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Online Gender-Based Violence in Tiktok Digital Culture: A Phenomenological Study on Women Tiktok Users in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Online Gender-Based Violence (OGBV) is increasingly widespread with the increasing use of social media, especially TikTok which is the most popular digital public space among young women. While it offers a space for expression, TikTok also exposes the reproduction of misogyny, anti-feminism, and attacks on women's bodies in various forms. This study aims to understand the experiences of Indonesian women as victims of OGBV on TikTok and how they give meaning to the violence they experience in the emotional, social, and digital dimensions. This research uses a qualitative method with a digital phenomenology approach, referring to the thoughts of Simone de Beauvoir, Iris Marion Young, Sara Ahmed, and Silvano Tagliagambe. The data was obtained through in-depth interviews with five women who had experienced OGBV on TikTok. The results showed that women experienced multiple forms of OGBV such as sexually explicit comments, body shaming, gender-based hate speech, deepfakes, as well as threats and intimidation. This experience has an emotional impact in the form of fear, anger, shame, and anxiety that is inherent in the body and affects the way they interact in the digital space. Socially, women tend to withdraw themselves, change their way of expressing themselves, or self-censorship to avoid repeated violence. Although victims carry out various strategies such as blocking the perpetrator, reporting accounts, or deleting content, these actions have not been able to overcome patriarchal power structures that work through algorithms and digital culture. This study concludes that OGBV on TikTok is an existential experience that affects women's bodies, emotions, and identities while showing that digital space and real space merge in forming violent experiences. These findings underscore the need for collaborative efforts between users, platforms, and policymakers to create safer digital spaces for women.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, being a woman is not only about living life, but also about surviving. Surviving social pressures, cultural demands, and also from various forms of violence that continue to loom. Violence against women is not just a legal record or daily news, but a collective wound that continues to be inherited from generation to generation. The development of digital technology and the massive use of social media have created a new public space that promises freedom of expression, but at the same time creates new vulnerabilities for women. Online-Based Gender-Based Violence emerged as an extension of gender-based structural violence that has long been rooted in patriarchal systems, now operating through digital mediums. Data from the Komnas Perempuan Annual Record shows that gender-based violence against

women is still at an alarming number, namely 1,272 reports of cases of Gender-Based Cyber Violence (KSBG), a decrease of 25% compared to 2022 which recorded 1,697 cases. however, cyberviolence is often not reported due to social pressure, stigma, and weak protection and law enforcement mechanisms (Komisi Nasional Anti Kekerasan terhadap Perempuan (Komnas Perempuan), 2024). This condition shows that the digital space cannot be understood as a neutral space, but as part of a social structure that contributes to gender inequality.

In the context of social media, TikTok occupies a strategic position as one of the most popular digital public spaces in Indonesia, especially among young women. However, TikTok does not only function as a technology platform, but as a digital cultural arena where values, norms, and power relations are produced and circulated. Through algorithmic logic that prioritizes virality, mass participation, and humor, TikTok is often a reproductive medium of misogyny and anti-feminism, where violence against women is disguised as a joke, moral criticism, or public opinion that is considered reasonable (Banet-Weiser, 2018; (Marwick & Caplan, 2018). In this space, women's bodies and expressions become objects of collective supervision that are constantly assessed, commented on, and controlled.

Online Gender-Based Violence on TikTok comes in various forms, ranging from sexist comments, body shaming, gender-based hate speech, intimidation, threats, to unauthorized dissemination of personal information (Komisi Nasional Anti Kekerasan terhadap Perempuan (Komnas Perempuan), 2024). SAFEnet categorizes OGBV as a spectrum of violence that includes online sexual harassment, privacy violations, threats, digital stalking, and reputational damage (Safenet, 2019). Although it does not cause direct physical harm, digital violence leaves a permanent and repetitive trace, which has a serious impact on the psychological state of the victim. Women often experience fear, shame, anxiety, and trauma that affect the way they interact and express themselves in the digital space (Mustika & Corliana, 2022).

The presence of social media also blurs the boundaries and signs of gender violence. Actions that demean women are often normalized through vulgar language, sexist humor, or moral advice that blames the victim (Mantilla, 2015). As a result, women as a group that are structurally vulnerable to gender injustice experience difficulties in accessing a sense of security, controlling self-representation, and managing their existence in the digital space. Such experiences of violence encourage many women to self-censor, withdraw from digital participation, or restrict expression as a survival strategy, which ultimately narrows the digital public space for women themselves (Safenet, 2019)

The growing anti-feminism narrative on social media further amplifies this cycle of violence. Anti-feminism serves not only as a rejection of the idea of gender equality, but also as an ideological mechanism that maintains patriarchal dominance and legitimizes women's subordination (Mingkase & Rohmaniyah, 2022) On TikTok, anti-feminism narratives often appear in the form of disparaging comments, satirism, and content that mocks women who voice gender equality issues, so that misogyny has become a normalized practice in digital culture.

However, most previous research on OGBV has focused on mapping forms of violence, classification of perpetrators, or analyzing violent content on social media. Women's subjective experiences as victims—including how they feel, interpret, and negotiate such violence in their digital lives—are still relatively marginalized in academic studies. In fact, understanding the meaning of women's experiences is the key to reading OGBV not only as an individual act, but as an existential experience that is intertwined with patriarchal structures and digital culture.

Therefore, this research has academic and social urgency by seeking to explore the experiences of Indonesian women in dealing with Online Gender-Based Violence on TikTok, as well as describe how anti-feminism attitudes are manifested and interpreted in the digital cultural space. By placing women's experiences at the center of the analysis, this research is expected to enrich the study of gender communication and digital culture, while affirming the importance of creating a safer, fairer, and more gender-responsive digital space.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Online Gender-Based Violence (OGBV)

Online Gender-Based Violence (OGBV) is a form of violence that occurs in the digital space and is directed at individuals based on their gender identity, which in practice is more experienced by women. Online gender-based violence is not an isolated digital phenomenon but reflects the underlying unequal

gender relations and patriarchal power structures of society, where technology and social media both facilitate and amplify attacks, oppression, and silencing of women and gender minorities in public and private spheres. (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, 2019) In the context of social media, especially TikTok, OGBV is present through sexist comments, body shaming, gender-based hate speech, verbal sexual harassment, threats, intimidation, and the dissemination of personal information without permission, which is reinforced by algorithmic logic and mass participation.

Komnas Perempuan categorizes gender-based cyberviolence into several main forms, including cyber harassment, malicious distribution, online defamation, impersonation, cyberstalking, revenge porn, sexting, and online grooming (Komisi Nasional Anti Kekerasan terhadap Perempuan (Komnas Perempuan), 2024). SAFEnet emphasizes that these various forms have the same essence as non-digital gender violence, with the main difference in the medium used. Violence becomes gender-based when the act is carried out with the motive of degrading, controlling, or intimidating the victim because of his or her gender identity or sexuality, rather than just an ordinary online conflict (Safenet, 2019).

