



# Beyond Words: The Interplay Of Language, Visuals, And Social Context In Shaping Gender Expectations And Representations In Sports News

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## Abstract

This study uses a multimodal discourse analysis to examine how gender is portrayed in sports journalism within an Arab cultural framework. This research utilizes Halliday's systemic functional linguistics and Kress and van Leeuwen's framework for visual analysis to examine how the combination of textual and visual aspects in sports articles influences and strengthens gender norms. A dataset consisting of ten sports articles, showcasing a variety of sports and forms of coverage, was chosen from an Arab news website. The textual analysis primarily aims to find thematic, linguistic, and interpersonal themes, hence uncovering patterns in the portrayal of gender in written information. Visual analysis explores the prominence, presentation, and manner of representation to comprehend the focus and depiction of gender in images. The results suggest a notable inclination towards male athletes, who are commonly portrayed highlighting their athletic abilities, whereas female athletes are generally underrepresented or featured with an emphasis on their physical attractiveness or personal qualities rather than their sporting accomplishments. This discrepancy maintains conventional gender assumptions and undermines gender equity in sports. The study emphasizes the necessity of achieving a more just and proportionate portrayal in sports journalism, calling for the impartial inclusion of both male and female players. This research offers a thorough comprehension of how sports media influences society gender expectations by combining textual and visual analysis. The results emphasize the wider impact of sports media in influencing public opinions and advancing gender parity. Additional research is recommended to further investigate the interplay between various modalities in sports journalism in order to have a more comprehensive understanding of their combined influence on gender representation.

**Keywords:** Gender Representation, Sports Journalism, Multimodal Discourse Analysis, Systemic Functional Linguistics, Visual Analysis, Arab News Media, Gender Bias, Media Studies, Sports Media, Gender Equality.

## Introduction

The interplay between words, pictures, and social context plays a crucial role in shaping and strengthening gender norms and portrayals. The intricate connection between these fields of study, such as linguistics, sociology, media studies, and gender studies, has been the main area of interest. Multimodal discourse analysis (MDA) provides a thorough framework for studying the interactions between multiple forms of communication, such as text, picture, layout, and other semiotic resources, and how they contribute to the creation of meaning (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). This introduction will examine the existing body of literature on the topic, highlighting the necessity for additional study on the gendered aspects of sports news items.

MDA has become a crucial methodological technique in the study of communication, focusing on the incorporation of many semiotic modes (O'Halloran, 2011). Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) argue that communication is intrinsically multimodal, meaning that it involves multiple means of expression. To fully comprehend any kind of communication, it is necessary to examine how these different modes interact with each other. Their influential publication, "Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design," establishes a fundamental framework for analyzing visual communication in conjunction with verbal components, demonstrating the role of visual grammar in the construction of meaning.

Jewitt (2013) provides additional details on the use of MDA in several media formats, such as commercials, educational materials, and internet platforms. According to her argument, MDA allows academics to reveal the hidden power dynamics and ideologies present in multimodal texts. This approach is especially pertinent for analyzing gender representations, as it uncovers how visual and language elements collaboratively shape gender norms and expectations.

Extensive study has thoroughly shown the widespread gender biases found in media portrayals. Tuchman (1978) popularized the term "symbolic annihilation" to refer to the lack of representation and stereotypical depiction of women in the media. Further research has validated that the media frequently sustains conventional gender roles, which leads to the marginalization of women and the reinforcement of patriarchal norms (Lauzen, Dozier, & Horan, 2008; Collins, 2011).

In her work, Gill (2007) presents the notion of "postfeminist media culture," which posits that modern media both recognizes and hinders the progress made by feminism. The portrayal of women in different media genres, such as news, sometimes exhibits a conflicting image, where women are frequently depicted in conventional roles or as peripheral people (Byerly & Ross, 2006).

The visual aspect of media plays a crucial role in influencing gender views. Messaris (1997) argues that visuals are potent instruments for communicating ideological messages, frequently surpassing the effectiveness of language. In his work, Goffman (1979) examines how visual representations often display women in submissive and reliant positions, so reinforcing gender-based power structures through the ritualization of subordination.

