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Between the Left and the Right: Jihadi Brides' British Media Frames Post ISIS Fall

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ABSTRACT

This thesis analyzes the media frames/representations of Western women who migrated to ISIS, known as “Jihadi Brides,” after the fall of ISIS in December 2017. ISIS is a terrorist group that used attractive strategies and techniques in recruiting Western women to join ISIS as Jihadi Brides, building on the promises of the perfect life within the Islamic state. It is important to understand this phenomenon especially after the fall of ISIS. Media narratives and frames help shape the public opinion and the societal actions toward different societal issues. This research is important because it analyzes the phenomenon of the Jihadi Brides as an existing problem after the fall of ISIS through the frames of the media and qualitative research through a feminist lens focused on the traumatized Western women who migrated to ISIS. Based on a media feminist analysis of two main British newspapers that represent the right and the left, this research holds a comparison of the media representations of the Jihadi Brides in *The Daily Telegraph/Sunday telegraph* and *The Guardian*.

Keywords: Jihadi Brides, ISIS Women, Media Frames, British Media, Feminism

DEDICATION

This thesis, and the achievement of the master's program are dedicated to my wonderful, supportive parents and my beloved sister. Without you, I wouldn't have been me, and this success wouldn't have existed. I hope I made you proud ... I love you.

هذه الرسالة، والإنجاز المتعلق بإتمام درجة الماجستير إهداء مني لأبي وأمي الرائعين الداعمين،

ولأختي العزيزة.

بدونكم لم أكن أنا، ولم يكن هذا النجاح ليتحقق.

أتمنى أن أكون مصدر فخر لكم... أحبكم.

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I DID IT ...

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Chapter 1: Introduction

ISIS claimed itself to be the “worldwide Caliphate” of Islam in 2014, growing into one of the most dangerous threats to international security in modern history (Bjørngum (2016). ISIS was formed from a pre-jihadist Sunni group who were against the American existence in the Middle East, the Western culture ideals, the Shi’a, and the secular Arab regimes (Jacoby, 2015). Reuters Institute for the study of Journalism (2015), listed ISIS as the largest terrorist threat to the world.

According to Perešin (2015), ISIS was known for its extreme violence, brutal tortures, and mistreatment of civilians and hostages including women and children. The difference between ISIS and the Muslim community is that ISIS legitimizes violence (Jacoby, 2015). ISIS had spread fear and shaped that image of severe control over women through practiced brutality against women both physically and sexually, as well as through slavery (Perešin, 2015). Even though this should make ISIS unattractive to join, surprisingly, a substantial number of females had left their Western countries and joined ISIS.

According to the International Centre for the Study of Radicalization at Kings College London, approximately 10% of the foreign nationals who joined ISIS are females who are between the age of 16 and 24. These numbers represent the growing trend of radicalization for Western females who decide to migrate to parts of the Middle East to join ISIS, leaving behind their life and families. Women and girls who decide to migrate to ISIS are known as “Jihadi Brides.” The growing number of these Jihadi Brides raised concerns to Western society.

According to different scholars including Jacoby (2015), Perešin (2015), Martini (2018), and Nacos, (2005), there are different motivations of Western women to migrate to ISIS; including religious, political, ideological, and personal motives. Perešin (2015) discussed the method ISIS propaganda uses to recruit Western women, specifically that ISIS focuses on the idea of offering a new meaningful life through religion. Therefore, religious motivation was the most cited among Western women migrants according to Perešin (2015). Religious motives came from the invitation of ISIS's leader who urged Muslims to fulfill their religion by joining the new Islamic state. Other women had ideological motives of being part of establishing the new Islamic State with expectations to be given an important role in a state that respects women and where they could live an honorable life under Sharia law. Some other women had political motives and thought it is a humanitarian cause to move to Syria and help revive the country after the war by being part of the new Islamic State. Personal motives included the ideology of ISIS offering a new sense of belonging to a movement that will change history, the idea of being part of a global cause, or just looking for the ideal man -- the real fighter.

Though ISIS fell, the Western women Jihadi Brides still exist as detainees in refugee camps in the Middle East. It is important to understand the media frames of these women as it allows us insights into the gender relations within this society. The fall of ISIS created a dilemma for countries that will have to deal with the returnees, not only women, but also children who were born in ISIS or taken there (Jackson, 2019). The fact that Western women move to the Islamic state supports the argument that these women see the ideology and values of ISIS as powerful and superior to that of the Western

society. Given that ISIS is focused on recruiting Western women, it implies the power and validation of ISIS ideology throughout the whole world (Perešin, 2015).

This research is an interpretive approach to Western media framing of the Jihadi Brides phenomenon with a careful consideration to a feminist analysis. That is, the purpose of this research is to examine the nuances of the media framing to determine the particularities of the specific topic of Jihadi Brides through values coding and feminism. This research will be an examination of two of the main most read British newspapers: *The Daily Telegraph/Sunday telegraph* and *The Guardian*. According to YouGov (2017), *The Daily Telegraph/Sunday telegraph* represents the right wing and *The Guardian* represents the left wing in Britain. The main goal for this research is to elucidate the degree to which the media frame Western women Jihadi Brides as feminists. The time frame for the research is 2017-2019. The research time frame starts at ISIS's official fall date. The time frame of the research is important because the existent research on the phenomenon of the Jihadi Brides only addressed this phenomenon while ISIS was still active, and no writing is found after the fall of ISIS in 2017. According to The International Center for the Study of Radicalization's research from King's College in London, British women and minors who are affiliated with ISIS accounted for 23% of the British citizens who joined ISIS. The same report said that 4,761 of foreign citizens who joined ISIS (41,490) were women. This research adds new insights on the feminist media analysis for the British Jihadi Brides' phenomenon after the fall of ISIS.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)

ISIS is a terrorist group that is taking the Middle East, especially in Iraq and Syria, as the main headquarter for its leadership (Gulmohamad, 2014). ISIS claims itself to be the sole ruler of the Islamic world and for all Muslims (Byman, 2016). But there is a major difference between ISIS and the Muslim community, in that unlike the Muslim community -- ISIS legitimizes violence (Jacoby, 2015). ISIS was founded by a Jordanian extremist named Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi who was connected to the terrorist group Al-Qaida (Austin, 2014). Al-Zarqawi was killed in 2006, and the Egyptian Abu Ayyoub Al-Masri was then announced the leader of ISIS (Freemen, 2014).

According to the timeline from The Wilson Center (2019), ISIS was founded in 2007, but it started to expand officially in 2011. According to the same source, 2015 was the peak year of ISIS's terrorist actions as it developed a network of affiliates in eight different countries who started to execute terrorist attack under the leadership of ISIS. ISIS continued its terrorist actions until December 9th, 2017, the day that serves as the date ISIS was defeated and represents the official date of its fall.

ISIS is not only a terrorist organization, but rather an idea or an ideology that wants to be rooted in the world as argued by Khashoggi (2014). Multiple groups, whether locally or internationally were attracted to ISIS for an obvious reason of genuine convention (Byman, 2016). ISIS ideas tapped into the beliefs of Muslims and portrayed itself as the protector and defender of Islam, especially the Sunni sectarian (Byman, 2016). According to Lister (2016) ISIS's goal is to remove all the borders in the Middle

East and extend to central Asia to form the world's Islamic caliphate. Unlike other terrorist groups who promote suicide bombing and martyrdom in order to reach paradise, ISIS wants to build paradise on earth.

According to Gulmohamad (2014) and Byman (2016), the rapid growth of ISIS into different countries in the Middle East such as Syria, Iraq, Libya, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Lebanon show the extensive influence ISIS could have on the vulnerability of the region. The source of funds that ISIS gets is not clearly known, but experts suggest that these funds come from illegal black marketing, kidnapping, drug trafficking, and criminal activities (Gulmohamad, 2014). Additionally, ISIS has grown to be the richest terrorism group in history, since it controlled oil wells in the region, organized acts of bank robbery, and imposed taxes on its territories (Lister, 2015).

Western Muslim Women in the Western Society

Western societies gain superiority over other societies given the status enjoyed by the individuals living there, including Western Muslim women (Martini, 2018). In addition, when Western Muslim women join ISIS, this causes a disruption of the Western societies' images of passive Muslim women who need to be saved from the Arab/Muslim influence. However, this participation legitimizes the war on Islam and confirms the false Western understanding of Islam (Martini, 2018).

Weedon (2009) argues that the appeal to radical Islam will increase in societies where radical Islam is most rejected as a way of resistance. An important reason for the attraction of Islamism to young Western Islamists is the imagined, romanticized idea of an ideal future Islamic state where they are accepted and free to fully practice their "true"

version of Islam. Social media provides a free medium of distribution to material that will attract the Western Muslims who are affected by world politics. These Western Muslims, within themselves, have identities that are multi-layered with conflicts from society, politics, or the media and are looking for a place where they could find their own true identity and practice their religion freely (Weedon, 2009). Islamism offers to those Muslims a “fixing” of the identity through the power of belonging (Weedon, 2009).

Perešin and Cervone (2015) discuss another fear that concerns the Western society: women who were not able to join ISIS performing supportive duties from their home countries and involvement in violent acts in what is known as the “female lone wolves” phenomenon. According to Pantucci (2011), the term “lone wolf” defines individuals who continue to pursue terroristic extremist Islamists’ goals alone when they return to their countries or anywhere in the world.

