

**The Framing of Citizenship Deprivation: An analysis of the UK mainstream media's framing of the citizenship deprivation of Shamima Begum**

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## **Abstract:**

With the collapse of the Islamic State caliphate throughout 2019, thousands of foreign fighters from across the Western world fled the failing terrorist organisation. Meanwhile, a problem was presented to Western governments: how to deal with these returning foreign fighters. This study focuses on the example of Shamima Begum, a British teenager who fled to Syria to join ISIS. Despite only holding a British Passport, Begum was deprived of her citizenship in February 2019, by the UK Government, when she attempted to return home.

With public opinion split on how Begum should be treated by the UK Government, this study aims to comprehend why two opposing perspectives exist, and how these narratives are framed within the context of the agenda-setting capabilities of two of Britain's major newspapers: the Daily Mail and The Guardian. Through a comprehensive mixed-methods content analysis, key themes develop within each newspaper's rhetoric, clarifying how such stark perspectives exist, and why public perception can be manipulated.

Through the emergence of these themes, this study explores the tensions surrounding the stripping of Begum's citizenship. The research argues that the Daily Mail focuses on a securitised narrative, with a commitment to the protection of the UK national interest, with a negative portrayal of Begum as an individual. In contrast, The Guardian's rhetoric is one that focuses on a more sympathetic view of Begum, through suggesting she was groomed by ISIS and is ultimately a victim in this whole debate. Because of these sentiments, The Guardian is argued to have adopted a humanitarian approach to Begum. Regardless of perspectives on Begum, this study ultimately emphasises the significance media framing can have on the evolution of public opinion, and through this the potential to impact public policy.

**Table of Contents:**

|  |      |
|--|------|
| <b>1. Abstract</b>   | p.3  |
| <b>2. Table of Contents</b>                                  | p.4  |
| <b>3. List of Figures</b>                                    | p.5  |
| <b>4. Introduction</b>                                       | p.6  |
| <b>5. Chapter One: Theoretical and Contextual Background</b> | p.10 |
| 5.1 Citizenship Debates                                      | p.10 |
| 5.2 Media Framing  | p.16 |
| <b>6. Chapter Two: Methodology</b>                           | p.23 |
| 6.1 Mixed-Method Content Analysis                            | p.24 |
| 6.2 Sampling Process   | p.27 |
| <b>7.. Chapter Three: Results and Discussion</b>             | p.33 |
| 7.1 Quantitative analysis                                    | p.33 |
| 7.2 Qualitative analysis                                     | p.36 |
| 7.3 The ‘Other’  | p.36 |
| 7.4 Critique of the UK Government                            | p.40 |
| 7.5 Broader Agendas  | p.43 |
| <b>8. Limitations and Implications</b>                       | p.46 |
| <b>9. Closing Remarks</b>                                    | p.47 |
| <b>10. Bibliography</b>                                      | p.50 |

**List of Figures:**

**Figure 1:**  
- **Frequency of Theme Coverage**

**Figure 2:**  
- **Theme Coverage Based on Newspaper Comparison**

**Examples Provided by JK Essay**

## Introduction:

Islamic extremism and the terrorist organisations attached to this fundamentalism have been a significant foreign policy issue for the Western world for many years. The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) have been the most recent threat to the Western way of life since its formation in 2014 (Tolis 2019, p.129). With their ability to attract vast numbers of foreign fighters, it made them especially threatening to the West, particularly since their collapse in 2019. The potential for these fighters to return home and cause terror in their home countries presented Governments with a dilemma: repatriate these foreign fighters, and their families, or reject their return, through processes of citizenship deprivation.

This study focuses on one specific example where, in February 2019, citizenship deprivation occurred to a British citizen, Shamima Begum, who wanted to return to the UK having fled ISIS territory. In removing Begum's citizenship, the Government cited protection of the UK's national security as a priority over her rights as a British citizen. This decision highlights a key tension in citizenship deprivation debates, between what this study calls a security-based approach, and a humanitarian approach. The securitised approach highlights the national interest over individual rights of citizens and places the political power in the hands of the state (Cohen and Ghosh 2019), whereas the humanitarian approach prioritises the state's responsibility to protect an individual's rights as a citizen (Adjami and Harrington 2008; Mantu 2018). These approaches stress the importance of how the concept of citizenship can epitomise both individual identity and societal divisions (Safran 1997,

p.313; Cohen and Ghosh 2019). Therefore, it is important to investigate these perspectives and how they can impact the interpretation of individual citizenship. To achieve this, narratives framed by the media will be analysed. These media frames essentially focus on the perception of information manifested by the media (Entman 1993), which can shape societal behaviours (Boyle and Mower 2018).

This manipulation of social behaviour can be embodied through impacting public policy (Burstein 2003), which highlights the role of the media manipulating public opinion through agenda-setting and the “selective function” of the media (McCombs 2003; McCombs 2011; Milioni and Spyridou 2015, p.157). It becomes clear why the narratives set by the media must be analysed and evaluated to truly understand how specific accounts of the same issue vary so greatly. Narratives can epitomise political influence (McCombs 2003) and so, through this desire for the acquisition of power, it becomes clear why certain distinct frames are created. Hence, this study’s main research question concentrates on framing theory within the perspective of different existing ideas of citizenship and why it may be removed from an individual:

1. How has the UK media framed the debates on the citizen deprivation of Shamima Begum and her attempted return to the UK?

With the assumption that media frames exemplify political power (McCombs 2003) tensions between two opposing perspectives on the citizenship deprivation of individuals like Shamima Begum will be analysed. This will unearth key elements of each perspective, and further the understanding of why each view exists and how they potentially “reflect social mainstream” (Owe 2017, p.27). This is significant

because this desire for societal impact epitomises why media frames exist, and why they can be so influential.

This study will argue that significant tensions and distinctions surrounding citizenship deprivation exist between the Daily Mail and The Guardian and, as a result, different frames will exist. For The Daily Mail, a security-based, negatively focused narrative on Begum, with an emphasis on individual blame and desire for Begum's prosecution will be proposed. In contrast, The Guardian's approach will be argued as one focused on a more humanitarian, compassionate narrative, which focuses on the victimisation of Begum. Through the theoretical and contextual background, these differing perspectives can be understood further, particularly in relation to the legal frameworks of citizenship deprivation within a UK context. Ultimately this background will underpin the analysis of articles because it will allow for a greater understanding of theoretical tensions. A theoretical background of media framing theory will also assist in discussing why it is important to study media outlets when certain tensions arise, particularly when vastly different views exist. This is significant because it makes it possible to understand the impacts the media has on public perceptions, public policies and wider society.

To investigate this tension within citizenship debates, the utilisation of a mixed-methods content analysis will uncover both qualitative and quantitative results, which will not only focus on the numerical frequency of themes, but also the deeper contextual meanings of these themes (Patterson et al. 2016) and, how through agenda-setting processes, they can alter public perceptions on the citizenship deprivation of Shamima Begum (McCombs 2003; Semetko and Valkenburg 2000).

Finally, once the results of article analysis have been discussed, potential limitations will be discussed to allow for further research to build upon this study's initial research. The implications of the research will also be discussed, to grasp what this research means for the media, and the subjectivity of its frames. Crucially, the implications of what it means for other individuals such as Shamima Begum will be examined, and what Begum's case can teach society about how citizenship has potentially evolved to an alternate meaning than that of the traditional idea of being a citizen.

It is noteworthy that this issue is particularly relevant as Begum's appeals to return home are on-going (at the time of writing), and so the analysis is based on the six months after Begum was discovered in February 2019. This is an appropriate timeframe because this period was when most newspaper articles on Begum were written, and it allows focus to be centred on the immediate aftermath of unfolding key events in Begum's situation. This study is based on understanding objectively how the narrative surrounding Begum has been shaped and so, to include legal aspects of Begum's appeals, would firstly distract from the central issues in this study but would also lend itself towards a subjective outlook on how Begum should be treated by the UK Government.

