Journal of Women Empowerment and Studies
ISSN: 2799-1253
Vol: 04, No. 01, Dec 2023 – Jan 2024
http://journal.hmjournals.com/index.php/JWES
DOI: https://doi.org/10.55529/jwes.41.6.12

Women Exploitation under ISIS: Ideology, Sexual Enslavement and Consequences

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Received: 02 August 2023 **Accepted:** 17 October 2023 **Published:** 01 December 2023

Abstract: ***ISIS is an infamous acronym for Islamic States of Iraq and Syria, having strong hold on these two regions. It had established itself as a self-declared Caliphate. It possesses one of the largest terrorist threats to the international society and to global peace and security. There leaders have introduced a specific interpretation of sharia law, which is intensely harsh and brutal, one-sided with a very little regard to the human life. Among the whole human community, one of the worst sufferers are the women living in the ISIS controlled regions. Women faced brutal suppression and maltreatment under the ISIS rule. They forbid women education and impose stringent dress codes. Strict laws are made for marriage which gives a year-to-year guide that at which age a girl should be married and how later a woman should live her life. Women are brutally punished if they do not follow rules made by the ISIS like public execution. Irrespective of any sect all women face the brunt of strict oppressive behavior undermining their basic human rights. ISIS heavily sexualizes women as an object, "sex slaves". This paper will focus on ideological standpoint behind different forms of violence against women in ISIS controlled territories, consequences of both direct and indirect violence on women and a case study on the sexual enslavement of the Yazidi women.***

Keywords: Jihad Bride, ISIS, ISIL, Sex Slaves, Nikkah Ul Jihad, Yazidi Women.

1. INTRODUCTION

ISIS is an unpopular abbreviation of Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. It is popularly also known asISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and Levant) or Daesh. This Sunni jihadist faction asserts religious dominance over all Muslims by its strict and deadly doctrine by calling itself the Caliphate. They had strong hold over third of the Syrian territory and about 40% of Iraq portion. However, by December 2017, ISIS had given up 95% of the areas that it controlled over its two largest holdings, Raqqa in northern Syria and Mosul, the second-largest city in Iraq. (Camron Glenn, 2019) This terrorist group makes harsh rules and laws to be obliged by all the people residing in the territories. It had possessed a large threat to global peace and

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security
They assassinated and abused unbelievers. Muslims who identify as apostates and who do not agree with ISIS's understanding of faith may face immediate execution or harsh punishment. It endorses physical and sexual exploitation of women. Irrespective of any sect women are the worst sufferers as female fighters, sex slave, jihad brides or simply as being a woman. The crimes against women have been a part of the harsh war tactic to create terror, humiliate and crush resistance raised by people against ISIS regime.

Ideology
ISIS has a 'Manifesto for Women' to circulate and make people follow its ideology in the name of Allah. 'Women of the Islamic State: Manifesto and case study' was the manifesto, first published in Arabic language. It was prominently drafted by female militia of ISIS named 'al- Khansaa Brigade'. It talks about role of women in day to day life. It states that women should remain completed veiled and hidden in homes. They are not allowed to leave the house except in critical circumstances to pursue religious studies or engage in jihad when there are no men available. Fashion shops are to be banned and described as the devil's creation. The manifesto harshly criticises Western culture for being materialistic and for having poisoned women's mindsby separating them from religion.

The document outlines a year-by-year plan for women's marriage and education. To become a decent housewife and mother, it recommends some education, primarily in the religious domain. The manifesto depicts that -

- Three subjects will be taught to children aged between the ages of seven and nine: science (natural sciences and accounting), fiqh (faith and knowledge), and Quranic Arabic (writing and reading).
- Religious studies, particularly fiqh, will increase between the ages of 10 and 12, with a particular emphasis on women's fiqh and divorce and marriage regulations. On top of the other two subjects, there is this. Girls' education will also include instruction in basic cookery and textiles, knitting, and other skills."
- From 13 to 15, there will be less science, the fundamentals of which will have previously been taught, and more emphasis on sharia and physical skills, particularly those pertaining to rearing children. They will also learn about Islamic history, the lives of the prophets, and the lives of his adherents.
- One of the manifesto's main points is that a girl can get married as early as age nine, and it is recommended that all girls get married by the time they are 16 or 17 years old, when they are still "young and active".

The manifesto promotes a widely disseminated image of Raqqa and Mosul's women's existence. Images of cheerful kids playing in parks, old folks dining together, and young girls and ladies with veils attending female classes are all displayed. An image of a multicultural society is shown, where men and women carry out their responsibilities in accordance with how they see Islam (Ali, 2015)
Women who disobey the dressing guidelines face harsh punishment from ISIS.Women under ISIS control become both the perpetrator of violence and victims of human right violation. The Sunni women are brainwashed to support male member of their family to join ISIS and

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also the victim of gender based violence from their male counterpart. It became her moral duty to survive in the violence household.
The young ladies and girls who flew to Syria and Iraq to join the Islamic State of Iraq and become the wives of Islamic State fighters are known as *jihad brides*. But there seems to be a common feature that draws both men and women to ISIS: the promise of a fascinating existence in a religious group that promises to give a purpose to life. As usual, ISIS paints a rosy picture, leading women who visit its areas to envision a perfect version of life in Syria and Iraq.

