# Online Hate Speech In Jordan: The Suppression Of Women's Voices

Zain Hakim & Paula-Charlotte Matlach

Content Warning: This report contains mentions and examples of hateful content which some readers may find distressing.

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**About the authors**

Zain Alhakim, Paula-Charlotte Matlach

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## Introduction

Digital connectivity has created [new opportunities](#) for Jordanian women's professional development and civic engagement, providing increased flexibility and agency. However, despite digital platforms offering new opportunities for women in Jordan, they continue to face targeted [harassment](#) and systemic exclusion online. This is attested to by data from the country's Cybercrime Unit, showing that women were the primary victims of [cyber-extortion](#). Previous research elsewhere has shown that women in high-profile roles — including [politicians](#), [journalists](#) and other [public figures](#) — face disproportionate levels of online hostility compared to their male counterparts.

The Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) and CASM Technology are leading a collaborative initiative for the European Union (EU) to empower women in Jordan through research-driven prevention and response programmes. This study is the first of six papers that aim to provide insights into the online landscape of hate speech and misogyny in the country. It offers a comprehensive understanding of how social media platforms including X, YouTube and Facebook shape the landscape of online misogyny. It also provides evidence-based recommendations for creating safer and more inclusive online spaces. Finally, it highlights the urgent need for coordinated action from policymakers, platforms and civil society organisations (CSOs) to effectively combat online misogyny and hate speech.

## Executive Summary

Utilising a mixed-methods research approach, ISD researchers identified the presence of online hate speech, particularly misogynistic discourse targeting women in the public sphere. Much of the misogynistic behaviour online was found in individuals with antiquated worldviews, as well as within certain insular communities across social media platforms, including X, Facebook and YouTube.

A quantitative analysis conducted on X over a seven-month period revealed that 15 percent of all collected posts and comments contained misogynistic content. Posts were classified as misogynistic if they included derogatory or dehumanising language, direct or implicit threats, incitements to violence, or rhetoric opposing women's rights. These findings highlight the persistent and systemic nature of digital misogyny.

A qualitative analysis of Facebook and YouTube content revealed multiple groups that form the backbone of an Arabic-language '[Manosphere](#)' ecosystem, drawing many of their characteristics from its Western counterpart. A central component of this Jordanian online ecosystem is the '[red pillers](#)', increasingly virulent form of 'red pill ideology. Proponents of this ideology typically emphasise traditional masculinity as a critique of feminism. On social media platforms in Jordan, these groups often challenge women's rights and advocate for society.

In Jordan, the situation is particularly concerning, given the country's [socio-cultural context](#), where traditional gender norms often limit women's public participation and empowerment. [Research](#) shows that the rising prevalence of online misogyny amplifies these challenges, as it further marginalises women and deters them from engaging in political, social and

professional spheres. Women who speak out, especially those in leadership roles such as journalists, activists and politicians, are at risk of facing not only public vilification but also digital violence that seeks to silence their voices and delegitimise their contributions

The digital landscape in Jordan presents a unique challenge due to gaps in existing legal frameworks for addressing online gender-based violence, leaving women vulnerable and often without recourse. This regulatory gap, combined with cultural norms that perpetuate online harassment, necessitates the development of urgent policies and strategies to protect women's rights in the digital space.

One part of this challenge is the need for further research into misogyny online in Jordan. Central to this research is identifying the specific platforms and communities where these issues are most prevalent, and contributing to the creation of informed, culturally sensitive interventions to combat online harassment and promote safer digital spaces for women. Furthermore, understanding the broader societal impacts of digital misogyny—on women's mental health, political participation and overall well-being—is crucial to addressing this growing issue effectively.