## **Chapter One: Theoretical and Contextual Background**

The importance of understanding citizenship debates is significant because of citizenships potential to identify and separate people into distinctive groups within a nation-state context (Safran 1997, p.313). This ability to divide is arguably why Shamima Begum has been subjected to statelessness: she has been viewed in the UK as essentially an 'alien' non-member by the British press and Government ministers (Cohen and Ghosh 2019). But to grasp these debates and tensions fully, British citizenship, and citizenship deprivation powers need to be unpacked to appreciate why tensions exist surrounding different analyses of statelessness. This includes understanding the UK's powers of citizenship deprivation and how, through legal rationalisations, the Government could justify Begum's statelessness. However, these citizenship tensions and Government justifications cannot be understood without considering the significance of media framing. The UK media's capacity to frame specific narratives is important to the case of Shamima Begum, because of the way that their agenda-setting can manipulate public opinion. This was especially true in Begum's case because of the "heightened public awareness" (Canny 2019, p.108) that surrounded it.

### **Citizenship Debates:**

Citizenship as a concept is powerful because of its ability to manipulate emotions into a sense of belonging (Fortier 2006). This emotive feeling goes some way to suggest how and why citizenship can be such a polarising topic, because of the power dynamics that are intertwined within the concept (Owen 2018), but also

because this sense of belonging plays into debates surrounding citizenship through “making distinctions between members and non-members (Cohen and Ghosh 2019, p.17). This member/non-member dichotomy is where debates surrounding Shamima Begum become relevant. Begum brings into question in/out-group relations and her case suggests potential restrictions to British citizenship, because of the unclear status of how she should be treated by the British Government

Before the impact of media framing can be developed, it must be understood what exactly the media are framing. In the case of Shamima Begum, the threat to her citizenship as a British citizen is focused on, including the attempts by the British Government to deprive her of certain rights many believe that she has, primarily legal protection (Mantu 2018). This opens up great tensions between different interpretations of what citizenship truly is. Debates surrounding citizenship differ on the prioritisation of rights or obligations (Harrison and Boyd 2003). A Humanitarian analysis would focus on the expectation of the state to defend and protect the rights of its citizens, implying a level of safeguarding for citizens (Mantu 2018).

However, in reality, the relationship between citizens and the state requires a complex balance between rights and obligations. A UK Ministry of Justice constitutional framework highlights this desire for a stable relationship, by suggesting an acknowledgement of “what we owe, as much as what we expect” (Ministry of Justice 2009, p.17). This acknowledgement is idealistically the groundwork of a healthy and stable democratic state (Ministry of Justice 2009, p.17), due to its mutually beneficial nature. It benefits citizens because of the strong legal connection between both parties, which ultimately protects the human rights of citizens (Adjami

and Harrington 2008, p.94). But in reality, this egalitarian analysis of citizenship is rather utopian, because, as Lenard (2016) argues, the relations between citizen and state are inherently imbalanced. Power is placed in the hands of the state because of how it grants (and removes) rights, so therefore gives the state the ability to define how it views and interprets the citizenship of its nation (Cohen and Ghosh 2019). Despite state-based interpretations of citizenship, this is where a humanitarian approach to citizenship exists, because of the emphasis on the protection of citizens' rights, even if the state can remove certain rights.

This point of state-based understandings of citizenship is particularly poignant, because of its applicability in Begum's statelessness, because in the Government's eyes, Begum has disrupted this balance between rights and obligations. This imbalance is understood through the "conditional status" of citizenship (Lenard 2016, p.73), which plays into key forces of deprivation at the states disposal, particularly because it highlights that for certain groups of citizens, their citizenship is less assured than others (Lenard 2016, p.88). This conditionality is heightened when vulnerable social groups are embroiled in possible statelessness. Shamima Begum has been exposed to this vulnerability because of her exposure to the "exercises of private and public power" (Owen 2018, p.301). Although this point is usually only relevant for citizens who migrate to a country, who have naturalised citizenship, the point remains, because of the powers the state has against an individual who acquired citizenship by birthright, in this case, Shamima Begum. This is particularly so when the individual is considered to be from an ethnic minority (Garbaye and Latour 2016; Brinson and Stohl 2012), as in the case of Shamima Begum, with her Bangladeshi descent.

This power enforced on a citizen is significant as it emphasises how and why rights abuses are possible against a stateless citizen (Zedner 2016, p.13). The exposure occurs because an individual is outside the realm of state protection, which enables the possibility of exploitation. Despite states agreeing that access and protection of human rights should be universal and equal (Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948), it is often seen that citizens access varying levels of citizens' rights due to the complexity of internal factors within a state (Bauböck and Paskaley 2015, p.10). This complexity implies the extent of rights given to citizens is up to state interpretation. International guidelines are in place in an attempt to standardise these rights, but it is often at the level of the nation-state where the power lies (Bauböck and Paskaley 2015; Choudhary 2017; Spiro 2011). As Spiro (2011) argues it is effectively up to state discretion on how to define their citizenship, despite international laws being in place. This emphasis on the role of the nation-state rather than international organisations is important as it highlights Zedner's (2016) point on how and why citizens can be exposed to rights abuses through the process of citizenship deprivation. The argument that rights and citizenship are both secure norms for all individuals is unfortunately misguided (Choudhary 2017, p.240).

The power for rights abuses being located at a national level in many cases, allows for an "increasingly securitised understandings of ethnic diversity" (Garbaye and Latour 2016, p.2). This ethnic diversity can only truly be understood in a globalised, interconnected world, with migration playing a big role in the UK Government redefining its law to limit immigration with a focus on UK security (Mantu 2018, p.32). Walker (2019) takes this idea of protection of national security further, by suggesting

the state is weaponising nationality for those posing a threat to the UK, particularly terrorists and as Choudhary (2017) argues, terrorists fighting in Syria. This concern from the Government is rooted in the challenges surrounding public security, terrorism and citizenship because of the potential threat to national security from returning foreign fighters (Bauböck and Paskalev 2015, p.2). To control this risk to public security within a war on terror context, the UK Government's first response to these terrorists is a process of exclusion through the removal of citizenship (Choudhary 2017, p.235). The focus on state power and their ability to abuse the rights of citizens, particularly in a globalised world with often heterogeneous societies, is where the security-based assumption on citizenship is rooted, because of the prioritisation of the state over its individuals.

This exclusionary process within citizenship deprivation has inherently unequal undertones, because of the links to conditionality (Lenard 2016, p.73). This association implies an imbalance particularly in relation to the identifying abilities of citizenship, and how certain groups can be viewed differently, despite having the same citizenship status (van Waas and Jaghai 2018). This idea corroborates with Lenard (2016) and the links she makes between vulnerability, potential individual human rights violations and the conditionality of citizenship. Furthermore, a tangible view that has practical implications is the idea that statelessness alone is a violation of human rights (Adjami and Harrington 2008, p.94). This would presume violations of Shamima Begum's human rights in her attempts to return to the UK, because of her vulnerability and exposure to radical insecurity (Owen 2018, p.301). This suggests a willingness on the part of the UK Government to allow rights abuses of its citizens because of its desire for the protection of the state.

Another manifestation of this avoidance of the state's duty comes in the form of Begum, amongst others, being exposed to "excommunicating them without conviction" (Bauböck and Paskalev 2015, p.16). Bauböck and Paskalev (2015) take this point further by suggesting this ex-communication is a removal of responsibility from the UK Government because of the placement of their citizens outside state law. This prejudiced standpoint on citizenship deprivation directly impact Shamima Begum because of her stateless status as, despite a "failure of responsibility" (Zedner 2016 p.12), Begum is still regarded as a threat to the UK, yet is not being prosecuted in her home country. This point alone may be a point of friction for narratives surrounding Begum.

