The Role of the Online News Media in Reporting ISIS Terrorist Attacks in Europe (2014-present): the Case of *BBC Online*

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ABSTRACT

The numbers of *ISIS* (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) terrorist attacks have risen in Europe since 2014. Consequently, these incidents have particularly attracted the media attention and received a great amount of news coverage. The study has examined the role of that the online news media in reporting *ISIS* terrorist attacks during the period between 2014-present, based on the fact, that the online news has overtaken the print media and the television as the most popular source of the news within the last few years (Newman et al., 2018). Hence, this allows it to reach and affect the highest numbers of audience.

The research has focused on the case study of the *British Broadcasting Corporation* news website *BBC Online* coverage on the Manchester Arena bombing, which was caused by *ISIS*. The study has investigated the news coverage throughout 29 weeks since the date of the terrorist attack, what includes the period between the 22nd May 2017 and the 11th December 2017. This time slot has provided the qualitative study with 155 articles, what were analysed while conducting the thematic analysis.

The findings indicated that some themes are dominant in the content of the online news media coverage on *ISIS* terrorist attacks. The research has been based on the *Though Contagion Theory* approach*, according to which, these themes act as a 'contagion' among the audience of the online news media. This suggests that the online news media play specific roles while reporting *ISIS* terrorist attacks. The results of the study identified that the online news media through its coverage may mediate various emotions, encourage solidarity among society and create the stereotype of the perpetrator and, as a result, all this may prolong the presence of the terrorist attack effects on society.

Keywords:

ISIS, terrorism, online, news, media, roles.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Terrorism has been a huge issue in Europe since 2014 (Simcox, 2017). As the number of terrorist attacks started to increase, the phenomenon has been a highly present topic in the news during these few years. The relationship between the media and terrorism has been discussed by many scholars and referred as 'symbiotic' (Peresin, 2007; Beckett, 2016) due it its mutual benefits. However, in this symbiosis, not much attention has been paid particularly to the role of the online news media. Although it is argued that the media coverage on terrorism may provoke various emotions among society (Doveling et al., 2011) and even encourage further attacks to happen (Barnhurst, 1991), the majority of the literature is focused mainly on the influence of the mass media overall. The role of the online news media while reporting *ISIS* terrorist attacks in Europe has not been taken into consideration enough, as there have not been any studies directly addressing the issue. Thus, the primary aim of this research was to locate the roles of the online news media in reporting the phenomenon and, therefore, to contribute to filling the existing gap in the field of study.

The *Islamic State*, also known as the *Islamic State of Iraq and Syria* (ISIS) and the *Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant* (ISIL), is the militant Jihadist group in Syria and Iraq (Galily et al., 2016) that also recently expanded in Libya (Engel, 2015). The terrorist group is based on religious extremism and seeks to establish a caliphate in Syria, Iraq and beyond by causing bombings, public executions and other acts (Wood, 2015). It is believed that the main aim behind each terrorist attack is the media attention that the perpetrators aim to achieve in order to spread their ideology (Speckhard, 2015). The main targets for Jihadists have been people because of the emotional response and the attention that the attacks with high numbers of injured and dead victims receive (*Europol*, 2018). According to *European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report* produced by *Europol* (2018), recently, the *Islamic State* has caused more fatal attacks in Europe than any other terrorist group. Inevitably, these attacks have received a high amount of media attention and have dominated in the new after they occurred. Therefore, *ISIS* terrorism has been a considerable issue in Europe within the past few years and a huge topic in the online news media.

The concept of the online news media has been greatly discussed recently (Breiner et al., 2018; Debbelt et al. 2017), since it has become the primary source of the news for the Western societies (Boczkowski et al. 2018). An easy access to the Internet nowadays has turned the online news media into a quick and informative way for people to gather the news in every European country. The capability of the online news media to constantly provide the audience with a great amount of information (Debbelt et al. 2017) and to reach a high amount of visitors (Fletcher et al., 2017) increases its influence on the audience, what simultaneously empowers the roles that the online news media play in reporting *ISIS* terrorist attacks.

Having established that, the world's leading broadcaster *British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)* provides its users with the opportunity to instantly gather the news online from *BBC Online* news website (BBC, c2018). Every day receiving the highest numbers of visitors from all the British news websites (SimilarWeb, 2018), *BBC Online* plays a great importance while reporting about *ISIS* terrorist attacks in Europe. *BBC Online* provides the content in 27 different languages (BBC, c2018), what enables the news website to be used and read by people not just in the United Kingdom, but also in most of the European countries. Moreover, *BBC* represents itself as acting as a national public broadcaster (BBC, c2018), what addresses to its aims and responsibilities to provide the news for the public benefit instead of seeking any commercial advantage from it. This refers to *BBC's* transparency and trustworthiness while reporting the news, including *ISIS* terrorist attacks. For this reason and the popularity of the website, the coverage of *BBC Online* has been investigated by conducting thematic analysis of the news articles in this research.

Furthermore, this study takes an innovative approach towards the roles of the online media in reporting the news. The research is based on *Thought Contagion Theory.*[1] The theory states that people's beliefs, behaviour, values and emotions are influenced by the ideas that are presented to them. The dissemination of the ideas strengthens their own existence and impact people to act, think and feel in a way that is presented to them. Hence, the research suggests that the online news media

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[1] The theory was build on *Social Contagion Theory* and developed by Aaron Lynch in 1996 (Lynch, 1996, p. vii).

act as a 'contagion' while covering *ISIS* terrorist attacks through reporting certain themes, which impact the audience.

Therefore, this study has examined the roles of the online news media in reporting *ISIS* terrorist attacks using the real coverage of *BBC Online* on the incidences. In order to locate the roles, the research aimed to answer three research sub-questions: *'How do the online news media depict ISIS terrorist attacks in Europe?'*, *'How may the coverage of the online news media impact society while reporting ISIS terrorist attacks in Europe based its effects on Thought Contagion Theory?'* and *'How may the coverage of the online news media influence the outcome of ISIS terrorist attacks based its effects on Thought Contagion Theory?'* Hence, set out in four sections, this research initially analyses the relationship between the media and terrorism and presents a review of the existing literature on the roles of the media while depicting terrorism. The methodology chapter provides an in-depth explanation of the methodology that was used while aiming to locate the roles of the online news media and justifies the choice of thematic analysis for this research. Afterwards, findings and discussion chapters thoroughly provide with the outcome of this investigation. Ultimately, some conclusions have been drawn out of the research findings.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, various theories and previous academic studies related to the news media roles while reporting terrorism will be discussed and analysed. The literature review chapter provides with an overview of the links between media and terrorism, critically assesses what is already known about the roles that the media play while covering terrorism and defines the existing gaps in the field of study.

2.1 Media and Terrorism Relation

Since 2014, when the number of *ISIS* terrorist attacks started to increase significantly, a relation between terrorism and the media has developed stronger than ever before. This relationship is claimed to rely on the mutual influence of both entities (Tsauro, 2016). Peresin (2007) highlights their interactive impact of media and terrorism on each other, explaining that nowadays the media industry seeks the content that causes sensation and attracts more audience, whereas terrorists also aim to get the public attention though the media. Therefore, in this way, the media and terrorism complement each other, and that is why this relation is necessary for both of them (Hacker, cited in Jaehnig, 1978). Beckett (2016, p. 4) contributes to the idea, claiming that terrorists aim to get the media attention and the media is also attracted by terrorism.

Thus, this relationship is considered to be quasi – symbiotic (Nacos, 2002). According to Nacos (2002), terrorists implement their goal to acquire publicity for their attacks through the media, and the media is also simultaneously attracted by the terrorist stories as a relevant content for the news coverage. Interestingly, Jeahnig (1978), Peresin (2007) and Beckett (2016) claim that the link between the media and terrorism nowadays is purely symbiotic. They all argue that the relationship has become even stronger with the rise of mass media and the Internet.

Wilkinson (2006) also emphasizes that terrorism and the media unintentionally support each other. Terrorism and the power of its acts depend on publicity that the media nowadays are able guarantee, and that is the essence of this symbiotic relation (Wilkinson, cited in Peresin, 2002).

Having said that, Wieviorka (cited in Peresin, 2002), dismisses the symbiotic nature of the relationship between terrorism. In the theory presented by Wieviorka (cited in Peresin, 2002), terrorism benefits significantly more from the media, rather than the media from terrorism. When the media cover the actions of terrorists, likewise, it provides them with popularity among society. To illustrate that, Nacos (2002) claims that the news media amplifies the impact of terrorism and turns terrorism from a local problem into a global issue. Nevertheless, even though Nacos (2002) still agrees with the idea of Wieviorka (cited in Peresin, 2002), that the main cause of the relationship is terrorism, the scholar (Nacos, 2002) also emphasizes the importance of the media role in this symbiosis and the relation between these two entities still remains undeniable

Ultimately, even though the various scholars present different arguments about the links between media and terrorism, the relationship of these two entities is yet irrefutable. Terrorism attracts the media coverage as an interesting content for the news, whereas the media also play a significant role while reporting them as a popularity provider.

2.1.1 Advantages of Terrorism for the News Media

In the symbiotic relationship that the media and terrorism shares together, terrorism undeniably attracts the media attention. Simon Jenkins, the editor of the *London Times*, claims that 'to the media, terrorism is meat and drink' (Beckett, 2016, p. 20). The base of this use for the media is the content that the terrorist attacks provide the news media with. Marthoz (2017) emphasizes that today the media economy is based on the competition to attract audiences and Tuman (2010) complements that terrorism helps the news media to attract more users.

Therefore, terrorism is claimed to benefit the media because it attracts high numbers of audience. Tsuaro (2016) supports the statement and claims that the presence of terrorist attacks in the media is directly related to the earning of the news company, since it generates more users.

Similarly, Mahmoud (2014) suggests that terrorism is a great topic for the news media due to the high numbers of audience it is able to attract because of its relevance. Mahmoud (2014, p. 2) even

introduces the term of '*terroredia*', what is used to describe a codependent and interactive relationship between the media and terrorism, which is based on the news media's extensive coverage on terrorist attacks. Evidently, this idea is supported by Tsauro (2016), Schmid and Graaf (1982) who claim that terrorism is a 'good news' for the media because it helps to attract more audience and increase sales.

Furthermore, another angle on this debate suggests that terrorism is also a source of entertainment for the media. Nacos (2002, p. 29) introduces a new term of 'infotainment', that indicates the role of the media in portraying terrorism:

> Far more than informative hard news, strives on the very images and themes that terrorists incidents offer – drama, tragedy, shock, anger, grief, fear, panic – ideal ingredients for transforming real life terror into breathtaking thrillers or soap operas designed to captivate and stir up audiences.

Therefore, Nacos (2002) contradicts to the statement that terrorism benefits the media as a solid content for the news stories. Terrorism is provocatively presented as a way to attract the audience as a form entertainment. Hoffman (cited in Peresin, 2002) supports the argument, stating that terrorism now is a form of show business for the news media industry. Hence, according to Nacos (2002) and Hoffman (cited in Peresin, 2002), the media benefit from terrorism using the incidences as interesting stories to present to the audience.

As has been shown, there have been different approaches by scholars at how and why terrorism is advantageous for the media. However, they all agree there are certain benefits of terrorism for the news media.

2.1.2 Advantages of the News Media for Terrorism

Since the relationship between the media and terrorism is considered to be symbiotic, there is a mutual use between them from each other. The benefits of the media coverage for terrorism will be discussed in detail in this section.

