

## The Role of Social Media in Raising Awareness about Preventing Violence against Women in Jordan

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### Abstract

**Objectives:** Gender-based violence (GBV) is a pervasive global issue requiring immediate attention. Social media platforms have emerged as powerful tools in combating this violence by providing avenues for support, advocacy, and awareness. This study highlights the role of social media in raising awareness about violence against women, aiming to explore its impact and contribution to understanding and addressing this pressing issue.

**Methods:** A qualitative approach was adopted, utilizing in-depth interviews with 13 participants, including activists, advocates, writers, and researchers focused on violence against women. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data.

**Results** The results indicate that social media plays a critical role in increasing awareness about violence against women. However, societal values pose significant challenges for activists addressing this issue. The study underscores the importance of social media in empowering individuals and organizations to share personal stories and disseminate information about GBV. It also provides valuable insights for policymakers and organizations to design initiatives and workshops aimed at reducing violence against women.

**Conclusion:** Social media serves as a platform for survivors to share their stories and seek support. Campaigns on these platforms foster a sense of community responsibility by raising public awareness, challenging societal norms, and promoting discussions on GBV, ultimately contributing to societal change.

**Keywords:** Social media; violence against women; awareness; Jordanian women

### دور وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في رفع الوعي حول الحد من العنف ضد المرأة في الأردن

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#### ملخص

**الأهداف:** العنف القائم على النوع الاجتماعي مشكلة عالمية منتشرة على نطاق واسع ولا بد من معالجتها على الفور. وقد أصبحت منصات التواصل الاجتماعي أدوات فعالة في مكافحة هذا النوع من العنف، حيث تقدم سبل الدعم والمناصرة والتوعية. وتكتسب هذه الدراسة أهمية كبيرة، حيث تظهر دور تأثير استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في رفع مستوى الوعي بشأن العنف ضد المرأة. وتهدف الورقة إلى التعرف على مدى دور وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي وأثارها في رفع مستوى الوعي بالعنف ضد المرأة، مما يساهم لاحقاً في مناقشة وفهم مشكلة ظاهرة العنف ضد المرأة.

**الطرق:** تم اعتماد نهج نوعي في هذا البحث حيث تم استخدام المقابلات المتعمقة للحصول على بيانات من المشاركين الثلاثة عشر الذين كانوا ناشطين ودعاة وكتاب وباحثين مهتمين بالعنف ضد المرأة. وعلاوة على ذلك، تم استخدام التحليل الموضوعي لتحليل البيانات.

**النتائج:** أشارت النتائج إلى أن وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي تلعب دوراً حاسماً في رفع مستوى الوعي بشأن العنف ضد المرأة. وتشير الدراسة إلى وجود العديد من العقبات التي تواجه الناشطين المهمين في هذه القضية من القيم المجتمعية. هذه الدراسة ذات أهمية كبيرة وتساعد صناع السياسات والمنظمات على وضع الخطط وتنظيم ورش العمل التي من شأنها الحد من العنف ضد المرأة. إنها تجعل من الممكن للأشخاص والمنظمات تبادل ومشاركة القصص الشخصية والمعلومات حول العنف القائم على النوع الاجتماعي.

**الخلاصة:** إنها توفر منتدى للناجين للتحدث ومشاركة قصصهم والحصول على الدعم. تعمل الحملات على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي على خلق شعور بالمسؤولية المجتمعية من خلال زيادة الوعي العام، ومناقشة المعايير الاجتماعية، وتعزيز المحادثات حول العنف القائم على النوع الاجتماعي.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، العنف ضد المرأة، الوعي، النساء الأردنيات، الأردن.



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## Introduction

Violence against women (VAW) is common worldwide, Jordanian women reported 25.9% lifetime husband-related DV, with emotional (20.6%), physical (17.5%), and sexual (5.1%) violence in 2018 (Kheirallah et al., 2023). In many contexts, exist permissive attitudes toward this kind of violence among both men and women. Prominent initiatives to combat VAW seek to alter people's perceptions of what constitutes appropriate behavior in this regard, much like they do with other socially detrimental behaviors (Green et al., 2020). Two obstacles face those attempting to address this issue: it is common for witnesses to choose not to report instances, and some forms of domestic violence are generally accepted (Green et al., 2020).