Understanding the Motivations of Jihadi Brides

Perešin (2015) offers an insight into understanding the motivations of Western women who decided to leave their countries and join ISIS. These women go through a terrorist production system in order to become female terrorists who are capable of performing violence acts whether within ISIS or their Western countries (Perešin, 2015). Mah-Rukh (2015) suggests Western women are attracted to go to ISIS because there is a universal appeal to the idea of joining the group, which is the promise of a new exciting adventurous life while serving a religious cause. ISIS presents a perfect picture for those who want to join the Islamic State and find a meaning to their life (Mah-Rukh, 2015). ISIS’s social media campaigns influenced many girls through images of the wonderful

life they will have upon joining ISIS (Mah-Rukh, 2015). This life portrays acknowledging the role of women as warriors' side by side to men, having a loving husband and building the perfect Muslim family (Mah-Rukh, 2015).

According to Jacques and Taylor (2019), literature on female terrorism categorize their motivations as social, personal, idealistic, through key event or for revenge. Social motivations are gender equality, education, humiliation, and family problems. Personal motivations are personal distress, monetary worries or being a social outsider. Idealistic motivations are supporting an important cause, religious purposes, nationalism and hope for martyrdom. Key events represent the loss of a loved one, displacement, and humiliating events. Finally, revenge is for vengeance and anger (Jacques & Taylor, 2009).

Perešin (2015) clarified that the main motivation for the female foreign fighter tends to be ideological or religious rather than financial. The female foreign fighters receive financial support when they arrive to ISIS, but in this case, money is not a priority (Perešin, 2015).

Jihadi Brides and Challenges of Gender

Terrorism research has been widely known to be gender specific to men. Since women's involvement in terrorism actions has been increasing in the recent decade(s), so has female terrorism research (Jacques & Taylor, 2009). Martini (2018) discusses that Muslim women are often portrayed as victims to the barbaric actions of Muslim men and the oriental culture in general. This results in framing women as passive victims and oppressed.

The Jihadi Brides are women who did not only refuse to be saved but joins the terrorist groups who are known to be oppressive, thinking of acts of violence as a pathway to liberation (Martini, 2018). According to Sylvester and Parshar (2009) the word “terrorism” is always gendered towards males and is associated with descriptions of masculinity and violence.

ISIS targets naïve and easily manipulated teenagers to recruit to a cause that they do not really understand. These girls become part of ISIS and play a role that is controlled by the terrorist leadership which reflects the evolution of women roles in the violent jihadi movements, from passive supporters to active members (Perešin, 2015). According to Bjørgum (2016) the Jihadi Brides offers a new representation of feminism combined with the Islamic fundamentalism and the anti-Western egalitarian feminism. ISIS considers the idea of feminism when recruiting for new jihadi brides. They put together the manifesto for women to set their roles in the ISIS utopia and prove the Western ideas for women were corrupted. Feminism in ISIS State means the importance of women in their society. ISIS women believe that they are the rocks and mortar of the family (Bjørgum, 2016).

Literature shows that the most favorable environmental enabler for women to join terrorism groups is the desire for gender equality, and to be in a society that have equal roles for men and women (Jacques & Taylor, 2009). According to Saltman and Smith (2015), females who join ISIS “are not only rejecting the culture and foreign policy of the West they leave behind; they are also embracing a new worldview, cultivated by ISIS, based on building what they are told will become a utopian society” (p. 14). The concept

of the Jihadi Brides used to label women and girls who migrated to ISIS was meant to render their motivation of joining ISIS (Saltman & Smith, 2015). Jihadi Brides were reduced into a third category of neither targets nor innocent, but rather to individuals whose life is disposable because they decided to migrate (Jackson, 2019).

According to Jacoby (2015) since Jihadi Brides seek to challenge gender roles in society, they could be seen as feminists. Jihadi Brides are looking for a harmonious society where men and women are equal (Jacoby, 2015). ISIS doesn't prevent women from being in the battlefield if there is a necessity for that (Jacoby, 2015). If this is the case, there could be a gender transformation applied by a terrorist group such as ISIS (Jacoby, 2015). The feminist strategy that ISIS uses by politicizing the domestic roles of women has been successful in the recruitment of Jihadi Brides; it attracted many Western women who were aspiring for women empowerment and gender equality (Jacoby, 2015).

Jihadi Brides and Feminism

Jacoby (2015) defines Jihadi Brides as women from the geographical west who migrated to Syria to marry a jihadi fighter and live under ISIS controlled territory. From a feminism point of view, the phenomena of Jihadi Brides help confirm that women want gender equality and their voices to be heard. Jihadi Brides had accepted a role to support the violent jihad through domesticated roles as housewives, caregivers, mothers, and symbols of uniting the society (Jacoby, 2015).

Women who joined ISIS are always portrayed in the media through their relationship with their male counterparts and often referred to as "ISIS Brides" (Jacoby, 2015). This framing of women via males takes away their agency and their decision to

join ISIS. Media frames of female terrorists often relates their motives to their family and loved ones and use their marital status whether married or unmarried (Soules, 2019).

Western media, when reporting on female terrorists, focuses on the personal aspects such as biographical information, social circumstances, and the societal influence. Therefore, the female terrorist behavior is decided by external factors versus personal factors. Diminishing the influence of personal factors portray women as powerless and influence their credibility as female terrorists. In contrast, Arab media tends to be free of gender stereotypes (Jacques & Taylor, 2009). It treats male terrorists and female terrorists equally and focuses on the personal motivations and religious causes (Jacques & Taylor, 2009). In general, media uses female terrorism to advance the feminism argument through descriptions of women manipulated and controlled by men to become terrorists, or that female terrorists are the result of the patriarchal world we live in (Jacques & Taylor, 2009).

The case of Jihadi Brides shows women involvement in the struggle against Western feminism. Feminism is known to be diverse and inclusive, but who sets the boundaries of feminism and how far should it go until it becomes meaningless? Should feminism include women who have different political purposes and drift from the collective purpose of democracy (Jacoby, 2015)?

The media narratives around the Jihadi Brides included their descriptions as vulnerable, confused, and naïve (Martini, 2018). The media tends to emphasize their young age to dehumanize the values of ISIS and to confirm the easy manipulation of young girls to be recruited as Jihadi Brides (Martini, 2018). The narratives of women as

naïve depicts the political motivations behind joining ISIS. However, Jihadi Brides have shown awareness of the violence, political motivations and the commitment to the cause, which clashes with the naivety narrative (Martini, 2018). The concept of marriage itself portrays the Jihadi Brides as incomplete women who are looking for a jihadi fighter to marry and that's why they decide to join a terrorism organization such as ISIS (Martini, 2018). According to Jacoby (2015) women who live in war zones experience and practice different feminism that is not meant for peace, it rather seeks to fit women's rights into the identities of men whether it is for national, religious, or ethnic purposes.

Martini (2018) also described one of the frames of migration to ISIS as an adventure and a quest for liberation or some sort of rebellion, however these frames were gender-constructed more for males. Some media narratives included descriptions of Jihadi Brides as "hormone-driven" jihadists who are attracted to bad men who can whip up the female hormones that strive for pain from deep inside (Martini, 2018). According to religion, marriage is the only way to channel this mad hormonal energy in the display of sexual deviance (Martini, 2018). Framing women as irrational and immature and only sexually driven, unlike men who were not framed as hormone-driven or brainwashed (Martini, 2018).

Women's Status in ISIS

Since the establishment of the Islamic State would be impossible without women, ISIS started to recruit Muslim women from around the world, especially from Western societies, to increase its population. To do so, ISIS used their perspectives on the role of women in the Islamic State in the manifesto of women that was published online. The

manifesto diminishes Western views on education, feminism and science. It introduces a new version of women as protected, pious, and vital to the establishment of the Islamic State (Jacoby, 2015).

Mah-Rukh (2015) describes the status of women under ISIS control through three main points: ISIS's manifesto of women, Jihadi Brides, and sexual Jihad. ISIS's manifesto of women was the first of its kind to be released through a terrorist group. This manifesto sets rules for women living in the Islamic State. Women should wear all black and cover every inch of their body (Mah-Rukh, 2015). The manifesto seeks to prove the failure of the Western model of "liberated" women. It states that women and men are not equal in Islam, women are expected to be wives and serve their husband and children only, and that women are not expected to work unless it is under extreme conditions and only few days a week (Mah-Rukh, 2015). In addition, women are not allowed to go out of the house unless it is for jihad or the purpose of studying religion (Mah-Rukh, 2015).

ISIS puts a value on and politicizes the social roles of women. Women serving as mothers and wives to the group through domesticated roles who receive acknowledgement and value from ISIS men and the whole organization gives women a sense of power they have been striving for (Jacoby, 2015). For example, in ISIS women are present at the times of important political decisions, even if they are in the background, but the idea is that they exist, and their existence is important (Jacoby, 2015).

Widely practiced in ISIS, women are encouraged to offer themselves as sexual servants to the jihadi fighters in what is known as "Nikkah ul Jihad". This allows jihadi

fighters to have “halal” sex in order to avoid any distractions in the battlefield to fulfill his jihadi mission perfectly (Mah-Rukh, 2015). To do that, a jihadi man can marry a woman for a couple of hours or a couple of days. Mah-Rukh (2015) reports that this shameful practice resulted in more sexual violence that made women’s life in ISIS more miserable.

ISIS Women and Propaganda

Unlike other terror groups, ISIS rely heavily on women in their propaganda in order to guarantee intense media coverage in the Western media. ISIS propaganda, especially online media as the main way of recruiting potential Jihadi Brides, includes depicting women in the battlefield or women police forces which serves as attraction for the promise of personal power and the ability to fight for a bigger cause for the success of the Islamic State (Mah-Rukh, 2015).

