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**The Representation of Domestic Violence in Media**  
**Critical Discourse Analysis of two Algerian Newspaper**  
**Articles**

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in Sociolinguistics and Gender Studies

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## **Dedications**

*This dissertation is dedicated to my beloved parents whose words of encouragement and push for tenacity ring in my ears, thank you for all the unconditional love, guidance, and support that you have always given me.*

*To my sisters Fatima, saida, nadia, fatiha, maysae*

*To my brother Mohamed Amine*

*To my dear supervisor Dr. Aoumeur Hayat*

*To my best friends JoJo and Fatiha*

*To all my friends.*

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## Abstract

Studies on Domestic Violence have taken a large area of research. The issue has been discussed from different perspectives for the sake of examining such issue in media, particularly in the newspaper articles. The current study seeks to explore the way of representing man and woman as two main participants of domestic violence and their actions in media as well as how they are represented in relation to such violence. A focus is placed on the representation of them, in two Algerian newspaper articles taken from El Chaab newspaper. So, this later is chosen as a corpus of this investigation, where the representation of two social actors is the focus of attention. This study has different objective. First, to discuss the role of media in representing and depicting domestic violence as an issue and how media relates to such issue. Second, it aims at exploring how media, particularly newspaper, describe man and woman as two different social actors and their actions. As far as the first aim of this study is concerned, two articles from El Chaab Newspaper are selected, examined, and analyzed based on Van leeuwen's categories for the representation of social actors and their actions. Data have demonstrated that there are hidden ideologies behind this representation. Besides, data have confirmed that woman is always represented as a weak, passive, and dependent (victim) whereas man is always represented as a strong, active, and independent (perpetrator).



## List of Abbreviations

WHO: The World Health Organization

CDA: Critical Discourse Analysis

COVAW: Coalition on Violence against Women

BPA: The Beijing Platform for Action

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General

Introduction

## General Introduction

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It is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore the role of media in depicting and representing sensitive issues such as domestic violence. In this connection, media representations of social issues influence public attitudes as the media are the main source of information about them (Goddard and Saunders, 2001). In other words, media affects people in the way of understanding social issues mainly in those areas in which they do not have direct experience of what is happening, they become particularly dependent on the media to inform them.

Furthermore, the events that always occur every day can be related to social, cultural, economic, and many other things including the incidents of social problems. It influences both how we see ourselves and the world around us in general. In these different types, there are different images of men and women, which are represented in different ways and with different characteristics. Concerning this study, newspapers can be considered as one of media's types aims at representing men and women as social actors and their actions of domestic violence.

In this respect, the present study is an attempt to examine the depiction and the representation of women and men as social participants and their behaviors in media particularly in the newspaper articles in which the different stories have been published.

The motivation laying behind this work springs from my reading to the different articles of domestic violence in newspapers. What draws my attention is the women's struggles inside their house where women struggling to live a different life in a society in which women have limited options, rights of the women are strictly controlled by men where women have no freedom, no power, and are always forced to accomplish domestic tasks whereas men hold position of power and prestige. I have also noticed that the majority of stories of domestic violence describe woman in lower position while men are described in higher position. Therefore, I find it extremely necessary to deal with this subject.

In this connection, the following research objectives are put forwards. The first aim is to discuss the role of media in representing and depicting the issue of domestic violence and to know how media relates to such issue. The second aim is to explore how media particularly newspaper articles represent men and women as social participants. Along these objectives, the following research questions are developed:

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- 1- How does media, as a source of knowledge, depict and represent the issue of domestic violence?
- 2- How are women and men as two different social actors and their actions represented in the media, particularly, in the newspaper articles and what are the hidden ideologies behind their representations?

In this respect, the first hypothesis assumes that media has a central role in influencing individual understandings of social issues, including domestic violence. It affects their way of internalizing beliefs, values and social norms as well as it intervenes in adopting certain stances towards different issues whether the latter is presented graphically( images, signs....) or textually( written or spoken texts). The second hypothesis suggests that the majority of newspaper articles represents women as a weak, passive, dependent whereas men as a strong, active, independent and as a perpetrator.

For the sake of an objective investigation, data were collected from the two articles of El chaab newspaper. Van leeuwen's model for the representation of social actors and their actions is adopted, different words and statements that are reported female and the male participants of domestic violence are selected; hidden ideologies behind each sentence in both articles are examined and interpreted.

I have drawn on the model provided by Van leeuwen for the representation of social actors and their actions. This model can be considered as a better tool to analyze and interpret the way of representing men and women as social participants and their actions in both newspaper articles.

To answer the research questions and test the hypotheses, the study is divided into three chapters:

The first chapter is divided into two main parts. The first part is concerned with the conceptualization of gender based domestic violence. It sheds light on the situation of women in patriarchal societies. Besides, it provides an explanation of domestic violence from different perspectives. The second part is concerned with the representation of domestic violence in discourse as well as how the domestic violence as an abusive behavior can be seen from different discourses such as religious, and cultural discourses by emphasizing on the unequal distribution of power among gender relationships and how domestic violence can be understood in relation to the idea of social constructionism.

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The second chapter is concerned with the representation of domestic violence as an issue in media by emphasizing on the role of media in representing and depicting such issue. It sheds light also on the way of representing men and women as social members and their actions by discussing Van leeuwen's frameworks for the representation of social actors and their actions; some key concepts are put under focus such as the representations within text, and Van leeuwen's categories for the representation of social actors and their actions.

The third chapter is concerned with the analysis of the two articles taken from El chaab newspaper by examining the way of representing men and women as the main actors and their different actions, the main categories that is used by van leeuwen in his study of the representation of social actors and their actions. Finally, a discussion of the findings of the analysis is provided at the end of the thesis. This discussion summarizes both the main points and the results of the research and draws a conclusion to the topic of this study.

# Chapter One

## **1.1. Introduction**

This chapter reviews the previous researches conducted on the topic suggested “the representation of domestic violence in discourse. It is divided into two parts. The first part is concerned with the conceptualization of gender based domestic violence. It sheds light on the situation of women in patriarchal societies. Besides, it provides the definition of domestic violence from different theories “social learning theory, feminist theory and ecological system theory”. The second part features the other theoretical dimensions of the research and looks at the representation of domestic violence in discourse as well as how domestic violence as an abusive behavior can be seen from different discourses such as religious, political and cultural discourses by emphasizing on the unequal distribution of power among gender relationships and how such violence can be understood in relation to the idea of social constructionism.

## **1.2. Part One: Conceptualization of Domestic Violence**

### **1.2.1. Defining Domestic Violence**

Numerous studies have attempted to discuss the issue of domestic violence in different ways and with different attitudes.

One of these studies was conducted by Griffith, ET al. (2006) which describes domestic violence as an aggressive behavior that is used by one person to exercise power over another person in an intimate relationship. It can be physical, sexual, emotional, and even psychological behaviors. Davis (2006, p. 46) agrees with Griffith, et al., (2006) and extends this definition to include the actions that “intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound someone”. Similarly, Smith (1989) defines domestic violence as an abusive act happens in the context of an intimate relationship for the sake to hold the higher position in the family and the society in general. In the light of what has been just discussed, the main idea can be understood that domestic violence is a discursive act that is used by one individual as a head of the family by getting the privileged place through their domination of the other individual.

Domestic violence is often described as a private issue and generally understood as an abusive act that is used by one partner for the intention to gain control or power in the family. It can take a variety of forms such as physical, sexual, psychological, and even financial behaviors. This is well illustrated in the following quotation:

Intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation (WHO, 2002, p. 38).

This quotation further supports the idea that the issue of domestic violence can be seen as a forceful act that is tended to exercise the power by one partner against his self, or against one or a group of individual of the same family. It contributes in producing negative health results such as injuries, psychological harms and even death.

Another definition was carried out by Goldstein (2007, p. 9) in which domestic violence defines as a violent behavior that is committed by one person for the sake to control and get the privileged position over another one in a close relationship. According to him, domestic violence is usually not a single event and often becomes more controlling and authoritarian and frequent over time.

Overall, from all of what has been discussed above, it is understood that domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain power and control over an intimate partner. It can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person.

### **1.2.2. Conceptualization of Gender Based Domestic Violence**

One of the most studies in representing and depicting domestic violence as a gender phenomenon was confirmed by Bacchi (1999) which emphasize on the idea that domestic violence is a gendered phenomenon, in that it is committed by the men towards the women. In this regard, the women are significantly more likely than men to be abused of domestic violence while the men are described as the one who held power over them.