## Key Findings

- **Jordanian cultural norms including deep-seated patriarchal values and traditional gender roles are contributing to the normalisation of misogynistic behaviour online.** Similarly, the absence of robust legal frameworks in Jordan, specifically targeting online harassment and digital violence leaves women vulnerable, with limited avenues for legal recourse and protection.
- **Misogynistic content in Jordan ebbs and flows with global developments, not just local dynamics and news**. Researchers found that the highest spike in misogynistic content occurred during the 2024 United States Presidential Election. This finding suggests that global developments have as much impact on misogynistic content in Jordan as local developments.
- **During the seven-month period of data collection, most misogynistic content on X was primarily generated in the central region of Jordan, particularly in the greater Amman area.** The geolocation of accounts was based solely on the information provided by users online. The central region of Jordan, comprising the governorates of Amman, Balqa, Madaba and Zarqa, is the most densely populated area in country.
- **15 percent of all comments analysed by researchers on X [formerly Twitter] were identified as misogynistic.** Researchers collected 45,522 posts and comments on Jordanian X between 1 July 2024 and 31 January 2025 to understand the prevalence of misogynistic discourse on the platform. More than 6,700 of these posts were classified as misogynistic.
- **Researchers identified three main subsets of misogynistic narratives in Jordan, the largest being derogatory and dehumanising language about women.** Comments such as *"your body is on sale because you aren't veiled,"* or *"war talk is for men, go back to applying makeup,"* were part and parcel of this narrative. Researchers also noted that women were frequently referred to as various animals, indicating a level of

dehumanisation. The other two most common narratives included traditional gender roles in Jordan and threats, harassment and incitement to violence.

- **While threats, harassment and incitement to violence were the least prevalent narratives found, the identified content was often directed toward women in public positions.** Many of these narratives appeared intended to silence women in these roles.
- **Jordanian Manosphere accounts and pages on Facebook and YouTube have significant reach, with some accounts having more than 180K followers on Facebook and 107K subscribers on YouTube.** They frequently critique women's rights and advocate for male authority as a fundamental pillar of societal stability.
- **X's enforcement mechanisms and content moderation policies appear ineffective, as flagged misogynistic posts and comments often continue to reach wide audiences despite restrictions**. Research on social media governance suggests that labelling posts as harmful without removing them can fuel misinformation and amplify divisive content.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings, ISD researchers have outlined a range of recommendations for donors, government, civil society and platforms to address online hate faced by girls and women in Jordan. These recommendations are focused on digital education and strategic communications, government and digital policy to provide donors, civil society, government stakeholders and researchers with concrete steps they can take to address what appears to these challenges.

### Digital Education and Strategic Communications

**The development of digital citizenship programmes that go beyond basic literacy, and focus on healthy interactions online, should be a key goal in fostering a healthy environment online in Jordan.** Audiences in Jordan should be made aware of the forms of hate they may encounter online, how to report it, and what actions they can take to effectively combat its proliferation. Central to this initiative should be a civil society-led process through which digital citizenship programmes are developed for Jordan's unique context.

**Donors should support efforts to effectively detect, report and counter online misogyny in Jordan.** ISD found gaps in the capacity of civil society to identify and report hate speech more broadly – and misogyny in particular. As part of this effort, donors should work to specifically create digital literacy programmes focused on trauma-informed support for girls and women facing hate online.

**Strategic communications efforts to address digital misogyny in Jordan should prioritise gamified and edutainment approaches to better engage younger audiences.** Given the central role of online gaming among youth in Jordan, developing entertaining, educational video game content could be an effective entry point for raising awareness on issues such as misogyny. Alternatively, partnerships with established gaming platforms and companies could help integrate this type of content into existing products.

## Digital Policy and Enforcement

**Platforms should pair machine-assisted moderation with expert human review to ensure that context and meaning are not lost when moderating Arabic content, particularly around targeted harassment and illegal material such as terrorist content.** Experts in gender-based violence and regional contexts are especially critical in mitigating harms and providing critical perspectives into moderation practices that impact Jordanian audiences.

**Connecting Jordanian digital policy experts with others in different countries should be a priority to improve the ability of stakeholders to address the challenges of digital gender-based violence.** This would not only enhance the capacity of Jordanian experts, but likely spur on novel responses to the challenges of online hate in the Jordanian context.

**Platforms should be aware of the workarounds used by hateful actors online to evade moderation, such as the use of Arabizi – a written form of Arabic using Latin letters and numbers – to insult, degrade and dehumanise women.** The use of workarounds by users online provides them with the ability to continue harmful and hateful behaviour, often to the detriment of other users, and in clear violation of platform guidelines. Civil society could assist to address these gaps with platforms.

