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heCareZA Social Media Analytics Report 6

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1. Introduction

This report aims to generate a deeper understanding of gender discrimination through an analysis of public social media. It provides an overview of research into the online conversation about the relationships between men and women in South Africa. The findings discussed in this report are shared with other researchers, practitioners and digital activists to inform policy and practice. They are also used by the heCareZA programme to engage men in self-reflection and healing through creative communications and dialogue facilitation. The long-term goal of the heCareZA programme is to engage with thousands of men and support them to effectively promote gender equality, dismantle the cycle of gender discrimination and curtail the perpetration of Gender-Based Violence (GBV). This is done through online and offline dialogue facilitation.

The development of masculinity in the digital era is an area of immense interest. The use of memes, sharing of content from influencer accounts and other forms of online content may have real-world implications on men's conceptualisations of masculinity and subsequently their behaviour¹.

The research process includes the creation, testing and refinement of an online research query. The broad query is used as a benchmark in an ongoing social media comparative analysis (see Appendix C). Relying on quantitative and qualitative research findings, this report is the latest instalment in a series of reports written in support of the heCareZA programme. In it, data metrics are used to provide a high-level overview of the broad conversation about the relationships between men and women in South Africa. To support the [heCareZA](https://www.cabc.org.za/hecareza) programme, opportunities to engage are also identified and a summary of findings is presented.

The primary source of data for this report was sourced from the social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter. Recent estimates drawn from X's (then Twitter) advertisement reports in early 2022 indicate that 2.85 million South Africans are active on the social media platform.² This represents just under 5% of the population, so it is important to keep in mind that the results are not indicative of the sentiment and thought of the population at large. However, the opportunity for narratives to break out from social media platforms like X and influence traditional media and policy decisions has been reported on frequently in South Africa and beyond³.

Content Warning: This report contains sensitive content, such as discussions of sexual violence and abuse, which may be triggering to readers.

¹ Shefer & Ratele, 2023

² <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2022-south-africa>

³ Bosch, 2017 ; Mpofu, 2019

2. Findings Summary

Macro themes

(These themes were based on the volume, relevance and prominence within the query, further details are provided in Section [5](#))

Opposing views on female submission: A video showing a woman kneeling to give her partner food sparked an online debate on female submission, which is considered a component of both religious and cultural values. For some, the practice of kneeling is an indicator of respect. Other users stated that such instances of female submission were outdated and undermined gender equality. (see Section [5.1](#))

Spousal support and perceived hypocrisies: The high-profile divorce of Minnie Dlamini and Quinton Jones, as well as recent allegations that Jones was seeking spousal support from the TV personality, unearthed a new focus of perceived hypocrisies within the gendered discourse. These perceived hypocrisies were also highlighted in another conversation around fatherhood and misogyny. The main question governing these perceptions is why certain actions/behaviours are deemed acceptable for certain genders and unacceptable for others. (see Section [5.1](#))

Lobola, the price and the legal implication: A recurring subtopic within the online conversation around lobola is the factors used to determine the “bride price”. Some accounts continue to use this conversation to spread derogatory and stereotypical messaging around women, based on individual perceptions of ‘acceptable’ behaviour. A number of users were stunned to learn that couples married under customary law were considered to be married in community of property unless they had signed an antenuptial contract before the marriage. (see Section [5.1](#)).

Fatherhood: Our research highlights the extent to which “copypasta”⁴ or duplicated content for the purposes of garnering engagement, may be present in conversation related to gendered topics. Conversation related to the extent of absent fatherhood in South African society prompted a confrontational conversation, with some individuals contrasting the right to abortion with the “right” for men to refuse a parental role. On the other hand, some accounts took the opportunity to reflect and share their views on the impact of fatherhood, their expectations of the role and the need for more positive sentiment around fatherhood to be mobilised online. A further theme emerged related to hypocritical anger toward young single mothers. In response to this prompt,

⁴ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/wordplay/words-were-watching-copypasta>

men were found to either double down and justify their perceptions on the basis of it being a “different time” or to reflect and share their experiences of being raised in a single-parent household (see Section [5.2](#)).

Individual Expressions

(This section predominantly focused on original content posted by men who have less than 10,000 followers. Further details in Section [6](#))

Men and Mental Health: Society’s attitude towards men’s mental health was the main focus of this conversation. One user called out the government for providing few resources to support men’s mental health, adding that “broken” men were perpetuating the cycle of breaking others. This is deemed part of the femicide problem in the country. (see Section [6.1](#))

Marriage and Cultural Tradition: Researchers recorded posts which contained positive, negative and neutral sentiments in the conversation about lobola within the individual expressions section of this report. Conversations centred around the significance of lobola. Some users accused families of being greedy during the negotiations. Others argued that the meaning of lobola has changed over time. (see Section [6.2](#))

Parental Roles, Alienation and Paternity Testing: Themes emerging from individual expressions around fatherhood concerned assumptions and stereotypes related to social stigma around paternity testing, as well as the centering of struggle as a building block of masculinity. The dataset contained various perceptions about the role of a father in rearing a child. These perceptions stemmed from positive calls for parental involvement to gendered assumptions around the need for a man to hold a paternal role in a boy child’s life to ensure their development. One Individual was noted to express fear at being “exposed” as a “deadbeat” and being alienated from their children (see Section [6.3](#))

Gendered Assumptions and Hate Speech: Stereotypes and assumptions about the roles men and women play in relationships were among those recorded in this conversation. These include notions that “modern men act like women because they were mostly raised by them”, that submission (also covered in Section [5.1](#) of this report) prevented divorce and that women can tolerate abusive men, but not a “broke” one. (see Section [6.4](#))

Gender-Based Violence and Misogyny: Posts within this conversation highlighted the importance for men to intervene and call out known abusers. One user stated that that silence perpetrated abuse, while another shared that abuse stemmed from insecurity. There was also a conversation about the difficulties of intervening in an abusive situation when the survivor reunites with the abuser. (see Section [6.5](#))

3. Supporting Project Outputs and Opportunities for Engagement

3.1 Analytic Information on GBV and Misogyny

- The presence of copy-paste or duplicated texts which are reposted within the space may indicate a form of narrative manipulation within conversation around gender-based violence and misogyny. The use of these tactics by X-verified accounts lends credence to concerns about the monetization of misogynistic content. (see Section [5.2](#)) Future reports in this space may seek to analyse the extent to which copy-paste and narrative manipulation drive negative sentiment toward gender equality and tolerance.
- The successful geolocation of close to 90% of posts within the data set serves to support and direct continued keyword development toward African languages spoken in the northern provinces. These include Afrikaans, isiZulu, Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana and a variety of vernacular and colloquial languages, such as s'Pitori. Expanding on these keywords will ensure we're better positioned to capture more of the conversation present online.
- Building upon the analysis of volume distribution and engagement, an author or landscape analysis may be necessary in this space. A better understanding of social media consumption in terms of influencers, hashtags, TV shows and organisations, will serve to further strengthen the ability to draw insights from the conversation.
- The individual expressions section of this report showcases the ability of well-constructed categories to isolate relevant conversation (see Section [6](#)). By developing categories which focus on understanding the underlying constructs, or perspectives, which drive the conversation, we will be better placed to identify vectors, or entry points, for engagement. This will heighten the potential of our social media listening tool to uncover rich insights.

3.2 Capacitating Online Allies and Facilitating Critical Conversations

- Across both the macro theme and individual expressions sections, there is a need to facilitate conversations on bodily autonomy. This topic appeared predominantly in conversations that equated the right to have an abortion with a perspective that spoke to men walking away from a fatherly role.
- As noted in the individual expressions section on gender-based violence and misogyny, men have expressed their desire to see more participation from other men in calling out acts of abuse and intervening in abusive situations. This was contrasted with posts which spoke to a misunderstanding of the difficulty present in leaving abusive situations, as well as in framing the motivation of an abuser. Facilitating conversation around the *how* and *what* of safely supporting and intervening in instances of abusive situations, as well as sharing information which dispels myths about abuse, may prove valuable.
- Masculinity has been represented in the individual expressions sections 'Men and Mental Health' and 'Parental Roles, Alienation and Paternity Testing' as an overcoming of adversity. Dialogue may seek to understand whether this opinion is widely held and if so what may influence the perception that masculinity is tied to hardship and difficulty.

3.3 Supporting Public Awareness and Advocacy for Positive Messaging

- As noted in a previous report by the CABC, questions and confusion around the legal implications of practices which constitute part of the process of facilitating and concluding a customary marriage continue to be spoken about online. Influencer accounts of people who understand and engage with legalities in this space garner high engagement by relaying these implications to their followers. Co-authorship of a media article, or the production of video material on this topic, that is highly accessible, may serve to support public awareness.

4. Research Overview

This section provides a high-level overview of the broad conversation between men and women in South Africa taking place on public social media in September 2023.

4.1 Volume and Engagement

For the month of September 2023, 392,778 mentions were recorded by the query (see Figure 1). These mentions were predominantly made up of retweets at 63.4% of the overall recorded volume, indicating a preference for the resharing of content over the production of original content. 86,394 authors participated in the conversation in September with each account on average posting or reposting content around five times.

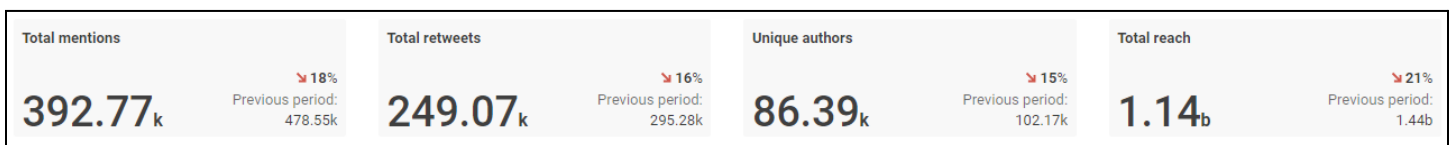


Figure 1: Total Volume and Engagement Metrics for September 2023

Throughout the course of September, accounts engaged in a broad variety of topics (see Figure 2).

- The beginning of the month saw interest expressed in women's month, continued coverage of Dr. Nandipha Magudumana, conversation around missing persons and a publicised case of gender-based violence which spurred the sharing of a call for awareness and action through the hashtag #justiceforkita.
- Conversations related to reality television shows such as #sengkhatele, #izinkomo and #uyajola99⁵, gained prominence in the conversation in mid-September. These were bracketed with general terms such as "black woman/women", "white woman" and social media. #masculinitysaturday and #askaman featured in this period. These hashtags were often used for the purpose of hashjacking, predominantly in #masculinitysaturday, while #askaman⁶ relates to a radio show.
- The end of the month comprised of conversations related to the passing of Zoleka Mandela, spousal support in the context of a publicised break-up of a celebrity couple, and the usage of "Boy Math" and

⁵ <https://www.dstv.com/mzansimagic/en-za/show/sengkhatele> ; <https://x.com/MojaLoveTv/status/1680261761755127809?s=20> ; <https://mojalove.co.za/portfolio/uyajola/>

⁶ <https://www.metrofm.co.za/metrofm/ask-a-man/>



The overall conversation has been segmented into various categories (see Figure 3). Currently, our in-house segmentation accounts for around 25% of all mentions brought in by the query, predominantly comprising mentions related to gender-based violence and misogyny, as well as marriage and cultural traditions. An explanation for the low percentage of categorised conversation is that the keyword based query contains some very broad words like ‘women’ or ‘woman’. Not every instance of the use of such keywords would be related to GBV or misogyny.



