



Femicide and Intimate-Partner-Violence Events:

Cross-Cultural discourse analysis of Greek and English online newspapers

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Master's thesis

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Abstract

The present study is a comparative discourse analysis of Greek and English background articles and news reports about Intimate Partner Violence and femicide incidents in two online newspapers, *Kathimerini online* and *The Guardian*. From the beginning of the COVID-19 lockdown, there has been a growing discussion about the explosion of femicide incidents in many countries, including Greece and the UK. The current study explored this type of crime in light of media representations to understand the discourse about gender-related violence. Through a qualitative discourse analysis, a series of findings were obtained. While events in the English corpus were framed with an emphasis on the social aspect of gendered violence, the Greek corpus viewed events as personal matters. In addition, there were differences in how responsibility was attributed in two corpora. These findings contribute to the existing body of research regarding the relationship between framing theory and IPV media representations.

Keywords: Discourse analysis, Intimate Partner Violence, femicide, *Kathimerini online*, *The Guardian*, COVID-19 lockdown, Greece, the UK

Contents

Theoretical framework	4
The social impact of the Media	4
Media representations and framing	6
Reporting similar events in different countries: Journalistic practices across cultural contexts	11
Role of gender in media representations: Media framing of women	13
Intimate-Partner-Violence and Femicides in Media	15
Present case study: Femicide in Greek and English Media	20
Method	23
Corpus	23
Model of Analysis	28
Reliability	30
Results	30
Common Frames	31
English Frames: <i>The Guardian</i>	43
Greek Frames: <i>Kathimerini online</i>	64
Conclusion and Discussion	80
Reference List	89
Appendix A: Definitions of the terms	96
Appendix B: Analysis of an article in <i>The Guardian</i>	96

Introduction

Contemporary world has witnessed several cases of domestic violence. According to the World Health Organization (2021), 1 of 3 women (30%) around the world have been subjected to physical or/and sexual violence by their partners or non-partners during their life. Most of this violence is Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), which includes “physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and controlling behaviors by an intimate partner”(World Health Organization, 2021). Notably, during the Covid-19 pandemic, the world has witnessed a significant increase in IPV and femicide incidents, due to the fact that women were forced to stay at home with their abusive partners and were unable to access in domestic violence services and support systems.

The surge in domestic violence cases has resulted in an increase of media coverage regarding this type of violence. Media representations play a fundamental role in everyday life due to fact that they serve as a primary source of information and influence our perception of reality. In fact, they subsequently tend to reinforce societal stereotypes including how women and gendered violence are viewed (Carll, 2003). It is therefore crucial to explore and examine “the [underlying] organizing principles [frames] that are socially shared and persistent over time” (Reese, Gandy & Grant, 2001, p.11) in media narratives.

The main objective of this study is twofold. First, it aims to employ a discourse analytical perspective to scrutinize patterns of media representations regarding femicide and IPV incidents in two distinct cultural contexts, namely Greece and the UK. Secondly, the study seeks to discuss those patterns within the cultural context in which they are produced and consumed.

Theoretical framework

The social impact of the Media

Media have become a fundamental source of everyday life due to their ubiquitous presence. Due to its prevalence, “our perception of reality is increasingly structured by narrative” (Huisman et al., 2005, p.1), namely stories presented to us through various linguistic and professional techniques used in media production. These narratives have been considered as a priority area in the prevention of gendered violence (Carll, 2003).

Scholars have explored media’s influence (Flood & Pease, 2009) and found that media coverage regarding incidents of violence against women can increase community awareness (p.136). According to a study (Jaschik-Herman & Fisk, 1995), the publicity of hearings of sexual harassment incidents became a potential factor that increased women’s awareness to relevant issues. Researchers examined whether the 1991 Hill-Thomas hearings on sexual harassment impacted women’s perceptions of sexual harassment. This was done by replicating a previous study, which collected data two years prior to the Hill-Thomas hearings, in 1989. Thus, two studies were conducted; one before the Hill-Thomas hearings and one after. Both studies used the same stimuli, namely a video of a male teacher who was sexually disturbing a female student while he was evaluating her term paper. To measure the perception of sexual harassment, participants were asked to describe the teacher’s behaviour (open-ended question) and to respond positively or negatively in the following question: ‘Do you think the teacher’s conduct showed sexual harassment?’ (Jaschik-Herman & Fisk, 1995, p.442). Both studies revealed that participants were more likely to label the behaviour as sexual harassment when they were asked

directly about this. However, in a more recent study, they were significantly more likely to do so spontaneously (open-ended questions) than in 1989. Researchers suggested that this may have occurred because people became more aware of these incidents after hearing about them in the news. Other potential factors were also explored though.

Another study (Anastasio & Kosta, 2004) explored whether and how articles on crime personalize male and female victims and whether such treatment led to the audience feeling empathy for the victim or instead attributing blame to it. In the first case, articles were analyzed according to whether they provided personal information about the victim and whether they identified the victim using their name, a noun (e.g., mum), or a pronoun (e.g., he/she). According to the findings, male victims were personalized more than females and were also identified by their names. A significant result was revealed by the second phase of the study, where the audience's empathy was explored. Participants were asked to read an article about "a victim that was shot by a murderer in a robbery incident and then died in the hospital" (p.538) and complete a questionnaire that assessed perceptions of empathy for the victim, victim blame and perpetrator's justification. According to the findings, when the victim's personal information was provided, greater empathy towards it was produced. According to the study, this suggests that greater 'personalization' may signify that the actors involved in the incident hold a greater level of importance within the community whereas less 'personalization' might convey that they are not so significant. Thus, it can be inferred that media's linguistic representations can shape certain social perceptions about people.

Media representations and framing

Journalists' role goes beyond merely making an event public (Tuchman, 1976, p.94). Their role extends to framing the events, namely presenting certain aspects of it (what) in a certain way (how) to influence people on how to think about an issue. In other words, framing is the process of selecting a few elements of events and creating a narration that highlights connections among those elements (Entman, 2007). As a result, it can promote a particular interpretation of the narrated event and lead the audience to "locate, perceive, identify, and label" it (Goffman, 1974, p. 21).

Framing includes particular components. These are called "reasoning devices" and include the definition of the problem, the responsibility attribution, a moral judgment and suggestion of remedies (Entman, 2007, p.164; Van Gorp, 2005, p.485). Framing can appear in text fully or partly; a fully-developed frame includes all of the four reasoning devices while a partly-developed frame includes only some of them. The reasoning devices are constructed through the usage of framing devices which include rhetorical and technical devices. The former refers to word choice, metaphors, exemplars, catchphrases, imageries, and quantification, whereas the latter refers to technical elements such as headlines, subheadings, leads and source selection (Linström & Marais, 2012, p.31).

A frame analysis carried out in German media (Wiedicke, et al., 2022) revealed the importance of the responsibility attribution frame regarding the illness of depression. Particularly, content analysis was conducted to explore the degree of responsibility attribution about the cause and the treatment of the illness to the individual, social network and society, and whether these levels were seen as interdependent. The term "social network" refers to the individual's social

connections (e.g., family, neighbors, co-workers etc.). According to the findings, most of German media assigned responsibility for the cause and the treatment of depression mostly to the individual, which means that individual-level attributions were greater than social-level attributions. Additionally, emphasis was placed on the role of the social network - which was not often seen in media representations - as well as the interaction between these three factors. According to the study, the responsibility attribution can influence the public's perception of those affected by the illness, including who is seen as responsible and the emotional stance towards them (Wiedicke, et al., 2022, p. 97).

Another study (Hart, 2016) revealed the significance of word choice with regard to blame allocation in news texts about political protests. Participants were given news reports about political protests between protesters and police, constructed with different grammatical representations which contained either reciprocal or transactive verbs. The former invokes a two-sided action such as “Protesters clashed with police officers...” whereas the latter is presented as a one-sided action “Protesters attacked police officers...” (p. 412). The results showed that, in the reciprocal condition, participants were more likely to assign equal blame to both sides, whereas, in the transactive condition, they were less likely to assign equal blame. As this illustrates, political ideologies could be also constructed by systems of frames (Lakoff, 2010, p.72) since different frames can lead to different interpretations of “the relationship between the state and the citizen” (Hart, 2016, p.408).

Ideological orientation in media framing

Despite the variety of different political orientations that media adopt, dominant ideologies in news productions are linked with the position of journalists,

which largely represent values of “white, male, middle-class journalists working within a corporate environment” (Van Dijk, 2009, p.202). Some of these values include that men are stronger, more competent and more objective than women (Van Dijk, 2009). On the other side, “women, poor people, workers, black people, immigrants” and generally those who do not have the same degree of access to the public discourse, are more likely to be under-represented by media or portrayed in a negative way (Van Dijk, 2009, p.202). Following this, discourse analysis aims to scrutinize the usage and function of language to uncover how social inequalities are constructed and legitimized according to dominant beliefs.

A representative study (Blinder & Allen, 2014) of how social inequalities are constructed through the use of language was conducted in English newspapers. The study attempted to examine the collocates, namely those words that habitually co-occur with other words more frequently than would happen by chance (Stubbs, 1995), linked with the terms *immigrants*, *migrants*, *asylum seekers* and *refugees*. The study revealed that the most prominent modifiers had a negative load, which means that there were negative associations related to social minorities. Additionally, the language surrounding asylum seekers overlapped with the language about migrants and immigrants which may have implied that public perceptions about each social minority were misunderstood. These findings provided an insight into how the usage of certain linguistic components could shape the public portrayals of social minorities, and, potentially, impact public policy.

Another study (Colburn & Melander, 2018) investigated how minorities such as African Americans, Hispanics and Middle Easterners were portrayed in the American media regarding crime news compared to white Americans. The study examined their visual representations and whether these differed by race and

ethnicity. Two themes emerged: suspect photos and non-suspect photos. The former contained two sub-themes, mugshot photos of suspects and non-mugshot suspect photos, with the first pertaining to judicial photographs captured at the time of the arrest of a suspect and the second including suspects in and out of the court. The second theme included depictions of non criminals but related to the crime, such as police officers. The findings revealed that in the suspect-mugshot theme, non-White individuals were depicted more frequently as compared to White ones. At the same time, the FBI data used in the study showed that Whites accounted for a higher percentage (72.6%) of total arrests while non-Whites for a lower percentage (27.4%) (Colburn & Melander, 2018, p.388). This implies that media coverage may over-represent non- White individuals in connection with crime, potentially contributing to a perception of minorities as a threat to the dominant group.

Reporting similar events in different countries: Journalistic practices across cultural contexts

Cross-cultural analyses of journalistic practices contribute to our understanding that “choices in the narration of events are not inevitable or random, but rather consequences of framing due to contextual factors” (Rafiee, Spooren & Sanders, 2021, p.335). These contextual factors occur due to a variety of political, economic, cultural, technological and historical reasons (Hanusch & Hanitzch, 2017) and include factors such as “freedom of the media and difference in media systems, journalistic conventions and communication styles, socio-behavioural preferences, and, in the context of crime reporting, norms toward crime and criminality” (as cited in Rafiee, Spooren & Sanders, 2021, p. 335). By understanding these parameters, we might be able to comprehend the differences among the various forms of production and usage of journalism worldwide. The following examples include two different

comparisons of Dutch and Iranian journalism, and American and Swedish journalism, that illustrate the distinct journalistic practices which are attributed to different sociocultural contexts.

A study showed that narratives about crimes or crime-related events are framed differently in Dutch and Iranian news regarding the depiction of the social actors, actions and circumstances at thematic, lexical and syntactic levels (Rafiee, Spooren & Sanders, 2021). Accordingly, regarding the social actors, Iranian news texts put more emphasis on the officials and their acts while Dutch news texts on the victims. Moreover, the former tended to depict criminals more negatively than Dutch texts. Regarding the actions, Dutch media focused on criminal actions, while Iranian media on official actions. Concerning the circumstances, Dutch news texts referenced to time and location of the crime more frequently, while Iranian texts on the cause and purpose. Overall, Iranian news appeared to depict officials dealing with the crime's aftermath more frequently than Dutch texts, whereas Dutch news seemed to focus mostly on the impact of crime on its victim. The differences were attributed to different sociocultural contexts, including different perceptions of punishment conventions, power distance, and long-term orientation (see Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov, 2010).

Another study (Barker, 2012) examined the portrait of the Iraq War in 2003 by the Swedish and American media. The main hypothesis was that American media would provide more masculine content compared to Swedish due to different political, financial and cultural values. The results revealed that journalistic output differed significantly since different perspectives about the war were adopted; American journalists described the war in terms of strategy and weaponry, while Swedish media perceived the war as a failure of the international community to

negotiate. The authors attributed this significant difference to the distinct degrees of masculinity across these two countries with America generally adopting more masculine values compared to Sweden (see Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov, 2010).

Role of gender in media representations: Media framing of women

Narrations about genders “are often taken as representative of cultural patterns of gendered discourse” (Bucholtz, 2003) and are likely to reveal how females and victims of IPV are perceived in everyday social life (Aliefendioglu & Arslan, 2011).

Scholars have examined how narrations are constructed around particular events leading to a sexist discourse. For instance, according to prior research, women are often blamed for their victimization with statements such as “there is no such thing as rape, because if a woman did not want to have sex, she could easily avoid it” or “the woman provoked him” (Meyers, 1997, pp.25-26). Similarly, questions are often asked of victims of violent relationships, such as “why does she just not leave the jerk?” or “what if the kids become the next target?” (Cravens, Whiting & Amar, 2015, p.373). According to a study, these questions fail to acknowledge the complex decision-making process women experience when trying to leave abusive relationships (Cravens, Whiting & Amar, 2015, p.372).

Content and discourse analysis of Indonesian online media were conducted with a focus on the media’s biases against women (Murtiningsih, et al., 2017). The study revealed that women were often seen as subordinate subjects and blamed in cases of rape; they were depicted as the cause of the corruption maelstroms, and as sexual objects in commercial advertisements, whereas women in politics were

portrayed in relation to their physical appearance rather than their intellectual qualities or political stances.