## Government Initiative

**Governments should strengthen legal frameworks addressing gender-based violence, including online hate speech and harassment targeting women in Jordan.** The government should support civil society in delivering recommendations to strengthen protections againsthate speech targeting women and other affectedgroups.

**The Jordanian government could collaborate with the European Union to identify effective ways of compelling platforms to uphold their own community guidelines, particularly in relation to harassment and coordinated hate.** The EU's [Digital Services Act](#) (DSA) offers a robust model for platform accountability toward their own terms of service, including transparency requirements and enforcement mechanisms. Establishing working groups on the viability of a similar system in Jordan should be explored as a potential avenue to address platform inaction. Notably, many platforms are already providing the EU with transparency reports on various aspects of hate speech moderation, offering a useful precedent for such efforts.

# Glossary

**Misogyny**: Misogyny operates to uphold a patriarchal social order, policing gender norms to ensure that women and marginalised gender identities conform. Misogyny works to justify violence there is deviation from these norms. Misogyny includes what might be considered a type of deeply held prejudice towards women and marginalised gender identities.

**Male supremacy:** A "hateful [ideology](#) rooted in the belief of the innate superiority of cisgender men and their right to subjugate women [and trans and gender-diverse people]." It is linked to hegemonic masculinity, which structures patriarchy and describes the "legitimation of unequal [gender relations](#)."

**Patriarchy**: Patriarchy refers to a social system in which men hold primary power and [authority](#) in various aspects of life, including family, politics, economics and culture. It is characterised by [male dominance](#) in decision-making, legal structures and social norms, often reinforced by traditions, religious interpretations and societal expectations.

**"Red pill" ideology**: A belief system that advocates for an extreme form of male supremacy, rooted in anti-feminist, misogynistic and patriarchal views of gender roles. It takes its name from the "[red pill](#)" in *The Matrix* movie series, symbolising a supposed awakening to "truth" about gender dynamics. Red pill ideology encourages men to assert male dominance and reject societal norms, particularly those advocating for gender equality. Proponents argue that society has been corrupted by [feminism](#), and they view women as inferior or manipulative particularly in the contexts of relationships and other power structures.

**Cyberbullying**: The use of digital platforms including social media, websites and messaging apps to harass, intimidate or harm others. It involves repeated [harmful behaviour](#), such as sending threatening messages, spreading rumours or sharing embarrassing content with the intent to cause emotional distress and other offline impacts.

**Dehumanisation**: The denial of the full humanity of others. This is often achieved by comparisons to vermin, animals, property or the suggestion that targets are subhuman. Dehumanisation justifies the mistreatment of [dehumanised group](#)s.

**Edutainment:** A blend of education and entertainment, referring to content that is designed to educate while also entertaining the audience. It's often used in media, games, and digital learning platforms where engaging storytelling or interactivity enhances the learning experience.

**Coded Language**: Words, phrases or symbols used to convey a hidden or disguised meaning that may not be immediately apparent to the listener or reader. This is often done to avoid detection or to communicate ideas in ways that bypass [moderation](#) or social norms. This type of [language](#) is commonly used online to express controversial, prejudiced or harmful opinions while maintaining plausible deniability or evading moderation.

**Arabizi**: Also referred to as Latinised Arabic, which is a hybrid form of Arabic using Latin script and numerals which is often used to bypass content moderation filters.

**Diacritics**: In Arabic, these are the small symbols above or below letters that indicate short vowels or pronunciation, like fatha ( ´ ), damma ( ُ ), and kasra ( ِ )...etc.

**Word Clustering:** Grouping similar words or terms that frequently appear together or have related meanings within a dataset.

**Thematic Mapping:** Visualising the relationships and distribution of words or themes across a dataset. This technique typically uses graphical tools such as word clouds, heat maps or concept maps to visually represent how themes (including misogyny, empowerment and activism) manifest in the data.