Investigating the prevention of VAW in the Middle East, specifically, in Jordan, may contribute significantly to our understanding of how to reduce harmful social practices. According to Moshtagh et al. (2023), sexual or physical VAW is very common in the Middle East. More specifically, many Jordanian women have been exposed to some type of violence from an intimate partner in recent years (Abujilban et al., 2023; Eneizat, et al., 2023a). According to a recent study (Kheirallah et al., 2023), about 25.9% of Jordanian women have experienced (emotional, physical, or sexual) violence by an intimate partner. Also, a report by World Economic Forum ranked Jordan 123 of 146 in the Global Gender Gap Index 2024. Which places Jordan in the global rankings for the frequency of VAW (Kheirallah et al., 2023). In this set of countries, knowing how to stop VAW is especially important from the point of view of politics. Cultural acceptance of VAW and strict ideas on gender roles are common among Jordanians (Abujilban et al., 2023; Eneizat, et al., 2023b).

Raising awareness involves a range of actions, and frequently entails attempting to expand people's understanding of the causes and consequences of various forms of violence, confronting attitudes, beliefs, and social norms that support VAW, and informing them of pertinent laws, policies, services, and rights (WHO, 2021). Strategies for increasing awareness rely on a range of platforms, such as social media, to spread messages (WHO, 2021). Social media connects and educates survivors, activists, and advocates, which is vital in the fight against gender violence (such s #MeToo movement) (Miller & Demirbilek, 2023).

Activities aimed at increasing awareness are frequently used to support campaigns and events that advocate for the prevention of VAW, such as the yearly 16 Days of Action GBV (WHO, 2021). These endeavors are executed via enduring programs, like radio or television shows, or social media campaigns. Many awareness-raising strategies aim to change perceptions of VAW as well as gender norms, which specify what constitutes proper behavior for men and women in a particular group or society (Green et al., 2020). Activities focused on increasing awareness are common and effective in reducing VAW (Jewkes et al., 2020).

Public perception of VAW can be significantly influenced by the mass media as a culture creator (Mcloughlin, 2013). This is significant because attitudes, roles, and detrimental social norms that perpetuate gender inequality are some of the most potent causes of VAW (Jewkes et al., 2019) and, if left unchecked, can impede societal transformation (Heise & Manji, 2016). Publicizing pertinent VAW regulations and policies can be accomplished through awareness-raising techniques (Mcloughlin, 2013). By fostering political will or community support, awareness-raising initiatives can aid in the advancement of women's rights movements and create an atmosphere that allows women to exercise their rights (Mcloughlin, 2013).

This paper includes a section that provides and discusses the findings of a qualitative analysis of interviews with professionals involved in the prevention of VAW. These interviews offer insightful context that is essential for comprehending the significant work that has been done on social media over time. This study also emphasizes how social media plays a significant role in many violence prevention strategies, such as hashtag campaigns to elevate the voices of abused women, information sharing about personal experiences of violence, participation in campaigns advocating for women's rights, calling for policy reform, and accelerating efforts to reduce GBV. This study focuses on both individual comments and news material generated by social media, so illustrating the relationship between risk factors at the individual, or attitudes and beliefs, and broader community and societal levels, or social norms. An important advancement in the fight against VAW.

## **Literature review:**

### ***Terminology of VAW***

Although there are multiple forms of VAW, it is used here as an umbrella term to refer to sexual VAW and intimate partner violence committed by men. VAW is described as "one of the most common forms of VAW and includes physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and controlling behaviors by an intimate partner" (World Health Organization, 2012, p. 1).

