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The Motives and Roles of Female Terrorists of ISIS: An Interpretative Phenomenological
Analysis of Open-Source Narratives

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By

Shreshtha Alok

Committee Chair: Dr. Jacqueline Helfgott

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List of Abbreviations

AQ- al-Qaeda

AQI- al-Qaeda in Iraq

ALF- Animal Liberation Front

ELF- Earth Liberation Front

HAMAS- Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya (The Islamic Revolution)

ISIS- Islamic State of Iraq and Syria

LTTE- Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

PLO- Palestinian Liberation Organization

Abstract

Research on the role of women in terrorism has emerged over the last several decades suggesting that female terrorists tend to have more passive roles than male terrorists. Female Islamic terrorists may engage in such acts due to trauma, revenge, religious ideology, peers, spouses, expression of community outrage. However, gaps about their motivations remain. For example, very little research has explored the roles, responsibilities, and motivation of female terrorists who are specifically part of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). This research seeks to fill these gaps by utilizing interpretative phenomenological analysis of qualitative research including documentaries, manifestos, magazines, memoir (written by female terrorists), and newspaper articles. Total twenty case studies were used to analyze on motives and roles, out of those, eighteen belonged from ISIS and rest from other terrorist groups. In pre-identified motives, there was no particular theme which highlighted the most whereas the findings of this research helped in developing a new typology on motives of female Islamic terrorists. For roles, majority women were found to be indulged in forefront roles. Future research, policy suggestions, and how ISIS different from other Islamic terrorist organizations along with limitation are also discussed in this study.

Keywords: female terrorists, ISIS, motivation, role

CHAPTER ONE

Terrorism is a pejorative term, and its usage involves making moral judgement: one man's freedom fighter is another man's terrorist (Dingly,1997). Defining terrorism is more complicated than often perceived as it can depend on individual perception (Dingly,1997). In a way it can be said that people whom we consider as terrorists, they consider themselves as freedom fighters and for them we are terrorists. One interpretation of terrorism could be is that it is a social construct, one which is "...not a given in the real world but is instead an interpretation of the events and their presumed causes" (Turk, 2004, p. 271).

Terrorism further can be classified as a political crime. A political crime is engaging in behaviors that violate the law for the primary purpose of opposing the ideas of an individual, group, or governmental power(Helfgott, 2008). It is a crime both by and against the government and committed in organizational, occupational, or individual contexts(Helfgott, 2008). There are two types of political crimes, oppositional and state (Helfgott, 2008). Oppositional can be further classified as violent and non-violent(Helfgott, 2008). Violent political crime incorporates terrorism and assassination whereas non-violent political crime incorporates political protests, espionage, etc., (Helfgott, 2008). In state political crime the incorporation of political corruption, human rights violation etc., are there (Helfgott, 2008).

Over the years the rise of terrorism has been witnessed, considering the ease of creating terror among the people with the era of internet. The evolution of a stereotypical terrorist happens from a lone assassin to religious fanatics, to state sponsored groups. The explanation of the wide variety of terrorist events that have occurred, there is a need to classify the terrorist motivations into number of different categories. The overlapping nature of motivations makes it

hard to place them in one category. The motivation includes state-sponsored, religious, ethnic, and politically motivated terrorist acts (Hoffman, 2004; Spindlove & Simonsen, 2013).

When it comes to fueling the motivations of current terrorist organizations, the role of history comes into light where the occurrence of certain past events pertains to fuel it. Bloom (2011) states:

Much of what inspires religious terrorism today is reflected in the history of these early organizations. The early terrorists' desire for publicity, their indoctrination of children, their targeting for foreign occupiers, and attacks against collaborators are all surprisingly similar to the tactics used today in Israel, Sri Lanka, Chechnya, Iraq, and Afghanistan (p. 10).

The historical background of these terrorist organizations is necessary to be considered in order to understand the present scenario and predict about the future situations that can take place. The basic principle of any terrorist organization (irrespective of domestic or international in nature) is to instill fear in the community over the radical beliefs.

There are several terrorist organizations which operate domestically and internationally. An example of a domestic terrorist group is Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), it was formed in Sri Lanka in 1970s and got defeated in 2009 (Britannica, 2023). For international terrorism, Islamic terrorism is considered on top comprising with several Islamic terrorist organizations. Some of them are al-Qaeda (AQ), Boko Haram, Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya (HAMAS) (The Islamic Revolution), Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), etc. The ideology of these organizations is somewhat similar to each other as the core belief is based on Islam, however their functioning and areas of operating differs from each other. For instance, the attacks of 9/11 were performed by al-Qaeda (AQ) which was led by Osama Bin Laden.

History of ISIS

In this study the main focus is on the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), therefore it is essential to understand how ISIS was formed. Iraq became a failed state after American forces evacuated it. A power vacuum was created where no stable military force was in order. The competition for power between Kurds, Sunnis, and Shias continued. Abu Mus'ab al Zarqawi (Ayman al-Zarqawi), a future player in the Iraqi saga was released from the prison in Jordan directly before joining al-Qaeda in Afghanistan in 1999. Zarqawi believed that America would definitely invade Iraq sometime and that would become his selected location for jihad.

Hence, in March 2003, America invaded Iraq. Zarqawi took oath in 2004 for creating al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) by forming an alliance with the leaders of al-Qaeda, Osama bin Laden, and Ayman al- Zarqawi (Gerges, 2021). Sooner, the relations between both the organizations started to become unpleasant as Zarqawi was targeting Shia Muslims in suicide bombings and al-Qaeda wasn't in favor of that. In June 2006, Zarqawi was killed by American airstrikes.

After Zarqawi's death, Abu Ayyub al-Masri took charge and declared the creation of Islamic State of Iraq (ISI). Abu Umar al-Baghdadi (a shadowy figure whose existence is still in question) was declared as the Caliphate (the office of the political leader of the Muslim community or state). The focus on improving relations with al-Qaeda was done and it got better too. However, as time progressed ISI became a failure and al-Masri proved to be a poor commander and manager. Another caliph (successor of the Prophet Mohammad) was chosen, Hamid al-Zawi, who was a former police officer who joined ISI. Yet again issues started to arise because of al-Masri's poor management and as a result, anyone was admitted to ISI. In 2010, al-Masri and Abu Umar al-Baghdadi were killed by American forces (Gerges, 2021). Therefore,

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi became the next caliph, who also didn't work efficiently for the organization.

By 2011, al-Qaeda discredited and disowned ISI, but it rose again with Syria's civil war (Gerges, 2021). Syrian president Bashir al-Assad was sending jihadists into Iraq since the time American troops invaded, around 90 percent of Iraqi ISI members were from Syria. The Syrians protested against the president in 2011 because al-Assad took the jihadists out of the prison, which led towards the creating and renewal of ISIS in Iraq. After that there were arguments between the newly made ISIS and the group that existed in Syria. In the end both groups went to al-Qaeda to resolve the issues, where al-Qaeda declared that these groups would operate under them (al-Qaeda) and along with that tried to mediate between the two parties.

Later because of the unsatisfied attitudes from both parties, they were again separated. The battle between two parties became a social media war, where ISI was becoming successful and continued to carve the path toward conquering Iraq. In March 2013, ISI moved to Raqqa, Syria taking over the provincial capital (Gerges, 2021). ISI started to take over other cities and towns in Syria and thus the name was finally attributed to ISIS. In June 2014, ISIS moved from Mosul, Iraq and increased their territory to the outskirts of Syria. ISIS caliph Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi renamed the caliph to Ibrahim al-Baghdadi and claimed the authority over Muslims (Gerges, 2021).

In 2014-2015, the estimated number of people joining ISIS was between 20,000 to 30,000. ISIS controlled its territory by utilizing the strict interpretation of Sharia Law and attacking anyone who is not a Sunni Muslim which includes Shia Muslims as well (Gerges, 2021). ISIS also used women to spread their agenda through suicide bombings and/or female

policing. The involvement of females has expanded by broadening the domain of work in the organization.

Female Terrorism

Turk (2004) stated that “construction and selective application of definitions of terrorism are embedded in the dynamics of political conflicts, where ideological warfare to cast the enemy as an evildoer is a dimension of the struggle to win support for one’s own cause” (p. 273). According to this definition, it can be perceived that there could be many reasons why one gets involved with the terrorist organization. There is a requirement to understand the terrorism both on social and political levels and as well as the participation of women in these terrorist acts. It is needed for better application of counter-terrorism strategy.

However, the role of women in terrorism have not been identified as a forefront, though their existence is there worldwide in seemingly passive roles. Women’s involvement is now widening ideologically, logistically, and regionally for several reasons as source of motivations. Some of the motivations that can be listed come under conflicted zones such as trauma, revenge, religious ideology as a consideration of weak gender in the society, and expression of community outrage, while other are non-conflict zones such as feelings of alienation, negative self-identity, and a desire to act on behalf of those in conflicted zones as mentioned above (Speckhard & Akhmedova, 2006; Speckhard, 2008). Increasing contextual pressure (domestic/international enforcement, conflict, social dislocation) can also be considered as one of the motivation (Cunningham, 2003). All these creates a mutual dislocation process driving terrorist organizations to recruit women and at the same time women’s motivations to join these groups increases (Cunningham, 2003). It impacts the societal controls over women that may facilitate, if not necessitate (Cunningham, 2003).

The roles of females in these organizations have been confined to invisible, supportive roles which also reflect the gender hierarchy within their societies (Narozhna, 2009). Although this notion of using females in background roles is getting changed by using them in the forefront which can be as direct as influencing people from over the internet or giving training to fellow female terrorists.

One such instance stood out in 1991, when females were not considered to work in the forefront in the terrorist organizations. Thenmuli Rajaratnam was a suicide bomber for the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka (American Kids Encyclopedia [AKE], n.d.). In May 1991, Rajaratnam assassinated former Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi (AKE, n.d.). At that time Gandhi was doing a campaign for the Congress Party, where Gandhi left his motorcycle to walk on the road to meet and greet supporters(AKE, n.d.). Rajaratnam approached Gandhi with a garland and handed over a gift too(AKE, n.d.). Rajaratnam bent down to touch Gandhi's feet, out of respect and then indicated a suicide belt which was hidden beneath her clothes(AKE, n.d.). This incident became a pivotal incident for involvement and roles of female terrorists. It was believed that Rajaratnam's motivation to become a suicide bomber was because of her tragic life story(AKE, n.d.). Four of Rajaratnam's brothers were reportedly killed by Indian security forces in a raid in their village and importantly, Rajaratnam was gangraped in the same raid (AKE, n.d.)

According to Mia Bloom (2011), there are four R's and plus one on why a woman gets involved in terrorism. The first R is *revenge*, second is *redemption*, third is *relationship* and forth is *respect*. The plus one R stands for *rape*. *Revenge* is considered as a key factor for females in engaging into terrorism, and revenge can be for the death of close family member. *Redemption* is for the past sins committed by the female. It has been reported that women are often purposely

seduced into an illicit relationship. A woman caught in a romantic relationship might be scandalous and perfect for a *martyrdom* to wash away the 'sins'. *Relationship* is something important to understand how females are mobilized. One of the best single indicators that a female will likely be involved in terrorism is if she holds a relationship with a known insurgent or jihadist. As it will also vouch for her reliability to everyone and the organization. It is a crucial consideration for terrorist leaders who need to make sure that there are no risks involved in terms of leaking information. *Respect* is something which comes with other sources of motivation. However, respect is also attached to gaining pride back for the community. Engaging in these acts is just a way of demonstrating how they are dedicated towards the community's cause and sentiments. The plus one R which is *rape*, is just an addition to these four R's. It has been added because there is an increase in the sexual exploitation of females, globally. It is particularly evident in Iraq and Chechnya, where sexual exploitation is used as just another method to coerce females to participate in the battles (Bloom, 2011). The most disturbing and shocking element of this situation is that at times women have helped in setting up attacks on other women, which makes the whole situation even critical and obnoxious.

There are several methods of influencing a person to shift into radicalization. One such way is presenting strong quotations by leaders of these organizations. Once Osama Bin Laden stated and Tora Bora (2001) quoted "the time is now. Arm your women and children against the infidel!" It essentially means that it is the high time where women and children should be handed guns and point them at those who are disbelievers of Islam. This statement also suggests how easily a woman, or a child can become a target of the radicalization process.

Motive Behind Recruiting Females

The idea behind recruiting females in these terrorist organizations is related to the wider motivations. The decision making of terrorist organizations is a combination of strategic thinking and opportunism (Kim & Sara 2009). The strategic thinking leads to strategic decision making, meaning women can easily go through security checks or hide suicide bombing vests compared to men. Therefore, these organizations lean towards recruiting females as it makes the job easier. However, at times these organizations work more opportunistically rather than strategically. It means the decisions of including females in the organization works on internal group dynamics, irrespective of the way of achieving objects strategically. The terrorist leaders select their targets based on opportunities given rather than to pursue to the overall strategy (Kim & Sara 2009).

ISIS Women

The role of women in ISIS evolved with the changing and growing nature of the organization. Earlier, women were employed for the role of suicide bombing. Now, women are taking part outside the conflict zones with strategic roles. It includes traveling from all over the world to become a part of ISIS by taking active participation in being a facilitator of the group.

According to the Department of Homeland Security and the FBI, between the year 2003 to 2008 there were at least seventeen female suicide bomber operations that killed over one hundred people. Additionally, according to the Women in Terrorism dataset, since the year 2003, there were sixty-two suicide attacks that were conducted by women which killed over 850 people and injured over 1,900.

In the modern history of terrorism, shocking numbers are being observed by the women who are joining ISIS. The women who are attracted towards ISIS are not only limited to women living in Middle East or Asia but shocking number of women coming from the West. The

Western women make up crucial numbers of who are traveling to join terrorist organizations. One of the relatively high profile-cases was highlighted in February 2015 when three women from the United Kingdom fled to Syria to join ISIS (Dodd, 2015). They were encouraged by a woman who was already there in Syria. The women who fled were young, aged between fifteen to sixteen and the recruiter was twenty years old at that time(Dodd, 2015). Among the three women, one of them was an ISIS bride named as Shamima Begum, who became the headlines when she wanted to go back to the United Kingdom. In 2019, she appealed to the UK government that she wants to come back to her home country (Sky News, 2019). After a lot of back and forth, the UK government declined Begum's request (Topping, 2023). According to Begum, at the time of moving to Syria, she wasn't clear what ISIS agendas were or what ISIS does (Good morning Britain, 2021). After one of Begum's friends who moved with her to Syria was killed, she started requesting the UK government to return. At that time, she was pregnant with a child and her husband was taken by a group of Syrian fighters. In present, Begum is living in a refugee camp in Syria, and she also lost the child sometime after it was born (Topping, 2023). Begum's narratives are considered in this study by collecting her data. Irrespective of stories like these women are moving to Syria to join ISIS, either as a bride or as a forefront terrorist.

Therefore, this study is particularly focusing on motivations and roles of women terrorists of ISIS. There are previously conducted studies which suggests on the motivations and roles of female terrorists who belong from different terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda, The Black Widows, Hamas group etc., but due to a lack in cohesive set of research on women of ISIS, this study is targeting ISIS. It is fairly important to understand the motivations and roles as it could help in developing counterterrorism and anti-terrorism strategies especially for this group. The

personal factors and group tactics in influencing these women might be controlled if all the driving forces could be identified.

Summary

This chapter focused on the overall meaning of terrorism, discussing domestic and international terrorist groups. It focused on the complicated history of ISIS. In general, an overview was given on female terrorism, discussing some of the motivating factors and roles. A revolutionary case was also discussed of political assassination which helped in pivoting the role of women in terrorism. The important four R's and plus one was discussed in respects to women's involvement which also lead to considering the motives behind recruiting female terrorists. In the end, an outline was given of ISIS women, in which the famous case of an ISIS bride was also briefly discussed.

In the subsequent chapters the review of literature is discussed on gender and crime and feminist criminology, motivations, typologies of motivation, roles, manifesto and magazines, typologies, interpretative phenomenology analysis and female homegrown and emigrant terrorism in the United States. The following to that chapter, explains the method which included unit of analysis, coding framework, etc. The next chapter is analysis in which each case study is discussed along with identifying quotes and themes. The last chapter focuses on the conclusion in which the typology that is developed out of the data has been explained and a few other sections such as on how ISIS is different from other organizations, limitations of this study and future scope are discussed.

CHAPTER TWO

In June 2014, a statement was raised in the media regarding the allegations of female's involvement in Boko Haram, which included suicide bombing by an alleged female member of Boko Haram in Gombe, Nigeria. The statement was published in *AllAfrica* article "Nigeria: Female Suicide Bombers, Our New Challenge- Military" written by Omona and Ogbodo-Iwuagwu (2014, June 15):

Women are always allowed to pass free at security's check points without undergoing any checks because they believe that they cannot engage in such criminal activities, but the Gombe Incident should be an eye opener to everybody so both male and female should be check thoroughly so that we don't experience what happened in Gombe (para. 10)

The statement showed that how the perception of women engaging in terrorism is unacknowledged and also their increasing involvement in the terrorist organizations. This chapter intends to provide a brief literature of review pertaining to motivations and roles of female terrorists on joining the terrorist organizations. The background of existing literature will make it familiar to establish women's motivation and roles in terrorist organization. The information regarding domestic terrorism such as The Earth Liberation Front (ELF) is at one's disposal, however limited information is available that focuses as the motives and roles of women inside this organization. Similarly, restricted information is available on the motivation and general roles of women inside ISIS or any other Islamic terrorist organization. The Earth Liberation Front (ELF) and ISIS, both are terrorist organization, though the motivation of people joining it might differ. For instance, a woman joining ISIS could be a result of oppression that she faced in the society due to the religion versus a woman joining The Earth Liberation Front (ELF) as a result of simple radicalization.

