

Thursday, 30 May 2013

Tweeps attack Saudi cleric encouraging harassment of working women



The Twittersphere exploded with comments on Thursday following a Saudi cleric's introduction of the hashtag "#harass_female_cashiers," referring to Saudi women.

Abdullah Mohammed al-Dawood, who is an author of self-help books, has called on men to harass women working as cashiers to discourage them from leaving home, so as not to lose their chastity, Gulf News reported on Wednesday.

Some of his 97,000 followers supported his call, with one saying: "It is a man-made law and it can't be accepted in a kingdom ruled by God's law. They had better ban mingling of the sexes, not protect it."

Saudi women were just recently allowed to work in public in shops, a move which provoked a backlash from conservatives.

However, hundreds of Saudis and other Arab tweeps attacked the cleric.

One Twitter user asked: "What kind of person urges the youth to commit debauchery?"

Others even called for the cleric's castration, one Tweepsaying: "Call for #SaudiArabia to Castrate: Abdullah Mohammad Al Dawood, danger to #Saudi women by #harass_female_cashiers"

Another tweeted : "Advocate of female molestation, Abdullah Mohammad Al Dawood, has also written a self-help book. Who would seek his advice, I have to wonder."

Others even tried to promote the hashtag '#arm_female_cashiers'.

"#arm_female_cashiers to protect them from thugs who think they are entitled to

Conservative cleric Khalid Ebrahim al-Saqabi reportedly supports Dawood's appeal, saying the law proposed by the government against sexual harassment in mixed workplaces was "only meant to encourage consensual debauchery."

Saqabi was quoted by the International Business Times as asking: "Why is the labor minister concerned with finding jobs for women instead of men?"