Visual Phatic Communication among Jordanian Users of Snapchat Streaks

DOI: https://doi.org/10.33806/ijaes1233

Dina M. Hammouri and Doaa K. Riziq
Applied Science Private University, Jordan

Received: 17.11.2025 Accepted: 27.5.2026 Published: 7.6.2026

Abstract: This study investigates the effect of gender and age on phatic communication through Snapchat streaks among Jordanian Snapchat users. It tests whether Snapchat streaking behaviour differs across gender and age groups. It focuses on three areas, including streak maintenance patterns, visual content types preferred by users, and perception of emotional and relational aspects that users associate with streaking. The study adopts a mixed-methods approach that includes a survey of 100 participants, quantitative visual analysis of streak images, and semi-structured interviews with 50 participants. The findings show that both Jordanian males and females actively use exchanges of Snap streaks for purposes of digital connection. However, Snapchat streaking reveals gender and age-based differences in both streaking patterns and the use of visual content type; for example, females are more likely than males to maintain longer Streaks, and younger users show a stronger tendency to actively engage in Snapchat streaks and to maintain them. These gendered preferences resonate with wider sociocultural norms and further demonstrate that the phaticity of Snapchat streaks functions as a simple yet symbolically rich ritual of digital connection.

Keywords: digital sociolinguistics, phatic communion, Snapchat streaks, social media rituals, visual communication

1. Introduction

Digital communication increasingly blends verbal, non-verbal and symbolic forms, and much of this interaction operates through culturally patterned phatic rituals that sustain social ties in low-content but high-social-meaning ways (Miller, 2008; Yus, 2019). This shift has contributed to the rise of phatic communication, which refers to the use of verbal or non-verbal language to establish, maintain and manage social relationships rather than merely convey information (Andersen and Guerrero 1996; Bickmore and Cassell 2005; Miller and Saville-Troike 2008; Schandorf 2013; Hills 2015; Darwish, Darwish and Haider 2025).

Malinowski (1923) introduced the notion of phatic communion to describe speech whose main function is to maintain social relations, such as greetings and small talk. Jakobson (1960) later elaborated on this concept through his model of the six functions of language, where the phatic function is conceptualized as establishing, maintaining, or closing communication channels. More recently, Zuckerman (2021) argued that phaticity, particularly in a digital setting, is more than idle chat; it is an ideological gesture signifying a desire for connection and presence. He proposed a theoretical model of Visual Communion, which portrays photographic

images as a form of phatic communion. In this sense, phatic communication illustrates how language operates as a socially shaped practice that in turn shapes identities and ideologies (Al-Shawabkah and El-Zraigat 2022; Avodo, Cdlc and Avodo 2023).

Phatic exchanges have become central in social communication in contemporary times, especially among adolescents and young adults (Miller 2008) because of the upsurge of social media and mobile-based platforms (Glotz, Bertschi and Locke 2005; Abeele, Schouten and Antheunis 2017). Miller (2008) and Bengtsson and Johansson (2022) have noted that the birth of a culture of phatics has emerged with the advent of Snapchat, Instagram, and TikTok, or in other words, interacting over a digital medium less for the sake of interaction but more for gestures of presence, availability, and connectedness. According to Tagg and Lyons (2022), computer mediated communication involves visual and multimodal forms of phaticity, expressed through repetitive, symbolic, and ritualistic verbal and non-verbal elements that serve an interactional purpose in digital environments. These forms are unnecessary and empty in their intended meanings, but they maintain social ties, even at the cost of information exchange. They render entire communicative acts into performative rituals infused with social and digital presence through the calibrated and visual nature of Snapchat's offerings. Yus (2019) stated that phatic utterances can be unintentional and may link to informational contents, explicitly indicating pertinent contents. In the context of phatic communication, paralinguistic digital affordances are considered the body language of online communication. They highlight the presence of physicality in interactions thereby granting the users an ability to express time, attitude, and emotion (Schandorf 2013; Tagg 2015; Hayes, Carr and Wohn 2016; Hayes, Wesselmann and Carr 2018).

Social media is culturally contextualized and supports diverse forms of public engagement worldwide, including Jordan, especially for understanding emerging forms of digital phaticity. It has also become a primary source for immediate and quick dissemination of information and is expected to continue reshaping how communities communicate (Al-Qahwaji et al. 2023). In Jordan, digital interaction has become part of everyday life, where over 92.5 percent of the population is connected to the internet, and over 6.45 million or about 55.7 percent of the population, are social media users (Kemp 2024). Among social media platforms, Snapchat stands out as particularly popular. Its growth, measured against category criteria, shows an increase in reach from 30.5 percent of the total population in 2024 to 35.4 percent in early 2025, representing 47.8 percent of the eligible online audience, with slightly more than half of these users being female (54%) (Kemp 2025). Conversely, it has about the same user base as Instagram, with 35 percent penetration (about 4.05 million users); TikTok has declined to 2.3 million users (31.2%) of adults in Jordan (ICE 2024; Jordan News Updates 2024). The trends show that Snapchat is becoming increasingly relevant to Jordanian digital culture and is therefore central to establishing phatic interaction rituals.

