

Do apologetic emotions satisfy sexism victims? The influence of empathy,

guilt and the offer to repair

V.J. Bertl

University of Groningen

Student number: s3221040

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. E.H. Gordijn

2<sup>nd</sup> evaluator: Dr. H.K.E Greijdanus

Date: 01-10-2021

## Abstract

Sexism is a deep rooted problem in many societies around the world. Often the struggles many women as a consequence face are not acknowledged and have therefore far reaching consequences on women's life. Offering an apology by transgressors could, in line with the “Needs based model of reconciliation” (Shnabel & Nadler, 2008) increase satisfaction in victims. Expression of emotions (i.e., empathy and guilt) and reparation would entail tending to victims' needs and restore the power of which the latter had been, due to the transgression, deprived of. In a study with 2x2 (emotion yes-no; reparation yes-no) design, we examined the impact of emotional and reparative offer in a fictional story of male Members of the European Union to women. In line with our expectations we found that both the expression of empathy and guilt and the expression of reparation increased women's satisfaction. Contrary to our expectations, combining these two factors in one apology did not increase satisfaction even more. Hence, any kind of tending to women's needs had a significant impact on their perception of satisfaction. Further, women's satisfaction with men in general only increased when male politicians expressed emotional concerns for women. Moreover, when offering reparations, participants perceived politicians as more victim-focused than when reparations were not offered. Implications of these findings are discussed.

*Keywords:* apologies, satisfaction, sexism, sexual harassment, emotion, empathy, guilt reparation

## **Do apologetic emotions satisfy sexism victims? The influence of empathy, guilt and the offer to repair**

Sexist behaviour, which includes sexual harassment is a global problem in our societies (Latcheva, 2017). The consequences are imminent, specifically on women's physical and mental health (Barreto & Ellemers, 2005; Clarke, 2014). More than half of women in the EU alone are expected to have experienced some form of sexual harassment (Latcheva, 2017). This implies a large variety of people who have been wronged. Oftentimes, these transgressions are however not acknowledged (Hillstrom, 2018). The request for an apology stems from the satisfaction the victim feels once a distressing event has been publicly acknowledged (MacLachlan, 2013). An apology can be perceived as a public recognition of wrongdoing (Minow, 1998). If administered adequately, an apology could help heal the emotional trauma experienced, and offer possible closure on the transgression (Blatz & Philpot, 2010; Hornsey & Wohl, 2013). How could the existing suffering be adequately acknowledged to satisfy victims of sexism?

Expressing emotions such as shame, guilt, empathy, or offering to repair the damage done have been used as possible factors to portray and accommodate victims of a wide array of different conflicts (Gordijn & Grundmann, 2020; Slocum et al., 2011). This research will examine different aspects of apologies, test their impact and efficiency on the extent of their influence on victims. More specifically, it will examine whether women are satisfied by apologies of men regarding sexual harassment.

### **Sexism and Sexual Transgressions**

Sexism is the discrimination of a person because of their gender (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2020). It is manifested covertly, through apparent benevolent deeds

or overtly, through hostile behaviour which includes sexual harassment (Benokraitis, 1997; Hyers, 2007). Women majoritively are reported to be subjects of these transgressions (Benokraitis, 1997; Uggen & Blackstone, 2004). According to a study by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2014b) most women in the EU report having experienced some form of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment can have far reaching consequences on victim's mental and physical health (Barreto & Ellemers, 2005; Clarke, 2014). Moreover, the victim's health might further be impacted due to their environment's unsupportive and dismissive reaction to their forthcoming (Hillstrom, 2018; Sobieraj, 2018). The lack of adequate legislative acknowledgement and prosecution of a sexual transgression might further hinder any societal support (Latcheva, 2017).

The environmental reception of victims of sexual transgression however was challenged when in 2017 the hashtag #metoo was revived on social media platform Twitter (Burke, n.d.; Nigro et al., 2019). The movement, which had been started by civil rights activist Tarana Burke about a decade earlier, was initiated to safely share experiences of sexual transgressions (Burke, n.d.; Nigro et al., 2019). The movement enabled people throughout the world to share their impacting wrongdoings involving sexist transgressions. Once dismissed, victims were now given a public platform to share experiences and be heard (Schumann, 2019). The global movement emphasized the profound problem in many societies with sexual transgressions and their handling. Namely, a lack of acknowledgement of thereof (Burke, n.d.; Hillstrom, 2018; Nigro et al., 2019). In the wake of the revelations, numerous accused transgressors had to publicly face allegations (Hillstrom, 2018; Nigro et al., 2019). Henceforth, the pressure on the transgressors of an acknowledgement of the publicly shared transgressions by the victims, increased (Hillstrom, 2018; Nigro et al., 2019).

### **The need for acknowledgment by victims**



The necessity of acknowledgement of wrongdoing can be explained by the "Needs Based Model of Reconciliation" (Shnabel & Nadler, 2008): The model describes the process of victimization as depriving victims and transgressors of their psychological needs.

The act of the transgression seizes victims' power and freedom of decision. For the transgressor on the other hand, the act results in a risk of their stance in the community. As a consequence, victims seek to restore their power which had been taken. The restoration or reallocation of power can only be achieved by a transgressors' acknowledgement of wrongdoing to the victim. The act of the acknowledgement offered by transgressors, in turn creates psychological debt to their victims. The victims then hold control over that debt. This results in victims being able to be in power of the outcome. Consequently, the act of acknowledgement reconstitutes the power victims were deprived of during the transgression. For victims, the reconstitution of power could increase their satisfaction. For transgressors, an apology could restore their need to belong and help rehabilitate the relationship with their victim. Applied to an intergroup context, Philip and Hornsey (2008) presented participants with different transgressions in which their interests had been harmed by an outgroup. An acknowledgement in the form of an apology was given. No increase in forgiveness in the presence of an apology was measured. However, the presence of an apology was perceived as more satisfactory than none (Philpot & Hornsey, 2008). Consequently one could argue that even though forgiveness was not granted, some aspects of the apologetic expression led to an increase in satisfaction for the victims. The reconstitution of power in the form of an acknowledgement could, as a result, have increased satisfaction in victims (Philpot & Hornsey, 2008; Shnabel & Nadler, 2008). Consequently the question arises which components of an apology should be included in order to satisfy victims' needs.

### **Apologies**

A wide array of research examined the portrayal of apologetic emotions during an apology (Howell et al., 2012; Tangney & Dearing, 2002); Hereby it is important to highlight emotions which are both demanded by victims and probable to be expressed by transgressors. If the transgressor is not likely to offer the demanded emotions, satisfaction of the victim is less probable (Shnabel & Nadler, 2008). The admission of guilt in the context of an apology has been the subject of extensive research (B. Doosje et al., 1998; B. E. J. Doosje et al., 2006; Howell et al., 2012; Tangney & Dearing, 2002). It is an unpleasant feeling which arises out of a negative evaluation and therefore acknowledgement of wrongdoing. Expressing guilt to victims could allow for the redistribution of emotional distress (Baumeister et al., 1994). The transgressor, caused either directly or indirectly distress to the victim. As a result, admitting to guilt, they are feeling some degree of distress, too. It might have a positive effect on victims as the negative feelings are directed towards the person who has caused them (Shnabel & Nadler, 2008). Experiencing guilt, as a result, signals to victims that the transgressors understand their wrongdoing, are willing to understand the victim's pain and able to feel with them (Baumeister et al., 1994). The feeling and expression of guilt therefore signals an acknowledgement of the wrongdoing and entails empathy: it shows concern towards the victim. Henceforth the process of feeling and expressing guilt could show empathetic behaviour (Tangney & Dearing, 2002). An acknowledgement of wrongdoing, with the expression of emotions such as guilt and empathy, could therefore be seen as reducing the probability of reoffending (Baumeister et al., 1994). Gordijn and Grundmann (2020) examined the victim's perception of acknowledgement of their suffering by comparing expressions of self-critical emotions such as guilt, and victim focused emotions such as empathy. British participants were offered different kind of apologies by Germans, whose fathers had allegedly participated in the Blitz bombings. Participants perceived expression of empathy to be more victim-focused, warm and were subsequently happier and more thankful

compared to the expression of self critical emotions. On the other hand, transgressors expressing self-critical emotions such as guilt were seen as more guilty. When guilt was combined with empathy, the apology resulted in more positive perceptions of the outgroup, in more positive feelings, and in forgiveness. This suggests that victims feel more satisfied when guilt is accompanied by empathy. Similarly, expressing empathy resulted in victims feeling the apology was directed at them. Research by Berndsen et al. (2015) tackled the difference in perception by victims of self and other focused apologies. In line with Gordijn and Grundmann (2020) findings, other-focused apologies accounted for an increase in perception of remorse, perceived empathy -of and trust -in the transgressors. An application of the self and self-other focused apologies was researched by (Nigro et al., 2019). Actual public apologies made by transgressors in the Art, Media and Entertainment industries were recorded and separated according to an adapted apologetic scheme by Slocum et al. (2011). The apologies were separated by self and self-other focused responses. Apologies were classified as self- focused when they dealt with transgressors offering accounts of how the act had impacted their life. Self-other focused responses however dealt with more victim focused effects of the transgression. The results showed that self-other focused apologies, although less prevalent (26 apologies compared to 62 self-focused), were seen as more sincere, and more likely, to meet the victim's needs (Nigro et al., 2019).