Social media play a most important part in connecting people to ISIS fighters and succeeding in brainwashing their minds. The majority of young girls have been influenced by content postedon social media made by ISIS members who have already joined, where they portray a serene, free life in the Islamic State. They exchange recipes, share happy-family stories, and upload cat images to social media sites like Facebook and Twitter. The cats are considered very pure and close to Allah in Islam. They utilize social media to share their disappointments about how Muslims are treated worldwide and to convey their belief that ISIS is a true Islamic society basedon sharia law. They propagate the idea that visiting ISIL controlled territory is a feministobligation for all Muslim women.

ISIL made women believe that everything they could possibly dreamt of like a loving partner, kids, a lovely home, and acknowledgment as female fighters battling alongside males for a just cause, will come to them in this life. As a result, some of the females had to fly from the West to meet up with militants they had come across online.
Nikkah ul Jihad was a "temporary marriage order" that was modified by ISIS to be applied to civilians beyond areas of conflict too. Based on reports, many ISIS women's daily lives are uneasy, and this new practice has led to a surge in sexual abuse. In the name of Islam, women whether a Muslim or non-Muslim were subjected to sexual abuse and harassment. This "Nikkah ul Jihad" was a contentious Fatwa that was made public in 2013 as part of the Tunisian government's campaign against terrorism in the area that borders Algeria that is associated with Al Qaeda. It advises ladies to come forward to serve as sexual slaves or servants to Jihadi soldiers'.

This was apparently done to relieve a man, in times of war, of distracting sexual frustration. In order to enable a man carry out his Jihadi duty more successfully on the battlefield, the Fatwa permits a man to marry a woman for a week or for a few hours, and to have "halal" sex with her. Sheikh Mohamad al-Arefe, a Saudi Wahhabi preacher, is credited with creating the idea. He urgedSunni women to volunteer for sexual jihad in order to aid the Mujahedeen in their struggle against Bashar al-Assad and his Syrian regime. Later, this became commonplace in regions under ISIS control. They justified this practice by pointing out that Islam is a missionary religion, just as Christianity.

Anything that is often forbidden during a Jihad becomes "halal" in order to disseminate the teachings of God. Except in times of Jihad, when it may improve a man's capability on the battlefield, the holy Koran prohibits sex before marriage. This made Sunni women more sexualized in order to satisfy the lusts of Jihadists. But here the double face of ISIL rule come

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forward, Sunni women were permitted to go out of their houses only when accompanied by a close male family member and that too completely covered in a niqab.
ISIS through its practices and ideology sexualizes women as an object. One of the largest genocide of humanity was conducted by ISIS against Yazidi religious community in 2014. Witha warning to convert into Islam or perish, ISIL physically and physiologically ruined the community. This ultimatum led to thousands of deaths—either mass killings, shootings during the run, or exposure on Mount Sinjar during the attempt to escape. Thousands were sold into slavery, where women and children were separated from their families and subjected to the most severe abuses, such as serial rape and other forms of intolerable sexual violence.

The Yazidi women have been subjected to multiple international crimes, including extermination, enslavement, sexual brutality, forced transfer, and persecution on the basis of gender and religion. The horrors against them do not end here. (UN security council press, 2021) ISIS referred to the young females they would purchase and sell as sex slaves as "sabaya" (sabiyya is singular) when they gained control of Sinjar in August 2014 and began enslaving Yazidis.

ISIS used an interpretation of the Quran that was long forbidden by Muslim communities worldwide as justification for this atrocity. These interpretations were included in the official fatwas and pamphlets that ISIS released before to their attack on Sinjar. Yazidi girls were viewed as unbelievers, and raping a slave is not a sin, in the militants' interpretation of the Quran. These sabaya were given out as rewards for loyalty and good behaviour and were thought to be an enticement for prospective recruits to join the militant ranks. (Nadia Murad, 2018)

When the Yazidi women were detained, first their information was methodically documented before being taken prisoner and made into the warriors' property. Then, women were sold in markets, either in person at specific times in market halls and jails or electronically via a mobile phone messenger app where their pictures and slave numbers were swapped. (Otten, 2017)

The women underwent tests of virginity after being stripped nude and having their bodies evaluated for their breast measurement and beauty. The ladies were put up for sale in a market with the youngest and most attractive receiving the highest price after a price was determined. Numerous women kidnapped by ISIS killed themselves. Later, ISIS outlawed the wearing of scarves by Yazidi women in an effort to stop suicides. They plotted out the slave trade, deciding what they believed to be legal and illegal under Islamic law, from their centers in Syria and sleeper cells in Iraq. They then wrote it down so that all members of the Islamic State would be forced to abide by the same harsh guidelines. Anyone can study the pamphlet published by ISIS's Research and Fatwa Department to discover more about the specifics of the sabaya plan.

