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MOULOUD MAMMERI UNIVERSITY OF TIZI-OUZOU

FACULTY OF LETTERS & LANGUAGES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH



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**Social Semiotic Analysis of World Women Leaders'
Representation in Handling of Covid 19 Crisis: the
Guardian and the New York Times**

Presented by:

- Dassine HAMIDANI

Supervised by:

- Pr. Souryana YASSINE

Board of Examiners:

Chair: Amel BENAÏSSA, MCB, Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou.

Supervisor: Souryana YASSINE, Professor, Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou.

Examiner: Karima ADEM, MAA, Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou.

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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to ME, another part of myself that always eager for challenges in life. All my best friends and family for providing me with unfailing support and continuous encouragement throughout the years of study and the process of writing this dissertation. This accomplishment would not have been possible without you

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The present study deals with the representation of world women leaders in Western Media, the American and British newspapers: The New York Times and the Guardian. The corpus consists of six news articles along with nine visual images accompanying them. This dissertation analyses articles and images portraying women leaders using the mixed method research, which combines qualitative method and quantitative method. It relies on two analytical frameworks; the first is the multimodal social semiotic theory 'Visual Grammar' proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, 2006) in order to analyse images and the second is van Leeuwen's framework in Critical Discourse Analysis named 'the Socio-Semantic Inventory' (1996, 2008) to analyse the articles. The examination of the selected news articles and images has revealed that the Guardian and the New York Times provide a positive depiction of women leaders both visually and linguistically. Thus, the visual and the linguistic modes complement each other semantically in the aforementioned broadsheets. Furthermore, the comparison has shown that the newspapers share some similarities in their visual and linguistic portrayal of women: they both represent women as active participants and as specific identifiable individuals. The newspapers acknowledge the hard work women leaders are putting into to make everyone safe and secure.

Key words: *Critical Discourse Analysis, representation, the Socio-semantic Inventory, Visual Grammar.*

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General Introduction

- **Statement of the Problem**

When we hear the term “leader”, we simultaneously think that it is a “he”. Traditionally, the king can rule, but the queen will always be a wife or mother or in most cases both. It has been said since history that leadership is mainly a masculine activity. However, at the beginning of the 21st century, people started tolerating women being leaders.

Since 1960, 73 women have held the most remarkable places of official power in their nations, although more than a third of them were acting in a brief limit, or they supplanted already elected leaders and were never re-elected in their own right, claimed Aaron O'Neill, a Research expert specializing in global historical data on *Statista*, which is a German online portal for statistics. “*Since Bandaranaike (April 17, 1916 – October 10, 2000), commonly known as Sirimavo Bandaranaike, was a Sri Lankan stateswoman) was first elected in 1960*” he added, “*The number of women in power has grown slowly, with the fastest growth coming in the past twelve years. Despite this growth in recent years, there have never been more than 18 women in these positions of power in a single year, which is less than 10% of the number of men who have held these positions.*” (2012: 14).

Just like any leader, women leaders in different countries have always felt the urge to prove the worthiness of their positions in power. Consequently, the COVID-19 pandemic has provided unusual opportunities for women leaders to display their qualifications as leaders. Coronavirus is a worldwide sanitary crisis that requires cure on one hand, and control over the population to decrease the number of casualties on the other hand. As a matter of fact, all kinds of media, be it visual or linguistic, have followed closely the steps and actions made by women in higher positions in order to face the virus and report them. Many newspapers, mainly western ones, have discussed this issue in more than one article, either on printed newspapers or websites. Some of them constitute the corpus of the present study.

The present work seeks to investigate how women leaders are portrayed both visually and linguistically in the western printed media during the Covid 19 crisis, by analysing articles published between April and June of the year 2020 by two Western daily printed broadsheets: the British *the Guardian* and the American *the New York Times*. Their political orientations are completely different; the former is liberal and left-wing, whereas the latter is conservative and right-wing. Therefore, the study aims to compare between the linguistic and visual corpus under investigation. The analysis is established relying on two analytical frameworks. The first is Van Leeuwen's framework in CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS called "the Socio-semantic inventory" (1996, 2008) to analyse texts. The second is the Visual Grammar developed by Kress and Van Leeuwen (1995, 2006) to analyse images.

The theories adopted in this research study are used in previous research too. Yet, this present work distinguishes itself in the sense that it is a new area of research, which includes women in leadership, and the way they handled the novel coronavirus pandemic. The present study depicts how these women are represented in two broadsheets: *The Guardian* and *The New York Times*, and it combines both visual and linguistic analysis.

The choice of this research topic is based on the fact that it is a timely one, and it makes a new contribution to "multimodality" which is a recent area of research especially in Algerian Universities given the fact that it adopts the theory of Visual Design.

- **Aims of the study**

Despite a growing body of literature on women in leadership, no research has dealt with their management of a sanitary crisis. It is against this background that this study is concerned with the representation of the world women leaders managing the corona Virus crisis in American and British Newspapers through Van Leeuwen's approach in CRITICAL

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS entitled “the Socio-semantic Inventory” (1996, 2008) to analyse texts, and Kress and Van Leeuwen's Visual Grammar (1995,2006) to analyse images.

The main objective of this dissertation is to analyse critically news articles (texts) and images published in the aforementioned broadsheets to describe Women Leaders and sort out the hidden meanings (visual and linguistic) from a critical discourse analysis and social semiotic perspective. Since the broadsheets differ in their ideologies, the present study seeks to establish a comparison between the selected articles and images to uncover the similarities and differences of their depiction of women leaders’ handling of the corona virus pandemic.

- **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

The current study attempts to answer a number of questions in relation to the representation of women leaders’ actions against the Corona Virus in the media. The questions are as follows:

1. Do the selected newspapers represent women positively or negatively while handling the corona virus pandemic?
2. Do the linguistic and visual modes complement each other semantically in both *the New York Times* and *the Guardian*?
3. Are there any similarities or differences between the selected newspapers in their pictorial and linguistic representation of women leaders’ management of Covid 19 crisis?

To answer these questions, the following hypotheses have been suggested:

Hp1. The selected newspapers depict women positively in their quest to handle the crisis.

Hp2. The visual and the linguistic modes complement each other semantically in the corpus under investigation.

Hp3. There are some similarities and differences between *the New York Times* and *the Guardian* representation of women leaders' management of Corona Virus.

- **Research Techniques and Methodology**

As regards the corpus of the study, it will be selected from two daily newspapers: The British: *The Guardian* and the American: *The New York Times*. 03 articles and 05 images from *the New York Times*. And 03 articles and 04 images from *the Guardian*. Thus, the whole data is composed of 6 articles and 09 images. The articles are analysed in relation to Van Leeuwen's framework in Critical Discourse Analysis "the Socio-Semantic Inventory". Whereas images are analysed in relation to The Grammar of Visual Design based on their *representational, interactional, and compositional meanings*.

In order to answer the research questions of the study, the mixed methods approach, which combines qualitative and quantitative techniques, is adopted in the process of data analysis. The former aims to analyse images relying on their representational, interactional and compositional meanings. The latter is adopted to analyse the chosen news articles in relation to Van Leeuwen's framework in Critical Discourse Analysis called "the Socio-Semantic Inventory". This is done by examining the frequency distributions of some categories belonging to this analytical tool in the news articles. The two frameworks combined provide the necessary means to accomplish this work and answer the research questions.

- **Structure of the Dissertation**

This research work follows the traditional complex model which breaks down into a general introduction followed by four chapters and ends up with a general conclusion. The first chapter, preceded by a General Introduction, is the Review of Literature, which is concerned mainly with the theoretical framework of this research. The second chapter is called Research Design, which seeks to provide a detailed description of the research method,

the procedures of data collection and data analysis as well as the corpus of this research. The next chapter is the Presentation of the Findings, which reveals the research findings of the study. The last chapter is the Discussion of the Findings, as the name suggests, the final results are discussed and interpreted with respect to the theoretical frameworks adopted in the study. Besides, it provides answers to the research questions to either confirm or reject the hypotheses advanced for the present work. The dissertation ends with a General Conclusion which summarizes the main points of the study and contains suggested areas for further research.



Review of the Literature

Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the review of the literature underlying the topic under investigation, which is the Representation of Women Leaders' handling of the corona virus pandemic in two daily Western printed newspapers: the British *the Guardian* and the American *the New York Times*. First, it introduces social semiotics and some operational concepts related to this field. It, then, presents the theoretical framework used in this study, which consists of Kress's approach to Critical Discourse Analysis "The Socio Semantic Inventory", to analyse texts depicting women leaders. Besides, *The Grammar of Visual Design* by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) is used to analyse images depicting Women Leaders.

1. Social Semiotic Theory

Though semiotics as a discipline has a long history, social semiotics as a branch of semiotics is a new development. The term "Social Semiotics" is first introduced to linguistics by linguistic theorist MAK Halliday as a title in one of his books, known as "*Language as Social Semiotics*" (1978). This work argues against the traditional separation between language and society.

According to Halliday, language study should not emphasize language as a fixed system of linguistic structures, yet, as sets of resources that influence what a speaker can do with language, in a particular social context.

Social semiotics is currently expanding the mainstream semiotics framework beyond its linguistic origins in order to account for the growing significance of sounds and visual images. Theorists such as Gunther Kress and Theo Van Leeuwen elaborated a new analytical framework to study and analyse images, by providing "*grammars*" for other semiotic modes.

Unlike traditional semiotics, social semiotics takes signs as they are in socio-cultural context, with the perception of their meaning.

2. Key Concepts

2.1. Semiotic Resource

Semiotic Resource is a key term in social semiotics (Van Leeuwen 2005; Jewitt2006)

Van Leeuwen notes that the notion of “*resource*” replaces the notion of “*sign*”. He defines the term as follows:

“Semiotic resources are the actions, materials and artifacts we use for communicative purposes, whether produced physiologically – for example, with our vocal apparatus, the muscles we use to make facial expressions and gestures – or technically – for example, with pen and ink, or computer hardware and software – together with the ways in which these resources can be organized. Semiotic resources have a meaning potential, based on their past uses, and a set of affordances based on their possible uses, and these will be actualized in concrete social contexts where their use is subject to some form of semiotic regime”

(Van Leeuwen 2004:285).

This definition highlights the historical development of connections between form and meaning. Kress (2010) stresses that these resources are continually changing; this hypothetical position presents people as sign-makers who shape and combine semiotic resources to reflect their interests.

Semiotic Resource originated from the work of Halliday (1978) who argues that the grammar of language is not a code or set of rules for producing correct sentences but a resource for making meaning. Van Leeuwen (2005) states that semiotic resources carry cultural value and significance. Thus, “*Semiotic Resources are not restricted to speech and writing and picture making*” (ibid) but they can be considered as almost anything that individuals make or use to convey meaning.

2.2. Mode

A mode is a set of socially and culturally shaped resources for making meaning. Following Halliday Metafunction's test is the common way to establish whether a set of resources counts as a mode or not. That is, if the set can serve all the three meta-functions, it is regarded as a mode. Jewitt (2008) affirms that modes are continually transformed by their users in response to the communicative needs of communities, institutions and society. Therefore, new modes are created and existing modes are changed. Examples of modes include writing, image, speech, and layout among others.

2.2.1. Linguistic Mode

According to Arola, Sheppard and Ball (2014), linguistic mode refers to written or spoken words. The mode incorporates word choice, the delivery of written or spoken text, the organisation of words into sentences and paragraphs. Moreover the development and coherence of words and ideas. It is the most used mode, since it can be both read and heard, on both paper and audio. In the framework of multimodality, the linguistic mode is viewed to be always accompanied by other kinds of modes in "*semiosis*"; that is the meaning making process, where "*each mode is [...] partial in relation to the whole of the meaning*" (Jewitt, 2009:25). This means that the meaning generated by a given mode is always interwoven with the meanings created by other modes.

2.2.2. Visual Mode

Visual mode refers to the images, still or moving, and characters that people see. This mode includes colour, layout, style, size and perspective. The mode "*not only represents the world... but also plays a part in some interaction...*" (Jewitt and Oyama cited in Van Leeuwen and Jewitt, 2001:140), meaning that visuals are designed to perform specific

communicative functions, not to be used just as a decoration. For instance, sad movies captivate the attention of the audience and make them feel sad or even more; make them cry. With the evolution of the digital era, the visual mode has become the predominant mode of communication. Visuals have been given an increased attention in mobile applications, web pages, newspapers and all kinds of social media.