A further investigation (Aliefendioglu & Arslan, 2011) revealed that journalistic practices in a Cypriot newspaper offered sexist jokes and cartoons with downgrading female presentations regarding female intelligence. To give an example, a column entitled “Saziye’s opinion” in a Cypriot newspaper (*Afrika*), presents a middle-aged female character, uneducated with low intellectual abilities to make politically incorrect statements, and naive comments. She was often presented to utter “masculine” statements such as: “To love only half of this country, is like loving only the bottom half of a woman” (Aliefendioglu & Arslan, 2011, p.6). According to the study, the humorist representation that emerged as a result of the low intellectual ability of the female character is deeply rooted in patriarchal social perceptions that view women as entertaining elements of men’s lives (p.9).

On the other side, social perceptions that promote equal power relations among genders can lead to different female presentations. In the late 1990s, South Korea experienced political, social and financial prosperity, which influenced power relations among genders. Following this, the status and female depiction were improved significantly. In this line, a newspaper content analysis (Kim, 2008) in two South Korean television dramas was conducted and focused on gender roles, female sexuality, and nuclear family system. According to the findings, the portrayal of equal gender relations and a modern female portrait emerged according to which women were seen as self-employed and sexually liberated. However, the portrait of the nuclear family as an important mainstay of the retention of society remained dominant in both dramas. This study gave an insight into how gendered discourse is influenced

by the social context within which it is produced; socially liberated environments are more likely to stimulate perceptions that support individual liberation.

Intimate-Partner-Violence and Femicides in Media

Conceptual approach of femicide

The term “femicide” was first used in 1976 during the first International Tribunal on Crimes against Women by the criminologist and activist Diana Russel to refer to “the killing of females by a male because they are female” (Russel, 2011). She also suggested that “we need to arrive at a consensus to describe this complex, polyhedral and culturally dependent murder” (Grzyb, Naudi & Marcuello-Servós, 2018), implying that it is difficult to define the context of femicide. However, she later refined this concept by stressing the main causes of gender violence, namely the male power and control over women and the unequal gender relations. The new concept was then uttered at the United Nations Symposium on Femicide in Brussels in 2012 and defined as “the misogynist killing of women by men” (Grzyb, Naudi & Marcuello-Servós, 2018). Subsequent definitions explained the term as the result of repeated actions of discrimination and violence involving a variety of verbal, physical, sexual and emotional abuse, mutilations and forced situations before the deprivation of life (Radford & Russell, 1992).

Describing the context of femicide can be challenging since there are not always available data about the clear cause of the crime or the type of killing. Regarding the former, gender inequality is recognized as being one of the key features of why men use violence against women (WHO, 2021). A clear connection between gender inequality and violence-killing is difficult to give. However, feminist theories

(Meyers, 1997) have situated gender, power and patriarchy as key factors that contribute to this reality.

Media framing of IPV

The framing of IPV and femicide incidents has been discussed in many studies with respect to media representations. Media depictions have generally ignored to present gendered violence as a societal issue, due to the view that this is a private matter that does not require public attention rather than a social problem (Radford & Russell, 1992).

A study (Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013) explored how IPV incidents were framed in Canadian media and whether this has changed throughout the years. Three frames were found to be the most common, namely reporting prior violence, direct victim blaming including accusations against the victim and indirect victim blaming including perpetrator's explanations. The study also explored the sources of information because these are considered important framing mechanisms; based on the source, empirical validity, alignment with specific opinions of authority, and/or marginalization of other perspectives, can emerge (Linström & Marais, 2012). The aforementioned frames are explained in greater detail in the following sub-sections.

Direct victim-blaming

There have been several investigations into the role the media play in portraying violence against women around the world such as in Florida, Nigeria, Serbia and Latin America (Taylor, 2009; Ogunlana, et al., 2021; Čvorić, 2021; Montiel Valle & Martin, 2021).

Exploring American newspapers in Florida, Taylor (2009) found that the media criticize the victim by employing negative language against them. For instance, victims appear blameworthy for tolerating long-term domestic violence and “choosing” to remain in insane relationships, as if there were other ways to avoid the abuse, as well as for recklessness due to alcohol, drug abuse or emotional and psychological problems. Additionally, according to a study (Čvorić, 2021), which explored Serbian readers' comments on social media, some main themes were found, including misogynist and victim-blaming remarks. A representative example is the following comment that was made by a male reader who considers the women responsible for their abuse due to the attention they give to their appearance:

“The public’ is full of lazy women who do nothing all day except play with their phones, flirt and neglect their kids. They’re obsessed with their looks. [...] I have a lot of male friends who are secretly seeing at least 2 or 3 married women in various hotels! And then we wonder why all these tragedies happen” (p. 24).

Another study that explored Nigerian digital media (Ogunlana, et al., 2021) found that “the word ‘allegedly’ was found to be frequently used in the title and content inferring careful articulation so as not to convey blame to the perpetrator” (p.8).

Indirect victim-blaming / Perpetrator explanation

Indirect victim blaming is evident in cases where the media de-emphasize the abuser’s responsibility by using several factors which can be either situational circumstances or specific characteristics of the aggressor. Prior research indicates that news coverage provides a number of these variables (Bullock & Cubert, 2002; Taylor, 2009; Jovana Čvorić, 2021; Montiel Valle & Martin, 2021).

For instance, in a content analysis on crime news in an American newspaper (Taylor, 2009), 292 articles were examined and most of them were found to emphasize the perpetrator's problems including mental, physical and emotional problems as well as the financial hardships. Further, in 12 articles, where health problems were not known, media texts stated that no psychological or financial hardships existed, implying that individual problematic situations are the only cause for gender violence whereas standing unequal power relations was hidden. Similarly, discourse analysis of newspaper articles in Latin America (Montiel Valle & Martin, 2021) found that femicide was presented to emerge as "a moment of impassioned rage, jealousy, and sickness" (p.11) because of women's problematic behavior. So, variables such as impulsivity and emotional stress were displayed as the motives for the crime. In another study (Jovana Čvorić, 2021), perpetrator-defending comments were examined in online newspaper versions and male readers were found to attribute the crime to the conflict between the couple without assigning the major responsibility to the abuser. According to Jovana Čvorić (2021):

"In this way, readers suggest that it is mutual aggression between actors with equal social power and position and, thus, equal responsibilities." (p.25)

Perpetrators were also justified by some male readers by writing that it was a moment of carelessness such as "A sad story. His recklessness and a careless moment led to tragedy" (p.25). According to another study (Bullock & Cubert, 2002), almost half of the articles included a motivation or a justification for the crime entailed the consumption of alcohol and drugs, the separation or divorce, and past abuse by the murderer's family. In some cases, the aggressor appeared not to have this intention and the crime happened accidentally (Bullock & Cubert, 2002).

As a result, sympathy for the perpetrator and blame for the victim are constructed, while also cultural aspects of violence such as tolerance of misogynistic attitudes and dominant masculinities are precluded (Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013).

Reporting prehistory of violence

In spite of empirical evidence that femicide occurs as a result of chronic male-perpetrated abuse, prior research has shown that only a little attention is paid to the connection between the violent background of the relationship and the femicide itself by media (Taylor, 2009; Richards, et al., 2011). By not reporting the background of violence, the individual death remains an isolated event and cannot be connected to the social issue of IPV (Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013, p. 151). Following this, discourses that justify the events as “one-time, spontaneous instances of a male ‘snapping’” cannot be accepted. (Fairbairn & Dawson, 2013, p.151)

Taylor (2009) found that only a few articles reported a history of violence such as divorce and problems in the relationship. Also, 57 articles from the total sample depicted the relationship with neutral terms blaming equally the murderer and the victim. An interesting note is that the titles and the subtitles of the coverage labeled the violence as such (IPV) but did not identify who was the aggressor.

In a quantitative content analysis of news coverage in 1998 in Washington, Bullock et Cubert (2002) found that phrases such as *domestic violence*, *violent history*, *domestic abuse* were found only in 22,6% of the total sample. Other lexical items such as *emotional*, *physical abuse* and *trauma* were mentioned in fewer cases. According to the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE, 2019), labeling “gender-based” violence as such highlights the inherent power inequality between women and men. This study also examined

whether the articles provided a history of abuse without labeling it necessarily as such. Examples showed that 74% of the total sample included the background of the relationship and made quite clear that the femicide was not an unexpected crime but the final stage of a continuous abusive situation.

Furthermore, another study (Richards, et al., 2011) found that only 22% of the total sample cited a history of violence against the victim. Additionally, only 13% of them used IPV language when covering the incidents such as: “If you’re in a relationship where there is domestic violence, you need to get out of it because the person is not going to change” (Karr, 2003, as cited in Richards, et al., 2011).

Present case study: Femicide in Greek and English media

This study offers a discourse analysis of media representations of IPV and femicide events that have occurred in Greece and in the UK during the Covid-19 pandemic. This is an interesting case since most researchers have historically worked on single-nation analyses of journalistic practices (Hanusch & Hanitzsch, 2017, p.525). As for the particular choice of Greek and English newspapers, this is justified for practical reasons, considering the author’s native knowledge, in the former case, and her proficiency in the latter case. Additionally, it would be interesting to investigate these contexts as they exhibit variations in media autonomy and gender equality, as well as cultural diversity that may result in different communication styles.

Media Freedom in Greece and in the UK

In the global analysis of Reporters Without Borders (RSF, 2022), that focuses on parameters that influence media freedom including the government influence, the dissemination of news using ethical ways, and the effects of social parameters like gender that

challenge the established norms among others. The rankings of Greece and the UK were significantly distinct; Greece ranked 108 and the UK 24 out of 180. This suggests that English journalism is much more liberated and open than Greek. Consequently, English mass media could allow for a more pluralistic platform including multiple perspectives and voices to address issues without being largely controlled and influenced by the government as in the case of Greek media.

Gender Equality in Greece and in the UK

According to the European Commission (EC, 2018):

“Examining Greece’s progress on key issues regarding equality, emancipation, and general social health, it was shown that the country, especially when stacked up against other EU countries, is performing relatively weakly” (as cited in Lalou, 2020, p. 11).

To be more precise, according to the Gender Equality Index (2021), Greece ranked last whereas the UK ranked in sixth place among all EU countries in domains including work, power, money, knowledge, time and health. This suggests that while men appear more privileged than women in both countries, in Greece, the gender gap is considerably higher. With respect to gendered violence, which is “both a cause and a consequence of gender equality” (EIGE, 2019), no scores were found available because of the lack of comparable EU data.

This gender gap may be explained due to different cultural values and orientations. The UK typically has a tendency towards equal values among the members of society while Greece tends towards a hierarchical and dominating system of values (see Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010). This suggests that while the UK supports that inequalities among members should be minimized and all should have equal rights, Greece tends to support that less powerful members should be dependent

on the powerful. As a result, power relations among genders and dominant masculinities emerge.

In a similar vein, collectivist cultures as Greece, typically place more emphasis on social cohesion while individualistic cultures like the UK prioritize individual achievement (see Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010). As a result, in collectivist countries, the role of family is considered a mainstay of social harmony. Following this, traditional gender roles that restrict individual freedom, especially for women, are more likely to emerge in cultural contexts such as Greece.

COVID-19 pandemic

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the world witnessed a rise in domestic abuse and femicide cases. In Greece, 17 cases occurred only within the last year, 2021, while 7 cases occurred within the first seven months of 2022. In spite of the fact that these numbers are not enormous when compared to Greece's population, they, however, represent a continuation of the previous trends. According to the data of the “General Secretariat for Demography and Family Policy and Gender Equality”, offenses related to domestic violence in Greece, in 2020, more than tripled compared to 2010 (Michaelson & Sidiropoulou, 2021). Also, feminist groups estimate that every month in Greece a woman is murdered by a member of her family (Michaelson & Sidiropoulou, 2021). According to a study (Kontochristou, 2020), data from 41 cases of domestic violence from 2018 to 2020 revealed that the most common place of crime was at home and that jealousy was found to be the most frequent factor of the murders. The study also found that alcohol and drug consumption were contributing factors as well.

Similarly, according to Karen Ingala Smith's project *Counting Dead Women*, at least 144 femicide incidents occurred in 2021, while 85 occurred only until April 2022. Additionally, the Femicide Census (2020) in the UK revealed that, on average, one woman is killed by a man every 3 days in the UK. Most cases involve a perpetrator who was known to the victim, and in 57 of these cases, the perpetrator was either a present or a former partner of the victim.

Due to the rise of domestic abuse, a significant amount of public and private discourse occurs on a daily basis regarding gendered violence which is also a dominant topic in news. As a result, it is important to examine how different media frame this type of crime to gain a better understanding. So, taking all the aforementioned literature into account, the present study attempts to investigate the following research questions:

1. How are femicide events framed in background articles from the English *The Guardian* and the Greek *Kathimerini online*?
2. To what extent can the framing be explained in terms of cultural context?

Method

Corpus

For the purpose of this investigation, a corpus-based analysis was conducted using 40 background articles and news reports (20 Greek and 20 English) about femicide and IPV-related events¹ published during the pandemic, particularly from

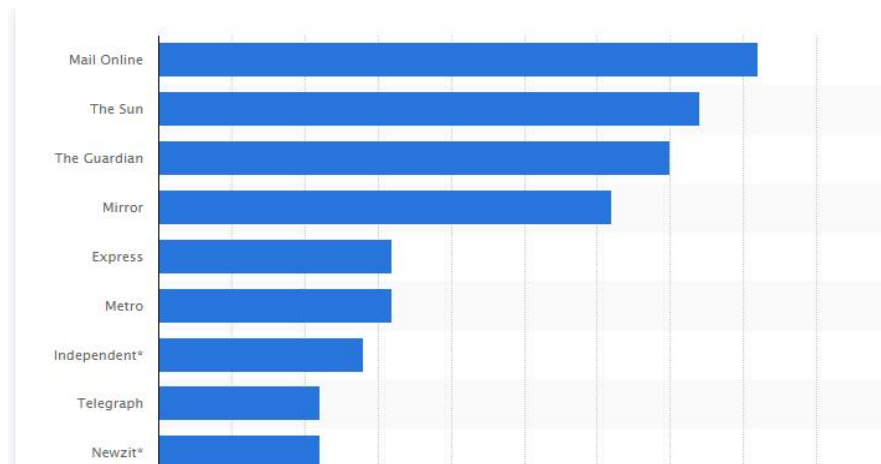
¹ Femicide results from repeated acts of discrimination and violence, namely a variety of verbal, physical, sexual and emotional abuse, mutilations and forced situations before the deprivation of life (Radford & Russell, 1992). IPV is defined as the “physical and sexual violence, stalking and psychological aggression committed by a current or former husband” (CDC, 2022).