### ***Primary prevention***

Primary prevention (for example, using social media and/or educational programs) seeks to stop violence before it starts (Dahlberg & Krug, 2006). In the field of VAW prevention, primary prevention has up until recently been "relatively neglected," with the majority of resources going toward secondary prevention, which addresses long-term care related to violent experiences (such as rehabilitation and reintegration) or tertiary prevention, which addresses immediate responses to violence (such as health care services or treatments following violent victimization) (WHO, 2021). Long-term efforts to lowering VAW must include primary preventive techniques, and a crucial but difficult component of preventative work is altering social attitudes and norms (Johnson & Dawson, 2010).

The development and spread of social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, X, and Instagram, along with the widespread use of apps, show how online collaboration and sharing have become significant components of an increasing number of initiatives. VAW prevention efforts have developed and grown along with these platforms' prominence in social issue discussions. Reducing risk among possible victims and offenders has been the main goal of anti-violence efforts in the past (McMahon & Banyard, 2012). From treating men as merely the perpetrators of VAW or as women's allies in its prevention, prevention strategies have changed in recent years to focus on changing the relationships, systems, and social norms that support gender inequality and violence (Jewkes et al., 2015).

### ***VAW Prevention, and Media***

There is a complicated relationship between new media and VAW (Saqib et al., 2023). Digital technology's recent explosion has made it easier for knowledge to spread globally and for people to communicate with one other. This has had both positive and negative effects for women, particularly when it comes to violence. On the one hand, women now have a forum to express their worries about violence and to raise awareness of the problem due to new media (Saqib et al., 2023).

Social media's interactive and visually appealing features help raise awareness and give women useful tools to deal with violence, support activism, and bring about change in their communities (Miller & Demirbilek, 2023). Media outlets ought to actively increase public awareness of the issue and support effective initiatives that address violence (Miller & Demirbilek, 2023). According to Saqib et al. (2023), that social media has a significant impact on women's perceptions of VAW. The media provides sufficient opportunity to exchange information, share the stories of abused women and their experiences, and discuss women's rights, which leads to raising their level of awareness and thus reducing the phenomenon of VAW.

The posting and resharing, likes, and emotional expressions of victims on social media demonstrate awareness and interest in the issue of VAW (ElSherief et al., 2017). Since 2019, people's interest in online reactions to femicide and VAW has increased significantly, particularly among women, which has helped to create sympathetic audiences for this issue (ElSherief et al., 2017). According to Bas et al. (2022), social media is crucial in spreading awareness about VAW. Because there is little coverage of a topic in mainstream media, as there is with femicide and VAW, the media audience in a controlled media environment like Jordan may rely more on social media to share and comment on new information (Bas et al., 2022; Eneizat, et al., 2023c). When there is strong control over collective action in public settings, they might also use social media more (Fileborn, & Loney-Howes, 2020; Eneizat, et al., 2024).

There are conflicting results about the potential of media, including awareness campaigns, to alter public perception of VAW. Evidence that the advent of television has decreased the acceptance of VAW in India is presented by Jensen and Oster (2009). Research from community-based edutainment programmes in Nigeria (Banerjee et al., 2019) and Mexico (Arias, 2019) indicates that media campaigns can change the attitudes of particular subgroups. However, opinions on gender equality and the acceptability of such violence remained largely unchanged, despite education-entertainment campaigns on

the media aimed at demonstrating that VAW is both unlawful and morally repugnant (Green et al., 2016).

There are aspects of raising awareness against women through social media, for example, women can share their experiences with GBV, which raises women's awareness and encourages them to speak out (Bas et al., 2022). The importance of hashtags related to GBV and VAW, such as #MeToo, has increased significantly on social media platforms such as Instagram and X. These campaigns work to raise the voices of abused women and draw others' attention to the seriousness of VAW, its impact on society, and its prevalence (Fileborn, & Loney-Howes, 2020). As well as, social media makes it possible to share useful information, such as facts, resources, and preventative techniques. Women are empowered to take action and advocate for change by having access to knowledge about identifying warning signs of abuse, getting treatment, and supporting survivors (Bas et al., 2022). Also, to increase public knowledge of their projects, activities, and campaigns, advocacy groups and nonprofit organizations use social media. Through active engagement with their followers and the sharing of pertinent content, these organizations foster a sense of community, volunteerism (Duche-Pérez et al., 2023). In addition, to combat VAW, social media can be a potent instrument for promoting legislative reforms and policy improvements. With the use of social media, women may use grassroots movements, protest planning, and policy campaigning to raise awareness and pressure decision-makers to make changes (Bas et al., 2022; Fileborn, & Loney-Howes, 2020). Social media can empower women, and raise awareness by using its potential for reach and engagement. Ultimately, this could help curb rates of violence against women.