Even though the emotional needs of the victims might be addressed through emotion expression, once the transgression is being acknowledged, the apology might still be perceived as incomplete (Pettigrove, 2003). Victims demand an action which solidifies the expressed emotions and implements their expressed intent to them (Scher & Darley, 1997; Slocum et al., 2011). Two variables which have been mentioned in literature addressing implementation of intentions in apologies are restitutions and reparations (Slocum et al., 2011). Restitution is described as a physical deed e.g. a gift. It can be perceived as insincere

or insulting: victims might perceive that the focus of the transgressors is only on relieving the guilt. Henceforth, the act of reconquering the person i.e expecting reconciliation in return as a response to the act of restitution is the purpose, and not the victim's compensation.

Reparation however is perceived as focussing more on the victim's needs. To be able to offer reparations, one has to firstly acknowledge the harm done (Scher & Darley, 1997). Only then, tending to victims such as emphasizing, listening to and offering requested demands is possible. Going to great lengths to tend to the victim by listening could as a result show physical efforts of non-repeatability of the act. As a result, restitution is perceived as a self-focused action, whereas reparation is perceived as a self-other focused action (Slocum et al., 2011). The perception of the focus of the compensation seems to be essential in the effectiveness and consequential assimilation of the apology (Slocum et al., 2011).

### **Current study**

The basis for our study is the longstanding deprivation of victims' needs (Shnabel & Nadler, 2008) in a sexism context. Sexual discrimination of women, concerns a prevalent conflict between two parties: regressors being often male and victims, often female (Benokraitis, 1997; Uggen & Blackstone, 2004). Our research will therefore focus on women's response to men apologising for sexual misconduct and the way in which the apology is presented. Response satisfaction will hereby be used as a measure to analyse the impact of the response on women's well-being. In our current study, we aim to therefore replicate and extend Gordijn and Grundmann (2020) findings regarding emotional expressions of apologetic emotions. Overall we will expect expression of empathy in combination with guilt to have a positive effect on victims satisfaction. Moreover, given previous research by Gordijn and Grundmann (2020) and Hornsey and Wohl (2015), we will expect expressions of empathy and guilt to be perceived as being focused on the victim. Due to the studies on reparative measures by Slocum et al. (2011), we will add reparations as an

additional variable. As a result we hypothesize, in line with Hornsey and Wohl (2013) and Slocum et al. (2011), that offering solely reparations could also increase victims' satisfaction. Similarly as Nigro et al. 2019 and Slocum et al. 2011 we expect it to be perceived as focusing on the victim. The combined effects of the expression of empathy, guilt and reparation has, to our knowledge, not been studied yet. However, taking the literature (Scher & Darley, 1997; Okimoto & Tyler, 2007; Slocum et al., 2011) into account, we believe that adding reparations to the expression of apologetic emotions such as empathy and guilt could increase victims' satisfaction significantly. The combination of emotion and reparative expression could further signal concern for victims, willingness to change and prevent further possibilities of similar transgressions. Henceforth, we hypothesise that offering reparations along with apologetic emotions will yield an even stronger effect on victims' satisfaction than without. In order to explore the generalisability of our research, we will measure victim's satisfaction of men's response to sexual harassment in general. Similar generalisations of variables in this context have, again, to our knowledge, not been recorded yet. We will therefore keep the results explorative.

## **Method**

### **Participants And Research Design**

The study was pre-registered on AsPredicted (see Appendix A for complete pre-registration). The power analysis performed showed that our sample had to contain at least 128 participants to find an effect of  $F = 0.25$  with an alpha level of  $\alpha = 0.05$  and a power of 80%. A total of 305 subjects participated in the study, of whom 157 were excluded because of: not correctly filling in the items that measure the attention of the participants during the questionnaire, too often filling in the same answer by the participant or not fully filling in the questionnaire, being under the age of 17, not answering truthfully, being male. The final

sample contained 149 participants. Two identical studies were run online on qualtrics simultaneously: The participants in the first copy, were female first-year psychology students of the University of Groningen, invited to participate in order to obtain partial course credits. Participants in the other study were recruited through acquaintances and online sampling. Age ranged between 17 and over 30 years with an average age range of 19-21 with a standard deviation of 1 year. This study has a 2x2 design (expression of emotion: yes or no; reparation: yes or no). Given previous research about word ambiguity, especially in the perception among foreigners, we decided to include several aspects of expression of emotions, additionally to empathy. Through randomization, the participants were assigned to one of four different conditions. This concerned one of the two conditions in which expression of emotions (e.g. guilt, empathy, embarrassment) or a reparation was shown, one condition in which both were shown or one control condition in which neither was shown.

### **Procedure and Independent variables**

The Ethical Committee on Psychology (ECP) granted permission for the study to be carried out. The questionnaire was taken online via qualtrics (see Appendix B for full questionnaire). Participants gave their informed consent for participation in the experiment. This briefed the participants about the possible risks and benefits of the study. First, we collected some general demographic data of the participants. Gender was measured on a 3-item scale, 1=male; 2= female; 3= other. Age was asked on a 6-item range scale: (5-item scale; 1= younger than 17 years; 2=17-19 years ; 3=19-21 years; 4=22-24 years; 5=older than 30 years). Furthermore, information had to be disclosed about whether subjects are members of the European Union (2-item scale; 1=yes; 2=no). Participants were consequently asked on a 7-item-Likert scale (ranging from 1= *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*) to what extent they followed the #metoo movement and their identification as a woman. Then participants were asked to read a manipulated article, set up by the researchers, supposedly

from the EUobserver.com, a real online non-profit European newspaper. The article presented results of an actual study, which showed that a large percentage of women in different European countries had experienced (a form of) sexually transgressive behavior. By means of quotes, some of these experiences were then recounted by women who had become victims. It was mentioned that the committee 'Women's rights and Gender Equality' of the European Parliament had discussed the figures of this study. The statements of three male members of the committee as a result of the discussion of the study were quoted. The various manipulations of the study were incorporated in the newspaper article that the participants had to read. In the article, three male Members of the European Parliament (MEP) (Jacob Mulder, David Johansson and Peter O'Sullivan) make statements about sexual harassment of women. The four conditions were kept as comparable as possible.

In the *repair condition* they offer all kinds of solutions. An example of a statement from the repair condition is:

Another member of the committee, David Johansson adds: "The stories that were disclosed during the last few weeks on social media, in newspapers, talk shows and on the radio are actual accounts from real women. Only talking about the issue is not enough. This needs to be tackled practically. We as male politicians who are part of the system need to act. Conclusively, we need to think about the female victims but also about future preventative measures. Thus, our proposal will entail a wide range of practical implications which will help change systematic injustice."

In expressing *emotion condition*, the three male parliamentarians show a lot of compassion for women and also make them feel ashamed or even guilty about the behaviour of men. An example of David Johansson's statement in this condition is:

Another member of the committee, David Johansson, adds: "The stories that were disclosed during the last few weeks on social media, in newspapers, talk shows and on

the radio are actual accounts from real women. I am deeply saddened and ashamed by this. We are aware of the facts by now, and that this has been a horrible reality for the majority of women. We can't look away anymore, the suffering women have had to endure, due to our neglect as politicians but especially as men is devastating. We can never understand the immense pain women must have felt and still feel, caused to our blatant facilitation of sexual discrimination".

For the manipulations for the *combined condition* (reparation and expression of emotion), the statements of the two separate conditions were mixed, so that both conditions were present.

An example of this is as follows:

Another member of the working group, David Johansson, adds: "The stories that were disclosed during the last few weeks on social media, in newspapers, talk shows and on the radio are actual accounts from real women. I am deeply saddened and ashamed by this. We are aware of the facts by now, and that this has been a horrible reality for the majority of women. Only talking about the issue is not enough. This needs to be tackled practically. Conclusively, we need to think about the female victims but also about future preventative measures which will help change systematic injustice."

The *control condition* did not include any of the manipulations and the statements were kept as neutral as possible. An example of this is as follows:

Another member of the committee, David Johansson, adds: "The stories that were disclosed during the last few weeks on social media, in newspapers, talk shows and on the radio are actual accounts from real women".

In order to communicate the manipulations effectively, at least 17 statements separating the different conditions are included. See the appendix for full descriptions.

### **Dependent variables<sup>1</sup>**

---



After reading the story, participants were presented with the dependent variables. *Response satisfaction* was measured by adapting a three item measure from Philpot and Hornsey (2008) ( $\alpha = .81$ ). All measures asked participants to fill in the following question stem “I think that Mulder's, Johansson's, and O'Sullivan's response to sexual harassment is ...”. The response items consisted of the terms “adequate, unsatisfactory, and sufficient” and had to be rated on a 7-point Likert scale that ranged from 1= *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*. The item measuring “dissatisfaction” was reverse coded in the analysis to align with other positive items (e.g adequate, sufficient). Items were checked for reliability, Cronbach's alpha .844 and subsequently combined into a single satisfaction item.

*Response satisfaction* regarding men in general was also measured, with participants having to answer on a 7-point Likert scale that ranged from 1= *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree* to the following statement: “I think in general men's response to sexual harassment of women is sufficient.”

Participants were consequently presented with manipulation checks. Perceived empathy was recorded: “I believe that Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan expressed empathy towards women”; Perception of reparation was measured with the following statement: “I believe that Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan offered measures to reduce sexual harassment of women”; Finally, perception of guilt was presented depicting the following statement: I believe that Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan expressed feelings such as shame, guilt, and embarrassment about sexual harassment of women. All manipulation checks had to be consequently rated on a 7-point Likert scale that ranged from 1= *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*.

---

<sup>1</sup> The study was performed in a Bachelor-Thesis collaboration. Further variables which were used and analysed by respective parties include: perceived remorse, meta perceptions, trust and forgiveness.

Perception of self- and other focus was measured. Notably, other focused was recorded “I believe that Mulder, Johannson, and O'Sullivan are focused on victims of sexual harassment”. Self focus was measured with “I believe that Mulder, Johannson, and O'Sullivan are focused on men and/or on themselves”. Again, both variables were rated on a 7-point Likert scale that ranged from 1= *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*.

