

# **HATE TARGETED AT ORGANISATIONS - A LITERATURE REVIEW**

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## ABSTRACT

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Title Hate targeted at organisations – A literature review	
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Abstract <p>The aim of this thesis was to understand who or what are the targets of hate, and the reasons behind the hate, when expressed toward organisations. Even though hate as a research interest has received attention in behavioural disciplines, there seems to be a lack of a systematic link between behavioural and organisational research on hate. Moreover, previous studies have not examined organisations as targets of hate.</p> <p>Implemented as an integrated literature review, this qualitative study delved into the existing knowledge on what is already known of hate targeted at organisations, and searched what new aspects could be found. The literature included in this thesis were published after year 1999 in English language, and the findings included 20 peer-reviewed articles on hate and organisations.</p> <p>The targets of hate identified in the literature review were products, brands, organisations, and people representing an organisation. However, the results of the literature show that that the articles did not clearly discuss toward what, who, or which hate is targeted at in organisations, unless the study concentrated on studying one specific target. Nevertheless, the explored reasons behind hatred targeted at organisations showed the multiple issues on individual, organisational, and societal level, that may lead to hate toward organisations.</p> <p>On the basis of the study, these reasons were developed into three hate journeys of light hate, moderate hate, and intense hate, which vary in intensity. Hate journeys may activate and arise unexpectedly depending on the current societal and individual issues, as well as organisation-related issues. In conclusion, organisations need to be ready to tackle and prevent hate stemming from various levels and in different intensities.</p>	
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<p>Tämän tutkielman tarkoituksena oli ymmärtää, kuka tai mikä on vihan kohde, kun vihaa ilmaistaan organisaatioita kohtaan. Tutkielman tarkoituksena oli myös osoittaa, mistä syistä viha organisaatioita kohtaan syntyy. Vaikka vihaa on tutkittu käyttäytymistieteissä, tätä tutkimustietoa ei ole sovellettu organisaatioiden tutkimuksen kontekstiin. Lisäksi organisaatioita ei ole aiemmassa tutkimuksessa tarkasteltu vihan kohteina.</p> <p>Tutkielma toteutettiin integroituna kirjallisuuskatsauksena, jossa pyrittiin tarkastelemaan olemassa olevaa tietoa organisaatioista vihan kohteina. Lisäksi siinä pyrittiin selvittämään, millaisia uusia näkökulmia aiheesta voisi tuoda esille. Tutkielman aineisto koostui 20 vertaisarvioidusta vihaa ja organisaatioita käsittelevästä artikkelista, jotka oli julkaistu englannin kielellä vuoden 1999 jälkeen.</p> <p>Kirjallisuudesta saatujen tulosten perusteella vihan kohteiksi identifioitiin tuotteet, brändit, organisaatiot sekä organisaatioita edustavat ihmiset. Kirjallisuuskatsauksen tulosten perusteella käy kuitenkin ilmi, ettei tutkimuskirjallisuudessa selkeästi käsitellä sitä, mitä, ketä tai keitä kohtaan vihaa organisaatioissa ilmaistaan. Vihan taustalta tutkitut syyt kuitenkin toivat esiin monia tekijöitä yksilön, organisaation ja yhteiskunnan tasoilla, jotka voivat johtaa organisaatioihin kohdistuvaan vihaan.</p> <p>Tutkimuksen perusteella vihan syyt jaoteltiin kolmeen eri vihapolkuun - kevyeen, maltilliseen ja intensiiviseen vihapolkuun - joiden sisällä vihan voimakkuus vaihtelee. Vihapolut voivat aktivoitua ja saada alkunsa odottamattomasti organisaation ulkopuolisista yhteiskunnallisista ja yksilön tason syistä sekä organisaatiotason syistä. Tämän vuoksi organisaatioiden on oltava valmiina käsittelemään eri tasoilta nousevaa, intensiteetiltään vaihtelevaa vihaa.</p>	
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# 1 INTRODUCTION

It appears that hate has become a tangible reality for organisations as they are increasingly affected by the uncontrollability and severity of it (Platania, Morando, & Santisi, 2020a; Kucuk, 2019, p. 426). For example, a vast number of managers in Italy have considered their companies being targets of hatred and fake news (The Italian Standard Wire Gauge (SWG) in Platania et al. 2020, p. 2). Furthermore, negative stories may even hurt companies' stock returns (Luo, 2009) and anti-branding activities can link to brand value (Krishnamurthy & Kucuk, 2009). Even though negative emotions of customers may impact the economic value of the brand, the effects of hate on organisations are less studied.

It has been stated that in general there is little in-depth empirical research on hatred (Zarantonello, Romani, Grappi, & Bagozzi, 2016, p.21), and often studies on hate have narrowly focused on emotions and "piecemeal interpretations" (Zarantonello et al., 2016, p. 13). The number of studies on hate in marketing research is also low (Platania et al., 2020, p. 2; Zarantonello et al., 2016, p. 13). However, it is notable that hate as a research interest has received more attention during the past years as new studies on hate crimes and hate speech have been conducted in sociology, political science, and in social justice. (Fischer, Halperin, Canetti, & Jasini, 2018; Royzman, McCauley, & Rozin, 2005) Moreover, in corporate communication hate has been studied from the point of view of stakeholder negative engagement (e.g. Lievonen & Luoma-aho, 2015; Naumann, Bowden, & Gabbott, 2020; Lievonen, 2020). Thus, the phenomenon is topical, but it seems that systematic link between behavioural and organisational research on hate is scarce.

The purpose of the thesis is to explore the targets of hate when hate is targeted at organisations and understand why the hate occurs. Moreover, hate is conceptualised in the context of organisations in this thesis. The thesis combines literature on hate from various disciplines – from psychology, brand studies, and corporate communication - to gain a comprehensive outlook on the phenomenon.

The research questions guiding this thesis are specified as:

1. What or who is the target of hate when hate is expressed toward organisations?
2. Why are the targets hated?

## **1.1. Implementation of the research**

Building on symbolic interactionism, this thesis aims to explore the targets of hate and the motivations behind hate, as well as combining behavioural and organisational approaches to study hate when the hate is targeted at organisations. This study focuses on finding existing knowledge on hate targeted at organisations from academic journals. It is conducted as an integrative literature review, which can be described as conduction of research about already existing research (Salminen, 2011, p.1).

When making integrative literature review, critical analysis of the literature is required (Torraco, 2016, p. 423). A careful and critical examination of the main ideas and arguments of the literature is needed, and it involves deconstructing pieces of literature into their basic elements (Torraco, 2016, p. 419). Critical analysis links together with synthesis, and the combination of these provide the means through which new knowledge about a topic can be generated. Whereas critical analysis can be used to identify new research areas, synthesis utilises the knowledge by creating new ways of thinking about the studied matter (Torraco, 2016, p. 421). New theoretical formulations as well as new ways of thinking may be created by using the insights based on the critical analysis of the literature as the concepts and perspective are recasted, combined, reorganised and integrated (Torraco, 2016, p. 420).

The thesis is constructed as follows. First, theoretical background and the main concepts are introduced: symbolic interactionism, stakeholder theory, conceptualisation of hate, reasons of hate, negative engagement, and hate targets are presented. Second, integrative literature review is implemented to explore what are the targets of hate and reasons behind the hate when it is expressed toward organisations. This is done by partly following Boland et al. (2016) nine steps of making a systematic literature review. Third, the results of the literature review are critically analysed, synthesized and linked together with the theoretical background and context of the study. As a result, hate journeys are presented to understand why and how hate can be targeted at organisations.

## 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, theoretical framework for the thesis is outlined. First, symbolic interactionism is introduced as a wider paradigm to combine behavioural and organisational approaches to study hate targeted at organisations. Second, stakeholder theory is discussed to define organisations. Third, hate is conceptualised in the context of organisations, and reasons for hate as well as research on negative engagement are presented. In the end, targets of hate in organisational context are briefly discussed. In the end, a synthesis of the aforementioned topics and a research gap are introduced.

### 2.1. Symbolic interactionism

Symbolic interactionism, in short, studies “the ways in which people converge to share meaning” (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011, p. 194). Symbolic interactionism represents sociocultural tradition to communication theory, which explores the ways meanings, understandings, norms, and rules are formed interactively in communication. The emphasis in the sociocultural approach is on exploring the social worlds people are living in. The approach posits that reality is constructed through interaction processes between human beings in communities, cultures, and groups. (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011, p. 54-55) In the sociocultural approach, the focus is on context and culture, and thus the researchers representing the approach often recognize the importance of the whole situation to microlevel events, even though they might study small aspects of those situations. Symbols are seen to be present in interactions, and the symbols refer to different meanings as communicators move from situation to another. (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011, p. 55)

Symbolic interactionism has been influential within the sociocultural tradition. The origins of symbolic interactionism lay in sociology in the work of George Hebert Mead and Herbert Blumer, and their research have been incorporated in the studies of self, social structures, groups, emotions, and politics. Symbolic interactionism is focused on the ways how meanings and structures in society are formed through interactions. (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011, p. 55 - 56) Social structures from interpersonal interactions to institutions and macro-level phenomena are outcomes of the acts of individuals, whereas structures are seen to reside in patterns of interaction between individuals (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011, p. 190). What exists and what is currently being done is the result of the previous interactions as well as of the interaction currently taking place (Charon, 2001, p.



29 - 30). Moreover, the individual self is seen as a profoundly social entity (Inglis, 2012, p. 112). According to Littlejohn and Foss (2011, p. 190), the tradition can be summarised into six following premises:

- 1) actions and decisions of people are made in accordance with their subjective understandings of the situations they find themselves in,
- 2) interaction processes, not structures, constitute social life, and therefore social life is seen as constantly changing,
- 3) language is a very important part of social life, and people make sense of their experiences through the meanings in the symbols of their primary groups,
- 4) named social objects, that have socially determined meanings, constitute the world,
- 5) interpretations are the basis of people's actions, in which the relevant objects and actions are defined,
- 6) self, like all the other social objects, is defined through social interactions with others.

When it comes to Blumerian symbolic interactionist conceptualisation, there are three main principles that have been outlined (Blumer 1969, p. 2 - 6). First, people are guided by the meanings they have attached to social objects (Blumer, 1969/1986 in Snow, 2001, p. 369). Human action, therefore, consists of and is guided by the meanings people attribute to objects, people, and situations (Inglis, 2012, p. 117). Second, these socially negotiated meanings are modified, refined, and developed through social interactions through time. It is to be noted that meaning is seen as a social product, because individuals demonstrate their commitment by classifying situations along particular lines by acting certain ways. (Blumer, 1969/1986, p. 2 - 6 in Snow, 2001, p. 369; Inglis, 2012, p. 117) Third, the meanings are being transformed and managed through individual interpretive processes that are used to make sense of the objects constituting the social worlds (Blumer 1969/1986, p. 2 - 6 in Snow, 2001, p. 369). Following these principles, hate toward organisations do not form in a vacuum but are created in various interactions. Meanings attached to organisations, too, guide the human action. These meanings are created and transformed in social actions outside of organisations' sphere of influence as well as in interactions with organisations.

Objects, as a part of the first principle outlined by Blumer, are divided into three types of different objects: physical (things), and abstracts (ideas), social (people). A physical object refers to, for example, concrete things such as houses and schools. Abstract objects can refer to thought patterns, honesty, or justice; those are constructed through interactions with others and the interpretations of

concepts and principles attached to those. Social object, on the other hand, refers to meanings attached to the object and is created in the process of interaction. (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011, p. 194; Blumer, 1969, p. 4 - 5). Blumer (2004, p. 42) states that "[t]he meaning of an object exists in a relation between the object and the subject for whom it is an object; its meaning exists in how the subject designates the object. If people designate or see a given thing differently, it will have different meanings for them". The relationship between the objects and action is a process, and before actions there are indication and interpretation of the object (Blumer, 2004, p. 45). When people express hatred toward organisations – that are social objects - it can be a result of the negative meanings that the subjects associate with organisations and is result of interaction processes.

When it comes to Mead's (1969) conceptualisation of the theory, it can be divided into three basic concepts: *society*, *self*, and *mind*. These three categories represent the aspects of the general process of *social act* which cannot be analysed into subparts. (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011, p. 191) Social act may be short or long-term, and the acts relate to each other and build up throughout time. Acts, however, begin as impulses, and they can consist of perceptions and assignment of meanings. (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011, p. 191) According to Charon (2007, p. 148 - 151) meaning giving and defining always occur in relation to social actions; either in social situations or inside one's own mind. In interaction, the institutional communities' roles and different identities are created and maintained. Social acts involve a relationship between individual's initial gestures, another person's response to those, and a result that is the meaning of the act for the persons involved in the situation. Gestures refer to mechanisms within social acts, and a gesture with shared meaning is called a "*significant symbol*" which indicates social acts in the future. It is to be noted, though, that meaning is a triadic relationship of all the three elements. This can be demonstrated as follows: a holdup is a result of a situation where a robber indicates to the victim that they will be robbed, after which the victim gives their money to the robber. (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011, p. 191 - 192)

Moreover, solitary actions, such as walking alone or reading, are considered as social acts, because the individual relies on meanings and actions learned previously in social actions with others. In other words, solitary actions are interactional in a sense that they have their foundation in already occurred responses and gestures that continue in one's own mind. There are meanings attached to symbolic interaction of, for example, walking. (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011, p. 191) Social acts may be joint actions, like marriages and war, and these consist of smaller interlinkages of smaller interactions. In group patterns, nothing is permanent but changing, because individual action is a starting point of each case.

(Littlejohn & Foss, 2011, p. 191) When it comes to hate targeted at organisations, the concepts of solitary and social actions can offer explanations on why hate is formed: people may rely on meanings and actions they have experienced in interaction with organisations or what they have learned from others about organisations. For example, an individual may have associated certain negative meanings to a certain organisation through social actions, and the social act in relation to the organisation could potentially be expressed as a hateful act, demonstration, or boycott perhaps.

*Society*, in Mead's theory, refers to cooperative behaviours of the members of society. Cooperation consists of the member's understanding of the other's actions and intentions and responding to those. Significant symbols make up the society, which is constituted of networked social interactions. In these interactions people attach meanings to actions through symbols, and institutions are based on the interactions of the people involved in the institutions. For example, court has no meaning without the interpretations of actions of those that are involved in it. (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011, p. 192) To Mead, society emerges out of interaction and shapes selves, and the self then shapes society – society is continuously created and recreated (Stryker, 2008).

The concept of *the self* is based on the idea that one has a self because self is an object which one can respond to. By role-taking an individual can assume how others see them, which leads to one having a self-concept. (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011, p. 193) Another crucial concept in Mead's thinking in relation to self is the idea of "*generalised other*". According to Blumer (2004, p. 61) the generalised other is constructed by individuals out of one's own group experiences. The individuals have different associations to others' associations and social groups, and the generalised other is a composition of these individuals and groups through which the individuals see themselves. In the context of organisations, this could mean that people perceive organisations and their actions in accordance with and through the views of their reference groups, society, or past experiences.

