

THESIS

FRAMING FEMALE CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE:  
A COMPARISON OF NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF THE 2008 AND 2009  
KUWAITI PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

Submitted by

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the Degree of Master of Science

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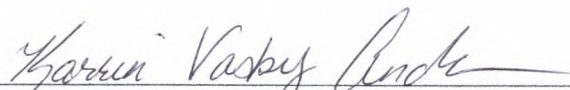
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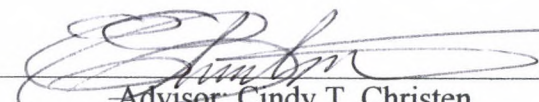
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WE HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER OUR SUPERVISION BY SHAIKHAH ALGHAITH ENTITLED FRAMING FEMALE CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE: A COMPARISON OF NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF THE 2008 AND 2009 KUWAITI PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING IN PART REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE.

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## ABSTRACT OF THESIS

### FRAMING FEMALE CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE:

### A COMPARISON OF NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF THE 2008 AND 2009

### KUWAITI PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

The way newspapers framed their news coverage may have influenced the perceptions of the Kuwaiti female candidates for office. This study examined if the Kuwaiti female candidates who ran unsuccessfully in 2008 but were elected in the 2009 parliamentary election were framed differently in the 2008 and 2009 news coverage. It looked at and compared the frames that were used by the Kuwaiti press in 2008 and 2009 to see if there was any association between the way female candidates were framed and the two different election results.

A qualitative content analysis was used to identify the way Kuwaiti newspapers framed Kuwaiti women candidates. Using a census sample of news articles from three Kuwaiti newspapers, a comparison was done between the frames used in the coverage of the 2008 and 2009 Kuwaiti parliamentary elections.

The results of this study showed that Kuwaiti female candidates received more newspaper coverage in 2009 than 2008. Most of the frames used by the Kuwaiti newspapers when covering female candidates occurred in both 2008 and 2009 coverage.



More positive associations were used in the 2009 coverage of female candidates. Kuwaiti newspapers framed women candidates with gender-specific frames and were mostly used favorably. Kuwaiti women candidates were framed as agents of change in Kuwaiti parliament more frequently in the 2009 election coverage.

In this study, framing theory explained the selections of frames that were used for the female candidates and the positive ways they were directed whereas priming explained the relationship between the positive attributions that were used by the newspapers' coverage of female candidates and the result of the 2009 election, where women candidates won seats in the Kuwaiti parliament. The readers may have been primed by the positive frames used for women candidates in 2009 when deciding whom to vote for.

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## Introduction

Use of different frames by the press when covering female candidates who run for the Kuwaiti parliamentary elections may have influenced their success in winning seats in the parliament. The possible correlation between newspaper coverage and the success of the Kuwaiti female candidates in the 2009 parliamentary election was the main focus of this study. It examined newspaper coverage of three of the female candidates who ran unsuccessfully in 2008 but were elected in the 2009 Kuwait parliamentary election to see if there were changes in the way they were covered by the Kuwaiti press.

Kuwaiti women gained the right to vote and run for elections on May 16, 2005. However, the two previous attempts to run for office that were made in 2006 and 2008 were all unsuccessful for Kuwaiti women due to the fact that none of the Kuwaiti female candidates were elected to the parliament at that time. Nevertheless, the latest parliamentary elections in Kuwait that took place in May 16, 2009 had a different result. Four Kuwaiti women out of 19 women who competed to get mandates in the 50-seat parliament were elected and won for the first time in the history of Kuwait. One of the four candidates who won was running for elections for the first time. The other three elected female candidates ran in previous parliamentary elections and failed. Asil Al-Awadi ran in the 2008 elections and came 11th and did not make it to the parliament that year, whereas she won in the recent elections of Kuwait. Rola Dashti had been an unsuccessful candidate in the 2008 elections but she won a seat in the parliament in 2009. Salwa Al-Jassar was also one of the first four Kuwaiti women who won in 2009.



This study looked at these three Kuwaiti female candidates who ran for both the 2008 and 2009 Kuwait parliamentary elections and examined the way they were covered by the press. Comparing their 2008 newspaper coverage with 2009 coverage indicated that media news coverage may have influenced the results of the candidates who aimed for the parliament in general and more specifically for Kuwaiti women who wanted to win more seats in future parliamentary elections.

This study focused mainly on the role of newspaper coverage in Kuwait and how it influenced the results for three Kuwaiti women who were elected in the 2009 Kuwaiti elections and were unsuccessful in the previous elections. More precisely, the study looked into the different frames that were used by the media when publishing news stories regarding them. The study looked at and compared news stories published in the press in 2008 and 2009 to investigate what changed if anything in the way newspapers framed their news stories when it came to the Kuwaiti female candidates.

This study focused on the Kuwaiti newspapers and the way they framed the coverage of the three Kuwaiti female candidates who won in the 2009 Kuwaiti elections. The research question this study examined was: Were there any differences in the frames used by Kuwaiti newspapers in their coverage of Kuwaiti female candidates who ran for the parliamentary elections of 2008 and 2009 and was there an association between the way female candidates framed by the press and the two results of the elections, where women candidates were unsuccessful in the 2008 election but were elected in 2009 election?



## Theoretical Basis and Approach

The theoretical framework of this study was framing. It was used in order to help examine the research questions of this study, provide a possible explanation for the different results and draw some conclusions as to the possible effects of newspaper frames on Kuwaiti women running for office. Therefore, it was important to look at framing as a theory and how it had been used in other studies that covered similar areas of research.

### Framing Theory

Framing guides analysis of newspapers coverage and therefore it is was the theory applied in this study. Entman (1993) defined framing as follows: “Framing essentially involves selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, casual interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation of the item described. Typically frames diagnose, evaluate and prescribe” (p. 52). Moreover, Entman (1991) emphasized the importance of framing when it comes to providing information because it focuses more on certain pieces of information and makes them more “noticeable, meaningful, or memorable to audiences” (p. 53). Nelson, Clawson, and Oxley (1997) also offered a definition for framing, explaining it as it follows: “Framing is the process by which a communication source, such as a news organization, defines and constructs a political issue or public controversy” (p. 567).

According to Gitlin (1980), frames are “persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol handlers routinely organize discourse, whether verbal or visual” (p. 7). Cristina (2008) wrote, “Frames’ theory is based on the assumption that the way in which news is presented by media influences the way the public receives the news” (p. 10). Furthermore, Cristina wrote, “the central idea is that different presentations of similar situations can decisively influence the choice of how individuals assess a situation and relate to the decision-making processes” (pp. 10-11). Therefore, this suggests that use of different frames by the newspapers can affect the way the audience sees and judges the news. Journalists use certain words and metaphors and place them in certain frames with the intention to control the focus of their readers. According to Baran and Davis (2006, p. 322), “news coverage can strongly influence the way news readers or viewers make sense of news events and the major actors in the events”.

The different definitions of framing show how framing is used to direct the attention of the audience to specific pieces of information and how it plays a role in shaping the audiences’ opinions and decisions. Therefore, framing is used in studies that look at media coverage to examine the way the media frames their content. Stromback and Luengo (2008) conducted one of the studies that examined news coverage in relation to framing of content. The central idea of their study was comparing the framing of politics in election news coverage of two democratic countries, Spain and Sweden. The study looked at how the national media systems and political systems were shaping the news coverage of the elections. The results of the study indicated that there were differences in the newspapers frames that were used by the Spanish press when compared to the



Swedish newspapers coverage. It showed that the Spanish newspapers focused more on the conflicts that were happening between their politicians whereas the Swedish newspapers coverage gave more attention to opinion polls that measured the electoral context. Another finding showed that there was not much of a difference when it came to news coverage and how interpretive it was. Their study concluded that there were differences in framing of politics which could be derived from the different models of media and politics.

### Framing and Gender Studies

According to Kahn (1993), who examined media coverage of political advertisements of the 38 candidates for the U.S. Senate between 1984 and 1986, there were gender differences that were apparent in the candidates' campaigns. There were stereotypical attributions when it came to the advertisements of female and male candidates' campaigns. The results of the study showed that women candidates concentrated on healthy policy and education. On the other hand, men focused more on economic issues.

Another study done by Banwart, Bystrom, and Robertson (2001) found that primary framing could lead to bias in the general elections. The study aimed to analyze the media's portrayal of female and male candidates in primary races at two levels of political leadership, state governor and U.S. senator, in the U.S. 2000 campaign. They demonstrated that women candidates were not treated as men candidates when it came to media coverage. The results showed that the representation of women was remarkably

low and that they received poor coverage from the media and that advantaged male candidates and their chances of winning.

Another study done by Kahn and Goldenberg (1991) covered gender differences in the U.S. senate campaign coverage of 1982-86. They concluded that the way female candidates were framed in the press, such as noncompetitive, influenced their political progress and that some of the frames that the media used worked as critical obstacles for them. Kahn and Goldenberg argued that, “by covering male and female candidates differently, the news media may influence the success of female candidates for public office” (p. 180). The results of their study showed that women candidates received less news coverage than men candidates. Moreover, they found out that the news coverage of the female candidates was more negative when compared to the coverage that the male candidates got from the press. Also, Kahn and Goldenberg noted that, “the coverage they do receive concentrates more on their viability and less on their issue positions” (p. 180).

Fountain and McGregor (2002) also emphasized the importance of the quantity of media coverage when it came to news media framing of female political candidates. Their study looked at framing of political women in New Zealand and how it influenced the increase of women’s political power in all three major constitutional positions – Prime Minister, Governor General and Chief Justice. Their argument and research questions were based on Tuchman’s (1978) notion of “symbolic annihilation”, which refers to trivialization and omission of women by the media. Their research questions focused on the relationship between the way female candidates had been presented in the media and their increased improvement in the political participation. Their findings



showed that despite the increase of media coverage of political women in New Zealand, women in politics still were trivialized, especially when it came to their perspectives regarding certain matters. They also found that the stereotypical frames that the media used when representing political women still existed. They explained how media coverage revolved around male dominance in the field of politics and depicted women as political outsiders. Other frames that were identified in their study revealed the sexist media representation of women in politics and the way they were objectified through using specific sexist images and vocabulary.