2.3. Multimodal Texts

Multimodal texts are texts that are constructed by the application of a variety of modes. As It is argued by Kress et al (2001:42) “*multimodal texts [are] texts-as objects which use more than one mode of meaning-making*” such as writing, visuals... Thus, all texts are multimodal in nature “*though one modality can dominate*” (Yassine, 2012:45).

According to Jewitt (2009), each mode is multimodal and states that texts work together with other modes in order to give the overall meaning of the text. In other words, meaning is conveyed through combinations of different modes such as gestural, audio, and oral language. Multimodal texts incorporate dance, performance, oral storytelling, and presentations.

2.4. Multimodality Theory

Multimodality Theory is an interdisciplinary approach to contemporary communication developed during the 2000s, it understands communication and representations to be more than about language. Multimodality emerged from Systemic Functional Linguistics, which is developed by Halliday (1978), to study and analyse representations. Kress and Van Leeuwen adopted Halliday's metafunctions, which are applicable to other modes, like the visual and the linguistic mode.

Multimodality assumes that communication draws on a multiplicity within one mode, in which each mode has its role in generating meaning. Van Leeuwen (2005:281) defines

multimodality as “*the combination of different semiotic modes-for example language and music- in a communicative artefact or event*”. Therefore, multimodality departs from the view of communication as being the exclusive way to transmit images and accounts for “*the multimodal relations between the verbal, the visual, and other modes which commonly co-occur in modern communication*” (Yassine, 2012:42).

Multimodality views language as one semiotic mode that constitutes human communication. That is, language has been displaced from the centre of communication, and other modes have been given prominence such as visuals.

2.5. Broadsheets

Broadsheets are large-format popular newspapers which, unlike the tabloids, are characterized by their standard and formal language, long articles and their focus on serious news (Sterling, 2009). But in the early twenty-first century, because of the cost and other considerations, broadsheet newspapers have shrunk in size and shifted to a smaller tabloid format (Sterling, 2009: 223-224).

3. Theoretical Framework Used in the Study

3.1. Visual Grammar

Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) have elaborated a new analytical framework to analyse the visual mode. They have adjusted Halliday's metafunctional approach and expanded his ideas to demonstrate how various semiotic modes work together in visuals, in their joint work entitled “*Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*”.

Just as the grammar of language, which describes how words are put together to form texts, visual grammar studies the way different elements are combined together in visuals in a meaningful way. In visual grammar, however, the three metafunctions have been

reconceptualised as the *representational, interactional and compositional meanings* in correspondence with Halliday's *ideational, interpersonal and textual metafunctions*. (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006: 55).

As a matter of fact, Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) advanced a descriptive framework, which can be used as a critical tool to trace and uncover intended meanings, including power inequalities in visual semiotics. In other words, the framework is established to account for the hidden meanings in images. Therefore, it is adopted in the current study in order to examine the selected images to reveal the way Women Leaders are represented.

3.1.1. The Representational Meaning

The representational meaning is related to the way participants such as persons, objects, places, or elements of various kinds represented in images, are depicted visually, and how they interact with one another. Each semiotic mode contains two kinds of participants, one is interactive participants within the *narrative process*, and the other is represented participants within a *conceptual process*.

A) Narrative Process

Narrative process suggests that “*when participants are connected by a vector, they are represented as doing something to or for each other*”, (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006, p.59). This shows that participants are connected to one another and represented to one another as “*actors*” or “*goal*”, this can be recognised thanks to “*vectors*”. The participant that creates a vector is called ‘*Actor*’, while the one at which the vector is directed is referred to as ‘*Goal*’ (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006: 66). Therefore, the viewer understands them to be interacting with one another (ibid.75).

Different kinds of narrative processes could be distinguished:

- **Non transactional** is the process when the action has no goal and “*is not “done to” or “aimed at” anyone or anything*” (Kress and Van Leeuwen (ibid.63). This relates to the situation where only one participant in the image performs an action and plays the role of an actor. (Ibid, 63).
- **Transactional** refers to when an actor performs an action to another goal (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006:50).
- **Reactional process** is one in which a given participant reacts to another participant or phenomenon (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006:67).

B) Conceptual process

Compared with the narrative process, the conceptual process has no vector. In this process, the state of the participants is the main focus rather than their actions. It refers to representing participants in terms of their more generalized and more or less stable and timeless essence. (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006:69).

3.1.2. Interactional meaning

Interactional meaning is associated with the social relations between actors and the evaluative orientations that participants adopt towards each other and towards the represented world. (Kress and Van Leeuwen 1996: 110). It is all about designing the position of the viewer and the interaction between the producer and the viewer of the image.

Based on Halliday’s interpersonal metafunction, the interactional meaning is the interaction between the producer and the viewer of the image. The interactional meaning of an image has three dimensions: *the gaze, social distance and point of view* (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006:114).

- **The Gaze**

The gaze is either demanding; participants are looking directly to the viewer and demand them to enter into some kind of imaginary relations, or offering: Participants are looking somewhere else other than the viewer. (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006:116).

- **Social Distance**

According to Kress and Van Lueewen (2006), participants are presented at personal (close-up shot), social (medium shot) or public (long shot) distances from the viewer.

- **Angle**

The selection of an angle, also known as *Point of View*, implies the possibility of expressing subjective attitudes towards represented participants. In *Horizontal Angle*, participants may be presented in a frontal (Involved) or oblique (Detached) angle. In *Vertical Angle*, participants may be presented in a low (Insignificant), high (Significant) or eye level (Equal) angle. (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006: 143).

3.1.3. Compositional Meaning

Based on Halliday's textual metafunction, compositional meaning refers to the ways both representational and interactional meanings relate to each other in order to form a meaningful whole. It is done via three interrelated systems: *Information value, Salience, and Framing*. (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006: 177).

- **Information Value**

Information Value deals with the placement of participants (Left (Given), Right (New), Bottom (Real) and Top (Idealized), implies specific informational values. (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006: 205).

- **Saliency**

Saliency relates to the fact that some elements are considered to be more important and attractive than others. “This is realised by size, colour, sharpness of focus, placement in the foreground or background, etc. (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006:210).

- **Framing**

It is the final principal of composition and it is concerned with the connection or disconnection between elements in visuals. Framing can be realised by discontinuation of shapes or empty space between elements. (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006:203).

3.2. Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis is a branch of critical linguistics, which studies the relationship between discourse events and socio-political and cultural factors within a text or talk. It is concerned with how power is exercised through language. It is also defined as an interdisciplinary approach to the study of discourse that “*views language as a form of social practice*” (Fairclough, 1989: 20). In other words, it is related to the way social and political domination is manifested in discourse. Fairclough’s analytical approach assumes that language helps create change and can be used to change behaviour. Therefore, language becomes a power tool.

CDA is a socio-political approach to analysing discourse; it aims to make the invisible more visible and transparent. In fact, CDA is a type of discourse analytical research that “*studies the way social power, abuse, dominance and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in social and political context.*” (Van Dijk 1997). In other words, it is

the way discourse is used in order to support or oppose something, to justify or falsify something; it is the way discourse is used to solve a particular political interest.

CDA is an approach that is concerned with power, politics and ideologies that exist within a society where a discourse is produced and understood (Hodge and Kress, 1988). That is, Critical Discourse Analysis analyses discourse with reference to power, to politics, to ideology, to inequality... etc.

CDA gave birth to many various approaches by different scholars like Fowler et al (1979), Kress (1985), Fairclough (1989), Van Dijk (1998a, 1998b), Wodak (2001) and Van Leeuwen (1996, 2008). Their entire approaches share the same objective, which is to go beyond linguistic level and demonstrate how social inequalities are reflected and created in discourse (Pennycook, 1994 cited in Karimaghaie and Kasmani, 2013:127).

3.2.1. Socio Semantic Inventory

In the present study, Van Leeuwen's "Socio-Semantic Inventory" is adopted. It is an approach to Critical Discourse Analysis introduced by the scholar Van Leeuwen (1996, 2008) in his book entitled "*Discourse and Practice: New Tools for Critical Discourse Analysis*", which provides a discursive framework to critically explore the way social actors are represented in the texts. This is in order to uncover the hidden ideological assumptions in the written texts. According to Van Leeuwen, social actors can be either included, through different mechanisms, or excluded, by suppression or backgrounding, in their representation to suit the interests of the audience for whom they are intended. The following are some of the features that constitute the framework of Van Leeuwen, which will be used in the study:

1. Exclusion

Exclusion is a major source for critical investigation of social actors. It refers to omitting

social actors in their representation. It has two sub-categories: *Backgrounding* and *Suppression*. In *Backgrounding*, “*the excluded social actors may not be mentioned in relation to a given action, but they are mentioned elsewhere in the text, and we can infer with reasonable (though never total) certainty who they are*” (van Leeuwen, 2008: 29). In other words, social actors are referred to elsewhere in the text. Whereas *suppression* “*leaves no traces in the representation, excluding both the social actors and their activities*” (ibid, 28). Thus, there is no reference or trace to social actors in the text.

2. Inclusion

In inclusion, social actors can be included purposefully to deliver a meaningful message to the readers or hearers. It is realised through the following mechanisms:

- **Role allocation**

Role allocation refers to the role that social actors take in the representations. Social actors may be represented as active or passive. (Van Leeuwen, 2008: 20).

- **Generecization Vs Specefication**

The former refers to representing social actors by generic terms. The latter is concerned with presenting social actors as individuals (individualization), or groups (assimilation). (Van Leeuwen, 2008: 22).

- **Individualization and assimilation**

Social actors can be represented as individuals or in as members. The individual representation of social actors is called *individualization*, whereas group representation of social actors is referred to as *assimilation*. (Van Leeuwen 2008: 24).

- **Nomination**

Social actors are represented in terms of their unique identity, realized by proper noun, which can be formal, semiformal or informal. (Van Leeuwen, 2008: 40).

- **Functionalization and Identification**

Functionalization and identification are two types of categorization. Functionalization occurs when social actors are referred to in terms of an activity or what they do. For instance, an occupation or role. As for identification, it occurs when social actors are referred to not in terms of what they do but rather in terms of what they are.

Conclusion

To sum, this chapter reviewed the literature related to the Representation of Women Leaders' handling of the Corona Virus pandemic. Then, it highlighted definitions of key notions related to the field of social semiotics. Afterwards, it provided the theoretical framework to be used in the study. One is the "Visual Grammar", the other is "Socio Semantic Inventory". The methodology that the study adapts is discussed in the following chapter, named "Research Design".



Research Design

Introduction

Research Design deals with the method of research, procedures of data analysis and data collection. Moreover, it deals with the corpus as well as the data analysis used to conduct the present research about media representation of women leaders' handling covid 19 crisis. First, the chapter describes the research method adopted, which is the mixed method research in order to obtain data from the analysis of the portrayal of women leaders' handling of the covid 19 pandemic. Later, it presents the data collection procedures by describing the corpus which is constituted of 09 images and 06 articles. Last but not least, the collected data in the aforementioned newspapers is analysed relying on "The Grammar of Visual Design" (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1996, 2006) for the images. And "the Socio-Semantic Inventory" (Van Leeuwen, 1996, 2008) for articles.

1. The Research Method

The present study adopts the mixed method research in order to accomplish the investigation about the representation of women leaders' handling covid 19 crisis, using Socio Semantic Inventory and Grammar of Visual Design. This method integrates both quantitative and qualitative research techniques. The former "*is concerned with quantities and measurements*" (Piggan, 2008: 86). As for the latter, it is based on non numerical measurements, which involves studying "*things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interrupt phenomenon in terms of the meanings people bring to them*" (Denzim and Lincoln cited in Biggam, 2008: 86).

The quantitative technique is adopted to count and calculate the frequency of the distribution of the linguistic categories constituting Van Leeuwen's theory "The Socio-Semantic Inventory". As for the qualitative technique, which is undertaken via the social semiotic theory "Visual Grammar", it examines the pictorial representation of women leaders.

2. Description of the Corpus

2.1. The Guardian

The Guardian is a British newspaper, founded in 1821 by John Edward Taylor as the *Manchester Guardian*, and changed its name in 1959 to *the Guardian*. *The Guardian* online publication started in 1994, and its online paper was created in 1995. It targets an educated, middle class, left leaning, 18+ audience and it supports the liberal democrat's party. According to the UK national daily newspapers circulations record (2020) and the Audit bureau of circulation (2020), *the Guardian* has got a circulation number of 141,160 printed copies every day. The *guardian.co.uk* website won the Best Newspaper category three years running in 2005, 2006 and 2007. It has been the winner for six years in a row of the British Press Awards for Best Electronic Daily Newspaper.

