

Presentation of Muslim Women in Western Print Media: A Content Analysis of ‘Time’ and ‘Newsweek’

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Abstract

Media usage as most influential and malleable tool to affect the society as a whole and particularly different segments within the social boundaries regarding their means of thinking and belief system, is commonly known now. Western media have consistently presented distorted images of Muslim women and as a result they are simply perceived as lustful and object of desire besides illiterate, enslaved and oppressed images. The study was intended to explore the overall treatment of the Muslim women by newsmagazines ‘Time’ and ‘Newsweek’. Content analysis of all the data published in the newsmagazines concerning Muslim women was analyzed within the dimensions of categories, frames, tone and themes. Results of the study instigated that progressive Muslim women were positively while oppressed Muslim women were negatively discussed. Furthermore, their Education, Social Status and Achievements etc. were mainly highlighted.

Key Words: Veil, Rights, Muslims, Islam, Social Status, Education, Stereotypes, Oppressed Women.

Introduction

It is above any doubt that all forms of media have great influences over the audience; however, print media steps forward more passionately in order to leave its long-lasting impacts on different segments of the society (Jamieson & Campbell, 2000). Sometimes, it becomes a significant contributor also by disseminating type of false information or data to the readers. However, not only printed but all types of media present the distorted image of Muslims and Islam to the world. Muslims are entitled as uncivilized, absurd, barbaric, backward and extremists etc. (Kabir, 2006). Western media’s conception about the Islamic principles is contradictory and incorrect. The reality is totally opposite of what is being portrayed on media (Gerges, 2003). There is a consistent pursuit of besmirch campaigning by Western media against Islam that it is the only religion in the world which promotes violence and extremism (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 2004).

a. Rescuing Muslim Women:

On the basis of fabricated assumptions, Western media promulgates its own version of ‘enslaved Muslim women’ to the world. Western media compares Muslim women with Western women in both explicit and implicit ways. Muslim women are evaluated on the basis of their social status in comparison with the social status of women in West. Social and cultural values of the Western society are considered as the universal evaluation standard for the development, modernism and advancement. Considering western society as the symbol of modernity, enlightenment and liberalism, Western media make comparison between both Islamic and Western societies which ensures the positive self-realization. In the name of Human and Women rights, Western media is propagating that Muslim women should be rescued and liberated.

b. Ban on Veil:

As veil is exclusively associated with women oppression, it is outlawed in many Western and European countries. Even in many secular Muslim states it is officially prohibited for women, additionally many other Muslim countries have no obligation for women to wear Islamic clothing (Wikipedia). Some of the countries where Hijab/Niqab is not allowed are listed below:

- A bill was passed by the National Assembly of *France* on July 13th, 2010 with 335-1 votes to ban all types of veil, Hijab, headscarves and full-body costumes etc. Law was implemented on April 11th, 2011.
- In July 2011, *Belgium* also banned the face covering and *Burqa* for the citizens.
- Practice of wearing veil in public places is prohibited for women in major cities of *Spain*.
- Veil and Headscarves were banned in *Turkey* since decades but new government has been introducing relaxation in such strict rules gradually.

Islamic veil and coverings are proscribed for women in foremost areas of *Italy*.

c. Status of Women in Islam:

In Islam, women are not isolated and inferior to men rather both are acknowledged as other halves of each other. Life of both man and woman is incomplete without each other. In Islam, the quest of knowledge is obligatory for all Muslims irrespective of their gender (Siddiqi, 1988). Islam empowers women to earn, to work, to own, to inherit and so on, like in the era of Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) i.e. Hazrat Khadija (R.A.) was a businesswoman, historical archives demonstrate that women in that era also participated in battles to tend the wounds and injuries of their men, Hazrat Aisha (R.A.) was one of the greatest scholars of Islam especially for women etc. (Mernissi, 1991).

Problem Statement

Muslim women are mainly identified as stereotypically submissive and victims of religious radicalism yet at times they are projected as progressive and liberated women in such

ways that support Western' own interests (Chowdhury, 2010; Kassam, 2010; Navarro, 2010; Rahman, 2012). This type of representation contributes to discrimination, racism, segregation and deformation of the culture and religious values. This study examines how Western news print media is constructing the socio-cultural identities of Muslim women by presenting them in certain frames and highlighting a few themes about their lives.

Objectives

- i. To explore the treatment of Muslim women in both news magazines.
- ii. To evaluate frames, print media mostly use to portray the Muslim women.
- iii. To find out what type of issues of Muslim women are highlighted more by Western print media.

Literature Review

Hoodfar (1993) investigated how the western society perceived the Muslim women and her veil and how these perceptions and portrayal of veil hurdled the true understanding of veil. It is the descriptive analysis of the origins of veil, true meanings of the veil, understanding of the veil by western society, and researcher's own experiences. This study suggested that the Muslim women particularly belonging from Middle East and North-Africa were the most persistent subjects of debate in Western media for previous two decades and they most frequently discussed the oppression of Muslim women and veil i.e. main image of Western society about Muslim women is the veiled and oppressed women.

Hamel (2002) explored the role of media in controversy against Muslim veil in France. The researcher examined the concept of integration and the functioning of this integration as source of discrimination. This study was intended to use this controversy to question and challenge the conventional study of integration of Muslims into secular French society. It was focused to investigate the interplay of religion, immigration and citizenship in France. Findings suggested that this controversy revealed the mentality of French society and their character not the character of Muslim community i.e. French society suppressed the Muslim community and intricated the process of integration of Muslims in French society.