To understand why many argue the state has failed Begum, the UK context of its deprivation powers must be understood. Before the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, these powers were almost non-existent (Gibney 2014, p.330). However, Tony Blair adapted these powers with a guideline on British citizenship in the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002. This Act gave deprivation powers to the Secretary of State (Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002; Mantu 2015, p.8). This was significant as it centralised state power in one individual, who was able to determine whether a person was a risk to national security. This leaves space for potential rights abuses because of the centrality of the power in the Governments hands. (Mantu 2015, pp, 8-10).

In 2006, this Act was altered to "lower the standards for deprivation" (Puzzo 2016, p.11), and focused on deprivation prerequisites as being simply if an individual was

not “conducive to public good” (Mantu 2015, p.5), instead of focusing on fundamental threats to national security. This legal adaptation widened state powers of deprivation, as statelessness now embodied a far wider criterion, from vital national threats, to simply unconducive behaviour of an individual (Walker 2019). In 2014, the previous Acts of 2002 and 2006 were amended to combine the conditions for deprivation to permit statelessness if conducive to public good, because an individual’s actions negatively impacted the UK’s key interests (Mantu 2015, p.14; van den Elsen 2016, p.18). Although this legislation focuses on naturalised citizens (i.e those who were not born in the UK) (Sawyer and Wray 2014, p.17), it remains significant, because it was used by Sajid Javid (the Home Secretary at the time) as the principal justification for Begum’s statelessness, despite her being a birthright citizen of the UK (Wyatt 2015, p.1).

### **Media Framing:**

Citizenship deprivations portrayal within the public sphere can only be understood through looking at media framing, which engages specifically with the expression of information (Entman 1993). Entman (1993) argues this information communication derives from media’s salient selection of issues. By focusing on prominent problems it affects the level of human consciousness attached to certain issues portrayed by the media. This highlights how the framing of issues can explain how the media can influence thoughts and behaviour (Boyle and Mower 2018 p.207). Through this manipulation of information, the saliency and prominence of frames becomes relevant because of the capacity to make information “more noticeable, meaningful or memorable” (Entman 1993, p.53). It is possible to understand how media framing

can portray one viewpoint on an issue whilst excluding other perspectives (Bodystun et al. 2013, p.1), particularly when highlighting issues through personal “moral judgements” (Akhavan-Majid and Ramaprasad 1998, p.132). Because of the ability to promote one view of an issue by making it more noticeable, this allows for the process of exclusion of other angles on the same issue. The implications of the saliency of certain frames is important for political research because of the ability to alter public opinions and perceptions, particularly on public political concerns (Semetko and Valkenburg 2000, p.93). Van Dijk (2017) takes this further by suggesting this evolution of the public’s perception of political issues can influence political elites.

Van Dijk’s (2017) analysis derives from theoretical perspectives of framing linked to the political implications of such frames. This theoretical framework focuses on two main types of frames; episodic and thematic, drawn from Iyengar (1991) who highlighted focus on these framing ideas within media narratives. Episodic framing prioritises selected events and tends to locate focus on the individual involved. Thematic framing, however, emphasises the wider contextual motives for an event, and tends to look at societal factors for explaining actions, such as public policy. This lessens the individual blame and locates fault within a collective responsibility justification. Because of the ability of these frames, particularly episodic frames, to invoke emotions, they can shape public attitudes, which in turn can impact political policy (Gross 2008 p.184; van Dijk 2017 p.4). Gross (2008) does highlight that if the issue at hand does not provoke sympathetic emotions, the influence of emotion is significantly reduced. Nonetheless, the point remains that, through rousing emotive sentiments and general interest in an issue, frames can shape public perceptions; in

other words, frames have agenda-setting capabilities (Iyengar 1991, cited in; Boyle and Mower 2018, p.207). Media frames and the inherent link to public opinion are relevant in the case of Shamima Begum and citizenship deprivation more widely, because of the dominance frames have played within the public sphere, not just in dividing opinion, but in key legal changes that affect individuals such as Begum, who are threatened with statelessness (Mantu 2018, p.28).

These agenda-setting capabilities are important in understanding the media's influence on public perceptions, because they can achieve more than simply directing the public's focus to certain issues (McCombs 2003, p.1). McCombs (2003) suggests a framework that helps understand why the public interprets news through different perspectives. Through a process of the "agenda of attributes" information is broken down into simple objects of information to be interpreted (McCombs 2003, p.5). McCombs (2011) highlights how these objects can be emphasised on different levels, or even disregarded completely. The implications of this agenda of attributes indicates a link between presenting frames and being able to manipulate information presentation by setting an agenda to suit a certain narrative. Through these controlling processes, it is possible to understand how frames possess "selective functions" (Milioni and Spyridou 2015, p.157) because of subjective conclusions made by media outlets. This idea relates to the impact of framing on public perceptions suggested by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) because the consequences of these varying levels of emphasis and how they affect political agendas is the "epitome of political power" (McCombs 2003, p.8). The impact of narrative creation and manipulation allows for information to be overlooked by the media, which ultimately gets disregarded by the public (Haynes et al. 2005, p.3).

This emphasises the power the media hold over political discourse because of the ability to shape public opinion.

An agenda of attributes is relevant for the investigation of Shamima Begum and the citizenship debates surrounding her, because of the role the media has played in defining the discourse of her attempts to return to the UK. This study aims to understand how emphasis and omission of certain objects have shaped the debates on Begum. Furthermore, these objects give an insight into how the UK media has been able to manipulate this discourse, which conveys the power held by media outlets, as suggested by McCombs (2003).

This idea of manipulated discourse fits into wider debates surrounding the impact of the media, not just with its framing and agenda-setting abilities, but its ability to overwhelm politics within a wider context. The “mediatisation of politics” (Strömbäck 2008; Mazzoleni and Schulz 1999) highlights the ability of the media to shape and influence political communication. The media maintains influential capacities within society, because of the need for the media to keep society (including politicians and the public more widely) informed. Therefore, through this assumption it becomes clear why the media becomes a necessity for a functioning society (Strömbäck 2008, p.230). The media’s political power additionally allows for pressure to be applied on politicians, highlighting the influence the media plays within politics, whilst also enabling understanding of why media frames are so important within civil society.

The need for swift action on issues deriving from media pressure corresponds with “social pressure for politicians to act accordingly” (Canny 2019, p.108).

This political pressure becomes relevant to Begum because of the contested nature of her citizenship. Arguably, decisions were made in relation to Begum because of the media storm around her case, which ultimately could have forced the UK Government to act according to the opinions of both the media and wider society (Canny 2019, p.106). This is increasingly likely because of the significant impact public perception has on policy formulation, particularly when the salience of an issue is heightened (Burstein 2003). This political pressure from the media highlights the “symbiotic relationship” between the media and politicians (Mazzoleni and Schulz 1999, p.52), because of the influence the media has on politicians and the need for media support for politicians’ policy initiatives. This shaping of politics, on the media’s terms links back to agenda-setting frameworks of the media, because of their ability not just to suggest “what to think about” but also “what to think” (Cohen 1963, cited in; Weaver 2007, p.145). This notion adds weight to the general mediatisation of society because of the influencing capabilities media frames have on the public. This also suggests that the public’s opinions on Shamima Begum did not originate from individual views within the public, but were instead formed and influenced by the media.

