

Arab Women Image in the Western Media Discourse: A Critical Study

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Abstract

In the field of discourse analysis, much research has been done on analyzing the discourse of Western media. Little research has been conducted on portraying the image of Arab woman. Thus, the paucity of the topic has spurred the researcher to shed light on Arab women issues in the Middle East discussed in *Oprah Winfrey Show* and *Amanpour program*. The present study highlights ideological themes embedded in the discourses of Oprah Winfrey, Amanpour, and their Arab guests namely Queen Rania Al-yaseen of Jordan, Princess of Saudi Arabia Ameerah Al-taweel, and Sheikha Al-zain Al-sabah of Kuwait. Theoretically, this study adopts Van Dijk's (2006d) ideological strategies in the process of analysis. The study concluded that van Dijk's ideological categories were very helpful in exposing the negative image that Western.

Keywords : Arab Woman Image, Media Discourse, CDA, Ideology.

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صورة المرأة العربية في خطاب الإعلام الغربي: دراسة ناقدة

الباحثة زهراء فائز جميل

الأستاذ المساعد الدكتور علي عبد الحميد فارس

قسم اللغة الأنكليزية / كلية الآداب / جامعة البصرة

المستخلص

ثمة أبحاث علمية قامت على تحليل الخطاب في مجالات عدة ، ومنها مجال الاعلام. بيد ان البحث في تحليل الخطاب المتعلق بصورة المرأة العربية في الشرق الأوسط و برؤية غربية لم تتوفر فيه الأبحاث الا القليل. الامر الذي دفع الباحثة لتسليط الضوء على هذا المجال والكشف عن قضايا المرأة عبر برنامج (أوبرا وينفري وبرنامج امانبور). تهتم هذه الدراسة بالموضوعات الأيديولوجية في خطابات اوبرا ونفري و امانبور عند استضافتهم بعض الشخصيات النسوية العربية الإسلامية ومنها : الملكة رانيا الياسين من المملكة الأردنية ، وأميرة الطويل من المملكة العربية السعودية ، والشيخة زين الصباح من الكويت. اعتمدت الباحثة نظرية (فان دايك, ٢٠٠٦ د) في تحليل الخطاب وتوصلت الى ان الدراسات الاستراتيجية الأيديولوجية عبر هذه النظرية تكشف عن صورة الغرب السلبية للمرأة العربية المسلمة من خلال تبني أيديولوجيات سلبية وتصويرها على انها المرأة المضطهدة التي لا تملك ادنى مقومات الحرية.

كلمات مفتاحية: صورة المرأة العربية, الخطاب الاعلامي, تحليل الخطاب الناقد, الأيديولوجية.

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1.1 Introduction

Discourse, as a term, carries certain meanings which are defined according to the discourse research type and the contexts in which they are used. This fact is stated by Tistcher (2000: 42) who stated that "discourse is a broad term with different definitions, which integrates a whole palette of meanings". Discourse is numerously defined by different scholars. Schiffrin et al. (2015:1) for example, assert that discourse is "anything beyond the sentence". That is, in the study of discourse, the prime importance is given to the context in which it is interrelated to the written or spoken sentence.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) came into existence in the 1990s. According to Fairclough, et al. (2011: 357), CDA is looked upon "as a problem-oriented interdisciplinary research movement, subsuming a variety of approaches, each with different theoretical models, research methods and agenda". CDA goes further to delve into power relations like coercion, inequality, hegemony, social struggles, injustice, etc. It endeavors to show the connection between the language and the context in which it is used.

Alongside the significant roles discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis have in the field of linguistics, ideology comes into existence to feed the need of something new to take over the study of thoughts and to provide the researchers with the scientific genealogy of thoughts. Destutt de Tracy puts these points in mind when he first produces the term and adds that "a rational investigation of the origins of ideas, free from metaphysical prejudice would be the foundation of a just and happy society" (Hawkes, 1996: 68).

In every society, there are different modes and different ways of communication. The new modes of interaction are mainly characterized by the massive use of social media. Massive media has become the point of attraction to many sociolinguists. Media discourse comes at the top of the scale in the social studies. News or TV shows are worth to say the easiest windows to see, hear, and discover about the world. For Fairclough (1995: 2) "media is defined as the power to shape governments and parties. It is the power to influence knowledge, values, social relations and social identities."

1.2 Research Objectives

The current study endeavors to arrive at the following objectives:

1. To examine how Arab woman image is shaped in the discourse of Oprah Winfrey Show and Amanpour program and

2. to explore the outlining ideologies concerning the Arab woman in the discourse of Oprah Winfrey and Amanpour shows.

1.3 Research Questions

1. How the Arab woman image is shaped by Oprah Winfrey and Amanpour shows? and
2. what ideologies do the speakers advocate in Oprah Winfrey and Amanpour shows?

