

Gender-Based Violence Online: Prevalence, Reporting, and Legal Responses

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ABSTRACT

Gender-based violence online (GBV online) has emerged as a significant global human rights and public health concern, driven by the rapid expansion of digital technologies and online communication platforms. This review examines the prevalence, reporting mechanisms, legal responses, and policy interventions related to GBV online across diverse geographical and cultural contexts. It explores the various manifestations of online gender-based violence, including cyberstalking, harassment, hate speech, impersonation, non-consensual sharing of intimate content, doxxing, and threats of sexual violence, highlighting their disproportionate impact on women, girls, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and other marginalized populations. The review demonstrates that although reporting mechanisms exist through digital platforms, law enforcement agencies, and civil society organizations, victims continue to face substantial barriers, including fear of victim-blaming, distrust of legal institutions, concerns about privacy, inconsistent reporting procedures, and inadequate institutional support. The paper further analyzes national, regional, and international legal frameworks addressing online gender-based violence, emphasizing the growing need for harmonized legislation, effective enforcement, platform accountability, and survivor-centered approaches. Comparative case studies illustrate promising practices and continuing implementation challenges across jurisdictions. The review also highlights the importance of digital literacy, public awareness, platform governance, multi-stakeholder collaboration, and comprehensive support services in preventing online abuse and promoting safer digital environments. Finally, it identifies persistent research gaps, particularly the lack of standardized definitions, reliable prevalence data, and comparative evidence from low- and middle-income countries. Strengthening legal protections, improving reporting systems, enhancing cross-sector collaboration, and investing in evidence-based prevention strategies are essential to reducing online gender-based violence and advancing digital rights, gender equality, and human rights globally.

Keywords: Online Gender-Based Violence, Cyber Violence, Digital Safety, Reporting Mechanisms and Legal Responses.

INTRODUCTION

The term gender-based violence online (GBV online) refers to harmful behaviours directed at individuals or groups because of their gender identities, or violence that disproportionately affects people of a particular gender carried out using or facilitated by the internet or related technologies[1]. GBV online can happen in multiple forms across writing-based and audiovisual media and is relevant to all geographic, cultural, ethnic, and national contexts [2]. The proliferation of online interactions has made many forms of GBV possible to perpetrate in ways that can affect any individual with access to the internet [3]. GBV online threatens the broader goals of achieving gender equality and improving human rights for women and other marginalised gender groups[4]. Research questions sought to identify the scale, characteristics, mechanisms, and societal responses of GBV online along with the corresponding data gaps [5]. Analysis clustered around eight mutually reinforcing research themes: the precise forms and nuances of GBV online; the prevalence of GBV online in different geographic and demographic settings; the opportunities and constraints for reporting GBV online, including formal institutional pathways and informal help-seeking responses; the legal frameworks governing the prevention and prosecution of GBV online; the involvement of researchers and civil society organisations in collecting, sharing, and analysing GBV online data; the support for broader multimedia engagement from platforms providing GBV-related data, capacity-building assistance, and audience outreach; the diversity of national and regional level engagement, including the

development of online gender-related safety guidance and comparative analysis of legal responses; and the excess supply of GBV online cases posing a secondary obstacle to greater policy engagement[6]. Framing focused on the concept of social harm, defined as activities or behaviours that negatively affect an individual's or group's well-being and acquire formal standing under the law [7]. The analytic lens of social harm supports the categorisation of GBV online by form and provides a basis for assessing its prevalence, regulatory response, and other dimensions while underscoring the ways in which these issues intersect with wider societal constructs concerning gender and broader perceptions of risk [8]. Identification of relevant data proceeded through a systematic literature review to identify a wide range of initial sources and case studies across multiple jurisdictions, enabling the filtering down of materials before the analysis of individual datasets [8]. Each specific focus area drew on the subset of sources providing relevant insight, often leading to the practical substitution of other data, information, or anecdote where relevant indicators remained absent [1, 2].