2.1.2.1 'Oxygen of Publicity'[2]

Regarding a strong connection between terrorism and the media, the latter one plays a significant role while benefiting the terrorists and their aims. In 1985, Margaret Thatcher, the former British Prime Minister, referred to terrorism, stating that it starves for 'oxygen of publicity' that is provided by the media (Huff, Kertzer, 2017, p. 35). Interestingly enough, Nacos (2002, p. 39) states that especially for religiously inspired terrorist groups, such as *ISIS*, publicity is a 'life blood'. Nacos (2002) further argues that for the terrorists, their acts are the means of communication rather than violence and claiming that the media help them to achieve it. That refers to the idea, that the news media provide terrorism with the publicity, what plays an important role to the perpetrators. Miller (1982) also claims that terrorists even choreograph their attacks in a way, what would attract the greatest possible amount of the media attention.

It has been clarified that the news media coverage benefits terrorism and its perpetrators. The media play a publisher's role and spread the news about the terrorist attacks what is beneficial for the perpetrators. However, none of the scholars states what further advantages and impacts the news media coverage on terrorism has after the attacks are publicized to society in the news.

2.1.2.2 Propaganda

While reporting the news about terrorism acts, together with the main information, the media also send a message about the perpetrators, who have executed the violence. According to Tuman (2010), the media help the terrorists to spread the propaganda and they manipulate it in order to acquire promotion and distribution of their ideology. Having established that, Schmid and Graaf (1982) argue that terrorism is a combination of violence and propaganda, and emphasize that the media help the terrorists to achieve it. Additionally, Peresin (2002) complements the idea and presents terrorism as an act of communication that is implemented through the media coverage.

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[2] On 15 July 1985 the former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher during her speech to the *American Bar Association* said that the media provide the terrorists with the 'oxygen of publicity on which they depend' (Margaret Thatcher Foundation, 2018, no pagination).

Interestingly enough, one of the aims for the terrorists while causing the attack is to obtain publicity about their existence, principles and beliefs (Paletz, Vinson, 1992). The idea is also supported by Hoffman (2003) who claims that terrorist groups try to spread their culture through the news media. Therefore, the media are recognized not only as a tool for the perpetrators to represent and promote themselves in public, but also as a way to popularize their cult.

Tsauro (2006) even claims that terrorists use the news media to attract and recruit new members to their organizations. Tsauro (2006) further states that while reporting terrorism, the media plays an important role in placing it as breaking news because the coverage may attract new members to join the terrorist groups. Additionally, Peresin (2015) highlights that especially religiously inspired terrorist' organizations, such as *ISIS*, try to attract young people through the media.

In contrast to Tsauro (2006) and Peresin (2015), Greene (2015) presents an alternative perspective that terrorists use more social media, rather than the news media in order to spread the propaganda and even encourage people to join their groups. Greene (2015) also states that for *ISIS* social media has been extremely efficient while hiring new perpetrators. Since social media is more used by the younger generation rather than the elder, and so are the majority of *ISIS* perpetrators, the *Islamic State* is believed to be successful while attracting new members via social media (Blaker, 2015).

Similarly, terrorist groups tend to have their own set up secret media, what they use for propaganda and the recruiting of new members (Marighella, 2008). Nacos (2002) also highlights the importance of the media channels that are owned by the terrorists for their network expansion and minimizes the power of the news media for recruiting new members. Beckett (2016) points out to the new web platforms that ISIS use and their own social media networks while diminishing the effect of the news media in attracting news members.

Therefore, even though some authors present the news media as a tool for the terrorists to spread propaganda, yet there have been arguments that especially religiously inspired terrorism groups prefer to use a social media instead to implement their goals. Since the younger generation of people tend to search for the news on the Internet (Antunovic, 2016), there is a gap between the

ideas of different scholars, since none of them actually discusses the power of the public online news media in helping *ISIS* to recruit new members and spread propaganda nowadays.

2.2 Theoretical Approach: Thought Contagion Theory

While analyzing the roles of the online news media in reporting *ISIS* terrorist attacks, it is important to ground the arguments in the field of study. In this work, the role of the media in covering the terrorist attacks is analysed on the bases of *Thought Contagion Theory*[3]. The theory is based on the approach that ideas, so-called memes, affect society's behavior, emotions and ways of thinking through their dissemination to the public. Moreover, the theory states that ideas are claimed to strengthen their impact through their own presence and existence (Lynch, 2002; Howie, 2006). Mardsen (1998) complements the theory stating that even a small exposure of the idea of any phenomenon or ideology is a sufficient condition to and impact society's beliefs.

Therefore, this suggests that people's beliefs, emotions and behavior are influenced by the thoughts that are presented to them. Simultaneously, the more often ideas are expressed and presented, the bigger power they have to affect people.

2.2.1 Contagious Terrorism and the Media

Within the last few decades, *Thought Contagion Theory* has been linked with the media. In the theory, the media are claimed to stand as an element that generates the memes – ideas, beliefs and even human behavior models, related to terrorism and its perception while reporting the attacks. Barnhurst (1991) emphasizes that the concept of 'contagion' means that terrorism has a contagious effect, and most often this is done through the media.

One aspect, which illustrates the contagious effect that media have on terrorism can be identified as a collateral crime what is usually caused by individuals who copy the violet acts while taking examples from the incidences published by the news media (Nacos, 2009). Nacos (2009) suggests that the media coverage of terrorist attacks can help other perpetrators to plan further attacks

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[3] The theory was build on *Social Contagion Theory* and developed by Aaron Lynch in 1996 (Lynch, 1996, p. vii).

providing them with ideas of techniques, and presents this as a reason why similar terrorist attacks often comes in waves.

Howie (2006) argues that the *Thought Contagion Theory* contributes to understanding the emotional power that media have on society while reporting terrorism. According to Tsauro (2016), the contagion effect of the media creates a terrorist climate around people, as they become intimidated by the phenomenon. Howie (2006) complements that the media spread fear and anxiety related to terrorism, while reporting it. Thus, the media are blamed for generating various memes that affect society.

Interestingly, the media's contagious effect on terrorism is discussed to be present through encouraging new members to join to the terrorism groups or even create the new ones. The presence of idea of terrorism in the media may encourage even the formation of new terrorism groups (Levy cited in Picard, 1986).

However, not all scholars agreeably admit on the contagious effect of that media have while reporting on terrorism. Picard (1986) partly contradicts to the previous of the authors and states that terrorism can have a contagious effect not on the whole audience, but just on a particular group of people, with specific psychological background, who tend to be unsociable and gather the news just from the public sources of information, rather than using interpersonal communication. In this case, this group of audience constructs their beliefs and attitudes depending only on the news media.

Therefore, in this research, *Thought Contagion Theory* was applied while aiming to identify the roles that the online news media play while reporting *ISIS* terrorist attacks in Europe.

2.3 The News Media Roles While Covering Terrorist Attacks

The influence of the news media while reporting terrorist attacks goes far beyond its benefits for the perpetrators. Since the news media impact society and the way people think (McCombs, 2014), the coverage of terrorist attacks may also play a significant part within societies. Provocatively, Perse and Lambe (2016) claim that the media affect individuals, institutions, societies and even cultures.

Hence, in this chapter, various theories of scholars about the roles that media play beyond its effects on perpetrators are analysed.

2.3.1 Reporting Terrorism and Serving Public Interest

One of the primary functions of the news media is to provide the audience with the relevant news. Within the last few decades, the idea of the news media freedom from any state control has become highly popular and common in the majority of countries (Kenski, Jamieson, 2017). Particularly, reporting and presenting the news to the public in the democratic societies has been represented as a historic and traditional role that the news media has to perform (Miller, 1982). However, many scholars have controversially discussed this role of the news media in reporting terrorist attacks.

To begin with, reporting terrorism might be challenging for the news journalists, since the bound between serving the public interest and providing the audience with too much information is unclear. On the one hand, the news media are supposed to inform society about terrorist attacks, but, on the other hand, too much of coverage is claimed to be more harmful rather than useful (Powell, 2011). Therefore, while performing its main duty to inform the public about all the relevant information about the violence, fatalities and possible threats after the attack, the news media can simultaneously provide society with the negative outcome.

Beckett (2016) presents an interesting approach that detailed media coverage on the police operations and investigations after the terrorist attack can even put society at risk, as it provides the terrorists with the relevant information. Also, Paletz and Boiney (1992) complement the statement, claiming that while serving a public's right to know, the media can even prolong the police and rescue operations because of the exposure of an important information. Beckett (2016) concludes, that while reporting terrorist attacks to the public, the news media also uncover a high number of useful information for terrorists, what can help them to adjust their modus operandi. Therefore, Beckett (2016) further claims, journalists should always cooperate with the security officers and governmental institutions.

However, despite the risks that the news media might cause while reporting terrorist attacks, Schmid (1989, p.546) indicates the principles that journalists have to follow in Western democracies:

1) to report truthfully, that is, honestly, accurately, objectively and reliably;

2) to report comprehensively so that the public gets the most qualitative information available in order to develop understanding of conflicting approaches and to reduce ignorance of significant issues;

3) to report impartially, that is, with fairness to all sides who have a point;

4) to maintain editorial independence against all interest groups;

5) to separate news from commentary.

Therefore, disagreements between different opinions of the scholars indicate that the role of the news media to serve a public interest is still highly debatable. However, it still remains the primary function of the news media. Atwater (1987) claims that the media should report terrorism responsibly in order not to become perpetrators' tool to empower terrorism, as some more effects emerge from this primary role of the media. Thus, the further roles of the news media will be discussed in the next subsections.

2.3.2 Mediating Emotional Power

While covering terrorist acts, the news media not only provide an audience with the relevant information, but may also provoke an emotional response within society to the events reported in the news. Reinecke and Oliver (2017) together with Doveling et al. (2011) state that the media have a huge power to influence the emotions of its audience. This approach suggests that for terrorists, the news media are a tool to transmit the emotion that they seek to spread within society. Nacos (2002) proposes the idea that terrorist groups that rely on religious extremism aim to bear the pain within societies, and this is implemented by the mass media. Hence, the news media are claimed to influence the emotions of its audience while reporting terrorist attacks.

Furthermore, Nacos (2002) states that perpetrators are aware of the fact, that the media can help them to create the atmosphere of fear and massive panic among people, and that this emotional impact is transmitted by the news media after each terrorist attack. The statement is supported by a study of Lerner et al. (2003), who argue that when people receive the news about terrorist attacks through the mass media, they develop various feelings such as anxiety, fear and anger.

For this reason, various terrorists groups, especially those, that are related to religiously inspired terrorism, such as *ISIS,* usually design their attacks in order to generate a massive fear within society and they know that the news media will unintentionally help them to do that (Nacos, 2002). Similarly, Paletz and Vinson (1992) add that one of the main aims of the terrorists is to intimidate societies while causing attacks and that the media enable them to achieve it. Beckett (2016) also complements that the news media help perpetrators to spread a massive panic within society. Hence, this suggests that *ISIS* perpetrators perceive the news media as a powerful tool that may help them to implement their goal to spread panic and fear within society.

Interestingly, Tsauro (2016) even introduces an approach that terrorists do not even need to cause attacks every day to achieve this objective, because every single quote in the news media about the attack continually causes threat and fear. Therefore, the media are claimed to provide society with more fear, rather than actual terrorist attacks.

Building on from the idea that the media may evoke fear and panic among people while covering terrorist attacks, Barnett and Reynolds (2009) claims that the news media are able to spread diverse emotions. To illustrate, Chouliaraki (2008) argues that the news media not only make people anxious while presenting the information about the terrorist attacks, but also it inspires a distant suffering within society. Therefore, the media are claimed to provoke a huge diversity of emotions among its audience through the coverage of terrorism.

