



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office

eLab
Data-driven Democracy

DEMOCRACY
REPORTING
INTERNATIONAL

MARCH
2022

“FIRMER GROUND FOR ADVANCING WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN LIBYA (FG4W)“

**SOCIAL MEDIA MONITORING
REPORT**

This publication was produced by eLab, with the financial support of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and the technical support of Democracy Reporting International. Its contents are the sole responsibility of eLab and do not necessarily reflect the views of FCDO or DRI.

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Introduction

The democratic political transition in Libya continues to face several obstacles. The first is the postponement of the presidential and parliamentary elections. Second, is the lack of solid institutions to support rights and freedoms. Finally, the difficult security situation and the presence of insurgent militias constitute threats to internal and regional stability.

Additionally, Libyan women are underrepresented in public and political areas. The political scene is essentially reserved for men: in the June 2014 elections, only 20 women were elected to the House of Representatives out of 188 and only five women ministers were appointed to the 35-member Government of National Unity in 2021. On 1 March 2022, Libya's parliament approved a new government of 35 ministers led by Fathi Bashagha, despite the outgoing government's announcement that it would hand over power only after elections. This new government includes just two women.

Women in post-conflict Libya face discrimination and systematic violence, including sexual violence. Several prominent politicians and activists have been threatened, abducted and even killed. Lawyer Hanan Al Barassi, an outspoken voice on social media, was shot in broad daylight in the streets of Benghazi in November 2020. Two and a half years after her abduction from her house in Benghazi, House Representative member Sihem Sergiwa remains missing, while in January of this year there was an assassination attempt against Libyan minister of Justice Halima Al Busifi in Tripoli. There is no official data or information that any perpetrator were brought to account for these crimes.

This lack of accountability towards preparators of violent crimes against women affects women's participation in elections and in public life. The lack of a justice framework to tackle violence against women does not offer a safe environment for women to participate politically. One of the most repeated forms of hate speech detected in our research for this report was "I hope you end up like Sihem Sergiwa". This shows how enforced disappearance is used to threaten Libyan women online to prevent them from fully participating in political life. Violence against women online in Libya is not just a reflection of its offline version but can become an incitement to it.

Many women politicians in Libya face a gendered hate speech narrative and are the subject of online misogynist conversations that are often framed in a religious context. A typical example is the first Libyan woman to be appointed as Minister of Foreign Affairs, Najla Mohammed El Mangoush, who received various online criticism and threats over her clothing choices.¹

With the aim of maintaining freedom of expression and speech, social media companies offer limited protection to "public" figures who report unfavourable comments. While Facebook and Twitter have specific rules for removing identified attacks on public figures, this still excludes content intended to "degrade or humiliate." This means that gender-based comments may not be adequately considered. In addition, social media companies are slow to respond when there is specific harassment towards women leaders.²

1- Al Hadath, "8 June 2021 التركي نظيرها لقائها خلال زيارة وزيرة ملابس حول جدل", اطلاعات-وزيرة-خارجية-ليبيا-في-تركيا-تشير-جدلاً <<https://www.alhadath.net/maghreb/2021/06/08/>>

2- Meta, "The challenge of detecting hate speech" 19 January 2022. <<https://transparency.fb.com/en-gb/enforcement/detecting-violations/challenge-of-detecting-hate-speech/>>

Social media platforms allow users to abuse one another from a distance verbally; the barrier of anonymity allows individuals to make sexist comments with few public consequences. It may be difficult or impossible to track down the source of an anonymous online attack.

Such harassment and hate speech may negatively influence an individual's mental health, capability to continue expressing women's voices as a public leader, and decision to participate in public life. As Libyan political activist Abeir Imneina noted: "The impact is significant, as many women prefer to withdraw from public space due to the attempts to undermine, defame and slander them, not to mention death threats.³

This report, built on social media research conducted during the period of December to March 2022, aims to:

- Explore gender-based harassment against women with a public profile in the online sphere in Libya
- Envisage an approach to overcome the issue.

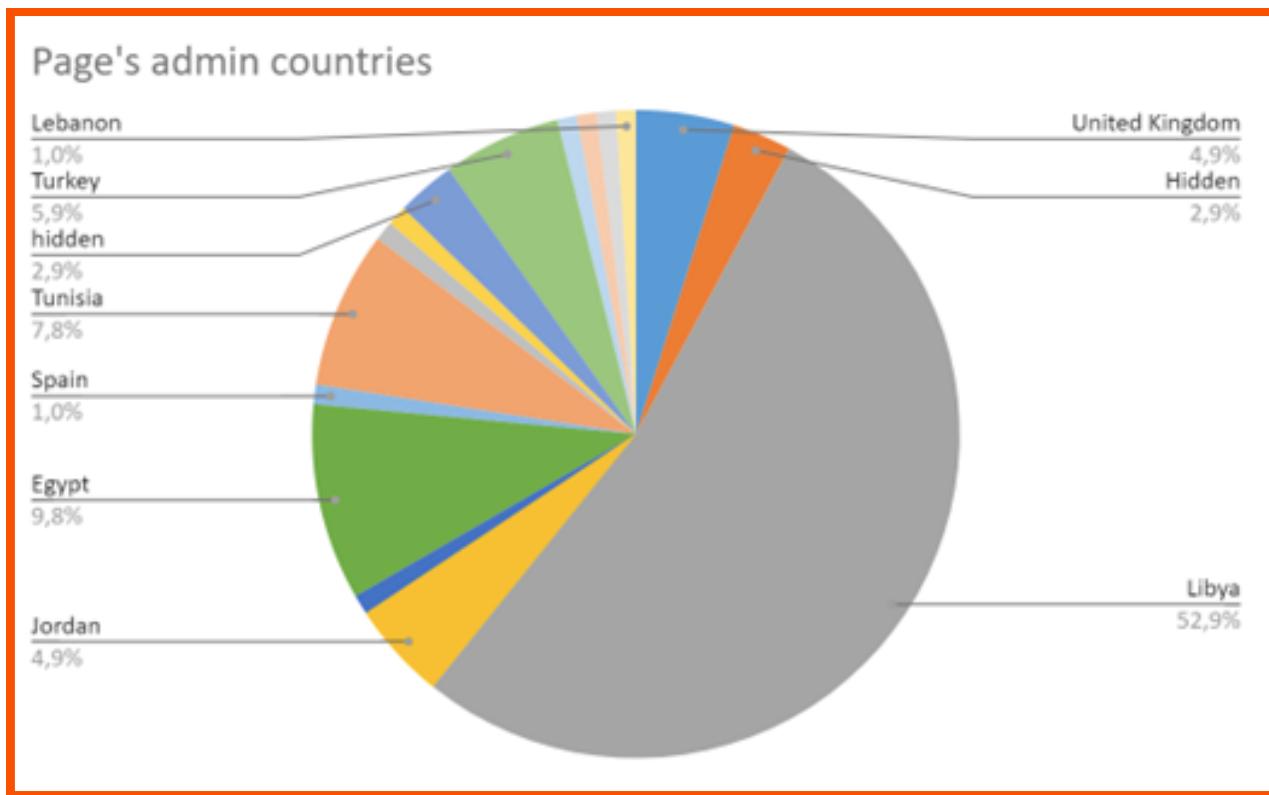
3- Lawyers for Justice in Libya, "Urgent Action needed to address the shocking levels of online violence against Libyan women" 10 March 2021.
<<https://www.libyanjustice.org/news/urgent-action-needed-to-address-shocking-levels-of-online-violence-against-libyan-women>>