*Mind*, on the other hand, refers to a process of thinking, interaction with oneself. *Minding* happens when a situation is interpreted in one's mind. Significant symbols are used to name objects, and something is defined on how one might act toward it. People act differently toward others depending on how they perceive the relationship with them: people will, for example, start acting differently toward a friend toward whom they start to feel romantic feelings. Symbolic-minding process creates the objects to be what they are; it is the lens through which the object is seen and changes when new or different actions toward an object are envisioned. (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011, p. 193) The symbolic-minding process makes social objects, such as organisations, to be what they are in one's mind.

The perception or interpretation of an organisation can change when new actions are envisioned about it.

Stryker (2008) has offered modifications to Mead's framework by creating the so-called structural symbolic theory. Stryker (2008, p. 18) states that Mead's the key concepts imprecise, especially when it comes to the concepts of society and self. In addition, they add that Mead's image of society is not satisfactory anymore (Stryker, 2008, p. 18). Nevertheless, they give credit to Mead's views on meaning as a very important part of social interaction (Stryker 2008, p. 19). Despite of this, the main argument Stryker (2008, p. 18) makes is that "although society emerges from social process, organised society exists before the appearance of all new members". In other words, society is perceived to shape the individual to shape society (Stryker, 2008, p.18). For example, courts do not have meaning without the interpretations of it and the people involved in it (Littlejohn & Foss 2011, p. 192), and combined with Stryker's (2008, p. 18) ideas, organisations and meanings attached to those may have existed long before the new members of society have. In accordance with this view, organisations and institutions can be seen to shape individuals who then shape organisations, as long as the organisations are perceived as structures being shaped by the individuals' behaviour in and outside of the organisation.

Stryker (2008, p. 19) adds that structural symbolic theory can consider as well as accommodate stability and change. The theory acknowledges social structures as patterned interactions as well as the resistance these social structures have for change. Society is perceived as being composed of organised systems of interactions as well as the so-called role relationships. Furthermore, society is seen as a mixture of different communities, groups, and institutions, where diversity of these communities is sometimes interdependent and sometimes isolated. According to Stryker (2008, p. 19), social life occurs in relatively small networks of relationships, not so much within the whole society. Moreover, the effect of social structures is seen as a process: class, gender, and ethnicity, and other large-scale structures, operate through more intermediate structures such as schools, neighbourhoods, and other social structures. Self is seen being shaped by these structures within proximity of an individual. (Stryker, 2008, p. 20)

In conclusion, symbolic interactionism provides a means of investigating the social world as well as contextualised processes (Milliken & Schreiber, 2012), and following this idea, creates the link between the behavioural and the organisational research perspectives on the topic in this thesis. As stated before, institutions are constituted of the interactions of the people that are involved in the institutions (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011, p. 192). As courts have no meaning without the interpretations of it and the people involved in those (Littlejohn & Foss 2011,

p. 192), the same way organisations as social objects do not have meaning without the interpretations that are attached to the organisations or the people involved in the organisations.

The elements of symbolic interaction also offer an outlook on why hate is targeted at organisations. People attach meanings to social objects which exist only in relation to its meaning (Blumer, 2004, p. 45). These meanings can reside in one's own mind or in group interactions (Charon, 2007, p. 148 - 149), and can offer a means of interpreting the reasons to why organisations are hated. If hated organisations are perceived to be, or if meanings of these organisations in one's mind are negative, even evil, one can start acting hatefully toward those, in accordance with their feelings. This occurs because meaning giving and defining are related to social actions, and in these interactions the institutional communities' roles and different identities are created and maintained (Charon, 2007, p. 148 - 149).

When it comes to Mead's so-called "minding process", organisations can be interpreted differently in people's minds. As stated, people act differently toward the objects depending on the relationship they perceive to be having with them (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011, p. 193). According to Blumer (2004, p. 47), it is possible for change to occur in the actions of communities and individuals if the social objects receive new meanings. Interaction is the potential reason for change because the social objectives and meanings are created in interaction (Blumer, 2004, p. 47, 82-83). In other words, the meanings related to organisations can change if new meanings are attached to organisations. This is the result of interaction, and thus the interactions between hated organisations and the subject can carry potential for change. However, since the interactions take place in other social interactions as well, organisations can be viewed via different lenses of the generalised other. People might perceive a certain hate-targeted organisation through their lenses of the generalised other which is constructed by people's own pasts and associations to different social groups.

These aforementioned elements of symbolic interactionism will be discussed in the analysis section of this thesis, which is based on the results of what the hated targets are in the context of organisations and why they or those are hated. In the next subchapter, conceptualisation of organisation is presented in the context of this study.

## 2.2. Stakeholder theory: organisation defined

The concept of organisation has different definitions depending on the discipline. Kotler (Kotler, 1975) has concluded that in political science, an organisation consists of power relations, whereas in sociology, people in different roles and statuses make up an organisation. When it comes to economics, an organisation refers to a set of people who aim at maximising their utilities. In marketing, an emphasis is given to an organisation's relationship and interaction with its stakeholders, the public, and the environment. (Kotler, 1975) In the context of this thesis, stakeholder theory is utilised to create an understanding of organisation. Moreover, because this thesis concentrates on the phenomenon of hate being targeted at organisations, different types of organisations from non-governmental organisations to private sector firms are included in the research to which stakeholder theory offers a framework to study various types of organisations. Stakeholder theory is seen as one of the dominant approaches to analyse the normative obligations of the ones engaging in business. (Hasnas, 2013, p. 5)

The basic idea of stakeholder theory is that a firm should create value not only for shareholders, but to other stakeholders as well (Freeman, 1984). When it comes to defining stakeholders, R. Edward Freeman - seen as the founding father of stakeholder theory - has defined them as groups or individuals, who affect or are affected by firm's decision making, and to groups and individuals, who can affect firm's actions. (Freeman, 1984; Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Parmar, & de Colle, 2010)

Stakeholder theory can be seen to consist of many stakeholder theories which have a normative core, and have a link to the idea on how corporations ought to be governed and how managers should act (Edward Freeman & Phillips, 2002, p. 43). Freeman et al. (2010, p. 63) have discussed that stakeholder theory is rather a framework, being "a set of ideas from which a number of theories can be derived". According to some scholars (e.g. Hasnas, 2013; Freeman, 2010) there have been confusion and mischaracterizations about the nature of stakeholder theory during the past decades about, for example, on what types of organisations it is applicable to. Freeman et al. (2010, p. 63), however, have stated that stakeholder theory can serve many purposes in different disciplines as well as address various questions. It can be applied to range of other types of organisations, not only to for-profit organisations (Freeman et al., 2010, p. 63; Hasnas, 2013, p. 53). Freeman et al. (2010, p. 4 - 5) discuss that stakeholder theory was developed to address the problems of value creation and trade, ethics of capitalism, and managerial mindset, which concern many types of organisations. It is

perceived being rooted in humanistic conception, which assumes that business is a vehicle for human cooperation for realising outcomes that would not otherwise be attainable. In addition, it takes into account the different, both immediate and long-term impacts on society. (Freeman, Phillips & Sisodia, 2020, p. 219)

Freeman et al. (2020, 219) state that stakeholder theory recognises both the cooperative and competitive elements to exist when it comes to economic relationships. Furthermore, perceptions of what is fair from the stakeholder's point of view have been concluded to have an important impact on interactions in these two contexts. The boundaries of a firm and the meaning it has, for example, to value creation and values alignment, is an open concept in stakeholder theory. The boundaries of a firm and the meaning it has, for example, to value creation and values alignment, is an open concept in stakeholder theory (Freeman et al., 2020, 220) Moreover, Freeman et al. (2020, p. 220) discuss how businesses have recognized the need to serve a higher purpose of their own interlinked with the necessity to deliver profits, and how this idea of shared purpose is a critical function in aligning the business' stakeholders around this purpose. If there is no articulated purpose, Freeman et al. (2020, p. 220) argue that businesses revert to the "default purpose" which refers to profit maximation.

According to Hasnas (2013, p. 49) Freeman et al. (2010) identify four ideas that constitute the stakeholder theory: 1) the separation fallacy, 2) the open question argument, 3) the integration thesis, and 4) the responsibility principle. The separation fallacy refers to the fallacious belief that business and ethics are separate from each other. The open questions argument, on the other hand, means that it is reasonable to ponder whose interests, values, and rights are affected by business decisions. The integration thesis claims that business and ethics should be simultaneously discussed, so that the one should not be discussed without discussing the other too. The responsibility principle makes the claim that people often agree with the idea that they are responsible over the effects of their actions on other people. (Freeman et al., 2010, 6-8)

Phillips (Phillips, 2003) has concluded that there are three essential characteristics that distinguish organisations: 1) freedom of exit, 2) value of contribution, as well as 3) orienting aims and purposes. Freedom of exit means that there is either an option to exit the organisation or the possibility of ejection by other members (Phillips, 2003, p. 46-47). Value of contribution refers to the idea that one has the knowledge and control over one's commitment and contribution (Phillips, 2003, p. 47). Third, orienting aims and purposes means that "[p]eople join and remain with associations, just as they are recruited and evaluated, on the basis of the association's objectives" (Phillips, 2003, p. 48).

Comparing and studying the differing views on stakeholder theory, Hasnas (2013, p. 53) concludes that stakeholder theory may be applied to both for-profit and non-profit organisations, because both can be characterised as voluntary associations that have been “formed to realize specified aims and purposes”, and from which its members can freely exit or be ejected, and in advancing its objectives, attracts and retains its members. These elements characterise various types of organisations from charities and NGO’s to corporations. Hasnas (2013, p. 54) adds that because stakeholder theory is made for providing ethical guidance to organisations and its managers, it is also reasonable to think that the theory applies to various kinds of organisations. In the context of this thesis, Hasnas (2013) idea on organisations is applied because hate can be targeted at many types of organisations and as this study attempts to gain comprehensive understanding on the phenomenon previously found in the literature. In the next sub-chapter, hate is conceptualised in the context of behavioural studies.

### 2.3. Hate conceptualised

There is no single accepted definition for hate, and there is a lack of consensus about the defining features of hate, for example, among emotion theorists (Fischer et al., 2018; Royzman et al., 2005). The classical definitions, according to Royzman et al. (2005, p. 4), already imply that there have been various views on hate, as well as on what the beliefs, feelings and behaviours associated with hate are. The definitions contradict by the weight that is given to feeling and judgement, because hate is seen either as a feeling that is targeted at a hated object or a negative judgement about the object of hate. (Royzman et al., 2005, p. 4) Interestingly, according to Royzman et al., (2005, p.4), early definitions disagree about whether hate is painful, as well as about its cause:

Descartes (1694/1989): “hate meant awareness of an object as something bad and an urge to withdraw from it”

Spinoza (1677/1985): “a case of pain accompanied by a perception of some external cause”

Aristotle (trans. 1954): “hate -- is pain-free (in addition to being incurable by time and striving for the annihilation of its object)”

Hume (1739/1980): “hate -- cannot be defined, because it is a feeling with introspective immediacy of sensory impressions”

Darwin (1872/1998): “a special feeling, one that lacks a distinct facial sign and manifests itself as rage”



Altogether, the concept of hate has evoked several kinds of explanations throughout history in different disciplines. Some argue it is a feeling or emotion, whereas others claim it to be a syndrome - and this has been a topic under a continuous debate (Royzman et al., 2005; Fischer et al., 2018). Examples of different perspectives on hate are presented on Table 1:

Table 1. Examples of definitions of hate in different fields of study.

Field	Definition	Outlook	Article
Psychology	"Hate is a stable emotional pattern marked by severely negative feelings toward some person or group."	A negative, emotional pattern toward some or someone	R. F., & Butz, D. A. (2005). Roots of hate, violence, and evil. In R. J. Sternberg (Ed.), <i>The psychology of hate</i> (1st ed., 87-102).
	"Hate is an intense negative view of, accompanied by intense feelings against, the objects of hate. The intense devaluation and the associated feelings make it satisfying to have the hated other suffer, experience loss, and be harmed."	An intensive, negative view and enmity with an aim to harm the other(s)	Staub, E. (2006) The Origins and Evolution of Hate, With Notes on Prevention. In R. J. Sternberg (Ed.), <i>The psychology of hate</i> . (1st ed. 51-66).
	"Hate is based on perceptions of a stable, negative disposition of persons or groups. We hate persons and groups more because of who they are, than because of what they do. Hate has the goal to eliminate its target."	A stable, negative perception about the other(s) identity, with an aim to destroy them	Fischer, A., Halperin, E., Canetti, D., & Jasini, A. (2018). Why We Hate. <i>Emotion Review</i> , 10(4), 309-320.
Social sciences / Conflict resolution	"Hatred is the affective phenomenon that encapsulates the idea of stable negative characteristics in the out group and the belief in the out-group's inability to undergo positive change."	A phenomenon which includes a stable, negative perception of the other who is unable to change	Halperin, E. (2008). Group-based hatred in intractable conflict in Israel. <i>Journal of Conflict Resolution</i> , 52(5), 713-736.
	"The consumer's dissatisfaction with the product	Hate is an emotion and	Platania, S.; Morando, M.; Santisi, G. (Platania

Consumer behaviour research	or service performance. The consumer's hatred of the brand is related to the desire for revenge and avoidance. This kind of emotion does not remain only a desire; it is often transformed into real actions that lead to consumer behaviour."	has behavioural outcomes	et al., 2020) Psychometric Properties, Measurement Invariance, and Construct Validity of the Italian Version of the Brand Hate Short Scale (BHS). <i>Sustainability</i> , 12, 2013.
	"Hate is a more intense emotional response that consumers have toward a brand than brand dislike."	Hate is more intensive emotion than other negative feelings	Hegner, S. M., Fetscherin, M. & van Delzen, M. (2017). Determinants and outcomes of brand hate. <i>Journal of Product &amp; Brand Management</i> , 26(1), 13-25.

In addition to the debate over the nature of hate – whether it is for example a feeling or a syndrome – scholars have discussed whether hate is a mixture of different emotions or if it can be differentiated from other negative emotions such as anger. Fischer et al. (2018, p. 311) define hate from other negative emotions based on its goals and duration. Instead of analysing the different combinations of hate and other feelings, Fischer et al. (2018) aim at conceptualising hate by examining it through the aforementioned elements. Fischer et al. (2018, p. 311) differentiate hatred and its motivational goal from other emotions' motivational goals by the destructiveness of it. Hate has a motivational goal that aims at either mentally, socially, or physically destroying its target. They suggest that anger aims to change the target by attacking, contempt aims at socially excluding its target by avoidance, disgust distances oneself from the target, revenge includes the intention to get even with the other to restore the equity in suffering, and humiliation withdraws one from the target to protect oneself. (Fischer et al., 2018)

All the above mentioned may be associated with the emotion of hate. Nevertheless, the actions stemming from hate will differ based on the relationship between the hater and the hated, and why hate has been developed. Fischer et al. (2018, p. 311) illustrate this by explaining how a hated parent can be eliminated by ignoring and banning them from one's life, and a company CEO would be destroyed by being derogated, scored, and ridiculed by the ones who hate the CEO.