Having said that, Cepulkauskaite (cited in Peresin, 2007) in relation to the media's ability to affect society on an emotional level, introduces an approach that the news media are only powerful among people when it is their only resource of information. In defense of the online news media,

Boczkowski et al. (2018) claims that it is the primary source of information for young and middle-aged people who create the majority of every society. This suggests that the online news media do not affect older generation as much as it influence younger people.

Overall, the news media are claimed to spread diverse emotions, but the mutual agreement on this debate has not been reached yet. While some scholars investigate the influence of the news media on society's emotions in general, there has been just a little research about the power of the online news media to affect society while reporting *ISIS* attacks exactly, what creates a gap in the study field.

2.3.3 Media Coverage and Future Attacks

Since the media are discussed to play various roles while reporting terrorism, the next question, which arises from the phenomenon, is wither or not it contributes to the further development of terrorist attacks. Paletz and Boiney (1992, p. 10) propose two media indictments related to terrorism exposure in the news: 'antiterrorist', that claims that the media do not help perpetrators to plan the future attacks, and 'proterrorist', that states that the media may even encourage future terrorism. However, various scholars present different argument to the theory.

Tsauro (2016) argues, that the media prolong the effects of terrorism and, consequently, terrorists do not need to cause attacks every day. The author (Tsauro, 2016) further states that every reference to the terrorist attack in the news media causes threat, what is one of the main terrorists aims. Thus, this suggests that less coverage of terrorism in the media may lead to more attacks, since the perpetrators strive for the media attention.

Having said that, Peresin (2007) presents another angle of this debate and argues that depriving the publicity of the perpetrators in the news media may reduce the occurrence of their acts. Similarly, Barnhurst (1991) complements that each time the news media reports terrorism, it provokes more attacks, what consequently stimulates further media coverage and creates a repetitive cycle. The study of Barnhurst (1991) has also unfolded, that there is a positive correlation between the media

exposure of terrorism and further attacks. However, the study investigated the printed press instead of the actual online news media.

Furthermore, according to the study of Nacos et al. (cited in Paletz, Boiney, 1992), even though terrorism receives the media attention, the perpetrators rarely get the amount of the news coverage, what would be enough to encourage some further attacks to occur. However, the research was done in the United States of America within the U.S. newspapers, so the findings may not completely apply to the online news media in Europe and its coverage on ISIS terror attacks.

Therefore, there has been some literature on the issue that shows some evidence that the media may impact further terrorist attack, but particularly *ISIS* terrorist group and the online news media have not been addressed yet directly.

2.4 Relevant Studies in the Field

Many scholars have discussed various roles that the media play while reporting terrorism. Nevertheless, none of them has researched the coverage of the online news media on *ISIS* terrorist attacks that have happened in Europe within the last few years. Thus, the previous studies in the field provide no credible answer to the present research question. However, some relevant findings have been introduced.

Jetter (2017) in the study '*Terrorism and the Media: The Effect of US Television Coverage on Al-Qaeda Attacks'* argues that the perpetrators cause subsequent attacks, when the media coverage on the incidences is more frequent. The scholar (Jetter, 2017) also claims that there is a direct relation between the television coverage of terrorist attacks and the increase of their occurrence. However, although Jetter (2017) unfolds the relation between the news media coverage and future attacks, the findings still lack accuracy, as they do not represent any evidence of the influence of the online news media, what is nowadays considered to be the primary source of the information for the majority of the news audience.

Having said that, according to the study of Spencer (2012) '*Lessons Learned: Terrorism And the Media*', the news media play a communication channel role for terrorists. In the words of the scholar Spencer (2012), it helps them to spread fear of violence that they are willing to transmit to society. However, the research was only based on the opinion polls method, rather than an in-depth qualitative analysis of the issue.

Anand et al. (2017) in the research '*Fear and Anger: How does the emotionalisation of news reports affect perceptions of terrorism risk*' contradict to the approaches that claim that the media coverage generates fear, anxiety and panic in the public. After analyzing the news media coverage of bombings in Manchester Arena in 2017, the scholars (Anand et al., 2017) presented that the framings of the media, such as 'fear' and 'anger', in relation to terrorism, only had an insignificant influence on the audience emotional perception. Nevertheless, even though the study is recent and directly related to the terrorist attack caused by *ISIS*, the sample of the respondents in the research was younger adults, what did not allow to draw any conclusions about the whole audience.

Berkowitz (2017) in the research *'Solidarity Through the Visual: Healing Images in the Brussels Terrorism Attacks'* discovered that the news media coverage of terrorist attacks provokes the feeling of solidarity among society. The research analyses the media coverage of the English language media on Islamists' terrorist attacks, which happened in Brussels in 2016, and the social solidarity that the media inspired during these incidents. The findings also uncovered that there is a link between the reports of terrorism and the increased feeling of patriotism in the country. However, Berkowitz (2017) only analyses the visual images presented in the media without the news articles. Hence, the results might be related to the role of visual material in the news media, but not the whole content of news.

In conclusion, various scholars present diverse ideas on the roles of the media in reporting terrorist attacks. Although the findings of different studies significantly vary, they all indicate that the media's impact in reporting terrorist attacks goes far beyond its informational function and serving

a public interest. However, none of scholars has analysed the role of the online news media in reporting *ISIS* terrorist attacks, therefore this research aims to fill the gap in the field of study.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Questions, Aims and Objectives

The main research question:

RQ1: What are the roles of the online news media in reporting *ISIS* terrorist attacks?

Research sub-questions:

RQ 2: How do the online news media depict *ISIS* terrorist attacks in Europe?

RQ 3: How may the coverage of the online news media impact society while reporting *ISIS* terrorist attacks in Europe based its effects on *Thought Contagion Theory*?

RQ 4: How may the coverage of online news media influence the outcome of *ISIS* terrorist attacks based its effects on *Thought Contagion Theory*?

Research Aims

The aims of this research are:

1. To locate the roles that the online news media play in reporting *ISIS* terrorist attacks.

2. To contribute to filling the gap in the field of study and to encourage more investigation.

Research Objectives

In order to satisfy the aims of this research, the further objectives were set for the study:

- To investigate the most common themes in the news articles about *ISIS* terrorist attacks on *BBC Online.*

- To examine the range of themes in *BBC Online* news articles that may have an impact on society's perceptions and reactions to terrorism.

- To explore the range of themes in *BBC Online* news articles that may affect the outcome of *ISIS* terrorist attacks.

3.2 Research Methods

3.2.1 A Case Study Approach

In order to achieve the objectives of the study, a case study of *BBC Online* was chosen. According to Yin (1989) a case study approach is useful when: 1) the researcher seeks to investigate complex social phenomena; 2) when the investigator does not have control over the phenomenon. Since the roles that the online news media play while reporting *ISIS* terror attacks might have a significant effect on society (and the researcher has no control to manipulate their relevant behaviors), a case study approach was chosen as applicable for the investigation

According to Yin (1989), case study is applicable when the research addresses the question *'How?'* Since in order to locate the roles of the online news media, this study aims to answer the following research sub-questions *'How do the online news media depict ISIS terrorist attacks in Europe?'*, *'How may the coverage of the online news media impact society while reporting ISIS terrorist attacks in Europe based its effects on Thought Contagion Theory?'* and *'How may the coverage of the online news media influence the outcome of ISIS terrorist attacks based its effects on Thought Contagion Theory?'* a case study strategy was again chosen as applicable for this investigation.

Even though case studies sometimes are criticized for the lack of generalization ability (Tsang, 2014), the scientific facts are usually based not a single investigation, but on a collection of them (Yin, 1989). Thus, case studies contribute to the universal findings in the field and may lead to significant generalizations (Noor, 2008), what this research aimed to accomplish.

The major argument in defense of the case study, is that a case study concentrates on quality rather than on quantity and offers a deeper understanding of the phenomena. Creswell (2003) claims that in cases studies the subject of the study is explored in depth and the researcher is able to collect detailed information.

The main aim in this approach is to reconstruct and investigate the field in a broad perspective while using an in-depth analysis of one case (Hamel et al., 1993). The case study approach allows

the researcher to carry out deep and qualitative research and present findings valid for the generalizations.

Finally, the essential function of a case study is 'locate global in the local' (Hamel cited in Hamel et al., 1993), therefore, this approach of the cases analysis was used as primary in the research. While analyzing the content of the *BBC Online*, the research aimed to find the universal tendencies of the roles that the news media play in reporting *ISIS* terror attacks. A case study of *BBC Online* was undertaken in order to find the results that would be help to make conclusions about the phenomenon globally in Europe.

3.2.2 Qualitative Thematic Analysis

This research takes a qualitative approach to define the roles that the online news media play in reporting *ISIS* terrorist attacks. The term comes from a Latin word *qualitas*, which means 'of what kind' and determines the attribute of something (Peeva, 2009). Qualitative research into the media studies also leads to unfolding the meaning of the events, reported by the media (Dill, 2013). Since this investigation aimed to understand what meaning the online news media have in reporting *ISIS* terror attacks, qualitative analysis was applicable to the study.

Moreover, qualitative analysis allows the investigator to create a 'language – based symbolic reality', which is then applied to a social reality (Brennen, 2013, p. 4). Flyvbjerg (2006) points out that even though qualitative studies leave more space for the investigator's personal interpretation, at the same time they reflect on real-life events and situations more in-depth.

Furthermore, the method of thematic analysis was used while aiming to determine the thematic patterns within the data (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun, Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis provides the researcher with the opportunity to analyse different aspects of the study and investigate the topic in a deep and broad perspective (Boyatzis, 1998). The method is also claimed to be useful for analysing narrative materials of real life events (Bondas et al., 2013).

Therefore, after collecting the news articles from the *BBC Online*, qualitative thematic analysis was conducted. Braun and Clarke (2006) represent six phases of doing the thematic analysis. Since it is considered to be the most influential approach of thematic analysis (Maguire, Delahunt, 2017), it was used for conducting this research as well. The six stages were as follows (Braun, Clarke, 2006):

1. Familiarising with the data to be analysed.

2. Generating the initial codes.

3. Investigating the themes.

4. Reviewing the derived themes.

5. Defining the final themes.

6. Presenting the final analysis.

While conducting the analysis, pre-set codes were also not used. The codes were developed during the process of analyzing the articles. Thus, *'open coding'* (Maguire, Delahunt, 2017, p. 3355**)** was used while performing the study.

Finally, during the analysis of the articles, all articles was given specific codes in order to make their referencing and quoting easier while presenting the findings. Thus, every time the article was quoted, the code was written next to the quotation. The actual list of references of the news articles that were quoted while describing the findings was presented in the Appendix.

3.2.3 Data Collection

The main difficulty at this stage was finding a representative sample, whilst making sure that the data were both, manageable and trustworthy. That is why it was important to ensure that sufficient data would be collected to identify all the relevant themes to this research (Fugar, Potts cited in Hammersley, 2015). Therefore, a purposive sampling was chosen to collect the data as it offers a possibility to investigate 'information – rich cases for in – depth studies' (Gentles et al., 2015).

The purposive sampling strategy is also useful when it is hard to define the whole population (Etikan et al., 2015). Since terrorism attracts a high amount of the news media coverage and it

would have been hard, in terms of the time and effort, for one researcher to investigate all the articles on *BBC Online* that have been written about the *ISIS* terror attacks, this strategy was chosen for an in-depth analysis.