Twitter is the main platform for ISIS for their social media recruitment campaigns, but they also use Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, Kik, Instagram, SureSpot and Ask.FM and are constantly looking for ways to exploit different social media platforms (Perešin, 2015). ISIS online recruiters create an attractive narrative for the perfect life in Syria which makes it easy for recruits to identify themselves (Perešin, 2015). These attractive narratives respond to the frustrations of Western women/adults who are looking for the perfect life in the “Muslim Disneyland” as described by Perešin (2015).

Women joining ISIS have great propaganda benefits as audiences tend to be more sympathetic to women, ISIS women help with recruitment for potential newcomers, and

it motivates men to join ISIS as well as it puts shame on men who did not join yet (Soules, 2019). Women's role within ISIS was informal, yet it was highly glorified through portraying the image of women as providers of the safe domestic space that is essential to the growth and development of the Islamic State. Unlike men who join ISIS for the honorable fate of martyrdom, women have a continuous role in the establishment of the state. Women can remarry after the death of their husbands to produce ISIS citizens who are going to be its future fighters (Al-Dayel, 2018).

ISIS Media Narratives

There is a strong relationship between media and terrorism. Margret Thatcher had argued that media provides terrorism with the oxygen for publicity. In parallel, terrorism offers to the media what it craves most according to Nacos and Bloch-Elkon (2011, p. 692).

According to Jackson (2019), 40% of the people in the UK report that they get their information and ideas about the world from newspapers. British media in the period of 2013-2018, according to Jackson (2019), had used the frames of describing the Jihadi Brides as natural, biological and supernatural forces. These portrayals included expressions such as waves and floods for natural disasters, expressions of toxicity such as poison and viruses, or expressions of vegetations such as roots and seeds for biological forces, and finally supernatural expressions such as the magic of the evil jihadi men (Jackson, 2019). These metaphors are not new to the descriptions of extremism, terrorism, and migration. What is new here is that these metaphors portray the Jihadi Brides powerless and passive bystanders influenced by the unstoppable growth of ISIS

(Jackson, 2019). The image of Jihadi Brides as passives enchanted by ISIS ideas and radicalized present women as weak, powerless, and vulnerable. These metaphors don't offer the image that Jihadi Brides own their decisions of joining ISIS (Jackson, 2019). This representation of women, in addition to being gendered, it is also homogenizing and ignoring the multiple diverse reasons for migrating to ISIS (Jackson, 2019).

Women who joined ISIS are usually framed as manipulated, controlled, or lacking choices. According to Sjoberg (2018) many of the narratives around Jihadi Brides or ISIS women fit well into the mother, monster, and whore narratives. The motherhood distinction/role of women makes them protective which causes women to be violent (Sjoberg, 2018). The monster narrative suggests that women who are psychologically disturbed are the most violent. The whore narrative pairs a woman's violence and sexual dysfunction together (Sjoberg, 2018). The frames around women who joined ISIS support the understanding of women not being violent (Sjoberg, 2018). Women wouldn't join ISIS or any radical organizations because of its radical politics, rather, women would have personal and misguided motivations to do so (Sjoberg, 2018). Therefore, women who joined ISIS are usually framed as manipulated (Sjoberg, 2018).

The romantic narrative used by ISIS women recruiters on social media attract young girls to be jihadi wives (Björgum, 2016). Unlike for men, the love connection is a theme dedicated to women who join terrorist groups over the history such as the women who joined the Ku Klux Klan for their husbands or boyfriends (Nacos, 2015). Saltman and Smith (2015) noted that the prize of a meaningful romance appeal to the younger segment of potential Jihadi Brides. Nacos (2015) finds that media pays great attention to

the family background when reporting on female terrorists and whether they are in a relationship or not, trying to find an explanation of the violent attitude of female protesters.

Jihadi Brides are often described as misled and brainwashed; however, research shows that there is an existing agency for women who decide to join ISIS and support its purposes (Al-Dayel, 2018). Narratives about women that come from within ISIS include women as a source of empowerment, given that women participation in ISIS is not limited to marriage and motherhood only. The narratives of ISIS successfully encouraged Western men and women to migrate to ISIS and build a state (Al-Dayel, 2018).

Al-Dayel (2018) showed that the recruitment narratives of ISIS provide women agency through sexual suppression of their husbands who refuse to switch their loyalty to the Islamic State. ISIS recruitment narratives encourage those women to be accountable, leave their husbands, and migrate to the Islamic State. Unlike the passive image of ISIS women in the media, ISIS propaganda encourages women's self-reliance, self-confidence, and self-determination of taking the decision of migrating and being a "role model" for others (Al-Dayel, 2018). ISIS female media narratives challenge two layers of relationships; first, they introduce the citizen-state relationship within ISIS through emphasizing the role of women within the Islamic State such as the women police patrol "Al-Khansaa Brigade" (Al-Dayel, 2018). Second, those narratives serve as motivations for women to break through the patriarchal wife-husband relationship (Al-Dayel, 2018).

Framing in the Media and Propaganda

News media offers narratives through specific frames which sets the discourses and suggests reactions to them. Labeling Western women who joined ISIS as Jihadi Brides gave those women a pre-determined role in ISIS, which is to be a fighter's bride, which in turn offered a simplified interpretation to the intentions of ISIS (Martini, 2018). It also attached women's agency with men and limited it to the context of marriage (Martini, 2018).

Propaganda is defined by Cole (1998) as any attempt to influence the public opinion on a wide scale. Propaganda is a communication tool to promote or discourage attitudes for the purpose of supporting or undermining a cause, an organization or an individual. Another definition of propaganda by Jack C. Plano and Milton Greenberg include propaganda as a communication meant to influence the way of thinking, emotions and actions of a group of people or the public audience through manipulating the information offered to them (Cole, 1998).

Pratkanis and Aronson (2001) state that the way "narratives" are being phrased affect the influence they will have in our heads. Bilandzic and Busselle (2013) argue that narratives in messages can be used for persuasion to influence beliefs, attitudes, or actions. Audiences to any sort of narrative construct a meaning in their head which is the cognitive and emotional understanding of this narrative. Propaganda, for example, is a narrative used to persuade people and influence their opinions, beliefs, and behaviors. Morgan and Shanahan (2010) discussed the related concept of cultivation in a broad-

based approach to study mass communication as a way of mass production of messages that get delivered to the public.

People learn values, norms, and stereotypes from the media through the narrative mechanisms used to affect the cognitive processing of specific messages. These messages through media apply narrative mechanisms that shape opinions and construct meanings in audiences' minds. This emphasizes what Reinsborough and Canning (2017) mean by narrative power. Humans understand the world through stories that include a narrative dimension. "Stories have the power to make change imaginable and urgent, to convince people to see a better future and believe in their own collective agency" (Reinsborough & Canning, 2017, p. 29). Narrative renders the meaning in our minds which makes a story a powerful source. Narrative dimensions of physical relationships of power, privilege, unequal access to resources help bring merging narrative power into social change.

The way the media frame the news shapes the public views of women and helps solidify the stereotypes of women in terms of oppression and inferiority. Goffman (1974) defined the term "frame" as the basic element of organization used to define a specific part of an event. Entman (1993) defined framing as a tool used to describe the power of a text through the way framing influences the public's thinking and consciousness. Entman (2013) added that any text can make specific information noticeable and memorable to the audience through frames.

Gitlin (1980) defined frames as principles of selection, emphasis, and presentation to contextualize in a specific way what exists, what happens, and what matters. Zaller (1992) argued that frames determine what 'public opinion' is through focusing on some

ideas and ignoring others because framing is a symbol of manipulation. Frames play an important role in shaping thoughts and attitudes, known as a framing effect (Zaller, 1992).

Framing effect examines how the use of different words or phrases can influence individuals to change their preferences (Druckman, 2001). Framing effects occur when frames that offer the same critical information in either a positive or negative way cause individuals to have different preferences (Druckman, 2001). Weisman (2011) argued that word choice is a key framing strategy. Controlling the language presented to the audience defines how the audience understands the message as well as setting the emotional tone of the news. The use of specific words, images, and the way specific information is presented offer a tool to examine frames (De Vreese, 2005).

When framing is combined with narrative, it means setting specific terms for how to understand the narrative. This makes the narrative more powerful because it has a specific message that resonates and motivates the audience. A powerful message can use metaphors as well. In their book "*Metaphors we live by*", Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argue that metaphors are not only used in language, but also that human thoughts and processes are shaped in a metaphorical way. When we say that "argument is war" it doesn't only mean a metaphor in the word itself but also in the person's conceptual system.

Language is the foundation to how we understand our surroundings and communicate with each other. In political communication, language choice is a key framing strategy (Weisman, 2011). News agencies are selective in the words and phrases

used in their news. Word choice has the power to frame the public's interpretation of news/issues (Weisman, 2011). Framing plays a major role in the exertion of political power as it registers the identity of actors or interests that compete to dominate the text (Entman, 1993). Using framing in the news media gives these organizations power (Weisman, 2011). Framing allows the ability to trigger existing knowledge and construct cultural beliefs; it constitutes what "reality" is for the public (Weisman, 2011). As framing constitutes what "reality" is for the public, it turns the public into a docile body. A docile body does what it is told (Foucault, 1975).