The previous research studies further demonstrate on Islamic females terrorist's motivations and roles and ISIS's female terrorists motivation and roles. In literature, the reason for

focusing more on women terrorists and not specifically on Islamic women terrorists is because of the lack of research on women terrorist of ISIS.

Gender and Crime and Feminist Criminology

One of the strong and consistent findings in criminology till day is that females commit much less crime than males. Until the 1980s, gender differences in crime received negligible attention (Steffensmeier, 1996). In 1970s, feminist critiques of criminology paid attention to the neglect of women (Steffensmeier, 1996). The patterns of committing crime by men and women are notable as both have their similarities and differences. Both genders are found to be heavily involved in minor property and substance abuse offenses than in heinous crimes like murder (Steffensmeier, 1996). The gender gap between both gender can become greater when it comes to heinous crimes and least for mild forms of lawbreaking (Steffensmeier, 1996).

The gender ratio is most skewed when males as offenders and females as victims of sexual and domestic abuse. Patriarchal power relationships molds gender differences in crime, pushing women through victimization. The role of inequality could be seen in career paths of female teens who shift towards criminality as a result of running away from sexual and physical abuse at home. The struggle to survive lead them to streets which may them convert into status offences (Chesney-Lind 1989; Gilfus 1992), which included prostitution and drug dealing (English 1993).

Nevertheless, in criminology the feminist perspective is growing with the research. Daly & Chesney-Lind (1989) pointed out 'the gender gap and the generalizability problem'. For brief time, there were persistent differences that were recorded in crime rates between men and women and as a consequence, problems were faced when trying to apply theories of crime that were designated to fit males to female subjects. Pat Carlen (n.d.), who used to doubt the possibility of distinctive criminology suggested that contradicting traditional and sexualized views of women

are changing as now women can be seen on the criminological map. Therefore, recognition is the single most important effect of feminist work. It is directly linked to the generation of the wealth of research on female offenders as victims of crime. The list is not endless while considering the notions, for instance gender equality and of the double deviance of 'unconventional women' before the courts.

Motivations

There are several motivating factors that encourage an individual to join terrorist organizations, which range from social, political, or personal reasons. The nature of the motivation differs too, according to the terrorist organization's ideology. Even if focusing on a particular organization, for instance Islamic terrorism, the ideology between the several groups differs. Though, similarities exist which often confuse people between these organizations. If taking two organizations of Islamic terrorism such as, ISIS and al-Qaeda both of them works under the Sharia Law (Islamic religious law, which is perceived as divine). However, they function differently because of their belief system as ISIS targets Shia Muslims too when conducting bombing whereas al-Qaeda is not comfortable with the idea of targeting Shia Muslims. Hence, this depicts that irrespective of coming from one domain of Islamic terrorism, how different these two organizations work and so does the people who get indulged into this has some differences in their motivation.

Anna Erelle (Pseudo name) (2015), who was a Paris-based journalist, published memoir on the investigation on the recruitment channels of the Islamic State. Erelle used to focus on the digital channel where people are propagated and successfully mobilized into joining the Islamic State. Increasing numbers of young adults from Europe were moving to join the Islamic State at that time. In order to understand the motivation levels of these people, Erelle created a fake

Facebook profile with the name 'Melodie' - a twenty-year-old convert to Islam. Melodie met Bilel through this network, who was a French-born, high-ranking militant for the Islamic State in Syria. In few days with back-and-forth Skype calls and messages, Bilel was found to be in love with Melodie and was repeatedly urging Melodie to come to Syria and marry him and do jihad. In a month-long intense relationship, she was found that Bilel was none other than the right-hand man of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi who was the caliph of ISIS. Melodie tried to grasp as much information as it was possible from Bilel about ISIS. Melodie found that Bilel was someone who was fully radicalized with thoughts of Islamic State. Bilel tried to lure Melodie by saying that he will treat Melodie like a queen once she comes to Syria. Bilel also said that her life will become fulfilled once she comes marry him after coming to Syria, all of it was a lie. At one moment, Bilel assured Melodie that he loved her and, in another moment, would curse Melodie for not obeying the orders given by him. All of this didn't end on a good note or on a desired note as Anna wanted. Anna planned on going till border of Syria to give an end to her investigative story. However, things went terribly wrong which included Bilel knowing the reality of Anna because of the confusion happened on Syrian airport. It has gone to an extent where ISIS declared a fatwa (a ruling point of Islamic law given by a recognized authority) against Anna and because of that Anna had to leave her home country and had to change her identity. In the case of Bilel, the development of radical beliefs moved him from France to Syria, which is one of the many repercussion of the deadly digital world. Digital world constitutes as one of the most formidable and frightening weapons to lure someone into the Islamic State by projecting the painted picture of luxury of living in Syria and religion.

Typologies of Motivation

Spindlove and Simonsen (2013) found that there are three categories of motivation: rational, psychological, and cultural. Among these categories there are number of different factors which affect and dominate the preference to engage in terrorist acts. The rational motivation of a terrorist is when the individual compare and contrasts the costs and benefits of joining the group and as well as the instructions to carry out (Spindlove and Simonsen, 2013). Psychological motivation functions on the individual's wish to belong with the group who has a similar outlook (Spindlove and Simonsen, 2013). The psychological motive not only drives for the need for inclusion but only contributes in the dynamics among the members within the organization. The third category of motivation that was found was culture. Culture plays an important role in driving individuals because of the sense of identification and unity that is typically induced by those who are embedded within (Spindlove and Simonsen, 2013). The existence of a sense of belongingness is really powerful in regard to culture and the idea to maintain that divide between those who are accepted in the culture versus those who are not (pp. 15-17). Similar to that religion is a part of the culture which often plays a role in making radical beliefs which is the core of terrorist activity. This is largely based on the fact that religion "encompasses values and beliefs deeply rooted in a long-standing and ancient cultural paradigm" (Spindlove & Simonsen, 2013, p. 17). Personal motivations are never served as sole reasons of joining a terrorist group, but it works in a combination of number of motivational factors.

This study is focusing only on the motivating factors that influence females to join the terrorist organization. Hence, the focus will be exclusively on the motivating criterions that make females to indulge in Islamic terrorism or particularly in ISIS. Rahman (2019) and Speckhard and Ellenberg (2020) studied on motivations of females to join ISIS and it was found that the

reasons included poverty, spouse joining ISIS, prior trauma, and negative relations with social institutions or social victimization. If looking at these factors through Spindlove and Simonsen (2013) lens of motivation, these factors can be placed into personal category. However, as stated before personal factors can never serve as the basis for joining extreme groups, it require combinations to be radicalized and become a part of these terrorist groups. Among all the personal factors mentioned above spouse joining ISIS, prior trauma and negative relations with social institutions or social victimization can be placed into the category of culture. As a spouse joining of ISIS is a big enough reason to become a part of that group on the other hand prior trauma can become a cultural factor as well on the grounds of the exploitation that a woman or someone who might be close to the woman was harmed, which became a culture or religious affair along with the personal motive. Similarly, with negative relations with social institutions or social victimization, the cultural or religious aspects works hand in hand.

The motivation level of joining the organization of every female differs and this difference also comes from where that female is placed geographically. One such study was conducted by Yilmaz (2017) which noted the triggering points of females who were located in different areas. It was found that the motivation to join ISIS by the women who are placed in Western countries was that they feel culturally excluded and wanted to feel the sense of belongingness (Yilmaz, 2017). By contrast women from the middle east are motivated to join ISIS because for them ISIS works as a protectors in the insecure conditions of war, which again can be associated with the sense of belongingness (Yilmaz, 2017).

In 2016, increased female involvement in Islamic terrorism was witnessed in Bangladesh though traditionally Bangladesh is considered less threatening to security and peace loving. Rahman (2019) examined the potential reasons behind this. It was found the major reasons of

female involving those groups was because of negative lived experiences which can also be considered as an expression of community outrage (Rahman, 2019).

Speckhard & Akhmedova (2006) conducted a study to understand the motivations of Chechen women bombers who were later named Black Widows by the Russian and international press. After some time, it became clear that most of them were acting out of revenge for the deaths of their husbands, sons, and brothers. In October 2002, nineteen female bombers showed up in black mourning clothes with the bomb strapped against their bodies (Speckhard & Akhmedova 2006). The major motivations sets were related to trauma, revenge, religious ideology, and gender. There is a very thin line between the motive of community outrage and revenge. Community outrage happens when there is a feeling of getting back at society by including several humans on a much broader level. On the other hand, revenge can be associated with just one human being instead of a bunch of individuals. Speckhard & Akhmedova (2006) believed that the main motivational force behind joining a terror group starts by deep personal traumatization.

In consequence, it can be perceived that female terrorist motivations can be classified into various areas and a female can have multiple reasons to join the radicalized groups. Every women who joins ISIS or any other Islamic organization tries to fulfil her own desires or beliefs. These organizations give them the power by engaging them in terrorist acts which according to these organizations were taken away from those women by society at some point (Bjørge 2004; Crenshaw 1981; Danzell 2011; Hoffman 2006).

Roles

There are several roles and responsibilities of an individual in a terrorist group. The level of involvement of an individual varies ranging from support-type roles to distinctive operational

assignments. While the roles of a females in Islamic terrorist organizations can vary too. Women are found to be more indulged in propagating the jihadist ideology not only by supporting their jihadist husbands but also by disseminating the jihadist propaganda (Leede, 2020). The role of women spreading the organization's agenda is done online and offline, both. However, most of the times women's roles are downplayed but it was found that the contribution by women were wide ranged and diverse. The roles taken by women have changed overtime even in the areas where gender divide is more prevalent. It can also be said that women are getting involved in military actions as well in terrorist organization. Frazier (2002) stated:

Their roles in warring have been clearly delineated and boundaries unmistakably demarcated. Society, through its body of rules and its numerous institutions, has conventionally dictated [women's] roles within the boundaries of militancy. Assisting in subordinate roles is welcomed and encouraged. Actually, fighting in the war is not. Yet women have demanded to be integrated in all aspects of war including frontline fighting. (Para. 5)

The changing scenario of women's participation in terrorist organizations has widespread where women can be seen participating in forefront rather working in background roles. Earlier women were given secondary or supporting roles than primary. Though the importance of such roles cannot be neglected as today as well women are participating in those supporting roles. Some background roles includes being a bride, mother or it can also range from finding support and maintaining and expanding networks (Speckhard and Ellenberg, 2020; Yilmaz 2017). In contrast to that some of the primary roles in which women are participating includes to be a recruiter, suicide bomber, and so on (Speckhard and Ellenberg, 2020; Yilmaz 2017).

Some of the typologies of roles that are found by Speckhard and Ellenberg (2020); Yilmaz (2017) includes, females engaged as a mother, role of suicide terrorist, face-to-face recruiter, media personnel, and "bride of Jihad" or "wives of Jihad". Some typologies on roles are discussed below in detail:

Women as Logisticians

Logisticians typically in terrorism world means someone who can “smuggle weapons and funds to terrorist fighters or perhaps act as couriers with messages between terrorist leaders and their operational cells” (Cragin & Daly, 2009, p. 21). The people who generally chosen to get involved in these type of activities are those that are believed to work without anyone being suspicious on them. Women are often picked for this role because of two reasons, first that the chances of drawing attention towards them is really less. Second, this role is more supportive role rather than a forefront role which is typically understood to be a position that woman holds in an organization.

Women as Recruiters

Cragin & Daly (2009) defined recruiter as “individuals used or designated by terrorist leaders to attract new logisticians, financiers, suicide bombers or guerilla fighters into their organization” (p.39). The basic motive of a recruiter is to gather additional members in the organization to support the cause and ideology. The process of recruitment can be done through different techniques that includes force, solicitation, familiar connection, relationships, and online participation. Women in the position of a recruiter are found to be less though there existence cannot be avoided. The position of a female as recruiter not only benefits in indulging other females to join the terrorist group but it motivates males as well.

Women as Suicide Bombers

According to Bloom (2005),

A suicide bomber is a weapon with a brain that can change directions or adjust the situation. Because there is no need to plan for the perpetrator’s escape route, the hardest part is reaching the target. The suicide bomber is deadlier than other forms of terrorist attacks because of his or her ability to switch targets midsession or, if the detonator fails, to find an alternative way of activating the explosive. (pp. 113)

The usage of suicide bombing is a very powerful tool as the changes in the plan can take place without any advance notice or planning, which makes it even more dangerous. The use of female bombers is important because “they provide a tactical advantage, increased the number of combatants, received enhanced media coverage, and maximized psychological impact” (Zedalis, 2008, p.50). In 1991, a historic case of a female suicide bomber took place where a female assassinated Indian prime minister, this case is also discussed above in detail. It became historic as it was done at a time when there was not much discussion of female suicide bombers. The bomber belonged from terrorist organization, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) which dissolved in late 2000s (AKE, n.d.).

Women as Operational Leaders

Women do serve in the role of operational leaders though these roles are not much filled by women but with evolving time, changes are being made. For instance, recently a Kansas woman admitted that she trained 100 woman in ISIS battalion in Syria (Legare, 2022). This woman was a teacher and a mother in the US before turning into ISIS battalion leader.

Therefore, the role of women in terrorist organizations changes according to the requirement of the mission. There can be many roles which women are given when it comes to ISIS. Once the women arrives in ISIS territory, first and foremost action goes to marry her to one of the group’s fighters and have a strict lifestyle that includes cooking, cleaning, and child rearing. Some of the other roles includes enforcing of the Islamic State’s rule and regulation or pursuing of jihad, if there is a command to do so. Outside of ISIS, women have supporter roles which includes recruiting fighters from all over the globe. Overall, mixed outcomes are witnessed on the roles that women caters.

Manifesto and Magazines

Jihadi fatwas are responsible to set the rules and laws within Islamic State. The explanation of who and why lies in them to provide the explanation on why some groups are infidels and to encourage violent action against them. The effectiveness of the manifesto would suggest on how many groups or leaders reference the ideals in the fatwa when there is a formation of jihadi group. The management of fatwas and manifestos remain important for violent extremist groups and individuals in order to spread ideas and inspire new attacks. A female focused manifesto was released in the beginning of 2015. It was believed to be the first document which focused women with guideline for them, under the title, ‘Women of the Islamic State: Manifesto and Case Study.’ The manifesto was originally released in Arabic and later translated by a London based counter-extremism think tank. The manifesto was drafted by the al-Khansaa Brigade (a female-militia setup of ISIS, largely focusing educated Western women). The manifesto provided year-to-year guide on how a female should live her life as it covered on how a female should be dressed in Islamic State, what are their roles, education, and marriage. Other influencing factor for women was the publication of digital magazines all of the internet. These magazines were Dabiq and Rumiya.

Dabiq started to publish in July 2014 and was till July 2016 in which total 15 editions were released. Rumiya started in September 2016 and lasted till September 2017 and in total there were 13 editions. These magazines were graphic in nature and published news on the successful work of ISIS which was influential in nature. These magazines were published in Arabic and English to widespread its reach. Hence, manifesto and magazines are also analyzed in this study to understand and compare it with how ISIS changed the face of terrorism.

Typology

Typology is a theory which is made manageable through the division and organization of the data to be more coherent (Helfgott 2008). In terms of crime and criminal justice system it can be further understood as: “The criminal justice system cannot respond to crime with a ‘one size fits all’ approach. Sanctions, management strategies, treatment approaches, and public safety policies and practices are highly dependent on differentiation of types of crimes and criminals” (Helfgott, 2008, p 99). Meaning that there is no single type through which the criminal justice system could respond against crime but there is a requirement to approach these differently according to the nature of crime. The nature of crime can vary on many levels and further can be classified into different typologies such as violent crime, sex crime economic crime, political crime and so on. The act of terrorism falls under political crime domain which can further be divided into categories as oppositional (violent and non-violent) and state crime(Helfgott 2008). Terrorism is categorized as oppositional violent crime(Helfgott 2008). Terrorism has typologies as well which is considered as homogeneous phenomenon, meaning there is no variations in either time or place (Helfgott 2008). Thus, it can be classified as hijacking, kidnapping, shooting, bombing, suicide bombing and so on. However, these classifications does not predict the motives of such acts, for digging into other aspects such as the geographic classification is necessary.

One of the typology of terrorism was created by Mozaffari (1988) which had four categories, namely: sub-revolutionary, repressive, independentist, and international. Sub-revolutionary aims at the revolutionary or reformist, political motives short of change. Repressive focuses at the neutralization of the oppositional groups within the country or liquidation of the opponent abroad (Mozaffari 1988). Independentist aims at gaining more rights of autonomy or independence struggle against colonialism and imperialism(Mozaffari 1988).

International focuses at political or instrumental political requests for fundamental changes in the international system(Mozaffari 1988). Islamic terrorism falls under the international typology (Mozaffari 1988).

These four categories has further sub-categories, in sub-revolutionary two types of terrorism comes in, agitational terrorism and structural terrorism (Mozaffari 1988). Agitational terrorism does not focus on revolutionary projects, but it shows that discontent between certain groups of population and the conduct policy of the government. Structural terrorism focuses on the ideology or totalizing religious vision(Mozaffari 1988). It majorly focuses on the basic structures of society. The second category is repressive terrorism which is divided into three sub-categories, revolutionary terrorism, terrorism of state and anti-terrorism (Mozaffari 1988). Revolutionary terrorism is regarded as the source of modern terrorism which generally appears when the ancient regime falls, and the state sited by the revolution is yet to be born(Mozaffari 1988). Terrorism of the state is the type which is used by the state itself as a political instrument of internal policy. The third is anti-terrorism which intends to focus either on combat or neutralize terrorist actions(Mozaffari 1988). Third category, independentist is divided into two sub-categories, separatist terrorism, and nationalist terrorism. Separatist terrorism is considered by the people who considers themselves aliens in their own country. On the other end nationalist terrorism focuses over the anti-colonial terrorism. The fourth and last type is international terrorism, and it has two sub-types, anti-system terrorism and coercive terrorism(Mozaffari 1988). Anti-system terrorism considers any movement and any state that looks to destabilize the established international order (Mozaffari 1988). “Mass terrorism joins state terrorism: both are first and foremost the history of great historical and political vulnerability” (Mongin, 1984). Coercive terrorism is a type of terrorism where the state monopolizes the scene, meaning, a state

may not make use of terrorism in the domestic setting, however it will not hesitate to use it as a coercive means among others in its relations with other states.