In another gender-based study, Lundell and Ekstrom (2008) examined the images of political women in the Swedish press. The study looked at the different ways of portraying women politicians in visual images and their correlation with some stereotypical frames such as objectification and passivity. The results showed that most of the images of the political women in Sweden focused on their appearances and their lack of conformity to conventional standards of attractiveness. Close-ups shots were taken to show their emotional and facial expressions correlating with the notion that women were very emotional and demonstrating dramatic narratives created by the press.

Synthesizing the above findings suggests that the quantity of media coverage and the different frames used for female candidates have a correlation with the way the audiences perceive them and may influence the audiences' voting decisions and the candidates' success. This study looked for any differences in the frames used by the Kuwaiti newspapers when they covered the Kuwaiti female candidates who ran for both the 2008 and 2009 parliamentary elections of Kuwait. The study examined and compared the press



frames and to see if there was a relationship between changes in frames and the different results of the 2008 and 2009 elections. In order to examine these questions, it was important to take a closer look at the Kuwait political situation and more specifically the involvement of Kuwaiti female candidates in recent elections.

### The Political Structure of Kuwait

The State of Kuwait is a constitutional monarchy. The head of the state is the Emir Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Crown Prince is Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. The Emir of Kuwait approves the cabinet of 15 ministers that is appointed by the Prime Minister, Nasir Muhammed Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah. The parliament of Kuwait has 50 seats and by popular vote, the members of the parliament are elected. According to BBC online website (2009), “Kuwait was the first Arab country in the Gulf to have an elected parliament” (p. 1).

Members of the Kuwaiti parliament serve four-year terms. Every four years, a parliamentary election is held to enable the public to choose the members that they want to represent their voices in the parliament. However, Kuwait’s unstable political situation in recent years led the Emir to dissolve the Kuwaiti parliament two years in a row. Kuwait parliament elections were held in 2008, followed by another election in 2009. The political crisis of Kuwait started when some members of the parliament accused the Prime Minister, who is a relative of the royal family, of spending and misusing public funds. Moreover, they accused him of not doing anything to improve the bad economic situation facing the country. This led to a political standoff between Kuwait’s royal family and the parliamentarians (Ahelbarra, 2009).

Despite the political crisis of Kuwait, women achieved success in terms of their political progress. On May 16, 2009, four Kuwaiti women were elected to the parliament for the first time in the history of Kuwait.

#### Progress on Political Rights for Kuwaiti Women

Kuwait is a conservative country that is governed by religious and cultural constraints, especially when it comes to women. Therefore, electing women to seats in the parliament has taken a long time to happen. Katulis (2005) found that the issue of women holding seats in the parliament and gaining top positions in government was a very controversial issue in Kuwait. Katulis' study demonstrated some of the opposing views regarding women running for office in Kuwait. He found that the arguments against Kuwaiti women being elected to the parliament could be grouped into four categories: impracticality, damaging to families, too emotional and absolute rejection.

In describing women's suitability for political office, Katulis (2005) found that some of the opposing views argued, "women are not capable of traveling freely or interacting with all of the people they would have to serve and represent" (p. 16). Katulis identified other opinions that considered women to be impractical as parliamentarians because they might not be able to be available to work in the late hours of the day. Furthermore, he wrote, "some who oppose women running for office base their arguments on the notion that women are too emotional and weak to serve in a position of responsibility" (p. 16). Katulis also added that "some of these arguments are framed in emotionally resonant language and based on certain individuals' understanding of Islam" (2005, p. 16). Katulis' study identified a number of public views against women getting elected.



However, the big shift that happened in the 2009 parliamentary election, where four Kuwaiti women won seats in the parliament, suggests that some of the views against female candidates may have shifted.

Unlike Katulis' study that focused on public opinions, the present study examined the frames that were used by the newspapers. This study examined the press usage of certain frames for female candidates to see if there were similarities with the opinions presented in Katulis' work.

Other insights regarding Kuwaiti women and Kuwaiti culture were provided in a 2001 study done by Wheeler. Wheeler wrote, "Kuwait is a country where women face daily challenges because of their gender. Both in the press and in private conversations, the boundaries of patriarchy are tested by female social critique" (p. 192). Some of the challenges that Wheeler discussed were the limitations of Kuwaiti women's political rights. Her research was a little bit dated since Kuwaiti women were granted full political rights in the year 2005. However, Wheeler provided some specific cultural and religious perspectives of Kuwait and the way women were viewed in this culture. She pointed out that Kuwaiti women faced and had to deal with the stereotypical belief that the appropriate place for women was their homes, where they had to fulfill their nurturing role. Wheeler explained some of the opposition to women holding upper positions, stating that "Islamics try to drive women back into the home or into fields (compatible with their nature) like education and nursing" (p. 193). On the other hand, she noted that liberal Kuwaiti women argued that women were capable of holding power positions and worked hard to gain them. This is clear when it comes to political progress, where

Kuwaiti women worked to achieve their rights and gain seats in the parliament in 2009. Another cultural constraint mentioned by Wheeler was the gender separation and public segregation. Most of the occupations in Kuwait tend to segregate women from men. Even in the governmental schools and Kuwait University, girls are segregated from boys and study in separate classrooms.

When it comes to media coverage of Kuwaiti women's political rights, Al-Mughni and Tetreault (2004) argued that "with the respect to women's rights, Kuwaiti newspapers are neither reflexively conservative supporters of the status quo nor reliably progressive supporters of liberalization" (p. 120). Their study looked at newspaper coverage of Kuwaiti women's progress in gaining their political rights. Their study showed that the press had covered the issue of political rights for Kuwaiti women widely. However, Al-Mughni and Tetreault observed that "individual media outlets tend to favour advocacy pieces that reflect their respective publisher's points of view" (p. 120). Therefore, they concluded that the readers should not rely on one newspaper if they were seeking balanced coverage regarding women's political rights. Other findings showed that Kuwaiti female activists were satisfied with the way they were covered by the media because they thought they were fairly covered by the press. Nevertheless, Al-Mughni and Tetreault argued that there were some deficiencies in the way Kuwaiti press covered political rights for women as they had only concentrated on two sides whereas there was more complexity and diversity when it came to women's struggle to gain their political rights.



## Research Questions

This study focused on answering a set of research questions that considered the way Kuwaiti female candidates were framed by the newspapers in their coverage of the 2008 and 2009 parliamentary elections. It also examined questions pondering if there was a relationship between these frames and the different results of the two elections, where female candidates were unsuccessful in the 2008 election but won seats in the Kuwaiti parliament in 2009. The research questions of this study were:

RQ1: What type of frames did the Kuwaiti newspapers use when covering female candidates?

RQ2: Were there differences in the gender-specific frames used by the newspapers in their coverage of the Kuwaiti female candidates who ran in the parliamentary elections of 2008 and 2009?

RQ3: Were there changes in the frames used in the newspaper coverage regarding Kuwaiti female candidates in the 2008 and 2009 elections?

RQ4: Were the newspaper more supportive of the Kuwaiti female candidates in their coverage of the 2009 parliamentary election versus the 2008 election?

RQ5: Did the female candidates receive more coverage from the Kuwaiti newspapers in 2009 versus 2008?

RQ6: Were there differences in the amount of coverage and the frames used for the female candidates based on the differences of the three individual newspapers?



## Method

To answer the research questions, a qualitative content analysis of newspaper coverage of female candidates in the 2008 and 2009 Kuwaiti parliamentary elections was conducted. The content was collected from the official websites of three Kuwaiti newspapers, where there were electronic copies of the actual newspapers posted in PDF files. The newspapers were *Alwatan*, *Alqabas* and *Alrai*. These three newspapers were chosen because they were the most popular and most read newspapers in Kuwait when it comes to Kuwaiti politics. *Alwatan* and *Alqabas* are liberal newspapers and *Alrai* is known as a controversial newspaper. The news coverage of the three Kuwaiti women who lost in 2008 but won in 2009 was published within a time-frame of eight weeks and four days prior to the dates of the two elections, which took place on May 17, 2008, and May 16, 2009, respectively.

Coverage of the three female candidates during the 2008 and 2009 elections was compared to determine if different frames were used by the press when addressing these three female candidates, and if the amount of coverage differed. Each one of the identified frames was arranged in separated categories linked with other derived codes to help answer the research questions. The analysis was summarized in a set of tables that showed both the frequencies and the percentages of the frames (categories and codes) used by the Kuwaiti newspapers in their coverage of the female candidates of the 2008 and 2009 Kuwaiti parliamentary elections.

## Sampling

The units of analysis for this study were the newspaper articles that were written by professional journalists and that covered the three female Kuwaiti candidates who ran for office in 2008 and 2009. A census sample selected all the articles covering female candidates that were published in 2008 and 2009 by the three Kuwaiti newspapers. The total size of the census sample of this study was 335 articles. It included 135 articles of the 2008 coverage, and 200 articles of 2009 coverage. *Alrai* newspaper published 50 articles in 2008 and 69 articles in 2009. There were 45 articles in *Alwatan* newspaper in 2008 and 67 articles in 2009. 40 articles were published by *Alqabas* newspaper in 2008 and 64 articles were published in 2009.

The news stories and editorials that covered the three female candidates in 2008 and 2009 were identified by searching for their names in the headlines and lead paragraphs. This study analyzed news articles and editorials that were written by professional journalists of the newspapers. It also included any type of user-generated content that was provided by the readers of the newspapers, such as letters to the editor.

## Data Analysis

Research questions were answered by examining the words used in newspaper articles and editorials and by developing a code book that was used to code newspaper articles and editorials. To identify categories and codes of the codebook, there were several passes through the newspaper articles and editorials to look for the concepts and words that were more frequently used in the coverage of female candidates. The first pass



was done to develop the overarching categories of the code book. The categories included the broader frames that were used repeatedly by the three Kuwaiti newspapers. The second pass was done to identify the specific codes for each of the major categories. The codes included the various concepts and words that were used the most when covering female candidates. For example, the overarching category was female candidates' personal characteristics and it included codes such as age, ethnicity, religious branch, marital status, personal hobbies and interests, and other personal characteristics. (See Appendix B)

Once categories and codes were identified, the code book was used to code each article in the census sample for each newspaper. The coding was done in the margins of each article. The parts of the articles that matched the identified codes were circled and then coded by writing the letter and number of the matched code in the margins. Categories and codes were determined and used to analyze newspaper articles and editorials to see if there were differences in the frames used in the coverage. The categories and codes were not only used to identify the frames that were used for the female candidates but they were also used to identify the direction of the articles. For example, a plus sign was placed at the end of the code that showed positive meanings whereas a minus sign was used for the code that indicated negative meanings of the code.

