Canadian and US Mass Media Representation

of

Iranian Women and Their Activities in Social Movements

By

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ABSTRACT

Media can display a stereotypical image of women to represent, produce, or reinforce an inequality system. In Western mass media, images of Iranian women as women of a Muslim, Middle Eastern country may not provide a comprehensive view of these women. To understand the dominant discourses in the US and Canada's mass media, my research asks: How are Iranian women represented in US and Canadian media, and have there been any changes in this representation during the years since the Islamic Revolution of 1979 and, more specifically, after 2001? Have women's activities in social movements in Iran, specifically since 2009, had any effects on their representations in Canadian and US media?

Through a critical discourse analysis of four widely circulated national newspapers in Canada and the US, and using theories of hegemony and counter-hegemony, social movements and power of networks, and intersectionality, my research shows that women in Iran have gained attention from the Canadian and US mass media by means of their participation in street protests. The results show that media images of women and their activities since 2009 include more positive representations and are different, in the main, from the older images of women during the years immediately after the Islamic Revolution or stereotypical images of Middle Eastern women as victims of an oppressive Islamic system. In general, when women's activities and their resistance take forms that are familiar to US and Canadian mass media, they receive greater visibility. The results also show that overall representations of Iranian women in the media vary more so with the orientation of newspapers than media geographies. However, in some respects, such as the images in which the hijab is featured, the dominant discourse has not changed; the hijab is represented as oppressive and negative in both time-periods. The focus of

the newspapers remain on the hijab law in both time-periods, and women's clothes are represented as mainly oppressive.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

"**Sports another loss for Iran women's rights**" Sonia Verma, *The Globe and Mail*, January 22, 2012

The above title is one example of my research data. It is the title of an article (with an image of an Iranian woman soccer player fixing her hijab[1]) published in *The Globe and Mail* on January 22, 2012. The title of the article creates the impression that women do not have the right to participate in sports in Iran. Moreover, in the article, the author specifically mentions that women are banned from skiing and many other sports. Most of the information in this article, however, ignores that Iranian women participate in almost all sports including soccer, basketball, swimming, and skiing (Pfister 2003, pp. 214, 215; Steel and Richter-Devroe 2003). As a result, readers do not have access to a complete picture of women's sports participation in Iran, which can impact the audience's understanding and judgment of women's situation in Iran.

Women have a significant role in representations of national and ethnic identity and state policies. Women are important for nations or ethnic groups because of their role in giving birth and in the reproduction of a population for a nation or society (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1994). Women are also recognized as the main participants in the upbringing of children; therefore, they are significant reproducers of the "boundaries and ideology of nations or ethnic groups and their culture, collective norms and identity" (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1994, p. 313). Women can represent and be subject to a nation or an ethnic group's ideology. Thus,

[1] by hijab I mean scarf on the head which has been compulsory after the Islamic Revolution of 1979, in Iran. Because many women might not believe in scarf on the hair, but they still believe in covering their body.

many aspects of a nation's ideology can be gleaned from women's situation in a country or an ethnic group (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1994, p. 313).

Representations of women, in images and discourses, are significant to understanding and interpreting the cultural sites of hegemonic and ideological systems of power. For example, in an ideological Islamic state, such as Iran, wearing a compulsory hijab can be interpreted as a positive political act by power holders and an indication of the practice of Islamic ideology (For example see: Pfister 2003, p. 216). In contrast, images of women wearing the hijab are often interpreted by those in non-Islamic societies as indicative of an oppressive situation for women. Such differences in interpretation demonstrate that, if the goal is to avoid cultural misrecognition, their portrayal should go beyond such unidimensional representations. Fraser (Fraser 2000; Fraser and Honneth 2003) emphasizes that cultural misrecognition reinforces other oppression systems. Moreover, misrecognition can reinforce forms of power distribution such as class-based oppression, as it might affect people's jobs or positions in society. Therefore, every social group or minority should have an active role in producing cultural products and discourses to enforce social justice and power equality.

One area in which such misrepresentations can arise (as well as be overcome) is in the mass media. Mass media can depict more or less inclusive images and representations of Iranian women for example, thereby affecting readers' understandings of them, and of power systems or ideological systems of power. For example, Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1994) discusses how women and their representation, is significant for representing ideologies and nations. Such images can portray the multidimensional character of an ideology or a nation/ethnic group, or depict it as limited (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1994). On the one hand, if the media provides

more varied images of women that include more aspects of women's lives, the audience's understanding of both women and the ideology of the nation or ethnic group will be more comprehensive. On the other hand, unidimensional and stereotypical images can reinforce systems of inequality. So, images of women of a Muslim country, such as the images of Iranian women that appear in Canadian and American media, can serve as important indicators of whether and how mass media are affected by a hegemonic inequality system's discourse. Furthermore, because mass media provide visibility to counter-hegemonic discourses as well, any *changes* observed in the nature of such images over time can serve as indicators of changes or challenges to the hegemonic inequality system. At least since 1979, and especially since the Green Revolution of 2009, women in Iran have engaged in activities to expand their rights and power, including participating in social movements (Tahmasei-birgani 2010, Hoodfar and Sadr 2010, Hoodfar and Sadeghi 2009). Although it is difficult to draw any causal inferences, it is possible that these activities have played a role in bringing about any changes observed.

Showing the more complex nature of these women's lives in mass media could help them be understood better in North American (the US and Canada) society. Representing more aspects of Muslim and, specific to this research, Iranian women, can better secure them recognitional justice in North America (the US and Canada), as a lack of recognition or misrecognition can contribute to their oppression (Fraser 1998, 2000; Fraser and Honneth 2003). A more inclusive portrayal of Iranian women would help all the women who live in Iran as well as Iranian, Iranian-Canadian, and Iranian-American women who live in Canada and the US.

The main focus of this research is on the image of Iranian women and changes in these represented images. In analyzing this umbrella topic, I also examined how women's social movement activities are represented and the changes in how these activities are represented (specifically after 2009).

Purpose of the Study

Women's activities in social and economic spheres in Iran have been affected by various political and religious phenomena during the country's history. For example, after 1925, Reza Khan and Pahlavi's dynasty implemented anti-hijab policies. "In 1936, the Shah's father (Reza Khan Pahlavi), as part of his plan to modernize Iran, decided to outlaw the veil and passed a law that made it illegal for women to be in the street wearing the veil (chador) or any other kind of head covering except a European hat and the police had strict orders to pull off and tear up any scarf or chador worn in public" (Hoodfar 1992, p. 10). Likewise, after the Islamic Revolution of 1979, the Islamic regime enforced compulsory hijab and other oppressive laws against women. Since the inception of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979, images of Iranian women portrayed by official government media outlets in Iran have been stereotypical, representing only traditional Iranian women. These stereotypes of Iranian women focus mostly on traditional family roles for women who do not have social, economic or political roles and responsibilities in society (see Kianpour and Aslani 2015).

The clichéd image of women in the Iranian regime seeks to display on Iran's national media is reinforced by the stereotypical image of Muslim women in Western media [2]. A number

[2] The Iranian media system is dominated by the national media, with no private or "free" media. The lack of a mass media, other than Iran's national media, to present the Iranian women and their situation from inside the country, increases the possible influence of domestic media on other foreign/international media representation of Iranian women.

of scholars have noted that Western mass media depict a stereotypical image of the Muslims as 'others' who are a threat to Western civilization (Said 1979). Middle Eastern women have typically been portrayed in Western mass media only as "mothers and nice consumable objects," "absent from politics," "refuge of the cultural tradition of the country through images in which they wore traditional clothing while men copied the Western model," and "passive women" and "victims" (Navarro 2010, pp. 98–100). For example, Navarro (2010), examines how "news discourse tends to focus on symbolic and religious issues such as the veil or Islam, thus eluding more important matters relating to the equality of these women, such as rights to education or public freedoms" (Navarro 2010, p. 99). As a result, the "dynamic realities" of women's activities have "often been rendered invisible or obscured by stereotyped representations of Muslim women" (Nouraie-Simone 2005, p. xiv) in the news.

One of these dynamic realities is the fact that many Iranian women have been fighting for gender equality, freedom, and justice (at least since 1979 and especially since the Green Revolution of 2009). The participation of women in social movements against oppression systems can help achieve their gender-based and non-gender-based demands. Women's movements and women's activities in social movements that oppose tyranny and dictatorship have had significant impact on the process of democratization in many different countries such as South Africa, Argentina, and Ghana (Viterna and Fallon 2008). Women's participation in social movements against any oppression system have had the capacity to change how they are represented in the media, through attracting media attention.

My research focuses on the representations of Iranian women, as women of a Muslim or Middle Eastern country, that are promoted by the US and Canada's mass media. More

specifically, the representation and intersection of women of a Muslim country as members of an ethnic group and gender are at the center of this study. Drawing on theories of women and media, hegemony, and discourse in media and social movements, I ask whether and how the discourses around Iranian women, including texts, language, and images in US and Canadian mass media, have been affected or challenged/changed over time. If so, might differences in their activism have had any effect on their representation in North American mass media? I do not seek to establish a cause/effect relationship between media representation of these women and their activism. The changes on media representation of these women and their activism might/can be due to various reasons. However, the simultaneous changes and synchronicity between the changes in women's activism and their media representation might show one aspect of the possibility for effects of the changes in activism on media discourse. Also, it should be considered that overlaps between representation of women's activism (the actors and their tactics) and reporting that emphasizes women's positive/resistance aspects shows that there are reasons to see the possibility of effects between activism and media representation. Furthermore, does the country from which articles originate make a difference, or is the ideological stance of the newspaper more important for shaping media representation? My research uses critical discourse analysis of newspapers to explore the changes in Iranian women's representations in the media in the US and Canada.

A few points of clarification. First, ethnicity may or may not amalgamate with race (Acker 2009). As James notes, "ethnicity or ethnic group refers to a group of people who identify themselves as, or are identified by others as, sharing a common historical and ancestral origin" (James 2003, p. 31). In Iran, there are African-Iranian women in the southern parts of the country that have little or no representation, even in the national media in Iran. Likewise,

women from different ethnic backgrounds in Iran, such as Kurdish women, Azeri women, and Baloch women, do not have much representations (or non-stereotypical representation) in the mass media, even inside Iran (for example see Elling 2013). Moreover, texts or images about minority ethnic groups in Iran such as Kurdish, Azeri, Baloch, or Arab women are extremely limited. This lack of recognition will be discussed in the results section.

Second, although social media and websites play a significant role in creating collective identity and collective action, as well as in creating connections between social movement participants, I have chosen to focus on traditional mass media such as newspapers. Traditional mass media cover a variety of opinions that are independent from the audience's choices and are a unique form of communication (Stoddart et al. 2017). Moreover, despite the power of digital networks, "most socialized communication is still processed through the mass media, and the most popular information websites are those of the mainstream media because of the importance of branding in the source of the message" (Castells 2009, p. 419). Much of the content used in social and digital media is currently drawn from mass media, as well.

The most significant reason why I chose newspapers as my data source, however, is that they allow longitudinal analysis of changing patterns of representation over time. My research is focused on a relatively long period of time and cannot be based on social media sources since during most of the years of my research period there were no social media, or social media did not have as significant a role in political or social phenomena as in the past few years. This made the newspapers in these time-periods some of the most powerful information sources in their respective societies. Even as communication tools have changed, however, newspapers "remain important spaces for engagement among policymakers and activists, and as a source of

information for other media including online news feeds and social networks" (Stoddart et al. 2016, p. 221). Research shows that social movements still want to "gain favourable coverage in large-scale print and broadcast news media, with the Internet and web approached as tactical tools with which to alter information flows in the mass media" (Lester and Hutchins 2009, p. 584). Thus, newspapers continue to occupy an important role in the mass media environment as it pertains to my research. Furthermore, when journalists or writers analyze a subject, it is still the case that their viewpoint and perception on that subject is more apparent as they, in some way, make a judgment about it, and thus the pattern of hegemonic or counter-hegemonic discourse is more explicit. Media and texts are significant, as they are the "space of power-making," "not neutral, as the ideology of professional journalism asserts", nor are they "direct instruments of state power, with the obvious exception of mass media under authoritarian regimes" (Castells 2009, p. 194). Drawing on the concept of hegemony and discourse (Laclau and Mouffe 1985), I explore how texts and language create or challenge the hegemony and network of power and inequality. I examine how media content represents Iranian women in the US and Canada and if/how this content has been affected by (or along and at the same time of) the recent activities of social movement participants.

Third, although the US and Canada are not representative of all Western countries, the reason I have chosen the US and Canadian media in this research is because of the political opposition between the US and Iran after the Islamic Revolution of 1979, and the political disconnection between the Iranian government and the Canadian government since 2011. The political disconnection between the US and Canadian governments and Iran has made it more difficult for journalists to access Iranian society and has increased the possibility of stereotypical images about Iranian women being circulated in these two countries. There are

cases of the imprisonment of Iranian-Americans such as Roxana Saberi or Jason Rezaian, Iranian-Canadians such as Zahrah Kazemi, and Homa Hoodfar in Iran and reports of their mistreatment in prison (and vice-versa, Iranians in US prisons) that have raised tensions between Iran and these two countries in the past two decades. I also have a theoretical rationale for choosing two countries (the US and Canada). Selecting relatively conservative and centrist/liberal papers in both countries helps me to better assess whether media geography (Canada versus the US) or ideological orientation (conservative versus centrist/liberal) better explains media misrecognition as a form of hegemonic power. The other reason I have chosen the US and Canadian media in this research is my positionality as a researcher. I have lived and studied in both the US and Canada; this experience makes me more knowledgeable in understanding and interpreting the cultural codes and language in texts and images in media.

Finally, it is true that the relationship between women's activism and the way in which they are represented in the media is not a direct or visible relationship. Changes may be affected by many factors, including fluctuations inside Iran, the US and Canada, changing journalism practices. or other reasons. Therefore, my research will not establish any cause/effect or direct relationship between women's activities and their representation in media. If changes are detected, however, there are good reasons to suggest that the presence of women in street movements may have played a role in bringing them about. Social movement outcomes include a wide range of effects of social movement participants' activities in social and political spheres, from changing a political regime or changes in politics, laws, or policies to the cultural changes that occur in people's thoughts, ideas, and opinions about a subject. Although changing policies, laws, and political or economic structures are the main and primary goal for social movements, over a longer timeframe, the achievements of social movements in a culture can be

to change people's perceptions and priorities regarding a social movement's values (Stoddart 2015). Thus, it is reasonable to assume that women's participation in social movements in Iran in recent years may have had what Giugni (1998, p. 371) calls invisible, "indirect and unintended" outcomes on culture (Giugni 1998, p. 371), and thus on how they are represented in the media in the US and Canada.

Indeed, previous research suggests that the large numbers of women present in the protests indicates the value of their contribution to the social movements in Iran such as in the Green Movement of 2009, and protestors have used the Internet and recent technologies to spread the news of their movement to the world and to organize their movement (Abadpour 2010; Tahmasebi-Birgani 2010). While giving attention to these connections, my research also will explore whether people's usage of cyberspace in recent social movements in Iran and spreading news of their movements against the government's policies may have had an effect on their representation in mass media in the US and Canada. Further, The existing literature on Iranian women and their activities focuses heavily on either the Green Movement of 2009 or on the historical processes of the women's movements in Iran. This neglects the gap that exists regarding the changes in women's representation in the Western media after the Islamic Republic regime (1979), and effects that Iranian women's activities in social movements might have had on their representation. I highlight how women's activities in social movements influence Iranian women's representations in the media in the West, specifically in Canada and the US. Therefore, the main focus of this research is the image of Iranian women and the changes in their representation. As a key subtopic, I examine if these changes can be related to changes in women's activities, including their social movement participation.

Research Questions

My research asks:

1: How are Iranian women represented in the US and Canadian media and have there been any changes in this representation during the years since the Islamic Revolution of 1979 and, more specifically, after 2001?

2 (sub-question): Have women's activities in social movements in Iran, particularly since 2009, had any effects on their representations in Canadian and US media?

The focus of this research is on Canadian and American mass media representations of Iranian women as well as changes in these representations over time. In studying representations of women, I also ask how/if Iranian women's activities, including their participation in political movements, women's movements, environmental movements, etc., have influenced their recognition in Canadian and US mass media toward creating more complex representations that include more aspects of their lives in Iran. Therefore, the broad focus is on women's representation in media. Within this broader focus, I examine women's activities and their participation in social movements. Moreover, this research does not establish any direct or cause/effect relationship between women's representation and their activism. However, the synchronicity or simultaneous changes in these two aspects will be discussed.

My questions and topic are based on my personal experience as a woman who was active in the student movement and social movement of 2009 in Iran and has been living in Canada and the US for the past eight years. My Master's thesis was about understanding the

role of Iranian women in the social movement of 2009 by doing content analysis of YouTube videos of the movement of 2009 that were taken by ordinary citizens during the movement and street protests. After understanding women's activities and their role and after having experience living in the US and Canada and noticing the media representations of Middle Eastern women in these Western countries, I became interested in this research topic. Although there is research about Iranian women and their activities during the social movement of 2009, there are fewer academic works about Western media representations of Iranian women and their activities and the changes in these representations more broadly.

Background

Women's Situation in Iran

The combination of an authoritarian state and ideological, religious laws has slowed the process of democratization and gender equality in Iran (Hoodfar and Sadr 2010, pp. 885–886). With the Shi'a interpretation of Islam (Shi'ism), the major problems related to gender equality in Iran come from the undemocratic political system and not religion (Hoodfar and Sadr 2010, p. 885). Political systems can empower and support patriarchy by passing laws or supporting men through family laws, such as is the case in Iran (Walby 1989). Moreover, fundamentalism and patriarchy can be linked in countries like Iran. Castells (Castells 2004) emphasizes different processes that women's movements undergo based on their different cultures and contexts in different societies. Patriarchy and the lack of a powerful nation-state identity can provide the context for fundamentalism (Castells 2004). A common inspiration for women's movements is the belief that their personal life is not separated from the oppressive political or social systems in the society (Castells 2004).

One of the examples of the dependency and affiliation of personal life and the political system in Iran's history involves the changes in the situation of women after the Islamic Revolution. After 1979, the new post-revolutionary government in Iran started to segregate men and women in universities and schools and restricted some of the most important rights of women, such as the right to divorce. "Temporary marriage was encouraged, women were barred from becoming judges in accordance with Shi'a tradition", and "the age of maturity for girls was set at nine years, and for boys at 14, sexual relations outside marriage became a crime against the state, punishable with stoning and lashes" (Hoodfar and Sadr 2010, p. 891). In new Islamic laws, "the value of a woman's life is half that of a man's; in court two women witnesses are equal to one man; and women inherit half as much as their male counterparts" (Hoodfar and Sadr 2010, p. 892).

However, many Iranian women fought back against these gender-based discriminatory laws soon after Khomeini's implementation of the compulsory hijab; the Iranian women's movement led to a major demonstration to protest the compulsory hijab in March 1979 (Gheytanchi 2000). Regarding family laws such as divorce or the custody of children, women started talking to different religious experts to seek out liberal interpretations of Shi'a law in Islam. Through bargaining and bringing various opinions to the parliament, women attempted to modify the laws that were oppressing women (Hoodfar and Sadr 2010). These activities of women's movement activists continued after the Islamic Revolution, and in 2003, Shirin Ebadi, a prominent human rights lawyer, received the Nobel Peace Prize for her activities advocating for women's rights and human rights improvements in Iran. Women started campaigns such as the Stop Stoning Forever campaign and the One Million Signatures campaign to attempt to reform the constitution and gender-based discriminatory laws (Hoodfar and Sadr 2010, p. 899).

More recently, during the eight years of Ahmadinejad's presidency and increasing pressure on women's rights activists, many NGOs and activists continued their activities online and used the Internet for their organization's plans (Abbasgholizadeh 2014).

After the presidential elections of June 2009 in Iran, what came to be known as the Iranian Green Movement mobilized, protesting the election result that awarded Ahmadinejad a second presidential term (Nezhadhossein 2014, p. 9). As the government "expelled all international journalists in Iran at that time as well as imprisoned many Iranian journalists and activists, almost no journalist was able to cover the events of the streets in Tehran and other big cities of Iran" (Michaelsen 2018; Nezhadhossein 2014, p. 9). Therefore, "ordinary citizens began to document the Iranian Green Revolution of 2009, and those videos and images from ordinary citizens were the only records that reflected the presence and activism of Iranian women" (Nezhadhossein 2014, p. 9). The reformist presidential candidate in the 2009 election, Mousavi, had chosen the colour green as the symbol of his party. When Mousavi became the leader of the movement after the election, his supporters continued to use colour green as a symbol of their movement and to express their political viewpoint and votes publicly; this is the reason that this movement was named the Green movement (Nezhadhossein 2014). The Iranian women participating in this movement believed that their activism would successfully help them gain their rights, freedom, and have their demands met. Tahmasebi-Birgani (2010) "discussed the role Iranian women played in all sectors of Iranian society, especially their role [the social and political activities of women during the social movement that relate to a broader grassroots women's movement calling for widespread reforms of gender relations in Iran] in the social uprising after Iran's 2009 election" (Nezhadhossein 2014, p. 13). Interestingly, and similar to Iranian women, Muslim women in all Middle Eastern countries have agitated for their

human rights. Castells (2012) discusses how women participated in the Egyptian Revolution and the positive impact this has had on gender equality. This is noteworthy, as Egypt is a patriarchal country, and women established a movement against the patriarchy in the revolution to gain their rights and have their demands met. These developments are similar to the Green Movement of 2009 in Iran.

In addition to these collective action efforts, Iranian women have challenged the political regime through their everyday actions. Despite all the government's efforts to suppress women, Iranian women have continued to pursue their education and high-level university degrees; they have continued to "participate in the labor force, even after marriage", "seek for gender equality within marriage, and they report that their marriages are more egalitarian, at least with regard to decision-making on key issues" (Kurzman 2008, p. 320; see also Hoodfar and Sadeghi 2009). The pursuit of education has given women a good reason to convince their families to accept delays in getting married; they have also started to delay having children and are having fewer children (Kurzman 2008, p. 298). As well, women's formal employment rates have increased, indeed much more quickly in the 1990s than they did during the 1960s and 1970s when a secular regime was in power (Bahramitash 2003, p. 551). "This sharp increase in women's employment seriously challenged the view that religion is responsible for women's economic status in Muslim countries" (Bahramitash 2003, p. 551). So Iranian women have been active in social and economic spheres in society, such as in education, the job market, and business in spite of the suppression they face from the government (Bahramitash 2003; Kurzman 2008). It is true that, after the Islamic revolution, Iranian women were forced to wear the hijab. But that is only one aspect of a reality in which they have otherwise continued to be socially, economically, and politically active (Nezhadhossein 2014; see also Shirazi 2001).

It is worth dwelling on the matter of the hijab, since Western stereotypes of Muslim women as uniformly subjugated and oppressed invariably mention or display them wearing the hijab. Shirazi (2001) argues that stereotypes of Muslim women that include their hijab and about the hijab more generally cannot be true because the veiling and hijab do not have the same meaning everywhere in the world. For example, the hijab in Iran has a different meaning than it does in Egypt or other Arab countries. She also says that the meaning of the hijab has changed over time. For example, in Iran before the Islamic Revolution, the hijab was a symbol of tradition, religious devotion, and possibly a lack of academic education, but its meaning has shifted since the revolution. During the social movements and political activities against Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, women used the hijab and chador to hide political manifestos and statements of their political groups or parties, allowing them to take these to different places. Moreover, after the Islamic Revolution, women with chadors (veils) were holding guns and actively fighting during the war between Iran and Iraq (Shirazi 2001, p. 101).

However, most of the above-mentioned aspects of the hijab's role in women's lives have been ignored and have not been represented in Western media. Vanzan (2006) asserts that, historically, most of the images of Muslim women in Western media were from Western travel literature (2006, p. 65). The authors of such Western travel literature mainly knew that there were some women in harems, hundreds of years ago, and in some of the king's palaces (Vanzan 2006). Further, because readers wanted to know and read more about these women, the authors used their imagination to add to these stories (Vanzan 2006, p. 65). This is an example of what Said (1979) explains about Orientalism. According to Said (1979) the meaning of the East is constructed in the West in a way that allows it to justify its hegemony in the Eastern world. Orientalism justifies colonialism through shaping a dominant discourse. The orientalism

discourse represents the incomprehensible East to incorporate or control it. The above-mentioned images are reinforced by the assumption that Islamist ideology is incompatible with feminism. However, many human rights and women's rights activists, such as the reformist party, in Iran believe that Islam can be flexible in its law in regard to modern issues in the society (Hoodfar and Sadr 2010).

So history shows that large numbers of Iranian women have actively empowered themselves educationally and economically, and that during any anti-oppression movements, women have been on the front lines of the movements to expand their rights. However, these women's social and political activities have not always had representations in media, specifically in the Western mass media.

Representations of Iranian Women in the Western Media

There is a focus on the relationship between oppression and the veil-wearing of Middle Eastern and Muslim women in the Western mass media and among some Western feminist activists and scholars that are based on racism and colonialism (Mohanty 1988). Hoodfar (1992), through exploring Iranian and other Middle Eastern women's history of wearing veils and social and economic activities, asserts that the Western image of oppression and the situation of Iranian women or other Muslim and Middle Eastern women are highly problematic.

Part of the reason why these stereotypical images of women of Muslim countries are common in the West is because the Iranian government shows only oppressive pictures of women and does not portray women that are active in the economic, social, and political arenas of society (for example see Sreberny and Mohammadi 1994, p. 183). Government funding affects women's rights organizations and movements differently due to factors such as policies

toward women's rights. State funding of women's rights organizations and movements could have positive effects on these organizations and movements' activities and could help them reach their goals through providing support and financial power. For example, Masson (2015) analyzed how the funding from governments has strengthened women's rights organizations' activities in some cases, such as in Quebec.

However, bureaucratization, as one result of receiving funds from the government, can divert women's movements and women's institutions from their radical demands (Beres et al. 2009). In a country like Iran, which has an Islamic ideological government, women's institutions are not always and completely related to the actual women's movement as the government is supporting and encouraging more oppression against women and not empowering them (for example see AliBeigi and Saaki 2010). An 'Islamic ideologic state' or any ideological government is distinct from a democratic state; ideologic states seek to regulate social life in the society through policies that are based on their unitary ideology. The official institutions for women in Iran support the government's ideology and encourage the family role of women and are therefore separate from these movements (Moghadam 1992). Therefore, images of Iranian women and representations of them in Iran's national media are skewed toward the traditional.

The other significant part of this misrepresentation of Iranian women's lives is the hegemonic racist tendencies in the Western mass media toward Middle Eastern women that consequently show more oppressed images of these women. Said (1979) explains orientalism as "the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient - dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it settling it, ruling over it: in short,

Orientalism as a Western-style for dominating restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (Said 1979, p. 3). Moreover, Islamophobia in North American countries has greatly increased after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Research shows that the level of "indirect and direct racial and religious discrimination" has increased by "82% and 76%" (Sheridan 2006, p. 317). After 2001, Muslims who live in North America, especially those who show signs of practicing Islam through their appearance, such as those "who have a hijab or beard, have faced a level of xenophobia in North America" (Raihanah et al. 2015, p. 108).

The 'othering' process can also be seen in the media discourse and representation of Iranian people on North American news media. Fayyaz and Shirazi (2013) discuss how the American media, specifically print news media in the US, articulates a dichotomous representation of Iranian society and show it as either "good or bad" which "elides nuance, reifies culture, oversimplifies political behavior and reinforces problematic accounts of civilizational clash between Islam and modernity" (Fayyaz and Shirazi 2013, p. 54). Therefore, Iranian women face two major inequality systems: one that is based on gender in Iran and another that is based on race and ethnicity and, more specifically, Western stereotypes about the Middle East.

Social Movements, Media, and Iranian Women

The disconnect between how Iranian women have been represented in Western (and Iranian) mass media, and the more complex aspects of their lives and circumstances even despite their efforts to effect change raises further questions around the relationship between social movements, in North America and elsewhere, and the media more generally. Culture is a multidimensional concept that always affects and can be affected by states, large corporations,

different organizations and institutions, and also ordinary people. In recent decades, the use of cultural tools and products has changed. Various factors such as the Internet, new communication technologies, variation, and the privatization of media and cultural products have increased ordinary people's ability to control and use media to challenge power structures. Also, new communication technologies have empowered international movements and networks.

There are many cultural elements that affect social movements and vice versa. Mass media, the Internet, and social networks have had huge impacts on organizing movements, mobilizing forces and consequently on the success of movements in recent decades. Social movements can use the capacity of cyberspace and social networks to represent their goals, demands and news independent from mass media as an alternative form of media. Staggenborg (2012) discusses the inception and usage of collective actions that were principally defensive, short-lived and localized and how these have changed to "large-scale demonstrations, strikes and boycotts" (Staggenborg 2012, p. 4). This conceptual change in social movement studies, and in actual SM (Social Movements) organizing, represents a substantial positive gain for human rights and anti-oppression movements. People are changing their position in the power structure from being oppressed by the dominant systems toward a more powerful situation as they actively make their demands through the potential of cyberspace.

Social movements' claims and legitimacy can be affected by the discourses employed by newspapers. Newspapers and their news representation structures might seem identical, but in many cases, specifically in cases of reporting on social movements and especially new social movements, they might have different styles and content based on the context. Some of the

articles and scholarly work that discuss the relationship between newspapers and social movements focus on how reports about social movements in newspapers can create political opportunities and mobilization possibilities for social movements. One such article is by Kriesi et al. (1992), which explains how media reports of new social movements, especially those with non-conventional actions, can be affected by political environments and political institutions. Therefore, the capacity for creating political opportunities and mobilizing new social movements will be affected by the political environment. Another example comes from Da Silva and Rothman (2011), who examine Brazilian newspapers' representations of the social movement of Dam-Affected People (MAB) from 1998 to 2005 and how the newspapers ignored, misrepresented or drew attention to the presence of the movement in public (Da Silva and Rothman 2011, p. 725). Still other literature states that mass media, and specifically newspapers, can cultivate social movements and their values. Reisner (2003) explains how newspapers have supported some environmental movements in places where environmental social change has been a controversial topic and is not supported by everyone. On the other hand, media can vilify social movement actors. For example, Reisner (2003) states that "movement participants sometimes are being categorized and represented as members of social groups that previously were known as negative in the society" (p. 47). In the end, the news coverage of social movements and movement participants can work to marginalize movement participants in the society *or* sympathize with the movement participants (Reisner 2003, p. 47).

Mainly, though, mass media represent social movements in the structure of prevalent discourses; this means that the context of the social movements and their goals and relationships with the dominant power discourse affect how the movements and movement participants are represented in mass media. Mass media follow different norms and policies in various

countries. In some countries, mainstream media might not be allowed to cover news of social movements since this could increase the movement's political opportunities. Mass media can change the information being presented about a movement based on the policies and rules imposed on the media. That said, in recent decades, media has been privatized in most countries, except for a few ideologically fundamentalist countries such as Iran. People now have access to private radio and TV channels; consequently, in these countries, the government's media popularity has been reduced (Castells 2004).

Even in private hands, mass media can be under the surveillance of power sources including states or giant corporations which can disadvantage social movements that oppose some oppressive aspects of these power sources. Nonetheless, social movements also can have effects on mass media since the latter should cover the news eventually. It seems that the connections between mass media and social movements are interrelated and can shift power dynamics (Staggenborg 2012). For example, women's movements have often critiqued mass media representations of women's activities; additionally, mass media are constantly perpetuating stereotypes, most notably about women (Goddu 1999).

Network theory provides another lens through which to view the complex relationships between the media, social movements, and power dynamics. Networks of power and social networks, such as social media, are related to and impact each other (Castells 2012). Programmers of these social networks can have effects on many different aspects of people's lives, including movements, media, and power systems. Social networks (even local ones) that are based on the Internet are global and can challenge a power system (Castells 2009). Thus, along with the direct relationship between media and social movements, social movements and

media can also be affected by each other through social networks; for instance, the relationship and impacts of Al Jazeera (TV channel) and alternative social media on the results of social movements in Tunisia, Egypt and other movements in the Middle East or even Iceland (Castells 2012). Therefore, most recent movements have started from cyberspace as alternative media and moved to urban spaces. The Internet also has had a major role in overcoming fears, organizing movements and mobilizing forces.

Many of the aforementioned connections between social movements and media through social networks were evident during Iran's Green Movement of 2009. In Iran's Green Movement of 2009, although the Internet's low speed did not allow activists to upload videos and pictures from the movement to share with the world, people started using email to send the pictures and short videos they had taken with cellphones to each other and consequently to people they knew and activists outside of Iran so they could upload them on YouTube or Facebook (Michaelsen 2018). Since journalists and reporters were not allowed to cover news of the movement, the photos and videos that ordinary people shared on social media or sent to others outside of Iran or to mass media satellite TV channels were mainlysome of the only sources of news about this huge movement (Michaelsen 2018).

These images and information showed Iranian women in a very different light than the traditional stereotype. During the protests of the Green Movement of 2009, many Iranian women were injured, and more than 100 people were killed by government forces (there is a list of the name and the place of death of 78 people, and many are not reported due to the fears of their families) (Tait 2009). Many women were injured physically or were killed during this movement, but this brutality of the oppressive system did not stop them from being active in the

front line of the movement. If there was any question about the religiosity of the women who were advocating for democracy and equal rights during these protests, images and videos revealed that many had covered their hair completely, which shows religious and non-religious people were both asking for gender equity (Nezhadhossein 2014). Clearly, Iranian women actively participated in the Green movement of 2009 and their participation was as valuable as that of men.

The increased oppression of Iranian women by the Iranian regime after the Green movement of 2009 could not stop the women's movement in Iran. Iranian women, after facing increased oppression, shifted their political activity from NGOs and the public to cyberspace, which was safer and more accessible (Abbasgholizadeh 2014). Through comparing women's participation in movements processes and strategies in three different countries in the Middle East and North Africa (Iran, Egypt, and Tunisia), Gheytanchi and Moghadam (2014) assert that Iranian women are actively, through peaceful movements, fighting and changing the oppression system against women in their country. Moreover, transnational connections and the Iranian diaspora have helped local women's movements in Iran (Ghorashi and Tavakoli 2006).

Theoretical Contribution and Significance

The main focus of my research is on the representation of Iranian women in Western mass media and whether there were changes in this representation during the studied time period. Additionally, my research involves examining the cultural impacts of the participation of Iranian women in social movements on their media representation in the US and Canada. This research is informed by three complementary bodies of literature: 1) the 'other' and the media (including postcolonial media theories and intersectionality), 2) social movements

theories, and 3) Media theory (effects of ideology and hegemony in media discourse). In the discussion of hegemonic and counter-hegemonic discourses, I use the concepts of recognition and misrecognition by Fraser (2000). Hegemony and counter-hegemony are necessary to understand how people are able to challenge power systems; but they do not specifically discuss all the intersectional and also international effects of social movements against hegemonic power systems.

Hegemonic inequality systems such as power systems that are based on gender, race or ethnicity can prevail in culture and media when media cannot adequately capture different social contexts and inequality systems. The political disconnection between Iran and Canada and the US (which limited the presence of North America media in Iran), as well as the mainly oppressive picture of women shown by Iran's government, together with the more general systems of inequality based on race and ethnicity, are some of the most powerful reasons why Iranian women's image in mass media in Canada and the US might misrepresent different aspects of these women's lives.

Despite an emphasis on inequality systems, intersectionality theory's focus on the interplay of gender, race, ethnicity, and class – with a greater focus on the intersection of hegemonic inequalities – provides an analytical toolkit for examining the cultural aspects of social movements and challenging different intersectional hegemonic power systems. My theoretical synthesis focuses on the cultural aspects of the counter-hegemonic functions of social movements. Drawing on these bodies of work, my research can shed new light on the outcomes of participation in social movements as having global and intersectional effects and helping to create intersectional counter-hegemonies against interrelated inequality systems.

My research builds on discussions extended by scholars of critical cultural and global social movements studies, in particular Giugni's (1998) work on the global and cultural "unintended and indirect" effects of social movements (p. 371) as well as Smith's (1987), Hall's (1980a, 1980b) and Gramsci's (1971) work on the role of texts and discourse in the creation of counter-hegemonies. The conceptual value of this bridging lies in being able to see and understand international and also intersectional perspectives of cultural and counter-hegemonic aspects of social movements.

In this research, I discuss the importance of intersectionality: the intersections between race, ethnicity, gender, and class inequality systems. I discuss the significant characteristic of intersectionality in the process of both creating/maintaining hegemony and challenging the hegemony of inequality systems. My research adds an international aspect of intersectionality to the scholarly works that link together gender, race, ethnicity, and class inequality systems and resistance against these inequality systems. My research stands as an intersectional object that focuses on the intersections of different factors affecting people's resistance against inequality and in challenging hegemony. More specifically, I discuss how resistance against one oppression system can reinforce and empower resistance against other oppression systems (even internationally). The results of this research demonstrate a simultaneous and synchronic change in both media representation of Iranian women in the North American media and also in these women's activism, the representation and recognition of this activism, the actors and their tactics. I name this process 'intersectionality in resistance'.

Building on the existing literature on intersectionality, my research provides a new vision of the counter-hegemonic process of social movements and how various oppression

systems can be challenged unintentionally and/or internationally. Hegemonic representations of a culture, a group of people or any phenomenon can be reinforced by cooperation with disparate and divergent cultures and political systems that might initially seem to be adversarial. Therefore, intersectionality in oppression and also resistance against oppression are important parts of my research.

My results also show how Iranian women and their activities can receive more attention from Western mass media when they use social movement tactics such as street protests and demonstrations rather than the other tactics that they used in the years after the Islamic Revolution, and after 2001. The participation of women in street protests has led the Western media to portray Iranian women as more complex, less unidimensional, than previously. That said, the negative representations of the hijab and women's clothes in both time-periods show how the intersection of gender and ethnicity continues to exist in media discourses.

This research adds to the literature on the possible cultural effects (or more specifically, simultaneous changes along with the changes on women's activities) of women's participation in social movements, particularly on the ways that social movement participants can affect a culture over a long period of time. It adds to ongoing discussions concerning the networks of power, and expands on past research on the relationships between social movements, activists and media (mass media and cyberspace), and the international impact of social movements on cultural hegemonies present in mass media representations in other countries. I hope the women and activists in social movements in Iran, and also Iranian women in general, see themselves in my work and acquire a new perspective on the broader effects of their activities.

Conclusion

Inclusive and complex images of Iranian women's lives, as women of a Muslim and Middle Eastern country, have not always been represented in mass media in the West. These images have been manipulated and affected by many factors, such as the political ideology of nation-states or race- and ethnic-based stereotypes. The misrecognition and misrepresentation of Iranian women as women of a Muslim country in both Iran's national media and the Western mass media have motivated my research questions. I explore how these women have been represented in mass media in the past two decades. I also examine if there have been any changes in this representation toward more inclusive image, and how women have participated in bringing about these changes. With consideration of the theories of hegemony and counter-hegemony by Gramsci and the significant role that ordinary people can play in challenging an unequal power system, my research shows that Western media portrayals of women and their activities and participation in recent social movements in Iran, such as the Green Movement of 2009, are different from the images of Iranian women in the years following 2001.

In chapter two of my dissertation, I explain the main concepts and theories I use in my research such as hegemony, social movements and media, networks of power and intersectionality. I discuss how the theories of hegemony and counter-hegemony and also the concepts of recognition and misrecognition in media discourses are used in my research and analysis. Moreover, I explain how networks of power have empowered the social movements inside Iran, especially since 2009, and how people have sent news and images outside of Iran to fill the gap left by not having reporters or journalists on the ground to cover the movement news.

In chapter three, I describe the data collection process of my research and the methods used for analyzing the data. I have collected my data from the Factiva newspaper database and categorized my data into texts and images and coded them using NVIVO software. I provide the results of my research in chapters four and five based on the two time-periods I chose for the data. To present and discuss my results, I structure my analysis through: discourse (Iranian women's general representation, clothes), political opportunity structure (oppressive organizational actors, laws), and women's social movement participation (social movement actors, social movement tactics).

I further interpret the results in chapter six. My discussion and analysis of the results is categorized and based on the main theories I use in this research: media hegemony and counter-hegemony, social movements and the power of networks, and intersectionality. In chapter seven, I discuss the conclusions of my research. I explore the main similarities and differences I found across time-periods, media geographies (the US versus Canada), and the orientations of the newspapers. In the final chapter, I consider the media's framing of women's involvement in Iranian protest movements.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I review the main theoretical background and concepts of my research. I explain the representation of the 'other women' in media using postcolonial media theories and intersectionality. Next, I explain how hegemony and counter-hegemony are created and work in media discourses according to agenda setting media theory, and the theories of Gramsci, Laclau and Mouffe, and Hall. Then, I explain Manuel Castells' concept of the power of networks and how it can help us to understand links between women who participate in social movements and their representation in the media. Moreover, I examine the theoretical literature on how different concepts of race, ethnicity, gender, class and intersectionality are related to social movements. Lastly, I demonstrate how the above-mentioned concepts and theories are connected in my research.

Through the theories of hegemonic and post-colonial media discourses (Hall 1980a, 1980b; Laclau and Mouffe 1985; Said 1979; Smith 1987), and also the concepts of recognition and misrecognition (Fraser 2000; Fraser and Honneth 2003), I analyze the dominant discourses in mass media to explore any changes in these discourses. I then assess whether these changes (if any) in mass media discourse can be explained by means of Castells' theories and work. Castells' theory of power of networks could help in discussing the role of the Internet-based networks and their significance in Iran's social movements in spreading their news and images to the world and mass media. Moreover, understanding the situation of women in Iran, their resistance against oppression and the tactics that they use to resist oppression requires an intersectional lens. I use intersectionality theories to explain how women in Iran have been resisting oppression.

The 'Other Women' and Media

Post-Orientalism theories, such as Edward Said's work (1979), help us to analyze the recognition and misrecognition of Iranian women in Western mass media. According to Said (1979), Orientalism has shaped the East and 'the other' in Western thought. Orientalism has helped colonialism to define the East in a way that justifies its domination and control over the East (Said 1979, for example see p. 17, 25, 28, 33, 40, 338). The East is generalized as having an Arabic, Muslim or Middle Eastern way of thinking or acting. Based on Orientalism, the West is the 'one' and the East is the 'other' (Said 1979, for example see p.24, 334).

Said identifies various levels of Orientalism, such as hidden Orientalism or visible Orientalism, which portray those from the Orient as the other (Said 1979, p. 201). Hidden Orientalism includes ideas about the Orient as being far and separate from the center (Europe) and undeveloped (Said 1979). Since the nineteenth century, racism and hidden Orientalism have supported and reinforced each other. Orientalism justifies racism through the binary categorizing of societies into 'culturally developed' and 'undeveloped'; undeveloped societies were perceived as needing moral, political, and European colonial advice (Said, 1979, for example see p. 300, 306). In the nineteenth century, Orientalism was similar to the discourse surrounding proletarians or women (Said 1979). In orientalist discourse, all Middle Eastern people are considered the other and are marginalized. People of the Orient are considered and analyzed as problems facing the world and not citizens of the world (Said 1979, for example see p.31, 46.

Representation of Muslim societies and Orientalism has had various forms. For example, Fayyaz and Shirazi (2013) explain that "contemporary Orientalist representations of 'Muslim World' politics and societies go beyond the simplicity of an East vs. West conflict, to

focus on an inter-civilizational clash taking place within Muslim majority countries like Iran" (Fayyaz and Shirazi 2013, p. 63); this is "a focus that, nonetheless, reproduces the idea that modernization and modernity are ultimately icons of becoming Western" (Fayyaz and Shirazi 2013, p. 63). Moreover, Muslim women, particularly Iranian women "attract special attention from the Western media", possibly, due to the hostility and disconnection between the Iranian government and some Western countries such as the US and Canadian governments (Al-Ariqi 2008, p. 7).

Western media outlets typically show Iranian women as passive victims (Messing 2011, p. 11). In representing Iranian women, the veil, as one of the most apparent symbols of Islam, has been the main focus of US media (Eltantawy 2013, p. 767; Roushanzamir 2004). Moreover, Sylvia Chan-Malik explains that "U.S. media framings of the Iranian women's protests and their demands for 'freedom' were deeply shaped by American discourses of race, gender, class, and sexuality" (Chan-Malik 2011, p. 113). "The American media coverage of the Iranian women's movement recast the longstanding Orientalist narrative of the Poor Muslim Woman" (Chan-Malik 2011, p. 116). According to Chan-Malik (2011), the women's protest against compulsory hijab (such as the women protest in March 1979), are interpreted in US media in a way that reinforce the Orientalist discourse that show Islam in contrast with freedom and modernity (Chan-Malik 2011, pp. 120, 123, 127). Representing women's movement and protests against oppressive laws of the Iranian (Islamic) regime against women, can provide an opportunity to represent Islam as limiting freedom and oppressing women.

