

# **Components of Inter-Group Hostility**

**by**

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## **Abstract**

A two-phase project investigated expressions of inter-group hostility across a real-world context identified as displaying prior and on-going manifestations of conflict. The views of white-British community members were accessed to explore how issues around problematic relations with a juxtaposed population of British South Asians were constructed, explained and interpreted. Following a review of theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of inter-group hostility, the initial phase of the study applied thematic analysis to a series of open-ended semi-structured interviews with 21 respondents. From this a range of perceived contributory factors ('components') to the generation and maintenance of inter-group hostility were identified. Observations were also made about how issues around the inter-group relationship were differentially evaluated from both lesser/non-hostile and more overtly hostile perspectives. Phase two then used material generated from these analyses to produce context-specific survey measures to enable the assessment of patterns of the relative importance attributed to various components of perceived influence on inter-group hostility by 205 participants from the same community. Findings from both phases were discussed in relation to the range of theoretical perspectives initially outlined, particularly the relative importance attributed to different contributory components in this specific social context. These most notably related to various forms of perceived threat (Riek et al., 2006; Runcimann, 1966; Sherif, 1966; Stephan & Stephan, 2000; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). The importance of in-group consensus and social facilitation were also highlighted in relation to accounts from more hostile perspectives (Bobo, 2008), particularly in terms of limits to the availability of explanatory resources and interpretive repertoires in such accounts (Wetherell & Potter, 1992). Perceptions of the out-group as being problematically different and receiving preferential treatment were also identified as sources of animosity from more hostile

perspectives. Lesser/non-hostile perspectives were notable for identifying external forces (e.g., media and political influence, general social deprivation in the area) as the factors most responsible for inter-group hostility. This research makes contributions to existing knowledge in a number of ways: 1.) By incorporating a broader, multidimensional and more holistic synthesis of potential contributory elements to inter-group hostility than has been previously attempted. 2.) By placing greater emphasis on the contextual nature of specific inter-group conflicts across different situations. 3.) From the investigation of a specifically British context of inter-group hostility, and the role played by perceived threat in this particular intergroup dynamic. That these contributions were accomplished using in-depth qualitative analysis, which acknowledge the importance of consensual understandings of social reality and incorporate participants' own subjective interpretations, also represents a strength. Suggestions for future research are also discussed.

For Jorgè

‘I don’t want to belong to any club that will accept people like me as a member.’

Groucho Marx, 1959

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## Chapter 1: General Background and Introduction

Inter-group hostility has been a recurrent theme throughout human history and continues to be so. On a day-to-day level it requires only a brief perusal of news media sources to establish the prevalence and scope of this phenomenon in its varied manifestations. In an extreme form, recent years have witnessed violent upheavals throughout the Middle East, the Balkans and numerous African communities, such as Darfur and Rwanda, where accounts detailing the ferocity of intense sectarian conflicts were frequent and regular occurrences. On a smaller stage, many social groups around the world continue to co-exist in states ranging from mild disharmony to outright hatred, whether delineated by ethnic background, religion, geographical location, gender or sexuality. Underlying such fractious relationships is the spectre of prejudice.

The unfailing tendency of prejudice to manifest itself in human interactions has led over the years to a host of contributory elements being proposed and evaluated in order to explain its existence, and a number of approaches intended to evaluate such factors and processes accordingly developed. In terms of social psychology, the study of what has been defined as *negative attitudes and behaviours with respect to an out-group* (Hewstone & Greenland, 2000), *where antipathy is based on perceived category membership* (Brown, 2005) began to gain prominence in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century or, as McConahay (1986, p. 91) notes, “*Since Hitler gave racism a bad name.*” One has only to consider this most shameful episode in our tenure on the planet to recognise the gravity of prejudice in its more extreme forms (see Gilbert, 1989, for a heartbreakingly thorough catalogue of the depths plumbed throughout the era).

The benchmark publication on the psychology of prejudice is universally regarded to be Gordon Allport's (1954) *The Nature of Prejudice*. With this a first comprehensive attempt was made to outline many of the elements – vis-à-vis the generation, make-up and manifestation of prejudice - that continue to dominate the area to this day. Allport (1954) recognised that, rather than describing a simple, unitary concept, the aspects and dynamics of prejudice were complex and manifold. His book set out a variety of levels and ways in which the phenomenon could be researched, analysed, understood and therefore be potentially reduced or countered.

This included cognitive approaches focussing on everyday mental functioning such as categorisation, reflexive biases and more social cognitions like stereotyping or attitude formation and maintenance – where prejudice might inadvertently spring from regular human thought processes. Allport (1954) also considered how divergent patterns of individual characteristics might potentially contribute to prejudice on a personal level. Human motivational drives to acquire and maintain resources and territory were further evaluated as precursors, alongside the pursuit of less tangible goals such as self-esteem and status. While at a societal level Allport (1954) was influential in initially establishing these concepts within the context of group processes – a focus this current research continues – whereby individual definition, self-concept and motivations are subsumed under collective identities and found in shared norms, understandings and beliefs, including the perception and (pre)judgement of other social groups. Perceived threat in relation to such identity processes can then help to produce the negative responses often observed in hostile inter-group relations (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Perceptions of competition, deprivation or conflicts of interest arising from specific historical or socio-cultural contexts were additionally acknowledged as playing a part in disharmony. These social factors not only help to construct and shape the various groups or

categories themselves (as well as their members' perceptions and understandings of the world), but also potentially contribute to the maintenance and reproduction of bias and hostility over time.

The study of prejudice, then, represents a complex and diverse landscape, and researchers from disparate traditions and backgrounds have employed various means over the years to explore some of its features. No single one of these approaches can claim superiority over another (Stephan, 2008), but at times it has been difficult to establish any overall coherence. In some cases different perspectives have even appeared at odds with one another, when it is perhaps only through a more integrated approach that frameworks can emerge to develop a deeper understanding (Brown, 1998). In a small way, the current project attempts to explore some of these issues. Subsequent chapters will review the relative merits and limitations of various theoretical, operational and analytical concepts and perspectives found in the study of prejudice and inter-group hostility. Along the way a case will be made for the stance taken by the author in relation to these, and develop a rationale for the methods, sampling and analytic procedures employed herein.

Broadly speaking the intent of the research is pragmatic and exploratory, utilising both qualitative and quantitative methodologies in a real-world context to investigate manifestations of hostility and conflict between ethnically defined social groups. By studying a genuine example of inter-group conflict from the 'bottom-up' perspective of those embedded within it, it is hoped that any subsequent contribution made to prejudice research will also have a practically applicable flavour in terms of identifying or drawing focus on problematic aspects of the inter-group relationship which might provide avenues for investigating future strategies for intervention. Ever more refined and nuanced academic

models outlining the nature of prejudice are invaluable as we attempt to understand its continued recurrence, yet there is also a case to be made for studying inter-group hostility as a practical research problem to be addressed in society (Shmadar & Stone, 2008). It is with a balance of these two concerns that the author proceeds.

Phase one of the project takes a qualitative approach by thematically analysing (Braun & Clarke, 2006) transcribed semi-structured interview accounts from white British respondents discussing problematic relations with a juxtaposed population of South Asians (mostly Pakistani and Bangladeshi). This sample is taken from a specific social context identified as displaying prior and ongoing manifestations of inter-group conflict and hostility. Respondents embedded within this context were expected to display a range of orientations towards the Asian out-group, encompassing both overtly hostile and lesser/non-hostile perspectives. The general research aims are:

1. To identify the core themes and concepts used to explain problematic inter-group relations from respondent accounts in order to establish a range of potential 'components' considered influential to the manifestation of inter-group hostility in this case.
2. To assess whether the identified componential themes can be said to offer support for, or be meaningfully interpreted, in relation to the range of theoretical approaches outlined in following chapters.
3. To investigate variation between overtly hostile and lesser/non-hostile accounts in terms of how these construct and interpret componential aspects of the problematic inter-group relationship, particularly with regard to explanations or justifications advanced for any expressed hostility towards members of the Asian community.

4. To generate appropriate material for the development of context specific quantitative survey measures in order to further investigate aspects of the above across a broader sample from the same community.

Phase two then uses these situation specific questionnaire measures to assess participant ratings of the relative importance and dynamics attributed to a range of componential factors identified at phase one as contributory influences in the generation of inter-group problems and hostility towards the Asian out-group.

5. To analyse the relative strength and importance ascribed to various components as contributory to inter-group problems across the sample, specifically how these relate to expressed a) aversion to engaging more closely at a social level with the out-group, b) dislike of the out-group, c) willingness to engage in negative political activities against the out-group, and d) willingness to engage in negative physical activities against the out-group.
6. To compare the relative (rated) levels of importance ascribed to each identified componential factor between those who are designated as either high or low on a) aversion to engaging more closely at a social level with the out-group, b) dislike of the out-group, c) willingness to engage in negative political activities against the out-group, and d) willingness to engage in negative physical activities against the out-group.

A full summary of the overall perspective taken by the current project in terms of its theoretical underpinnings, methodological procedures and research questions will be provided in a subsequent methodology chapter. Given the range and complexity of

approaches taken to the study of inter-group hostility, a consideration of how the project will relate specifically to each of these will also be included as we proceed. To begin setting this in context, a review of the main theoretical perspectives on prejudice and inter-group hostility is a good place to start.

## **Chapter 2: Internal Social-Cognition Approaches to Inter-Group Hostility**

### **2.1 Mental categorisation**

Traditionally, mental categorisation has been seen as a cognitive mechanism which helps us deal effectively with an amount of stimuli that would be otherwise overwhelming (Whitely & Kite, 2006). Rapid assignment of stimuli into readily available and manageable category sets has been regarded as something essential to human development, having evolved as an unavoidable and often implicit cognitive process (Allport, 1954). A benefit of quickly categorising mental data is the efficiency with which it enables things to be processed and reacted to: Can I eat it or will it eat me? Should I fight or mate with it ... or perhaps even alternate between the two? Put simply, categorisation helps us make sense of the world (Quinn, Macrae & Bodenhausen, 2003). This is achieved through the creation of rough mental category templates by which individuals are able to assimilate and deal with novel stimuli – in terms of human interaction, spontaneously grading those we encounter into general categories is far less time and energy consuming than attempting any detailed or uniquely individual assessment (Fiske, 2005). An often automatic process, categorisation is considered swift and effective, it is functional and consistent, an invaluable part of everyday life (Macrae & Bodenhausen, 2000).

Categorical decisions are thought to be a function of perceived similarities, associations or differences observed in the target stimuli - objects or situations, people – ensuring that things which appear to be alike or closely related are often ‘clumped’ together for the sake of expedience; whereas things that are not face swift exclusion from a category (Yzberyt,

Rocher & Schadron, 1997). This type of categorisation is said to rely chiefly on sense data such as visual cues which, in human terms, means differentiating between individuals by dint of things like skin colour (Maddox & Gray, 2002), gender characteristics or on account of hearing a foreign language being spoken (see Fiske & Taylor, 1991, for a review). Categories can also operate hierarchically (an apple is simultaneously a fruit, an apple and a specific type of apple, for instance), though usually one of these distinctions is most readily accessible (Cantor & Mischel, 1979). In this way a person may be initially identified by appearance as a human, a male, and of native African descent, depending on which level of category is most salient to an observer at the time (though with human interaction, salience is tied to both the observer and the context, as we shall see). At this most basic level, categorisation is commonly regarded as relying on a somewhat simplified notion of essentialism: that a perceptual target exhibits a plain and coherent nature or set of qualities for the perceiver, thus allowing it to be easily and accurately pigeonholed (Whitely & Kite, 2006).

There are, of course, problems with this. As mentioned, without such economical forms of categorisation life as we know it would be very difficult. Unfortunately, so too would prejudice (Fiske, 1998). A disadvantage of instant or implicit categorisation is that labelling and assigning social others in this manner encourages divisive frameworks for viewing our social world and people in it, swiftly and definitively distinguishing between those who belong to one category or another (Brewer, 1999). This tends to put a 'Them' and 'Us' spin on social cognitions, especially in regard to groups, where distinctions are frequently drawn between the *In-Groups* we (or others) perceive ourselves as belonging to and the *Out-Groups* we do not (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Due to the complexities of human interaction and modern social environments, these types of simplistic category divisions acquire the potential to be influenced by a multiplicity of abstract and socially defined criteria (Brown, 1995). Aside

from distinctions primarily driven by sense data – like sexual characteristics, skin tone, or coloured stripes on a football scarf – a range of more elusive ideological and social distinctions then become available, such as religion, political persuasion or even taste in music (Brewer & Brown, 1998).

We shall later see that when it comes to social categorisation an individual may in fact be defined by any number of shifting categories (Augustinos, Walker & Donahugh, 2006), but in every-day situations the distinction which appears as most initially salient to an observer usually takes precedence. For example, where inter-group relations are concerned there is evidence to suggest that categories such as ethnicity become more salient in contexts where ethnic populations are juxtaposed (Brewer & Brown, 1998). Basic categorisation processes, however, cannot be held directly responsible for prejudice, even though they are often regarded as the mechanism which provides for such outcomes in the first place (Fiske, 1998). For category allocation to evolve into bias or prejudice against one category by another, additional factors are needed. From the cognitive perspective currently under review, a number of possibilities have been suggested.

## **2.2 Cognitive bias**

One result of categorical thinking is the distorting effect it seems to have on perceptions of the categories themselves. Once people have been mentally categorised into separate groups, distinctions between these groups then display a tendency to appear exaggerated, as perceptions of inter-group dissimilarity are enhanced (Tajfel & Wilkes, 1963; Krueger & Clement, 1994). Conversely, perceptions of difference between members of the same group become attenuated - though the effect is not always symmetrical (Brown, 1995). For instance, the *out-group homogeneity* effect describes how members of out-groups are consistently seen

as being more alike and less varied across a range of characteristics than are members of one's own on similar domain evaluations. This allows members of the out-group to be regarded as inter-changeable or 'all the same' (Plous, 2003). Taylor, Fiske, Etoff and Ruderman (1978) demonstrated with the Who-Said-What paradigm that misattributions of speech from one person to another in meetings were systematically confused within both race and gender, indicating that women or members of ethnic minorities could sometimes be viewed in this manner. The out-group homogeneity effect has been most consistently found in stable, well-established in/out-groups in real-world settings where the in-group is a majority (Simon, 1992).

Further bias in social cognition is described by the fundamental (Ross, 1977) and ultimate (Pettigrew, 1979) attribution errors. The former reveals a general tendency to attribute the behaviour of others to dispositional rather than environmental causes (innate clumsiness rather than wet paving-stones in the event of an observed stumble), whereas the latter has in-group members attributing negative out-group fortunes or behaviour to dispositional causes, and positive out-group outcomes to situational factors, unfair advantage or luck. In short, not only are 'They' 'all the same,' but 'They' are all 'just *like that*' ... and rarely in any positive sense. This tendency to inadvertent bias against others is regularly observed in many situations where neither prejudice nor conflict are present (Pettigrew, 1979), yet it takes on a more ominous cast if the groups in question share a perceived history of disharmony, and gains potency when those making the evaluations are prejudiced to begin with (see Hewstone, 1990, for a review). In such situations the out-group, and each of its unique and individual members, find themselves regarded not only as exemplars of a single homogenous entity, but also in a position of being 'damned if they do, and damned if they don't' in how their actions are perceived by in-group members (Whitley & Kite, 2001).

Illusory correlation (Hamilton & Gifford, 1976) is another form of implicit bias whereby distinctive stimuli are better recalled, especially when comparatively rare events and attributes become perceived as linked together. Research has shown that this is especially pronounced when the pairings involve negative behaviours and seem consistent with existing opinions of minority out-groups (Hamilton & Rose, 1980). An example of this would be the oft-heard opinion that all immigrants prefer to live off state hand-outs rather than work. Evidence of further bias in implicit judgements comes from the popularly used Implicit Associations Test. Here participants are visually presented with category relevant stimuli – photos of black or white faces, in early instances – paired with both negative and positive words, and subsequent reaction times of identification/recognition measured. Overall an observed tendency is reported to more speedily associate positive terms with higher status groups, and negative terms with those of low status. In many instances this corresponds with associations to in-groups and out-groups. The IAT also claims to assess hidden levels of prejudices in individuals through these implicit associations (see Greenwald, Banaji, Rudman, Farnham, Nosek & Mellot, 2002 for a review of the IAT).

Collectively these biases of social cognition emphasise the notion of categorised out-groups and their members being perceived as sharing some intrinsic element of commonality (regardless of whether such could ever be demonstrated on a meaningful level). They also highlight the point that categorical judgements invariably come with their own sets of baggage. No given category, in other words, tends to be evaluatively neutral, but rather brings along with it a multitude of pre-conceived expectations, attributions and judgements about those regarded as belonging to it (Fiske, 1998).

## 2.3 Stereotyping

Perhaps the most widely recognised offshoot of categorisation is the stereotype. As with categorisation, stereotyping is usually viewed as an expedient method of dealing with complex social interactions by making quick, convenient summaries of people and groups (Stephan, 1985; Macrae, Milne & Bodenhausen, 1994). Stereotyping similarly relies on allocation of the individuals we encounter into homogenous mental sub-sets where, rather than being predicated on any detailed or unique evaluation, the impressions we form are frequently assimilated into pre-existent mental templates and assessed accordingly (Dovidio & Tyler, 1986). This inevitably entails making implied generalisations and assumptions about a given category, that its members share particular attributes or features, or the ascription to individuals of a supposedly immutable trait or quality thought to be displayed by the group en masse (e.g., the assumption that all Scotsmen are niggardly, or that men with big noses are well-endowed). A stereotype describes a set of supposedly fixed ideas associated with a category, and relies on over-generalisation to forge intuitive explanations, predictions or (pre)judgements about the target. In this way stereotypes serve to de-individualise and distort perceptions and interpretations of the characteristics, intentions and behaviour of out-group members (Jost & Hamilton, 2005; Fazio, Jackson, Dunton & Williams, 1995). Some stereotypes are deemed to carry more weight than others and are therefore perceived as more legitimate. This is particularly the case where the categories they refer to are conceived of as 'natural' (as opposed to artificial), such as gender or ethnicity, as it infers greater inductive potential for the holder, thus permitting judgements about the target to seem more 'valid' and 'accurate' ... regardless of how invalid or inaccurate these are demonstrated to be (Jost & Hamilton, 2005).

A further problem with both stereotyping and categorisation is that, once formed, these conceptions of others are notoriously difficult to shift, especially in real world environments that serve to foster them (Locke & Walker, 1999). Pre-formed, socially shared and indulged impressions or evaluations, in any form, consistently display a tendency towards self-perpetuation - even when confronted by substantial evidence to the contrary. People have been found more likely to remember information that is consistent or confirming of their already held views about others, than they are of contradictory or disconfirming examples (von Hippel, Sekaquaptewa & Vargas, 1995). Henri Tajfel (1981) suggested that when we employ these templates to explain situations and events, it usually comes in the form of hypotheses in search of confirmatory information, often leading to conclusions that are both tautological and essentialist (she behaved that way because that's what *people like her* are like). In some instances people confronted with undeniably contradictory evidence are forced to sub-type individuals into new categories – a generally homophobic man may consort with a gay friend because 'he is not like the rest of them' for instance, thus creating a sub-typical category for this one instance alone (Brown, 1995). In the main, however, stereotypes operate through a process of focussing attention on particular aspects of information about others, whilst also serving to influence the way in which this information is interpreted and remembered. This in turn helps to shape consequent beliefs and actions about the target, as well as facilitating the disproportionate assimilation of fresh information in order to bolster previously held positions (Jost & Hamilton, 2005. See Fiske, 1998, for a further review of stereotyping research).

From this perspective, then, it would appear that human beings are inherently predisposed, through a variety of interacting cognitive mechanisms, to categorise and pre-judge others; and that these mechanisms represent a platform for creating potentially unavoidable divisions

between them which are further prone, through all manner of implicit bias, to degeneration into negatively conceptualised inter-group relations. It is a pretty bleak picture, though fortunately one that is far from complete. As we shall come to see, the generation of bias, hostility and conflict in society is likely reliant on a range of contributory factors much beyond the purely cognitive. But first, a less pessimistic look at categorisation and stereotyping may be advisable.

## **2.4 Benefits and limitations of the internal cognitive approach**

If, as previous sections imply, people are wholly at the mercy of implicit cognitive forces in their dealings with the world, then what hope does this offer for any improvement in human relations? An important point to establish here is that posited universal categorisation processes only suggest how we might be susceptible to differentiating between each other, and sometimes guilty of making unwarranted negative assumptions based on this. This underplays the implication that category judgements and stereotypes may also function benignly – stereotypes emphasising the tolerance or helpfulness of a group (nurses, for instance) can often help to foster positive impressions and evaluations of groups in society (Oakes & Haslam, 2001). In this sense a tendency towards stereotyping can be regarded as neither good nor bad, but merely a recurrent feature of cognitive processing (Stangor & Lange, 1994). Also often underplayed is people's awareness of their own cognitive propensities, and the contingent ability to think more carefully or debate issues for themselves, to question the accuracy or validity of any implicitly generated assumptions before allowing them to influence subsequent decisions, judgements or behaviour (Billig, 2005). After all, if it were the case that flawed processing were the entire story then we might each of us expect to be raging, insular bigots, helpless before the irrationality of our biased cognitions. And in fact there is neither a great deal of, nor very strong evidence linking

group-based stereotype activation to measures of prejudice and discrimination (Augustinos, Walker & Donaghue, 2006). A meta-analysis by Dovidio, Brigham, Johnson and Gaertner (1996) found only moderate and indirect links between the two. So, while stereotyping processes may offer one explanation of how bias in attitudes might crop up, they cannot directly account for more severe forms of inter-group hostility.

In order to try and unpick some of these issues, one strand of research has sought to examine differences in negative stereotype activation and use (see Locke & Johnston, 2001, for an overview). Devine (1995) asserts that when making judgements about others, everyone in society has a stock repertoire of stereotypical assumptions available to draw upon, which are generally regarded as being known by everyone in the cultural context. These are derived from early and ongoing processes of socialisation, contextually shaped influences and interaction with others in the socio-cultural and historical context (more of which presently). Further, it is claimed (Devine, 1989; Lapore & Brown, 1997) that when presented with stereotype related stimuli, automatic stereotype activation of information will occur, regardless of the personal beliefs, levels of prejudice or intolerance in a person's worldview. In other words, being aware of and instantly accessing such information is not necessarily linked to the expression of direct or negatively prejudiced beliefs about a target (Locke & Johnston, 2001).

Personal levels of prejudice, however, *do* seem to influence whether such accessed information remains active in, and relevant to, an individual's assessment and judgements; or whether it is suppressed. Findings by Devine (1995; 2001) indicate that where low or non-prejudiced people appear to inhibit automatic stereotype use in their judgements, those who are more highly prejudiced often do not. Work by Locke, Macleod and Walker (1994) also

suggests that whereas highly prejudiced individuals automatically activate *only* stereotypical material when required to think about a group around whom stereotypes exist, those identified as low-prejudiced are more likely to evoke a far greater range of related and unrelated, positive and negative information. One implication of this is that it appears being non-prejudiced requires more cognitive effort (Augustinos, Walker & Donaghue, 2006). Clearly, then, there are differences in how the same presumed underlying cognitive mechanisms exhibit themselves between various individuals (low and high prejudiced in this case). In later sections a more thorough account of how observed differences in prejudice manifestation might be accounted for will be presented. First, however, we need to consider more carefully the influence of social forces on categorisation and stereotyping, and how this shapes perceptions of the world people inhabit.

## **2.5 The social side of categorisation and stereotyping**

One criticism of research into categorisation and stereotyping is that, in the past, far more emphasis has been placed on the cognitive processing and mental representational sides of these phenomena than on the social, interactional and functional aspects of stereotype/category formation, structure and content (Fazio, Jackson, Dunstan & Williams, 1995). Such a straightforward cognitive approach first of all implies the existence of 'lone observers' at the mercy of their own mental functioning (Wetherell & Potter, 1992); large groups of individuals who somehow internally produce the same judgements of the same stimuli due to shared limitations in processing. When, as Markus (2008) points out, there is no such thing as a completely neutral and isolated asocial, a-historical person. The world we enter at birth comes fully equipped with endless sets of pre-conceived wisdom, explanations, norms, traditions, ideas, institutions, meanings, descriptions and judgements to which we are exposed. Human development is therefore partly a process of social interaction, where

perception inevitably comes filtered through a lens of contextually and culturally defined interpretation (Wetherell & Potter, 1992).

What this also means is that many of the categories we often take for granted are not in fact fixed, *a priori* givens that perception merely alights upon, but rather a product of the social structures, beliefs and ideologies in which they are embedded - and as such potentially subject to variability of interpretation or change and redefinition over time (Turner & Reynolds, 2003). Around the sense-driven cues previously touched upon (visual distinctions of skin-tone or aural registration of a foreign language), society weaves a complex web of sub-division, definition and meaning by which to potentially sort and classify its members (Brown, 2005). Some of these distinctions, such as political systems/orientations or denominations of religion, may quite readily be acknowledged as a product of socially constructive processes. Yet many other distinctions commonly regarded as 'real' or 'natural' by people can also prove on closer inspection to be similarly artificial or collectively negotiated (Reicher & Hopkins, 2006).

Nationhood is perhaps one obvious example of this (ask any Assyrian), but comparable considerations also apply to notions of race. From current anthropological perspectives the notion of 'race' is widely considered redundant (Smedley & Smedley, 2005)<sup>1</sup>. The concept of genetically discrete, reliably measurable or scientifically meaningful racial groups has been largely superseded by that of race as a historico-cultural and geographically defined social construction, subject to re-configurations of category and salience over time (Wade, 2004;

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<sup>1</sup> Many conflicts rely on divisions which could not be defined as 'racial' in any case - Loyalists and Republicans in Northern Ireland, for example, or Shi-ite and Sunni Muslims in Iraq, which are perhaps best defined as heritage-based conflicts. For the purposes of current research, prejudice, hostility and conflict will therefore be framed in terms of 'inter-group' phenomena where possible.

Bobo & Fox, 2003). Yet it is the widespread assumption that people can be readily fitted into a set of pre-existing and exclusively defined 'natural' categories of this kind which permits many divisions or enmity to arise in the first place. Certainly there is variation in skin tone, amongst other observable features, to provide a basis for presumed differentiation, yet the human species actually exists along an unbroken genetic continuum. Therefore any attempted compartmentalisation applied must be regarded as wholly arbitrary in biological terms (Reicher, 2001). Put more simply, 'Racial' categories cannot be viewed in any meaningful way as 'natural, but rather as a very human method of trying to order the complex social world. As Reicher (2001) points out, to take the notion of race for granted means 'we are in danger of transforming a contingent feature of the social landscape into a natural fact' (p. 296).

Analogous to these potentially shifting and inaccurate category definitions are the stereotypes which attach to them (Augustinos et al., 2006). As with categorisation, socially constructed stereotypes are often also ascribed a basis in 'reality', rather than considered as resulting from any contextual or social factors underlying them (Brewer & Campbell, 1976). A well-established stereotype of South Asians in Britain, for example, is that of taxi-driver, as if this represents some inclination, quality or disposition inherent in the individual or (predominantly) his culture; instead of reflecting the harsh economic or employment conditions which ensure that the role is one of only a few openly available. Despite the obvious situational nature of this conjunction, the frequency with which it appears works only to reinforce perceptions of an objectively characteristic 'reality'.

This subjective and contextually dependent aspect of categorisation and stereotyping is highlighted in a study of South Asians' experience of contact in Britain by Hopkins and

Kahani-Hopkins (2006). Here it is observed that processes of marginalisation and discrimination in relation to this group have (albeit qualitatively) altered over the last twenty years in terms of content and focus, due to changing historical and cultural factors. Where once prejudice tended to be orientated around their designation as (for example) Pakistanis, more recent times have seen this shift to categorical focus on perceptions of stereotypical Muslim identity (Hopkins & Kahani-Hopkins, 2006). Moreover, if we extend this observation of categorical subjectivity a stage further it would have been quite difficult, before the partition of India in 1947, to apply the ‘Pakistani’ designation itself.

Another implication of a more reflexive take on categorisation and stereotyping comes in examination of the function or purpose such judgements can serve for the holder, particularly in terms of any deliberate strategies of influence they might represent (see Reicher, Hopkins & Condor, 1997). In other words, the creation and perpetuation of particular social demarcations, and their attendant slew of beliefs and judgements, may in some cases be motivated by utilitarian or goal-orientated aims of those espousing them (Leyens, Yzerbyt & Shadron, 1994). Jost, Banaji & Nosek (2004), for example, offer a system-justification stance on this, whereby categories and stereotypes are frequently utilised and interpreted as justification devices to help maintain the status quo and legitimise existing inequalities and power relationships in society. In their view, this can take three forms: *ego-justification* (individual protection of self-esteem by maintaining negative or derogatory evaluations of others); *group-justification* (to rationalise and excuse unfair or discriminatory treatment or negative views of out-groups); *system-justification* (as means to legitimise and perpetuate institution systems – class divisions, patriarchy, capitalism, imperialism, for instance – thus allowing controlling or dominant groups to maintain their status and justify inequitable treatment of others). By these means a culturally shared belief system can serve to ratify and

perpetuate negatively false impressions of a target group, thus allowing prevailing attitudes, conditions and inter-group relations to persist (Wetherell & Potter, 1992). As a consequence, such strategies may be employed by higher status or socially comparable groups in order to legitimate or justify negative orientations and actions (Jost & Hamilton, 2005). Seen this way, stereotype use takes on a more intentional and disquieting significance.

On a positive note, there is some evidence to suggest that more consistent or widespread exposure to disconfirming information or examples may help to counter stereotypical perspectives (see Hewstone, Macrae, Griffiths, Milne & Brown, 1994; Hewstone & Lord, 1998). Findings from an impressive field study conducted in Rwanda (Paluck, 2009) observed changes in beliefs, norms and behaviour in an experimental group (versus controls) after a one year period of regular exposure to a specially designed radio drama promoting ideas of reconciliation, empathy and violence prevention in this previously war-torn country. Interestingly, Staub and Pearlman (2009) assert that these changes partly came about through subsequent community discussions of the program itself, thus again emphasising the importance of social interaction and influence. Another study by Pettijohn and Walzer (2008), which pre-assessed undergraduate levels of prejudice, found subsequent reduction in students who completed a psychology of prejudice course compared to those enrolled on introductory psychology. Many Western cultures also now widely acknowledge that negative stereotypes may be inappropriate or offensive to others, therefore creating the possibility for change: as little as thirty years ago it was pretty acceptable to regard members of Afro-Caribbean communities (or Irish, for that matter) as lazy, profligate and lacking in intelligence (Solomos, 1989). At the very least, shifting cultural trends have made some headway in inhibiting the overt expression of such views - if not providing motivation to potentially reassess their actual validity.

Taken together, these points argue against an immutably fixed interpretation of social-cognitions as a result of implicit processing, replacing it with one where socio-contextual forces work more explicitly to shape our perceptions of the world and others within it. As Billig (2005) notes, in some socio-historical contexts bigotry and intolerance may perhaps be the norm, but across many others equality and tolerance are more usual, thus emphasising the inadequacy of purely cognitive explanations. Instead of being regarded as an unavoidable product of faulty wiring, therefore, prejudice becomes a culturally shaped and influenced phenomenon, and consequently more amenable to personal agency and change (Reicher & Hopkins, 2001).

## **2.6 The current research and internal social-cognitions**

So far, a selection of ideas have been presented in relation to social cognition. These began from a perspective that views limitations in mental processing as working to compartmentalise and distort perceptions of observable phenomena, thus creating a basis for division and bias in social relations. A more social interpretation of stereotyping and categorisation was then outlined, suggesting that many of the categories and attendant stereotypes we take for granted are in fact products of human interaction and thus socially constructed, sometimes for self-legitimising purposes. Some researchers cited (notably Billig, 1976, 1978, 2005; Wetherell & Potter, 1992) take this further to suggest (broadly) that interpretation, understanding and perception of such phenomena can be viewed only as the product of social interaction through language. These approaches to the study of prejudice will be covered in more detail later, as will a consideration of them in relation to traditional positivistic science paradigms. Epistemological issues around this will then be discussed in relation to the current research. For now the author will confine any comment to an outline of the position taken by this research vis-à-vis categorisation and stereotyping.

It would seem fair to say that human beings are prone to compartmentalisation, a hasty yet tenacious classification of one another into handily separate groups. It also appears that they are inclined to prefer and to pre-judge on the basis of this, often making skewed judgements about 'Them' and 'Us' along the way. Regardless of the extent to which this is a product of either mental processing or social programming, the inequality, suffering and conflict frequently inspired by it remains a serious problem. On a basic level people *are* often delineated or categorised by primary identifiers registered directly through the senses (seeing dark skin, or a woman in full burqa; hearing a different language being spoken). Yet clearly how these signifiers are processed, interpreted and constructed in terms of meaning and explanation - not to mention any subsequent judgement or action deemed appropriate to take on this basis - relies largely on past and ongoing social influence. On closer inspection many categories and their attendant stereotypes arise from, and are perpetuated by, contextually vulnerable, arbitrarily abstract and socially reliant factors. Yet the punch in the *Ausländer's* face still hurts. The senses lead us into a habit of readily distinguishing between one thing and another, while the content and meaning of such divisions comes mostly through the lens of socially shared and constructed understandings of the world. That these can be changeable across different contexts, times, groups and individuals is a key issue in research on inter-group hostility. Mental categorisation certainly occurs, but alone cannot account for extreme manifestations of negative inter-group relations. Nor can it explain how some individuals, groups and whole contexts display high levels of prejudice, whereas others do not. Upcoming sections will look at other ways in which these differences have been studied and explained. The focus of the current research is therefore not on the role of cognitive factors involved in inter-group hostility. The author assumes a broadly critical realist perspective (Parker, 1998) on such matters, in line with the foregoing conceptualisation of categorisation and

stereotyping as being heavily dependent on how members of social groups construct distinctions or interpret meaning and content in relation to these.

Phase one of the project will incorporate some issues of categorisation and stereotyping, however, by first qualitatively examining categorical distinctions and descriptions in accounts provided by white British respondents in relation to Asians in the community. As stated, the primary aim of this research is to identify from respondent accounts the core themes and concepts used to explain and/or justify hostility towards Asians, as a means to establish a range of potential 'components' considered influential to the manifestation of inter-group hostility. From evidence previously cited in this chapter, it is expected that perceptions of difference between the two ethnic groups will be considered a major influence in problematic relations. A second research aim of the project is to assess any variation observed between lesser/non-hostile and overtly hostile accounts along a number of dimensions, including perceptions of the out-group as problematically different. In which ways do more hostile accounts construct markers of difference and categorisation between the two ethnic groups as problematic – whether in terms of easily identifiable surface differences or more abstract cultural definitions - and what form do any attendant negative generalisations or stereotypical assumptions about the out-group take? The third main research aim of the project, to assess identified componential themes in terms of whether they can be said to offer support for, or be meaningfully interpreted in relation to, the range of outlined theoretical approaches will also involve consideration of categorisation and stereotyping issues. Phase two will then use this information to examine the relative importance attributed to perceived inter-group differences as influential in generating hostility towards the out-group across a broader sample. In particular, is it possible to assess the extent to which measures of perceived difference contribute, along with other identified components, to reported levels of expressed

aversion, dislike and willingness to engage in a range of negative activities against the out-group? Is it additionally possible to ascertain where any difference lies in the presence, relative importance and dynamic of components between those identified as highly hostile and those not?

This last point is an interesting one. If purportedly universal and underlying cognition processes are inadequate as an explanation for how inter-group hostility occurs only within certain contexts or populations, what other considerations might be able to shed light on such phenomena? One approach has been to try and identify individual difference characteristics which may predispose some and not others to prejudice.

## **Chapter 3: Individual Difference Approaches to Inter-Group Hostility**

### **3.1 Authoritarianism**

The Authoritarian Personality concept (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson & Sanford, 1950) posits the existence of personality ‘types’, whose psychological make-up and thought patterns render them more amenable to and supportive of prejudiced or non-egalitarian views and activities (Brown, 1995). In its original conception the Authoritarian Personality type (Adorno et al., 1950) was believed to be rooted in childhood experiences defined by harsh discipline, emphasis on obligation and duty, unquestioning obedience, conformity, and set within a strict social hierarchy requiring ingratiation towards those perceived as being of higher status, and disdain for those deemed lower (Dion, 1999).

It was suggested by Adorno et al. (1950) that these influences generate a reliance on authority within the individual. This holds a repressed hostility towards parental figures of authority at its core, which is then displaced onto substitute targets. The recipients of such ‘scape-goating’ effects are often those defined by the prevailing social norms as ‘different’ or ‘inferior’, therefore potentially including groups such as ethnic minorities, homosexuals and non-conformists. Overall, the individual Authoritarian Personality type (Adorno et al., 1950) leans towards intolerance, rigid and inflexible thinking (often viewing things in stark terms of right and wrong, black and white), right-wing political views and general prejudice towards anyone not perceived as an in-group member - in this way manifesting a whole raft of negative and interlinked biases. The Adorno et al. (1950) approach was considered initially

quite successful and led to the creation of the F-scale (as it supposedly identified pre-Fascist tendencies) which claimed to be an index of measurement for the Authoritarian Personality and, as such, to correlate well with other measures of prejudice (Duckitt, 2005)

Several problems were identified within this over time: little empirical support was found for the repressed/displaced aggression psychodynamic elements of the theory; the structure, reliability, validity and methodologies used to test the F-scale failed to elicit adequately convincing support; the measure itself was additionally predicated on measurement of attitudes, rather than behaviours and affect, as many other so-called personality measures are; the concept was further criticised as being too focussed on right-wing examples without throwing light onto other supposed forms of authoritarianism, such as left-wing totalitarianism for instance (Duckitt, 2005).

### **3.2 Right Wing Authoritarianism**

Twenty years after this original formulation, a sustained attempt was made to address some of these criticisms and redefine the Authoritarian Personality concept (Altemeyer, 1981; 1986; 1988). Altemeyer (1981) sought first to detail and eradicate any shortcomings of the original theory before creating and testing a more empirically robust scale and concept of Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA).<sup>2</sup> In this streamlined reinvention RWA involved the covariation of three facets/attitude clusters to comprise a unitary dimension. These are: a) Authoritarian submission: acceptance of and submission to recognised and established

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<sup>2</sup> Examples of RWA scale items for respondents to either agree or disagree with on a scale of -4 to +4 are: (19.) 'Everyone should have their own lifestyle, religious beliefs, and sexual preferences, even if it makes them different from everybody else.' (21.) 'What our country needs is a strong, determined leader who will crush evil, and take us back to our one true path.' (4.) 'It is important to protect the rights of radicals and deviants in all ways.' The utility of employing survey measures in prejudice research will be given a thorough treatment in later chapters.

sources of authority; b) Conventionalism: ascription and adherence to norms and conventions sanctioned by the aforementioned sources of authority; and c) Authoritarian aggression: aggression towards groups or individuals deemed to be legitimate targets by such prevailing norms, conventions and sources of authority (Dion, 1999). Over the years RWA has been shown to correlate (in the USA at least, and in primarily undergraduate samples) with measures of both ethnic prejudice and homophobia, as well as with willingness to infringe/curtail the civil rights of or punish others, especially in relation to perceived deviance from the prevailing social order (Dion, 1999). RWA has also been found to appear more concentrated in other samples, including right-wing politicians, fundamentalist protestants and the poorly educated (Altemeyer, 1981, 1988, 1996). Unlike Adorno's (1950) original psychodynamic interpretation, Altemeyer takes a social learning approach (Bandura, 1977) to the inception and manifestation of RWA. Instead of incipient hostility arising from childhood experience causing displaced aggression against more easily available targets, the re-tooled RWA pinpoints its origins in the observation and learning processes of development and early socialisation (e.g., the influence of parents, relatives, teachers, peers and the media). These elements are then asserted to crystallise by the time of adolescence into a set of learned beliefs and attitudes regarding others and the world (Altemeyer, 1996). Part of this proposed mindset are beliefs organised around the concept of a 'dangerous world' which requires continual threat control strategies in order to be successfully negotiated (Altemeyer, 1988). Anxiety and insecurity caused by perceptions of the world as a threatening and unpredictable place may therefore be countered by a drive towards maintaining order, stability, security and cohesion - especially in the face of individuals, ideas and other groups seen as potentially threatening or undermining this status quo (Duckitt, 2005; Cohrs & Asbrok, 2009). In this sense RWA represents a set of inherited insecurities and motivations tied to a very fixed and intolerant view of the social landscape and how it ought to be.

That many aspects of RWA actually appear to refer to individual (and presumably group) differences in attitudes and beliefs which are socially communicated and maintained, rather than representing evidence for underlying and easily delineated ‘personality traits’, will be returned to once a further individual difference approach to the study of prejudice has been discussed.

### **3.3 Social dominance**

The Social Dominance Theory of Sidanius and Pratto (1999)<sup>3</sup> assumes that all societies consist of group-based social hierarchies, within which an individual’s standing is closely linked to group membership. This structure is purportedly maintained by the interplay of hierarchy attenuating and enhancing forces, partly in the form of individual/group support for legitimising myths – beliefs and stereotypes which promote either equality or inequality between individuals, social groupings or within the system generally. Social Dominance Theory focuses on differential acceptance of these beliefs by individuals and gives rise to an attitudinal disposition measure of (SDO) Social Dominance Orientation (Sidanius & Pratto, 1991, 1999). SDO can be considered in terms both specific (desire for one’s specific in-group dominance) and general – overall belief in the validity of hierarchical systems (Jost & Thompson, 2000). A person with low SDO would therefore lean towards the promotion of egalitarianism and equality. Whereas a high SDO rating would indicate alignment with views about group superiority/inferiority and the ‘natural’ hierarchical order of things - a stance which is suggested to promote intolerance and a belief that ‘inferior’ social groups should ‘know their place’. SDT additionally asserts that all forms of prejudice (e.g., ethnic, sexist,

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<sup>3</sup> Items from the SDO scale, measured ‘agree’ to ‘disagree’ on a 1 – 7 scale (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). (1) ‘Some groups of people are simply inferior to other groups.’ (5) ‘If certain groups stayed in their place, we would have fewer problems.’ (10) ‘Group equality should be our ideal.’ (16) ‘No one group should dominate in society.’

homophobic) spring from this same source. Links have been found between SDO and clusters of non-egalitarian attitudes (see Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Similarly to RWA the roots of SDO are ascribed to developmental learning processes (Bandura, 1977), whereby socialisation and upbringing operate cumulatively to set in place a particular, and particularly rigid, way of viewing ones general and specific social environment.

Both SDO and RWA claim to measure individual differences between people, especially in relation to social perceptions, though research to discover connections between the two concepts have not been particularly conclusive (see Altemeyer, 1998; McFarland, 2002). It is therefore theorised that they represent separate personality ‘types’ or dimensions which might both predict prejudice and intolerance from different standpoints. Duckitt’s (2001) Dual-process model describes this in terms of RWA and SDO being ideological variables representing complementary yet diversely derived and manifested worldviews and motivational concerns, where each is differentially influenced by out-group characteristics to create the response of intolerance (Sibley, Wilson, & Duckitt, 2007). These proposed differences being that high RWA might correspond with a threat-driven need for control, order and stability, with the focus of antipathy directed at those perceived as potentially undermining this; where high SDO reflects an impulse towards competitive dominance motivated by the need for superiority or power, with the attendant negative bias directed towards those regarded as subordinate, inferior or challenging to the prevailing status quo (Cohrs & Asbrock, 2009). One question pertaining to both conceptualisations is whether RWA and SDO actually represent ingrained and underlying differences of personality between individuals, or whether it would be more accurate to describe them as clusters of culturally transferred and shared social attitudes and perceptions.

### **3.4 Benefits and limitations of individual difference approaches**

Several difficulties have been identified with adopting the former, more straightforward personality approach to these variables (see Billig, 1976 and Brown, 1995 for detailed summaries of the key points). Perhaps the most obvious limitation is that this approach is not able to adequately explain the apparent ubiquity of overtly negative and prejudiced attitudes sometimes observed across larger groups, communities and even nations (widespread prejudice against Jews throughout European history culminating in Nazi Germany, for instance, or the treatment of native Africans in apartheid era South Africa). These examples highlight situations in which strongly prejudiced tendencies appear across populations comprising thousands if not millions of individuals who would otherwise presumably differ along the usual range of social-demographic, psychological and early socialisation experience dimensions observed in a given society (Brown, 1995). The more widely prevalent prejudiced beliefs and ideologies become in a society, in other words, the less valid are explanations derived from individual psychology or, as Reicher (2001) puts it: ‘...the larger the problem of racism, the smaller the relevance of individual accounts’ (p. 283).

Another related criticism is that the general prevalence of instances and expressions of prejudice appear to shift over time in many cases, waxing and waning in tandem with political, economic and historical changes undergone by a society (Billig, 1976). For instance, there is evidence to suggest that rises in manifestations of inter-group hostility may coincide with rises in poverty levels and economic downturn in many cases (Billig, 1978). While at a more immediate local level, specific social contexts have also been shown to reduce or increase prejudiced patterns of thought; Vollenbergh (1991) found reliable decreases in reported Authoritarianism in a two year longitudinal study of 900 adolescents in

the Netherlands over five delineated age categories. Also a large amount of work relating to the increasingly nuanced contact hypothesis (Allport, 1952. See Dixon, Durrheim & Tredoux, 2005 for an up-to-date appraisal) demonstrates that contextual factors such as various types of inter-group contact and interaction can in some cases have an impact on reducing prejudice (see Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006, 2008 for meta-analytical reviews of contact research). In the short term, our previously cited study of psychology students by Pettijohn and Walzer (2008) highlights how more immediate contextual factors might also impact on prejudice reduction.

As we have seen, many attitudes and stereotypes are defined and maintained by interaction with others and the prevailing culture. In this way, any claimed internal orientation may over time become subject to external forces and shifting social norms concerning what is desirable or acceptable in a context. Over the long term, prolonged exposure to different ways of thinking may have an impact, if not on an immediate personal level, then on the nature and transmission of group norms across a population or from one generation to the next.<sup>4</sup> If both RWA and SDO reflected only deep-seated underlying personality traits across members of society, these shifts would perhaps not be so readily observable.

Duckitt (2001, 2005) suggests that a more constructive way of viewing such individual difference aspects of prejudice as RWA and SDO is as measures of beliefs or attitudes held by individuals, groups and communities. These social ideologies, he claims, reflect both the influence of socialisation and personality, and should be relatively stable at an individual level; yet they are also highly influenced by social situation (Duckitt, 2001). Worldviews emphasising conformity and the dangers of instability and threatening change should

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<sup>4</sup> Whether these hypothesised changes might represent shifts away from or movement towards more prejudiced thinking in a community is another matter.

therefore increase the likelihood of heightened RWA, while those propounding the legitimacy of social hierarchies, dominance and competition should similarly affect SDO (Duckitt, 2005; Duckitt, Wagner, du Plessis & Birum, 2003). In this way, both concepts may be regarded as patterns of socially transmitted and shared thoughts about the general nature of the world, relating specifically to the status and relationships of social groups within it.

History indicates there are those who are more disposed to extremes of prejudice and hostility against selective groups and their members, whatever the proposed aetiology of this orientation, but that in general these appear to reflect only a comparative minority (a Heinrich Himmler, for instance, or more ineffectual British examples of far-right thought such as Oswald Mosley or BNP leader Nick Griffin). As Billig notes in his 1978 study of National Front members, attempted individual psychology explanations may work to some extent if dealing with very small elements of extremists or fringe populations, but they are limited in the study of widespread manifestations of prejudice and hostility.

Clearly there are also sections of society more likely to err towards a blanket intolerance of others, conceivably through anxious insecurity around the maintenance of a prevailing social order (RWA) or a sense of rightful superiority and dominance for certain groups (SDO). One only has to peruse the comment boards of a newspaper such as the Daily Mail in Britain to find evidence of this (<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/home/index.html>). Whether this particular demographic reflects the influence of a mutual set of ingrained personality characteristics or the perpetuation of certain socially transmitted and shared norms and understandings, however, remains open to debate.

### **3.5 The current research and individual differences**

In line with its broadly critical realist stance (Sayer, 2000), this project adopts the position that widespread expressions of hostility towards an out-group, when displayed across a general sample within a specific context defined by prior manifestations of inter-group conflict, are more likely the result of social influences and shared frames of understanding than any inherent ‘personality’ characteristics shared by individuals within the geographically defined cohort.

The focus therefore will be on community-wide expressions of prejudice, inter-group hostility and conflict, through accessing a sample population within a context marked by the previous occurrence of such phenomena. Unlike Billig’s (1978) study of the far-right National Front party members in England, it is intended and expected that few if any respondents within this current sample could legitimately be described as either highly extremist or especially political in orientation, but rather a regular group of people expressing a range of lay-understandings about how they perceive problematic inter-group relations. This is not to dismiss the concept of individual differences out-of-hand, but instead to analyse these only as heterogeneous instances of how socially transmitted ideas and shared understandings can differ across respondents within a specific context. As a consequence, any observed variation between overtly hostile and lesser/non-hostile individuals within the cohort in their acceptance or rejection of negatively prejudiced conceptions of the out-group and group interactions will be evaluated.

As stated, the phase one qualitative study will concentrate partly on how overtly hostile and lesser/non-hostile respondents differentially construct, interpret and evaluate inter-group

relations, in-group and out-group identities, and perceived causal factors in the generation of overt conflict and hostility between the two ethnic groups. Alongside this and the project's primary aim of identifying a range of core components considered influential by respondents to this particular instance of inter-group hostility, a third research aim is to also assess identified components in terms of whether they can be said to offer support for or be meaningfully interpreted in relation to a number of key theoretical perspectives on prejudice research. Therefore, if respondent formulations can be seen as compatible with RWA-type constructs such as rigorous conventionalism, exaggerated submission to authority or perceptions of authoritarian sanction for out-group directed negativity, this will then be duly acknowledged and discussed. Likewise, any pronouncements concerning the perceived legitimacy of social hierarchies and a need to maintain the stability of in-group/individual status within these will be referred back to the appropriate SDO concepts. If, however, respondent accounts cannot be justifiably interpreted in terms of these theoretical propositions this will also be discussed accordingly.

Phase two will then quantitatively examine more general levels of expressed prejudice and hostility across a larger sample from the same community, particularly relating to how any discrepancies between those reporting high and low levels of aversion, dislike or willingness to engage in negative activities against the out-group manifest themselves. Individual differences in this case will therefore be incorporated only as those between respondents rated high and low on measures of inter-group hostility, and the potentially different componential dynamic of factors rated as importantly influential by the two elements. A range of perceived factors, identified at phase one, will be assessed in terms of their relative importance (to respondents) as perceived contributory factors in causing inter-group hostility. Any patterns in the presence, strength and order of importance of these will be statistically

compared between low and high hostility groups, especially how these elements are relatively rated as causal explanations used to legitimise or justify hostility towards the out-group.

Running through both the previous chapters on cognitive and individual difference approaches to prejudice is the thread of shared understanding, the idea that beliefs and norms can be communally held and transmitted, both by and about the various 'in' and 'out' groups in a given society. This notion of how common perspectives help to shape the world people inhabit also informs another perspective.

## Chapter 4: Group-Based Approaches to Inter-Group Hostility

Social perception is intrinsically linked to the group experience. Living amongst and interacting with others - be this family and peers, or members of the myriad other social classifications people ascribe to - is integral to our understanding of the world. In the study of prejudice we have seen that negative attitudes and hostility are usually shared by and about large-scale social groupings; that prejudice is frequently directed at others simply *because* of their perceived membership of such groups; and that perceived relationships between groups often determine how prejudiced their individual members are against each other (Reynolds & Turner, 2001). Socially defined groupings play a huge part in how we view others and how we, in turn, are viewed by them – they shape the perceptions and judgements that arise from this (Hogg, 2003). Social groupings also influence how we define ourselves.

### 4.1 Social Identity Theory (SIT)

Prominent amongst contemporary perspectives on inter-group behaviour, Tajfel & Turner's (1986) Social Identity Theory describes how perceived group memberships influence the way individuals define and position themselves in society and in relation to others. It also seeks to explain how bias can arise in such interactions. Social identity in this case refers to facets of an individual's self-image that are derived from the social categories to which they are regarded as belonging (Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

The theory grew out of earlier work by Tajfel<sup>5</sup> and colleagues (Tajfel, Flament, Billig &

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<sup>5</sup> Henri Tajfel's personal history was inspirational in a most literal sense. Born in Poland of Jewish heritage, Hersz Mordche studied at the Sorbonne before being called up by the French army when WWII broke out. Subsequently captured by the Nazis he survived as a prisoner of war under his newly assumed name and national identity. Most of his immediate family and all but a few acquaintances did not survive the war.

Bundy, 1971) into what minimal conditions might be necessary to generate bias between groups of individuals. These influential studies employed trivial criteria to allocate schoolboys into one group or another (preference for either a Klee or Kandinsky painting they had been shown in one study, or whether they were supposedly under or over estimators on a dot counting task in another) in order to subsequently test for the presence of inter-group bias or discrimination (Reynolds & Turner, 2001). The arbitrary nature of these group memberships, however, added to the fact that participants shared no prior interaction, social history, nor were even aware who else was in their group, was not sufficient to prevent them from consistently favouring in-group members on a series of resource allocation tasks. In this way Tajfel et al. (1971) demonstrated that mere perception of belonging, no matter how trivially or randomly assigned, can influence social interaction through favouring one's own group while discriminating against perceived out-groups.

An enormous amount has been written, and innumerable studies conducted over the decades since these initial experiments and the subsequent formulation of SIT, both to investigate the processes involved and to propose and refine various interpretations of Social Identity Theory itself (see Brewer & Brown, 1998; Hewstone, Rubin & Willis, 2002). For the purposes of this research it will be necessary only to cover some of the key relevant points.

Social Identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) suggests that a sense of belonging alone can be enough to introduce a perception of personal investment when it comes to consideration of group outcomes, even if a person is not directly impacted, as identification with the group or category becomes part of the individual's sense of self (Deux, 1996). In this way, individual

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Following his experiences and a later move to England, Tajfel began to study the psychology of groups, identity, bias and conflict (Turner, 1996).

concerns - about personal status, fortunes and goals - become subsumed by those of the group (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). A further contention of SIT is that people in general have a need to acquire and maintain a positive self-image. A combination of these ingredients then drives them to seek positive distinction for the in-groups they regard themselves as belonging to, particularly in relation to comparable or proximal out-groups (Brown & Zagefka, 2005). If outcomes on these comparisons are seen to reflect negatively on the in-group, however, or if threats to in-group status and self-image are perceived, then problems may arise. Attempts to re-establish or maintain positive in-group differentiation can consequently run the gamut from mild in-group favouritism, right up to overt derogation and hostility directed towards out-groups - where likelihood of a particular response is thought to represent a function of both individual levels of in-group identification and the perceived strength and nature of any threat (Brewer, 1999).

Social Identity, then, involves a process of: a) *Categorisation* – recognition of a category's existence and acceptance of one's own membership within this; b) *Identification* – feeling that one belongs, is part of and identifies with the given category; and c) *Comparison* – with other groups in order to derive positive differentiation for the in-group and its members in order to maintain a satisfactory identity (Whitely & Kite, 2006). SIT has traditionally viewed a person's sense of self as operating along a continuum, with *personal identity* (the unique combination of individual experience, motivation and goals) at one end, and *group identity* (the sense of belonging to or representing a particular category) at the other, with a host of possible combinations along the continuum (Hogg & Abrams, 1999).

This is somewhat complicated by the nature of human society, where any sense of identity must inevitably be influenced by the range of social groupings and distinctions relevant to an

individual<sup>6</sup>. A personal example might best illustrate this: kicking off an exercise undertaken by this author as part of a university access course module on diversity, a tutor once self-identified as being a ‘white’, ‘female’, ‘British’, ‘academic’ ‘sociologist’, ‘single-parent’, ‘anarchist’, ‘feminist’, ‘white-witch’ – an unusual (though possibly not unique in the circumstances) mix of self-defining categorical elements that provides some flavour of how SIT concepts can operate. To whatever degree social identity is multiply constituted, it also follows that not all contributory elements can maintain simultaneous priority (Ellemers, Sears & Doosje, 2002). In other words, different aspects of one’s social identity are more likely to take precedence depending upon the situation; with those aspects that seem to make sense or have greater significance and meaning in a given context becoming more active or *salient* (Doosje & Ellemers, 1997). To return to the example above, different parts of our tutor’s identity will be salient to her depending upon whether she is teaching sociology undergraduates or conducting Wiccan ceremonies in a forest.

## 4.2 Self-Categorisation Theory (SCT)

Self-Categorisation Theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes Reicher & Wetherell, 1987; Turner & Oakes, 1997) sets out to further address how these protean aspects self-definition influence people. Where SIT (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) introduced the concept of group membership shaping individual identity, SCT adds to this the notion that identities may be multiple, fluid and contextually dependent. In its broadest sense this is conceived as a hierarchy of relative inclusiveness, with *Superordinate* (larger, all-embracing classifications), *Intermediate* (smaller group categories) and *Subordinate* (more specific identities) all representing levels

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<sup>6</sup> It has been persuasively argued (e.g., Augustinos, Walker & Donaghue, 2006) that the combination of these socially defined, cross-hatching category elements may in fact be wholly responsible for an individual’s personal identity, and that any sense of self is totally comprised from the interplay between them. Attempting to either confirm or disconfirm assertions like this are beyond the scope of this current project.

of available self-definition in our dealings with others (Augustinos & Reynolds, 2001). Interactions between the same individuals therefore have the potential to take on different forms, dependent on the context (Turner & Reynolds, 2001). To use a rather hackneyed analogy, two otherwise similar and congenial individuals might find themselves at odds if the dimension of comparative identity is support of opposing football clubs,<sup>7</sup> yet on a broader level regard each other as compatriots in their support for a national team. Or, indeed, in identification as fellow nationals.

Within these comparative levels, the salience of a particular identity also depends on how a situation is interpreted (Kawakami & Dion, 1995). The readiness of an individual to make certain categorisations in the first-place is thought to play its part here; often dependent upon personal motivations and beliefs about the social world, along with how well a categorisation or identity fits with self-perception (Reynolds & Turner, 2001). Another factor is the level of difference/similarity perceived between the self and others. Perceived similarity increases the likelihood that an individual will self-categorise accordingly, whereas perceived difference has the opposite effect, increasing the chances of distinctions being drawn between ‘them’ and ‘me/us’ along the relevant dimension (Augustinos, Walker & Donaghue, 2006). Once self-categorised in this way, a person is more likely to maintain a positive perception of the salient category and stick with the choice, as to do otherwise is to admit making a mistake (Forsythe, 2008).

Turner’s (1985) meta-contrast ratio implies that as a self-categorisation becomes more salient, differences between the self and non-category members are perceived as more

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<sup>7</sup> See Levine, Prosser, Evans & Reicher (2005), for an interesting football-related demonstration of how identification and perceived club partisanship can influence the likelihood of helping behaviours.

pronounced, and that the extent to which an individual considers themselves a representative of a salient category grows in relation to perceived in-group similarity/out-group dissimilarity (Hogg, 2000). Salience of category membership has been found to increase in terms of gender (Swan & Wyer, 1997) and ethnicity (McGuire & McGuire, 1988), when differences are highlighted by having a minority of female or ethnic group members interact with a relevant majority cohort.

Alongside more noticeable surface differences such as these, perceptions of similarity can influence self-categorisation and salience across a number of other dimensions. People tend to identify with others/categories which they perceive as sharing common beliefs and values, for instance (Reynolds & Turner, 2001). Personal perspectives are more likely to be deemed legitimate if they are acknowledged and shared by like-minded others, therefore individuals tend to gravitate towards group identifications that provide reinforcement and validation of this through consensus. Abrams & Hogg (2008) propose that acceptance and identification with these agreed collective understandings perform a function of *subjective uncertainty reduction* for people, thereby reducing individual doubt through a communal reciprocity. A related preference is also claimed for identification with groups or categories that offer clear standpoints and normative proscriptions about how the world and society works (Hogg, 2000). This, however, is a double-edged sword, as identification with a group or category on the grounds of perceived compatibility or shared perspective frequently entails a wholesale acceptance of any other normative baggage that comes along with it (Augustinos et al., 2006). Members are then inclined to adopt *self-stereotypes* which conform to group expectations regarding beliefs, values and behaviours - with one outcome being the perpetuation of often unexamined, stereotypical interpretations and evaluations of events, situations and groups/others.

Group identities work to mutually reinforce beliefs and explanations about phenomena through social influence (Turner, 1991). In-group members become a source of information to each other, causing shared and often unquestioned perspectives to become *de rigueur*, thus further validating and reinforcing the perceived legitimacy of an in-group position (Turner, 1996). Conforming to in-group self-stereotypes and the consequent adoption of generic beliefs and perspectives also encourages individual members to feel they are representative of a group or category, thus enhancing perceptions of interchangeability and solidarity with other in-group members (Turner, 1998). As a categorical identity becomes more salient, this process of *depersonalisation* means not only that self-definition is subsumed under collective group identity, but also that the concerns of the group acquire greater importance, until collective goals and motives take precedence over – or actually become – those of the individual (Oakes, Haslam & Turner, 1994). Once this internalisation of group membership has occurred, any subsequent challenges perceived to a group are then liable to be taken personally (Reynolds & Turner, 2001).

Self-Categorisation Theory offers a somewhat cognitive explanation of how categorisation and related processes might actually operate (Brewer, 1999). Some of the above points, however, also hint at how individual alignment with a group identity might provide motivation for discontent and bias to arise in some inter-group contexts. According to Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), a driving force for in-group identification is to achieve and maintain a positive self-image, and derive a sense of esteem through group identification. At an individual level this provides a sense of belonging, value and distinctiveness for an individual based on shared group membership. At a group level it translates into seeking positive differentiation and identity at a collective level through

comparison with other relevant groups (Brewer, 2001; Ellemers, 1993). It is when negativity impinges upon this that inter-group relations have the potential to become problematic.

### **4.3 Social identity, self-categorisation and inter-group hostility**

Individual motivations and goals can become inexorably bound up in those of the group (Tajfel, 1981). Once this has occurred, a number of potential factors can then influence how in-group members view their relationships and interactions with the various other out-groups in society. It has been noted that greater conformity to in-group norms can lead to greater rigidity and intolerance in regard to alternative perspectives and those who hold them (Oakes & Haslam, 2001). These potential divagations from the in-group consensus and its values may then be regarded as a challenge (Hogg & Abrams, 1999). Mummendey and Wenzel (1999) observe that intolerance is more likely if an in-group regard their general set of norms as applying across society, from which an out-group then appears to diverge. In this case the out-group may come to be regarded as morally or culturally inferior or threatening, which can provide justification or legitimization for bias, or negative attitudes towards the out-group in order to bolster existing perceptions of in-group status (Sidanius, 1993). A compounding effect is experienced if out-group non-compliance is perceived as a rejection of in-group culture and values, thus implying they may be regarded as inferior in some way by the out-group (Stangor & Jost, 1997). These challenges to in-group status act as threats to the collective and individual positive identity of its members - a root cause of inter-group bias and prejudice as conceptualised by SIT (Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Social Identity Theory states that, in order to acquire and maintain a satisfactory self-image, groups and their members evaluate themselves in comparison with others and groups in society (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). If threats to positive in-group identity are perceived in these,

then problems are more likely to emerge (Mummendey, Klink & Brown, 2001). From here a number of strategies have been proposed by which members can attempt to protect or re-establish a satisfactory self-perception, beginning with positive in-group bias – an overly favourable preference for and estimation of the characteristics and qualities of one's own group (Aberson, Healy & Romero, 2000). However, while SIT has been quite successful at establishing the processes by which in-group favouritism can operate, a comprehensive account of how it might translate into out-group derogation and hostility is not so simple or straightforward (Rubin & Hewstone, 1998).

Brewer (1999), in proposing an Optimal Distinctiveness model of social identity,<sup>8</sup> points out that in-group bias can exist independently of out-group prejudice, and that the path between the two may therefore be both cumulative and contingent upon other factors. Dependent upon increases in perceived strength of threat, she suggests that maintenance strategies can move from in-group bias via progressive stages of *indifference to out-groups*, through *concern for in-group relative position* and *perception of out-group benefit at expense of in-group*, up to *positive out-group evaluation as threat to in-group*. In the latter cases, one consequence is that in-group bias may be replaced by out-group derogation and even overt hostility as a way of maintaining status and self conception (Brewer, 2000). This may be especially potent if the situation is compounded by elicitation of commonly aroused emotional responses from the in-group along the way, such as anxiety, fear, disgust and anger (Brewer, 2001).

A number of factors, both individual and contextual, have been cited as working to influence

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<sup>8</sup> Brewer outlines two, separate, initial motives for identification: a) a need for inclusion and assimilation into larger social collectives; b) a need for personal differentiation by positively distinguishing the self from others when immersed in a large undefined social group. Optimal balance is then sought between the two (Brewer, 1999; 2000; 2001).

negative inter-group relations in this direction; a number of conditions which are thought necessary to set social identity processes on the road to negative inter-group bias or disharmony in the first place, thereby increasing the likelihood of conflict.

Rather than mere awareness of a category membership, it is believed that the strength of in-group identification – the degree to which it has meaning, value and significance for an individual, the level of any perceived personal investment – is key to this process (Brewer & Brown, 1998; Rubin & Hewstone, 1998). Out-group derogation has been observed as more likely when identification with the in-group is strong (Branscombe & Wann, 1994) and bias has been more associated with strong in-group identification (Perreault & Bouris, 1994). High identifiers have also been shown more likely to respond negatively to threat, whereas low identifiers are inclined to maintain positive identity under threat (Doosje & Ellemers, 1997). Greater expression of aggression has been linked to perceptions of conflict in high identifiers in a real life conflict situation (Struch & Shwartz, 1989). Expressions of negative out-group (French) stereotypes have also been found to be stronger for (English) in-group members high in national identification (Brown, Maras, Masser, Vivian & Hewstone, 2001).

The relationship between levels of identification and out-group hostility is not quite so simple or direct, however, but subject to further caveats. The identity in question must first be salient to an individual within the comparative context, and the dimension of comparison must also be important to positive in-group identity (Oakes, Haslam & Turner, 1994). If inter-group comparisons are highly salient to an individual's personal identity in general, or become so in a particular situation, or if individual perceptions err towards the highly essentialist to begin with, then stronger identification can then work to enhance or amplify group concerns in the individual (Brown, 2010).