Prevalence of Gender-based Violence Online

Gender-based violence online covers a broad array of digital acts where GBV perpetrators may seek to control or abuse victims through online means [4]. Although extensive research has documented the use of IT for GBV, the complementary use of technology to address, counter, and prevent such digital acts has received less attention 1. Prevalence data, while patchy, indicates that online GBV significantly affects women, those in the LGBTQIA+ community, and other marginalized groups globally [5]. Women remain over-represented in all forms of online abuse and receive the most violent threats, with subsequent research indicating that GBV severely undermines their digital rights [2]. The prevalence of GBV acts, motivations, and contexts varies according to local circumstances, reflecting broader societal conditions and embedded cultural attitudes worldwide. GBV online significantly affects women, people with diverse gender identities, and marginalized social groups, leaving psychological, social, and economic scars [5]. Differences according to age, gender, socio-economic profile, and social setting together with varying mediation across channels and platforms also reflect cross-national patterns in GBV perpetration and experience [5]. Country- or region-specific studies that measure GBV levels and explore its causes and consequences remain limited [6].

Forms and Manifestations

Gender-based violence transpires in numerous ways and is experienced by many individuals on a variety of online platforms, such as social media and messaging applications, but there is no globally accepted definition for it [7]. Acts classified under gender-based violence online vary from an isolated incident of hate speech towards one sexual identity to repetitive harassment focusing on a specific individual [2]. Some documentation and reporting efforts also include unwanted dissemination of sexually explicit material, whether images or videos, as a form of gender-based violence online; some forms fall under the broader category of intimate partner violence [1]. Gender-based violence comprises seven forms of abuse: incitement to hatred, incitement to sexual violence, direct threats, cyberstalking, harassment, impersonation, and the unsolicited sharing of sexually explicit content[7].

Demographic and Contextual Factors

Gender-based violence online affects women and members of sexual and gender minorities across different contexts and geographic spaces. Various demographic and situational factors shape who is targeted and how, including offenders' characteristics, platform affordances, and socio-economic conditions[8].Prevalence data indicate that young women in low-income communities are particularly vulnerable, and platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp are both ubiquitous and sites of extensive abuse. Awareness of and sensitivity to risk varies; for example, some young women perceive and report abuse through Instagram DMs, while others overlook unsolicited comments on TikTok videos[1]. Young women increasingly report abuse such as doxxing, swatting, and threats of sexual violence 2. Certain factors (age, gender identity, socio-economic status, platform choice, harassment type, everyday context) correlate with the incidence of online gender-based violence against women [1].

Cross-cultural and Regional Variations

Gender-based violence (GBV) facilitated through digital technology such as the internet and mobile phones (also known as technology-facilitated violence, technology-enabled gender-based violence, cyber violence, or online abuse) are a significant global threat that predominately affects women and gender-diverse people [1]. It occurs online in three main forms: harassment, non-consensual content, and impersonation [3]. Harassment includes unwanted messages, intimidation, stalking, and abuse targeting a person's identity, role, or opinions. Non-consensual content includes the dissemination of intimate content, altered photos, and unconsented spying. Impersonation includes account hacking, fake profiles, and identity theft [4]. GBV can lead to severe physical and psychological harm, including injuries, anxiety, depression, social stigma, and suicidal ideation [5]. GBV prevalence varies significantly across different cultures and geographic areas [6]. Available figures from 24 countries, mainly from the Global North and Latin America, suggest that 15–40% of women experience online harassment [7]. However, cross-country variation is pronounced, with reported rates of victimisation ranging between 10% and 85%. Measurement challenges including the absence of verified data, inconsistency in definitions,

and variation in cultural norms regarding reporting must be addressed for a more comprehensive understanding of global prevalence [8].

Reporting Mechanisms and Barriers

Most platforms maintain mechanisms for reporting harmful user-generated content and conduct. Such mechanisms may include the option to flag or report individual pieces of content (e.g. a comment, a message) or blocks to a user's ability to post further content after repeated violations, along with options for the user (e.g. moving to suspension or deletion of the account) [5]; reporting harmful and inappropriate conduct may trigger escalation when an identified pattern emerges or when the material reported falls under specific abuse categories. Institutional sources of support exist both within platforms and in independent organizations associated with strategies to combat gender-based violence online [6]. Paths to support usually involve sometimes indirectly engagement with the underlying harmful content. The setting of many digital ecology practices remains a source of continued prevention, reduction, and education to counter serious and harmful repeat offender patterns, and to mitigate the impact of gender-based violence [7]. Responses and measures initiated by public authorities, when sought, tend to occupy a variety of positions along the spectrum from formalized to informal, and include steps like information-gathering, provision of advice, warning letters, steps towards prosecutorial action, and criminal investigation [1, 8].