Kane, LaVoi, and Fink (2013) contend that within the realm of sports media, female athletes are frequently depicted in manners that accentuate their physical attractiveness and femininity, rather than their athletic prowess. These depictions contribute to the belittlement of women's sports and strengthen the idea that athleticism is inherently associated with masculinity.

The analysis of gender biases has been a significant focus within the realm of sports media. According to Billings and Eastman (2002), sports commentary and reporting frequently reinforce gender stereotypes by giving more attention to male athletes and portraying them as more competitive and skilled. Conversely, female athletes are sometimes neglected or portrayed based on their physical attractiveness and personal lives rather than their accomplishments in sports.

Bruce (2016) offers a thorough examination of the relationship between gender and sports media. It highlights the progress made in the representation of women's sports, but also acknowledges the existence of substantial inequalities. He stresses the importance of doing more sophisticated analyses that take into account how various modalities of communication contribute to these biases.

Although there is a significant amount of study on how gender is portrayed in media, there is a noticeable lack of studies that apply multimodal discourse analysis to sports news pieces. Although there have been research that have separately analyzed textual and visual features, there have been few that have combined these analyses to gain a comprehensive picture of how gender expectations are formed and strengthened in sports media. Furthermore, the majority of current research primarily examines broad media portrayals, with less emphasis on the methodical examination of sports news pieces over a period of time.

The existence of this research gap holds great importance for various reasons. Sports journalism is a significant cultural sphere that influences how the public perceives gender and athleticism. An analysis of the use of multimodal aspects in sports news items can offer valuable insights into the wider society norms and beliefs around gender expectations. Furthermore, the time period starting from 21<sup>st</sup> century has witnessed significant transformations in both media technology and gender dynamics in sports, which justifies the need for a current analysis. Furthermore, academics can gain a more comprehensive knowledge of the relationship between language, visuals, and social environment by examining how gender representations are influenced by various sports, events, and circumstances in sports news articles.

### **Aim of the Study**

The aim of this study is to address the lack of research by performing a multimodal discourse analysis on sports news. The analysis will explore the interplay between textual and visual components in these

publications, elucidating how they collaborate to shape and strengthen gender norms and depictions. This study aims to gain a complete understanding of the gendered aspects of sports journalism and contribute to the broader discussion on media, gender, and society by examining a wide range of sports news items.

## Research Objectives

1. To analyze how textual and visual components in sports news articles work together to shape and reinforce gender norms and depictions.
2. To understand the interplay between written and visual elements in sports journalism and their collective impact on the portrayal of gender roles.
3. To analyze Gender Representation in Sports News
4. To analyze Cultural and Geographical Contextual

## Research Methodology

### Data Collection

The data set for this study comprises ten sports news pieces that were published on an Arab news website from May 26 to May 28, 2024. The selection of this particular time period was made in order to offer a brief yet comprehensive overview of the current state of sports journalism and its portrayal of gender. The assortment of articles covers a wide range of sports, guaranteeing a thorough examination across many situations within the field of sports journalism. The combined word count of these publications is roughly 3800 words, which offers a significant body of text for thorough analysis.

### Rationale for Selection

The selection of Arab news websites for this study aims to investigate the distinctive cultural and geographical factors that shape gender portrayals in sports journalism. The chosen articles include a variety of sports to guarantee diversity in the types of sports discussed and the potential differences in gender representation in various sporting settings. This approach seeks to offer insights on the similarities and distinctions in the construction and portrayal of gender in sports news within the Arab setting.

### Analytical Framework

#### Halliday's Thematic Structure

The main analytical framework employed in this study is Halliday's (1994) systemic functional linguistics, specifically focusing on his model of thematic structure. Halliday categorizes themes in conversation into three distinct types: topical, textual, and interpersonal. This framework will be employed to examine the written content of the sports articles.

1. **Topical Theme:** This is the primary topic of the sentence, often the grammatical subject. It establishes the subject of the message and offers information about the points that are stressed in the conversation.