2.2. The New York Times

The New York Times (*NYT*) or simply *the Times* is an American newspaper based in New York City, with worldwide leadership. The paper's motto, "*All the News That's Fit to Print*", appears in the upper left-hand corner of the front page. The newspaper was founded in 1851 by the journalist and politician Henry Jarvis Raymond. As one of the most popular news websites in the United States, the *NYT* has been known to achieve 70 million unique monthly visitors. It has got circulation number of 483,701 of daily printed copies. This broadsheet is considered to be one of the world's most prestigious and leading newspapers which have won more than 120 Pulitzer prizes.

3. Procedures of Data Collection

This section presents the corpus of the study under investigation, which is taken from two daily printed newspapers: The American: *The New York Times* and the British: *The Guardian*.

Three news articles from each of these newspapers and five images from *the New York Times* and four images from *the Guardian*, that deal with women leaders' management of the situation concerning Covid 19, are selected. The articles chosen from the Guardian are entitled as follow: 1) *Are Female Leaders More Successful At Managing The Coronavirus Crisis?* 2) *The Secret Weapon In The Fight Against Coronavirus: Women.* 3) *Female Led Countries Handled Coronavirus Better, Study Suggests.* As for the New York Times, 4) *What The Pandemic Reveals About The Male Ego.* 5) *Why Are Women Led Nations Doing Better With Covid-19?* 6) *In a Crisis, True Leaders Stand Out.*

According to Fairclough (1992), the frequency and amount of input distributed to the target audience plays a huge role in spreading a particular view. Thus, the aforementioned newspapers fit the requirements, since they are published daily and in a considerable number.

To collect this corpus, it was necessary to consult *the New York Times* and *the Guardian* websites and then search for the news that dealt with women leaders' handling of the novel corona virus. After that, the gathered data, both linguistic and visual, is analysed. The former is analysed relying on Van Leeuwen approach to CDA, "the Socio Semantic Inventory". The latter through the lenses of Kress and Van Leeuwen's joint framework: "Grammar of Visual Design".

4. Procedures of Data Analysis

4.1. Visual Analysis

4.1.1. The Gaze

In some representations, participants are depicted as looking directly to the viewers and others, not. According to Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006), *demand images* are those in which the participant makes a direct eye contact with the viewer. Whereas *offer images* are

those in which the participant's eye contact is directed away from the viewer. When the participant gazes directly at the viewer, it simulates eye contact and positions the viewer as a participant in the interaction and demands their attention, this is demand. In the case of offer images, the participant's look is turned away from the viewer. This positions us as an observer to what is happening. The subject does not acknowledge the viewer and we are kept outside the story world.

4.1.2. Social Distance

Social Distance is related to the different relations that the distance between a represented participant and the viewer can suggest. Participants are presented at personal (close-up shot), social (medium shot) or public (long shot) distances from the viewer. The shorter the distance between the participant and the viewer the more intimate the relation becomes. If the participant is shown to be very close to you, it takes up most of the frame; a close-up can imply a close, intimate, and familiar relationship with the participant. Medium close shots show at least half of the participant's body in the frame, and a little bit of the setting. This is considered a friendly distance as in real life we would be close enough to touch each other and talk. Whereas long shot is when you can see the participant's whole body, and probably other participants, and more of the setting; this indicates that the subject is further away from you. For instance, photographs that are required for school cards or any official document such as passports are close shots. Whereas, photos we took with our classmates in elementary school for souvenir are public or long shot. A selfie can be considered to be a social or medium shot.

4.1.3. Angle

Angle, also called *Point of View*, indicates the angle from which participants are depicted. Kress and Van Leeuwen discussed two angles:

- A) *Horizontal Angle*: This refers to whether the represented participants are seen from the side or the front. Horizontal Angle can be either *frontal* or *oblique*. The former suggests involvement as viewers are brought to the world of the represented participants. Our photograph on our passports is an illustration of the frontal angle. The latter indicate viewer's detachment from depicted participant's world; it involves participants that are seen from the oblique angle.
- B) *Vertical Angle*: It can be related to power. If the represented participant is seen from a high angle by the viewer, it simply means that he is more powerful. However, if the represented participant is seen from a low angle, then in this case, the represented participant is the one depicted as holding the power in the relationship. There are other cases where the picture is at eye level, which means that the relationship between the participant and the viewer is one of equality.

4.1.4. Information Value

The positioning of participants in the image provide specific meanings, whether on the left or on the right, center or at the margin, top or bottom.

- A) *Left/right* positions are referred to by Kress and Van Leeuwen as Given Vs New. Given is placed on the right, which refers to already known information by the viewer. Whereas new, which is placed on the left, refers to unfamiliar information. For example, on the front page of a newspaper, we find several images. And at the right side, an image of doctors helping patients during the pandemic. This is the given, since we are familiar with this information. But the image of a scientist announcing finding a cure to the pandemic is on the left, as it is something new.
- B) *Top/bottom* is when the page is divided horizontally. The top of the page is often called the '*ideal*'. In advertising the product is usually placed in the ideal. What has

been placed at the bottom of an image can be said to represent the 'real' and usually information about the product.

C) *Center/margin*: the elements placed in the middle are considered to be the most important elements. Unlike the margin that is secondary and dependent on the center.

4.1.5. Salience

Salience relates to the fact that some elements are considered to be more important and attractive than others. *"This is realised by size, colour, sharpness of focus, placement in the foreground or background, etc"* (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006: 210). Salience is how the viewer's eye is drawn to what is important in the image. It can be highlighted by placement in the foreground, size of the object, and contrast in tone or colour. For example, an image in black and white where all the participants are in black and white too. Except for one girl with a red dress; that girl is the salient element. In other words, the girl catches our attention because it is different from the rest of the image, and this is realised by colour.

4.1.6. Framing

Framing is concerned with the connection or disconnection between elements in visuals. It can be realised by discontinuation of shapes or empty space between elements. (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006: 203). Namely, elements in a layout can be disconnected and marked off from each other or connected. If elements are cut off from one another they are strongly framed. Framing can be achieved by borders, discontinuities of color and shape. For instance, the Queen of Great Britain is always disconnected from other royal members in visuals; there is always a distance between her and other family members.

4.2. Linguistic Analysis

4.2.1. Exclusion

In addressing the ways in which social actors can be contextualized in texts, van

Leeuwen says that “*the knowledge of a social practice that constitutes the field in a given context does not need to include all participants who are, in reality, part of that social practice*” (1993, p. 95). In other words, it is the act of excluding social actors and their activities. It has two sub-categories: *suppression* and *backgrounding*. In *suppression*, there is no reference or trace to social actors in the text even though they played a significant role in social event. As for *backgrounding*, the exclusion of the social actors is less radical and it does leave a trace; social actors are not mentioned immediately in the action but they appear elsewhere in the text.

4.2.2. Inclusion

In inclusion, social actors are included in relation to their actions using various mechanisms; some of them are the following:

- **Role allocation**

Social actors can be either active or passive (van Leeuwen, 2008: 32). In *activation*, “*social actors are represented as the active, dynamic forces in an activity*” (ibid: 33). Whereas in *passivation*, they are represented as “*‘undergoing’ the activity or as being ‘at the receiving end of it’*” (ibid). Activation can be realized by “*by*” or “*from*”. In passivation, social actors can be *subjected* or *beneficialized*. In the first, the social actors are treated as subjects or objects of exchange in the representation. Whereas, in the second, social actors form a third party which, positively or negatively, benefits from the action.

- **Genericization and Specification**

Social actors can be represented either in generic or specific ways. Generic is to represent social actors as classes. Specific, on the other hand, is to represent social actors as identifiable

individuals (van Leeuwen, 2008: 35). There are two kinds of Specification, according to Van Leeuwen: *Individualization and assimilation* (1993, p. 128).

- **Individualization and Assimilation**

“[...] *individualization occurs when participants are represented as individuals*” (Van Leeuwen, 2008: 32), while in assimilation they are represented as groups. There are two types of assimilation: *aggregation* and *collectivization*. The first is often used to regulate practice and manufacture consensus opinion and the groups of participants are quantified, statistically treated. In the second, they are not.

- **Nomination**

Nomination is a sub-category in which social actors are represented in terms of their unique identity that is realized by proper noun which can be formal (surname only, with or without honorifics), semiformal (name and surname) or informal (name only). (Van Leeuwen, 2008: 40). For instance, Angela is considered to be informal, Angela Merkle is semi formal. Whereas Merkle is formal.

- **Functionalization and Identification**

In Functionalization, social actors are referred to in term of an activity or what they do, for example, an occupation or a role. Linguistically, functionalization is carried by nouns derived from verbs, or by nouns constructed from nouns that name instruments with which an activity is performed.

As for identification, the participant is not represented by what he does, but for what he is. According to van Leeuwen (1993, p. 145), there are three types of identification: *classification*, *relational identification*, and *physical identification*.

Classification occurs through socio-historical categories that are used to divide people into classes. Such as age, sex, religion, ethnicity, skin color, among others. In relational identification, participants are represented and carried out by nouns that denote the relationships they have with other people. As for the physical identification, it is concerned with those characteristics which distinguish a participant from the other.

Conclusion

To sum up, this chapter dealt with the methodology upon which this present study is based. First, it introduced the method of research, and then moved to the data collection by describing the corpus under investigation: The British *the Guardian* and the American *the New York Times*. Afterwards it has described the procedures of data analysis which are represented relying on the principals of Visual Grammar developed by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) and Van Leeuwen's approach to Critical Discourse Analysis called "The Socio Semantic Inventory". The coming chapter is concerned with the presentation of the findings.



Presentation of the Findings

Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the visual and linguistic analysis of women leaders' presentation in two newspapers: The American *the New York Times* and the British *the Guardian*. The analysed data is composed of 6 articles and 9 images. 3 article and 5 images from *the New York Times*, 03 articles and 4 images from *the Guardian*. The analysis is conducted based on two analytical frameworks. The first is Kress's approach to Critical Discourse Analysis "The Socio Semantic Inventory", to analyse texts depicting Women Leaders. The second is The Grammar of Visual Design by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006), to analyse images depicting Women Leaders.

1. Presentation of the Visual Results

This particular part depicts the findings of the social semiotic analysis of the nine images under investigation. They are analysed relying on the representational, the interactional and the compositional meanings underlying the theory of Visual Grammar.

1.1. The Representational Meaning

A) *The New York Times*

Images	The Type of participants	Description
Image 01	Conceptual	The picture depicts a group of participants; one woman placed in the center and men; all of them wear masks and are giving thumbs-ups. The women and two men are wearing suits. while the rest are wearing military uniform. The image is connected directly to the viewer through a vector formed by their gaze. It represents a conceptual meaning, since there is no action.
Image 02	Active	The image presents a woman that has two microphones pointed at her. She is talking and interacting with other participants within the picture. She explains matters by using hand gestures. The vector line emerges from the speaker and goes towards the other participants.

Image 03	Active	The image represents a woman, behind her a flag of New Zealand, and a men looking at her. She is depicted as interacting and looking at other participants within the picture rather than with the viewer. It is considered to be narrative since it contains both actor and goal. The former refers to the women, the latter to the participants she’s addressing. The vector starts from the speaker and goes towards the participants.
Image 04	Active	The image documents a group of four people walking, one woman and three men behind her; the women in the front are holding documents on her left hand and a pen on her right one.
Image 05	Active	The image pictures a group of participants; one woman in the front holding a purse and two men behind her, all of them are walking. They are not connected directly to the viewer through a gaze.

Table 01: The Representational Meaning in the Selected Images of *the New York Times*

B) *The Guardian*

Images	The Type of Participants	Description
Image 06	Active	The image depicts one single participant, a woman who is interacting with other participants within the picture frame.
Image 07	Active	The picture portrays a women talking and interacting with the participants within the picture
Image 08	Active	Five world women leaders are put together in one picture. The two that are wearing mustard and bleu coats. The vector is formed by the gaze of the represented participants which is directed to the audience
Image 09	Active	Three world women leaders are put together in one picture. Two participants with the microphone are involved in an action, except one participant is posing to the viewer

Table2: The Representational Meaning in the Selected Images of *the Guardian*

Table 1 and 2 reveal that seven images represent a narrative meaning since they involve participants that are active and two images are conceptual since the represented participants are static. The narrative images are image 2, 3, 4, 5 from *the New York Times*, and 6, 7, 8, 9 from *the Guardian*. The results obtained on the table above reveal that both *the New York Times* and *The Guardian* depict women as active participants.