On a socio-contextual level, the range of potential pre-requisites and influences is even broader. Easily distinguishable and comparable groups co-existing in segmented and hierarchical societies are more prone to inter-group problems (Brown & Zagefka, 2005). And the situation itself must allow comparison between the in-group and relevantly similar or proximal out-groups along a mutually valued dimension - particularly in a case where outcomes can be regarded as a zero/sum (one group's loss is another's gain) (Esses, Dovidio, Jackson & Armstrong, 2001). Negative outcomes are more likely where groups and members perceive social competition in this way (Reynolds & Turner, 2001). Specific social climates can also come into play, by helping to reinforce perceptions of competition or incompatibility in group goals (Augustinos et al., 2006). Economic factors, particularly in times of recession, when finance, employment or social provision may be more limited can work to heighten perceptions of competition between groups for these potentially limited resources (Coenders, Lubbers, Scheepers & Verkuyten, 2008). This has an added impact in geographic areas or populations which are historically or comparatively deprived to begin with. Quillian (1995), for instance, found that levels of prejudice on inner-city housing estates were higher when in conjunction with perceptions of faltering economic growth. Similarly, political initiatives – such as immigration policy or equal opportunities directives - can additionally work to exacerbate tensions, especially if these are interpreted as favouring one group over another (Staub, 1989). Hewitt (1996) reports greater occurrence rates of ethnic prejudice and harassment behaviour where an ethnic minority were perceived as receiving favourable treatment.

In most cases, too, relationships of this kind do not spring unbidden from the aether, but are a product of longer term social situations (Billig, 1979). Groups in conflict often tend to share socio-historical contexts, where past situations and events have helped to shape current

animosity. Slavery, for instance (to somewhat glibly cite a rather extreme example). Hunter, Stringer and Watson (1991) found that respondents' explanations and interpretation of current events was highly coloured by prior group relations and partisanship in a study conducted on Catholic and Protestant groups in Northern Ireland. Often these shaping forces, in the form of received wisdom, common views and explanations, are transmitted vertically down to younger members of a community throughout their development, thus perpetuating any commonly negative (or positive) interpretations of the social environment and group interactions (Bandura, 1977). Those who grow up surrounded by norms incorporating negative out-group stereotypes or interpretative perceptions of inter-group conflict are, therefore, more likely to take such things for granted, and subsequently evince compatible perspectives (Brown, 1995).

This importance of consensus in group interactions has already been established in the current work, so it is perhaps unsurprising that here again they have a role to play. Even within societies where more general proscriptions against prejudice and inequality are prevalent, specific geographic or demographic communities may still embrace perspectives which allow or even facilitate bias and hostility against others (Terry, Hogg & Blackwood, 2001; Mummendey & Otten, 1998). Ray and Smith (2004) assert that much racial offending is grounded in the wider social and cultural contexts from which it appears. Group ideologies such as these can often perpetuate ways of thinking which also help to justify or legitimize existing inequalities and divisions between groups (Billig, 1978; Reicher, 2001), therefore working to normalise unequal treatment of others and out-group prejudice (Crandall & Eshleman, 2003; Esses & Hodson, 2006). In some contexts or groups, prejudice may even *be* the norm (Mackie, Mairer & Smith, 2009). It has been found, for example, to be more likely to exist within groups or communities whose shared perceptions and values conform to

negative interpretations of inter-group relations (Biernat, Vescio, Theno & Crandall, 1996). Sibbitt (1993) also indicates that individuals involved in overtly prejudiced activity often report feeling a lack of community censure for their activities. Indeed, community wide acceptance of prejudice and its expression can operate to some extent as a legitimising force on individual manifestations. These elements of group-level intolerance and collective frameworks for negatively interpreting group interactions often represent working models by which group members then construct the inter-group relationship for themselves, helping to further facilitate and reproduce in-group bias and hostility (Dixon & Reicher, 1997)

Some of these points imply a more instrumental aspect to prejudice in terms of attempts to maintain group status. Tajfel (1978) observes that all societies contain differences of both status and power between the groups who comprise them. Groups, or even whole societies, which regard themselves as representative of a dominant or majority culture, may also perceive themselves as superior or of higher status in relation to other, minority or less socially conventional groups (Ellemers, 1993). In such cases prejudice can act as an expressive strategy used to help protect the status quo, through justification or confirmation of a prevailing social order or hierarchy (Scheepers, Spears, Doosje & Manstead, 2006). Brewer (1999) suggests that if dominant moral or social orders are seen as absolute rather than relative, and that out-groups are perceived as not subscribing rigidly to these, then this is when in-group indifference can turn into denigration and contempt.

In this way dominant social forms of social understanding may serve to facilitate or 'justify' prejudice (Mummendey & Otten, 1998). Pursuit of dominant in-group goals often aspires to the maintenance of stability within a current social hierarchy. If this is seen to be questioned or challenged on its legitimacy, overall or in terms of existing group status differences within,

then increased efforts to confirm and justify the validity of the existing order may be undertaken (Mullin & Hogg, 1998). Also, if the higher status group believes a social hierarchy is legitimate but potentially unstable, they may feel then threatened by changes to out-group status or social advancement (Reynolds & Turner, 2001). A meta-analysis conducted by Bettencourt, Charlton, Dair and Hume (2001) identified higher levels of prejudice more generally with majority and higher status groups. One way these kinds of beliefs can work is by granting explanations which allow or 'justify' continuing social inequalities or out-group disadvantage common currency (Lerner, 1980). Perceptions which therefore make out-groups accountable for their own misfortune work to shift any blame or recrimination from the social system or its dominant representatives. Potter and Wetherell (1987) found that making an out-group accountable for its own social and economic disadvantage or relatively low status in society was a discursive strategy used by in-group members to make prejudiced statements appear more legitimate; in this case by blaming degraded out-group status on their own failure or inability to successfully adapt or conform to a 'superior' dominant culture.

A comprehensive treatment of each and every nuance, qualification and caveat relating to the emergence of inter-group hostility from SIT/SCT processes is beyond the scope of this project, but the foregoing passages provide a rough summary of elements that are pertinent to the research at hand. Some of these will be covered more thoroughly in a subsequent section (on theories dealing more specifically with direct comparison, competition and threat in inter-group contexts). But hopefully a flavour has been provided of certain (un)favourable or necessary conditions from which inter-group hostility can emerge.

To summarise: Individual self-image is in part derived from category memberships (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Identification here contributes to an individual's sense of self (Deux, 1996). This introduces a personal element to group concerns, which often involve comparisons with distinguishable but relevantly similar or proximal out-groups (Brown & Zagefka, 2005). Negative in-group outcomes perceived in these *may* be regarded as threats to status or self image, thus *potentially* leading to hostility directed towards out-groups, *depending* upon the perceived strength of any threat (Brewer, 1999). For *some*, certain identities are more salient than others, and individual levels of personal identification with a salient category *can* influence responses to perceived threat (Reynolds & Turner, 2001). *If* an identification is both strong, salient and the dimension of comparison considered important, then high identifiers are more *likely* to respond negatively (Oakes, Haslam & Turner, 1994). People are also liable to identify with categories which share compatible characteristics and beliefs (Hogg, 2000). Group members *may* then be inclined to adopt self-stereotypes which further conform to group norms and expectations, often including unquestioned stereotypical interpretations and assessments of events and others (Turner, 1996). Conformity here *can* lead to greater rigidity and intolerance in regard to alternative perspectives and those who embody them, particularly *if* in-group culture is regarded as more legitimate and generally applicable across society. Any out-group divergence *might* then be seen as a challenge to positive in-group identity (Hogg & Abrams, 1999). Some groups or communities *may* actually embrace norms that facilitate prejudice (Mummendey & Otten, 2004). Such ideologies help to justify and perpetuate existing divisions between groups, potentially legitimising hostility (Billig, 1978). Sometimes this *can* also be a means of trying to justify existing status inequalities and a prevailing social order (Scheepers et al., 2006). Wider social concerns, such as economic or political factors *may* further influence inter-group relations, *if* they are seen as having a negative impact on in-group status, or heighten perceptions of social competition between

groups - especially in communities where deprivation has been historically more prevalent (Coenders et al., 2008). For groups who exist in these shared socio-historical contexts, the template of prior events can help to shape the present. If previous group encounters have been marked by competition, distrust, disharmony and conflict, then common interpretations of current interactions are *likely* to reflect this, thus helping to perpetuate negativity (Billig, 1995). These socially shared perspectives *can* then be transmitted horizontally and vertically through the community, helping to reinforce normative and stereotypical views and explanations of both the out-group and the social landscape in general.

From this it would appear that out-group hostility in relation to SIT/SCT processes is contingent upon a good number of variable and contextually dependent influences (hence the proliferation of grating *italics* above). How, then, does this impact upon the utility of this approach?

#### **4.4 Benefits and limitations of Social Identity approaches to Inter-group hostility**

As an explanation of how group identification processes can influence individuals, particularly to favour their own group, SIT and SCT have had enormous influence on the way inter-group prejudice and hostility have been studied - at least on this side of the Atlantic (Zick, Pettigrew & Wagner, 2008). This is not, however, without its limitations. The interpretation outlined above represents the general orientation of this author to these theoretical approaches, and focuses on issues specifically relevant to the current research. A detailed analysis of these, in terms of more intricate epistemological and methodological issues around the conceptualisation and measurement of inter-group hostility will be provided in a later section, and serve to develop and justify the rationale employed herein (subsequent

to essential coverage of other perspectives on inter-group hostility, including discursive approaches and theories of comparison, conflict and threat). For now, a brief summary will hopefully suffice, followed by how specific social identity related questions will be addressed in the current research.

First, it has been noted that self-categorisation and identification processes alone cannot provide a satisfactory explanation for more overtly negative manifestations of inter-group behaviour, such as open conflict and hostility (Brown, 2010). For these to emerge, a whole range of contingent and contextually variable factors have been proposed. What this means is that it then becomes increasingly difficult to sustain a view of inter-group hostility where each and all manifestations of the phenomena can be understood in terms of clear, readily generalisable – let alone universal – processes, situational factors and influences (Billig, 2002). In terms of traditionally positivistic approaches to psychology, this potential lack of wider applicability and parsimony represents a serious demerit. Yet a quick snapshot of selected conflicts around the globe indicates that the dynamics and manifestations of reciprocal disharmony between members of different (minority and majority, indigenous and non-indigenous, dominant and subordinate) groups rest on a non-uniform bed of various macro and micro-social, historical, temporal and contextual influences and subjective, communal or societal norms. It is therefore advisable to exercise caution when attempting to generalise findings from a situation/context under direct study to other instances of inter-group hostility.

A second point relates to the way social categorisation and identity have mostly been studied. A majority of research on these topics has been conducted experimentally under laboratory conditions (Reicher, 1996). This has produced a huge amount of invaluable information and

advanced our knowledge of inter-group processes across a number of domains. Yet the old problem of ecological validity remains. True to a more traditional realist scientific paradigm, the preferred method of study has been to isolate various aspects and processes involved in these phenomena and attempt to replicate and analyse them in a controlled environment (Billig, 2002). Findings are then presumed to be generalisable across huge swathes of a global population. The danger in such a fragmentary and artificial approach is that it may underplay, or even ignore, the social elements, complexity and amorphous properties of genuine real-world group interactions. Tajfel (1981) himself emphasised both the limitations of performing 'experiments in a vacuum', and the importance of considering social context in the study of group relations. This is especially applicable to inter-group conflict, where we have already seen the importance of a plethora of cross-cutting potentially influential social factors on prejudice and hostility (Stephan, 2008). To divorce these inter-group dynamics from their wider social context and focus only upon certain narrowly measured and controlled aspects runs the risk of missing out on the actuality of authentic group relations (Dixon & Durrheim, 2003). A strength of SIT/SCT approaches is their introduction of and emphasis on more fluid, flexible and socially constructed and influenced interpretations of group interactions and conflict; prejudice research in general would therefore be negligent in not adequately acknowledging such.

A related limitation of the standard experimental model applying to *any* study of inter-group hostility concerns another facet of how it is frequently operationalised. A mainstay of traditional experimental research has been to utilise random sampling of a general cohort in the lab setting. Yet we have seen that manifestations and expressions of overt negative prejudice and inter-group hostility are often focussed in specific contexts and populations (Esses, Jackson, Dovidio & Hudson, 2005). Therefore, in order to gain a fuller appreciation

of inter-group hostility a focus may also be required on more narrowly defined and appropriate samples (Shmader & Stone, 2008). No more is this evident than in the over-reliance on student participation in research (Fazio et al., 2003). Given the importance frequently attributed to contextual or shared group norms and perspectives in the expression of prejudice and hostility, it seems mildly perverse to rely for its study on participants from an environment where there are clear prescriptive norms heavily prohibiting the expression of any prejudice whatsoever<sup>9</sup>.

#### **4.5 Social Identity approaches and the current research**

Social Identity and Self-Categorisation perspectives on the interpretation of inter-group hostility factors will form a main theoretical underpinning for the bulk of this current project. The different ways in which these processes impact upon perceptions of problematic influences on the inter-group relationship will be frequently employed when discussing study results in relation to research aims – particularly in terms of assessing the identified componential themes as to whether they can be said to offer support for or be meaningfully interpreted in relation to the range of theoretical approaches. It is important, then, to address some of the points just raised in relation to limitations in the way such processes have been largely studied in the past. To attempt this, the current study will utilise a pre-existing real world situation marked by prior and ongoing manifestations of inter-group hostility rather than lab based procedures. What this loses in terms of controlled and highly specific scientifically testable cause and effect hypotheses, it will gain in the exploration of naturalistic research questions into the deeper meaning and nuance of lived experience in

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<sup>9</sup> Conversely, there are fairly obvious problems, both logistic and ethical, in either bringing already overtly hostile or conflicted group members into realistic contact in laboratory setting, or attempting to generate genuinely overt hostility and conflict between random members of the public. These difficulties are not the province of the current research, so will be left for others to try and surmount.

regard to identity issues and inter-group conflict. The inter-group context in question displays a number of characteristics relevant to the study of hostility from a social identity perspective – particularly the juxtaposition of easily distinguishable, socially and proximally comparable groups who share a history of disharmony. Ethnically, respondents were taken from a target in-group most likely to self-identify as white, British or (in some cases) English. It was expected that these particular facets of identity, alongside personal membership of a local community comprised of similar individuals, would be highly salient in the context of juxtaposition with the relevantly comparable South Asian out-group. It should also be noted here that the current project, in line with the foregoing discussion of issues around contextually dependent aspects of inter-group hostility from a social identity perspective, acknowledges the limitations this consequently places on any proposed generalisability of findings from the specific to a global context. This will be discussed further in subsequent chapters.

Phase one of the current project centred around semi-structured, open ended interviews conducted with members of the in-group community. The aim was to encourage discussion and exploration of how these respondents construct, interpret and evaluate inter-group relations, in-group and out-group identities and any problematic differences between the two. Participants were asked to provide their own description of the inter-group relationship and to offer explanations as to why they thought problems arise between the two communities, including ways in which they perceived the out-group as potentially threatening across a number of dimensions (including those relating to in-group identity, self-evaluation and esteem). This was pursued with the intent of establishing if respondents perceived or interpreted these as underlying contributory factors (components) to inter-group hostility. Potential differences were also explored between how problematic inter-group relations are

constructed in overtly hostile and lesser/non-hostile accounts. As part of the analysis specific to social identity processes, respondents were also evaluated on the extent to which they regarded and experienced perceived threats, concerns and outcomes in relation to local white British in-group on a personal level, or felt their own explanations/interpretations of inter-group phenomena were representative of and consensually reciprocated by fellow in-group members. These facets of Social Identity processes have been proposed as factors of contribution to the facilitation or justification of intolerance and hostility towards out-groups where problematic relations are perceived to exist. For phase two, a number of identified components were related to perceptions of potential threat to in-group self-evaluation and esteem. Analysis then attempted to gauge how relatively important these were considered to be as perceived factors of influence in participant ratings of inter-group hostility, more specifically exploring any differences observed in relative component ratings between those who reported high levels of aversion, dislike or willingness to engage in negative activities towards the out-group and those who do not. Measures were also taken of the extent to which respondents considered themselves representative of the local white British in-group, and to which perceived negative outcomes for the in-group related to respondents' personal outcomes.

Social identity approaches to intergroup hostility repeatedly emphasise the importance of perceived threat to in-group self-evaluation and esteem, sometimes relating to the values and traditions, culture and norms often seen as embodiments of this. On their own, however, such threats cannot always be regarded as sufficient to generate more overt forms of intergroup hostility and conflict. Because of this, it may be necessary to consider additional, more direct forms of threat when attempting to evaluate genuinely problematic instances of group interaction. Whilst often relying on a bedrock of identification with an in-group, these can

take the form of perceived threats across more tangible domains. From a social identity perspective we have seen how various types of comparison and perceived competition can operate in the formation of inter-group problems. It is therefore important to take a look at theoretical perspectives which deal more explicitly with this issue.

# **Chapter 5: Comparison, Competition and Inter-Group Hostility**

## **5.1 Realistic Group Conflict**

Perceived threat can have a profound impact upon the way groups and individuals see their relations with others. It can impact upon positive identity or esteem in terms of individual or group self-image, and it can do this in a number of ways. Included amongst these are more direct or physically perceived challenges, potentially emerging through comparisons with and perceived competition between groups for status, for access to resources or fulfilment of group goals and needs.

Realistic Group Conflict theory focuses on the nature and compatibility of group goals and was amply demonstrated by Sherif (1966) in a series of well-known summer camp studies. Here artificial groups were created amongst sets of young boys and subsequent hostility generated between them through creation of opposing interests. This was done by creating a state of negative interdependence between the groups in the form of competitive activities (sports) which granted prizes only to the winners and nothing to the losers. Previously neutral relations were subsequently found to be replaced by mutual hostility and conflict between the groups – in a few instances even where some boys had been friends prior to group allocation. This again shows that when perceptions of group interest overtake the personal, especially if these are seen as mutually incompatible with those of an out-group, then negative outcomes become more likely.

In one sense, realistic group conflict (RGC) can be termed ‘rational’ in that it relates to direct

concerns, such as physical threat and territorial encroachment, or competition for scarce but desired resources (housing or employment for example), thus threatening in-group access to them (Platow & Hunter, 2001). Studies of general populations show that perceived zero-sum (more for the out-group means less for the in-group) competition relationships have been strongly linked to negative attitudes to (immigrant) out-groups, whether the competition is considered a result of the situation or related to a belief in all inter-group relations as being zero-sum (Esses, Dovidio, Jackson & Armstrong, 2001; Esses, Jackson & Armstrong, 1998). Indeed, contexts involving perceptions of in-group 'hosts' and immigrant out-groups are believed to generally heighten perceptions of increased competition for limited resources on the part of in-group members (Brown, 1995). Quillian (1995) found data from the Eurobarometer survey of attitudes indicating that perceptions of economic competition across Europe intensified by country as the number of immigrants increased. A recent British survey (Populus, 2008) also found substantial percentages of statements relating to immigrants putting jobs at risk (19%), making it harder to get a fair wage (29%) and putting pressure on access to social resources such as schools, housing and medical services (82%), evidencing perceptions of inter-group competition across a national sample. These percentages were noticeably higher in working-class respondents.

It should be noted, however, that perceptions of inter-group competition and conflict may also be part shaped by the group expectations and ideological positions previously covered, or even by the influence of outside forces with an interest in social division (Reicher, 1986; Kundnani, 2001). This means that in some instances, regardless of any actual competition (or lack of) directly inherent in the status dynamic or resource allocation of conflicted groups, the *perception* of such a relationship can exist independently as a source of antipathy. Furthermore, perceptions of competition and conflict of interest may often have just as

tangible psychological and behavioural repercussions as any concrete experience of these conditions - especially if these perceptions are incorporated as aspects of personal or group ideologies (Billig, 1976). A nice demonstration of how perceived competition can affect judgement is provided in a study by Esses, Dovidio, Jackson and Armstrong (2001), where less favourable attitudes to an imaginary immigrant population were elicited from participants who had previously read a fictitious news article alluding to job scarcity and the current success of these (imaginary) immigrants in the Canadian job market. For similar reasons conflicts of interest can also occur over perceived competition or threats to less tangible or symbolic resources. As previous sections have indicated, potential challenge or erosion to in-group values, customs and norms are often regarded just as seriously, if not more so, than threats to physical territory and resources (Hewstone, Rubin & Willis 2002; Corenblum & Stephan, 2001). Esses et al (2005) note that cultural worldviews might underlie many perceived conflicts over symbolic resources, as groups disagree over which competing cultural or value systems are more valid and 'correct'. Struch & Shwartz (1989) found evidence linking out-group directed aggression to perceptions of both conflict of interests and value conflicts between religious groups in Israel, particularly in those who expressed higher in-group identification.

## **5.2 Relative Deprivation**

Another way in which comparison and perceptions of competition can negatively influence group relations is found in Relative Deprivation theory (RD) (Dollard, 1939. See Brown, 1995 for an overview). This grew originally from incorporating displacement theory into the frustration-aggression sphere of research (later represented in the work of Berkowitz, 1986), and deals partly with ways in which hardship and frustration born of a lack of power, blocked goals or control over circumstance might find outlet in aggression (Marcus-Newhall,

Pederson, Carlson, & Miller, 2000). It is suggested that under certain circumstances, where sources of frustration may not easily be confronted or even understood (e.g. economic, social or political conditions), subsequent aggression is then directed at targets seen as more vulnerable or easily accessible (Billig, 1976). This victimisation of groups or individuals as expedient 'scapegoats' who are often blamed, vilified or punished in situations where the actual systems, individuals or conditions responsible for hardship are unavailable is a way in which RD can be seen as a potential source of inter-group prejudice and hostility (Brown, 1995). Ray & Smith (2004) provide evidence for increased ethnic scape-goating of this type where concurrent feelings of failure and resentment were evident in the population.

Runciman (1966) further defined the original concepts of RD, with a shift of emphasis away from absolute levels of adversity, status and deprivation onto perceived levels in a relational context. Primarily these take the form of comparisons between expectations and the perception of actual circumstances. This can work at an individual level (Egoistic RD), but of more interest to current research is the concept of group level, Collective RD (originally *Fraternalistic* RD, a mildly ironic term given the theory relates to group inequalities). An investigation by Vanneman & Pettigrew (1972) of attitudes to race riots found higher levels of prejudice were linked to higher levels of collective RD. It is thought that issues of collective deprivation come about where there is a perceived gap between expectations and 'reality' of group fortunes when certain comparisons are made (Dion, 2002). First of these is at a temporal level: how do a group's current fortunes compare to those of the past. Quillian (1995) found that levels of prejudice were higher in conjunction with perceptions of faltering economic growth. The second type of comparison relates to how current in-group fortunes compare with those of the out-group(s). Negative evaluation of comparative in-group fortunes, or sense of disadvantage, can become especially potent if the out-group is also seen

as similar or relevant in a competitive sense (Dion, 2002), or in combination with perceptions of beneficially unfair/unequal treatment for the out-group (Guimond & Dambrun, 2002). Hewitt (1996) reports greater occurrence rates of ethnic prejudice and harassment behaviour where an ethnic minority were perceived as receiving favourable treatment.

In research using data from three European surveys, both collective and individual RD were found primarily amongst working class respondents who felt politically alienated. However, only collective RD correlated proximally with anti-immigrant prejudice, while individual RD came mediated through the group perception (Pettigrew, Christ, Wagner, Meertens, van Dick & Zick, 2008). Perceptions of group level relative deprivation, then, are a powerful ingredient if added to the contextual mix, especially for in-groups at the lower end of the socio-economic spectrum who consider their status and access to various resources as potentially endangered (Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995). This can be further exacerbated if perceptions exist of favourable treatment being granted to the out-group. Perceptions of collectivistic relative deprivation and inter-group competition - where individual interpretations of events and situations come filtered and magnified through common in-group explanations to produce negative evaluations of inter-group comparison or negative interdependence - are therefore forms of threat which can impact heavily on any progression from in-group bias to extreme out-group prejudice across contexts – with the perceived intensity of any threat often being matched by in-group reactions to it (Mummendey, Kessler, Klink & Mielke, 1999; Brewer, 2001). Wagner, Christ and Pettigrew (2008) found relationships between perceived threat and willingness to discriminate against foreigners, while Bergman (2008) asserts that a fundamental cause of anti-Semitism in Europe has been perceived threat to national identity. Similarly, Billiet and DeWhitte (2008) found links between voting for far-right wing political parties and the perception of immigrants as a threat

Attempts have also been made to conceptualise how some of these different contextual threat factors might come together with other elements in manifestations of inter-group hostility, with Stephan and Stephan's (2000) Integrated Threat model of prejudice incorporating four such dimensions. Besides the 'Symbolic' and 'Realistic' threats already touched upon, they also include 'Negative Stereotypes' of the out-group and 'Inter-group Anxiety' in the mix – this last referring to apprehension or discomfort felt about contact with out-group members. In some cases, symbolic threats have been found to most positively correlate with expressions of prejudice, in others it is perceived threat across more concrete, realistic dimensions that appear pertinent, while sometimes the two in combination may be necessary for prejudice to occur. For the most part these work in tandem with both negative stereotypes of the out-group and anxiety about potential inter-group contacts (Stephan et al 2002; 2005). Perceptions of both realistic and symbolic threat were also found in survey data across Europe as linked to anti-immigrant sentiment, particularly in those who reported a lack of positive inter-group contact or friendship (McLaren, 2003).

Another interesting branch of study has explored how emotional aspects of prejudice, like inter-group anxiety, might interact with inter-group perceptions to produce different outcomes across contexts (Mackie & Smith, 2002)<sup>10</sup>. Put simply, this suggests that members can feel emotions on behalf of their in-group, whereby perceived threats to the collective identity can produce negative emotional responses to the out-group, regardless of any individually experienced negative impact (*a la* SIT); that the structural (relative size and status) nature of the inter-group relationship can dictate how individuals might respond

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<sup>10</sup> It is a sincere regret that emotional perspectives were not incorporated at the phase one stage of the current study (thus precluding their inclusion at phase two.) Though this would undoubtedly have presented difficulties, the author regards it as a missed opportunity to try and access and assess the emotional nature of participant feelings towards the out-group more directly. These limitations will be addressed in the final discussion section.

emotionally to perceived threats (anger, fear or disgust, for example); that type of emotional reaction produced then influences future perceptions of or behaviour towards the out-group, with contempt or anger responses more likely to produce hostility and fear or disgust more predictive of avoidance (Cottrell & Neuberg, 2005).

From this it can be seen that, although RGC and RD are recognized as having a role in the generation of hostility, a criticism might again be that these elements alone cannot provide explanations across all instances of inter-group disharmony. In combination with other elements, however, including those above and some of the social identity and categorisation process outlined previously, a fuller picture may begin to emerge. The current research will therefore incorporate elements relating to various aspects of competition, conflict of interest, relative deprivation and in-group perceptions of threat.

### **5.3 Realistic Group Conflict, Relative Deprivation and the current research**

The specific context under analysis in this current research again displays a number of features highly relevant to the outlined theoretical propositions. The sample community is geographically situated in an area traditionally associated with economic hardship, and disadvantaged in terms of social resources/support and employment opportunities, thus offering the potential for heightened perceptions of inter-group competition. There has been a history of difficulties and hostility between members of the two ethnic groups for a number of years, including full-scale street riots and other disturbances. At the time of study, the far-right British National Party polled roughly 11% of the regional electorate in national and 21% in local authority elections, thus holding several seats on the local council – including those represented by the specific wards participants were recruited from. A fuller contextual description will be provided in the later methodology chapter (see [www.](#)

burnleytaskforce.org.uk for background information cited here from the government task-force report). Alongside avenues of potential inter-group competition for tangible resources like adequate housing, employment and social support, this 2004 report also touches upon more abstract dimensions over which groups might compete. This is highlighted in (white) residents' views on perceived competition and threats to their way of life, including perceptions of Asian unwillingness or refusal to attempt to understand and adopt local (white) culture, traditions, dress and language. For the most part these are framed in terms of Muslim values and ideologies being competitive, incompatible and threatening to the dominant white culture. Another area of identified concern was a widespread belief amongst the white population that Asians were somehow in receipt of favourable treatment across a number of domains, both concrete (e.g. financial and social services) and abstract<sup>11</sup>. It is clear from these findings that the context (rather unfortunately) offers a number of opportunities to examine a range of issues around inter-group competition, relative deprivation and perceived threats in a real-world setting.

Phase one of the current project explored perceptions of how conflicts of interest and competition appeared as thematic components in accounts of inter-group hostility, and whether these were compatible with the relevant theoretical propositions. Respondents were asked if and how they perceived any incompatibilities or conflicts between their own and the out-group and, if so, to what degree – and over which domains - these were regarded as influences on problematic relations between the groups. Given the undeniably genuine levels of absolute social deprivation and limited availability of resources reported in this context, qualitative analysis also considered how attributions of cause were differentially focused in

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<sup>11</sup> It should be noted here that the task force report takes great care to emphasise that many of these assumed inequalities have very little evidential basis in either policy or actual resource allocation on the part of relevant authorities. As stated, however, it is the perception of such that is of more interest to the current research.

overtly hostile and lesser/non-hostile accounts for this state of affairs. The interviews similarly sought to ascertain if perceptions of relative disparity in group fortunes or unequal treatment might be regarded as a contributory element to inter-group hostility. Respondents were encouraged to discuss if they felt current in-group fortunes were satisfactory, deserved, or equitable in comparison to the out-group, or if perceptions of the Asian out-group as being in receipt of preferential might perhaps be an influence on problematic inter-group relations. Again, any variation in the way both these issues were conceptualised between overtly hostile and lesser/non-hostile accounts was explored. As a consequence of phase one, phase two quantitative measures then incorporated items relating to various types of perceived conflicts of interest or threat, as well as rating scales for perceived out-group preferential treatment along a number of dimensions. Again the primary intent was to examine variation in levels and dynamics of perceived contributory factors (components) to inter-group conflict between participants high and low in aversion, dislike or willingness to engage in negative activities towards the out-group.

So far a number of potential contributory factors have been identified from different theoretical perspectives which might be considered as influential on manifestations of inter-group hostility. An observation that inter-group hostility can take on various contextually dependent forms has also been presented. It was then established that, though of great value to our understanding of how prejudice and inter-group hostility manifest themselves, an over-reliance on lab-based experimental studies may limit understanding of the complexity of prejudice in its more naturalistic forms. An appropriate real-world context for undertaking such an investigation was therefore identified and outlined. This inevitably leads to consideration of the methodological options available and ways in which other non-lab based studies of prejudice and inter-group hostility have proceeded (and will proceed in this current

project). *Very* broadly speaking, the brace of methodological approaches (qualitative analysis of interview procedures and quantitative analysis of survey measures) used in the current project are those which have most commonly been employed in respect to inter-group hostility. Alongside purely methodological aspects, however, each approach entails additional consideration of some theoretical and epistemological issues and perspectives that have often accompanied them. The forthcoming review will therefore focus on both the uses each methodological approach has been put to in terms of contribution to the understanding of inter-group hostility, as well as outlining some of the assumptions traditionally regarded as underlying these. In this way it represents both an evaluation of two key research perspectives on the study of inter-group conflict, and a critique of methods employed in the current project - thus forming a bridge between the foregoing introductory passages and the subsequent one on methodology.

Shortly the strengths and limitations of applying qualitative approaches to the study of inter-group conflict will be presented, focussing particularly on studies which have utilised discursive techniques. Although the current project is not specifically discursive in orientation, it nevertheless incorporates elements, concepts and ideas from this influential and important body of work. Before this, however, a summary of how more traditionally positivistic perspectives and empiricist paradigms have been used to investigate the topic of inter-group hostility will be provided. A discussion of the appropriateness and applicability of taking a mixed methodological approach will also follow.

## Chapter 6: Quantitative Measurement and Typological Approaches to Inter-Group Hostility

### 6.1 Modern forms of racism

A common means of studying prejudice (in and) out of the lab has been the use of survey materials which attempt to quantify individual responses to attitude objects. Numerical ratings of respondent agreement with these items along a scale are then used to assess potential differences between individuals or examine how scores correlate with other items, variables and measures. Most often this is used to try and identify common patterns and trends more generally across samples, situations and contexts (Brown, 1995). The Social Dominance (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) and Authoritarianism (Altemeyer, 1996) scales we encountered earlier are examples of this, whereby purported individual orientations are characterised and calibrated in this manner so as to find potential links, differences or commonalities between various other groups, scenarios and psychological constructs.

Social psychological attempts to similarly assess 'racial' prejudice more directly have taken on a number of forms in the last few decades, initially in response to the observation that generalised surveys of the phenomena appear to reveal substantial declines over the same period – at least in terms of white America's negativity towards African-Americans (Sears, 1988). Partly this was ascribed to social changes helping to promote greater general tolerance and equality for all groups (e.g. the civil rights movement, feminism, gay pride), but *also* partly to how these developments have worked to make open expressions of prejudice less generally acceptable (McConahay, 1986). This shift in prevailing social norms, alongside increasing amounts of anti-discriminatory legislation, helped create a social climate in

America where 'old-style racist' attitudes about the inherent inferiority of 'blacks' (including laziness, lack of intelligence and personal hygiene) or support for segregation and formal discrimination were no longer deemed appropriate in mainstream society (Henry & Sears, 2000). From this it was argued that, in some instances, it may not be actual levels or prevalence of prejudice that had diminished, but merely the expression of its more overt aspects and forms (See Brown, 2010 for a review). In other words, while it was possible that many people still harboured strongly prejudiced views, they were now less likely to admit it openly (let alone in writing for some officious looking stranger with a clip-board). This latter is a problem that has continued to dog social psychological research into inter-group hostility.

In response, a number of researchers began to develop theories and measures to further investigate these 'modern' forms of racism. First amongst these came *symbolic racism* (Kinder & Sears, 1981; McConahay & Hough, 1976), a designation that was later supplanted by *modern racism* (McConahay, 1982; 1986), as both concepts shared much the same approach and basic tenets. These new manifestations of (white American) prejudice were characterised by negative feelings towards 'blacks' as a group, combined with a sense that this group were somehow in violation of traditionally cherished (white American) values, and therefore represented a source of threat to these abstract concepts (McConahay, 1986). This purported belief system centred round perceptions that, because discrimination should no longer represent a barrier to improvement and equality for African-Americans, any continuing disadvantage they experienced was therefore due to an unwillingness or inability to take responsibility for life, thus consequently rendering any demands for or receipt of special treatment on their part (equality laws, positive discrimination etc), illegitimate, unjustified and undeserved (Henry & Sears, 2000). Resentment over perceived violations of the existing social and moral order was suggested to be rooted in early-learned values and

ideals (rather than any concrete personal inter-group experiences) on the part of prejudiced individuals.

Modern racism researchers attempted to codify and explore this by then creating generalisable survey scale measures designed to tap into these more indirect expressions of prejudice. It was argued that, even though ‘old-fashioned’ expressions of ‘racism’ may no longer be readily accessed, researchers might still be able to measure abstract or symbolic prejudice indicators by covert means (Biernat & Crandall, 1999). Because generally prevailing social norms inhibit the expression of directly negative views, respondents were considered more likely to tailor their responses accordingly (regardless of their actual beliefs), due to social desirability influences on self-presentation. These ‘new’ tools, however, were claimed to be less reactive or susceptible to this by allowing respondents to express ‘justified’ or ‘legitimate’ negative views of the out-group without appearing to be openly prejudiced<sup>12</sup> (Henry & Sears, 2000).

Although created specifically for European-American prejudice towards African Americans (in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century), modern racism scales have also been adapted for use in Australia (Augustinos, Ahrens & Innes, 1994; Pederson & Walker, 1997), South Africa (Duckitt, 1991) and Britain (Lepore & Brown, 1997), where they were found to correlate with other measures of inter-group bias. Associations between modern racism scores have also been found with choice of political candidates (Kinder & Sanders, 1996) and support for racial and immigration policies (Sears, van Laar, Carrillo & Kosterman, 1997 amongst others).

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<sup>12</sup> Although items have been subject to variation over the years, the following are representative of the modern or symbolic racism scale (Sears, 2000). 2.) Irish, Italian, Jewish and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same. 6.) Blacks are demanding too much from society. 13.) Discrimination against blacks is no longer a problem in the United States.

A similar approach was taken up in Europe by Pettigrew and Meertens (1995; Meertens & Pettigrew, 1997) with their *blatant* (akin to old-fashioned) and *subtle* (new) racism distinctions. The subtle racism concept and measure includes perceptions of heightened cultural difference between the in-group and out-group and denial of positive feelings towards the out-group (in contrast to *blatant* outright negative expressions), alongside modern racism constructs like perceived threats to traditional values and undeserved preferential treatment being granted to the out-group<sup>13</sup>. From this they extrapolate three broad categories of respondent: *bigots* (high in both subtle and blatant prejudice), *subtles* (low in blatant but high in subtle) and *equalitarians* (low in both) and have reported differences between the three in response to immigration related questions across a large European sample. These studies also found correlations between the two forms of prejudice and both ethnocentrism and relative deprivation (Pettigrew, 1998). One important implication of this is that prejudiced orientations can often take diverse forms rather than being a singular or unitary construct.

This is further suggested by the conceptualisation of other proposed forms prejudice might take. Dovidio and Gaertner's (1991; 1998) *aversive* racism, for instance, claims to identify a category of individuals who are accepting of equality, do not view themselves as being prejudiced and may even display pro-minority bias in order to avoid appearing so. In this case prejudice is revealed in avoidance of inter-group contact and occasional anti-minority bias if this can appear justified, though more usually manifesting itself as in-group favouritism

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<sup>13</sup> Perhaps a touch more nuanced than the Modern scale, these are items from the subtle/blatant scale tailored to a British context. **Blatant:** 1.5) West Indians come from less able races and this explains why they are not as well off as most British people. 2.3) I would not mind if a suitably qualified West Indian person was appointed as my boss. **Subtle:** 3.3) It is just a matter of some people not trying hard enough. If West Indians would only try harder they could be as well off as British people. 4.3) How different or similar do you think West Indians living here are to other British people like yourself in their sexual values and sexual practices? (Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995).

(Pettigrew, 1998). *Ambivalent* prejudice (Katz & Hass, 1988) also suggests that there may be those who accept equality, but can simultaneously have conflicting positive and negative beliefs and emotions about the out-group leading to discomfort about the inconsistency. Incorporating some of these issues, they used survey measures of old fashioned, symbolic and aversive prejudice, along with ethnocentrism, and tested these on schoolchildren in relation to a number of other prejudice indicators (willingness to date out-group members or endure racist jokes, endorsement of ethnic stereotypes or affirmative action). From this they claimed to identify differences between types of respondent to suggest a possibly cumulative element to prejudice; with aversive prejudice representing the lower end of the scale, modern prejudice being more characteristic of the middle and old-fashioned prejudice manifesting as the most extreme form (Kleinpenning & Hagendoorn, 1993).

For our current purposes, however, it is not the specificity of such proposed taxonomies or indicators of prejudice that is of interest, so much as the conceptualisations and form of measurement itself. Phase two of the current study involves use of survey scale materials, albeit in a somewhat inverted form to those cited above - rather than agreement with these kind of items being used as indicative markers *of* prejudice, they will be assessed in terms of their explanatory/legitimising/justificatory capacity *for* those who express overt hostility towards an out-group (more of which presently). The use of questionnaire scales in prejudice research has had a long and sometimes fruitful history, but it is not one without problems. A number of these will need to be addressed before continuing.

## **6.2 Benefits and limitations of survey approaches to inter-group hostility**

These procedures represent a relatively quick and easy means of collecting large amounts of data across numerous samples and populations, allowing these to then be classified,

compared or assessed for patterns of association. They provide a useful way of gathering and analysing information about broad trends and features of various social phenomena (Hammersley, 2005). As applied to ‘racial’ issues, we have seen their widespread use throughout social psychology in a number of ways – though mostly in attempting to identify fixed sets of generic factors which are then presumed generalisable across other populations and contexts (Franko & Maas, 1999). In this way such instruments seek to step back from the socio-historical context of any inter-group relationship in order to identify generalities in and about the nature of prejudice itself. Yet, while such commonalities may well potentially exist, we have seen that much research into prejudice has also emphasised the crucial role of contextual factors in the generation, form and expression of prejudice and conflict across diverse manifestations (see for example Augustinos et al., 2006; Reynolds & Turner, 2001). To therefore minimise or neglect this aspect represents a serious limitation on gaining a fuller understanding of issues relating to inter-group hostility. The current research, then, proceeds only with caution.

To begin with, an enormous amount of this type of research has been carried out in terms of how (white) European-Americans manifest prejudice and hostility towards (black) African-Americans – with the assumption being that observations made here are broadly applicable to interactions across other national and ethnic contexts. Yet, as Walker (2001), for instance, notes, the relationship between these groups in terms of history, culture and social status dynamics is highly specific. To wit, a quickly sketched comparison:

A dominant (white) ‘host’ majority and a reasonably large (black) minority out-group, who were originally victims of enforced transportation from their homeland, followed by several generations of enslavement to the former. (USA).

A conquering (white) majority who subsequently enacted policies of enslavement, disenfranchisement and genocide against a smaller indigenous minority of Aboriginals (Australia).

A conquering (white) minority ruling elite and the indigenous (black) majority who until recently were subject to segregation by the former, alongside economic, cultural and political disenfranchisement and servitude (South Africa).

A dominant (white) indigenous majority and voluntary immigrant groups from former colonies, who were partly encouraged to make this move by a need to fulfil labour requirements on the part of the 'host'. (Britain).

From this it is difficult to see how a narrow range of highly regularised questionnaire items might be both flexible and generalisable enough to usefully capture the 'essence' of inter-group hostility across the full range of culturally, socially and historically defined and influenced contexts outlined above (Walker, 2001).

Generic scales of this sort also run the danger of assuming that supposed indicative markers or expressions of prejudice are transferable or generalisable across different groups *within* a broad social context, or that all instances of inter-group hostility are based on identical foundations (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). For example, a recurrent theme in contemporary scales has items asserting the out-group's inability or unwillingness to adapt or get along and succeed in society as attitudinal markers of respondent prejudice. But if we take for example the historically widespread (and ongoing) prejudice of anti-Semitism which found its nadir in Nazi Germany, emphasis seems to be on prejudice directed towards the out-group partly *because* they appear to be socially accomplished and successful at getting along (Gilbert, 1989). Similarly, where American based scales include perceptions of out-group intellectual

inferiority as generic components of racism against African-Americans, in the case of the Jews this was also often reversed, with prejudice focussing on perceptions of high intelligence - albeit in an accusatory guise of supposed connivance and acquisitiveness (Billig, 1978).

This last has relevance, too, in the case of British Asians, where perceptions of them as hard-working and able to get along also register negatively in stereotypes and expressions of prejudice, due to these qualities being regarded as potentially threatening to (white) in-group status and resources (Kundnani, 2001). In this case perceptions of Asian intelligence are also negatively framed in terms of their 'cleverness' making them somehow wily and untrustworthy (Reicher, 2001). This again is in contrast to some of the predefined 'racist' indicators identified in example items (see above) from the subtle/blatant scale, whose nominal target is members of an earlier wave of West Indian immigrants in Britain. Both groups have undoubtedly been subject to prejudice in this country, yet some of the markers and indicators (or 'reasons' and 'justifications' used by those who carry such views, if you will) might well be very different. Simply substituting 'Asian' or 'West-Indian' for 'black' in a generic questionnaire format, therefore, may not always be the best way of proceeding.

A third and related concern applies to issues of temporal context. A reason for the development of the type of racism measure under discussion came from an observation that 'old fashioned' forms of prejudice seemed to be in decline, therefore requiring a reformulation and standardisation of its newer incarnations - in the 1970s (Walker, 2001). Presumably this implication - that forms and expressions of racism are subject to change over time - means that prejudice in the 21<sup>st</sup> century may be again potentially different in shape, thus requiring fresh calibrations of measurement. For example, another theme in 'modern'

prejudice measures hinges on respondent perceptions of the out-group as being different from their own group as an indicator of prejudice. In modern Britain, however, where social equality and harmony initiatives have been built on the platform of creating a multicultural society, the recognition of different cultural orientations and practices has been actively encouraged – so long as these variations are also accepted, valued and respected. It is therefore not so much the recognition of difference in itself that is tied to prejudice, but perceptions of any dissimilarity as being problematically deviant, unacceptable, inferior or threatening to in-group culture, values and morality.

Pre-selectivity in definition and usage of prejudice indicators presents additional difficulties. Sniderman, Crosby and Howell (2000) make a point that several concepts claimed as prejudice indicators by modern racism scales may more accurately describe highly conservative ideologies which, while often correlating with other indicators of prejudice such as right-wing political orientation and support/opposition for race related policy, do not necessarily equate directly with prejudice itself. They further observe that when testing modern scales against support for such policies, the dependent variable and questionnaire items themselves are often so similar as to appear tautological, rather than the latter representing a straightforward measure of racism (Sniderman, Crosby & Howell, 2000). Comparable concerns can be raised about modern racism concepts which centre on perceptions of unfair, undeserved or special treatment applying to the out-group as indicators of prejudice. There is undoubtedly a connection between the two, but to which direction (prejudiced people think the out-group are unfairly advantaged, or people who think the out-group are unfairly advantaged are more likely to be prejudiced) is not made clear by such limited formats; especially as Relative Deprivation theory (Runciman, 1966) claims such perceptions are a potential cause, rather than a symptom, of prejudice in the first place. Also,

perceptions of unequal treatment in themselves are again not necessarily exclusively indicative of prejudice, so much as the perception that any such imbalance is problematic or threatening.

These ambiguities of definition and contextual meaning in generic survey instruments highlight a typical problem with this type of prejudice research. In measurement of attitudes to inter-group hostility, these approaches display a presumption to predefine and classify what constitutes 'racism' to begin with, both in a given context and globally (Durrheim & Dixon, 2005). To do this researchers assemble fixed sets of items derived from their own pre-conceptions and definitions, partly shaped by the academic research traditions they proceed from. These items must then be defined in terms general enough so that they can be applied across multiple groups and contexts to assess and compare disparate examples of the phenomena in a 'realistic' way (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). The inapplicability of applying generalised conceptions across divergent contexts we have already touched upon, but there are more specific aspects of this which require closer scrutiny.

Firstly, this approach assumes the existence of simply defined, unproblematic items and unambiguous categorisations which can be applied across contexts by means of standardised measurement tools. This standardisation intends that all respondents interpret and evaluate attitude items in the same way, thus making any observed differences a product of variation in attitudes rather than in interpretation of the items themselves (Durrheim & Dixon, 2005). Yet often individuals and communities may hold disparate or even contradictory conceptions of the definition, meaning or implications of inter-group relations - which cannot be easily translated into such simplified and generic forms (Hopkins & Kahani-Hopkins, 2006). For example, we shall see in the current research that any attempt to pre-define 'integration' in a

way that has simple, generalisable relevance across the sample base would be difficult in the extreme, given the profusion and variability of participant interpretations and understandings of this issue. Similarly, to construct global sets of items on attitudes to 'immigrants' in general, does not take into account that different populations in different contexts might have different relationships with different immigrant groups in mind when making any assessment (Potter & Wetherell, 1987).

The subtleties of inter-group hostility and the ways people construct inter-group relations are not always best captured by researcher pre-defined quantitative scales, therefore, and attempting to establish common meaning across contexts in order to compare 'like against like' cannot adequately capture the complexity of different inter-group contexts and how people within these think (Reicher, 2001). To begin by overlaying pre-defined researcher definitions of phenomena, rather than taking heed of participant experience embedded in the lived context, then risks losing touch with any meanings and understanding in participant evaluations of their own lived reality - which may not always fit with abstracted research concepts and definitions (Potter, 1998).

Durrheim & Dixon (2005) aptly refer to these types of generic overall approaches as a form of 'impoverished realism'<sup>14</sup>, whereby pre-defined academic research concepts and measures, encapsulated across pre-set dimensions in the form of a limited set of generic attitude items, propose to represent an adequate means of understanding the richness and complexity of inter-group phenomena across a range of diverse and multiple contexts (p 448). This

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<sup>14</sup> Realism here refers in part to the assumption that the attitudes these approaches presume to assess relate to well-defined, unambiguous events, objects and psychological concepts (such as 'race' or 'racism') as 'real' entities which can be objectively studied. The reductive approach taken by generic attitude survey approaches suggests the 'impoverished' appellation. A more detailed consideration of epistemological and ontological perspectives in research will be presented in the upcoming section on the use of mixed methodologies

approach, they claim, neglects both the imbedded meaning and actual respondent constructions of the issues at hand, thus either ignoring or obscuring the actual interpretive frameworks used by groups and communities to make sense of everyday relations (Dixon & Reicher, 1997). Assessments at such generic levels can then risk distancing or even divorcing themselves from the experience and meanings of participant's lived reality, and so fail to capture the nuance and specificity of problematic relations between groups in a 'real-world' socio-cultural context.

These top-down perspectives and methods, which by imposing a template of pre-defined researcher-driven conceptual categories and items hope to provide an adequate understanding of complex inter-group relations from subsequent participant ratings, are obviously far from ideal. In response a need has therefore been proposed (see Dixon, Durrheim & Tredoux, 2005; Durrheim & Dixon, 2005) for future investigations into problematic group relations to proceed from a more detailed bottom-up analysis, one which utilises participants' own frameworks of meaning as applied to the social context. Such an approach would therefore have to be both tailored to the specific inter-group context and adequately representative of respondent understandings and interpretations of the topics under study within this. Before moving to address how the current research will address these issues, however, some additional concerns about the limitations of generic survey approaches need to be covered.

A core feature of modern survey approaches to prejudice and inter-group hostility is their proposed utility as a covert means of evaluating orientations which might otherwise not be accessible. Due to the social unacceptability of overt expressions of prejudice, it is claimed such subtle techniques can not only cunningly root out undercover 'racists' but also categorically classify them into the bargain. Doubts have been expressed about the efficacy of

this (Brown, 2010). Augustinos et al (1994) suggest, for instance, that such claims underestimate the extent to which people are capable of thinking for themselves and working out what is socially expected of them. Vargas, Sekaquaptewa and von Hippel (2004) also express concern that disguised self-report measures have become quite discernible, therefore making them vulnerable to respondent's social desirability/conformity concerns. Awareness of cultural approbation against overt expressions of prejudice may in fact then make it difficult to accurately access these with *any* form of self-report measure (Condor, Figgou, Abell, Gibson & Stevenson, 2006). One recent study found both Modern and Symbolic prejudice scales both quite transparent in their social implications, with participants being easily capable of quickly decoding the social implications of their answers and manipulating responses accordingly - regardless of any implemented social desirability precautions (Holmes, 2009). Others note that scores on racial attitudes scales may be strongly affected by social norms implied in the instructions, the response options and even the data collection procedure and personnel (Fazio, Jackson, Dunton & Williams, 1995). Bonilla-Silva and Forman (2000), testing white American college students, noted lower levels of self-reported prejudice in survey form, than those they observed in subsequently interviews with the same participants.

This last study touches on another issue relevant to how survey methods into problematic topics such as prejudice have been too frequently limited: choice of sample. It has been noted previously that the university/college setting offers widely accepted normative codes which work to try and inhibit both implicitly prejudiced attitudes and any explicit expression of these. Not only that, but the vast majority of institutions also have *written* rules and policies clearly forbidding such expressions, and promising harsh punitive measures against those who do so. Clearly then this is not an ideal context to ask people to self-report their levels of

‘racism.’ That is not to say, of course, that a good deal of useful work has not been conducted outside such settings. Survey studies using more general participant bases have been fairly prevalent - though this has frequently been to assess prejudice in the manner outlined previously, by generalising between contexts to try and observe the presence, levels, types and aspects of prejudice which might be found between different individuals, groups and situations (see Akrami, Ekehammer & Araya, 2000; Brown, Maras, Masser, Vivian & Hewstone, 2001; Hagendoorn & Sniderman, 2001; Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995, for example) These type of survey methods have also been employed in situations which evince varying levels of inter-group tension (Esses, Jackson & Armstrong, 1998; Levin, Henry, Pratto & Sidanius, 2003; Hunter, Platow, Howard & Stringer, 1996; Islam & Hewstone, 1993; Struch & Shwartz, 1989; Wagner, Van Dick, Pettigrew & Christ, 2003), though again using (sometimes adapted) generalised survey measures to study prejudice in these contexts.

### **6.3 Survey approaches and the current research**

The use of survey measures in the current project differs from many of these previously outlined approaches in a number of ways. To quickly deal first with some of the latter points relating to appropriate sample selection: It has already been reasonably established that the context under examination in the current research displays characteristics suitable for the study of genuine inter-group hostility. Further to this, there were reasons to believe at the outset that the community sample targeted in these studies would comprise, at least in part, individuals likely to be freely and openly expressive of overt hostility and prejudice towards the out-group, regardless of potential social desirability factors, thus reducing some of the concerns around use of self-report measurement procedures (‘covert’ or not).<sup>15</sup> Explicit

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<sup>15</sup> This does not mean that steps will not be taken to facilitate or optimise how the procedures at each phase attempt to access as genuine participant responses as possible.

evidence for these assertions will be provided in the background context section of the upcoming methodology chapter. A further and equally important concern, however, relates to the content of any proposed survey measures.

In accessing respondents from this specific context, initial qualitative procedures took the form of semi-structured, open-ended interviews as a means to encourage free discussion of how white community members construct, interpret and evaluate various aspects of the inter-group relationship, and offer explanations as to why they thought problems occur between the two ethnic groups<sup>16</sup>. Partly this was to identify contributory elements (components) which appeared in respondent accounts as perceived factors of influence in the generation of inter-group problems, particularly in terms of any variation observed in explanations or justifications offered for manifestations of hostility towards the out-group between lesser/non-hostile and overtly hostile accounts. It was from these that contextually specific survey measures were produced in order to further quantitatively assess relative degrees of rated importance ascribed to the various identified components across a broader community sample, specifically in how they relate to levels of expressed aversion or dislike for the out-group, or willingness to engage in negatively political or physical activities against them. Comparisons could then also be made between those designated either high or low in these self-reported measures of out-group directed negativity, in terms of the relative importance and dynamic attributed to the various identified factors of perceived contributory influence (components).

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<sup>16</sup> Interviews were semi-structured in the sense that - while steps were taken where possible not to lead or influence respondents in their discussions of specific topics, thus allowing them to express freely what they saw as the story in Burnley - some kind of flexible framework of questioning was still required to maintain the conversational flow and retain focus on material relating to inter-group matters. A full account of these issues will be provided in the upcoming methodology section.

By these means the phase two survey study proceeded from a bottom-up perspective, in first identifying how participants embedded within the relevantly specific context themselves appraised problematic inter-group relations. Aside from some basic demographics and baseline measures of perceived inter-group hostility in the local context, only elements identified in participant accounts at phase one were included in the subsequent questionnaire stage, where every effort was made to phrase individual assessment items in a manner compatible with participant understandings of the concepts under investigation. No attempt to rigidly pre-define what constituted 'racism' was made from a researcher perspective, nor were pre-conceived supposed indicators used to try and measure overall levels of this as a unitary concept. Instead, direct ratings of participant hostility were taken at the outset in the form of self-reported levels of expressed aversion, dislike and willingness to engage in negative activities against the out-group. The relative importance ascribed to each proposed contributory factor was then gauged in relation to these. Rather than using indirect means and a composite of pre-defined supposed attitudinal markers to try and assess the overall *if or how much* someone can be considered 'racist', then, this research is concerned more in attempting to unpick any underlying structure in how overt expressions of inter-group hostility relate to a selection of proposed contributory elements as perceived by those who espouse them.

The utility of survey methods in projects like the current one is that they allow large amounts of data to be gathered with (relative) ease and speed. This then provides a way of assessing broad trends and patterns in expressions of intergroup hostility as they occur more generally across a conflicted community. In this case, quantifying indications of the importance participants attribute to each factor of perceived influence identified as contributory to inter-group hostility at phase one will help to establish which of these are generally rated as the

greatest perceived influence in association to higher levels of expressed hostility towards the out-group. Numerically coding participants' expressed levels of hostility towards the out-group will also allow quantitative delineation to be made between those rated high and low on levels of hostility in order to assess the different componential dynamics between these two elements of the sample, thus highlighting which particular elements are considered most problematic for each – something which qualitative approaches are not so adept at. Admittedly, survey methods of this kind can never be regarded as ideal in trying to gain greater understanding into the social psychology of inter-group conflict and hostility, due in part to the various issues of definition, relative meaning and applicability cited earlier, as well as concerns about the veracity of self-report measures in general. It is still felt, however, that in this instance such a strategy can be of utility. Inter-group hostility, besides being an area of academic inquiry, also represents a very real social problem; any method of investigation which might yield useful information about its various manifestations is therefore potentially worth pursuing. This current research largely agrees with Durrheim and Dixon's (2005) critique of inter-group survey methods, and also acknowledges its own inadequacy to the task of imbuing such forms of impoverished realism with extravagant sums of analytical wealth. In this case, however, it may be possible to supply enough local currency to get by on.

It is also hopefully clear by now that the author does not (nor cannot or wish to) make claims as to the generalisability of any findings from this work across the broader spectrum of inter-group hostility contexts. It is certainly viable that findings here might comparably relate to other instances where British Asian and white populations come into potential conflict, of which there are a number of problematic examples (see Hussain & Bagguley, 2005 for a review). It may even be possible to make legitimate comparisons between these contexts and others where British or European communities experience disharmony between 'host' and

‘immigrant’ populations (see Stephan, 2008). But without testing such situations in a similar manner this cannot begin to be established. From a more traditionally realist perspective, where both generalisability of theory and research practice are often regarded as paramount in the quest to establish clear, parsimonious and meta-theoretical explanations for inter-group phenomena, this might represent a limitation of the current work.

In the words of H. L. Menken (1917), however, ‘There is always an easy solution to every human problem - neat, plausible, and wrong.’ The convolution of historical, cultural, social and psychological dynamics in the make-up of inter-group hostility contexts render instances of this phenomena not easily amenable to a generic analysis of clear-cut and pre-defined one-size-fits-all componential factors. This is not to say, however, that such a range of overarching potential influences cannot be meaningfully established. But rather that the perceived presence, relative strength/importance and mix of these elements may substantially differ between situations, groups and the individuals within these, and that such blends might well be highly specific, if not exclusive, to a given context – in *this* situation *a*, *b* and *c* might be regarded as the key factors; in *that* situation *x*, *d* and *a*. From the huge body of previous research a number of potential candidates for such a roll-call can be suggested, be these related to the social identity, perceived threat, deprivation, competition, social influence or socio-cultural factors reviewed earlier. The current research is only capable of attempting an initial assessment of how such multiple influences might express and arrange themselves in accounts from one particular context and, more specifically, in how overtly hostile perspectives within this conceptualise problematic aspects of group interactions.

## **Chapter 7: Integrated Approaches to Inter-Group Hostility and Threat**

So far a number of approaches to the study of inter-group hostility have been covered in order to review as broad a spectrum of prejudice research as possible and identify areas of potential synthesis. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 in particular have dealt with aspects of prejudice from a group based perspective and identified several potential contributory components to inter-group hostility in the context selected for investigation by the current research. This is not to say that attempts have never previously been made to incorporate more than one contributory element when it comes to studying negative group relations, however. It is therefore important to outline ways in which such ideas have previously been conceptualised and combined, and how these differ from or complement the current project.

### **7.1 Integrated Threat Theory**

Prominent among contemporary approaches to combined theories of inter-group hostility is the Integrated Threat theory (ITT) of Stephan and Stephan (2000). A reading of the chapters outlined above clearly indicates the central role that perceptions of threat take in relation to manifestations of inter-group hostility – including ‘realistic’ threats to in-group resources or territory (RGC), threats to perceptions of in-group esteem and identity (SIT), threats to in-group standing and status in relation to others (RDT) and symbolic threats to in-group values and culture, as purportedly accessed by modern or symbolic racism scales (McConahay, 1986; Kinder & Sears, 1981). Within their model, Stephan and Stephan (2000) incorporate four specific types of threat which they consider most pertinent to manifestations of prejudice towards out-groups: 1.) Realistic threat which, in line with RGC, comprises perceived challenge to in-group economic, territorial, employment resources or actual physical threat.

2.) Symbolic Threat, relating to modern racism concepts such as threat to how the in-group defines itself in terms of things like cultural values, norms, beliefs, language and religion. 3.) Intergroup Anxiety, by which in-group members are uncomfortable or apprehensive about interacting with out-group members, thus generating aversion or nervousness around potential encounters, due partly to either uncertainty of how to act or concerns about how the out-group will treat them. 4.) Negative Out-group Stereotypes, whereby generalised preconceptions about out-group members create negative expectations and views about their motivations and behaviour. A fair amount of support has been found for this model as a predictor of prejudice<sup>17</sup> across different inter-group contexts, including student attitudes to Mexicans, Cubans and (East) Asians in the US (Stephan, Ybarra & Bachman, 1999); Spanish students' attitudes to Moroccans and Israeli students' attitudes to Ethiopians and Russians (Stephan, Ybarra, Martinez, Schwarzwald & Tur-Kasba, 1998), all of which showed some correlation between negative attitudes and the four proposed kinds of threat. McLaren (2003) found both Realistic and Symbolic threat strongly predicted anti-immigrant sentiment across several European contexts also, with weaker associations being noted for Intergroup Anxiety and Negative Stereotypes. More interestingly perhaps, especially considering that ITT was originally conceived as a generic tool of prejudice investigation across contexts, similar instances of variation have also been reported in the presence and strength of the four components in other situations. For instance, Bizman and Yinon (2001) found that Realistic, though not Symbolic, threat was a predictor of prejudice towards immigrants in Israel, while Tausch, Tam, Hewstone, Kenworthy and Cairns (2007) conversely found that Symbolic, though not Realistic threat had similar predictive value in a Northern Irish sample. In some cases, both Realistic and Symbolic threat have been found to operate in tandem as prejudice

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<sup>17</sup> These studies employed survey methods similar to those outlined in chapter 6, with all the attendant benefits and limitations discussed therein.

predictors, though in research by Curseu, Stoop and Schalk (2007), little evidence was found for a similar relationship with negative stereotype threat. After conducting a meta-analytic review of ITT studies comprising 95 samples, Riek, Mania and Gaertner (2006) concluded that while negative stereotypes may serve to intensify negative views of an out-group, it is questionable whether they represent an independent type of threat.<sup>18</sup> Further to this, Riek et al (2006), while agreeing that threats both Realistic, Symbolic (and to some extent pertaining to Intergroup anxiety) represent complimentary yet distinct components of inter-group hostility, also suggest that future research should work towards broadening the scope of potential contributory factors for incorporation in order to create more all-inclusive models of inter-group prejudice. To this end they propose a brace of candidates for possible inclusion, the first of which they term Group Esteem threat. This concept is drawn from the realm of Social Identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), where perceived challenges to individual or group sense of value or self-image are regarded as threatening and therefore produce negative reactions. This is especially the case where challenge to group esteem is perceived by those who strongly identify as in-group members (Branscombe & Wann, 1994.) Evidence from a study by Branscombe, Spears, Ellemers and Doosje (2002) suggests that perceived negative evaluations of participants by others acted as threats to self-esteem and prompted negative actions towards the assumed source. In this way perceived threats to group self-esteem have been claimed to result in derogation, negative attitudes and behaviours directed at out-groups seen as representing similar sources of threat. Riek et al (2006) also suggest a further potential component in the form of Distinctiveness threat (where very similar groups vie for

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<sup>18</sup> Several commentators have questioned the inclusion of negative stereotypes as a form of direct threat in this model (Brown, 2010.) Curseu, et al (2007) suggest that this factor might better be conceptualised as mediator variable in the relationship between perceived threat and prejudice, while Riek et al (2006) question whether it might not actually be an antecedent to perceptions of threat rather than a distinct form of its own. The author concurs with this latter position.

distinction to the point of competition in a social context.) However, given that this factor is not a consideration in the current study, no further discussion of it will be included here.

Two important points can be drawn from the foregoing paragraphs in relation to the current research. First, that as previously mentioned, the presence and strength of different proposed contributory factors to manifestations of inter-group hostility are most likely to vary across different inter-group contexts. Second, that in order to best further research in this area it is desirable to study the subject and build subsequent theory upon as broad-ranging, holistic and multi-dimensional a basis as possible. By incorporating elements from diverse research traditions into ever more inclusive models, a greater understanding of prejudice as a multi-faceted concept can therefore emerge. Walter Stephan, for one, agrees; in a recent (2008) paper he argues that more comparative studies are needed to help understand what common factors help create negative intergroup relations across different (specifically European) countries and communities, and which factors appear to be unique to different contexts or situations. He further states that an evaluation of which particular components take on greater or lesser importance in a given situation should also be an aim of future research. In addition to this, Stephan (2008) acknowledges that the ITT framework was never designed to be a fully comprehensive model of contributory elements to inter-group hostility, and therefore inclusion of additional elements, particularly relating to perceived threat, may provide welcome additions to the inter-group conflict research tradition. Section 7.3 will subsequently outline how this current research aims to contribute to knowledge on both these fronts.

The need for more multi-dimensional and cross-discipline orientated research into inter-group conflict, however, also finds echo in another longstanding tradition of prejudice research, one which also places strong emphasis on the role of perceived threat in the

generation of hostility towards others and hints at further elements of potential contribution to negative inter-group relations.

## **7.2 Group Position Theory**

Outside of psychology, important research on problematic inter-group relations has also traditionally been the domain of other disciplines, most notably sociology. One eminent contributor to this body of work has been Lawrence Bobo (see Bobo & Fox, 2003; Bobo & Hutchins, 1996; Bobo, 1999.) Bobo's work continues and furthers the tradition of Blumer (1958) and his Group Position theory (GPT) of prejudice. The theory emphasises the important role that social influence and shared meaning have in shaping how in-group members perceive society and their place within it. By this route, dominant and historically accepted in-group consensus and shared norms work to construct and shape social reality through collective and individual interaction between members, particularly when it comes to ideas about the 'rightful' position of the group in relation to others. This in turn leads in-group members to adopt, perpetuate and defend ideologies which maintain what is seen as legitimate in terms of group identity and status. As with Social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), with which GPT shares some common ground, problems are thought to arise when threat is perceived to aspects of in-group identity relating to sense of social position or status (Bobo & Fox, 2003). When it comes to prejudice generation, GPT posits four criteria required for inter-group hostility to occur: 1.) The in-group must in some way regard itself as superior to the relevant out-group. 2.) A perception of the out-group as different or alien must be present. 3.) Some sense of in-group propriety in terms of rights and status is further necessary. 4.) Perceptions of threat emanating from the (supposedly subordinate) out-group in the form of challenges to maintenance of in-group social position or status then produce hostility. These factors can further be exacerbated if the in-group itself feels a sense of

alienation or marginalisation within the larger social order. Threat in this instance is also regarded in terms to its *perceived* occurrence within the shared construction and interpretation of social reality, as defined by in-group understandings of such, rather than any strictly objective, 'realistic' or material conditions (Bobo, 1999). Perceived threats in relation to loss of in-group standing or status can take on different forms. They can appear, for instance, as in-group perceptions of victimisation or unfair treatment meted out to them by general society, especially in relation to the way out-groups are favoured or treated, regardless of if this is genuinely the case or not. They can also come in the form of perceived out-group social advancement or promotion in relation to the in-group, in contravention of the 'rightful' order and hierarchy of things. In such situations the out-group and its members often then become a target of any resulting hostility. In-group consensus and shared interpretations of reality, then, besides shaping self-perceptions about position and status can additionally perpetuate the notion of out-group threat, subsequently facilitating, legitimising, reinforcing negative evaluations of or hostility towards the out-group. These social facilitation effects of in-group consensus on perceived threat are therefore one further potential component of inter-group hostility and will be accordingly incorporated within the current project (see section 7.3).

