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## Discrimination and Cyberbullying against Women in Iraq: Exploring Social Media and Perceived Norms

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## **Abstract**

*As compared to women in industrialized and developed nations, household women in Iraq do not lead standard lives. The proliferation of digital media platforms for communication has led to an upsurge in cyberbullying of household women in Iraq. In Iraq, there are only a few laws against cyberbullying, and the current structure of government and justice does not adequately protect women from this type of abuse. In order to understand the causes and prevalence of cyberbullying of women in Iraq, interviews with various Iraqi women were performed as part of this study. The results of this study show that cyberbullying against women in Iraq is a result of illiteracy, a lack of resources, and the absence of contemporary criminal legislation. The study comes to the conclusion that the Iraqi government can lessen the practice of cyberbullying against women by improving police administration and the criminal justice system. The study has crucial theoretical and practical ramifications for Iraq's efforts to outlaw cyberbullying and cybercrime against women.*

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Keywords: Discrimination; Cyberbullying; Social Media; Internet Education; Perceived Norms; Social Beliefs; Iraq; Women

## **1. Introduction**

The persistence of gender discrimination in contemporary society can be attributed to the emergence of new forms of discriminatory practices, as highlighted by Cheng et al. (2021). Significantly, women residing in impoverished and disadvantaged nations are confronted with such challenges. This form of discrimination might be characterized as a lack of legal provisions to address it. Discrimination has been extensively studied by Barlett et al. (2021). It is vital to comprehend that Women in Iraq are encountering challenges in relation to their utilization of social media as a means of communication and engagement. According to a study conducted by Ngo et al. (2021), a contemporary means of communication is available. It is an established fact that, in the context of the given information, With the aid of social media, women are afforded the option to engage in communication with fellow individuals. Communities can be effectively engaged through many means; nonetheless, it is important to acknowledge that there are adverse repercussions associated with such utilization. In the context of Iraq, it is evident that women are confronted with the issue of domestic violence, a phenomenon that is deemed unfavorable within contemporary society (Cheng et al., 2021). Simultaneously, there has been a rise in the incidence of cyberbullying, particularly targeting women in Iraq, as evidenced by the escalating number of reported complaints (Faucher, Cassidy, & Jackson, 2018). Significantly, the Iraqi government appears to have been unsuccessful in safeguarding the rights of its citizens in a comprehensive manner, particularly in terms of facilitating advancements for half of the population. Government institutions should prioritize the safeguarding of women's rights through legal measures and the collaboration of law enforcement authorities. This approach is necessary to ensure the provision of enhanced resources for Iraqi women, thereby effectively shielding them from the detrimental effects of cyberbullying (Chai, 2022).

The phenomenon of cyberbullying has become a prominent concern for women in contemporary culture, both in industrialized and developing nations. The origins of

cyberbullying may be traced back to the utilization of social media and digital platforms as means of communication. Based on recent studies conducted by Kircaburun et al. (2021), it has been reported by the New York Times that a significant proportion, specifically 35%, of women utilizing social media platforms encounter various challenges pertaining to privacy concerns and personal attacks. Verbal and irrational expressions of hatred towards women also contribute significantly to the cyberbullying experienced by women.

Nevertheless, the Iraqi government's efforts to protect the rights of its residents, notably in addressing cyberbullying and discrimination against women, have been deemed inadequate. Consequently, a thorough examination of the legal and administrative aspects surrounding these concerns is needed. The aim of this study is to explore the discrimination and cyberbullying against Women in Iraq within Iraq, with a focus on identifying limitations and gaps in the existing framework. The objectives of this study are:

1. To determine the prevalence of discrimination and cyberbullying against women in Iraq.
2. To explore the role of social media and internet education perceived Norms, and social beliefs within the context of cyberbullying and discrimination against women in Iraq.

