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The Propaganda of ISIS/DAESH through the Virtual Space

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Abstract: *The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS/DAESH) is orchestrating well through the information and communication technology in its different means. Despite the counterattacks it is still remaining strong in the YouTube, Facebook and most extensively on twitter. Through the analysis of their websites and the different social media tools, the ISIS/DAESH is able to send its messages to the world, not only its aggressiveness, but also its positive impact on people, as they perceive it. They aim with their messages to recruit more people, to justify their attacks religiously, and to show their strength virtually and on the ground. The ISIS/DAESH is able to post their messages and images through their supporters and those whom they recruit, and they are able to publish through institutions merely established for supporting the ISIS/DAESH. All publications were developed with well-established techniques with emotional messages that touch all those who look for the rule of religion.*

Keywords: *ISIS/DAESH, Information and communication technology, social media, propaganda, terrorism*

Introduction

The military sector as in all other sectors has developed through the advancement of technology. The use of advanced tanks, aircrafts and other weapon systems has been affected from one side. Another advancement included the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the sector. And the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS/DAESH) is indeed finding their way through using the ICT to express their opinions and spread their message worldwide.

The ISIS/DAESH has used a wide range of technology in their strategy implementation. They have used social media including Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. The ISIS/DAESH has its own websites that defines their strategy and accomplishments; a strategy that has clearly recognized the shift in the warfare nature.

The effective use of social media has brought to the ISIS/DAESH efficient results and accomplishments, especially in recruiting youth worldwide. Social media has helped the ISIS/DAESH disseminate their views and stories across societies around the globe. This has been the case in a changing world where social media has become the commonplace for communication, exchanging information, and for most political activism.

The new media sources have thus changed the means with which information is moving throughout the communities. It has increased the speed of disseminating information; additionally, it has permitted more transparent and effective information that it is supporting and competing with formal media. This new source is characterized by ease of access and possibility to communicate widely in an open sphere, and the ability to communicate and provide public discourse even with anonymous individuals and groups.

This paper aims at presenting and analyzing the means with which the ISIS/DAESH was able to send its messages and to maintain its virtual existence throughout the different means. The article analyzes the messages that are delivered through their videos, twitter accounts, Facebook accounts, and through their websites. Finally it makes conclusions about the experience of using modern communication technology by the ISIS/DAESH.

Literature Review

Terrorism groups have always extensively used information and communication technology in their attacks and operations. They have used them for planning, command control and communication. Additionally, ICT has been used to obtain and disseminate information to impact their people and their enemies. Moreover, technology has also been used for intelligence gathering. They have been used to gather information about members affiliated or against the group. This includes gathering information from emails, social media users, and other means that are technically possible. ICT has also been used for propaganda through sending messages, engaging in cybercrime and solicitation of financial and human resources.

In order to achieve the desired impact and reach a wide range of people, terrorism has used social media to help them share their ideas in a convenient effective and accessible manner. They

are using websites, emails, and chat rooms for disseminating their views to wider audiences. Hence, they are heavily investing in producing audio, video and imagery messages.

The very early adapters were the Chechen rebels¹. The presence of terrorist and other extremist groups online has risen sharply over the last two decades. According to the American sources², in 1998 less than half of terrorist organization had websites. The real concern started after September 11, through Al-Qaeda. Al-Qaeda is considered the ‘first guerilla movement’ to transform the war from an era of physical battles to Cyberspace³. Although Al-Qaeda utilized the cyberspace for their activities including training, communication, and suicide bombing information, it was relying on the less advanced Web platforms⁴.

The ISIS/DAESH represents a new era in utilizing the cyberspace for terrorism as it has developed and using a highly sophisticated media strategy⁵. Their media strategy is in compliance with their strategy for existence *baqeya wa tatamadad*, ‘remaining and expanding’; a strategy that inflicts damage in the areas they control to inflict fear on their adversaries. In June 2014, the ISIS/DAESH entered the global conflict and started its use of social media and cyber security worldwide⁶. One major method they used was the hacking of websites. After the assassination of the Charlie Hebdo for instance the group hacked the websites of two French towns and replaced the website with a black page and a message. One of the messages sent were: ‘The ISIS/DAESH Stay *Inshallah*⁷, Free Palestine, Death to France, and Death to Charlie’⁸.

Several countermeasures have been taken towards terrorism operations including ISIS/DAESH active utilization of the ICT sector. One main measure taken included suppression of the activities; several chat rooms were closed, websites were blocked, and emails hacked. Another countermeasure is again the intelligence gathering to help identify the enemy’s resources, which helps in their attacks against them. The European Union for instance is just setting up a special police force for this purpose⁹. Other counter measures that are usually used include the battle of ideas by confronting the others’ discourse.

¹ James Lewis, “The Internet and Terrorism. Proceedings of the annual meeting” *American Society of International Law*, 99, March 30 – April 2 (2005), available at <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25659982> (accessed 08 January 2015).

² Carol K. Winkler, Cori E. Dauber (Eds), *Visual Propaganda and extremism in the online environment* (US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 2014) available at <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=1213> (accessed 30 March 2015).

³ Steve Coll, Susan Glasser, “Terrorists Turn to the Web as Base of Operations. *Washington Post*, (2005), available at http://msl1.mit.edu/furdlog/docs/washpost/2005-08-07_washpost_www_weapon_01.pdf, (accessed 28 June 2015).

⁴ Laura Ryan, “Al-Qaida and ISIS use Twitter Differently. Here’s How and Why. Islamic State’s online efforts reveal how extreme the group is, even among extremists” *National Journal*. (10 October 2014), available at <http://www.nationaljournal.com/tech/al-qaida-and-isis-use-twitter-differently-here-s-how-and-why-20141009> (accessed 28 June 2015).

⁵ Yasmin Tadjdeh, “Government, Industry Countering Islamic State’s Social media Campaign”, National Defense Industrial Association, (2014b).

⁶ James P. Farwell, “The Media Strategy of ISIS” *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, 56(6) (2014).

⁷ Meaning: If God wills.

⁸ David Barrett, “French Websites targeted by Islamic State hackers”. *The Telegraph*. (2015), available at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/france/11334514/French-websites-targeted-by-Islamic-State-hackers.html> (accessed 09 January 2015).

⁹ Ivett Körösi, “Online against the Islamic State” *Népszabadság* (Budapest, 23 June 2015).