Public opinions are often negatively swayed by the media, particularly when migrant or minority populations are at the centre of a media storm. This hostility is entrenched further in society because of processes of globalisation, especially migration and increases in multiculturalism, which negatively profiles these groups into the ‘other’ (Brinson and Stohl 2012, p.288). The notion of ‘the other’ is a product of wider globalisation developments, argued by Cohen and Ghosh (2019), and their emphasis on in/out-groups. These group divides often can occur because of

negative exposure to frames created by the media, which often alter the public's perceptions of ethnic minorities (Brinson and Stohl 2012; Sogelola 2018). For example, Muslims terrorists are often portrayed in the media more negatively than non-Muslim terrorists (Powell 2018).

To take this further, Powell (2011) argues the 'other' (out-group) are categorised as being more violent, which further entrenches sentiments of resentment for foreign groups. This hostility to 'the other' has been heightened by the prominence of these views by right-wing media outlets, which have affected the socio-political landscape (Berry et al 2015; Brinson and Stohl 2012; Patler and Gonzales 2015; Powell 2011; Bashatah 2017). This divide is embedded in restricting civil liberties, for the benefit of national security.

These views are often expressed by those on the ideological right (Nacos & Torres-Reyna 2007, cited in; Brinson and Stohl 2012 p.275). Although these findings originate in America, the same phenomenon can be found in the UK, with the British right-wing press equally holding these hostile views, with regular conservative bias (Bashatah 2017, p.118), especially on migrant populations (Berry et al. 2015). Patler and Gonzales (2015) take the idea of bias further, by highlighting not only how conservative media outlet can favour these obstructive policies on civil liberties, but also stimulate and uphold negative sentiments to out-groups, or 'the other'. Through understanding how the British media has tendencies to favour the security of the state over the liberties of its citizens (particularly its ethnic minority populations) an issue presents itself, particularly with the media's agenda-setting capabilities.

Therefore, if these agendas are based on hostility, security and antagonism,

problems could potentially surface for these ethnic minorities. This directly impacts Begum and her possible statelessness and highlights why understanding the British media, and their potential for bias, is so crucial in order to fully comprehend why Shamima Begum was refused re-entry back to the UK in 2019.

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## **Chapter Two: Methodology**

This study aims to analyse the media framing of citizenship debates surrounding Shamima Begum and her attempt to return home to the UK. To understand the debates, and the attempts to deprive Begum of her British citizenship, two influential and potentially opposing newspapers will be analysed. They will be examined through a mixed-methods approach, through utilising both qualitative and quantitative data.

This is made possible through a content analysis, where keywords and themes will be numerically tallied to understand the consistency of key themes being presented by each newspaper. In qualitative terms, articles will be analysed more deeply and intently, to understand any underlying meanings and contextual suggestions that may help in understanding how each newspaper has framed their views on Shamima Begum. Ultimately this method is best suited for the research question, because of the ability to understand both numerical patterns of keywords and frames made by these newspapers but critically through deeper analysis of the interpretations of media outlets on such citizenship deprivation circumstances (Patterson et al. 2016; Johnson et al. 2007). A content analysis of this kind also allows for analysis to be made along the distinctive lines between the opposing views of citizenship deprivation and also citizenship more broadly. Through fair and consistent codebook, themes can be categorized to represent distinctive understandings of citizenship deprivation perspectives.

### **Mixed-Method Content Analysis:**

This study utilised a mixed-methods content analysis, to examine newspaper articles and the frequency of themes, whilst in tandem analysing articles for deeper emerging themes, which will aid in understanding each newspapers framing processes. Because of this desire for a full understanding, a thorough examination of articles will be implemented to understand issues involving Begum through “key words, metaphors and concepts” (Entman 1991, cited in; Akhavan-Majid and Ramaprasad 1998, p.132).

These key concepts will hopefully arise within the categorised themes presented previously, which will allow for a comprehensive study of debates and tensions that surround Begum (Schram 2014, p.2620). This mixed-method approach will be shown to be appropriate because of the ability to examine a single event, and the contrasting results that may emerge from different news outlets. This is a similar process to the study by Akhavan-Majid and Ramaprasad (1998), which was able to recognise emerging themes through their content analysis. Specifically, for this study, this process enhances the understanding of key tensions within citizenship debates. Justifications are underpinned by the method used, within the context of analysing newspaper articles, which make it a suitable design for the research question.

First, human coding, as opposed to computer-based coding, was the most suitable method for this design because of the inability for computers to “find assertion” (Conway 2006, p.192). The context is crucial for the analysis of articles because distinctions and obscurities of the language can be unearthed when comparing

articles between media outlets (Matthes and Kohring 2008, p.275), something a computer-assisted analysis could not achieve. Whilst computer coding is suitable for tallying word frequencies (Conway 2006, p.192), this quantitative approach “is merely convenient” and does not necessarily lead to valid results (Krippendorf 2004, p.87). Through using a human coder this validity can be achieved through two ways: understanding the context of words presented, and coder consistency.

Understanding of context is crucial for validity as it allows for a true and full understanding of interpretations and implications of data being coded (Stemler 2000, p.2), which can, as a result, then be applied to the real world (in this case, the stripping of Begum’s citizenship).

This context and true meaning could become muddled when using a computer analysis (Roberts 1989, p.148), which would affect the study’s validity greatly, as realistically there would be a real lack of relevant/useful data. Consistency of the design, particularly the coding process is essential to obtain valid and reliable data to analyse. In an ideal scenario, multiple coders would be present to code alongside each other. Inter-coder reliability could be achieved, through comparing each coding process, with an end goal of similar results (Ratajczyk et al. 2016, p.461).

Unfortunately, multiple coders were not an option for this study, so, as a single coder, the way to best achieve reliability and validity, was through consistency (Weber 1990 cited in; Stemler 2000, p.3), both for justifying methods and codes, but crucially maintaining fair and stable analysis of themes when analysing each article.

This will enable this study to be repeated by other researchers (Sonsore and Buzzelli 2017, p.441).

As shown previously, in order to find true meanings of articles, quantitative analysis would not be sufficient exclusively due to its inability, as data, to stretch beyond “manifest content” which focuses on a shallow form of content, unable to be analysed effectively, with an absence of an explanation for the data sets (Patterson et al. 2016, p.3). Qualitative data, in contrast, focuses on “latent content” essentially, what a specific text may mean, and why it means that. Through understanding the deeper implications of data (Patterson et al. 2016, p.3).

Despite the natural subjectivity of qualitative data, it is a necessary evil for this study, because, without qualitative analysis true understanding of the way Shamima Begum has been framed by the media will not be fully comprehended. Frames created by newspaper outlets can set agendas and manipulate opinions (Sonsore and Buzzelli 2017, p.441) and often “reflect social mainstream” (Owe 2017, p.27). Understanding these frames can be a subjective process because of personal “conscious experience of the world” (Harnett 2016, p.6) from the coder. This can, however, be lessened through processes of consistency mentioned earlier (Stemler 2000), whilst at the same time being aware, as a sole coder, of the effect subjectivity and bias may have on the interpretations of texts (Bumbuc 2016, p.423).

Despite the inherent lack of depth which quantitative data produces, it is still important for a study because of the ability to generalise this data and to link it to qualitative data. Similarly, qualitative data can also validate numerical tallies, through corroborating similar patterns emerging within both data sets (Johnson et al. 2007, p.115). This corroborative process creates a level of triangulation to the study design (Turner and Turner 2009, p.3). Essentially triangulation improves validity due to the

“convergence of results from multiple methods” (Greene et al. 1989 p.256). This triangulation lessens subjectivity because of this corroboration, yet this is simply a by-product of a mixed-methods approach. This is key to avoiding subjectivity in a “transparent and honest” research design (Owe 2017, p.31), which has been set out through this mixed-methods justification and will ultimately allow for a valid study of Begum’s case within a citizenship framework.