The impact of the OGBV is not momentary, but inherent and layered. Victims experience emotional impacts such as fear, shame, anger, anxiety, and trauma that affect their relationship with the body, identity, and digital space. Socially, the OGBV encourages women to withdraw from interactions, limit expression, and engage in self-censorship as a survival strategy (Anstis & Laflèche, 2025). SAFEnet (2019) notes that many survivors end up losing their sense of security, experiencing social isolation, and even facing economic and reputational losses due to permanent digital traces of violence. Thus, the OGBV not only restricts women's freedom of expression, but also narrows their access to digital public spaces that are supposed to be inclusive and safe (Enock et al., 2025).

In this study, OGBV is understood as a lived experience experienced by women on TikTok, not solely as a category of actions or types of violations. This understanding is important because the experience of digital violence does not stop at online comments or attacks, but continues at how women interpret, respond, and negotiate their presence in the digital space on a daily basis.

Online Misogyny and Anti-Feminism

Online misogyny is a form of hatred against women mediated by digital technology and manifested through comments, memes, hate speech, harassment, and threats in online spaces. Jane called online misogyny a practice of symbolic violence that aims to silence women, especially those who appear, speak out, or express themselves in digital public spaces (Jane, 2014) In social media like TikTok, misogyny doesn't always come in the form of open attacks, but it's often wrapped up in humor, irony, or moral criticism that is normalized through mass interaction and the platform's algorithms.

Banet-Weiser asserts that contemporary digital culture allows misogyny to work affectively and popularly, where hatred of women is not only tolerated, but also gains visibility and legitimacy through the logic of virality (Banet-Weiser, 2018) In the context of TikTok, sexist comments, body shaming, and insults to women's expressions are often produced and reproduced as entertainment, so that violence becomes vague and difficult to recognize as a form of oppression. Marwick and Caplan add that this dynamic is reinforced by the collective participation of users, where attacks on women are often carried out in groups, creating a greater effect of intimidation and silencing (Marwick & Caplan, 2018)

Anti-feminism in the digital space is inseparable from online misogyny practices. Mantilla defines anti-feminism as a form of resistance to gender equality that is manifested through systematic attacks on women and the idea of feminism, often carried out anonymously and aggressively on the internet (Mantilla, 2015) Anti-feminism works not only as an ideological rejection, but also as a social control mechanism that seeks to maintain patriarchal dominance by degrading, ridicule, or delegitimizing women who are perceived as violating traditional gender norms.

On social media, especially TikTok, anti-feminism often appears in the form of sarcastic comments, moral policing, and narratives that blame women for the violence they experience. Banet-Weiser and Miltner point out that resistance to feminism in the digital space is often wrapped up in the language of humor and "common sense", so that it seems harmless, even though it serves to reinforce gender inequality (Banet-

Weiser & Miltner, 2016) This strategy makes misogyny and anti-feminism even more difficult to fight because it is not always recognized as violence, but rather as legitimate public opinion.

Thus, online misogyny and anti-feminism can be understood as two interrelated mechanisms in digital culture. Both work symbolically, affectively, and structurally to control women's bodies, voices, and existence in digital public spaces. In this study, misogyny and anti-feminism are positioned as ideological contexts that frame the experiences of women victims of OGBV on TikTok, as well as explain why digital violence does not stop at individual actions, but becomes a collective practice that perpetuates women's subordination.

Feminism

Feminism in this study is positioned not as a normative identity or ideological label, but as a critical framework to read women's experiences in unequal power relations, especially in the digital space. A feminist perspective is used to understand how women's bodies, emotions, and identities are constructed, controlled, and negotiated in the context of Online Gender-Based Violence (OGBV). This approach allows for an analysis centered on women's subjective experiences as victims, while also uncovering the patriarchal structures that work symbolically and culturally on TikTok's social media.

Simone de Beauvoir's thinking is an important foundation in understanding the position of women as *the Other* in the social structure. In *The Second Sex*, Beauvoir asserts that women are not born women, but rather "become" women through social processes that place them in subordinate positions (de Beauvior, 1956) In the context of TikTok, women's bodies and expressions are not understood as autonomous entities, but rather as objects of public gaze that are constantly assessed, commented on, and controlled. The verbal, sexual, and symbolic violence experienced by women in the digital space reflects the process of oppression, in which women are reduced from subjects to legitimate objects to be judged. Thus, OGBV can be read as an existential experience that disrupts a woman's relationship with her own body and identity.

Iris Marion Young expands this understanding through a phenomenological perspective on the female body. The concepts *of lived body*, *ambiguous transcendence*, and *inhibited intentionality* explain how women's bodies are always in a state of being supervised and limited by social norms (Young, 2005). In a digital space like TikTok, these restrictions appear in anticipation of misogynistic comments, threats, and moral condemnation. Women then limit their movement, expression, and visibility in response to potential violence. The female body in the digital space is not completely free, but rather is constantly negotiated through the vigilance and fear inherent in everyday experience.

Sara Ahmed offers an affective lens for understanding how emotions work in women's experiences of dealing with OGBV. Through the concept of affective economies, Ahmed shows that emotions such as fear, shame, and anger are not purely personal, but circulate and are attached to certain bodies through social and discursive practices. In the context of digital violence, women's emotions are formed through the circulation of comments, public responses, and platform culture that normalizes misogyny. Ahmed also underlined how women who voice discomfort or resistance are often positioned as feminist killjoy, i.e. figures who are considered to disrupt the social order (Ahmed, 2004). This explains why women's emotional expressions on TikTok are often countered with follow-up attacks, instead of empathy.

These three feminist perspectives complement each other in reading the experiences of women victims of OGBV on TikTok. Beauvoir helps understand the position of women as others, Young explains how women's bodies are limited and controlled, while Ahmed explains how emotions work as a power mechanism in digital culture. Thus, feminism in this study serves as an analytical tool to reveal the patriarchal power relations that shape women's experiences in the digital space, not as a moral benchmark for victim responses

Digital Phenomenology

Digital phenomenology is used in this study to understand women's experiences as victims of Online Gender-Based Violence (OGBV) not just as a technological event, but as a life experience that has existential weight. Departing from the thinking of Silvano Tagliagambe, digital phenomenology rejects the firm separation between the real world and the digital world. Tagliagambe emphasizes that digital space is not an artificial space separate from reality, but rather a part of the concrete human experience,

where emotions, social relationships, and identity formation take place in real life (Tagliagambe, 2023).

In the context of social media such as TikTok, women's experiences of facing the OGBV do not stop at screens or text comments, but permeate into their daily lives. Fear, insecurity, trauma, and changes in the way we express and interact show that digital experiences and social-physical experiences are intertwined. Digital phenomenology allows for the reading of online violence as a bodily perceived experience, influences self-awareness, and shapes the way women interpret their existence in digital public spaces.

