

8. Chapter: Cross-Case Comparison and Conclusion

8.1. Introduction

Following the analysis of the two individual cases UK and Singapore as part of the multiple-case replication design, this chapter compares the conclusions of both cases with each other and draws a *cross-case conclusion* as prescribed by Yin assessing whether the cases were able to falsify the proposed *Rings of Resilience Model*.¹¹²⁰ For illustrative purposes the qualitative comparison is augmented by radar chart, quantifying outliers and commonalities in the programme mix of both countries.

8.2. Assessment

By comparing the mix of programmes that were measured and assessed for each case in the chapters five and six and visualising the percentage-share of the total number of programmes in each country across the nine categories, which contribute to *Strategic Resilience*, the UK and Singapore show differing centres of gravity in their national approach to achieve *Strategic Resilience*.

1120 See Yin, 2001, 49.

Figure 56: Comparison of percentage-share of the total number of the assessed programmes in each country across the nine categories.

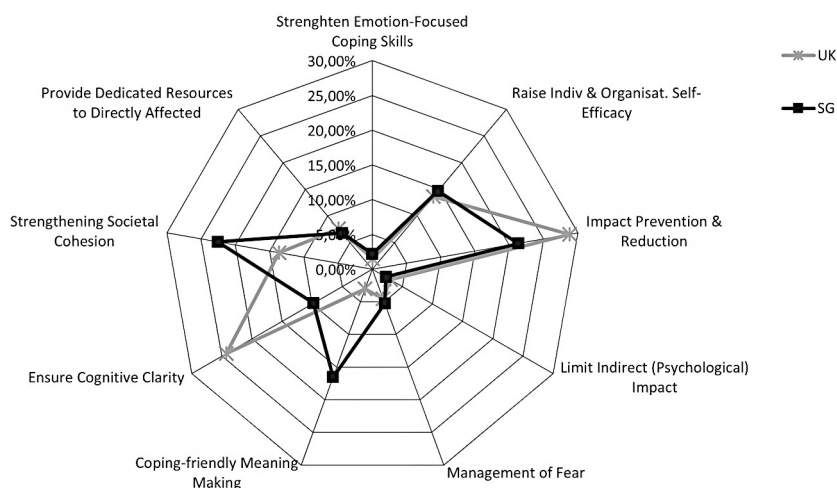


Table 8: Percentage-share of the total number of the assessed programmes in UK and Singapore in each of the nine categories.¹¹²¹

Programmes in %	Strengthen Emotion-Focused Coping Skills	Raise Individual & Organisational Self-Efficacy	Impact Prevention & Reduction	Limit Indirect Psychological Impact	Management of Fear	Coping Friendly Meaning Making	Ensure Cognitive Clarity	Strengthen Societal Cohesion	Provide Dedicated Support to Directly Affected
UK	1,52%	13,64%	28,79%	3,03%	4,55%	3,03%	24,24%	13,64%	7,58%
SG	2,21%	14,71%	21,32%	2,21%	5,15%	16,18%	9,56%	22,06%	6,62%

This is not surprising as the case countries are dissimilar in many ways, including culturally as shown in the country comparison of the well-known *Hofstede's 6 Cultural Dimension*.¹¹²²

Stronger emphasis on *strengthening societal cohesion* in Singapore than in the UK is to be expected considering the collectivist nature of the Singaporean society compared to the UK, based on differing social norms that value social responsibility over personal freedom and is woven into the national narrative and self-concept of Singapore. The ability to galvanise