Concluding, participants were asked whether they had responded truthfully and given space to comment on the study. Furthermore the aim of the study was questioned. A debriefing followed which emphasized the fictionailty of the study. Given that accounts of sexual harassment were discussed, the dutch national helpline for victim support was included.

## **Results**

Analyses were conducted on alpha level of .05 for all statistical tests. 2x2 (emotion: yes, no; reparation: yes, no) Analyses of Variance (ANOVA's) were carried out on different dependent variables (perceived empathy, guilt, reparation, self/-other focus, satisfaction of politicians, satisfaction of men in general).

### **Manipulation checks**

#### ***Empathy check***

ANOVA revealed a main effect of emotion on the empathy check,  $F(1, 149) = 14.624, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .092$ . Interestingly, reparation was also perceived as empathetic as the result suggests a significant main effect of reparation on empathy,  $F(1, 149) = 8.560, p = .004, \eta_p^2 = .056$ . Also, an interaction effect between emotions and reparation was found,  $F(1, 149) = 10.597, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .068$ . To test which means differed from each other, a Least Significant Differences post hoc test (LSD) was conducted. When either emotions were expressed ( $M = 5.256, SD = .219$ ) or reparations were offered ( $M = 5.073, SD = .194$ ), or both

( $M = 5.189$ ,  $SD = .204$ ), more empathy was perceived than when no emotions and a reparation offer were present ( $M = 3.812$ ,  $SD = .219$ ), all  $p$ s  $< 0.05$ , ( $M = 5.189$ ,  $SD = .204$ )

### ***Guilt check***

The 2 (emotion yes, emotion no) x 2 (reparation yes, reparation no) analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed a main effect of emotion on the guilt check,  $F(1, 149) = 33.965$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .190$ , as participants perceived more guilt when emotions were expressed ( $M=4.938$ ,  $SE=.153$ ) than when no emotions were expressed ( $M=3.657$ ,  $SE=.158$ ). Interestingly, there was also a main effect of reparation,  $F(1, 149) = 10.311$ ,  $p < .002$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .066$ , as participants perceived more guilt when reparations were offered ( $M=4.65$ ,  $SE=0.151$ ) than when no reparations were offered ( $M=3.944$ ,  $SE=0.159$ ). The interaction effect was not significant,  $F(1, 145) = 3.645$ ,  $p > .05$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = 0.25$ .

### ***Reparation check***

The main effect of offering reparations was significant,  $F(1, 149) = 23.666$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .140$ , indicating that the politicians were indeed perceived to offer more reparations when reparations were offered ( $M=4.227$ ,  $SE=0.161$ ) than when no reparations were offered ( $M=3.087$ ,  $SE=0.17$ ). The main effect for emotions was not significant,  $F(1, 149) = 1.600$ ,  $p = .208$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .011$ , and neither was the interaction effect,  $F(1, 149) = .066$ ,  $p = .798$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .001$ .

### **Satisfaction**

#### ***Politicians***

The 2 (emotion yes, emotion no) x 2 (reparation yes, reparation no) analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed a main effect of emotion on satisfaction,  $F(1, 145) = 9.017$ ,  $p = .003$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = 0.059$  (small). Further, reparation was also perceived as more satisfactory as the results revealed a significant main effect of reparation on satisfaction,  $F(1, 145) = 11.744$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .75$  (medium). Also, an interaction effect between emotions and reparation was found,  $F(1, 145) = 6.965$ ,  $p = .009$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = 0.046$ . To test which means differed from each other,

a Least Significant Differences post hoc test (LSD) was conducted. When either emotions were expressed ( $M = 4.256, SD = 1.19076$ ) or reparations were offered ( $M = 4.342, SD = 1.205$ ), or both ( $M = 4.414, SD = 1.273$ ), more satisfaction was perceived than when no emotions and a reparation offer were present ( $M = 3.125, SD = 1.206$ ), all  $ps < 0.001$ . There was no evidence for an additive effect as the combined condition was not more satisfying than when either emotions or reparations were offered (all  $ps > \dots$ ).

### ***Satisfaction about men in general***

The main effect of emotions was significant,  $F(1, 149) = 4.585, p = .034, \eta_p^2 = .031$  (small), indicating that the participants were more satisfied with men in general when emotions were expressed ( $M=2.984, SE=0.157$ ) than when no emotions were expressed ( $M=2.501, SE=0.162$ ).

The main effect for reparations was not significant,  $F(1, 149) = 0.083, p = .774, \eta_p^2 = .001$ , and neither was the interaction effect,  $F(1, 145) = 1.226, p = .270, \eta_p^2 = .008$ .

### **Perception of Focus**

#### ***Perception of other-focus (towards victim)***

The main effect of reparation was significant,  $F(1, 149) = 6.638, p = .011, \eta_p^2 = .044$  (small), indicating that the politicians were perceived to focus more on victims when reparations were offered ( $M=4.744, SE=0.157$ ) than when no reparations were offered ( $M=4.158, SE=0.164$ ). The main effect for emotions was not significant,  $F(1, 149) = 1.353, p < .247, \eta_p^2 = .009$ , and neither was the interaction effect,  $F(1, 145) = 1.109, p = .294, \eta_p^2 = .008$ .

#### ***Perception of self-focus (towards transgressors)***

The main effect of reparation was significant,  $F(1, 145) = 0.216, p = .033, \eta_p^2 = .031$  indicating that the politicians were perceived to focus more on themselves when no reparations were offered ( $M=4.433, SE=0.17$ ) than when reparations were offered ( $M=3.928,$

$SE=0.16$ ). The main effect for emotions was not significant,  $F(1, 149) = 2.879, p = .092, \eta_p^2 = .019$ , and neither was the interaction effect,  $F(1, 145) = 1.109, p = .216, \eta_p^2 = .001$

### Discussion

The focus of this research was to tend to sexism victims' needs which had been previously deprived through the act of a transgression (Philpot & Hornsey, 2008; Shnabel & Nadler, 2008). We used women as representatives for victims of sexual transgressions. Male Members of the European (MEP) parliament served as representatives for male transgressors. Hereby we examined whether the expressions of emotions and/or expression of reparations by male MEP would increase satisfaction in women. The reported satisfaction by women served as a reference for the extent to which the women's needs would be acknowledged and met. More specifically, we hypothesized, that women would feel more satisfied with politician's response to sexual harassment when they would be presented with either an emotional expression of *empathy* and *guilt* or *reparation*. In line with our hypothesis, we found that women were more satisfied when they were shown an apology, which contained emotions such as *empathy* and *guilt* and/or *reparations*. Furthermore we also predicted that combining expressions of *empathy*, *guilt* and *reparations* would have a stronger impact on response *satisfaction*. Surprisingly, contrarily to our initial hypothesis, combining the variables did not have the most impact on satisfaction. Therefore *emotion expression* and *reparations* combined did not increase satisfaction levels more than offering the manipulations of emotions and reparations independently. We also hypothesized that *expressing emotions* and *reparation* independently would be perceived as focusing on the victim. As opposed to our initial expectation however, women did not perceive *emotional expression* of *guilt* and *empathy* to be focusing on victims. Women did however perceive *reparations* as focusing on victims. That is, only when *reparations* were expressed, did

women perceive that the politicians were focusing their efforts on victims and less on themselves.

Our exploratory analysis involved asking women whether they were satisfied with men in general's response to sexual harassment. Surprisingly, women were only more satisfied with men in general when *emotions* such as *empathy* and *guilt* were expressed. Offering *reparations* did not increase women's satisfaction with men in general.

### **Theoretical Implications**

Women perceived the acknowledgement in the form of *emotion* expression as more satisfying than no *emotion* expression. As a result, it could be argued that the admission of emotions of *empathy* and *guilt* was perceived as an acknowledgement of a transgression. Contrary to studies by Gordijn and Grundmann (2020) and Hornsey and Wohl (2015) however, women did not think that expressing *emotions* would be focused on the victim. Indeed public apologies can also be perceived by victims as tending more to the restoration of transgressors' own integrity than addressing victims (Shnabel & Nadler, 2008; Wohl et al., 2011). Another plausible reasoning could be that women, even though women were more satisfied, demanded an actual implementation of politicians' expressed intentions (Slocum et al., 2011). While *emotion expression* was not perceived as focusing on victims, expressing *reparations*, was. Surprisingly, women perceived the reparations to be empathetic and an admission of guilt, even though we had specifically excluded any admission of emotion in the reparation manipulation article. According to (Slocum et al., 2011), implementation of intent in the form of reparations is demanded as proof of the aforementioned intentions. Hereby it is possible that the mere act of expressing tangible reparative measures which focus both on the current state of victims and on the prevention of further transgressions, precede with empathy and guilt. That is, women think that a transgressor has to be able to have empathy and feel guilty towards victims in order to focus on the victims' needs: The needs being reparative

measures (Scher & Darley, 1997). One could argue reparations were a more tangible acknowledgement of the suffering of victims. The reparations not only acknowledged the impact the past transgression had had, but also saw the structural problem that facilitated the transgression in the first place.

Given that the research on expression of *emotions* (Baumeister et al., 1994; Gordijn & Grundmann, 2020; Slocum et al., 2011; Tangney & Dearing, 2002) and *reparations* (Nigro et al., 2019; Scher & Darley, 1997; Slocum et al., 2011) resulted in a similarly positive impact on the acknowledgement of a transgression; we hypothesized that combining the variables together would result in even more satisfaction in women. Contrary to our hypothesising, women were not more satisfied with an apologetic expression and an offer of reparation. A possible explanation for the outcome could be the perception of the meaning for the different apologetic expressions. Apologetic emotions were previously perceived as an acknowledgement of wrongdoing and suggestive of non-repeatability of a similar act (Scher & Darley, 1997; Slocum et al., 2011). Similar meanings have been alluded to in the expression of reparations (Scher & Darley, 1997; Slocum et al., 2011). Hereby one could argue that both apologetic expressions were perceived to have similar meanings and were as a result perceived similarly.

