“They Think We’re Fair Game”
When Technology is Used to Abuse

Emily Geissler

This thesis has been submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctorate in Clinical Psychology

Coventry University, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

University of Warwick, Department of Psychology

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Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Abbreviations and Terminology

CB	Cyberbullying
CV	Cyber-victimisation
Camping	Waiting in a specific area to keep killing a player after respawning
CoD	Call of Duty [Game]
DOTA	Defence of the Ancients [Game]
Doxing	Publicly revealing private information with malicious intent
FIFA	Federation Internationale de Football Association [Game]
Flaming	Using profanities or offensive language towards another online
Ganking	To kill in the game
Griefing	Harassing players using aspects of the game in unintended ways
GTA	Grand Theft Auto [Game]
IIA	Intimate Image Abuse
LoL	League of Legends [Game]
LOL/Lols	Acronym for 'Laugh Out Loud'. To express humour/enjoyment
Lulz	Variation on LOL 'Laugh Out Loud'
MMORG/MMORPG	Mass Multiplayer Online Role Playing Game
OGE/OG	Online Gaming Environments/Online Games/Online Gaming
Respawning	When a player dies and re-emerges in the same location in-game
RP	Revenge Porn
Scamming	Cheating players out of game items or coins
Trolling	Intentionally upsetting someone online for enjoyment
WoW	World of Warcraft [game]

List of Appendices

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to thank the brave women who I interviewed for Part Two of this thesis. Without you this research would not have been able to go ahead and it was a privilege to hear your stories. I sincerely hope that this research allows your voices to be heard.

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Thank you to my family. You have seen the *long* journey I've been on to get to this point and have always encouraged me to do whatever I wanted. I am so lucky to have you all.

I am not exaggerating when I say that my cohort is the best cohort ever. I *literally* could not have gotten through these last three years without you all. The hive mind has always been a source of knowledge, unconditional support and memes and I don't know what I would do without you. It's so amazing to have a group of people who just 'get' you. I hope you will always be a part of my life and I love you all.

Lastly but by no means least my supervision team Magda and Jacky. You have been incredible. You have supported me through all stages of this research and have been witness to some low points but also lots of excitement. I am so grateful for all the words of encouragement when things felt tough, and for the feedback which helped me to improve on this thesis, and my overall research skills.

Declaration

This thesis is an original piece of my own work, that has been submitted as part of the fulfilment of requirements for the degree of Doctor in Clinical Psychology, to the Universities of Coventry and Warwick.

The work included in this thesis has not been submitted for any other qualification or to any other institution. It was completed under the academic supervision of Dr Magda Marczak (Chartered Psychologist, Coventry University) and Ms Jacqueline Knibbs (Consultant Clinical Psychologist, Coventry University).

The supervisory process included support in the study designs, analyses, quality assessments for the systematic review papers and of the reading and feedback on draft papers.

With the exception of collaborations highlighted above, the content of this thesis is my own.

The systematic review (Part One) will be prepared for submission to the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health.

The empirical paper (Part Two) will be prepared for submission to the Journal of Sexual Aggression.

Summary

This thesis broadly focuses on abusive experiences in an online environment.

Part One includes a narrative review of the literature on cyberbullying within an online gaming environment. Three overall themes are identified that consider the overall culture of online games which perpetuates and encourages cyberbullying. The themes also illustrate the motivations behind the perpetration of cyberbullying within online games, its impacts and the coping strategies of victims. The clinical implications of the research and recommendations for potential intervention and future research are explored.

Part Two of this thesis is an empirical study which focuses on the experiences of Intimate Image Abuse (IIA) for victims and those who have supported them. A Multiperspectival Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (MIPA) approach was utilised and interviews were conducted with four victims, two friends and family members, and two professionals working with IIA victims. Clinical implications for mental health professionals, social support and educators are explored and legal factors are considered.

Part Three contains a reflective account built around Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) principles. The reflections are centred around the research process which was undertaken to complete this thesis and consider aspects of identity, motivations for focusing on these research topics, and managing the emotional journey of research.

Summary word count: 203

Thesis total word count: 19,985 (excluding abstracts, figures, tables, footnotes, and references)

Part One

Systematic Literature Review

Title:

Cyberbullying in Online Games:

A Narrative Review

This chapter will be amended for submission to the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health (see Appendix G for the journal's author instructions)

This literature review was registered with The International Prospective Register of Systematic Reviews (PROSPERO)

Identifier: CRD42021227082

Word count: 8,894 (exclusive of abstract, tables, figures, footnotes, and references)

Abstract

AIM: This narrative review synthesises the current literature on cyberbullying within an online gaming environment.

METHODS: Five databases (Web of Science, Scopus, CINAHL, PsycINFO and Medline) were systematically searched using specific terms informed by the aim of the review. The searches resulted in 21 studies which met the inclusion criteria and passed quality assessment checks.

RESULTS: Three superordinate themes emerged from the narrative synthesis 1) Gaming Culture (Exploring the normalisation of harassment, how minority groups are often targeted, and the vicious cycle of harassment within online games), 2) Perpetrators (motivations and traits such as superiority and enjoyment), and 3) Victims (exploring the impacts on victims and the methods of coping they use).

CONCLUSION: These findings have implications for a number of settings including for Clinical Psychologists and mental health professionals working with victims of cyberbullying. Furthermore, for the social network around those who play online games, and for game developers in working towards environments which can help to break the cycle of harassment.

Introduction

Technology Development

Over the last two decades technology has rapidly developed to a level where individuals can communicate virtually through a number of devices such as computers, phones, tablets and gaming consoles. People can connect through different media including messages, audio and audio-visually, and can do this instantly across the globe using the internet. As of July 2020, nearly 4.57 billion people were active internet users; 59 percent of the global population (Clement, 2020). Research identifies benefits to this technology development including bringing people closer together and allowing for ease of communication which can, in some cases, mean an increase in individuals' overall wellbeing (Chopik, 2016; Castellacci & Tveito, 2018; Clark et al., 2018).

Despite these benefits, there are a number of ways that developments in technology have been misused to harass and victimise others.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is a relatively new phenomenon within the literature, and research by Finkelhor et al. (2000) demonstrated that online media such as instant messaging and email were being used to perpetrate cyber-harassment and bullying. One of the first definitions described cyberbullying as "*an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly and over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself*" (Smith et al., 2008, p.376). There have been various definitions of cyberbullying and these have evolved over the years. Put simply, Kowalski et al. (2014) define cyberbullying as "*the use of electronic communication technologies to bully others*" (p.2). Langos (2012) proposed two potential subcategories of cyberbullying. The first of these is when the cyberbullying occurs between the bully and the victim only (direct); this could be through private messages. The second subcategory is when the bully posts a message/comment about the victim in a social media environment where multiple people can view it and potentially also contribute (indirect).

There appears to be a clear definition and understanding of what cyberbullying is within the literature, however, some discrepancies are noted depending on whether the research adopts traditional 'bullying' criteria of intention to harm, power imbalance and repetition (Smith, 2016; Olweus et al., 1999). Some researchers consider that cyberbullying does not need to be repetitive in the same way as face-to-face bullying. The repetition is created from the way that media can be shared and commented upon, and from the difficulties in removing content from the internet permanently (Slonje & Smith, 2008).

There are a number of different forms of cyberbullying that have been explored. These include trolling (abusive and persistent comments on a website; Golf-Papez & Veer, 2017), flaming (direct and repeated insults with the use of profanity; Karthikeyan, 2020), doxing (releasing personal information such as name and address online without consent; Karthikeyan, 2020; Chen et al., 2019), and griefing (cyber-harassment within virtual games or virtual worlds; Slonje et al., 2012).

There is some debate about the definitions of certain specific phenomena and whether they fall under the broader definition of cyberbullying, or are outside of this. Golf-Papez and Veer (2017) propose that there are a variety of forms of trolling such as posting jokes at others' expense, sharing inaccurate information in order to 'prank' other online users or 'baiting' others by posting negative or extreme opinions to incite an aggressive response. They suggest that these differ from cyberbullying, as trolling is typically a one-off event, and does not involve an imbalance of power between the troll and the target.

The variation in language and definitions is an important area to note when considering research in cyberbullying. This is more specifically a challenge when reviewing the literature as many relevant studies may use different language to explore the phenomenon.

Coric and Kaštelan (2020) conducted a brief review of papers on cyberbullying. Their findings summarised information on prevalence and demographics, and the impact on victims and perpetrators. They found that cyberbullying tended to begin at age 14 due to increased phone and

internet usage, and that between 15% and 35% of young people were victims. Between 10% and 20% of individuals admitted to cyberbullying and it was proposed that the internet gave perpetrators a degree of anonymity. Cyberbullying affected victims' mental health and some reported depression, self-harm and suicidal behaviours. Coric and Kaštelan (2020) suggested further research is needed.

In relation to the personality types of perpetrators, Balakrishnan et al. (2019) explored a predictive model of cyberbully detection on Twitter based on the Big Five[1] (Goldberg, 1981; Goldberg, 1992) and Dark Triad[2] (Paulhus & Williams, 2002) personality trait models. Extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism (Big Five), and psychopathy (Dark Triad) were effective in perpetrator detection with 96% precision, indicating personality traits may be contributing or predictive factors in cyberbullying perpetration.

Impact of Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can have a negative impact on victims' overall wellbeing and mental health (Campbell, 2011; Navarro et al., 2015). These effects can be similar to that of traditional face-to-face bullying, though the constancy may worsen this; cyberbullying does not stop when the victim gets home, instead staying with them on electronic media (Campbell, 2011).

Harassing posts or comments can reach wide audiences and can potentially be viewed by millions. Furthermore, abusive materials posted online can be shared, commented on and have screenshots taken of, creating permanency (Raskauskas, 2010). Cyber-victims reported feeling sad, annoyed, embarrassed, afraid, angry, anxious and less trusting of people (Raskauskas, 2010; Price & Dalgleish 2010; Ortega et al., 2009). They report significantly more depressive symptoms than non-victims, (Raskauskas, 2010; Chu et al., 2018; Fahy et al., 2016; Nixon, 2014), and have overall worse mental health symptoms, rated by higher levels of both anxiety and depression, when compared with victims of face-to-face bullying (Campbell et al., 2011). Cyber-victims are also observed to have

[1] Openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism
[2] Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy

lower levels of self-esteem (Patchin & Hinduja, 2010) and increased social difficulties (Perren et al., 2010). Cyberbullying is also positively associated with an increase in suicidal ideation and behaviour in young adults (Brailovskaia et al., 2018; Van Geel et al., 2014).

Cyberbullying also occurs in an adult population and can have a detrimental impact on cyber-victims (Gardner et al., 2016; Farley et al., 2015; Zhang & Leidner, 2014; Cassidy et al., 2014). Muhonen et al. (2017) found that, within a working environment, the social organisational climate may be influenced by cyberbullying, and could have negative consequences on cyber-victims' health, wellbeing, engagement and intention to quit their job.

This research illustrates that cyberbullying can and does occur across ages, across a number of platforms and can have a significant impact upon cyber-victims' wellbeing.

Online Gaming

Over 60% of people who play games do so with others through online platforms (Entertainment Software Association, 2018). Over the years, online gaming (OG) has evolved to include communicating with other gamers through individual or group messaging, and also through audio. This has changed the nature of gaming to include social elements, which is a big motivator for gamers (Frostling-Henningsson, 2009; Jansz & Tanis, 2007; Jansz & Martens, 2005). Although this can have certain advantages such as overall and social wellbeing for adolescents (Adachi & Willoughby, 2013), reducing aggressive behaviour (Velez et al., 2014; Jerabeck & Ferguson 2013), and reducing stress (Reinecke, 2009), it can also have potential risks, as discussed below.

Online Gaming Concerns

Despite the research supporting positive effects and outcomes for people engaging in OG, there is also much evidence that illustrates the potential risks involved. For younger users, engaging in OG can increase the risk of social isolation, (Orleans & Laney, 2000), and the loss of offline friendships (Kraut et al., 1998a; Kraut et al., 1998b). Furthermore, the results of excessive playing and the potential for gaming addictions is well documented (Kuss & Griffiths, 2012).

Games often imply some form of conflict; "*A game is a system in which players engage in an artificial conflict, defined by rules, that result in a quantifiable outcome*" (Salen et al., 2004, p.83). Smith (2004) proposes that there are two main types of in-game conflict. 'Intra-mechanic' refers to conflict as a direct consequence of the game rules and it is rare that this type of conflict is enough to cause the gamer to 'attack' another gamer. 'Extra-mechanic' is a conflict as a consequence of the social interactions during multiplayer games, which is more likely to involve emotional responses and personal 'attacks'. It appears that it is more the social interactions within a gaming platform that can cause potential risks for harassment, rather than the in-game 'conflict' itself.

Cyberbullying in Online Games

The prevalence of cyberbullying within online gaming environments (OGE) is still being explored but research suggests that it occurs across a number of online platforms such as mobile gaming (Przybylski, 2019), computer games (Cole et al., 2020), and console-based games such as Xbox (Gray, 2012).

Rationale

Although there is an increase in research within this area, there is currently no systematic review of the literature synthesising this information. In addition, searches of the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews and the International Prospective Register of Systematic Reviews (PROSPERO) identified that no systematic reviews of this topic are currently registered as future projects.

Review Aims

This systematic literature review aims to address the question: what do we know about cyberbullying in online gaming platforms? The main aim is to critically appraise and synthesise existing scientific knowledge pertaining to cyberbullying, perpetrated and experienced within the OGE.

Methods

Search Process

A scoping search of the quantitative literature on cyberbullying in online games (OG) was completed in October 2020 and the full systematic literature review was completed between December 2020 and January 2021. The five databases used were: PsycINFO, CINAHL, Web of Science, Scopus and Medline.

Search Terms and Strategy

The SPIDER tool (Table 1) is designed to structure qualitative or mixed methods research questions (Cooke et al., 2012). The SPIDER question is: "What do we know about cyberbullying in online gaming platforms?"

Table 1
A table of the SPIDER tool

	Main Concepts
Sample	Individuals who have experienced cyberbullying in online games as a victim, perpetrator or bystander
Phenomenon of Interest	Cyberbullying in online games
Design	Questionnaires, surveys, interviews etc
Evaluation	Experiences, impacts, mental health outcomes, predictive factors, causes, risk factors
Research type	Empirical research. Qualitative, quantitative & mixed methods

Table 1 includes the main concepts relevant to the topic of this review which were searched within the title and abstract of the articles. Table 2 presents the key concepts and synonyms of cyberbullying and OG which were searched for within the databases. The synonyms included online bullying, online harassment, online victimisation, griefing, flaming, trolling, computer games, digital games, mobile games, MMORG (Mass Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games), and multiplayer games.

Table 2

A Table of the Key Concepts With Synonyms and Location for the Systematic Literature Review

Key Concept	Synonym	Location
Online	Computer, cyber, digital, online, mobile, internet	Title, Abstract
Gaming	Games, gaming, MMORG, multiplayer games	Title, Abstract
Cyberbullying	Cyberbullying, harassment, victimisation, bullying, griefing, flaming, trolling	Title, Abstract

Boolean operators were utilised in order to identify relevant articles using the functions of 'OR' to identify articles which mention either term, and 'AND' to identify articles which mention both (Grewal et al., 2016; Beaven, & Craig, 2019).

The following key search terms were used for the searches within the 'Topic' function or the 'Title and Abstracts' function depending on the database (see Table 2), and Boolean operators were used to combine search terms. Wildcard indicators (?) were used to identify any variations in spelling. The search string was: ((computer OR cyber OR digital OR online OR mobile OR internet) AND (games OR gaming OR MMORG OR MMORPG OR multiplayer games) AND (cyber?bullying OR harassment OR victimi?ation OR bullying OR griefing OR flaming OR trolling)).

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

An initial screening was conducted which involved assessing the articles' titles and abstracts. Papers were kept for further analysis if they were written in English, peer reviewed and had the focus of cyberbullying in OG. Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches were accepted due to the limited amount of research in this area.

Following this initial screening, full text articles were assessed for eligibility for review according to specific inclusion criteria noted in Table 3 below.

Table 3

A Table of Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criteria	Include	Exclude
Participants	- Victims or perpetrators of cyberbullying in online games or bystanders - Any age	- Online gamers who have no direct or observed experience of cyberbullying - Cyberbullying when it occurs in Second Life or other virtual social worlds
Psychological Phenomena	- Cyberbullying in online gaming platforms on any game - Griefing as a specific form of cyberbullying - Harassment in online gaming environments	- Cyberbullying in social media - Cyberbullying in virtual worlds such as Second Life. Research suggests this is not classified as an online 'game' but rather a 'virtual social world' (Malaby, 2011; Chesney et al., 2009). The creators of Second life – Linden Lab – state that it is not a game as there is no manufactured conflict and no set objectives. - Cyberbullying in e-sports as this was categorised with 'sport' rather than 'games' - Bullying when it occurs in person

All studies were included if they met criteria of being focused on cyberbullying within OG and if participants were a part of this as a cyber-victim, perpetrator or bystander.

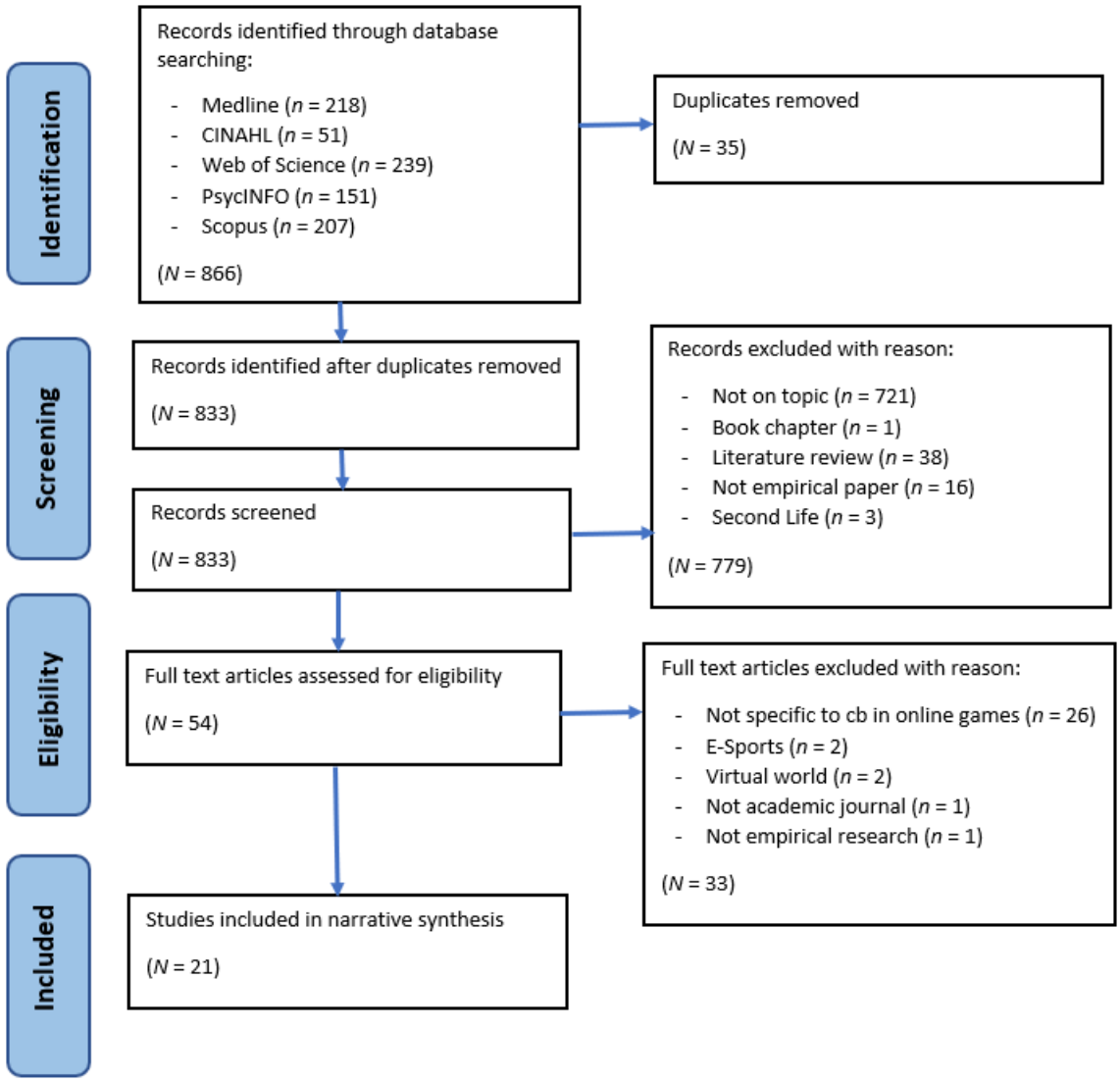
There were no limitations on the date of study publication, location, type of research methodology, sample size or game. There were also no limitations on the age, gender or ethnicity of the individuals. This is due to the current limited research.

Classification of Studies

A Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses (PRISMA) flow diagram was used to report the process of study selection (Moher et al., 2009). Figure 1 illustrates the process of identifying, screening, determining eligibility and including studies, and the number of studies excluded at each eligibility check point.

Figure 1

The PRISMA Flow Diagram for the Process of Study Selection



A total of 867 articles were identified through database searches. Initial screening removed 779 articles for not meeting the initial criteria or being duplicates. 54 articles went on to be assessed for the inclusion and exclusion criteria and 33 were excluded for reasons such as not being on topic and exploring eSports or virtual worlds. Overall, 21 studies satisfied the inclusion criteria and were included in the narrative synthesis.

Quality Assessment Checks

This review utilised Caldwell et al.'s (2005) assessment tool to ensure the methodological quality of studies included in the review, as it can be used for both qualitative and quantitative literature. The assessment tool has 18 questions (Appendix B) which allocate a score of 0 (not met), 1 (partially met) or 2 (fully met), and a total of 36 can be achieved. A second researcher independently rated all articles against the same framework in order to ensure reliability of the quality assessment (Appendix C). No articles were excluded at this stage as they all scored 18 or above indicating an acceptable level of quality. An inter-rater reliability analysis was performed showing the individual kappas ranged between .61 and 1.00, with an overall kappa score of .77, suggesting moderate inter-rater reliability (McHugh, 2012). A table of kappa values can be found in Appendix D.

Characteristics of the Literature

Table 4 presents the key characteristics of included studies and further descriptive information can be found below.

Table 4 A Table of Characteristics of the Literature

Authors, Date, Country, Quality Rating	Research Aims	Research Design and Sampling Method	Sample Characteristics	Method of Data Collection and Data Analysis	Key Findings
Thacker & Griffiths (2012) UK *QR* = 32 88.89%	1) To examine the frequency of trolling within gaming environments 2) To explore the type of trolling that exists during online gaming, and to examine whether or not the context of being in a game changes the way a gamer may troll 3) To explore the motivations and reasons for trolling within gaming environments 4) To explore the effects of trolling on self-esteem for people who participate in trolling, for those who are the victims of trolling, and for those who witness trolling taking place within online gaming environments	A mixed methods design Purposive sampling	*N*=125 adult gamers 87% males (*n*=109), 12% females (*n*=15) 1 not specified Age range: 18–47 years (*M*=22.6 years; *SD*=5.3 years)	Online survey Thematic analysis Multiple linear regression of self-esteem scores were calculated	- 47% participants frequently, very frequently or always witnessed trolling in the past 12 months. 6% very frequently or always experienced trolling in the past 12 months - 59.5% participants admitted to trolling others. 63% males trolled compared to 33.3% females - 21% trolls frequently, very frequently or always trolled during online video game play - Experience of trolling predicted frequency of trolling (t [66] = 4.58, $p < .001$) - During online gaming 84% gamers reported auditory trolling in games and 72% gamers reported textual trolling in games. 17% of gamers chose an "other" form of trolling - Themes of griefing, sexism and racism and intentional fallacy were identified in people's experiences of witnessing or engaging in trolling in online games - There was an overall significant relationship between self-esteem and witnessing trolling, experiencing trolling, hours played per single gaming session, and hours spent gaming per week (F [4, 113] =9.8; $p < .001$), but the regression was a poor fit (R^2 =0.257), accounting for just 25.7% of the variance in self-esteem - There was a significant effect for type of gamer and self-esteem (t=3.63, $p < .05$)
Fox & Tang (2017)	1) To assess women's experiences of general and sexual harassment in online video games	Quantitative design	*N*=293 women	Online survey Parallel mediation	- General harassment was not significantly related to rumination nor organizational responsiveness - There was a direct effect of general harassment on withdrawal (p < .0005), meaning that although general

USA *QR* = 29 80.56%	2) To explore coping strategies women use to prevent or mitigate harassment, from before they initiate play to after harassment takes place	Purposive sampling through online advertisement of a survey	Age range: 18–57 years (*M*=26.20, *SD*=6.39) Ethnicity: - 79.1% White (*n*=232), - 9.6% multiple races or ethnicities (*n*=28) - 6.5% Asian/Asian-American (*n*=19) - 1.4% Black/ African/African American (*n*=4) - 1.4% American Indian (*n*=4) - 1% Latina/ Hispanic (*n*=3) - 0.6% other (*n*=2)	analyses with PROCESS Model 4 Exploratory factor analysis of coping strategies	harassment can lead to women quitting games, women do not appear to ruminate about this experience offline - Higher levels of sexual harassment were associated with more rumination (*r*=.18, *p*<.005) and rumination, in turn, predicted withdrawal (*r*=.42, *p*<.0005) - Sexual harassment was also directly predictive of withdrawal - Coping strategies from qualitative information included: gender masking, avoidance, denial, seeking help and self-blame
Cook, Schaafsma & Antheunis (2018) Netherlands *QR* = 29 80.56%	1) To determine which behaviours actual trolls consider as trolling 2) To explore the motivations behind trolling 3) To examine the online community's response to trolling as perceived by the troll	Qualitative design Purposive sampling method advertised through web-based advertising, flyers, network sampling, and snowball sampling	*N* = 22 self-identified trolls, 9% of the sample were female (*N*=2) Mean age of 23.6 years (*SD* = 2.4) All had a high school diploma or equivalent, 32% had also completed post-secondary education	Semi-structured interviews No formal method of data analysis stated but themes and codes were identified	- Trolls identified different definitions of trolling which were not mutually exclusive but categorised into: attack, sensation seeking, and interaction-seeking - Trolling behaviour was categorised into 2 groups: verbal trolling and behavioural trolling. The different types identified were: trash-talking, flaming, misdirection, spamming, inappropriate roleplaying, inhibiting team, contrary play and aiding the enemy - Trolling motivations were identified through goals (3 categories: personal enjoyment, revenge, and thrill-seeking) and triggers (social triggers, internal triggers, and circumstantial triggers) - Community response to trolling included rage, ignore, troll, prevention, and participation (bystanders only) - Trolling is a normative but negatively viewed behaviour

			Participants had been gaming from 3.5–23 years (*M* = 14, *SD* = 5.78)		
Easpaig & Humphrey (2017) UK and Australia *QR* = 24 66.67%	1) To explore which performances of gender are intelligible within text discussions of women in online gaming 2) To investigate which discourses enable this intelligibility 3) To explore what versions of subjectivity are possible 4) To investigate how these might reproduce and/or resist gendered scripts	Qualitative design Using publicly available data from online gaming forums	*N* = 19 individual texts (including small excerpts such as blogs and entire discussion threads) primarily comprised of written texts, but including a small number of videos and one audiocast (transcribed)	Public data from gaming communities and discussion sites, immersion in online games and issue network analysis. A data subset of discussion texts focused on women gamers and their gameplay Critical discourse analysis	- Women gamers were seen as desiring, invisible and active subjects - 'Desiring' described a belief that female gamers had an ulterior motive to gaming – lonely or to get male attention - 'Invisible' referred to women hiding their gender from other players, and when other players assumed female characters were attempting to gain favour - 'Active subjects' was the term used to describe themes of women being actively engaged in online harassment of other players including other women
Tang, Reer & Quandt (2020) Germany *QR* = 32 88.89%	1) To assess if female players perpetrate sexual harassment in online video games less often than male players 2) To assess if higher levels of gamer identification is associated with more sexual harassment perpetration in online video games	Quantitative design Convenience sampling using data collected as part of a large online survey of 2,000 German Internet users	*N* = 856 online gamers 67% males (*n*= 574) Age range: 14-39 (*M*= 26.76, *SD* = 6.95) Participants played - FIFA (*n*= 84), - GTA (*n*= 36),	Survey t-tests and ordinary least squares regression	- Women perpetrated online sexual harassment less often than men - Regression analysis predicted sexual harassment perpetration (*R*= 0.67, adjusted *R*2=0.46, *F*(8,847) = 89.24, *p*< .001) - Increasing levels of gamer identification, hostile sexism, social dominance, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy were significant predictors of sexual harassment perpetration - Narcissism, time spent playing, and gender were not significant predictors of sexual harassment perpetration

