

# Construction of Gender Equality in Arab News Media: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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**Abstract**—Women in Arabia are often seen as subjects who need liberation from the constraints of patriarchal culture. Based on a report released by the United Nation in 2020, Saudi Arabia has big challenges in terms of women's empowerment and gender equality. The subject of limited space for women in Arabia has been extensively examined in earlier works from social and political science perspectives. However, there has been a lack of research on this topic from a linguistic viewpoint, particularly in the field of critical discourse analysis. This study aims to examine how Arab media portrays gender equality in the context of reporting on Arab government policy concerning women's rights. This research uses a critical discourse analysis approach initiated by Fairclough (1995) and a transitivity system approach introduced by Halliday (2014). This study discovered that the Arab media perceives Saudi Arabia's policy change on women's rights in a positive light. It is depicted as a demonstration of gender equality, a representation of the women's liberation movement, and a significant advancement that will propel Arab nations forward. In this particular instance, it pertains to the advancement of gender equality, which is being achieved through the implementation of policy reforms by the Saudi Arabian government with regards to women's rights. The reporting that is carried out can be a tool to guide public opinion, in this case, what is being constructed is gender equality which is realized through the Saudi Arabian government's policy reforms regarding women's rights.

**Index Terms**—Arabic, gender equality, CDA, transitivity

## I. INTRODUCTION

Saudi Arabia is revered by Muslims worldwide. Throughout history, Saudi Arabia has maintained strong affiliations with the Islamic faith. This country holds historical significance as the birthplace of the Islamic religion, as it is where the Prophet Muhammad SAW, the Prophet, and Messenger who introduced Islam, was born. Therefore, the existence of the Islamic religion is closely tied to Saudi Arabia, even the basis of the country's constitution refers to the Koran and Sunnah (Sharia Law) (Pamela, 2022). From an economic standpoint, Saudi Arabia is considered one of the wealthiest nations globally (Al-Ajalani, 1993, p. 18). It is a member of OPEC (The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries) and ranks as the second largest producer and exporter of petroleum (quoted from <https://www.mappr.co/thematic-maps/richest-arab-countries/>). Consequently, Saudi Arabia is recognized as the fourth most prosperous country worldwide. Saudi Arabia is a prominent force in the Middle East, possessing substantial oil reserves and a formidable military capability. It holds the distinction of having the highest budget for importing weapons in the world, amounting to USD 6.46 billion (Dewi et al., 2020, p. 32).

Nevertheless, Saudi Arabia's economic advancements do not overshadow its reputation as an authoritarian nation with a deeply entrenched patriarchal society (Ibrohim, 2023; Joseph, 1996). This is evident in government policies that impose significant restrictions on the mobility of women. For instance, in Saudi Arabia, women are required to have a legal male guardian in order to travel, even for purposes such as studying and working. They must obtain the consent of their male guardian to pursue these activities (Ochsenwald et al., 2023). Additionally, in the education sector, there are provisions that discriminate between women and men in terms of their choice of study programs. Women are only allowed to select social and humanities study programs (Alwedini, 2016). Additional evidence of patriarchal practices in Arabia is shown in the 2020 United Nations Report, which highlights the significant difficulty of achieving gender

equality and women's empowerment in Arab countries (United Nations, 2020). The presence of restrictive policies on women's mobility in Saudi Arabia is shaped by the prevailing religion and belief systems (Yassine-Hamdan & Strate, 2020). The government's strategy of subordinating women is influenced by the teachings of the Islamic religion, particularly the principles of Salafus righteousness and the Hambali school of thought (Ardiansyah, 2013). Nevertheless, Saudi Arabia has demonstrated its endorsement of the role of Arab women by appointing Noura Al-Fayez as Deputy Minister of Education in 2009, during the reign of King Abdullah.

In 2015, King Abdullah's leadership was succeeded by King Salman, who promptly designated Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) as the Crown Prince. MBS's actions frequently garner global notice, such as his efforts to establish diplomatic relations with Iran and engage in peace negotiations with the Yemeni Houthis (Borck, 2023). Conversely, Saudi Arabia is gradually undergoing transformations under his guidance, particularly in the form of policy reforms. One such policy grants women the freedom to move, including the ability to drive, travel internationally without a male guardian, attend sports events in stadiums, and various other policies. These regulations have the potential to eventually eliminate Saudi Arabia's long-standing patriarchal society, granting women the same rights as males. This is Saudi Arabia's effort to accomplish its Vision 2030, which includes creating a vibrant society in which all citizens can develop and follow their interests (Arabia, 2023).

