



Gender-Based Violence and Misogyny Social Media Analytics and Narrative Update in South Africa

1 July to 31 August, 2024

Overview

This report provides an analysis of the online discourse surrounding misogyny and Gender-Based Violence in South Africa for the period 1 July to 31 August, 2024. Key metrics, including conversation volume and engagement, are examined to understand the evolving nature of the conversation. Additionally, the report dives into the dominant themes, topics, influential accounts, and trends shaping the conversation.

Conversation Volume

From July to August, the Centre for Analytics and Behavioural Change (CABC) identified approximately 632 950 mentions from 125 950 unique authors (see *Figure 1*). This was a 9% increase compared to the May and June 2024 period. In addition, there were approximately 551 660 reposts of content. This means that there was a retweet rate percentage of 87% which is notably high. And further, aligns with previous findings by the CABC that a core group of accounts produce content which is engaged by others.

Total mentions	Total X reposts	Unique authors
632.95 _k Previous period: 622.96k ↑ 2%	551.66 _k Previous period: 491.35k ↑ 12%	125.95 _k Previous period: 124.96k ↑ 1%

Figure 1: Key volume metrics

Topical events:

Below is a breakdown of the conversation volume over the reporting period. Two prominent spikes, labelled A and B, were observed by the analytics tool during the reporting period (see *Figure 2*). These spikes are analysed further below.

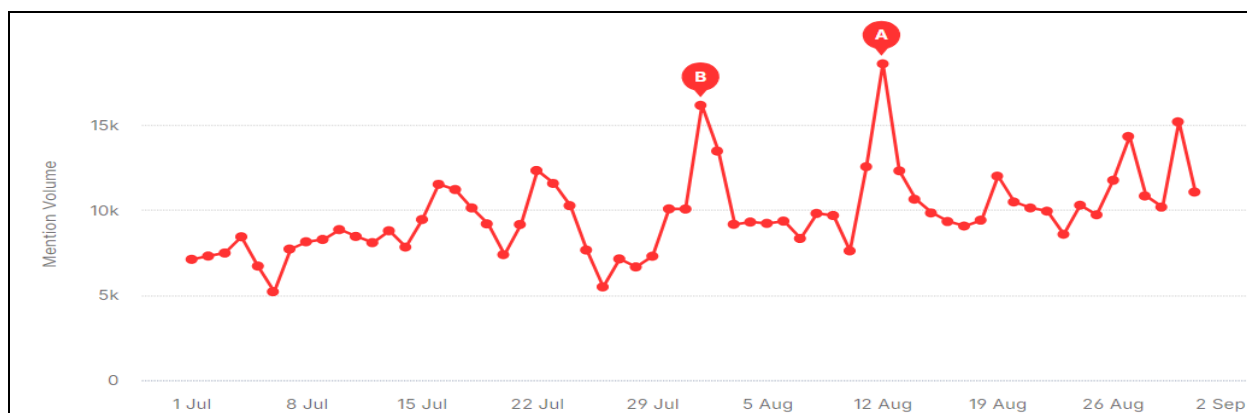


Figure 2: Mention Volume per day

- **Rapex:** Spike A was driven by retweets of a post by an account which reported on the invention of a device helping to prevent rape in South Africa. The device, called Rapex, is shaped like a female condom but has spikes on the inside and should penetration occur, the spikes will impale the phallus. This post was retweeted more than 8800 times (1). Responses to the post varied, with some endorsing its use as a protective measure while others called the method mediaeval and ineffective, as the device would only serve to anger the perpetrator and cause him to lash out.
- **Miss South Africa:** Spike B was largely driven by retweets of a post claiming that former Miss South Africa contestant, Chidimma Adetshina's father committed fraud in order to secure citizenship in the country (1). The matter was subsequently investigated by home affairs, who found *prima facie* evidence that fraud may have been committed by the mother of the Miss SA contestant.¹ A comprehensive analysis of the Miss South Africa 2024 debacle is covered in our Xenophobia factsheet, which can be found [here](#).

Trending hashtags (filtered by trending):

The top trending hashtags concerned a variety of different topics. Certain hashtags were condensed due to their similar content and/or nature.

- #justicefor___ (1); (2); (3): This hashtag was shortened to capture two concurrent trending hashtags, namely; #justiceforzanotherdo and #justicefortebogo. Zanotherdo is a two-year-old girl who got raped at her crèche. This despicably evil act incurred the disgust and contempt of all who engaged with the news relating to the hashtag. Tebogo is a Gender-Based Violence survivor who posted her story on Facebook which subsequently went viral on both Facebook and X. She alleges that her husband locked her up, abused her, drugged her and committed several other horrific acts on her. On 27 August 2024, a brigadier and the National Spokesperson, Miss Athlenda Mathe, for the South African Police Service responded that she was placed at a place of safety and subsequently booked herself out. Tebogo responded that she didn't book herself out.