As stated before, hate can be differentiated from other feelings, such as anger, by its duration (Fischer et al. 2018, p. 311). It is not possible to sustain anger for long periods of time, but it is possible to sustain hate (Kucuk, 2019, p. 16). In

other words, hate lasts longer than the event that evoked it, and it may take a form more sustained than just a reaction to a specific event. In addition to its motivational goal, hatred has its roots in appraisals that target the very nature of the hate target. Therefore, hate is not just a reaction to a single event, nor short-term emotion - it is more like a sentiment or attitude. (Fischer et al., 2018, p. 311) It is to be noted, too, that Fischer et al. (2018, p. 311) explain how other scholars (e.g. Fischer et al., 2018; Sternberg, 2003) have concluded that some emotions may occur both as immediate and chronic, in other words, short-term or long-term.

Table 2. Differences between anger and hate (as in Fischer et al., 2018).

	<b>Anger</b>	<b>Hate</b>
Goal	Aims to change the target by attacking	Aims at either mentally, socially, or physically destroying its target
Duration	Short-term	Long-term
Nature	Reaction to a certain situation	Attitude or sentiment
Perception of the other	The other is acting maliciously	The other is inherently malicious

However, the sentiment especially in group-contexts is that the chronic hatred organises people's social world to ingroups and outgroups. The goal is to eliminate this group from one's environment to prevent future offences which could cause pain to oneself. (Halperin, 2008 in Fischer et al., 2018, p. 311) If the hated is perceived as evil, they can also be morally excluded and perceived as psychologically distant, outside of the scope of justice (Opatow, 2005, p. 127). In addition, Fischer et al. (2018) state that the reason for hate is the target itself, not their actions, and that hate is aimed at persons or groups consisting of a stable, negative disposition of them. Thus, people are hated because of what they are perceived to be, not what they do. The other is seen as malicious, not as someone who just acts maliciously. (Fischer et al., 2018)

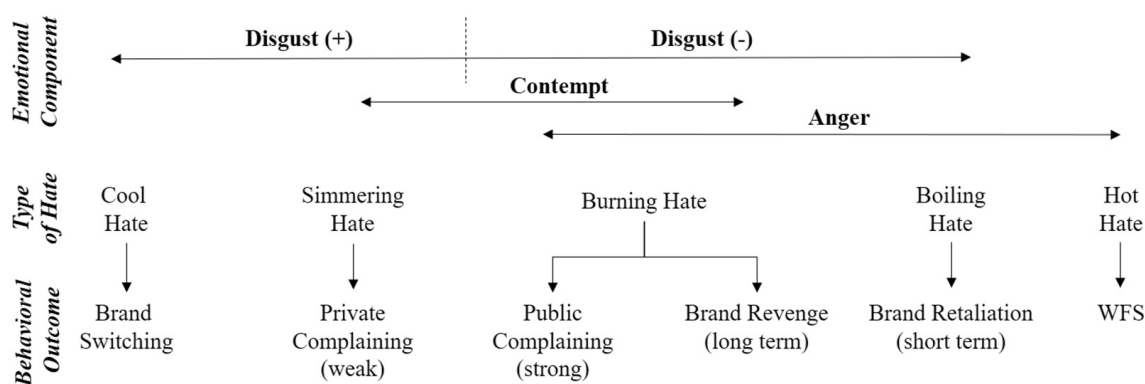
When it comes to other conceptualisations of hate, Robert Sternberg, one of the leading scholars in studying hate in the field of psychology, has created a theory called triangular theory of the structure of hate (Sternberg, 2003) in which hate is conceptualised into a combination of different negative emotions. The theory has three potential components, which are divided in three: negation of intimacy, passion, and commitment, which constitute the different types of hate. Negation of intimacy refers to seeking distance usually from a target (individual) who repulses and disgusts the person experiencing hate, whereas passion in hate

is perceived as intense anger or fear which either causes the person to approach or avoid the hate target. Decision-commitment can be characterised by devaluing and diminution through contempt, which means that the hater might experience contempt toward the hate target and perceive them as subhuman as well as promote the preferred population to think alike. (Sternberg, 2003, p. 39)

These three potential components of hate that may generate seven different types that are 1) cool hate (disgust) 2) hot hate (anger + fear) 3) cold hate (devaluation through contempt) 4) boiling hate (disgust + anger-fear) 5) simmering hate, loathing (disgust + contempt) 6) seething hate: revilement (passion - commitment) 7) burning hate: need for annihilation (all three components). According to Sternberg (2005, p. 41) the listing was the first attempt to conceptualise or characterise hate.

Sternberg's study (2005) on hate has recently been applied by Fetscherin et al. (2019) to study brand hate. Fetscherin et al. (2019) found that there are five different types of brand hate that result from the three potential components (disgust, contempt, and anger) defined by Sternberg (2003). The outcomes lead to brand switching, complaining, brand retaliation, as well as making financial sacrifices to harm the brand. To be more specific, the types of brand hate are 1) cool hate, which leads to brand switching, 2) simmering hate, which leads to private complaining, 3) burning hate, leading to public complaining and brand revenge, 4) boiling hate, leading to brand retaliation, and 5) hot hate which leads to WFS (willingness to make financial sacrifices) (Fetscherin et al., 2019). More precisely, WFS refers to actions such as paying hosting fees for the purpose of hosting an anti-brand website (Fetscherin et al., 2019, p. 124)

Figure 1. Importance of brand hate components and outcomes according to Fetscherin et al. (2019, p. 124).



The fifth type of hate - hot hate - is a distinctive and different variable from other consumer behaviours and constructs and is triggered by feeling of

anger (Fetscherin et al., 2019, p. 124). Hot hate is seen to consist of extreme feelings of anger toward the target, which does not consider personal consequences (Fetscherin et al., 2019, p. 119). It is different from burning and boiling hate because it relies on interdependence theory which suggests that people can be expected to willingly sacrifice to do harm for a relationship. On the other hand, burning hate resulting in brand revenge and boiling hate resulting in brand retaliation, seek equity with the brand that is hated. (Fetscherin et al., 2019, p. 118) Therefore, it can be concluded that hot hate aims to destroy the target because of the willingness to make sacrifices in order to harm the target and is a long-term oriented attitude. These characteristics are compliant with the ideas of Fischer et al. (2018) on hate. The characteristics of this kind of hot hate form what in this thesis is called “intense hate”.

Burning hate, is divided into two outcomes: public complaining and brand revenge. Public complaining may be short-term and more reactionary than brand revenge, which on the other hand is characterised by long-term orientation and the hated target perceived as a threat. (Fetscherin et al., 2019, p. 119) Boiling hate, resulting in brand retaliation, can also be seen having characteristics from both anger and hate. It impulsively seeks to restore equity without harming the brand and thus may be considered anger-like behaviour. (Fetscherin et al., 2019, p. 118) Based on Fischer et al. (2018) ideas, public complaining is not yet hate since it does not seek to implicitly destroy the target. However, when hate includes revenge it may sometimes refer to a long-term attitude about someone or something that is perceived as a threat, which also characterises hate in Fischer et al. (2018) study. Brand revenge does not include the idea to specifically destroy the hated target but instead seeks to get even with the target, and thus attacking the target would be characterised as anger, not hate, according to Fischer et al. (2018). In short, burning and boiling hate are characterised by restoration of equity with the hate target and neither aim to destroy the target nor seem to perceive it as inherently bad. Therefore, this type of hate in this thesis is called as “moderate hate” as it is not as extreme as intense hate.

Simmering hate results in private complaining when no direct confrontation is sought after. The purpose is only to distance oneself from the brand, and the target of hate is loathed but hate is not publicly expressed since feelings of anger are lacking. Cool hate leads to avoidance and brand switching because the haters want to distance themselves of the brand. Instead of confrontation, cool hate is characterised by aversion. (Fetscherin et al., 2019, p. 119). Cool hate only leads to avoidance-like behaviour, and brand switching and simmering hate do not seek direct confrontation with the brand - the brand is only loathed in private. (Fetscherin et al., 2019, p. 119) Avoidance also does not seek revenge which is

perceived to be the characteristics of anger, not hate (Fischer et al., 2018). However, in the context of this thesis cool hate and simmering hate are considered as potential and initial stages of more intense hatred and are described as “light hate”. It is to be noted that all the different types of hate are not stagnant but different types of hate may spill over to other levels: light levels of hate can escalate into more intense levels of hate (Fetscherin et al., 2019).

Fetscherin et al. (2019) and Fischer et al. (2018) outlooks on defining hate differ, which also shows the complexity of the matter. In this study, these two outlooks have been combined and differentiated into light, moderate, and intense hate (see Table 3). Even though hate could be differentiated from anger by its duration (Fischer et al., 2018) in reality, negative emotions overlap. However, in light of both Fischer et al. (2018) and Fetscherin et al. (2019) studies, it can be concluded that the more intense the feeling of hatred is and the more commitment there is to hate, the more likely it is for the actions to become public (public complaining, brand revenge, brand retaliation, WFS) and aim at harming, even destroying the target by willingly sacrificing one’s resources. It can also be concluded that intense hate toward organisations is both behavioural and public. In the next sub-chapter, the reasons behind hate are discussed.

Table 3. Hate conceptualisation.

<b>Study</b>	<b>Light hate</b>	<b>Moderate hate</b>	<b>Intense hate</b>
Fetscherin et al., 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Simmering hate and cool hate</li> <li>- Goal is to avoid the hated target</li> <li>- Characterised as aversion</li> <li>- Private complaining</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Burning hate and boiling hate</li> <li>- Goal is to restore equity</li> <li>- Both short- and long-term</li> <li>- Target may be perceived as a threat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hot hate</li> <li>- Does not consider personal consequences</li> <li>- Willingness to make sacrifices in order to harm (e.g. WFS)</li> </ul>
Fischer et al., 2018		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Anger</li> <li>- Aims to change the target by attacking</li> <li>- Short-term</li> <li>- Reactional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hate</li> <li>- Aims to destroy the target</li> <li>- Long-term attitude</li> <li>- Target perceived as inherently bad</li> </ul>

## 2.4. Reasons for hate

When it comes to research on hate, not only have the emotion or attitude of hate been studied, but also the reasons that have evoked it. Sternberg (2005, p. 38) has created a categorisation of hate, where rational and character-conditioned hate was separated. Rational hate refers to rationally based hate when “someone has swindled one from fame and fortune”, whereas character-conditioned hate is categorised as a much more dangerous version of hate (Sternberg, 2005, p. 38). Character-conditioned hate, according to Sternberg (2005), is targeted at groups that have been chosen to be the hate targets, after which aggressive behaviour is targeted at them.

Kucuk (2019), on the other hand, has discussed how moderate hate occurs when one is treated unfairly and legally or socially acceptably or when one is treated fairly but illegally or socially unacceptably. When being treated unfairly and legally or socially acceptably, moderate hate will occur, for example, in a case where a medicine company finds a life-saving medicine but puts such a high price on it that people are not able to afford it. In other words, if one has enough money, they would have a right to live. Whilst this company’s act is not illegal, it is still unfair. The hate is labelled as moderate since the act is not illegal, but when one would still attempt to justify their hatred toward the company. (Kucuk, 2019, p. 11)

Table 4. Perceived injustice and hate according to Kucuk (2019, p. 10).

	<b>Legal/socially acceptable</b>	<b>Illegal/socially unacceptable</b>
<b>Fair</b>	Acceptance and love	Moderate hate
<b>Unfair</b>	Moderate hate	Rejection and intense hate

From the other point of view, moderate hate can be viewed as illegal or socially unacceptable but fair. Kucuk (2019, p. 11) describes this kind of situation by referring to heroes and the bad guys of actions movies: the main character, the hero, gets the chance to kill the enemies. The cops see the situation, but because it is socially acceptable to murder the bad guys, the cop lets the hero go – even though they had just committed a murder. The cops did not follow the law, but it was fair to let the hero go. By unfair and illegal or socially unacceptable behaviour he refers to rejection and intense hate. This becomes evident when one treats the other unfairly and then denies their actions, and the duration of the behaviour will affect the level of hate. For example, an employee might experience intense hate if their employer lowers their salary and harasses them without a reason,

but gives promotions, pay raises and fair treatment to other employees with no grounds. (Kucuk, 2019, p. 10)

When it comes to fair and legal or socially acceptable behaviour, or in other words, acceptance and love, the opposite occurs. A person in this case is treated fairly and legally, and even though they might be punished for something, they would know there is a good reason behind it and therefore, that does not necessarily affect the degree of love and positive feelings. One could even admit that they deserved the punishment, even though it would not feel good. If the other person forgives them, even though they were wrong, that will create love and compassion. Afterwards, we may approach these people who have forgiven us with love because they were right. (Kucuk, 2019, p. 12) He also makes the notion that in most of the cases when one's perception about right and wrong is threatened, they will feel violated and experience hate toward the one behind the act. Love and hate are, in many cases, are related concepts in different spectrums of human emotions. (Kucuk, 2019, p. 12)

With regards to the idea of justified and unjustified hate (Sternberg, 2005) or fair and unfair hate (Kucuk, 2019), one may ask whether the feeling of the hater would change as well if the hated target changed their actions. If there are justified reasons behind hatred, hate may become less intense if the issue causing hatred was solved rightfully. If by changing one's behaviour the hater would stop hating, one would speak about anger, as Fischer et al. (2018) suggest. In short, if the person causing anger changed their actions, anger would disappear. Contrary to anger, hate would not be reduced even if the target changed their actions since hatred is not characterised by one's actions but their nature – by who they are. Most likely, the hate target is perceived as being immoral and malicious, and in addition, the hater might feel powerless and having no control (Fischer et al., 2018, p. 317).

However, Fischer et al. (2018) conclusions do not seem to take into account the notions by Sternberg (2005) about justified hate, Kucuk's (2019) categorisations on fair and unfair: hate might have a justified reason behind it and therefore, it may have other outcomes than devastation and destruction only, such as a call for justice. This is characterised as moderate hate in this thesis. It still may aim at harming the target, but if the hated changed their actions, hate could potentially become less intense. Fetcher et al. (2019) also make the notion on the evolving nature of hate. In other words, hate can have different levels of intensity: it can grow from being less intense to more intense, depending on the behaviour of the target and the perceived change in the hate target's nature and the other way around, as discussed in the previous sub-chapter.



Even though hate would be moderate, and perhaps short-term, it would not necessarily disappear anywhere because reputation and the character of the hated from the hater's perspective could yet remain unchanged (e.g. moderate hate, see Table 4). The other could still be hated because of what they are perceived to be, and their actions are seen to represent their "malicious" true selves. As symbolic interactionism posits, people act differently toward the objects depending on the relationship they experience with them (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011, p. 193). If the meanings attached to organisation are very negative, one may start acting hatefully toward it in accordance with their perception (Charon, 2007, p. 148 - 149). Since hatred needs time to evolve (Fischer et al., 2018), downregulating and dissolving hate would require more time to dissolve than short-term feelings such as light hate or anger. Thus, it can be assumed that there are no quick strategies for dissolving hate but rather, it is a process.