Domestic violence as gender based violence refers to all forms of violent behavior that happen to men and women as a consequence of unequal distribution of power between them. It has a greater impact on one of them, particularly women. According to the world health organization (2005), women are more expected to be the sufferer one of various kinds of such violence than men. From among these, studies indicate that such violence is the most common form of aggression in women's lives. It restricts their freedom, and their quality of life. From this point of view, women struggling to live a different life in a society in which women have

limited options. Besides, rights of women are strictly limited by men where women have no freedom, no power, and are always forced to accomplish in domestic tasks while the men are the one who have control over women, they are the one who hold positions of power and prestige. In the same vassal, domestic violence against women has been regarded in most societies as a personal family matter, as well as makes women to suffer inside their houses "in silence". It is important to note that, domestic violence decreases the variety of opportunities open to women, and limits their options in every area in their life "public and private areas". In other words, it controls their occasions such as reducing the choices of women from the involvement to the society, directly influences their health, disrupting their lives.

Another study set out with the idea of the role of power in abusive relationship as stated by Coalition on Violence against Women (COVAW, 2003), which claims that domestic violence within the home is about power and control, where the abuser uses this later as a way to control ( as a way of immobilizing over the other). Similarly, the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) states that domestic violence against women can be seen as any gender based violence produces the negative health results. This violence can be physical, sexual, or psychological suffering to women including threats of such acts, oppression, intimidation whether happening in public or private sphere. It can happen to anyone of different features of educational levels, race, age, and religious.

Another significant discussion was conducted by Cook (1994, p.120) which describes gender based violence as "systemic and structural, a mechanism of patriarchal control of women". In this connection, violence is regarded as a legitimate strategy to impose the patriarchal system by dehumanizing women and representing them as properties and possessions. Cook (1994, p. 69) goes on to state that this difference is gendered, giving power to the public male world while muting the private place and the invisibility of women's interests. For him, women and men are more likely to act in different ways. Therefore, the power of women is ignored and denied.

Domestic violence relates to one person exercising power and control over another within the domestic setting, for example, family home, through the use of coercion, threat and force, subsequently leading to the oppression, disadvantage and harm of other person( cook & Bessant, 1997; Yllo, 1993). Relationships within the domestic sphere can comprise same gender relations, carer and person with a disability relations, and gendered relations such as male and female.



In summary, these studies show that domestic violence is a gendered phenomenon in which violence has been discussed as an abusive act in the hands of one partner( men) through which they can exploit the other one( women) and establish their superiority. In this connection, women are living in patriarchal society in which the male dominance and the female subordination. This is what will be discussed in the following section.

### **1.2.3. Women’s place in patriarchal societies**

The concept of patriarchy has been defined by many scholars in different fields of research. In this connection, it refers to the men’s dominance and women’s subordination. This later can be referring to the situation in which one is forced to stay under the control of other. In relation to this study, women’s subordination means the social situation in which women are forced to stay under the control of men.

Men's violence against women in an intimate relationship produces the system of discrimination and oppression. For Walby (1990), male violence itself forms a social structure which represents patriarchy, together with patriarchal relations as well as the patriarchal form of production. Accordingly, conceptualizing patriarchy as a system of social structures enables us to get the idea that men are always in a position of domination and all women are always in a position of subordination. It is consequently significant to recognize the complex ways in which other systems of oppression, such as racism and capitalism, related to the system of patriarchy in different areas. This also relates to domestic violence itself, where basis such as class and ethnicity can have significant impacts on the lived experiences of women, and the ways in which they are controlled and dominated by men. However, it is a defining feature of patriarchy that men as a class have higher position while women as a class have a lower position, just for belonging to the class of men.

A more understandable definition about patriarchy is supported by Gerda Lerner in which the system of patriarchy defines as “the manifestation and the institutionalization of male dominance over women and children in the family and the extension of male dominance over women in society in general”. (Lerner. G. cited by Fineman.M, 1991, P. 290). In this regard, it has been claimed that patriarchy is reported through every day life, that is to say, it is transmitted through the language, by which we interact including sings, gestures, and images, as well as through the social policies and power structures that are exercised and held by men.

On the other hand, patriarchal ideology to remain women under the power systems has been attempted through the creation of private and public areas for women and men correspondingly. In this connection, Walby (1990, p. 24) divides the patriarchal theories into two different forms: private and public patriarchy. The private patriarchy is focused on domestic production as the major place of women's subjugation while the public patriarchy is based largely in public places such as employment and the state.

Furthermore, different schools of feminists are concerned with how the patriarchal system contributes to the event of domestic violence among intimate partners. Walby (2003) distinguishes between three different feminists schools: the radical feminists, the Marxist feminists and the liberal feminists. The radical feminists stressed on the human relations are arranged upon men's oppression or patriarchy (Walby, 1990). In this regard, the radical feminists assert that society is a result of patriarchal social structures in which the class of men is the oppressors of the class of women. They assume that as a consequence of patriarchy; women have come to be viewed as an abused to the male rule. They also state that men as a class profit from the subjugation of women. According to Walby (2003, p.16), domestic violence against women is a result of patriarchal system that control and dominate women whereas the men are the ones who benefits from such dominance in different fields of life such as social, economic, political and ideological control.

The Marxist feminists totally assume further the previous one. It explains that the distinction between men and women initiates in the capitalistic structure. According to them, patriarchy arises out of the structure of economic production. In other words, the economic exploitation of one class by another is the central feature of social structure and determines the nature of gender relation (Mitchell, 1980). Besides, the Liberal feminism focused on representative system for the subjugation of women. It asserts that patriarchal system controlled women's rights in every areas of life where they become dependent and subordinated. In the same vein, Hedges (1996, p.1) claims that the liberal feminists refuses such patriarchal system and attempts to improve and rise women's interests along a civil rights model since woman requires to be in the same position like men. In this view, equality between men and women is possible but this equality will require substantive changes through social and legal improvement. To sum up, these studies highlight the importance on the concept of patriarchy as a system of living, in which the men are living as a head of the society while the women are living under the control of them.

Some researchers have focused on different dimensional perspectives that address the issue of domestic violence in several ways. The following section provides an explanation of these different perspectives, which will be presented in three major angles: social learning theory, feminist perspective, and social ecological theory.

#### **1.2.4. Theories related to Domestic Violence**

Different theoretical perspectives that have been used to explain domestic violence among intimate partners were Social learning theory, Feminist Theory and an Ecological Model of factors associated with partner abuse by Heise (1998).

##### **1.2.4.1. Social Learning Theory**

One of the most influential theories that has addressed why some women behave violently is the social learning theory originally articulated by Bandura (1978). In the context of domestic violence against women, social learning theory, named also the intergenerational transmission of violence, believes that violence is learned during socialization within the family, which is the main agent of socialization (Straus et.al., 1986). In this connection, everything we do has been learned through socialization. Significantly, learning in humans, comes from witnessing the actions of others and from making imagination to the results of our behaviors. In relation to this study, domestic violence is a repeated act that is educated through observation and experience.

The social learning theory focuses on observational learning and reinforcement of the perpetrator's performance (Ganley, 1989). In this respect, the different aggressive behaviors that are committed by the perpetrator on the victim can be considered as repeated actions that may be acquired previously. In more concrete example, in our society, we find that the child who has observed the violence that was occur between his/her partners, he/she more expected to be more violent than those who developed in peaceful surroundings. This idea is reinforced by Bandura and Walters (1963) who state that boys who come from violent environments are more expected to perpetuate different abusive acts of violence towards their partners than those who grew up in less violent settings.

Similarly, Nolan and Julio (2012, p. 12) state that violence is transmitted through generations as children get feedback from others vis-à-vis their behavior and look for different forms that match these values and principles. Moghaddam (1998) also states that human

behaviour can be explained by observing and imitating others in order to get rewards or to avoid punishments. In relation to such violence, violent behaviour is acquired through childhood by getting presented messages through viewing behaviours of parents, or violent people in the public who achieve power and control through behaving aggressively. In particular, those experiencing or witnessing violence in their family learn that violence is a way of getting what they want.

Moreover, Doumas and et al (1994) reveals that men exposed to violence in their family were more likely to be responsible for domestic violence, and women who witnessed violence in their family were more expected to be subjected to their partners' violence. As a concrete example, Lie and Gentlewarrier (1991) conducted a real study that examines the relationship between witnessing or experiencing violence in the family of origin and violence in a marriage relationship. They found that the actors who witnessed aggression between members of their family of origin were more likely to have been a victim of aggression with a current intimate partner. Based on Bandura's social learning analysis of aggression, the social learning theory explains family violence in terms of a "learned phenomena", that is, the generational link between violence and individuals learned behavioural role, forming during childhood and established through the process of modeling (Gelles 1985 et el). The assumption is that violence remains a learned response transmitted and reinforced across family generations (Carden, 1994). The core emphasis of the social learning theory is on family dynamics and interpersonal relations. Moreover, Bandura (1986) claims that much learning in humans, results from observing the behavior of others and from imagining the consequences of our own actions. Often children copy the behavior they have observed from others. Social learning theory therefore, explains violence as a coping mechanism learned through observation or experience.