⁷ <https://www.thecut.com/2023/09/girl-math-boy-math-explained.html>

The conversation segmented is represented over time in Figure 4 below. Notable peaks of activity are present for GBV and misogyny (Green - S), and marriage and cultural tradition (Blue - M & N).

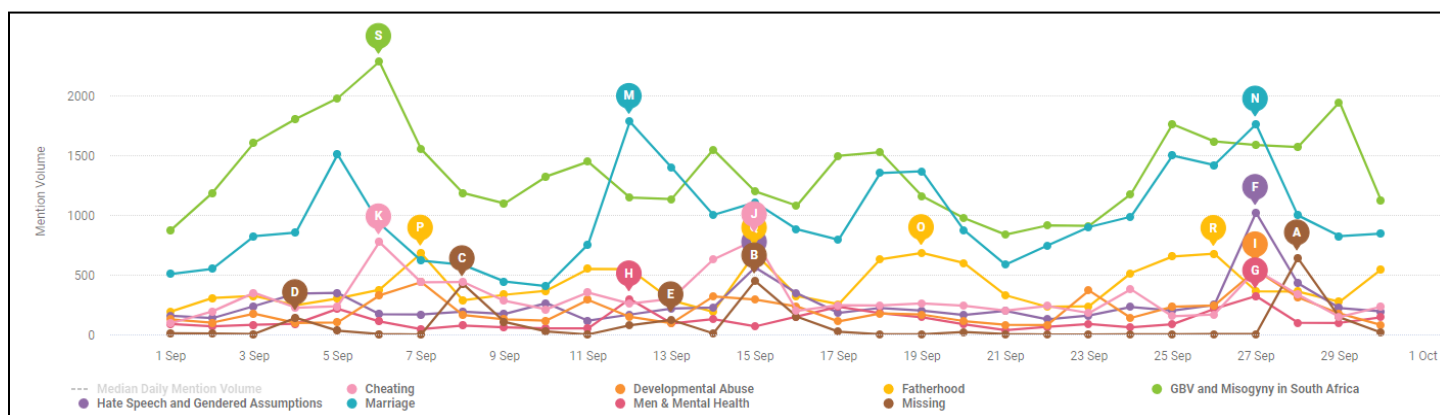


Figure 4: Mention Volume by category over time (excl. uncategorised)

The following section of the report will highlight upticks in conversation and provide context around the posting behaviour of accounts engaged in the broader GBV and misogyny conversation.

4.2 Volume Distribution

Our social media listening tool indicated a lack of mention volume peaks in September. In lieu of peak days, conversational bursts, or periods of rapid increase in mention count, have been identified manually (see Figure 5). These conversational bursts have been interpreted below.

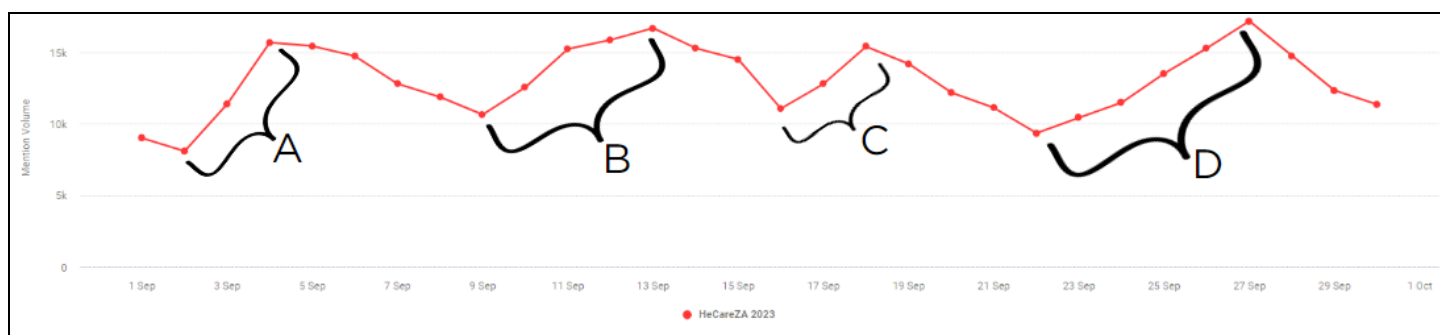


Figure 5: Mention Volume Over Time (Emphasised Conversational Bursts)

Burst A occurred between 2 and 4 September. The conversational uptick is broadly focused with a few high-engagement posts emerging within the period (See Figure 6). These posts ranged from topics about abuse by celebrities to calls to action against GBV (#justiceforkita). A video showing a mother shoplifting nappies/diapers for her child was also shared during this period. Researchers detected posts about falsified

marriages (which garnered responses with xenophobic and misogynistic undertones) and conversations on the impact of familial sanctioning of suspected infidelity.

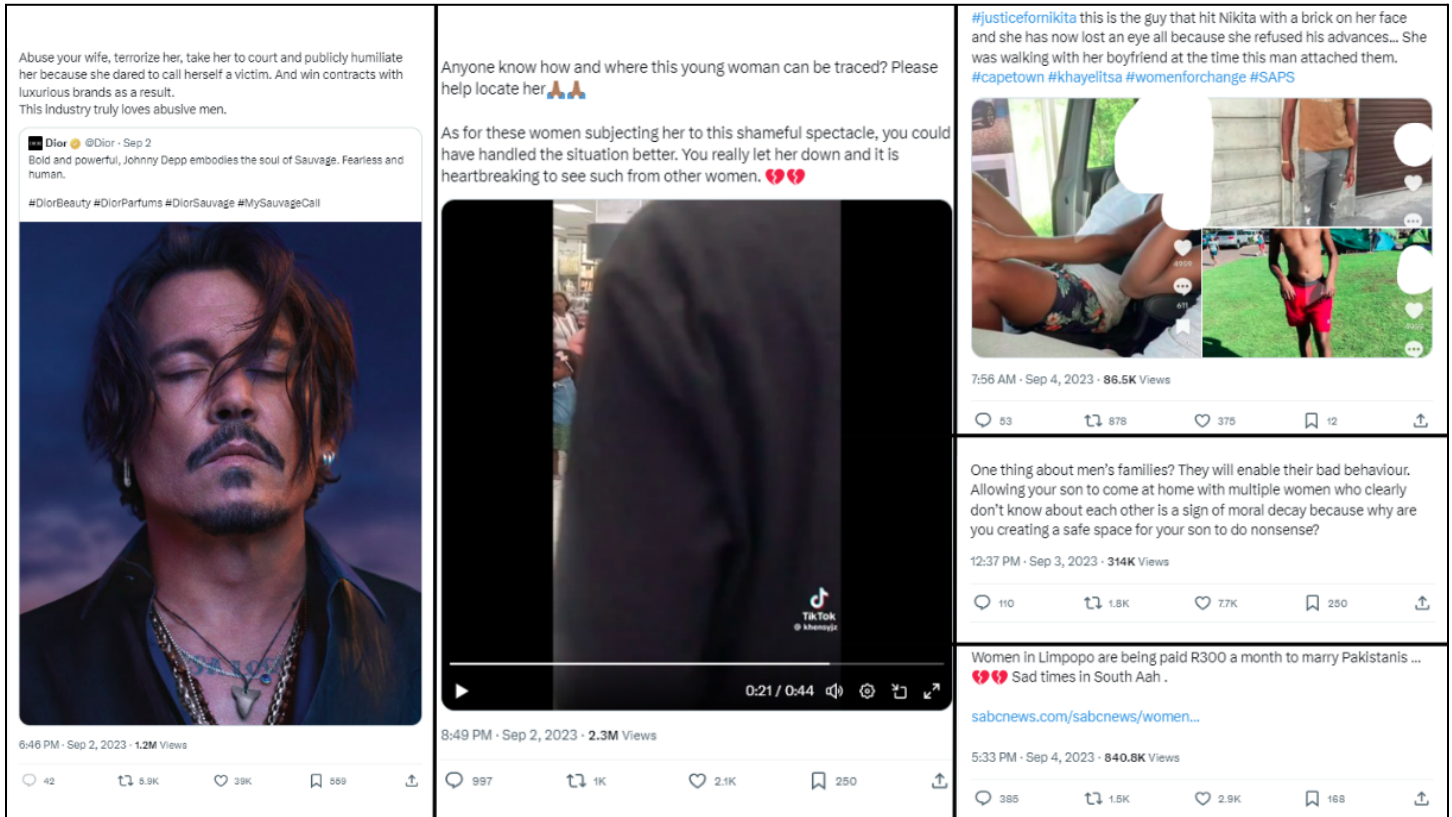


Figure 6: High traction posts that contributed to the conversational burst from 2 to 4 September

Burst B occurred between 9 and 13 September. Posts within this period focused on celebrity culture, comparisons between different forms of abuse, stereotypes related to stepmothers, perceived double standards in topics about violence against children and perceptions of women in relationships (see Figure 7).

