

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Digital sexual violence against women in Mexico

Role of the *Olimpia* Law in transforming underlying gender norms



Marcela Hernández Oropa, Penélope Isabel Chavarría García, Itzel Contreras Chávez, Ana Leticia Hernández Vélez, Luis Gerardo Ayala Real, Mónica del Carmen Quevedo Berrelleza and Diana Ponce Toledo

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About the authors

Marcela Hernández Oropa

Marcela holds a master's degree in Public Policy and Gender, with Distinction, by the *Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales* (FLACSO). She coordinates academic and advocacy projects at the *Frente Nacional para la Sororidad* and specialises in violence prevention and masculinities. She is also the national co-coordinator of the *Red de Masculinidades Cómplices por la Igualdad/MenEngage*, Mexico.

Penélope Isabel Chavarría García

A graduate in Communication Sciences from the UNAM, Penélope specialises in gender-based violence, human rights and violence prevention. She is an activist against digital sexual violence with the FNS and collaborates with DD. She is a founding member of the *Red Mexicana de Prevención a la Violencia*.

Itzel Contreras Chávez

Itzel is a feminist economist. She is currently studying for a master's degree at the *Programa de Posgrado de Estudios Latinoamericanos* (PELA) at UNAM. She facilitates courses and workshops on feminism(s), gender perspective and economics at public, private and independent institutions. She teaches at the UNAM Economics Faculty.

Ana Leticia Hernández Vélez

Ana Leticia has a master's degree in Public Policy and Gender from FLACSO and an undergraduate degree in Sociology from the *Universidad de Guanajuato*. She is a doctoral candidate at the *Universidad Campesina Indígena en Red* (UCIRED). She has worked in violence prevention at the municipal and state level and is a consultant on gender-based violence and inequality.

Luis Gerardo Ayala Real

Luis Gerardo is a teacher and researcher at the *Centro Multidisciplinario de Investigación del Semidesierto* (CEMIS) of the *Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro*. He is an activist in the fields of masculinity, health, and self-care. He also jointly coordinates the *Red de Masculinidades Cómplices por la Igualdad/MenEngage*, Mexico.

Mónica del Carmen Quevedo Berrelleza

Mónica del Carmen is an economist and programme manager working on gender equality and social justice projects. She focuses on strategic planning, research and data analysis.

Diana Ponce Toledo

Diana has an undergraduate degree in Psychology and a master's degree in Political and Social Studies from the *Universidad Autónoma de Sinaloa* (UAS). She is also pursuing doctoral studies in the *Facultad de Ciencias Económicas and Sociales* at the same university.

Introduction

The mission of the *Frente Nacional para la Sororidad* (FNS),¹ founded in 2013 by *Olimpia Coral Melo Cruz*, is to defend the digital rights of women and girls and to demand online spaces are free of gender-based violence (GBV). Since at the time no law in Mexico identified and punished GBV occurring online, FNS developed and promoted a legal reform known as the *Ley Olimpia* (*Olimpia Law*). Its purpose was to name, define, prevent, respond to, and eliminate digital gender-based violence.

Between 2018 and 2022, the *Olimpia Law* was approved by all the country's federal institutions and in 2021 it was incorporated into national and federal laws. The *Olimpia Law* transformed the way sexual crimes are defined in Mexico's different criminal codes, which hitherto had only recognised actions involving the sexual abuse, mistreatment, or transgression of the physical integrity of individuals. As a result, it has been a ground-breaking piece of gender legislation in Latin America, now also adopted in Argentina.²

This study explores the impact the FNS³ and the *Olimpia Law* – referred to henceforth as the 'Ley Olimpia movement' or simply 'the movement' – has had on the gender norms that underpin digital sexual violence (DSV) in Mexico (see Key concepts section). For this purpose, the study examines the impact of the movement on: 1) state institutions, 2) civil society, and 3) the private sector (social media networks and television companies), between 2013 and 2023.

