



THE DEPENDENT, THE VICTIM AND THE UNQUALIFIED

- A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF MEDIA'S
CONSTRUCTION OF IMMIGRANT WOMEN IN SWEDEN

BY

MY SELIM

International Migration and Ethnic Relations
One-Year Master's Thesis (IM636L)
Malmö University
Spring 2020
Supervisor: Tina Gudrun Jensen

Abstract

The aim of the thesis is to contribute to an increased understanding on how immigrant women are being constructed in Swedish media in relation to labour. It is also to gain a greater understanding of the different kinds of expressions of ‘Swedish values’ and ‘othering’ that immigrant women are associated with in editorial pages in Swedish newspapers. Fairclough's critical discourse analysis is used to answer the research questions of the study. 27 editorial texts, published between 2016 - 2018, regarding immigrant women in relation to labour is analyzed. The theoretical framework used in the thesis consists of the framing theory, the concept of stereotypes and othering, and femonationalism. The result shows that ‘Swedish values’ and especially ‘Swedish gender equality’ is utilized to position the immigrant woman as the opposite of the “Swedish woman”. In addition to the overall prevailing discourses of ‘Swedish values’ and especially ‘Swedish gender equality’, the media's image of the immigrant women entailed three sub discourses; the Dependent, the Victim and the Unqualified.

Keywords: *Immigrant women, labour market, critical discourse analysis, Fairclough, femonationalism, stereotypes.*

Word count: 15.327

Acknowledgements

There are some people, who in different ways have contributed throughout this process, without you this thesis would never have been finished.

I would like to thank my supervisor Tina for your support and constructive feedback. And for enlightening me on which tea is the most appropriate to drink during writing processes.

Vilde, for checking in on me every morning, and for the rest of the day. For being there all the bad days and also the good ones. May the bridge open soon!

My family, for all the support and helping me out in different ways. And for always believing in me, even when I did not.

Johan, for putting up with an exhausted mother. Skrutt, you exercise my patience every day and make me smile every day. I love you.

Finally, Bengt, Batol, Lars, Caroline and Marie-Louise, for teaching me to enjoy studying and pushing myself a bit further.

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1 Introduction

“Employment is generally considered to be a crucial factor for the integration of immigrants” (Lundborg 2013 p. 219)

According to the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise (Svenskt Näringsliv) it takes about ten years for immigrant women to establish themselves on the Swedish labour market compared to six and a half years for men (Galte Schermer 2019). 22.3% of the women aged 20-64, born outside Sweden, are not part of the labor force (i.e. unemployed or job-seekers) which is more than 10% higher than women born in Sweden (Migrationsinfo.se). Regardless of educational level or age, the category of foreign-born women shows a higher unemployment rate than foreign-born men and domestic-born men and women (ibid). Some of the most common explanations are education level, work experience and language skills. But these factors are not always sufficient to explain the gap in employment rate. Several studies show that individuals with foreign names are less likely to land a job than individuals with domestic names, and the likeliness decreases the higher the level of customer contact (Carlsson and Skedinger 2011:39ff). An applicant with a typical Swedish name is twice or three times more likely to be interviewed than an applicant with a typical Arabic name for a job as a store clerk, restaurant assistant or construction worker (Carlsson and Skedinger 2011:50). Another study shows that male employment officers believe that the ability to finish education and/or job training is higher for female job-seekers with a stereotypical Swedish appearance (Arai, Gartell, Rödin and Özcan 2016:15). Obviously, there is a streak of ethnic discrimination in employment situations.

Because the media produces "self evident truths" and images of reality (Strömbäck 2014), media has a significant role in the development of structural discrimination, and this means that opinions of the public are influenced by this in relation to their understanding of immigration and immigrants.

Although balanced and neutral articles have been in majority in editorial pages of the Swedish national daily newspapers 2010-2015, it is clear that articles that portray immigration and integration depicted in negative terms have been dominant to articles that portray immigration and integration in positive terms (Bolin, Hinnfors and Strömbäck 2016:203). Furthermore, de los Reyes argues that gender discrimination of immigrant women rarely is discussed in relation to Swedish workplaces (2017:28). This indicates that there is a knowledge gap and a need to investigate how “immigrant women” are being constructed in relation to the labour market and work life in Swedish editorial pages.

1.2 Aim, Problem statement and Research questions

Based on the above mentioned insights, and the fact that gender discrimination for immigrant women is rarely discussed in relation to Swedish workplaces (de los Reyes 2017), the aim of this study is to find out how immigrant women are being constructed in Swedish media in relation to labour. This is to gain a greater understanding of the different kinds of expressions of ‘Swedish values’ and ‘othering’ that immigrant women are associated with in editorial pages in Swedish newspapers. In addition to this, the thesis will contribute to already existing material on how immigrant women are constructed in Swedish media.

Problem statement:

- What are the prevalent discourses through which the Swedish media construct immigrant women in connection to labour?

Research questions:

- How do 'Swedish values' play a role in the construction of immigrant women?
- How do gender and stereotypes intersect in the editorial texts?

Before continuing, two important terms will be discussed. First the problematic term 'immigrant' and why I choose to use it. Then follows a short discussion of what 'mass media' means in this context, and mass media's effect and power.

1.3 Immigrants

Immigrants, migrants, newly arrived or foreign-born are some of the terms I have encountered during the study. I have chosen to use the term immigrants. This term is used by European Commission and means “a non-resident (both national or alien) arriving in a state with the intention to remain for a period exceeding a year”, and is chosen mainly because it is the term used in the majority of the empiric material. Stating this, I am aware that it carries some problematic aspects. The concept of immigrants is charged with a meaning of difference and otherness (de los Reyes 2001). In this sense, the concept of immigration is based on an “us-and-them thinking”, and appear to be dichotomies, where “we” the Swedes and “them” immigrants are in many ways assumed to be fundamentally different. Further, as discussed by the Antiracist Academy, not all foreign-born persons are regarded as immigrants in everyday speech (2020). Most often people from “the West” are not considered to be immigrants, unlike people from “non-Western” countries. Also, some people, even though they are born in Sweden, might never be regarded as a Swede (ibid). Finally, I am aware that by using this term I might be contributing to the reproduction of the stereotypic division of “us” and “them”.

1.4 Power and Effect of Mass media

Media possess power and often communicate through mass communication (Bäck, Larsson and Erlingsson 2011:63). Media creates meanings, affects people, captures public opinions and mediates it to the political system (2011:63). Our need for media for information is an important explanation for why the media can exercise power over us (Strömbäck 2014:91), but power is limited and what Bäck, Larsson and Erlingsson call *episodic* (2011:63). Communication permeates the whole society and thus all forms of politics and society, and it is seen to tie individuals and groups together (Strömbäck 2014:18). Media exerts its power through texts as it offers a language of categorization and meaning, and language controls what can be thought about an issue and what can be done.

Further, media holds a particular role as gatekeepers, assisting us in collecting, sorting, and structuring information, even though this role to some extent has weakened with the growing

importance of digital media (Strömbäck 2014:91). Strömbäck writes that in the field of media research, the theory of cognitive schemes has gained importance in the effect media has on the individual level, which is closely connected to the emergence of framing theory (2014:96). Cognitive schemes, where schemas mean *an overview of something*, function as an associative network where different nodes are interconnected and emotionally charged. In other words, it is a way of organizing knowledge and memory. They control how we perceive things around us, our expectations and how we interpret new information. They make it easier to gather new information, and interpretations of the new information are characterized by our previous knowledge, experiences and feelings. Strömbäck states that people are less open to new information that contradicts their cognitive schedules than to information that confirms them (2014:97). And this is regardless of whether the cognitive schemas refers to politicians, women or immigrants. With this said, it is important to remember that media do not describe the reality as in mirroring the reality, instead media reconstruct and frame the reality (2014:114)

1.5 Delimitations and Limitations

During the work with this study some delimitations have been made, such as focusing explicitly on immigrant women, and not on men or other groups. This is based on my belief that these groups are treated and described as very different from each other, sometimes as opposites. The delimitations to only look at editorial texts and not whole newspapers, or all articles from one newspaper is based on two arguments. First, digitalisation has, according to Bolin, Hinnfors and Strömbäck (2016), led to a greater spread of the editorial pages and opinion material belongs to the most shared on social media. And secondly, the political role of the editorial pages is generally an under-explored area (Nord in Bolin, Hinnfors and Strömbäck 2016).

Focusing on solely editorial texts is also due to the timeframe and the scope of the thesis. Other kinds of texts could have provided a different kind of result and findings.

1.6 Disposition

After the introductory chapter follows a chapter regarding the contextual background, this includes a historical background on immigrant women in Sweden, in relation to the labor market. The chapter also contains a discussion on “Swedish values” and “Swedish gender equality” and then the previous research. In section three the theoretical framework is presented, which entails a short presentation of the ideological foundation of the study. This is accompanied by the framing theory, stereotypes and femonationalism and last, the theoretical framework of discourse analysis. In chapter four, the method chapter, Fairclough's critical discourse analysis is presented, together with the analytical framework. Finally, chapter five, which is where the analysis is presented. The chapter concludes with a discussion and suggestions for further research.

2. Background and Previous research

This section will provide the reader with a short historical background regarding immigrants and the labour market in Sweden, followed by a discussion about the “Swedish values”, “Swedish gender equality”. The last section will present a summary of previous research closely connected to this study.