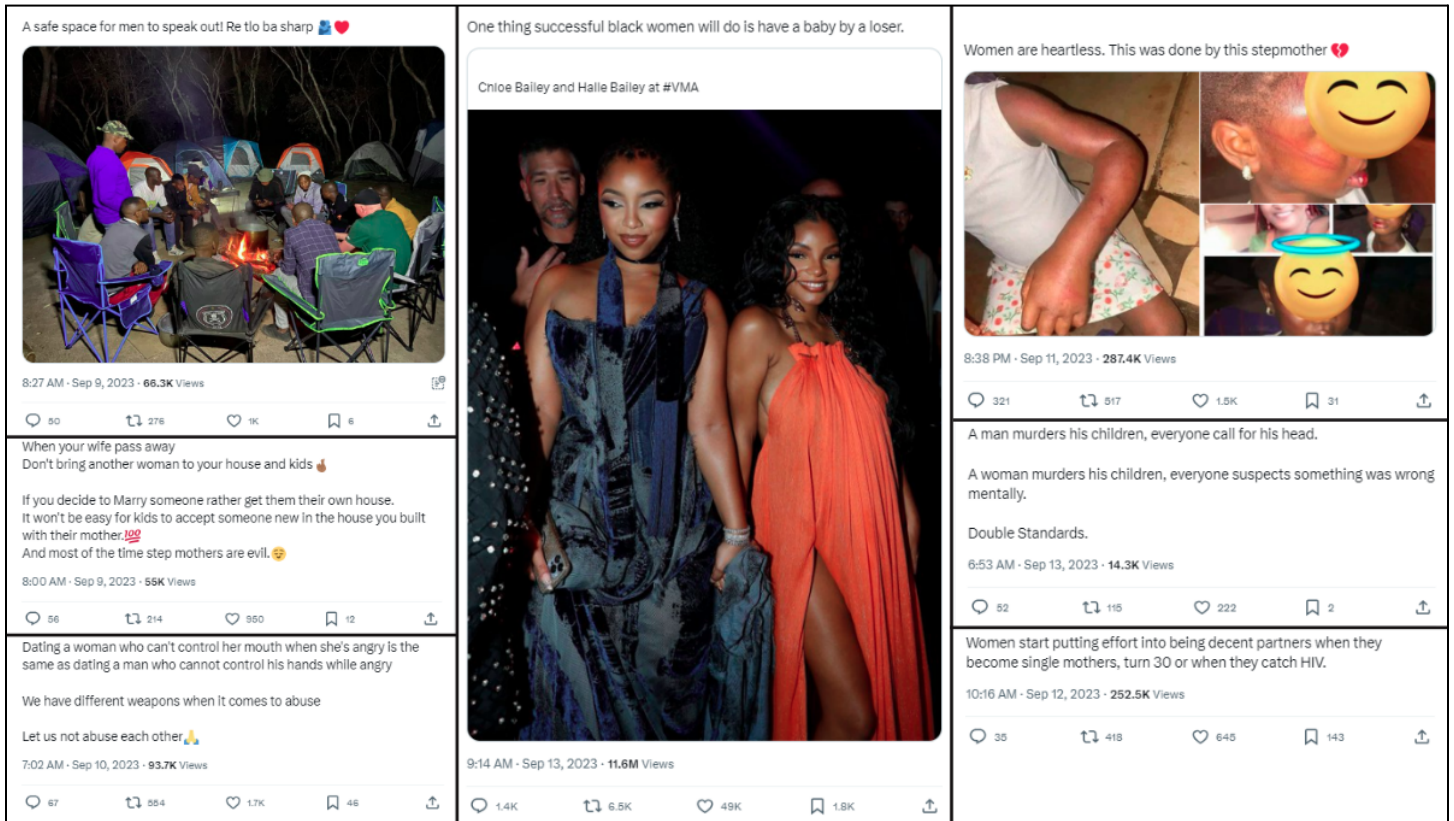


Figure 7: High traction posts that contributed to the conversational burst from 9 to 13 September

Burst C occurred between 16 and 18 September. Most posts in this timeframe were not relevant for the purpose of this report, except for two which held high engagement (see Figure 8). The post on the left included a skit, in which a woman asks a man for money and when he declines, she begins to scream and indicates that she will falsely accuse him of rape. The post on the right relays a rumour about TV personality, Minnie Dlamini. This post in particular, alongside other considerations related to spousal support, customary marriages and reactions thereof, will be interpreted further in Section 5.1 of this report.



Figure 8: High traction posts that contributed to the conversational burst from 16 to 18 September

Burst D, occurred between 22 and 27 September. Posts which drove engagement grappled with news of gender-based violence, co-parenting and step-fatherhood as well as secret marriages (see Figure 9).



Figure 9: High traction posts which contributed to the conversational burst from 22 to 27 September

Individuals tended to engage in conversation more often at the beginning of the week, with a noticeable dip in mention count occurring on Thursdays and a trend of decreased volume prevalent on the weekend, inclusive of Saturday and Sunday (see Figure 10).

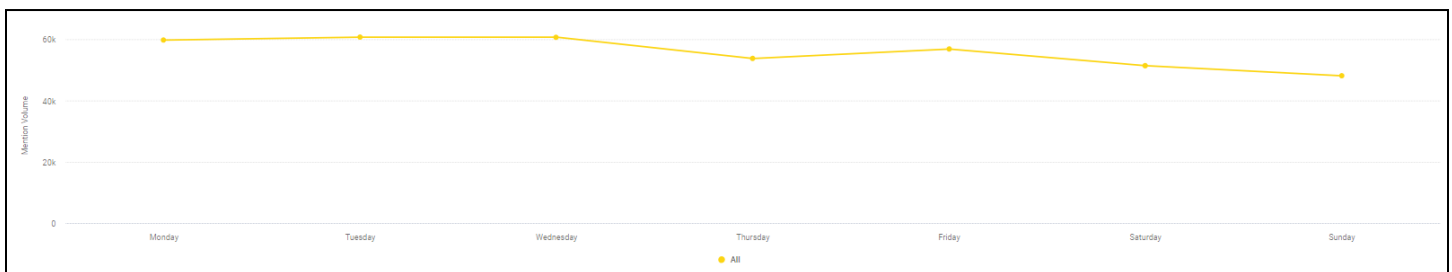


Figure 10: Mention Volume by day of the week

The most active time period throughout the month for account activity was 8pm. About 15,000 mentions were made for each hour between 7am and 10pm throughout September (see Figure 11).

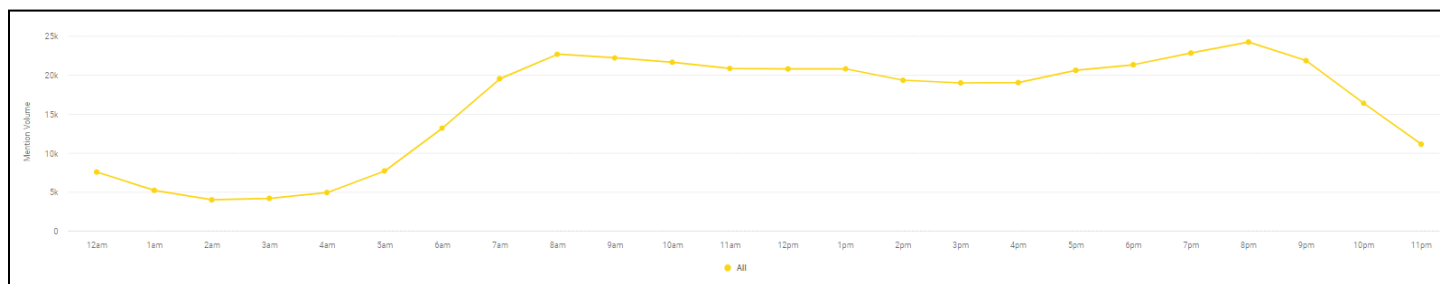


Figure 11: Mention Volume by hour of day

Our social media listening tool utilises an array of techniques such as geolocation and self-identified location to determine where accounts may be posting from (see Figure 12). In September, 86.4% of mentions were successfully categorised within one of the nine South African provinces. About 72% of these emanated from Gauteng, 10% from the Western Cape and 8% from KZN. The remaining 6 provinces accounted for under 3% of individual mention counts each.

By geolocating mentions, we are able to generate insights to inform assumptions at scale. For example, having the majority of mentions stem from Gauteng province suggests that urban-based populations may be more prevalent in conversations on X related to gender-based violence and misogyny. While this is only an assumption, it is important to note that Gauteng is often cited to comprise a large portion of the South African accounts active on the platform and that our selection of keywords intended to capture online conversation on these topics may sway the data⁸. In terms of language, it may suggest that the development of new keywords may be advantageous if a focus is placed on developing keywords in languages spoken in Gauteng, but more importantly on vernacular and colloquial keywords often used in online conversation⁹.

⁸ [State of SA Social Media \(2023\)](#) ; [State of SA Social Media \(2022\)](#)

⁹ <https://www.gcro.ac.za/outputs/map-of-the-month/detail/language-diversity-gauteng/> ;
<https://www.kaitomacreatives.co.za/thinking/translationtuesdays-the-fascinating-versatility-of-south-african-languages/>

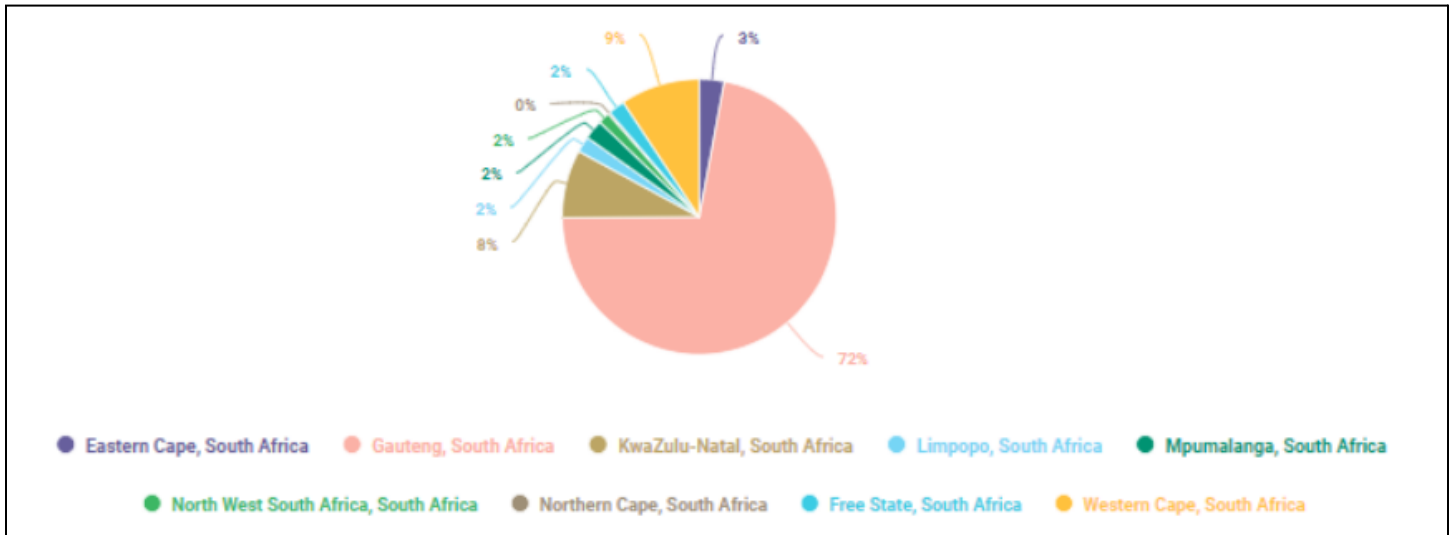


Figure 12: Geographical distribution of mentions brought in through the query

5. Macro Themes

Based on volume, relevance and prominence within the query, the following thematic areas were selected for further analysis: (1) Marriage, Custom, and Spousal Support; (2) Fatherhood. This section of the report engages with broad and popular themes which emerged during the data analysis phase of our reporting period (see [Appendix C - Methodology](#)).

5.1 Marriage, Custom, and Spousal Support

A video (see Figure 3) of a woman kneeling in front of a man (believed to be her partner) to give him food sparked a debate about respect and submission versus abuse and “slavery” among users online. Female submission is considered to be a component of both religious and cultural values in African societies¹⁰. However, this practice has been and continues to be criticised by those advocating for gender equality. Others simply believe that submission is outdated and has no place in modern society.