To understand women's situations in Iran, however, it is crucial to recognize that Orientalism can converge and intersect with various other oppression systems such as gender, race, ethnicity and class. Women of colour in various countries face different issues that make

their situation dissimilar from white women and women who live in industrialized Western countries. Third World feminist theory is a perspective that emphasizes the significance of cultural differences between women. For example, Mohanty (1988) criticizes dominant Western feminist discourse and methodologies that generalize women's situations regardless of their economic, racial or cultural contexts. Mohanty (1988) emphasizes the crucial requirements of building a deliberate alliance between class, race/ethnicity and women's cultural context in analyzing women's issues.

Approaches to race in the gender literature maintain that, to develop strong women's rights movements and sisterhood between women, the race-based discrimination that women face needs to be understood as well. Understanding the intersection of race and gender is necessary to understand the situation of women in Iran, such as Afro-Iranian women in southern parts of Iran, as well as the representation of these women in Iran's national media. There are Afro-Iranians in southern provinces in Iran, such as Sistan va Baluchistan, Hurmuzgan, and Khuzestan (Mirzai 2009). Their representation (if any) in Iran's national media and in any other mass media outside of Iran is very limited. Race-based oppression systems in Western media discourses can be analyzed through the intersectionality of gender and race as well.

As Crenshaw (1991) discusses, the problem of representing women without the lens of the intersectionality of race or ethnicity and gender, "is not simply that separate race or gender discourses fail women of colour by not acknowledging the "additional" issue of race or of patriarchy but that the discourses are often inadequate even to the discrete tasks of articulating the full dimensions of racism and sexism" (Crenshaw 1991, p. 1252). According to Crenshaw (1991) "women of colour experience racism in ways not always the same as those experienced by men of colour and sexism in ways not always parallel to experiences of white women,

antiracism and feminism are limited, even on their own terms" (Crenshaw 1991, p. 1252). The intersectionality lens is necessary to see the complex oppression situation that can be created through existence of more than one oppression system.

Intersectional views of analysis that consider gender, class and race help to illuminate systematic power and inequalities at both the individual and family structure levels in society. For example, Collins (1998) analyzes Black American families and concludes that the oppression systems are multiplied and multi-dimensional for Black families; the Black family structures and Black women's situation are more vulnerable than white women or white families in America. Intersectional methods of analyzing not only help to understand the individual's situation, it facilitates analyzing the family's situation, such as Black families' structure (Collins 1998). At various levels of analyzing social situations, race is a significant factor that influences and reinforces inequality systems. Therefore, to understand the social situation of women and families, the intersectionality between race and other aspects of identity, such as gender, should be considered.

Marginalized ethnicities are under the added pressure of nationalist policies in various countries (McClintock 1995). Imposing or recognizing one language or religion as a national religion or language in most countries has contributed to the creation of oppressive policies against ethnic minorities that have different religions or languages. Gender-based inequalities and ethnic minority-based domination systems reinforce and empower each other; for example, women of ethnic minorities can be sexually assaulted because of their ethnicity (Epstein 2007). "Women's roles in the biological reproduction of members of nations and ethnic groups and the socialization of the young impart upon them the assignation of transmitters of culture and signifiers of ethnic/national differences" (Moghadam 1999, p. 174). Moreover, ethnic-based

inequalities can affect the class status of people and reinforce the class domination system (Bannerji 2000).

For many ethnic groups inside Iran, their representation in Iran is very limited (compared to their population) and stereotypical. There are many ethnic minorities in Iran based on language and religion, such as Kurdish people, Azeri people, Balouch people, Sonnies, Bahais, Jewish people, etc. However, the human rights of these minorities are not being respected, as the government has recognized Persian as the only official language and Shia Islam as the official religion of the country (Elling 2013). For example, education in all parts of Iran has to be only in Persian, and some religions such as Bahais do not have the right to go to university. Oppression exists also in the ways these minorities are represented in Iran's national media and in most mass media outside Iran due to misrepresentation or a lack of representation. Overall, understanding the intersection of ethnicity, gender is essential to analyzing the representations of Iranian women, as women of a Muslim country, in the Western media.

Finally, the class and economic situation of women affects the capacity of women to fight against gender-based inequalities. For instance, Moghadam (1992), through comparing three different patriarchal societies, maintains that the education and economic activities of women have created changes and challenges to patriarchal systems and should be considered in analyzing oppression systems and situations. Indeed, women's education and entry into economic activities and the job market have created a growing feminist generation in Iran that is challenging the patriarchal system (Kurzman 2008). Thus, to understand how Iranian women empowered themselves after the Islamic Revolution and gained their rights in the face of oppressive laws passed by the ideological Islamic government, it is also necessary to examine the intersection of gender and class in this research.

Media Theory

There are media theories, such as 'Agenda Setting' theory (McCombs and Shaw 1972) that discusses the process of giving priority to cover some news rather than others; and how media has the power to affect what people think or how people feel about different issues (Cohen 1963). Shoemaker and Reese (1991) explain that there are many factors that affect this agenda setting process and can be categorized in five main factors: "individual media workers" (p.63), "media routines" (p.105), "organizational influences on content" (p.139), "influences on content from outside of media organizations" (p.175), and "the influence of ideology" (p.221). In my research, I focus and discuss the last factor, "the influence of ideology"(Shoemaker and Reese 1991, p. 221), hegemony and discourse on media representation.

The media and the audience are placed within the discursive and ideological structures of power. My research emphasizes the theoretical claim that state and civil society can cultivate consent in society through hegemony to maintain power relations, and, furthermore, that people can create counter-hegemony to challenge power relations (Gramsci 1971). Dominant groups, organizations or institutions rule people through the use of cultural power, while civil society actors can employ various cultural tools to preserve or alter their power. Although civil society includes ordinary people, Gramsci (1971) underlines the advantage of the ruling class in using cultural tools in a hegemonic way to maintain their power in society. Schools, churches, "newspapers, magazines and the book trade and private educational institutions" are some of the various cultural organizations that are involved and influence a large number of people in society (Gramsci 1971, p. 654).

More specifically, civil society and "the intellectual groups" create public consent to control society through cultural institutions (Gramsci 1971, p. 654). Adding a cultural

dimension to Marxist class theory, Gramsci (1971) explains the concept of cultural hegemony as the domination of one class or group of people by another group through the production of meanings (Tarrow 2011). Media, as a set of cultural tools, can be used to influence people to maintain power. Media representations of Iranian women can be affected by the dominant discourses in a hegemonic process of maintaining power relations, racism or gender inequality.

However, hegemony has a dialectical nature, and people can also use cultural tools such as media to challenge power relations. Gramsci (1971), at the same time, believes that the role of organic intellectuals should be to create counter-hegemony and challenge power relations. Ordinary people can challenge power relations through cultural tools such as media or cultural organizations. More specifically, social movements are a possible force for the creation of counter-hegemony (Carroll and Ratner 1996). From this perspective, Iranian women have the ability to challenge the dominant discourses of their states and gender inequality as well as domination based on racism.

The creation of hegemony and counter-hegemony in society through culture is discussed in Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) theory of hegemony and discourse. Culture is the battlefield of dominant and dominated groups. From Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) perspective, discourses shape our beliefs about social and political phenomena. These discourses include language, texts, journals, newspapers, books, or speeches. The media can be one of the main arenas in which groups compete to create dominant discourses. Social and political "movements make strategic use of the media for various counter-hegemonic purposes which include disruption of dominant discourses, codes and identities, and articulation of alternatives" (Carroll and Ratner 1999, p. 2). Dominant discourses in media can shape people's available systems of thought, social and political actions, and the way they accept or refuse the dominant power system.

George Lakoff (2014) notes that social and political discourses work through subconscious levels of audience understandings and the brain. Lakoff (2014) explains that the subconscious will learn discourses through frames and metaphors that are used in discourse. "Frames are mental structures that shape the way we see the world" and "as a result, they shape the goals we seek, the plans we make, the way we act" (Lakoff 2014, pp. XI, XII). Lakoff (2014) discusses that "frames cannot be seen or be heard and are part of cognitive unconscious" (Lakoff 2014, p. XII).

To create a counter-hegemonic discourse, instead of replacing false claims with facts and correct claims, people should create a constructive framework to counter and decrease the hegemonic discourse (Lakoff 2014). Therefore, according to Lakoff (2014), to create a counter-hegemonic discourse it is more important to frame a new discourse than to correct false representations or mis-recognition in the media discourse. Because when we correct a false discourse, we are still in the framework of the same hegemonic discourse, repeating it and reinforcing it.

According to Lakoff (2014), it is important to consider how the brain learns and is affected through this neurological path, and it does not matter if the media corrects the false representation, it still reinforces the same ongoing hegemonic discourse in people's minds. The creation of a new discourse that, through new powerful values, counter the hegemonic discourse will be a counter-hegemonic discourse that can "change the way the public sees the world" (Lakoff 2014, p. XII).

Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony and discourse created the foundation of the formation of new studies on culture in the 1970s, such as Stuart Hall's work on culture. Hall (1996) argues that traditional concepts of class and ideology or modes of production can no

longer be used to explain and analyze modern societies, as culture affects people's lives more than their class identity, and there is no essential relationship between social classes and ideological viewpoints. Hall (1980a, 1980b) explains that ideology is comprised of concepts, and assumptions, and through them, we understand and analyze aspects of society. Moreover, Hall (1980b, 1980a) argues that audiences also have an active role in producing ideologies, texts and language, for example, in media. Ideologies, texts or media do not necessarily explain people's lives, or provide complex accounts of social and political phenomena. Therefore, the goal of the analysis of an ideology or discourse should be to discover and expose other aspects of social phenomena and/or reasons behind ideological distortions.

Moreover, Stuart Hall (1973) argues that it is possible to have more than one interpretation of a media text or media product. This means that the message that is sent through media might be different than the message that is received by the audience. The encoded message by the author or producer of the media text or product is not always similar to the message that has been decoded by the audience. Therefore, the audience has an active role in the interpretation and decoding the message of the media.

Dorothy Smith's gender-oriented analysis of hegemony in texts is also a significant part of my theoretical framework for understanding counter-hegemonic activities and social movement participants. Smith (1987) emphasizes the role of people and their everyday activities in creating or challenging discourses and ideologies. There are significant similarities between Gramsci's theory of hegemony and Smith's standpoint theory, such as their emphasis on people's power to create counter-hegemony. Smith's (1987) main focus is also on texts and language. She changes the focus of power to gender inequality, such as in the imperialist

system, in which proletarians are prevented from producing, and women are prevented from producing according to the standards of men's ruling system.

According to Smith (1987), just "one sex and class are directly and actively involved in producing, debating, and developing its ideas, in creating its art, informing its medical and psychological conceptions, in framing its laws, its political principles, its educational values, and objectives" (Smith 1987, p. 20). Social procedures of learning, employment and business, and relations restrict women from taking part in producing ideas, standards, and culture, such as in media. These restrictive processes produce an everyday suppression of women (Smith 1987). The discourses that have been used in the media (in the current case, in Iran's national media and in the West), can be employed for maintaining or challenging power relations and racial, ethnic or gender-based inequalities. In fact, the focus of Smith, Gramsci, and Hall is on cultural aspects of the creation process of hegemony rather than economic bases (Stoddart 2007). In these theories, "power is discursive while having material effects and it flows throughout daily life in multiple directions" (Stoddart 2007, p. 223).

At the same time, mainstream media also can be affected by power relations. Media outlets do not have rules for forming specific representations. However, journalists' analyses and reports of social and political phenomena can be affected by the dominant discourses and hegemonic systems and inequality. This is why I have chosen media as the subject on which to collect my data in this research. Journalists have a significant role in writing and reporting what they see and hear. They write about Iranian women's activities and everyday life experiences. Reports from journalists have major impacts on the representations of Iranian women in Western media and, consequently, on people in Western countries.

In my research, I discuss how these reports and articles are connected to and impact people's lives. Women's activities and people's everyday lives also can affect how these journalists write their reports. Smith discusses how these texts have common features. All these kinds of texts can be seen, heard, or felt by more than one person at different times or in different places. Journalists' reports about Iranian women in these media are effective texts that can be read or heard by many people around the world. By *effective*, Smith (2005) means that when people read, see or hear the text, that text can have an effect. Thus, if nobody has seen, read or heard the text, it means that the text is text in potential. Text in potential can be activated by readers; as soon as readers see or watch reports of journalists, those texts are active.

Smith (2005) explains how texts are related to people's everyday lives, work, and organizations, and how they coordinate with each other. More specifically, Smith (2005) maintains that *work* is anything that people do for a purpose. Everything that Iranian women do, including their activities in social movements, their silence or what they wear in public can be considered as work that can affect the reports of journalists and also can be affected by the higher level of texts in a society such as law. Therefore, all work and people's life experiences are related to these texts, and they affect each other. Journalists translate women's everyday life to actionable documents that can have an effect on society or the social life of people. Journalists' reports on women's activities are one of the very basic texts that organize relations between those women's life experiences and activities and everything else in society.

However, there might be some differences between these reports or articles as texts and the women's activities or life experiences. Journalists do not write about everything that is going on in these women's lives. Journalists might intentionally ignore some aspects of Iranian women's activities. They might exaggerate some parts of women's activities. This problem can

occur because journalists' work is also affected by another kind of text in the institutional process. There are some other texts at other higher levels of the institutional process that affect people's work, life, and other texts. According to Smith (2005), laws and policies can affect the writing of texts and people's lives. These laws and codes have a higher level of power in the institutional process that regulate and organize the writing of other texts on other levels.

For example, journalists might not cover all the details of women's activities in a social movement or the everyday life of women in Iran. They work for a media organization in a Western country, and each media organization has its own political and commercial interests. This organization might even be owned by a political party. These political interests require the journalists that work for a media organization to write reports that support the media organization's political ideals. Even if they are politically neutral, they still will have a particular style in reporting the events of people's lives. That style, which creates codes and policies in writing, shapes the way reports are written by journalists. Consequently, journalists do not necessarily write or report on all the details and aspects of women's activities; they look for specific details to report on based on the formal and informal codes of the media organization they work for. I ask how the journalists and texts have represented Iranian women and how/if there have been any changes in these representations, and if so, whether they have been affected through the activities of these women in social movements. More specifically, I examine the 'recognition' and 'misrecognition' of Iranian women in mass media (Fraser and Honneth 2003). As Fraser (2000) discusses, in a cultural hegemony, the identity of the dominated group is more significant than their economic interests, and for counter-hegemonic movements, recognition is the main goal rather than economic redistribution.

The misrecognition of these women and their lives can be a result of the 'gap' between what journalists and news agencies tend to cover what the audience is interested in reading (Boczkowski and Mitchelstein 2013). By focusing on the "informational dimension of the news media", Boczkowski and Mitchelstein (2013) maintain "that a sizable supply-demand gap is a common element of the news environment, cutting across sites that have divergent ideological orientations and are located in countries with diverse media systems and cultures" (Boczkowski and Mitchelstein 2013, p. 4). Therefore, to fill this gap, news agencies and journalists might be encouraged to cover what is more interesting to the audience. Boczkowski and Mitchelstein focus on the informational aspect of 'news', but it can be applicable in a more general range of articles on newspapers. Although I did not include the audience reception of the articles in this research, the Boczkowski and Mitchelstein work on 'news gap' is helpful to understand another aspect of the audience role on media discourse and media representation, and how "the news gap also poses challenges to other roles that news organizations play in the public sphere such as providing information" (Boczkowski and Mitchelstein 2013, p. 5). Therefore, different factors can affect these discourses and recognition or misrecognition of various aspects of women's lives.

Social Movements, the Media, and Networks

One of the most significant ways that cultural tools can be used to challenge oppression systems and power relations is through social movements. Most social movements emerge against the homogenizing politics of the state that oppress diversity and impose one language, trade system, ideology or religion (Tilly 1990). Suppressing any aspect of people's social life or private life can be a reason why a social movement may rise up against an oppressive system. Media and communication tools help movements to organize their activities, as they allow participants to

connect to each other and share their ideas. Furthermore, new media and the Internet help social movements to have independent media and spread their message to the public. However, governments also can use these communication tools and social media technologies to suppress people and movements. In the case of Iran, Golkar (2011) explains how the Iranian government used social media and communication technologies by identifying activists on Facebook or disconnecting the Internet and cellphones to suppress the Green Movement in 2009.

Media plays a notable role in the public's and government's understanding of movements. News and reports of the same events can be different in two different countries. According to McAdam et al. (1996), different cultures create and determine the "news market" to report social movement events and news (p. 274). The most significant way to present a movement's message to the public is through media. Tilly and Wood (2009) emphasize the significant role of print media in disclosing and communicating a movement's goals and activities. The ability to employ newspapers and images is not exclusively in the hands of government; movements and activists also use them to communicate with people.

Historically speaking, media changed traditional methods of communication and "led the ordinary people to think of themselves as part of broader collectivities" (Tarrow 2011, p. 58). Creating imagined collective identities between a group of people through media has long helped activists and people to develop collective actions and social movements. For example, in the eighteenth century in England, associations started to use newspapers to develop their activities and perspectives (Tarrow 2011). Media representations of movements are significant for increasing political opportunity as well. "The media are instrumental for social movements in at least three different ways: (1) reaching the general public, for approval and mobilize; (2) link movements with other political and social actors; and (3) provide psychological support for

members" (McAdam et al. 1996, p. 319). For the first years of these activities in the eighteenth century, social movements used media such as newspapers, magazines, and books to transfer their messages to people and participants and publicize their future plans. In the twentieth century, the capacity of using media for social movements' activities increased through the diversity of new media such as TV and radio (Tilly and Wood 2009); however, the significance of face-to-face communication decreased.

In the 21st century and particularly in the last decade, the Internet has created competition and "threats and challenges" to mass media, as it provides opportunities and possibilities for many Internet users and social movement participants and activists to provide content and news for readers conveniently and, in many cases, freely (Küng et al. 2008, p. 151). However, newspapers and other traditional mass media started to use the advantages and opportunities the Internet and new technologies can provide for them, such as publishing an online edition at a lower price (Küng et al. 2008, p. 151). The growth in the capacities of mass media has been helpful to social movements and has developed the potential use of mass media for social movement participants.

Mass media coverage of social movements is shaped by different factors, such as government policies (Rohlinger et al. 2012). Government policies and restrictions on media impose limitations on social movements. Fundamentalist governments in countries like Iran often have strict control over media, including the Internet (Castells 2004). For example, if a social movement opposes a government's politics, the policies of the mass media in that country might not allow the news of that social movement to be covered. The limited reports and coverage of the Chinese media of the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests and also very limited reports of anti-government protests such as the Green Movement of 2009 in Iran are some

examples of mass media being controlled by an undemocratic government. Moreover, the levels of suppression, and, consequently, the political opportunity for movements in some countries, such as in Iran, are different than in Western countries (Bayat 2005). Social movements cannot always be freely active because they are limited by the oppression of the government, which then limits their ability to gain media attention and public visibility. However, social movements also can affect and change the mass media coverage of a movement. For example, at the first levels of a movement's activities, the mass media coverage of the movement will be less, and during the revolution or changing policy process, the media coverage of the movement will increase.

Moreover, the effects of mass media on society and movements can be different in different cultures. For example, TV and people who work in the TV industry have a significantly larger role in fighting against fundamentalism in Afghanistan than the people who use the Internet (Osman 2014). "Given high illiteracy rates and the relatively slow development of broadband and cable infrastructure, the promise of the digital age has only partially arrived in Afghanistan" (Osman 2014, p. 875). As Osman states, "only 5 percent of the Afghan population (primarily university students and social elites) has any access to the Internet, and by contrast, the broadcast media of television and radio have grown exponentially and reach large segments of the population" (Osman 2014, p. 875). Thus, in some contexts and societies, TV and traditional mass media can have more effects than the Internet.

Furthermore, the media can have negative impacts on social and collective actions. For example, Putnam (2000) maintains that cultural and social capital are increased through communication, but the Internet, much like TV and other media and communication tools, is not accessible for all social and economic groups in society. Moreover, the Internet also has

decreased the amount of face-to-face and in-person communication. The process of using the Internet is the same as the process of using media such as TV; not only do TV and other types of media not increase informational functions for people, TV mostly takes up people's free time for entertainment and creates obstacles to expanding communication (Putnam 2000).

However, the growth and changes in Internet technologies and use have been rapid in the decade after Putnam's (2000) book, and the process of Internet functions has changed. Overall, focusing only on the positive role of culture and media in movements shows the cultural power of people, but the significant effects of governments and politics and the possible negative effects of media on social movements should not be ignored. In general, institutions, organizations or informal social and political actions are known through their functions and in the context. The effects of social movements, states and cultures can vary based on the context and are changeable over time, depending on new conditions and situations.

The relationship between mass media and social movements has been discussed through the category of the *protest paradigm*, which McCurdy (2012) defines as mapping "the 'routines', 'patterns' and 'templates' used by media in their coverage of social movements and protest" (McCurdy 2012, p. 245). For McCurdy, the protest paradigm "argues that social protests are predestined to be covered negatively due to the practices, conventions, frameworks and characteristics inherent in both the practice of journalism and the media system" (McCurdy 2012, p. 245). The protest paradigm is taken as "a form of social control that all mainstream media exert over society" (Taylor 2017, p. 47). For example, Brasted (2005), explains how the protests against war and the US invasion of Iraq were not represented in US mass media in the first year of the Iraq war (Brasted 2005, p. 383). According to Brasted (2005), media defines and determines the importance of the social and political world, including the meaning of social

movements, for audiences (Brasted 2005, p. 383). Brasted (2005) notes that media "to report social movements, follow a frame" that "determines what is selected, excluded, or emphasized" and "consists of keywords, concepts, and visual images emphasized in the narrative" (Brasted 2005, p. 383) . Although news agencies and journalists may believe that news reports of social movements are neutral, they often represent movements as somehow overthrowing or challenging established social or political systems without clarifying the motivation or rationale of movement actors (Brasted 2005, pp. 383–384).

In analyzing media representation of social movements and their participants, it is important to note that this media framing and protest paradigm can be different based on the media and social movement's context. For example, Rauch et al. (2007), analyze media framing of the anti-globalization movement starting from the Seattle WTO protests, during a five year period (Rauch et al. 2007, p. 131). They note that although media employed "delegitimizing language" that reflects the "protest paradigm" in the early years of the movement, an "evolving sympathy" could also be seen in the media "through which movement members [acquired] improved access to reporters and [got] their issues across to the public" (Rauch et al. 2007, p. 131). Therefore, the media protest can be different, and change based on factors such as context of the movement or during time.

The effect of the protest paradigm in media representation of social movements can be different based on the goals and tactics that movements have (Boyle et al. 2012, p. 127). According to Boyle et al. (2012), "radical groups, whose goals and tactics threaten the status quo, are more likely to trigger coverage" that follow "protest paradigm" framings (Boyle et al. 2012, p. 129). Considering that each social movement is threatening in some regard, the

prevailing power structure and the framing the media use to cover the social movement can . reveal the extent to which the protest paradigm is at play.

Shahin et al. (2016) provide another example that shows the protest paradigm can be different based on context. By comparing the media coverage of protests and movements in three different countries, Brazil, China and India, Shahin et al. (2016) discuss that "the historical legitimacy of informal power negotiations in a political culture makes news media more willing to take protesters seriously and limits adherence to the protest paradigm" (Shahin et al. 2016, p. 143). The political and ideological viewpoint of the media and their support for maintaining the prevailing power structure can also encourage or limit the media coverage of movements (Shahin et al. 2016, p. 146).

The ideological and political viewpoint of the media and its effect on framing social movement participants is not limited to the national scale. According to Kim and Shahin (2019), "ideological affinities can operate beyond national boundaries to make news organizations sympathetic or hostile toward a social movement" (Kim and Shahin 2019, p. 1). However, at the same time, it is important to consider the political relationship between the two countries and its effect on framing a movement transnationally.

Kim and Shahin (2019), discuss that, although political and ideological viewpoints of newspapers shape their framing process, "nationalist sentiments also remain significant to the extent that a foreign social movement affects a nation's foreign policy" (Kim and Shahin 2019, p. 1). For example, regarding US mass media representations of movements inside Iran, the hostility of foreign relations between the two countries should be considered as a factor in whether media coverage follows the protest paradigm. Movement participants and their activities might not have any representation or have negative representation in Iran's national

media. However, US mass media representation of participants in social movements against Iran's government might not be as negative or marginalizing.

When we move to considering women's movements specifically, it is worth mentioning that mass media has not always portrayed women, their presence, or their activities in social movements such as the women's movement or other political or social movements, uniformly. For example, Ashley and Olson (1998), discuss that in the US "women involved in social protest have been treated differently depending on the issue and their tactics and the media have lost interest when women protest on behalf of their own needs" (Ashley and Olson 1998, p. 264). As Sisco and Lucas (2015) note, "journalists typically focus on a few 'leaders' of the movement, which leads to the movement being represented almost solely by formal organizational leaders who tend to be negatively constructed as inauthentic representatives of women's interests" (Sisco and Lucas 2015, p. 494). Media can also even reinforce violence against women by misrepresenting or not representing key issues. For example, Lumsden and Morgan (2017), examine British newspapers' framing of online trolling and find that "media reports of trolling adopt the use of 'silencing strategies'", and "reinforce the normalisation of online violence against women" (Lumsden and Morgan 2017, p. 936). Therefore, media does not always portray a complete or inclusive image of women participation in social and political activities and movements.

Media representations of women who are active in politics also can be stereotypical (Sisco and Lucas 2015, p. 493). According to Sisco and Lucas (2015), in the US, "stereotypical coverage stems from female [political] candidates having to negotiate the double bind of being a female running in the masculine arena of politics" (Sisco and Lucas 2015, p. 493). Another example is that "gains in numbers of women in office are then assumed to be achievements of

feminist goals, because the news media label female candidates as feminists" no matter if they have self-identified themselves so or not (Sisco and Lucas 2015, p. 494). In other study, Thuo (2012), examines media coverage of women parliamentarians in Kenya, and finds that "women parliamentarians in Kenya receive dismal media coverage in general" (Thuo 2012, p. 93). Furthermore, ;"their names hardly make it to headlines and most of their stories are in the inside pages, therefore, their coverage is invisible" (Thuo 2012, p. 93). The misrepresentation or stereotypical representation of women in media is not limited to women in parliament or women who are active in movements. It exists for women who are active in most political spheres; for example, "a comparison of the framing patterns in the news about women in politics and the entrenched stereotypes in the coverage of female terrorists demonstrates similarities in the depiction of these legitimate (women in politics) and illegitimate political actors (women in terrorism)" (Nacos 2005, p. 435). Therefore, media discourse can reinforce oppression against women through misrecognition, misrepresentation or representing stereotypical images of them.

However, in representing women's activities in social movements in the Middle East, this framing can be different. Although media representations of Muslim women have been mainly based on stereotypes (Dastgeer and Gade 2016, p. 432), when media covers social movements in Middle Eastern and Muslim countries, women's participation in these movements are often at the center of attention (Dastgeer and Gade 2016, p. 432). According to Dastgeer and Gade (2016), in US media coverage of Arab Spring movements "visual images of women were packaged prominently in news reports, and when men and women were in images, women appeared in the primary focal point a majority of the time for both media" (Dastgeer and Gade 2016, p. 444).

There are many reasons why women participants are framed differently in movements in the Muslim and Middle Eastern countries compared to Western countries. For example, Dastgeer and Gade (2016) note that, “conflict, crisis, and deviance in other nations receive more coverage in the US media, often because they are perceived as the efforts for normalizing the abnormalities” (Dastgeer and Gade 2016, p. 444). “The participation of Arab women in the Arab Spring was not only novel to the world, but also had the potential for social and political changes that broadly fit with Western democratic and gender ideologies” (Dastgeer and Gade 2016, p. 444). According to Dastgeer and Gade (2016), “visual frames of Muslim women shifted in Western media because these women were acting to create social change aligned with Western ideologies” (Dastgeer and Gade 2016, p. 444). Therefore, media representations of women’s movements or participation of women in political and social movements and activities vary based on the context and can change during time.

The difference in the representation of women’s activities in Muslim countries can also be seen in the context of other countries, such as women’s activities in Pakistan. Rahman (2012), who examines US media coverage of Pakistani women’s activities, notes that, “least coverage was given to her as the one who is trying to work for her emancipation within the context of Islam” and “most of the coverage was given to women in the secular image, and in this context hardly any reference of Islam was given” (Rahman 2012, p. 106). Therefore, it is significant to consider these differences in studying the US and Canadian mass media framing of women of a Muslim and Middle Eastern country like Iran.

Another framework that helps us to better understand the relationship between social movements and the media as it manifests currently is Castells’ discussion on power of networks. Social networks include patterns of communication and information exchange

(Castells 2009). Social networks include individuals and organizations as users of public communication tools. However, “Internet-mediated social networks are key ingredients” of most of the world’s new social movements, such as environmental movements (Castells 2009, p. 325). In the past decade, the role and effects of Internet-based social networks in social movements have increased significantly, particularly in the MENA [the Middle East and North Africa] region (Remmer 2017). Although the primary focus of my research is not on online social networks or online alternative media and websites, the latter are significant because I study changes in the representations of Iranian women after the 2009 social movement in the US and Canadian media. Therefore, if there have been changes, they have likely been made through social networks and the Internet since they were mainly the only accessible sources of news about the 2009 movement.

The ability to challenge and change politics through culture is rooted in networks, and networks are related to cultural communication tools and technologies. Politics can be improved through international networks, “as institutions of state and organizations of civil society are based on culture, history, and geography, the sudden acceleration of the historical tempo, and the abstraction of power in a web of computers, are disintegrating existing mechanisms of social control and political representation” (Castells 2004, p. 72). The Internet is an essential networking method and communication tool. The anti-globalization movement has developed based on networks, and the Internet is a crucial factor in this movement. Anti-system movements’ organizations and activists that oppose a power system often connect and communicate as networks through the Internet (Castells 2004).

The Internet can be used to broadcast and distribute political propaganda as well as to counter the political propaganda of the dominant group. For example, in a political election or

movement, candidates have email lists for sending messages to supporters. If states do not disseminate the candidates or movement's news accurately, activists and social movement participants can use the Internet to present what they want people to know about them. The Internet has reduced the cost of propaganda in terms of publishing news and sending messages and pictures without printing or using billboards. Email services and social media such as Facebook and Twitter have also increased the speed of news dissemination among society.

Social networks have helped start and grow movements. First, activists and protesters use social networks to communicate and to start and spread movements. Secondly, they use them as alternative social media to cover their movement and to represent the different aspects of the movement (Tarrow 2011). Moreover, "the Internet empowers social movements in: (a) purely instrumental ways (an additional logistical resource for 'resource-poor' actors), (b) a protest function (direct expression of protest); (c) symbolically (as a medium favouring identification processes in collective actors) and (d) cognitively (informing and sensitising public opinion)" (della Porta and Mosca 2005, p. 165). Thus, these main functions show the significant role of the Internet in these movements in recent years.

The Internet and new social media and communication technologies have significance in shaping collective identities, networking and organizing social movements. For example, in the 1990s, Zapatista movement activists used the capacity of the Internet to mobilize support and push their movement forward. The use of the Internet in social movements has become more popular and prevalent in recent years through the emergence of social media and smartphone capabilities. For example, Egyptians used Facebook to organize their protests and share news of their movements in the revolution against Mubarak. Activists, especially in international protests and campaigns, use email to collect signatures for petitions. That said, according to

research on recent movements in the Middle East, traditional mass media have had more of an audience than the alternative forms of media used by protestors (see Aday et al. 2013). For example, in the Arab Spring movements, mass media played the main role in spreading news of the movements to people outside of the Middle East (Aday et al. 2013).

To have a comprehensive understanding of the relationships between social movements and media, it is important to consider the reciprocal relationships between them. One of the characteristics of relations between new media and social movements is the use of social networks by activists and protestors as tools to develop and organize the movements. Over the last decade, media, the Internet and social networks have had huge impacts on organizing movements, mobilizing forces and, consequently, on the success of movements. In Iran's Green Movement of 2009, low Internet's speed and the fact that most social networking websites and applications are filtered in Iran made it difficult for activists to upload videos and pictures to share with the world. However, people started using email to send the pictures and short videos they had taken with cellphones to each other and consequently to people they knew outside of Iran. These individuals could then upload them on YouTube or Facebook or send them to news agencies such as Voice of America Farsi and BBC Persian (for example see Michaelsen 2018; Warnaar 2011).

Moreover, social movement participants can affect mainstream media through social networks and cyberspace. New communication technologies have empowered international movements and networks; activists use "the capacity of the internet and the web for sustainable self-representation" to declare their goals and demands and in general their news without intermediaries or media manipulation policies (Lester and Hutchins 2009, p. 591). Journalists and the media eventually have to cover the news. Social movements, such as social

organizations or campaigns, try to gain the attention of mass media to spread their messages through social media and digital networking (Cottle 2008).

In addition, the Internet and new digital media have affected social movements not just in terms of facilitating their communication; Internet-based media have transformed the principal features of social movements. Local and national social movements can be more effective through the Internet and can be seen and linked to activists and social movements in other countries. International social movements use the Internet to organize their activities to be more effective in various contexts and continue their movements' activities. New digital electronic media link social movements within nations and also between different nations, cultures, and countries (Tilly and Wood 2009).

Recent social movements have had both local and global roots and impacts (Castells 2012). They have their own urban spaces and networks they use to communicate, their own conditions and motivations, and their own cultures, but they also have impacts on each other. They learn from each other about organizing and how powerless people can empower the movement. People in these movements used Twitter and Tumblr, and they knew people outside of the Arab countries and in Iran who were using Facebook and online networks to empower the movements (Castells 2012). They did not have special programmers, but they were connected to the world, and through their growing awareness, they could influence world politics and economics.

The other main similarity in these movements is the role of globalization. Political globalization and the *transferability* of ideas, strategies, and tactics used between movements have had a significant role in these movements (della Porta and Tarrow 2005). Political globalization generates transnational effects for the movements. Social movements in recent

years have not been completely separate from each other. Social movements affect many aspects of movements in other societies. Protesters learn tactics from each other to grow their movements. These movements connect to each other in different ways, such as through the Internet and online social networks. Chatterji (2013) discusses how an anti-corruption movement in India and the recent social movement in Egypt, which happened at the same time, exchanged ideas, tactics, and strategies between members. Kerton (2012) examines the impacts of the Arab Spring movements on the Occupy movement and the role of political globalization and relations between these movements. Globalization here has positive impacts for the movements to facilitate and transfer experiences and tactics between movements.

In recent years, international outcomes of social movements, even non-international movements, have been crucial to developing my insight about the conceivable effects that the social movement of 2009 in Iran had in other places and other societies such as the US. However, cyberspace and social networks are not the same in all countries and all situations. The context of the recent social movement in Egypt was different from the situation and context of the recent movement in Libya. The methods of using cyberspace and the effects of the usage of social networks in movements' outcomes are diverse according to the different situations of various movements.

For example, in the Green Movement of 2009, a political movement began that demanded the establishment of democracy after the presidential election that led to Ahmadinejad having a second presidential term. The Internet was disconnected for weeks, and after reconnecting the Internet, many websites such as Facebook and YouTube and many news agencies' websites were not accessible. Text services were disconnected for months as well. Also, the Internet was a tool used by the government against the participants of these

movements (Golkar 2011). Using texts and other means of organizing social or political movements through the Internet is dangerous in Iran because it gives the government documents that prove a participant's political crime of organizing a movement.

Moreover, the national media in Iran are limited to few (about ten national channels) that are very restricted and controlled by the supreme leader's party and are not allowed to cover the news of movements. The use of the Internet by the Green Movement of 2009 in Iran, like some of the movements of the Arab Spring, was mostly from outside the country (see Bruns et al. 2014). The Internet was used by activists and ordinary people to transfer images, videos, and news to outside the country to other activists or to mass media channels such as BBC Persia or VOA Farsi (for example see Michaelsen 2018; Warnaar 2011). This connectivity demonstrates Manuel Castells' (2011) network theory of power. Global networks helped movement participants share their news with the world and gain support from international society. The main source of news for people inside the country about the movement was the BBC or VOA, demonstrating the significant role of mass media in the movement, similar to the role of mass media in other movements in the Arab Spring (see Aday et al. 2013).

Intersectionality and Social Movements

Intersectionality is about how social categories create complicated oppression situations and can allow oppression and power to go unnoticed because they look so different depending on the situation (McCall 2005). Without an intersectional approach, social movements cannot be completely anti-oppressive. Lorber (2001) emphasizes the exploration of race/ethnicity and class in feminist research on gender inequality. Cultures, religions, and different power relations, such as states and media, can reinforce gender inequality and domination systems.

The relationship between gender inequalities, racial domination systems, and political systems as a main root and cause of inequality in society is one of the main aspects of my research. Women's participation in gender-based social movements, as well as other social movements against oppression, indicate the realization of the common roots of inequality systems. Moreover, intersectionality and considering women's viewpoints, situations and race provide a broader and more complete perspective through which to view and analyze this relationship between gender and political or social inequalities.

I use the concept of gender in my research in terms of its relationship with race and the common roots of race and gender. Gender-, race-, and class-oppressed groups should participate in creating values, rules, and morality in society and culture to eliminate power domination (Grosz 1994). The participation of women in social movements against power relations can have various effects on different aspects of inequality systems; it can help women to achieve their gender-based and non-gender-based demands and, moreover, fight against racism and other domination systems that reinforce the oppression of women: "Analytically, feminists have theorized the interactive and intersectional character of domination based on the mutually-reinforcing dynamics of oppression based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and class, among other axes of social hierarchy and differentiation" (Conway 2011, p. 49). Oppressive systems reinforce each other and cooperate with others. Resistance against any oppression can also foster cooperation and strengthen resistance against other oppression systems as well.

Sylvia Walby (2015) explains the financial crisis of developed democratic countries and how this financial crisis is "gendered in both its causes and its effects" (p. 2) and that to solve the financial crisis, we need to "deepen democracy and regulate the finance in the interest of the whole society" (p. 1). According to Walby (2018), "social inclusion" is a significant aspect of

economic growth, and to solve the financial crisis, we need gendered equal economic growth (p. 138). We need more gender-based equality activities and have to include more women and gender diversity in our policy-making level of society to be able to see all aspects of problems to solve economic issues and achieve economic growth (Walby 2018, p. 139). We can see that, in the same way that oppressive systems work and reinforce each other, social movements and resistance against these oppressions, such as class-based inequality, can work and reinforce each other. Moreover, Walby (1989) explains the differences between private patriarchy and public patriarchy and how they are the two main types of patriarchal systems. Private patriarchy bans women from activities in society, while public patriarchy does not ban women from social activities but dominates them (Walby 1989, p. 228). Although the state structure is a patriarchal system that does not allow women to participate in ruling the system equally to men, patriarchal cultures are diverse based on religious or educational systems and the economic activities of women.

hooks (2000) critiques the modern feminist assertion of generalizing the oppression of women and suggests that race, class, religion and other differences between women create different levels of oppression between them. To fight against gender inequality and also to eliminate racist and stereotypical images of women in different places of the world, it is necessary to understand various aspects of women's lives in different parts of the world. Differences in social and cultural factors can be different or even opposite in even two neighboring countries with many cultural similarities. These differences show the significance of women's viewpoints in analyzing their situations. For example, Moghadam (1999) compares two political revolutions with different and opposite gender politics in two different countries with patriarchal cultures: Iran and Afghanistan. Although culture and politics in both

revolutions were gendered, the results of gendered politics were not in line with the government's expectations.

It is significant to recognize the differences between patriarchal political systems and patriarchal culture. For example, in the case of Iran, inequality in the laws and the politics of the Islamic regime of Iran do not exist because of the Islamic religion; they exist because of the undemocratic structure of the Iranian state. For gender equality in a society like Iran, the undemocratic political system is creating the main problems for gender equality (Hoodfar and Sadr 2010). Moreover, political reformists in Iran, most of whom are Muslim and not just secular, interpret Islam and Islamic laws as accommodating of gender equality. However, they have been confronted with domestic political obstacles that prevent them from being effective in power (Razavi 2006). Razavi (2006) argues that reformists "were largely incapable of substantiating those rights (whether with regard to the freedom of expression, of the press and the media or with respect to women's rights)" and also "the changing global politics, with the US president singling out Iran as a rogue state and as part of the 'axis of evil' in 2002 strengthened the hands of the conservatives and their confrontational mentality" (p. 1235). The origin of gender inequality in Iran is not religion; it is state laws and political power relations.

Moreover, the relationship between gender and social movements is reciprocal. Gender influences social movements in different ways and, conversely, social movements can influence gender issues. However, most scholarly research on gender and social movements is about gender-based social movements, for example, women's movements or gay/lesbian movements. Nevertheless, gender dynamics are present in all social movements and influences them. This is not only true for gender-centered movements, as other social movements can influence gender

issues as well (Einwohner et al. 2000). Movements and counter-movements both can use "cultural ideas about gender" to empower themselves (Einwohner et al. 2000, p. 690).

How do class, race, and ethnicity intersect in my research? In the more than forty years since the Islamic Revolution, women have been more and more active in economic activities and have become more independent and educated, as more than 65 percent of students in universities are now women (see Kurzman 2008). Through empowering themselves in economic areas, they do not have to get married early in life, they are less and less suppressed, and they are able to bargain with the patriarchy. That said, in Iran, there are Black women in the southern parts of the country that have no representation, even in the national media in Iran. Race and ethnicity and the images of Iranian women as women of a Muslim or Middle Eastern country, and how these concepts are portrayed in the Western media, specifically in the US and Canadian media, are related to this research. It is true that their misrecognition by Western media is not a priority for women inside of Iran. Their activities in social movements are more likely to gain the attention of these media, however, and the images that media employ of Iranian women can be changed and made more inclusive.

The aim of using an intersectionality perspective is not only to investigate the intersectional oppression systems that Iranian women face. There is also intersectionality in the resistance against these inequality systems. The intersectional oppression systems against Iranian women, inside and outside of Iran, can be challenged through these women's participation in social movements that oppose any oppression system. Women's participation in a social movement, such as a political movement fighting for a democratic regime, or participation in an environmental movement or women's movement, can help women challenge oppressive systems such as the gender-based political inequality system inside Iran as well as

the ethnicity/race-based oppression system in media discourse in Canada or in the US. The widespread participation of women in the 2009 Green Movement in Iran, for example, showed a more powerful picture of women to the world's mass media that was covering news of the movement. As Tahmasebi-Birgani (2010) states, "watching images and videos from these demonstrations, there was no doubt in anyone's mind that Iran's body politic was invaded by feminine power" (Tahmasebi-Birgani 2010, p. 78). Women's participation in a political movement advocating for democracy had the potential to challenge the stereotypical representation of these women and the ethnicity/race-based oppression system operating in the US and Canada against Iranian women as women of a Muslim and Middle Eastern country.

Theoretical Framework

This section weaves together all the theories that I am using in this research. I also discuss how I will use these theories in my study. The concept of culture in early political scholarship literature, such as Gramsci's work mainly focuses on the role of culture in legitimizing power relations. States or oppression systems can use cultural organizations such as education systems or churches and cultural products such as newspapers or books to influence people and legitimize their power in people's minds. Dominant groups in societies use culture to legitimize their power in society and consequently preserve their power. Cultural beliefs, ideas, and ideologies are the main sources of a power system's legitimacy in a traditional authority domination system.

The second aspect of the use of culture and cultural tools is their ability to challenge power relations. Culture is related to social movements on different levels. First, cultural ideas, ideologies, and emotions increase the capacity to create a collective identity and, consequently,

collective action. Second, cultural history, events, and products can produce political opportunities for the movement by influencing meanings, symbols, and interpretations. In addition to facilitating communication methods and organizing and framing processes of movements, media are used to spread movements' messages.

The development of new digital communication tools and Internet-based media has challenged power relations and structures through strengthening social movements. The Internet has facilitated the communication and organizing process of social movement activists, and international social networks and social movements use new digital communication tools and independent media to spread their message. The Internet has decreased the government's control over the media, and, consequently, international movements' power has been changing in recent decades.