### **Sampling Process:**

The mixed-method content analysis carried out in the study involved data that was first coded, numerically tallied and finally analysed in more depth for a more insightful analysis of exact frames created by each paper (Patterson et al. 2016, p.3). But before these processes are unpacked further, the design of the study must be set out. As the research question directly aims to understand media framing, it is unavoidable that the analysed content was media focused.

Specifically, this study looked at newspaper articles, from two major UK newspapers; The Guardian and the Daily Mail. These papers were chosen for two main reasons. First, the size of their readership was important for understanding the scope and reach these newspapers (and their views) had on the British public. In 2018, the Daily Mail’s readership was 9,356,000, which was the most popular British newspaper, while The Guardian was a close second with 8,010,000 readers (Ofcom 2018). Although these Ofcom figures combine both hard and online newspaper copies, and other articles suggest these numbers may be excessive (Thurman 2014, p.164), the point remains that both these papers are greatly influential within the British media. This influence facilitates their

ability in “shaping public opinion” (Songsore and Buzzelli 2017, p.441) and so are suitable newspapers to analyse as the impact of media framing will become apparent. Correspondingly, the national reach this issue possesses means analysis of national newspapers with national influence is essential in this study (Songsore and Buzzelli 2017, p.443), because of its ability potentially to affect all British citizens.

Secondly, and crucially, the two newspapers used were very distinctive, in terms of ideological stances, and the newspapers formats, with The Guardian being seen as a “left-leaning broadsheet” and The Daily Mail as a “right-leaning tabloid” (Chauhan and Foster 2014, p.392). The differing ideological stances of these papers may give us some insight into their views on alternative views on citizenship, because of the potential bias certain narratives may represent (Lenard 2016; Patler and Gonzales 2015).

Yet, this can only be understood through the results and implications of the data. Possible bias may also exist through differences of the format of newspaper: tabloid and broadsheet. Firstly, educational levels of readers tend to be higher with broadsheet newspapers, with a focus on “hard news” for a more highly educated audience, with tabloids targeting readers with “lower socio-economic backgrounds” (Lehman-Wilzig and Seletsky 2012, cited in; Owe 2017, p.29). There is an element of truth to this because of the sensationalism attached to much of the tabloid press, with the associations of negative portrayals of much of their news coverage (Larsen and Dejgaard 2013, p.297) (Johansson 2017, p.7). Elements of this sensationalism are bound to arise within The Daily Mail, although possibly less than expected due to

it being regarded as a “mid-market tabloid” with a solid representation of higher educated readers (Johansson 2017 p.24). These key differences link back to the need for national representation of news coverage to fully understand the views of the nation from differing perspectives (Owe 2017, p.28).

Articles were selected from both these papers using the same method to maintain as much consistency as possible. The database Lexis-Nexis was used to retrieve articles relevant to Shamima Begum and her citizenship. The keyword used to search in each newspaper was simply “Shamima Begum” because, understandably, it was the most relevant key phrase to retrieve articles on Begum. The time frame for article retrieving was set appropriately for six months from the day the story broke of Begum attempting to return to the UK, 13<sup>th</sup> February 2019. Therefore, the end date was 13<sup>th</sup> August 2019. This time frame was appropriate because it retained focus on the immediate assessment of Begum, whilst adding an element of longitudinal assessment to the study. For example, key developments in Begum’s case could be analysed, such as the death of Begum’s new-born baby and the decision to give her legal aid in her appeals against the British Government.

The process of retrieving the articles within this time frame consisted of inspecting each article to ensure they were relevant to the research question, which unearthed a few exemptions, as they did not directly relate to Begum, or her citizenship. Out of the 105 articles from The Guardian, 43 articles were irrelevant to the study and so were excluded, which gave the final number of 64 articles. A similar process occurred with The Daily Mail, with 24 exemptions out of 82 articles, which resulted in 58 articles. This meant the total number of articles to analyse was 122.

Having examined each article, this allowed for codes to emerge, sourced from the articles content. This enabled a codebook to be categorised concerning key debates surrounding citizenship deprivation and specifically Shamima Begum. It was also ensured that the themes were relevant to both the data and the research question. As a human coder, it enabled assertion and deeper meaning to be understood, something a computer coder would unlikely point out (Conway 2006, p.192). This deeper meaning can be interpreted through the creation of seven distinctive, yet pertinent categories for a coding process of the 122 newspaper articles. These codes can be split into different subdivisions to understand how they apply to the research question and the newspaper articles. Firstly, themes as an umbrella term:

1. Humanitarian approach
2. Security approach

These codes link to ideological assumptions, with a humanitarian approach assuming key sub-themes such as the vulnerability and helplessness of Begum (Lenard 2016), whilst a security approach naturally implies the security of the state as a priority (Cohen and Ghosh 2019). Wider expectations can come from these two categories because of the stark differences in their implications. These implications are presented in the next category of codes:

3. Forgiveness
4. Punishment

The implications of categories one and two are presented in these codes, as, although not directly linked to the vulnerability of Begum, forgiveness would imply similar viewpoints and perspectives related to this view. This process is the same for punishment and its links to a security approach because of an emphasis on law and order. These categories are suitable because of the interpretations they explicitly infer on the wider framing of citizenship debates. Whilst categories one and two are more umbrella terms categories three and four are more succinct and concise in the responses and outcomes of Begum and the citizenship debates surrounding her. Two further responses to these debates include different consequences:

5. Victimization
6. Active perpetration

Whilst these categories assume indirect consequences of Begum's decisions, they are important to the research question as they link back to theoretical frameworks of this study. Victimization assumes a humanitarian analysis of Begum's situation, whereas Begum as a perpetrator assumes guilt, and so can link to security assumptions including the protection of the state. Possible connections can be made between categories four and six as perpetrators are often prosecuted as a form of punishment. However, the distinction is necessary because articles may suggest perpetration without the explicit need for punishment; and vice versa. Finally, category seven remains essential to analysis because of the implications attached to it:

7. 'Jihadi Bride'

Despite this term being a stand-alone theme, it still remains crucial to the study of Begum, not so much because of direct links to Begum's citizenship, but to understand media narratives more broadly. Due to the exploitative nature of the phrase, and the negative connotations attached, it is important to code as it suggests how the discourse of Begum can be shaped by using this type of negative buzzword

Whilst many of these codes are interlinked and at times appear similar, they remain suitable codes because of their relevance to wider citizenship and media framing debates. In addition, the connections allow for specific patterns of the content of each newspaper to emerge, which is crucial to understanding each newspapers framing of Begum. The coding unit is by paragraph, yet it is probable that themes will overlap within paragraphs, so multiple coding of such paragraphs will be applicable. This, however, is not a significant issue as a paragraph can in tandem have multiple themes with multiple coded categories.

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### Chapter Three: Results and Discussion

This study set out to examine the impact of contrasting media outlets, and their frame creation on Shamima Begum's attempted return to the UK from ISIS strongholds in Syria. Overall, the results from this study lend support to the hypothesis that the Daily Mail will be more hostile to Begum's return and will support a security-based approach. In tandem, the results verify that The Guardian have maintained a humanitarian analysis of Begum, through a more accommodating approach than the Daily Mail.