It is necessary to have typologies on terrorism as it gives more clarity on how these terrorist organizations work. Similarly, it is essential to have typologies on female terrorists as well on their motivations behind joining an organization and the roles given to them. The need of establishment of the typologies is necessary to produce better counterterrorism models after understanding the causes attached with it. Some of the existing typologies of motives behind joining terrorist organizations by women includes, trauma, spouse involvement, revenge, religious beliefs, and peer pressure whereas for roles some of the typologies found are role of recruiters, role of suicide bombers and some passive roles such as logisticians or brides. There are studies that highlighted the motivating factors and roles of female terrorism in organizations such as al-Qaeda, Black widows, HAMAS, LTTE so on., though there are no studies which solely focused on women of ISIS. Hence, this study is specifically focusing on the women who are joining ISIS to fill the gaps in research.

Interpretative Phenomenology Analysis

Interpretative phenomenology analysis is the mindful and organized reflective study of lived experiences. It is a qualitative approach that is used to carefully evaluate the systematic studies of lived experiences. There are different iterations of interpretative phenomenology, all share the focus on understanding the human experience within the context of the lived world (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin, 2009a)

In contrast to the other qualitative research designs, phenomenology is the: Sober reflection on the *lived experience* of human existence – sober, in the sense that it must be thoughtful, and as much as possible, free from theoretical, prejudicial, and suppositional intoxications. But phenomenology is also a project that is driven by fascination: being swept up in a spell of wonder, a fascination with meaning. (Van Manen, 2007: 11)

In other words, the purpose of interpretative phenomenology is to process a representation of a phenomena that occurs in everyday experience, as to understand the essential nature and characteristics. It is also a social responsibility to transform the information given by the subjects to the researcher. It is to explore and explain the particular phenomena in a most subtly non-biased manner and often taking the reflective stance by the researcher.

In interpretative phenomenology analysis the researcher takes a role of transforming information that is given by the participants as researcher tries to explore and generate a particular phenomenon. It also means, taking a reflective stance to make sense of the nuances of own experience of a phenomenon and then to acknowledge the experiences earned by a person in phenomenon specific context (O'Brien, 2003). The development of thoughtful phenomenologically oriented questions is the first and crucial step in conducting an interpretative phenomenology analysis (Manen, 1990).

In some of the studies where interpretative phenomenology analysis used includes study of police brutality in Nigeria where participants were both criminals and non-criminals who had interactions with police (Ike & Jidong 2022) or where interpretative phenomenology analysis was conducted on the police officers in the UK to study on the critical incidents that police had to encounter (Eyre 2014). Interpretative phenomenology analysis is also used in research when studying terrorism. Gragera & Pascual (2014); Morris & Crank (2011); Menecier et al., (2020) conducted studies on terrorism where the method used was interpretative phenomenology analysis in order to examine the obtained experiences from victims, to make a counterterrorism policy, and phenomenological analysis of terrorism and organized crime from comparative criminological perspective, respectively. Studies that are conducted on women terrorists are also found which used the method of interpretative phenomenology analysis. Koehler (2021)

conducted a study to understand the motives of women engaging in left-wing terrorism where the method was interpretative phenomenology analysis using 13 autobiographies of women who joined left-wing terrorism. Another study where interpretative phenomenology analysis was used on women to study the gender gap in domestic terrorism was by Makin & Hoard (2014). This research tested two beliefs on female terrorists which was ruthlessness and lethality and the belief that women can only be found in certain group type (left wing).

Therefore, in this study the method of interpretative phenomenology analysis will be used to examine the motivating factors and roles of women terrorist of ISIS. The usage of this method in previous studies establishes that this method has been used before in understanding the female terrorism which also suggests that this method is dependable in this domain.

Female Homegrown and Emigrant Terrorism in the United States

Since 2001, the terrorist attacks that have been committed by women in the United States ranges to only 7 percent which essentially means that rest 93 percent were committed by men (Rinehart 2019). Interestingly, every terrorist attack that has been done by women in the United States was committed by women in jihadist terrorist organization (Rinehart 2019).

There is a subtle difference between female homegrown terrorism and an emigrant female terrorism act. Homegrown terrorism refers to when women who are American citizens that were born in the US or received an American citizenship. Their religion can vary, meaning they can either be Muslim by birth or they converted to Islam shortly before or after the crime. After then they tend to commit terrorist attacks in the US. On the other hand, to be an American emigrant jihadist means a woman who has left the United States but still an American citizen who joined the terrorist organization. These women are generally referred foreign fighters,

though they are mainly engaged into supportive roles. The differences discussed are in reference with ISIS agenda concerning these women.

In reference to homegrown female jihadists, Wafa Sultan, Syrian Muslim critic and former Muslim (n.d.) once quoted:

No one can be a true Muslim and a true American simultaneously. Islam is both a religion and a state. A true Muslim does not acknowledge the U.S. Constitution, and his willingness to live under that constitution is, as far as he is concerned, nothing more than an unavoidable step on the way to that constitution's replacement by Islamic Sharia Law. Therefore, according to jihadist interpretation American Muslims are in some sense of apostates. To solve this problem, they must be controlled by the Sharia Law either convert the political system that they live, or they must emigrate to a Muslim country which works under Sharia Law.

When it comes to American emigrants to jihad the story takes a turn in a certain way as it to lure women who are living in another country, hence abundance of planning is required. A lot of women who travels to join ISIS gets shocked by the conditions when they arrive. Most of them were introduced to an ISIS that they had never heard of or read of.

There are approximately fourteen American born females jihadists and eighteen foreign born female jihadist from the year 2001 to 2018 (Center for International Security and Cooperation, n.d.). This depicts that there have been more terrorist attacks from jihadist women who are born in other countries, who immigrated to the US and earned citizenship. This also shows that American born female jihadists who converted to Islam is on peak after the creation of ISIS. Most of the American converts to Islam were inspired by ISIS in which internet radicalization played a major role to decide and make their jihad.

Summary

In this chapter the literature was discussed that have been done in past years on female terrorists of ISIS and female Islamic terrorism. This chapter had two main sections, first that discussed about the motivations and second discussed about the roles. Apart from that, ISIS

manifesto and magazines were reviewed along with typologies of terrorism. In the last segment of this chapter, brief discussion was done on female homegrown and emigrant terrorism in the United States, highlighting the main difference between both in the light of ISIS.

The next chapter of this study discusses the method used to perceive the motives and roles of women. This chapter compared interpretative phenomenological analysis with other qualitative methods which justifies the need of using this method in this study. Data section table, unit of analysis, coding framework, inter-rater reliability, manifesto and magazines and typology are other sections which are explained in detail.

CHAPTER THREE

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the background of the method used in this study to understand the motivations and roles of female terrorists of ISIS. Along with that, framing work of structured guide is discussed which was required to analyze motivations and roles that helped in making a new typology. Creating of a new typology could help in identifying the factors associated female terrorism, the recruiting criteria which is focused by ISIS and in general it will aid in understanding the terrorism patterns.

The research questions explored in this study are:

- 1) What are the motivations of female terrorists of ISIS?
- 2) What roles do female terrorists play in the larger organization of ISIS?

Within these two overarching research questions, the specific motivational elements revealed in prior research will be examined such as past trauma, revenge, religious ideology, peer influence, spousal influence, community estrangement, or other motivations. In addition, the specific roles women play in ISIS terrorist organizations will be examined to better understand the nature of the role of female terrorists within ISIS. For reviewing all the data, a coding framework will be developed which will help in demonstrating unique elements of female's motivation in joining ISIS and the type of roles they perform.

Interpretative Phenomenology

Interpretative phenomenology analysis is the systematic reflective analysis of lived experiences. The most common type of data collection in this method is audio-taped phenomenological interviews with the people who have lived through the experiences under the investigation (Priest 2002), although other forms of data such as diaries can also be used in this.

The interviews conducted are semi-structured, featuring open-ended questions (Liamputtong 2010; Miller 2002).

For this study, interpretative phenomenological analysis is picked as a method of evaluating the data because of the nature of the study that restricts conducting in-person interviews. Hence, relying on the narrations or lived experiences of female terrorists of ISIS is found to be relevant measure to understand the questions and sub-questions posed. In order to understand the determining motives and roles of women this method is chosen as best and relevant because through the help documentaries, memoirs, news articles, manifestos, and terrorist databases, it will come as close as to the lived experiences of women. The data will be considered firsthand as it comes from the direct sources of involvement.

This study is aiming to fill the gaps in the literature by providing the information that is coming from the sources that are primary. It is important to conduct study in this manner because it will provide the experiences of female terrorists of ISIS from a reality standpoint which is essential considering the lack of research in this area.

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis Compared to Other Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis can develop and use their subjectivity and interpersonal abilities to their research exploratory processes. However, using the interpretative phenomenological approach (IPA) technique benefits the study quadruple since the approach enables the researchers to form strong bonds with their research participants Creswell (2013).

There are varieties of data analytical approaches in qualitative research that researchers can use for their data analytics. The justification for using any of the approaches can be made, though the approach is selected on the basis of research design Creswell (2013). The other qualitative approaches are as functional as they could with their analysis, nonetheless,

phenomenological approach goes a bit farther away. Creswell (2013) added the advantage of using phenomenological approach, “The suggestions for narrative analysis present a general template for qualitative researchers. In contrast, in phenomenology, there have been specific, structured methods of analysis advanced” (p.193).

The majority of crime-related research studies are quantitative (Miller 2008; Sherman & Strange 2004; Taylor 2007). The usage of qualitative studies in the domain of crime started approximately from 1920 to 1940 (Miller 2008; Sherman & Strange 2004; Taylor 2007). Though, this approach has fallen out of favor in the last several decades (Miller 2008; Taylor, 2007). Von et.al., (1999) requested to use of qualitative studies to examine offending processes, suggesting that they will be more outcome-based. And in that, interpretative phenomenological research can often recognize theories that can guide interview questions and orient research design (Lopez & Willis, 2004).

On contrary to that, an interpretative phenomenological approach is found to be highly underutilized in the study of crime. This mode not only uncovers offender participants decisions and motivations for offending but also allows to include and reflect on their own journey which allows profound participant response. The phenomenological approach has been recommended by criminologists as a means to encourage offenders to explain the process that led them to offending (Seidman, 2006; Taylor, 2007).

Data Selection Criteria

The timeframe selection for data is from June 2000 to February 2023. The reason for picking this timeframe is to understand majorly about ISIS which was formed in 2014. The data before that will suggest how the face of terrorism changed after the forming of ISIS. There is availability of data before the year 2000, however considering the method of data collection

which is through the content available on several digital platforms. It would have become impossible to reach any end. Therefore, the content of last 23 years is selected which will show the changing patterns of terrorism, especially after the 9/11 attacks.

The feasibility of conducting interviews with female terrorists is logistically challenging at this point. Therefore, this research utilizes open-source information about female terrorists to uncover their motivations and roles. Prior research has utilized open-source information to understand other types of perpetrators such as individuals who commit copycat crimes (Surette et al., 2021). The open-source information that will be utilized includes, documentaries, news articles, televised interviews, manifestos, magazines, and memoirs, which are presented in the table below:

Data Selection Table	
Documentaries	Return from ISIS Jihadi Jane: The Terrorist Next Door
Memoirs	Women on the verge of Jihad In the shadow of Daesh
Manifestos	Dirasat: Terror Propaganda ISIS and Propaganda: How ISIS Exploits Women.
News Articles	Kansas woman admits she trained 100-woman battalion in Syria
Newspapers	NY Times, Al-Jazeera, ABC News, The Week, CBS News etc.

Magazines	Dabiq and Rumiya
Secondary Databases	EBSCOhost, ProQuest, JSTOR, Criminal Justice Abstracts with full Text, SocINDEX with Full Text, APA PsycINFO

The extensive keyword searches conducted like, ‘female terrorism’, ‘female international terrorism’, ‘gender and terrorism’, ‘gender and international terrorism’, ‘ISIS terrorists’, ‘Islamic terrorism’, ‘terrorist narratives’ ‘Islamic terrorist narratives’. The data was also taken from Google Scholar and other available search-engines which utilized both published and unpublished scholarly manuscripts on this topic.

Unit of Analysis

In this section, the identification of all twenty-six women that are examined and are presented on the left side of table, which is the unit of analysis for this study. On the right, all sources are listed which are used in this qualitative analysis.

Unit of Analysis Table

Name of the Women	Sources
Aqsa Mahmood aka Umm Layth	Newspaper articles
Imane	Newspaper article, Book narrative
Shamima Begum	News channel interviews
Sally Jones aka Jihadi Jones	Newspaper articles, Book narrative
Listyowati	Youtube Documentary
Marifah	Youtube Documentary

Mhae	Youtube Documentary
Tareena Shakil aka The Towie Jihadi	News channel interview
Sam Sally	Documentary and podcasts
Lisa Smith	News channel interviews
Kimberley Polman	News channel interviews, News articles
Hoda Muthana	News channel interviews, News articles
Tooba Gondal aka Umm Muthanna	News article, Documentary trailer,
Khadija	Interview & News articles
Teenge terror twins, Zahra and Salma Halane	News channel interviews, News articles
Alison Fluke	News articles
Sophie Kaiski	Memoir
Laura Passoni (strong motivations)	News articles
Jamie Paulin Ramirez	Documentary
Colleen LaRose aka Jihadi Jane	News articles, Documentary, Book narrative
Ahlam Ahmad al- Tamimi	News channel interviews, News articles
Darshika	Documentary
Puhalchudar	Documentary
Samira Ahmed Jassim	Confession video, News article
Hawa Barayev	Book quotes
Reem Riyashi	Testimonial video, News article

Coding Framework

The coding framework is used to compare data attained throughout the collected material from various sources. The questions are created to review the sub-questions and applied equally in all the data. Usage of this method will make it easier to note down the similarities and differences between the data considered and later frame into a new typology after examining it. The coding framework has both kinds of question, close ended and open ended. Close ended questions like age, marital status, year of committing crime, specific motivations, frontline working terrorist or passive working, etc., whereas open ended questions is related with the role in the organization, year of joining the organization, etc. Each question was coded in order to get clarity of systematically arrange the data. Close ended questions are coded as, for instance if the question is about the marital status, then single is coded as 0 whereas married is coded as 3. In other questions, where the response gotten as no and yes, no is coded as 0 whereas yes is coded as 1. In open ended questions, the response received will simply be taken into consideration and later analyzed on similarities and differences in the responses.

The coding framework is evaluated as mentioned below:

Coding Framework Questions

Variables:	Question:
Age	What is the age of women involved?
Marital Status	Were the woman singled, married, widowed, divorced?
Year of Joining	In what year the female joined the organization?
Year of Committing Crime	In what year the female committed the crime?

Motivation	What are some of the motivations to join ISIS by the female terrorist?
Socioeconomic Status	What is the socioeconomic status of the female joined organization?
Religious Affiliation	Did the female changed her religious beliefs when joined the organization?
Motivation	If the motivation of female joining ISIS is because religious ideology?
Motivation	If the motivation of female joining ISIS is because peer pressure?
Motivation	If the motivation of female joining ISIS is because spouse works in the organization?
Motivation	If the motivation of female joining ISIS as an expression of community outrage?
Motivation	If the motivation of female joining ISIS because of past trauma?
Role	What are some roles in which female is engaged?
Role	If it was a frontline working terrorist role?
Role	If it was a passive working terrorist role?

Role	For how long working in this role?
Mode of Recruitment	If it was online or in-person

Inter-Rater Reliability

After the careful analysis of each case study with the help of coding framework, the inter-rater reliability of the data is conducted. For this process, an undergraduate student of Seattle University volunteered for it. The undergraduate is majoring in Forensic Psychology and is a freshman at the time of volunteering. The volunteer consciously analyzed each case study by keeping coding framework in focus.

Manifesto and Magazines

The women focused manifesto released by ISIS in early 2015, titled ‘Women of the Islamic State: Manifesto and Case Study’ will be analyzed by taking out statements mentioned in the manifesto. Similarly, Dabiq and Rumiya which were two magazines which were published by ISIS digitally. There are 15 editions of Dabiq in which seven had a segment which specifically focused on women and Rumiya had 13 editions with seven having specific segment on them. These specific sections in those which emphasized on women, such as ‘Story of a Woman who did Hijrah’, ‘Faithful Wife’, etc., hence, quotes from those sections will be highlighted. It will help in understanding more on how women were influenced. Also, what changes were brought because of which women from all around the globe joined ISIS in huge numbers compared to before 2014.

Typology

As discussed in the literature review, the typologies are categories/class which helps in organizing the data according to characteristics, around the common principle. It makes the

process easy for the evaluation of different categories. There are several criminal typologies that exist which essentially is made to categorize a particular kind of crime by putting it in a category. The act of terrorism comes under the political crime, which is further divided into categories. In this study through interpretive phenomenological analysis, themes will be identified through the analysis, that will be then used to develop a motivational typology of female Islamic terrorists.

Summary

This chapter described the working of the research design along with the criteria of data selection and unit of analysis. Comparison of interpretative phenomenological analysis was also done with other Qualitative Data Analysis. This section further explained how data is going to be analyzed through a coding framework and how inter-rater reliability is used. The reason behind using ISIS manifesto and magazines will also be analyzed. Some of the main questions possess are age, marital status, different types of motivation and roles further it will help in making a typology of the female Islamic terrorists.