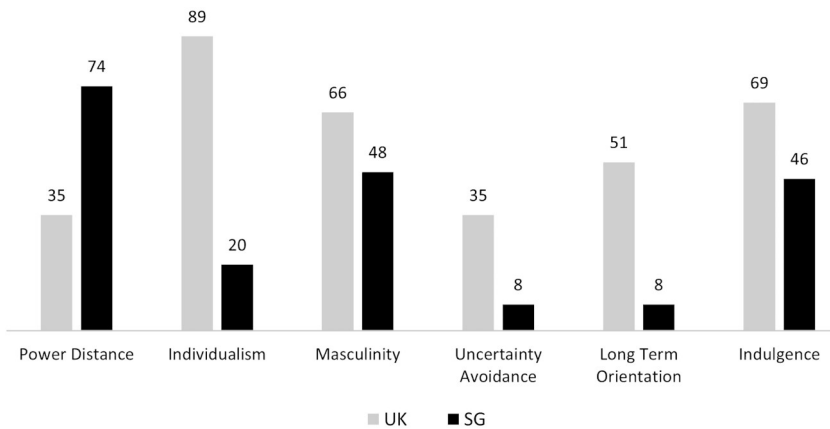
1121 Author's own work.

1122 See comparison on the next page.

collective action is also one important way for small countries with a small population to try to fulfil their security needs.

Similarly, Singapore's emphasis on providing and preserving an *effective coping friendly meaning*, is reflective of the felt necessity to strengthen and preserve societal cohesion, especially considering the challenges that stem from the heterogeneous multi-ethnic and multicultural fabric of its society in a volatile geographic neighbourhood. It is also reflective of Singapore's ability to promote one dominant narrative through a big government with centralized control and a high *Power Distance* in society (as shown in Figure 63). The environment in the UK and the role of government in the UK is very different, and consequently the Government's ability to successfully promote one central narrative is much more restricted and actively challenged.

Figure 57: Comparison between the UK and Singapore across Hofstede's 6 Cultural Dimension.¹¹²³



This may well explain the UK's multi-layered effort to assure *cognitive clarity* through informational support. As the role of and the trust in government is lower, with more focus on the individual than on the community and its needs to operate in a contested media environment, there is a high need for communication. That requirement has further been repeatedly amplified through terror incidents and has leads to new channels and protocols being introduced. In comparison to the UK situation the Singapore

1123 Figure and numbers adapted and from Hofstede Insights without year.

government has great control over the media environment, it operates in. On top of that, the Singapore government is also able to further amplify its messages through government and non-governmental organisations.

Efforts to *prevent and reduce direct impact* of a terrorist attack, play an important role in both countries. However, the case analysis identified comparatively more measures in the UK than in Singapore. This is to be expected considering that the UK has had a long list of terrorist attacks which it suffered on its soil even before the *jihadi wave* started. As a result of such attacks the country therefore has continuously responded with new measures to mitigate future threats and is doing so today. As a country that has suffered little or no attacks, Singapore might be expected to lag behind in terms of programmes and policies implemented, but it is actively learning lessons from the UK.¹¹²⁴ The recently updated infrastructure protection guidelines¹¹²⁵ and increased CCTV surveillance are examples.¹¹²⁶

For all the remaining four categories, *Figure 70*, shows similar values for both case countries. While the slight difference in numbers may be considered insignificant, it is still worthwhile looking at the qualitative data behind the numbers.

In the delivery of *dedicated support for those directly affected* from a terrorist attack, both countries undertake not insignificant efforts. The UK, however, is scoring only a slightly higher value share, considering that the country has suffered hundreds of victims over the years, whose wellbeing strongly depended on the quality and level of support given.

To make their populations better prepared for terrorist attacks and avoid preventable casualties, both Singapore and the UK put a similarly high focus on *raising self-efficacy* in the society. Both countries have adopted clear risk communication and practical public service advice to build the citizens' self-efficacy. Singapore has an advantage as it can build on an existing whole-of-society *Total Defence* concept. The authorities are able to plug their counter-terrorism prevention and preparedness efforts into the *Total Defence* concept and build on existing organisational structures for its facilitation. The UK authorities in turn benefit from higher levels of attention for their public service announcements, without the need to constantly alert the public to the threat.