Platforms and Institutional Channels

Offering a clearer view of channels to approach legal authorities depending on local circumstances, available and easily identifiable pathways for victims to report incidents of gender-based violence online constitute an indispensable factor within any viable system for preventing and addressing such offences [4]. Reporting pathways can differ both across and within countries [5]. Law enforcement agencies and dedicated governmental bodies usually provide formal mechanisms to report offences [6]. Other less formal channels may also exist, maintained by non-governmental organisations and victims' support groups. Informal channels, including facilitated reporting to social media platforms allowing for non-identified provision of evidence, may also be available. Therefore, claims about lack of reporting opportunities require certain qualification [7]. Reviewing countries currently taking up systematic initiatives on how to report incidents of gender-based violence online, describing the actual procedures in place and the handling of incidents looks like a promising undertaking. The lack of readily identifiable pathways to report issues and lack of uniformity across reporting procedures represent major obstacles, especially where victims are constantly confronted with the problem of deciding whether an incident constitutes gender-based violence online [8]. A number of dedicated explanatory websites describing detailed procedures in different languages do exist [2]. Nevertheless, information on who provides assistance and how, especially outside recognised incident-response services maintained by social media platforms, does remain insufficiently available [3]. Platforms may also keep track of statistics on reported incidents in certain regions but fail to provide systematic overviews of how the formal procedures for each specific platform operate, requiring individuals to engage with each platform separately [4].

Help-seeking Behavior and Victim Support

Although there are numerous formal support systems, survivors of violence often seek help from their close networks. In the European Union (EU), reports of domestic violence tend to be disclosed to family (66%), friends (51%), and health professionals such as general practitioners (42%) and psychologists (32%) [4]. In a survey from the National Family Health Surveys conducted in India, 44% of women who experienced physical and/or sexual violence discussed the issue with others [5]. According to a survey carried out in Spain, only two out of ten women who had experienced intimate partner violence (IPV) reported their experiences to the police, but 70% would have preferred to tell someone about it; the most common types of informal support sought were family members (43%) and friends (32%) [6]. A survey by the World Health Organization revealed that in ten countries across diverse settings, women who sought help after partner violence were more likely to approach informal sources like family, friends, and community organizations than formal ones like health services and the police [7].

Barriers to Reporting and Data Gaps

According to various studies, fear of victim-blaming from reporting to designated authorities deters individuals from reporting digital violence [1]. Marginalized groups may be especially reluctant to approach police or governance systems [2]. A 2022 study in the Philippines revealed low reporting rates to law enforcement and the government among young people targeted by harassment online, due in part to fears of being blamed for the abuse. Many instead sought advice from friends and family and increased their privacy settings [3]. Even with protective policies in place, potential victims remain apprehensive about whether reporting would entail harassment or loss of privacy [4]. Online harassment frequently provokes mixed responses, further complicating the decision to report [5]. Victims risk being blamed or subjected to counter-harassment when seeking redress, particularly if their identity is publicly disclosed [6]. Those facing both online and offline harassment may become suspicious of the intent behind offers of support [7]. Human rights organizations and academics, especially if publicly known, receive harassment and threats during gun violence discussions; offers of assistance may therefore

appear insincere. Countries with limited confidence in the legal system refrain from reporting incidents for fear of being treated as criminals [8]. Muslim women in an unspecified region are reluctant to counter online hate speech because their efforts would be politicized, leading to incendiary comments or violence. Individuals remain skeptical of legal remedies' effectiveness [1].

Legal Frameworks and Responses

Legal frameworks and responses are already established yet still evolving. Offences relating to online gender-based violence, such as creating or sharing intimate images without consent or transmitting malicious messages, are typically encompassed [2]. Many jurisdictions define and criminalize gender-based violence outside the scope of these specific provisions [3]. These crimes generally do not require a specific gendered intention, nor is the prosecutor compelled to demonstrate that the victim belongs to a certain target group [4]. Legislators may nonetheless perceive a necessity to ascertain whether and how surveillance of gender-based violence perpetrated online is addressed explicitly [5]. One consideration is whether the act is actionable solely through *lex specialis* provisions or in conjunction with gender-neutral offences [1].

Criminal Law Provisions and Definitions

Violence against women refers to any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty occurring in public or private life [7]. Violence against women encompasses physical, sexual and psychological harm, including but not limited to: [1] physical and sexual violence occurring in the family; [2] physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community; [3] trafficking in women and forced prostitution; and [4] non-consensual sexual acts [1]. Gender-based violence disproportionately affects women and girls based on their gender, resulting in severe physical, sexual, and psychological harm. Gender-based violence manifests in various ways and occurs at both structural and interpersonal levels. Keeping in view the structural drivers of gender-based violence online, the following definitions are proposed: [1] Aggression or degradation towards women or members of the LGBTQI+ community; [2] Background threats that uphold reflects women's status as subordinate to men; [3] Control, surveillance, or manipulation of women's images; [4] Unwanted sharing of images or conversations originating from women; [5] Non-consensual sharing of intimate or private information; and [6] Harassment or intimidation targeting gendered persons.