Other aspects of Bobo et al's (2003) perspective also have resonance within the current work. One such is its emphasis on the implementation of greater multi-discipline research in terms of theoretical and methodological paradigms. Bobo contends that broader engagement with diverse methods of investigation and analysis should be an aim of future research. He also urges that research be undertaken across a greater range of inter-group contexts (especially beyond that of the primarily African-white dynamic which has tended to dominate American research.) Besides exploring multi-ethnic environments and inter-group contexts, Bobo

additionally proposes specific investigation into the different forms perceived threat and other potential components of inter-group hostility can take and how these manifest themselves differently across variously conflicted communities. Again this will be addressed in section 7.3.

An additional manner in which this perspective intersects with the aims of the current project relates even more specifically to methodological concerns. A key tenet in the work of both Bobo et al (2003) and Blumer (1958) is an advocacy of the use of research methods which are both naturalistic and ecologically valid. This approach stresses the importance of utilising and incorporating participants' subjective interpretations of reality and viewpoints in the work to achieve more in-depth analysis and knowledge of the topic under investigation. In chapter 8 a review will be provided of research which has attempted to both fulfil this criterion of naturalism and incorporate subjective elements of participant experience into the study of conflicted inter-group relations, as well as acknowledging how socially-constructed, shared aspects of social reality can impact upon manifestations of prejudice. How these issues will be addressed by the current project will also be covered in more detail in Chapter 8. Before this, however, a recap of how the current project will attempt to bring some of these elements together in order to contribute fresh knowledge to the sphere of prejudice will be provided.

### **7.3 Integrated approaches and the Current Research**

Throughout the foregoing chapters a broad range of approaches to the study of inter-group hostility have been presented. In this current chapter some coverage has also been given to ways in which synthesis of potential contributory elements to prejudice has been attempted.

In continuing this line of investigation a summary will now be provided of how the current project will aim to further knowledge in this area.

1. Broader inclusion of potential contributory elements to inter-group hostility. The Integrated Threat theory of Stephan and Stephan (2000) attempts to synthesise concepts of both Realistic and Symbolic threat, alongside Intergroup anxiety and negative stereotypes, into a predictive model of prejudice. The current project acknowledges this contribution while also noting that commentators such as Riek et al (2006), Bobo (2003) and Stephan (2008) himself urge the inclusion of further potential components in order to create a fuller picture of inter-group conflict. To this end consideration will be given to a greater range of possible contributory factors. These will be drawn from various theoretical domains including work on Realistic group conflict (Sherif, 1966) relating to concerns over economic, territorial, and social resources, alongside physical threat; Symbolic threat (McConahay, 1986; Stephan & Stephan, 2000), such as perceived challenge to dominant in-group cultural traditions, practices, beliefs and values; Esteem threat (Riek et al, 2006; Tajfel & Turner, 1986), relating to when threats to in-group self-image, esteem and social standing are thought to produce hostile reactions when provoked by perceived negative evaluation from others; Relative deprivation (Runcimann, 1966), where the in-group feels disadvantaged or disfavoured in relation to others in society, or in terms of former social position; Group position concerns (Bobo, 2000), which similarly pertain to shared in-group consensus about relative social position, status and the 'rightful' order coming under perceived challenge from others; Social facilitation effects (LeCouteur & Augustinos; 2001, Bobo & Fox, 2003), by which commonly shared versions of

reality work to construct, reinforce and perpetuate negative views of the out-group and legitimise/justify hostility towards them on the part of in-group members.

By incorporating such a breadth of potential components the current research attempts to create a more holistic view of inter-group hostility in order to gain further understanding of the phenomenon, with the following caveat:

2. Greater awareness of the contextual nature of specific inter-group conflicts. As extensively noted in section 6.2 and further evidenced by divergent results from ITT studies (Bizman et al, 2001; Curseu et al, 2007; Tausch et al, 2007), contextual variation in the potential presence, weight and mix of potential contributory factors to in-group hostility often appears to occur. There may well be an overall set of potential underlying factors which can be theorised to cover each and every instance of prejudice, but most likely the presence, strength of importance and inter-dynamic of these will vary between specific instances. Therefore it is as interesting to look at what is unique about a particular situation as much as what it shares with other conflicted inter-group contexts.
3. Along these same lines a secondary benefit of the current work is that it will allow greater specification and analysis of exactly which individual aspects of potential contribution to inter-group conflict make the greatest impact in terms of general presence and in relation to each other, thus creating a hierarchy of components deemed influentially important to the manifestation of prejudice in the chosen context. In reference to this last point, another unique contribution of the current research is also presented.

4. The current project relates specifically to a British context of inter-group hostility. Prejudice against West Asians, and particularly Muslims in Britain has a long and unsavoury history. Since the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 and subsequent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan involving the British forces, as well as a resurgence in more fundamentalist stripes of Islam this has, if anything, intensified. At the time the current study was undertaken several areas of England were experiencing frequent incidence of open conflict between white and Asian British citizens. This also coincided with the far-right British Nationalist Party gaining electoral ground and local government representation in many of the same areas. The current work used the opportunity of having access to participants embedded within a real-world context of genuine inter-group conflict to further investigate this phenomenon in a British context, and consequently aid further understanding of prejudice in general.
5. A further contribution comes from the manner in which the above was operationalized in the initial phase of study, and how this subsequently informed the secondary phase. In addition to Bobo et al (2003), many authors have urged the use of in-depth research methodologies which incorporate participants' own subjective meaning and interpretation of social reality into the analysis, as a means of gleaning greater knowledge of social conflicts (see Billig, 1978, 1995; Wetherell & Potter, 1992, for example). This naturalistic, 'bottom-up' way of proceeding is one that has been remarkably underused in prejudice research, particularly in a British context, and represents an area in which the current research can add particular richness of detail and nuance to the existing knowledge base. Moreover, whereas studies conducted under the remit of ITT (Stephan & Stephan, 2002) or other purely survey based enterprises (Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995; Pratto & Sidanius, 2003, to name just two)

frequently rely on researcher driven, 'top down' content by administering research tools comprised of pre-defined, often generic items and concepts, the current work will draw materials for its own survey procedure solely from the input of the aforementioned individuals embedded with the conflict situation. This again will add greater richness and authenticity to existing knowledge.

6. Finally, and with assertions about the need for future research to embrace multi-layered, faceted and interdisciplinary approaches in mind (e.g. Bobo, 2008; Reicher, 2001, amongst others), the current project intends to further contribute to existing knowledge by employing mixed qualitative and quantitative methodologies. By these means again, it is intended a more rounded and fuller picture of inter-group hostility can emerge, at least in relation to the context under investigation (see chapter 9 for discussion of mixed methods in research).

From material presented in sections 7.2 and 7.3 above an important consideration has emerged in relation to prejudice research, one perhaps not fully represented in earlier chapters: the notion of how socially shared versions and interpretations of social reality can heavily shape the way individuals understand and explain the world they live in. In this sense it can be said that it is perhaps variation in how sections of the community differentially construct understandings of the inter-group relationship that may be regarded as problematic, rather than any simply definable qualities of the individuals or groups themselves. Perceptions of inter-group relationships cannot help but be moulded by the frames of reference, shared perspectives and explanations available to make sense of the world that are prevalent across a given in-group or social context through interactions between its members. These collective frameworks of interpretation represent models by which in-group members

conceptualise things like inter-group relationships for themselves, often helping to reinforce, reproduce and transmit existing perspectives through the way these are most commonly understood and described (Dixon & Reicher, 1997). Previous chapters have noted how identification can promote acceptance of and conformity to in-group beliefs through social influence (Turner, 1991). But in-group members also represent sources of both information and validation to each other, thereby reinforcing the perceived legitimacy of shared views. For those embedded within socio-cultural contexts where group norms and consensus incorporate negative and stereotypical perceptions of others, ideologies such as these work to perpetuate ways of thinking and explanation which can normalise or legitimate intolerance and prejudice (Reicher, 2001). In some contexts or communities forms of prejudice or hostility towards other groups may even be part of the norm, colouring interpretations and evaluations of the social relationship accordingly (Billig, 1978). These forms of shared understanding and the ways they are interactively constructed through language by in-group members have been the focus of a number of important studies in social psychology using qualitative or discursive methods of data collection and analysis.

The current project is not specifically discursive in approach, nor does it employ discourse analytical techniques. Yet several influential research studies into problematic inter-group relations have been undertaken from this perspective. In common with the current project, these incorporate issues of shared in-group understandings and consensus similar to those outlined above, as well as the use of qualitative interview procedures as a strategy of data collection. In reviewing examples of inter-group research where discursive approaches have been used in this way, an outline of how such issues relate to the current project will also be presented.

## **Chapter 8: Qualitative and Discursive Approaches to Inter-Group Hostility**

### **8.1 Some qualitative and discursive perspectives on inter-group hostility**

As previously noted, a growing awareness of cultural approbation against overt expressions of prejudice came, over time, to present a number of problems for traditional self-report measures in social psychology (Condor, Figgou, Abell, Gibson & Stevenson, 2006). This development also coincided with the emergence of certain alternative approaches which were particularly applicable to the study of prejudice (Van Dijk, 1993). In these, a greater emphasis was placed on qualitative research methodologies and the analysis of various types of spoken and written discourse, with a move away from highly controlled research environments towards more nuanced and flexible in-situ explorations of real-world contexts, especially in terms of accessing the lived-experiences of those within them (see Van Dijk, 1993; Wetherell & Potter, 1992; Augustinos, Tuffin & Rapley, 1999; Billig, 1978, 1995 for instance). Overall these approaches represent a broad range of perspectives rather than any narrowly fixed epistemological or methodological paradigm (Hammersly, 2002), and for this reason a selective review will reflect only the orientation of this current project.

Many of the previously reviewed approaches to the study of inter-group hostility share a more traditionally realist perspective, where concepts such as categories, attitudes and stereotypes are primarily seen as internally generated products of cognitive processes which then create prejudiced states or orientations in individuals (LeCouteur & Augustinos, 2001). This view tends to regard such aspects of social perception as unquestioned and valid representations of a reality directly perceived through the senses, which is then reflected in

the language people use to describe it (Potter, 2000). Language and discourse in this version, then, are largely seen as passive and neutral mediums which simply reflect internally generated perceptions (Rapley, 2001). Criticisms have suggested, however, that approaches which conceptualise internal-cognitive processes as representative of psychological or dispositional characteristics like this - or see prejudice purely in terms of individual pathology whilst ignoring how this is situated in and influenced by broader social contexts - can only produce theories, models and practices which are asocial and decontextualised, thus limiting any understanding of real-world phenomena (Hepburn, 2003).

Discursive approaches, on the other hand, have tended to focus more on the way events, situations and phenomena are *constructed* through language to produce versions of reality for people (Edwards, 1997). Things like categories and concepts are constituted using culturally available linguistic resources – words, phrases, expressions, arguments – which people use to understand, interpret and evaluate the social landscape around them (Potter, 2000). From this perspective language can be seen as *constitutive*, in that the way people interactively describe, negotiate and discuss their world serves to shape both it and their own sense of identity (Le Couteur & Augustinos, 2001). Language and discourse are also seen as being orientated to accomplish various tasks – they are *active* in how they are used to argue and debate the nature of social reality, to persuade or justify various perspectives, or to accuse and attribute blame (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). A third common feature is the view of language as *variable*. Instead of taking a traditional view of attitudes as stable, enduring and consistent sets of beliefs about the world which can be used to codify individual orientations, respondent expressions are regarded as flexibly capable of shift, ambiguity and contradiction as people negotiate their understanding of a given topic, depending on both the situated context of the discourse and what they are trying to achieve by it (Wetherell & Potter, 1992).

In the case of inter-group conflict, discursive approaches have focused on how expressions of hostility relate to the ways people interactively construct versions of reality in which 'real' conflicts between 'them' and 'us' become taken for granted (Potter, 2000). In this way prejudice is regarded more as a feature of the social context rather than individual disposition (Wetherell & Potter, 1992). The linguistic and discursive resources available within such contexts often provide the main, or even only, framework of explanation, interpretation and evaluation by which those embedded within them make sense of potentially problematic group interactions, and can additionally serve to legitimise and justify continuing negative perceptions and treatment of an out-group (Antaki, 1994). These *interpretive repertoires* (Potter & Wetherell, 1987) consist of related sets of commonplace and 'off-the-shelf' metaphors, arguments, terms, phrases that are most frequently used to define, interpret and evaluate aspects of inter-group relations. Collective repertoires of this sort also work to constrain shifts away from consensus towards other interpretations, due to the limitation of available alternative perspectives. In addition to everyday interactions between in-group members, repertoires can be further shaped by discourses from outside the immediate setting in which a person's life is lived, as political, institutional and media representations work to create and influence the range of available resources of interpretation (Wetherell, 1998). For example, the way different political parties or newspapers present and frame issues such as 'immigrants' and 'immigration' can hugely impact upon how these take form in subsequent public conceptualisations and evaluations, therefore reflecting the influence of perspectives which promote, maintain and perpetuate interpretations of society favourable to powerful and high status interest groups (Chomsky, 2002; Reicher, 2001; Chomsky & Herman, 2006).

In terms of interpretive repertoires, Wetherell and Potter's widely cited qualitative interview study of white New Zealander perspectives on the Maori community (1992) identified repetition, frequently recurring patterns and homogeneity in negative constructions of the inter-group relationship. These came in the form of common tropes, routine and rhetorically self-sufficient 'clinching arguments' and sets of 'socially acceptable' clichés. Stances on a range of issues relating to the out-group were often presented in this way as 'self-evident' social 'truths' which held unquestioned assumptions of validity, and were therefore regarded as beyond doubt by respondents (Wetherell & Potter, 1992). In this way, shared repertoires and interpretations of the inter-group relationship help maintain, reproduce and transmit negative and hostile perspectives towards the out-group within specific cultural contexts. An interview study of white residents' views on a recent and informal black settlement in their traditionally white South African neighbourhood found, in addition to common perceptions of the settlers as foreign, intrusive outsiders, that shared understandings significantly shaped collective actions which were resistant of social change and acceptance (Dixon & Reicher, 1997).

The influence of interpretive repertoires in negatively shaping people's discourse on inter-group relations has been observed in a number of ways, particularly in terms of how they are used by majority in-group members to perform various functions. One of these, found in both the Wetherell and Potter (1992) and Dixon and Reicher (1997) studies above, as well as qualitative interview work carried out in Australia by Augustinos et al. (1999), comes in the construction of distinctly separate or incompatible identities for social groups, wherein any perceived differences are deemed as 'real' or 'legitimate', and therefore responsible for or symptomatic of potentially problematic group interactions. In these accounts out-groups are frequently constructed and categorised as 'other' or 'separate' from the dominant majority,

perceived somehow as existing outside the accepted norms of the homogenously prevailing culture – in relation to which their own (out-group culture) is regarded as secondary or inferior (Augustinos et al., 1999).

Negative constructions of out-group identities can also be employed in order to justify, and perpetuate existing social inequalities, by shifting accountability to the out-group for its own misfortune (Augustinos et al., 2006). Such conceptions work to render any difference in group fortunes – in relation to out-group deprivation or disadvantage in social status and educational achievement or overrepresentation in unemployment, poverty or crime figures, for example - the fault of the out-group itself rather than broader social forces. In rationalising inequities of this kind, accounts seek to explain perceived out-group disadvantage by imputing cause to inability or inferiority on the out-group's part in adapting, fitting or being able to get along in mainstream society (Augustinos et al., 1999). Further, in shifting blame and legitimating existing social systems in this way, common perspectives also represent a means for further justifying negatively prejudiced interpretations of the inter-group relationship, thereby potentially 'validating' disdain expressed towards these selected 'others' for 'genuine' reasons – other than straightforward prejudice, of course (Potter, 2005). Collective cultural interpretations, then, create a reality for some that is imbued with 'just' and 'legitimate' reasons for prejudice and hostility, allowing negative orientations towards the out-group to be defended and reproduced in everyday perspectives through shared discourse. Other common forms this can take are in attributions claiming that it is the out-group, in fact, who are themselves prejudiced towards the in-group; that they (the out-group) consistently and systematically overestimate and exaggerate any prejudice supposedly directed towards them, and that they (the out-group) then use this latter as excuse for any social inequality, failure or disadvantage they are subject to (Augustinos et al., 1999;

Wetherell & Potter, 1992).

Clearly the findings outlined above highlight consensus and shared repertoires of understanding between in-group members as key influences on expressions of inter-group hostility where it is observed as prevalent across a community context (such as the one under investigation in the current project). Dominant and widespread explanations and interpretations of inter-group problems frequently come to represent an unquestioned reality for those who share them, thus shaping perceptions and evaluations of various aspects of the inter-group relationship. Earlier chapters have noted how it is often the *perception* of incompatibility or conflict in group relations, as much as any genuinely ascertainable instances of such, which can most often be regarded as contributory to problematic interactions (Brown, 2010). Also identified were a range of potential influences in this regard to manifestations of inter-group hostility, including perceptions of problematic differences between groups, perceptions of different types of threat emanating from the out-group, and perceptions of disadvantage or unfairness extant in comparative group fortunes. It can now be suggested that the ways in which such issues are most commonly interpreted and described across an in-group context can also have enormous influence on manifestations of inter-group hostility, through how these are evaluated and expressed on an individual basis. Common in-group world-views which incorporate hostility, negative bias and blame towards other groups in this way, then work to facilitate, reproduce, reinforce, legitimise and transmit repertoires of interpretation across their members, thus helping to further perpetuate inter-group hostility and perceptions of legitimate conflict.

What also becomes clear from reviewing these types of research is that any proposed investigation into how hostile in-group members constitute and interpret problematic inter-

group relations, particularly in terms of how they perceive both in-group consensus and the aforementioned array of potential contributory elements, is perhaps best served by first gaining access to detailed accounts of the inter-group relationship supplied from this point of view. By taking direct account of hostile orientations, as expressed by those representing them in a context marked by inter-group conflict, a deeper insight can then begin to be formed as to the constituent or componential nature of such perspectives. One way of doing this, common to both the current project and the studies outlined above, is through use of interview procedures which allow, and attempt to elicit, open discussion of themes and issues around problematic group interactions with an appropriately specific sample of individuals from a relevant context. Before embarking on such a course, however, some considerations need to be taken into account.

## **8.2 Benefits and limitations of qualitative approaches to inter-group hostility**

A most obvious strength of applying these types of qualitative interview methods (discourse analytical or otherwise) comes from the opportunities they provide for gaining deeper, more nuanced and meaningful insights into real-world instances of inter-group hostility (Potter, 2005). By accessing the lived experience of specific samples of respondents embedded within cultural contexts marked by social unrest, and examining how lay perceptions and shared interpretations can operate in relation to problematic inter-group relationships, a richer and more subtle understanding of such phenomena may come about (Richardson, 1996). Moreover, these types of approach offer a much more reflexive medium of study in a number of ways. Qualitative interviews are more flexible in adaption to participant response, for instance, and therefore capable of accessing information not available to most quantitative research methods - a questionnaire will only provide limited answers in terms of the

questions contained within it, and specifically to the way these have been framed; a limitation much less applicable to open-ended interview procedures (Lyons & Coyle, 2007). This willingness to incorporate respondents' own understandings and definitions also carries an acknowledgement that research participants are thinking, feeling complex human beings, capable of debate, argumentation and contradiction in their accounts, rather than simply inert subjects to be manipulated and straightforwardly measured for the purposes of study (Billig, 2002).

From a more traditionally positivistic science point of view, however, there can be objections to taking such an approach. One assertion we have already encountered is that research findings should ideally be applicable and comparable more generally across larger (if not universal) samples and populations, as a way of establishing meta-theoretical 'facts' about how human beings think and behave (Hammersley, 2005). Accordingly, any findings should also be replicable across social and temporal contexts, in order to further establish conceptual integrity. In contrast to this, many qualitative endeavours prefer to sample smaller, more culturally and contextually relevant or specific populations in order to try and effect a richer, more naturalistic analysis, sometimes using extreme or deviant cases as means to provide deeper insights into particular social phenomena (Brannen, 1995). The current project's position on this has already been set out. A second criticism of qualitative research using text-based data (as opposed to the hypothetico-deductive testing of numerically represented participant responses) can focus on a supposed lack of reliability in terms of its analytic procedures, focusing as these do on more potentially subjective and interpretive forms of analysis (Brannen, 1995). These critiques imply that a lack of hypothetically driven, precisely framed experimental questions and rigidly structured or controlled procedures often equate to a deficiency in standardisation and rigour which can limit the consequent validity of any

findings (Potter, 1998). Advocates of qualitative methodologies, on the other hand, advance a number of points to counter these accusations, including the recommendation that research using such techniques should be as transparent and explicit as possible in providing information and detail about the specifics of any analytical procedures undertaken. The manner in which such matters have been addressed in the current project will appear in the phase one analysis segment of the upcoming methodology chapter.

### **8.3 Qualitative approaches and the current research**

A basic outline of the phase one qualitative study - relating to the target context and sample, the use of an open-ended and semi-structured interview format, and the intent to assess a range of potential contributory influences to inter-group conflict as expressed in the accounts of both overtly-hostile and non-hostile respondents - has been set out in previous chapters. How this will be operationalised in terms of content and specific methodological, procedural and analytical techniques will be presented shortly, as will a summary of the general perspective and particular research aims of the current project as a whole. As it stands, phase one may be regarded as a self-contained piece of work from which its own set of research conclusions can be drawn. A further purpose, however, is to use this opportunity to explore how accounts from respondents embedded within a genuine context of inter-group hostility appear to relate to a range of long-standing theoretical perspectives. Instead of beginning from the 'top-down', with a highly standardised/formulaic or academically pre-conceived definition of what prejudice and inter-group hostility 'should' look like or consist of, the current research proceeds from the 'bottom-up', with a more open, flexible and exploratory approach in allowing respondents as free a rein as possible to discuss problematic inter-group relations – which can then be assessed in terms of their compatibility with the range of theoretical propositions outlined in earlier chapters. Finally, material gleaned from participant

accounts in the qualitative phase one will be used to create questionnaire measures for the quantitative second phase. In this can be seen a potential conflict. As, for some in the social-psychological research community, mixing methods in such a way does not always come without problems. These will be addressed here before moving on to a more specific methodology chapter for the current research.

## Chapter 9: Use of Mixed Methodologies in Social Psychology and the Current Research

On the surface, mixed methods in psychological inquiry might appear simply a case of selecting the most appropriate practical means to optimise a study (Woolgar, 1996). If only things were so simple. The existence of different perspectives on the nature of knowledge and how to go about acquiring it often means that making such decisions is not always as straightforward as it seems. A quick, overly-simplified and polarised summary might best illustrate this:

On one hand, hypothetico-deductive scientific *realist* approaches try to compare or establish relationships between observable representations and the underlying reality of phenomena by objective study through unified sets of procedure (Woolgar, 1996). This involves the isolation and control of factors/variables, as they are manifest in a ‘representative’ sample of a general population (usually in terms of numerical incidence and frequency). Analysis of statistical aggregation tries to provide support for causation processes or associations, which may be then extrapolated back and applied to the general population as a whole. These methods are often promoted in terms of the opportunity for standardisation, replicability and validity they offer (Hammersley, 2005; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

On the other hand are many what-some-people-might-sometimes-call fingers. In other words, a more *relativistic* approach to research in the social sciences. This perspective asserts that, rather than consisting of fixed, measurable sets of objective phenomena, social reality may in fact be multiply and interactively constructed and negotiated by its observers, and in this way produce different contextually dependent ‘versions’ for different people (or groups) at

different times and in different situations (Potter, 2005). Understandably this questions the propriety of investigating human social behaviour in the same way as objects in the physical world, without consideration of variability, meaning, context and complexity. It also highlights the difficulty of applying findings from the particularity of one instance to equally unique others, or more generally across broader contexts and populations (Richardson, 2005). A shift away from numerical representations of data towards analysis of narrative accounts is also entailed – focusing on the relationship between linguistic expression and the world this attempts to describe – as well as reflexive incorporation of social actors' own understanding and definitions of phenomena (Brannen, 1995; Henwood, 2004).

In short, then, we are stuck with a choice between a) a crudely naive, over-generalised and insufficiently reflexive asocial reductivism, incapable of deeper insight or subtlety due to an inadequate consideration of context, motive and meaning or b) a solipsistic vermicelli of undisciplined fuzziness and overly interpretive subjectivity, insufficiently standardised or reliable, and compromised in terms of applicable insight due to a lack of broader generalisability (Bryman, 1992; Hammersley, 1996). Fortunately this rather harsh and flippant *précis* conveys the somewhat false impression of an unbridgeable dichotomy, accurately capturing neither the range of diverse epistemological positions along the continuum between the two poles, nor adequately portraying the methodological variety in contemporary trends of research practice (Richardson, 2005). Few researchers would perhaps identify themselves purely as ascribing to either the naive realist or heavy constructionist positions outlined above, but more likely claim to embrace a perspective falling somewhere in-between (Brannen, 1995). The current research takes such an intermediate position, broadly in line with a critical realist perspective (Sayer, 2000) and embracing an informed pragmatic approach to methodological eclecticism (Hammersley, 2005). There is no space

here for a meditation on the deeper ontological or epistemological nature of reality, or of how much we can ever really know about this. The author is not qualified to make any definitive statements about the extent to which a quark can be considered 'real' or a nocturnal penile tumescence thought of as discursively constituted (to offer two deliberately provocative examples). Nor does he feel capable of making assertions about which came first, the chicken or the signifier. Instead, discussion will focus only on how mixed perspectives and methodologies might legitimately combine in the current work.

Broadly in line with perspectives of critical realism (see Sayer, 2000), the current research acknowledges that social and interactional forces heavily shape and influence individual perceptions and representations of reality, and that different levels and types of knowledge can also be claimed about social phenomena (Brannen, 2004). This perhaps corresponds with a 'weak' constructionist position (Burr, 2003), in that it accepts the relativistic nature of experience, knowledge and information whilst remaining open to the possibility of independently existing external phenomena - regardless of how truly 'knowable' these may actually be (Sayer, 2000). So while the difficulty of ascertaining any one 'true' version of reality is accepted, this approach still maintains the possibility of arriving at vertically corresponding interpretations of phenomena which can help in the production of practically applicable results – an important consideration when dealing with inter-group conflict.

In the present case, it has been repeatedly emphasised how different perceptions of reality can be socially constructed and maintained through shared contextually specific repertoires of interpretation, to produce negative orientations towards other social groups (Potter & Wetherell, 1992). Yet the repercussions of this can frequently have very real consequences for those who hold them and, more seriously, those on the receiving end. The hostility and

perceived reasons for it (incompatibility, threat and unfairness in group interactions) described by participants in the current study certainly seemed very real to them, as did their expressed willingness to engage in negative behaviours towards the out-group because of this. And it is in activities such as physical violence that we see a very realist outcome of relativistic interpretations of the social context from a collectively biased perspective. In this sense it does not matter whether hostile orientations spring from internal categorisations described in language, or discursive constructions which take on subsequent reality in the human brain. In line with these practical concerns the current project therefore attempts only to 1.) Qualitatively assess any form and componential structure potentially underlying expressions of hostility in respondent accounts of inter-group problems 2.) quantitatively establish differentiation between hostile and non-hostile respondents in order to compare the presence, relative importance and dynamics of this range of perceived components more broadly across the problematic inter-group context. In this sense the current research straddles both theoretical and methodological camps in the pursuit of practically applicable knowledge.

All this is not to suggest that theoretical orientations have necessarily shackled researchers to either quantitative or qualitative methods in general, or that project specific methodological cross-hatching has not long taken place (Hammersley, 1992). But rather that it is advisable, if not necessary, to first acknowledge at least some degree of underlying epistemological tension in order to proceed down the mixed methods route from an informed pragmatic standpoint (Richardson, 2005). Method itself can be regarded as neither inherently valid nor invalid in one sense, as validity lies to an extent in the expertise and discipline with which a study is designed and operationalised - the precision and integrity with which data is handled, the critical rigour applied to accounts and conclusions drawn from it (Henwood, 2004). One

relevant criterion for this kind of validity may in fact rest on appropriately informed consideration of potential methods at the outset (Bryman, 1992), so that with an awareness of such issues, there is no reason why informed pragmatic research cannot attempt to be as objective and open when it comes to choice of methods as in other aspects of the research process (Seale, 2004).

In the current research, neither approach employed can perhaps be considered truly ideal, involving as they do trade-offs between breadth and depth, subtlety and generalisability, naturalism and artificiality (Hammersley, 1992). Nonetheless, this can still be regarded as the best available way of proceeding under the circumstances. Different approaches contribute different qualities and are best suited to accessing different types of knowledge in order to create a more comprehensive understanding of a research topic (Todd, Nerlich, McKeown & Clarke, 2004). It has also been noted that inter-group hostility, rather than exhibiting a monolithic, unitary nature, may in fact comprise a number of diverse elements. The qualitative methods of phase one were essential in identifying and establishing the relevance of such themes in naturalistic accounts of respondents from a conflicted inter-group context. Without this richly informed platform, any subsequent steps would suffer greatly in terms of applied meaning and ecological validity. What this phase cannot do so well, perhaps, is help to assess how patterns of prevalence in these components manifest more generally across the context – or which components assume greater importance in the minds of its inhabitants. Moreover, it does not let us compare for patterns of difference between overtly hostile and non-hostile perspectives in terms of componential structure, even if this is, to some extent, artificially manipulated by the researcher. In order to accomplish these last investigations, quantitative measures were therefore employed.

Moreover, in terms of approaching inter-group disharmony from multiple angles and perspectives, a number of researchers in recent years have called for more integrated and multi-faceted approaches to be taken. Reicher (2001) points out that a one-sided reliance on specific methods is only likely to produce one-sided understanding of a phenomenon, and that new strategies and combinations of method may be needed to address the complexity of inter-group hostility. Other researchers (Levine & Campbell, 1972) recognise that no single level of study may be sufficient to the task, and recommend the use of different forms of analysis of negative inter-group relations (Wagner, Christ & Pettigrew, 2008) in order to create more integrated and multi-level paradigms of research and theory (Stephan, 2008). In order to optimise such approaches, Schmader and Stone (2008) suggest that we need to concentrate more on prejudice and inter-group hostility as they occur in the real world, especially in terms of this being a concrete problem in need of address.

This last reminds us that there can be benefits both academic and practical in enlisting such combined strategies. Identifying context relevant features of inter-group hostility and how these manifest in the real world, especially in terms of relative importance in hostile perspectives, can only further our knowledge of inter-group conflict. However, being able to pinpoint more accurately which of these components appear most potentially problematic may also facilitate development of more effective intervention strategies in the future. By narrowing focus in this way, mixed methods can constitute an iterative strategy if used as part of longer-term projects, and may be complementarily or corroboratively utilised, switching back and forth between the two modes in order to tighten understanding of the problem. Social psychology has long concerned itself with the investigation of socially problematic phenomena and, while higher level academic and philosophical concerns are undoubtedly important to this, they should not be allowed to wholly subsume our desire to undertake

meaningfully applicable research (Richardson 2005).

And finally, there is a related and more quotidian sense in which informed use of mixed methods can be seen as desirable. The process of negotiating different epistemological, theoretical and methodological terrains can perhaps only further the experience of researchers who undertake such a task. Familiarisation with various types of knowledge and consideration of appropriate strategies by which to try and acquire these can therefore not only produce more fully rounded and multi-faceted research, but also help to develop researcher identities which are similarly versatile and comprehensive (Brannen, 2004). A consideration of how this directly applies to the current project will now be presented.

## **Chapter 10: Methodology**

The introductory chapters have presented a case for how the study of inter-group hostility might benefit from research carried out in a context identified as displaying prior and ongoing manifestations of inter-group conflict. Examining a genuine instance of inter-group hostility from the 'bottom-up' perspective of those embedded within this provides the opportunity for gaining more nuanced and naturalistic insight into how aspects of the phenomenon express themselves. Before going into more prosaic methodological and procedural detail about this current research project, some background material will therefore be provided on the social context chosen for research, as a way of establishing its suitability for the task at hand.

### **10.1 Background and the social context under study**

The research focussed on the East Lancashire town of Burnley. As procedures were beginning on phase one of this current project a 2007 newspaper article referred to Burnley as 'Britain's most segregated town, a BNP stronghold where many Asians and whites only meet to riot (The Independent, February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2007). Of the town's 90,000 population at this time, roughly 7% were identified as of South Asian heritage (predominantly Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslims) who were largely concentrated in a single ward - identified as being amongst the 1% of the worst deprived areas in the county, with 15% of houses uninhabited and a further 27% of occupied properties considered unfit for habitation. In direct juxtaposition to this, the white British residential areas which provided participants for the current research studies were described in the same article as 'superficially identical (to the Asian residential areas), grids of dilapidated ... two-up, two-down terraced houses built ... by mill owners for their employees 100 years ago.' This poor state of economic affairs in these

areas has been largely attributed to successive job losses entailed by the decline of traditional (textile, engineering and manufacturing) industries in the region - a factor of particular relevance due to an original need for cheap labour in these areas being pivotal in encouraging the influx of South Asian immigrants to the North West of England beginning from the late 1960s. As the above article asserts, the two ethnic communities exist largely in de facto segregation, with some areas almost exclusively white and others Asian. Social interaction between the two groups is for the most part restricted to school or workplace environments. ([http://www.burnley.gov.uk/site/scripts/download\\_info.php?fileID=80](http://www.burnley.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?fileID=80)).

There has been a history of difficulties between members of these two ethnic heritage groups over a number of years, including full-scale street riots and other disturbances. At the time the current project began, the far-right British National Party polled roughly 11% of the regional electorate in national and 21% in local authority elections, thus holding several seats on the local council – including those represented by the specific wards participants were recruited from. A 2004 government task force report, chaired by Lord Tony Clarke, commissioned and published as a consequence of full-scale street disturbances between members of the two ethnic groups, set out to highlight some of the key issues felt to be responsible for these events (for the full set of reports visit [www.burnleytaskforce.org.uk](http://www.burnleytaskforce.org.uk)). Included here is an anonymous quote from a white resident which serves well to set the scene:

*‘Racism apart, there are a lots of other factors in Burnley that are just not right. There is a whole section/class of people that have been written off, both economically, socially and medically (sic). Run down housing and neglected areas are common place, whole generations have grown up knowing nothing else.’* (Burnley task force report, p. 80).

Besides drawing attention to the widespread prejudice against Asians in the town this quote also emphasises how social deprivation factors are seen to exacerbate inter-group problems. Ethnically, the in-group community targeted by the current project were considered most likely to self-identify as white, British or English. It was expected that these particular facets of identity, alongside personal membership of a local community comprised of similar individuals, would be highly salient, particularly in the context of comparison with the relevant Asian out-group. Demographically, this community represented the low-to-mid end of the socio-economic spectrum (or, more simply, what used to be known as the working-class.) Besides the situational aspects described above *vis-a-vis* inter-group relations there was further reason to consider that participants recruited from this context would be an appropriate focus of study. This comes from evidence to suggest that many members of this community were often freely, openly and unashamedly expressive of negative sentiments towards the Asian out-group, and thus perhaps relatively less likely to self-present as otherwise. This comes first from evidence provided in the Burnley Task Force report and encapsulated in the following quote regarding the extensive volume of material received from the public during consultation processes:

*‘It would be easy to dismiss many of the biased and prejudiced views expressed, especially those directed at members of the minority ethnic communities. We believe that the reason for some of the outright racist views held by many, including some quite young people, have their foundation in the poor communication between the governed and the government in Burnley.’*

[http://www.burnley.gov.uk/site/scripts/download\\_info.php?fileID=80](http://www.burnley.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?fileID=80)).

In support of the idea that participants would be relatively uninhibited in such expressions comes data from an unpublished undergraduate study by this author examining similar issues in the same context. Here a questionnaire was also used, albeit in limited form, to initially

explore white British in-group attitudes towards the Asian out-group. From a sample of 100 a total of 41% of respondents openly scored 6 or above on 1 to 7-point (7 being the maximum) Likert scales asking them to rate their willingness to engage in indirect (protests, marching, handing out pamphlets) and direct (use of force or violence) negative activities directed at the out-group. Similarly high levels of response were also recorded on items such as ‘I really don’t have much time for them (OG)’, ‘I would be quite happy to have no more dealings with them (OG)’ and ‘I find that likeable ones (OG members) are usually an exception to the rule.’

A third, admittedly anecdotal, source of evidence for likely openness of response emanates from the lived experience of the researcher himself<sup>19</sup>. Having previously lived and worked within similar target communities for many years, and been frequently exposed to the unabashed, openly expressed and often defiant promulgation of such highly prejudiced and hostile viewpoints, the author claims at least some insight into how prevalent and casual such everyday expression might actually be.

## **10.2 Phase one method and procedure**

### *10.2.1 Interview intent, schedule and design*

A key aspect of this current research project is represented by use of the qualitative interview procedures at phase one to access lay-accounts of issues around the subject of inter-group hostility from a perspective of lived experience. Therefore, through use of reflexive and naturalistic open-ended, semi-structured interview techniques in relation to the participant base described above it was hoped to acquire more nuanced and meaningful information

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<sup>19</sup> Besides growing up in the area, the researcher spent the period between 1988 and 2001 locally employed as a carpet fitter. This involved spending time in roughly three/five houses per day, five days a week for 13 years, and indulging in conversations with their residents. These experiences, alongside providing insight into how community members expressed their perspectives on the inter-group relationship, also provided valuable skills for later conducting participant interviews from an insider perspective. These will be discussed in section 9.2.3.

about problematic inter-group relations, especially from overtly hostile perspectives. In allowing respondents as free rein as possible it was further hoped that respondent-driven material would provide information about hostility in this particular context not available by other means. The semi-structured, open-ended format allowed participants to consider and discuss which factors seemed most relevant to their *own* conceptions and explanations of inter-group disharmony, whilst still retaining enough structure to keep focus on matters relating to inter-group problems. As introductory chapters have suggested, the concept of differing perceptions of individual or shared versions of social reality is of particular relevance to prejudice and intergroup hostility research, and it therefore seems appropriate to approach its study in a manner that can accommodate these more subjective elements. For these reasons the interview schedule was designed in such a way as to avoid unnecessarily influencing participant response where possible. Instead of beginning interview procedures with a rigidly defined set of questions relating to high specifically problematic elements of inter-group relations as provided by academic theory, it was therefore decided to keep discussion as open as possible. In this way, if material came up that *could* be interpreted in the light of the various theoretical positions outlined in the introductory chapters, this then would have been produced in a more naturalistic manner through participant discourses themselves. No restrictions were to be placed on either the subject or length of participant response, though certain prompts and questions were included to help keep the accounts themselves focussed on matters at hand.

The interviews were to be presented as research into aspects of potential conflict between social groups in the local community, rather than a direct study of expressed hostility towards Asians. Although a main aim of the current research was to examine perspectives held by hostile members of the white British community towards this out-group, a more direct

approach may not have been most appropriate ('So, you're a racist? Tell me about it ...'). Instead respondents would be told that they were going to be asked questions about relations between the white British and Asian populations in Burnley, and why problems might be considered to arise in these. The guiding principle behind this approach was that if, as we have seen in the introduction, one were to ask a social psychologist about such matters, a social psychological explanation would no doubt be forthcoming (with similarly specific results being likely for a sociologist or politician.) Whereas asking the same thing of a 'racist' would perhaps produce responses more reflective of that particular orientation. In this way interview procedures were designed to indirectly tap into highly hostile perspectives rather than taking a head-on approach. As noted, elements in the current sample may have been considered likely to be openly expressive of prejudice, but it was also important that they were encouraged to relax as much as possible without reason to feel defensive or as being judged in any way (which, in fact, they were not. But this shall be returned to presently.)

To begin the interview process it was considered appropriate to provide some initial preparatory material for respondents, in order to focus their attention on the topic to be discussed. Rather than launching straight into questions, then, volunteers would be asked to first spend some time reading and reflecting on a Newspaper article. This was taken from an edition of the Daily Star dated June 26<sup>th</sup> 2001, the text of which relates to a well-documented incident of intergroup conflict that occurred in the town. The article reports on an incident described as a '*riot*' involving up to '400' individuals from '*white and Asian gangs*' who '*battled riot police and one another and torched shops, pubs and cars.*' (See appendix 1 for full newspaper article.) Once this setting the scene exercise had been accomplished a series of predetermined questions would then be posed.

The interview schedule itself was fairly flexible, with the questions tending more to the general than specific. These were arranged in order of potential priority, with the primary bank of questions being along the lines of. *'Why do you think these kinds of problems occur between different ethnic groups in society?'* *'What do you think are the underlying factors that cause problems between social groups?'* *'What sort of things contribute to problematic inter-group relations?'* *'How do people in the local community feel in general about the Asians?'* *'What are the reasons usually given for hostility towards the Asians?'* *'What can be done to try and reduce such things happening in future?'* (See appendix 1 for full interview schedule items). Responses to these and other queries would then be further pursued in terms of discussing each and any specific aspects that were raised in subsequent discourse, thus allowing it to take whatever course respondents then chose. A second bank of more specific questions was also prepared, in order to facilitate further discussion if the primary bank did not prove sufficient to maintain dialogue (which, in most cases it did.) These were created more with an eye to the range of theoretical perspectives outlined in the introduction, though still retaining a more general feel. Several themes repeatedly recur in relation to prominent theoretical understandings of inter-group prejudice and these were reflected here. For instance *'Do you think that there might be any differences between the groups that are thought to cause problems?'* *'Do you think the Asians can be seen as a potential threat in any way? Do you think there are any conflicts of interest between the whites and Asians which could be seen as problematic?'* *'How do you think things would be different in Burnley if there were no Asians here?'*

The interview schedule took on additional shape from input as the procedures progressed, with respondent-identified issues of interest being subsequently included for discussion in later interviews. One example of this came through discussion of the influence exerted by

outside forces on the intergroup context. Respondents in the first three interviews all brought up the subject of how they thought inter-group relations were negatively impacted by a number of external influences, including how the mainstream tabloid media report on such issues, how the BNP presented such issues locally, and how the ‘government’ sought to influence things. It was therefore felt that the area of ‘outside influence’ was of sufficient interest to be incorporated as a subsequent point of potential discussion. In a similar vein, the second person to be interviewed raised an interesting point – that while perceiving the Asians as having a generally negative impact upon local and general society, she did not consider her own life to have been negatively affected. The question, ‘Do you think that your own life has in any way been negatively affected by the Asians being here?’ was also added to the schedule. Once the open-ended, semi-structured format had been decided on, and appropriate materials for this created, recruitment of respondents began.

### *10.2.2 Recruitment and sampling*

An opportunity sampling method was used to recruit participants for phase one interview procedures from the context described above. The intent behind this was to hopefully access a fairly representative cross-section of views extant in the local community around inter-group relations. Besides any practical or ethical difficulties entailed by attempting to specifically target and recruit only highly hostile individuals, the current study wanted to assess as broad a range of counter-opinion as possible in discussion of the relevant topics. Yet accessing at least some number and degree of hostile perspectives towards Asians remained an obvious and important consideration. For this purpose adverts were placed in local Burnley Express and Citizen Newspapers:

## **Opinionated People Wanted!**

**Would you be interested in taking part in a University of Central Lancashire survey asking what real people think about how different social groups get along?**

**If you are patriotic and prepared to speak your mind we would like to recruit you for a short, confidential and anonymous interview**

**Ring or email to find out more:**

Of all the recruitment options considered in relation to phase one this was felt to be perhaps the most appropriate in its wording. Obviously the author had some reservations, as there was no way of ensuring beforehand that such an approach would work, but under the circumstances a decision was made to proceed (See appendix 1 for newspaper advert.)

Arrangements were then made by email or mobile phone for respondents to the advert to be interviewed in their own homes at a convenient time. During this arrangement process participants were informed verbally or in writing that the interviews would specifically focus on issues relating to problematic social interactions between different ethnic groups (i.e. the white and south Asian populations of the town) and any problems they saw as arising from this. They were informed that the interview would be sound-recorded and transcribed for research purposes and that, although data would remain confidential to all parties but the researcher, some excerpts from the interviews may be used for publication at a later date in anonymous form with any potentially identifying material removed. Volunteers were also told that they could terminate or withdraw co-operation from the study at any point, including subsequent withdrawal following the interview and transcription processes. Although material could be removed post-interview, it could not however be changed or altered in any way. (See appendix 1 for briefing information and consent sheet.) Once agreement was

obtained for participation, arrangements were then made for the researcher to visit respondents in their homes in order to conduct the interviews.

Overall 21 individuals agreed to take part (13 male, 8 female.) Their ages ranged from 16 to 56 years with a mean age of 39. All participants were of white/Caucasian British heritage. All participants lived within a 3-mile radius of the town centre and no more than 3 miles from the Asian community's main area of residence. Some anonymity was retained by use only of forenames in the interviews themselves, though these were subsequently replaced with pseudonyms for the transcription process. The only demographic details recorded or asked for were gender, age and occupation. A fuller list of respondent details will be presented in section 9.2.4.

#### *10.2.3 Interview procedure*

Qualitative data for phase one was acquired by tape-recording the interview procedures. Interviews had been designed (and pre-tested on a long-suffering fellow researcher) to last roughly one hour. In practice, no interview lasted less than 40 and no longer than 90 minutes in total. Interviews took place between May 2006 and April 2007 in respondent's own homes. Prior to commencing the interview, volunteers were asked to read a briefing sheet and subsequently indicate their consent to participate (see appendix 1 for briefing and instruction sheet). Following this the newspaper article was presented and the interview proper began.

Some important points should be included here about the way in which interviews were conducted. Discussion of issues around intergroup prejudice, hostility and conflict can be an extremely sensitive subject. This is especially true when attempting to access naturalistic and honest responses from individuals who may harbour hostile and prejudicial attitudes to

members of other ethnic groups. In wider society, 'racism' and prejudice of this sort may be seen as generally frowned upon, and expression of such sentiments perhaps regarded as unacceptable. Asking someone if and why they hold these views is not as straightforward, then, as inquiring about their views on more mundane or everyday topics. For this reason it was essential that the interviewer remained as neutral and open-minded as possible, so as to put respondents at ease and allow them to speak as openly and freely about their views. Moreover, to treat volunteers in this current (or, for that matter, any) study as mere research subjects to be studied, besides being potentially counter-productive, would also have been inappropriate and disrespectful (regardless of personal orientations towards any of the issues raised). The approach taken by this interviewer was therefore one of genuine and non-judgemental curiosity. Interview procedures were conducted in as respectful, friendly and informal manner as possible within the remits of acceptable research practice<sup>20</sup>. Perhaps conveniently, the author of this current research errs towards informality, friendliness, sincere curiosity and non-judgement by natural bent; however, any hint of condescension, stuffiness or over-formality in the interview procedures would have come at the detriment of the current research, as this would have undoubtedly put respondents on the defensive and caused them to perhaps monitor their expressions more cautiously.

A related point in relation to interviewer orientation concerns life experience. A number of researchers (see Jaspal, 2009) have stressed the benefits of conducting qualitative research from an 'insider' perspective. This undoubtedly played its role in the current research, as the interviewer's considerable experience of living within and interacting with members of this community – including knowledge of the locale and its social history, as well as possessing a

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<sup>20</sup> In other words, rather than turning up in starched shirt and tie, frowning down at a clipboard and muttering or barking out questions in Received Pronunciation, the interviewer's appearance and general demeanour perhaps owed more to the Frank Gallagher character depicted in British sit-com, *Shameless*. With perhaps a hint of the investigative journalist Louis Theroux thrown in for good measure.

local accent, along with its shared and context specific colloquialisms, terms and phrases of meaning and expression - proved most useful in both helping the procedures to run successfully, whilst also allowing potentially greater insight into some aspects of the subsequent analysis (see foot-note 17, page 115).

#### *10.2.4 Interview transcription and analysis*

Qualitative analysis of interview data can take in a complex and diverse number of forms and techniques, often with no explicit hard and fast rules applying rigidly to its application. While several options for transcription and analysis were considered in relation to the current research, space only allows for a brief consideration of these here. Very broadly, several of the more discursive approaches available (of which there are many and varied examples) tend to a greater and lesser degree to go beyond analysing for common themes the explanations provided by respondents about a topic and draw focus on the form, structure and function of discourse, the linguistic techniques and strategies used by respondents in the way things are expressed themselves (see Wetherell, 1998, for an overview) This current research, however, is interested in assessing themes in relation to inter-group hostility at a broader surface level, in order to try and interpret which aspects of the conflicted inter-group relationship are considered most problematic by respondents within the conflicted community. Other, less explicitly discursive approaches, like Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (Smith & Osbourne, 2003) also tend to rely on greater level of depth and detail in analysis, often involving repeated interactions with individual respondents to establish and check for clarity of meaning. This was not possible for the current research, given that respondents, while happy enough to give up a small amount of time, would likely object to repeated questioning. Not only this, but as subsequent analysis was partly orientated towards roughly defining how

prejudiced these respondents were, certain difficulties might again be anticipated. Unlike more broadly thematic approaches such as Grounded theory (Glaser, 1992), the current research did not intend to create any theoretical framework from the data collected, nor was it attempting to rigidly fit data into any pre-existing theoretical perspective as some more naively realist approaches entail. As stated previously, the current research was broadly exploratory in nature, with the intent to take a fairly open, bottom-up inductive approach to data analysis – themes here being generated from respondent data rather than any strongly pre-defined perspective. Yet clearly some prior influence is involved in the creation of certain interview questions in relation to difference and threat, and moreover there is additional intent to assess a number of longstanding theoretical interpretations of inter-group hostility in reference to themes that are established. The current research falls somewhere amongst the various approaches to qualitative research (as do many such projects), and the author's basic epistemological standpoint has previously been outlined in chapter 8. For the purposes of current analysis the approach taken will therefore fall under the banner of Thematic Analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). Rather than any specifically prescribed methodology this represents a broad research perspective and research tool for use across different methodological and theoretical paradigms. Instead of presenting an extended description of this perspective towards qualitative research and analysis, however, the forthcoming section will focus only on which and how techniques of data analysis were used in the current study, to demonstrate transparency and rigour in the analytical process (see Braun & Clarke 2006 for analysis guidelines in relation to this.)

Following each interview procedure, the researcher's first task was to jot down any notes and impression formed during discussion with the participant while the memory was fresh (after first vacating the interview location, obviously). Transcripts were then subsequently produced

from the interview tapes. An essential aspect of data analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) is familiarity with the data. For the current project, all interview, transcription and analysis procedures were undertaken by the author alone, thus ensuring maximum exposure and absorption in the material from the very beginning. Transcription itself consisted of rigorous and verbatim representations of respondent accounts, including indications of any gestural or non-verbal communication, such as laughter, pointed looks or movement. Transcripts were also produced in phonetic spelling for dialect words, and punctuation attempted to follow as close as possible the intent of those speaking. A good deal of this would not have been possible had the interview and transcription procedures not been undertaken by the same person.

Once transcription of all interviews had been completed, tapes were played back alongside a reading of the printed manuscripts to allow checking of accuracy to occur. The 21 interview transcripts were then read through several times before initial note taking and coding commenced. This was done for each manuscript in the form of line by line coding, whereby detailed notes and basic coding procedures were produced over a number of readings. A series of broad themes were next established in relation to the specific codes across the data. In many ways this was relatively straightforward for the current project, as respondents were quite consistently clear about what they regarded as the key problematic elements in the inter-group relationship. For example, many accounts in response to initial questioning about which factors were seen as underlying inter-group hostility explicitly stated issues of difference between the groups, perceptions of threat represented by the out-group, perceptions of Asians as being in receipt of preferential treatment, perceptions of problematic outside influence and separation between the groups straight off the bat. As these can clearly be seen to represent various thematic facets of the inter-group relationship, many were

adopted as general thematic categories after initial coding had been completed. Such responses were also remarkably uniform across the sample, with the same issues arising again and again (an aspect of the data that will be subsequently discussed in relation to consensus effects in the target community.)

Once the broad themes had been established, separate documents were then created for each theme, comprising all examples of coded data which related to this. These documents were then coded more specifically in terms of any sub-themes recurrent in the data. Here once more respondent accounts tended to be quite explicit in identifying aspects of each theme they regarded as potentially problematic influences on inter-group relations, as well as describing in which terms this influence was interpreted as problematic. For instance, within the 'Inter-group Differences' theme a number of areas were repeatedly highlighted as examples of this – with perceived differences of dress, language and religion, for example, commonly being cited as areas of concern. To make subsequent analysis easier, separate documents were then created for each sub-theme.

Alongside the coding, identification and analysis of each thematic element of respondent discourse, some further observations were noted and categorised as analysis proceeded. This related to distinctions which could be drawn between various perspectives expressed in accounts relating to the Asians. What became evident from the interview stage on, were differences in general respondent orientations towards the target out-group - which were then subsequently adopted in reference to the analysis. Put simply, of the 21 respondent transcripts analysed, one small sub-set of accounts contained no expressions of animosity, dislike or hostility towards the Asian out-group in their accounts. Conversely, a larger subset demonstrated quite consistent hostility throughout their accounts. These two elements were initially designated as non-hostile and more overtly-hostile perspectives for purposes of

analysis, and separated accordingly in relation to printed manuscripts relating to each identified sub-theme. Things were not so simple, however.

Further observations were also made in regard to respondent accounts which could not be said to fall strictly into either camp – and as such were designated ‘less-hostile’ in the analysis. One respondent, for instance, appeared quite consistently reasonable and non-hostile towards the Asians throughout the majority of her transcript, yet near the end still used the term ‘Paki’ several times and stated that she ‘didn’t really have much time for “them”.’ Other respondents also appeared to fluctuate in terms of their expressed levels of hostility towards Asians as their accounts progressed – seeming to express more, or in some cases less, hostility with passing time (examples of both these observations will be highlighted and discussed further in the chapter 10 analyses.)

This tricky delineation, alluding to ‘less hostile’ elements and variation within individual accounts generated across the sample for the sake of clearer analysis raises pertinent issues, however, around the subject of self-presentation in participant response, and in particular how this relates to discourse analytical arguments around the topic. While chapter 6 has previously considered comparable issues in relation to survey methodologies, such problems may, if anything, be greatly magnified through the qualitative interview process – survey measures can be filled in anonymously without the respondent having to actually interact with a researcher, whereas an interview necessarily involves face-to-face contact. Because of this, impression management concerns on behalf of respondents can become a factor of greater potential importance (Van Dijk, 1993). As noted previously, general awareness of a widespread opprobrium against the open or public expression of prejudice tends to run right the way through many modern western societies. Consequently, attempts to access expressions of this type may run into difficulty, as accounts or discourse around the topic

may be subject to the use of self-presentation strategies on behalf of respondents in order to avoid being seen as prejudiced or racist (Condor, 2000). In this way frank and open discussion of themes around inter-group hostility may be hindered, as participants tailor their responses to be more in line with what they regard as desirable in relation to the liberal strictures against prejudice deemed appropriate by wider society. This is especially relevant in the micro-context of an interview situation, conducted with a stranger, from a university, who despite no overt indication of such may well be regarded as a representative of the aforementioned liberal norms and strictures.

Overtly hostile elements of the current study displayed no such qualms and were often unabashedly, even proudly, expressive of negativity towards the out-group. Non-hostile elements also tended to be quite consistently vehement, well-versed and confident in their espousal of the counter-position. In regards to elements here termed 'less-hostile', three possibilities can be stated: 1.) mixed or fluctuating responses by individual respondents may represent a genuine conflict between unthinking acceptance of a prevalent in-group consensus of negativity towards the out-group and acknowledgement that more general proscriptions against such prejudice might indeed also have some validity – particularly as this may have been the first time some respondents have been required to give these matters serious consideration. 2.) These same discrepancies may in fact be a direct result of impression management concerns. One beauty of the open-format interview is that it requires prolonged interchanges of dialogue between the interlocutors over an extended period of time. As such it can become increasingly difficult to maintain a 100% comprehensive veneer of social desirability throughout. The variation in accounts might therefore represent examples of when the mask has slipped. 3.) The differences observed may be context dependent and relate to relativity in understandings of what constitutes genuine prejudice or

otherwise. In a kingdom of the blind the one-eyed man is king; in a predominantly and overtly prejudiced community context, one who espouses only mild or casual prejudice may consider themselves not to be genuinely prejudiced at all in the grand scheme of things, therefore registering little awareness of potential contradiction in their statements.

Whichever may be the case, and indeed a combination of all three may be extant in participant response, there is little beyond what has already been operationalised by the current study to further get around the problem. Therefore certain decisions have been made in relation to the data. Firstly, analysis and discussion of qualitative data from phase one will primarily be presented and delineated in terms of ‘accounts’ or ‘perspectives’ around the issues discussed (rather than being seen as coherent products representative of a pattern that reflects underlying properties of an individual respondent.) Second, these will be presented only in relation to the specific topic under discussion at the time – an overtly hostile and less hostile account of separate issues may therefore originate from the same individual at different times depending upon what is being talked about. The focus of the current study is not on attempting to distinguish between individuals in terms of any underlying qualities or characteristics they may or may not possess (regardless of if and how such could be legitimately measured), but rather on different ways that issues around the intergroup relationship can be variously constructed and interpreted, and how this can be seen to influence or relate to expressions of hostility towards the out-group. In light of these points, taking a more DA approach to the data in this way, viewing the accounts/perspectives themselves as an entity to be researched rather than any differences between respondents which they might be presumed to indicate, is here considered to be the optimal way of proceeding.

Basic demographic information is now presented below in reference to the various respondents who took part in the study.

Table 1. Details of participant gender, age, occupation by pseudonym

<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Occupation</b>
Jason	Male	48	Manager
Zoë	Female	17	Unemployed
Julie	Female	49	Administrator
John	Male	56	Roofer/Builder
Evelyn	Female	53	Journalist
Jim	Male	56	Retired
Katherine	Female	51	Civil servant
Robin	Male	44	Small business owner
Lynn	Female	39	Prison officer
Daniel	Male	16	School leaver
Alan	Male	27	Teacher
Stuart	Male	38	Self-employed
Pete	Male	24	Nursing assistant
Neil	Male	41	Factory manager
Denise	Female	54	Retired
David	Male	28	Tradesman
Lesley	Female	44	Catering worker
Charlotte	Female	21	Clerical worker
Karl	Male	40	Salesman
Graham	Male	26	Mechanic
Glenn	Male	32	Electrical Engineer

Specific research questions in relation to the phase one qualitative interview analysis will be presented at the beginning of the chapter 10 results section, along with analysis and discussion of all identified themes. Details of how phase one material was specifically utilised in the creation of quantitative survey measure tools for phase two will be presented in

the chapter 11 chapter summarising phase one findings in relation to the structure of phase two analysis. For now only basic methodological details for phase two will be included.

### **10.3 Phase two method and procedure**

A questionnaire study was undertaken for phase two of the research. Items for this were created using material from the phase one qualitative analysis (see appendix 2 for example questionnaire booklet). The general aim was to assess by correlation, multiple regression and comparison analyses the relative importance various identified components of perceived contributory influence to inter-group problems were rated as having in relation to different forms of expressed hostility towards Asians.

Survey booklets were distributed at various factories, shops, small businesses and other workplaces within a three mile radius of Burnley town centre over a number of weeks. Some of these were completed in the presence of the researcher, some left to be collected later, and others returned by pre-paid envelope at a later date. Participants were informed of the following, before being asked to record their age and gender and begin answering the questions contained within:

**‘This study will focus only on the attitudes of white British people, so please only fill it in if you regard yourself to be in this category. Also do not complete the questionnaire if you are younger than 16. No names will be taken, to allow anonymity, and any answers you provide will be treated as confidential, stored securely and viewed only by the research team and Ph.D examiners. Some data may be published at a later date, in academic journals for instance, but this will not be traceable to individual respondents. Participation is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any point prior to the form being returned (because names are not recorded, individual forms cannot be identified once returned.) Some of the questions relate to conflict and violence between different ethnic groups and if you think this might cause you any discomfort or offence, you should not participate. For this study to be of use you will need to think carefully and try to write down what most genuinely reflects your own thoughts and opinions on the subject. Please use this opportunity to tell us what you really think.’**

The eventual sample consisted of 205 individuals, of whom 105 were male, 99 were female and one was undesignated. The age range of the sample was 17 to 74 years old with a mean age of 40. Specific measures used in the questionnaire and the series of research questions these were used to investigate are presented in chapters 11 and 12.

#### **10.4 Mixed Methods and the Current Project**

Before presenting the results of phase one analysis a brief recap of material presented in the Chapter 9 mixed methods chapter and how this specifically relates to the current methodology will be included. As noted, this project falls *loosely* within the remit of critical realism (Sayer, 2000) and as such perhaps requires elaboration upon how this position is specifically represented herein. The notion that inter-group hostility, either universally or within the chosen context, can be fully or empirically defined, understood or measured to produce privileged or objectively ‘truthful’ knowledge about the topic is rejected. However, observations can still be made about structures and patterns of interpretation or causal liabilities around this that have meaning and validity when attempting to understand manifestations of the phenomenon itself and how it impacts upon the experience and behaviour of individuals within a community. In other words, the author accepts that any conception of and conclusions about what is ‘really’ happening will inevitably be a product of socially construction, but nevertheless believes that findings can still relate meaningfully and add to existing knowledge about various aspects of the circumstances under investigation. A critically realist perspective also advocates acquisition of both intensive (study of individual or small groups of cases in order to identify elements by which these meaning is interpreted in relation to a phenomenon) and extensive (how this relates to common patterns or distinct features of a larger population and how widely these may be represented) knowledge about a topic in order to achieve this end. This again the current

research concurs with. Problems in attempting to blend these two approaches - and bridging the potential divide between multiply subjective accounts of reality in the case of the former, with more reductively generalised concepts and prepositions in the latter - have also been broadly outlined in chapter 9. How the above points relate specifically to the current study will now be addressed.

The hostility expressed towards the out-group by respondents in this study who were so inclined can be seen as very real, as were the attendant emotions this produced. Also, many of the components identified as potential contributory factors to the generation of inter-group hostility can equally be said to find representation in the 'real' world, regardless of how difficult these would be to take 'accurate' measure of. Violence or aggression between groups of individuals is frequently reported across different situations; disparity and unfair preference in relation to group fortunes also often occurs; people's livelihoods and economic stability do come under threat. The primary focus of this study is not on such matters. What is of interest here is how perceptions of such potential contributory elements are interpreted, understood and find expression in participant responses. This project is primarily concerned, therefore, with how *perceived* causes of intergroup conflict are socially constructed in the accounts of community members (more hostile accounts in particular), and also how these relate to often unthinking acceptance and reproduction of a shared in-group consensus of negativity towards the out-group. That these constructions can be regarded to a large extent as a product of interaction between hostile in-group members (in addition to influence by outside media and political forces), rather than a simply measurable representation of social reality, can be evidenced by alternate perspectives espoused in non-hostile accounts from the same community. These latter often describe a world that is strikingly different to that of more hostile counter-examples, and phase one of the current research was essential in

establishing ways in which aspects of the social context were variously and relatively constructed in this manner.

Such acknowledgement of and sensitivity to subjective and varied interpretations of a phenomenon undoubtedly represent a particular strength of relativistic/qualitative approaches to psychological research – while by the same token can raise problems for any subsequent attempt to investigate the topic more generally across a larger population. In some cases the variety inherent in multiply conceived perspectives accessed around a subject may well preclude any meaningful incorporation into such a large-scale endeavour, which by necessity is limited to a more simplistic/reductive conceptualisation of included factors. This was felt not to be the case with the current project. As noted above, one focus of this research was on ways in which a widely accepted in-group consensus of negativity towards the out-group served to shape many members' subjective constructions and interpretations of issues around the inter-group relationship. What was striking about a majority of these was the sheer uniformity and homogeneity of expression appearing in respondent accounts. In many instances the same taken-for-granted, pervasive and often unquestioned conceptions and formulations appeared time and time again in relation to perceived contributory factors to inter-group hostility – frequently being cited as factors of legitimisation or justification along the way. A comparable – though alternatively orientated - pattern of uniformity could also be observed running through accounts from a non-hostile perspective. As a view of the world, then, the negative in-group consensus appeared to be remarkably consistent and stable across hostile accounts, as well as being comprised of a (relatively) limited selection of well-defined constructs. For this reason it was deemed legitimate to attempt amalgamation and formulation of these into the more generic quantitative survey measure employed at phase two. After all, it was not only individual experience of inter-group conflict or disharmony that was under

investigation here, but also how commonly accepted and shared perspectives worked to shape the presence and importance of perceived factors of contributory influence to inter-group hostility more generally across the group. That these confined themselves to only a suitably limited selection of components across the sample lent itself to and provided justification for their adaption to quantitative measurement.

In a critically realist sense the current work is attempting to explore how genuine (and to some extent palpably measureable) dislike and hostility towards an out-group can largely come as a result of conceptual factors that are socially constructed through interaction between in-group members. Phase two quantitative measures therefore represent an attempt only to investigate how prevalent and important these constructs are regarded as being in relation to levels of expressed dislike for the out-group. Aside from initial identification of factors, phase one qualitative analysis can then further be used to explore ways in which interpretation of these factors variously and more specifically relates to expressions of hostility, to provide more fully rounded and nuanced insight into problematic group relations across the chosen context. With this in mind Phase one results are now presented.

# **Chapter 11: Results of the Phase One Thematic Analysis of Transcribed Respondent Interview Accounts**

## **11.1 General outline of the results section**

The analysed data displayed great variety, richness and depth in participant response to questions about what they saw as influential issues around and contributory factors towards the manifestation of inter-group conflict and hostility in their community. From this, a number of recurrent themes were identified by the analysis, many of which found expression right the way through the entire sample, albeit from a range of noticeably different perspectives. The results for this will be presented in a way as to address the research aims for phase one in terms of each theme/component as the analysis proceeds.

1. To identify from respondent accounts the core themes and concepts used to explain inter-group problems and/or justify hostility towards the Asian out-group, as a means to establish a range of perceived components of contributory influence to inter-group hostility in this particular social context.