Generally, these studies indicate that social learning theory reinforce the idea that everything we do can be considered as a result of socialization process where the majority of acts are largely acquired from social rules, values and behavioral expectation.

#### **1.2.4.2. Feminist theory**

To explain the feminist view of domestic violence, Bograd (cited in Loue, 2001, p. 25) discusses the four elements of this perspective. As the dominant class, men have differential access to representative properties while women are devalued as less important or inferior,

intimate partner abuse is a common aspect of normal family life, the experiences of women are frequently defined as inferior because male domination influences all aspects of life. And the feminist perspective is devoted to support for women. In this connection, feminist perspective argues the idea that domestic violence is a result of a patriarchal society and the unequal distribution of power that has generally dominated men over women. It is mainly about the use of power by men, who believe they have the right to exercise power over women through different forms of violence.

In the same vein, the feminist researchers argue that violence is based on the unequal distribution of power among partner's relationships. They focus on patriarchy, and suggest that women are subject to domestic violence as they are devalued while men continue to enjoy a dominant position in society (Moss & Taylor, 1991). This quotation further supports the idea that society is constructed in a particular arrangement in which men are living in higher position whereas women are living in lower position. So, the unequal distribution of power among individuals produces the system of the patriarchal society as well as creates male violence against women inside their houses.

Another study was carried out by Dobash and Dobash (1979) in which the patriarchal society is considered as a result of gender socialization. They state that men infer a current role in the majority of social foundations including their relationships. In this regard, through socialization process, the men have adopted patriarchal attitudes and beliefs of superiority whereas the women are recognized as a subordinate and inferior. In other words, men assert their power, control and dominance of women in the form of violence and aggression which in turn makes it possible for them to exercise their authority. Besides, Dobash and Dobash (1979, p. 11) state that when females challenge the authority of their husbands, they are more expected to accept beating. At the same time as feminists accept that violence happens at all levels within the household, including common pair battering and female to male violence, they do not consider this as a violent relationship and describe it as unimportant.

Overall, from all of what has been discussed above, feminist perspective focused on the idea that society is controlled with fundamental rules and in a particular order where man maintains order and gets a privileged position through domination of women. Therefore, the power imbalances inherent in the patriarchal society create and perpetuate male violence against women.

### **1.2.4.3. Ecological System Theory**

Many studies set out with the idea that the ecological system theory is an environmental theory in which domestic violence as an aggressive act occurs as a production of the cultural setting and circumstances. According to Cornell (2006), the cause of human issues is examined as a result of culture and the environment.

Preliminary work on the cause of domestic violence is undertaken by Heise (1998). He states that the source of domestic violence is demonstrated into four major factors, namely the individual perpetrator, relationship, community and society. According to him, the model is represented as four concentric circles. The intimate circle represents the biological and personal history that each individual brings to his or her behavior in relationships. The second circle represents the direct context in which abuse can occur in the family or other intimate relationship. The third sequence represents the institutions and social structures, both formal and informal in which relationships are hidden while the fourth circle is the society that reflects economic and social environment such as cultural norms and tradition.

Overall, these studies highlight the idea that domestic violence was conceptualized in relation to the explanations given by the already explained theories and with orientation to an ecological model adopted from Heise (1998). Therefore, social learning theory, feminist theory and the ecological model for gender violence have given guidance in understanding of the causes of domestic violence against women in this study.

In the following part, light is going to be shed on the representation of domestic violence in discourse from different discourses such as religious, political and cultural discourses. This study can be discussed from the idea that discourse is a way of discussing and understanding the world where we live, since it is very significant to share our beliefs, attitudes with other people for getting accurate knowledge.

## **1.3. Part Two: Domestic violence, Discourse, and Representation**

### **1.3.1. Representation in Discourse**

The concept of discourse plays an important role in the context of domestic violence and the approaches of representatives towards it. In this study, discourse has contributed significantly to our understanding of this phenomenon and how society responds to it.

Discourse has a central part in communicating and transmitting a various ways of living, in which meaning is shaped either by establishing or constructing it to others 'knowledge. According to Stuart Hall (1992, p.291), discourse is “a group of statements which provide a language for talking about –i.e. a way of representing- a particular type of knowledge about a topic” (cited in Bacchi, 1999, p.199). And discourse analysis is the analysis of these statements, these patterns (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2002, p.1).

Critical Discourse Analysis as a type of discourse plays an important role in the way of representing and exercising power in the society. This idea is clearly supported by Van dijk (2001); he argues that critical discourse analysis is the ways “discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce, or challenge relations of power and dominance in society” (p. 353). In this connection, critical discourse analysis has a significant part in depicting and detecting domestic violence as an issue in which this later take great interests from different scholars and researchers in different fields of research. According to Fairclough (2000, p. 170), the question of discourse is the question of how texts form in how people depict the social issues, including themselves and their actions. That is, different discourses are different ways of representation related to the different positions. The issue of domestic violence takes more interests in different discourses and with different opinions and attitudes, particularly in the way of representing it in discourse. This is what will be discussed in the following section.

### **1.3.2. Representation of Domestic Violence in Discourse**

Representation generally is a central element in processes of group arrangement where meaning is created and transferred among individuals of particular culture .It entails the use of language (sings, images, words) which stands for particular things for appropriate cultural communication. That's why the relation between things and concepts lies at the heart of the construction of meaning through language.

Representation is a central concept within discourses. One of the most studies on representation is undertaken by Stuart Hall in 1997 that has been considered as the most successful study in cultural studies. Hall (1997, p. 17) refers to the representation as being the production of meaning of different concepts in our minds .The way this happens, according to Hall (1997) is through language. In this connection, the representation of domestic violence as an issue takes more interests among different scholars in different discourses (religious and cultural discourses). Religion plays a central role in the events of domestic violence since this later can be considered as a prohibition act. To the extent that domestic violence is



considered, it is an issue that has been dealt with protective view, since the Qur'an obviously prevents any kind of inequality or oppression. There are certain verses that specially prohibit behaviors that result in the different forms such as emotional and psychological abuse such as intimidating, name calling, biting.

More understandable explanation of religious discourse on domestic violence is that Muslim teaching specifically prohibits abuse of wives by their husbands, by the very words of the Prophet Mohammed, who in his last discourse controlled men to "Be kind to women – you have rights over your wives, and they have rights over you" and "treat your women well, and be kind to them, for they are your partners and committed helpers" (quoted in Alkahateeb, 1999, p. 54). So, the previous mentioned studies tackled the role of religious particularly, Islam in preventing and prohibiting all the kinds of domestic violence that is used by men towards women in an intimate relationship.

The issue of domestic violence however takes more interests from different cultural discourses. It is represented as a phenomenon that is dominant in all societies. 20-50 percent of women in the different regions of the world have experienced domestic violence according to a report produced by UNICEF (UNICEF 2000). Besides, in many societies, there are cultural beliefs and practices that misrepresent women's independence and contribute to the issue of domestic violence. In more details, gender in all societies is a major class in establishing different cultural and social relations. Therefore, domestic violence is articulated differently and takes distinctive forms in different cultures, changing its patterns and movements. In many cultures, violations against women's rights are permitted under the limited cultural practices and norms.

In the following section, light is going to be shed on the social constructionism as a particular way of understanding domestic violence in discourse in which we interact with the world through constructions and our world is constructed from discourses.

### **1.3.3. Social Constructionist Perspective of Domestic Violence in Discourse**

We interact with the world through constructions and our world is constructed from discourses. This idea is supported by Phillips and Hardy (2002) who emphasize that "without discourse, there is no social reality, and without understanding discourse, we cannot understand our reality, our experience or ourselves" (cited in Heracleous and Marshak, 2004



p. 1290). In this study, the social phenomenon of domestic violence is understood in relation to the social constructionism.