Snapchat has most explicitly institutionalized phatic communication through features such as Snap Streaks and Snap Scores. While Snapchat has been broadly

used and studied as a social media platform, its "streaks" feature has not been examined as distinct relational practices, nor has its visual content or its gendered interpretations been systematically analyzed. Streaking has formed an important interaction pattern, reflecting contemporary users' behavioural engagement and commitment to online platforms. It appears to occupy a hybrid communicative space that merges gameful communication with phatic interaction, which represents a blend that shapes users' social and technological behaviours. It has become popular on Snapchat, Instagram, and TikTok, where it serves dual purposes as a game feature that fosters user engagement and platform loyalty. Snapchat is the most common because it employs an explicit, somewhat structured, gamified reward system indicated by scores. For instance, the Snapchat Score is the numerical expression of a user's activity, while snap streaks are visible indexes of that activity. Snap streaks involve emojis and trophies to reflect habitual engagement and relational maintenance through visual symbols of achievement. On the contrary, other platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook, adopt more implicit forms of gamification through features like likes, comments and follower counts. Unlike Snapchat's phatic features, these affordances are not designed as a structured interpersonal reward system, but function as more diffuse forms of symbolic and relational signaling consistent with broader phatic practices (Al-Abbas, Haider and Hussein 2020).

This study examines Snap streaking as a social practice among general Snapchat users and Jordanian users in particular. Despite the platform's wide use in Jordan, the literature remains silent on Snapchat streaks in the Jordanian context, leaving a gap regarding how gender and age as variables shape streak practices, visual exchange strategies, and the meanings users attach to them. This study investigates Jordanians' digital behaviour with a particular focus on how they use Snapchat streaks as a distinctive relational and communicative practice. It studies gender and age-based differences in streak maintenance patterns, visual content types preferred by users during their streak exchanges, and perception of emotional and relational aspects that users associate with streaking. This study intends to contribute to an understanding of how social media platforms are reshaping interpersonal relationships and, in essence, revitalizing the phatic communication of existence in the digital age.

2. Literature review

This section is built on established sociolinguistic and media research on online communication. It reviews previous studies on phatic digital communication and gendered online interaction and Snapchat streak practices with particular attention to the Jordanian context.

Research on phatic communication has highlighted how digital platforms increasingly formalize ritualized practices that help sustain social ties over time. Rettberg (2018) argued that Snap streaks function as a digital social practice that maintains constant social connections through habitual and scheduled contact methods. He demonstrated that snap streaks serve as a way to build intimate relationships because users share their daily lives through ordinary snaps, which create social

bonds without conveying important information. Similarly, Sarantoja and Villi (2019) indicated that the visual aspect of phatic communication positions digital photographs less as representational images and more as phatic acts that index social presence. Hristova et al. (2020) pointed out that Viennese adolescents often maintain Snapchat streaks through content-light images that are less personalized. These images included mass snaps, 'good morning' or 'good night' snaps, and even blank or black images, all for keeping the streak alive.

Expanding on the relationship between visibility and digital communication, Wilhelm (2021) interpreted low-content and indirect online interactions as forms of gendered digital visibility in which women negotiate the topological and cultural barriers in strategic, indirect, or aesthetic silence. Likewise, Toma (2024) described such interactions as phatic symbols: small gestures and micro-behaviours that carry social meaning even if nothing is suggested in terms of content. Within the Jordanian context, where concepts such as shame, social esteem, and face-saving hold considerable cultural significance, these symbolic exchanges are more than important in their roles to maintain the closeness of the social environment.

Studies on digital sociolinguistics show consistent gender differences across multiple online communication contexts. Tu, Yen and Blocher (2011) investigated patterns of emotional presence among males and females, and they found that females have greater emotional presence but lower levels of engagement in online learning environments. In the same vein, Van Essen and Van Ouytsel (2023) revealed that females from the Dutch-speaking community in Belgium were more likely than males to actively engage in Snapchat streaks and to maintain them.

The social and psychological implications of Snapchat streak practices have also been studied in the Middle Eastern contexts. Abdel Dayim et al. (2025) explored the behavioural and psychological effects of Snapchat streaks maintenance on Egyptian adolescents. The findings identified several negative issues that affect the users' mental health. Such issues include late-night application usage, priority to streaks, oversleeping or studying, and emotional distress when the streak is lost.

These global patterns resonate with Jordanian youth culture in which the digital behaviours are shaped by the convergence of social norms, gender expectations, and platform affordances. In the Jordanian context, Al-Harahsheh (2014) conducted a study on gender communication practices in the digital setting and found that Jordanian women tend to use more indirect, conservative language in spoken Arabic, a pattern that also extends to online communication. Similarly, Al-Sad, Wanas and Yunus (2020) revealed gender differences in the use of social media in Jordan. More specifically, Jordanian women were less likely than men to post their personal photos or make direct statements on social media.

As is evident, research on phatic communication has expanded considerably, yet there remains limited evidence from Jordan regarding how Snapchat streaks are used across genders and how broader social and cultural forces shape these practices. Most studies on phatic communication have been conducted within Western contexts while little research has examined how Snapchat streak practices are shaped by gender in Arab societies, particularly in Jordan. Therefore, this study

aims to investigate how phatic communication is manifested through Snap streaking among Jordanians, with particular attention to gender and age -based differences in streaking patterns

The study contributes to the fields of digital sociolinguistics and gendered communication in the Middle East by examining how male and female Snapchat users strategically maintain social ties through Snapchat streaking in Jordan. Accordingly, the present study seeks answers to the following questions:

1. How do practices of Snapchat streak maintenance among Jordanians differ according to gender and age groups?
2. What visual and communicative content types are used to maintain Snapchat streaks, and how do they vary by gender and age groups?
3. How do Jordanian males and females perceive the social and emotional significance of Snapchat streaks?