This approach also emphasizes the importance of intersubjectivity in the digital space. According to Tagliagambe, technology shapes the way individuals relate to others, as well as building a structure of shared experiences. In the case of OGBV, violence is not only perpetrated by individual perpetrators, but is also amplified by public responses, comment cultures, and platform mechanisms that allow violence to take place collectively. Therefore, digital phenomenology is relevant to understand how women's experiences are shaped by the interaction between individual subjectivity, social relations, and technological structures.

Using digital phenomenology, this study places women's experiences as the main source of knowledge. The focus of the analysis is not directed at measuring the frequency or technical classification of violence, but rather on how women feel, understand, and give meaning to online-based gender-based violence in their digital lives. This approach allows for the reading of OGBV as an existential experience that suggests that the boundaries between digital space and real space are fluid and intertwined.

METHOD

Research Approach

This study uses a qualitative approach with digital phenomenology methods to understand the experiences of Indonesian women in dealing with Online Gender-Based Violence (OGBV) on the TikTok platform. This approach was chosen because the research focuses on women's subjective experiences as victims, as well as how they feel, interpret, and negotiate violence experienced in the context of digital culture. Digital phenomenology, referring to the thought of Silvano Tagliagambe, views experiences in digital spaces as part of a whole living reality, in which digital and non-digital dimensions merge with each other and form the existential experience of individuals (Tagliagambe, 2023)

This research is in an interpretive paradigm that emphasizes understanding meaning based on the perspective of the research subject. With this paradigm, social reality is understood as the result of the construction of experience and interaction, rather than as an objective fact that stands alone. Therefore, the experiences of women victims of OGBV are positioned as the main source of knowledge to read the dynamics of violence, online misogyny, and anti-feminism at work on TikTok.

Data was collected through in-depth interviews with five Indonesian women who had experienced OGBV on TikTok with the following criteria: women at least 17 years old, active users of TikTok, and have first-hand experience of dealing with forms of Online Gender-Based Violence. The interviews were conducted online and focused on the informants' personal experiences, including the forms of violence experienced, emotional and social responses, and how they interpret and respond to such violence in their daily digital lives.

Data analysis is carried out in a descriptive-interpretive manner by emphasizing the process of interpreting the informant's experience. The data was analyzed by reading the narrative of women's experiences thematically, especially in the emotional, social, and digital dimensions, without imposing a structural categorization of the story. This approach allows researchers to capture how OGBV is experienced as a life experience that affects women's bodies, emotions, identities, and social relationships in the digital space.

RESULT

This research focuses on TikTok as a digital public space where social interaction, visibility, and gender-based power relations take place intensely. As a short video-based platform with algorithmic logic and a culture of mass participation, TikTok not only provides a space for expression, but also creates conditions that allow the reproduction of misogyny, anti-feminism, and Online Gender-Based Violence. For women, visibility on TikTok is often accompanied by the risk of excessive surveillance, moral judgment, and symbolic violence that mainly appears through the comment column and public response.

The informants in this study were five Indonesian women who actively use TikTok and have direct experience dealing with Online Gender-Based Violence (OGBV) on the platform. The informants came from diverse backgrounds, including students and workers, allowing this study to capture the variety of OGBV experiences in different social contexts. All informants reported experiencing more than one form of digital violence, such as sexist comments, body shaming, moral judgment, intimidation, and misogynistic public responses to the content they uploaded.

This study does not position informants solely as passive victims, but rather as active subjects who reflect, respond, and negotiate the experiences of violence they experience in the digital space. The informant's narrative shows how OGBV affects the emotional, social, and digital dimensions of their lives, as well as shaping the way women manage self-expression, participation, and a sense of security on TikTok. Thus, this overview places women's experiences in the context of TikTok's culture and technology as a space where patriarchal norms are reproduced as well as fought. Here is a brief profile of the research subject:

Table 1. Participant Data

Participant Initials	Age	OGBV Forms	Respons
AY	21	Sexually explicit comments & DMs from fake accounts & real accounts	Block, report, delete content, confrontation via DM
NA	22	Sexual comments, hate speech	Block & report
BE	23	Body shaming, hate speech	Ignore, delete Comment
NI	25	Sexual comments, body shaming	Block
TU	28	Deepfake/ edited content	Block

This study involved five female participant with an age range of 21–28 years who are active users of TikTok with intensive content consumption patterns. All informants are classified as consumptive users, with varying uploads frequency, ranging from rarely posting (once every 1-2 months) to uploading and broadcasting live almost every day. The five informants experienced various forms of Online Gender-Based Violence (OGBV), including sexually explicit comments and messages, body shaming, gender-based hate speech, unauthorized dissemination of content, and manipulation of digital content such as deepfakes. The violent incident occurred in the January-March 2025 range. The responses made by informants are also diverse, ranging from blocking and reporting accounts, to content removal, to limited confrontation and abandonment, which shows individual survival strategies in the face of violence in the digital space.

DISCUSSION

Forms of Online Gender-Based Violence (OGBV) on TikTok

Verbal Abuse

Verbal violence is the most dominant and earliest form of Online Gender-Based Violence (OGBV) experienced by women in this study. This violence arises through comments, messages, and public responses that attack women's bodies, identities, and morality. The findings of the study show that verbal violence does not present as a single experience, but rather occurs in layers and repeatedly, thus forming a traumatic experience inherent in women's relationship with the TikTok digital space.

Sexist comments were the initial form of verbal violence experienced by almost all informants in this study. Sexism in the digital space often works subtly and is normalized as a “joke” or “prank,” even though the impact is serious on women. Global data show that this phenomenon is structural: a Plan International survey in 22 countries noted that 59% of young women have received insulting or derogatory online comments, the majority of which are gender-related (Plan International, 2020). This confirms that digital sexism is not a separate incident, but rather a manifestation of the patriarchal culture operating in the online space.

The experience of informant AY illustrates how sexist comments work through the objectification of women's bodies. While uploading a simple lipsync video with casual clothes, AY received comments such as "your clothes are really spoofing" and requests to make a more hot dance.

“There was one lipsync video and I was shaking a little at that time, I was wearing a white tank top and hotpants, just ordinary dancing, not sensual. There

are always comments like, 'Your clothes are really inviting,' or 'Can you request a hotter dance?' I'm a bit of a nerd, but I think maybe they're just a bunch of crap. But it turned out to continue to DM." ***(AY, August 7, 2025)***

The comment reduces AY's body as a sexual invitation and places her as an object of fantasy gratification, erasing her autonomy as a creative subject. A woman's body is read automatically in a sexual framework, regardless of context and personal intentions.

A similar pattern was experienced by other informants in different contexts. TU received comments demeaning about her live broadcast activities as a mere "male attention" attempt, so her identity was reduced to an inauthentic female stereotype. NI experienced repeated vulgar comments while live with her friends, which shifted casual interactions to invitations to show off. Meanwhile, BE faced sexist comments while appearing in automotive community content, denying the legitimacy of her presence in a male-constructed space. Even NA, who rarely uploads content, received explicit comments "Where's your bokep video?" when only following the light dance trend. These cases show that sexist comments do not depend on the type of content, age, or intensity of platform use, but are inherent in the presence of women in the digital space.