¹⁰ [Gender inequality in Africa: A re-examination of cultural values](#)



Figure 13: Posts which garnered high traction showcasing gendered custom

Users in support of the video argued that the woman showed respect and wished that their partners would also do the same. Others criticised the behaviour, arguing that the man would eventually be unfaithful to her, regardless of how much “respect” she showed him.

Recent developments in TV personality Minnie Dlamini’s divorce from her now ex-husband Quinton Jones were also among the main topics during the research period. Jones and Dlamini announced their divorce last year. It was reported that Jones was seeking R10 000 in monthly spousal support from Dlamini. A post reporting on these allegations was retweeted more than 1,000 times, receiving more than 600 comments and 7,000 likes (see Figure 4).



Figure 14: Post about Minnie Dlamini and Quinton Jones's alleged spousal support

In response, one user questioned why Jones would demand money from the mother of his child (see Figure 15 below).

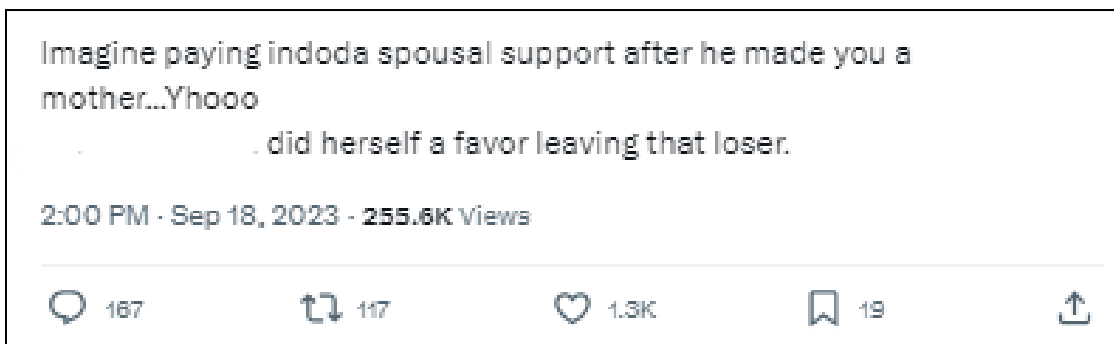


Figure 15: Response to allegations of Quinton Jones's R10 000 spousal support demand

Another account ran a poll asking users how much spousal support Jones “deserves” from Dlamini. The poll received 1,002 votes, with a majority voting that the amount should be increased to R50,000 (see Figure 16).

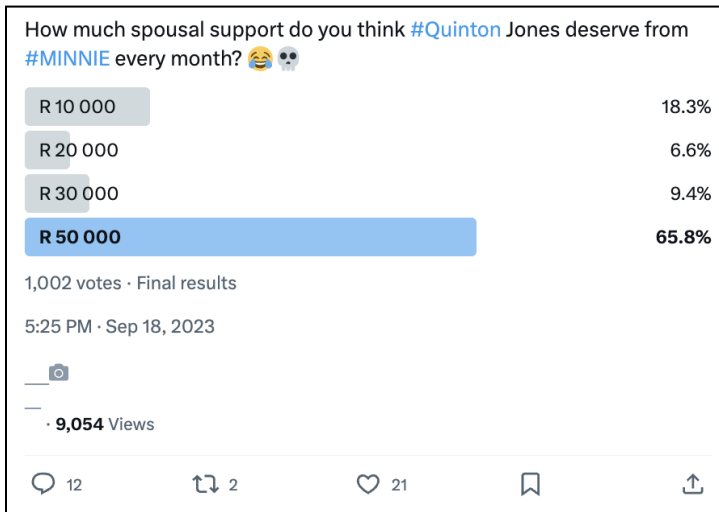


Figure 16: A poll on allegations of spousal support

Users in support of the alleged spousal support went on to congratulate Jones for “flipping the script” (see Figure 17). Popular posts include calling Jones a “focused” and “winning” man who is “mastering the game”.



Figure 17: Responses to a post about spousal support

These users also alluded to perceived “double standards” in the situation, highlighting that women did the same to men, therefore it should not be an issue when the tables are turned. Perceived hypocrisy/double standards have been one of the main points of contestation in the interactions between men and women online.

In another example in the Fatherhood section of this report (see Section [5.2](#)), one user shared that “some men will shame a woman for being a baby mama and glorify their mother for raising them without a father”. Accounts promoting misogyny online have also been found to devalue women based on certain lifestyle choices while appraising men for the same choices and behaviours.

The CABC has noted a recurring theme within the online conversation about lobola/magadi as a traditional practice. Posts which receive high traction within this conversation often question how families determine “bride price” during negotiations.



Figure 18: Post on sharing individual beliefs about lobola

In a previous [report](#), features/qualities such as “having tattoos, smoking or not being virgins” were considered undesirable in women. As in this report, some users tie a woman’s “worth” to her educational background, social media activity and whether she has children (see Figures 18 and 19). It is important to once again note that these sentiments do not reflect the traditional culture of lobola as a practice.



Figure 19: Post on lobola

There appears to be a lack of knowledge about the legal implications of customary marriages. A post explaining that antenuptial contracts signed after the conclusion of lobola celebrations were considered invalid (see Figure 20) was received with shock from users who were unaware of this condition.

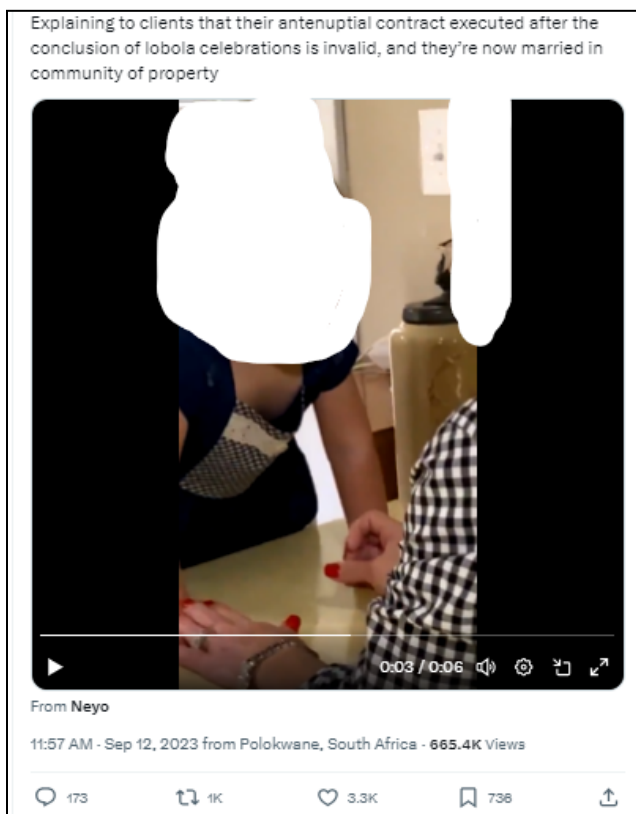


Figure 20: A post on customary marriage and antenuptial contracts

Customary marriages are considered, by default, to be in community of property. As a result, couples are advised to sign an antenuptial contract before concluding the customary marriage¹¹.

¹¹ [Customary Marriage VS Antenuptial Contract](#)

In summary, lobola continues to be a contested topic within the online community. As noted in previous reports, conversations around this practice have and continue to revolve around the following questions:

- Who must pay lobola? Can a woman pay her own lobola if she has the financial means to do so?
- What factors do families use to determine the price of lobola?
- What are the legal implications of concluded lobola negotiations?

5.2 Fatherhood

A high-traction post on fatherhood in the month of September indicated a perspective on parental roles in the case of relationships based on co-parenting. The author of the post suggests that the father, whether step, biological or social, who rears the child within their household, should assume the ultimate parental and fatherly responsibility for the child.

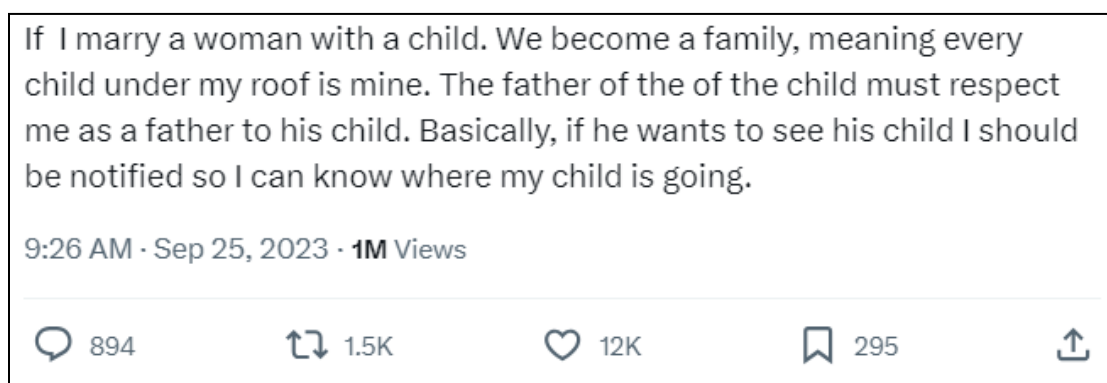


Figure 21: An individual shares a perspective on fatherhood in the context of co-parenting

This post has been deleted and reposted verbatim by multiple accounts over the past few years, having been reposted at least 14 times since 2021, but likely more. Individual versions of these tweets which are known to the researchers were not found through an advanced X search. This may be due to platform-specific regulations on the visibility of copy-paste, or duplicated content (see Figure 22)¹².

¹² This post formed part of an analysis on fatherhood in the second report for this project: [CABC EU/heCareZA Report 2](https://help.twitter.com/en/rules-and-policies/copy-paste-duplicate-content)
<https://help.twitter.com/en/rules-and-policies/copy-paste-duplicate-content>



Figure 22: Copypasta of the fatherhood tweet in Figure 21

Notably, the copypasta content in Figure 21, contained replies from the author to drive viewers toward purchasing clothing (see Figure 23).



Figure 23: Apparel Sales under duplicated content

Other high-traction posts around fatherhood in September touched on absent fatherhood. A popular post, seen in Figure 24 below, indicated that men in South Africa are at an advantage when it comes to parenting as they can choose to leave at any point.



Figure 24: A popular post which centred an assumption around men's role as fathers

Figure 25 showcases some narratives in reply to the original post. These replies centred on bodily autonomy and abortion as justification for men's agency to leave a parental role, as well as parental alienation by the mothers of their children. Interestingly, the first two tweets, of which the second is a reply to the first by the same account, invoke statistics to bolster a claim about women excluding men from seeing their children and being involved in their lives.

The claim that >80% of birth certificates did not have the information of the father, could not be substantiated. StatSA, in a 2021 report on statistics gathered in 2020, indicates a proportion above 60%¹³. This finding was bracketed with reference to section 10 of the Births and Deaths Registration Act of 1992¹⁴, which restricted unmarried fathers from having their surnames present on an "illegitimate" child's birth certificate unless express consent was given by the mother and such details were requested in the presence of all concerned parties and an official. In September 2021, this act was deemed unconstitutional¹⁵, allowing unmarried fathers to register children under their surnames and have their details on the child's documentation¹⁶. StatsSA's latest report on births focused on 2021, does not make explicit reference to figures which relay the amount of birth certificates which do not include the fathers surname¹⁷.