	3) To assess if higher levels of hostile sexism is associated with more sexual harassment perpetration in online video games 4) To assess whether higher levels of SDO[3] is associated with more sexual harassment perpetration in online video games 5) To assess whether higher levels of Narcissism, Machiavellianism and Psychopathy are associated with more sexual harassment perpetration in online video games		- CoD (*n*= 31), - Counter-Strike (*n*= 30), - Battlefield (*n*= 29), - LoL (*n*= 25), - Sims (*n*= 22), and - WoW (*n*= 19)		
Cote (2017) USA *QR* = 26 72.22%	1) To determine how women respond to harassment in online gaming environments	Qualitative design Purposive sampling through online video game forums and snowball sampling methods	*N* = 37 self-identified female gamers age 19-45 (*M*= 25) Location: - USA (*n* = 31) - Canada (*n*=3) - UK (*n*=2) - Bahrain (*n* = 1)	Interviews Grounded Theory Analysis	Five main harassment management strategies emerged: 1) Leaving online gaming in order to avoid harassment or in preference for private online gaming. 2) Avoiding strangers – although participants recognised there were likely to be genuine male players who would not subject them to sexual harassment, female gamers felt it exhausting to try figure out which ones could be trusted and which ones would sexually harass them. They therefore stick to playing with friends 3) Camouflaging gender involved using a non-gendered username, avoiding voice chat and selecting avatar

[3] SDO refers to Social Dominance Orientation: an individual's beliefs about the organization of social groups in society, whether groups should be treated as equals or structured in a hierarchy with some dominating over others (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999)

			Ethnicity: - Not identified (*n*= 4) - Non-Hispanic Caucasians (*n* = 25) - Arabic (*n* = 2) - Mexican (*n* = 2) - Korean Chinese, or Asian American (*n* = 4) *N* = 9 undergraduates, *n* = 2 completed ''some college'' and *n* = 2 possessed associate's degrees, *n* = 24 at least a bachelor's degree		characteristics to cover gender in order to avoid being perceived as female 4) Emphasizing skill - Through stating player levels or length of time playing in order to dismiss anger as jealousy motivated which served as a protective strategy 5) Assuming more aggressive personalities - Through sarcasm or aggressive responses to harassment which earned them respect Participants also described three strategies they did not generally find useful; technical solutions, relying on male assistance, and flirting.
Achterbosch, Miller & Vamplew (2017) Australia *QR* = 28 77.78%	1) To create a taxonomy of griefer types constructed from the broad range of griefing that occurs, focusing on the gains that griefing can provide to the griefer	Qualitative research design Purposive sampling methods using a survey advertised on MMORPG forums Additional written/email interviews following survey completion	15 interviewees, majority male (*n* = 14), selected based on the detailed and personal answers in survey questions from separate study Interviewees: aged 18 or above, either a griefer (*n*=7), griefed player (*n*=6) or both (*n* = 2; intersectors)	Online survey Thematic analysis of interviews and survey answers	When exploring why players were targeted to be griefed they found themes of: 1) Random – players are selected to be griefed because the griefer is bored 2) Power – a griefer seeks competition targeting weaker players to win, or higher-level players to show skill. Possibly showing power they do not have in the real world 3) Attitudes – targeting players who make mistakes, perform poorly or to abuse lower ranked players. Also for the enjoyment of provoking or distracting another player 4) Discrimination – both real life and avatar demographics, also based on player level, being female and for being a 'terrible player' 5) Provocation – to retaliate against another player for griefing towards themselves or another

			Aged: - 22-30 age bracket (*n*=9), - 18-21 (*n*=4) - 31 and over (*n*=2) Most had 5-10 years' experience playing MMORPGs (*n*=6), followed by more than 10 years (*n*=5) and 2-5 years (*n*=4)		The most enjoyable types of griefing were identified as: corpse/spawn camping (repeatedly killing the same player and waiting for them to respawn), player killing/ganking (killing players that are at a disadvantage i.e. weakened health), verbal harassment, area control and scamming (conning another player out of something). Players identified the reasons why they cause grief as falling into themes of pleasure, power, control and challenge. The final proposed taxonomy of griefer included: disrupter, advancer, competitor, retaliator, vigilante, elitist, deceiver and dominator.
McInroy & Mishna (2017) Canada *QR* = 34 94.44%	1) To explore the prevalence rates and experiences of gaming and cyberbullying (CB) on various types of gaming platforms among a quantitative sample of primary, middle, and secondary school students. 2) To investigate the experiences and impacts of gaming and CB on a qualitative sub-sample	Secondary data analysis using a mixed methods design with quantitative survey methods and semi structured interview guides Stratified random sampling methods were used	Primary school students (*n*= 670) in: - 4th grade (*n* = 160) - 7th grade (*n* = 243) - 10th grade (*n* = 276) Aged 8 to 16 (*M* = 12.63) Within the quantitative (*n* = 670) and qualitative study (*n*=57) the majority were female (*n*=400; *n*=35). Ethnicity varied (most	Survey and Semi-structured interviews Qualitative content analysis and quantitative Chi Squared analysis	Perpetration, victimization, and witnessing were all low for the full quantitative sample, with the highest being witnessing CB on MMOGs once or twice (3.3%). Additionally, 3.0% had witnessed CB once or twice on internet-enabled console games. Four interconnected themes related to online gaming were generated: 1) aggression (exceeding what was required for achieving game objectives) characterized gaming culture and pervaded gaming platforms 2) anonymity on online gaming platforms contributed to the culture of aggression 3) participants often did not consider aggressive behaviours CB, but rather just a part of the culture of gaming platforms 4) participants' responses to aggressive behaviours

			common was white Canadian in both; *n*=160; *n*=17) Qualitative participants were in: - 4th grade (*n* = 20) - 7th grade (*n* = 21) - 10th grade (*n* = 16) Age range = 9-16 years old (*M* = 12.09)		
Przybylski (2018) UK *QR* = 28 77.78%	1) To investigate the prevalence of CB among regular mobile gamers 2) To explore the demographic or psychosocial risk factors that might make gamers prone to CB 3) To explore the potential impacts CB in mobile games might have on young people and how they respond	Quantitative research design Quota sampling approach undertaken by the polling company using geographic data, household socioeconomic class, age, and gender factors based on 2011 United Kingdom Census data	*N* = 2008 adolescents and their parents living in England, Scotland, and Wales Aged 14 (*n*=497) and 15 (*n*=507) Participants identified as male (*n* = 540) female (*n* = 461), and another gender orientation (*n* = 3) Participants were predominantly white, with 8.1%	Survey Kendall's Taub correlation analyses, multiple regression analysis	- 33.5% reported at least one form of cybervictimisation (CV) in the past 6 months, 9.3% reported significant levels of at least one form of CB during this period. - The most prevalent form of CB was being teased or being made fun of (26%). - The most frequently reported form of serious CB was unwanted sexual messages (5.6%). - Boys were most likely to report any CB ($r(181) = -0.32$, $p<0.001$), and serious CB ($r(182) = -0.20$, $p<0.001$). - Non-white mobile gamers were not more likely to report any CB ($r(182) = -0.05$, $p=0.537$), but were more likely to report serious CB, ($r(182) = -0.22$, $p=0.003$) - Those rated by their care givers as struggling with psychosocial difficulties were more likely to encounter both any ($r(181) = 0.18$, $p=0.002$), and serious CB, ($r(182) = 0.19$, $p=0.002$). - Being male, daily gaming time, and emotional problems were uniquely predictive of any CB. In contrast, being male, from a minority ethnicity, and caregiver reports of

			from black or minority ethnicities Total combined household income mirrored the general population from £6,500 (1.9 %) to £150,000 or more (2.8 %)		conduct problems predicted variability in significant CB in the past 6 months controlling for other factors. - 39.4% of those who were bullied in mobile games said that the experience made them feel very or fairly upset. - Adolescents were most likely to reach out to caregivers (49.3%) and friends (43.7%) following CV. - Adolescents were not likely to use developer reporting tools such as blocking or reporting (4.2%).
Leung & McBride-Chang (2013) China *QR* = 29 80.56%	1) To measure the prevalence of CB and CV in Hong Kong 2) To explore whether school and CV experiences would be negatively associated with psychological well-being 3) To explore online gamers quality of online friendship in MMOGs and assess if this positively explains participants overall psychological wellbeing after controlling for real-life friendship, traditional victimization, and CV	Quantitative design using convenience sampling through contacting local schools and sending study details to families.	*N* = 626 students (318 boys; 308 girls) in grades 5 and 6 from four primary schools in two districts of Hong Kong Ages ranged from 9-15, with an average age of 10.81 (*SD* = .83) years	Survey and questionnaires Correlation analysis	- There was a larger proportion (11.2%) of those who reported being heavily victimized online among those who had experienced CB. - 12.82% of those who rated themselves as cyber-bullies said that they engaged in this behaviour very frequently. - Significant negative associations were found between CV and psychological well-being (social competence: r = -.10, p < .01, friendship satisfaction: r = -.19, p < .01; self-esteem: r = -.18, p < .01, and life satisfaction: r = -.12, p < .01). - When all other variables were controlled for CV still explained 1% additional variance in friendship satisfaction, and it was negatively correlated with friendship satisfaction.
Tang & Fox (2016) USA	1) To investigate if higher levels of benevolent sexism will be associated with less harassment in online games	Quantitative research design using a survey	*N* = 425 male gamers from 47 countries: - U.S. (46.4%) - UK (9.6%) - Canada (5.4%)	Survey Correlations and ordinary least squares	- The proposed model predicted sexual harassment, (R= .43, adjusted R^2= .17, F(5, 417) = 18.60, p<.001). - Higher levels of hostile sexism and SDO predicted sexual harassment in online games. - Weekly game play, game involvement, and benevolent sexism were not significant predictors.

QR = 32 88.89%	2) To explore whether higher levels of hostile sexism will be associated with more harassment in online games 3) To investigate if higher levels of social dominance orientation (SDO) will be associated with more harassment in online games 4) To investigate whether higher levels of game involvement will be associated with harassment in online games 5) To investigate if more time spent playing video games will be associated with harassment in online games		- Germany (4%) - Sweden (3.8%) Age: 18-55 (*M* = 23.40, *SD* = 5.64) Race/ethnicities: - Caucasian/ White (83.8%) - Asian/Asian–American (5.2%) - Latino/a (1.6%) - African/African American /Black (0.5%) - Other (1%) - Multiple (8%) Average game play a week was 24.88 hr (*SD* = 15.99): - DOTA 2 (*n* = 157) - Team Fortress 2 (*n* = 43) - LoL (*n* = 25) - WoW (*n* = 13) - Counter Strike (*n* = 55) - CoD (*n* = 33) - Halo (*n* = 14)	regression analysis	- The proposed model also predicted general harassment, (R=.43, adjusted R^2=.19, F(5, 417) =12.95, p<.001). - Higher levels of hostile sexism, SDO, involvement, and weekly game play predicted general harassment. - Benevolent sexism was not significant.
Yang (2012) China	1) To understand whether adolescent gamers who prefer violent games tend to approve of violent themes, show higher	Quantitative design using questionnaires	*N* = 1,069 students (male = 52.17%, female 47.83%) who had played online games	Questionnaires Structural equation modelling	- Gender and preference for violent games had a direct effect on, and direct predictive power for, hostility. - Hostility effectively predicted the likelihood of being cyberbullied.

QR = 30 83.33%	levels of hostility and animosity than their peers, and engage in attack behaviour 2) To investigate how this tendency may increase the likelihood that young people will be the perpetrators or victims of cyberbullying	Convenience sampling was used through contacting local schools	From schools in Southern Taiwan: - elementary schools (26.22%) - junior high schools (26.95%) - senior high schools (25.57%) - vocational high school (21.26%)		- Gender also had a significant indirect effect on the extent of being cyberbullied and was mediated by hostility. - A preference for violent games had a significant indirect effect on the extent of being cyberbullied, which was mediated by hostility.
Huang, Yang & Hsieh (2019) China *QR* = 30 83.33%	1) To investigate whether cyberbullying (CB) and cyber-victimization (CV) that occur in an online gaming context are prevalent 2) To explore which gender and educational stage students are likely to become cyberbullies and cyber-victims in online games 3) To investigate whether Taiwanese students with different genders or educational stages have different views on the severity of CB and CV	Quantitative design using questionnaires. Convenience sampling was used through contacting local schools	Among 1112 participants only 81% (*n*=902) responded demographic information. Participants were from 24 schools in 3 cities in Southern Taiwan.: - elementary students (*n*=268, 29.7%) - junior high (*n*=223, 24.7%) - senior high (*n*=411, 45.6%) 62.7% (*n*=565) males, and 37.3% (*n*=337) females	Questionnaires Descriptive statistics, paired t-test, MANOVA and ANOVA	- Flaming was the most common form of CV in online games (*M*=0.33, *SD*=0.70) - Outing (*M*=1.34, *SD*=0.46), cyberstalking (*M*=1.22, *SD*=0.41) and harassment (*M*=1.19, *SD*=0.37) were perceived to be most serious forms of CV and cyberstalking (*M*=1.23, *SD*=0.39), outing (*M*=1.20, *SD*=0.32) and impersonation (*M*=1.18, *SD*=0.33) were perceived to be the most serious forms of CB - There were statistically significant differences between victims and bullies in the perception of seriousness of CB acts, except for cyberstalking - Boys more frequently reported CB and CV experiences than girls on all forms of harassment - Boys perceived their own victimization as more serious than girls - Girls perceived victims experiences of CB as more serious than boys - There were more senior high students who were bullies or victims than elementary and junior high students - Senior high students seemed to be more aware of the severity of CB and CV compared with students in primary and junior high

Paul, Bowman & Banks (2015) USA *QR* = 25 69.44%	1) To explore griefers' satisfaction of autonomy, competence and either satisfaction of relatedness with other players or lack thereof from griefing 2) To see if these factors will be positively related with enjoyment	Quantitative design using an online survey Purposive sampling methods were used through online advertisement	*N* = 221 current or former players of WoW *N* = 153 males, *n* = 16 females, *n* = 52 did not provide gender information Age *M* = 32	Online survey Hierarchical regression model t-tests Thematic analysis	- For participants who reported on a memorable griefing gameplay experience, their enjoyment was best explained by the satisfaction of autonomy, followed by competence, and these had a significant positive impact on enjoyment - Self-reported video game skill was unrelated to enjoyment scores for griefers as a control measure - The overall model was significant ($F(7,30)=12.0$, $p<0.001$, adj.$R^2=0.68$) - For enjoyment, scores did not differ significantly between both groups of players, $t(262)=–0.34$, $p=0.74$, suggesting that both community players ($M=5.88$, $SD=0.67$) and griefers ($M=5.91$, $SD=0.72$) had similar, and high, levels of enjoyment - Scores of autonomy need satisfaction did significantly differ between the groups, $t(262)=–2.25$, $p=0.03$, showing higher scores of autonomy for griefers ($M=6.05$, $SD=0.82$) than non-griefers ($M=5.81$, $SD=0.94$) - Relatedness need satisfaction scores also differed between the groups, $t(262)=2.82$, $p=0.01$, showing lower scores of relatedness for griefers ($M=4.41$, $SD=1.89$) than non-griefers ($M=5.00$, $SD=1.49$) - Thematic analysis suggested a variance in what WoW players consider griefing, including social elements and often occurring as reaction to other players griefing first
Ballard & Welch (2017) USA *QR* = 28 77.78%	1) To explore whether CV and CB would be common during MMOG play 2) To investigate if females would report higher rates of CV than males, particularly in terms of behaviours with sexual intentions	A Qualitative design using questionnaires. Participants were recruited through purposive sampling methods.	Participants (*n* = 151) played: - CoD (18.6%) - WoW (15.3%) - LoL (13.3%) - Guild Wars (9.3%) - Runescape (6%)	Questionnaires Stepwise linear regression analysis	- Participants commonly reported CV (52%; female=52%, male = 49%, transgender = 60%), perpetrating CB (35%; female = 25%, male = 40%, transgender = 0%), and/or being CB victims (21%; female = 20%, male = 23%, transgender = 0%) during MMOG play in the 2–3 months prior to the survey - 22% (female = 22%, male = 22%) reported they had cyber-bullied once or twice, 6% (female = 3%, male = 7%) reported they had cyber-bullied 2–3 times per month, 2% (female = 0%, male = 5%) reported they had cyber-bullied

	3) To investigate whether males would report higher rates of CB than females 4) To explore if Cyber-victims would report higher levels of CB by male perpetrators 5) To investigate whether Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender (LGBT) participants would report higher rates of CV than heterosexual participants 6) To explore if participants would report game ranking—a source of status and power differential—as a common reason for CB and CV 7) To explore if CV- and CB would be strongly correlated		- Star Wars: The Old Republic (4%) - Eve online (2%) - Other (31.5%) *N* = 110 males, *n* = 36 females, *n* = 5 transgender/ others Participants were from the USA and were: - Caucasian (83%) - Black (1.3%) - Hispanic (3.3%) - Asian (3.3%) - Multiracial (5.3%) - other (3.3%) Age 18–52 (*M* = 21) 81% heterosexual 19% LGBT Most (81%) played MMOGs at least once a week		once a week, and 5% (female = 0% and male = 6%) reported they had cyber-bullied several times a week - Participants most commonly reported CV during MMOG play through name-calling (52%) - Game rank was the most cited reason for both CV and CB - Most (90%; female = 94%, male = 89%) cyber-victims during MMOG play reported they had been cyber-bullied at least once by a male - The most common context for CB was from perpetrators who were unknown (65%; female = 58%, male = 75%). - Male participants reported higher rates of CB ($t(145) = -2.33$, $p>.05$) than females - Females did not report significantly higher overall rates of CV ($t(145) = -.32$, $p = .75$), than males - Females reported significantly higher rates of sexual harassment ($t(145) = 2.94$, $p< .01$), and excessive sexual pursuit ($t(145) = 4.62$, $p< .001$), than males in MMOG - LGBT participants did not report higher levels of CV than heterosexuals ($t(149) = -.04$, $p = .97$), but did report significantly higher rates of excessive sexual pursuit ($t(149) = -2.38$, $p< .05$), than heterosexuals in MMOG - Participants reported being CV more by opponents than teammates ($t(150) = -2.88$, $p< .01$) - The only significant predictor of CV was the perpetration of CB ($R = .36$, adjusted $R^2 = .13$) - Both CV ($p< .001$; $R = .35$, adjusted $R^2 = .12$) and sexual orientation ($p< .05$; $R = .40$, adjusted $R^2 = .14$) were significant predictors of CB - Heterosexual participants were more likely to report CB others than LGBT participants ($t(149) = 2.32$, $p< .05$)
Li & Pustaka (2017)	1) To explore young adults' beliefs and experiences related to CB while	Quantitative research design with questionnaires	*N* = 357 university students on the East Coast of the United States	Questionnaires Cross sectional survey design	- Around one-fifth participants were intensely involved, as cyberbullies (*n*= 45), cyber-victims (*n* = 48), or witnesses (*n*= 63)

USA *QR* = 30 83.33	gaming, as well as their preferred gaming style 2) To investigate the extent to which young adults experience CB while gaming 3) To explore young adults' experiences with CB while gaming relating to their views towards gaming	and the sampling design used convenience sampling methods	Predominantly female (males *n* = 95, females *n* = 262)	Pearson's correlation analysis	- Around one-third were moderately involves as witnesses to a few CB incidents (*n*= 113), one-fifth cyber-harassed others (*n*= 46) and over 15% were victims (*n*= 38) - For minor involvement one-fifth of participants were cyber-victims (*n*= 51) or bystanders (*n*= 71). Less than 15% cyber-harassed others (*n* = 33) - Almost all (93%) participants believed that CB occurred in action gaming environments - 68% disagreed that they felt content being CB and 54% said that they would feel angry, offended (58%) or annoyed (71%), if they were being cyberbullied. However, the majority also said that they would not feel worthless (57%) or depressed (57%) - Experience as a victim and the belief that gaming is risky were negatively correlated ($r(209) = -.15$, $p = .02$) - Experience as victim and the belief that the more they play, the more they would be cyberbullied were positively correlated ($r(209) = .31$, $p < .001$) - Experience as cyberbullies and the belief that gaming is risky were negatively correlated, *$r(210) = -.31$, $p < .001$) - Experience as bystander and the belief in the association between the frequency of gaming and cyberbullying were positively correlated ($r(295) = .28$, $p < .001$) - Experience as bystanders and the belief that gaming promotes CB were positively correlated ($r(295) = .14$, $p = .01$)
Mattinen & Macey (2018) Finland *QR* = 29 80.56%	1) To explore how young players perceive and experience verbal aggression (Communication Abuse) in the Multiplayer Online Battle Arena game Dota 2	Quantitative research design using online survey methods Participants were recruited through purposive	*N* = 364, with a majority of male participants (94.2%) Age range: 12-55 (Median = 23)	Online survey Linear-by- linear test. Somers' delta (Δ) and Kendall's tau (τ) were performed in order to determine	- Being a target of Communication Abuse did not display any statistically significant correlations with Age Range - Investigating Opinion on the Seriousness of Communication Abuse in respect to age group provides a statistically significant result, p = .031, however, neither Δ nor τ were found to be significant - Frequency of participation in acts of Communication Abuse are shown to increase as age increases ($p = .002$)

		sampling on social media and gaming forum websites	51% played Dota 2 daily and 37% at least once a week. 57% had a game rank in one of the top three of eight possible rankings	predictive power (Δ) and direction of association (τ)	- The younger a player is, the more likely they are to have been placed in the Low Priority pool (p = <.001)
Rubin & Camm (2013) Canada *QR* = 29 80.56%	1) To expand the inventory of griefing varieties, consider their deceptive elements and examine attitudes towards the phenomenon 2) To explore an empirical understanding of griefing, its varieties, its deceptive elements, and its relationship to other closely associated malicious acts in video games	Qualitative research design with email interviews and analysis of public information on forums Convenience and purposive sampling design methods were used	*N* = 10 interview participants and 80 posts on the Reddit Griefing thread 'Something Awful' Interviewees (females, *n*=2; male, *n*=8) were predominantly students at the University of Western Ontario Age range 21-45 *N* = 6 participants played more than five hours of video games per week	Email interviews and data gathered from online forums Thematic coding of interviews and forum threads	- Six interviewees experienced griefing as both victim and perpetrator, three as victims, and one respondent witnessed it - In the thread posts 48 were coded as perpetrators, 15 were witnesses, one was both a victim and a perpetrator, and three were victims - Scamming was typically considered a part of griefing - Greed play does not have to be accompanied by harassment or scamming - Casual griefing differs from abusive forms of griefing - Griefing can be through non-verbal deceptive strategies - 91% (*n*=73) of the thread posts had a positive or neutral attitude toward griefing, however 80% (*n*=8) interviewee's defined griefing as harassment, emotionally harmful or irritating
Ortiz (2019) USA *QR* = 33	1) To explore how men of colour respond to racist trash talking during online gameplay 2) To explore the process of negotiating racism in this space	Qualitative study design of interviews Purposive sampling methods were	*N* = 12 heterosexual men age 18-41 (*M*=26) Identified as: - Puerto Rican (*n*=2)	Interviews Thematic Analysis	- Harassment on Xbox Live began when racial and ethnic identities were perceived as being non-white - Participants were racialized by white gamers, who use the tools of Xbox Live to feel 'powerful' - Participants were disciplined and invalidated by other gamers and family members when they sought out advice for how to cope with their experiences

91.67%	3) To explore how this process both shapes and is shaped by masculinity	used through online advertisement	- Mexican American (*n*=2) - African American - Tejano - Black (*n*=3) - Filipino - Lebanese		- Learning to keep their emotions to themselves and adopt a strategy of desensitization became the primary coping mechanism - The collective understanding of racism as an offline phenomenon, and masculinity as a practice of emotional avoidance, is incredibly effective at encouraging silence in the face of everyday racism online
Wright (2019) Czech Republic *QR* = 28 77.78%	1) To expand the general aggression model by investigating the reciprocal effects of friends who engage in console-gaming aggression (a situational factor) and how their personality traits (individual factor) influence their behaviours	Quantitative design using interviews and surveys The sampling approach was convenience sampling of local schools Purposive sampling was then used for participants who wanted take part in the interview	51 friendship dyads (*N* = 102) from a USA middle school. 48 were male–male dyads, 1 female–female, and 1 female–male Age range 12-14 (M = 13.6, *SD*= .34), and were in the eighth grade All were of European ancestry and predominantly middle to upper class, with 13% qualifying for free or reduced lunch	Interviews and surveys Interclass Correlation analysis An actor–partner interdependence mediation model	- Poor friendship quality was related positively to verbal aggression ($p < .001$), trolling ($p < .001$), and camping ($p < .001$) - These relationships were mediated by anger ($ß = .33$, $p < .001$) and revenge planning ($ß = .48$, $p < .001$) - Friendship quality, anger, and revenge planning are important in adolescents' aggressive behaviours through first-person shooters - Adolescents low in friendship quality are more angry and revengeful, which leads to greater verbal aggression, trolling, and camping through first-person shooters
Lee, Jeong & Jeon (2019) South Korea	1) To investigate if disruptive behaviours increases as a player's level of aggression increases 2) To investigate if disruptive behaviours increase as a	Quantitative design using questionnaires and purposive sampling methods	*N* = 343 LoL players; 99 men (87.1%) and 44 women (12.9%)	Questionnaires Structural Equation Analysis	- Moral positioning had a positive effect on players' disruptive behaviour, implying that the propensity to select a character designed to kill or harass others can stimulate antisocial behaviours against the other game participants

QR = 30 83.33%	player's level of competitive motivation increases 3) To explore how moral positioning in a game affects players disruptive behaviours when aggression and competitive motivation are controlled 4) To explore how aggression and competitive motivation affects players moral positioning in a game	Age = *M* 26 (*SD* = 5.32) Average daily gaming time 1.54 hours (*SD* = 54 minutes)	- Players' moral positioning was positively affected by aggression and competitive motivation, showing that the personal moral choices made in a virtual gaming world are closely related to the factors of the individual player's temperament or media use motivations

Descriptive Information on Studies Included in the Literature Review

The included studies demonstrated a broad range of locations, with the largest number of studies being conducted in the USA (*n* = 7). Others were located in the UK (*n* = 3), China (*n* = 3), Canada (*n* = 2), South Korea (*n* = 1), Australia (n = 1), Czech Republic (*n* = 1), Finland (*n* = 1), Germany (*n* = 1) and the Netherlands (*n* = 1).

The study focus varied including the experiences of victims of harassment (*n* = 4; Ortiz, 2019; Przybylski, 2018; Fox & Tang, 2017; Cote, 2015); perpetration (*n* = 5; Tang et al., 2020; Wright, 2019; Lee et al., 2019; Cook et al., 2018; Tang & Fox, 2016;) and the majority explored combinations of these, including bystanders and general online gamers (*n* = 12; Huang et al., 2019; Mattinen & Macey, 2018; Easpaig & Humphrey, 2017; Achterbosch et al., 2017; Li & Pustaka, 2017; McInroy & Mishna, 2017; Ballard & Welch, 2015; Paul et al., 2015; Rubin & Camm, 2013; Leung & McBride-Chang, 2013; Thacker & Griffiths, 2012; Yang, 2012).

The study aims were varied, falling into numerous categories. Some explored the prevalence and demographics of cyberbullying within OG (Huang et al., 2019; Mattinen & Macey, 2018; Przybylski, 2018; McInroy & Mishna, 2017; Li & Pustaka, 2017; Ballard & Welch, 2017; Leung & McBride-Chang, 2013). Others researched the definitions and understanding of griefing and online victimisation (McInroy & Mishna, 2017; Achterbosch et al., 2017; Easpaig & Humphrey, 2017; Rubin & Camm, 2013; Thacker & Griffiths, 2012), the psychological and wellbeing impacts on victims (Przybylski, 2018; Leung & McBride-Chang, 2013; Thacker & Griffiths, 2012), motivations and personality traits in relation to perpetration (Tang et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2019; Wright, 2019; Cook et al., 2018; Achterbosch et al., 2017; Tang & Fox, 2016; Paul et al., 2015; Yang, 2012) and coping strategies for victims (Ortiz, 2019; Cote, 2017; Fox & Tang 2017).

Study designs were qualitative (*n* = 8; Ortiz, 2019; Wright, 2019; Cook et al., 2018; Cote, 2017; Ballard & Welch, 2017; Achterbosch et al., 2017; Easpaig & Humphrey, 2017; Rubin & Camm, 2013), quantitative (*n* = 11; Tang et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2019; Huang et al., 2019; Mattinen & Macey, 2018;

Przybylski, 2018; Li & Pustaka, 2017; Fox & Tang, 2017; Tang & Fox, 2016; Paul et al., 2015; Leung & McBride-Chang, 2013; Yang, 2012) and mixed methods (*n* = 2; McInroy & Mishna, 2017; Thacker & Griffiths, 2012). Nineteen studies used primary data from participants with the exception of one using secondary data (McInroy & Mishna, 2017) and another using publicly available forum data (Easpaig & Humphrey, 2017). Many of the studies used survey methods (*n* = 15), verbal or written interviews (*n* = 5), whereas Easpaig and Humphrey (2017) used content analysis of forum data.

