


# How Do Gender and Social Status Shape Adolescents' Perceptions and Attitudes Toward Online Gender-Based Violence?

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<p><b>Received:</b> 2024-11-20</p> <p><b>Published:</b> 2024-12-29</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Attitudes, Online Gender-Based Violence, Perceptions</p> <p><b>Copyright holder:</b> © Author/s (2024)</p> <p><b>This article is under:</b> </p> <p><b>How to cite:</b> Rakhmawati, D., Venty, V., Ismanto, H. S., &amp; Julienjatiningsih, J. (2024). How Do Gender and Social Status Shape Adolescents' Perceptions and Attitudes Toward Online Gender-Based Violence?. <i>Bulletin of Counseling and Psychotherapy</i>, 6(3). <a href="https://doi.org/10.51214/002024061183000">https://doi.org/10.51214/002024061183000</a></p> <p><b>Published by:</b> Kuras Institute</p> <p><b>E-ISSN:</b> 2656-1050</p>	<p><b>ABSTRACT:</b> Online gender-based violence (OGBV) in Indonesia has experienced a significant increase in 2023 compared to the previous year. OGBV is a term that refers to acts of violence or sexual harassment, especially targeting women, which are carried out through internet technology. Teenagers are a generation of digital natives who are highly dependent on internet technology. Engaging in harmful content online has also been shown to pose a danger to physical and mental health. Understanding adolescents' perceptions and attitudes towards OGBV is a crucial step in efforts to overcome and prevent it. This study aims to: 1) Identify adolescents' perception of OGBV based on gender and social background; 2) Analyze adolescents' attitudes towards OGBV based on gender and social background. This quantitative survey design took the research subjects of high schools in Semarang, approximately 30882 adolescents in 16 sub-districts in Semarang with a random sampling technique using a total of 545 respondents. Because the data was not normally distributed, the data analysis used The Mann-Whitney U test and The Kruskal-Wallis H analysis. The results of the study show that women's perception is better than men's. The higher the socio-economic status, the better the perception of OGBV. Women's attitudes are higher than men's attitudes towards OGBV. There was no significant difference in OGBV's attitude based on socioeconomic status.</p>
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## INTRODUCTION

The latest data on online gender-based violence (OGBV) in Indonesia shows an increase of over 40% in 2023 compared to the previous year. SafeNet reported 281 OGBV cases over a span of 19 years, but in just the past 10 months, there have been 659 cases. The most common types of OGBV cases include online harassment, repeated unwanted messages, attention or contact, direct threats of sexual or physical violence, offensive comments, hate speech, and social media posts targeting specific genders or sexualities (Arisanti et al., 2023; Diva Parasdya et al., 2023).

Online gender-based violence (OGBV) refers to acts of violence or sexual harassment primarily targeting women through internet technologies in the forms of verbal harassment such as stalking, harassment, bullying, and pornography. OGBV can manifest both online and offline, leading to a combination of physical and psychological violence. Examples of OGBV behaviors include online harassment, repeated unwanted messages or contacts, threats of sexual or physical violence, offensive comments, hate speech, and targeted social media posts. The prevalence of OGBV

increased during the COVID-19 pandemic (Samakao & Manda, 2023; Yalcinoz-Ucan & Eslen-Ziya, 2023).

The rise in online gender-based violence can be attributed to several factors. Internal factors include gender inequality and unmet sexual desires on the part of the perpetrator (Setiawan & Putri, 2023). External factors include the victim's vulnerability and the misuse of technology by perpetrators (Wirawan et al., 2022). Risk factors for committing online gender-based violence include anxiety, online disinhibition, and a history of victimization (Pradeep Kulshrestha et al., 2022).

Low resilience levels in adolescents make them more susceptible to difficulties that can lead to high-risk sexual behavior. Biological development, including gender, personal characteristics, adolescence, school situation, peer relationships, and family, can act both as risk factors and protective factors (Rakhmawati et al., 2016). Every child, including adolescents, has the right to grow and to be protected from violence and discrimination (Rakhmawati et al., 2022). Due to the significant impact of sexual violence on mental health, research findings indicate that victims experience low self-esteem, a lack of confidence, and anxiety. These feelings increase the victim's vulnerability to further sexual violence (Rakhmawati et al., 2020).