Mohammed bin Salman's policies have not been without problems. This strategy has sparked debate within Arab communities, particularly between men and women, as well as patriarchal and conservative organizations (Dewi et al., 2020). It is not uncommon for these regulations to get international attention and spark debate in other Muslim-majority countries. This is due to the intimate relationship between Arabia's patriarchal society and the teachings of Islam. Patriarchs and conservatives perceive MBS's policies as a manifestation of the long-standing erosion of culture and religion in Arab nations (Perdana, 2019). There are even scholars and clerics who suggest that pro-gender equality activists are people who do not believe and may be killed (Dewi et al., 2020, p. 39). Conversely, many enthusiastically welcome these policies (Saragih, 2018), particularly Arab women activists who have persistently advocated and battled for gender equality in Arabia.

The policy improvements enacted by MBS for women in Saudi Arabia are a contentious event, although they hold significant value for journalists. According to Shoemaker and Reese (1996, p. 216), numerous characteristics determine the news value of an event: (1) deviance, (2) sensationalism and controversy, and (3) uniqueness. When journalists interpret reality, they employ two methods: (1) fact selection, which acknowledges that journalists have their viewpoint when reporting, and (2) fact presentation, which refers to how a fact is communicated to the public. This pertains to the media's ability to shape a new societal reality by constraining perceptions and guiding them toward specific modes of thinking and beliefs (Badara, 2014, p. 57). According to Rolnicki et al. (2008, p. 4) while presenting factual information in news articles, it is important to present it engagingly to establish a connection with the reader or audience.

When constructing a narrative, journalists recount an incident based on their viewpoint. This suggests that the same event might be recounted in varying ways depending on the journalist's perspective. One way this is evident is through the utilization of diction, as the language employed in media texts is not isolated. The utilization of this vocabulary can demonstrate the presence of media bias inherent in the content. Diction can convey the perspective of the world from a particular category and reveal the ideological stance of the media or the author of the piece. For instance, the author's perspective and ideology are reflected in the use of terms like "freedom fighter" or "terrorist" (Davis & Walton, 1984, p. 130).

The debate around women's issues in Arabia is a longstanding topic, often linked to patriarchal culture, religious beliefs, and the feminist movement. Several studies have also addressed this topic, such as the research conducted by Joseph (1996), Mobaraki and Söderfeldt (2010), Hersi et al. (2013), Lihi (2013), Bovell and Durnwald (2014), Rajkhan (2014), Al Rakhis (2017), Bisharat and Bowirrat (2015), Balamoune-Lutz and McGillivray (2015), Alwedini (2016), Maktabi (2017), Glas et al. (2018), Alobaid et al. (2020), Moghadam (2020), and Parveen (2022). Prior research examining the relationship between gender and Arab countries from a linguistic standpoint has been conducted by Eltantawy (2007), Mustafa-Awad and Kirner-Ludwig (2017), Adams (2019), Harun and Ismail (2020), Hamid et al. (2021), Alhalholi and Awajan (2022), and Tabaza and Mustafa-awad (2022). However, based on the available literature, there is a lack of extensive research on critical discourse analysis about gender equality in reporting in the Arab media. The authors address this gap in their research.

Starting from this background, the Saudi Arabian government's recent policy change on women's rights is a topic worth examining further, particularly in terms of how it is portrayed by the Arab media. Hence, two research problem formulations have been put out. The first one investigates how the Arab media reshapes the concept of gender equality by covering the Saudi Arabian policy reform on women's rights. The second one aims to determine the underlying ideology employed by the Arab media in producing this report. The two research problem formulations will be examined concerning the conceptual framework established in this study.

## II. LITERATURE VIEW

### A. Conceptual Framework

The research will be examined utilizing the Critical Discourse Analysis methodology developed by Fairclough (1995), which relies on Transitivity analysis to assess textual elements. According to Fairclough, language serves as

both a symbol and a means of exerting power (Eriyanto, 2001, p. 285). In addition, Fairclough (1989, p. 6) asserts that language is not a self-contained entity, but rather a collection of sentences known as discourse. When implementing Fairclough's critical discourse analysis, a three-dimensional analysis model is used to integrate micro and macro factors in texts. This model consists of three components: texts, discourse practices, and sociocultural practices.