II Social media monitoring

1- Project Scope

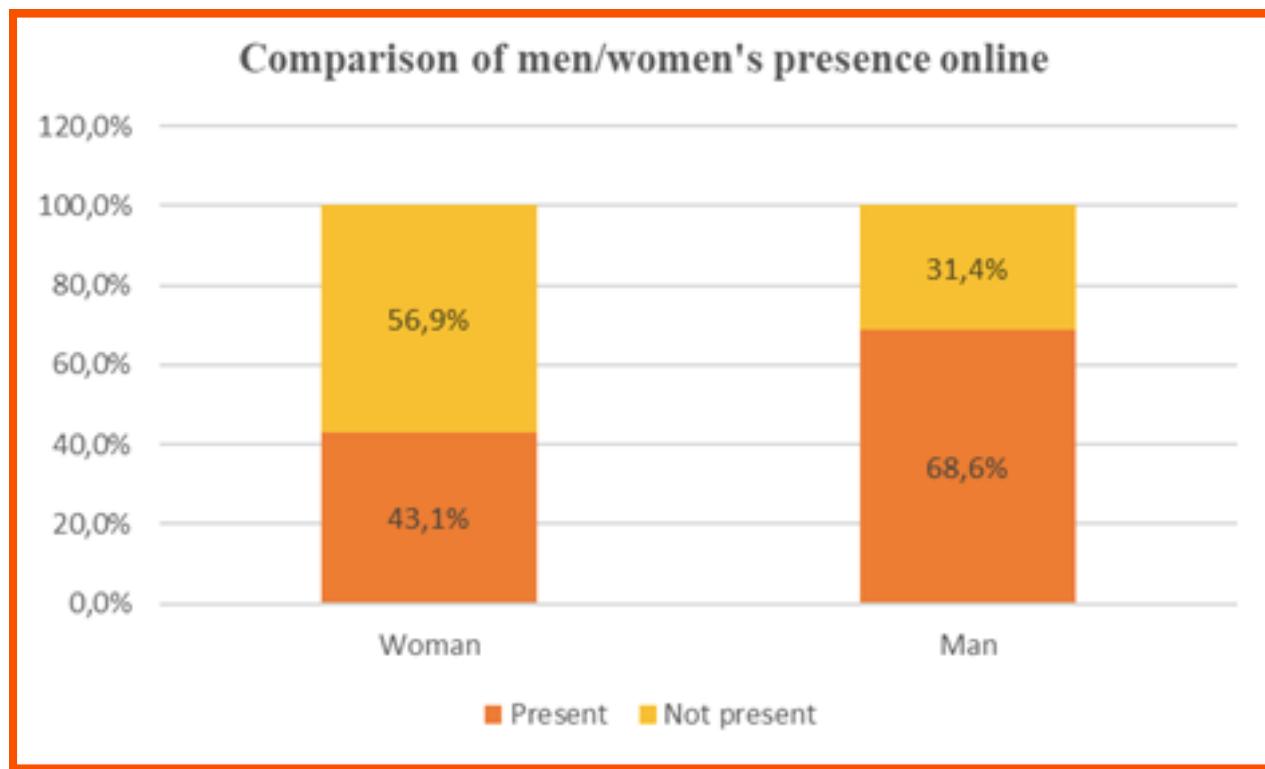
The research began with an initial observation of the behaviour of the hate speech propagators that target women active in political affairs in Libya.

1.A large number of Libyan social media outlets of the collected sample are managed by administrators registered as being based outside of Libya. They operate mainly from Jordan, Egypt, the United Kingdom, Turkey and Tunisia. In addition, many administrators have hidden their locations, whether inside or outside of Libya. Among the 71 general political pages followed under the initial observation, 32 are operated partially or completely outside of Libya.



Graph 1: Page's admin countries sample of 71 pages

2. Female public figures are much less present online than their male counterparts: Only 43% of the 51 women activists surveyed have Facebook Pages or Twitter accounts. This is to be compared with 69% of the 51 male political activists surveyed. As women are underrepresented online, their voices and expertise become less visible. This may provide space for propagating abuse and harassment against them. When women's perspectives are not adequately represented in the media and are referenced as experts less frequently, women politicians' credibility and capacity to shape political narratives diminish. This needs to be further researched.



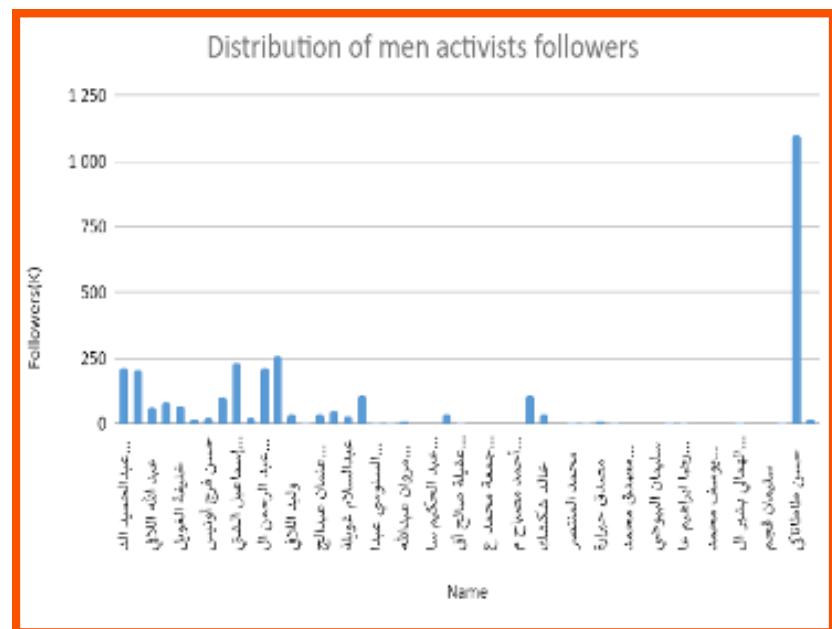
**Graph 2: Comparison of men/women's presence online
(Facebook & Twitter)**

It is difficult to verify the actual ownership of social media accounts that bear women's names. Only two female political activists from the sample have verified Twitter accounts, whereas half of the male political activists have verified accounts.