An interesting finding was that women were more satisfied when the male politicians expressed any apologetic expression, but satisfaction for men in general only increased when *emotions* were expressed. To understand this effect we need to look at our study design: participants were presented with information about three MEP, which were used as figurative representatives for the creation of an intergroup conflict between men and women. Women were consequently first asked about their opinion on the aforementioned politicians, and then about men in general's response to sexual harassment. Only when politicians expressed *emotions* did the effects generalize to men. It could be that only *emotion* expressions are

generalized to men because men in general would also be able to express these emotions. That is, men could express guilt and empathy for the victims as a response to sexual harassment. The reparations the politicians offered on the other hand consisted of legislative measures only politicians would be able to enforce. That is, men who are not politicians can't implement awareness or prevention programs. As a result, the legislative changes were probably less likely to generalise to men in general.

### **Limitations and directions for future research**

The first limitation we encountered while analysing our data is participants' reading time. We observed that some participants only spent mere seconds on the article before continuing with the study. Even if the participants were classified as "fast readers", they would have not been able to read the article in the short amount of time they spent with the article (Fry, 1975). We did not include a time reading restriction in the pre-registration of our study and did therefore also not exclude said participants. Further studies should therefore include a previously set and studied timespan to ensure that participants actually read the manipulations.

According to observations of Gordijn and Grundmann (2020), in order for variables to have an effect on participants they have to be repeatedly stated. For expressions of emotions we resorted to include empathy and guilt in the title and text at least four times. Repetition also ensured that a distinction between the manipulations was more visible and thus reactions to them more distinguishable. However, lamentable, due to repetitive wording, significant word count differences emerged. Even though we tried to adjust the texts accordingly, constructing a control condition with non emotive words resulted in a dilemma: to waive control over comparable length to content-accuracy or vice versa? For our study we prioritised variable-repetition while still accounting for text-length. Whereas the control/no-



apology condition only included 639 words, the combined condition consisted of 928 words. Therefore, the combined condition was roughly longer by a third. Reparation (855 words) and emotional expression (806 words) contained respectively between 20 % and 25 % more text content than the control condition. Comparably, Philpot and Hornsey (2008) only used 83 words for their group-based emotional apology. Subsequently, less emotive expressions were included. A longer apologetic expression could, similarly as (Berndsen et al., 2015) Berndsen et al. (2015) noted, be seen as more elaborative and therefore more satisfying by default. Therefore, future research should explore possibilities of adjusting the manipulation's word lengths. Hereby one could possibly eliminate a variable which could impact or account for certain results.

A third limitation refers to asking women about their perceptions of the politicians. These included evaluations of two roles: as representatives for men in general but also as politicians. The impact of the difference of these roles unravels in the allocation of reparations: The general population is unable to implement the reparative proposals included. Thus realistically, they lack a possibility to enforce the reparative measures. The objective of a politician ideally is however to tend to their population and execute their legislative power, in favour of the greater good. Replicating the study including reparations which would also generalise to men in general and their behaviour, would be necessary in order to accurately compare generalisability. Hereby we could exclude the factor of influence of the perception of the profession, which might have had an impact on the results.

## **Conclusion**

What do women who have suffered a transgression demand and how can the latter be satisfied? The question, which spurred our research, directed us to emphasise victims' needs (Shnabel & Nadler, 2008): The need to receive an adequate acknowledgement for a suffered transgression (Slocum, Allan and Allan, 2011). Our research revealed promising effects and

important implications for both victims of sexism and victims of other conflicts. Despite the constraints, expressing *emotions* and/or *reparations* increased women's satisfaction. Reparative measures were perceived as tending to victims' needs whereas emotional concern increased overall satisfaction with men. *Reparations* and *emotional* expressions, individually and combined, had positive effects on women's satisfaction with politicians. Acknowledging the prevalence of sexual harassment therefore not only emphasised the damage done, but also offered a possible approach to help tend to those who have been affected by it. Most importantly however, our results indicate that, despite its limitations, apologetic expressions and reparative measures can have a positive effect on victims and thus, as a result, on society's dealing with similar conflicts.

## References

- Barreto, M., & Ellemers, N. (2005). The burden of benevolent sexism: How it contributes to the maintenance of gender inequalities. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 35(5), 633–642. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.270>
- Baumeister, R. F., Stillwell, A. M., & Heatherton, T. F. (1994). Guilt: An interpersonal approach. *Psychological Bulletin*, 115(2), 243–267. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.115.2.243>
- Benokraitis, N. V. (1997). *Subtle sexism: Current practice and prospects for change*. Sage Publications,.
- Berndsen, M., Hornsey, M. J., & Wohl, M. J. A. (2015). The impact of a victim-focused apology on forgiveness in an intergroup context. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 18(5), 726–739. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430215586275>
- Blatz, C. W., & Philpot, C. (2010). On the Outcomes of Intergroup Apologies: A Review. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 4(11), 995–1007. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9004.2010.00318.x>
- Burke, T. (n.d.). *The 'me too.' Movement*. Justbeinc. Retrieved 13 June 2020, from <https://justbeinc.wixsite.com/justbeinc/the-me-too-movement-cmml>
- Clarke, H. M. (2014). *Predicting the Decision to Report Sexual Harassment: Organizational Influences and the Theory of Planned Behavior*. /paper/Predicting-the-Decision-to-Report-Sexual-Influences-Clarke/be9f872f4c1ef0e02ce72af847c939ed2173d866
- Doosje, B., Branscombe, N., Spears, R., & Manstead, A. (1998). Guilty by Association: When One's Group Has a Negative History. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 75, 872–886. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.75.4.872>
- Doosje, B. E. J., Branscombe, N. R., Spears, R., & Manstead, A. S. R. (2006). Antecedents

and Consequences of Group-Based Guilt: The Effects of Ingroup Identification.

*Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 9(3), 325–338.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430206064637>

European Institute for Gender Equality. (2020). *Sexism at Work: What is sexism?*

<https://eige.europa.eu/publications/sexism-at-work-handbook/part-1-understand/what-sexism>

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. (2014). *Violence against women :an EU wide survey: Results at a glance*. Publications Office.

<https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2811/60683>

Gordijn, E., & Grundmann. (2020). *Victims' reactions when the outgroup acknowledges the suffering it caused*.

Hillstrom, L. C. (2018). *The #MeToo Movement*. ABC-CLIO, LLC.

<http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/rug/detail.action?docID=5583957>

Hornsey, M. J., & Wohl, M. J. A. (2013). We are sorry: Intergroup apologies and their tenuous link with intergroup forgiveness. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 24(1), 1–31. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10463283.2013.822206>

Howell, A. J., Turowski, J. B., & Buro, K. (2012). Guilt, empathy, and apology. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 53(7), 917–922.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2012.06.021>

Hyers, L. L. (2007). Resisting Prejudice Every Day: Exploring Women's Assertive Responses to Anti-Black Racism, Anti-Semitism, Heterosexism, and Sexism. *Sex Roles*, 56(1), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-006-9142-8>

Latcheva, R. (2017). Sexual Harassment in the European Union: A Pervasive but Still Hidden Form of Gender-Based Violence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 32(12), 1821–1852. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260517698948>

- MacLachlan, A. (2013). Gender and Public Apology. *Transitional Justice Review*, 1–21.  
<https://doi.org/10.5206/tjr.2013.1.2.6>
- Minow, M. (1998). Between Vengeance and Forgiveness: South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. *Negotiation Journal*, 14(4), 319–355.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1571-9979.1998.tb00170.x>
- Nigro, G., Ross, E., Binns, T., & Kurtz, C. (2019). Apologies in the #MeToo moment. *Psychology of Popular Media Culture*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000261>
- Pettigrove, G. (2003). Apology, Reparations, and the Question of Inherited Guilt. *Public Affairs Quarterly*, 17(4), 31.
- Philpot, C. R., & Hornsey, M. J. (2008). What Happens When Groups Say Sorry: The Effect of Intergroup Apologies on Their Recipients. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 34(4), 474–487. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167207311283>
- Scher, S. J., & Darley, J. M. (1997). How Effective Are the Things People Say to Apologize? Effects of the Realization of the Apology Speech Act. *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, 26(1), 14.
- Schumann, K. (2019). Apologies as signals for change? Implicit theories of personality and reactions to apologies during the #MeToo movement. *PLOS ONE*, 14(12), e0226047.  
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0226047>
- Shnabel, N., & Nadler, A. (2008). A needs-based model of reconciliation: Satisfying the differential emotional needs of victim and perpetrator as a key to promoting reconciliation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 94(1), 116–132.  
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.94.1.116>
- Slocum, D., Allan, A., & Allan, M. M. (2011). An emerging theory of apology: An emerging theory of apology. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, 63(2), 83–92.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1742-9536.2011.00013.x>

- Sobieraj, S. (2018). Bitch, slut, skank, cunt: Patterned resistance to women's visibility in digital publics. *Information, Communication & Society*, 21(11), 1700–1714.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2017.1348535>
- Tangney, J. P., & Dearing, R. L. (2002). *Shame and Guilt*. Guilford Publications.  
<http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/rug/detail.action?docID=330591>
- Uggen, C., & Blackstone, A. (2004). Sexual Harassment as a Gendered Expression of Power. *American Sociological Review*, 69(1), 64–92.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240406900105>
- Wohl, M. J. A., Hornsey, M. J., & Philpot, C. R. (2011). A Critical Review of Official Public Apologies: Aims, Pitfalls, and a Staircase Model of Effectiveness. *Social Issues and Policy Review*, 5(1), 70–100. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-2409.2011.01026.x>

## Appendix A

### CONFIDENTIAL - FOR PEER-REVIEW ONLY



#### Bachelor Thesis 2019-2020 Sexual Harassment (#36941)

Created: 03/06/2020 08:39 AM (PT)

Shared: 06/20/2020 08:38 AM (PT)

This pre-registration is not yet public. This anonymized copy (without author names) was created by the author(s) to use during peer-review. A non-anonymized version (containing author names) will become publicly available only if an author makes it public. Until that happens the contents of this pre-registration are confidential.