One of the most studies of constructionist approach of discourse is discussed by Jorgensen and Philip (2002, p.8). They indicated that discourse analysis has a “general constructionist principles”. In this study, I draw from the social constructivism in a way which clearly focuses on the importance of social construction in the reality of gender inequality that is contributed to the issue of domestic violence against women where women live in lower position while men live in higher position. It is the fundamental understanding in this study that the differences between men and women are constructed through several processes and foundations within society. These differences do not exist independently from their social environments and continue to be maintained through social process. In this sense, the values which are placed on gender are also regarded as a product of social construction. According to them, the understandings of men and women in society influence the expectations, limits, behaviors and values which are located on men and women in which the impacts on gender relations and how men and women are treated within society.

Overall, these studies highlight the idea that social constructivism can contribute towards identifying why issue of gender inequality and domestic violence occur.

#### **1.3.4. Unequal distribution of power among gender relationships**

At the heart of the discourse on violence there is the question of power and control in a patriarchal society. For Arendt, “violence is nothing more than the most flagrant manifestation of power” (1970, p. 35). Power, in general, is a control or an abuse of someone’s right; that is to prevent someone from doing what they want to do (van Dijk, 1995). In this view, power is about limiting people’s freedom and preventing them from participating in different ranges in society. This study sets out to explore the social power that discourse in the news has on society.

The representational nature of language treats the fact of how the world is demonstrated and explained. Fairclough (1989, p. 43-46) distinguishes between two aspects in power relations of language: power in discourse and the power behind the discourse. Power in discourse is concerned with authoritative participants controlling and preventing the roles of weaker participants. This kind of power relations can occur either in face-to-face conversation, but in this study the power in discourse rises from the written article within

specific topic. It means that in written articles the author of the text gains power status compared with the reader and this way enables the power to socially construct the reality over others. Fairclough (1989, p. 49) names also the term 'hidden-power' which is seen generally as the one-sidedness of the discourse in the media. Concerning this study, power as an abusive of human rights contributes in creating the male domination over women's subordination in which this later gives the opportunity to men for controlling and oppressing in different areas of life. This idea is supported by Shepherd (2008, p. 44) who states that power is represented as male power over women, in that men held the power that enables them to oppress women through different acts of violence.

Moreover, Pietikäinen & Mäntynen (2009, p. 53) claim that discourses and power relations are interrelated in the ways in which certain things are presented as a truth. In discourse analysis, the use of language is a social inventor of reality. This means that the actions resulted from written or spoken gives power to the discourses. According to Pietikäinen and Mäntynen (2009, p. 2), discourses can have power to illustrate how things are represented and tell how we can organize certain things. They add that the power of discourse is related to the ability to demonstrate and construct the reality. In this study, power plays a central role in representing the events of domestic violence in discourse as well as in depicting the social reality of such issue. As an example, the way in which the actors are named is important. Richardson (Richardson, 2007, p. 49) remarks that the way that people are named in news discourse can have significant power on the way in which they are viewed. We all simultaneously take a range of identities, roles and characteristics that could be used to describe us equally accurately but not with the same meaning. Research has shown that certain ways of portraying perpetrators and victims can influence the reader's perception of blame and extent of violence (Henley et al., 1995; Lafrance & Hahn, 1994) and choosing what to call those involved can influence how readers view them.

#### **1.4. Conclusion**

In view of all that has been mentioned so far, one may notice that the first section of this research paper examines data from several studies that have been carried out about all what concerns domestic violence and its representations, how it is conceptualized as gender phenomenon and defined from different perspectives. The issue has grown in importance when light is shed on the representation of domestic violence in discourse. This study was well demonstrated through the representation of domestic violence in discourse as well as

how domestic violence is represented in religious and cultural discourses by shedding light on the constructionist perspective about domestic violence in discourse, where this later plays an important role in constructing the social world. Then, I move deeper to call upon what has been done about the representation of domestic violence against women in media and the extent to which this latter represents men and women as two different social actors and their actions. These points will be demonstrated clearly in the next chapter.

Chapter

Two

## 2.1. Introduction

Media has been recognized as playing an important role in influencing individual understandings of social issues, including domestic violence. In this connection, researches have examined the role of media, as a source of knowledge, in reporting the events of such issue. So, this chapter aims at examining the representation of domestic violence as a matter in media as well as how the incidents of such violence relates to the context of media. It sheds light also on the representation of men and women as two social members and their characteristics. This chapter too emphasizes on Van leeuwen's model for the representation of social actors and their actions; some key concepts are put under focus such as the representations within text, and Van leeuwen's categories for the representation of social actors and their actions.

## 2.2. The role of media in representing domestic violence

A number of studies have indicated that media plays a central role in depicting and representing social issues such as domestic violence and hence influencing people's attitudes and beliefs.

One of these studies was discussed by Cumberbatch & Howitt (1989) which assert on the role of media in both, reflecting and forming public opinions, especially on sensitive issues such as domestic violence which is more likely unclear for the public. According to them, the media has expected to be a dominant tool in a public's response to such violence. In this regard, reporting of such communal issue helps the public in understanding the existence of such act and constructing their opinions and attitudes.

Another study was conducted by Berns (2004) who states that the majority of people who have no direct experience with social issues focus on the media as the key source of knowledge. She claims that the media plays an important role in communicating to the public about the current issues and happenings around them, mainly in those areas in which people do not have any experience of what is happening, they become particularly dependent on the media to inform them. In the same vassal, Berns (2004) claims that if you have not experienced domestic violence first hand your knowledge of domestic violence is born from what you read, see, and hear in reference to such issue. The present study aims at examining newspaper coverage of domestic violence as Berns (2004) indicates that people often consider that what you find in a newspaper is more convincing than what is on the other forms of

media. For her, the Newspapers achieve a much wider audience and are regarded by many as real pieces of information in which the reader can provide with accurate knowledge.

In relation to the extent and the importance of media's types in representing domestic violence and supporting public's opinions and beliefs, Berns states:

Newspaper columns, magazine articles, films, made-for-TV movies, television special reports, and talk shows are all public arenas where images of domestic violence are constructed, debated, and reproduced. From these resources, individuals construct their own conceptions of what is normal and acceptable (Berns, 2001, p. 263).

This quotation further supports the idea that media's types take place in the construction of people's lives. They have a function to provide people by information about what happens around them. The events that always occur every day can be related to social, cultural, economic, and many other things including the incidents of social problems. It influences both how we see ourselves and the world around us in general. In these different types, there are different images of men and women, which are represented in different ways and with different characteristics. Concerning this study, newspaper as a major source of knowledge represents men and women in different ways.

Prior studies have shown that the media's representations of domestic violence against women are products of unequal gender roles and the inferior status of women compared to men (Barker, 2012; Das, 2012; Hermes, 2007; Trujillo, 1999; van der Watt, 2007). They reinforce the idea that domestic violence is a result of the unequal distribution of power among gender relationships in which the male domination and superiority while the female subordination and inferiority.

As a type of media, newspaper communicate to the readers through the images they present, indeed, for most people in the western and developing world, life is saturated with visual images and representations, we communicate with one another through the images and representations and, more highly, make sense of the world (Soobben, 2012). This shows that the images in the newspaper depict who we are – our thoughts, beliefs and values. Bamburac, Jusic & Isanovic (2006) besides point out that in a newspaper, photography visually supports an article, by offering additional information and by drawing the reader to be aware, it is both a reporting technique as well as advertising strategy. Nevertheless, by doing so it also

represents those who are photographed in a particular way depicting their body or style, characteristics, expressions, positions, movements, stories.

So, the current study tends to focus more attention on the ways in which the media represents the events of domestic violence. The media is identified as a leading source of communication (Højier, 2011; Wagner & Hayes, 2005), which more emphasized on the importance of the current study. However, the mass media, when reporting on a social phenomenon, do not simply present “photocopy” (p. 561) information of social phenomena; but the media also makes it easier and sensitive issue related to a social phenomenon to hold the attention of mass audiences. In this study, the media not only reveals and reproduce what is happening in the society but also reinforces and supports the images of women and men as central participants in media’s texts.

Overall, In the light of what has been discussed above, the main idea can be understood that media’ forms especially newspapers have a central role in the construction and production of social problems and affecting peoples’ beliefs and behaviors.

When the media reports on stories of violence against women, such as domestic violence, a specific frame is needed to show that this single incident is part of a much larger problem (Carll, 2003). In the following section, light is going to be shed on the representation of domestic violence as a social issue.

### **2.3. Framing domestic violence as a social issue**

Media representation of social issues such as domestic violence can not only influence who they see as being responsible for the violence or who society views as the blame, but also if they see this problem as a social issue or as a private family matter.

One of the most studies in representing and depicting domestic violence as social issue was carried out by Bullock (2007) and Consalvo (1998) in which domestic violence can be seen as public issue. They state that if domestic violence were seen as an individual problem, rather than a social issue, the society may understand that this problem cannot affect them because it is not their problem. For them, many researchers have found a great difference between domestic violence being viewed as a public problem or as an individual issue leading to the result that if the society does not see the problem as their own then they are less likely to follow decision of the issue.