It is to be noted, too, that justification for hate can be well-rounded in the mind of the hater when nobody else sees justification for it. According to Kucuk (2020, p. 7) the level of hate may be determined by the hater's prejudice and perception of truth. In case there is no justified reason to hate in the eyes of a third party, the hater may be described as prejudiced hate, in the context of this research, "unjustified" (Kucuk, 2019, p. 8). It is to be remembered too that there are justified and logically rounded reasons for hateful feelings, for example lying or betraying (Kucuk, 2019, p. 8).

However, discussion about justice and justification leads to ponderings about morals and ethics. What makes someone's behaviour justified from the third party's point of view? People may have different opinions about right and wrong in relation to objects, people, or events. Perceived injustice upsets, and the feeling might evolve into hate. The perceived justice and injustice are, as well as hatred, affected by one's own past, personality, and threatened identity. (Kucuk 2019, p. 8) Furthermore, Kucuk (2019, p. 19) presents the notion that perceived injustice and unfairness are decided by society based on the ideas that have affected the formation of that society. In societies, right and wrong are defined by the law. If society lacks a strong social or legal value system, people have the tendency to create their own justifications which is, however, limited by their own perception and capability to understand the factors influencing themselves. (Kucuk, 2019, p. 8)

In the context of this thesis, the perceived justification or unjustification is defined from the perspective of organisations: whether the organisations have control over the issue of which they are accused of. However, it is to be noted that justification or unjustification of somethings is context- and case-dependent and cannot always be strictly divided into two categories. In addition, there

might be different levels of justification and unjustification. In the next sub-chapter, negative engagement in the context of organisations is discussed.

## 2.5. Negative engagement

Negative engagement refers to “experience-based series of participative actions where negative issues concerning an organisation or brand are publicly discussed” (Lievonen et al., 2015, p. 288). Negative engagement has a clear target which makes it an important issue for the organisations, brands, and individuals to consider (Lievonen et al., 2015, p. 533), and the concept includes the idea of participative actions taking place publicly, and the actions may take place in both online and offline contexts (Hollebeek & Chen 2014 in Lievonen et al., 2018, p. 531) The negatively engaged stakeholder may also aim at involving others in active, dedicated, and sometimes destructive attacks (Lievonen et al., 2015, p. 541). It is often accompanied by unfavourable thoughts, feelings, and behaviours about an organisation or a brand (Lievonen, Luoma-aho, & Bowden, 2018, p. 531), and manifest in negative word-of-mouth, possible retaliation, and revenge behaviours (Lievonen et al., 2015, p. 533).

Moreover, the components of negative consumer engagement can be conceptualised as and differentiated into perceived negative cognitive, emotional and behavioural aspects. The cognitive aspect can refer to unfavourable object-related thoughts, the emotional aspect may include feelings like object-related resentment, and the behavioural aspect can lead to act based on the negative feeling. (Hollebeek and Chen, 2014; Lievonen, 2020) Thus, negative engagement can be perceived as multidimensional phenomenon that includes these aforementioned aspects (Lievonen, 2020). In the context of this thesis, intense and moderate hate are interpreted as negative engagement, because these types of hate are affective (an attitude and/or a strong emotion), cognitive (includes a belief about the target), and behavioural (aims to destroy or restore equity) (Fischer et al., 2018; Fetscherin et al., 2019), as these three elements constitute negative engagement.

A more passive form of engagement is described as disengagement which refers to “weak negative orientation toward a focal object or relationship that manifests when customers physically or emotionally distance themselves from the focal object or relationship” (Lievonen et al., 2015, p. 533). Negative engagement is evident in expressions of negative thoughts and feelings; it is a more visible, active form of engagement than disengagement, and is a lot broader as a phenomenon (Lievonen et al., 2015, p. 533). In the context of this thesis,

disengagement also refers to the concept of light hate which often results in avoidance (Fetscherin et al., 2018).

The first phase of the engagement process is an issue or an experience of the stakeholder, and if neither one lead to feelings of anger, it activates negative engagement (Bowden, Luoma-Aho, & Naumann, 2016; Lievonen & Luoma-aho, 2015). Anger has also been found to be a central emotion and component when a stakeholder becomes a so-called hateholder (Lievonen & Luoma-aho, 2015). Anger either causes the relationship to end or results in complaining when the aim of the hateholder is to change the situation (Lievonen & Luoma-aho, 2015). This may lead to hurting the service provider (Zeelenberg & Pieters, 2004).

Usually negative emotions result from injustice or wrongdoings, either real or perceived ones (Lievonen et al., 2018, p. 541). Previously the reasons that trigger stakeholder's anger have been found to be a lack of respect, fairness, truthfulness, and social responsibility (Lievonen et al., 2015), which indicate that organisations themselves have been involved in the process of formation of stakeholder anger. It is to be noted that for example negative feedback, even though often understood as a negative type of engagement, has positive outcomes as well. In fact, most of the times negative engagement is aimed at improving the state of affairs. (Lievonen et al., 2018)

Next, the following sub-chapter delves into to the issue of organisations as hate targets.

## **2.6. Hate targets**

Currently it seems that the literature considering hate does not clearly discuss and make a distinction between the targets of hate when hate toward organisations or brands has been studied (e.g. Platania, 2020; Kucuk, 2019). Despite the fact that there seems to be very little research on hate targets in the context of organisations, hate targets have been discussed and explored in relation to anger, brand research, and customer engagement.

In the context of consumer engagement research, Dessart, Veloutsou and Morgan-Thomas (2015) have made the statement that engagement is always directed at a specific object, as is negative engagement (Bowden et al., 2016; Lievonen et al., 2015, p. 533). Because of this, hate would also have to have a target. Oftentimes only one of the engagement object has been researched at a time - most often a brand - but it is suggested that engaging with different objects or partners can perhaps be simultaneous and inter-related (Dessart et al., 2015;

Bowden, Conduit, Hollebeek, Luoma-aho, & Solem, 2017). In other words, there may be many different targets of hatred at the same time, for example in cases when a customer hates both a customer server and an organisation. A study made by McColl-Kennedy et al. (2010) shows that devaluing and disrespectful service by customer servers fuels anger toward whole organisation. In this case, it may be so that the customer server is seen to come to typify a disrespectful organisation. Thus, in these cases anger would be directed at something and not only toward a person.

Moreover, different objects can possibly have various roles when it comes to shaping consumer engagement (Dessart et al., 2016). Bowden et al. (2017, p. 892) found that a so-called spill-over effect from one object to another may occur. People may also experience hate toward objects representing systems of meaning (Kucuk, 2019, p. 24). However, Kucuk referring to Opatow (2005) claims that hate toward persons may be a little different than hate targeted at objects, such as brands, because it has been found that about a third of student respondents do not associate their hate with “someone” but with “something”. Opatow (2005, p. 135) found that the students for example “hate being ignored”, “hate people hitting my brother”, or they “hate going to Burger King”. The statements could also be interpreted in another way; for example, by stating that certain actions are hated.

In interpersonal relationships hate and other emotions, such as anger, dislike, and disgust, are often expressed with the adversary, whereas people emphasize detestation and irritation when they experience hate toward an object (Opatow 2005, p. 135). Therefore, Kucuk (2019, p. 436) states that perhaps “true brand haters” see the targeted brands as a person, whereas regular consumers might experience “object hate”. People attribute human characteristics to, for instance, brands and communicate with them like they were communicating with their acquaintances, enemies, even friends (Fournier, 1998). It might be possible to interpret the phenomenon as hate becoming more intense and perhaps uncontrollable if consumers perceive the object as a person and not just as an object (Kucuk, 2019). “Object hate” has not been studied before Kucuk’s work (Kucuk, 2019), and neither in consumer psychology or in general psychology to my knowledge. Thus, it is still unclear whether people experience more hate toward people or objects (Kucuk, 2019, p. 25). There is still lack of research on if interpersonal hate can become more intense than hate toward objects, or the other way around (Kucuk, 2019, p. 25).

However, it may be pondered whether people distinguish the target(s) of hatred themselves or differentiate the reasons why they hate a certain organisations or parts of it. Since there is also a very limited number of studies on the

topic, analysis of existing literature's findings on hatred and organisations as well as symbolic interactionism may serve as a basis for discovering answers to the question on toward who or which hate is targeted when it is targeted at organisations. In the next sub-chapter, context of this study is synthesized and research gap discussed.

## **2.7. Synthesis and research gap**

When it comes to solving the problem of hatred targeted at organisations, it is essential to know who or what the target is and why they are hated: the actions to solve the problem could then be efficiently allocated. In light of the aforementioned studies and concepts, there seems to be a lack of systematic link on behavioural disciplines and organisational research on hate targeted at organisations. Moreover, little research on organisations as hate targets has been made. By combining the elements of symbolic interactionism, studies on hate in psychology, brands, and corporate communication, this thesis aims to understand hate targeted organisations. In this thesis, organisations refer to various types of organisations from corporations to NGO's and governmental organisations, in accordance with Hasnas' interpretation of the stakeholder theory (2013, p. 54).

Moreover, symbolic interactionism provides a means of investigating the social world as well as contextualised processes (Milliken & Schreiber, 2012), and in this case, links together the behavioural and the organisational research perspectives on hate targeted at organisations. Moreover, the key elements of symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969; Mead, 1967) and structural symbolic interactionism (Stryker, 2008) are utilised in understanding why hate is targeted at organisations. Symbolic interactionism states that it is communication and interaction processes that constitute a social life (Mead, 1969). Organisations are perceived as objects of active sense-making which occurs in interactions with the organisation as well as in other interactions outside of the organisation's sphere of influence. Thus, meanings about organisations - interpreted as social objects - are created in various interactions.

When it comes to hate targeted at organisations, the concepts of solitary and social actions (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011) can offer explanations as to why hate is formed: the meanings and actions may have been created in interactions with organisation or in interactions with others concerning the given organisation. In accordance with Stryker's (2008) ideas, the hateful meanings attached to organisations may have already been formed in the past, since society and structures

shape individuals to shape society and organisations within it. The meanings develop through time and are made sense of and managed through individual interpretive processes and through generalised other (Blumer, 2004, p. 61), and organisations are perceived in accordance with and through one's views of reference groups, society, or past experiences. If these perceptions are negative – and whether the organisation is to blame or not - hateful actions may evolve toward the organisations.

In the context of this study - derived from Fischer et al. (2018) and Fetcscherin et al. (2019) studies - hate is perceived as a threefold concept: it can be intense, moderate, or light. Intense hate does not consider personal consequences and includes a willingness for personal sacrifice in order to harm the target (Festcherin et al., 2019). It is a long-term attitude with an aim to destroy, and intense hate perceives the target as inherently bad. (Fischer et al., 2018). Moderate hate aims at restoring equity with the target that is potentially perceived as a threat, and it may evolve from being short-term to long-term (Festcherin et al., 2019; Fischer et al., 2018). In the context of this thesis, intense and moderate hate are interpreted as negative engagement, because these types of hate have affective, cognitive, and behavioural elements in them (Hollebeek and Chen, 2014; Lievonen, 2020, Fischer et al., 2018; Fetscherin et al., 2019), as these three elements constitute negative engagement. Light hate aims to avoid the hated target and is evident in situations when one privately complains about the target with aversion (Fetcscherin et al., 2019), and is similar to the concept of disengagement (Lievonen, 2015, p. 533). The three types of hate are not stagnant, but may spill-over to other levels, from being light to moderate and intense and the other way around (Fetcscherin et al., 2019).

Hate can stem from either justified or unjustified reasons (Sternberg, 2005; Kucuk, 2018) from the organisation's perspective. If hate stems from unjustified reasons, the reasons for hate are not dependent on organisation's actions but the meanings that have been created about the organisation in other contexts and interactions outside of the organisation's own sphere of influence. Though, if hate stems from justified reasons, organisation is somehow to be blamed and/or could have affected the formation of hate. In this case, the meanings created about the organisations can also be affected by interactions with the organisation. However, it is vital to note that justification or unjustification of hate is context- and case-dependent and therefore, cannot necessarily be strictly divided into two categories. There also might be different levels of justification and unjustification of hatred.

In the next chapter, the method of the study, integrative literature review, is described.

### 3. METHOD

#### 3.1. Literature review: Integrated approach

The purpose of the thesis is to understand hate targeted at organisations especially from the point of view of targets of hate and why hate occurs, when it is targeted at organisations. To answer the questions, existing literature on the topic was gathered and systemized. Literature review is not only a means to collect information, but also a research method - it enables information gathering from various fields and thus provides an opportunity to combine literature from different points of views. (Salminen, 2011) By using literature review, a conduct of a multidisciplinary study on how hate is targeted at organisations, as well as systemizing existing literature on the topic and pointing out existing research gaps, is possible.

Traditionally, literature review has been divided into three different types: into systematic literature review, meta-analysis, and descriptive literature review though - although there are other categorizations as well (Salminen, 2011, p. 6). Systematic literature review, according to Salminen (2011, p. 9), is an efficient way to test hypotheses, present research results, and assess their coherence, and may highlight new research gaps. In short, systematic literature review aims at summarizing previous research on a selected topic by using strict screening. (Salminen, 2011, p. 9, 11)

Qualitative meta-analysis can be divided into two orientations which are meta-synthesis and meta-summary. Meta-synthesis is often characterised by quantitative and mathematical approach, where different studies around the same topic are combined to spot differences, nuances and assumptions, whereas meta-summary is more descriptive and interpreting type of analysis, in which descriptive research is summarized by quantitative methods. (Salminen, 2011, p. 13)

Descriptive literature review, according to Salminen (2011, p. 6), is one of the most used types of literature reviews, where the researched data or material are often extensive and not bound by methodical guidelines. Research question may be broader than in systematic literature review or in meta-analysis. Nevertheless, the studied topic may be studied broadly and the characteristics of the phenomenon can be categorized. It is an independent method, and it is often seen as a method which raises new topics to study for more systematic literature review. (Salminen, 2011, p. 7)

Descriptive literature review has two different approaches: narrative and integrative. Narrative approach aims at presenting a wide picture of the topic under research, or to describe the history or progress of it, where heterogeneous information is systematized as a continuous event. While narrative approach enables updating research knowledge, it does not conduce to analytical results. (Salminen, 2011, p. 7)

Integrative approach, on the other hand, is used when the topic under study is wanted to be presented as versatile as possible. The integrative approach might reveal research gaps as well as new research areas because it is an abstract of integral content of studies conducted earlier (Salminen 2011, p. 8). The approach has many similarities with systematic literature review, but integrative approach presents a broader description of the topic under research. However, it is not as selective as a method as systematic literature review, nevertheless it can be classified as a part of systematic approach with narrative characteristics but with more critical examination. (Salminen, 2011, p. 8) Integrated approaches seek to synthesize different types of data: it can either bring together qualitative and quantitative data, as mentioned above, as well as triangulating various types of data and methods. In integrative approach the researcher may use either quantitative or qualitative approaches to summarize qualitative data, which is not the case in other approaches. (Booth, Sutton, & Papaioannou, 2016)

In contrast to other methods, such as meta-summary that gives results on the effect sizes or percentages, integrative approach produces taxonomies of conceptual findings. Through integrative approach it is possible to lay ground for developing conceptual, multidisciplinary descriptions of a chosen phenomenon. The aim of the integrative approach is also to produce new integrated, descriptive interpretations and perspectives on the topic under research. Overall, the methods used in qualitative reviews aim at gaining new insight into the topic researched. (Saini & Shlonsky, 2012)

When it comes to conducting the research, the integrative approach does not differ much from the conduct of systematic literature review. It follows certain, well-defined steps and, according to Boland (2014, p. 3), requires a defined research problem or question, identifying and critically appraising the evidence, systematizing the findings and in the end, drawing conclusions. Transparency is the one of the most important things conducting a systematic literature review; one should be able to replicate the study since all steps have been correctly reported. (Boland, Cherry, & Dickon, 2014)

In the context of this study, the data used is both quantitative and qualitative. Furthermore, this study aims at creating multidisciplinary understanding



and integration of different perspectives on the phenomenon of hate. Therefore, the integrative approach serves the purpose of the study appropriately.