A second person was recruited to participate in the intercoder reliability check. The second person used the same codebook to code articles that were randomly selected. 10 percent of each of the three newspapers' articles was coded by the second person. Two training runs were done before doing the actual coding by the second person. The

calculation of the intercoder reliability was done through comparing the copies of articles that both the coder of this study and that second person coded. If a code was assigned to a specific part of the text by both coders that code was counted as an agreement. If a code was assigned differently by both of them then that was counted as a disagreement. Also, if a code was assigned by only one of them that code was assigned as a disagreement. Then, the total number of agreements and the total number of disagreements were calculated to confirm the intercoder reliability check percentage. The intercoder agreement was 89 percent across all-coded articles.

## Results

The research questions of this study focused on the way Kuwaiti female candidates were framed by the newspapers in their coverage of the 2008 and 2009 parliamentary elections. The research questions examined the possible relationships between the frames used by the Kuwaiti newspapers and the different results of the two elections, where female candidates were unsuccessful in the 2008 election but won seats in the Kuwaiti parliament in 2009. The summary of results is presented in Tables 1 through 9. (See Appendix A)

The first research question addressed the type of frames (categories and codes) that Kuwaiti newspapers used when covering female candidates. There were nine types of frames that were most commonly used by the three Kuwaiti newspapers. Each one of the overarching categories was followed by various numbers of codes. The main categories started with the female candidates' personal characteristics,' which included the female candidates' age, ethnicity, religious branch, marital status, personal hobbies, interests and other personal characteristics that were mentioned fewer times by the newspapers. The second category was female candidates' professional qualifications. This covered the Kuwaiti women candidates' educational degree, profession, previous or current work positions, political background, membership in community organizations and other professional qualifications. The Kuwaiti female candidates' campaign platforms, which comprised the third category, included better education and the economy of Kuwait. Moreover, it included campaign slogans, and the women candidates' opinions regarding political issues such as Alquota, electronic counting of votes, buying the votes of voters



and other opinions. The political alliance category covered the political alliances that these female candidates formed, and it also covered the absence of alliances. There was a category about the rumors and controversies surrounding the female candidates, including the veil controversy in 2009, and it also included other rumors and controversies that didn't receive much coverage. Moreover, it looked at the way female candidates dealt with rumors.

Another category was women's equity/equality as political candidates' and it looked at how the Kuwaiti newspapers framed women candidates' right to be elected to the parliament and the hopes of being the first female candidates to win seats in the parliament. It also looked at women playing more active roles in their society in general, the religious views for or against female candidates running, cultural views and gender stereotypes. The category of women's rights in society was another category, and it covered the specific women's rights that the female candidates were fighting for; for example, women's right to education, women's right to occupy better professional positions, women's rights to have equal benefits for her and her children when marrying a foreign spouse and other women's rights. The change category showed the way Kuwaiti female candidates were framed as agents of change in the Kuwaiti parliament. The last category covered the way female candidates deal with voters. It included women candidates targeting and representing female voters and male voters in the parliament. Furthermore, it showed the way women candidates interacted with supporters or other voters in person and also through mass media/electronic means.

The second research question addressed differences in the gender-specific frames used by the newspapers in their coverage of the Kuwaiti female candidates who ran in the parliamentary elections of 2008 and 2009. Both Tables 6 and 7 present results that show the ways Kuwaiti newspapers assigned gender-specific frames when addressing female candidates. There were noticeable differences between frames used in covering the two elections. Table 6, which covered the women's equity/equality as political candidates, showed increases in frequencies for all frames in 2009 when compared to the 2008 coverage. For example, female candidates' right to be elected to the parliament was mentioned 73 times in 2008 but was used 144 times in 2009. Moreover, the frame of women playing more active roles in their society in general was used 46 times by the three Kuwaiti newspapers in 2008 and 69 times in 2009. Also, the three Kuwaiti newspapers used the frame of hopes for being the first female candidates to win seats in the parliament 13 times in 2009 coverage, while it was only mentioned 5 times in 2008 by the three newspapers. As an example of this frame, it was written in *Alqabas* that "the experience is different this time and women will win seats in the parliament" (Al-Abdullah, 2009, p. 18).

Unexpectedly, the religious and cultural views for or against female candidates running for office showed relatively smaller numbers compared to the other frames that were listed under women's equity/equality as political candidates category. Similar to the other results, however, they were used more frequently in 2009 than 2008. The religious views for and against women running for office occurred 7 times in 2008 and increased to 22 times in 2009. The frame cultural views for or against female candidates running for office was used only 2 times in 2008; in 2009, it occurred 8 times. The gender



stereotypes frame is not an exception; it was mentioned only 3 times in 2008 but in 2009, the frequency increased to 10 times.

When it comes to women's rights in society that the Kuwaiti female candidates were fighting for (see Table 7), there was a decrease in the numbers of all frames between 2008 and 2009. For example, women's right to education occurred 21 times in 2008 in the three newspapers, but it was only used 7 times in the 2009 coverage. Furthermore, women's right to occupy better professional positions totaled 34 times in 2008, but in 2009 it was only mentioned 14 times. In addition, the three Kuwaiti newspapers used the frame women's right to have equal benefits for her and her children when marrying a foreign spouse 27 times in 2008, and the number dropped slightly to 23 times in 2009.

The third research question asked if there were changes in the frames used in the newspaper coverage regarding Kuwaiti female candidates in the 2008 and 2009 elections. The results show that there were major differences in some of the frames used by the Kuwaiti newspapers in 2008 and 2009. Starting with the female candidates' personal characteristics frame (addressed in Table 1), there was an increase in the number of the times ethnicity was used in 2009. Kuwaiti newspapers used it 15 times in 2009, but it was only used once in 2008. Personal hobbies and interests were completely absent in 2008 but were used 8 times in the 2009 newspapers' coverage. In sum, the 2009 coverage assigned more frames for female candidates' personal characteristics than in the 2008 coverage.

Further results are presented in Table 2, which covers female candidates' professional qualifications. The frequency of the profession frame in both 2008 and 2009

newspaper coverage was high. The total number of occurrences in 2008 was 210, while in 2009 it increased to 409 times. There was an increased emphasis on the female candidates' work as professors in Kuwait University among the three female candidates who won seats in the parliament in 2009. Moreover, the frame regarding the candidates' political background occurred 13 times in 2008, and it increased to 39 times in 2009. Also, the newspapers mentioned women candidates' memberships in community organizations 19 times in 2008, and it increased to 24 times in 2009.

When it comes to the female candidates' campaign platforms (addressed in Table 3), there were increases and decreases in 2008 and 2009. For example, the frame better education declined in 2009. It was used 71 times in 2008, and it decreased in 2009 to 63 times. On the other hand, there was an increase in the economy of Kuwait frame in 2009. It occurred 43 times in 2008 and was used 76 times in 2009. Their opinions regarding Alquota were mentioned 8 times in 2008, and it decreased slightly to 7 times in 2009. The candidates' opinions about electronic counting of votes were completely absent in 2008, whereas in 2009 it was used 8 times. Another debated issue that was covered in both elections was buying the votes of voters. It occurred 16 times in 2008, and it was mentioned only 5 times in 2009.

The results shown in Table 4 further illustrate changes by the Kuwaiti newspapers when framing the female candidates in 2008 and 2009. The alliance frame showed how the female candidates were framed when forming an alliance. The number of times female candidates were mentioned forming an alliance was 117 in 2008. Then this number dropped dramatically to 18 times in 2009. None of the female candidates who



won formed an alliance in the 2009 election. The times an alliance was mentioned by the newspapers' coverage of 2009 pertained to the media's speculations of female candidates forming an alliance. Independent of alliance, which showed that female candidates did not form an alliance with any political group, increased in 2009 with a total of 25, while it was only mentioned 14 times in 2008. For example, *Alwatan* said that "Al-Jassar declared that she is an independent candidate who is not joining any political party or forming any alliance with any political group" (Abduldayem, 2009, p. 22).

Another frame that was used more frequently in 2009 when covering female candidates running for office was the one about rumors and controversies. Table 5 illustrates the rumors and controversies frame. The Kuwaiti newspapers used the veil controversy that happened in 2009 56 times. The controversy occurred when one of the students of one of the female candidates recorded a part of her lecture saying that the veil was not meant to be worn by all the Muslim women, and then the student uploaded it online on You Tube to affect this female candidate negatively. Furthermore, there were increases in the numbers of frames assigned to other rumors and controversies. For example, female candidates dealing with rumors increased to 60 times in 2009, where it was only used 8 times by the Kuwaiti newspapers in 2008.

The most remarkable change of frame can be seen in the change in Kuwaiti parliament frame (see Table 8). There is a notable difference in the number of times it was used by the three Kuwaiti newspapers framing Kuwaiti women candidates running for office. In their 2008 coverage, the newspapers framing Kuwaiti female candidates as agents of change in the Kuwaiti parliament used it only 25 times. However, in 2009 the

three Kuwaiti newspapers increased their usage of this frame to 125 times when covering the same Kuwaiti female candidates. For example, *Alqabas* used this frame by stating that “the responsible voters, who want to contribute to creating change in the parliament, will have to vote for women candidates” (Mohammed, 2009, p. 1).

Other differences between the coverage of the two elections occurred in the voters frame. For instance, Kuwaiti newspapers used the frame women candidates targeting and representing female voters in the parliament 64 times in 2008 and increased it to 90 times in 2009. For example, it was said in *Alwatan* that “the female voter is not the enemy of the female candidate and that she will vote for her” (Saeed, 2009, p. 23). On the other hand, women candidates targeting and representing male voters in the parliament was used 45 times in 2008, and it dropped slightly to 42 times in 2009. The frame women candidates interacting with supporters and other voters in person was used 64 times in 2008 by the Kuwaiti newspaper, but it increased substantially to 112 times in 2009. In addition, the three Kuwaiti newspapers mentioned women candidates interacting with supporters or other voters through mass media/electronic means 15 times in 2008, and the same frame was used 42 times in the year 2009. The results addressing the voters frame can be found in Table 9.

