The Roles of Women in Terrorism Literature

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Chapter 1: The Islamic State

The Rise of the Islamic State

According to Laub & Masters (2016) study on the Islamic State. It is the Sunni movement that has conquered territories in Eastern Syria, Western Iraq and Libya. The sole purpose of this movement was to establish a Caliphate with the claiming of theological authority and exclusive political authority over the world's Muslims. This movement was more characterized by the extreme violence used in the movement. In Iraq and Syria few signs of political progress have been seen, this progress was needed to sustain military gains. The origin of the Islamic State group began after the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. This group initiated its operations when Jordanian militant Abu Musab al Zarqawi aligned his militant group with Al Qaeda, making Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI). The main focus of the Zarqawi organization was focused on US forces and their international allies. In 2006, Zarqawi was killed in an airstrike by the USA. After the death of Zarqawi, the name of the organization changed into the Islamic State of Iraq and Al Sham (ISIS). ISIS means a territory that roughly corresponds with the Eastern Mediterranean. The leader of an Islamic state, Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, spent time in one of the prisons controlled by the USA. In 2003, the US formed an institution, De-Ba'athification, that shows the collaboration of the USA with the Islamic State with respect to its way back to power.

According to Ralph & Souter (2015), the Islamic State emerged as a threat to the Iraqi people. Aimo Fteh's study was to see if Australia and the UK have a responsibility to protect those who have been threatened. The study presented an argument that ISIS is a result of the invasion by the USA of Iraq in 2003. It was mentioned in the study that the UK and Australia should not be held responsible for the invasion made by the USA. The invasion by the USA of Iraq led to the emergence of a major civil force in 2013, which extended its operations in Iraq. Islamic State of Iraq and al-sham (ISIS) seized the operations of the main city in Iraq, Mosul, and the coalition was formed to protect the Mosul dam from the Kurdish group forces. It has been argued in the study that the UK helped the USA in the invasion of Iraq, which led to the emergence of ISIS.

In the book written by Atwan (2015), the Islamic State is the latest and deadliest incarnation of the global jihad movement. This movement was established by Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri in 1998. According to the Montevideo Convention on rights and duties, two types of statehood are there: declaratory and constitutive. The population that is being controlled by the Islamic state is over

6 million which is more than any country in Europe. In January 2015, Islamic State opened its own bank in Mosul, which is the main city of Iraq, with the fact that Interest is Haram in Islam. Islamic State is not concerned with international laws and regulations. The Slafists, who adhere to the earlier versions of Islam, have a history that shows a period of Jahiliyyah (Ignorance). The belief of the Islamic state revolves around the fact that the world has been in a state of ignorance, which can only emerge through three steps: Faith, Jihad and Hijra. The primary focus of the Islamic State is on these three stages. The migration of a high number of fighters to join this cause of Islamic State is a vital aspect of its online recruitment material and PR.

According to Jabareen (2015), the world has seen an emergence of new Islamic states by specific Islamic organizations. These new Islamic States have the potential to transform the geopolitical situation setting of the Middle East to have complex effects on a broader or global level. The argument raised in the study was related to the challenge that has been posed by the Islamic State on the tactical and conceptual dimensions of territories of modern states. The uniqueness of the Islamic State lies in the tactics and strategies used by the Islamic State. It has been shown by the study that these tactics and strategies are brutal with respect to their executions and considered the worst by Muslims around the globe. The results of the study made clear that strategies made and implemented by the Islamic State do pose a challenge to the territories of modern states.

The Roles of Women within ISIS

According to Chatterjee (2016), looking at the Islamic State, other than the strategic implications of the rise of this state, the role of women is questioned widely regarding how they are perceived in ISIS. The study explored and imposed different situations to assess the role of women in those situations. It also examined the impact of those situations on women's lives. The study concluded with the result that women can be seen as active agents and voiceless victims. It depends on the situation, and their role cannot be judged within a monolithic frame. Their roles change according to the situation.