1.4 Theoretical Framework

1.4.1 Van Dijk's (1998) Socio-Cognitive Approach

In the realm of applied linguistics, discourse analysis occupies a prominent position as a vital tool to discuss different social practices and uncovers hidden ideologies. Thus, discourse could be seen as ideological that practices power which is embedded in language and conveyed through semiotic resources and carries implicit intentions (Fairclough, 2001: 28). Ideologies can be understood as representations or views that work towards sustaining domination and exploitation in society including the domination of women.

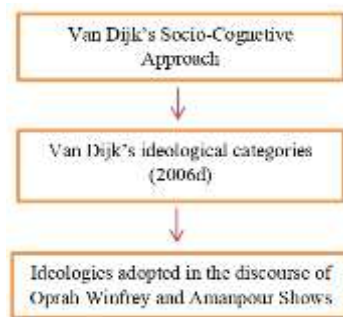
Van Dijk (2018: 27-8) chooses to use the term Critical Discourse Studies. He argues that CDA is not a method but a collection of multiple methods and critical attitudes, "focusing on discursive forms of power abuse." He also developed the approach of critical discourse analysis in a form of critique to other critical discourse studies in which he demonstrates that these studies lack the fundamental element of cognition. Van Dijk argues that human beings, as social members, have representations of social structures and discourse structures in their minds before these structures are produced in texts and talk.

1.4.2 Van Dijk's Ideological Square (2006d)

Coinciding with his socio-cognitive theory to CDA, van Dijk, (2006d: 44) develops what he calls the ideological square. This framework carries in its assumption four ideological categories. They are approached to define the comparison between different social groups. Significantly, the intergroup is referred to with positive "Us" while the negative "Them" is referred to the other groups. The conceptual category is as follow:

- Emphasize/Include Our good things or actions
- Emphasize /Include Their bad things or actions
- De-emphasize/Exclude Our bad things or actions
- De-emphasize /Exclude Their good things or actions

1.5 Conceptual Framework



1.6 Methodology

This section was designed to introduce the reader to the methodology espoused in this study. This chapter provided a road map to the methodology and how it is structured. The analytical framework and the methods adopted were thoroughly explored. The analytical section focused on the discourses selected from the two prominent programs of Oprah Winfrey show and Christiane Amanpour. Therefore, the aim of this study was to uncover the image of Arab/Muslim woman as it was portrayed in the western media. What the researcher wanted to achieve in this chapter was to introduce the reader to the aim of her study and to justify the reasons behind choosing the data. The analytical framework took a significant part as it explained the procedures and methods that guided the whole study

1.7 Research Design

Little is known about the influence of the Western media on the portrayal of the image of Arab woman. Thus, the current study was qualitatively designed in order to describe and discuss the issues of Arab/Muslim women as well as to express the ideologies, thoughts, and experiences of Arab/Muslim women. In general, analyzing Western interviews that host Arab females was a good topic that carries in its assumption the portrayal of the real status of Arab women as if they were educated, have their own businesses, and occupied in different social institutions.

1.8 Data Analysis and Discussion

1.8.1 Oprah Winfrey, in her talk show, interviews Queen Rania to discuss the lifestyles of Arab/Muslim women in Middle East.

Excerpt 1: Negative Other-Presentation

12. Oprah Winfrey: **In a country where women aren't always seen and heard**, this glamorous hands-on mother of four works tirelessly promoting the causes close to her heart, "If you educated women, you educated family. If you educate the girls, you educate the future".

In this excerpt, Oprah Winfrey directly refers to the marginalization of Arab women by saying that *in a country where women aren't always seen and heard*. It is obvious for her that women are not given the rights they deserve in their Arab countries. Oprah negatively presents the image of Arab women before the reign of the Queen Rania where in some families women are not allowed to have education or jobs which approve the ideologies of women oppression and discrimination. This point does not refer that education is never found before the Queen, but, her feminist ideology and her royal responsibilities encourage her to improve education more than before. Thus, she has built numerous educational institutions to provide larger opportunities for girls to have education. In addition, Western media believe that in Muslim countries most women marry their relatives even if the marriage is against their own will. According to the Western belief, al-hijab is another sign of women marginalization and suppression. In Islam, alhijab is mandatory; therefore, it restricts Arab Muslim women freedom and prevents them to be active and supportive. Again, **In a country where women aren't always seen and heard** reveals that Western people are on the belief that Arab countries are dominated by male control. The Arab/Islamic governments give the priority of education and employment to men and women are given less attention and importance, so to speak, **aren't seen and heard**.

Owing to the social boundaries Arab/Muslim women face in their Arab countries, Western media construct the belief that men and women are not equal in terms of human rights as it is in the Western societies. Men in Arab countries occupy the most part of education and social institutions. This issue leads the Western media to diagnose the subordination of women in their Muslim countries. In Arab families, men control their women whether they are wives, sisters, or even mothers. Women keep the part of being housekeepers whereas men are in charged for subsidizing the family. In a word, women live in a masculine society and they have no means but to comply with such society. This perspective, Richardson (2001a: 164), is widely spread in the Western media. Muslim women are considered the "others".