Conceptually, such sexist comments can be understood as a form of cyber harassment and misogynistic hate speech that serves to reinforce gender inequality (EIGE, 2021). Verbal harassment is often underestimated as a joke, even though it is actually an entrance to more severe violence. Jane calls this practice e-bile, which is misogynistic hatred expressed through abusive and sexist language on the internet (Jane, 2014). Megarry added that digital sexism is a form of backlash against the increasing visibility of women in the online space (Megarry, 2014), while Banet-Weiser explains that sexism and misogyny work as structural mechanisms to maintain patriarchal dominance in digital culture (Banet-Weiser, 2018).

As such, sexist comments on TikTok cannot be understood as mere profanity or individual behavior. The comments serve as a social mechanism that normalizes the objectification of women's bodies and limits their legitimacy to appear and express themselves in digital public spaces. The experiences of five informants show that digital sexism operates as a digital patriarchal strategy that makes women question their right to be present, speak out, and be recognized as autonomous subjects on social media.

Body shaming is a form of verbal violence experienced by four out of five informants in this study. This practice works through ridicule, judgment, or commentary on women's bodies, either vulgarly or disguised in the form of "praise". In the digital space, body shaming is often normalized as a joke, even though research shows a significant impact on self-esteem, mental health, and women's tendency to self-censor (Schlüter et al., 2023)

NI's experience showed a vulgar and repetitive form of body shaming when doing live broadcasts. The comments she received explicitly highlighted the body and shifted casual conversations into sexual spectacle:

"When I was live with friends, someone commented 'there are big ones but not eyes', and then 'go down again so you can see the split'. There are also those who say, 'try to stand and see your height, while rotating, time backwards are held', as well as 'from the faces of the faces are hyper huh.' Even though I was just having a casual chat." ***(NI, August 19, 2025)***

The comment reduces NI to a body worthy of being shown and judged, erasing her position as a socially interacting subject.

A more subtle form of body shaming was experienced by BE through comments wrapped as compliments as he appeared in automotive community content. The focus of content that should be on activities and interests shifts to the evaluation of the body, suggesting that women, regardless of their context, remain drawn into the framework of objectification. Meanwhile, AY suffers from body shaming associated with clothes, where his body is used as a basis for moral judgment. This experience prompted AY to limit her clothing and movement as a self-protection strategy, affirming the function of body shaming as a control mechanism.

TU experienced body shaming which then escalated to other digital violence, including visual manipulation. This case shows that body shaming doesn't always stop at comments, but can be a gateway to more extreme forms of violence. In line with Hamamra's findings, body-based public shaming serves to strengthen women's social subordination and limit their legitimacy in the public space (Hamamra et al., 2025)

Thus, body shaming on TikTok cannot be understood as a mild mockery or miscommunication, but rather as a social mechanism that normalizes control over women's bodies. This practice narrows safe spaces, limits expression, and reinforces digital patriarchal power relations that place women's bodies as objects of public evaluation.

Visual Abuse

Visual violence is a form of Online Gender-Based Violence (OGBV) that has developed along with advances in image and video manipulation technology. This form involves creating, altering, or disseminating visual representations of women's bodies without consent, including through artificial intelligence (AI) technology. In this study, out of five informants, only TU experienced visual violence in the form of deepfake content. Although single, this case shows a serious level of violence because the victim's body is forcibly reproduced in a sexual context.

TU's experience shows how visual violence works through the manipulation of identity and the body.

"Until finally he sent the deepfake video file. The video clearly shows my face being pasted on someone else's body, doing something vulgar. Honestly, I dropped right away." ***(TU, September 8, 2025)***

This case can be understood in the framework of image-based sexual abuse (IBSA), which is intimate visual abuse through the creation, manipulation, or distribution of sexual content without the consent of the victim (Henry et al., 2019). In the context of TU, such violence falls into the category of altered or fabricated sexual images, in which the victim's face is engineered to create a completely fictitious sexual representation.

In the case of TU, visual violence also serves as a tool of control and blackmail. Deepfake videos are used by perpetrators to intimidate victims with the threat of spreading content, showing that visual violence does not stop at representation, but escalates into sextortion (Henry et al., 2019). Thus, even though it was experienced by one informant, the TU case confirms that visual violence is a form of OGBV that stands alone, with heavy emotional, social, and digital impacts, and shows how women's bodies are increasingly vulnerable to being used medan kontrol di era teknologi manipulatif.

Symbolic and Structural Violence

Victim blaming is a form of symbolic violence that is often experienced by victims of Online Gender-Based Violence (OGBV), both in offline and digital spaces. Victim blaming refers to the tendency to blame the victim for the violence he or she experienced, instead of placing the responsibility on the perpetrator. This phenomenon can be explained through the Just-World Hypothesis, which is the belief that the world must be fair so that the victim is considered to have certain "mistakes" that trigger violence (Lerner, 1980).

In this study, victim blaming appears in two main forms, namely internalized victim blaming and externalized victim blaming. Internalized victim blaming occurs when the victim absorbs social stigma and blames himself, both at the behavioral level (behavioral self-blame) and personality (characterological self-blame) (Janoff-Bulman, 1979).

"So the video was just a lipsync of a viral song at that time, which beat fast. My outfit is ordinary, but maybe for some people it's 'too open', I also thought that maybe my clothes were too open and I was too loose for the dance, so it seemed 'invited'." ***(AY, August 7, 2025)***

AY's experience clearly demonstrates this mechanism when he judged his clothes and movements as the cause of the sexist comments he received. A similar pattern was also experienced by NI, TU, and NA, who had reflected on harassment as "criticism" or self-blame. This process is in line with rape myth acceptance which normalizes the notion that women's bodies and expressions invite violence (Banyard et al., 2009), while showing how patriarchal norms are internalized by the victim.

The impact of internalized victim blaming is psychologically significant. Research shows that self-blame correlates with increased shame, distress, trauma, and a tendency to withdraw from digital public spaces (Dworkin et al., 2019). In this context, victim blaming works as a form of symbolic violence, because the victim unconsciously absorbs oppressive social values and makes them a judgment of the self. Instead of seeing violence as a structural problem, the victim positions himself as the source of the problem.

In addition, this study also found externalized victim blaming, which is when the social environment directly blames the victim. TU's experience shows how close friends responses such as "don't be

discouraged" or "just block" reject the legitimacy of the victim's experience. AY also received external comments blaming her outfit, including from fellow women. This kind of reaction is classified as negative social reactions to disclosure, which has been shown to exacerbate trauma and reduce the likelihood of victims seeking help (Dworkin et al., 2019). External victim blaming comes not only from the anonymous public, but also from the closest social circles, thus deepening the victim's sense of isolation.