The sample sizes varied with the largest being 2,008 (Huang et al, 2018) and the smallest being 10 (Rubin & Camm, 2013) with an age range across studies of 9 to 57 years old. The majority of participants across studies were male with the exception of a 40.3% male sample in McInroy and Mishna's (2017) and 26.6% male sample in Li and Pustaka (2017). Cote (2017), and Fox and Tang (2016) focused on a female sample, and Ortiz (2019) and Tang and Fox (2016) had a male sample.

The overall findings of the research demonstrated perpetrator factors of higher levels of aggression and hostile sexism, poor friendship quality, previous experiences of cyberbullying and levels of Machiavellianism, and psychopathy (Tang et al, 2020; Lee at al., 2019; Wright, 2019; Tang & Fox, 2016; Yang, 2012), and motivations for cyberbullying included enjoyment and to feel powerful (Ortiz, 2019; Cook et al., 2018; Achterbosch et al., 2017; Paul et al., 2015). Cyberbullying in OG was a relatively common experience (Li & Pustaka, 2017; Ballard & Welch, 2017; Thacker & Griffiths, 2012). The impacts on cyber-victims demonstrated patterns of emotional distress and negative overall wellbeing (Przybylski, 2018; Rubin & Camm, 2013; Leung & McBride-Chang, 2013; Thacker & Griffiths, 2012) and coping strategies included pretending to be someone else, reaching out to others and avoidance (Ortiz, 2019; Przybylski, 2018; Fox & Tang, 2017; Easpaig & Humphrey, 2017; Cote, 2017).

Studies also had findings relating to other factors not in line with this research question (such as serious gaming interventions, or the effect of violent video games). These were not included in the table or analysed with the results due to the focus of the literature review.

Inter-rater reliability tests were carried out by the researcher and research supervisor on all included papers, and the data satisfies the assumptions for this analysis. The Kappa reliability coefficient for each paper is included in Table Appendix D. No coefficient score was below $k = 0.61$ with an overall coefficient reliability value of $k = .77$ ($p < .001$) which, according to Altman (1999), represents a consistently moderate pattern of inter-rater reliability.

Analytic Review Strategy

This narrative-synthesis adopted a modernist position in that there can be a shared meaning across situations, which are also context specific. This approach can be used in systematic literature reviews that focus on a broad range of questions (Popay et al., 2006), and are heterogenous in terms of their design and methodology; using both qualitative and quantitative approaches with varied measures. Furthermore, narrative syntheses have been used in previous research in this area with mixed methodologies (Jiménez-Barbero et al., 2020; Ramage & Moorley, 2019).

The researcher used NVivo to aid the analysis as this software can help with the process of narrative synthesis and the matrices and tables which can be produced can aid the transparency of these methods (Snilstveit et al., 2012). Table 5 describes this process.

Table 5
A Table to show the process of analysis

Stage	Process
Coding	The first stage was to undertake line-by-line coding by analysing the meaning and content of information of each study (Appendix E).
Descriptive Themes	Descriptive themes were generated based on collective trends in the codes across the studies (Appendix F).
Analytic Themes	From descriptive themes, analytical themes were generated and can be found in Table 6 below. These themes helped to consider and interpret higher level constructs that may have gone beyond the original research (Butler et al., 2016).

Results

Three main themes were found: '*Gaming Culture'*, '*Perpetrators'* and '*Victims'*. A summary of the themes is presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6
A Table of Themes from the Literature Review

Main Theme	Sub Theme
Gaming Culture	- *Definitions* - *Normalised and Desensitised* - *Minority groups as targets* - *Vicious cycle*
Perpetrators	- *Superiority* - *"For the Lulz"*[4]
Victims	- *Impacts* - *Coping strategies*

The frequency of occurrence for each sub theme within the papers is illustrated below in Table 7.

The results of the synthesis and resultant themes are discussed individually to explore the current literature in this area and provide a better understanding of this phenomenon.

[4] Lulz is a variant on the acronym LOLs which stands for Laughing Out Loud and is used to infer when something is funny. "For the lulz" therefore could be understood as "because it was funny"

Table 7

A Table of theme prevalence within each paper

	Superordinate and Subordinate Themes							
	Gaming Culture				Perpetrators		Victims	
Author/s	*Definitions*	*Normalised and Desensitised*	*Minority Groups as Targets*	*Vicious Cycle*	*Superiority*	*"For the Lulz"*	*Impacts*	*Coping Strategies*
Achterbosch et al. (2017)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Ballard & Welch (2015)	✓		✓		✓			
Cook et al. (2018)	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cote (2015)		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Easpaig & Humphrey (2016)			✓		✓			✓
Fox & Tang (2017)		✓	✓				✓	✓
Huang et al. (2019)	✓	✓		✓				✓
Lee, Jeong & Jeon (2019)				✓				
Leung & McBride-Chang (2013)							✓	
Li & Pustaka (2017)		✓					✓	
Mattinen & Macey (2018)		✓		✓				
McInroy & Mishna (2017)		✓		✓	✓			
Ortiz (2019)		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Paul et al. (2015)				✓	✓	✓		
Przybylski (2018)			✓				✓	✓
Rubin & Camm (2013)	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	
Tang & Fox (2016)			✓			✓		
Tang et al. (2020)			✓		✓	✓		
Thacker & Griffiths (2012)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Wright (2017)				✓		✓		
Yang (2012)				✓			✓	

Gaming Culture

The idea of a certain shared understanding of behaviour within OGE was present in many of the reviewed studies, and was used to explain how gamers understand cyberbullying and certain normalised behaviours. This theme is further divided into four sub themes: '*Definitions'*, '*Normalised and Desensitised*', '*Minority Groups as Targets'* and '*Vicious Cycle'*.

Definitions

Definitions within the literature on cyberbullying in OG vary and so do the methods of perpetration. Within OG, cyberbullying can be perpetrated through textual (72%) and auditory (84%) formats (Thacker & Griffiths, 2015).

In an OGE, there is an additional modality of harassing through behavioural means, using in-game functions such as killing another player's character. This type of cyberbullying was termed as 'griefing' by Rubin and Camm (2013) who found that *"Of the 80 posts examined within the griefing thread, 42 (52 percent) were acts of griefing in which the grief could be completed non-verbally"* (p.379).

Overall, there are many ways that gamers felt they could perpetrate cyberbullying within OG:

> *"Those who perpetrated cyberbullying most often did so using name-calling (29%), profanity (25%), using names with a sexual meaning (21%), exclusion (24%), sexual harassment (5%), threatening (5%), pursuing in a sexual manner (4%), and kicking someone out of a guild because they disliked them (13%)"* (Ballard & Welch, 2015, p.11).

Furthermore, it appears that gamers felt that trolling can *be "divided into two groups: verbal trolling and behavioural trolling"* (Cook et al., 2018, p.3329). Finally, victims would not always classify hurtful comments or behaviours within OG as cyberbullying;

> *"People are sometimes mean, if you're playing online games and you do bad, sometimes someone will just attack you for doing bad or not being as good as others… I don't think it's always cyberbullying"* (McInroy & Mishna, 2017, p.7).

For some, the divide between harmful or fun seems to depend on the context. With friends, the same trolling behaviours are seen as fun:

> *"Among friends, trolling is completely acceptable, and that it only treads into negative territory when it takes place among strangers (P10, 23, male: 'So … yeah, trolling for fun … it's ok, but trolling to um, influence other people that you don't know is not ok'.) … there is a high degree of nuance in our trolls' responses, and context seems to be an important factor"* (Cook et al., 2018, p.3334).

Whereas, in other contexts, if a perpetrator is becoming persistent, or targets a specific individual, this can be seen as aberrant;

> *"In order to be considered deviant, trolling must enter the realm of cyberbullying or cybercrime, typically by persistently targeting a single person or entity repeatedly or by breaking a written law"* (Cook et al., 2018, p.3337).

Some gamers even see griefing as a form of *"emergent gameplay"* (Rubin & Camm, 2012, p.376), rather than cyberbullying.

Normalised and Desensitised

This sub theme encapsulates findings from eleven papers which report on the statistical prevalence of harassment within OG (Huang et al.,2019; Ortiz, 2019; Cook et al., 2018; Mattinen & Macey, 2018; Achterbosch et al., 2017; Li & Pustaka, 2017; McInroy & Mishna, 2017; Fox & Tang, 2017; Cote, 2015; Rubin & Camm, 2013; Thacker & Griffiths, 2012). This makes harassment now a relatively 'normal' behaviour, which gamers expect and therefore *"is of little or no seriousness"* (Huang et al., 2019, p.7).

Prevalence of trolling, griefing, harassment and cyberbullying varied across the research with some reporting as few as 3% of children who played MMORPGs[5] witnessing, perpetrating or being a victim of cyberbullying (McInroy & Misha, 2017), and further research suggesting just 6% of gamers experienced being a victim (Huang et al., 2019). The majority of research suggests it is more common than this; in Li and Pustaka's study (2017) 57% of participants were cyberbullied in some form whilst OG; and in Rubin and Camm's (2013), 60% were involved in cyberbullying either as a victim or perpetrator. Przybylski (2018) found that 33.5% encountered cyber-victimisation, and Thacker and Griffiths (2012) found 47% of participants 'frequently to always' witnessed trolling in the last year. Even when accounting for different types of games, cyberbullying was felt to be prevalent; 93% in action gaming environments, 66% in role-playing games, 52% in sports games, 35% in strategy games, and 23% in simulation games (Li & Pustaka, 2017). Overall, qualitative research found that "*trolling was a part of gaming, an inextricable piece of the activity"* (Cook et al., 2018, p.3334).

This normalisation appears to have led to gamers becoming desensitised to these forms of online harassment within gaming environments. Rubin and Camm (2013) found that only 9% of the analysed gaming thread posts made a negative comment about griefing, yet still found it acceptable if it was entertaining. Furthermore, McInroy and Misha (2017) found that gamers did not consider aggressive behaviours cyberbullying, as it was a part of the gaming culture. Additionally, Ortiz (2019) identified that victims were harassed so often they became desensitised to it, and following their accounts of racism, explained that "*It's just a game"* (p.578). This was further highlighted as the onus appeared to be on the victims to tolerate it, rather than perpetrators to stop;

> *"New gamers quickly learn the rules of Xbox Live: "shut up and put up." To go against these rules would result in peer ridicule, which defeats the prosocial purpose of multiplayer gameplay."* (Ortiz, 2019, p.580).

[5] Mass Multiplayer Online Role Playing Games

Minority Groups as Targets

Of the studies included in this research, five focused on sexism and sexual harassment in OGE (Tang et al., 2020; Cote, 2017; Easpaig & Humphrey, 2017; Fox & Tang, 2017; Tang & Fox, 2016), noting that females were disproportionately victims of sexual harassment and gender discrimination.

Easpaig and Humphrey (2017) suggested there was a belief that gaming is a male environment and *"guy stuff*" (p.4), and therefore female gamers were seen as inferior; *"women were afforded minority status and a secondary status as gaming subjects"* (p.7). Their research highlighted the idea that male gamers believe female gamers to have ulterior motives for gaming, such as to get male attention; *"Perhaps you're secretly just hoping to meet the perfect man over Xbox live"* (Easpaig & Humphrey, 2017, p.4), or to be seen by others as different for liking games.

Racism was another common form of harassment which was explored by Ortiz (2019) and a significant finding in other research was that ethnic-minority gamers were more likely to report serious bullying in OG, $r(182)$-0.22, p=0.003 (Przybylski, 2018). Gamers felt that the perceived anonymity of Xbox Live and an apparent lack of consequences meant harassment was a more common experience for minority ethnic groups;

> *"On Xbox Live, boundaries between the front stage and backstage have dissolved, and white men freely harass people of color with overt racist speech*" (Ortiz, 2019, p.578).

Participants discovered that racism was a part of the gaming culture and *"quickly learned to accept hate speech"* (Ortiz, 2019, p.581).

One minority group not explored in great detail, but which appeared to experience greater levels of harassment, were people who identified as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender (LGBT). These gamers were found to encounter significantly higher rates of excessive sexual pursuit ($t(149)$=2.38, p<.05), than heterosexual players during MMORPG play (Ballard & Welch, 2017).

Furthermore, 60% of the sample who were transgender reported cybervictimisation compared with females (52%) and males (49%).

These findings relating to a focus of 'otherness' for victimisation appear to convey a wider culture of OG which was noted by much of the research included in this review;

> *"These findings suggest that sexism, misogyny, homophobia, or the dominant masculine culture of MMOGs might increase the likelihood of cyberbullying during MMOG play"* (Ballard & Welch, 2017, p.16).

The research has noted that there are dominant traits which are viewed as a 'typical gamer', and those who do not fit within this stereotype may face abuse;

> *"Players who are not the stereotypical straight, White, male ''gamer'' are still frequently viewed as outsiders to online gaming and face harassment because of this status."* (Cote, 2017, p.1).

The idea of perpetrators enforcing power is a theme which is explored in more detail within the sub theme of '*Superiority'*.

Vicious Cycle

Harassment in OG appears to be perpetuated via a vicious cycle through a number of methods. The research has indicated that one of the main reasons perpetrators engage in cyberbullying is because they have been the victim themselves, and it is therefore a form of retaliation or defence. In their taxonomy of 'griefers', Achterbosch et al. (2017) proposed the 'retaliator' as a specific type of griefer who harasses others in response to being harassed themselves. Paul et al. (2015) found that 46% of their participants engaged in griefing as a form of retaliation or revenge, and in their qualitative study, Cook et al. (2018) found that *"being trolled first was the single most popular reason to begin trolling"* (p.3330):

> *"Although not all young players start flaming and verbal abuse, they can react to it more actively, increasing the amounts of communication abuse witnessed, thereby creating a*

feedback loop" (Mattinen & Macy, 2018, p.6).

This cycle can also be perpetuated by bystanders' inaction within the game and the beliefs noted above that harassment is a normal part of OG culture:

> *"Students' underestimation of the seriousness of bullying may reflect their belief that bullying is acceptable or tolerable, which might be linked with a tendency not to intervene, thus leading to the encouragement of rampant bullying acts"* (Huang et al., 2019, p.8).

Furthermore, research commented on the lack of use by gamers of in game reporting for harassment, with only 4.2% of participants in one study using this function (Przybylski, 2018). Qualitatively, using reporting functions was the least popular response (Cook et al., 2018). Victims and bystanders chose not to report harassment and instead to use their own coping strategies. This promotes a culture whereby harassment behaviours are not penalised, the behaviours continue, are responded to with further harassment, and ultimately become a normal part of OG interactions.

Perpetrators

The perpetration of harassment in OG was a broad topic within the reviewed papers. The subthemes synthesise the findings for the motivations of perpetrators and how these relate to personality traits, as well as the broader culture of the OGE noted above.

Superiority

This subtheme synthesised the idea of power being a motivating factor for many perpetrators engaging in harassment, and the sense of perpetrators feeling entitled to power and control.

This power from harassing others was a theme which arose in ten of the reviewed studies (Tang et al., 2020; Ortiz, 2019; Cook et al., 2018; Achterbosch et al., 2017; McInroy & Mishna, 2017; Easpaig & Humphrey, 2016; Ballard & Welch, 2015; Cote, 2015; Paul et al., 2015; Rubin & Camm, 2013). 61% of the participants in Paul et al.'s (2015) study identified 'power imposition griefing' as the description of their harassment; this was also highlighted by Ortiz's (2019) participant who stated *"power is what it comes down to*" (p.578).

Achterbosch et al. (2017) termed a specific type of griefer as the 'elitists', who feel they are highly skilled players and therefore need to provide disciplinary control over weaker and less skilled players when they perform poorly. Some elitists felt that their level of experience and gaming skill entitled them to do this:

> *"Generally I get annoyed by terrible players so I'll grief them since after years of telling people how to play I'm tired of that route"* (Achterbosch et al., 2017, p.7).

Others felt it was their duty to 'help' others notice their mistakes by harassing them in order to push them to do better, and presented this kind of power as a burden:

> *"they did not enjoy this type of griefing, but felt it needed to be done by someone in a leading and controlling position of power"* Achterbosch et al., 2017, p.10).

Furthermore, some perpetrators reported harassing others in order to provide a form of justice to victims, as a kind of vigilante. When this occurred with males towards female gamers, it was coined 'white knighting' whereby they would seek out female players to help, with the assumption they were not capable of gameplay, or self-defence (Easpaig & Humphrey, 2017).

'Queening' was the term used for female perpetrators (Easpaig & Humphrey, 2017; Tang et al., 2020), wherein a gamer seeks to maintain a position of power, and this is the motivation for in-game harassment of others who might threaten this.

These power dynamics also appeared in how perpetrators chose their victims in order to retain control and superiority. Players who were perceived as weaker were generally targeted. Weaknesses were categorised as such by a lower game rank or skill, and also by 'real life' factors perceived as weaker such as gender, race and sexuality (See '*Minority groups as targets'*). McInroy and Mishna (2017) found that newer and lower ranked players in the game were regularly targeted. Ballard and Welch (2017) also found that 45% of their participants who harassed another gamer did so because of their rank, and this was a pattern in other research (Achterbosch et al., 2017; Cook et al., 2018).

Overall, it appeared that perpetrators felt entitled to some kind of power and control within the game and enjoyed using or testing out this power to 'compete' at trolling or harassing others, rather than competing within the game:

> *"Those who troll due to boredom often seem to treat the trolling as a sort of meta-game. They see themselves as being 'beyond' the game, having seen all there is to see, and thus try to 'win' at trolling instead"* (Cook et al., 2018, p.3331).

"For the Lulz"

Eight of the reviewed studies highlighted enjoyment as the reason perpetrators engaged in harassment within OG (Tang et al., 2020; Cook et al., 2018; Achterbosch et al., 2017; Wright, 2017; Tang & Fox, 2016; Paul et al., 2015; Rubin & Camm, 2013; Thacker & Griffiths, 2012). The same, or similar, phrase of "*for the lulz"* (p.27) was used by five participants in the research by Thacker and Griffiths (2012) to describe this feeling of enjoyment.

> *"R: Why did you start to troll yourself?*
>
> *P: Personal enjoyment.*
>
> *R: Something to do?*
>
> *P: Yeah, you get bored of the game sometimes, and sometimes it makes the game more exciting"*
>
> (Cook et al., 2018, p.3331).

When there was a perceived gain by perpetrators such as financial (scamming) or increases in rank, there appeared to be further enjoyment of harassing others (*Achterbosch et al., 2017; Cook et al., 2018*). However, this enjoyment was also present in some instances purely from seeing distress in others:

> *"You can kill their avatar. If you do it in a way that works, that's kind of nice too, but if you can do it in a way that they get pissed off even more, that's even more fun"* (Cook et al., 2018, p.3332).

Tang et al. (2020) found that increasing levels of gamer identification, hostile sexism, social dominance, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy were significant predictors of sexual harassment. Similarly, Tang and Fox (2016) showed that the personality factors of hostile sexism and social dominance were related to sexual harassment and general harassment within OGE. Yang (2012) highlighted that gender and preference for violent games had a direct effect on, and direct predictive power for, hostility, and furthermore, that hostility effectively predicted the likelihood of being cyberbullied. In addition, Wright (2019) found that individuals with lower levels of friendship quality had greater levels of aggression which led to an increased likelihood of engaging in cyberbullying within OGE.

Some research suggested that it was more about the player becoming immersed "*in the evil identity of the characters in the game"* (Lee et al., 2016, p.6), which caused them to harass others, rather than their own personal traits.

> *"Some of the griefers who were interviewed actually roleplayed a character themselves, but chose an evil identity. They felt this evil persona should give them reign to be the antagonist of role-players without consequence"* (Achterbosch et al, 2012, p.8).

However, it was unclear whether this persona created by the individual was something that increased the likelihood of harassing others, or a method of justification used by perpetrators in order to absolve themselves.

Victims

The majority of the research papers included in this synthesis explored the cyber-harassment experiences of victims. The following subthemes explore the most common features of the findings including impacts and coping strategies.

Impacts

Findings relating to the impacts of harassment, highlight its negative or distressing nature. McInroy and Mishna (2017) found that many of their participants did not feel this was a serious behaviour nor did they take it personally:

> *"The first two times they actually bullied me I felt upset obviously, but then… I was just like this is dumb. This is a game. You're supposed to have fun. That's the point of games so I didn't take that personally"* (McInroy & Mishna, 2017, p.7).

However, initial feelings of upset were noted and the possibility that this acceptance may represent normalisation of harassment behaviour as noted above.

Other research has suggested that harassment in OG can have negative emotional impacts such as feelings of intense anger, shock, pain, exhaustion (Ortiz, 2019), and offense and annoyance (Li & Pustaka, 2017). Furthermore, 80% of participants in Rubin and Camm's (2013) research found harassment to be emotionally harmful or irritating, and 39.4% of participants in the study by Przybylski (2018) commented that the experience was very or fairly upsetting.

Harassment in OG was also found to impact on victims' self-esteem (Thacker & Griffiths, 2012), and findings tentatively suggest overall negative impact on victims' psychological well-being, categorised by social competence (p<.01), friendship satisfaction (p<.01), self-esteem (p<.01), and life satisfaction (p<.01) (Leung & McBride-Chang, 2013). Other impacts included rumination and worry which led to withdrawal from the game and victims blaming themselves (Fox & Tang, 2017).

Coping Strategies

Participants who had been victims of harassment in OG spoke about their coping strategies; both effective and non-effective. As noted above, many of the participants in these papers did not favour reporting or muting[6] (Cook et al., 2018; Przybylski, 2018), and so opted for alternative methods.

Avoidance and ignoring were common coping strategies here. Players would often ignore harassment and focus on the game play (Cote, 2017), and this was found to be a relatively successful strategy as many perpetrators then lost interest (Cook et al., 2018).

When speaking about sexual harassment in OG, participants in research by Cote (2017) highlighted methods of avoiding any contact with players who they felt would potentially harass them. This avoidance strategy helped them to feel safer whilst gaming:

> *"All interviewees recognized that there were always a few male players who were there just to play and that some had even become good friends. But many women spoke of how exhausting it was to wade through negativity in order to reach decent players. One said, ''There are guys out there that I'm sure are fun and respectful and wonderful to play with, but I don't have the time or the energy to slog through it'' (Feather). Therefore, they stuck to playing with people they knew in real life or a handful of carefully vetted online friends"* (Cote, 2017, p.9).

Another common strategy used by women to avoid sexual or gender-based harassment included masking or hiding their gender (Cote, 2017; Easpaig & Humphrey, 2017; Fox & Tang, 2017; Thacker & Griffiths, 2012):

> *""As a girl, I get trolled a lot by guys! Sometimes I changed character gender for that reason!"* (Thacker & Griffiths, 2012, p.25).

However, the research also remarked that by choosing to mask their sex or gender, women were

[6] Reporting and muting are in-game functions where players can report harassment to moderators, or mute other players chat so they cannot see their messages

inadvertently perpetuating the idea that females were a small minority of players. This had the impact of reinforcing the culture of gaming being a solely masculine space:

> *"In this way, harassment has created a spiral of silence in which women—and the men who support their presence in games— have been silenced by a perceived majority of hostile, hypermasculine players*" (Fox & Tang, 2017, p.15).

As noted within the sub theme of '*Vicious Cycle'*, coping with harassment by being aggressive in response is common, and can perpetuate the cycle of victimisation. This strategy was commented on by women in research by Cote (2017):

> *"I never acted the way they thought I would act, so I didn't cry and complain and be like, 'OH MY GOD, YOU'RE SO MEAN!' I was a dick back to them ... a lot of guys are really surprised by that, but in a way, it's kind of earned me a lot of respect because they know I'm not a pushover. I'm not just gonna let them treat me a certain way just because I'm a girl. I fight for respect"* (p.12).

This seemed to be a successful strategy for some women in order to bridge the perceived inequalities perpetrators saw between male and female gamers. However, it was not always successful as they were sometimes faced with accusations that they were *''acting like an emotional female''* (Cote, 2017, p.13). It appeared that women were not always allowed to use the same strategies as men as they may be dismissed which may lead to further harassment or accusations of being overly sensitive.

Often support from friends and family was sought and provided as a way of coping with harassment as methods of validating distress and ignoring (Cote, 2017; Fox & Tang, 2017). Adolescents were most likely to reach out to caregivers (49.3%) and friends (43.7%) following victimization in mobile games (Przybylski, 2018).

However, Ortiz (2019) suggested that some participants' experiences were dismissed by friends and family who did not understand the gaming environment and they were left feeling invalidated. Furthermore, some children or adolescents may be reluctant to report any forms of abuse in OG due to a worry that parents may take away the game (Huang et al., 2019).

Critical Appraisal of Studies

All studies included in this narrative review were of a good quality as indicated by the quality assessment scores (Appendix C). Furthermore, with the exception of Mattinen and Macey (2018), all studies identified and justified their chosen methodology. Quantitative methodology was appropriate for the eleven studies which utilised this approach, with the potential exception of Yang (2012) who did not provide a clearly identified study design. All but one paper (Cote, 2017) presented philosophical background and study designs.

Six of the included studies made no reference to ethical issues within their research and how they managed this (Ortiz, 2019; Cook et al., 2018; Mattinen & Macey, 2018; Fox & Tang, 2017; Paul et al., 2015; Rubin & Camm, 2013).

All quantitative studies used tables, graphs and figures to appropriately present their results, with the exception of Paul et al. (2015). All qualitative research used participant quotes to illustrate findings.

One factor which scored comparatively low quality analysis scores across all studies was the generalisability or transferability of results. Advertisements for recruitment were commonly posted within specific gaming sites therefore limiting the sample to gamers who view those websites (Lee et al., 2019; Mattinen & Macey, 2018; Achterbosch et al., 2017; Tang & Fox, 2016; Cote, 2015; Paul et al., 2015; Thacker & Griffiths, 2012). This potentially identified them as more serious gamers and excluded casual gamers who do not view game websites or forums.

The specification of a single game within the research was also a factor which impacted on the generalisability or transferability of the findings. Lee et al. (2019) focused only on LoL[7], Mattinen and

[7] League of Legends

Macey (2018) centred on DOTA[8], and Paul et al. (2015) concentrated only on WoW[9], and noted that this was not representative of all MMORGs.

The way in which cyberbullying was categorised differed across research papers. Some classified griefing, flaming and trolling as alternative behaviours to cyberbullying (Cook et al., 2018; Ballard & Welch, 2017; Achterbosch et al., 2017; Paul et al., 2015; Rubin & Camm, 2013; Thacker & Griffiths, 2012). Whereas others grouped these as sub-categories of cyberbullying (Huang et al., 2019; Yang, 2012). This highlights some difficulties with the generalisability of the research findings to all areas of cyberbullying in OG.

[8] Defence Of The Ancients
[9] World of Warcraft

Discussion

This narrative review sought to synthesise the current literature on cyberbullying OG. Three overall themes were created from the 21 papers included in this research. A discussion on how these findings relate to the current theories within the area, clinical recommendations, limitations of the review and proposals for future research are presented below.

Theoretical Considerations for Cyberbullying in Online Games

As previously noted, the definitions and terminology used around cyberbullying are varied and debatable. This also appears true when it occurs within OGE.

The sub theme of '*Definitions'* explored gamers' perceptions about what constitutes cyberbullying in these environments. Huang et al. (2019) commented that cyberbullying *"is usually defined as a repetitive act, and under this concept, the frequency of occurrence ranging from once to three times should be excluded in the analysis"* (p.7). This is similar to Golf-Papez and Veer's (2017) definition that trolling differs from cyberbullying as it is a singular event. However, Huang et al. (2019) also noted that the Taiwan Ministry of Education (2012) suggest that repeatability is not a necessary requirement for cyberbullying.

Furthermore, Golf-Papez and Veer (2017) commented that trolling differed from cyberbullying due to the non-involvement of a power imbalance between the troll and the target. This contrasts with findings within this review which found that power imbalances were a key theme in all forms of cyberbullying. Perpetrators often 'trolled' and 'griefed' to feel in control or powerful (Tang et al., 2020; Ortiz, 2019; Cook et al., 2018; Achterbosch et al., 2017; McInroy & Mishna, 2017; Easpaig & Humphrey, 2016; Ballard & Welch, 2015; Cote, 2015; Paul et al., 2015; Rubin & Camm, 2013), and targeted players they perceived as weaker either due to in game rank, or minority group status (Tang et al., 2020; Cote, 2017; Easpaig & Humphrey, 2017; Fox & Tang, 2017; Tang & Fox, 2016).

Overall, the results of this synthesis suggest that some forms of intentional harassment and aggression within OG are not viewed by gamers as cyberbullying. Terms such as trolling and griefing

appear to be more commonly used to communicate less serious behaviours than cyberbullying. There seem to be different boundaries within games for what is an acceptable amount of harassment which does not depend on the level of distress felt by the victim; distressed or angered responses often fuelled further enjoyment (Cook et al., 2018; Achterbosch et al., 2017). With the normalisation of these behaviours in this setting, and the pressure that many gamers reported to "*shut up and put up*" (Ortiz, 2019, p.580; McInroy & Mishna, 2017), it is unlikely gamers would admit to feeling harmed by these behaviours if they did occur, due to concerns of judgements from others (Ortiz, 2019). The cyclical nature of harassment behaviours would continue, as gamers would be less likely to report 'normal' behaviours as abusive, and unlikely to deem this cyberbullying. This further alludes to the cycle referred to by Cook et al. (2018): "*Trolling appears to breed trolling, with the behaviour seemingly becoming a social contagion among gamers"* (p.3331).