Furthermore, this research aims to offer substantial theoretical and practical implications for enhancing the quality of life for women in Iraq, as well as mitigating the alarming prevalence of cyberbullying targeting them. Consequently, the implementation of such measures would yield increased prospects for Iraqi women, facilitating the enhancement of their living conditions and the establishment of a robust framework for addressing instances of cyberbullying. This scholarly contribution would assist future research endeavors in identifying the correlation between prejudice and the present legal framework and enforcement agencies' emphasis on addressing cyberbullying incidents targeting women. This study also offers potential avenues for future research in the field of public studies, specifically pertaining to enhancing the well-being of women residing in Iraq and mitigating the occurrence of cyberbullying targeting women.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 *The Phenomenon of Cyberbullying Targeting Women in Iraq*

The impact of hate speech and bullying on a child's growth and self-perception can be substantial, perhaps resulting in diminished self-esteem (Mäkinen, 2019). This study also affirms that bullying can manifest in various forms, including physical, psychological, and social dimensions. Due to the enduring ramifications associated with bullying, it is of paramount significance to proactively address the issue of cyberbullying and hate speech targeting children and adolescents. Cyberbullying is a significant societal issue that affects not only children and males but also individuals who hold influential positions in society (Chen et al., 2022). The adverse utilization of the internet is a contributing factor to the occurrence of cyberbullying throughout society (Ngo et al., 2021). It is crucial to comprehend that the prevalence of cyberbullying is on the rise in advanced and industrialized nations, as shown by an article published in the New York Times (Barlett et al., 2021). The prevalence of individuals' apprehension over the dissemination of information on social media platforms stems from the potential exploitation of their personal data for malicious

intentions, such as blackmail (Alasadi et al., 2020). Fabito et al. (2018) found that women and girls in Iraq are employing social media platforms as a means of exchanging information and engaging in communication. However, the most recent report of 2021 indicates that the chief police commissioner of Baghdad has disclosed a significant number of individuals who have experienced cyberbullying (Wright, Wachs, & Gámez-Guadix, 2022). The severity of cyberbullying increases when individuals are unable to conceal their personal information on social media platforms or lack the knowledge to use social media in a proficient manner (Ahmed et al., 2022). The utilization of social media in Iraq is observed among a significant portion of the population, although it is worth noting that a considerable proportion of these individuals still lack formal education (Bedrosova et al., 2022). Based on the findings of the 2021 crime report, it has been observed that females and women with limited literacy skills who engage in the practice of sharing their visual content on popular social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram are susceptible to experiencing bullying behaviors from those within their social circles, including those associated with their familial and domestic contexts (Schade, Voracek, & Tran, 2021). It is imperative to acknowledge that granting the government unrestricted access to resources, which enables them to amass wealth effortlessly, poses a significant threat to the societal framework. The prevalence of women's humiliation on social media platforms in Iraq can be attributed to the lack of effective measures taken by legal authorities to address this kind of cyberbullying (Ahmed et al., 2022). It is imperative to acknowledge that the legal system and law enforcement authorities are actively engaged in combating terrorism and addressing the threat posed by terrorists. Consequently, relatively little emphasis is placed on addressing the concerns pertaining to women who experience cyberbullying (Yuvaraj et al., 2021).

In addition, it is worth noting that the challenges related to social media are not exclusive to women in Iraq. Teenage boys often have similar issues while engaging with social media platforms for the purpose of information exchange and communication (Viner et al., 2019). The development of a social media platform mentorship cell by the Iraqi government is deemed necessary in order to effectively monitor the activities of individuals, ensuring a proper system of checks and balances. Based on the findings of Tian, Yan, and Huebner (2018), the World Health Organization (WHO) suggests that the prevalence of cyberbullying in Iraq could be reduced by the implementation of government regulations aimed at monitoring and controlling the activities and operations of social media platforms. The harmful impact of cyberbullying on individuals' personalities is deemed inappropriate under societal norms.

## *2.2 Engagement of Women in Iraq with Social Media Platforms*

In contemporary society, social media has emerged as a prevalent phenomenon with a substantial user base (Tian et al., 2020). There are multiple factors that motivate individuals to establish their online identities on social media platforms in order to engage with various communities and individuals. It is imperative to acknowledge that social media platforms play a crucial role in facilitating the dissemination of relevant information among individuals. Specifically, women in society can derive significant advantages from these platforms (Menin et al., 2021). According to a study conducted by Ehman and Gross (2019) it has been reported by officials from WhatsApp and