2.1 Background

In research on women, working life and the labour market in Sweden, a unproblematic usage of the category “women” and the disregard of categories as ethnicity has historically been ignored, which has resulted in a view that Sweden is ethnically homogeneous (de los Reyes 2005:35). de los Reyes argues that research aimed at making women visible from a historical perspective has revolved mostly around women's participation in the labor market, with a focus on Swedish-born women, which hides the historical presence of immigrant women in Sweden. The author shows for example that during 1945 and 1955 the majority of immigrants were women, most of them unmarried women of working age, depending on work to support themselves. A demand for labor arose in domestic work, and in the 50s in the textile and food industry. The striking gender blindness in immigrant research led to an understanding of the category *immigrant* that until the late 90s was synonymous with a male. This is evident in the fact that the labor force participation among immigrant women exceeded that of Swedish-born women up to the late 1970s (de los Reyes 2017:28).

Unlike other West European countries in the mid 1900s, Sweden never developed a guest-worker program, only some minor regulations (Johansson 2015:196). But in the early 1970s, after several decades of labour immigration to Sweden immigration from non-Nordic countries was stopped (ibid:200). The origin of the decision came, according to Johansson, from LO, the Swedish Trade Union Confederation, which caused the union and the Labor Market Board to reject work permits applications (ibid). Johansson explains that the decision was justified by the argument that some indigenous groups, such as women, youths, elderly and disabled people were unemployed, and therefore should be prioritized. With the regulation, the issue of immigrants' ability to adapt to the Swedish society received a great deal of attention. An immigrant inquiry was ordained and became the basis for a

government's bill, which entailed goals regarding equality, freedom of choice and cooperation. The background description of these goals shows that the government expected a continued immigration and that Sweden must have a preparedness for receiving, training and being able to handle the social problems of immigrants (2015:201).

During the 1980s and 1990s, a growing criticism against and a negative image became dominant regarding immigration policies and immigration (Mattsson 2004:102). Mattsson argues that the increasing racialization of ethnic minorities, which was by no means new in Sweden, cannot be linked to any particular political position or political actor (2004:103). It should rather be seen as a hegemonic discourse that framed contemporary views of society and thus also the integration policy debate.

During the late 1990s, Sweden was influenced by the neoliberal capitalist model. This included reducing political regulation of the economy, labor market, the public sector and reducing tax-financed welfare systems (Mattsson 2004:104). Standing (2016) writes about the new growing social class, the precariat. A new service class, to use when needed (Sassen 2003:259). The flexible workforce was exposed to and characterized by precarious employment conditions, short term positions, lack of security and difficulties in providing for themselves and their families due to low income levels, often consisting of women and immigrants. In Sweden this generated a debate called *the maid debate* (Pigdebatten). Hiring a domestic worker was at the time considered something non-Swedish, a marker of class (Anving and Eldén 2016). The proponents argued that the proposal would increase equality as it would facilitate women to participate in the labour market on more equal terms (ibid). Opponents argued that the proposal would result in a more segregated class society, as it contains a deep hierarchy relationship between women from different class positions, races and nationalities (Andersson 2003:104). The tax deduction for domestic services-proposal was approved in 2007, and is called RUT.

This period was also characterized by more restricting immigration policy proposals, often from right-wing parties, with an aim to a larger extent tie the right to stay permanently in Sweden to national citizenship, which in turn should be linked to various forms of tests, such as language tests (Mattsson 2004:104). Negative and positive incentives were proposed to bring people from welfare benefits into paid work and to reduce social segregation

(2004:116). But most often these proposals and policies were directed against immigrants as a group (Johansson 2015:117). This cemented an “us” and “them”- rhetoric, where “we”, the Swedish society should teach “them”, the immigrants that work and activity pays off (ibid). It also endorsed the racialization of the society, and contributed to making unequal power relations natural, self-evident, inevitable and fair (2015:121).

2.2 “Swedish values” and “Swedish gender equality”

Sweden is often portrayed, both internationally and nationally, as one of the world's most gender equal countries (Alnebratt and Rönnblom 2016), which is confirmed by recurring top rankings in different gender equality measurements. Eduards argues that there is a strong self-image in Sweden of “leading the equality league” and that “Swedish gender equality” is something produced by “Swedish values” (Eduards 2007:57). Like a mantra, Swedish gender equality is portrayed as a success story, has taken the shape of a national feature for Sweden and Swedes, and has become part of Swedish exceptionalism (Martinsson, Griffin and Giritli Nygren 2017, de los Reyes 2017:28).

Reports about equality in Sweden are often presented in terms of binary categories: women and men, measured by quantitative measures, and are presented as two homogeneous groups with common goals and interests (Giritli Nygren, Fahlgren and Johansson 2017:56). This binary division illustrates how women as a group still have worse conditions than men as a group in areas such as salaries. But it hides inequality within the groups and has also been criticized for suggesting a certain understanding of what kind of equality is considered possible to achieve (ibid). According to Eduards, the Swedish equality discourse has, ironically, led to a hierarchical division into Swedish and immigrants (2007:57). Further, Sweden is portrayed as a modern, progress-friendly and rationally acting country, and lies ahead of other countries and cultures (ibid).

More frequent immigration flows have changed “valuation patterns and attitudes in relation to the Other” and led to a more distinct hierarchy in the Swedish society (Sernhede 2010:77). Racism based on biological differences, which justified the colonization of other countries and systematically constructs the colonized peoples as “the Other”, is an outdated racism (de los Reyes, Molina and Mulinari 2005:18ff). Instead, we see a cultural racism, where cultural

differences are highlighted in the search for a Swedish identity (ibid). These differences mark a distance to and at the same time construct "the Other". Immigrants are attributed with cultures that do not fit in the norm, while enlightened Westerners (such as Swedes), do not have a 'culture' but is rather associated with civilization. Likewise, patriarchal culture is placed outside Swedishness, something that others, non-Swedes, have (Eduards 2007:57). As immigrants are portrayed as incapable of identifying with "Western values", various policies aimed at combining civil rights with assimilation, and integration policies with a strong emphasis on equality as a Swedish cultural symbol is not unusual (Mulinari 2017:138).

2.3 Previous research

Several studies reveal that immigrants, refugees and ethnic minorities are often underrepresented and/or misrepresented in the media (Camauër 2011). For example Petersson (2009) shows in a study on representations of the resident majority population and minority groups, in a Swedish local daily newspaper, that immigrants were not a part of the everyday news in the local community. If immigrants were mentioned it was within a stereotypical frame; as a perpetrator, a victim, as the exotic immigrant often connected to food, music or dance, or as the exception that proves the rule (Petersson 2009). Petersson shows that the negative stereotypes are meant to maintain the borderlines that assist groups of people to define who they are, and makes it easier for a group of people to agree on whom is *not* considered to be a part of the group (Petersson 2009).

Bolin, Hinnfors and Strömbäck (2016) examines how the editorial pages in Swedish newspapers have written about immigration and integration. The authors conclude that the issues surrounding immigration and integration have been given more space over time and that there is a great variation between the magazines in terms of how much they write about immigration and integration (2016:206). The authors conclude that although balanced and neutral articles have been in the majority in the editorials, it is evident that articles that portray immigration and integration in negative terms, have been dominating over articles that portray immigration and integration in positive terms.

Further, Brune (2005), compares images of immigrant women in media during the 70's with contemporary images (late 90's). Brune shows that stereotypical images on immigrant women have lingered. It is not obvious that stereotypic images on immigrant women were used in the earlier news articles. Instead, Brune argues, the media seemed to be in the process of constructing prototypes of immigrant women and immigrant girls. In the headlines, young immigrant women are most often described as trapped, passive, split and longing and often had two choices; remain as victims of their culture, or they could strive to become a "Swedish girl" (2005:173). Brune observes a shift in the later texts, in the narrations of what the immigrant women should strive for, there are nationalistic claims. The immigrant women should strive for becoming "Swedish" or acting like "Swedish girls", which implies being free and equal. The women were pictured as brave and ambitious, they just needed to free themselves from the patriarchal structure they were a part of.

Not only have immigrating women been invisible or created in a stereotypic way in the media, they are often constructed as a problematic group in research regarding the labour market (Knocke 1991; de los Reyes 2017). Knocke (1991) argues that stereotypes transform into myths, which has had effects for immigrant women on the labour market. One myth, identified by Knocke, was that the immigrant women would rather be home with their children or grandchildren, instead of being at work. Knocke's results revealed that the interviewed women expressed opinions that were almost the opposite of the myth (1991). Bursell (2014) explored various aspects of ethnic discrimination on the Swedish labour market, as name and gender. The study showed that job applicants with foreign-sounding names were being discriminated against by employers in Sweden. Bursell also revealed that discrimination rates, based on names, differed substantially among occupations. Discrimination against North African and Arabic applicants were higher for men than females in male-dominated occupations, proven by the high callback rate for females in male-dominated occupations in the Swedish labour market.

More recent research showed a shift in the discourses regarding migrant women. Mulinari (2018) identified that migrant women continued to be represented as victims in public discourses regarding unemployment. But, these women were also depicted as being lazy and

unwilling to work. Mulinari argues that these are qualities that legitimize the need for more repressive interventions towards the group, and that these interventions are articulated within an femonationalistic rhetoric, which depart from a gender equality rhetoric about saving migrant women and their children from their men. The rhetoric of femonationalism is used to create a service class, whose purpose is to make it possible for *the regular workforce to continue to function despite cutbacks and the neoliberal management of professional care work in the public sector* (Mulinari 2018:36).