Key concepts

Digital Sexual Violence (DSV)

The term *digital GBV* refers to acts of violence committed, promoted, or aggravated in part or entirely using digital technology and that are motivated by patriarchal attitudes towards gender (Oropa et al., 2022). Digital GBV is not an additional form of gender-based violence, but a modality of different kinds of GBV, be they sexual, economic, patrimonial, psychological, or physical (Ahlenback et al., 2022).

Digital sexual violence (DSV), therefore, refers to a form of GBV that targets a person's sexuality via the use of technology.⁴

Virtual spaces amplify the risk of sexual violence for girls, women, and people of other genders. For example, once multimedia content has been shared on online platforms, its owner loses full control over it and it can be extremely difficult to completely remove from the web. Given how gender intersects with other identities – such as race, ethnicity, age, sexuality, or class – women and girls who are more vulnerable to GBV are also more vulnerable to DSV (Oropa et al., 2022). Table 1 describes some of the different types of DSV.

1 For more information see: www.facebook.com/FrenteNacionalParaLaSororidad/

2 Recognised as such by UN Women in a message published on X (Twitter at the time) on 30 April 2021.

3 In addition to creating and promoting the reform project that led to the creation of the *Olimpia Law*, the FNS has also engaged in victim support, knowledge development, and advocacy.

4 Virtual spaces have transformed how people interact and experience sexual-affective bonds. For example, some individuals maintain long-distance relationships primarily through social media and instant messaging platforms, avoiding in-person encounters. Others use dating platforms to connect with potential partners, seeking temporary or lasting relationships. Sexting has also become increasingly prevalent, involving the exchange of sexually explicit images, videos, audio, or text via messaging platforms (Oropa et al., 2022).

Table 1. Some types of DSV

Type of DSV	Description
Producing intimate sexual content without consent	Recording or photographing a sexual encounter, or the total or partial nudity of a person without their consent (or in case of the latter, of someone who is unconscious). For example, taking upskirt images or using hidden cameras in changing rooms, toilets, etc. This can also involve creating deep fakes, that is using artificial intelligence (AI) to create or alter imagery or videos depicting sexual activity or nudity involving an individual who has not given consent.
Disseminating intimate sexual content without consent	Sharing intimate images and videos without the permission of those involved. The content may have been created with or without that person's consent.
Stealing or assuming a person's identity with the intention of sexual exploitation	Using a false identity to disseminate and/or sell sexual content whether or not this identity really belongs to the person alluded to (also known as virtual prostitution).
Online sexual harassment	Sending, for example, unsolicited sexual, obscene or lascivious photographs or messages.
Grooming	Assuming a false online identity to connect with underage people and manipulate them to carry out acts that endanger their personal safety, wellbeing, or sexual intimacy.
Sextortion	Demanding money, intimate material, sexual encounters, sexual video calls, etc. in exchange for a promise not to share material with others.
Unauthorised offer of sexual services	Creating online directories that use the identities of people to offer sexual services in their name and/or sell sexual content (which might or might not correspond to the person in question). These advertisements are generally accompanied by the personal data of the person whose identity has been exposed.

Source: Based on the cases of DSV that FNS has advised. Also recently mentioned in Oropa (2024).

People who have been victims-survivors of DSV, or other forms of digital GBV, often face serious damage to their reputation and public image (obstructing participation in public life and/or affecting their personal relationships); suffer economic and patrimonial losses; and become exposed to other forms of GBV (APC, 2015; Barrera, 2017). DSV can also have severe mental health consequences for victims-survivors (Oropa et al., 2022). FNS has observed the effects of DSV are heightened when victims lack a support network and when the aggression persists within their communities.