Similar to previous research findings regarding the perpetration of cyberbullying, this literature review found varying motivations. Some perpetrators viewed it as entertainment, as with findings of cyberbullying on other online formats (Rafferty & Vander Ven 2014; Watts et al., 2017). Whereas others found a specific motivation of revenge or justice, which may be more similar to rationales for other forms of cyberbullying such as 'doxing'[10].

Cyberbullying in OG seems to occur through perceptions of an in-group and out-groups (Social Identity Theory; Tajfel et al., 1979). The sub theme of '*Minority Groups as Targets'* suggests that 'otherness' provides a rationale for harassment. Within OG, the 'in-group' appears to be based around the dominant stereotype of the *"straight white male gamer"* (Cote, 2017, p.1).

Salter and Blodgett (2012) propose that hypermasculinity is a prominent concept OG. Themes from this synthesis illustrate OGE as masculine, and traits in line with masculinity ideals, such as power and superiority, are favoured (Tang et al., 2020; Cote, 2017). Kendall (2000) explored hegemonic masculinity and suggested OG and general computer technology are places men often feel power to

[10] The release of personal information online

assert control over others, and technology itself. These theories from Salter and Blodgett (2012) and Kendall (2000) reflect conclusions drawn from this synthesis: desires to control (or win) gaming environments for both men and women (Tang et al., 2020; Achterbosch et al., 2017; Easpaig & Humphrey, 2017), and to assert control over others through abuse.

Salter and Blodgett (2012) suggest that harassment occurs online more as a result of perpetrators feeling a lack of control in the 'real world'. This was not something this review highlighted, but it was noted by Achterbosch et al. (2017) that "*some griefers craved power they did not have in the real world"* (p.7).

Clinical Implications and Recommendations

Victims of cyberbullying within OG did not often use in-game reporting tools (Cook et al., 2018; Przybylski, 2018), instead opting to try and cope independently or seek support from friends and family (Przybylski, 2018; Cote, 2017; Fox & Tang, 2017). Furthermore, Ortiz (2019) noted that victims did not feel that peers or family understood their situation. It may be useful to educate caregivers and peers on the impacts of cyberbullying within OG as they could support.

It is important for mental health professionals to appreciate the psychological impacts of cyberbullying within OGE as victims may present to services. Psychological interventions can provide support for victims. However, perpetrators are likely to continue cyberbullying if reporting functions are not being used to deter them. Therefore, any negative effects of cyberbullying in OGE may be long term.

Understanding the differences between the impacts of face-to-face and cyberbullying is important when considering individuals who may present to psychological services. The present literature review brings to light some of the negative impacts of cyberbullying within OG; an environment individuals actively chose to be in. When comparing this with face-to-face bullying, which typically occurs in environments individuals are in as part of their daily lives (school or work; Mischel & Kitsantas, 2020; Feijó et al. 2019), it may call to question why individuals chose to partake despite

the risks. As noted above, previous research has also reported on gamers perceptions of the benefits of OG to their overall wellbeing (Adachi & Willoughby, 2013; Reinecke, 2009). Thus, it appears for many individuals, they chose to continue in the pursuit of something they value.

As with other forms of cyberbullying, this literature review also highlights the unique impacts and difficulties that OG cyber victims face, when compared with face-to-face bullying. Abuse does not stop when the individuals get home and perpetrators are often less inhibited (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006) due to reduced opportunities for empathy (Slonje et al., 2012) and perceived anonymity (Peebles, 2014; Slonje & Smith, 2008; Willard, 2005).

Thus, it is important for mental health professionals working with victims of OG bullying to consider the impacts. As noted above, OG can provide a coping strategy, safe space and a way of promoting positive overall wellbeing. If an individual is being cyberbullied in this environment then this is taken away and may cause additional negative consequences.

Consequently, recommendations from many of the papers within this review proposed that OG developers should focus on long-term improvements in tools for reporting harassment, and procedures and repercussions for perpetrations. This would help to ensure the tools they provide are used and felt to be useful and trusted by gamers (Przybylski, 2018).

Limitations and Future Research

The researcher acknowledged that including only English language papers introduced a language bias (Butler et al., 2016). However, due to the restrictions of time for completion of this review, and cost implications for translations, this was unavoidable. As cyberbullying can occur across all countries, future reviews could benefit from the inclusion of other non-English papers to synthesise all relevant information on cyberbullying in OG. In addition, grey literature such as dissertations and theses were not included in the search which may have excluded research relevant to this area.

Much of the research within this narrative review noted the enjoyment felt by perpetrators from others' distress (Cook et al., 2018; Achterbosch et al., 2017) and explored personality traits such as machiavellianism and aggression (Tang et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2019). However, there were no papers within this review which explored perpetrators' empathy within cyberbullying in OG. Previous research has found that empathy levels are lower for cyberbullies compared with non-cyberbullies (Brewer & Kerslake, 2015; Steffgen et al., 2011). It would therefore be interesting to explore whether this is the case for cyberbullies within OG, where this behaviour is seen as more normative, and gamers are likely to engage in it.

Conclusion

Cyberbullying is a relatively common and normalised phenomenon within OG and this narrative synthesis provides clarity on the overall experiences of this phenomenon within this environment. The impacts on victims and their coping strategies were explored, and recommendations discussed regarding mental health workers who may work with victims. The motivations of perpetrators were considered within the wider context of the gaming culture which perpetuates the cycle of cyberbullying. Cyberbullying in OG may be reflected upon and understood using Social Integration theory and embedded within ideas of hegemonic masculinity. Future research should consider non-English research papers on this topic and also to explore the role of empathy for perpetrators of cyberbullying in OG.

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Part Two

Empirical Paper

Title:

What are the Lived Experiences of Intimate Image Abuse in an Adult Population?

A Multiperspectival Approach of Victims and Those Who Support

This chapter has been prepared for submission to the Journal of Sexual Aggression (see Appendix H for the journal's author instructions)

Word count: 8,325 (exclusive of tables, figures, footnotes, and references)

Abstract

AIM: The study's aim was to gain a clearer understanding of victims' experiences of Intimate Image Abuse (IIA) from the multiple perspectives of victims and those who have supported them. This is an issue of growing concern; crime rates for this relatively new area of abuse are increasing and there is a paucity of research focusing on the sharing of intimate or private images without consent.

METHODS: One-to-one interviews were conducted and the study employed a Multiperspectival Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (MIPA) in order to investigate the lived experiences of eight women aged between 25 and 73 who had either been the victim of IIA, or provided support to a victim as a friend, family member or support professional.

RESULTS: Three superordinate themes emerged from the MIPA analysis: 1) *Personal apocalypse* (the deep and relentless emotional impacts of IIA and the loss of or changes to identity as a result); 2) *Strands of the social web* (the comfort and acceptance received by supporters alongside the worries about the judgements of others) and 3) *Inferior creatures* (the gendered discrimination of women in society and its negative impact on the women's experiences of victim blaming and judgements).

CONCLUSION: These findings have implications for a number of settings including Clinical Psychologists and mental health professionals, education, law reform and the recognition of the importance of informal and professional support services for victims of IIA.

Introduction

The evolution of technology means accessing and sharing media via the internet is easier than ever. In 2019, 79% of UK adults owned a smartphone: 100% of 16-24-year-olds, and 97% of 25-34-year-olds (Office for National Statistics, 2019). These devices can now be used to share messages and media instantly.

Sexting

One of the many uses for these devices is to engage in online sexual activity (Shaughnessy et al., 2017). Sexting has been defined as the "*creating, sharing and forwarding of sexually suggestive nude or nearly nude images*" (Lenhart, 2009, p.4) and has increased with the growth of technology. A recent meta-analysis found a high number of 18-29 year olds engaged in sending (38.3%), receiving (41.5%), and reciprocal sexting (47.7%; Mori et al., 2020).

People engage in sexting more frequently when they are in a relationship (Burkett, 2015; Martinez-Prather & Vandiver, 2014; Klettke et al., 2014; Mitchell et al., 2012). There is uncertainty regarding gender differences with some research suggesting that women and girls sext more than boys and men (Martinez-Prather & Vandiver, 2014; Mitchell et al., 2012), or the reverse (Chacón-Lópeza et al., 2019), whereas other literature suggests there are no gender differences (Klettke et al., 2014).

Overall, researchers have found mixed motivations for sexting, which were experienced as both positive and negative. Reasons included to feel sexy, for fun (Burkett, 2015), flirtation, self-expression (Henderson & Morgan, 2011), and maintaining intimacy in long distance relationships (Drouin et al., 2017; Walker et al., 2013), but also feeling pressured, afraid or upset (Mitchell et al., 2012; Henderson & Morgan, 2011; Englander, 2012).

Overall, sexting is positively described within the context of intimate sexual relationships, as it enhances intimacy and facilitates sexual pleasure (Drouin et al., 2017; Burkett, 2015). However, individuals also demonstrate a conscious awareness of the risks; that possible outcomes could

include exploitation, sexual abuse, unwanted sharing, legal ramifications and increases in suicidal ideation (Kopecký, 2012).

Intimate Image Abuse

Intimate Image Abuse (IIA) is a broad term which describes a situation in which private or sexual images are used to coerce, threaten, harass, objectify and abuse, by a known or unknown perpetrator, for control, intimidation, sexual gratification, monetary gain or social status building (Henry et al., 2017). There are many specific forms of IIA with their own terminology. Sextortion occurs when perpetrators threaten to share nude or sexual images in order to force a victim to engage in unwanted sexual acts, prevent them from leaving a relationship, or as blackmail (Wolak & Finkelhor, 2016). Another commonly heard term is revenge porn (RP); when an ex-partner shares private or sexual images of the other, as revenge for some perceived wrongdoing, such as ending the relationship (McGlynn et al., 2017). IIA can also include forms of non-consensual image creation such as up-skirting or down-blousing, whereby photos or videos are covertly taken under an individual's garments in public settings (McCann et al., 2018).

Terminology and the Law

The legislation governing IIA differs around the world. In some US states it is not recognised as a criminal act whereas in the UK, RP became a criminal offence in 2015 under s.33 Criminal Justice and Courts Act, 2015. It is punishable by up to two years in prison and over 200 cases of RP were prosecuted in England and Wales in the year following its criminalisation (Crown Prosecution Service 2016), suggesting RP is a current and growing area of concern.

The legislation makes it an offence to share private or sexual images without consent, with an intent to cause distress. This aligns more within the broader spectrum of IIA as opposed to the colloquial media understanding for RP of a revengeful ex-partner. Furthermore, the legislation is being reviewed by the Law Commission to create an offence within the Domestic Abuse Bill and remove the requirement to prove an intent to cause distress.

As a result of these differences and changes, navigating the legal terminology of this form of abuse, and aligning it with a general understanding can become difficult.

A Continuum of Intimate Image Abuse

The disparities in the terminology have muddied the literature in terms of how researchers are classifying RP or IIA. Bates' (2017) study on women's mental health impacts following RP posited it within a broader context of Non-Consensual Pornography; thus RP was viewed as a form of Non-Consensual Pornography, but not vice versa.

McGlynn et al. (2017) proposed a 'continuum of image-based sexual abuse'. This suggests that forms of IIA including RP and sextortion should be understood as a range of gendered, sexualised abuse with a common underlying theme of control and intimidation – similar to domestic abuse and assault. Furthermore, this eliminates the idea of experiences fitting into 'set boxes', and instead illustrates that events cannot easily be distinguished.

Research Findings on IIA

With the increase in smart phone ownership, image sharing apps, and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, rates of IIA have increased over the last year. In 2019, the Revenge Porn Helpline supported 1,681 people, and this increased by 87% in 2020 (The Revenge Porn Helpline, 2021). Research by Henry et al. (2017) found 23% of 4,247 16-49-year-olds in Australia had experienced at least one form of IIA victimisation. Branch et al. (2017) found that approximately 10% of college freshmen had had a private photo shared without consent. Victims were mostly female and perpetrators were mainly a current or ex-boyfriend. They also highlighted the dearth of research exploring the impact of IIA. Mori et al. (2020) suggested that image sharing apps would increase IIA and therefore the psychological consequences of this phenomenon require further exploration.

IIA has received much media attention over recent years, however, there is a paucity of relevant research. Bahadur (2014) suggested that the social and emotional harms of being a victim of IIA are similar to other forms of sexual aggression and include trust issues, shame, anxiety, fear of safety

and humiliation. Victims are almost twice as likely as non-victims to report high levels of psychological distress, and 80% of individuals who experienced threats of IIA reported symptoms consistent with diagnoses of moderate to severe depression and/or anxiety (Henry et al., 2017). Furthermore, some victims can experience posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), suicidal thoughts, negative coping strategies such as alcohol use (Bates, 2017), difficulties finding new romantic partners, job loss, and offline harassment (Burkett, 2015; Citron & Franks, 2014). McGlynn et al. (2020) used a Feminist Phenomenological Approach when interviewing 75 victims of IIA across the UK, Australia and New Zealand. Their results demonstrated five interconnected themes in the harms experienced: Social Rupture (devastation, life-ruining), Constancy (relentless, endless), Existential Threat (unnerving sense of fear and uncertainty), Isolation (a breach of trust, shame, fear of digital spaces) and Constrained Liberty (feeling vulnerable).

The existence of specific websites designed for RP content (Langlois & Slane, 2017), and the challenges website owners have in trying to monitor and remove non-consensual content, mean that once an image is shared online the damage is usually done, as others can save it and re-share. Therefore, the impact of IIA can be long-term and the fear of images reappearing and others seeing them establishes further difficulties for the victim.

As well as the negative impacts of IIA, Bates (2017) also explored positive coping strategies, finding that victims received support from friends, family and therapists, which had a positive effect. Bates suggested future research into RP is needed to examine how new laws have affected experiences.

Rationale and Research Question

Previous research illustrates IIA impacts mental health (Bates, 2017; Henry et al., 2017), relationships with others and work (Burkett, 2015; Citron & Franks, 2014). It is important to continue to explore the psychological experiences of victims, in order to achieve a better understanding of this phenomenon (Mori et al., 2020; Walker & Sleath, 2017; Bates, 2017). Moreover, McGlynn et al.

(2019) highlighted that further research is essential to help victims name and narrate their experiences, in a society where abuse is often normalised.

The aim of this research is to investigate the lived experiences of IIA from victims, or someone who has supported them such as a family member, friend or professional. It is hoped this may provide a better understanding of the impact of this phenomenon. Subsequently, services may be provided with new information to be better equipped in supporting IIA victims.

Walker and Sleath (2017) highlighted the lack of qualitative research exploring negative outcomes of sexting in an adult population, and previous qualitative research has used forms of inductive and thematic analyses. This leaves a gap for further interpretative exploration within an adult population, and for a multiperspective approach, which takes into account the experiences of a wider support system. IIA can have a significant impact on relationships and many victims noted the importance of a support network (Bates, 2017). Larkin et al. (2019) suggest that a multiperspective approach to complex and systemic phenomena can be useful, as understandings of certain phenomena are also located within the accounts of others belonging to the lived world of the individual. In the case of IIA this could include family, friends or professional support.

The research question explored here is:

What are the lived experiences of Intimate Image Abuse in an adult population?

The focus of this research will be on the experience of individuals who have taken, or had taken, photos or videos of themselves (with or without another person), which were then shared with unintended individual(s) without their consent.

The research will also explore this phenomenon through the experiences of family members, friends or support professionals who have directly supported an IIA victim[11].

[11] There were variances in the preferred terminology for individuals who experience IIA. During interviews the researcher was led by participant preference on their terminology; victim, survivor, experiencer. For this report, for consistency the decision was made to use the term victim as the most common wording within the literature, and from participants.

Methodology

Research Design

An interpretivist epistemology underlies the methodological approach for this research. The principles of this perspective require the researcher to understand that individuals have their own significant subjective accounts of their experiences. The goal of research from this position is to gain a meaningful understanding of an experience (Weber, 2004). The aim was to collect information which captures the unique experiences of people who have been a victim of IIA, or part of their support network, in order to understand the nuances of their personally constructed lived experiences.

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) is often used to explore 'lived experiences', and participants' perspectives on the meaning made from these experiences. This research used a Multiperspective IPA approach (MIPA; Larkin et al., 2019) which aims to maintain a commitment to depth, and expand it with a systemic and polyvocal dimension. By combining the three focal perceptions (victim, family and friends, and professional support), the researcher acknowledges that the experience of IIA is not only located within accounts of the victim, but also with others who are within the lived world of the victim (Larkin et al., 2019). With this approach, the principle tenet for IPA of the homogeneity of the sample is maintained despite the multiple perspectives of the participants through the shared experience of IIA (Smith et al., 2019). Larkin et al. (2019) suggest that a multiperspective approach to complex and systemic phenomena can be useful, as understandings of certain phenomena are also located within the accounts of others belonging to the lived world of the individual. In the case of IIA this could include family, friends or professional support.

This research used a purposive sampling method which was based on participants' own judgement of whether they met the inclusion criteria (Coolican, 2017; Tongco, 2007) in accordance with the MIPA design (Larkin et al., 2019; Brocki & Wearden, 2006). The method of sampling also included

snowball sampling, which was a helpful way of creating a wide range of participants and rich data (Smith et al., 2009).

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The inclusion and exclusion criteria are outlined below.

Table 8.
A Table of Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criteria	Include	Exclude
Experience	- Direct experience of IIA at any time - Direct experience of supporting someone in a professional capacity through IIA - Direct experience of supporting a partner, friend or family member through IIA	- Experience of having photos or videos taken but not shared or threatened to share (voyeurism) - No direct experience of IIA - Perpetrators of IIA
Age	- Adults age 18+ years at the time of interview - Any age when IIA occurred	- Under the age of 18
Language	- Ability to speak fluent English	- Unable to speak English fluently

Inclusion criteria for this research required that all participants had a lived experience of IIA, or of supporting a victim through IIA. This was to create homogeneity within the sample in line with the IPA approach (Cresswell, 2016). The focus was victims' experiences and therefore perpetrators were excluded.

It was recognised that participants may fit into more than one category, for example being a victim and support professional; this was guided by the participant. No restrictions were made as to the length of time since the IIA occurred; as the abuse takes place online and images are reported, it can be continual. Additionally, the impacts of IIA may be similar to other forms of sexual abuse, and therefore accurate memories of the event can be recalled for years afterwards (Goldfarb et al., 2020; Peace & Porter, 2004).

Inclusion criteria were focused on an adult population of at least 18-years-old. The abuse experiences of children should be understood within their own right and specific ethical considerations for research with children should be followed (Hill, 2005; BPS, 2014). Participants were required to be English speaking as the researcher did not have access to interpretation services for interviews.

Materials

A semi-structured interview guide was used informed by recommendations from Smith et al. (2009). The interview guides (Appendix I) consisted of open-ended questions, formed around themes from previous literature in the area. They focused on individuals' experiences surrounding the IIA, including their thoughts and feelings about it and support networks and strategies. Three interview guides were created with variations in the wording of the questions for victims, friends and family, or support professionals.

Procedure

Ethical Considerations

The British Psychological Society (BPS; 2014) and the American Psychological Association's (APA; 2000) Codes of Ethics for Research with Human Participants were followed throughout. Guidelines for internet-mediated research set out by the BPS Ethics Guidelines were followed (BPS, 2017). Ethical approval was obtained from the Coventry University Ethics Committee (Appendix J). A detailed description of the ethical considerations of this research can be found in Appendix K.

Recruitment

This research used a purposive sampling method which fits with the MIPA design (Larkin et al., 2019; Coolican, 2017; Tongco, 2007; Brocki & Wearden, 2006), and snowball sampling which was a helpful way of creating a wide range of participants and rich data (Smith et al., 2009).

Participants were recruited through varied media, including advertisements on a University system for psychology undergraduate students, online social media (Twitter and Facebook) and UK support services such as The Revenge Porn Helpline website. Research supervisors also advertised it within their networks. Support organisations for IIA across the UK, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand were contacted to advertise the research. Participants contacted the researcher directly via email, were provided with the participant information sheet (Appendix L) and had the opportunity to ask any questions before completing a consent form (Appendix M). This conversation was also used to screen for the inclusion criteria (Table 8). Participants preferred method of interview (telephone or videocall) was requested and a suitable appointment made.

Individual interviews were conducted using Zoom (a secure video-link programme) or telephone for participants who preferred this. They were recorded using a password protected Dictaphone for the telephone, or the record function on Zoom. All interviews were conducted using the researcher's personal computer in a confidential and quiet environment. Interview length ranged from 39 to 120 minutes (*M* = 68 minutes).

Brief participant demographics including age, gender, sexual orientation and location (all open questions) were collected at the start of each interview. Each participant was verbally debriefed and emailed the Participant Debrief form (Appendix N).

Analysis

Researcher Perspective

It was acknowledged that the researcher had her own perspectives and potential unconscious bias on the subject matter. A bracketing interview (Alase, 2017) was completed prior to commencing interviews with the supervision team, in order to identify the researcher's assumptions and fully focus on participants' sense making (Cronin & Lowes, 2016). The researcher became very aware of the feminist themes that were present in many of her assumptions; that victims would be mostly females and perpetrators mostly men and that IIA occurred as a method of control or intention to

degrade. Furthermore, it was also assumed that this experience would be distressing for the individual but contained within a relatively small field of the victim's life. These reflections were of note for the interview process to minimise leading questions, and through the analysis process. Criteria of validity, credibility, and believability were factors which the researcher wished to strive for through this process, whilst acknowledging that the relationship between her own values and the research can be beneficial (Harrison et al., 2001).[12]

Methods of Data Analysis

Table 9 below illustrates the procedure when completing the IPA analysis (Smith et al., 2009). As MIPA is a relatively new approach, the guidelines for IPA were followed (Smith et al., 2019). There was also an acknowledgement that there may be distinct themes for each different group (victim, friends and family and professional support), which may also transcend groups.

The programme NVivo was used to support the analysis process.

[12] The researcher perspective and how subjectivity was maintained through this process is discussed further in Chapter Three.

Table 9

Procedure for IPA analysis

Stage of Analysis	**Procedure**
Reading and Re-reading of the Transcript	Listening to the recording and reading the transcripts multiple times to become familiar with the data and develop an 'interpretative relationship' (Smith & Osborn, 2008).
Initial Noting (Linguistic and Conceptual Comments)	Annotations using 'free textual analysis' (Smith et al., 2009), including descriptive notes, paraphrasing and reflections about pertinent information (Smith et al. 2009). This was done using the 'annotations' function of NVivo and the 'code' function, which creates a list of all codes for individual transcripts and the data set as a whole. There were a number of duplications of the same codes (i.e. 'family support') or similar wording ('support from family') as a result of the researchers attempts to maintain an independent analysis approach and not be led by previous codes. Thus the full code list was reviewed, checked for errors and repetitions (Appendix P).
Development of Emergent Themes	Emergent Themes were noted and their meaning explored (Smith et al., 2009). Codes were grouped based on similarities to begin exploring potential themes. These remained grounded within each participant's account at this stage. The 'Maps' tool in NVivo was used to create an interactive mind map of the codes for each participants transcript (Appendix T).
Making Connections across Emergent Themes	Subthemes were created from emergent themes which were reflective of the most significant aspects of the transcript which had meaningful connections (Smith et al., 2009).
Repeating the Process	The process was repeated for each of the participant transcripts creating new subthemes for each (Smith et al., 2009).
Searching for Patterns	Subthemes were compared and collated, and from this process 'Superordinate Themes' were constructed. These were representative of clusters of the Subthemes, whilst maintaining the truth and meaning of each participant's experience (Smith et al., 2009). IPA supports the ideography that individual accounts are as valid as anything else and the focus is on the particular as opposed to the general (Smith et al., 1999). Participants' code maps (Appendix T) were exported to a code spreadsheet (Appendix U) to explore the number of times each code was present across all participants to aid theme creation. This spreadsheet was also used to group friends and family, victims, support professionals, and for both friends and family and support professionals to see if there were any common themes across perspectives. This data was considered alongside the transcripts, codes and themes and was used as a guide but not an exclusive measure of the importance of a code for an individual or group as per IPA guidelines (Smith et al., 2009).
Identifying Recurrent Themes	The final step of the analysis involved examining the Superordinate Themes in terms of their representation of the full data set including direct quotes which linked with each Superordinate Theme (Smith et al., 2009). Themes that were found within one

	individuals account were still just as valid but when considering the overall themes for the group, multiple occurrences of the same theme across participants were seen as pertinent. Due to the multiperspectival approach of this research, this stage was completed for the data set as a whole, victims, friends/family, support professionals and the latter two groups combined as 'supporters'. Themes were refined and revised by checking these against the data. Some were dropped because they did not fit, or had a weak evidential basis. This process was cyclical and the researcher continued to review themes if they overlapped, or if a new theme was represented by a previous case. Hand drawn diagrams were also created in order to explore themes (Appendix V & W).

Dual interpretation was considered whilst analysing transcripts; *"Participants are trying to make sense of their world; the researcher is trying to make sense of the participants trying to make sense of their world"* (Smith & Osborn, 2003, p. 51).

An excerpt of transcribed data for one interview was independently coded by another researcher in order to enhance the quality and reliability of data analysis and to highlight similarities and differences between codes. There were variations in the wording chosen to describe some of the codes but overall concepts demonstrated a high level of reliability. Additionally, coding and themes were discussed with the research supervision team which provided reflexive discussions on the data analysis. Finally, a brief table of the codes and themes for participants who agreed for this was emailed to them (*n*=6; Appendix Q) to check that no data had been misunderstood through the transcription or analysis stages.[13] This remained in line with the IPA concepts of the double hermeneutic approach, maintaining the truth of the participants' own experiences. Participants confirmed they were happy with the representation of the themes which were generated.

Participants

Eight women living in the UK and aged 25-73-years-old (*M*= 38 years, *SD* = 16.10) took part in this research. The majority of participants identified as heterosexual (*n*=4), with the remaining

[13] Only participants who had provided consent in advance to be contacted for this purpose were part of this process

identifying as either bisexual (*n*=3) or pansexual (*n*=1). All participants identified their ethnicity as white (n=8), and specified as British (*n*=4), English (*n*=2), European (*n*=1) or gave no further detail (*n*=1). A table of demographics for each participant group is presented in Appendix O.

Participants identified either as being a victim of IIA (*n*=4), having supported a victim as a friend/family (*n*=2) or a professional (*n*=2). Those who identified as a support individual had direct experience of speaking with a victim at length specifically about their experience of IIA, either at the time or after. Participants' experiences of IIA varied in terms of when this occurred; IIA was perpetrated following the end of a relationship by the ex-partner, by someone outside of the relationship, or by an unknown perpetrator. The images were shared through social media platforms, messaging and/or specific sites dedicated to sharing RP.

Despite all having varied experiences of IIA, the homogeneity is maintained through their lived experiences of the same phenomenon and the MIPA approach allows exploration of the relational, intersubjective, and microsocial dimensions of IIA. Furthermore, some of the participants shared the same incident experience from their differing perspective, creating further homogeneity. Finally, the systemic nature of this phenomenon from a socio-ecological model means that supporters experience the effects on the victims through the ripples made through the system (Davis et al. 1995). Therefore producing another layer whilst maintaining homogeneity within the sample.

Results

The aim of the research was to explore the lived experience of IIA from the varied perspectives of victims and those who support them. This was achieved by exploring the data in accordance with an MIPA approach. Data analysis provided superordinate and subordinate themes for each participant (Appendix Q), for participant groups (victims, friends and family, professionals), and across both groups of supporters (Appendix R).

Finally, superordinate and subordinate themes were created across all participant groups and have been presented in table and diagram format (Table 10 and Appendix S). Each superordinate theme has two or three sub themes supported by quotes from participants interviews. Three common superordinate themes were found: '*Personal apocalypse'*, '*Strands of the social web'*, and '*Inferior creatures'*. These are discussed in detail below. Themes were created from both participants' interpretations of their own experiences as a victim, and from how supporters interpreted the victim's feelings. Table 10 demonstrates which themes were present within each participant's interview and how these themes map across groups.

Table 10

A table of theme prevalence for each participant and group

		Superordinate and Subordinate Themes						
		Personal apocalypse		Strands of the social web			Inferior creatures	
Group	**Participant**	*Internal battle*	*Grabbing for the strands of myself*	*It takes a village*	*Nothing to be ashamed of*	*Judgements*	*Fair game*	*Impotent Rage*
Victim	Penelope	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
	Rose	✓	✓		✓		✓	
	Ruby		✓			✓	✓	
	Daisy	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Professional	Kim	✓		✓			✓	✓
	Barbara	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Friend/ Family	Freya	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
	Robyn			✓	✓			

Personal Apocalypse

This theme highlights the victims' experience of IIA and how it felt all encompassing. Rose described it as *"[her] own personal apocalypse*" (line 86), whilst Freya expressed it was *"eating her entire life"* (171). It comprises two subthemes which explore the internal emotional experience and impact of IIA, and the impact on the individuals' sense of their identity.

Internal Battle

Participants interpreted the emotional experience of IIA as a war. One professional made multiple references to victims "*battling this*" (Kim, 62). She went on to describe the ongoing and relentless nature of IIA as having wounds re-opening:

> *"as much as you can heal from it the wounds re-opened on a monthly basis…imagine having that wound open every couple of weeks"* (Kim, 82-84).