3 Theoretical Framework

Following chapter will outline the theoretical framework which includes a short presentation of the ideological foundation of the study. Then follows an introduction of the framing theory and a presentation of the theoretical concepts of stereotypes and femonationalism. Because discourse analysis should be handled as a package, where theory and method are interlinked (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 2000:10), the last section of this chapter will lay out the fundamental basics of social constructivism and will be continued in the next chapter.

The theoretical framework will build on postcolonial theory and intersectionality. Postcolonial theory reveals how European colonialism has led to the Western becoming the norm in many parts of the world. An important aspect of postcolonial theory is language and how language is used. Spivak (1988) argues that third-world women are doubly colonized as oppressed both racially and sexually, by imperialist and patriarchal structures simultaneously. Intersectionality draws attention to how different kinds of discrimination and oppression are used to maintain or create power relations (de los Reyes, Molina and Mulinari 2005:25ff). The intersection between different factors like age, class, gender, race, ethnicity and sexuality affect and sometimes reinforce each other, a single factor or system of power cannot be understood independently of others.

3.1 Framing Theory

Sociologist Erving Goffman (1922-1982) is often attributed as the originator of the framing theory (Strömbäck 2014:113). Framing theory is applied within several different scientific disciplines, for example in the study of social mobilization or movement (see Snow and Benford 1988). This has led to various definitions of frames. The definition used in this study is borrowed from Robert Entman, professor of communication, and is widely used today:

“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, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described” (Entman 1993:52).

Framing theory is one of the most recognized theories in research about media's effects and power (Strömbäck 2014:113), and entails focus on how problems are defined and formulated (Entman 1993:53). Attention is directed towards the media's descriptions and construction of various societal problems, and how constructions of reality affect citizens and the media consumer. Depending on what you want to investigate, the framing theory can be applied in different ways (Strömbäck 2014:113). It can be applied to examine the content of the media and what the content represents, or by examining how media by framing reality in some specific ways, but not in others, spread and reproduces different power centers and ideologies.

Framing involves selection and salience (Entman 1993:52). As reality or different versions of reality are unlimited, but the media format is not, selection is inevitable. Some of these selections on what to focus on are done consciously, but to a large extent selections are made routinized and characterized by the news productions, thus not perceived as selections, but as natural (Strömbäck 2014:114). Framing also involves salience, salience here means *making a piece of information more noticeable, meaningful or memorable to audiences* (Entman 1993:53). An increase in salience enhances the likelihood that recipients will understand the information, discern meaning, and thus process it and store it in memory (ibid). Repetition, placement or connecting information to culturally familiar symbols can make information more salience (ibid). Concepts such as categories, scripts, stereotypes that contain mentally stored idea clusters, guide individuals' processing of information, and therefore enhances a texts salience (1993:53).

Framing theory offers a way to describe the power of a communicating text (Entman 1993:51). It is done through the media's way of portraying something in society in a certain way, which has an effect on people's perception of the presented topic and on *people's perception of reality as well* (1993:51). Strömbäck emphasizes that the news often is said to represent a reflection of reality, but instead of treating journalistic news as a reflection of, or as a mirroring of reality, Strömbäck argues, that journalistic news should be seen as reconstruction or configuration of the reality (2014:114).

3.2 Stereotypes and the Other

According to Hall (2013) everyone creates stereotypes. Hall argues that we cannot function in the world without them, and when we create stereotypes it is included in the process by which all humans become individuals (2013:278). We have an urge to divide the self and the world into “good” and “bad” objects, objects that are not fixed but rather negotiable. Binaries like white/black or women/men carry power relations, but also they are a crude way of establishing meaning. Saussure (in Hall) argues that we need “difference” because we can only construct meaning through a dialogue with “the Other” (2013:225). This underlines that the role of stereotypes is to maintain the power relation between different groups.

In accordance with Hall and Saussure, Dyer (2002:16) argues that stereotype functions to maintain sharp boundary definitions, and works to identify the boundaries of what is a good and acceptable behavior. But, stereotypes also work to identify and create boundaries where there are none in real life, to make the invisible visible. Dyer explains that some social categories entails these produced boundaries and that they can be invisible and/or fluid. When categories are invisible, people can most often not tell just by looking at the person whether or not that person belongs to a category. Unless, stresses Dyer, the person chooses to dress or behave in a distinctly and *culturally defined manner* (ibid). Or unless a person has a trained eye, for example one who works with drug addicts can probably spot a drug addict more easily than one who does not work with addicts. “Social categories can be fluid, in the sense that it is not possible in reality to draw a line between them and adjacent categories (2002:16). For example heterosexuality and homosexuality, Dyer argues that even though *heterosexual and homosexual responses and behaviour are to some extent experienced by everybody in their life*, they often are created as opposed categories. And this is what stereotyping does, makes the invisible visible, and works to separate what in real life is fluid and *much closer to the norm than the dominant value system cares to admit* (Dyer 2002:16).

Stereotypes are created within the global labour market as well. Anderson (2003) reveals how domestic workers are categorised and ranked according to the shades of their skin color or sometimes their national belonging or personal prejudices from agencies and/or employers (2003:108). This means that the domestic workers believed ability to perform duties are based on the employers stereotypical images, mostly based on the employees’ looks.

Anderson research reveals that the Ethiopians are seen as sweet, the Moroccans are difficult to place because of their religion, and the Filipinas are the easiest to place (2003:108). The stereotypical images work to construct a clear space between the women, the employer and the employee. The space, and the stereotypes, enables an image of that some women are more suitable to do domestic work, to clean houses that the owners no longer have the time or will to do (ibid).

3.3 Femonationalism

Femonationalism, a concept coined by Sara Farris, is a strategy used by “three very different political actors - right-wing nationalists, certain feminists and women’s equality agencies, and neoliberals” (2017:3). The strategy is utilized to promote women's rights, by using a feminist rhetoric for the realization of right-wing populist goals (Farris 2017:53ff). In *In the name of women’s rights: the rise of femonationalism* (2017) Farris explores “the mobilization of women’s rights in anti-Islam and anti-immigration campaigns in the Netherlands, France, and Italy from the early 2000s until 2013” (2017:22). By conducting in-depth interviews, critical discourse analysis, content analysis and participant observations, she examines groups like different women’s organizations and right-wing nationalist groups in France, Netherlands and Italy (2017:93). Farris explains how these countries enact laws that criminalize mainly migrants and Muslim women. There is a focus on Islam, and a claim within the religion Islam women are being oppressed. For example, in 2004 France “approved the ban of ostentatious religious symbols to all of the country’s public schools” (2017:46). The ban was formulated as a step in the government's goal to get Muslim women to adopt the secularist stance adopted by other French women (2017:46, 115). Through campaigns and statements, Muslims and non-western migrant males are portrayed as a threat to Western societies, to national security, as those who steal the jobs of European citizens and thereby cause high unemployment, as violent, rapists and oppressors of women (2017:38). At the same time, Muslim woman and non-western women, are portrayed as passive victims of an oppressive culture (2017:73ff) and as in need of being saved from Islam and muslim men (2017:73ff). Right-wing parties' newfound focus on gender equality, with a rhetoric that gives

the appearance of supporting equality aims, according to Farris, to expand the electoral base and attract voters who have not previously voted for these parties (2017:29ff).

The femonationalistic ideology includes an economic aspect in which neoliberalism has played a significant role, which “produces very concrete consequences in the lives of the Muslim and non-western migrant women” (2017:116ff). Farris illustrates how implementations of some civic integration programs and policies for women from third-country nationals in the three countries, has steered the migrant women who undergo these integration programs towards the health care and domestic sectors or social reproduction (2017:117). As these policies promote economic integration and also a step towards independence of migrant women, they in fact contribute to reinforce the image of the private sphere as the woman's sphere (ibid). It relegates the migrant women to the segregated care industry, with low wages and low status, where they perform the work that other women are no longer willing to do (2017:128).

3.4 Discourse Analysis and Social Constructivism

According to Winther Jørgensen and Phillips, discourse analysis can be applied in several areas, however, you can not choose any theoretical framework or methodological basis (2000:10). Discourse analysis should be handled as a package, where theory and method are interlinked. The package contains philosophical premises regarding the role of language in the social construction of the world, theoretical models, methodological guidelines for approaching a research area and specific techniques for language analysis (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 2000:10).

Discourse analysis is based on a social constructivist point of view, where language is important. Language does not depict reality in a direct, uncomplicated or neutral way, but rather contributes to shaping reality, social relationships and identities (Bergström and Boréus 2005:305; Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 2000:7). It is also based on a post-structuralist philosophy of language, which assumes that it is through language we gain access to reality (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 2000:15). Winther Jørgensen and Phillips argue that there is no general idea of the relationship between social constructivism and post-structuralism, but

adopt the premise that social constructivism is a broader category, which post-structuralism is part of (2000:12).

Winther Jørgensen and Phillips (2000:11ff) describes, (borrowing from Burr 1995), four social constructionist premises that discourse analysis often can agree on; (1) a critical attitude towards knowledge that is sometimes taken for granted. Our knowledge of the world cannot be regarded as an objective truth, reality is only available to us through our produced categories. (2) Historical and cultural specificity. Humans are essentially historical and cultural beings and our view and knowledge of the world is always culturally and historically imprinted, and changeable. (3) There is a relationship between knowledge and social processes. Our perception of the world is created and maintained in social processes. (4) There is a relationship between knowledge and social action. People's different social worldviews lead to different social actions.