Civil Remedies and Transitional Justice

Gender-based violence online encompasses acts targeting a person based on socially ascribed gender attributes, chiefly perpetrated by individuals of the opposite and, in some cases, the same gender [5]. In the digital context, gender-based violence includes electronic text, audio, visual, or video content and actions aimed at dissemination or access through computing and telecommunication networks or devices [6]. The emergence of online platforms has transformed the dynamics of gender-based violence, pushing it away from the physical domain, which, due to the universal prevalence of the Internet, has a global character [7]. With the rapid proliferation of information and communication technologies, particularly the Internet and mobile telephony, many young people, especially women, have become increasingly vulnerable to various forms of violence, particularly gender-based violence [1]. Ratifying the Convention on Cybercrime, in combination with initiatives outlined in the International Guidelines on Freedom of Expression and Gender Justice and the International Guidelines on Violence against Children in a Digital World, could guide and support the development of adequate national laws and measures to prevent and combat gender-based violence, particularly against women and young people [8].

International and Regional Standards

International guidelines recognize the need for member states to set national standards to tackle VAW in cyberspace however, given that GBVO online requires specific laws to tackle it differently from other forms of GBVO in spaces over the course of a global pandemic the GBVO landscape worldwide has evolved hence, an overview of regulations in four regions North America, Latin America, Europe and Africa [1].

Enforcement Challenges and Accountability

The challenge of enforcement lies in the ability to hold perpetrators accountable for their actions. Considerations of accountability encompass not only the prosecution of offenders but also the institution of effective legal pathways for victims to find redress through restraining orders, compensation, and victim assistance [4]. In many jurisdictions, the lethargy in the prosecution of gender-based violence often causes victims to lose hope in obtaining legal redress [2]. This is worsened when victims experience harassment from police officers, inspiring fear rather than trust in the criminal justice system [1]. The lack of technical expertise among prosecutors to handle cybercrimes further exacerbates the reticence of potential complainants [4]. Furthermore, the responsibility for monitoring and curbing gender-based violence has been disproportionately placed on platforms rather than members of the prosecution, while legislation does little to clarify the scope of civil liability [6].

Case Studies and Comparative Analysis

Online gender-based violence (GBV) takes on various forms that individuals experience differently across the world. Some countries have made progress in creating legal frameworks for addressing it [7]. In this context,

exploring online GBV and examining specific country case studies can yield lessons on promising responses, whether legislative or practical[8]. Material from Kenya, South Africa, and the Philippines highlights GBV's specific dynamics in those contexts. Because online abuse often represents a continuum of offline violence, countries also need strong legal, institutional, and policy measures to tackle it fully [2]. These jurisdictions illustrate how some countries have formulated approaches to legal and institutional mechanisms, even when broader contexts discourage effective action on the abuse [1].

Jurisdictional Perspectives

Gender-based violence (GBV) undermines the fundamental human rights of women and girls, stalls social progress and economic growth, and creates obstacles to addressing other global and national priorities. Despite growing awareness of the issue, far too little has yet been done to counter it [1]. GBV manifests through multiple forms of violence, abuse or harassment, including digital environments. Such forms are interconnected but remain ambiguously framed, which complicates effective national legal responses and regulations [2]. GBV includes discrimination, intimidation, coercion, harassment, abuse (both physical and non-physical) and attack (psychological, economic, sexual, physical)[3]. Gender-based violence operates through at least seven forms: teenage intimate partner violence, teenage sexual abuse, female economic abuse, domestic abuse through sexual pressure, women-access-focused financial abuse and free or single-love relationship abuse and eighteen abuse-like abuse types in total[4]. Legal arrangements for GBV vary widely across national jurisdictions [5].