In systematic literature review, there are nine steps to be followed, according to Boland et al. (2016), and these steps have been utilised in the conduct of this research as well:

- 1) Identifying the review questions and performing scoping searches
- 2) Searching for literature by using bibliographic databases to address the review question
- 3) Screening titles and abstracts. This means discarding the studies that are not relevant for the review question and respectively keeping the ones that fit the review question
- 4) Obtaining the full-text papers identified in the previous step
- 5) Selecting full-text papers and excluding those that do not fit the criteria. At this stage, the reasons for excluding papers and documenting them is relevant, too (Jesson et al., 2011, p. 108)
- 6) Assessing the quality of the chosen full-text papers using an appropriate quality assessment tool
- 7) Identifying data needed from each paper and summarizing the information in tables
- 8) Analysing, scrutinizing, and synthesizing data
- 9) Writing up and editing the background, method and results, discussing the results and making conclusions from the review.

### 3.2. Review process

The research problem and research questions were formed first, as Boland et al. (2016, p. 10) suggest. The research questions are:

1. What or who is the target of hate when hate is expressed toward organisations?
2. Why are the targets hated?

After deciding the research questions, the databases for the search were chosen. The University of Jyväskylä's website "Data collection in different disciplines" (<https://koppa.jyu.fi/avoimet/kirjasto/tiedonhankinta-eri-tieteenaloilla>) was utilised in deciding the most fitting databases. On the website, there is a listing

which databases are the most central sources of information for each discipline. The chosen databases needed to be under University of Jyväskylä's subscription. Since the topic of this thesis is multidisciplinary, the aim of the study is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of hate targeted at organisations, the databases used were chosen according to that. The databases chosen for the study were:

- Multidisciplinary databases: SAGE Reference Online, JSTOR, Wiley Online Library
- Social / political sciences: SAGE Reference Online
- Economics: Business Source Elite (EBSCO), ABI/INFORM Complete (ProQuest)

The key words for the search are the following:

- 1) How is hate targeted at representatives of organisations?

Hate OR hating OR hatred OR hated  
 AND individual OR CEO OR leader OR entrepreneur OR founder OR board OR board of executives OR executive OR spokesperson OR owner OR manager OR corporate officers OR employee

- 2) How is hate targeted at organisations?

Hate OR hating OR hatred OR hated  
 AND organisation OR organisation OR organisations OR organisations OR corporation OR brand OR business OR stock OR stock value OR start up OR SME\* OR customer server OR customer service

The search was conducted in the databases during the first and second weeks of March 2020 as follows:

- SAGE Reference Online
  - o Limiters: Keywords & titles, Document type: (peer reviewed) Articles, Search for date: 1999-2020, Access type: all content
- JSTOR
  - o Limiters: Abstracts, Content I can access, Item type: Articles and research reports, Search for date: 1999-2020, Language: English
- Wiley Online Library

- Limiters: Keywords & titles, Search for date: 1999-2020
- Business Source Elite (EBSCO)
  - Limiters: Keywords & titles, Document type: Full text (available) & peer reviewed journals, Access type: All content, Search for date: 1999-2020
- ABI/INFORM Complete (ProQuest)
  - Limiters: Document type: Full text (available) & peer reviewed & all sources, Document type: Article, Language: English

The searches resulted 2361 hits altogether. It is to be noted, though, that the amount of articles found might be lower because the same articles may have appeared in various searches.

The literature was required to be electronic and found in academic journal, after which the article's titles and abstracts were read (Booth et al. 2016, p. 143). The number of hits were marked in a table. The criteria for inclusion was that hate needed to be mentioned in the title, abstract or keywords. In addition, if the language was not English, the article was excluded from the search. If the article filled the criteria, it was marked in the table as a possible, relevant source of information for the purpose of the study. The number of possibly relevant articles was 83.

After that, the articles were scanned through again with more precision. When scanning through the articles, hate was required to be targeted at organisation, the representative of the organisation, brand, or hate otherwise needed to be the topic under research. The articles discussing hate stemming from inside the organisation were excluded. In this case, the methodologies were not discussed and evaluated, which is common when an integrative literature review is conducted (Salminen, 2011, p. 6). The articles' abstracts, introductions and conclusions were read through again, as Jesson et al. (2011, p. 155) suggest, and the reason for hate and the target of hate mentioned in the article were marked and described with regards to each article. 28 number of articles were chosen under further review to be appropriate for the study, and 8 articles were excluded. After further examination, those articles were excluded that did not provide sufficient information to study both hate targets and the reasons for hate, and therefore 20 articles were chosen to be reviewed.

### 3.3. Research material

The data and material from the literature review are categorized next chapter in a table of five sections. The findings consist of peer-reviewed articles and case studies from the following journals:

- The American Behavioral Scientist
- Academy of Marketing Studies Journal
- British Food Journal
- Contemporary Islam
- Cultural studies - Critical methodologies
- International Business Review
- International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy
- Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science
- Journal of Business Ethics
- Journal of Brand Management
- Journal of Consumer Marketing
- Journal of Product & Brand Management
- Marketing Letters
- Policing: An International Journal
- Psychology & Marketing
- Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal
- Quality – Access to Success

Reviewed articles are presented in the Table 5. In the five sections, the article is mentioned on the left. In the next section the main results of the study are introduced, after which targets of hate, reasons behind the hate, and behaviour resulting from hate are written down in the columns on the right side.

Table 5. Reviewed literature.

Article	Main results of the study	Target(s)	Reason	Behaviour
Antonetti, P., Manika, D. & Katsikeas, C. (2019). Why consumer animosity reduces product quality perceptions: The role of extreme emotions in international crises. <i>International business</i>	Discrete emotions of contempt and disgust explain consumers' animosity toward products produced by a company from a hostile country. International conflicts have a negative effect on consumer behaviour, and feelings of animosity results in a degraded image of the country that is associated with	Products from a hostile country	Serious disputes and long-standing geopolitical rivalry between the countries "Degraded image of the target country that is associated with social exclusion and intergroup hatred"	NWOM Product avoidance

review, 28(4), p. 739-753.	intergroup hatred and product quality perceptions. The study Focuses on war-related animosity beliefs in China toward Japan.			
Bryson, D. & Atwal, G. (2019). Brand hate: The case of Starbucks in France. <i>British Food Journal</i> , 121(1), p. 172-182.	Severity of hate differs depending on customer's experience toward Starbucks: antecedents of extreme negative affect depend in some level on the intensity of hate experienced toward a brand.	Starbucks in France	Too dominant in the market structure Cultural Dominance Negative stereotypes of the people using the brand Symbolic identity being incompatible with Starbucks Corporate irresponsible behaviour	Avoidance NWOM Complaining and protest behaviours
Bryson, D., Atwal, G. & Hultén, P. (2013). Towards the conceptualisation of the antecedents of extreme negative affect towards luxury brands. <i>Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal</i> , 16(4), p. 393-405.	Conceptualises the influences of brand hate towards luxury brands of German and British luxury consumers by evaluating the customer's negative incidents associated with the brands. Attitudes of sales staff and negative sentiments about the service, negative stereotypes of the brand users, and the brand perceived being too popular, were found to be the reasons for hatred. However, country of origin was an unequivocal antecedent of brand hate.	Luxury brands	Brand's country of origin Consumer dissatisfaction with the customer service Negative stereotypes of a brand's consumers Corporate social performance (not a strong source for hate, but seen as a significant factor)	-
Chan, H. & Ngai, E. (2010). What Makes Customers Discontent with Service Providers? An Empirical Analysis of	In the study, fairness theory is applied to explore the psychological responses of consumers in the post-complaint phase. Unfair trade practices	ICT providers in Hong Kong	Unfair trade practices	-

Complaint Handling in Information and Communication Technology Services. <i>Journal of Business Ethics</i> , 91(Supplement 1), p. 73-110.	make customers hate service providers.			
Edström, M. (2016) The trolls disappear in the light: Swedish experiences of mediated sexualised hate speech in the aftermath of Behring Breivik. <i>International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy</i> 5(2): 96-106.	Internet trolls' responses to the Breivik terrorist attack constitute a threat to females, and in particular, to female journalists.	Feminist journalists	Misogynism	Online hate speech
Fine, G. A., & Eisenberg, E. (2002). Tricky Dick and Slick Willy: Despised presidents and generational imprinting: PROD. <i>The American Behavioural Scientist</i> , 46(4), 553-565.	Presidential hatred is involved in generational politics and is grounded in the cultural past rather than the political present. It is not the actions of the president that cause hatred, but instead how they have come to typify the previous political generation. In the case of Nixon and Clinton, it is suggested that hatred facilitates scandal rather than the other way around. Attitudes toward each represent unresolved conflicts of that period.	The US Presidents Nixon and Clinton	Typification of the previous political generation	Public complaining / scandal
Goodall, H. L. (2011). The Hate Narrative Against Public Employees,	The narrative research discusses hate narratives of right-wing Republican leaders and spokespersons toward	"Jobs and careers that are in the public interest as enemies of	Differing political ideologies	-

Educators, and Unions. Cultural Studies - Critical Methodologies, 11(4), p. 359-363.	public employees, educators, and unions.	capitalism, liberty and freedom"		
Grégoire, Y. & Fisher, R. (2008). Customer betrayal and retaliation: When your best customers become your worst enemies. Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 36(2), p. 247-261.	Customers attempt to restore fairness in all possible means, which is motivated mainly by betrayal. Relationship quality does not have favourable effects on the service recovery, and violation of the fairness norm has stronger impact on perceived betrayal as the relationship deepens.	Airline companies	Perceived betrayal Violation of the fairness norm	Making a public scene
Hegner, S. M., Fetscherin, M. & van Delzen, M. (2017). Determinants and outcomes of brand hate. Journal of Product & Brand Management, 26(1), p. 13-25	Brand hate is triggered by product-related, consumer-related and contextual-related determinants, and brand hate leads to three types of active and passive behaviour (brand avoidance, negative word-of-mouth, and brand retaliation) towards a brand.	Brand	Ideological incompatibility Symbolic incongruity Negative past experience	Negative past experience -> brand retaliation All three -> NWOM Incongruity and ideological incompatibility -> avoidance
Islam, T., Attiq, S., Hameed, Z., Munnawar, N. K., & Sheikh, Z. (2019). The impact of self-congruity (symbolic and functional) on the brand hate. British Food Journal, 122(1), 71-88.	Symbolic and functional incongruity are the key determinants of brand hate among Pakistani fast-food customers. Customer's self-image and product attributes are carefully pondered when a customer purchases products.	Fast-food chain-franchises in Pakistan	Functional incongruence Symbolic incongruence	Avoidance
Jain, K. & Sharma, I. (2019). Negative outcomes of positive	Strong brand attachment may cause the feelings of betrayal increase if there is a negative experience with	Smart phone brand	Previous strong and positive relationships with the brand can create brand hate	NWOM

brand relationships. <i>Journal of Consumer Marketing</i> , 36(7), p. 986-1002.	the brand. After the feelings of betrayal have emerged, resentful customers might resort to eWOM despite of the previous strong attachment to the brand.		(that can generate even stronger feelings of perceived betrayal, after the brand transgresses the expectations of the customer)	
Kucuk, S. U. (2018). Macro-level antecedents of consumer brand hate. <i>Journal of Consumer Marketing</i> , 35(5), p. 555-564	Consumer dissatisfaction links to brand hate, and corporate social responsibility and consumer complaints have a partially mediating impact on creation on hate. Companies that have a few CSR initiatives and a vast number of consumer complaints can be characterised as "the most hated" brands.	Brand	Lack of corporate social responsibility efforts / Socially irresponsible business practices  Product service failure that leads to consumer dissatisfaction and complaints	-
Kucuk, S. U. (2019). Consumer Brand Hate: Steamrolling whatever I see. <i>Psychology &amp; Marketing</i> , 36(5), p. 431-443	Investigates negative relationships between consumers and brands and develops brand-hate concept; true haters display "boiling brand hate" and regular haters express "seething brand hate". Consumers who are "self-confident" and "competitive" might be more prone to hate a brand that perform poorly or unethically. Consumers demanding professional service are more likely to be hateful toward a brand if it fails expectations.	Brand	Personality traits of consumer	-
Mawby, R. C. & Zempi, I. (2018). Police officers' experiences as victims of hate	The police experiences hostility in their work because of the intersectionality between their stigmatised	The UK Police officers	Stigmatized professions and personal identities	Verbal abuse Physical violence



crime. Policing: An International Journal, 41(5), p. 526-538.	professional and personal identities.			
Olson, E. (2018). Are rival team fans a curse for home team sponsors? The moderating effects of fit, oppositional loyalty, and league sponsoring. Marketing Letters, 29(1), p. 115-122	Fan passion for a certain sports team or athlete might work against the sponsor of the hated rivals. Especially if the rival team's sponsor has high-perceived fit with the sports brand and is a direct business competitor to one's "home" team sponsor, severe negative effects can take place.	Sports brands	Love for the company's competitor brand	-
Platania, S., Morando, M., & Santisi, G. (2017). The phenomenon of brand hate: Analysis of predictors and outcomes. Quality - Access to Success, 18, p. 342-347.	Identity avoidance and moral avoidance have more influential role in formation of brand hate than experiential avoidance.	Brands	Identity avoidance Moral avoidance Experiential avoidance	NWOM Rejection
Sakulsinlapakorn, K. & Zhang, J. (2019). When love-becomes-hate effect happens: An empirical study of the impact of brand failure severity upon consumers' negative responses. Academy of Marketing Studies Journal, 23(1), p. 1-22	Love-becomes-hate effect is a result of failed service and aggressive personality, low level of brand trust, high level of blame attribution, and low level of perceived fairness. Consumers with these characteristics are likely to vent negative emotions as well as retaliate against the hated companies.	Brand	Aggressive personality: Low level of brand trust Blame attribution Low level of perceived fairness	Venting Retaliation (Complaining to a third party)