Discourse analysis is a useful method when studying debates and in studies of power schemes such as hegemonies or gender (Bergström and Boréus 2005:357). But also to identify and map identity constructions (ibid), which means that a discourse analysis is suitable for this thesis and suitable to accomplish the aim of this thesis.

3.5 Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis

The chosen method is a critical discourse analysis by Norman Fairclough. It aims to expose hidden power structures (Bergström and Boréus 2005:321), which is helpful in achieving the aim of this study. A critical discourse analysis is also useful to explore and map power relations in society and to investigate what assumptions are taken for granted (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 2000:8). According to Fairclough, *the only way of gaining access to the truth is through representation of it, and all representations involve particular points of view, values, and goals* (1993:46). Thus, true reality can never be revealed outside the discourse. An important difference that distinguishes Fairclough's model from other discourse analysis is that Fairclough's critical discourse analysis emphasises that discourses are not only constitutive, but also constituent (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 2000:72). This means that

discourses are not raised above the activities of other social practitioners and social processors, but are constructed by as well as constructing the world.

Discourses, according to Fairclough, have three functions, they shape and reshape social identities, social relations and knowledge and meaning systems (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 2000:73). An analysis centres around two main points; the communicative event and the order of discourse (Fairclough 1995:56). In this particular study the communicative event is the editorial articles and the order of discourse is the media discourse. The order of discourses entails several specific discursive practices, which compete with each other to create and establish meaning (Bergström and Boréus 2005:325). Here the concept of hegemony is central, and helpful when connecting discourses with power. Hegemony is to be understood from Antonio Gramsci's definition of hegemony, a "form of domination based on consensus-creating and socially sanctioned agreements about what is right, normal and real" (de los Reyes and Mulinari 2014:79). Thus hegemony emphasises the dominance of a certain discourse within the order discourses. But, dominance is never fully completed (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 2000:80). Hegemony involves a constant process of negotiation of meaning, and a full consensus of meaning will never be completed. The competing discourses constitutes the ongoing resistance (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 2000:80)

4. Method and Material

This section starts with a discussion of reflexivity, the position of the author. Then Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis with the chosen tools is introduced. Finally, the empirical material and ethical considerations are discussed.

4.1 Reflexivity

Within feminist tradition, but also when the chosen method is based on a social constructive perspective, reflexivity and the position of the author is important to discuss. It is significant, as it may affect choices made during the study (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 2000:29). The concept of situated knowledge, introduced by the feminist theorist Donna Haraway, captures the standpoint that all forms of knowledge production must be understood as situated (Haraway 1991). Haraway uses the metaphor “the god trick”, a scientific conviction that research can be based on a non-contextual position, totally objective. Haraway argues that total objectivity is an illusion because research can not be conducted from the outside, raised above (like a god) looking down on the object of analysis and producing objective knowledge. According to Haraway, regardless of research object, the researcher is always involved, contributing and partly responsible in their research, but also that research always takes on a subjective dimension (Lykke 2014:20). A standpoint like this means that research can never be conducted from a neutral position, which is in line with my conviction.

I am aware of that my background, as a women and as a feminist, may direct or indirect affect some choices made in this study. For example my feminist background is closely connected to the choice of subject. My focus on immigrant women and not immigrant men reflects my interest in wanting to learn more about the situation of women, wanting to study and reveal different kinds of experiences from women. Further, my choice of theorists is influenced by my former education in gender studies. Also, institutional and cultural factors affect how we understand and perceive the world around us, and therefore affect how we analyse texts (Bacchi 2009:62). In line with a social constructivist standpoint, I argue that the research and the text produced through the study is influenced by the researcher's pre understandings. The thesis shall therefore be understood as one result, one version among

other possible versions (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 2000:11). This means that other researchers with a different background, might see and react to other things in the texts, and therefore come up with a different result than in this thesis. Although, according to the standpoint of this thesis, we all are subjective, the aim is to be as objective as possible.

4.2 Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis

Choosing Fairclough's critical discourse analysis is based on the fact that the method is described as the most developed of the critical discourse analysis methods when wanting to do research about communication, culture and society (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 2000:66). Further, the purpose of a critical discourse analysis is to contribute to social change towards more equal distributed power relations in the communication processes and in society as a whole (2000:69). It aims to map out the role of discursive practice in sustaining the social world that implies unequal power relations, which is closely linked to the purpose of this thesis. Fairclough's critical discourse analysis is a three dimensional model which entails text, discourse practice and sociocultural practice (1995:57). According to Fairclough, every case of language use is a communicative event, and a critical discourse analysis of a communicative event is an analysis of the relationship between three dimensions; text, discourse practice and sociocultural practice (1995:57).

4.3 The Three Dimensional Model

The text includes speeches, written texts, images or a mixture of the linguistic and the visual. The analysis of texts has a focus on the formal features of the text, including vocabulary, grammar, and connection between sentences that construct discourses and genres linguistically (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 2000:75). Analysing text there are multiple tools to choose from, this study uses modality and transitivity. Analysing modality means focusing on the speaker's or authors degree of affinity in a statement. "It is not fair", "I do not think it is fair", and "it might be fair", are different ways of expressing modality. What kind of modality is used has consequences for the discourse's construction of both social relations and on knowledge- and meaning systems (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 2000:88). Mass

media often incorporate objective modalities in their text when presenting interpretations as if they were facts or the truth. When using modalities, mass media both promotes and reflects their authority in society (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 2000:88).

Transitivity is analysing how different processes and events are connected, or not connected, to objects and subjects (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 2000:87). The purpose is to map the ideological consequences that different representations may contribute to (ibid). This is done by examining how sentences are constructed, if the sentence is constructed in a passive or an active form. For example, in the sentence “30 cleaners were dismissed” is a passive form. There is no agent, no one to be held responsible. The focus is on the effects and consequences, and not on the actions and processes behind the dismissing

Analysis of discourse practice includes processes of text production, distribution and consumption (Fairclough 1995). Analysing the discourse practice is relevant when one is interested in analysing how the text is produced and how it is consumed (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 2000:85). To do this kind of analysis one needs to find out what stages a text is required to go through before being printed and produced, and what changes the text has gone through during the different stages (ibid:85). How a text is consumed requires a study of the receptions, to find out how the receptions interpret the text. But, analysis of discourse practice can also be conducted through looking at the intertextuality of a text, which means that the text builds upon other text. Manifest intertextuality is a clearer form of intertextuality, where the text you analyze is not only in an obvious way based on another text, but the author is openly referring to another text or statements to support his or her own statement (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 2000:77).

To analyse the third dimension, sociocultural practice, a discourse analysis is not enough (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 2000:90), but there are no clear instructions of how these kinds of studies are to be conducted (Bergström and Boréus 2005:325). It aims to map out which sociocultural practice the communicative event is part of, and to do that it is necessary to include other relevant theories, like sociological theories (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 2000:90). In this study framing theory and presented theoretical concepts have been included and applied. It is in the analysis of the relationship between discursive practice and the broader sociocultural practice that the study finds its final conclusions (ibid). As mentioned,

there is no clear instructions of how to analyse the sociocultural practices, but Winther Jørgensen and Phillips (2000:90) presents a set of questions that one can ask the text and apply the presented theoretical framework; Does the discursive practice reproduce the discourse order?, Is the discourse order reshaped so it creates social change? What are the ideological, political and social consequences of the discursive practice?, Does the discursive practice reinforce or conceal certain unequal power relations in society?

4.4 Reliability and Validity

As with many other qualitative methods in social science, discourse analysis involves a criticism regarding the level of reliability in the study. A study with a high reliability means that the study can be conducted in the same way, by another researcher and still come up with the same result (Bergström and Boréus 2005:353). As a discourse analysis includes interpretations of the chosen empirical material, there is a risk that the researcher's own values and opinions might influence the results of the study, that the interpretations of the material are perceived as subjective (ibid). In order to reduce the problem of reliability, it is important to employ transparency. Transparency means that the discourse analyst describes exactly how an interpretation has been made, for example by showing quotes from the empirical material and explaining your interpretations.

The validity of a study is perhaps the most difficult, and at the same time the most central problem for empirical social science (Esaiasson et al 2007:62). As in the problem of reliability, transparency is important in increasing the validity of a study. To enhance the validity, to measure what is set out to measure, it is crucial that the measurement tools, employed to assist the analyse are clear, and that an accurate and detailed explanation of how the survey was conducted is displayed. This is done in the sections of The tools and How to analyse. Further, using well known analytic tools, in this case borrowed from Fairclough, can be helpful in improving the validity.

4.5 Material

The material to be analyzed consists of editorial articles in Swedish daily newspapers regarding migrants and the labour market, produced between 2016-2018. To qualify as a daily newspaper in Sweden, the newspaper must be published at least once a week, contain regular news media or public policy opinion and at least 50 percent must be editorial in nature, which means that the material must be created by an editor (Retriever 2019). The chosen material has been searched in the Media Archive, the largest digital news archive in the Nordic region (ibid). The articles available in the Media Archive are of editorial nature, and all are reviewed and have a responsible publisher responsible for the content that is published (ibid).