3. Women activists seem to have a much smaller online audience than their male counterparts. Of the 51 women activists surveyed that had a public account, only five have more than 20,000 followers. To put this in perspective, 13 accounts of male activists surveyed have between 50,000 and 280,000 followers.



Graph 3: Distribution of women activists' followers



Graph 4 : Distribution of men activists' followers

Women face online harassment on social media based on different attitudes and narratives that vary from their clothing choices, personal life and social position (especially motherhood). These forms of harassment adopt traditional and religious speech and manipulate it to attack women online. Here we find the most frequent lexicon of hate speech is based primarily on words such as “prayers”, “home”, “kitchen” and “children” as well as many intense religious concepts like “disobedience”, “cursing” and “punishment”. We also notice death threats through a lexicon of death and violence, such as wishing death in gloating terms and incitement to assassinate, also calling women names such as “demon”, “witch” or animals (“chameleon”, “pig”). In comparison, the hate narratives observed toward male targets are mainly based on their political background or professional duties, and the vocabulary is less intense and based on ironic disapproval and negative descriptions such as “thief”, “corrupt” and “traitorous”.

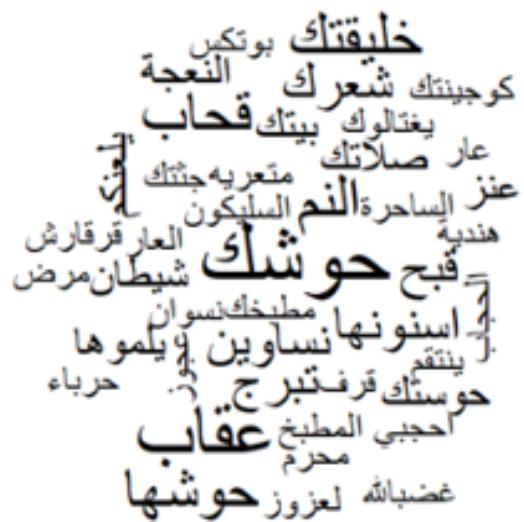


Figure 1: Word cloud of negative words mentioned in the initial collection



Figure 2: Hate speech based on political orientation and background



Figure 3: Religious-based hate speech

This observation phase allowed us to determine the scope as follows:

- Facebook public pages and Twitter accounts that share political content and mention at least one of the women political activists followed under this research⁴, as well as their own Facebook pages and Twitter accounts. We chose these two social networks as they are the most common social media platforms in Libya according to the number of their users. Facebook had 5.45 million users in Libya in early 2022 and Twitter, reported 489,200 users.⁵ The data collection focused on the textual content in Facebook posts and comments and tweets. Some video or image content targeting women actors was also analysed but this visual content was treated independently of the quantitative analysis of the texts

4- Prominent women who held political or government positions during the last year were selected as key names for the research.

5- Simon Kemp, "Digital 2022: Libya", Datareportal, February 2022, <<https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2022-libya>

- The data was collected between 1 December 2021 and 15 March 2022.
- For comparison purposes, the research also followed 17 male activists⁶ over the same period.

2- Methodology

Online harassment is a form of gender-based violence and hate speech targeting women.

According to DRI's Gender and Social Media research⁷, women politicians experience several types of gender-based harassment online, including;

- Indirect harassment (i.e. stereotypes and suggesting women are inferior).
- Information threat (i.e. threats that information will be stolen, revealed, or misused).
- Sexual harassment (i.e. insulting words of anger, violence, or sex).
- Physical harassment (i.e. threats based on female biology).

To track harassment against women in the public sphere on social media, we used a quantitative approach. The main aim of this analysis was to first outline the features, behaviours, and attitudes of the targeted hate speech and the hate speech perpetrators, and then, to understand the different forms and trends of hate speech.

To begin, a mapping of social media actors was developed using several criteria:

- Pages with political content, spreading hateful messages, and targeting political activists;
- Pages with public affairs content, with higher interactions; and
- Official political groups and Libyan political figures

6- Prominent men who are most exposed to the media.>

7- Democracy Reporting International, "Gender and Social Media: Measuring Underrepresentation and Harassment Online", March 2020

<https://digitalmonitor.democracy-reporting.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Final_IWD-Publication.pdf?msclkid=8fdc0cdead1811ec9fca7e6c36de4ed5>

3- Data collection

Two approaches to collecting relevant information were used:

- 1. Monitoring content related to politically active women:** As a first step, we identified the social media outlets that share political content related to women activists.
- 2. Monitoring political discussion:** Any other pages creating political content in Libya in the timeframe of the project, are within the monitoring scope, especially those containing discourse related to women in posts.

The eLab team, with the support of DRI, gathered posts and comments published on 1,667 pages between 1 December 2021 and 15 March 2022.

The data collection process was carried out using Facebook's CrowdTangle tool and other platforms to collect Facebook posts and comments. Twitter API was used for extracting tweets and replies.

The focus was on two categories of social media content:

- Comments and tweets on political content published by targeted pages, as well as any Facebook postings; and
- Tweets mentioning selected women political leaders and activists, as well as reactions to this content.

The textual content was processed automatically to detect hate-speech messages, feeding into the analysis phase to learn from the intensity of hate messages, identify intersections between hate patterns and political events, and track the behaviours of those involved in hate speech. Building a linguistic reference to hate speech was a vital methodological pillar for textual analysis at a later stage.

a. Hate speech detection:

Speech on social media has many layers. For one thing, words can be obfuscated in various ways, both intentionally to avoid automatic content moderation and as a result of the fact that social media users rely widely on hints and jokes to communicate.