2. **Textual Theme:** This covers conjunctions and relative pronouns, among other things, that connect the clause to the text before it. It facilitates comprehension of the coherence and cohesion of the conversation.
3. **Interpersonal Theme:** This includes, among other things, vocatives and modal verbs, which convey the speaker's opinions. It makes clear the attitudes and interpersonal connections the book is trying to get across.

### Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Visuals

This work will investigate the visual components in the sports articles using multimodal discourse analysis (MDA) in addition to textual analysis. Based on the framework of Kress and van Leeuwen (2001), the following features of visual communication will be the main focus of the analysis:

1. **Saliency:** This is about the way some parts of an image are emphasized. Size, colour and placement are among the elements that add to saliency. Saliency research will reveal which elements of gender representation are visually highlighted.
2. **Framing:** This focuses at connections or separations between visual components in an image. Analysis of the framing will look at how men and women are arranged in relation to other elements and one another in the pictures.
3. **Modality:** This has to do with how realistic an image is. A high degree of realism is indicated by a high modality, and a more stylized or abstract portrayal by a low modality. Analyzing modality will determine how accurately men and women are portrayed in sporting circumstances.

### Procedure

#### Data Collection

A total of ten sports articles were carefully chosen from an Arab news website, guaranteeing a diverse selection of sports and various forms of coverage, such as match reports, player profiles, and opinion pieces. The articles were downloaded and prepared uniformly for analysis, ensuring that all textual and visual components were retained. The written content was divided into separate phrases for thematic analysis, and the visual content was classified according to the image type.

#### Thematic Analysis

An analysis was conducted on each clause in the articles to find the topical, linguistic, and interpersonal themes. The process required the coding of each clause based on Halliday's (1994) paradigm. The articles' thematic structure was analyzed by quantifying the frequency and distribution of various themes to detect patterns. In addition, specific instances were chosen for in-depth qualitative examination to demonstrate how theme structures contribute to the portrayal of gender.

## Visual Analysis

The salience, framing, and modality of each image were analyzed using Kress and van Leeuwen's (2001) methodology. An analysis was conducted to quantify the frequency and distribution of visual elements in order to uncover trends in the portrayal of individuals in sports photos. Analyzed in depth were specific photographs to investigate the role of visual features in shaping gender expectations and representations.

## Data Analysis

### Integrating Textual and Visual Analysis

The final stage of the research entails merging the results obtained from the textual and visual studies to establish a comprehensive comprehension of how gender expectations and representations are formulated in sports news items. This integration will primarily examine the similarities and differences between textual and visual features, and analyze how these distinct modalities of communication work together to either support or question societal expectations related to gender.

### Ethical Considerations

Since this study uses news stories that are accessible to the public, ethical concerns are negligible. Nevertheless, it is crucial to guarantee that the analysis is carried out in an unbiased manner and that interpretations are based on the data. The results will be presented in a manner that upholds the original articles' integrity and the personalities they portray.

## Analysis and interpretation

**Tabel 1**

Types of Themes and Occurrences

Text Type	Occurrences	THEMES			Total
		Topical Theme	Textual Theme	Interpersonal Theme	
Sport Articles Text	Frequency	91	49	46	186
	Percentage	48.92%	26.34%	24.73%	100.00%

**Tabel 2**

Types of Themes Occurrences in each article

Text Type	Themes	A 1	A 2	A 3	A 4	A 5	A 6	A 7	A 8	A 9	A 10	Total
Opinion Article Text	Topical	9	7	16	10	8	4	10	11	8	8	91
	Textual	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	49
	Interpersonal	4	3	7	7	6	3	4	4	4	4	46

Tables 1 and 2 display the frequency and proportions of themes detected in sports publications, classified into three primary categories: Topical themes, Textual themes, and interpersonal themes.