However, the findings of this study also show that victim blaming is not a universal experience for all victims of OGBV. The BE case shows a different dynamic, where she is not blamed for the violence, but experiences symbolic misogyny and exclusion that escalates from the digital space to the real world. This phenomenon confirms that in addition to victim blaming, there are other mechanisms of violence such as digital misogyny and structural violence that work in parallel (Dragiewicz et al., 2018). Thus, victim blaming needs to be understood as one of the mechanisms of patriarchal power, not the only one, that functions to silence women and perpetuate their subordination in the digital public space.

Digital misogyny refers to gender-based speech, comments, and actions that are rooted in hatred of women and expressed through digital mediums. Different from regular verbal violence, digital misogyny not only attacks individuals, but also perpetuates patriarchal norms that place women as inferior. Banet-Weiser calls this phenomenon popular misogyny, which is misogyny that is normalized through popular culture and social media (Banet-Weiser, 2018). Lewis, Rowe, and Wiper affirm that online misogyny is a form of gender-based violence that must be understood structurally, not just "abusive comments" (Lewis et al., 2017). Dragiewicz et al. show how technology facilitates technology-facilitated coercive control, in which digital violence seeps into the victim's daily life (Dragiewicz et al., 2018).

The most dominant form of digital misogyny in this study is the sexualization of women's bodies, as experienced by AY, NI, and NA. Women's bodies are quickly reduced to sexual objects, regardless of the context of the content being uploaded. AY's experience shows how sexist comments continue to be private messages that flip responsibility on the victim:

"Then someone DMs say, 'Don't blame me, you're the one who made me do this.'" ***(AY, August 7, 2025)***

This speech combines misogyny and victim blaming, and reflects e-bile that serves to shame and silence women (Jane, 2017). A similar pattern was experienced by NI and NA, who received vulgar comments even though they only did light activities. This phenomenon can be read through the concepts of objectification in which women are encouraged to see themselves through the gaze of men (Sarda et al., 2025).

The second form of digital misogyny appears in the form of moral stigma and delegitimization, as experienced by TU. The live activities she carried out were positioned as acts of "seeking male attention" and "selling themselves", which denied women the legitimacy to be present in digital public spaces. TU explains the escalation of the experience:

"At first it was just a sexist comment, but the next day I DM again, more rude, until I said I sold myself live." **(TU, September 8, 2025)**

In the case of TU, misogyny does not stop at speech, but develops into threats and control through the delivery of deepfake content. This shows how digital misogyny operates as a coercive control that leverages technology to intimidate and restrict women (Dragiewicz et al., 2018).

The third form of digital misogyny is the exclusion of women from masculinely constructed spaces, as experienced by BE in the automotive community. Comments such as "wrong server" or joke-laced insults deny the legitimacy of his presence. BE explained that the harassment didn't stop on TikTok:

"At first it was just a comment, but when I met in person at a community event, the conversation was repeated again." ***(BE, July 30, 2025)***

This phenomenon indicates online-to-offline spillover, where digital misogyny seeps into real social interactions (Jane, 2017).

Overall, the experiences of AY, NI, NA, TU, and BE show that digital misogyny works through three main axes, the sexualization of the body, moral stigma, and the exclusion of masculine spaces, which are intertwined in maintaining patriarchal dominance in the digital space. Digital misogyny not only hurts individuals through trauma, shame, and self-censorship, but also serves as a structural mechanism that denies women's legitimacy as autonomous subjects in online public spaces.

Threats and Intimidation

Bullying and threats are the most serious forms of Online Gender-Based Violence (OGBV) because they directly attack the victim's sense of security, body autonomy, and identity integrity. Henry and Powell categorize this practice as technology-facilitated sexual violence (TFSV), which is violence that uses digital media to intimidate, humiliate, or control women (Henry et al., 2019). These include the threat of dissemination of personal data or intimate content, sextortion, and production and distribution of deepfake content without consent. Unlike verbal harassment, digital bullying is coercive and puts the victim in a state of loss of control. Dragiewicz asserts that digital threats cannot be understood as "abusive comments" because their coercive nature creates a sense of helplessness and ongoing fear (Dragiewicz et al., 2018).

In this study, bullying and threats were explicitly experienced by TU. Her experience shows an escalation from sexist comments to direct threats through private messages. TU explains:

"The next day the same account DMs again... "Don't be so naïve, everyone knows you're selling yourself live." ***(TU, September 8, 2025)***

This escalation reached its peak when the perpetrator sent a deepfake video with TU's face taped to someone else's body in a vulgar sexual scene, accompanied by the threat of spreading: *" obey me, or this video I spread."* The threats were followed by manipulative orders and explicit misogynistic remarks that emphasized that women were not appropriate in public spaces.

The TU case shows that digital bullying works through three interconnected dimensions. First, the sexual dimension, through the production of deepfakes that use the victim's body as a tool of humiliation. Second, the coercive dimension, through manipulative threats and orders aimed at forcing the victim's compliance. Third, the ideological dimension, through misogynistic speech that rejects women's legitimacy in the digital public space. This combination is in line with the findings of Dragiewicz et al. that TFCC aims to limit women's space of movement and force them to withdraw from public spaces (Dragiewicz et al., 2018).

Unlike TU, other informants (AY, NI, NA, and BE) did not experience intimidation in the form of direct threats. They face sexual harassment, objectification, and symbolic misogyny, including vulgar comments, body shaming, and exclusion from masculine spaces, but without the threat of data dissemination or blackmail. The BE case even shows online-to-offline spillover, but it remains in the realm of symbolic exclusion, rather than coercive control. This difference confirms that bullying and threats are specific forms of OGBV and are not experienced by all victims, but have a much deeper impact.

Thus, technology-based bullying and threats need to be understood as the most serious form of OGBV because it generates permanent fear, self-censorship, and the withdrawal of women from the digital public space. Stevens said digital threats have a heavier long-term impact than verbal harassment alone (Enock et al., 2025). The TU case shows that bullying is not just abusive speech, but a coercive misogyny mechanism that uses technology to silence women and maintain gender subordination in the digital space.

The Meaning of Women's Experience as OGBV Victims

Emotional Dimension

The emotional dimension is the most tangible aspect of women's experiences when facing Online Gender-Based Violence (OGBV). Sexist comments, vulgar messages, and digital threats do not stop as text on the screen, but leave an affective imprint that sticks to the victim's body and consciousness. In digital phenomenology, online experiences are understood as a reality that "blends" with everyday life; The subject experiences the real world and the world of possibilities simultaneously, so that digital experiences also shape the existence and way the body is present (Tagliagambe, 2023). In other words, violence on TikTok doesn't just happen "on the platform," but also shapes the way victims move, feel, and judge themselves in social spaces.

Sara Ahmed's affective economic framework reinforces this reading. Ahmed emphasizes that emotions do not stay within the body, but circulate and are attached to a certain body (Ahmed, 2004). In the context of patriarchy, fear, shame, anger, and trauma tend to "attach" to women's bodies, not because of women's personal traits, but because of social positions that make women's bodies more vulnerable to being policed, sexualized, and controlled.