## Methodology

ISD used a mixed methods approach to provide an overview of the landscape of online hate speech – specifically misogyny – in Jordan. An ethnographic analysis identified Jordanian social media accounts which produced misogynistic content on Facebook, YouTube and X. The reach and rhetoric of these accounts were analysed qualitatively through a manual 'social media lookup' – a process that uses publicly available information and platform-specific search tools to locate relevant accounts. This method is commonly used in investigations, research, and monitoring activities.

ISD also used the social media monitoring tool Brandwatch to systematically collect and analyse explicitly misogynistic content from X. This was surfaced using a:

- Targeted set of misogynistic and gendered keywords, hashtags and phrases such as slurs and demeaning, dehumanising words.
  - While compiling this list, researchers took into account the complexity of the Arabic language which allows for *Arabizi,* and the use of non-standard characters and variations in spelling such as diacritics, alternative letter forms or phonetic substitutions (using "2" for "أ" or "7" for "ح") to bypass detection.
- List of targets, including organisations, entities and women in the public eye (e.g. politicians, activists, journalists, actors, TV personalities, and influencers), who have previously been targeted or are at risk of being targeted (due to controversial or unpopular opinions). To account for the range of misogynistic expressions in Arabic, our search looked at:
  1. Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and Jordanian dialectal variations,
  2. *Arabizi* and deliberate misspellings used to evade moderation,
  3. Altered spellings, euphemisms and metaphorical phrasing designed to obscure misogynistic intent.

**ISD collected 45,522 posts and comments published by 8,451 Jordanian X users from 1 July 2024 until 31 January 2025.** The study identified 6,784 misogynistic posts (15 percent of the collective total) on X made by 2,337 users (28 percent of all accounts found in this study).

This dataset was further analysed using word clustering – a method of grouping similar words or terms that frequently appear together or have related meanings in order to find themes within the collected misogynistic content. Based on the word clustering process, three main themes appeared within the collected misogynistic content; 1) derogatory and dehumanising, 2) threatening and harassment and 3) restrictive views of gender roles.

During the seven-month period of data collection, most misogynistic content on X was generated in the central region, particularly in the greater Amman area. The geolocation of accounts was based solely on the information provided by users online. The central region of Jordan, comprising the governorates of Amman, Balqa, Madaba and Zarqa, is the most densely populated area in country, accounting for 63.5 percent of the total population.

This prevalence is attributed to Amman's large population, widespread internet access and its role as a hub for political discourse, media and activism. This has made it a focal point for ideological debates, including those on gender issues. Public discussions on women's rights, workplace inclusion and policy reforms often originate in or gain momentum from Amman,

triggering increased misogynistic reactions. Additional factors include economic pressures, youth unemployment and Amman's higher digital literacy compared to other regions, especially in the south.

Similarly, ISD researchers found multiple posts that were supposedly flagged as hate speech with a disclaimer that stated, "visibility limited: this post may violate X's rules against hateful conduct" (see Figure 2). However, these posts are still public and accessible. This apparent flaw in platform enforcement mechanisms and content moderation policies builds on previous research which found some flagged posts on X continue to reach wide audiences despite restrictions. Studies on social media governance show that labelling posts as harmful without removing them can contribute to misinformation and amplify divisive content. Past research has also found that X's algorithm may still recommend flagged content under certain conditions, undermining content moderation. These studies highlight the challenges in balancing free speech with responsible platform governance.

Having said that, accounts were found to use *Arabizi* or modified spelling to evade platform moderation. Users also altered spelling, used abbreviations or relied on indirect phrasing in their comments or posts to avoid detection. This allowed them to spread misogynistic content without explicitly violating content policies.

## Analysis

### Misogyny: Ebbs and Flows with News

In total, there are 919,000 X users in Jordan, accounting for 7.9 percent of the country's population. ISD collected 45,522 posts and comments published by 8,451 X users from 1 July 2024 until 31 January 2025. Using a machine learning classifier, the data was then filtered for misogynistic content. The findings were corroborated by subject matter and regional experts, who independently annotated a random sample of the data.

The final dataset tagged as misogynistic consisted of 6,784 misogynistic X posts (15 percent of the total comments and posts collected) and was published by 2,337 self-proclaimed Jordanian users (28 percent of accounts included in the dataset).