Western Definitions of Feminism

Hirschman (1998) defines feminism as a political values system that has a main purpose of empowering women to be in control of their lives, which serves the basic values of ending oppression on the basis of gender. Feminism entails the basic notion of choice and giving women agency to obtain control over the power structures that is related to their circumstances such as sexuality, employment, lifestyles, and relationships (Hirschman, 1998). Western feminism is interested in the issues of sensitivity to difference and cultural specificity (Hirschman, 1998). Korieh (2012) argues that Western feminism offers a continuous superiority and privileging to the Western ideas and cultural practices.

Feminism is generally dedicated to the respect of women, and women just like men in life are involved in many contexts, thus in order to promote women's respect, there is a necessity to respect and acknowledge those contexts (Hirschman, 1998). Western societies practices of feminism were different. Women did not get the respect

and acknowledgment in religious contexts. Women wearing the Hijab (veil) are often seen as a threat to the Western ideology (Bowen, 2007). The veil for example has been seen by feminists and non-feminists but especially Westerners as a means of women's oppression and there have been Western attempts to "liberate" women from this oppression. These attempts, though, have placed women's bodies as a symbol of culture and not as individual agents (Hirschman, 1998). The main issue that faces Western feminism is not whether the Western freedom is good or bad, but it is about what and who defines the good and bad about the West and the East (Hirschman, 1998).

Chapter 3: Methodology

Research Method

According to Creswell and Poth (2017), “We conduct qualitative research because we need a complex, detailed understanding of the issue” (p. 45). This research uses interpretive qualitative methods to compare frames and values used in British media coverage of Western Muslim women who migrated to ISIS known as Jihadi Brides. This comparison includes the two most read British newspapers: *The Daily Telegraph/Sunday telegraph* and *The Guardian*. *The Daily Telegraph/Sunday telegraph* represents the right-wing point of view (Smith, 2017) and *The Guardian* represents the left-wing point of view (Smith, 2017).

From the News Bank database, the research words used are: “Jihadi Brides,” “ISIS Brides,” and “ISIS Wives.” The sample time frame for the research begins at 2017, which marks the fall of ISIS, and ends at 2019. Through applying this sampling time frame a total number of 37 initial articles were retrieved; 19 articles from *The Guardian* and 18 articles from *The Daily Telegraph/Sunday telegraph*.

This research is an interpretive approach to Western media framing of the Jihadi Brides phenomenon with a careful attention to a feminist analysis. That is, the research examines the nuances of the media framing to determine the particularities of the specific topic of the Jihadi Brides through values coding and feminism frames in the British media post ISIS fall. The time frame of the research is important because the existent research on the phenomenon of the Jihadi Brides only addressed this phenomenon while ISIS was still active, and no writing is found after the fall of ISIS in 2017. According to

The International Center for the Study of Radicalization's research from King's College in London, British women and minors who are affiliated with ISIS accounted for 23% of the British citizens who joined ISIS. The same report said that 4,761 of foreign citizens who joined ISIS (41,490) were women.

Researcher's Positionality

I prefer to position myself as an emerging female researcher/scholar. I'm Muslim, I wear the headscarf, and I was born and raised in Egypt of the Middle East, in a male-dominated society, but to an open-minded family. This is part of me, but also at a young age I studied, lived, and experienced the values of the Western societies in the U.S. Tracy (2013) states: "your own background, values, and beliefs fundamentally shape the way you approach and conduct research. The mind and body of a qualitative researcher literally serve as research instrument – absorbing, sifting through, and interpreting the world through observation, participation, and interviewing. These are analytical resources of our own subjectivity" (p. 3). It is worthy to mention that any mature, well balanced, and logical person, including myself, would disagree and hate the ideology of ISIS and would be aware that this ideology is far from the moderate Islam that the majority of Muslims, again including myself, belong to.

My interest in studying women issues and feminism evolved after joining the master's program in communication studies at the University of Nevada, Reno. I found myself interested in the intersections of politics, human rights, and gender issues. Given my background, my experiences, and who I am overall, I know that this kind of research is what I want to do in my scholarship. While my background and personal experiences

shape the way I approach my research and how I see things around me, I'm well aware of self-reflexivity and I do apply careful considerations in the ways they might affect my interpretations through this research.

Data Analysis

According to Saldana (2009), "a code in qualitative inquiry is most often a word or a short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language based or visual data" (p. 4). Coding is the critical link between the data collected and the elaboration of their meaning (Charmaz, 2001). This research is qualitative, and uses values coding of attitude, belief, and value. Values coding is achieved through sorting the data in order to understand how values, attitudes, and beliefs are articulated in worldviews (Saldana, 2009).

Using values coding is helpful to understand how the values system is necessary for the perceptions of meaning in a society. According to Manning and Kunkel (2014), values coding examines the ways values, beliefs, and attitudes are understood through different discourses and can provide a sense to how meanings are structured into the ideologies of a society. Values coding is appropriate to all qualitative research, but it is especially important to research that explores the "values and belief systems, identity, intrapersonal and interpersonal participant experiences" (Saldana, 2009, p. 132). A research rationale for values coding in the present context would be identifying how the Jihadi Brides were framed in society through different societal institutions such as the government, the community, and their families and whether the Jihadi Brides experienced their agency or not.

Research Question

How do the British media frame Western women Jihadi Brides in terms of feminism and agency within the Western society after the fall of ISIS?

Procedure

The sample of the articles according to the timeline of 2017-2019, using the following search words “Jihadi Brides,” “ISIS Brides,” and “ISIS Wives” included 37 articles, with 19 articles from *The Guardian* and 18 articles from *The Daily Telegraph/Sunday telegraph*. After the initial screening of the sample articles, 16 articles were eliminated due to irrelevancy as they had only mentioned Jihadi Brides in different contexts rather than the purpose of this research. The final sample came to 21 articles; 10 articles from *The Daily Telegraph/Sunday telegraph* and 11 articles from *The Guardian*. Codes of value, belief, and attitude were used throughout the articles, and common themes are introduced in the results and discussion sections to follow. The procedure of categorizing a specific phrase to a value, an attitude, or a belief was accomplished according to the definitions offered by Saldana (2009) in his book “*The coding manual for qualitative research*,” Saldana (2009) defined a value as the importance we give to ourselves, another person, or to an idea. Values are defined by the moral codes and principles that a person set for themselves, and the more the personal meaning for a specific value is, the more payoff and greater value it becomes (Saldana, 2009). Attitude is defined as the way we think, feel, or evaluate ourselves, another person, a situation, or an idea. The attitude is formed through what we learned through our all lives and it is related to an evaluative system and affective reactions (Saldana, 2009). And finally, a

belief is a mix between the values and attitudes in addition to the personal experiences, opinions, morals, and perception of the world (Saldana, 2009).

Chapter 4: Results

Sentences from the articles were coded to reflect values, attitudes and beliefs. Categorizing the two samples of the articles into the right-wing views and left-wing views; the coded phrases were categorized and reflected upon through their collective meaning while understanding that they are interconnected to result in common themes and/or ideas. The results section is a report of the themes found within the newspapers; the discussion and conclusion are my interpretation of those themes.

The Daily Telegraph/Sunday Telegraph (right-wing)

Values

There is a clear lack of values presented about the Jihadi Brides in the articles offered by *The Daily Telegraph/Sunday telegraph*. It was only one time when a Jihadi Bride is given a voice to tell her story when she was able to show the value of honesty within herself. In an article by Oliphant and Sawyer (2019), Shamima Begum, a Jihadi Bride says: “I was honest, I told them my whole story so now it’s up to them to judge.” (p. 12)

Attitudes

Worrisome vs. forgiveness attitude. The community’s attitude about the returning of the Jihadi Brides is divided into fear and worry, and forgiveness. According to Sawyer and Brunetti (2019), some community members believe that Jihadi Brides shouldn’t be allowed again into the society: “she should not be allowed to slip back into a normal life in Britain” (p. 4). The community members are worried and have showed concerns that Jihadi Brides still supports the ideology of ISIS so, they will be dangerous.

In addition, Jihadi Brides who will return home to the UK will face disappointment from the community according to Sawyer and Brunetti (2019). Other community members feel that Jihadi Brides deserve forgiveness (Sawer & Brunetti, 2019). They believe that as members of the community, they have the duty to take care of the young and the children. They said: “We have a duty to look after our young and our children, she was too young at the time to know what she was doing,” “you can forgive people and bring back if they understand what they did wrong,” and “the baby deserves to be in a safer place than a bombardment area” (Sawer & Brunetti, 2019, p. 4). Religious people in the community think that Jihadi Brides pose a danger to the community if they come back. The Imam said, “he fears Shamima and the other Isil brides still pose a danger” (Sawer & Brunetti, 2019, p. 4).

Identity-oriented attitudes. Jihadi Brides argue that they are British citizens, according to Oliphant and Sawyer (2019) a Jihadi Bride said: “but take me back to the UK, that’s where I’m from” (p. 12). However; the government would make the argument that the Jihadi Brides, especially those with dual citizenships, don’t belong to the UK. Even though they are born and raised in the UK, “the Home Office could pursue the argument that they are Pakistani nationals” (Oliphant & Sawyer, 2019, p. 12). However; the government was forced to concede one of the Jihadi Bride’s one-week-old son was a UK citizen, but stripping away his mother’s citizenship (Evans & Verkaik, 2019). Moreover; the government appeared uncomfortable when legal aid is presented to a Jihadi Bride: “Foreign secretary Jeremy Hunt said it made him feel very uncomfortable to think of legal aid being presented to such a person” (Pearson, 2017, p. 27). The opposition party

is taking the stand of defending the Jihadi Brides' rights as human beings. The opposition party condemned the Home Secretary's decision of stripping the citizenship of a jihadi bride, especially after the death of her child, as "callous and inhumane" (Oliphant & Sawyer, 2019).