Fahmy (2004) analyzed the presentation of Afghan women in AP-Wire photographs during the Taliban regime and after their fall. He further analyzed the various picturesque signs about visualizing the Afghan women. Purpose of the study was to find out the difference in the depictions of Afghan women in realistic frameworks throughout and afterwards Taliban regime. Concept of Orientalism was applied to the study as theoretical framework. This analysis was based on visual subordination, point of view, social distance, imaginary contact, behavior and general portrayal. Findings of the study suggested that regardless of the symbols of pictorial subordination and stereotypes, Muslim women later the fall of Taliban rule were depicted as participative, socially active and equal; investigation showed that the AP portrayed intricate form of Afghan women's liberation i.e. still wearing their Burqas.

McDonald (2006) explored the dimension of problems of image and voice in media regarding veil of the Muslim women. The study was based on the purpose to examine different ways to understand the Muslim femininity. It analyzed the residual influence on veiling and unveiling of Muslim women in Western culture as well as social, economic and political positioning of veiled women in the society. It also explained that how western post feminists related the concepts of women's objectification and bodily self-expressions, and how they felt about veil discouraging and rejecting the wrong intentions and thoughts towards females. The results revealed that even in 21st century' religiously secular states like France and Turkey etc., Muslim women's right to wear Hijab was severely erupted by passing laws against wearing Hijab in public and they were still presented stereotypically by Western media. Furthermore, media always muffled the voices of Muslim women raised against this hegemonic stereotypical depiction of them in media.

Mishra (2007) in her study examined the depictions about Muslims (both males & females) in American print media. Main research questions of the study were to find out the overall coverage of Muslims by NY Times, and the ways in which this coverage served Western interests. Textual analysis of the news stories about Muslims printed in New York Times through the time span of 2-years from September, 2001 to September, 2003 (app. 258) was conducted within the Orientalist scenario. Analysis included the news articles, commentary, editorials and essays published related to Muslim men/women. On the basis of the results, it was concluded that newspaper presented Muslim women as targets of religious, socio-political and cultural practices, while Muslim men were presented in relation with terrorism and this presentation constructed a Western interpretation for liberation and modernity of Muslim women.

Morin (2009) scanned Submission within new feminist perspectives of Muslim contexts and socio-political environment of Netherlands. Submission was a movie directed by T. H. Gogh and written by A. H. Ali. This movie was grounded on the theme, the critique of treatment of Muslim women. Shortly after the broadcast of this film, a Muslim fundamentalist murdered the director/producer of the movie which brought the Islamic extremism into worldwide attention. This study discussed the complexity of struggle of Muslim women by evaluating the exhibition of Muslim women in the movie Submission. Researcher critically analyzed the movie from three perspectives; Ali (script-writer), Gogh (director/producer) and Bouyeri (Gogh's murderer). Concepts of Orientalism, Feminism and Islamism were applied to dig out the facts. This study suggested that Muslim women are surrounded by teachings of Islam and patriarchy on one side while the concepts of global sisterhood and Orientalism on the other, and they struggle to achieve the equal status with Muslim men and Western women.

Manley and Purvis (2010) investigated the negative agenda settings of Western electronic media towards Muslim/Middle Eastern Women. Western Media had always depicted Muslim/Middle Eastern Women by practicing negative agenda settings. It was anticipated to analyze whether the coverage of Muslim women by TV news was positive, negative or neutral. Content of three major networks ABC, CBS and NBC was analyzed on aired from September

2001- December 2008, by using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The findings of the study showed that stories about the Muslim women were more negative than positive.

Amara (2012) scanned the coverage given by international media to the veiled-Muslim athletes and the explored the perception of Muslim world about this coverage. The purpose of the study was also to analyze the responses of Muslim media to the international media. Researcher in this study arranged the data for participation of Muslim women in Olympics from the start on yearly basis, analyzed the media coverage of veiled-Muslim athletes participating in Olympics and also conducted surveys in Muslim world to get the public perception about this coverage. Findings of the study revealed that some media issue criticized the Hijab as religious practice while others criticized the situation of women in Muslim societies etc. and the perception of the public about the coverage was also diverse.

Research Questions

- i. How both news magazines are treating Muslim women over time?
- ii. What are the main frames in which Western print media presents the Muslim women?
- iii. Which news magazine is more Islamophobic regarding Muslim women?
- iv. What issues of Muslim women are most frequently highlighted by Western media?

Research Hypotheses

H1: Western print media is reinforcing the stereotypical image of Muslim women in the society.

H2: Western print media mainly publish content discussing Social Status of the Muslim women.

H3: Oppressed Muslim women are mostly unfavorably depicted in the news magazines.

Methodology

As this is the multi-variate study, content analysis is most appropriate method to be applied. This particular study includes analysis of articles, interviews, stories, images and vice versa. According to Abrahamson (1983) content analysis is exclusively used to examine any type of communication and draws fruitful conclusions (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1976). It is a unique process which is cost-effective, can compress large number of data into fewer categories and can span over for long time.

Population

It is a census study processing the entire population. Due to small quantity of published content, no sample is selected. A 3-years period of time is selected for this particular study. Proximity is the main reason for choosing this certain time period.

Findings

1. Categories:

In this section, pie-charts denote the respective frequencies and percentages of the categories presented in the corresponding years.