3. Method

The study aims to investigate how visual interactions, namely Snapchat streaks, serve as a form of communication in the realm of digital interaction in Jordan. It particularly analyses the difference between males and females in Snapchat streaking behaviour through the following three areas: streak maintenance patterns, visual content types preferred by users during their streak exchanges, and gendered perception of emotional and relational aspects users associate with streaking.

3.1 Participants

The participants in this study were 100 active Snapchat users who maintained at least one Snapchat streak in the last three months. They began their active Snapchat streaks in 2019. They were 50 males and 50 females, within the age range of 16-30. This age range was selected because individuals in this range are expected to show high engagement with Snapchat's streak feature. The participants were invited to participate in the study via university email lists, social media platforms, and online forums commonly used by Snapchat users.

Purposeful sampling was used to ensure diversity based on gender identity, age groups, and frequency of engagement with Snapchat streaks. This systematic selection provides a suitable context for examining how Jordanian users maintain streaks, use streaks with different visual content types, and experience the emotional and relational effects of those practices.

3.2 Data collection and analysis

Data collection was carried out through three primary methods, namely, an online questionnaire, visual content type analysis, and qualitative interviews. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. The first part was intended to elicit demographic information such as age, gender, and level of education. The second section contained items that aimed to evaluate participants' Snapchat streak behaviour, their motivations for maintaining streaks, and their perceptions of emotional and relational meanings that users associate with streaking. Notably, Zuckerman's (2021) framework was used to develop the survey items. The questionnaire was pilot tested

with three active Snap streak users to ensure clarity and consistency. Minor revisions were made based on their suggestions to improve the clarity and understanding of key terms. The participants were requested to rate the items in the second section on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from low to high agreement. Further, participation was anonymous, and all participants completed the survey via an online link.

The study organized the participant responses in an excel sheet based on age and gender. It evaluated the responses to identify how Snapchat streak behaviours and usage patterns differ among Jordanians of different age and gender. Several key variables were also examined including, the total number of active streaks, the duration of these streaks, the Snap Score, and the time users devote each day to maintain their Snapchat streaks. Frequency and percentage analyses were applied to examine gender and age-related differences in usage patterns, content styles, and perceived motivations for maintaining Snapchat streaks.

The second source of data included 76 Snapchat image exchanges. These images were analyzed using Zuckerman's (2021) structural visual content framework. Each image was classified based on genre (selfies, objects, black screen, screenshots, or text) and visual features (Emojis, Bitmojis). Two trained coders classified all images and inter-coder reliability was evaluated using Cohen's kappa, and any points of disagreement were reviewed collaboratively to maintain coding consistency. The resulting κ value of 0.85 indicates a high level of reliability according to standard assessment guidelines.

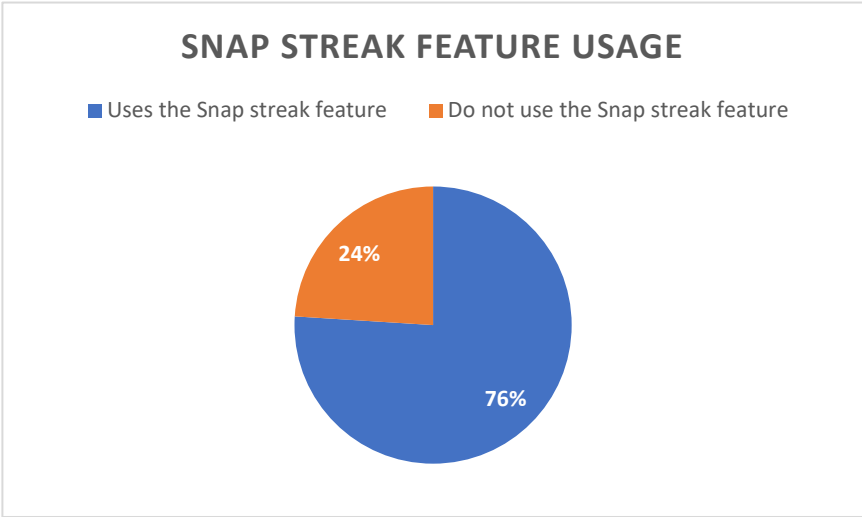
The third source of data is semi-structured interviews, which were conducted with 50 participants. The participants were asked open-ended questions to reflect on their personal experiences with Snapchat streaks. The interviews focused on their usage patterns, visual content type they usually use for streak maintenance, and the emotional and social effects they attach to streaks. Each interview took approximately 30 minutes. A semi-structured interview checklist served as a guide to qualitatively analyze the data and ensure consistent coverage of key topics across interviews. The checklist was also valuable to facilitate the evaluation of gendered interpretations of streaking practices.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Analysis of Snapchat streak survey

This section presents findings from a quantitative survey conducted with 100 Jordanian Snapchat users.

According to the figure, 76 percent of participants reported using the Snap streak feature while 24 percent of participants said they did not. In agreement with Rettberg's findings (2018), this high level of engagement demonstrates that Snapchat streaks are widely used as communicative practices among Jordanian users. Table 1 presents Snap streak usage distributed by age group and gender.