### *B. Gender Equality*

Gender equality is a contemporary social concern that has garnered significant attention and debate. Discussions on gender equality are inherently intertwined with matters of religion, patriarchal culture, and feminism. According to Abirafeh (2021), no nation on Earth has achieved complete implementation of gender equality. Gender equality, in terminological terms, denotes the presence of equitable rights between males and females. Consequently, there are no constraints that impede the mobility of women. Women have the freedom to openly manifest their thoughts, voice their opinions, and engage in any desired actions without being subject to any restrictions that impede their mobility. Abirafeh (2021) asserted that gender equality is not only a fundamental human rights ideal, but also a prerequisite for a secure, equitable, and enduring future.

Perhaps in certain democratic nations, the issue of gender equality does not generate as much controversy. However, in authoritarian and patriarchal nations, gender equality remains an issue for which women continue to advocate. Conversely, Lussier and Fish (2016) demonstrated that nations dominated by Muslims tend to exhibit gender inequality due to religious beliefs that seem to support a patriarchal cultural interpretation that disproportionately positions men in positions of authority over women. This is evident in Arab countries, where the policy of the Kingdom is to ensure that women receive an Islamic education so that they may become intelligent mothers and wives in the future (Rajkhan, 2014). According to the studies published by Human Rights Watch, the practice of male guardianship over women in Arab nations leads to the emigration of numerous women (HRW, 2019).

Gender equality is intricately linked to patriarchal culture, wherein women are positioned as subservient or inferior to men. According to Philips (2003, p. 255), patriarchy is the act of male supremacy over women, when men possess complete authority over women and can demand obedience from them. Conversely, women are portrayed as individuals who possess characteristics of vulnerability, lower intelligence, and heightened emotional sensitivity compared to men. Women lack complete autonomy in various aspects of their lives, including domestic affairs, professional settings, religious institutions, and even political spheres.

The emergence of discriminatory behaviors targeting women led to the inception of the feminist movement, which aims to enhance the status and worth of women in the face of a patriarchal society. Feminists, as a collective advocating for gender equality, highlight the disparities faced by women in domains such as politics, economics, social dynamics, and culture. They consistently assert that equal treatment based on gender is a fundamental entitlement for all individuals worldwide. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that some individuals perceive the feminist movement with skepticism, portraying it as a secular ideology that encourages women to relinquish their inherent characteristics in the pursuit of gender equality (Fajriyah, 2020).

### *C. Critical Discourse Analysis*

Critical discourse analysis is an analytical approach that examines spoken or written texts that aims to reveal the social issues behind the practice of these texts, such as representations of power, inequality, ideology, and dominance. van Dijk (2007) defines CDA as "a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context". van Dijk (1993) similarly articulated the objective of CDA, which is to examine the societal aspects underlying the text, such as power dynamics, hegemony, dominance, and political practices.

Fairclough's (1995) approach to critical discourse analysis consists of three distinct dimensions: text, discourse practice, and sociocultural practice. The text serves as the primary phase in critical discourse analysis, focusing on the linguistic elements that underlie the text. This phase is referred to as the decryption stage. The subsequent phase is the analysis stage, wherein the outcomes of textual analysis are examined and subsequently interpreted by the underlying discourse practices. This is followed by the explanation stage, which establishes a connection between the outcomes of discourse practices and social aspects, thereby facilitating intertextual comprehension. The relationship between a text and existing hegemony is influenced by the nature of discourse practices in text production, which in turn affects the surface features of the text. Additionally, the way a text is interpreted is determined by the nature of the discourse practice of text interpretation (Fairclough, 1995, p. 97). The subsequent text provides a comprehensive elucidation of every facet encompassed within Fairclough's critical discourse analysis approach.

### *D. Text*

Text is a unit of linguistic expression. Text is a record of situation processes that transcend language systems, according to the discourse perspective (Halliday & Hasan in Sinar, 2012, p. 3). Texts can analyze discourse variables, including situational context, culture, and ideology, in addition to morphemes, phrases, and clauses (Sinar, 2012, p. 4). According to Fairclough (2003, p. 5), the transitivity theory approach developed by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) can be used to analyze texts, which includes processes (activities that occur), participants (people or objects involved in the process), and circumstant (environment, nature, or location where a process takes place). In this regard, Jorgensen

and Phillips (2010, p. 35) argue that text analysis is the first stage in critical discourse analysis before connecting characteristics of the text to other social dimensions.

#### *E. Discursive Practice*

Discursive practice refers to the production and interpretation of texts (Fairclough, 1995, p. 97). Discursive practice encompasses the process of producing and consuming texts. According to Eriyanto (2001, p. 287), discursive practices are tied to media institutions, which are the organizations that produce media texts. This comprises the structure and orientation of a specific institution. The creation of a certain text is a result of discursive practice. Furthermore, it is important to consider the author's perspective, whether he is neutral or actively participating in the development of a specific discourse (Eriyanto, 2001, p. 318).