Figure 1.1: Time – Cumulative

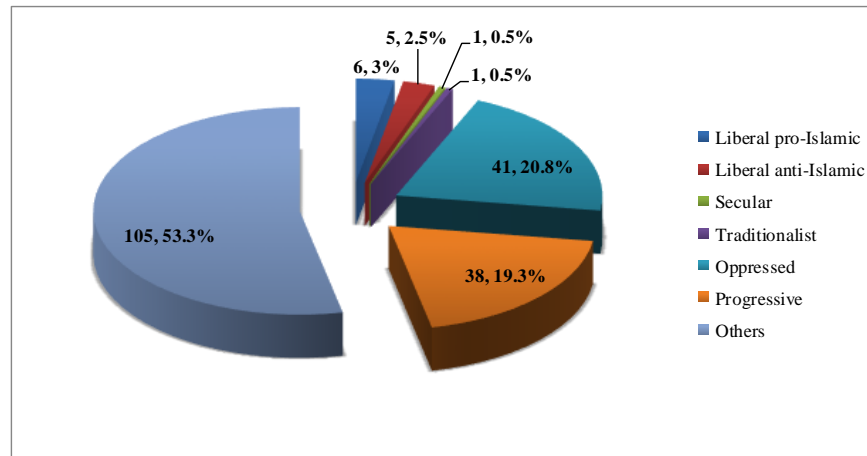
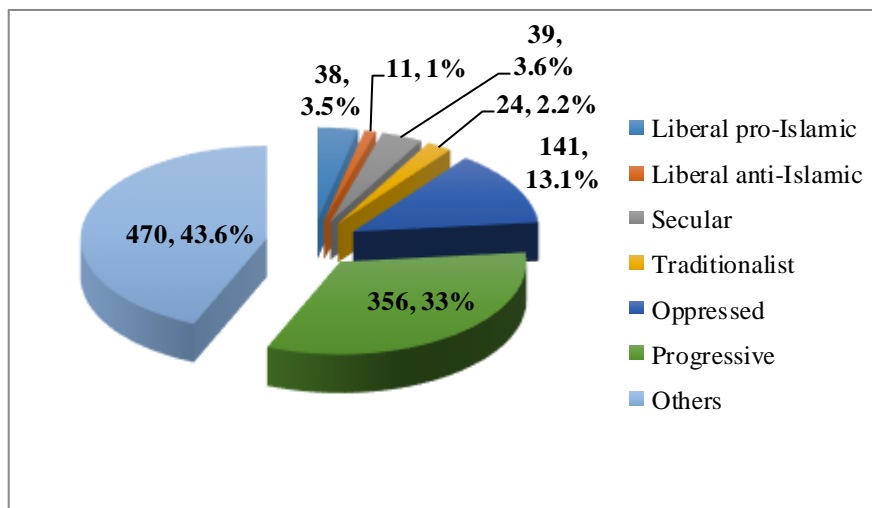


Figure-1.1 exhibits the total coverage of Muslim women within the pre-developed categories in Time magazine during the time period of 3-complete years (2011-2013). Total paragraphs about Muslim women during this time period were 197, out of which, ‘Others’ category was comprised of 53.3% (105), slightly more than the half of total coverage. Whereas, ‘Oppressed’ category succeeded with 20.8% (41) and ratio for ‘Progressive’ category was 19.3% (38). Furthermore, corresponding percentages for ‘Liberal pro-Islamic’ and ‘Liberal anti-Islamic’ categories were 3% (6), and 2.5% (5) respectively. Therefore, ‘Secular’ and ‘Traditionalist’ were been same as 0.5% (1).

Figure 1.2: Newsweek - Cumulative



The weightage of each category with reference to Muslim women for the period of 3-complete years in Newsweek magazine is illustrated by Figure-1.2. Category ‘Others’ included 43.6% (470) of total 1079 paragraphs, whereas ‘Progressive’ and ‘Oppressed’ encompassed 33% (356) and 13.1% (141) of the total. Additionally, categories having less ratios were ‘Secular’, ‘Liberal pro-Islamic’, ‘Liberal anti-Islamic’ with 3.6% (39), 3.5% (38) and 2.2% (24) respectively, while ‘Traditionalist’ attained only 1% (11).

i. Figure 1.3: Cumulative:

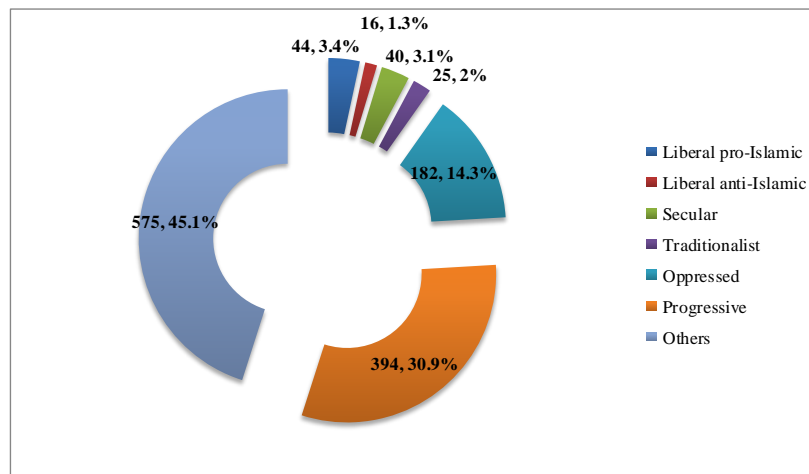


Figure-1.3 gives details about the cumulative coverage of categories concerning Muslim women in both magazines Time and Newsweek throughout 3-years (2011-2013). Collective paragraphs of both magazines were 1276. ‘Others’ category exceeded with 45.1% (575), next in order was ‘Progressive’ as having 30.9% (394) followed by 14.3% (182) of ‘Oppressed’. Consequently, ‘Liberal pro-Islamic’, ‘Secular’ and ‘Traditionalist’ got 3.4% (44), 3.1% (40) and 2% (25) as mentioned. Therefore, ‘Liberal anti-Islamic’ had the lowest percentage i.e. 1.3% (16).