1124 See Vasu 2007.

1125 See Singapore Police Force 06.2019.

1126 See Today Online 2016.

To limit the indirect (psychological) impact from attacks on the rest of the population, the authorities in both cases use legislation and a mix of inducements and coercion, that is why there is not a high number of programmes that can be counted under this category. While Singapore and the UK have very different starting points, considering their general media environment and the laws governing it, when it comes to *jihadi* terrorism content both countries strongly legislate and police its dissemination, with legislation added as seen fit and which also extends to international social media platforms. An exception today is only the British press which may publish similarly unnerving and divisive terrorism-related content offline and on its online pages, so far unimpeded by government regulation. But it is on the radar of non-governmental pressure groups.

While both countries aim to better prevent and *manage fear* in the population by limiting the virality of negative content, both countries use careful risk communication to achieve a prepared but not scared population. Part of the communication also includes efforts to reassure the population of state preparedness through rapid law enforcement and emergency response in case of an attack through highly visual law enforcement deployments into public spaces or by actually successfully responding and ending live attacks in a very short time. This happened repeatedly during *Jihadi-inspired* knife attacks in UK. In absence of real attacks, regular public counter-terrorism exercises (as conducted annually in all of Singapore's districts) are used to reassure and to ask for sustained vigilance.

Tolerance to dissenting views and beliefs, uncertainty acceptance and openness to change and resilience in adversity are taught as virtues in the UK and Singapore in order to raise *emotion focused-coping-skills*. In Singapore, they form part of the national narrative and are encouraged in all aspects of life, which may partly explain the extremely low *uncertainty avoidance* identified by Hofstede in the Singaporean population, as shown in Figure 88. Cognitive congruence between the *Situational Meaning* of an attack and the held *Global Beliefs* in the Singaporean population is further strengthened at the highest government level by repeatedly issuing a "Not if, but When"-message concerning the probability of the next terror attack.

Despite the strongly dissimilar circumstances in the case countries as shown above and described in the 2nd Chapter, that affect the direction of counter-terrorism efforts in each country, all programmes and measures assessed across the two case studies that are undertaken in order to mitigate and muster a resilient response to the terrorism threat, contribute to the completion of the nine critical tasks identified in the 5th Chapter.

While the description and analysis of programmes and measures in the 6th and 7th Chapters represent only a picture of the situation at a point in time in a very dynamic and responsive terrorism and counter-terrorism environment, they still have general relevance beyond this period: What may be deduced from the analysis and is visible in Figure 87 is that each country shows preferences how they choose to address the terrorism threat and build resilience. It also shows where the two countries have opportunities to increase their efforts by adding activities and or shifting them into other categories. Several events at the time of writing but after the completion of the country case analysis, are confirming the findings' continuing relevance.

On 21 January 2020, the Home Office announced a year-on-year increase of £90 million funding for counter-terrorism policing, bringing it to a total £906 million in 2020/21, which will further strengthen the country's *terrorism impact prevention and reduction* efforts.¹¹²⁷

By spring 2020, the UK Government will introduce a new law to be debated in Parliament, named 'Protect Duty' Law or simply *Martyn's Law* that also has the same impact prevention and reduction focus.¹¹²⁸ According to the Home Office, the new law as currently proposed, would place a legal duty on operators of crowded venues "*to consider the risk of a terrorist attack and take proportionate and reasonable measures to prepare for and protect the public from such an attack. This could include increased physical security, having training in place, incident response plans and exercises for staff on what to do during an attack.*"¹¹²⁹

In December 2019, *UK Counter Terror Policing* has started its call on the whole of UK public to take a free counter-terrorism online training¹¹³⁰. This had previously been reserved for professionals in front line roles at crowded places and companies. Now it aims at bolstering the vigilance and preparedness (*problem-focused coping skills*) of the wider public. According to the NaCTSO, nearly 70,000 new people signed up during the corona lock down, bringing the total number to over 500,000 participants by June 2020.¹¹³¹

1127 See UK Home Office 2020b.

1128 See UK Home Office 2020a ; the proposed law is named after Martyn Hett who died in the *Manchester Arena Attack* , and whose mother has since been campaigning for better terror protection of public venues.