Box 1: DSV in Mexico

There is no official data available on the prevalence of DSV in Mexico, only that of cyber bullying specifically.⁵ FNS figures suggest, however, that 95% of victims of DSV are women and 2.8% men (Oropa et al., 2022).⁶ According to a survey conducted during this research (see Section 2.6), 37.1% of respondents reported they had been a victim of DSV (33.9% of all women respondents and 8.3% of all male respondents) and 59.1% said they knew someone who had been. The most frequent forms of DSV reported were: online sexual harassment, unauthorised offer of sexual services, and dissemination of intimate sexual content without consent.

Gender norms

The term *gender norms* refers to the formal and informal rules that define how a person should behave and relate to others, and how they should expect to be treated, based on gender (Harper et al. 2018). Patriarchal gender norms are usually formulated using binary oppositions (feminine-masculine) and are configured and expressed in the roles and stereotypes that are assigned differentially to men and women. They subordinate and oppress women and people of other genders with respect to men and interact with other forms of oppression or inequality such as those based on race/ethnicity, class, disability, age, sexuality, etc. (ibid.).

GBV and gender norms interact in two interconnected ways. Firstly, GBV arises from patriarchal gender norms that establish men as figures of authority, grant them control over financial and material resources, and define traits like strength and toughness as inherent to masculinity. These norms place women in vulnerable positions, increasing their risk of violence. Secondly, GBV functions as a primary mechanism for enforcing, maintaining, and reproducing these patriarchal norms. It acts as a coercive tool used against those who resist or fail to conform, while also serving as a deterrent for others to comply with these gender norms (Jiménez Thomas, 2022). Interacting with these gender norms is the perception that **virtual spaces are not real** which allows perpetrators to deny that the harm caused in or through these spaces is real (Oropa et al., 2022). This belief, therefore, often minimises the perceived severity of violence in online spaces.

Based on the work carried out by FNS, Table 2 presents the norms underpinning DSV in Mexico.

⁵ According to official statistics, 22.4% of women in Mexico aged 12 or over suffered cyberbullying in 2021, equivalent to 9.8 million women and girl, and 19% of men and boys aged 12 or over were victims of cyberbullying in 2021, equivalent to 7.6 million (INEGI, 2022).

⁶ Figure based on the 1,705 cases of DSV, systematized between 2019 and 2021 in FNS' Digital Violence Report (Oropa et al., 2022). These are not limited to a specific age range, nor to specific geographical regions. These figures, furthermore, do not necessarily reflect the prevalence of DSV during these years, since the cases may have been related to events prior to this period.

Table 2. Gender norms that underpin DSV in Mexico

Norms related to female sexuality	Norms related to male sexuality
Women exist for others; their bodies are primarily for male pleasure, use and consumption	Men should have the greatest number of sexual partners they can and should never say no to sex (hypersexuality)
The value of women is associated with virginity or depends on a moderate, discrete and de-eroticised sexuality	Men should always achieve their sexual objectives by whatever means. Failing to do so humiliates or denigrates them
Women who fail to comply with patriarchal gender norms deserve, and are responsible for, the sexual violence they suffer	Men have the right to exert control over women's bodies, especially of women with whom they share sexual-affective experiences
	Men are complicit and conceal violent or sexually abusive acts against women
	To be accepted by and belong to the male collective, men must validate themselves in front of other men

Patriarchal gender norms, however, are not immutable. Feminist movements have been one of the main drivers of their transformation (Jiménez Thomas et al., 2021). Changing gender norms is a long process involving setbacks, stagnations, and regressions. During this process, gender norms associated with traditional roles and stereotypes can coexist with norms that are undergoing transition (Harper et al., 2018).

Eliminating DSV –like GBV more generally– requires not only the transformation of patriarchal gender norms but also structural changes in the digital technology and pornography industries, both of which the movement has identified as significant drivers of DSV. The digital industry has fuelled its growth by creating platforms that generate profits based on user numbers and interactions, resulting in spaces with inadequate safety measures and protections. The pornography industry contributes to the problem by commodifying women's bodies, thereby encouraging the appropriation or creation of sexual content, even when it results in DSV.