2021 to 2022, in two online newspapers, *The Guardian* and *Kathimerini online*. The English texts were published between February 2021 and October 2022, while the Greek texts were published between July 2021 and November 2022. During these time frames, gender-based violence increased dramatically due to the pandemic. The genre of the corpus consisted primarily of background articles, since they contain an extensive analysis of the events. However, since most of the content available on *Kathimerini online* consisted of news reports, some of the articles in the Greek corpus turned out to be reports instead of background articles.

The Guardian and *Kathimerini online* were selected due to their wide readership. According to Statista, an online portal providing market data on the global digital economy, *The Guardian* is considered the broadsheet with the highest circulation among English newspapers (see Figure 1). However, due to the fact that paid registration was required for the Greek data, the *Digital News Report* conducted by The Reuters Institute for the study of Journalism was used and it revealed that *Kathimerini online* has the highest readership among online newspapers (see Figure 2).

Figure 1

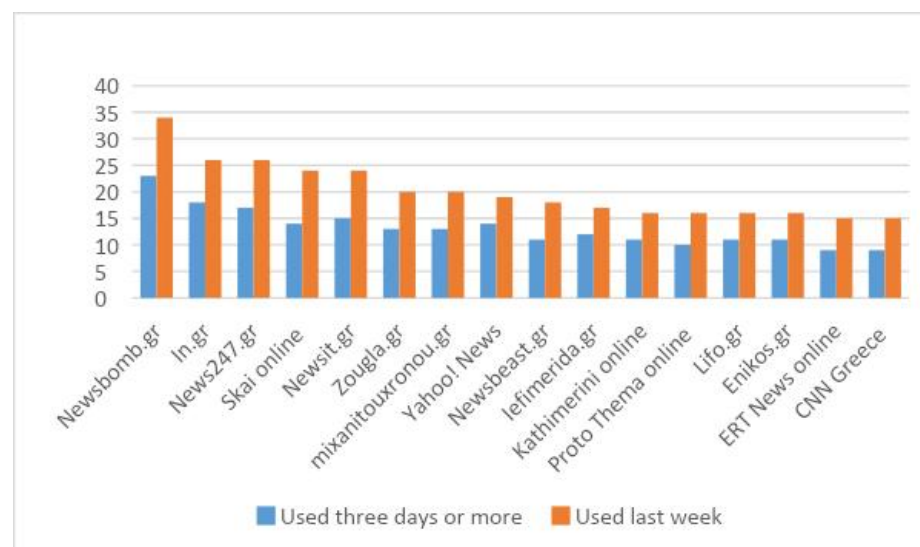
Traffic source of the English online newspapers at Statista.com



The Guardian is considered the first quality newspaper as it can be indicated in the chart above while the Mail Online and The Sun are considered tabloids.

Figure 2

Traffic source of the Greek online pages according to the Reuters Institute for the study of Journalism.



Although Kathimerini online is not topped on the list, it is still considered the most highly circulated online newspaper on the grounds that what ranked higher than Kathimerini online on this chart are pages rather than newspapers.

These two media outlets differ in terms of political orientation since *The Guardian* has a centre-left political orientation whereas *Kathimerini online* is considered much more politically diverse entailing content with various political perspectives. However, since the focus of the study is politically relevant, yet not mainly political in nature but rather social, the differences in political orientations are not considered significant. As for the format of the newspapers, broadsheets were selected since they are more extended and include more in-depth coverage, compared with tabloids which present shorter and less detailed articles on average. As a result, the former is considered a more reliable and valid source of information.

The article selection process involved using a range of keywords (listed below) to gather as many articles as possible published in 2022. The search process using the newspapers' websites was chronological; after gathering all the relevant articles for 2022, the same search process was repeated for 2021 in descending chronological order until we reach 20 articles for each data set. The English keywords used for article retrieval on *The Guardian* and the Greek keywords on the *Kathimerini online* are shown below.

Table 1

English and Greek keywords

English Keywords	Greek Keywords
Murder and wife	Δολοφόνος και σύζυγος
Husband killed wife	Σκότωσε την σύζυγο
Man killed wife	Σύζυγος και θάνατος
Man jailed for* ²	Σε δίκη ο άνδρας

² An asterisk indicates a truncation operator, so that the search engine will search for all words beginning with the preceding string of text.

Man guilty for*

Γυναικοκτονία

Ενδοοικογενειακή βία

The total number of articles chosen for the analysis does not reflect the number of incidents that have happened since some incidents were reported more than one time. Six out of the twenty cases in the English database included incidents that happened before 2021-2022 but were reported recently because legal proceedings related to those cases were still ongoing, so they were still included in the database. Moreover, similar to Taylor's research (2009), articles reporting crimes committed by those not considered intimate partners such as members of the extended family, relatives, roommates and foreigners will be excluded from the analysis, since these are not considered instances of IPV.

The English corpus mostly referred to long judicial proceedings including opinions and discussions except two, which focused on the facts of the crime, whereas almost half of the Greek corpus referred to the facts before the judicial proceedings. This is due to the distinct communication styles the media outlets adopt; *The Guardian* tends to feature more extensive articles with multiple sources and quotes while *Kathimerini online* has a rather factual style of reporting.

The examination of the headlines will be part of the analysis since these are considered "the most salient cue to activate certain semantically related concepts in readers' minds" (Linström & Marais, 2011, p.33). For instance, in a study (Taylor, 2009) it was found that these devices can impact how readers perceive blame. One of the cases that was cited was the headline "Tragedy After Wife Left" (p.25), which failed to mention that the agent was a motorbike racer who killed his wife. This

omission may have influenced readers to perceive the perpetrator as less responsible for the event.

Model of Analysis

The present study follows a discourse analytic approach. Following Rafiee et al. (2021), the analysis is conducted in two phases: textual and contextual.

Phase 1: Textual analysis

The framing analysis has been carried out following an inductive approach, meaning that the frames will be discovered as the analysis progresses.

Step 1: After collecting the English and Greek data sets, the first step was to go through several circles of reading, with each pass having deeper connections of meanings.

Step 2: The next step was finding ten random articles from each data set and coding them. The coding process involved searching for the presence of frame packages, namely reasoning and framing devices, that would help decide the core frames (Van Gorp, 2005). Through coding the twenty articles, some devices were found. Following this, it was decided that this model of analysis is applicable and, thus, appropriate for use in the analysis of the articles. To give more details about the frame packages, according to Van Gorp (2005), the framing devices are divided into grammatical/rhetorical and technical. Core frames are the result of linking framing and reasoning devices. The table below provides an overview of the frame package.

Table 2

Overview of the frame package (Van Gorp, 2005, Linström & Marais, 2012)

Category	Examples
Reasoning devices	Problem definition, Responsibility attribution, Moral Judgement, Suggestion of remedies (Van Gorp, 2005, p.486)
Grammatical and Rhetorical devices	Lexical choice, Exemplars, Keywords, Stock phrases, Sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgement, Concluding statements and paragraphs (Linström & Marais, 2012, p.33)
Technical devices	Headlines, Subheadings, Leads, All sources of information, Where the quote is placed in the story (Linström & Marais, 2012, p.33)

Step 3: The next step was the identification of the framing devices for the rest thirty articles. This process included underlining the items that are meaningful and contribute to the presence of a particular frame. As they began to appear, the researcher recorded them in a Word file while also evaluating the function of these items.

Step 4: Next, following the framing devices, the reasoning devices were found and recorded in a Word file as well.

Step 5: Once the framing and reasoning devices were explored and found in each data set, the core frames were defined. However, to confirm that the core frames were consistent with the content of each text, additional reading was used.

Step 6: Lastly, the core frames found in the Greek corpus and the core frames found in the English corpus were compared.

Phase 2: Contextual phasis

The contextual analysis was conducted after the textual analysis. In this phase, the social significance of the results of the textual analysis was interpreted in line with each cultural context. This analysis used an exploratory approach in an attempt to explore possible reasons for the findings based on the literature review and the author's understanding of the Greek cultural context as in prior studies (see, Rafiee, Spoooren & Sanders, 2021). This is discussed thoroughly in the Discussion section.

Reliability

To ensure the accuracy and consistency of the model of analysis, two approaches were adopted. First, a very detailed description of the steps taken to gather all the data was given. Secondly, the findings were elaborated in detail, including the occurrence, function and specific examples of the reasoning, framing devices and core frames. Furthermore, a table of each core frame was included to provide a summary of these elements.

Results

The first research question asked how femicide and IPV incidents were depicted in two online newspapers, namely *The Guardian* in English and *Kathimerini online* in Greek. The study aimed to identify the core frames used by each publication, along with their explanation, namely their grammatical/rhetorical and technical devices. The complete analytical process used in the study is provided in the appendix, including sample analysis, to ensure transparency and reliability of the research.

Common Frames

The common frames include: 1. Blaming the perpetrator, 2. Perpetrator's explanations, 3. Procedural

1. Blaming the perpetrator

This frame package found in ten articles in the English corpus and in four articles in the Greek corpus is a responsibility attribution frame that referred to the negative profile of the perpetrators for their actions against their wives.

Reasoning devices

All the articles focused on femicide cases. The articles displayed a wide range of reasons with the majority holding the male perpetrator responsible for his controlling and violent behavior. However, the perpetrators are presented to attribute the crimes to different reasons. For instance, one (3) accused his wife of having mental health problems and starting arguments that fueled his anger. In another article (5), a row over "frozen chips" is demonstrated to be the trigger, whereas in another article (10), an argument over a television program. In one article, the perpetrator committed the

crime because he could not accept his girlfriend's rejection (11). In terms of offered solutions, all of the articles focused on the perpetrators' sentence, which involves sentencing them to imprisonment and/or imposing a restraining order, along with providing domestic violence helplines. Furthermore, all the articles have a consistent pattern of making a negative moral assessment of the perpetrator and creating a sympathetic image of the victim and her family who have suffered a loss.

Grammatical and Rhetorical Devices

The previously described reasoning devices were sustained by a number of grammatical devices. These include **lexical items** that potentially reinforce the negative profile of the perpetrator. Some examples are provided below.

In the English corpus, the perpetrator was characterized as “bully”, “controlling”, “manipulator”, “coercive”, “callous”, “dangerous”, “ongoing risk”, “multi-talented actor” while one's hands were labeled as “ungodly”, his actions as “cruel” and “selfish” and in the Greek corpus as “aggressive”, “manipulator”, “curt” and “slayer”. Additionally, in the Greek corpus, the following phrase suggests that the perpetrator tried to downplay his guilt.

“As kathimerini.gr reported, the 62-year-old perpetrator tried to justify his heinous act by claiming that his wife had extramarital affairs”

Along the same line, lexical choices painted the crime in the negative light in both corpora. In the English, the crime was defined as “terrible”, “horrific” and “upsetting” while the adverb “gratuitously” was used to demonstrate the large number of wounds the perpetrator inflicted on the victim. In one article, the word “deliberately” was repeatedly used to show that the murderer was well aware of what

he did. In the Greek corpus, the word “heinous” was used to characterize the crime, the verb “butcher/massacre” to demonstrate the barbaric action and the verb “fight” to depict the efforts made by the victim to survive, the word set “lake of blood” to illustrate the bloody scenery.

On the other side, positive lexical choices for the victim were used in both corpora including “beautiful”, “amazing”, “wonderful”, “very special, caring and capable”, “was a woman with a great deal to live for and a great deal to look forward to”, and words that illustrate the impact to her and to her offspring such as “unfortunate woman” and “mother-of-three”.

In the same vein, **imagery** illustrated the scenery of the crime, thus it might have reinforced the barbarism and the perpetrator’s guilt. Some examples are the following:

“He strangled and repeatedly stabbed” / “covered himself with the victim’s blood”, “filmed himself on his mobile phone covered in Ashley’s blood apologizing for what he had done” / “inflicted 90 wounds”. (Engl:7) / A Greek article (9) described the scenery by presenting the perpetrator killing his wife, their puppy, leaving their baby beside her, and then contacting the police and binding his hands and feet with a duct tape to deceive the justice that someone else did this.

Quantification was found in line with the core frame. Large numbers were potentially used to depict the perpetrator’s obsession to reach the victim and her suffering. In this manner, his negative profile might have been stressed. Some examples from the English corpus (1) and from the Greek (2) are presented below.

1. “The judge, Mr Justice Murray, told Chelmsford crown court Sepple “gratuitously inflicted some 90 wounds on her body”. (7) / However, he continued to contact her and sent her more than 900 messages the weekend before the stabbings, jurors were told” / “...how Boulton walked 28 miles from his hostel in Skegness to Vincent’s house, where he stabbed her nine times.” (8)

2. “... where she had been admitted with over 70% burns on her body and face.” (7) / “... the unfortunate woman was stabbed 23 times in the chest, abdomen and limbs”. (10)

Additionally, **clusters of facts** related to the prehistory of violence were found in line with the core frame. This information indicates a link between previous abuse and the femicide itself. To give more details, one article in the English corpus (6) mentioned that the perpetrator was stalking his wife excessively, checking her mobile phone, demanding to know her location at any time, causing conflicts and being aggressive with her acquaintances while another article (8) in the same corpus cited that the victim was experiencing violence such as “he threw her around the house” and “sent her more than 900 messages”. In the Greek corpus one article (10) demonstrated that the perpetrator had been arrested in the past again. An example is the following.

“The man was previously arrested at the end of August last year due to allegations of neglecting his child. As a result, the child left home and was found in poor condition on the streets.”

Some of the **concluding statements** highlight the perpetrator's punishment while other stress the impact of the crime on the victim's family. In both cases, the negative portrait of the perpetrator could be intensified.