Topical themes constitute the majority, with a percentage of 48.92%, suggesting that the primary focus and content of the sport articles mainly center around conversations relating to current sports events, performances, and outcomes. Regarding the content of the articles, Article 3 stands out with the greatest count of 16 themes. This suggests that it covers a wide range of topics within the context of CSR initiatives, including opinions and analyses. Articles 1, 2, 4, and 8 exhibit significant counts, indicating a great amount of discussion regarding viewpoints or analyses in these articles. The articles uniformly distribute topical themes, pertaining to the major subject matter, at a rate of 7 to 11 themes per article. This demonstrates extensive treatment of diverse themes inside each article, guaranteeing a full and balanced exploration of the core subject matter. This underscores the need to deliver thorough coverage and analysis of athletic events to the public.

The textual themes account for 26.34% of the instances, suggesting a notable emphasis on the structure and arrangement of the text in the sports articles. The textual themes, which center on the structure and arrangement of the text, remain fairly consistent across the articles, with counts varying between 4 and 5. This suggests that the articles prioritize ensuring coherence, readability, and consistency in the presentation of material, thereby enhancing their overall quality.

Interpersonal themes make up 24.73% of the events in sports articles, indicating the inclusion of personal feelings, appraisals, and relationships. Additionally, it demonstrates a rather uniform distribution among the articles, with counts varying between 3 and 7. This demonstrates a continuous integration of individual viewpoints and personal encounters across the pieces, enhancing the content with greater complexity and relatability.

### **Topical Theme**

Analyzing the language characteristics and thematic substance in the sports stories from Arab News reveals numerous significant patterns and trends. First and foremost, there is a significant focus on the exploits of individual players, specifically showcasing remarkable accomplishments such as Ronaldo's record-breaking goal-scoring and Al-Hilal's undefeated season. This focus on individual exceptionalism is consistent with the wider international sports media environment, where prominent athletes frequently monopolize news stories and conversations. Moreover, there is a persistent emphasis on the performance of the team, as evidenced by articles that chronicle championship victories and undefeated seasons. This highlights the significance of collective accomplishment in sports culture.

Moreover, the sports coverage exhibits a significant incorporation of cultural and societal aspects. The mention of Saudi Vision 2030 and the changing emphasis of sports clubs on community-building projects highlight the connection between sports and wider state development objectives. Furthermore, the inclusion of global figures, such as FC Bayern Munich and Kashima Antlers, in discussions about sustainability initiatives emphasizes the worldwide interdependence of sports and the possibility for cross-cultural interaction and motivation.

The pieces also highlight the growing significance of the Saudi Pro League in drawing European talent, as players such as Mitrovic and Neves share their experiences and commend various aspects of life and sport in Saudi Arabia. This demonstrates the league's endeavors to enhance its reputation and competitiveness on the global platform, as well as its role in promoting cultural interaction and integration.

In addition, the journal covers a wide variety of sporting activities, including football and WWE, demonstrating the range of sports interests in the region and the publication's dedication to provide extensive sports coverage to its readership. The wide range of interests within the sports community is reflected in this diversity, highlighting the complex nature of sports fandom and the need to accommodate different preferences.

In summary, the linguistic analysis of the articles highlights the complex relationship between individual accomplishments, team triumphs, cultural settings, and global impacts in the field of sports journalism on the Arab News website. This analysis offers readers a comprehensive and diverse comprehension of the sports scene in Saudi Arabia and beyond.

### **Textual Theme**

Studying the linguistic attributes and textual subjects found in the sports stories on the Arab News website uncovers some significant trends and traits. Each article is organized around particular events, activities, and statements relating to the corresponding sports, showcasing a dedication to provide the readership with comprehensive coverage and analysis.

The articles on football, namely Articles 1, 2, 4, and 5, consistently highlight the individual efforts of notable players such as Cristiano Ronaldo and Aleksandar Mitrovic. They also discuss the collective accomplishments of teams, such as Al-Hilal's undefeated season. The focus on player and team achievements is consistent with the larger theme of triumph and rivalry in football culture. Furthermore, players and coaches consistently express a theme of optimism and resolve, emphasizing their ambitions for future triumphs and championships.

Moreover, Article 3 deviates from the narratives centered around players to concentrate on more extensive topics like corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities inside Saudi sports teams. This article emphasizes the changing emphasis of sports clubs on initiatives that promote community-building, in keeping with the greater national development goals set out in Saudi Vision 2030. The incorporation of international examples and the prioritization of sustainability measures underscore Saudi sports clubs' global outlook and aspirations to contribute to societal progress.

