



CASE STUDY

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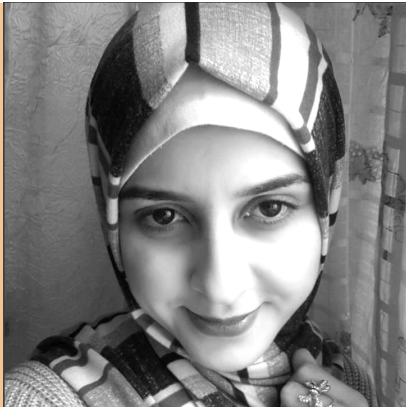
Takatoat and Nazra for Feminist Studies' Online Regional Feminist School: A Milestone in the Journey of Dynamic Feminist Activism

A journey to an effective feminist movement

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01 The Background to it



Life may give you an opportunity that is like a breath that keeps you alive, full of passion and hope, and this was the gift of the feminist school,

Nourhane
Participant



Until today, the majority of women in the region are subjected to discriminatory family laws and religious courts that reinforce patriarchal power and patrilineal social organization.

Despite some limited reforms, women in the Levant region continue to face entrenched discrimination and daily violence amid the abject failure of governments to stamp out arbitrary arrests, abductions, assassinations, crimes, and other forms of gender-based violence.

In this context, Takatoat and Nazra for Feminist Studies organized the Regional Feminist school, inviting women from Palestine, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon, aging between 21 and 35, to be part of online sessions to provide a space for peer-to-peer feminist consideration that encourages confidence, openness, and active usage of one's voice, knowledge, and academic learning for activism, knowledge, and academic learning. The school was, therefore, a beacon of information for women to understand

the rooted concept of violence and the issues related to it, as well as understanding the social and historical contexts of gender-based violence. The participants have eventually expanded their knowledge of the laws & legislations related to gender-based violence (GBV).

The program was held for one month with more than 24 women being selected out of 210 applicants. Almost 24 experts, professors, and feminist activists gave a fair share of knowledge on the feminism spectrum, in addition to providing the participants with tools and information that enables them to respond to GBV in their communities and voice out their demands. The Feminist School resembled a platform for the participants to raise questions and freely discuss stigmatized topics.

Every week the participants attended 3 sessions over a one-month course. The intense 30-hour programme built power among the participants and gave them a fundamental base for informed activism.



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The school taught me about the societal, political, & cultural roots of oppression that we face today as women, and how to be a good advocate for our causes. The most important thing is that we as women live as individuals in different societies and environments, but our concerns are common and our wars are one,

Rebecca
Participant

”

02 The knowledge rooted in it

The school had a theory of change at its core structured in the belief that knowledge is the basis for awareness among women when it comes to their causes. By developing and increasing this knowledge, and expanding their perspectives on issues of gender-based violence, we are thus, working to increase sensitivity, broaden the vision in an intersectional and transformative manner about feminist issues, and motivate them to act towards it.

No matter where girls are from or what challenges they face, they need to gain knowledge that not only provides academic instruction but also serves as models of gender equity, places where they can thrive free of gender bias. It is therefore vital to dismantle unequal gendered power relations. Topics that were given included legislative background pertaining to regional and international laws, political correctness and

its terminologies, LGBTQIA+ and women's rights on the human rights spectrum, financial discrimination, and all the aspects of sexual and gender-based violence that impact the lives of the most vulnerable and marginalized of women and girls in patriarchal contexts, in addition to exacerbating issues due to the pandemic like cyber violence and violence against women human rights defenders.

It is about the need to address the destruction of unequal power relations between men and women.



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The feminist school also rooted the idea that the struggle against the patriarchal system and pulling the rug of privileges offered to males on a silver platter is not an easy thing, as it needs strong women who believe in change, and that we are capable of making it,

Majd

Participant

"

The School included interactive sessions that allowed women from different countries to exchange thoughts and experiences. The participating women were able to deepen their understanding of the social and historical contexts of gender-based violence which was tackled and

analysed from a feminist perspective to identify the root causes of its different forms in our societies in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, highlighting the divisions between private and public spaces and their role in the oppression of women and girls.

"

I didn't have enough information or background on feminism; a subject that means a lot to me and this is why I registered to be part of the Feminist School so that I get to know more about it and be able to participate in the feminist struggle. I aimed at amplifying the voices of the marginalized,

Bayan

Participant

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While feminism-related knowledge was the key takeaway from the program, the school has also paved the way for building new networks among

from diverse backgrounds and different challenging contexts and to strengthen solidarity for their causes.