Accounts raised a fairly broad range of elements which were considered as influential to manifestations of hostility towards the Asian out-group. These also tended to be quite consistent across the sample in terms of the issues raised as important contributors to problems between the groups. Each identified theme/contributory component of perceived influence will be presented as a separate section with various relevant sub-themes incorporated within this.

2. To assess the identified componential themes in terms of whether they can be said to offer support for or be meaningfully interpreted in relation to the range of theoretical approaches presented throughout the introductory chapters.

An attempt will be made at each step of the analysis to interpret and map each thematic component identified in respondent accounts onto a theoretical base provided by the range of perspectives outlined previously.

3. To investigate ways in which interpretations of inter-group problems and explanations for hostility towards the out-group differ between lesser/non-hostile and more overtly hostile perspectives, in terms of how each identified theme/component is conceptualised and evaluated in respondent accounts.

Although there was quite a high level of agreement across the sample about *which* factors were considered key influences in the generation of hostility towards the out-group, accounts often differed in the explanation and interpretation of *how* these factors arose and were manifested. In general, several broad distinctions could be drawn between accounts which consistently expressed overt hostility towards Asians and those that did not. Results will be therefore presented in such a way as to highlight the form these differences take in relation to the various themes identified, highlighting alternate strands of explanation through counter examples evident in respondent accounts as this proceeds. 'Hostility' in this analysis will be used as a broad definition encompassing expressions of general negativity, animosity and dislike towards Asians, including negative evaluations of and assumptions about them as a group. Obviously it is quite difficult to pin down the precise extent to which one individual account or another can be regarded as 'hostile' in this sense, especially as fluctuations in

hostility were sometimes noted within accounts in this regard. For the practical purposes of analysis, however, a broad distinction will be drawn between overtly hostile accounts (those which openly expressed negativity towards Asians) and lesser/non-hostile (those which expressed little or none.) Before turning to the analysis of each specific theme, some general observations can be made about the sample in relation to this last research aim.

## **11.2 Some initial observations about the respondent sample**

One overall difference between how respondents discussed the issues could be seen in relation to the interpretive repertoires (Wetherell & Potter, 1992) employed in accounts of inter-group relations; particularly in that lesser or non-hostile perspectives tended to draw on a broader range of explanations and information sources – socio-cultural, economic, historical – when accounting for various problematic aspects of the inter-group relationship, in addition to attributing causal influence to outside forces such as media representations and the contribution of governmental (local and national) or other political forces (the BNP, for instance.) More hostile accounts, on the other hand, frequently attributed causation narrowly and directly to the out-group and its members as a source of problems, either through intrinsically negative aspects of out-group culture and ‘demeanour’, or even through purposeful design on the out-group’s part. In this way more overtly hostile perspectives tended to draw on a more limited palette of interpretive resources when constructing explanations and judgements of the inter-group relationship. This will be highlighted with examples as the analysis proceeds. Hostile accounts often therefore appeared to be less considered and thoughtful than lesser/non-hostile accounts in this way, as well as frequently expressing a good many negatively stereotypical assumptions about the out-group. Although lesser hostile accounts sometimes mention attributions of out-group blame in their evaluation of issues, they also tended to make greater effort to contextually frame these and look to

broader social effects and precursors for explanation – rather than ascribing cause simply to some essentially negative aspect or intent of the out-group itself. This also corresponds with observations made by Locke, Macleod and Walker (1994) of individuals previously designated as highly prejudiced seeming to employ greater effort in accessing a wider range of information beyond the immediately stereotypical when making judgements about other groups. Both overtly and lesser/non-hostile perspectives in the sample concurred for the most part on the general underlying patterns of influence on inter-group disharmony, then, but frequently produced different interpretations of how these influences came into play, and ascribed different levels of relative importance and severity to their role and contribution. These differences will be highlighted as we move through the analysis.

Variation could further be seen in how each element of the sample tended to present their case. As noted, lesser/non-hostile accounts mostly appeared to apply greater consideration to the issues at hand, sometimes displaying uncertainty, and emphasising that these represented only a personal perspective or interpretation. In contrast, overtly hostile narrations tended to present issues as foregone conclusions or undeniable statements of fact, representative of generally held perspectives, and as such carrying unquestioned assumptions of validity. In this way overtly hostile respondents came across as more sure of themselves, demonstrating similar patterns of argumentation and justification to those described by Wetherell and Potter (1992) in relation to prejudiced individuals framing discourse in terms of ‘valid’ and unquestioned ‘self-evident’ social ‘truths’. The two examples below briefly serve to demonstrate this. The first is from ‘Alan’, a non-hostile school-teacher, and the second from ‘John’, a roofer, who was quite openly (if not defiantly) hostile throughout his interview. Each respondent is considering the issue of Asians as being in receipt of preferential treatment in the form of financial aid:

*'Erm, yeah. I think there's the perception. Is it a reality...? The, the, it's genuinely true that Daneshouse and Stoneyholme (Asian residential wards) a few years ago did receive a disproportional amount of money from the council, but I'm not ... I've heard different justifications for that.'*

Alan

*'Well yeah. We know that for a fact, don't we. I don't have to say it again, do I. Yeah they get preferential treatment. Yeah. And that's what boils up inside you. It really gets you. Causes prejudice, course it does.'*

John

It would seem from this that, not only is John in no doubt about his assertion, but also regards it as a legitimate factor in justifying any prejudice he may express. Alan, meanwhile, appears to consider and weigh the issue a little more before offering his opinion. On the whole, less hostile accounts tended to attempt more in the way of explanation and provision of context, where more overtly hostile examples often saw things as straightforward, clear cut and beyond argument. These variations in presentational tone between overtly and lesser or non-hostile respondents will be repeatedly demonstrated throughout the coming sections.

A further interesting difference observed between overtly and lesser/non-hostile accounts in the sample comes in the interpretive spin respondents tended to place on issues relating to Asians in the area, particularly in terms of the instance and severity of any negative impact different aspects of this were thought to have on the in-group. Put simply, hostile accounts often appeared to describe a much bleaker and potentially threatening environment than their less hostile equivalents. In this way events and aspects of the inter-group relationship were often interpreted much more negatively or even as sometimes having a sinister undertone. The quote below is from 'Jason' a factory manager:

*'I just think the threat is, for the whites, is the fact that they're (Asians) trying to build up and take over. I think that's the ultimate ... they are trying to take over. And there's no way you are going to take over this area, I'm not having it.'* Jason

Compare this with 'Denise', a retiree, on the same topic of what these respondents perceived as goals on the part of the Asian community (bearing in mind that both 'Jason' and 'Denise' lived within less than a kilometre of each other in an almost exclusively white area):

*'I don't, I don't know. I should imagine they'd (Asians) want just what everybody wants, to, er, get along and do well, to prosper isn't that what we all want. To move on and up (in society). It's not ... I don't know that many (Asians) but I imagine it's no different for them than anyone else.'* Denise

'Jason's' quote above was a common claim made in more hostile accounts, that there existed on the out-group's part an (unstated and mostly undefined) desire to 'take over', thus representing a range of negative and severe consequences for general in-group status and fortunes. Several respondents on this theme indicated that they felt at least some strategy or hidden agenda in the Asian communities towards these ends – something wholly absent from non-hostile accounts. Again this issue will be returned to when presenting analysis of the individual themes themselves. As will be shown, the three areas of observed difference outlined in the foregoing paragraphs – that hostile accounts frequently appeared more certain, more negative and more simplistic in their analysis of the situation – extended right through discussions of the full range of issues around problematic inter-group relations. These distinctions highlight how differences in the way that individuals within the same contextual environment conceptualise and describe the same events, people and situations can serve to construct and shape perceptions of a problematic social 'reality', as for more hostile respondents it appears frequently to be a 'simple' 'truth' that the out-group represent a negative and threatening presence in their lives (often in ways that do not seem to exist from less hostile perspectives.) This will be covered

in more detail in the later discussion sections, especially in terms of in-group consensus factors serving to validate shared interpretations, though should be kept in mind as we proceed through analysis of the various themes. The first identified theme to be discussed as a contributory influence on the generation of hostility towards the out-group centres around perceptions of separation and lack of mixing between the two groups.

### **11.3 Perspectives on separation and not mixing as contributory factors to inter-group hostility**

All participants discussed the informal segregation of the two groups as being an issue. This is unsurprising, as the segregation outlined in section 9.1 of the methodology chapter is one most obvious feature of the social context, there being very little social interaction (beyond necessary aspects of education, commerce and employment) between the two groups. Discussion of this topic took a number of forms, one such relating to the origins of segregation itself, so it is perhaps best to begin by looking at this. For the most part lesser/non-hostile accounts presented a more considered view of separation between the groups, tending to emphasise the role of socio-economic, historical or external factors in creating the situation in the first place. For instance:

*'I think they (Asians) move together to places that are cheap housing, so I suppose they created this sort of ghetto-ish area simply because of financial constraints at the time. And then as the white people move out more of them (Asians) moved in, so you get these areas that are predominantly Asian.'*

Stuart

*'The originals (Asians) who came over first, I think they would have been quite happy to (mix) ... but I'm not sure they were allowed to, I'm not sure the whites wanted them to. So ... I think now you've got them (Asians) that just think, "Well bugger off then, if you won't let us be part of your (white) thing then we'll do our own."'*

Graham

Both these views show an awareness of how events or conditions in the past may have served to develop or reinforce separation between the two communities. On the whole, lesser/non-hostile accounts tended to see segregation itself as problematic, frequently citing a lack of communication, interaction and understanding between the groups as being a root cause of hostility. A number of lesser hostile accounts allude to the socio-historical context outlined by 'Graham' above to provide explanations for segregation – that due to a) low social status and lack of financial resources in the immigrant population and b) initial resistance on the part of whites to interact with the newcomers, Asians had little choice but to create their own communities. More hostile accounts of segregation conversely tended to place the emphasis for this process more straightforwardly on a perception of Asians as unwilling or resistant to becoming part of the local culture. Several accounts state this directly:

*'(Asians) want the trappings of what they see as Western, but want to keep their own ways and not mix.'*

Robin

*'(Asians) want the best of both worlds. They take and take but don't want to be part of us.'*

Lesley

Running through such accounts is, not only the perception that it is a clear choice on the part of the out-group not to be part of the larger community, but also that this choice reflects an element of aversion to in-group culture. This perceived unwillingness to adopt aspects of in-group identity and culture by remaining separate is often interpreted by hostile respondents as representing a form of rejection on the Asians' part, and will shortly be discussed further in relation to social identity and threat issues between the two groups. For now, though, the focus will remain on accounts of separation itself. Whilst acknowledging broader social

factors as playing a part in creating segregation, lesser/non-hostile respondents did also recognise some potential aspects of out-group group culture that may contribute to separation, though these tended to be expressed with some understanding of why such instances might be. Again, these accounts were often situated in broader or contextual explanations rather than simply attributing it to pure and wilful negativity on the out-group's part. One potential reason cited by lesser-hostile respondents for Asians' perceived unwillingness to mix stems from perceptions that older or more religious (Islamic) members of the Asian community might harbour anxiety about younger Asians, particularly girls, adopting what they see as undesirably 'Western' ways. This is evident in the views below:

*'(I think) younger Asians want to mix more, but the older ones are worried they might turn out like us' (laughs.)* Charlotte

*'My understanding of the Asian community is that it really does find our attitudes to certain issues, such as how young women dress and behave, quite abhorrent. It really is seen as beyond the pale and the last thing they want is their own daughters to behave like.'* Denise

Rather than regarding such perceived barriers to closer inter-action between the communities as simply negative aspects of Asian perspectives, however, accounts such as these seemed to evince at least some sympathy or understanding with these concerns. This tended to place the emphasis on specific aspects of difference in inter-group cultural practices, rather than straightforward and wholesale rejection of in-group culture by the out-group.

A further interesting difference between lesser/non-hostile and overtly hostile perspectives came in the way each tended to evaluate segregation, in terms of both desirability and legitimacy. As previously noted, lesser/non-hostile perspectives generally regarded segregation itself as problematic,

seeing it as a potential source of misunderstanding and therefore mistrust between the groups. This was not always the case for more hostile accounts. For several of the latter, segregation tended to be viewed as a desirable, even positive, thing:

*They (Asians) live a separate life, we (whites) live a separate life and I think people like it that way ... they're different from you, aren't they, and while you might tolerate them, you don't want to take them to your bosom. Where we're living now it's like, y'know, a "Let's keep it white" sort of thing ... and it's that "Let's keep 'em out."'* Neil

In this can be seen one of a number of apparent paradoxes which recur in relation to perspectives of the out-group throughout more hostile accounts. Overall, more hostile perspectives tended to place blame on the Asians for not attempting to mix more, thus creating problems; while at the same time espousing strong opposition to any attempts at allowing Asians to mix. This is a theme which runs through many such hostile perspectives, an observation also recognised in lesser/non-hostile accounts. This is 'Alan' again:

*'I think a lot of (white) people want it both ways. (They) see Asians not taking part, perhaps they complain that these people are not willing to integrate with them, and (whites say) "They're not prepared to make an effort. They don't want to get on with us." And yet when Asians do integrate, for example one becomes the Mayor, or a community leader ... you might often get the quote, y'know, "They're taking over." So from a white point of view an Asian can't win, they either don't integrate or they've integrated too much.'* Alan

'Neil's' quote demonstrates a tendency for more hostile perspectives to regard separation as perhaps the best or only way to accommodate both ethnic groups within the same community. Other hostile accounts elaborated further on this, making the point that segregation of this kind can often be regarded as 'right' or 'natural' and that it is appropriate for groups of people who are perceived as different to live apart and be separated in this way:

*'In theory it's all very nice for us to live in one big melting pot but it doesn't work like that ... people aren't happy to mix. It has it in America for instance, that's supposed to be the biggest melting pot in the world. But they don't really get on. They still have their own communities. I just don't think that people do mix.'*

Lynn

*'I really do think it's just the, like just the tribal thing ... you still see these little tribes fighting each other, if you go, like in Africa and that you get tribes that hate each other's guts, the territory gets marked, it's like evolution.'*

David

*'Everybody always goes back to the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve and they were white. They weren't black and white.'*

Zoë

These three slightly differing interpretations of segregation all share the notion that this is a basic and normal part of human relations, and that attempts to create harmony and integration between groups can be regarded as unnatural or doomed to failure from some perspectives in the community. Noticeably, only more hostile accounts made such claims, and often in the form of justifications for why inter-group conflict occurs. Explaining separation and tribalism as normal or natural aspects of human interaction in this way also allowed these respondents to dismiss attempts at what they saw as interference from outside forces (equality initiatives etc) as pointless or misguided. The counter position to this, taken in lesser/non-hostile accounts, usually centred round perceptions that it was quite possible for groups to co-exist peacefully, given the right circumstances. The youngest respondent in the sample, 'Daniel', a 16 year-old school-leaver (and perhaps interestingly the son of one of the more hostile interviewees), offered the following when asked if it was possibly for different groups to get on:

*'It's easy enough, yeah. It's just (a case of) bringing something that can be common factors between the two, that everyone can get along and associate to ... some people, some people are brought up in a way that, that it's wrong to mix with, er, certain (other) cultures, but, everyone's the same really.'*

Daniel

This and similar accounts tend to present segregation as a function of contextual factors, rather than any essential part of human nature, often emphasising the role of outside influences – such as family, peer or media – in the creation and perpetration of more negatively pessimistic interpretations. Again this shows a broader consideration of different potential influences on segregation on the part of less hostile respondents; whereas hostile accounts tended to regard separation between the groups as a simple inevitable fact of life, requiring little further consideration. Both types of perspective, however, hinged on perceived differences between the groups as a pivotal factor in creating segregation in the first place. The various ways in which both the white and Asian group identities are distinctly conceptualised lies at the heart of this issue – for the more hostile in perceptions of the out-group as fixedly different thus requiring separation, and for the less hostile in that separation heightens perceptions of difference between the groups through lack of contact and understanding. Previous studies (Wetherell & Potter, 1992; Dixon & Reicher, 1997; Augustinos et al., 1999) have observed that inter-group problems are often accompanied by perceptions of distinctly separate or incompatible identities for social groups, wherein the out-group is typically characterised as 'separate' or 'other' from the dominant majority. Along with this, perceptions of 'real' or 'legitimate' differences between the groups are often regarded as responsible for problematic group interactions. It is these differences in perceived identity between the in-group and out-group that are examined next.

## 11.4 Perceptions of difference between in-group and out-group identities as contributory to inter-group hostility

Perceived differences between the two groups were repeatedly cited as a major source of inter-group problems, with the two ethnic communities largely viewed as representing wholly distinct and separate social and cultural entities. Respondent accounts of problematic inter-group differences took a variety of forms, the specific dimensions of which will be reviewed presently, but overall these tended to relate to general notions of the out-group as either not fitting in with or refusing to adopt aspects of in-group culture and identity so as to become absorbed into the larger community. That Asians were for the most part seen as preferring to retain their own forms of, often incompatible, social identity whilst living in the midst of another culture was frequently proposed to be either problematic or unacceptable by a majority of respondents. From the perspective of more hostile accounts, opposition to the out-group retaining a distinct cultural identity was quite strong:

*'They (Asians) don't want to be part of us, they don't wanna ... if you come over here (England) and you want to do all that, you should proper join in with everyone else, but they don't. They want to push all their ... ideas and everything on us.'*

Pete

*'But they (Asians) will not change round to our way of thinking, yet they're living here all their lives. And they will not change. They will not. That is wrong.'*

John

While Asian culture in itself tended not to be seen as intrinsically negative on the whole, more hostile perspectives often claimed that it should have limited or no importance when transposed from a 'native' cultural context into one where other traditions and values were more established and prevalent. The quote below is fairly representative of this viewpoint.

*'There's nowt, nothing wrong with their (Asian) culture when it's where it belongs ... they (Asians) can do what the fuck they want. But why are they doing it over here? They can't push it on us and we don't want it. You're (Asians) not at home, you're here in my country, so they should act it. If they want it their way, do it where you belong.'*

Karl

Inferred in 'Karl's' statement is a thread common in more hostile accounts of the inter-group relationship – that British Asians were perhaps often primarily regarded more in terms of their identity as of Asian ethnic heritage rather than 'British' or 'English', and moreover that it was a wilful cultural choice on the out-group's part not to embrace characteristics of what was perceived as legitimate (white British) identity. This notion of the out-group as visitors or interlopers in a foreign culture was not so straightforward a distinction as first might seem, however. More specifically, both lesser and more hostile perspectives on the whole tended to draw a distinction between Asians who were seen as wanting or trying to fit in, and those who were seen as resisting or rejecting efforts to become assimilated:

*'I think there are two lots of Asians. There are, should we call them group A and group B? And group A wear western clothes, speak English, chat, join in. Group B won't join in.'*

Evelyn

Evelyn here draws attention to perhaps the most commonly cited problematic distinction cited in the accounts: between Asians who were regarded as willing or prepared to adopt 'Western' or 'British' ways, and those who were not. Here again we see that perceived out-group failure to adopt identities that could be considered more compatible with in-group culture is raised as the problematic issue. Even the most hostile of respondents professed to feel little animosity towards what they saw as examples of this former designation:

*'Them (Asians) that's been, them born here and have fit in, the ones that are proud to be British, then fair do, fair play. But if you're not then it's ... we've got a problem with you. Live and let live fair enough, but you've got to play the game, if you want to be here you have to play the game ... if you're here then you go by what's always been here, not what you bring'.*

Karl

Problematic differences of self-identification between the groups, then, appear to be consistently perceived as a negative influence on inter-group relations. Asians regarded as adopting identities closer to those of the in-group, or conforming to dominant in-group culture, do not appear to attract the same level of hostility as those seen as rejecting aspects of in-group culture and identity in favour of their own. In general, these in-group identities were interchangeably referred to most often as 'British', 'English', 'Western' or 'white', yet when asked to summarise what exactly this entailed, many respondents struggled. 'Julie', a non-hostile respondent, spoke of encountering this phenomenon in relation to other members of the white community:

*'It's more a sort of undefined (sic) sense of "This is what England is, this is what Britain is" and "that" (Asian culture) isn't like this, so it must be threatening. If you actually try and pin them (whites) down they'd have a great problem in coming out with exactly what it was, but I just think they feel, "It (Asian culture) must be threatening because it's not the same."'*

Julie

Another respondent, 'Neil', represented an interesting case. He began the interview espousing fairly hostile views, but as his account progressed, and he was required to consider issues in more depth, 'Neil' began to adopt a more reflective orientation, appearing to question some of the assumptions he had previously voiced. Elements of this can be seen in his response below:

*'I think what it is (that members of the white community think), is basically everybody should be English, we'll all put on little bowler hats, y'know (laughs.) I know that's taking it to its extreme, but everybody's gotta be English. I mean, what the definition is of being English I don't know (laughs.)'*

Neil

'Julie's' views above represented perhaps the least hostile in the sample, and mirrored other non-hostile perspectives when it came to evaluating inter-group differences as a factor in generating disharmony. Lesser/non-hostile accounts were often at pains to stress that, while they themselves did not regard differences of social identity between the groups as personally problematic, they considered perceptions of such differences throughout the local white community as being a large problem. Also, from this perspective, retention of Asian cultural identities by the out-group were seen as a normal and understandable practices, which would equally apply if the roles were reversed:

*'I'd take the view that if I were to live in a foreign country that I would still speak English and still dress in English clothes and so on, so why should people coming into this country be expected to behave like the average English guy? I think it's totally unreasonable to expect them (Asians) to give up their culture and their roots. I think the basic problem is (whites) treating Asians as though they are different.'*

Denise

Respondents who expressed views compatible with 'Julie' and 'Denise', on the whole seemed to identify themselves just as strongly as 'British', 'English' or 'white' as did more hostile interviewees, yet tended to regard any perceived differences in the out-group as not a cause of personal concern. Hostile respondents were far more likely to treat inter-group differences as a source of problems, especially when it came to justifying any expressed hostility. Some of the most common assertions used to explain or justify hostility towards the out-group were that a) the out-group were incompatibly different from the in-group in a number of ways b) it was the responsibility or duty of the out-group to make more concessions towards accepting and adopting facets of in-group social and cultural identity and C) resistance or lack of willingness to do this by the out-group was a key factor on causing problems and hostility between the groups. What came across most strongly in hostile accounts was the deep sense of affront expressed by these participants, particularly in terms of being angered by what they perceived as rejection of long-standing in-group culture by the out-group in their failure to adapt or conform to this. From a Social Identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) perspective this makes sense, as hostile respondents largely tended to identify themselves as strongly representative of local 'white

British' culture, considering this to be not only the more legitimate and valid social orientation, but also a source of personal and collective pride. In appearing to not conform to this, the out-group's insistence in maintaining its own identity can be regarded as a form of rejection and challenge to 'white British culture's' primacy and legitimacy (Hogg & Abrams, 1993; Stangor & Jost, 1997). The personal and collective affront displayed by more hostile respondents can then be interpreted as a response to perceived threat to in-group self perception and standing felt at a personal level. Many hostile respondents spoke of their British identity as a big source of personal and collective pride, and that if members of the out-group were not prepared to share this then they had no business living in the same community:

*'I don't wanna be ... multicultural. It's not a multi-cultural society, it's English. It's ... we're England, we should be proud of our heritage ... we should be proud that we're English. And I've got a tattoo on my back saying: Made In England. We should be proud to be English and (English) people don't wanna integrate, we don't wanna be multi-cultural'*

Pete

This sense of pride also played a part where the same respondents evinced what appeared to be genuine bafflement about Asian unwillingness to adopt British or western ways, claiming not to be able to comprehend why they (Asians) would not wish to become part of what was (to the respondents) a clearly superior culture (Mummendey & Wenzel, 1999). As noted, perceptions of dissimilarity frequently recurred in explanations of how conflict arose between the groups, and took on a number of forms - each to a greater or lesser degree being regarded as a problematic. Broadly, these can be encapsulated in six thematic strands identified by the analysis. In beginning to outline these, one noticeable omission from the roster is first identified. The quotes below came in response to the following question: *'What do you think are the most important things that contribute to the two groups not getting along?'*

*'I'd say religion, I'd say culture, I'd say dress ... it sounds daft but I'd say looking different. Language. Just the way we (both groups) live really, we're just so ... our cultures are so different. I don't think it's owt to do with (skin) colour, people talk about colour but I think that's just an excuse.'*

Lynn

*'They're (Asians) too different. They wear different clothes, the women, they wear ... whatever (indicates head-dress.) They don't drink, they don't go in pubs. The religion thing ... I'm not, I don't care what colour someone's skin is, even though you do notice it ... but because of the colour you straight away think, "Oh, he's a Muslim, I don't understand that."'*

David

This was not an uncommon claim made by hostile respondents, that disharmony manifesting itself between the two groups had no basis in purely 'racial' factors. Admittedly there could perhaps be a suspicion of evasion in such statements, a desire not to appear straightforwardly 'racist' on the part of these respondents. Counter to this, however, is the fact that a good number of the same more hostile respondents were quite open in admitting that they *were* 'racists' or prejudiced against the out-group. However, even the most openly prejudiced or hostile individuals interviewed still went to great lengths to also try and adequately 'justify' any bias and animosity they expressed towards the out-group. That expressions of this prejudice had a tendency to take the form of expressed antagonism towards cultural rather than inherent signifiers (like skin-colour) is perhaps explained by general social approbation against displaying old fashioned 'unjustified' prejudice. But also, in 'David's' account, skin colour is mentioned only in terms of it being an indicator implying other, potentially problematic cultural differences, rather than a source of problems in itself. In this can be seen the influence of social forces which shape and interpret for people the ways in which visual categorisation stimuli like skin-colour are conceived, especially in relation to any stereotypically 'relevant' assumptions this entails. For David, skin colour is claimed to represent only an indicator that the person in question might be seen as problematic in other, related, ways. As well as denying skin-

colour as a direct source of problematic difference, the two quotes above point out several other dimensions of difference which commonly *were* regarded as problematic in accounts drawn from this sample.

The majority of South Asian residents in Burnley are bi-lingual, often with English as a second language or alongside Urdu, Punjabi or Bengali (in the case of Bangladeshis.) Almost all respondents in this study identified differences of language as being influential in creating difficulty between the groups. As with accounts relating to other topics these assertions tended to fall into two distinct (lesser/non and more overtly hostile) camps. In lesser hostile accounts, language represented a problem in terms of it being a barrier to achieving better understanding and communication between the groups.

*'I think language is a problem. I get the impression that many, er, older Asian people don't speak English, or aren't able to speak English, that presumably prevents them from integrating.'*

Alan

*'Language is a problem. If you can't communicate and understand (each other) then that's where misinformation comes from.'*

Stuart

In more hostile accounts, language first of all tended to represent just one more element in the overall perception of Asian unwillingness to adopt western ways and conform to the dominant culture.

*'Language is a problem. If they (Asians) want to have a go at you and they start gibbering away at you in another language, because you can't understand it, it's frustrating. If they are living over here, my people expect the Asian community to speak English.'*

Jason

But by far the most common issue raised from more hostile perspectives in connection to language as a cause of problems between the two ethnic groups related not so much to issues of unavoidable

misunderstanding or lack of communication, nor indeed a perceived unwillingness of the out-group to adopt English speaking as the norm. This key concern is perhaps best summed up below:

*‘Quite often – and I’m sure it’s natural – when they’re (Asians) talking amongst themselves they slip into the mother tongue. And ... anyone (white) who’s standing there doesn’t know what they (Asians) are saying. And if you’re paranoid and concerned enough ... they’re (whites) probably thinking, “Ooh, they’re (Asians) saying nasty things about me.” I can’t imagine for one minute that Asian people who are doing this realise the reaction it’s causing. I think it’s a problem caused by the use of language.’*

Julie

‘Julie’s’ observation is echoed numerous times in accounts which are more hostile towards the out-group. From a more hostile perspective this phenomenon seemed to represent quite a serious cause for concern, as the quote below indicates:

*‘Now that pisses me off. If they can’t speak English, they can’t speak English but they should learn. But if they can (speak English) then they should speak it. ‘Cos when someone starts doing that (stereotypically mimics Asian speech) “Budda-budda-budda”, then I don’t care who you are, it pisses you off, you think it’s you they’re talking about, and it probably is.’*

David

The most noticeable difference between this example and ‘Julie’s’ lies in the assumption of negative intent on the part of out-group members. Hostile accounts consistently and often unquestioningly interpreted instances of this phenomenon in such a harsh light - of Asians deliberately employing language as a covert means of speaking negatively in reference to the white community. Less hostile participants did remark that they found this practice unhelpful or ignorant at times, but did not ascribe such blatantly negative motives to it as did the more hostile. One possible explanation for this could be that accounts from more hostile elements in the sample are inclined towards a greater sensitivity to perceived slights, insults or potential threats to esteem (or, as ‘Julie’ termed it, paranoia.) This oversensitivity then potentially leads to a more ready attribution of negativity in situations where it may not be present. Whether this represents a more sensitive or hostile orientation for such respondents

generally, regardless of context, is not clear, or whether consensually hostile interpretations of the inter-group relationship tend to generally promulgate such notions of negative intent on the Asians' behalf. Nor is it clear whether such negative assumptions and attributions are a product of the problematic inter-group relationship, or a factor of causal influence in its generation. These questions are beyond the scope of this current research.

Another perceived problematic difference between the groups was based around a more visual cue: dress. For the most part, lesser hostile respondents made no comment on the two groups different modes of apparel as being problematic. Rather this was again interpreted as simply representing a marker of instantly recognisable difference between the two groups, though one which they nevertheless saw as potentially provocative to more hostile elements of the community.

*'I do think that the, the overt wearing of the (Asian) costume is ... it's like a red rag to the bull (for hostile whites.)*

Evelyn

More hostile accounts tended to concur with this, frequently citing dress as one instantly and visually obvious example of Asian's rejection and refusal to fit in with the dominant culture which served to delineate them from other members of the community. On the subject of other, Eastern European, migrants to the area, 'David' said:

*'They're different (to us) but they don't look different ... they wear jeans and trackies (sportswear.) ... they're harder to spot. I mean, they're more like us, if you will. With Asians it (the difference) just kicks in straight away. They've been here longer but they still don't fit in.'*

David

Further to this, more hostile accounts often referred to differences of Asian dress as an area that the white community found either difficult to understand, or a barrier to allowing closer contact or acceptance between the two communities.

*'All we see is (Asian) people walking round in pyjamas ... That we don't understand. I wouldn't expect to live in Bangladesh and walk round with a knotted hanky and socks.'*

Lynn

*'Because there are all these sort of barriers (to getting to know Asians), where you don't think you can ... there's a lot of misconceptions (on whites' part) ... y'know, "They make them (Asian women) wear the fucking ninja masks."'*

Neil

This last quote from 'Neil' is highly representative of a most commonly cited problematic aspect of the two cultures' perceived sartorial differences. Both lesser and greater hostile respondents drew distinctions between male and female Asian dress when discussing the issue.

*'Asian males are prepared in integrate to some extent, I mean they dress in western clothes ... but when it comes to the female section, they aren't allowed, like they (Asian women) are still in Pakistan.'*

Jim

The perception of Asian men as having more choice in the way they dressed and behaved was quite common in accounts. For the most part, Asian males were perceived as having a greater option to adopt 'western' modes of dress, and that their consequent decision not to do this represented greater resistance or rejection to in-group culture on their part. Asian women, however, were considered not to have this same freedom, due to what were seen as strong patriarchal traditions in Asian culture, and were therefore often not held as accountable for problematic issues of dress<sup>21</sup>. Perhaps unsurprisingly, a difference in approaching this topic was also observable between male and female respondents in

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<sup>21</sup> Parenthetically, as interviewer, transcriber and analyst of the data presented in this study, the author often came away with the impression that when hostile respondents talked about Asians as a problem in general, it was actually male Asians to which they referred. Insufficient evidence was found to support this, however.

the sample. For the most part, female respondents discussed this discrepancy between acceptable forms of dress for male and female Asians more in terms of identification with female Asians, often asserting that they would find the idea of being required conform to such a strict dress as totally unacceptable for themselves (and, in some cases, their daughters.)

*'It would never bother me if my daughter married a black man, or Asian or Chinese or anything, a man's colour would never bother me. Or my sons, y'know, if they were to marry a coloured girl. What would bother me is if my daughter married into a Muslim family. Now that, I would be appalled, I'd be horrified, that my daughter would have to be covered up like that.'* Katherine

Male respondents, on the other hand, displayed no similar identification or solidarity with their male Asian counterparts, tending to couch the issue more in perceptions that Asian women were somehow being 'unfairly withheld' from interacting with white British culture. Accounts of this were often presented as it being a hypocritical and unfair policy.

*'(Perhaps in future) The (Asian) men will be more the same (as us), but then they'll keep their women bagged up or at home so they (Asian men) can go off trying to shag white women and, er ... but you try copping off with one of their (Asian) birds, so much as look at one of their birds and ... they'll (Males) get fucking mental, I tell you ... they'll have your bollocks (laughs).'* Karl

Again, further investigation into this last issue of differential evaluations made between male and female respondents is not the focus of the current report, though this does not preclude such analysis in future. Alongside language and dress, a third (what might be called) surface difference was highlighted as a source of problems between the two groups - that of the two groups indulging in different types of lifestyle interests and leisure activities. Though initially these might seem trivial considerations, many respondents nevertheless identified this area as one which served to distance and isolate the two groups from each other. The primary perceived lifestyle difference identified between the groups was a simple one: white British people drink alcohol socially and Asians, for the most part,

do not. Time and again, this issue was raised as a reason for the two groups not interacting and getting on better.

*'What fifteen and sixteen year olds do ... like on Fridays and the weekend and that. They all go out drinking, whereas ... maybe the other (Asian) child won't be able to.'*

Zoe

*'They (Asians) don't drink ... it's not just that they don't, it's that they look down on us for it (drinking.) But it does make a difference because they don't mingle in pubs and you kind of get the impression they're sticking their nose up.'*

Glenn

For many of the sample, social drinking represented an integral part of their lifestyle (as it does for a great many white Britons.) Asians were largely perceived not to indulge in such activities, due to religious proscriptions against it, and this was interpreted as a barrier to better relations between the two groups. The above quotes incorporate two issues which commonly arose in relation to this: firstly that lack of social interaction in this domain stopped the groups getting to know each other better, and secondly that there was a view of strong aversion or rejection to drinking and drinking culture in Asian communities. As can be seen from 'Glenn's' comment, this was again interpreted quite negatively by in more hostile accounts, the implication being that there was perceived negative judgement passed on whites by the Asians because of social drinking. Lesser/non-hostile accounts did also pick up on this perception, though often it was described with more humour and less sense of affront:

*'I think that some Asians find the fact that we (whites) seem to be a set of drunken layabouts, and some of them look down on us (laughs), because they don't drink and socialise in the same way.'*

Stuart

Lesser/non-hostile accounts additionally drew attention to another potential impediment to Asians being able to partake in this most common leisure activity:

*'There are pubs in Burnley where I don't imagine an Asian could go in ... even if he went for a soft drink. There are certainly pubs where it wouldn't be worth their (Asians) life (to go in.)'*

Julie

'Julie' here draws attention to another paradoxical situation that Asians often find themselves in. As with the earlier observation about simultaneous complaints about lack of Asian willingness to integrate/opposition to Asians integrating on the part of whites, the overall feeling about social drinking tended to be that Asians would be accepted more if they indulged in this; coupled with strong implications that they would not be welcome if such a thing were to be attempted. Perceptions that members of the out-group often chose to avoid opportunities to socialise or join in with in-group activities were not restricted to the hostelry and off-licence, though:

*'In some ways the Asians are to blame because they don't really get to know us. We've had (social) evening events at work, everyone's invited but Asian people tend not to be there. Whereas if they'd come and mix we'd get to know them better,'*

Katherine

On the whole, these dissimilarities in lifestyle activities were not regarded as being so problematic as the two previously discussed differences (language and dress), but rather thought of as another example of Asians' general unwillingness to become more like the in-group. Also, as with dress, cultural activities of this kind were often identified as part and parcel of other, deeper-seated differences between the groups. The most commonly cited of these being religious faith. Being of Asian heritage was largely regarded as synonymous with being Muslim by respondents. Several accounts recognized that not all Asian members of the community were Muslim, and that within this faith there were gradations of adherence as with any other. Nevertheless, when the topic of religion came up it was usually in terms of problematically perceived discrepancies between Muslims and non-Muslim white British people.

One issue which might perhaps have been expected to arise more noticeably in respondent accounts – pertaining to extreme of militant forms of Islam - made very little appearance. On the whole, Muslims in the local community were regarded as being a fairly moderate and unproblematic presence in this regard. Few accounts even raised the issue, but ‘Katherine’ did make the following statement in regard to religion as being problematic:

*‘I think (people see it as) that’s becoming more of a factor now, with the extremism. I’ve never particularly bothered what religion anybody is. I know that Asians who live in this county are not extremists ... they just want to do what I do – work, earn a crust, come home and be with your family – but we are picking this fear (of extremism) up.’* Katherine<sup>22</sup>

The last part of this statement will be returned to when discussing perceptions of outside influence, such as the media, can contribute to the generation of hostility between the groups. But the most common problematic distinction made in relation to religious faith between the two groups was an interesting one: while Asians were frequently perceived as adhering more closely to various tenets of Islamic faith, white British people were for the most part identified as non-religious.

*‘They’re (Asians) that much (more) into their religion, and if you go back 20 years we (whites) were going to church and doing all that (but) now we’ve sort of worn out of all that ... but they (Asians) really take it (religion) strong.’* Pete

Interestingly, at no point in any of the interviews did a respondent self-identify as being Christian. If anything, the majority of accounts expressed either disinterest or disdain for religion in general, often regarding it as a generic source of potential problems between people.

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<sup>22</sup> These interviews were conducted over four years ago, so it is possible that things may have changed since then with increasing amounts of negative press coverage of issues around militant Islam.

*'Somebody who's praying five times a day ... it's just something that's alien and different to us, so anything that's alien and different is to be mistrusted, innit. Maybe if all religion were fucking banned, y'know. Let's get rid of all the fucking lot of them (religions.)'* Neil

Although quite forceful in its assertion, this comment can be seen as fairly representative of participant accounts across the sample. Different results would presumably be found from individuals who expressed strong Christian beliefs. However, 'Neil's' quote serves to identify a most common issue raised in relation to faith. Rather than seeing religion as simply a divisive factor between Muslim and Christian faiths, the problem as expressed by participants seemed to suggest that it was more often that certain values associated with Islamic faith were seen as incompatible with more secular 'white British' culture:

*'I think the main problem is religion and ideals for what is (seen as) socially correct. They alienate, it alienates each other (the two groups).'* Stuart

As with elements seen in the previous paragraphs on dress and social drinking, it can be seen that it is frequently only specific aspects of Islamic practice which are considered as key sources of difference and separation between the groups – rather than actual belief in the faith itself. This again relates partly to a perceived unwillingness on the part of the out-group to conform to the prevailing norms of dominant in-group culture:

*'(Religion) put's people on different wavelengths. I don't think a lot of white people are religious these days. Though a lot of Asians are. I think (white) people see the Asians, as living by their own (religious) rules. (But) if they're here then they should go by our rules.'* Lesley

By and large, participants tended to focus on more visible and cultural aspects of Islam – dress, prayer, abstinence – rather than perceptions of more direct conflicts of faith. These opinions were often meanwhile accompanied by respondent acknowledgement that they in fact knew very little about Islamic faith in general:

*'We (whites) don't understand their (Asian) religion and beliefs ... and quite frankly we don't want to. It's a case of "Why should we?" And yeah, that is bigoted but a lot of people do feel like that.'*

Lynn

This observation, presented in 'Lynn's' quote and recurring in relation to overall orientations towards out-group differences of faith found in the sample, is fairly well articulated by 'Alan' below. Here he alludes to a similar general lack of understanding on the in-group's part:

*'I think Islam is part of the problem, I think it's a very small part of the problem. I think the greater part of the problem ... is that many white people think Islam is a problem (without really knowing anything about it).'*

Alan

Similar to previous observations regarding a perceived unwillingness of Asians to adopt more 'western' cultural practices, here again was expressed a sense that this constituted a form of deliberate rejection. In addition to their confessed lack of knowledge about Islam (and reluctance to address this) more hostile accounts tended to interpret Asian adherence to Islamic tradition as disdainful of or a negative judgement upon in-group culture, and as such to be regarded as an unwelcome challenge to the dominant order. These problematic differences were largely defined in terms of the perceived values implicit in the religious and non-religious orientations of the two groups, rather than simple distinction of faith:

*'I think they (Asians) look at us (whites) sometimes and think, y'know, what's it called? (That) we're the 'Heathens'. So (white) people get, they don't like it. It's like they (Asians) bring in their religion then ... they're judging us.'*

Glenn

This sense of the in-group feeling 'judged' by more traditional Muslim elements was quite widespread, particularly in reference to female members of the white community. Already highlighted in

previous sections, this again largely centred around perceptions that Asians found certain in-group behaviours, such as drinking alcohol and wearing less formal clothing, intolerable - particularly for females. Evident here once more is the sense of affront expressed in many hostile accounts in reaction to what was seen as rejection of in-group culture by the out-group in favour of its own. Not only are Asians perceived as unwilling to accept what are regarded as legitimately dominant social practices and identities, but in many cases additionally seen as being disdainful or negatively judgemental of in-group culture, thus representing a potential threat to in-group self-perception and esteem from a social identity perspective (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Other discrepancies between perceived in-group and out-group values were also identified in connection with how the groups lived. On the surface, the most common of these may perhaps not be initially regarded as especially negative.

*'The way that ethnic minorities and their social structure and their families look after each other, they all care for themselves. But in their (Asian's) society that's how they live in Muslim families. I mean we've (whites) got this "nuclear family" where no one seems to hand around the social structure of family anymore.'*

Stuart

There was wide acknowledgement in the sample that Asian family and community structure was regarded as more closely knit and supportive of its members than was the white British equivalent. In itself this was mostly seen as a desirable quality of out-group culture. However, in more hostile accounts a negative interpretation of priority and intent was frequently applied to certain assumed corollaries of these practices:

*'They're (Asians) more joined together than we are ... our society. They all help each other ... so they build up their own businesses ... and lend each other cash.'*

Lynn

*'They (Asians) do live differently to us, they have their mums in the houses, their grandparents ... their grandchildren. I mean they don't spend any money on food ... not like we do. Because they send it all (money) out of the country.'*

John

Two common beliefs about the out-group are apparent in these comments. Firstly that, in appearing more cohesive as family or social entity, members and groups in the Asian community tend to be viewed as more insular and self-serving by hostile respondents, a view frequently couched in terms of 'Looking after their own' and 'Sticking to themselves' and thus not fully committing to the 'host' society:

*'(In Asian communities) it's family first, then (their) community, and then everybody else.'*

Evelyn

A second point drawn separately from 'John's' and 'Lynn's' statements refers to a widely held suspicion (often stated as fact) expressed in more hostile accounts, regarding differences in assumed priorities between the two groups. Hostile accounts consistently alluded to what they saw as a specifically different set of aims and goals manifested in the out-group community, often presented in quite sinister terms.

*'How much money goes out of the country because of them (Asians)? Working two or three jobs so more (Asians) can come over. That's a problem.'*

Glenn

*'(People think) the Asians are gonna take all the money out of the country ... bring more Asians in. I think one of the things is birth-rate as well. Because they are having so many children the (Asian) population is going to grow.'*

Jason

These kinds of extremely negative and stereotypical assertions were quite prevalent from more hostile perspectives, indicating a belief in some kind of hidden agenda on the part of the out-group to

deliberately increase their own number in British society. Many of these accounts expressed utter conviction in their perception of deliberate intent in the Asian community to accumulate as much money as possible in order to allow more family members to enter the country, so as to accumulate as much money as possible in order to allow more family members to enter the country, so as to... .. *ad infinitum*. This, coupled with the perception voiced by 'Jason' above of Asian families having greater numbers of children, represented a core justification of hostility towards the out-group by those who were so orientated. In this we see again evidence of over-sensitivity to perceived threat incorporated in hostile accounts, a ready willingness to interpret and assume the most negative meaning from a set of observations. Non/lesser-hostile respondents also expressed awareness of these accusations against the Asian community and tended to view them as instances of ignorance or the perpetuation of misinformation amongst elements of the in-group, sometimes from outside sources such as the BNP and elements of the news media (which will be dealt with shortly.) This is 'Julie' explaining how white British people in the community are prone to exaggerating the number of other ethnic group members in society, without realising how small it actually is:

*'It's a misperception and I think a lot of it's caused because it's (Burnley) so ghettoised. It gobsmacks people when you actually tell them how many (few), what percentage of the population isn't ... what they (hostile whites) would think of as English.'*

Julie

Previously we have seen that some of the differences identified as problematic by hostile respondents (language, dress, lifestyle, for instance) can be viewed in terms of being perceived as forms of indirect threat to the in-group self-perception and esteem from a Social Identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) perspective. Here, as these differences move from religion, through divergence in perceived values and onto sets of distinct and potentially divisive goals and priorities attributed to the out-group, a shift of focus can be seen towards other, more direct forms of perceived threat - in this latter case from an increasing out-group population drawing off financial resources for their own benefit. Socially and historically there appears to be some element of perceived competition between the two groups in the study, though when asked directly about this respondents were quite dismissive of the notion.

Nevertheless, several identified areas of perceived threat can clearly be interpreted as potential conflicts of interest over resources – across a number of more-or-less tangible domains – between the groups (Esses, Dovidio, Jackson & Armstrong, 2001). While Social Identity offers a basis for group identification causing perceptions of threat to be experienced at a personal level, certain themes derived from the data suggest that some aspects of inter-group hostility in this context can be more directly explained in terms of Realistic Group Conflict (Sherif, 1966). Though in this case, as with others, it may well be that it is the *perception* of conflicting interests between groups that is frequently regarded as potentially problematic, rather than any readily assessed actuality.

### **11.5 Perceptions of direct threat as contributory to inter-group hostility**

Direct threat was repeatedly referred to as an explanation or justification for conflict between the groups. As with perceived differences this took on a number of distinct forms. Some of these manifested as perceived threats across tangible dimensions, such as competition between the groups over what they saw as limited or unequally distributed social resources (Platow & Hunter, 2001). Others referred to more abstract sources of threat such as perceived conflicts of interest in the form of fears about the erosion and displacement of in-group culture (Corenblum & Stephan, 2001). For the most part, hostile accounts continued to differ from their lesser/non-hostile counterparts in assessment of the inter-group relationship: hostile accounts consistently expressed perceptions of greater instance and strength of threat across the different dimensions; demonstrated a bias towards constructing overtly threatening interpretations of events and phenomena; were prone to making more simplistic, stereotypical and essentialist evaluations about causal influence in relation to perceived threat; displayed greater confidence in and less doubt about the validity of these evaluations. Put simply, hostile perspectives tended to 1) perceive more things as threatening 2) attribute greater severity to forms of potential threat 3) attribute cause and negative intent directly to the out-group for these without consideration of any broader contextual or social factors. Also, while a number of distinct types of perceived threat could be identified from respondent accounts, these frequently emerged as

intertwined aspects of a greater overall threat embodied by the out-group in more hostile accounts, the general thrust of which is encapsulated in the quotes below:

*'They (Asians) just seem to, they want everything, y'know, they want to take over. It's like, that's like cancer, it's gonna keep growing and getting bigger, and that's how people see it. That's how I see it.'*

Pete

*'I came to Burnley 35 year ago, and there weren't so many (Asians) then, and I've seen them grow and they've just took over. And everywhere, I mean they just take over.'*

John

As noted previously, that the Asians were 'Taking over' was one of the most common phrases employed between accounts, with even non/lesser hostile respondents recognising this as a potentially key element of hostile perspectives. Although initially somewhat non-specific in apparent meaning, this assertion was revealed on closer examination to encompass several domains, including those of physical space and territory, acquisition of a greater financial and commercial stake in society, unfair expropriation of social welfare benefits, and expansion of out-group culture and traditions as a force of erosion and displacement in relation to those of the in-group. For example, the excerpt below is fairly representative of hostile perspectives towards perceived territorial and physical expansion and encroachment by the out-group into what is considered in-group space:

*'Because there's so many of them (Asians) now, they're all in one area, but the more that come the more room they need. And the more there are the more they are gonna want their own way ... I think that is threatening to some people, they get pissed off, because now they're (Asians) trying to turn parts of it in to their country.'*

Glenn

Alongside other negatively stereotypical assumptions underlying these accounts can be seen perceptions of the out-group as an invasive presence, ceaselessly expanding to claim a greater proportion of physical space and the population, thus potentially marginalising or usurping in-group members by sheer force of numbers. Referring back to 'Julie's' earlier comment about the assumed relative proportions of in and out-group populations, however, it can be seen that, for non/lesser hostile participants, this perception of territorial encroachment was largely absent. From non/lesser hostile perspectives, perceptions of out-group expansion were regarded as exaggerations or creations of both shared in-group misperception and external sources of misinformation such as elements of the media and local politics. Another aspect of overtly hostile narratives on perceived Asian encroachment has also been touched on previously, namely that in the case of very hostile perspectives it was quite usual to find accusations of purpose and strategy levelled at the out-group:

*'I see them (Asians) as a threat as in future years. My kids are gonna be the minority, I don't want that. Or my grandkids anyway. Without a doubt. They (Asians) will not integrate and all they do is breed and breed and breed, and they know what they are fucking doing.'* John

Here John's account takes us into the realms of conspiracy. Several other overtly hostile accounts ascribe similar levels of intent to the Asian population. Given that these concerns were not evident in non/lesser hostile accounts (or even in those that could be deemed moderately hostile), such perspectives may perhaps be ascribable to the aforementioned greater sensitivity to perceived threat, negative interpretation bias and simplistic/essentialist/stereotypic explanatory styles observed in hostile accounts (or again, as 'Julie' termed it, paranoia). Two of the most commonly cited assumed consequences of this perceived out-group expansion, related to how this would (or did) impact upon the relative availability of and access to social resources in terms of financial aid and employment:

*'You hear people saying about all Pakis are coming over, taking jobs, money, this that and the other ... (Asians) having loads of kids and sponging off the government. And that's where people seem to think all the money's going. They say, "Well Pakis are moving over and bringing all their hundreds of kids in ... and they're not working ... and they seem to get all the jobs"'*

Zoe

Ignoring for now the glaring contradiction presented at the end, 'Zoe's' quote highlights two core grievances with which hostile accounts sought to explain or justify negative attitudes towards the out-group. The first is of Asians as (somewhat negatively and stereotypically) being unfairly or disproportionately in receipt of government aid and state benefits.

*'(Whites) are going out ... paying the national insurance, paying your tax. But you don't see that with Asians, with them working and getting benefits, job seekers allowance, disability, what else they can scam.'*

Pete

'Pete' again here puts the most negative and threatening spin possible on his interpretation. That while (legitimate, tax-paying) in-group members struggle to make their way honestly in the world and contribute fully to society, the (grasping, underhanded) out-group contribute little and take much in terms of resources. This negatively stereotypical judgement was quite often repeated in hostile accounts, stressing that greater supposed amounts of social benefit and funding received by the out-group were seen as representing an unfair allocation of potentially limited resources.

*'They've (Asians) got everything and we've got bugger all. These things are said day in and day out. Everybody's (Asians) out for what they can get ... there's only so many resources, I think that people see that ... if there's a limitation on things and then there's (Asian) people draining that off in a big way then it's begrudged.'*

Lynn

With this type of thinking the emphasis of provocation seemed not so much to be on perceptions of straight competition between the two groups for scarce resources, but rather that one group was seen

as illegitimately taking or undeservedly being given more than their fair share. It was not so much that hostile respondents perceived the in-group as actually suffering or being disadvantaged by unequal distribution of resources in many cases, but rather that the out-group were either taking advantage or being treated with more favour. The role of perceptions of the out-group as in receipt of preferential treatment to inter-group hostility will be discussed in a subsequent section. For non/lesser hostile respondents these concerns of inequality or unfairness in the allocation of financial aid were also sometimes described as important, though perhaps with a different emphasis applied to where divisions lay:

*'It's just when some people abuse the system, like, it happens with both white and black people, where people just don't go to work, just sponging off benefits and everyone else, and, that annoys some people, but it does happen in both cultures. But when you're part of one culture you only see it happening in the other one, you don't look deep inside your own.'*

Daniel

The second perceived grievance identified by 'Zoe's' earlier statement came in relation to employment and commerce.

*I mean they just take over, the businesses, anything that doesn't have any manufacturing labour in it they will do. Driving taxis or busses, or running a shop.'*

John

*'We've (whites) been pushed out of the way to give someone a job because of their colour. Not because of their ability.'*

Katherine

In many hostile accounts part of the threat implied by greater out-group expansion came from the effect this would have on the employment prospects of white community members. Here Asians were seen as gradually taking over both the running of business enterprises in the community and of a larger proportion of jobs which otherwise might go to in-group members – sometimes as a result of 'positive discrimination' policies operated by the local authority.

This last will be dealt with in the upcoming preferential treatment section, while the former assumption of negative impact on employment opportunities described above found an alternate interpretation in the accounts from lesser/non-hostile perspectives:

*'People go on about them (Asians) taking jobs away from whites but it's not (the sort of) jobs anyone wants. But they (whites) see them (Asians) doing all right and that winds them up.'*      Graham

If anything, less hostile accounts tended to assert that Asian employment opportunities were limited to specific spheres, and that these were largely of no interest to in-group members of similar socio-economic status. Overall there can again be discerned contradiction in hostile accounts in both these (financial aid and employment resources) domains, often interpreting situations in such a way as to represent out-group members in the worst and most threatening of possible lights regardless of what they do. One way in which less hostile respondents characterised this was as a tendency of more hostile individuals to regard any sign of perceived out-group relative prosperity or social improvement as a source of concern or envy, and therefore make attributions of unfair advantage.

*'I think that the resources that are available ... are getting out to both groups, but they're (whites) looking at the other and thinking, "They're getting more." I mean, it's almost childish, it's almost "His slice is bigger than mine, Mum."'*      Julie

Besides those relating to territory and social resources, a second core area of perceived threat identified from respondent accounts pertained to less quantifiable domains of competition or conflict of interests between the groups (Sherif, 1966). Cultural differences have been previously accounted as a factor of influence in the generation of inter-group conflict by more hostile respondents, with Asians' perceived rejection of in-group cultural practices, values and traditions in favour of their own being regarded as problematic. Issues around this were

taken a stage further in hostile accounts when it came to direct threat. Added to the rejection aspect of cultural disparity now came a perception that traditional in-group culture and values were also under more direct and deliberate challenge:

*'From when the Asian migration ... started in about the '50s, '60s or whenever, they (whites) have just seen their way of life, well what they see as their way of life, eroded.'* Neil

Quite a number of accounts carried this assertion that the out-group's presence was regarded as having a detrimental effect upon 'traditional' in-group culture. Again, in many more-hostile accounts this seemed to represent a policy of expansion by Asians:

*'They (Asians) wanna take over, and they want to rule it don't they. They want to push all their religion and their ideas and everything on to us.'* Pete

As with some of the earlier, more tangible, aspects of the Asians 'taking over' this perceived cultural encroachment spanned several interconnected domains. For instance, some hostile accounts cited elements of legal and religious practice as an area of increasing Asian influence:

*'(Asians) think their way is better, so ... bit by bit they bring it in, so we have their (religious) holidays now, they get their holidays and then ours. What's next? It's their law to still, you get stoned to death don't you, are they gonna bring that in next?'* Karl

While others highlighted how cultural encroachment could also have ramifications in more concrete terms:

*'It's a threat to everything we believe, our architecture, our town planning, the way things are run, our education system, healthcare system, everything seemed to be dictated for the minority instead of*

*the majority. And the majority of people in this country I believe are still white British and proud of it and want to maintain that way of life.'*

Lynn

The belief that minority (Asian) interests were being disproportionately or unfairly catered to or promoted was also a recurrent theme. This was often voiced as a concern that increasing acceptance and accommodation of out-group culture and values would lead to the diminution or displacement of in-group culture as dominant in society. When added to the perception that certain elements in the Asian community had such an agenda of conversion in mind, this generated quite widespread declarations of opposition.

*'I think it's very important that people understand that it's more important for smaller minorities to bend their views and ways to ... er, dovetail with the existing population. Because some (Asian) cultures do not like the (white) culture ... and they will try and use any way they have to change that. Which's really not on I'm afraid.'*

Robin

Lesser/non-hostile accounts also displayed familiarity or even limited acceptance of some aspects of the same proposition, though for the most part they did not consider it quite so seriously as a form of threat:

*'(I think) A little group of them (Asians) would like to make us a Muslim country ... but people just wouldn't stand for that, they would not put up with it for a minute, so that's a bit of a joke. And I'm sure there's some (white) people think that's what's gonna happen but that's just being daft.'*

Graham

As noted, one of the differences between more overtly hostile and non/lesser hostile perspectives appeared to be a heightened perception of and sensitivity to both the incidence and severity of perceived threat. This coupled with a bias towards making attributions of negative cause and intent

directly to the out-group (without consideration of any broader contextual factors) was a frequently observed distinction between different perspectives in the sample. This last can be seen in 'Alan's' account below. Here he is discussing the promotion of out-group culture as a potential threat from a non-hostile perspective:

*'I do (think there is some threat), but I don't think the blame needs to be laid at the doors of immigrants, or Asians, I think the blame is to be laid at local authorities, and governments and civil servants, who pass these silly rules. Which is wrong, because it gives the idea that Asians are somehow taking over our culture. That's not the Asians' fault, I don't think they had any involvement in it, but I think that perception is there. The Asians I know have no problem with British culture, it's these white, well-meaning, middle-class bureaucrats, who tend to treat minorities with kid gloves, patronising them, I think the blame is to be laid partly at their door.'*

Alan

Alan incorporates two themes in the above statement which will be discussed more thoroughly in later sections on perceptions of preferential out-group treatment and perceptions of outside influence as contributory to inter-group hostility, but he also demonstrates greater equanimity with regard to the legitimacy and seriousness of potential threats to in-group culture, as well as a broader and more considered perspective on its possible origin. While beliefs about out-group expansion in terms of either absorption of territory and resources or displacement of traditional in-group culture and values represented the two most common and urgent threads of perceived threat across the sample, two further forms of potential threat were also identified. The first of these was physical threat.

For the most part, the out-group in general was not regarded as a direct physical threat by members of the sample. Where the subject of physical threat arose in respondent accounts this usually took quite specific forms – firstly as that of female respondents feeling intimidated in the presence of young Asian men in groups:

*'I feel threatened when I see gangs of Asian youths sort of walking towards me or in, in a car, usually with the windows open usually with music playing, I find it quite intimidating.'* Katherine

This was evident in statements from a majority of female respondents, regardless of any personal levels of hostility they expressed. However, in some cases a caveat was at times appended:

*'I feel, I'd feel threatened. Walking down the street if I ran into a big group of Asians lads. But I wouldn't want to run into a big gang of lads whatever, of whatever colour.'* Lesley

The particular form this sense of intimidation seemed to take was not related to direct fears of violence from the out-group on the behalf of female participants, either, but more a sense of negative attitudes towards women being regarded as present in collectives of young Asian men. It was also most often discussed in terms of aversion to entering what were considered Asian parts of the town. One possible explanation for why perceptions of physical threat were perhaps not more prominent in accounts more generally, therefore, may be the documented lack of interaction and contact between the two groups. Asians were largely regarded as sticking to their own areas, into which the prospect of entering was often regarded as source of perceived physical intimidation:

*'Feeling that you can't walk through an Asian area because of young Asian men. The(ir) attitude to white women and the assumption that they're (white women) all sort of, like, if not Jordan (topless model), then at least her cousin. I don't think there are any of the (white) blokes I know who feel at all worried about the idea of walking through there (Asian area.) Some of them (white men) would probably quite like the idea of ... being challenged, shall we say.'* Julie

This assertion that physical intimidation might not be considered problematic by male members of the white community was largely supported by their representatives in this sample. Male respondents for the most part did not report viewing members of the out-group as a physical threat. It is possible, of course, that male accounts might be less likely to contain admissions of vulnerability or anxiety about such matters due to concerns of masculine self-presentation. Of males in the sample, only 16 year-old 'Daniel' claimed to regard perceptions of physical threat as personally problematic, when talking about the school environment:

*'They (Asian boys) tend to stick around in big groups (at school) and that makes you paranoid as well, because you daren't walk past a large group of them, when they're in big groups it's quite intimidating.'*

Daniel

Similar to the female examples above, the perception of threat is here again linked to groups of young Asian males, specifically in locations where they were likely to be found gathering (e.g. Asian residential areas, school.) This tended to be the case whenever the subject arose, that physical threat might only be considered as a problem if one were to enter Asian residential areas. Although 'Karl's' comment below was fairly typical, if a little extreme, of the hostile older male perspectives on the issue of physical intimidation:

*'I suppose it (would be) a threat if you can't go along without ten of them (Asians) jumping you, but I tell you if it came to a fair fight we'd wipe the floor (with them.) They're cowards, a lot of them they're cowards.'*

Karl

Another form of identified threat raised some interesting issues. The volume of comment in which the out-group were conceived as threateningly detrimental to in-group interests (be this territory, resources or culture and values) was consistently high. From this it might be anticipated that respondent assessments of how the in-group's status in society had been

negatively impacted by out-group expansion would be similarly so. After all, if Asians were attempting to take over housing, employment, financial aid and cultural pre-eminence in the local community this would presumably have directly negative consequences for in-group social standing. This was not seen to be the case. No single respondent admitted to regarding in-group standing, in either financial terms or social position and prestige to be detrimentally effected by the out-group's presence. 'Lynn' captures general perspectives on this quite well:

*'I don't think our status or standard of living has gone down in reality, it's probably gone up. I don't think they've (Asians) made it worse, but on the same token they haven't made it better.'* Lynn

Participants in this sample, then, largely rejected any claim that their group had suffered directly from any negative impact of the out-group's presence in terms of status or standing in society. 'Lynn' was only the second person to be interviewed in the study and her assessment of the situation prompted an addition to the schedule, in that participants were subsequently asked to also evaluate if and how they felt their *own* life had been negatively impacted by the out-group's presence. Responses to this were highly consistent across the sample:

*'No, I don't think so. I mean, I do jobs for them (Asians) so I'm probably better off.'* David

*'I wouldn't say it's affected my life, I wouldn't say it's made a difference to my life.'* Pete

*'To be quite honest it's had no effect on me.'* Jason

Only one respondent in the study considered their own life to have been impacted in a negative way by the out-group's presence in the local community, though this took a somewhat indirect form:

*'Yeah. I got out of Burnley 15 years ago because I was sick of all the racism. I came back three and a half years ago and it's still the same.'* Stuart

'Stuart's' account aside, no other respondent considered their own life to have been directly impacted in a negative way by the out-group's presence. This, of course, may have been a result of the small sample size utilised by the study, which perhaps just happened to have had no experience of personal negativity. However, another possibility is also worth considering. Social Identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) clearly suggests that strong self-identification as a member of the white British/local community impels individuals to take any perceived threats to this personally, regardless of any direct experience of negative impact. An interesting point follows from this, however, especially if evidence can be found of comparable observations occurring across a larger sample. Put simply, if widespread perceptions exist of the out-group as having a detrimental impact on the in-group and its members in the specific social context, yet few or no individuals within this personally report having being negatively affected in any way, then where exactly can the negative impact be said to reside? This question will be addressed further in section 11.5 as it relates to phase two of the current study. Another related possibility has already been suggested by previous analysis of perceived threats to in-group resources. Here it was indicated that, although respondents often reported feeling no direct or objectively negative impact from the out-group's allocation of financial and social benefits, the greater problem was usually phrased in terms of the out-group being regarded as unfairly, illegitimately or disproportionately in

receipt of such favour when compared to the in-group. This form of perceived relative deprivation on the in-group's part brings us to the next theme relating to perceived sources of problematic influence on hostile inter-group relations identified in respondent accounts.