2. Category vs. Slant:

This portion deals with the cross-tabulation of the developed categories with the slants i.e. favorable, unfavorable and neutral. Corresponding percentages are displayed using bar charts and tables while the chi-square test results are also tabulated to compare the recorded p-values.

Table 2.1

Paragraph Category * Paragraph Slant Cross-tabulation

Category	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Total
Liberal pro-Islamic	2 2.6%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2 2.6%
Liberal anti-Islamic	0	0	4	4

	0.0%	0.0%	5.2%	5.2%
Secular	0	0	0	0
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Traditionalist	0	0	1	1
	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	1.3%
Oppressed	4	4	0	8
	5.2%	5.2%	0.0%	10.4%
Progressive	14	0	0	14
	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%	18.2%
Others	9	8	31	48
	11.7%	10.4%	40.3%	62.3%
Total	29	12	36	77
	37.7%	15.6%	46.8%	100.0%

Chi-Square = 50.179

P-Value = 0.000

Table-2.1 is the cross-tabulation of the categories and slants in Time magazine during year 2011. As the table shows, highest percentage (46.8%) lies in neutral section, then 37.7% belongs to favorable column and unfavorable has the lowest percentage of 15.6%. Moreover, p-value obtained from chi-square test is $0.000 < 0.05$ which means the results are significant and there is strong association between the variables.

Table 2.2

Paragraph Category * Paragraph Slant Cross-tabulation

Category	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Total
Liberal pro-Islamic	2	0	0	2
	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%	2.8%
Liberal anti-Islamic	1	0	0	1
	1.4%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%
Secular	1	0	0	1
	1.4%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%
Traditionalist	0	0	0	0
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Oppressed	12	8	0	20
	16.9%	11.3%	0.0%	28.2%
Progressive	13	0	0	13
	18.3%	0.0%	0.0%	18.3%
Others	8	13	13	34
	11.3%	18.3%	18.3%	47.9%
Total	37	21	13	71
	52.1%	29.6%	18.3%	100.0%

Chi-Square = 33.821

P-Value = 0.000

Table-2.2 is the result of cross-tabulation between the categories and slants used in Time magazine for the year 2012 which reveals that percentage for favorable treatment of the categories is high i.e. 52.1%, unfavorable coverage succeeds with 29.6% while neutral presentation attains 18.3% only. However, it is evident from chi-square test that the results are significant and there is strong association between the categories and slants as p-value is $0.000 < 0.05$.

Table 2.3

Paragraph Category * Paragraph Slant Cross-tabulation

Category	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Total
Liberal pro-Islamic	2 4.1%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2 4.1%
Liberal anti-Islamic	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
Secular	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
Traditionalist	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
Oppressed	6 12.2%	7 14.3%	0 0.0%	13 26.5%
Progressive	11 22.4%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	11 22.4%
Others	14 28.6%	6 12.2%	3 6.1%	23 46.9%
Total	33 67.3%	13 26.5%	3 6.1%	49 100.0%

Chi-Square = 13.566

P-Value = 0.035

Table-2.3 is the illustration of cross-tabulation of category vs. slant for the year 2013. This table displays the proportions of favorable, unfavorable and neutral presentation as 67.3%, 26.5% and 6.1% respectively. The recorded p-value for this year is $0.035 < 0.05$ which ensures that results are significant and there exists association between the variables.

Table 2.4
Paragraph Category * Paragraph Slant Cross-tabulation

Category	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Total
Liberal pro-Islamic	6 3.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	6 3.0%
Liberal anti-Islamic	1 0.5%	0 0.0%	4 2.0%	5 2.5%
Secular	1 0.5%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 0.5%
Traditionalist	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 0.5%	1 0.5%
Oppressed	22 11.2%	19 9.6%	0 0.0%	41 20.8%
Progressive	38 19.3%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	38 19.3%
Others	31 15.7%	27 13.7%	47 23.9%	105 53.3%
Total	99 50.3%	46 23.4%	52 26.4%	197 100.0%

Chi-Square = 97.701

P-Value = 0.000

Table-2.4 exhibits the accumulative percentage for time span of 3-years (2011-2013) after applying cross-tabulation. The obtained percentage is as: 50.3% favorable, 26.4% neutral and 23.4% unfavorable. 0.05 was set as level of significance and the calculated p-value $0.000 < 0.05$ which means association is very strong between the tested variables and the results are significant.

Table 2.5
Paragraph Category * Paragraph Slant Cross-tabulation

Category	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Total
Liberal pro-Islamic	7 1.7%	0 0.0%	7 1.7%	14 3.5%
Liberal anti-Islamic	1 0.2%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 0.2%
Secular	13 3.2%	0 0.0%	2 0.5%	15 3.7%
Traditionalist	0	2	3	5

	0.0%	0.5%	0.7%	1.2%
Oppressed	23	27	16	66
	5.7%	6.7%	4.0%	16.4%
Progressive	149	0	26	175
	37.0%	0.0%	6.5%	43.4%
Others	23	31	73	127
	5.7%	7.7%	18.1%	31.5%
Total	216	60	127	403
	53.6%	14.9%	31.5%	100.0%

Chi-Square = 191.603

P-Value = 0.000

Table-2.5 is the cross-tabulation of the categories and slants in Newsweek magazine during year 2011. Highest percentage is 53.6% which belongs to favorable section, then 31.5% lies in neutral column while the unfavorable has the lowest percentage of 14.9%. Moreover, acquired p-value from chi-square test is $0.000 < 0.05$ i.e. results are significant and strong association does exist for the variables.