According to Ali (2015), ISIS forbids the education of women and brutalizes those women who do not meet the dress code. ISIS uses women in most of its propaganda, in which women appear in publicity, holding a gun and wearing a hijab. ISIS heavily sexualizes women as objects. At the beginning of 2015, ISIS made its first publication related to the manifesto "Women of the Islamic State." The manifesto contained 41 pages. The role of women described in the manifesto explained that they should be kept hidden and veiled. Shops that sell fashion-related items should be banned, and they consider this as a work of the devil (Shaitaan). They have a distinct belief that Men and Women are not equal. Women are meant to give birth to the child and serve their husbands and should never leave the house without the permission of a husband. Women can only go out of the house in case of Jihad or when no men are available. The study also explained the brutality of ISIS against Yazidi women; most of the women taken by ISIS have committed suicide, and now ISIS has banned the use of scarves for Yazidi women so that they will not commit suicide. ISIS sexualizes women and uses Yazidi women for sex purposes for their fighters of Jihad.

According to Agara (2015), terrorism is as old as humanity. Nowadays, nuclear war is not considered as dangerous as the differences in religion and religious differences. The involvement of women in terrorism and terrorist organizations is not clear by the media and policymakers. This initiates many questions regarding why women join these organizations. Do they join it from a religious perspective or not? The study explained that approximately 26% of all suicide attacks between 1981 and 2007 involved women. This shows that terrorist organizations use women as a weapon to carry out their major terrorist activities. Most of the time, we think that terrorist activities are majorly carried out by the men in society.

According to Bloom (2011), the use of women in terrorist activities has increased drastically. Terrorist organizations use women as an element of surprise. However, it does damage the psychological well-being and morale of the soldiers opposing them. The main purpose of soldiers is to protect the country and people. However, they encounter Post-traumatic stress disorder from the fact that they have to shoot those people who they have to protect, which creates stress in their minds to study different roles played by women in different situations of terrorism. However, their role cannot be depicted in full confidence as their role changes according to the situation.

According to Chowdhury et al. (2016), history shows the involvement of women in terrorist organizations. Organisations like Red Brigades (Italy), Action Directe (France) and Red Army Fraction (Germany) included women in their ranks. During the feminist movement in Europe in 1970, it gave birth to the fact that in order to respond to political and ideological demands, violence is the method that can be used. History revealed the use of women in terrorist organizations. Those women who are somehow being brutalized by society or even criticized by society end up joining these organizations. Mostly, they use these organizations to get their revenge on society, which leads them to do such activities.

Chapter 2: The Chechen-Russian Conflict

The Moscow Theatre Hostage Crisis

According to Sanz (2017), the aim of the study was to contribute to bridging the gap in the academic literature on the North Caucasus, which involves the critical discourse analysis of the evidence provided by the Kavkaz Center news agency. The study also explained the disclosure that is varied in the light of recent and alleged peace culture permeating Western societies. The theater was taken down by 50 Chechens in October 2002. In this scenario, Chechen people took 850 hostages, which resulted in the deaths of more than 150 people. The claim of the Chechens was allegiance to the Islamist separatist movement in Chechnya. The main demands of this action by the Chechens were the removal of Russia from the lands of Chechnya and the end of the Second Chechnya War. Women were covered from head to toe, and they wore black dresses holding guns. After this event, Russians named the Black Widow.

Research conducted by Vorsina et al (2017), on the effect of Moscow theater siege on expectations of well-being in the future explains by focusing on the expectations of life in shorter and broadened understanding of social consequences of terrorism. The study concluded that engaging with the psychological communities in order for them to devise programs and policies whose primary target would be the people that are most vulnerable to enhanced psychological resilience, which results in terrorist activities.