1.1 The Interactional Metafunction:

A) *The New York Times*

Images	Gaze	Social Distance	Point of view	
			Horizontal	Vertical
Image 01	Demand	Medium-close shot	Frontal	Eye level angle
Image 02	Offer	Close shot	Frontal	Eye level angle
Image 03	Offer	Close shot	Slightly oblique	High level angle
Image 04	Offer	medium close shot	Frontal	Eye level angle
Image 05	Offer	Medium-close shot	Slightly oblique	High level angle

Table03: The Interactional Metafunction in the Selected Images of *the New York Times*

B) *The Guardian*

Images	Gaze	Social Distance	Point of view	
			Horizontal	Vertical
Image 06	Offer	Medium close shot	Frontal	Eye level angle
Image 07	Offer	Close shot	Frontal	Eye level angle
Image 08	Offer	Close shot	Frontal	Eye level angle
Image 09	offer	Close shot	Frontal	Eye level angle

Table04: The Interactional Metafunction in the Selected Images of *the Guardian*

As shown in table 03 and 04, the images of *the New York Times* are all offers except for image 01, which is demand. In addition, the images of *the Guardian* are offers. The results collected from the analysis of social distance indicate that both *the New York Times* and *the Guardian* represent women leaders from a close perspective. Close shot is realised in image 02, 03, 07, 08, 09. Whereas medium-close shot is realised in images 01, 04, 05, 06. In terms of gaze, the analysis of the horizontal angle indicates that all of the images 01, 02, 04, 06, 07, 08, 09 portray women in frontal angle, expect for image 03 and 05 in which the participants are viewed from a slightly oblique angle. This shows a high degree of involvement, since the viewer is directly connected with what is in the picture.

As for the results gathered from the analysis of the vertical angle, both *the Guardian* and New York Times portray women leaders in an eye level angle (7 out of 9) which indicates equality between the represented participants and the viewer.

1.1 The Compositional Meaning

A) *The New York Times*

Images	Information Value	Saliency	Framing
Image 01	In this picture, the woman is placed in the center, which suggests that she is the most important element in the image.	All the represented participants seem equal in size. This means that they are the salient elements in the image.	The men are connected to each other. Whereas, the Depicted women seem disconnected.
Image 02	This image depicts one single participant, a woman, who is placed in the middle of the image.	The represented woman is the important element in this image by putting her in the foreground.	The depicted woman in this image is presented as a separate item of information
Image 03	This image presents two participants: one is placed on the left and another on the right. This indicates that the one placed on the left is the given while the one placed on the right is the new. But the focus is on the Woman as it is shown clearly, Whereas the man is blurred.	The woman placed on the left side of this image is given saliency and this is by placing her in the foreground.	The two participants are disconnected from each other.
Image 04	In this image, the woman is placed in the center whereas the men are put in the margin. This indicates that the depicted woman is more important than the three men.	This image suggests that saliency is given to the woman by placing her in the foreground	The four participants are disconnected from each other.
Image 05	This picture portrays three participants: one man placed on the left, another woman on the right and the man placed in the center. This indicates that the one placed on the center is more important.	The represented woman is given saliency because of the use of a different colour from other participants which is blue.	The three depicted participants are disconnected.

Table05: The Compositional Meaning in the Selected Images of New York Times

B) The Guardian

Images	Information Value	Saliency	Framing
Image 06	Similarly to image 01, this one also depicts one single participant, a woman, who is placed in the middle of the picture.	The represented woman is given saliency by placing her in the foreground.	The depicted woman in this image is represented as a separate unit of information.
Image 07	The image represents a woman placed in the center which suggests that she is the most valuable element in the image.	The depicted woman is given saliency by placing her in the foreground.	The represented woman in this image is shown as a separate unit of information.
Image 08	The image documents five world women leaders; the two women wearing blue green blazer and the one with long hair smiling are put in the center. Whereas the rest of them are placed in the margin. This indicates that the two women placed in the center are more important.	The two women wearing blue green blazer and the one with long hair smiling are given saliency.	The group of women seem to be connected to each other.
Image 09	The picture depicts three women leaders. One of them is placed in the central position whereas the other two women are in the margin. This suggests that the woman placed in the center is considered to be the most important element in the image.	The woman in the center is given saliency.	The three participants are connected.

Table06: The Compositional Metafunction in the Selected Images of *the Guardian*

As shown in table 05 and 06, out of 9 images, 8 images place women in the central position to indicate that they are the most valued elements in the image. Moreover, the depicted participants in all the images are given saliency. In terms of framing, most images represent the participants as disconnected

2. The Representation of the Linguistic Results

2.1. Exclusion

Concerning Exclusion, women leaders are never excluded in *the New York Times*. Except

a few instances (02) in *the Guardian* where they are excluded, but not fully, and this is done by using the mechanism of backgrounding. Thus, the exclusion is less radical since the social actors are mentioned elsewhere in the text.

2.2. Inclusion

- **Role Allocation**

In terms of role allocation, the results indicate that women are represented actively both in *the Guardian* and *the New York Times* (10, 10 times respectively) and they are not passivated at all.

- **Genericization Vs Specification**

	The New York Times	<i>The Guardian</i>
Frequency of Genericization	30	25
Frequency of Specification	20	44

Table 07: Genericization and Specification of Women Leaders in the Selected Articles

As shown in table 07, the frequency of specification is higher than genericization in the two newspapers. It illustrates that women leaders are represented multiple times as specific individuals rather than categories, 32 cases in *the Guardian* and 20 cases in *the New York Times*.

- **Nomination**

	The New York Times	The Guardian
Frequency of Formalization	09	11
Frequency of Informalization	00	00
Frequency of Semi Formalization	10	22
Total	19	33

Table 08: Nomination of Women Leaders in the Selected Articles

Table 08 reveals that *the New York Times* nominates women leaders in 19 cases, 10 cases of semi-formalization and 09 cases of informalization. As for *The Guardian*, out of 33 instances of nomination found in this newspaper, women are nominated in formalization in 11 cases and in semi-formalization 22 times. This represents a big difference in the way the two newspapers nominate women.

• **Assimilation and Individualization**

	The New York Times	The Guardian
Frequency of Assimilation	04	06
Frequency of Individualization	15	30

Table 09: Assimilation and Individualization of Women Leaders in the Selected Articles

The results in table 09 reveal that women leaders are, in both newspapers, represented as individuals, rather than as a group. 30 instances in *the Guardian* and 15 cases in *The New York Times* which shows a remarkable difference.

• **Functionalization and Identification**

	The New York Times	The Guardian
Frequency of Functionalization	17	20
Frequency of Identification	04	01

Table 10: Functionalization and Identification of Women Leaders in the Selected Articles

Table 08 highlights that women leaders are represented mostly through functionalization in the two broadsheets; 20 times in *the Guardian* and 17 times in *the New York Times*.

In short, the results of visual analysis indicate that all participants are active and depicted as important participants; most images are taken from an eye level angle and a frontal angle

to display equality. Whereas the analysis of the linguistic data shows that women political leaders are represented as active participants and specific identifiable individuals.

Conclusion

This chapter showed the main results obtained from the analysis of the linguistic and visual corpus. Texts are analysed relying on Kress's approach to Critical Discourse Analysis "The Socio Semantic Inventory", in which nine representational categories in relation to the latter are selected namely *exclusion, role allocation, genericization, specification, nomination, functionalization, identification, assimilation and individualization*. In addition, images through the lenses of Grammar of Visual Design by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006). It revealed that 08 out of 09 images depict women leaders as active participants and central ones. They are pictured as identifiable individual instead of categories and are given a central role. The linguistic and visual findings reveal that both *the New York Times* and *the Guardian* depict women positively. Although, there are some cases of discrepancies between the linguistic mode and visual mode while portraying women. The obtained results are discussed in the following chapter.



Discussion of the Findings

Introduction

This chapter discusses the results of the present study. It is divided into three parts. The first one discusses the visual results under the categories of the three dimensions: *representational, interactional, and compositional*. As for the second part, it deals with the discussion of the linguistic data through nine representational categories namely *exclusion, role allocation, genericization, specification, nomination, functionalization, identification, assimilation, and individualization*. It ends with the third part which includes a comparison between the linguistic and visual results obtained from *The Guardian* and *New York Times*. This chapter aims at providing answers to the research questions postulated in the introduction and at checking the validity of the advanced hypotheses.

1. The Visual Representation of World Women Leaders

1.1. The Represented Women Leaders as Active Social Actors

The first dimension underlying ‘Visual Grammar’ (1996, 2008) is the representational meaning which is constituted of *narrative process* and *conceptual process*. *Narrative processes* contain active participants who are remarkable by a presence of a vector which connects them. They are labeled as Actor “*from which the vector emanates*” and Goal “*the participant at which the vector is directed*” (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006:66). Evolved from the results obtained from the analysis of the type of participants, images 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07, 08 and 09 (see appendix 1) generate a *narrative meaning*. Put differently, world women leaders are portrayed as active participants who are connected by a gaze which is directed at something outside the image frame, “*something that can be identified as the viewer*” (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006:118). Consequently, women leaders are viewed as actors targeting the goal which is the viewer; this indicates the dominance and leadership of women, and it also depicts their significant role which is central. That is to say, women superiors are represented

as performing multiple actions in order to face the pandemic; this is attained by closing borders, imposing quarantine, urging people to keep social distance and ensure that hygiene and safety rules are observed. Negative stereotypes result in prejudice against women, they are perceived as less competent leaders and less deserving of leadership roles (Heilman, 2001; Phelan and Rudman, 2010; Ridgeway, 2001; Schein, 2001). However, based on the findings of the present study, a more plausible explanation is that women leaders are, actually, worthy of leadership roles and are competent and qualified commanders; as they exhibit praiseworthy efforts in managing the corona virus crisis.

As regards the *conceptual process*, it represents the participants in terms of their class, structure and meaning, without including a vector. Image 01 (see appendix 1) is an illustration of conceptual meaning in which the participants are not depicted as being involved in an action, but, rather, pose for the viewer. The woman stands straight with proper posture; she is also wearing a suit, which is a set of clothes that used to be reserved only for men. It denotes that women are gaining more command in the workplace and manifest that authority visually by wearing suits. All the participants in the visual are showing a gesture, called “thumbs up”, which has been described by Pliny the Elder, a Roman author, as a common gesture of good wishes. It suggests that everything is alright and under control and that there is nothing to worry about. The female leader in the image, without doing an action, reaches to ensure her country. Thus, the way women leaders are represented in both New York Times and The Guardian is not neutral. They are as strong, confident and dominating commanders

1.2. The Interactional Meaning

The second dimension is the interactional one, which is concerned with the relationship between the participants of the image and the viewers. It has three dimensions: *the gaze, social distance and point of view* (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006:114).

1.2.1. The Gaze Direction of Women Leaders

In some representations, the participants are depicted as looking directly to the viewers and others, not. According to Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006), *demand images* are those in which the viewer makes a direct eye contact with the viewer. Whereas *offer images* are those in which the participants' eye contact is directed away from the viewer. Based on the results obtained from the analysis of the gaze, it is been shown that most images (image 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07, 08, 09) in both *The Guardian* and New York Times are offer images, as they picture Women Leaders with their gaze directed away from the viewer, respectively, the image producer invites the viewer to observe women leaders without interacting with them. Therefore, an offer is considered to be a less confrontational way of engaging the viewer and usually shows that the person in the image is involved in some action.

In image 02 and 03, both women leaders are interacting with the participants within the image frame; they are looking away from the viewer while using their hands to explain something related to the pandemic, it can be precautions or warning about the crisis. They are talking with serious facial expressions which connote the seriousness of the situation and their seriousness in handling it. This suggests that they are using personal traits like charisma, work record, and interpersonal skills to motivate others. In fact, women leaders practise “interactive leadership”; Namely, making every possible interaction with public servants positive, by sharing power and information, making people feel important, and energizing them.

Image 01 is a demand image, it pictures a woman leader with the gaze directed at the viewer, the participants invite the viewer to enter into an imaginary relation with them (Kress and van Lueewen, 2006). The group of participants is looking directly to the camera;

they are standing side by side as a unified force against the coronavirus crisis. Corona virus death rates is so high, it is estimated to be over one million deaths and over forty three million confirmed cases in less than a year. As a result, the woman leader in image 01 seems to be saying out loud, with the gaze directed to the viewer, that “everything will be alright and there is nothing to worry about. We can handle this”. It shows women leaders’ engagement and confidence in managing the crisis. In other words, the participant assures her nation and let it be sure that there is nothing to worry about as she is taking care of everything.