The time frame is set from January 2016 to December 2018, due to the fact that during these years more women immigrated to Sweden than ever before or after up till this date (SCB 2020). In the search for relevant editorial articles, keywords such as immigrant, newly arrived, foreign-born, workforce, work, women, labour market, unemployed, unemployment, employed and work were used. A first search resulted in 97 editorial articles. To further narrow it down I read all the articles and excluded articles that were printed in several newspapers, or that only mentioned immigrant women or discussed immigrant women in a context not relevant for the aim of this thesis. In *Skånska Dagbladet* (20160814) for example, trafficking is discussed with a focus on the policies and their malpractice for not establishing police reports for the disappearance of immigrant women. Or, as in *Karlskoga Tidning* (20171207), where the Swedish Public Employment Service and the work they perform and costs is criticised. These steps resulted in 27 relevant editorial articles.

4.6 Ethical Considerations

During the study ethical considerations have been regarded. As the study's empirical material consists of editorial articles that have been published in newspapers, therefore they are public and covered by the Swedish Copyright Act. According to the Swedish Research Council (2002), consent is not required when using public information provided via mass media. The study does not share any sensitive information about private or professional persons. Therefore, no consent is required from individuals who have expressed themselves in

interviews, other articles for the purpose of being published publicly. Further, analyzing different journalist standpoint is not relevant for the study or the aim when using a critical discourse analysis (Bergström and Boréus 2005:328), therefore the journalists' names are not published in the study, but in the references list. Instead the newspapers' names and the date of publication is used as a reference in the text.

5 Analysis

In this chapter the analysis is presented. After repeated reading of the articles one dominant and overarching discourse emerged, the discourse of “Swedish values” and “Swedish gender equality”. As the discourse has a central place and is intertwined in all the articles it is not analyzed as one discourse in itself, but rather gets a short introduction of how these two terms are described in the text, and then included in the rest of the analysis. During the thorough readings of the empirical material three central subdiscourses emerged, which entailed descriptions of a dependent immigrant woman, the woman as a victim or as unqualified with no education. The three subdiscourses, named *the Dependent*, *the Victim* and *the Unqualified* is analyzed and divided according to Faircloughs analytic model; text, discursive practice and sociocultural practice.

In general, there is no discussion or definition of who the immigrant women are or where they come from. Mentioned groups other than immigrants, immigrant women, Swedish women and men are people from the Middle East and Africa and mentioned in texts regarding different attitude to women’s and men's responsibilities (Strömstads Tidning 20181227), or in connection to statistical employment rates, where people from Asia is incorporated (Falun Kuriren 20170426, Hudiksvalls Tidning 20170426). Muslims and Islam are mentioned in the text regarding traditions, traditional values, religion and equality, especially equality at work (Dagens Nyheter 20170316). As all articles were published in Swedish, all quotations have been translated by the author.

As stated before, there is a general focus on “Swedish values” and “Swedish gender equality”, most often interlinked but mentioned in the articles as two separate concepts. Swedish values are considered to be equality, democracy, human and children's rights and trust (Bohusläningen 20170516, Karlstads Tidningen 20170824). The Swedish gender equality is described as the best in the world (Svenska Dagbladet 20171204). It is outstanding, and if one would do an international comparison of values between different countries one would find that Sweden is alone in our sharp focus on individualism, equality, secular values and self-realization (Karlskoga Tidning 20160219). Swedish values have been built up for generations and every day an inherited valuation work is confirmed, and taught

daily to all Swedes at school, among friends and family (ibid). The Swedish values is in empirical material concentrated against “the Others”:

Those who flee to Sweden come from countries with opposite conditions. There, collective, family or clan affiliation is emphasized. Women have significantly lower status than men. Religion is often very present. Because of poverty, discrimination, corruption and other things, self-realization is a luxury (Karlskoga Tidning 20160219).

Traditional gender roles are described as incompatible with the welfare state Sweden (Strömstads Tidning 20181227). Further, there is a clear division between what is considered a part of the Swedish society and what is considered to a part of “the Others” society:

One reason why the differences between men and women are so great is traditional gender roles. (...) It is no wonder that people from the Middle East and Africa have a different attitude to women and men's responsibilities. But the model that the mother takes care of the children and the father makes the money generally does not work in the welfare state of Sweden (Strömstads Tidning 20181227)

The traditional gender roles are positioned in the Middle East and Africa, and again contrasted to the welfare state Sweden, and the Swedish gender equality. In line with Eduards (2007), there is a hierarchical division between Sweden, the modern state, and in this case people from the Middle East and Africa, with its traditional gender roles. There is a need for those who come from patriarchal cultures to be educated in “Swedish values”, and it is not only the men that need to be educated, this includes the women (Karlskoga Tidning 20160219). The motivation is that it is not only men who maintain unequal structures, so do the women (ibid). “We” need to educate “them” in “our values”. “In patriarchal cultures, the man is expected to work while the woman takes care of the home. Then it is extra important to reach out to women, who have fewer natural contact with Swedish values in a workplace” (Karlskoga Tidning 20160219), and getting a job is mentioned as a way for the women to be emancipated from their subordinated position (Svenska Dagbladet 20171204). In connection with discussing emancipation for the immigrant women, the need for more in simple jobs in the labour market is emphasised as a way out of their isolation (Vestmanlands Läns Tidning 20180527, Karlstads Tidningen 20170824).

5.1 The Dependent

The first subdiscourse that emerged during the readings of the empirical material, is a discourse of the immigrant woman - a dependent woman. Dependent on allowance or benefit. Most often it is the parental benefit that is discussed, but also housing and child allowance (Strömstads Tidning 20181227, Karlskoga Tidning 20160827, Oskarshamns Tidningen 20170104).

Text

The immigrant woman as dependent is most dominant in articles about parental allowance and in articles regarding a proposition from the government that suggested new, more restrictive rules on parental allowance for newly arrived immigrants. The proposal means that newly arrived parents no longer will receive full parents insurance for their children, instead, the number of days of parental leave should be adjusted to the child's age (Borlänge Tidning 20170325).

The reason for this change is that the current rules means that newly arrived parents are getting unreasonably many parental days. As a result, foreign-born women stay at home with their children for a very long time, and therefore it takes time before they go out into the labor market. It results in poorer integration and equality, and it also means a great cost to society. (Borlänge Tidning 20170325).

In the quote, we are informed that newly arrived parents are getting unreasonably many parental days when in fact they, at the time, got as many days as all other parents in Sweden. The emphasis on *unreasonably many parental days* causes, according to most of the analysed media, not only an extended time of unemployment, but also result in poorer integration and equality. This is an example of high objective modality, when the media present interpretations as if they were facts or the truth, as there is no indication that this is an opinion or one version among other versions. And, as Entman (1993) and Strömbäck (2014) argues, media often selects one version to mediate, which gives no room for a nuanced image or other aspects of the version. When the media portrays something in society in a certain way, it has an effect on people's perception of the presented topic and on the perception of reality as well (Entman 1993).

Further, the quote above portrays immigrant women as a homogenous group, which gives the impression that all immigrant women stay at home for a long time with their children, they

are poorly integrated in society and subordinated. The quote also, together with statements like “Newly arrived are made dependent on benefits” (Svenska Dagbladet 20180415), “stuck in exclusion and passivity” (Sydsvenskan 20181129), “Of course, the family who wants to live traditionally has the right to do so - but not on allowances (Falu Kuriren 20170426) enhances and reinforces the image of that the immigrant woman is a cost for the Swedish society (Borlänge Tidning 20170325). This shows how the media uses salience to make the information they want to convey more noticeable, meaningful or memorable to the readers (Entman 1993). By repeating and connecting the immigrant women with staying at home with children, with a cost for society, exclusion, passivity and traditional lifestyles they are depicted and separated from the norm and the “Swedish woman”.

Discursive practice

Most of the articles regarding the immigrant woman and different allowances build their arguments on statements or debate articles written by politicians, and on statistics from SCB, Statistics Sweden - who is responsible for official statistics and for other government statistics. Statements from politicians are utilized to argue against other politicians statements, against different propositions regarding the labour market or to suggest what the government should do to be able to reduce unemployment for some groups. For example in Sydsvenska (20181139) there are references to and quotes from Annie Lööf, the leader of the Centre Party, used to built the argument that the Swedish labor market is in need of heavy and comprehensive reforms, so that more people in Sweden get a chance to do the right thing. To do the right thing in this article is to work. The arguments from Lööf are applied to argue and show that the government, with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven in the lead, should be making other decisions regarding unemployment. Arguments based on statistics from SCB are often utilized to demonstrate employment or unemployment rates between different kinds of group as native-born women with foreign-born women (Karlskoga Tidning 20160827), or women from different parts of the world as Africa and Asia (Falu Kuriren 20170426, Ystad Allehanda 20180206).

As shown above, the articles utilizes manifest intertextualitet to reinforce their own statements by referring to for example the Prime Minister or statistics produced by SCB (Statistics Sweden). Statistics are selected to prove the point of the articles, to enhance the

credibility of the articles (Fairclough 1993). Many of the articles convey the same or similar message, which is in line with the framing theory and how media select and salience aspects (Entman 1993). Repeating the same messages over and over again, and thereby exerting the power of a communicating text, media shape the perception of people (Entman 1993). But, evident in Värmlands Folkblad (20170218), media have the power to select focus and how to frame an issue. Even though the article states that far too many foreign-born women never enter the labor market, the article refers to positive statistics. According to Värmlands Folkblad, with references to SCB, the numbers that live on social security support has decreased from 13.9 to 4.8 per cent in 20 years. Further, the number who have a job is the highest measured since SCB began its measurements 20 years ago, and in Rinkeby, 50 percent have a job to go to compared to 22 percent in 1997 (Värmlands Folkblad 20170218). The SCBs statistics are public statistics, available for everyone, which prove that Värmlands Folkblad chooses to produce a more positive image of reality. Värmlands Folkblad chooses to focus on the positive aspects in the statistics, instead of producing a more negative image, focusing on high unemployment of immigrants.