The study period (1 July 2024 to 31 January 2025) was marked by multiple events which influenced not only the broader public debate in Jordan but also shaped misogynistic discourse. As seen in the chart below, ISD observed several spikes in misogynistic content over the seven-month observation period, which were linked to local and international political or social events happening offline.
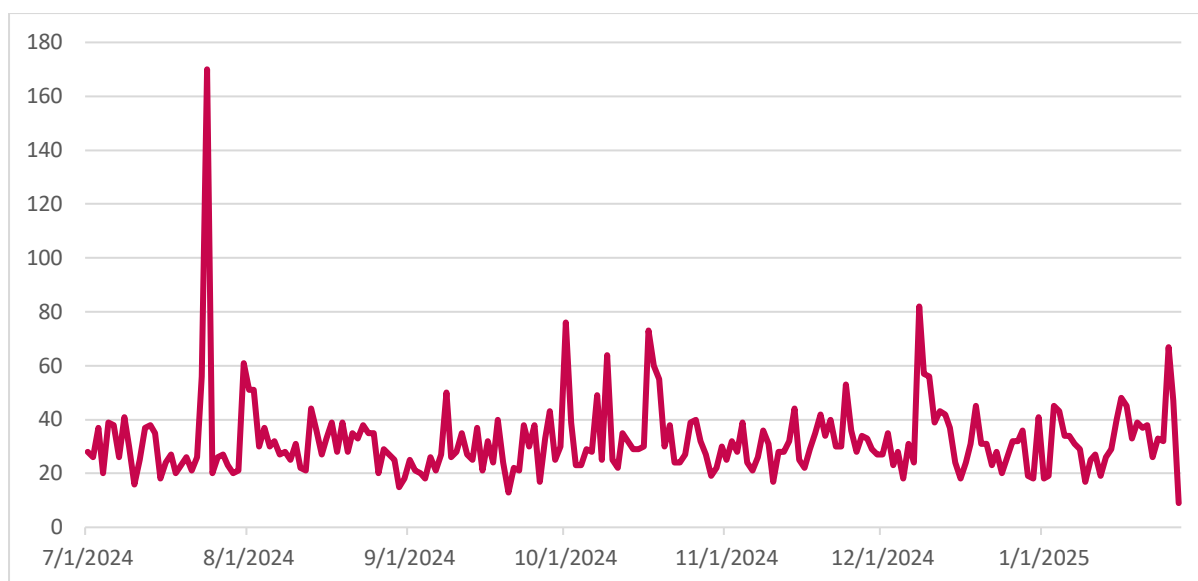
**Figure 1.** Misogynistic content on X in Jordan between 1 July 2024 and 31 January 2025.

Among the spikes found in July 2024, one coincided with US President Joe Biden's withdrawal from the presidential race on 21 July, and a second with his endorsement of Vice President Kamala Harris as the Democratic nominee. This led to a surge of people using misogynistic language in response to the possibility of a woman president in the US.



**Figure 2:** Post with a 'Visibility limited' disclaimer. Translation: The presidential candidate in the United States was nothing but a side w**** for a singer.

The annual Jordanian Jerash Festival for Culture and Arts on 24 July was another focal point for online debates about cultural and societal norms. Discussions that challenged traditional patriarchal values led to the largest observed spike (See Figure 1) – 170 posts or comments.

Research indicates that public events highlighting women's roles or challenging traditional gender norms can trigger increased misogynistic discourse online, as demonstrated by this data. These reactions often stem from a clash between evolving societal norms and entrenched patriarchal attitudes.

Another spike in misogynistic discourse was witnessed when prominent Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh was assassinated on 31 July as a result of the military escalation between Hamas and Israel. Data registered a small spike in misogynistic content toward women supporters of Hamas including journalists, media presenters and TV hosts. Women in these positions were frequently targeted as symbols of perceived ideological threats with accusations of spreading misinformation or destabilising society. Women are often silenced through dismissive rhetoric; narratives such as "politics and war are matters for men" or "be quiet, you don't understand what you're talking about." These statements reinforce gender barriers, further undermining women's contributions to political and military discourse.