Facebook that a significant majority, specifically over 90%, of individuals utilizing Facebook own the means to connect to mobile phones and access the internet. In a similar vein, women in Iraq are employing social media platforms as a means of disseminating information and engaging in dialogue with individuals from diverse cultures (Vivolo-Kantor et al., 2021). Nonetheless, the issue of privacy in social media and communication remains largely unaddressed in Iraq, as a significant number of Iraqi women encounter various forms of threats on social media platforms that directly impact their personal lives (Zhu et al., 2020). Based on the findings of Yuvaraj et al. (2021) it has been observed that Iraqi women frequently register numerous grievances pertaining to instances of cyberbullying on social media platforms. It is an established reality that certain individuals within society exhibit behaviors that demonstrate a lack of respect for women, thereby infringing into their privacy for personal motives. The prevalence of social media usage in Iraq has experienced a notable rise, particularly among women who have gained access to affordable mobile internet connections (Wachs, Wright, & Vazsonyi, 2019). The phenomenon of digitalization is not limited to advanced nations; rather, it is also making progress in less developed countries. This wave of digitalization is creating opportunities for communities and women to access the same amenities as those available in advanced countries (Tian et al., 2020). The utilization of social media by women in Iraq for the purpose of information exchange and communication with distant friends and family members has been seen (Shaker et al., 2022). Based on the findings of the media management cell in Iraq, there is a notable increase in the utilization of social media platforms by female students in Iraq for the purpose of disseminating information pertaining to their studies and educational institution activities (Chen et al., 2022). The increased potential for girls in Iraq can be attributed to the advancements in technology, particularly in the realm of social media and cellphones (Wahhab, 2022). The provision of digitalization is considered a fundamental entitlement for all individuals, as it contributes to the facilitation of daily living. The advent of social media and the period of digitalization have significantly enhanced interpersonal communication capabilities among individuals (Houkamau et al., 2021). In contrast to their female counterparts in Iraq, male individuals in Iraq exhibit a somewhat restricted use of social media platforms, mostly due to their predominant engagement in domestic and economic responsibilities within the household (Neubauer et al., 2017). The environment in Iraq is not conducive to a high standard of living due to ongoing war zone activities. However, despite these challenges, the population continues to utilize social media and various platforms to share and gather information pertaining to their daily routines within the country (Thumronglaohapun et al., 2022). The utilization of social media by women in Iraq is significant since it grants them access to the same information that women in industrialized and advanced nations receive during the digital age. The study primarily concentrates on the heightened utilization of social media platforms among women in Iraq. However, it would be advantageous to offer contextual information and delve into the underlying factors contributing to this observed pattern. The expansion of social media use may be influenced by various factors such as alterations in internet accessibility, governmental regulations, or cultural transformations. However, it is important to acknowledge that these factors have not been adequately examined in the current study.

### **2.3 Importance of Internet Education in Mitigating Cyberbullying Incidents**

This part offers emotional coping mechanisms, expressive outlets for cyber victims' frustration, and empathy training for cyberbullies. Hamuddin et al. (2023) affirm that cyberbullying psychology dabbling with rehabilitative treatments, which help victims and bullies improve their mental health. IT Media relies on machine learning and AI to detect and prevent SNS cyberbullying using text and image classification. While machine learning and AI promise to flag and police online activities, third parties still cannot spot contextual meaning when cyberbullies use text-based and typographic emoticon "linguistic wordplay" to bully another person without flagging linguistic categories or image feature classifiers (Torgal et al., 2023). However, preventing cyberbullying requires automatically improving incidences when users publish or post on SNS. IT media emphasizes prevention in the five key health care categories. Cyberbullying's major challenge in education is a lack of cooperation. Most students won't confess, so professors can't help. International Journal of Innovative Research and Scientific Studies, cyberbullying, and most parents are oblivious, uncaring, and unfamiliar with newer SNS. Therefore, cyberbullying solutions and proposals tend to raise awareness. Hellfeldt, López-Romero, and Andershed (2020) recommend promoting "cyber-kindness." The school sector encourages a nicer online world through proactive constructive communication rather than simply stopping cyberbullying.