According to an Islamic State leaflet, sabayas can be given as presents and sold at the owner's will because "they are merely property." (Nadia Murad, 2018)

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In an effort to lure new recruits and provide a formal explanation for its sexual assault of women, ISIS brought the English-language online propaganda magazine 'Dabiq'. Published in October 2014, the article titled "Revival of Slavery before the hour" makes a claim that it is an Islamic responsibility. According to the article, Yazidi women must be kept as slaves and their males must be slain since they do not belong to the people of the book, which includes Islam, Judaism, or Christianity. In order to justify their enslavement programme, it makes reference to the Koran and quotes Islamic texts addressing the treatment of battle prisoners. (Ali, 2015)

The pamphlet included restrictions around sexual behaviour, such as what happens if a sabiyya gets pregnant and cannot be sold, or if her owner passes away and she is given to his estate. It states that if a prepubescent slave is "fit for intercourse," an owner may have sex with her; if not, "then it is enough to enjoy her without intercourse." In order to further dehumanise and control women and girls who attempted to flee, ISIS utilised gang rape as a form of punishment. The ultimate goal of the slavery was to grow the ISIS population through the birth of Yazidi women and the upbringing of their offspring among jihadist warriors.

Consequence

Ideology of ISIL depicts the way through which they exploits and sexualized women in their propaganda, pamphlets, magazines and various physical practices. Most women were sexually abused, tortured and sold amongst the Jihad fighters before they fled from the ISIL controlled territories. The Sunni women were denied access to common facilities and living conditions due to a variety of restrictions. Their freedom of movement and attire were restricted. Fearing harsh penalties for any or both of the male family members, the women cut themselves off from friends, relatives, and the public eye, so eliminating all socialization from their lives. (Human right watch, 2016) Through its various publications, ISIS has depicted women role to be confined within house taking care of children and desires of her husband.

Mortality rate increased amongst the women and their health parameters decreased. ISIS implemented regulations that disallowed male physicians from interacting, observing, or spending time alone with female patients. Women were afraid of going to hospitals and schools since they were often bombed. Both male and female ISIS soldiers employed moral policing tactics on women, such as hitting or prodding them with metal spikes to keep them in line and prevent them from attempting to receive the essential basic human services. When women and girls join ISIS, it's possible that they'll be coerced into becoming "*jihad brides*" or that they'll endup in a position where a marriage that was initially agreed upon turns into sexual or domestic slavery.

By the time the Jihad brides realizes the true reality of the ISIL world, it become impossible for them to leave the Caliphate and come back to their homelands. Even if these women succeed in escaping out, government policies in their nations are not welcoming making them left out and stateless in the refugee camps. Many nations ban citizens from entering Syria, suspend passports, or imprison individuals who did so. In these conditions, girls will not

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only be unable to return, but parents will be reluctant to report their missing daughters for fear of the government and society's reaction. Additionally, girls who may have been captured before to crossing the border may become "missing forever homeless." (Binetti, 2015) Children born from such girls and women have no future with their life confined within the refugee camps, deprived of political, social and economic rights. States neither welcome the women nor the children fearing national security threats.

Yazidis women, Kurdish religious minority have suffered the worst under ISIS rule. These women were held in captivity, experiencing repeated torture and sexual abuse. Following ISIS rule, they experienced both post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and complex post-traumatic stress disorder (CPTSD). The majority were either killed on the scene for trying to escape or stepped on the LED laid on the roadways while trying to escape ISIS rule. Many feared the society that would they be accepted by their families and the society if they become aware that they were raped. The women for live develop fear of trusting any individuals and developing disturbing relationships. They develop psychological trauma of losing their family in mass killings and facing the reality of never seeing them. Most of the Yazidi families were unaware of whether they would be able to see their daughters or sons back which were enslaved by the ISIL. (Human right watch, 2016)

No one still knows, the plight of some of the Yazidi women still under ISIL control, facing despicable sexual abuse, unfathomable atrocities and unfettered human rights violations. Fearing social rejection upon their return to the refugee camps, the majority of the ladies underwent extreme steps to cleanse themselves. Many survivors had their hymen repaired during "re-virginization" surgery in an attempt to erase the stigma and memory of the rape. A few survivors'doctors in the Yazidi camp offered that service and asked the victims to "come for the treatment," treating it like any other routine check-up. (Nadia Murad, 2018, p. 249)
Their mental health was heavily affected with lifetime scares of genocide. The pediatric growth of children was affected when they were separated from their mothers. Women in refugee camps whether one escaping the ISIL control or be Yazidi women is always susceptible to gender basedviolence.

ISIS rule was one of the gravest periods of humanity, torturing and depriving women off human rights on the case of gender. This have prolonged and profound consequences on the survivors. Yazidi genocide by ISIS was the true case of ethnic cleansing on mass scale with killing and mass raping of women and girls. This shook the social stability of the human lives.

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