“Nutt will be sentenced on 19 August. Judge Jonathan Rose said he would face a life sentence, with a minimum term to be set on that date.” / “Diane Stewart's siblings, sister Wendy Bellamy-Lee and brother Christopher Lem, called her a very special, caring and capable person who would always be greatly loved and hugely missed by her family and all who knew her”,

Additionally, in some cases, the English corpus provided remedies including helplines while in one article (8) in the Greek corpus , a stock phrase was used that could act as a slogan for society's efforts to stop gendered violence. Some excerpts are the following:

“In the UK, call the national domestic abuse helpline on ..., or visit Women's Aid. In the US, the domestic violence hotline is In Australia, the national family violence counselling service is on...” / “No more victims like Garyfallia, no more bullies”.

Technical Devices

In terms of technical devices, some patterns were found featuring the core frame in both corpora. **The headline and the subheading** placed responsibility for the crime on the murderer and mention the penalty he will receive. Some examples of the English corpus (1) and the Greek corpus (2) are the following:

1. “Man gets life sentence for ‘brutal’ murder of Canadian girlfriend” (7) / “Mark Barrott had a long history as an abuser, stalking his wife Eileen physically and electronically”. (6)
2. “Thessaloniki: Life sentence for 50-year-old who killed his wife in Polichni.” (7) / “Folegandros: Aggressive, manipulative and ruthless - The profile of the 30-year-old murderer.” (8)

Several **sources** including members of the court, witnesses, neighbors, and the victims’ family used statements against the perpetrators. Some examples of the English (1) and Greek (2) corpora are:

1. “The judge told the defendant: “You are a dangerous individual,” adding that the attack was “brutal and cowardly.” (7)
2. “ He also added that the 50-year-old considered his wife - the witness's mother - as his "property." / “The 30-year-old man... he began to throw stones at the police officers, to scream and shout "it's the bad moment's fault" / “According to the prosecutor, the husband premeditated the crime and that night, after a quarrel he had with his 20-year-old wife, ...”.

In one article (8) of the Greek corpus the victim’s mother is presented to call for a change in men’s education in Greek society.

"Teach your boys to behave with manhood, not to be thugs," she said, speaking on the television station SKAI. "Let's raise our boys differently."

It is noteworthy that in some cases in the English corpus, the **placement of a quote** was immediately after the defense counsel's quote as a way to refute it. For instance, in one article (10) the quotes below are representative of this case:

“Defence lawyers said the accused loved his wife, had no motive for killing her and there was no proof he had done so...However, Maître Matthieu Chirez, representing the victim's sister Catherine Seymour, told the court: “It's not possible that he is unable to explain what happened. To say Stephanie Turtle voluntarily lay under the wheels [of the vehicle], knowing that he wanted to drive off, doesn't make sense.”

Table 3

Reasoning and framing devices for the frame: Blaming the perpetrator

Reasoning Devices			
Problem definition	Responsibility attribution	Suggestion of remedies	Moral Judgement
Homicides committed by husbands/boy friends against their partners	The controlling, callous and violent personality of the perpetrator	Perpetrator's punishment including imprisonment and restraining orders Domestic violence helplines (only in the English corpus)	Negative moral assessment of the perpetrator and a humanitarian portrait of the victim
Framing Devices			
Grammatical and Rhetorical Devices			

Imagery	Quantification	Lexical Choice	Clusters of facts or judgement	Concluding statements or paragraphs
Detailed descriptions of the crime including the body of the victim, the act of crime. These were found mostly in the English corpus.	Enumerations that show the number of stabs/wounds the perpetrator inflicted on the victim.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negative characteristics of the perpetrator (bully, controlling, “manipulator) Positive characteristics of the victim Words describing the savagery of the crime 	Prehistory of violence and course of events/ facts that reinforce the savagery of the crime	The sentence of the perpetrators / the human impact of the crime/ Helplines (only in the English corpus) Stock phrase that calls for an end of gendered violence (only in the Greek corpus)

Technical Devices

Heading & Subheading	Sources and quotes
Reinforce the negative profile of the perpetrator by mentioning the punishment he will receive	<p>Prosecutors, witnesses, neighbours, judges, and the victims’ family members (English)</p> <p>Victim’s family, judges, prosecutor, police officers (Greek)</p>

2. Perpetrator’s explanations

This frame package, identified in two articles (19,20) in the English corpus and in six articles (1,2,3,4,5,6) in the Greek corpus, is about the emphasis on the mitigating

statements regarding the perpetrator's responsibility. While both present evidence against the perpetrator, there is a greater focus on the perpetrator's statements, resulting in a disproportionate emphasis on the deterrents.

Reasoning Devices

In all of the articles, the problem revolves around crimes committed by husbands against their wives. It is noteworthy that the Greek corpus has referred to the crime as "femicide" because this term is commonly used in this context as a way to give a gender-based dimension to the crime. In terms of responsibility attribution, most articles focus on the perpetrators' apologies which mainly contained statements attributing the crime to other factors, thereby lessening the perpetrator's responsibility. These include references to the perpetrator's alcoholism, mental health issues, lack of clear thinking and control, pathological jealousy, their spouse's decision to divorce or the fact that she was unfaithful. No clear solutions are offered. Regarding the moral judgement, in most cases no clear judgement was offered, however, in one case the perpetrator was seen as considerably depressed after the crime he committed, which could probably imply that the coverage takes a sympathetic stance over him.

Grammatical and Rhetorical Devices

Sentences were found to attribute the crime to other factors than the perpetrator's personality. These sentences found in the Greek corpus were not direct quotes but descriptions in the article. Some examples are the following:

The 53-year-old chef murdered his 46-year-old wife with a kitchen knife in Koukaki because she was asking for a divorce." / "Early Friday morning, she had a heated

argument with the victim in the living room of the house. Earlier, he had gone out and consumed alcohol.” (1)

Certain **lexical items** were found in line with the core frame as well.

In the Greek corpus, the defendant was called remorseful (2). In the English corpus, one article (20) presents the murderer’s bad mental and physical health following the crime. The verbs “succumb” and “beseech” in the following examples indicate that the woman wanted bitterly to die. Additionally, the couple’s lovely past in Cyprus and the absence of prior abuse are highlighted. In all of these ways, it could be implied that the perpetrator was led to commit a crime that he did not want to and thus he is not accountable. Some examples are the following:

“teenage sweethearts when they first fell in love”/ “... described him as having no desire to live after the death of his wife. Now 75, he appeared ruddy-faced and considerably thinner as he stood in the dock...” / “Hunter said he finally succumbed to his wife’s wishes”/ “the 75-year-old (woman) allegedly beseached her husband to end...” (20).

Technical Devices

In the Greek corpus, **headlines** and **subheadings** were found to be in line with the core frame whereas not relevant technical items were found in the English corpus. For instance, one case (1) presented the murder as a natural outcome of the victim's desire to divorce, another case (3) placed the blame on the woman for initiating the conflict and another case (5) highlighted the perpetrator’s inability to remember what happened.

“Koukaki: He killed his wife to prevent the divorce / The issue of divorce was what led the 53-year-old to murder his spouse in an apartment on Matrozou Street in Koukaki” (1)

“During his defense, he claimed that his wife had attacked him first before he killed her” (3)

"Murder of a woman in Mani: 'I don't remember what I did' claims the accused"/ The 46-year-old defendant, in his brief defense, claimed that he is in shock from that moment and does not remember anything, while he emphasized that he loved his wife. (5)

However, **quotes** either by the defendant or the defence counsel were found in both corpora which could downgrade the perpetrator’s guilt. For instance, in the English corpus (1) one article emphasizes the clear criminal record of the perpetrator before the crime, his general good behavior in the society, whereas a conflict is seen to sparkle the crime. Some examples from the English (1) and Greek corpus (2) are the following:

1. “... had argued his client was not an unacceptable risk to the community or a flight risk. Barker had no criminal record, a long employment history and had only been overseas three times despite his considerable means, the court was told. Thursday’s alleged murder occurred after an **unraveling** in the Barkers’ long marriage and the accused killer did not pose a threat to the wider community, Bogunovich said. Prison would probably be tough for Barker as a first-time offender ...” (19)

2. "I don't remember what I did" , "He claims that he has been in shock since the time he committed the crime", "he was loving his wife", "he asks for forgiveness from his children and God" , "he argues that he has been dealing with psychological problems since his military service" (5) / "He insisted that he was experiencing problems in his relationship with his wife, who, as he stated, had left him three times." (3)

Table 4

Reasoning and Framing devices for the core frame: Perpetrator's explanations

Reasoning Devices			
Problem definition	Responsibility attribution	Suggestion of remedies	Moral Judgement
Homicides committed by husbands against their wives.	The crime is attributed to external factors other than his personality that could mitigate the perpetrator's responsibility. These include the victim's health issues, an unravelling in the couple's marriage, alcohol consumption, the perpetrator's bad mental state, the victim's infidelity	No solutions suggested.	No moral judgement is given in the Greek corpus. A sympathetic profile for the perpetrator is constructed in the English corpus.
Framing Devices			
Grammatical and Rhetorical Devices			

Lexical Choice	Sentences that provide reinforcing clusters of facts or judgement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The perpetrator is called “remorseful” ● Words that demonstrate the absence of violent background in the relationship (teenage sweethearts, Cyprus was paradise), the woman’s desire to die (beseech, succumb), the bad health of the murderer (considerably thinner, ruddy-faced). 	<p>Statements regarding the clean criminal record of the murderer prior to the crime which could mitigate his responsibility.</p> <p>Statements that shift the blame from the perpetrator to external factors including alcohol consumption, the woman’s desire to break up etc</p>
<p>These items could work as an index that the murderer would not commit the crime, he just satisfied his woman’s desire to die.</p>	
Technical Devices	
Headline and Subheading	Sources and Quotes
<p>Highlight the responsibility attribution to other factors such as:</p> <p>Koukaki: He killed his wife <u>to prevent the divorce</u></p> <p>...he claimed that <u>his wife had attacked him</u> first before he killed her</p>	<p>Quotes: Defense counsels, Defendant</p>

3. Procedural

This frame package identified in two articles (13, 14) in the English corpus and in two articles (19, 20) in the Greek corpus is about basic crime description. Even though some devices were found in both corpora, they do not reveal a particular frame. Some information about each article is given below.

In the English corpus, one article (14) discussed the killing of a young Canadian woman by her boyfriend, whom she met on an online dating app and travelled to London to meet him. No framing devices leading to certain reasoning devices were found. Another article in the English corpus (13) referred to a murder trial and presented evidence by both the prosecution and defense. However, no certain framing and reasoning devices were found to be associated with it. Along the same line, two articles in the Greek corpus referred to femicide incidents and they included the facts before the case went to the court, namely the time, location and some very brief details of the crime without offering a certain interpretation.

English Frames: *The Guardian*

In *the Guardian*'s corpus, 4 frames were found. These include: **1.** Quest for an official Domestic Homicide Review (DHR), **2.** Reactions over the lenient sentences given to perpetrators, **3.** The longstanding violence due to the state agencies' apathy, **4.** The public's anger following a femicide

1. Quest for an official Domestic Homicide Review (DHR)

This frame identified in one article (1) is about the victims' family quest for an official Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) in the hopes of improving collaboration between governmental agencies. Domestic Homicide Reviews are carried out, so that professionals and organizations, including the police force, social workers, health providers, have the ability to examine how they handled a particular case and assess whether there is space for improvement to prevent similar issues from occurring in the future (Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Abuse, 2023).

Reasoning Devices

The article discusses a double crime committed by a husband who killed both his wife and his daughter. The problem revolves around the fact that an official DHR should be constructed by domestic violence agencies. The victims' family attribute responsibility to these agencies for not taking action prior to the incident. To address this issue, the article suggests that all the agencies need to collaborate efficiently to establish an official review. This involves agency coordination, risk assessment, mental health education, and serial offenders' treatment. The funding of a femicide repository with an oversight mechanism is further suggested. The moral imperative is to ensure the protection of children in the future by investigating domestic violence issues, before they escalate into crimes, as the outcome of neglecting such investigations is the loss of lives.

Grammatical and Rhetorical Devices

Grammatical and rhetorical devices are in line with the core frame. There are **clusters of facts** related to the violent background of the relationship prior to the homicide and the course of events. These facts are presented as if they were disregarded by both the family and the agencies prior to the crime. Therefore, it may be essential for the agencies to reflect on the mistakes they may have made, and for the DHR to integrate these new facts to prevent similar incidents in the future. Some examples are the following:

“For seven years from the age of four, Ella’s behavioral problems at school were interpreted as a conduct issue, not a signal that at home she and her mother were under duress.”, “What the family didn’t know – and police didn’t divulge – is that earlier in 2010, Boon had been given a suspended sentence....”, “The family subsequently discovered that all of Mortimer’s (victim) income was going into

Boon's (killer) account.”, “Mortimer often saw her GP and attended hospital with leg, stomach and back pains, but no one asked her about domestic abuse.”, “ In May, days before her death, she said she'd told him to leave the house. Ten days before the killings, her older child said at her school that her father had punched the door and hurt his hand”.

In the same line, **clusters of facts** demonstrate the efforts made by other domestic violence organizations to create a centralized repository for all DHRs.

“... the Femicide Working Group ... campaigned for a central repository for all DHRs, ... and a national oversight mechanism to ensure recommendations are implemented. This is also one of the aims of the *Observer's* End Femicide campaign...”

Additionally, some **lexical choices** are used to characterize the family's efforts to establish the truth by demanding an official review to be constructed that would record clearly the family relationships and the agencies involved. The three members of the family in conjunction with an advocate for domestic violence are called “formidable quartet” while the result of their effort “groundbreaking”. These words could probably imply that the governmental agencies should act in the same way as the family to establish the truth. Some examples are the following:

- After the deaths, Stinchcombe, Ella's paternal grandmother..., Ella's aunt...and Sue Haile – an advocate for the charity Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Abuse, (AAFDA), which supports families after a killing – became a formidable quartet battling to establish the truth and reclaim Mortimer's reputation.”
- What they have achieved... may prove groundbreaking.

- Stinchcombe is a fierce defender of her granddaughters' happiness.