Policy Innovations and Best Practices

Multistakeholder initiatives provide institutional mechanisms for multisector engagement. Enhanced policy and practice frameworks in this area help advance the organisation's broader gender equality goals and the fulfilment of their fundamental human rights obligations [6]. Strategies include prioritising awareness-raising initiatives to expand the understanding of violence against women and girls, aligning regulatory frameworks with international standards, establishing clear responsibilities and accountability mechanisms, strengthening multi-stakeholder capacity-building initiatives, facilitating the sharing of data on the issue, and incorporating appropriate technical intergovernmental cooperation[7]. Emerging innovations around the world demonstrate how multi-stakeholder partnerships can accelerate progress towards a more effective prevention of gender-based violence online. In Spain, the government has introduced a zero-tolerance policy against gender-based violence to eliminate it from the digital space as well [8]. It denotes all forms of violence, along with new technologies brought in and the virtual world, including specific measures for prevention. In a joint project between the Peru's Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations and the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics, new pedagogical materials and issues are being developed with emphasis on prevention to help address gender-based violence in schools through awareness [1]. In New Zealand, activity with internet service providers on online child sexual abuse material through a multi-stakeholder project has partnered with an international organisation to develop a code of conduct governing the detection and reporting of that content [2]. In the Netherlands, a multi-stakeholder effort is underway to integrate the prevention of and response to harmful online content while further encouraging research on violence against women more broadly [1, 3].

Policy Implications and Recommendations

Gender-based violence online remains a global concern, with violence against women and girls occurring regularly and unabated throughout the world [1]. Now, in an ever-evolving digital landscape, the propagation of harmful content including hate speech, threats of violence, sexual violence, and reality distortion cuts across groups, communities, and platforms, and affects women differently than men[2]. Everyone has the right to access today's fundamental resources without fear of violence, but taking the digital plunge brings potential for victimization, especially vulnerability for traditionally marginalised populations[3]. During the past decade, gender-based violence online has sparked public outcry from various institutions and organizations, yet little action has been taken to address the problem. Gender-based violence remains pervasive online[4].

Prevention through Education and Digital Literacy

Online interventions can prevent gender-based violence (GBV) by facilitating education on digital literacy. Critical digital literacy enables individuals to use information and communication technologies consciously [5]. GBV in the online space involves the legitimate rights of individuals being threatened by those who abuse and misuse the technology [1]. Education reduces human suffering and increases wellness. An informed youth population may increase awareness about GBV, leading to debates on whether the government should implement measures to prevent GBV through education [2]. GBV in the online space utilizes social media platforms, online games, computers, telephones, or any digital device committed by a parent, sibling, family member, friend, or an acquaintance [3]. Essential skills include not sharing passwords, privacy settings, suitable apps, knowing redress procedures, block and reporting features, protecting personal data, knowing to whom to report, and cyber safety (e.g. keeping personal matters secret, asking consent before publishing someone's content)[4]. Keeping personal matters/secrets, if certain information is leaked, it may lead to unwanted harassment. Keeping public and private data public and vigilant over chat history may contain past messages or pictures [5]. Critical understanding

enables informed consumer choices regarding what, where, how, and the purpose the government can reduce GBV [6].

Platform Governance and Responsibility

Platform governance plays a central role in shaping individuals' safety and freedom of expression online, influencing access to the workforce and democratic participation [5]. Women are disproportionately targeted: they face online gender-based violence (GBV) in public spaces and while working from home [6]. Notably, women of colour, members of minoritised religious groups, and queer women experience even higher levels of abuse. Academic institutions therefore bear responsibility for preventing and protecting against such harm directed at women researchers [7]. Yet, in the absence of adequate preventative measures, individuals also need greater skills to self-protect while engaging in online scholarship [2]. Educational and training programmes should enhance knowledge of online GBV and equip participants to develop protective skills. Legal, social, and technological measures are essential to combatting online abuse, ensuring safe and equitable digital spaces [1]. Even if legislation exists, platforms are often reluctant to exercise their agency and intervene. Instead, they focus solely on content moderation by formulating policies and curating ambiguous guidelines [3]. To promote a facility that allows equitable participation irrespective of status, platforms should commit to transparency regarding policing the dissemination of GBV, establish moderation standards that avoid discrimination, and clarify obligations for managing reported incidents [8]. Before accepting a user, platforms must clearly indicate the degree of anonymity to which they are entitled. Harassment is exacerbated when users conceal their true identity and are shielded from consequences. Additionally, anonymity is meaningless if users subsequently violate community guidelines and evade identification [1]. These measures are vital for lifting institutional barriers that inhibit equitable digital communication and fostering self-protective responses and preventive remedies to GBV [2].