A lexicon-based technique is a simple strategy for identifying hate speech. Text that contains potentially hostile terms is recognised using a dictionary. A database of disparaging phrases is developed.

Our task started with a collection of the most repetitive hate narratives from women activists social media accounts, which enabled us to build a Libyan lexicon of sentiment expressions, and semantic hate phrases used as features extractors. Next, we built a machine-learning classifier to detect hate speech based on labelled classifiers.

b. Lexicon for hate speech:

This approach starts with a small list of negative expressions containing more than 800 words and compound words to expand the hate dictionary with hate verbs, comparison verbs and adverbs, hate adjectives, metaphors and swear words.

In our lexicon-based approach, hate speech was classified into six forms. The first category is metaphors and comparisons that identify others as deadly animals, things, disease, filth, zombies, or demons. This dehumanizing metaphor-family evokes hostility, disdain, loathing, physical disgust, and bodily fear in people. These metaphors are categorised into two types; single words ("زومبي", "حياة", "غوله") and compound words ("وجوه النحس", "حالة العلمانية", "قشاره البصل"). In the political realm, such metaphors encourage people to see their fellow human beings who belong to a particular group as obnoxious, disease-carrying, and bloodthirsty creatures that should be removed or isolated from the community.

The second category is verbs and adverbs of comparison. These words are used in comparison forms like "كيف" "أشباه" "تشبهه" "تقول" "زي" "شكلها" meaning "looks, look like, has the shape of, smells like".

The third category is hate verbs, which are single words that can be threatening like: "اغتصب" "قتل" "خطف" "حرق" meaning "avenge, rape, kill, kidnap, burn".

The four category is negative adjectives, which are also single words structured holding intense hate meanings like: "جاهلة" "شلافطية" "كركوبية" meaning "ugly, greedy, unpleasant, nasty, gross, thieving, dirty"

Verbs + complements are also used in hate speech and are compound structured nouns, such as: "يقسم إلزامي بيتك", "تربي صغارك", "تزدادي حقاره", "يتحطى في الحبس", "تأكل راسك", "عطك موووت ظهرك", meaning: wish you die, eats your head, put you in jail, break your back, you get meaner, you should keep to raising your kids, you should stay at home"

The final category is **hate with swear words**, like: "أعوذ بالله من وجهها", "الله لا تربحك", "قبح الله وجهه", "انشاء الله تموتي", These are also compound words and sometimes structured phrases which are a socially offensive use of language and may also be called cursing or expletives. Accordingly, swearing is a language that is sometimes deemed impolite, rude, or culturally offensive; in certain religions, it is considered a sin.

Many semantic hate expressions aren't inherently offensive, but they promote specific socio-cultural norms or gender stereotypes. These expressions can have different intensities depending on their use.

These are presented in a composition of **verbs + additions** in our case. The verbs independently have no offensive meaning and same for the additions, but when they are concatenated, they implicitly create a hate meaning. For instance, the verb “ضمي” and the addition “كوجينتك” together means “you have to stay at your kitchen”, which contains a misogynistic hate meaning.

To accurately annotate the data, a group of annotators took charge of preparing the previously collected dataset. We adopted a **scoring axiom for assigning intensity scores to narratives by attributing colours from green to black**.

In the final step, this data set was used to pre-train a Natural Language Processing (**NLP**) algorithm that predicts and classifies hate speech narratives.

c.Hate speech classification:

The hate narratives spread against women on Libyan social media outlets drive the research to determine **two criteria of hate speech classification**.

The **first criterion** is based on the intensity of speech, and the **second criterion** shows **categories of negative speech based on sexism**.

Variations in the intensity of hate speech can be distinguished. We introduced a six-point hate speech intensity scale. They are presented in the table below. It shows a colour, a number, a title, and a description for each point on the scale:

Number	Label	Description
1	Disagreement	Disagreeing with the idea, the belief/ trying to change the view
2	Negative character	Non-violent characterisation and insults.
3	Dehumanisation and demonisation	Subhuman and superhuman characteristics
4	Slander and defamation	A false, spoken statement about someone which damages that person's reputation
5	Discrimination	The practice of unfairly treating different categories of people on the grounds of ethnicity, gender, race, religion, and sexual orientation.
6	Violenceand incitement	Incite to inflict physical harm, including by using metaphor

Table 1: Intensity scale of hate speech

1. The basic level presents statements of disagreement, such as rejecting or trying to persuade and change a position. This negative speech deals more with ideas rather than actions.
2. The next level refers to non-violent negative characterisation/actions or insults, including non-violent negative metaphors. This category can be moved to level 6 if the context refers to violence.

3. The third level refers to dehumanisation and demonisation. Dehumanisation presents people as sub-human entities considered inferior such as goats, rats, and monkeys. Demonisation involves portraying someone as superhuman, such as a monster, devil or even diseases like cancer. Demonisation/dehumanisation is a particularly extreme type of negative characterisation.
4. Slander and defamation occur when a statement questioning integrity or honesty is presented as fact, causing injury or damage to the individual's character.
5. Discrimination is treating a person or particular group of people differently, especially in a worse way than the way in which other people are treated, because of their skin colour, sex, sexuality, origins, religion, etc.
6. Violence and incitement represent the worst form of hate speech, as they refer to literal or metaphorical inciting to violence and killing, which can certainly increase hate and support for violence.

The hate narratives are divided into five categories based on sexism. The table below clearly explains each category with a description:

Category	Description	Examples
Not Sexist	No implicit or explicitly gendered harassment or threat.	إن شاء الله تموتي
Indirect Harassment	Stereotypical or traditional beliefs about the role of women.	كوجينتك
	Inferiority of women in comparison to men.	ماعاش فيها رجال
	Indirectly sexist without swear words.	والله ما تصليحي لشي

Category	Description	Examples
Information Threat	Threats to women that information will be stolen.	None found
	Threats to women that information will be revealed.	
	Threats to women that information will be misused.	
Sexual Harassment	Containing insulting words, name-calling, words of anger or violence.	Several ones found, example below: - عاهرات متبرجات لعلكن الله
	Force toward sex.	
Physical Harassment	Threats based on female biology/beauty.	Several ones found, examples below: - الوليه هذى متتجوزه والله لا خلونا انشوفوله عرييس عشان تسكت وتغم على الموضوع - شي عطيتى باش وصلتى للمنصب هذا
	Considering women as sex objects.	
	Implying a sense of ignorance or lack of attractiveness of women.	
	Implying physical or mental inability of women.	
	Using humour to describe the female body.	