Articles 6 and 8 of the publication feature WWE events and basketball, respectively, presenting a varied range of sports content. These articles provide detailed accounts of specific matches, evaluations of influential players' performances, and analyses of game dynamics, appealing to the sports audience's many interests.

Furthermore, Article 7 explores the experiences of European football players in the Saudi Pro League, offering valuable insights into their cultural adjustment and their views on the league's level of competitiveness. This article demonstrates the publication's curiosity in investigating the convergence of sports and cultural interchange, emphasizing the worldwide attractiveness and influence of football as a unifying power.

In summary, the linguistic study of these sports stories uncovers a diverse range of topics and storylines, encompassing both personal accomplishments and larger social concerns, all presented within the framework of sporting events and competitions. This versatile approach to sports journalism aims to captivate readers and provide a thorough understanding of the various complexities and factors that shape the world of sports.

### **Interpersonal Themes**

Examining the interpersonal themes found in the sports articles on the Arab News website uncovers a notable focus on individual feelings, assessments, and relationships within the realm of sports. The stories consistently convey the emotions of delight, pride, and satisfaction expressed by different individuals engaged in sports activities, including players, coaches, and supporters. Cristiano Ronaldo demonstrates his elation in concluding the season with a triumph and surpassing previous records, emphasizing the importance of these accomplishments in his professional trajectory (Article 1). Jorge Jesus expresses his happiness and satisfaction with Al-Hilal's outstanding season, highlighting the team's cohesion and skill (Article 2). Incorporating verbatim statements from those participating in athletic competitions enhances the stories by providing a genuine and intimate element, enabling readers to establish an emotional and experiential connection. Article 10 showcases the audience's fervor and endorsement, demonstrating acknowledgement and gratitude for followers' backing and commitment. Collectively, the interpersonal motifs in these pieces enhance the involvement and relatability of the sports coverage, establishing a feeling of connection between the readers and the persons inside the sporting community.

## Visual

**Table 3**

Visual representation as per Kress and van Leeuwen's (2001) framework.

Image	Salience	Framing	Modality
Picture 1	High	Tight	High
Picture 2	High	Medium	High
Picture 3	Medium	Tight	Medium to High
Picture 4	High	Wide	High
Picture 5	Medium to High	Tight to Medium	High
Picture 6	High	Tight	High
Picture 7	Medium	Medium	Medium to High
Picture 8	Medium	Tight	Medium
Picture 9	High	Medium	High
Picture 10	High	Variable	High
Picture 11	High	Medium	High

Table 3 indicates a noticeable inclination towards items that have a significant impact and influence. Out of the eight photographs (photographs 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11), there are elements that are frequently noticeable (high saliency), and an equal number of pictures (Pictures 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11) display elements with a high level of certainty (high modality). The framing appears to be more diverse, consisting of a combination of close-up pictures (4 occurrences), medium shots (5 occurrences), and broad shots (2 occurrences). Picture 5 is noteworthy as it is found in both the high saliency and medium framing categories, indicating that it may serve as a primary feature with a versatile framing style.



**Picture 1:** Cristiano Ronaldo celebrates after scoring in Al-Nassr's 4-2 win over Al-Ittihad on the final day of the 2023-24 Saudi Pro League season

First picture shows a team's group ecstasy and unity in a football stadium, a moment of triumph and jubilation. With the filled stadium and players' exuberant gestures expressing a sense of success and pride, the lively environment is obvious. The team's colors—yellow and blue—as well as the matching uniforms highlight their common identity and camaraderie. Surrounded with splashing water, the dynamic posture of the center participant becomes a focal point that heightens the emotional intensity of the action. The picture not only catches a brief success but also perfectly portrays the larger ideas of brotherhood, teamwork, and competitive spirit defining the sport. It also shows the cultural value of football in Saudi Arabia, where Al-Nassr, the most likely team shown, has particular place in the sporting scene of the nation. All things considered, the picture captures the core of an exciting match-day event and invites the audience to participate in the happiness and thrills of the occasion.