#### 1) Have any data been collected for this study already?

No, no data have been collected for this study yet.

#### 2) What's the main question being asked or hypothesis being tested in this study?

We study how expressions of guilt in combination with empathy and offers for reparations by an outgroup influence the perceived remorse, satisfaction, forgiveness, (meta)stereotyping, emotions, contact intentions, other versus self focus, and trust, perceived by an ingroup. We expect that both empathy in combination with guilt and reparations will have positive effects on these variables in comparison to a control group. However, we expect the combined effect of guilt with empathy and reparations to be most positive.

#### 3) Describe the key dependent variable(s) specifying how they will be measured.

Perceived remorse measures how much remorse the participants think has been shown by the perpetrators. (3 items: I think that Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan are truly remorseful with regard to sexual harassment; I think that Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan really showed regret with regard to sexual harassment; I believe that most men are truly remorseful with regard to sexual harassment of women).

Satisfaction measures how satisfied the participants are with the apology/reparations. (4 items: 3 in a matrix: I think that Mulder's, Johansson's, and O'Sullivan's response to sexual harassment is... adequate, unsatisfactory, sufficient. And 1 statement. "I think in general men's response to sexual harassment of women is sufficient").

Forgiveness measures the rate at which the participants would forgive the perpetrators. (3 items: "I am ready to forgive men such as Mulder, Johansson and O' Sullivan with regard to sexual harassment towards women.", "The behavior of men towards women regarding sexual harassment is forgivable." and "The behavior of men towards women regarding sexual harassment is forgivable").

Meta-stereotyping measures the stereotypes the participants think the perpetrator group has about them. (6 items: men such as Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan think that women are...: honest, dishonest, warm, cold, strong & weak).

Stereotyping measures the stereotypes the participants have about the perpetrator group: (6 items: men such as Jacob Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan are...: honest, dishonest, warm, cold, strong & weak).

Trust measures trust the participants have in the perpetrators and in the expected change of the situation. (4 items: I have faith in Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan; I think Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan can be seen as trustworthy; I have confidence in the willingness of the European parliament to reduce the problems regarding sexual harassment in time to come & I trust that most men will do everything to prevent sexual harassment from happening in the future).

Emotions: The extent to which participant feels touched by the expressions (4 items: How do you feel about what Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan say?: I feel happy, thankful, moved, softhearted) and the extent to which they feel humiliated by the expressions (3 items: How do you feel about what Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan say? I feel angry, insulted, humiliated).

Contact: "I would like to meet Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan."

Self-focus: "Please indicate to what extent you think that Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan are focused on female victims of sexual harassment."

Other-focus: "Please indicate to what extent you think that Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan are focused on men and/ or on themselves."

#### 4) How many and which conditions will participants be assigned to?

There will be 4 conditions: one control group, one group which will only have a reparation offer, one group in which only guilt and empathy are expressed, and a group where guilt, empathy and reparations are combined. Each participant will randomly be assigned to a condition.

#### 5) Specify exactly which analyses you will conduct to examine the main question/hypothesis.

We will run 2x2 analysis of variance on all the variables to examine whether there are main effects and interaction effects on perceived remorse, satisfaction, forgiveness, meta- stereotyping, stereotyping, emotions, contact intentions and trust. We will use regression analyses to examine whether perceptions of the outgroup and feelings about the expressions mediate the relation between the manipulations and contact, forgiveness and trust.

#### 6) Describe exactly how outliers will be defined and handled, and your precise rule(s) for excluding observations.



## AS PREDICTED

We will exclude observations as follows:

- Male participants (the questionnaire refers only to women)
- Did not finish most of the questionnaire (i.e., less than 50% of the dependent measures)
- Failed attention checks
- Most questions answered the same (flat lining)

**7) How many observations will be collected or what will determine sample size? No need to justify decision, but be precise about exactly how the number will be determined.**

We aim for 150 female participants, this has been calculated using GPower for measuring with ANOVA. To have a power of at least 0.80, ( $F=0.25$ ,  $\alpha=0.05$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $groups=4$ ,  $covariates=0$ ) we will need 128 participants. We will aim for 150 given that some participants may be excluded (see point 6).

**8) Anything else you would like to pre-register? (e.g., secondary analyses, variables collected for exploratory purposes, unusual analyses planned?)**

We will pre-measure identification with women and explore if this moderates the effects of the manipulations. We will explore whether the influence of the conditions on perceived remorse, satisfaction about responses to sexual harassment, trust, and forgiveness generalize to men in general.

Also our 6th author is Daniel Buxton, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, d.t.buxton@student.rug.nl.



## Appendix B

### Questionnaire

Qualtrics Survey Software

<https://rug.eu.qualtrics.com/Q/EditSection/Blocks/Ajax/GetSurveyPrin...>

#### Informed Consent

#### INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESEARCH

##### “Perceptions of male politicians”

###### ∅ Why do I receive this information?

You are being invited to participate in this research because we want to study your perceptions of male politicians and the way they communicate about sexual harassment. The research began on approximately the 12th of March 2020 and is ending on approximately June 20th 2020. The Ethics Committee of Psychology (ECP) at the University of Groningen (RUG) evaluated the research plan. The primary investigator of this research is Professor Ernestine Gordijn. Esther Hoiting, Willemijn Tuynman, Jonas Melnyk, Valeria Bertl and Daniel Buxton who are bachelor's students from University of Groningen, will also be conducting research.

###### ∅ Do I have to participate in this research?

Participation in the research is voluntary. However, your consent is needed. Therefore, please read this information carefully. Only afterwards you decide if you want to participate. If you decide to not participate, you do not need to explain why, and there will be no negative consequences for you. You have this right at all times, including after you have consented to participate in the research.

###### ∅ Why this research?

This research is investigating how students perceive male politicians and the way they communicate about sexual harassment.

###### ∅ What do we ask of you during the research?

You will first be asked for your consent to participate in this research. If you agree, you will be automatically guided to a questionnaire that will take about 20 minutes. Your participating in voluntary and no monetary compensation is provided. You will

receive 0.6 SONA credit.

∅ **What are the consequences of participation?**

There are no direct or indirect benefits of the research to the participants. Disadvantages are limited to the minor time investment of about 20 minutes as well as being asked to read about sexual harassment, which might arouse some negative feelings.

∅ **How will we treat your data?**

Your data is confidential. Only the researchers of this study will have access to it. While no personal data are being collected, some information (whether you are a member of the European Union, gender and age range) may act as (indirect) identifiers when combined. The data is your responses to the questionnaire, which will be collected using an online questionnaire, using Qualtrics. We collect this data for scientific purposes. The data will be stored at a safe university of Groningen server, and cannot be deleted.

∅ **What else do you need to know?**

· You may always ask questions about the research. You can do so by emailing us ([e.hoiting@student.rug.nl](mailto:e.hoiting@student.rug.nl)).

· Do you have questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant? For this you may also contact the Ethics Committee of Psychology of the University of Groningen: [ecp@rug.nl](mailto:ecp@rug.nl)

· Do you have questions or concerns regarding your privacy, or regarding the handling of your personal data? For this you may also contact the Data Protection Officer of the University of Groningen: [privacy@rug.nl](mailto:privacy@rug.nl).

· Please note that participants have the right to a copy of this information sheet. In case you would like a copy, we suggest you either take a screenshot of this page or sent an email to [e.hoiting@student.rug.nl](mailto:e.hoiting@student.rug.nl) to receive a pdf-version of the information sheet. (Note: you will be identifiable via your email address if you choose the latter option, but your email address is not linked to the answers in the questionnaire).

if you want to continue, click below on the arrow (->) to proceed to the informed consent form

**INFORMED CONSENT**

**Perceptions of male politicians**

We invite you to participate in a survey about your perceptions of male politicians and the way they communicate about sexual harassment. You will first be asked for your consent to participate in this research. If you agree, you will be automatically guided to a questionnaire that will take about 20 minutes.

Please note that participants have the right to a copy of this informed consent form. In case you would like a copy, we suggest you either take a screenshot of this page or sent an email to [e.hoiting@student.rug.nl](mailto:e.hoiting@student.rug.nl) to receive a pdf-version of the informed consent form. The researchers in this study are affiliated with the University of Groningen in the Netherlands. This study adheres to the guidelines of the ethical review process of The University of Groningen.

By agreeing to participate you understand the following:

- My **participation is voluntary** and I may withdraw my consent to participate in this study at any time without penalty.
- I **may refuse to answer or skip any questions** in this study that I do not wish to answer. There are no advantages or disadvantages for me depending on my decisions.
- At the completion of this study, I will be given more information about my participation and the **purpose** of this research.
- All of my **responses are confidential**. While no personal data are being collected, some information (such as age range and gender) may act as (indirect) identifiers. In the event that I have communicated any information in an open question that is able to directly identify me, the information would be removed from the survey materials.
- All responses will be **securely stored and only be accessible to the research team**, and not passed on to any third parties.
- I further understand that this project subscribes to the ethical conduct of research and to the protection of the dignity, rights, interests and safety of participants at all times.