Despite all countermeasures taken to defeat the operability of the ISIS/DAESH technology, the ISIS/DAESH is able to find ways through. It has started working using open source diaspora. Facebook's rules include the possibility of banning pages or groups according to content; however twitter does not have this rule. Twitter does not screen content but does prohibit the publication of violent or pornography imagery¹⁰.

This article is based on analyzing accessed websites and accounts while conducting the research; especially that many sites and accounts were banned during the analysis process. It is mainly focused on sites that are primarily developed by the ISIS/DAESH leaders and supporters.

Research Methodology

The methodology used to conduct the desired analysis was based on Google search to help identify the sites and means used by the ISIS/DAESH. Snowball sample was used to identify the sample of sites and sample YouTube videos analyzed. Both Arabic and English sites were analyzed for the purpose of this research. During the research a twitter account was also established in order to follow ISIS/DAESH users and the content of the followers and the following accounts were analyzed.

The research was based on accounts, videos and sites that are produced by the ISIS/DAESH itself or by affiliates of the State. None of the videos presented by other members, international organizations, or media groups were taken into consideration.

Research Results

The ISIS/DAESH websites

ISIS/DAESH has developed several websites including formal and informal ones; some are developed by the ISIS/DAESH members and others are developed by supporters. Most recently the websites have had blocking problems and many stopped operating. However, some websites are still operating. The following websites were identified and analyzed for the purpose of the research:

Jihad Platform Media¹¹

This site is a platform that provides the opportunities for members to exchange information and ideas about the so-called Jihad and the Islamic Sharia. The number of comments available within this site is 440,499 and the number of members is 3,188.

This site works as a forum where participants have the chance to join through a username and a password, and provide feedback and raise questions to the rest of the members.

¹⁰ Jacob Axelrad, "Islamic State Militants turn to alternative social network in wake of ban from Twitter", *Christian Science Monitor* (accessed on 21 August 2014).

¹¹ Jihad Media Platform – an interactive website for the ISIS/DAESH available at <https://www.alplatformmedia.com/vb/showthread.php?t=70116> (accessed 09 June 2015).

The main page of the site includes the latest news and publications. While the subpages include incidents and breaking news, other regions, analysis and articles page, foreign languages, Sharia section, Archive of Osama Bin Laden. The incidents and breaking news page includes an archive of the news along with an up-to-date follow up. The highest number of viewers of these incidents got to 1,316 for a photo report for journalists who work against Islam.

The other regions page include the subpages Arabian Peninsula, Somalia, Caucasus, Eastern Turkistan, Global supporters of Sharia, the environs of Jerusalem, Islamic Maghreb, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and other regions. This page presents personnel working in those different regions, along with accomplishments and perceived vision within such regions.

The 'Analysis and Articles' page includes the platform for military training including training videos and manuals, which they call 'cross demolition series'. These include subjects like explosives, science of explosives, forming and producing explosives (liquid and solid), along with methods to prepare specific types of explosives. Viewers of these sections reached to 54,200 viewers. This page provides online training and instructions for members.

Other subpages include a section with other languages including English, French and German. Some sections were news and articles written in English, while others are merely translation of the other sections in the before-mentioned languages. There are subpages about Islamic religion education called the 'Sharia Section': This includes a Holy Quran forum, Prophet Mohammad life forum, and other religious related forums. The archive of Osama Bin Laden, on the other hand, presents photos and speeches of Bin Laden.

Islamic State Archive¹²

This is an informal website that presents the archive of the ISIS/DAESH which includes a mirror standby website (<http://dawla-is.appspot.com>). It is considered a documentary platform that provides an archive of the following: speeches of the leaders, publications of the ISIS/DAESH media institutions, heroes (martyrs) stories and profiles, episodes of videos, messages of the land of battles, and general publications.

'Speeches of the leaders and the *Ameer*¹³' section provides speeches from the ISIS/DAESH leaders to the Islamic community and the international community as well. Some speeches are produced with a voice background of shooting and/or ISIS/DAESH music and songs, other speeches starts with Holy Quran recitation and others presented the ISIS/DAESH accomplishments during the speech. The leaders in this subtitle include: Sheikh Abu Musaab Zaraqawi (27 videos), Sheikh Abu Hamza Al-Muhajer (fourteen videos), Sheikh Abu Omar Baghdadi (21 videos), Sheik Abu Baker Baghdadi (six videos), and Sheikh Abu Mohammed Al-Adnani (twenty videos).

Al-Furqan is one of the official media production institutes of the ISIS/DAESH. Under its subtitle includes all publications of the Al-Furqan Institute for media production; in this section 62 videos are presented with very high production quality. Based on the video analysis eight themes

¹² Informal website for the ISIS/DAESH – with archive of publications available at <http://dawla-is.appspot.com> (accessed 09 June 2015).

¹³ The Arabic word for the prince, commander, or head of state in the Islamic countries, it is the title of honor of the descendants of Muhammad.

were identified throughout the products: stories of the heroes (the martyrs), justification of the violence used by the ISIS/DAESH, exhibition of military attacks and operations, festivals of the ISIS/DAESH citizens about the accomplishments, messages for different reasons and different targets, training and preparations and windows on the battle land.

For recruiting new personnel the ISIS/DAESH uses quotes from the Holy Quran to encourage other members to join and be part of the brotherhood as they call it. These messages are uploaded in different languages targeting both locals and internationals, focusing on two major recruitment strategies: religious and the glory of revenge beheading and terror. Other messages or themes are direct messages to the World including the United States and their allies. The political messages informing the world they should fear the capability and faith of the ISIS/DAESH warriors and knights. ‘Knights of the martyrism series’ section presents the series of nine videos that manifested the story of the martyrs who kill themselves in the name of God. Each video starts with a truck driving towards a building that has a cross, which is then exploded, while shouting *Allah Akbar*¹⁴, which resembles the explosion of the church by the group. Then a picture of the martyr and his profile is presented, and finally the story of the attack he participated in. Another subtitle is The Living Word Uprising *Intafada Hayya*. This includes a series of videos that again presents martyrs and their profiles. The videos start with a plate full of blood; where the logo of the ISIS/DAESH washes out all the blood on that plate. The series presents words that remained live from martyrs after their death. This is the reason why the subtitle of this series is called ‘living word’.