In order to lower the risk of the bias and vulnerability to errors (Etikan et al., 2015), some parameters were taken into account while sampling. It is claimed that the more violent the event is and the more fatalities it has, the more media coverage and attention it receives (Vasterman, 2005). Additionally, it is also stated that local terrorist attacks always attract more media coverage, rather than the ones that happen in other countries (Ruigrok et al. 2007). Therefore, based on these factors and the fact that the news website *BBC Online* belongs to the *British Broadcasting Corporation*, it was decided to analyse the coverage of one terrorist attack in the United Kingdom between 2014 and 2018 with the highest numbers, what, according to Vasterman (2005), refers to the highest amount of the news media coverage.

Moreover, the *Global Terrorism Database* was used to collect the information about the number of fatalities during *ISIS* terror attacks. Therefore, based on the data of the *Global Terrorism Database*, the news articles on *BBC Online* about Manchester Arena bombing, that occurred on 22 May 2017 and had 23 fatalities in total, ware selected for the analysis.

Furthermore, according to a study '*Terrorism in the News: The Efficiency and Impact of Sampling Methods on Data Collection and Content Analysis'*, in order to achieve a sufficient amount of objective representative data in terrorism and media studies while analyzing the content of the news reports, the sample size has to be the articles collected within 20-29 weeks after the terrorist attack. Therefore, based on this approach, 155 articles from the day of event about Manchester Arena bombing were manually collected while entering the keywords to the *BBC Online* search engine, such as 'Manchester', 'arena', 'attack', 'terrorism' and '*ISIS*', within 29 weeks of time frame in order to maximize the sample size, what included the reports from 22 May 2017 until 11 December 2017.

Since the data collection method and sampling of qualitative studies are usually adjusted during the research (Mack, et al., 2005), the possibilities to extend the sample size were taken into account if not enough sufficient amount of information for the analysis was gathered during the process.

3.2.4 Credibility

Since thematic analysis is recognized as a method that has a risk of interpretation and is often linked with possibilities for bias (Nowell et al., 2017), it was important to ensure credibility and trustworthiness of the study. In order to avoid bias, *'prolonged engagement'* was used what helped to enhance credibility of the research outcomes (Lincoln, Guba cited in Nowell et al., 2017, p. 3). The term refers to investing sufficient amount of time for the researcher to familiarize themselves with the sources of information. In this case, it was ensured that the researcher would spend a high amount of time to analyse the article for an in – depth analysis. All the articles were read three times each. An average amount of time for an article per one reading was 15 minutes of analysis. Thus, approximately 116 hours were spent on coding and investigating the articles.

3.2.5 Limitations

Despite the valuable information gathered from the articles on *BBC Online,* a few limitations of the research were present during the process. A leading limitation while conducting the investigation was the presence of only one researcher. This factor limited the credibility of the study and its outcomes, because it did not provide the research with *'peer debriefing'* (Brownlee et al, 2014, p. 31) to lower the risk for incorrect interpretations, what is useful while undertaking a qualitative investigation (Lincoln, Guba cited in Nowell et al., 2017). Because of the lack of more scholars in a team, this strategy for ensuring credibility was not able to implement.

Furthermore, due to a lack of time it was impossible for one researcher to apply triangulation of data sources and data collection methods, what is also considered to be an important task while seeking to ensure the credibility of the study (Guest et al, 2011; Lincoln, Guba cited in Nowell et al., 2017). There was not enough time for sampling the articles of different terrorist attacks and

using more than one method to analyse them. Clearly, having a team of a few scholars while conducting the research would have provided a study with the higher rate of credibility. However, meaningful results to the field of study were still discovered.

Finally, it was difficult to collect the articles, as the main online news databases do not provide access to *BBC Online* content. It narrowed down the sampling strategy, as it was impossible to collect the news articles about different *ISIS* terrorist attacks separately and manually. However, *BBC Online* search engine allowed the researcher to investigate all articles about one particular topic, thus, useful data was still gathered from the website. Even though it limited the quality of the generalization of the research, the findings still contributed to the field and put the basis for further investigations.

3.2.6 Ethical Considerations

The data used for this research has been taken from a public news website *BBC Online*, therefore, the content conveyed only a public information and no privacy law was violated. The study also did not involve any interpersonal interactions, thus, there were no additional aspects of ethical considerations for this study beyond those required for any scholar.

4.0 FINDINGS

Four main themes with sub-themes were emerged from the data while conducting thematic analysis. The main themes were: 'perpetrator', 'solidarity', 'victims' and 'violence'. The findings will be presented in detail in the section with theme maps, quotations from the articles and data description.

4.1 Perpetrator
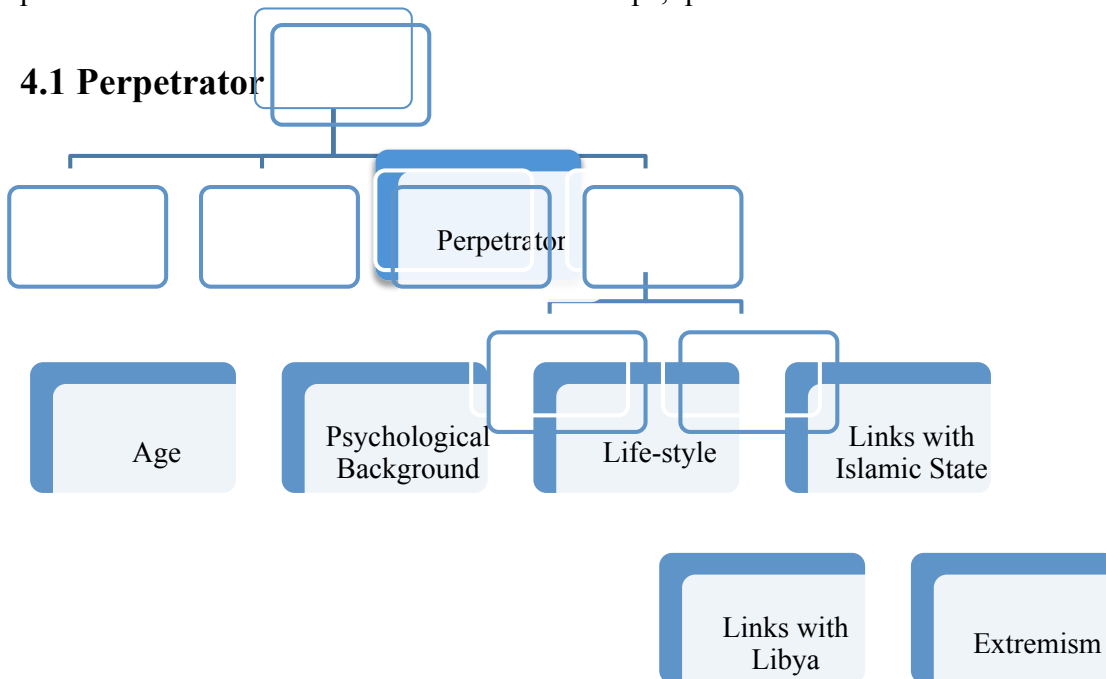
Figure 1 'Perpetrator' theme map

In the articles, the perpetrator is usually indentified as a 'bomber' (BBC10, BBC13, BBC132, BBC46, BBC122, BBC117) and 'suicide attacker' (BBC126, BBC117, BBC106). The perpetrator is also presented as a young man, with specific psychological background and life-style. Additionally, the perpetrator's links with the *Islamic State* are also portrayed in the news coverage. This representation of the perpetrator in the media generates the stereotypical image of the person, implementing the terrorist attacks and provides society with the background knowledge about *Islamic State.*

Age

The perpetrator's age was discovered as a sub-theme of his depiction in the articles. The age has been mentioned in the general characterization of the attacker, what represented him as a young person:

Salman Abedi is understood to be a 22-year-old born in Manchester to parents of Libyan descent, and a former University of Salford student. (BBC152)

Additionally, the media have repetitively included the age of the perpetrator in the news even when the main aim of the report was not to present the profile of the attacker:

Attacker 22-year-old Salman Abedi detonated a home-made bomb in the arena's foyer as crowds were leaving a performance by US singer Ariana Grande just after 22:30 BST on 22 May. (BBC46)

Abedi, 22, bought a white Nissan Micra on 13 April - two days before leaving the UK for a month-long trip to Libya. (BBC117)

This repetitive emphasis of the perpetrator's age generates the idea that people who cause the terrorist attacks are young. This contributes to the general stereotype of the *Islamic State* terrorists.

Psychological Background

While presenting the general image of the perpetrator, the online news media have also identified the personality traits of the person who caused the bombing. In this way, the media coverage stimulates the idea of unusual personality features that tend to develop someone's interest in terrorism.

While writing about the perpetrator, the online news media quote the people, who knew the perpetrator, and who had faced his unpredictable behavior even in his very young age:

A former classmate of Abedi's told the BBC that he was a "very jokey lad" but also "very short tempered" and would get angry at "the littlest thing". (BBC152)

Besides, the media also have depicted the perpetrator as someone, who would have not engaged with various groups in his social life, such as classmates and friends. The perpetrator is also represented as an individual, who had separated himself from society, while living in solitude:

Bomber Salman Abedi was remembered by some as a loner who would sometimes read books in the corner. (BBC129)

Briefing reporters at the headquarters of Greater Manchester Police on Thursday, Ch Supt Jackson said it was "hard to get inside [Abedi's] head" in terms of how he was radicalized. (BBC106)

Therefore, the characterization of the perpetrator's psychological background creates a stereotype that people, who tend to develop an interest in causing terrorist attacks, might have a contradictive personality with destructive feelings, such as anger. This adds to the general stereotype of the *Islamic State* terrorists.

Life-style

'Life-style' was also discovered as a sub-theme for the 'perpetrator' in the articles. The online news media depict the criminal background of perpetrator's life. The details of the official criminal report made by the police are given to illustrate the illegal activities that the perpetrator was engaged in:

Mr Hopkins said: "At this stage I have no other information other than what is on our system about his theft, receiving stolen goods, minor assault... Five years ago, so he would have been 16/17. (BBC126)

Additionally, the online news media have quoted impressions of the witnesses who had realized that the perpetrator was undertaking unusual activities in a flat, which he was renting before committing the attack:

Details have emerged about a flat Salman Abedi is said to have been using in Manchester until about six weeks before his suicide attack. A friend of Abedi's landlord claims the bomber left behind a flat that smelled of chemicals and he had crossed-out children's stickers on the walls. (BBC63)

When Mr Elwafi arrived at the flat an hour later, Abedi was gone, the friend said. He found squares of curtain-like material cut up, a metal rod in the bath, a chemical smell, the electricity turned off and a smoke alarm disconnected, Mr El-Hudarey said. (BBC63)

The online news media outline the perpetrator's criminal actions throughout a few years until the terrorist attack was implemented and simultaneously stimulates a stereotype to the audience that the perpetrator had always had a tendency for illegal activities. This encourages the readers to think that people who cause terrorism come from criminal background.

Links with Islamic State

Even though the news media tend to avoid mentioning the name of *Islamic State* in the articles, it yet draws a link between the perpetrator and the militant Islamist group. It indicates that the media seek to highlight the relation between the terrorist and *Islamic State*:

One of the biggest IS recruiters locally was a man called Raphael Hostey - he lived halfway between the Abedis and Abdallah. (BBC143)

Additionally, the online news media several times try to draw a link between *ISIS* and the perpetrator through reporting the perpetrator's extremist views and his relations to Libya, where the *Islamic State* movement has been active for several years.