¹³ <https://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=14902>

¹⁴ https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/a511992.pdf

¹⁵ <https://www.saflii.org/za/cases/ZACC/2021/31.pdf>

¹⁶ <https://www.legalwise.co.za/news/unmarried-fathers-can-now-give-their-children-their-surname>

¹⁷ <https://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=16039>



Figure 25: Mentions in reply to Figure 24

Other mentions in reply by men who sought to reflect on and engage with the topic are featured in Figure 26.



Figure 26: Replies by men which reflected and engaged with the original tweet

Another theme emerged in September in relation to the shaming of single mothers. The post, as seen in Figure 27 below, indicates the perspective of an individual who believes that there is a form of dissonance present in narratives around single motherhood when absent fatherhood and single parent rearing is a relatively common experience in the South African context¹⁸.

¹⁸ <https://genderjustice.org.za/publication/state-of-south-africas-fathers-2021/>

Some men will shame a woman for being a baby mama and glorify their mother for raising them without a father.

11:14 PM · Sep 25, 2023 · 370.3K Views

209

1K

5.1K

103



Figure 27: A perspective is shared on the shaming of single mothers

Replies were varied, with those opposed to the statement demonstrating a bias toward their personal experience (see Figure 28)

Most of our mothers became single after our fathers whom they were married to passed on. They stayed and raised us in our fathers' homes.

Today average single mother has 3 kids with 3 different baby daddies never married any of them it's just streets lol

You can never compare

Yes , because father passed away, not because the mother is securing the bag ka bofebe, yeses I hate people who defend multi dating

It's because our mothers were not baby mama's and are not baby mama's, you can't compare our beloved mothers imbokodo with these... I don't even know what we call them "baby mama's". You can't compare these two.

Some of you became baby mamas due to imfebo... Our parents were left by our fathers, not difference. I can't respect a baby mama with 3 different daddies

Figure 28: Replies indicative of a bias toward personal experience

Men who replied to engage with the prompt shared stories of their experience of being raised by a single mother or raising family members communally (see Figure 29).

my father was gun down when was 6 months old,so my mom had to raise me alone.. !100 🤖👑
My nephews dad was stabbed when he was 4 months old, we're raising him now... you're not alone bro 🤖
I would glorify my mother for the rest of my life because she raised me and my siblings alone after loosing our dad at a very young age. I believe I can do the same to any responsible baby mama raising children without a father.

Figure 29: Reflection and the sharing of experience by men in relation to the original tweet

6. Individual Expressions

This portion of the report analyses original posts from individual accounts, which belong to men, with a low-to-moderate followership. While these posts do not necessarily garner high engagement, they provide a lens into the perspectives and opinions of everyday users sharing personal anecdotes not necessarily related to trends on social media or swayed by influencer accounts. This is important because these insights will inform the design and supporting material of on-the-ground sectoral engagement and outreach activities within this programme. Furthermore, identifying insights from individuals may serve to inform our knowledge gap in this space as it pertains to the perceptions men may hold. In order to focus data being returned from the query, posts were restricted along the following parameters: (1) Accounts needed to have less than 10,000 followers¹⁹; (2) Posts needed to be wholly original, excluding retweets, quote tweets and replies to other posts. Qualitative checks through account biographies, profile pictures and self-referential gendered posts were utilised to ensure that posts stemmed solely from men.

Once the parameters were put in place, mentions were sourced from in-house categories²⁰, built to segment original posts from the query. The present themes are: (1) Men and Mental Health; (2) Marriage and Cultural Tradition; (3) Parental Roles, Alienation and Paternity Testing; (4) Gendered Assumptions and Hate Speech; (5) Gender-Based Violence and Misogyny. Once the posts had been filtered, manual checks and selection took place across all returned mentions, in total amounting to just under 3,500 mentions.

¹⁹ This number was selected as accounts with less than 10,000 followers are considered '[nano-influencers](#)', in 2019, the average twitter account had [707 followers](#). Aiming to incorporate mentions from accounts with less than 10,000 followers represented a satisfactory compromise for our first exploration of individual expressions.

²⁰ Categories act similarly to a 'funnel', in which the use of specific keywords assists in filtering relevant content

6.1 Men and Mental Health

The “Men and Mental Health” category used root words, among others Men, Man, Mfethu, Grootman, alongside descriptive words, such as Anxiety, Depression, Suicide, Dysphoria, Self-Harm, “Mental Health” etc. to isolate conversation related to Men and Mental Health. Filtering for original posts created by accounts with less than 10,000 followers, the query returned 104 mentions. A sample of these mentions considered relevant are showcased below (see Figures 30 and 31).

Figure 31 showcases a perspective expressed by a man that society holds no empathy for men’s mental health struggles. The post in question indicates that the person who posted this feels that these topics are often overshadowed or ignored through comparison with the struggles women face in society.

They DONT CARE how sad men are.

They DONT CARE if we kill ourselves.

If you even mention it, they start mentioning how women dont get paid enough or some other conflation garbage.

How we feel means NOTHING to society.

Until they need us to run into a burning building.

Figure 31: A man shares his opinion on societal perceptions toward men’s mental health

Figure 32 showcases a compiled series of tweets by four men. These tweets portray perspectives on the need for further attention on men’s mental health, considerations by accounts that men need to go through pain in order to grow and that mental healthcare is not valuable for men, and the sharing of an image which uses male celebrities as a device for expressing that men’s mental health is not taken seriously but rather is used as a form of humour.





<p>@GovernmentZA Why are there so few resources and support here for men's mental health? There is almost nothing and almost no resources to be found online. This is part of the #femicide problem in South Africa. Broken men perpetuating the cycle of breaking others. Quite frankly this is shocking considering the amount of abuse there is in ZA. There is such a culture of shame around men seeking and undergoing treatment, to ask for help and to get better. The only emotions allowed to them are anger and lust. Society needs to do better.</p>	<p>A man details #ISB and abuse on @Radio2000ZA - stabbed by his woman, threats on his car and job whenever he tries to break things off, & doesn't know what to do. BUT, no help offered/suggested at all, no "stay on the line...", life just moved on! How sad 😞 #BetterTogether</p>
<p>If I was a woman I wouldn't trust a man that has never been through pain or worse make him my man. Never!</p>	<p>When Tyrese had a mental breakdown online in regards to not seeing his daughter in 2 years. People laughed at him and he became a meme.</p> 
<p>As a man you must suffer or go through challenges first so you can be strong.</p>	<p>When Kanye West Had A Mental Breakdown On Tv. People called him "crazy" and he too became a meme.</p> 
<p>Challenges = growth</p>	<p>The world watched Will Smith listen to his wife tell him live that she had an affair. People laughed at Will. He too became a meme.</p> 
<p>Therapy is a waste of time for men. Imagine going there and the therapist tell "it's okay, cry". Is crying going to fix the problems? I don't think so.</p>	<p>Yet, folks wonder why men don't open up about their mental health.</p> 
<p>You have to suffer, go through pains to fix your life as men.</p>	
<p>I think crying is fun and that's why women do it a lot.</p>	

Figure 32: Posts related to mental health, the seeking of mental healthcare and perceptions around masculinity

6.2 Marriage and Cultural Tradition

The "Marriage and Cultural Tradition" category uses root keywords solely. Examples of these keywords are, marriage, lobola, magadi, mahadi, umembeso, izbizo and dowry. Filtered for our individual expression parameters, this category returned 1,134 mentions.

Figure 33 below showcases relevant posts which hold a negative sentiment. These posts highlight perspectives from men on bridal valuation, marital rape and value judgements based upon assumptions of the "modern" woman.

Men, Modern women do not deserve the grace of lobola. You cannot gamble with your hard earned cash. Impregnate first and pay lobola in installments. Avoid unnecessary heartaches and heartbreaks. Reward what she did, not what you assume she's going to be.	When I first heard about the concept of marital rape I thought it was an oxymoron. In my culture, it is generally understood that when a woman has given herself in marriage to a man, and it is the woman who gives herself and the man who accepts her offer, she has consented to his right to sleep with her. We are also taught that neither man nor woman should say "No" to their partners because it is a sacred duty on both to fulfill the sexual needs of each other.
This lobola thing use to be a good thing back in the days besaziphethe kahle, I mean you can't buy a car with a huge mileage lento izohlezi ikuhlupha nje	However, it was always emphasised that women specifically should not refuse their husbands. There is an obvious mechanical and biological reason for this: a man who is really just stressed and tired may not be able to get it up anyway and so while it is not in the nature of men to refuse sex to begin with, he may in fact not be able to have sex sometimes. Later I learnt that in other cultures they practice forced marriages which under Islamic law proper is invalid, but considered valid in some Muslim cultures where proper measures for consent are not established- when the guardian marries off his daughter it is assumed that the daughter consented. I am not going to condone all things Muslims do in the name of their respective cultures or hide away what's bad amongst Muslims so as to safeguard the perception of 'ours is better...' Rather, the thing that is better is Islam, not all Muslims follow it. #marriage #rape
Lol her family won't let me marry her because they want her to enroll in varsity and finish then we can talk about lobola. They wanna charge more 😊 well if we don't marry she has her family to blame for being so greedy.	

Figure 33: Posts related to Marriage and Cultural Tradition with a negative slant

Figure 34 below represents mentions holding a neutral to positive sentiment. These posts consider “vat en sit” relationships, where unmarried couples live together, as well as concerns around perspectives on lobola and the corruption of its original meaning.

Vat n sit is vital for at least a year. Don't marry someone you barely even know. Weekend visits are not sufficient to learn one's disposition.
The statement that 'dowry is a social evil' is not true ,men finish paying lobola you will understand the meaning of that later.
We've corrupted what the meaning of lobola is. Bo malome ba lona using it go phanda.
one day we might sit down and have a conversation about hoe the 11 cows for lobola mark is not traditional to us and was imposed by a white man who they named a town after in KZN. maybe a conversation around how the normal number was around 6, not uhlambi lwezinkomo

Figure 34: Posts related to Marriage and Cultural Tradition with a reflective slant

6.3 Parental Roles, Alienation and Paternity Testing

The ‘Fatherhood’ category utilises terms such as atm dad, deadbeat, co-parent, parental alienation, uBaba and custody among other keywords to focus the conversation on fathers. Filtered for our individual expression parameters, this category returned 399 mentions.

Figure 35 below highlights fatherhood-adjacent content which holds a negative slant. Content of this nature was slanted toward paternity, or DNA testing and based on assumptions around social stigma on the practice. One post speaks to content which arose under the 'Men and Mental Health' category, which situated masculinity as an overcoming of adversity.