Research methods

This study used qualitative and quantitative methods including focus groups, semi-structured interviews, reviews of primary documentation, social media listening, and an online survey.

Focus groups: Nine focus groups were carried out in six Mexican states: Mexico City, Puebla, Chihuahua, Tamaulipas, Yucatán and Campeche. Participants were called via social networks, as well as through groups where castings and market studies are announced. Participants were selected to include: men and women over 18 years of age (differentiated between those under and over 30); people from different socio-economic groups; residents of rural, semi-urban and urban areas.

Semi-structured interviews: 17 interviews were carried out with state officials, in the following states: Mexico City, Hidalgo, Puebla, Tlaxcala, Zacatecas and Jalisco. These officials included representatives from all three branches of government (Executive, Legislative, Judicial) and

autonomous entities, including representatives of the bodies responsible for procuring justice, citizen security, education and attention to women's rights. In the private sector, it was only possible to interview a representative of Meta, despite attempts to also speak to X (formerly Twitter) and OnlyFans. Representatives of two of Mexico's main TV companies – Grupo Salinas and Televisa – were also approached for interviews since they are also liable to commit DSV in their programming and advertising. However, it was only possible to gain an interview with Grupo Salinas.

Review of primary documentation: Three hundred eighty freedom of information (FOI) requests were made through the *Sistema Nacional de Transparencia* (SNT) concerning the actions different government bodies have taken to prevent, respond to and eliminate DSV. Two hundred twenty nine satisfactory responses were received (i.e. those that reported on DSV-related activities). The states that provided the highest number of responses were Hidalgo, Mexico City and Oaxaca, while Colima, Guanajuato and San Luis Potosí provided the fewest.

Social media monitoring: This study monitored social media conversations on and attitudes towards the *Ley Olimpia* and DSV between July 2020 and July 2023 across Mexico, with the tool *Sentione*. Following a screening process, 377,801 mentions of *Olimpia Law* and DSV against women and girls were identified, with the most coming from Facebook, X and webpages managed by media outlets.

Online survey: The online survey was launched through the Google Forms platform. It generated 838 results. All respondents were over 18 and Mexican residents: 81.1% were women (680), 15.8% men (132), and 3.1% (26) people of other genders.⁷

Results

1. Impact on government institutions

According to the satisfactory responses to the FOI requests, 725 actions to prevent, attend to, and eliminate DSV were carried out in Mexico between 2013 and 2023. Although most entities legislated and approved the *Olimpia Law* before national approval, 75% of the activities reported in the FOI requests correspond to activities carried out from 2021 onwards, when the Federal Congress approved the reform.⁸ From 2021 onwards various government institutions began to:

- **launch campaigns:** such as the *Violentómetro Digital* ('Digital Violence Meter', created by *Olimpia Coral Melo Cruz*) to publicise the *Olimpia Law*
- **establish certain institutional channels** for reporting of crimes against sexual intimacy
- **train state officials**, especially those in prosecutor's offices
- **reform prosecutor's offices** to enable them to pursue the new crime.⁹

⁷ This includes trans, gender fluid and non-binary people.

⁸ The most common activities in the period prior to national approval were prevention talks in middle and high schools. These did not have a gender perspective given that their focus was on preventing online harassment and cyberbullying.

⁹ For example, the Specialised Agency for Crimes Against Sexual Privacy was created in the Mexico City Prosecutor's Office.

The government sectors that have carried out the most actions to prevent, treat and eliminate DSV are:

- **The local commissions for Human Rights and assistance to victims**, who have the function of protecting and disseminating human rights in civil society, as well as with government authorities (248 actions, equivalent to 34.2% of reported activities)
- **The women's institutes and secretariats**, who are in charge of addressing gender violence and coordinating public policies to promote gender equality (240 actions, equivalent to 33.1% of the reported actions).