This idea of having a wound re-opening suggests reliving the same painful experience. It also alludes to the sensitivity of a wound which never quite closes, and perhaps the vulnerability to be more easily hurt each time. Kim also described waves crashing down on the victim continually, and a repeated painful response:

> *"she goes through it again. Like if she has like a break where not a lot of images are being shared and then a wave of images comes again you can tell that's she's really feeling like, that's like the first time again"* (Kim, 92-94).

The impact of this ongoing battle seems to be physically exhausting for the victim who *"…can never seem to rest [ending up] … absolutely broken"* (Kim, 72-79).

The victims themselves also conveyed the relentless nature of their experiences seeing it as "*a never ending circle*" (Rose, 387) and *"…a constant sexual abuse [that] is still happening. It's degrading on a daily basis."* (Penelope, 615-616). It impacted on their ability to keep going when their emotional reserves were running low:

> *"… the resilience that I would have had to these things before feels much tighter like … the elastic used to get to here, and now it gets to here, on my ability to cope"* (Daisy, 381-383).

The damage inflicted by IIA was seen as "*a minefield*" (Barbara, 347) conjuring images of uncertainty and unpredictability, which were common concepts for victims. They were unsure where their images were or who had seen them, and felt a constant fear of when or how they might surface. This also communicates ideas of how destructive finding one of those 'mines' could be, and the emotional damage victims may suffer. Furthermore, Kim perceived the IIA as "*not just an invasion of your visual body but like your whole being"* (Kim, 76-77).

The use of the continuing war metaphor for Barbara and Kim speaks to the severity of the impact and something which was deeply personal which has now been attacked and taken over. This also suggests a lack of control over the situation and the unexpected shock when it occurs. Furthermore, the reference to *"[her] whole being*" elucidates that this was not just an attack on this woman's physical body, but rather an attack on her identity.

Grabbing For the Strands of Myself

The theme of IIA affecting the victim's identity arose in some way for every participant. This was either in terms of a loss of identity, trying to rebuild one's sense of identity, or a worry that others' perceptions were not in line with the way they perceived themselves as a result of the IIA.

Daisy spoke of her identity drifting away and how she continued trying to pull parts back together again, despite frustrations at the inconsistency of her success:

> *"I remember how I was, and how I am now, and trying to grab at you know the strands of me that I still have and occasionally… I can, you know… there are things about those experiences I am able to access but only sometimes and, yeah, it it's incredibly frustrating"* (Daisy, 370-373).

The concept of grabbing and pulling at these strands creates a sense of hopefulness; an attempt to rebuild one's self despite the difficulties, and speaks to a sense of strength and resilience in the face of struggles. Whilst Ruby was uncertain how she would *"pick up the pieces"* (Ruby, 262), Rose felt that pieces of herself had vanished, and her feelings of hollowness left her with a *"loss of identity"* (Rose, 206). When speaking about her identity, Rose disclosed that she had changed her name:

> *"I was the only person in the world with my name…And I feel like all my accomplishments for my university work, all the articles I've written, and everything was just instantly turned to ash"* (Rose, 216-217).

There was a sense that the IIA had changed the victim as a person and this was reflected by Freya saying *"someone has stolen my best friend"* (Freya, 310-311). She blamed the perpetrator for the IIA and also the loss that Freya herself felt in her life as a result.

Victims' sexual behaviours have also been affected by the IIA by feeling *"…a lot less sexual"* (Rose 408) and not "*feel[ing] good about intimacy*" (Rose, 411). They no longer felt safe engaging in image sharing, which they had previously enjoyed; they spoke about losing a part of themselves as a result of this, with a fear they would not get this back:

> *"I would have said in the past that I was a very confidently sexual person, was very flirtatious… and not shy about having a sexual like joke conversation. And … I find myself being very easily uncomfortable now in a lot of those same scenarios than I used to be. So flirting doesn't come as naturally, I've found generally that I'm just not very attracted to anyone"* (Daisy, 334-338).

Penelope highlighted she hadn't "*had a sexual relationship in nearly 2 years."* As *"the thought of that terrifies [her]"* (Penelope, 559-560). Overall, finding their sexual identity through this experience felt tough; "*I've tried to separate my own sexual identity through all this, has been really really difficult*" (Daisy, 299-300).

Barbara also spoke of the IIA affecting the victims' abilities to be true to themselves, and comfortably express themselves in the same way they used to, suggesting they are *"not being able to be who [they] are freely"* (Barbara, 163). As well as expressing loss, victims also conveyed that that the IIA had become *"a part of [them] now and it just feels like everything's a bit wrong"* (Rose, 430-431). This was not a part that seemed to fit well and created a sense of unease. Participants were not only navigating the process of trying to pull back lost parts of themselves, but also trying to understand and integrate this new part (being an IIA victim), and consider how this might fit into their identity.

For Ruby it felt difficult to think that others may see her differently to how she saw herself:

> *"I just didn't want people to see me like that because I didn't believe that that was who I was.…I didn't want people to think like that I was like a whore for doing that because I very much don't believe that that makes you a whore"* (Ruby, 286-274).

Victims' sense of identity comprised how they were seen by others as well as how they saw themselves, and this perception that others could not see their true self felt uncomfortable. The importance of social connections is addressed in the second superordinate theme below.

Strands of the Social Web

All participants spoke of the experience of IIA within the context of a network; strands of a web which either help to connect them to others who provide support, or communicate judgements and victim blaming. The idea of this web is discussed below within three sub themes that explore the importance of a whole 'village' to provide support, the function of social strands in communicating acceptance, and the more entangling strands where participants felt judged.

It Takes a Village

When discussing victim support, there was a myriad of services and actions which were felt to be essential. The perception was that victims had not received a sufficient level of support to truly help

them. The support one professional provided did not feel enough, as she felt she was helping with "*just the tip of the iceberg"* (Kim, 131-132).

The overarching notion from participants was that in order to make it through this experience, victims relied on support from services, friends and family. Penelope highlighted the "*need [for] real connections"* (Penelope, 456), and no participants expressed that they went through IIA alone.

Participants spoke of a multifaceted approach involving police officers, solicitors, financial aid services, IIA organisations and counselling. But overall, there was a dearth of support provided from all directions. Building up the strands of the web with as many support services as possible was felt to be essential as *"it really does take a, takes a village to support someone"* (Kim, 183).

All supporters noted the limitations of their roles within the network of support. Friends and family noted a lack of knowledge on the law or support services, and so they focused on being there for the victim:

> *"I don't know the, the legal options and what help is available out there for this…so I've just been there to make sure she's ok; to be supportive"* (Robyn, 296-299).

Professionals noted the boundaries of their own roles in terms of knowledge of the judicial system:

> *"If you are a therapist it's not your role to advise. Therefore you don't need to necessarily read up on the law... That's not really your role. But in agencies where the role goes further, because there's different kinds of support, then they need to have the facts at their fingertips so that they can advise"* (Barbara, 329-333).

Jill also commented on the service provision restrictions of her organisation as they *"don't offer long term emotional support… we wouldn't give any kind of counselling or mental health advice"* (30-40).

Consequently, it was remarked that victims "*need someone they can talk to freely, in the sense of a therapist but also someone in an advisory capacity"* (Barbara, 334).

Nothing to be Ashamed of

Friends and family highlighted the importance of non-shaming communication. This was also an important issue for victims themselves in how they felt they were treated by friends and family as it enabled them to feel supported and comforted.

Friends and family wanted to communicate most strongly that they were "*being there for one another [and]… not about criticising choices"* (Robyn, 199-200), and feelings of empathy; *"If [they're] upset then I'm upset"* (Freya, 187-188), thus being non-judgemental towards the victim. They stressed that consensual private image sharing was a normal activity, nothing to feel ashamed of and that it was the perpetrator who was blameworthy. For Robyn this was one of the first things she mentioned in the interview:

> *"very much what I wanted to get across first was the fact that, that they shouldn't feel guilty or bad in the first instance about creating those images in the first place I think that's a perfectly normal and ok thing to do between two consenting adults and that's nothing they should ever, ever be ashamed of and that was the thing I wanted to get across more than anything"* (Robyn, 35-38).

Participants highlighted a shared trust of each other, not just the absence of judgement: *"She knew that she had our support"* (Freya, 291).

The responses of family members and professionals were noticed by victims and created safety, acceptance and feeling *"less alone"* (Rose, 468), which was valued:

> *"They wanted to hold my hand through it and talk for as long as I need to and actually actively engage in the conversations, not just listen and go "yeah yeah yeah." It was like just being there is needed you know. Talking and unravelling everything and just having someone to talk to basically*" (Penelope, 458-461)

Judgements

However, in contrast to the above, participants were aware and fearful of the potential judgements and shaming responses of others, feeling this was a flawed way to view their situation:

> *"I'm afraid of judgement from people who are small minded and cruel.…that people will judge me rather than the person responsible for doing the horrible thing they did*" (Daisy, 260-272).

Participants were concerned about their perception amongst others. They worried *"that [they were] going to come across in a certain way because there's always that stigma in life and [they] just didn't want people to see [them] like that because [they] didn't believe that that was who [they were]"* (Ruby, 285-287).

Despite victims recognising that these potential beliefs of others were not 'true', the lack of control over how people may view them was challenging: "*I didn't want people to think those things*" (Ruby, 280-281).

Inferior Creatures

This superordinate theme relates to sexism and misogyny, conceptualising how individuals perceived their experience as a woman, and how this impacted on their journey. The two subordinate themes relate to views of women in society, and feelings of anger and frustration at a perceived lack of control over their experience of IIA.

Fair Game

Rose stated that women are viewed as sexual objects within society, given *"They think [women]'re fair game, [and] not people… just like a little trophy for someone to put on their shelf…."* (Rose, 244-547).

For Freya this was a sense of being like property that others feel they have an inherent right to; "*feeling that someone's got a right to you, a right to your body because, well you've shown it to me before and its mine now and I have it"* (125-127).

This suggests that these views of women as sexual objects create a feeling of entitlement for perpetrators, and a perception of a justifiable motive because it is the norm. Kim expressed how angry she felt this was the reality, and believed this kind of behaviour was dehumanising:

> *"I'm like, this is a, this is a person, this is a human being and I, I just hate the way people speak to, speak about women especially online"* (Kim, 217-218).

Her reference to the online environment alludes to this being especially devious. This is potentially due to the permanency of gendered abuse perpetrated online, and of users being more open to abusing others because of the perceived security of anonymity that an online situation provides.

Ruby highlighted that if women share private images of their body with another person, then IIA is the expected status quo, which therefore perpetuates the cycle of victim blaming:

> *"okay yeah they shared it between the rugby group and stuff and that shouldn't of happened but that was their boundary you know they wasn't ever going to put it on social media…just going to joke between friends and that was it"* (Ruby, 343-347).

IIA was something Ruby perceived as the norm and, whilst she communicated that she expected this, she also clearly stated this was something the perpetrator should not have done. Ruby felt a sense of being the target of others' judgements because of her gender, despite the photo also showing another male with her; *"yeah it's definitely 100% because I was the girl. 100%.... I got most of the stick for it and it's just like, that's just not fair"* (Ruby, 124; 449-450).

The women recognised these judgements and interpreted them in line with their own views that women are not inferior, nor should they be treated as trophies, and it was this belief which ignited the sense of unfairness. This further stresses an undercurrent of IIA being that the 'game' is not fair

for women. Participants identified the inequalities between genders, understood these as reasons for their personal experiences of abuse, and felt a sense of injustice at this. The unfairness towards the way IIA victims were treated, and the current legislation which describes IIA as revenge porn, feeds into societal views of victim blaming:

> *"Revenge porn is like, it's almost like a misnomer because it makes you think that that person is deserving is something to happen like a revenge act. And pornography as well is like a sexual gratification word, like for the most part and again it's not that. It's not pornography and it's not revenge"* (Kim, 15-18).

Kim also spoke about the police involvement in cases of IIA. Her choice of words and tone suggested a frustration that "*there's a 50/50 chance you will get a good response from the police*" (236) and a worry that this barrier to justice results in "*a lot of victims [not] reporting it"* (Kim, 240).

Participants also spoke of victims feeling *"undervalued"* (Kim, 99) and that their "*voice just doesn't matter"* (Penelope, 636). The overall impact of this experience was summarised by Penelope as *"the most crushing sense of injustice that you could ever be dealt"* (Penelope, 183).

Impotent Rage

This subordinate theme stems from the frustration and anger at societal inequalities and injustice, as well as feelings of powerlessness to get justice for themselves, or to affect change and achieve support:

> *"the sort of impotent rage that you get from this situation where you're like I can't believe you have done this for just, kicks. And then, and we can do nothing, like he's learned nothing from this situation like he could do this again"* (Freya, 89-91).

Freya, who supported a victim, felt *"just so powerless in that situation, like nothing [she] can say makes it better"* (Freya, 304-305). Furthermore, Kim commented on the phrasing of the legislation and the helplessness she felt:

> *"Cos if somebody's like I've spoke to the police and they just said "sorry he did it for the lols"…like what the hell do I do? … I want them to like help you, and I understand that that's the law, but yeah like what can you do"* (Kim, 377-380).

This powerlessness induced anger and not acceptance; *"more angry, frustrated at the, at the thing that there was nothing she could do"* (Barbara, 76-77).

Supporters communicated a sense of desperation to help and be *"a bit of a band aid"* (Freya, 293) because of how much they cared about the victims. As can be expected, this was especially true for friends and family:

> *"I'd do anything for her like I would…break into his house steal his laptop and break it [laughs] like I just wanted her to feel better, and I just wanted, I just want good things for her and it's really hard when it just felt like the world was kicking her when she was down and like, you're just so powerless in this situation"* (Freya, 301-304).

Freya also described it feeling like "*trying to board up a house in a crisis like we were just building barricades and walls"* (Freya, 42-43).

This also seems to speak to the invasion features of the '*Constant battle'* theme, and alludes to a feeling of desperation to help, alongside feelings of hopelessness at the lack of control in generating meaningful change for the victim.

Discussion

The present study explored the experiences of IIA for eight women; both victims and supporters, and three superordinate themes were identified.

Each participant experienced, and/or supported someone through the experience of IIA within their own context. At times there were difficulties separating the emotional experiences associated specifically with IIA, and other aspects such as the breakdown of relationships, domestic abuse, and perceived judgements regarding a sexual encounter. This was something specifically highlighted by Daisy; "*I had that other relationship end last year…I do find the emotions I experienced, all of them have kind of been mushed together…it all gets mixed up*" (332-334). Therefore, it is important to recognise the intersectional nature of each participant's experience and its location within their own context.

Discussion of Themes

Personal Apocalypse

The superordinate theme of '*Personal Apocalypse'* conceptualised the emotional distress and relentless impacts of the IIA, and the impression this can leave on the victim's identity. Previous research by McGlynn et al. (2019) suggested that victims experience IIA as devastating, life-ruining and endless. Research by Bates (2017) and Henry et al. (2017) also recognised the psychological distress and mental health consequences (such as anxiety, depression and symptoms of PTSD) experienced by IIA victims, which were also findings in this research.

Previous research has not specified the impact on identity. This was highlighted by the current study within the subordinate theme of '*Grabbing for the strands of myself*' as the process of understanding and rebuilding one's identity.

Strands of the Social Web

The superordinate theme of the '*Strands of the social web'* illustrates how connections with others were thought about within the experience of IIA. This was further categorised into subthemes of '*Judgements'* and '*Nothing to be ashamed of*'. Other research has also recognised that victims of IIA are fearful of the judgements of others and potential victim blaming (McGlynn et al., 2019).

The present research differs from previous studies by incorporating the multiple perspectives of supporters. The subordinate theme '*Nothing to be ashamed of*' illustrates the desire of others to support, and the impact that these positive connections had in communicating acceptance to the victims. Previous research by Bates (2017) also quantitatively identified connections with friends and family as a positive coping strategy.

Inferior Creatures

The superordinate theme of '*Inferior creatures'* depicted the sense participants made of living within a society which has unjust gender bias, and the resultant feelings of anger at a lack of control over this. These patterns echoed findings from the study by McGlynn et al. (2019).

Psychological Theory

The continuum of image-based sexual abuse proposed by McGlynn et al. (2019) can be a useful way of conceptualising some of the findings of this research. The theme of '*Inferior creatures'* highlighted the way women are viewed in society as sexual objects who do not have autonomy over their own bodies. This draws on the previous model of the continuum of sexual abuse (Kelly, 2013), which proposes that men's behaviour is understood as either typical or harmful. Furthermore, stereotypes of deviant behaviours prevent victims explaining why societally accepted behaviours (such as objectifying women) cause them to feel victimised. Viewing IIA on the continuum of image-based sexual abuse can help women to explain their experiences by showing shades of behaviours, rather than needing to classify this as either typical, or aberrant.

Another useful concept in relation to the themes of this research is the Power Threat Meaning Framework (Johnstone & Boyle, 2018). Using this framework can help reflect on how the relevant wider social factors such as discrimination and inequality, alongside IIA, link with the distress and shame felt by victims and supporters. It provides a perspective on distress and shame which considers not only the individual, but the wider struggle for a fairer society. This seems be a shared experience for the victims and the supporters, as nearly all participants commented on the power imbalances of women in society, as well as the shame and blame responses they felt as a result of perpetrators' misuse of this power.

Limitations and Future Research

Participants were all White British which limits our understanding of the multiperspectival experience of IIA with people from other cultures and ethnic origins. This is particularly of note as research suggests that black and minority ethnic (BAME) women are more likely to experience forms of sexual abuse including IIA (Powell et al., 2020). Furthermore, a BBC Newsnight documentary (2015) highlighted that women from certain cultures may be specifically targeted for IIA and could face ostracization or punishment from families that abide by codes of honour and shame. In addition, there are noted barriers for people from BAME groups in accessing psychological support services (Imkaan, 2020; McKellar, 2019; SafeLives, 2015; Loewenthal et al., 2012). It would therefore be important to explore the experiences of IIA, and methods of support, if any, that people from different cultures and ethnicities may experience, as well as the perspectives of the people within their systems.

Though this was an adequate sample size within an IPA methodology, and was rich with data, the use of a multiperspective approach meant there may have been further benefit to a larger sample size. Having more participants within each group of supporters could have allowed for further interpretations for the wider experiences of friends, family and professionals who support.

Two of the eight participants had experienced IIA whilst at school and these were both historical accounts. Technology has evolved significantly in the last decade and image sharing is becoming the norm for young people (Mori et al., 2020). Therefore, future research is needed to explore IIA experiences amongst young people. Research has shown that early abuse, such as child pornography, can impact on young people's sense of self and overall wellbeing (Gewirtz-Meydan et al., 2019). As young people cannot provide legal consent to engage in intimate image sharing, this behaviour would be classified within the definition of distributing child pornography. As a form of abuse, IIA should be explored within this population to gain further understanding in order to provide appropriate support.

No perspectives were gathered from the children of victims within this research, however, it is important to consider the whole system around an individual who has suffered any form of abuse, as family impacts can be extensive (Kirkner et al., 2018; Lorenz et al., 2018; Holt, 2017). Therefore, future research could continue with a multiperspective approach to explore the understanding of IIA for the victims' children or partners.

Clinical Implications and Recommendations

Participants saw engaging in this research as an opportunity to enact their agency by raising awareness and providing recommendations for change. Many women felt that, despite the difficulties of their experience it "*proved that [they were] strong*" (Ruby, 458), and overcoming the challenges allowed them to feel "*very proud of [themselves]"* (Daisy, 570). Overall, their recommendations for change proved a big part of why they wished to engage in this research and a full table of their own recommendations is located in Appendix X with further considerations noted below.

Similar to other forms of abuse, this research highlights the importance of therapeutic input for victims, and how therapy can be useful in making sense of their experiences in line with their identity (Anderson et al., 2019; Irons & Lad, 2017). Initially, increasing the understanding and

recognition of the mental health impacts of IIA could be beneficial in order to provide higher quality therapeutic support. One opportunity may be for Clinical Psychologists to work collaboratively with mental health services and schools, to provide information leaflets, or psychoeducation and teaching sessions on IIA and its impacts. Information leaflets could be distributed to relevant organisations such as schools, GP surgeries and support organisations as most participants (*n*=6) highlighted the need for education as an essential factor to enact change. When discussing sexting and image sharing, the majority of participants felt this was a normative and enjoyable behaviour. Therefore, education should focus around consent within relationships and technology, and potential impacts of IIA on wellbeing, rather than the prevention of consensual image sharing.

Furthermore, with technology a big part of society and IIA rates rising, it may be useful to include questions around negative or distressing online experiences such as IIA within assessments for psychological services. To the researcher's knowledge, this is not something which is usually discussed, but may help to normalise conversations around this topic, and provide an opportunity for service users to share.

Raising general awareness and working collaboratively with other services could help victims of IIA by providing a multi-disciplinary approach. By increasing the range of services that can be offered to victims, services may feel more comfortable working within their own role, and less worried that they are not doing enough. These research findings suggest that a network would create a cohesive feeling of security for the victim and those who support them.

As a part of the theme of '*Nothing to be ashamed of*', participants shared that the non-judgemental and accepting attitudes from others created feelings of comfort, acceptance and safety. Therefore, for Clinical Psychologists and other mental health professionals working with victims of IIA it would be vital to maintain these interpersonal skills to create a positive relationship. It is recognised that many therapists will have their own personal values around sexting or image sharing which may

conflict with the client, and shared supervision may be a useful opportunity for clinicians working with victims of IIA to provide professional support to each other.

Finally, it is important for psychological services to recognise the roles that family and friends have in supporting victims of IIA. The feelings of helplessness and anger may be difficult for them to navigate whilst maintaining their perceived role in holding the victim's wellbeing as their priority. Mental health workers with an interest and experience in this area could facilitate online support groups for family and friends to provide validation and normalisation of any difficulties they might experience.

Conclusion

The present study aimed to explore the experiences of IIA from the multiple perspectives of victims and supporters. Qualitative methodology was utilised and data was analysed using MIPA, which resulted in three superordinate themes, each with two or three subordinate themes: '*Personal apocalypse*' ('*Internal battle'* and '*Grabbing for the strands of myself*'), '*Strands of the social web'* ('*It takes a village'*, '*Nothing to be ashamed of*' and '*Judgements'*), and '*Inferior creatures'* ('*Impotent rage*' and '*Fair game'*). These results have important clinical implications in terms of how services can support victims of IIA and raise awareness, whilst also considering the importance of the systems around them. Furthermore, participants were eager for the law on IIA to be reviewed in order to better provide justice for victims. Future research should build on findings from the current study and explore IIA when it occurs with people from BAME backgrounds, and children and young people in order to further the understanding of the impact of IIA across society and to facilitate preventative measures where appropriate.

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Part Three

Reflective Account

Title:

Identity, Feminism and not Being Good Enough

This paper has not been prepared for any journal submission

Word Count: 3,232 (Exclusive of tables, figures, footnotes and references)

Introduction

Reflection has been an essential part of my journey in becoming a Clinical Psychologist, and I am thankful to have been awarded opportunities and encouragement to engage in this. The British Psychological Society (BPS) recognises the importance of reflection and considers it a fundamental part of the role to maintain professional status within the Health and Care Professionals Council (HCPC; BPS, 2017).

The reflective process during completion of this thesis has been a different experience to anything I have engaged in thus far in my career. I believe this is due to the breadth and length of time that has been dedicated to the process in its entirety.

I began by reflecting my own investment and motivations for the research topics, and considered how my own experiences and values influenced this process, and myself. I also thought about my identity, and specifically ideas of feminism. Using a metaphor of different hats, I contemplated the different roles and requirements of a Trainee Clinical Psychologist, and how to navigate being a researcher and a therapist alongside my own identity.

With me throughout the thesis, and career overall, have been the stories of '*someone else would do this better*' and '*you are not good enough*'. The idea of 'imposter syndrome' is often spoken of within clinical psychology training (Tigranyan et al., 2020) and other healthcare professions (Gill, 2020). When reviewing my reflective log I noticed that this was a theme through most of my reflections and I have therefore included it within this reflective paper.

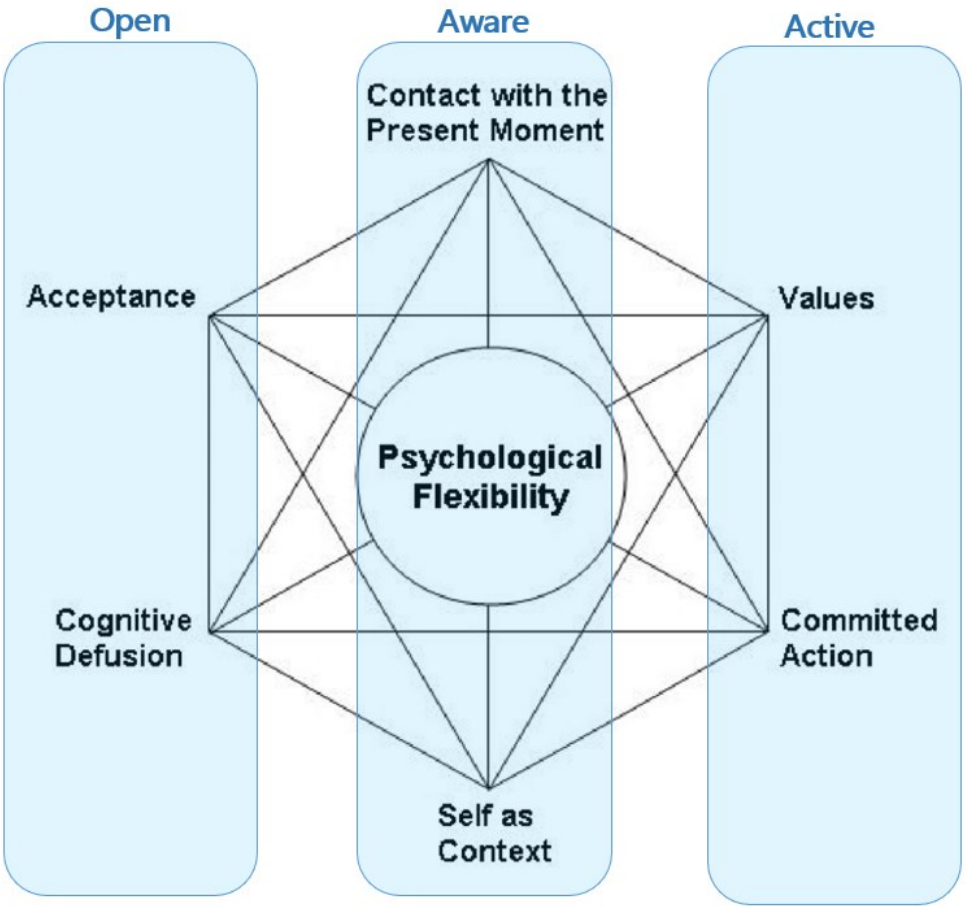
The way I have understood this has been using a model of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT; Hayes et al., 1999). This has helped me to recognise that these are stories which my mind often tells me. I can notice these stories, *and,* I am still able to achieve all I have done despite them. The ACT model was a helpful way of reflecting on these experiences and I have therefore structured further reflections in this way.

ACT Reflections

ACT is a third wave model whereby the overall aim is to move from a place of psychological inflexibility, to psychological flexibility. This occurs through processes such as connection to the present moment, being open and accepting of current thoughts and feelings, and making committed choices to do things in line with one's values, despite uncomfortable feelings (Harris, 2019).

Psychological flexibility aims to move us away from things that keep us stuck, and towards our values. The hexaflex is a common representation of the six core processes of ACT; acceptance, cognitive defusion, connecting with the present moment, self as context, values and committed action. My personal preference is a simplified understanding of these processes which is represented by three pillars; Open, Aware and Active (Figure 2).

Figure 2
The hexaflex with 3 pillars



The three ideas of being open, aware and active resonated with me. There have been times where I have been 'fused'[14] with the '*someone else would do this better*' story. On some level I believed it to be true, and this subsequent fear of failure prevented my own autonomy. Consequently, I was not truly and actively engaged in the direction of my values of learning and helping others.

Through my placements I began to notice my confidence growing with supervisors; I felt more capable in proposing formulations and recommendations for clinical work, and less reliant on direct instruction. This is a process which has been noted to happen for clinical psychology trainees as skills and knowledge develop, supervision becomes utilised effectively and autonomy builds (Kuyken et al., 2003).

However, as the intensity of the research project increased, I noticed the return of the '*someone else can do this better*' story. I was feeling less confident in my skills and abilities and more reliant on asking questions of my supervisors. Autonomous working felt unachievable.

Using my reflective log was a great opportunity for being 'Aware' and provided me with a reflection space. There were many distractions to occupy my mind, and divert me from being present, however, once I was able to take time to be aware, it felt much easier to be 'Open' to accepting this story and make room for a new story: '*I am capable*'. Through this I was able to gain flexibility and felt encouraged to make committed actions towards my values of learning and helping others by completing this research.