According to Riches et al. (2012), on October 23, 2002, Chechen terrorists took over the theater in Moscow during a performance of the musical Nord – Ost. Terrorists took approximately 850 people as hostages, the siege ended on Oct 26, 2002, when special forces of Russian Federal security services pumped out a chemical aerosol into the building resulting in the deaths of 33 terrorists and 129 hostages. It has been reported that two hostages were shot dead by the terrorists. Medical services provided by the Russian forces were inadequate and complex. The women shown in this scenario were cruel and extremely violent. It was due to the fact that the Russian government did not know how to handle the situation that arose after chemical aerosol strikes. It has been said by an official of the Russian government that one of the hostages lost his life because of the effects of the gas. The use of this gas is not effective as far as humans are concerned; if used in other such activities it is highly likely that hostages also get affected by the gas.

According to Rieder et al. (2012), on Oct 26, 2002, the Russian army put an end to the terrorist activity going on in the Moscow theater. Volatile substances have been used to eliminate terrorists. Authorities of the government made it clear that they use narcotic fentanyl to eliminate terrorists. Terrorists were unable to move and continue their work because of the combination of gases used by the Russian Army. The study concludes with the fact that the use of such gases was highly unlikely and that it would cost the lives of hostages as well. The army should have come up with other plans to capture the terrorists and protect the hostages as well. But if this combination of gases is used in the future in other such activities, then more innocent lives will be lost. However, claims have been made regarding the fact that in carrying out such an operation, if some lives are lost to save most of the lives, it's acceptable, but on humanitarian grounds, this is morally wrong. Loss of innocent lives is never in the best interest of the government. The role of women, in this case, was to let Russians go through the amount of pain they went through in the war when they lost their husbands and sons.

According to Potter (2018), the combination of gases used to capture terrorists and recover the hostages in the Moscow theater terrorist activity. The gas used has the ability to potentiate synthetic opiates, which will lead to unconsciousness. After this siege, authorities of Russia were denying the fact that they knew about the gas. Doctors were unable to identify the cure of this gas to the patients of that incident. The study concluded with the fact that the complexity of the medical support required was underestimated in preparation for the action to end the occupation.

The Black Widows of Chechnya

According to Toto (2015), a black widow is defined as a murderous woman who has committed crimes directed at men in their lives. Most of the women in this category have the same instincts and are considered cruel and extremely violent while carrying out their crimes. This term came into existence after the Moscow theater crisis. Most of the terrorists have lost their loved ones or husbands in the Chechen war, which leads them to do illegal activities which are illegal. The black widows made a claim that they would appear in the social Olympic games held in Russia. Many videos were made by the Black Widows with one sole claim: they ensured there would be a war coming towards them for the loss of their loved ones caused by the Russian Army. From the beginning of the Chechen insurgency, women have contributed 80% to the terrorist war and attacks. The use of females in the war by the Chechens brings forward better results than in the war that involves men. Using females in attacks brings fear, efficient results and attention. It has been concluded in the paper that most of the women in the Chechen terrorist groups are self-recruited because they have the same purpose to avenge their loved ones whom they have lost in a war with Russia. The study also concluded that organizations have a powerful effect on the degree of female terrorism within a terrorist group.

According to Spechkard & Akhmednova (2006), Chechen women were named Black Widow by the Russian media when it became clear that they were conducting terrorist activities because of the deaths of their loved ones in the war between Russia and Chechnya. It appeared as if the answer to the psychological trauma and ways of expressing their grief and sorrow by adopting the Jihadist ideology. Traditionally, Chechens live by a code that explains that if they lose their loved ones, they will drastically go into a state of psychological trauma, which causes them to take revenge on their loved ones if they die because of cruelty. The study concludes that all the participants involved in the study had the primary motive of revenge. Participants involved in the study were self-recruited in the early stages of their terrorist journey.