CHAPTER FOUR

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an individual case study of twenty-six female terrorists, who are taken in this research to understand the motives and roles in-depth. Along with that, analysis of ISIS's magazines and manifestos to understand the influencing factors which drive women towards it and how ISIS made its radicalizing process different in the age of digit world as before. The female terrorists are analyzed individually with the help of coding framework, which not only included their motives and roles but also the year of joining the organization, year of committing the crime, mode of recruitment and other demographic details. The inter-rater reliability was also conducted over the coding of the samples by an undergraduate student of criminal justice department. Apart from this framework, their quotes were also taken into consideration when collecting the data which links with their motives and roles. Other things such as their radicalization or repentance, if any, were also taken from the narratives, which is also be a part of their individual case study. After case studies, the data is presented in the form of bar graphs and pie chart, which shows the motivation factors from the stated factors. Similar is done with roles and along with that distribution of age of female terrorists. The case studies are presented in the following order, first, the sample of 18 female terrorists of ISIS is analyzed and then remaining 8 female terrorists from groups such as al-Qaeda, HAMAS, LTTE, Black Widows, etc., analyzed.

Case Study One: Aqsa Mahmood aka Umm Layth

Umm Layth was a young woman who joined ISIS in her early adulthood in 2013. Layth belonged from an affluent neighborhood in the UK, who started to post over social media about the feelings of isolation and directionless in the year 2013. Layth radicalized online by a British male, hence Layth's motive to join ISIS began through romanticism. Layth posted in January 2013,

I feel like I have no direction in life anymore. It's funny how things work out, once upon a time I used to be such a career obsessed girl. Now I have no clue. I just want another fresh start and to do it right this time.

Layth's posted frequently about her parents disapproval towards her radicalizing process,

I asked my dad to get me some books while he goes to Pakistan next week. He got angry and said what 'Al Qaeda' [sic] type books. (Tafsir ibn Kathir) My parents genuinely think I'm extremist cba cba.(n.d.).

In October 2013, Layth's intentions to travel to Syria become evident. Layth wrote frequently about her devotion to ISIS and her desire to join them on social media, 'I'm getting so so [sic] Halal jealous hearing of all those who've recently made Hijrah to Bilaad ash Shaam Feesabeelilah :) [sic] May Allāh keep them steadfast.'

Layth called for lone wolf attacks in the West, as Layth (n.d.), stated on twitter, 'If you cannot make it to the battlefield then bring the battlefield to yourself. Be sincere and be a Mujahid wherever you may be'[Tweet].

Sometimes Layth's posts on social media were more philosophical, one-time Layth's posted, "We are created to be mothers and wives — as much as the western society has warped your views on this with a hidden feminist mentality." (n.d.).

Layth's role in ISIS was that of an online recruiter who used to post heavily on social media. One-time Layth posted on women's role stating,

Our role is even more important as women in Islam, since if we don't have sisters with the correct Aqeedah [conviction] and understanding who are willing to sacrifice all their desires and give up their families and lives in the west in order to make Hijrah and please Allah, then who will raise the next generation of Lions? ...Sister's [sic] don't forsake this beautiful blessing being able to raise the future Mujahideen of Shaam. (n.d.).

Some of Layth's radicalized posts on social media (n.d.) stated,

Sister's [sic] a little note: many people in present day do not understand and cannot comprehend at all why a female would choose to make this decision. ...They will point fingers and say behind your back and to your families faces that you are taking part in

'Jihadul nikaah' or 'sexual jihad' and many many more vile terms. It hurts because these words will come from perhaps some of your closest relatives.

Layth was up-front on this topic,

The reality is that to stay without a man here is really difficult. ...I have stressed this before on twitter, but I really need sisters to stop dreaming about coming to Shaam and not getting married. (n.d.).

Layth published on her Tumblr (n.d.), "Diary of a Muhajirah," meaning one who has made the

"Hijrah," or journey to the Islamic State.

You can find shampoos soaps and other female necessities here, so do not stress if you think you will be experiencing some cavewomen life here. ...And lastly for the married sisters or soon to be married, bring makeup and jewellery from the West because trust me there is absolutely nothing here. ...Unless you plan on looking like a clown ting."

Layth also stated a few words to Islamic State husbands,

You are responsible for your wife," Umm Layth writes, noting that "one of the most important duties" of a militant is to "educate your wife" including about her period of mourning after he is killed in battle.

Layth tweeted (n.d.), "Follow the example of your brothers from Woolwich, Texas and Boston etc. Have no fear as Allah swt [glory to God] is always with the Believers" [Tweet].

"Whoever carries out an individual operation (in USA/UK/France etc) against any country that is openly waging a war against Muslims and oppressing them" [Tweet]. "He must realize that he is in fact participating in the Jihad alongside his Mujahedeen brothers & that his operation is not less important than the operations his brothers [sic] undertake in the lands of Jihad that are open" [Tweet].

Layth role in ISIS can be considered as a frontline role where Layth not only recruited other people but also served as propagandist by openly expressing her support towards the organization through social media. Umm Layth served this role till 2019 and ended this role as she was killed by an airstrike in the same year.

Case Study Two: Imane

Imane was a young adult who belonged from France and got radicalized in 2014.

Imane actually could not commit the crime of a suicide attacker, as before that France police caught her. In February 2017, Imane stated in an interview that she met her recruiter online,

We met through Facebook and exchanged numbers, we chatted for six months, I really liked her. It was different from my friends, because we were so far away from each other, it meant we could talk about everything. I don't know whether I can say, it was she who indoctrinated me, I don't know how to describe it. I really never thought about dying, it was Kami (recruiter) who gave me ideas like that, little by little. I began hating life and wanting to become a martyr. Dying a martyr meant we could go to paradise with 70 people we knew and being able to take my whole family to paradise too. I started to become obsessed with the idea.

Imane's motives could be were religious ideology as the reasons. Imane worked in this role till 2014 and her role can be considered as forefront. Imane stated in the interview about the suicide mission that she was given and how she was feeling about it and also stated about the repentance or self- realization that she was having after being arrested. "That was it to take the weapons and go kill people, I agreed to carry out the suicide mission, two days before I was arrested. That arrest is what saved my life..." "When you are 17 you shouldn't be prepared to die for extremist ideas and it's not through Facebook that you learn Islam."

Case Study Three: Shamima Begum

Shamima Begum's made into headlines as she fled to Syria from London in 2015, along with her two friends. Begum's case is still in the headlines because of her appeal to go back to London which is declined by the UK government and recently her citizenship was also stripped by the government. Begum was an adolescent who was recruited online to move to Syria to become an ISIS bride which is a passive role. There was an interview with Begum on February 17, 2019, which covered about her motives and radicalization,

Interviewer: What is it about Islamic state that attracted you? What did you like about it?

Begum: The way they showed you can go, they will take care of you, you can have your own family there you can do anything; you are living under Islamic law.

Interviewer: Did you know what Islamic state were doing when you left for Syria because they beheaded people, there were executions.

Begum: I knew about all those things, and I was okay with it at first because I started to become religious just before I left, you know what I heard that Islamically that is all allowed so I was okay with it.

Interviewer: And you didn't question that?

Begum: No.

Interviewer asked Begum if she could be considered as a dangerous person, to which

Begum replied,

They don't have any evidence against me doing anything dangerous. When I went to Syria, I was just a housewife in the time of four years, stayed home to care about him to care of my kids. I never did anything dangerous, I never spread propaganda and I never encouraged people became Syrian, so it only have proof that I did anything that is dangerous.

Interviewer: What exactly prompted a 15-year-old girl to go to Syria?

Begum: During the time I left you know it was all over the news and stuff and like a lot of videos were coming out and I the videos on the internet and I just kind of attracted me to them. They attract a lot of people.

Interviewer: Do you think you made a mistake coming here in Islamic State?

Begum: In a way yes, but I don't regret it as it has changed me as a person, it's made me stronger, tougher, you know, I married my husband I wouldn't find someone like him back in the UK, I had my kids, you know I had a good time there just that the things got hard, and I couldn't take anymore.

On contrary to this interview, on September 15, 2021, Begum spoke again about her motive to join ISIS during an interview,

The people I was speaking to online, they created an image of a paradise an Islamic paradise you know, and they pressured me very hard into coming, they made me feel bad for wanting to stay in the UK or with my family who weren't practicing at that time and they took advantage of me because I was young.

Case Study Four: Sally Jones aka Jihadi Jones or Umm Hussain al-Britani

Sally Jones was another UK recruited women who decided to join ISIS in her middle age.

Jones came from a middle-class socioeconomic background who changed her religion to join ISIS. Sally was also recruited online who played the role of a recruiter and a leader of female

battalion. Jones was active in this role till 2019. Though, Jones motives were not found to be clear but it can be assumed that it might be mid-life crisis as Sally was 45 when she married her recruiter, who was 20 years old. In 2014, Jones posted online, “You Christians all need beheading with a nice blunt knife and stuck on the railings at Raqqa... Come here I’ll do it for you!”

Jones once wrote (n.d.), “I know what I’m doing. Paradise has a price and I hope this will be the price for Paradise,” On May 25, 2016, Jones allegedly wrote on Twitter, “To be honest I wouldn’t go into Central London through June... or even July well to be honest I wouldn’t go there at all especially by Tube.

Further Tweets (n.d.) made statements such as “England... Boom” and “London-Glasgow-Wales Boooooom!” In September, 2015 Jones threatens the US military personnel, publishing 100 soldiers personal information in a “kill list”, she tweeted about it, “2nd kill list released on 9-11 of 100 US military- please retweet” [Tweet].

Case Study Five: Listyowati

Listoyowati is an Indonesian woman who joined ISIS in 2018. Listyowati was in her twenties when joined the organization who belonged from a low socioeconomic status. The main role that Listyowati performed was of a funder and buying of weapons, which was a passive role. Lisotoyowati was recruited online as her motives involved religious ideology and also revenge because she became angry over Syrian war, which can be understood clearly through her interview which was published on July 30, 2022. In this interview Listyowati was seen sharing about her childhood, her role in organization, her motive to join the organization and her radicalized thinking,

During junior high school, I lived far away from home. I attended an Islamic boarding school in Mangkang. I was very conservative when I was young. I didn’t know about the shopping mall; I didn’t know about karaoke. I didn’t know about those things at all. When I grew up, I decided I wanted to have some savings.

The first time I touch got a touch screen mobile phone when I was in Hong Kong. Honestly, I didn't even know how to create a Facebook profile back then, so my friend made it for me. I started searching for women who wore a hijab and a burqa and men with Islamic attributes, and I started adding them as friends. I was still innocent back then. There were Muslim people from Syria, and I was interested in them. We Muslims are like one body. So, if a part of our body is hurt, we naturally feel it as well. When I heard about Syria about the end of the world, how do I put it. About the reward for people who carry out Islamic Sharia there. It became a dividing force for me, and it made me angrier. Seeing their struggle drove me crazy, I felt more than angry. It made me shed tears nonstop. I felt bad for them, it really affected me. I wanted to know more about it.

There was one Mujahidah from there who inspired me. Since his country had been bombed and the women had been harassed, he chose to work for God instead. He chose to be a suicide bomber. He chose this rather than living in that lonely environment. Instead of a lifestyle where he can play, hangout or have fun with his friends. That didn't suit him.

Interviewer asked Listyowati about Mujahidia's whereabouts, to which she replied, "He was in Syria. He was still very young; I think he was 19 years old, but he had a strong mind. He dared to fight the enemies. That's what inspired me." Drawn to ISIS propaganda Listyowati started to send regular money to another Indonesian, Mr. Arif, who was also an ISIS convert. In 2020, Mr. Arif was arrested by the police and from weapons, jihadi reading materials were found. Along with that a high-powered firearm was found which belonged to Listyowati which was provided by Arif, "I had dared to order a small gun. Mr. Arif ordered me another one because I didn't like the previous one, after I tried it. So, he offered me a long riffle (M-16 semi-automatic rifle)."

Arif's phone calls were found which implicated Listyowati and she too was arrested, "If we die there (Syria), it means we are a martyr. We won't feel hurt, it is as if we are bitten by a mosquito, we won't feel the pain."

Case Study Six: Marifah

Marifah is an Indonesian women who also joined ISIS in 2018 through an online recruiter. Marifah's role in the organization was that she was a member in a social media

community, who had a purpose was to provide funds and training for people who wanted to be attackers. Marifah was also responsible for near fatal attack on Indonesia's then security minister, Wiranto. Marifah was in her thirties when joined the organization and was married twice. Marifah's case is a strong case as the motive to join ISIS was different than others, hence a new typology can be created out of this. The motive was to escape from dysfunctional and violent personal life and to vent out aggression and frustration and in that process Marifah took the help of social media to post rebelliously. Marifah's traumatic life was understood more through her interview on July 30, 2022, in which she describes details about her personal life to her involvement in the fatal attack. The attack on Indonesia's then security minister, Wiranto was carried by a 21-year-old lady and her husband. After the attack they were arrested on scene, spelling trouble for Marifah,

I didn't have any idea that I would be arrested at that time because I felt everything was safe. However, I noticed that I was being followed when I was dropping off the kids. That's when I realized it must be related with Abu Rara (husband of 21 years old). It's because I know him personally. I didn't know about it (the attack) at all. I wasn't involved in it.

As Marifah claimed that she wasn't aware about it, the authorities claimed proof of her involvement. Evidence showed her connection to other attacks, but Marifah claimed that the sharing of funds was simply an act of kindness,

When there is a friend who shares stories with me that he is sick or sad because doesn't have money. If I have enough money at that time, I'll use whatever I have left in my budget to help them. My purpose is just to help them. Not just Abu Rara I have also done that for other people.

Interviewer: If you don't mind, I want to ask if your current husband is your second marriage?

Marifah: Yes

Interviewer: What about your first one?

Marifah: Sometimes he hit me.

Interviewer: I see. So, you were physically abused by your first husband?

Marifah: Yes, I ran away from my first husband. When a woman feels hurt, she sometimes does whatever she feels like doing. Maybe I behaved like that because of my

problems at home. My husband was aggressive, so I wanted to relieve myself by taking my anger out on something else.

Interviewer: I see. You were being rebellious and stressed out?

Marifah: Right, I became rebellious. Since I was scared to act on it in real life. I released it on social media madly.

Interviewer: As much as I know, it is normal for humans to get emotional, and we need to release it.

Marifah: Right. However, other people might take advantage of it for their purposes that emotion, that you want to vent.

Case Study Seven: Mhae

Mhae belongs from Philippines who joined ISIS in 2018. Mhae was in twenties when joined the organization. However, Mhae claimed that she did not know about that she was a wife of a leading terrorist commanders at that time.

I was so scared as I felt it was not just my husband that was being hunted, it was also me, because if they find me, they will also find my husband. And I eventually accepted his new life and my new life being, the enemies of the military and the enemies of the government. If we came to town, we would stay at a secret place they don't know about. I then started supporting them by trying to smuggle food and medicine and sometimes even ammunition. Sometimes the checkpoints are very strict, but they are more lenient towards women.

According to Mhae's narrative, it became clear on how she was not motivated to become a part of the organization but then in sometime how she became radicalized and played the role of supporter. As after some time Mhae's husband died which changed the whole financial situation. With no income and pursued by the security forces, Mhae had no choice but to sacrifice herself for the cause of the group, but she was captured. In jail, Mhae was scared and isolated which could have made her potentially vulnerable for further radicalization. But then met a group which focuses on radicalized women who become full-fledged terrorists. It restored Mhae back by providing job opportunities and a chance to return to her community. Mhae stated that in same interview,

Meeting you (deradicalized group) has had a very deep impact on my life. It was so difficult to adjust to being a single parent but when I met you, you gave me the change

that I wanted so badly. Now I feel free and with that I realize my value. The reintegration program made me realize that even as a single parent and widow of Abu Sayyaf leader, I can still be of use.

Case Study Eight: Tareena Shakil aka The Towie Jihadi

Tareena Shakil case is a strong case because of the motive through which she got radicalized. Shakil became motivated to join ISIS because of the loneliness she was feeling in her life. As per her narratives, Shakil wanted a fresh start in life, hence decide to move to Syria from the UK. Shakil belongs from an affluent family in Birmingham. In 2014, Shakil was in her twenties when decided to move because of online radicalization. Shakil did not had any role in organization because she stayed for brief period of time. That is when she realized that the place was not meant for her and was soon evacuated by the UK government. On February 7, 2023, an interview was released of her from a news channel where Shakil described her whole journey in detail. At this point Shakil served three years in prison and attended de-radicalization program.

Interviewer: You had a pretty western upbringing, you were a fan of spice girls, you liked watching Tower, you had a Saturday job at Morrisons but then in 2014 everything changed, and this began online so just explain what happened?

Tareena: So, it was at a time when I was in a really unhappy place due to a breakdown in a relationship and I was generally feeling really lost really due to the breakdown of the relationship. I didn't feel like I had any direction in life, and I didn't know where life was going because life as I thought that it was going to be had been really taken away from me and due that everything was going on that left me feeling very vulnerable and through the vulnerability I was unfortunately groomed online.

Interviewer: So, you had a happy childhood, and you loved learning spice girls songs, Saturday job and all that sort of stuff and yet this relationship issue but aside from that quite happy life so how did it happen, where did it happen? Do you remember the first approach?

Tareena: I had reactivated social media because it was at the time when the fundraising for Palestine was going on and me and my friends would look for like marches and how to support the Palestine course and I remember coming across the profiles that were, if people stood in front of a black flag so I initially assumed that they were in Palestine and the communication started from there.

Interviewer: How did the communication start?

Tareena: I sent the first message which was are you in Palestine? Is everything okay? How are things there? And I received a message saying we are not in Palestine, and I was like where are you and they were like we are in Syria fighting and I didn't know anything about it which then I inquired about it.