**Do you agree to participate in this study? If not, please exit the study**

**Yes, I agree:** If you agree to participate in this survey, please click below on "→".

## Demographics

First, please answer the demographic questions below. These questions will not be used to identify individuals, but they will help the researcher to describe the sample of participants.

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other

What is your age?

- Younger than 17
- 17-18
- 19-21
- 22-24
- 25-30
- Older than 30

Are you a member of the European Union?

- Yes
- No

This survey is about your perceptions of male politicians and the way they communicate about sexual harassment of women. Before turning to this specific topic, please take a look at the following statements, and indicate to what extent you either agree or disagree with each statement.

I followed the #Metoo movement.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I identify with women.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Article

In this section you are asked to read an article about female victims of sexual harassment and reactions of male politicians in the European parliament. The article was published in the EUobserver, a Non-profit, independent online newspaper in 2019.

Please read this article carefully as you will be asked several questions about it.

You can proceed to the newspaper article by clicking on '→'.


### Empathy and guilt only





This is a screenshot of an article from the EUobserver.



Saturday  
15th Feb 2020

- NEWS
- OPINION
- AGENDA
- FOCUS
- STAKEHOLDERS
- INVESTIGATIONS
- PODCAST
- MAGAZINES
- SEARCH
- JOIN EUOBSERVER
- LOGIN
- NEWSLETTER
- ABOUT US
- PRIVACY POLICY
- CORRECTIONS
- ADVERTISING




[Join EUobserver](#)
[Login](#)
[Newsletter](#)

NEWS / POLITICAL AFFAIRS

ANALYSIS



## Ashamed male politicians express empathy towards women who experienced sexual harassment

Many European women have experienced sexual harassment and report its immense impact on their lives. In response to a recent EU-wide survey and after listening to many victims, men in the European Parliament's committee Women's Rights and Gender Equality that discussed these findings tell the EUobserver how guilty and embarrassed they feel. They express how much they think about the suffering of female victims of sexual harassment in our society.



The European Parliament (Photo: Council of the European Union)

By **ESZTER ZALAN**

A [European wide study in 2019](#) interviewed 42,000 women and found that more than half of women have experienced sexual harassment before. Shocking numbers of sexual harassment were found in the Netherlands where 73% of women report having experienced some form of sexual harassment. Similar high prevalence was reported in the UK (68%) and in Germany (65%).

When describing their individual experiences of gender inequality, from street harassment to inappropriate comments, women and girls are regularly warned not to make a fuss. It is common to be told that you are overreacting, that you have misinterpreted the situation, or that it simply isn't a big deal. However, women who have shared their experiences in the survey make clear how badly sexual harassment affects them in their daily lives. Femke (20) states: "If I'm really scared I hold my keys between my fingers. I wear my headphones with the music turned up in town so I don't have to hear catcalls. I walk at a certain distance from groups of men in front of me. If they are behind me, I take a different route. This is all just normal to me now. It's normal for a lot of women I know. It's everyday."

was told that this was to be expected and if I asked to move it would affect my future career. So I continued in my position but felt so uncomfortable.”

The committee Women’s Rights and Gender Equality of the European Parliament, which represents an equal number of male and female politicians of different parties and EU countries in the Parliament has discussed these findings. Several male members of this committee talked to the EUobserver about the committee’s conclusions.



Jacob Mulder with the committee of Women's Rights and Gender Equality of the European Parliament (Photo : Council of the European Union)

Jacob Mulder, member of the committee states: “Accounts of these brave women are painful to hear as I myself am the father of two daughters. I feel deeply shocked. The challenges women have to overcome on a daily basis in our society are hard and simply outrageous. I realised that I, not only as a politician but as a man, have been facilitating these injustices women are facing”.

Another member of the committee, David Johansson, adds: “The stories that were disclosed during the last few weeks on social media, in newspapers, talk shows and on the radio are actual accounts from real women. I am deeply saddened and ashamed by this. We are aware of the facts by now, and that this has been a horrible reality for the majority of women. We can’t look away anymore, the suffering women have had to endure, due to our neglect as politicians but especially as men is devastating. We can never understand the immense pain women must have felt and still feel, caused by our blatant facilitation of sexual discrimination.”

Jacob Mulder continues: “Speaking for myself and others, we truly feel guilty about having been a part of these ever-persisting brutalities. As a man I do not experience the all-day life stress many women face, which seem to affect their quality of life. Empathizing with victims, and with women in general, is an important step to understand the reality they go through.”


The endless stories being told by women encouraged by the [#metoo](#) movement were further verified by the shocking results of the EU wide survey. The only question remaining now is how victims can be helped, and future assaults be prevented.

In a [concluding statement about the discussions of the committee](#), Peter O’Sullivan says: “As the awareness of sexual harassment increased remarkably with victims telling their stories online, in talk shows or elsewhere we as male politicians cannot deny the unrighteousness anymore and must truly recognize that with our role as politicians we are part of shaping the society’s values. Admitting our own guilt and shame is painful but necessary. We cannot imagine the agony many women went through in the past and unfortunately still continue to experience in the present. ”

#### SHARE ARTICLE



NORDIC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS  
New programme studies infectious diseases  
and antibiotic resistance



For the planet and so much more  
I count on Europe

euobserver

University of Groningen has a group subscription to EUobserver, giving users unlimited access to premium EU news content.  
To access EUobserver offsite or on your mobile device(s), you can [register for free](#) using your university email address.




euobserver

NEWS / POLITICAL AFFAIRS

ANALYSIS

### Ashamed male politicians express empathy towards women who experienced sexual harassment

Many European women have experienced sexual harassment and report its immense impact on their lives. In response to a recent EU-wide survey and after listening to many victims, men in the European Parliament's committee Women's Rights and Gender Equality that discussed these findings tell the EUobserver how guilty and embarrassed they feel. They express how much they think about the suffering of female victims of sexual harassment in our society.



The European Parliament (Photo: Council of the European Union)

By **ESZTER ZALAN**

A [European wide study in 2019](#) interviewed 42,000 women and found that more than half of women have experienced sexual harassment before. Shocking numbers of sexual harassment were found in the Netherlands where 73% of women report having experienced some form of sexual harassment. Similar high prevalence was reported in the UK (68%) and in Germany (65%).

When describing their individual experiences of gender inequality, from street harassment to inappropriate comments, women and girls are regularly warned not to make a fuss. It is common to be told that you are overreacting, that you have misinterpreted the situation, or that it simply isn't a big deal. However, women who have shared their experiences in the survey make clear how badly sexual harassment affects them in their daily lives. Femke (20) states: "If I'm really scared I hold my keys between my fingers. I wear my headphones with the music turned up in town so I don't have to hear catcalls. I walk at a certain distance from groups of men in front of me. If they are behind me, I take a different route. This is all just normal to me now. It's normal for a lot of women I know. It's everyday."

was told that this was to be expected and if I asked to move it would affect my future career. So I continued in my position but felt so uncomfortable.”

The committee Women’s Rights and Gender Equality of the European Parliament, which represents an equal number of male and female politicians of different parties and EU countries in the Parliament has discussed these findings. Several male members of this committee talked to the EUobserver about the committee’s conclusions.



Jacob Mulder with the committee of Women's Rights and Gender Equality of the European Parliament (Photo : Council of the European Union)

Jacob Mulder, member of the committee states: “Accounts of these brave women are painful to hear as I myself am the father of two daughters. I feel deeply shocked. The challenges women have to overcome on a daily basis in our society are hard and simply outrageous. I realised that I, not only as a politician but as a man, have been facilitating these injustices women are facing”.

Another member of the committee, David Johansson, adds: “The stories that were disclosed during the last few weeks on social media, in newspapers, talk shows and on the radio are actual accounts from real women. I am deeply saddened and ashamed by this. We are aware of the facts by now, and that this has been a horrible reality for the majority of women. We can’t look away anymore, the suffering women have had to endure, due to our neglect as politicians but especially as men is devastating. We can never understand the immense pain women must have felt and still feel, caused by our blatant facilitation of sexual discrimination.”

Jacob Mulder continues: “Speaking for myself and others, we truly feel guilty about having been a part of these ever-persisting brutalities. As a man I do not experience the all-day life stress many women face, which seem to affect their quality of life. Empathizing with victims, and with women in general, is an important step to understand the reality they go through.”

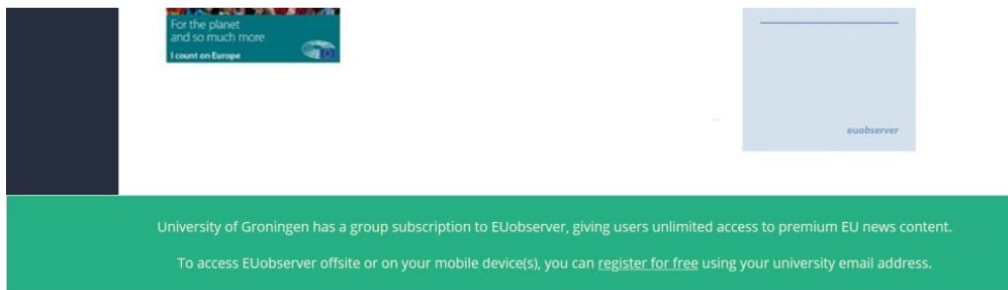
The endless stories being told by women encouraged by the [#metoo](#) movement were further verified by the shocking results of the EU wide survey. The only question remaining now is how victims can be helped, and future assaults be prevented.