### **Social media and women in Jordan**

In January 2023, approximately 9.95 million people in Jordan, or 88% of the population, had internet access, reflecting a 6.8% increase from 2022. These internet users contributed to over half of the Arabic digital content online. Social media usage was strong, with 6.61 million users, representing 66.4% of all internet users, of which 45.4% were female and 54.6% male. Facebook had 4.90 million users (49.2% of the internet user base), although it saw a 6.7% decline from the previous year. X, however, grew by 25.3%, reaching 921.9 thousand users, or 9.3% of the internet user base. YouTube was the most popular platform, with 6.61 million users (66.4%), followed by Instagram with 2.85 million users (28.6%), and TikTok with 4.43 million users aged 18 and above (44.5%). LinkedIn and Snapchat had 1.40 million (14.1%) and 3.25 million (32.7%) users, respectively (Husami, 2024).

## **Materials and Methods**

### **3.1. Participants**

The 13 interviews with a diverse range of service providers, public educators, activists, advocates, writers, and researchers involved in VAW prevention work (also known as "violence against women prevention workers") from Jordan in 2024 provided the data for this article. Based on the author's observations of the participants' online VAW advocacy and education activity, 13 people participated in exploratory interviews in 2024.

For qualitative research, a sample size of at least 13 interview subjects is considered appropriate (Marshall et al., 2013). Even though every respondent had a different viewpoint and background with VAW prevention work, themes about their social media activity were evident. After 13 interviews, new themes had yet to emerge. According to Charmaz (2001), the author came to the conclusion that there was data saturation when "the same themes reoccur, or research participants report similar views and experiences." (p. 405). Additionally, Creswell and Creswell (2005) suggests conducting 5-25 interviews for a grounded theory study and 20-30 interviews for a phenomenological investigation.

Potential participants have to work largely in Jordan and perform VAW work including social media to conduct the interviews. Activists and public educators (n =4), journalists and writers (n = 4), programme directors or directors of anti-violence organizations (n = 2), and researchers and academics (n = 3) were among the interviewees' principal roles. All participants identified that preventing VAW is a crucial aspect of their employment. All participants in this sample were women.

### **Interviews**

One historically significant technique for researching VAW is qualitative interviewing (Fairbairn, 2020; Oakley, 1981). The interview approach for this study was grounded in the feminist methodological principles that gender (and thus, GBV

or VAW), in addition to being an individual attribute, is also a social structure (Fairbairn, 2020). Conceptualizing gender, and VAW, in this manner enables us to understand myths, misrepresentation, and misogyny in social media as more than individual issues (Fairbairn, 2020).

Structured interviews followed a series of fundamental exploratory questions as a guide: (1) could you provide an overview of your VAW-related social media work? (2) Which social media platforms are you most active on? Could you describe the different methods that you use each of them? (3) Could you elaborate on the specifics of prevention in relation to your work with social media? (for example, how you see prevention in this context; is it any different from work done offline?); (4) Could you briefly describe some of the interactions and projects you have taken part in on social media? (A successful or positive example? An illustration of anything bad or ineffective?); (5) If you had the power to alter anything about social media, what would you do to promote VAW prevention?. There were two types of interviews: voice calls (N = 7) and in-person (N = 6). The duration of the interviews varied, ranging from one hour to 35 minutes. With consent, all interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded to find important themes (which will be covered in more detail shortly).