Sexual violence now occurs not only in person but also online. Studies indicate that sexual violence in the virtual world has recently increased, with many adolescents experiencing violence and social media abuse, particularly on social media platforms. A major factor contributing is - the amount of time adolescents spend on smartphones (Rakhmawati et al., 2023). Adolescents are at risk of experiencing various forms of online violence. Research has shown that online sexual violence, such as threats to post or share sexual media, is more likely associated with suicidal thoughts, suicide planning, suicide attempts, and self-harm behaviors among young people (Parra et al., 2023). Engaging in harmful online content is also associated with mental health risks (Srivastava et al., 2023). Additionally, adolescent boys who perpetrate violence against girls both online and offline can be classified into various types, where male dominance and the justification of male violence are identified as significant risk factors (Stänicke et al., 2024).

OGBV, defined as gender-based violence through ICT, encompasses various forms such as online sexual harassment, cyberbullying, non-consensual sharing of pornographic content, and doxing (Parasdya et al., 2023; Hajra Khan, 2023). These actions, common on platforms such as social media, pose significant threats to individuals, particularly women, impacting their well-being and safety. Studies emphasize the need to address the detrimental effects of cyber-gender harassment, which replicates physical violence and impedes mental health and participation of victims in various activities (Hajra Khan, 2023). Efforts to combat OGBV include creating safe spaces, and providing platforms for victims to share their experiences without fear of judgment (Friedberg et al., 2023). Educating individuals, particularly teachers, about OGBV is crucial for preventing and addressing such violence effectively, highlighting the importance of proactive measures and support systems in combating online gender-based violence.

Online gender-based violence (OGBV) may have severe negative impacts on adolescents, including increased risks of anxiety and depression, long-term stress and trauma, reduced self-esteem, and negative self-image. OGBV may lead to physical health problems such as sleep disorders and eating disorders. Additionally, adolescents who experience OGBV are more likely to engage in risky behaviors such as substance abuse and promiscuity. The harmful effects of OGBV underscore the urgent need for research and interventions to address mental health conditions among adolescents, particularly in low-income environments, and to combat the normalization of gender-based violence (Rousseau et al., 2023).

Adolescents involved in cybersexuality, as highlighted in the context of OGBV, are at risk of experiencing such violence, with factors such as being women, having poor self-esteem, and consuming toxic substances linked to higher chances of engaging in cybersexuality. Furthermore, this research highlights that a lack of parental control, a history of violence, and excessive use of social

media, evidenced by having over 300 friends on social networks, are associated with an increased risk of cybersexuality. Additionally, Mustika et al. (2023) assert the importance of educating teachers about OGBV to effectively prevent and address online gender-based violence, especially among adolescents to increase teachers' understanding of OGBV and develop strategies to prevent and address such incidents in schools, ultimately contributing to a safer online environment for adolescents. Understanding adolescents' perceptions and attitudes toward OGBV is a crucial step in efforts to counteract and prevent it. This research aims to: 1) Identify adolescents' perceptions of OGBV based on gender and social background; 2) Analyze adolescents' attitudes toward OGBV based on gender and social background.

## **METHODS**

### **Design**

This quantitative research uses a survey design. The researchers collected data by distributing questionnaires online to teenagers in Semarang.

### **Participants**

The participants of the research were high school students in the city of Semarang, consisting of 30,882 adolescents from 16 sub-districts in Semarang. The researchers randomly selected the research sample, including 545 respondents.

### **Instruments**

The instruments used were a scale of adolescents' perceptions and attitudes towards OGBV, and demographic data such as gender, age, educational background, and economic background. Instruments on adolescents' perceptions of online gender-based sexual violence are developed from indicators of acceptance, understanding and assessment (Nuraini et al., 2023). Adolescent attitude instruments are developed based on cognitive, affective, and conative aspects (Widiharto & Rakhmawati, 2017).