### **11.6 Perceptions of out-group preferential treatment as contributory to inter-group hostility**

Relative Deprivation theory (Runciman, 1966) claims that perceptions of out-group favour, regardless of any objective detriment to in-group fortunes, can be a force in the generation of hostility between groups. Comparisons which produce notions that one group is being unfairly advantaged, or that overall disadvantage in a context comes partly as a result of the out-group presence (as opposed to broader social and economic factors of influence) represent a potential source of inter-group problems, as the out-group may subsequently become a focus of blame and hostility. This can be interpreted in terms of both Relative Deprivation (Runciman, 1966) theory and Social Identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), as perceptions of undeserved or unfair bias against the in-group may also impact upon elements of members' sense of personal and group esteem – especially where preferment is viewed as applying to cultural aspects of group identity. Perceptions of the out-group as being in receipt of preferential treatment were consistently raised as a problematic influence on inter-group hostility across the sample. This was somewhat the case for both non/lesser hostile and overtly hostile accounts, though again these tended to differ in interpretation. A selection of such views is presented below:

*'There's been the long, kind of, tradition in the town of white people thinking that Asian people are somehow preferred.'*

Alan

*'I perceive, rightly or wrongly, that ethnic minorities have been given more privileges, more money, better housing conditions, grants in their area, and that angers me, it really does.'*

Katherine

*'It's like we're (Whites) shit, and they (Asians) get it handed on a plate time and again, we're just supposed to go along.'*

Karl

Some of the forms these perceived inequalities were considered to take have already been touched upon, one such being preference in terms of financial resources allocated to the Asian community. This manifested in two ways: first in perceptions that Asian residential areas were receiving greater amounts of government subsidy to help with improvements:

*'I mean, all the unfair, it all comes down to unfair distribution of monies. I know for a fact where all the money's been spent. I've seen it, we've all seen where it's been spent.'* John

General perspectives on this perception are captured in 'Denise's' quote below, as is an uncertainty in lesser/non-hostile accounts about how accurate such claims are. While lesser/non-hostile respondents recognised perceptions of unfair financial disbursement as problematic in their accounts, they often also questioned the actuality of its occurrence:

*'(People say) "There's all this money being spent, Burnley council are spending all this money on the areas where the Asians live. It's totally unfair that the Asians, who are only a small part of the population get all this money." That again is a problem, because (white) people don't always see the truth, they see what they want to see, or they see what other people have told them is true.'*

Denise

A second area of perceived financial disparity identified in accounts focussed on receipt of state or unemployment benefits and social support. Hostile accounts were quite often filled with claims that members of the out-group were either disproportionately or illegitimately receiving unemployment or social assistance benefits. General stereotypical perceptions of the out-group as 'spongers' or 'scroungers' in this way were quite commonly brought up as justifications for hostility towards them. Support for these claims was presented in different ways, though usually containing implicitly negative and stereotypical assumptions about the out-group:

*'Because the educational, communicational abilities of quite a lot of Asians are low, then they've got low paid jobs, or no jobs ... in which case they obviously get a lot more (state) benefits than the indigenous population.'*

Robin

*'(Asians are) a cleverer group of people as a community, because they know what's available, they go out of their way to find out. So they apply for it, and they get it.'*

Neil

*'I think they (Asians) do get any easy ride. Even if they don't set out (to), there are some who will abuse the system, but even if they don't it's kind of set up to let them slide through.'*

Glen

Together the statements above capture a range of negative attributions frequently ascribed to the out-group. Intimations can be found in these of Asians being regarded as socially inferior and therefore perhaps undeserving of financial support, cunningly acquisitive in working the system to their own advantage, and unfairly favoured in terms of successful applications. In both cases of financial preference, hostile accounts focused not on any directly detrimental effect to the in-group from these activities, so much as the unfair and undeserved preference they saw as being gifted to the out-group. This was not quite so clear cut in another area of perceived preferential out-group treatment, that of access to employment resources. Several accounts regarded the out-group as unfairly preferred in only one respect to this:

*'Burnley council, they had a policy of deliberately employing people from an Asian background, but that caused resentment as well.'*

Denise

Preferential bias here was for the most part regarded as operating in the public sector, with preferment being seen as applying to Asian applicants for posts under government or local authority control. This was also raised as an issue in lesser/non-hostile accounts, but as with other issues the onus was not placed directly on the out-group itself:

*'Ethnic groups have been excluded (in the past) from jury duty, council, police work, and the problem is the government have decided they're going to sort this out and make everything equal by just pushing (ethnic minority) people through the system, and this is then perceived as preferential treatment.'*

Stuart

'Stuart' here accepts that there may be a problem in this regard, but locates it within government policy; recognising in doing so that socio-historical determinants are also at play in the situation. In more hostile accounts this awareness was mostly lacking, with attributions of unfair treatment again seen as reflecting negative characteristics of the out-group itself, in this way echoing Wetherell and Potter's (1992) finding that making an out-group accountable for its own social and economic disadvantage was a strategy used by in-group members to make prejudiced statements appear more legitimate. This is 'Katherine', arguing the point:

*'And this thing about jobs, saying that Asian people don't get as many jobs as whites, but why don't they? I mean, they have the same education as we do ... and if they haven't taken advantage of that well they don't deserve a better job. Y'know, they've only got the same start as we have when they're born here aren't they.'*

Katherine

Ascriptions of preferential treatment were applied both to somewhat quantifiable domains such as those above, as well as to less tangible aspects of the inter-group relationship. These more abstract concerns were often considered problematic from both lesser/non-hostile and hostile perspectives alike. For instance, one most common assertion found in accounts was that of the out-group as receiving preference in being allowed to promote or defend issues or aspects of their own culture. Dissatisfaction here centred around what respondents saw as the repression of in-group culture by the authorities, due in part to an over-sensitivity to out-group concerns:

*'They (Asians) can do it, but you can't do it ... you can't fly your own St George's cross but somebody else can do it. They (government) keep saying it's because of other races, but ... why do we have to feel like we're being racist? If we're all supposed to be English it isn't racist.'* Jason

Perceived official discouragement from publicly displaying the Cross of St George flag and other expressions of white 'British' (sic) national pride was an issue raised by several respondents. Regardless of whether this represented an actual directive handed down from the powers-that-be or not, hostility was sometimes seen as justified by respondents through what they saw as an unfair challenge to open displays of legitimate pride in their national identity. This was a common complaint in more hostile accounts, that demonstrations of pride and identification with in-group culture were being illegitimately suppressed by or on behalf of the out-group. Other perceived threats to in-group cultural identity were similarly proposed:

*'Then there's this rubbish about Christmas, it was in something (news article) where they want to call it 'Winter festival' at schools. That really gets people's back up.'* Lesley

Unlike financial preference, concerns such as these did not tend to be regarded as mainly originating directly from the out-group itself, however (even though they did still appear to work to justify hostility towards its members.) Rather, respondents right across the board repeatedly identified what

they perceived as interference from above as a key influence in generating disharmony between the groups:

*'There's no ... consultation, the council or whoever, the politicians just go ahead and do it. You don't see them (government) trying to mess around with their (Asians) religious festivals. No, they wouldn't dare.'*

Glenn

*'This political correctness, that you can't say, you see articles that at school you can't even say things like baa-baa-black sheep because it could upset people who are not white.'*

Jim

The term 'Political Correctness' (PC) came up at least once in each interview. Although never specifically defined, PC was generally spoken of in derogatory terms as a form of unwanted and misguided interference by 'the government'<sup>23</sup> in social and inter-group matters. Employment bias in the favour of Asians was regarded as an example of PC, as were perceived allowances to out-group sensitivities such as described above. For the most part it was considered particularly problematic in its perceived intent to suppress or inhibit free expression and language:

*'Because we've (whites) got more scared, we've built up all these ... issues that we can't tackle it ... we're (considered) racist if we say owt (anything), we're sexist if we say owt, it's not PC to say owt, so everybody's seething underneath and daren't really say what they're bloody thinking and that's how it feels. It feels like we're being oppressed and that's where the resentment builds up.'*

Lynn

We shall return momentarily to the issue of free speech, as this represents a final dimension of perceived preferential treatment identified from respondent accounts. Before this, it is

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<sup>23</sup> Respondents used the term 'government' interchangeably throughout their accounts to refer to national or local ruling bodies, politicians and bureaucrats. This more general sense of meaning will be retained here. References to 'government' in this report will therefore represent a catch-all term for the powers that be.

worth including a perspective from one of the most non-hostile participants in the study. 'Alan' the school teacher identified PC as a problematic area of influence on inter-group hostility. Alan's statement is interesting because he was the one interviewee who incorporated material from what he saw as the out-group's perspective in his account:

*'It's easy to go on about political correctness, and a lot of it's perceived and imaginary as opposed to being real. (But) I go to friends who are Asian, and they hate political correctness because they feel patronised by it, they feel as though people are bending over backwards to make them feel at home. If Asian people feel that, then white people think that as well, because it looks like a certain group of people are getting special treatment, so I think actually it backfires.'*

Alan

A perception of Political Correctness as being a potentially problematic influence on inter-group relations was perhaps the biggest single area of agreement between all respondents. The difference between the two perspectives being that non/lesser-hostile accounts tended to show some awareness of a positive intent behind such policies, while recognising that this went largely misunderstood by many in the community:

*'At a ground roots level people don't understand the psychology and the reason for political correctness, and they just come across it and don't understand it, so they see it as preferential treatment.'*

Stuart

This misunderstanding was quite evident in more hostile accounts, with resentment and anger frequently being expressed towards what these saw as unfair or confusing dictates being enforced from above. 'Pete's' statement below serves quite well to capture this:

*'The full on political correctness. That creates grief. I've done these courses a couple of times at work. And first off they're (supposed to be called) Asians, then they're ethnic, then they're black. We (whites) can't call them this, we can't call them that. We've got to do it this*

way. Then you say sommat wrong, you're on a disciplinary. Why can't you just say, er, they're Pakis? I mean 'Stan' (as in Pakistan) as far as I'm aware it means land<sup>24</sup>. Pete

Similar confusion (and irritation) around the use of language and what was acceptable abounded throughout respondent accounts. This was interpreted in a number of ways. For several lesser-hostile interviewees, even where there was an awareness of an underlying purpose to PC, there still appeared to sometimes be genuine puzzlement over what was considered appropriate:

*'You've got to tiptoe around it and not upset anyone. I think 'cos they (Asians) got treat(ed) so badly ... people do treat them horrible sometimes. But I do think it sometimes gets back the other way, so now there's nothing, no-one can say anything about it and it's, even now I don't know what's meant to be racist and not.'* Charlotte

For more hostile respondents this issue seemed to represent a clear cut case of preferential treatment in being able to express criticism of other groups. In these accounts it was generally conceived that, while the out-group were free to discuss matters in any way they wished, this option was not available to in-group members:

*'But the PC thing (is) where no one can speak their mind any more unless he's black, if he's a minority. If you're white, though, you have to keep your mouth shut.'* Glenn

This again was regarded as an influence on creating resentment between the groups, that Asians were seen as free to criticise while whites were not. For some this was viewed as

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<sup>24</sup> Pakistan is actually an acronym representing the five Northern parts of India from which it was formed: Punjab, North-West Frontier Province (Afghan Province), Kashmir, Sind, and BaluchisTAN. The 'i' was added to help pronunciation. It also means Land of (the) Pure in Urdu (Talbot, 1999).

representing part of an overarching structure of attempted control in the form of political correctness, which not only created an atmosphere of resentment and defensiveness on their part, but also worked to make people *more* hostile or prejudiced as a form of misguided rebellion. In this way, perceived preferential treatment in the form of political correctness can be seen as a two-fold justification of hostility – in addition to the out-group being seen as unfairly favoured, more hostile accounts from this sample claimed to feel that they themselves (as representatives of the legitimate and dominant white, British culture) were being unfairly victimised, blamed and castigated for no apparently justifiable reason.

*'We're (whites) continuously being told that ... we are at fault, people seem to blame us, regardless of who's at fault. I think we still seem to get bullied for a lot of problems that I think is unfair on us.'*

Robin

These last examples of perceived preferential treatment, while representing a form of Relative Deprivation (Runciman, 1966) also re-affirm the role of Social Identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) processes in the generation of inter-group hostility. The perceived suppression of openly displayed pride for in-group identity was seen as highly problematic from more hostile perspectives, particularly where these saw no comparable restraints being applied to the out-group and their culture. In part this seemed to add fuel to the fire of hostile assertions regarding the ongoing threats of erosion to in-group values and traditions. While preferment in being able to promote, defend or criticise aspects of group culture was not necessarily directly blamed on the out-group, it was still for the most part taken as symptomatic of a greater trend in out-group promotion and expansion at expense of in-group cultural identity – and as such a justification of for hostility towards them. Government interference in the form of PC culture represented one of three main elements of perceived outside influence on inter-

group hostility. These three factors tended to be considered as problematically influential principally in their role as sources of guidance and information for community members – thus helping to provide content for explanatory resources and interpretive repertoires (Wetherell & Potter, 1992) used to make sense of the social context - and were again evaluated in different ways from lesser/non-hostile and overtly hostile perspectives.

### **11.7 Perceptions of outside influence as contributory to inter-group hostility**

Briefly we shall first consider some additional perspectives on the perceived influence of government on inter-group problems. Respondents repeatedly spoke of feeling frustration at what they saw as government indifference to or disinterest in their concerns and perspectives. This was especially evident in accounts which cited (assumed) government policy as a factor in fuelling problems between the groups:

*'And all these decisions that's made by ... integration, and made by people in parliament, politicians making these ... huge statements about oh, "We'll do this" or "We'll do the other". They don't live here.'*

Katherine

For many the government was seen as a distant, uncaring force, pronouncing upon the fate of the local white community with little consideration of social realities in the context. This was problematic in two related senses. Government was seen by some as a direct cause of inter-group hostility, as several accounts made the claim that unwanted 'immigrant' and out-group populations were being deliberately settled in their community on government say so:

*The government's to blame. The general consensus is that (white) people don't want the Asians here ... that's how it is. Because they (Asians) have been thrust ... they have been thrust on the community. It's nothing to do with the (Asian) individual, it's just the government.'* Jason

Negative interpretations of this scenario were further compounded by commonly cited views of the out-group as being preferred and listened to by government, in direct contrast to perceptions of whites being simultaneously dismissed as unimportant or inferior from the same quarter:

*'They (government) don't give (white) people who actually live in these areas any ... any credit for having any sense, sort of thing. They (government) just say, like, "We're the educated, you're the fucking thick bastards, we'll tell you what to do and everything will be all right." And it just don't work like that.'* Neil

In these statements we can again see compatible elements of both Social Identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) and Relative Deprivation (Runciman, 1966) concerns emerging. From the latter perspective, the frustration caused by a perception of powerlessness in the face of unheeding social forces of control may create feelings of anger and resentment in white community members, which, given the already problematic nature of inter-group relations, then become focused on hostility to the out-group as scapegoats in lieu of other less easily challenged sources of perceived disadvantage. Perceived unfairness in being attended to or supported by forces of authority also appear to represent a threat to positive in-group self-perception in many cases. 'Neil's' claim that the in-group were regarded as unintelligent (and therefore not worthy of input) was frequently echoed in other accounts, and largely interpreted as a negative evaluation of (local white British) in-group esteem. Governmental threats to in-group positive evaluation were also then seen as intrinsically bound up with

similar threats perceived as emanating from the out-group. To summarise: from a Social Identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) perspective we have seen that hostile respondents tended to interpret Asian non-adoption of ('legitimately dominant') in-group culture as a form of rejection, thus potentially threatening positive in-group self-evaluation. That 'government' were also seen as biased in support of out-group cultural identities, whilst at the same time dismissive of in-group concerns and legitimacy, only served to exacerbate feelings of resentment and hostility in some members of the white community. For hostile respondents it was as if they felt in-group positive identity was being threatened and devalued both by the out-group and their own (white British) government at the same time – perhaps again demonstrating a heightened sensitivity to perceived threat and negative interpretive bias in doing so.

Perceptions of government as problematically influential were not limited to hostile perspectives, however, and several lesser/non-hostile accounts also raised this issue. For these respondents, perceived government disinterest or disdain for certain in-group viewpoints was often related to concerns about another perceived outside influence on inter-group hostility. This quite lengthy quote from Julie serves well to link the two themes together:

*'I think it's been handled very insensitively in terms of the white community's ... feelings. They've (whites) just been seen as wrong. I mean, I'm not saying they are right, because I don't think they are right. But I think that understanding why they feel like that, and addressing their fears rather than just condemning them, would have been a much better way of progressing. I think just being told, "Well anyone who thinks like that is just scum" rather than sort of saying "Well let's talk about why you feel like that" and what information you're lacking or... what we can do about the situation. (This is why) they (whites) think the BNP's speaking for them. Not because the BNP are speaking the way they believe, but because the BNP are saying what they want to hear about certain things.'* Julie

Understandably, given their prominence in local political affairs at the time, references to the far right-wing British National Party (BNP) made frequent appearances in respondent accounts. In this there was a clear division observable between perspectives, indicating that only lesser/non-hostile elements in the sample regarded BNP influence as a source of problems between the groups. This predominantly took the form of assertions that the BNP were responsible for the dissemination of misinformation about Asians. A good example of perceived BNP influence here came when ‘Alan’ was discussing perceptions of the out-group as being favoured in public service employment opportunities and, more importantly, where such perceptions might originate:

*‘There’s a perception that the council, and actually the BNP put this in some of their literature, that our council has to employ so many Asian people ... as a proportion, and that, I don’t know if that’s true or not, I don’t tend to believe everything the BNP tell me, strangely enough.’* Alan

‘Julie’s’ and ‘Alan’s’ quotes capture several aspects of perspectives on the BNP. Firstly they highlight a common view amongst the majority of participants that this political party employs a strategy of distributing material purposefully designed to cater to or accommodate what are seen as generally desirable outcomes on behalf of the white community – ‘They just say what they think people want to hear’ was a common assertion throughout respondent accounts. Secondly, that perhaps because of this, there was a general consensus that many BNP claims were unrealistic or untenable and therefore not to be taken at face value. But for lesser/non-hostile accounts the third and most important element of negative influence attributed to the BNP was its aforementioned wilful dissemination of pernicious and often unreliable information about the out-group. While the two former assertions appear quite often across different accounts, this last only tended to be a matter of concern from lesser/non-hostile perspectives. For them, this was considered a major factor in generating hostility, in terms of it helping to shape the interpretive repertoires (Wetherell & Potter, 1992) available to community members when constructing explanations, interpretations and

evaluations of events and phenomena in the inter-group context. This will be touched on again when we discuss perceptions of media influence on inter-group hostility and covered more fully in the subsequent section on consensus and facilitation factors as influential to inter-group hostility. Overtly hostile accounts did not consider the BNP as meaningfully influential on problematic relations between the groups at all. As stated, the BNP were for the most part considered to be saying either what people already thought or wanted to hear, rather than shaping public opinion in any way. In this they were often regarded as a conduit for the open-expression of views held throughout the community, or as speaking up for those who felt incapable or unable to get themselves heard:

*'I've voted BNP these last couple of years, not because I want the BNP to get in, because it's a protest vote because nobody else will listen to me. So in a way the BNP are standing up for us.'*

Pete

Other than in this respect, or as a beneficiary of protest voting *a la* 'Pete's' quote, the BNP were for the most part represented as a largely ineffectual force in the grand scheme of things from more hostile perspectives. Even for those who expressed open hostility or resentment towards the out-group, the BNP itself mostly tended to arouse reactions of either ambivalence or aversion:

*'I don't think most people always perceive the BNP with much seriousness, but I think most people would say they should be able to speak out and say what they want to say.'*

Robin

*'The BNP, personally I loathe them. But at the same time you get this sneaking thing about it and you, you think, "I agree with that." I would never vote for them, never. But then ... you sometimes think "But am I letting someone else do my dirty work?"'*

Katherine

The quotes above are quite representative of more hostile accounts in this sample, again asserting that the views expressed by this political party tended to be seen as reflecting rather than influencing in-group perceptions of the out-group – while lesser/non-hostile accounts were more likely to ascribe both roles to BNP out/input. From a Lesser/non-hostile perspective, too, the third major source of perceived outside influence on inter-group hostility shared this characteristic of potentially influencing opinions, or the repertoires of explanation and interpretation (Wetherell & Potter, 1992) frequently used to make sense of inter-group relations:

*‘Well there’s a big problem at the moment with ... the fact that we have the gutter press, in the way they forwarded things in the news, false information, bigotry to religion, er, lack of knowledge of other social groups.’*

Stuart

This negative influence of the (predominantly tabloid newspaper) media on inter-group issues was another factor raised primarily in lesser/non-hostile accounts. These perspectives tended to display greater awareness of how, often unquestioned and potentially biased, outside sources of information could impact negatively on the situation by the way they helped shape explanations and ways of understanding social phenomena. Again this highlights a broader and more considered approach taken by these respondents when evaluating inter-group problems – something they themselves displayed awareness of:

*‘(There’s) so little exposure (amongst the white community), apart from going through the tabloids, to outside ideas, as much as anything. I mean if you go into any of the newspaper shops round here, there’s a pile that’s nearly a foot high that’s of the Sun (newspaper) and then there’s ... one each of the broadsheets. And that’s where they (hostile whites) get most of their information from.’*

Julie

It would be unfair to say that more hostile accounts did not also include awareness of this issue. Though media representations were not generally considered a major factor in the generation or perpetuation of inter-group hostility in these, a few moderately hostile accounts did describe ways in which media influence played its part in fanning the flames of intolerance or creating greater anxiety about potential threats represented by the out-group:

*'Hostile, again it depends, from time to time, y'know, you get a Daily Mail (headline) kind of "Mad Mullah preaching, fucking let's kill the west", and obviously the (Whites') feeling goes up.'*

Neil

*'Maybe that's why they (whites) take it out on the Asian community, because they see articles in the paper that this terrorist was receiving twenty-odd grand a year benefits and a four-wheel drive Range Rover and things like that.'*

Jim

The respondents cited above shared one interesting thing in common. Both began the interview as quite openly hostile towards the out-group, then, as they were required to apply deeper consideration to the issues at hand, expressions of hostility tended to fluctuate and alternate with more thoughtful evaluations of inter-group hostility issues. Indeed, several moderately hostile respondents clearly showed a willingness and ability to step outside straightforwardly negative orientations towards the out-group when stimulated to do so. Nevertheless, a slight difference could still be observed between these and completely non-hostile accounts which largely questioned the veracity and intent behind tabloid reporting; whereas attention in the above is drawn only to the prominence and spin sometimes applied to particular stories as a negative influence.

As with the BNP, tabloid media influence was regarded as a negative factor in group relations mostly in non-hostile accounts. This negativity was located in the provision of information which shaped and influenced common interpretations and evaluations of events and situations. A common assertion found in lesser/non-hostile accounts was that hostility between the groups was perpetuated and reinforced by both negative influence and limitations applying to the amount and type of information available or accessed by many in-group members. For large sections of the white community, it was suggested, the most accessible or available sources of information and explanation about inter-group matters came only from other, negatively like-minded in-group members, and sources such as those noted above. Added to the lack of prolonged or meaningful contact between the ethnic groups, and consequent paucity of genuine knowledge about each other, these factors were considered instrumental in further promoting inter-group misunderstanding and distrust, particularly in those who were unable, disinclined or unmotivated to access additional or alternative information. These proposed limitations in availability and access, or inclination and motivation to acquire greater explanatory resources or interpretive repertoires (Wetherell & Potter, 1992) will be more thoroughly dealt with in section 10.9. Before this, one last external source of contribution to inter-group hostility needs to be covered.

### **11.8 General social deprivation in the context as contributory to inter-group hostility**

Hardship and general social deprivation in the local context were frequently cited as issues related to the generation of inter-group hostility. The extent to which these were regarded as directly responsible for problems differed between accounts, but overall there was general acknowledgement that these factors had some influence:

*'It's (Burnley) an area of relatively higher poverty, low wages, not many people who are working on average. It's just the circumstances (that create problems), I feel.'*

Denise

*'Areas where there's just poverty and where there's any problems, er, that seems to accelerate the problem expotentially (sic), it's about hardship. There's a lot of poverty, there's no money going round, and that's the basis of it all more than anything else.'*

Stuart

These two quotes from a lesser/non-hostile perspective represent such orientations quite well. For less hostile members of the community, general social deprivation was regarded as a major factor in problematic inter-group relations. Respondents who expressed greater hostility did also recognise the role of general social forces but were more likely to view these as operating in tandem with other factors to create problems:

*'I think a lot of it is a financial thing, it is a poor area. Then when, when there's no money, when you see people who have money who look like they weren't, don't belong here ... their roots aren't in this country, then you get, you resent it.'*

Katherine

Here we see a number of elements combine in a single statement. 'Katherine' accepts general deprivation as a problem but chooses to focus on a perception of Asians as easily distinguishable and unwelcome interlopers in undeserving (and therefore illegitimate) receipt of good fortune, especially in comparison to the in-group. This proposition, that prosperous Asians were a source of resentment, was fairly common overall, again providing an example of blame for wider social hardship being attributed directly to the out-group in lieu of other potential sources. That the out-group might represent a more accessible or easily targeted

outlet for blame and the frustration caused by factors beyond both groups' control was a common assertion:

*'There's so many people in debt now, they can't see a way out of it, there's no jobs, no prospects, no future ... and maybe that's why they take it out on the Asian community.'* Jim

*'I think it's just easy to blame (Asians), er ... maybe we should (laughs) have a "Blame a Paki Week." I don't, I'm not all that keen on things about them (Asians), but I don't think everything's their fault. But it's easy to blame them.'* Charlotte

When required to ponder the issue, accounts such as these above often displayed awareness of a tendency in the local white community to perhaps indiscriminately blame unsatisfactory in-group fortunes on the Asians, though often this was cited as representing an additional or incidental factor alongside some of the 'genuine' causal influences previously cited earlier in this analysis, such as perceived inter-group differences and threat. As repeatedly noted, more overtly hostile accounts tended to simply blame the Asians without any question or consideration of how legitimately justifiable this might be. While lesser/non-hostile accounts focused more on processes of unjustified blame as being central to the inter-group difficulties observed in the context:

*'There's a few hard core people who actually believe all this BNP fascist rhetoric, and then there's (the majority of) people who are just using it as a, er, scapegoat, just to blame anything (on the Asians) for their own personal situation.'* Stuart

From 'Stuart's' perspective, and others like it, hostility towards the out-group was partly viewed as a function of the generally deprived social environment, with enmity coming as a result of frustration

on the part of in-group members over dissatisfaction with personal and group fortunes. This then found a focus on the out-group as more easily identifiable and targeted scapegoats, especially where perceptions of prosperity, social improvement or disproportionate favour applying to the Asians were evident. This interpretation again falls broadly in line with a Relative Deprivation (Runciman, 1966) perspective, in that comparisons which ascribe relative benefit to an out-group in generally deprived situations may lead to such responses of frustration, blame and hostility. Perceptions of the out-group as getting along and doing well comparative to the in-group also raises issues of potential threat to in-group self-evaluation and esteem from a Social Identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) perspective.

### **11.9 In-group consensus and facilitation as contributory to inter-group hostility**

Throughout the foregoing sections repeated attention had been drawn to issues of consensus in respondent accounts. This was observed in a number of ways. Overall, there was a good deal of agreement between accounts as to what the main problematic component of inter-group hostility were regarded as being, even though accounts frequently differed between lesser/non-hostile and more-hostile perspectives in the explanations, interpretations and perceived meanings these took. Lesser/non-hostile accounts also alluded to what they saw as a general consensus in the wider local community, with a majority of views being regarded as falling in-line with those espoused from more hostile perspectives – an observation that was often backed up in hostile accounts themselves. From analysis of the interview transcripts in this study it is clear that participants in general regarded a majority within the local context as sharing this consensus of negativity towards the Asians:

*'I think Burnley is, no matter what the councillors and politicians say, there is a great deal of racism in Burnley. No matter what people say, the majority are racist.'*

Jim

*'These (hostility to Asians) things are said day in and day out, I hear something like that every single day. So I think it's there, at the bottom of a majority. They are voicing a consensus.'*

Lynn

This in itself can be considered a problematic component of inter-group hostility for several reasons. Collective frameworks for interpreting group interactions have been identified as models by which individual members construct the inter-group relationship for themselves (Dixon & Reicher, 1997). Specific ways of understanding and interpreting social reality can be widespread and pervasive across a given context, and therefore often come to be regarded as unquestionably 'valid' by many within this. In addition to providing this framework of explanation, consensus also works to mutually reinforce beliefs and explanations between members of a community through social influence, as perspectives are more likely to be deemed legitimate if they are acknowledged and shared by like-minded others (Reynolds & Turner, 2001). In this way in-group members represent a main source of information to each other, further validating and reinforcing the perceived legitimacy of a commonly held in-group position (Turner, 1996). As has already been noted, the bulk of available explanatory resources and information about the inter-group relationship (and various aspects of this identified as problematic in the foregoing analysis) in the local white community have been claimed to come from either other, similarly orientated community members, the tabloid media or the BNP. Whereas alternative information, from government sources in the form of equality initiatives for example, has a tendency to be rejected, resented or misunderstood in favour of more prevalent common perspectives. In this way, negativity directed towards the Asians can to some extent be regarded as the norm in this context, thus shaping individual perspectives and the way they construct and evaluate elements of the inter-group relationship. At several points in respondent accounts, mention was made of in-group members' tendency to unquestioningly conform to such a consensus view:

*'I think it's (hostility towards Asians) rife, I really do. Whether it's (that) people really do feel it, or whether they just say it because it's what they're supposed to say (in the context). Whenever you start talking to someone, you'll always, before long somebody'll say, "Oh, them black fuckers," or whatever it is.'*

Neil

'Neil' here both acknowledges the common-place nature of statements declaring out-group hostility, and also hints that this may be to some extent influenced by what is expected under the circumstances. Both numerically in this sample, and as asserted in its accounts, the expression of lesser/non-hostile perspectives in relation to the out-group represented a minority (one might almost say nonconformist) position. These (non-hostile) respondents often spoke in terms of feeling that they were going against the flow of general consensus in the community by expressing such perspectives. 'Julie' here is talking about one aspect of her frustration at this:

*'There are so many cases where you hear (white) people saying (negative) things about ... other ethnic groups in the town. That just aren't true. You think (of saying to them) "Somebody is going round telling you stuff, and it's not true. But you're believing it.'"*

Julie

Several more-hostile accounts also expressed awareness that unquestioning forms of adherence to common consensus amongst the community had a strong impact on legitimising, reinforcing and reproducing expressions of negativity towards the Asian community, and that this might represent a factor in its continuing manifestation.

*'I hear it all the time. Nearly every day there'll be someone going on about Pakis. It's like they (hostile white community members) think it's all right to hate, er, Asians 'cos they've (whites) heard it all their lives – "Paki this, Paki that" – so they think it's all right.'*

David

'David's' quote here refers to a common assertion in regards to in-group consensus, particularly emanating from the accounts of younger members of the sample – that growing up in social and

family environments marked by wide-spread expressions of animosity towards the Asian community can be an important contributory factor in generating, facilitating, perpetuating and transmitting such views both horizontally across peer relationships in the community and vertically to children through parental or other family interactions. Nowhere is this better captured than in the following extended dialogue between the author and 'Zoe', an unemployed 17 year-old school-leaver:

**Zoe:** *'I will admit that white people have been brought up to be racist. It's family influence, innit. If your family doesn't like Asian people ... you're gonna grow up to not like Asian people, because you're being pushed. And I'll admit that I am racist. Because I've been brought up that way.'*

**Interviewer:** **'Do you think people in general feel like this?'**

**Zoe:** *'I think most people are racist. Yeah. All the lads I know round here are racist. I mean, the other night ... there was some young (white) lads on the front street ... ringing taxis and shouting "Paki bastards, we're gonna brick your windows!" and that. And I mean ... they've obviously got it off their parents and brothers or whatever, so ...'*

**Interviewer:** **Do you think that kind of thing is quite common?**

**Zoe:** *Yeah. It's not something that you think, "Oh my god, what they doing?" You've seen it all before, it's not shock.*

**Interviewer:** **You don't think it's seen as anything...?**

**Zoe:** *Unusual. No. Because people are so used to doing it, seeing it and hearing it.*

**Interviewer:** **And it's not seen as wrong?**

**Zoe:** *No. Because that's how they've been brought up.*

This and other accounts reinforce the suggestion that a major contributory factor of influence on expressions of inter-group hostility in this context comes in the form of adherence to in-group consensus and the use of explanatory and interpretive resources predominant within this to explain and interpret aspects of the inter-group relationship as problematic. This could further be observed throughout respondent accounts in the way many tended to frame expressions of hostility using

identical terms. Previously cited studies (Wetherell & Potter, 1992; Dixon & Reicher, 1997; Augustinos et al., 1999) have referred to recurring patterns and homogeneity in respondent accounts of problematic inter-group relations, where common tropes and ‘off the shelf’ arguments and sets of ‘socially acceptable’ clichés are frequently employed. This was certainly the case for many hostile perspectives expressed in the current study, where accounts outlining perceived contributory factors of influence to inter-group hostility were repeatedly described using similar and even identical terms and phrases, with assertions about the Asians ‘taking over’, ‘having loads of kids’, ‘sticking to themselves’ and ‘taking all the money’ being pretty much ubiquitous. So not only did more-hostile accounts frequently utilise the same general explanations and arguments for inter-group problems, they also did this in greatly similar, almost formulaic terms. Taken together these observations about the general and specific aspects of shared and often unquestioned in-group consensus further indicate that rather than ‘racism’ being simply a characteristic of certain elements or individuals in a context, it can be said to also largely reflect how factors of social influence, conformity and reliance on predominantly available and shared resources of explanation and interpretation construct and shape the ways individual members make sense of their world:

*‘People think that it’s (hostility towards Asians) come from nowhere but it’s already there, people feeling it ... and passing it on to these kids ... they (community members) haven’t just thought it (recently), they’ve already grown up with them notions. Hopefully I won’t pass it on. I’m prejudiced, and I think I’ve proved that ... but I hope I haven’t passed it on to my son.’* Lynn

‘Lynn’s’ statement here ends on a more positive note, indicating that from (at least some) hostile perspectives there is an awareness of how such negative orientations can be passed on through the community. ‘Lynn’ acknowledges her own prejudice, and that in part it may have origins in the social environment of her own upbringing, yet she additionally expresses a disinclination to pass this on to her children. This statement came at the very end of Lynn’s account, and for this reason is useful in highlighting another observation about consensus drawn from analysis of this sample. It was noted above that more-hostile accounts tended to include a greater amount of clichéd or ‘found’ statements

in reference to inter-group problems, often unquestioningly utilising and repeating explanatory and interpretive elements of a general in-group consensus of negativity towards Asians in doing so. Earlier an observation was also made that some respondents, although initially relying heavily on such resources, began to adopt a more considered and contemplative approach to inter-group issues as the interview process progressed. For many of these respondents, this may have been the first time they have been asked to consider, explain or justify personal perspectives on the inter-group relationship to such a degree of analytical detail and thoughtfulness – thus perhaps requiring more than a simple reliance on ‘standard issue’ arguments and broadly consensual in-group rhetoric which came initially to hand<sup>25</sup>. The quote below touches upon this:

*‘When I was answering some of the stuff I was thinking, that sounds a bit over the top even when I was saying it, but that’s how everyone thinks.’* Glenn

In addition, two other respondents (‘Jim’ and ‘Neil’) made comments to the interviewer after the tape had stopped rolling (unfortunately), to the effect that they had never been required to actually think about many of the issues under discussion so deeply or in such a focussed manner before and that, in now doing so, had begun to question some of the general assumptions they had formerly regarded themselves as holding. Implicit evidence of this over-reliance on elements of stock rhetoric, employed to make sense of the world in more-hostile accounts, can be further seen in the contradiction or logical inconsistencies often observed both between and within these. Previous sections of analysis have drawn attention to a ‘damned-if-they-do/damned-if-they-don’t’ orientation towards the out-group inherent in more negative accounts, where Asians are considered problematic in both their refusal and their attempts to become more assimilated within the white British community; where Asians are simultaneously ‘not-working’ and ‘taking all the jobs’; or where Asians are castigated for both their

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<sup>25</sup> To my mind this is one beauty of using qualitative interview procedures over other research techniques. Given enough time and an appropriate approach to the process, respondents can really be allowed to open up and give more thought in relation to expressing their ‘true’ feelings about an issue at a given time (contradictions, fluctuations and all.)

ability and inability to prosper. Again this indicates a reliance on consensually negative evaluations and assumptions, no matter if these contradict each other, rather than any use of arguments or explanations which represent aspects of a clearly or logically thought-out personal perspective. ‘John’ provides a good example of this in action:

*‘And it’s getting to the stage now where we’re saying, “Right then. If you’re not going to integrate, then you are going to have to either change or fuck off back.” Even though you were born here.’*

John

In respect of the above points the social influence of in-group consensus and shared repertoires of interpretation is highlighted as a key contributory factor in producing expressions of negativity towards the out-group. As stated earlier, in this sense the variation observed between lesser/non-hostile and hostile perspectives in the study can in many ways be said to relate to differences in how respondents construct, interpret and explain their social environment and selected ‘others’ within it, rather than any purely ‘essential’ elements of psychological character. Clearly, though, this still indicates a general difference observable in the sample – between those who express hostility towards the Asians (admittedly to varying and fluctuating degrees) and those who do not. The focus of the current work is not, however, on explicitly, comprehensively or conclusively identifying exactly why or from where such differences might be said to originate, but merely on how these manifest, arrange and express themselves in the accounts of respondents drawn from a genuinely conflicted context. Nevertheless, at least some consideration must also be given to questions of ‘individual difference’.

### **11.10 Potential factors of individual difference as contributory to inter-group hostility**

Before outlining some observations from the current analysis in regard to potential differences between respondents (other than in their expressions of hostility towards the out-group), necessarily brief consideration will be given to how accounts produced in this study reflect aspects of individual

difference as specifically proposed by the theoretical perspectives of Right-Wing Authoritarianism (Altemeyer, 1996) and Social Dominance (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999.) Both these concepts claim to measure a set of attitudes consistent with particular orientations observed in individuals (or even ‘personality’ traits), by which means someone’s individual levels of Authoritarianism (RWA) or Social Dominance orientation (SDO) can be assessed. High recorded levels of these are then claimed as associated with or as markers and indications of prejudice and intolerance. In the case of the current research, little evidence was found to suggest that either proposition could be said to fully hang together – thus finding no support for them as holistically coherent concepts in relation to prejudice in this sample. This will be covered more thoroughly in chapter 15 general discussion.

In terms of differences that *were* observed in the current sample, some comment has already been provided at the beginning of this chapter. Certain elements of this will be quickly reprised here in order to make some further observations. First of all, it was noted earlier that more hostile accounts tended to be distinguishable from those from lesser/non-hostile perspectives in terms of the more limited resources of explanation or interpretive repertoires (Wetherell & Potter, 1992) they drew on in evaluating inter-group relations. For the most part, causal influence in the generation of inter-group problems was ascribed in more hostile accounts to factors assumed as emanating more simply and directly from the out-group (whereas lesser/non-hostile accounts brought into consideration a wider range of social, cultural and historical sources of potential influence in their explanations.) One possible reason cited for this was a lack of available or prevalent alternatives extant in the community - due to a widespread consensus of negativity towards the Asians - which might provide greater opportunities for assessing group relations from a broader perspective. ‘Julie’s’ quote below sees her contemplating issues around this:

*‘It’s an odd place in some ways, is Burnley. It’s at the end of everything, it’s at the end of the motorway. And I think being such a backwater in that way, it’s very insular. We’re talking about (hostile white) people who probably have hardly left Burnley ... and the outside world has not really got in.’*

Julie

Although 'Julie' is perhaps herself now negatively stereotyping white British members of the local community, she raises an interesting point. The non-hostile perspectives in this study did tend to emanate from respondents who had perhaps had greater opportunity for being exposed to a wider range of other viewpoints. Alan, the schoolteacher, Julie herself (an administrator for the Citizens Advice Bureau) and Stuart, who was self-employed in graphic design of some kind, had all spent time away from Burnley (partly as participants in further education, for instance.)<sup>26</sup> The opportunities these experiences may have provided for prolonged or consistent exposure to alternative perspectives and evaluations of inter-group relations might be one factor in producing perspectives which run contrary to the general in-group consensus in Burnley. 'Evelyn', a journalist, framed this more explicitly in terms of limited educational opportunities:

*'With the best will in the world a lot of people, in sort of Burnley Wood (White residential area), they haven't had the benefits of a very good education ... they're not thick (unintelligent) people, don't get me wrong. I'm saying they haven't been given an opportunity to have that good education.'*

Evelyn

'Evelyn' was speaking here in reference to a perceived lack of information and alternative perspective available in the community regarding inter-group matters. She makes clear that it is a lack of opportunity to be exposed to other explanatory or interpretive resources that may be regarded as potentially problematic, rather than any deficiency of intellect.

This heavy reliance on consensual but limited resources of understanding attributed to more hostile perspectives has a bearing on a second observed difference between accounts, in that hostile perspectives tended to be more assertive and sure of the validity inherent in their interpretations and explanations of contributory influences to inter-group problems. This again could be said to reflect unquestioning acceptance of and reliance on in-group consensus and shared resources of

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<sup>26</sup> This is not to suggest that there were necessarily any differences in what might be called 'intelligence' between these respondents and others, but merely difference in the opportunity individuals had had for moving in contexts other than the local one.

understanding, thus avoiding potentially ‘muddying the waters’ with unnecessarily over-complicated ideas and explanations drawn from an ‘outside’ perspective. As noted earlier, Wetherell & Potter (1992) observed that in-group members’ stances on a range of issues relating to the out-group were often presented as ‘self-evident’ social ‘truths’ which held unquestioned assumptions of validity, and were therefore regarded as beyond doubt by respondents. Both the above observed differences reinforce the importance on in-group consensus, whether accepted or rejected, as an important influence in inter-group hostility.

A final observed potential difference is not so easy to pin down, however. Overall it was noted that more hostile accounts tended to paint a much bleaker and threatening portrait of the social landscape. From a hostile perspective, greater instance of threat was perceived as emanating from various aspects of the inter-group relationship, and greater levels of severity were consistently ascribed to any threats that were perceived. This heightened sensitivity to perceptions of threat was particularly noticeable in attributions of negative or malign (even sinister) intent made directly to the out-group in more hostile accounts. This can be seen in previously discussed common assertions about Asians deliberately plotting to ‘take over’ across a number of domains, and further in hostile perceptions of the Asians as deliberately using their own language as a way of talking negatively about (white British) people behind their backs. In relation to this last, attention is now drawn to one final componential factor of perceived contributory influence to inter-group hostility.

### **11.11 Perceptions of out-group negative attitudes towards the in-group**

Several of the more hostile accounts in this current study cited perceptions of negative out-group attitudes towards members of the white British community as a main factor of influence in the generation of inter-group hostility. Interestingly such assertions did not appear in lesser/non-hostile accounts from the sample and, perhaps more interestingly, the negative attitudes attributed to Asians did not refer directly to explicit forms of dislike or hostility towards whites Britons on the Asians’ part. Instead, Asians were quite often perceived as evincing attitudes of arrogance, superiority and

lack of respect for white British people and their culture in more hostile accounts, as well as being perceived as generally thinking they could take advantage or ‘get one over’ on the in-group and its members. Rather than go through these one at a time, a selection of examples is provided below:

*‘I think there’s a perception of them (Asians) laughing behind (white) people’s back. If they can get away with it. I don’t believe, on the whole, for instance the Asian population of Britain has any, in Burnley, has fantastic respect for the indigenous population.’*

Robin

*‘I think they (Asians) laugh their socks off at us. A lot of the time when they’re doing this (mimics stereotypically assumed Asian manner), “Yes, yes, I’ll do anything you say,” like giving it the “Bwana” bit, then turn round behind your back and tell you to fuck off.’*

Neil

*‘I can only talk about (Asian) people who I know, but there is kind of an arrogance about them.’*

Katherine

*‘It’s the arrogance of them. Their (Asians’) attitude. I really do think they are so arrogant and they do think they’re superior. No, no. I genuinely believe that they look down on us, like we’re inferior.’*

John

In these claims, as with the previous examples in paragraphs above, can again be seen a suggestion of heightened perceptions of intended out-group negativity where it may in fact not exist. In attributing negative attitudes and intent to the Asians in this way, more hostile accounts appear to evince greater sensitivity to perceived slight or insult which, in turn, can be interpreted as potential threats to in-group and personal esteem and self-evaluation from a Social Identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) perspective. Perceived lack of respect for the in-group and its culture, or assumptions of superiority or arrogance attributed to Asians, seem here to be taken as sources of personal affront from a more hostile perspective. This heightened sensitivity to potential threats to personal and in-group pride and esteem, coupled with a tendency to make biased attributions of a negative intent to the out-group seem to go hand-in-hand with greater expressions of hostility towards Asians. While the current research is

not specifically focussed on ascertaining any direction this relationship might take – either hostility towards Asians working to produce heightened attributions of negativity, or generally hostile and threat-sensitive orientations finding a handy target in the highly visible Asian community – one element of the current analysis did touch upon issues in relation to this.

### **11.12 Manifestations of different types of hostility towards the out-group**

One question, variously posed in interviews with this sample, can be summarised as follows: How do you think things would be different (in regard to the occurrence of inter-group conflict) if the Asians were not here? The quote below aptly summarises a most common response:

*‘Probably not (different), because people would always, there’d be someone else, Polish people or something. People would always, there’d always be people who don’t get along. I mean look at the football. Or gangs of lads fighting in town of a Friday night.’*

Lesley

Many respondents across the sample made similar assertions, that without the Asians as specific targets, hostility would still find focus on other groups in the local context potentially regarded as ‘different’ for whatever reason. Rather than attributing this directly to individual hostility levels, however, it was often, at least in part, regarded as a product of the deprived social-resource and economic status of the town in general. Nevertheless, it should be noted that perceived individual differences in hostility levels *were* regarded as a factor of contributory influence to inter-group disharmony in one respect, specifically when it came to overt and severe manifestations of inter-group conflict as identified at the end of ‘Lesley’s’ statement. In reference to instances of violence or physical hostility arising in the local context, the majority of respondents (both lesser and more hostile) tended to agree that this was largely the preserve of young men (both white *and* Asian) who, if not fighting each other, would doubtless find somebody else to fight with. To a large extent, therefore, the violence which had intermittently erupted in the community was seen as – though often

‘racially’ fuelled and targeted - not specifically a product of ‘racial’ tension so much as more general aggression and frustration on the part of aggressive and frustrated young men.

This last observation draws attention to further distinctions which can be drawn from respondent accounts as to different forms the manifestation of inter-group hostility can take. So far this has mainly been discussed in terms of ‘lesser/non-hostile’ and ‘overtly or ‘more-hostile’ perspectives appearing in respondent accounts – though with some ambiguity and fluctuation apparent within these – as this was deemed the most practical approach to the analysis: either people expressed hostility towards the Asians (to whatever degree) or they did not. Given the space allowed here for discussion of the qualitative analysis, any attempt to break this down further would have proved unmanageable. However, as we prepare to move on to phase two of the current study, with its attempt to quantify aspects of the thematic analysis in order to test some of the observations across a wider sample from the same community, some more specific distinctions can be drawn from respondent accounts in terms of further (broadly) distinguishing between perspectives which are expressive of hostility.

Perhaps the ‘least severe’ form of hostility described in accounts came in respondent descriptions of perspectives which, while not necessarily declaring strong feelings of outright or direct animosity, nevertheless expressed palpable negativity towards the Asians - particularly in the form of aversion to inter-acting more closely with them. For example:

*‘The other (less overtly hostile white) ones are sort of ... ‘Well I wouldn’t want one (Asian) marrying my sister’, the use of the name ‘Paki’, things like that.’*

Julie

*‘They don’t want loads of them moving in next door. They say that, like, ‘Pakis move in, you’d have to move out.’*

Charlotte

*‘I bet more than half the people’s families (in Burnley) would be like that. They would be, “I don’t want you to hang round with Pakis, please don’t.” They just think, “Oh, Pakis are dirty, you shouldn’t hang around with them.”’*

Zoe

This came across as perhaps representing a form of (almost) passive hostility or dislike. While respondents who expressed such sentiments often admitted not particularly liking Asians and spoke derogatively about them, including use of ‘racist’ epithets, this was done quite casually or without noticeable vehemence. Nor did they consider themselves to be ‘racists’ in any meaningful way. Several lesser/non-hostile accounts also identified this ‘casual’ or ‘passive’ hostility and preference of social-distance between the groups as being most prevalent across the community - particularly in the form of disinclination to have Asians as friends, neighbours or form domestic relationships with a family member.

A step up from this is perhaps represented in accounts provided by respondents such as ‘John’, ‘Pete’, ‘David’ and ‘Karl’ (for example). As can be seen from examples cited right throughout earlier sections of the analysis, these accounts frequently contained open, and often quite animated or heated statements of strong dislike or extreme negativity towards Asians, whilst the respondents themselves were quite free in admitting to being ‘racists’ or strongly prejudiced (e.g. ‘Lynn’, ‘Zoe’ and ‘Katherine’.) For the most part, these respondents were forceful also in outlining justifications for why they felt this way, and overall seemed quite happy to have the opportunity of speaking openly about the animosity, anger and resentment they felt towards Asians, whilst at the same time outlining ‘legitimate’ reasons for this. Even these accounts, however, tended to draw the line at taking any action in regard to their views:

*‘I am a racist ... I’m not saying I would go and beat somebody up because of their colour or religion or anything like that, but I do, I do have racist feelings, yeah.’* Katherine

*‘A lot of white people are prejudiced, my family, my dad’s terrible but he’d never do (anything about) it.’* Charlotte

*'But they (majority of hostile whites) would never dream of going out and physically attacking them (Asians). And yet there's others who I wouldn't be at all surprised ... would be actually quite happy to go out and commit murder.'*

Julie

Whilst openly (even proudly at times) admitting strong feelings of hostility and dislike, none of the respondents in this sample who expressed such sentiments regarded themselves as likely to actually engage in negative activities towards the Asians at any point. Yet many accounts clearly regarded some sections of the community as perfectly willing to do so – as further evidenced by the instances of genuine conflict arising in the community and the number of people either campaigning or standing as candidates for the BNP in local elections. These last designations represent inter-group hostility in its most severe forms, involving activities which might knowingly have a directly negative impact upon the out-group and its members – up to and including physical violence and intimidation. Little can be said about such perspectives from the point of view of this current analysis, as no respondents of this type were identified. These distinctions of variance in forms and levels of expressed hostility will, however, be taken forward into the next phase of study and analysis where larger scale use of survey measures across a broader community sample will hope to also incorporate and assess expressions of these more extreme forms. As a way of introducing this, a summary will now be presented of findings so far, particularly in relation to the project's stated research aims and incorporation at phase two.

## **Chapter 12: Summary and Discussion of Phase One Analysis in Relation to Creation of Phase Two Quantitative Survey Measures and Research Aims**

A final stated research aim of phase one was to generate materials for the creation of survey measures, in order to further explore different aspects of the 'componential' view of inter-group hostility across a broader community sample drawn from the same context. Phase one identified a number of perceived factors of contributory influence as potential explanations/justifications in relation to manifestations of inter-group hostility, as well as differences in how these tended to express themselves between broadly hostile and non-hostile perspectives. A main intent of phase two is to then try and quantify the relative importance ascribed to each identified component of influence in relation to rated levels of different forms of expressed hostility across the wider local community. Several factors have been identified as influential, in other words, but which of these are most associated with or highly predictive of expressing greater or lesser hostility towards the out-group? Also, can any statistical differences be ascertained in ratings of importance attributed to these components between those designated high and low in hostility? Before moving on to summarise findings on the identified components themselves these measures of hostility will be outlined here.

### **12.1 Outcome measures of different types/levels of out-group directed hostility identified from phase one analysis**

At the end of chapter 11, three broad forms of hostility were identified by the analysis. The first of these represented perhaps the least severe form of hostility and was characterised by casual dislike for and aversion to closer social contact with members of the Asian community. This found particular expression in a disinclination to have Asians as friends, neighbours or form relationships with family members. For phase two procedures item measure ratings were taken of unwillingness to engage with Asians along these dimensions to form a composite measure of **Social Distance** hostility. A second identified form of hostility came in more straightforward dislike for Asians. In this, respondents were

quite happy to state animosity or dislike for Asians directly, even openly admitting their own prejudice or 'racism.' This will be defined and straightforwardly measured as **Negative Feelings** hostility for the purposes of phase two. Respondents at phase one also described members of the community who were more overtly active in their hostility towards Asians in different ways. For phase two it was decided to try and initially formulate this as ratings of expressed willingness to engage in four kinds/levels of negative activity towards Asians. These were: rated levels of expressed willingness to engage in **Indirect political action** (voting for parties or policies which participants thought would negatively impact the other group), **Direct political action** (joining, marching or campaigning for parties or policies which participants thought would negatively impact the other group), **Indirect aggressive action** (harassment or verbal/written abuse against the out-group) and **Direct aggressive action** (violence or physical intimidation against the out-group). Initial analysis (see section 13.1) indicated, however, that these might be better collapsed into two negative activity measures of **Political Action** and **Aggressive action**, which were then used in the subsequent analysis.

Participant ratings were taken for each of the above measures. Participants were also asked to record ratings of the specific levels of importance they attached to each of several perceived contributory factors of influence (components) to inter-group problems identified from phase one analysis. This would then allow correlation, regression and comparative analyses to identify the relative strength and order attributed to the various components as perceived contributory factors to inter-group problems in relation to levels of expressed hostility. Specific research questions relating to this element of the study will be presented following a summary of findings from phase one in relation to the various identified components.

## **12.2 Summary of perceived components of contributory influence to inter-group problems identified from phase one analysis**

A range of themes were identified as perceived contributory factors of influence (components) in the generation of inter-group hostility across the context under investigation. These will be presented under headings for each component and include highlighted details of the various sub-elements within each which will be used as single item measures to form a composite factor rating representative of each component.

### **Perceptions of separation between the ethnic groups (Separation)**

This was regarded as a component of inter-group hostility and can be condensed into two potentially problematic sub-elements: a *Lack of mixing between the two groups*, and a perceived *unwillingness on the part of the Asian out-group to integrate* more fully with the white British population. From lesser/non-hostile perspectives, both elements were seen as a problem to some extent, with lack of mixing representing the greater area of concern in its role as a potential source of mistrust and misunderstanding between the groups. More overtly hostile accounts tended not to regard lack of mixing as so problematic, instead identifying a perceived Unwillingness to integrate by Asians as a major factor of contribution to inter-group hostility. A composite measure of perceived problematic influence to inter-group problems in relation to separation between the groups will consist of ratings of perceived **Lack of mixing between the groups** and perceived **Unwillingness of Asians to mix**.

### **Perceptions of inter-group difference (Difference)**

Perceptions of problematic differences perceived between the ethnic groups were also identified as a component. These were regarded as taking on a number of forms. Differences of spoken language were perceived as problematic from a lesser/non-hostile perspective, again as a potential barrier to the creation of greater understanding between the groups. More overtly hostile accounts, on the other hand, tended to regard *language* as problematic as 1.) an indicator of general Asian disinclination to become more assimilated within, and therefore appear in rejection of, the dominant white British

culture and 2.) a manifestation of negative intent on the Asians' part as a method of covertly disparaging white British community members. Differences of *dress* between the groups were also highlighted as a perceived source of problems, with all members of the sample seeing this as rendering Asians more noticeable. Sartorial differences in themselves were not seen as problematic from a lesser/non-hostile perspective, other than in this sense of making traditionally dressed Asians stand out as potential sources of ire for hostile elements in the community. While more overtly hostile accounts saw maintenance of traditional Asian dress as another example of deliberate rejection/lack of willingness to assimilate, as well as also being a visual marker indicative of other, overarching differences of cultural identity between the groups. Differences of *lifestyle*, too, were highlighted as problematic, particularly in regard to leisure activities such as social alcohol consumption, with lesser/non-hostile accounts focussing on the missed opportunities this represented for inter-action between the groups. Whereas more hostile perspectives saw this as again a rejection of in-group culture, as well as representing a source of censure and unwelcome negative judgement on white community members from an Asian perspective.

At a deeper level, perceived differences of *religion* were identified as problematic, specifically in relation to the Asians being seen as adhering more strongly to various aspects of the Muslim faith in comparison to a largely irreligious local white British population. This was framed most frequently in terms of perceived cultural differences arising from religiosity rather than any more directly faith based-conflict. More hostile accounts again regarded this as an example of rejection/lack of willingness to assimilate. This was further perceived as a difference in *values*, relating to what was regarded as proper conduct by the two groups, as a source of perceived problematic influence, particularly from more hostile perspectives where stricter dress codes, closer knit family units and abstinence from alcohol consumption were all considered symptomatic of greater Asian insularity and unwillingness to assimilate. This last also had additional problematic implications from a more hostile perspective, in relation to perceived differences in the *priorities* (goals and aims) held by each group. Asians were for the most part described as more self-serving and less contributory to British society, for instance, than white members of the community in more hostile accounts. A composite factor of

six perceived inter-group differences will be used in subsequent analysis, comprising rated individual item perceptions of contributory influence variously attributed to issues of difference between the groups in terms of **Language, Dress, Lifestyle, Religion, Values and Priorities**.

### **Perceptions of direct threat from the out-group (Threat)**

As previously noted, to some extent various themes/components identified at phase one can be seen as representing forms of perceived threat, particularly from a Social Identity perspective – where perceptions of (wilful) difference, preferential treatment and negative out-group attitudes can all be interpreted as challenges to in-group self-evaluation and esteem. Yet some aspects of the inter-group relationship more clearly relate to direct forms of perceived threat. These more direct challenges will be covered here, and subsequently referred to as simply ‘Threat’ in relation to phase two analyses. Perceptions of threat largely tended to be the preserve of more hostile accounts, with lesser/non-hostile perspectives viewing various proposed examples of threat as either exaggerated, non-existent or emanating from sources other than the out-group. Perceived *threat to territory and resources* represented one form of this, with concerns that an ever-expanding Asian population, and the greater territorial encroachment this implied, would create increased burden upon and competition for limited resources of employment, commerce, housing and social welfare funds in the local community at the in-group’s expense. A related form of perceived threat represented by the out-group could be described as *threat to in-group culture and values*. Here, perceived erosion of traditional in-group culture and values was seen to go hand-in-hand with a growing prominence and acceptance of Asian equivalents. Perceived *threats to in-group status and standing* in society as a result of these two former concerns were also identified, particularly in regard to supposed increases in Asian prosperity, though no member in the current sample considered themselves to have been personally impacted or disadvantaged in this way. Concerns were also raised about perceived *physical threat* emanating from the out-group, though this was regarded as mostly problematic only in relation to groups of young Asian men representing a threat to any in-group members, especially women, entering into predominantly Asian residential areas. Lesser/non-hostile and more overtly hostile accounts tended to

be more in agreement on this last count. The composite factor component representing perceptions of direct out-group threat will comprise four individual item measure ratings of perceived threat in relation to **Territory and resources**, **Culture and values**, threats to in-group **Status and standing** and perceptions of **Physical threat** emanating from the out-group.

#### **Perceptions of preferential treatment accorded to the out-group (Preferential OG treatment)**

This was regarded as a fairly problematic area across the whole sample. Lesser/non-hostile accounts tended to consider factors beyond the control of, or not directly attributable to the out-group as being responsible for creating the appearance (or even actual instances) of favouritism in this way. More hostile accounts often concurred with this to some extent, but still used perceptions of preferential treatment as explanations/justifications for hostility expressed directly towards the out-group. Preference towards the out-group was regarded as occurring across a number of more-or-less tangible domains, with perceived preferential treatment in being *allocated financial aid* and perceived preferential treatment in *getting access to social resources* such as jobs and housing being the most prominent of concrete examples. Preferment was additionally seen as existing in other, less quantifiable ways, with perceived *freedom to promote or defend own causes* and issues and *freedom to criticize the other group* being two areas which generated expressions of hostility where the out-group was seen as favourably treated. While perceptions of preferment in the two former cases were more prominent in more overtly hostile accounts, these latter two were generally regarded as quite problematic across the whole sample. A composite of individual item measures will be used to represent the perceived preferential treatment component, made up from rated perceptions of the out-group being in receipt of preferential treatment across the following four domains: **Allocation of financial aid; Access to social resources such as jobs and housing; Freedom to promote or defend own causes and issues; Freedom to criticize the other group.**

### **Perceptions of outside influence.**

Initial internal reliability analysis suggested that ‘outside influences’ did not represent an adequately coherent composite factor of perceived influence to inter-group problems (see section 13.1). For this reason the three aspects of outside influence detailed below were retained as individual component factors. Both lesser/non-hostile and more overtly hostile accounts considered ‘**Government influence**’ as a factor, particularly in its perceived role as a source of interference through the promotion of what was seen as somewhat heavy handed aspects of ‘political correctness’ culture. These practices in general were often seen as having unintended consequences by actually creating resentment against the people they sought to benefit. More hostile accounts also drew attention to problematic government influence in the form of equality initiatives which were regarded as unfairly biased towards out-group promotion. Lesser/non-hostile accounts drew attention to two further perceived sources of negative influence on generating expressions of inter-group hostility which, for the most part, were not identified as problematic from more overtly hostile perspectives. Of these, perceptions of negative **BNP influence** focussed on the provision and promulgation of information throughout the local community which consistently and unreliably represented the Asian out-group in an unfavourable light, thus working to shape local opinion through biased explanatory and interpretive resources presented for making sense of the inter-group relationship. Similarly, **Media influence**, especially in the form of tabloid newspaper reporting, was also identified as potentially problematic from a lesser/non-hostile perspective – again through provision of biased, unfavourable and often sensationalistic representation of issues around relations between white British and ethnic minority or immigrant populations.

### **Perceptions of general social deprivation in the area (General deprivation)**

The role of general social deprivation in the local community context was generally acknowledged as playing a contributory part in influencing the generation of inter-group problems. The relative weight ascribed to this contribution differed between elements of the sample. From lesser/non-hostile perspectives general deprivation was regarded as one of the most important factors of influence, while

more hostile accounts tended to place less emphasis on this as a main contributory force. Perceptions of **General social deprivation** as being a problematic influence to inter-group relations will be included as a single item component measure.

### **Perceptions of negative out-group attitudes (Negative OG attitudes)**

This identified component of perceived influence in the generation of hostility was identified only in accounts from a more overtly hostile perspective. These centred round perceptions that members of the Asian community evinced attitudes of arrogance or **superiority** towards the in-group, that out-group members had a **lack of respect** for the in-group and its culture, that the out-group were in some way **'laughing behind the back'** of the in-group, and generally feeling that they (the out-group) could **take advantage of the in-group**. Perceptions of such negative out-group attitudes were wholly lacking from non-hostile perspectives. The four above highlighted individual item measures of negative out-group attitudes will comprise the composite of this component.

At the conclusion of chapter 11, comment was also made about manifestations of more extreme forms of inter-group hostility – particularly in that these often tended to be activities undertaken predominantly by young violent males. It was also observed that many of the more aggressive instances of inter-group hostility may not be purely the result of specific enmity towards the Asians but rather examples of violence being targeted at Asians as a more 'legitimate' target. As the study is looking at different forms of expressed hostility, including measures of hostility defined by activities of direct physical aggression, details of age and gender will also be considered as factors of influence in the analysis.

## **12.3 Components of inter-group hostility and phase two research aims**

The component factors identified for use as perceived factors of contributory influence in relation to different forms of expressed hostility have now been outlined. These will subsequently be referred to as: **Separation; Difference; (direct) Threat; OG preferential treatment; Negative OG attitudes;**

**Government influence; BNP influence; Media influence; General deprivation; Gender; Age.** The first round of phase two analyses will attempt to ascertain the relative importance attributed to each of these components as contributory influences to inter-group problems in relation to measured levels of self-reported hostility across the four dimension of: **Social Distance; Negative Feelings; Political Action** and **Aggressive Action**. The specific research questions to be addressed by this part of the analysis are as follows:

1. To explore by correlation analysis which rated components of contributory influence to inter-group problems were significantly associated with greater self-reported levels of Social Distance hostility, Negative Feelings hostility, Political Action Hostility and Aggressive Action hostility.
2. To assess by multiple regression analysis which rated components of contributory influence to inter-group problems were most predictive of greater self-reported levels of Social Distance hostility, Negative Feelings hostility, Political Action Hostility and Aggressive Action hostility.

These analyses will provide insight into the general patterns of perceived importance attributed to the identified factor components of influence to inter-group problems, particularly in how these are rated in relation to more strongly hostile perspectives. To unpick this a little more, a second set of analyses will investigate this relationship more specifically in terms of how rated importance of the components differs in ascription between participants designated high and low in self-rated hostility. Respondent scores were therefore split to create separate groups designated either high and low in Social Distance hostility, Negative Feelings hostility, Political Action hostility and Aggressive action hostility, so as to compare the relative ratings of importance attributed by each group to the various perceived components of influence to inter-group problems. The specific research aims of this were:

3. To assess which components and in which order were rated most strongly influential to inter-group problems by participants designated high on each of the Social Distance hostility, Negative Feelings hostility, Political Action hostility and Aggressive action hostility measures.
4. To assess which components and in which order were rated most strongly influential to inter-group problems by participants designated low on each of the Social Distance hostility, Negative Feelings hostility, Political Action hostility and Aggressive action hostility measures.

Alongside the components, and individual sub-elements of these, outlined in relation to the analyses just described, two other factors were identified from phase one as key influences on expressions of inter-group hostility. Rather than being regarded as individual components of contribution, however, these can be seen as factors which help to actually create, shape and facilitate problematic perceptions around the above elements in the first place. Social Identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) suggests that self-identification as a member of the white British/local in-group can lead individual members to consider any perception of challenge, negative out-comes or fortune at a group level to be personally problematic, regardless of any direct individual experience of negativity. Further, in-group identification of this kind is also symbiotically related to consensus and use of shared in-group perspectives, explanations and interpretations to make sense of social relationships. Perceptions of consensus work to both construct and 'validate' perspectives represented within this as true and accurate representations of social reality, as well as promoting greater conformity to wide-spread and dominant perspectives as unquestioned frames of understanding in the context. Issues of a) difference in perceived group-level negative impact in relation to personal experience and b) differences of perceived social consensus with individual perspectives will therefore be investigated between elements of the research sample designated either high or low in expressed hostility.

## **12.4 Issues of consensus in relation to levels of expressed inter-group hostility**

Phase one analysis noted that more hostile accounts tended to conform to and present themselves as representative of what was considered (by most members of the sample) to be an in-group consensus of negativity towards Asians. In addition to providing a main source of explanatory resources for inter-group relations, perceptions of widespread agreement throughout the in-group also served to increase the assumed validity and 'reality' these explanations held as true and legitimate reflections of inter-group affairs, particularly in relation to the range of problematic contributory influences outlined in section 12.2. Overall, more hostile perspectives tended to perceive greater levels of community agreement with their own views than did non-hostile perspectives, as well as considering their own views as more representative of a majority in the local community context. The extent to which this can be seen to apply more generally across the local social context will therefore be further examined by phase two. Perceptions of consensus with participant's views will be assessed using self-rated measures of perceived agreement with own perspective across four dimensions: Friends; Family; Local community; General society. This was done in order to investigate if:

5. Significant differences could be observed in self-reported perceptions of consensus agreement with own personal views between those designated high and low in Social Distance hostility, Negative Feelings hostility, Political Action hostility and Aggressive action hostility across the Friends, Family, Local community and General society dimensions.
6. Any significant difference could be identified between self-reported levels of perceived consensus between the Friends, Family, Local community and General society dimensions for those designated as high in the four types of measured hostility.

7. Any significant difference could be identified between self-reported levels of perceived consensus between the Friends, Family, Local community and General society dimensions for those designated as low in the four types of measured hostility.

These last comparisons were included in order to explore if perceptions of consensus were limited to the confines of the local context or whether (particularly more hostile) participants regarded their views of the out-group to be shared even more broadly across British society as a whole. Negativity towards Asians can be regarded as the norm to some extent in the local context, but this analysis attempted to investigate whether more hostile participants showed awareness that their views were perhaps neither so widespread nor acceptable at an overall society level. Conversely, lesser-hostile accounts at phase one indicated that these respondents felt their views were not so commonly shared in the immediate social context, therefore analysis looked at whether those designated as low in hostility across the community regarded their views as being more consensually prevalent at a general societal level.

## **12.5 Perceptions of negative out-group impact at a personal level in relation to perceived negative impact at different group identity levels**

The purpose of this section of analysis was two-fold. Firstly, phase one analysis described in section 11.2 observed that expressions of negative impact ascribed to the Asian out-group's presence tended to be regarded as problematic mainly in relation to perceived group-level in-group domains rather than having any specifically personal negative impact. This conforms to a Social Identity (Tajfel & Turner) explanation of individual identification leading to perceptions of negativity at in-group level being taken personally. In order to investigate this, self-reported rating measures of levels of perceived negative impact in relation to the out-group's presence were recorded for participants along the dimensions of: Self; Friends and family; Local community; Society in general. This was done as a means of establishing if:

8. Difference could be observed in ratings of perceived negative out-group impact between the Self, Friends and family, Local community and General society levels for those designated high in the four types of measured hostility.
9. Difference could be observed in ratings of perceived negative out-group impact between the Self, Friends and family, Local community and General society levels for those designated low in the four types of measured hostility.