Sociocultural practices

In the empirical material a majority of the articles produce an image of the immigrant women as depending on different allowances opens up for various social, political and economic consequences. In one of the articles it is argued that the immigrant women's dependence on different allowance has an effect gender equality:

Among refugee immigrants and their relatives, it is far more common for men to have income from gainful employment while women's income comes from allowances linked to children, such as child allowance, parental allowance and housing allowance. It is bad for gender equality (Strömstads Tidning 20181227).

It is explained in the article that women who do not have her own income from employment will be economically dependent on her husband, but also an economic burden for the taxpayers.

I argue that the image of the immigrant women, produced by the media in some of the articles, causes political consequences. As stated before, media not only mediate political statements from politicians to the public (Strömbäck 2014). Media also serves as a source of

information for politicians, where they can follow public opinions and discussions about current events or situations in society that affect people (ibid). This means that the opinions laid out by the media in the empirical texts, has an effect on politicians and in the extension it may also influence political decisions. The text entails already implemented decisions that restrict the number of parental days for newly arrived immigrants, but also contains demands and suggestions on how different allowances should be further restricted. But, at the same time the produced image of the immigrant women as economically dependent could result in policies that, instead of restricting, would benefit the women in a way that would gain more economic independence.

From July 1, the possibility of taking parental days for children over one year will be limited for those who come to Sweden. It is good, but can be tightened further (Falu Kuriren 20170426).

In order to improve integration and do something about the foreign-born nowadays being in the majority among both unemployed and welfare recipients, we need to start abandoning the cherished Swedish model. (...) In office, the Alliance did not dare to do much on this front and Sweden is now reaping the fruits of this cowardice. However, both the Social Democrats and the Sweden Democrats are even worse on these issues (Nya Wermlands-Tidningen 20170511).

I argue that the repeated image of the depending woman, in some of the editorial texts, justifies further restriction on different allowances. These kind of restriction will first and foremost effect the immigrant women as it is, according media's created image, the immigrant women that are the ones living on different allowances:

In order for the exclusion in Sweden to be disrupted, the allowance systems in the country must be reviewed to provide even clearer incentives for work and study than they provide today. This applies to both men and women, but the effects are particularly clear when it comes to the allowances schemes that are often used by foreign-born women (Karlstads Tidningen 20170824).

The political consequences are highly connected to the economical consequences. More restrictions on allowances could mean less money for the immigrant women. Which in turn could, according to me, further enhance the dependency as their economic freedom will be further limited. The political and economical consequences for the dependent immigrant women will only move the dependency from dependency on allowances to being dependent on her family or her husband. This could reinforce the traditional gender roles, but also lead to further exclusion and isolation. But, as stated before, the portrayals of immigrant women in

the articles, could also have positive effects as the portyaying could lead to policies that will benefit the immigrant women and improve the integration.

The media's recurring image in the articles of the immigrant women a dependent can also have social consequences. I argue that the media's image of the immigrant woman as dependent on allowances, and with the connection made to her being *a great cost for the society* (Borlänge Tidning 20170325) reinforces stereotypes about the immigrant woman. When media writes that *such a large proportion of foreign-born women do not work is unsustainable in the long run* (Falun Kuriren 20170426), and *In addition, the high unemployment rate among foreign-born and newly arrived women is a financial burden for taxpayers* (Strömstads Tidning 20181227), it has affects people's perception and creates stereotypes (Entman 1993). Stereotypes work to identify the boundaries of what is a good and acceptable behavior, and what is not (Dyer 1999). The immigrant woman is not connected to a criminal behavior in the articles, but to a behavior that is created as not accepted in the Swedish society. It could have argued in the articles that the women are not getting more parental days than other parents. The choice to write *unreasonably many days of parental days*, is a way for the media to enhance and salience their statements. And a way to establish boundaries that are not visible, but made visible. I claim that these choices, made in the articles, reinforces the hierarchy of society. This could result in further discrimination against these women as they are characterized and attributed with a bad behavior, which could have the effect that they are seen as unattractive on the labour market.

Reconnecting to the quote in the beginning of this section, that stated that the immigrant women's dependency is different allowances, is bad for the gender equality (Strömstads Tidning 20181227), is a recurring connection made in the articles. One article states that *Swedish equality is the best in the world*, but continuings on pointing out that Sweden nowadays is ranked fifth place, instead of first place in the World Economic Forums (WEF) survey Gender Gap Report (Svenska Dagbladet 20171204). The article states that the decline is largest in the Health and Survival Index. In connection to this, the article poses a question that might serve to explain the decline, and one of the questions is; *Is the decline due to the fact that we have received a number of women with poor health?* (Svenska Dagbladet 20171204). This, I argue, has consequences for how the immigrant women are percieved. As shown above, Sweden is no longer ranked number one and the decline is implicitly (or

explicit) caused by immigrant women. Due to the fact that they, according to the articles, live on different allowances and do not work to the same extent as Swedish women, the “Swedish gender equality” is on the decline. In these articles there is no discussion of what else could have impinged the “Swedish gender equality”, such as the gender divided labour market, or the prevailing wage gap in Sweden. Comparing women's and men's salaries for 2018, women earn on average 89 percent of what men earn. After reducing factors such as different occupations or education, SCB still reports a wage gap of five percent, to which there is no explanation for in the statistics (ibid). By not considering other factors for the declining gender equality than the immigrant women, I argue, the immigrant women are constructed as those to blame. When blaming the immigrant women the problem is positioned with the “others”, outside the “us”, and the “Swedish gender equality” is kept intact and safe. The decline in the gender equality ranking has nothing to do with the “Swedes”, but something to do with the immigrant women arriving in Sweden with poor health.

Further, when the decline of gender equality is explained by referring to immigrant women, stereotyping is taking place, it makes the fluid boundaries visible (Dyer 1999). As it is impossible to know if a person is dependent or oppressed just by looking at them, a visible border between “us” and “them” is produced, and dependent or oppressed or attached to all immigrant women.

Discourses like these aim to reinforce the power relations and maintain the hegemonic discourse order (Fairclough 1993). I argue that there is an implicit statement that the “Swedish gender equality” should still have been ranked number one, if it weren't for the immigrant women, and that this can result in social consequences, as they are constructed as subordinated and therefore not attractive on the labour market.

5.2 The Victim

The second sub discourse that reappeared in the material the media's portrayal of the immigrant women as victims of patriarchal structures and traditional gender roles.

Text

Patriarchal structures and the traditional gender roles is, in the texts, intertwined with a stay at home-woman. In some articles the traditional gender roles are positioned outside Sweden;

It is no wonder that people from the Middle East and Africa have a different attitude to women and men's responsibilities. But the model that the mother should take care of the children and the father should make the money generally does not work in the welfare state of Sweden (Strömstads Tidning 20181227).

But, when it is not possible to deny the existence of patriarchal structures and traditional gender roles in the Swedish society, patriarchal structures and traditional gender roles are positioned in the vulnerable areas and in the suburbs (Vestmanlands Läns Tidning 20180527, Sundsvalls Tidning 20180107).

Further, it is pointed out that Sweden has received many women that have experience from cultures where the women do not have any rights (Svenska Dagbladet 20171204), and that they are kept isolated, away from the society (Vestmanlands Läns Tidning 20180527). One way, and most often, the only way to break the isolation is, according to the articles, by entering the Swedish labor market (Svenska Dagbladet 20171204, Vestmanlands Läns Tidning 20180527, Karlstads Tidningen 20170824).

In many countries, it is a terrible uphill to a dignified life. And for women in these countries, the road to a place in society often goes through working life (Svenska Dagbladet 20171204).

As the article displays, the objective modality is high. The statements are presented as facts, the women are isolated and they do not have any rights. In patriarchal cultures, the man is expected to work and earn money, while the women are supposed to take care of the home (Karlskoga Tidning 20160219). The transitivity in the articles assists in establishing that the immigrant women are victims, as it places the processes of patriarchal structures with the men and the effects with the women. Honor-related violence and non-Swedish norms are linked to girls and women who live under a very concrete, and a very culturally conditioned, threat from their families (Oskarshamns - Tidning 20170503). Stating that it is the girls and women that lives under threat, it implicitly states that the other family members, the men and boys are the one to threaten them, and it is explicitly stated that they are held prisoner by the man's world (Vestmanlands Läns Tidning 20180527). To help the victim, to help the immigrant women to break free from the patriarchal structures, is described as the most important women's struggle of the 21st century (Vestmanlands Läns Tidning 20180527). The

responsibility of helping the women is located with politicians and the government. By various incentives politicians can, according to some of the articles, make it easier for the oppressed women to enter the labour market (Karlskoga Tidning 20160827, Nya Wermlands-Tidningen 20170511). But, some media also argue that the politicians are responsible for maintaining the oppression of women. By not acting forcefully against patriarchal structures, politicians are portrayed as those who have betrayed the women in the suburbs (Nya Ludvika Tidningen 20170406).