## **3. Research Method**

### **3.1. Philosophical Background**

To proceed with a particular research methodology and confirm the methodological procedure that will correlate with the research framework of the study, several research assumptions are made by the investigators, which could be beneficial for determining an accurate philosophical background which has been classified as realism, interpretivism, pragmatism, and positivism. However, the framework of the present study is based on understanding discrimination and cyberbullying against women in Iraq and exploring the role of social media, internet education, perceived norms, and social beliefs in discrimination and cyberbullying in Iraq to satisfy the research objectives of the current study the researcher has prioritized to use interpretivism philosophy. According to research, interpretivism philosophy relies on understanding human behaviors regarding a particular aspect (Carminati, 2018). It is obvious from the present research framework that the investigator aims to determine the perceptions of women regarding cyberbullying and discrimination in Iraq and how social media, social beliefs, internet education, and perceived norms impact this discrimination and cyberbullying against women, which signifies the usage of interpretivism philosophy for this study.

### **3.2. Research Design, Sampling Technique, and Population**

This study is based on a qualitative research design, which has been based on interpretivism philosophy, purposive sampling technique, and inductive research approach, where the targeted sample includes women from Iraq. Within the context

of Iraq, the researcher has focused on examining the women's perceptions regarding cyberbullying with the help of conducting detailed interviews of the chosen sample is the reason behind selecting a qualitative research approach because, for the present study, a detailed analysis of the cyberbullying and discrimination in Iraq is required which and the qualitative analysis is based on achieving in-depth knowledge about the perspectives of humans. In addition, the purposive sampling technique has enabled the investigator to choose an appropriate sample that could provide accurate answers to the questions thus asked by the interviewer while pursuing the research process and avoiding any biased responses. The sample size that the researcher has focused on for the present research is 9 women from Iraq, which is smaller because the qualitative methodology has been used, which signifies the choice of a small sample size. Moreover, the research is based on understanding the women's perspectives in Iraq, so males have not been chosen as a research sample, and this small sample size will be helpful for the investigator to analyze and gather the data without any saturation effectively.

### *3.3. Data Collection and Data Analysis*

The data was collected from the research respondents with the help of semi-structured interviews, but before conducting the interviews, the research participants were briefed about the research scope, application, and purpose. The interviews were based on qualitative questions regarding the fact that whether cyberbullying and discrimination against women are common in Iraq, how perceived norms, internet education, social beliefs, and social media impact the discrimination and cybersecurity against women in Iraq, and how they overcome such situations or are there any measures that are taken by the country to deal with such crimes. The data thus gathered after the interviews has been imported to the NVivo software as it is an effective tool to analyze the data thus gathered after qualitative interviews. After that, the data has been further subjected to thematic analysis because it enables the researcher to analyze it efficiently without repetition.

### *3.4. Research Ethics*

Research ethics refers to the ethical considerations that have been considered by the researcher while gathering the data from research respondents to avoid any inconvenience and maintain a trustworthy relationship between the investigator and the research participants. For the present study, the researcher has considered the following ethics:

- Before starting the semi-structured interviews, the research respondents will be told about the research scope and the purpose of the study, and they will be free to decide whenever they want to quit the research procedure.
- The personal details of the respondents will be kept confidential and will not be shared with anyone else.
- Addition, the research participants' values, norms, and perspectives will be respected, and none of the participants will be discriminated against.
- The researcher will treat all the participants respectfully, not abuse or exploit the chosen research respondents, and ensure that the research will be conducted responsibly.

#### 4. Findings

For this study, qualitative analysis was conducted to fulfil the proposed objectives. The collected qualitative data was analyzed effectively, and codification was done, leading to the formulation of important themes and sub-themes, which (figure 4.1) are presented below:

- Theme I: Prevalence of Discrimination and Cyberbullying against Women in Iraq
  - Theme Ia: Personal Experience
  - Theme Ib: Perceived Norms
  - Theme Ic: Social Beliefs
- Theme II: Social Media Impact on Cyberbullying
  - Theme IIa: Role of Internet Education in Combating Cyberbullying
- Theme III: Organizations Working against Discrimination and Cyberbullying
  - Theme IIIa: Measures to reduce Discrimination and Cyberbullying against Women