The high activity rates in these two sectors can likely be attributed to their human rights focus which mandates prioritizing the prevention, response to, and eradication of gender violence. Notably, while the cyber police ranks third in terms of the number of activities conducted during this period, they have only carried out 80 actions.¹⁰

The largest number of actions (517 in total) carried out were talks, chats, workshops, and conferences aimed at specific population groups (mostly students from all levels of education). While these actions are crucial, they are unlikely to have the most impact. More significant actions – those oriented towards creating institutional transformation and that therefore equip institutions to respond adequately to DSV – were the least reported. There were only seven initiatives intended to create institutional infrastructure, 16 aimed at generating institutional action protocols, and 56 at developing internal training sessions. Regarding the prosecution of DSV cases, only 11 responses to the FOI requests included the number of cases initiated for crimes against sexual intimacy. While there have been cases where convictions have been reached (ver Ávila, 2023; Corona, 2021; Arochi, 2023), no response included any mention of this.

The FOI requests, therefore, show that at an institutional level, the *Olimpia Law* has influenced agendas and the use of government resources. However, there is still scope to rethink the current portfolio of activities in order to carry out more high-impact actions.

With regards to the impact of the *Olimpia Law* on the gender norms that public officials hold, there were significant differences both by gender and age, as discussed below.

Female public officials: Younger female officials (aged between 30 and 40 years) were those that most strongly disagreed with the patriarchal gender norms that underpin DSV. For example, young female officials strongly disagreed, as measured by the intensity of their responses during the interviews, that women's bodies are for male pleasure and that women's value is associated with virginity or a discrete or de-eroticised sexuality. Young female officials were those who believed most strongly that women are entitled to pleasure and that they should be able to live their sexuality freely, this being a human right. Female officials over 41 years did not reject these patriarchal norms as strongly. The one they rejected most strongly was the norm that dictates holding women responsible for the violence they suffer, a norm that leads to the re-victimisation of victim-survivors of GBV.

Male public officials: The study revealed a spectrum of attitudes among male officials regarding patriarchal views. Some have significantly shifted away from traditional beliefs, while others subtly perpetuate patriarchal norms, though none openly defended them. Notably, younger public officials emerged as the most critical of these gender norms, particularly regarding the complicity among men about violent behaviour against women.

¹⁰ The remaining sectors reported: educational institutions (76 activities), prosecutor's offices (64 activities), state and municipal governments (10 activities), and finally, courts (7 activities).

Both male and female officials highlighted the significant impact of training on their perceptions and understanding of DSV. The categorisation of DSV under the *Olimpia Law* has helped them identify the acts that constitute such violence. Additionally, their direct engagement with victim-survivors has fostered greater empathy and a deeper awareness of the consequences of DSV.

The study also found, however, that there is resistance to laws that include a gender perspective, as well as a reluctance to recognise online spaces as real. In addition, stigmatising ideas about female sexuality, which suggest women are responsible for the violence they are subjected to, are still being reproduced. Although some officials consider it inappropriate, a culture of machismo and male complicity still exists among male officials. This appears to limit the application of the *Olimpia Law*. According to the digital survey, 72.2% of victim-survivors of DSV did not make a complaint, and those that did mostly reported to social media platforms (11.3%). The reasons given for not reporting cases of DSV were that it was easier to let it slip, fear of complaining, and distrust of authorities.

2. Impact on Mexican society

The Ley Olimpia movement's impact on Mexican society differs between men and women, and by age group as outlined below.

Age: There were differences in perceptions of online spaces by age group. Both men and women, aged between 18 and 30, tended to agree that what happens in online spaces is real. By contrast, those over 40 viewed online spaces as less real, arguing that what seems real on social networks is often not, with people able to pretend to be anything they want to be.¹¹

While people under 30 may be more receptive to, and influenced by, the movement's message (as they agree with the movement's stance on the nature of online spaces), people over 40 may be influenced too. Although those over 40 were less likely to agree with the movement's position on online spaces, they emphasised one characteristic that facilitates DSV – how digital spaces can be used to create false content, such as identity theft or impersonation, with or without using AI. It is possible, therefore, that the difference between age groups is more about the forms or expressions of DSV that they recognise. For example, there may be disagreement about DSV cases involving virtual reality technologies, and it may be more difficult for people over 40 to recognise these cases as DSV.