It's like the rest of Sweden, in particular the authorities and politicians are unwilling or unable to take in what is actually taking place here in our country, in our streets. You close your eyes because there are women in Sweden who do not see the smoke of the centennial women's struggle that characterizes every law text and public document (Nya Ludvika Tidning 20170406).

The editorial texts most often construct an image of the immigrant women as an isolated, passive victim with no ability to influence their own situation. She is often made passive in the articles, with no agency at all, which means that she is given no voice and to a degree becomes objectified. But, there are passages where a space is created, where the women are given agency to act and break the isolation herself. By learning the Swedish language, entering the labour market and receiving their own salary, she can become a role model for their children and also influence the patriarchal structures and cultures of honor that exist in our suburbs (Nya Wermlands- Tidningen 20170511).

Discursive practice

In the articles portraying the immigrant women as a victim, most references are linked to the government or different politicians statements, such as the former Minister for Gender Equality, Åsa Regnér. But also to the Swedish Public Employment Service and SCB, and to associated statistics are referred to (Nya Wermlands- Tidningen 20170511, Falu Kuriren 20170426). Similar to previous sections, the media refers to well-known and trusted authorities and well-known politicians, to enhance trustworthiness. Further, manifest intertextuality is used in the article to convince the readers that their position and view is the one that shows what reality actually looks like. Repeating the same arguments over and over again, or in this case, repeating by referring to others that express the same opinions affect people's cognitive schemas (Strömbäck 2014). The cognitive schemas help us organize

knowledge and memories, and controls how we interpret new information. Repeated and monotonous information might shape people's understandings of reality, and people are less open to new information that contradicts their cognitive schemes than to information that confirms them (Strömbäck 2014). This means that media's monotonous and repetitive discourses in the articles will shape people's understanding of the immigrant women, and perhaps eventually also the immigrant women's perception of themselves.

Sociocultural practices

Media's image of the immigrant women as a victim of the oppressive patriarchy and of oppressive cultures, are in the articles constructed as something that is not a part of the Swedish society, and therefore not a part of the “Swedish values” or the “Swedish gender equality”. The political consequences are that oppression of immigrant women are treated as something happening in the family, the private sphere and therefore not a political issue. One of the articles points at the authorities paralyzation on the issue:

It's like the rest of Sweden, in particular the authorities and politicians are unwilling or unable to take in what is actually taking place here in our country, in our streets. You close your eyes because there are women in Sweden who do not see the smoke of the centennial women's struggle that characterizes every law text and public document (Nya Ludvika Tidning 20170406).

The quote underlines that politicians are aware of the problem but not taking enough actions. By pointing out the paralyzation of the authorities it could result in, and also justify more powerful political acting against patriarchal structures, against immigrants. As immigrants are treated as a collective this creates stereotypes, and reinforces a separation in the Swedish society. It enhances the image of Sweden as the modern, progress-friendly and rationally acting country (Eduards 2005). Sweden and the Swedish women are pictured as lying ahead of other countries and cultures, and the other countries are created as the opposite, as traditional and non-rational.

Headlines like *The situation of vulnerable women is a shame for Sweden*, followed by the statement that less than half of the 100,000 women living in vulnerable areas¹ in Sweden, are

¹ A vulnerable area is a geographically defined area characterized by a low socio-economic status where criminals have an impact on the local community. In these areas, there are a number of risk factors that can lead to a lack of faith in the future, such as unemployment, ill-health and unsuccessful schooling. The risk factors can also consist of structural factors such as the residential area's physical environment and an experienced concern among ethnic groups as historical and globally relevant conflicts give local imprint (Nationella operativa avdelningen 2017).

unemployed and many of them live completely separate from the society (Vestmanlands Läns Tidning 20180527), places the women and the whole process of oppression inside Sweden but outside the Swedish society. Some of the media writes about parallel societies within the Swedish society (Nya Ludvika Tidning 20170417), that are characterized by long-term unemployment, have incomplete or low grades, social problems and crime (Karlstads Tidning 20170824). This I argue, could have ideological effects, as whole areas, and the population of the area are being stereotyped and stigmatized it could result in increased racism and discrimination against which further complicates the possibility to get a job.

The fact that a large number of women live in such conditions in the country that boasts of being the world's most equal is a great shame. Without the support of society, they also have no opportunity to break the exclusion and go against the men's world that keeps them trapped (Vestmanlands Läns Tidning 20180527).

It is the Swedish society that will rescue the women from the men's world. Arguments like this cements the stereotyped image that patriarchal structures do not exist in the Swedish society, and separates the Swedish society with "the Others" society. This is in line with what Eduards (2007) argues, the longer the Swedish gender equality policy has been pursued, the more prominent is the hierarchical division between the people of Sweden and "the Others". The hierarchical division is also evident in the next quote and reveals the social consequences of medias repeatedly produced image of the immigrant woman as victim of patriarchal oppression:

Sweden has now received a whole host of women with experience from cultures where women do not have rights. We say no to oppressive attitudes again in Sweden. Swedish women's experience of how to achieve gender equality can and should be shared with the newly arrived. (Svenska Dagbladet 20171204).

In most of the articles the immigrant women are positioned as passive, subordinated and with no rights at all. In the quote above, immigrant women are furthermore positioned as somewhat subordinated to the Swedish women, as the quote hints at their ignorance of 'gender equality' and how to achieve this. The Swedish women is the one to learn the immigrant women what the Swedish gender equality entails and how to achieve it, which reveals a hierarchical positioning. It also reveals how femonationalism works. With the use of the rhetoric of gender equality and women rights, the oppressed women need to be saved from the patriarchy and from traditional gender roles. And as previous sub discourses there made no room for any other interpretations. Instead of giving a nuanced image of the immigrant

women or pointing out that the article gives one version of many other versions, the articles describe the immigrant woman and what characterises her as if it were fact. As the immigrant women are described as a collective, it creates an image that implies that all immigrant women are oppressed and victim of patriarchal structures. This further cements the stereotypes of the Swedish woman as modern, a woman who seeks self-realization and has goals with her life. The immigrant women are in the articles constructed as the opposite, where self-realization is a luxury.

5.3 The Unqualified

The third and last sub discourse that is consistently in the texts regards the high unemployment of the immigrant women and how to make them participate in the labour market.

Text

In the texts the immigrant women are described as long term unemployed, uneducated or have a very low educational level. One out of five of immigrant women in the vulnerable areas do not have a primary school education (Vestmanlands Läns Tidning 20180527). Exclusion in the labor market is stated to be one of the main problems. The unemployment is in the articles dominated by non-Europeans, but foreign-born women are mentioned as being particularly at risk (Karlskoga Tidning 20160827). They are described as the most difficult group:

Many peoples (immigrants) problems can be solved with compensatory education, but the most difficult group to get a job is low-educated women often, with several children, who never had a job (Tidningen Ångermanland 20180423).

Low-educated newly arrived women are still farthest away from the labor market (Tidningen Ångermanland 20171218).

The articles refers to different political reforms that aim to facilitate the entry into the labour market, such as establishment jobs (Tidningen Ångermanland 20171218) and extra employment in the welfare sector (Hela Gotland 20170223). It is also stated that the home care service and the elderly care are popular workplaces for immigrant women (Värmlands Folkblad 20170531). It is pointed out that the Swedish labor market must move towards jobs that do not require high language skills or require other qualifications. In connection with the

above mentioned, the RUT-reform is often discussed. In most of the articles that mentions RUT, states that RUT has helped to create thousands of new jobs (Karlstads Tidningen 20170824), and in other article, vocational education is promoted:

For those who have been a housewife for a large part of their lives, a long academic education may be far away, and therefore the focus should be on vocational education (Falu Kuriren 20170426).

In the articles it is argued that simple jobs are required to reduce exclusion (Karlskoga Tidning 20160827). But, in some articles the establishment of the extra jobs are criticised and called “fake jobs”, that do not exist on the “real labour market” (Hela Gotland 20170223). The articles makes connects parallel societies with vulnerable areas (Skånsk Dagbladet 20160805, Nya Ludvika Tidning 20170406), and with exclusion from the society, a new underclass and the precariat (Ystad Allehanda 20160819). This shows, as in previous sub discourses, that the objective modality is high. The immigrant women are in the articles described as particularly vulnerable, difficult and a low-educated group (Karlskoga tidning 20160827). Most of the immigrant women have never had a job, and they have several children (Tidningen Ångermanland 20180423). This is presented as facts, leaving no room for other interpretations.

The immigrant women have almost no agency as they are made passive in these texts. Analysing the transitivity reveals that the immigrant men and patriarchal, with its traditional gender roles (Strömstads Tidning 20181227) are given agency, and are constructed as one of the reasons that immigrant women's participation on the labour market is low:

The fact that certain immigrant groups have the attitude that the woman's role is to take care of the household while the man goes to work, of course, makes the immigrant women's labor market establishment more difficult (Falu Kuriren 20170426).

But also the government are made responsible:

The Social Democrats are presenting one reform proposal after another. (...) To create customized fake jobs for a specific group, in this case foreign-born women, to come to work is to address the problem from the wrong direction. (...) The fact remains that jobs were created for the newly arrived women and not because demand exists in the labor market. The solution should instead be to remove what prevents employers from hiring more, rather than tailoring shortcuts for specific groups (Hela Gotland 20170223).