The most important point of this approach is recognizing the power of ordinary people and social movement participants in creating and using cultural power to alter power relations. The state's control over media and other kinds of state power, such as law or physical force, can restrict the power of culture in some contexts, but new digital media and communication tools have nevertheless strengthened people's ability to use culture against domination systems.

Reviewing the concepts of culture, media and social movements shows that social movements can affect mass media representations through the power of networks. For example, mass media representations of Iranian women can be affected by the power of networks and through representations of these women's activities in social movements. Moreover, social movements, along with changes in media and communication methods, have taken on more international character. The limitations of media accessibility and the limited variety of media once kept movements at a local or national level. The growth in the variety and accessibility of

media and of the Internet, digital and private media and communication methods consequently has weakened the state's controlling power over social movements. This has allowed activists and social movement participants to find opportunities to share their ideas and connect with people outside their own region and country. Consequently, social movements have pursued more international goals and activities. This is why, in spite of the political disconnection between some countries, social movements' activities in a Middle Eastern country like Iran can affect or be represented in Western mass media.

Moreover, understanding the specific cultural features and contexts of social movements contributes to developing social movement theories. General social theories of social movement dynamics that do not recognize or consider the cultural context of social movements face various limitations. In this research, understanding the complexities of Islamic social movements in the Middle East could not be possible without perceiving the cultural beliefs and contexts of these movements and participants. For example, Internet accessibility and other communication tools are limited because of political restrictions in Middle Eastern countries such as Iran.

I use the approach of intersectionality between race and gender in my research project. The ways that Western media (in Canada and the US) represents Iranian women as women of a Muslim and Middle Eastern country matters to Muslim women who live in Western countries and also to Iranian women who are fighting against gender inequalities in their everyday lives. The misrecognition and stereotypical depictions of women of a Muslim or Middle Eastern country are based on the intersectionality of race, ethnicity (for people who live in the West as a Muslim) and gender. This intersectionality of domination systems causes Iranian women to face double oppression and prevents them from actively participating in ruling systems and

determining standards for their life. In addition, portraying an image of Iranian women that shows the intersectionality of class and gender involves showing how the economic activities of Iranian women have improved their ability to fight against gender inequality.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

My research question is about social justice in terms of the media representations and misrecognition of people who are active socially and politically against the government. According to Mackenzie and Knipe (2006), transformative research links politics and political plans or organizations. Transformative research attempts to make improvements and provide hope for changing the lives of people who are involved in research as participants or even the researcher's life. My research fits into the 'transformative' paradigm.

Methods for collecting data should match with the paradigm and methodology (Mackenzie and Knipe 2006). To understand how media content and images have portrayed Iranian women in the US and Canada, I conducted a critical discourse analysis of texts. Critical discourse analysis helps me to understand the ideologies behind the texts and their relation to larger power systems (DiFrancesco and Young 2011, p. 521). This includes analyzing the manifest and latent content of articles and news about Iranian women in these newspapers (Van den Hoonaard 2015).

According to Fairclough (2003a), "there are three analytically separable elements in processes of meaning-making: the production of the text, the text itself, and the reception of the text" (2003a, p. 10). The writer's intention and identity are more focused on the process of text production, while the audience and readers are more focused on text reception (Fairclough 2003a, p. 10); but the most critical point in analyzing text as a tool for conveying meaning is to understand the interaction of all three elements of meaning production (Fairclough 2003a, p.

10). The main limitation of my research is that I did not focus on the production process or the audience's reception of the texts and images. I solely focused on the texts and images.

To understand the effects of texts, they should be analyzed in ideological contexts and the context of more substantial power relations (Fairclough 2003a, p. 16). In my research, I examined texts to understand the discourses of various systems of power being practiced in media and the changes (if any) in these texts and discourses. Discourses explain and interpret social phenomena, but they are different in their levels of repetition. Discourses can be identified by the main themes, which are interpretations and words used to describe social phenomena (Fairclough 2003a). Discourses that can be found both in texts and images create, maintain or challenge a hegemonic ideology (Macdonald 2003).

Mass Media Selection

Traditional mass media such as TV, radio and newspapers can be significant sources of data for understanding the dominant or hegemonic discourses in media. "While the Internet tends to be an effective tool to receive and/or distribute information, it is much less suited as a tool to persuade or to engage with people who are non-activists or disinterested in politics altogether" (Cammaerts et al. 2013, p. 260). Moreover, "getting access and coverage by mass media such as newspapers has been recognized as the key channel for social movements to reach the public at large" (Cammaerts et al. 2013, p. 262). Considering the longitudinal nature of my research, I chose newspapers as the data source for my research because they are better archived over time.

I selected the two most circulated national newspapers in Canada: *The Globe and Mail* and *National Post* (the *Toronto Star* has higher circulation, but it does not have an explicitly national scope, so I used the *National Post*). I chose the two most circulated national

newspapers in the US: *The New York Times* and *USA Today*[3]. I focused on Canadian and US mass media because of my positionality as the researcher. I have lived in the US and Canada, I know the language, and I have access to a newspaper database. Another significant reason for choosing the US and Canadian mass media is the political opposition and disconnection between the US government and the Iranian government since 1979 and also the Canadian government and Iranian government (officially) since 2011.

My approach in choosing these four newspapers as my data source was informed by previous media and social movements research (Cammaerts et al. 2013, p. 213; Castells 2009, 2011, 2012; Stoddart 2015). This work recognizes the significance of mass media in the relationship between social movements and activists and ordinary people. For example, Castells (2012) discusses the relationship and impacts of the Al Jazeera TV channel on the results of social movements in Tunisia, Egypt and other movements in the Middle East. The spread of mass media creates new opportunities for social movements, as the members of these movements gain the opportunity to learn about other people's interpretations of their activities. Moreover, media and the Internet, as significant cultural and communication tools, help social movements spread their message to the people and public and also to create networks. Thus, the representation, recognition or misrecognition of movement participants in mass media can affect the result of movements and also provide new possibilities for movements to be more effective. For example, recognition of Iranian women's activities in social movements in the

[3] Choosing the most circulated national newspapers does not necessarily include the most diverse data and newspaper articles, as smaller newspapers might have more diverse or different depictions of Iranian women. However, as higher circulation can be an indicator of a larger audience indication of reach, I chose the most circulated newspapers.

Western mass media can change their image in Western culture, bringing various aspects of their lives.

Although the role of social media in social movements has been expanding rapidly, the main newspapers continue to have a substantial position and function in reaching a more inclusive, broader audience. Moreover, these newspapers generate a considerable amount of content that is spread by social media websites and accounts. The main mass media channels are beneficial for strengthening the representation and work of social movements on social media on, and, consequently, they represent the social movements for a broader audience (Castells 2009, 2012).

Data Collection

In doing critical discourse analysis, I examine articles and news about Iranian women, including images and texts of two different time-periods. I explore the changes (if any) in the representation of Iranian women in two time-periods: from 2001 to 2009 and from 2009 to 2018. I chose 2001 as the starting date for the first period because this was the year of the September 11th terrorist attacks in the US, which had a considerable impact on people's perceptions and started a wave of Islamophobia in Western countries, especially in the US. The reason I chose 2009 as the starting date for the second time-period is because the Green Movement of Iran began in this year. The participation of women in this movement was widespread. Women were on the front lines of the movement, and the images disseminated of their activities in this movement were different than the pictures the Iranian government tried to show of them and different from the pictures the mass media used to depict them.

I used a purposive sampling strategy to select the most representative articles from the Factiva database for analysis (Sharp et al. 2012). According to Sharp et al. (2012), a purposive

sampling strategy helps to select the best data relating to the research question (Sharp et al. 2012). In an effort to understand how Iranian women are represented in US and Canadian mass media and if there have been changes in this representation since the 2009 social movement, I performed critical discourse analysis of the four above-mentioned newspapers during the time-period mentioned.

In my preliminary work on the Factiva newspaper database, the search words *Iranian women*, from 1979 to the present date, brought up about 100–200 articles about Iranian women in each of these newspapers. I could not find any images in my preliminary data search on Factiva. Then, I tried the search words *Iran* AND women** (to bring up Iran and Iranian, or woman, women, and women`s). Factiva did not highlight words such as 'girl', 'lady' or 'girls' or 'ladies', but it did find articles relevant to these keywords. Therefore, to build the data sample for this study, I used the words *Iran* AND women** as the key search words in my search database. To focus on the goal of the study, I did the analysis only on news and articles that pertained to Iranian women. For the first time-period, I set the date on Factiva from September 1, 2001, as the 2001 terrorist attacks happened on September 11th. I set the finishing date of the first time-period as May 30th, as the presidential election date in Iran was June 12, 2009.

The reason that I used only Iran* AND women* as search terms is that the main focus and umbrella question in my research is exploring the representation of Iranian women and changes in these representations. Within this framework, the sub-question is whether the social movement activities of women have had effects on their representation. The second reason for structuring search terms this way is that by not only focusing on articles about social movements, I was able to see the representation of activities that are not framed as activism or movement participation in western mass media. Looking at a broader relation of players and arenas helps to understand various tactics and actors that are involved in diverse forms of strategic interaction for social change (Jasper and Duyvendak 2015; Stoddart et al. 2020).

Text

Table 3.1 below shows the number of articles that came up for each newspaper in each time-period with the search words on Factiva.

Country	Newspapers	2001–2009	2009–2018	Total
Canadian National Newspapers	*The Globe and Mail*	671	857	1528
	National Post	492	563	1055
US National Newspapers	*The New York Times*	2294	4165	6459
	USA Today	261	222	483
Total		3718	5807	9525

Table 3.1. The Number of Articles that Came Up for Each Newspaper and Each Time-period

I set the search parameters to bring up articles based on relevance to my keywords. I manually scanned the articles and found that most were not related to the representation of Iranian women. For example, one article was about Saudi Arabia, Qatar and oil, and it mentioned Iran when talking about oil in the Middle East in general; then, in another part of the article, it discusses women's situation in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, the article is not talking about Iranian women or women's situation in Iran. However, the deeper analysis can result in bringing up the name of the Middle Eastern countries in one article and a description of women's situation in one of them can contribute to the creation of stereotypes about women of the whole region. In this research, my focus was on articles that, at least in one or two sentences, directly discuss Iranian women.

In the first round of collecting data, I downloaded the first 500 relevant articles of each newspaper in each time-period. If the total number of articles was less than 500, I downloaded the whole set of articles. I went through the downloaded articles by skimming and scanning.

Using a purposive sampling strategy, I first chose the most relevant articles, and the number included in the data set came to:

Country	Newspapers	2001–2009	2009–2018	Total
Canadian National Newspapers	*The Globe and Mail*	110	60	170
	National Post	45	60	105
US National Newspapers	*The New York Times*	149	151	300
	USA Today	29	21	50
Total		333	292	625

Table 3.2. The Number of Most Relevant Articles for Each Newspaper and Each Time-period

The number of articles was still too large for the time and capacity for this research, so I decided to first do the coding for the first 20 percent of the data, sorted by relevance, then I coded for the next 20 percent of the data. However, for *USA Today*, as the number of articles was low, I coded the most relevant chosen articles in my data. I used the first 40 percent of the relevant data because the articles were sorted based on relevancy, and the first ones were the most relevant. Moreover, I could not choose the first 40 percent for each year separately for two reasons: First, I sorted my data on Factiva based on relevancy and not date. Second, the separate year would not be beneficial for my results, as it is categorized in two 9-year time-periods. In total, I coded 281 articles. My final results are based on this number of articles:

Country	Newspapers	2001–2009	2009–2018	Total
Canadian National Newspapers	*The Globe and Mail*	44	24	68
	National Post	18	24	42
US National Newspapers	*The New York Times*	60	61	121
	USA Today	29	21	50
Total		151	130	281

Table 3.3. The Number of Coded Articles for Each Newspaper and Each Time-period

Images

Through visual images, media can shape people's perception of a movement and activists with a greater and longer influence (Corrigall-Brown and Wilkes 2012; Wetzel 2012). Images might not show the same expression as the texts; they might be chosen in a way that marginalizes a group of people or highlights only certain aspects of their lives and experiences. To explore the changes in Iranian women's representations in US media, I coded images that were used in the articles. According to Pauwels (2010), images and their content are "windows" to understanding the world (p. 557). Visual sociology uses images, videos, and visual data to understand, describe and analyze culture and society (Pauwels 2010). I used pre-existing visual data and newspaper images of or about Iranian women in these newspapers. In this type of research, what is depicted and how it is depicted are both significant (Pauwels 2010).

Based on preliminary searches of the four newspaper websites (*The Globe and Mail*, *National Post*, *USA Today* and *The New York Times*), I found that I can gain access to more images of Iranian women on these websites if I search the keywords on these newspapers' websites and choose the articles that have images of Iran and Iranians, though they were not always about Iranian women. I had access to a number of images in the articles that I used in my research.

Although the Factiva database has a 'pictures' category in its search result, it only brings up the written description of the photos written in the articles. I tried to change the setting to at least have the AP and Reuters photo feeds on Factiva, but, unfortunately, it did not bring up any images. Factiva provides a description of the images of the articles; however, it does not show any description for *The Globe and Mail* articles. To retrieve photos, I tried to search the title of the articles I used in my coding process, as well as the descriptions of the photos that Factiva provided,

on Google and look up the pictures of the items on the websites of the newspapers. I did not find the actual copies of the printed paper. As there are not enough images for a valid result based on a comparison of the newspapers, I did the coding and analyzed the images along with the texts, and my main discussion and conclusion will be based on the text of the articles.

The number of images found for each period are shown in the below table:

Country	Newspapers	2001–2009	2009–2018	Total
Canadian National Newspapers	*The Globe and Mail*	0	13	13
	National Post	3	4	7
US National Newspapers	*The New York Times*	13	44	57
	USA Today	13	8	21
Total		29	69	98

Table 3.4. The Number of Coded pictures for Each Newspaper and Each Time-period

Critical Discourse Analysis

For the critical discourse analysis, I used a coding table to find main themes and analyze the data. Analyzing data is an iterative process based on the context of new discoveries and generates further questions and different answers to previously evaluated questions. This process includes transcribing, memo writing, data coding, finding themes and generalizing (Van den Hoonaard 2015).

The coding was based on the theories driving my research and my reflexivity. Because the focus of the research is on representations of women, I analyzed women's actions and clothing. I looked at images that were chosen by the US and Canadian media to represent Iranian women and read the articles in these newspapers to determine if these portrayals show an inclusive image of women, or show mainly women as oppressed, or positive images of active women.

It is worth mentioning that the everyday lives of Iranian women can include women who are oppressed and women who are actively fighting for their rights or resist against oppression. Women wear black chadors and colourful short coats and dresses. Representing mainly or only one aspect of women's lives can lead to a misrecognition of the everyday lives of a large number of these women. Representing these women's situation as either positive/resistance or negative/victim demonstrates dichotomous representations that ignore many other aspects of these women's lives.

Textual data can demonstrate the discourses, and specifically the dominant discourses, in media. However, as described by Fraser (1998, 2000), recognition or misrecognition of social phenomena in media can indicate justice in representation and discourse. To understand the

recognition or misrecognition in media representations, we need to analyze both the discourse and ideology behind it (Macdonald 2003).

To do the coding and analysis, I started by using a semi-structured coding strategy (Saldaña 2010). A semi-structured coding strategy means that in addition to some predetermined codes, such as feminists and women's rights activists as social movement actors, I added new codes as I was reading the texts, reviewing the images and doing the coding, which were helpful to describe, categorize and analyze the texts and images. For example, I generated some of the main themes and codes, such as 'laws', which were mainly oppressive laws such as the 'compulsory hijab', after I started the coding process and by reading the texts.

The process for coding in this research included first, theoretically deriving codes. In this regard, I used codes related to social movements such as different social movement actors (for example women right activists, students, political parties etc.), or 'social movement tactics' (such as street protest, strikes, etc.), or 'oppressive organizational actors' (such as government, including parliament or IRGC, police, Muslim clerics, etc.). Second, I used some predetermined codes based on my research questions, such as 'Iranian women general representation'. Third, as I read the data and reviewed the images, I added codes and child nodes such as different 'laws', or the representation of Iran as a country in general. Overall, I created 14 parent nodes and 150 child nodes. However, 7 parent nodes, and 73 Child nodes reached a point of theoretical saturation; other parent nodes and child nodes remained peripheral, such as 'name of the social movements' (predetermined based on both my research questions and also theories), 'place' (including urban, bigger cities or small cities, or rural areas; based on my question and theories), 'representation of people of LGBTQ' groups (based on my research questions and theories).

To generate codes and child nodes, in general (based on any of the above-mentioned criteria and ways), I added codes that included terms that helped me categorize the data (Van den Hoonaard 2015). For example, I used ‘peaceful’ and ‘violent’ to categorize the social movement tactics, and in the ‘peaceful’ category, as I went through the data, I added codes that were not included in my predetermined codes such as ‘artistic protest,’ ‘online movements’ , etc. If the researcher’s background is related to the coded topic, it is very helpful in the coding process, as it helps the researcher gain a better understanding of the subject and allows them to see some aspects that might not have been noticed otherwise (Van den Hoonaard 2015).

During and after coding, I recoded the data to refine the codes and categories and assigned data to new codes and categories when applicable (Saldaña 2010). For example, during the beginning of the coding process, I noticed the representation of laws and specifically, oppressive laws and I started to code all the texts that mentioned or discussed any law and created a category in laws name: ‘Oppressive Laws’. After reading more through the data, I realized that discussions of oppressive laws were different than what I had imagined and there is a pattern that shows a specific focus on some laws. In my perspective, as an Iranian woman, I had imagined that all the oppressive laws against women would be mentioned to some extent equally (unless an article is discussing a law specifically). However, as I read the articles, I noticed that the compulsory hijab is mentioned more frequently compared to other laws, such as not having the right to divorce. Therefore, I decided to recode ‘Oppressive Laws’ and specifically create a code for each law.

Reading the reports again and again, viewing the images again and again, and writing memos are the next steps in recoding. These steps help to find some aspects and points that were missed the first time reading the data (Van den Hoonaard 2015). Next, to identify a

category, theme, or pattern for these codes and to move to the next stage of analysis and thematic analysis, I made notes, through annotation, on how some codes seem to interrelate. The repeated codes helped me categorize the coding as analytic reflections (Saldaña 2010). For example, coding for oppressive organizational actors and laws could also show the political opportunity structure. Or, codes on women's clothes, that mainly included the hijab as being oppressive, or in some cases as a choice, and various styles of hijab such as black chador, burqa or coats and headscarves, can be categorized as women's dress, and in the discourse on representation of women.

I used the comparative figures to compare the codes and the usage frequency of the words. To create a better understanding of the data, I created different matrix figures for each newspaper, for each time-period and for each of the main themes. I also created matrix figures to analyze if there are any differences based on the countries these newspapers are published in.

To analyze my data, I inserted the data into the latest version of NVivo (NVivo 12 Pro). I created the codes and subcodes (nodes on NVivo) and cases (codes for each time-period and each newspaper). Cases help to classify the coded data to create a matrix on NVivo and analyze the data. Before starting the coding process and reading the data, I categorized the data into texts and images. Next, I classified texts and images for each time-period. I generated coding matrices in NVivo to compare different aspects of the results and to compare results across time periods and, across newspapers. Generating these matrices helped me to understand and analyze the results better. The coding and analysis in this research is based on qualitative discourse analysis. I read through the data, including texts and images, and manually coded the data according to this coding process. As I discuss the results in chapters 4 and 5, I present some data

as examples. I also present quantify coding references as frequencies in order to summarize the results.

Norman Fairclough (2003b) discusses that critical discourse analysis has three different levels. In the first level, discourse is examined and analyzed as text. In the second level, discourse is analyzed as the level of production and interpretation of the text, and the third level, the discourse is being analyzed in macro social, cultural, political or historical levels (Fairclough 2001, 2003b). My analysis is closest to the third level/dimension of analysis described by Fairclough.

Methodological Reflexivity

Physical objects, texts, documents, visual documents, and pre-existing reference materials can be sources of data for sociological research without the need for interaction with human participants. This type of research with no direct human participation is called unobtrusive research (Van den Hoonaard 2015, pp. 96–97). According to Van Den Hoonard (2015), news has the power to "shape our understandings of the social world" (p. 103) and might also provide "specific frames to manage the analysis and determine what should be discussed and how" (Van den Hoonaard 2015, p. 104). However, after writing and publishing documents, the consequences of people's interpretations of them and their reactions are not predictable.

There were multiple advantages to using these methods, such as how they do not have time and space restrictions. I have access to the data, and I conducted my research at a time that was appropriate for me as a researcher. I did not have to be worried about going to Iran or setting up an interview with participants in my research. A fundamental limitation of these methods was that there was no communication with the people who took these pictures or wrote

the articles to understand what factors impacted them in taking or choosing those pictures or analyzing or writing the articles. I have not communicated with people who produced the media content nor the people who are the audience and receive the media content. Several different reasons might change a framing process and media content production about a movement, as this process is not a fixed, stable or unchanged process (Benford and Snow 2000). This inference problem is the main limitation of my research. Moreover, the researcher who must recognize "unintended and uncontrolled influences on the researched situation" in visual sociology needs "to be knowledgeable of techniques" (Pauwels 2010, p. 562).

Another limitation of this method in my research was the asymmetry between the *New York Times* and the other three outlets, especially *USA Today*. The number of articles that came up in a search from the *NYT* was about 13 times more than the other American newspaper, *USA Today*; this number was 6.5 and 4.5 times more compared to *National Post* and *The Globe and Mail*. Although this symmetry itself could indicate some aspects of discourses, it does not allow for comparison of the results of the newspapers by number in many cases. One of the main reasons why the *NYT* has a larger number of articles is that in both time-periods, the *NYT* has had living correspondents in Iran: Nazila Fathi and Thomas Erdbrink. Another reason for the higher number of articles for the *NYT* and also *The Globe and Mail* might be their political viewpoint and coverage of more topics about Iran rather than political news.

The complexity of the cultural and historical context of Iran's society and Iranian women is important to consider. Reflexivity is a substantial part of this research method, and thus I recognized and used reflexivity and my positionality in this research to explain the relevant cultural and historical backgrounds and complexities (Kirby et al. 2006). The ability to understand the symbols, language, and cultural signs in these images is a strength of my

positionality. I have both insider and outsider positionality in this research. I am an insider because of my first language, Persian, and also because of my experience with participating in social movements such as the student movement or the Green Movement of 2009. At the time of the Green Movement of 2009, I was a graduate student at the University of Tehran, completing my master's program in the political science department. I was active in all student activities and protests on campus and dormitory protests.

I know the cultural codes, symbolic signs and various aspects of Iranian women's situation inside of Iran, which help me to understand and analyze the meaning of images. In cases where images and texts were more inclusive in terms of different aspects of Iranian women's lives or where they were not, my positionality helped me understand the relation between the texts and images and various pictures of Iran. However, there might be some knowledge about Iranian women's situation that might have caused me not to question or explain, while a complete outsider might examine those issues.

Moreover, I had outsider positionality because I am conducting my research in Canada, and my data, including the texts and images, are from Canadian and American newspapers in my second language, English. Outsider positionality leads me to question some of the taken-for-granted sentences that are stereotypical. However, I might not have been familiar with some terms that journalists use in these newspapers or with the politics or cultural codes used to explain them in more substantial power relations. Moreover, because of my positionality, I might have been more focused on ethnic- or race-based inequality discourses used in the articles.

Another ethical concern in this research is political problems, particularly for me as a researcher. Publishing this research might cause some political issues, as going to Iran might not

be safe for me as a researcher. My research is about the portrayal of Iranian women in US and Canadian media and the images, activities involves, or some discussions might be in conflict with Islamic ideology and laws of the Iranian regime. To prevent potential political problems, the focus of my research is not on suppressive laws against women in the country.

Moreover, since I should be careful about using media images of people if they can be identified by the Iranian regime, and reproducing the images, I should darken any images of the faces of women active in social movements. Although they are images that already have been used in mass media, I still should consider the safety of those people inside of Iran when I reproduce their pictures in my research. There is the possibility of shaping "the public identities and subjectivities of researchers and research participants by institutional research discourse" (Halse and Honey 2007, p. 345) and the likelihood of maintaining colonizing power. Researcher ethics considers any possible danger or effects of the research process on participants and related people, including the researchers themselves and especially vulnerable people.

Conclusion

To address my research question, I performed critical discourse analysis of the two most circulated Canadian national newspapers and the two most circulated US national newspapers. I used some predetermined codes, such as social movement actors and social movement tactics, in my coding process. I also created new codes based on the data as I was reading the data and reviewing the images. The critical discourse analysis of the texts and images in this study has benefits and limitations. The accessibility of the data for the researcher is the main advantage of this method, and not communicating with people who wrote the articles or took or chose the pictures for the newspapers to understand their thoughts and reasons for their writing or picture is the main limitation.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS: DISCOURSE

Introduction

Inclusive representations of Iranian women can be analyzed in relation to various factors, such as whether they encompass different aspects of women's lives, including being socially, economically or politically active or being victims of oppressive laws. When a text or image depicts economically powerful women, it affects the audience's perception of the level of oppression in that society. Women's clothes can also be significant to describing women's level of oppression, and women's clothing can be portrayed as oppressive or freely chosen. Iranian women's clothes have been represented mainly as a limitation and oppressive and this misrecognition of women's clothing has not changed significantly in the hegemonic dominant discourse in media.

The first time-period of the data is from September 1, 2001, to May 30, 2009. The second time-period is from June 1, 2009 to January 22, 2018. I have categorized my codes based on six main themes in three broader categories drawn from my theoretical framework and research question, which help to understand and analyze media coverage: 'discourse' (1. Iranian Women's General Representation; 2. Dress), 'political opportunity structure' (1. Oppressive Actors; 2. Laws), and 'women's social movement participation' (1. Social Movement Actors; 2. Social Movement Tactics). In this chapter, I discuss the result of the texts and images[4] of the four outlets, in the two time-periods, to examine how media discourses are depicting Iranian women's general representation and specifically their clothing. I first examine the results of the

[4] As Memorial University of Newfoundland does not have a Fair Use policy (for dissertations as they will be accessible in the university's library for public), in this dissertation I cannot publish any of the images from the data.

texts of the four newspapers' articles, and in the second section, I discuss the results of the images.

I use the frequency of coding references to present data in summary form. However, the coding process was based on the qualitative methods. Also, the numbers of codes are not being compared across newspapers. The number of codes only show the frequency of the coded references for a specific topic in each specific newspaper and each time-period. This quantification of the coding references provides a general overview of each newspapers' articles on a specific topic and in a specific time-period. However, the coding is based on qualitative discourse analysis.

Discourse

First Time-period 2001-2009

The Globe and Mail

1. **General representation: Not a Negative Image**

The number of coded references[5] (10 positive coded references, 6 negative coded references) shows a generally positive representation of women in this time period in *The Globe and Mail*. However, as some articles are longer or have more coded paragraphs, the number of articles indicates an almost equal number of positive and negative representations in this time period. I use normative words such as 'positive/resistance' or 'negative' to describe the main message (if any) that can be perceived from the text or image about Iranian women (whether the article is talking about specific cases or the general situation of women). What I categorize as

[5] In terms of images, no images from this time period were available for *The Globe and Mail*

‘positive/resistance’ media discourse is mainly representing women as people who are fighting for their rights and resisters of social codes and expectations. What I categorize as ‘negative/victim or oppressed’ media discourse is mainly representing women as oppressed people who are victims of an oppressive regime.

Although the media representation of women and their situation might depict these women’s life as either positive/resistant or negative/victim/oppressed, the everyday life of women can include multiple aspects simultaneously: positive, resistance against oppression, or victim and oppressed. It is the same for hijab and dress as it is a choice for some women, but is an oppressive law and form of clothing for other women. The dichotomous representation of women’s lives as either positive/resistance or negative/victim is not necessarily reflecting the complexity of these women’s lives and experiences.

As is shown in Figure 4.1, the general representation of Iranian women in *The Globe and Mail* articles’ texts is more positive/resistance than negative/victim or oppressed. For example, in this newspaper and this time-period, in positive/resistance texts, the authors mainly write about women who are going to universities and are educated or women who resist or are against oppressive laws such as the compulsory hijab. They use specific words such as ‘brave’ or ‘educated’. In other cases, they describe how women are freely, like men, enjoying sports such as bicycling or riding jet skis. Here is an example of a positive/resistance representation of the text of an article from *The Globe and Mail* in this time-period:

> Women make up 65 percent of Iran’s university students. “I wanted to write a book that would correct Western stereotypes of Iran, especially the image of Muslim women as docile, forlorn creatures,” she says (Margaret Wente, Bravest woman in Iran, 1 June 2006).

Or:

> And although the mullahs are trying to clamp down again on immodest dress, young women are dressing far more freely than they were a few years ago. They favour tight, form-fitting manteaus (the overcoat that is required in public) in all the latest colours. They're wearing sandals without stockings, and their hair is escaping from their headscarves. Makeup has made a comeback. Can you have social, cultural and economic liberalization without political freedom? Iran will be one of the test cases. And even though the regime is cracking down on the Net, the young Webloggers believe they can't crack down forever. "For sure it won't last too long," IranianGirl wrote recently. "Their time is over (Margaret Wente, The story of the Internet and the frustrated mullahs, 20 May 2003).

However, in an almost equal number of articles, the general representation of women was negative/victim or oppressed. These texts show a very oppressed image of women who do not have basic human rights, mainly because of their gender. For example, the concept of 'rape' is used to show that Iran's government is anti-human rights. These are some examples from these articles:

> Satrapi keeps the tone light, even when the topic is a 13-year-old forced into an arranged marriage with a 69-year-old man, or the fact that Iranian society views unmarried women who have lost their virginity as untouchables (Jessa Crispin, Not your average kaffeeklatsch, 23 April 2005)

Or

> Rape, torture, and lies; Dr. Shahram Azam, an unassuming, intense man in his late 30s, had barely started his emergency-room shift when he admitted a female patient on a stretcher from Tehran's Evin prison (Arne Ruth and Haideh Dargahi, 31 March 2005)

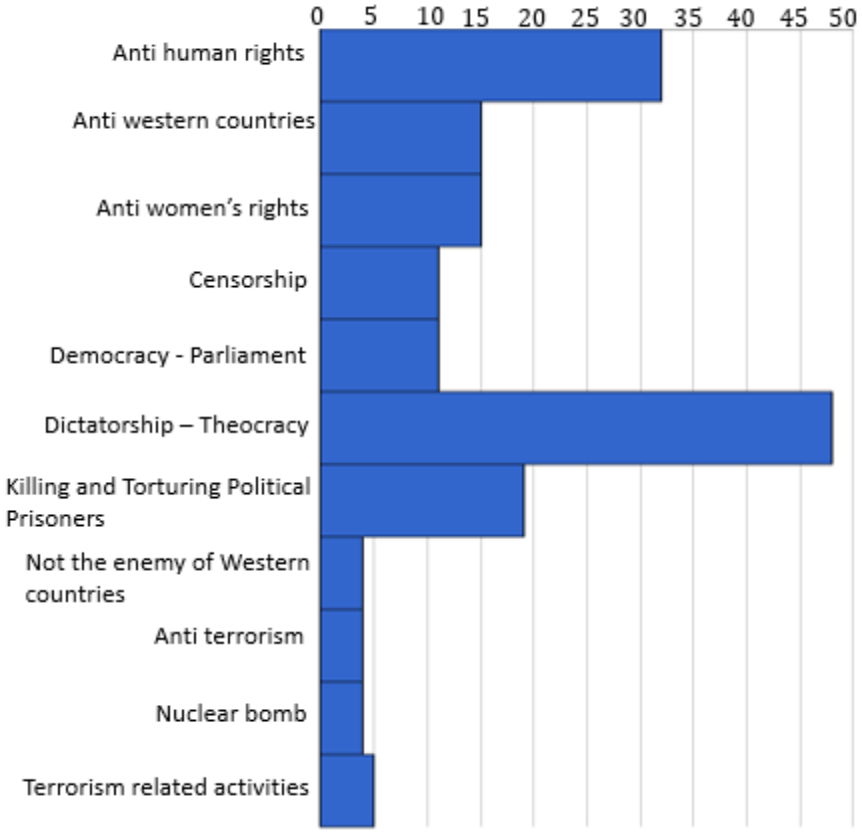

Figure 4.1: The Number of Coded References for Iran's General Political & Social Representation. *The Globe and Mail*, 2001–2009

In Figure 4.1, I used the number of coded references to show how Iran has been represented as an anti-women's rights country as well as an anti-human rights and dictatorial country. The significant point taken is that Iran being anti-women's rights is one of the dominant themes of these articles. Overall, the representation of Iranian women in this time period in *The Globe and Mail* articles includes positive/resistance images and also negative/victim or oppressed images.

2. Clothing/Dress: Not a positive image

The topic of dress styles and women's clothes is discussed in the articles in both positive/resistance and negative/victim or oppressed ways. Some of them discuss the fashionable new styles adopted by Iranian women, and some of them talk about their clothes/the hijab as oppressive tools that make women uncomfortable. Discussing women's clothes in most of the articles and representing their clothes as a signifier of their freedom, oppression, or gender equality, in general, has been a significant dimension of the dominant discourse. People's clothes can contain direct or indirect (or both) messages that demonstrate their self-expression, obligations they face or their situation. Dominant systems can employ this function of clothing in many ways. For example, a class-based domination system can relate certain clothing to a certain economic class. In the same way, gender, race or ethnic-based oppression systems can define a certain clothing style as oppressive for women or as an expression of their freedom (Barthes 2006). For example, in these oppression systems, the hijab can be considered a symbol of oppression for women. However, in my coding, the definitions of oppressive and progressive are based on the resistance of women against the above expectations.

I have coded the dress discussions in texts (and images) as progressive or oppressive. The texts coded as oppressive indicate some sort of oppression that has been created through

women's clothes or the clothes-related laws in Iran. In these texts, women, because of their clothes and the hijab, are the victims of an oppressive regime. For example, some texts relate the hijab with women's opportunities in sports and claim that the hijab restricts women's participation in exercise and sports. In contrast, the progressive coded texts describe women's clothes as beautiful, fashionable, colourful or a free choice of women to wear, and, in general, their clothes are not seen as putting any limitations on women's activities or their power in society. In these texts, women show resistance against gender or ethnic-based stereotypes and assumptions and demonstrate their power and happiness in different ways. In this time period, most of the representations of women's clothes are oppressive (17 coded references in 11 articles) rather than positive/resistance (4 coded references in 2 articles).

For example:

> Ms. Ebadi, whose colourful, sky-blue pant suit yesterday was a long way from the dark chadors often required of women in Muslim countries, has represented numerous, high-profile political prisoners and other victims of Iran's hard-line leaders (Rod Mickleburgh, Nobel Peace Prize an honour, a burden; Iranian lawyer feels a duty to face those who misunderstand or abuse Islam, 22 April 2004)

In the above example, the author mentions the contrast in the clothes worn by Ms. Ebadi (the Iranian Noble Peace Prize winner) inside and outside of Iran by describing the 'chador' as required clothing in Islamic countries such as Iran, where Ms. Ebadi is from. There is no explanation in such articles about how the chador is not obligatory in Iran (Mehran 1999, p. 207) or how Ms. Ebadi was not wearing the chador when she was in Iran. In this text, Ebadi's clothes outside of Iran are described as colourful and modern, but the context is in contrast with the clothes worn by women inside of Iran, which are described erroneously as obligatory dark chadors.

Another example of a more negative/victim or oppressed description of the hijab as oppressive in Iran is:

> Today, Mohammed Reza Khatami and his chador-hating wife, Zahra Eshraghi, are at the forefront of a power struggle with the strict Islamic religious political system ushered in by the 1979 revolution concerning its treatment of dissenters and advocates of a modern, democratic society (Estanislao Oziewicz, Power couple lead freedom fight; Both are at forefront of Iran's struggle between democracy and a strict Islamic political system, 13 January 2004).

In the above example, the chador is described as both obligatory and hated by people who are advocating for a modern, democratic society or people who are considered as moderate Muslims.. The chador is not obligatory in Iran, and most Iranian women do not wear a chador. Moreover, Zahra Eshraghi (Khomeini's granddaughter) has always voluntarily chosen to wear the chador. Zahra Eshraghi, in an interview published in the *New York Times* in 2003 (April 2), states that the chador has become "a symbol of revolution", "people have lost their respect for it" and that she "only wear it because of her family status" (Sciolino 2003, p. Section A, Page 6 of the National edition). Therefore, due to the culture of her family, she wears chador to respect her family. This is another example of how the hijab in Iran has been represented mainly as the obligatory chador. There are different hijab styles in Iran, but chador is still a choice for many women. At the same time, although many women might choose to wear hijab or chador, the hijab is obligatory for many other women in Iran.

An example that shows the hijab situation more inclusively in terms of different aspects and styles is:

> People now get TV from all over. They can flip back and forth between the chador-clad newsreader and fashion TV. And

> although the mullahs are trying to clamp down again on immodest dress, young women are dressing far more freely than they were a few years ago. They favour tight, form-fitting manteaus (the overcoat that is required in public) in all the latest colours. They're wearing sandals without stockings, and their hair is escaping from their headscarves. Makeup has made a comeback (Margaret Wente, The story of the Internet and the frustrated mullahs, 20 May 2003).

Margaret Wente, the writer of the above passage, a conservative columnist who is not known for advocacy of progressive causes or women's movements in Canada and the US, is the author of many of the articles on women's situation in Iran. However, the above example shows another aspect of women's clothing, as it states that women wear some sort of scarf (and not a chador) and that their hair can be easily seen. It also describes women's clothing as colourful and that some women wear tight jeans or other clothes that are different than dark chadors.

The focus on the clothing worn by some parts of the population and how it is completely different from North American norms is significant as a form of misrecognition. Representing the whole population based on one part of the population creates an incomplete image that only represents one part of Iranian society. There may be different reasons why media are more interested in representing the part of Iranian society that is different from North American society, such as to reinforce the image of 'the other' as Said (1979) explains, to maintain and legitimize the superiority and/or power of the West over the East. Moreover, as Barthes (2006) maintains, clothing can convey meanings such as freedom or oppression. Power systems, through hegemonic discourses, can create and connect meanings such as being a victim and oppressed to a clothing item such as the hijab. This hegemonic system, through misrecognition of the other aspects of a society such as wearing the hijab being a choice for a group of women

and not a limitation, reinforces the gender, race, ethnic inequality systems' definitions of clothing (Fraser 1998, 2000; Fraser and Honneth 2003).

Moreover, as Borrero et al. (2012) note, the othering process and homogenization also can reinforce each other. "Othering" can reinforce "the homogenization of ethnicity and race and justifies the halting of multidimensional cultural identities" (Borrero et al. 2012, p. 4). For example, "when ethnic minority youth are "othered" they are labeled as being different from the norm, they are lumped together as a group, and the complexity or diversity of their identities is not fully realized" (Borrero et al. 2012, p. 4).

Moreover, representing women based on their clothing and making assumptions based on their ethnicity shows the intersectionality between gender and ethnicity. It also demonstrates how representations of politics and ethnicity can be gendered. Representations of women's clothing, either when they are depicting activists or ordinary women in any social and political situation, can be connected and based on gendered assumptions. For example, a women's rights activist dresses differently from a Muslim woman when she has a choice (for example, Ebadi outside of Iran).

Overall, women's clothes have been described mainly as oppressive, dark, or imposing limitations on women's activities rather than being beautiful, fashionable, colourful or simply a choice for many women in Iran. Although the hijab law imposes limitations on many women's activities or is oppressive to them, at the same time, many women in Iran choose to wear chador or hijab in general. Focusing mainly or only on some aspects of the hijab and ignoring or misrepresenting other aspects can lead to misrecognition or oppression for particular social groups. The intersectionality of gender and ethnicity, and also gender and social movements (actors in this context) can be understood from this part of the data. Hijab is compulsory in Iran;

however, it has always been the choice for many women as the majority of the population in the country are Muslim. Describing the cultural traditional and religious clothes of women as oppressive, and representing the population that is wearing more similar to the Western-style clothes as a positive change, also shows that how the gender and ethnicity are being used to reinforce the 'othering' process and the superiority of the West on the East. Moreover, it can show how gender- and ethnic-based assumptions can be used and reinforced by the media to describe the politics and policies of a country.

National Post

1. **General Representation: Mainly Oppressed**

There are no positive/resistance representations of the general situation of Iranian women in the *National Post* articles from this time-period. In most cases, women's situation was described as oppressive, and it was reported that women are being killed or tortured because of honor killing crimes. The articles discuss how the hijab and Islamic laws are creating limitations for women's activities, such as banning women from participating in sports and the Olympic games. They discuss how the hijab has created limitations on even the hearing and vision of women. Most parts of the texts are generally about the discrimination and limitations faced by women. For example:

> That leaves the mullahs as strong as ever to maintain a system that is extraordinarily discriminatory against women (Steven Edwards, UN selective about protecting women: Islamist extremism at root of discrimination, 10 March 2007).

However, as the results of the number of coded references (Figure 4.2) show, the articles do not focus on Iran's anti-women's rights policies as much as they focus on the dictatorship, anti-human rights, killing and torturing of political prisoners and being anti-western.

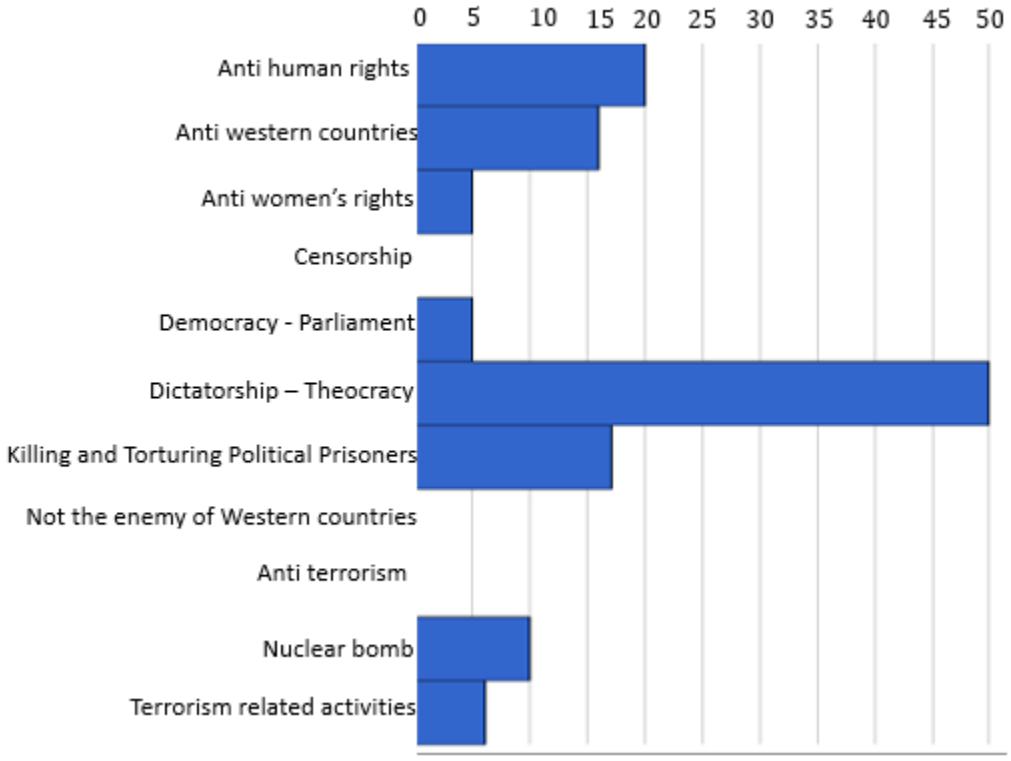

Figure 4.2: The Number of Coded References for Iran's General Political and Social Representation. *National Post* 2001-2009

One of the reasons why the *National Post* articles are focused on the torture of political prisoners, anti-human rights issues and anti-western perspectives is that Zahra Kazemi, an Iranian-Canadian journalist, died in Evin Prison in Iran in 2003. Her death became one of the main issues in the Iran-Canada relationship that led to the closing of the embassies of the two countries and their political disconnection in 2011.