Women: Regarding their adherence to gender norms that sustain DSV, the study found that, for the most part, women recognise the existence of DSV and believe in their right to express their sexuality safely in online spaces (although the right is still not fully respected). This is especially the case for women aged between 18 and 30. Women over 30 displayed, instead, more noticeable nuances, depending on the region of the country they were from and whether they lived in urban, rural, or semi-rural settings. For example, it was more common for women over 30 in urban areas to confront and question traditional gender norms, while women of this age group from rural or semi-rural contexts, despite feeling uncomfortable with DSV, did not find it easy to name or identify it and displayed a tendency to re-victimise DSV victim-survivors.

It was common for women of both age groups:

- **to reject the hypersexualisation of women and men.** The participants tended to reject the social demand to comply with certain beauty stereotypes and how these are imposed on women's bodies, hypersexualising them. They also expressed critical positions on male hypersexual behaviour, since this leads them to 'consume' female bodies.

¹¹ There was no visible trend seen in people between 30 and 40 years old. They were part of either group or showed intermediate positions.

- **to recognise the risks of exercising their sexuality virtually** and how online spaces can aggravate the damage. In the digital survey, of the 339 women respondents who had taken intimate photographs or videos of themselves, 87.9% said they were aware of the risks of doing so. Of the 439 women who had practiced sexting at some point in their lives, when asked if they would do so again, 38.4% said no, since they now know the risks and 16.1% said they would do it again because they know that the *Olimpia Law* exists and they feel protected by it.¹² In the focus groups, participants emphasised how the risk of DSV is greater for women than men due to existing gender mandates.

The feminist movement is likely to have played a significant part in helping shift female participants' views on gender norms. The fact that these changes are reflected in conversations about digital spaces, however, does speak to the direct influence of the *Ley Olimpia* movement. The results of the digital survey concerning whether participants would share intimate images again may be an indication of the effects of the dissemination of information about DSV, as well as the impact of the new *Olimpia Law*.

Men: In contrast to women, there were more diverse positions among men regarding their adherence to the gender norms that sustain DSV. In general, the report identified three groups:

1. A small group of men (of all ages) who rejected feminist ideas and defended the patriarchal gender norms that uphold DSV.
2. Men (of all ages) who were uncomfortable with feminist demands when GBV is pointed out, but who recognize them due to the social pressure generated by the feminist movement.
3. Men (mostly between 20 and 49 years old) who were willing to partake in dialogue about feminism and reject patriarchal norms related to men's sexuality. This group was also more likely to be critical of negative views about women's sexuality and more able to recognise and take action against GBV.

In the second and third groups, there were men who mentioned they no longer normalise cases of DSV, men who recognised and disapproved of DSV as a mechanism of control and subordination of women, and men who spoke about how their privileges facilitate its perpetration. In another potential indication of the movement's impact, the study also found that some men identified the hypersexualisation of women and girls as linked to DSV, suggesting a newly emergent critical stance. Lastly, it is notable that in conversations about sexting, the third most frequent association made by men was 'consent'. Again, these positions may be the result of the influence of the feminist movement in general, but the fact these changes are reflected when talking specifically about online spaces speaks to the direct influence of *Olimpia Law*.

There is a tendency in men of all age groups, however, to justify DSV. Some claim shared responsibility between the aggressor and the victim-survivor, while others still claim all the responsibility lies with women. These positions reflect, to varied extent, the persistent belief that in certain cases women 'deserve' acts of violence as a way to discipline or 'educate' them. The focus groups revealed how sarcasm and mockery is used to minimise DSV, showing that male complicity persists among some men. The focus groups further indicated the likelihood that these gender norms are still prevalent among men:

¹² Of the remaining responses: 21.4% said they would do it again because they trust the people they do it with, and 17.9% said that they would not do it anymore because they are no longer interested in it.