Snap streak feature usage

Table 1. Snap streak usage by age group and gender

Gender / Age Range	M – Yes (%)	M – No (%)	F– Yes (%)	F – No (%)	Total – No (%)
16-20	25	9	23	4	61
21-25	5	1	14	5	25
26-30	6	2	2	0	10
30+	0	2	1	1	4
Yes = participants who use Snap streaks					**100**
No = participants who do not use Snap streaks					
M= male F= female					

As shown in Table 1, the highest rate of Snapchat streak usage was among participants aged 16-20, accounting for 48 percent of the total users and 13 percent of participants not using the feature. This finding indicates that younger participants are more active than other Snapchat users. Engagement declined steadily with age, which highlights that Snap streak activity is concentrated among late adolescence and early adulthood. The 21-25 group represented 19 percent of the users, followed by 8 percent in the 26-30 group and only 1 percent in the 30+ category.

Snapchat streak patterns exhibit differences among participants of different genders as shown in Table 1. Among users aged 16–20, 25 percent of males reported using Snap Streaks compared to 23 percent of females, with non- use slightly higher among males (9%) than females (4%). In contrast, among females aged 21-25 years, Snap streak usage was higher (14%) than that of their male counterparts

(5%), suggesting an engagement shift among early adult females. Overall, female users demonstrated sustained engagement in longer Snap stream trends across all age groups whereas male users exhibited their highest levels of engagement between ages 16–20, followed by a more pronounced decline with increasing age. These findings align with prior research reporting that females are more likely than males to actively maintain Snapchat streaks (Tu et al. 2011; Van Essen and Van Ouytsel 2023).

According to the Figure, 76 Jordanian participants reported using Snapchat streaks. To identify and interpret behavioural patterns of Snapchat streak users based on age and gender, four primary measures were analyzed and examined. These measures included the number of active individual Snap Streaks a user maintained, overall Snap Score, longest Snap Streak achieved, and the frequency of sharing images. Together, these factors shape how phatic communication through Snapchat streaks is practiced in Jordan. Table 2 presents the number of active individual Snapchat streaks maintained by the user.

Table 2. The number of active individual Snap Streaks maintained by the user.

Number of active streaks	**1-2**		**3-5**		**6-10**		**+10**		
Gender / Age Range	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**Total (%)**
16-20	3	3	1	1	3	3	26	26	66
21-25	0	0	1	1	3	1	3	14	23
26-30	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	5	9
30+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
									100

The sample of active Snapchat streak maintainers was predominantly young, with 66 percent of participants aged 16-20. Within this age group, males and females similarly showed the highest pattern (26% each), which reported maintaining more than ten active streaks per day. This pattern reflects high levels of digital interaction commitment among younger users. However, it was observed that the engagement in Snap streak activity decreased gradually as users got older. For instance, the participants aged 21-25 made up 23 percent of the total users while females were found to be more involved in longer streaks (10+) as compared to males (females 14% vs. males 3%). Males (3%) in the same age group slightly exceeded females (1%) in maintaining 6-10 streaks. The 26-30 age group represented 9% of users, which showed limited engagement with Snap streak activity, with females (5%) being more involved than males (1%) in maintaining longer streaks (10+). In the last age group (30+), participants reported no active Snap streaks. Across categories of Snap streaks, the table showed that shorter Snap streak ranges (1-2, 3-5

and 6-10) were less common among participants belonging to different age groups and genders. This indicates that most users who engage with Snap streaks tend to maintain a higher number of active streaks rather than a few. Such patterns are wider reflections of gendered communicative expectations in Jordanian society since female modes of interaction are often determined by cultural norms and social limitations (Al-Khasawneh and Al-Khasawneh 2025).

Table 3 presents the percentage distribution of participants' total Snapchat Scores across age groups and gender.

Table 3. Snapchat score of active users

Snap score	**>10,000**		**10,000 – 50,000**		**50,001 – 100,000**		**100,001 – 250,000**		**< 250.000**		
Gender / Age Range	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**Total (%)**
16-20	29	8	8	8	0	4	0	0	12	4	73
21-25	4	8	0	8	0	4	0	0	0	0	24
26-30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
30+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
											100

There were differences in total Snapchat scores by age and gender, as shown in Table 3. The 16-20 age group consisted of active users who made up about 73% of all participants. Within this age group, males (29%) were more concentrated in the lower score band (less than 10,000) than females (8%). This suggests that young male users have probably recently entered the platform or are less active on it. Among those who score between 10,000-50,000, both males and females reported an equal participation (8%) whereas females demonstrated greater participation (4%) than males (0%) within the 50,001-100,000 categories. A notable number (12%) of males and 4% of females in this age category scored above 250,000. Thus, this age group would classify as those who were highly active on the platform and engaged with Snapchat. For the age group of 21-25, user engagement decreased, with females (20%) still proving to be more engaged in all scoring categories compared to males (4%). More importantly, participants aged 26 and older showed no active Snapchat scores. These results further confirm that Snapchat sliding is primarily a youth-driven behaviour, and they indicate that female participants may be more likely to maintain higher engagement levels over time.

Table 4 presents the longest Snap streaks maintained across age groups and gender.

Table 4. Longest Snap streak maintained.