Presentation of victorious battles also plays very important role in recruitment of fighters. 22 videos are dedicated to the land of battles. All videos start with a message to all people to join the brotherhood so that all will be under the name of God and the name of the prophet since this is the way to wisdom and belief. The videos present different incidents and interviews with the aim to expose the Islamic belief and recruit personnel in accordance to those beliefs. Some videos also reflect the impact of Islamic Sharia on the daily life, including education and courts. All of this should be judged and lead by the ISIS/DAESH leaders who are the ones knowledgeable and the ones who can decide who can do what, when and how. Therefore ISIS/DAESH with its leaders and structure is a Sharia enforcement tool and the leader (*Al-Ameer*) of the Nation (*Ummah*) has the final say. Different videos all in Arabic language present different messages and values.

In a video showing the courts work of the ISIS/DAESH. Two tribes in Iraq were fighting, and a man from the first tribe was killed. The ISIS/DAESH interfered, they went to the second tribe asking about their expectations (receiving money or killing the killer). The tribe requested that the killer be killed. Hence, the ISIS/DAESH approached the first tribe, and asked that according to Sharia this killer should be killed, and in order to prevent bloodshed, the ISIS/DAESH should be the one executing the judgment. Hence, they killed the killer, did the appropriate prayers in front of the family, and buried the body.

Then they interviewed the families asking about the difference between the Iraqi court and the ISIS/DAESH system to get the desired answer:

¹⁴ Meaning: God is great.

1. Speed in court
2. Justice
3. Stopping bloodshed, since courts will not kill the killer

Publication Series of the 'Al-Itisam Institute for media production' is representing another topic. In this series, 21 publications start with Holy Quran recitation, then a video to show their power including trainings and real attacks and operations using innovative methods of presentations. These videos identify the believers loved by God and the disbelievers as per the ISIS/DAESH. According to the videos the ISIS/DAESH leaders have the right to judge believers from disbelievers, prosecute the cases, and kill them. Judging, prosecuting, and killing are all rights granted for the leaders; a right they claim is mentioned clearly in the Holy Quran. Hence, their source of power is the Islamic Sharia. Another major message sent through these media products is the establishment of an Islamic state (a state governed by Islam/Sharia) with extended boundaries to reach the globe. In general, the videos work explicitly on the ISIS/DAESH nation branding based on two factors power and religion.

Al-Hayat Media Center Publications shows eleven videos in English which are generally reveal the vision of the ISIS/DAESH that has no boundaries to reach the globe while using the strategy of so called Jihad and power that is justified by the Holy Quran and the Islamic values, and governed by the ISIS/DAESH leaders who have the power for law enforcement. The website also includes publications of the media offices and 151 videos of the ISIS/DAESH accomplishments.

The analysis of the videos available along with the different products posted on the websites, exhibits the ISIS/DAESH's clear and consistent communication strategy that complies with its military strategy. This strategy uses technology as part of the psychological war causing fear and disparity amongst people in the areas they control, thus causing pandemonium that reaches the globe. Throughout their posts and publications the ISIS/DAESH prevail themselves as a brotherhood group where everybody can belong despite ethnicities. Hence, they believe that warriors have no limits, all should fight regardless of the age, the ethnicity or gender, each has his specific role. Moreover, they present the ISIS/DAESH as borderless that will extend from the Levant region towards the whole world. This is in conformity with the ISIS/DAESH Military Strategy Remaining and Expanding (*Baqia wa tatamadad*). ISIS/DAESH believes that their state will maintain due to the fact that it has been established through the martyr blood; that is blessed and will help sustain the state.

The discourse also justifies and glorifies the violence and extremism used by the ISIS/DAESH. In their messages they claim that fight (*Jihad*) is a message declared by God; hence, the leaders have the authority and power for law enforcement. They justify violence because the reason is sacred. They believe it is a war between faith (*Iman*) and Disbelief *Kufr*, since ISIS/DAESH people are the believers and the rest are disbelievers. They also deem death and martyrism the way to God and the eternal life. Therefore, they conceive so called *Jihad*, killing of disbelievers, conduct martyr operations to achieve their strategy and to disseminate the word of God, *Allah*¹⁵. They also justify violence because the result is a sustained organized state. This policy leads to decrease in crime in the locations where the ISIS/DAESH has taken control over. The Islamic courts help resolve all disputes and judge upon all crimes in accordance to the Islamic Sharia and in the least possible time.

¹⁵ Allah is the Arabic word of God and despite the fact that Muslims believes God is the same for Judaism, Christianity and Islam; however, they refuse to use the name God in English scripts.

The ISIS/DAESH Blogs

- The State of the Islamic Caliphate¹⁶:

The posts on this blog were last updated on 07 January 2015, and are hosted on the Wordpress.com. The blog has no information or reference as to whom is administrating the site, or whom does it represent. Number of visitors reach 196,781. The structure of the page is advanced with significant routine updates provided. It includes an introductory page that presents the latest updates on the site including breaking news and videos. The news in this section ranges from incidents in the battlefields to announcements from the leaders. Another subtitle is the ‘News of the Islamic World’ which is categorized by the provinces: Jerusalem, Islamic Maghreb, international religion supporters, Somalia, Caucasus, Iraq, Pakistan, East Turkistan, Khorasan, and other regions. Another page allows members to interact directly and express their opinions and discuss relevant aspects is the ‘Monotheism and Jihad Forum’.

A richly endowed library of diverse publication tools and diverse fields is also a subpage available in the website. This includes books, messages, articles, and encyclopedias. Several books are available for downloading; examples of these books are: Raise Motivation to face the Nations, A message to the *Tawhid* and Jihad *Ummah*, and others. This section also includes the weekly Journal ‘*Hasad Al-Jihad* Accomplishments of the Jihad’. Moreover, the page includes the ‘*Jihad Encyclopedia*’, this is a security encyclopedia that is comprised of subjects related to basics of security, national security and how to combat national security, inspection and how to face inspectors, and intelligence and security.

The website includes several other sources aiming for recruitment and promotion of the ISIS/DAESH ideology. The site also provides the opportunity to follow the administrators on Twitter with the account @dawlatelislam. However, it is not clear who are the administrators of the blog.

- The Islamic State Blog¹⁷:

This blog is administered by the ISIS/DAESH supporters hence it reflects the perception of the administrators. This is not an up-to-date blog, nor is it actively used; posting started in August 2013, and latest blogs were added in June 2014. Number of visitors is not shown, but number of comments ranges from zero to two comments on each post.

The blog structure is comprehensive including all necessary components to comply with the ISIS/DAESH strategy. It is specifically apparent in the two pages: ‘Islamic state warriors’ that presents some stories of martyrs and ‘Militant acts’ that discusses five militant operations. This blog re-emphasizes the nation branding of power through violence and religion. The blog also presents a ‘Go To’ Link that has several sub-links presenting internal communication strategy and external strategy that they call enemy’s media.