Motivations for Research

Although online abuse is the overarching concept of this thesis, this was not something I had previously sought to focus on. The path that led me to Intimate Image Abuse (IIA; Part Two) stemmed first from exploring domestic abuse. It was a long journey to discover this research focus due to various challenges. My motivations for exploring IIA were initially unclear to me.

[14] In ACT, fusion refers to the process of becoming tangled, and overly focused on our thoughts which may prevent us from living a life within our values.

The idea that women are treated as lesser, and that many individuals are normalised to this is something which jarred with me. I am a passionate advocate for the right of self-expression and believe that feminism means supporting women in whatever they feel comfortable doing. The idea of female empowerment is spoken about greatly in the media. Despite definitions appearing all encompassing; "*the decision-making ability of a woman regarding her strategic and non-strategic life choices*" (Ballon, 2018, p.1303), my experience is that many people have firm ideas of what empowerment should look like, and seek to impose their values on others. I have myself experienced being shamed for expressing my own femininity and sexual identity, and see this as a common occurrence in the media and today's society. I believe the spectrum of female empowerment can include any preference from looking after children full time, to sex work. Empowerment is a subjective experience, therefore any of these ideas can be empowering as long as they are consensual.

I hoped that my IIA research could provide information which could ultimately help support victims, and foster conversations around gender equality and freedom of expression for women.

From my supervision team I learned that a bracketing interview was a useful way of identifying any unconscious bias, which, if left unidentified, may have affected the way I conducted the interviews or interpreted the information (Alase, 2017). Initially, I superficially reflected on my assumptions that most victims would be female, most perpetrators would be male and would be motivated by revenge for a relationship ending. I also assumed the impact of this experience would cause feelings of distress. I believe my anxiety, and the story of '*you need to get this right',* led me to concentrate on giving answers, rather than engaging on a deeper level.

However, after this meeting, I found time to engage with the material when my anxiety was reduced and felt more able to deeply engage. I reflected on my initial assumptions which had not accounted for the vast impacts that IIA could have. I assumed it would be emotionally distressing but that this would be contained within a small part of their lives. Furthermore, I had not considered the broader

effects of society on the lived experiences of victims, nor the impact that research and knowledge could have on society. This process therefore began to change my views on IIA.

The Value of Each Piece of Research

My engagement with materials around IIA and cyberbullying had initially been on an intellectual level. I recognised that research showed increases in depression and anxiety as a result of both, but had not emotionally connected with this until the analysis phases of both papers.

This led me to consider the way I consume academic literature. Through the clinical psychology training, and the quantity of literature consumed, my appreciation of the value of individual research articles got lost. This mindset was especially prominent prior to completing the literature review (Part One). However, the analysis process sparked engagement in the literature and I found aspects which connected with my values. This helped to reignite my dedication towards the project. Rather than purely a thesis task that needed to be completed, I saw that each piece of research has individuals' experiences at its heart. I made committed actions to complete the research to the best of my ability in order to contribute towards the literature.

Managing my Own Emotional Investment

Interviewing participants, listening to the recordings and analysing the information brought with it a plethora of emotional experiences. I found myself feeling empathic towards participants' situations and experienced sadness and anger. I vividly remember pausing the interview at the request of one participant who became tearful relaying her experience. She spoke of feeling she would never recover from her experience, the daily fear she felt when online, and the pain of seeing comments on her private photos from others. My heart broke listening to her distress and I felt helpless.

Remaining in a place where I could connect with participants, whilst preparing an academic piece of writing was a difficult balancing act, and an important learning experience. I did not want to ignore these feelings as this would conflict with my values of connection. However, to live within my values

I also needed to be able to focus on academic report writing, and maintain levels of professionalism and objectivity.

In the first instance I found it helpful to acknowledge what I was feeling and how it was affecting me. Following this was a process of validation that these were human responses to something which connected with my values. This helped me accept rather than battle with uncomfortable emotions and was important to identify to provide reflexivity[15] (Berger, 2015).

Balance was essential, and as such there was the need to engage with the values pertinent to other areas of my life, and take time to look after my emotional well-being. This was challenging during times when it felt that all I *should* be doing was thesis work. At these times my mind often provided the story that '*other people work harder than you'.* I recognised this was the part of me which wanted to achieve academically, albeit not communicating this in a compassionate way. Through appreciating this I accepted that this story was present, and also continued to see the importance of ensuring my emotional well-being.

Finding the Right Hat

The role of being a researcher was a steep learning curve, which reminded me of something a supervisor once explained to me; Clinical Psychologists are required to wear different hats depending on the context they are in. I reflected on my experiences of conflict in finding the right hat; a feminist, a researcher, and a therapist.

The Feminist Hat

My own identity as a woman and a feminist has been formed from my own lived experiences, and this was hard to leave behind during interviews. Navigating the interweaving of my own identity within research processes as a Trainee Clinical Psychologist is something I was not alone in (Harrison et al., 2001), but had never considered before. Rather than an impartial researcher, this feminist hat

[15] Reflexivity refers to the process whereby the researchers subjective ideas are identified using questions around what the research process is and how they are influencing it

was one I wanted to wear when speaking to the participants during interviews. I noticed that my own views were reflected in the stories that these women shared. At times it was hard to manage these feelings during the interviews, and suppress my natural inclination to say '*yes I agree with you, it's so unfair!*' I feared coming across as robotic and uncaring as I tried to ensure my own experiences would not cause leading questions.

The idea of reflexivity within qualitative research meant that I did not have to hide this part of myself – this hat – completely, and that it could form part of my researcher identity. I considered reflexivity as a scaffolding for critical thinking in order to illuminate any connections between the research questions and conclusions, and make space for critically different interpretations (Lazard & McAvoy, 2020).

Recognising that I could engage subjectivity in the research process, and maintain my own identity, felt like an opportunity to provide context and offer enrichment to the outputs (Finlay, 2002). I felt reassured that the idea of total detachment was not wholly possible because of my role in the research, my investments in it, and the relationships between myself and the participants and literature (Lazard & McAvoy, 2020).

My concern remained that I wanted to do justice to the participants' experiences and I found a balance I felt comfortable with. I endeavoured to not lead participants in interviews, by using phrases such as '*that makes sense to me*', rather than '*I know how hard that would be*.' I then was able to engage with the information during the analysis using subjectivity to explore theories of gender inequality (Kelly, 1987) whilst being careful not to let a preoccupation with my own identity slide into a reflexive spiral and obscure the phenomenon of IIA (Pels, 2000).

The Researcher Hat

I have never considered myself a researcher. In my career thus far this has been a hat I have tentatively put on, lit with a bright 'imposter' sign. Consequently, I did what was required of me through my undergraduate and postgraduate degrees, before swiftly removing it.

The desire to do justice to the topics of this research was, at times, overwhelming. This was most prominent for the empirical research, as I had made connections with the women whose experiences I was writing about. The process of IPA required me to take the full narratives of these women's experiences and reduce them down whilst maintaining levels of quality (Smith et al., 2009). As an avid cook, I likened this to the making of a *jus* – a process which reduces the amount of overall liquid but creates something where the original flavours are still present and richer than before. I had theoretical knowledge of what this process involved upon beginning the research, but had not imagined how it might feel. Feelings of anxiety laced through the task of choosing quotes to illustrate themes as I felt a strong desire to ensure that each participant's voice was heard. In order to write succinctly this was a process that had to be completed, so I focused on staying true to the nuances of these women's lived experiences.

This research project presented many hurdles. The largest of these involved changing my research project three times before arriving at the experiences of IIA. The reasons for these changes were threefold: 1) another member of my cohort had prepared the same research project, 2) there were difficulties with the second proposal in terms of recruitment, and 3) a potential project working with pre-collected data was not viable due to course requirements of the thesis. Furthermore, I became very familiar with the process of submitting ethical amendment forms. There were a number of changes required for the empirical project in order to sufficiently recruit, such as widening the sample to include non-students, and the inclusion of a multiperspective approach.

Pragmatism was the key factor during these times which helped me firmly hold on to my researcher hat in order to keep going. I felt that if the researcher hat slipped at any point, I might realise how anxious I felt and be unable to keep going. The support of my supervision team allowed me to have moments of emotion and vulnerability without judgement, and provided me with the assurance that I could, and would, keep going.

I believe being a Trainee Clinical Psychologist is a privileged position. I had always felt this when considering my role within therapy but had never considered the position of being a researcher. Both during, and after my first interview, I reflected on these feelings and began noting these in my reflective log. In a therapeutic setting, service users put their trust in me to share their experience for the purpose of, hopefully, being able to help them. Within this research, participants put their trust in me by sharing their personal experiences of a difficult situation for the purpose of helping others. I felt so lucky I felt to be able to listen to these women's experiences. They felt passionate about their involvement in contributing towards the literature in order to make a difference which ignited my desire further to be able to do justice to their stories.

Despite its challenges, I found that wearing my researcher hat, and specifically utilising IPA within the empirical paper, were enjoyable experiences, and I connected with a quote from Smith et al. (2009) in that it was "*a uniquely interesting, insightful, and rewarding process"* (p.81). I feel proud to say that I can now wear my researcher hat without the imposter sign shining quite so bright.

The Therapist Hat

In contrast to never considering myself a researcher, I had always felt comfortable wearing the therapist hat. In a similar way to my personal identity feeling lost, I initially felt uncomfortable losing the therapist hat; the prominent part of my Trainee Clinical Psychologist identity. It was challenging during interviews balancing what I perceived to be the best interests of the participant and their emotional experience, with the need to seek knowledge (Haverkamp, 2005). I was unable to offer the same levels of empathy or interpretative reflections that I would during therapeutic sessions, and thus instead, was required by IPA principles to limit responses in order to allow participants own narrative (Smith et al., 2009).

Although I was not able to offer the same empathic responses as I would during therapeutic interventions, I was reassured by the notion that participants were passionate about engaging in this research. It is common for research participants to experience this as cathartic, and benefit from a

sense of purpose as well as opportunities to reflect on their own self-awareness. Perhaps the most relevant concept to this group was the idea of empowerment through their participation (Hutchinson et al., 1994). These are all ideals I would strive towards facilitating within a client during therapeutic interventions, and I therefore felt proud that I was able to potentially provide a space for this through wearing my researcher hat.

A Learning Experience

I believe I have found this thesis a far more valuable learning opportunity than I ever anticipated.

Moving forward in clinical work, I predict that my views on research whilst working in clinical settings will be different. As a Clinical Psychologist going into new areas of work, I believe I will now be more open to opportunities for service development and research, in order to contribute towards meaningful change. Prior to writing this thesis, the thought of voluntarily engaging in research would not have been something I would have explored. I now feel like I can see the possibilities research can offer, and would be excited to explore this further. Rather than leaving my researcher hat to collect dust, I may try it on more often.

Finally, I feel comfortable with combining working autonomously with asking for help when needed. Prior to this thesis I felt that I had to ask for help, assuming I would fail if I tried myself. I now have grown in confidence, and recognise that I am capable, and that trying and being wrong does not equate to failure.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Certificate of Ethical Approval From Coventry University for the Systematic Literature Review

Certificate of Ethical Approval

Applicant:	Emily Geissler
Project Title:	Cyberbullying in Online Games: A Narrative Review.

This is to certify that the above named applicant has completed the Coventry University Ethical Approval process and their project has been confirmed and approved as Low Risk

Date of approval:	18 Dec 2020
Project Reference Number:	P106031

Appendix B

Caldwell Quality Assessment Questions and guidance

Caldwell, Henshaw & Taylor (2011)

Does the title reflect the content?
The title should be informative and indicate the focus of the study. It should allow the reader to easily interpret the content of the study. An inaccurate or misleading title can confuse the reader.

Are the authors credible?
Researchers should hold appropriate academic qualifications and be linked to a professional field relevant to the research.

Does the abstract summarize the key components?
The abstract should provide a short summary of the study. It should include the aim of the study, outline of the methodology and the main findings. The purpose of the abstract is to allow the reader to decide if the study is of interest to them.

Is the rationale for undertaking the research clearly outlined?
The author should present a clear rationale for the research, setting it in context of any current issues and knowledge of the topic to date.

Is the literature review comprehensive and up-to-date?
The literature review should reflect the current state of knowledge relevant to the study and identify any gaps or conflicts. It should include key or classic studies on the topic as well as up to date literature. There should be a balance of primary and secondary sources.

Is the aim of the research clearly stated?
The aim of the study should be clearly stated and should convey what the researcher is setting out to achieve.

Are all ethical issues identified and addressed?
Ethical issues pertinent to the study should be discussed. The researcher should identify how the rights of informants have been protected and informed consent obtained. If the research is conducted within the NHS then there should be indication of Local Research Ethics committee approval.

Is the methodology identified and justified?
The researcher should make clear which research strategy they are adopting, i.e. qualitative or quantitative. A clear rationale for the choice should also be provided, so that the reader can judge whether the chosen strategy is appropriate for the study.

At this point the student is asked to look specifically at the questions that apply to the paradigm appropriate to the study they are critiquing (Table 2). To complete their critique, the final questions students need to address are applied to both quantitative and qualitative studies.

Table 2. Questions relevant to quantitative or qualitative research.

Quantitative	**Qualitative**
Is the design clearly identified and a rationale provided?	*Are the philosophical background and study design identified and the rationale for choice evident?*
The design of the study, e.g. survey, experiment, should be identified and justified. As with the choice of strategy, the reader needs to determine whether the design is appropriate for the research undertaken.	The design of the study, e.g. phenomenology, ethnography, should be identified and the philosophical background and rationale discussed. The reader needs to consider if it is appropriate to meet the aims of the study.
Is there an experimental hypothesis clearly stated and are the key variable identified?	*Are the major concepts identified?*
In experimental research, the researcher should provide a hypothesis. This should clearly identify the independent and dependent variables, and state their relationship and the intent of the study. In survey research the researcher may choose to provide a hypothesis, but it is not essential, and alternatively a research question or aim may be provided.	The researcher should make clear what the major concepts are, but they might not define them. The purpose of the study is to explore the concepts from the perspective of the participants.
Is the population identified?	*Is the context of the study outlined?*
The population is the total number of units from which the researcher can gather data. It maybe individuals, organisations or documentation. Whatever the unit, it must be clearly identified.	The researcher should provide a description of the context of the study, how the study sites were determined and how the participants were selected.
Is the sample adequately described and reflective of the population?	*Is the selection of participants described and sampling method identified?*
Both the method of sampling and the size of the sample should be stated so that the reader can judge whether the sample is representative of the population and sufficiently large to eliminate bias.	Informants are selected for their relevant knowledge or experience. Representativeness is not a criteria and purposive sampling is often used. Sample size may be determined through saturation.
Is the method of data collection valid and reliable?	*Is the method of data collection auditable?*
The process of data collection should be described. The tools or instruments must be appropriate to the aims of the study and the researcher should identify how reliability and validity were assured.	Data collection methods should be described, and be appropriate to the aims of the study. The researcher should describe how they have assured that the method is auditable.

Quantitative	Qualitative
Is the method of data analysis valid and reliable?	*Is the method of data analysis credible and confirmable?*
The method of data analysis must be described and justified. Any statistical test used should be appropriate for the data involved.	The data analysis strategy should be identified, what processes were used to identify patterns and themes. The researcher should identify how credibility and confirmability have been addressed.

Are the results presented in a way that is appropriate and clear?
Presentation of data should be clear, easily interpreted and consistent.

Is the discussion comprehensive?
In quantitative studies the results and discussion are presented separately. In qualitative studies these maybe integrated. Whatever the mode of presentation the researcher should compare and contrast the findings with that of previous research on the topic. The discussion should be balanced and avoid subjectivity.

Is the conclusion comprehensive?
Conclusions must be supported by the findings. The researcher should identify any limitations to the study. There may also be recommendations for further research, or if appropriate, implications for practice in the relevant field.

Appendix C

Quality Assessment Ratings

	Thacker & Griffiths (2012)		**Fox & Tang (2017)**		**Cook, Schaafsma & Antheunis (2018)**		**Easpaig & Humphrey (2017)**		**Tang, Reer & Quandt (2020)**	
Quality Assessment Question	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 1	Rater 2
	Mixed		Quantitative		Qualitative		Qualitative		Quantitative	
1.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
2.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2
3.	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2
4.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
5.	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2
6.	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	2
7.	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	2
8.	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
9.	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
10.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2
11.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
12.	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2
13.	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2
14.	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2
15.	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
16.	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	2
17.	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2
18.	2	2	2	2	2	1	0	0	2	2
Total	32	31	29	28	29	28	24	23	32	34
percentage	88.89%	86.11%	80.56%	77.78%	80.56%	77.78%	66.67%	63.89	88.89%	94.44%

	Cote (2017)		**Achterbosch, Miller & Vamplew (2017)**		**McInroy & Mishna (2017)**		**Przybylski (2018)**		**Leung & McBride-Chang (2013)**	
Quality Assessment Question	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 1	Rater 2
	Qualitative		Qualitative		Mixed		Quantitative		Quantitative	
1.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
2.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
4.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2
5.	2	2	2	2	2	2	0	0	2	2
6.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
7.	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1
8.	1	1	1	2	2	2	0	1	1	1
9.	0	0	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
10.	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	2
11.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
12.	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
13.	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2
14.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
15.	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2
16.	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	1
17.	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
18.	0	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	1
Total	26	29	28	31	34	35	28	29	29	29
Percentage	72.22%	80.56%	77.78%	86.11%	94.44%	97.22%	77.78%	80.56%	80.56%	80.56%

	Tang & Fox (2016)		**Yang (2012)**		**Huang, Yang & Hsieh (2019)**		**Paul, Bowman & Banks (2015)**		**Ballard & Welch (2017)**	
Quality Assessment Question	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 1	Rater 2
	Quantitative		Quantitative		Quantitative		Mixed		Qualitative	
1.	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1
2.	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2
3.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
4.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
5.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
6.	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
7.	1	2	2	1	2	2	0	0	1	2
8.	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1
9.	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1
10.	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2
11.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
12.	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2
13.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
14.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
15.	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2
16.	1	1	2	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
17.	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	1
18.	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2
Total	32	33	30	29	30	32	25	28	28	29
Percentage	88.89%	91.67%	83.33%	80.56%	83.33%	88.89%	69.44%	77.78%	77.78%	80.56%

	Li & Pustaka (2017)		**Mattinen & Macey (2018)**		**Rubin & Camm (2013)**		**Ortiz (2019)**		**Wright (2019)**		**Lee, Jeong & Jeon (2019)**	
Quality Assessment Question	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 1	Rater 2
	Quantitative		Quantitative		Qualitative		Qualitative		Quantitative		Quantitative	
1.	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
2.	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
3.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2
4.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
5.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
6.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
7.	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2
8.	2	2	0	0	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1
9.	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	1
10.	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2
11.	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
12.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
13.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
14.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2
15.	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	2
16.	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1
17.	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	2
18.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1
Total	30	32	29	30	29	30	33	33	28	30	30	31
Percentage	83.33%	88.89%	80.56%	83.33%	80.56%	83.33%	91.67%	91.67%	77.78%	83.33%	83.33%	86.11%

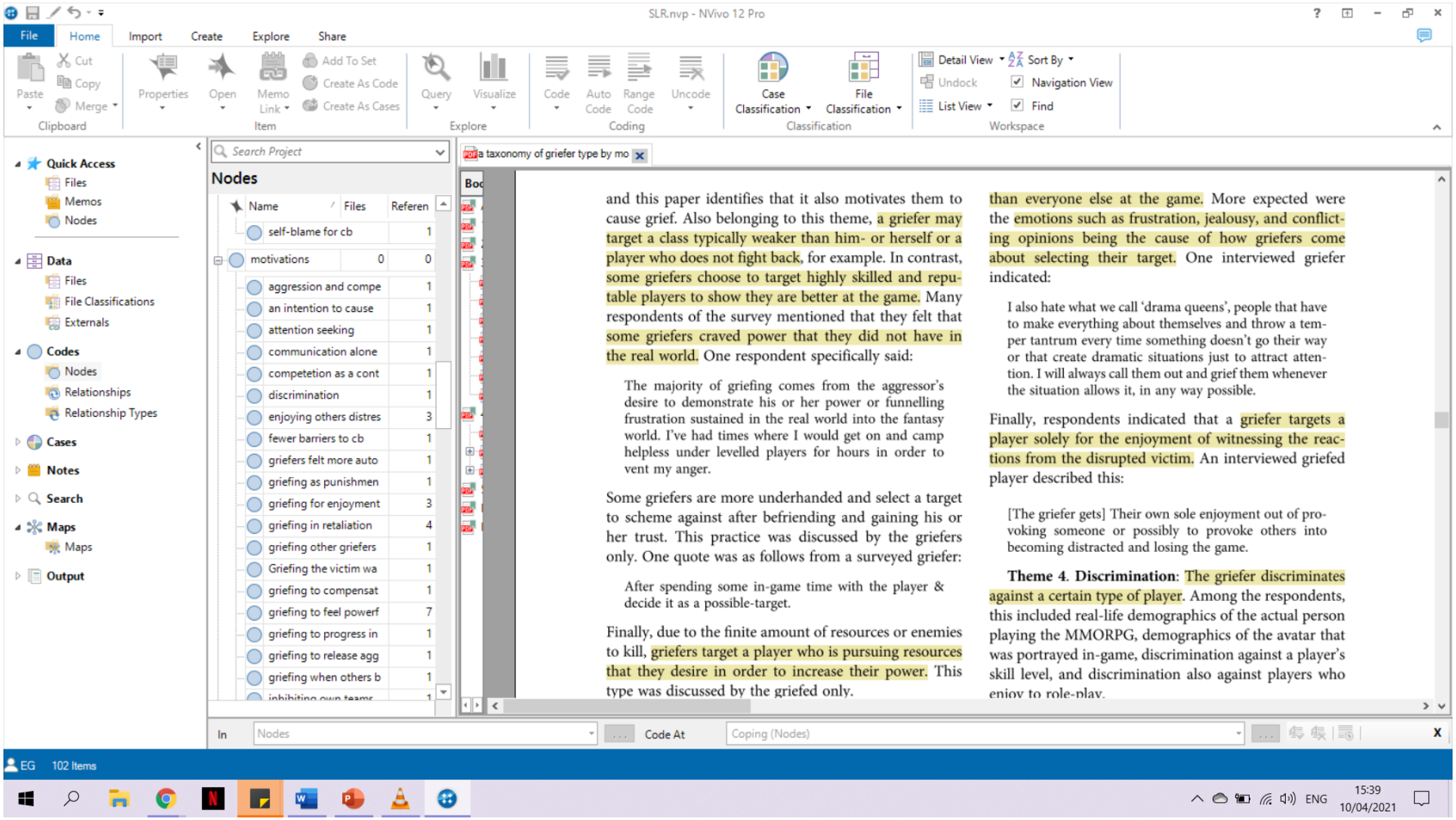
Appendix D

Inter-rater reliability coefficient (Kappa) for all papers

Authors	*k* value	Significance (*p* value)
Thacker & Griffiths (2012)	.85	.000
Fox & Tang (2017)	.89	.000
Cook, Schaafsma & Antheunis (2018)	.67	.001
Easpaig & Humphrey (2017)	.90	.000
Tang, Reer & Quandt (2020)	.61	.005
Cote (2017)	.69	.000
Achterbosch, Miller & Vamplew (2017)	.65	.003
McInroy & Mishna (2017)	.64	.004
Przybylski (2018)	.66	.000
Leung & McBride-Chang (2013)	.77	.001
Tang & Fox (2016)	.82	.000
Yang (2012)	.63	.001
Huang, Yang & Hsieh (2019)	.71	.001
Paul, Bowman & Banks (2015)	.70	.000
Ballard & Welch (2017)	.89	.000
Li & Pustaka (2017)	.73	.001
Mattinen & Macey (2018)	.86	.000
Rubin & Camm (2013)	.88	.000
Ortiz (2019)	1.00	.000
Wright (2019)	.77	.001
Lee, Jeong & Jeon (2019)	.61	.009
Overall	**.77**	**.000**

Appendix E

NVivo coding process of narrative review



Appendix F

Table of theme generation with supporting codes from Nvivo

Name	Files	References
conflicting views of griefing between perpetrators and victims	1	2
Coping	4	8
activism against sexism	1	1
avoidance as a coping strategy	2	4
being aggressive to avoid cb	1	2
coping strategies perpetuate stereotypes	1	2
gender differences in coping	1	1
hiding gender (female) as a coping strategy	4	4
ignoring as a coping strategy	2	2
laughing off insults as a coping strategy	1	1
reluctance to ask for help	1	1
support from others	4	5
culture	0	0
bystander beliefs about cb	1	1
bystanders offering help	1	2
cycle of harassment	3	3
desensitization	1	4
invasion of privacy	1	1
masculine culture increasing likelihood of cyberbullying	1	1
minority groups targeted	4	4
onus put on victims to deal with it	1	1
social dominance	2	4
trolling a vicious circle	4	4
trolling normalised in games	7	10
trolling perceived negatively	1	1
future research	1	1
future research exploring communities in trolling	1	1
future research exploring POC, age and lGBT	4	4
future research for gender roles in trolling	3	3
future research for interventions of cb in MMORG	1	1
future research longitudinal	3	3
future research look at beliefs of seriousness of cb	1	1
future research on moral positioning	1	1
future research qualitative	1	1
future research self esteem	1	1

Name	Files	References
future research to explore repetition of cb	1	1
future research to explore sexuality factors	1	1
impacts	0	0
being a victim affects beliefs about cb	1	1
current harassment does not predict current negative effects	1	1
cybervictimisation affected wellbeing, friendship, self-esteem and life satisfaction	1	2
effects of sexual harassment	1	1
emotional response to cb	7	11
psychological difficulties	1	1
self-blame for cb	1	1
motivations	0	0
aggression and competitiveness increased likelihood of cb	1	2
an intention to cause distress	1	1
attention seeking	1	1
communication alone acts as trigger	1	1
competition as a contributory factor of cyberbullying	1	1
discrimination	1	2
enjoying others distress	3	9
fewer barriers to cb	1	2
griefers felt more autonomous but less connected to others	1	1
griefing as punishment for poor performance	1	3
griefing for enjoyment	3	14
griefing in retaliation	4	9
griefing other griefers to be a hero	1	2
Griefing the victim was random	1	2
griefing to compensate for 'real world' difficulties	1	1
griefing to feel powerful	7	20
griefing to progress in the game	1	6
griefing to release aggression	1	1
griefing when others believe they are better than everyone else	1	1
inhibiting own teams game play	1	1
justifying griefing as trying to help others do better	1	2
lower friendship quality predicted more aggression	1	3
more aggression in game increases likelihood of cb	1	1
persona as a way of justifying griefing	2	3
personality factors predict harassment	2	3
predictors of hostility	1	4

Name	Files	References
targeting 'weaker' players	4	7
trolling to encourage involvement and interaction	1	1
trolling to 'weaken' opponents to win the game	1	1
trolling with friends	1	1
unaware that behaviour would cause upset	1	1
prevalence and demographics		
age was not a factor for being a cb victim	1	1
boys perceive their own victimisation as serious	1	1
cybervictimisation common. more in transgender	1	1
girls perceived victimisation of others as more serious	1	1
LGBT less likely to perpetrate	1	1
males more likely to be victims	3	3
males more likely to bully more frequently	4	5
more common in older children	1	1
older people more like to cb	1	1
perpetrators more likely to be male	1	3
prevalence of cb	6	11
sexual harassment for more common for LGBT	1	1
sexual harassment more common for females	2	2
victims and perpetrators are unknown to each other	3	3
sexism	5	13
not all men	1	1
varied methods of cybervictimisation	2	2
verbal personal criticism	2	3
ways to target cb	1	1
game developers strategies for combating cb	2	2
not likely to report	2	2
organisations not doing enough	1	3
recommendations for game designers	2	2

Appendix G

Author Guidelines for the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health

The author intends to adapt Chapter Two to fulfil these guidelines post-viva

Information for Authors

Overview

MDPI is a publisher of scholarly open access **journals**. All journals uphold a peer-reviewed, rapid, and rigorous manuscript handling and editorial process.

MDPI journals are the perfect place for you to publish your work under an **open access** license, in a fast and straightforward manner. Our journals are indexed in the leading databases and, since they are open access, have a broad readership.

As a pioneer open access publisher, our mission is to make new research findings accessible to everyone. We are serving scholars from across the globe and from a variety of backgrounds. To deepen our understanding of the research communities that we serve, we aim to build journals that are just as diverse and inclusive. Only by valuing differences can we create an equitable and inclusive work environment and foster the openness that is key to our mission.

The daily exchange of ideas between the East and the West has been at the heart of MDPI's progress from day one. We understand that diversity does not end there. More needs to be done to bridge the gap between the global North and South—and to create equal opportunities for people without regard to race, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, religion, country of origin, physical ability, or socio-economic status. There is no place for discrimination on the basis of any one of these characteristics.