### **Data analysis**

The researchers conducted data analysis using descriptive and inferential statistics. The researchers also used descriptive statistics to describe the frequency distribution and mean of the research variables and inferential statistics to examine the research hypothesis, examining differences in attitudes and perceptions based on gender and social background through an independent sample t-test. After being tested for normality, the data of this study was not normal, so non-parametric statistics were used, namely The Mann-Whitney U test and The Kruskal-Wallis H analysis.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **RESULTS**

The Mann-Whitney U test results indicate an Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.000, less than 0.05, signifying a significant disparity in perceptions of OGBV between genders. Women exhibit more favorable perceptions than men. Perceptions of gender-based knowledge outcomes (OGBV) differ between men and women, with studies indicating that women frequently possess a more nuanced comprehension of matters concerning gender and corruption. The result also suggests both genders must cooperate to enhance awareness and comprehension of OGBV.

Table 1. The Test of OGBV Perception Differences between Male and Women

Groups	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Rank
Male	228	245,30	55927,50
Women	317	292,93	92857,50
Total	545		
Mann-Whitney U			29821,5
Wilcoxon W			66927,5
Z			-3,489
Asymp.Sig.(2-tailed)			,000

Table 2. The Differences between Men' and Women's OGBV Attitudes

Groups	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Rank
Male	228	232,08	52913,50
Woman	317	302,43	95871,50
Total	545		
Mann-Whitney U			29821,5
Wilcoxon W			66927,5
Z			-3,489
Asymp.Sig.(2-tailed)			,000

The Mann-Whitney data analysis reveals an Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.000, less than 0.05, signifying a disparity in attitudes toward online gender-based violence (OGBV) between men and women. Women's attitudes are more positive than men's regarding OGBV.

Table 3. The Analysis of OGBV Perception Differences Based on Socio-Economic Status

Sosio-Economic	N (545)	Mean Rank
extremely low	186	250,81
low	218	276,94
moderate	82	275,99
high	27	318,24
extremely high	32	329,30
Kruskal-Wallis H		10,214
df		4
Asymp.Sig		,037

a. Kruskal Walls Test

b. Gruping Variabel: Sosio Economic

The Kruskal-Wallis H analysis, conducted on abnormally distributed data with five independent variables, yielded an Asymp. Sig value of 0.037, less than 0.05 ( $p < 0.05$ ), signifies a significant disparity in OGBV perceptions among various socioeconomic groups. The analysis of the average outcomes indicates that an increase in socioeconomic status correlates with an improved perception of online gender-based violence (OGBV).

Table 4. The Analysis of OGBV Attitude Differences Based on Socio-Economic Statuses

Sosio Economic	N (545)	Mean Rank
extremely low	186	261,65
low	218	278,54
moderate	82	275,12
high	27	273,94
extremely high	32	294,97
Kruskal-Wallis H		1,877
df		4
Asymp.Sig		,758

a. Kruskal Walls Test

b. Gruping Variabel: Sosio Economic

The Kruskal-Wallis analysis yielded an Asymp. Sig value of 0.758, higher than 0.05 ( $p > 0.05$ ), signifying no significant differences in attitudes toward OGBV relative to socioeconomic status (SES).

## DISCUSSION

The results of the study showed that women's attitudes were higher than men's attitudes towards online gender-based violence. Women's attitudes towards online gender-based violence are generally more prominent than men's, reflecting a deeper recognition of the dangers associated with such violence. Research shows that women feel greater harm from online harassment, especially in the case of non-consensual image sharing, and advocate for stricter platform responses (Im et al., 2022). These differences in attitudes can be attributed to a variety of factors, including the prevalence of online violence against women and the intersectionality of their experiences (Panda, 2023; Araújo et al., 2022). Women report a higher perception of harm from online harassment compared to men. Specific areas of concern include non-consensual image sharing and the abuse of digital dating (Im et al., 2022; Araújo et al., 2022).