#### *F. Sociocultural Practice*

Language is a kind of communication that is influenced by the way society is organized (Fairclough, 1989, p. 17). This sociocultural practice is associated with the author's ideology, which subsequently shapes the way a certain text is conveyed. This sociocultural technique results in the shaping of readers' viewpoints in alignment with the author's stance. Sociocultural practices encompass both textual and discourse aspects, with the discourse aspect serving as the connection between the two.

#### *G. Transitivity*

The utilization of transitivity in this research serves as a means to reveal linguistic elements inside the text. According to Halliday and Fowler (Matheson, 2005), transitivity is a semantic arrangement that determines how language constructs a clause with a specific meaning. Transitivity is a field of research in functional systems linguistics that examines how experiences are expressed through language. In addition, transitivity serves as the primary instrument for studying discourse within Fairclough's theoretical framework. Wodak and Meyer (2016, p. 2) also asserted that linguistics is a fundamental basis for critical discourse studies. According to Halliday (in Hart, 2014, p. 6), a critical discourse analysis that does not rely on grammar is not a valid analysis, but rather a mere subjective commentary on a text. Transitivity research reveals how language influences the portrayal of an object by concealing and excluding specific occurrences in the reported text (Simpson, 1994, p. 96). Transitivity studies involve analyzing the utilization of processes, participants, and circumstantial elements within the text. The realization of a process in a clause typically involves a verb, a participant is represented by a noun, and a circumstant is expressed through a prepositional phrase (Eggs, 2004; Halliday & Mathiessen, 2014). Nevertheless, this circumstance may vary based on the linguistic structure of each language. For instance, in Arabic, certain actions are not expressed by verbs, but rather through nouns. The function labels of process, participant, and circumstant are used to define how linguistic structures represent phenomena of experience in the world. Transitivity requires the presence of both processes and actors. Every process has a minimum of one participant, and certain processes have more than three participants, whereas the circumstant serves as an extra component of a clause.

### III. METHODOLOGY

This study employs Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as developed by Fairclough (1995) and transitivity theory as introduced by Halliday (2014) to examine how the media constructs women's freedom through reporting about Saudi Arabia's new policy regarding women's rights published in Arabic media. The study focuses on media discourse since news in the media can impact public opinion on contentious matters, such as Saudi Arabia's policy change concerning women's rights.

Three steps were included in the data collection process: description, interpretation, and explanation. First, data description means we demonstrate the data in the form of news discourse in Arabic newspapers. The data in this study were gathered from specific news items there are arabic.cnn.com and independentarabia.com concerning Saudi Arabia's policy reforms regarding women's rights in the Arab media. Due to its extensive coverage and subscriber base, this daily is regarded as a representative of newspapers in Arabia. Second, data interpretation which allows us to interpret pieces of news discourse in Arabic publications that contain news about Saudi Arabia's policy reforms regarding women's rights. Second, data interpretation enables us to analyze segments of news discourse found in Arabic publications that pertain to Saudi Arabia's policy revisions concerning women's rights. The final stage is the explanatory phase, in which the authors elucidate the process of critically analyzing the data by utilizing excerpts from news articles written in the Arabic language.

### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### *Textual*

The initial phase of this analysis centers on the linguistic elements of the news. Currently, the data is linguistically evaluated by examining the semantic and grammatical features of diction using a transitivity analysis framework. This framework specifically looks at the process, participants, and circumstant. The frequency of appearance of transitivity elements can be seen in the following tables.

TABLE 1  
DISPLAYS THE FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCES OF PROCESSES IN NEWS TEXTS

No.	Process Type	F	%	
1.	<i>Material</i>	48	39.3	
2.	<i>Mental</i>	9	7.38	
3.	<i>Relational</i>	<i>Attributive</i>	9	7.38
		<i>Identifying</i>	2	1.64
4.	<i>Behavioural</i>	1	0.82	
5.	<i>Verbal</i>	46	37.7	
6.	<i>Existential</i>	5	5.74	
<b>Total</b>		<b>122</b>	<b>100</b>	

Table 1 shows that the processes that most dominate news texts are material and verbal processes, with percentages of 39.3% and 37.7% respectively. This indicates that this news tends to be constructed as an event involving physical action or telling of an event, and this news also elaborates more on events from the perspective of the sources in the news. For example, the material and verbal processes that appear in the text are *في مبنى* which means "in building". In this particular word context, the process is not realized by the verb, but by the noun which functions as a verb. This discrepancy arises due to variations in the linguistic structure and mechanics of the Arabic and English systems. The emergence of the process cannot be separated from the participants. The frequency of participant appearances can be seen in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2  
FREQUENCY OF PARTICIPANT APPEARANCE