Interviewer: What appealed to you from that life that made you want to leave everything you knew?

Tareena: As I said I was in a really vulnerable place I felt very isolated from friends and family and through the process of grooming I was kind of offered a sense of belonging and a chance to start a new life and through the grooming process we were always told that you know if you die in England you are going to go to hell and you need to make hijarah so that was more of an appeal of making Islamic migration and as well and I am really isolated from friends, family, I feel lonely, don't know which direction my life's going in, the direction I thought its going in, it's not happening that way. Maybe as silly as it sounds my happy ever after is in Syria maybe that is where I belong.

Interviewer: How did you after reaching there think that it was dangerous? What brought to your attention?

Tareena: Because we would see walking around with guns and initially when I first got there, I wasn't exposed to any bombs being dropped because we were on the outskirts of Raqqa but as I got further into my time there we were amongst bombings and things like that really gunshots.

Interviewer: You were arrested, you ended up being in prison six years, you serve three years of that time because you go to this de-radicalization program. Did you feel that you needed it? Or did that help? How did that work?

Tareena: Initially I didn't think I needed it, I thought I can just carry on with my life, I just wanted to put everything behind me and carry on but as I was going through it, I realized that I needed this and included working with psychologists, counseling and things like that and like I said it wasn't until I was actually participating in it that I realized this is actually helping me I really needed a chance to speak to people I really needed these conversations.

Interviewer: Did you realize then that I was radicalized, and I did begin to think in different way?

Tareena: I realized the first time about being radicalized and groomed online when I was going through my court proceedings because there were other women that had given accounts that were exactly the same as mine, in terms of how they go over to Syria, how they were groomed online the kinds of things that were said to them and that was the first time, I actually remember it thinking, oh my God this woman's account is almost exactly the same as mind the things that she was told before she ran away and that was the moment that it really hit me and I was like wow so I was groomed."

Tareena: I wouldn't have done it if it wasn't for the grooming process. Nobody ever just wakes up and says that I run away to Syria today, no it happens because of the grooming process and when you really think about it and think wow it's something somebody has actually put their mind to it and its their task to prey on other people's vulnerability, it's not right. When I first realized that I was radicalized, I felt disgusted because I had not realized that that's what it was.

Interviewer: Could you have been stopped if someone in your family asked what you are doing tonight? And leads on to the question of if someone in your family believes this is the case can they be stopped?

Tareena: I think in certain situations you ask yourself if I had made it aware to my family which I think is why I didn't make them aware I was very secretive about it, I didn't tell anyone I was going to Syria yeah because we are already close family so it would have inevitability stopped me. In most case I would say yes but unfortunately, I have seen or read about cases where even when families have notified whatever organization it may be it wasn't enough to stop and help but in most cases it would.

Case Study Nine: Sam Sally aka Sam El Hassani

Sam Sally belonged from Indiana, USA before she went to Syria to become a part of ISIS. Sally was a married woman in her thirties from an affluent family who joined the organization in 2015. Sally changed her religious beliefs because of her husband, who was a Muslim man named Moussa, originally belonged from Morocco. According to Sally's narratives, Moussa started to believe in ISIS's ideology and that became a driving force for her. Sally worked as a role of a supporter to her husband till 2017. In 2017, Moussa died in an airstrike and Sam and her kids fled and was taken into custody by Kurdish forces. In 2018, Sam and her children were put in military flight and taken back to the US. Sam's kids (Matthew and his sister) were placed in a child protective services and Sam was put in county jail. On December 15, 2015, there was a documentary released on Sam's experience named, Return from ISIS. In that documentary, lot many things are covered but most importantly, interviews with Sam are there which were taken in different time periods. For instance, when Sam was in custody by Kurdish forces or when she was in county jail. The interviews covered the intimate details of Sam's married life, motives to join ISIS, roles, and other things.

Interviewer: How did an American lady end up in Syria with ISIS?

Sally: I don't know where to start answering this question. I met my husband, Moussa. About a year after we met each other, we got married. We'd been seeing each other, and we were living together but we weren't married which shows you he was not a strict Muslim.

Matthew (Sam's son) was around five years old when Moussa became his stepfather.

Moussa was from Morocco, came to the US for study but stayed on to work in the family business, a shipping company. Sam and Moussa had a daughter together.

Sally: For five years we had a great life. We worked together; we did everything together. He was relaxed. He was really good in giving me attention and kids attention. There was not one dollar he wouldn't spend on us. After a while, he became bored, I think, with his life.

... So, my husband was like okay, we are going to get the money together for this and he got busy. He's selling his expensive watches, he sold his Porsche, sold the BMW."

"So, the family sold everything and travelled to Turkey to Moussa's brother home carrying tens thousands of money and gold. After two weeks, they headed to the border to Syria.

...I didn't know what was happening. I assumed that I was being lied to. In my bag I had all of our cash, all of my jewelry, all of our passports. He took my daughter and started to go away; he knew I was going to follow him. What am I going to do? I saw my husband cross through a fence and this time my heart was beating so fast, I know what's happening now and I am thinking okay I will just make it to the other side, take my bag and my kid, and walk back across again, you know it's just that simple. But it wasn't that simple, we made it across, I followed him.

Interviewer: There will be people who think you are an American who was with Arguably the world's worst terrorist organization, you should go to prison, what would you say to that?

Sally: They could live in my shoes for a day, they would understand why I don't care if I go to prison or not. If they want to put me in prison, they can put me in prison for a year or 50 years. As long as I get to see my kids and I know my kids are good.

Another interview when Sam was in jail,

Interviewer: Did you know you were going to join ISIS?

Sally: No.

Interviewer: Did you support Moussa and Abdel Hadi to join ISIS?

Sally: Not to support them, no.

Interviewer: What do you mean by that?

Sally: I mean I didn't support joining them no. Did I support my husband in his stupid ventures? Yes. But if I knew he was doing that, I wouldn't have supported it.

Interviewer: You spent years saying that you are innocent of everything and by doing this (Accepting plea agreement) you have admitted that you are guilty of terrorism, right?

Sally: Well, it states that I am guilty of supporting my husband. It states specifically that my husband and his brother were ISIS member or wanted to be ISIS members.

Interviewer: And that means you knowing provided support for ISIS, who you know have committed some of the worst atrocities we have seen in decades, and you have supported that.

Sally: You are putting me in a really difficult spot here. I mean I don't know how to answer your question as far as my plea agreement goes, yes, I did. If I don't admit to exactly what they are saying in the plea agreement, then they will take the plea agreement

back away from me, okay? So, yes, I knew, I knew it. I knew exactly that he was going to fight for ISIS and that he was a terrorist.

Interviewer: So, you have supported terrorism then?

Sally: Yep

Case Study Ten: Lisa Smith

Lisa used to live in Dublin, Ireland and worked in military before radicalized through an online recruiter. Lisa changed her religious beliefs as well and joined ISIS in 2015 and worked in her role till 2019. Smith never accepted her role as a weapon trainer to children even in her narratives but it was believed that Lisa had a forefront role in the organization. The motive to join ISIS was because of religious ideologies. According to Smith, a decade of corps (military) left her depressed lost in drinking and drugs and searching for answers which she found in radical Islam. The following quote is from one of Smith's interviews in 2019,

...they said you come, you see the propaganda, the videos and you want the Islam you want to come and live in the Muslim country in a Muslim environment. No music, no smoking, no drinking, no prostitution, not anything like this and you want a clean life like this. This is what you want. But sometimes it's not like this.

The following narratives are from the same interview, "I want myself and actually kind of it like as in a Muslim country not like a group or a brutality group."

Interviewer: Now do you accept that is what Islamic state was?

Smith: Yeah, I think there was another fatality in it, you know.

Interviewer: Did they ask you to fight?

Smith: No, not even if I want you to go fight then they wouldn't even let me.

Interviewer: And you never picked up a gun?

Smith: No, I had my daughter at that time you know.

Interviewer: They must have asked you to do it?

Smith: No.

Interviewer: You trained girls aged maybe 9 to 12?

Smith: It's not true.

Interviewer: So why do those girls say, they don't just say that they learn, they say that it was you that taught them.

Smith: Bring these girls to me personally, I sit here, and they can see my face and we'd speak, and we will seek the truth.

Interviewer: Why do you think they are saying that about you? It is because of military background?

Smith: I don't know. And no, because not a lot of people don't know I was in the military.

In another interview that also happened in 2019,

Interviewer: You have been teaching children in weapons?

Smith: I have never trained anyone, I never worked, they never seen anything and its very interesting you have seen these kids; I didn't know even who these people are. They don't even know my real name, they don't even know, I don't even speak Arabic like, how can I work with them? Does they speak English? These two children speak English? I don't know what you are talking about.

I don't hold the same beliefs as them, do you understand. I came to a caliphate which Islam meant to be implemented now I have different beliefs you know than the majority of people maybe even the doubling, I mean, and I think a lot of people in the Islamic state they come from all over world, they have different beliefs, they have different understanding of Islam, and you know for me it's a big ball of confusion. "...I have never seen these radicalized videos, I have heard about it but I heard its not true, it's just said it's just people lying about it."

Interviewer: What you saw that made you think that okay this isn't Islamic state territory?

Smith: I actually didn't see anything just to be honest I didn't see anything I have heard stories, I have heard more stories since I have come to the camp and women speaking or towards my end in my time like you know I met some sisters and they would tell me some horrific stories of what Islamic state meant and that's how I learned mostly like I didn't really see anything because I was home all the time.

What did I do? I just joined Islamic state and I am a monster? How can I be a monster, I came here to Islam state and I didn't do anything, a lot of people came here to Islamic state and got depressed, oppressed and got tortured in actual Muslim prisons, Muslims got tortured in Muslim prisons and they tried to run away and then got caught again and got into prison again and they are trying to go home and they can't go home because they are known as monsters and terrorists and they didn't do anything wrong.

Case Study Eleven: Kimberly Polman

Kimberly Polman was a middle-aged Canadian woman who fled to Syria in 2015.

Poleman changed her religious beliefs due to her traumatic life, which was also, the reason of joining ISIS. Polman met her recruiter online who persuade her in joining the organization through the things she was missing all this time. In Syria, Polman had a role of a nurse. In February 2020, one of Polman's interview came out in which she was found to be explaining the fact that she did not know about ISIS completely before moving to Syria,

Interviewer: I am just trying to explain to you that it's just, it's very a motive issue and of course ISIS committed some of the most heinous acts.

Kimberly: They did, we are still finding out things that they did, and we are in shock even finding out what they did because we didn't even know.

Interviewer: Its interesting how you say they rather than because I think people at home will think that well you were ISIS you have joined ISIS.

Kimberly: Never, I wasn't before I came it was known they tried to kill me there because I wouldn't conform.

Kimberly: Everybody asks didn't you see the beheading videos; the problem is that in North America every time I clicked on any links, they weren't there anymore so no to be honest with you I didn't see them.

Another interview which happened in March 2020, Polman shared her personal life from her childhood and to the traumas attached with it and about her role of nurse in ISIS,

If I was going to die at least I could die helping children. Its illogical that you are entering a war zone that you don't know anything about. I felt if I did something good it would overwrite the bad that had happened.

“Addiction is very brutal on the entire family,” Polman mentioned as her father was addicted to amphetamines in medical school and got sick with leukemia when Polman was 14. He died when she was 19 after he asked her to help in his suicide.

According to Kimberly's narratives, she fell into troubled relationships and was raped more than once. By age 20, Polman was the unwed mother of three small children. Trying to find her way in life and terrified of falling into substance abuse like her father. Kimberley was drawn to the conservative nature of Islam and what seemed to her as the “safety” and close-knit warmth of Islamic communities. In order to avoid substance abuse Kimberly joined this community so that she could protect her children from her childhood traumas. However, seeking safety among Muslims didn't turn out as she hoped. Kimberly married a Kuwaiti man who took her and her children overseas and subjected them to violence.

After escaping from him and divorcing, Kimberly sought help at home from a Canadian imam, “The imam started counseling me and my children, while her family blamed me for taking the kids overseas and for what happened.” Polman stated that the imam seemed so supportive, “He invited me for picnics with his wife and children. He was so nice and friendly, and he could take over talking with my husband, so I wouldn't have to.” Then one day on her way to meet

him, “I got lost and he came and got me, I followed him, and he led me into a forest. Nine hours later that day I left the community.” The imam also raped Kimberly. “He’s been convicted now. It turned out he’d been a serial rapist,” according to Polman.

When I didn’t show up for therapy, [my therapist] asked me what happened. They brought in a rape specialist [who] advised me not to testify because of who he was and who I was, better to focus on healing. I think he did get convicted. This happened maybe a year before I left.

Like many rape survivors facing the trial of their rapist, Kimberly found herself descending into a spiral of post-traumatic stress, “I started failing at a university when his trial began. I had a hard time focusing, stopped sleeping, nightmares from my ex-husband.” Speaking of the flashbacks Polman recalled, “It was like a DVD that wouldn’t shut off. I couldn’t make it stop.” Speaking of the many times she was raped, Kimberly stated, “Sometimes I think I have a ‘F*’ on my back.”

It was during this time that Kimberly fell into the hands of an ISIS recruiter. He asked me, ‘You are not really the kind of woman who divorces. Why did you?’ Kimberly recalls, “It’s not the subject you want to discuss with anyone. It’s what you want to forget. It will never get easier. I always feel guilty. I will always hate myself.”

Kimberley told that the reasons on why she followed the recruiter was because, “We are taught in Islam that your husband is the emir of your life, the protector,” “...Come where you are loved. Your children don’t even see you. You have skills. You shouldn’t be alone.” Polman further stated,

He didn’t know, but I was actively suicidal. I was on medication from a psychiatrist. It was just sleep medication and it made me groggy. I asked for actual help, [but the psychiatrist] said, ‘It’s \$700 per hour.’ That was more than [I could afford.] Kimberly recalls, “My Facebook was being flooded with Syrian and Palestinian children.

It was getting worse and worse. I couldn't deal with it." "...I felt guilty that I was living a good life, so I followed a link on Facebook to Twitter," "...I had never had a Twitter account. It was there I met him. After a year of marriage, after he came to Syria, I remember what he said. I remember they were defining moments for me," Kimberly spent 3 years in detention center, in 2022 she was released by Canadian government and brought back to her country.

Case Study Twelve: Hoda Muthana

Hoda Muthana was a 17-year-old girl from Alabama, USA, when radicalized online to become an ISIS bride. Muthana belonged from a high socioeconomic status before moved to Syria in 2014. The motive attached was religious ideology and the need to seek freedom. One of Mutana's tweets in the past was, "Go on drive by and spill all of their blood or rent a big truck and drive all over them veterans, patriots, Memorial Day, kill them." In February 2019, Muthana's explained her driving force to join ISIS,

Interviewer: Do you remember waking up in the morning and thinking today is the day.

Hoda: I was very active online and ever heard of women going and then I thought to myself that I need to go.

Hoda: I had a good relationship with my family, but I wanted a more Americanized life. I just wanted to go out I wanted to have like friends go to places they didn't get any of it, the only way out for me just to become practicing.

Interviewer: To become more religious?

Hoda: More religious yeah.

Hoda: When I was 17, I had an account on twitter and we were all just normal Muslims speaking together and like we would just even rap online together, and I heard that the Caliphate was just announced, I thought it was obligatory upon me to go.

In January 2023, Muthana spoke about her repentance for joining the organization,

Of course, I regret coming here you know, of course, if I could take it back I would do it in a heartbeat you know, and I have never agreed with the ideology of ISIS and I have never sympathized with their attacks and with their agendas and stuff.

Case Study Thirteen: Tooba Gondal aka Umm Muthanna al-Britannia

Tooba Gondal was a propogandist and recruiter in ISIS, who originally belonged from the UK. In 2014, Gondal was in her twenties, when she fled to Syria from a high socioeconomic

society. Gondal was recruited online and worked in that role till 2018. There is no information that supports the motive behind joining this organization. There was an audio recording of Gondal from the year 2013 in which she explained how she used to be before radicalized,

Firstly, I will give some background on how I used to think and behave, without revealing my sins too much. Year 9 [age 13 to 14] where I started to, you know, go totally off track. I started smoking, got into the habit where it became an addiction. And then hanging around with bad company and guys and doing all sorts of haram [forbidden] things. But it wasn't to such a bad extent until I got to college. Then I had that freedom, you know? I wore whatever I wanted. As time went on it was getting worse – piercings – without even thinking what I was doing. You know, there was no haya [modesty], no limit.

In the recording Gondal notes that her family are practicing Muslims.

But I was never home to realize this; I never connected with them. I believed in Allah and that was it. Nothing resembling a Muslim. Now I realize, of course, I was lost. Every time I thought about Islam I would put it to the back of my mind, and every time I thought about covering up, I would put it to the back of my mind and think, 'Nah, that's not me, that's not who I am.

In November 2014, Gondal tweeted (n.d.) the following, "Alhamdulillah for Islam, how lost and astray I was before I had this blessing in my life, and how everything makes sense..." "If you feel down, turn to Allah before you turn to any human for support, or shall I say...any social site for attention? Allah must'ann" "I need Allah's guidance more than I need anything else in this dirty dunya" [Tweet].

On December 7, 2014, Gondal tweeted, "There are only two states: The Islamic State and the Kufr (infidels) State. Which state are you on?" [Tweet].

In January 2015, Gondal tweeted, "Hey UK security, how do you feel that your citizen left your filthy country whilst listening to Salil as-Sawarim on the plane? Pathetic." (Salil as-Sawarim) is a jihadi a cappella nasheed (song) popular among ISIS supporters. [Tweet].