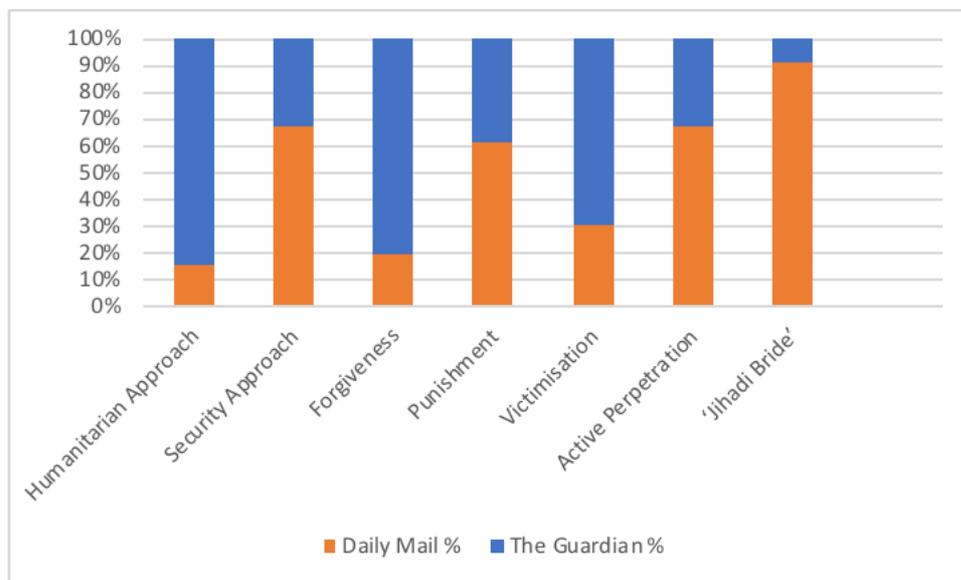
#### Quantitative Analysis:

|                              | Daily Mail |            | The Guardian |            |
|------------------------------|------------|------------|--------------|------------|
|                              | Frequency  | %          | Frequency    | %          |
| <b>Humanitarian Approach</b> | 19         | 6.93       | 156          | 39.10      |
| <b>Security Approach</b>     | 106        | 38.69      | 76           | 19.05      |
| <b>Forgiveness</b>           | 6          | 2.19       | 37           | 9.27       |
| <b>Punishment</b>            | 53         | 19.34      | 49           | 12.28      |
| <b>Victimisation</b>         | 13         | 4.75       | 45           | 11.28      |
| <b>Active Perpetration</b>   | 44         | 16.06      | 31           | 7.77       |
| <b>'Jihadi Bride'</b>        | 33         | 12.04      | 5            | 1.25       |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>274</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>399</b>   | <b>100</b> |

Figure 1: Frequency of Theme Coverage

As figure 1 reveals, the differences between the themes each newspaper focused on are displayed. For the Daily Mail, the umbrella theme of a security approach was the most prominent theme mentioned, accounting for 31.55% of all codes. Naturally, this anticipated a recurrence of sub-themes linked to this approach, which included an emphasis on both punishment/prosecution of Begum (15.77%) and the perpetration of terrorist activities by Begum (13.1%). The use of “Jihadi Bride” (9.82%) was common in the Daily Mail, purely with negative connotations, which link to sensational standards of right-wing media outlets. This will, however, be unpacked further below.

As for The Guardian, similar patterns emerge, but for a different analysis on Begum and her citizenship. Despite revealing some security-based approaches on Begum (17.63%), they remained largely focused on a humanitarian approach to citizenship, with 36.20% of codes denoting to this theme. However, The Guardian results, at face value, are slightly more complex than those of the Daily Mail. Through a humanitarian approach, a commonality and link could be assumed between this approach and themes of forgiveness arising in their articles. However, only 8.58% of codes related to the forgiveness of Begum. Yet, The Guardian did tend to acknowledge Begum as a victim of her past with 10.44% of themes based on this understanding. The Guardian also accepted the active perpetration of Begum (7.2%), but less so than the Daily Mail. Despite a lower percentage of mentions of punishment than The Daily Mail, The Guardian still recognise a need for prosecution should evidence arise of Begum’s guilt (11.37%). The use of “Jihadi Bride” was rare (1.16%), with its use purely to criticise the use of the term.



**Figure 2: Theme Coverage Based on Newspaper Comparison**

Figure 2 highlights the balance of themes when comparing the two newspapers, regardless of the number of codes recorded. This graph adds weight in support of the argument made by this study, that predominantly coded themes characterise each newspaper's narrative. For the Daily Mail, theme focus (themes 2, 4 and 6) originates in a securitised analysis of Begum. Conversely, The Guardian's analysis although slightly more balanced still prioritises a humanitarian based narrative (with focus on themes 1, 3 and 5). Despite the worth of a quantitative analysis, questions over why these prioritisations exist can only truly be understood through deeper qualitative analysis.

## Qualitative Analysis

### **The 'Other':**

Primarily, the Daily Mail showed a strong distaste for Begum as an individual. They consistently described her not only as a threat to the UK but also attack her character and temperament. She was seen by the Daily Mail as "vile", a "monster" and a "psychopath" (Glover 2019; Vine 2019). Furthermore, certain articles endorsed letting "her rot" in the refugee camp where she was found in (Glover 2019; Littlejohn 2019). Questions must be raised as to whether these claims are correct, but also they must be questioned in terms of in/out-group opinions.

Through the research of Brinson and Stohl (2012) correlations can be made between negative media frames of ethnic minorities and Begum, because of these negative portrayals of her personality and the fact that she is of Bangladeshi descent, or essentially non-British (Sogelola 2018, p.135). Despite Begum being born in Britain, as a British citizen, her parents are Bangladeshi, which would suggest she is part of a migrant population. This supports Berry et al. (2015) through the implications that minority migrant populations are unfairly treated by the right-wing press, in this case the Daily Mail.

Further tangible evidence of this can be seen in articles written by Daily Mail journalists. Bethnal Green, where Begum and her two school friends who also travelled to Syria to join ISIS lived, is a predominantly Muslim London Borough, with a large Bangladeshi and migrant population and with 34% of the population identifying as Muslim (Office for National Statistics 2011). Despite some socio-

economic development issues, generally Bethnal Green is not the poorest nor most at-risk London Borough to crime and extremism (Office for National Statistics 2011). Yet, the Daily Mail describes the streets of Bethnal Green as being controlled by “Islamist vigilantes” and they suggest that extremism is rife in the Borough, with “more burkas per square yard in Bethnal Green than in Bangladesh” (Littlejohn 2019). These examples show hostility to multicultural areas in the UK, and highlights features of negative sensationalism (Johansson 2017) in the Daily Mail’s rhetoric on the threat of Begum, particularly as these explanations of Bethnal Green are not grounded in evidential reasoning.

This negative sensationalism is linked to the resentment of the ‘other’ (minority groups), grounded in the Daily Mail’s narrative as they certainly see Begum, and potentially others from migrant populations as a threat to the UK. The suggestion that Begum presents a threat to UK security explains why the term ‘jihadi bride’ was commonplace in their articles. Because of the loaded nature of the term as a sensationalist buzzword, the use of the term intends to provoke reactions from the reader and to link Begum closer to Islamic extremism. Critically, it aims to shape negative public perceptions of Begum (Canny 2019, p.108). This jihadi bride rhetoric fits suitably into the ideas of negative reporting of Begum, particularly in a security-based analysis.

Not only have the Daily Mail’s frames been negative to Begum, but some themes have directly linked to ideas suggested by Powell (2011). These ideas explicitly link to the continued potential violence of Begum, should she return to the UK. Despite the unanimous acceptance of active perpetration from Begum when in Syria, the

Daily Mail were unique in their suggestion of how Begum would act back in the UK (in comparison to The Guardian). One particular article suggested how Begum had the potential to “strap half a pound of Semtex under her Burka” (Littlejohn 2019).

This is relevant in two ways: first, sensationalist undertones emerge again; second, it highlights animosity of the other and particularly plays into the argument Powell (2011) makes that the ‘other’ is often considered more violent, whether this claim is grounded in evidence, or not.