¹⁶ Blog of the ISIS/DAESH with no information about the administrators available at <https://akhbardawlatelislam.wordpress.com> (accessed 10 June 2015).

¹⁷ Islamic State blog- administered by ISIS/DAESH supporters available at <http://the-islamic-state.blogspot.hu> (accessed 10 June 2015).

In general all websites and blogs reflect the same communication strategy sending clear consistent messages. They all promote the same Nation branding; power and religion. All tools focus on the brutal picture of the ISIS/DAESH people, which is justified by the second factor that is religion. Consequently, the ISIS/DAESH conducting psychological war, bringing disparity and horror before starting any battle; that is ending the battle and winning before it actually starts. The strategy targets all nations, speaking in different languages and addressing different targets regionally and internationally. This strategy is based on the ISIS/DAESH military strategy remaining and expanding *Baqiya wa tatamadad*.

The ISIS/DAESH has been successful in utilizing those websites and blogs effectively and successfully. The main purpose of using those websites is to recruit fighters, either directly through direct messages from the ISIS/DAESH people, or indirectly through encouraging messages of allegiance. This recruitment is based on propagandizing the Islam encouragement of joining the ISIS/DAESH, and the benefits gained including adventurous combats for youth. Moreover, they are successful in disseminating their views to a wider audience through the different languages adopted. Additionally, through the different training manuals provided the ISIS/DAESH is capable of using the websites in the planning and operations and for implementing their brutal missions.

Apparently, the websites and blogs utilize the most recent and updated technologies and strategies. The ISIS/DAESH has the ability to manage rapid changes of internet addresses while having mirror websites. They also use platforms and forums for discussion working as portals, which give a chance for interactive use of the technology. This also helps in securing users and securing messages sent.

The ISIS/DAESH Use of social media

As an alternate, and due to the increase blocking of the ISIS/DAESH Facebook accounts, the ISIS/DAESH has turned to the use of the open source diaspora, which gives the user full control of their details and content they share.

The ISIS/DAESH supporters are suspended regularly from the use of social media; hence, it is not easy to allocate or analyze these supporters. However, those supporters are developing their own ways to maintain their presence and to build backup and mirror accounts.

Despite all of the countermeasures, the ISIS/DAESH is able to maintain and disseminate their word through social media. Tadjdeh mentioned that the ISIS/DAESH use a popular trending hashtag as a means of “infiltrating conversations by adding that hashtags onto one of their unrelated tweets”¹⁸. They can also mass tweet using their own designated hashtags, which gets them to trend”. This section provides an analysis of the use of social media including Facebook, twitter, and YouTube.

¹⁸ Yasmin Tadjdeh, “Government, Industry Countering Islamic State’s Social Media Campaign (updated)”, National Defense (2014a), available at <http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/archive/2014/December/Pages/GovernmentIndustryCounteringIslamicStatesSocialMediaCampaign.aspx> (accessed 28 June 2015).

- **Use of Facebook**

The authors have used the Facebook search tools to identify pages related to ISIS/DAESH looking for names related to ISIS/DAESH including IS, ISIS, and *Daesh*¹⁹, and words related to the *ISIS/DAESH slogans*. Two types of usage were available; these include groups and pages. Groups and pages usually differ in the privacy, the audience, and communication.

Table (1) below lists the identified groups found during the research project despite the blocking taking place.

Table (1): The ISIS/DAESH Facebook Groups Identified

Groups	Number of members	Group Type
'Harakat Daesh' Daesh Movement	396 members	Public group
Arab Daesh Forum	207 members	Public group
Daesh Organization Section 4/11	54 members	Closed group
The affiliates of Ameer Abu Baker Bagdadi Alqurashi	15 members	Closed group
Media cell for the Islamic State remaining	310 members	Closed group
Group 'Power Islam' NETWORK	2,289 members	Closed group
The Ummah Jihad to get to the top	3,256	Closed group
Supporting returnees after deleted for the females (akhawat) only	657	Closed group

Apparently, most of the groups are a closed group, which means that only those members whom the administrators deem appropriate and affiliated to the ISIS/DAESH are accepted. The researchers were denied to get access to the closed group despite the several attempts to join through different names. However, the number of group members is relatively low; the highest was 3,256 for the group 'The Ummah Jihad to get to the top'. It is worth to note that when a group exceeds a certain size then some features are limited. Hence, it is even better to create small groups, which is appears in Table (1) above.

Additionally, interesting pages were also identified during the research. Table (2) below lists the pages identified.

¹⁹ Daesh is the Arabic acronym of ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and Levant "*Sham*")

Table (2): The ISIS/DAESH Facebook Pages Identified

Page	Number of likes	About page
Mujahido news	19 likes	News about mujahidon
Al-shabab Mujahid	3 friends	NA
Harakat al shabab al mujahedeen	2	NA
Abu-Baker Baghdadi	20 followers	NA
Islamic State Updates	2,044 likes	Providing up to date news and discussion regarding ISIS/DAESH and other related assorted material.
Islamic State	6 likes	NA

Number of friends and number of likes are very limited in the pages identified due to the fact that these pages were only developed recently as Facebook is active in disabling accounts that might cause threat or support groups in the violent and criminal behavior. Facebook says it clearly “We remove content, disable accounts, and work with law enforcement when we believe there is a genuine risk of physical harm or direct threats to public safety”²⁰. The ISIS/DAESH is facing regular banning and blocking on Facebook. As a result the ISIS/DAESH established a similar platform 5elafabook.com hosted on a domain located in Egypt²¹.

With the limited capacity to analyze the accounts it was apparent that those pages repost videos and pictures of the ISIS/DAESH operations again glorifying extremism and violence under the religion umbrella. Despite the continuous countermeasures of Facebook, the ISIS/DAESH is firmly contending and rallying their efforts to boost their strategy.

- **Use of Twitter**

In order to analyze the use of twitter, the author followed a convenient sample of 2000 twitter accounts²² in order to analyze the content of each. The sample is chosen according to the following:

1. Twitter account that claims directly affiliation with and support of the ISIS/DAESH
2. An account that is followed by the ISIS/DAESH supporter
3. An account with all tweets in favor of or supports the ISIS/DAESH
4. Active accounts with at least one tweet per day

The analyzed²³ twitter accounts are categorized according to the following:

²⁰ Facebook page – Facebook policies available at <https://www.facebook.com/communitystandards/>

²¹ <http://cyberwarzone.com/> (accessed 28 June 2015).