### **Data analysis**

Using a combination of memoing and coding, each interview was transcribed and coded using NVivo qualitative analytic software. Memorising is "the writing of notes and commentaries concerning ideas, patterns, and themes that occur to the researcher in the process of reading and coding data," whereas coding is "the development of concepts and categories in the recognition and ordering of themes" (Babbie, 2002, p. 381). Participants use social media to achieve various goals related to preventing VAW. The research focuses on the data theme of "conversation" to support previous work emphasizing the value of hashtags, posts, and other anti-violence support for online conversation-based actions (Fairbairn, 2020; Mendes et al., 2018; Lokot, 2018).

To ensure that interpretations and structuring of the interview findings remained rooted in the words of the participants, the author regularly consulted the coded interview data while compiling the results. However, because they are the storyteller and are writing a document that is "structured primarily by a researcher's purposes, offering a researcher's interpretations registered in a researcher's voice" (Stacey, 1988, p. 114), the researcher has a great deal of power during the data analysis stage (Letherby, 2003). The study uses participant descriptions and illustrations of research findings to reduce this power (Opie, 1992).

## **Finding and Discussion**

### **Finding**

One of the main objectives for participants is to increase the number of conversations around VAW and draw attention to its prevalence. Some see social media as a forum for igniting a public discussion about a subject that has traditionally been a private one. As an illustration, an NGO director claims that

*Social media platforms can be helpful tools in breaking the stigma and silence that accompany VAW. In the past, VAW has been cloaked in secrecy, which has left survivors without clarification or support, we're discussing subjects that rarely conversation-stoppers.*

Participants feel that social media can effectively advance difficult debates regarding VAW and bring feminist advocacy and research into spaces where these topics may not be well known. An NGO advocate, for instance, outlines how social media may assist in bringing stories and conversations into the public vision:

This work is done in two steps: first, videos and hashtags with content designed to increase awareness about VAW are made and shared on social media, which then offers an opportunity for further discussion of the concerns brought up. As one participant notes, in addition to interacting with the public, this social media content allows participants to interact with organizations that share their values and work together to increase awareness:

*I believe that by following specific hashtags on Facebook and X, I may connect with people who are actively involved in these causes and who work as activists, communicators, or both. In my opinion, X is one of the best platforms for defending women's rights, but raising this issue on Facebook is also very important due to its widespread use in Jordan.*

As one participant put it, social media connections allow people and organizations to collaborate to "signal-boost"—

that is, like and share—each other's content to generate momentum for their activity. The majority of participants operate both in-person and virtually, and they utilize social media to accomplish particular objectives like raising awareness of VAW. Put another way, VAW prevention via social media enhances rather than replaces other modes of prevention. For instance, a writer and activist describe how hashtag activism is an additional tool for VAW prevention rather than a replacement:

*I know people underestimate the value of hashtag activism, but I hardly know anyone who just does hashtag activism. I don't think individuals often perform hashtag activism and then decide they don't need to care about this anymore because the majority of the people and activists I know that work to stop VAW also engage in other activities. I know the importance of campaigns on social media, but other activities that help reduce this phenomenon cannot be neglected.*

Gaining widespread acceptance among the public that VAW is a social problem is a crucial first step in efforts to avoid VAW. According to participants, raising awareness usually means persuading audiences outside of the VAW sector and the general public to view VAW as a social issue that has to be taken seriously and that action needs to be taken to stop it from happening. Sometimes, participants want to elicit an emotional reaction from VAW. As an illustration, one writer and campaigner explain how they are attempting to overcome societal indifference towards VAW:

*I want VAW to be something that concerns all people and for it to become an issue that terrifies everyone because it has serious effects on society, but it is so common that it is not even recorded. People are not interested in that. This phenomenon is culturally acceptable among members of society. At times, we find ourselves offended by the treatment of women in other nations, but we fail to examine our own behaviour. I am aware that getting VAW recognized as a serious social issue is a critical first step toward preventing it.*