Table 2.6

Paragraph Category * Paragraph Slant Cross-tabulation

Category	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Total
Liberal pro-Islamic	4	0	3	7
	1.0%	0.0%	0.7%	1.7%
Liberal anti-Islamic	2	0	5	7
	0.5%	0.0%	1.2%	1.7%
Secular	14	0	0	14
	3.4%	0.0%	0.0%	3.4%
Traditionalist	0	9	6	15
	0.0%	2.2%	1.4%	3.6%
Oppressed	17	11	2	30
	4.1%	2.6%	0.5%	7.2%
Progressive	112	0	21	133
	26.9%	0.0%	5.0%	31.9%
Others	42	58	111	211
	10.1%	13.9%	26.6%	50.6%
Total	191	78	148	417
	45.8%	18.7%	35.5%	100.0%

Chi-Square = 195.362

P-Value = 0.000

Table-2.6 shows the category/slant relationship in Newsweek during the year 2012. This table demonstrates that favorable treatment (45.8%) exceeds the neutral (35.5%) and unfavorable treatment (18.7%). Therefore, p-value obtained from chi-square test is $0.000 < 0.05$ which means the results are significant and there is strong association between the variables.

Table 2.7**Paragraph Category * Paragraph Slant Cross-tabulation**

Category	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Total
Liberal pro-Islamic	17 6.6%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	17 6.6%
Liberal anti-Islamic	1 0.4%	0 0.0%	2 0.8%	3 1.2%
Secular	10 3.9%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	10 3.9%
Traditionalist	0 0.0%	3 1.2%	1 0.4%	4 1.5%
Oppressed	26 10.0%	15 5.8%	4 1.5%	45 17.4%
Progressive	38 14.7%	0 0.0%	10 3.9%	48 18.5%
Others	36 13.9%	30 11.6%	66 25.5%	132 51.0%
Total	128 49.4%	48 18.5%	83 32.0%	259 100.0%

Chi-Square = 98.879

P-Value = 0.000

Table-2.7 is the cross-tabulation of the categories and slants in Newsweek magazine during year 2013. Favorable treatment attained maximum share in the percentage i.e. 49.4% followed by the 32% of neutral coverage while the unfavorable presentation has the lowest percentage of 18.5%. However, attained p-value is $0.000 < 0.05$ which declares that strong association exists and the results are significant.

Table 2.8**Paragraph Category * Paragraph Slant Cross-tabulation**

Category	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Total
Liberal pro-Islamic	28 2.6%	0 0.0%	10 0.9%	38 3.5%
Liberal anti-Islamic	4 0.4%	0 0.0%	7 0.6%	11 1.0%
Secular	37 3.4%	0 0.0%	2 0.2%	39 3.6%
Traditionalist	0 0.0%	14 1.3%	10 0.9%	24 2.2%
Oppressed	66 6.1%	53 4.9%	22 2.0%	141 13.1%
Progressive	299 27.7%	0 0.0%	57 5.3%	356 33.0%
Others	101	119	250	470

	9.4%	11.0%	23.2%	43.6%
	535	186	358	1079
Total	49.6%	17.2%	33.2%	100.0%

Chi-Square = 459.497

P-Value = 0.000

Table-2.8 is the result of cumulative cross-tabulation of the categories and slants in Newsweek magazine during years 2011-2013. As the table shows, highest percentage (49.6%) lies in favorable column, 33.2% belongs to neutral section while unfavorable has the lowest percentage of 17.2%. The results are significant and there does exist the strong association verified by the obtained p-value i.e. $0.000 < 0.05$.

Table 2.9

Paragraph Category * Paragraph Slant Cross-tabulation

Category	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Total
Liberal pro-Islamic	34 2.7%	0 0.0%	10 0.8%	44 3.4%
Liberal anti-Islamic	5 0.4%	0 0.0%	11 0.9%	16 1.3%
Secular	38 3.0%	0 0.0%	2 0.2%	40 3.1%
Traditionalist	0 0.0%	14 1.1%	11 0.9%	25 2.0%
Oppressed	88 6.9%	72 5.6%	22 1.7%	182 14.3%
Progressive	337 26.4%	0 0.0%	57 4.5%	394 30.9%
Others	132 10.3%	146 11.4%	297 23.3%	575 45.1%
Total	634 49.7%	232 18.2%	410 32.1%	1276 100.0%

Chi-Square = 540.458

P-Value = 0.000

Table-2.9 demonstrates the respective proportions of categories and slants by applying cross-tabulation for the years 2011-2013. 49.7% is the maximum percentage in the table belongs to favorable treatment, followed by 32.1% of neutral coverage and unfavorable has the lowest percentage of 18.2%. Furthermore, $0.000 < 0.05$ is the calculated p-value which means the results are significant and strong association exists between the tested variables.

3. Tones:

This part deals with the tones both magazines used while presenting Muslim women with reference to their religion. Pie-charts are used to demonstrate the frequencies in the corresponding years while comparison is done between the samples of both magazines using Z-score test.