Streak Duration	**< 7 days**		**1-3 months**		**4-12 months**		**1-3 years**		**> 3 years**		Total
Gender / Age Range	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**(%)**
16-20	1	1	3	18	8	4	8	18	0	5	67
21-25	1	1	0	0	1	3	4	1	0	14	25
26-30	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	1	1	6
30+	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
											100

As shown in Table 4, the largest number of participants sustaining long streaks, at 67 percent, belonged to the youngest age group (16-20). In this age group, females seemed more inclined to maintain extended streaks than males. Among them, 23 percent reported streaks exceeding 1 year compared to 8 percent of males, and 18 percent of females compared to 3 percent of males maintaining streaks of 1-3 months. Strikingly, only 2 percent of participants in this age group reported having streaks lasting < 7 days. This, therefore, indicates that younger users have a preference for long-term digital interactions. In the 21-25 age group, the engagement percentage fell to 25 percent across the board, with 14 percent of females again topping the longest-streak categories (> 3 years). Among participants aged 26-30, the engagement percentage fell to 6 percent while participants aged 31+ had the lowest level of engagement, with only 1 percent in the group holding a streak of 4-12 months. This result further emphasizes that females are more likely to maintain long streaks, consistent with prior research into gendered social maintenance and digital sociolinguistics (Tu et al. 2011; Van Essen and Van Ouytsel 2023).

Table 5 presents the frequency of sharing Snap streak images on a daily basis. The bulk of the activity occurred between ages 16-20, comprising 63 percent of total users. Within this age group, the 1-2 images per day were shared by 22 percent of males and 14 percent of females, showing a notable pattern in which younger users prefer a strategy of low-frequency but consistent image sharing strategy. In the 21-25 age group, there was a slight difference in favor of females (16%) sharing 3-5 images per day. On sharing 6-10 per day, or even 10 or more, it was rare for all ages and genders to do so. These patterns indicate that image-sharing is a very common interaction among Jordanians.

Table 5. Frequency of sharing images.

Frequency	1-2		3-5		6-10		more than 10		
Gender / Age Range	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**Total (%)**
16-20	22	14	8	16	0	0	3	0	63
21-25	3	9	3	8	1	1	0	0	25
26-30	8	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
30+	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
									100

4.2 Analysis of visual content type in Snapchat streak

This section presents a quantitative analysis of the visual content type used by Jordanians in Snapchat streak exchanges, and it shows how these practices vary across age and gender. Table 6 presents the types of images shared during streak exchanges distributed by gender and age groups.

Table 6. The nature of images shared during Snap streaks

Nature of Images	**Selfie**		**Black screen or letter**		**Random images (food and others)**		**Nature photo**		**Other**		
Gender / Age	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**Total (%)**
16-20	2.6	0.0	5.3	0.0	15.8	26.4	5.3	2.6	3.9	0.0	61.9
21-25	2.6	0.0	0.0	1.3	2.6	14.5	0.0	2.6	1.3	1.3	26.3
26-30	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	6.6	1.3	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.5
30+	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	0.0	0.0	1.3
											100

The findings show different gendered patterns in visual practices. They indicate that males and females use images with different content types to maintain digital presence. Within 16-20 age group, the overall dominant type of image-sharing content was random images (for example, food, objects, etc.), which accounted for 42.1 percent of responses. In this category, female users dominated overwhelmingly, with 26.4 percent aged 16–20 and 14.5 percent aged 21–25, compared to lower percentages (15.8% and 2.6%) for males in the same age groups. These disparities indicate that females are more likely to use Snap streaks for specific, expressive, and socially related visuals. In contrast, male users aged 16-20 showed a stronger tendency to send simple visuals such as black screens or single letters, with a proportion of 5.3 percent and no entries from females in the same age group. Females only began to appear in this category, in the 21-25 and 26-30 age group groups at (1.3% each) while no males were recorded in these corresponding age groups.

Selfies were used infrequently, with only 2.6 percent of males in both the 16–20 and 21–25 age groups reporting its use. No female participants in any age group reported sending selfies. Nature photography, another type of visual content, was 13.1 percent of the total images. The main contributors in this category were males (5.3%) aged 16-20 and females (2.6%) aged 16-20. But comparatively, lower percentages were recorded among 26-30 and older. Thus, in this category, the division by gender formed a relatively balanced picture, suggesting that images of nature can serve as a more neutral and thus shared visual resource. Finally, the 'other' category made up 6.5 percent overall, comprising 3.9 percent among males aged 16–20 and smaller proportions across other groups. Only 1.3 percent of females aged 21-25 contributed to this category.

Another content type that the study focused on is how frequently individuals send messages during streak activity. This phase examines the extent to which users diverged from Snapchat's image-based affordances in favor of written forms of communication. Table 7 presents frequency of sending written texts in Snapchat Streaks distributed by age and gender.

Table 7. Frequency of sending written texts in Snapchat streaks

Frequency	**Rarely**		**Sometimes**		**Often**		**Never**		
Gender / Age Rang	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**Total (%)**
16-20	14.5	15.8	11.8	3.9	0.0	0.0	6.6	10.5	63.2
21-25	0.0	3.9	2.6	10.5	0.0	1.3	3.9	2.6	25.0
26-30	2.6	1.3	2.6	0.0	0.0	1.3	2.6	0.0	10.5
30+	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3
									100

The findings indicated that textual communication is not a primary interaction mode, with most participants preferring image-based exchanges. The responses were largely concentrated on the option "rarely,". This option included 14.5 percent of males and 15.8 percent of females aged 16–20, as well as 2.6 percent of males and 1.3 percent of females aged 26–30. Thus, these percentages demonstrate that written text is sometimes used but not essential for maintaining streaks.