A second purpose of this analysis relates to a point outlined in section 11.2. Here it was noted that hostile accounts in general tended to put a more negative spin on various aspects of the inter-group relationship – seeing more things as threatening and ascribing greater levels of threat to those areas where it was perceived, for example. Analysis of the ratings outlined above, then, also intended to further investigate greater levels of perceived negativity as rated by participants across a broader community sample in relation to any difference in levels of negativity perceived from perspectives of greater and lesser hostility. Specifically this intended to:

10. Compare levels of self-reported perceived negative out-group impact across the Self, Friends and family, Local community and General society levels between those designated high and low in the four types of measured hostility.

A final point of interest can also be raised in relation to this. If, as indicated by section 11.5, more hostile respondents show a tendency to explain hostility expressed towards the Asians as being as a result of the general negative impact this out-group is perceived as representing, yet also report no direct experience of personal negativity, where then can any negative impact be shown to actually reside? This will be subsequently discussed alongside the previously outlined research questions.

## **Chapter 13: Results of Phase Two Quantitative Survey Study**

### **13.1 Data screening and frequencies for perceived levels of conflict and hostility estimated as existing in the social context under research**

Data was inputted into PASW v.18. Missing data was re-coded and variables were data screened for regular distributions, homogeneity, skewness and kurtosis. Some level of both negative skew and Kurtosis were found across the study variables, as the sample scored quite consistently towards the highest end on a majority of items. None of these distribution values exceeded twice the level of standard error relating to the variable in question, nor exceeded values of 1 or -1. McQueen and Knussen (2006) recommend using these criteria as rules of thumb in order to establish significant abnormality in data distributions which might then be more appropriate for either non-parametric testing or data transformation procedures.

Before more specific analyses were undertaken, some initial baseline indicators of how frequently and the extent to which general hostility and conflict between the groups was perceived as existing in the local context were generated. The extent to which respondents estimated levels of the following social disharmony measures were scored 1 = 'None' to 7 = 'A great deal' for levels and 1 = 'Never' to 7 = 'All the time' for frequency. These scores are represented in the table below.

Table 1: Percentage frequencies and meant totals for estimated levels of inter-group hostility and conflict existing in the research context

<b>Item: How much underlying hostility do you think there is between the two groups?</b>							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Mean score
0.5%	8.3%	13.2%	15.6%	24.9%	20%	17.6%	4.86
<b>Item: How much open conflict/trouble do you think there is between the two groups?</b>							
0.5%	16.6%	25.9%	16.6%	18.5%	10.7%	11.2%	4.13
<b>Item: How frequently would you say any open conflict/trouble occurs between the two groups?</b>							
1.5%	14.1%	17.1%	23.4%	32.4%	11.2%	9.3%	4.24

Overall these figures demonstrate fairly high levels and frequency of perceived hostility and conflict between the two groups in the context, therefore further establishing the validity of using this particular situation (Burnley) as adequately representative of genuine inter-group disharmony.

### **13.2 Outcome variables**

For the next step of analysis a series of outcome variable measures were established relating to different forms of hostility. These were designed to assess the extent to which respondents expressed the different forms and degrees of negativity towards the out-group identified as relevant from phase one analysis - from aversion, through dislike and onto direct aggression.

#### **Social Distance**

The first of these was a composite measure of items relating to in-group aversion to have close social relationships with members of the out-group. This was named the **Social Distance** factor and was derived from three items scored along 7-point scales. These were

reverse coded ratings of participant agreement ('1 = not at all/7 = very much' in original item) with statements asking how glad they would be to have:

- 1.) Out-group members as neighbours.**
- 2.) Out-group members as friends.**
- 3.) One of my family marry an out-group member.**

Social Distance represents perhaps the least severe measure of negativity used in this study. Here, dislike of or casual hostility towards the out-group is more implied than direct, as these measures record respondent unwillingness to accept the out-group in closer forms of social interaction. It is therefore possible that high scores along this dimension do not explicitly relate to strong dislike or outright hostility towards the out-group *per se*, but rather passive negativity expressed through aversion to having any closer contact with them. A Cronbach's alpha was calculated to assess internal reliability of the Social Distance factor items, producing a result of .92.

### **Negative Feelings**

The second outcome measure used in the study relied on more direct and open expressions of hostility towards the out-group. This was a fairly crude and straightforward, single item measure where participants were asked to indicate along a 7-point continuous scale the level of negative (or positive) feeling they held towards the out-group. This was rated from 1 = Like the OG up to 7 = Hate the OG.

### **Negative Activities**

A third set of outcome measures were originally intended to examine expressed respondent willingness to engage in four separate types of negative activity against the out-group. These were measured on likelihood to engage in the specific behaviours, again on a continuous 7-

point continuous scale from 1 = never/7 = definitely. While the Social Distance and Negative Feelings measures above could be said to relate to open dislike or hostility, these measures sought to assess levels of willingness to engage in actual behaviours which had negative repercussions for the out-group. This measure therefore represented the most severe form of hostility measured by the study. The four types of negative intent were:

- 1.) **Indirect Political Action** ('voting for parties or policies which I thought would negatively affect the OG'.)
- 2.) **Direct Political Action** ('joining, protesting and campaigning for parties or policies I thought would negatively affect the OG'.)
- 3.) **Indirect Aggressive Action** ('verbal or written harassment or abuse against the OG'.)
- 4.) **Direct Aggressive Action** ('violence or physical intimidation against the OG'.)

Initial examination of correlations between these items, however, saw extremely high coefficients recorded between items 1 and 2 ( $r = .91, p < .001$ ) and between 3 and 4 ( $r = .83, p < .001$ ), indicating potential co-linearity. A decision was therefore made to create a composite of items 1 and 2 now designated as **Political Action**. Internal reliability testing of this composite factor recorded a Cronbach's Alpha of .95. The Political Action items were phrased in a way that made it clear there would be negative repercussions for the out-group by taking this action. A corresponding composite of items 3 and 4 now labelled **Aggressive Action** was also created, producing an alpha of .96.

### **13.3 Creating factor components from the individual item measures used in the survey**

A range of individual item measures were included for participants to rate in terms of the importance they ascribed to each as a contributory influence in generating problems between the two ethnic groups. These could then be tested in relation to the four different kinds of

negative outcomes outlined above. In order to facilitate exploratory analysis using correlation and multiple regression these individual items were to be collapsed into composite factors relating to the various 'components' identified in section 11.2, thereby reducing over 35 item measures to more manageable proportions.

In attempting to validate this reduction an initial principle components analysis produced no meaningful factors from the item selection, however, as every single item loaded onto a single factor. Given that the sample scored fairly consistently across the board (the highly hostile people recording uniformly high or low scores across all items in almost direct reversal of scoring patterns for the low hostility respondents) this is perhaps understandable. Therefore a decision was made to group individual item factors into blocks which conformed roughly to the identified components (section 12.2) relating to perceptions of Difference, Threat, Preferential OG Treatment, Negative OG Attitudes, Separation and Outside Influence. Grouping data into larger blocks in this way would initially facilitate subsequent regression analysis undertaken to assess the relative importance factors held as potentially contributing to expressions of negativity along the four outcome dimensions. Confirmatory analysis was then conducted to assess the internal consistency of these item groupings as coherent factors. The individual item measures, factor loadings and Cronbach's alpha for the composite components of inter-group hostility are presented below.

**Table 2: Composite items, factor loadings and Cronbach's reliability for the Differences component**

How much of a problem do you think the following factors cause between the two groups?	
<b>Item</b> (Scored 1 = not at all/7 = major problem)	<b>Factor loadings</b>
Speaking different languages	.85
Dressing differently	.92
Having different lifestyles (e.g. interests, cultural and leisure activities)	.84
Differences of faith between the two groups	.86
Having different values (e.g. what is considered proper conduct and behaviour.)	.91
Having different priorities (e.g. different goals and aims in life.)	.91
Eigenvalue: 75.94; Cronbach's Alpha: .90	

**Table 3: Composite items, factor loadings and Cronbach's reliability for the Direct Threat component**

<b>Item</b> (scored 1 = not at all/7 = very much so.)	<b>Factor loading</b>
I see the OG as potentially threatening the physical safety of my group.	.84
I see the OG as potentially threatening to the culture and values of my group (e.g. replacing my group's values and traditions with their own.)	.88
I see the OG as potentially threatening to the status of my group (e.g. being responsible for my group's loss of standing and status.)	.85
I see the OG as potentially threatening to the territory and resources of my group (e.g. threatening my group's access to housing, jobs and investment by taking these themselves.)	.92
Eigenvalue: 76.11; Cronbach's Alpha: .90	

**Table 4: Composite items, factor loadings and Cronbach's reliability for the Preferential OG Treatment component**

Do you think either of the groups are treated differently in the following ways	
<b>Item</b> (scored 1 = in-group preferred/7 = out-group preferred)	<b>Factor loadings</b>
Receive preference in getting financial aid (e.g. state benefits and grants.)	.91
Receive preference in getting access to social resources (e.g. jobs and housing.)	.96
Receive preference in being able to promote or defend causes or issues relating to their own group	.93
Receive preference in being able to criticise the other group.	.86
Eigenvalue: 81.31; Cronbach's Alpha: .92	

**Table 5: Composite items, factor loadings and Cronbach's reliability for the Negative OG Attitudes component**

<b>Item</b> (scored 1 = not at all/7 = very much so.)	<b>Factor loading</b>
I often think the OG are laughing behind our backs	.92
I get the impression that they think they're superior to us	.94
I feel they always think they can take advantage of us	.95
I feel that the OG has respect for my group (reverse coded.)	.58
Eigenvalue: 74.30; Cronbach's Alpha .88	

**Table 6: Composite items, factor loadings and Cronbach's reliability for the Separation component**

<b>Item</b> (scored 1 = not a problem/7 = major problem)	<b>Factor loading</b>
How much is the two groups not mixing a problem?	.88
How much is the OG's unwillingness to integrate a problem	.88
Eigenvalue: 76.77; Cronbach's Alpha .70	

**Table 7: Composite items, factor loadings and Cronbach's reliability for the Outside Influences component**

How much do you think the following influences contribute to trouble between the groups?	
<b>Item</b> (Scored 1 = no influence/7 = Massive influence)	<b>Factor loading</b>
The way the media presents issues.	.87
The way the government presents issues	.79
The way the BNP present issues	.55
Eigenvalue: 59.53; Cronbach's Alpha .58	

The Cronbach's alpha reliability scores for this last potential composite failed to reach levels considered sufficient to justify retaining it as a composite. This is perhaps unsurprising, as the three outside influence items comprising it refer to quite diverse sources of potential influence, which also may meet with divergent appraisals from greater and lesser hostile respondents. For this reason it was decided to incorporate the three items from this block as single measures of the different influences within the regression.

For the composite measures above, an overall mean of the comprising item ratings was calculated for each respondent to create a total factor rating score.

One final factor for inclusion in initial regression analysis also comprised a single item measure, in this case asking participants to indicate how much they thought general **Social Deprivation** in the area was responsible for causing problems between the two groups (1=not at all/7=major problem.)

Measures of participant **Age** (along a continuous scale) and **Gender** (male/female) were also taken so as to be included in subsequent regression analysis. It was thought that these two variables would potentially have at least have some impact on expressed negativity, particularly in the Aggressive Action measures, given the preponderance of younger males in statistics for violent activity in general.

The twelve identified factor components for inclusion in regression analysis, then, consisted first of **Gender** and **Age** measures. Added to these were participant perceptions of how influential the following factors were in problematic inter-group relations: **Inter-group Differences; Threat; Negative OG Attitudes; Preferential OG treatment; Separation; General Social Deprivation**. A final three measures also sought to discern how much **Media Influence, Government Influence** and **BNP Influence** were variously felt to be important in their contribution to problems between the groups. The regression analysis would then attempt to evaluate the contributory strength of each factor against the four identified negatives outcomes in turn: **Social Distance; Negative Feelings; Political Action; Aggressive Action**. As noted, these outcomes represent different expressions of negativity, from aversion, through dislike and up to willingness to aggress against the out-group. The various correlation, regression and comparison analyses undertaken on each outcome dimension will therefore be dealt with as one of four separate set of results. Phase two results

relating to research questions 1 – 5 in section 11.3 will be addressed first in terms of Social Distance hostility, followed in turn by the equivalent results for Negative Feelings, Political Action and Aggressive Action hostility.

### 13.4 Analysing the components of Social Distance hostility towards the out-group

#### Correlation of components and the Social Distance hostility measure

An initial Pearson correlational analysis was undertaken to explore any significant relationships between the 11 components and the Social Distance outcome measure of hostility. The factor variables were Age (measured on a continuous scale) and Gender (this last dummy coded as male = 0/female = 1), plus the 9 continuously factor components: Inter-group Differences; Threat; Negative OG attitudes; OG preferential treatment; Separation; General social deprivation; Media influence; Government influence; BNP influence. Results for the correlation analysis are displayed in the table below.

Table 8: Pearson correlation coefficients for 11 components and the **Social Distance** outcome measure

	Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Social distance		-.03	-.04	.61**	.74**	.64**	.15*	.74**	.10	-.24*	.01	-.14*
2	Age of participant			-.03	-.10	.05	.07	-.05	.02	-.07	-.02	-.12	.03
3	Gender of participant				-.04	-.10	-.12	-.04	-.05	.13	-.02	.07	-.04
4	Inter-Group Differences					.62**	.60**	.31**	.67**	.19**	.07	.30**	-.04
5	Threat						.76**	.27**	.84**	-.02	-.08	.13	-.07
6	OG preferential treatment							.22**	.80**	.07	-.09	.17*	.05
7	Separation								.24**	.14*	.13	.19**	-.10
8	Negative OG attitudes									.04	-.12	.19**	-.10
9	General social deprivation										.63**	.61**	.37**
10	Media influences											.54**	.31**
11	Government influences												.14
12	BNP influence												

\* =  $p < .05$     \*\* =  $p < .01$

The Pearson correlation identified five components displaying significantly positive associations with the Social Distance measure, indicating that strong ascription of these as contributory factors to inter-group problems was related to greater reported levels of Social Distance hostility. In order of strength these were: Threat ( $r = .75, p < .001$ ), Negative OG Attitudes ( $r = .74, P < .001$ ), OG Preferential Treatment ( $r = .64, P < .001$ ), Inter-group Differences ( $r = .61, P < .001$ ) and Separation ( $r = .15, p < .05$ ), though for this last the relationship was quite weak. Two significant negative associations were also identified, suggesting that greater ascription of Media Influence ( $r = -.24, P < .05$ ) and BNP Influence ( $-.14, p < .05$ ) as contributory factors to intergroup problems were related to lower self-reported levels of Social Distance hostility. Again the latter association was on the low side.

Two other notably strong associations are those which appear between Threat and Negative OG attitudes ( $r = .84, p < .001$ ) and Negative OG Attitudes and Preferential Treatment ( $r = .80, p < .001$ ). As noted in chapter 10, perceptions of the out-group as holding negative attitudes towards the in-group could be seen to represent just another form of threat from a Social Identity perspective – suggesting that the first strong association above could indicate these variables are conflated and should therefore be collapsed into a composite. Given that the current research is interested in attempting to pick apart the role of social identity factors from more concrete forms of threat, however, these factors will continue to be treated as separate concerns rather than attempt this. In the second instance, it is difficult to see how a case could be made for the association between OG negative attitudes and Preferential OG treatment as being somehow conflated, rather than just recording a strong relationship between the two concepts.

### Regression of components against the Social Distance hostility measure

As a number of factors showed significant relationships with the Social Distance measure, a forward stepwise multiple regression was performed to assess the predictive contribution of the eleven component factors against the Social Distance outcome. The results for this are displayed below.

Table 9: Forward Stepwise multiple regression of 11 components against **Social Distance**

Step	Variable	Beta	t	Sig t	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> change	Sig change
1.	Negative OG attitudes	.75	15.83	<.001	.56		
2.	Threat	.36	4.29	<.001	.60	.04	F(1, 196) = 18.37, p < .001
3.	Media influence	-.16	-3.65	<.001	.62	.03	F(1, 195) = 13.30, p < .001
4.	Inter-group Differences	.18	3.04	<.005	.64	.02	F(1, 194) = 9.26, p < .005
Model statistics: R <sup>2</sup> = .64, Adj R <sup>2</sup> = .63						F(4, 198) = 88.33, p < .001	

The regression analysis generated a significant four factor model deemed predictive of higher expressions of Social Distance, and accounting for 64% of overall variance. At the first step perceptions of negative out-group Attitudes was identified as a positive predictor accounting for 56% of variance and representing the strongest contribution. Perceived Threat was entered at step two, adding a further 4% variance and also identified as positive. At the third step Media Influence negatively predicted Social Distance hostility and explained 3% variance. While Inter-group Differences positively accounted for another 2% at step four.

### Creating high and low Social distance hostility groups

In order to try and pick out how the factors might relate to differences in the presence, strength and mix of ascribed contributory influences to inter-group hostility between respondents scoring high and low on the Social Distance measure of out-group directed negativity, two groups were created by splitting Social Distance rating scores by the median.

This produced a low Social Distance group containing 79 respondents (37 male, 42 female) and a high Social Distance group of 125 (68 male, 57 female.)

### **Comparisons between high and low Social distance groups**

The first thing to be examined was the different distributions of mean rating scores for each factor between the high and low Social Distance groups. Rather than standard means tables this data is presented side-by side below in ranked descending order of importance for each group. This is done to display more explicitly how the two groups differentially rated the relative importance of each factor as a contributor to general inter-group problems in the social context.

Table 10: Means and standard deviations for component ratings between the high and low Social Distance groups

#### **High Social Distance group**

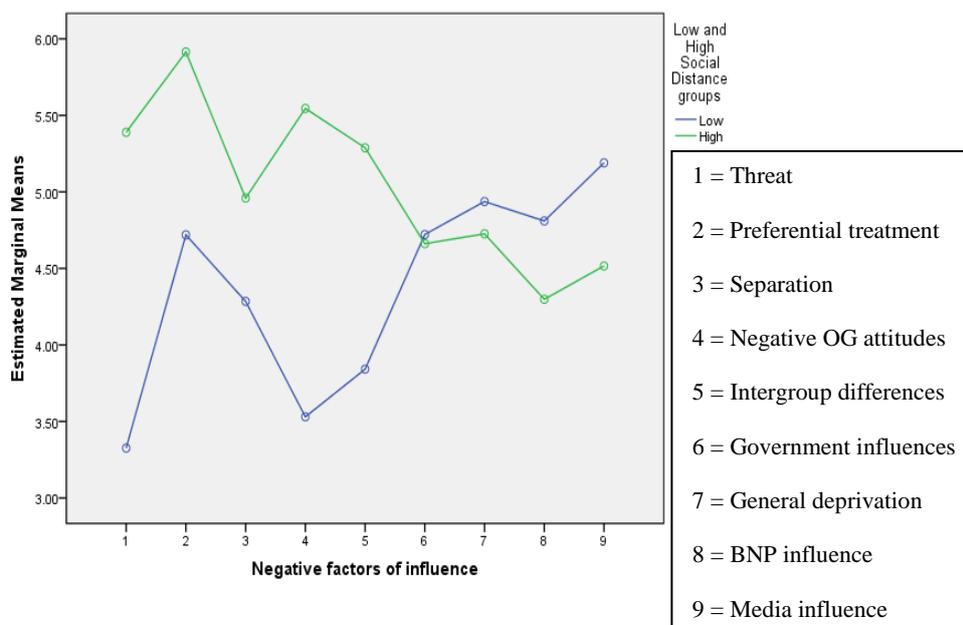
#### **Low Social Distance group**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>		<b>Factor</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Preferential OG treatment	5.92	1.02		Media influence	5.20	1.32
Negative OG attitudes	5.56	1.26		General social deprivation	4.95	1.30
Threat	5.40	1.23		BNP influence	4.84	1.76
Inter-group Differences	5.30	1.26		Government influence	4.74	1.50
Separation	4.93	1.55		Preferential OG treatment	4.70	1.06
General social deprivation	4.73	1.56		Separation	4.28	1.43
Government influence	4.66	1.90		Inter-group Differences	3.84	1.16
Media influences	4.52	1.83		Negative OG attitudes	3.46	1.52
BNP influence	2.30	1.88		Threat	3.21	1.61

Inspection of these mean scores for the composite measures offers some indication of emerging patterns of difference in respondent scores. A most obvious difference between the high and low Social Distance Groups appears in the relative importance they assign to external cause in the generation of inter-group problems. For the low Social Distance group

the four most highly rated contributory factors to inter-group problems are Media influence, General social deprivation, BNP influence and Government influence, whereas these same four factors represent those regarded as least influential by the high Social Distance group. Conversely, where perceptions of Negative out-group attitudes and Threat represent two of the most highly influential factors in creating inter-group problems as rated by the high Social Distance group, these same factors appear as the two least influential in the view of the low. Top of the ratings for the high Social Distance group, however, is the preferential out-group treatment factor, which is also rated by the low Social Distance group as the most important factor after external influences. This factor was not identified as significant in the regression analysis. These observations will be discussed along with other findings from phase two of the study in chapter 14. The pattern of differential ratings for the components between high and low Social Distance hostility groups can be seen more clearly when presented in diagrammatic form.

**Mean rating scores across the 9 components for the high and low Negative Feeling groups**



**Figure 1: Graph showing mean ratings of 9 components for the high and low Social Distance groups**

### 13.5 Analysing the components of Negative Feelings hostility towards the out-group

#### Correlation of components and the Negative Feelings hostility measure

Again initial Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to explore significant relationships between 11 components, this time with the Negative Feelings hostility outcome measure. Results for the correlation analysis are displayed in the table below.

Table 11: Pearson correlation coefficients for 11 components and the Negative Feelings outcome measure

	Item	r –value
	<b>Outcome: Negative Feelings towards the out-group</b>	
1.	OG preferential treatment	.64**
2.	Negative OG attitudes	.55**
3.	Inter-group Differences	.54**
4.	Threat	.52**
5.	Media influence	-.17*
6.	Gender	-.14
7.	Separation	.13
8.	Age	-.09
9.	Government influence	.09
10.	General social deprivation	-.06
11.	BNP influence	.01

The Pearson correlation identified four significant positive associations with the Negative Feelings outcome, indicating that strong ascription of these as contributory factors to inter-group problems was related to higher levels of Negative Feeling towards the out group. In general these co-efficients were lower than those for the Social Distance negativity measure, and in order of strength were respondent perceptions of: OG Preferential Treatment ( $r = .64$ ,  $P < .001$ ), Negative OG Attitudes ( $r = .55$ ,  $P < .001$ ), Inter-group Differences ( $r = .54$ ,  $P < .001$ ), and Threat ( $r = .52$ ,  $P < .001$ ).

.001) and Threat ( $r = .52, p < .001$ ) One significant negative association was also identified, suggesting that lower levels of Negative Feelings hostility were related to greater ascription of Media Influence ( $r = -.17, P < .05$ ) as a contributory factor to intergroup problems.

### **Regression of components against Negative Feelings hostility measure**

Significant relationships between several factors and the Negative Feelings outcome again suggested the utility of performing a forward stepwise multiple regression to assess the predictive contribution of the twelve component factors on Negative Feeling towards the out-group. Results are displayed below

Table 12: Forward Stepwise multiple regression of 11 components against **Negative Feelings**

Step	Variable	Beta	t	Sig t	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> change	Sig change
1.	Negative OG attitudes	.54	9.06	<.001	.30		
2.	Inter-group Differences	.31	3.98	<.001	.34	.05	F(1, 196) = 15.83, p < .001
3.	Media influence	-.18	-3.07	<.005	.37	.03	F(1, 195) = 9.42, p < .005
4.	Gender	-.13	-2.32	<.05	.38	.02	F(1, 194) = 5.40, p < .05
Model statistics: R <sup>2</sup> = .40, Adj R <sup>2</sup> = .38					F (4, 198) = 31.51, p < .001		

This time the analysis produced a significant four factor model, accounting for 40% of overall variance in Negative Feelings scores. At the first step perceptions of Negative OG Attitudes was identified as a positive predictor accounting for 29% of variance and representing the strongest contribution. Perceptions of Inter-group Differences was entered at step two, adding a further 5% variance and also positive. At the third step greater perceptions of Media Influence negatively predicted Social Distance and explained 3% variance. Gender accounted for another 2% at step four as a negative predictor, indicating that being male was predictive of displaying higher levels of Negative Feelings towards the out-group.

### **Creating high and low Negative Feelings hostility groups**

The negative feelings out-come was intended to be as simple and direct as possible measure of straightforward like or dislike for the out-group. This, however, presented problems when it came to splitting the sample into high and low groups for Negative Feelings. To attempt a direct median split ignores the fact that respondents scoring 4 are directly in the centre of the scale and could therefore be legitimately classed as falling in neither the high nor low camp, but rather taking up a neutral position (see appendix for questionnaire item). For this reason the scores were split by allocating ratings from 1 – 3 to the low negative feelings group and only those from 5 – 7 into the high. This designated 51 (22 male, 29 female) respondents into the low and 95 (53 male, 42 female) into the high Negative Feelings groups<sup>27</sup>.

### **Comparisons between high and low Negative Feelings groups**

Analysis of Negative Feelings ratings again began with an examination of the different distributions of mean scores for each factor between the high and low Negative Feelings groups. These are presented in the table below, again in descending order separately for each group.

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<sup>27</sup> Results will also be provided in appendix of comparisons between high and low Negative Feelings groups where ratings were split by 1-4 = low and 5-7 = high to create the groups (109 in the low and 95 in the high.) These do not differ substantially from results obtained from the above split.

Table 13: Means and standard deviations for component ratings between the high and low **Negative Feeling** groups

**High Negative Feelings group**

**Low Negative Feelings group**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>		<b>Factor</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Preferential OG treatment	6.04	.93		Media Influences	4.54	1.90
Negative OG attitudes	5.66	1.22		Preferential OG treatment	4.72	1.12
Inter-group Differences	5.53	1.21		General Social Deprivation	5.00	1.31
Threat	5.41	1.38		BNP Influence	4.55	1.80
Separation	4.89	1.65		Government Influence	4.53	1.58
Government Influence	4.86	1.93		Separation	4.32	1.47
General Social deprivation	4.77	1.64		Inter-group Differences	3.92	1.24
Media Influence	4.54	1.90		Negative OG attitudes	3.57	1.72
BNP Influence	4.36	1.91		Threat	3.41	1.81

From these it can be seen that when negative feelings towards the out-group are the focus, only subtle shifts in the inter-factor dynamics appear from the group scores generated by splitting the Social Distance measure. For the high Negative Feelings group, perceptions of Inter-group Difference increase in relative importance, as does Government influence at the lower end of the rankings. For the low Negative Feelings group, perceptions of preferential treatment given to the out-group are now rated more highly than for the Social Distance measure – both groups can again be seen to place preferential treatment quite high in the ratings. Other than this, the general pattern of ratings remains intact, with the low group emphasising outside influences and general deprivation as factors of greater importance, and the high group ascribing greater importance to perceived out-group negative attitudes and threat. A graph showing mean rating scores of components for the high and low negative feelings group is presented below.

### Mean rating scores across the 9 components for the high and low Negative Feeling groups

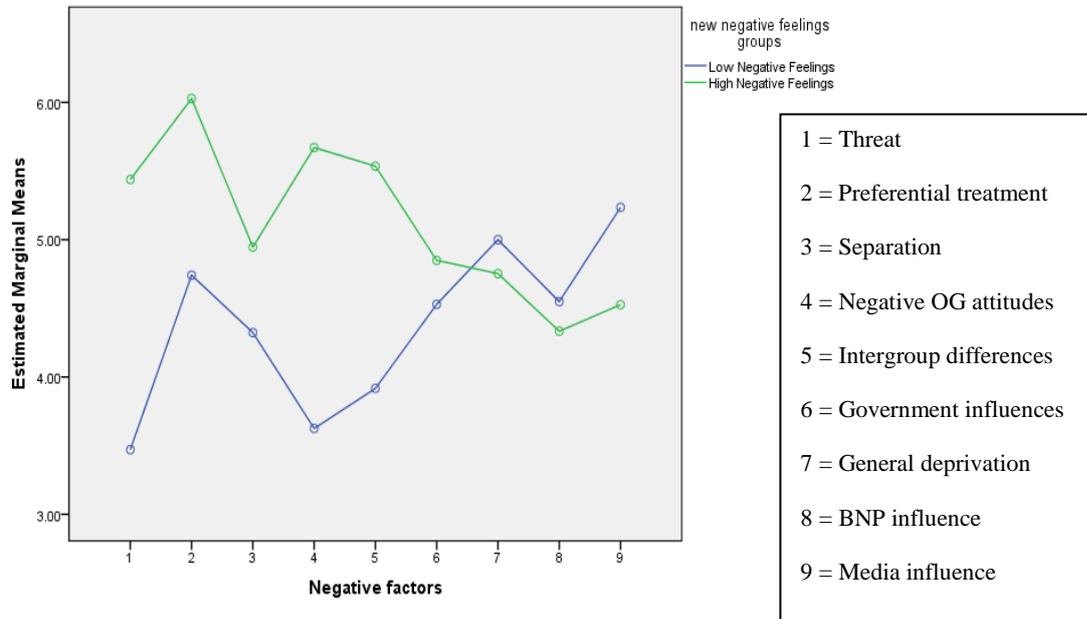


Figure 2: Mean rating scores across 9 components for the high and low Negative Feeling groups

### 13.6 Analysing the components of Political Action hostility towards the out-group

The previous two measures of inter-group negativity, Social Distance and Negative Feelings, could be said to assess more passive forms of hostility towards the out-group, and as such can be seen as pretty widespread throughout the sample. As we move on to examine more severe forms of expressed hostility, relating to a willingness to engage in activities with negative consequences for the out-group, the number of respondents allocated to the high Political and Aggressive Actions groups can be seen to decrease, allowing analysis to focus on smaller, more severely hostile elements of the overall sample. What this also means is that many respondents formerly classified as highly ‘hostile’ for the Social Distance and Negative Feelings measures will now be absorbed into the low Political and Aggressive action ‘hostility’ groups, thus potentially muddying the waters of analysis aimed at assessing

comparisons between the groups. For this reason greater attention will be paid to results and scores produced by those identified as members of the designated high hostility groups in the following sets of analyses.

### **Correlation of components and the Political Action hostility measure**

A Pearson correlation analysis examining relationships between eleven factor variables and the Political Action outcome was undertaken. Results are shown in the table below.

Table 14: Pearson correlation coefficients for 11 components and the **Political Action** outcome measure

	<b>Item</b>	<b>R -value</b>
1.	Inter-group Differences	.56**
2.	Negative OG attitudes	.56**
3.	Threat	.53**
4.	OG preferential treatment	.52**
5.	Government influence	.15*
6.	Media influence	-.15*
7.	Gender	-.14*
8.	Age	-.11
9.	Separation	.06
10..	BNP influence	.03
11.	General social deprivation	-.01

Five factors were identified as having significant positive associations with expressed willingness to engage in negative Political Action towards the out-group. These were Inter-group differences ( $r = .56, p < .001$ ), Negative OG attitudes ( $r = .56, p < .001$ ), Threat ( $r = .53, p < .001$ ), OG preferential treatment ( $r = .52, p < .001$ ) and Government influence ( $r = .15, p < .05$ ). Two significant negative relationships were also observed for Media influence ( $r = -.15, p < .05$ ) and Gender ( $r = -.14, p < .05$ ), both quite weak, with the last indicating an

association between expressing willingness to engage in negative political activities and being male. Next a forward stepwise multiple regression analysis sought to establish the predictive value of any of these components against Political Action. Results are shown below.

**Table 15: Forward Stepwise multiple regression of 11 components against Political Action**

Step	Variable	Beta	t	Sig t	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> change	Sig change
1.	Inter-group differences	.56	9.50	<.001	.31		
2.	OG Preferential treatment	.31	4.34	<.001	.37	.06	F(1, 196) = 18.79, p < .001
3.	Media influences	-.16	-2.80	< .005	.39	.02	F(1, 195) = 7.84, p < .01
4.	Separation	-.13	2.15	< .05	.40	.02	F(1, 194) = 4.62, p < .05
Model statistics: R <sup>2</sup> = .41, Adj R <sup>2</sup> = .40					F (4, 198) = 34.04, p < .001		

A significant four factor model was created by the analysis, accounting for 41% of total variance in Political Action scores. Inter-group differences was identified as positive and the strongest predictor at step one, explaining 31%, with OG preferential treatment, also positive, added at step two and explaining a further 6% of variance. At step three Media influences was identified as a negative predictor, adding 2% of explained variance, again indicating that low Political Action intent is predicted by regarding media influences as an important factor around inter-group problems. Step four added the Separation factor as a negative predictor for the first time, explaining another 2%, to indicate that perceiving this as an important factor also predicts lower willingness to engage in negative political activity.

### **Creating the high and low political action hostility groups**

Scores for the Political Action outcome measure were split by the median to create high and low groups. This created a low Political Action group of 128 (58 male, 70 female) and a high Political Action group of 76 (47 male, 29 female).

### Comparisons between the high and low Political Action hostility groups

The mean ratings of importance ascribed to each component as a contributory influence to inter-group problems are presented in the table below for the high and low Political Action hostility groups.

Table 16: Means and standard deviations for 9 component ratings across the high and low Political Action groups

#### High Political Action group

#### Low Political Action group

Factor	Mean	SD		Factor	Mean	SD
Preferential OG treatment	6.15	.96		Preferential OG treatment	5.04	1.13
Negative OG attitudes	5.73	1.29		Media Influences	4.84	1.43
Inter-group Differences	5.65	1.24		General Social Deprivation	4.78	1.34
Threat	5.57	1.29		Separation	4.62	1.42
Government Influence	5.08	1.92		BNP Influence	4.52	1.75
General Social deprivation	4.87	1.67		Government Influence	4.46	1.60
Separation	4.76	1.70		Inter-group Differences	4.19	1.22
Media Influence	4.68	2.04		Negative OG attitudes	4.15	1.66
BNP Influence	4.49	2.02		Threat	3.94	1.71

Differences in mean ranking scores of the 9 components of perceived influence between the high and low Political Action hostility groups are also presented in graphic form in the figure below.

**Mean rating scores across the 9 components for the high and low Negative Feeling groups**

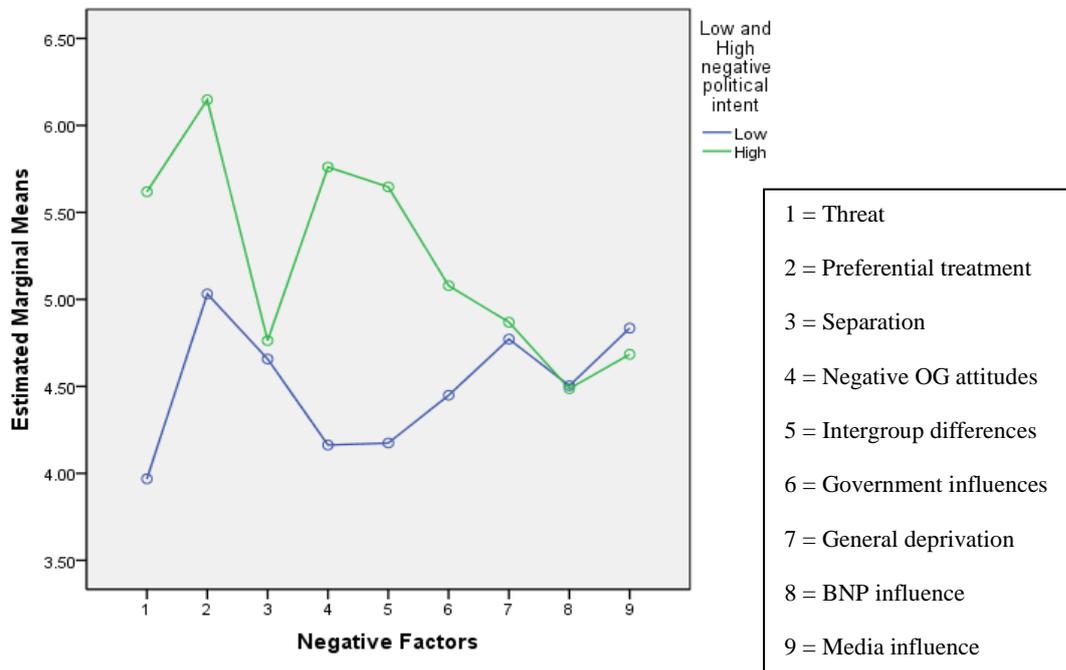


Figure 3: Mean rating scores across 9 components for the high and low Political Action groups

**13.7 Analysing the components of Aggressive Action hostility towards the out-group**

The Aggressive Action outcome measure represents the most severe form of hostility used in this study and relates to an expressed willingness to engage in verbal or written abuse and harassment or physical violence and force against the out-group. Results of the Pearson correlation analysis examining relationships between the components and levels of expressed willingness to engage in Aggressive Action hostility against the out-group are presented in the table below.

**Table 17: Pearson correlation coefficients for the 11 contributory factor variables and Aggressive Action**

	<b>Item</b>	<b>R -value</b>
1.	Inter-group Differences	.42**
2.	Negative OG attitudes	.42**
3.	OG preferential treatment	.41**
4.	Threat	.38**
5.	Media influence	-.25*
6.	Gender	-.18*
7.	Age	-.17*
8.	Government influence	.13
9.	BNP influence	-.07
10.	General social deprivation	-.03
11.	Separation	.01

Seven factors were identified as showing significant relationships with the Aggressive Action outcome measure. Of these, four were positive: Inter-group differences ( $r = .42, p < .001$ ), Negative OG attitudes ( $r = .42, p < .001$ ), OG preferential treatment ( $r = .41, p < .001$ ), and Threat ( $r = .38, p < .001$ ). Three significant negative associations were also found between Aggressive Action and Media influence ( $r = -.25, p < .05$ ), Gender ( $r = -.18, p < .05$ ) and Age ( $r = -.17, p < .05$ ), the latter two indicating a link between younger males and expressed willingness to engage in aggressive acts against the out-group. A forward stepwise multiple regression was performed on the Aggressive Action outcome measure, producing the following result.

Table 17: Forward Stepwise multiple regression of 11 factors against the **Aggressive Action** measure

Step	Variable	Beta	t	Sig t	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> change	Sig change
1.	Inter-group differences	.43	6.70	<.001	.19		
2.	Media influence	-.30	-3.63	<.001	.27	.09	F(1, 196) = 23.30, p < .001
3.	Government influence	.22	2.95	<.005	.30	.03	F(1, 195) = 8.69, p < .001
4.	Gender	-.19	-3.26	<.005	.34	.04	F(1, 194) = 10.63, p < .005
5.	Age	-.12	-2.06	< .05	.35	.01	F(1, 193) = 8.42, p < .005
6.	OG Preferential treatment	.13	2.02	< .05	.37	.01	F(1, 192) = 4.24, p < .05
7.	Separation	-.12	-1.99	< .05	.38	.01	F(1, 191) = 3.98, p < .05
Model statistics: R <sup>2</sup> = .38, Adj R <sup>2</sup> = .36					F (7, 198) = 16.72, p < .001		

For Aggressive Actions the regression produced a significant seven factor solution, incorporating almost all the study factors as predictive of higher aggressive intent and accounting for 38% of overall variance. Three positive predictors were identified, with the strongest being perceptions of inter-group difference as problematic and accounting for 19% variance. Perceptions of government influence as being problematic was also a positive predictor, explaining another 3% of variance. A third positive predictor was identified as perceptions of the out-group receiving preferential treatment, adding a further 1% of variance. The remaining four significant factors were all negatively predictive of Aggressive Action, the strongest of which was again perceptions of media influence as problematic, accounting for 9% variance. Two more negative predictors related to respondent characteristics, in that being male (4% variance explained) and younger (1% variance) were predictive of willingness to engage in aggressive actions. Perceptions of Separation between the groups was the weakest negative predictor (1% variance).

### **Creating high and low Aggressive Action hostility groups**

Scores for the Aggressive Action outcome measure were split by the median to create a low aggressive intent group of 180 respondents (91 male and 89 female) and a high aggressive

intent group of 24 (14 male and 10 female.) The number of respondents designated high on this variable was comparably few. The difference in size between these groups, along with the large number of respondents formerly identified as highly hostile now absorbed into the low group, must therefore be taken into account when examining subsequent results. Examination of the mean rankings for the high aggressive intent group still provide insight into the relative importance attached to the various components by this element of the sample. Means and standard deviations are provided below.

Table 18: Means and standard deviations of 9 component ratings for the high and low Aggressive Action groups

**High Aggressive Actions group**

**Low Aggressive Actions group**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>		<b>Factor</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Preferential OG treatment	6.46	.67		Preferential OG treatment	5.32	1.19
Negative OG attitudes	5.95	1.46		Media Influences	4.89	1.58
Inter-group Differences	5.89	1.27		General Social Deprivation	4.78	1.48
Threat	5.48	1.43		Separation	4.71	1.50
General deprivation	5.04	1.33		Government Influence	4.66	1.70
Government Influence	4.96	2.07		Inter-group Differences	4.58	1.36
Separation	4.40	1.78		Negative OG attitudes	4.58	1.68
BNP Influence	4.17	2.20		BNP Influence	4.56	1.80
Media influences	4.00	2.19		Threat	4.42	1.76

Again this distribution of scores is perhaps better observed in a graph displaying distribution of mean ratings of importance for the components between the high and low Aggressive Action hostility groups. This is provided in the figure below.

**Mean rating scores across the 9 negative factors for the high and low Negative Feeling groups**

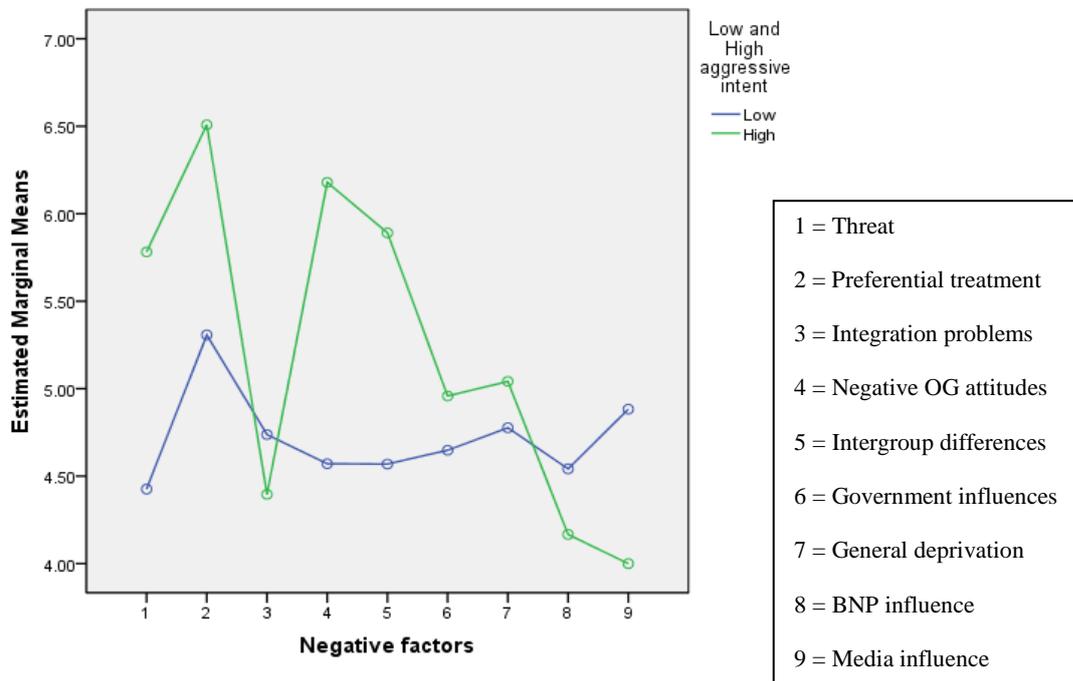


Figure 4: Mean rating of the 9 components for the high and low Aggressive Action groups

From this it appears the high Aggressive Action group still seem to be outscoring the low across a number of component ratings, though the low group now appear above them in ratings of separation between the groups as a problematic influence.

In addition to questions investigating the componential make-up of ascribed influence in the perceptions of greater and lesser hostile elements in the current research, two other related avenues were also to be explored. These considered the extent to which differences could be observed in patterns of perceived consensus between high and low groups across the different hostility outcome measures, and patterns to be found in levels of negative impact attributed to the out-group across a number of dimensions. Phase two research questions 6, 7 and 8 outlined in section 12.4 in relation to consensus will be dealt with first.

### 13.8 Analysis of self-perceived agreement with respondent viewpoints

The questionnaire survey (see appendix 2) contained the following question: How much do you think the following people share your views towards the other group? This was followed by 7-point rating scales (1 = Not at all/7 = Completely) rating perceptions of agreement across four dimensions – Friends, Family, Local community, Society in general. This was done to allow some assessment to be made of how peer or local community consensus factors might interact with the expressed beliefs of respondents (research questions 6, 7 and 8, section 11.4). Levels of self-perceived agreement on these four levels would then be compared between the high and low groups across the four hostility outcome measures. As this analysis produced a similar set of findings across all four measures the results of these will be presented consecutively below, before overall comments are made on patterns of participant response.

Table 20: Means and standard deviations of rating scores for self perceived agreement with own views by Friends, Family, Local community and General society for high and low groups across the Social Distance, Negative Feelings, Political Action and Aggressive Action hostility measures.

	<b>Means and standard deviations of self-perceptions of agreement by Social Distance</b>							
	<b>Friends</b>		<b>Family</b>		<b>Local community</b>		<b>General Society</b>	
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>High Social distance</b>	5.39	1.44	5.24	1.23	5.56	1.15	5.37	1.32
<b>Low Social distance</b>	3.83	1.54	3.37	1.39	4.33	1.24	4.61	1.19
	<b>Means and standard deviations of self-perceptions of agreement by Negative Feelings</b>							
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>High Negative Feelings</b>	5.98	.90	5.76	1.96	5.88	.92	5.61	1.24
<b>Low Negative Feelings</b>	3.08	1.64	3.00	1.36	3.94	1.30	5.61	1.24

<b>Means and standard deviations of self-perceptions of agreement by Political Action</b>								
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>High Political Action</b>	5.96	1.30	5.72	1.15	5.99	1.05	5.63	1.44
<b>Low Political Action</b>	4.09	1.41	4.02	1.29	4.54	1.17	4.71	1.05
<b>Means and standard deviations of self-perceptions of agreement by Aggressive Action</b>								
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>High Aggressive Action</b>	6.13	1.23	5.92	1.21	6.00	1.23	5.88	1.39
<b>Low Aggressive Action</b>	4.60	1.61	4.48	1.44	4.96	1.29	4.94	1.24

A series of mixed factorial ANOVA analyses were conducted to assess potential differences between the high and low groups on each of the four hostility measures over the four self-perceived levels of agreement dimensions. These are also presented together below.

Table 21: ANOVA results comparing self-perceived levels of agreement with own views across Friends, Family, Local Community and General Society dimensions between groups designated high and low in Social Distance, Negative Feelings, Political Action and Aggressive Action hostility measures

<b>High and low Social Distance groups ANOVA</b>	
<b>Effect of agreement dimensions factor</b>	F (3, 609) = 17.14, p < .001, Eta <sup>2</sup> = .08
<b>Effect of high and low groups factor</b>	F (1, 203) = 65.81, p < .001, Eta <sup>2</sup> = .25
<b>Interaction</b>	F (3, 609) = 10.72, p < .001, Eta <sup>2</sup> = .05
<b>High and low Negative Feelings groups ANOVA</b>	
<b>Effect of agreement dimensions factor</b>	F (3, 432) = 17.72, p < .001, Eta <sup>2</sup> = .11
<b>Effect of high and low groups factor</b>	F (1, 144) = 202.59, p < .001, Eta <sup>2</sup> = .59
<b>Interaction</b>	F (3, 432) = 30.24, p < .001, Eta <sup>2</sup> = .17
<b>High and low Political Action groups ANOVA</b>	
<b>Effect of agreement dimensions factor</b>	F (3, 609) = 8.54, p < .001, Eta <sup>2</sup> = .04
<b>Effect of high and low groups factor</b>	F (1, 203) = 101.80, p < .001, Eta <sup>2</sup> = .33
<b>Interaction</b>	F (3, 609) = 12.42, p < .001, Eta <sup>2</sup> = .06

	<b>High and low Aggressive Action groups ANOVA</b>
<b>Effect of agreement dimensions factor</b>	F (3, 609) = 1.70, p = .167, Eta <sup>2</sup> = .01
<b>Effect of high and low groups factor</b>	F (1, 203) = 23.02, p < .001, Eta <sup>2</sup> = .10
<b>Interaction</b>	F (3, 609) = 2.53, p = .057, Eta <sup>2</sup> = .01

Comparisons were then made first between the high and low groups in each hostility measure across the four levels of self-perceived agreement. Results showed significantly greater levels of self-perceived agreement for the high hostility groups over the low for each perceived agreement dimension over all four hostility outcome measures. The clearest way to present this pattern of results is in the form of a series of line graphs depicting variations in scoring between the high and low groups across levels of self-perceived agreement. These are presented below.

**Mean ratings for high and low Social Distance groups self-perceived agreement with own views**

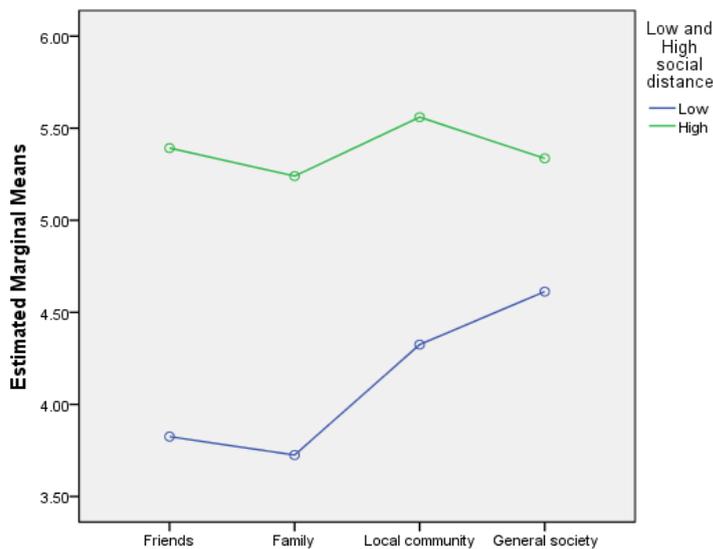


Figure 5: Self-perceived agreement with respondent's own views for Friends, Family, Local community and General society for the high and low Social Distance hostility groups

Mean ratings for high and low Negative Feelings groups self-perceived agreement with own views

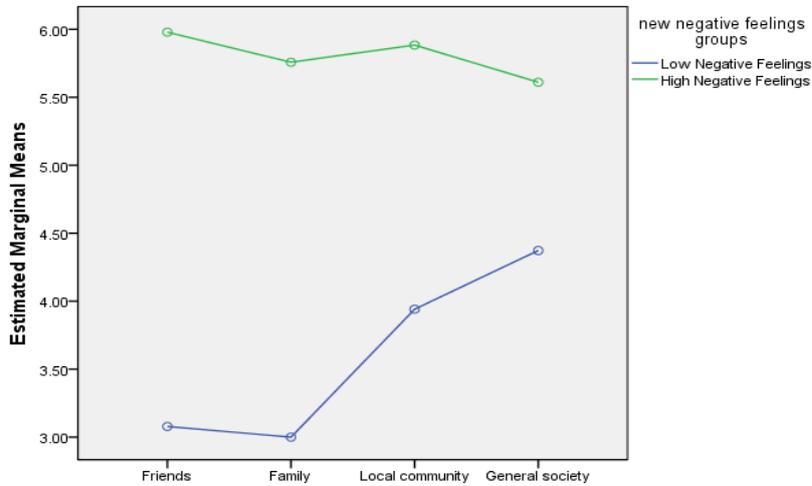


Figure 6: Self-perceived agreement with respondent's own views for Friends, Family, Local community and General society for the high and low Negative Feelings hostility groups

Mean ratings for high and low Political Action groups self-perceived agreement with own views

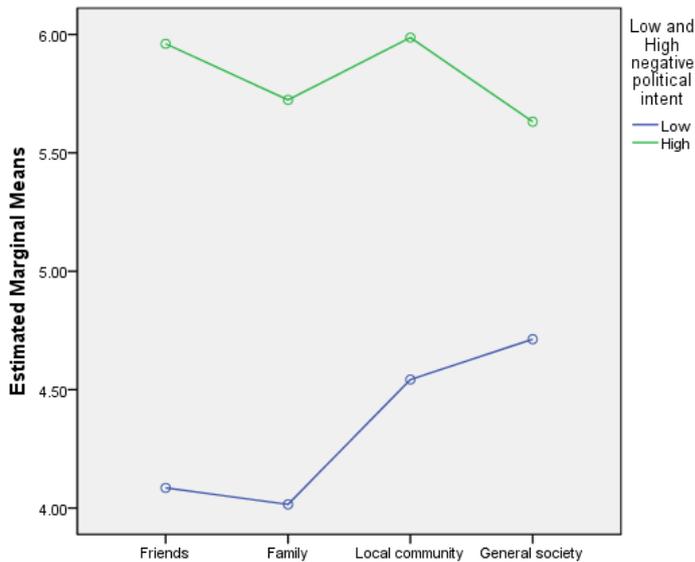


Figure 7: Self-perceived agreement with respondent's own views for Friends, Family, Local community and General society for the high and low Political Action hostility groups

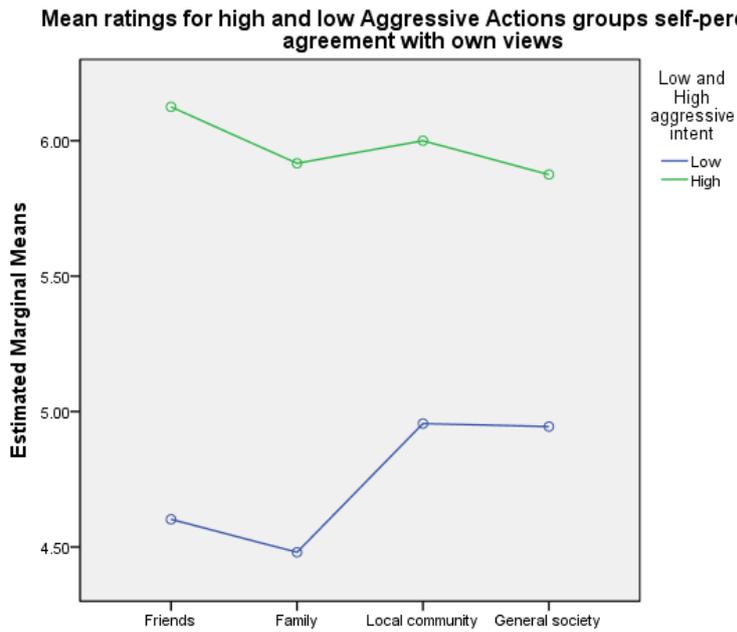


Figure 8: Self-perceived agreement with respondent’s own views for Friends, Family, Local community and General society for the high and low Aggressive Action hostility groups

**Differences in levels of self-perceived agreement between the high and low hostility groups**

In reference to research question 6 (section12.4), the general pattern of results for these measures indicate that the designated high groups on each hostility outcome measure (Social Distance, Negative Feelings, Political Action, Aggressive Action) recorded significantly greater levels of self-perceived agreement with their own views than do the low hostility groups right across the board - from the Friends dimension, though Family and Local Community up to and including that of General Society (results of the 16 independent samples t-test comparisons for this can be found in appendix). To examine these patterns of results further a series of comparisons were made between the Friends, Family, Local Community and General Society levels of self-perceived agreement categories for the high hostility groups on each of the Social Distance, Negative Feelings, Political Action and

Aggressive Action negative outcome measures (research question 7, section 12.4) and also for the low hostility groups (research question 8, section 12.4).

### **Levels of self-perceived agreement for the high groups**

A series of 24 paired sample t-tests comparing levels of self-perceived agreement for the high negativity groups across the four agreement levels were made, using a reduced alpha level of .008 from the Bonferonni calculation. The high negativity groups reported significantly greater levels of self-perceived agreement with their own views on only two of the multiple comparisons conducted. These were for greater levels of self-perceived agreement at the local over family levels for the high Social Distance group ( $t(124) = 3.43, p < .005$ ), and greater levels of self-perceived agreement for the friends over general societal levels for the high Negative Feelings group ( $t(94) = 3.08, p < .005$ ). No significant differences were found in comparisons between any other levels of self-perceived agreement across groups designated high on the negative outcome measures (see appendix 3 for all t-test results).

### **Levels of perceived agreement for the low negativity groups**

For those with viewpoints designated as low in hostility towards the out-group across the outcome measures a different pattern can be seen. A further series of 24 paired-samples t-tests were made using a reduced alpha level of .008. For the low Social Distance hostility group, general societal levels of self-perceived agreement with their views are rated as significantly higher than those for friends ( $t(79) = 5.02, p < .001$ ), family ( $t(79) = 5.72, p < .001$ ) and local community ( $t(79) = 2.84, p < .001$ ). Interestingly, this same sub-sample rate local community agreement with their beliefs as also significantly greater than friends ( $t(79) = 3.54, p < .005$ ) and family ( $t(79) = 4.37, p < .001$ ). No significant difference was found between levels of friend and family perceived agreement. An identical pattern of results was

reproduced for both the low Negative Feelings and Political Action groups, with greater agreement perceived for their views at the general societal over friends, family and local community levels, and greater perceived agreement at the local community over friends and family. Given its size and composition, the low hostility group for Aggressive Action cannot truly be considered low in hostility, therefore results for this will not be considered here.

### **13.9 Analysis of self-perceived levels of negative out-group impact over the sample**

In order to answer research questions 9, 10 and 11 outlined in section 11.5, questionnaire survey measures (see appendix 2 for example) were also taken of the extent to which participants regarded the out-group as having a negative impact across various levels. These were recorded on a series of 7-point scales (1=Not at all/7=Very much so), with the perceived negative out-group impact factor assessed over four levels, beginning with Self and continuing to levels of Friends and family, Local community and Society as a whole. Table below shows means and standard deviations for ratings of perceived negative out-group impact across four levels for both high and low groups over the four types of out-group hostility measure.

Table 22: Means and standard deviations for ratings of perceived negative out-group impact across Self, Friends & family, Local community and General society levels for both high and low groups over the Social Distance, Negative Feelings, Political Action and Aggressive Action hostility measures.

<b>Means and standard deviations for perceptions of negative out-group impact for high and low Social distance groups</b>								
	<b>Self</b>		<b>Friends and family</b>		<b>Local community</b>		<b>General Society</b>	
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>High Social Distance</b>	4.29	1.95	4.66	2.01	5.32	1.89	5.58	1.71
<b>Low Social Distance</b>	2.49	1.72	2.78	1.79	2.94	1.66	3.38	1.68
<b>Means and standard deviations for perceptions of negative out-group impact for high and low Negative Feelings groups</b>								
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>High Negative Feelings</b>	4.96	1.52	5.39	1.55	5.81	1.51	6.18	1.18
<b>Low Negative Feelings</b>	1.37	.63	1.80	1.02	2.18	1.14	2.63	1.47
<b>Means and standard deviations for perceptions of negative out-group impact for high and low Political Action groups</b>								
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>High Political Action</b>	5.26	1.50	5.64	1.48	6.11	1.27	6.39	1.12
<b>Low Political Action</b>	2.60	1.66	2.91	1.77	3.33	1.84	3.74	1.75
<b>Means and standard deviations for perceptions of negative out-group impact for high and low Aggressive Action groups</b>								
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>High Aggressive Action</b>	5.58	1.44	5.92	1.28	6.38	1.17	6.42	1.28
<b>Low aggressive Action</b>	3.32	1.98	3.66	2.08	4.09	2.08	4.50	1.99

A series of mixed factorial ANOVA analyses were then conducted to assess potential differences between the high and low groups on each of the four hostility outcome measures over the four self-perceived levels of agreement. These are also presented together below.

Table 23: ANOVA results comparing self-perceived levels of out-group negative impact across Self, Friends & family, Local Community and General Society dimensions between groups designated high and low in Social Distance, Negative Feelings, Political Action and Aggressive Action hostility

	<b>High and low Social Distance hostility groups ANOVA</b>
<b>Effect of agreement dimensions factor</b>	F (8, 1608) = 9.41, p < .001, Eta <sup>2</sup> = .05
<b>Effect of high and low groups factor</b>	F (1, 201) = 30.31, p < .001, Eta <sup>2</sup> = .13
<b>Interaction</b>	F (8, 1608) = 34.97, p < .001, Eta <sup>2</sup> = .15
	<b>High and low Negative Feelings hostility groups ANOVA</b>
<b>Effect of agreement dimensions factor</b>	F (4.15, 588.88) = 5.75, p < .001, Eta <sup>2</sup> = .04
<b>Effect of high and low groups factor</b>	F (1, 142) = 27.94, p < .001, Eta <sup>2</sup> = .16
<b>Interaction</b>	F (4.15, 588.88) = 19.25, p < .001, Eta <sup>2</sup> = .12
	<b>High and low Political Action hostility groups ANOVA</b>
<b>Effect of agreement dimensions factor</b>	F (4.09, 821.13) = 9.43, p < .001, Eta <sup>2</sup> = .05
<b>Effect of high and low groups factor</b>	F (1, 201) = 33.98, p < .001, Eta <sup>2</sup> = .15
<b>Interaction</b>	F (4.09, 821.13) = 14.30, p < .001, Eta <sup>2</sup> = .07
	<b>High and low Aggressive Action hostility groups ANOVA</b>
<b>Effect of agreement dimensions factor</b>	F (3.93, 789.70) = 10.32, p < .001, Eta <sup>2</sup> = .05
<b>Effect of high and low groups factor</b>	F (1, 201) = 4.76, p < .05, Eta <sup>2</sup> = .04
<b>Interaction</b>	F (3.93, 789.70) = 7.93, p < .001, Eta <sup>2</sup> = .04

Individual comparisons were made between the high and low groups in each hostility outcome measure across the four levels of perceived negative impact. As with the self-perceived agreement with own views analysis, these results displayed significantly greater rating scores for the high hostility groups than for the low across the four levels of perceived negative impact. These are again perhaps displayed most clearly in the graphic form displayed below.

Mean ratings for high and low Social Distance groups on perceptions of negative impact

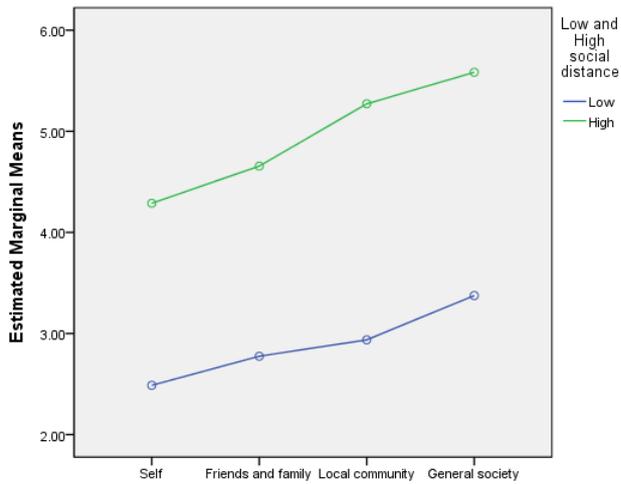


Figure 9: Perceptions of negative out-group impact on Self, Friends and family, Local community and General society for the high and low Social Distance hostility groups

Mean rating for high and low Negative Feelings groups on perceptions of negative impact

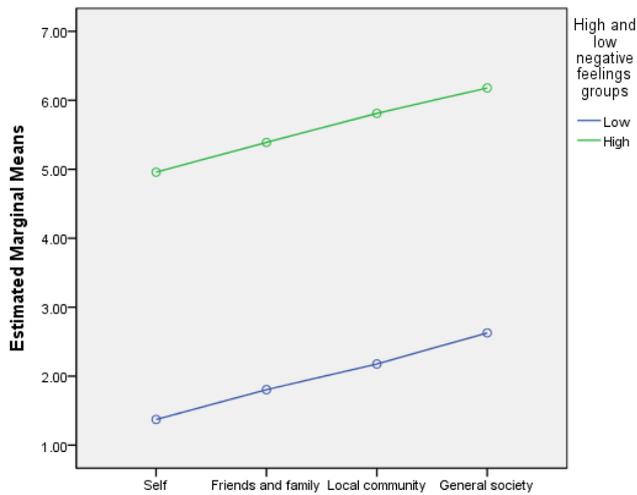


Figure 10 : Perceptions of negative out-group impact on Self, Friends and family, Local community and General society for the high and low Negative Feelings hostility groups

Mean ratings of high and low Political Action groups for perceptions of negative impact

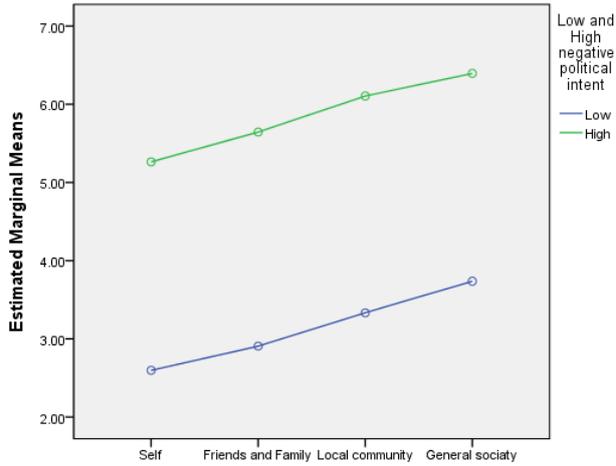


Figure 11: Perceptions of negative out-group impact on Self, Friends and family, Local community and General society for the high and low Political Action hostility groups

Mean ratings of high and low Aggressive Action groups for perceptions of negative impact

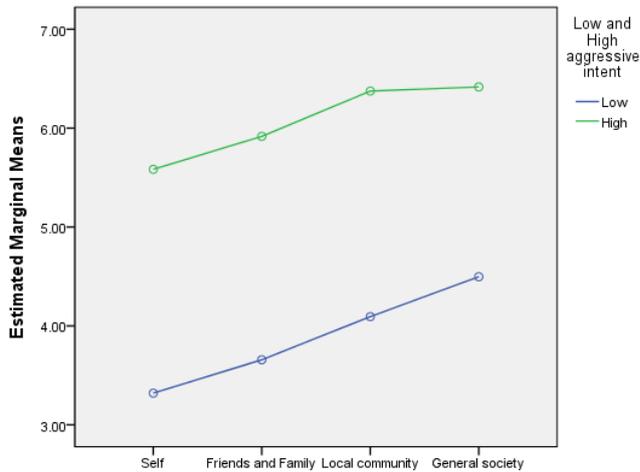


Figure 12: Perceptions of negative out-group impact on Self, Friends and family, Local community and General society for the high and low Aggressive Action hostility groups

### **Differing levels of self-perceived negative out-group impact between the high and low hostility measure groups**

To begin with research question 9 (section 12.5), the groups designated high on each hostility outcome measure consistently and significantly outscored the low groups across every level of perceived out-group negative impact. Results of all the independent samples t-tests comparing high and low groups for each outcome measure of negativity across the Self, Family and friends, Local community and general society levels displayed significantly greater rating for the high hostility groups than the low (see appendix 3 for t-test results). Clearly this demonstrates that respondents in this sample designated as high in all the hostility measures regard the out-group as more damaging right across all levels of society than those in the low hostility groups.