²² The maximum number of twitter accounts the system allows, though 1767 accounts blocked the user after a while or has been suspended through twitter.

²³ All tweets were analyzed in the period 07-09 April 2015.

Table (3): Categories of Twitter Accounts

Category	Percentage	Average number of followers	Maximum number of followers
Supporters	59%	970	1,792
Soldiers in the caliphate	32%	1,133	2,117
Leaders in the caliphate	8%	2,132	5,400
Others	1%	2,791	8,834

The names displayed on the twitter accounts include names of leaders, the ISIS/DAESH (including abbreviations like IS, ISIS, or other abbreviations in Arabic), associates or supporters of the ISIS/DAESH, remaining and expanding,²⁴ names of leaders, names with reference to regions, Caliphate or *Chilapha*, combinations of numbers and letters, Jihad and other relevant terms, and names of affiliated institutions.

The content of the tweets of each category was analyzed. The supporters' accounts are mainly sending support messages to the ISIS/DAESH and to other twitter accounts after being suspended. Table (4) below illustrates the messages sent by the supporters.

Table (4): Messages send by the Supporters

Message Category	Percentage
Support Statements to ISIS/DAESH and the leaders	24%
Holy Quran quotes	23%
Support of ISIS/DAESH twitter accounts	22%
Pictures and videos of ISIS/DAESH accomplishments	21%
Readiness and willingness to participate in the ground attacks	9%
Others	1%

Soldiers in the caliphate sent messages that are mainly presenting accomplishments on the ground. Table (5) below identifies the messages categories identified.

²⁴ The slogan of the ISIS/DAESH.

Table (5): Messages send by the Soldiers of the Caliphate

Message Category	Percentage
Pictures and videos of ISIS/DAESH accomplishments	57%
Support of ISIS/DAESH twitter accounts	24%
Support Statements to the State and the leaders	10%
Holy Quran quotes	7%
Messages supporting the expansion of the ISIS/DAESH to the Region or to the whole world	1%
Others	1%

Leaders in the caliphate display encouraging messages to be part of the ISIS/DAESH. The categories of messages identified in the leader’s accounts are identified in Table (6) below. These leaders declare they are leaders of certain geographic locations.

Table (5): Messages send by the Soldiers of the Caliphate

Message Category	Percentage
Pictures and videos of ISIS/DAESH accomplishments	55%
Support of ISIS/DAESH twitter accounts	20%
Support Statements to ISIS/DAESH and the one ISIS/DAESH leader (encouraging statements to participate in the ISIS/DAESH)	12%
Holy Quran quotes	12%
Others	1%

The other important twitter accounts that were identified in Table 3 included accounts of technical support, financial support and fundraising, media accounts, media publication institutions, and educational accounts.

Four twitter accounts were identified that provides technical support. The support provided are mainly Information Technology (IT) support, which provided information on means to secure email accounts, secure twitter accounts, and support to hack other accounts and emails. Table (6) below identifies the accounts identified with the names displayed and the content in each.

Table (6): Accounts that provide technical support

Twitter account	Name	Following	Followers	Content available
@SECURITY_PRO	Islamic State Technician (in Arabic)	208	2,381	Providing answers to technical advices requested by the followers Providing advices how to secure accounts Providing lessons on technical issues Providing training manuals (ex. 'Security in using smart phones' and 'how to create encrypted e-mail ²⁵ ')
@IT_PRO3	State's Technician (in Arabic)	54	2,791	@IT_PRO3's Tweets are protected. Only confirmed followers have access to its tweets and complete profile.
@T33chnical	The Technical Expert	103	1,778	@T33chnical's Tweets are protected. Only confirmed followers have access to its tweets and complete profile
@ ica_is5	The IS Hacker	49	1,633	Provides technical support on hacking accounts Providing statistics, information and news about hacking international sites

Other types of twitter accounts included those demanding financial support to the ISIS/DAESH. Table (7) below identifies the account identified with the name displayed and the content.

Table (7): Accounts demanding financial support

Twitter account	Name	Following	Followers	Content available
@AL_T_O_R (previously @altor103)	Al-Tour Institution	5	2,611	Demands for financial support providing the contacts ²⁶

Media Accounts were active accounts of the ISIS/DAESH; eight accounts were identified. These focus mainly on news and breaking news of the ISIS/DAESH and its accomplishments. The accounts are active in posting videos and pictures along with links to news and the ISIS/DAESH relevant sites. Table (8) below identifies the accounts identified with the names displayed and the content in each.

²⁵ How to build encrypted email: providing examples including proton mail, TUTANOTA, and HUSHMAIL available at <https://dump.to/Emailencrypted> (accessed 08 April 2015).

²⁶ Website for donating to the ISIS/DAESH available at https://twitter.com/AL_T_O_R/status/582632737334530048 (accessed 04 August 2014).

Table (8): The ISIS/DAESH Media accounts

Twitter account	Name	Following	Followers	Content available
@ra_00002	Islamic Raqa Network	486	2,129	News and breaking news
@asetuml	Strangers for media	237	2,901	Breaking news Videos and links Other media publications ²⁷
@casaress_ase	Battlefield Media: Islamic State	188	1,271	Videos and links Call to support the ISIS/DAESH accounts Islamic information and quotes
@aljabhaa1	Media Front: the formal account for 'the IS' media front to support the	41	909	Videos and links Alerts and announcements
@kskssmnzn	News of the Caliphate State	1,964	1,159	News and breaking news Videos Publications of the ISIS/DAESH
@NH9FC	Iben-altayeb: blog to expose the liars who distort the image of IS	1,624	1,897	News and breaking news Links to videos ²⁸
@daily_taqarer	Daily report	5	1,005	News and reports about the ISIS/DAESH
@forsan_NH	Fursan Publication Workshop	2	8,834	News and breaking news

Other than the media accounts media institutions that works on publishing the ISIS/DAESH videos were also identified. Five accounts declared that their main mission is publishing videos. Table (9) below identifies these accounts.

Table (9): Media Publication Institutions

Twitter account	Name	Following	Followers	Content available
@khefafa_media77 ²⁹	Al-khefafa institute (Media Front)	199	3,534	Videos and links of their own publications Other media publications Breaking news
@khefafa_media88	Al-khefafa institute (Media Front)	193	3,299	Videos and links of their own publications. Other media publications. Breaking news

²⁷ Announcements are displayed in Arabic, German, or English.