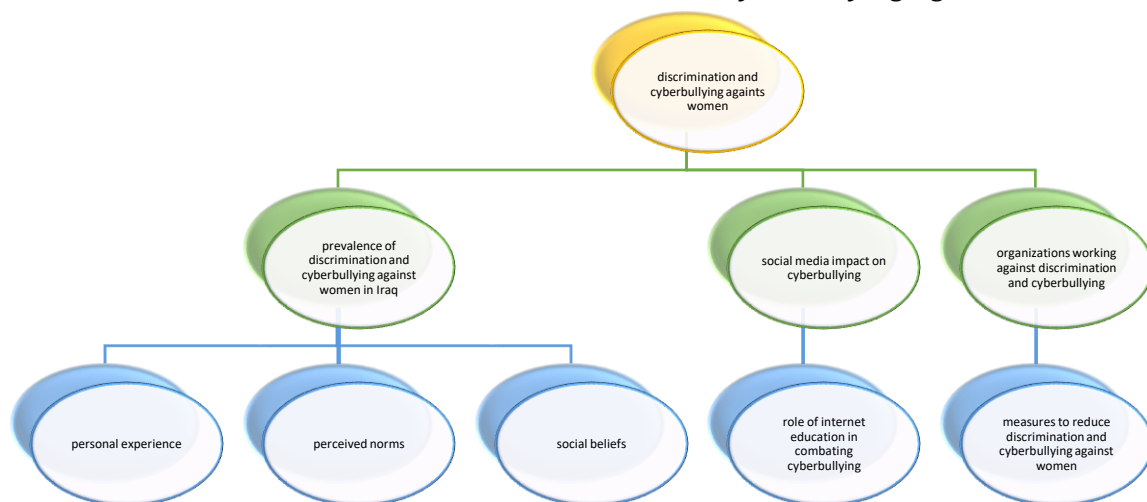


Figure 4.1. "Mind map of thematic analysis"

- *Theme I: Prevalence of Discrimination and Cyberbullying against Women in Iraq*

In different low and middle-income countries, the issue of discrimination against women remains persistent. This issue is also commonly observed in developed countries as women are prevented from their rights and freedom of speech. Seven respondents believed that Iraq is a male dominant society and that women are still looked down upon in Iraq and are only considered responsible for managing the homes. Moreover, technological advancements have also opened doorways for cyberbullying against women in Iraq. One of the respondents quoted:

*"I always try to look on the bright side of everything.... But I don't know how to deal with discrimination and cyberbullying as I cannot find any positive aspect."*

- *Theme Ia: Personal Experience*

Eight out of nine respondents in this study have experienced discrimination in their personal or professional life. They believed they were not provided with equal resources and opportunities as their male colleagues, preventing them from attaining the required success. Five of the respondents also faced cyberbullying, which negatively impacted their self-esteem and overall performance as one of them said:



*"Last year, I made my first social media account. I was bombarded with hate comments and messages from unknown people who accused me of neglecting my family, as I am very passionate about my career. These comments got me; I even had suicidal thoughts, so I sought professional help."*

- *Theme Ib: Perceived Norms*

In Iraq, women are not given equal rights to men and are only held responsible for caring for their families and children. Five respondents supported that perceived norms have played an important role in enforcing gender-based discrimination against women in Iraq. They believed social pressure prevented them from speaking against discrimination and cyberbullying. Additionally, the legal system in Iraq is ineffective in protecting women's rights, resulting in devastating situations like domestic violence, rape and other associated issues. Supporting this argument, one of the respondents said:

*"I have suffered from domestic violence for years, and when I tried to take a divorce, my family and friends prevented me from doing so due to social pressure. I don't want this life for my children."*

- *Theme Ic: Social Beliefs*

In Iraq, many people modify religious teachings for their benefit. Therefore, three of the respondents also described their experience supporting this argument. These women were told that the religion also asked them to stay home and protect their dignity. They were also prohibited from leaving their homes. As a result, women in Iraq were not given enough privileges to live a normal life. At the same time, the increased internet utilization has also caused various issues for women in Iraq. Within this context, one of the respondents said:

*"In Iraq, cultural and socio-economic factors have resulted in the digital divide as the women are provided with limited access to social media than men due to different social norms."*

- *Theme II: Social Media Impact on Cyberbullying*

The prevalence of cyberbullying against women is persistently increasing in Iraq due to the enhanced usage of social media platforms. This has prevented many women from speaking freely on social media platforms. Six respondents also stated that they faced cyberbullying, which negatively impacting their mental well-being. One of the respondents was also blackmailed online, which encouraged her to delete all her social media accounts. The lack of an effective legislative framework in Iraq for the protection of women against cyberbullying has also contributed to the prevalence of cyberbullying against women, as one of the respondents said:

*"I was traumatized, and I was not even able to report to the authorities about the cyberbullying... I suffered from great depression and anxiety."*

- *Theme IIa: Role of Internet Education in Combating Cyberbullying*

Six respondents believed that internet education can effectively prevent cyberbullying as it can help them take important measures to avoid hateful comments. For this purpose, awareness regarding safety measures among women is

considered crucial. Therefore, by taking important preventive measures, women can safely use social media platforms, as one of the respondents said:

*"I believe women should have the basic knowledge concerning social media usage to protect themselves against cyberbullying."*

- **Theme III: Organizations Working against Discrimination and Cyberbullying**

According to the respondents, not many organizations in Iraq work to protect women against discrimination and cyberbullying. They also stated that there are no specific laws and regulations to overcome such issues while cybercrimes are dealt with under Iraq's Penal Code and Civil Code. In this regard, one of the respondents said:

*"I have hardly heard of any organization working for women's rights in Iraq. However, Ersaa has taken important measures to combat gender-based violence."*

- **Theme IIIa: Measures to reduce Discrimination and Cyberbullying against Women**

All respondents provided suggestions to reduce discrimination and cyberbullying against women in Iraq. Four of these respondents emphasized developing and implementing effective laws and regulations in this regard, while others have also highlighted the significance of internet education in combating cyberbullying. One of the respondents said:

*"I believe public awareness programs should be held to improve internet education among women so they can protect themselves against online harassment and cyberbullying."*

Figures 4.2 and 4.3 present the treemap and project map of the thematic analysis.

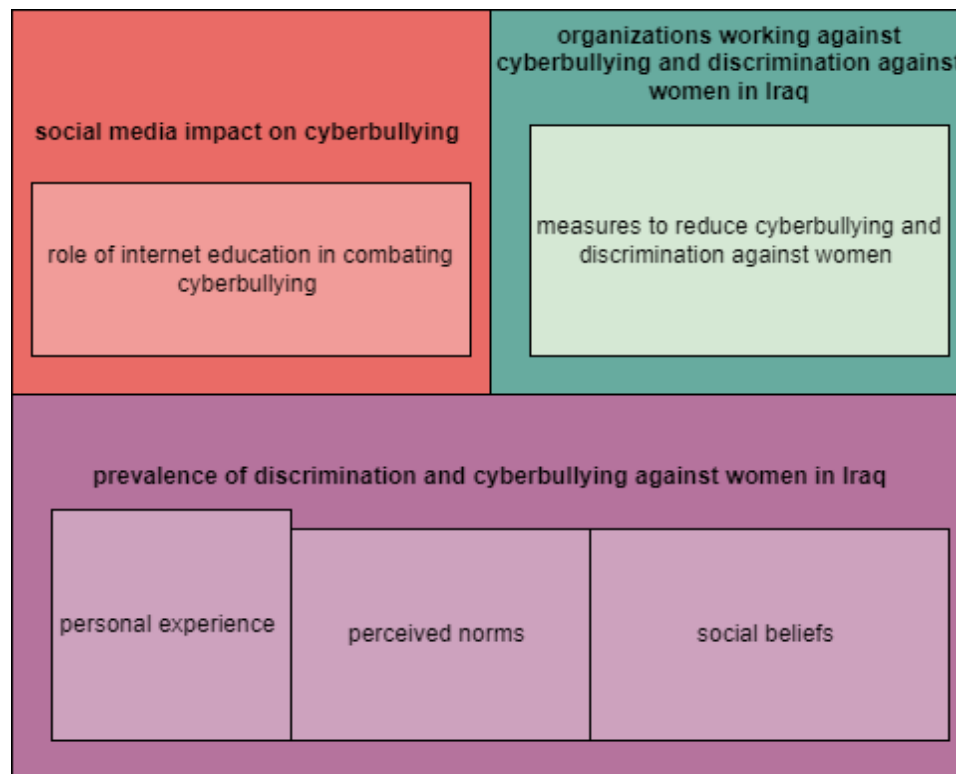


Figure 4.2. "Treemap of thematic analysis"