Participants showed great variation in frequency of sending written texts. 11.8 percent of males and 3.9 percent of females aged 16-20 reported that they "sometimes" send textual streaks only. This suggests that younger users, particularly males, tend to use a more flexible approach by combining images with written text in their streak exchanges. Conversely, only 2.6 percent of females indicated that they send textual streaks 'often', all of whom belong to the 21-25 and 26-30

age groups (1.3% each). Notably, none of the males mentioned frequent reliance on text, suggesting a gendered preference for the use of textual type of content. Many participants (26.2%) reported that they never send text-only in their streak. This included 6.6 percent of males and 10.5 percent of females aged 16-20, 3.9 percent of males, and 2.6 percent of females aged 21-25, and 2.6 percent of males and 0 percent of females aged 26-30. These responses suggest that the text does not convey adequate expressiveness or relevance to the purpose of maintaining a Snap streak. Overall, female participants fall across multiple usage categories, which indicates more varied practices. Male participants, on the other hand, tend to cluster at the extremes, either not engaging at all with written texts or doing so only rarely. Although age and gender exhibit differences, the data consistently demonstrate that Snapchat streak interactions are primarily visual, with text serving only as a secondary supplement. This pattern aligns with the view that textual practices gain meaning through how they are received and through the relational effects they generate (Haider and Al-Abbas 2022).

As an additional indicator of phatic visual signaling in streak interactions, Table 8 shows how Emojis and Bitmoji are used by age and gender.

Table 8. Use of Emojis and Bitmoji in Snap streaks

Frequency		Al-ways	Often		Sometimes		Rarely		Never		
Gender / Age Rang	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**M (%)**	**F (%)**	**Total (%)**
16-20	0.0	1.3	10.5	3.9	1.3	5.3	14.5	13.2	5.3	6.6	61.8
21-25	0.0	1.3	2.6	3.9	1.3	2.6	2.6	5.3	1.3	5.3	26.3
26-30	0.0	0.0	1.3	1.3	0.0	0.0	2.6	0.0	3.9	1.3	10.5
30+	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3
											100

Table 8 examines gender and age differences in the frequency and use of Emojis or Bitmojis in Snap streak content among Jordanian participants of different gender and age. The results revealed a fair amount of variation in digital expression styles among participants of different genders and age groups. Frequency showed Always = emojis/ Bitmojis in all exchanges; Often = present in most exchanges (> 75%); Sometimes = present in some exchanges (26-75%); rarely = present in few exchanges (≤ 25%); Never = absent.

Although only 1.3 percent of females aged 16-20 reported 'Always' using Emojis or Bitmoji, the greatest percentage indicated using them often (10.5% of males and 3.9% of females). 'Sometimes' was reported by 1.3 percent of males and 5.3 percent of females. Most participants in this age group reported that they

'Rarely' use such visual features (14.5% of males and 13.2% of females), indicating a tendency toward more minimalist or functional visual content. A smaller proportion comprised 5.3 percent of males and 6.6 percent of females who indicated that they 'never' use any Emojis or Bitmojis, so this basically signals segments that resist or even bypass paralinguistic digital tools completely. Usage was less frequent overall in the 21-25 age group. Usage 'Always' was still very low, 1.3 percent of females only. 2.6 percent of males and 3.9 percent of females used Emojis or Bitmoji 'Often'. In participants between ages 26-30, the interaction with Emojis or Bitmojis further declined. No one chose 'Always' or 'Sometimes' while 1.3 percent of both males and females opted for 'Often' 2.6 percent of males marked 'rarely', with 'Never' selected by 3.9 percent of males and 1.3 percent of females, indicating an age-related decline toward the embrace of expressive digital cues. Females above 30 years highlighted that they 'Often' used these features. These findings support further the idea that the usage of Emojis or Bitmoji shows noticeable decline with age. To sum it up, data reflect that the younger users in the age band of 16-20 use the Emojis or Bitmojis in Snap streaks to a far extent compared to older users, who dwindle out to a far lesser degree in this domain. Interestingly, even among this younger generation, males are slightly more inclined than females to use them frequently. Nevertheless, the only fitting pattern across all ages reveals rare usage 'Rarely' or 'Never', indicating that while the visual aids are available to the streak-makers, they are perhaps not deemed central to the rest of the participants' grasp of how to serve up their streak content-especially among the older ones. These clearly show that most Snap Streak exchanges among Jordanians fall into low-effort, phatic exchanges, intended mainly to keep social bonds rather than to deliver elaborate content.

4.3 Interview analysis on Snapchat streak engagement

Interviews were conducted with 50 participants who answered positively the open-ended questions. These interviews generated rich qualitative information to complement the patterns observed in numerical data. Many participants stated that the content-sharing use of Snap was heavily female-oriented, such as events of day highlighted, or some stylized photos with filters and music. On the other hand, males indicated that they use Snap streaks functionally for keeping their streaks or increasing their snap score. They always send fast, low-effort images such as black screens or just texts. Most of the differences are attributed to differences in social and emotional investment, with females appearing to put more premium on visual quality and interpersonal communication. Most females emphasized that Snap streaks are a social practice. For males, it is just a routine digital interaction. Some participants also connected these behaviours to broader cultural and gender norms. For instance, some female users reported being selective about the content they share due to social expectations while others intentionally reported using filters or music to enhance how they express themselves. On the other hand, male users said that they were less inclined to present themselves or display their emotions in their Snap content.