Excerpt 2: Positive Self-Presentation

32. Oprah: You know, **I believe in educating girls too, and I love your quote when you say educating a girl, you educate the future.**
33. Queen Rania: **Absolutely, and one of the most important things that you can do for a girl is to empower her with her education. When she has education, she can then have control over her income, she can change her life, and she can have choices.**

Essentially, ideology is the representation of thoughts and beliefs (van Dijk, 2006d). Moreover, ideology is "a science of ideas, the study of how we think, speak, and argue (van Dijk, 2006d: 6). According to this definition, the prominent ideologies Queen Rania advocates are feminism, anti-racism, anti-sexism, and pacifist ideologies. The excerpt above illustrates these ideologies from the sayings of the Queen as in **I believe in educating girls, and one of the most important things that you can do for a girl is to empower her with her education** especially when Rania tirelessly works on establishing a strong educational system in her country. She is anti-racist and anti-sexist because she insists on educating both of girls and boys. She has become a powerful advocate of reform in public health and precisely in education. She occupies herself in spending much effort to found a well-organized educational level for children and girls in particular. The educational institutions the Queen has set up are *Queen Rania Foundation for Education and Development, Jordan Educational Initiative, Queen Rania Teacher Academy, Madrasati* and many others. It is apparent that the contributions of the Queen concerning education aim at emphasizing the positive self-presentation and to fight against the negative image Western media have shaped towards women education in the Middle East.

Oprah Winfrey quotes the sentence of the Queen by saying that **educating a girl; you educate the future** to assert the power of the Queens' words and actions. In turn, Queen Rania reinforces her statement by explaining the reasons behind making a strong educational level in Jordan. Her main target is to empower women, viz, the positive power that enables women to resist social pressure and to fight for their rights of education and being submitted to male oppression. Queen Rania follows the humanitarian ideology that encourages Arab/Muslim women to go along the road in the journey of education. In sentence 33 Queen Rania attempts to make a change in the minds of women. This change can emancipate women from power

abuse and social inequality. Queen Rania protests against sexism and racism that allow boys to have education while girls are not. The sentence **she can then have control over her income** refers to the Queen's real intention of empowering girls and advising them to be self-independent to earn their own incomes and to have their own businesses. Thus, Queen Rania attempts to offer the positive image of Muslim women in the Middle East in general and in Jordan in particular.

Excerpt 3: Lexicalization

63. Oprah: **Why do some women choose to wear the veil and others not?**

64. Queen Rania: Well, you know **it's a personal; we think it's a personal choice**. And as long as a woman does it because she wants to and **she's not coerced into it**. And that is her right?

65. Oprah: Did you ever wear the veil?

66. Queen Rania: I never wore the veil. **Unfortunately, in the west people look at the veil as a sign of Oppression or weakness**. And this is not true as long as woman's wearing the veil because of her belief. **And I always say we should judge women according to what's going on in their heads rather than what's on top of their heads**.

67. Oprah: a very good saying! good for you

"**The veil as a sign of oppression**" is the prominent sentence this excerpt tries to express. The expression discusses the contrasted conceptions of the veil from Western and eastern viewpoints. Unlike the Queen where her identification of the veil is direct and explicit, Oprah implicitly refers to the veil as a symbol which is indelibly related to freedom limitation and repression. Moreover, Oprah doubts the Islamic obligation of the veil and asks the Queen **Why do some women choose to wear the veil and others not?** The lexical use of the word **choose** elucidates Oprah's question in that if women are free to wear or not to wear the veil, so why they do not have similar freedom in choosing their religion? Queen Rania replies that **it's a personal choice and she is not coerced into it, and that is her right**. This belief is shared by most Arab/Muslim veiled and unveiled women.

The lexical use of the Queen **she's not coerced into it** defines the Western's racist ideology about the veil. Hence, she asserts her ideology of humanity and peace whereby veiled and unveiled women obtain similar rights in their countries and there is no place for veil

discrimination. This overview is clarified by applying the category of Example/Illustration illustrated by van Dijk (2006d: 77) as he says that “We need to express underlying concepts and beliefs in specific lexical items...depending on the position, role, goals, point of view or opinion of the speaker, that is, as a function of context features.” Thus, the position and the role of Oprah Winfrey as a talk show host requires her to pose her questions and, at the same time to negotiate her beliefs according to her culture and religion. To a large extent, Oprah represents the beliefs of the Western people and shows how they interpret culture and religion in the Middle East. However, the Queen refutes the fallacious concept of the veil. She states that the veil is not compulsory. Instead, it is personal choice and Muslim woman can wear the veil according to her own belief and her relationship with Allah. No one can force her to wear it if she is not convinced to do so.