Don't come tell me it's a fathers duty to do that. Do u know how many fatherless homes there r in this world? I was taught to earn my keep from a young age. Not because my father couldn't raise me with a silver spoon. No because he had to break me to make me. The cycle of life 🍌
Why do women get so angry when they hear DNA test? Why does it trigger them?
Why are women scared of DNA test ??
<p>*Breaking News*</p> <p>*A woman had obtained a Court injunction stopping her husband from conducting a DNA test on their three children.*</p> <p>*When asked why, she said allowing the DNA test would cause her “.. severe and irreparable damages..”*</p> <p>That's where we are.</p> <p>😭😭😭😭😭😭😭</p>

Figure 35: Posts related to Fatherhood and Parenting with a negative slant

In contrast, Figure 36 below showcases men posting their reflections on the difficulties they face fulfilling a fatherly role and their assumptions on present fatherhood. Notably, the second tweet in the compilation makes explicit reference to fatherhood requiring presence rather than access to financial resources.

Just because you don't need a man or woman, does not mean your child won't need a present father or mother.
Children are not there to fill a void in you.
Being a father requires TIME, not money....
It is hard to be a good loving and caring partner, father, who is always there and an accomplished entrepreneur making enough money to give your family everything they deserve.
<p>The amount of deadbeat fathers that we have in South Africa is insane.</p> <p>My take will always be; if you don't want to be a present father at the VERY least support your child financially.</p>

Figure 36: Posts related to perceptions of parental roles by men

Fatherhood returned a variety of relevant mentions and perspectives. Figure 37 below themes responses by men who take a gendered approach to child-rearing, advocate for the shaming of absent fathers and engage with perceptions around judicial and personal access to children in the South African context.

How do you expect a boy who grew up without a father to grow up and be one. Worse of all you actually believe a woman could teach it to him. Fish have easier tasks teaching birds how to fly. #feminist
When a woman says "I carried the child" during coparenting struggles - she's saying she has more rights to the child than the father - contrary to South African law. Fathers deserve equal access to their children when y'all breakup. Stop being toxic. Let the man fail on his own
deadbeat fathers are the root of almost all our problems in the black community. we need to shame them more.
As a young girl, you have no reason to be a single mother. Every child needs a father. He may not be the man you want him to be but his voice every time he rises it in the house leaves an impression to your children's NB: There are things a man can do and a woman can not do.
No one is talking about us being denied access to our kids 🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄 No one is ready to talk about it. If only one doesn't send maintenance money, the whole world will know that you are a deadbeat father 🙄🙄

Figure 37: Gendered Perspectives on Parental Relationships and Alienation

6.4 Gendered Assumptions and Hate Speech

The 'Gendered Assumptions and Hate Speech' category makes use of keywords such as, ubufebe, sfebe, slut, modern women, traditional women, amavuso, patriarchy, toxic masculinity and toxic femininity to focus mentions on content related to gendered assumptions, roles and hate speech. After applying individual expression parameters, this category returned 233 mentions.

Posts from this category focused on assumptions around the reporting of abuse by women, value judgements, the role of fathers and the development of gendered role behaviour in children, and perspectives on divorce and relationships.

Women hide abusive men but expose broke men, because a woman would rather lose her life than source of income
Learn OR perish!!!
No normal man would want to marry a woman with tendencies of a slut.....ngibulaleni
Modern men act more like women, because most of them were raised by women.
It's not rocket science. It's very hard for a boy to become not only a competent, but emotionally well rounded and mature man without any significant input from older men.
Even the ancients knew this
Truth is, woman's submission is the only way to prevent divorce. Otherwise divorce is inevitable. Divorce wreaks sorrow and regret.
Indoda must normalize hustling, Ladies don't like umahlalela. Strong, independent men is music to their ears..
As indoda I'D rather hustle (24/7) than slave (9 - 5)..👊
Women like men they can control and manipulate, generally speaking. It's easier to maintain a relationship you can control

Figure 38: Posts related to Gendered Assumptions, Roles and Hate Speech

6.5 Gender-Based Violence and Misogyny

The 'Gender-Based Violence and Misogyny' category employs keywords such as femicide, GBV, misogyny, rape, intimate partner violence, perpetrator and sexism, among others. After applying individual expression parameters, this category returned 1,568 mentions.

Figure 39 below showcases mentions from men reflecting on and aiming to disrupt narratives of gendered violence. This form of self-organisation provides a lens into the ways men can be engaged on the topic of GBV. The reflections present stem from the need to 'call out' abusive men, the need for men to uplift women and girls, the prompting of thoughts on masculinity and insecurity in relation to abuse, the acceptance and despondency in relation to the epidemic of GBV within the country, and reflection on the difficulty in speaking up about abuse when you are a man.

<p>We, men, hardly call out other men who are known to be abusers. So many men, even on this platform are known for harassing and abuse women, but we hardly call them out. Why is that gents?</p> <p>3:53 PM · Sep 18, 2023 · 78 Views</p> <p>3 1</p>	<p>Manhood is not about dominating others, but about empowering them. As men, we have a responsibility to use our power to lift up women and girls. We can do this by listening to their voices, challenging sexism and misogyny, and supporting them in leadership positions.</p>
<p>You have an important point bro. Silence in the face of abuse perpetuates the problem. It's crucial for everyone, including men, to speak out against harassment and abuse. Let's encourage open conversations about respecting others and fostering a safe environment for all.</p> <p>5</p>	<p>A man who is comfortable with his masculinity does not seek to subjugate a woman. Abuse stems from insecurity</p>
<p>.....therefore, reluctance to call out abusers, regardless of their gender, only allows the problem to persist. As a community, we must promote a culture of accountability, where everyone feels responsible for creating a safe and respectful environment.</p> <p>1 26</p>	<p>80% of women I've had a deep conversation with whether friends or exes have told me they have raped/assaulted. In my mind I'm think no way soo many women have been thru this.</p> <p>It basically means in your click of homies, some of them are abusers/rapists. It's s very scary thought</p>
<p>But why do you think there's often this hesitation to speak up, especially among men though 🤔? I am curious.</p> <p>6</p>	<p>Abuse is something else man . Sometimes you don't know whom to tell that you're being abused by someone that you're in love with . It's painful</p>

Figure 39: Posts by men which reflect on GBV, Abuse and Misogyny

In selecting individual posts from men within the GBV and misogyny category, two posts were noted that spoke to perceptions on psychological determinants and risk factors in the context of intimate partner violence (see Figure 40). The first post speaks to the difficulty of exiting from an abusive relationship, where the individual in question indicates that they reached out to someone they know who was in a physically abusive relationship. The post in question relays that the individual's attempt to reach out to the person in the abusive relationship was rebuffed, before ending off with the statement “huns [women] love abusers nje”.

The response does not account for difficulties in abusive relationships related to trauma bonding²¹, or socio-economic factors which may keep survivors tied to their abusers. This presents an opportunity for engagement, where an individual has expressed their willingness or desire to assist an individual to leave an abusive relationship, but may be confused on why they have been responded to in an unexpected way.

<p>Found out this hun gettin beat up by her guy, trying to reach out to her that abusive relationships aint the end goal but hey the replies I'm gettin are wild, HUNS LOVE ANUSERS NJJEE...</p>
<p>The most abusive man is the one that deep down knows you deserve better. 🍌 100</p>

Figure 40: Misconceptions related to GBV and Misogyny

²¹ <https://www.thehotline.org/resources/trauma-bonds-what-are-they-and-how-can-we-overcome-them/>

7. Dialogue Facilitation

The dialogue facilitation team is responsible for facilitating direct and indirect dialogue online that; 1) encourages critical engagement with mis- and disinformation, 2) calms negative, toxic or frenetic narratives, and 3) prevents and heals social ills perpetuated through hate speech or the promotion of violence. This is achieved through skillfully designed engagements that consist of bringing people into a process of self-reflection and healing at scale.

The impact of these efforts is increased by engaging with change agents through a variety of different platforms to train and mobilise citizens to facilitate online dialogue. This includes the use of Turn.io to train change agents in dialogue facilitation and the team takes shifts to monitor the platform for opportunities to engage. Turn.io is an interactive additional platform for dialogue facilitation training and resources. To look at the menu individuals can WhatsApp “hi” to +27 (60) 011-1011 or click on this [link](#) to go there directly.

The dialogue facilitation team is responsible for creating dialogue facilitation Canva designs to facilitate conversations online. The dialogue facilitators provide insights into online conversations and narratives internally to the other units within the CABC.

We harness social media platforms as dynamic spaces to foster relationships with men through online dialogue and to engage them as allies in order to dismantle gender discrimination and violence. Fathers are an important focus group of the project as men will be changing harmful gendered norms of behaviour for the benefit of themselves, and for the improved safety and wellbeing of their children and partners. Additionally and critically, for sustainability and long-term impacts, modelling these new attitudes and practices to sons and daughters so that they are likely to adopt the practices as they grow up, thus fundamentally disrupting the intergenerational transfer of misogynistic practices.

7.1 Dialogue Facilitation Metrics

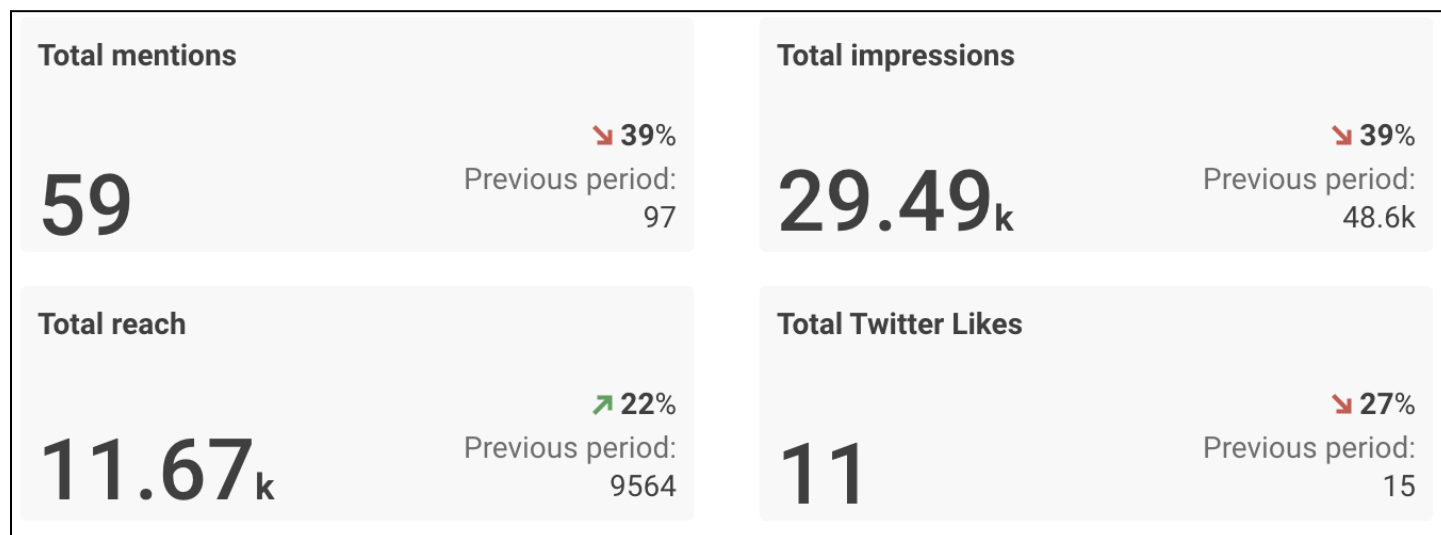


Figure 41: Total mention volume of heCareZA directed dialogue

Figure 41 shows the total activity of the CABC Dialogue Facilitation team from 1 to 30 September 2023, achieved an impressive 29,490 impressions and reached 11,670 accounts, which is a 22% increase compared to the previous period as detailed in Figure 41 above. This period saw the facilitators actively posting and commenting 59 times, which is included in this tally. The calculation of reach is deeply influenced by how much engagement each post receives and the traffic associated with the author or site. To assess the likely number of individuals who saw a given post, our social media analytics platform utilises a specialised algorithm. This algorithm integrates various metrics and applies content source-specific assumptions based on patterns previously observed in user behaviour.