Several small spikes in misogynistic content in September were attributed to the Jordanian parliamentary elections, in which more than half of the 1,600 candidates were women. Women candidates faced intense online harassment, including attacks that questioned their competence, emotional stability and legitimacy in leadership roles, with the aim of discrediting and silencing them. The deliberate spread of false, misleading or manipulated information to discredit, silence or intimidate women is referred to as gender disinformation tactics.

A month later, misogynistic content peaked again around 17 October, coinciding with an escalation in the Gaza-Israel conflict. As observed in previous crises, ISD found that misogyny and other societal biases were amplified, serving as a mechanism to silence and discredit women's voices in public discourse.

## Key Themes of Misogynistic Content in Jordan

ISD identified **three key themes** that shaped the majority of misogynistic discourse on X in Jordan using thematic mapping and qualitative analysis. Thematic mapping here is used to identify and categorise patterns of misogynistic data.

The analysis uncovered how gendered hate speech manifests, evolves and reinforces societal biases around gender norms. This reveals the deeply embedded patterns of stereotyping, harassment, and derogatory and dehumanising language.

1. **Derogatory and dehumanising language** was the largest cluster at 2,418 comments and posts – with 4,973 likes, published by 1,178 accounts. These used language to silence, shame and discredit women, including:
    - Gender-based slurs, insults and derogatory terms such as 'spinster', 'whore' and references to women as 'lacking intellect'.
    - Sexualised and objectifying comments such as "your body is on sale because you aren't veiled".
    - Dismissive and silencing language such as claims that women do not belong in certain industries or public life, e.g. "women shouldn't have a say in war."
    - Dehumanising language which compares women to animals, vermin and inanimate objects (mostly equating women to dogs, donkeys and shoes).

The analysis found patterns of gender-based intimidation which was meant to suppress women's participation in professional and civic discourse in Jordan. Comments and posts

included gendered insults that attack women on basis of morality, honour and virtue. Others questioned women's intellectual capabilities, often justifying their position by selection interpretations of religious texts which reinforced patriarchal narratives designed to limit women's roles in public life. These tactics contribute to a hostile environment that undermines gender equality and restricts women's engagement and their right to participate in societal and political spheres.

Previous research carried out by ISD in Jordan suggests that sexualised hate speech in Jordan particularly targets women in prominent public roles including politicians, journalists and media presenters. They are frequently subjected to dehumanising rhetoric and explicit threats designed to undermine their authority and discourage participation in public discourse. This form of harassment often employs graphic and objectifying language to foster a hostile environment that inhibits women's professional visibility and engagement.

An illustrative example of such rhetoric (Figure 3) below contains gendered derogatory remarks aimed at a TV presenter such as *"she's a cow and so should have no opinion"*. This type of language both dehumanises women and seeks to delegitimise their contributions to political discussion. These tactics are not merely incidental but serve as deliberate strategies to silence and marginalise women in key societal roles in Jordan.

Figure 3 is a post with a label that body shamed women. The author insinuated that men who do not embrace their masculinity may find themselves with women who do not align with conventional beauty standards.



**Figure 3:** Post containing gendered derogatory remarks. Translation of post: Now do you see why you should listen to me?



**Figure 4:** Is a comment left by a user viewing the post in Figure 3 regarding body shaming. Translation of comment: Perhaps she enchanted him with her mind, way of thinking, style, and her manners, not necessarily with her looks.

The author's reply : Don't be silly

2. **Restrictive and traditionalist views of gender roles** made up the second-largest cluster at 1,784 comments and posts – with 14,031 likes, published by 910 accounts.

ISD researchers found that discussions on X revealed a strong tension between patriarchal values and evolving online discourse. Posts in this cluster frequently cited cultural and religious justifications for limiting women's participation in public life, reinforcing traditional norms that confine them to domestic roles. By promoting the belief that a woman's place is in the home, these narratives work to uphold existing power structures which restrict women's rights, such as their influence in leadership and decision-making. These narratives also marginalise women's contributions to professional fields and policy discussions.



**Figure 5:** Post with a traditionalist view of gender roles. Translation: "Every girl who doesn't know how to cook is mentally ill."