Interview responses reinforced these findings by revealing consistent gendered patterns in streak practices. Taken together, the results support the conclusion that Snap streaks frequently carry a phatic quality in the broad sense defined by Malinowski (1923). They function not to convey information but to establish or maintain social bonds. Regarding gendered differences in communication styles, females tend to engage in expressive, relational interaction marked by visual effort and personal content whereas males appear to adopt a more efficient approach, maintaining the connection with minimal emotional investment. Overall, the observed differences suggest that engagement with digital communication is never neutral; rather, it is shaped by social and cultural expectations that operate along gendered lines and within the everyday interfaces of social networking.

5 Conclusion

The research examined how age and gender influences Snapchat streaking behaviour among Jordanian users through three specific areas, which include (i) streak maintenance patterns, (ii) visual content types which users prefer during their streak exchanges, and (iii) gendered ways of understanding emotional and relational aspects which people associate with streaking. The researchers used a mixed-methods design, including survey data, visual content analysis of streak images, and semi-structured interviews. The study results demonstrate that streaking serves as a normal way to show social presence and maintain relationships, rather than a simple form of game play. The maintenance patterns showed that females maintained longer streaks than males. Streak exchanges used visual strategies that featured a small number of content types because male participants preferred efficient, low-effort methods. The participants explained that streaks possess emotional and relational significance and that gender determines the different meanings of relationships. Particularly, females see streaks as expressive and relational while males treat them as functional.

The study results show how sociocultural norms determine the digital phatic communication behaviour of males and females in Jordan. Upcoming research should collect data from various educational levels and all social networks. Researchers should track streaking behaviour over time and study gender differences through advanced statistical methods that evaluate visual categories and relationship outcomes.

The study results show how sociocultural norms determine the digital phatic communication behaviour of males and females in Jordan. Upcoming research should collect data from various educational levels and all social networks. Researchers should track streaking behaviour over time and study gender differences through advanced statistical methods that evaluate visual categories and relationship outcomes.

Institutional Review Board Statement
The research was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki. Ethical approval was obtained from the Institutional Review Board of The Applied Science Private University/ Jordan, under approval number FOAH 12/2023.

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: The data of this study are not publicly available due to privacy restrictions.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Dina M. Hammouri (Assistant Professor) -Corresponding Author
Applied Science Private University
ORCID Number: 0000-0001-7274-1615
Email: d_hammouri@asu.edu.jo

Doaa K. Riziq (Assistant Professor)
Applied Science Private University
ORCID Number: 0000-0001-8565-0616
Email: d_riziq@asu.edu.jo

References

Abdel Dayim, Fedaa, Sarah Kswat, Abdel Moneim Ali and Manar Abdalla. (2025). 'The impact of *Snapchat Streaks* on Egyptian teenagers' mental health'. *Journal of Research and Media Studies*, 31(31): 659-682. https://doi.org/10.21608/mjsm.2025.355276.1210

Abeele, Mariek Vanden, Alexander P. Schouten and Marjolijn L. Antheunis. (2017). 'Personal, editable, and always accessible: An affordance approach to the relationship between adolescents' mobile messaging behavior and their friendship quality'. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 34(6): 875-893. https://doi.org/10.1177/0265407516660636

Al-Abbas, Linda S., Ahmad S. Haider and Riyad F. Hussein. (2020). 'Google autocomplete search algorithms and the Arabs' perspectives on gender: A case study of Google Egypt'. *GEMA Online® Journal of Language Studies*, 20 (4): 95–112. https://doi.org/10.17576/gema-2020-2004-06

Al-Harahsheh, Ahmad. (2014). 'Language and gender differences in Jordanian spoken Arabic: A sociolinguistics perspective'. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 4(5): 872-882. https://doi.org/10.4304/tpls.4.5.872-882

Al-Khasawneh, Reem and Tala Al-Khasawneh. (2025). 'Women's privacy and the challenges of their work as auditors in Jordan'. *Jordan Journal of Applied Science-Humanities*, 42(2): 1-10.

Al-Qahwaji, Yaqoub, Khaled Atiyat and Areen Al-Moghrabi. (2023). 'Content analysis of social media for some sports institutions from the perspective of the sport community'. *Jordan Journal of Applied Science-Humanities Series*, 34(2): 1-12. https://doi.org/10.35192/jjoas-h.v34i2.449

Al-Sad, Haytham Wanas and Kamariah Yunus. (2020).'Genders patterns on Facebook: A Jordanian sociolinguistic perspective'. *International Journal of Humanities, Philosophy and Language*, 3(12): 1-12. https://doi.org/10.35631/IJHPL.312001

Al-Shawabkah, Hadeel and Ibrahim El-Zraigat. (2022). 'The effectiveness of a program based on symbolic communication in reducing challenging behaviors and improving social interaction among individuals with autism spectrum disorder and intellectual disability in Jordan'. *Jordan Journal of Applied Science–Humanities Series*, 33(2): 88-110. https://doi.org/10.35192/jjoas-h.v33i2.375

Andersen, Peter A. and Laura K. Guerrero. (1996). 'Principles of communication and emotion in social interaction'. In Peter A. Andersen and Laura K. Guerrero (eds.), Handbook *of Communication and Emotion*, 9-49. San Diego: Academic Press. https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-012057770-5/50005-9

Avodo, Avodo, Revue Cdlc and Joseph A. Avodo. (2023). 'L'organisation interactive et stratégique des échanges dans quelques webinaires pédagogiques'. *Multilinguales*, 20: 160-184.