Using Report Insights in Dialogue Facilitation

The aim of the research reports is to provide dialogue facilitators with a deeper understanding of the broader online conversation which guides the work of the team. This section shows the insight from the fifth report which was applicable to dialogue facilitation. One of the key insights from report four was around paternal involvement in their children's lives.

In this space a facilitator posted a dialogue design online, which was shared by a user and garnered significant attention (see Figure 42). This sparked discussions about the responsibilities of fathers in reaching out to their children. The original post stated that it is not the child's responsibility to initiate contact, but rather the father's duty to connect with their children.

Responses to this tweet varied, reflecting a spectrum of perspectives on this issue. While the majority resonated with the viewpoint that fathers should proactively engage with their children, others presented alternative narratives. Some users highlighted the influential role of mothers in shaping father-child relationships. Personal accounts were shared where fathers had attempted to connect with their children only to face rejection. This brought to light scenarios where older children sometimes opt to distance themselves from their fathers. Additionally, discussions emerged around situations where mothers might use children as leverage in disputes with their partners potentially creating barriers in father-child connections. In response to these diverse viewpoints, the dialogue facilitation team leveraged this opportunity to develop several dialogue designs around this topic. These designs aimed at fostering conversations that delve into the varied experiences and perspectives surrounding father-child relationships, discipline and the roles of both parents in nurturing these bonds.

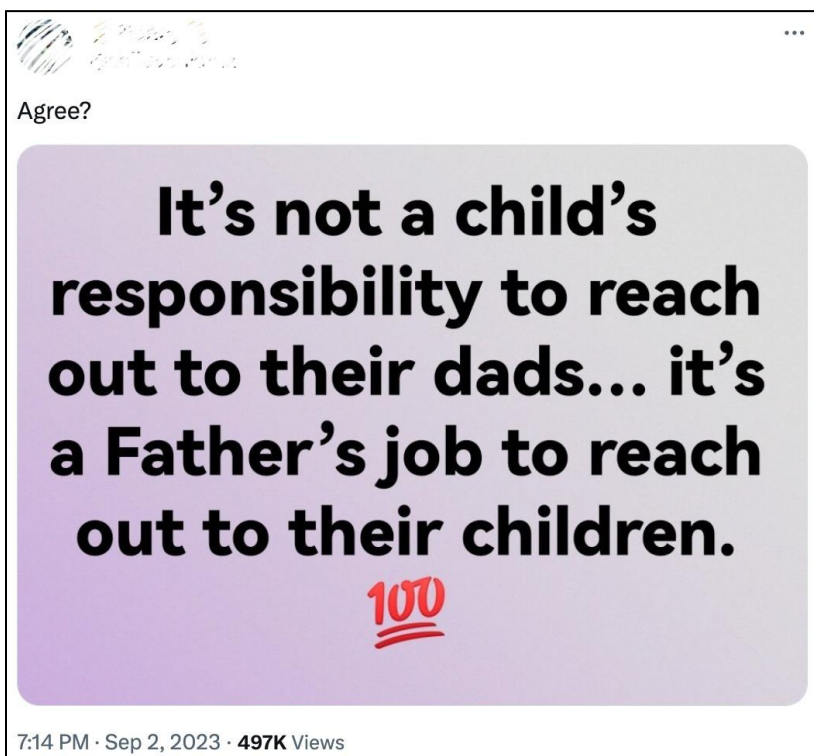


Figure 42: Post shared by user

Dialogue Facilitation Designs

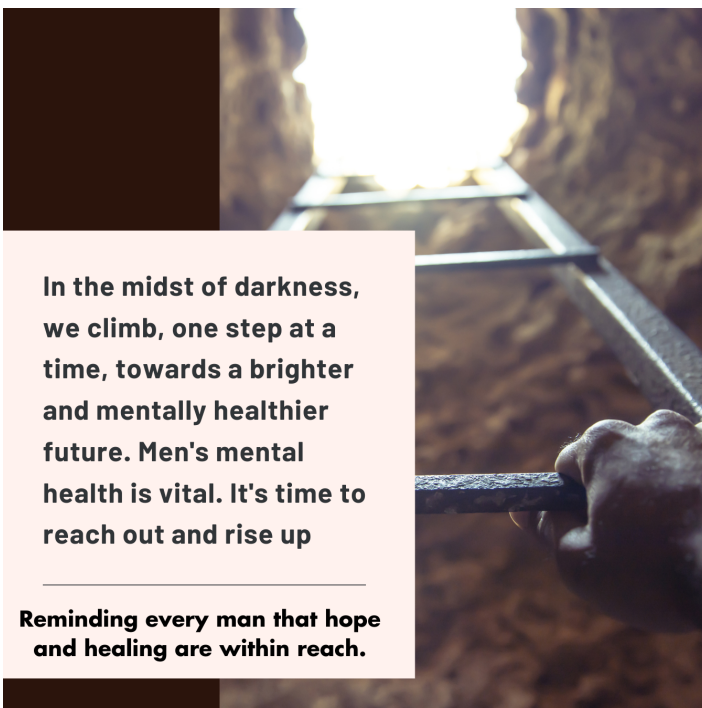
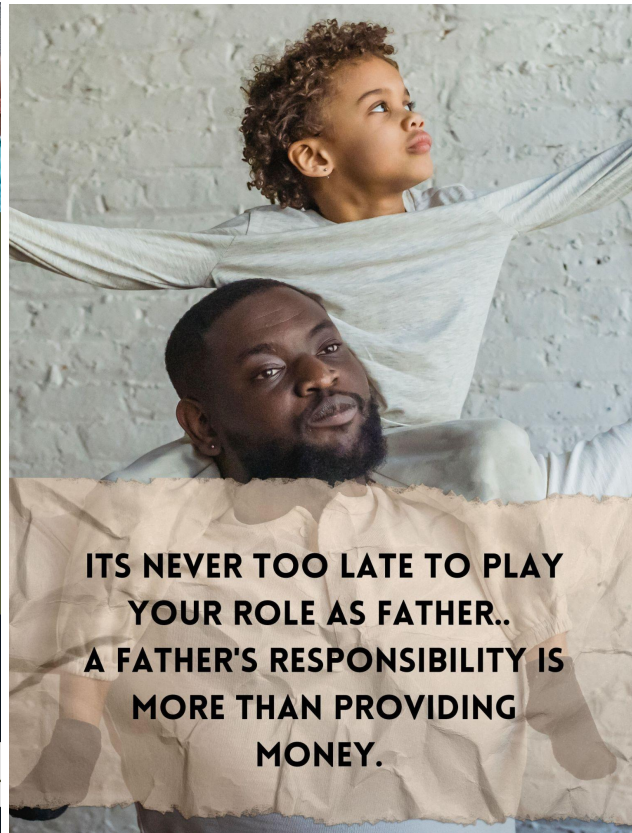



Figure 43: Dialogue Designs

7.2 heCareZA Dialogue Deck

#HeCareZA

DIALOGUE DECK




APPROACH

Dialoguing is a way to help and support men who are caught or stuck in spaces that encourage hatred and violence toward women. This deck will help you change men's toxic ideas of women and help men express themselves differently.

HOW TO USE THE DIALOGUE DECK

- Use the responses below to give you ideas for your replies.
- Make the suggested tweets your own.
- Remember to use #IsonoSethuYini at the end of all your tweets
- Set yourself a daily tweet and retweet target
- Get the squad involved. Make teams of 2 or more who have your back and retweet each other




SAMPLE TWEET

A lot of you don't understand there are millions of 18-30 year old men who have grown up with no (or weak) fathers, in a society that constantly tells them their gender is the source of all problems, women don't need them, their masculinity is 'toxic', and everything is hopeless.

4:04 PM · Jan 5, 2023 · 1.3M Views

SUGGESTED RESPONSES



- What do you suggest should be done to help those that are raised in such environments?
- How can we stop such a mentality to all fathers in our society?
- How accurate is your statistic and how did you come up with its conclusion?
- We have to approach this issue by not isolating men nor women from the conversation. How do you suggest we open this conversation with men?
- How do we know that a man is weak?

PUBLISH AND SHARE

You can publish on social networks and share with the team or ask for assistance.

Find more examples on the following page

Figure 44: heCareZA Dialogue Deck

The heCareZA team has put together a dialogue deck for digital activists to explore and make their responses their own. The dialogue deck is a collection of sample tweets with responses from the dialogue facilitators that allies can use to see how facilitators approach a statement and frame their own responses to similar tweets as well as use for inspiration and an example for their own dialoguing. By making these decks freely available online, allies are able to engage on Twitter using the dialogue methodology to engage with those who make harmful statements. This deck will help you change men's ideas of women and help men express themselves differently. View the heCareZA Dialogue Deck [here](#).

We shared the dialogue deck on our Digital Activism WhatsApp group to inspire the members to get involved in online conversations. Are you currently involved in gender-based violence prevention? We would love to hear from you. Send us an email and join the heCareZA Collective. Email us at info@hecareza.co.za

8. Reach Out for Help

Lifeline: 021 461 1113

GBV Command Centre: 0800 428 428

Rape Crisis Centre: 021 447 9762

Sonke Gender Justice: 021 423 7088

You can also send a please-call-me to a Social Worker by dialling *120*7867#

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Appendix

Appendix A: heCareZA Ethical Considerations

In our work, we abide by specific ethical principles to ensure that we do no harm. We are particularly influenced by the recommendations made by the Partners for Prevention in their report, “Using social media for prevention of violence against women.” (Liou, 2013). Below, we list these recommendations and explain how they relate to our work.

Anonymity and confidentiality: All research findings will be sufficiently aggregated to ensure that no one community or individual can be identified. Where case study findings are presented, we will change sufficient detail to ensure that the source of the information cannot be identified. In our study, we focused exclusively on content that is publicly available. Nonetheless, we are aware that the boundaries between public and private are dynamic and often blurred in the social media space (Markham, 2018). For example, although social media users may consent to sharing their content publicly and with “third parties” at the point of sign up (Samuel & Buchanan, 2020; Williams et al., 2017), they may not agree to their words and personal identities being subject to academic scrutiny and publication. Therefore, to ensure our research is ethically responsible and that we protect the privacy of social media users, we do not include their names, Twitter handle or profile picture.