²⁸ Videos include YouTube that posts messages for different sectors (one includes a message to the deaf using sign language available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2PECSseeFkCI>)

²⁹ Official website of the ISIS/DAESH - the Khelafa media website offering all publications available at <http://www.khefafa-media.com/> (accessed 09 June 2015).

@bentymeia01 ³⁰	Bentymeia for Media	1	1,165	Posts of their publications (videos and articles) announcements
@__ghareeb__	Stranger (Ghareeb)	62	1,309	News Ghareeb publications
@MD_Battar	Al-Battar Media Institute	5	2,209	Posts published in the batter blog ³¹ The account in English is @AENBMF

Another important category of the ISIS/DAESH accounts is the educational accounts. The sample included two of those. The accounts provided training manuals and lessons that focus on military lessons techniques, and weapons. Additionally, the lessons focus on religious matters from the ISIS/DAESH point of view and its relevance to so called Jihad and war. The messages revealed made sure to link between the so called Jihad and the Islamic religion. Table (10) below identifies the two accounts with the names displayed and the content in each.

Table (10): Educational Accounts

Twitter account	Name	Following	Followers	Content available
@nshrat_jj	Jihad Publications	140	2,527	Military lessons Islamic Religion lessons
@HADEHY_SABELY	This is my way	0	385	Religious lessons

Despite the counter measures the ISIS/DAESH is able to maintain their active existence on twitter. The supporters in many cases revealed the number of times their accounts were suspended. An analysis of the number of suspension of accounts as declared by the supporters reveals the insistence and capability of the users to remain. Table (11) below lists the frequency of suspensions of twitter accounts.

Table (11): The Suspension cases of the accounts

Range of times twitter accounts were suspended	# of accounts that claimed reestablishment after suspension
1-10	298
11-20	75
21-30	18
31-40	10
41-50	3
51-60	2
61-more	4

³⁰ The alternative account is @bentymeia.

³¹ Battar Publication Institute, includes publications produced by the Institute available at <http://al-battar-media-foundation.blogspot.com/?m=0> (accessed 04 August 2015).

Despite the fact that the ISIS/DAESH strategy communication is decentralized with different users and agents spreading out the word, it is clear and consistent with the other means of communication and within twitter itself. The ISIS/DAESH eulogizes violence justified by religion; two factors that are apparent in the different messages. The different twitter accounts post religious quotes that encourage so called Jihad. Twitter accounts provided links of videos and articles of the ISIS/DAESH; also, it is effective in promoting new twitter accounts after being deleted.

The ISIS/DAESH uses twitter for recruiting new member from the region and the globe through addressing messages of encouragement in different languages. According to the analysis, several accounts were established for educational reasons, some educating on combat and others with religious education. Another important educational training included IT training on how to secure own account and own data and how to hack others accounts. Twitter accounts are being established repeatedly despite the countermeasures taken, some were reiteratively establishing new accounts after twitter has suspended more than 61 previous accounts. Users are now hiding their identities using encryption tools and using coded names.

Twitter states it clearly “you may not publish or post threats of violence against others or promote violence against others”³²; however, twitter does not “proactively monitor content” (Reuters, 2015) as is the case in Facebook. However, the several countermeasure efforts were able to block barbarous scenes and accounts of the ISIS/DAESH. Accordingly the ISIS/DAESH threatened to physically assassinate twitter’s management and bring the war to the real world as they promised.

- **Use of YouTube**

Many videos are uploaded on YouTube through ISIS/DAESH, however, so many of those are blocked. A sample of 123 unbanned videos was analyzed for the purpose of this study. An analysis of these videos revealed different categories and themes provided by the ISIS/DAESH through YouTube; these include: training, messages by detainees, killing of detainees, organization of daily life activities, recruitment and pledging support, and propaganda films. This section provides detailed analysis of these themes.

Training of militias videos show the graduation of the militant groups and samples of the outdoors trainings they receive. The videos are uploaded through the media center in the region from which they received the training. Not only the videos show the trainings provided but also aim at presenting the capacities, capabilities and resources owned by those forces. An example of those trainings is ‘Islamic State Training Camp and the war lion’s camp’³³. The songs provided on the background of the trainings include encouraging messages for so called Jihad such as the following:

- “Go to the War battles, the dignity is gained through the battles, and don’t say my family my parents or my children”-Sees in the death good omen
- Face all enemies of God wherever they are

³² Twitter website, “Twitter policies” available at <https://support.twitter.com/articles/18311-the-twitter-rules>

³³ Training of militias: ISIS/DAESH training camp available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0tyg1HD5mU> (accessed 12 June 2015).

- Jihad is the way for sustainability
- You will pass through but on a river of blood to get to the best world

The trainings provided include theoretical that was basically based on the religious aspects and the Holy Quran studies and practical trainings that focused on wrestling bout and fighting techniques. An illustrative sample of those trainings is the TelAfar training camp in Nineveh³⁴. This type of training and videos reiterates the focus of the ISIS/DAESH on violence and religion.

Another type of videos is the messages by detainees, which provide speeches, directed the governments of the detainees' countries and to the international world. These messages generally try to prove that life in the ISIS/DAESH is secure for all who are affiliated and in allegiance with the ISIS/DAESH. It also tries to emphasize that the governments of the countries the detainees come from cannot be entrusted even for their own citizens. One major series of messages analyzed is the series of messages from the British Detainee John Cantlie. Table (12) below lists the different episodes posted with the messages sent from each.

Table (12): John Cantlie Series of messages uploaded on YouTube

Episode	Source	Message released
intro	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HJ_rIBfqf3Q	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction of himself 2. The fact that the Western media is manipulating the reality 3. The strength of the ISIS/DAESH 4. Introduction of the stories to come (upcoming episodes)
1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Di0bI1Prkbc&bpcctr=1421097417	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approach to war without learning lessons from previous war 2. Persuasive approach to lure the public 3. US government has no public sign that it has any awareness what its enemies are fighting war 4. The US was not able to destroy the ISIS/DAESH in Iraq before, while now ISIS/DAESH is muc stronger. 5. Intelligence failed to anticipate the ISIS/DAESH
2	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BCsewwKrvk	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Islamic did not kill the Christian and Yazidi women and children 2. The ISIS/DAESH does have a vision they created an autonomous and functioning Khalifet
3	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iQVkRAob6fc	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The strength of the ISIS/DAESH with many years of experience, they are patient and self reliant 2. Public support from the US is not possible, except when they are concerned about national security 3. The murdering of the journalist will help ISIS/DAESH whatever the reaction is.

