

## **The Role of Digital Journalism in Framing the Issue of Child Marriage in Jordan**

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### **Abstract**

There is a dearth of academic studies focusing on the role of mass communication in combating issues related to child marriage. The present study, therefore, examines the role of the Arabic news websites in framing the news about early marriages in Jordan in terms of providing information that contributes to raising awareness of this issue and identifying the motives that prompted the Jordanian legislation to allow marriage for those under 18 years of age. Additionally, the study examines whether it causes an increase in the rate of psychological and physical abuse of girls. The study also monitors the role of news platforms in covering the contribution of human rights activists in providing solutions and suggestions to limit the spread of this issue and empowering girls to overcome the consequences of marriage at an early age. A qualitative approach, using qualitative content analysis was adopted to examine the media's role in framing the issue of child marriage between 2018 and 2021. Which the results of the frame analysis for news websites showed that victims of child marriage are exposed to physical and psychological violence, deprivation of education, and early divorce. Moreover, the reasons for the enactment of the Jordanian legislation stating the legal age for marriage is to be 15 years were found to be obscure. Furthermore, the causes for the prevalence of child marriage in Jordan have not been adequately addressed through the news reports. In addition, the results also revealed that the Alarab and Alghad newspapers present a negative attitude towards child marriage, while the Al Jazeera news website maintains a neutral stance.

**Keywords:** child marriage, underage marriage, early marriage, digital journalism, violence