The lexical items “**coerced, weakness and oppression**” portray the Western understanding of Islam and the veil. To neglect these ideologies, Queen Rania uses the same words mostly used in the Western media to assault the Islamic religion. She argues that the Western beliefs about Islam are misconceived. Islam is a religion of love and tolerance. She always makes effort to correct the stereotypical images of the Westerns on the Middle East. She describes the Arab/Muslim women in respect to their education, work, business, relationships, life experiences and social accomplishments to show the world that the Western portrayal of Arab women is distracted. Furthermore, the Queen puts forward her own message by suggesting that instead of giving accounts to the outside appearances of what women wear, we must deeply look at their morals and contributions, **And I always say we should judge women according to what's going on in their heads rather than what's on top of their heads.** No matter if a woman wears the veil or not, she is a woman who has her own identity and full rights and others should judge her according to her knowledge and beliefs.

Table 1: Ideological themes in the discourse of Queen Rania and Oprah Winfrey

Ideological themes	Ideological strategy	Excerpt number	Frequency
Women oppression	Negative Other-Presentation	1	1
Racial discrimination	Lexicalization	3	1
Humanitarianism	Positive self-Presentation	2	1

The table above shows the ideologies maintained in the discourse of Oprah Winfrey and Queen Rania. The ideological strategies disclose that Oprah Winfrey embraces negative ideologies

towards women in the Middle East such as woman oppression and racial discrimination. On the other hand, Queen Rania adopts the humanitarian ideology to improve the role of women in Arab and Muslim societies and to preserve their rights. For the Queen, Arab/Muslim women are not oppressed as it is advocated by the Western media; rather, they are supported, educated, not oppressed by wearing the veil, and involved in the employment system.

1.8.2 Queen Rania speaks to Christian Amanpour on CBS News "60 minutes" February 4, 2000, Video duration: 13:53

Excerpt 4: Metaphor

Amanpour: The situation is the Jordan's economy needs **a shot in the arm**. People here are well educated, but many desperately need jobs.

Metaphor is linguistic expression that creates meaning in various levels. In this excerpt, the metaphorical construction **a shot in the arm** stated by Amanpour reflects negative meaning in describing the economic system in Jordan. Fairclough, (1995: 94) shares van Dijk the perspective in that "Metaphorical applications of discourses are socially motivated, different metaphors may correspond to different interests and perspectives, and may have different ideological loadings". In this regard, **a shot in the arm** is a metaphorical expression confirms that Jordan remains at odds in economy. Amanpour illustrates that Jordan is a developing country and requires plenty of reformations, especially in light of the ongoing changes in politics and society. Moreover, Amanpour negatively represents other group which is the Middle East. She rhetorically describes the economic derogation in Jordan in terms of education, job opportunities, and health system. Thus, the use of metaphor falls under the strategy of negative-other representation as well as it reveals the ideology of non-civilization.

However, the education in Jordan is not in its highest level. People who get the opportunity to have education are not lucky enough to have job. So, this is a negative portrayal of "Them" because, on the contrary, the education ranges in high levels in the Western countries. This negative representation is realized by the king and the Queen. Accordingly they tirelessly endeavor to make strong decisions to reform economy and education in Jordan, as well as using country development as a weapon against the bad image the Westerns have about Arabs and Muslims.

Excerpt 5: Illegality

43. Amanpour: **Honor killings are murders**, every year 20 to 30 women in Jordan and many more throughout the region are killed by relatives, who say, they have dishonored their families by having sex outside marriage. **Right now, the law protects killers.**
44. Queen Rania: **We are moving on the changing of the legislation in Jordan. We're going to make the laws much harder on people who commit these kinds of crimes.**

This excerpt discusses **Honor killings**, the issues that result in constructing the negative ideologies of non-civilization and islamophobia against Islam and Muslims. For the Western media, The Islamic world violates the democratic rights where women are pitilessly murdered. Honor killing is a violent act and a crime against humanity committed by male family members against women who have premarital, extramarital or post-marital relationship, and this is what tarnishes and stigmatizes the reputation of the family and the tribe in general. Traditionally, this horrible phenomenon has its roots in religious and tribal orthodoxy (Araji and Carlson, 2021). The ideological strategy of illegality defined by van Dijk (2006d: 74) as "the strategy of negative other-presentation, and in particular of criminalization" reveals that honor crimes perpetrated by the dominant patriarchal societies are illegally legitimized by the clannish groups. However, in the perspective of the Western media, the Islamic society falls under the category of negative other-presentation.

Generally, honor killing is a public opinion case which both of the Eastern and the Western societies decry. But, the Arab/Islamic society itself has a group conflict where in-group members are proponents, tribe customs and crime's perpetrators, and the opponents are the out-group. In this segment, after displaying honor killing, Amanpour wondering the reasons behind the spread of this phenomenon in the Middle East by saying that **Right now, the law protects killers!** Her point is an apparent negative presentation of the Islamic government and at the same time it is a revelation of the ideologies of non-civilization and masculinism. Those ideologies are observed through "the close reading, understanding or systematic analysis (van Dijk, 1995: 135).