Debates surrounding the ‘other’ are arguably where The Guardian and the Daily Mail deviate most. As shown, the Daily Mail suggests arguments for contrasting levels of citizenship, based on race and ethnicity. The Guardian, however, is passionately vocal in their opposition to this narrative. Consistent suggestions of racism, linked to citizenship stripping are made by The Guardian. They use the example of suggesting that, if Begum was a white terrorist she would be “seen as ‘our’ criminal” whereas because of her ethnic background many consider her “not really British after all” (Hasan 2019). They suggest this example situates the British state, and society more broadly, as “racist, vengeful and weak” (Ramaswamy 2019). This is because of the expression of how the British state and the much of the British public view Begum and wider terrorist acts as coming from ethnic minorities, who have a different skin colour to the native British population.

An explanation for these views is made in one Guardian article, where they imply that the negative perception of the ‘other’ originates from higher immigration numbers, originating in a globalised context. Ultimately, this is seen as stoking “racist fears” (Bridle 2019) from the native population against migrant populations, which is

relevant to Begum and her Bangladeshi heritage. The point of immigration creating these racist sentiments is particularly poignant because of the significance migration, globalisation and general multi-cultural trends have had on Western society. This corroborates with Mantu (2018) and Brinson and Stohl (2012) because of how ethnic minorities are negatively reported in the press, but also why these debates are more relevant now than they were in the past because of an increasingly globalised world (Brinson and Stohl 2012; Mantu 2018).

The Guardian's narrative further supports Walker (2019) because they also suggest how nationality has been weaponised by British Governments, particularly through ideas surrounding second-class citizenship, something The Guardian is repeatedly concerned about. The Guardian highlighted the risk of Begum being evidence of "setting a dangerous precedent" to creating "two-tiered citizenship" (Busby 2019). The Guardian argues this form of citizenship originates from "skin colour" (Amrani 2019), by suggesting that "the burden of proof falls more heavily on those who are black or brown" (Younge 2019).

The consistent reference to the concern for second-class citizenship from the Guardian, highlights elements of a humanitarian approach from their narrative, as the focus is more on threats to civil liberties of individuals in minority groups than it is focused on the security of the state. The Guardian corresponds with Lenard (2016), because of the common understanding that citizenship is not an equal concept, with the potential for bias and prejudice to favour certain groups, at the expense of others. This shows how The Guardian have been framing their views on citizenship

from a perspective of understanding the conditional status and restrictive qualities of citizenship in the UK.

### **Critique of the UK Government:**

Before understanding the critical frames made by the newspapers, an assumption must be made; the UK Government's stance on Shamima Begum was purely security based, with little empathy for Begum. This abdication of responsibility correlates with Bauböck and Paskalex (2015) and Zedner (2016), because of the failure to properly handle Begum in accordance to international law, which has subjected one of its citizens to potential rights abuses. Naturally, with The Guardian's largely humanitarian-based approach to Shamima Begum, it is no surprise their criticisms are rooted in the Government's failure to act. Despite the Mail's desire to maintain national security, several articles are critical of the Government's isolationist approach because of their desire to prosecute Begum in the UK.

The Guardian suggested elements of security assumption through their commitment to the UK legal processes and their upholding of the rule of law (Ramaswamy 2019; Rawlinson and Dodd 2019), which explains why 12.28% of codes linked to the prosecution of Begum. Nonetheless, the majority of the narrative on Begum focuses on the view that regardless of the outcome of legal processes, the Government's position is "highly controversial" (Rawlinson and Dodd 2019). This makes Britain look "callous and weak" (Younge 2019), particularly because of the disregard for international obligations on the protection of citizens developing from the Government (Sodha 2019; Dodd and Addley 2019). This highlights Begum's state exposure, because Begum is subject to state discretion, regardless of international

law (Spiro 2011). This exposure highlights the prioritisation of national security over individual liberties (Zedner 2016), something The Guardian vehemently oppose.

The Guardian's concern for rights originates from suggesting the Government is representing a societal shift towards "growing nativism and intolerance" (Barrett 2019), with a fear of a "right-wing backlash" (Beaumont 2019) should Begum not be stripped of her citizenship. Despite The Guardian's maintained support of the rule of law, their criticism has arisen over concerns of a "trial by tabloid" (Ramaswamy 2019). Arguably this trial by media links to wider processes of sensationalism within the tabloid press, because of the negative portrayals of those who disregard British society (Larsen and Dejgaard 2013, p.297). This argument is understandable because if this backlash is rooted in the narratives of right-wing tabloids (like the Daily Mail) then naturally The Guardian would oppose these ideas, particularly if Begum's statelessness is rooted in Sajid Javid's populist motivations (Busby 2019; Greenslade 2019). This opposition would arise as The Guardian's narrative is far from right-wing and is entrenched in a more compassionate approach compared to the 'us and them' rhetoric promulgated by the Daily Mail when discussing Begum.

Much of the stripping of Begum's citizenship can be understood through the lens of understanding the mediatisation of politics, (Strömbäck 2008; Mazzoleni and Schulz 1999). This is due to the importance of the media in a politician's career particularly in shaping and evolving political communications, and the way they present these to the public. Such communications pressure politicians to act in accordance with the political mood of the media, and by extension the public (Canny 2019). This further helps to understand Begum because, if Begum is generally disliked by the British

public, then it would be in the interests of politicians to align with these portrayed viewpoints. Consequently, this alignment could increase popularity as “it suits the political ambitions” (Sodha 2019) of Government figures, such as Javid (the then Home Secretary).

For the Daily Mail, criticisms of the Government still existed, yet they originate from vastly different perspectives than The Guardian’s. The Daily Mail criticised the Government because of discontent at the lack of prosecution of Begum under the British legal system. Despite Begum being regarded as a “danger to the UK” (Cole 2019; Camber 2019), the Government was lambasted for its unwillingness to bring Begum home to prosecute her, which would be following both national and international law; as the Daily Mail highlighted the handling of Begum was “not lawful” nor “right” (Glover 2019). Furthermore, the Daily Mail criticised the Government because of their desire for the UK to display strong values of law and order, and to show citizens they cannot “commit terrible crimes and get away with it” (Toube 2019).

This emphasis on individual guilt is significant because it gives an insight into how the Daily Mail has focused its frames. Through observing theoretical understanding of framing suggested by Iyengar (1991) it is clear that the Daily Mail have focused on episodic framing of Begum’s situation, essentially locating the frame focus, and blame, on the individual. This makes sense when scrutinising the narrative set by the Daily Mail. If thematic frames were used the focus would have been on contextual and societal reasonings for Begum joining ISIS and subsequently looking to return home, much as The Guardian had been arguing.

However, the Daily Mail consistently highlighted that the responsibility fell on no-one but Begum for her misfortunes. The implications of this responsibility advocate for the prosecution of Begum for her actions, with the need for her to be “held to account” (Glover 2019). Accountability implies both guilt and the need for punishment, two key themes (four and six) that were commonplace in the Daily Mail’s coverage.

From a different angle, this also implies a disregard for humanitarian aspects of frames, particularly Begum as a victim who should be forgiven (themes three and five). This is because, although accountability can be achieved through de-radicalisation and other forms of ‘softer’ retribution, to be held to account in a traditional form suggests prosecution, particularly to an individual on whom blame is focused. Through stoking negative emotive narratives on Begum as an individual, this highlights how the Daily Mail has shaped its rhetoric around a security-based assumption on Begum. This corroborates the ideas that link emotive, episodic frames by media outlets to a public perception manipulated by a negative view on Begum (Gross 2008 p.184; van Dijk 2017 p.4.). These presumptions are important because they lead to understandings of guilt and therefore allow for a security-based approach to be taken towards Begum, whether that be the Daily Mail’s approach on a desire for prosecution, or the UK Government’s approach of citizenship deprivation.

### **Broader Agendas:**

Whilst the narratives of both the Daily Mail and The Guardian fit in wider theoretical perspectives on citizenship deprivation, it remains important to delve deeper into

specific narratives that help understand theoretical standpoints more comprehensively. Specifically, these relate to the Daily Mail's distaste for Begum acquiring legal aid for her appeals, and The Guardian's attention being rooted in the grooming of Begum as a teenager.