03 The people behind it

Takatoat is a group of young feminist activists from all across Jordan who believe in the power of feminist consciousness and solidarity in transforming narratives around gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. In 2020, Takatoat, which means “intersectionalities” was established in response to the alarming number of horrific femicides that took place in the country and the

persisting gender gaps within the legal, social, economic, cultural, and political domains. Takatoat aims to contribute to the current wave of unprecedented feminist mobilization and activism across the Arab world and the rise of a regional young, radical feminist movement that is unapologetically demanding safety, respect, and dignity for all women and girls.



“

Women and girls struggle and fight daily against various forms of violence and marginalization that are practiced against them by the patriarchal system, and we at Takatoat believe in the capabilities of women and girls for change, so we seek to secure safe spaces for learning & development of feminist knowledge in a participatory manner. Knowledge is power and we want to empower the girls through an educated activism program,

Banan abu zain al-din

Co-Founder and Executive
Director of Takatoat

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Nazra for Feminist Studies is a group that aims at contributing to the continuity and development of the Egyptian and regional feminist movement in the Middle East and North Africa, where the group believes that feminism and gender are political and social issues affecting freedom and development in

all societies. Nazra aims to mainstream these values in both public and private spheres. Nazra’s team believes that integrating gender and feminism will be achieved through the efforts of believers in the validity of these values and in the necessity of their implementation in both spheres.



Nazra's goals for developing and supporting feminist movements is through establishing feminist education, believing that feminist education is a means to develop feminist awareness and its tools,



feminist & woman
human rights defender

Mozn Hassan

Founder and Executive
Director of Nazra

04 The Loud Feminists Who Left their Mark on



This program gave me hope that young feminists have a certain contagious positive energy and a thirst for knowledge. These girls don't want to just be on the activism spectrum without a fundamental base that is structured with knowledge. Apart from this, the program is a truly effective one as it is the first one in the region to present the topics presented at hand and as it caters to women across the Levant.



Hayat Mirshad

Lebanese Feminist Activist
and one of the lecturers



05 Women and Girls Own

Even as gender gaps narrow in educational achievement, the personal and social costs of achievement remain high

for girls around the world who face daily hostility and harassment as they attempt to gain an education.



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I needed a more organized & sequential academic course than the random readings that I had. The feminist school and several feminist projects directly cross with my specialization as a lawyer & a law student.

Saffana
Participant

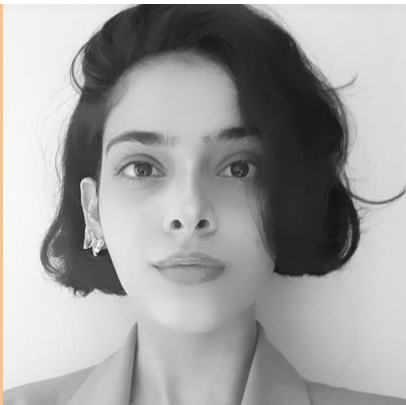
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Feminism strives for equality of the sexes, not superiority for women. And one of the main aims of feminism is to take the gender roles that have been around for many years and deconstruct these to allow people to live free & empowered lives, without being tied down to 'traditional' restrictions.

Anonymous

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The School was my first travel trip to the outside world as a girl who had never left the great prison called Gaza. Without those differences that distinguish us, the feminist school gave me safety, and I never had to feel these differences.

Waten
Participant

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The effort made by the organizations and participants to raise awareness on feminism, women's rights, and gender-based violence is clear. The discussion was fun & rich in experiences, including life examples, which some of the participants bravely shared, and this also highlights their kindness in providing support to each other after sharing examples. I look forward to more cooperation with the Regional Women's School in the near future.

Dr. Yasmine Haidar “
Egyptian Academic
and one of the speakers

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The idea of the feminist school is an inspiring idea in itself, but what really amazed me is the diversity & distinction in the young women participants who participated in the feminist school, as they came from different countries and from different social, cultural backgrounds and specializations, but the rejection of patriarchy, oppression of women, feminist solidarity, and the desire to learn and communicate have put them together. I hope to see this experience repeated many times and for Takatoat to reach young feminists across the Arab world and contribute to bridging the generational gap

Prof. Hadeel Gazzaz “
Palestinian Feminist Activist,
Researcher and one of the speakers