On March 1, 2015, Gondal posted two pictures of herself cloaked in a burqa and brandishing an AK-47. It was captioned: "Living the life of real freedom." Gondal recognized

herself as, "Leaving behind everything in Britain... crossing into Dawlah [ISIS-controlled territory]...to being married to a mujahid [jihadist fighter]... to now wife of shahid [martyr] ALL under a year." Gondal sadistically applauded the attacks in Paris last November 2014, "Wish I could have seen the hostages being slaughtered last night with my own eyes. Would have been just beautiful."

In September 2015, Gondal tweeted, "Sisters, if you're serious about Hijrah [migration to the Islamic State] yet stuck in Dar ul Kufr ["land of disbelief"] for whatever reason, know there is a way out for you. Contact me privately." [Tweet].

On March 1, 2016, Gondal tweeted, "Muhajirat muaskar [an all-female training camp] is the best thing so far for me loving it! Alhamdullilah ["Praise to God"]... firearm training is wajib [duty] in the land of Jihad." [Tweet].

There is a documentary named, *The Matchmaker*, by Benedetta Argentieri premiered at the Venice Film Festival. The film is about Gondal, who, in her incarnation as Umm Muthanna Al-Britannia, sought to enlist foreign women and girls to Isis, where they would become the wives of the male fighters. The entire project is a riveting case study in the psychology of denial and dissimulation: Gondal portrays herself as a victim, flagrantly lies and contradicts herself.

Case Study Fourteen: Khadija

Khadija is a Syrian woman who joined ISIS in 2014. Khadija was in her twenties when approached by a recruiter online. Religious beliefs were Khadija's motivation to join the organization. Khadija worked less than a year in the role of patroller, who used to patrol the streets of Raqqa to keep a check on women. Khadija decided to leave the brigade when she received the pressure for marriage from ISIS. On October 6, 2014, during an interview Khadija revealed about her role and why she left the organization and also showed the repentance and

fear of being radicalized again. Following are the quotes from the interview,

At the start, I was happy with my job. I felt that I had authority in the streets. I thought I was frightening people but then I started to ask myself where I am, where I am going, felt time is dragging me someplace ugly. "...We patrol the streets, if she a woman who is not wearing the proper Sharia clothing we grab her, sometimes they be lashed." "...The worst thing I saw was a man getting his head hacked off in front of me."

So it was at this point, I said enough. After all that I had already seen and all the time I stayed silent, telling myself, 'We're at war, then it will all be rectified. But after this, I decided no, I have to leave.

It has to be gradual, so that I don't become someone else. I am afraid of becoming someone else. Someone who swings, as a reaction in the other direction, after I was so entrenched in religion, that I reject religion completely.

Case Study Fifteen: Twins, Zahra and Salma Halane

Zahra and Salma Halane are twins from the UK who fled to join ISIS in 2014. The twins were adolescents when moved to Syria to become the brides and the propogandists. The twins were recruited online and served in that role till 2019. The motives of joining ISIS is still not clear but it seems religious ideology. Following are tweets that are posted by the twins in 2014, "Are you coming to Dawlah [ISIS]? They will train you up. You will meet boys from England, China, Ireland, Sweden, FROM EVERYWHERE. Want to see my Kalash [Kalashnikov]?? Ha haha." [Tweet]. Zahra added, in another message to her family (n.d.), "We have a caliph, and we must obey him. He said everyone that doesn't come is kuffar [a non-believer]. I had to fulfill my commitment and so will you." [Tweet]. "Allah, the merciful, placed something in mine and Salma's hearts that we came to hate the infidels [in Britain] – to such a degree we could not even bear to look at them." (n.d.), [Tweet]. "My best advice to you is to get the whole family to make hijrah [travel] to the Islamic State." (n.d.), [Tweet]. When in training, one of the Halane twins tweeted a picture (n.d.), captioned: "Fun day training for self-defense in the Islamic State with humble sisters." Zahra tweets included. "I support the executions of Syrian soldiers. It's self-defense" [Tweet].

Then on August 23, 2020, during an interview Zahra and Salma stated,

Zahra: On my phone you know, Instagram and this and I was reading about Islam you have to in 2014, you have to come to Sham and help Syrian people.

Salma: I never thought of leaving, things were good. We had a WHO whole checking me and my sister, but the situation became very bad, the water was yellow, I am suffering, I have injuries on me and my nephew and my sister. She has an injury on her head... We have nothing to do with Islamic State, I see myself as a victim. I am not happy about Islamic State.

Case Study Sixteen: Allison Fluke aka Umm Mohammad al-Amriki

Allison Fluke was in her middle age when joined ISIS. Fluke fled to Syria in 2014 from Kansas, USA. Before moving, Fluke had a settled life in America where she was a school teacher and a mother. Fluke changed her religious beliefs and became a leader of female battalion in ISIS. Allison worked in this role till 2019 and as other females, she was also radicalized online. The motives remains unclear as Fluke's narratives could not be found, however, according to Lyela Ekren (Fluke's daughter) who was also taken by Fluke to join ISIS and married by her rapist at the age of 13 by fluke, the motive was "lust for power and control." Lyela Ekren also stated the following, "I want people to see what kind of person she was," "...She abandoned me in Raqqa with my rapist," "...My mother is a monster very skilled in manipulation and controlling her emotions to her advantage." "...My mother is a monster without love for her children, without an excuse for her actions." "...She has the blood, pain, and suffering of all of her children on her hands." Though Allison's statement in the court was, "I never fought myself, I never shot or fired any bullet."

US attorney Raj Parekh stated, "There is nothing in her background that can explain her conduct, which was driven by fanaticism, power, manipulation, delusional invincibility, and extreme cruelty." "...She brainwashed young girls and trained them to kill."

Fluke admitted that she continued her affiliation with ISIS until May 2019, ultimately turning herself into local Syrian police in the summer of 2021. Though narratives from her could not be found. Fluke was transferred into U.S. custody on January 28, 2022, and now faces a maximum of 20 years in prison as a result of her plea.

Case Study Seventeen: Sophie Kasiki

Sophie Kasiki is a woman from France who fled to Syria after getting influenced from her three friends, who were radicalized and went to join ISIS all of a sudden. Sophie shared her experience, from her childhood to the motivating factors that led her to go to Syria and the struggle to come back to France in her memoir named, *In the shadow of Daesh*. Sophie went to Syria in 2015 because of the difficulties in her personal and professional life, for which she thought this might be a solution. Sophie also changed her religion to Islam much before going to Syria as she thought Islam could provide her some peace and because of changed religion, she made three friends who later influenced her to join ISIS. Sophie planned of serving the role of a nurse in Syria but couldn't after looking the condition of hospital.

Sophie was born in central Africa and had no memory of her father and when her mother also passed away Sophie went to France to live with her sister and her husband. Sophie graduated from college, married her boyfriend, had a kid but soon Sophie and her husband grew apart but were living under the same roof. Sophie used to teach French to Arabic people. As mentioned, Sophie left her religion as it wasn't giving her happiness and,

It was Islam that would fill it. I didn't meet a persuasive imam or visionary preacher. No firebrand crossed my path, no one sought me out to show me the way or brainwash me. The religion wasn't handed down or imposed on me. I chose it alone. My journey contradicts the notion that proselytizing imams are at work to recruit the good people of France. I met my first imam after I'd already decided to become a Muslim, and I am not the only one.

Sophie met with the boys (who tried to radicalize her), three of them were friends and were Muslim. They fled to Syria in September 2014, out of nowhere.

Idriss started to call me... Souleymane and Mohammed started to write to me too. Bit by bit, I became the messenger between them and their families. According to the boys wishes, I tried to reassure their parents by giving them positive news. I didn't realize I became the part of the well-established propaganda system.

Our conversations became more and more personal. I could talk to them about my problems at work. It was easy and came naturally. They knew the places and they remembered my colleagues. They could easily imagine what we were coming up against. It was that straightforward. It felt good to confide in them.

Little by little, it started to go further than the boundaries of work. I don't know how I started to bring up the more personal subjects, which I am not usually in the habit to telling anyone. Later, a lot later, I'd be ashamed to remember this. For a long time, it would be impossible to admit that I'd trusted these boys. These kids.

We started talking about Syria,

You should see how beautiful the city is, Sophie. Its magical, said the boys.

But what about the war? The bombing? Sophie said.

That's all bullshit. There's no bombing Raqqa, the situation is totally stable. The town is so beautiful. We have a big apartment, 120 m², with two living rooms. You should see it, Sophie, you wouldn't believe your eyes. The streets are full of trees and flowers, replied by the boys.

I will never see it because I'd never go of my free will to a country at war, Sophie said. War is far away. You don't even hear bombing here; we haven't heard any gunfire since we arrived. Nothing. You shouldn't believe what you read in the newspapers. Here, Muslims from all over the world live in peace. We have a purpose. We are useful, boys said,

... They started talking about a hospital, for women, A lot of families have fled, due to violence is Bashar, the Syrian president. So there's a lack of staff in the hospitals. For example, the big women's hospital in Raqqa, which cares for Syrian women from all over the country. A lot of foreigners come to help out, but there aren't enough of them. In the maternity ward, there are enormous amount of birds and not enough people to help them deliver.

But I am not a doctor, Sophie exclaimed.

They don't need doctors or nurses. There's a lack of motivated women to help the patients and to look after their kids. There are huge needs here, to which the boys replied this.

The more I talked to them, the more I listened to them, and the more I believed them. I was hearing it from the horses' mouth, after all. Who else knew that much about it? Who else had contact on the ground, in the middle of Raqqa, with whom they could talk so often? I felt chosen, important, and I took pleasure in storing the details in my mind. The idea took shape. I was at an impasse in life. The community center was bogged down with difficulties... At home my marriage was a deadlock... My nieces had grown up; soon they wouldn't need me anymore... My sister and I didn't speak much about personal issues.

From the start, before even planning anything, it was clear that whatever I did, Hugo (Sophie's four-year-old son) would be with me. There was no question of us being separated.

They'd contacted the persona in charge of the woman's hospital, who confirmed they needed all the help they could get. They knew a French woman who'd worked there, who didn't speak Arabic either. Even though I didn't have medical training, they'd find a way to make use of me.

Case Study Eighteen: Laura Passoni

Laura Passoni is a Belgian woman who moved to Syria in 2014 but soon realized that she had made a mistake. Passoni was in her thirties when decided to join ISIS as she was depressed with her life. Passoni was recruited online as others and approached by the recruiter when she was at the lowest and served the role of a bride till 2015. During Passoni's interviews in 2016, she quoted the following, "He played on my weaknesses. He told me that I could help the Syrian people, that I could be a nurse and be useful," "...He told me I could start my life all over again. He made me believe in dreams." "...It was really important for me to restart my life from zero because I was so depressed." "...Some had come to try to help, some were there for love, because they had followed a fighter," "...But there were plenty of women who were full of hatred. All they wanted to do was get a Kalashnikov and launch attacks." "...For Daesh I am a traitor because I left and I'm denouncing them. For Belgium, I am a terrorist because I joined them." "...Why women? Because we make babies and especially boys, the future cubs of the caliphate as they say. They need descendants,"

Case Study Nineteen: Collen LaRose aka Jihadi Jane

Collen LaRose is a woman who became a part of al-Qaeda in 2007. LaRose was in forties when joined the organization from Pennsylvania, USA. LaRose worked as an online recruiter till 2009 and she was herself recruited online by a radicalizer. LaRose's motivation to join the organization was because of her traumatic childhood that included sexual abuse by her biological

father. It resulted in her becoming a prostitute and all of this summed up in making her as a low-self esteemed person which retrieved after joining al-Qaeda. LaRose explained about it, in the documentary named, Jihadi Jane: The terrorist next door which was released in December 18, 2021. LaRose said, “I felt pride, I felt stronger like I had a mission, I had a goal for something that was important that needed to be done and I was going to be the one who do it.”

Interviewer: Colleen, in your life is there any other times where you felt important?

Colleen: not like that no. “...The first time I ran away, and I was like 13 it was after I moved from Michigan to Texas, so I just kept running away.”

I think I was 13. I have met this guy that we are at a restaurant. He knew a pimp and a pimp came in there one day saw me and we started talking and I just ended up going home with him and then he started me and doing all kinds of stuff. That's when I started doing drugs, I mean everything. I wanted to make a lot of money so that my pimp would be happy with me and when these men came to see me, I felt like I was undesirable, at that time it didn't click on me that this is terrible.

I remember one time when I was 7 comma he came to my bed and I guess he was touching me or whatever and he asked me have I ever been f*** and I told him no and I don't remember what happened after that, I just blacked out.

I remember one time when my mother and my stepdad was driving me and my sister my brother back to my real dad and his wife and I was in the back seat of the car and I just started to cry because I knew what was going to be waiting for me when I got there.

I consider everything in my life it's been a big adventure, and so it was just part of me growing up it's what I had to go through.

While LaRose was in prison, further stated in the documentary on how she became radicalized,

I was so much into Jihad that it all meant something to me, I mean I just wanted to accomplish this, “...Being in prison I reflected over my past and I realized that I used to be a pretty selfish person and I didn't show my appreciation to Kurt (ex-boyfriend) like I should have because I mean he did nothing wrong, that one regret that I have is that he didn't deserve what I did to him.

I went to Amsterdam, me and my boyfriend had some word or whatever we were drinking and he went to bed and I went downstairs to the bar and I was drinking some more and then I got on the elevator and there was a Middle Eastern guy on the elevator and me and him we decided to get our own room and we stayed together for a few couple few hours and then I went upstairs to my boyfriend, he went upstairs to his girlfriend. After I come back to America, I decided I was going to find another Middle Eastern man because I liked him. I joined different sites for Muslims from Arab, lounge Aram something and then was lima.com. I joined a couple other sites from Muslims. I started meeting different brothers and sisters online in different Muslim sites and they were

reaching me more about Islam and I made a lot of brothers and sisters and we always talking online mostly through YouTube. I was watching videos on YouTube, the thing that had an effect on me was the brutality I have seen against the Muslims. It would like to make me mad; I would see it and I would get upset, the blood, the bodies and the bait, the children and I mean there was just so much that the kids kept bombing them. The day I was watching the Zionists bombing and Palestinians and you hear the children screaming and crying and people all the women and the brothers and at the same time I was watching this on the internet, outside my window in the streets little kids were playing and having fun and laughing and I was thinking to myself, and nobody knows what's going on. I was hurt by what was happening and then I got real angry, and I decided that I hated it and wanted to do something to them, and I started to talk to other brothers and sisters who thought like me and then I went further and found other brothers who were into Jihad. "...I felt like I was living a double life and I wanted to commit to one of them and I committed to Jihad."

On the internet, LaRose posted a comment stating,

I am desperate to do something, somehow to help Ummah. Collen got a reply from a person named 'Black flag', I thought that he was like me, that he wanted to do something, make a difference. The person's reply was "I desire to become a martyr in the name of Allah, I tried twice but I wasn't successful. I will try until Allah make it easy for me." I thought he was a brother that was into Jihad like I was and he was somebody who had already tried to do couple of things to further the cause of Jihad and then he was in some sort of an army or whatever according to him and that he had fought for the Muslims but he did say that there was a house ready for me and brothers and sisters were there waiting for me and that all I needed to do was just to come there.

I met the brother eagle eye; he was an al-Qaeda operative. He had a page on YouTube, and I saw some of his videos and I liked his videos because they were about Jihad. He told me do I want to know about somebody who needs to be dealt with and I said who and he said that large growth needs to be killed and that he's done that, nobody's even slapped him for what he's done, and he needs to be killed. He told me because you want to know the crime that he did, and I said yeah. Then he told me that the brothers can't get close to him because he had got bodyguards all around him and that I could probably get close to him. I told him, I said yes, I will do it.

Case Study Twenty: Jamie Paulin Ramiez

Jamie Paulin Ramiez is from Colorado, USA and became a member of an Ireland based terrorist cell in 2009. Ramiez was in her thirties when recruited online by Collen LaRose. Ramiez changed her religion as well and became a part of this organization because of her past Trauma. Ramiez worked in the role of a supporter till 2010, who used to provide materials and resources to terrorists. Ramiez was also a part the documentary, *Jihadi Jane: The terrorist next door* which was released in December 18, 2021, in which discussed about the reason of being in

prison, her traumas related to married life and the process on how she was radicalized.

Interviewer: What did you think when you were in prison?

Ramiez: What did I think when I was in prison, why the hell to their ever go on that plane. So, but I can't change the past I mean are not allowed to say well if I would have done this this would have happened to say so I mean you just got to accept it it's the will of Allah. People laughed at me in my entire life so why I'm going to worry about it now. I was the main part of school when I have grown up sometimes, I'd be lonely I like wish I had friends but it's like it was something I was always used to because I grew up like that. I always had low self-esteem, I've had a hard time saying no to people, I like this want to please people, make people happy.

Interviewer: and why do you think you want these people so much?

Jamie: Because no one wanted to be my friend I wanted to have friends. I got married when I was 18.

Interviewer: What age was he?

Jamie: 33. He used to beat me up all the time, it was physical you know he hit me gave me black eyes, popped lips. One morning I woke up and I found a gun next to my head and he wasn't in the room hold stop he beat me up and so I ran out of the house and ran straight to the Police Department and got a restraining order put against him. After the divorce I never heard from him again. I had a couple of boyfriends after that nothing serious but then I met my son's father. His name was Alejandro. He was from Mexico. I got pregnant with my son down in Mexico. I was so excited I had finally had a baby. He was deported back to Mexico after some time.

Jamie: well, I wasn't going to get married again, I was through because married to divorce, married divorce, married divorced. More of it I just got tired of it why what, so I don't want to deal with that anymore I was happy, I had my little job, I am going to college, I had my own place, had my own car, had my son so I was making it. I would recommend newcomers and I watched videos of newcomers and eventually I ran into my codefendant. His screen name was the black flag. He sent me an e-mail through YouTube, originally, we talked about living in a non-Muslim country then he would send me the Jihad videos and then about a week or a week something around there he asked me to marry him.