Table 2: Gender and social media: Mapping Online Harassment: Classification of Sexist Messages⁸ [ANNEX 2]

8- Sima Sharifirad and Stan Matwin, "When a Tweet is Actually Sexist. A more Comprehensive Classification of Different Online Harassment Categories and The Challenges in NLP", Arxiv, February 2019
[<https://arxiv.org/ftp/arxiv/papers/1902/1902.10584.pdf>](https://arxiv.org/ftp/arxiv/papers/1902/1902.10584.pdf)

4- Challenges and limitations

- Online automated hate speech detection and classification in-text systems are necessary to capture the amplitude and spread of the phenomenon of harassment against women online. However, even a very detailed lexicon may lose language nuances and variances in definitions of what constitutes abusive speech in the Libyan environment and needs frequent updating. Time and data availability placed also constraints for training and testing algorithms. The lack of scientific references and open-source projects to detect hate speech in Arabic, and particularly in Arabic dialects, meant that we could not rely on pre-existing work.
- This challenge calls for more accurate techniques to be developed to further detect and verify texts and expressions that can carry hateful meanings.
- Another limitation is that the research focused on text. On Libyan social networks, harassment can also be conveyed through pictures or memes, which was not captured here.

Data processing approach

1- Data-flow management

The most crucial goal of the data cleaning phase is to place collected data from all data-sources into a data structure ready to pass the data analysis stage. Also, data must go through a qualification and standardisation process.

Unique Id	Source ID	Date	Source	Type	Text	Mentioned	Hate	Hate Category	Hate intensity
1954402 7049449 2_0x0	1954402 7049449 2	2022-01-28 18:11:13 GMT+01:00	Facebook	Post	تعرضت وزير العدل حليمة ابراهيم البوسيفي لمحاولة اغتيال فاشلة في طريق السوانى . محاولة الاغتيال الفاشلة اكبر دليل على ان حليمة ليست من المنظومة الفاسدة	[حليمة البوسيفي]			To be determined

Table 3: The Standard data structure

Data Ethics Note:

To ensure the protection of the identity of social media users. We do not store or analyse any information that can be used to identify and classify the author of the comment.

2- Data analysis

Based on the lexicon's keywords collected during the initial observation and the methodological approach to hate-speech detection (III.3.a), we labelled all textual content gathered from Facebook and Twitter either as "hate speech" or "not hate speech" and classified them by Intensity (Table1) and Category (Table2).

Unique Id	Source ID	Date	Source	Type	Text	Mentioned	Hate	Hate Category	Hate intensity
19544 02704 94492_0x0	1954402 7049449 2	2022-01-28 18:11:13 GMT+01:00	Facebook	Post	تعرضت وزیر العدل حلیمة ابراهیم البوسیفی لمحاولة اغتیال فاشلة فی طريق السوانی . محاولة الاغتیال الفاشلة اکبر دلیل على ان حلیمة ليست من المنظومة الفاسدة	[حلیمة البوسیفی]	0	None	None

Table 4: Processed-data structure

Machine learning approach: Hate speech can morph into many different shapes depending on the context, which makes it hard to detect and classify. So, the use of an intelligent system – such as NLP technologies – is necessary.

Natural language processing (NLP) converts human words into numbers and vectors understandable by the machine. This process uses data cleaning, removing stop words; tokenisation; the implementation of term frequency, which weights words depending on their importance; and lemmatisation, to stem or take the root of words.

IV

Findings

- 21.36% of the monitored pages (from 1,667 pages on Facebook) are mainly operated by admins outside Libya. Below is the list of countries where admins from outside Libya are based.

TOP	Page Admin Top Country ⁹	Number of Facebook Pages	%
1	LIBYA	1311	78.64%
2	Hidden	126	7.56%
3	EGYPT	67	4.02%
4	TUNIS	40	2.40%
5	TURKEY	30	1.80%
6	UNITED KINGDOM	13	0.78%

Table 5: Six Top Admin Countries

- 28.85 % of the pages referencing women political activists are operated from outside Libya, out of 9,450 postings.

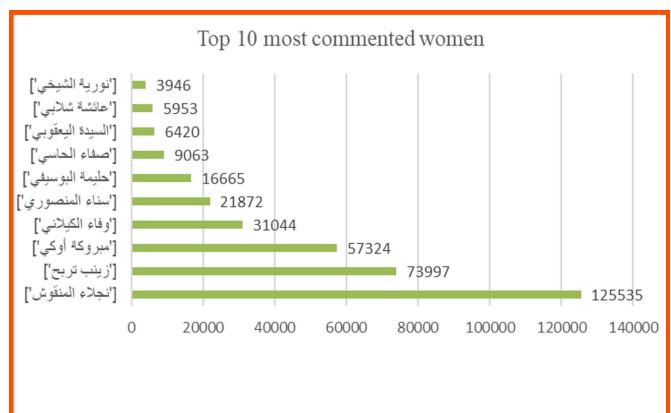
Page Admin Top Country	Number of posts	% Nbr of post
Libya	LIBYA	1311
Others	Hidden	126

Table 6: Distribution of posts by origin of admins

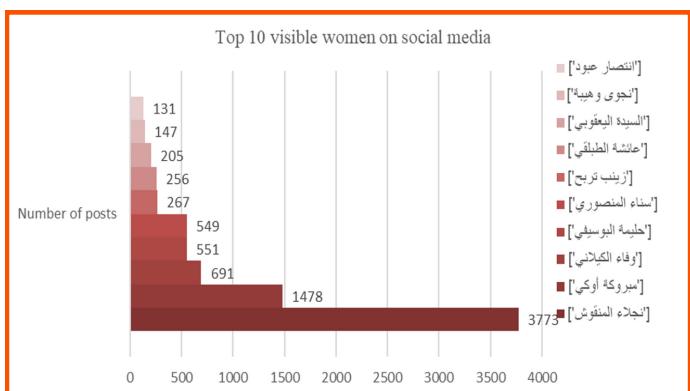
9- CrowdTangle,"FAQ: Page Admin Country Filters"

<<https://help.crowdtangle.com/en/articles/3311064-faq-page-admin-country-filters>>

- Women political activists aren't well represented online on social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook. The online politics sphere is the preserve of a close elite of mostly men, while women remain less likely to engage in political discussions online. Our researchers could barely find any public presence on social media of some women activists, not even any media content talking about them when using the Google search service. This is the case, for example, with Rebha Abdelsalam Ali El Ferjani رابحة عبدالسلام علي الفرجاني, who is a member of the House of Representatives, as well as Salha El Toumi Bechir El Drougi صالحه التومي بشير الدروجي, the new Minister of Culture and Arts in the Bashagha government. Even the woman politician who has the most reaction on social networks (Najla El Mangouch) is much less visible than several other male politicians.
- Having a public account as a woman politician and activist and engaging on social media is a difficult choice to make in Libya as the more women are mentioned in social media posts, the more comments they receive, making them vulnerable to receiving insults and becoming a target of online violence.