The complete negative/victim or oppressed representation of women in this time-period and the focus on the political situation and Zahra Kazemi's case in Iran shows how political disagreements between countries can affect the representation of gender equality and women's situation in the media. Overall, focusing on the negative/victim or oppressed representations of women, especially in this time-period, can be seen in some of the other outlets as well. However, what makes the result of these data different than the other newspapers is that there were no positive/resistance representations of women in these data. Not including the significant aspects of women's lives in a society leads to misrecognition and reinforces oppression against women in that society.

2. Clothing/Dress: Mainly Oppressive

Considering that the representation of Iranian women was only negative/victim or oppressed in this time-period, the use of clothing in media representations in the *National Post* is predictable. There were no positive/resistance representations of Iranian women's clothes in the *National Post* from 2001–2009 (18 coded reference as negative/oppressive). In the representations of the hijab, the authors discuss the hijab as an oppressive tool that restricts women. For example, here is the title of an article:

> How can you compete while wearing a hijab?: Muslim countries send few female athletes to Games (Amir Taheri, 17 August 2004).

Many of the articles about Iran in this time-period in the *National Post* were written by Amir Taheri and included situations that have not happened, such as passing this law in Iran's parliament: :

> The law mandates the government to make sure that all Iranians wear "standard Islamic garments" designed to remove ethnic and class distinctions reflected in clothing, and to eliminate "the influence of the infidel" on the way Iranians, especially, the young dress. It also envisages separate dress codes for religious minorities, Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians, who will have to adopt distinct colour schemes to make them identifiable in public. The new codes would enable Muslims to easily recognize non-Muslims so that they can avoid shaking hands with them by mistake, and thus becoming najis (unclean) (Amir Taheri, A colour code for Iran's 'infidels', 19 May 2006).

Such a law (the above mentioned), or even a similar law, has never been passed by the Iranian parliament. Also, all Iranians do not wear the same clothes designed by the government, and ethnic groups do not wear any sign or colour to show their religion (Melman 2006; Wattie 2006). Many of Amir Taheri's claims have been proven wrong by other Middle East specialists (Cohler-Esses 2006), and he is one of the authors who wrote several times about Iran in the *National Post* in this time-period. The above-mentioned example and similar data in my research demonstrate the 'misrecognition' of Iranian people, specifically women, in Western media (Fraser 1998, 2000; Fraser and Honneth 2003).

Throughout the limited representation of Iranian women in the *National Post* during 2001–2009, clothing is represented as negative/victim or oppressed and creating limitations for

women's activities. In terms of the general representation of women's clothes, both Canadian newspapers have had a more negative/victim or oppressed representation. However, there are two main differences among them in this regard. First, *The Globe and Mail* had some positive/resistance depictions such as descriptions of how young women dress more freely or how women design and wear their scarves fashionably. In contrast, there were no positive/resistance discussions about women's clothes in the data from the *National Post*.

Second, the language used in *The Globe and Mail* is less directly negative. For example, in the *National Post*, the articles specifically discuss how the hijab has negative/victim or oppressed effects on women's sports and limits women's activities, as well as how the Iranian regime is creating more restrictions related to the hijab for women and how women get punished if they do not follow the strict hijab laws. However, the language used to discuss women's clothing negatively in *The Globe and Mail* is less directly negative. For example, there are mentions of a movie that shows how women dress like men so they can go to stadiums to watch soccer or how there is one place (Kish Island) where women can dress more freely. Although women's clothes are very different in every city and town based on the women's choice, and some dress more freely, while others choose the chador, the language that describes an oppressive situation for women refers to the entire country and does not depict absolute negativity and the oppression of the whole population.

Each of the small number of images from the *National Post* portrays a negative/victim or oppressed image of women and Iran in general. For example, one image is a picture of Zahra Kazemi with her camera in her hands. Kazemi was an Iranian-Canadian photographer who was arrested in Iran and died in prison in 2003. Her death was one of the main reasons why the

relationship between Canada and Iran diminished until the two countries broke off their connection in 2011 (Blanchfield 2013).

The other two images in the *National Post* show women in a black chador and black maghnaeh-mantou. In both pictures, there is a big painted wall behind the women. In one of the pictures, the wall behind a woman who is walking shows a painting of one of the most powerful clerics and politicians since the Islamic Revolution: Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani. The other picture shows two women walking by a painted wall, and the painting on the wall shows a satirical mural image of the Statue of Liberty and the US flag. The explanation on the picture says the wall belongs to the building where the US embassy was located before the revolution.

The images in this time period in the *National Post* do not include positive aspect of women's lives. They focus on limited aspects and mainly oppression. Not that oppression does not exist in women's lives in Iran, but there are also empowered women and positive situations. Images from the *National Post* in this time-period demonstrate the hegemonic discourse that links the hijab with oppression. They also represent a negative/victim or oppressed image of women who are victims of an oppressive regime. All this information shows a misrecognition of women's situation in Iran as they are not inclusive of different styles or situations of women; such as women that wearing different types of clothing and/or women who are active and powerful in society and fighting for their demands. Overall, the *National Post* images focus on showing a more negative/victim or oppressed image of Iranian people and specifically women that is comparable with the results from their texts.

The New York Times

1. **General Representation: More Inclusive**

The *New York Times* is different compared to the others in terms of the number of articles about Iranian women and also some aspects of the results. One of the reasons why *The New York Times* is different than other outlets studied in this research and why the texts present a more inclusive view of people's lives is that *The New York Times*, for most of the two time-periods in this study, has had correspondents that live in Iran: Nazila Fathi (2001–2009) and Thomas Erdbrink, who has been living in Tehran since 2012 and has been working for many newspapers including *The New York Times* in the past decade; It is worth mentioning that Erdbrink's permission to work in Iran has been revoked by the Iranian government since 2019 (Cunningham 2019). Fathi, and other journalists in Iran at the time of the 2009 movement, were asked by the Iranian government to stop reporting news on the protests; she left Iran in 2009 due to restrictions on her work (CNN 2009; Fathi 2010). For example, there are many positive/resistance representations of Iranian women in the articles in this newspaper and in this time period. The number of references coded as 'positive/resistance' representations is 51 (out of 65) compared to 14 'negative/victim or oppressed' coded references.

In positive/resistance representations of Iranian women, the authors mention some aspects of these women's lives that are not usually shown on the news. For example, they discuss the high rate of university education among women, how women have good jobs and good incomes, the power (through financial agreements of the marriage that can be used as a bargaining tool) to get divorced if they want (in spite of not having the right to get a divorce), and their activities in areas where the government tries to restrict them such as fashion, beauty

and sports. They also discuss women's political activities in government and parliament and their campaigns. Moreover, the intellectual activities of Iranian women, women directors and their movies, and the high rate of women writers and their publications are topics of the articles. They also discuss the power of women in the royal families before the Islamic Revolution and throughout history, which is different than might be expected from the descriptions of harems that are prominent in the history of Iran.

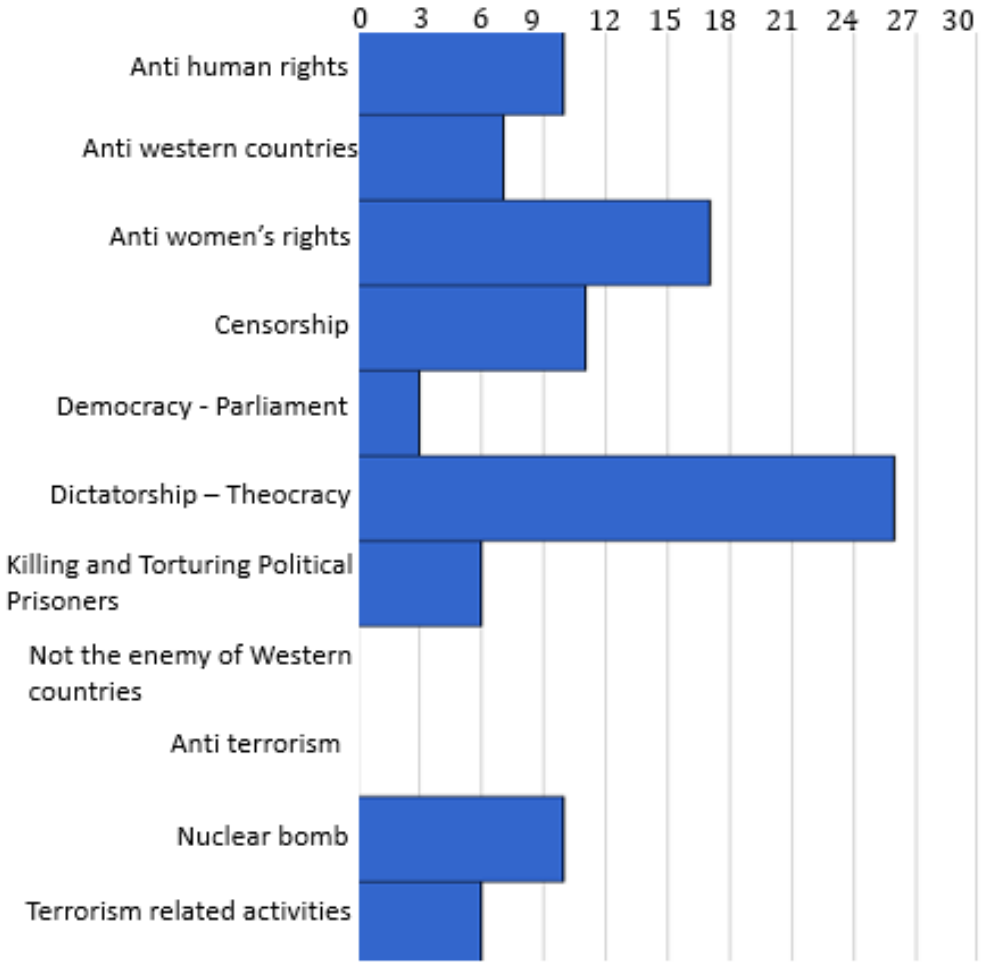

Figure 4.3: The Number of Coded References for Iran's General Representation, *The New York Times*, 2001–2009

Overall, the articles from *The New York Times* in this time-period are focused more on the everyday lives of women. However, the number of coded references (as is shown in Figure 4.3) shows that after the dictatorship, representations of Iran as being anti-women's rights are more important in the articles in general. *The New York Times,* along with representing some of the positive/resistance aspects of women's lives in Iran, has represented Iran as an anti-women's rights country. This asymmetry can indicate the difference between the population and the totalitarian regime of Iran. It also can demonstrate that although women's lives or situations have some positive/resistance aspects, they are facing widespread oppression from the government and Iran's patriarchal society.

2. Clothing/Dress: Less Fashionable

Despite including more positive/resistance aspects of women's lives in the portrayals of women, when it comes to clothes, Iranian women's clothing has been represented mainly as oppressive. Women's clothes are represented more as an oppressive topic (28 coded references) than described as fashionable or beautiful (5 coded references). In negative/victim or oppressed coded texts, the authors, although they sometimes mention that some women dress freely, focus on the oppressive aspects of the hijab. For example:

> One day in spring 2007, Ms. Moaveni reports: "The authorities launched the most ferocious crackdown on 'un-Islamic' dress in over a decade. Overnight, they revised the tacit rules governing women's dress. The closets of millions of women across the country contained nothing but short, tailored coats; ankle-length pants; and bright headscarves. Suddenly, these styles were grounds for arrest. In the days that followed, the police detained 150,000 women for failing to abide by the official dress code" (Michiko Kakutani, Life in Iran, Where Freedom Is Deferred, 14 April 2009).

Or:

> Iranian women, whose ability to dress and speak freely is usually limited to the confine of their own living rooms, can now write about their loves and lusts using online diaries.(Nazila Fathi, The World; Taboo Surfing: Click Here for Iran. Aug. 4, 2002)

In terms of the overall result of this part of the data, *The New York Times* has represented the hijab or women's clothing in general as oppressive rather than positive/resistance, fashionable or discussing the different styles or choices of people. However, in terms of the language used to describe the situations or to discuss the hijab or clothing in general, this newspaper is more similar to *The Globe and Mail*. The authors describe some positive/resistance points about women's situation, and during their discussions, they mention oppressive aspects of women's clothes. For instance, in the above example, the author describes the active blogger women as not having any freedom to speak or dress freely in their day-to-day life.

The images that *The New York Times* has published are both positive/resistance (6) and negative/victim or oppressed (7). One image is of a woman with a brightly coloured scarf holding some books and looking up books in a bookstore. Another image includes a picture of Anousheh Ansari when she landed on earth. Ansari is the first Iranian and the first self-funded woman in the world who flew to the International Space Station. The other image is a picture of Azadeh Moaveni, an Iranian-American journalist. All these above-mentioned pictures show powerful images of women with or without a hijab. In another picture, a group of young women are talking to a journalist, while they are all wearing white short clothes, colourful scarves and

laughing. One picture shows a group of female physical education students playing golf. Another picture shows a group of young men and women hanging out and laughing.

At the same time, there are some pictures that show women wearing black chadors and whose faces are not clear in the picture. In some cases, there are pictures of the Islamic Revolution's leader Khomeini and posters of Supreme Leader Khamenei in the background. In one case, women are shown with sad and angry expressions on their faces, and the background shows a flock of birds flying above their heads This picture (by Lorraine Adams, published in Essay about Muslim Women's Memoirs – Beyond the Burka, Jan 6, 2006) is very symbolic, as it shows that the hijab has created limitations on women's freedom. As previously stated, although the hijab is a choice for many women in Iran, it also has been oppressive to women who do not believe in it. Therefore, all these pictures, positive or negative, represent limited aspects of women's situations. One picture also shows a woman covered in a black chador crying (praying) in a haram (a religious place). Another picture shows a picture from the 19th century in which a group of women are sitting and posing for the picture (all with a hijab), and the caption says these women are the king's wives. Moreover, there are some pictures that show only men. For example, some show young men hanging out in a mall in Tehran, while another picture shows men in a stadium cheering for Iran's national soccer team. And one picture shows Ahmadinejad sitting in a chair in parliament.

All these above-mentioned images represent some aspects of women's lives and their situation in Iran. If a newspaper focuses only and mainly on specific aspects of their life and situation, it will lead to misrecognition of other aspects of these people's life. There are many situations where women might be excluded from a social or political situation. The hijab which

might have different styles might be a choice for some women and might be oppressive to some others. As newspapers represent a more inclusive image and cover various aspects of these women's situations, the overall represented image in that newspaper is more comprehensive.

USA Today

1. **General Representation: Limited and Narrow**

The representation of Iranian women in *USA Today* articles is not frequent, and the few representations found are mostly negative/victim or oppressed. The results show 10 negative/victim or oppressed coded references, and 6 positive/resistance references. In terms of frequency, the representation of Iran, in general, is less frequent than in other newspapers. In these limited representations, Iran is shown more as an anti-western and anti-women's rights country. This result is very similar to the other three newspapers, as Iran's dictatorship and it being 'anti-women's rights' are considered the most important aspects of the country. In general, limited representation of Iranian women and not representing various aspects of women's lives might lead to misrecognition of some aspects of women's situations. However, there are more negative representation coding references than coding references for positive representations. The inclusion of various positive and negative aspects shows a more comprehensive image compared to the *National Post*, which represented mainly one aspect (women as victims).

2. **Clothing/Dress: Limited and Limiting**

The results of the representations of Iranian women's clothes are not very different compared to the general representation of Iranian women. Throughout the limited representations of Iranian women in *USA Today*, similar to the other three outlets, the discussion about clothing was more negative or oppressed (10 coded reference) than

positive/resistance (5 coded references). However, the coded texts that indicate a positive/resistance, beautiful or fashionable representation of women's clothes are close to the texts that describe their clothes as oppressive. In some parts of the texts, the authors discuss both the oppressive aspects of the hijab law as well as how women have changed their clothing style during the years after the revolution and how their clothes can vary and be in a different style based on their own choice. For example:

> Officially, that means either a full-length chador (a shapeless, tentlike cloth, usually black) or a headscarf, trousers and long- sleeved, lightweight coat called a manteau. But as foreign tourists chafing beneath their unaccustomed garb discover, the country's shifting interpretations of acceptable attire illustrate the complex realities of Iranian women themselves. On the streets of modern neighborhoods in cities such as Tehran and Shiraz, young fashionistas wear thigh-high, figure-hugging manteaus, their peroxided tresses spilling out of skimpy silk scarves, while visitors push the envelope with ball caps and gauzy Indian tunics. Yet elsewhere, particularly in conservative Mashhad and Yazd, the black chador and maqna-e (a nunlike, one-piece garment that covers the head and shoulders) are ubiquitous (Laura Bly, Lifting the veil on 'modest dress', 7 November 2008).

Or:

> In a city that only a few years ago was almost monochromatic -- full of women draped head to toe in black - women and girls this winter are sporting pink coats, pink sweaters, pink head scarves, shoes and bags (Barbara Slavin, 'Pink revolution' just one example that paints a picture of theocracy that is not quite so black-and-white, 1 March 2005).

Overall, the general result on women's clothes, similar to the other three outlets, indicates a more oppressive situation. The number of articles and data that represent women in this newspaper is limited and is similar to that of the *National Post*. For *USA Today*, in this

time-period, the actual images were not accessible. However, Factiva provided an explanation of the photos (if any) of the twenty-nine articles with the captions. I collected six explanation cases for this time-period and their captions (if any). One caption mentions an increasingly popular drink; it describes a Coca Cola delivery truck and says that this American soft drink was not available before in Tehran, and now it is available. Another caption explains how people are happy with the clothing rules, and now women can dress more freely and choose colourful clothes. The other images talk about Shirin Ebadi (activist and Noble Peace Prize winner), Azadeh Moaveni's book Lipstick Jihad, and Azar Nafisi's book Reading Lolita in Tehran. There is one caption that talks about criticizing women that leaves their home and mentions an Arabic full name of a woman who spends most days at home with her children. Overall, *USA Today*'s explanations and the captions of the pictures provided are similar to the results of its text; they represent both negative/victim or oppressed and positive/resistance images of women and people in general, such as positive images of women happily wearing clothes of whatever colour they want, as well as negative/victim or oppressed images like an Arabic woman having to stay at home most days. However, as the discussion on this topic (Iranian women) is limited in these articles, and they mostly focus on the victim or negative aspects of women's life and their clothing, the overall images are not completely inclusive of most aspects of these women's lives. .

Second Time-period 2009- 2018

The Globe and Mail

1. **General Representation: A More Positive Image**

   Iranian women are represented positively in the articles from this time-period. The

difference between the positive/resistance (19 coded references, out of 21) and the negative/victim or oppressed (2 coded references, out of 21) representations is larger than in the first time-period. Similar to the previous time period, I use normative words such as 'positive/resistance' or 'negative/victim or oppressed' to describe the main message (if any) that can be perceived from the text or image about Iranian women (whether the article is discussing specific cases or the general situation of women). Positive/resistance representations show women as socially, economically, and politically active and as resisters of social codes and expectations. However, the negative/victim or oppressed representations mainly depict women as victims of an oppressive regime who do not have rights or power. For example, in this newspaper, where the text is coded as 'positive/resistance', it mainly discusses how women have been actively working in all institutions and have created a civil society group or, for example, how young women are active in music and have well-known underground music bands. In 'negative/victim or oppressed' representations, the texts discuss how women do not have human rights or that they commit suicide due to the oppression they face. Examples of positive/resistance representations include:

> The fact that these women are learning a new sport which seems strange or charming for us from the outside, for them it's just not a big deal. They pick up new activities all the time… they are girls, like anyone else. Given the chance they will go out and train and compete. These women are not so different from other women (Sonia Verma, Folio: Women in Iran, 23 January 2012).

or

> Even the conservative challenger Mohsen Rezaie, former head of Iran's Revolutionary Guard, has a women's advisory team and said he would reform the law to ensure greater equality for women. "Whoever comes to power

has to respond to the demands of the women's rights movement," said rights campaigner Sussan Tahmasebi. "We are no longer invisible." (Patricj Martin, Election in Iran, 13 June 2009)

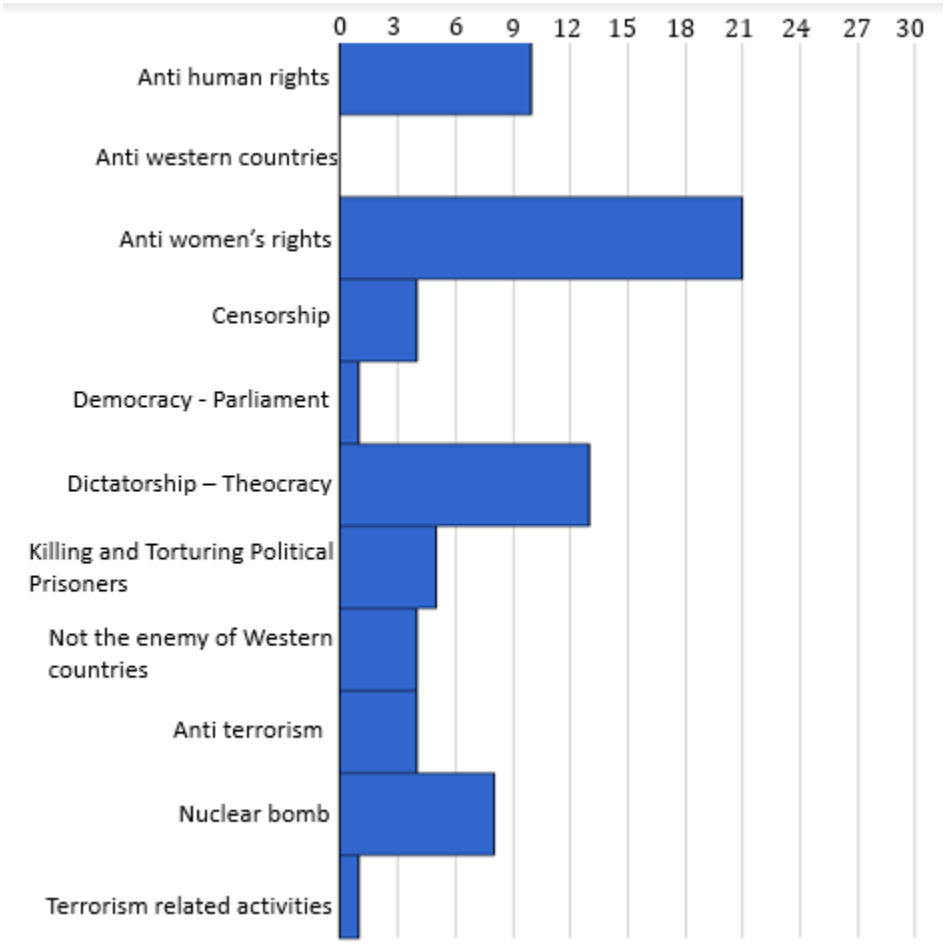

Figure 4.4: The Number of Coded References for Iran's General Political and Social Representation, *The Globe and Mail*, 2009–2018

The general representation of women is not significantly different compared to the previous time-period and shows more positive/resistance rather than negative/victim or oppressed representations. By displaying more aspects of women's lives, *the Globe and Mail* creates a more comprehensive image of these women's situation. Although this newspaper in this time period focuses more on positive and resistance aspects of women's lives and the general represented image is more inclusive compared to the other Canadian newspaper or to the first time-period, there are of course other conditions facing Iranian women, as well as minority groups of women (such as Kurdish, Azeri, Arab, Baloch women, or Bahai's etc.,..), that are not represented or are represented in a very limited way. However, the general representation, which includes new images that are far from stereotypical images of Muslim women on mass media, is a more complete picture.

As is shown in Figure 4.4, the general representation of Iran is mostly as an anti-women's rights country (21 coded references, out of 71). Also, similar to the previous time-period, Iran is represented as a dictatorial (13 coded references) and anti-human rights country. The discussion of Iran being anti-women's rights increased remarkably compared to being discussed as a 'dictatorial' country in general. The reason for this change might be due to the increase in the representations of women as SM actors.

2. Clothing and Dress: A Negative Image

People can convey specific and apparent messages through their clothing style and choices, as clothes can have hidden meanings associated with them through hegemonic dominant discourses based on race, ethnicity, class, etc. (Barthes 2006). In these hegemonic dominant discourses, clothing is linked to the meaning of oppression or freedom. Specific styles

of clothing are represented as demonstrating freedom of choice in clothing, while some traditional or specific types of clothing, such as the hijab might be interpreted as symbols of oppression for women (Barthes 2006).

I coded dress discussions in texts (and images) as progressive or oppressive. The texts coded as oppressive indicate some sort of oppression that has been created through women's clothes or clothes-related laws in Iran, while the texts coded as progressive describe women's clothes as beautiful, fashionable, colourful or a free choice of women to wear. In this time-period, in most cases, the clothing of Iranian women is represented as oppressive and often described as compulsory, dark-coloured chadors that restrict them. For instance, in the following example, women's clothes and the hijab are portrayed as the main barrier to being able to play on rugby teams:

> Mr. Beheshti's film, Salam Rugby, also offers a rare glimpse into modern Iranian society where women's rights are being constantly eroded. The rugby players in the film are rarely allowed to practise outdoors. They practice fully covered, wearing hijabs. Eventually their male coach gets fired after rumours start to swirl about his players 'loose morals' and the team ultimately gets disbanded (Sonia Verma, These women are incredibly spirited and lively, but you can see the damage done by 32 years of this archaic regime'; Women's rugby challenged the rules and strict codes of behaviour in Iran – until it, too, fell victim to President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's regime, filmmaker Faramarz Beheshti tells Sonia Verma, 23 January 2012).

Therefore, similar to the first time-period, although the images and reports on women include more positive/resistance representations, their clothes are represented mainly as negative/victim or oppressed (5 coded references out of 6). The result of this part of the coded data, which shows consistency in both time-periods, is significant in showing how the mass

media is creating a discourse that focuses on displaying an oppressive image of the hijab in a Muslim society. This image is represented regardless of the political leaning of the newspaper or the geographical location of the newspaper (the US or Canada). The hijab is one of the most apparent symbols of Islam and Muslim ethnic groups, and showing it as oppressive reinforces a negative/victim or oppressed image of Muslims. The mainly negative representation of the hijab in mass media is an example of the cultural hegemony that Gramsci (1971) discusses. The domination of a hegemonic discourse that links the hijab to a negative sign of oppression has been produced, reproduced and reinforced through media. It is worth mentioning again that the hijab is viewed as oppressive by many women's in Iran. However, it is a choice for many other women as Iran is a Muslim majority country. The focus only or mainly on the oppressive aspect of the hijab can lead to misrecognition of many other women and their experiences with the hijab.

Moreover, the images from *The Globe and Mail* (13 pictures) depict both negative/victim or oppressed (6 Pictures) and positive/resistance (7 coded references) representation of women, and the results on clothing also show a more oppressive representation of women's clothes. There are very few representations of oppressive organizational actors, and in terms of laws, there are no mentions other than the hijab law.

One picture (by Atta Kenare/AFP/Getty Images, published June 1, 2009), a resistance/positive representation, shows women in the front line of the Green Movement of 2009. For example, one picture shows a female athlete wearing a hijab with an unhappy facial expression. The title of the article, which is right on the top of the picture, says that sports are an area of loss for Iranian women's rights (Sports another loss for Iranian women, Sonia Verma,

Published January 22, 2012, Updated May 9, 2018). When a picture and title focus ties oppression and limitation in doing sports to women's hijab and in most representations reinforces this image, it ignores (lack of recognition) some of the other aspects related to the hijab and sports for women in Iran. For example, because of the hijab in sports, traditional families let their daughters participate in sports because their clothes and environment are Islamic. For example, Pfister (2003) asserts that "gender segregation" in Iran has "enabled girls from traditional Muslim families to take up sport" (Pfister 2003, p. 215). Therefore, in representing women's hijab and women's situations, there are many aspects that are not always visible in mass media.

National Post

1. **General Representation: More Resistance**

The representation of Iranian women in the *National Post* shows a remarkable change that contrasts with the results from the first time-period. The results show that the representation of women includes mostly positive/resistance representation (8 coded references) rather than negative/victim or oppressed. The authors discuss some of the powerful women in Iran and their activities. For example:

> Rahnavard has a formidable resume. She's a writer and sculptor; has a doctorate in political science; and was a political advisor to Mohammed Khatami, the former moderate president…, She favours colourfully patterned headscarves instead of the all-enveloping black chador approved for female public attire by the governing mullahs. She appears beside her husband on the campaign platform or addresses gatherings on his behalf (Araminta Wordsworth, Women on the surge; The charismatic wife of Mir Hossein Mousavi has inspired thousands of Iranian women to push back their headscarves, 19 June 2009).

However, this positive/resistance representation does not mean that the positivity is necessarily seen from Iranian women's perspectives. Regardless of the positivity or negativity of an act or situation involving Iranian women, the positive/resistance representation is based on what the authors see as positive/resistance. For example:

> the fact young Iranians are feeling sufficiently independent and self-actualized to adopt Western social norms ought to be seen as rather hopeful news (Peter Shawn Taylor, When broken vows make for a safer world, 10 February 2014).

Although the representation of women changed towards including a more positive/resistance image (compared to the first time-period), the representation of Iran as a dictatorial and anti-human rights country did not change much during this time. Dictatorship and being anti-human rights and anti-women's rights are some of the most important aspects of Iran for the authors. The nuclear weapons discussion also has increased in recent years.

Moreover, the four images from the *National Post* in this time-period convey one of two very clear messages: oppression or protest and resistance. One picture shows a women's prison and women who, while wearing a hijab, are sitting on their beds and sadly covering their faces with their hands. Another picture shows the hand of a woman who holds a piece of paper that has 'free political prisoners' written on it (by Tiziana Fabi/AFP/Getty images, published May 28, 2013).

Another picture is of Nasrin Sotoudeh (without a hijab), a lawyer and human rights and women's rights activist in Iran who has been in prison many times over the past decade since the Green Movement of 2009. The fourth photo is of Zahra Rahnavard (Mir-Hossein Mousavi's

wife), who was one of the leaders of the Green Movement of 2009 and has been under house arrest since March 2010. Rahnavard in this picture is wearing a colourful scarf and clothes and is using body language that represents her power.

Therefore, the general pattern of representation of women in this newspaper shows positive changes as it includes more aspects of people's lives. However, the dichotomy between being a victim/negative or being resistant/positive is shown in most cases. Furthermore, many aspects of women's situation, such as women of rural areas, or minorities groups are not included in these images and representations. .

2. Clothing/Dress: Less Freedom

The representation of Iranian clothing is not very frequent in general; however, the positive/resistance representations among the articles is a change compared to the previous time-period (2 positive coded reference). Moreover, the negative/victim or oppressed representations decreased (6 coded reference). In the positive/resistance representations of clothing, they mainly mention that women wear colourful clothes and not just black chadors. Again, this positive/resistance representation, in some cases, is from Western authors' viewpoint; however, in most cases, they show the power of people in choosing their clothes. Here is an example of a positive/resistance representation in this newspaper:

> Many of his female supporters would be targets: at this week's huge demonstrations they can be seen wearing figure-hugging coats that skim the knee and have short sleeves. Their scarves, often in bright colours, barely stay on their heads, pushed back by luxuriant strands of hair (Araminta Wordsworth, Women on the surge; The charismatic wife of Mir Hossein Mousavi has inspired thousands of Iranian women to push back their headscarves, 19 June 2009).

Overall, the representation of women's clothes did not change significantly compared to the previous time-period. The hijab, similar to other newspapers and in both time-periods, is represented mainly as oppressive clothing for women that creates limitations in their activities such as sports. Although there are some positive changes in the result of this time-period, the overall result did not change. This consistency in the results demonstrates a significant aspect of the dominant discourse in media about the hijab. If the texts showed the hijab as a choice and/or not necessarily oppressive, and if they discussed the obligatory part of the law as oppressive for only some women who might not choose to wear it, the image of women's situation would be more representative of the hijab and women's situation. For years, the hijab has been a part of Iranian culture; many women among the previous generations who lived during the pro-Western regime of the Shah also wore the hijab (Shirazi 2001). Therefore, yes, the *compulsory* hijab is oppressive for some women, but hijab is a choice for many of the population due to their religious and traditional beliefs. As mentioned above, the Islamic regime of Iran has created opportunities for religious people to be able to participate in sports and many other activities, since they do not feel that their religious beliefs have to be sacrificed to do so. According to Pfister (2003), the "gender segregation" law, in Iran has "enabled girls from traditional Muslim families to take up sport" (Pfister 2003, p. 215).

Of course, the opportunities for women, after the Islamic Revolution of 1979, have not come about because of liberalization policies or laws or official plans and programs of Iran's regime. It is the case, however, that Islamic laws such as hijab and separation of men and women, which can be and are oppressive to many women, became an opportunity for the women in majority Muslim traditional families to be able to convince their families that it is

safe to go to school or work. As Haleh Esfandiari (1997) explains, "younger, upwardly mobile, lower-middle-class girls, ardent supporters of the revolution, proved adept at turning the language of the Islamic reformers and the revolutionary clerics to their own advantage" (Esfandiari 1997, p. 43). In fact, the rules and laws in the Islamic revolutionary regime were in opposition to and against women's rights in many respects, but women started to fight back for their rights through using the opportunities they had (Esfandiari 1997).

The New York Times

1. **General Representation; Diverse**

The representation of Iranian women, similar to the previous time-period, include more positive/resistance (15 coded references out of 19) than negative/victim or oppressed (4 coded references). The positive/resistance topics and discussions are mainly about women's social and economic activities such as dance classes, book clubs, handmade carpet weaving, art galleries. Also, there are examples of discussing women's campaigns and activities such as the 'My Stealthy Freedom' Facebook page, and the achievements of some of the Iranian women such as Maryam Mirzakhani receiving the Fields Medal. For example:

> Three years ago, Mirzakhani, 37, became the first woman to win the Fields Medal, the Nobel Prize of mathematics. News of the award, and the obvious symbolism (first woman, first Iranian, an immigrant from a Muslim country) sat uneasily with her(Gareth Cook, Maryam Mirzakhani, 31 December 2017)

Here is another example of women's activities:

> There are signs, though, that the morality police and their hard-line backers may have a tough summer ahead. A

> newly created Facebook page posts photographs of Iranian women taking off their headscarves during tourist outings. The page, titled "Iranian Women's Freedoms Stealthy" has received more than 31,500 likes since Saturday. Its administrators are anonymous, and a cover photo at the top of the page says, "We're just ourselves" (Thomas Eedbrink, When Freedom is the Right to Stay Under Wraps, 8 May 2014).

However, as is shown in the second-mentioned example, the positive/resistance representation in some cases, again, is from the author's perspective. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that the above-mentioned 'My Stealthy Freedom' Facebook page is publicly known to belong to Masih Alinejad. Since 2014, Masih Alinejad has encouraged young women in Iran to take off their scarves for as long as they can in public and send their pictures to this page. Masih Alinejad left Iran before the Iranian presidential election of 2009 and has been working for BBC Persian and VOA (Voice of America) Persian.

Although Iranian women's symbolic protests against the compulsory hijab in the past two years have been a very brave tactic, this movement started and is supported by Masih Alinejad from the United States. This Facebook page and Masih's activities have received widespread attention and positive/resistance representations from Western media. Similar to representations of women, representations of Iran did not change significantly in this time-period. Dictatorship, anti-women's rights and anti-human rights acts and laws, and nuclear weapons are again the most significant aspects of Iran focused on in the newspaper articles.

Overall, representations of women and general representations of Iran did not significantly change during the two time-periods. Iran is more frequently represented as a dictatorial and anti-human rights country. However, similar to *The Globe and Mail*, the frequency of representing Iran as an 'anti-women's rights' country increased in this time-period.

Focusing on women as social movement actors or more representations of women in general can lead to an increase in representing Iran as an anti-women's rights country.

Moreover, all the images from *The New York Times* in this time-period (44 images) were coded. The general representation of women shows positive/resistance (13 coded references out of 22) and negative/victim or oppressed images (9 coded references). One example of a resistance/positive representation of women which was published in an article on January 1st, 2018, by Thomas Erdbrink, is a picture of a women on the street who has raised her fist and the street is covered by teargas.

Some of the pictures do not represent women (they are mostly pictures of nature, or streets and cars or some people who are being interviewed, and none of them are women). The representations of women's clothing are oppressive and positive. There are some pictures of women walking in the streets or being in the front line of the movement that show more diverse styles of clothing. For example, in one photo, which is published in an article by Anne Barnard and Thomas Erdbrink, on December 29th, 2017.

Some of the pictures show Iranian women who are artists in the US, and others report on the artistic photographs of women. There are some pictures related to the election that show Mousavi (the Green movement's leader and the presidential election candidate), and Rouhani's election posters (the current president of Iran). One picture shows a female nurse and a newborn baby (the article is about population policies in Iran). There are also pictures of a group of European and American businessmen, and businesswomen in Tehran in a meeting and the women are covering their hair with a bright hat or scarf. The overall result shows oppressive (10 coded references out of 19) and positive (9 coded references) representations of women's

clothing. Overall, the representation and images of women shown in this newspaper in this time-period is more inclusive and more positive than negative. Different aspects of women's activities and their presence in social spheres and economic activities are represented.

2. Clothing/Dress: Diverse but Mostly Oppressive

The results related to clothing are the same as other newspapers and the previous time-period, as Iranian women's clothing is represented mainly as oppressive (9 coded references) rather than positive/resistance (1 coded reference). In negative/victim or oppressed representations, the authors discussed the hijab as black clothing on women's bodies that create limitations for women or stop women from having the right to choose what they wear. For example, women suffer from the heat due to wearing the hijab during the summertime. Although the articles mention hijab and black chador and the oppression of mandatory hijab in Iran, the language that they use, and the main point does not focus on oppression and seems to represent a more positive situation and diverse image of women's hijab. This is the main difference between *the New York Times* and *The Globe and Mail* in contrast with the other two newspapers. Here is an example of a representation of women's hijab as oppressive:

> Ever since the hijab, a generic term for every Islamic modesty covering, became mandatory after the 1979 revolution, Iranian women have been used to represent the country visually. For the new Islamic republic, the all-covering cloak called a chador became a badge of honor, a trademark of fundamental change. To Western visitors, it dropped a pin on their travel maps, where the bodies of Iranian women became a stand-in for the character of Iranian society. When I worked with foreign journalists for six years, I helped produce reports that were illustrated invariably with a woman in a black chador. I once asked a photojournalist why. He said, "How else can we show where we are?" (Haleh Anvari, The Fetish of Staring at Iran's Women, 17 June 2014)

Women's clothes in all newspapers and both time-periods are represented as oppressive and mostly referred to as the 'black chador'. However, the black chador is not obligatory in Iran and has never been obligatory. The chador (all styles and colours) is a kind of hijab that women in Iran traditionally have worn throughout the country's history, even before the Islamic Revolution (Shirazi 2001). Although the black-coloured chador has been the favorite choice of hijab to wear for women who are close to high state positions, some women who have been parliament members do not wear the chador such as Elahe Koulaie or Tahereh RezaZadeh (Sanij 2017). Among ordinary women, wearing the chador, like before the revolution, is a choice. Women can wear colourful scarves and clothes, and some of their hair might be shown. As Shirazi-Mahajan (1993) describes these different approaches in two major styles that she calls "orthodox look" and "nonorthodox look" (Shirazi-Mahajan 1993, p. 60). The representation of the hijab as only or mainly a 'black chador' (that in some cases is represented as obligatory) demonstrates the misrecognition of women's situation in the dominant media discourse (Fraser 2000). This misrecognition shows a significant aspect of the dominant discourses in reproducing hegemonic power relations. To maintain a power relation, media can be employed by hegemonic powers to reproduce an image that represents women as victims of an oppressive system who need help to change their situation or reach their demands. However, there are women who might be oppressed, or women who wear black chador willingly or due to the culture of their families. As well, there are other significant facets of women's situation, their power in the family and in society, for example, and their economic activities and their different choices of hijab or clothes. Including multiple aspects of people's lives in the images that are used to represent them help to communicate a better understanding of them.

USA Today

1. **General representation: More Inclusive**

The frequency of the representation (the number of articles) of Iranian women was not significantly different compared to the first time-period (29 articles in the first time-period and 21 articles in the second time-period; 16 coded references in first time-period and 21 coded reference in second time-period). However, the positivity and negativity of the representations were very close in first time-period, while in the second time-period, there are almost no negative/victim or oppressed representations (2 coded reference), and most of the discussed topics show a positive/resistance representation of women's power, acts or situation (19 coded reference). For example, the widespread participation of women on the front lines of the movements in the streets while being attacked by police were represented as women not being afraid, and women's resistance against the Morality Police and the compulsory hijab changed the policy, and women are no longer arrested for breaking the hijab rule.

Although the representation of the political and social situation of Iran is not frequent in *USA Today*, in the four times that Iran is discussed, they mention dictatorship, anti-human rights (killing and torturing of political prisoners), anti-women's rights and nuclear weapons. Overall, representations of Iran in this newspaper are (although much more limited in terms of the frequency) similar to the other newspapers in both time-periods; which means even if there are positive images or representations of public resistance, there are consistent negative representations of the political system of Iran. This consistent negativity in all the newspapers in both time-period, might be rooted in the history of the political relationship between Iran after the revolution and the US and Canada.

An image from *USA Today* (Photo: Laura Bly, USAT), in an article by Jane Onyanga-Omara, *USA Today*, Dec. 29, 2017, shows a store that sells scarves; it shows rows of mannequins wearing scarves of different colours and fashion styles. The description of the image says that it is a hijab fashion.

Most pictures from this time-period in this newspaper were published and collected in summer and fall 2018 due to limited accessibility on Factiva. There are some pictures of women playing soccer with a hijab and women with different hijab styles. Some have almost no hijab or colourful scarves and are at a soccer stadium watching a soccer game and laughing. Overall, the images are focused on the hijab. However, many of the photos are representing the diversity that exists in terms of the hijab. Therefore, in this time-period, pictures include more positive and diverse images of people's lives in terms of hijab. This is the opposite of the result of the text about the hijab that was mainly described as oppressive. Although the texts and description might represent only the oppressive aspect of the hijab, pictures of ordinary people's daily life that are not focused on only one group of people can show the diversity of the colour and style of the hijab. For example, Fatemeh Sadeghi (2008), explains the differences in young Iranian women hijab as, "misveiled (badhi-jab) girls (those who wear hijab in order to accommodate themselves to Iranian legal requirements yet intentionally disregard the spirit if not precisely the letter of the law)", and also "veiled girls (often referred to as chadori, whether or not they actually wear the chador)" (Sadeghi 2008, p. 250).

2. Clothing/Dress: Not Inclusive

The clothing of Iranian women is discussed three times. It is discussed one time positively and two times negatively. In the positive/resistance text, the author mentions that

women have the right to choose their hijab style; they can choose to cover their bodies from head to toe or just cover some of their hair with a scarf. In the negative/victim or oppressed reference code, the text mentions arresting women because of their hijab. Though it says that the arrests will stop, the message of the text demonstrates oppression related to the hijab. Another oppressive situation represented in relation to the hijab is discussions of punishment or being imprisoned, lashed or fined for showing some parts of the hair or body or having nail polish. Regardless of the written law regarding the hijab (there are some punishments for not wearing hijab or proper hijab, such as a fine. see Tabnak 2010), Iran's police in 2018 have announced that they will not arrest or fine women due to their hijab, and even if they do, it is not practical for the police to punish every woman who has nail polish or showing some parts of their hair or body due to their high number (Bucar 2018; Donovan 2018; Shirazi 2019).

Overall, discussions about women's clothes were limited in this newspaper and in this time-period compared to the other American newspaper and the two Canadian newspapers. However, the result of the women's general representation was similar to other newspapers in this time-period, which include more positive/resistance images and reorientations of women than negative/victim or oppressed image. The results on women's clothes, however, is similar among all the newspapers in both time-periods: an oppressive image of the hijab.

Conclusion

Media coverage, in both texts and images, represents women as either victims of the oppressive political regime (mostly) or resisters against oppression. In most texts and images, women are sad or their activities such as participation in sports are limited because of oppression, and this oppression is linked with their clothes. In most of these texts and images,

women appear to have only one clothing style, which is the black chador, even though this is a clothing choice of only some women in Iran and not everyone. In contrast, in all the pictures in which women are laughing, reading books or are socially active in any way, they either are depicted as hating the chador or are wearing very bright clothes. The depiction women's oppression through their clothes is a common theme throughout these texts and images.