Another study was conducted by Berns (1999) which indicates that the society still thinks of domestic violence as a personal family issue rather than a public issue. By representing domestic violence in such a way, representation of media's news is not regularly dependable and there is no idea support for societal intervention. To illustrate on this regard, Taylor and Sorenson (2002) conducted a research of newspaper reporting of murder, found that only 1 of 33 articles on domestic violence killing addressed domestic violence as a social issue. They also state that the majority of articles concerning domestic violence were less likely to provide surroundings information of major underlying issues of domestic violence.

In the same vein, Consalvo (1998) points out that the behavior in which the two actors of domestic violence were represented, would guide you to consider that they are not common and familiar where the rest of society should not be concerned with. For him, if a social problem is to be seen as a legal, then there would need to be some media interest on real changes that should happen in society to help fight this issue. Besides, Bullock(2007) claims that the perpetrator and victim of domestic violence were described as being different from the society, which would indicate that the subject of domestic violence is their individual issue rather than public issue.

Media representations of domestic violence have tended to focus mainly on the representation of the female and the male as central participants of domestic violence. This point will be discussed clearly by different scholars in the following section.

#### **2.4. Representation of women and men as two main participants in media**

In view of the fact that the depiction of men and women as a social actors and their actions is mainly mediated, several researchers and scholars of domestic violence against women discuss events present in the images of women and men of violence in different studies.

One of these studies was conducted by Best (1999) in which the media not only reflects what is happening in society but also support the idea of how women and men are viewed. Therefore, how media's news represents this social problem is really important, as they hold a significant part in influencing public opinion as well as affecting the ways in which audiences see the world. This helps those that were unconscious to be conscious and to be able to understand the positions of the victim who is suffering under his/her particular social problems.



Furthermore, Foss (1989) states that the representation of gender characters takes a large area in media where women are represented in lower position ( in terms of inferior and subordinate) while men are usually described in higher position( in terms of superior and dominance). This idea is reinforced by Morris (2006) who states that media mainly describe women as passive, weak, dependent, Concerned with appearance, and sensitive to others; while men are viewed as active, competitive, independent, assertive, financial providers and dominant over women. In this regard, media tends commonly to represent women in negative ways ( in terms of passive, weak and sensitive) while men are described in positive ways ( in terms of active, directive, and physically aggressive). Therefore, women are living in lower position as a passive, weak, and emotional and they are belonging to men in different fields of their lives while the men are living in activist position as strong, aggressive, making decision in the family and society in general.

Moreover, cultural theorists have supported the idea that media can be seen as a central part in conveying patriarchal ideologies. According to Ashong and Batta (2011), media contributes to the production of patriarchal system in two ways: It enhances the beliefs of gender characters while it describes women as a weak, powerless, and sensitive in the public area. According to them, the several researchers in the field of media have discovered that this later would generally support conventional ideologies of gender by depicting women in inferior status such as vulnerable, helpless, victims of men's violence, controlled by men, dependent, obedient( living in man's world).

From all of what has been just discussed above, the main idea is understood that men and women are represented in different ways and with different characteristics since there are imbalanced relations between them prevailing in all over the world. Everyday a number of women face not only discrimination but also violence from their intimate partner in different fields of their lives. So, this is what makes the researchers tend to discuss such issue and take it into consideration.

The ways in which the social participants" men and women" and their actions are depicted and described in media, particularly, in relation to the occurrence of domestic violence, and the different categories that are used to report them in different ways and with different features will be discussed clearly in the following section.

## 2.5. Representations within Texts

The way in which the actors are named in news discourse can have significant influence on the way in which they are viewed. According to Richardson (2007, p. 49), each individual has his own personalities, roles and characteristics that could be used to describe them in the same way but in the different meaning. In this connection, the way people are named in a newspaper certainly has a great impact on how they are viewed through the eyes of people in the society. Additionally, the means of making choices in the naming of people can be referred to as ‘representational strategies’ that being as a part of the way we perceive people. Besides, Henley et al (1995) point out that the different ways of representing men and women as two main actors of domestic violence have a great influence on the audience’s perception of blame and the amount of violence and also choosing the way to name those involved can influence how readers view them, including the linguistic features such as the naming of those involved in the story.

The most important to critical discourse analysis is the idea that the choice of one word over another in a discourse can guide set of information to develop the ideological attitudes of speaker towards a particular topic. This idea is reinforced by White (2000, p.142) who states that analysis of which social actors have been chosen to be taken into account within a text and which actor roles they have been chosen to be regularly in the text is a significant device for discovering hidden ideologies. Besides, Stubbs (1996, p. 93) claims that it is very important to indicate the linguistic devices which express ideology that it is recognized in which the choices have been made, it is also recognized that other choices could be made, and that reality could be presented differently. From what has been discussed, light is going to be shed on the idea that representations of social actors in relation to their social activities are constructed not only on the methods or the techniques of reproduction, such as through media, but also through the power of choice (i.e. the choice of how to produce words to depict one reality over another, the choice of which images to transmit the reality and the choice of how to support oneself within ideological frameworks).

According to Richardson (2007, p. 18), Critical Discourse Analysis has great advantages in representing texts discourse. According to him, it offers interpretations of the meanings of texts more than counting the features of the text and getting meaning from it. In more details, it situates what is written or said in the context in which it occurs, rather than just summarizing patterns or regularities in texts. It also argue that textual meaning is

constructed through an interaction between producer, text and consumer rather than reading the text by the all the readers in the same way.

Moreover, Lexical choices include the analysis of particular words in the discourse. In relation to this study, the analysis of words has a significant role in constructing and understanding the text since such words “convey the imprint of society and of value judgments in particular” (Richardson, 2007, p. 47). In other words, a particular word does not transmit only literal meaning (in terms of understanding the text by explaining word by word) but also implicit meaning (i.e. analyzing the text by emphasizing on the hidden ideologies behind it)

In relation to the representation of meaning within text, van leeuwen (2008) states that the language that is used in media’s discourse provides a construction of lexicogrammatical elements that reproduces different features of reality which are systematically constructed to reform our knowledge. Besides, Halliday sees language as a systematic resource for expressing and exchanging meaning through varying contexts and linguistic usage (Chappele, 1998, p. 1). For that reason, the contexts in which the language is appreciated and understood are presented for analysis as the choices of words that may have been selected. Furthermore, some words and some contexts can be more effective than the other since there is no similarity between them. In more details, Thompson (1991) claims that there is no equality between words and contexts and these later can’t be overloaded with the same semantic power or the amount of influence. The power by which individuals use language to form discourse may change depending on who creates the word and under what circumstances the word is used.

In the following section, light is going to be shed on Van leeuwen’s frameworks for the representation of social actors and their actions in which this section will be focus on important question: what are the main categories that are used to describe two main participants and their activities in discourse text?

### **2.5.1. Van leeuwen’s model for the representation of social actors and their actions**

Theo van Leeuwen's framework of the representation of social actors is one of the most powerful tools within Critical Discourse Analysis. A theoretical framework for the representation of social actors and their actions is important to account for the way in which

they are represented in discourse. Agency, responsibility and backgrounding in the representation of those which are involved in discourses can be achieved by using the different communicative strategies. In this regard, Van Leeuwen (2008, p. 24-25) provides a more extensive description as regards to the organization of discourse participants. He intends to go more into the establishment of meaning in which this later can be established behind social actors' representations and grammatical roles, which he calls the socio semantic of representation. Through his study, Van Leeuwen focuses on two main points "the representation of social actors" and "the representation of social actions". So, this is what will be explained in the next section.

### **2.5.1.1. Social action representation**

Concerning his model for the representation of social actors in different ways with different meanings in discourse, Van Leeuwen (2008, p.8) points out that social action is a set of actions performed in sequence as the nucleus of social practices. These actions may or may not transform in discourse. A discourse may introduce a certain version of a social practice with representation of the different acts or reactions of the actors. According to him, discourse analysis is involved not only in describing events but also to refer to its background information making use of "background knowledge" and "activity sequence" (p.4). Moreover, As Van Leeuwen (2008, p. 148) observes that the core of a social practice is formed by a set of actions, which may or may not have to be performed in a specific order.