Graph 7: Top 10 most commented women



Graph 6: Top 10 visible women on social media

However, there is an anomaly in the case of media personality Zainab Terbah, who is sixth in the top 10 most mentioned women on social media in Libya, but is the second most commented. When these posts were analysed, we discovered that their content was a topic inciting comment (Islamic scarf), and the tense words in the comments are linked to religion and refer to "removed the veil".

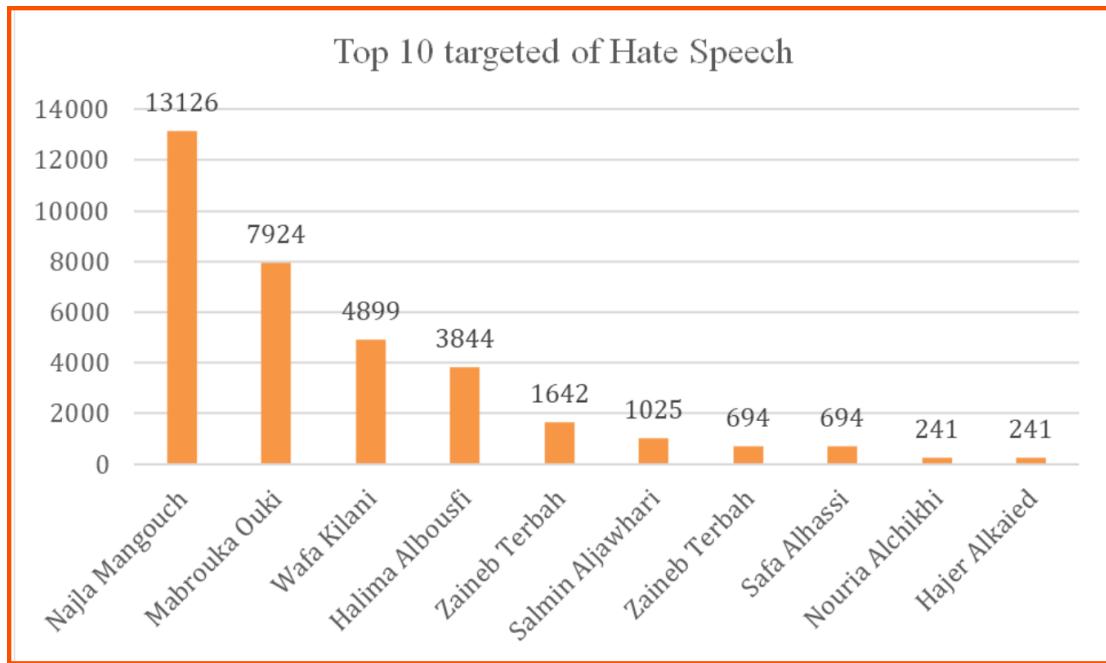


Figure 4: Religious-based hate speech¹⁰

A hate-speech campaign was launched on Facebook platforms against Zainab Terbah, which coincided with the same period she hosted a local singer on her talk show. They were mentioned in many publications within the campaign, most of which included religious hate speech.

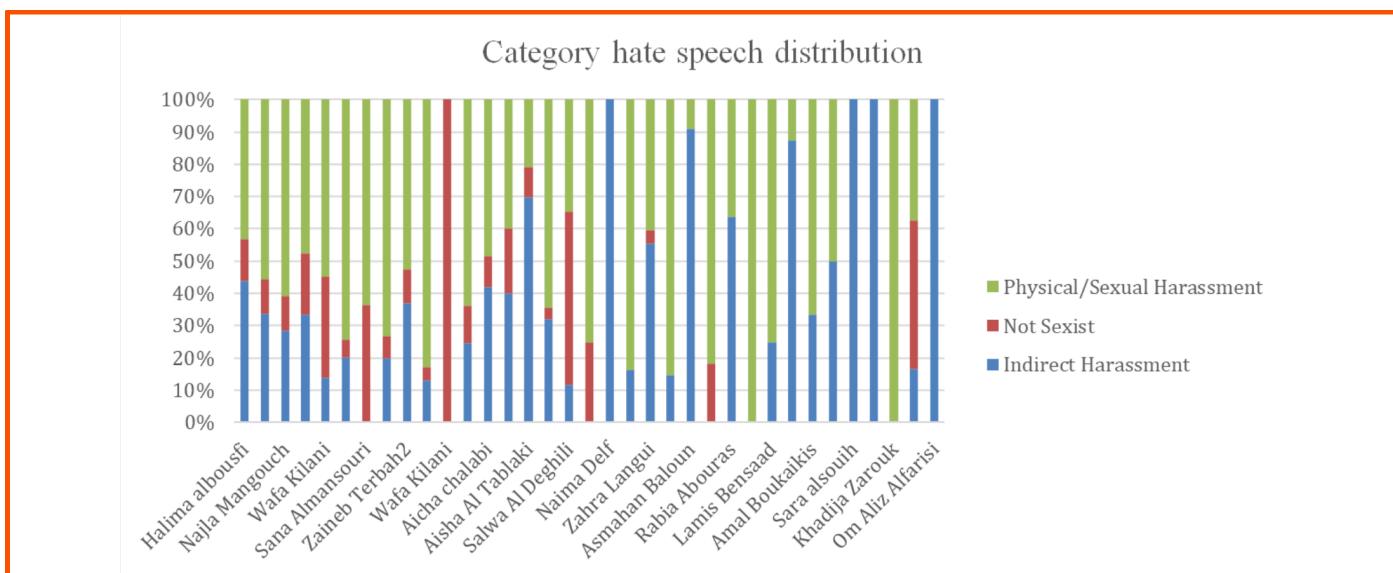
- The more women are visible online, the more they are exposed to harassment or hate speech including rape and death threats, as well as online sexual harassment and various other forms of harassment. Further research is needed to determine whether this becomes a deterrent for them to be present in politics.