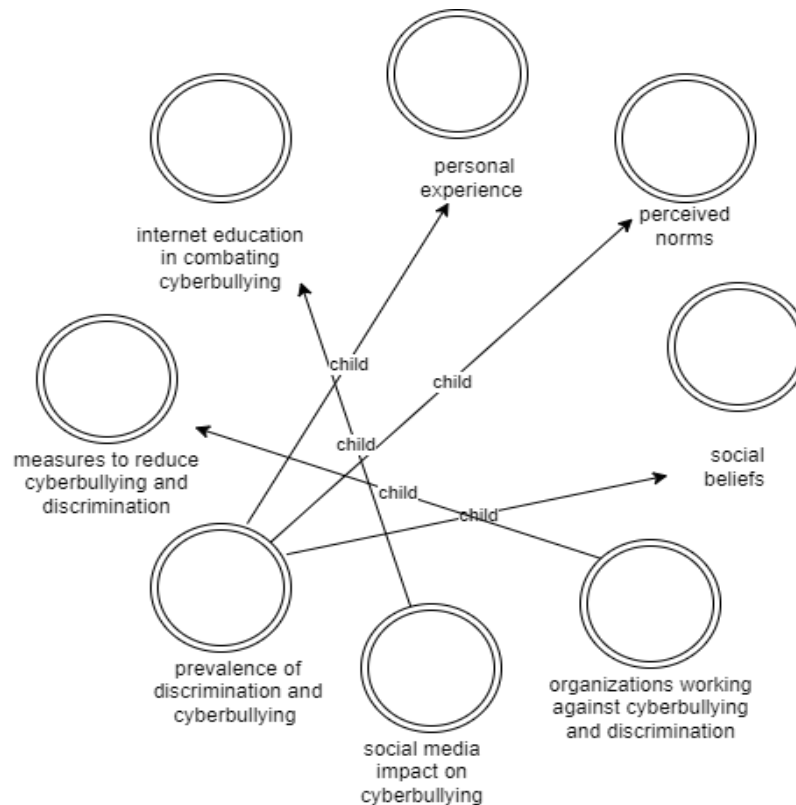


Figure 4.3. “Project map of thematic analysis”

## 5. Discussion

The results of this study emphasize the necessity of granting women in Iraq the ability to utilize social media platforms for their daily activities. Social media serves as a platform that facilitates the sharing of knowledge for the sake of learning and community development (Khudhair, 2021). The utilization of social media by women in advanced and developed nations is positively impacting the well-being of individuals in relation to their quality of life. Nevertheless, it is incumbent upon the government to oversee individuals' social media engagements in order to mitigate the potential perils of prejudice on such platforms (Fabito et al., 2018). The primary role of the government entails the surveillance of individuals' actions and the provision of education to promote the constructive use of social media, discouraging the propagation of discriminatory or hateful content (Viner et al., 2019). It is widely held that by offering the community suitable education, a favorable outcome can be anticipated due to individuals' inherent interest in education pertaining to their daily lives. The Japanese government is closely monitoring the utilization of social media platforms by women and teenagers due to the numerous grievances over the inappropriate usage of such platforms, particularly concerning women and children (Mahmood, 2020).

The Iraqi government possesses the authority to take measures against individuals who engage in the misuse of social media platforms to target women. The development of confidence among women in standing against social media behaviors of a criminal nature can be attributed to the implementation of efficient measures

targeting such individuals (Tahat, Tahat, & Habes, 2020). According to Viner et al. (2019) the Australian Government has provided law enforcement authorities with advanced technology to track those engaging in cyberbullying through social media platforms. According to Tian et al. (2018) a significant reduction of 85% in cyberbullying-related offenses has been observed in major cities of Australia. In a similar vein, the Iraqi government has the capacity to implement measures aimed at incorporating contemporary technology, such as providing the police with enhanced border facilities, in order to use the potential of social media as a tool against criminal activities (Qushua et al., 2023). There is an urgent need for a collaborative effort between social media platform administrators and law enforcement authorities to effectively address and prevent crimes pertaining to women's issues. It is imperative to acknowledge that with the utilization of sophisticated tools, proactive measures can be implemented to address individuals who employ social media platforms for disseminating hate speech. Furthermore, it is incumbent upon women to pursue educational opportunities and exercise discretion in managing the privacy settings of their social media profiles. In the United States and Canada, women employ the privacy policy offered by social media platforms as a means to mitigate the occurrence of cyberbullying directed towards them (Dou et al., 2020).