Although the overall frequency of the positive/resistance representation did not change significantly compared to the first time-period, the negative/victim or oppressed representation of women decreased dramatically. It is worth mentioning that neutral representations have not been coded in this research as they were very limited, and most of the articles and paragraphs displayed mainly either a positive or negative image of women's lives in Iran. Compared to the first time-period, this result represents a change in two newspapers: the *National Post* and *USA Today*, which contained more negative/victim or oppressed representations of women. Dictatorship, being anti-human rights, anti-women's rights and nuclear weapons are the most frequently discussed topics about Iran in these newspapers. The reason for the positive change in the two newspapers and the decrease in the negative/victim or oppressed representations of women overall can be due to many factors. For example, the role and power of the Internet and online networks can have a huge effect on the understanding of people around the world. In recent protests in Iran, ordinary people were recording videos and taking pictures of their protests and send it to other activists outside of Iran and some of the popular satellite TVs such as BBC Persian and VOA Persian (See Michaelsen 2018; Warnaar 2011). Since 2009, however, in most protests, the government limits Internet access and bans most websites. YouTube and Facebook, and later, Twitter have been banned since 2009 (Frenkel 2018). Therefore, social media does not work for protesters inside Iran and that it is why they email or use other

applications to send their news outside Iran. However, in the recent protests of November 2019 against the economic situation and the gas price hike, the government shut down the internet for the whole country, and for days there was almost no news of the protests (Newman 2019).

In both time-periods and all four newspapers, Iranian women's clothes are represented mainly as oppressive. Representing women's clothes as oppressive and the hijab law as the most oppressive law demonstrates the reinforcement of the 'othering' process in mass media. This result demonstrates the dominant discourse that reproduces hegemonic power relations. The hijab is one of the most widely recognized signs of Islam, and there is a focus on the hijab as an oppressive tool that limits women's activities and reinforces hegemonic relations against Muslim and Middle Eastern countries. This misrecognition represents women as victims of an oppressive system who need to be freed by hegemonic powers and reinforces the process of 'othering' Muslims and Middle Eastern people for a Western audience.

Moreover, focusing on hijab as oppression can bring home the point that there is no oppression based on clothing in Western countries. As Barthes (2006) explains, clothes can have various meaning and can be used as a tool of oppression based on gender, class, sexuality, etc. in every society, including North America. For example, as Barry (2018) explains, "the public regulate hegemonic masculinity by demeaning men or women who defied gender dress norms" (Barry 2018, p. 657). Media, by focusing on hijab as oppression, ignores other oppressive systems that work through clothing in North American societies. For example, as Barry (2018) discusses, "men across identities and contexts use dress to secure social domination and support an unequal gender system" (Barry 2018, p. 659).

The images of the second time-periods, show a similar result to the text of the articles (*G&M*: 3 negative, 5 positive, *NP*: 1 negative, 3 positive, *NYT*: 9 negative, 13 positive, *USA Today*, 0 negative, 7 positive). However, the result varies in the first time-period. There are both positive and negative representations (*G&M* doesn't have any and *NP* has only three that are mostly negative) and *USA Today* and *NYT* represent both positive, negative pictures with slightly more positive representation.

However, these results show that the similarities and differences among newspapers are based on political and ideological orientations of the newspapers (*NYT*/ *the Globe and Mail* vs. *USA Today*/*National Post*), rather than their geography (Canada vs. the US). For example, the limited representation of the *National Post* and *USA Today* are similar, while the higher visibility in *The New York Times* and *The Globe and Mail* are similar. The language used to represent ordinary people, and their power is also similar in *The Globe and Mail* and *The New York Times*. Most articles in *NYT* and *G&M* represent both positive and negative aspects of people's lives. Therefore, to understand the media discourse in the US and Canada, the political orientations of the media are more significant than their geographical location.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS: POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURE AND WOMEN'S SOCIAL MOVEMENT PARTICPATION

Introduction

In this chapter, I examine the results related to political opportunity structures, including depictions of oppressive organizational actors and laws. I also examine how representations of women as social movement actors and the tactics they use can indicate an active and positive image or a passive or oppressed image of women in society. For each newspaper, I discuss the representation of SM actors and tactics and the changes in this representation compared to the previous time-period.

Different social movement actors and social movement tactics receive mass media attention in various forms that can affect the how media portray movements. Western media representations of oppression, resistance and of social movement actors might lead to the misrecognition of certain social movement actors and tactics, as well as misrecognition of the oppressive situations and laws facing people, specifically women, of a Muslim Middle Eastern country like Iran. In the first time-period, the main activists portrayed are those labeled as women's rights activists. However, ordinary women have been the main SM actors, and their activism in Iran is different than what is considered activism in Western countries. In the second time-period, as women have chosen new tactics and have played a role in the social movements and street protests that received widespread media attention, they are presented as the main social movement actors.

Political Opportunity Structure

First Time-period 2001- 2009

The Globe and Mail

1. **Oppressive Organizational Actors**

The separation of different agencies or "sub-units" of the state from each other in the process of oppression is impractical (Duyvendak and Jasper 2015, p. 11). As Duyvendak and Jasper (2015) explain, the "state includes arenas in which a variety of players participate such as courts, elections, etc., and units of the state participate in other arenas, too, such as markets, the media, and public opinion, etc." (p. 12). It is worth mentioning that the same situation exists in relation to social movements as well (Duyvendak and Jasper 2015). In Iran, an act of oppression can be carried out through parliament, government, police, the IRGC (Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps), etc., and all these sub-units of the state cannot be separated from each other as none of these subunits are independent from the power of the supreme leader, even the parliament or the judiciary system.

More specifically, the supreme leader directly controls the state media, the army, the IRGC, and even the qualifications of presidential candidates and have to be approved by the Guardian Council of the Constitution which 6 out of its 12 members are selected directly by the supreme leader and the other half by parliament (the qualifications of the candidates for parliamentary elections also should be approved by the Guardian Council); The supreme leader has the power of 'Hokme Hokoomati (حکم حکومتی)', also known by 'Dastooreh Velayee' (دستور ولایی), which means 'governmental decree', and 'supreme leader's order', and can directly order any change or decision to any of the sub-units of the state such as parliament, the president, or

the judiciary system (BBC_News 2009; Maahrouyan 2020; Sadjadpour 2010). Therefore, in my research, I do not focus on specific differences between different oppressive organizational actors. I only compare the level of attention given to oppressive organizational actors in the two time-periods and the level of media attention given to SM actors.

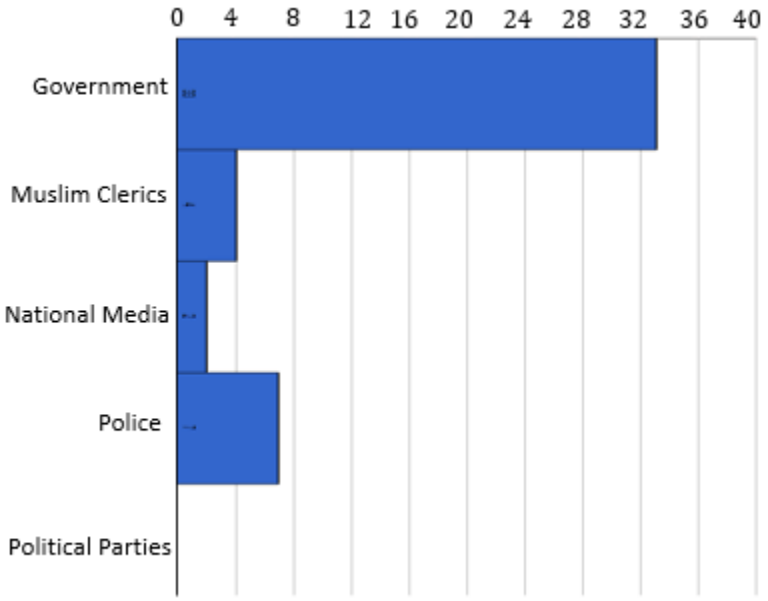

Figure 5.1: The Number of Coded References for Oppressive Organizational Actors, *The Globe and Mail* 2001–2009

As is shown in Figure 5.1, in this time-period and this newspaper, the government has been the most represented oppressive organizational actor (33 coded reference), with a remarkable difference in the number of representations compared with other organizational actors.

2. Laws: 'Hijab and Exclusion from Judiciary'

When journalists and columnists discuss laws in this time-period, they often mention the compulsory hijab. After passing the compulsory hijab law, Iranians, mainly women, held demonstrations and protests such as the March 8, 1979 demonstration during the first few years

after the Islamic Revolution. After those first years of the revolution, there were no protests specifically against the hijab laws until 2017 (Alinejad's Facebook page and her campaign started in 2014, but she is based in the US, see Maloney and Katz 2019). Although women have been changing their hijab styles gradually since the Islamic Revolution (Moaveni 2016), there were no collective actions or movements specifically opposing the compulsory hijab in these years of the first time-period.

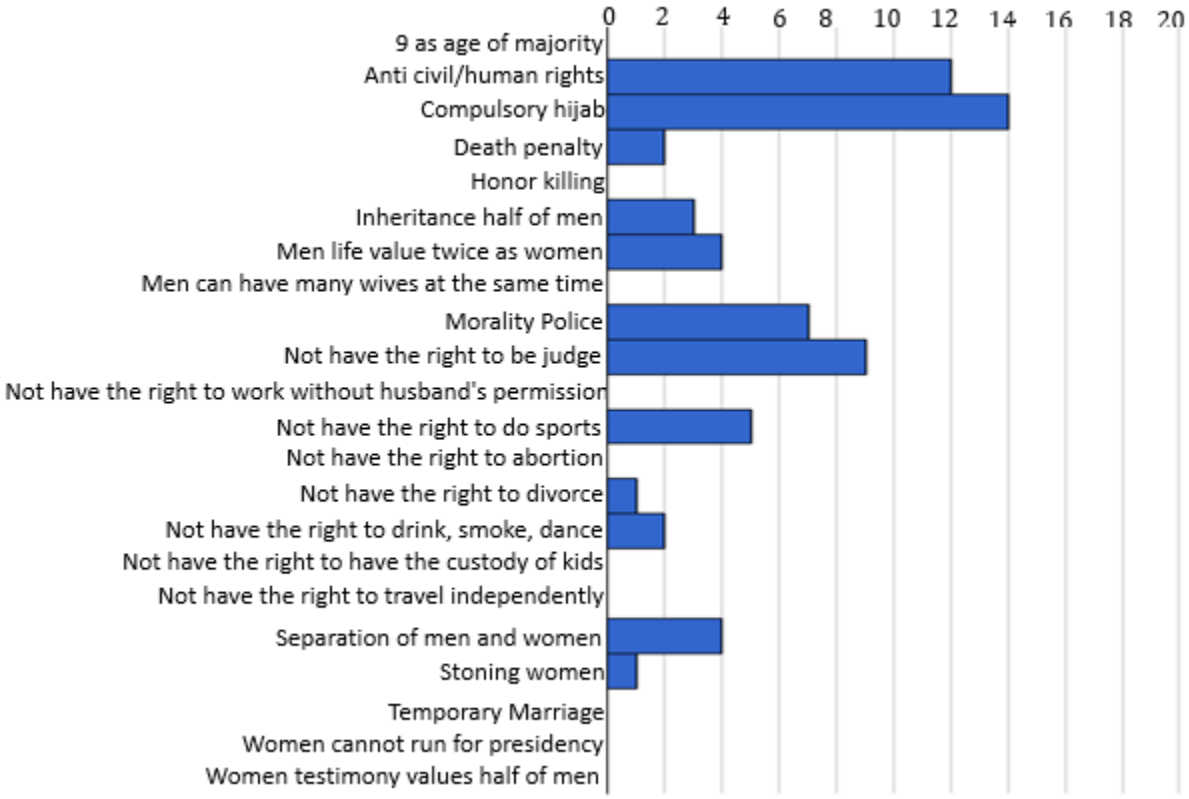

Figure 5.2: The Number of Coded References for Laws, *The Globe and Mail* 2001–2009

Looking at the number of coding references (see Figure 5.2 above), as well as the number of articles, all show that the compulsory hijab has been the most represented Iranian law in this outlet in the first time-period. There are many oppressive laws inside Iran against women, including not having the right to divorce and not having the right to have custody of children (Hoodfar and Sadr 2010). However, the hijab law is the most frequently represented and discussed law in this newspaper. Representations of women's clothes and oppressive laws are related. In both areas (clothing and oppressive laws), Iranian women are portrayed as either resisters to government oppression or victims of this oppression.

Here is an example of the compulsory hijab topic:

> Tehran's police force dispatched dozens of police cars and minibuses into the early evening rush hour yesterday to enforce the dress code at major squares in the city centre. Women in Iran are obliged to cover all bodily contours as well as their heads, but in recent years many have pushed the boundaries by showing off bare ankles and fashionably styled hair beneath their head scarves (Farhad Pouladi, Fashion police hit Tehran streets, 24 July 2007).

Moreover, there is another law that has been mentioned comparatively frequently (after the hijab, the morality police and the separation of men and women): not having the right to be a judge. This law of 'women not having the right to be a judge' cannot be understood or analyzed in the category of the hijab or the laws related to the hijab, such as the morality police or the separation of men and women in some public spaces. The reason why this law is mentioned in this time-period is because in 2003, Shirin Ebadi won the Nobel Peace Prize. Ebadi was a judge before the Islamic Revolution of 1979, and she was not allowed to work as a judge after the revolution because of this law, so she worked as a lawyer and human rights

activist (Ebadi 2003). Therefore, most of the articles that discuss Ebadi and her life in 2003 also discuss this law as well.

In many cases, articles mention that anti-human rights laws exist in Iran but do not mention any specific laws. However, in cases when they do mention the specific name of a law, they mainly focus on the compulsory hijab. With less frequency, they also discuss the morality police or the separation of men and women in some public spaces (for example, on public buses). It is worth noting that there was not any protest specifically against the compulsory hijab in Iran during this time-period. Focusing on representations of the compulsory hijab law of Iran in North American mass media indicates how politics are gendered in both Iran and in Canada. Moreover, it indicates how gender- and ethnic-based assumptions can be reproduced and reinforced through mass media. The hijab is the most common area of focus of Islam and the Islamic State, and it can be an easy way to depict Islam. At the same time, focusing mainly on the hijab law can reinforce the image of Muslim women as 'others' for the North American audience. People in Iran have been changing their clothes and hijab style every year as it can be seen very clearly by comparing the women's hijab in the first years after the revolution with their hijab now (Moaveni 2016). In recent years, women, through making changes in the designs of their clothes and using elements of traditional Iranian clothes, have been making colourful and fashionable clothes (Shirazi 2019). Women who do not believe in hijab since the first few years after the Revolution have started to change their clothes and hijab style in a way that it becomes freer every year. One example is that in the first years after the Revolution, women had to cover their hair entirely and were not allowed to wear jeans. Women started to collectively, yet fragmentedly, buy and wear jeans and move their scarves backs in a way that their hair can be seen (Abdmolaei 2014). And now, it has been more than thirty years that

women are wearing any clothes that they want as long as they are wearing an overcoat.. In many streets you can see women whose scarves have been moved on their shoulders and they just move it to their head when they see a police car, or when they need to go to a governmental place.

National Post

1. **Oppressive Organizational Actors**

Since the result of this part of the data is almost the same between all four outlets, I will not compare the frequency of the coded references between four newspapers. This lack of variation among the oppressive actor also provides specific information that most of the oppression in Iran comes from the undemocratic political system and not the culture or religion. Similar to the three other outlets, the government as an oppressive organizational actor is mentioned the most and is compared the most to SM actors and tactics. The frequency of discussing the government is very high. For example:

> Moreover, a number of known human rights violators have been awarded prominent roles in Iran's government. The presence in high-ranking government positions of individuals implicated in serious and systematic violations- such as the Minister of Interior, Mustafa Pour-Mohammadi, and the Minister of Information, Gholamhussein Mohseni Ezhei -- along with Saeed Mortazavi, still in the influential position of Tehran Chief Prosecutor, provide little reason to hope that the situation will improve soon (Mora Johnson, Iran's woeful human rights record: Informed sources, 23 August 2006).

Although Iran's totalitarian state (including the executive, judiciary system, and parliament) has always been a highly oppressive organization, the mass media's focus on

discussing the government's role can vary over time due to many factors. In this time-period, the government had 23 coded references (out of 32). It is worth mentioning that the government includes child nodes such as parliament and the IRGC. The reason why these two mentioned child nodes are included as part of government is that the root of power in almost all official state-related organizations is connected to the supreme leader (BBC_News 2009; Maahrouyan 2020; Sadjadpour 2010).

2. Laws: Hijab, Sport and Separation of Men and women

The number of coded references (Figure 5.3) indicates that the compulsory hijab and the separation of men and women in public places have been the most important laws in Iran for the authors of the *National Post* in this time-period. Other than these laws, the authors generally discuss anti-human rights laws.

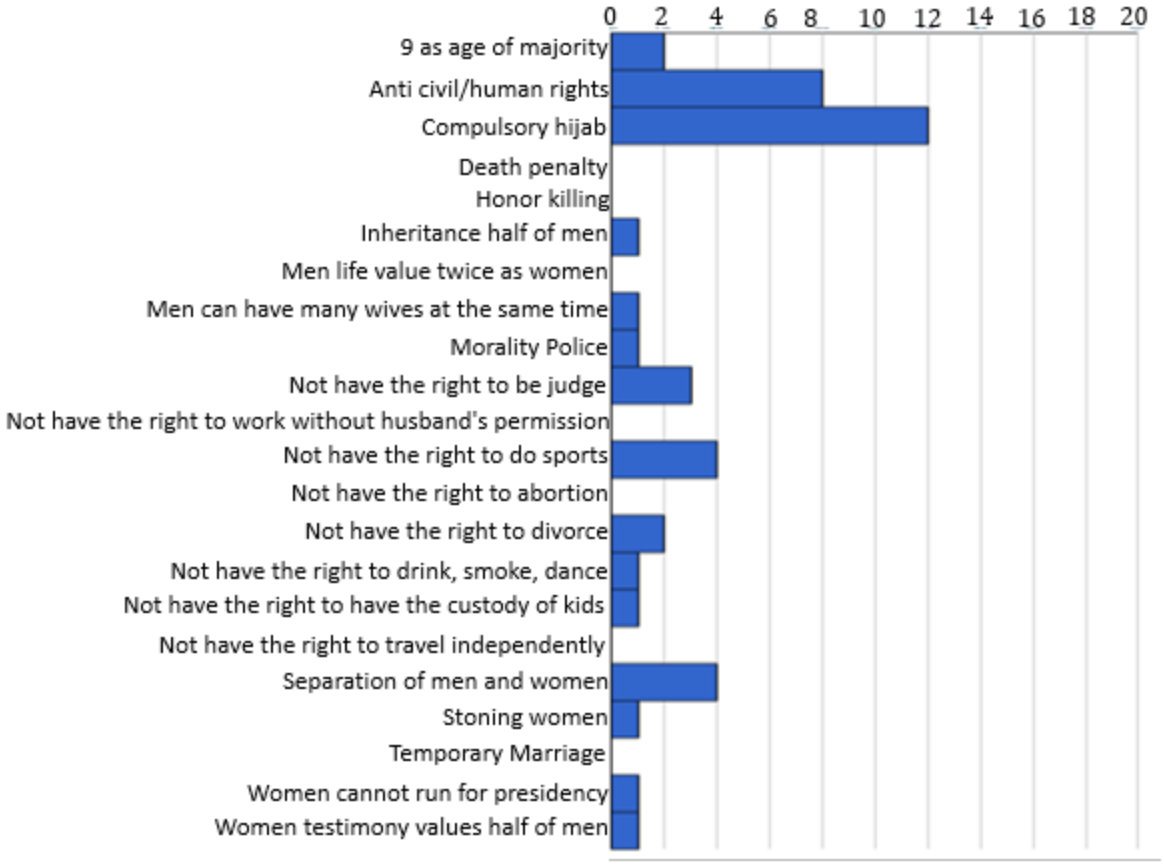

Figure 5.3: The Number of Coded References for Laws, *National Post* 2001–2009

The compulsory hijab has been mentioned and discussed as a significant symbol of the Islamist government. For example:

> The new Islamist regime passed a law in 1982 making the hijab mandatory for females aged above six, regardless of religious faith. Violating the hijab code was made punishable by 100 lashes of the cane and six months imprisonment (Amir Taheri, Lifting the veil on gender apartheid, 19 August 2003).

When the articles talk about Iran as an anti-human rights country (a country with anti-human rights laws), they do not always specifically mention which laws or which situations are anti-human rights. At the same time, they might mention one specific anti-human rights law or situation (which has been coded separately) and then describe the country's laws generally as anti-human rights. In any of these cases, Iran is described as a country that is anti-human rights; therefore, I decided to code this description as a specific code in this part of the data coding and analysis.

The third most frequently represented laws (based on the number of coded references) are those regarding the separation of men and women in some public spaces. In most cases, the authors discuss the separation of women and men in sports and stadiums. Women in Iran do not have the right to go stadiums to watch local events or most of the national games of some sports such as soccer (although recently there have been cases where women did get permission to go to a designated part of the stadium to watch some international soccer games (see France-Presse 2019; Panja 2019). Another example of the separation of women and men that has been

mentioned pertains to the right of men and women to travel together as they are not allowed to stay in one hotel room (if they are not related or marries) (see IranDestination n.d.; SurfIran 2016). Police can ask men and women about their relationship and if they are not married or related, the police can detain them and ask their families to pick them up and separate them or make them aware of their relationship

In the four most frequently discussed laws, the authors often mention the word ‘sport’. In one case, the author mentioned riding bicycles. Although riding bicycles is not allowed on the streets, and it is not common among even men, women ride their own bicycles in parks, and there are designated places for bikes in parks and most public places (see Guardian Cities 2017). Women do have the right to participate in almost all sports; however, they must follow the hijab rule (Pfister 2003). There are many different kinds of designs for hijabs to allow women to participate in sports while keeping their hair and body covered. In some cases, however, their participation in certain international games has been limited because of safety rules (Ahmed 2018).

Overall, similar to the other three outlets, the compulsory hijab has the most representation in this time-period. Considering the general representation of women and the representation of women’s clothes in this newspaper and in this time-period, it could be predictable that the compulsory hijab has the most representation. The representation of women’s clothes as oppressive and focusing on the compulsory hijab law as the law that is most oppressive against women demonstrates how the hijab and being the victim of an oppressive regime are tightly linked in these articles. This result demonstrates that the hijab, as a symbol of the Islamic regime, has been represented as the most oppressive, unknown, different or unfamiliar law for the North American mass media and their audience. There have been many

countries that oppress women in many different ways, but the hijab is considered a symbol of Muslim ethnicity and a Muslim regime law.

The New York Times

1. Oppressive Organizational Actors

The government has been the main oppressive organizational actor in this time-period (43 coded reference out of 72) and discussions of oppressive acts and the power of the government, compared to 'police' (5 coded references) or 'Muslim clerics' (11 coded reference), have the highest frequency in *The New York Times*. High ranked Muslim clerics can have power that is separate from the whole political system or state. They can issue a 'fatwa' for any social or political issue, and all the religious people will follow their 'fatwa'(Khalaji 2013; Rabbani Khorasgani 2005). However, police and national media are usually connected in some ways to the supreme leader. The supreme leader appoints the national radio and TV organizations, and their funding also comes from the supreme leader's office. Ayatollah Khamenei, the supreme leader of the country, also approves the funding of and chooses the army chief commander, the chief of the police and the chief commander of the IRGC (Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps). Overall, the sources of oppression inside the state and political system are interconnected and rooted in the supreme leader's power (Sadjadpour 2010).

2. Laws: Compulsory Hijab and Obligatory Separation

As is shown in Figure 5.4, the compulsory hijab is the most frequently discussed law in this time-period followed by the separation of men and women. The reason why this result is surprising is that, considering the SM tactics and SM actors, I expected to see laws that are

more closely related to economic and social issues such as divorce rights or not being able to participate in or watch certain sports. Economic and social empowerment does not affect the obligation of the hijab in public spaces. In Iran in this time-period, many women were fighting against the compulsory hijab in their own way by changing the style of the hijab and making it more fashionable and colourful (Abdmolaei 2014; Shirazi 2019). Women have learned to justify their hijabs based on the different places they go to, and they have learned how to be independent and powerful socially and economically, even with the compulsory hijab (Esfandiari 1997; Hoodfar and Sadeghi 2009). However, the results show that the compulsory hijab and the separation of men and women received more attention from the media compared to other laws.

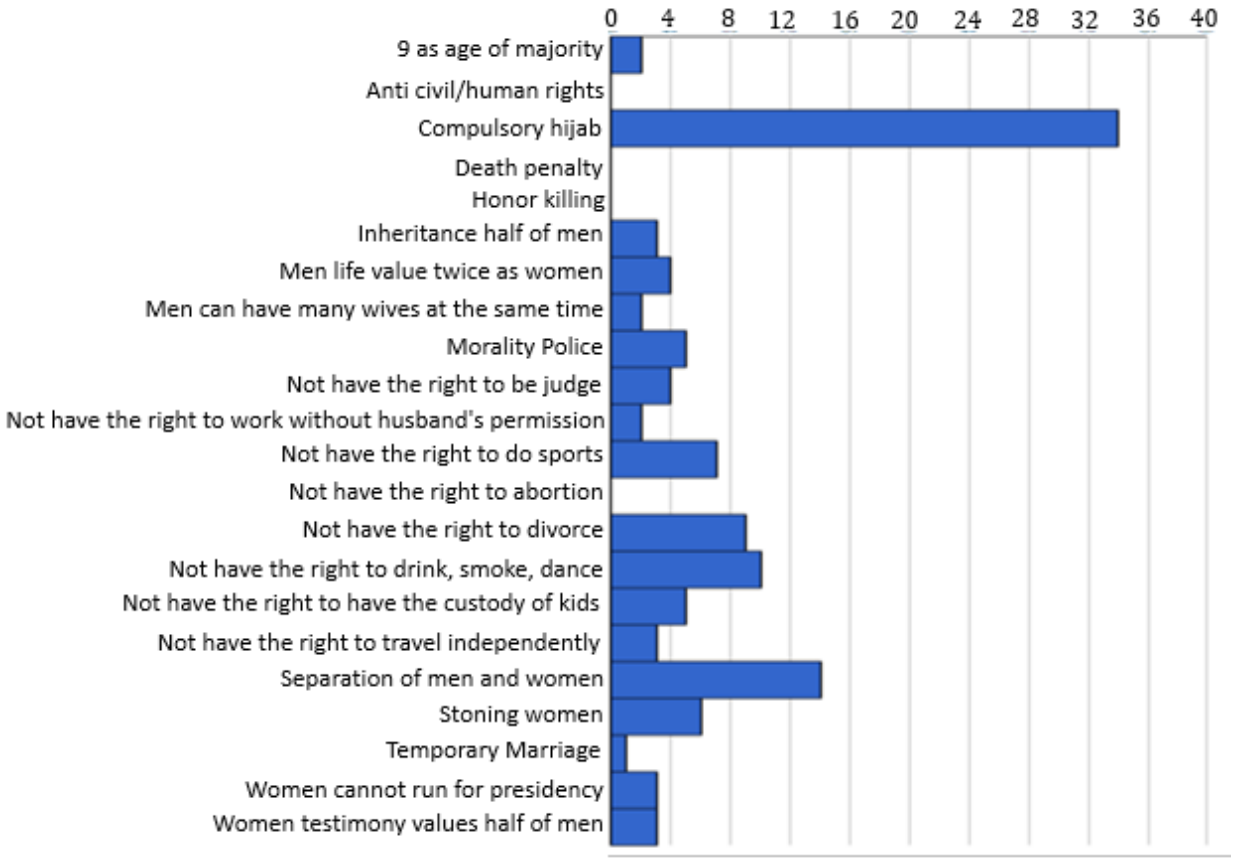

Figure 5.4: The Number of Coded References for Laws, *The New York Times*, 2001–2009

Overall, these results are similar to the other three outlets in this time-period, which shows that the compulsory hijab has had the most representation compared to other laws. This heavy focus on representing the compulsory hijab demonstrates the North American mass media's focus on the hijab as a symbol of an Islamic regime and also Muslim ethnicity, rather than representing news or social-political issues regarding the hijab. Activists consider the political and social pressures and situation of Iran and prioritize their demands. Although many women and activists might have always been against the compulsory hijab, reviewing the women's movement and other movements in Iran in this time-period can prove that the hijab has not been a priority for people in Iran. After the protests against the compulsory hijab in the first couple of years after the Islamic Revolution, the next protest that targeted the hijab was in 2017. Even when looking at the list of demands of the One Million Signatures campaign, which has been one of the biggest campaigns promoted by women activists since it started in 2006, eliminating the compulsory hijab is not mentioned as one of their goals (See Amini 2008; Ebadi 2006). This does not necessarily mean that people agree with the compulsory hijab, but it might indicate that people have more significant issues to deal with other than the hijab, which has been one of the most significant parts of their culture. Images of people before the revolution simply show women with and without the hijab, even at the time of the pro-Western Shah.

USA Today

1. **Oppressive Organizational Actors**

The results for this news outlet are similar to the other three newspapers in this time-period. Government is the most important oppressive organizational actor (9 coded references

out of 12). In Iran, though the undemocratic ideological Islamic government is, in fact, the main oppressive organization in the country, not all the examples that describe it as oppressive are correct. For example:

> On a basic human level, the meetings allowed the women to shed their mandatory robes and veils, to loosen their hair and to relax without the oppressive glare of the Revolutionary Guard, who routinely reprimand and arrest women for eating fruit "too suggestively," or laughing in public, or wearing bright-coloured socks (Stephen J. Lyons, 'Lolita in Tehran' lifts a veil on oppression. 8 May 2003).

In the above passage, the author is discussing the author of a book called Reading Lolita in Tehran. This became a popular book about Iran in North America, as the author left Iran in 1997 to go live in the US. Many people have criticized how Nafisi falsely describes the first years after the revolution in Iran. For example, Rowe (2007) states that "Nafisi's cultural politics in Reading Lolita in Tehran and in all of her journalism clearly supports the 'modernization' process we often identify with one-way globalization by the first-world nations, especially the United States" (p. 258). The above passage is one example of the false representation of the government's oppression written by Nafisi, which has been mentioned and reproduced in this article (Marandi 2008).

Many aspects of Iranian society have not been represented correctly in Nafisi's work. Marandi (2008) maintains that "Nafisi has produced gross misrepresentations of Iranian society and Islam and she uses quotes and references which are inaccurate, misleading, or even wholly invented" (p. 179). This misrepresentation of Iranian society in Western media and the dominant discourse such as in Nafisi's work again shows a 'misrecognition' of Iran and Iranians

(Fraser 2000; Fraser and Honneth 2003). These misrepresentations reinforce the misrecognition of other aspects of people's lives.

2. Laws: Hijab

The number of coded references (shown in Figure 5.5) indicates that the compulsory hijab has received the most attention from all the newspapers in this time-period. For example:

> Not that they have a choice: Under Iranian law imposed after the Islamic revolution, all women – visitors included -- must cover their heads and dress modestly (Laura Bly, Lifting the veil on 'modest dress' ; Opinions of rules, attire vary among women and regions, 7 November 2008).

Or

> Iran's Islamic rulers appear to have given up trying to make women observe more than the letter of the hijab, the Koran's admonition that Muslim women outside their homes should cover everything but their faces, hands and feet. The change has been gradual, but this year coats have gotten shorter, brighter and tighter, heels higher and scarves have slipped farther back to reveal most of women's hair (Barbara Slavin, New attitudes colour Iranian society, culture, 1 March 2005).

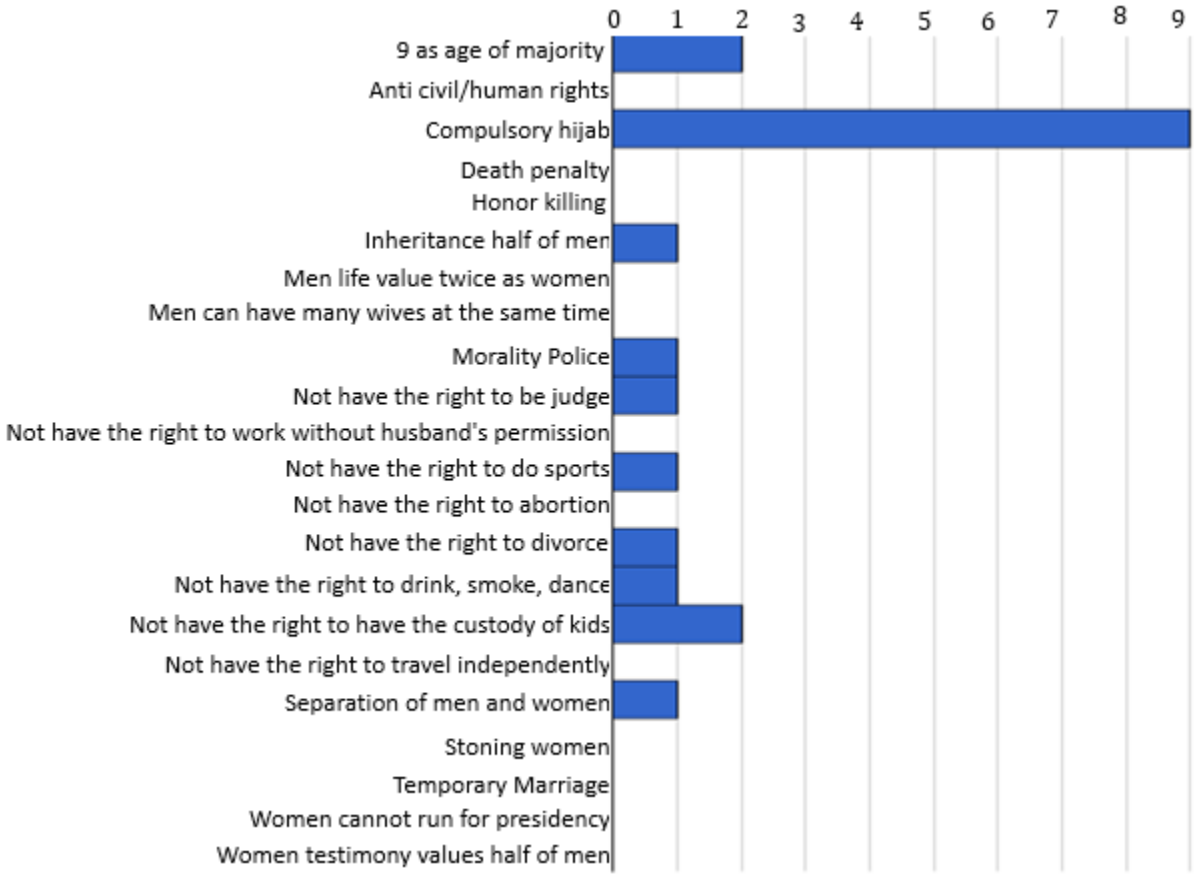

Figure 5.5: The Number of Coded References for Laws, *USA Today*, 2001–2009

Although the compulsory hijab, similar to the other three outlets, has been the most represented law in this time-period, the language used to discuss or mention it (i.e. positive or negative) in some cases is similar to the language used in *The New York Times*. For instance, in the above (second) mentioned example passage, the author describes how women's clothes are different and colourful based on women's choices, and, at the same time, the article describes the compulsory hijab law. Therefore, although the latent message includes a description of an oppressive situation, the manifest message of the text is positively describing women's colourful clothes.

Second Time-period 2009 – 2018

The Globe and Mail

1. **Oppressive Organizational Actors**

A common result across all the newspapers in both time-periods is that government is mentioned the most as an oppressive organizational actor. However, the frequency of discussing oppressive organizational actors has changed over time: from 33 coded references out of 46 in 2001-2009 to 14 coded reference out of 17 in 2009-2018 (coded reference count for overall four newspapers: 132 coded references in the first time-period, and 105 coded references in the second time-period).

The analytical separation of oppressive organizational actors into different elements of the state is not practical, as there is no clear line between state units in Iran (Duyvendak and Jasper 2015, p. 227). Duyvendak and Jasper (2015) maintain that "the actors and structures

within what we conventionally call governance units or state institutions or official positions are themselves a complex and constantly contested set, with some such actors sometimes indeed defending the policies of the governance unit, but at other times they or other state actors are found allying with certain specific incumbents against those policies and at still other times they or other state actors are joining challengers to reshape the entire field" (p. 227). In my research, all the oppressive organizational actors, including police and Muslim clerics, can be put in the category of government, and I do not compare the different oppressive organizational actors. I mainly focus on the frequency of discussing oppressive actors in general in the two time-periods. The government is the most significant oppressive organizational actor, and the frequency of discussing the role of government in oppressing people decreased from 2009 to 2018 compared to the first time-period. However, the main result from all the newspapers and in both time-periods is similar in terms of portraying the government as the most oppressive organizational actor.

2. Laws: Stoning

The stoning law is mentioned most frequently in this time period (12 coded references out of 29). One of the main reasons why the stoning law was one of the top topics is the case of Sakine Mohammadi Ashtiani, whose initial sentence of capital punishment and stoning led to many protests internationally. Therefore, many of the articles covered this specific case. The Morality Police, the separation of men and women in public places, and the compulsory hijab were not as visible compared to 2001–2009.

Stoning is one of the forms of capital punishment in Islam, and it has been in Iranian law since the Islamic Revolution. The number of people who have faced stoning (based on what has

been said and not documented) in forty years since the Islamic Revolution is less than 10 people (for example, see BBC_News 2007; Erdbrink 2009; Sahebjam 1994). Although there are no official records of the exact number, there are also reports that the number of people who have faced stoning in Iran has increased (See Wooldridge 2010). Iran's juridical system, since 2002, has announced that although the law exists due to Islamic rules, it is suggested/recommended that judges do not use it (Erdbrink 2009). However, judges are allowed and can use it as it exists in the law (Erdbrink 2009). Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani, who had a relationship with a man and helped him to kill her husband, based on this law, should have faced stoning (she initially had been sentenced to stoning), but she spent several (nine) years in jail due to her cooperation in murdering her husband, and she is now free (See BBC_News 2010; Tomlinson 2014; Wooldridge 2010). It is worth mentioning that one of the reasons why Sakineh did not face stoning might be due to the international attention this case received (See the CNN Wire Staff 2010). Moreover, according to this law, at least two men have to say they have seen these people having a sexual relationship so the judge can be convinced, a situation that is unlikely in almost any case (Tohidi 1991).

Overall, stoning as an Islamic law exists due to the Islamic ideology of the state. However, based on the numbers that are unofficially reported and according to Iran's Deputy for International Affairs of the Secretary of the Human Rights Headquarters, it is not commonly practiced in the country (Erdbrink 2009; Shargh 2019). However, stoning is mentioned in the title of many articles in Western newspapers as a representation of Iranian women's situation. This is a clear example of what Fraser (2000) describes as the misrecognition of a situation in a hegemonic discourse. Recognition of what exactly is the situation of women in this regard requires an understanding of all the aspects of the law (e.g., how complicated it is to prove the

crime based on law), and the history of its practice. Stoning being in the title or the topic of an article misrepresents women's situation as only oppressive, which is a misrecognition of their more complex reality.

National Post

1. **Oppressive Organizational Actors**

Similar to other newspapers in both time-periods, the government is portrayed as the most oppressive organization (37 coded references out of 42). Moreover, police are one of the tools of government oppression in many countries around the world. In Iran, like in many other countries, police action is related to government policies and more specifically, the supreme leader. However, in this part of the coding, the government, including the IRGC and Basij groups, which are not army or police, are mentioned mostly as oppressive organizational actors.

2. **Laws: Stoning Replaces the Hijab as a Key Topic**

The articles do not discuss or mention laws in general, but among the mentioned laws, stoning is the most frequently mentioned law in this time period (13 coded references out of 38). The reason for this is the same as in *The Globe and Mail*, as Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani's case received widespread international support and attention and newspapers that covered news about her case discussed the stoning law as well. This result from the two Canadian newspapers shows that the focus on the compulsory hijab decreased considerably, and stoning became the centre of attention. Therefore, this decrease in focus on the hijab law did not necessarily create a positive change toward representing other significant oppressive laws (or laws in general) that women have to deal with inside Iran.

The New York Times

1. **Oppressive Organizational Actors**

Although government is again the main oppressive organizational actor, other actors such as the police, Iranian national media, and Muslim clerics are mentioned in this time-period as well. For example:

> Nervous police officers stood by as the protesters blocked traffic in the square to deliver their demand for harsher measures against women who flout Iran's obligatory Islamic dress code, especially now that the hot Tehran summer is approaching(Thomas Erdbrink, When Freedom is the Right to Stay Under Wraps, 8 May 2014).

Or,

> But when Fatemeh, the daughter of a man killed in the Iran-Iraq war, watches the programs, she feels estranged. ''I wonder if we live in the same country,'' the 30-year old municipal worker said. ''Anything they broadcast has so many contradictions with the way I really live, that I have sold my television'' (Thomas Erdbrink; Somaye Malekian contributed reporting. Iranians Say Vote Won't Bridge Gap Between Leaders' Promises and Reality,14 June 2013).

Here is an example of Muslim clerics being represented as oppressive organizational actors:

> To those Iranians shaking their hips and backsides to Latin American music during Zumba exercise classes, Iran's Muslim clerics — and an American company — have the same message: Stop it. It's illegal (Thomas Erdbrink, Iran Bans Zumba, and Its Fans Fume,17 June 2017).

Overall, the number of representations of other oppressive organizational actors (Muslim clerics: 3 coded references; National Media: 5 coded references; Police: 8 coded

references), is considerably less than the number of representations of the government (29 coded references). Similar to the other three newspapers in both time-periods, the government, including the IRGC, Basij, parliament and supreme leader, is the most frequently represented oppressive group. The reason I have coded most parts of the state in one code is that they are all connected and under the control of the supreme leader. In fact, even the national media and police are under the direct control of the supreme leader. The only significantly different source of power in this part of the data is Muslim clerics, as most of the people follow them. The second group that can be a source of power that is not related to the supreme leader is political parties.

Moreover, police, conservative cleric politicians and the supreme leader are shown in different ways as oppressive organizational actors in most pictures. For example, in one picture, a policeman is beating a woman during a protest in the street, and in many other pictures of women, large images of the supreme leader or conservative politicians are shown in the background (their picture is usually on a wall or poster behind a woman who is passing by, and the photographs are framed in a way that suggests that they have power over people, like the woman on the street). The only pictures that might be related to a law (other than the hijab, which is shown in most of the pictures) are those depicting the separation of men and women. In one picture, a police officer is taking a man downstairs while a woman with a black chador can be seen in the opposite direction, and the police are between the man and woman. The picture implies that the police are separating the woman and man; however, it is near a police station, and people pass by each other every day, and women and men walk by each other freely in these places. While all of these pictures and representations are depicting some aspects of people's lives in Iran, there are other aspects of their lives that are not related to oppression or

resistance and representation. Again, better and more frequent portrayals of those other aspects and their recognition would help to portray a more complete understanding of these women's situations.

2. Laws: Hijab and Laws against 'Dancing, Drinking, Smoking'

The compulsory hijab and the separation of men and women are again among the most frequently discussed topics (shown in Figure 5.6). The topics related to laws that restrict women and men from dancing, drinking or smoking in public are the second most represented in this time-period. Moreover, results related to positive/resistance and progressive laws show a change in this time-period. Here is an example of the representation of progressive and positive/resistance laws:

> Former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad once infamously claimed that there are no gays in Iran. But last year the Iranian Parliament issued a report saying that 17 percent of the population is gay. Contrary to what some might think, there is no law here against homosexuality. There is, however, a law against sodomy, which carries the death penalty. It is a very difficult crime to prove. The law requires at least four eyewitnesses who must be pious Muslims and who must also explain what they had been doing to witness such an act. They are required to explain why they didn't leave the room or why they didn't cover their eyes or, if they had their hands and feet bound, why they didn't turn their heads to look away (Our Man in Tehran (Thomas Erdbrink) Answers Your Questions About Iran,16 May 2015).