The fourth research question asked if the Kuwaiti newspapers were more supportive of the Kuwaiti female candidates in their coverage of the 2009 parliamentary election versus the 2008 election. The increased amount of newspapers coverage of female candidates in 2009 compared to 2008 coverage is one of the reasons behind the greater numbers of the positive frames that were used in 2009. Furthermore, the results showed



that the 2009 newspapers' coverage of women candidates running for office was more supportive compared to the 2008 coverage of the same female candidates in most of its categories. The 2008 Kuwaiti newspapers' coverage of the female candidates assigned more neutral connotations to the frames used for Kuwaiti women candidates, while the 2009 coverage used more positive associations when writing about the women candidates running for office.

The most notable results covered the frame female candidates' right to be elected to the parliament. The total of times this frame was used in 2009 was 144 times. It was stated 140 times in a positive tune in 2009 coverage and only 59 out 73 times positively in 2008. Moreover, the frame women playing more active roles in their society in general was used 63 times positively in 2009 while in 2008 it was only mentioned 36 times in a positive way. In addition, the religious views of female candidates running for office were mentioned only 4 times in a positive way in 2008 but it was used 16 times positively in 2008. The cultural views of female candidates running for office were mentioned 7 times positively in 2009 but only once positively in 2008. Also, the gender stereotypes frame was stated 6 times positively in 2009, but it did not occur as a positive frame in 2008. When covering the female candidates' profession, they tended to do so neutrally in both elections' coverage. Nevertheless, it was used 48 times positively in 2009 and only 11 times positively in 2008. Also, the rumors and controversies frame that covered the veil controversy of 2009 was used 43 times positively. The female candidates dealing with rumors frame was never mentioned negatively in the 2008 newspapers coverage whereas it was used 6 times as negative frame in 2009. However, it was stated 53 times positively in 2009 and only 5 times positively in 2008. Furthermore, the frame



regarding Kuwaiti women candidates as agents of change in Kuwaiti parliament was assigned with negative connotations 3 times in 2008 but it was never used negatively in 2009. It was used 120 times positively in the 2009 election coverage whereas it was only used 22 times positively in 2008.

The next research question, RQ5, asked if female candidates received more coverage from the Kuwaiti newspapers in 2009 versus 2008. The results showed that Kuwaiti female candidates received more coverage in 2009 when compared to their coverage in the 2008 election. There were 135 articles of female candidates in the 2008 coverage, whereas there were 200 articles covering Kuwaiti female candidates in 2009.

Research question 6 asked if there were differences in the amounts of coverage and the frames used for the female candidates among the three individual newspapers. The results showed that there were no major differences in the amounts of coverage of the individual newspapers and the frames used for female candidates. *Alwatan* and *Alqabas* are both liberal newspapers and *Alrai* is known as a controversial newspaper. *Alrai* newspaper had a total of 119 articles. *Alrai* newspaper coverage of Kuwaiti female candidates reached 50 articles in 2008, and the number of *Alrai* articles in 2009 increased to 67 articles. *Alwatan* newspaper's total articles on female candidates in both elections was 112 articles. *Alwatan* newspaper published a total of 45 articles in its coverage of the 2008 election, while in 2009 there were 67 articles. *Alqabas* newspapers had a total of 104 articles. The total number of 2008 articles published by *Alqabas* newspaper was 40, and in 2009 there were 64 articles covering Kuwaiti female candidates running for office.

When it comes to the differences in frames used by the three Kuwaiti newspapers, *Alrai* newspaper, which is classified as a controversial type of newspaper, showed a larger number in the rumors and controversies category, as addressed in Table 5. *Alrai* newspaper covered the veil controversy 24 times, while *Alwatan* newspaper wrote about it 17 times and *Alqabas* newspaper mentioned it 15 times. The frame female candidates dealing with rumors was also used more often by *Alrai* newspaper, which used it 29 times. *Alqabas* used it 17 times and *Alwatan* newspaper used 14 times.

## Discussion

Through examining the Kuwaiti newspapers' coverage of the parliamentary elections of 2008 and 2009, this study analyzed the way Kuwaiti female candidates were framed in these two elections. The analysis investigated possible differences between the frames that were used by the Kuwaiti newspapers in 2008 and 2009 when covering the female candidates running for office. It also compared the frames that the Kuwaiti newspapers used when addressing the Kuwaiti female candidates to look into the possible relationship between the newspapers' coverage of the female candidates in 2008 and 2009 and the different results of the elections, where the same women candidates were unsuccessful in 2008 but won seats in the Kuwaiti parliament in 2009.

The results show that there were substantial differences between the 2008 and 2009 Kuwaiti newspapers' coverage of female candidates running for office. The first major difference was the amounts of coverage that the Kuwaiti female candidates received in 2008 and 2009. Women candidates received more newspaper coverage in 2009 compared to 2008. All three Kuwaiti newspapers increased the number of articles written about the Kuwaiti female candidates in their 2009 coverage. Another major difference between the newspapers' coverage of the two elections was assigning more positive associations to the frames used for Kuwaiti female candidates in their coverage of the 2009 Kuwaiti parliamentary election, whereas they assigned more neutral associations to the frames in their 2008 coverage. Other differences included the number of times Kuwaiti newspapers framed women candidates as agents of change in Kuwaiti parliament. The Kuwaiti



newspapers increased their usage of this frame in their coverage of the 2009 parliamentary election of Kuwait.

The results also showed that there were increases in the newspapers' usages of the frames related to women's equity/equality as political candidates in 2009 in comparison to their usage in 2008. The frame female candidates right to be elected to the parliament was used fewer times by the three Kuwaiti newspapers when compared to the times it was used in 2009. Another frame, hopes for being the first female candidates to win seats in the parliament, was mentioned more in 2009 than in 2008. Furthermore, the frame women playing more active roles in their society in general increased in the 2009 newspapers' coverage. Other results of this study showed that Kuwaiti newspapers decreased their usage of all of the codes related to the frame women's rights in society.

Even though the primary focus of this study was to look for differences in the frames used by the Kuwaiti newspapers when covering the female candidates of the parliamentary elections of Kuwait, the results of this study showed that there were some similarities between 2008 and 2009 newspaper coverage of female candidates of the Kuwaiti parliamentary elections. For example, there was little usage of the female candidates' personal characteristics frames. Moreover, the three Kuwaiti newspapers assigned more positive or neutral connotations than negative associations when writing about women candidates in both 2008 and 2009 newspaper coverage. Moreover, there were only minor differences among the three Kuwaiti newspapers in the way they framed Kuwaiti female candidates in both 2008 and 2009.

## Theoretical Implications

The increase in the quantity of newspapers coverage that female candidates running for office received in 2009 was one of the major differences between the 2008 and 2009 newspapers coverage of the parliamentary elections. The increased attention by the Kuwaiti newspapers led to increases in the frames used for Kuwaiti female candidates. The current study suggests that this increase may have played a role in the 2009 parliamentary election, where more readers and viewers got more exposure to these female candidates and therefore may have considered them as credible candidates. This increased exposure in turn correlated with the result that they got in 2009, where they won seats in the parliament. When it came to the frames used for Kuwaiti women candidates, however, they were more mostly supportive or neutral in both elections' coverage. Therefore, when comparing newspaper coverage of female candidates in Kuwaiti parliamentary elections of 2008 and 2009, the primary difference was the number of frames assigned for women candidates rather than the direction of these frames.

This finding contrasts with results obtained by Fountaine and McGregor (2002), who found in an earlier study that more media coverage did not necessarily add to the better representation or framing of political women. Their study also showed that even though political women in New Zealand reached higher positions politically, political women were still trivialized or ignored by the media.

The Fountaine and McGregor study also indicated that the increase of women visibility in the media increased the gendering of frames used for women in politics. The



results of the current study showed similar results, where the increase in newspaper coverage led to the increase of the gender specific frame of women's equity/equality as political candidates. However, it seemed to work in favor of the female candidates in the current study. Fountaine and McGregor (2002) showed that the media of New Zealand focused on framing the political women in terms of gender. They attributed many gender stereotypes to them. They showed how the media framed the political women by using frames related to their physical appearances; for example, the media's criticism of political women's voices and the way they spoke. However, the present study analysis showed that the Kuwaiti newspapers did not focus much on the physical appearances of the Kuwaiti female candidates in either 2008 or 2009 election coverage. It also used the gender stereotypes frames more positively than they did neutrally or negatively.

Khan (1993) found that female political candidates for the U.S. Senate concentrated more on education when advertising about their campaign messages while men candidates focused more on economic issues in their campaign platforms. A similar result was found in the present study, where Kuwaiti newspapers used the education frame more frequently when covering the female candidates' campaign platforms. However, Kuwaiti female candidates also attracted a great amount of coverage when campaigning for the economy of Kuwait. This result did not correspond with the Kahn study, which showed that there were differences in the candidates' advertisements of their campaign platforms based on their gender differences.

The study done by Kahn and Goldenberg (1991) showed that female U.S. Senate candidates received less coverage of their campaigns, and it also suggested that female



candidates received more negative coverage when compared to the male candidates. Even though the current study did not compare Kuwaiti female candidates with male candidates, the results of the present study show an opposite result to that of Kahn and Goldenberg when it came to the newspapers' coverage of the Kuwaiti female candidates running for office in 2008 and 2009 parliamentary elections. Women candidates were presented with positive or neutral attributions in most of the frames used.