Along the same line, **enumerations** are utilized to reinforce the core frame. First, these illustrate the number of wounds the victims received, which may be important to be included in the DHR. Secondly, statistics and analyses about domestic violence cases were used. This could give a broader perspective on this issue and underscore the importance of domestic violence agencies taking action to prevent future crimes. Some examples are given below.

- “Ella, 11, was stabbed 24 times by Christopher Boon, 28, her stepfather.
- “In 2017, according to the Femicide Census, 55% of women killed by an ex-partner were murdered in the first month of separation, 87% in the first year”.
- Prof Jane Monckton Smith in her book, *In Control – Dangerous Relationships and How They End in Murder*, has identified an eight-stage homicide timeline that begins with the abuser “love bombing” a victim, then moves on to isolation.

The **concluding statement** is a rhetorical question that further reinforces the responsibility of the agencies to collaborate efficiently to create an official review. If they had already investigated the case sufficiently, as they were supposed to do, the crime would not occur. An example is the following:

“Why didn’t the school and social workers and police join up the dots?” said Clements. “If they had, Laura and Ella might still be here.”

Technical Devices

The technical devices work in the same line. The **headline** and the **subheading** refer to an official review of the crime that will occur through a better collaboration of all the agencies in charge to investigate the crime as a way to prevent future lives.

Various **quotes** from experts, judges and the victims' family are also included. These provide accounts of the impact of the crime on the family, information that should be contained or changed in the DHR, as well as evidence of scientific research into the way the DHRs are constructed. For instance, the victim's mother asserts that the DHR contains a lot of wrong facts about the crime. Experts evaluate them as insufficient tools since they do not often ask for information from the families and lack accuracy and thoroughness. Some examples are the following.

- “In the first draft, my daughter was described as an alcoholic, rubbish mum...The night she died she'd been to her auntie's pub, but that doesn't make her a drunk. The DHR also had a number of facts wrong, so how can the right lessons be learned?
- “... families are often excluded from the DHR process”,
- “families know stuff that agencies don't”,
- “DHRs give the appearance of investigation and reflection but too often they are a thoroughly blunt tool.”
- “The family say... It takes skill to detect a pervasive pattern of abuse and not an alleged sudden “loss of control”.”

Table 4

Reasoning and framing devices for the frame: Quest for an official Domestic Homicide Review (DHR)

Reasoning Devices			
Problem definition	Responsibility attribution	Suggestion of remedies	Moral Judgement
An official DHR should be created.	The agencies in charge of investigating the crime are held responsible for collaborating to create a DHR.	Improved agency coordination, risk assessment, mental health education, and serial offenders' treatment / The funding of a femicide repository with an oversight mechanism.	A negative stance against the operation of the DHR.
Framing Devices			
Grammatical and Rhetorical Devices			
Quantification - Enumeration	Lexical Choice	Sentences that provide reinforcing clusters of facts or judgement	Concluding statements or paragraphs
<p>The number of wounds the mother and daughter received, which need to be included in the DHR.</p> <p>Experts' analyses, statistics show the issue is social, so agencies need to take action.</p>	<p>Words that illustrate the family's struggle to establish the truth about the crime:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Formidable quartet ● Groundbreaking ● Fierce defender of her granddaughter's happiness <p>In this way, it is possibly implied that</p>	<p>Facts reinforce the prehistory of violence and the course of events that need to be mentioned in the DHR.</p> <p>Attempts of other domestic violence agencies to create a repository of DHRs to combat the issue.</p>	<p>Rhetorical question that calls the governmental agencies to take action:</p> <p>“Why didn't the school and social workers and police join up the dots?”</p>

the agencies
involved to construct
the DHR should
follow the same way
as the family.

Technical Devices

Heading & Subheading	Quotes and Sources
Both refer to a better review of the crime that would occur through a better collaboration of all the agencies in charge to investigate the crime.	Quotes: Judge, Victims' family, Experts, Solicitor
Headline: Review of mother and daughter's murders could save lives, family hopes / Subheading: Relatives want an official review of the killing of Laura Mortimer and Ella Dalby to spark better collaboration between police, social services and others.	Sources: The perpetrator (Boon), Prof Jane Monckton Smith, a social worker

2. Reactions over the lenient sentences given to perpetrators

This frame package identified in three articles (16,17,18) revolves around domestic violence agencies' reactions regarding the lenient sentences given to perpetrators. In particular, they are presented to be shocked by the decisions of the court and consider the redeeming features presented by the perpetrators/defense counsels as excuses and justifications. The reasoning devices are explained below in detail.

Reasoning Devices

In one article (18), the problem revolves around the lenient sentence given to a man who killed a woman during **consensual "rough" sex**. The man used rough sex defenses to exonerate himself by arguing that the woman had given consent for bodily harm. In another article (16), the focus is on the reaction of domestic violence agencies to the sentence given to a man who allegedly strangled his wife due to the

depression caused by the **pandemic**, as well as the response to his partner to his distress. Similarly, in another article (17), the problem lies in the general attorney's office's response to the court of appeal's decision not to increase the sentence, **due to lack of history of abuse**. Despite the different circumstances, all of these cases hold the perpetrator accountable for the crime. The solution presented is the imprisonment of the perpetrators. The articles also offer moral opinions by opposing certain defenses and advocating for harsher punishments for the perpetrators. In one article (18), it is repeatedly suggested that rough sex defenses should not be allowed in cases of violence against women. In another case (16), emphasis is given to the fact that the pandemic should not be an excuse for violence. In yet another article (17), the focus is on the fact that femicides can be one-off incidents and do not necessarily require a longstanding history of violence to be considered as such.

Grammatical and Rhetorical Devices

The reasoning devices were delineated by a series of grammatical and rhetorical devices. **Lexical choices** were found to be in line with the core frame. In two articles (16,17) the decision of the court sparked off the reaction of domestic violence agencies which were repeatedly characterized as "shocked" and "surprised" after hearing the decision of the court. In the same vein, in another article (18), the word "dreadful" was used repeatedly as a potential way to convey the alarming effects of the decision. The repetition of these words could demonstrate the reactions of the agencies and imply the moral basis of the articles, namely that harsher punishments should be imposed. Some examples are cited below.

"After the ruling, the Labour MP Harriet Harman said she was surprised by the decision, / Labour MP Harriet Harman says she was surprised by decision after the

court of appeal ruling in case of Anthony Williams” (17) / “shocked by leniency...”, “were shocked by the sentence passed...”, “we are shocked by the leniency...”. (16) / “Campaigners say Sam Pybus’s sentence for strangling Sophie Moss sends ‘dreadful message’” (18)

Additionally, **lexical choices** highlight the portrait of the victim, the tortures she endured and the brutality of the crime. These choices could paint her in a favourable light and the perpetrator in a negative light. In this way, the reactions over the lenient sentences may be further encouraged. Some examples are the following:

Moss, a 33-year-old mother of two, was described in court as “a vulnerable individual who endured poor physical and mental health”. (18) / “For her to die in circumstances where she was being strangled by someone who she had loved and had been in a mutually loving relationship for many years, is an awful way to die,” (17) / “...Williams admitted to detectives that he “literally choked the living daylight” out of his wife. / “The overwhelming greatest tragedy...” (16)

Additionally, in one article (18) a **quantification** illustrates the perpetrator’s drunken state. This enumeration could potentially strengthen his negative portrait, thus sustaining the reactions of the court members for a harsher punishment.

“He told police he had been drinking for 10 hours and had consumed around 24 bottles of Amstel lager before getting in his car to visit Moss.”

The **concluding statement** in all the cases sustained the core frame. In two articles (16, 17) the final statement could work as a take-home message, whereas another article (18) could stress the victim’s positive portrait and the impact of the

crime. In this way, it could create empathy for the victim and strengthen the perpetrator's negative profile. Some excerpts are given below.

“To say that the lockdown is causing men to kill their wives is not accurate ... [it] is making already unstable people more volatile. Lockdown can certainly act as a trigger to make them more volatile, but it's not causing it.” (16)

“Domestic abuse doesn't have to be continuous, although it usually is. It can be a one-off homicide,” she said. “To say it's not domestic abuse when a man kills his wife is fatuous. This is the ultimate, most extreme form of domestic abuse.” (17)

‘Moss's brother James, told Teesside crown court that his sister was “joyous, vibrant, funny, talented and fearless, unless she saw a spider”. The family would “never be able to shake the belief” that she was “a victim, taken advantage of and exploited, and was subjected to an entirely avoidable and infinitely tragic end.” (18)

Technical devices

The technical devices were found to be also in line with the core frame. In all three cases, **the subheading** highlighted the outrage of campaigners (16,18) and the attorney general's office (17) in response to the light sentence. Some examples are the following:

“Domestic violence campaigners ‘shocked by leniency’ of sentence given to Anthony Williams, who strangled wife during lockdown” (16) / “Campaigners say Sam Pybus's sentence for strangling Sophie Moss sends ‘dreadful message’” (18) /

“Labour MP Harriet Harman says she was surprised by the decision after the court of appeal ruling in case of Anthony Williams” (17)

In a number of **quotes**, members of the court are seen to criticize the sentence given to the perpetrator and highlight the need for more severe punishments to be imposed. “We don’t think this is how the law should work – and look to the government now to see what they intend to do.” (18)

They are also seen to express their stance on gendered violence as a broader societal issue citing the common stages of this phenomenon. An example is given below:

“A spokeswoman for Welsh Women’s Aid... adding that the pandemic and lockdown must not be used to justify or excuse abuse.” / “Domestic homicides often follow years of coercive and controlling abuse and it is vital this is understood by all in our justice system.” / “The excuses are pretty similar, based on a crime of passion, mental health justification for what they have done, but there is always a trackable history of problems,”. (16)

Another technical device is the **placement of the quote**. For instance, in one article, it was found that while a judge offered statements that mitigate the perpetrator’s responsibility citing the lack of history of abuse and presenting the case as isolated, a member of the court dismissed his statement in the following way. An example is the following:

“Domestic abuse doesn’t have to be continuous, although it usually is. It can be a one-off homicide,” she said. “To say it’s not domestic abuse when a man kills his wife is fatuous. This is the ultimate, most extreme form of domestic abuse.” (17)

Along the same line, in another article (16), a psychiatrist is seen to exonerate the perpetrator by ascribing the murder to a lack of self-control as a result of the

Covid19 pandemic. However, a second psychologist's quote is placed immediately after and assigns responsibility to the murderer. It is possible that due to the placement of the second quote, the responsibility may be attributed to the killer.

'Dr Alison Witts, a psychiatrist, told the trial Williams' anxiety and depressive illness were "heightened" by the coronavirus measures and impaired his ability to exercise self-control. But another psychiatrist, Dr Damian Gamble, said Williams had no documented history of suffering a depressive illness and had "no psychiatric. (16)

Table 5

Reasoning and Framing Devices for the frame: Reactions over the lenient sentences given to perpetrators

Reasoning Devices			
Problem definition	Responsibility attribution	Suggestion of remedies	Moral Judgement
The reaction of members in the court regarding the lenience sentences given to perpetrators of femicide cases.	The perpetrators are held responsible for their actions. Additionally, the court members are held responsible for the lenient sentences that they gave to them.	The remedy is the imprisonment of the perpetrator.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rough sex defences should not be allowed in IPV cases. (18) ● One-off homicides should be viewed as domestic violence cases (17) ● The pandemic should not be excuse for domestic violence provoked by already volatile and violent people. <p>It is generally advocated that stricter punishments should</p>

be imposed.

Framing Devices

Grammatical and Rhetorical Devices

Lexical Choice	Quantification	Concluding statements or paragraphs
<p>Words that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● show the reaction of the domestic violence agencies and characterize the court's decision: dreadful message/ we are shocked ● paint the victim in a sympathetic light ● Describe the savagery of the crime: tragic case/ overwhelming greatest tragedy/ "he literally choked the living daylights" 	<p>It is used to show the murderer's consumption of alcohol and further reinforce his guilt.</p>	<p>The human impact of the crime probably implies that future tragedies should be prevented by the application of harsher laws for such crimes.</p> <p>Take-home messages offered by the agencies including</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Femicide does not need to be the result of longstanding violence, it can also be a one-time incident. / 2. Lockdown does not cause people to kill, it makes already unstable persons more volatile.

Technical Devices

Subheading	Quotes
<p>Highlight the outrage of the members of the campaign and the general attorney's office at the ruling considered unfair.</p>	<p>Members of the court including Tom Little QC for the AGO, Judges, Labour MP, the defendant, A spokeswoman for Welsh Women's Aid, Psychologists, Criminologist</p>

3. The long-term violence due to the state agencies' apathy

This frame package identified in only one article (12) is about the longstanding violence a woman was subjected to by her partner that ultimately resulted in her death. Despite seeking help from the police, they showed a lack of interest to help her. The victim further hesitated to tell the full extent of violence she experienced due to fears that the social workers would take away her baby. Due to them, she endured an abusive situation for a long time, until her husband stabbed her to death.

Reasoning Devices

This article defined the problem as the longstanding violence a woman received from her partner and the ultimate act of violence, her death. The responsibility is attributed to those in positions of power, such as police force and social workers, who neglected to take the issue seriously resulting in the victim's death. The explicit solution to the problem is the perpetrator's life imprisonment. The implicit solution could be the responsibility of authorities to assist IPV victims by providing the necessary support. Regarding the moral basis, a sympathetic profile of the victim has been constructed that could reinforce the obligation of the police force to assist to her. Additionally, the repetitive mention of the lack of empathy of the authorities might be interpreted as a way of taking a critical stance against them.

Grammatical and Rhetorical Devices

These reasoning devices are sustained by a series of grammatical devices. Firstly, there are **lexical choices** that illustrate the frightened state of the victim. The repetition of the terms "feared", "over fears", "was scared" "too scared" might be

representative of her fearful emotional state. In this way, the responsibility of those in positions of power could be showcased. Some examples are the following:

“Woman killed by ex, feared losing access to the child after reporting abuse, inquest told...” / “A domestic violence victim who was stabbed to death by her former partner felt too scared to tell police the full extent of his abuse over fears that social services would take her baby away” / “Norris said Oudeh was scared of telling police the full extent of Tarin’s violent behaviour...” / “She wanted to cooperate with social workers but was too scared that if she tells them everything...”