Individuals who are in a traumatized psychological state are highly attracted to radical groups. It has been explained in the study that not all but some of the women were trained in a terrorist training program. Chechen women are somehow different from their Arab sisters in the fact that they can do a job and have an education as well. The main objective of terrorist activity is to bring change in the political structure of the country. Palestinians started using their women in their terrorist activities when their men were not able to cross the checkpoints. It has been explained that in most of the cases of female terrorists, they are derived from some motive.

According to Turner (2016), the increasing availability of females in terrorist activities shows the growing trend of them being used by terrorist organizations. There are a number of reasons that organizations use females for terrorist activities, one of them is related to the publicity they gain by the involvement of females in terrorist activity. They are provided with the motive that triggers them to commit terrorist activities. Chechen women used to take revenge on their husbands whom they lost in the war between Chechnya and Russia. The role of women in terrorist activities is to present an element of surprise. We all have one common belief: men are the ones who are involved in terrorist

activities. Some organizations, just to increase their ranks and numbers, use women in terrorist activities. One of those organizations is LTTE, they call these women Freedom Birds. The campaign of suicide bombings by the Chechen women was a hallmark of Chechnya's earliest separatist campaigns. Organizations use these women to increase fear among the people and to promote their cause.

Motivations of the Black Widows of Chechnya

According to Rivera (2016), there were several factors involved that motivated the Chechen women to carry out terrorist activities. Martyrdom is one of those factors that motivated them. The wives of Mujaheedeen were raped by the Russian soldiers. These women did not cope with the humiliation they faced, so they used martyrdom as a remedy to serve the cause of GOD and take revenge for their sons and husbands. For Chechen women, in order to get back their honor, martyrdom is the way by which they can get back their honor. The study also explained the role Wahabbi Islam played during the conflict with Chechens, which was used as a justification to commit terrorist crimes. According to the Chechen sources, many of the women were victims of rape, for Chechen women they now can never get married to any other male and will never have children. So, martyrdom was the only solution available to them. Akhmedova discovered evidence of the women's self-recruitment and a strong willingness to martyr themselves on behalf of their country and independence from Russia.

Revenge was another motive that motivated Chechen women to indulge in terrorist activities. Most of the recruiters target women who have lost their loved ones in a war. Terrorists in Chechen emphasized the fact that many of the suicide female attackers acted following the death of their loved ones. Because of this, almost all the women who lost their loved ones joined the organization and started committing activities that would help them get revenge for their husbands and sons. Terrorists frame the death of a family member so that they can manipulate women to become suicide bombers so that they can serve them. Chechen women, after becoming black widows, were able to take some control and no longer have to bear the sufferings they endured throughout the war. The death of a family member is considered one of the most powerful tools in the motivation of women to become suicide bombers in Chechnya. There's a belief in Chechen people that women should not get revenge on their loved ones on their own. But still, studies have revealed that they went into organizations so that they can get revenge. Being provided with the opportunity to take revenge also breaks down the social norm associated with gender roles. Bloom believed that the actions of the Russian military played an important role in the emergence of the Black Widow.

Gentry (2016), in his book, explained several factors that played a role in the motivation of Chechen women. In the war between Russia and Chechnya, the Russian army brutalized the people of Chechnya, they raped women and humiliated them. Women of the people who were slaughtered and killed developed psychological trauma that continuously haunted them. It has been said that Chechen women should not indulge in activities that will lead them to take revenge for their loved ones.

Women of Chechnya self-recruited themselves with the sole purpose of bringing terror to Russia so that they would feel the same pain as they did. Loss of their loved ones and to get back their honor, women of Chechnya started out committing terrorist activities. One of the other factors that led them to commit such activities was the belief that by means of martyrdom, they would get back their honor. There's a belief in Chechen women that once they are raped by other men, they will never be able to give birth to another child and will never be able to marry another person. For them, this is one of the worst feelings they could get. Being raped by the Russian Army leads them into a state of trauma that continuously haunts them. It has also been said in the book that their movement is somehow related to the jihadi movement of Muslims.

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