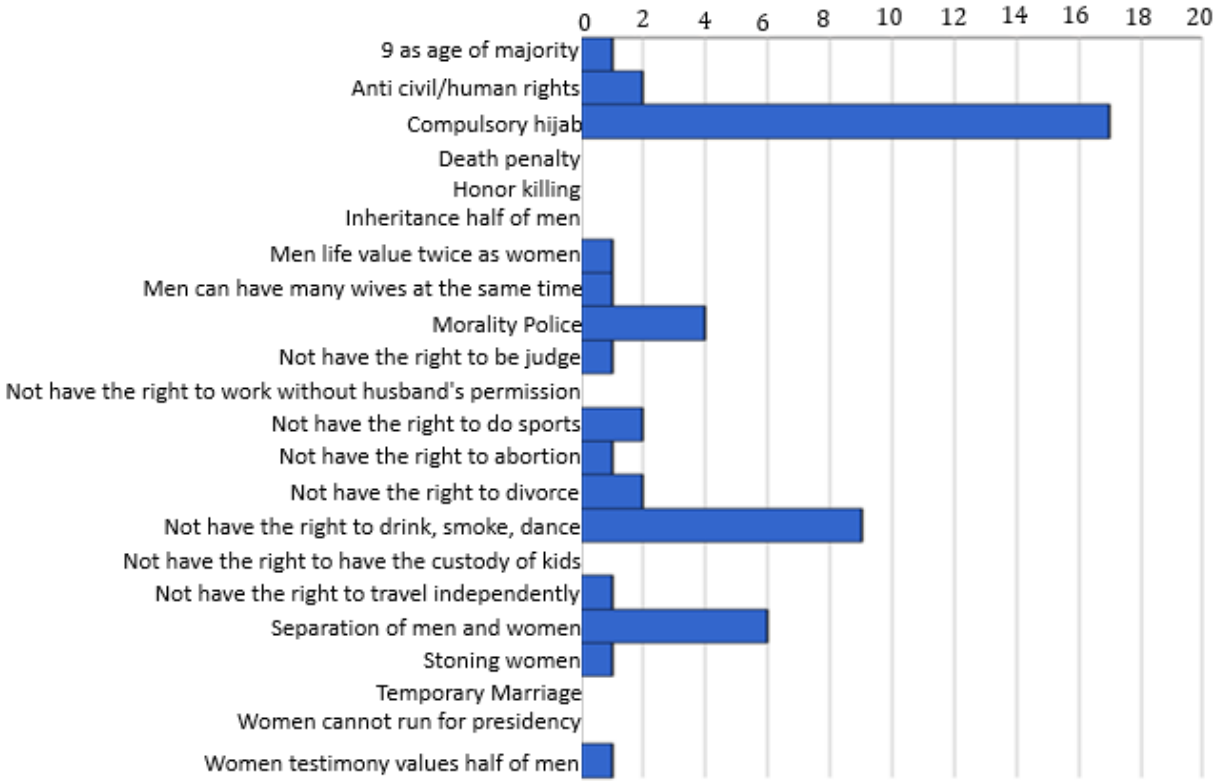

Figure 5.6: The Number of Coded References, Laws, *The New York Times*, 2009–2018

Overall, there are very few representations of positive/resistance laws, such as women having the right to participate in international weightlifting competitions or driving or having many more liberties compared to women in some other Middle Eastern countries such as Saudi Arabia. However, the representation of laws, similar to the first time-period, is more focused on the compulsory hijab law. Considering the frequency of articles about Iran that also discussed women in *The New York Times*, the consistency in the representations of the hijab as oppressive shows a significant aspect of media discourse that did not change significantly during this time.

USA Today

1. **Oppressive Organizational Actors**

The government, as the most frequently represented oppressive organizational actor, is discussed in a way similar to the first time period (10 coded references out of 17). However, the frequency of the police being portrayed as oppressive actors increased in this time-period; one of the reasons why police are mentioned in the articles more than in the first time-period is the increase in protests after 2009. The result of this part of the data is the same in all the newspapers in both time-periods.

2. **Laws: Limited Attention, but Focus on Hijab**

Laws are not a topic of many articles. The compulsory hijab is mentioned 7 times (out of 15 coded references). The Morality Police, the separation of men and women in public, and the prohibition of dancing, drinking, smoking, etc., are other topics that are discussed one time or two times each. Although the frequency of the representation of laws is limited, the few laws that are mentioned are those that had the most representation in all newspapers in these time

periods. This can show the focus of the dominant hegemonic media discourse on hijab. Hijab law has been the focus of the newspapers in most cases. Even when the overall frequency of the discussing laws is low, still it can be seen that hijab is the most frequent mentioned law. This focus on one of the most apparent aspects of Islam, reinforces the othering process of Muslims for the audience.

Women's Social Movement Participation

First Time-period 2001- 2009

The Globe and Mail

1. **Social Movement Actors: Women Rights Activists, Celebrities and Ordinary People**

Social movement actors are the actors who resist the oppressive systems and make changes in society against oppression. Social movement actors are highly visible in media coverage. Twelve groups of actors were mentioned in the articles. In my research, I have chosen articles that discuss Iranian women and their situation, not specifically articles that focus on social movements or women's activism. The reason for this data collection strategy is that first, the main focus of my research is on the representation of Iranian women in US and Canadian media, and any changes in their representations. Second, this data collection helped me to see the activism, tactics and actors that are not necessarily framed by Western media as activism, SM actors or tactics. Many of the activities in which women engaged during this time period, although they were not necessarily known or portrayed by Western media as activism, SM actors or tactics, were actually means of resistance.

As is shown in Table 5.3, in the first time period, of the 44 *The Globe and Mail* newspaper articles, the groups of actors labelled by media as ‘feminists, women’s rights activists’ are mentioned the most (43 coded references out of 172) , followed by ‘celebrities, artists’ (30 coded references), and ‘ordinary people’ (30 coded references).

Shirin Ebadi, an Iranian lawyer and a human rights and women and children's rights activist, won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2003. There were many articles that discuss Shirin Ebadi in 2003 and the following years. Also, a few other women who are filmmakers, writers and activists are discussed. For example:

> Shirin Ebadi, the Iranian feminist who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2003 for her work, is in the midst of a surprisingly successful petition campaign to get a million women to put their names on a statement denouncing Islamic law as harmful to women (Doug Saunders, What if they had a revolution and nobody came?, 14 February 2007).

Or

> Ms. Eshraghi is a government official, working at the Interior Ministry to promote women's rights. Both her candidacy and her husband's were revoked (Estanislo Oziewicz, Power couple lead freedom fight, 13 January 2004).

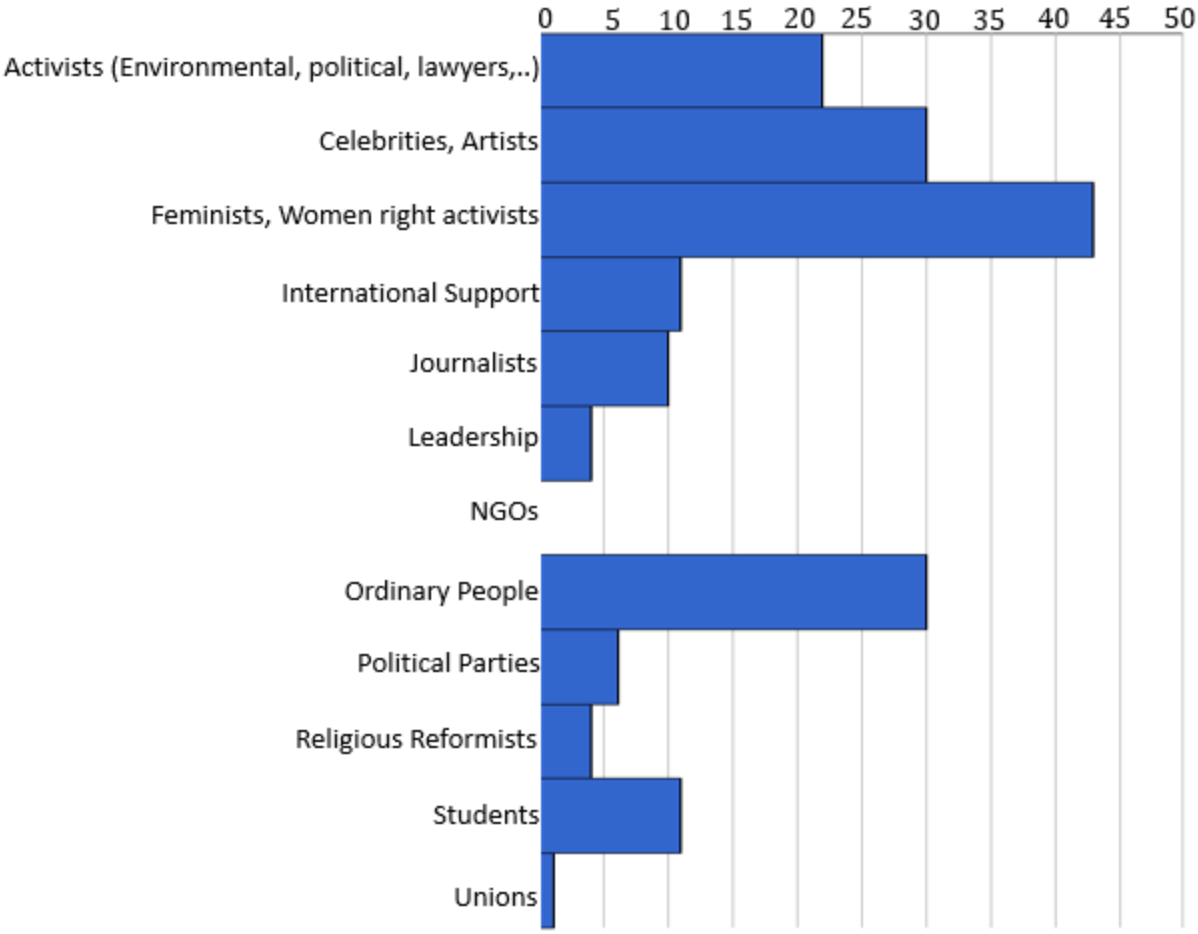

Figure 5.7: The Number of Coded References for Social Movement Actors, *The Globe and Mail* 2001–2009

In terms of the number of coded references, as is shown in Figure 5.7, ordinary people and celebrities/artists, are the second group of activists most frequently mentioned in this time period by *The Globe and Mail* articles. For example:

> From the very first moment of the inception of the Islamic republic, society was ahead of the regime. Hundreds of thousands of women came into the streets saying that freedom is neither Eastern nor Western — it's human. Even with the new president, things have improved in the sense that people continue to try to create spaces to hold on to rights within the private realm (Kathy English, Readers of the world unite, 6 December 2005).

In the first half of this time-period (until 2005), the political environment of Iran, because of the reformist president, Khatami, and the majority of the members of the 6th parliament, was relatively open compared to before and after this president and parliament. During these years, there were a number of protests and activities by women's rights activists (such as in June 2005) and political movements (Hoodfar and Sadeghi 2009; Hoodfar and Sadr 2010).

Overall, in this time-period, 'feminists and women's rights activists' were the categories used by media most often to identify social movement actors. The 'celebrities and artists' group was the second most discussed group of social movement actors in this time-period in *The Globe and Mail*. Artistic protests through movies, theatre, books, paintings and various art forms can be a common way of protesting a totalitarian regime (for example see Jonson 2015). Ordinary people and, specifically, ordinary women have had the third most representations. The acts and resistance of ordinary people have received less attention from the media compared to 'feminists and women's rights activists' and also compared to 'celebrities and artists' as social movement actors.

Ordinary people, and specifically women, have actively changed their social and economic situation after the Islamic Revolution. Women have been active in terms of achieving high levels of education and in the job market, running for political offices (and being active in sports, for example see Pfister 2003). Although they had to wear hijab, it did not stop them from being engaged in society (Bahramitash 2003; Bayat 2007; Hoodfar and Sadeghi 2009; Kurzman 2008). Before the Islamic Revolution, the traditionalist majority of families did not permit their daughters to be in society as it is not an Islamic environment. As Bahramitash (2003) explains, "women from low-income families who respected tradition were marginalised by an atmosphere that strongly discouraged veiled women from entering certain public places where middle- and upper-class women gathered" (Bahramitash 2003, p. 558). Consequently, only women of modern minority families were educated and active in society. However, after the Islamic Revolution, the presence of women in society, with the hijab and separation of girls and boys in schools, became accepted by the majority of the population as the environment was Islamic.

For example, Bahramitash (2003) discusses how "the literacy campaign" after the Islamic revolution of 1979, "became far more successful than that of the Shah with far fewer funds, because female teachers were volunteers and many traditional families welcomed the campaign" (Bahramitash 2003, p. 561). Furthermore, because "Khomeini made literacy a religious duty for men and women equally, few husbands could prevent their wives from going to the local mosques for education even if they had so wished" (Bahramitash 2003, p. 561). Therefore, not only "the literacy rate among women increased", but also, "many religious women working as volunteers took an increasingly public role, particularly as the literacy campaign branched into others such as military training for women" (Bahramitash 2003, p.

561). In many cases, Iran's regime, after the Islamic revolution of 1979, passed laws and policies that aimed to oppress women, but women started to use the opportunities that they were given in their context to empower themselves. As Esfandiari (1997) explains, women turned "the language of the Islamic reformers and the revolutionary clerics to their own advantage" (Esfandiari 1997, p. 43).

Thereafter, women started to go to schools and universities and the job market, and many of them were independent and chose to participate in sports or run for political offices. There was no rule to ban women with hijab from being active in society, and in terms of culture and families, it was very much accepted and considered as positive. However, in these media articles, the surface of the society, which is compulsory hijab, is represented as oppressive, and the positive changes and power of women who have actively used their opportunities to change the culture and society are not represented. Even in terms of rules and norms such as wearing jeans and sandals or having nail polish in the first years after the revolution, as mentioned previously also, women continued to change the norms and regulations. It has been more than thirty years that they have broken these rules.

2. Social Movement Tactics: Artistic Protests

The number of coded references (28 coded reference out of 75; see Figure 5.8) demonstrates that among the social movement tactics mentioned and coded in this time period, 'artistic protest' is the most common tactic mentioned. 'Peaceful demonstration' and 'protest' are the second and third most frequently mentioned tactics in this time-period.

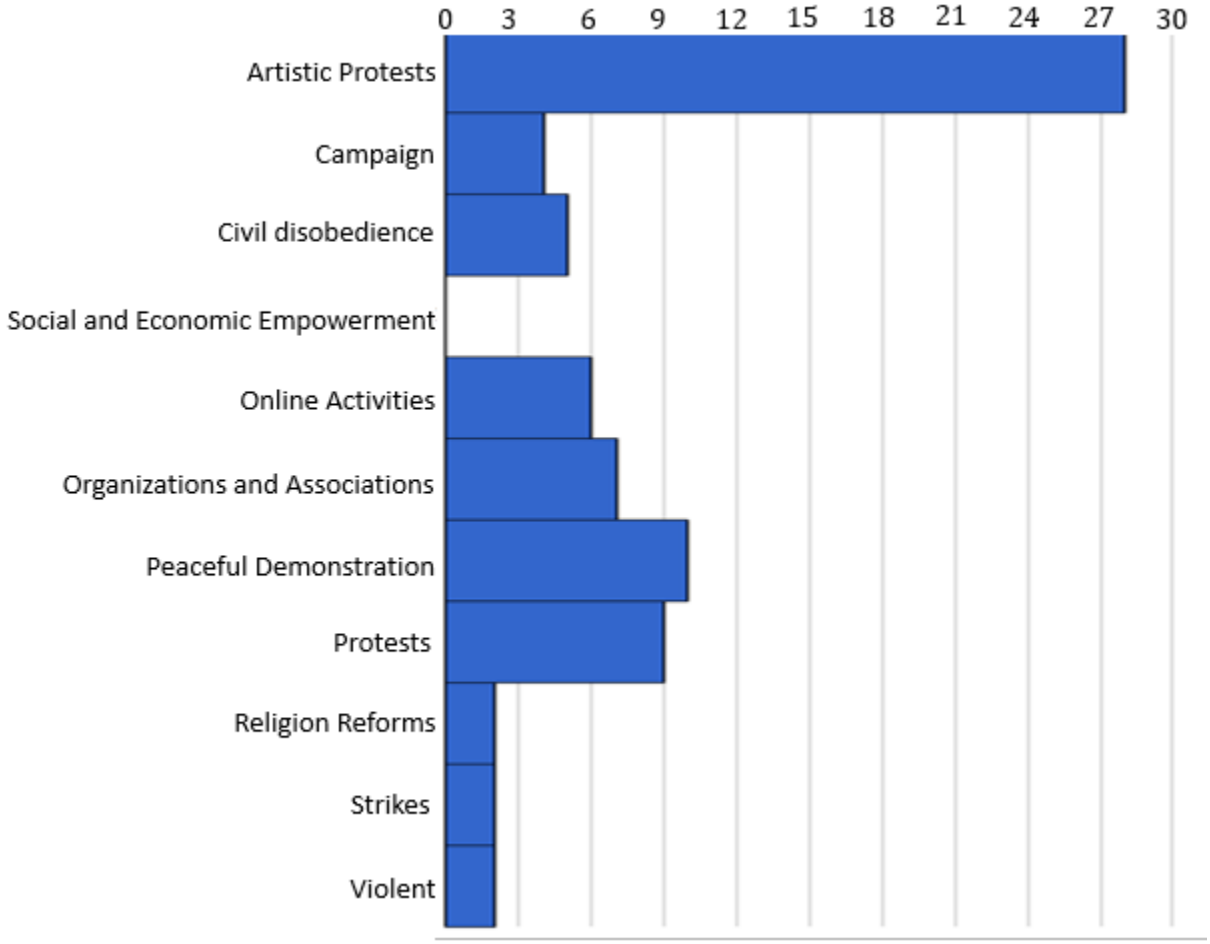

Figure 5.8: The Number of Coded References for Social Movement Tactics, *The Globe and Mail*, 2001–2009

‘Artistic protests’ refer to the paintings, movies, or songs that people have made and used to fight against government oppression. For example:

> Mr Jafar Panahi: “I become the person whose identity is defined by my rebellion against the censorship regime. I do enjoy that status of being the person who is resisting this force.” His films are adored by cinema-goers around the world. They have won most of the major film awards. And they have taught the world extraordinary things about Iran: The Circle, in 2000, followed women in and out of a Tehran jail and chronicled the cruel life of women under Islam. Crimson Gold was a stark vision of class division under the revolution. And last year’s Offside chronicled a group of women sneaking into a World Cup qualification soccer game, where female presence is strictly against the law, and their time under the guard of the vice squad (Doug Saunders, Making movies under the mullahs, 31 March 2007)

Considering social movement actors’ representations, the frequency of representations of ‘artistic protest’ could be predictable. However, compared to the representations of ‘feminists and women’s rights activists’ the representations of ‘protest’ or ‘peaceful demonstration’ are not as frequent. Moreover, ‘campaign,’ which is one of the most significant forms of protest by feminists and women’s rights activists, is not discussed. Campaigns are SM tactics in the legal structure of the state and want to change a specific law or situation. In this time period in Iran, campaigns are not focused on hijab law. The biggest campaign in this time period is ‘ کمپین یک میلیون امضا’ or ‘One Million Signature’ campaign to change discriminatory laws against women and does not include the compulsory hijab law in its main goals.

There is an asymmetry between the representations of social movement tactics and social movement actors. The number of protests by feminists and women’s rights activists and

also protests against government in general in this time-period is more comparable with the representations of protests and demonstrations as tactics. If feminists and women's rights activists had led any protests in any way (other than artistic protests, which are comparable with the frequency of representations of artists), their tactics could have more representations. One of the reasons for this imbalanced representation of people who are labeled as women's rights activists and the tactics such as campaign and protest is that in many cases, people are represented without discussing their specific activities. For example, in many instances, Shirin Ebadi is represented as an activist who has received the Nobel Peace prize, but her actions are not mentioned specifically. Moreover, artistic forms of activism in Iran's post-revolutionary years have been safer, such as paintings or movies that can be interpreted in many ways.

National Post

1. Social Movement Actors: Women's Rights Activists

The number of coded references (7 coded references out of 28) demonstrates that the *National Post* discusses a group of activists labelled as women's rights activists in these articles as social movement actors more than any other group of SM actors. The articles mention the name of Shirin Ebadi several times as well as the names of a few other feminists. They also have used more general terms, such as women's rights activists, to describe actors. For example:

> In June, police beat hundreds of women's rights activists with batons during a peaceful demonstration in Tehran and took at least 70 people into custody. The demonstration followed a call by hundreds of women's rights activists for reforms to Iran's legal code and the removal of discriminatory clauses against women (Mora Johnson,

Iran's woeful human rights record: Informed sources, 23 August 2006).

The result of this part of the data, in terms of not representing ordinary people as the main social movement actors (considering the number of references coded), is similar to the *Globe and Mail*, as it represents mainly feminists and women's rights activists as SM actors and most frequently, while *The Globe and Mail* represents the artists and celebrities group and women's right's activists as the main SM actors. International support, journalists, ordinary people, and celebrities have the next most frequent representations. In representing ordinary people, the authors have mainly used the words 'ordinary people', 'ordinary citizens' or 'hundreds of women'. However, this result from the *National Post* (similar to *The Globe and Mail*) is different than the result of the two American newspapers, which mainly represent ordinary people as the main SM actors in this time-period. It is worth mentioning that women's rights activists have been actively fighting for gender equality during all the years in this time period and have had demonstrations and campaigns (Hoodfar and Sadr 2010). However, the main changes toward gender equality have been done though women's everyday activities and social and political empowerment (Bayat 2007; Hoodfar and Sadeghi 2009)

2. Social Movement Tactics: Online Activities in Election Year ()

Although online activities are the most frequently mentioned tactics in the *National Post* in the first time-period (13 coded references out of 20), all the coded references are from three articles published in 2005, the year of the presidential election in Iran and also the time when blogging was first becoming very popular. Other tactics are mentioned very few times. Moreover, the online activities of Iranians who live outside of Iran and in exile are one of the main reasons why this tactic has been represented more frequently.

The New York Times

1. **Social Movement Actors: Ordinary People and Women's Rights Activists**

The number of coded references (61 coded references out of 179) indicates that ordinary people and those labelled as women's rights activists have been the two most frequently represented social movement actor groups in this outlet in the first time period. This group of activists do not necessarily self-identify as women's rights activists, but they are labelled as such in media coverage. As the articles focus more on people's everyday life challenges and their ways of fighting against oppressive situations, ordinary people are mentioned more as SM actors in Iran. The role of ordinary people is discussed in terms of both challenging oppression in everyday life and in protests and social movements. For example:

> Howard [Jane Howard, a former BBC correspondent, accompanied her husband to Iran when he was sent there on a United Nations mission in 1996. They lived there until 2000, and during those years she became interested in the situation of Iranian women. Based on extensive research, interviews and personal observations, "Inside Iran: Women's Lives" shows us vividly what life is like in Iran today, and some of what the author has to say will probably surprise many Western readers] concludes that some of women's gains have come about as a result not just of government policy but of arbitrariness in enforcing the law (the shah's secret police were much more efficient). Because the rules are not consistently enforced, strong-minded women manage to get around many of them. "Time and time again in Iran you hear stories about women who struggle against the laws ranged against them, and who frequently beat the odds, triumphing through sheer force of personality," she writes. They "confront the laws of covering up, traveling, marriage and divorce."…, On my last visit, for instance, I met several young women who had managed to get divorces by persuading the court that their husbands were not performing their husbandly duties. One of them had gotten custody of her son -- which my sister wasn't granted when

> she left her abusive husband during the shah's regime (Nahid Rachlin, Persian Progress, 29 September 2002).

Or,

> Political dissent is often expressed through unauthorized demonstrations, as was the case on Sunday in Tehran, when hundreds of women marched to protest sexual discrimination (Nazila Fathi, 7 Bombings Shatter Calm in Iran, 13 June 2005).

Overall, ordinary people had the most representation in this time period. Although these representations provide a broader view of ordinary people's activities and their own way of resisting against oppression and achieving their demands, this group is followed closely by feminists and women's rights activists, which is similar to the results from *The Globe and Mail* and *National Post*. Women's rights activists and feminists are represented as main SM actors in Iran, despite this group's movements and activities were limited in this time period (See Hoodfar and Sadeghi 2009). Hoodfar and Sadeghi (2009) discuss the women's movement in Iran (mainly in this time period: 1997-2008) and explain that "the women's movement in Iran does not fit into the classic model of a centralized and coordinated organization with clear leaders" and "neither does it subscribe to any grand theories" (Hoodfar and Sadeghi 2009, p. 222). This indicates how the concepts of resistance, movement and oppression are perceived and represented differently by the North American mass media than the ways they appear in the context of a Muslim and Middle Eastern country like Iran.

2. Social Movement Tactics: Economic & Social Empowerment, Artistic Protests

Considering that ordinary people as the most frequently mentioned actors, it is unsurprising that being economically and socially empowered frequently appears an SM tactic (36 coded reference, out of 134 overall coded references about SM tactics in *NY Times* in this time period) to fight oppression. Although 'economic and social empowerment' is not considered a social movement tactic in social movement theories, there are social movement scholars, such as Asef Bayat (2007), who identify this form of empowerment and the daily activities of women in Iran as activism. These are the main tactics that have allowed women to achieve their goals in various areas of their life. The changes women make are intentional but fragmented and by individuals' everyday activities. This is an example of using economic and social empowerment to fight oppression:

> Confronted with new cultural and legal restrictions after the Islamic Revolution in 1979, some young women turned to higher education as a way to get away from home, postpone marriage and earn social respect, advocates say. Religious women, who had refused to sit in classes with men, returned to universities after they were resegregated. Today, more than 60 percent of university students are women, compared with just over 30 percent in 1982, even though classes are no longer segregated (Nazila Fathi, Starting at Home, Iran's Women Fight for Rights,13 February 2009).

The second most mentioned tactic in this time period is artistic protest (30 coded references). Artistic protest refers to using any art form to protest an oppressive system or show discontent with policy. Artistic protests can be a safe SM tactic in this dictatorial political system, as most other SM tactics can result in imprisonment. However, in Iran, there are many artists also that are/have been put in jail because of their work such as the filmmaker Jafar

Panahi, who has made many movies, such as *Offside*, which shows the effects of the government's oppression on people's lives (Brooks 2012). This is an example of an artistic protest tactic:

> The shots became known as the Qajar series and made her one of Iran's most famous female photographers. "My pictures became a mirror reflecting how I felt: we are stuck between tradition and modernity," she said in an interview here;… The pictures of women challenge the standard idea of harem life, and the wives of the king present a powerful and modern image of themselves. They look confidently into the lens, and unlike women of that time in other pictures taken by foreign photographers, they don't look flirtatious or shy (Nazila Fathi, Iran's Giant Shoe Box of Faded Photographs, Full of the Unexpected, 30 May 2007).

The results of this part of the data, possibly due to the presence of the newspaper's correspondent in Iran, show that this newspaper is different in some ways and similar in other ways to the other news outlets. Its representation of economic and social empowerment as the most frequent SM tactic for Iranian women and Iranian people demonstrates a different result than the other three newspapers. However, similar to the two Canadian newspapers, artistic forms of protest have been one of the most frequently represented SM tactics in this time-period. This result closely reflects one significant way of protest in Iran, as using art to protest an oppressive situation can be one of the safest ways to protest in a totalitarian country (for example see Jonson 2015).

USA Today

1. **Social Movement Actors: Ordinary People, Artists and Celebrities, Women's Rights Activists**

The number of coded references (11 coded references out of 29) shows that ordinary people are the most frequently mentioned SM actor group in articles from *USA Today* in this time period, followed by celebrities and artist groups, and those labelled by media as activists and women's rights activists. In most newspapers, these four groups of actors are the biggest groups. However, in the two American newspapers, ordinary people have had more frequent representations (compared to other groups of SM actors). In most cases, the authors describe how Iranian people, specifically women, despite the oppression they face, have changed their situation to gain more freedom and power in their everyday life.

Ordinary people, as the most represented group of SM actors, is followed by celebrities and women's rights activists. The first part of the result is similar to *The New York Times*. The second part, which shows women's rights activists and also celebrities as among the most represented groups of activists, is common across all four newspapers.

2. **Social Movement Tactics: Artistic Protests and Economic & Social Empowerment**

The result of SM tactics shows that the 'economic and social empowerment' by ordinary people is the main tactic in this period (7 coded references). This SM tactic is followed by artistic protests (6 coded references) and, lastly, civil disobedience (3 coded references), such as women starting to dance, music being played illegally in some places, or men and women having a relationship out of marriage. Overall, the representation of this part of the coding has been very limited in this newspaper, which likely reflects the low number of articles.

Second Time-period 2009 - 2018

The Globe and Mail

1. **Social Movement Actors: Ordinary People, International Support**

As is shown in Figure 5.9, discussions of the role of ordinary people as SM actors has been the most represented group of actors in this time-period (32 coded reference out of 102 coded references). The representations of groups of activists labeled by media as women's rights activists did not have the highest frequency in this time-period. The number of names mentioned in these articles is less than 20, which shows a small group of activists who are labeled (and not necessarily self-identified) primarily as human rights and women's rights activists. And in this time-period, the focus of the media changed from representing a group as women's rights activists toward representing them as ordinary people and specifically ordinary women, whose participation in political and social movements has been widespread since the Green Movement of 2009.

Moreover, international supporters are the second most mentioned SM actor group during this time-period. One of the reasons for this change may be because of the growth of Internet accessibility in recent years. Communication and networking have become more global through the Internet. Michaelsen (2018) notes that, through "new communication technologies, in particular the internet," people who are in exile or leave their country can still remain in touch with the politics of their country and have an impact (Michaelsen 2018, pp. 250, 251). For example, Iranians living abroad "have used websites, blogs as well as satellite programs to provide audiences in Iran with alternative information and to participate in internal debates,

circumventing state-controlled media and contributing to counterpublics" (Michaelsen 2015a, 2018, p. 251).

However, the word 'support' does not mean that activities of government or activists will necessarily contribute to help any movement in Iran; it only means that these international actors are showing support or willing to help ordinary people or activists inside Iran to create change. The actions or words of politicians and activists outside Iran can have both positive/resistance and negative consequences for people and activists inside Iran. Not only might they endanger the lives or safety of people inside of Iran, but they also might not receive their trust. "The threats against horizontal links into the country contrast with the freedom that exiles have gained with their exit from the territorial jurisdiction and immediate power sphere of the authoritarian state" (Michaelsen 2018, p. 258). Therefore, it is important for these connections and networks to consider the safety of people inside the country.

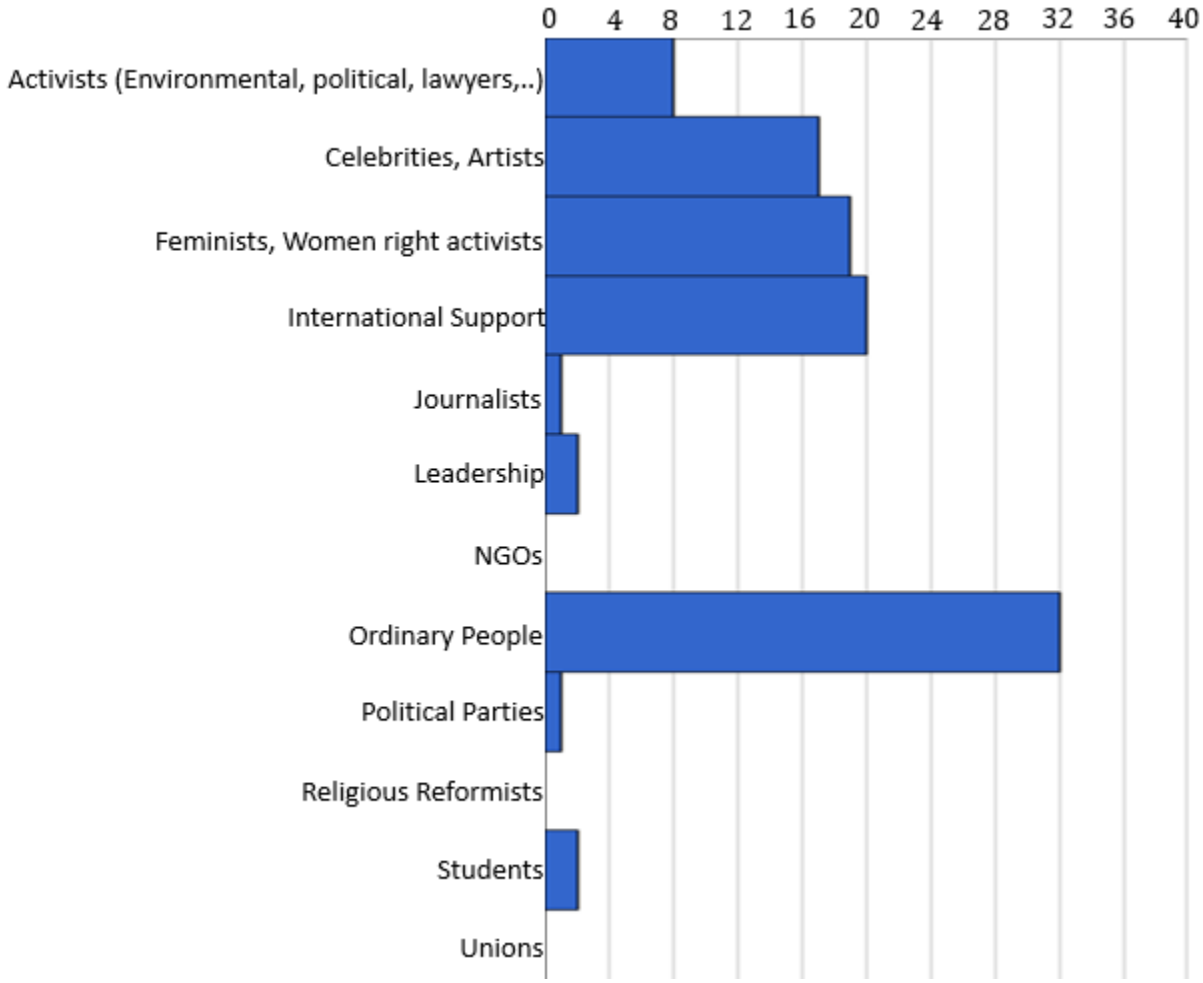

Figure 5.9: The Number of Coded References, Social Movement Actors, *The Globe and Mail*, 2009–2018

Here is an example of international support:

> Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani, the Iranian mother who was convicted of adultery and sentenced to death by stoning, is still alive, for now - saved by an international outcry of revulsion against state barbarism. But the story isn't over. She's still on death row. Once the heat dies down, the regime may simply choose to hang her, instead. "This regime has taken so many lives," says Maryam Namazie, an Iranian human-rights campaigner who now lives in London. "There's got to be a time when it stops" (Margaret Wente, It's a crime to be a woman in Iran. 17 July 2010).

Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani, who helped her boyfriend murder her husband, was freed in 2014 after serving her 10-year sentence in jail (See BBC_News 2010; Tomlinson 2014; Wooldridge 2010). Sakineh, due to committing adultery, was in danger of receiving a stoning sentence. Her son asked a lawyer and activist to take on Sakineh's case, make it public and ask for international support to prevent a stoning sentence from being issued. Activists around the world, mainly in Western European countries, started to show their support and made Sakineh's case public (See the CNN Wire Staff 2010). Eventually, Sakineh did not receive a stoning sentence, and she spent 10 years in jail for cooperating in the murder of her husband.

2. Social Movement tactics: Protests, Artistic Protests

Protests are the most represented SM tactics (19 coded references out of 74; see Figure 5.10). The representation of artistic protest tactics is again high (15 coded reference), but decreased compared to the previous time period. The reason why protest had the highest frequency is because the number of social movements in the streets increased in Iran in this time-period. The Green Movement, which started in June 2009, continued for more than one

year. There were also many other protests in the streets in the following years in the name of and on the anniversary of the events of the first year of the Green Movement as well as due to other types of oppression including the economic situation of people.

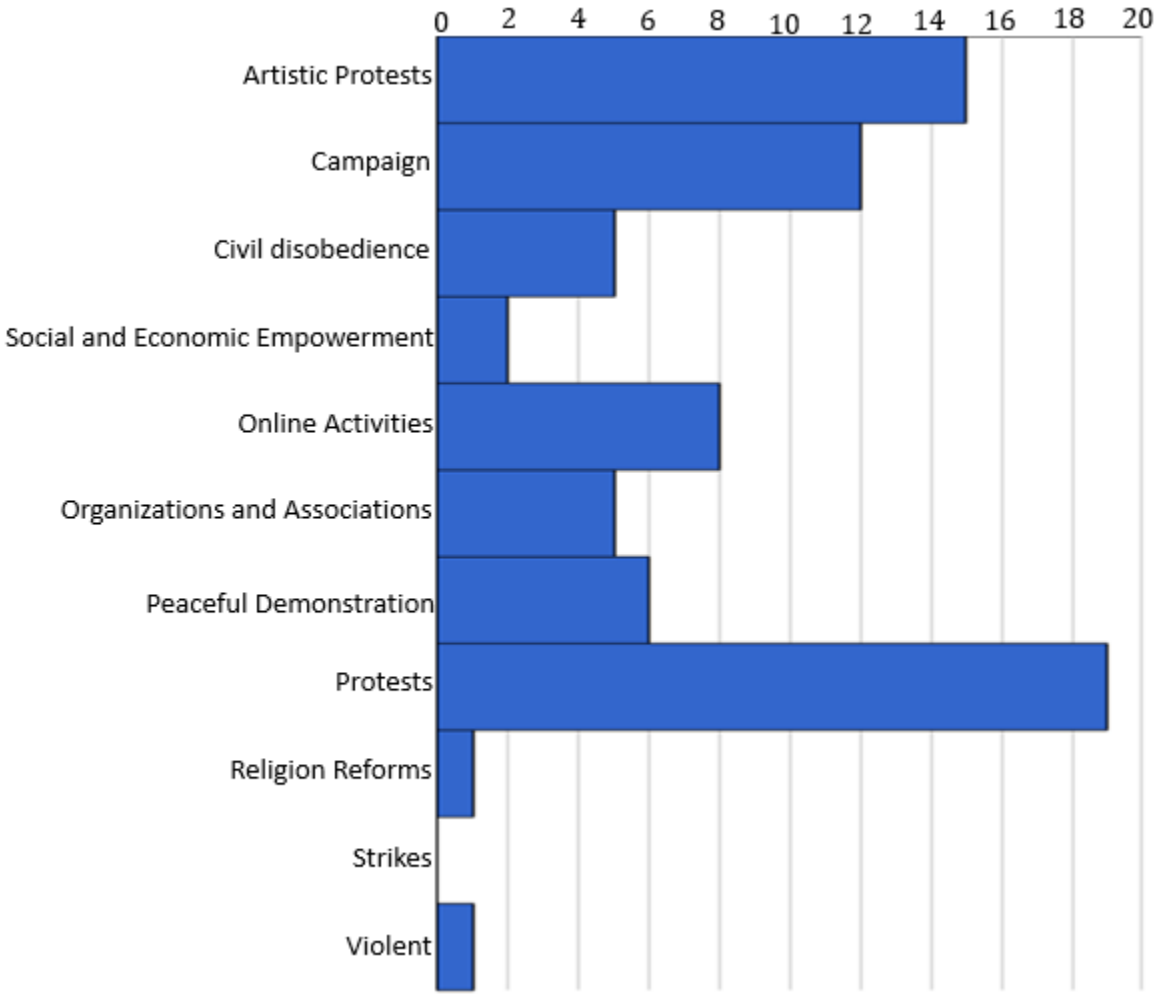

Figure 5.10: The Number of Coded References, Social Movement Tactics, *The Globe and Mail*, 2009–2018

Overall, the general representation of women had positive changes. First, the positive/resistance general representations of women increased compared to the previous time-period. Second, the discussion of oppressive organizational actors and oppressive laws decreased compared to the first time-period. And, most significantly, in terms of social

movement actors' representations, the focus of media switched from representing activists who are labeled as women's rights activists to ordinary women who are empowered and active in social movements as well as other social and political activities. However, in general, there is a dichotomous representation of women on mass media that show them as either victims of oppression or as resisters, while many other aspects of these women's lives are not included in their representation.

As Gramsci (1971) explains, media reproduces power relations and can function as an oppressive tool. The above discussion on changes in media representations of women's situation demonstrates the dominant discourse, which is created by hegemonic power relations and reproduced through media, in the first time-period. This dominant discourse is focused on the oppression of the government and portrays ordinary people, mainly as victims of the oppressive system. This discourse does not recognize women's activism and the changes they make in their situation toward their rights and demands. However, when ordinary people, as the main SM actors, change their tactics and participate in protests and street movements, the media eventually has to cover the movements' news and include ordinary people as the main SM actors who are fighting for their rights. This change shows the power of ordinary people in challenging power relations and creating counter-hegemonic discourse in media (Gramsci 1971; Hall 1980a, 1980b; Laclau and Mouffe 1985).

Ordinary women have been empowering themselves, resisting government oppression and creating changes in society to strive for gender equality in all the years since the Islamic Revolution. Women's rights activists and feminists in Iran have always been active in many ways as well, from staging protests to launching campaigns. However, due to the high level of

government oppression, they have not been successful in their activities or protests (in terms of both the number of people joining them and also the number of events). For example, Hoodfar and Sadeghi (2009) discuss the number of activities that were led by women rights activists and feminist leaders during 1997- 2007 (Iran had a reformist president and majority reformist parliament during eight years of this period). They also discuss how ordinary women through their everyday activities made changes in their situation and conclude that "the women's individual acts of resistance often render state attempts to control and repress ineffective" (Hoodfar and Sadeghi 2009, p. 222). However, they note that "this also carries with it the danger of women losing sight of the larger movement and its goals" and "creating days of celebration, anniversaries and the launching of film festivals and book readings are effective strategies for women renewing their vows and reinforcing their sense of solidarity and commitment to the cause, and to remind each other of their continuing struggle" (Hoodfar and Sadeghi 2009, p. 222).

As Bayat (2007) explains, women's movement activities and social changes toward equality in Iran have been a result of ordinary people's "fragmented yet collective practices that led to some tangible outcome" (p. 169). The attention and focus of the media, specifically in the first time-period, has been on the number of feminists and women's rights activists rather than the changes ordinary people have been creating toward gender equality. As Bayat (2007, 2013) explains, women's activism in Iran, a Muslim and authoritarian state, is not based on the women's rights activists' acts; it is mainly based on the acts of ordinary people, specifically ordinary women. Bayat (2007) explains that "there are different ways in which Muslim women under authoritarian regimes may, consciously or without being aware, defy, resist, negotiate, or even circumvent gender discrimination not necessarily by resorting to extraordinary and

overarching ‘movements’ identified by deliberate collective protest and informed by mobilization theory and strategy, but by being involved in ordinary daily practices of life, by working, engaging in sports, jogging, singing, or running for public offices” (p. 161). This activism has not received much mass media attention, and the actors did not have a correct representation in media in the first time-period. However, in the second time-period, when ordinary women were shown to have a huge presence in social movements on the streets (Tahmasebi-Birgani 2010), they started to be seen more in mass media. This presence in social movements is understandable from a mass media perspective, as it has helped to portray the ordinary people as the main actors. Therefore, through changing their tactics in creating change, these social movement actors (ordinary women) have had greater representation in mass media.

National Post

1. **Social Movement Actors: Ordinary People, Women’s Rights Activists**

In general, the discussion of SM actors increased in this period (115 coded references in this time period, and 28 coded references in the first time period). The visibility of ordinary people as SM actors also increased, and they are the most represented SM actors (32 coded references and most represented in this time period, as shown in Figure 5.11; 4 coded references and third represented group in the first time period). Groups labeled as activists and women’s rights activists are the next most frequently mentioned actor groups. The representation of the role of international support actors also increased significantly in this time-period. This increase in the role of international support has been possible mainly due to the role of the Internet and the power of networks (Castells 2009, 2012; Michaelsen 2018).