Woodward, M., Yahya, M., Rohmaniyah, I., Coleman, D., Lundry, C. & Amin, A. (2014). The Islamic Defenders Front: Demonization, Violence and the State in Indonesia. <i>Contemporary Islam</i> , 8(2), p. 153-171.	The Indonesian Defenders Front FPI uses hate speech and demonization to legitimize violent attacks on organisations and individuals who are considered as sinful.	Organisations and individuals considered as sinful or religiously deviant (Muslim liberals, Shi'ah minority, Islamic Universities, Muslim Pluralists, Christian minorities, LGBT - community)	Religiously motivated violent extremism	Violent attacks
Zarantonello, L., Romani, S., Grappi, S. & Bagozzi, R. P. (2016). Brand hate. <i>Journal of Product &amp; Brand Management</i> , 25(1), p. 11-25	Provides an outlook on antecedents and outcomes of brand hate. Attack-like and approach-like strategies are linked with corporate wrongdoings, and taste systems are associated with avoidance-like strategies.	Brands	Corporate wrongdoings Violations of expectations Taste system	Corporate wrongdoings -> complaining, NWOM, protest, patronage reduction Violations of expectations -> complaining, NWOM, protest Taste systems -> avoidance
Zarantonello, L., Romani, S., Grappi, S. & Fetscherin, M. (2018). Trajectories of brand hate. <i>Journal of Brand Management</i> , 25(6), p. 549-560.	The study investigates how hate toward brands evolves in time and identifies the most common antecedents as well as the outcomes of it. Brand hate associates with negative behavioural outcomes, and the severity of it is determined by the reason behind hate.	Brand	Negative past experiences Corporate wrongdoing (as related to immoral, unethical, antisocial, or illegal corporate behaviour) Image incongruence between the company and self	Negative past experiences -> complaints to the company, NWOM Image incongruence -> avoidance, complaining to the company Corporate wrongdoing -> rejection, active hateful behaviour

## 4. FINDINGS

In this chapter, the results of the literature review are presented by first addressing targets of hate, after which the reasons for hatred are discussed. In the literature review 20 articles were analysed, and the results consider different types of hate targets and reasons for hate when it is targeted at organisations. The targets of hate identified in the literature review can be differentiated into products, brands, organisations, and people who represent organisation.

Even though not all the articles define hatred, and the articles conceptualise hate differently, it is still assumed that the identified reasons may lead to hate. One article discussed products as targets of hate (Antonetti, Manika, & Katsikeas, 2019), 11 articles identified brands as targets of hate (Bryson et al., 2019a; Bryson et al., 2013; Hegner et al., 2017; Jain et al., 2019; Kucuk, 2018; Olson, 2018; Platania et al., 2017; Sakulsinlapakorn, et al., 2019; Zarantonello et al., 2018; Zarantonello et al., 2016; Loureiro & Kaufmann, 2018), four articles discussed organisations or companies as targets (Chan et al., 2010; Grégoire et al., 2008b; Woodward et al., 2014, Islam et al., 2019), and four articles considered people representing an organisation being targets of hate (Edström, 2016; Fine et al., 2002; Goodall, 2011; Mawby et al., 2018).

When it comes to products, products coming from a hostile country can be hated when there is a long-standing geopolitical rivalry between two countries (Antonetti, Manika, & Katsikeas, 2019).

Hate targeted at brands has been studied in various contexts, and the reason for the hate differs depending on the case and the focus of the study. Starbucks (Bryson & Atwal, 2019b) is hated in France not so much because of its poor service or products, but because it is perceived to be too dominant in the French culture as well as in the market structure. French value their culture and cafés and some are fearful of losing their cultural heritage, which results in avoiding and hating Starbucks (Bryson et al., 2019b, p. 176).

Negative past experiences leading to hate can refer to failures of the product or service, or in other words, dissatisfaction with the offering (Hegner et al., 2017, p. 14; Jain et al., 2019; Zarantonello et al., 2018; Kucuk, 2018). In addition to product or service failure, a failure to deal with consumer complaints has been found to significantly impact consumer-aggregated brand hate (Kucuk, 2018). Violations of expectations as well as taste system of the consumer may also lead to brand hate (Zarantonello et al., 2016).

In addition, symbolic identity, or social roles not being compatible with the brand, can lead to brand hate (Bryson et al., 2019, p. 176; Hegner, Fetscherin,

& van Delzen, 2017; Platania, 2017; Zarantonello et al., 2018). Though, the so-called “symbolic incongruity” (Hegner et al., 2017) or “image incongruence” (Zarantonello, 2018) may occur if, for example, the brand represents a negative reference group or if there is negative symbolic meaning associated with the brand, such as lack of authenticity, representation of an undesired self, or loss of individuality, and these may lead to brand avoidance. Incongruity between the symbolic meanings of brands and consumer’s idea of themselves may lead to hate (Hegner et al. 2017, p. 14, 15), as well as negative stereotypes of the users of the brand which can also result in avoiding the brand (Bryson et al., 2019).

Platania et al. (2017) also found that identity and moral avoidance have a more influential role in brand hate formation than experiential avoidance. This means that a brand is not so much hated because of their specific service or product performance, but because of the of the values and symbolic meanings that are linked to the brand. In other words, if consumer’s values differ from the company’s values - and especially if the brand betrays the consumer’s expectations - the more the brand will be hated. When this happens, it might result in rejection and online complaining of the brand (Platania et al. 2017, p. 348). When it comes to hate targeted at luxury and coffee brands, negative stereotypes of brand’s consumers were also seen as a reason for hate because they were perceived to be superficial (Bryson et al., 2019, p. 176; Bryson et al. 2013). Consumers also described that dissatisfaction with the service – manifested in the negative attitudes of sales staff – was reason for hatred because the customers felt disrespected. This can lead to avoiding the brand. (Bryson et al., 2013) Though, neither country of origin nor poor corporate social performance were perceived as strong factors behind luxury brand hate (Bryson et al., 2013).

Love for competitor’s brand has also been found to be a potential reason for hatred. Fan passion for a certain sports team may work against of the hated rivals, especially if the rival team’s sponsors seem to have a high-perceived fit with the sports brand. (Olson, 2018) Ideological incompatibility, referring to set of beliefs incompatible with the consumer, may lead to brand hate as well. Contextual and often a societal or moral focus is involved in this type of brand hate. (Hegner et al., 2017, p. 15) This has been studied also in the context of smart phone brands in India when feelings of betrayal occurred after brand failing to meet customers’ expectation (Jain et al., 2019). The so-called “love-becomes-hate effect” can result of a brand failure as well as consumers’ traits: a high-level of aggressive personality, low level of brand trust, high level of blame attribution, and low level of perceived fairness. Consumers with these characteristics are likely to vent negative emotions as well as retaliate against the hated companies. (Sakulsinlapakorn et al., 2019). Previous strong and positive relationships with

the brand can create brand hate, and generate even stronger feelings of perceived betrayal, after the brand transgresses the expectations of the customer. This may result in negative word-of-mouth and seeking revenge. (Jain et al., 2019, p. 995)

As stated, consumers with aggressive traits have been found to have the tendency to engage in aggressive behaviour in product or service situations (Sakulsinlapakorn et al., 2019). Moreover, consumers who are “self-confident” and “competitive” are concluded to be more prone to hate a brand and feel a deeper hatred toward a brand that performs poorly or unethically than consumers without these personality traits. Consumers demanding professional service are more likely to hate a brand if it fails their expectations. Less confident consumers might prefer distancing themselves from the brand and do not necessarily express the hate they feel. (Kucuk, 2018, p. 441)

Lack of corporate social responsibility efforts and a vast number of consumer complaints create the most hated brands, according to Kucuk (2018). Furthermore, corporate irresponsible behaviour is seen as a moral shortcoming. In this case, hate provides moral exclusion, meaning that the hated target is seen as evil, being outside of boundaries of justice. And the moral exclusion elements – coexistence, human rights, gender equality, and environmentalism – are part of CSR initiatives. (Kucuk, 2018, p. 557) Corporate wrongdoings, such as immoral, unethical, antisocial, or illegal behaviour, are also seen as a reason for brand hate, and can lead to complaining, negative word-of-mouth and protesting (Zarantonello et al., 2016, p. 22; Zarantonello et al., 2018). Though consumer dissatisfaction links to brand hate, and corporate social responsibility and consumer complaints have been found to have a partially mediating impact on creation on hate, companies that have a few CSR initiatives and a vast number of consumer complaints can be characterised as the most hated brands (Kucuk, 2018). However, Bryson et al. (2013) studied luxury brands, and found that corporate social irresponsibility was stated to be an important factor but not seen as a significant source of hate as symbolic identity not being congruent with the brand.

When it comes to organisations as targets of hate, ICT providers in Hong Kong have been hated because of their unfair trade practices (Chan & Ngai, 2010). Hate has been expressed toward airline companies because of customer’s perceived betrayal which can lead to restoring fairness and retaliation. Moreover, when fairness norm has been violated, and if the quality of the relationship has been experienced to be strong, violation of the norm has even stronger effect on hate formation. Previous strong and positive relationship with the brand may turn into hate if the brand transgresses the expectation of the customer, and can result in negative word-of-mouth. (Grégoire & Fisher, 2008a) Similarly, Jain et al. (2019) study on brand hate found that previous positive relationship with brand

generated even stronger feelings of perceived betrayal after customer's expectations were transgressed. Dissatisfied customers were also found to be less inclined to restore fairness, but betrayal is a key motivational force for customers to retaliate (Grégoire & Fisher, 2008, p. 248).

Symbolic incongruence, one of the reasons leading to brand hate too, was found to be one of the key determinants to hate Pakistani fast-food companies: the companies did not sell halal-meat to their Muslim customers which lead to the situation where the customers began to avoid the company. In addition, functional incongruence – though not as significantly – may affect customers negative image of the brand, because the beliefs of the product's utilitarian, performance-related attributes or audiences referent attributes did not match. (Islam et al. 2017, p. 75 - 76)

A study by Woodward et al. (2014) explains how organisations that have been considered as religiously deviant or sinful can be targeted by terrorist groups. They stated that in Indonesia, one of the reasons for hate targeted at organisations is religiously motivated extremism. The Indonesian Defenders Front FPI uses hate speech and demonization to legitimize violent attacks on organisations and individuals who are perceived as sinful by the terrorist group, such as liberal Muslims and religious minorities. (Woodward et al., 2014)

When it comes to hate targeted to representatives of organisations, police officers in the UK have experienced hostility in the form verbal and/or physical attacks because of their stigmatized professional identity and personal identities. In other words, the police face hatred because of the stigma in their profession especially if it is linked with racism, homophobia, sexism, religion, disability, and gender. (Mawby et al., 2018) Another study found that feminist journalists have been targets of online hate speech by trolls because of what they represent and because they are women – in other words, reasons for hate in this case were misogyny and sexism (Edström et al., 2016). Even though it was not explicitly mentioned that these journalists represented an organisation, they can be perceived representing news organisations. Moreover, jobs seen as “enemies of capitalism, liberty and freedom”, such as public employees, educators and unions, have been described to be targets of hate by right-wing Republican leaders in the United States (Goodall, 2011). In this case, hate can be seen to stem from differing political ideologies and viewpoints.

Hatred has been concluded to be involved in generational politics and cultural past when it has been targeted at the presidents of the United States (Clinton and Nixon) (Fine et al., 2002.). The study concluded that the actions of the presidents are not the reason for hate but the fact that how they typify the previous political generation. In other words, existing hatred was found to facilitate

scandals and public complaining, not the other way around that the actions of the presidents facilitating the scandal. Depending on the interpretation, presidents could be seen to represent either an institution or the White House Office, but in the context of this thesis, the latter is applied.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

In this section, the results of the integrative literature review are analysed by utilizing the critical analysis method. Critical analysis links together with synthesis, and the combination of critical analysis and synthesis provides the lens through which new knowledge about a chosen topic can be generated. Moreover, critical analysis can be used to identify new research areas, and synthesis utilises the knowledge by creating new ways of thinking about the studied matter. (Torraco, 2005, p. 362, 421) In this chapter, the context of the study is combined with the findings and hate triggers toward organisations and hate journeys are presented. Furthermore, validity and reliability of the study are also evaluated, as well as implications for future research.

### 5.1. Organisations as targets of hate

According to the literature reviews results, the targets of hate in the context of organisations can be differentiated into organisations, brands, products, and people representing organisations. The results of the literature show that that the articles do not clearly discuss toward what, who, or which hate is targeted at in organisations, unless the study concentrates on studying one specific target (e.g. Islam et al., 2017; Jain et al. 2019; Greogoire & Fischer, 2008; Chan & Ngai, 2010; Mawby et al., 2018; Edström et al., 2016; Fine et al., 2002). This goes in line with the finding that oftentimes only one engagement object has been researched at a time (Dessart et al., 2015). An exception to this is Kucuk (2019, p. 436) notions on how hate toward a person and a brand might be different.

When it comes to studies on brand hate, it seems unclear whether people, who for example hate Starbucks, perceive “Starbucks” as a brand, organisation, or a customer server, or a combination of these as the targets of hate (e.g. Bryson et al., 2019). The same unclarity can be identified when people or organisations are found to be hate targets. However, the so-called spill-over effect has been noted in the results of the literature review: Hegner et al. (2019, p. 14) found that a negative experience about a certain product affects the attitudes one has about the organisation’s other products or brand as well. Thus, the notions comply with the previous findings about the spill-over effect, which refers to hate spreading from one engagement object to another (Bowden 2017, p. 892; McColl-Kennedy et al., 2010).