1. **Male hypersexuality.** For example, when talking about sexting, the words men used most frequently during the focus groups were: ‘virtual sex’ and ‘horniness’ (an uncontrolled sexual desire).
2. **Validation from male peers at the expense of women.** The belief that being violent towards women reinforces masculinity, and instead of identifying men as aggressors, they are praised for their masculinity. The focus groups revealed that it is a common practice among men to participate in WhatsApp groups where explicit nude photos are shared, as if they were trophies.
3. **Relating women’s value to their sexuality.** Men associated the words ‘naked’ and ‘to denigrate’ most often with nude images. Although the study did not reveal if respondents meant the images are denigrating or are used to denigrate the other person, the fact that this association was so prominent highlights men’s view of the relationship between nudity and a woman’s value, and between nudity and humiliation.

3. Impact in the private sector

Social media companies tend to recognise that DSV is perpetrated on their platforms. This recognition is implicit in their community rules and usage policies, which prohibit behaviours involving DSV, as well as in the creation of some reporting mechanisms and their collaboration with DSV initiatives.¹³ For example, Meta indicates that it prohibits nudity or implied nudity, partial nudity, images focused on certain body parts or on sexual activity and they automatically remove sexual images to prevent non-consensual or underage content from being shared. Meta also offers teenage users greater security tools in their profile settings and they publish information on case handling and mechanisms for reporting DSV in their Transparency Centre.

However, while these platforms have developed relevant policies and mechanisms against DSV, these are generally unilateral and are not widely disseminated to their user bases. All reporting mechanisms on social media platforms are impersonal, meaning users can only report concerns using automated mechanisms which do not give them an opportunity to interact with a human being. The follow-up of processes tends to be opaque, and ultimately, the decisions (for example, whether to remove harmful content or a fake account or one that impersonates someone’s identity) are unilateral, discretionary, and with little to no possibility of appeal.

In an interview with Meta, a spokesperson said the company does not feel the *Olimpia Law* has had a significant impact on its actions. They maintained that DSV was already one of their priorities before the movement came into being. Meta indicated that – in addition to providing automated mechanisms to report cases of DSV – the platform also cooperates with the Mexican authorities by responding to digital information requests for the investigation of cases.

Although it was not possible to interview representatives of X or OnlyFans, the fact that both platforms continue to refer to the non-consensual distribution of intimate images as ‘revenge porn’ suggests the *Ley Olimpia* movement – like other feminist movements – has not succeeded in influencing the way these companies understand DSV. As FNS and other feminist groups contend, the term ‘revenge porn’ suggests that intimate images are inherently pornographic and that victims somehow provoked their abusers. This shifts the blame onto the victim, justifies consuming these images as a form of entertainment, and minimises the severity of the crime.

¹³ Meta and OnlyFans, for example, are linked to global initiatives like Take it Down and StopNCII, which are tools to stop the dissemination online of sexually explicit images or videos shared without consent.

A significant barrier to the movement's impact on these platforms is the lack of institutional willingness to address DSV which is sometimes reflected in their leaders. A discourse of defending freedom of expression is often deployed to avoid taking the necessary actions to prevent, respond to, and eliminate DSV.¹⁴ There may be even less institutional willingness in the case of OnlyFans, given that its purpose is, precisely, to profit from the sale of sexual content.¹⁵ The fact the report authors were unable to contact staff from OnlyFans and X in spite of multiple attempts through various channels, indicates, the near impossibility of real dialogue with social media companies.

Although Meta cooperates with Mexican authorities, the lack of national and international regulations limits the possibility of greater future cooperation and of increased legal responsibilities for these companies. Regulatory frameworks could establish obligations for companies to report cases of DSV to the authorities and increase their legal responsibility to resolve complaints.