10- Facebook, "واعرة حريق عليك" 2 January 2022. <<https://fb.com/473082664254442>>

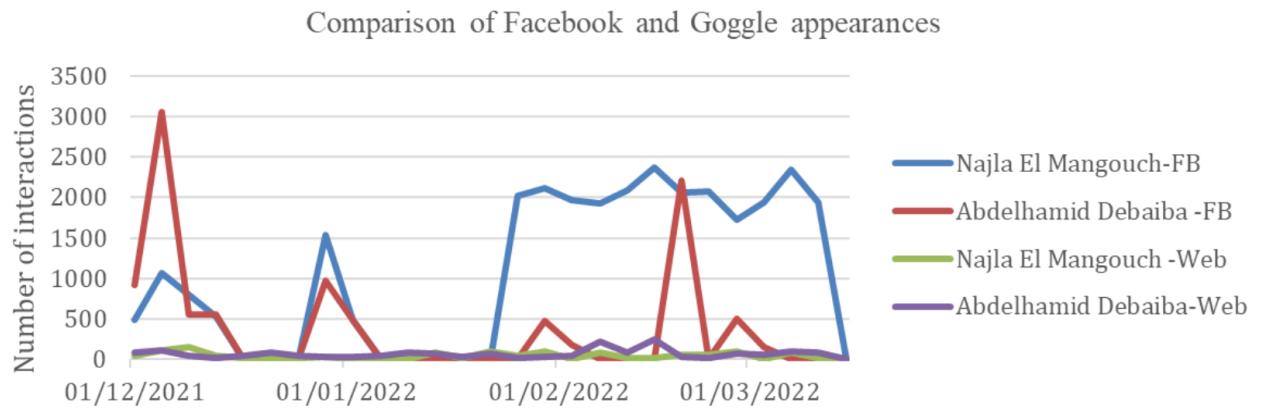


Graph 8: Top 10 targeted of Hate Speech

- There is a definite association between the lexicon employed in hate speech and the target, which is a highly noticeable finding. This means that a specific vocabulary is employed for each targeted woman. The usage of certain lexicons in hate speech is related to specific behaviours, appearances, or even expressions that the targeted women typically use.



Graph 9: For each woman category hate speech distribution



Graph 10 : Comparison of Facebook and Goggle appearances

- Writers use in some cases trivialisation and a kind of humiliating humour to verbally attack the target, for instance: “تقول سواريز لا يس وشاح” (translation: “you look like Souarez [a well-known football player] with a scarf”).
- Women face online harassment on social media based on different attitudes and narratives that vary from their clothing choices, personal life and social position (especially motherhood). These forms of harassment adopt traditional and religious speech and manipulate it to attack women online. Here we find the most frequent lexicon of hate speech is based primarily on words such as “prayers”, “home”, “kitchen” and “children” as well as many intense religious concepts like “disobedience”, “cursing” and “punishment”. We also notice death threats through a lexicon of death and violence, such as wishing death in gloating terms and incitement to assassinate, also calling women names such as “demon”, “witch” or animals (“chameleon”, “pig”). In comparison, the hate narratives observed toward male targets are mainly based on their political background or professional duties, and the vocabulary is less intense and based on ironic disapproval and negative descriptions such as “thief”, “corrupt” and “traitorous”.

- The nature of the harm against women political activists varies. They can be the targets of misinformation and disinformation or cheap and deep fake campaigns. The most significant example of disinformation observed against a female politician was the claim of the resignation of Foreign Minister Najla Al-Mangouch, with a falsified resignation statement circulated on Facebook and Twitter with many hateful phrases. This news was later debunked by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and several media outlets published the denial. This pattern tends to be even more pronounced for women political leaders who are highly visible in the media.



Figure 5: Falsified resignation statement¹¹



Figure 6: The denial by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs¹²

11- Facebook,” 12 “سرت February 2022 <<http://fb.com/2078946312278399>>

12- Facebook, “وزارة الخارجية والتعاون الدولي - دولة ليبا ”10“ February 2022 <<http://fb.com/1239710346438769>>

Recommendations

In order to ensure that online violence against women does not go unchecked and to reduce the instances of such incidents, the following recommendations are suggested:

- The Libyan authorities to adequately investigate online violence against women and hold (in-country) perpetrators accountable under the Penal Code provisions that criminalise violence. Article 217 criminalises the prevention of a person from exercising a political right by violence, threats, or by deceit, whilst article 430 criminalises threats to unlawful injury. Although no provision tackles online violence, article 16 of the 1953 Penal Code recognises offences which take place “by means of newspapers or other means of publication or propaganda”, which could be interpreted to include online media.
- Social Media Platform moderators to closely monitor violent and hateful comments and remove, in a timely manner, those that violate their social media policy.
- Social Media Platforms to build in-house understanding of the Libyan dialect among their moderator team.
- Social media platforms to mainstream features that offer the option to automatically hide negative/hate speech comments in posts. Such a feature could build on comments that users have reported as inappropriate in the past.
- Women civil society organisations to implement projects that address violence against women online and change people's mindsets about women's leadership, women's engagement, and harmful socio-cultural norms.

- International organisations to provide support to civil society organisations addressing violence against women in general, in relation to women's inclusion and engagement in decision-making processes.

Targets of online violence should also be offered services and necessary support to minimise the negative impact on their wellbeing;

- For persons subject to online harassment or violence, increase awareness of existing Arabic-speaking online resources such as Speak Up & Stay Safe(r): A Guide to Protecting Yourself From Online Harassment <https://onlinesafety.feministfrequency.com/en/>. IWMF and ICFJ's Online Violence Response Hub <https://onlineviolenceresponsehub.org/> and Access Now's Digital Security Helpline, <https://cyber-women.com/> or <https://cyber-arabs.com/>, as well as automated tools for filtering harmful comments.
- Civil society organisations should include a parallel stream of activities on a referral system that can aid women exposed to online violence or consider existing hotlines aimed at human rights defenders or journalists as models that can be replicated. While the present research findings explored online violence against women politicians, further research is needed to provide more comprehensive findings. Future research should take into consideration the following recommendations:

- ~ Comparing hate narratives used against men with those against women in order to determine the intensity of hate speech based on gender.
- ~ Exploring the use of sarcasm as a way to disparage or humiliate specific persons.
- ~ Exploring the impact of foreign-operated online accounts and pages on the Libyan democratic discourse and on gendered hate speech.
- ~ Exploring the root causes of violence against women in relation to participation in politics in Libya in order to decide on programmes that can address the issue properly.