1129 *ibid.*

1130 See National Counter Terrorism Security Office 2019a.

1131 National Counter Terrorism Security Office 2020.

Reflective of the untapped potential visible in the radar chart to further strengthen societal cohesion and personal efficacy, a *Royal United Services Institute* (RUSI) occasional paper published in March 2020, established that overall, liberal democracies like the UK lack abilities to effectively deal with non-traditional threats¹¹³². As a result, it found “*large parts of the population [...] ill-equipped to take action for themselves in case of serious disruption or interference*”.¹¹³³ To avoid the exploitation of these gaps by adversaries and a further overstretch of professional civil and military responders, the paper argues for a stronger involvement of the wider population in national security.¹¹³⁴ The study’s author argues the case for introducing national resilience training for teenagers which should equip these with “*basic national security skills, specifically those required for citizens and their communities to (partially) mitigate the effects of non-kinetic aggression, in addition to nature-related contingencies such as severe weather events and contagious diseases.*”¹¹³⁵

This proposed shift of national focus to embrace community resilience and cohesion through significant involvement of the citizen in national crisis response aligned to a *Total Defence* approach, would constitute to a strong “counter-cultural” shift for the UK, “*where large parts of the population are uneasy about the government reaching into their personal lives.*”¹¹³⁶

The fact that the leading security and defense think tank with its partners and sponsors is not afraid of a political backlash from this proposal, underlines RUSI’s conviction that more investment in the citizens’ individual *problem solving-focused coping skills* and in the *strengthening of social cohesion* (both areas proposed by this work) are very relevant for the *Strategic Resilience* of an open liberal society.

In Singapore in the meantime, at the time of writing, the early and initial response by the authorities to the COVID-19 pandemic has been considered exemplary with record low fatality rates. Its approach to the pandemic is reflective of the resilience-led approach, of a prepared administration and society, that is able through whole-of-government effort to limit the crisis’ direct and indirect impact, provide necessary support, and – complemented by transparent and effective crisis communication –

1132 See Braw 2020, 2.

1133 *ibid.*, 3.

1134 See *ibid.*, 3.

1135 *ibid.*, 3.

1136 *ibid.*

maintain social trust and encourage community resilience, avoiding the divisiveness and discord experienced from the crisis in other countries. After extending the same attention and care to the migrant workers' who are housed in special dormitories and are politically, socially and economically detached from the community the government has been able to get the spike in infections under control and maintains a low death rate of just 27 deaths from 55,938 confirmed cases (52,350 recovered) as of 18 August 2020.¹¹³⁷

8.3. Case Study Conclusion

Concluding the theory testing, the case study analysis found that the *nine critical tasks* that are at the core of the new *Rings-of-Resilience model* proposed by this work, to establish strengthen and maintain *Strategic Resilience* in open pluralist societies, are being reflected in the actual government resilience-focused counter-terrorism efforts and programmes in both the United Kingdom and in Singapore that are faced with a jihadi terrorist threat.

As a result, it can be stated, that neither the UK case study, nor the Singapore case study, nor the cross-case comparison, were able to falsify the hypothesis.

The analysis of the cases further shows that *the nine critical tasks* proposed by the model, form a useful and practical framework for the categorisation and assessment of existing programmes / efforts. It allows authorities the self-assessment of their effort – indicating strengths and weaknesses, enabling conscious decisions which gaps to close and which not. Importantly the framework also allows the comparison of programmes with each other. This is important in resource allocation decisions which governments are regularly confronted with in face of finite resources.

The dissimilarity of the described cases further indicates – if not a general, then a wider applicability of the model beyond the two tested cases. Other open pluralist societies faced with the same terrorism challenges are likely to benefit from adopting the same framework. Research sub-question three: “Can the findings of question two be applied to the concrete challenge of jihadi terrorism in the open, pluralist society?” can be answered with a “YES” with good confidence.

1137 The Straits Times 2020.

As it was set out, applying the analytical frame of the nine resilience categories to the programmes also helped in the identification of numerous practical measures in each category that may be generalised and most of which are likely to enhance the prevention, response and coping abilities of other open pluralist societies as well. Only minor adaptations may be necessary, to customise them to the specific circumstances of each country.