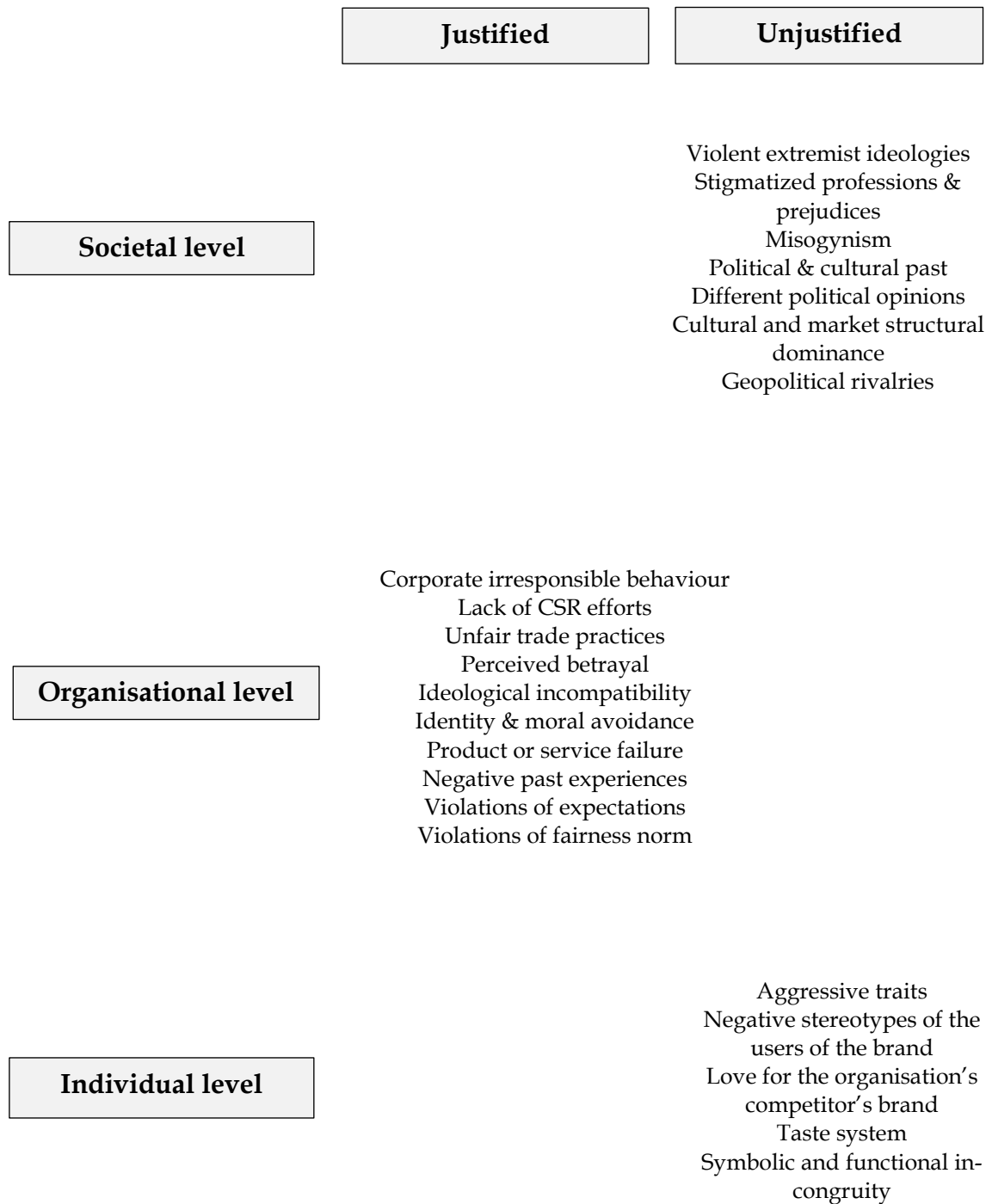
The reasons why something or someone is hated may reveal the issue behind hate. For example, the police officers in the UK have been found to be hated because of both the stigmatized identity that is related to the perception people have about the organisation or profession and their personal identities as representatives of, for example, a certain minority or gender (Mawby et al., 2018). Thus, studying the reasons why hate is targeted at organisations may provide more detailed information on what causes hate and how it might be resolved. The reasons why hate evolves towards organisations are analysed in the next sub-chapter.

## **5.2. Hate triggers**

Based on these findings and the theoretical context of the thesis, the reasons for hate are categorized into justified and unjustified reasons from the point of view of organisations, following the ideas of Kucuk (2019) and Sternberg (2005). Justified hatred in this context means that organisation or its actions can somehow be blamed for hate because organisation is or has been involved in the issue, whereas unjustified hatred refers to matters which are not under the control of organisation or it has no part of involvement on the issue causing hatred. However, as stated earlier, justification or unjustification of hate is context- and case-dependent and therefore, cannot always be strictly divided into two categories. There might also be different levels of justification and unjustification of hatred.

To address the reasons why hate is targeted at organisations concisely, the reasons are divided into three different levels: societal, organisational, and individual levels (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Reasons for hate in the literature review.



## **Societal level and unjustified reasons for hate**

When hate stems from a societal level, hate can be seen to be unjustified from the organisations point of view because the organisation has no part of involvement on the issue causing hatred. The reasons for hate are extra-organisational in a sense that the reasons can be related to politics (Antonetti et al., 2019; Goodall, 2011), violent extremist ideologies (Woodward et al., 2014), generalised prejudices (Mawby et al., 2018; Edström, 2016), and cultural matters (Bryson et al., 2019b).

Hatred and rivalries may stem if organisation is affected by international conflicts (Antonetti et al., 2019) or if it is seen to represent an opposing political group (Goodall 2011). Organisation can become to typify the enemy's league and can thus be perceived as a threat (Goodall, 2011). Sometimes violence is used to target organisation, and the reasons behind it may relate to ideology that is followed by a group or an individual, through which the hated target is seen as an enemy (Woodward et al., 2014). In these cases, one may then identify themselves with the opposing group and perceive organisation through the generalised other - that is a composition of the individuals and groups through which the individual sees themselves (Mead, 1967). If negative meanings are attached to one's opposing group, hate may evolve since meaning giving and defining are related to social actions, in which the institutional communities' roles and different identities are created and maintained (Charon, 2007, p. 148 - 149).

In addition, cultural dominance and dominance in the market structure (Bryson et al., 2019) as reasons for hatred can be understood via the generalised other: a certain organisation may be hated because it is not seen as being a part of their reference group, as the actor may be afraid of losing "the traditions and values of French culture" (Bryson et al., 2019, p. 176). The same logic may be applied when reason for hatred stem from stigmas (Mawby et al., 2018), sexism, and/or misogyny (Edström, 2016). The combination of stigmatized professions and personal identities as targets of hate show the fact that the reasons behind hatred can also stem from not only one, but many different perceptions and meanings attached to the hated target; they may relate to the organisation as well as to the individual (Mawby et al., 2018). This entails that reasons for hatred toward organisations are not stagnant but vary and spill-over to other parts of organisation, as is the case with the targets of hate (e.g. Hegner et al., 2019, p. 14; Bowden 2017, p. 892; McColl-Kennedy et al., 2010).

When it comes to political and cultural past, it is not the current actions, but the typification of previous political generation that can cause hatred. Existing hateful attitudes may cause scandals, not the actions of the ones that are being

hated. (Fine et al., 2002) In other words, associations with the past that are related to the hated target, in some way or another, are then seen a more truthful interpretation of one's identity and actions at a given moment than one's current identity and actions. This may be because of the perception of the organisation or its representative as a hated target is formed in the past and then transferred to the current. The idea has similarities to the ideas of structural symbolic interactionism, which posits that already existing society shapes the individual to shape society (Stryker, 2008, p. 18). The past society and its structures, among which organisations and institutions are, have shaped individuals and their ideas, which then shape the society and the organisations in it. Therefore, the past affects the perceptions of today, and therefore hatred stemming from the negative reasons that have been attached to the organisation in the past has an effect why a given organisation is hated today.

In conclusion, when the organisations as objects are interpreted, for instance, as being part of the old enemy's league, a threat to one's cultural identity, typification of old grudges, untrustworthy, or representatives of evil in this world, hate can be seen to stem from the belief that the other is malicious or a threat (Fischer et al., 2018; Fetscherin et al., 2019). The hater may even aim to not only harm but also physically eliminate and violently attack the target (Fischer et al., 2019; Woodward et al., 2014), which makes the hate stemming from the societal level serious.

### **Organisational level and justified reasons for hate**

When hate occurs in organisational level, organisation or its actions can somehow be blamed for the hate because organisation is involved in the issue. These reasons for hate can be perceived to relate for example to one's experiences with the organisation. These reasons to hate organisations can potentially stem from reasons such as negative past experiences (Zarantello et al., 2018; Hegner et al., 2017; Bryson et al., 2013), product or service failure (Sakuslipakorn et al., 2019; Kucuk, 2018), and dissatisfaction with customer service (Bryson et al., 2013, p. 397-398).

Furthermore, violations of customer's expectations (Zarantonello et al., 2016) and feelings of betrayal can also trigger hate (Jain et al., 2019). Previously it has been found that negatively valenced engagement can result from perceived negative experiences as well as from the extent and intensity and dissonance experienced by the individual (Hollebeek and Chen, 2014; Bowden et al. 2016, 880), which also seems to be the case when hate is targeted at organisations in organisational level. Interestingly, it has been found that previous strong and positive

relationship with the organisation can generate even stronger feelings of hate and betrayal if the organisations transgresses customer expectations. If a customer feels that their expectations have been betrayed and their values differ from the company's values, the more the customer is likely to hate the organisation. (Jain et al., 2019)

Furthermore, violations of corporate social responsibility efforts, or lack of these efforts, as well as corporate wrongdoings, can be reasons for hate targeted at organisations (Zarantonello et al., 2018; Zarantonello et al., 2016; Kucuk, 2018; Bryson et al., 2019; Bryson et al., 2013). Hate can be triggered if the organisation has acted in an immoral, unethical, or illegal manner (Zarantonello et al., 2017). A lack of corporate social responsibility efforts or violation of social responsibility linked to product and service failure can lead the brand be among the most hated brands (Kucuk, 2018, p. 561). In addition, trade practices may cause hate if they are perceived to be unfair (Chan et al., 2010). Ideological incompatibility (Hegner et al., 2017, p. 15) refers to societal or moral incompatibilities, such as human rights or environmental violations, which the organisation has violated but what the actor holds important. Interestingly, Bryson et al. (2017, p. 17) found that ideological incompatibility has the strongest effect on formation of hate after which symbolic incongruence and negative past experiences followed. Similar conclusion has been made by Platania et al. (2017), as identity avoidance and moral avoidance play a greater role in formation of brand hate than hate that is based on experiences (Platania et al., 2017).

When hate stems from corporate social irresponsibility of lack of fairness, hate can be seen to provide reasons for moral exclusion, where the hated acts unjust and is perceived as evil or morally corrupt (Kucuk, 2018, p. 557) When one becomes aware of organisation's moral shortcomings, and perhaps has previously had a good relationship with it, the perception of organisation may change into negative, even hateful perception through symbolic-minding process. (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011, p. 193) Through the process, one's actions toward organisations are defined, and the process creates the organisation to be what it is in the one's mind. In addition, their actions may change depending on the perception one has about the given organisation.

Moreover, if hated organisation is seen as morally corrupt, it can be morally excluded and perceived psychologically distant, outside of the scope of justice (e.g. Opatow, 2005, p. 127). In psychology, this has been found to result in "chronic hatred" as it organises people's social worlds to ingroups and outgroups, and which causes the hater to eliminate the hated group from its environment (Fischer et al., 2018, p. 311). In addition, Zarantonello et al. (2018, p. 557) found that the ones who hated the organisation because of corporate wrongdoing were

not willing to forgive the organisation in the future “as they believe that the reason why they hate the brand is part of the brand identity itself, therefore something that cannot really be changed”. Thus, hate based on moral shortcomings of the organisation could be concluded to seemingly be more serious than hate stemming from negative experiences solely.

The aforementioned reasons are also related to organisations role as responsible actors in society. Previously, it has also been concluded that negative emotions can result from injustice or wrongdoings, which can be either real or perceived ones (Lievonen et al., 2018, p. 541). Moreover, lack of fairness, truthfulness, social responsibility, as well as lack of authenticity have been discovered to be reasons behind anger, and in these cases organisations themselves are to blame for having caused the issue (Lievonen et al., 2015). Therefore, based on the results of the literature review, it could be stated that somewhat same type of reasons leading to anger and negative engagement can potentially lead to hate targeted at organisations in organisational level, especially if combined with failed service or product experiences. In conclusion, direct negative experiences with organisation may cause hate, but more serious forms of hatred stem from the perceived moral shortcomings of organisation.

### **Individual level and unjustified reasons for hate**

When hate toward organisation is triggered on individual level, it is unjustified in a sense that the reasons for hate are related to subject, not organisation. The matters causing hatred are neither under the control of organisation nor does it necessarily have any part of involvement on the issue. Individual level, however, refers to personalities, preferences, or identities.

Consumer traits, such as aggressive personality, blame attribution, and low level of brand trust (which may be related to organisation’s actions, though) can increase the level of hate after service failure. The consumers with these characteristics are likely to vent their negative emotions and retaliate against the organisation. (Sakulsinlapakorn et al., 2019) Consumers, who are self-confident, highly conscientious, and competitive, may hate organisations more likely than personalities without these characteristics (Kucuk, 2019). If these consumers have experienced brand love toward the focal organisation, their negative emotions will strengthen after service failure (Sakulsinlapakorn et al., 2019, p. 18). In addition, the aforementioned reasons can affect the level of hate intensity. Moreover, love for the sports organisation competitor’s brand may be a possible reason for hate (Olson, 2018).

Symbolic incongruity (Bryson et al., 2019; Hegner et al., 2017; Zarantonello et al., 2018) refers to the idea that the organisation does not fit to the individual's symbolic identity requirements - it is seen as incompatible with one's social role (Bryson et al., 2019, p. 176). Symbolic incongruity occurs if the organisation represents a negative reference group or if there is negative symbolic meaning incorporated to the organisation, such a lack of authenticity and representation of undesired self, and loss of individuality (Hegner et al., 2017, p. 17). An example of symbolic incongruence is presented in a study where a business does not offer halal-meat to their Muslim customers which may cause hate among them (Islam et al., 2019, p. 82). Furthermore, functional incongruence can also contribute to hate formation toward the organisation - though not as much as symbolic incongruence - and can represent a lack of ideal attributes in a product that are wanted by a customer (Islam et al., 2019, p. 81). In addition, negative perceptions of the users of the brand cause the customer refraining purchasing the product due to the idea that there would be psychosocial consequences stemming from peer groups (Bryson et al., 2013, p. 389).

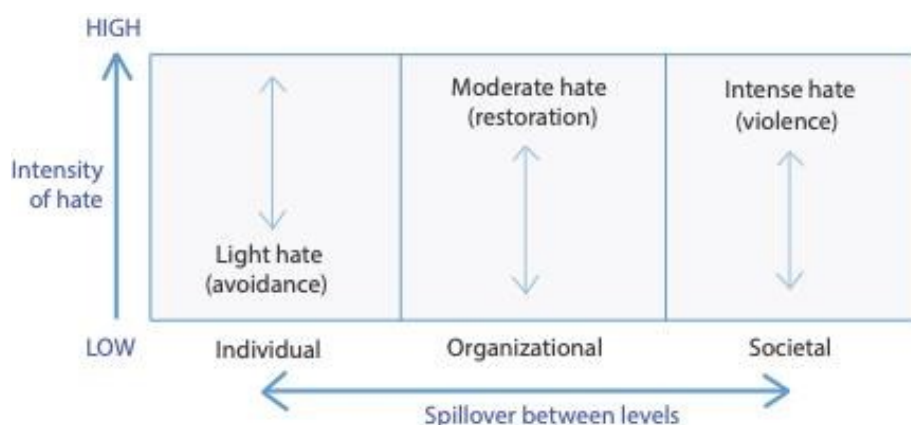
Due to symbolic incongruence with organisation, the customer may avoid the company's products and services, because the actor perceives the organisation as not being congruent with their own self-image. These aforementioned reasons for hate targeted at organisations show again that meanings attached to organisations matter. Organisations in these cases may be interpreted through the generalised other (e.g. Blumer, 2004; Charon, 2007, p. 109-113) - one's peers and social groups - through which they also see themselves. Thus, people refrain from attaching themselves to organisation by for example not buying the company's products, as they do not want to be different from and disliked by their closest social contacts, or eventually themselves.