1.2.2. Point of view

Another means for representing symbolic relations between the participants of the image and the viewers is the point of view or angle through the horizontal angle and oblique angle, the first suggests involvement while the second signifies detachment between the participant and the viewer. As regards *the New York Times*, the depicted women in image 3 and 5 are seen from a ‘slightly oblique angle’ in which the viewers are neither maximally involved with the participants nor fully detached (Torres, 2015: 247). This entails that the viewer does not share the participant’s world. All of *the Guardian* Images and image 01, 02, 04 of *the New York Times* are frontal images; As it is pointed out by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006: 113) ”*what we see here is part of our world, something we are involved with*”, this gives a sense of involvement between the participants and the viewers. It is a way to show that women leaders and the viewers share the same world. The aim behind this representation is to get the viewers involved with the depicted women in their efforts to handle the coronavirus situation, as if the viewer is engaged with their actions.

As for vertical angle which according to Kress and van Leeuwen is associated with power and status. It can be low which makes the viewer have more power, high in order to make the represented participant the one having more power, or at eye level to realize

equality. Image 01, 02, 04 of *the New York Times* and all images from *the Guardian* (06, 07, 08, 09) are taken from eye level angle, creating “*a relationship of symbolic equality*” (Jewitt and Oyama, 2001: 135) between the viewers and the depicted participants. This implies the equal power between the depicted woman and the audience. According to Machine (2007), such representation suggests a balance in terms of power and status between the viewer and the represented participants. In other terms, “we’re equal, we can all get sick, so we should all quarantine, all wear a mask and all keep distance from each other”.

1.2.3. Social distance

Social distance refers to the different relationships that the distance between the represented participants in an image and the viewers can suggest. The results obtained from the analysis of the social distance indicate that seven images out of nine (image 02, 03, 06, 07, 08, 09), depict women leaders in a close and intimate social distance to the viewer through the close shots. This suggests an intimate and personal relationship between the represented participants and the viewers. It is a way to tell the viewers that they are close to these leaders in a way which shows that “*we are in this together and we will get through this together*”. Somehow, it shows how women leaders or “mothers” are close to their people or “children”. After all, it is known that mothers, who look after ill members of the family and take care of the hygiene and ensure that children wash their hands. It is also women who are consistently attentive in alarming and difficult times. Therefore, women are depicted in close shots to depict how close they are to the nations they govern.

1.3. The Compositional Meaning

The main function of the compositional metafunction is to combine the representational

and the interactional meanings within the visuals via *information value, salience and framing*.

1.3.1. Information Value

Information value deals with the placement of elements of participants within visuals. Whether on the left or on the right, center or at the margin, top or bottom. In image 01, the woman is placed at the center, the centralization of the woman makes her the core of the representation in order to let the viewer notice the dominant role she is playing and the high position she holds. As for images 02, 04 from *the New York Times*, and 06, 07 from *the Guardian*, the depicted women leaders are placed in the center which implies that they are the most valued elements in the image. The depicted women leaders are given prominence to indicate the significant role they play in order to find a solution to a worldwide crisis, and to calm their people and reassure them. In image 08 of *the New York Times*, five women leaders are depicted, yet only two of them are placed in the center. They are considered to be more important. Similarly, in image 09, three women leaders are represented in the visual, but only one is placed in the center, this indicates that the woman placed in the center is the most valuable element in the image. This denotes that although women leaders are doing a great job in handling the pandemic, others are doing much better. It minimizes the efforts of some women leaders and praises the efforts of others. Somehow, these images represent some kind of distinction, the one that forces women to tear each other apart, work harder alone, instead of working together hand in hand and having each other's backs.

1.3.2. Salience

Salience relates to the fact that some elements are considered to be more important and attractive than others. "*This is realised by size, colour, sharpness of focus, placement in the foreground or background, etc*" (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006:210). In image 01, all the

participants are placed in the background; however, the women assume salience and this is through her dominant central position. The goal behind such depiction is to make the viewers aware of the leaders' attempts to take care of the situation. In images 03, the woman who talks and interacts is given salience and this is through her being foregrounded while the left side of the image, the man is blurred. In image 02, 06 and 07, all women leaders are the salient elements through being foregrounded in the center of the images. In image 04, the woman leader is given salience since she is foregrounded. Moreover, in image 05, the woman is given salience too; she is standing out from other participants with her blue blazer and by leading them while walking. This suggests that women leaders are considered to be the most valuable elements in both newspapers.

1.3.3. Framing

Framing is the final element of composition and it is concerned with the connection or disconnection between elements in visuals. Framing can be realised by discontinuation of shapes or empty space between elements. (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006:203). For Kress and Van Leeuwen, the absence of framing stresses 'group identity' while its presence signifies 'individuality' and 'differentiation' (ibid).

In the first image of *the New York Times*, the group of men standing next to each other seems to be connected, whereas the woman in front of them is disconnected. This suggests that the woman is depicted as an independent individual while men are collectively identified. In fact, women participants in all images of *the New York Times* are depicted as disconnected.

As far as concerns *The Guardian*, Images 06 and 07 are disconnected since they picture the woman participant individually. In images 08 and 09 of the same newspaper, women participants are connected to each other. Thus, it connotes solidarity and fighting hand in hand against the corona virus.

2. The Linguistic Representation of Women Leaders in the Selected Newspapers

2.1. The Exclusion and Inclusion of Women Leaders in the News Articles

In terms of exclusion, Van Leeuwen (2008: 28) asserts that some texts exclude reference to social actors altogether. In some cases, it leaves trace, others do not. The former is referred to as backgrounding, the latter as suppression. Based on the results obtained from the analysis of news articles, it has been found that women leaders in *The New York Times* are excluded just twice using the category of backgrounding. And they are never excluded in the articles of *The Guardian*. Two instances where the women leaders are backgrounded in *the New York Times* are:

Example 01: *Some have fallen short, sometimes dismally, but there are also those leaders who have risen to the moment, demonstrating resolve, courage, empathy, respect for science and elemental decency, and thereby dulling the impact of the disease on their people.*

Example 02: *Other examples of countries where swift and decisive action helped allay the impact of the disease and unite the nation range from South Korea and Taiwan in Asia to Germany, Greece and Iceland in Europe.*

Consequently, women leaders are included more frequently than they are backgrounded; in most of their activities and they are given recognition for the hard work they are doing. Including them shows the appreciation and respect granted. Therefore, the focus of this study is on eight major representational mechanisms of inclusion which are: ***role allocation (activation and passivation), nomination, individualization, assimilation, functionalization, identification, genericization and specification.***

• The Role of Women Leaders in the News Articles

Van Leeuwen (2008: 32) claims that “*representations can reallocate roles or rearrange the social relations between the participants*”. . .” Social actors can be activated, that is, they are represented as active and dynamic forces in a given activity; they can also be passivated through undergoing the activity, or being the recipients. He explains that social actors can be either passive or active. In the selected news articles, women are represented actively in both broadsheets except for some instances where they are passivated. The examples below demonstrate how women are represented actively in the newspapers:

Example 03 (*The New York Times*) “The *master class on **how to respond** belongs to Jacinda Ardern...*”

Example 04 (*The New York Times*) “*Like Ms. Ardern, Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany **acted early and calmly...***”

Example 05 (*The New York Times*) “*Prime Minister Katrin Jakobsdottir **led the government in offering free coronavirus testing for all and organizing a thorough tracking system.***”

Example 06 (*The Guardian*) “*From Germany to New Zealand and Denmark to Taiwan, **women have managed the coronavirus crisis with aplomb.***”

Example 07 (*The Guardian*) “*Ardern **imposed a 14-day quarantine** on anyone entering the country on 14 March and implemented a strict lockdown two weeks later...*”

Example 08 (*The Guardian*) “*Taiwan’s president Tsai Ing-wen **responded equally fast, activating the country’s central epidemic command center in early January and introducing travel restrictions and quarantine measures.***”

Accordingly, *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* portray women positively, they depict them as active social actors and powerful leaders that succeeded to take quick measures in hard times to save their people from the disease and stop its spread. Such representation makes readers, especially those who underestimate women, value them and recognize the hard work they are putting into to find a solution and protect their people from an invisible foe.

• **Generecization and Specification of Women in the News Articles**

In this category, social actors are represented with either a generic reference or a specific reference. The former generalizes the social actors into a class of entities while the latter identifies the social actor individually (Van Leeuwen, 2008: 35) Based on the corpus of this research, World Women Leaders are most frequently depicted via specific references. For instance:

Example 09 (*The Guardian*) “*With a doctorate in quantum chemistry, Merkel’s clear, calm expositions – a clip of her explaining the scientific basis behind the government’s lockdown exit strategy was shared thousands of times online.*”

Example 10 (*The Guardian*) “*the prime minister, Mette Frederiksen, acted equally firmly*”

Example 11 (*The New York Times*) “*President Tsai Ing-wen of Taiwan likewise responded at the first sign of the new danger...*”

Van Leeuwen (2008: 36) stresses that social actors depicted in generic references are “*symbolically removed from the readers’ world of immediate experience, treated as distant ‘others’ rather than as people with whom ‘we’ have to deal in our everyday lives*”. Therefore, representing women leaders frequently with a specific reference indicates that the linguistic

corpus is representing women from a close distance. It denotes that these women leaders are independent from male leaders and society. Besides, it depicts them as specific individuals.

• The Nomination of Women Leaders in the News Articles

According to Van Leeuwen, nomination represents the participants for their individual and unique identity; it is realized by proper nouns which can be formal (surname only, with or without honorifics), semiformal (name and surname) or informal (name only). The results indicate that women leaders are more nominated in semi-formalization in *The Guardian* in 22 out of 33 cases and *The New York Times* in 10 out of 19 instances, by mentioning their name and their surname. The examples below illustrate this point:

Example 12 (*The Guardian*) “**Silveria Jacobs** knew the small island country... it had two ICU beds.”

Example 13 (*The Guardian*) “In Germany, **Angela Merkel** has been hailed for direct but uncharacteristically personal public interventions.”

Example 14 (*The New York Times*) “Monday was a day of triumph for Prime Minister **Jacinda Ardern**.”

Example 15 (*The New York Times*) “Germany, led by **Angela Merkel**, has had a far lower death rate than Britain, France, Italy or Spain.”

Women Leaders are nominated in formalization also by mentioning their surname only. The following examples demonstrate the point properly:

Example 16 (*The Guardian*) “**Jacobs** did not want to impose a strict lockdown”

Example 17 (*The Guardian*) “**Ardern** imposed a 14-day quarantine on anyone entering the country”

Example 18 (*The New York Times*) “**Ms. Merkel** is arguably among the least flashy, charismatic or eloquent of Europe’s leaders”

Example 19 (*The New York Times*) “**Ms. Ardern’s** success is the latest data point in a widely noticed trend.”

Thus, the news articles of the two Broadsheets, *The New York Times* and *The Guardian* give importance to women leaders by showing respect through the use of either semi formalization or formalization to identify them. In other words, they are either identified with their surnames only or both surname and first name, which is a show of respect and a way to explain that they are the person in control. They are not random people; they are not common people; they are leaders. Thus, this difference should be manifested. One way of doing it is through either formalization or semi formalization.

• **Assimilation and Individualization of Women in the News Articles**

There are two kinds of specifications, according to van Leeuwen (1993, p. 128): individualization and assimilation. “[...] *individualization occurs when participants are represented as individuals*” (1993, p. 128), while in assimilation they are represented as groups. The results obtained from the analysis of these two categories reveal that female leaders are mostly identified as specific, identifiable individuals in *The Guardian* and *New York Times* (30, 15 respectively). The following are some examples of individualization in both newspapers:

Example 20 (*The Guardian*) “**Tsai’s** warm, authoritative style has won her plaudits, even from political opponents.”

Example 21 (*The New York Times*) “**And Tsai Ing-wen**, the president of Taiwan, has presided over one of the most successful efforts in the world at containing the virus”

Thus, such representation shows that women are unique and identifiable characters. It depicts women leaders as strong and autonomous leaders that can manage and handle the situation of the pandemic in their countries on their own.