Participant				
No	Process	Participant	F	%
1	<i>Material</i>	<i>Actor</i>	23	11.8
		<i>Goal</i>	22	11.3
		<i>Client</i>	0	0
		<i>Recipient</i>	8	4.1
		<i>Range</i>	6	3.08
2	<i>Mental</i>	<i>Senser</i>	6	3.08
		<i>Phenomenon</i>	7	3.59
3	<i>Relational Attributive</i>	<i>Carrier</i>	11	5.64
		<i>Attribute</i>	11	5.64
4	<i>Relational identifying</i>	<i>Token</i>	2	1.03
		<i>Value</i>	2	1.03
5	<i>Behavioural</i>	<i>Behaver</i>	1	0.51
6	<i>Verbal</i>	<i>Sayer</i>	43	22.1
		<i>Receiver</i>	1	0.51
		<i>Target</i>	0	0
		<i>Verbiage</i>	41	21
7	<i>Existential</i>	<i>Existent</i>	11	5.64
<b>Total</b>			<b>195</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2 demonstrates that the participants that dominate the news text the most are sayer and verbiage with percentages of 22.28% and 21.24% respectively. In line with the process, the dominance of the sayer in the text indicates that this report elaborates a lot on events from the perspective of the source as a participant who provides validity to the information conveyed in the report. To further clarify the process and participants, circumstant attendance is needed. The frequency of occurrence of circumstan can be seen in Table 3 below.

TABLE 3  
FREQUENCY OF APPEARANCE OF CIRCUMSTANT

Circumstances				
No	Circumstant Type		F	%
1.	Extent	Distance	0	0
		Duration	1	1.15
		Frequency	3	3.45
2.	Location	Place	14	16.1
		Time	15	17.2
3.	Manner	Means	3	3.45
		Quality	3	3.45
		Comparison	1	1.15
		Degree	2	2.3
4.	Cause	Reason	1	1.15
		Purpose	6	6.9
		Behalf	1	1.15
5.	Contingency	Condition	11	12.6
		Concession	0	0
		Default	4	4.6
6.	Accompaniment	Comitative	0	0
		Addition	0	0
7.	Role	Guise	7	8.05
		Product	0	0
8.	Matter		9	10.3
9.	Angle		6	6.9
Total			87	100

The circumstances that predominate in news texts are time and place, with 17.2% and 16.1%, respectively, as shown in Table 3. This indicates that this report makes a lot of explicit information about the place and time that accompanies the process. Some of the circumstantial places and times that appear in the text are the word *دالبل* which means "country". This suggests that the reporting focuses on information about where the incident occurred, namely in our country/Arab. Meanwhile, the circumstantial time that appears in the text, for example, is the word *جويلا*. Lexically, the word means "day", but in this context, it means "now" which indicates a time description that explains that currently, women can drive alone without needing to be accompanied by a man.

#### Discourse Practice

Discourse analysis will concentrate on the interpretation aspect, which pertains to the textual elements that underlie the news content, encompassing the process, participants, and circumstant details. From the process perspective, it is evident that the predominant processes in the text are material and verbal processes. This indicates the media constructs news by showcasing a greater number of activities, events, and information. The emergence of material processes can be found in one of the news headlines, namely:

السعودية تقرر السماح للمرأة بالسفر "دون موافقة ولي أمرها"

"Saudi Arabia has made the decision to grant women the freedom to travel "without the need for permission from their guardians".

The transitivity explanation in this clause is as follows.

السعودية	تقرر	السماح -	للرأة	بالسفر دون موافقة ولي أمرها
actor	Process	Range	Recipient	Circumstance contingency default

The headline indicates that Saudi Arabia is beginning to enforce gender equality by implementing a policy that permits women to drive independently, without the need for male accompaniment. From a lexicogrammatical perspective, the Arabic news headline indicates that women are positioned as recipients, implying that they are participants who derive advantages from the process carried out by the actor. This indicates that in its reporting the media places women as the parties who benefit from the process carried out by Saudi Arabia, the process in question is *قرّر* "enimreted ot" snuem hcihw "without the need for permission from their male guardian. The first paragraph in the report opens with a sentence explaining that women no longer need to ask permission and can go without their guardians. This media campaign aims to captivate readers' attention by highlighting the historic milestone achieved by Saudi Arabian women, who can now travel independently without the requirement of a male guardian. This clause is observable in the data provided below (1).