### **2.5.1.2. Social actor representation**

The concept of social actors in Critical Discourse Analysis stands for an important element in the representation of social practices. Social actor theory examines "the way social actors are represented in specific texts or kinds of texts" (van Leeuwen, 2009, p. 281). There are many ways in which social actors can be represented in a text and each way expresses a specific view of the social actors and has different effects on them and on the comprehension of a text. According to van Leeuwen (2009, p. 6), social actors in discourse are the participants of social practices, "the socially regulated way of doing things". For him, social actors could be presented in numerous strategies that are related to the ideological choices by authors. In relation to this study, the critical analysis of the representation of men and women in media's articles aims at describing the linguistic features of texts that are used to represent those actors with their actions. Therefore, Van Leeuwen (in Caldas-Coulthard & Coulthard

1996) presents a large number of ways in which the actors can be analysed for the purpose of discovering how people are represented and what choice is available for representing them. In other words, he provides a several discursive features to evaluate the ways in which social actors can be represented in texts. He sum up the major way in which social actors can be represented in discourse in the form of a network which contains the systems involved in the realization of representation of social actors, such as a number of different lexicogrammatical features.

So, the following is a brief description of several major categories in van Leeuwen's (1996) model, which are taken into account as the principles for the analysis in the current study.

#### **2.5.1.3.1. Nomination and Categorization: Functionalization and Identification**

Within texts, the analysis of how social actors are nominated can be important in understanding how their representations are used in the text. According to Van leeuwen(1996, p. 52-54), nomination within text can be considered as the analysis of how social actors are nominated through the use of their name, is realized with proper nouns. Additionally, within the social actor system, there are two types of categorization for defining social actors: functionalization and identification (Van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 42-45). Functionalization represented when social actors are referenced through practices they do, such as professions or roles while Identification represented when social actors are referenced through what they certainly are. It can be divided into three types: classification, relational identification and physical identification. Classification refers to the ways in which social actors are defined by the differentialities between set of people in a given society. Relational identification refers to social actors through their personal relationships. Physical identification refers to social actors through their physical traits to differentiate them within a specific context.

#### **2.5.1.3.2. Exclusion and Inclusion**

Concerning this category, Van Leeuwen (2008, p. 28-30) points out that the social actors can be excluded or omitted from the texts in which they are represented. In this regard, Social actors are sometimes absent or backgrounded in relation to the hidden purposes. One is exclusion, which is when social actors, as the main participant in the text, are embedded in the text. It includes two parts: partial and full. The full exclusion of social actors is called

suppression and the partial exclusion of social actors is called backgrounding. In the case of suppression, the social actors are excluded and not mentioned anywhere in the text. So the text includes only the action without its actor. In the case of backgrounding, it aims rejecting any direct reference to the social actor in relation to a given action while they will be available in another place in the text that makes it easy to the reader to infer who they are.

Inclusion however, is represented when social actors are apparent in regard to the action; they are articulated at different positions in relation to the action. In more details, when analysing a text, it is very important to determine who is the ‘actor’ and what is the ‘goal’ and whether the grammatical role given in the text is similar to that of the social action. It can be also divided into two types “activation and passivation”. Activation is considered when the social actor is activated, it is given the role of the grammatical (agent) and the doer who is responsible of the social practice in the text while passivation is considered when the participant is described as passivated, and it is given the grammatical role of (goal) of the social practice in the text. In this connection, van Leeuwen (1996, p. 3) points out that social actors can be given active roles or passive roles to play. When they are given the active role to play, that is, represented as dynamic forces in a given activity, activation occurs; when they are given passive roles to play, that is, described as experiencing a given activity, passivation occurs.

### **2.5.1.3.3. Personalization and Impersonalization.**

Social actors can also be represented through means of impersonalization (Van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 46-47). This later can be used in texts for the purposes of hiding the role or the identity of social actors, giving impersonal authority to an action, adding positive or negative traces to actions or utterances of a social actor. According to Van Leeuwen (2008, p. 47), there are two types of impersonalization: abstraction and objectivation. Abstraction occurs when social actors are represented by means of a quality assigned to them while objectivation occurs when social actors are represented by means of reference to a place or thing personally related either with their person or with the activity they are represented as being engaged in, as well as an object.

Personalization however, represents human beings as realized by personal or possessive pronouns, proper names or nouns. According to Van Leeuwen (2008, p. 46-47), Personalization is when social actors are represented as a human being, that is realized by proper names or nouns and personal or possessive pronouns.

## 2.6. Conclusion

Collectively, the points represented so far provide an explanation about the representation of domestic violence in media 'texts by emphasizing on the representation of men and women as two main actors in representing the event of this issue. It dealt with van leeuwen's categories for the representation of social actors and their actions in the text. The next chapter will be concerned with the analysis of the representation of men as perpetrator and women as a victim and their actions in newspapers articles by focusing mainly on van leeuwen's categories that was discussed above and the hidden ideologies behind these representations.

# Chapter Three



### 3.1. Introduction

In this chapter an attempt has been made to analyze two articles taken from El Chaab Newspaper by focusing particularly, on the representation of the two main social actors of the event of domestic violence (the female and the male) and their actions. It draws on van Leeuwen's model of critical discourse analysis for the representation of social actors and their actions since this model examines language in the context of a language-based medium, such as newspaper. In this chapter, I focus mainly on the similarities and differences between the two articles. Then, I move to show how these representations can be understood as ideologically significant and linked with the reproduction of unbalanced relations between the two actors in the context of domestic violence.

### 3.2. Methodology

#### 3.2.1. The Corpus of the study

This study collected data from two articles taken from "El\_Sha3b" newspaper. The first article is entitled "I was hit with an iron rod", while the second one "the Coma gave her Strength to ask for khula". The former newspaper is remarkably well-known within the Algerian society; since it provides the readers by useful pieces of information. In more details, these two articles are selected as a case study for the present research. They were selected randomly from El Chaab newspaper, they were published in November; 23<sup>rd</sup> 2016 by the journalist "Fatiha. K". Furthermore, the data shown can be considered as a real event which exemplifies the issue of domestic violence that is committed by one individual over another in their intimate relationship.

#### 3.2.2. The Tool

In order to explore the ways of representing the two main participants of the event of domestic violence (male and female) in the two newspaper articles, it is necessary to analyze and interpret these articles. In this connection, I chose Van Leeuwen's model (2006) with its different categories as a tool to analyze and examine the representation of domestic violence in Algerian newspapers (in terms of how men and women are represented).

### 3.3. The Discussion of the Findings:

#### 3.3.1. The representation of the female as social actor and her actions

If we look at the title of both articles “I Was Hit with an Iron Rod” and “The Coma gave her the Strength to ask for Khula’ ”, by referring to Van leeuwen’s categories, we can notice that the use of the personal pronoun “I” and the possessive pronoun “her” implies that the women are narrating their own stories. According to Van leeuwen (2008, p. 46-47), personalization is when social actors are well defined as a person, that is realized by proper names or nouns and personal or possessive pronouns. In other words, we can say that women in both articles aren’t represented as an object but they are represented as a human being. The hidden message behind using the personalization category is that woman in both articles wants to show her subjectivity (emotions, feelings, experiences.....etc). They wanted to make the reader live the moment and feel what they felt inside their houses. Moreover, they are being subjective more than being objective since there is great difference in narrating the events of any story objectively or subjectively (i.e. narrating the story in objective way is more likely to talk only about what happened during the events without showing how does the victim feel. While narrating the story in a subjective way is more likely to show to what extent the violence did affect the victim (i.e. discussing emotions and feelings). From all of what has been discussed above, we can see that personalization assumes that the stories of women in both articles are real ones.

Both articles share the same characteristics concerning the representation of women as actors. They are represented as a passive in the sense that they receive a big amount of violence. They are passivated, because they are represented as being the receiver of the attack. In addition to this, they are subjected, being the subject of passive constructions. According to Van leeuwen (1996), social actors can be included in a text either through activation or through passivation, which is they can be represented as active forces or as experiencing an activity as well as being the goal or the recipient of violence. So, the following examples show how women in both articles are represented in relation to this category:

She was attacked (as it is mentioned in the first article)

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My life has been destroyed (in the second article)

I was beaten (in the second article)

In addition, both of them are subjected in terms of being the object in passive constructions.

As it is illustrated below:

Connect me with a wire (in the first article)

Slap me, kick me, and Ground me (in the second articles)

Carry my laptop and throw it on my head (in the second article)

Tug of my hair (in the second article)

Forced me to marriage (in the first article)

Hit me with an iron bar (in the first article)

From what has been discussed above, we can understand that women in both articles are treated in aggressive way (i.e. beating by her husband even by her brother by different forms of abuse). These expressions mainly show the male authoritative position in the family since he is the house leader who has all the right to lead and control the members of the family. Also, woman do not have power to control and even to live independently (i.e. at home, her father and her brother have power over her and when she get married, her husband has power over her(as we see in the first article). Therefore, their power can be regarded as absenteeism or may be ignorance. In this respect, it is understood that their whole life has been spent under someone else's control since this life has never really brought them any happiness. So, it is obvious that woman is living in the patriarchal society in which the unequal distribution of power between the two sexes (male and female) exists. This means that each individual man is always in a position of dominance and woman is always in a position of subordination.