³⁴ Training of militias: for youth at TelAfar training camp available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xroBASTyBd4#t=114> (accessed 12 June 2015).

4	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fY_iBYSg2qw	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meteoric rise of the ISIS/DAESH 2. Western Media are so keen for the public to support unwinnable war
5	NA	NA
6	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nidEJB_3ioo	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Failed raid to rescue the detainees 2. Not through negotiations with the ISIS/DAESH 3. But through military options(the first option for the US and the UK)
A final one	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RN3ktXbLzIY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sophisticated live report with a change in his appearance (previously as a prisoners wearing orange with no suggestion of where the videos were taken) 2. From Mosul 3. Denial American bombardments of Kobani has succeeded in pushing the militants back 4. Showing that life is in business as usual

Cantlie starts all his programs in the same manner; he talks in a very calm way, criticizing the US and the British foreign policy.

Cantlie says “I am the British citizen abandoned by my government and a longtime prisoner of the Islamic State... join me again in the next program”

Cantlie pointed out how the ISIS/DAESH had negotiated the release of other European prisoners. However, while the British and Americans refused to make any negotiations, Cantlie started his series by identifying himself as being abandoned, and there is nothing else to lose. He started with a series as a detainee but the last part as a reporter to the ISIS/DAESH in the field. His messages were in compliance with the messages revealed by all the different videos published by the ISIS/DAESH. His basic message was that violence and extremism was the way through to establish the ISIS/DAESH; however, living under their control is something different because he was enjoying security and peace despite the fact that he is not part of the people. He also pointed to the fact that although airstrikes are being used; however, they are not attacking and they are not trying to set him free.

Another important set of videos that has been reposted repeatedly throughout the mass media is the execution of detainees. There are two main categories of detainees being killed: these are local and regional people and international personnel especially journalists. The two categories were dealt with differently. Videos related to killing the locals in the region showed the full massacre and the killing process without cutting off any parts of the process.

However, for the internationals it was different as is the case in the videos of executing the international journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff. Both videos were structured similarly; they begin with a clip of President Obama talking about US foreign policy. The videos are taken in similar landscape (desert area). Both incidents showed the same positioning and same way of dressing

for both the killer and the killed. It shows the start of the beheading and then cuts off; it then shows footage of the body and separated head position on the desert floor. Both videos received much attention within the international community and the media production experts but the International community condemned the aggressive beheading.

The media production experts have their doubts about the reality of those videos. Analysts mentioned several factors that truly doubts if the killing took place, many mentions it is part of the propaganda. Doubting factors include the fact that the beheaded did not show any fear before or during the killing, which is not possible given that those people are waiting for a brutal attack. Another doubting factor is that the beheading process was cut off, though the ISIS/DAESH has shown without any humanitarian sense the full killing processes in other videos for other people. Some even doubted that the beheaded people are not the real persons.

True or not the message to fear ISIS/DAESH has been sent and made clear. One main message revealed is displaying the ISIS/DAESH strength, and that the international community should fear this state. Hence, it proclaims that the ISIS/DAESH is ready to face and confront the international community even if takes killing citizens brutally in front of the whole world. Again, these videos glorify the violence, terrorism and extremism. It shows that airstrikes are not doing any good to defeat ISIS/DAESH or to free the detainees; hence, it could be explained that they are calling for a further step. They are calling the Western World to start the ground battle as no defeat will be possible through airstrikes.

The portrait of aggressiveness and extremism is also revealed through the theme they widely present and distribute, which discusses the 'ISIS/DAESH accomplishments'. Several types of accomplishments were identified. One type includes Islamic groups joining the ISIS/DAESH (example Ansar al-Islam joins IS / Islamic State (Eng subs) Clip from Upon the Prophetic Methodology³⁵), another type is members joining the ISIS/DAESH (example of 'Saddam AlJamal³⁶') and the battle accomplishments type (example ISIS siege on Samarra June 2014³⁷).

Other videos promote the security and organization of the ISIS/DAESH. It provides an insight about the organization of the daily life activities in the ISIS/DAESH. It includes a promotion of how the ISIS/DAESH personnel assist in traffic regulations³⁸, it also provides details about food security as is the case in the food market project³⁹. It presents the educational services provided by the ISIS/DAESH and the fiscal policy as in the case of establishing the ISIS/DAESH currency⁴⁰.

³⁵ ISIS/DAESH publications: Accomplishments of successful recruitments of new groups, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uvIizIrvDt4> (accessed 13 June 2015).

³⁶ ISIS/DAESH publications: Accomplishments of successful recruitments of new members available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6yozchiRZfw> (accessed 14 June 2015).

³⁷ ISIS/DAESH publications: Winning new battles available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8SBwiKw-ntY> (accessed 13 June 2015).

³⁸ ISIS/DAESH Publications: Mechanisms of organizing daily life activities available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d1EKVx1S1-E> (accessed 13 June 2015).

³⁹ ISIS/DAESH Publications: Mechanisms of organizing daily life activities available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6KL2AAwqL0A> (accessed 13 June 2015).

⁴⁰ ISIS/DAESH Publications: Mechanisms of organizing financial transactions available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MGCivrh8Mp0> (accessed 13 June 2015).

Distinct types of videos published by the ISIS/DAESH that summarizes and elucidates their strategy are the propaganda films named ‘Flames of War’. These came in different parts. Part one⁴¹ came to discuss the establishment of the ISIS/DAESH and they confronted the words of Bush and Obama when they mentioned the war was over; however, ISIS/DAESH mentions that the flames only started to intensity. This is considered a welcoming message for the Western world to send the ground troops, where they say: “The fighting has just begun... Our victory is in our survival”. The other parts of the videos mainly call for recruitment and a performance show of their accomplishments showing the brutality and aggressiveness of their warriors.

The action film of the ISIS/DAESH is ‘The road to Caliphate⁴²’. This video shows the way to change the world, their way to enforce the desired change. The film shows their accomplishment, the defeat of the ‘crusaders’, and the unity of the *Ummah*.

Several propaganda messages were presented through the different videos uploaded. One main message is that ISIS/DAESH presents the one identity for all Muslims. The one identity includes the one religion, unified thoughts and unified region. This was apparent through abandoning their passports to identify all as one⁴³.

Another important message revealed is the picture of the normal life in the areas controlled by the ISIS/DAESH. It revealed that all conditions of normal life are available, and all people in those areas accept the ISIS/DAESH control and are satisfied with the imposed rules, the conditions, and the Sharia. An example that illustrates this propaganda is the video in Russian with translation to Arabic and English: ‘a visit to Mosul⁴⁴’.