The families of the Jihadi Brides are taking a different stand supporting the government's decisions against their daughters. A father of a Jihadi Bride stated that his daughter made a wrong decision to flee the country and join a terrorist group. The father "offered an apology to the British public for his daughter's decision" (Oliphant & Sawyer, 2019). Another father of a Jihadi Bride supports the government's decision of revoking her UK citizenship and thinks that the government is right in taking his daughter's citizenship away (Evans & Verkaik, 2019). Families and the community might feel sorry for the Jihadi Brides if they admitted they have done a mistake by joining ISIS (Evans & Verkaik, 2019).

Agency related attitudes. According to Allen (2019) Jihadi Brides are seen as "coerced" in that they were forced to take this decision and join ISIS. There is a hateful attitude towards the way Jihadi Brides dress. Pearson (2017) describes: "the group helped her take off her hateful garment" (p. 27). On the other hand, Pearson (2017) describes women who remove the veil as "courageous" saying: "courageous women have been imprisoned for removing the veils and demanding the right to go uncovered" (p. 27). Unlike Jihadi Brides who choose to join ISIS, and who thought their life in ISIS was fulfilling, Yazidi sex slaves did not choose to be sex slaves. According to the description provided by Pearson (2017), Yazidi sex slaves were grateful to burn the niqab. Other

Jihadi Brides who express agency for their actions regret joining ISIS. One of the Jihadi Brides who were rescued from ISIS said: “I made a mistake; I knew it the day I arrived” (Operation Jihadi Bride, 2019, p. 23). The same article described rescued women as: “many women we rescued expressed deep regret” (Operation Jihadi Bride, 2019, p. 23).

Acceptance related attitudes. There is a lack of compassion about Jihadi Brides’ children; they will be blamed for their parents actions as Pearson (2017) describes: “The death of Shamima Begum’s baby son was incredibly sad, in the way that the death of any child is sad, but it was a mere anguished droplet in the ocean of pain caused by the organization his parents joined” (p. 27). In addition, Jihadi Brides are described as wicked since they supported “some of the worst human wrongs the modern world has seen” and “the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself” (Pearson, 2017, p. 27). However, Jihadi Brides might find some acceptance from their families. According to the article “Operation Jihadi Bride”, many families want their daughters back. “My inbox began to ping like a pinball machine with emails from families in London, Amsterdam, Paris, Munich, they all said the same: please, Mr. Carney, bring my daughter home” (Operation Jihadi Bride, 2019, p. 23). In France, there has been a policy change that concluded that it is better to bring Jihadi Brides back to face the law. This is an attitude of accepting Jihadi Brides into the community to face the law and apply justice rules.

Beliefs

Safety-oriented beliefs. The government believes that Jihadi Brides are a source of danger if they come back and get integrated again with the society. The government has stripped the British citizenship away from two Jihadi Brides who joined ISIS while

they have been still at one of the refugees' camps in Syria (Oliphant & Sawyer, 2019). The government also doesn't want the children of the Jihadi Brides to return back to the UK because they create a security issue for the government. According to Evans and Verkaik (2019), the children of Jihadi Brides are "Creating a security headache for the government as it seeks to strip dual-national jihadists of their UK citizenship" (p. 15).

British society appears to share with their government these beliefs about safety. According to Sawyer and Brunetti (2019), "the prospect of her returning home has understandably led to fears." (p. 4) British society members believe that the return of Jihadi Brides spread fears in the community (Sawyer & Brunetti, 2019). "She believes that England is not good and poses a risk to people living here" and "it will be a risk for the people of London" are quotes reported by Sawyer and Brunetti, 2019 (p. 4), from a teacher working an anti-radicalization prevention programme who lives in a neighborhood where a Jihadi Bride used to live. Neighbors in the same neighborhood were not sure whether she shouldn't be allowed back at all or if she should be given a second chance (Sawyer & Brunetti, 2019). Generally, members of the British society believe that Jihadi Brides shouldn't come back to the society. According to Sawyer and Brunetti (2019), citizens said about Jihadi Brides coming back: "It may be in her best interest to remain abroad" and "I think it is better if she stays in Syria" (p. 4). According to the same resource, other members of British society showed fear regarding their safety and wanted to have Jihadi Brides monitored carefully if they are to be let into the society again. "If she is released into society, she should be monitored carefully" (Sawyer & Brunetti, 2019, p. 4).

The right-wing news outlet support the beliefs of the government and society regarding the safety of the UK. Pearson (2017) reported that there aren't enough laws in the UK to put Jihadists and Jihadi Brides behind the bars. Pearson (2017) reported "we don't have the necessary laws to put them behind the bars" (p. 27), and "we can't even punish her for membership of a group that severed heads. We need a law that can, and fast" (p. 27). In addition, Pearson (2017) believes that letting Jihadi Brides back into British society jeopardize public safety and help spread the extremists' ideas into the society. Pearson wrote: "round the clock surveillance still doesn't guarantee public safety, and nor does it prevent her spreading poison to any future children" (p. 27). The reason behind these fears is the evil nature of ISIS as portrayed by Pearson (2017): "Begum joined an organization of fathomless evil, which delighted in torturing, executing and blowing up innocent Britons" (p. 27), which gives valid reasons for the public to believe that Jihadi Brides are a danger into their society. Pearson (2017) believes that Jihadi Brides are part of an organization that has clear purposes of making Britain an unsafe country: "people like Begum joined an organization that wants to make our country terrifyingly unsafe" (p. 27).

Sense of belonging oriented beliefs. Jihadi Brides who joined ISIS from the UK believe that they belong to the UK. Even those who happen to have dual citizenship but were born and raised in the UK believe that this is their identity; to belong to the UK and be British citizens. A Jihadi Bride said: "I don't know if my Mum ever got me a Pakistani passport or not, I've never been to Pakistan", and added: "but take me back to the UK,

that's where I'm from" (Oliphant & Sawyer, 2019, p. 12). Jihadi Brides are holding on to their identity while the government stripped their citizenship.

Agency related beliefs. There have been some beliefs messaged through the media that gives Western women Jihadi Brides agency and others that take this agency away from them. Some Jihadi Brides themselves still believe that their decision to join ISIS was right. Since the ideology of ISIS still exists in the mind of the believers of ISIS, some women who joined ISIS don't regret their decisions and showed satisfaction of how their life was in the group. If this shows something, it shows the will and persistence of Jihadi Brides to maintain the agency of their decisions. According to the article "Inside the minds of teenage Jihadi Brides" (2019), the writer describes a Jihadi Bride's time in ISIS as "a period that, actually really did, fulfill her aspirations" (p. 21). Some media resources would support this agency belief. According to Burchill (2019), there is always this possibility that Jihadi Brides joined ISIS because they wanted to. Burchill (2019) writes: "these are things people do because, horrible as it is, they want to, just as British jihadi brides and boys joined Isil not despite the torture, rape, and murder but because of it" (p. 20).

Different views were offered through the right-wing media; some articles showed the strong believe that Jihadi Brides are deceived, under a spell, make unconscious decisions, or brainwashed. Some academics through the media described Jihadi Brides as brainwashed. In the article "Inside the minds of teenage Jihadi Brides", these descriptions appear in the following quotes: "the poisonous ideology of the extremist group has wrapped her young mind", and "she is experiencing cognitive dissonance – an inability to

realize traveling to Syria was a fundamental mistake” (Inside the minds of teenage Jihadi Brides, 2019, p. 21). Describing the mind of a Jihadi Bride “young” and the continuous description of them as brainwashed takes away the agency they have of their decisions.

Moreover; according to the article “Operation Jihadi Bride” (2019), ISIS propaganda and lies have cast a spell on Jihadi Brides. While Western women joined ISIS for the promise of paradise, love, and adventure, the reality was different. What they found was a living hell. That is why the same article described women who decided to join ISIS that they made an unconscious decision. “Thousands of young women made the unconscionable decision to leave their families and travel in secret to Iraq and Syria” (Operation Jihadi Bride, 2019, p. 23). Another article, “inside the minds of teenage Jihadi Brides” (2019), described the false promises for Jihadi Brides of joining ISIS that this will be an adventure, since the female recruiters are convinced that joining the group is going to be an adventure and that is the same idea they deliver to the prospective Jihadi Brides

The reality of the life of Jihadi Brides within ISIS came through the newspapers that it is a controlled life and that Jihadi Brides are used for specific purposes while they are living in ISIS. In the article, “Inside the minds of teenage Jihadi Brides” (2019), Academics believe that Jihadi Brides are used for the three Rs: to recruit other Jihadi Brides, to retain the male fighters, and to reproduce the future generation of jihadists. The life of Jihadi Brides is believed to be highly controlled in that they were not allowed to walk around without a male guardian accompanying them, the formal dress that they were required to wear was full body-covering dress, and women who did not abide by

these rules received punishment for being too “promiscuous” (Inside the minds of teenage Jihadi Brides, 2019). In addition, those who lost their husbands weren’t given any choice but to be forced to get married again immediately. Another description within the same article is: “Foreign jihadi wives are tightly controlled in the camp and restricted to a designated section without any access to mobile phones” (Inside the minds of teenage Jihadi Brides, 2019, p. 21).