Moreover, Amanpour censures the existence of these illegal acts. This is because the Arab/Islamic governments, up to date, can't discontinue such crimes. And the power of the

uncivilized groups is dominating the whole structure of the Arab societies. As a consequence, the illegal, cultural and social practices paved the way to the group dynamics to develop illegal contexts and thus be in clash with the legal environment. To positively introduce her country, Queen Rania states that **we are moving on the changing of the legislation in Jordan**. This statement shows that the government has such a challenge to deal with the illegal groups. Queen Rania continues defending her monarchy rules by admitting that **we're going to make the laws much harder on people who commit these kinds of crimes**. Her answer clearly makes known the social conflict between the demonstrators and the conservatives who are fanatic to their brutal old rules. Significantly, to fight illegality, the royal government aims at strengthening the law and building it on solid pillars to belittle the issues of honor crimes as much as possible as she said **we're going to make the laws much harder on people who commit these kinds of crimes**.

Excerpt 6: Example/illustration

Conservatives:

47. First person: Touching a woman is a crime and **we cannot accept a woman acting promiscuous in public. If she does, she must be punished**.

48. The second: Our laws come to us from the Holy Quran and whatever it says we live by it. The anti-feminist discourse is conspicuous in this excerpt in which women are threatened by punishment and killing if they violate the traditional beliefs of the region they live in. The sentence **if she does, she must be punished** clearly identifies the beliefs of anti-feminist communities dominated in the Middle East. For the organization of human rights, women's rights are an issue of global consensus. As it is pointed out by Rothermel (2020: 8), the general understanding of the anti-feminist mobilization is "a conservative backlash in response to feminist achievements... as well as, the anti-feminism activism is born from crises of masculinity as a result of worldwide economic and political changes."

Gender discrimination and racist discourse are also evident in this excerpt. For van Dijk (2006d: 49), "in racist discourse, thus, we may find a general opinion statement, for instance about how 'They' break the rules, do not adapt, are deviant or even criminal." The pronoun "They" refers to the conservatives who establish their criminal law by themselves and impose it upon women in the name of religion. The interpretation of the sentence 47 **she must be punished**, for

conservatives, means killing. They assume that the Holy Quran is the resource that legitimizes women killing if they commit honorable misdeed, that is, to have a relationship outside marriage. Although the punishment embraces both the adulteress and the adulterer, they are only women.

It is worth noting that adultery is a sin forbidden by Allah and explained in the Quran in surah Al-isra (17:32, p: 211) "Do not commit adultery, for it is an indecent thing and an evil course." killing punishment, legitimated by perpetrators, contradicts what is stated in the Holy Quran which clearly manifests that the adultery sinner (both for men and women) should be flogged not killed, "Flog the adulteress and the adulterer, each one of them, with a hundred lashes" (Alnur, 24:2, Khan, 2009). From the evidence mentioned, it becomes clear that there is an extreme difference between killing and flogging. The conservatives interviewed in the report do not represent the whole society but rather, a group of tribal and uncivilized population. They have their own interpretation of the Holy Quran so that they legitimize killing as the solely judgment. Therefore, Queen Rania dos not share them the same belief and interpretation.

The ideology of gender discrimination uncovered by the strategy of negative other-presentation comes into surface quite clearly in this excerpt in sentence **we cannot accept a woman acting promiscuous in public**. Conservatives specify women to be killed if they act promiscuous and they exclude men, a point that assures the ideology of gender discrimination. The interview of the conservatives is reported through Amanpour program in order to condemn the Islamic fundamentalists and display their racial ideologies, whereas positive presentation of our good things is obvious through the binary of **Us** and **Them**.

Table 2: Ideological themes implemented in the discourse of Queen Rania and Amanpour

Ideological themes	Ideological strategy	Excerpt number	Frequency
Women oppression	Example/illustration	6	1
Anti-feminism	Example/illustration	6	1
gender Discrimination	Example/illustration	6	1
Masculinism	Illegality	5	1
Non-civilization	Metaphor	4	1
Islamophobia	Illegality	5	1

The dominant ideologies uncovered in the discourse of Amanpour and Queen Rania are negative. Western media illuminate that the ideologies of women oppression, anti-feminism,

gender discrimination, masculinism, non-civilization, and islamophobia are realistic because women are killed, marginalized, uneducated, and suffer from the lack of freedom in the name of Islam. On the other hand, Queen Rania maintains that Western media misunderstand the truth concerning the role of women in the Holy Quran. The groups that commit honor crimes are tribal extremists and they out to be punished for killing women as well as making laws much harder upon them.