Support Services and Survivor-centered Approaches

Survivor-centered responses are critical in addressing gender-based violence facilitated by technology [5]. Available support services must minimize harms and enhance individuals' and communities' capacity to address their needs. Governments should revise laws and reporting procedures to protect victim-survivors and reinforce existing legislative frameworks to address gender-based violence effectively [3]. Gender equality policies and equal access to digital tools should be ensured in all professional settings. To increase digital literacy, governmental and non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, and the private sector must provide training on technology-facilitated sexual violence and abuse [6]. All education, community, and family programs should emphasize respect for human rights and the importance of technology in everyday life [7]. Educational institutions and organizations should enforce strict gender equality policies and intervention strategies. Raising awareness of gender-based violence facilitated by technology and establishing accessible support services is crucial [7]. Conducting surveys is also essential to understand the prevalence of technology-facilitated sexual violence and abuse, particularly in low- and middle-income regions [8]. Such research should identify vulnerable groups and compare technology-facilitated sexual violence and abuse across different income-level countries. Investigating the impacts of such violence and the barriers to seeking help is another priority, as is exploring police perspectives and responses [7]. Finally, the effectiveness of bystander intervention strategies and online support forums is worthy of examination.

Data Collection, Measurement, and Research Priorities

Understanding the scope and dimensions of gender-based violence online remains a pressing research priority, as knowledge gaps and significant measurement challenges persist [7]. Academic scholarship examining the online manifestations of gender-based violence has expanded markedly in recent years, but comparatively little systematic attention has been directed toward prevalence estimation, global mapping, and quantitative measurement strategies [7]. Much existing work focuses principally on platform-specific analyses of exposure, reporting mechanisms, and policy responses, with few studies synthesizing the available evidence across jurisdictions or recording how legal and policy measures evolve over time [8]. Recognizing the growing infrastructure of laws and policies governing gender-based violence online, more systematic, cross-jurisdictional studies could illuminate the establishment and modification of laws, the changing nature of the phenomenon and the emergence of new legal and policy measures, and the collaborations or coalitions among law enforcement, policymakers, civil society, and media organizations actively addressing the problem [8].

CONCLUSION

Online gender-based violence has become one of the most pressing challenges accompanying the rapid expansion of digital communication technologies. The evidence reviewed demonstrates that technology-facilitated abuse disproportionately affects women, girls, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and other marginalized groups, undermining their safety, psychological well-being, freedom of expression, participation in public life, and enjoyment of fundamental human rights. The diverse forms of online abuse including harassment, cyberstalking, impersonation, non-consensual sharing of intimate content, hate speech, and threats of violence reflect broader patterns of gender inequality that extend from offline environments into digital spaces. Although many countries and digital

platforms have introduced reporting mechanisms and legal provisions to address online gender-based violence, significant barriers continue to limit their effectiveness. Fear of victim-blaming, inadequate legal protection, inconsistent reporting procedures, limited institutional capacity, lack of public trust, and insufficient technical expertise among law enforcement agencies discourage many survivors from seeking justice. Differences in legal definitions, enforcement practices, and platform policies across jurisdictions further complicate efforts to provide timely and effective remedies. These findings underscore the need for harmonized legal frameworks, transparent reporting procedures, and stronger accountability mechanisms for both public institutions and digital platforms. The review further demonstrates that addressing online gender-based violence requires a comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach that combines legal reform, survivor-centered support services, digital literacy education, platform governance, public awareness campaigns, and collaboration among governments, technology companies, civil society organizations, educational institutions, and international bodies. Preventive strategies should empower users with the knowledge and skills necessary to protect themselves online while promoting respectful digital citizenship and challenging harmful gender norms that perpetuate violence. Despite growing scholarship, important knowledge gaps remain. Reliable prevalence estimates are constrained by inconsistent definitions, underreporting, and limited cross-national data, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. Future research should prioritize standardized measurement frameworks, longitudinal and comparative studies, evaluation of legal and policy interventions, and the experiences of marginalized populations that remain underrepresented in existing literature. Strengthening evidence-based policymaking and international cooperation will be essential for developing effective responses to emerging forms of technology-facilitated abuse. Ultimately, eliminating online gender-based violence requires sustained commitment to protecting human rights in digital spaces. By strengthening legal protections, improving reporting systems, enhancing institutional accountability, promoting digital literacy, and fostering inclusive online environments, governments, technology platforms, and civil society can collectively reduce online gender-based violence and advance gender equality, digital safety, and equitable participation in the digital age.

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