The CABC are closely tracking this story due to the irregular manner in which information has been shared about a case on a social platform.

- **#manyonyoba** (1); (2); (3): Manyonyoba is a TV show on Moja Love where the hosts confront older men trying to or sleeping with young children. Several posts utilizing the hashtag expressed their disgust at the show's reporting of men as old as 60 raping girls as young as 14.
- **#crimstats** (1); (2): The #crimstats hashtag concerned the worrying increase in crime with violent crime, in particular, seeing a surge in four provinces. In terms of our Gender-Based Violence, civil society organisations expressed anxiety over the increase in violence, in all forms, against women and children. In addition, it was reported that 91 incidents of rape were reported at educational institutions.

Top Content Sorted by Reach:

The X posts in *Figure 1* were the top three highest-reach posts under this narrative.

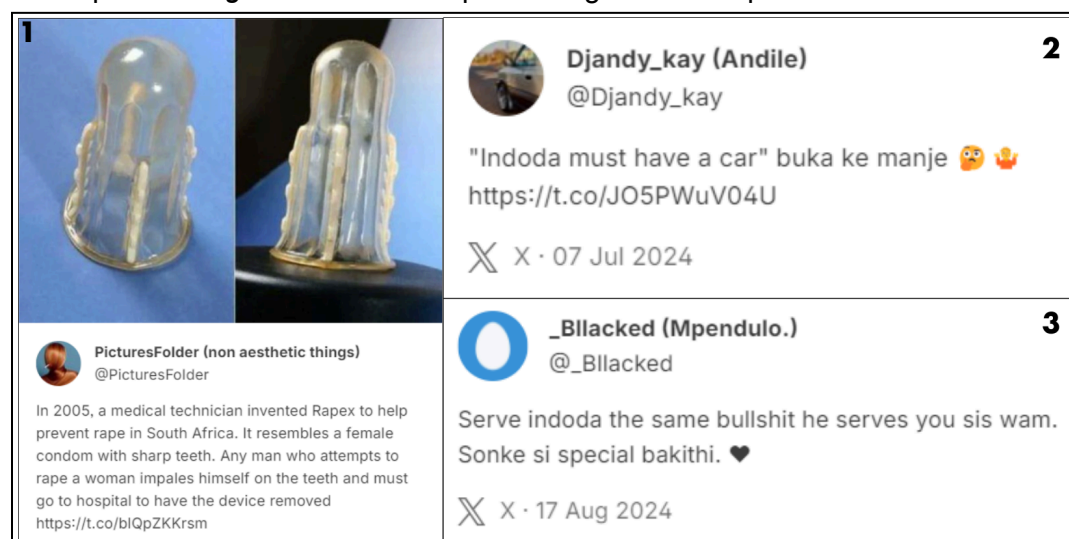


Figure 3: Highest reach X posts

Individual Expressions

Individual Expressions are those accounts with a followership of less than 10 000 accounts. These accounts are analysed as they do not have an outsized influence on the Gender-Based Violence and Misogyny narratives being perpetuated on X. The following themes were found among the posts by these accounts:

- **Social Issues and Relationships:** The headlines highlight various societal issues such as selective outrage, Gender-Based Violence, and xenophobic sentiment in relation to Gender-Based Violence. In one instance, a video from TikTok was cross posted on X wherein a video of an individual was edited side-by-side to an image. In the video, the women proudly claims that her husband is Nigerian and combats xenophobic sentiments. In the image, presumably circulated some time after the video, she requests

assistance from various civil society organisations such as Operation Dudula, PA, Gayton McKenzie presumably due to some form of abuse enacted upon her. It is unclear whether the two individuals are the [same person](#), but comments to the post largely indicate trivialization of the victim due to her prior video combatting xenophobic sentiment. (1); (2)

- **Fatherhood and Family Dynamics:** The narratives discuss the significance of fatherhood, the challenges faced by fathers, and the impact of absent or toxic paternal figures. They explore themes of responsibility, protection, and the emotional complexities within family structures, emphasising the importance of positive male role models. A notable post here reflects on a statement by an activist group that action must be taken against fathers of children born to underage mothers. Responses varied with some claiming that the responsibility also lies with the child, that culture trumps law, and that community leaders need to play a more active part in this matter. Further, it was alleged that white students at Pretoria Girls High School made racist remarks towards black students. An account claimed that the students who made the allegations may lack fathers to teach them not lie. This post received 574 likes and received substantial support in the comments (1); (2).
- **Abuse and Trauma Awareness:** Posts in this category touch upon issues of abuse, both physical and emotional, highlighting the lasting effects on individuals and the importance of recognizing and addressing such traumas. They underscore the need for support, healing, and breaking the cycle of violence (1).
- **Cultural Practices and Traditions:** The stories delve into cultural practices like lobola, exploring their impact on relationships and individuals. They raise questions about tradition, gender roles, and societal expectations, prompting reflections on the evolving nature of customs and their relevance in contemporary society (1); (2).
- **Advocacy for Social Change:** The headlines address a range of societal issues including gender-based violence, mental health, and social norms. They advocate for awareness, empathy, and understanding, emphasising the importance of dialogue, support systems, and collective efforts to create a more inclusive and compassionate society. General comments were also made regarding the impact of social awareness and behavioural campaigns which dominated television and radio in South Africa's early democratic period and has, in recent years, seen a decline (1); (2).