[Annex 1]

Hate form	Examples	
Metaphors and comparison to animals, demons and things	"كيف دجاجه" "عزوز القايله" "زومبي" "حية" "وجوه النحس" "حالة العلمانية" "قشاره البصل" "البوكيمون" "تشبه برجال" "عبسي" "كناسه" "بنت الخادم" "غوله" "وجه النعجة" "وجه الفقر" "وجه العنز" "عبدة الشخشير" "ورم سرطاني" "خليقتك المصديه" "وجه الزينقو" "زريبه سعي" "يمثلو بها فيلم رعب" "ياوجه الشؤم" "فريد شوقي مربى شعره"	
Verbs and Adverbs of comparison looks, look like, the shape of, smell like	"تشبهه" "كيف" "أشبه" "تقول" "زي" "شكلها شكل" "كيفك كيف"	
Hate verbs	avenge	ينتقم
	rape	اغتصب
	kill	قتل
	curse	لعن
	become crazy	انكلب
	control her	يلموها
	vanish	اندمري
	kidnap	خطف
	punish	يعاقب

Hate verbs	burn	حرق
	ugly	يبغدد
	remove	استئصال
	shoot	اطلقوا
	get off	كعكص
	decent	تحشم
	rant	خرفي
	split	يقسم
Negative adjectives Ugly, Greedy, Unpleasant, Nasty, Gross, Thief, Dirty "	جاهرة "شلافطية" "كركوبة" "المتروشق" "المريضة" "البائسة" "الشمطاء" "زمزامات" "مقززة" "مضاحك" "فاجره" "مريشة" "مصدرنه" "مسعورة" "حالة" "فاشلة" "عاهرات" "متبرجات" "المسخوطه" "مستعصيه" "زنوبيا" "فانص	
Verbs + additions	دوري وين تعليبي" "اديري تقويم" "دعك من السياسة" "احجبي شعرك" "استري روحك" "عدى شوفي رجالك" "شدى مطبخك" "اضمي كوجينتك" "ربى فرخات" "تشدي حوشك" "إلزمي بيتك" "تربي صغارك" "تزادادي حقاره" "يقسم ظهرك" "يحطك في الحبس" "تاكل راسك" "عطك موووت"	
Hate with swear words	أعوذ بالله من وجهها" "الله لا تربحك " "قبح الله وجهه" "انشاء الله تموتي " "حسبي الله ونعم الوكيل فيك" "اعوذ بالله منها . ومن الشيطان الرجيم"	

[Annex 2]

The most repetitive lexicon/form of hate speech toward women is basically explained in the following table:

Description	Category	Hate narrative
Beauty discrimination	Physical Harassment	وجهها زي ذكر
Beauty discrimination	Physical Harassment	اول مرة نشوف عزوز قايله كانو يخوفو فينا بها زمان
Using humour to describe women's body	Physical Harassment	تقول سواريز لابس وشاح
Beauty discrimination	Physical Harassment	كان تمشي اديري تقويم لسنونك خير
Considering a woman as a sex object	Physical Harassment	الولييه هذى متجوزه والله لا خلونا انشوفوله عريس عشان تسكت وتغم على الموضوع
Considering a woman as a sex object	Physical Harassment	حوالى كم واحد متزوجها وإلا كل ليلة واحد وإلا كيف أعطونا رقم

Traditional beliefs about the role of women	Not sexist	المطبخ أولى بك
Traditional beliefs about the role of women	Not sexist	الزمي بيتك مش صنعتك هدي
Traditional beliefs about the role of women	Not sexist	بالله شدي حوشك ، والله ما تتحشمي
Incite to inflict physical harm	Not sexist	انشاء الله تموتي
Incite to inflict physical harm	Not sexist	كان ماتت شن بيصير
Incite to inflict physical harm	Not sexist	يا رب مصيرك زي سهام سرقيةوة
Incite to inflict physical harm	Not sexist	كان يغتللنا مسعوده السوده البارده

Insulting words	Sexual Harassment	متعريه ومتبرج
Insulting words	Sexual Harassment	عاهرات متبرجات لعلکن الله
Insulting words	Sexual Harassment	ساعطيك عصبة
Inferiority of woman in comparison to man	Indirect Harassment	كان عندكم رجاله راه لامينك في كوجينتك مش مخلينك تزمزكي لاسيادك بلاد القهوة
Inferiority of woman in comparison to man	Indirect Harassment	ونتي من حتى تقرري اخدمي عنده راجل مليان ايحطك في وحدة من شركاته ونادية سيدى الرئيس
Inferiority of woman in comparison to man	Indirect Harassment	عد رجالك و أورد المي

[Annex 3]

Several expressions are typically in the Libyan lexicon:

Word	Meaning
المتروشك	ugly
كعكوص	ugly
الشين	ugly
زياطات	sluts
شرقاوية	from east
النائلة	bad origins

Word	Meaning
حيزبون	Bad-mannered old woman
وجه الزينقو	ugly face
زياطات	sluts
شلافطية	slut
زومتها	her face
مبمبكة	ugly

Word	Meaning
كركوبة	ugly
تلاهط	insult
التريس	mannish
مريشة	poor
سريفه	poor
كعكسي	get off
زمزمكي	hypocrite

Or insinuations that take different forms for the same meaning

woman's place is home			
مرجوك	شور المطبخ	شدي مطبخك	تشدي خربتك
للكوجينة			
مكانك حوشك	اخصلي مطبخك	شدي حوشك	اندمري في بيتك
شووفي راجل	التهي بعيتاك	إلزمي بيتك	قعدت في بيتها
عني شدي حوشك	خليك على البصل	الي المطبخ	المر مكانها الطبيعي البيت
الهي في حوشك	طالفة صغارها	ضمي كوجينتك	حق المطبخ

inferiority compared to men			
معادش عندكم	لو كن من بيوت	خلو الرجال	ذكوره
اخدمي عند راجل			
رجل يسترak	ماتت التريس	من يلها بيها	معادش فيه تريس
دوروي راجل	جينها تريس	راجلي يشدك	
عد رجالك	شووفي راجل	مفيهاش تريس	
نساويين يمشووو	ف تريس راحوا	بنوالوها رجال	