**Figure 6:** Another post with a traditionalist view of gender roles. Translation: "All the roads lead to the kitchen, they just like to confuse you with details."

3. **Threatening and harassment Language** is the third and smallest cluster at 602 comments and posts – with 293 likes, published by 431 accounts.

Women, particularly those in public roles such as journalists and activists, often face online attacks, some of which appear to be coordinated. These include threats, defamatory comments and cyberbullying, all aimed at silencing them and deterring their

professional engagement. For instance, Figure 7 illustrates a threat made against a female TV host who had criticised parliament.



**Figure 7:** Threatening post made against a female TV host who criticised parliament. Translation: "Shut up and be careful they don't come and get you... soon you will be kissing shoes."

Several Jordanian women activists promoting women's equality have faced criticism, hate and threats online. One prominent example from 2023 was Hala Al-Ahed, a Jordanian human rights defender and lawyer who faced a severe online harassment campaign after she announced she would be teaching a course about feminism. Al-Ahed was accused of trying to impose a western model of feminist ideology on conservative Jordanian society. The harassment campaign against Al-Ahed soon expanded and became "organised and systematic", with a deluge of fake accounts attacking her for her activism. Figures 8 below shows an example from YouTube of the type of harassment Al-Ahed experienced.



**Figure 8:** Post attacking human rights defender and lawyer Hala Al-Ahed. Translation: "We, as Jordanians, demand the elimination of feminism and ask the government to prosecute her."

## Online Misogynistic Actors in Jordan

On YouTube, misogynistic rhetoric often surfaces in the comment sections of Jordanian content creators. This was particularly evident on various, politically charged, news-based and social commentary channels.

A manual data collection effort on Facebook and YouTube was used to identify posts and accounts aligned with the 'red pill' ideology. Although the idea of the red pill emerged from Western digital spaces, it has since been adopted online by groups in the Middle East and

North Africa (MENA), including Jordan. Its success in the country also reflects deeply ingrained patriarchal traditions and conservative gender norms.

Within this context, ISD researchers found that Facebook pages and public accounts as well as YouTube channels that promote "red pill" ideology exploit societal norms to justify and reinforce gender disparities. These accounts often criticise women's increasing participation in the workforce, oppose female independence and argue that male authority is essential for societal stability.

Several public red pill pages and accounts are active on Facebook, including those managed by influencers with tens of thousands of followers. The example post below (Figure 9) employs derogatory and objectifying language to reinforce harmful gender stereotypes that women are "gold diggers." Comments from other users further degrade and objectify women, reflecting broader misogynistic discourse within these online communities.



**Figure 9:** Post portraying women as a 'gold diggers'. The post translates as follows:

- **Post**: Protect your goals from her. Protect your money from her. Protect your belongings, because the "thief" is coming for all of it.

- **Comment**: I have no doubt that the person who called women the 'gentle beings' was blinded and misguided by his sexual desires. How can such beings with short legs, hunched shoulders, and wide hips be called gentle?! No doubt that women's beauty only stems from men's sexual desires.

Some Jordanian YouTube channels also focus on criticising feminism and alleged foreign influence on Jordan and its conservative society, blaming "the West" for introducing modern ideologies. This content is also apparent in the comment section of YouTube channels belonging to media outlets that publish supportive content on women's rights. Users argue that Western ideals and contemporary social movements have negatively impacted Jordanian women and society. They also assert that women's increased focus on higher education, careers and independence has come at the expense of traditional homemaking roles (Figures 10 and 11).



**Figure 10:** Post discouraging fathers from allowing their daughters to attend higher education institutes. Translation: Behind every whore in university is a father who trusts her.
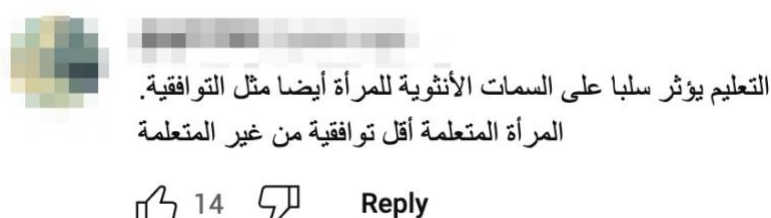


**Figure 11:** Post translation: Education negatively affects feminine traits and compatibility. Educated women are less compatible than non-educated ones.