The reluctance of the police force to provide assistance could be further underlined with an **enumeration**. It is cited that the victim called at least seven (7) times the agencies but she did not receive any answer. An example is provided below.

“...her niece called the police at least seven times to report Tarin’s violent behaviour, but felt “they didn’t really listen to her properly and didn’t take her seriously”

In the **concluding paragraph**, the victim is described with emotionally charged words. The sympathetic profile constructed through the positive characteristics of the victims could further emphasize the reader’s empathy towards her and reinforce the obligation of local authorities to provide her with the necessary support. Some examples are the following:

“...Oudeh was described as “a flower that never stopped blossoming. She was passionate, ambitious and her confidence always stood out.” Family members said Saleem was “the definition of peace” and “full of love, care and sweetness”.

Technical Devices

The technical devices are in the same line with the core frame. The **heading** and the **subheading** could demonstrate the powerless profile of the woman. These are the following:

“Woman killed by ex, feared losing access to the child after reporting abuse, inquest told” / “Janbaz Tarin subjected Raneem Oudeh to campaign of violence before killing her and her mother in Solihull in 2018”.

In the same line, there are **quotes** provided by the victim’s aunt that attribute blame to authorities for their inaction towards the victim. Some excerpts are the following:

“...her niece called the police at least seven times to report Tarin’s violent behaviour, but felt “they didn’t really listen to her properly and didn’t take her seriously”/ “They’ll say to her: ‘You’re wasting our time, you need to deal with him yourself, kick him out – you can’t call us all the time. Ask him to move out.” / “She felt they were attacking her, told her she was putting her child in danger, and that she should keep him [Tarin] out the house.” / “She could speak good English, she could explain herself very well, but they told her it was a personal matter and she should sort it out herself.”

He portrays her niece as a vulnerable mother raising her child alone and being forced to get married to another man to feel safe, which may further underscores the role of the “responders” to take action. An example is in the following excerpt.

“The marriage broke down and Oudeh brought up their son alone. By the summer of 2016, she was “down, upset – a single mum at the age of 20”, and still being “stalked” by Tarin, Norris said.”

In the same line, through the descriptions of the **999 recordings** made by the victim regarding the violence she suffered, the article may be placing a stronger focus on the responsibility of the authorities. Some examples are the following:

“He’s tried to hurt me many times, like stabbing me with things. He is standing outside my door, he has my bank card.” / He won’t leave me alone. / “We don’t have divorce in our culture. The day that you will be free from me is the day I will kill you.”

Table 6

Reasoning and Framing Devices of the frame: The longstanding violence due to the state agencies’ apathy

Reasoning Devices			
Problem definition	Responsibility attribution	Suggestion of remedies	Moral Judgement
The longstanding violence a woman endured by her husband and the ultimate consequence, her death, due to the inaction of the authorities.	The duty to help victims of IPV falls on those in positions of power, such as police force and social services.	The perpetrator’s life imprisonment with a minimum of 32 years. It could also be implied that the authorities in charge of assisting IPV victims should always provide the necessary support to them.	A sympathetic profile of the victim and a negative profile against the local professionals in charge to provide help.
Framing Devices			
Grammatical and Rhetorical Devices			

Lexical Choice	Enumeration	Concluding statements or paragraphs
Words with a sympathetic tone for the victim: scared, a single mum, a lone parent, passionate, ambitious, full of love, flower that continuously blossoming	The victim called at least 7 (seven) times the police force, but she did not receive any answer.	It could be said that the concluding paragraph attempts to give a human face by showcasing the good properties of the victim, while also further suggesting that the authorities are responsible for this outcome.
Technical Devices		
Heading & Subheading	Sources and Quotes	
Both provide a sympathetic portrayal of the victim by depicting her fear of fully disclosing the truth to social workers and demonstrating the pattern of abuse she endured.	<p>Quotes:</p> <p>The <u>victim's aunt</u> offers clusters of facts regarding the prehistory of violence and the inaction of the police officers and social workers</p> <p>A <u>recording of 999</u> presents the victim to ask for help</p>	

4 . The public's anger following a femicide

This frame package identified in only one article (15) referred to a femicide occurred after a man set her girlfriend on fire while she was live-streaming. The case sparked widespread outrage in multiple ways. The reasoning and framing devices are explained below.

Reasoning Devices

The problem revolves around the murder of a woman by her ex-husband, who set her on fire while she was live-streaming on Douyin (the Chinese version of Tik Tok), leading to her death. The man is being held responsible for the crime with the court ordering his execution. While the article does not propose clear solutions beyond the court's decision, it highlights the outrage of people in Shanghai over domestic violence issue and their demand for the creation of laws allowing victim to divorce automatically. Additionally, it refers to Chinese president's UN speech about the protection of women's rights. At the same time, a human face is given to the text through the quotes from the victim's family. In all of these ways, the article appears to express disapproval statements against IPV and suggests that there may be a need for improved measures for victims.

Grammatical and Rhetorical Devices

Clusters of facts were found to be aligned with the core frame. First, women's rights campaigns took place amplified by President Xi Jinping's UN speech calling for protecting women's rights. Furthermore, Internet users created hashtags demanding laws that allow an automatic divorce for victims of abuse. Some examples are the following:

“Campaigns over Lhamo's death intensified when the Chinese president, Xi Jinping, gave a speech to a UN conference a day later saying the protection of women's rights and interests “must become a national commitment”/ “Hashtags including #LhamoAct, calling for laws allowing victims an automatic divorce, spread across the internet...”.

The **concluding statement** refers to the outrage of people in response to this case and their stance against domestic abuse. The repetition of the societal reaction in

the final statement could further accentuate the core frame. An example is the following:

“The case drew widespread condemnation and outrage across the country over the plight that women can face in abusive marriages.”

Technical Devices

Regarding the technical devices, **quotes** offered by the **victim’s sister** refer to the long-standing domestic violence her sister was experiencing prior to her death. The lexical term “domestic abuse” could imply that the homicide was not an isolated domestic abuse incident but rather a longstanding situation. The emphasis on the prehistory of violence may further encourage the primary message, which is the the people’s outrage towards this issue in society.

“Lhamo’s sister had told the Paper, an official media outlet based in Shanghai, that her sister suffered domestic abuse at Tang’s hands for years and decided to divorce him as a result.”

Table 7

Reasoning and Framing devices for the frame: The public’s anger following a femicide

Reasoning Devices			
Problem definition	Responsibility attribution	Suggestion of remedies	Moral Judgement

A femicide that occurred after a man set on fire his girlfriend while she was live-streaming	Perpetrators are being held accountable for such crimes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The execution of the perpetrator. ● Creation of laws allowing victims to divorce their husbands automatically. 	Women's rights should be protected
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Framing Devices

Grammatical and Rhetorical Devices

Sentences that provide clusters of facts or judgement	Concluding statements or paragraphs
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The widespread condemnation of people, the hashtags provided by Internet users against domestic abuse, the speech of the president for the protection of women's rights	It refers to the outrage of people in response to this case and their stance against domestic abuse as a social issue.
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Technical Devices

Heading & Subheading	Quotes
<p>The heading demonstrates the punishment of the perpetrator.</p> <p>“Chinese man executed for murder of former wife during live stream”</p>	<p>The victim's family (sister) provided statements regarding the prehistory of violence</p> <p>President: the protection of women's rights should be a national commitment</p>

Greek Frames: *Kathimerini online*

In *Kathimerini online* corpus, **5 core frames** were found. These include the following:

1. Blaming the police officers, 2. Praising the police force, 3. Prehistory of violence,
4. Battered woman, 5. Safe haven for a victim

1. Blaming the police officers

This frame package identified in only one article (16) is about a responsibility attribution frame against police officers because of its inability to prevent a femicide in Greece.

Reasoning Devices

The problem is a femicide occurred due to the fact that the police force ignored the resident's calls. Their response is being investigated by a prosecuting officer to identify any possible criminal violations. There are no suggested remedies, these would depend on the outcome of the investigations. No moral basis is suggested; however, it could be implied from the framing devices that the police force should be vigilant in such cases.

Grammatical and Rhetorical Devices

Sentences that demonstrate a delayed response from the police were found to be associated with the core frame. These potentially reinforce their inconsistency as well as the results of their inaction, namely the femicide. In this way, a negative portrait against them could be created that could further stress their responsibility. Some examples are the following:

“Despite the fact that the neighbour reported hearing loud screams and sought help through Emergency Action, the police “took 25 minutes” to arrive and “they did not intervene”, they “did not even get out of the vehicle”. They just opened and closed the windows of the car claiming that there was none to show them the apartment. Thus, they failed to prevent the crime.”

In the same line, the exact number of time (**enumeration**) the police force spent to arrive at the location “took 25 minutes” could further reinforce their inconsistency.

Technical Devices

The following **heading** may attribute blame to the police officers with the usage of the lexical item “ignored”: “Femicide in Dafni: Prosecutor’s intervention for the two police officers who ignored the calls of the residents.”

Along the same line, regarding the **quotes** offered in the text, a neighbor posted on social media the failure of the police force to handle the crime effectively. Following the crime, she re-posted the original post with the comment “she was eventually killed”. This may suggest that despite the information provided by the woman, nothing was happened to avoid the crime. Thus, the police officers’ responsibility could be further intensified.

Table 8

Reasoning and framing devices for the core frame: Blaming the police officers

Reasoning Devices

Problem definition	Responsibility attribution	Suggestion of remedies	Moral Judgement
A woman was killed because two police officers did not respond promptly to the location of the crime.	The police officers are held responsible for their inconsistency.	No clear remedies are suggested, these would depend on the outcome of the investigations and any criminal responsibilities identified.	The police force should be on the alert for possible crimes.

Framing Devices

Grammatical and Rhetorical Devices

Enumeration	Sentences that provide reinforcing clusters of facts or judgement
Despite the report and the fact that the event was signaled as a “high-priority incident”, the police reportedly “took 25 minutes ” to arrive	Demonstrate the delayed response of the police through their failed actions.

Technical Devices

Heading & Subheading	Quotes
It shows the ignorance of the police force: “Femicide in Dafni: Prosecutor’s intervention for the two police officers who ignored the calls of the residents.”	The neighbor’s post on Facebook following the police force’s inaction: “she eventually died”

2. Praising the police force

This frame package is constructed around the positive portrait of the police force, who managed to prevent a new femicide in Greece. This was found in two articles (17,18), which report the same incident.

Reasoning Devices

The articles present a domestic violence incident by a 39-year-old man who attacked, injured with a sharp object and then attempted to rape his wife and the mother of their child. However, he did not manage to kill her woman, because the police force managed to prevent him from committing the crime. As it is stated in the article, he is being charged with attempted murder, attempted assault, endangering physical harm, violence against law enforcement, threats, arms trafficking and arms use. No solutions are put forward; the man has been taken to the prosecutor for criminal investigation. However, the articles highlight the importance of authorities being vigilant in such incidents, as happened in this case thanks to their preparedness and urgency.

Grammatical and Rhetorical Devices

In terms of **lexical choices**, the mobilization of the police is repeatedly labeled as “instantaneous”, “immediate” and “efficient”. Additionally, the phrase “4 police officers prevented a new femicide...” is repeatedly mentioned. In this way, their accomplishment may be further highlighted.

In the same vein, the use of the number 18 (**enumeration**) in the phrase “Four police officers from the Rapid Response Unit and the Democracy Square vehicle in Thessaloniki prevented at the last moment the 18th femicide reported in Greece in 2021.” potentially highlight the social impact of the police officers’ accomplishment, namely the prevention of another femicide.

Clusters of facts depict the crime scene and may stress the police officers' actions. Through the statements that demonstrate their bravery and self-sacrifice, a

positive portrait could be further constructed. Some representative information is cited below:

“During their immediate intervention in the house, they found the would-be perpetrator with a knife in his hands, ready to murder his wife in front of the frightened eyes of their minor child.” / “When they heard the woman's heartbreak for the second time, they finally broke down the door and saw the perpetrator wielding a knife in his hands with which he was striking the woman in the neck”. / “The police officers intervened quickly and effectively to immobilize him, remove the knife, and arrest him. In fact, one officer tore his jacket during the attempt, while the other was wearing a bulletproof vest and was not in danger.”

Technical Devices

In terms of technical devices, the **headline** of one article (18) mentioned from the beginning the police officers’ achievement. An example is given below.

“**Headline: Thessaloniki: Police officers prevented a new femicide** - He was holding the knife in his wife's neck.”

The **sources** were found in line with the core frame as well. One article (17) relied on two different sources, a police officer and the Minister of Protection of citizens, to provide information about the incident and express appreciation for the professionalism of the police officers. An example is given below.

“The Minister praised the police officer and acknowledged his professional behavior, determination, calmness, and compassion during the operation. The Minister emphasized that the officer exemplified the finest qualities of the Greek police force.”

Table 9

Reasoning and framing devices for the core frame: Praising the police force

Reasoning Devices			
Problem definition	Responsibility attribution	Suggestion of remedies	Moral Judgement
A domestic violence incident by a man who attacked, and injured with a sharp object and then attempted to rape his wife which did not result in a femicide <u>thanks to the police force.</u>	The man is being held responsible for the violence.	No remedies are suggested.	The police force should be on the lookout for such cases as happened in this case.
Framing Devices			
Grammatical and Rhetorical Devices			
Sentences that provide reinforcing clusters of facts or judgement	Quantification	Lexical Choice	
There are clusters of facts that demonstrate the quick actions of the police force which contributed to the prevention of the femicide.	Enumerations that show the number of femicide incidents that would occur (18) if law enforcement did not act appropriately	The police force's actions are labeled as instantaneous, immediate, efficient It is stated that they intervened "quickly"	

 Technical Devices

Heading & Subheading

 Quotes and Sources

Highlight the prevention of the femicide by the police force: “Thessaloniki: Police officers prevented a new femicide - He was holding the knife in his wife's neck.”

Police officers, Minister for protection of citizens

3. Prehistory of violence

This frame package found in three articles (11, 12, 13) is about the violent background of a relationship - emotional and physical - prior to the femicide. While instances of prior violence were found in other articles in the English and Greek data sets, these articles seem that they placed a great emphasis on it.