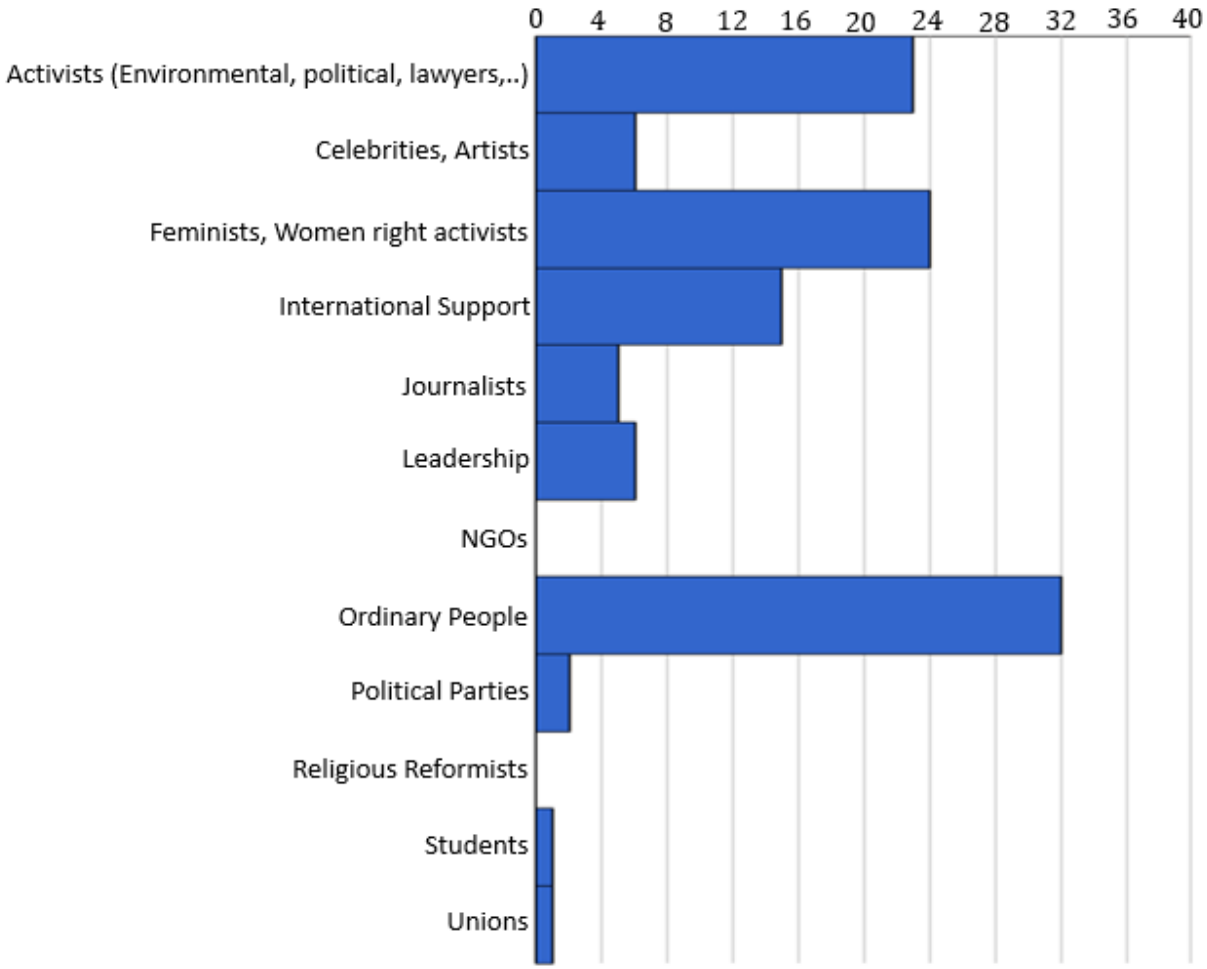

Figure 5.11: The Number of Coded References, Social Movement Actors, *National Post*, 2009–2018

The increase in the representation of social movement actors (115 coded references compared to 28 in the first time period), can be considered a positive change in this time period because it includes resistance against oppression. There is still, however, a dichotomous representation of women's situations that show them as either victims of oppression or resistant). However, the most significant change is representing ordinary people as the most frequent social movement actors. As I discussed in relation to *The Globe and Mail*, changes toward a freer and more equal situation in a country like Iran has not occurred based on the collective actions of women's rights activists (Bayat, 2007,2013). However, the activities of ordinary women might not be considered as social movement tactics, and consequently, these ordinary women are not being portrayed as social movement actors. "Clearly the hegemony of the Western-centric model of social movements confined these conceptual imaginations to two opposing positions - either there was a women's movement or there was not - as if alternative forms of struggles beyond the conventional contentious politics were unthinkable" (Bayat 2007, p. 169).

Therefore, in the first time period, ordinary people and their ways of creating change and "fragmented, yet collective actions" did not have representation (Bayat 2007, p. 169) until they changed their actions of resistance and participates in street protests. Therefore, social movements, and the way they are seen and understood through a Western mass media perspective, helped change the focus from women's rights activists to ordinary women as the main social movement actors. When SMs take the shape of street protests, which is known and familiar for the Western mass media and its audience as SM, they get the attention of the media. Consequently, ordinary people can be seen and recognized as the main SM actors.

2. Social Movement Tactics: Protests and Demonstration

In this time period, similar to the results from *The Globe and Mail*, protests (19 coded references out of 57 coded references, shown in Figure 5.12) and demonstrations (15 coded references out of 57), are the most frequently mentioned SM tactics in this time period[6]. For example:

> At the same time, the Green Movement is growing, she said. The opposition movement came together to protest last year's elections that returned President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to power despite widespread evidence of voting fraud (Stewart Bell, Activist in exile; Iran's mullahs thought they could silence Shirin Ebadi. They were wrong, 24 April 2010).

Or:

> This time, it is the mothers and daughters of Iran who have rebelled against the Islamic Republic of Iran and have come out in the streets to lead the men (Tarek Fatah, Confronting Tehran's vicious misogyny, 22 July 2009).

[6] It is worth mentioning that I do not compare the number of coded references with each other in two time period or among the newspapers. My analysis is mainly based on the main discussed and represented code in each theme and each period.

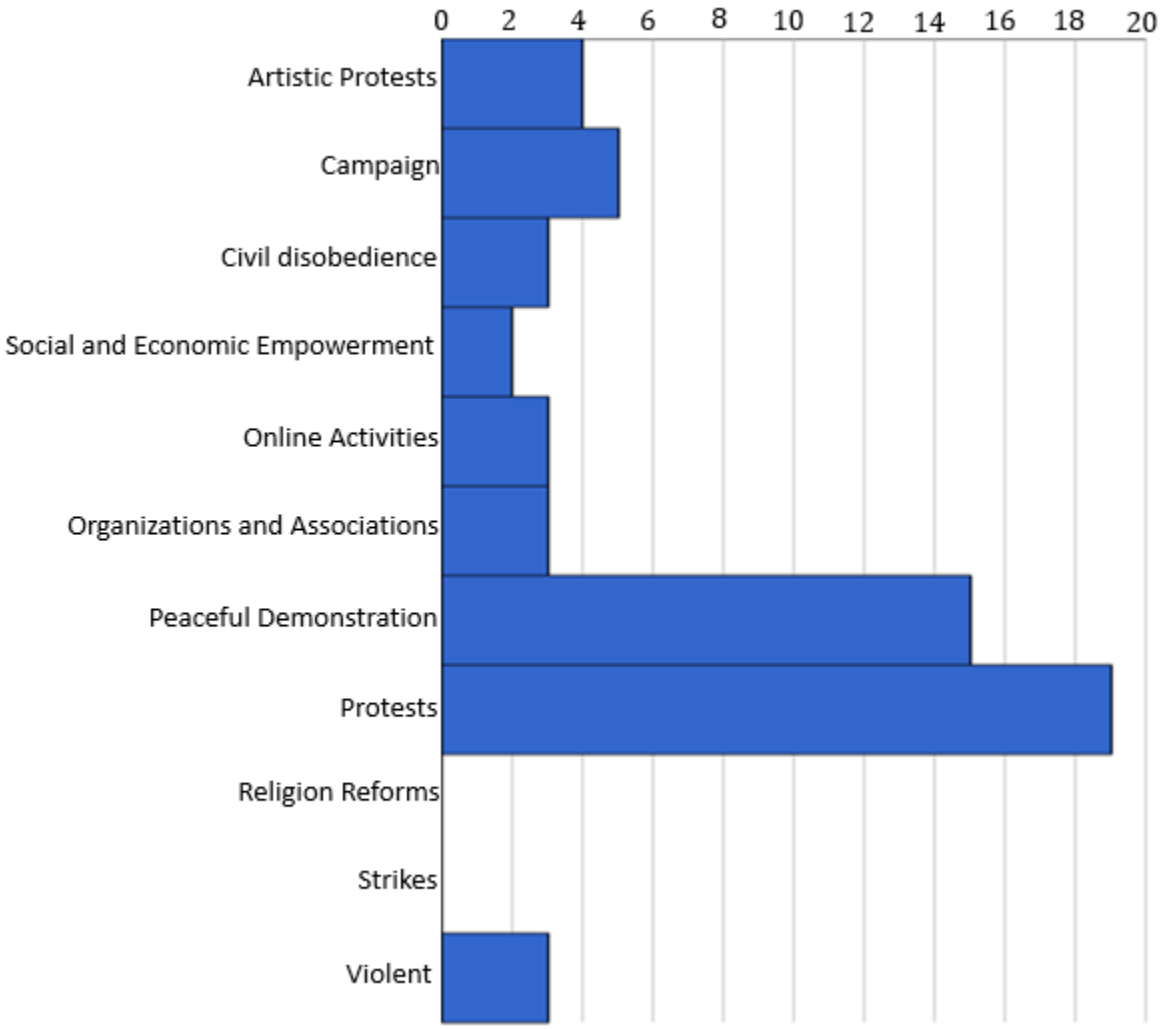

Figure 5.12: The Number of Coded References, Social Movement Tactics, *National Post* 2009–2018

The number of protests and demonstrations has increased in recent decades in Iran. The Green Movement of 2009 included many protests in the streets beginning from June 2009 to more than one year after its starting date. The number of protests and demonstrations has decreased since March 2010, when the leaders of the movement, Mir-Hossein Mousavi, his wife Zahra Rahnavard, and Karroubi, were arrested, as they have been under house arrest since March 2010. On the anniversary of these leaders' arrests or on the anniversaries of the deaths of people who were killed during the first year of the movement, people have held protests and demonstrations. One such protest took place in June 2010 on the anniversary of the death of Neda Agha Soltan, a young woman who was shot in the streets and whose death was captured on video, leading her to become a symbol of the movement (Fathi 2009).

The New York Times

1. **Social Movement Actors: Ordinary People**

Ordinary people are again the most represented SM actors for *The New York Times* (Shown in Figure 5.13). The second group of actors with the most visibility in this period is international support actors. The group labeled women's rights activists are the third group of actors.

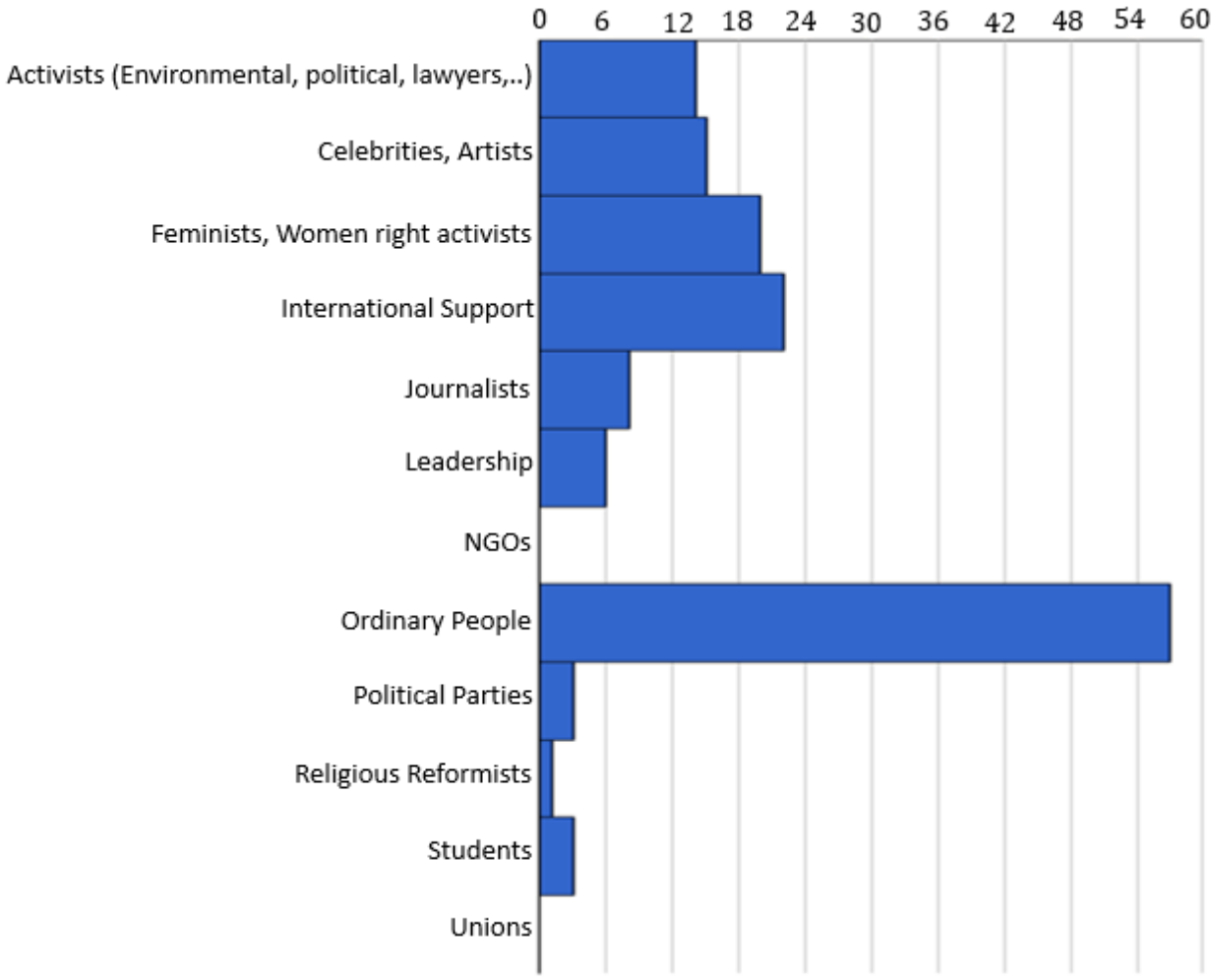

Figure 5.13: The Number of Coded References, Social Movement Actors, *The New York Times*, 2009–2018

Ordinary people had the most representations in both time periods in this newspaper. However, the representation of activists labeled as women's rights activists decreased compared to ordinary people. The representation of ordinary people, and specifically women, as the main social movement actor in both time-periods demonstrates that the recognition of women's situation by this outlet encompassed more aspects of women's situation (Bayat 2007, 2013; Hoodfar and Sadeghi 2009). In both time-periods, *The New York Times* had two correspondents living in Iran: Nazila Fathi and Thomas Erdbrink. The changes that women in Iran make, intentionally and collectively (but fragmented), in their everyday lives and activities cannot be seen through eyes of the Western mass media, as this form of activism is not familiar to a democratic Western country. However, in the case of this outlet, having a correspondent in Iran helps to cover this activism and the changes these ordinary women, as the main social movement actors, make through their activism.

The other significant change in this time-period is the increase in the role of international support. International support can be from international activists, international organizations or other governments. Moreover, Iranian activists outside Iran, most of whom are in exile, have had a significant role in supporting movements and activists in Iran. For example, "during the 2009 protests in Iran, the social media profiles of a few exiled journalists played a key role in bringing news from the ground to international audiences as domestic and foreign media were banned to report from Tehran" (Michaelsen 2015b, 2018, p. 251). Since there were no journalists allowed to cover the movement news and since people were not able to use any media for the organization of their movements, people started to send the news, photos and videos of the movements and also the time and date of the next protest or demonstration to

everyone they knew outside of Iran, the activists outside of Iran and the two main popular satellite channels: BBC Persian and VOA Persian (Michaelsen 2018). Although accessing satellite channels became very difficult for people inside Iran, they had a significant role in movements as the only mass media that covered the news of the movement. The increase in the role of international support and the connection of people inside Iran with activists and media outside Iran shows what Castells (2009) describes as ‘the power of networks’.

2. Social Movement Tactics: Protests

When the topics of texts are about SM tactics, the authors mainly mention protests and demonstrations (see Figure 5.14). However, in this time-period, economic and social empowerment as a tactic to resist oppression is still important.

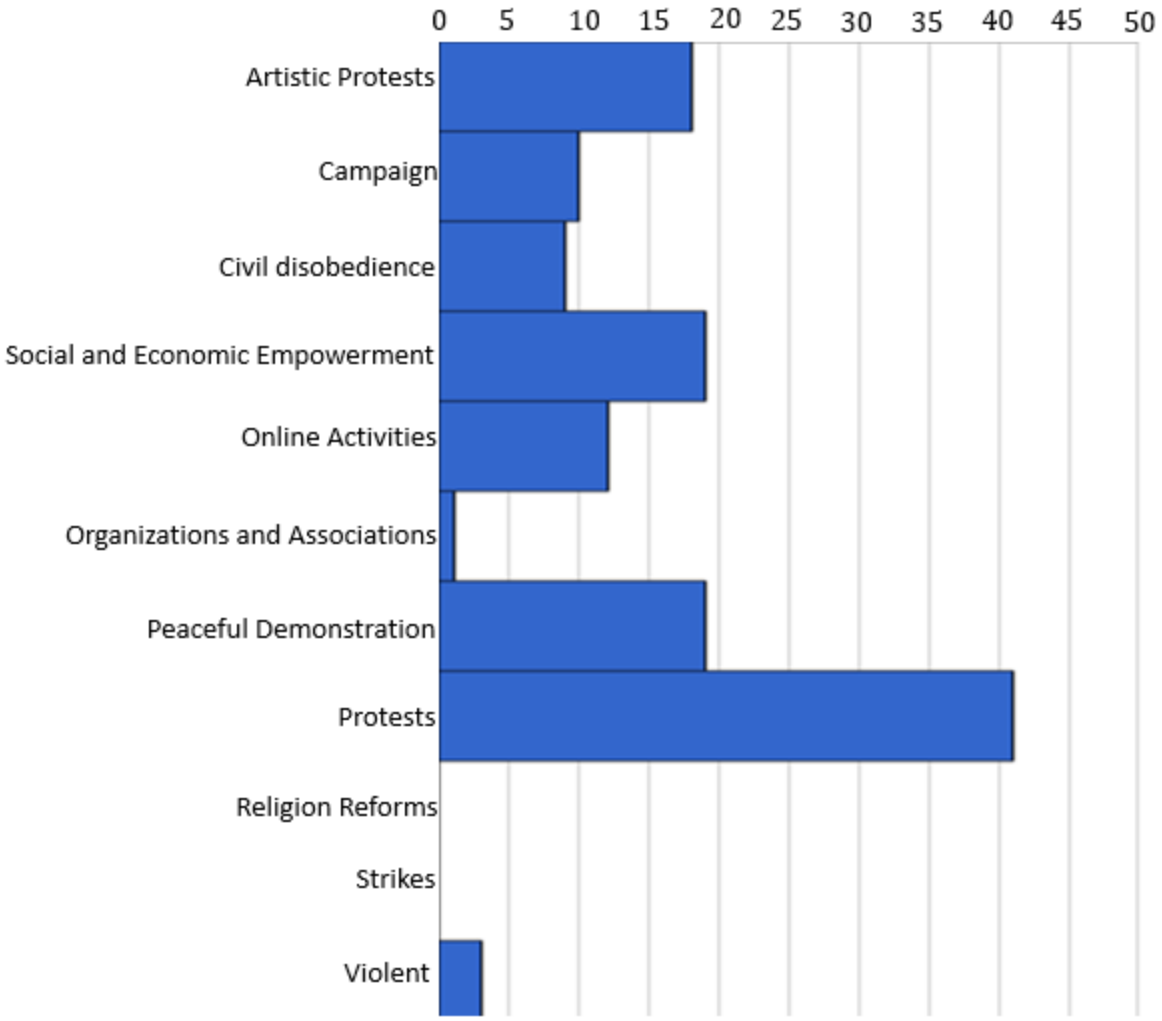

Figure 5.14: The Number of Coded References, Social Movement Tactics, *The New York Times*, 2009–2018

Although ordinary people had the most representations in both time-periods, the tactics changed from social and political empowerment to protest and demonstration. Here, social and political empowerment refers to the activities that Bayat (2007, 2013) considers as women's rights activism in Muslim and totalitarian countries such as participation in sports, receiving high-level education or entering the job market. For example:

> For 22 years, since I returned after living in Britain, I have seen women push against boundaries in every aspect of life. We have established a distance between the realities of our lives and how the state wishes us to behave. We have consistently defied official efforts to keep us inside our private spaces, by entering universities and professions in record numbers. But it is also in the sanctuary of our private spaces that we have raised young men and women who now can negotiate conservative cultural norms more smoothly than we ever did before the revolution (Haleh Anvari, The Fetish of Staring at Iran's Women,17 June 2014).

Or in this example:

> They, the younger generation, are being raised with the basic rights of society. It is why I guess women will have a better future in Iran. Last, but not least, one should not forget about the importance of the Islamic Revolution in gaining the trust of the religious and conservative families to let their daughters go to school. For example, in my small, hometown city, Dowlatabad, many of the religious people trusted the girls school after the Islamic Revolution, and let their daughters attend classes. Before that, in the Shah's time, few religious people in the small towns and villages of Iran would let their daughters go to school, if there was a school for girls in the village at all. We were sent to school, and, some years later, we filled more than half of the universities. We, educated middle-class women, started to know more about our rights and decided to fight to change our living conditions, pursuing our rights (Thomas Erdbrink, Big City Life, April 8th, 2015).

In images, similar to the texts in all the newspapers in this time-period, protest is the main social movement tactic shown. There are some pictures of protests that became violent and involved the police beating people with batons and using tear gas. There are also some artists and their works in this part of the data, but their representations are limited compared to representations of protests. In this time-period, ordinary people are most frequently represented in pictures. There are no representations of women's rights activists or activists in general, such as Shirin Ebadi or Nasrin Sotoudeh.

USA Today

1. **Social Movement Actors: More Focus on Ordinary People, Less Focus on Women's Rights Activists**

Similar to the first time-period and to *The New York Times*, ordinary people are the most represented SM actor. Although a group of activists who are labelled as women's rights activists is the second most mentioned actor, the frequency of discussing this group is considerably less than for ordinary people. Although ordinary people had the most representation in both time-periods, the frequency of their representation increased (10 coded references in first time-period increased to 16 in second time-period), whilst the representation of other groups of SM actors did not change or decreased. The recognition of ordinary people in this time-period, as the main social movement actors, marks a positive change toward understanding more aspects of women's activism in Iran.

2. **Social Movement Tactics: Protests, Campaigns and Online Movements**

As is the case with the other newspapers, in this time-period, protests, campaigns and online movements received the most attention from the newspapers. This result is a significant

change compared to the previous time-period. The representation of protests (19 coded references) is higher than the second tactic, empowerment (8 coded references), and third, artistic protests (7 coded references), and campaigning (6 coded references). The online movement and activities changed from zero representations to 7 coded references. The increase in online tactics and also the role of international support as SM actors in almost all newspapers during the second time period also indicates the significance of the Internet in line with Castells' (2009) notion of the ‘power of networks’.

Conclusion

The level of government oppression women experience can be seen in oppressive laws and policies such as not having the right to have custody of children, the compulsory hijab, etc. However, the focus on representations of these laws and policies demonstrates the interest of the dominant discourse in media representations of these women. For example, if the focus of most of the texts and images is on the compulsory hijab rather than other oppressive laws, it may indicate the interest of the dominant discourse in reproducing stereotypical images of women of a Muslim country. The most represented law is the compulsory hijab law, and the state is depicted as the most oppressive organization. The results of this part of the data, which show how all the newspapers focus on the compulsory hijab law rather than other oppressive or progressive laws in Iran. Linking the hijab with political oppression and representing women as victims of this oppression because of the compulsory hijab reinforces the ‘othering’ process of Middle Eastern women. This depicts women of this country as people who need help to be free from oppression. There can be many political and economic reasons for creating such hegemonic power relations through media and this image of the ‘other’ in power systems.

The intersectionality between gender and ethnicity can be seen in this discourse. Perceiving and interpreting the hijab as the most significant aspect of oppression in a society indicates the creation of 'the other' and, at the same time, the 'misrecognition' that Nancy Fraser (Fraser 1998, 2000; Fraser and Honneth 2003) discussed. Moreover, most of the data represent people of the middle/upper class living in bigger cities, mainly in Tehran and few other bigger cities such as Isfahan or Mashhad. Although rural women or nomad women have always had significant roles in agriculture and other economic activities of the community, there is almost no representation of people in rural or remote areas. There is almost no representation of impoverished women either. And this lack of representation (which exists in Iran's national media as well), reinforces the oppression against these women. Moreover, all the newspapers represent Iran as a dictatorship, followed by depictions of Iran as an anti-human rights and anti-women's rights country. The political hostility between Iran and the US and the disconnection between Iran and Canada can explain the generally negative portrayal of the Iranian government. Iran has a non-democratic political system that has been oppressive against women and many ethnic and religious and political groups. However, there are many positive aspects of the Iranian government and, more importantly, Iranian society.

For example, seeing women and ordinary people as the main SM actors and understanding their specific forms of resistance against oppression cannot be possible out of context. To understand people's everyday lives, the significant issues they face and their ways of dealing with their issues and resisting the oppression that is making their life difficult should be shown in the context of Iran. Iran is a non-democratic country, and loudly protesting on the streets in this society might lead to prison, torture or even death. Rationally considering the costs and benefits has led most women to find ways of voicing their demands with less cost.

More specifically, women have used the potential that the government and their religious or traditional families have given to them to let them pursue their education (due to the segregation of men and women in schools and the requirement to wear the hijab in public places. The high rate of education for women after the Revolution, and at the same time, passing oppressive laws against women, is a complex situation that might have different reasons (Mehran 2003, p. 285). For example, "the Islamization of education—manifested in the banning of coeducation, veiling, using female instructors to teach girls, and increasing the number of hours allocated to the study of religion and the Qur'an—has opened the school doors to the daughters of more conservative and pious families who find postrevolutionary education culturally acceptable" (Mehran 2003, pp. 285, 286).

By pursuing education (as they create convincing reasons for their families), women start to delay marriage (Hoodfar and Sadeghi 2009; Kurzman 2008). Through their education, women enter the job market and start to empower themselves economically and socially. Women in these situations have been successful in terms of gaining the power to bargain for their rights such as the right to divorce or to have custody of their children and in general "marital equality" and "control for marital status, employment status and income" (Kurzman 2008, pp. 302, 311). Women have entered parliament and have been trying to pass laws such as giving citizenship to children based on only having an Iranian mother (Hoodfar and Sadeghi 2009). And, very recently, they have been successful in getting the right to pass citizenship through mothers (Begum 2019; Daragahi 2019). The process of empowerment and resistance shows the intersectionality between gender and class. This is also displayed in Walby's (2018) discussion on how empowering women financially can improve equality and the level of democracy. However, all four newspapers, in the first time period, have focused heavily on the

role of a group of activists who are labeled as women's rights activists as the main SM actors. Perceiving women's movements in terms of the ways such movements work in Western countries might lead to a focus on the activities of one group of activists as the main social movement actors, rather than the actions of the larger population.

Although the focus on depictions of women's rights activists does not show an inclusive recognition of Iranian society, celebrities' actions and artistic works have always been significant forms of protest in Iranian society with an undemocratic government and political system, as arts can be common forms of protest in a dictatorship (for example see Jonson 2015). Again, the costs and benefits for SM actors in an undemocratic regime necessitates that actors must adopt the safest ways to protest. Artistic products such as TV shows, movies or art exhibitions, or novels can communicate powerful messages, and, at the same time, these messages may not clearly address any specific oppressive actors (see Jonson 2015). Therefore, although there are many limitations and forms of censorship in Iran, artistic products have the power to affect the society and pose less danger or cost to the celebrities or artists. Although the writers of some of the mentioned novels do not live in Iran and the readers of their books are mainly Western audiences, including *Reading Lolita in Tehran* by Azar Nafisi, or *Lipstick Jihad* by Azadeh Moaveni.

The increase in the role of 'international support' and 'online movements' in the second time period also shows the significance of the power of networks. As many social networks and websites such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube are filtered in Iran, Iranians and activists who are in exile or outside Iran receive the videos, images and news from people inside Iran and share it on social networks. In some cases, people send the videos and news directly to popular satellite channels outside Iran, such as VOA Persian or BBC Persian. This connection among people

inside Iran and outside the county shows the role of international support by people outside the country. in some cases, also, this role of international support can be seen in the activities of Human Rights organizations outside Iran.

Overall, there are many factors that contribute to misrecognition in mass media discourse; for example, the right- and left-leaning tendencies of outlets, having access to the everyday lives of people, knowing people's perspectives, and analyzing SM actors and their tactics based on their context. The overall representation of the women, in terms of the number of articles, the language used to describe women's situation, and also their SM actors and tactics show that having a correspondent in the country, like *The New York Times*, makes a significant difference in terms of media misrecognition.

CHAPTER 6: ANALYSIS

Introduction

In this chapter, I explain how the dominant discourse of mass media represents Iranian women. Looking across time periods, this discourse has not significantly changed in some key ways. Media continue to represent the hijab as a restriction for women and reinforce the 'othering' of Iranian society as a Muslim and Middle Eastern country. Nevertheless, the Internet and networks of power have affected changes in social movement tactics that have changed some of the dominant media representations of ordinary people, especially women, who are the main social movement actors in Iran. I also explain the intersectionality of race, ethnicity, and gender in mass media representations. I discuss the intersectionality of class and gender to explain women's situation in Iran; intersectionality also clarifies how resistance against one form of oppression can lead to fighting other oppression systems as well. In Table 6.1, I summarize the theories, the theorists and the key concepts I integrate in this discussion. The first column of Table (6.1) represents the main theories: a) hegemony, discourse and counter-hegemony in media, b) social movements and networks of power, and c) intersectionality. The second column represents the name of the main theorists, and the third column contains the key concepts I have used to discuss the main results of my research.

Theory	Theorists	Key Concepts
Hegemony, Discourse, and Counter-Hegemony in Media	Gramsci, Laclau & Mouffe Hall Dorothy Smith	- People's power to create counter-hegemonic discourses in media; - Effects of power relations on mass media
Social Movements and Networks of Power	Castells	The role of the Internet and networks of power in challenging and changing power relations and empowering SMs' international effects
Intersectionality	Hooks Patricia Hill Collins	Understanding the intersectionality of race/ethnicity and gender on mass media discourses and the intersectionality of gender and class in women's situation in Iran
Understanding the Invisible Effects of Social Movements on Mass Media		

Table 6.1: Analytical framework combining SM and Networks of Power, Hegemony and Counter-hegemony and Intersectionality Literature to Understand the Invisible Effects of Social Movements on Mass Media

Overall, in this chapter, I link the results to the theoretical discussions of hegemony, discourse, and counter-hegemony in media. I integrate theories on social movements and networks of power, counter-hegemony, and intersectionality for a better understanding of the relationship between media and social movements. My analysis is similar to the social practice

level (macro-level) of analysis in Norman Fairclough's (2003) framework for critical discourse analysis. This broad approach mainly discusses how to analyze and interpret texts in relation to broader social forces and cultural and processes (Fairclough 2003b).

Hegemony and Counter-Hegemony in Media

From Gramsci's point of view, hegemony is a particular type of social power relationship in which ruling groups keep their privileged position by consensual means (Gramsci 1971). This means that the dominant group gains the consent of the dominated masses through the elaboration of political or ideological attitudes that become engrained in popular political culture and throughout the society. Gramsci (1971) considers hegemony as a process in which dominant classes, through media, churches, or schools, promote values that strengthen the control of dominant classes over politics and the economy. These values form the dominant ideology of society, which legitimizes the power structure. In this way, they show that the existing pattern of distribution of power in society is incontrovertible. These thoughts and symbols create satisfaction for people and legitimize the rulers' dominance. Similarly, Laclau and Mouffe (1985) explain that the meanings and understanding we have of the world are created through discourses, and discourse is a system of language and meanings that shape our beliefs about different political and social realities. Thus, discourses are more powerful than realities.

Gramsci's solution for resisting against a hegemonic power is rooted in the key role of 'organic intellectuals' in changing history (Gramsci 1971). Gramsci (1971) does not consider existing dominant structures as permanent and irreversible; he stresses that it is possible to resist dominant structures and replace them with alternative structures. Moreover, Laclau and Mouffe

(1985) explain that dominant discourses emerge and decline, which means that when a discourse is not able to explain and answer a social problem and faces major criticism, alternative discourses can win over the culture. This is how new power structures are created based on these discourses; therefore, the domination of a discourse does not mean a complete stabilization.

Similarly, Hall's (1980a, 1980b) theory emphasizes the mutual interaction between the audience and the text as well as the social framework in which such an interaction takes place. Hall (1980a, 1980b) showed that media content could be interpreted differently and even contradictorily. Audiences, like message producers, actively read media texts and create meanings. In other words, the meanings that are being received by the audience are not necessarily the same as the meaning that the writer or producer of the text and image want to represent. The role of the audience in the creation of media discourse can also be seen in Smith's (1987) theories, which focus on gender. Smith (1987) believes that social domination occurs through texts that are created by the dominant group (gender-based domination). Smith stresses that women's own everyday perspective of subjects or situations and their active role can change the dominant language and texts.

One aspect of the results that show a hegemonic media discourse and space for counter-hegemony is that representations of Iranian women in the first time period were generally more negative, and characterized them as victims or oppressed (*National Post*, *USA Today*). Newspapers that described Iranian women's situation more positively than negatively are *The Globe and Mail*, and *The New York Times*. Most of these negative texts depicted women as an oppressed group. In most of the cases, the negative/victim or oppressed representations did not

refer to any specific situations; they used general phrases such as ‘discrimination against women by Islamists,’ (example in chapter 4, *National Pos*t results). The words ‘victim’ (examples in chapter 4, *The Globe and Mail*), or ‘gender apartheid’ (example in chapter 4, *National Post*) were associated with a focus on the hijab and depicted a generally oppressive situation of women.

Representing women's situation as either positive/resistance against oppression or being victims of the oppressive system can itself be a misrecognition of these women’s lives. Women in Iran (similar to women everywhere) might choose hijab or might have to wear hijab as it is the law in the country. Women might be powerful and fight for their rights, or be victims of the oppressive system and they might have both experiences at the same time. The everyday experience of women of a country like Iran might simultaneously include acts of resistance and oppressive situations. The dichotomous representation of women and representing them as either positive/resistance or negative/victims (or mainly focusing on one of these aspects of their life) is a misrecognition of women's lives, which reinforces the gender and race/ethnicity-based oppression systemssystem through a hegemonic discourse.

In many cases, when the articles discuss the torture of political prisoners, they mention ‘rape’ as an act of torture in Iran’s prisons (example in chapter 4, *The Globe and Mail*). Women in this political environment are described as passive and not very present in politics. In many cases, for example, in some of *The New York Times* articles, the articles describe a filmmaker who focuses on the inequalities experienced by women or the oppressed women he portrays in his films (examples in chapter 4, *The New York Times* and *The Globe and Mail*). In general, they describe some resistance, but mainly they describe an oppressive situation both for the

filmmaker and for the women or people depicted in the films. When the articles are describing the positive/resistance situation of women in the first time period, they mention the high percentage of women among university students. Moreover, they mention some specific cases of women that are artists and how some of them are working outside of Iran because of exile or voluntarily so they can have more freedom. However, in most cases, the positive/resistance representation is also associated with these women's resistance against patriarchy or oppression.

The results show a different representation in the second time period. The general representation of women in all the newspapers includes more positive/resistance than negative/victim or oppressed. In the negative/victim or oppressed representations, the words used are still general, such as 'women as second-class citizens' or 'women without human rights', which are associated with the hijab as part of an oppressive situation for women. The word 'rape' as an act of torture, is mentioned in this time period as well. There is a difference in this second time period's negative/victim or oppressed representation of women's situation; however: there emerges a focus on women's economic situation. Some articles describe women's negative economic situation as being associated with the fact that most educated women are not able to find jobs. It is worth mentioning that the economic sanctions by the US and other Western countries against Iran were imposed mainly during this (second) period. The general representation of women is more complex in the second time period as it includes more aspects of women's lives, i.e. more positive features instead of focusing mainly on oppression and oppressive situations, though the positive/resistance representation is still mainly associated with their resistance against an oppressive political structure.

Overall, the image of Iranian women in both time periods is an example of misrecognition of their situation (Fraser 2000; Fraser and Honneth 2003). The image of oppressed, second-class citizens who need help to be freed from a patriarchal, oppressive government prevails, especially in the first time period. The hegemonic discourse that understands and explains the situation of these women from a Western perspective can be seen in these media representations. Moreover, there are many women who are not represented at all, such as Afro-Iranian women in southern parts of Iran or ethnic minorities such as Kurdish people, Azeris, or Arabs.

However, in the second time period, the language of the texts changes toward including a more positive/resistance image of Iranian women. One of the reasons that there have been positive changes in women's situation in Iran, according to Mehran (2003), might be having more women from majority traditional Muslim families in schools; After the Islamic Revolution of 1979, many religious families started to let their daughters go to school, as schools had become separate for boys and girls (See Mehran 2003). Therefore, many women were able to pursue their education and begin to enter the job market. Education and work for the new generation of women have increased more than it did for women before the revolution (Bahramitash 2003), and this aspect of women's lives (their empowerment) is reflected in the articles from the second time period.

Another change in media discourse relates to the representation of oppressive organizational actors. In Iran, the national media are strictly controlled by the supreme leader, and the same is for the police (BBC_News 2009; Sadjadpour 2010). Therefore, it is not surprising to see the government appearing in these articles as generally the most frequent oppressive organization. Although the government was the most oppressive organization in both

time periods, the overall frequency of representations of the government as an oppressive organization decreased in the second time period. The reason for the decrease may be the attention of the media towards SM actors and participants at the time of the protests and demonstrations.

This change in the second time period is reflective of the emergence of a counter-hegemonic discourse countering the dominant discourse of the previous time period, and it represents a positive change toward recognition of an 'other' group of race-ethnicity. Many factors might work together to create a change in a hegemonic discourse on mass media. One of the main changes from the Iranian society side and perspective is the significant presence and many activities of women in social movements on the streets. This holds especially for the period since the Green Movement of 2009, which was different than other protests; it was the biggest and longest movement in Iran after the Islamic Revolution. Millions of people participated in this movement, and it continued actively for one year.

In both time periods, newspaper articles frequently discuss oppressive laws against women. However, the number of times these oppressive laws are mentioned in the first period are at least two to three times more numerous than in the second time period. In both time periods, the compulsory hijab is one of the most frequently mentioned oppressive laws. The compulsory hijab is discussed as the most oppressive law against women in both time periods, even though the overall discussion of oppressive laws decreased in the second period. This suggests that this aspect of women's (un) freedom is more attractive and visible to the media.

Hegemonic images of Iranian women in the hijab can be seen throughout the articles when they discuss women's clothes. Clothing can convey various messages; it can be a form of

self-expression for people, and, at the same time, it can have other hidden or unintentional meanings (Barthes 2006). This function of clothing (which can have different meanings) can be employed in hegemonic dominant discourses and power systems. A specific style of clothing can be represented by the dominant discourse as a symbol of oppression or freedom. Another style of clothing can be linked with an upper economic class in society. For example, Stoddart (2012) explains how mass media represent First Nations protesters' clothing to marginalize them, which is different from their representation by environmental protest groups (pp. 152–153). All these meanings are used to maintain hegemonic power relations based on class, race, ethnicity, gender, etc. (Barthes 2006). This representation of clothing can be seen in portrayals of Iranian women in Western media as well. The hijab has been linked to the meaning of oppression, and women are represented as victims of an oppressive system because of the hijabs they wear.

Moreover, my research shows that the hegemonic media discourse that is based on gender and ethnicity of Iranian women, also works to reinforce broader gender, race, ethnicity, or class-based oppression systems. The intersection of gender and ethnicity is not only limited to Iranian Muslim women and US and Canadian mass media. As the result shows, there are not many representations of other ethnic minorities in Iran such as Jewish people, Baha'is, Arabs, Baloch, Azeri, Kurdish people who are some of the minority groups in Iran. They do not have much representation in Iranian mass media either. Oppressing groups of people based on their ethnicity or race or even class are broad general oppressive systems and are not limited to only US and Canadian or Western mass media and representation of Muslim or Iranian women. There are African Iranians in southern parts of Iran who have less representation in Iranian mass media or in US and Canadian mass media. It is the same situation for women in rural areas who

are not represented in mass media in Iran or, as my research shows, in the US and Canadian mass media. This lack of representation also demonstrates the general broad gender, race, ethnicity, or class-based oppression system. Furthermore, not only representing Iranian women as either victim of the oppressive system or resistant against oppression, reinforces the othering process of these women, it also implicitly convey a message that women who live in Western countries are free and do not face oppression as they are not in Iranian women positions. For example, focusing on hijab law in a Muslim Middle Eastern country, as oppression can have an implicit meaning that there is no oppression regarding the clothing for women or other gender identities in the US and Canada.

Social Movements and the Power of Networks

In Castells's (2012) view, networks form the basis of our society, and the expansion of network power brings significant changes to the production and reproduction process of power and culture. Castells (2012) believes that power lies in global communication networks. The power of global networks has been increasing, along with the increase in Internet usage. The process of networks and their power can be seen in social movements actions in Iran.

The role of the Internet in Iranian social movements has particular characteristics. The national media and international reporters and journalists are not allowed to cover social movements in Iran. So, movement participants and actors use the Internet for movement organizing and to connect with Iranians outside of Iran to spread the news about their cause. At the same time, many Iranians have used the Internet to send photos, videos, and news about their movements to two major mass media satellite TV and radio channels: BBC Persian and VOA Persian (See Michaelsen 2018; Warnaar 2011). A large population in Iran want to hear the

news or watch political programs from a news source or media other than the national news agencies (which are controlled by the supreme leader), and so they often use BBC and VOA media (See Zanconato and Sabahi 2017).

Moreover, during the movements, Iranians outside Iran help the movement participants spread their news and organize themselves, which has been a considerable help for people inside Iran (Michaelsen 2018). Thus, connections are built between ordinary people as movement participants and activists inside Iran together with other activists, and between ordinary Iranians outside Iran and the two most popular Persian mass media outlets outside Iran. The result is a non-national (i.e. not controlled by the supreme leader) media perspective in Iran.

Networks of power between movement participants inside and outside of Iran have been using the potential of the Internet to play a connector role between social movements and mass media. Therefore, one of the main reasons why movements inside Iran can influence media outside of Iran is the creation of these global networks of power, which are, at the same time, rooted inside the country.

One interesting characteristic of the hegemonic media image is how these articles represent social movement (SM) actors. Women's rights activists, specifically, emerge as the main actors of social movements in the first time period (the first group of actors in the two Canadian newspapers: *The Globe and Mail* and the *National Post*; and the second group of SM actors in the two American newspapers after 'ordinary people'); they still have a significant place in the second time period, but the frequency of their mentions decreases remarkably. Although the main way that the oppressive situation in Iran has been fought is through the gradual empowerment of ordinary women, newspapers have tended to focus on the actions of

women's rights activists, who only make up a small portion of the population. The role of these actors is more easily understandable for Western newspapers and their audiences. Therefore, although the actions of these SM actors have not been as impactful as the everyday empowerment of ordinary women, their actions of protests and campaigns are more frequently represented in these newspapers, at least in the first time period.

In the second time period, however, where ordinary people and especially ordinary women have chosen the tactics of protest and demonstration (the most familiar SM tactics in SM theories), they have received more attention from the media as the main SM actors. Although these representations reflect both hegemonic perspectives toward social movements, they at the same time demonstrate that the participation of ordinary women in social movements can change the hegemonic representation from one that highlights the role of women's rights activists to one that encompasses ordinary women as the main actors. This change in the representation of women demonstrates a counter-hegemonic representation of ordinary women as the main SM actors. How did Iranian women help achieve this change?

Clues can be found in the unique ways the women's rights movement in Iran, specifically after the Islamic Revolution of 1979, has evolved. As Asef Bayat (2007) argues "there are perhaps different ways in which Muslim women under authoritarian regimes may, consciously or without being aware, defy, resist, negotiate, or even circumvent gender discrimination—not necessarily by resorting to extraordinary and overarching 'movements' identified by deliberate collective protest and informed by mobilization theory and strategy, but by being involved in ordinary daily practices of life, by working, engaging in sports, jogging, singing, or running for public offices" (p. 161). In these collective actions by non-collective

actors, ordinary people are the main actors rather than activists, such as feminists and women's rights activists. Bayat (2007) explains that "[t]he effective power of these practices lies precisely in their ordinariness since as irrepressible actions they encroach incrementally to capture trenches from the power base of the patriarchal structure while erecting springboards to march on" (p. 161).