Links with Libya

A close relation between the perpetrator, who caused the bombing in Manchester Arena, and Libya is often mentioned by the news media. This presents Libya as a country, where *Islamic State* has been highly active and as a place, which had influenced Abedi (the perpetrator) to commit the suicide bombing. The fact that the perpetrator had traveled to Libya several times has been highly emphasized in the articles. The online news media relate theses trips to the terrorist attack claiming that the perpetrator committed after he came back from his last trip to Libya:

Abedi left the UK on 15 April and travelled to Libya before returning back into the UK on the 18 May, the police investigation has found. (BBC46)

Police believe Abedi wanted to carry out the attack within days of returning to the UK after a month-long trip to Libya. (BBC46)

Additionally, in order to strengthen the idea, the online news media quote the police officer who has suspected that the perpetrator also gained the experience how to create a bomb in Libya:

Salman Abedi travelled to Libya a number of times in his life. What we are looking at is the number of ways he learned the skills to build the device… (BBC106)

Finally, the news media also represent the perpetrator's Libyan origin while reporting his family background:

The family, of Libyan origin, lived at several addresses in Manchester, including properties which were raided by the police. (BBC46)

Therefore, Libya is presented as a place, where Abedi (the perpetrator) was influenced by *Islamic State.* In this way, the media generate image of the cultural background of the terrorist and also *Islamic State.*

Extremism

The extremist political and religious views of the perpetrator have also been indicated as a reference of the links between him and the *Islamic State*. Abedi's attitude towards implementing drastic actions to support his radical views has been disclosed in the news reports:

According to the source, Abedi had been saying it was worth dying for a cause and suicide bombing was OK. (BBC129)

Besides, the media have reported that Abedi's had had an interest in extremism since he was a child. This highlights the perpetrator's strong interest in extremism that the *Islamic State* promotes and its power to influence young people:

Others in the community did report Abedi. A local youth worker told Panorama that while Abedi was at college in his teens, teachers and pupils were so worried they called an anti-terror hotline a number of times. (BBC129)

'… before leaving the school in 2011, Abedi became "more and more religious" and that this might explain why he cut ties with former classmates.' (BBC152)

Two people who knew Abedi while he was a college student made separate calls to an anti-terrorism hotline to warn police about his extremist views. (BBC126)

The BBC has been told by a Muslim community worker that members of the public called the police anti-terrorism hotline about Abedi's extreme and violent views several years ago. (BBC143)

Finally, the online news media have also disclosed that the perpetrator was known for the police because of his extremist views later in his adulthood. While presenting that, the online news media reference to the idea that the perpetrator's radical views had not changed after he grew up:

It was later revealed that MI5 is to hold an inquiry into the way it dealt with warnings from the public that Abedi had expressed extremist views and was a potential threat. (BBC46)

The security service, which was alerted to Abedi's extremist views three times prior to last Monday's attack, will examine how it dealt with the warnings. (BBC148)

Therefore, the online news media portray the power of the *Islamic State* to spread the radical and extremis views within young people. Additionally, it also indicates that young people from countries, where the *Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant* is active, are not resistant to its ideology. While reporting this information, the online news media provide the audience with the knowledge about the *Islamic State* and simultaneously generate the stereotype of terrorists.

4.2 Solidarity
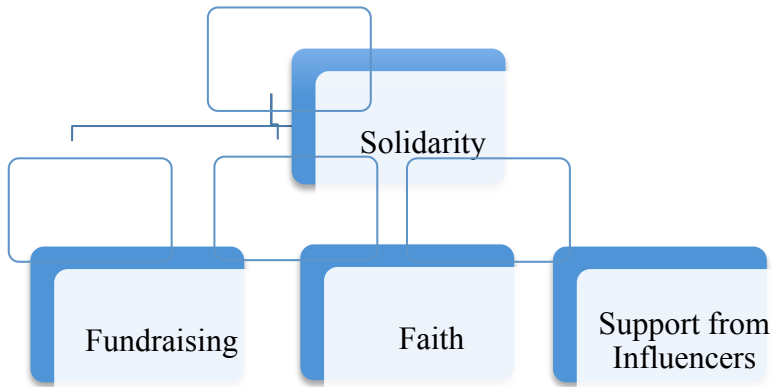
Figure 2 'Solidarity' theme map

While analyzing the data, 'solidarity' was discovered as a broad theme, which is repeated highly often in the articles. The online news media emphasize the solidarity of the people through the reports on kind actions of various society members towards the victims and their families. Mutual people's faith to stop terrorism is expressed in the news articles that report the suicide bombing. Additionally, the representation of fundraising is highly common in the news, what supports the statement of solidarity among society members. This presence of solidarity in the online news media stimulates the idea of support and the society being united during the times of hardship.

Fundraising

'Fundraising' was defined as a sub-theme for 'solidarity', as the online news media present many news articles about donating the money for the victims and their families to support their recovering from injuries and help to progress with their lives after the tragedy. The news coverage depicts fundraising as an expression of solidarity and simultaneously promotes the idea of support through donating:

> 'People from communities across the UK and right around the world are showing their solidarity by donating.' (BBC81)

Some political authorities are quoted in the news reports on the terrorist attack, what emphasizes the importance of fundraising and donating phenomenon among society members.

Councillor Sue Murphy, chair of the new charity, said: 'Those who have been affected by this incident may need longer term support. We're releasing early payments to go some way to alleviating any financial suffering in the short term and we're working on plans to distribute the remaining funds. We remain grateful to everyone who has shown solidarity with the city - thank you. (BBC116)

Councillor Sue Murphy said the money would be 'distributed to those who need it, and when they need it most. (BBC123)

Additionally, the news reports highlight the amount of money that has been collected through donations. This adds to the significance of fundraising and donating phenomenon of society members and presents the outcome of their support. In this way, the online news media shows how important it is to help the people, who have suffered from the consequences of the terrorist attack:

Trustees for the We Love Manchester Emergency Fund agreed on Tuesday to release payments of £50,000 to families of the victims and those who were more seriously injured. (BBC116)

More than £11.2m has been raised by the appeal. (BBC116)

Trustees for the We Love Manchester Emergency Fund, which has raised £6.9m, agreed on Wednesday to release £1m in the first round of funding. (BBC123)

Hence, the media report in detail on fundraising and donating highly often, with complementing statements from important political figures. This adds the value to initiation and shows to society that it is important to help and support the victims and their relatives.

Faith

The online news media report on people's will to continue living regular life even though the terrorist attack has threatened them. A will and strength to continue living a normal life together with a determination not surrender to terrorism are common subjects in the quotes of various society members in the news articles. Besides, the online news media also portray society's shared

desire to resist and halt terrorism. While reporting such subjects, the online news media promote the value of common faith.

The news articles depict people's endurance and resistance to hardships that terrorism has caused. Society's collective and constructive attitude towards continuing to live their usual daily life is presented in the news reports as an important weapon in fighting against terrorism. This kind of news coverage promotes the values of faith, solidarity and moral strength, and highlights their importance in society's recovering after the terrorist attack:

'If we were to stop living they would have won…' (BBC71)

'Praising the emergency services who were helping people during this "terrible and traumatic time", he said the country must come together and "not allow this violence to divide us or prevent us from leading a decent and normal life". (BBC94)

'He said: "The people of Manchester will remember the victims forever and we will defy the terrorists by working together to create cohesive, diverse communities that are stronger together.' (BBC94)

Saying her thoughts and prayers were with the families of those killed and the injured, the PM said there would be difficult days ahead but Britain's "spirit will never be broken... terrorists will never win and our way of life will always prevail". (BBC89)

'People have been emotional but what unites them all is a steely defiance to carry on. Commuter Hannah Khan, 32, said: 'I just want to hold my hands out and hug everyone.' (BBC126)

'Chalked out messages like "we will stand together, no fear one love" on the ground have not faded despite the numbers coming to pay their respects and leave poignant tributes.' (BBC71)

Additionally, hope and belief in society's own ability to carry on with their daily lives are also depicted in the news articles. The online news media used the quotes of various society members to portray the city that has been affected by terrorism being strong and united to endure the struggles. Various examples of how people continue doing their daily routines and still find space in their

lives for light and hope are portrayed by the online news media. It strengthens the image of society's solidarity and positive outlook towards the future:

'We'll get through this because that is the spirit of Manchester.' (BBC94)

'And while we mourn the victims of last night's appalling attack, we stand defiant. The spirit of Manchester - and the spirit of Britain - is far mightier than the sick plots of depraved terrorists. That is why the terrorists will never win, and we will prevail.' (BBC154)

'The Manchester attack may have tested the city's resolve, but people are finding light in the darkness through its twin loves of music and sport.' (BBC145)

'Manchester's two time-honoured traditions of gigs and sporting events are continuing, with a renewed sense of defiance.' (BBC88)

'He said he had 'mixed feelings but I'm glad to be back at work'. (BBC126)

Support from Influencers

Important public figures and entertainers are portrayed showing their help and support to the victims. Using them in the news coverage enables the media to influence other people to follow their example in helping each other:

The Queen praised hospital staff for "coming together" after hearing how many had come in from home offering their assistance in the wake of the attack. (BBC147)

Another girl, 14-year-old Evie Mills from Harrogate, was visited by Grande who also spoke to nurses and staff during her time at the Manchester hospital. Evie was one of the youngsters who met the Queen when she paid her respects on 25 May to those injured in the bombing. (BBC52)

Ariana Grande is to return to Manchester to play a benefit gig for the victims of the attack at her concert on Monday. The American star said her "heart, prayers and deepest condolences" were with the victims of the Manchester attack. (BBC62)

Furthermore, the online news media depict that the outside communities that have not been directly affected by the terrorist attack also support the victims and stand together with them in solidarity. The quotes of people living in different places of the world are presented in the news articles as a sign of solidarity. Hence, while depicting the reactions of the outside communities and foreign countries the online news media present terrorism a global issue:

Foreign leaders have also expressed their condolences and solidarity with the UK in the face of the global terror threat. (BBC89)

Organisers say: "Birmingham is a great city and, like Manchester, we shall be showing the world our true spirit of love, unity, and support for one another whilst honouring the victims of Monday night's attack". (BBC151)

A tribute to the victims of the Manchester bombing has appeared on a Glasgow landmark. (BBC54)

4.3 Victims

Victims

Funaral   Family Loss   Paying Tribute to Victims
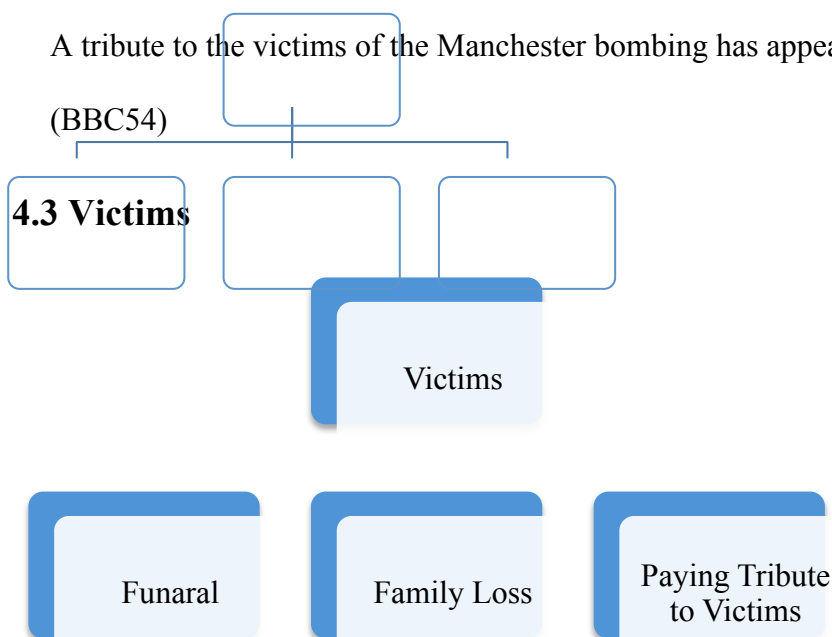
**Figure 3 'Victims' theme map**

Representation of 'victims' was emerged as a broad theme in the news coverage of Manchester Arena bombing. The online news media depict victims from various angles, showing their extraordinary talents and personalities, their importance to family members and their even funeral. Additionally, sentimental memories and feelings about the victims are also presented in news

reports. In this way, the online news media mediate the diversity of emotions emerging form the outcome of the terrorist attack.