(1) وتمت المصادقة على القانون الجديد، وسيسمح للنساء من سن 21 عامًا فما فوق بالسفر خارج البلاد دون وصي، وسيدخل القانون الجديد حيز التنفيذ في نهاية شهر أغسطس من هذا العام، وفقًا لبيان وزارة الإعلام السعودية.

"The Saudi Council of Ministers has sanctioned a recent legislation that grants women aged 21 and above the freedom to travel overseas without the requirement of a guardian. As per an announcement by the Saudi Ministry of Information, the new legislation would be enforced by the conclusion of August this year."

The media portrays Saudi Arabia's policy reform allowing women to travel without a guardian in a favorable light, presenting it as a beneficial development. As can be seen in data (2) below.

(2) وقال البيان، إن اللائحة الجديدة هي "امتداد لسلسلة من الإصلاحات والمبادرات الرامية إلى تعديل وتطوير اللوائح والقوانين الحكومية بما يتماشى مع احتياجات المجتمع"، بالإضافة إلى ذلك، يقول البيان إنه يمثل "فرصة للنساء لشغل مناصب عليا في الحكومة، بما في ذلك منصب النائب أو مساعد الوزير أو السفير

*"The statement said that the new regulations are "an extension of a series of reforms and initiatives aimed at changing and developing government regulations and laws in line with society's needs." Additionally, the statement said that the regulations represent "an opportunity for women to occupy high positions in government, including the positions of deputy, assistant minister, or ambassador."*

Data (2) above explains that the new policy reforms implemented by Saudi Arabia can provide great opportunities for women to have careers by occupying important positions in government. The sentence "in line with the needs of society" indicates that the policy reform was constructed by the media as if it were a need for Saudi Arabian society in general. However, the interests behind the implementation of this policy are Arab women who want equality with men in terms of careers. This can be observed in the subsequent clause.

The news construction is further reinforced by the lexicogrammatical element, wherein the media gives a positive value to the new policies implemented by Saudi Arabia. This positive value is given through the use of the relational attributive process in the text, even in this clause the carrier participant is given emphasis through the use of the word "indeed" which in Arabic semantically functions as an affirmation of a sentence. In this case, the media highlights that the attainment of gender equality will lead to transformation and advancement in the Arab country.

إن اللائحة الجديدة	هي	امتداد لسلسلة من الإصلاحات والمبادرات الرامية إلى تعديل وتطوير اللوائح والقوانين الحكومية بما يتماشى مع احتياجات المجتمع
this new regulation"	is	This is an expansion of a sequence of reforms and efforts intended to modify and advance government regulations and laws in accordance with the requirements of society."
Carrier	Process Relational Attributive	Attribute

والام بادرات sa h aibarA iduaS tahw taht setacidni sevitaitini dna smrofer snaem hcihw تاحالصلاحإلا The use of the word done is a positive change and initiative that will make the Arab country better by releasing the patriarchal culture which for decades has discriminated against women in Saudi Arabia. As is known, Saudi Arabia is a country that adheres to a very strong patriarchal culture, which has an impact on the positioning of women as inferior compared to men. This interpretation cannot be separated from the etymology of the word تاحالصلاحإلا which comes from the word صَلَحَ which means "good", so the change in the word will always have the meaning "good". This is also reflected in the clause which reads:

أمر ملكيا يسمح للنساء السعوديات باستخراج رخص لقيادة السيارات، وهو ما يعد خطوة إصلاحية كبيرة في حقوق المرأة السعودية  
*"royal order allowing Saudi women to obtain driver's licenses, which is considered a major reform step in Saudi women's rights"*

The word تاحالصلاحإلا in this clause means "reforms", and the clause explains that the legalization of driving for women in Saudi Arabia which has been implemented by Saudi Arabia is a positive change that will free them from the shackles of conservative culture. Even with gender equality, women in Saudi Arabia will be free from the shadow of male domination. This is reinforced by clauses

للمساواة بين الجنسين من شأنه أن يخلق بلا شك تغييرا حقيقيا للمرأة السعودية  
*"Gender equality will undoubtedly create real change for Saudi women."*

The use of the word كفش الب is used as an emphasis that attempts to convince readers that gender equality will truly improve the quality of life for women in Arabia.

Furthermore, apart from the material process, the news text is also dominated by verbal processes, which indicates that the news report elaborates more on the news from the source's point of view. As seen in data (3) below.