Women prefer proactive actions from social media platforms, such as content removal and user bans, while showing less support for financial punishment (Im et al., 2022). The need for a gender-sensitive approach to policymaking is emphasized to address the unique experiences of women in the online space (Panda, 2023). The experience of online violence is influenced by factors such as race, socioeconomic status, and cultural background, which requires an understanding of online gender-based violence (Panda, 2023; Gius, 2023). Conversely, some studies suggest that men may underestimate the severity of OGBV, potentially due to a lack of personal experience or social conditioning that underestimates the impact of such violence on Women (Araújo et al., 2022) (Kavanagh & Brown, 2020). This highlights the importance of awareness-raising initiatives to bridge the perception gap between genders.

The results of the next study showed that the higher the socioeconomic status, the better the perception of KGO. The relationship between socioeconomic status (SES) and perceptions of gender-based violence (GBV) online is complex, with higher SES often correlated with better understanding and perception of such violence. Research shows that individuals from higher socioeconomic backgrounds tend to have greater access to education and resources, which increases their awareness of the issue of gender-based violence online, especially in digital contexts. Higher SES is associated with better educational opportunities, leading to increased awareness of online gender-based violence and its implications (Daniel et al., 2023). Studies show that women with higher social status experience lower rates of violence, suggesting that education and economic empowerment can reduce online gender-based violence (Liu & Fullerton, 2015). Urban male internet users, often from higher SES backgrounds, show a greater understanding of the ethical use of technology, which

can influence their perception of online gender-based violence (Daniel et al., 2023). Programs such as 'Women are Safe on the Internet' aim to educate individuals about gender-based violence online, highlighting the importance of digital literacy in shaping perceptions (Isnawati et al., 2022). Increased knowledge about gender equality and digital safety could lead to a more nuanced understanding of online violence, especially among those with higher SES (Fidella Azhar Julian & Wa Ode Asmawati, 2024). Conversely, it is important to recognize that not all individuals from lower SES backgrounds are less aware of online gender-based violence; Some may have significant insights based on personal experience. This highlights the need for inclusive education initiatives that address the perceptions of all socioeconomic groups.

And finally, regarding the attitude of OGBV and the socioeconomic status, the results of the study show that there is no significant difference in the attitude of OGBV based on socioeconomic status. The relationship between socioeconomic status (SES) and attitudes towards knowledge-based governance is nuanced, suggesting that while there may not always be significant differences, various factors influence individual perceptions. Research shows that SES can shape attitudes towards health information seeking and risk perception, which is very important in understanding OGBV's attitudes. Individuals with higher SES often exhibit different attitudes toward online health information, influenced by perceived usability and access to technologists (Kartiwi et al., 2020). Studies show that individuals with lower SES may view themselves negatively, affecting their engagement with governance issues (Sakura, 2024). The Role of Access to Information and Social Environment and Access to information is often limited to lower SES groups, impacting their attitudes towards governance and participation (Jeong & Shim, 2023). Social norms and personal experiences also play an important role in shaping perceptions, as individuals from different backgrounds can interpret governance issues differently (Engstrom et al., 2024). Research on risk attitudes reveals that individuals with higher SES may be less worried about certain risks, influencing their attitudes and governance decisions (Rasmussen & Ewald, 2022). While SES does not necessarily lead to significant differences in OGBV attitudes, it is important to consider the broader context, including social norms and personal experiences in adolescents

## CONCLUSION

Women's perceptions are better than men's perceptions. Women have a better understanding of OGBV than men, but men should still be involved. The increase in awareness and understanding of OGBV must be a shared responsibility, both for women and men. The higher the socioeconomic status, the better the perception of OGBV. Socioeconomic status can indeed be one of the factors influencing adolescents' perceptions of OGBV, but it is not the only determining factor. Various other factors, including social environment, education, cultural norms, and personal experiences, also influence teenagers' perceptions. Women have higher attitudes towards OGBV compared to men. Although women generally have a higher awareness of OGBV, it does not mean that men do not need to be involved in efforts to address this issue. Prevention and handling of OGBV require joint efforts from all parties, both women and men. There is no significant difference in attitudes toward OGBV based on socioeconomic status. This is not entirely true and requires further study. Socioeconomic status may lead to differences in attitudes towards OGBV, though these differences are not always significant. Factors such as access to information, social environments, personal experiences, and social norms also play an important role in shaping individual perceptions.

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