**Picture 2:** *New champions beat A-Wehda 2-1 on the final day of the 2023-24 season*

Second picture shows a team's love and respect of their coach or mentor, therefore reflecting a touching moment of triumph and gratitude. Most often a training pitch or post-game gathering, the informal environment gives the celebration more authenticity and closeness. With their dark clothes displaying the "MVV" emblem, the players seem to be Al-Hilal, a well-known Saudi Arabian football team, stressing the importance of this event inside the team's history. Surrounded by his players showering him with compliments and admiration, the white-haired elder guy strikes out as a figure of authority and wisdom. Emphasizing the need of leadership and direction in attaining achievement, the image communicates thankfulness, trust, and unity. The players' radiant smiles and happy body language accentuate the emotional depth of the moment, therefore paying a moving tribute to the ties created in the field of football by means of common events and successes.



**Picture 3:** *Top Saudi clubs expanding into community-building programs*

Third picture shows the unified elation of players and supporters both, catching the ecstatic climax of a football success. The crowded stadium hums with activity as the blue-clad players proudly hold aloft trophies, thereby honoring their hard-earned success. The sea of flags and banners along the backdrop produces a kaleidoscope of color that emphasizes the shared pride and commitment of the Al-Hilal adherents. Media and photographers confirm the scope of this triumph, most likely a championship or title win, so establishing Al-Hilal's authority in Saudi Arabian football. Forever capturing this moment of unrestrained excitement and jubilation in the annals of football history, the image distills the core of triumph, teamwork, and fandom.



**Picture 4:** Ronaldo sets Saudi Pro League season scoring record while Al-Hilal finishes unbeaten

Fourth picture depicts a man in a yellow sports jersey celebrating with wide-open lips and arms spread, most likely yelling in delight. Given his attire and his intensity of expression, he seems to be a soccer player. The lettering on his jersey and the design point to a professional league as likely source.



**Picture 5:** Jorge Jesus hails Al-Hilal players as champions lift Roshn Saudi League trophy in glitzy ceremony

Given the size of the group and the backdrop of their celebration, fifth photograph shows a sizable gathering of people—probably a sports team—celebrating on a stage with a banner reading "CHAMPIONS 23-24" and "RSL." They seem to be part of a soccer squad based on the magnitude of the gathering. The scenario most certainly comes from an awards ceremony or a victory celebration.



**Picture 6:** *WWE's epic SmackDown and King And Queen showdowns shake up Jeddah*

In sixth picture, a wrestling match is in process as one wrestler is lifting another high into the air. Together with the audience in the backdrop, the degree of the action and the environment in a wrestling ring imply this is a professional wrestling event. The context is even more supported by logos and branding.



**Picture 7:** *Al-Hilal stars Mitrovic, Neves praise new Saudi lifestyles*

Seventh picture captures a victorious football moment when a player exuberantly celebrates in a packed stadium. With his assured posture and hand-to-ear motion, the blue-jerseyed athlete honors the adulation of the crowd or maybe insulting the competition. The backdrop of a vibrant stadium audience emphasizes the importance of the game, probably a high-stakes event considering the filled facility. Contextual hints regarding the team and league come from the team crest and the notable display of sponsor logos including "SAVVY GAMES GROUP". This picture captures the emotional intensity of sports, in which team and personal successes are greeted with celebration and sportsmen frequently employ gestures to interact with supporters or challenge rivals, so igniting the competitive spirit of the game.



**Picture 7.1:** *Al-Hilal stars Mitrovic, Neves praise new Saudi lifestyles*

Picture 7.1 captures the same actor in a gloomy moment, lost in thought, with his palm over his lips, therefore offering a moving juxtaposition to the previous joyful event. While the athlete's thoughtful stance and expression imply remorse, disappointment, or introspection, the stadium environment and presence of competing players highlight the competitive backdrop. This picture emphasizes how emotionally erratic sports are, as success and loss coexist on the same coin. The juxtaposition of this picture with the previous festive one emphasizes the dynamic character of sports events, in which excitement could quickly give way to disappointment and vice versa. Through capturing this period of introspection, the picture allows the audience to recognize the emotional depth and sensitivity of players, so adding complexity to our knowledge of the sports experience.