Box 2: Impact of the *Olimpia Law* on the television channels run by the Grupo Salinas

The study did not find that the *Olimpia Law* has had an impact on the regulation of the content on Salinas's TV channels, or on the mechanisms for reporting content that does not comply with the regulations. The company stated that sexually explicit content in its programming is handled with 'care' but did not detail any criteria in this regard or list any existing protocols in cases of non-compliance. The *Olimpia Law* is mentioned only in protocols, training workshops, and reporting mechanisms on GBV in the work environment. While this does not constitute a change in the group's broadcast content, it is an important step towards beginning a transformation of the perception of DSV by signalling an institution's rejection of the practice, and by raising awareness about it among employees.

¹⁴ For example, in 2023, Elon Musk (owner of X) adopted a policy based on the concept of 'freedom of speech, not freedom of reach'. This means the company has begun to leave inappropriate content online but limits the number of people who sees it (Couts, 2023). Like Meta and X, OnlyFans advocates for users' freedom of expression to generate content with which they can earn profits.

¹⁵ The platform retains 20% of the profits generated by users. For example, in 2021, BBC News exposed how OnlyFans' policies are permissive towards accounts with illegal content—especially if these generate higher earnings (Titheradge, 2021).

Conclusion

Ley Olimpia – as a movement and as a set of legal reforms – is having an impact on Mexican state institutions and civil society. In both sectors, *Olimpia Law* has begun to question and dismantle the gender norms that sustain DSV in Mexico. This reinforces the importance of working through legislative changes that recognise and criminalise GBV, as well as accompanying these efforts with a broader range of actions.

There is resistance to these changes, however, both in state institutions and in Mexican society. The persistence of re-victimisation in both implies a significant challenge for the movement as it limits the impact of the *Olimpia Law* by discouraging the reporting of DSV. If DSV is not reported, the power of the *Olimpia Law* to deter it – and therefore, the gender norms that sustain it – is limited.

In social media companies, and television networks, the report did not find the *Olimpia Law* to have had a significant impact on the moderation of content and handling of DSV cases.

The findings and limitations of this study suggest several avenues for future research. It invites further in-depth investigation of each area of analysis (state, social and business), as well as research on:

- The impact of incorporating women, especially younger women, into public administration as, their rejection of patriarchal gender norms make them important agents of change.
- How to transform the gender norms which sustain the re-victimisation of people who have suffered DSV, and GBV in general, as this is a significant barrier for feminist legal reforms to have the desired impact.
- How to work effectively with boys and men to transform the patriarchal gender norms they retain.
- The potential for international regulation that responds to the characteristics of online spaces—the way it transcends national borders and the role of the private sector – and that recognises digital GBV and establishes obligations for all actors involved.

While there is still much work to be done, transforming gender norms is a gradual and non-linear process, and the *Olimpia Law* has only been in effect for a few years. The progress achieved thus far is largely thanks to Olimpia Coral Melo Cruz, whose courage in sharing her story has sparked meaningful action for the greater good. By voicing her personal experiences of violence, she transformed them into a collective narrative. This is the essence of feminist politics: when emotions such as fear, pain, courage, anger, tenderness, joy, and strength are shared and united, they become powerful catalysts for social change.

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About ALiGN

ALiGN is a digital platform and programme of work that is creating a global community of researchers and thought leaders, all committed to gender justice and equality. It provides new research, insights from practice, and grants for initiatives that increase our understanding of – and work to change – patriarchal gender norms. Through its vibrant and growing digital platform, and its events and activities, ALiGN aims to ensure that the best of available knowledge and resources have a growing impact on discriminatory gender norms.

ALiGN Programme

ODI

203 Blackfriars Road

London SE18NJ

United Kingdom

Email: align@odi.org.uk

Web: www.alignplatform.org

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