Taken together, results of some of the previous studies suggest that the use of gender-specific frames tend to disadvantage the female candidates. The current study is an exception, showing that the gender-specific frames that were used in the Kuwaiti newspapers' coverage for the Kuwaiti female candidates tended to favor them. The gender differences between women and men candidates were used by the Kuwaiti newspapers (besides the qualifications that the female candidates possessed) to show the credibility of the women candidates. The political crisis of the Kuwaiti parliament which started in 2008 and lasted until 2009, where it was dissolved two times in a row encouraged the female candidates to speak openly about how poorly men were doing in the last years of the parliament. For example, in *Alwatan* article about Salwa Al-Jassar, who is one of the female candidates who won seats in the 2009 parliament after being unsuccessful in 2008, spoke about the gender differences between female and male candidates. She noted that the participation of women in the parliament would contribute to solving the bad situation in the parliament. She also confirmed that the women candidates had the right to win seats in the Kuwaiti parliament and that the parliament was not meant to be only for men (Abduldayem, 2009).

The distinctive situation of the Kuwaiti parliament resulted in using some new frames when addressing female candidates running for office. In the 2009 newspapers' coverage, it was stated that many people were not willing to vote anymore because they lost trust in most candidates. They also thought that even if they would do so, the parliament would eventually be dissolved. Therefore, most of the articles in the Kuwaiti newspapers were framing the female candidates as the hope for a better change in the Kuwaiti parliament. The frames used by the Kuwaiti newspapers suggested that by changing the members of the parliament, change in the parliament would definitely be achieved. Although none of the Kuwaiti female candidates won seats in the 2008 parliamentary election, huge emphasis was placed on this frame in 2009, suggesting a correlation between the way these Kuwaiti female candidates were framed as agents of change by the Kuwaiti newspapers and the way readers or the voters perceived them as the solution to the problems of the Kuwaiti parliament. As Cristina (2008) stated, "frames are the selective views on certain issues or events" (p. 11). The results of the current study show that the Kuwaiti newspapers selected certain frames to direct their readers to view Kuwaiti female candidates as the most credible candidates who would create change in the Kuwaiti parliament. However, another argument suggests that the disruptive political situation of Kuwaiti politics at that year may have made people want change in general and not conclusively to women candidates creating change in the Kuwaiti parliament.

However, another argument suggests that the disruptive political situation of Kuwaiti politics at that year may have people want change in general rather than the change represented specifically by electing women candidates to Kuwaiti parliament. In other



words, the Kuwaiti public may have wanted any kind of change in 2009, even if it meant voting for women candidates. Certainly it can be argued that the way newspapers framed women candidates as agents of change helped them to be perceived as one of the factors that could create change in the Kuwaiti parliament. Such frames may have never been used in non-disruptive political years. Therefore, women candidates might be framed more in terms of gender stereotypes such as being more nurturing or too emotional and that might have reduced their chances of being elected.

Considering the conservative nature of the Kuwaiti culture, the results of the present study showed an increase in both the religious and cultural views concerning women candidates running for office. Although these frames were used fewer times compared to the other gender frames that were used in 2008 and 2009 coverage, these two frames were more often used positively in the 2009 coverage. The religious and cultural frames that were selected by the Kuwaiti newspapers when addressing Kuwaiti women candidates included some references to the four categories in which Katulis (2005) grouped the arguments against Kuwaiti women running for office. The four categories included the argument that Kuwaiti women candidates were impractical when it came to interacting with all the people they would represent, especially men, if they won seats in the parliament. However, the Kuwaiti newspapers included frames of the way female candidates interacting with their male supporters and other voters, indicating that female candidates were practical enough to communicate with both female and male voters. The other category that was described by Katulis was damaging the families. There were very few times in the current study where the Kuwaiti newspapers mentioned the family frame

or the marital status of the female candidates. Not much attention was given to their female candidates' personal relationships with their families.

Katulis' third category was that women were too emotional. This category was one of the gender stereotypes frames that was used rarely by the Kuwaiti newspapers. Even when it was used, it was framed more positively than neutrally or negatively in 2009. For example, in *Alqabas* newspaper there was an article written by Saadiyah Mefreh (2009) addressing Rola Dashti as too emotional. The female candidate declared in one of her interviews that she got too emotional and cried on her mother's shoulder when she did not win in the 2008 parliamentary election. However, the writer of this article asked the readers to vote for Dashti so that she would not cry again and the writer stated that Dashti was a qualified candidate who deserved to win. Then, one day later in the same Kuwaiti newspaper, there was an article written by Abdullatif Aldeaj who used the same frame, too emotional, in response to that article and speculated that the Dashti would cry but this time she would cry from happiness for being among the first women to win seats in the Kuwaiti parliament. He specifically encouraged female readers of his article to vote for Dashti (Aldeaj, 2009).

Expanding more on Katulis' four categories, his fourth category, absolute rejection, showed that more men than women rejected the idea of electing female candidates to seats in the Kuwaiti parliament. However, the Kuwaiti newspapers in the current study focused more on the idea that women voters did not vote for women candidates in the 2008 parliamentary election. The female candidates said in some of newspaper interviews that women voters should not vote for women just because they were women and from



the same gender. The female candidates wanted both women and men voters to vote for them because they were credible candidates who deserved to gain the people's votes. However, the present study showed that the frame women candidates targeting and representing female candidates in the parliament was used 64 times in 2008 coverage and rose to 90 times in 2009, whereas the frame women candidates targeting and representing male voters in the parliament was used 45 times in 2008 and decreased to 42 times in 2009. Moreover, Aldeaj (2009) offers a good example of how Kuwaiti newspapers were using certain frames to both familiarize the female readers with the idea of voting for female candidates and also to encourage them to actually do so. Therefore, focusing on women voters more than male voters was one of the obvious frames that were used by the Kuwaiti newspapers. There are various possible explanations when it comes to the selection of this particular frame by Kuwaiti newspapers. One explanation suggests that the Kuwaiti newspapers focused more on women voters because they outnumbered male voters and thus their votes could make more of a difference if many women voters voted for female candidates.

Another explanation of the way the Kuwaiti newspapers genderized the frames used for Kuwaiti female candidates is that it was shown that even though Kuwaiti newspapers assigned gender specific frames to Kuwaiti women candidates in their coverage of the 2009 parliamentary election, the frames used were favorable. This disagrees with some previous findings that showed that gender framing of women in politics affected them negatively because the gender frames that were used were mostly opposed to the female candidates (Kahn and Goldenberg, 1991). A third explanation of Kuwaiti newspapers' focus on the female voters frame is the lack of usage of the Alquota frame. This frame

showed the female candidates' opinions regarding the idea of granting them seats in the Kuwaiti parliament regardless of them winning the election, to ensure the equal representation of women and men in the parliament. Kuwaiti newspapers used this frame 8 times in 2008 and 7 times in 2009. The two female candidates who were against the idea of Alquota were framed positively, whereas the one who agreed with the idea of Alquota was framed negatively in 2009 newspapers' coverage.

By combining several findings of the present study which showed increased usage of the female voters, female candidates' right to be elected to the parliament, women playing more active roles in their society in general and Alquota frames in 2009 coverage, this study suggests that the three Kuwaiti newspapers took a supportive stand on the idea of electing women candidates to the Kuwaiti parliament, especially in their coverage of the 2009 election.

The application of framing theory in the context of this study tends to explain the role that the press played in shaping the media content that was consumed by many readers. The framing theory shows that there are certain selections made by the mass communicators, which they use to direct and emphasize specific parts of the media content (Baran & Davis, 2006). This can be seen in the frames used by the Kuwaiti newspapers in their coverage of female candidates in the 2008 and 2009 Kuwaiti parliamentary elections. The result showed that there were very few differences among the frames used by the three different Kuwaiti newspapers in their coverage of female candidates running for office in 2008 and 2009, suggesting that newspapers were in agreement in viewing women as credible candidates.



Framing theory also helps understand the possible relationship between the way Kuwaiti newspapers framed women candidates and the two different election results, where they were unsuccessful in the 2008 Kuwait parliamentary election but won seats in the parliament in 2009. The findings of the present study showed that there were not only similarities in the frames used for Kuwaiti female candidates but also that the positive direction of these frames was relatively similar. Moreover, it showed an increase in the amount of coverage that the female candidates received in 2009 compared to 2008. The increased exposure likely familiarized readers with the idea and action of electing Kuwaiti female candidates to the parliament.

Both framing and priming theories together may explain the shift that happened in the voters' perceptions of Kuwaiti female candidates in 2009, where they viewed them more positively and eventually voted for them. Framing explains the use of certain frames in news coverage. The link between the positive frames used by the Kuwaiti newspapers when covering Kuwaiti female candidates in 2009 and the positive election result of 2009 can be explained by priming. The positive frames in the 2009 newspapers' coverage may have primed readers to apply those positive attributes when deciding who to vote for. Iyengar and Kinder (1987, p. 114) described priming as the process of "drawing attention to some aspects of political life at the expense of others." Also, Entman (2004) defined priming as "activating an association between an item highlighted in the framed text and an audience's thinking about a related concept" (p. 27). Therefore, priming explains the relationship between the positive associations that were used for women candidates in news coverage and the Kuwaiti public's voting decisions in 2009. In other words, the positive frames used by Kuwaiti newspapers may have primed their

readers to believe that Kuwaiti female candidates were credible candidates and, therefore, the readers were more inclined to vote for those candidates.

It is important to note that the frame that was used as a primary frame in 2009 was the change in the parliament frame. The Kuwaiti newspapers framed Kuwaiti female candidates as agents of change in the Kuwaiti parliament and assigned this frame with positive associations. It in turn, correlated positively with the voters' voting decisions in 2009. Many voters may have voted for Kuwaiti women candidates because they wanted change and wanted the political crisis of Kuwait to end and did not want the Kuwaiti parliament to be dissolved again.

#### Practical Implications

Kuwaiti female candidates running for office achieved their victory in 2009 and today they have their seats in the Kuwaiti parliament. Therefore, one can say that in the future parliamentary elections of Kuwait, there are likely be fewer obstacles facing women candidates to win seats in the parliament. However, the critical experience of the two previous elections contributed to the 2009 victory. Female candidates were aware that many Kuwaiti voters wanted change in the Kuwaiti parliament. According to CNN (2009), "Al-Awadi said the elections proved Kuwaitis want political change" (p.1). The present study showed how Kuwaiti newspapers placed greater attention on framing women candidates as agents of change. However, this particular frame was used effectively in the 2009 election, because none of the women candidates won seats in the parliament in earlier elections which helped in presenting them as agents of change in the 2009 newspapers' coverage.