Fear appears as the dominant emotion in almost all victim narratives, in various forms: fear of content

being disseminated, fear of humiliation, fear of being attacked again, to fear of being sexually "seen" by the public. This fear is not a single reaction, but rather the result of layered digital interactions, comments, DMs, threats, which builds the imagination about the social risks that continue to be possible.

The TU case shows fear in its most extreme form: explicit threats based on deepfakes and extortion. TU fear is not only psychological, but also manifest in the body's physical reactions.

"Mix. I'm scared to admit it... Terrible heartbeat, trembling hands... The body feels weak... And then there's the mules, too." ***(TU, September 8, 2025)***

This experience is in harmony with the concept of anticipatory fear, the fear of possibilities that have not yet occurred but has already regulated behavior and perception (Marks, 1987), while showing that digital threats are enough to create a "real" fear physically.

In AY, fear tends to take the form of withdrawing from the digital space, deleting content, stopping interacting, and avoiding re-exposure. This pattern can be read through the lens of Ahmed showing the politics of affection: women's bodies are "directed" away from public spaces because of the fear effect circulated by violence (Ahmed, 2004). In NA, fear shifts to fear of recurrence, the fear of violence to be repeated when you want to post new content (Hellevik et al., 2025). While NI experiences a delayed emergent fear: initially laughing at the comment, but then the body reacts with nausea and goosebumps after the live is over, according to the delayed trauma response pattern (Van Der Kolk, 2014). Thus, fear is not only a feeling, but a way for the body to "narrow its movements" due to social threats attached to the female body (Young, 2005).

If you are afraid of pushing the body away, you are embarrassed to make your body look down. Shame and sadness are two subtle yet political emotions because they work as "moral tools" that shift the burden of violence from the perpetrator to the victim. Ahmed explained that shame sticks to the surface of the body and marks who deserves/does not deserve to be present in the social space (Ahmed, 2004). In patriarchal affective economies, shame is often produced not by the victim's actions, but by the way the woman's body is read as a source of blame (Panpan & Chunhua, 2024).

NA's experience shows how sexual comments can turn into a very personal "dirty" feeling.

"I feel like crying because I feel like I'm being bullied. I'm scared to post anything." ***(NA, July 27, 2025)***

This statement shows how stigma is attached to the victim, even though the victim did not violate the norm. The literature shows that self-blame and negative social responses exacerbate emotional distress and increase trauma susceptibility (Dworkin et al., 2019).

In AY, shame and sadness move dynamically: there is a time of self-blame, then there is an awareness that what happened was harassment. This transformation confirms the potential for changes in emotions, when the victim refuses to shoulder a moral burden that does not belong to him (Ahmed, 2010). In NI, sadness arose after he realized that the laughter he had let out during the live was actually a strategy to "survive" in a misogynistic space; After reflection, sadness replaces laughter because a sense of security feels paid for by compromising one's dignity. Grief also marks loss: loss of security, loss of space for expression, and loss of self-confidence (Karni-Vizer & Walter, 2020).

In contrast to fear and shame that tend to restrict movement, anger and disgust contain the potential for rejection of domination. In the framework of affective economics, emotions that are considered "bad" are important because they reveal the injustices hidden by normalization (Ahmed, 2014). In OGBV victims, anger and disgust are forms of affective knowledge about how their bodies are treated in a patriarchal order.

AY described anger and disgust as a series of emotions that arise after she becomes aware of the abuse she has experienced.

"At first I was angry, then disgusted... Why do I have to feel this just because I'm showing myself on social media?" ***(AY, August 7, 2025)***

AY's anger can be read as a rejection of the knowledge framework that objectifies the female body, which is a form of epistemic resistance to injustice (Fricker, 2007). However, women's anger is often policed, considered excessive, so it easily turns into sadness or guilt, which shows how patriarchy also regulates "emotions that can be displayed" (Banet-Weiser, 2018).

Disgust marks the moral limit of the body: the body "rejects" the meaning imposed by the perpetrator.

Ahmed defines disgust as an emotion that marks the boundary between the "pure" and the "polluted"; When victims say they feel "dirty," it shows how harassment makes women's bodies a site of social contamination (Ahmed, 2004). In BE, anger and disgust are expressed more quietly through the act of blocking and keeping a distance, not because they are not angry, but because the digital space is not always safe for women's anger. This shows affective negotiation: surviving in a way that is minimal risk, but still contains agency (Ahmed, 2004).

Trauma and physical reactions show that emotions do not stop in consciousness, but settle in the body. In Ahmed's terms, affectivity has a "stickiness" that makes it attached to the body as a physical memory. In AY, digital abuse elicits a strong physical response:

"Hands are shaking, chest tight, like they want to vomit. It was the first time I felt really violated." ***(AY, August 7, 2025)***

These findings are in line with research showing that verbal violence can affect the regulation of emotions and stress reactivity at the neurophysiological level (Teicher et al., 2006).

In TU, trauma appears as a repetitive bodily response when faced with threats, showing that trauma is not only a past event, but a bodily reaction that continues to live in the present (Van Der Kolk, 2014). In NA, trauma can take an extreme form in the form of a tendency to self-harm, an indication that digital violence can penetrate psychological boundaries into somatic distress (Henry et al., 2019). NI indicates delayed trauma: the body "remembers" before the mind is able to interpret, according to the idea that the body stores the experience of violence as a social archive that is difficult to erase. In the framework of Young, this experience shows the relationship of the female body that becomes ambiguous: the body must continue to function, but at the same time become a place where violence sticks and limits intentionality (Young, 2005).

Social Dimension

Revictimization marks an advanced phase of gender-based violence when victims re-experience suffering as a result of social responses that underestimate, delay, or close the recovery space. In the study of victimology, this phenomenon is known as secondary victimization, which is the second violence that arises not from the initial perpetrator, but from the social environment or institution that fails to respond to the victim empathically (Campbell & Raja, 1999). In the context of digital communication, victimization is often present through moral policing and the delegitimization of women's experiences, such as the advice to "shut up," "just block," or the notion that victims overreact (Mendes et al., 2018). Sara Ahmed explained that emotions such as shame and fear do not live in the individual, but circulate and are attached to a certain body. Through a disparaging social response, the affective burden of violence shifts from the perpetrator to the victim.

TU's experience clearly demonstrates this mechanism. After experiencing multiple layers of harassment and deepfake threats, she actually faced a disparaging response from her immediate environment. TU relates:

"I told some close friends. They suggest blocking the same report, "It's already blocked, don't go away." I also wanted to look for LBH information, but I didn't dare to report it because I was confused about the process and afraid that it would be more complicated" ***(TU, September 8, 2025)***

This quote shows how digital violence evolved into social violence. Instead of getting validation, TU is encouraged to rearrange their emotions so that they are not considered excessive. In the framework of Ahmed, the demand to "not be lebay" is a way for society to maintain emotional order at the expense of women's experiences (Ahmed, 2010). Phenomenologically, revitalization also works on the body: notifications and memories of threats trigger physical reactions such as shaking and nausea, marking the connection between the digital body and the real body (Tagliagambe, 2023).