(3) ذكرت هند الزاهد، وكيلة وزارة الموارد البشرية والتنمية الاجتماعية، أن قيادة المرأة للسيارة "لا تقتصر فقط على القيادة بحد ذاتها، أو الاستقلالية التامة في التنقل، بل تتعداها إلى الاعتماد على النفس وعدم الاعتماد على السائق، وعلى أفراد الأسرة الذكور، قيادة المرأة بالنسبة إلى هي رسالة من الحكومة السعودية للمرأة السعودية، وللمواطنات السعوديات بأنهن مواطنات من الدرجة الأولى على قدر من المسؤولية والكفاءة، ويحق لهن كنساء ممارسة حياتهن الطبيعية مثل الرجال".

*"Hind Al Zahid, Deputy Secretary of the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development, stated that women driving cars "is not limited to just driving alone, or complete independence in movement, but rather independence and not dependence on the driver and family members."*

*For me, driving by women is "This is a message from the Saudi government to Saudi women and Saudi female citizens that they are first-class citizens who have certain responsibilities and competencies, and they as women have the right to lead a normal life just like men."*

Data (3) provides an explanation of the legality of women driving in Saudi Arabia. Hind Alzahid has expressed that the legalization of women driving is not solely about promoting women's independence as individuals. Nevertheless, this serves as evidence that women possess equivalent capabilities to men in terms of competence. Regrettably, these abilities remain untapped due to the patriarchal rules enforced in Arabia.

Lexicogrammatically, this is realized through clauses with verbal processes that are reinforced by the participants who accompany the process. The explanation of the transitivity of this clause is as follows.

أن قيادة المرأة للسيارة "لا تقتصر فقط على القيادة بحد ذاتها، أو الاستقلالية التامة في التنقل، بل تتعداها إلى الاعتماد على النفس وعدم الاعتماد على السائق، وعلى أفراد الأسرة الذكور قيادة المرأة بالنسبة إليّ هي رسالة من الحكومة السعودية للمرأة السعودية، وللواطنات السعوديات بأنهنّ مواطنات من الدرجة الأولى على قدر من المسؤولية والكفاءة، ويحقّ لهنّ كنساء ممارسة حياتهنّ الطبيعية مثل الرجال	وكيلة وزارة الموارد البشرية والتنمية الاجتماعية	هند الزاهد،	ذكرت
Verbiage	Circ. Role Guise	Part. Sayer	Process verbal

The use of *sayer* ذنه .swen eht ni deyevnoc noitamrofni eht fo ytidilav edivorp ot aidem eht yb tpmetta na si الزاه Hind Al-Zahid is the deputy secretary of the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development who has the authority to convey information related to community empowerment in social and economic development. This indicates that issues related to women's empowerment have implications for the country's economic and political development. This is reinforced by the clause *عياً، واقتصادياً، وسياسياً* "Saudi leadership has supported women at all levels, both socially, economically and politically". Through this clause, the media portrays this event as a demonstration of gender equality, emphasizing that women are not solely associated with home responsibilities but can also make significant contributions to the nation's progress. This can also be seen through the use of the sentence *لهنّ كنساء ممارسة حياتهنّ الطبيعية مثل الرجال* "Women have the right to lead a normal life just like men" accompanied by the word *أي عي بطلا* "natural," this suggests that the current existence women have experienced is abnormal life under male domination.

The pervasive patriarchal culture in Arabia has significantly constrained the mobility of women. As a consequence of the policies in place, women in Arabia are hindered from self-exploration, leading to discrimination against them in their daily lives. Hence, the policy enacted by MBS to legalize women's driving is a poignant occasion for the majority of Arab women who have consistently yearned for liberation. This can be seen in the clause excerpt in data (4).

(4) وما إن صدر قرار السماح بقيادة المرأة، شعرت أن العبء الثقيل قد تلاشى

"After the decision was issued allowing women to drive, I felt a heavy burden had been lifted"

This data elucidates the sentiment of women feeling confined within the traditional society prevailing in Saudi Arabia, with the media portraying this culture as an onerous *عبء* "burden" for women. Lexicogrammatically, this clause explores the semantic meaning experienced by Arab women. This can be seen through the following description of transitivity.

شعرت	أن العبء الثقيل	قد تلاشى
Process Mental+Senser	Goal	Process Material
	Phenomenon	

Through the description of transitivity, it can be seen that women become senser of the mental process *شعر* "felt". Even though the participant senser is not visible in the sentence structure because it is hidden in the process, it actually refers to "she" which is indicated by the presence of *ت*, which in the Arabic language system indicates that the subject is a woman. In this context, it refers to the participant "Al-Jazi Al-Rakan, a Saudi doctor and ambassador of Al-Nahda Association and Zahra Charity Association" who appeared in the previous paragraph.