**Picture 8:** *Jrue Holiday's finishing flurry helps Celtics beat Pacers 114-111 for 3-0 lead in East finals*

Picture 8 catches the explosive force and competitive passion of a pivotal basketball game moment. Surrounded in yellow by defenders, the green, mid-shot player emphasizes the strategic struggle between offense and defense. Suggesting a high-stakes game, the full arena and strong lighting heighten the sense of stress and significance. Emphasizing the split-second decisions and accuracy needed for success, the graphic shows the agility and ability needed in basketball. By emphasizing the player's dynamic activity among the electrifying environment of the audience, the picture simplifies the core of competitive basketball, where talent, strategy, and physical ability combine in an exciting show of sportmanship.



**Picture 9:** *Barcelona avenge Lyon defeats to win third women's Champions League*

Picture 9 shows the happiness and delight of the victorious squad for the UEFA Women's Champions League Final in 2024. There is a visually impressive scene created by the vivid confetti, clearly shown trophy, and team costumes. While the players' and staff's radiant expressions capture their emotional elation, the banner at the bottom of the shot accentuates the relevance of the moment. The picture has great composition; the squad grouped around the trophy fosters unity and celebration. This picture is a potent portrayal of success and triumph in women's football since the usage of a podium and confetti adds depth and improves the joyous mood.



**Picture 10:** *Bayer Leverkusen win the German Cup and complete undefeated domestic double*

Picture 10 catches the team who won the DFB-Pokal in 2024's ecstatic moment of success. The team's jubilation finds a symbolic backdrop from the arch bearing the year and title of their success. The trophy's conspicuous display as well as the team's consistent colors—red, black, and green—help to accentuate their accomplishment and identity. With arms lifted and cheers exploding, the players' and staff's ecstatic expressions capture the wild delight and exhilaration of their triumph. While the arch's framing effect grabs the audience's attention to the heart of the celebration, the pyramid construction and central trophy placement produce harmony and balance. This picture captures the core of football's triumph and excitement really brilliantly.

## Discussion

### Integration of Textual and Visual Analysis

The present study combines textual and visual analysis to examine the construction of gender expectations and representations in sports news items. The study offers a complete insight into how gender norms are either reinforced or challenged through sports journalism by analyzing these two separate modes. The integration process entails discerning the resemblances and disparities between textual and visual components, and comprehending their interplay in shaping social conceptions of gender in sports.

### Findings from Textual Analysis

Textual analysis indicates that the majority of themes discovered in the sports articles are topical, making up 48.92% of the total. The main emphasis of these themes is on contemporary sporting events, performances, and outcomes, underscoring the timeliness and significance of the content for readers. This discovery highlights the importance of offering comprehensive coverage and analysis of current sports events, which is essential for captivating the audience and ensuring the news outlet remains relevant.

Textual themes, accounting for 26.34% of the occurrences, focus on the organization and composition of the text. The presence of consistent linguistic themes throughout the articles indicates a purposeful attempt to maintain coherence, readability, and quality in the way the material is presented. The even distribution of textual topics among stories suggests that sports journalists place a high value on clarity and order, which improves the overall efficacy of their communication.

Interpersonal themes account for 24.73% of the occurrences in the sports articles, indicating the presence of personal emotions, evaluations, and connections. This suggests that sports journalism include not only objective reporting of events, but also includes subjective perspectives and personal experiences, so enhancing the content with greater complexity and relatability. The consistent incorporation of interpersonal themes across the pieces enhances the storytelling, rendering it more captivating and relatable to readers.

## Findings from Visual Analysis

The visual analysis, utilizing the paradigm proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2001), concentrates on characteristics such as prominence, composition, and expression. The examination of visual components in sports stories uncovers a notable focus on individual players, particularly male athletes, who are frequently portrayed in energetic, dynamic positions that accentuate their physical strength and competitive drive. This visual representation conforms to conventional gender stereotypes that link masculinity with attributes such as physical strength, authority, and athleticism.