The current study provides some suggestions for female candidates running for office in future Kuwait parliamentary elections. One suggestion is to clarify the importance of considering the dominant political situation in the year that the female candidates plan to participate. Presenting themselves as agents of change might be as effective as it was in the 2009 election. In a disruptive year of politics, the emphasis on the change factor can be more appropriately used in their campaign platforms and as well as their campaign slogans. In addition, they should promote themselves as agents of change by providing change strategies and actions that they would aim to achieve as part of the Kuwaiti parliament. On the other hand, focusing on change in the Kuwaiti parliament might not work as effectively when used in non-disruptive years of Kuwaiti politics. Therefore, in a non-disruptive year politically, female candidates should focus on issues that they stand for and are included in their campaign platforms. Another credible strategy would be campaigning about issues and areas that the women candidates specialize in and that were used by some of the female candidates in the 2008 and 2009 parliamentary elections. For example, Rola Dashti, one of the female candidates who won in the 2009 parliamentary election, talked a lot about the economy of Kuwait during her campaign and it was part of her campaign platform. That is likely because she is a professor in Kuwait University and specializes in economics.

When it comes to the way female candidates interact with voters, the findings of this study showed that there was a great amount of newspaper attention regarding the way women candidates interacted with their supporters and other voters, especially in the 2009 newspaper coverage of the Kuwaiti parliamentary election. The frames about women candidates interacting with supporters and other voters in person and also through

mass media/electronic means were more often used by the Kuwaiti newspapers in 2009. Therefore, increasing their personal appearances would be a good strategy to use in future elections. Moreover, expanding their interaction with various types of media would also help them in maintaining higher profiles and make them more recognizable to the public. The female candidates' interaction with the media means can be done through inviting journalists and photographers to their campaign events to ensure receiving adequate media coverage for their campaigns. Furthermore, increasing their media appearances and maintaining good relations with the media and mass communicators can work as a useful tactic.

### Study Limitations

Limitations of this study include that it only looked at Kuwaiti female candidates and the way they were covered by the Kuwaiti newspapers in the 2008 and 2009 Kuwaiti parliamentary elections. The comparison focused on newspapers frames that were assigned to women candidates only and did not look at the Kuwaiti male candidates or made any comparison between the way Kuwaiti newspapers covered Kuwaiti female and male candidates running for office. By comparing women candidates to men candidates, further explanations of the frames used by Kuwaiti newspapers could be investigated, especially the use of gender-specific frames. Future research should look at the frames that were used by the Kuwaiti newspapers for both female and male candidates and also compare the ways they were used in the newspapers' coverage of the elections.

Another limitation of this study is that it only focused on Kuwaiti newspapers and did not include other news media. There was no representation of Kuwaiti television or



radio coverage of Kuwaiti female candidates running for office in 2008 and 2009. The primary focus of the current study was the frames used by the Kuwaiti newspapers. Including other types of news media would add to the understanding of the way women candidates were framed by the various types of news media in Kuwait. Also, making comparisons between the coverage done by the newspapers, television and radio stations would show the differences and similarities in the frames used for female candidates. Thus, future research should examine the ways different news media present women candidates and see how the type of media influences the coverage and the frames used for female candidates running for office. A comparison of the coverage by newspapers, television and radio stations can reveal differences in the way they cover women candidates and these differences will be based on the differences among them. The visual and sound effects of television and radio may add differences to the coverage of female candidates when compared to newspaper coverage which requires reading skills.

Comparing only Kuwaiti newspapers' coverage of female candidates in parliamentary elections of Kuwait is another limitation of this study. It did not include comparisons to newspaper coverage of female candidates in other countries or regions of the world. The comparisons of Kuwaiti newspapers' coverage of female candidates and other countries' newspaper coverage would show the differences and similarities between the way Kuwaiti newspapers and newspapers in other countries frame their female candidates running for office, where cultural differences could reveal differences in the way they cover women candidates. Future research should look at comparing Kuwaiti newspapers' coverage of female candidates and other countries' coverage of female

candidates to learn more about the effects of culture on the use of gender-specific frames for women in the different regions of the world.

### Future Research

More research is needed to investigate the relationships between the frames used by the media in their coverage of female candidates and their political progress. Future research should compare the amounts of coverage that female and male candidates receive from news media and see if they tend to cover both female and male candidates with the same frequency. Moreover, the comparison should include both the differences and similarities in the gender-specific frames assigned for female and male candidates. There should also be comparisons about the positive, neutral or negative direction of the frames used by the news media to learn more about the way they cover female and male candidates. These comparisons might show if the news media are more supportive of female candidates or male candidates.

Besides comparing coverage of female and male candidates by different types of news media, there are other questions that can be examined in future research. As mentioned previously, media coverage of female candidates in other parts of the world should be further investigated. Future research can be done using comparisons between Kuwaiti media framing of women candidates and other Middle Eastern countries and the ways their media frame female candidates. Future studies should compare the way the media in each country frame their female candidates, to show how the differences in the political experiences of each country contribute in its media coverage of their female candidates and the way they frame them, which in turn may influence the perceptions of



the voters in those countries. Moreover, these comparisons could show the differences in female political gains in Middle Eastern countries.

More research is needed to further investigate the change frame that was used for female candidates in the Kuwaiti newspaper coverage of the 2009 parliamentary election. Future research should see if it was change in general that the Kuwaiti public wanted at that time because they wanted an end for the political corruption in the parliament, or if the change sought was electing women candidates specifically. The use of the change in the parliament frame should be examined to see if the general desire for change was one of the factors that helped women candidates get seats in the Kuwaiti parliament and compare their chances of winning seats in other parliamentary elections in non-disruptive political years.

As mentioned previously, future studies can also compare media and the way they frame female candidates in Middle Eastern and Western countries, where cultural differences and diverse political experiences might emerge. Comparing Middle Eastern and Western media coverage of female candidates could identify differences in frames that are used for women candidates to see if cultural factors affect the way women candidates are framed by the media. Future studies should also see if gender-specific frames assigned for women remain the same or differ based on the similarities and differences between Middle Eastern and Western countries.

Future research is also needed to explore more about the way media frame their coverage of female candidates and the way such frames prime the voters. Through applying the theories of framing and priming, there should be more investigation

regarding the relationship between the way media coverage of female candidates is framed and the way the public view them. The relationship of how frames can influence voters' behaviors and decisions through priming should also be examined. Therefore, future studies should further investigate the application of framing and priming to the news media coverage of female candidates and the voters' decisions to vote for them in Kuwait and other countries.

The increased amount of coverage that the Kuwaiti women candidates received from the Kuwaiti newspapers in 2009 also could have had an agenda setting effect. McCombs and Shaw (1972) described agenda setting by saying that "in choosing and displaying news, editors, newsroom staff, and broadcasters play an important part in shaping political reality. Readers learn not only about a given issue, but how much importance to attach to that issue from the amount of information in a news story and its positions" (p. 176). Future research should examine the agenda setting effect of the Kuwaiti newspaper coverage of female candidates to see if the increased amount of news stories of female candidates, separate from the way they were framed in such stories, directed the readers to pay more attention to them and thereby increased their chances of getting elected.

### Conclusion

It is clear that there were differences between Kuwaiti newspapers' coverage of female candidates running for office in 2008 and 2009. The increased amount of Kuwaiti newspapers' coverage of female candidates in 2009 show that female candidates are getting more newspaper attention. The increased amount of coverage will help women



candidates in future parliamentary elections become well known by the Kuwaiti public. Therefore, they should gain more seats in the Kuwaiti parliament in the future.

The positive frames that were associated with female candidates in the Kuwaiti newspapers' coverage of the 2009 parliamentary election showed that the Kuwaiti newspapers were supportive of Kuwaiti female candidates running for office and encouraged the idea of electing women candidates to the parliament in 2009. The support that the Kuwaiti women candidates received from the Kuwaiti newspapers correlated with the 2009 parliamentary election outcome, where Kuwaiti women candidates were successful in winning seats in the parliament. Due in part to positive and supportive coverage from newspapers, Kuwaiti women candidates not only gained more political progress in 2009. In future elections to the Kuwaiti parliament, there is hope that Kuwaiti female candidate will be depicted as more competitive with male candidates and win more seats in the parliament of Kuwait.

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## APPENDIX A

### Tables of Frequencies and Percentages of Frames

**Table 1:**

#### **Frequencies and Percentages of Frames for Female Candidates' Personal Characteristics**

##### **A: Female Candidates' Personal Characteristics**

<b>A.1. Age</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	1 (5.0%)			0 (0.0%)		
	+	<b>0</b>	-	+	<b>0</b>	-
	0	1	0	0	0	0
Alqabas Newspaper	0 (0.0%)			4 (9.5%)		
	+	<b>0</b>	-	+	<b>0</b>	-
	0	0	0	1	3	0
Alrai Newspaper	4 (20.0%)			0 (0.0%)		
	+	<b>0</b>	-	+	<b>0</b>	-
	2	2	0	0	0	0
Total	5 (25.0%)			4 (9.5%)		
	+	<b>0</b>	-	+	<b>0</b>	-
	2	3	0	1	3	0
<b>A.2. Ethnicity</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	0 (0.0%)			3 (7.1%)		
	+	<b>0</b>	-	+	<b>0</b>	-
	0	0	0	3	0	0
Alqabas Newspaper	3 (15.0%)			9 (21.4%)		
	+	<b>0</b>	-	+	<b>0</b>	-
	1	2	0	7	1	1
Alrai Newspaper	0 (0.0%)			3 (7.1%)		
	+	<b>0</b>	-	+	<b>0</b>	-
	0	0	0	3	0	0
Total	3 (15.0%)			15 (35.7%)		
	+	<b>0</b>	-	+	<b>0</b>	-
	1	2	0	13	1	1
<b>A.3. Religious branch</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	3 (15.0%)			0 (0.0%)		
	+	<b>0</b>	-	+	<b>0</b>	-
	0	3	0	0	0	0