Reasoning devices

The problem revolves around men who killed their wives and then committed suicide. The men are being held responsible not only for the crime itself but also for the longstanding domestic violence they were practising against their wives. No remedies or moral basis are suggested.

Grammatical and Rhetorical Devices

Among the grammatical devices identified, **clusters of facts** highlighting the violent background of the relationship were found. For instance, one article (12) described the the murderer's numerous restraining orders, the longstanding domestic abuse he committed against his wife, the litigation they filed against one another, the fact that the perpetrator had been arrested for other offenses and that after the crime he went to

his work as if nothing had happened before. These reports could also highlight the authority's duty to have already enforced a stricter punishment on the perpetrator.

"It should be noted that the man had been previously charged with violations related to domestic violence and was arrested for the same in June of this year, as well as other offenses, and was brought before the competent Prosecution Authority."/

"According to reports, the 49-year-old was arrested in the area of Keri, where he went to the construction site where he works as if nothing had happened."

In the same line, **lexical choices** including the phrases (11,13) "she was afraid", he threatened to kill her", "she had received threats against her life" illustrate the frightened state of the victim due to the threats she was experiencing.

Technical Devices

In terms of technical devices, the **headline and the subheading** demonstrated the prior abusive incidents in two articles (12,13). Some examples are the following:

"Crime in Kavala: "He threatened to kill her" - What the lawyer of the 30-year-old tells " / As the lawyer of the unfortunate woman, Mr. Markos Apostolidis, revealed to kathimerini.gr, the 30-year-old had received threats to her life in the past". (13)

"Zakynthos: 49-year-old re-arrested for domestic violence who killed his wife / The 49-year-old had frequent arguments with his wife, resulting in mutual complaints being filed, and he had previously been arrested for domestic violence." (12)

Additionally, the **sources** were witnessed to be in line with the core frame in two articles (12, 13). The victim's lawyer (12) highlights the violent background of the relationship whereas the victim's friends, neighbors and solicitor (11) illustrate the

violent portrait of the perpetrator and the inability of the victim to end the relationship due to her fear. Some examples are the following:

“If you take the child and leave, I will kill you”/ “She had expressed her fears to me about him potentially doing her harm”/ “However, things between them started not to go well from July and led to the separation”. (12) / “She couldn't get away from him. He was afraid. It was a strange relationship. She was trying to protect her children as well," he added.” (11)

Table 10

Reasoning and framing devices for the frame: Prehistory of violence

Reasoning Devices			
Problem definition	Responsibility attribution	Suggestion of remedies	Moral Judgement
The longstanding violence victim endured prior to their death.	Men are being held accountable for the crime and the longstanding domestic violence they were exercising against their wives.	Due to the fact that in all of the cases the perpetrator committed suicides, no remedies are suggested.	-
Framing Devices			
Grammatical and Rhetorical Devices			
Sentences that provide reinforcing clusters of facts or judgement		Lexical Choice	

The history of abuse is documented, including instances of a restraining order against the perpetrator, previous reports of violence, a previous arrest	Verbs that demonstrate the frightened state of the victim due to the longstanding violence: she was afraid / he threatened to kill her / she had received threats against her life
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Technical Devices

Heading & Subheading	Quotes
They highlight the previous abusive incidents such as “Crime in Kavala: <u>"He threatened to kill her"</u> - What the lawyer of the 30-year-old tells " / Zakynthos: 49-year-old <u>re-arrested for domestic violence</u> who killed his wife	Victim’s lawyer, friends, neighbors

4. Battered woman

This frame package identified in one article (15) demonstrates the extent of the victim’s suffering at the hands of her partner. The victim sought help from the authorities, which prevented the IPV case from escalating into femicide.

Reasoning devices

The problem revolves around the tortures a woman suffered by her ex-husband. The man is being accountable for the crime and was taken into custody. No moral judgments are suggested.

Grammatical and Rhetorical Devices

There are **lexical items** in line with the core frame. The victim’s vulnerable situation is demonstrated through the following adjectives "naked", "unprotected," and "terrified". The verb “batter” and the adverb "aggressively" could reinforce the violent

manner in which the victim was forced out. The urgent need to seek refuge is seen in the verb "resort" in the phrase "she resorted to the police". Through these lexical choices, the victim's powerless portrait may be further stressed.

In the same vein, there are **clusters of facts** that demonstrate the continuous violent acts and the inability to break free. Some examples are the following:

"The man had been lying in wait outside of his ex-girlfriend's home, violently dragging her into a car, hitting her on her head and body while the doors were closed and the woman could not get out."

Technical Devices

The **heading** and **subheading** sustain the core frame. To be more precise, three verbs in the headline "kidnap", "batter", "rape" depict the brutal murder while the subheading demonstrates that the murder was planned in advance, as the perpetrator had been staking out his ex-partner's house. Some examples are provided below:

"He kidnapped, battered and raped his ex-partner. / The perpetrator, a 33-year-old man, was staking out his partner in Korinthos"

Sources provide detailed information about the tortures the victim endured until she finally resorted to the police station. An example is the following:

"As reported by korinthostv, the 33-year-old man stopped the car on a deserted road, where he forced her to undress under threats to her life and almost set her on fire, by lighting her hair with his lighter..."

Table 11

Reasoning and framing devices for the frame: Battered woman

Reasoning Devices

Problem definition	Responsibility attribution	Suggestion of remedies	Moral Judgement
The tortures a woman endured by her husband	The abuser is held responsible for the crime	The woman was offered help by the authorities and the perpetrator was taken into custody.	-

Framing Devices

Grammatical and Rhetorical Devices

Sentences that provide reinforcing clusters of facts or judgement	Lexical Choice
Statements that demonstrate the barbaric actions against the victim such as	Characteristics of the victim: naked, unprotected, terrified
“The man <u>had been lying in wait</u> outside of his ex-girlfriend's home, <u>violently dragging</u> her into a car, <u>hitting her on her head and body</u> while the doors were closed and <u>the woman could not get out.</u> ”	Verbs/ adverbs that demonstrate the action: batter/ aggressively

Technical Devices

Heading & Subheading	Sources and Quotes
Demonstrate the helpless portrait of the victim: He <u>kidnapped, battered and raped his ex-partner.</u>	Source: Online media provide information about the tortures the victim endured: 33-year-old man <u>stopped the car on a deserted road</u> , where he forced her to <u>undress under threats to her life</u> and <u>almost set her on fire</u> , by <u>lighting her hair with his lighter</u>

5. Safe haven for a victim

This frame package identified in only one article (14) refers to the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs intervening to provide temporary shelter and police protection for an IPV victim.

Reasoning Devices

The problem revolves around a woman who endured tortures made by her partner. The man is being held responsible, thereby was taken into custody. The Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Maria Syreggela, is seen as responsible for taking action to address the issue. Thanks to her, the victim left her place, found a shelter and received police protection. Following this case, the article mentions that similar to this woman, a large number of victims have resorted to shelters, where only their basic needs are satisfied. This suggests that the article may have taken a critical stance on the quality of assistance provided to IPV victims.

Grammatical and Rhetorical Devices

In terms of **lexical choices**, the following patterns were found. The repetition of the phrase “safe place” could emphasize the security status in which the victim is placed temporarily. Some examples are the following.

“Volos: 26-year-old in a safe place after falling victim to domestic violence” /
 “woman who fell victim to domestic violence in Volos is now in a safe place”

Also, lexical choices were found to depict the help provided by the authorities (political figure and the court) such as “rush to help”, “take care”, “she was given police protection”, “so as to ensure the safety of herself and her child”

Clusters of facts demonstrated the domestic violence a woman endured and the necessity for safety measures to be taken for her. Some examples that illustrate the tortures she experienced are the following:

“...while he told her that she would suffer the same as the other women shown in the news” / “Her 36-year-old partner threatened to kill her with a screwdriver.” / “The 36-year-old was released on conditions, with the woman breaking down in tears and shouting that soon there will be a report about her as for the other women”.

The **final paragraph** mentioned the number (241) of women who have sought shelter in Greece, thereby it could present the domestic abuse as a large problem within society. However, it is stated that only some basic women’s needs are satisfied which could imply that there is still work to be done.

“It is noted that for the first half of 2022 alone, 241 women who were victims of violence have been directed to hospitality structures, satisfying very basic needs.”

Technical devices

The heading represents the security level in which the victim is currently placed, namely the fact that she has found a safe shelter. An example is the following.

"Volos: 26-year-old in a **safe place** after falling victim to domestic violence”.

The **quotes** were found in the same line as the core frame. During the court proceedings, the victim was seen shouting that if the abuser was to be released, she would suffer the same fate as the other women covered in the news. Due to this, police protection was finally given to her as supplementary aid.

Table 12

Reasoning and Framing devices for the core frame: Safe haven for a victim

Reasoning Devices			
Problem definition	Responsibility attribution	Suggestion of remedies	Moral Judgement
A woman was threatened with death by her partner received protection measures	The abuser was taken into custody	The woman found a temporary shelter and was given police protection	Additional measures are required at the governmental level to tackle the gendered violence.

Framing Devices

Grammatical and Rhetorical Devices		
Sentences that provide reinforcing clusters of facts or judgement	Lexical Choice	Concluding statements or paragraphs
<p>Facts demonstrating the violence against the victim and justifying the measures taken for her:</p> <p>The perpetrator is seen mistreating the victim with a screwdriver. He is also seen threatening the victim during court proceedings that she will suffer the same as the other women.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Words that demonstrate the security status in which she was placed: “in safe space” Verbs that show the act of care provided by the Minister “rush to help”, “take care”, “the safety of her and her child” 	<p>Highlights the number of domestic violence victims that have sought shelters during the first six months of 2022.</p> <p>It is mentioned that the women have received only very basic help. Thus it could be implied that more improved measures are required.</p>

Technical Devices

Heading & Subheading	Sources and Quotes
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Delineate the help offered to the victim: “**In safe space** the 26-year old woman who fell victim of domestic violence”

Victim’s quote: During the court proceedings the victim shouted that she would suffer the same fate as other women covered in the news if the abuser was released.

Conclusion and Discussion

The study attempted to investigate how femicide and Intimate Partner Violence incidents are framed in two online newspapers, *Kathimerini online* and *The Guardian*, and how these frames are connected with each context. To answer these questions, an inductive qualitative analysis was carried out.

Concerning the first research question, despite the three common frames found, the two corpora framed the incidents quite differently. With regard to the common frames, these include **1. Blaming the perpetrator**, **2. Perpetrator's explanations** and **3. Procedural**. With respect to the different frames, four (4) frames were found in *The Guardian* including **1. Quest for an official Domestic Homicide Review (DHR)**, **2. Reactions over the lenient sentences given to perpetrators**, **3. The longstanding violence due to the state agencies' apathy**, **4. The public's anger following a femicide**, and five (5) frames in *Kathimerini online* including **1. Blaming the police officers**, **2. Praising the police force**, **3. Prehistory of violence**, **4. Battered woman**, **5. Safe haven for a victim**. Nonetheless, differences between the common frames were also observed with regard to the reasoning and framing devices in some cases.

With respect to the **common frames**, the frame *Blaming the perpetrator* presented a negative portrait of the perpetrator and gave a human face by depicting the victim's powerless profile and the impact of her loss on their families. The repertoires of reasoning and framing devices were very similar in both corpora including positive lexical choices for the victim, clusters of facts related to the

prehistory of violence as a link for the femicide incident, quantification illustrating the victim's suffering along with imagery demonstrating details about the crime.

Accountability was given to perpetrators including imprisonment and restraining orders.

Despite the existing common frame found in these two corpora, differences were noted in the framing devices employed in each corpus. The English corpus used a number of imagery entailing creepy details about the victim's corps and the barbaric actions of the perpetrator, whereas, in the Greek corpus, not much relevant information was found. Additionally, in some cases the former cited national and international helplines to encourage victims to ask for help, thus it tended to portray the incidents as part of a larger systemic problem rather than isolated events as the Greek corpus. It was also found that *The Guardian* used a broader repertoire of sources and quotes expressing opinions and experiences, whereas *Kathimerini online* had a more factual reporting style. Notably, the placement of some quotes played a significant role in the frame construction in the English corpus. To be more precise, in some cases it was observed that quotes against the perpetrators were positioned right after quotes that exonerated them, thereby nullifying the former.

The second common frame, *Perpetrator's explanations*, presented the femicide incidents by shifting the blame from the perpetrator to situational factors. Whereas both corpora provided evidence against the perpetrator, more emphasis was given to the mitigating statements, namely justifications for the crime. In all of these cases, quotes by defendants and defense counsels attributed the crime to variables including the victim's and/or the perpetrator's health issues, the perpetrator's drunken state, unraveling in the couple's marriage, the divorce and/or the victim's infidelity.

This frame was found to limit the explanations of the crime to such issues, which may imply that no further reasons or explanations are required to be investigated.

Some minor differences were also noted. First, *The Guardian* entailed thorough negotiations among court members whereas *Kathimerini online* focused on the perpetrator's apology without including any other quotes and sources. Additionally, a recurring pattern observed in the Greek corpus was the presentation of femicide as a natural outcome of arguments/divorces such as "The issue of divorce was what led the 53-year-old to murder his spouse in an apartment on Matrozou Street in Koukaki". This pattern was also observed in the English corpus such as "Stockport man who murdered wife after row over chips jailed for life"⁴ but not so extensively. A study (Meyers, 1997, p.14) has shown that stating "an argument started" is rhetorically vague since it obscures who started the argument and how so that both parties appear to be equally at fault".

The last common frame, *Procedural*, entailed basic crime description and court negotiation without offering certain interpretations. Despite a lengthy English article (13) including court members discussing the perpetrator's sentence, the rest articles in both corpora adopted a rather factual style of reporting to address the events.

With regard to the different frames, most of the frames found in *The Guardian* tended to frame domestic abuse as a **social systemic issue** rather than as a **private matter** as in *Kathimerini online*. Furthermore, they were also found to place

⁴ Nonetheless, this article was not included in the frame "Perpetrator's explanations", due to the fact that rest text did not reveal a similar pattern.

responsibility for preventing such crimes on various government authorities, including the police force, the justice system and domestic violence agencies.