In a [concluding statement about the discussions of the committee](#), Peter O’Sullivan says: “As the awareness of sexual harassment increased remarkably with victims telling their stories online, in talk shows or elsewhere we as male politicians cannot deny the unrighteousness anymore and must truly recognize that with our role as politicians we are part of shaping the society’s values. Admitting our own guilt and shame is painful but necessary. We cannot imagine the agony many women went through in the past and unfortunately still continue to experience in the present. ”

#### SHARE ARTICLE



NORDIC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS  
New programme studies infectious diseases  
and antibiotic resistance



## Reparation

This is a screenshot of an article from EUobserver.

Saturday  
15th Feb 2020

NEWS

OPINION

AGENDA

FOCUS

STAKEHOLDERS

INVESTIGATIONS

PODCAST

MAGAZINES

SEARCH

JOIN EUOBSERVER

LOGIN

NEWSLETTER

ABOUT US

PRIVACY POLICY

CORRECTIONS

ADVERTISING

f t in

**euobserver** f t in @ Join EUobserver Login Newsletter Q Search

NEWS / POLITICAL AFFAIRS

ANALYSIS

## Male politicians propose measures against sexual harassment of women

Many European women have experienced sexual harassment and report its immense impact on their lives. In response to a recent EU-wide survey and after listening to many victims, men in the European Parliament's committee Women's Rights and Gender Equality that discussed these findings tell the EUobserver that drastic political measures are needed to help victims and to tackle the problem of harassment systematically.

The European Parliament (Photo : Council of the European Union)

By **ESZTER ZALAN** f t

A [European wide study in 2019](#) interviewed 42,000 women and found that more than half of women have experienced sexual harassment before. Shocking numbers of sexual harassment were found in the Netherlands where 73% of women report having experienced some form of sexual harassment. Similar high prevalence was reported in the UK (68%) and in Germany (65%).

When describing their individual experiences of gender inequality, from street harassment to inappropriate comments, women and girls are regularly warned not to make a fuss. It is common to be told that you are overreacting, that you have misinterpreted the situation, or that it simply isn't a big deal. However, women who have shared their experiences in the survey make clear how badly sexual harassment affects them in their daily lives. Femke (20) states: "If I'm really scared I hold my keys between my fingers. I wear my headphones with the music turned up in town so I don't have to hear catcalls. I walk at a certain distance from groups of men in front of me. If they are behind me, I take a different route. This is all just normal to me now. It's normal for a lot of women I know. It's everyday."



was told that this was to be expected and if I asked to move it would affect my future career. So I continued in my position but felt so uncomfortable."

The committee Women's Rights and Gender Equality of the European Parliament, which represents an equal number of male and female politicians of different parties and EU countries in the Parliament has discussed these findings. Several male members of this committee talked to the EUobserver about the committee's conclusions.



Jacob Mulder with the committee of Women's Rights and Gender Equality of the European Parliament (Photo : Council of the European Union)

Jacob Mulder, a member of the committee states: "As I myself am a father of two daughters, hearing the stories being told, I see the necessity that change needs to take place as soon as possible. We as politicians but especially as men cannot wait to undertake important steps in order to facilitate help for the victims and educate our citizens."

Another member of the committee, David Johansson adds: "The stories that were disclosed during the last few weeks on social media, in newspapers, talk shows and on the radio are actual accounts from real women. Only talking about the issue is not enough. This needs to be tackled practically. We as male politicians who are part of the system need to act. Conclusively, we need to think about the female victims but also about future preventative measures. Thus, our proposal will entail a wide range of practical implications which will help change systematic injustice."

Jacob Mulder continues: "Speaking for myself and others, these stories encouraged us to have fruitful discussions about how to deal with this in the European Union and finally came up with a proposal which the majority of the Parliament will definitely agree upon. The least we can do now is to take action to prevent sexual harassment."

The endless stories being told by women encouraged by the [#metoo](#) movement were further verified by the shocking results of the EU wide survey. The only question remaining now is how victims can be helped, and future assaults be prevented.

In [a concluding statement about the committee's proposal](#) concerning sexual harassment, Peter O'Sullivan says: "A drastic change must and will happen now! As we acknowledge the reparation we owe to women, increased victim support as well as programs which specifically focus on awareness and prevention throughout the EU are part of our proposal. Victims' access to help in their communities needs to be quicker, easier and confidential. Therefore, funding towards communal help centres for women in need will increase drastically. Moreover, legislative measures will support treatment programmes aimed at preventing re-offending.

The prevention program aims at formal curricula and all levels of education ranging from students to teachers. Among others, this includes the education of non-violent conflict resolution, right to personal integrity and non-stereotyped

The screenshot displays a webpage layout with a dark blue sidebar on the left. The main content area features a 'SHARE ARTICLE' section with buttons for Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Reddit, and Email. Below this is a 'SITE SECTION' titled 'Political Affairs'. A featured article thumbnail is visible with the headline 'The EU long-term budget 2021-2027' and the sub-headline 'For the planet and so much more. I count on Europe'. To the right, a vertical banner reads 'NORDIC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS New programme studies infectious diseases and antibiotic resistance' and 'FOCUS ON THE NORDIC' with the 'euobserver' logo at the bottom. A green footer bar contains the text: 'University of Groningen has a group subscription to EUobserver, giving users unlimited access to premium EU news content. To access EUobserver offsite or on your mobile device(s), you can register for free using your university email address.'

## Reparation + Empathy and guilt

This is a screenshot of an article from EUobserver.com.

Saturday  
15th Feb 2020

euobserver

f t in @
Join EUobserver
Login Newsletter


Q Search

NEWS  
OPINION  
AGENDA  
FOCUS  
STAKEHOLDERS  
INVESTIGATIONS  
PODCAST  
MAGAZINES  
SEARCH  
  
 JOIN EUOBSERVER  
LOGIN  
NEWSLETTER  
  
 ABOUT US  
PRIVACY POLICY  
CORRECTIONS  
ADVERTISING

NEWS / POLITICAL AFFAIRS  
  
**ANALYSIS**  
  

## Ashamed male politicians express empathy towards women who experienced sexual harassment and propose measures against it

Many European women have experienced sexual harassment and report its immense impact on their lives. In response to a recent EU-wide survey and after listening to many victims, men in the European Parliament's committee Women's Rights and Gender Equality that discussed these findings tell the EUobserver how guilty and embarrassed they feel. They express how much they think about the suffering of female victims of sexual harassment in our society and state that drastic political measures are needed to help victims and to tackle the problem of harassment systematically.



The European Parliament (Photo : Council of the European Union)

By **ESZTER ZALAN** cc t

A [European wide study in 2019](#) interviewed 42,000 women and found that more than half of women have experienced sexual harassment before. Shocking numbers of sexual harassment were found in the Netherlands where 73% of women report having experienced some form of sexual harassment. Similar high prevalence was reported in the UK (68%) and in Germany (65%).

When describing their individual experiences of gender inequality, from street harassment to inappropriate comments, women and girls are regularly warned not to make a fuss. It is common to be told that you are overreacting, that you have misinterpreted the situation, or that it simply isn't a big deal. However, women who have shared their experiences in the survey make clear how badly sexual harassment affects them in their daily lives. Femke (20) states: "If I'm really scared I hold my keys between my fingers. I wear my headphones with the music turned up in town so I don't have to hear catcalls. I walk at a certain distance from groups of men in front of me. If they are behind me. I take a



damages their performance. Their confidence is undermined in an atmosphere where they are subjected to discrimination or abuse. For example, Lisa (25) recounts: "My 40-year-old boss tried to kiss me. I was 22. I went to the coordinator and was told that this was to be expected and if I asked to move it would affect my future career. So I continued in my position but felt so uncomfortable."

The committee Women's Rights and Gender Equality of the European Parliament, which represents an equal number of male and female politicians of different parties and EU countries in the Parliament has discussed these findings. Several male members of this committee talked to the EUobserver about the committee's conclusions.



Jacob Mulder with the committee of Women's Rights and Gender Equality of the European Parliament (Photo : Council of the European Union)

Jacob Mulder, member of the committee states: "Accounts of these brave women are painful to hear as I myself am the father of two daughters. I feel deeply shocked. The challenges women have to overcome on a daily basis in our society are hard and simply outrageous. I realised that I, not only as a politician but as a man, have been facilitating these injustices women are facing".

Another member of the working group, David Johansson, adds: "The stories that were disclosed during the last few weeks on social media, in newspapers, talk shows and on the radio are actual accounts from real women. I am deeply saddened and ashamed by this. We are aware of the facts by now, and that this has been a horrible reality for the majority of women. Only talking about the issue is not enough. This needs to be tackled practically. Conclusively, we need to think about the female victims but also about future preventative measures which will help change systematic injustice."

Jacob Mulder continues: "Speaking for myself and others, these stories encouraged us to have fruitful discussions about how to deal with this issue in the European Union. The least we can do now is to take action to prevent sexual harassment. Change needs to take place as soon as possible. We will therefore take important steps to help women and educate citizens."






The endless stories being told by women encouraged by the [#metoo](#) movement were further verified by the shocking results of the EU wide survey. The only question remaining now is how victims can be helped, and future assaults be prevented.

In a [concluding statement about the committee's proposal](#) concerning sexual harassment, Peter O'Sullivan says: "We as male politicians cannot imagine the agony many women have to experience. As the awareness of sexual harassment increased remarkably we cannot deny the unrighteousness anymore and must truly recognize that we are part of shaping the society's values. Admitting our own guilt and shame is painful but necessary to acknowledge the reparation we owe to women. Our proposal includes increased victim support as well as programs which specifically focus on awareness and prevention throughout the EU. Victims' access to help in their communities needs to be quicker, easier and confidential. Therefore, funding




of non-violent conflict resolution, right to personal integrity and non-stereotyped gender roles. Emotional and physical boundaries are thus taught from a very young age onwards in order to prevent transgressions. Thanks to the majority of the Parliament supporting our proposal, the implications will be translated into actions soon.”