Figure 3.1

Cumulative

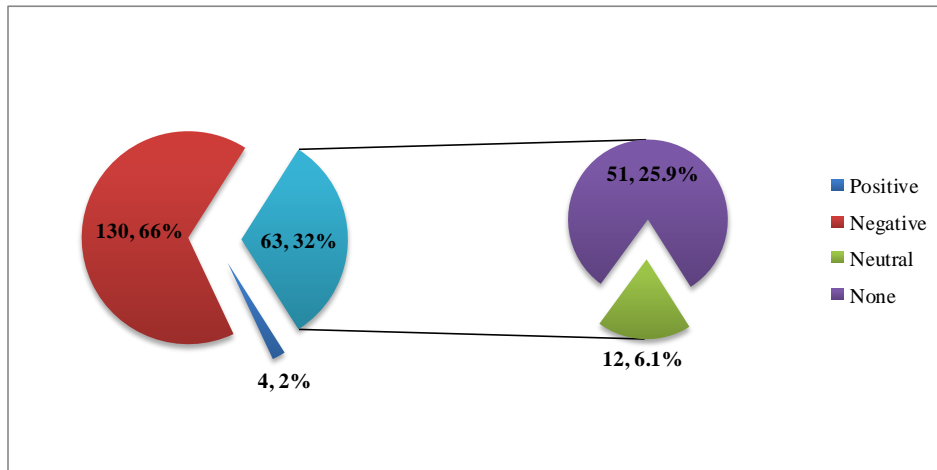
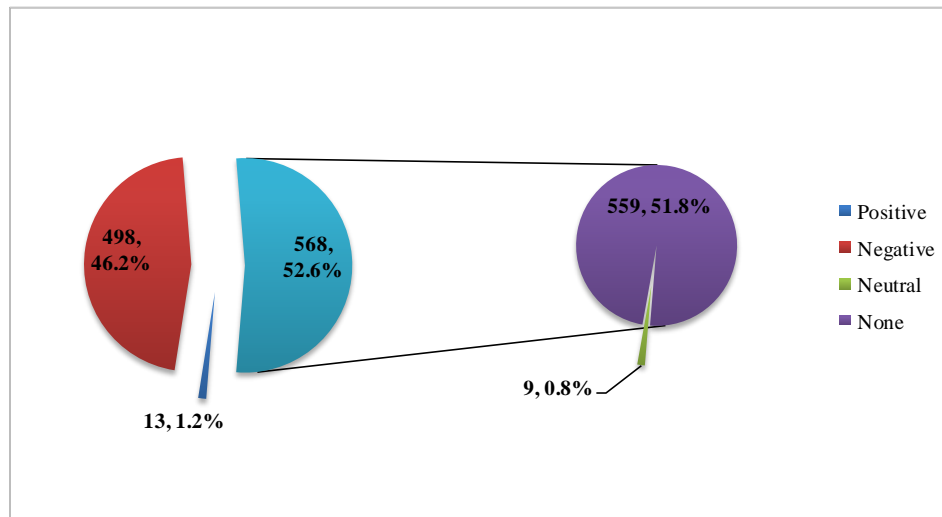


Figure-3.1 exhibits the respective shares of tones during the time span of 2011-2013 in Time magazine's coverage. Primarily the 'Negative' (66%) and 'None' (25.9%) tones were (more than half percentage attained by the 'Negative' tone) used by magazine while contribution of 'Positive' (2%) and 'Neutral' (6.1%) tones were very small.

Figure 3.2 Newsweek - Cumulative



The tones which Newsweek magazine used to identify Muslim women and their religion all through the years 2011-2013 are demonstrated by the Figure-3.2 with their corresponding percentages. As it is evident from the chart, 'None' tone had the maximum percentage i.e. 51.8% followed by the 46.2% of the 'Negative' tone. Both the 'Positive' (1.2%) and 'Neutral' (0.8%) attained least percentages.

Figure 3.3: Cumulative

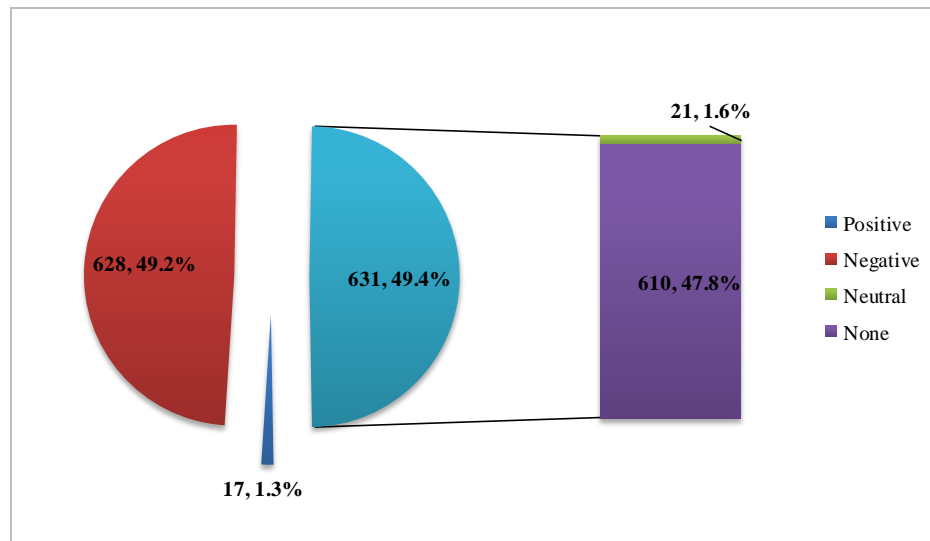
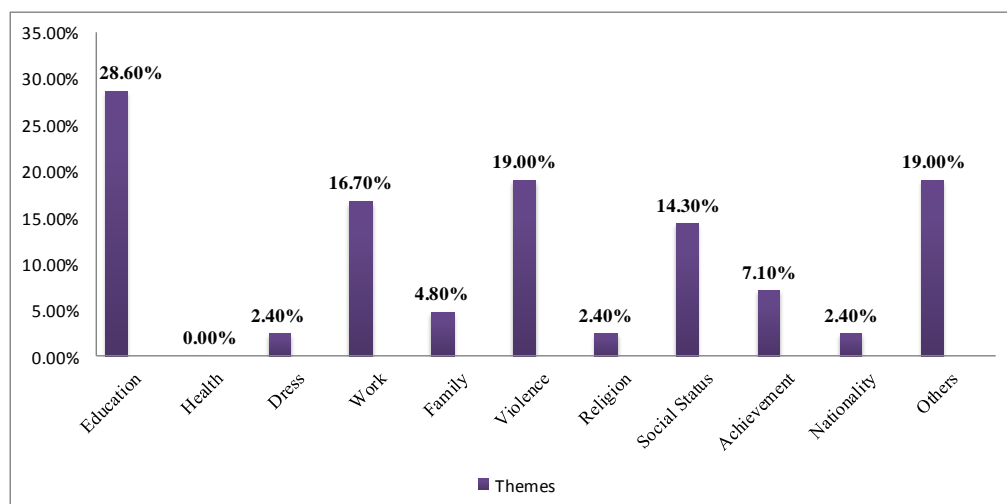