Responsibility-oriented beliefs. The opposition party have put the responsibility of protecting British Jihadi Brides and their kids on the government. A member of the Tory party stated that “the government had failed its moral responsibility to both a mother and child” which shows also that government oppositions are standing with Jihadi Brides as UK citizens (Oliphant & Sawyer, 2019, p. 12). This right-wing news outlet blames authorities for putting the Jihadi Brides returnees into the risk of being re-radicalized because they are being treated too “leniently” due to the spread image about Jihadi Brides being “coerced” (Allen, 2019).

Another responsibility belief represented in this news outlet is about people who sympathize with Jihadi Brides. People who supported the return of Jihadi Brides were blamed for a moral responsibility. Two descriptions were provided about them; that they hate their country, and that they are idiots. Pearson (2017) said that people who support Jihadi Brides hate the UK: “Unfortunately, there are British people who despise our country they will bend over backwards to extend sympathy and comfort to its sworn enemies” (Pearson, 2019, p.27). In addition, in the same article Pearson (2017) described those who show sympathy with Jihadi Brides as idiots: “We are right, and they are useful

idiots for Islamist fanatics”, since 80% of the public supported the decision of taking away the British citizenship from the Jihadi Bride Shamima Begum (Pearson, 2019, p. 27).

The Guardian (left-wing)

Values

Ramaswamy (2019), wrote in *The Guardian* that the choice of the society about the actions and behaviors of Jihadi Brides who ran to Syria and Iraq to join ISIS was to “other” them, since these actions and behaviors of Jihadi Brides are very irrelevant to the “British values.” Jihadi Brides are presented into the society as “evil” and that “they knew what they were doing; they deserved what was coming to them” (Ramaswamy, 2019, p. 7). However, when a Jihadi Bride was asked about what attracted her to join ISIS her answer included the values of “care” and “family” which implies the fact that these uncontroversial values are “damning indictment” of Britain (Ramaswamy, 2019). Responding to the Jihadi Bride case, British society had showed the values of being “racist,” “weak,” and “vengeful,” instead of showing the values of “strong,” “stable,” “humane,” and “tolerant” society (Ramaswamy, 2019).

Attitudes

Acceptance related attitudes. Ramaswamy (2019) describes the political references being sent out to the public about ISIS Jihadi Brides as “inflammatory dog-whistle” that are meant to implant specific attitudes about Jihadi Brides to the public. Ramaswamy (2019) then wonders if these “inflammatory dog-whistle references” are removed, how would that change the way people would feel about Jihadi Brides of pity

and mercy, and how would this shape the care and support to be the country's priority to Jihadi Brides as British citizens. "To treat the question whether she poses a terrorist threat as one to be settled by the rule of law rather than trial by tabloid" (Ramaswamy, 2019, p. 7). In the same article, Ramaswamy (2019) provided descriptions of Jihadi Brides as "traumatized", "vulnerable", and "survivor" in a trial to spread acceptance of Jihadi Brides who want to return to their homes.

Government officials, on the other side, are not willing to allow a Jihadi Bride to return back to the UK (Ramaswamy, 2019). Some newspapers have taken the pride into announcing that Jihadi Brides should "expect no sympathy from Britain", and spread the attitude of refusal to Jihadi Brides returning back to the UK: "sorry my heartless little Jihadi Bride, but you made your bed now and you can lie in it", moreover; other severe messages included "go f*ck herself" (Ramaswamy, 2019, p. 7). Kennedy (2018) writes: "there is unlikely to be much sympathy for jihadist women who return to the UK" (p. 9).

Families often want to have their daughters back and they often write "I'm asking you to find my daughter" to activists who could help them find their daughters who joined ISIS (Roth, 2019). According to Chulov and Mckernan (2019), there are some Jihadi Brides who show deep regret of joining ISIS: "she deeply regrets travelling to Syria to join the terror group" and describe their experience within ISIS as "mind-blowing" (p .6). Moaveni (2019b) writes that several Jihadi Brides "reject ISIS, beg for forgiveness of their home countries, and are keen for the chance to be returned, prosecuted and given a second chance in life." Jihadi Brides feel that revoking their citizenship is heart-breaking and are pleading to return to their families (Holpuch, 2019).

Unfortunately, Jihadi Brides will face denial to return home as the government is not considering them citizens anymore (Holpuch, 2019).

Agency related attitudes. There should be an acknowledgement that several Jihadi Brides are minors, but also there should be an acknowledgment that these Jihadi Brides have made an active decision of joining ISIS (Mckernan, 2019a). The attitude of ignoring the agency of the women who joined ISIS risks the possibilities of understanding the ways and purposes of why Jihadi Brides decided to join ISIS (Moaveni, 2019). Women who joined ISIS weren't only "brides" but they "served as doctors and midwives, language instructors, recruiters and intelligence agents, and morality policewoman who tormented locals" (Moaveni, 2019, p. 4). There is a mainstream perception that Jihadi Brides are motivated only by either love or marriage to join ISIS (Grierson, 2019). Simplifying the motivations of Jihadi Brides joining ISIS into love and marriage leads to misleading stereotypes and biases about Jihadi Brides that classify these women as "passive followers rather than active, ideological supporters" (Grierson, 2019, p. 23). Jihadi Brides are a rebel against society, and their parents as well, they have aspirations for women empowerment and they are rejecting the "Western feminism" frames (Grierson, 2019). Jihadi Brides have a desire for activism, they want to be part of something divine and big, and they are looking for the sense of belonging and "sisterhood" (Grierson, 2019).

There was a call for women to be part of building the new Islamic State, Jihadi Brides responded and were drawn by the mixture of piety, romance, and adventure (Kennedy, 2018). Some of these women Jihadi Brides who joined ISIS were of the same

political commitment as men, but others were brainwashed (Kennedy, 2018). The government's tendency to hold Jihadi Brides, such as Shamima Begum, as accountable as extremists who beheaded civilians and the rush to make her sound brainwashed is "the rush to bestow militant women agency" according to Moaveni (2019, p. 4). Some Jihadi Brides realize that they have made a mistake by joining ISIS and have wanted to return home (Moaveni, 2019a), and acknowledge that they were "really young and ignorant" trying to plead for a second chance to be home (Chulov & Mckernan, 2019).

Beliefs

Safety-oriented beliefs. Since women who joined ISIS received fighting training that could potentially be transferred to other locations, or even to other individuals such as their children, the government believes that they are a source of a much greater danger than what it seems and they are definitely a security threat to the country (Khomani, 2018). Not only women, but also minors are the ones who pose a potential ideological threat to the community when they return back (Khomani, 2018). According to Mackernan (2019b), Jihadi Brides are not sympathetic; "the women who joined ISIS are not sympathetic refugee characters" (p. 40). If Jihadi Brides' role in ISIS was only that they were "wives," the society would have forgiven them once ISIS fell and the fight was over (Moaveni, 2019).

Khomani (2018) reported: "We believe some women may now pose a particular security threat based on several factors", "a changing view within ISIS of when women should take up arms means that the danger they pose is likely to be much greater than official figures suggest", and finally confirming that "women are indeed important to

consider as a potential threat” (p. 1). Moaveni (2019a) added that the Jihadi Bride Shamima Begum “was, and remains, chillingly incurious” about the severe sufferings that the victims of ISIS have been through, especially Yazidi women. Accepting violence is a valid reason for the safety concerns regarding Jihadi Brides returning home.

According to Khomani (2018) there is a clear shortage in the government data about the number of British returnees from Syria and Iraq, which makes these number underestimates of the real danger.

Agency related beliefs. According to the reports about the roles of women in ISIS, Khomani (2019) reported that women has evolving increasing roles: “to take three general forms: women-only cells, family cells, or individual women perpetrating attacks” (p. 1). ISIS have made efforts to portray the empowerment of women through its ideologies to potential Jihadi Brides in its recruitment strategies which echoed well with Western women who felt discriminated against or lacked the sense of belonging into the Western society, and “this narrative has played itself out in many countries around the world” (Khomani, 2018, p. 1). Women who joined ISIS are not only driven by love and marriage, it is more complicated than what it seems: “women and girls who attach themselves to Islamic State are driven by a complex combination of factors beyond just love or marriage, including feelings of social exclusion and the appeal of sisterhood” (Grierson, 2019, p. 23).

Women who joined ISIS have more important roles than just being a “Jihadi Bride” (Khomani, 2018). The support of women who joined ISIS to the male fighters is an important factor that helped the legitimization of ISIS’s vision (Khomani, 2018).

Another Jihadi Bride was reported by Kennedy (2018) to have held a higher level of training as she is believed to “have trained a special unit of female European recruits in the use of firearms and bombmaking and showed them how to plan and execute suicide attacks” (Kennedy, 2018, p. 9). In February 2018, ISIS released a video of a woman in the battlefield among male fighters for the first time ever which reflects a new and unique trend in a terrorist group (Khomani 2018).

Women and minors who joined ISIS were described as “poised to play a significant role in carrying on the ideology and the organization of ISIS” which presents a security threat to society; but this description is giving them an agency as they are self-possessed, balanced, and well-aware of what they are doing (Khomani, 2018, p. 1). Other descriptions provided by Moaveni (2019a) are that Jihadi Brides are “submissive” and “bewitched” as it is surprisingly unique for young women to leave the west societies and move to ISIS.