He sent me an e-mail telling me that she needs to contact me. Colleen (Jihad Jane) and him had been communicating previously and me Colleen (Jihad Jane) communicated together.

Case Study Twenty-One: Ahlam Ahmad Al- Tamini

Tamini was an adolescent when recruited by HAMAS group in 2001. Tamini lived in Jordan, who was responsible for 2001 suicide bomber attack in a restaurant as she did the whole planning. Tamini worked in this role till September 2001 as she was arrested after that. The motive of Tamini is not clear but it seems to be because of religious ideology. Throughout

these years Tamini were interviewed to gather information about how she plot this attack and if she had any repentance of it, which became clear with her responses that she did not. In 2011, the following interview took place in which Tamini stated,

When I received the cell phone call, I didn't know the operation was going to be today. I was asked to come to Ramallah, when I arrived in Ramallah, I was surprised to see Mohammed (who helped plan the bombing), and Izzedine al-Masri, I saw them from far away, and we didn't talk. We just acknowledged one another through eye contact and from here we started the operation.

On Jaffa Street we started to talk. It was the first time I spoke with Izzedine al-Masri. I interpreted it as a real desire to be a martyr and to meet Allah. Izzedine al-Masri asked me just one question: are there religious Jews in the place where we are going to conduct the attack? That was his question, and I said yes, there are religious Jews there, and also other people. I had been to the area before; I knew there was a Jewish religious school near there. He asked me how many religious Jews would be there?

Interviewer: Why did he ask about religious Jews?

Tamini: Because the base of the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians is a religious struggle. When we came to the place, he looked at my eyes and I told him, 'There is no God other than the mighty Allah', he went on his way, and I went on my way.

Interviewer: Do you feel sorry?

Tamini: No, absolutely not. Why? For what?

In 2012, during another interview Tamini took pride over the role she played in Jerusalem bombing by stating,

I learned how to operate one of those explosive devices. I took it to one of the supermarket in our occupied Jerusalem, I placed it, activated it and left the place. The supermarket completely exploded.

In January 2014,

Interviewer: If you would carry out the attack today?

Tamini: Of course, I do not regret what happened. Absolutely not. This is the path. I dedicated myself to Jihad for the sake of Allah, and Allah granted me success. You know how many casualties there were [in the 2001 attack on the Sbarro pizzeria]? This was made possible by Allah. Do you want me to denounce what I did? That's out of the question. I would do it again today, and in the same manner.

In the same year, during another interview took place,

Interviewer: Who chose Sbarro (Pizza bombing place)?

Tamini: I did, for nine days I examined the place very carefully and I chose it after seeing the large number of patrons at the Sbarro restaurant. My mission was just to choose the place and to bring the Martyrdom-seeker (i.e., the suicide bomber). I made the general plan of the operation but carrying it out was entrusted to the Martyrdom seeker. I told

him to enter the restaurant, eat a meal, and then after 15 minutes carry out the Martyrdom seeking operation.

My job was to realize, for this Martyrdom seeker, the happy life that he wanted.

Interviewer: Didn't you think about the people who were in the restaurant? The children? The families?

Tamini: No

Interviewer: Do you know how many children were killed in the restaurant?

Tamini: Three children were killed in the operation, I think.

Interviewer: It was eight.

Tamini: Eight? Eight (Smiled).

In 2019, Tamini quoted to Al-Jazeera, which depicted that she was still radicalized, "Being in Jordan has given me strength," "Why are we considered to be terrorists? Why am I, Ahlam, considered to be a terrorist when I am part of a movement for freedom and national liberation?"

Case Study Twenty-Two : Darshika

Darshika was in her early twenties when joined LTTE. Darshika was from Columbo, Sri Lanka and came from a poor household. In 2007, she joined the organization to become a suicide bomber. The driving force was to take revenge of her father's death and trauma which highlighted in the 2007 documentary, 'My Daughter, The Terrorist'. Darshika had a friend with her throughout, who was also filmed in the documentary named, Puhachudar (who is next in this case study). Darshika was radicalized in-person by someone and worked sometime in the organization before becoming a suicide bomber. In documentary Darshika quoted the following,

We are fighting because we want our own homeland, Tamil Eelam. A country where people can live freely. That is why our leader is carrying out the struggle and we are proud to be its part. Outsiders have not seen our true face that is why they call us terrorists.

At one time I was always talking to the God. I wanted to be pure and live a life of celibacy. After my father's death and everything the army did, changed my mindset. I wanted to fight against all this, that is why I joined the struggle.

We use RPG 22 grenades and then these mines, claymores. A claymore mine will be attached to our body. The bomb then destroys the target along with our body, but we will try to destroy the target first. If there is no other option, we will destroy ourselves.

Once the army forced my mother, sister, and me to sit outside in the baking Sun. The commander was sitting in the shade of a big umbrella held by the soldiers. To protect us from the burning Sun, my mother put my sister and me on a towel. The soldiers yelled at

us, grabbed the towel, and put us back on the hot sand again. They made us sit like that for several hours until we were burnt and in terrible pain. Imagine the feeling or just putting one foot on scorching sand. This happened to my sister and me in front of my mother.

The enemy took my father. I have witnessed murder with my own eye, several churches were bombed. We were told the enemy was coming and the people rushed to churches for safety. The army bombed the churches and caused blood to flow within.

Case Study Twenty-Three: Puhalchudar

Puhalchudar, as mentioned was a friend of Darshika, who was also a part of LTTE and had the same motives to join the organization (trauma and revenge). Puhalchudar was also in her early twenties and used to live in Columbo, Sri Lanka. Puhalchudar belonged from low socioeconomic status and joined LTTE in 2007. Puhalchudar was also a suicide member, who was trained along with Darshika. Puhalchudar was also recruited in-person and recorded in ‘My Daughter, The Terrorist’ documentary. Puhalchudar quoted the following, “When I left home, I didn’t tell my mother. After I joined the Guerrilla movement, she found out and just had to accept it.” “...If I am selected for a mission then she will beg the leaders to go, instead of me (Darshika). If she is selected, I will do the same.”

By the time I was 13 we were completely displaced. I had to stop studying and everything was lost. The last experience I had from Jaffna, my very last day at home. That day I couldn’t go to school and in the evening heavy fighting started. Right next to us was a big army base. We children were in a simple shelter my parents had built. My parents were outside all night, watching, waiting. When the shelters started falling in front of the house we just had to run. On our way there was a lot of shelling, darkness, fighting, everywhere. The crowd leaving was so big, there was hardly space to put your feet on the ground. My brother and I took a wrong turn and got separated from our family. To reunite with them, we had to cross a bridge. The bridge had huge gaps in it so we couldn’t cross. The army was attacking but the guerrillas defended it and helped us to reach the other side. At this time, I didn’t understand much about the war. But this, I did understand, we were alive only because the guerrillas helped us.

Thanks to the movement, our families was saved. When we were running through the shelling, the army attacked us, but the movement fought back, that’s how we survived. After that I felt that I had to save these people. I thought if I font join the movement, our people will be forced into slavery, that’s why I joined LTTE.

Case Study Twenty-Four: Samira Ahmed Jassim aka The Mother of Believers

Samira Jassim became a member of al-Qaeda in 2007. Jassim was an Iraqi who held the role of a recruiter and trainer for females to become suicide bombers. Jassim was middle-aged married woman. Jassim's motives were not found to be clear, however religious ideology could be the one. Jassim confessed in 2009 about her roles, how she used to do radicalize women and for how long she worked in that role,

Amal is a lady teacher who lives near my home. I met Amal and stayed together for more than two weeks talking to her until I convinced her she was in a bad situation as she had been treated badly by her husband and brothers. She was mentally exhausted. We started to see each other in my shop. I took her to them (al-Qaida) then received her back from them at the same delivery place, where she then blew herself up at the popular committees (Awakening Councils).

Jassim said her first assignment was Um Hoda, a nickname meaning mother of Hoda, I talked to her a number of times, when I was talking to her, she was not answering or looking at me. She was mumbling verses of the Koran... who had four daughters and two sons. I went back to them and gave them the details on her. And they told me, bring her to us. ... And I took her to the police station, and that's where she blew herself up.

...I got her to the bank and left her there, Jassim went on, unemotionally...She detonated herself at a police station in Muqadadiya...I was able to persuade women to become suicide bombers ... broken women, especially those who were raped...I worked with [Ansar al-Sunnah] for a year and a half.

Case Study Twenty-Five: Hawa Barayev

Hawa Barayev was a Russia woman, who joined Black Widows in 2000. Barayev was in early adulthood period when became a suicide bomber. Barayev was single, who came from middle class household. The mode of recruitment of Barayev was probably through word of mouth as clear information was not available. The driving force to join the organization not clear either but according to the organization's agenda, it seems revenge and community outrage. Barayev's last words were "I know what I am doing, paradise has a price, and I hope this will be the price of paradise."

Case Study Twenty-Six: Reem Riyashi

Reem Riyashi was a Palestine woman who joined HAMAS. In 2004, Riyashi was in her twenties when became a suicide bomber. Riyashi was a married woman who had children too. The mode of recruitment was not clear, but it seems it might be through word of mouth. The motive to join the organization was revenge and religious ideology, which can be understood through her last testimonial video before the suicide attack,

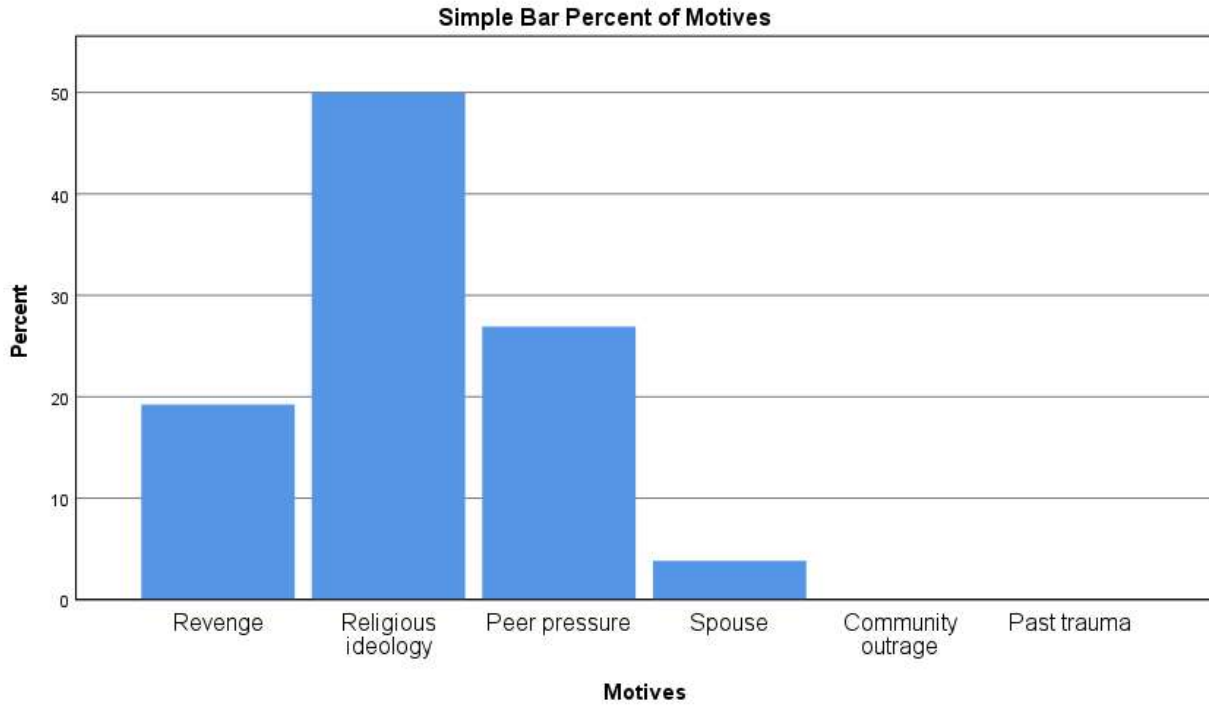
I am the Martyr Reem Saleh Riyashi, I hoped that the shredded limbs of my body would be shrapnel, tearing Zionists to pieces, knocking on heaven's door with the skulls of Zionists. How often I spoke to my soul: "Oh soul, if you loathe the Zionists, enemies of my religion, my blood shall be my path to heaven." Since 8th grade I have striven, seeking people daily to guide [me], listen, and help me. How often I desired to carry out a Martyrdom-seeking [suicide] operation inside Israel, and with perseverance, and with Allah's grace, my wish has been fulfilled.

Analysis for Age

It is observed that the highest age group of females who were involved in terrorism are from ages 21 to 30, whereas for ages 10 to 20, it is the second highest. The third is 31 to 40 years of age. The least females involved in terrorism are found from the age group 41 to 50, whereas there are no samples found for the age 51 and above age group. Therefore, it can be considered that young, aged females from the ages 10 to 30 are more susceptible to be involved in terrorism.

Pictorial Depiction of the Data Analyzed

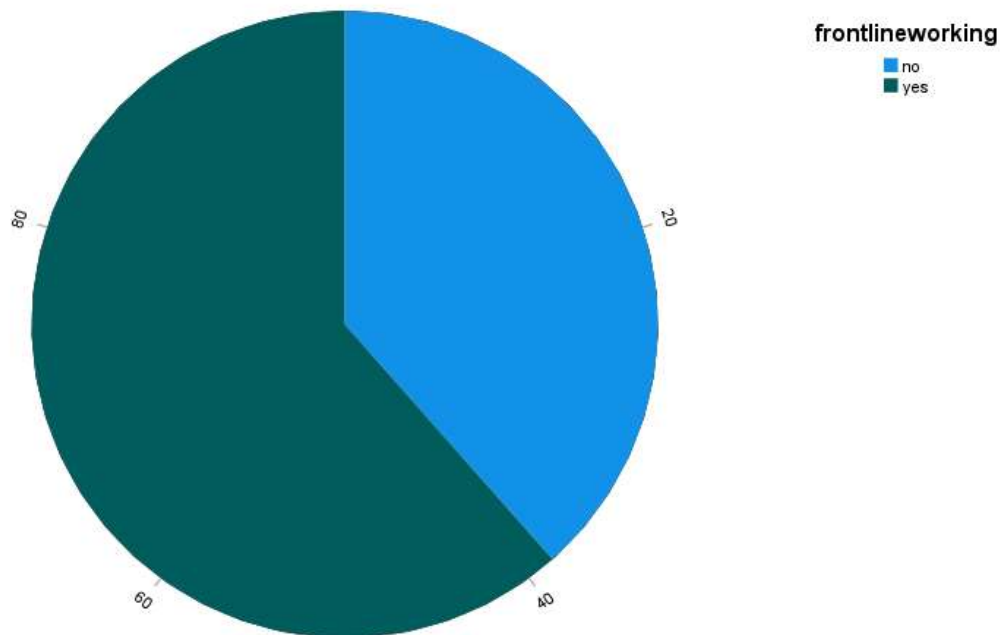
Figure 1: Figure for Motives



All these figures are presenting the pre-identified motives of females to join the terrorism. In this bar graph, the most identified motive is religious ideology, the second most identified motive is peer pressure, third is revenge and fourth is spouse involvement. The least identified is community outrage and past trauma.

Figure 2: Frontline Working Role

Pie Chart Percent of frontlineworking



In this figure, it can be observed that 80% of the responses of females out of twenty-six, indicated that they were involved in the frontline working role of a terrorist instead of passive working.

Typologies

The first typology that was created after analyzing the narratives of an Indonesian woman named, Marifah. The motive became clear during an interview on July 30, 2022, in which Marifah shared about her personal life in which she faced domestic violence from her husband. Marifah stated the following,

Yes, I ran away from my first husband. When a woman feels hurt, she sometimes does whatever she feels like doing. Maybe I behaved like that because of my problems at home. My husband was aggressive, so I wanted to relieve myself by taking my anger out on something else.

Interviewer: I see. You were being rebellious and stressed out?

Marifah: Right, I became rebellious. Since I was scared to act on it in real life. I released it on social media madly.

Hence, this narrative of Marifah depicts why some women would join terrorism. This is a kind of trauma response in an emotional sense. It also gave an understanding of how domestic violence could lead to massive results. The second typology, which is loneliness, was created from the narratives of Tareena Shakil. On February 7, 2023, a news channel interview was released in which Tareena mentioned that she was going through a breakup and wanted a fresh start in her life that is why she got radicalized.

So, it was at a time when I was in a really unhappy place due to a breakdown in a relationship and I was generally feeling really lost really due to the breakdown of the relationship. I didn't feel like I had any direction in life, and I didn't know where life was going because life as I thought that it was going to be had been really taken away from me and due that everything was going on that left me feeling very vulnerable and through the vulnerability I was unfortunately groomed online.

Interviewer: What appealed to you from that life that made you want to leave everything you knew?

Tareena: As I said I was in a really vulnerable place I felt very isolated from friends and family and through the process of grooming I was kind of offered a sense of belonging and a chance to start a new life... I am really isolated from friends and family, I feel lonely, don't know which direction my life's going in, the direction I thought its going in, it's not happening that way....

Therefore, the experience of Tareena feeling lost and lonely might be an experience that most females could go through during young years (adolescence) of life. That is why it is necessary to identify and understand this, as one becomes more susceptible to vulnerability during those times. Nonetheless, these two typologies fall under personal motivations. According to Spindlove and Simonsen (2013) personal motives are never the sole reasons of joining a terrorist group. Moreover, it works in a combination of a number of other motivational factors and that is where religious ideology might play its role. Meaning the repression of a gender in a religion could lead towards developing strong religious ideologies which later act as a strong motivational force. For instance, revenge and religious ideology can work in combination to drive a female to join terrorism, as it has also been observed in some of the case studies.