Bengtsson, Stina and Sofia Johansson. (2022). 'The meanings of social media use in everyday life: Filling empty slots, everyday transformations, and mood management'. *Social Media and Society,* 8(4): 1-20. 20563051221130292. https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051221130292

Bickmore, Timothy and Justine Cassell. (2005). 'Social dialogue with embodied conversational agents'. In Jan C. J. van Kuppevelt, Laila Dybkjær and Niels Ole Bernsen (eds.), *Advances in Natural Multimodal Dialogue Systems*, 23–54. Dordrecht: Springer https://doi.org/10.1007/1-4020-3933-6_2

Darwish, Noor T., Taha M. Darwish and Ahmad S. Haider. (2025). 'Family relations in the age of social media: How Jordanians view the influence of Facebook and WhatsApp'. *Research Journal in Advanced Humanities*, 6 (3): 1-20. https://doi.org/10.58256/dg4wwm95

Glotz, Peter, Stefan Bertschi and Chris Locke. (2005). *Thumb Culture: The Meaning of Mobile Phones for Society*. Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag.

Haider, Ahmad S. and Linda S. Al-Abbas. (2022). 'Stereotyping Arab women in jokes circulated on social media during the coronavirus crisis'. *The European Journal of Humour Research*, 10(1): 168-185. https://doi.org/10.7592/EJHR2022.10.1.569

Hayes, Rebecca A., Caleb T. Carr and Donghee Y. Wohn. (2016). 'It's the audience: Differences in social support across social media'. *Social Media and Society*, 2(4): 1-20.

Hayes, Rebecca A., Eric D. Wesselmann and Caleb T. Carr. (2018). 'When nobody 'likes' you: Perceived ostracism through paralinguistic digital affordances within social media'. *Social Media and Society*,4(3): 1-12.

Hills, Matt. (2015). 'From para-social to multisocial interaction: Theorizing material/digital fandom and celebrity'. In P. David Marshal and Sean Redmond (eds), *A Companion to Celebrity*, 463-482. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118475089.ch25

Hristova, Dayana, Joe Dumit, Anderson Lieberoth and Thomas Slunecko. (2020). 'Snapchat streaks: How adolescents metagame gamification in social media'. *Proceedings of the 4th International GamiFIN Conference*, 126-135.

Jakobson, Roman. (1960). 'Closing statement: Linguistics and poetics'. *Style in Language*, 350(377): 570-579.

Jordan News Updates. (2024). 'TikTok usage in Jordan declines in 2024 statistics'. Retrieved July 8, 2025, from: https://jordantimes.com/news/local/internet-social-media-usage-surges-2025-%E2%80%94-intj?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Kemp, Simon. 2024. 'Digital 2024: Global Overview Report'. *DataReportal*. https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2024-global-overview-report (Retrieved July 8, 2025).

Kemp, Simon. 2025. 'Digital 2025: Jordan'. *DataReportal*. https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2025-jordan (Retrieved July 10, 2025).

Malinowski, Bronislaw. (1923). 'The problem of meaning in primitive languages'. In Charles K. Ogden and Ivor A. Richards (eds.), *The Meaning of Meaning*, 296-336. London: K. Paul, Trend, Trübner.

Miller, Vincent. (2008). 'New media, networking and phatic culture'. *Convergence*, 14(4): 387-400.

Rettberg, Walker. (2018). 'Snapchat: Phatic communication and ephemeral social media'. In Jeremy Morri and Sarah Murray (eds.), *Appified: Culture in the Age of Apps*, 296-336. Michigan: University of Michigan Press.

Saville-Troike, Muriel. (2008). '*The Ethnography of Communication: An Introduction'*. New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons.

Schandorf, Micheal. (2013). 'Mediated gesture: Paralinguistic communication and phatic text'. *Convergence*, 19(3): 319-344. https://doi.org/10.1177/1354856512439501

Tagg, Caroline. (2015). *Exploring Digital Communication: Language in Action*. London: Routledge.

Tagg, Caroline and Agnieszka Lyons. (2022). *Mobile Messaging and Resourcefulness: A Post-Digital Ethnography*. London: Routledge.

Toma, Monica A. (2024). 'Beyond words: The significance of phatic communication in instant messaging'. *ACROSS*, 8(2): 71-81.

Tu, Chih-Hsiung, Cherng-Jyh Yen and Michael Blocher. (2011). 'A study of the relationship between gender and online social presence'. *International Journal of Online Pedagogy and Course Design (IJOPCD)*, 1(3): 33-49. https://doi.org/10.4018/ijopcd.2011070103

Van Essen, Christina and Joris Van Ouytsel. (2023). 'Snapchat streaks: How are these forms of gamified interactions associated with problematic smartphone use and fear of missing out among early adolescents?' *Telematics and Informatics Reports*, 11:1-7. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.teler.2023.100087

Wilhelm, Claudia. (2021). 'Gendered (in) visibility in digital media contexts. *Studies in Communication Sciences*, 21(1): 99-113.

https://doi.org/10.24434/j.scoms.2021.01.007

Yus, Francisco. (2019). 'A cognitive pragmatics of the phatic Internet'. In J. Lachlan Mackenzie, Laura Alba-Juez (eds.), Emotion *in Discourse*, 161-188. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Zuckerman, Charles. (2021). 'Phatic: The communication and communion'. *The International Encyclopedia of Linguistic Anthropology*, 1: 1-5.