According to some of the participants, social media helps spread awareness by allowing survivors to relate their experiences of being subjected to abuse. This is because those with personal experience have a greater emotional influence. As one of the writers and activists' states below, for instance:

*I think free media should be used to share stories. From this angle, I think that the Internet is significantly contributing to the decline of violence in general and GBV in particular. Because it allows women to escape the social isolation to which they have always been exposed and to share their stories, which makes the people around them more sympathetic to them and thus supports them in combatting violence.*

For some, increased awareness of VAW in traditional and social media news outlets is a sign of success. One advocate and educator, for instance, who has spent many years working in VAW prevention notes that there are increasing discussions about VAW in local media:

*Sure. Growing media coverage in traditional and social media channels might be interpreted as a sign of progress in the fight against VAW. Increased attention to VAW can help it reach a wider audience that may not have known about the effect and prevalence of the problem. In addition to promoting better public understanding, this may also cultivate a culture of compassion and support for survivors.*

### **Changing Social Norms**

It is necessary to alter social norms, attitudes, and excuses for VAW in order to prevent it (Johnson & Dawson, 2010). The absence of a more comprehensive background, misogyny, and other deeply held notions regarding VAW (such as the notion that women always lie about sexual assault) are examples of detrimental narratives surrounding VAW. Participants clarify that attempts to raise awareness of VAW as a social issue through public education are frequently greeted with

societal rejection and a general lack of interest or belief. One human rights advocate, for instance, puts it this way when describing how she uses VAW on social media:

*I think the most important thing is to increase people's awareness of this issue. Some campaigns may face criticism, but as we repeat these activities and campaigns, we will have better support. We are not trying to minimize the negative effects of violence, it is important to draw attention to this issue. This is still a problem. Yes, this is a global problem that affects all people.*

Social media prevention efforts explicitly address negative preconceptions about VAW and emphasise the gendered aspect of intimate relationship abuse. As one participant says, I believe there are a lot of potential for social norms to change through discourse. In my opinion, social media is the ideal platform for modifying societal standards. According to one of the participants, social media's speed and reach allow it to be a great tool for prevention efforts while also having the capacity to spread stories about VAW:

*In my opinion, social media can be a powerful instrument for worthy, but it can also be abused to spread false narratives, despite its rapid pace. Information can spread quickly and widely, but this can also have a negative effect by spreading false information and biased viewpoints that could reinforce negative perceptions regarding VAW. On the other hand, proponents may swiftly refute these falsehoods with factual data and a range of viewpoints thanks to the same speed and accessibility.*

Effectively discussing risk factors at the community and societal levels (such as gender socialization and social norms around women's sexuality) is one of the challenges of social media conversations. It is especially challenging to introduce this intricacy and nuance in a setting where users' attention spans and available content may be limited. One advocate and public educator provides an example of how crucial it is to educate people about abusive behaviors and bystander intervention:

*Our online outreach primarily focuses on raising awareness and educating the public about the culture of VAW. It also aims to help people understand that their comments can reinforce the VAW, or that the behavior they have witnessed, experienced, or even committed themselves, is unacceptable.*

*Indeed. Social media's inherent constraints make it particularly difficult to have conversations regarding VAW there. These problems include Limited time for thoughtful debate and short attention spans.*

While several volunteers are employed by frontline support organizations, the majority of the activity on social media is targeted at potential offenders and larger audiences, with many women receiving one-on-one assistance. One supporter, for instance, claims:

*You are correct in recognizing that the majority of the outreach and counseling we do for women is done in person, especially when it comes to having direct contact with women who are experiencing difficulties. Social media, however, cannot be disregarded because more content is oriented toward the public at large online, particularly in the area of prevention and news distribution regarding the gravity and consequences of VAW.*

Through educating individuals in a setting that is publicly accessible and shareable, participants hope to modify attitudes and beliefs (risk factors at the individual level) as well as social norms (risk factors at the community and societal levels) over time. An activist and researcher clarify that she intends to utilize social media to expose victim-blaming discourse in both her local community and the media at large:

*Many anti-violence campaigns remain extremely poor and mostly concentrate on the behaviour of women. Many of them, I believe, still make statements that blame women or imply that they must occasionally put up with violence in order to survive.*

### Challenges

Even while social media presents more opportunities for VAW prevention, organizations that are already struggling with resources may miss out on these opportunities or face further burdens if they lack the necessary resources and social media experience. Even while a lot of people are using social media to advocate for VAW prevention on a personal level, they frequently do so at a high time and energy cost. Many participants shared stories of being subjected to abuse and harassment online as a result of their social media activity preventing VAWs. Some participants discuss how their work has made them the focus of internet hate campaigns, while others discuss their worries of experiencing such abuse. One writer and activist, for instance, described her experiences in the following way:

*There are a lot of bad things that happened to me. Someone said to me on Facebook: You are exaggerating a lot and you are seeking to destroy society, and I hope you fail in your plan. So I was afraid after I heard that. . . Another time, a person said on X: I was harassed because of my image and the way I dressed by an anonymous person who described me with bad and obscene words. Some of the comments were that someone was supposed to rape me, some of them were arrogant and they did not wish to hit me, and some of them described me as ugly.*

Many participants believe it is crucial to get involved in these online debates because they see the news media as a platform that often undermines VAW prevention goals. This can be done in public due to social media; one way to do this is to tweet the news outlet that published a victim-blaming headline (Gilmore, 2019). Social media seeks to provide a VAW perspective to existing discussions on hot-button issues and current affairs. One public educator and advocate, for instance, notes that social media is a crucial instrument for filling in the gaps in feminist interpretation of recent news stories:

*I think that most traditional media do not support or discuss the phenomenon of VAW to some extent, because this problem is very sensitive in our society... Some media places blame on the victims instead of the perpetrators of mistakes. So now social media has become very important to acknowledge this problem first and then discuss it with others.*

Social media is one of the most important platforms where general issues in society are discussed, especially VAW. Where the company receives information about the victims and the problems they face. One of the active participants described it as follows

*Our work is summarized in the platform (Instagram, X, Facebook, TikTok, Web, Telegram) as one of the most influential social media pages on public opinion in Jordan. Through it, we seek to write articles, critical analyses, research papers, and public opinion issues in an objective manner that takes into account the privacy of the victims, ensuring that the necessary support is provided to them, and community awareness about women's rights and humanity in particular, and human rights in particular.*

An activist also described that all platforms are important, but they prefer to share information and photos through Instagram which is most important platform among women:

*In my opinion, Instagram is one of the most used platforms. So we are most active on the Instagram platform, followed by X. We use Instagram to raise issues of public opinion as well as to publish awareness posts about the status of women. It is our platform that victims resort to most to seek help, while we have dedicated X to raising hashtags only in order to mobilize the largest possible number of sympathizers with the victim's cause.*

Social networking sites have provided a great opportunity for abused women to express their opinions through social networking and sharing important hashtags. One of the activists referred to this as follows:

*I believe, from my own experience, that digital activity on various social media sites has provided male and female activists with freer spaces for expression. It also provided the opportunity for absent voices to emerge, the most important of which are the voices of "home detainees," those women and girls who were prevented from appearing from their homes except for having voices in their communities, until today, thanks to social networking sites, they constitute the largest percentage of feminist and human rights activists across the world, and this Society was forced to confront the spotlight on a new kind of their oppression of women.*

There are some interactions and projects in which some women activists participated on social media. For example, one of the participants referred to an issue that was of concern to women. This issue was discussed through social media and



was greatly welcomed by the local community:

*Of course, approximately 3 years ago, we led two simultaneous campaigns against the inability of mothers to issue passports to their children, as well as against returning migrant girls to their families if they did not agree to their travel. Indeed, a circular was issued allowing mothers (provided that no separation occurred) to issue passports to their children, as no We then receive cases that talk about preventing girls from traveling and sending them back.*