About *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*

Aims and Scope

International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health (IJERPH) (ISSN 1660-4601) is a peer-reviewed scientific journal that publishes original articles, critical reviews, research notes, and short communications in the interdisciplinary area of environmental health sciences and public health. It links several scientific disciplines including biology, biochemistry, biotechnology, cellular and molecular biology, chemistry, computer science, ecology, engineering, epidemiology, genetics, immunology, microbiology, oncology, pathology, pharmacology, and toxicology, in an integrated fashion, to address critical issues related to environmental quality and public health. Therefore, IJERPH focuses on the publication of scientific and technical information on the impacts of natural phenomena and anthropogenic factors on the quality of our environment, the interrelationships between environmental health and the quality of life, as well as the socio-cultural, political, economic, and legal considerations related to environmental stewardship, environmental medicine, and public health. As a comprehensive multi-disciplinary journal, IJERPH is comprised of nineteen major sections including the following:

- Children's Health
- Climate Change and Health
- Digital Health
- Ecology and the Environment
- Environmental Health

- Environmental Microbiology
- Environmental Science and Engineering
- Global Health
- Health Behavior, Chronic Disease and Health Promotion
- Health Care Sciences and Services
- Health Communication
- Health Economics
- Infectious Disease Epidemiology
- Mental Health
- Occupational Safety and Health
- Public Health Statistics and Risk Assessment
- Toxicology and Public Health
- Women's Health
- Exercise and Health
- Oral Health

The above-listed scientific sections cover critical areas of research discovery such as gene-environment interactions; global environmental health; ecotoxicology and ecological risk assessment and management; environmental chemistry and computational modeling; environmental education and public health; environmental engineering and technology; environmental epidemiology and disease control; environmental genomics and proteomics; environmental geology and health; environmental health and diseases; environmental medicine; environmental policy and stewardship; environmental toxicology, mutagenesis and carcinogenesis; health risk assessment and management; and natural resources damage assessment and management.

Therefore this international journal covers a broad spectrum of important topics which are relevant to environmental health sciences and public health protection. It provides comprehensive and unique information with a worldwide readership. Emphasizing holistic approach, the journal serves as a comprehensive and multidisciplinary platform, addressing important public health issues associated with environmental pollution and degradation. A large number of eminent professors and scientists from all over the world serve as section editors and/or guest reviewers for the journal.

Manuscript Submission Overview

Types of Publications

IJERPH has no restrictions on the length of manuscripts, provided that the text is concise and comprehensive. Full experimental details must be provided so that the results can be reproduced. *IJERPH* requires that authors publish all experimental controls and make full datasets available where possible

Manuscripts submitted to *IJERPH* should neither be published previously nor be under consideration for publication in another journal. The main article types are as follows:

Articles: Original research manuscripts. The journal considers all original research manuscripts provided that the work reports scientifically sound experiments and provides a substantial amount of new information. Authors should not unnecessarily divide their work into several related manuscripts, although Short *Communications* of preliminary, but significant, results will be considered. The quality and impact of the study will be considered during peer review. Articles should have a main text of around 3000 words at minimum.

Reviews: These provide concise and precise updates on the latest progress made in a given area of research. Systematic reviews should follow the PRISMA **guidelines.** The main text of review papers should be around 4000 words at minimum.

Submission Process

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Manuscript Preparation

General Considerations

Research manuscripts should comprise:

Front matter: Title, Author list, Affiliations, Abstract, Keywords

Research manuscript sections: Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, Conclusions.

Back matter: Supplementary Materials, Acknowledgments, Author Contributions, Conflicts of Interest, **References**.

Review manuscripts should comprise the **front matter**, literature review sections and the **back matter**. The template file can also be used to prepare the front and back matter of your review manuscript. It is not necessary to follow the remaining structure. Structured reviews and meta-analyses should use the same structure as research articles and ensure they conform to the **PRISMA** guidelines.

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Research and Publication Ethics

Research Ethics

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If no conflicts exist, the authors should state:

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Editorial Procedures and Peer-Review

Initial Checks

All submitted manuscripts received by the Editorial Office will be checked by a professional in-house *Managing Editor* to determine whether they are properly prepared and whether they follow the ethical policies of the journal, including those for human and animal experimentation. Manuscripts that do not fit the journal's ethics policy or do not meet the standards of the journal will be rejected before peer-review. Manuscripts that are not properly prepared will be returned to the authors for revision and resubmission. After these checks, the *Managing Editor* will consult the journals' *Editor-in-Chief* or *Associate Editors* to determine whether the manuscript fits the scope of the journal and whether it is scientifically sound. No judgment on the potential impact of the work will be made at this stage. Reject decisions at this stage will be verified by the *Editor-in-Chief*.

Peer-Review

Once a manuscript passes the initial checks, it will be assigned to at least two independent experts for peer-review. A single-blind review is applied, where authors' identities are known to reviewers. Peer review comments are confidential and will only be disclosed with the express agreement of the reviewer.

In the case of regular submissions, in-house assistant editors will invite experts, including recommendations by an academic editor. These experts may also include *Editorial Board Members* and Guest Editors of the journal. Potential reviewers suggested by the authors may also be considered. Reviewers should not have published with any of the co-authors during the past five years and should not currently work or collaborate with any of the institutions of the co-authors of the submitted manuscript.

Optional Open Peer-Review

The journal operates optional open peer-review: *Authors are given the option for all review reports and editorial decisions to be published alongside their manuscript. In addition, reviewers can sign their review, i.e., identify themselves in the published review reports.* Authors can alter their choice for open review at any time before publication, but once the paper has been published changes will only be made at the discretion of the *Publisher* and *Editor-in-Chief*. We encourage authors to take advantage of this opportunity as proof of the rigorous process employed in publishing their research. To guarantee impartial refereeing, the names of referees will be revealed only if the referees agree to do so, and after a paper has been accepted for publication.

Editorial Decision and Revision

All the articles, reviews and communications published in MDPI journals go through the peer-review process and receive at least two reviews. The in-house editor will communicate the decision of the academic editor, which will be one of the following:

Accept after Minor Revisions:
The paper is in principle accepted after revision based on the reviewer's comments. Authors are given five days for minor revisions.

Reconsider after Major Revisions:
The acceptance of the manuscript would depend on the revisions. The author needs to provide a point by point response or provide a rebuttal if some of the reviewer's comments cannot be revised. Usually, only one round of major revisions is allowed. Authors will be asked to resubmit the revised paper within a suitable time frame, and the revised version will be returned to the reviewer for further comments.

Reject and Encourage Resubmission:
If additional experiments are needed to support the conclusions, the manuscript will be rejected and the authors will be encouraged to re-submit the paper once further experiments have been conducted.

Reject:
The article has serious flaws, and/or makes no original significant contribution. No offer of resubmission to the journal is provided.

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Production and Publication

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Appendix H

Author Guidelines for the Journal of Sexual Aggression

Impact Factor 1.67

Aims and Scope

The Journal of Sexual Aggression provides an international and interdisciplinary forum for the dissemination of original research findings, reviews, theory, and practice developments regarding sexual aggression in all its forms. The Journal aims to engage readers from a wide range of research, practice and policy areas, including prevention science, crime science, public health, law and regulation, policing and investigation, prosecution and sentencing, corrections and youth justice, child protection, victim advocacy and support, clinical and risk assessment, and offender treatment and risk management. The Journal recognises that human sexual aggression is a global problem, and therefore wishes to include high quality contributions, written in English, from around the world.

All research articles in this journal, including those in special issues, special sections or supplements, have undergone rigorous peer review, based on initial Editor screening and refereeing by at least two independent, expert referees. All peer review is double blind and submissions may be made online via ScholarOne Manuscripts.

Instructions for authors

COVID-19 impact on peer review

As a result of the significant disruption that is being caused by the COVID-19 pandemic we understand that many authors and peer reviewers will be making adjustments to their professional and personal lives. As a result they may have difficulty in meeting the timelines associated with our peer review process. Please let the journal editorial office know if you need additional time. Our systems will continue to remind you of the original timelines but we intend to be flexible.

Thank you for choosing to submit your paper to us. These instructions will ensure we have everything required so your paper can move through peer review, production and publication smoothly. Please take the time to read and follow them as closely as possible, as doing so will ensure your paper matches the journal's requirements.

Author Services

For general guidance on every stage of the publication process, please visit our Author Services website.

Editing Services

For editing support, including translation and language polishing, explore our Editing Services website

ScholarOne Manuscripts

This journal uses ScholarOne Manuscripts (previously Manuscript Central) to peer review manuscript submissions. Please read the guide for ScholarOne authors before making a submission. Complete guidelines for preparing and submitting your manuscript to this journal are provided below.

Journal of Sexual Aggression is an international, peer-reviewed journal publishing high-quality, original research. Please see the journal's Aims & Scope for information about its focus and peer-review policy.

Please note that this journal only publishes manuscripts in English.

Types of Contributions

Original Research Article: The Journal of Sexual Aggression invites authors to submit original research articles (including empirical findings or conceptual development). The Journal publishes a range of quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods research. Authors should ensure appropriate and rigorous methods and data analytic strategies are employed. Manuscripts should include a critical discussion of the wider implications of research findings for research, policy and/or practice.

Reviews: The Journal of Sexual Aggression invites authors to submit review (scoping, systematic, meta-analytic) articles. The Editor may also commission reviews on specific areas of interest to the Journal's audience.

Policy and Practice Papers: The Journal of Sexual Aggression invites policy and practice papers, including case studies, to be submitted for review. These articles may discuss current or emerging legal, policy, or practice developments and debates, but must present a critical analysis, drawing on empirical research as part of the discussion. Authors are invited to first submit a written proposal to the Editor, for initial review by NOTA's policy and practice subcommittee, prior to authors being invited to make a full submission to the Journal.

Open Access

You have the option to publish open access in this journal via our Open Select publishing program. Publishing open access means that your article will be free to access online immediately on publication, increasing the visibility, readership and impact of your research. Articles published Open Select with Taylor & Francis typically receive 32% more citations* and over 6 times as many downloads** compared to those that are not published Open Select.

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*Citations received up to Jan 31st 2020 for articles published in 2015-2019 in journals listed in Web of Science®.

**Usage in 2017-2019 for articles published in 2015-2019.

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Taylor & Francis is committed to peer-review integrity and upholding the highest standards of review. Once your paper has been assessed for suitability by the editor, it will then be double blind peer reviewed by independent, anonymous expert referees. Find out more about what to expect during peer review and read our guidance on publishing ethics.

Preparing Your Paper

Structure

Your paper should be compiled in the following order: title page; abstract; keywords; main text introduction, materials and methods, results, discussion; acknowledgments; declaration of interest statement; references; appendices (as appropriate); table(s) with caption(s) (on individual pages); figures; figure captions (as a list).

Word Limits

Please include a word count for your paper.

Original research articles and reviews are typically 8000 words. A typical policy and practice paper should be no more than 6000 words; this limit does not include tables, references or figure captions.

Style Guidelines

Please refer to these quick style guidelines when preparing your paper, rather than any published articles or a sample copy.

Please use British (-ise) spelling style consistently throughout your manuscript.

Please use double quotation marks, except where “a quotation is ‘within’ a quotation”. Please note that long quotations should be indented without quotation marks.

Formatting and Templates

Papers may be submitted in Word format. Figures should be saved separately from the text. To assist you in preparing your paper, we provide formatting template(s).

Word templates are available for this journal. Please save the template to your hard drive, ready for use.

If you are not able to use the template via the links (or if you have any other template queries) please contact us here.

It is essential you follow the APA 7 guidelines when preparing the reference list for your paper.

References

Please use this reference guide when preparing your paper.

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Checklist: What to Include

Cover letter. Authors should submit a separate cover letter with their manuscript, that includes a statement pertaining to significance in terms of research, policy and/or practice. A template is available for download.

Author details. All authors of a manuscript should include their full name and affiliation on the cover page of the manuscript. Where available, please also include ORCiDs and social media handles (Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn). One author will need to be identified as the corresponding author, with their email address normally displayed in the article PDF (depending on the journal) and the online article. Authors' affiliations are the affiliations where the research was conducted. If any of the named co-authors moves affiliation during the peer-review process, the new affiliation can be given as a footnote. Please note that no changes to affiliation can be made after your paper is accepted. Read more on authorship.

Should contain an unstructured abstract of 150 words.

You can opt to include a video abstract with your article. Find out how these can help your work reach a wider audience, and what to think about when filming.

Between 4 and 6 keywords. Read making your article more discoverable, including information on choosing a title and search engine optimization.

Funding details. Please supply all details required by your funding and grant-awarding bodies as follows:

For single agency grants - This work was supported by the [Funding Agency] under Grant [number xxxx].

For multiple agency grants - This work was supported by the [Funding Agency #1] under Grant [number xxxx]; [Funding Agency #2] under Grant [number xxxx]; and [Funding Agency #3] under Grant [number xxxx].

Disclosure statement. This is to acknowledge any financial interest or benefit that has arisen from the direct applications of your research. Further guidance on what is a conflict of interest and how to disclose it.

Geolocation information. Submitting a geolocation information section, as a separate paragraph before your acknowledgements, means we can index your paper's study area accurately in JournalMap's geographic literature database and make your article more discoverable to others. More information.

Supplemental online material. Supplemental material can be a video, dataset, fileset, sound file or anything which supports (and is pertinent to) your paper. We publish supplemental material online via Figshare. Find out more about supplemental material and how to submit it with your article.

Figures. Figures should be high quality (1200 dpi for line art, 600 dpi for grayscale and 300 dpi for colour, at the correct size). Figures should be supplied in one of our preferred file formats: EPS, PS, JPEG, TIFF, or Microsoft Word (DOC or DOCX) files are acceptable for figures that have been drawn in Word. For information relating to other file types, please consult our Submission of electronic artwork document.

Tables. Tables should present new information rather than duplicating what is in the text. Readers should be able to interpret the table without reference to the text. Please supply editable files.

Equations. If you are submitting your manuscript as a Word document, please ensure that equations are editable. More information about mathematical symbols and equations.

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Please note that Journal of Sexual Aggression uses Crossref™ to screen papers for unoriginal material. By submitting your paper to Journal of Sexual Aggression you are agreeing to originality checks during the peer-review and production processes.

On acceptance, we recommend that you keep a copy of your Accepted Manuscript. Find out more about sharing your work.

Publication Charges

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Colour figures will be reproduced in colour in your online article free of charge. If it is necessary for the figures to be reproduced in colour in the print version, a charge will apply.

Charges for colour figures in print are £300 per figure ($400 US Dollars; $500 Australian Dollars; €350). For more than 4 colour figures, figures 5 and above will be charged at £50 per figure ($75 US Dollars; $100 Australian Dollars; €65). Depending on your location, these charges may be subject to local taxes.

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Appendix I

Interview Guides

(Victim)

Would you be happy to answer some general demographic information questions?

- What is your gender identity?
- What is your sexual orientation?
- How old are you?
- What would you say is your ethnicity?
- What country do you currently live in?
    - Was this where you were living when the intimate image abuse occurred?

- I'd like to start by hearing a bit about yourself.
    - Do you currently work? Study?
    - What are you studying/working as?
    - Do you live alone, with friends or family?
- Can you describe what sexting means to you?
    - What words or images come to your mind?
    - Do you have another name for what I have called sexting?
- What do the terms Revenge Porn and Intimate Image Abuse mean to you?
- Could you tell me a bit about what your relationship was like at the time with the person who went on to share your images/videos?
- Can you tell me about your experience of Intimate Image Abuse?
    - How long ago was this?
    - How did it make you feel?
    - What sense did you make of this at the time? Why do you think they did it? Why do you think this happened to you?
    - What did this mean to you?
    - What did you do?
    - Do you see them following the image being shared?
    - How did that make you feel?
    - Did you get the police involved?
    - Do you mind me asking if they still have the images?
        - If yes – how does that make you feel?
- Has this impacted on your views of relationships?
    - Friendships? Did they see it?
    - Family members? Have they seen it?
    - Professional relationships?
- Has the way you approached new relationships changed?
    - How you feel in intimate relationships now?
- Has your experience impacted your views on Sexting? If so, in what way?
- What, if anything, helped you?
    - Can you give me an example of something that helped you?
    - How did that make you feel?
- Do you see yourself differently now to before this experience?

- Is there anything you would say to your younger self before you had this experience?
- Are you aware of the law around Revenge Porn/ Are there any laws you are area of in your country for intimate image abuse?
    - If no: what has stopped you from looking into the law further?
    - What do you think of it?
    - Has the law impacted your experience?
- Is there anything else that you feel is important for me to know about your experience?

Interview guide Family/Friends

Would you be happy to answer some general demographic information questions?

- What is your gender identity?
- What is your sexual orientation?
- How old are you?
- What would you say is your ethnicity?
- What country do you currently live in?
    - Was this where you were living when the intimate image abuse occurred?

I'd like to start with some general questions about this topic if that is ok?

- Can you describe what sexting means to you?
    - What words or images come to your mind?
    - Do you have another name for what we have called sexting?
- What do the terms Revenge Porn and Intimate Image Abuse mean to you?

I'd like to hear a bit about yourself.

- Do you work or study? What as/what do you study?
- Do you live alone or with friends/family?

For these questions I'd like to focus on your understanding of this experience for the victim/survivor themselves.

- Can you describe the situation when you were supporting your family member who was a victim/survivor of IIA?
- Could you tell me a bit about your understanding of what the IIA was like for this victim/survivor?
    - How long ago was this?
    - How do you think it made them feel?
    - What sense do you think they made of this at the time?
    - What are your thoughts on why they thought it happened to them?
    - Were the police involved?
        - If yes or no, what do you think their thoughts were on police involvement and the law?
    - What was your understanding of how they felt knowing their images could still be online?
- What was your interpretation of how this impacted their views of relationships?
    - Friendships? Did they see it?
    - Family members? Have they seen it?
    - Professional relationships and work environment?
- What was your interpretation of whether the way they approached new relationships had changed?
- How do you think this experience impacted on their views of Sexting?
- What, if anything, helped your friend/family member?
    - How do you think this made them feel?

If its ok, I'd now like to explore your own experience of supporting this individual.

- When supporting the individual that we spoke about earlier through the IIA, how did it make you feel?
- What sense did you make of what had happened to them?
- What were your thoughts on hearing about the police involvement in this case?
- How did you feel knowing their images may still be online?
- Has supporting the person through this experience impacted on your views of sexting?
    - If so, in what way?
- Has supporting the person through this experience impacted how your approach relationships?
    - Friendships
    - Intimate relationships
    - Family
    - Professional relationships
- What, if anything, helped you during this experience?
    - How did that make you feel?
- Is there any support you think that could be provided for victim/survivors of IIA that is currently not?
- What organisations/information would have been helpful for you to have been aware of?
- What do you think could be done to prevent these kinds of crimes being committed?
- Are you aware of the law around Revenge Porn? (Or if not UK: Are there any laws you are aware of in your country for intimate image abuse?)
        - If no: what has stopped you from looking into the law further?
    - What do you think of it?
    - Has the law impacted your experience of providing support? If so in what way?
- Is there anything else that you feel is important for me to know about your experience of supporting the victim/survivor?

Interview Guide Support Workers

Would you be happy to answer some general demographic information questions?

- What is your gender identity?
- What is your sexual orientation?
- How old are you?
- What would you say is your ethnicity?
- What country do you currently live in?
    - Was this where you were living when you were supporting people with intimate image abuse experiences?

I'd like to start with some general questions about this topic if that is ok?

- Can you describe what sexting means to you?
    - What words or images come to your mind?
    - Do you have another name for what we have called sexting?
- What do the terms Revenge Porn and Intimate Image Abuse mean to you?

I'd like to hear a bit about yourself.

- Are you currently working in an IIA support organisation?
- What does this work involve?
- Could you describe the kind of situations that you provide support for victim/survivors?
    - Is there a specific case that you would be able to bring to mind specifically when we go through the next questions?

For these questions I'd like to focus on your understanding of this experience for the victim/survivor themselves.

- Could you tell me a bit about your understanding of what the IIA was like for this victim/survivor?
    - How long ago was this?
    - How do you think it made them feel?
    - What sense do you think they made of this at the time?
    - What are your thoughts on why they thought it happened to them?
    - Were the police involved?
        - If yes or no, what do you think their thoughts were on police involvement and the law?
    - What was your understanding of how they felt knowing their images could still be online?
- What was your interpretation of how this impacted their views of relationships?
    - Friendships? Did they see it?
    - Family members? Have they seen it?
    - Professional relationships?
- What was your interpretation of whether the way they approached new relationships had changed?
- How do you think this experience impacted on their views of Sexting?
- What, if anything, helped your service user?
    - How do you think this made them feel?

If its ok, I'd now like to explore your own experience of supporting this individual.

- You provide support for victims of IIA - what does this mean to you?
    - How does this make you feel?
- When supporting the individual that we spoke about earlier through the IIA, how did it make you feel?
- What sense did you make of what had happened to them?
- What were your thoughts on hearing about the police involvement in this case?
- How did you feel knowing their images may still be online?
- Has supporting the person through this experience impacted on your views of sexting?
    - If so, in what way?
- Has supporting the person through this experience impacted how your approach relationships?
    - Friendships
    - Intimate relationships
    - Family
    - Professional relationships
- What, if anything, helped you during this experience?
    - How did that make you feel?
- What are your thoughts on the kind of support that could be provided for victim/survivors of IIA that is currently not?
- What organisations/information do you think other support workers should be aware of?
- What do you think could be done to prevent these kinds of crimes being committed?
- Are you aware of the law around Revenge Porn? (Or if not UK: Are there any laws you are aware of in your country for intimate image abuse?)
        - If no: what has stopped you from looking into the law further?
    - What do you think of it?
    - Has the law impacted your experience of providing support? If so in what way?
- Is there anything else that you feel is important for me to know about your experience of supporting the victim/survivor?

Appendix J

Certificate of Ethical Approval from Coventry University for Empirical Research

Certificate of Ethical Approval

Applicant:	Emily Geissler
Project Title:	What are the Lived Experiences of Intimate Image Abuse in Adults? A Multiperspectival Approach of Victims and Those who Support.

This is to certify that the above named applicant has completed the Coventry University Ethical Approval process and their project has been confirmed and approved as Medium Risk

Date of approval:	05 May 2020
Project Reference Number:	P105276

Appendix K

Ethical Considerations for Empirical Research

Informed consent was obtained from each participant and they had the opportunity to discuss this initially over email or during the interview itself. Consent forms were collected prior to the interview, and involved providing a sufficient amount of information about the purpose, procedure, risks and benefits of the study, along with the participant's right to refuse or withdraw (BPS, 2014). An electronic copy of the debrief form was provided to all participants via email upon completion of the interview.

Participants were informed of their right to withdraw their consent by giving their participant number to the researcher in order for their data to be confidentially destroyed. They were informed that they were able to withdraw up to one month prior to thesis submission (31st March 2021) to allow enough time for the researcher to remove any participant data. After this date the research was submitted and data was unable to be withdrawn.

The guidance states that participants should not be in any greater risk than in daily life and that any distress should be appropriately managed (BPS, 2014). This research focused on potentially distressing and traumatic experiences. Participants' distress levels were monitored throughout the interview and they were provided with signposting information for services such as Samaritans and Revenge Porn Helpline support services (see debriefs; Appendix N). The interviews were paused at points when participants requested this and could have been stopped at any point and information withdrawn if participants wished.

Participants were under no pressure to disclose information that they were not comfortable with, and could withdraw at any point. In addition, participants were given information included in the debrief form of contact details for Victim Support, who can offer practical information and support if they wish to report a crime. Participants were informed that the researcher would maintain confidentiality of information in line with GDPR regulations and Coventry University Ethics procedures.

Participant information was kept confidentially in line with GDPR regulations (Regulation (EU) 2016/679) by providing them with a participant number which they could use if they wished to withdraw their data. This ensured no identifiable information was kept together. The interviews were recorded on a password protected Dictaphone or laptop. These were locked inside a secure residence when not in use. Audio recordings and transcribed documents were stored securely using the Microsoft One Drive cloud storage linked to the researcher's Coventry University e-mail account. Only the researcher and two academic supervisors had access to these in order to prevent a single point failure should any unforeseen circumstances affect the lead researcher. All participant identifying information was removed during transcription; location names were removed, any other identified individuals were given pseudonyms and participants chose their own pseudonyms to preserve anonymity while retaining the meaning of the containing statement. The decision was made to change the pseudonym of one participant as this was similar to another participants 'real' name. The participant was contacted to ensure they did not feel their data had been removed from the final paper.

Analysis was performed using the digital copy of each transcript. No hard/paper copies of transcripts were produced. The transcripts were only saved to and accessed from the secure One Drive cloud storage account. All consent forms that participants signed were uploaded to the secure One Drive.

Appendix L

Participant information sheet

What are the Lived Experiences of Intimate Image Abuse in Adults? A Multiperspectival Approach of Victim/Survivors and Those who Support

Participant information sheet

You are being invited to take part in research looking at experiences of Intimate Image Abuse (IIA). This is also called Revenge Porn and Image Based Sexual Abuse. This research is being led by

Emily Geissler, Trainee Clinical Psychologist at Coventry University (UK). It is important that you understand what this research will involve, and why it is being conducted before you decide to participate. Please take your time to read through the following information carefully.

What is the purpose of the study?
The purpose of the study is to accurately capture and interpret the lived experience of adults who have either: had their private or sexual images shared without their consent, had direct experience of supporting a friend or family member who has experienced this, or supported victims/survivors of in their job. Ultimately, the desired outcome is to identify how best to support victim/survivors of IIA.

Why have I been asked to take part?
We are inviting individuals to take part in this study who are 18 years or older. Participants will either identify as having been the victim/survivor of IIA, have directly supported a family member or friend who has been through this, or work with victim/survivors through their job.

What are the benefits of taking part?
By sharing your experiences with us, you will be helping Emily Geissler and Coventry University to better understand the experiences of adults who are victim/survivors of IIA, the impact of this experience and what support might be helpful for others who share this experience.

Are there any risks associated with taking part?
This study has been reviewed and approved through Coventry University's formal research ethics procedure. There are no significant risks associated with participation. However, discussing personal experiences may lead to distress, in this case the interview will be paused and you can choose if you would like to continue, reschedule the interview for another time or withdraw from the study. If you are still experiencing distress and are in the UK please contact your GP or the Samaritans on 116 123, the Revenge Porn Helpline on 0845 6000 459, Victim Support on 0808 16 89 111 or VOIC at info@voic.org.uk. If you are in the USA you can speak to someone 27/7 on 1-800-273-8255. For international support, you can search the Befrienders Worldwide website for support services for your local area on https://www.befrienders.org/

Do I have to take part?
No – it is entirely up to you. If you do decide to take part, please keep this Information Sheet and complete the Informed Consent Form to show that you understand your rights in relation to the research, and that you are happy to participate. Please note down your participant number (which is

on the Consent Form) and provide this to Emily Geissler if you want to withdraw from the study at a later date. You are free to withdraw your information from the project data up to one month before submission of the thesis (31st March 2021). You should note that your data may be used prior to this date in the production of formal research outputs (e.g. journal articles, conference papers and theses), and so you are advised to contact the university at the earliest opportunity should you wish to withdraw from the study. To withdraw, please contact the lead researcher (contact details are provided below). Please also contact the Research Support Office (ethics.hls@coventry.ac.uk; telephone +44(0)247 765 8461, so that your request can be dealt with promptly in the event of the lead researcher's absence. You do not need to give a reason. A decision to withdraw, or not to take part, will not affect you in any way.

What will happen if I decide to take part?

You will be asked a number of questions regarding your experience of being a victim/survivor of IIA, or of your experience of supporting someone through this. Specifically, how you made sense of it, how it made you feel and the impact that it has had on you. The interview will take place at a time that is convenient to you. In line with government guidelines on the COVID-19 virus no face-to-face interviews will be conducted. Therefore, interviews will be conducted over the telephone or audio-visually (eg. Skype or Zoom etc). These interviews will be audio recorded (and we will require your consent for this), so if over telephone or other media this should be in a quiet location where you feel comfortable to speak openly. The interview should take around 60-90 minutes.

Data Protection and Confidentiality

Your data will be processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016 and the Data Protection Act 2018. All information collected about you will be kept strictly confidential. Unless fully anonymised in our records, your data will be referred to by a unique participant number. If you consent to being audio recorded, recordings will be destroyed following analysis. Your data will only be viewed by the research team. All electronic data will be stored on a secure One Drive linked to the researchers Coventry University e-mail account. All paper records will be scanned the same day as the interview and following this, destroyed in confidential waste. Your consent information will be kept separately from your responses in order to minimise risk in the event of a data breach.

Data Protection Rights

Coventry University is a Data Controller for the information you provide. You have the right to access information held about you. Your right of access can be exercised in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018. You also have other rights including rights of correction, erasure, objection, and data portability. Questions, comments and requests about your personal data can also be sent to the University Data Protection Officer – dpo@coventry.ac.uk or to the Information Governance Unit at dsar@coventry.ac.uk.

What will happen with the results of this study?

The results of this study may be summarised in published articles, reports and presentations. Quotes or key findings will always be made anonymous in any formal outputs unless we have your prior and explicit written permission to attribute them to you by name.