Interestingly, individual level hate is not necessarily the type of hate which would include an aim to attack, harm or destroy the focal organisation (Fischer et al., 2018; Fetcscherin et al., 2019), but seeks distance from the hate target. Thus, this could be referred as disengagement. It is a passive state of engagement and refers to "weak negative orientation toward a focal object or relationship that manifests when customers physically or emotionally distance themselves from the focal object or relationship" (Lievonen et al., 2015, p. 533). However, personality traits have been concluded to result in retaliation (e.g. Sakulsinlapakorn et al., 2019) and therefore, there may be different levels of hate resulting in individual level. In the next sub-chapter, the potential hate journeys toward organisations are outlined.

### 5.3. Hate journeys

As a result of combining the context of the study with the findings of the literature review, three types of journeys of hate toward organisations can be identified. This chapter also discusses how this hate formulates and addresses managerial implications. Hate journeys are divided into three sections: light hate, moderate hate, and intense hate journeys, within which spill-over effect occurs and intensity of hate varies depending on the context and case. As stated earlier, the different types of hate are not stagnant: light hate can escalate into moderate hate, that can escalate into intense hate, and in some cases, the other way around.

Figure 3. Hate journeys. *Made in collaboration with Professor Vilma Luoma-aho.*



#### 5.3.1. Light hate journey

Light hate journey stems from reasons that are extra-organisational, or in other words, reasons that are not directly related to organisation. More precisely, the reasons to hate organisation stem from the subject. The issues behind this type of hatred can be related to one's identity, personality traits, and/or preferences. The reasons may include identity incongruence with the hated organisation (Bryson et al., 2019; Hegner et al., 2017; Zarantonello et al., 2018), aggressive personality traits (Sakulsinlapakorn et al., 2019; Kucuk, 2019), negative associations (Bryson et al., 2013, p. 389), or preferability over the organisation's competitor than the given organisation (Olson, 2018).

Light hate is targeted at organisations that might have been chosen to be the hate targets, after which hate is targeted at them and in this sense, is unjustified (Sternberg, 2005, p. 38). It can be a result of the negative meaning that the



subject associates with the focal organisation, and the organisation might be perceived through a generalised other, differentiating the organisation from one's peers and social groups and eventually themselves (e.g. Blumer, 2004; Charon, 2007, p. 109-113). This type of hate does not necessarily result in public, aggressive behaviour, but results in avoidance and private complaining (Fetscherin et al., 2019; Platania et al., 2017; Islam et al., 2019; Hegner; et al., 2017; Bryson et al., 2019). This can also be referred to as disengagement, which can be referred to as weak negative orientation toward the hated organisation (Lievonen et al., 2015, p. 533). Thus, this type of hate does not necessarily become public or reach the knowledge of organisation, which makes it hard to manage.

Therefore, light hate is not intense in a sense that it would aim to cause harm, but it can potentially become more intense as spill-over effect between different levels occurs. For example, one with aggressive personality traits may start to vent and retaliate against the organisation if they experience a service failure caused by the organisation (Sakulsinlapakorn et al., 2019). So to say, individual level reasons may fuel the formation of hatred if other reasons to hate the organisation appear.

### **5.3.2. Moderate hate journey**

Moderate hate journey derives from reasons that are related to organisation and its actions. Organisation has or could have influence over the issues that have caused hate to evolve. Organisation may have violated norms, acted unfairly, or violated corporate social irresponsibility norms. In addition, the reasons for hatred toward organisations may be related to one's own negative experiences with the given organisation.

This type of hate is referred to as moderate hate because it can both be short-and long-term and more reactional than intense hate (Fetscherin et al., 2019). The aim is to restore equity (Fetscherin et al., 2019) or aim to change the target by attacking (Fischer et al., 2018). For example, corporate wrongdoings may result in complaining and protesting (Zarantonello et al., 2016, p. 22; Zarantonello et al., 2018) which may indicate that a certain issue has provoked reactional hatred aiming to change the organisation to act more responsibly. The same goes with situations when there has been product or service failure (Sakuslipakorn et al., 2019; Kucuk, 2018), dissatisfaction with the service (Bryson et al., 2013, p. 397-398), or violations of expectations (Zarantonello et al., 2016). The subject may want to restore equity (Fischer et al., 2018) by making a public scene and retaliation (Grégoire & Fisher, 2008a). The subject may also begin to avoid

the organisation (Bryson et al., 2013) which indicates that moderate hate might also overlap with light hate.

Corporate irresponsible behaviour or failure to comply with ethics may be perceived as a moral shortcoming that reveals the organisation's core identity (Zarantonello et al., 2018, p. 557). Even though the hate would not at first be character-conditioned, organisation might become to be perceived as inherently malicious due to the immoral actions it has taken or lack of expected actions to act responsibly (Fischer et al., 2018). For example, because corporate wrongdoings are not easily forgiven and seen to represent the organisation's identity (Zarantonello et al., 2018, p. 557), hate based on moral shortcomings of the organisation could be concluded to be more serious than hate stemming from negative experiences solely. Moderate hate, in other words, is formed in interactions with the organisation and in other interactions regarding the organisation.

The reasons for hate are not stagnant but, again, may spill-over from one level to another: organisational level issues overlap between other levels. As mentioned before, cases where organisation fails to deliver a service, hate may be related to individual level if the subject for example has aggressive personality traits (Sakulsinlapakorn et al., 2019). In addition, the intensity of hate may also grow to intense if there are societal level issues involved in hate formation as well. In sum, moderate hate stems from reasons that are related to organisation and may result in restorative actions such as complaining and protesting.

### **5.3.3. Intense hate journey**

Intense hate journey stems from extra-organisational reasons, or in other words, reasons outside of the organisation's sphere of influence. The organisation itself has not contributed to the formation of hatred but has come to typify something or someone who or what is seen in negative light in societal level. The reasons behind intense hate may, for example stem from geopolitical rivalries (Antonetti et al., 2019), differences in political opinion (Goodall, 2011), violent extremism (Woodward, 2014), and prejudices in societal level (Edström et al., 2016). From the point of view of organisations, this type of hate can also be understood as unjustified hate, which is a more dangerous version of hate than the hate that is based on reasons such as the target's wrongdoings because hate is aimed at groups that have been chosen to be the hate targets, after which aggressive behaviour is targeted at them. (Sternberg, 2005, p. 38)

This type of hate is very intense because it can result in violence (Woodward et al., 2014; Mawby et al., 2018), hate speech and/or verbal abuse (Woodward et al., 2014; Edström et al., 2016). Illegal actions, like violence or illegal hate

speech, do not consider personal consequences in accordance Fetscherin et al. (2019) conceptualisation. In addition, the target is perceived inherently evil and therefore needs to be destroyed, and is likely to be a long-term attitude. Therefore, if organisation is seen to represent something or someone who is seen as malicious, outcomes may be serious.

From organisation's point of view, it is hard to deal with this type of hate, because the initial reason for hate is not organisation itself but the meanings or interpretations externally attached to organisation. Organisation and its actions are not the reason for hate directly, but organisation is hated because of what it represents in a wider societal context. In conclusion, intense hate stems from extra-organisational sources and may result in very serious destructive actions toward organisation.

#### **5.3.4. Conclusions on hate journeys**

In conclusion, hate toward organisations can stem from both extra-organisational and/or organisational reasons. Both individual and societal level reasons may serve as a breeding ground for extra-organisational hate, and organisation itself can also contribute to the formation of hatred on organisational level. Organisation's own contribution to causing hatred becomes evident in cases of, for example, service failures, violations of expectations, and irresponsible corporate behaviour. Extra-organisational hatred can result from reasons such as geopolitical rivalries or prejudices. Moreover, the reasons for hatred toward organisations in different levels may overlap.

Since extra-organisational hate is formed in interactions that do not include interactions with organisation, it is hard for organisations to manage individual and societal level hate. Especially societal level hate may become very intense. Therefore, organisations should pay a special focus on interactions it has with its stakeholders and publics because it is the means how organisations can affect the tone of discussion. This is due to the fact that negative meanings about organisations are created in various situations, both with organisation and outside of its sphere of influence. Meaning giving always occurs in relation to social actions; either in social situations or inside one's own mind (Charon, 2007, p. 148-149).

Moreover, if there are negative meanings associated with the organisation prior to organisation's perceived failure, organisation may come to strengthen the negative perceptions about it by acting, for example, socially irresponsible. In addition, the shortcomings of organisation may even be perceived to reveal the true identity of it being a corrupt to the core. Interestingly, it is also vital to pay

attention to those who love the organisation. This is due to the love-becomes-hate effect: previous committed relationship with the organisation may contribute to hate becoming even worse than it would otherwise be if the relationship was not so strong (Sakulsinlapakorn et al., 2019).

Due to these aforementioned matters, organisations would benefit from monitoring not only their stakeholders and immediate environments, but also weak signals and public opinions in society. In addition, awareness of public and stakeholder's expectations can also prevent possible hate targeted at organisations. But first and foremost, the more integrity organisation has, the less complicated it is to prevent hate to be targeted at it.

However, if the organisation is already hated, downregulating and dissolving the hate requires time since hate itself needs time to evolve (e.g. Fischer et al., 2018). The more intense the hate, the longer it may take to solve the problem. In these cases organisation would need to make changes in its operations and its communications. Communication with the subjects who hate it is essential because interaction is the potential reason for change as the social objectives and meanings are created in interaction (Blumer, 2004, p. 47, 82-83). If the organisations succeed in creating and receiving new, positive meanings attached to them, there could be a possibility to solve the problem of hatred, since meaning giving and defining always occur in relation to social actions (Charon, 2007, p. 148-149). Because the most intense hate is rooted in a perception of the organisation at its core, it seems that dissolving hate is a process. Therefore, it seems that there are no quick strategies to tackle hatred targeted at organisations.

## 5.4. Discussion

The aim of this thesis was to understand what or who are the targets of hate when hate is targeted at organisations, and what are the reasons behind the hate. The research questions were the following:

1. What or who is the target of hate when hate is expressed toward organisations?
2. Why are the targets hated?

In this thesis, the theoretical context was combined with the findings of the literature review, after which the text was critically analysed. Hate journeys were formed from this process.

The findings indicate that when hate is targeted at organisations, the targets are not clearly discussed or differentiated in the literature. On the basis on the findings, it seems to remain unclear how the subjects perceive the hated target; whether it is the whole organisation, only a brand, or a representative of organisation, that is hated. It was only mentioned in passing in few of the results of the literature review. However, the reasons behind the hate reveal the issues that might cause hate. These reasons may stem from three levels: societal, organisational, or individual levels. Organisations may themselves contribute to hate formation by acting socially irresponsible, failures in service or products, or otherwise not being able to meet expectations. Societal reasons consider wider phenomena and themes in societies – such as violent extremist movements, politics, and generalised prejudices. Moreover, individual reasons refer to issues that are related to the individuals' personalities, preferences, or identities. Three types of hate journeys – light, moderate, and intense hate journeys – stem from the aforementioned reasons, and which may overlap and spill-over from one level to another, which may intensify the level of hate.

It is to be noted that not all the studies in the literature review concentrated on hatred toward organisation, but targets of hate and reasons for the hate resulted from and through critical and analytical reading of the articles. In the review process organisations' stakeholders and other groups were not differentiated either. However, when hate can be perceived to stem from organisational level, most likely the subjects are organisations' stakeholders since the organisation is seen to have some level of involvement in hate formation. Nevertheless, the focus of this thesis was in understanding the targets and the formation of hatred, not in understanding the subjects who come to hate an organisation.

## **5.5. Evaluation and limitations of the research and implications for the further research**

This thesis aimed at gaining understanding toward what hate is targeted at in organisations and the reasons behind the hate, and as a result, hate journeys were created. However, there are several limitations to this study. The results only show the hate targets that have been studied before and that were in the scope of the literature review, and thus, the thesis offers only a limited view on the phenomenon. In addition, only the hated targets were searched in the databases, after which the possible reasons for hatred were identified. Therefore, some of the potential reasons to hate organisations might have offered a more versatile

picture of the phenomenon. In addition, use of even more detailed and versatile search terms could have given more information on the hate targets and the phenomenon in general.

In this thesis, it was not considered who were the subjects who come to hate organisation - whether they are individuals or groups, or stakeholders or not. However, these limitations are common for reviews: reviews cannot cover all the previous research in its various aspects. In addition, integrated literature reviews offer a wider picture on the topic and new conclusions, rather than focus on the details of the studies. (Torraco, 2005, p. 361) Hate targeted at organisations seemed not to have been studied previously, neither had the behavioural and the organisational perspectives on hate targeted at organisations been linked together. Therefore, this thesis created only a preliminary outlook on the phenomenon of hate targeted at organisations and how it could be understood and studied in the context of organisations.

As this study was conducted as a qualitative research, the subjectivity of the author was strong. Therefore, it is important that the author explains the conduct of the study in a detailed manner - such as how and why categorisations of the results and analysis are made (Hirsjärvi, Remes, Sajavaara, & Sinivuori, 2015, p. 232) Even though the phases of the research were described as in detail as possible, it was done by only one author. The analysis process is very subjective, and therefore many interpretations could have been drawn from the same results. However, this is a common issue when conducting literature reviews and qualitative studies, but at the same time new viewpoints can be found and revealed (Hirsjärvi et al., 2015, p. 182). Though, if triangulation - triangulation of methods, theories or authors - were used, the results would have been more valid (Hirsjärvi et al., 2015, p. 233).

Since there seems to be a very limited number of research on hate and organisations, there are several implications for further research. Since the current studies do not seem to differentiate toward who, what, or which hate is targeted at in organisations, there would be a need to delve deeper into this topic in the future. More detailed information on the hate targets and reasons would assist the organisations to deal with hatred. Moreover, empirical studies could offer valuable information on what and why subjects come to hate organisations. In order to understand hate, empirical studies could also provide deeper knowledge on how hate spills over to other levels and why it intensifies.

This study was founded in symbolic interactionism, but also other theoretical backgrounds, such as Actor-network theory (e.g. Jóhannesson & Bærenholdt, 2009) could be utilised in next studies. A closer link to negative engagement could also be drawn with the topic of this thesis to understand the

process how people come to hate organisations. Moreover, hate targeted at organisations could also be studied from the subjects' point of view to gain a comprehensive picture on the phenomenon.

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