Ramaswamy (2019) described Jihadi Brides being “groomed online.” According to Kennedy (2018), while in ISIS, women are “commonly bought, sold, or traded” and are forced to get pregnant and have children. Kennedy (2018) described what is believed to be the status of women in ISIS that “they are used to retain disillusioned troops, made to police the women in local populations, forced to produce children and made to accept their place as one of the several wives” (p. 9). Several Jihadi Brides believe that they were deceived about the beliefs of the Islamic religion and “thought was doing things correctly for the sake of God” (Chulov & Mckernan, 2019, p. 6). Women who joined

ISIS are believed to have been the victims of a terrible abuse, are coerced, and are facing severe public hostility from the society (Kennedy, 2018).

Sense of belonging-oriented beliefs. Ramaswamy (2019), through the description provided about Jihadi Brides continues to confirm that they are British citizens: “a British teenage girl is groomed online at the age of 15,” and “stay with her nationality for a moment, she is British” (Ramaswamy, 2019, p. 7). In a refugee camp, the Jihadi Bride Shamima Begum wants to return back to her home, the UK, but she is not allowed to since her British citizenship was revoked (Grierson, 2019). Jihadi Brides believe they should be given a chance and not being generalized as dangerous because not all of them are; “we aren’t dangerous, maybe there are some who are dangerous, but we shouldn’t be all punished for them” (Roth, 2019, p. 41).

The government is revoking the citizenships of Jihadi Brides who have dual citizenships even though they are born and raised in the UK and claim that they will face death penalties if they go to their other citizenship country such as Bangladesh (Grierson, 2019). The possibility of the return of the Jihadi Brides has caused a blazing public debate but the governments are taking unequalled procedures to prevent them from being repatriated to their countries (Roth, 2019). However, in Russia, there is a different approach of bringing back Jihadi Brides so that they are under the control of the country’s law enforcement: “those people need to be brought back, so that they are under the control of our law enforcement agencies” (Roth, 2019, p. 41).

The left-wing news outlet is calling for the British government to put efforts into rehabilitation of its citizens who joined ISIS rather than prosecution, and there should be

a middle ground point to handle the situation. Those British citizens were “coerced to join ISIS” or “travelled to Syria and Iraq through naivety” (Mckernan, 2019a, p. 19). ISIS women and children at refugee camps are believed to be in a severely vulnerable position as it is impossible to provide them with medical care, hygiene care, and adequate food and water (Mckernan, 2019b). This vulnerable situation is believed to cause them to be radicalized again; “they are very vulnerable and without real education and support, radicalization is going to continue to be a problem” (Mckernan, 2019b, p. 40).

Responsibility-oriented beliefs. According to Ramaswamy (2019), the case of Jihadi Brides shows the ugly side of British society as “racist”, “weak”, and “vengeful.” The language used about Jihadi Brides is also sometimes “dehumanizing” to make them an easy target for ethnic hate (Moaveni, 2019). If a Jihadi Bride is born and raised in Britain, the same country she was radicalized in, she has the right to come home, she has the right to ask the country to support her to return home, and the society should be more tolerant and humane “In every sense, we are responsible for her” (Ramaswamy, 2019, p. 7). The UK government is giving up on the British nationals at displacement camps in Syria who are facing “appalling conditions” claiming that the “British consular assistance is very limited” in Syria (Mckernan, 2019a). Other governments have repatriated their citizens in order to face trials or receive rehabilitation assistance (Mckernan, 2019a). Several Jihadi Brides have shown deep regret for leaving to Syria and joining the terrorist group of ISIS (Hopluch, 2019). These Jihadi Brides who regret joining ISIS believe that they were brainwashed and had a misunderstanding of the Islamic religion when they got aligned with ISIS (Hopluch, 2019). However, Jihadi Brides will be blocked from

returning home “the state department will block an American-born woman who left Alabama to join Islamic State in 2014 from returning to the US” (Hopluch, 2019, p. 14). According to Mckernan (2019a), society has the responsibility to allow Jihadi Brides a second chance, there shouldn't be generalization and Jihadi Brides' situation should be handled on a case-by-case basis.

It is a matter of fact that the European governments are capable of dealing with the situation of the Jihadi Brides (Moaveni, 2019b). “They are already coping with a sizeable number of independent returns, with security services, police and social care mobilized” (Moaveni, 2019b, p. 1). European governments are well aware and have the full knowledge of its women citizens and understand who from these women will be posing greater risk than others, upon their return (Moaveni, 2019b). Governments are aware of the classifications of women who joined ISIS in terms of who chose to join ISIS, who was coerced, and who stumbled (Moaveni, 2019b).

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

The fall of ISIS marks the physical fall of the Caliphate; however, the ideology of ISIS still exists, strongly, in the head of its countless supporters; men, women, and children who were born and lived there (Evans & Verkaik, 2019). ISIS proved its extraordinary ability, more than any other known terrorist group, to enlist young Western women (Inside the mind of teenage Jihadi Brides, 2019). The actual numbers of the Jihadi Brides (Western women) and their children in detention centers is not clear enough. Some articles mentioned that there have been 150 British females who joined ISIS, and at least 700 children born to Jihadi Brides who are still in Syria (Evans & Verkaik, 2019). Other articles combined the number of foreign females and children to 1,323 (Inside the mind of teenage Jihadi Brides, 2019). Regardless of the exact numbers, the problem exists. The problem of foreign females who are seeking a way to return home with their children, and the problem of those children who witnessed massive violence or even were forced to take part in violent acts against humanity.

Women who joined ISIS represent 13% of the total numbers of foreign citizens who migrated to ISIS; of this 13% there is 12% of those women/females who are minors (Khomani, 2019). Moaveni (2019a) writes that using the term “Jihadi Brides” in the media and by the public is dismaying to these females, which might lead to causing them further stress or trauma. Moaveni (2019a) added that throughout history and across many societies, young women have been viewed as “capable of dreadful violence,” (p. 4) and it is through powerful governments and systems that the female militancy gets downplayed such as that of ISIS. Accepting violence as a legitimized act comes through the

relationship between the army and the young women recruited as Jihadi Brides. The term that doesn't have political associations to it, but the role of Jihadi Brides is amplified through ISIS because a Jihadi Bride is wed to the cause and the fight and not just affiliated with it only operationally (Moaveni, 2019a).

Unlike jihadi brides who choose to join ISIS, and who thought their life in ISIS was fulfilling, Yazidi sex slaves did not choose to be sex slaves. There should be awareness while examining the media frames about Yazidi women and Jihadi Brides. Yazidi women are not Western women, they are originally from the Middle East and belong to an ancient religious group there (Omer et al., 2016). Due to their different beliefs and religious ideology, the Yazidis have been oppressed, terrorized, and displaced throughout the history (Omer et al., 2016). ISIS have attacked the Yazidi villages, killed thousands of men, and kidnapped women and children who have been subjected to terrible enslavement and sexual violence (Foster & Minwala, 2018). It is clear then, why Yazidi girls felt liberated being saved from ISIS, unlike several Jihadi Brides who believed that the time they spent at ISIS was fulfilling.

The Jihadi Brides' problem is a problem of "extraordinary complexity" (Moaveni, 2019b). Religious people in the British community think that Jihadi Brides pose a danger to the community if they come back. Now, here is a turning point: if people of the true Islam religion don't accept and welcome the return of the Jihadi brides and contain them to show them the true values of Islam, who will? It is understandable that governments would have fears of accepting Jihadi Brides into the country again due to the security threats they might pose considering that these are women who experienced a great deal of

violence and received training while they were in ISIS. The reaction of the religious people is odd in this context; it is, indeed, an irresponsible reaction since it is the true religious people's responsibility to guide and enlighten those who have misunderstandings about religion or in the case of Jihadi Brides, have been brainwashed.

The US and the UK are more restricted regarding decisions of having Jihadi Brides return back to their homes. The articles in the two news outlets reviewed showed that both countries refused to allow a Jihadi Bride to return home with the decision of revoking the citizenship. However, in other countries such as Germany, the acceptance of Jihadi Brides returning back home is higher than how it is in the UK and the US. It is believed that having Jihadi Brides return home will have them under the legislative control of the government where they would face trials and receive rehabilitation. For example, an ISIS bride in Germany has been sentenced to five years in jail after proven guilty of being part of a foreign terrorist organization; ISIS (Luyken, 2019).

The Guardian which represents more left-wing views has mentioned the idea of the government working with the designated authorities to make sure that the UK citizens are located and dealt with through international law measures including rehabilitation and deradicalization strategies rather than punishment policies. This is unlike *the Daily Telegraph/Sunday telegraph* that represents the right-wing views and has been solidly taking the stand of rejecting the idea of the Jihadi Brides return. *The Guardian* used an emotional approach for the frames of the Jihadi Brides represented in the newspaper. Frames of nationalism, social responsibility, fairness, and human rights are present in the

left-wing media with the aim of encouraging the public and the government to accept Jihadi Brides and give them a second chance.

The Guardian offered the realities of the refugee camps to the public. These realities of the refugee camps in Syria includes that there are women who are holding language classes for their kids as they are preparing them for school when they go back to their countries, and there are other women who are practicing violence burning out the tents and “stabbing others to death for apostasy” (Moaveni, 2019b, p. 1). It is indeed inhumane to keep these women mixed together, especially kids, and for that, politics measures should be considerate to human rights and fairness (Moaveni, 2019b).