In contrast, female athletes are frequently portrayed in stances that are less active or more focused on aesthetics, so perpetuating preconceptions that stress their physical attractiveness rather than their athletic prowess. This visual prejudice adds to the marginalization of women's sports and maintains the idea that athleticism is necessarily masculine. The disparity in visual portrayal between male and female athletes highlights the enduring gender prejudices in sports media.

## Cultural and Societal Context

The sports coverage also includes important cultural and societal elements, such as mentions of Saudi Vision 2030 and the participation of sports clubs in projects aimed at strengthening the community. These features demonstrate the connection between sports and larger state development goals, showing how sports journalism may mirror and strengthen national priorities. The incorporation of worldwide statistics and international sporting occasions serves to underscore the interdependence of sports and the capacity for cross-cultural engagement and impact.

## Thematic Trends in Sports Journalism

Analyzing the topic substance of the articles uncovers some noteworthy patterns. There is a prominent emphasis on the accomplishments of individual players, such as Ronaldo's exceptional goal-scoring record and Al-Hilal's unbeaten season. The emphasis on individual exceptionalism is consistent with the prevailing worldwide sports media landscape, where celebrity players frequently monopolize news coverage. Furthermore, the significance placed on team performance, as evidenced by articles discussing championship wins and unbeaten seasons, underscores the value of collaborative achievement in sports culture.

The articles also demonstrate an increasing focus on sustainability and social responsibility, as indicated by the talks of initiatives undertaken by FC Bayern Munich and Kashima Antlers. This tendency signifies a transition towards acknowledging the wider influence of sports on society and the environment, which corresponds with worldwide trends towards sustainability and corporate social responsibility.

## Gender Representation in Sports Journalism

An examination of gender representation in sports journalism uncovers an enduring prejudice in favor of male athletes. Male athletes are given greater media attention and are frequently shown in a manner that highlights their athletic abilities and competitive disposition. Conversely, female athletes are often not adequately represented and are more prone to being portrayed in manners that emphasize their physical attractiveness or personal matters rather than their accomplishments in sports.

This lack of equal representation promotes conventional gender stereotypes and undermines the advancements made in promoting gender equality in sports. The absence of equitable reporting and the contrasting depiction of male and female athletes perpetuate societal expectations that link sports with masculinity and denigrate the athletic abilities of women.

### Implications for Sports Journalism

The results of this study have important consequences for the field of sports journalism. The enduring presence of gender biases in both written and visual depictions suggests a requirement for more fair and balanced portrayal of male and female athletes. Sports writers and editors should aim to deliver impartial coverage that showcases the accomplishments of athletes, irrespective of their gender, and questions conventional preconceptions.

Furthermore, the incorporation of cultural and sociological topics in sports writing exemplifies the wider influence of sports in molding and mirroring society principles. Sports journalists bear the duty of not only documenting events but also contemplating the broader consequences of their coverage on public attitudes towards gender, culture, and society.

### Conclusion

This study conducts a thorough examination of how gender is portrayed in sports journalism by using a multimodal discourse analysis of sports news stories. The results indicate notable biases in both written and visual depictions, with a prevailing emphasis on male athletes and a tendency to perpetuate conventional gender roles. These biases lead to the marginalization of women's sports and reinforce the idea that athleticism is fundamentally associated with masculinity.

The study emphasizes the significance of offering fair and impartial coverage of both male and female athletes in the field of sports media. Sports journalists can help to the greater push towards gender equality in sports by questioning conventional preconceptions and advocating for a more inclusive portrayal of athletes.

Moreover, the incorporation of cultural and socioeconomic topics in sports media demonstrates the interdependence between sports and wider society principles. The field of sports journalism has the capacity to shape public opinions and actively contribute to the advancement of beneficial societal transformations.

Further investigation is needed to examine the interaction between written and visual components in sports journalism and determine their role in shaping and reinforcing gender stereotypes. Sports journalism may have a significant impact on promoting gender equality and creating a more inclusive sports culture by addressing biases and advocating for fair representation.

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