The legal system in Iraq bears the task of offering assistance to women within society who encounter challenges in utilizing social media platforms and facing issues related to cyberbullying. According to Carlson and Frazer (2021), there is a collaborative effort between the kangaroo courts in the United Kingdom and law enforcement authorities to combat instances of cyberbullying and digital blackmail on social media sites. According to Bedrosova et al. (2022), there has been a drop of 77% in incidents pertaining to the cyberbullying of women over the past five years. Similarly, it is imperative to implement new legal measures in Iraq to address the issue of cyberbullying and safeguard the community against these criminal activities. The phenomenon of blackmailing on social media platforms extends beyond the cyberbullying of women, and in its most severe manifestation, it has led to the trafficking of women (Carlson & Frazer, 2021).

## **6. Conclusion**

In Iraq, there exist governmental institutions that are dedicated to improving the conditions for women, particularly in terms of providing protection against domestic abuse and online violence. Hence, it is imperative for law enforcement agencies to seek the necessary support from the management of social media platforms in order to effectively address and mitigate acts of violence against women. In contrast, the establishment of a partnership between the government and societal stakeholders could facilitate the formulation of efficacious initiatives aimed at safeguarding women's rights (Peker, 2020). In the context of Iraq, it is imperative for social media platforms to enhance their privacy features in order to empower women to have greater control over their social media engagements. It is widely acknowledged that the implementation of robust and efficient privacy measures on social media platforms would significantly reduce the incidence of cyberbullying targeting women in Iraq. This study highlights the necessity of establishing an expeditious judicial framework to address the grievances of women pertaining to cyberbullying incidents occurring on social media and digital platforms. The

implementation of a robust judicial system, coupled with effective cooperation among law enforcement authorities, has the potential to mitigate the occurrence of cyberbullying and hate speech over the entirety of Iraq (Utami & Astuti, 2022). Similarly, the Government of Iraq should adopt the strategies employed by advanced nations in order to effectively regulate cyberbullying within the country.

## 7. Implications

This finding has important theoretical consequences for cyberbullying Iraqi women. First, this study shows that women's cyberbullying is caused by Iraq's outdated digital criminal laws. It's because women don't have equal rights and legal protections. Second, previous research didn't regard cyberbullying as domestic violence in Iraq. A government's policy should raise Iraqi women's living standards. It is important to recognize that a policy to protect women will benefit the discriminated community. This study has important practical relevance for improving women's social media living standards. Thus, women can use social media if all social media sites follow policies to protect women. Hence, the criminal justice system that handles cyberbullying and other crimes against women should be improved. This study shows that providing Iraqi women with resources and the best technique to use social media platforms with good policy supervision can raise their living standards.

## 8. Limitations and Future Research Suggestions

This research has extensively examined the issue of gender discrimination against women in Iraq. However, the influence of social media and cyberbullying on this matter has not been thoroughly explored and warrants further investigation. However, it is imperative for future research endeavors to prioritize the examination of the impact of online education on the prevention of cyberbullying against women in Iraq. Furthermore, it is imperative for future research endeavors to prioritize the examination of perceived norms and their influence on the prevention of cyberbullying perpetration among women in Iraq. In conclusion, it is imperative for future research endeavors to prioritize the examination of the influence of social views on the ban of cyberbullying against women within the context of Iraq. The study's 9 Iraqi women sample is a big drawback. Qualitative technique seeks to understand Iraqi women's opinions, justifying a small sample. However, this small sample size may restrict generalizability. Only female participation may bias the study.

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## Appendix

### Interview Questions

1. Have you ever faced discrimination and cyberbullying in your personal or professional life? If yes, can you explain your reaction to such a scenario?
2. In your opinion, is cyberbullying common against women in Iraq?
3. What role does social media play in the prevalence of cyberbullying common against women in Iraq?
4. According to you, is internet education crucial in combating cyberbullying against women on social media platforms?
5. In your opinion, how do perceived norms impact discrimination and cyberbullying against women in Iraq?
6. How do social beliefs influence discrimination and cyberbullying against women in Iraq?
7. Are there any organizations working in Iraq to reduce discrimination and cyberbullying against women in Iraq? If yes, have they been successful?
8. In your opinion, what measures can be taken to reduce cyberbullying and discrimination against women in Iraq?