*Socio-Cultural Practices*

Analysis of socio-cultural practices pertains to the societal framework that influences discourse in the media. Socio-cultural practices are related to the ideology held by the author of the text, which then influences the reporting of an event.

Saudi Arabia is renowned for its stringent limitations on women's mobility. Women frequently encounter discriminatory practices in multiple domains, including education, politics, household matters, and even routine tasks, where their autonomy is undermined. Nevertheless, with the transfer of power to the crown prince, Saudi Arabia has embarked into a new era under his governance. Due to its conservative nature, Saudi Arabia has implemented regulations that undermine the status and rights of women. Saudi Arabia is now implementing significant policy reforms as part of its Vision 2030 initiative. One of these reforms focuses on women's empowerment, aiming to liberate women from societal constraints that have historically placed them in an inferior position.

This policy raises pros and cons in most Arab societies, especially between men and women. In addition, this occurrence garnered attention from various perspectives and was reported in different ways. The author made a distinctive discovery that the reporting of the same incident in the same media varied depending on the gender of the writer. Typically, male journalists tend to portray it in a bad light, whereas female journalists choose to present it



favorably through the use of distinct language tactics.

To enhance their reporting, news writers employ strategic use of diction and participants (sources). This is evident from the deliberate choice of sources in the news, all of whom are female. The speakers included Rima Bandar Al Saud, who serves as the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the United States, Hind Al Zahid, who holds the position of Deputy Secretary of the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development, and Al-Jazi Al-Rakan, a Saudi doctor and ambassador for the Al-Nahda Association and the Amal Zahra Association. All of these sources are lexicogrammatically positioned as 'sayer' who convey information regarding the urgency of gender equality for the survival of women in Arabia in particular and Arab countries in general.

Eriyanto (2012, p. 317) asserts that the inclusion of sources in news articles might impact readers' evaluation of the news. This is because the sources, who are perceived as authoritative figures, provide their responses to the problem at hand. Naturally, these sources will amplify the topic of gender equality as they consist of women who hold significant positions and occupy high-ranking roles in society. This was a difficult accomplishment at a period when patriarchal culture was still deeply ingrained, because they were battling against males who saw women as weak persons. Through the 'verbiage' conveyed, they recounted several negative experiences they encountered before the implementation of the new policy. Therefore, the verbal process that dominates the text is dominated by past tense verbs, such as *تتلاق*, *تترافذ*, and *تتعبات* to emphasize to readers that the current new policy can prevent them from acts of discrimination.

The construction of reporting as a form of gender equality carried out by the Arab media indicates that the ideology possessed by these journalists is the ideology of feminism. Feminism is an ideology that aims to advocate for gender equality in terms of rights and treatment (Rachman, 2023). The usage of all-female sources in the news reinforces feminist ideology. In addition, the news journalist is a woman, specifically Sarah Hasan in CNN media and Al-Anoud Al-Nahit in Independent Arabia media. The media employs this tactic to promote gender equality by amplifying the views of women, particularly those from intellectual and professional spheres. Varying outcomes may arise when utilizing a male source, as his perspectives may diverge from those of a female.

## V. CONCLUSION

Gender inequality is a prominent societal topic that consistently garners global attention. Conservatives and progressives in Saudi Arabia engage in extensive debates on gender equality. By using critical discourse analysis, it was found that several media viewed the issue of gender equality as something positive that should be implemented by countries adhering to a patriarchal culture. The media recontextualizes its news by highlighting the enduring detrimental effects of patriarchal culture on women in Saudi Arabia. Women have been confined by patriarchal culture, which has restricted their mobility. Representation of gender equality is reflected through the textual dimensions, discourse practices and socio-culture that underlie news texts. The aim of the reporting carried out by the media cannot be separated from the journalist's feminist ideology. By using media, journalists can speak out about gender equality through the construction of their reports. This indicates that the media has a role in voicing minority groups.

The study of gender discrimination is an intriguing topic to investigate through a critical discourse analysis lens. The challenges of gender equality in Arabia are intricately linked to cultural norms, religious beliefs, and the prevalence of violence against women. Hence, more investigation can delve into the framing of these three elements in Arab media coverage or can draw comparisons with the framing employed in other nations with mostly Muslim populations, such as Indonesia.

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