1.8.3 Voice for Female Empowerment in the Arab World Saudi Princess Ameerah Al-Taweel fights for rights in the kingdom, CNN Channel, April 26, 2012

Excerpt 7: Negative Other Presentation

2. Christiane Amanpour: On this program, we've often discussed women's rights across the Muslim's world. In a country, that is **unfortunately among the most oppressive for women anywhere**. In the world where **women can't travel alone, can't drive a car, can't even take a job without the approval of their male Guardian**.

In one of the episodes that discusses the issues of Arab/Muslim women in the Middle East and in Saudi Arabia in particular, Amanpour conducts a television interview with the Princess of Saudi Arabia, Ameerah Al-taweel. The strategy of negative other-presentation clearly manifested with the lexical choice of the adverb **unfortunately** in identifying Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is notorious for the Western media as the kingdom largely ruled by men and controlled by masculinism. As well as **most oppressive** is another sign for the negative representation. It is a traditional and conservative state where women are not given chances to assume social as well as political positions. The key words indicating the negative representation of Arab/Muslim women this excerpt tries to explain are: **women can't travel alone, can't drive a car, and can't have a job without the approval of their male guardian**. This segment will discuss them in a sequence.

Foremost, the imposition of compulsory head and face veil is a clear-cut sign of women oppression, according to Amanpour, in Muslim societies, especially in Saudi Arabia because it is not personal choice. It is a dress code imposed upon both of the Saudi women and the expatriate women. Another sign that approves women suppression in Saudi Arabia is preventing them from traveling alone without a male guardian, known as *mahram*. This unfair decision shackles the freedom of women. This issue triggers a large debate in the Western media.

The law of guardianship seems humiliating to Saudi women. It is one of the most severe rules imposed upon them. It restricts their freedom and violates their rights (Fahim, 2019). According

to the Wahhabi school, the authority of men over women is legislated in the Qur'an "Men are protectors of women, because God has made some of them excel others and because they spend their wealth on them" (Al-Nisa: 34, Khan, 2009). Saudi *ulama* (cleric men) assure that men are in charge of protecting women and to be their guardians (*wali*) in every practical purpose in life (Ibn Baz, 1979). Their literal interpretation of this surah leads to the establishment of the guardianship law because the kingdom is guided by the Wahhabi beliefs not the monarchy system.

Travel prohibition concerns the security and modesty of women. Saudi religious schools demonstrate that women can't be safe if they are alone. They need a man in every situation to protect them from harassment, committing a sin, or violating the Islamic rules. This assumption comes from the belief that women may take off the veil when they travel alone outside the country. Consequently, whatever the justification behind preventing women from travelling alone, Western media consider this issue a gender discrimination and have nothing to do with women protection. Although education is given high priority in the kingdom that never discriminates between males and females, women are not allowed to travel alone to study in the universities abroad. Thus, they are oppressed in a country that curtails their ambition and limits their future. Traveling without a *mahram* is a taboo phenomenon in an ultra-conservative country.

That **women can't travel alone** and **can't drive a car** evokes the gender discrimination that Saudi Arabian women undergo in everyday life situations. Alongside the taboo subject discussed above, allowing women to drive is another taboo act that violates the social and religious norms in the Saudi society. In order to carry out her activities, a woman should hire a taxi, depends on a *mahram* to pick her up, or to have her own chauffeur. Again, the *ulama* advocate that women are vulnerable individuals exposed to danger from themselves and others. To maintain the integrity of the country, especially the Islamic society, women must remain under the guardianship of men. Furthermore, allowing women to drive is a promiscuous act that could collapse the modesty and chastity of Arab Muslim women. If a woman drives her own car, she may commit mistakes by going to inappropriate places or meets strangers of males. This would destroy the Saudi family and hence men would lose control over women (Ibn Baz, 1979; Ibn Uthaymin, 1982; Wahhab, 1974).

Equally significant, in sentence 2 **women can't have a job without the approval of their male guardian**. This rule is another sign of gender discrimination and women oppression. A girl can have access to a college only by the approval of her father, husband, or brother. This also portrays the suppression of women because they may prefer to choose a course to study while their male guardian would prefer another one. Hence, a woman may lose hope in fulfilling her ambition. The same is true when pursuing a job, access to a police station, or going to undergo a surgery in the hospital. Women can get access by producing the approval of the male guardian in a form of written permission. However, women can't have an ID for their own as individuals, but they are listed as family members within the ID of the father (BBC news, 2001).

The feature use of the contractive negative form of the modal "can't" in **women can't travel alone, can't drive a car, and can't have a job without the approval of their male guardian** echoes Amanpour's ideological conception of the racial discrimination that Saudi Arabian women encounter in their own home. The negative lexical choice of "can't" reflects not only the otherness of the government policies, but also the beliefs of the clerics who legitimize such offensive and derogatory laws.

Excerpt 8: Authority

21 Ameerah Altaweel: **We're creating the first women leaders Network in Saudi Arabia. We have women leaders from different sectors and they get together, they set priorities.** And they set how to tackle these priorities and reach their voices to the right people. And this is a step that I think will create a positive change.