As documented on *The Guardian's* frames, the *Quest for an official Domestic Homicide Review (DHR)*, involves holding the DHR panel⁵ responsible to investigate a double crime rigorously to uncover the truth behind it. This frame was sustained by a number of sources and quotes provided by experts and scientists regarding analyses and statistics about domestic abuse such as “Domestic abuse features in 41% of child deaths and stepchildren face a higher risk” which gave validity to the event and demonstrated the social character of violence.

Similarly, the social aspect of gendered violence was also seen in the frame *The public's anger following a femicide*. Clusters of facts focused on the public's response to gendered violence and called on the government to the protection of women's rights including the ability for automatic divorce while the plight that women face in abusive marriages mentioned in the concluding statement could further stress the gendered nature of the crime.

A consistent pattern was also found in the *Reactions over the lenient sentences given to perpetrators*, which represented NGOs and domestic violence agencies being critical of the court's decision and arguing that the justice system should change. These organizations took a supportive stance for the IPV victims by arguing against gendered violence such as “To say it's not domestic abuse when a man kills his wife is fatuous. This is the ultimate, most extreme form of domestic abuse.” They also

⁵ DHRs are carried out, so that agencies including the police force, social workers, health providers, have the ability to examine how they handled a particular case and assess whether there is space for improvement to prevent similar issues from occurring in the future (Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Abuse, 2023).

rejected justifications used by perpetrators such as lack of prior abuse, blaming the pandemic for lack of self-control, and use of rough sex defences. Research has shown (Bows and Herring, 2020) that narratives of consent in rough sex homicide cases are very often in England and Wales. Men use the euphemism of “consensual rough sex” to “escape murder charges and only face manslaughter charges” (p.7). This could suggest that women are presented as enjoying being abused, thus becoming responsible for their victimization.

The final frame found in the English corpus *The longstanding violence due to the state agencies' apathy* pertains to a long-term emotional and physical domestic abuse case that escalated to femicide due to the apathy of the local police force and the inadequate response of social workers. The course of events is illustrated in detail. The focus is largely on the lack of assistance from authorities through clusters of facts that show them avoiding her, talking to her in an aggressive manner and attributing the responsibility of solving the problem to her. Despite this, the victim's positive personality traits are highlighted, creating a powerless but humanizing portrait of the incident.

As regards the related frames in *Kathimerini online*, the *Prehistory of violence* and *Battered woman* seem to be similar to *The longstanding violence due to the state agencies' apathy* as they focus on the tortures the victims endured. However, unlike the former English frame, no responsibility attribution to government agencies was found in the Greek frames. The perpetrator was presented to be solely accountable. However, differences were also featured between the Greek frames. The *Prehistory of violence* largely focused on the violent background of the relationship including previous restraining orders, offenses, emotional and physical abuse, and painted the

perpetrator in a bad light. As a result, a link was possibly constructed between the prior incidents and the femicide itself. In contrast, the *Battered woman* did not provide any context about the relationship and the abuser. Instead, it presented the event as a standalone event, which could give the impression that it occurred suddenly and unexpectedly.

Two frames were found to address to the police force's response to femicide incidents in *Kathimerini online*, one by *Blaming the police officers* for not preventing femicide while another by *Praising the police force* for preventing femicide. The first emphasized the indifference of the police officers whereas the latter highlighted their professionalism. It is worth noting that while the first blamed the individual officers, the second praised the Police Force as a whole with the statement "You showed the best face of the Hellenic Police". Thus, while the positive actions were seen to reflect the entire system, no mention was made of the system in the case of failure of preventing the committed crime. This could suggest that the Greek police system may be seen as blameless.

A relevant remark concerning the frame *Blaming the police officers* found in the Greek corpus and *The longstanding violence due to the state agencies' apathy* found in the English corpus is that despite the fact that they both held the police force responsible for preventing femicide, the English corpus gave salience on the victim's long-term experience of domestic abuse, portraying her as helpless and describing her character in more detail.

Finally, a last frame identified in the Greek corpus is the *Safe haven for a victim* which underlined the remedies taken for a victim including police protection and removal to a shelter after the intervention of a political figure. The focus was on

the safety and care provided to the victim. Interestingly, despite the fact that the event was framed as a private matter, a glimpse of the social perspective of domestic abuse was offered by briefly citing the number of women who have sought assistance but received little support in Greece. This could be interpreted as a critique of the quality of assistance provided.

With respect to the second research question, the aforementioned differences may be explained due to different sociocultural contexts. There may be a few reasons why these two data sets framed quite differently the crime events despite the three common frames, in which also some differences were found.

Different repertoire of framing devices, especially quotes and sources, were found in the publications which could be attributed to different reporting styles. Despite the fact that no prior study has compared *Kathimerini online* with *The Guardian* directly, prior studies have shown that they have distinct reporting styles. For instance, one study (Touna, 2021, p.95) showed that the reporting style of femicide incidents in Greek newspapers including *Kathimerini online* was factual with a focus on the crime's conditions. On the other side, a study (Berry et al., 2015) about the representation of immigration in English media showed that *The Guardian* included a large number of voices including NGOs, refugee advocacy groups, and members of civil society as figures. The different degrees of media autonomy (RSF, 2022) and independence could have led to the differentiations in reporting styles, with the UK being more free and open while Greece being relatively affiliated to the government. Consequently, the English media landscape allows for multiple viewpoints, while the Greek tends to construct a rather "just the facts" context that hinders the expression of multiple opinions.

The different degrees of government influence could also explain the responsibility attribution of each publication. In *The Guardian*, a stronger focus was placed on partner violence as a public problem that requires intervention in multiple ways rather than a private matter. It also tried to express the social distress towards such incidents. On the other hand, in *Kathimerini online* events were largely framed as personal issues and responsibility was attributed to individual perpetrators and individual police officers. This could suggest that in the Greek media - consequently in Greece - IPV does not seem to have its own place as a social and public issue. A further explanation for this could be found to different degrees of gender equality in each context. The UK tends to support values related to self-development, thus it is a context that allows for greater expression of identity, whereas Greece tends to retain conservative values that may decrease individual freedom, especially for women, given the large gender gap (see Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov, 2010).

Despite the actual differences, both publications painted the perpetrator in a negative light, and the victim in a sympathetic light and stressed her powerless portrait. Limitation of the perpetrator's responsibility was also found in both corpora by shifting the blame from the perpetrator to the victim or to situational variables. Particularly in the Greek corpus, this was quite evident in the headlines. Prior research (Touna, 2021, p.96) in Greek media including *Kathimerini online* has found that 83% of the articles analyzed tended to shift blame from the perpetrator to external factors in the headlines and in the main text such as "Jealousy armed the hand of the 25-year-old killer" (p.97). Similarly, prior research (Braber, 2015, p.99) in *The Guardian* has witnessed that violence against women was also normalized in the headlines such as "Chef who hid wife's body in wheelie bin guilty of murder."

The present investigation was the first that explored how different media outlets frame femicide and IPV incidents in two different cultural contexts. Following this, it will be interesting, if it initiates large-scale studies to examine femicide incidents over a longer duration and using a larger corpus. Nonetheless, there are limitations. A limitation is that the Greek corpus entailed some news reports, whereas *The Guardian* relied mostly on background articles. The difference in genres may have affected the reliability of the comparison since background articles generally entail more extensive texts, whereas news reports contain basic facts about the crime.

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Appendix A: Definitions of the terms

Table 13

Definitions of the terms

Term	Definition of the term
Domestic violence	<p>According to the Department of Health (2000), domestic violence describes:</p> <p>“... a continuum of behaviour ranging from verbal abuse, through threats and intimidation, to manipulative behaviour, physical and sexual assault, to rape and even homicide. The vast majority of such violence is perpetrated by men, against women and their children. Those who experience domestic violence often keep it to themselves - shamed and embarrassed by what is happening to them; unsure of where they can go and what help they can get, and fearful of doing anything which might make the situation worse” (p.5).</p>
Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)	<p>According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2022) IPV includes “Physical and sexual violence, stalking and psychological aggression by a current or former intimate partner”.</p>
Femicide	<p>Femicide results from repeated acts of discrimination and violence, namely a variety of verbal, physical, sexual and emotional abuse, mutilations and forced situations before the deprivation of life (Radford & Russell, 1992). IPV is defined as the “physical and sexual violence, stalking and psychological aggregation committed by a current or former husband” (CDC, 2022).</p>

Appendix B: Analysis of an article in *The Guardian*

Man who killed wife and stuffed her in suitcase receives life sentence (19/08/2022)

Thomas Nutt isolated his victim years before killing her on their wedding day, Bradford crown court told

A “bully” who murdered a woman on their wedding night and stuffed her body into a suitcase has been jailed for life with a minimum term of 21 years.

Thomas Nutt, 46, punched and then strangled his wife, Dawn Walker, 52. He hid her body in a cupboard at their home before later dumping her in a field.

Bradford crown court heard that Nutt broke her leg so he could fit her corpse into the suitcase, which he tossed over a fence and hid in bushes. Her remains were found four days later.

Nutt lied to her family blaming her disappearance on her mental health. He sent them false texts, supposedly from her, and convinced her youngest daughter to help try to find her all the while knowing she was dead.

He had controlled Walker for years and isolated her from members of her family for three years “before his ungodly hands took her away from us forever”, Walker’s sister told the court.

Sentencing, Judge Rose told him: “Dawn Walker died because you are a bully, used to getting your own way with women, used to controlling and manipulating women and used to using your considerable size advantage to inflict violence on women if you considered it necessary to do so.”

Nutt killed the mother of three hours after their wedding when they returned to their home in Shirley Grove, Lightcliffe, near Halifax, West Yorkshire on the night of 27 October.

He told police they had gone on a honeymoon to Skegness the next day, but the judge said there was no evidence to support that claim, and the judge was sure Ms Walker was already dead.

The killer “desecrated” her body by breaking bones to make her fit in the suitcase, Rose said.

The victim’s daughter, Kiera-Lee Guest, told the court Nutt put up Halloween decorations in the house even while Ms Walker was lying dead.

Guest said Nutt knew what he had done when she went from place to place with a photo of her mother, asking if people had seen her. She said: “Justice will be served for my beautiful mother.”

Walker’s sister, Lisa, told the court: “I mourn for my sister who suffered so much and felt like she had nobody to turn to because this man made her feel worthless.”

Alistair MacDonald QC, prosecuting, said the crime was aggravated by the way Nutt deceived her family after the murder, causing them “psychological damage” he said.

Stephen Wood QC, defending, said there was no evidence that Nutt intended to kill his wife and that it had been “spontaneous”.

Nutt had admitted manslaughter, but was convicted of murder.

After the judge imposed a life sentence with a 21-year minimum term, a woman in the public gallery called out: “Thank you Your Honour, thank you.”

Core Frame: Blaming the perpetrator

Reasoning Devices

Problem definition: A man who killed his wife after engaging in ongoing domestic violence and then pretended to be looking for her body.

Responsibility attribution: The man is held accountable for the femicide, the ongoing domestic abuse, and the countless lies he told the authorities such as claiming the woman vanished due to mental health problems.

Suggestion of remedies: The life sentence with a 21-year minimum term is the penalty for this case.

Moral Judgement: A negative portrait could be constructed around the murderer. The man is shown to be manipulative and controlling over the long term, to conduct a very gruesome and terrifying crime just after their marriage, and to launch a campaign of deceit while he seems to be very aware of his actions.

On the other hand, the victim is portrayed with a great deal of sympathy, and her family experiences the pain of her passing.

Framing Devices

Rhetorical and Grammatical

Imagery: The cruel and creepy scenery of the crime is illustrated and reinforces the barbaric manner of the crime and the guilt of the murderer.

The man is depicted punching, strangling his wife and then dumping her in a field. Not only that, but because her corpse could not fit in the baggage, he broke her bones.

Lexical Choice: There are emotionally charged words and metaphors that illustrate the human impact of the crime.

These involve: “beautiful” mother, the sister “mourns” for the victim, the murderer provoked “psychological damage” to the family. The woman is also called “mother-of-three” as an indication that the murderer led her to leave behind her offspring.

Ultimately, the public gallery cried out "Thanks Your Honour" in a sense of redemption. Regarding the crime, the verb “desecrated” is used to show the unethical manner of the crime.

Additionally, there negative are words that illustrate the portrait of the murderer. He is characterized as “bully” twice, his hands are called “ungodly” and the gerunds “controlling” and “manipulating” further reinforce his callous character.

Sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgement:

There are descriptions that could reinforce his criminal and hypocritical character and lead to his custodial sentence.

At first, the murderer appears to punch, put the corpse in a suitcase and then dump it in bushes. He broke her bones in order for them to fit in the suitcase. He then pretended that he knew nothing about his wife; he is described as lying to his family, blaming her disappearance on her mental health and going from place to place pretending that he was searching for her. He also seemed very dissociative, since he was acting as if nothing had happened “Nutt put up Halloween decorations in the house”.

Concluding statements and paragraphs: The audience cried out “Thank you Your Honour” in a sense of ethical redemption. This statement could depict the emotional release of the public gallery which feels that the truth was established and justice was restored!

Technical Devices

Headline and Subheading

Subheading: Thomas Nutt isolated his victim years before killing her on their wedding day, Bradford crown court told

The subheading could demonstrate that the crime was not random and isolated but part of a series of abusive facts.

Quotes: There is a number of quotes which assign responsibility to the murderer and support the victim:

Victim’s sister: Accusation of the murderer's manipulative actions and controlling behaviour toward the victim, who felt helpless and unable to save her life, as well as the harm he caused to her entire family.

Judge Rose: Accusation about the controlling and manipulative behaviour of the killer

Victim’s daughter: Accusation about the callous behaviour of the murderer who acted as if nothing had happened (he was decorating the house)

Alistair MacDonald QC: Statement about the impact of the crime in the family

Judge: Statement that the murderer will get a life sentence. An interesting note is that the quote of the judge is placed immediately after the defence counsel's (Stephen Wood QC) quote. This implies that there is no possibility of vindication and the decision is irreversible.