When looking at both articles, we find that the women are represented as a sayers (in terms of describing how their intimate partners treat them). In contrast, men are represented as a doers (in terms of different acts that belong to them). The hidden ideology here is that woman can't implement what she says because she runs the risk under men's power, she is afraid from men's reactions and feedbacks, she knows what is the result behind her actions. Therefore, man is represented in term of doing while woman is represented in term of saying.

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This idea is supported by Thwaite (in Poynton, 1989, p. 64) that if one wishes to exert power, it is more effective to exert it within the domain of ‘doing’ rather than ‘sensing’, ‘saying’ or ‘behaving’. This is also related to the maintenance of male dominance and power in relation to female submissiveness and subordination. This appears in the articles where we can see that the way the female is represented in form of saying (i.e. they were just talking and expressing themselves without doing anything as evidence they are staying in the abusive relationship).

In the two articles, women are represented with proper nouns in which they are individualized, personalized, determined and nominated through all the events of the story [Malika (in the first article) and Razika (in the second article)]. According to Van leeuwen (1996, p. 52-54), nomination is considered as the analysis of how social actors are nominated. These later can be nominated through the use of their names (proper nouns). The hidden message here is clearly since woman wants to narrate her story in certain way, she narrated her own story by referring to her name, and she didn’t give more interests to the others. She did not care about the words of people when they know her story (in terms of nothing should be hidden).

Furthermore, as it appears in both articles, women are described in terms of Categorization. Woman is categorized and, more precisely, she is identified and appraised. According to van Leeuwen (1996, p. 54-59), although the sufferer is represented as having a unique identity, she/ he is also categorized. The following explanation show how both women are represented in terms of categorization:

Concerning the first article, Malika was identified in terms of her age (29 years old) and in terms of her classification such as living in poor family. She is also identified in terms of her physical characteristics as it is mentioned below:

“I have paraplegia as a result of beating me”

“They discovered my spinal cord injury”

“I am sitting in a wheelchair waiting for my time to die and rest”

Concerning the second article, Razika is represented by several features such as, her age (35 years old), her classification (she was living in a rich family where she was working in high school), and her physical characteristics such as the following statements:

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“The traces of beating were clear on my body”

“I was pregnant”

From what has been tackled above, Malika and Razika in both articles are subjected to various degrees of physical abuse from their intimate partners (Malika was treated aggressively by her brother and when she gets married, she was abused by her husband while Razika was treated by her husband). They are represented in terms of their physical characteristics. The hidden ideology here is that both women are described with more information about their life (characteristics, personalities, features...etc). They are described everything belong to them. According to Van leeuwen (1996), categorizations tend to characterize the social actors (man and woman) as individuals by revealing more details about their age, property, occupations, relations and physical appearance.

Moreover, if we look at the opening paragraphs of both articles, by referring to Van leeuwen's categories, we can notice that the male actor is embedded even his actions are appeared. Also, if we remove to the title of both articles, we find that Malika was beaten and abused, but we don't find out who committed the action or was suspected of having committed it. According to Van leeuwen( 1995, p. 96-98), the actions are represented, through passivation, as brought about not by human activity, but in other ways. These actions are represented as events, as something that just happened, without the involvement of human agency. Therefore, this is the case of eventuation (p. 96-97), which refers to actions that are represented as mere events. The following statements will confirm how women are described in relation to this category:

My life have been destroyed (in the first article)

I have been suffering from humiliation and humiliation for 18 years (in the first article)

The hidden ideology behind these statements is that women are included while men are excluded. In other words, Woman is described in terms of the narrator of the story whereas man is embedded since there is no reference to him. Therefore, the exclusion of man (the doer) from the title as we see in the two articles tends to hide the responsibility of man's actor and may be blame the woman actor about the violence.

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In both articles, the participants (Malika and Razika) are represented in terms of differentiation since both women struggling to live a distinguished life in a society where women have limited options. They both agree on the fact that women in society have living circumstances that differ from one woman to another. According to Van leeuwen( 2008, p.40-41), Differentiation is the different of two (similar) groups, again something used to promote “us” versus “them” mentality. As it will be mentioned in the example below:

I have not lived with him as any wife (in the second article)

In the two articles we have, we can notice that both women (Malika and Razika) transfer the actions [“her beating”, “her threat”, “her forcing to married”, “her connecting with a wire” (in the first article)] and [“her threat”, “her kicking”, “her hitting” (in the second article)] that their intimate partners did to them into a thing that they possess. As it is discussed by Van leeuwen (2008), the social actor is passivated through possessivation, where action is changed into the ‘possession’ of a process, rather than the performing of an action. The action is transformed into a ‘thing’.

The hidden ideology here is that the female activation was more frequently realized by possessivation. They tended to focus on their possessions and belongings more than males. One possible reason that can justify the higher frequency of female representation through possessivation can be the sensitivity of females toward the things that they own; they tend to assert their sense of possessions more in terms of emotional matters.

Moreover, in both articles, we can notice that woman is functionalized or referred to in terms of the role she occupies in the particular situation (the role of women at home). According to van Leeuwen’s framework (1996, p. 54), Functionalization is the appearance of social actors in terms of their activities and actions. In relation to the two articles, both women are represented in term of their role in the family as we see in the first article, the role of malika at home from sister to the wife into the mother. In the second article, Razika is represented as wife and at the same time as the worker. This implies that women have a great role inside and even outside the house since they are considered as a basis of the family. They wanted to show to the reader that even her place in family, they are treating as a servant from their intimate partner by different forms of the abuse.

By looking to the two articles, we can understand that both women are beneficialised in the sense they benefit from all the actions that are used by their close partner against them.

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According to Van leeuwen(2008), beneficialization occurs when social actors benefit from an activity positively, or negatively. Beneficialisation may be realized by participation, in which the beneficialised participant is recipient or client in relation to a material process, or receiver in relation to a verbal process (Halliday, 1985). The hidden ideology here is that both women are considered as the raw material in which men can exploit women and adapt them to do what is not intended to serve and satisfy those who consider themselves masters. In other words, this category tends to describe woman as the receiver of the actions as it is mentioned clearly in both articles. In addition, woman as a main participant of domestic violence is represented as the goal of the attack (in terms of receiving all the actions that are performed by her husband and even by her brother as we see in the two articles). This is confirmed in the following examples uttered by both women (Malika and Razika)

Hit me, Connect me with a wire (in the first article)

Slap me, kick me, and Ground me (in the second articles)

Carry my laptop and Throw it on my head (in the second article)

Tug of my hair (in the second article)

Forced me to marriage (in the first article)

Hit me with an Iron Bar (in the first article)

She has paraplegia as a result of beating her (in the first article)

I am sitting in a wheelchair waiting for my time to die and rest“(In the first article)

### 3.3.2. The representation of the male actor and his actions

To begin with the titles of both articles “I was hit with an Iron Rod” and “The Coma gave her the Strength to ask for Khula’ ”, the attacker is excluded and, more specifically, suppressed, since there is no reference to him as a social actor, although his action is included. According to Van leeuwen (2008), backgrounding refers to the limited representation of social actor where this later isn’t mentioned in relation to the given action but is mentioned elsewhere in the text that makes it easy to the reader to infer who they are. In more details, the main point that I have noticed in the title of the first article ”I was hit with an Iron Rod” is that the male actor was excluded from the event even his action are included (biting), since there is

### Chapter three: Analysis of two Articles from El Chaab Newspaper

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no reference to him. So, we can say that the actions of the male perpetrator are being embedded because they are represented in the passive voice. The main results of this transformation (active => passive) is that, although the doer is known by the victim, he is deleted and treated as if he is irrelevant to the story. Another kind of linguistic transformation presents in the title of the second article “The Coma gave her the Strength to ask for Khula”, which has a particular ideological meaning is nominalization. As we see here that the actions of the male actor is grammatically recognized through nominalizations (process nouns).