In abroad sense, Arab/Muslim women are stereotyped as they lack the qualifications for leadership because they are dependent and conforming. Unlike Western women who would never give up to social or cultural barriers, Middle Eastern women suffer from gender inequality and thus, most of them painfully accept such discrimination because they are less capable to defend their rights. This perspective hinders the future of Arab/Muslim women in terms of education, career, and leadership (Mostafa, 2003). Women are excluded from the priority of employment owing to the anti-feminist ideology adopted by the Saudi government. This statement showcases the negative presentation of laws in Saudi Arabia.

On the other hand, Princess Ameerah adopts feminist ideology against which she holds a defensive position by stating that leadership system is affordable for Saudi women. According to

this argumentative issue, princess Ameerah takes over this matter through uniting women to provide them job opportunities. She feels the sense of authority because she is the Vice chairwomen of Al-waleed bin Talal charity foundation. In sentence 21, Princess Al-taweel uses the pronoun **We** to show her influential role in social reforming. She has responsibilities towards women inside and outside her country. According to van Dijk (2006d: 63), many candidates or parliament members mention their authority to support their cases. Examples of people and institutions that have such roles are: "International organizations (such as the United Nations, or Amnesty) scholars, the media, the church or the courts." Thus, the vital position of Princess Ameerah authenticates her argument and indicates her evidentiality.

The implementation of the authority strategy is argued to positively introduce princess Ameerah and her country to the Western world. Yet, it goes in line with the category of positive self-presentation. Princess Ameerah demonstrates that many women in Saudi Arabia occupy leadership positions. Her reliability is shown in her statement **we're creating the first women leaders Network in Saudi Arabia** by using the personal pronoun **we**. Equally significant, women are capable to manage social positions if they are given the chance to do so. As a consequence, Al-waleed foundation is the best means that gives them this opportunity. So that not only men, but also women are endowed **priorities**.

Table 3: Ideological themes in the discourse of Amanpour and Princess Ameerah Al-Taweel

Ideological themes	Ideological strategy	Excerpt number	Frequency
Women oppression	Negative other-presentation	7	1
Gender discrimination	Negative other-presentation	7	1
Feminism	Authority	8	1

By the virtue of using the strategies of negative other-presentation and authority, the negative ideologies of Amanpour and the positive ones of Princess Amerah Al-taweel are revealed. For Amanpour and the Western media in general, women oppression and gender discrimination are mostly practiced against Arab/Muslim women by preventing them from driving, travelling, and having social or political positions. Per contra, Princess Ameerah argues for her feminist ideology and maintains that Saudi women are not oppressed, rather, they are educated, have job opportunities and the ban of driving is a temporal situation that could be changed as soon as possible.

1.8.4 Oprah Winfrey interviews the Kuwaiti Sheikha Al-zain Al-Sabah, 14, Dec 2004, Video duration: 7:31

Excerpt 9: Comparison

11. Oprah: **Unlike the United States**, there are freedoms Kuwaiti women do not enjoy, though it is one of the few democracies in the Middle East **women have never been able to vote**.

Negative other presentation appears in this excerpt from the first sentence. This segment starts by comparing the freedoms Western women possess with the freedom Kuwaiti women do not have because they **have never been able to vote**. Despite the fact that the state of Kuwait is the third-richest country in the Middle East and the 8th richest country in the world, it oppresses women by preventing them from the right to vote. That is, Kuwait does not offer freedom to Kuwaiti women. This perspective seems obvious as Kuwaiti rich women are not included within the electoral system.

Despite all the privileges the state of Kuwait provides to its people, one remaining issue is negatively highlighted that is Kuwait is accused of racial discrimination, a point that contravenes the democratic system of the country. Against their will, women have not been yet allowed to vote. For Westerners, it is a portrayal of women oppression. Likewise, it is an indirect message to tell women to stay at homes because their voices are not considered in the political sphere. This Middle Eastern lifestyle is entirely in contrast with that in the West. Western women have had the suffrage rights for decades, thus, their rights are totally preserved and they are equal to men in every governmental or private domain.

The comparative move is adopted in this current segment to talk about Kuwaiti women as minorities in their tiny conservative rich country. The statement of Oprah **Unlike the United States**, reflects her racist discourse with the sense of negative other representation. Hence, Western women for Oprah are in-group while Kuwaiti women are the out-group. Therefore, van Dijk (2006d: 65) demonstrates that "in racist talk, such comparisons typically imply the negative score of the out-group on the criteria of the comparison." As a democratic country, it is unexpected to prevent women from voting, otherwise, it cannot be labeled as a democratic country.