Alqabas Newspaper	2 (10.0%)			2 (4.7%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	2	0	1	1	0
Alrai Newspaper	0 (0.0%)			2 (4.7%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	0	0	1	1	0
Total	5 (25.0%)			4 (9.5%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	5	0	2	2	0
<b>A.4. Marital status</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	0 (0.0%)			0 (0.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	0	0	0	0	0
Alqabas Newspaper	3 (15.0%)			4 (9.5%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	2	1	0	2	2	0
Alrai Newspaper	0 (0.0%)			0 (0.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	3 (15.0%)			4 (9.5%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	2	1	0	2	2	0
<b>A.5. Personal hobbies and interests</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	0 (0.0%)			0 (0.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	0	0	0	0	0
Alqabas Newspaper	0 (0.0%)			8 (19.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	0	0	5	3	0
Alrai Newspaper	0 (0.0%)			0 (0.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0 (0.0%)			8 (19.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	0	0	5	3	0
<b>A.6. Other personal characteristics</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	1 (5.0%)			2 (4.7%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	1	0	2	0	0
Alqabas Newspaper	1 (5.0%)			2 (4.7%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-

	1	0	0	2	0	0
Alrai Newspaper	2 (10.0%)			3 (7.1%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	2	0	0	2	0	1
Total	4 (20.0%)			7 (16.6%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	3	1	0	6	0	1



**Table 2:****Frequencies and Percentages of Frames for Female Candidates' Professional Qualifications****B: Female Candidates' Professional Qualifications**

<b>B.1. Educational degree</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	1 (0.36%)			1 (0.19%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	1	0	1	0	0
Alqabas Newspaper	1 (0.36%)			5 (.97%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	1	0	5	0	0
Alrai Newspaper	7 (2.5%)			3 (0.58%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	3	4	0	3	0	0
Total	9 (3.2%)			9 (1.7%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	3	6	0	9	0	0
<b>B.2. Profession</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	59 (21.3%)			140 (27.2%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	1	58	0	7	127	6
Alqabas Newspaper	67 (24.2%)			149 (28.9%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	6	61	0	20	118	11
Alrai Newspaper	84 (30.4%)			120 (23.3%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	4	80	0	21	99	0
Total	210 (76.0%)			409 (79.5%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	11	199	0	48	344	17
<b>B.3. Previous/current work positions</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	3 (1.0%)			4 (0.7%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	3	0	1	2	1
Alqabas Newspaper	4 (1.4%)			12 (2.3%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	4	0	0	11	1	0
Alrai Newspaper	11 (3.9%)			9 (1.7%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	5	6	0	4	5	0

Total	18 (6.5%)			25 (4.8%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	9	9	0	16	8	1
<b>B.4. Political background</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	3 (1.0%)			7 (1.3%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	2	1	0	6	1	0
Alqabas Newspaper	6 (2.1%)			21 (4.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	4	2	0	18	2	1
Alrai Newspaper	4 (1.4%)			11(2.1%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	4	0	0	9	2	0
Total	13 (4.7%)			39 (7.5%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	10	3	0	33	5	1
<b>B.5. Membership in community organizations</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	4 (1.4%)			10 (1.9%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	4	0	0	8	2
Alqabas Newspaper	5 (1.8%)			7 (1.3%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	1	4	0	7	0	0
Alrai Newspaper	10 (3.6%)			7 (1.3%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	3	7	0	1	6	0
Total	19 (6.8%)			24 (4.6%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	4	15	0	8	14	2
<b>B.6. Other professional qualifications</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	0 (0.0%)			0 (0.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	0	0	0	0	0
Alqabas Newspaper	3 (1.0%)			6 (1.1%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	2	1	0	5	1	0
Alrai Newspaper	4 (1.4%)			2 (0.38%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	4	0	0	2	0	0
Total	7 (2.5%)			8 (1.5%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	6	1	0	7	1	0



**Table 3:****Frequencies and Percentages of Frames for Campaign Platforms/Opinions****C: Campaign Platforms/Opinions**

<b>C.1. Better education</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	18 (10.5%)			24 (12.6%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	5	13	0	18	6	0
Alqabas Newspaper	21 (12.2%)			16 (8.4%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	6	14	1	16	0	0
Alrai Newspaper	32 (18.7%)			23 (12.1%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	29	3	0	23	0	0
Total	71 (41.5%)			63 (33.1%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	40	30	1	57	6	0
<b>C.2. Economy of Kuwait</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	10 (5.8%)			24 (12.6%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	2	8	0	18	6	0
Alqabas Newspaper	10 (5.8%)			24 (12.6%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	2	8	0	24	0	0
Alrai Newspaper	23 (13.4%)			28 (14.7%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	22	1	0	28	0	0
Total	43 (25.1%)			76 (40.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	26	17	0	70	6	0
<b>C.3. Campaign slogans</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	7 (4.0%)			6 (3.1%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	2	5	0	3	3	0
Alqabas Newspaper	10 (5.8%)			6 (3.1%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	5	5	0	4	2	0
Alrai Newspaper	8 (5.6%)			9 (4.7%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	4	4	0	5	4	0
Total	25 (14.6%)			21 (11.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-

	11	14	0	12	9	0
<b>C.4. Alquota</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	1 (0.58%)			2 (1.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	1	0	0	0	2
Alqabas Newspaper	5 (2.9%)			3 (1.5%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	1	4	0	3	0	0
Alrai Newspaper	2 (1.1%)			2 (1.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	1	1	0	2	0	0
Total	8 (4.6%)			7 (3.6%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	2	6	0	5	0	2
<b>C.5. Electronic counting of votes</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	0 (0.0%)			4 (2.1%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	0	0	0	2	2
Alqabas Newspaper	0 (0.0%)			2 (1.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	0	0	1	1	0
Alrai Newspaper	0 (0.0%)			2 (1.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	0	0	1	1	0
Total	0 (0.0%)			8 (4.2%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	0	0	2	4	2
<b>C.6. Buying the votes of voters</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	3 (1.7%)			2 (1.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	1	2	0	1	1	0
Alqabas Newspaper	7 (4.0%)			0 (0.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	3	4	0	0	0	0
Alrai Newspaper	6 (3.5%)			3 (1.5%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	6	0	0	1	2	0
Total	16 (9.3%)			5 (2.6%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	10	6	0	2	3	0



<b>C.7. Other platforms/ opinions</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	4 (2.3%)			3 (1.5%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	2	2	0	3	0	0
Alqabas Newspaper	1 (0.58%)			5 (2.6%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	1	0	0	5	0	0
Alrai Newspaper	3 (1.7%)			2 (1.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	2	1	0	2	0	0
Total	8 (4.6%)			10 (5.2%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	5	3	0	10	0	0

**Table 4:****Frequencies and Percentages of Frames for Political Alliance****D: Political Alliance**

<b>D.1. Alliance</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	24 (18.3%)			1 (2.3%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	7	17	0	0	0	1
Alqabas Newspaper	38 (29.0%)			5 (11.6%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	17	18	3	5	0	0
Alrai Newspaper	55 (41.9%)			12 (27.9%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	25	25	5	3	6	3
Total	117 (89.3%)			18 (41.8%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	49	60	8	8	6	4
<b>D.2. Independent alliance</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	1 (0.76%)			9 (20.9%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	1	0	0	5	2	2
Alqabas Newspaper	3 (2.2%)			2 (4.6%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	3	0	1	0	1
Alrai Newspaper	10 (7.6%)			14 (32.5%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	4	1	5	11	2	1
Total	14 (10.6%)			25 (58.1%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	5	4	5	17	4	4



**Table 5:****Frequencies and Percentages of Frames for Rumors and Controversies****E. Rumors and Controversies**

<b>E.1. Veil controversy</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	0 (0.0%)			17 (13.8%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	0	0	8	2	7
Alqabas Newspaper	0 (0.0%)			15 (12.1%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	0	0	13	0	2
Alrai Newspaper	0 (0.0%)			24 (19.5%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	0	0	22	2	0
Total	0 (0.0%)			56 (45.5%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	0	0	43	4	9
<b>E.2. Female candidates dealing with rumors</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	0 (0.0%)			14 (11.3%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	0	0	9	1	4
Alqabas Newspaper	7 (53.8%)			17 (13.8%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	4	3	0	15	0	2
Alrai Newspaper	1 (7.6%)			29 (23.5%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	1	0	0	29	0	0
Total	8 (61.5%)			60 (48.7%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	5	3	0	53	1	6
<b>E.3. Other rumors/ controversies</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	0 (0.0%)			1 (0.81%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	0	0	1	0	0
Alqabas Newspaper	3 (23.0%)			3 (2.4%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	2	1	0	2	0	1
Alrai Newspaper	2 (15.3%)			3 (2.4%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	2	0	0	3	0	0

Total	5 (38.4%)			7 (5.6%)		
	+	<b>0</b>	-	+	<b>0</b>	-
	4	1	0	6	0	1



**Table 6:****Frequencies and Percentages of Frames for Women's Equity/Equality as Political Candidates****F: Women's Equity/Equality as Political Candidates**

<b>F.1. Female candidates' right to be elected to the parliament</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	12 (8.8%)			32 (12.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	5	7	0	28	4	0
Alqabas Newspaper	25 (18.3%)			61 (22.9%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	20	5	0	61	0	0
Alrai Newspaper	36 (26.4%)			51 (19.1%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	34	1	1	51	0	0
Total	73 (53.6%)			144 (54.1%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	59	13	1	140	4	0
<b>F.2. Hopes for being the first female candidate to win seats in the parliament</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	0 (0.0%)			3 (1.1%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	0	0	3	0	0
Alqabas Newspaper	3 (2.2%)			3 (1.1%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	3	0	0	3	0	0
Alrai Newspaper	2 (1.4%)			7 (2.6%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	1	1	0	7	0	0
Total	5 (3.6%)			13 (4.8%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	4	1	0	13	0	0
<b>F.3. Women playing more active roles in their society in general</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	10 (7.3%)			19 (7.1%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	4	6	0	17	2	0