Followers of the red pill ideology in Jordan argue that the rise of feminism has contributed to increased financial independence among Jordanian women which in turn has led to delayed marriages and an increase in women remaining unmarried, deriding them as "old spinsters". This messaging seeks to reaffirm the 'natural order' of traditional gender roles and demeans women as only useful when they are in traditional homemaking roles (Figure 12).

**Figure 12:** Post by a red pill influencer who criticizes women from seeking independence through work. Translation of post: Marry a housewife, not a working woman.

Translation of reply by a follower: Man, you crack me up.  Everyone, I encourage you to follow [account name] this is a man in every sense of the word.

## Conclusion

This analysis identified a complex network of harmful misogynistic social media content and behaviours from Jordanian accounts that disproportionately impact women. This reflects a broader global dilemma: digital platforms can empower women while also exposing them to high levels of cyber-violence and gender based discrimination.

The ethnographic analysis revealed a presence of misogynistic "red pill" content among insular groups across Jordanian social media. These accounts frequently critiqued women's independence, labelling it as "excessive freedom" and misrepresenting Islamic teachings to justify their stance. These narratives uphold patriarchal structures and undermine efforts toward gender equality in Jordan's political, professional and social spheres.

In addition to degrading content, the study found some misogynistic threats and incitements to violence toward women in the public eye including politicians, lawyers, journalists and TV hosts who were particularly vulnerable to these attacks. A number of women in these positions suffered violent threats, as well as slander and verbal abuse often based on their appearance, perceived morality or competence. Many were accused of "violating traditions" for taking leadership roles or speaking out, which not only likely harms their mental health but also discourages broader female participation in the public sphere. This dynamic illustrates how online misogyny and offline violence form a continuum, and that gender-based violence is a systemic problem rather than isolated incidents.

Another prominent theme was the use of cultural and religious references to justify restrictive gender roles, further entrenching patriarchal norms that limit women's professional and public participation. These narratives reinforced societal structures that prioritise domestic duties over educational and career advancement for women. They were often perpetuated through institutions such as family, education and law. Addressing online misogyny in Jordan requires more than digital regulation: it demands a comprehensive, societal approach that considers wider cultural norms.

## Limitations of Data Collection

- Restricted access to Meta platforms: Meta's strict data restrictions limit large-scale public data collection for research compared to X. To compensate, we conducted manual searches to track public pages, comments and misogynistic discourse patterns on Meta's platforms. While this provided qualitative depth, it required extensive

human verification, making it less scalable than automated datasets from X and YouTube.

- Private messages and closed groups: Due to privacy restrictions, closed digital spaces including WhatsApp chats and private Facebook groups remain inaccessible. As such, our findings reflect public discourse rather than private radicalisation or incitement within closed communities.

- AI-derived insights require human validation: While machine learning classifiers are integral to processing large volumes of data, AI cannot fully interpret the nuanced, sarcastic or coded language frequently used in misogynistic speech. Human analysts continue play a crucial role in verifying flagged content, reducing false positives and contextual misinterpretations.

- The complexity of the Arabic language allows the use of non-standard characters and variations in spelling such as diacritics, alternative letter forms or phonetic substitutions in Arabi (such as using "2" for "أ" or "7" for "ح") to bypass detection.

## Annex

A sample of keywords and hashtags used for the research on social media platforms for misogynistic content:

| Keywords and hashtags | Translation |
| --- | --- |
| عانس | spinster |
| مسترجِلة | masculine woman |
| حيوانة | Animal (female) |
| كلبة | Dog (female) |
| شرم**ة | slut |
| زانية | adulteress |
| وق*ة | Hussite, rude |
| ح**رة | despicable, Vile |
| وا*يه | low life |
| #ضبي_لسانك | Shut up |
| #بوق_إعلامي | Mouthpiece |
| #خليكي_بالمطبخ | stay in the kitchen |
| #لا_لعمل_المرأة | no to women's work |
| #المرأة_مكانها_البيت | Women belong at home |

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