Excerpt 10: Positive Self-Presentation

29. Oprah: Okay! And so as a woman, **do women feel oppressed** at all because **they can't vote** and don't have it right now

30. Al-zain Al-Sabah: **No, no, no, not at all.**
31. Oprah: Women do not feel oppressed?
32. Al-zain Al-Sabah: You have to understand Oprah; **we are a very young democracy. Our constitution was born on 1961. So, we're very young. Change is coming.** It just takes a while, you know, it's like a newborn child.
33. Oprah: **So, voting is coming.**
34. Al-zain Al-Sabah: **Yeah, it is coming eventually.** And believe me, our women, their voices are heard in other ways.

The question that is frequently raised by the Western News Correspondents or TV Show presenters when investigating Arab/Muslim figures is on the oppression of women in the Middle East even if it comes at the expense of the truth. It is worth mentioning that anti-feminism, women oppression, masculinism, and gender discrimination are the overwhelmingly Western ideologies concerning the Arab/Muslim woman. Oprah in sentence 29 links voting with oppression by asking **do women feel oppressed at all because they can't vote?** The analysis of this sentence can reveal Oprah's dominating idea of women stultification and oppression in their wealthy countries.

The strategy of positive self-presentation is manipulated in this excerpt to reverse the false conception with a positive one. Sheikha Al-zain strongly and repeatedly rejects Oprah's repetition of the negative form **No, no, no, not at all.** Now it comes for Al-Sabah to show the Western audience the reality of her state and the fact beyond the ban of women suffrage. She tackles the democratic system of her country; it is the system that preserves human rights and women as equal as men in education, workforce, politics and business. The political domain is not yet prepared for women to win seats. This fact is maintained by Sheikha Al-Sabah when she asserts that **our constitution was born in 1961. So we're very young. Change is coming.** Even if change gradually comes; it **evidently** will come at the end. Al-sabah's adverbial use of **evidently** signals out that she is certain that a positive solution concerning the suffrage of Kuwaiti woman is on the horizon.

Kuwaiti women can't vote because they are viewed as delicate individuals who lack the strength and confidence to occupy political positions, to run election campaigns, or to win parliamentary seat. Sheikh Al-zain Al-Sabah has the confidence in her state to believe that the policy in Kuwait is amenable to change with time (sentence 32). She has the insight that Kuwaiti women will be involved in politics if they collaborate to work with each other, learn to build coalitions, learn to create political compromises, coordinate with political forces, and run political campaigns. They

further, need to understand how to deal with Islamism and Tribalism to manage different perspectives and produce the best solutions (Olimat, 2009: 211).

Table 4: Ideological themes in the discourse of Oprah Winfrey and Sheikha Al-Sabah

Ideological themes	Ideological strategy	Excerpt number	Frequency
Women oppression	comparison and Positive self-presentation	9, 10	2
Misunderstanding the truth	Positive self-presentation	10	1
Feminism	Positive self-presentation	10	1

Despite the luxury life Kuwaiti women enjoy in their tiny oil-rich country, Western media focus on the ideology of women oppression negative part where Kuwaiti women are not yet allowed to vote. Conversely, Sheikha Al-Sabah adopts the ideologies of feminism and Misunderstanding the truth revealed through the strategy of positive self-presentation.

1.9 Findings and conclusions

This study investigates the discourse of Queen Rania, Oprah Winfrey, Christiane Amanpour, Princess Ameerah Al-taweel, and Sheikha Al-zain Al-Sabah. The findings and discussions of the interviews' discourses exhibited below are considered to answer the main target of the study:

How is the image of Arab/Muslim woman portrayed in the Western media?

Oprah Winfrey and Amanpour have negative portrayal for the image of Arab woman. The negative ideologies of the Western media on the Arab/Muslim woman highlighted through the process of analysis were investigated at the macro and micro levels through explicit linguistic items. Ideologies are as follow:

- Woman oppression
- Gender discrimination
- Islamophobia
- Masculinism
- Non-civilization

On the other hand, Queen Rania positively portrayed the image of Arab woman. She knew that poverty is found in Jordan but it is not enough to portray negative image about women. As far as the issue of honor killings is concerned, Queen Rania manifested that the issue is existed and she is about to control it by making the laws much harder upon the perpetrators.

Princess Ameerah Al-taweel showed similar attitude to that of the Queen. She ran philanthropist campaigns to support women who suffer from the lack of freedoms. Recognizing such facts never prevented the Princess to positively portray the image of Arab woman and to maintain that restrictions upon Arab/Muslim women were not long lasting; they were going to be changed at any moment.

Sheikha Al-zain Al-Sabah not only produced the Arab woman image in a positive manner, but also explicitly encountered all the Western beliefs concerning women oppression. She falsified the negative ideologies of the Western media and added that Kuwaiti women enjoyed the best life in their country. Sheikha Al-Sabah stated that preventing women from suffrage had nothing to do with women oppression.

The positive ideologies adopted by the Arab guests are:

- Feminism
- Misunderstanding the truth
- Anti-racism
- Humanitarian ideology

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