Funeral

'Funeral' was discovered as a sub-theme for 'victims'. The online news media provide the readers with broad descriptions of the funeral ceremonies. Interestingly, even though funeral is generally sad event for the families and relatives of the dead victims, the online news media present it brightly:

> Hundreds of mourners dressed in blue - the favourite colour of Manchester attack victim Olivia Campbell-Hardy - have gathered to celebrate her life. The funeral, at the Parish Church of St Anne in Tottington, near Bury, was "a celebration of her life". <…> Speaking ahead of the funeral, Ms Campbell said: "We are not calling it a funeral, we know we've got the official bit to do but afterwards we're calling it her party. (BBC41)

> As the funeral came to a close the hymn All Things Bright and Beautiful was sung. (BBC34)

Therefore, the online news media choose to depict the funeral of the victims in a way that mediates peace to the audience through the content of the articles.

Family Loss

'Family loss' has been a highly common theme in the news while reporting on victims of the terrorist attack. Many quotations by the family members on what the dead victims have meant to them have been portrayed in the news articles. This highlights the feelings of loss, devastation and moral pain as consequences of the terrorist attack:

> The family of a man who died in the Manchester attack have said they are "heartbroken". (BBC75)

> 'The hole left in our family following Kelly's tragic passing is immeasurable.' (BBC115)

In a statement, the parents of Eilidh MacLeod said: "Words cannot express how we feel at losing our darling Eilidh" (BBC73)

The family of a man who was killed in the Manchester attack have said his loss is "immeasurable". (BBC121)

Additionally, the importance of the dead to their family members and friends is also portrayed in the news reports. It emphasizes the significant roles that the victims played in their families and a feeling of loss that they had to experience after the terrorist attack:

In a statement they said: 'Elaine was one of a kind and had an impact on so many lives. She was a friend to so many and an amazing daughter, sister and aunt'. (BBC134)

He read a tribute from Lauren that said: 'Our mum was not just a mum, she was also our best friend.' (BBC39)

'Our hearts have been shattered. We loved Nell so very much, she was our world,' they said in a statement. (BBC53)

'She was our mum, our best friend, our everything,' her daughters said.' (BBC103)

'Her love for all was immense and she was like the glue that held us all together.' (BBC134)

Paying tribute, his relatives said he was the "life and soul of his family". (BBC121)

Paying Tribute to Victims

While reporting the news about the terrorist attack and its victims, the online news media have showed a tendency to quote statements about victims that would emphasize their talents and unique personalities. The victims of terrorist attack are usually portrayed as strong, bright and loving. Highly often, the victims are lionized. This adds to the significance of the loss that victims' families and society experienced as a consequence of the terrorist attack:

The first hymn, The Lord of the Dance, reflected her love of performing. Her cremation, a private event, also had recordings of her singing to There You'll Be and All Of Me. (BBC41)

In the statement, the Jones family said: "Our Nell was just lovely. She was top class, she was clever and she was fun. She would have a go at anything and just loved life. (BBC135)

'She had an "effervescent and outgoing personality", a huge heart and was thoughtful beyond belief, her family added.' (BBC134)

'John was one in a million and loved by so many…' (BBC53)

In an emotional tribute to the 14-year-old from Barra, her father Roddy and mother Marion said she was 'beautiful, popular and talented'. (BBC64)

Her family said she "just loved life", had a major love of music, loved to talk and could speak to complete strangers with ease, making everyone around her feel comfortable and relaxed.'
(BBC134)

Therefore, while depicting the victims, the online news media mediate various emotions to the readers, such as moral pain, devastation and the feeling of loss, whereas the victims' funeral is always portrayed brightly and peacefully. Therefore, the online news media tend to present various emotions related to the loss of the victims.

4.4 Violence

Violence

Injuries

Descriptions of the Scene

Increased Threat Level
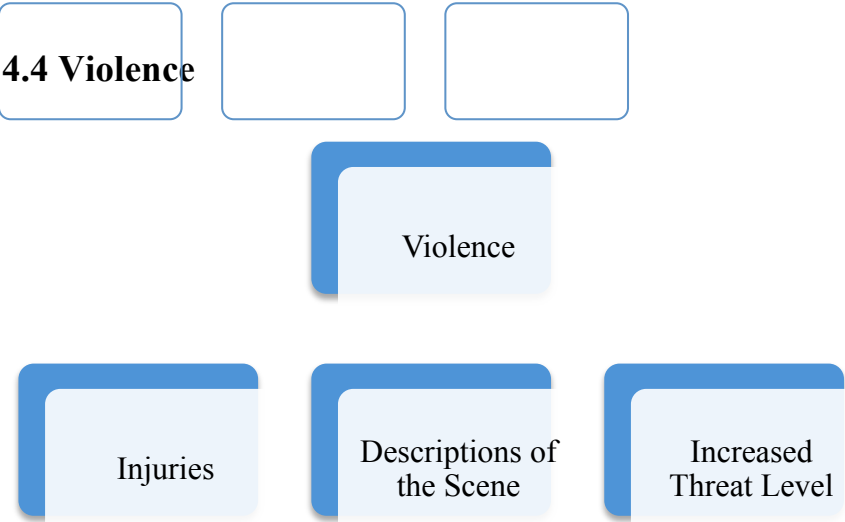
Figure 4 'Violence' theme map

'Violence' was discovered as one more dominating theme in the news coverage on the terrorist attack. Portrayal of various 'injuries' and 'descriptions of the scene' were emerged as sub-themes,

supporting the violent effects of the terrorist attack, whereas 'increased threat level' was discovered as identifying the possibilities for more terrorist attacks to happen.

Injuries

The online news media portray physical traumas that the victims have experienced because of the terrorist attack. In this way, media coverage intensifies audience's negative perception of violence. Disastrous consequences after the terrorist attack have been depicted in the news coverage that convey the horrific portrayals of violence:

> In the picture, half her jeans had been cut off by paramedics and she needed help to walk because of 14 shrapnel wounds she had suffered. Once at hospital medics operated to remove the lumps of metal from her legs. (BBC31)

Furthermore, the online news media depict the struggles that a little girl has to overcome after being injured during the incident. A journalist describes his impressions of the injured victim, unfolding not only the physical injuries, but also the psychological impact of terrorism. Thus, this type of coverage emphasizes a cruel effect that *ISIS* terrorism has on society:

> 'This was also the first time I met Eve. She was still struggling to walk because of the shrapnel wounds and nerve damage. As a teenage girl and talented dancer, the way her legs looked and worked was important to her. <…> Emilia's hearing in one ear was damaged by the blast, but she escaped any other physical injuries. Her parents' main concern was about the psychological impact.' (BCC31)

The scale of physical injuries is also portrayed through quoting the witness' impressions from the terrorist attack:

> Mr Parker had been begging in the arena foyer when the bomb went off. He comforted a seriously injured little girl and helped a woman in her 60s who was badly hurt. He told the media last Tuesday: 'She passed away in my arms. I haven't stopped crying.' (BBC128)

Descriptions of the Scene

Violent descriptions of the attack scene are a highly present topic in the news articles about the *Islamic State* terrorism. Thus, these depictions of the scene were emerged as a sub-theme for the violence. Impressions of various witnesses are quoted to express the horror during the scene. In this way, the news media show to the audience how cruel *ISIS* terrorist attacks can be:

'We went past the corridor and I saw bodies covered in blood on the floor. I covered my sister's eyes so she couldn't see.' (BBC110)

'As she talked to me about the way her mind played and replayed what she saw that night, it became clear why. 'I see all of it. I see the flashing lights of the explosion,' she said. 'I see the people being thrown in the air who were probably dead. And then you play it. And then you pause it. It's like my mind took a photo. That's what it feels like when you think about it.' (BBC31)

Seconds after the blast, Niamh Woods told her father people were 'frantically banging' on the door to try and get away from the scene of the explosion. (BBC100)

Additionally, the online news media also choose to describe in detail how cruel the attack was. Besides violence, it also highlights the panic that prevailed during the scene of the terrorist attack:

The blast, between the main arena and neighbouring Victoria station, blew people off their feet and caused widespread panic. Witnesses described hearing an explosion and seeing a flash of fire. <…> Pictures of the aftermath show debris and casualties in the foyer area of the arena. Metal nuts and bolts were strewn around the floor among bodies. The smell of explosives was in the air, witnesses said. (BBC46)

Finally, the online news media strengthens the image of horror and violence by quoting the witness, what concludes the general atmosphere and conveys to the audience how violent *ISIS* terrorist attacks might be.

Ms Coward said it was like being in a "war zone" with people being stretchered out and others frantically searching for their loved ones. (BBC127)

Increased Threat Level

The online news media portray the increased threat level in the country. These reports also inform the audience about the risk of more terrorist attacks to happen:

The UK terror threat is at its highest level of "critical" after Monday's bombing at Manchester Arena amid fears more attacks may be imminent. (BBC74)

But for the investigation team, he said, there were still "important" lines of inquiry to pursue, and the security level will not yet be reduced from 'critical'. A senior security source told BBC News the threat level was "critical" partly because of concern at so-called 'copy-cat' attacks, as well as fears about the Manchester network. (BBC76)

It has now concluded, on the basis of today's investigations, that the threat level should be increased, for the time being, from severe to critical. This means that their assessment is not only that an attack remains highly likely, but that a further attack may be imminent. (BBC154)

Hence, the online news media depict violence highly often in the reports about the terrorist attack. In this way, the online news media stimulate the idea of how brutal terrorism may be and present threat, danger and panic as inherent consequences of terrorism.

5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The role of the online news media in reporting *ISIS* terrorist attacks in Europe was an important subject to be investigated because of the lack of information in the field and the relevance of the topic. In order to locate the roles that the online news media play, three research sub-questions were raised in this study. Also, recall Parkin and Green (2016), we follow 29 weeks of news coverage after the terrorist attack in order to conduct its accurate examination. Therefore, the analysis of the *BBC Online* news coverage from 22 May 2017 until 11 December 2017 on Manchester Arena

bombing was conducted, which presented some valuable findings to the field of study that will be discussed in detail below in this section.

Based on *Thought Contagion Theory*, the media act as a 'contagion' while reporting terrorism (Barnhurst, 1991) and influence people's emotions, behaviour (Howie, 2006; Tsauro, 2016;) ideas and beliefs (Picard, 1986). Therefore, the themes in the news, that were highlighted in this study, were taken as acting as 'contagions' and playing some certain roles while being presented to the audience of the online news media.

Taken together, the findings of the study unfolded that the online news media choose to report and emphasize some particular subjects while reporting *ISIS* terrorist attacks. Four major themes with several sub-themes were emerged, what indicated the main focus of the media coverage.