• **Functionalization and Identification of Women in the News Articles**

Van Leeuwen states that

“Functionalization occurs when social actors are referred to in terms of an activity, in terms of something they do,” Whereas “Identification occurs when social actors are defined, not in terms of what they do, but in terms of what they, more or less permanently, or unavoidably, are.” Van Leeuwen (2008: 36)

The findings of the two categories reveal that women are mostly represented in terms of functionalization. That is, women leaders are portrayed in relation to what they do, their occupation, and their roles. The examples below illustrate this point:

Example 23 (*The Guardian*) ***“Taiwan’s president Tsai Ing-wen responded equally fast”***

Example 24 (*The Guardian*) ***“The prime minister, Erna Solberg, told CNN she had made a point of “letting scientists make the big medical decisions”***

Example 25 (*The New York Times*) ***“Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen of Denmark, Finland’s prime minister, Sanna Marin — at 34 among the youngest of the world’s leaders — and Norway’s prime minister, Erna Solberg, are other women who have earned plaudits at home and abroad for their handling of the crisis”.***

Consequently, women empowerment is rising. In other words, women leaders are frequently represented in terms of what they do. Their age, class, ethnicity and physical characteristics are neglected except in a few instances. Media coverage of women political leaders does not focus on their appearance and personal lives anymore; it focuses on the way they handle their jobs as leaders. This indicates that women leaders are no longer represented

as beauty or sex objects or beautiful faces only; they are represented as leaders in higher positions, leaders that can handle a worldwide pandemic and succeed to make the best of the bad deal.

3- A Comparison between the Visual and the Linguistic Representation of the World Women Leaders in the Selected Newspapers

The analysis and discussion of the visual results indicate that there are some points of convergence and divergence between the two broadsheets. Starting with points of convergence displayed in the representational meaning, almost all the participants are active except for Image 01 (*The New York Times*) this indicates the dominance and leadership of women; and it also depicts their significant role which is central. As for the interactional meaning, all images except for image 01 are offer, which suggests that the image producer invites the viewer to observe women leaders without interacting with them. Besides, nearly all images are taken from an eye level angle which refers to equality between the participant and the viewer. Last but not least, the compositional meaning, the women leaders in most of the images, except for two (03 and 05), are placed in the center which explains that they are the most important elements in the image. As mentioned before, there are also some points of divergence which are manifested in point of view, all images of *The Guardian* are photographed from a frontal angle in order to get the viewers involved with the represented participants' world. Contrary to *the New York Times*, which suggests detachment from the participants' world, as they are taken from an oblique angle; the viewer does not share the participants' world.

As for as the discussion of the linguistic corpus, it suggests that women are represented positively. In other words, women leaders are given credit for all the works they

are doing to fight the virus. Besides, they are identified as autonomous individuals and powerful leaders who occupy significant roles. Both newspapers use more frequently the category of activation to suggest that women leaders are included while doing different actions; they are also similar in term of functionalization which denotes that women leaders' occupations are respected and highly valued. But they differ in the remaining categories. The results reveal that *the Guardian* represents more frequently women leaders as specific identifiable individuals, unlike *the New York Times* which represents them as groups. Moreover, women are nominated multiple times in *the Guardian* rather than *the New York Times*. Although the difference is not large, it is established due to the different ideologies of *the Guardian* and *the New York Times*, the first is liberal, while the second is conservative.

It is worth mentioning that the way women leaders are represented reflects the newspapers standpoint; as mentioned before, *the Guardian* is a liberal newspaper and *the New York Times* is a conservative one. There are various reasons to believe that news outlets, which are more conservative like *the New York Times*, might portray women leaders less positively compared with their liberal counterparts, such as *the Guardian*. First, conservative media regularly perceive feminism and women's rights issues in a generally negative light (Baker Beck, 1998; Brescoll and LaFrance, 2004; Taibi, 2014). Accordingly, they may be less supportive in their coverage. Second, conservative media may also be less likely to employ female reporters and female editors, that according to some researchers, may be "damaging" to the coverage of women (Armstrong, 2004; De Swert and Hooghe, 2010; Gallagher, 2010; Mills, 1997; Rodgers and Thorson, 2003; Wood, 1994; Zoch and Turk, 1998). However, the difference in the coverage is not very large; women are depicted positively in both newspapers.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the main results obtained from the analysis of World women leaders in two western daily printed newspapers: *the Guardian* and *the New York Times*. This chapter has answered the research questions raised in the introduction and checked the accuracy of the suggested hypotheses. *The Guardian* and *The New York Times* represent women positively through the use of visual and linguistic modes, which confirms the first hypotheses. The two modes, in most cases, complement each other to represent women leaders clearly; which confirms the second hypothesis. And there are some differences in the pictorial and linguistic representation of women leaders handling the corona virus pandemic in the two newspapers as the third hypotheses suggests.



General Conclusion

The present study has investigated the representation of women leaders in two western daily printed newspapers, the British *the Guardian* and the American *the New York Times*. The analysis is conducted based on two analytical frameworks. The first is Kress's approach to Critical Discourse Analysis "The Socio Semantic Inventory", to analyze texts depicting Women Leaders in which nine representational categories in relation to the latter are selected namely exclusion, role allocation, genericization, specification, nomination, functionalization, identification, assimilation and individualization. The second is The Grammar of Visual Design by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006), to analyze images depicting Women Leaders, using the three metafunctions: *representational, interactional and compositional metafunctions*.

The study aimed to reach three main objectives. First, to investigate the pictorial representation of women leaders in the selected images. Second, to examine the linguistic depiction of women in the selected news articles. And finally, to draw a comparison between the two broadsheets for the sake of revealing the points of differences and similarities in their portrayal of women leaders. To conduct this research, the mixed method research, which integrates both the quantitative and the qualitative techniques, has been used in the process of data analysis in order to answer the research questions. The qualitative method is adopted to conduct an in-depth examination of the images under study, whereas the quantitative method is used to count the frequency distributions of the selected discursive categories in the news articles under investigation.

The social semiotic analysis of the images has revealed that almost all the participants are active except for one image which indicates women leaders' dominance and leadership. As for the interactional meaning, all images except for one are offer, which suggests that the participant is addressing other participants within the frame of the image. Besides, nearly all images are taken from an eye level angle which refers to equality between the participant and

the viewer. Last but not least, the compositional meaning, the women leaders in most of the images except for two (03 and 05), are placed in the center, which explains that they are the most important elements in the image.

In terms of “angle” or “point of view”, it has two parts, namely the horizontal and the vertical angle which are reflected in the selected images. The first refers to whether the participants are seen frontally or obliquely. The frontal angle signifies involvement between the participants and the viewers while the oblique angle suggests detachment between them. All images of *The Guardian* are photographed from a frontal angle in order to get the viewers involved with the represented participants’ world. Contrary to *the New York Times*, which suggests detachment from the participants’ world, as they’re taken from an oblique angle.

The results of the textual analysis of the selected news articles have revealed that women leaders are active participants. Both newspapers use more frequently the category of Activation to suggest that women leaders are included while doing different actions; they’re also similar in terms of functionalization which denotes that women leaders’ occupations are respected and highly valued. The results reveal that *the Guardian* represents more frequently women leaders as specific identifiable individuals. In the categories of assimilation and individualization, which are two parts of specification, women leaders are more referred to as individuals rather than as groups in *the Guardian*. Moreover, women are nominated multiple times in *the Guardian* rather than *the New York Times*, either by semi-formalization or formalization.

The linguistic and visual findings discussed in the previous chapter revealed that both *the New York Times* and *the Guardian* depict women positively. Although, there are some cases of discrepancies between the linguistic mode and visual mode while portraying women, in most cases they are complementary. And the findings have revealed some convergence and

divergence points while depicting women leaders. As a result, the hypotheses advanced in the introduction are valid. Furthermore, the research study has faced few limitations which can be taken into consideration in further studies. The present study has relied on a small number of news articles, and they are extracted from only two daily printed newspapers namely, The Guardian and The New York Times.

Hopefully, this work has contributed to the field of social semiotics and media discourse analysis. The dissertation was conducted on broadsheets and still images; further studies can be conducted using another type of newspapers which is Tabloids. Videos of the conferences held by the women leaders during the pandemic is an interesting topic to deal with, since it combines both visual and linguistic modes. As a final suggestion, this study has dealt with the representation of the women leaders in regard to the mixed method research, future studies can rely on the qualitative method of research to provide an in-depth analysis of how the leaders handled the corona virus pandemic.



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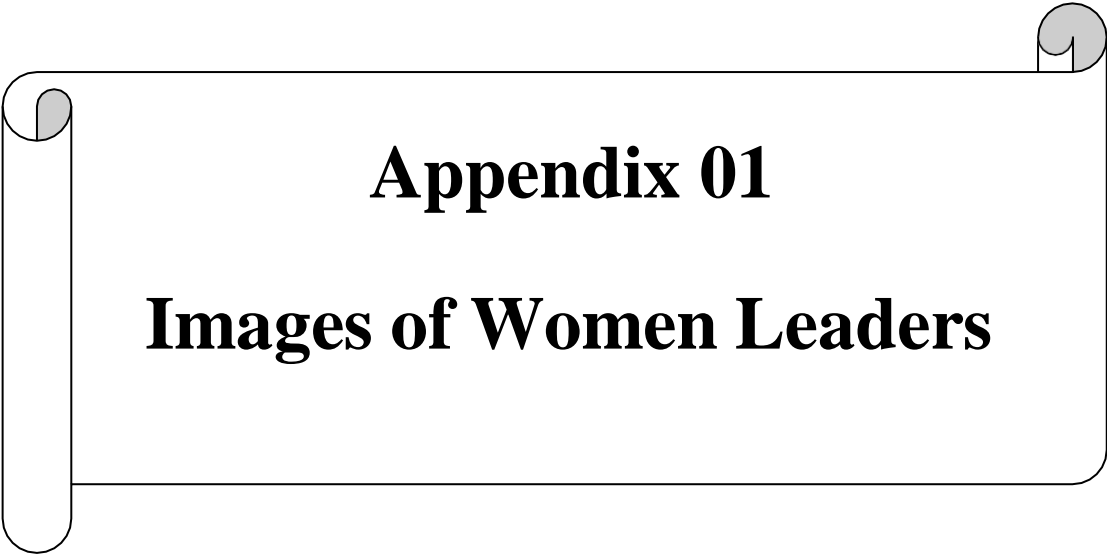
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Appendix 01
Images of Women Leaders



Image 01: The New York Times, June 13, 2020.

https://static01.nyt.com/images/2020/06/15/opinion/sunday/15Kristof2/merlin_171421221_ec3ba2ca-4f93-47c8-9727-f5ad9ab7f258-jumbo.jpg?quality=90&auto=webp



Image 02/

The New York Times. <https://static01.nyt.com/images/2020/06/15/opinion/sunday/14Kristof4/14Kristof4-jumbo.jpg?quality=90&auto=webp>



Image 03: The New York Times, April 30.

https://static01.nyt.com/images/2020/04/30/opinion/30leadershipWeb/merlin_172017267_c7fc4aff-1bdb-495a-b3db-21a035aaa8a7-jumbo.jpg?quality=90&auto=webp



Image 04: The New York Times, May 15, 2020 https://static01.nyt.com/images/2020/05/15/world/15virus-interpret-1/merlin_172259856_80693892-5f41-415e-964b-074bb625dc0f-jumbo.jpg?quality=90&auto=webp



Image 05: The New York Times, May 15, 2020 https://static01.nyt.com/images/2020/05/15/world/15virus-interpret-2/merlin_172455660_c4efbadf-e318-4076-912e-f9db2caf4c2e-jumbo.jpg?quality=90&auto=webp



Image 06: The Guardian, August 18, 2020 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/aug/18/female-led-countries-handled-coronavirus-better-study-jacinda-ardern-angela-merkel#img-1>



Image 07: The Guardian, April 11, 2020 <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/apr/11/secret-weapon-fight-against-coronavirus-women#img-1>



Image 08: The Guardian, April 25, 2020 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/25/why-do-female-leaders-seem-to-be-more-successful-at-managing-the-coronavirus-crisis#img-1>



Image 09: The Guardian, April 25, 2020. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/25/why-do-female-leaders-seem-to-be-more-successful-at-managing-the-coronavirus-crisis#img-2>



Appendix 2

Articles of Women Leaders

Article 01, the Guardian

Are female leaders more successful at managing the coronavirus crisis?