### **Levels of perceived negative impact of the out-group for the high hostility measure groups**

From the graphs it can be seen that, for members of the high hostility measure groups, rating scores appear to become progressively higher as they move along through the different levels of negative impact. This relates to research question 10 (section 12.5). The lowest rated level for each designated high hostility group was that of perceived negative impact on the self, followed by higher ratings for negative impact on Friends and family. Ratings for negative impact on the local community are then higher again than the previous two, with negative impact at a societal level representing the level at which negative impact is perceived as being strongest. A set of 24 paired samples t-tests (alpha value = .008 after Bonferonni correction) comparing ratings between the four perceived negative impact levels for the high Social Distance, Negative Feelings and Political Action hostility groups showed identical patterns. High groups across these three types of measured hostility all recorded significantly

greater rating scores for each progressive level of perceived negative impact over the one which preceded it. To use the high Political Action group as an example, reported perceptions of negative out-group impact were significantly lower for the self than for friends and family ( $t(75) = 4.16, p < .001$ ), the local community ( $t(75) = 7.02, p < .001$ ) and General society ( $t(75) = 7.02, p < .001$ ). Perceptions of negative impact were significantly lower for friends and family than for the local community ( $t(75) = 4.78, p < .001$ ) and general society ( $t(75) = 7.02, p < .001$ ). Perceived negative impact was significantly lower for the local community than for general society ( $t(75) = 3.77, p < .001$ ). Only the high Aggressive Action group displayed non-significant differences in perceived negative impact, recording significantly greater perceived negative impact for just the local community level over self ( $t(23) = 4.39, p < .001$ ) and family ( $t(23) = 3.41, p < .005$ ) levels, as well as greater perceived negative impact on general society over that for the self ( $t(23) = 3.50, p < .005$ ). So even while the high hostility groups consistently rate perceived negative impact as consistently greater than the low hostility groups, there is some evidence to indicate that this impact is regarded as more deleterious to fellow community members and others around them than it is at a personal level.

### **Levels of perceived negative impact of the out-group for the low hostility measure groups**

Looking once more at the graphs in reference to research question 11 (section 12.5), it can be seen that, albeit at a reduced level of perceived impact, the low hostility groups for each outcome measure follow a similar pattern to that of the high groups. As with the high, respondents designated as low in each type of hostility towards the out-group appear to rate effects upon the self as the lowest dimension of perceived negative out-group impact, followed by friends and family, the local community and society in general. Paired samples t-

test comparisons between levels of perceived negative impact were again for the most part significant, with progressively greater ratings attaching to progressively greater levels of negative impact I.E: Self < Friends and family < Local community < General society. There were only three exceptions to this. No significant difference was shown in ratings of perceived negative impact between the Local community and Family and friends levels for either the low Social Distance ( $t(79) = 1.12, p = .266$ ) and Negative Feelings ( $t(51) = 2.25, p < .029$ ) hostility groups. For the low Social Distance group no significant difference was also found between levels of perceived negative impact for the Self and Friends and family level ( $t(79) = 2.38, p < .05$ ). Overall it would seem that both groups regard any negative impact of the out-group presence as applying less to themselves personally than at other levels of impact. This and other results from the foregoing sections will be discussed in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 14: Discussion of Phase Two Quantitative Survey Results**

### **14.1 Outline of results discussion**

Several 'components' of inter-group hostility were formulated in relation to perceived factors of contributory influence on inter-group problems from the perspective of those embedded within a community marked by manifestations of hostility towards an Asian out-group. These comprised perceptions of inter-group differences, direct out-group threat, out-group preferential treatment, negative out-group attitudes, separation between the groups, general social deprivation in the local area and outside influence in the form of government, media and the British National Party. Gender and age were also considered as a potential influence on more overtly negative direct forms of hostility. Four types/levels of out-group directed hostility were additionally formulated and measured, increasing in terms of expressed severity/negativity towards the out-group at each step, through Social Distance hostility (SDH), Negative Feelings hostility (NFH), willingness to engage in Political (PAH) or Aggressive (AAH) activities towards the out-group. Ratings of importance attributed to components as perceived contributory influences in the generation of inter-group problems were then tested against self-reported levels of participant hostility towards the out-group across the four types/levels of hostility. This was done in order to assess patterns of componential strength and dynamics of each perceived factor of influence, particularly in relation to higher levels of expressed hostility. Specific research questions (1 – 5) outlined in

section 11.3 will first be discussed sequentially for findings in relation to each type/level of expressed hostility<sup>28</sup>. Social Distance hostility (SDH) is the first to be examined.

## **14.2 Components of Social Distance hostility (SDH)**

Five components were shown as significantly and positively related to the SDH measure, indicating that greater levels of this type of self-reported hostility were quite strongly associated with rating out-group (direct) Threat, Negative out-group attitudes, Preferential out-group treatment and Inter-group differences as highly influential contributory factors to problems between the ethnic groups. Separation between the groups was also significantly and positively related to SDH, though this was quite a weak relationship. Lower levels of expressed SDH were, on the other hand, associated with ascription of Media (moderately) and BNP (weakly) influences as having greater contribution to problematic group relations, in the form of significant negative correlations. Here we see some reflection of phase one findings, with those self-reporting lower hostility levels regarding the media and BNP as influential in creating the perception of problems between the groups. Recording high hostility levels, on the other hand, is quite strongly associated with regarding the out-group as directly threatening, as holding negative attitudes towards the in-group, as being in receipt of preferential treatment and as being problematically different. At the first stage of analysis we can already see that forms of direct threat, alongside threats to in-group esteem (negative OG attitudes) and differences which have been suggested as indirectly threatening from a Social Identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) perspective, all seem to come in to play where aversion to the out-group is reported. Alongside these, preferential treatment represents another potential

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<sup>28</sup> Limitations, flaws and potential improvements to specific aspects of phase two measurement techniques and materials will be addressed in the Chapter 14 general discussion.

affront to positive in-group sense of fairness and self evaluation, thus becoming a potential source of frustration and hostility from a Relative Deprivation (Dollard, 1966) perspective.

In order to establish more specifically the relative importance any of these components have in helping to predict higher levels of SDH a regression analysis was undertaken, creating a significant five factor model which accounted for 64% of overall explained variance. From this the component identified as most strongly predictive of greater expressed SDH was a perception of Negative OG attitudes towards the in-group as being problematic. This was followed in terms of contributory importance by perceptions of direct out-group Threat as predictive of higher expressed SDH. Lower expressions of SDH were then predicted by greater ascription of Media influence as contributory to inter-group problems. While the final and weakest predictor of greater levels of expressed SDH was identified as perceptions of Inter-group difference. Higher levels of negativity towards the out-group, as measured by SDH, are therefore predicted by greater perceptions of them as harbouring negative attitudes, as representing a direct threat to and being different from the in-group. In contrast, recording low levels of SDH is predicted by regarding media influences as an important contributor to inter-group problems. As stated above, from a Social Identity (Tajfel and Turner, 1986) perspective, the perceptions of disdain or disrespect for the in-group and its culture represented by the negative OG attitudes used in this study can also be regarded a form of threat – to in-group self-evaluation and esteem. Inter-group differences also, as interpreted in more overtly hostile accounts at phase one, can also be seen as potential Social Identity threats, where perceptions of the Asians as in deliberate rejection of ‘legitimate’ and ‘superior’ dominant normative practices was also regarded as a form of problematic challenge to positive in-group self-evaluation. The first, second and fourth positive predictors of high SDH therefore relate to various kinds of direct and indirect perceived threat, thus

highlighting the importance of perceived threat as a contributory factor to inter-group hostility and supporting findings from phase one of this project which indicate that overtly hostile perspectives tend to construct and interpret various aspects of the intergroup relationship as more negative and threatening than those of lesser/non-hostile peers.

Some of these points were further investigated by splitting SDH scores to create high and low SDH groups, so as to compare patterns in relative importance attributed to the various components as contributory factors to inter-group problems between those designated high or low on SDH. Mean component rating scores were first ranked in order of descending importance separately for each group in order to facilitate this. A most obvious difference between the high and low SDH groups appeared in the relative importance they generally assigned to external causation factors in the generation of inter-group problems. For the low SDH group the four most highly rated contributory factors were Media influence, General social deprivation, BNP influence and Government influence, whereas these same four factors represent those considered least influential by the high SDH group. Conversely, where perceptions of negative out-group attitudes and threat represented two of the most highly influential factors in creating inter-group problems as rated by the high SDH group, these same factors appear as the two least influential in the view of the low group. These results along with the regression analysis support findings from the qualitative analysis of phase one interview data, where lesser/non-hostile respondents often ascribed problematic inter-group relations to broader social and outside factors of influence (such as the tabloid media), whereas their more overtly hostile counterparts tended to attribute blame for problems to factors more directly in relation to the out-group – most specifically now identified as perceived negative OG attitudes, threat and difference by the analysis outlined above.

Heading the ratings for the high SDH group, however, was the preferential out-group treatment component, which was also rated by the low SDH group as the most important factor after the aforementioned external influences. Though this factor recorded a positive correlation with SDH it was not identified as a significant predictor by the regression analysis – potentially as a result of shared variance with other components in the initial correlation creating interference which was subsequently filtered out by the regression. The ranking results indicate that perceptions of preferential out-group treatment are assigned considerable (relative) importance by both high and low groups as a potential cause of inter-group problems. This supports the regression findings in that greater perception of preferential treatment cannot be seen as an indicator of high SDH, particularly as those who record low levels of SDH also perceive preferential treatment as a potential source of problems between the groups. Again this can be interpreted in light of phase one findings, where overtly-hostile and lesser/non-hostile accounts both cited perceptions of preferential out-group treatment as a problematic influence, though from less hostile perspectives the cause of this was more often attributed to outside forces, such as government equality initiatives, rather than directly to the out-group itself (as in more overtly hostile accounts).

Some initial overall patterns do seem to be emerging from phase two analysis, with both SDH groups appearing to regard preferential treatment as a factor of problematic influence. Where the two groups differ is in the low SDH group's ascription of mostly external influence to ongoing inter-group problems (particularly the media and BNP), and the high group's emphasis on factors explicitly related to the out-group itself, especially in the form of perceived direct and indirect threat, such as negative out-group attitudes and inter-group difference. Evidence from phase one suggested the lesser-hostile perspectives tended to consider broader social and environmental factors or external influences when interpreting

inter-group problems, thus displaying access to more diverse resources of explanation the more hostile – who just tended to blame everything straightforwardly and unquestioningly on the Asians. This again seems to be reflected in analysis here. As noted, the SDH measure can only really be said to relate to a casual or passive dislike, or aversion for engaging in closer forms of social relations with the out-group. The next type of hostility measure to be discussed relates to more openly expressed or overt dislike for or animosity towards Asians.

### **14.3 Components of Negative Feelings hostility (NFH)**

Initial correlation analysis of the components and NFH showed several differences with those for SDH. This time only four components were identified as have quite strong and significant positive associations with NFH. As with SDH these were perceptions of OG preferential treatment, perceptions of (direct) threat, negative OG attitudes and inter-group difference, with higher rating of these components as problematically influential being associated with greater self-reported NFH levels. As with SDH also, perceptions of media influence as being a key contributor to intergroup problems were again linked to reporting low NFH, though the relationship between the two was on the weak side. Two components identified as significantly related to SDH did not appear in the equivalent analysis for NFH; these were the positively related Separation and the negatively related BNP influence. Overall the correlation strengths were also generally lower for each component relationship with NFH than those observed in the equivalent SDH associations.

Changes were further observed in results for the regression analysis of NFH, which produced a significant four factor model explaining 40% of overall variance in scores. The strongest predictor of this type of hostility was, again, greater ascription of perceived negative OG

attitudes as an influence on problematic inter-group relations, though this time with the greater ratings of the inter-group differences as a problem component now representing the second strongest predictor of high reported NFH. Low levels of hostility were again predicted by perceptions of media influence as a contributor to inter-group problems for NFH, while gender now also made an appearance in the analysis as a negative predictor, indicating that being male was more predictive of expressing hostility towards the out-group in the form of NFH. This analysis indicates that males who regard the out-group as holding negative attitudes towards the in-group, while also seeing inter-group differences as a problematic influence, are more likely to record greater levels of negative feeling towards Asians. Rating media influence as an important contributory factor to inter-group problems was again predictive of low levels of (NFH) hostility. Perhaps interestingly, the (direct) Threat component identified as significant in the SDH analysis was not present in the equivalent results for NFH. Rating perceptions of direct out-group threat as a highly problematic influence on group relations cannot be therefore said to predict greater levels of expressed overt dislike for the out-group in the same way it could for more casual and passive forms of hostility. This does not perhaps support phase one findings where, if anything, more overtly hostile accounts identified perceptions of direct threat as problematic more than casually hostile respondents. The above analysis, meanwhile, did identify more indirect threats to in-group self-evaluation, such as perceived negative OG attitudes and inter-group difference, as more specifically indicative of greater NFH levels.

Looking at the group splits for NFH, however, still reveals a marked difference in the general pattern of relative importance attributed to the various components in high and low group ratings. As with SDH, the low NFH group rated (direct) threat as the least important contributory factor to inter-group problems, with negative OG attitudes and inter-group

differences joining this as the three components considered of lowest relative influence - whereas the high NFH group rated these same factors as the three most influential components, after perceived preferential OG treatment. Conversely, the low NFH group rated media influence, BNP influence and general social deprivation as the first, third and fourth most relatively influential components respectively (with preferential treatment representing the second highest rated.) As with SDH, both groups appear to consider perceptions of preferential OG treatment as quite a highly problematic influence, and as such therefore not indicative of greater hostility levels per se. Yet while the low NFH group continued to rate external factors as of greater relative importance, those designated high in NFH identified negative OG attitudes, inter-group differences and threat as more problematically influential factors, thus continuing the pattern identified in relation to SDH.

SDH and NFH measures of hostility can be said to assess more passive forms of hostility towards the out-group and as such have been observed as pretty widespread throughout this sample. As analysis gets ready to progress onto more severe measures of hostility, however, a reduction will be seen in the amount of responses which could be designated as highly hostile, thus perhaps representing a cumulative effect to some extent. To wit, not all high SDH participants would be expected to record similarly high scores on the more severely hostile NFH measure, yet it is reasonable to expect that those who did score high on NFH would have also recorded comparably SDH levels – after all, if you openly dislike Asians it would seem to accord with a wish not to interact with them. Similarly, expressing high SDH and NFH may not necessarily entail a greater expressed willingness to engage in political activities which could knowingly produce negative outcomes for the out-group, though those who do express such would perhaps also be expected to have previously scored high on SDH and NFH (as active hostility must to some degree be a product of underlying dislike and

aversion). As discussion moves to examine more severe forms of expressed hostility relating to a willingness to engage in activities with potentially negative consequences for the out-group, therefore, the number of respondents recording higher scores can be seen to decrease, allowing analysis to focus on smaller, more concentrated and severely hostile elements of the sample<sup>29</sup>. What this also means is that many respondents formerly classified as 'high' for the SDH and NFH measures will now be included in the 'low' sample groups when the subsequent splits are made for Political Action hostility (PAH) and Aggressive Action hostility (AAH), thus potentially muddying the waters of analysis aimed at assessing the low groups on these latter measures. For this reason greater attention will be paid to results and scores pertaining to those identified as high category members in the following sets of analyses.

#### **14.4 Components of Political Action hostility (PAH)**

Five components were seen to have significant positive associations with the PAH measure in the initial correlation analysis. Rating Inter-group differences, Negative OG attitudes, (direct) Threat and Preferential OG treatment as important factors of influence on inter-group problems were all moderately associated with recording greater levels of PAH (as was the case with previous SDH and NFH measures). In relation to PAH, rated perceptions of government influence as problematic were now also established as weakly associated with this type of hostility. Two significant negative associations were also recorded with PAH, these being media influence and gender (males associated with greater levels of PAH), though again co-efficient strengths were quite low for these components. Once more, regarding media influence as a strong problematic contributor to inter-group problems was

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<sup>29</sup> The high hostility group participant numbers are as follows: SDH = 125; NFH = 95; PAH = 76; AAH = 24

therefore indicative of recording low hostility levels; whereas high expressed PAH tended to relate to being male and considering Inter-group differences, Negative OG attitudes, Threat and OG preferential treatment as strong factors of influence.

The regression analysis identified a significant four factor model deemed predictive of PAH scores and accounting for 41% of variance explained. The strongest identified predictor of expressed PAH was regarding differences between the ethnic groups as a problematic influence on inter-group relations. The second strongest predictor was also positive and came in the form of rating Preferential OG treatment as an important factor. Stronger expression of PAH in this sample, then, is predicted by seeing the out-group as both problematically different, and regarding them as being in receipt of preferential treatment. The remaining predictors were both negative, indicating that regarding Media influence as problematic was once more predictive of lower hostility, while viewing separation between the groups as a problematic contributor to inter-group disharmony was also predictive of low PAH scores – or, that recording high PAH scores was predicted by not considering the Separation component as particularly problematic.

Several shifts from earlier analyses of SDH and NFH are discernible here. For the first time, perceptions of negative OG attitudes as problematic are not predictive of hostility. While aversion and overt dislike for the out-group have previously been strongly predicted by perceptions of the out-group as holding negative attitudes to the in-group, for those who express willingness to engage in political activities with negative outcomes for Asians this seems to not be the case. Instead, this type of expressed hostility focuses foremost on perceptions of the out-group as problematically different. A possible explanation for this is that where aversion and dislike alone represent perhaps more immediate ‘emotional’ responses to perceived conflict in group relations, those who are additionally willing to go

out and act (in this case through 'legitimate' mediums of political process) may represent a more 'practical' and calculated orientation. In which case, perceptions of direct negativity and challenge such as perceived OG attitudes and direct threat may not be considered so problematic as 'genuine' out-group differences which, as a problem in need of address, justify taking political action against Asians who do not (or will not) fit in. This is, of course, speculation – and further research would be needed to attempt more in the way of a cogent explanation – as all this current analysis intends and can provide is an exploration of which components of inter-group hostility appear to be considered most problematic by those who evince more hostile perspectives. Issues of future research such as this will be covered in the subsequent chapter 15 general discussion.

The preferential treatment component also makes a first appearance in regression analysis this time. For those who express willingness to engage in potentially negative political actions against the out-group, this component is the second of only two factors deemed positively predictive, and one which, again, was not present in analysis of previous hostility measures. Although fairly high relative priority has been repeatedly allotted to preferential treatment as a problematic influence across the sample, for those scoring high on PAH this component would seem of particular importance as a contributor to inter-group problems. As with perceived inter-group differences and PAH it could be the case that, for these high-scoring participants, preferential treatment once more represents an area of genuine practical concern (rather than a source of emotion-laden potential challenge) which is best addressed by taking political steps to rectify the situation. Again, without asking such participants in more detail about their motivation any fuller explanation here would have limited currency.

A third difference between the PAH regression and equivalent earlier analyses comes with the inclusion of separation between the groups as a negatively predictive factor. This perhaps

makes more sense. Phase one findings indicated that in the case of more overtly hostile perspectives (either included in the sample or alluded to by respondents as commonly held views extant within the local community) separation and non-mixing between the groups was regarded as a 'natural' if not desirable state of affairs. This would seem to be supported here, with perceptions of separation as a problem being predictive of lower PAH levels or, conversely, that high levels of PAH are predicted by not considering separation between the groups as especially problematic. For those who record high PAH it may even be the case that further separation between the groups might be one goal of taking political action in the first place, particularly when considering that a staple of the far-right political agenda often seems to include stricter immigration controls or even policies of 'repatriation' for those potentially considered non-nationals.

From all of the above it can be seen that higher PAH recorders are perhaps distinguishable from other more hostile designations, in that direct threat and negative OG attitudes are not identified as prime influences on inter-group problems when analysing by regression scores from this perspective. When PAH scores were split to create high and low PAH groups, however, a different picture emerged. Looking first at only the ranked component ratings for the high PAH group it can be seen that the relative order of importance ascribed to the nine analysed components of inter-group hostility by this portion of the sample barely differed from those previously presented for NFH. The only difference in relative order comes as the fifth (Separation) sixth (Government influence) and seventh (General social deprivation) rated components for NFH become the seventh, fifth and sixth in ratings for PAH, respectively, leaving the four highest (Preferential OG treatment, Negative OG attitudes, Inter-group differences and Threat) and the two lowest (Media influence and Threat) rated factors of problematic influence in the same ranked order for the high NFH and PAH hostility

groups. While the above changes and variation in individual component scores can account for the regression outcome (in terms of variance shifts in the inter-component Beta values altering relationships between the outcome and factor variables) the rankings nevertheless indicate that at a very basic level the order of importance relatively attached to the highest and lowest rated components by those high in both NFH and PAH does not appear to differ.

Altogether a tricky set of findings to summarise for PAH. While the high group continue to (relatively) rate negative OG attitudes and threat as some of the most important factors of influence to inter-group problems, alongside preferential treatment and inter-group differences, only these last two are positively predictive of reporting high levels of PAH. In contrast and more in line with findings from previous SDH and NFH analysis the highly hostile contingent continue to rate BNP and media influences as of least contributory importance, along with Separation between the groups. The main points of difference between this and earlier analyses being the potentially more practical flavour to predictive PAH components, which can be as interpreted in light of political activity representing a more calculated or 'rational' strategy of opposition to the out-group rather than just pure gut-level animosity linked, in part, to perceptions of more open forms of direct and in-direct threat.

If this last observation can be said to hold water, then for the Aggressive Action measure of hostility the mix of components in terms of importance attributed to their perceived influence in creating inter-group problems might be expected to differ again. If Political Action could be said to be a more 'rational' and calculated an expression of dislike for Asians, committing acts of aggression against them represents another matter. Before discussing this it should be stated that high scores on the AAH measure were much less common than those for SDO,

NFH and PAH, though a notable minority (24) of participants were still be assigned to the high AAG group when time came to make the split.

### **14.5 Components of Aggressive Action hostility (AAH)**

The Aggressive Action outcome measure represented the most severe form of hostility used in this study and relates to an expressed willingness to engage in verbal or written abuse and harassment or physical violence and force against the out-group. An initial Pearson correlation was again the first form of analysis undertaken, and calculated that seven components showed significant associations with the AAG outcome measure. The four positively (and moderately) correlated component scores in relation to AAG were those which have consistently appeared right through previous correlation analyses, that is: Inter-group differences, Negative OG attitudes, Preferential OG treatment and (direct) Threat. No other positive associations were found. Of the three significant negative associations produced by the analysis, Media influence was the strongest, registering at the low end of a moderate correlation. Perhaps unsurprisingly given the nature of the measure, the remaining negative associations, though quite weak, indicated that Age (being younger) and Gender (being male) were both linked to expressed willingness to engage in aggressive acts against the out-group.

The subsequent regression analysis produced a seven-factor model considered predictive of AAH scores. Within this the strongest predictor was positive and again reflected that perceptions of inter-group differences as problematic increased the likelihood of recording high Hostility levels. The second strongest component predictor was negative and, as with previous regression analyses, indicated that perceiving the media as a negative influence on

inter-group relations predicted lower AAH scores (or conversely that recording high scores was predicted by not regarding media influence as an important contributor.) Government influence was also included as a positive predictor, suggesting that those reporting high AAH viewed this as a problematic influence. The fourth and fifth identified predictors were both negative and support findings for the correlation analysis, in that high AAH scoring was identified as being more likely a product of young (Age) males (Gender). While considering Preferential OG treatment as a problematic influence was also predictive of greater AAH. The final predictor in this model came up as Separation which, as with PAH, suggests that higher AAH scores are predicted by not rating separation between the groups as a major factor of influence on problems arising between them. Overall, then, young males who perceive inter-group differences, government influence and preferential OG treatment as problematically influential are identified as being more likely to report higher levels of AAH; whereas regarding media influence and separation between the groups as problematic is more predictive of scoring low on this hostility measure.

As with the PAH measure, Negative OG attitudes and (direct) Threat again made no appearance in the regression here, along with General social deprivation and BNP influence. This is notable. If high PAH being positively predicted by inter-group difference and preferential OG treatment can be explained as a more calculated type of hostility - rather than an emotional dislike response related to perceptions of threat - which sees inter-group problems as primarily an issue to be addressed through political channels, it is harder to make the same case for AAH. Yet, again here perceptions of direct or indirect (negative attitudes) threat as predictive of likelihood to aggress do not appear. From this analysis it would seem that, for those willing to take aggressive action, it is difference and preferment that are most problematic. Of course, it may be that for those with aggressive intent, the various forms of

threat are not registered as important. Numerous accounts in the phase one analysis claimed that those prepared to become involved in violence or intimidation against the out-group would do this regardless of Asian presence in the community or not – in other words, they would simply find other targets for their aggression. In line with this, many respondents at phase one further proposed that forms of aggressive hostility were more likely a result of general aggressive tendencies present in individuals themselves rather than other, more purely ‘racial’ motivations. If this is the case, then perceptions of threat may not be necessary in relation to violent intent, merely some form of perceived differentiation between the perpetrator and target on which to hang ‘justification’ for the aggression.

This makes sense when we consider that being young and male also predicted aggressive intent. Phase one accounts also highlighted that instances of physical conflict between the ethnic groups mostly represented clashes between young males (both white and Asian) who were using the inter-group issue in Burnley as a reason to fight. This is not to suggest that such individuals do not harbour strong or genuine feelings of hostility towards Asians, merely that this perhaps represents just one more outlet for aggression, in this case against a highly and often visibly differentiated out-group who, in the local context at least, are generally viewed as legitimate targets for this. For such individuals, phase one accounts often claimed that the ‘racial’ aspect to inter-group conflicts merely represented easy-to-hand excuses or post-hoc justifications for violence which they would indulge in regardless of any specific disharmony with the Asians (football violence for example<sup>30</sup>.)

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<sup>30</sup> The phase one respondent, ‘John’, who claimed to know about such matters, indicated that many of the white British males prosecuted following the violent inter-group disturbances of 2003 in Burnley were already known to the police as members of the ‘Burnley Suicide Squad’, a local cohort of football hooligans. This assertion is supported by a reading of Porter (2005) in which the author, ‘Pot’, discusses his time spent as a member of this group, and includes a somewhat self-aggrandising account of the Burnley riots.

Having said all this, when AAH scores were split by the median to create high and low Aggressive Action hostility groups a potentially anomalous observation was made. Although regression analysis identified being male as predictive of recording high AAH scores, of the 24 participants designated high in AAH only 14 were male. Clearly when it came to expressed willingness to engage in aggressive acts, almost half of those reporting above average levels were women. Also, given that the measurement scale for the AAH variables went from 1=Never to 7=Definitely, the median split used in this study can be seen as fairly conservative (anything above 1 could potentially be regarded as registering at least some degree of hostility), thus limiting inclusion of individuals in this category. Although gender differences are not a specific concern of this current research it is still worth remarking on the substantial instance of females in this sample expressing high levels of aggressive intent.

Ratings of relative importance scores for each component were also again compared. The small size of the high AAH group, along with the contingently large number of respondents formerly identified as highly hostile on previous measures now absorbed into the low group for this measure, means that scores for this latter cannot be regarded as meaningfully representative of low hostility. Therefore examination of the mean rankings will focus on the relative componential ratings only for the high AAH group. Here the same four components in the same relative order of importance can be seen as the highest rated factors of influence to inter-group problems as was the case with NFH and PAH, as well as SDH (albeit with a slight shift in order for the latter.) For high hostility groups, up to and including AAH, it is perceptions of Preferential OG treatment, Negative OG attitudes, Inter-group differences and Threat which represent the highest rated factors of perceived contributory influence to inter-group problems. While the level of scoring for these has steadily increased for high hostility groups through analysis of progressive hostility measures (high NFH group ratings were

higher than the comparable SDH scores, PAH were greater again, with the high AAH group recording the greatest levels) the same four components have been consistently ascribed as having the greatest (relative) importance for those designated high in hostility. For the lowest rated factors of perceived contributory influence to inter-group problems a similar effect is observed – in this case with BNP and Media influence as consistently representing the two components deemed least influential by members of the high SDO, NFH, PAH and AAH sub-samples. The majority of changes in relative rankings of components between the high groups can be seen to take place in shifts between Separation, Government influence and General social deprivation as interchangeably the fifth, sixth and seventh most highly rated factors.

Overall the results for AAH suggest that young males, who view inter-group difference, preferential treatment and government influence as problematic, but not media influence or separation between the groups are more likely to report greater levels of AAH. Alongside this, those high in AAH also rate perceived negative out-group attitudes and threat as important contributory factors to inter-group problems. Low levels of expressed AAH are predicted in this sample by considering media influence and separation between the groups as more problematic factors. An overview of the foregoing results will be provided in the chapter 14 general discussion.

## **14.6 Self-perceived consensus in relation to expressions of inter-group hostility**

Phase one analysis noted that more hostile accounts tended to conform to and present themselves as representative of what was considered (by most members of the sample) to be an in-group consensus of negativity towards Asians. In addition to providing a main source of explanatory resources for inter-group relations, perceptions of widespread agreement

throughout the in-group also served to increase the assumed validity and ‘reality’ these explanations held as true and legitimate reflections of inter-group affairs, particularly in relation to the range of problematic contributory influences analysed above. Overall, more hostile perspectives tended to perceive greater levels of community agreement with their own views than did non-hostile perspectives, as well as considering their own views as more representative of a majority in the local community context. The extent to which this can be seen to apply more generally across the local social context was therefore further examined by phase two. Perceptions of consensus with participant’s views were assessed using self-rated measures of perceived agreement with own perspective across four dimensions: Friends; Family; Local community; General society. This was done with three specific research questions in mind. Initially to test for differences in levels of self-perceived agreement with own views between the high and low groups on each hostility measure (research question 6, section 12.4), but also to examine any difference between levels of self-perceived agreement between the Friends, Family, Local community, General society dimensions of agreement for those designated high (research question 7, section 12.4) and low (research question 8, section 12.4) on the various hostility measures.

Initial analysis was undertaken using mixed factorial ANOVA procedures to assess for the presence of significant differences in levels of self-perceived agreement with own views both between high and low groups and within the various dimensions of self-perceived agreement in relation to this across the various measures of hostility. All four ANOVA analyses identified a significant effect of group type (high or low hostility) across the SDO, NFH, PAH and AAH outcome measures, indicating that there were significant differences in levels of self-perceived agreement with own views between the high and low hostility groups across the different forms of hostility. Significant effects of dimension type (Friends, Family, Local

community and General society) were also recorded across the SDO, NFH and PAH hostility measures, indicating that significant differences between dimension ratings had been identified. No significant effect of dimension type was found for the AAH measure. Significant interactions were further observed between dimension type and group type for the SDO, NFH and PAH measures, indicating that post-hoc analysis would be appropriate in order to identify more precisely where any specific patterns of difference in scores on these measures occurred. No significant interaction of group and dimension type was recorded for the AAH measure.

Discussion will first focus on the results of post-hoc analysis in relation to differences of self-perceived agreement with own views between the high and low hostility groups across the four measures of expressed hostility (research question 6, section 12.4). Results here were quite conclusive, demonstrating that over the entire series of 16 statistical analyses comparing ratings of self-perceived agreement with own views on the various dimensions of perceived agreement between groups designated high or low in the four types of hostility, the high hostility groups consistently recorded significantly greater levels of self-perceived agreement with own views than the low on each comparison. This supports findings from phase one, which indicated that more overtly hostile perspectives tended to consider themselves more representative and in conformance with the views of peers and the community in general than did the lesser/non-hostile. In part this may help explain why more hostile respondents also tended to present their case with less doubt and more certainty, given that if such orientations are considered the legitimate and dominant majority viewpoint in this particular social context, then adherence to such finds constant validation and justification in daily interaction with others evincing similar majority perspectives. Again this highlights the importance of perceived in-group consensus influences in the expression, perpetuation, legitimisation and

transmission of negative attitudes towards Asians in Burnley, particularly in the form of consensually negative views representing the bulk of explanatory resources or interpretive repertoires available to make sense of inter-group relations for individuals in this community. Conversely, lesser/non-hostile perspectives in phase one analysis frequently regarded their own views as not being more widely compatible or shared in the perspectives of peers and fellow community members. As reported by these elements of the sample, lack of strong hostility towards Asians was considered as a minority, even non-conformist, stance to take – which is again supported by the quantitative analysis. A key difference between greater and lesser hostile perspectives in the current study, therefore, can be said to relate to levels of perceived agreement with own views.

One aspect of these findings was interesting for a slightly different reason, however. From evidence presented in phase one analysis, and material cited in the introductory chapters relating to assumed prohibitions against expressing ‘racist’ views being generally more extant in broader society (including official sanctions against such), one set of comparisons might have been expected to diverge somewhat from the above pattern. While perceptions of peer agreement with own views across the friends, family and local community dimensions clearly fits with an interpretation of in-group consensus as symbiotically entwined with individual perspectives in the expression of hostility towards the out-group, the finding that those designated high in hostility also regard their views as being in accord with ones held at a more general societal level is not so easy to understand. Undoubtedly regarding such a state of affairs to be the case can only further reinforce the perceived validity and legitimacy of personal viewpoints, yet it nevertheless raises the question as to where the perception of such agreement comes from. Without specifically exploring this through further study, only speculative interpretations can be forwarded. Perhaps, for instance, it is the case that the more

hostile regard such widespread views as genuinely existing, but that these are by necessity suppressed by a majority of the population for fear of censure. Lesser/non-hostile accounts at phase one, alongside phase two analysis of low hostility cohort ratings, also drew attention to the perceived importance of tabloid media influence as a problematic contributor to inter-group problems through its provision of limited and sometimes biased information. It is not for this author, nor this study, to make any definitive statements regarding what the general perspective of The Sun (for example) readers and staff might be to Asian or other British 'immigrant' populations, but perceived consensus in this area may perhaps represent another potential explanation for the results outlined above. Or perhaps the overtly hostile just assume everyone else thinks the same way, and give it little further consideration.

The above findings were further supported when statistical comparisons were next made between ratings of self-perceived agreement with own views between the different dimensions (friends, family, local community, general society) for the high hostility groups across the SDH, NFH, PAH and AAH measures (research question 7, section 12.4). Here the vast majority of analyses revealed no significant differences in ratings of self-perceived agreement for the high hostility groups between the four dimensions. This again indicates that besides reporting higher overall levels of self-perceived agreement more hostile perspectives, for the most part, seem to consider others - be these peers, family, community or general society members - as in agreement with their own views to a roughly similar degree. Only two exceptions to this pattern of results were found, firstly in that the high SDH group reported significantly greater levels of self-perceived agreement with own views at the local community over family level. At least this perhaps demonstrates that some members of this hostility cohort have relations who are not equally as negative in their view of Asians as the local community are assumed to be. The second significant difference related to the high

NFH group recording greater scores for friends' self-perceived agreement with own views over those for general society, thus (in a very small way) suggesting some awareness of differences in belief at a broader level existing in relation to those found closer at hand.

Results comparing levels of self-perceived agreement with own views between the friends, family, local community and general society dimensions for the low SDH, NFH, PAH and AAH groups did however produce more differences (research question 8, section 12.4). For the high SDH, NFH and PAH hostility groups a consistent pattern of results was produced. In each case levels of self-perceived agreement with own views were found to be significantly greater for the General society dimension than the friends, family and local community. In this can be seen evidence that, although still lower overall in ratings of self-perceived agreement, the low groups do still view their views as being shared more widely at a general societal level than across local and peer dimensions. The second set of findings in relation to high SDH, NFH and PAH groups were not so clear-cut. These indicate that those designated low in the four types of hostility *also* record greater levels of self-perceived agreement with own views at the local community over both friends and family levels. This suggests that it may actually be perceptions of peer and family agreement that are considered less consistent with non-hostile views than that of the local community, perhaps highlighting the potential influence of family and peers in the perpetuation and transmission of negative perspective as being a stronger influence than fellow members of the community.

## **14.7 Self-perceived negative impact in relation to expressions of inter-group hostility**

In order to answer research questions 9, 10 and 11 outlined in section 12.5, questionnaire survey measures were also taken of the extent to which participants regarded the out-group as having a negative impact across various dimensions. Similar to those for self-perceived agreement these related to levels of negative out-group impact perceived on the dimensions of Self, Friends and family, Local community and Society in general. Again this was done for several reasons. Besides revealing more negative perceptions in general, phase one analysis indicated that more hostile accounts also tended to view the Asians as having greater negative impact on local society than did those of a lesser/non-hostile persuasion. This seemed to contribute to a generally bleaker, more pessimistic and threat sensitive orientation on behalf of such respondents. Research question 11, therefore, intended to investigate any difference in negative impact ratings across the Self, Friends and Family, Local community and General society dimensions between those designated high or low in the various types of hostility (SDO, NFH, PAH and AAH.) Phase one findings additionally indicated that perspectives right across the sample further tended to view any perceived negative impact of the out-group presence as having a lesser impact on their own lives and experience than was regarded as occurring at broader levels. For this reason, research question 9 focussed on exploring difference in levels of self-perceived negative impact across the various dimensions for the designated high hostility groups, whereas research question 10 intended the same for those allocated to the low SDO, NFH, PAH and AAH categories.

Mixed factorial ANOVA analyses were again used to assess for the presence of any differences observable between the four high and low hostility groups across each dimension of perceived negative impact. A significant effect was found for the dimension of impact

factor across each of the four analyses relating to SDH, NFH, PAH and AAH, indicating that significant differences could be observed between rated levels of perceived impact across the four dimensions (Self, Friends and Family, Local community, General society.) A significant effect was also reported for the (high and low) group factor across all four hostility measures. Significant interactions were also recorded between dimension type and group types factors on these, thus justifying the use of post-hoc tests to establish clearer understanding of where specific differences lay.

To approach this in reverse, discussion will first turn to analysis of research question 11 (section 12.5) – differences between the high and low SDH, NFH, PAH and AAH measures. As with the self-perceived agreement measures, the groups designated high in each type of measured hostility recorded significantly greater levels of self-perceived negative impact than the low on every one of the 24 statistical comparisons covering the four negative impact dimensions. Consistently across the board, then, those designated more highly hostile - by whatever criteria – regarded the out-group as having a significant level of negative impact than the low hostility groups across the Self, Friends and Family, Local community and General society dimensions. This supports phase one findings to the extent that, at least in comparison to less hostile sections of this sample (who live in the very same community, let us not forget), those reporting higher levels of hostility do appear to perceive themselves, those close to and living around them, as well as society itself as suffering quite severe degrees of negative impact from the out-group's presence.

A second purpose of this section analysis was to assess any differences in levels of self-perceived negative impact recorded by those designated high on the SDH, NFH, PAH and AAH measures between the Self, Friends and Family, Local community and General society dimensions of impact. Phase one findings indicated that many more hostile perspectives,

while generally considering the out-group to be a force of negative impact, nevertheless claimed to have experienced no such negative affect personally. This can, of course, be interpreted in terms of Social Identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) processes, which purportedly lead those who identify strongly with a particular in-group to often consider and feel any perceived threats or negativity to aspects of group-level identity as matters of personal concern or detriment. It also begs a further question, however, in that if evidence can be found of this effect occurring more widely across larger communities – perceptions of general negative impact alongside the absence of such at an individual experiential level – then where, or more precisely on whom, can the negativity be said to have its impact.

Clearly the phenomena described above has not been comprehensively supported by the analysis of negative impact ratings *between* the high and low hostility groups, however, whereby those designated high in hostility do rate themselves as having experienced substantial levels of personal negative impact – high group negative impact on the self levels being significantly greater than low across each hostility measure, as well as the mean total of all the high group's negative self-impact scores averaging 5.02 on the 7-point scales used to measure this. Yet, it is still worth pursuing the question of how these perceptions of impact on the self are comparable to perceived levels of impact across the other dimensions, in order to assess how perceptions of negative group-identity impact relate to the personal. Analysis comparing levels of self-perceived negative out-group impact between the Self, Friends and Family, Local community and General society dimensions across high hostility groups (research question 10, section 12.5) produced an identical pattern of results for those designated high in SDO, NFH and PAH. In each case the lowest rated dimension of negative impact was recorded as that of the self. Ratings of perceived negative out-group impact to friends and family were in each case then found to produce significantly greater ratings than

self across the high hostility groups. High hostility groups further rated negative impact at the local community level to be significantly greater than that of both Self and Friends and family across the hostility types. And finally, perceived negative out-group impact at the general society levels was rated as being significantly greater than that of Self, Friends and family and Local community. Findings for the AAH high group took a similar shape, though many of the differences observed here failed to reach significance. Those that did, however, support findings from the SDH, NFH and PAH measures. Significantly greater perceived negative impact on the general society dimension over the self was one of these, as were significantly greater perceived levels of negative impact for the local community over self and family dimensions.

For these high hostility sub-samples it would seem that the greatest perceived negative impact of Asian presence tends to occur at the general society level, then. Considering findings from phase one, particularly in relation to the threat component used at phase two and perceived threats to in-group culture and values or territory and resources, this perception of negative impact on general society can be perhaps understood. From many of the more hostile perspectives reported, claims of negative impact often centred around perceived diminution or erosion of 'British values' or 'English values' due to a number of related factors (Asian social and cultural expansion and perceived 'government' collusion in this.) Second to this is perceived negative impact at the local community level, where again assumptions of Asian social and economic success shape a negative prognosis of the social landscape from more hostile perspectives. Therefore social identification as a white, British/English member of the local community, and perceptions of challenge or negativity in relation to this would appear to register as an area of (relatively) more concern for hostile participants in this sample than negativity on personal experiential level.

The above analyses were then repeated in order to address research question 10 (section 12.5), this time looking at potentially significant differences between ratings of self-perceived negative impact across the Self, Friends and family, Local community and General society dimensions for those designated low in the four types of measured hostility. Although at a significantly reduced level, ratings for the low hostility groups followed a pattern similar to that recorded by the high groups. As with the high, respondents designated as low in each type of hostility towards the out-group rated Self as the lowest dimension of perceived negative out-group impact. Perceived negative impact was then rated as significantly greater for the Friends and family dimension, except by the low SDO group where this difference did not reach significance. Scores for perceived negative impact were also not significantly different between the Local community and Friends and family dimensions for the low SDH and NFH groups. Negative impact to General society was considered significantly greater in comparison to all other dimension variables for the low hostility groups. It is perhaps not surprising to see this similar pattern of results for the low hostility groups – after all these individuals are as subject to Social Identity processes as anyone else. Overall though, no consistent support was found for the idea that perceived negative impact to the self was a negligible concern in comparison to impact across other dimensions. Both low and high groups did, for the most part, record significantly greater ratings of perceived negative impact across in dimensions when compared with that of the self, but members of the high hostility groups still reported quite considerable levels of Self negative impact – especially in relation to the low hostility groups. This finding supports observations from phase one analysis suggesting that more hostile perspectives in general do tend to perceive the inter-group situation in terms of greater negative impact, and therefore potential threat, than do lesser hostile elements within the same social context.

## **Chapter 15: General Discussion**

### **15.1 Summary of results**

A real-world context has been used to study inter-group hostility. Sample cohorts were taken from a white British community displaying prior and on-going manifestations of hostility towards a juxtaposed South Asian population. This was partly done in order to investigate how lay-perceptions and interpretations around problematic inter-group relations were expressed by those embedded within this environment, particularly in terms of identifying common themes (components) that arose in explanation and/or justification for hostility towards Asians. Various perspectives were recorded and analysed, representing a range of lesser/non-hostile and more overtly hostile orientations, and a number of components identified and subsequently discussed – with focus split between how these were differentially constructed and interpreted in respondent accounts. These components were also discussed in relation to a number of theoretical perspectives advanced across introductory chapters. Material generated through phase one qualitative interview and analysis procedures was then used to further assess these components across a wider community sample. This was done in order to explore the broad strokes and general pattern of relative importance ascribed to each component as a perceived contributory factor in the generation of hostility, especially in terms of differentiating componential strength and make-up dynamics between those designated high and low in various types of expressed hostility. A summary and overview of these results will now be presented here.

From prior evidence cited in section 10.1 of the methodology chapter – which found confirmation in both the accounts of phase one respondents and participant ratings at phase two – the context under investigation was regarded as manifesting quite high and widespread levels of out-group directed hostility. So much so that the adoption or expression of non-hostile perspectives towards Asians tended to be regarded at times as a minority, even non-conformist, position – in this way perhaps displaying a reversal of how hostility to ethnic minorities is considered in more ‘mainstream’ society. Both lesser and more hostile accounts indicated that an overtly negative orientation towards the out-group was regarded as characteristic and representative of a dominant consensus within the local white British community. Observed ratings further confirmed that those low in expression of inter-group hostility at phase two also reported significantly lower levels of self-perceived agreement with their views across a number of dimensions than did those designated as highly hostile. In beginning to summarise results, therefore, it may be easier to deal with the minority position first.

For generally less hostile members of the community (defined as lesser/non-hostile at phase one and as low SDH and NFH<sup>31</sup> groups at phase two), the first thing to be noted was the importance they attached to external forces as factors of influence on the generation of inter-group hostility. Whereas more hostile perspectives often tended to draw focus on contributory factors perceived directly in relation to the out-group, the less hostile frequently looked to environmental and outside forces when constructing explanations for inter-group problems. Most prominent amongst these were media influences. Throughout phase two analyses perceptions of the media as a highly problematic influence on inter-group problems

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<sup>31</sup> As noted in chapter 12, the low PAH and AAH groups cannot be regarded as truly low in hostility as they contain members previously designated high in SDO and NFH, thus potentially affecting scores. This should be kept in mind throughout the current discussion.

were repeatedly seen as associated with and predictive of lower levels of expressed hostility; while recording high hostility levels was linked to perceptions of media influence as being relatively unimportant. Phase one analysis allowed a clearer assessment to be made of such observations, as lesser hostile accounts repeatedly elucidated upon the perceived path this was seen as taking. Predominantly it was framed in terms of the role played by tabloid newspapers, through provision of information for more hostile community members, working to shape the explanatory resources and interpretive repertoires (Wetherell & Potter, 1992) available for making sense of inter-group relations. While more hostile perspectives acknowledged that newspaper reporting often helped to fan the flames of pre-existing animosity between the groups, the less hostile ascribed a more central and directly causal influence here in the generation of inter-group problems. Besides everyday interactions with like-minded others, the tabloid press and similarly available information sources such as locally prevalent political discourse, can come to represent the bulk of explanatory or interpretive resources available to community members - who may be neither inclined, motivated nor able to access alternative material - thus emphasising the influence external social forces can exert on manifestations of prejudice and hostility.

This was further highlighted by another component associated with reporting low levels of social distance hostility, and consistently rated as one of the most important contributory factors to inter-group problems by other low hostility cohorts: BNP influence. Here again, phase one analysis indicated that BNP influence, through dissemination of inaccurate, biased and sometimes defamatory material relating to the out-group, also represented a problem in terms of making available information which would negatively shape common perceptions of the inter-group relationship. Where more hostile perspectives tended to see BNP influence as largely ineffectual or merely reflective of pre-existing views already extant in the community,

the lesser hostile once more attributed greater import and negative influence to this component. Again this reflects the importance of external social factors in the generation, maintenance and perpetuation of negative views, as opposed to defining hostile orientations more in terms of any characteristics inherent within those who exhibit them (Reicher, 2001).

Perceived 'government' influence as a factor was also rated as one of the most (relatively) important contributory components by those rated low in social distance and negative feelings hostility, whilst being simultaneously rated as the lowest (or second lowest) in terms of relative contributory importance by all high hostility groups. However, despite this recurrent disparity in perceived *relative* importance, no significant difference could be observed in ratings of this component's contributory influence *between* any of the high and low hostility groups. It seems not so much that the highly hostile did not regard government as a problematic influence, but rather that there are a good number of other things which were regarded as much *more* problematic. This forms part of a pattern that will be later discussed in relation to the more hostile in this current research – in that that, overall, such elements tended to regard a greater number of things as being generally problematic than their less hostile counterparts, thus perhaps representing a perspective indicative of more threat-sensitive, negative and pessimistic orientation towards the social world and relations within this. Phase one analysis, however, did support the notion that lesser and more hostile perspectives both tended to view government influence as problematic - and for similar reasons. This came in the form of what was seen as dictatorial government interference in social matters, through the promotion of 'PC culture'. Yet while the lesser hostile appeared able to discern positive intent behind such policies, albeit at times though clumsily applied, the more hostile simply saw 'PC' initiatives as purely a form of official favouritism directed at ethnic minorities. Consequently, where blame and displeasure around such issues were

placed squarely on 'government' shoulders for the less hostile, the more hostile focussed additional and considerable ire on the out-group itself as recipients of preferential treatment. In this way 'government' influence overlaps with the concerns about the preferential treatment component of inter-group hostility that will be discussed presently in relation to expressions of hostility. Here it will be seen that concerns about perceived relative deprivation (Runciman, 1966) in the form of unfair or unequal treatment ceded to the groups, interacts with perceived threats to in-group positive evaluation, esteem and pride from a Social Identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) perspective to influence expression of hostility.

A final factor of external influence also saw little directly comparative difference between ratings of contributory importance for high and low hostility elements of the sample. Similarly to 'government' influence, perceptions of general social deprivation in the local context as being a key factor in the generation of problematic inter-group relations was consistently rated as one of the most important (relatively) influences. The areas of Burnley under investigation in the current research are without doubt subject to high levels of social and economic deprivation (as evidenced in section 10.1.1). This has been repeatedly cited in literature (see Brown, 2010, for instance) as a major contextual factor in relation to manifestations of inter-group hostility. From a Realistic Group Conflict perspective (Sherif, 1966), social hardship of this type can heighten perceptions of inter-group competition for scarce resources, thus increasing the likelihood of problematic relations. Also, even where the actuality of such conditions cannot always be conclusively evidenced, it may often only require the perception of such to create problems (Essess et al., 2005). Previous studies (Ray & Smith, 2004; Quillian, 1995) have indicated that manifestations of inter-group hostility may become more prevalent where the perceptions of such conditions exist.

Authors such as Reicher (2001) and Bobo (2008) have previously drawn attention to how

outside representations such as these can strongly impact upon ways in which individuals interpret and evaluate aspects of their social reality, especially in terms of perpetuating particular versions of social reality and group inequalities. Most traditional approaches to prejudice research (Henry & Sears, 2002; McConahay, 1986; Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995; Stephan & Stephan for example) have consistently failed to take such factors into account as potential contributors to inter-group hostility, yet the current project clearly shows they are commonly perceived as having an important role in (at least) this particular context. Future studies on inter-group conflict might therefore be well-served taking more note of such elements.

As noted, results for the current study found no significant difference in ratings of general social deprivation as a factor of influence between high and low hostility groups. The low social distance and negative feelings hostility groups rated this factor as the second and third most important contributory factor to inter-group problems, while for high hostility groups it was consistently rated as seventh in terms of relative contributory influence. Again this is perhaps best interpreted in relation to phase one findings. Here, more hostile perspectives tended to see social deprivation as an exacerbating force, with the (already problematically conceived) Asians as representing an additional burden on already slender means and thus a legitimate target for hostility. Allied to this was the perception that Asians were also illegitimately drawing off more than their fair share. For the most part, hostile perspectives did not see themselves as necessarily disadvantaged due to this, but more often complained about distribution of funds and financial allotments being unequal in favour of the out-group – thus again providing justification for hostility. Overall, competition for resources (Sherif, 1966) did not seem to be directly regarded as a cause of problems between the groups. Though both RD (Runcimann, 1966) and GPT (Blumer, 1958; Bobo et al, 2003) perspective

both indicate that perceived unequal or unfair treatment (regardless of actual resource allocation) of the respective groups can be seen as a form of perceived deprivation, and according generate hostility. From less hostile perspectives, hardship as a result of social deprivation was regarded to be a major contributory cause of inter-group difficulties. Evoking elements of a frustration-aggression perspective (Berkowitz, 1986), less hostile accounts tended to assert that frustration and dissatisfaction caused by the harsh socio-economic climate - along with an absence of awareness, or feelings of helplessness in the face of large-scale social factors beyond their control – frequently led more hostile elements in the community to focus anger on the more easily accessible and highly visible Asian community as ‘legitimate’ targets of blame and therefore scape-goats on which to vent feelings of general dissatisfaction. Both more and lesser/non-hostile accounts also drew attention to feelings of resentment aroused in the white community in response to perceptions of Asian prosperity or social promotion. So while similar levels of importance were ascribed by more and less hostile elements, the relative strength and perceived role this component had in creating problems again differed between the two. Though these aspects of inter-group hostility manifestation have been referred to in previous literature (see above), a strength of the current project is to locate them and their various interpretations within a real example of conflict.

Perhaps the most ambiguous component was identified as separation between the groups. This was weakly associated with higher hostility for the social distance measure and yet also identified as (very) weakly predictive of political and aggressive action. The high social distance and negative feelings hostility groups rated it as more important than the low, while no difference was found in the equivalent political and aggressive action comparisons (though, as mentioned, the ‘low’ groups for these latter couldn’t truly be said to be non-

hostile). Yet for both high and low hostility groups, separation was rated as similarly (albeit relatively) unimportant next to many of the other components. Elements of separation did throw up some interesting findings from phase one analysis, however. Perhaps unsurprisingly, lesser/non-hostile perspectives tended to regard a lack of mixing between the groups or failure for the Asians to integrate more thoroughly as contributory factors towards problematic inter-group relations – specifically in that this presented barriers to greater understanding and tolerance between the two community elements. On the other hand, and perhaps a little dispiritingly, many more-hostile accounts espoused a belief that separation and lack of mixing between the groups was the best and most desirable option available in the current situation. For some of these respondents separation was not only considered appropriate, but also inevitable and even ‘natural.’ This preference for separation was further highlighted in several accounts, with a disinclination often being observed to consider interaction more closely with Asians on a social level – as was subsequently demonstrated by the substantial number of phase two participants designated as high in social distance hostility. Moreover, even those more hostile perspectives who did suggest that a lack of mixing or integration might be problematic, frequently accompanied this with assertions that, even if they were to try, Asians would not be welcome. Of all the components employed in this research, separation was perhaps the one that could not be said to relate to either less or greater levels of hostility as a particularly important contributory influence.

Overall, then, perceptions of separation as a contributory to problematic inter-group relations cannot be said to figure strongly as an influence from either more or less hostile perspectives, while the four elements of contributory influence previously outlined above (media, BNP and government influence, alongside general social deprivation) represent those most highly rated in relation to, and most strongly associated with expressing lower levels of inter-group

hostility. From lesser hostile perspectives these external influences represent the bulk of explanatory resources for inter-group problems. This follows patterns observed through phase one analysis, whereby lesser hostile accounts tended to present more contextually aware explanations, which relied on a broader palette of socio-cultural, historic and environmental interpretations for social unrest – as opposed to a more hostile tendency to make attributions of blame simply and directly towards the out-group. Before turning to summarise findings relating to the nature and componential make-up of these more hostile perspectives, however, discussion will turn to the one componential element that displayed similarly high shared levels of relative importance for all members of the sample, therefore representing a key perceived factor of influence to inter-group problems, though as such one which cannot be regarded as particularly indicative of either a more or less hostile perspective. Some support for Stephan and Stephan's (2000) inclusion of intergroup anxiety might be drawn from these findings. Given that more-hostile perspectives tended to view mixing with out-group members as undesirable, this could be attributed to concerns similar to those outlined by ITT around this concept. One beauty of utilising more in-depth qualitative methods, however, is that they allow phenomena such as this to be unpicked to a greater degree. For the most part, hostile perspectives did not evince anxiety, so much as irritation, disdain and distaste towards the idea of mixing more closely with out-group members, thus not wholly supporting a notion of intergroup anxiety as a genuine form of threat.

From perspectives in the current sample expressive of greater, lesser and even no hostility towards the out-group, it was often widely acknowledged that perceptions of, or actual belief in the existence of preferential treatment being afforded to Asians was seen as a majorly (if relatively) contributive to problematic social relations. Ratings of preferential treatment as an important factor of influence on inter-group problems did show quite consistent associations

with greater reported levels of all four types of measured hostility, yet was only registered as significantly predictive of such for the political action hostility measure. One reason for this is that, alongside the external influence factors outlined above, preferential treatment was often also often rated by those designated as low in hostility as one of, if not the most important contributory factors. This was also evident from phase one analysis, especially in relation to issues around 'PC culture' as described earlier. Many lesser/non-hostile accounts claimed that a lack of sensitivity, transparency and downward communication at a local authority and national government level as regards information about policy and practice initiatives, worked to create widespread perceptions of favourable bias toward Asians. Failure to explain that development grants provided to Asian residential areas came as a result of these being some of the most deprived in the entire country, was claimed as a reason for the widespread belief that the out-group were favoured financially. Inadequately explained equality initiatives in local authority employment spheres, led to similar perceptions of bias in job allocation. Equally concerning was what could potentially be seen as the suppression of displays of white British in-group pride through (perceived) proscriptions against openly displaying the St George Cross or promoting traditionally white cultural festivities such as Christmas due to fears of offending Asian or Muslim sensibilities. From many lesser hostile perspectives, a heavy handed and inadequately explained set of official policies and practice were responsible for creating a climate where preference in being able to voice opinions, promote issues or offer criticism about society and others within it was regarded as an exclusively Asian prerogative. Therefore, high ratings of preferential treatment as an important contributory factor by lesser-hostile elements can in part be seen as a corollary of perceiving government influence as problematic.

Needless to say, more hostile perspectives did not always take such a nuanced, or

contextually informed view. For many of these at phase one it was simply and undeniably the case that Asians were unfairly, and for no good reason, more than happy to accept the unwarranted good fortune which consistently came their way. Overall, perceptions of preferential treatment might be interpreted in a couple of ways. From a theoretical point of view, more hostile perspectives can be seen as falling straightforwardly within territory outlined in RD (Runcimann, 1966) and linked to relative deprivation being seen as occurring in how the two groups are treated – the out-group are being consistently favoured across a number of domains. That lesser/non-hostile participants saw this as either more ambiguous or lacking perspective on the objective reality of the situation, meanwhile, hints more at Bobo et al's (2003) points about how in-group consensus shapes the way group position and 'rightful' entitlements can come into play. Social Identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) concerns can also arise from this latter position if perceived erosion of in-group culture, and legitimately expressed pride in this, is seen being supported by official suppression in favour of ceding out-group culture and issues greater respect and prominence (Hewitt, 1996). One contribution of the current research is to highlight, at least in a British context, the great importance perceptions of unequal treatment have in the generation of hostility - whichever way this is variously understood by different elements within the community.

If perceptions of preferential treatment as a highly important, and separation as less important contributory influences can be said to relate to both lesser and more hostile perspectives alike, albeit subject to different interpretations, and the four factors discussed earlier seen as more indicative of the lesser hostile, then the components which remain to be discussed are those which were identified as most strongly representative of hostile orientations towards the out-group. These three components of perceived contributory influence were consistently and strongly associated with higher recorded levels of all four types of measured hostility, and all

in at least one instance identified as predictive of such. The same three components consistently represented those considered least relatively influential from a lesser hostile perspective, while also being consistently rated the second, third and fourth most important after preferential treatment for the more hostile - thus further supporting their perceived importance in relation to this.

The perceptions of inter-group difference as problematic component was strongly associated with all forms of measured hostility. It was also identified as the fourth and second strongest predictor of Social Distance and Negative Feelings hostility respectively, as well as the strongest predictor for Political Action and Aggressive Action. Ratings of Inter-group differences as problematic were consistently and significantly greater for the high hostility groups over the low across the board, and it was rated as fourth most relatively important component by the high Social Distance hostility group, and third most important by the other three groups designated high in hostility. Clearly then a perception of inter-group differences figures high as an important explanatory/justificatory factor of influence in relation to expressions of inter-group hostility. One of the key determinants of potential hostility as defined by GPT (Blumer, 1958; Bobo et al, 2003) is that the out-group must be considered sufficiently different or alien in order for this to occur. As well as supporting such a position, phase one findings again help to define more detailed and nuanced interpretation in reference to this. Because perceived inter-group differences as a factor of contributory influence to inter-group problems were not specifically associated with less hostile perspectives, the following discussion will focus on how these were viewed only by the more hostile. Firstly, skin colour alone was claimed not be an important factor of influence, instead this was considered only in its role as a prospective marker indicative of other, cultural differences – such as being a Muslim. This fits with material presented in the introduction, which states

that, while sensory and socio-cognitive categorisation processes can perhaps be said to allow differentiation to occur, it is the socially constructed and defined meaning and baggage entailed by such distinction which can most often be problematic (Fiske, 1998).

In this case visual cues like skin colour and traditional Asian dress were claimed by respondents only to represent signifiers of deeper perceived (and often stereotypically conceived) cultural incompatibilities, rather than a straightforward reason for dislike. Out-group members who chose to wear more traditional Asian garb tended to arouse greater hostility in respondents than those attired in more 'western' fashion. For the most part this perceived difference, along with others soon to be discussed, was also considered problematic in that it was further seen as evidence of a general unwillingness or refusal on the part of Asians to conform to dominant cultural norms associated with the white British 'host' culture. This refusal to adapt or become further assimilated was viewed as an intentional rejection by the out-group, and as such largely unacceptable. These sentiments were also repeated in relation to other cultural disparities seen as existing between the groups. Differences in lifestyle – particularly perceived Asian disinclination towards social alcohol consumption – also focussed on Asian refusal to adopt customs and practices more compatible with those of the in-group, thus creating perceptions of further distance and aloofness in relation to white British culture. Alcohol consumption and dress, particularly where women were concerned, also represented an area where differences and distance were exacerbated by perceptions that the Asians also harboured negatively judgemental beliefs about in-group members. The ascription of different social and cultural values to the out-group, as highlighted by the examples above, further related to a perceived (Muslim) religiosity attributed to Asians in contrast to the largely secular or irreligious local white community. A further problematic cultural difference related to Asian-language speakers in

the out-group community's perceived refusal to adopt English as the prime mode of verbal communication. Language will be returned to presently, but overall these sets of perceived difference, where Asians were seen as preferring to retain aspects of their own cultural identity in defiance of local culture, all represented sources of affront in accounts analysed at phase one.

A way in which such perceived divergences from in-group culture and its values can be interpreted as problematic (again revealed more clearly by the qualitative analysis provided by the current study) is if they are seen as potential threats to in-group superiority and esteem in ways suggested by Riek, et al (2006) and outlined in the SIT (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) view of prejudice. The general consensus of hostile perspectives indicated that Asian unwillingness to adapt certain cultural signifiers and practices to be more in line with dominant in-group norms was seen as representing a negative judgement of these latter on the out-group's part. This was then often interpreted as an insult or affront to the existing order and subsequently a potential source of threat to positive in-group self-evaluation. As Riek et al (2006) suggest, SIT concerns connected to group esteem challenges may indeed represent an additional form of threat not included in earlier integrated threat models (Stephan & Stephan, 2000). This is a view that the current research supports. Other researchers have similarly noted that intolerance is more likely if an in-group regard their general set of norms as applying across society, from which an out-group then appears to diverge (Mummendey & Wenzel, 1999). In such cases the out-group may as a result come also to be derogatively regarded as morally or culturally inferior or threatening, which can provide justification or legitimization for bias, or negative attitudes towards the out-group in order to bolster existing perceptions of in-group status (Reynolds & Turner, 2001). In the current study, perceived inter-group differences were largely framed in terms of the threat these were seen as representing

indirectly from a Social Identity perspective (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Returning to the language question briefly provides an example of how cultural differences of this kind can additionally represent threats to esteem. From certain more-hostile perspectives at phase one, Asian use of indigenous Pakistani or Bangladeshi forms of language in the presence of white British community members tended in some cases to be regarded as a deliberate strategy which allowed out-group members to say negative or derogatory things without being understood. This ascription of negative intent or orientation to Asians was fairly characteristic of more hostile perspectives. In most cases it was interpreted as a deliberately disrespectful and insulting practice which had a negative impact on in-group sense of pride and esteem. The current research therefore finds strong support for consideration of group-esteem threats to be included in any future holistic theories of inter-group conflict. This was more explicitly demonstrated by another component identified by the current research.

Perceptions of negative out-group attitudes towards the in-group represented a second factor most linked to expressing hostility towards Asians. Associations between reported hostility and this component were calculated as the second strongest for each type measured, and perceptions of negative out-group attitudes was the strongest predictor of both social distance and negative feelings hostility. Negative out-group attitudes was also the second highest (relatively) rated component for groups high in each kind of reported hostility, after preferential treatment, whilst being rated the second least important contributory influence for the low social distance, negative feelings and political action hostility groups. High hostility group ratings of negative out-group attitudes were also consistently and significantly greater than those for the low groups. Put simply, where the more hostile tended to see quite high levels of negativity as existing on the part of Asians, the less hostile did not. The items relating to negative out-group attitudes used in this study were derived directly from phase

one interview and analysis procedures, and can be seen to represent a quite specific form of negativity. These items refer to perceptions of Asian lack of respect for the in-group and its culture, as well as feelings of superiority in relation to this; they refer to perceptions of Asians as thinking they can take advantage or 'laughing behind the back' of in-group members. As stated in the phase one discussion, perceptions of the Asians as holding such attitudes were wholly lacking in lesser/non-hostile accounts, whereas they were often presented as justifications for hostility from more hostile perspectives. Whatever the actuality is in regards to negative Asian attitudes, it is clear that if one perceived such to be the case these would represent a clear form of direct threat and challenge to individual and collective in-group self-evaluation and esteem (Riek et al, 2006; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Not only are perceived threats to in-group esteem worthy of inclusion in any future model of prejudice, therefore but, in this British case at least, evidence clearly suggests they are amongst the most important perceived contributory influences on inter-group hostility. When added to the interpretation of problems in relation to inter-group differences outlined earlier, a pattern of perceived threat to in-group esteem begins to emerge in relation to more hostile perspectives and relating to Social Identity processes outlined by Tajfel & Turner (1986). Again this represents a contribution to knowledge by the current project. This continuing pattern of greater perceived threat seeming to exist in constructions, interpretations and evaluations of the inter-group relationship from a more hostile perspective is further supported by the final component most strongly linked to these.