Addressing the research question *'How do the online news media depict ISIS terrorist attacks in Europe?'*, the results of the research showed that the online news media report certain issues, amplifying them through an extensive coverage. The study discovered, that 'violence', 'perpetrator', 'victims' and 'solidarity' were the dominant themes in the coverage of *ISIS* terrorist attacks. These prevailing topics in the news articles indicate that the media tend to depict the phenomenon from different angles and highlight specific subjects. Therefore, this way of the online news media to report *ISIS* terrorist attacks can be perceived as speculative. However, the emphasis on different topics in the news coverage reveals the different roles that the online news media plays while reporting *ISIS* terrorist attacks.

Moreover, the results unfolded that the online news media choose to quote witnesses of the terrorist attack, injured victims, families and friends of those who did not survive the incident, rather than presenting a descriptive content. This type of news coverage makes the content more emotional, forthright and credible for the audience (Maier et al., 2017), what consequently strengthens the power of the online news media to affect its audience while reporting *ISIS* terrorist attacks.

Furthermore, the study also presented significant findings to the research question *'How may the coverage of the online news media impact society while reporting ISIS terrorist attacks in Europe based its effects on Thought Contagion Theory?'* Firstly, the analysis showed that the content of the news reports on violence and victims represents diverse emotions. The research discovered that through the portrayal of victims the media particularly emphasize pain and distant suffering that were caused by a loss of family member, colleague or friend, as a consequence of terrorist attack. Similarly, violent descriptions of the scene are also highly present in the news articles and convey panic and fear. Based on *Thought Contagion Theory*, the media transmit these emotions to the audience (Howie, 2006; Tsauro, 2016;). Therefore, the depictions of violence and victims in the news media coverage of *ISIS* terrorist attacks can be seen as mediating pain, distant suffering, fear and panic among the public. Hence, these findings of the study supported an earlier research of Spencer (2012) that suggested that the media transmit fear of violence to society. The research also complemented to the theory of Nacos (2002), who proposed that terrorist groups that are based on religious extremism seek to cause pain among society, by showing that the online news media can help the perpetrators to achieve this goal.

Secondly, the research also discovered that the online news media pay a high attention to the solidarity of society and added strong evidence that it emphasizes how important it is for people to be united during terrorist attacks. The study unfolded that the online news media highly often portray how united the affected society is against terrorism through expressing people's common faith to resist terrorism and belief in a positive future. Thus, based its effects on *Thought Contagion Theory*, the online news media spread the importance of solidarity among society members and encourage people to support each other. Therefore, these findings helped to introduce a new role of the online news media as a solidarity promoter in reporting *ISIS* terrorist attacks. Additionally, by establishing the value of the news articles to promote solidarity among society, this research complemented and further developed the findings of Berkowitz (2017), adding that not only visual

images of terrorist attacks in the media may encourage solidarity and empathy among society, but the written content of the news articles also.

Besides that, the findings unexpectedly presented that the online news media often report on the fundraising for the families of victims. Together with that, the media also portray the importance and the outcome of this financial aid. Based on *Thought Contagion Theory,* these reports can be taken as an encouragement for people to support the victims and their families. Thus, the research introduced a new role of the online news media as financial support promoter for the victims of the terrorist attack.

Thirdly, through depictions of the perpetrator in the articles, the online news media create the stereotype of terrorists. By calling the perpetrator as a 'bomber' and 'suicide attacker' the media generate the idea for the audience of the activities that the terrorists usually do while implementing the attacks. Moreover, the online news media precisely report the psychological background of the perpetrator, what constructs the stereotypes of the people, who tend to cause terrorist attacks. The representation of the perpetrator's high interest in extremism ideas adds to society's general perception and understanding of *ISIS.*

However, despite creating the stereotypes of perpetrators, the research did not present any depictions and expressions of terrorism attraction, that could encourage young people to join *ISIS,* and in this way the study challenged the theory of Tsauro (2006). Instead, the results of the current research suggested that the online news media only construct a picture of *ISIS* perpetrators and provides the audience with the knowledge of *Islamic State.* Nevertheless, based on Hoffman (2003) theory, that the media coverage of terrorist attacks in the news helps to spread the terrorist culture, it can be claimed that the online news media circulate the popularity of *Islamic State* and its ideology, as the findings of this study unfoldeda high presence of *Islamic State* and extremism themes in the news articles.

To further understand the role of the online news media while reporting *ISIS* terror attacks in Europe, the research aimed to revel the answer to the research sub-question '*How may the coverage*

of the online news media influence the outcome of ISIS terrorist attacks based its effects on Thought Contagion Theory?' According to *Thought Contagion Theory*, the ideas strengthen their own influence by simply being present among the public (Lynch, 2002). As the study indicated, the online news media spread various emotions, such as pain, distant suffering, panic and fear through the news coverage. Henceforth, it can be assumed, that after the actual physical damage is done during the attack, the media may extend a moral pain while reporting the news, related to the terrorist attack. News reports that consist of negative impressions by the witnesses, depictions of violent moments and the representation of a loss that families and relatives of victims experience after the terrorist attack may have a negative emotional influence on society. Based on Tsauro (2016) reflection on *Thought Contagion Theory*, the representation of negative aspects of terrorist attacks in public creates a terrorist climate within societies, what increases the fear of the phenomenon. Therefore, by circulating these themes in the news coverage, the online news media may prolong the actual effects of the incidence.

To conclude, through analyzing the themes of *BBC Online* news coverage on Manchester Arena bombing and relying on *Thought Contagion Theory*, this study was able to locate the roles that the online news media play in reporting *ISIS* terrorist attacks. The research showed that the online news media pay a high attention to emotional effects of the terrorist attacks on people, what consequently mediate even more emotions within the audience. Furthermore, the focus on violence in the news may spread fear and panic among the public, whereas the representation of various facts about the perpetrator contributes to creating a stereotype of *ISIS* terrorists. Finally, interestingly enough, it was evident that the online news media act as solidarity promoter and may even encourage people to support the victims and their families financially.

Taken as a whole, the study reached its aim to contribute to filling the gap in the field of study. The analysis of *BBC Online* news coverage on Manchester Arena bombing unfolded significant findings. The major contribution that has been achieved while conducting this research is the disclosure of the themes that the online news media tend to focus on while covering *ISIS* terrorist

attacks in Europe and the indication of the roles that the online news media play while reporting the issue. A case study approach helped to conduct and in-depth analysis of the particular online news website coverage on terrorist attack and presented valuable results that contributed to the general findings in the academic field.

Additionally, the importance of the research findings goes beyond the academic context. As *ISIS* terrorist attacks have been an increasing phenomenon in Europe since 2014, it is also relevant for the online news media to be aware of and take into account its own role while reporting these incidents. Evidently, the research unfolded that the news coverage of *ISIS* terrorist attacks in Europe includes various facts about the perpetrator, descriptions of violence and emotional quotes about suffering and, together with it, indicated the influence that these kinds of subjects may have on society and the overall outcome of terrorist attacks. On one hand, in democratic countries journalists nowadays have a right to aim for an in depth report of terrorist attacks (Schmid, 1989) and the public has a right to know what is happening (Miller, 1982). On the other hand, detailed news coverage on terrorist attacks may even put society at various risks (Beckett, 2016). Hence, the study provided with the knowledge of roles that the online news media play while reporting *ISIS* terrorist attacks in Europe, what will help journalists to understand their pivotal effect while reporting the incidences. Additionally, the research raised a question and created a space for further studies to investigate how much the online news media should report on terrorism in order not to prolong the effects of the issue on society while still being able to perform its duty to serve a public interest.

Finally, there were some limitations to the study due to the interpretive nature of the thematic analysis method. The roles of the online news media in reporting *ISIS* terrorist attack were interpreted based on *Thought Contagion Theory*. However, it did not address the direct influence of the online news media on the audience and, therefore, it was impossible to identify the reactions of the readers towards the themes in the news coverage. Thus, a secondary research method would have been beneficial. Unfortunately, due to the limits of time and the lack of scholars in a research

team, it was not possible to conduct a further investigation that would have allowed clear conclusions to be made of how the online news media affect society.

Taking into account the results and the limitations of the study, some recommendation can be made for future studies. Further investigations with broader methods and bigger teams of scholars would be recommended, what would enable them indentify the roles of the online news media coverage in reporting *ISIS* terrorist attacks with a lower level of interpretation. Additionally, since the method did not allow the researcher to discover the reactions of the online news media users towards the news coverage on terrorist attack, there is still a space for further investigations on the relation between *Thought Contagion Theory* and the online news media coverage while reporting terrorism.

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APPENDICES

List of the *BBC Online* News Articles Analysed in this Study

No.	Date	Headline and Online Link	Code Name
1.	10/11/2017	Manchester attack: Government criticised over reimbursement delays https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-41944148	BBC1
2.	09/11/2017	Manchester attack: Arena payout for psychological injuries https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-41929487	BBC2
3.	07/11/2017	Manchester attack: 'Communication breakdown' delayed fire crews https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-41903310	BBC3
4.	06/11/2017	Manchester attack: 'Treatment delayed' for bomb victims https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-41838579	BBC4
5.	01/12/2017	Sir Paul McCartney's gift to Manchester attack families https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-42188005	BBC5
6.	23/11/2017	Manchester attack: Pre-inquest hearing due to go ahead https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-42085326	BBC6
7.	07/11/2017	Manchester attack: Fireman says crews were 'held back'. https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-41907592/manchester-attack-fireman-says-crews-were-held-back	BBC7
8.	06/11/2017	Manchester attack: Mayor voices concern over bomb response https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-england-manchester-41887450/manchester-attack-mayor-voices-concern-over-bomb-response	BBC8
9.	2/11/2017	Manchester attack: Militia 'to co-operate' on extradition https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-41838638	BBC9
10.	2/11/2017	Manchester attack: Extradition bid for Salman Abedi's brother https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-41839277	BBC10
11.	09/09/2017	Manchester attack: Arena reopens for charity concert https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-41202131	BBC11
12.	06/09/2017	Manchester attack: Memorial garden for Nell Jones https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-41093416	BBC12
13.	5/12/2017	Manchester Arena attack 'could have been stopped' https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-42241344	BBC13
14.	2/06/2017	Manchester attack: Manchester police find 'significant' car https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-40132725	BBC14
15.	21/07/2017	Manchester attack: Hundreds attend Kelly Brewster's funeral https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-south-yorkshire-40672634	BBC15

16.	12/09/2017	Manchester attack: 'Hero' faces trial over Arena thefts https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-41241274	BBC16
17.	24/11/2017	Manchester Arena attack: Police investigation delays inquests https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-42111239	BBC17
18.	25/05/2017	Manchester attack: Cookstown man injured https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-40041434	BBC18
19.	24/05/2017	Manchester attack: Aftermath in pictures https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/in-pictures-40016086	BBC19
20.	10/11/2017	Manchester attack: Government criticised over reimbursement delays https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-41944148	BBC20
21.	09/11/2017	Manchester attack: Arena payout for psychological injuries https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-41929487	BBC21
22.	07/11/2017	Manchester attack: 'Communication breakdown' delayed fire crews https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-41903310	BBC22
23.	06/11/2017	Manchester attack: 'Treatment delayed' for bomb victims https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-41838579	BBC23
24.	23/11/2017	Little Mix pay tribute to Manchester Attack victims https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/42098103	BBC24
25.	24/05/2017	Pictures: Vigil for Manchester attack http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsbeat/article/40030138/pictures-vigil-for-manchester-attack	BBC25
26.	23/05/2017	In pictures: Manchester attack aftermath https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40008229	BBC26
27.	08/09/2017	Manchester attack: Families and survivors visit ahead of reopening https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-41198668	BBC27
28.	06/09/2017	Manchester attack demo dinner lady allowed back at school https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-lancashire-41176594	BBC28
29.	07/07/2017	Manchester attack: Man arrested over terrorism offences https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40536831	BBC29
30.	06/07/2017	Manchester attack: Ariana Grande's tribute to victim https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-lancashire-40516934	BBC30
31.	4/09/2017	Manchester attack: One family's story of surviving the bomb https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-41088956	BBC31
32.	05/07/2017	Manchester attack: Birthday memorial for Saffie Roussos https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-lancashire-40503928	BBC32
33.	04/07/2017	Manchester attack: Saffie Roussos' family pay tribute https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40481950	BBC33