Alqabas Newspaper	13 (9.5%)			25 (9.3%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	9	3	1	21	4	0
Alrai Newspaper	23 (16.9%)			25 (9.3%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	23	0	0	25	0	0
Total	46 (33.8%)			69 (25.9%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	36	9	1	63	6	0
<b>F.4. Religious views for or against female candidates running for office</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	0 (0.0%)			5 (1.8%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	0	0	3	1	1
Alqabas Newspaper	5 (3.6%)			11 (4.1%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	2	3	0	7	0	4
Alrai Newspaper	2 (1.4%)			6 (2.2%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	2	0	0	6	0	0
Total	7 (5.1%)			22 (8.2%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	4	3	0	16	1	5
<b>F.5. Cultural views for or against female candidates running for office</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	0 (0.0%)			3 (1.1%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	0	0	2	1	0
Alqabas Newspaper	1 (0.73%)			4 (1.5%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	1	0	0	4	0	0
Alrai Newspaper	1 (0.73%)			1 (0.37%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	0	1	1	0	0
Total	2 (1.4%)			8 (3.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	1	1	0	7	1	0
<b>F.6. Gender stereotypes</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	1 (0.73%)			2 (0.75%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	1	0	0	0	2



Alqabas Newspaper	2 (1.4%)			8 (3.0%)		
	+	<b>0</b>	-	+	<b>0</b>	-
	0	0	2	6	1	1
Alrai Newspaper	0 (0.0%)			0 (0.0%)		
	+	<b>0</b>	-	+	<b>0</b>	-
	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	3 (2.2%)			10 (3.7%)		
	+	<b>0</b>	-	+	<b>0</b>	-
	0	1	2	6	1	3

**Table 7:**

**Frequencies and Percentages of Frames for Women's rights In Society**

**G: Women's Rights In Society**

<b>G.1. Women's right to education</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	1 (1.1%)			1 (2.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	1	0	1	0	0
Alqabas Newspaper	11 (12.2%)			3 (6.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	1	10	0	3	0	0
Alrai Newspaper	9 (10.0%)			3 (6.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	9	0	0	3	0	0
Total	21 (23.3%)			7 (14.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	10	11	0	7	0	0
<b>G.2. Women's right to occupy better professional positions</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	1 (1.1%)			1 (2.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	1	0	1	0	0
Alqabas Newspaper	16 (17.7%)			5 (10.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	2	14	0	5	0	0
Alrai Newspaper	17 (18.8%)			8 (16.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	17	0	0	8	0	0
Total	34 (37.7%)			14 (28.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	19	15	0	14	0	0
<b>G.3. Women's right to have equal benefits for her and her children when marrying a foreign spouse</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	2 (2.2%)			5 (10.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	0	2	0	5	0	0
Alqabas Newspaper	15 (16.6%)			6 (12.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	2	13	0	6	0	0



Alrai Newspaper	10 (11.1%)			12 (24.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	10	0	0	12	0	0
Total	27 (30.0%)			23 (46.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	12	15	0	23	0	0
<b>G.4. Other women's rights in society</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	2 (2.2%)			2 (4.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	1	1	0	2	0	0
Alqabas Newspaper	2 (2.2%)			1 (2.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	2	0	0	1	0	0
Alrai Newspaper	4 (4.4%)			3 (6.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	4	0	0	3	0	0
Total	8 (8.8%)			6 (12.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	7	1	0	6	0	0

**Table 8:**

**Frequencies and Percentages of Frames for Change In Kuwaiti Parliament**

**H: Change In Kuwaiti Parliament**

<b>H.1. Kuwaiti women candidates as agents of change in the Kuwaiti parliament</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	5 (20.0%)			35 (28.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	4	1	0	30	5	0
Alqabas Newspaper	5 (20.0%)			38 (30.4%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	3	2	0	38	0	0
Alrai Newspaper	15 (60.0%)			52 (41.6%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	15	0	0	52	0	0
Total	25 (100.0%)			125 (100.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	22	0	3	120	5	0



Table 9:

## Frequencies and Percentages of Frames for Voters

## I: Voters

<b>I.1. Women candidates targeting and representing female voters in the parliament</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	18 (9.5%)			23 (8.0%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	8	10	0	16	7	0
Alqabas Newspaper	23 (12.2%)			36 (12.5%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	7	16	0	26	10	0
Alrai Newspaper	23 (12.2%)			31 (10.8%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	18	3	2	28	2	1
Total	64 (34.0%)			90 (31.4%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	33	29	2	70	19	1
<b>I.2. Women candidates targeting and representing male voters in the parliament</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	13 (6.9%)			8 (2.7%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	2	11	0	4	4	0
Alqabas Newspaper	16 (8.5%)			19 (6.6%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	3	11	2	16	3	0
Alrai Newspaper	16 (8.5%)			15 (5.2%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	15	1	0	15	0	0
Total	45 (23.9%)			42 (14.6%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	20	23	2	35	7	0
<b>I.3. Women candidates interacting with supporters and other voters in person</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	15 (7.9%)			27 (9.4%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	5	10	0	12	15	0

Alqabas Newspaper	21 (11.1%)			41 (14.3%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	3	2	16	11	28	2
Alrai Newspaper	28 (14.8%)			44 (15.3%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	6	22	0	14	30	0
Total	64 (34.0%)			112 (39.1%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	14	48	2	37	73	2
<b>I.4. Women candidates interacting with supporters or other voters through mass media/electronic means</b>	<b>2008</b>			<b>2009</b>		
Alwatan Newspaper	3 (1.5%)			13 (4.5%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	1	2	0	2	11	0
Alqabas Newspaper	6 (3.1%)			12 (4.1%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	3	3	0	8	2	2
Alrai Newspaper	6 (3.1%)			17 (5.9%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	5	1	0	8	9	0
Total	15 (7.9%)			42 (14.6%)		
	+	0	-	+	0	-
	9	6	0	18	22	2



## **APPENDIX B**

### **Codebook**

#### **Code Book:**

Directions: To code each newspaper article, circle the parts of text that most closely match the description of the code and write the code in the margin next to the text. Then, code for direction. To code for direction, place a "+" (plus sign) at the end of the code that indicates positive meanings of the code; a "0" if the code is referred to in a neutral way; or a "-" (minus sign) if there is negative connotation attached to the code. For example, if one of the female candidates had support from her political alliance and it was shown in the article as a positive or a good point, place a "+" after the code.

#### **The Coding Categories:**

**A. Female Candidates' Personal Characteristics:** *(which includes any mention of the female candidates' age, ethnicity, religious branch, marital status, personal hobbies and interests)*

**A.1. Age.**

**A.2. Ethnicity.**

**A.3. Religious branch** *(e.g., Sunni or Shiite).*

**A.4. Marital status.**

**A.5. Personal hobbies and interests** *(e.g., riding horses, listening to music, etc).*

**A.6. Other personal characteristics.**

**B. Female Candidates' Professional Qualifications:** *(which includes the parts of text that state the female candidates' educational degree, profession, previous or current positions, political background, memberships in community organizations)*

**B.1. Educational degree** *(e.g., anything that refers to the candidate's educational background).*

**B.2. Profession.**

**B.3. Previous/current work positions.**

**B.4. Political background** (*e.g., any mention of the female candidate's previous attempts to run for office*).

**B.5. Memberships in community organizations** (*e.g., women's organizations*).

**B.6. Other professional qualifications.**

**C. Campaign Platform:** (*this includes, but not limited to, what the female candidates formally stand for and also what they promote, support and plan to achieve if they are elected. For example, better education, economy of Kuwait and so on. Also, it includes the campaigns' slogans and the female candidates' personal opinions regarding debated issues such as Alquota, electronic counting of votes, buying the votes of voters, etc*)

**C.1. Better education.**

**C.2. Economy of Kuwait.**

**C.3. Campaign slogans.**

**C.4. Alquota** (*i.e., granting women seats in the parliament regardless of they do or do not win votes in the election to ensure equal representation between women and men in the parliament*).

**C.5. Electronic counting of votes.**

**C.6. Buying the votes of voters.**

**C.7. Other platforms/opinions.**

**D. Political Alliance:** (*including the formation of alliances of the female candidates with other female or male candidates and also the absence of alliances*)

**D.1. Alliance.**



- D.2. Independent alliance** (*e.g., a female candidate's decision not to form alliances with other candidates*).
- E. Rumors and Controversies:** (*this includes the veil controversy that came against one of the female candidates through You Tube Website in 2009, and it also covers the way female candidates deal with them*)
- E.1. Veil controversy.**
- E.2. Female candidates' dealing with rumors.**
- E.3. Other rumors/controversies.**
- F. Women's Equity/Equality as Political Candidates:** (*this covers the female candidates' hopes, chances and ambition to obtain equality with male candidates by being elected by the people and win seats in the parliament. It also covers the religious and cultural views that are for or against women running for office and gender stereotypes*)
- F.1. Female candidates' right to be elected to the parliament.**
- F.2. Hopes for being the first female candidates to win seats in the parliament.**
- F.3. Women playing more active roles in their society in general.**
- F.4. Religious views for or against female candidates running for office.**
- F.5. Cultural views for or against female candidates running for office.**
- F.6. Gender stereotypes** (*e.g., stereotypical gender differences that are not linked to religion structures and are not culturally driven*).
- G. Women's Rights In Society:** (*including, but not limited to, women's rights that the female candidates are fighting for in general in Kuwait; for example, women's right to be well educated, have better occupational positions, and equal rights when marrying a foreign spouse*)

- G.1. Women's right to education.**
- G.2. Women's right to occupy better professional positions.**
- G.3. Women's right to have equal benefits for her and her children when marrying a foreign spouse.**
- G.4. Other women's rights in society.**
- H. Change In Kuwaiti Parliament:** *(this includes the various ways female candidates were covered in the press as agents of change and by stating that their contribution in the parliament will create change)*
  - H.1. Kuwaiti women candidates as agents of change in the Kuwaiti parliament.**
- I. Voters:** *(including women candidates as representers of the female voters, women candidates targeting and also representing male voters, and the way female candidates interact with their supporters and other voters in person or via mass media/electronic means)*
  - I.1. Women candidates targeting and representing female voters in the parliament.**
  - I.2. Women candidates targeting and representing male voters in the parliament.**
  - I.3. Women candidates interacting with supporters or other voters in person** *(e.g., a supporter greeting a female candidate in a public place).*
  - I.4. Women candidates interacting with supporters or other voters through mass media/electronic means** *(e.g., creating a Facebook page and using it to read the voters' comments, suggestions, etc).*