Stigmatisation: We will be scientifically rigorous in our dissemination of research findings and highlight that GBV and VAW are cross-cutting phenomena that exist in all communities and socio-economic groups. We will reiterate that these issues do not exist in one setting and are not perpetrated by specific ethnic groups.

Retraumatization and counselling: The heCareZA programme involves the facilitation of dialogue from an empathetic perspective. Rather than judging or shaming men, our facilitators are trained to support constructive conversations amongst men that address the cycle of violence, problematic social norms, and challenge discriminatory language and actions, from outright insults to sexist jokes. Moreover, we encourage perpetrators of GBV to reach out for healing.

Since this is a sensitive topic, and mental health is a growing concern among South African men we regularly post contact numbers for the GBV Command Centre, who has 24/7 counselling for survivors and perpetrators or to the non-profit, free counselling service of Families South Africa (FAMSA). In the event that we identify anyone that needs more comprehensive support, we always refer them directly to these same support

services. Lastly, we also share appropriate referral contact numbers on the heCareZA website and on our regular social media posts.

Informed consent: In our analysis of mass data on public social media, we will not be able to ask everyone for consent. However, as mentioned above, all of this data is publicly available and will be rigorously aggregated to ensure that all identities and communities are protected.

For the change agents, we will send a message to men who speak out against GBV online, and we will invite them to visit the website or join the Facebook group. The nature of the Facebook group is that they can leave the group at any time without any negative repercussions. We will not seek informed consent from all Facebook group members.

Appendix B: Exclusions

NOT ("uncle waffle*" OR "imali" OR "DiepCity" OR NoBhuti OR Showmax OR TheWife OR YomZulu OR YomXhosa OR Inja OR Umshado OR Igcwale OR Mnakwethu OR "Ari Lennox" OR Uyihlo OR #ad OR bbnaija OR bbmzansi OR sundowns OR mamelodi OR "hook ups" OR "sugar mommy" OR "sugar mamas" OR "strings attached" OR "find a blesser" OR "dating for singles" OR #teamnaturalhair OR #skeemsaam OR #vote4lasizwe OR #yourkeytofinancialfreedom OR #singleandmingle OR #nofuxxgiven OR #podcastandchill OR #squarerootcreatives OR "Meghan Markle" OR "Jeremy Clarkson" OR "Buckingham Palace" OR "World Cup" OR "Super Cup" OR "Section 89" OR Ramaphosa OR Zuma OR State OR RET OR Football OR "Prince Harry" OR Messi OR Morocco OR #BBTitans OR #BigBrotherTitans OR DM OR "Follow & Retweet" OR #thewifeshowmax OR #t20worldcup OR crypto OR #eth OR #btc OR NFT OR #gamblingtwitter OR #bitcoin OR bitcoin OR #nsfwtt OR #fifaworldcup OR #betredemption OR #gvfip OR #NBA OR #tiktok OR #NFL OR #Soccer OR #Win OR President OR ANC OR God OR Jesus OR Rwanda OR Kagame OR "Heavenly Father" OR Pope OR Pray* OR Holy OR John OR Psalm* OR EFF OR DA OR Christ OR Meghan OR Substance OR Drug OR Church OR Uganda OR Saudi OR @MiaCathell OR Tax OR Euro* OR AOC OR Fascist OR Dudula OR PSAF OR Xeno* OR race* OR Balenciaga OR Politic* OR Citizens OR Vote OR Zimbab* OR #PhalaPhala OR "Phala Phala" OR "State Capture" OR Apartheid OR ZanuPF OR CR17 OR Immigration OR OUTA OR Bank OR Apple OR Android OR #Unplayable OR Netflix OR #PutSouthAfricansFirst OR "Put South Africans First" OR Monarchy OR Eskom OR Loadshedding OR #supportlibraries OR "Please Retweet" OR #Ostfuza OR Ukraine OR Russia OR "Big Brother" OR COVID* OR Corona* OR #PremierLeague OR "Manchester United" OR #Nigeria OR biafra OR Nigeria OR Holocaust OR Taliban OR Afghanistan OR Iran OR "African National Congress" OR "Economic Freedom Fighters" OR "Democratic Alliance" OR #enoughisenough OR #StandUpSA OR #womensart OR #womeninbusiness OR #phyna OR Bloat OR #savewarriornun OR #davidukpo OR #beatriceekweremadu OR #runningiwthtumisole OR #fitness OR Amapiano OR Afrobeat OR Studio OR #Sete OR song OR #Python OR #ai OR #womenintech OR #blackexcellence OR #LuthuliHouse OR #BBTitians OR #womenwhocode OR #NYEEdition OR #datascience OR #malibongwe OR #machinelearning OR #Renewal OR Rwandan OR Pre-season OR "Tory Lanez" OR Belinda OR Migor OR "Belinda Migor" OR Pitbull OR "Riot Police" OR "Timothy C. Roth" OR Roth OR "Chris Brown" OR "#rho*" OR #grammys OR @loveisland OR #onemorefan OR #hazardsofvalentinesday OR SONA OR #sona2023 OR #reddwarf OR #ZeeNunewXVamino OR #KataBiz OR #mufc OR "black history month" OR #blackhistorymonth OR taehyung OR "Black seed" OR rhodurban OR "Tshepi Vundla"

OR "Map Editor" OR MK* OR "Super Nintendo" OR hibernation OR cock OR "andrew
tate" OR "man* city" OR Arsenal OR Chelsea OR Earthquake OR NTA OR Assam OR
"Leonardo DiCaprio" OR "Viola Davis" OR Casemiro OR "Cory Booker" OR Bruno OR
Ronaldo OR #PoliceTrainees OR #Project10K OR continent:"NORTH AMERICA" OR
continent:"EUROPE" OR continent:"ASIA" OR continent:"SOUTH AMERICA" OR
continent:"OCEANIA" OR #KhosiTwala OR "Khosi Twala" OR #SheOwnsHerSuccess OR
#BrutalFruitSheBeen OR #WomenWhoMakeMoves OR #ChangeTheTechnicalTeam OR #FemDom
OR #bdsm OR #dominatrix OR "Elon Musk" OR Musk OR Khosireigns OR Malema OR ABSA
OR #worldathleticschamps OR #liveart OR #bbnaijaallstars OR BRICS OR
#bricssummit2023 OR #senzomeyiwatrial OR avon OR #TsatsiiMadiba OR #taxistrike
OR #orlandopirates OR "Edwin Sodi" OR "Burna Boy" OR "violences sexuelles" OR
SIU OR DSTV OR Ireland OR "Hip Hop" OR #OccupyJulorbiHouse OR #OutlawsShowmax
OR #AlwaysRising OR #Auschwitz OR #USOpen OR #PAKWvSAW OR #bokwomen OR
#makeitcount)

Appendix C: Programme Overview & Methodology

heCareZA Programme Overview

The programme is aimed at men and focuses on disrupting the narrative that perpetuates harmful gender attitudes, social norms and standards. We know that “hurt people, hurt people” (attributed to Charles Eads, 1959²²). Accordingly, rather than judging men or alienating them through hostile engagement, we focus on deepening our understanding of their experiences and of gender discrimination through online social media in South Africa. Moreover, we harness these platforms as dynamic spaces to foster relationships with men through online dialogue and to engage them as allies in order to reduce gender discrimination and violence. The first step in this transformative process is to conduct in-depth online research to investigate conversations about the interactions between men and women taking place on social media in South Africa. This knowledge will inform our future work that engages men.

Methodology



Using a query designed to capture the broad conversation about interactions between men and women, this report covers February 2023. Stieglitz and colleagues (2018) identified four distinct phases in social media data analysis: (1) discovery, (2) collection, (3) preparation, and (4) analysis. Below, we describe how these phases guided our research project.

Step 1: Data Discovery

- The first step in data discovery was to draw up a list of keywords designed to isolate the broad conversation about interactions between men and women in South Africa on social media. The

²² <https://slate.com/culture/2019/09/hurt-people-hurt-people-quote-origin-hustlers-phrase.html>

research and dialogue facilitation teams contributed to this list collaboratively through a shared spreadsheet. The research team focuses on quantitative analysis while the dialogue team focuses on qualitative analysis of the conversation(s).

- To create this list, the research team drew on existing knowledge combined with desktop research, a literature review and a quantitative, analytic review of social media.
- Concurrently, dialogue facilitators recorded relevant insights and keywords gained through their exploratory online dialogue facilitation.
- Our preliminary keyword list comprised 52 words in isiZulu, isiXhosa, Sesotho, Afrikaans, English, and slang.
- We entered this list of words into a social media analytics tool to create a query into conversation about interactions between men and women on public social media in South Africa.
- We used this preliminary query to publish our chapter “Mapping Gender Norms in Public Social Media: A South African Study” (Treffry-Goatley et al., 2022).

Step 2: Data Collection

- We “collected” the resulting data using our social media analytics platform.

Step 3: Data Preparation²³

- We ‘prepared’ the data for analysis by refining the query. Query refinement entails sifting through the data set while looking for posts that are not relevant to interactions between men and women in South Africa. At this stage we also look at relevant posts that have not been included.
- If and when our team finds that some words could be added or removed, they are resolved by introducing additional keywords and/or exclusionary terms to the query. This allows us to analyse as much relevant conversation as possible (see [Appendix B](#)). Conducting this iterative process has allowed researchers to build onto the initial 52 keywords that were used for the “Mapping Gender Norms” study.
- With the goal of delivering the most useful insights possible in this report, we created libraries of categories and tags to focus on the parts of online conversation that were most relevant for this project. This development of the categories and tags was based on two factors:

1. *Prominence* - this is assessed quantitatively, using a dashboard that allows us to visualise data points, and qualitatively, using researchers’ expertise, desktop research and dashboard work.

²³ New keywords and exclusions are identified both at the query and tag level on an ongoing basis.

2. *Relevance* - a qualitative assessment of whether a focus area is important enough to the strategic goals of the heCareZA project to be included. Our team makes this determination based on subject matter expertise in South African social media dynamics and whether or not further research into the focus area is likely to provide valuable information for the ongoing heCareZA Programme.

Step 4: Data analysis

- We built a dashboard in our social media analytics platform to support our data analysis. This tool produces metrics according to volume, trending topics, news stories, and unique authors in relation to the keyword list.
- Thematic analysis involves studying the emerging patterns in the data and exploring how units of meaning connect to form themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis can highlight individuals' perspectives, ideas and experiences, and can be used to generate fresh insight into the social dynamics behind human behaviour. Accordingly, we analysed the collected data thematically to interpret the data and to gain insight into dominant themes and trends.
- The goal of this analysis is to better understand what was said during the reporting period. Thematic analysis was conducted both at the query level and the tag (focus area) level.
- Based on trends observed over the course of several months, an author watchlist section was added.