### **Discussion**

Social media is a vital platform for a variety of activities and events aimed at preventing violence, such as bringing attention to the issue of VAW, which affects both society and the individual. In this study, we observe how these activities are evolving and spreading across multiple social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, and X, to take advantage of the chances to influence conversations regarding VAW and disseminate the most notable stories affecting women in Jordan. One such opportunity is through mobilization around trending hashtags and important stories. The speed and reach of talks on social media are one of its advantages and unique features. Furthermore, rather of occurring in person, stories, critiques, and comments are accessible and shareable with an audience that can number in the hundreds of millions. It is, therefore, more important than ever to step in and correct falsehoods and misrepresentations in these social settings, especially when they emanate from influential organizations and community leaders like the media, police, and politicians. VAW prevention workers are leveraging culture to alter culture. This is consistent with more modern preventative strategies that seek to alter relationships and social norms that encourage VAW (Jewkes et al., 2015). This change acknowledges that institutions, organizations, and communities are all involved in VAW and must play a part in putting an end to it.

These efforts are based on the understanding that: (1) social media content, such as news reports and online discussions, influences people's attitudes and beliefs, which may either support or oppose VAW; and (2) false, dramatic, stereotyped, and victim-blaming content is a type of harm in and of itself that calls for intervention from others. By incorporating this work into our definition of bystander intervention, we can appreciate it and recognize the potential involvement of news media outlets and social media platforms as complicit community members.

VAW prevention professionals specifically strive to intervene and reframe victim-blaming narratives from individuals and organizations (e.g., politicians, police, college campus reps, media sources). Using social media to challenge messaging is especially crucial for influential organizations like the news media, which are crucial for influencing policy discussions, reiterating social norms around VAW, and educating the public about VAW (Welch et al., 1997; Sutherland et al., 2016).

Even though these online settings might be viewed as lower-risk, many people who try to prevent VAW face resource-related difficulties and become the focus of gendered and sexualized violence as a result of their public service. These results corroborate studies showing how feminists are frequently abused online and how this abuse can be understood as a type of VAW, as well as how bystanders should be valued and protected in preventative efforts. Further efforts are required to support and develop this work as part of larger goals to build community and societal responses to violence, as opposed to silos off offline and online activities.

### **Recommendations**

After identifying the primary themes, Jordanian media experts and stakeholders were given strategic recommendations. First, there is an urgent need for increased education, particularly on how to use social media to discuss and ultimately lessen major societal issues. Organizations should encourage discussion and sharing of information related to VAW, and even raise awareness of the risks of violence in general within the local community about VAW.

### **Future research**

Future research in this field ought to focus on particular subjects that have previously been introduced via thematic analysis. Research on specifics of the issues surrounding VAW, solutions to the problem, and the moral implications of social media use are advancements that contribute to a more thorough understanding of the topic. Longitudinal studies that follow the evolution of social media use in Jordan to raise awareness of VAW. Through taking into account the viewpoints of many stakeholders, such as the general public and policy makers, the complex societal effects of social media platforms can be more vividly depicted. Furthermore, empirical research incorporating global studies would give us helpful standards

for best practices and particular viewpoints. Ongoing research on increasing public knowledge of new forms of VAW must continue to be relevant. As a result, policy research in Jordan needs to keep up with international developments, face new obstacles, and take ever-changing chances.

### Conclusion

In general, this study aims to counter the extent to which social media plays a role in increasing public awareness of VAW, which in turn advances understanding and discourse regarding the issue of this phenomena. Social media websites are now powerful tools in the battle against this kind of violence, providing avenues for advocacy, support, and awareness-building. Violence against gender is the complexity of the issue in societies especially in Jordan. The study indicates the importance of social media in preventing VAW by disseminating information and supporting women in society. It also pointed to the need for continuous electronic campaigns and the interest of formal and informal organizations in combating VAW and spreading awareness to all members of society. Some common social norms appear to support GBV, so this problem is very complex and therefore requires continuous campaigns to reduce it.

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