By Jon Henley and Eleanor Ainge Roy

Sat 25 Apr 2020 05:00 BST

Female leaders around the globe, from left: Taiwan's president, Tsai Ing-wen; New Zealand's prime minister, Jacinda Ardern; the German chancellor, Angela Merkel; Denmark's prime minister, Mette Frederiksen; and Sanna Marin, the Finnish prime minister. Composite: Reuters/Getty/Rex/Shutterstock. On 1 April, the prime minister of Sint Maarten addressed her nation's 41,500 people. Coronavirus cases were rising, and Silveria Jacobs knew the small island country, which welcomes 500,000 tourists a year, was at great risk: it had two ICU beds.. Jacobs did not want to impose a strict lockdown, but she did want physical distancing observed. So she spelled it out: "Simply. Stop. Moving," she said. "If you don't have the bread you like in your house, eat crackers. Eat cereal. Eat oats. Eat ... sardines." The 51-year-old Caribbean premier may not have the global profile of Angela Merkel or Jacinda Ardern, but her blunt message exemplified firm action, effective communication – and showed another female leader getting the job done.

From Germany to New Zealand and Denmark to Taiwan, women have managed the coronavirus crisis with aplomb. Plenty of countries with male leaders – Vietnam, the Czech Republic, Greece, Australia – have also done well. But few with female leaders have done badly.

Ardern, 39, New Zealand's premier, has held Kiwis' hands through the lockdown, delivering empathetic "stay home, save lives" video messages from her couch and communicating daily through non-combative press conferences or intimate Facebook Live videos, her favourite medium.

Her insistence on saving lives and her kindness-first approach – urging New Zealanders to look after their neighbours, take care of the vulnerable, and make sacrifices for the greater good – has won her many fans, while her emphasis on shared responsibility has united the country.

Choosing to "go hard and go early", Ardern imposed a 14-day quarantine on anyone entering the country on 14 March and implemented a strict lockdown two weeks later, when fewer than 150 people had been infected and none had died. New Zealand has recorded just 18 deaths; public trust in Ardern's government is greater than 80%.

In Germany, Angela Merkel has been hailed for direct but uncharacteristically personal public interventions, warning that up to 70% of people would contract the virus – the country's "greatest challenge" since 1945 – and lamenting every death as that of "a father or grandfather, a mother or grandmother, a partner ..."

Thanks to extensive testing from the outset, plenty of intensive care beds, and the chancellor's periodic forthright reminders that Covid-19 was "serious – so take it seriously", Germany has so far recorded fewer than 5,000 deaths, a far lower figure than most EU countries.

With a doctorate in quantum chemistry, Merkel's clear, calm expositions – a clip of her explaining the scientific basis behind the government's lockdown exit strategy was shared thousands of times online – have also helped propel public approval of the fourth-term chancellor's handling of the crisis above 70%.

In nearby Denmark, meanwhile, the prime minister, Mette Frederiksen, acted equally firmly, closing the Scandinavian country's borders as early as 13 March, and following up a few days later by shutting all kindergartens, schools and universities and banning gatherings of more than 10 people.

That decisiveness appears to have spared Denmark the worst of the pandemic, with fewer than 8,000 confirmed cases and 370 deaths. Frederiksen's no-punches-pulled speeches and clear instructions to the nation have been widely praised.

She even managed to show a sense of fun, posting a clip on Facebook of herself doing the dishes while singing along to the 1980s Danish popsters Dodo and the Dodos during the nation's weekly TV lockdown singalong. The Scandinavian country's youngest-ever prime minister, whose approval ratings have doubled to more than 80%, has now begun easing its lockdown.

Taiwan's president Tsai Ing-wen responded equally fast, activating the country's central epidemic command centre in early January and introducing travel restrictions and quarantine measures. Mass public hygiene measures were rolled out, including disinfecting public areas and buildings.

In all, Taiwan adopted 124 control and contain measures in weeks, making a full lockdown unnecessary. It has reported just six deaths, and is now dispatching millions of face masks to the worst-struck parts of the US and Europe. Tsai's warm, authoritative style has won her plaudits, even from political opponents.

Norway, with 7,200 cases and 182 deaths, this week began relaxing its restrictions by reopening kindergartens. The prime minister, Erna Solberg, told CNN she had made a point of "letting scientists make the big medical decisions", adding that she thought her country's early lockdown and thorough testing programme had been key.

Following an example set earlier by Frederiksen, Solberg also took the unusual step of directly addressing the country's children, telling them in two press conferences – from which adult journalists were banned – that it was "permitted to be a little bit scared" and that she, too, missed being able to hug her friends.

Meanwhile, Iceland, under the prime minister, Katrín Jakobsdóttir's, leadership, has offered free testing to all citizens, not only those with symptoms, and has recorded 1,800 cases and 10 deaths. Some 12% of the population has taken up the offer, and an exhaustive tracing system has meant the country has not had to close schools.

Finland's prime minister, Sanna Marin – who last year became the world's youngest head of government – also moved decisively to impose a strict lockdown, including a ban on all non-essential travel in and out of the Helsinki region. This has helped her country contain the spread of the virus to just 4,000 cases and 140 deaths, a per-million toll 10 times lower than that of neighbouring Sweden.

Not all the women who have excelled in the corona crisis are national leaders. Jeong Eun-kyeong, the unflappable head of South Korea's centre for disease control, has become a national icon after overseeing a “test, trace, contain” strategy that has made the country the world's coronavirus role-model, with daily infections in single digits and a death toll of less than 250. Jeong, a former rural doctor dubbed “the world's best virus hunter”, has delivered no-nonsense daily press conferences, including demonstrating the ideal way to cough. While these have won praise, her work ethic – she has left an emergency operations bunker only for quick visits to a food truck – has prompted concern for her health.

Whatever conclusions we may draw from these leaders' performances during the pandemic, experts caution that while women are “disproportionately represented to a rather startling degree” among countries managing the crisis well, dividing men and women heads of state and government into homogenous categories is not necessarily useful.

Complicating factors may be at play. Kathleen Gerson, a professor of sociology at New York University, notes, for example, that women leaders are more likely to be elected in “a political culture in which there's a relative support and trust in the government – and that doesn't make stark distinctions between women and men. So you've already got a head start”.

In addition, it may be harder for men to escape “the way they are expected to behave” as leaders, Gerson told The Hill website. And since the very best leaders are both strong and decisive and capable of displaying feeling, women could, perhaps, “lead the way in showing that these are not competing and conflicting attributes, but complementary – and necessary for good leadership”, she said.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/25/why-do-female-leaders-seem-to-be-more-successful-at-managing-the-coronavirus-crisis>

Article 02, the Guardian

The secret weapon in the fight against coronavirus: women

By Arwa Mahdawi

Sat 11 Apr 2020 14.00 BST

What do Germany, Taiwan and New Zealand have in common?

Well, they've all got female leaders and they're all doing an exceptional job in their response to the coronavirus crisis.

Tsai Ing-Wen, a former law professor, became the first female president of Taiwan in 2016 – the same year America got its first reality TV president. Tsai has spearheaded a swift and successful defence to the pandemic; despite Taiwan's proximity to mainland China it has largely contained the virus and has just under 400 confirmed cases. It is so well prepared that it is donating 10m masks to the US and 11 European countries.

New Zealand, led by Jacinda Ardern, is also a world leader in combating the virus. The country has had only one Covid-19 death so far. That's partly due to geography and size: with under 5 million people, New Zealand's entire population is much smaller than New York's. Being an island state also gives it a distinct advantage. However, leadership is also a factor. New Zealand has implemented widespread testing and Ardern has responded to the crisis with clarity and compassion.

Germany has been hit hard by coronavirus, but it has an exceptionally low mortality rate of around 1.6%. (Italy's fatality rate is 12%; Spain, France and Britain's is 10%; China's is 4%; America's is 3%.) A number of factors feed into Germany's low death rates, including early and widespread testing and a large number of intensive care beds. Again, however, the country's leadership plays a role. As one wag on Twitter joked: if you're asking why death rates are so low in Germany and so high in America, it's “because their president used to be a quantum chemist and your president used to be a reality television host”. Angela Merkel, who has a doctorate in quantum chemistry, is actually the chancellor not the president, but the sentiment still holds.

Denmark (led by prime minister Mette Frederiksen) and Finland (prime minister Sanna Marin is the head of a coalition whose four other parties are all led by women) are also doing noteworthy jobs in containing coronavirus.

Correlation is obviously not causation. Being a woman doesn't automatically make you better at handling a global pandemic. Nor does it automatically make you a better leader; suggesting it does reinforces sexist and unhelpful ideas that women are innately more compassionate and cooperative.

What is true, however, is that women generally have to be better in order to *become* leaders; we are held to far higher standards than men. Women are rarely able to fail up in the way men can; you have to be twice as good as a man in order to be taken half as seriously. You have to work twice as hard. With a few notable exceptions (*cough* Ivanka Trump *cough*), you've got to be overqualified for a top job.

A surplus of qualifications isn't exactly a problem Donald Trump has. America's response to the coronavirus crisis is arguably the worst in the world – although Britain also gets an honourable mention here. Instead of expertise, the Trump administration has led with ego. While thousands of Americans die, Trump [tweets about his TV ratings](#). Instead of cooperating, Trump is lashing out at the press and state leaders. It's hard to imagine Hillary Clinton responding to a crisis in this way without being immediately impeached. Which raises the question: are some men simply too emotional to be leaders?

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/apr/11/secret-weapon-fight-against-coronavirus-women>

Article 03, the Guardian

Female-led countries handled coronavirus better, study suggests

By Jon Henley

Tue 18 Aug 2020 12.48 BST

Countries led by women had “systematically and significantly better” Covid-19 outcomes, research appears to show, locking down earlier and suffering half as many deaths on average as those led by men.

The relative early success of leaders such as Germany's Angela Merkel, New Zealand's Jacinda Ardern, Denmark's Mette Frederiksen, Taiwan's Tsai Ing-wen and Finland's Sanna Marin has so far [attracted many headlines](#) but little academic attention. The [analysis of 194 countries](#), published by the Centre for Economic Policy Research and the World Economic Forum, suggests the difference is real and “may be explained by the proactive and coordinated policy responses” adopted by female leaders.

Even after clear and frequently cited outliers such as New Zealand and Germany – and the US for male leaders – were removed from the statistics, the study found, the case for the relative success of female leaders was only strengthened.

“Our results clearly indicate that women leaders reacted more quickly and decisively in the face of potential fatalities,” said Supriya Garikipati, a developmental economist at Liverpool University, co-author with Reading University's Uma Kambhampati.

“In almost all cases, they locked down earlier than male leaders in similar circumstances. While this may have longer-term economic implications, it has certainly helped these countries to save lives, as evidenced by the significantly lower number of deaths in these countries.”

The two researchers said they analysed differing policy responses and subsequent total Covid-19 cases and deaths until 19 May, introducing a number of variables to help analyse the raw data and draw reliable comparisons between countries.

Among the datasets considered were GDP, total population, population density and proportion of elderly residents, as well as annual health spending per head, openness to international travel and level of gender equality in society in general.

Since only 19 of the nearly 200 countries were led by women, the authors also created so-called “nearest neighbour” countries to offset the small sample size, pairing Germany, New Zealand and Bangladesh with male-led Britain, Ireland and Pakistan.

“This analysis clearly confirms that when women-led countries are compared to countries similar to them along a range of characteristics, they have performed better, experiencing fewer cases as well as fewer deaths,” Garikipati said.

She added that while female leaders “were risk averse with regard to lives”, locking their countries down significantly earlier than male leaders, that also suggested they were “more willing to take risks in the domain of the economy”.

When compared according to the “openness to travel” criterion, female-led countries did not experience significantly lower Covid cases but did report lower deaths, the researchers found, concluding that this may suggest “better policies and compliance”.

Garikipati said the evidence of a “significant and systematic difference” showed that even accounting for institutional context and other controls, “being female-led has provided countries with an advantage in the current crisis”.

The researchers said they hoped the study would “serve as a starting point to illuminate the discussion on the influence of national leaders in explaining the differences in country Covid-outcomes”.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/aug/18/female-led-countries-handled-coronavirus-better-study-jacinda-ardern-angela-merkel>

Article 04, The New York Times

What the Pandemic Reveals About the Male Ego

By Nicholas Kristof

June 13, 2020

I compiled death rates from the coronavirus for 21 countries around the world, 13 led by men and eight by women. The male-led countries suffered an average of 214 coronavirus-related deaths per million inhabitants. Those led by women lost only one-fifth as many, 36 per million.

If the United States had the coronavirus death rate of the average female-led country, 102,000 American lives would have been saved out of the 114,000 lost.

“Countries led by women do seem to be particularly successful in fighting the coronavirus,” noted Anne W. Rimoin, an epidemiologist at U.C.L.A. “New Zealand, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Norway have done so well perhaps due to the leadership and management styles attributed to their female leaders.”

Let’s start by acknowledging that there have been plenty of wretched female leaders over the years. Indeed, according to research I once did for a book, female leaders around the world haven’t been clearly better than male counterparts even at improving girls’ education or reducing maternal mortality.