In relation to the first article, the opening paragraph represents the male actor in exclusion way through passivisation (i.e. woman describes what happen to her without referring to the doer where this later become outside the story and didn't have any responsibility on these actions. The use of the passive voice when it comes to the actions of the man is significant because it leads to the manipulation of blame and, in the end, to the removal or even to the denial of responsibility for his actions. To illustrate:

My life has been destroyed (in the first article)

I have been beaten (in the first article)

I have been treated as a servant (in the first article)

I have been hit by an iron (in the first article)

So, the opening paragraph of the first article can be considered as a directional summary of the story as it is said by Bell (1991, p. 183) “a lens through which the point of the story is focused and its news value magnified” Therefore, the suppression of the male actor in the initial paragraphs is ideologically significant. According to Van leeuwen (2008), when some or all the actors are not included in the text but the relevant actions (e.g. beating, punishing, hitting.....etc) are included. The exclusion here is not radical (not fundamental). This is the case of suppression, where there is no reference to the social actor (the beating in this case) anywhere in the text, but there are traces of his presence because his actions are included.

From what has been just tackled above, we find that the actions of the men are included, more specifically eventuated. Actions that are included present the women as the goal of the attack without making any reference to the male as social actor (as we see in both



## Chapter three: Analysis of two Articles from El Chaab Newspaper

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articles) even his actions are included. In the specific case of eventuation, the action is represented as something that just ‘happens’ without someone actively carrying out the action.

Additionally, if we look at the opening paragraph of the second article, we will find the male actor is included in the sense that he is appeared as the doer of the different abusive acts (i.e. woman starts to give the details about her struggles by referring to her husband in direct way).

The unique identity of man is not represented through nomination but in terms of identities and functions. In other words, he is categorized. He is referred to in terms of what he did [“attacker” in the first article]. In this way, he is functionalized. He is also identified and classified in his age [ 35 year-old man (in the first article)] and relationally identified to her as the beast, addicted man, beneficial man( as it is mentioned in the second article “ The man who could not earn a quarter of his morals and manhood”. In this respect, he is represented in terms of the responsible one for the action that is used against his wife. He is described by impersonal names as we can see in the second article when Razika described her husband as a beast.

Another aspect of the representation of the men social actors that is ideologically significant is the processes in which the two participants engage. The man, when he is activated (as we see in both articles), is the doer of material processes (bit/ threat/ ...etc.) and the women is the sayer in verbal processes or semiotic action (“talking”, “discussing” etc.). In this regard, the process of doing tends to describe men as the one who held the power over women (in terms of male dominance and female subordination). This category tends to describe men as a powerful, strong, independent (the leader of the family) while women as a weak, passive (they can’t do anything independently).

Overall, from all of what has been discussed above, it is understood that the male actors are being embedded in the titles of the two articles because they are represented in the passive voice. The main results of this transformation (active => passive) is that, although the doer is known by the narrator, he is deleted and treated as if he is irrelevant to the story.

The main point that I have noticed in both articles is that men are being active than women since the several actions that are belonged to them. The hidden message here is that men tend to exercise their power over women for the sake to construct their personalities and to emphasize on their characteristics. In this regard, Messerschmidt (1993, p. 85) suggests that men use the crime for the sake to construct his identity and to reinforce his characteristics

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such as strong, independent, dominance and even making decision). Therefore, men build their gender identity or masculinity through criminal acts when other resources for “doing gender” provided by social settings, occasions and activities are not existing to them.

As I mentioned in the beginning, this study sought to examine the way of representing men and women as two social actors and their actions in media, particularly in newspaper articles, how they are described and what are the hidden ideologies behind their representations. In order to obtain the required data, Van leeuwen’s categories were used. Moreover, it is immediately apparent from the analysis of the two articles selected from El Chaab Newspaper, that the most statements that are uttered by the two women (Malika and Razika) aims at depicting women as a passive, weak as well as victim and men as active, strong as well as perpetrator of such violence.

The main research question in this study tends to explore how men and women are represented in the newspaper articles and what are the hidden messages behind their representation. Accordingly, I hypothesize that woman as a social actor of domestic violence is represented as passive, weak, vulnerable and dependent (in terms of victim) while men as a social participant is represented as active, strong, and independent (in terms of the doer or the perpetrator). Thus, according to the data analyzed previously, the first hypothesis is confirmed.

So, the findings of this study indicate that the representation of men and women as a social actors of domestic violence in media, particularly, in newspaper articles aims at depicting the real image of women’s struggles from their intimate partner in which this latter exercises the power over them. In the same sense, the idea of women’s struggles tends to support the female submissiveness and subordination in which women are described as a weak, dependent, vulnerable and victim (in terms of belongings to men), while the idea behind the representation of men’s activist tends to reinforce the male dominance in which the men are described as a powerful, strong, dominance, independent, and perpetrator. Therefore, women are represented as a victim to the men’s actions whereas men are represented as a perpetrator (in terms of the one who did the action)

### **3.4. Limitation**

As far as the current study is concerned, a number of important limitations need to be articulated. This study needs to take into account the other criteria that concerns sensitive

## Chapter three: Analysis of two Articles from El Chaab Newspaper

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issues such as domestic violence in media, particularly, in newspaper articles. It focuses on restricted and limited data; it sheds light on representing and depicting the image of the women as a victim and the men as a perpetrator of domestic violence only from their own arguments as we see in this study. In the other words, when covering stories related to intimate partner violence, not to focus only on immediate events (e.g., arguments). Journalists may also take another approach by depending on the family and neighbors, or even friends for getting accurate knowledge (i.e. examining the context in which such issue occurs). Other limitations that I have find it during collecting data:

- The time factor was the biggest issue.
- The resources restriction and the difficulties when collecting data. It focuses on restricted and limited data.
- It is limited to analyze only two articles taken from El Chaab Newspaper. These were the main focus.
- Delayed of collecting the data.
- It was not possible to apply all the categories van Leeuwen's model in this study; we focused just on the small number of categories.
- In this connection, further research needs to take into consideration what has been missed in the current study. It is suggested to look for other kinds of newspapers

### 3.5. Conclusion

Overall, it should be noted that media generally and newspaper in particular plays an important role in depicting and representing sensitive issues such as domestic violence. Hence, the chapter aims to highlight the practical section of this research paper. Data are collected from two articles drawing from El Chaab Newspaper. They are collected, analyzed then discussed by focusing mainly on van leeuwen's categories for the representation of social actors and their actions cited in the previous chapters. In this connection, the findings show a real picture on the way of representing men and women in media where women are described as a victim while men are described as a perpetrator of domestic violence. As far as the objectives of this study are concerned and after an objective analysis of the data collected, it becomes obvious that the findings meet the study's objectives, answer the research questions and confirm the suggested hypotheses.

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# General Conclusion

## General Conclusion

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As explained previous, researches conducted on domestic violence issue have focused on representing such issue from different angles in different ways. The issue of domestic violence mainly was depicted in media news, particularly, in newspaper articles for the sake to address the way of representing men and women as two main actors; recently, more attention was addressed to the hidden ideologies behind the analysis of the representation of those two actors. The primary aim of this study was to explore the way of representing men and women as social actors of domestic violence in media, particularly, in newspaper articles.

This study was divided into three main chapters. The first chapter started giving general idea on the issue of domestic violence. It was divided into two main parts. The first part was concerned with the definition of domestic violence as an issue, conceptualizing domestic violence as a gendered phenomenon, theories related to such issue. The second part was concerned with the representation of domestic violence in discourse as well as how domestic violence was represented from different discourses. The second chapter dealt with the representation of domestic violence in media as well as how the issue of domestic violence relate to media. The other theoretical dimension in this chapter looked at the way that is represented men and women of domestic violence in newspaper articles by utilizing van leeuwen's model for the representation of social actors and their actions. The third chapter offered data analysis and interpretation and later the findings were discussed as well as it cited limitations for avoiding in the next studies.

In this connection, the following research objectives were put forwards. The first aim was to negotiate the role of media in representing and depicting sensitive problems including domestic violence. The second aim was to explore the way the two main participants (male and female) and their actions of domestic violence are represented in the two articles taken from the El chaab newspaper and how these later represented men and women, the similarities and the differences between the two articles were examined. Van leeuwen's model for the representation of social actors and their actions were adopted. Second, to explore how media particularly newspaper articles represent women and men as two members in the text and what is the hidden ideologies behind their representations.

As far as the first objective is concerned, data were selected through collecting, analyzing and understanding different words of the two newspaper articles by utilizing Van leeuwen's model for the representation of social actors and their actions that was mentioned previously.

## General Conclusion

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Data indicated that the representation of women as a weak, passive, dependent while men as a strong, active and independent in both newspaper articles showed that woman is a victim whereas man is a perpetrator of domestic violence. According to the data analyzed previously, the main hypothesis in this study was confirmed.

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# Appendices