Figure-3.3 illustrates the cumulative percentages of the tones in which both news magazines presented Muslim women all through the time span of (2011-2013). Both magazines mostly presented them negatively (49.2%) while the percentage of 'None' tone is almost same as 'Negative' i.e. 47.8%. Consequently, 1.6% and 1.3% are the percentages for 'Neutral' and 'Positive' tones.

Themes

In this portion, frequency of the themes highlighted in both magazines is represented by using simple bar charts while proportions are compared by applying Z-score test to validate the results and to find out the associations between the variables.

Figure 4.1: Time - Cumulative:



Accumulative coverage of themes during the selected time period of 3-years (2011-2013) is displayed with the help of Figure-4.1. The highest bar in the chart is devoted to ‘Education’ having 28.6% succeeded by ‘Violence’ with 19%. Furthermore, ‘Others’ also totaled at 19% with ‘Violence’. Therefore, ‘Work’ (16.7%) and ‘Social Status’ (14.3%) were also been reported.

Figure 4.2: Newsweek – Cumulative:

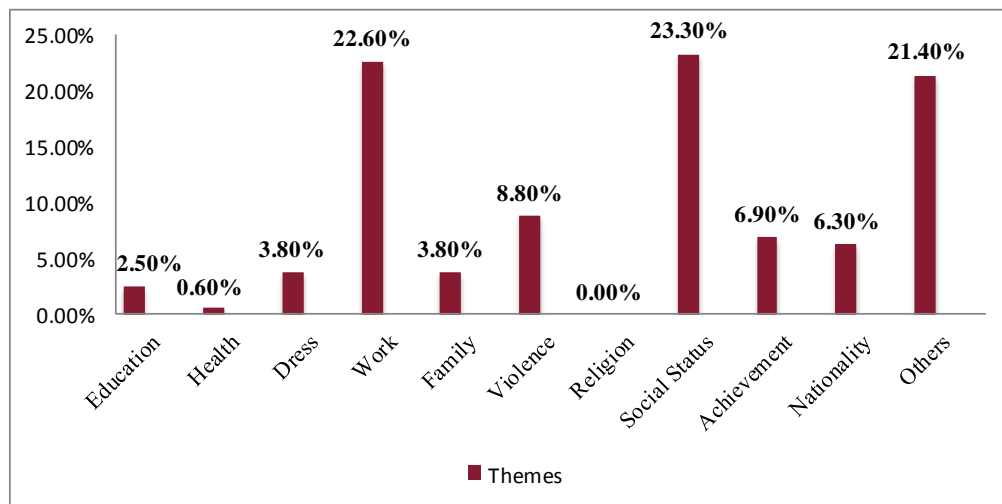
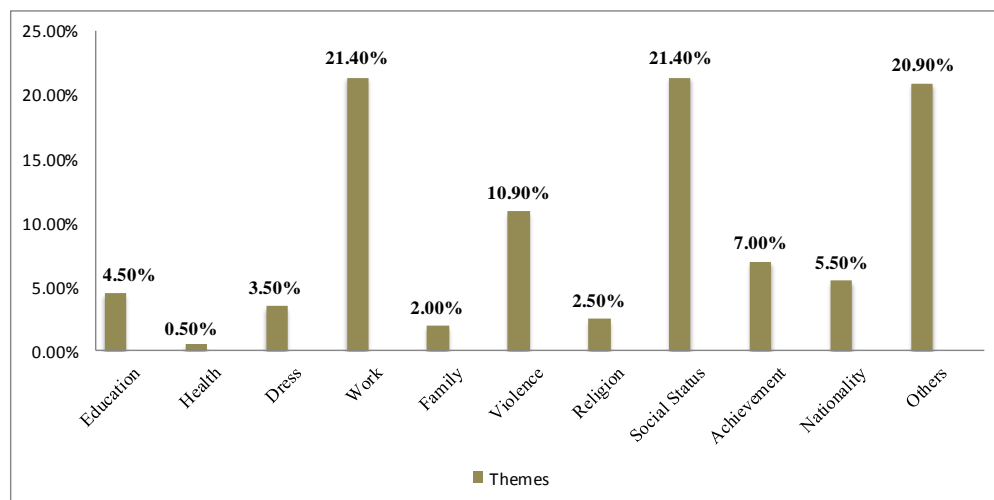


Figure-4.2 is the display of accumulative percentages of the themes that were most frequently presented in Newsweek during the years 2011-2013. As it is presented in the chart, ‘Social Status’ (23.3%), ‘Work’ (22.6%) and ‘Others’ (21.4%) were mainly reported by the magazine.