Instead, real support shows the social dimension that makes recovery possible. This support is not always present in the form of formal assistance, but rather through a presence that listens, trusts, and does not judge. Hooks calls this kind of relationship political care, which is treatment that rejects patriarchal logic that forces women to bear individual wounds (Hooks, 2019). NA describes this experience in a simple yet meaningful way:

"After the story, it's like it's more relieved... the burden of the mind that I initially bore on myself to share with others" (***NA, July 27, 2025)***

In the framework of Ahmed, support allows for the redistribution of affect: fear and shame no longer accumulate in the victim's body, but are channeled through supportive social relationships (Ahmed, 2004).

Thus, revictimization and real support are two poles of the same affective circulation. Revictimization extends patriarchal dominance by shifting shame and responsibility to the victim, while real support disrupts that circulation by validating women's experiences. In the context of OGBV, recovery is not just an individual psychological process, but a socio-political process determined by how the environment responds to the suffering of the victim, whether by silence, or by being present and taking sides.

Digital Dimension

A sense of security is the main prerequisite for digital participation, but for women on TikTok, a sense of security is something fragile and constantly negotiated. TikTok's algorithm and account anonymity reinforce this condition by creating exposure that is difficult to control.

TU's experience shows how insecurity works systemically. The threat comes not from a single account, but from a series of anonymous accounts that keep changing. She describes:

"As soon as I blocked, another account appeared... I am a self-censor. I think the caption is more closed, I think the caption is long" ***(TU, September 8, 2025)***

This fear is in line with the concept of diffuse fear (Citron, 2014), where faceless threats create ongoing anxiety.

More latent forms of insecurity are experienced by NA and AY. NA is no longer directly attacked, but every upload is always accompanied by a sense of fear of the repetition of violence. AY, after receiving the sexist comments, felt every move and outfit was potentially misinterpreted. This condition shows how women learn to organize themselves not because of formal rules, but because of social pressures that continue to work (Gill & Orgad, 2018). A sense of security is no longer attached, but must be "produced" through exhausting self-control.

This insecurity then transforms into self-censorship. NI explains the drastic change in the way it performs:

"I always wear a hoodie... finally private account" **(NI, August 19, 2025)**

His body was no longer freely present, but rather as a body that was alert to the gaze. In Young's perspective, this is a form of inhibited intentionality, a woman's body limits itself because of awareness of potential danger (Young, 2005). A similar pattern was also experienced by TU after the deepfake threat; he rearranges his language, performance time, and visibility as a form of self-protection (Ahmed, 2014).

At a later stage, some informants chose to withdraw from the digital space through the removal and privatization of content. NA locks the account and deletes the comments:

"So that I can control it... Only my closest friends can enjoy my content" ***(NA, July 27, 2025)***

AY deleted his own video to avoid any traumatic traces, while NI stopped going live completely. These actions reflect privacy withdrawal and strategic invisibility (Chadha et al., 2020), which are women's attempts to regain control over their boundaries and digital visibility.

Overall, the loss of a sense of security, self-censorship, and withdrawal from the digital space shows how the OGBV is not only emotionally hurting, but also rearranging women's relationship with their bodies and visibility. Through the circulation of fear, digital platforms encourage women to supervise, restrict, and even remove themselves from online public spaces. This confirms that digital violence works not only through speech, but through the production of social conditions that make women feel that their presence is always at risk.

Women's Response and Strategy to Face the OGBV

Individual Coping

"I deleted the comment and then I locked the account... So I can control it." ***(NA, July 27, 2025)***

The removal of comments is an initial response by women to break the traces of violence and restore a sense of control over the digital space. NA's actions reflect digital harm reduction (Lumsden & Morgan, 2017), which is the management of digital footprints to reduce exposure to violence. Removal is not just about cleaning up the comment section, but rebuilding the safe boundaries of the digital body.

A similar practice is seen in BE which routinely deletes sexist comments in the automotive community. She chose abolition rather than confrontation as a form of digital boundary enforcement. In AY, the deletion even carried out all videos that triggered trauma after receiving a vulgar message, showing trauma-informed digital negotiation, and removing the symbolic space where violence continued to be attached.

Thus, deleting comments or content is not passive avoidance, but rather a defensive agency to reclaim control when the platform fails to provide adequate protection.

Account blocking and reporting became the most common protective strategy after harassment. At TU, this step came after serious threats in the form of deepfakes and sexual intimidation. Megarry calls this practice defensive digital agency, the use of minimal platform features to stop perpetrators' access (Megarry, 2014).

"What I do is block, report... I don't want to talk to strangers anymore." ***(TU, September 8, 2025)***

AY blocks the perpetrator to stop the escalation of sexual DM, while BE uses the report as a way to protect the community space from the normalization of misogynistic speech civic signaling. NI and NA also use blocks to limit exposure from anonymous accounts. This pattern shows that women are forced to be their own security guards, as criticized by Gillespie (2018).

"I immediately had a private account... stop live for a long time." ***(NI, August 19, 2025)***

Privacy restrictions mark an advanced stage of women's withdrawal from the digital space. NI chose to private accounts and stop going live after harassment, in line with coerced self-protection (Scheuerman et al., 2018), self-protection due to the absence of other safe channels.

TUs and NAs also lock accounts to reduce the risk of repeated violence, a practice known as audience pruning (Hockin-Boyers et al., 2021). AY and BE limited their attendance without privatizing their accounts, AY temporarily withdrew due to emotional impacts, BE reduced uploads to maintain a professional position.

Overall, this strategy demonstrates women's defensive agency: they still act, but within a narrow space, with the aim of minimizing risk rather than expanding a sense of security. This confirms that the responsibility for security is still placed on the victim, not on the platform's structure.

Collective Coping

"I had been looking for LBH... But the more you read, the more difficult it gets. I'm afraid that the problem will get longer." ***(TU, September 8, 2025)***

The absence *of* collective coping has become a consistent pattern across informants. None of them access companion communities, legal institutions, or survivor networks. TU is the clearest example because it had considered a formal advocacy path, but withdrew for fear that the complicated process would actually increase social pressure. In the framework of relational autonomy (Mdletshe & Makhaye, 2025), this decision is not unwilling, but the result of negotiations in social relations that do not provide a safe space for women to have their voices.

A similar pattern was seen in other informants. NI chose not to "prolong the problem," NA felt too tired to report, AY judged her experience "too small," and BE only shared with her inner circle because she didn't believe reporting would bring change. This pattern shows the internalization of the idea that digital abuse is a personal risk that must be managed by oneself.