The strength of the ISIS/DAESH against the others in different languages⁴⁵ was another major message presented. This was revealed through aggressive videos and pictures that revealed the strength. This is the propaganda that they used to enter the different cities without much resistance in many cases. On the other hand, these messages declared that any aggression against ISIS/DAESH is an aggression against all Muslims and the belief that so called Jihad is the way to dignity an life, and that God will bring them Glory and victory.

These videos were presented in high quality; which illustrates the high capacity of the ISIS/DAESH use of IT, and strong capability. The sites provided different options to access the videos. The content included emotional hymns in the background, with extensive use of Holy Quran recitation as a proof of rightness, use of different languages and translation providing messages to the different nations globally. It is worthy to note that the use of languages was professional, even the characters speaking in English have perfect British or American accent.

⁴¹ ISIS/DAESH publications: Propaganda film – Flames of War: part 1 available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6GSvLcc9i5k> (accessed 14 June 2015).

⁴² ISIS/DAESH publication: Propaganda film – The road to Caliphate available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LiTBrucjA> (accessed 14 June 2015).

⁴³ ISIS/DAESH publications: Propaganda messages discussing the identity of the IS available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8hKo9Y2XHkM> (accessed 13 June 2015).

⁴⁴ ISIS/DAESH Publications: Propaganda messages in Russian available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MBKaPIYKQVI> (accessed 13 June 2015).

⁴⁵ ISIS/DAESH Publications: Propaganda messages – messages sent by the IS to the international community in different languages available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CdIrye--dDE> (accessed 13 June 2015).

In general, the ISIS/DAESH has succeeded in utilizing the different forms of social media especially in the twitter and YouTube platforms. They are continuously and effectively using up-to-date tools, new foras, and new platforms with regular advancement and development of each. They are fiercely trying to disseminate information that affects their people and the adversaries, while effectively trying to confront all countermeasures taken. They are using it to motivate their people and to bring fear amongst their enemies. They are even able to gather information about adversaries especially through twitter where they are able to locate enemies, identify them and block them. They are decisively sending propaganda messages for fundraising and recruitment, and they are decisively trying to maintain a nation brand based on extremism through beheading under the umbrella of the right Islam and the right religion.

Conclusion

Winning the propaganda battle is vital to win the war, and this is a war that the ISIS/DAESH is heavily using and investing in. The ISIS/DAESH is in fact orchestrating their vision through social media. They are using all possible tools to tell the rest of the world they are strong and they are to be feared. They are publishing their messages through different tools and different languages. They are even focusing on western tone and western language. All attacks are live recorded and all are documented and published for the rest of the world to see. Their acts are effectively illustrated through an intensive marketing strategy to win the war with minimal confrontation.

The ISIS/DAESH has used all forms of IT to grasp all parts of the cyberspace for their communication strategy and war strategy. They even started using open-source social network Diaspora in which the content is impossible to remove proving to be the unbreakable guerillas. The ISIS/DAESH has used several platforms with a decentralized system to implement their communication strategy. However, they were sending clear and consistent messages addressing each target differently but still intact and very persuasive.

The ISIS/DAESH strategy was mainly focusing on creating a nation brand, promoting their slogan, and promoting the aims and the desired end result; which were all apparent in all the tools used. The nation branding was simply based on two factors; the first factor is glorifying violence and extremism, which was raised through the beheading and brutal killing. The second factor that justifies the first is religion and the only one religion; where the religious aspect is present in all the tools used and is promoted through quotes from the Holy Quran and the words of *Jihad, Allah Akbar*, etc. The slogan *Baqyia wa tatamadad* is also very much present in all the videos and the messages sent.

The aims and end results are also apparent in their use of cyberspace. The aims includes solicitation of financial and human resources, religious and technical training, disseminating information they deem important that will educate in accordance to their perspective and bring fear amongst enemies. The end result is also identified the one identity, one state and one religion; it is the ISIS/DAESH that is extending to reach the globe with the 'right Islam' governing under their control and supervision and using their judgment.

The ISIS/DAESH has very well established media centers like Furqan Media Center that produces slick videos complete with interviews, graphics, Holy Quran recitation and jihadist hymns in the background, using both Arabic and English subtitles. They are emotional and want to accomplish the desired aims of the ISIS/DAESH.

Several messages are presented through the different IT mechanisms. Mainly, one of the most alarming messages that help in the expansion process is striking fear amongst the people in the region: this helps them control areas easily; when people hear about the massacres, they just flee away. Hence, they focus on inhuman fight showing all the beheading and the aggressive acts they can and are conducting. The messages reveal the strength of the ISIS/DAESH, but also it tells the Western World that they cannot be defeated through airstrikes.

Through the use of IT, the ISIS/DAESH is succeeding in recruiting new members regionally and globally. They use pictures and videos to illustrate the brutality of the Arab regimes that needs to come to an end with the help of both local and global potential members. Their attempts to use religious messages helps recruit people from the region along with attracting any suppressed Islamic in the Western world. Additionally, they use emotional and adventurous messages to attract youth who would want to be part of this adventurous process.

Throughout the different IT techniques, the ISIS/DAESH has focused on a unified image they want to be perceived with. They present themselves as the agent of change in the region and the world; they try to reveal that they will be the source and mean of change regionally and globally. In all their messages they claim that they speak in the name of God and Islam and that they are the exclusive source of religious education and preaching. They are the law and Sharia enforcement driver as they claim, and they are the drivers of social justice. Additionally, they provide the message that they are the champions of the battle and no competitors are able to defeat this force of knowledge wisdom and faith.

The pictures and videos published by the ISIS/DAESH and their supporters were mainly focused on beheading and brutal attacks. However, other pictures showed the impact of Islamic Sharia amongst all daily life aspect and it also revealed some activities related to social security and social justice for all. Moreover, it illustrated their efforts to provide basic services including education and health.

In their use of technology the ISIS/DAESH has achieved successful attempts despite the counterattacks on their different activities. They were able to reach not just the region but the globe as well, since some messages were targeting the local people and others were targeting the globe. They also had messages to reach out in different languages; mainly Arabic, English, and some in French, Spanish, and Kurdish. Analysis of the efforts showed fierce employment of all sorts of social media despite all the blocking and banning of their use, while building support from different regions and amongst different sectors and ethnic backgrounds. They utilized the Cyberspace for their communication strategy but they also used it for the implementation. It is a war strategy and a comprehensive one.

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