**SHARE ARTICLE**

**SITE SECTION**  
Political Affairs



**NORDIC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS**  
New programme studies infectious diseases and antibiotic resistance



University of Groningen has a group subscription to EUobserver, giving users unlimited access to premium EU news content.  
To access EUobserver offsite or on your mobile device(s), you can [register for free](#) using your university email address.

## Control condition

This is a screenshot of an article from EUobserver.com.

Saturday  
15th Feb 2020

- NEWS
- OPINION
- AGENDA
- FOCUS
- STAKEHOLDERS
- INVESTIGATIONS
- PODCAST
- MAGAZINES
- SEARCH
- JOIN EUOBSERVER
- LOGIN
- NEWSLETTER
- ABOUT US
- PRIVACY POLICY
- CORRECTIONS
- ADVERTISING

**euobserver**

NEWS / POLITICAL AFFAIRS


ANALYSIS

## Male politicians discuss sexual harassment of women

Many European women have experienced sexual harassment and report its immense impact on their lives. In response to a recent EU-wide survey and after listening to many victims, men in the European Parliament's committee Women's Rights and Gender Equality that discussed these findings share their thoughts with the EUobserver.

Join EUobserver Login Newsletter

Search



The European Parliament (Photo : Council of the European Union)

By **ESZTER ZALAN**

A [European wide study in 2019](#) interviewed 42,000 women and found that more than half of women have experienced sexual harassment before. Shocking numbers of sexual harassment were found in the Netherlands where 73% of women report having experienced some form of sexual harassment. Similar high prevalence was reported in the UK (68%) and in Germany (65%).

When describing their individual experiences of gender inequality, from street harassment to inappropriate comments, women and girls are regularly warned not to make a fuss. It is common to be told that you are overreacting, that you have misinterpreted the situation, or that it simply isn't a big deal. However, women who have shared their experiences in the survey make clear how badly sexual harassment affects them in their daily lives. Femke (20) states: "If I'm really scared I hold my keys between my fingers. I wear my headphones with the music turned up in town so I don't have to hear catcalls. I walk at a certain distance from groups of men in front of me. If they are behind me, I take a different route. This is all just normal to me now. It's normal for a lot of women I know. It's everyday."

For those who report gender inequality in the workplace, individual incidents

future career. So I continued in my position but felt so uncomfortable.”

The committee Women’s Rights and Gender Equality of the European Parliament, which represents an equal number of male and female politicians of different parties and EU countries in the Parliament has discussed these findings. Several male members of this committee talked to the EUobserver about the committee’s conclusions.



Jacob Mulder with the committee of Women’s Rights and Gender Equality of the European Parliament (Photo : Council of the European Union)

Jacob Mulder, member of the committee states: “Accounts of these women are relevant to hear.”

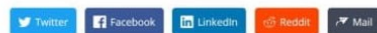
Another member of the committee, David Johansson, adds: “The stories that were disclosed during the last few weeks on social media, in newspapers, talk shows and on the radio are actual accounts from real women.”

The endless stories being told by women encouraged by the [#metoo](#) movement were further verified by the shocking results of the EU wide survey. The only question remaining now is how victims can be helped, and future assaults be prevented.

Jacob Mulder continues: “Speaking for myself and others, these stories and the survey encouraged us to have fruitful discussions about how to deal with this in the European Union. I was not aware of those numbers and thus we have discussed how such numbers arise”.

In [a concluding statement about the discussions of the committee](#), Peter O’Sullivan says: “The survey, conducted by the European Parliament in 2019 gave us a first insight into the prevalence of sexual harassment women face in their home countries. Simultaneously with the emergence of the [#metoo](#) movement we read all the stories on the internet, in newspapers, saw them in talk shows and heard them on the radio. We discussed the findings within the committee. We will report back to the Parliament.”

#### SHARE ARTICLE



#### SITE SECTION

Political Affairs



NORDIC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS  
New programme studies infectious diseases  
and antibiotic resistance



## Intro question

You will now be presented with different statements concerning the reactions that the politicians Jacob Mulder, David Johansson, and Peter O'Sullivan showed with regard to sexual harassment.

You can proceed to the questions by clicking on '→'.

## Questions part 1

I think that Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan are truly remorseful with regard to sexual harassment.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I think that Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan really showed regret with regard to sexual harassment.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I think that Mulder's, Johansson's, and O'Sullivan's response to sexual harassment is ...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
... adequate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... unsatisfactory	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... sufficient	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I think that men such as Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan think that **woman** are...:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Honest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dishonest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Warm	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cold	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strong	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Weak	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Competent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Incompetent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



I think that men such as Jacob Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan are..:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Honest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dishonest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Warm	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cold	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strong	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Weak	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Competent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Incompetent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How do you feel about what Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan have said in the article?

It makes me feel .....

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Happy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Angry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Thankful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Insulted	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Moved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Humiliated	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Softhearted	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I have faith in Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I think Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan can be seen as trustworthy.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I am ready to forgive men such as Mulder, Johansson and O' Sullivan with regard to sexual harassment towards women.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I would be happy to meet Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

This question is to check if you are still actively present.

What is 3 + 7?

4	10	12	14	21	28	11
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Questions part 2

You will now be presented with some statements concerning sexual harassment and how different groups (e.g., men in general or the European Parliament) respond to it.

You can proceed to the questions by clicking on '→'.

I believe that most men are truly remorseful with regard to sexual harassment of women.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I think in general men's response to sexual harassment of women is sufficient.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I have confidence in the willingness of the European parliament to reduce the problems regarding sexual harassment in time to come.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I trust that most men will do everything to prevent sexual harassment from happening in the future.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The behaviour of men towards women regarding to sexual harassment is forgivable.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



The behaviour of men towards women regarding to sexual harassment is unforgivable.



This question is to check if you are still actively present.  
What is 15 - 4?



### Manipulation Checks

You are now asked to rate a few final statements regarding the politicians' expressions.

I believe that Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan expressed empathy towards women.



I believe that Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan offered measures to reduce sexual harassment of women.



I believe that Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan expressed feelings such as shame, guilt, and embarrassment about sexual harassment of women.

Strongly disagree  Disagree  Somewhat disagree  Neither agree nor disagree  Somewhat agree  Agree  Strongly agree

I believe that Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan are focused on victims of sexual harassment.

Strongly disagree  Disagree  Somewhat disagree  Neither agree nor disagree  Somewhat agree  Agree  Strongly agree

I believe that Mulder, Johansson, and O'Sullivan are focused on men and/or on themselves.

Strongly disagree  Disagree  Somewhat disagree  Neither agree nor disagree  Somewhat agree  Agree  Strongly agree

## End

You have almost reached the end of the survey - please answer the final questions.

Did you complete this survey truthfully?

- Yes
- Mostly
- No

Furthermore, if you have any comments or thoughts about the study, which you would like to share with us, please write them in the box below.

What do you think the aim of this study is ?

### **Debriefing**

Thank you for participating in this study!

Please read the following information about this study carefully, also in order to automatically receive your sona credits.

#### **What was the aim of this study?**

Please note that the newspaper article was *fictional*. These male politicians do not exist.

We created this story to investigate our hypotheses. The present study is aimed at understanding how different reactions of members of a transgressor group are perceived by (potential) victims. We seek to investigate whether differences in how people communicate about their group's bad behaviour translates into differential perceptions of the transgressor group. For this reason, we conducted this study.

#### **Control questions**

Moreover, we would like to inform you about the rationale behind the use of control questions in a survey. Research in decision making shows that people, when making decisions and answering questions, often do not pay attention and minimise their effort as much as possible. In fact, some studies show that over 50% of people do not carefully read questions. Therefore, control questions are means to identify those people, which, in turn, allows researchers to exclude their responses and to ensure that the overall quality of the data is high.

#### **Anonymity and confidentiality**

Your information and participation in this project is strictly confidential. In the event

that you have communicated any information which may lead to your identification, we would remove it from the survey materials. All responses will be stored confidentially, will only be accessible to the research team, and not passed on to any third parties.

**Finally**

We kindly ask you to not talk about the questionnaire with people who might also participate in the study. This could affect the results.

You can request a summary of the findings by sending an email to [d.t.buxton@student.rug.nl](mailto:d.t.buxton@student.rug.nl).

Please note that if the topic of sexual harassment in this study resulted in negative thoughts and feelings about your own experiences concerning this, and you would like to talk to someone about it, you can contact the Helpline of Victim Support Netherlands on 0900 9999 001 for advice and an empathetic ear.

Thanks again for your participation in this research!

**Click below to leave the questionnaire and to automatically receive sona credits!**

Powered by Qualtrics

that you have communicated any information which may lead to your identification, we would remove it from the survey materials. All responses will be stored confidentially, will only be accessible to the research team, and not passed on to any third parties.

**Finally**

We kindly ask you to not talk about the questionnaire with people who might also participate in the study. This could affect the results.

You can request a summary of the findings by sending an email to [d.t.buxton@student.rug.nl](mailto:d.t.buxton@student.rug.nl).

Please note that if the topic of sexual harassment in this study resulted in negative thoughts and feelings about your own experiences concerning this, and you would like to talk to someone about it, you can contact the Helpline of Victim Support Netherlands on 0900 9999 001 for advice and an empathetic ear.

Thanks again for your participation in this research!

**Click below to leave the questionnaire and to automatically receive sona credits!**

Powered by Qualtrics