There has been solid research that it makes a difference to have more women on boards and in grass-roots positions, but evidence that they make better presidents or prime ministers has been lacking — until Covid-19 came along.

It’s not that the leaders who best managed the virus were all women. But those who bungled the response were *all* men, and mostly a particular type: authoritarian, vainglorious and blustering. Think of Boris Johnson in Britain, Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in Iran and Donald Trump in the United States.

Virtually every country that has experienced coronavirus mortality at a rate of more than 150 per million inhabitants is male-led.

“I don’t think it’s a coincidence that some of the best-run places have been run by women: New Zealand, Germany, Taiwan,” mused Susan Rice, who was national security adviser under President Barack Obama. “And where we’ve seen things go most badly wrong — the U.S., Brazil, Russia, the U.K. — it’s a lot of male ego and bluster.”

“We often joke that men drivers never ask for directions,” observed Dr. Ezekiel Emanuel of the University of Pennsylvania. “I actually think there’s something to that also in terms of women’s leadership, in terms of recognizing expertise and asking experts for advice, and men sort of barreling ahead like they got it.”

He has a point. Those leaders who handled the virus best were those who humbly consulted public health experts and acted quickly, and many were women; in contrast, male authoritarians who botched the response were suspicious of experts and too full of themselves.

“I really get it,” Trump said when he visited the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in March. Surrounded by medical experts, he added, “Maybe I have natural ability,” and he wondered aloud if he should have become a scientist. (Given that Trump said in January that Covid-19 was “totally under control,” he has his answer. And peer review might not have been kind to his ideas about bleach.)

While women have generally outshone men as international leaders, that does not seem true within the United States. Some female governors have done better, others worse, so there isn’t an obvious gender gap at home.

It’s also possible that this isn’t about female leaders but about the kind of country that chooses a woman to lead it.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/13/opinion/sunday/women-leaders-coronavirus.html?searchResultPosition=2>

Article 05, the New York Times

Why Are Women-Led Nations Doing Better With Covid-19?

By Amanda Taub

Published May 15, 2020

Monday was a day of triumph for Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern. Thanks to the efforts of the entire nation, she said, New Zealand had been largely successful in meeting its ambitious goal of eradicating, rather than just controlling, outbreaks of Covid-19. The lockdown she had put in place on March 25 could now end.

Ms. Ardern’s success is the latest data point in a widely noticed trend: Countries led by women seem to be particularly successful in fighting the coronavirus.

Germany, led by Angela Merkel, has had a far lower death rate than Britain, France, Italy or Spain. Finland, where Prime minister Sanna Marin, 34, governs with a coalition of four female-led parties, has had fewer than 10 percent as many deaths as nearby Sweden. And Tsai Ing-wen, the president of Taiwan, has presided over one of the most successful efforts in the world at containing the virus, using testing, contact tracing and isolation measures to control infections without a full national lockdown.

We should resist drawing conclusions about women leaders from a few exceptional individuals acting in exceptional circumstances. But experts say that the women’s success may still offer valuable lessons about what can help countries weather not just this crisis, but others in the future.

Varied information sources, and leaders with the humility to listen to outside voices, are crucial for successful pandemic response, Devi Sridhar, the Chair of Global Health at the University of Edinburgh Medical School, wrote in an op-ed in

the [British Medical Journal](#). “The only way to avoid ‘groupthink’ and blind spots is to ensure representatives with diverse backgrounds and expertise are at the table when major decisions are made,” she wrote.

Having a female leader is one signal that people of diverse backgrounds — and thus, hopefully, diverse perspectives on how to combat crises — are able to win seats at that table. In Germany, for instance, Ms. Merkel’s government considered a variety of different information sources in developing its coronavirus policy, including epidemiological models; data from medical providers; and evidence from South Korea’s successful program of testing and isolation. As a result, the country has achieved a coronavirus death rate that is dramatically lower than those of other Western European countries.

By contrast, the male-led governments of Sweden and Britain — both of which have high coronavirus death tolls — appear to have relied primarily on epidemiological modeling by their own advisers, with few channels for dissent from outside experts. However, a signal is not proof. And the surrounding political system can trump the different perspectives that a diverse group might bring to the issue.

When Ruth Carlitz, a political scientist at Tulane University, analyzed governors’ track records in the United States, she found that women were not quicker to impose lockdowns to fight the coronavirus. (Her analysis is recent and has not been peer-reviewed.)

That may be because any gender effect has been muffled by the all-consuming power of political partisanship. Dr. Carlitz found that Republican governors in the United States, male and female, took longer to impose stay-at-home orders than Democrats did.

After President Trump was criticized for failing to wear a mask during public appearances, David Marcus, a conservative journalist, argued in an [article](#) for the website The Federalist that Mr. Trump was “projecting American strength.” If Mr. Trump were to wear a mask, he wrote, that “would signal that the United States is so powerless against this invisible enemy sprung from China that even its president must cower behind a mask.”

Medical accessorizing is not usually seen as so crucial to great-power conflict. But Mr. Marcus’s analysis is actually quite consistent with the traditional idea of a strong American leader: one who projects power, acts aggressively and above all shows no fear, thereby cowering the nation’s enemies into submission.

In other words, a strong leader is one who conforms to the swaggering ideals of masculinity.

That has often created difficulties for women in politics. “There is an expectation that leaders should be aggressive and forward and domineering. But if women demonstrate those traits, then they’re seen as unfeminine,” said Alice Evans, a sociologist at King’s College London who studies how women gain power in public life. “That makes it very difficult for women to thrive as leaders.”

Ms. Arden’s approach to fighting the pandemic could not be further from that traditional archetype. But on this new kind of crisis, her cautious leadership has proved successful. “I would say that shutting down the economy early was a risk-averse strategy,” Dr. Evans said. “Because no one knew what was going to happen, so it’s the strategy to just protect life first.”

After New Zealand began its lockdown on March 25, Ms. Arden addressed the nation via a casual Facebook Live session she conducted on her phone after putting her toddler to bed. Dressed in a cozy-looking sweatshirt, she empathized with citizens’ anxieties and offered apologies to anyone who was startled or alarmed by the emergency alert that announced the lockdown order.

“There’s no way to send out those emergency civil alerts on your phones with anything other than the loud honk that you heard,” she said ruefully. “That was actually something we all discussed: Was there a way that we could send that message that wasn’t so alarming?”

By contrast, Mr. Trump has tried to anthropomorphize the virus into a foe he can rail against, calling it a “brilliant enemy.” But while that may have encouraged his base, it has not aided American efforts to contain the pandemic. The United States now has the highest coronavirus death toll in the world.

In Britain, Boris Johnson rose to power as a prominent Brexit backer, promising to play hardball to win the best “deal” in the country’s exit from the European Union. But the skills he used to battle Brussels bureaucrats turned out not to be useful in the fight against the pandemic. His government delayed lockdowns and other crucial protective measures like increasing testing capacity and ordering safety equipment for hospitals. Britain’s death toll is now the second-highest globally.

Male leaders can overcome gendered expectations, of course, and many have. But it may be less politically costly for women to do so because they do not have to violate perceived gender norms to adopt cautious, defensive policies.

That style of leadership may become increasingly valuable. As the consequences of climate change escalate, there will likely be more crises arising out of extreme weather and other natural disasters. Hurricanes and forest fires cannot be intimidated into surrender any more than the virus can. And neither can climate change itself.

Eventually that could change perceptions of what strong leadership looks like. “What we learned with Covid is that, actually, a different kind of leader can be very beneficial,” Dr. Evans said. “Perhaps people will learn to recognize and value risk averse, caring and thoughtful leaders.”

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/15/world/coronavirus-women-leaders.html>

Article 06, the New York Times

In a Crisis, True Leaders Stand Out

By The Editorial Board

April 30, 2020

Leadership may be hard to define, but in times of crisis it is easy to identify. As the pandemic has spread fear, disease and death, national leaders across the globe have been severely tested. Some have fallen short, sometimes dismally, but there are also those leaders who have risen to the moment, demonstrating resolve, courage, empathy, respect for science and elemental decency, and thereby dulling the impact of the disease on their people.

The master class on how to respond belongs to Jacinda Ardern, the 39-year-old prime minister of New Zealand. On March 21, when New Zealand still had only 52 confirmed cases, she told her fellow citizens what guidelines the government would follow in ramping up its response. Her message was clear: “These decisions will place the most significant restrictions on New Zealanders’ movements in modern history. But it is our best chance to slow the virus and to save lives.” And it was compassionate: “Please be strong, be kind and united against Covid-19.”

Ms. Ardern, a liberal, then joined with the conservative prime minister of Australia, Scott Morrison, in shaping a joint effort that has all but eliminated the virus from their island nations.

Other examples of countries where swift and decisive action helped allay the impact of the disease and unite the nation range from South Korea and Taiwan in Asia to Germany, Greece and Iceland in Europe. Women, a minority among the national leaders of the world, emerged among the most effective and reassuring of them.

Like Ms. Ardern, Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany acted early and calmly, warning Germans that many of them would fall prey to the novel coronavirus, and quickly getting testing underway. President Tsai Ing-wen of Taiwan likewise responded at the first sign of the new danger, keeping the virus under control and enabling her to send millions of face masks to the United States and Europe. In Iceland, Prime Minister Katrin Jakobsdottir led the government in offering free coronavirus testing for all and organizing a thorough tracking system.

Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen of Denmark, Finland’s prime minister, Sanna Marin — at 34 among the youngest of the world’s leaders — and Norway’s prime minister, Erna Solberg, are other women who have earned plaudits at home and abroad for their handling of the crisis.

There have been surprises. The greatest is Sweden, which has essentially left the country functioning almost normally, gambling that people under 70 will largely survive a bout of Covid-19 and create a “herd immunity” for the population. The elderly have been urged to stay indoors, to be sure, and the public has been advised to take precautions, but the approach is a radical departure from what everybody else is doing. Whether it succeeds or not remains to be seen.

In Italy, the European country hardest hit by the pandemic, Giuseppe Conte, a law professor who was originally plucked from obscurity by a coalition of rowdy anti-establishment parties and subsequently emerged at the head of a more orthodox government, has won respect for ordering stern measures and pledging that the state will take care of people.

Greece, usually viewed as among the European Union’s weakest members, has also been something of a surprise simply by doing better than might have been expected. With the first reported case, in Thessaloniki on Feb. 26, the government under Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis moved energetically to close down public venues, limit travel and increase hospital facilities for intensive care. As of this week, Greece has had fewer than 3,000 coronavirus infections.

All these feats and figures, of course, require caveats. Germany’s relatively low mortality rate, for example, may reflect a far higher rate of testing than other countries, which makes for a greater number of people known to be infected and therefore a smaller percentage of virus-related deaths. Greece’s numbers, by contrast, may be low because less than 1 percent of the population has been tested.

Most of the countries deemed to have shown a praiseworthy response, moreover, are relatively compact, homogeneous and advanced, and Asian countries have the added advantage of recent experience tangling with an epidemic. It is open to speculation whether a country more densely populated, less developed and more diverse than Sweden could replicate Sweden’s approach, or whether a nation with less trust in government would respond as the Germans have.

That said, the leaders who have gained the respect and attention of their people, and who have succeeded in dulling the impact of the disease, share certain traits and approaches to leadership worth noting as this pandemic roars on — and for future crises as well.

A willingness to take quick and bold action, even when it carries political risk, is surely among the most important hallmarks of leadership in a crisis. It is now obvious that China’s efforts to conceal the outbreak, or President Trump’s to downplay it for far too long, proved disastrous. Ms. Ardern, by contrast, chose, as she put it, to “go hard and go early.”

Other elements of effective leadership include a respect for science, transparent messaging, constant updating of the evidence and prompt assurance of financial support. And also experience: Ms. Merkel’s background as a scientist is by all accounts a major factor in her credibility; in Ireland, Prime Minister Leo Varadkar’s background as a doctor prompted him to start giving phone consultations half a day each week and helped boost his previously flagging standing.

Beyond politics, economics and science lie qualities of character that can't be faked, chiefly compassion, which may be the most important in reassuring a frightened, insecure and stricken population. Ms. Merkel is arguably among the least flashy, charismatic or eloquent of Europe's leaders, but nobody would ever question her decency. When she addressed her nation on television, something she does rarely and with evident reluctance, there was nothing pompous or bombastic in her parting words: "Take good care of yourselves and your loved ones."

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/30/opinion/coronavirus-leadership.html?searchResultPosition=9>