The negative frames about Jihadi Brides were dominant in the right-wing media. Showing the worries of the community regarding letting Jihadi Brides again in the community and that they don't deserve forgiveness because of their decision of Joining ISIS. Framing Jihadi Brides into hateful citizens who hate their country and are a danger to it and its citizens. The refusal of the British society is clear from the different community members including religious leaders who believe Jihadi Brides still pose a danger. Few frames of acceptance within the community were present; only older members of the British society were willing to accept Jihadi Brides and allow them a second chance if they admit their mistakes.

The right-wing newspaper presented the arguments of Jihadi Brides regarding their right of citizenship; however, these frames were marginalized against the frames of refusal of the Jihadi Brides rights of citizenship or reintegration into the society. The opposition party is not supportive of the government's decisions of revoking the

citizenship of the Jihadi Brides and denying their return, but it is not as prominent as the focus on the frames of hating Jihadi Brides especially if it is coming from their families who supported the government's decisions of revoking the citizenship.

Both right-wing and left-wing media framed Jihadi Brides as dangerous and showed the safety concerns around allowing them to return back to their countries, especially the governments concerns. The way those dangerous frames are handled through the right-wing media and left-wing media is different. Right-wing media used these frames to attempt to confirm the need to revoke citizenship of Jihadi Brides and spread a negative image about them within the society. On the other hand, the left-wing media used these frames to raise the social responsibility that the society have to support Jihadi Brides and allow them a second chance.

The consistent belief of the Jihadi Brides about their identity and citizenship shows that they are holding on to their agency. It is undeniable that many Western women who joined ISIS were inspired by the need to feel empowered and have control of their agency. The frames of agency are complicated on an extraordinary level. Some Jihadi Brides are presented in the media as they believe that their decision to join ISIS is right and that this is still a fulfilling time of their lives. Other Jihadi Brides are presented in the media as deceived and brainwashed women who made unconscious decisions. No matter if the frames were giving Jihadi Brides the agency or taking it way from them, right-wing media used it against them to emphasize the hate and isolation from the governments and the society that they deserve. In addition, the right-wing media consistently framed the Jihadi Brides within control and oppression frames for the same

purpose. It is clear within the right-wing media that the blame was extended to the people who showed sympathy with the Jihadi Brides to the extent that those people were categorized as idiots who hate their country in order to endorse the negative frames of the Jihadi Brides.

The purposes of the frames of the Jihadi Brides presented through the left-wing media served a totally different purpose. A purpose of reconsidering Jihadi Brides' image within the society, allows them a second chance and spread the values of the collective support they deserve. Jihadi Brides are framed to be evil which implies that their actions are against the British values. This frame, however, might sound negative, but it is used to show the society's negative values that have been present in reaction to the Jihadi Brides' situation such as racism and weakness instead of tolerance and strength. Framing Jihadi Brides within the left-wing media as traumatized, vulnerable, and survivors enhances the levels of their acceptance within the society. Even if some families would stand against the Jihadi Brides who want to return home, the focus in the left-wing media was on those who wouldn't give up on their daughters and encouraging the government and designated authorities to consider alternate measures to bring the Jihadi Brides back to their homes for trials and rehabilitation.

The acknowledgement that several Jihadi Brides are minors, but also the acknowledgment that these Jihadi Brides have made an active decision of joining ISIS, serves in the best interest of giving the Jihadi Brides their agency while still framing them positively in the society to offer an appealing acceptance to the public through the media. Similar to that, shedding light on the mainstream perceptions behind simplifying the

motivations of the Jihadi Brides to join ISIS for only love or marriage would lead to severe biases and stereotypes against them. There has been more agency given to the Jihadi Brides in the left-wing media, framing them as rebels against society and their aspirations for women empowerment while rejecting the Western feminism ideologies.

Presenting the different societal experiences by Western women who decided to join ISIS and become Jihadi Brides is important. These societal experiences include the social exclusion they face due to their religious beliefs in a Western society who considers wearing a head scarf is oppression and Islam as a terrorism religion. Discussing these unique experiences in the media supports the positive frames of the Jihadi Brides, it gives them agency for their decisions, shows their reasons, and promote allowing them a second chance. Women and minors who joined ISIS were described as “poised to play a significant role in carrying on the ideology and the organization of ISIS” framing them with agency as they are self-possessed, balanced, and well-aware of what they are doing as described by Khomani (2018, p. 1).

Unlike the right-wing media, the left-wing media emphasized on the fact that governments are capable of handling the complicated situation of the Jihadi Brides. Governments are fully aware of the citizens and are capable of recognizing who is going to pose a danger and who is not (Moaveni, 2019b). They have all the means of putting those who deserve into trials and rehabilitate others who would be found deserving for it. Left-wing media believes in the country’s responsibility to allow the Jihadi Brides back for a second chance, while right-wing media believes it is the country’s responsibility to keep Jihadi Brides away.

Research Limitations

This research is based on a qualitative research examining British media frames about the representation of the Western Jihadi Brides in the time frame of 2017 after the ISIS fall and until now. While the world is facing a global pandemic now, the research results stopped at 2019, there were no results in 2020. The researcher and the committee of this thesis believe in the importance of this research, as the case of the Western Jihadi Brides is prominent. They are also certain that the Covid-19 global pandemic is what is concerning the whole world now, which might have put the critical case of the Western Jihadi Brides on a temporary hold and clearly has implications regarding the conditions under which the researcher had to finish the research and write the thesis. There is definitely more work to be done. A future study might include wider comparison of the left and right views within the British media about the Jihadi Brides and focus on the complexity of the agency issues. After conducting this research, the researcher developed an awareness that different conceptual anchors would allow for a more nuanced understanding of the complexity of this phenomenon. For example, a richer analysis could include looking at higher frames of sympathy vs. blame, redemption vs. condemnation, and assimilation vs. non-assimilation.

Positionality Debrief

This research allowed me to grow interest in the complex topics of agency, feminism, and gender equality. The research method used in this research helped me gain insights on the society's perceptions of the women Jihadi Brides, but it did not allow me to develop a complete analysis of the agency. Whereas previous research had looked at

the framing of women Jihadi Brides during the conflict, my new contribution is to look at this phenomenon after the conflict with and the fall of ISIS. Yet, this research suggests various other important research questions regarding the complexity of feminism issues, Western values, religious identities, agency, and gender equality.

It is interesting to realize the frames of agency within this research between the left- and right-wing media. In some instances, Jihadi Brides would be given their agency, yet framed negatively and in other instances their agency would be stripped away, yet they are framed positively. A richer analysis to this complexity would include looking at higher frames of sympathy vs. blame, redemption vs. condemnation, and assimilation vs. non-assimilation.

The lack of values presented through the analysis offer a new research direction about the western feminism values within a religious context. If the Jihadi Brides weren't Muslim or Muslim converts, there would have been a different set of values within the media frames, and in turn, different attitudes and beliefs. To question the values within this context, values coding would not be the best research method to use, but to use a qualitative method of feminist analysis. There are deeper levels of complexity within the frames of feminism and extremism that I would like to approach in future research through a different qualitative research method (e.g., in-depth case studies).

Conclusion

This thesis analyzes the media frames/representations of Western women who migrated to ISIS, known as Jihadi Brides, after the fall of ISIS in December 2017. ISIS is a terrorist group that used attractive strategies and techniques in recruiting Western

women to join ISIS as Jihadi Brides building on the promises of the perfect life within the Islamic state. It is important to understand this phenomenon especially after the fall of the ISIS. Media narratives and frames help shape the public opinion and influence the actions towards the different societal issues such as the issue of the Jihadi Brides.

The British media frames of the Jihadi Brides varies between acceptance and refusal frames and agency giving and agency stripping frames, but those frames could be generalized into positive and negative frames. There is no doubt that the case of the Jihadi Brides is complex on many levels, and there has been a clear lack of solid values presented in the media due to this complexity. Everyone would agree that ISIS and its legitimization of violence is bad, but the case of the Jihadi Brides couldn't be evaluated in a shallow way to determine a set of values of their motivations, personalities, agency, and experiences.

Would it have been different if Jihadi Brides weren't fully covered with a veil or a face cover? Would they be considered liberated women who have the full agency of their decisions? Pearson (2019) describes women in Islamic countries who try to revolt against the veil, demanding the right to go uncovered and remove the veil as "courageous" women. This description implies that women who keep their veil are "cowards." Furthermore, it confirms Hirschmann (1998) views that Westerners see the veil as a means of women's oppression that inspires the west to liberate women from this oppression. Liberal societies in Europe have banned the veil and face cover "burka" for the reason that it is incompatible with the known Western values and they see it as a barrier for women's participation in the society (Pearson, 2019).

As the case of the Jihadi Brides continues to flicker its controversy, after the fall of ISIS in 2017, the fate and status of lots of women who joined ISIS remain unknown (Khomani, 2018). Burchell (2019) believes that there is an absolute comfort in ignoring issues about personal agency and the desire to do something just for the desire of doing it, people become more accepting to clichés like “forgive and forget” they tend to forgive the criminal and forget the victim. Ultimately, what do Jihadi Brides bring to the feminism debate? Who sets the rules of feminism? When are women considered feminists or not? When are they allowed agency and when is it stripped from them? And by whom?

Due to the controversial nature of the discussion regarding the agency of the Jihadi Brides, there comes a realization that what is important for the agency of the Jihadi Brides is the purposes behind taking away their agency or giving it to them. It is a clear fact that Jihadi Brides are in a vulnerable situation and are at risk of being without neither a home nor a citizenship. Moreover, along with their agency of deciding to go to ISIS comes the trauma and the terror they experienced while living in the territories of ISIS.

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