The above mentioned is in line with the two previous subdiscourses, of how the immigrant woman is portrayed in some of the articles. Most often she is given no agency as she is made

passive, unlike other actors in her surroundings. Which, I argue, is a way for the media in the articles to reinforce their image of the immigrant women and make their points more legitimate.

Discursive practice

According to Entman (1993) the media selects what to focus on. This selection often involves choosing a position, choosing sides on the current issue. Regarding the articles discussing simple jobs and RUT, a tax reduction on domestic services, there are two sides. In some articles it is argued that the RUT-reform has contributed to creating thousands of new jobs (Karlstads Tidning 20170824), and is referred to as one of the very best reforms implemented by the previous alliance government. It is also described as a reform that has helped turn the undeclared jobs into declared jobs, which in turn has resulted in tax revenues for Sweden and helped more people from the exclusion areas into employment (Nya Wermlands- Tidningen 20160311). These article, positive to RUT, refers to statistic from The Swedish Tax Agency (Nya Wermlands- Tidningen 20160311), the Swedish Public Employment Services (Nya Wermlands- Tidningen 20160311) and SCB (Sydsvenskan 20181139). These references are mostly connected to economic aspects, and not to aspects involving the experience of those who have employment connected to RUT. In one of the articles that is not very positive towards RUT, but still positive to the idea of creating simple jobs, it is argued that RUT has contributed to that thousands of people in a weak positions and are being used by ruthless companies in a variety of industries such as construction, restaurants, bakeries, window cleaning and so on (Tidningen Ångermanland 20180423). This article has a reference to a Kurdish woman, single parent mother of five, who now got her first job as a janitor in a municipal housing company in Gothenburg, and her pride in getting a job shone (Tidningen Ångermanland 20180423). This reference is to something the author of the article has seen on the television, there is no specific reference in the text, just a recount of what the author saw. This is, I argue, a way for the author to make a text more salience (Entman 1993). By referring to a single parent mother of five, and not just a woman who got her first job, the text is made more noticeable, meaningful or memorable (Entman 1993).

Sociocultural practices

There is made a strong connection in the media between immigrant women and simple jobs that do not require high qualifications. As shown before, the immigrant women are described as a difficult group, they are low-educated and some have never had an employment (Tidningen Ångermanland 20180423). The immigrant woman is repeatedly referred to as a housewife, and in line with the traditional gender roles her role is described as to take care of the household (Falun Kuriren 29170426, Gefle Bladet 20170224, Oskarshamns- Tidningen 20170104). I argue that these descriptions lead to different kinds of consequences.

Since the media's role is to create meaning, affect people's perception but also capture public opinions and mediate it to the political system (Bäck, Larsson and Erlingsson 2011), the media's repeated image of the immigrant women as uneducated or low-educated has political consequences. The image enables various political suggestions, propositions, or reforms, with the aims to create simple jobs targeted directly towards the immigrant women.

These jobs are part of the growing underclass, called the precariat. Working in the precariat involves low-status jobs, low-paid and often with flexible hours (Standing 2016). Media's image of the immigrant women in the editorial texts justifies on one hand the creation of these jobs, and on the other hand the fact that these women are supposed to work under sometimes terrible conditions. This reveals one of the aspects of femonationalism, the economic aspect. Farris (2017) argues that a space within society is made for immigrant women. This space is most often within the care sector. It entails work that some women are no longer willing to do, and therefore assists in creating a more hierarchy divided society. Which was pointed out during the initial debate regarding the RUT-proposal in the 90s (Anving and Eldén 2016). The proponents argued that the proposal would increase equality, because it would facilitate women to participate in the labor market on more equal terms (Anving and Eldén 2016). This indicates that a division is made between different groups of women, between immigrant women and "Swedish women". As shown it is the immigrant women that are hired to do the job that the Swedish women do not have the time for or are no longer willing to do. Further, this discourse also involves, in line with femonationalisms, a saving. The immigrant women that, in the texts, are unemployed are interlinked with vulnerable areas, exclusion from society, and most importantly, trapped and isolated by their men.

This sub discourse also has social consequences. Media's repeated image of the immigrant women as unqualified and more suitable for care- and domestic jobs, affects the public opinions, which might result in an increased stereotypical thinking of what kinds of jobs they are able to perform. As Hall argues, this what stereotyping does, it maintains the power relations between different groups (2013). Hiring immigrant women for domestic work will be normalized and in the end reinforce a more divided and hierarchy society. Regardless of age, utilizing RUT is more common among women than men (Galte Schermer 2020). This reinforces the hierarchical division between the immigrant women and the “Swedish woman”.

Finally, I argue, that media's image of the immigrant women might define, shape and delimit the image the immigrant women have on themselves:

Anyone who has taken care of children throughout their adult lives may find it difficult to imagine a future as a welder. Working at a preschool, like a childminder or a nurse, is probably closer at hand (Strömstads Tidning 20181227).

For those who have been a housewife for a larger part of their lives, a long academic education may be far away, and therefore the focus should be on vocational education (Falu Kuriren 20170426)

Some media's repeated image of the immigrant women in the articles as unqualified, might limit the women's expectations of what is possible to achieve in life. Again, self-realization is for those who flee to Sweden is, with an emphasis on the women, mentioned as a luxury. In the end this will also have economical effects as the women are created as suitable for the low-status and low-paid jobs.

5.4 Conclusions

The aim of this study is to find out how immigrant women are being constructed in Swedish media in relation to labour. It is also to gain a greater understanding of the different kinds of expressions of ‘Swedish values’ and ‘othering’ that immigrant women are associated with in editorial pages in Swedish newspapers. Fairclough's critical discourse analysis was used to answer the research questions of the study. 26 editorial texts, published between 2016 - 2018, regarding immigrant women in relation to labour were analyzed.

During the readings of the editorial texts, one overall discourse and three sub discourses emerged. The overall discourse, the “Swedish values and the Swedish gender equality” was intertwined with the three sub discourses *the Dependent*, *the Victim* and *the Unqualified*. In each of these subdiscourses Swedish values and Swedish gender equality was described as the opposite of the values that immigrant women are surrounded by, and also portrayed as something the immigrant women should strive for.

Within the discourse of *the Dependent*, the immigrant woman is constructed as unemployed and therefore dependent on her husband, but to a larger extent dependent on different kinds of allowances, most often connected to children. In the texts it is stressed that the immigrant women are getting unreasonably many parental days, even though the immigrant never has gotten more parental days than any other parents. She is constructed as a burden to the Swedish society, the consequences are that more restrictive reforms regarding allowances to those who are viewed as immigrants, is in the articles justified and also encouraged. According to some of the media in the editorial texts, more restrictive reforms will result in that the immigrant women will be more motivated to enter the labor market, which in return will make them more independent, as the Swedish women. I argue that further restrictions can be counterproductive as there is nothing that indicates that finding a job will be easier, instead this could result in enhancing the dependency on their husbands. Further, stating that the immigrant women are getting unreasonably many parental days, the media creates a boundary between “the Swedish” woman and “the Other” woman. Using one's own parental days is created as a bad behavior only when it comes to immigrant women. In addition the immigrant women are viewed as the reason why Sweden has dropped several places in the gender equality ranking.

The second sub discourse is *the Victim*, which stresses the subordinated position of the immigrant women. Media most often describes her in the articles as coming from countries where women have no rights and are isolated from the Swedish society. Patriarchal structures and traditional gender roles are the reason why she is isolated, which is located outside the Swedish society or in the suburbs and vulnerable areas in Sweden. Media's image reinforces a conviction that patriarchal structures and the subordinated hierarchy position of women, is not a part of the Swedish society, which in turn reinforces the success story of the Swedish gender equality. Entering the labour market is according to the media in the articles to get in

contact with Swedish values, and breaking the isolation of the immigrant women is described as the most important women's struggle of the 21st century. Further the Swedish women is the one to learn the immigrant women what the Swedish gender equality entails and how it is achieved, which strengthened the hierarchical positioning between the Swedish women and the immigrant women.

In the last subdiscours, *the Unqualified*, most articles describe immigrant women as the most difficult group to get into the labour market. This is due to the fact, media aruges, that many of them have been housewives for the most of their adult life, and if they have any education at all, they are low-educated. A way to break free from the isolation and to be an independent woman entering the labour market is essential. Low-status jobs, or “fake jobs”, must be created and preferably within the care and domestic- sector, as these jobs are, according to the media, not only popular for the immigrant women, it is also a familiar job as most of them have been or are housewives. This is characteristic for femonationalism, using a gender equality and feminist rhetoric to save the immigrant women from the patriarchal structures, and creating a space for them on the labour market. A space that means doing the job that the Swedish women no longer are willing to do.

As shown, “Swedish values” and “Swedish gender equality” are in the articles central when the media creates the image of the immigrant women. The Swedish women are equal to the Swedish men, and the immigrants are positioned as the opposite. Swedish gender equality is something to strive for, and the Swedish women is the one to teach the immigrant women how to achieve it. The stereotypical images of the immigrant women, as victims of traditional gender roles, are seperated from the stereotypes of Swedish women. This happens to the extent that Swedish and immigrant women do not seem to have anything in common, even though they are all women.

5.5 Future Studies

For further studies it would be interesting to make a broader but also deeper research about the construction of immigrant women. It would also be interesting to make a comparison to examine whether there has been a change in the produced image over time, but also compare

different kinds of media or different kinds of news paper. In addition it would be intriguing to add the perspective of the women that are being stereotyped, the immigrant women.

The end...

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