This condition reflects the way patriarchy works subtly. As Manne explains, misogyny disciplines women so that they do not demand justice too far (Manne. K, 2019). As a result, women's agency narrows down to an individual survival strategy, blocking, removing, privizing, or withdrawing.

Forms of Resistance

None of the informants chose to fight back through the content of the reply. The absence of this strategy is a structural finding, not an absence of agency. The literature suggests that public resistance in the digital space risks triggering an escalation of violence, expanding exposure, and enabling networked misogyny (Mendes et al., 2018).

In the context of TikTok, this risk is amplified by visibility algorithms that have the potential to massively spread reply content (Bishop, 2019). The platform only provides individual protection mechanisms such as blocks and reports, with no support for secure collective resistance (Gillespie, 2018).

All informants chose a defensive strategy, blocking, removing, privileging, or withdrawing, because public resistance was considered to increase the danger. This pattern shows the practice of gendered risk negotiation, where women must calculate emotional and social risks before acting. Thus, the absence of reply content reflects the structural pressures that make silence a survival strategy (Manne. K, 2019).

But AY's statement represents symbolic resistance through the affirmation of identity. Without explicitly mentioning feminism, she rejects the position of the victim and claims herself to be an empowered subject. This is in line with identity-based agency, where women reconstruct self-narratives to counter subordination (Holland et al., 1998).

"I am not a victim. I'm a fighter." ***(AY, August 7, 2025)***

A similar pattern appears in BE who rejects inferiority in the automotive community, as well as NA who interprets himself as a "struggling victim." This resistance serves as a psychosocial foundation when public resistance is too risky. In line with Mendes et al, these kinds of micro-practices became the initial form of feminist resistance in an insecure digital space (Mendes et al., 2018).

*"Now if there is something rude, I will reply. Let him know."****(NI, August 19, 2025)***

Direct confrontation was only carried out by some informants and was situational. NI replies to abusive comments as a form of *assertive retaliation*, namely affirming boundaries without expanding the conflict through reply content (Jane, 2017). BE also conducted a limited confrontation in order to maintain his professional position in the masculine space.

In contrast, AY, NA, and TU did not engage in confrontation due to trauma and high threat levels, especially in TU cases involving deepfakes. This choice suggests that women's resistance is highly dependent on the calculation of risk (situated agency) (Holland et al., 1998).

Overall, women's resistance to OGBV on TikTok comes in a defensive, symbolic, and limited form. Agency remains, but works in a narrow space due to digital misogyny and the absence of structural protections (Gillespie, 2018).

Women's Bodies as The Other in Digital Misogyny

In a digital space like TikTok, the female body does not exist as an autonomous subject, but rather as the result of a social construct that is constantly interpreted through public gazes, comments, and expectations. Simone de Beauvoir affirms that "*one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman*" (de Beauvior, 1956), which means that a woman's body is shaped by social relations, not by biological nature. The findings of this study show that when women appear on TikTok, their bodies immediately enter into a public judgment mechanism that positions the body as a source of morality, guilt, or provocation. Thus, the female body serves as a locus where patriarchal power is exercised in digital form.

Beauvoir explains that women are structurally positioned as the Other, while men function as universal subjects that determine meaning (de Beauvior, 1956). This subject-object relationship is evident in the experiences of the informants. Comments such as "try to stand," "play first," or "big but not eyes" (NI), accusations that women's clothing "invites" (AY), to the delegitimization of women's presence in the automotive space through the "wrong server, cake cake" (BE) comments, show that women's bodies are not understood as part of their subjectivity, but rather as objects that can be ordered, judged, and controlled. This pattern is in line with the concept of objectification which places women as a mere body, separate from their agency and intentions (Nussbaum, 1995).

This linearization does not stop at the body that is actually displayed, but also at the technologically engineered body. The deepfake case experienced by TU shows an extreme form of subject-object relations, where women's bodies are reproduced without consent and completely released from their subjectivity. This practice shows what Banet-Weiser and Rottenberg call the patriarchy platform, which is a condition when technology is not neutral, but expands patriarchal power over women's bodies (Banet-Weiser et al., 2019). In this context, the female body becomes not only an object of gaze, but also an object of symbolic manipulation, reinforcing Beauvoir's thesis that women continue to be positioned as the Other, even when the body is artificially presented.

CONCLUSION

This study examines the experiences of Indonesian women in dealing with Online Gender-Based

Violence (OGBV) on TikTok through a digital phenomenological approach. TikTok is understood as an algorithmic public space that is not neutral, where misogyny and anti-feminism are reproduced through gazes, comments, and the logic of visibility. Referring to Simone de Beauvoir, the findings show that the female body is positioned as the Other: a public object that is free to be judged, humiliated, and modified. The forms of violence experienced by informants, ranging from sexual comments, body shaming, gender hate speech, visual manipulation, deepfakes, to intimidation, confirm that the OGBV is not just a digital interaction, but a structural mechanism that places the female body as an arena of moral, sexual, and social control.

From the affective and response dimensions, OGBV leaves a lingering emotional trail in the form of fear, shame, anger, disgust, and diffused fear, which reshapes women's relationship with the body and digital space. In line with Sara Ahmed, these emotions circulate and are inherent in women's bodies as a result of the digital patriarchal structure. Women respond through defensive strategies, blocking, reporting, deleting content, privileging accounts, and withdrawing, that reflect inhibited intentionality (Iris Marion Young): agency that moves within the bounds of constant threats. Through Silvano Tagliagambe's perspective, this experience confirms that digital violence and physical reality merge into one existential experience. Thus, the OGBV on TikTok works through the body, affection, and technology all at once, expanding patriarchal operations and showing that women's digital security is still an unresolved structural issue.

This research has practical implications that confirm that Online Gender-Based Violence (OGBV) on TikTok cannot be handled solely as an individual problem, but rather as a structural problem involving platform design, digital culture, and public policy. Findings on women's emotional impacts, self-restraint, and defensive strategies show that women's digital safety must be understood as an issue of body protection and dignity, not just content management. Therefore, this research can be a reference for digital platforms, policymakers, and companion organizations in designing protection systems that are more gender-sensitive, based on victim experience, and able to respond to increasingly complex forms of digital violence, including deepfakes, intimidation, and symbolic misogyny.

Based on the findings of the study, women users of TikTok and other social media need to strengthen digital safety literacy, especially in privacy settings, comment management, and incident documentation as a form of self-protection, as well as building a safe support space online and offline. TikTok as a platform is recommended to improve the moderation system, tighten supervision of misogynistic content, and develop security features and reporting responses that are more adaptive to OGBV patterns. Governments and policymakers need to formulate regulations that are more responsive and victim-friendly, especially related to deepfakes, the dissemination of unauthorized content, and digital intimidation. Further research is suggested to expand the scope of informants, examine other digital platforms, and develop an interdisciplinary approach to make the understanding of OGBV more comprehensive. In addition, the public as social media users needs to build a more empathetic digital culture by rejecting victim blaming and not normalizing misogynistic humor as part of a collective effort to suppress OGBV.

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