Ordinary Iranians have fought for their rights through their everyday practices, and there have been many changes achieved in terms of gender equality. Although women's rights activists have organized events, protests, and many activities, many changes in the situation of women in Iran have been the result of ordinary women's everyday practices. Therefore, "Iran's women's activism represented a movement by implication, dispersed collective endeavors embodied in the mundane practices of everyday life, but ones that would follow progressive effects beyond their immediate intent" (Bayat 2007, p. 171). In Iran, "women did not usually take extraordinary measures to compel authorities to make concessions; in a sense, the very ordinary practices that they strove for accounted for the actual gains; not only did the element of ordinariness make the movement virtually irrepressible, it also allowed women to gain ground incrementally without seeming to constitute a threat" (Bayat 2007, p. 172). So although the Iranian movement has involved activists who "deploy sophisticated legal, theological, and theoretical articulations to take advantage of the opportunity that their public presence offered them" (Bayat 2007, p. 172), Bayat argues that "The women's movement drew its power not from the threat of disruption and uncertainty, as in the case of contentious politics" (Bayat 2007, p. 172); "rather, it subsisted on the power of presence—the ability to assert collective will in spite of all odds, by circumventing constraints, utilizing what exists, and discovering new spaces of freedom to make oneself heard, seen, and felt" (Bayat 2007, p. 172).

Bayat's description of the features of the women's movement in Iran provides an explanation for the change in media focus described above and a better understanding of the kinds of SM actors and SM tactics we might expect to see in Iranian women's lives. Although dominant (Western) theories of social movements would expect women's rights activists to be the most effective actors in women's movements (as reflected in media reports in the first period), representations of the activities of *ordinary* Iranian women (and the simultaneous decline in representations of women's rights activists) in the second time period presents a more inclusive image of women's situation in Iran. These representations thus offer a corrective to dominant SM theories suggesting that, in the case of non-democratic and authoritarian countries, the actors and tactics may be different based on their context, particularly when it comes to avoiding threats.

Another significant change in terms of SM actors in the second time period is the dramatic increase in the role of international support groups of actors (*G&M*: 11 coded reference first time period and 20 in the second time period; *NP*: 3 coded references first time period and 15 coded reference second time period, *NYT*: 12 coded reference first time period, 22 coded reference second time period, and *USA Today*: 0 coded references first time period and 3 coded references second time period). Internet use has made it possible to create international networks. Social movements around the world, specifically in the Middle East, have used the Internet to organize themselves. However, the use of the Internet in Iran's SMs has had other functions as well. As already mentioned above, journalists and reporters inside Iran are not allowed to cover the movements. There are no private media inside Iran, and when movements occur, international reporters must leave the country. To spread their movements to the world, people use the Internet to connect with other activists around the world and send their news and

photos from the movement to them so they can be shared globally (Golkar 2011). Movement participants also send their news and photos directly to two popular political satellite TV channels: BBC Persian and VOA Farsi (See Warnaar 2011). The popularity of these mass media outlets and their role in covering movement news in Iran is not a topic that will be discussed in this research. However, the use of the Internet to create networks of power, spread movement news, and receive support from international networks is a significant topic in the analysis of social movements and the power of networks in this research.

The same situation has occurred with SM tactics. The gradual acquisition of economic and social power by non-collective actors is not recognized as an SM tactic in most of the SM literature. Although ordinary women have been fighting against oppression in their everyday lives through empowering themselves economically and socially (Bayat 2007; Hoodfar and Sadeghi 2009; Kurzman 2008), they did not receive attention as SM actors in US and Canadian mass media. However, when these ordinary women started to use protests, campaigns, and demonstrations as their tactics, they received the most attention as the main actors in the media.

The costs and benefits of activities do not always let people take to the streets or launch campaigns or the other usual social movement tactics that have been examined in Western social movement theories. In Iran, people might easily lose their lives while fighting for rights, rights that they could achieve in other ways, and there is no limitation on how many people state forces can kill in these countries. Therefore, ‘non-collective actors’ in Iran, since the first years after the Islamic Revolution, have started to change their environment through ‘collective but fragmented actions (Bayat 2013, p. 15). These tactics have specifically been used to empower women in Iran (Bayat 2007; Kurzman 2008; Najmabadi 2000).

Although these tactics cannot easily be seen as ‘news’ by mass media or from an outsider’s viewpoint, my research shows that they can be better understood (and stereotypes and incorrect assumptions can be avoided) when reporters have more knowledge of or conduct research on people. For example, the *New York Times* has a correspondent who has been living in Iran for more than a decade. It is not a coincidence that the *NYT* portrayed people and women’s situations more inclusively (in terms of covering different aspects of their lives) than the other three newspapers. Another example of Iranian women acquiring power gradually and through non-collective action pertains to the changes in women’s clothes. Based on the limitations created by extremists after the revolution, in the form of both written and unwritten laws, women were not allowed even to wear jeans after the revolution. They were not allowed to participate in sports, wear light coloured clothes or engage in many other activities. The cost of launching a protest or campaign to secure all these small rights could lead to many innocent citizens being killed and could create an opportunity for extremists to exert more pressure in the name of societal security. While women did not accept the situation, they did not want to worsen the situation. Therefore, as fragmented actors, individual women started to wear jeans, go swimming and biking, wear light-coloured clothes, etc. (Abdmolaei 2014; Shirazi 2019), In a very short amount of time, without any state organization realizing it, the face of the society had changed. Indeed, this change became so pervasive that no organization could stop it, as there is no written law against any of these activities.

In terms of written laws such that deny women the right to divorce or gain custody of children, women started to empower themselves socially and economically so that they would have the power to reach their goals. The Islamic regime unintentionally provided an opportunity for women by implementing the hijab law and separating boys and girls in schools. Beginning

early in the 1980s, religious and traditional families started to let their daughters go to school, and in less than two decades after the revolution, more than 66% of university students were female. Since education became a normal right for women, they were able to delay marriage. These women started to enter into the job market and become financially independent. Since they could bring money into their family, they had the power to bargain and ask for rights such as the right to divorce, gain custody of their children, etc.

Moreover, in the first time period, artistic protests such as videos, songs, paintings, or novels are the most frequent types of SMs mentioned. In a country with a totalitarian regime, artistic opposition can be a form of resistance, as there are more halos of ambiguity that make it safer for people to protest (for example see Jonson 2015). It is worth mentioning that some of these artistic forms of resistance or protests have been undertaken by Iranians outside of Iran. However, protests and peaceful demonstrations saw a dramatic increase compared to the first time period and have been the most common tactics. Based on a comparison of results for the two time periods, it seems that protests and demonstrations have been the best ways to gain the attention of the Western mass media and to see ordinary people as the main SM actors in society. In social movement discourse in North America, creating change has been associated with more obvious forms of resistance, such as demonstrations, artistic protests, or protests in general and has often been associated with formal social movement organizations. The creation of change through everyday practices does not gain much media attention or, it is not recognized as activism (Bayat 2007). For example, O'Shaughnessy and Kennedy (2010) explain the effect of ‘relational activism’ and daily activities of women in environmental movements in North American countries and note that, although these activisms are effective, they are not

being recognized or seen as activism because they do not fit expectations for conventional environmental activism.

The increasing media visibility of 'international support' and online activities in the second time period (while almost all social networking websites and other websites such as YouTube or foreign news websites are filtered), shows the importance of the internet, as well as the connection among people inside Iran and other Iranians or activists outside Iran (see Abadpour 2010; Castells 2009, 2011, 2012; Michaelsen 2018; Warnaar 2011). The power of networks and connections between SM actors inside Iran and other actors and media outside of Iran has created resistance against another oppression system for women as well. Iranian women are fighting for their rights inside the country. However, by recognizing their activities and revealing ordinary women as the main social movement actors in Iran have created the possibility of changing their image from victims and oppressed women in Western mass media toward including more powerful depictions. In my research, I named this process 'intersectionality in resistance.'

This 'intersectionality in resistance' means that resistance against one oppression system can reinforce and empower resistance against other oppression systems as well. For example, in this research, women have fought against (gender-based or non-gender-based) oppression systems and a dictatorial system that is oppressing women inside Iran. The activities of street movements have been represented in mass media in other countries such as US and Canada. These representations create new images that are different than earlier race/ethnic based stereotypical media images and they are changing the hegemonic race/ethnic based discourse. Therefore, participation in movements against gender-based and political oppression systems

inside Iran has created the possibility of challenging and changing race/ethnicity-based hegemonic discourse in mass media in the US and Canada.

Intersectionality

The results show that the compulsory hijab and chador are described by Western media as the most oppressive laws for women, while other laws such as not having the right to divorce or have custody of their children do not attract as much attention. The compulsory hijab can certainly be oppressive for many women. However, there are many clothing styles and colours that are fashionable every year in Iran, but there has been almost no media representations of those clothes. The chador and hijab have been part of Iranian culture for hundreds of years, and accepting this law is likely not harder than accepting other oppressive laws such as not having the right to divorce or have custody of children, which are considered highly oppressive by many women. This obsession of Western media with the hijab rather than divorce laws or child custody can be a clear indicative of what Said (1979) discusses as Orientalism.

Moreover, the hijab has not had an oppressive function for Iranian women's situation in general; as mentioned above, it has actually helped to empower many women from traditional families. Most of the religious and traditional families, before the Islamic Revolution, did not let their daughters go to school because they believed their children would be in a non-religious place and sit in classes with boys, which was a big taboo for many families. With the hijab law and making the schools separate for girls and boys, these families started to feel that was safe to let their daughters go to schools and in public places. Women used this opportunity and empowered themselves socially and economically and have used this power to fight or bargain for their rights.

Another way that Iranian women have empowered themselves in the face many oppressive laws is to use their rights to have mehrieh (dowry) to bargain for their right to divorce and take the custody of their children. Indeed, most of the younger generations of women have been successful in their efforts. Moreover, in recent decades, many young women have asked for their rights to be written into their marriage certificate, so they can ensure that they have every right such as divorce rights or custody of children. Thus, the way in which media depicts laws and their resistance in Iran situations does not reflect the actual complexity of the situation. The compulsory hijab is the most frequently mentioned law in the articles, yet there is almost no mention of other laws and how women resist them.

The compulsory hijab law was implemented a few years after the Islamic Revolution (the early 1980s), and at that time, there were demonstrations to protest this law by many women and men in Iran. However, after facing rigorous enforcement of the law, women started to find other ways to fight against this measure. Women's clothes started to change every year and gradually became freer. Since 2014, a journalist, Masih Alinejad, working for Voice of America and BBC, has encouraged young girls (via her Facebook page) to take their scarves off in public and send their pictures and videos to her. Alinejad has been able to attract many young women to join her campaign (My Stealthy Freedom Campaign) and send her their pictures, starting a new movement against the compulsory hijab. This movement has many critics and supporters. Many young women have joined this movement, but many activists and ordinary people do not trust this campaign, as it was started by someone who works for the American mass media and does not live in Iran.

Such changes are ongoing, but the representation of women's clothes is nevertheless negative in both time periods. Women's clothes are mainly depicted as black chadors, which in terms of both style and colour is not the clothing worn by the majority of women. This does not represent all the other characteristics of women's clothes, as it only represents the group of women who choose to wear chadors. The majority of the population, who are part of a younger generation, do not wear the chador. In Iran, women mainly wear colourful scarves over their hair, and to cover their bodies they wear different designs and colours of manteaux or gowns. Even though the younger generation of women wear fashionable colours and designs for their scarves and gowns, there are not many media representations of them as compared to women who choose to wear a black chador.

Intersectionality is a framework used to understand the intersection between race, ethnicity, gender, and other oppression systems (Collins 1998; Hooks 2000; McCall 2005; Mohanty 1988; Walby 2015, 2018). This theory attempts to explain numerous complex forms of oppression. By avoiding focusing on only racism or patriarchy, this theory examines the intersection of domination systems in general. Intersectionality theory describes the marginalization that occurs from various aspects of oppression; it also explains how some social movements, if they focus on just one aspect of inequality, for example, gender-, class- or race-based inequality, fail to understand multiple oppression experiences.

To understand the changes in Iranian women's situation and their methods for fighting against oppressive laws, it is necessary to have an intersectional lens for analyzing their activities. There are oppressive laws in Iran that restrict women's rights and freedoms such as not having the right to divorce, not having the right to have custody of one's children, not

having the right to be a judge or run for the presidency or having to wear the hijab in public. Women have organized demonstrations, protests, and campaigns against these forms of oppression since the first years of the Islamic Revolution until now. However, the women's movement has always faced government resistance, and many activists have been jailed or exiled from the country.

Therefore, since the first years of the Islamic Revolution, women have resisted oppressive situations, mainly through empowering themselves economically and socially. Because of the Islamization of the educational system, many traditional and religious families have started to allow their daughters to pursue an education. Most women have chosen this opportunity, achieved a high level of education, and entered the job market.

Through this social and economic empowerment, many more women have obtained a high-level education, and since they have gotten jobs and become independent economically, they do not have to get married early. It is worth mentioning that this situation is not limited to the middle and upper class or to urban populations; in all cities, small towns and villages women have obtained high levels of education and are working. Also, when they do get married, women have the power to bargain for their rights. Most young women do not get married unless they have a legal contract with their future husband, indicating the woman's right to divorce and gain custody of their children. Women also ensure that there are many other rights mentioned in those contracts before their marriage to acquire almost all their rights, including the ability to travel or leave the country without their husband's permission and permission to pursue education and work outside the home. In terms of the compulsory hijab,

every year there are changes in women's clothes, as they gain more freedom and wear more colourful clothes.

Therefore, the intersection between the economic situation, social situation, and legal rights in society indicates that there have been remarkable positive changes in the situation of Iranian women. However, the image of women in the Western mass media did not improve along with the positive changes in these women's conditions. The images of women in the media have been mainly affected by the news and pictures of the Islamic Revolution and women's condition at that time. Therefore, these improvements in the economic status and education of women have not had noticeable effects on their representation in the mass media.

Linking women's situation and women-related media topics to hijab and the ethnicity of these women is another aspect of intersectionality highlighted by my research. Focusing on, discussing, or mentioning the hijab in almost every topic that is related to women was surprising. When I started this research, I did not predict this much focus and discussion on hijab in US and Canadian newspaper articles on Iranian women. This intersection existed in all newspapers in both time periods. However, the shape of the representation has been different and changed. In the first period, there is not much representation of various hijab styles or discussions that frame it in a positive light. In the second period, there are more positive situations described and representation of various hijab styles. However, in all newspapers and both time periods, in most articles and discussions about women, the author mentions or talks about hijab as well. In this media discourse, the identities of Iranian women are defined by hijab and this focus on the appearance of these women, makes their other life experiences unimportant or ignores other aspects of these people's lives. This focus in media discourse also,

implicitly tells the North American audience that, as they do not have to wear hijab, they are lucky to live in a free and gender egalitarian country. Another effect of this discourse for the North American audience is that it reinforces the debates about religious symbols and clothing that can be discriminatory and anti-Islamic effects in society.

There are a number of reasons why this 'misrecognition' in the mass media exists (Fraser 2000). There is a tendency in the mass media and their audience to see and understand Middle Eastern, Muslim, and 'other' women as oppressed and as victims of their society (Mohanty 1988). This race and ethnicity-based hegemonic discourse in the mass media does not work completely independently from other systems of oppression based on patriarchy inside Iran.

There is a tendency in the Iranian national media and mass media to represent only a small group of Iranian women in terms of hijab, ethnicity, class and race. The hijabs worn by women on TV are not like the hijabs worn by women on the streets and in public places. The national TV tries to show a very restricted and covered hijab that the state ideology approves of; at the same time, women's roles and behaviours are also not portrayed in ways that can be seen in the society. The family role is the most prominently depicted role of women in the national media. Thus, Iranian women's roles in the society are not depicted exhaustively in the mass media of their own country, which likely influences their depiction in Western media.

Another reason that such misrepresentations abound in the Western mass media is the disconnection and hostility between the Iranian government and the US and Canadian governments. There are not many international reporters in Iran that can freely report on the situations of people. This is especially true of reporters from Western countries, such as the US

and Canada. The result is that the everyday lives of people are inaccessible to these media outlets, which has further increased the chances of their misrepresentation. Therefore, the intersection between race and ethnicity-based oppression systems in the West and also the patriarchal, ideological oppression system of the Iranian state has created a specific oppression situation for Iranian women.

The concept of intersectionality can also be discussed from the perspective of resistance against this oppression. When Iranian women started to participate in social movements against different forms of oppression, such as in the Green Movement of 2009 or environmental movements, they received media attention as active and progressive movement actors. Receiving media attention has changed their depiction by the mass media toward a more inclusive image of their power and activities. The change has resulted in women being represented less often as the stereotypical victim and more as powerful social and political actors. As the result showed, the image of women in the second time period was more positive and showed them resisting oppression.

Conclusion

The depiction of women in media, the laws that have been mentioned or discussed in articles, the portrayal of women's clothes and the representation of SM actors and SM tactics all show that the dominant discourse in the Western media characterizes Iranians, specifically Iranian women, as oppressed victims of repressive state laws. That said, the representations of women and the language used in the Western mass media to describe the situation of women in Iran have changed towards a more positive/resistance image of women. In the second time period, the oppressed/victim model that dominated the first period had been displaced by one

that depicted women as more socially and economically active. However, the new image is still not a complete image of Iranian women's situation. It still fails to capture the economic power and progressive actions that have helped women gain back their rights (Fraser 2000).

That images of women in Iran as oppressed victims subject to the compulsory hijab law continue to appear in both time periods and in all four newspapers demonstrates misrecognition of these women in mass media (Fraser 2000). The hegemonic discourses in mass media about the hijab are one of the main results that confirm theories of hegemony. However, a counter-hegemonic discourse also has been created in mass media through changes in these women's activities. The changes in tactics used by ordinary people, specifically women, to resist and fight against oppression over the years have received attention from media. There are several reasons why these protest tactics receive more attention from the media compared to social and economic empowerment: The protests and demonstrations are considered more newsworthy and are more familiar and accessible for the media and their Western audiences. This change in the representation of women and media recognition of ordinary people, specifically women, as the main SM actors who create changes in society, have generated a counter-hegemonic discourse in media and created a better understanding of these women's situations.

Facilitating this change has been the creation of networks that have built the main medium to transmit the images and news of social movements and women's participation in these movements to other activists and people outside of Iran as well as mass media. Moreover, these networks have empowered the movement actors inside Iran in many ways, including spreading their news and events on social and mass media. The actions of these networks have made the recognition of the people's situation and their activism more possible.

The recognition of economic and social empowerment as the main SM tactic and activism for women in Iran shows the significance of the intersectionality of gender and economy. Moreover, the focus of the mass media on the hijab, which has also been shown as one of the main symbols of Islam, demonstrates the intersection of gender and ethnicity. In this research, I have also discussed the intersection of resistance against one oppressive system, patriarchy, inside Iran, and resistance against another oppression against women based on their ethnicity in Western mass media; this shows that resistance against one form of oppression can empower resistance against other oppression systems as well.

Overall, there are hegemonic and counter-hegemonic media discourses, such as hegemonic discourse about the hijab (the results related to women's clothing, and laws), and also a counter-hegemonic discourse that shows ordinary people as the main SM actors in Iran (results related to SM actors and also the general representation of women, also the results related to oppressive organizational actors). These counter-hegemonic discourses in mass media are created by social movements through the power of networks. Intersectionality is also a tool for gaining an understanding of media misrecognition and different aspects of these women's lives and situations.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

Introduction

In this chapter, I review the main results and their significance, and I identify directions for future research. To explain the main findings, I discuss the key similarities and differences, first across time periods, second across media geographies (the US versus Canada) and third across the political orientations of the newspapers. I also provide an example of the international and unintended cultural effects of social movements and elaborate on the creation of counter-hegemonic discourse in media and the potential of intersectionality in resistance. I highlight the dimensions of the results that are particularly important to understanding Western media's framing of women's involvement in Iranian protest movements. Last, I explain the main contributions to the literature, reflect on the methodological limitations of the study, and suggest potential research directions and possibilities for knowledge mobilization. During reviewing the main findings, I link back the findings to my research objectives and research questions. I discuss my main contributions and its significances.

Summary of the Main Findings

Key Similarities and Differences Across Time Periods

Comparison of the results across the two time periods shows that the representation of Iranian women in newspapers changed toward a more positive/resistance image in the second period. The images used in the articles show a portrayal of women that is more inclusive, and the language used is more positive/resistance in comparison to the first time period. The images show women both with and without hijabs. Some powerful women such as mathematicians or

lawyers are represented in the second time period, while in the first time period, the images mainly show women with specific hijabs (black chadors) whose faces have a sad expression. In some other images, pictures of Zahra Kazemi (the Iranian-Canadian journalist killed in an Iranian prison) are repeatedly shown in the first time period's articles (Kazemi's death made the relationship between the two countries, Iran and Canada, worse, ending with complete political disconnection. It is worth mentioning that a 'positive representation', in this research means that the resistance of women against oppressive systems and also the social, economic and political power of women has been represented.

Iranian women's lives include both positive/resistance and also negative/oppressed experiences. This research finds that media mainly represent a dichotomous image of women's lives or focuses mainly on one aspect of these women lives. Showing the resistance and power of women, despite oppression, is a more inclusive image of people's experience because it does not focus only on negative and oppressed images. Also, women exercise social political and economic power through contentious politics and everyday activity, and picturing them primarily as oppressed is a form of misrecognition of the complexity of their situations.

That said, understanding the 'positivity' in changes in dress can be complicated. For example, when an author depicts the increased visibility of Western style clothes on women as a 'positive' change, it can indeed be positive in terms of representing the different styles of clothing now worn because of the improved situation of women. It can at the same time, however, reinforce the discourse that celebrates the domination of the East by the West.

The representation of oppressive laws in both time periods shows an aspect of hegemonic discourse that changes slightly during the second time period. In both time periods,

the focus of the newspapers is mainly on the hijab law, which is mandatory for all women in the country, including visitors from other countries. In both time periods, the compulsory hijab law is emphasized and shown as the most oppressive law against women. Moreover, the government or state is represented as an oppressive organization in both time periods. Similar to the hijab law, the representation of oppressive organizations and specifically the government decreases in the second time period.

Although the compulsory hijab law was the target of a few demonstrations in the first years when this law was passed after the Islamic Revolution, it has not been the first and foremost concern of women for many reasons. This may be because the hijab was part of Iranian culture even before the Islamic Revolution. Another reason might be the fact that politicizing the hijab costs more than changing the hijab through the fragmented but collective activities of women in their everyday life. Indeed, women have started to make the hijab more fashionable and have made it freer every year by making slight changes in their clothes.

The representation of the compulsory hijab as one significant aspect of the dominant discourse demonstrates that, first, hegemonic power relations are reinforced through dominant media discourses (Gramsci 1971; Laclau and Mouffe 1985). This dominant discourse links the hijab to oppression and reinforces this image to represent Muslims and Middle Eastern people as ‘others’ for Western audiences. Thus, media provides discourses through text, language, and images that reinforce an ideology that maintains power relations (Hall 1980a, 1980b). This misrecognition of people’s situation reinforces the stereotypical image created through the Orientalism of the Middle East in western countries (Said 1979). Creating ‘the other’ who is in need of salvation from the East also helps to make the West as ‘the one’. An irrational,

uncivilized, etc., image of the East help to create a progressive and rational image of the West, and the image of women who are victims in the East help to create a savior image of Western woman (Mohanty 1988).

Moreover, the representation of women's clothes has taken a very similar path as the representation of laws in newspapers. The relationship between the hijab law and oppression resulted in Iranian women's clothes being represented as oppressive in both time periods. Focusing on the hijab as a tool of oppression reinforces an image that is based on Orientalism (Said 1979). It also demonstrates the cultural hegemony that works through dominant discourses in media (Hall 1980b, 1980a, 1996). This is a 'misrecognition' of women's situation, as it does not represent a complete image of all aspects of the hijab in Iran's social and political context (Fraser 2000). The hijab has been part of Iranian culture for hundreds of years, many women have chosen to wear it, and it has not limited women's activities in social and political spheres.

However, again, much like the hijab law, media discussion of Iranian women's clothes as oppressive decreased remarkably during the second time period. This change may not be the result of women's participation and activity in social movements. There might be many factors that affect this change. For example, from Orientalism viewpoint, when a resistance/positive image of women is represented, their hijab is not represented as only black chador; it has more colours, it can be fashionable and diverse, it is not always oppressive, and in general there is less focus on it. In any case, the whole discourse has changed toward a more inclusive image of the heterogeneity of Iranian women's situation. Seeing and representing ordinary women as the

main social movement actors has created the possibility of positive changes toward the 'recognition' of women and their power (Fraser 2000).

Moreover, the representation of SM actors in the first time period mainly involved women's rights activists and celebrities and, only in some cases, ordinary people. In the second time period, this representation changed to mainly ordinary people in all newspapers. Whereas the representation of SM tactics in the first time period included mainly artistic protests, and, only in some cases, economic and social empowerment, this changed to protests and demonstrations in the second time period. The reason why the image of women in the second time period is more inclusive is that changes in women's situation and resistance against gender inequality in Iran are not mainly led by women's rights activists. In Iran, although women's rights advocates are active, their number and the activities they engage in have been remarkably less than what ordinary people have to do to achieve gender equality in their everyday life. The situation of women has improved in the forty years since the Islamic Revolution, but this improvement may not necessarily be seen in policy changes or feminist activities; ordinary women have been actively fighting for their rights in their everyday lives through empowering themselves economically and financially and by being socially active in the society. Therefore, portrayals of ordinary people as the main SM actors is an image that is closer to the 'recognition' of women's situation in Iran (Fraser 2000).

The above-mentioned changes in media representations of women show that ordinary people, media audiences and, specifically, social movement participants have the potential to create a counter-hegemonic media discourse (Gramsci 1971; Hall 1980b, 1980a, 1996). Based on this synchronicity and simultaneous changes demonstrated on the results of this research, in

North American media representation of Iranian women and also in these women's activism and recognition of the ordinary women as the main social movement actors, I name and discuss this process as 'intersectionality in resistance'. Moreover, the connection between gender inequality and economic power, and the way that Iranian women have empowered themselves economically and socially to achieve their demands around gender equality in the family and society, demonstrate the intersectionality between various oppressive systems based on gender, class, etc.

The role of international support is frequently discussed in the second time period. Iranians living outside the country have had a large role in supporting movement participants through the Internet. Since Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and other major social media sites are filtered in Iran, Iranians outside of Iran have started to actively publish videos and pictures they receive from Iran online on social media, and they also send them to mass media outlets such as BBC Persian and VOA Persian. Support from people outside of Iran has facilitated the spread of news of the movement to the world. This connection between people inside Iran and activists, media and other Iranians outside Iran that help the movements to have representation in media demonstrate Castells' (2012) discussion on the power of networks.

Overall, the changes in the two time periods can be the result of many factors, such as the increase in the role of the Internet and the power of networks. However, the Green Movement of 2009 that continued for more than one year, the movements and protests of 2017 and 2018, and the pictures and videos related to these movements were not like the stereotypical images from the Islamic Revolution and hostage situations for people in North America. Moreover, the whole image of the Middle East began to change after 2009 through the social

movements and revolutions that emerged in Iran and continued with the Arab Spring movements and revolutions. Media representations of oppressive laws, and oppressive organizational actors also decreased. Although women's clothing was represented as oppressive in both time periods, negative representations of hijab decreased in the second. And general representations of women changed from victim/negative to more positive/resistance.

Key Similarities and Differences Across Media Geographies (the US versus Canada)

In general, finding similarities and differences based on media geographies, specifically the US versus Canada, is complicated and difficult. All Canadian and US newspapers showed positive/resistance representations of women in the second time period, but their results varied in the first time period. Both Canadian and US newspapers represented women's clothes as mainly oppressive in both time periods, both Canadian and US newspapers represented the state or government as the most oppressive organization, and the number of representations of the state decreased remarkably in the second time period. Moreover, the hijab law was the most frequently mentioned law in both Canadian and US newspapers in the first time period; however, in the second time period, Canadian newspapers focused more on the stoning law than the hijab or the separation of men and women, whereas the US newspapers still focused more on the hijab law.

All newspapers in both countries linked the hijab with oppression, depicting it as limiting women's activities, and there is a strong focus on the hijab law in both time periods. This binary representation and focus on the hijab, which is one of the most well-known signs of Islam, shows a misrecognition of the fact that the hijab is a choice

for many women. Not only has it not created limitations for women, it has created opportunities for women to be educated, to be more active in society and for them to empower themselves economically and socially. This misrecognition reinforces the image of Muslims that Said (Said 1979) identifies as part of Orientalism. Moreover, the reinforcing of the 'othering' process in media demonstrates how cultural hegemony exists and works through media, specifically mass media (Hall 1980b, 1980a, 1996).

With respect to SM actors, in the first time period, the American newspapers, *The New York Times* and *USA Today*, discussed ordinary people as the main actors first, and women's rights activists second. In contrast, Canadian newspapers focused more on women's rights activists. In the second time period, however, they all focused more on ordinary people. In terms of SM tactics, in the first time period, Canadian newspapers focused more on artistic protests and online activities whereas the US newspapers focused more on economic and social empowerment efforts. Overall, then, American newspapers were better at 'seeing' ordinary people as the main SM actors and recognizing their empowerment tactics. It is likely that having a correspondent who lives in Iran has helped *the New York Times* articles to represent an image that includes more aspects of people's lives. Moreover, the larger American newspapers used in this research have more circulation and hence possibility to impact media discourse. These American outlets also reach global audiences as content is circulated through social media such as Twitter.

Key Similarities and Differences Across Orientations of the Newspapers

There are more similarities and differences based on the orientation of newspapers than media geographies. The first and most noticeable of these are the number of articles that depict Iranian women. The representation of women is not the same among the four newspapers. Some of the newspapers, such as *The New York Times,* had hundreds of articles about Iranian women, while other newspapers, such as *USA Today,* had only a few. In general, newspapers that favour a liberal/left/progressive perspective (*NYT* and *G&M*) had, by far, a greater number of articles that discussed Iranian women than other the two newspapers that favour a conservative/right perspective (*USA Today* and *National Post*).

Moreover, in terms of their general representations of women, newspapers that favour a liberal/left/progressive perspective, *The Globe and Mail* and *The New York Times* had more positive/resistance than negative/victim or oppressed representations in the first time period. This is in contrast with newspapers that favour a conservative/right perspective, *National Post* and *USA Today,* which had more negative/victim or oppressed representations than positive/resistance. However, all four newspapers had more positive/resistance representations of women in the second time period. It is worth mentioning that, although I have not coded this aspect of articles, most of the articles in this research were written by and for the newspapers. The number of articles that were distributed through press services like Reuters or Associated Press were fewer in number and limited; cutting them from the data would not change in the results significantly.

With respect to the general language of the texts, *The New York Times* and *The Globe and Mail* (that favour a liberal/left/progressive perspective) are mainly similar. For example,

most of the negative/victim or oppressed representations in these newspapers are from articles that describe at least some positive changes in the society; in contrast, *National Post* and *USA Today* (newspapers that favour a conservative/right perspective) describe the situations in one article mainly only negatively using overtly negative language. These differences and similarities also exist in terms of images; for example, in both time periods, *The New York Times* used images of women's everyday lives and situations. Overall, my results show that, in terms of their general representations of women, the number of articles that cover Iranian women, and the language that explains the situation of Iranian women as positive or negative, there are more similarities based on the ideological leanings of the newspapers than the geographical location of the newspapers.

Media Framing of Women's Involvement in Iranian Protest Movements

The changes in the tactics ordinary people use to fight for their rights, from gradual, non-collective economic and social empowerment and bargaining, to protesting in the streets, have gained the attention of the media. This change has led to a reduced focus on women's rights activists and the artistic protests of elites and a greater focus on ordinary people as the main SM actors. Along with this shift, the general depiction of women changed toward a more positive/resistance, powerful and socially, economically, and politically active image. Moreover, SM actors and their protests diverted the media's attention, and the focus on oppressive laws and representations of these laws decreased in the second time period. Media were more focused on resistance and the power of people than on portraying them as victims of an oppressive state.

The results show that when a social movement or protest emerges in a Muslim, Middle Eastern country with an undemocratic regime like Iran, it can gain the attention of the Canadian and US mass media; however, not all forms of activism and social movements have equal representation in mass media. When social movements take a form that is familiar to US and Canadian societies and mass media, they receive greater visibility, but if activism differs from what is perceived as activism in Western countries, it will not receive the same level of visibility. Bayat (2007, 2013), Najmabadi (2000), Osanloo (2009), Hoodfar and Sadeghi (2009), and Kurzman (2008) all discuss how the activism of Muslim women in the Middle East is different than activism that is presented in Western theories of social movements and activism. Now that the media is covering news of this movement more effectively, the images and focus of media articles are not restricted to old images of women during the years after the Islamic Revolution, nor do they depict stereotypical images of women who are victims of an oppressive Islamic system, or how the national media in Iran shows of women.

Although the results of the second time-period are more inclusive as they incorporate more aspects of people's lives. At the same time, this might indicate that when women's activities become similar to Western social movement tactics, then women are represented as more powerful and positive. Therefore, this change in the representation of women, from negative/oppressed/victim to more positive/powerful, shows the hegemonic viewpoint that when the activities of women are similar to Western movements, women are more powerful, and their image is more positive than negative. It shows that the social-economic empowerment, collective but fragmented tactics of women in the first time period were not acknowledged or represented as the power of women and their activities, compared to their presence on the street movements. It appears that having a reporter/correspondent who lives in the society on which

she is reporting, such as the *New York Times'* correspondent in Iran, helps the media to create a better understanding and recognition of culture. The visibility of different SM actors and tactics, and also various aspects of Iranian women's lives in *the New York Times* shows that having dedicated correspondents in the country makes a significant difference in recognition and mitigating the media hegemony. Thus, it is crucial how the media designate and assign its resources. Unfortunately, as social media readership gets more popular, many mass media institutions and newspapers are experiencing decreasing circulation. This can lead to publications reducing their budgets or cutting allocated resources to correspondents living in a country like Iran. Such cuts can negatively impact media representations and recognition of that society and reinforce the hegemonic and oppressive power on media discourse. Moreover, based on the result of this research, it can be suggested to Western journalists that analyzing situations in another society needs an understanding and perspective from that society to have a more precise analysis of the priorities, struggles and the issues of the people who live in that context and also the ways that they resist.

Iranian women are fighting against a politically oppressive system inside Iran and hope to achieve their demands through a more democratic system. At the same time, these women, unintentionally, are helping to build a more powerful image of themselves to be portrayed by the mass media in Western countries. That said, not all aspects of the dominant discourses of Canadian and US mass media have changed. For example, the hijab always has been, and in all newspapers is, represented mainly as oppressive and negative. Although positive/resistance representations of the hijab increased in the second time period, negative and oppressive representations of the hijab are still far more common.

Analytical contribution

I used a diverse range of theories to elaborate on and analyze my research results, including social movement theory, networks of power, and media relation theories such as Manuel Castells' works. The increase in the role of international support in social movements after 2009 shows the role of these networks that people have created to communicate news of their movement to the world and to organize themselves. The potential these networks create to empower movements inside totalitarian and undemocratic regimes is a significant part of my research. Although my research has not specifically focused on this aspect of the movements and power of networks, comparison of the results related to the role of 'international support' as social movement actors in both time periods (which increased in the second time period), can show the effect of these networks.

My research contributes to sociological knowledge about the intersection of gender, media, and social movements. I have discussed the concept of hegemony and counterhegemony and the process of the creation of these phenomena in political and social discourses, specifically in mass media. Edward Said's work and theories on media discourse, the representation of Muslims as 'others' in Western media, and the role of the audience in changing language and representations are other significant aspects of my research. Some aspects of the hegemonic image of women as victims of an oppressive system (including the notion that ordinary people are not SM actors and that their empowerment and daily activism are insignificant) have changed through counter-hegemonic movements and shows a more positive/resistance and more powerful image of these women. The results show, however, that the hegemonic discourse on general representations of the hijab has not changed significantly.

I have also used the concept of intersectionality described by bell hooks and Patricia Hill Collins to explain and analyze how the patriarchal, oppressive system in Iran reinforces race-based and ethnicity-based oppression systems in western countries and to explain how resistance against oppression can be connected to resistance against other systems. The more positive image of women in mass media, which is different than stereotypical images based on ethnicity, along with the participation of ordinary women in protests and demonstrations show that resistance against one oppressive system can empower (in this case unintentionally) resistance against other oppression systems. Anti-dictatorship movements that are asking for democracy, likewise (in most cases also unintentionally) provide the opportunity and space for women to be seen, to be empowered and to make their demands about gender equality. Overall, in authoritarian and undemocratic societies, women's movements, due to the level of oppression and the huge costs associated with smaller movements for SM actors, are actively and effectively part of other larger democratic movements, such as political movements that are pressing for democracy or economic movements that are asking for economic reforms to achieve their demands.

Economic empowerment can help women fight against patriarchy and the participation of women in social movements in Iran can change their representations in North America. One of the main ways that women have empowered themselves during the years after the Islamic Revolution is using the opportunity to attain an education, enter the job market and empower themselves economically. Through economic empowerment, women have acquired the power to gain their rights and change society through their everyday collective but fragmented activities. When these women started to participate in protests and demonstrations, the way they were portrayed in North American mass media was different than what the Iranian government

tried to show of them. The Iranian government promoted images based on stereotypes about their ethnicity and Muslim Middle Eastern women.

I also discussed an example of the international cultural effects of social movements that are not necessarily intended, and how it can create the potential for a counter-hegemonic discourse in media. I named this process *intersectionality in resistance*. Considering the potential of the effects of resistance against one system of oppression on other oppression systems can help social movement participants and activists better understand the potential of their activism.

By applying an international example of the relationships between social movements and mass media, this research contributes to the intersectional and international theorization of social movements. The analytical framework of this research can be applied to other regions, to the relationship between SM tactics and actors, and to the effects on mass media. First, recognition of social movement tactics that are based on the context of the society, such as the economic and social empowerment of women in Iran, can be applied in other societies. Second, the results of this research show that some social movement tactics, such as protests and demonstrations, can achieve more coverage from mass media. I have also developed a contextual and intersectional understanding of social movements and resistance that has not been addressed in Western-dominated literature on social movements and media. Such an intersectional understanding of SMs means that adding cultural and context-based SM tactics which are dedicated to economic empowerment can help women to reach their gender-based and non-gender based rights and demands. My research offers new approaches to analyzing the tactics of social movements because social movement theories in North American-dominated

literature often do not consider the full range of social movement tactics that people use to resist oppression systems in non-Western contexts.

Methodological Reflexivity

I have gathered data from the most circulated national American and Canadian newspapers (I omit the *Wall Street Journal* in America, which is the second newspaper as it is more business-focused). The data were accessed through Factiva. Factiva shows all the articles, with the keywords we use to search, in newspapers we choose, during the timeframe we choose, based on the relevancy (it can also organize them based on time, but I chose relevancy). However, I could only access a description of the images in some of the newspapers. I used those descriptions or the titles of the chosen relevant articles to look up the images online, and in this way, I was able to have some images in my data as well. I would like to use newspaper images more centrally in my future research on mass media. One of the positive aspects of this methodology was that I did not have time and space restrictions, and I was able to conduct my research from any place where I had access to the Internet and a computer.

The longitudinal nature of my research is one of the most significant reasons why I chose newspapers as my data source. Moreover, newspaper articles are part of the mass media and reflect the culture of a society. Although social media and websites have seen significant growth in the past decade, newspapers are still a unique and significant source of data to use to analyze the dominant discourses on mass media, as they are independent (relatively) from audience choices in terms of what they publish. Moreover, although social media and digital networks have remarkable power in society, “most socialized communication is still processed through the mass media, and the most popular information websites are those of the mainstream

media because of the importance of branding in the source of the message" (Castells 2009, p. 419). Newspapers have a more inclusive and broader audience, and their content is the source of news and content for many social media websites and accounts. Analysis of newspaper articles and images was useful for understanding the dominant discourse of North American culture. It also was useful to see the differences (in general or in detail) in newspapers' representations of the research topics. I focused on the most circulated newspapers, as they have a wider audience, and in terms of reflecting the culture and affecting the culture, a higher number of readers can be a significant factor in giving power to a newspaper.

Like all textual analysis research, there is a problem of inference, as my analysis does not account for the social processes of media production or what the audience receives and interprets. Nevertheless, the results of this research can indicate some aspect of receiving media reports; for example, limited representation of women's social and economic empowerment in the first time period compared to the representation of women's activities in street social movements in the second time period shows that the audience could not have access to all aspects of these women's activities. I did not have any communication/interviews with the people who wrote these articles, the people who took or chose the images for the articles, nor people who read these newspapers. This is the main limitation of this research related to this methodology and data. However, for future research, it may be possible to conduct more comprehensive research that includes all aspects of the production process and the audience reception.

The data gathered from the newspapers were varied for many reasons. For example, *The New York Times* has had a reporter in Iran for years, and that was a reason why there was more

data from this newspaper than from other newspapers. I have not coded the role of press agencies. However, as it can be seen in examples also, most of the articles are written by journalists or in 'opinion' pages by a writer. But having a reporter in a country is not the only reason why a newspaper will cover a topic more than others. For example, *The Globe and Mail* also published more articles on my research topic compared to *USA Today* or *National Post.* Therefore, analyzing the newspaper articles can provide more information about several aspects of a dominant discourse rather than just looking at the text or the images in the articles. I believe the authors of the newspaper articles could be examined in a separate study, as their national and political background could be analyzed in relation to the data results from the newspapers. Another aspect that could be studied or added to this research method could be conducting interviews with the writers or editors to analyze the reasons why certain images are chosen for articles.

Future Research

My research offers a non-American-dominant analysis of social movement theories and their relation to media that can be applied in other social movements in other non-American or American social movements. Further, this research yields possibilities for research on other types of mass media on this topic and comparative studies among newspapers. There are several further research directions relating to the authors and editors of newspapers and different aspects of mass media, such as policies relating to editing and choosing images.

This research program could be broadened geographically. The analysis of images of Middle Eastern women in Canadian and/or US mass media is important. Most Middle Eastern countries have experienced social movements in recent years, and women have been active in

most of them. The support or participation of women in movements in countries such as Palestine or Yazidi women in Kurdistan also can be analyzed in comparison to, for example, Egyptian women's participation in their political and social movements.

Moreover, in future research, other media, including social and digital media such as Twitter, Facebook, or CBC news stories and other online media as well as other mass media such as TV programs could be analyzed, as could the portrayal of Iranian women or Middle Eastern women in these other media. These images could be studied and analyzed separately, or the analysis could focus on a time period that allows the researcher to examine women's participation in these movements and if this participation has had any effect on their lives.

Another direction for future research could be analyzing the media production process of Iranian women or Middle Eastern women in general and their participation in social movements. Another significant aspect can be the audience and their understanding of media production and the image of Middle Eastern women or Iranian women they have received.

This research studies women's representations in mass media. However, in future research, it could be broadened to Iranian or Middle Eastern people's representations in media and their participation in social movements. Future research could study other time periods that might be related to social and political changes in a country or changes in media or movements. Moreover, future research could study one specific social movement or be inclusive of all the social movements in a country.

People who are participating in social movements are not the only ones who will benefit from the results of the research; immigrants and specifically immigrant women who live in

North America will benefit from the results of this type of research. Moreover, specifically analyzing mass media representations of any significant topic can make the dominant discourse clearer and lead to the creation of alternative discourses or counter-hegemonic discourses.

My overall contribution and findings are related to dominant media discourse and representation of Iranian women. The dominant discourse in all newspapers has represented hijab as oppressive, hijab law as most oppressive, and in first period has represented women mainly as victims of oppressive systems. I have also discussed how women's participation in social movements (using tactics that are known and familiar to the Western media and Western audience as SM tactics) can have the attention of the media and change the dominant discourse to represent a more positive/resistant image of women. My research contributes to social movement studies and Muslim women studies. It helps to understand culture- and context-based SM tactics and observe the power and resistance of women in a Muslim country with an undemocratic political system. There have been changes in the representation of Iranian women on the US and Canadian mass media since 2001, from a negative/victim image toward a more inclusive (which covers also positive/resistance aspects) image. And, the participation of women in protests after 2009 has attracted the media attention and helped to see the power and resistance of women. This research has had limitations as I did not talk to people who wrote the articles or chose/took the pictures to publish. It is also not discussed if the authors are Iranians or American or Canadian.

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