34.	30/06/2017	Manchester attack: Funeral for 'caring' Megan Hurley https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-merseyside-40454045	BBC34
35.	30/06/2017	Manchester attack: Martyn Hett's funeral takes place https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40445403	BBC35
36.	29/06/2017	David Walliams visits Manchester attack victim's school https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-lancashire-40414849	BBC36
37.	29/08/2017	Manchester attack: PC reunited with bomb victim Lily Harrison https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-41072768	BBC37
38.	23/06/2017	Manchester attack: Funerals held for Polish couple https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-york-north-yorkshire-40380995	BBC38
39.	23/06/2017	Manchester attack: Funeral for victim Lisa Lees https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40368638	BBC39
40.	23/06/2017	Manchester attack: Hundreds attend Alison Howe's funeral https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40368637	BBC40
41.	20/06/2017	Manchester attack: Olivia Campbell-Hardy's funeral held https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40327219	BBC41
42.	17/08/2017	Manchester attack: Georgina Callander had won university place https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-lancashire-40960583	BBC42
43.	14/06/2017	Manchester attack: Wendy Fawell funeral held https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leeds-40271643	BBC43
44.	16/08/2017	Manchester attack: 'Hero' denies bank card and mobile phone theft https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40935166	BBC44
45.	12/06/2017	Manchester attack: Who was Salman Abedi? https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-40019135	BBC45
46.	12/06/2017	Manchester attack: What we know so far https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40008389	BBC46
47.	09/06/2017	Manchester attack: Courtney Boyle's funeral held https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-tyne-40224402	BBC47
48.	07/06/2017	Manchester attack: Man arrested over arena bombing https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40192091	BBC48
49.	06/06/2017	Manchester attack: Emergency response to be reviewed https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40167454	BBC49
50.	05/06/2017	Manchester attack: Funeral for Barra's Eilidh MacLeod https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-40131215	BBC50
51.	04/06/2017	Manchester attack victims' families 'feel for London' https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-tyne-40152449	BBC51

52.	03/06/2017	Manchester attack: Ariana Grande visits injured fans https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40141450	BBC52
53.	03/06/2017	Manchester attack: Who were the victims? https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-40012738	BBC53
54.	31/05/2017	Manchester attack tribute appears on 'Squinty Bridge' https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-40112775	BBC54
55.	30/05/2017	Manchester attack: Victoria railway station reopens https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40089799	BBC55
56.	30/05/2017	Manchester attack: 'Wonderwall' of messages brightens city https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40084143	BBC56
57.	29/05/2017	Manchester attack: Victoria Station services to resume https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40083756	BBC57
58.	29/05/2017	Manchester attack: Muslim community holds 'peace walk' https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40076591	BBC58
59.	2/08/2017	Manchester attack: Mail Online sorry over Jayden Parkinson photo https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-oxfordshire-40796541	BBC59
60.	27/05/2017	Manchester Attack: Father tells of bomb 'carnage' https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-40072711	BBC60
61.	27/05/2017	Manchester attack: Hate crime 'doubles' after incident https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40064424	BBC61
62.	27/05/2017	Manchester attack: Ariana Grande plans benefit gig https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40067159	BBC62
63.	27/05/2017	Manchester attack: 'Abedi's flat smelled of chemicals' https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-40066784	BBC63
64.	27/05/2017	Manchester Attack: Eilidh MacLeod's family pays tribute https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-40067176	BBC64
65.	24/05/2017	What is the 'critical' terror threat level and what does it mean? http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsbeat/article/40027916/what-is-the-critical-terror-threat-level-and-what-does-it-mean	BBC65
66.	26/05/2017	Manchester attack: 'Immense progress' made by police https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-40056102	BBC66
67.	26/05/2017	Manchester attack: Hundreds queue for bee tattoos https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40060657	BBC67
68.	26/05/2017	Manchester attack: Lancashire remembers its victims https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-lancashire-40056596	BBC68
69.	26/05/2017	Manchester attack: Trump condemns media leaks https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-40048565	BBC69
70.	25/05/2017	Manchester attack: Mobile phone 'saved woman's life'	BBC70

		https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-north-west-wales-40045682	
71.	25/05/2017	Manchester attack: National minute's silence held https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40041473	BBC71
72.	25/05/2017	Manchester attack: Ensuring donations get to victims https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40046196	BBC72
73.	25/05/2017	Manchester attack: Eilidh MacLeod's family confirm death https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-40027796	BBC73
74.	25/05/2017	Manchester attack: Hay Festival to increase security https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-mid-wales-40041941	BBC74
75.	25/05/2017	Manchester attack: Family of Martyn Hett 'heartbroken' https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40026357	BBC75
76.	25/05/2017	Manchester attack: Minute's silence held for victims https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-40041604	BBC76
77.	31/07/2017	Manchester Attack: Mental health support after arena blast https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40773540	BBC77
78.	25/05/2017	Manchester attack: Police hunt 'network' behind bomber https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-40032504	BBC78
79.	24/05/2017	Ariana Grande cancels concerts after Manchester attack https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-40037128	BBC79
80.	24/05/2017	Manchester attack: The Libya-jihad connection https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40037830	BBC80
81.	24/05/2017	Manchester attack: Fundraising for victims tops £2m https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40030967	BBC81
82.	24/05/2017	Manchester attack: Armed police deployed across Scotland https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-40025214	BBC82
83.	24/05/2017	Manchester attack: Victim Kelly Brewster 'shielded niece' https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-south-yorkshire-40025154	BBC83
84.	24/05/2017	Manchester attack: Family of Michelle Kiss 'devastated' https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-lancashire-40035936	BBC84
85.	24/05/2017	Manchester attack: Irish security talks follow explosion https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-40036193	BBC85
86.	24/05/2017	Manchester attack: Morrissey criticises response of politicians https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-40026536	BBC86
87.	24 /05/2017	Manchester attack: IoM police deploy 'additional resources https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-isle-of-man-40000056	BBC87
88.	23/05/2017	Manchester attack: Vigils across Wales for victims https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-40014470	BBC88
89.	23/05/2017	Manchester attack: PM condemns 'sickening, cowardly' act https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/40009526	BBC89
90.	30/05/2017	Manchester attack: Review to 'give voice' to victims	BBC90

		https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40768484	
91.	23/05/2017	Manchester attack appalling and senseless, says Jones https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-politics-40012397	BBC91
92.	23/05/2017	Manchester attack: Trump calls attacker a 'loser' https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-40010706	BBC92
93.	23/05/2017	Manchester attack: Take That postpone concerts https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-40015700	BBC93
94.	23/05/2017	Manchester attack: Albert Square 'vigil of peace' https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40019546	BBC94
95.	23/05/2017	RMT rail strike suspended after Manchester attack https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-40017451	BBC95
96.	23/05/2017	Manchester attack: Colin Parry offers victims support https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-40015839	BBC96
97.	23/05/2017	Manchester Attack: One Man Arrested https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0531xp0	BBC97
98.	23/05/2017	Police visibility 'to increase' following Manchester attack https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-wales-40020690/police-visibility-to-increase-following-manchester-attack	BBC98
99.	23/05/2017	Manchester attack: NI parties suspend campaigning https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-40009957	BBC99
100.	23/05/2017	Manchester attack: 'Unbearable' wait for daughter https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-foyle-west-40011296	BBC100
101.	23/05/2017	Music world reacts to Manchester attack https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-40011068	BBC101
102.	22/05/2017	Manchester attack: Latest on police investigation https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/live/uk-england-manchester-40007967	BBC102
103.	18/07/2017	Manchester attack: Tributes paid to victim Jane Tweddle https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-lancashire-40642888	BBC103
104.	14/07/2017	Manchester attack: Det Con Elaine McIver's funeral takes place https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-merseyside-40596750	BBC104
105.	12/07/2017	Manchester attack: Council honours 'extraordinary acts of courage' https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40580606	BBC105
106.	6/07/2017	Manchester attack: Salman Abedi 'carried bomb for hours https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40519495	BBC106
107.	27/11/2017	Manchester Arena attack: PM vows to cover costs https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-42132684	BBC107
108.	03/07/2017	Funeral for Manchester attack victim Sorrell Leczkowski, 14, from Leeds https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leeds-40479908	BBC108
109.	24/11/2017	Manchester Arena attack: £12m costs offer 'not enough' https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-	BBC109

		42112957	
110.	23/11/2017	Manchester Arena attack: Siblings return six months on https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-42099555	BBC110
111.	25/06/2017	Kelly Brewster death: Manchester attack victim honoured with football game https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-south-yorkshire-40397284	BBC111
112.	22/06/2017	Manchester attack: Funeral of Nell Jones held in Cheshire https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-40369128	BBC112
113.	22/06/2017	Manchester attack: Islamophobic hate crime reports increase by 500% https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40368668	BBC113
114.	16/06/2017	Manchester attack: Bomber Salman Abedi identified by DNA https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40290372	BBC114
115.	15/06/2017	Manchester attack: Chloe Rutherford and Liam Curry's funeral held https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-tyne-40286821	BBC115
116.	14/06/2017	Manchester attack: Further £3m to be released from fund https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40272024	BBC116
117.	12/06/2017	Manchester attack: Bomber Abedi 'built device alone at flat' https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40240355	BBC117
118.	09/06/2017	Manchester attack: Flowers to be removed as memorial planned https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40204061	BBC118
119.	07/06/2017	Noel Gallagher donates royalties to Manchester attack fund https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-40185297	BBC119
120.	06/06/2017	Manchester attack: Fear 'stops Muslims reporting hate crime' https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40170474	BBC120
121.	03/06/2017	Manchester attack victim John Atkinson 'had heart of gold' https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40144781	BBC121
122.	02/06/2017	Manchester attack: Salman Abedi's cousins say 'he did it secretly' https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-40122572	BBC122
123.	01/06/2017	Manchester attack: £1m to be given 'urgently' to victims https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40121715	BBC123
124.	01/06/2017	Manchester attack: Saffie Roussos mum 'told of her death' https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40118243	BBC124
125.	31//05/2017	Manchester attack: Abedi bought most bomb parts 'himself' https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-40103563	BBC125
126.	30/05/2017	Manchester attack: Abedi 'not known' to Prevent scheme https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-	BBC126

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127.	30/05/2017	Manchester attack: Bombed arena turned into a 'war zone' https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40091531	BBC127
128.	30/05/2017	Manchester attack hero Chris Parker reunited with mother https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-norfolk-40084710	BBC128
129.	29/05/2017	Manchester attack: Bomber's mosque has 'a lot to learn' https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-40079948	BBC129
130.	29/05/2017	Manchester attack: Martyn Hett's mother 'gains more sons' https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40084139	BBC130
131.	29/05/2017	The Lessons To Learn From Manchester's Attack https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p053ln4j	BBC131
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