Perceptions of direct threat as emanating from the out-group found strong associations with social distance (strongest co-efficient relationship), negative feelings (fourth strongest), political (third) and aggressive (fourth) action measures of hostility, although it was only identified as a significant predictor in the first case. Direct threat represented the fourth most

important factor as rated by the high negative feelings, political and aggressive action groups (after preferential treatment, negative attitudes and inter-group differences) and the third most important for high social distance hostility. All low hostility groups rated threat (relatively) as the single least important factor of perceived contributory influence in generating problems between the groups. High hostility groups across all four measures attributed significantly greater importance to threat than the low. Phase one analysis again provided a deeper level of detail and meaning when it came to interpreting these results. Generally, as has been repeatedly noted, more hostile accounts tended to describe the immediate social context and inter-group relationships within this in terms of greater instance and severity of perceived threat; they often saw more or stronger threat in relation to the out-group, where lesser-hostile perspectives divined little or none (while also regarding any they did perceive as often not directly attributable to the out-group).

The two perceived threats identified as comprising the most worrying elements of this component in phase one analysis came in the form of threats to in-group territory and resources and threats to in-group culture and values. These findings support the work of Stephan and Stephan (2002) and tie in nicely with their concepts of Realistic and Symbolic threat as being highly influential to the manifestation of inter-group hostility. This latter also echoes and amplifies themes previously highlighted in relation to perceived cultural differences representing a rejection, and therefore indirect challenge, to in-group culture, as well as official preference (in the form of 'PC culture') for defending and promoting out-group culture adding fuel to the fire. What differs between the former and these more directly threatening manifestations of cultural challenge is a further assertion from the point of view of more hostile perspectives that there is deliberate intent and strategy on the part of the out-group to 'take over' and replace the dominant in-group culture with its own. For some, this

'hidden agenda' of cultural expansion represented a very real worry, and consequent explanation/justification for expressed hostility. This can be seen in terms of how conflict of interest (Sherif, 1966), and the symbolic of ITT (Stephan & Stephan 1998) do indeed impact strongly on group relations. Similarly, threats to territory and resources were also viewed as instances of deliberate expansion and encroachment on the out-group's part, with some overtly hostile perspectives asserting a deliberate policy of sending money out of the country to bring more Asians in to make more money to send out of the country etc... The current research therefore supports Stephan & Stephan in this regard (albeit while more generally expanding on potential components for inclusion in the inter-group hostility mix. From lesser-hostile perspectives many of claims were frequently seen as erroneous, exaggerated or hysterically fantastical conjurings of a hostile mind-set fuelled in part by biased information sources – such as the tabloid media and BNP mentioned earlier. This again emphasises the power of in-group consensus to shape how members construct their social environment (Billig, 1978; Bobo et al, 2003; Whetherell & Potter, 1992).

Taken together, the three components most generally indicative of hostility towards the out-group can be seen to represent different forms and levels of perceived threat, then. Inter-group differences are often interpreted as problematic more in terms of the perceived rejection and disdain for in-group culture these imply to more hostile elements, thus representing indirect threats to in-group positive self-evaluation and esteem; perceptions of negative out-group attitudes are also considered threatening in a similar though more direct way to both individual and group esteem (Riek et al, 1996; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Perceived threats to in-group territory, resources, culture and values then represent the most direct form these perceived challenges take, echoing the research of Stephan & Stephan (2002). Phase one analysis indicated that, overall, perspectives which expressed hostility more overtly

tended to also construct and interpret the social environment and inter-group relations within this as more generally threatening than the less hostile. Analysis at phase two then established that components relating to perceived threat in one guise or another represented those considered as the most important contributory influences on the generation of inter-group problems by more hostile elements in the sample. These perceptions of greater threat and negativity in relation to the more hostile were also further supported by phase two findings which indicated those designated high in self-reported hostility also consistently reported significantly greater levels of perceived out-group negative impact - at the levels of self, friends and family, local community and general society – than did those low in expressed hostility. Clearly the way more hostile perspectives conceive and interpret aspects of social reality have a bias towards the negative then. Further, as can also be seen from the components self-perceived as the most important contributory influences to inter-group problems from a more hostile perspective, the focus seems to be on factors seen as problematic in direct relation to the out-group itself, often implying a more essentialist way of looking at things (Pettigrew, 1979). Asians are seen as wilfully and purposefully different, they are seen as having ‘bad’ attitudes, and they are seen as particularly threatening in their perceived intent to ‘take over’ by whatever cunning ploy and strategy comes to hand. From a more hostile perspective, broader social, historical or external factors have only a limited or minimal role to play in problematic inter-group relations, whereas for the less hostile these contextual influences were considered the most influential.

This further demonstrates other observations from phase one findings, where hostile perspectives rely heavily on accepted in-group consensus versions of social reality (Bobo, et al, 2003 which tend to draw on only a limited range of explanatory resources when accounting for inter-group problems (Whetherell & Potter, 1992). As with above, blame for

inter-group problems tended to be placed simply and directly at the door of the out-group, without any consideration of other potential contributory influences. This was, in part, linked to the in-group consensus of negativity mentioned at the head of this chapter. Several lesser-hostile accounts at phase one claimed that a lack of greater or more sophisticated explanatory resources or interpretive repertoires (Wetherell & Potter, 1992) available to many community members meant that the majority tended to (often unquestioningly) follow what was considered the 'standard version' of events, as represented by this consensus, when seeking to explain inter-group problems. This then works as a force of social facilitation which promotes, legitimises and justifies hostile perspectives towards the out-group. Evidence from phase two of the current study demonstrated that those designated high in expressed hostility overwhelmingly reported greater levels of self-perceived agreement with their own views across a range of social dimensions than did the lesser-hostile, thus providing further evidence for this perceived consensus of negativity. For many members of the community under examination it would seem that hostility towards Asians, substantially linked to perceptions of threat seen as emanating from this group, represents an in-group norm which is easier to conform to than oppose; it is woven into the social fabric of their existence. Respondents both lesser and more hostile at phase one asserted that negative consensus works to shape perceptions both continually and from an early age, through parental values being passed on and through everyday interactions with other hostile members of the in-group community. Within this, more hostile accounts of inter-group problems were also frequently couched in identical terms, often using similar sets of 'self-evident social truths', stock arguments, herd formulations and cliché to explain social phenomena without any deeper consideration to matters under discussion. At least two respondents at phase one further indicated that being required to give the topic of inter-group hostility more considered attention and deeper analysis caused them to question assumptions that they had previously

held unquestioned. Many more-hostile accounts were additionally noted to be inconsistent and self-contradictory at times, perhaps also indicating a reliance on commonly available explanatory/interpretive resources rather than any clearly thought out personal ideology. This acknowledgement and inclusion of both the consensus and facilitation effects of shared in-group perspectives and the use of only limited explanatory resources where manifestations of inter-group hostility are observed is another contribution of the current research and will now be discussed in more detail.

Taken in sum all of the above emphasises the important role of social factors of influence in the generation, maintenance, perpetuation, transmission and expression of hostility towards the out-group in this context. Theoretically this is best explained in terms of Social Identity (Tajfel & Turner) approaches to inter-group hostility, where self-identification as a member of the local white British community represents a large part of the individual member's sense of self (Deux, 1996). In this way, individual concerns - about personal status, fortunes and goals - become subsumed by those of the group (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). From a Social Identity perspective the most important factors of perceived influence to inter-group problems associated with greater hostility in this current research can all be interpreted as forms of threat. Issues of in-group consensus then work in two ways to perpetuate this, as people tend to further identify with others they perceive as sharing common beliefs and values (Reynolds & Turner, 2001), while personal perspectives are more likely to be deemed legitimate if they are acknowledged and shared by like-minded others, disposing individuals towards explanations and interpretation that provide reinforcement and validation through consensus. This leads to perpetuation of often unexamined and negatively stereotypical versions of social events, situations and groups/others. (Augustinos et al, 2006). It has been noted that even within societies where more general proscriptions against prejudice and

inequality are prevalent, specific geographic or demographic communities may still embrace perspectives which allow or even facilitate bias and hostility against others (Mummendey & Otten, 2003). Group ideologies such as these often nurture and facilitate ways of thinking which help to justify or legitimize perceived divisions between groups (Billig, 1978; Reicher, 2001), therefore working to normalise hostility and prejudice (Esses & Hodson, 2006). As we have seen, in contexts or groups such as the one under investigation here, negative consensus and inter-group hostility may then come to be seen as the norm (Smith & Mackie, 1998). Phase one analysis repeatedly indicated that more hostile perspectives were notable for the open and casual way they presented often quite prejudiced explanations for and interpretations of inter-group problems. Not only this, but more hostile accounts frequently seemed more certain of themselves than those of the lesser-hostile, perhaps reflecting a sense of legitimacy derived from knowing that these represent a majority view. Elements of group-level intolerance and collective frameworks for negatively interpreting group interactions therefore represent working models by which group members construct the inter-group relationship for themselves, helping to further facilitate, encourage and reproduce in-group bias and hostility (Dixon & Reicher, 1997).

As noted, analysis of phase one material indicated that more-hostile elements within the target community tended to draw on more limited explanatory and interpretive resources when accounting for inter-group problems, as these were the most easily and predominantly available in the context. The bulk of such resources, it was claimed, relied on information provided by other, like-minded accounts within the local community in the form of consensus. In addition to this, however, a limited number of other negatively influential information sources were also deemed interactively influential in creating and maintaining negative aspects of the consensus view. These were identified as specific external sources of

information most commonly accessed and available in the target community, primarily in the form of tabloid newspaper reporting and content supplied by the British National Party. In both cases, provision of potentially biased or inflammatory material was seen to go hand-in-hand with, and thus further reinforcing and legitimising, elements of the existing consensus. BNP literature was regarded from more hostile perspectives as generally reflective of commonly negative in-group views, where the less hostile saw its role as more influential or instructive – though either way, such information can be seen as supportive of greater hostility. Predominantly available news sources such as the Sun and Daily Mail newspapers were further highlighted as influential (by both more and less hostile respondents at phase one) in the way these tended to report stories about Islam, Muslims and/or immigrants/immigration in general – erring towards the negative and sensationalistic as such reports were claimed to do. In-group consensus, along with potentially negative and biased external sources of information were therefore claimed as comprising the bulk of explanatory or interpretive resources available to members of the target community, limiting in this manner the ways in which such individuals were likely to make sense of the social world and relationships within this.

Another factor symbiotically entwined with these influences was regarded as being the general levels of social deprivation extant in the area. From a Realistic Group Conflict (Sherif, 1966) perspective this could be said to put additional strain on intergroup relations as perceptions of limited available resources for which the two groups might be required to compete. For the most part, however, this phenomenon could be better observed in perceptions of Relative Deprivation (Runciman, 1966) held by many hostile in-group members – particularly in relation to perceptions of preferential treatment being afforded the Asians. Whilst respondents at phase one largely reported experiencing little in the way of

objective or quantifiable negative impact from the out-group's presence, resentment was frequently expressed in relation to the way Asians were seen as being in receipt of comparatively favourable treatment across a number of dimensions. Frustration-aggression (Berkowitz, 1986) aspects of the Relative Deprivation concept were further claimed by the lesser-hostile to be in operation throughout the context under study in relation to this. Put simply, this explanation implied that, for the hostile majority, Asians largely represented a highly visible and easily differentiated outlet on which to vent blame and frustration caused by broader social forces beyond the control of local residents. Dissatisfaction and worry about personal and in-group fortunes in relation to the social and economic climate then found focus on the Asians as 'legitimate' scape-goats. This fits with the consensus view of Asians as representing various forms of threat and also being in receipt of illegitimate and unfair favour, with perceptions of the out-group as being treated preferentially being a factor, along with the three threat related components, which figured strongly in hostile interpretations of contributory influence on inter-group problems.

In the context under investigation in the current research, then, Social Identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) processes, especially in the form of perceived threat to in-group self-image and esteem, appear to work in combination with an in-group consensus derived from limited explanatory and interpretive repertoires (Wetherell & Potter, 1992) to create, legitimise, reinforce and perpetuate a negative and shared perception of social reality, in which Asians are unquestioningly regarded as problematically different, directly and indirectly threatening and in receipt of preferential treatment, therefore perhaps representing a legitimate and justified target of blame for social and inter-group problems, regardless of broader socio-cultural forces. Before moving on, some comment should be included here about the problems of trying to meld the above concepts into a coherent whole, given that they

originate from quite epistemologically diverse research traditions; both of which might possibly have issues about sharing the same intellectual bed. To avoid being shot by both sides, therefore, the author will attempt to provide some justification here.

Although difficult to adequately summarise the diversity and complexity of discourse analytical (DA) perspectives (of which Whetherell and Potter, 1992, represent one strand), a common thread running through DA is that individually subjective understandings and interpretations of reality are constructed through interaction and discourse to build fluid and ongoing accounts of the world people experience. This has been adequately demonstrated by material presented in the current report which emphasises the importance that shared in-group consensus has in relation to the conception and shaping of perspectives around the causes of inter-group hostility. That the degree of uniformity observed within these was so great provided further evidence of the powerful influence that conformity to shared and unquestioned group narratives can have in relation to individual expression – right down to the very choice of words used to accomplish this. As noted, many hostile accounts tended to rely on the same, limited stock of arguments and phrases throughout the interview process, often repeating verbatim statements in line with the accepted in-group position. This tendency has also been observed in samples utilised by previous studies, including Whetherell and Potter (1992), who characterised and framed the tendency by labelling it as a proposed reliance on limited sets of ‘interpretive repertoires’ available to people in a given context. To this author’s mind this is a wholly valid construct and provides the ‘best fit’ to observations presented herein. In fact, if no similar conception existed then the current research would be required to implement one.

However, the above primarily relates to the ways in which people go about constructing and interpreting their experience, with more attention paid to the processes and strategies

involved than to any specific content of the discourse itself – something also of considerable relevance to our purposes here. In the present case, as we have seen, this pertained to how *perceptions* of various factors of potential contributory influence to inter-group hostility are expressed in accounts generated from within a conflicted scenario. A further accoutrement of DA perspectives advocates the use of naturalistic and subjectively flexible approaches to research methodology, urging the inclusion of participant's own understandings into the dynamic – an element fully incorporated into the current project. As outlined in the methodology chapter, this was operationalised using open-ended, highly free-form interview procedures, which attempted avoid theoretically driven top-down input as much as possible in order to access respondent accounts which were as naturalistically and free from researcher influence as possible. From these a range of issues were raised in relation to variously conceived components of inter-group hostility by respondents, one of the most notable being that of threat. Perceptions of different forms of threat were freely and repeatedly identified as a problematic influence on group relations throughout respondent discourse on the subject. That such perceptions could to a large extent be regarded as a product of in-group consensus rather than evidence of actual or materialised threat itself need not be rehashed again here; the concern being if and how these could be interpreted in order to further understanding of inter-group conflict. As presented in the introductory chapters, a huge body of work is available on ways in which perceived threat can negatively impact upon group relations. In particular the SIT perspective originally advanced by Tajfel and Turner (1986) has long represented a substantial and theoretically valid paradigm by which such factors can be understood – particularly in terms of perceived threats to in-group esteem as highlighted in the current project. Similarly to the aforementioned contribution of DA perspectives on factors involved in the construction of respondent accounts, the above conceptualisations

were regarded as comprising the 'best fit' when it came to interpreting the actual content of certain elements of respondent discourse

More generally, then, the current project acknowledges the difficulties inherent in attempting such a synthesis, but feels that the above concepts represent the most appropriate option in the circumstances. This is partly because they can be seen as relating to different facets of the same (inter-group hostility) phenomenon, the one outlining processes and resources through which respondent accounts come into being, the other describing ways in which the actual content of these impacts on interpretations of the social context. Authors such as Bobo (1999) and Reicher (2001) have previously urged a greater incorporation of diverse theoretical and methodological research paradigms - advocating a move away from rigidly enforced, discipline-specific, mutually exclusive and intellectually elite positions as a key way in which a more fully-rounded, holistic and inclusive picture of inter-group conflict can emerge. It is in the spirit of this that the current work proceeds, recognising that legitimate epistemological differences can indeed represent a potential barrier to greater incorporation, yet also firm in the belief that one does not necessarily have to adopt wholesale and stick rigidly to each and every tenet of a particular intellectual ideology in the pursuit of greater and more multi-faceted knowledge about how inter-group hostility is manifested in a real world context.

To return now to the summary of findings: A key intent here has been to try and distinguish potential differences between less and more hostile perspectives in terms of how such elements within a specifically conflicted community construct, conceptualise, explain and interpret various perceived factors of contributory influence in relation to manifestations of inter-group problems; anything further is beyond the scope of this current project. Yet a question remains about if and how those identified as more overtly hostile towards Asians might in any way be further distinguishable from the less hostile (apart from in their degree

of conformity to in-group consensus and/or subscription to such a negative and threat-coloured world view). Evidence cited within these pages clearly demonstrates that there was a sizeable minority who did *not* fall in line with the consensus position or express hostility towards Asians within this inter-group context. Similarly, there are without doubt many others embedded in social contexts where no such consensus exists – in fact where norms explicitly discourage or prohibit the expression of such views – who *do* express high levels of hostile and prejudiced towards Asians. Constant exposure to, absorption in, identification with and adoption of consensual in-group perspectives undoubtedly represent a major influence on the likelihood of expressing hostility towards the selected out-group in this context, though this is by no means a foregone conclusion. One potentially differentiating factor highlighted through respondent accounts at phase one indicated that greater opportunities for exposure to alternative views and perspectives can represent one potential difference, whether this be through interactions with non-hostile family members or peers, opportunities for travel or further education, or greater opportunities for engaging in positive contact with out-group members (a reason why contact hypothesis research remains a key area of investigation in social psychology – see Dixon, Durrheim & Tredoux, 2005).

Another possible avenue of investigation, also outlined earlier in relation to more extreme highly hostile perspectives, suggested that a tendency towards viewing society and the world more generally in a negative or threatening light may be a factor of influence in relation to likelihood of adopting hostility towards specific out-groups. Overtly hostile participants at phases one and two both produced evidence to suggest that they certainly did see greater levels of threat and negative impact upon society, at least in relation to the out-group. Lesser-hostile respondents also asserted that without the Asian presence, many such individuals would still find other targets for animosity (though this, in part, was attributed to the general

deprivation in the social context). Attention was additionally drawn to potential scapegoating aspects of the white-Asian relationship, where frustration and dissatisfaction with life was often regarded as finding vent on (Asian) targets that were deemed more 'legitimate' and 'justified' from a local consensus viewpoint. Aggressive young men were specifically further identified by phase one and two findings as being more likely to express willingness to engage in more active or aggressive forms of hostility.

Might it also be therefore possible that, in some cases, a more generally aggressive, threat-sensitive or easily affronted disposition, or personal history and development marked by experiences of exaggerated threat or negativity, could help shape a more embattled, embittered or pessimistic take on reality, which in turn might then more likely be attracted to views or consensus positions which both reflect this and provide an outlet for any frustration, anger and hostility produced in response to existence generally. More overtly hostile individuals were noted to perceive greater levels of negative attitudes emanating from the out-group in this study, as well as often interpreting the use of Asian language as a means of covert disparagement. Greater levels of perceived threat were repeatedly linked to more hostile perspectives. Adoption of and identification with consensus views which support such a threat-heavy version of reality would perhaps then be more likely to appeal – or, at least, adoption of a counter-position would be less likely. Such conformity to negative consensus, and the validation this represents for those who share in it, may also then provide 'legitimate' avenues of expression for any personal hostility or aggression aroused by frustration about life and the world in general. Rather than being indiscriminately hostile, therefore, or powerlessly hostile in the face of forces one feels unable to identify or confront, being a 'racist' may at least lend some focus, justification and purpose to personal feelings of hostility (specifically in relation to abiding micro-contextual norms which support hostility

against selected ‘others’ as a legitimate target). It might also provide one with some sense of purpose in life. Again this can only be conjecture, and something to perhaps think about for the future (or next time there’s footage of an English Defence League rally on the television). These observations, however, do find some faint reflection in existing theoretical attempts to distinguish ‘individual differences’ between people when it comes to expressions of intolerance or negative bias, though little support was found for either of these in the current research.

The concepts of Right-Wing Authoritarianism (Altemeyer, 1996) and Social Dominance (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) covered in the introductory chapters claim to measure a set of attitudes consistent with particular orientations observed in individuals (or even ‘personality’ traits), by which means someone’s individual levels of Authoritarianism (RWA) or Social Dominance orientation (SDO) can be assessed. High recorded levels of these are then claimed as associated with or as markers and indications of prejudice and intolerance. In the case of the current research, neither proposition could be said to fully hang together – thus finding no support for them as holistically coherent concepts in relation to prejudice in this sample.

To begin with a key tenet of RWA, supposed submission to recognised authority: a majority of accounts, particularly those of more hostile respondents in this current study could, if anything, be said to represent ‘anti-authoritarian’ positions, as defined by RWA. As earlier analysis indicated, there was widespread evidence of disdain and lack of trust in or respect for both local and national government right across the sample. From many hostile perspectives ‘government’ was often regarded as a misguided, meddling or an uncaring source of either disillusionment or irritation due to its perceived role in helping to promote disharmony between the groups. Billig’s (1978) study of the National Front also noted a comparable lack

of respect in relation to authority for younger members of the aforesaid organisation. Similarly disdainful or disinterested views were evinced towards forms of organised religion across the current sample, another form of proposed authority from an RWA perspective. Respondents in this sample did represent a conformist perspective to some extent, another plank of proposed Authoritarianism, though this tended to relate to amorphous concepts of (for example) 'Englishness' from which the Asians were regarded as deviating, rather than any well defined source of recognised 'authority.' In some ways, however, these imputations of out-group non-conformity centred around perceptions of the Asians as being *more* traditionally conventional and conservative (in terms of dress code, social activities or family structure and values for example) than members of the white, British community – thus finding no support for RWA's contention that adoption of these values was consistent with general intolerance. To summarise: while certain aspects of some RWA elements did find a reflection in the current sample, the RWA concept as a whole could not be said to 'fit' sufficiently with accounts from a more hostile perspectives.

While a similarly unsupportive evaluation can be generally applied to SDO in relation to the current study, this was somewhat trickier to unpick. Contentions of the SDO perspective include proposed opposition to equality and belief in a legitimately hierarchal social structure applying to groups in society. Very little expressed belief in or agreement with such a position could be explicitly drawn from respondent accounts in the current sample. For the most part, even the more hostile perspectives tended to emphasise the importance of fairness and equality as being desirable in group inter-relations, indicating a belief that everyone in society should be entitled to the same. Distinction *was* frequently made, however, in terms of deservingness and legitimate status in the social pecking order, though not specifically in relation to different ethnic or cultural groups in society. Here it was seen that perceptions of

legitimacy and social standing centred on perceived contribution to society, rather than being demarked by specific boundaries of group definition. Distinctions in this case were therefore drawn between ‘lazy’ people and ‘grafters’ – or between those who were willing to work and those who were not. One more hostile individual, in fact, stated that he would be much more well-disposed to ‘a working Asian, than a non-working white’. On the whole, respondents tended to adopt such an ‘egalitarian’ position in regards to social groupings. However, there is one quite obvious caveat to this. As presented in sections of the phase one analysis, from a hostile perspective Asian members of the community were often stereotypically characterised as a) being in receipt of disproportionate or unfairly allocated amounts of social welfare funding b) evading tax and illegally working whilst in receipt of such benefits c) drawing off funds from this to send out of the country. In other words, the Asians in general were negatively and stereotypically viewed as not contributing to society to the same extent as whites, and as such were perhaps undeserving of being treated as equals in the social hierarchy. In this sense an indirect link can perhaps be made between aspects of the SDO perspective and accounts in the current research. Yet, once more, the SDO concept as a unified whole could not be said to apply directly across the current sample as a clear measure of individual orientation. Moreover, given that individual evaluations of SDO rely on ratings of agreement with quite specific item object measures contained in the SDO scale (as do those of RWA), and given that in neither case could these be said to accurately or meaningfully reflect the general orientation of hostile perspectives in the current sample, the utility or appropriateness of relying on such measures as generic assessments of individual orientation, specifically in relation to problematic group interaction, is called into question. This further highlights the overall inapplicability of employing generic survey measures of this kind as appropriate tools of investigation for inter-group prejudice and hostility across

the diverse contexts of its manifestation. The contributions to existing knowledge made by the current project will now be briefly outlined.

## **15.2 Contributions to existing knowledge by the current project**

A first proposed contribution of this current research was that it would attempt to incorporate and synthesise a broader array of potential contributory factors to the manifestation of inter-group hostility than had been previously attempted. This was successful to some degree. Existing theoretical models, such as ITT (Stephan & Stephan, 2000) have combined different proposed types of threat – symbolic, realistic, intergroup anxiety and stereotype - in order to build a more comprehensive understanding of prejudice; the current research both expands and elaborates upon this.

Similarly to ITT, the current research did indeed find that various types of Realistic (perceived to economic, employment and territorial resources) and Symbolic (in relation to erosion and challenge to established in-group cultural norms and values) threats figured strongly as perceived factors of influence when it came to creating inter-group tensions in a British context (though little evidence was found for intergroup anxiety exerting a similar influence.) In addition to this, however, perceived threats to in-group esteem (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) were also identified by the current research as an important part of the mix. Partly this came in the form out-group refusal to adopt aspects and signifiers of established in-group cultural norms (dress, language, religion and leisure pursuits) as a negative evaluation on the dominant culture, therefore representing a challenge to in-group sense of self and esteem. One especially prominent example was the case of language, where use of Asian dialects in-front of in-group members was seen as a deliberate form of intended disrespect. Perceived negative out-group attitudes towards the in-group – disdain, superiority,

laughing behind the back – were also considered a major contributory factor to inter-group problems. These threats to esteem represent a key component of prejudice generation in the British context identified here.

A further way in which group esteem could also be potentially impacted relates to an additional component identified by the current research. Perceptions of unfairness or favouritism in the inter-group relationship featured strongly as a proposed contributory factor. Both Bobo et al (2003) and previous RD research (Runcimann, 1966) indicate that where perceptions of unequal treatment are viewed as occurring between social groups, problems are likely to follow. This was certainly the case in the British context. Regardless of if the in-group were actually disadvantaged, notions about the out-group being in receipt of favourable treatment (financial benefits and support, greater leeway in promoting and celebrating aspects of out-group culture, more freedom to criticise others in society) appeared right across the board in the current sample, thus indicating a further important and theoretically established component now incorporated into a broader synthesis by this work.

Findings from the current project also indicate that external influence is widely considered as a contributory factor to intergroup problems in this context, again an element largely overlooked by existing models. The influence of media, particularly tabloid newspapers, was repeatedly cited as a source of negative influence on group relations by participants – especially in terms of how this helped shape consensus by providing unquestioned narratives, explanatory resources and interpretive repertoires (Whetherell & Potter, 1992) for in-group members. Material and information disseminated by the BNP was also regarded as playing a similar role. The influence of (well-meaning yet possibly heavy-handed) government contributions to the inter-group dynamic was further highlighted as problematic, as was

general social deprivation in the area. Together these external influences represent a further component of intergroup hostility identified and discussed by the current research.

A related componential concept additionally represented herein shows awareness of how consensual understandings and interpretations around the intergroup relationship can highly influence expressions of hostility. Shared and interactive constructions of social reality by in-group members— pertaining to various types of threat, unfairness and other perceived components - have been here demonstrated as an important force of social influence and facilitation on manifestations of prejudice. Although writers such as Billig (1978), Bobo (2008) and Whetherell and Potter (1992) have long drawn attention to such phenomena, and the fact that prejudice may indeed be normative within certain communities, these have rarely before now been included as part of broader more holistic attempts to view of prejudice as a multi-faceted concept.

Another, albeit minor, contribution of the current project has been to enable the assessment of hierarchical orders of importance ascribed to this range of components across the British context – not only has their presence been established, in other words, but also the order of importance in which they are considered to contribute to inter-group hostility under the circumstances.

In addition to this incorporation of greater breadth in assessing factors which are potentially influential to the generation of prejudice, a second contribution of the current project is to emphasise the highly contextual nature inter-group hostility. This has been discussed in more detail earlier but a couple of examples here may serve to make the case. In the British context under investigation, one key determinant of expressed in-group hostility related to perceived

out-group disinclination to adopt or conform to established and dominant in-group norms. This was particularly evident in relation to areas relating to possible group esteem threat such as dress conventions and the speaking of other languages. Put simply, there are many other conflicted group situations where this would clearly not be an issue – yet here it was considered one of the most influential factors. Likewise the issue of perceived out-group preferential treatment: in many historical instances of inter-group prejudice, the out-group has been treated abominably and often denied basic human rights, let alone privilege (African-American slaves, people of Jewish heritage in Nazi Germany), yet the hostility towards them was still present. The importance of media influence identified by the current research, too, is not a factor which could genuinely be said to apply across all contexts. One strength of this current work is to acknowledge that prejudice manifestation is potentially much more complex and situationally dependent than has possible been previously considered, and that the use of generic research materials and paradigms may not therefore be the best way of proceeding in terms of future research.

Running through the above paragraphs is a repeated thread of emphasis on the actual instance of conflict under investigation. That the current project attempts to investigate a genuine, real-world and specifically British context of inter-group hostility, and moreover to do this in the in-depth manner employed by the chosen research methodologies, also represents a unique contribution to existing knowledge.

Further to this, the aforementioned utilisation of in-depth qualitative procedures has allowed in this instance a greater level of insight and nuance into the particular context outlined above. Chapter 6 details ways in which many previous studies (Stephan et al, 1998, Sidanius and Pratto, 1999) have conducted research by administering researcher pre-defined, top-down measurement instruments in order to investigate prejudice. To some extent the current

research started with a clear slate as far as respondent input was concerned. The range of potential contributory components gleaned from previous theory were only then selected for subsequent inclusion if these appeared in the discourse of those embedded within the conflicted situation. This added naturalism and authenticity, in a British context at least, is another strength of the current work. Not only this, but it also allowed clearer interpretation at times of some of the concepts identified as influential to hostility. Stephan and Stephan (2000), for example, have highlighted the importance of perceived symbolic threat; the current work not only established specific forms which this might take in the particularly British context, but also unpicked ways in which those actually embedded within this environment conceptualised, understood and interpreted this in relation to the out-group. The notion that perceived threats to in-group culture and norms can in fact be seen to represent threats to both esteem (supposed negative evaluation on behalf of the out-group) and in more concrete terms (seeking to replace in-group norms with those of their own) is a clear example of how deeper engagement with participant's own subjective meaning and interpretation of phenomena can be of great value to future research. This again is a clear strength of the current research and a contribution to knowledge relating, as it does, to the British context.

### **15.3 Practical implications of the current research**

Several practical implications are suggested by this current work. One such relates to the powerful role in-group consensus has been identified as playing in manifestations of inter-group hostility. Intervention initiatives aimed at reducing prejudice on an individual level can be seen as a valid way of attempting to reduce levels, or at least expressions, of this phenomenon in society. Yet the current research indicates these may be of limited impact where general in-group norms and consensus work to make prejudice and hostility to others seem contextually acceptable. Future proposals might well be advised to look more at trying

to change general community views, therefore, rather than targeting individual examples of bigotry. One interesting observation was made here from phase one of the study in relation to parental influence. The respondent 'Lynn', whilst openly admitted being herself a racist, also stated that she hoped this had not been passed on to her son. Given that many other respondents also indicated that hostile and negative perspectives towards the Asians were frequently passed down or acquired through home environments in this way, focus on drawing parental attention to ways in which their own views can reap negative reward in those of their offspring might also be an avenue of future investigation.

In-group consensus also works to create specific perceptions of Asians and the inter-group relationship in general – specifically identified here as the out-group being seen as problematically different and threatening in a number of ways, including as holders of negative attitudes towards the in-group. That lesser/non-hostile elements in the very same community failed to either notice this or consider it a problem, strongly indicates that perception most likely is all it represents. Therefore, information provision designed to reduce future manifestations of inter-group hostility could be better served perhaps by attending specifically to these areas deemed most problematic by the more hostile. Perceptions of negative intent and impact in relation to the out-group in general might represent additional areas where the dissemination of more accurate, disconfirming and reassuring information would not go amiss. Obviously, information running counter to an already held position is much less likely to be absorbed in many instances, but by making every effort to highlight how, in the vast majority of cases, Asians are not in fact problematically different, actually threatening, or representative of negative attitudes, surely cannot do any harm.

Similarly with perceptions of preferential treatment, many both more and less hostile accounts at phase one drew attention to how lack of consultation, transparency and appropriate information from local and national sources of officialdom and authority often contributed to perceptions of unfair bias, which were then seen as responsible for generating resentment and hostility towards Asians. These once more represent areas of potential improvement. The way official policy and practice tended to be regarded by different elements in the current sample also drew attention to further implications. From lesser/non-hostile perspectives, equality initiatives and 'PC' practices in the past were one area that might have actually helped in some way to increase levels of the very thing they sought to combat. More hostile perspectives frequently evinced a sense of (misguided) rebellion against what they saw as unfair and confusing dictates handed down from above in relation to this. Although the intent of such interventions is beyond question both positive and benign, the actual operationalisation and practice of its application was at times questioned. For many, the way issues of equality have been previously presented was sometimes regarded as heavy-handed, confusing and perhaps patronising or condescendingly insensitive. No matter how unpalatable the views represented by more hostile perspectives might be, to simply regard those who hold them as inferior or unintelligent does not perhaps comprise the best way of attempting to reduce their prevalence. Simply telling someone that 'racism' is wrong and that they must therefore not think or express such sentiments is, while worthy, perhaps a little too simplistic in its assumptions. Similarly, absolute refusal to engage with, or make greater effort to understand overtly hostile view-points such as represented in the current work might be a most obvious and easy thing to do, but if greater understanding and reduction of prejudice is the aim then some form of deeper engagement and understanding might be necessary. Evidence has also been shown here, albeit minimal and then only in terms of the very short-term and highly regulated context of an interview situation, that requiring more

overtly hostile individuals embedded within a community marked by high levels of negative consensus to think more deeply and explore in more detail issues around inter-group problems can sometimes facilitate at least some reduction in expressed bias and reliance on 'standard issue' explanations representative of the commonly shared in-group position. Allowed time and provided with the opportunity to think for themselves and ruminate on such topics in a reasoned manner may perhaps have at least some effect in certain cases.

Further attention and research directed towards negatively biased media portrayals on inter-group issues may also be worth considering, given the negative influence consistently attributed to these throughout the current research. Here, however, there is perhaps reason to hold out even less hope of any positive improvement, especially given that these for-profit enterprises rely for their readership on presenting material which is both sensationalist and arousing (be this in terms of titillation, anger, shock or fear.) It has even been claimed by some that the controlling interests represented by such outlets might often also have reason to perpetuate and ferment divisive and threat dominated perceptions of the social world and (especially) low status groups within this ( see Chomsky, 2002, for example).

A final practical implication arising from this current research relates to contact between the groups. In their comprehensive evaluation of contact hypothesis research, Dixon, Durrheim and Tredoux (2005) highlight a large number of potential caveats placed on ensuring positive outcomes when attempting to employ this paradigm for the purposes of prejudice and hostility reduction. While emphasising the value of such approaches they also recognise that a good number of the conditions considered most ideal or beneficial to potential success often do not exist in relation to many real-world instances of problematic inter-group situations. This view has been supported here. Perhaps dispiritingly, several more hostile accounts analysed in the current research indicated that separation and segregation between different

ethnic groups in society may often be regarded as a desired, if not optimum state of affairs for those who hold negative perspectives towards other groups. Indeed, several respondents even asserted that inter-group compartmentalisation is actually the more ‘natural’ or ‘appropriate’ state for successful co-existence between groups. Clearly, trying to encourage or force individuals or groups who think this way to engage more closely with out-groups they already regard with hostility would represent something of an uphill task.

#### **15.4 Limitations of the current project**

From a purely personal perspective, one potential limitation of this current work overall can be found in the breadth of intent represented by the project aims. This was a large, complicated piece of research in many ways, involving mixed methodologies and multiple theoretical and epistemological considerations, and as such perhaps reflects a naiveté in the author’s initial approach to undertaking post-graduate study<sup>32</sup>. Nevertheless, the topics under focus represent areas of great personal interest and concern, so it was therefore important for me to try and attempt something I felt had sufficient potential to produce useful and meaningful results in terms of my own academic and practical expertise and experience, as well as hopefully adding to the existing body of academic and practical knowledge related to the research area. The broad, exploratory nature of this current project was therefore considered an integral part of beginning to attempt such.

Material presented in the introduction also noted some potential limitations from a more traditional positivistic science perspective, specifically in reference to the highly context-specific nature of the current work perhaps meaning that more general or meta-theoretical implications of any findings might be called into question. It was asserted then and reiterated

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<sup>32</sup> At several points up to and including the writing of this thesis, the author had genuine moments of wishing he had just given a bunch of overused and outdated psychometric questionnaire tests to under-graduates instead.

here that, due to the highly contextually dependent nature of inter-group hostility itself, this was not considered to represent a serious limitation by the author, especially if deeper, more meaningfully nuanced and practically applicable understandings of real life inter-group hostility were a goal of research. That said, I will now discuss some ways in which findings reported here might very well have broader currency in both theoretical and practical terms for inter-group hostility research more generally.

First of all, the context represented in this current work is by no means an isolated example – instances of disharmony between white British and South Asian Muslim populations have been prevalent right across the country for many years. The riots in Burnley, for instance, were matched at the time by similar large scale disturbances in Oldham, Leeds and Bradford. These manifestations of Anglo-Muslim conflict also preceded the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 and July 7<sup>th</sup> 2005 and the subsequent ‘War on Terror’ conducted by predominantly white, Western forces against countries with majority Muslim populations - about which many British Muslims expressed and continue to express uneasiness, to say the least. The British National Party also retains significant levels of support across many areas of Britain, potentially only losing out in areas where the English Defence League has risen to prominence, and clashes between British Asian and white sections of the community continue to be reported on a regular basis. Clearly, instances of inter-group disharmony characterised as white-British antipathy towards the country’s sizeable population of South Asian-heritage Britons continues to be an area of great concern and represents a form of hostility comprising and deserving of a research area in itself. The findings from the current study can therefore be considered an addition to our knowledge of inter-group hostility in this way.

Further, a claim can also be made that many of the observations contained here are quite likely applicable across many other contexts where ‘indigenous’ populations come into potential conflict with those who are considered ‘immigrant’ or lesser/non-legitimate nationals around the world – if not situations of inter-group conflict more generally. The importance of perceived threat, problematic difference and negative out-group attitudes as main factors of explanatory influence from a more hostile perspective may well apply more generally. In many cases, assumptions of preferential treatment may too be quite widespread. Blame attributed simply and directly towards the out-group without consideration of broader contextual influences, and the use of limited explanatory and interpretive resources in explaining inter-group problems, likewise. The powerful influence of prevailing negative in-group consensus in reinforcing and perpetuating hostility and inequality in inter-group relations has already been established in other contexts (Potter and Wetherell, 1992; Dixon and Reicher, 1997; Augustinos et al., 1999). Some elements of the current research can, however, perhaps be seen as more relevant only to the specific social context under investigation (and others like it). The identification of traditional Asian dress, or use of non-indigenous language as perceived problematic aspects of the inter-group relationship represent examples of this, as such considerations would likely not appear across all instances where inter-group relations are conflicted. Yet, as also stated in the introduction, such limitations can reasonably be said to apply to any and all attempts to map examples of specific inter-group hostility more broadly across others.

Similar more traditionally positivistic claims about the limitations of using qualitative research and analytical procedures can also be dismissed. From a personal point of view, having completed this research project following an undergraduate degree containing no specific psychology of prejudice components and minimal coverage of qualitative

methodologies, the author is prepared to now assert that such approaches to the study of inter-group hostility can be regarded as an invaluable if not essential way of proceeding. Phase two quantitative measures were valuable in providing information about the broader patterns of importance dynamics and prevalence with regard to perceived factors of contributory influence to inter-group problems from a more hostile perspective, and in allowing broader distinctions to be drawn between more and less hostile sample elements in relation to this. Yet without the phase one qualitative study, these would have lacked deeper meaning, naturalism and practical applicability in terms of their initial structure and content. Besides representing a standalone piece of work in itself, phase one study further proved absolutely key when attempting to evaluate and draw inferences from subsequent survey findings – especially in terms supplying the means for more explicit and informed interpretations of results. Accessing the perspectives of those embedded in a lived reality marked by inter-group hostility in such a way therefore provided a richness of detail and contextual nuance which may be considered indispensable if gaining deeper and meaningful insight into actual manifestations of this phenomenon is desired. Having completed the process it now strikes this author as perhaps slightly presumptuous and self-limiting to begin approaching future studies in any other way.

The more naturalistic and exploratory approach taken herein was also useful in another way. Rather than coming to the current study with a rigidly fixed framework and agenda - representative solely of one or another of the various theoretical or research perspectives on offer - the open-ended and semi-structured format employed at phase one allowed material to flow more directly and naturally from respondent in-put and experience. In this way subsequent observations could be interpreted post-hoc in terms of how successfully these might map onto existing theory, rather than having the study potentially distorted or pre-

shaped at the outset by researcher expectations (or as much as is possible, at any rate. Obviously a good deal of researcher influence is an inevitable and a significant part of any study situation (See Burr, 2003). In this way, support for any pre-existing theoretical assertions provided by current study can be seen as more objective and naturalistically arrived at than would those produced under a template of more rigid preconception.

All this is not to say that the current project did not encounter its share of problems. The interview procedures worked well enough, but with little formal training (though much experience) these tended to become both easier and more natural as things went along. On the whole, the respondent sample was all that could be asked for in terms of candour and openness. Given that a large part of both study phases hinged on accessing a sufficiently appropriate sample, this was something of a blessing. Although the (extremely lengthy) recruitment process required to accomplish this, along with the similarly time consuming interview, transcription and analysis could perhaps at times be legitimately described as an ordeal (see previous foot-note). This difficulty in acquiring volunteers worked with time-pressures inherent in the PhD process to produce sample sizes which, though in the end sufficient, could ideally have been higher (30 for phase one and 500 or so for phase two would have been nice, but time conspired against me.)

Both analysis at phase one and the transfer of material from this to phase two were helped immensely by the explicit and frank way interview respondents expressed their views. People in Burnley are known for speaking their mind and coming straight to the point, qualities which proved particularly helpful when coding the data and creating themes from this. If respondents thought that Asians dressing differently was a major problem, then they would quite often simply say, 'I think Asians dressing differently is a major problem.' It was then for the interviewer to get them to expand on this in more detail. Another factor that helped in

the qualitative analysis stage was the high level of consensus displayed in accounts. Even where lesser/non-hostile perspectives disagreed on the cause or explicit nature of a perceived factor of influence on inter-group problems, both groups largely tended to agree on what the actual components/themes often were. Also, as repeatedly noted, in many more hostile accounts, conformity to a prevalent consensus view actually represented a theme in itself. When it came to creating the items for phase two, these factors did perhaps make things a little more straightforward (though no less difficult) than they might have been.

The transfer of material and operationalisation of phase two initially went quite well also, though one problem encountered here was in relation to artificiality. Firstly this related to how some of the variables were measured. Standard practice in survey design often encourages the inclusion of several, differently phrased, item objects to measure response to the same specifically individual questions (e.g. How much do you like the out-group/how little do you like the out-group/how much do you dislike the out-group/how little do you dislike the out-group) which are then summed to create a mean item response. This is done in order to acquire greater variation in scores so as to help create more finely tuned analysis – in that way perhaps representing a requirement of said analysis rather than any explicit aims of the study itself. The current project wanted to try and avoid such repetition for two reasons. The questionnaire survey itself was quite long to begin with, due to the volume of information generated at phase one, and to extend this length by three or four times through addition of such multiple measures would have been counter-productive. Respondents can lose interest, patience and focus after a time which leads to less considered item response or even non-completion of questionnaire materials, for instance. Also getting people to answer the same question in different ways, hoping these will be subtly different to each other creates a level of further artificiality the author sought to avoid. Therefore single item measures were

used where possible. This created problems, however, when it came to splitting the single-item Negative Feelings hostility measure into high and low groups, as the central score of 4 could be said to indicate neither high nor low hostility. At least two other items should have perhaps then been included (as above) for this measure, to prevent this limitation from occurring.

Artificiality also created a study limitation when it came to measurement of the components themselves. For the majority of these, composite variables were created, comprised of items relating to various sub-themes identified in relation to these at phase one. For instance, the Threat component was created by summing scores for individual items pertaining to territory and resource threat, culture and values threat, status and standing threat, physical threat. Yet while these overall ‘components’ could be said to hang together, both logically and in terms of internal statistical reliability for each, the whole concept itself is still somewhat artificial, given that the individual items relate to qualitatively different forms of threat. A further drawback to statistical procedures involving correlation and regression techniques, means that for each factor included in the analysis a requisite number of participants must be acquired, so that sample size to some extent dictates how many factors can be included in the analysis. Time constraints and difficulty in collecting completed questionnaires from an appropriate sample for phase two therefore meant that in this case only so many components could be included – even though this was part of the initial intent.

A main purpose of phase two was to investigate broad trends in the importance ascribed to the broad component categories identified at phase one. This would allow subsequent qualitative and quantitative studies to perhaps focus more specifically on areas identified as more important in relation to perceived factors of contributory influence relating to the highly hostile – for example, future research targeted more specifically at ‘threat’ is one option will

be explored presently. In this way, the more general and reductionist aspects of phase two were in fact quite successful in terms of achieving what they set out to accomplish. Attention is only drawn to the above limitation, therefore, in order to indicate that the author is aware that this in some way impacts with the overall more naturalistic intent of the current project. In this case it can perhaps be regarded as a necessary evil.

## **15.5 Potential avenues of future research**

Aside from the areas outlined above, a number of other suggestions will now be presented in terms of where research might go from here. This author for one would be interested in further pursuing the issues of consensus raised by the current research. While this has been identified as a key factor of contributory influence to manifestations of inter-group conflict, it would be interesting to try and pick this apart further. Qualitative procedures aimed towards assessing more specifically the content of such perspectives would represent a continuation of the current project, though focus more directly on from where and how themes within these were seen as originating might be a way forward. Getting respondents to try and describe aspects of the process by which they came to hold a particular view of the world, where information considered supportive of this was derived from, and how this relates to personal, social and development experiences could also be included. In this regard additional attention could also be more closely paid to the role of media influences in the manifestation of inter-group hostility. The current work was directed at exploring what people claimed to believe, subsequent procedures might attempt to assess why they claim to believe it.

This would be particularly interesting, if perhaps practically and ethically challenging, if directed at views expressed by a younger sample. Of the two youngest respondents at phase one, 16 year-old Daniel and 17 year-old Zoe offered quite different perspectives on the inter-

group context. Although displaying minor hostility in a couple of instances the former was generally reasonable and not particularly ill-disposed to Asians (despite his father being one of the more hostile respondents in the study.) Zoe, on the other hand was consistently and overtly hostile throughout her transcript – though did repeatedly ascribe this to the way she had been brought up. Access to a school-age population would be valuable in assessing how and when negatively consensus views of the out-group begin to influence personal expressions of negativity.

Another avenue of research might focus on the issues of perceived threat and negative impact outlined earlier. Conjecture was made there about how greater levels of perceived negativity and heightened threat sensitivity in general might influence likelihood to identify with or adopt collective perspectives or consensus positions which facilitate, legitimise or encourage the expression of hostility towards specific ‘sanctioned others’. In line with this research could potentially focus on accessing the views of respondents identified as hostile to Asians more particularly in terms of their general world view and orientation to other social matters and groups in general. Might it be the case that for some who express high levels of negativity towards one particular out-group, this represents just part of a pattern of negativity and greater perceived threat in relation to life generally and/or other targets deemed sufficiently and ‘legitimately’ different or other.

A further element missing from the current study which has implications down this path is that of emotion. One whole aspect of inter-group hostility dynamics not included at phase one relates to how hostile perspectives towards Asians related to respondent emotions. While questions were asked about how and what people thought about various aspects of the inter-group relationship, no mention was made of how such issues (and thinking about them) made respondents feel. This again would be an interesting prospect. Many of those who

volunteered for this study were quite animated during the interview procedures, and several alluded to feelings of anger and resentment in relation to various aspects of the inter-group relationship, but no explicit examination was made of emotion beyond this.

In terms of how this current research was operationalised, particularly phase one methods, comparable opportunities for future research might also prove fruitful. By this I mean that conducting a similar set of research procedures over other inter-group contexts would allow comparisons to be drawn between this particular manifestation of inter-group hostility and others. How might hostile white British perspectives towards other, white-European immigrants differ from those around Asians, for example? How might communities without a directly proximal out-group at hand to focus on construct problematic inter-group relations? More difficultly (in that a sufficiently appropriate interviewer would perhaps be necessary), how do Asian elements in conflicted communities such as the one represented here – including potentially hostile young men – construct, explain and interpret problematic inter-group relations themselves? All these, however, are questions for another day.

For the time-being a two-phase, multi method research project had been conducted on a real-world situation displaying prior and ongoing manifestations of inter-group hostility. Participants drawn from this have then been assessed in terms of how they construct, explain, interpret and evaluate various aspects of problematic group relations. A set of key themes were identified, and distinctions drawn between the interpretation provided and import attributed to these by those designated expressive of greater and lesser degrees of hostility. Results were then presented and discussed in relation to this. Suggestions for future research were additionally made. Though this current research could never perhaps be considered perfect in terms of its methodology and findings, it has hopefully and in some small way at least contributed to knowledge about inter-group conflict and hostility in general.

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## Appendices

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## **Appendix 1: Qualitative Interview Materials**

## Interview schedule

1. Open questions.

Comment on why these kinds of problems occur between the groups

Comment on which factors most contribute to problems between the groups

Comment on which things create underlying tension between the groups

Comment on which things people find most problematic about Asians

Comment on how people in the local community feel about Asians in general

Comment on the reasons usually given for hostility towards Asians

Comment on what might happen in future

Comment on what can be done about it

Comment on the possible for groups like this to co-exist in society

Comment on who or what is mostly responsible for problems between the groups

Comment on how life might be different without the out-group (OG) presence

Comment on how own life has been affected by the Asians being here

(In cases where this may prove insufficient, a set of general prompts may be utilised in order to help participants elaborate further.)

Comment on inter-group differences

Comment on inter-group threat

Comment on any conflicts of interest between the groups

Comment on inter-group competition

Comment on some groups deserving or being entitled to more than others

Comment on Asian goals in life

Comment on inter-group violence that occurs

Comment on outside influences

Comment on what most people in the white community think about Asians

Newspaper advert

**Opinionated People Wanted!**

Would you be interested in taking part in a University of Central Lancashire survey asking what real people think about how different social groups get along?

If you are patriotic and prepared to speak your mind we would like to recruit you for a short, confidential and anonymous interview

Ring or email to find out more:

**groupinterview@hotmail.co.uk**

**tel 07837 358131**

## Participant briefing sheet

Dear participant

You are being asked to take part in research of inter-group relations (how different sections of the community interact.) undertaken by the University of Central Lancashire. We are interested in people's opinions on inter-group relations - specifically how any problems in this area might come about, and what the possible causes of this may be. Also any viewpoints on possible future issues/solutions regarding inter-group disharmony will be sought. We are interested in what real people think about these issues and would like you to be as open and frank as possible. For the purpose of this section of the study we will be focussing on how different ethnic groups interact.

If you agree to take part, the study will consist of an anonymous tape-recorded interview lasting approximately 1 hour. A full written account (transcript) of this will also be produced at a later date.

Any information you provide within this will be:

Anonymous – You will be provided with a made-up participant name and referred to thereafter by only this. Only your age, gender and occupation will be recorded.

Voluntary – You will not be asked to discuss anything you do not wish to, and need only say that which you are comfortable with. What you say will be totally up to you.

Strictly confidential - the audio tape/transcript you provide will be stored securely and heard/seen only by the researchers. If any material/quotes you provide subsequently appear in published research, presentation or media the source will only be linked to the made-up participant name. It will not be possible for you to be identified from this.

You may turn off the recorder and ask to withdraw from the study at any point during the interview and keep hold of your tape. Following the interview you may choose to review the material provided at any later time. You may also withdraw (though not alter) material if you want at any point up to publication. Researcher contact details are provided below.

You will be shown a newspaper article describing previous instances of inter-group disharmony. You will then be asked for your opinions about various aspects of this: Why do you think it happened? What, in your opinion, might be the underlying causes? What do you think will happen in the future? What can be done about this? The interviewer may also offer prompts to you at various points to help move the interview along. Any material you wish to add later may also be considered. Feel free to ask the researcher any questions before the session begins, and thank you for your help.

You will be able to contact the researcher by the following routes:

Email: [Groupinterview@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:Groupinterview@hotmail.co.uk)

Phone: 07837358131

Please indicate that you have read and understood this by signing your name below

.....

Participant details and consent form (to go with cassette)

**Participant information sheet**

**Age**.....

**Gender**.....

**Occupation**.....

**Please indicate your consent for participation in this study and the subsequent use of any material you may provide by signing on the dotted line below.**

.....

## Newspaper article shown to respondents

Daily Star

June 26, 2001

### **HEADLINE: CRISIS TALKS TO HALT NEW RIOTS**

POLICE and community leaders in Burnley held crisis talks yesterday after two nights of riots.

Locals spent most of the day clearing up after white and Asian gangs ransacked the Lancashire town.

Around 400 battled riot police and one another and torched shops, pubs and cars.

The violence came just weeks after clashes in Bradford, Leeds and Oldham - just 20 miles away.

The weekend also saw unrest between Asians and whites in Tividale near Birmingham and Southend, Essex.

Yesterday politicians and police in Burnley pleaded for calm.

Labour MP Peter Pike said: "The only way to solve these problems is to sit round a table and talk." Chief Supt

John Knowles urged: "Do not overreact. Do not be provoked."

And community leader Shahid Malik added: "This has been a tragic weekend for the town. We must now try to work to rebuild things."

Around six per cent of the town's 92,000 population are from ethnic minorities, mainly Pakistani and Bangladeshi.

Unrest exploded on Saturday night, when gangs of youths clashed in the town's Danehouse area, leaving homes and cars wrecked.

Around 50 white youths ended up in the Burnley Wood area while more than 200 Asians marauded through the Duke Bar area.

Chief Supt Knowles said: "Burnley has a good record of race relations and I hope those who want to take that forward will identify what needs to be done."

He also revealed that Home Secretary David Blunkett is trying to find out if there are any links between the Burnley riots and the unrest in Oldham, Bradford and Leeds.

**LOAD-DATE:** June 26, 2001

## **Appendix 2: Quantitative Survey Materials**

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## Group Interaction Survey

This questionnaire is part of a post-graduate studies project being undertaken at the University of Central Lancashire. It is a research into how different social groups interact and of factors which might cause problems between them.

We will not be asking for any personal details beyond your age, gender and ethnicity - this study will focus only on the attitudes of white British people, so please only fill it in if you regard yourself to be in this category. Also do not complete the questionnaire if you are younger than 16. No names will be taken, to allow anonymity, and any answers you provide will be treated as confidential, stored securely and viewed only by the research team and Ph.D examiners. Some data may be published at a later date, in academic journals for instance, but this will not be traceable to individual respondents. Participation is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any point prior to the form being returned (because names are not recorded, individual forms cannot be identified once returned.) Some of the questions relate to conflict and violence between different ethnic groups and if you think this might cause you any discomfort or offence, you should not participate. For this study to be of use you will need to think carefully and try to write down what most genuinely reflects your own thoughts and opinions on the subject. Please use this opportunity to tell us what you really think.

The questionnaire should take about 10 minutes and be handed back to the researcher who gave it you. Or if you would like to take the questionnaire away to fill in privately at a later time, please return in the free envelope provided to:

Group interaction project

Darwin Building

University of Central Lancashire

Preston

Lancashire

PR1 2 HE

Or contact: [groupinteractionproject@uclan.ac.uk](mailto:groupinteractionproject@uclan.ac.uk) if you have any further questions about the study.

## **Instructions**

This research intends to examine how different ethnic groups interact. For this study you have been chosen because the group you belong to is:

## **White British**

This will sometimes be referred to as IG (in-group) in the following questionnaire.

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The other ethnic group you will be asked about for this part of the study will be:

## **Asian**

This will sometimes be referred to as OG (other-group) in the following questionnaire.

*Please tell us your age .....*

*Your gender .....*

**For most of the following questions you should indicate your answer somewhere along the scale provided.**

**Now please turn over and fill in the questionnaire**

**Section A: Group Relations**

**Please respond by circling the number which most accurately reflects your opinion. The scales go from a minimum score of 1 up through the scale to a maximum score of 7.**

**1. On the whole how well do you think your group (white British) gets on with the other group (Asian)?**

**Not at all** **Very well**  
**1**      **2**      **3**      **4**      **5**      **6**      **7**

**2. How much underlying hostility do you think there is between the two groups?**

**None** **A great deal**  
**1**      **2**      **3**      **4**      **5**      **6**      **7**

**3. Overall how much of a problem do you think any such hostility between the groups is?**

**Not a problem** **Major**  
**problem**  
**1**      **2**      **3**      **4**      **5**      **6**      **7**

**4. How much open conflict/trouble do you think there is between the groups?**

**None** **A great deal**  
**1**      **2**      **3**      **4**      **5**      **6**      **7**

**5. Overall how much of a problem do you think any such conflict between the groups is?**

**(If you answered 0 to the previous question please skip this one)**

**Not problem** **Major**  
**problem**





**2. Do you think there is a problem with the two groups not mixing together?**

**Not a Problem**

**Major problem**

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**3. How much do you think your group tries to fit in with the OG?**

**Not at all**

**A great deal**

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**4. How much do you think your group *should* try to fit in with the OG?**

**Not at all**

**A great deal**

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**5. How much do you think the OG tries to fit in with your group?**

**Not at all**

**A great deal**

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**5. How much do you think the OG *should* try to fit in with your group?**

**Not at all**

**A great deal**

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**6. How much do you think any OG lack of willingness integrate is a problem?**

**No problem**

**Major problem**

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**7. Do you think the area where you live is made worse by including these two ethnic cultures?**

**Not at all**

**Very much so**

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**8. Do you think the area where you live is made better by including the two ethnic cultures?**

**Not at all**

**Very much so**

**1                    2                    3                    4                    5                    6                    7**

**9. Do you think society on the whole is made worse by including different ethnic cultures?**

**Not at all**

**Very much so**

**1                    2                    3                    4                    5                    6                    7**

**10. Do you think on the whole society is made better by including different ethnic cultures?**

**Not at all**

**Very much so**

**1                    2                    3                    4                    5                    6                    7**

### **Section D: Outside Influence**

**How big a factor do you think the following influences are in contributing to any problems between the groups?**

**1. The way the media (newspapers, television) presents and influences issues?**

**No influence**

**Massive influence**

**1                    2                    3                    4                    5                    6                    7**

**2. The way the government presents and influences issues?**

**No influence**

**1**

**2**

**3**

**4**

**5**

**Massive influence**

**6**

**7**

**3. The way the BNP presents and influence issues?**

**No influence**

**1**

**2**

**3**

**4**

**5**

**Massive influence**

**6**

**7**

**4. The overall combined impact of outside influences like these?**

**No influence**

**1**

**2**

**3**

**4**

**5**

**Massive influence**

**6**

**7**

**How realistic/accurate do you think the following representations of the situation are?**

**5. The way the media (newspapers, television) represents issues?**

**Totally inaccurate**

**1**

**2**

**3**

**4**

**5**

**Totally accurate**

**6**

**7**

**6. The way the government represents issues?**

**Totally inaccurate**

**1**

**2**

**3**

**4**

**5**

**Totally accurate**

**6**

**7**

**7. The way the BNP represents issues?**

**Totally inaccurate**

**1**

**2**

**3**

**4**

**5**

**Totally accurate**

**6**

**7**

**Section E: Threat.**

**How much of a threat do you feel the other group (OG) is on the following levels?**

**1. I see the OG as potentially threatening to the physical safety of my group**

Not at all Very much so  
1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**2. I see the OG as potentially threatening to the culture and values of my group (e.g. replacing my group's traditions and values with those of their own.)**

Not at all Very much so  
1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**5. I see the OG as potentially threatening to the status of my group (e.g. the OG being responsible for my group's loss of standing in society.)**

Not at all Very much so  
1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**6. I see the OG as potentially threatening to the territory and resources of my group (e.g. the OG threatening my group's access to housing, jobs and investment by taking them for themselves.)**

Not at all Very much so  
1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**7. How much overall do you see the OG as a threat?**

Not at all Very much so  
1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**How much do you agree with the following statements?**

**8. My own life has been negatively impacted as a result of the OG presence.**

Not at all Very much so  
1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**9. The lives of those close to me (friends and family) have been negatively impacted as a result of the OG presence.**

Not at all Very much so  
1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**10. The local community has been negatively impacted as a result of the OG presence.**

Not at all Very much so  
1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**11. Society as a whole has been negatively impacted as a result of the OG presence.**

Not at all Very much so  
1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**12. How much do you think general social deprivation in the local area is responsible for trouble between the two groups**

Not at all Very much so  
1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**The following statements relate to how you think the OG views your group. How much do you agree with them?**

**13. I often think that the OG are laughing behind our (IG) backs.**

Not at all Very much so

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**14. I get the impression that they (OG) think they're superior to us (IG).**

Not at all Very much so

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**15. I feel they (OG) always think they can take advantage of us (IG).**

Not at all Very much so

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**16. I think that the OG has respect for my group (IG).**

Not at all Very much so

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**17. In general how much do you think negative OG attitudes towards your own group are a problem?**

Not at all Very much so

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**Section F: Different treatment**

**Do you think the two groups are treated differently on any of the following factors?  
Please indicate the direction you think any preference takes.**

**1. Preference in getting or being allocated financial aid (e.g. grants, benefits etc ...)**

**My group (IG) preferred**

**Other group (OG) preferred**

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**2. Preference in getting access to social resources (e.g. jobs, housing etc ...)**

**My group (IG) preferred**

**Other group (OG) preferred**

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**3. Preference in being allowed to freely promote or defend causes and issues relating to their own group.**

**My group (IG) preferred**

**Other group (OG) preferred**

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**4. Preference in being allowed to criticise the other group.**

**My group (IG) preferred**

**Other group (OG) preferred**

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**5. Overall how much of a problem do you think unfairly unequal treatment of the groups is?**

**No problem**

**Major problem**

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**Section G: Attitudes towards the other group**

**Please indicate along the following scales which choice most accurately reflects your general view towards the OG.**

**1. My own feelings toward the other group**

**Like the OG**

**Hate the OG**

**1            2            3            4            5            6            7**

**How much do you think the following people agree with your views towards the other group in general?**

**2. My friend's agree with my views toward the other group**

**Not at all**

**Completely**

**1            2            3            4            5            6            7**

**3. My family agree with my views toward the other group**

**Not at all**

**Completely**

**1            2            3            4            5            6            7**

**4. The local community agrees with my views toward the other group**

**Not at all**

**Completely**

**1            2            3            4            5            6            7**

**5. Society in general agrees with my views toward the other group**

**Not at all**

**Completely**

**1            2            3            4            5            6            7**

**Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements**

7. I would be glad to have them (OG) as my neighbours

Not at all

Very much

1                    2                    3                    4                    5                    6                    7

8. I would be glad to have them (OG) as friends

Not at all

Very much

1                    2                    3                    4                    5                    6                    7

9. I would be happy for a member of my family to marry one of them (OG)

Not at all

Very much

1                    2                    3                    4                    5                    6                    7

**Section H: Proximity to the other group**

**Please indicate from the boxes below how close you live to members of the other group.**

	Same Street	Surrounding Streets	Within 0 -2 Miles away	Between 2 -5 Miles away	Over 5 miles away
Roughly how close to you do the nearest members of the other group live?					

**Section I: Actions towards the other group.**

**Please indicate which of the following most accurately represents the likelihood of any action you would be willing to take against the OG.**

**1. I would be willing to take indirect political action, such as voting for parties or policies which I thought would negatively affect the other group.**

Never Definitely  
1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**2. I would be willing to take direct political action, such as joining, protesting and campaigning for parties or policies which I thought would negatively affect the other group.**

Never Definitely  
1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**3. I would be willing to take indirect aggressive action, such as harassment or verbal/written abuse against the other group.**

Never Definitely  
1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**4. I would be willing to take direct aggressive action, such as violence or physical intimidation against the other group.**

Never Definitely  
1            2            3            4            5            6            7

**Section J: Priority of factors in order**

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Please read through the following list carefully then try to indicate in order from 1-11 which factors you think most contribute to problems between the groups (e.g., for the most important factor score 1, the second most important 2, the third most important score 3 etc ... )

Factor relating to inter-group problems	Rating of importance from 1-11
Surface Differences: language, clothing and cultural practices such as lifestyle and leisure activities.	
Deeper Differences: things like religious faith and beliefs, moral values and social priorities.	
Other group's unwillingness to fit in and mix.	
Effects of outside influences on the situation.	
Physical threat from other group.	
Threat to replace traditional culture and values of your group by those of other group.	
Threat of other group taking over more and more physical territory and resources.	
Threat to social standing and status of your group by other group.	
Negative attitudes of other group towards your group.	
Preferential treatment given to the other group.	
General social deprivation where you live.	

On the next page you will find an information sheet about the aims of this study for you to tear off and take away with you. Thank you again for taking part in the study. Contact

details are also included if you would like to know more. If you would like to make any comments about the study, the issues raised by it, or ways in which you think it might be improved, please write them in the space provided below.

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## Information sheet ... please tear off and keep.

Recent times have seen many instances of disharmony between different ethnic groups across areas of Great Britain. This is an unfunded post-graduate study run from the University of Central Lancashire that attempts to ask people what they think are the main factors that contribute to different social groups not getting along. As this is an area that has not been looked at in great detail before, we are interested in what a whole range of people genuinely think. If you wish to contact the project or require further information, there are contact details below. The intention of this study is not to endorse any particular views, statements or attitudes toward inter-group relations, but to explore how people feel about these issues. Thanks again for your help with this.

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Darwin Building  
University of Central Lancashire  
Preston  
Lancashire  
PR1 2 HE

Or contact: [groupinteractionproject@hotmail.com](mailto:groupinteractionproject@hotmail.com)

If you are interested in the topic of community relations the following sources may be of use to you:

[www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com) Tel: 08456046610

Aims to foster a fairer Britain and equal rights for all.

<http://www.cohesioninstitute.org.uk/home> Tel: 02476795757

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