Figure 4.3: Cumulative:



Which themes were presented more to the world as the issues of the Muslim women by both the news magazines are indicated in the Figure-4.3. 'Work' (21.4%), 'Social Status' (21.4%) and 'Others' (20.9%) were the themes that mainly reported by both magazines.

Results

For a long period of time, Muslims and especially Muslim women have been the main focus of the Western media. It has played a very negative role in creating and building negative pictures of Muslims in layman's mind. The one huge reason behind the negative image of Muslims in the minds of people is the highly inappropriate words western media has always used for explaining Muslims such as terrorists and extremists etc. Moreover, Western media frequently criticizes Islam for this unequal and oppressive treatment towards women and the highly disproportionate distribution of power, wealth and authority between men and women. Western media while portraying Muslim women use words like 'victimized', 'oppressed', 'covered', 'veiled' etc. But this portrayal is seemed to be changing over time and Muslim women are being presented as 'brave' women struggling against the traditional male-chauvinist values of the society. This study is focused on assessing whether these assumptions are true or not, whether this trend is changing over time or not.

Here in the research question, 'the main frames in which Western print media presents the Muslim women', the term 'frames' is used for all the contexts assessed that both news magazines used to classify Muslim women i.e. categories, slants, tones, connotations and vice versa. Pie-charts and the bar charts in the quantitative portion illustrated the simple frequencies of these frames i.e. Muslim women were identified as progressive women and their visions were given remarkable space furthermore, through the cross-tab method and chi-square test it was assessed that both news magazines commend such progressive women.

Progressive women were operationalized as the 'women whose work is identified, sometimes without reference to country and religion'; the outcomes for the tone section endorsed the above mentioned finding that Muslim women were largely depicted without any reference to their religion. It was also validated with the results that both news magazines mainly spotlighted their 'Work' and 'Social Status'. These findings negated the hypothesis '**Western print media is reinforcing the stereotypical image of the Muslim women in the society**'. While the above findings approved the presumed statement '**Oppressed Muslim women are mostly unfavorably depicted in the news magazines**'.

Answer regarding 'what issues of Muslim women are most frequently highlighted by Western print media' included the findings that Time mainly published content regarding Muslim women about their 'Work', 'Social Status', 'Education' and 'Violence' i.e. those women were given space who worked and had good social status like Tehmina Anam (writer), Fatima Hal (chef), Fawzia Koofti (afghan parliamentarian), Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy (director), Sadaf Hashmi (boxer) and many more, therefore the worst situation of girls' education in Pakistan was

highly discussed with reference to the brutal attack of Taliban on Malala Yousafzai who fought back the restriction for girls to get education.

However, Newsweek also highlighted their 'Work' and 'Social Status', additionally some attention was also given to the incidents of 'Violence' their 'Achievements' and 'Nationality'. For example, 'Sherry Rahman', 'Fauzia Wahab', 'Zaha Hadid', 'Hina Rabbani Khar', 'Suzanne Mubarak' 'Meesha Shafi', 'Nusrat Bhutto' and vice versa. Furthermore, many Muslim women were discussed with their achievements like Oscar for Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy, award for Maryam Durrani, honoring reward for all those women who refused to accept the restrictions and raised their voices demanding their rights and liberty i.e. 'Humaira Bachal', 'Khalida Brohi', 'Manal al-Sharif', 'Noor Jahan Akbar' any many others. Moreover, violence against Muslim women was presented with reporting incidents like Swat flogging incident, Mukhtaran Mai case, Malala Yousafzai attack, punishment for Manal al-Sharif etc. Therefore, the assumption **'Western print media mainly publish content discussing Social Status of the Muslim women'** was approved because both news magazines consistently mentioned Muslim women with respect to their social status. As Rahman (2002) concluded that only Benazir Bhutto was presented as progressive while other women were negatively portrayed, similarly this study promoted this idea of giving positive coverage to famous and influential Muslim women.

Conclusion

This study reveals that Muslim women are less depicted as oppressed women and they are more projected as the progressive ones. Their social status, their work, achievements, struggles and fights are given more importance. With reference to their religion Islam, both newsmagazines used negative tone and it can be observed that mainly they were highlighted without any recognition for their religion and nationality. Henceforth, this study concludes that both news magazines have done splendid work to visibly convey that Western media changed its array of practicing racism, sexism and discrimination but actually it is following neo-racism i.e. practicing racism through meanings hidden in text (Van Dijk, 1991).

Recommendations

On the basis of these results, following are some recommendations for the Western media while portraying Muslim women:

- Western society and Western media should better understand the status of women in Islam.
- Western print media should identify its responsibility of objective and fair reporting of events and incidents regarding Muslim women.
- Both news magazines should play positive and constructive role to change the stereotypic perception of Western society about Muslim world.
- Both news magazines practiced indirect racism and discrimination, which should be avoided to promote peace and co-operation between both societies.

- Without focusing only on negative features of the Muslim nation, Western print media must spotlight its positive characteristics.
- Both news magazines highlighted only those women with strong background, common Muslim women should also be empowered to share their views.
- Western media must not generalize or over-simplify the cultural or individual violent actions of Muslims against their women to Muslim nation.
- Nearly all Muslim women wear Hijab and Niqab with their own will as an expression of personal identity, as a symbol of freedom, protection from harassment etc. but Western media mainly associate it to women oppression by the religion 'Islam'. This practice must be abolished.
- Western media must not consider Muslim women as 'others' or segregated part of the society instead productive steps should be taken to promote integration among Muslims and Westerners.

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