The se two typologies (Speckhard & Akhmedova, 2006; Speckhard, 2008). that have been generated with this study do have similarities with the existing typologies on female terrorism can be categorized into psychological motivation, where one wishes to be included with the group which has a similar outlook at them. In Therefore, the newly developed typologies can be categorized as a psychological motivation in a bigger domain.

Inter-Rater Reliability

After the mindful analysis of the case studies by the volunteer, the inter-rater of reliability is established. The coding framework is used as the primary line of analysis by the researcher and the volunteer, both. Therefore, the analysis of the researcher and the volunteer is found to be the same.

Manifesto and Magazines

The manifesto was published in 2015 which provided guidelines for women in each and every aspect of their Islamic State life and the criticized the learnings of the Western world. It started with how women should be raised, "From ages seven to nine, there will be three lessons: fiqh (understanding) and religion, Qur'anic Arabic (writing and reading) and science (accounting and natural sciences)".

From ages 10 to 12, there will be more religious studies, especially fiqh, focusing more on fiqh related to women and the rulings on marriage and divorce. This is in addition to the other two subjects. Skills like textiles and knitting, basic cooking will also be part of girls' education.

From 13 to 15, there will be more focus on sharia and manual skills (especially those related to raising children) and less of the science, the basics of which will already have been taught. In addition, they will be taught Islamic history, the life of the prophet and his followers". The manifesto also said, "It is considered legitimate for a girl to be married at the age of nine, most pure girls will be married by sixteen or seventeen, while they are still young and active.

The manifesto provided a critical insight about the organization's beliefs on women. "It

allows us to look past that which is banded about on social media by Western supporters of IS, enabling us to get into the mind-set of the hundreds, perhaps thousands, of women who willingly join its ranks,"

ISIS did not place women on "equal" level with men because the two sexes have distinctly different roles under Islam, "Women gain nothing from the idea of their equality with men apart from thorns,"

Under 'equality' they have to work and rest on the same days as men even though they have 'monthly complications' and pregnancies and so on, in spite of the nature of her life and responsibilities to their husband, sons and religion.

Yes, we say 'stay in your houses,' but this does not mean, in any way, that we support illiteracy, backwardness or ignorance. Rather, we just support the distinction between working—that which involves a woman leaving the house—and studying, as it was ordained, she should do.

The document further stated, "If a woman is forced to work outside the house, we must reward her for this service and look after her household and children in her long absence."

Among the manifesto's other guidance:

- A woman's job should take into account "necessities," such as a child's illness and a husband's travel. A woman's job should have "holidays."
- Mothers should be given a minimum of two years maternity leave to "rear and feed the child, and only resume if the child has started to be able to rely on himself for the most important things."
- Once children become more self-reliant, "There must be a place to put the children at work until they reach school age" so that children are not left home alone.

The manifesto mentioned about the effects of the Western civilization over women in a demeaning manner as,

Because of this, a woman studies these worthless worldly sciences in the farthest mountains and the deepest valleys, she travels, intent upon learning Western lifestyle and sitting in the midst of another culture, to study the brain cells of crows, grains of sand and the arteries of fish! Hence, there is no need for her to flit here and there to get degrees and so on, just so she can try to prove that her intelligence is greater than a man's.

It also mentioned on women's role outside home as,

Only under "exceptional circumstances," should women pursue things outside of the home. Such circumstances include jihad, as long as religious leaders issue an edict for women to do so and there are not enough men around to protect the country from enemy attack. In some cases, women may also leave the home if they are doctors and teachers—or if they are leaving to study theology—but only if they "keep strictly to Shariah guidelines.

The manifesto mentioned about women clothing as,

It is always preferable for a woman to remain hidden and veiled, to maintain society from behind this veil, this, which is always the most difficult role, is akin to that of a director, the most important person in a media production, who is behind the scenes organizing.

Therefore, because of the detailed report claiming to inform on how an Islamic State women should live, it was important to analyze the manifesto of ISIS. It was the first ever document that was released focusing on women. It can be observed from this manifesto on how things took a turn in terrorism by the time ISIS was formed. It can be considered as one of the influencing factor for women from all around the globe to join it. Other influencing factor for women was the publication of digital magazines all of the internet. These magazines were Dabiq and Rumiya.

Dabiq and Rumiya were published online through 2014 to 2017. The edition 7 of Dabiq like other editions has a section on women. In this edition a female named, Umm Basir is sharing her experience of Hijrah, that how pleasing it was and if she has a message for her brother and sisters. Umm Basir said this,

My sisters, be bases of support and safety for your husbands, brothers, fathers, and sons. Be advisors to them. They should find comfort and peace with you. Do not make things difficult for them. Facilitate all matters for them. Be strong and brave. It is essential you make all your deeds sincerely for Allah's face and hope for His reward. Know that the Companions radiyallāhu 'anhum) did not spread Islam in these vast lands except with their righteous wives behind them.

In edition 8, there is a mention about Hijrah (migration) again and how the importance of it,

Because hijrah for Allah's cause is a great matter, Allah revealed about it, {And the first

That is the great success} [At-Tawbah: 100]. Similarly, if not for the greatness of hijrah, forerunners among the Muhājirīn and the Ansār and those who followed them with good conduct Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him, and He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever. The Prophet (sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam) would not have given it as an example in the hadīth “actions are according to intentions,” as he said, “So whoever’s hijrah is to Allah and His Messenger, then his hijrah is to Allah and His Messenger.” Hijrah from Makkah to al-Madīnah also represented a great event and important turning point in the prophetic mission, as it contained many great lessons. Rather, it was the greatest event in the history of Islam, and for this reason it was used as the basis for the Islamic calendar.

Edition 10 mentioned about lawful spouse, suggesting not accepting spouse from any other religion,

Then there’s Umm Sulaym Bint Milhān likewise refusing to marry a kāfir and stipulating that he embraces Islam as her mahr (dowry). It was reported on the authority of Anas who said, “Abū Talhah proposed to Umm Sulaym, so she said, ‘By Allah, one such as yourself cannot be rejected, O Abū Talhah, but you are a kāfir man and I am a Muslim woman, and it is not permissible for me to marry you. So, if you embrace Islam, then that will be my mahr, and I will not ask from you other than that.’ So, he embraced Islam and that was her mahr”

Edition 11 discussed about how faithful life should look like to a woman towards her husband,

I know a prisoner’s wife who is a school of patience, faithfulness, and steadfastness. Lofty as a high mountain, she raised his children and made of them lions and lionesses. She lives on his memory and waits to meet him. Ten years have passed while he is in prison. Yes, ten complete years, and she has neither changed nor wavered; I consider her such and Allah is her judge. When she sees us, she says, “Have you supplicated that Allah breaks the chains of Abū So-and-so?” How good she is, and her reward is with Allah.

Here I dedicate my speech to my muhājirah sisters, for how often have we heard of sisters whose husbands are killed, so the earth with all its vastness becomes constricted for them and they turn towards the lands of kufr, where their families and relatives are. And there is no ability nor strength except with Allah! I tell them, you are sinful if you leave the land of Islam and return to the land of kufr. Whoever made hijrah for the sake of her husband, then know that he is indeed departing, without doubt, if not today then tomorrow. And whoever made hijrah for the cause of Allah, then know that Allah will remain, ever-living, and He does not die. So remain steadfast, my sisters, may Allah make us steadfast, and hold onto the Islamic State with all your strength!

Rumiyah's edition 1 mentioned about charity that is should be done by women, which states,

It is known that women – other than those whom Allah protects, and they are very few – often engage in nonsense, showing ingratitude towards their husbands, backbiting, and other grave sins. So, the Prophet guided them to that through which they could atone for some of what they have committed in this worldly life. Allah's Messenger went out to the place of prayer on one of the days of Eid, either Adha or Fitr, and he passed by the women. So, he said, "O women, give charity, for verily I was shown that you make up the majority of the people of Hellfire." They said, "Why, O Messenger of Allah?" He said, "You curse so much and are ungrateful to your husbands.

Edition 4 discussed on widows getting married, which is considered as haram (forbidden),

What was a common practice by the women of that generation from among the Sahabiyyat is that they would remarry after their husbands died or were killed, with the exception of the mothers of the Believers, who were forbidden for any man after the Prophet. And if we were to examine the books of biographies and histories, we would rarely find a woman from among those believing, noble, pious women who did not remarry after the passing of her husband, regardless of whether or not she had children." "...even if a hundred times – and then someone comes and censures and forbids her without a shar'i justification, but rather on the basis that this is "shameful," thereby placing a false understanding of "shame" that is rampant among many people – except for those whom our Lord has protected – over and above the halal that Allah has permitted or the haram that He has forbidden – then such a censorious individual should fear for his worrisome condition.

Edition 6 stated on abandoning someone (partner) who is not a follower of Islam for the sake of Allah,

In conclusion, we do not incite you, O bondwoman of Allah, to abandon your family and relatives except in the case of those whose apostasy has become clear to you through a statement or deed of theirs which takes one out of the religion.

Edition 7 discussed over spousal relationship, that how ideally it should look like from both husband and wife's side,

And yet, if some of them were to only limit themselves to listening! Some women help one another and support each other in this wrongdoing. When one woman complains against her husband, some of her friends react with incitement and provocation. Worse still, some women even guide their sister to the court and explain the procedure for divorce. They beautify to her the termination of her relationship with her husband, hoping

to marry her off to one of their relatives or to one of their husband's relatives – not doing anything for her out of love or in an endeavor to fix her problem – as if they have never read what Abu Dawud reported from Abu Hurayrah, that Allah's Messenger said, "Whoever embitters a women against her husband, or a slave against his owner, is not from us.

Edition 9 stated over women's responsibilities towards home, which included all the domestic work,

Every woman to whom Allah has granted the blessing of giving birth in the Islamic State should take advantage of this tremendous grace – which Allah has not granted to many other women – and painstakingly endeavor to raise her children in a manner that pleases her Lord and brings benefit to her ummah. And why should she not? For she is the child-rearing, nursing, and educating mother, whereas the fathers are either working for the cause of Allah or stationed in ribat.

The last edition of Rumiya discussed again about the importance of Hijrah, My hijrah to the Islamic State was a journey not unlike that undertaken by many others who sought to leave the lands of kufr and reside in the lands of tawhid. I was forced to disavow my strength and ability, and to place my trust in Allah and rely on Him alone in order to find a way out from the dangers and difficulties I faced along the way. It was a means of purification that would strengthen me and prepare me to remain patient and steadfast in the face of the hardships we face today as the entire world gathers against the Khilafah in an endeavor to extinguish the light of Allah.

Therefore, with these elaborative statements published in magazines, there are several things that can be concluded from it. First, because of the access to internet by 2014, these magazines tried reaching to maximum number of people especially when publishing it in English. Second, these magazines targeted recruitment towards the Western world which is why the word "Hijrah" essentially means migration used vastly. Third, along with the publishing of manifesto which already policed on a woman's life, these magazines continued doing monitor and police that. And lastly, these magazines perhaps created an urgency on women to do Hijrah otherwise they are kafir as stated by ISIS.

CHAPTER FIVE

This study focused on the motives and roles of women in Islamic terrorism and especially in that of ISIS as it changed the nature of terrorism with the era of internet. Narratives were taken from the women who were engaged in terrorism and analyzed through a coding framework. The sample consisted of the years June 2000 to February 2023. The development of ISIS happened in 2014, thus the narratives that were considered before that are from other Islamic terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda, HAMAS, Black Widows. One exception was made into this as narratives from two girls who worked under LTTE were also considered. The reason for considering them is because the first female suicide bombing was done in 1991 by LTTE group. Therefore, it was essential to consider about the motives and roles served by women by LTTE in later years, though the organization was dissolved in 2009. The analysis of ISIS manifesto, which was especially designed for women was done along with ISIS magazines in which certain section discussed on women. Analyzing these documents supported the understanding of the changing nature of terrorism.

Summary Findings

The findings of this study suggests the motives of women that engage them in terrorism and the role that is served by them. In this study a total of twenty-six females are considered for analysis with separate case study of each. Eighteen out of those belonged to ISIS and eight from other groups. In order to analyze each one's motive and role, quotes were taken from their interviews and/or statements that were made through social media or any other source. In few cases repentance was observed from the woman's statement whereas in others radicalized thinking reflected. Overall, with the help of interpretative phenomenological analysis these observations were made. As stated earlier, interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) refers

to mindful and organized lived experiences. Therefore, the information of twenty-six females were considered, explored, and explained in a non-biased manner, by taking the reflective instance as required in this method.

For motivation, religious ideology exhibited in majority, which is followed by peer pressure, revenge, and spousal involvement. The least motivating factor found is community outrage and past trauma. Aside from pre-stated themes, there are two themes that were identified which states new typology in the domain of motives. First is to use terrorism as an outlet to vent out trauma and second is loneliness; these will be further discussed.

For roles, women were assessed on being in the forefront in the organization or as a supporter. In this, the results suggested that majority of the women from the data, played a role of a forefront person, it could be of a suicide bomber, trainer of weapons, leader of a battalion and so on. One such case was of Allison fluke who is from Kansas, USA. Allison served a role of leading a female battalion in ISIS of 100 women.

The age of women terrorists was also considered as a factor of assessment in order to understand which age group is easily affected when recruiting. The results suggested that women who lie between ages 21 to 30 were likely to be affected most out of all other age groups. This age group was radicalized the most, leading to the age group of 10 to 20 years as the second most affected. The age group that was least radicalized was from ages 31 to 40 years. This suggests that younger age groups are more likely to be influenced by terrorist organization because the chances of being radicalized are higher.

Typology

The end goal of this study was to develop new typology of motivation of female terrorists. In the previous section as mentioned, two new typologies are found which are, use of

terrorism as an outlet to vent out trauma and second is loneliness. These typologies are similar to the pre stated typologies such as revenge . Therefore, these new typologies and pre-identified typology can be categorized as a psychological motivation in a bigger domain.

ISIS Different from Other Organizations

The comparison of ISIS with other Islamic terrorist groups can be done because it developed recently in 2014. Because of their recent development, the heavy usage of digital media was done to radicalize people from all over the globe. Manifesto and magazines were part of the same agenda. Manifesto is a document which layouts rule and polices and, in this case, ISIS became the first Islamic terrorist organization which released manifesto for women in 2015. The manifesto was developed by al-Khaansa brigade which was led by women in ISIS. The manifesto covered everything for a woman who was living in Islamic State. Starting from what age should she be married, what all should be taught to her, dressing of a female, role of a woman and so on. This was published in Arabic but was later translated to English.

Beside from manifesto ISIS published digital magazines from 2014 to 2017 in Arabic and English. These magazines further covered the success of ISIS with graphic content. There were particular sections in some editions of these magazines which focused on women. Every section of every edition conveyed a different message but mostly emphasized the cruciality of Hijrah (migration). Other sections stated on relationship of husband and wife, women who became a widow, and so on. Publishing print media with greater frequency resulted in putting ISIS on different tangent and which is why ISIS is different from other Islamic terrorist groups.

Limitations of this Study

The data in this study was not collected directly from female terrorists but relied on the primary sources of information. For data collection, sources that were considered are memoirs, news articles, documentaries, manifestos, and magazines which are firsthand data sources.

The other limitation is that the sample of the study was selected on the basis of information that was available at disposal. There are several female terrorists who became a part of ISIS and/or other terrorists groups that are considered for this study. However, there wasn't enough firsthand information on many of those who had organized serious terrorist activities. Therefore, their information has to be rejected.

Lastly, the study couldn't cover in-depth information of some female terrorists because of the language barrier. For instance, the availability of information for one of the female was in French as that woman had published her memoir only in that language and not in English.

Implications of this Study

Gray (2015), notes that "Gender reality must inform the measures designed to prevent and respond to terrorism and perhaps more importantly, the implementation of anti- and counterterrorism policies" (p.8). The outcomes of this study will aid in academics, policy, and practice by understanding in depth of the women's motives to join Islamic terrorism. It also helped in understanding the target age of women and on how many levels they can be radicalized.

Academically, it will help in broadening the under-studied area of female terrorism and particularly ISIS. The development of typology will further aid in research on precipitating factors of motives. It will also develop a pathway to understand other likely forces which pushes a woman towards radicalized path especially in the face of trauma.

In terms of policy and practice, it will aid in understanding the current patterns from the era of 2000s, which could benefit in developing anti-terrorism plans. The changing dynamics of gender in which women are equally working in forefront roles, even in conservative societies needs research so that the fight against terrorism could become stronger.

Future Research

Future research should focus on female terrorists because of lack of research in this area. It can be specific to any one international terrorist organization or can be amalgamation of different international terrorism organization. In this subject matter, finding firsthand data is challenging which will be solved if rigorous research is done on it. Apart from this, research should also focus on the deradicalization process of female terrorists. There are numerous cases in this study in which the female did not think that she needed deradicalization but once she complete the process, she realizes how much she needed it. Hence, there is a need to study what happens after a female gets in jail and offered with deradicalization and if that process is framed with individual's need or not. For instance, in the case of Marifah where she got easily radicalized as she wanted to vent out her frustration. Therefore, in this case deradicalization should be framed in a different manner versus for someone who got radicalized because of loneliness.

Another area on which future research should focus is over personality types and female terrorism. Personality types such as psychopathy, antisocial personality, borderline personality, etc., should be in focus. In order to understand on what level does these personality types affect the decision of joining terrorist organization by women. As women in terrorism is already a niche topic and in that studying about the personality types will be even more challenging with the perspective of collecting data. However, it is necessary to understand the level of it with the

perception of developing better counterterrorism strategies. Therefore, this thesis is a starting point over this area of research.

Lastly, this study would like to end with a quote, “lack of women in police forces and government agencies are throughout across the globe, underscores a deeper issue with gender, one when women remain undervalued and underrepresented. Ironically, some of the same factors that seem to drive women towards radicalization” (unknown, n.d.).

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