Women's Month

Every year, in August, South Africa celebrates women's month to commemorate the women who marched to the Union Buildings in 1956 against the issuance of pass laws for women. Women's month has come to signify women's rights, emancipation and equality for women in the country. While significant strides have been made to accord women equality in society, the

country still lags behind and women still face major disruption and violence in the fight for equality. Data from our analytics tool supports this statement and is explored further below.

- **Gender-Based Violence** (1); (2): Sadly, with women's month in focus, there was very little positive to focus on. Instead, civil society, government organisations and individuals called out the different forms of Gender-Based Violence continuing unabated in the country. A stark reminder of this was issued by an account stating that "Abusers don't care whether it is women's month or not."
- **Femicide** (1); (2): Several stories circulated reporting on women being killed in Women's month. A notable story reported was the murder of two black women on a farm who were allegedly fed to pigs. Accounts noted that the story highlighted both the epidemic of femicide and GBV in the country, as well as the separatist culture engendered by Apartheid.

Author analysis

Top 10 Twitter/X posters:

- Notably, the most prolific posters for the reporting period consist of ordinary presenting accounts with none of the known misogynistic, manosphere accounts forming part. Accounts such as @peacefreak_sa and @MisstressV typically post transphobic content.











X POSTER	MATCHING POSTS ▼	IMPACT ☺	X ☺	DEMOGRAPHICS ☺	REACH ☺
		AVERAGE	FOLLOWERS	GENDER	AVERAGE
 @peacefreak_sa	1100	11.1	1574	Unknown	1604
 @AquilakaHecate	851	6.5	3 065	Female	1969
 @Thuli_kaNtuli	799	0.3	1423	Unknown	622
 @yasd2091	767	1	120	Unknown	14
 @Jasminel113	707	0	1562	Female	756
 @Adamitv	673	50.8	90 040	-	15 492
 @SunBirdZAKH	559	27.9	6 355	Unknown	4 404
 @MisstressV	527	10.1	1499	Female	1473
 @elonsturpsjizz	505	0.5	341	Male	31
 @ndighweda	501	0.6	166	Unknown	9

Figure 4: Top X Accounts Contributing to the GBV and Misogyny Conversation

Analysis and commentary

Discourse in the Gender-Based Violence and Misogyny theme in South Africa saw an increase of 9% in the reporting period. Two prolific topics had an outsized influence in the conversation which are: (1) Xenophobic sentiment in relation to Miss South Africa; and (2) The Rapex device.

In relation to child predation, which found traction through the Moja Love television show, many online users expressed their disgust and contempt towards the perpetrators and adults who engage in these acts. X users based in South Africa often engage in discourse online around low-end reality TV and/or soapies, focused on the South African experience or context, which

presents an opportunity for views about misogyny and Gender-Based Violence to be expressed online. This allows insight into practices on the ground, as well as perceptions held online. In relation to the Manyonyoba show, accounts expressed concern that South Africa has a culture of child predation which laws alone cannot resolve.

In the individual expressions heading, several interrelated themes were found such as cultural practices and their impact on the individual and relationships as a whole. Fatherhood remains an ever-present topic online with individuals reflecting the responsibility and emotional maturity that the role requires from men. Finally, there was also discussion regarding abuse and the cycle of trauma from Gender-Based Violence due to the failure of citizens to act against known perpetrators.

It was further noted that abuse against women and children continues unabated, despite an active drive towards addressing these issues during Women's month. Reports that farmers murdered two women drew the ire of citizens. In a report released earlier this year, the CABC noted the inefficacy of campaigns against Gender-Based Violence that have historically been led by the government. Read more [here](#).

Conclusion

In summary, conversations about Gender-Based Violence and Misogyny largely followed similar trends over the reporting period. The notable exception was the conversation about child predation which may suggest that media, especially television shows, has the potential to shape conversations about Gender-Based Violence and misogyny online. With regards to child predation, the CABC's most recent report on Social Media Narratives of Ever-Partnered Violence Against Women and Children takes a closer look at these narratives online. The link to the report can be found [here](#).