These differing evaluations of Begum are logical by understanding the theoretical perspective of the agenda of attributes. This concept engages in the presentation and interpretation of manipulated information, to suit a particular narrative (McCombs 2011). By manipulating certain narratives both The Guardian and the Daily Mail can suggest "what to think" (Cohen 1963, cited in; Weaver 2007, p.145). This manipulation is done by altering the saliency of issues (Entman 1993), often through repetition and reiteration of these issues or, conversely, the overlooking of certain issues that would fail to fit a specific narrative (McCombs 2011). Therefore, it is important to highlight these broader agendas set by the Daily Mail and The Guardian because successful narratives, and specific frames are the embodiment of political influence (McCombs 2003). Because of the mutually beneficial relationship between politicians and the media, and the political influence this symbolises (Mazzoleni and Schulz 1999, p.5), it becomes clear why both newspapers are keen to alter public perceptions through their narratives.

Specifically, for The Guardian, it was commonplace for them to suggest Begum was groomed throughout her ordeal and, as a result, should be forgiven and re-educated (Addley and Dodd 2019; McKernan and Beaumont 2019; Barrett 2019). Of the 64 Guardian articles, 10 were dedicated to this wider rhetoric, by highlighting Begum was a young victim who was targeted and radicalised online (Perraudin and Dodd

2019; Dodd 2019; Wallis 2019). This included suggestions that Begum was “indoctrinated by one of the world’s most brutal terrorist cults” (Ramaswamy 2019). Her young age when she went to join ISIS (15 years old) was mentioned often in these Guardian articles, as she was seen as “the brainwashed child” (Segalov 2019) who was “ripe for the picking” (Wallis 2019). The focus on the grooming of Begum resulting in her leaving the UK, represents ideas of forgiveness and understanding she can be rehabilitated. This is embodied in one article stating how “mercy is a sign of strength” (Greenslade 2019). This quote is crucial in understanding The Guardian’s agenda because the mercy shown by a strong society implies a moral responsibility to Begum and signifies compassion for her in a broader sense (McKernan and Beaumont 2019; Mohdin and Chulov 2019).

Broader narratives set by the Daily Mail focused on the negative portrayal of Begum, particularly when legal aspects of her circumstances were revealed. The Daily Mail consistently argue against Begum receiving legal aid for her appeals to regain her citizenship. Of the 58 articles reviewed, 12 were dedicated to the Daily Mail’s shock at Begum receiving legal aid. Articles mentioned how the decision was an “outrage” (Marsden 2019) and an “insult to justice” (Camber and Bains 2019). These views may accompany the Daily Mail’s views on the ‘other’ because much of the rhetoric surrounding Begum’s legal aid acquisition is littered with ‘Jihadi Bride’ sensationalism (Martin 2019; Littlejohn 2019).

Linked to this, one particular Daily Mail article suggests a conditionality of legal aid by stating “there have to be limits” to legal aid (Littlejohn 2019). It is unlikely that this conditionality would be supported if Begum was not of minority descent. This links to

research by Brinson and Stohl (2012) and Berry et al. (2015) which highlight 'out' groups are often treated unfairly, particularly by the right-wing press, or in this case, the Daily Mail. With the Mail's desire for prosecution, an understanding would exist that legal aid is connected to this. However, the distaste of Begum receiving legal aid originates from negative sentiments towards Begum and the view that she does not deserve the same treatment as most British citizens. By negatively portraying Begum, through an attack of character (through sensationalist terms like jihadi bride) and an attack on the legal proceedings of Begum's citizenship deprivation appeals, the Daily Mail can set an agenda on Begum that is fixated on the removal of any sympathy towards her, and linked to this, the desire for the maintenance of security of the British state.

### **Limitations and Implications:**

Despite this study comprehensively understanding the case of Shamima Begum within the context of British media frames, two potential limitations arise which, although they are not critical issues, the potential for further research arises. First, as data was collected by a single coder, issues surrounding the reliability of the findings could exist. Despite inter-coder reliability being impractical for this study and measures being in place to avoid any researcher bias when analysing articles, this study cannot fully detach itself from the potential for subjective bias from a sole researcher.

Secondly, this study focused solely on one example of a member of a terrorist organisation wishing to return home. Despite extensive and comprehensive research

being made on Shamima Begum, a limitation exists due to the narrow focus of the study. The potential for research on multiple individuals in the same situation as Begum, possibly from differing countries (with different political and media landscapes) would enable a more holistic approach to the same tensions existing in Begum's case. Despite the research on Begum being in-depth and widespread, this point leaves room for further research to take this study further.

This research unearths several implications for debates on media framing but particularly on citizenship. Through justifications of the deprivation of Begum's citizenship key issues are highlighted about the vulnerability of individual citizenship. Similar to the findings of Walker (2019) the case of Shamima Begum has similarly suggested the weaponisation of nationality, whilst it also highlights how the political power surrounding citizenship lies in the hands of the state (Lenard 2016; Owen 2018), despite international law being in place to protect individual rights (Spiro 2011). The implications of this argument are more relevant to ethnic minorities, particularly in a globalised world, as governments are securitising ethnicity, which is relevant to citizenship because it fits into ideas of in/out-groups within a certain state (Garbaye and Latour 2016; Cohen and Ghosh 2019). These implications leave room for further research to enhance understanding of why governments are changing their perceptions of citizenship, despite international laws being in place to prevent these changes.

### **Closing Remarks:**

This study has explored the impact and the implications that media frames have had within the context of tensions in citizenship debates surrounding Shamima Begum,

who arguably waived her right to British citizenship by acting in a way that was not “conducive to public good” (Mantu 2015, p.5) by joining ISIS. Nonetheless, this phrase is naturally contested, which highlights why this study has been necessary to understand how these media frames have different interpretations of this phrase and as a result different outlooks on how Begum should be treated.

Through different interpretations of citizenship deprivation, this study has argued that the Daily Mail has created a solely negative rhetoric around Begum, and has prioritised the protection of the state, with Begum being considered a threat to British national security. In contrast, this research has argued that The Guardian’s narrative has been focused on a compassionate approach to Begum through recognition of her being groomed by ISIS recruiters as a 15-year-old, and argued against the deprivation of her citizenship.

Although a similar approach from both newspapers’ criticism of the Government’s handling of Begum was found, the majority of themes were largely different. This was highlighted through a mixed-methods approach, in particular through qualitative analysis, where the Daily Mail focused on a negative and critical narrative of the ‘other’ concerning Begum and ethnic minorities. By suggesting citizenship was not universally equal their narrative focused on the conditionality of citizenship.

The Daily Mail were happy to imply rights abuses to Begum and others who failed to conform to their view of what it means to be British, particularly if it meant society remained secure (Lenard 2016). The Guardian, however, showed concern for this citizenship conditionality with minorities being classed as second class citizens.

These both fit into each newspapers broader agendas of Begum as a groomed victim for The Guardian and a negative agenda which the Daily Mail maintained. These agendas become comprehensible when analysing these issues through a media framing lens, and the impact these agendas can have on altering public perceptions with the long-term goal of impacting public policy (McCombs 2011; Burstein 2003; Weaver 2007).

This study has highlighted the need for objective interpretations of the media, and the need for balanced reporting, particularly when theoretical views can vary so greatly. With one issue being reported on, this study has stressed just how much reporting can vary, when subjective media perspectives are taken into account. Further research is needed to understand the issues surrounding subjective reporting on national issues, such as citizenship deprivation, because of the need for objective processes surrounding policy formulation on issues such as these, particularly when they potentially affect every citizen residing in a liberal democracy.

Examples Provided by JK Essay

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