Making a Complaint

If you are unhappy with any aspect of this research, please first contact the lead researcher, on mulholle@uni.coventry.ac.uk. Alternatively, you can contact the supervisory team:

Ms Jacky Knibbs
Consultant Clinical Psychologist
Clinical Psychology Doctorate Course
Coventry University

Dr Magda Marczak
Lecturer in Clinical Psychology/ Research Tutor
Clinical Psychology Doctorate Course
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E: Magdalena.Marczak@coventry.ac.uk

If you still have concerns and wish to make a formal complaint, please write to

Prof. Nigel Berkeley
Associate Dean of Research
Coventry University
Coventry CV1 5FB
Email: Nigel.Barkeley@covnetry.ac.uk

In your letter please provide information about the research project, specify the name of the researcher and detail the nature of your complaint.

Appendix M

Consent form

What are the Lived Experiences of Intimate Image Abuse in Adults? A Multiperspectival Approach of Victim/Survivors and Those who Support

You are invited to take part in this research study exploring the lived experiences of individuals who have had private or sexual images or videos shared to unintended individual/s. You may have been a victim/survivor of this yourself, work to support people who have experienced this, or have supported a friend or family member through this experience.

Before you decide to take part, you must **read the accompanying Participant Information Sheet.**

Please do not hesitate to ask questions if anything is unclear or if you would like more information about any aspect of this research. It is important that you feel able to take the necessary time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

If you are happy to participate, please confirm your consent by circling YES against each of the below statements and then signing and dating the form as participant.

1	**I confirm that I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions**	**YES**	**NO**
2	**I confirm that I am over 18 years old**	**YES**	**NO**
3	**I understand my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my data, without giving a reason, by contacting the lead researcher and the Research Support Office at any time up until one month before submission of the thesis; March 2021.**	**YES**	**NO**
4	**I understand that my participation, choice to not participate, or choice to withdraw from this research will not affect my studies in any way (If a student)**	**YES**	**NO**
5	**I have noted down my participant number (top left of this Consent Form) which may be required by the lead researcher if I wish to withdraw from the study**	**YES**	**NO**
6	**I understand that all the information I provide will be held securely and treated confidentially**	**YES**	**NO**
7	**I am happy for the information I provide to be used (anonymously) in academic papers and other formal research outputs**	**YES**	**NO**
8	**I am happy for the interview to be audio recorded**	**YES**	**NO**
9	**I agree to take part in the above study**	**YES**	**NO**
10	**I am happy to be contacted following the interview for my thoughts on how the interview has been analysed and what themes have been generated**	**YES**	**NO**

Thank you for your participation in this study. Your help is very much appreciated.

Participant's Name	**Date**	**Signature**
Researcher	**Date**	**Signature**

Appendix N

Debrief Sheets

(Victims)

What are the Lived Experiences of Intimate Image Abuse in Adults? A Multiperspectival Approach of Victim/Survivors and Those who Support

Participant debriefing sheet

Thank you for participating in this interview, I hope you found it interesting. If you have found any part of this experience to be distressing, and wish to speak to someone please firstly contact your GP/primary physician. Below are the details for services available, and specific services to support victims of Intimate Image Abuse. If you are a student you can also access you University student counselling, wellbeing and support services.

Revenge Porn Helpline (UK)
The Revenge Porn Helpline are available for support and advice for individuals who have been a victim of intimate image abuse. They are contactable through email at help@revengepornhelpline.org.uk or their helpline 0345 6000 459 (10am – 4pm Monday to Friday)

CCRI Crisis Helpline (USA)
Free, confidential support available 24/7 for victims (844-878-2274). They have a website with further information and support: https://www.cybercivilrights.org/welcome/about/

Victim Support (UK)
Victim Support are available to anyone affected by Intimate Image Abuse. You do not need to go to the police first and can contact them directly on their free support line: 0808 16 89 111, or request online or email support: www.victimsupport.org.uk/help-and-support/get-help/request-support

Victims of Image Crime: VOIC (UK)
A support network for people who have experienced Intimate Image Abuse. The website includes accounts from others and the invitation to share your story. VOIC also offer a support group to provide emotional long term support for victim/survivors. You can access their website on: https://voic.org.uk/

Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) (Canada)
A multi-service organisation supporting women and girls against violence and human rights. You can access their website at: violations ywcacanada.ca/en

The office of eSafety Commissioner (Australia)
Support around image-based abuse by providing reporting options, support and resources for victims, family, friends, and bystanders. Their website is: www.esafety.gov.au/image-based-abuse

Netsafe (New Zealand)
An organisation which provides online safety education, advice and support about using digital technology safely, and managing online harassment, bullying abuse, scams and support for victims of image based abuse. You can contact through their website: www.netsafe.org.nz/image-based-abuse, phone: 0508 NETSAFE (0508 638 723), Text: 4282 or email: help@netsafe.org.nz

Samaritans (UK)
Samaritans provide a safe place to talk 24 hours a day. You can contact them by phone on 116 123, by email at jo@samaritans.org or visit their website www.samaritans.org/.

The Big White Wall (UK students)
A free online service for most UK university students. An anonymous forum and online support resources to support wellbeing for individuals with anxiety, depression and other common mental health issues. Accessible at https://www.bigwhitewall.com/

Women's Aid (UK)
A national service for women who are or have experienced Domestic Abuse. You can contact through their website: https://www.womensaid.org.uk/ or email: info@womensaid.org.uk

Reporting a Crime
It is completely your choice if you want to report a crime and it is ok to feel unsure about this. If you are in the UK and you do wish to, you can call 101 or go to your local police station. You can call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 if you want to remain anonymous. Outside the UK the laws on Intimate Image Abuse vary. Please get in touch with the support services for your local area and they should be able to advise on how to report (see above).

Study Aims and Design

The purpose of the study was to capture and interpret the lived experience of adults who have been the victim of Intimate Image Abuse, and those who have provided support to them. The study explored your individual lived experience of Intimate Image Abuse and the impact that this had on you. Ultimately, the desired outcome is to identify how best to support victims of Intimate Image Abuse.

What if I have a question? Please contact the researcher (Emily Geissler) if you would like some more information about this study at mulholle@uni.coventry.ac.uk.

Will I be contacted again?
If you have indicated within your consent form that you do not consent to be contacted following the interview then no further contact will be made. If you consented to this then you will be contacted by the researcher via email to request your feedback on the analysis of the information and themes which have been generated. This is to ensure that the way the researcher has interpreted your information feels consistent with your experience.

What if I want to withdraw from the study? You are free to withdraw your information up to one month before submission of the thesis (31st March 2021) and do not need to give a reason. A decision to withdraw will not affect you in any way.
Your data may be used prior to this date in the production of formal research outputs (e.g. journal articles, conference papers, and thesis), and so you are advised to contact the university at the earliest opportunity should you wish to withdraw. To withdraw, please contact the researcher (mulholle@uni.coventry.ac.uk) and provide your participant number which is listed on the consent form. Please also contact the Research Support Office (ethics.hls@coventry.ac.uk; tel: +44 (0)247 765 8461, so that your request can be dealt with promptly in the event of the lead researcher's absence.

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research team. All electronic data will be stored on a Microsoft One Drive cloud storage linked to the researcher's Coventry University e-mail account. No paper records will be kept. Any signed consent forms will be scanned and uploaded to a secure one drive account on the same day as your interview and the paper copies will be destroyed in confidential waste. Your consent information will be kept separately from your responses in order to minimise risk in the event of a data breach.

How will I find out the results of the study? Once this paper has been marked (July 2021), a research summary can be requested by contacting the researcher Emily Geissler on mulholle@uni.coventry.ac.uk.

What if I wish to make a complaint? If you are unhappy with any aspect of this research, please first contact the lead researcher, Emily Geissler on mulholle@uni.coventry.ac.uk. Alternatively, you can contact the supervisory team:

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In your letter please provide information about the research project, specify the name of the researcher and detail the nature of your complaint.

Thank you once again for taking part!

Debrief Sheet (Friends/family)

What are the Lived Experiences of Intimate Image Abuse in Adults? A Multiperspectival Approach of Victim/Survivors and Those who Support

Participant debriefing sheet

Thank you for participating in this interview, I hope you found it interesting. If you have found any part of this experience to be distressing, and wish to speak to someone please firstly contact your GP/primary physician. Below are the details for support services and those specifically designed for supporting the family and friends of the victim/survivors of Intimate Image Abuse. If you are a student you can also access you University student counselling, wellbeing and support services.

Victim Support (UK)
Victim Support are available to anyone affected by Intimate Image Abuse. You do not need to go to the police first and can contact them directly on their free support line: 0808 16 89 111, or request online or email support: www.victimsupport.org.uk/help-and-support/get-help/request-support

The office of eSafety Commissioner (Australia)
Support around image-based abuse by providing reporting options, support and resources for victims, family, friends, and bystanders. Their website is: www.esafety.gov.au/image-based-abuse

Netsafe (New Zealand)
An organisation which provides online safety education, advice and support about using digital technology safely, and managing online harassment, bullying abuse, scams and support for victims of image based abuse. You can contact through their website: www.netsafe.org.nz/image-based-abuse, phone: 0508 NETSAFE (0508 638 723), Text: 4282 or email: help@netsafe.org.nz

Samaritans (UK)
Samaritans provide a safe place to talk 24 hours a day. You can contact them by phone on 116 123, by email at jo@samaritans.org or visit their website www.samaritans.org/.

The Big White Wall (UK students)
A free online service for most UK university students. An anonymous forum and online support resources to support wellbeing for individuals with anxiety, depression and other common mental health issues. Accessible at https://www.bigwhitewall.com/

Reporting a Crime
It is completely your choice if you want to report a crime and it is ok to feel unsure about this. If you are in the UK and you do wish to, you can call 101 or go to your local police station. You can call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 if you want to remain anonymous. Outside the UK the laws on Intimate Image Abuse vary. Please get in touch with the support services for your local area and they should be able to advise on how to report (see above).

Study Aims and Design

The purpose of the study was to capture and interpret the lived experience of adults who have been the victim of Intimate Image Abuse, and those who have provided support to them. The study explored your individual lived experience of supporting a friend or family member who has been the victim/survivor of Intimate Image Abuse. Ultimately, the desired outcome is to identify how best to support victims of Intimate Image Abuse.
What if I have a question? Please contact the researcher (Emily Geissler) if you would like some more information about this study at mulholle@uni.coventry.ac.uk.

Will I be contacted again?
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In your letter please provide information about the research project, specify the name of the researcher and detail the nature of your complaint.

Thank you once again for taking part!

Debrief Sheet (Professionals)

What are the Lived Experiences of Intimate Image Abuse in Adults? A Multiperspectival Approach of Victim/Survivors and Those who Support

Participant debriefing sheet

Thank you for participating in this interview, I hope you found it interesting. If you have found any part of this experience to be distressing, and wish to speak to someone please firstly contact your GP/primary physician. Below are the details for support services to contact if you feel you need additional support for your own wellbeing. If you feel you are having a specific difficulty with someone you have worked with we would advise you speak to your manager at your place of work if you feel able to. Additionally, if you are a student you can access you University student counselling, wellbeing and support services.

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Thank you once again for taking part!

Appendix O

A Table of Demographics for Participant Groups

Participant Group	Age	Nationality	Sexuality
Victims	28	White British	Pansexual
	38	White British	Heterosexual
	28	White	Bisexual
	28	White European	Bisexual
Friends/Family	54	White English	Heterosexual
	28	White British	Bisexual
Professional	73	White English	Heterosexual
	25	White British	Heterosexual

Appendix P

Table of codes generated from Nvivo

Name	Files	References
sense of injustice	6	21
seeking support	3	18
impact on work	6	15
support network in friends and family	5	12
education as a preventative measure	5	11
trying to understand motives	5	11
worries about being judged	3	11
worries about the impact on children	1	11
avoidance as a coping strategy	4	10
continuing longer term emotional impacts	2	10
family support	5	10
feeling unsupported	2	10
feeling lost and uncertain	3	9
figuring out identity	4	9
mental health impacts	3	9
seeking justice	4	9
shame	4	9
anger	4	8
insufficient law	4	8
navigating the effects and impact on others	1	8
affecting entire life	3	7
emotional upheaval	2	7
frustration at slow processes	1	7
loss of control	3	7
positive experience of police support	5	7
powerless	4	7
self-blame or regret for choices	4	7
upset at being perceived a way which is not in line with identity	2	7
fear	3	6
loss of identity	4	6
loss of sexual identity	3	6
loss of trust in others	4	6
non-judgmental	2	6
perceived victim blaming	3	6
uncertainty and unpredictability	4	6
broken trust	2	5
caution	5	5
consent in sexting	4	5
feeling silenced	1	5

gender inequality	3	5
lack of police knowledge of IIA laws	2	5
resilience	2	5
ruminating about relationship	2	5
supporting choices	2	5
therapeutic support	4	5
understanding sexting	2	5
unhelpful responses	3	5
boastfulness	4	4
complex emotional experience	3	4
disappointment in the law	1	4
enjoyment vs caution	3	4
friends recognising that blame was with the perpetrator	1	4
immaturity	2	4
impact of lockdown on experience of IIA	2	4
impact on overall functioning and wellbeing	1	4
professionals strategies for coping	2	4
sexting is normalised	2	4
sharing the burden	3	4
societal problem	1	4
support through shared experiences	1	4
abuse	3	3
attitude of nonchalance and normality	1	3
change in views	2	3
conflict of caution but remaining true to self	3	3
conflicting emotions towards perpetrator	3	3
continuing feelings of dread	2	3
distrust	3	3
distrust of men	2	3
empathy	1	3
fear of new relationships	1	3
feeling accepted and supported	3	3
feeling emotionally stretched	3	3
feeling restricted by definitions	1	3
hopeful	2	3
hopeless	2	3
humour as a coping strategy	1	3
intense negative feelings towards perpetrator	1	3
lack of knowledge and understanding of IIA	2	3
limitations of the law	3	3
loss of choice	3	3
loss of self-esteem	1	3
loss of support network	1	3

methods of IIA	1	3
mixed feelings and confusion	3	3
multidimensional support	2	3
misogynist behaviours	1	3
need to prove or justify self as victim	1	3
no closure	2	3
not an emotionally linear process	2	3
not just about an image	1	3
others pulling away	1	3
permanence	2	3
pride	1	3
reclaiming the narrative	1	3
recognition of position of a victim and not to blame	1	3
recognition of self-determination	1	3
relentless	3	3
sense of exhaustion trying to do everything	2	3
sexting is a more intimate act	2	3
sexting is enjoyable	2	3
understanding of IIA	1	3
wanting to avoid and move on	2	3
waves of emotional upheaval	2	3
acceptance and support from family	2	2
acceptance and support from friends	2	2
admiration	2	2
anger at lack of justice	2	2
barriers to justice	2	2
compassionate response	2	2
concern for others	2	2
conflict of others judgements with own self views	1	2
cyber solutions	2	2
damage control	1	2
disbelief	2	2
drawing on own experiences	2	2
embarrassment	1	2
endless	2	2
experience of IIA or worries has not changed sexting behaviours	1	2
fear of sending images	1	2
feeling alone	2	2
feeling invalidated	1	2
feeling like a different person	2	2
feeling overwhelmed	1	2
feeling validated	2	2
feelings around sexting changed	2	2

frustration at inequality of gender victimisation	2	2
hypervigilance	1	2
IIA within a bigger context	2	2
impacted on views on men in general	2	2
impacts on personal life	1	2
impotent rage	2	2
information providing sense on control	1	2
initial response of shock	2	2
inappropriate terminology	2	2
judgements from others come from their naivety	1	2
lack of police input	1	2
long term implications	2	2
loss of freedom	2	2
manage expectations	1	2
multiple experiences of IIA	2	2
negative experience of sexting behaviours	1	2
negative perceptions of police	1	2
not being at fault	2	2
ongoing	1	2
placing blame within the perpetrator not victim	1	2
priority	1	2
providing practical support	2	2
reassured by having a choice	1	2
revealing private life	1	2
seeking practical support	2	2
self-care	2	2
sense of unfairness at perceptions of others	1	2
support from work	2	2
support provides reassurance	1	2
technology risks	1	2
the law is not enough in itself	2	2
violation	2	2
wanting to get something positive out of this	1	2
Wanting to know what the right thing to do is	1	2
worries of who has seen	1	2
a desire to help others	1	1
a way of staying connected	1	1
acceptance	1	1
acceptance of powerlessness	1	1
actions alone deserve justice in law	1	1
affecting change	1	1
affronted	1	1
anger at sexism	1	1

appropriate support could have avoided negative impacts	1	1
band aid solutions	1	1
being kept in the loop	1	1
breaching internet privacy	1	1
broken	1	1
comfort from receiving support	1	1
comfort in friends	1	1
conflicting needs	1	1
control	1	1
creating safe space	1	1
difficult for the partner	1	1
distress	1	1
emotional impact of others responses	1	1
emotional toll on providing support	1	1
empowerment	1	1
faced with a difficult reality	1	1
feeling dehumanised	1	1
feeling held	1	1
feeling like everyone is aware of it	1	1
frustration at perception of not facing it	1	1
guilt around seeking support	1	1
hard to make new connections	1	1
hurtful	1	1
IIA is a broad concept	1	1
IIA is not new	1	1
impact on friendships	1	1
impacts on relationships	1	1
in the context of other forms of abuse	1	1
increasing police knowledge	1	1
indignance	1	1
initial response of denial	1	1
inappropriate responses from others	1	1
interfering with daily life	1	1
interpreting terminology to infer shared blame	1	1
judgements on emotional responses	1	1
justice was helpful	1	1
lack of education causes ignorance	1	1
lack of empathy from others	1	1
lack of support	1	1
lack of support from services	1	1
lasting negative impact of ineffective initial response	1	1
law is insufficient	1	1
law providing a sense of justice	1	1

learning ways of coping	1	1
legal knowledge not needed	1	1
lifelong impacts	1	1
listening	1	1
little to no impact on life	1	1
long term emotional support	1	1
looking for signs	1	1
loss of intimacy	1	1
loss of sexual freedoms	1	1
lost sense of self	1	1
male support helped instil trust in men	1	1
media influence	1	1
mixed feelings around support services	1	1
morality vs realism	1	1
more police knowledge would create more compassion	1	1
no consequences	1	1
no impact on personal relationship	1	1
no sense of belonging	1	1
normalisation of sharing intimate images	1	1
not being heard	1	1
not feeling blamed	1	1
others judgements seen as immature	1	1
others perceptions of minimising experience	1	1
overwhelming impact	1	1
painful	1	1
partner support	1	1
perception that an intent would always be to cause distress	1	1
perception that some forms of image sharing are acceptable and others aren't	1	1
personal impacts to supporters	1	1
positive experience of providing support	1	1
positive feelings on the law	1	1
positive impact of support	1	1
power	1	1
practical barriers to accessing support	1	1
practical support from family	1	1
previous assumptions were non-threatening	1	1
private images	1	1
privileged	1	1
procedural delays	1	1
questioning identity	1	1
reassurance	1	1
rebuilding self	1	1

recognising extent of her control	1	1
recognising sexism	1	1
relief	1	1
remaining true to self	1	1
resignation	1	1
resurfacing negative emotions	1	1
self-acceptance	1	1
self-compassion	1	1
sense of distance from the law	1	1
sense of pride at support received	1	1
sense of shared disapproval	1	1
serious impacts	1	1
service provision restrictions	1	1
sexting as a means to an end	1	1
sexting as objectifying	1	1
sexting is individual	1	1
sexting to engage sexually with another	1	1
sexual empowerment	1	1
stress	1	1
support for partner	1	1
support options are limited by service provisions	1	1
support services	1	1
support through not talking about it	1	1
taking back control	1	1
teachers lack of knowledge of how to support	1	1
terminology implies guilt	1	1
therapist lack of knowledge	1	1
trust in friends gave a sense of security and reassurance	1	1
unable to provide support	1	1
Uncertainty of new relationships	1	1
untrusting of own choices	1	1
validation	1	1
varied forms of support provided	1	1
victimisation becomes normal	1	1
violating consent	1	1
want to move on	1	1
wanting to take power back	1	1
withdrawing	1	1
worries for the future	1	1
wounds reopening	1	1

Appendix Q

Tables of Themes for individual participants

Participant 1. Penelope

SUPERORDINATE	SUBORDINATE	QUOTE
WORLD CRASHING DOWN		It's like a constant abuse
		I don't recognise who I am
		I don't know if can piece my life back together
	Children's Devastation	To see the devastation on my children
CONNECTIONS		You need real connections
	Someone Cared	Had it not been for them I don't know if I'd be here now
		Having someone to talk to
		They wanted to hold my hand through it
	Silenced	The most crushing sense of injustice
		That your voice just doesn't matter
Understanding sexting		

Participant 2. Rose

SUPERORDINATE	SUBORDINATE	QUOTE
MY OWN PERSONAL APOCALYPSE		It's like my own personal apocalypse
		Never ending circle
		Heart-breaking
		It's life changing
AN INTERNAL STRUGGLE (PRE VS POST SELF)		An internal struggle between morality and realism
		Everything was just instantly turned to ash
		Everything's a bit wrong
		Not looking through rose-tinted glasses anymore
		I was quite an open book before
		It's a part of me now
ITS NOT YOUR FAULT	*They think we're fair game*	That we're not people
		Trophy
		Misogynist
	There for me	Makes me feel less alone
		I wasn't made to feel like I had done anything wrong

Participant 3. Ruby

SUPERORDINATE	SUBORDINATE	QUOTE
RECLAIMING (Narrative and identity)		I definitely reclaimed it I have done nothing wrong I didn't believe that was who I was I very much don't believe that makes you a whore I didn't believe those things
	Picking up the pieces	How am I going to pick up the pieces? How are people going to see me now? Worry that I was going to come across in a certain way
BECAUSE I AM A GIRL		It's definitely 100% because I was the girl I got all the stick for it I seemed to get the brunt of the problems Cos I'm the girl
NAIVETY		Immature We are not taught enough I truly believe that the only way we'll ever help these sorts of things is just education Education education education

Participant 4. Kim

SUPERORDINATE	SUBORDINATE	QUOTE
INVASION OF WHOLE BEING		She was absolutely broke
	She's battling this	Wounds re-opening She can never seem to rest
IT TAKES A VILLIAGE		Takes a village to help somebody It's just the tip of the iceberg
	Many routes	Take the burden away That many routes to give you support I hope is a great thing for her
	Blessing and a curse	It really touched my heart Personal failure If my heart sinks, I dread to think what hers is doing

Participant 5. Daisy

SUPERORDINATE	SUBORDINATE	QUOTE
GRABBING FOR THE STRANDS OF MYSELF		Trying to grab at you know the strands of me that I still have Became a part of who I was Extended period of time that a lot of my own identity was built upon that has been severely eroded in the last year
	Social Strands	Connection with another person
EMOTIONAL UPHEAVAL		A lot of anger, a lot of depression, difficulty trusting people All of the elastic used to get here, now it gets here
NETWORK OF PEOPLE	*Grateful*	Everyone was so supportive
	Fear of Judgements	I'm afraid of judgement from people who are small minded and cruel She made a comment about something that made me, made it seem as though she might be holding some judgement over me That people will judge me rather than the person responsible for doing the horrible thing they did
TRING TO FIGURE OUT		The psychology of a person I still do believe he cared about me

Participant 6. Freya

SUPERORDINATE	SUBORDINATE	QUOTE
EATEN HER ENTIRE LIFE		It's just eaten her entire life It's just changed who she was I feel like someone stole my best friend She's been this other person she's like "I don't feel like myself so why would anyone want to spend time with me" I don't wanna be this person
POWERLESS		Nothing you can do makes it better Being really careful not to make things worse She's worried about losing control of the narrative I just felt really powerless to be honest
	Band aids (helpless sadness)	Everything that she's done and everyone that she has is a bit of a band aid Trying to board up a house in a crisis We were just building barricades and walls I don't know how we're gonna, how we're gonna cope with that I just wanted her to feel better she's tried lots and lots of different things to feel better
	Impotent rage	The sort of impotent rage that you get from this situation I'm just really angry More angry, frustrated at the, at the thing that there was nothing she could do
INEQUALITY		What is deemed acceptable in our society Feeling that someone's got a right to you, a right to your body

Participant 7. Barbara

SUPERORDINATE	SUBORDINATE	QUOTE
INFERIOR CREATURES		Women have been seen as inferior creatures The whole fabric of society needs to change They were used as an object Just how sick society has become The general state of how women are in society
HAUNTED		Feeling haunted by it It's a minefield of how damaging it is That's part of what seems so terrible about it. That you may have images that are there forever Not being able to be who you are freely It's humiliating She moved through many different feelings
EMPOWERED		To become empowered in the situation They had so much power taken away from them Someone in that situation needs someone they can talk to freely, in the sense of a therapist but also someone in an advisory capacity

Participant 8. Robyn

SUPERORDINATE	SUBORDINATE	QUOTE
CONSTRASTING VIEWS	Victim sense of Responsibility	It made her question her choices She felt responsible
	Blame lies with perpetrator	I think the boyfriends pathetic I was angry at him
BEING THERE FOR ONE ANOTHER		There is nothing to be ashamed of That's nothing they should ever, ever be ashamed of They shouldn't feel guilty or bad We try very hard not to judge one another It's about being there for one another it's not about criticising choices we make Everyone was being supportive and caring

Appendix R

Table of Themes for Groups (Victims, Professionals and Friends/Family)

Table of Themes for Victims

SUPERORDINATE	SUBORDINATE	QUOTE
MY OWN APOCALYPSE		It's like a constant abuse I don't know if can piece my life back together Never ending circle Heart-breaking A lot of anger, a lot of depression, difficulty trusting people All of the elastic used to get here, now it gets here
BECAUSE I'M A GIRL (Misogyny Judged Victim blaming Unsupported Silenced)		The most crushing sense of injustice That your voice just doesn't matter That we're not people Trophy Misogynist They think we're fair game It's definitely 100% because I was the girl I got all the stick for it I seemed to get the brunt of the problems Cos I'm the girl
GRABBING FOR THE STRANDS OF MYSELF		I don't recognise who I am Everything was just instantly turned to ash It's a part of me now Everything's a bit wrong Trying to grab at you know the strands of me that I still have Became a part of who I was
CONNECTIONS		You need real connections
	Someone cared	Had it not been for them I don't know if I'd be here now Having someone to talk to They wanted to hold my hand through it Makes me feel less alone I wasn't made to feel like I had done anything wrong Everyone was so supportive
	Social strands *(worries about how to connect with others, their judgements and feeling disappointed with judgements)*	Connection with another person Afraid of judgement Incredibly disappointed

Table of Themes for Professionals

SUPERORDINATE	SUBORDINATE	QUOTE
IT TAKES A VILLIAGE		It takes a village to help somebody
		It's just the tip of the iceberg
	It's a blessing and a curse	It really touched my heart
		Personal failure
		If my heart sinks a dread to think what hers is doing
		Glad that I can give them support
	Taking the burden	Supporting to become empowered
		They don't feel quite so alone in it
		They can you know, offload absolutely everything
BATTLE		It's a minefield of how damaging it is
		She's battling this
		She can never seem to rest
		Wounds re-opening
		An invasion of her whole being
		She was absolutely broken
INFERIOR CREATURES (Only for p7)		Women have been seen as inferior creatures
		The whole fabric of society needs to change
		They were used as an object
		Just how sick society has become
		The general state of how women are in society

Table of Themes for Friends and Family

SUPERORDINATE	SUBORDINATE	QUOTE
IMPOTENT RAGE		Nothing you can do makes it better
		I think the boyfriends pathetic
		I'm angry at him
		A bit of a band aid
		Trying to board up a house in a crisis
		I'm just really angry
		I just felt really powerless to be honest
		The sort of impotent rage that you get from this situation
		More angry, frustrated at the, at the thing that there was nothing she could do
NOTHING TO BE ASHAMED OF		They shouldn't feel guilty or bad
		We try very hard not to judge one another
		It's about being there for one another it's not about criticising choices we make
		Everyone was being supportive and caring
		If you're upset then I'm upset.
		She knew that she had our support
		At no point did either of us say like "for shame"
EATEN HER ENTIRE LIFE		It made her question her choices
		She felt responsible
		It just changed who she was
		It's eaten her entire life
		I feel like someone stole my best friend
		She's been this other person

Table of Themes for all Supporters

SUPERORDINATE	SUBORDINATE	QUOTE
BATTLE		It made her question her choices She felt responsible She was absolutely broken She can never seem to rest Wounds re-opening It's a minefield of how damaging it is
	loss	It just changed who she was She's been this other person I feel like someone stole my best friend It's eaten her entire life An insidious eating into her sense of trust of anyone really she's like "I don't feel like myself so why would anyone want to spend time with me" Not being able to be who you are freely
NOTHING TO BE ASHAMED OF		They shouldn't feel guilty or bad We try very hard not to judge one another It's about being there for one another it's not about criticising choices we make Everyone was being supportive and caring If you're upset then I'm upset. She knew that she had our support At no point did either of us say like "for shame"
ANGER		I'm just really angry I'm angry at him POS Piece of shit we call them
	Powerlessness	Nothing you can do makes it better A bit of a band aid Boarding up a house in a crisis I just felt really powerless to be honest More angry, frustrated at the, at the thing that there was nothing she could do The sort of impotent rage that you get from this situation
	Unjust society	Women have been seen as inferior creatures The whole fabric of society needs to change They were used as an object Just how sick society has become The general state of how women are in society What is deemed acceptable in our society Feeling that someone's got a right to you, a right to your body She's so undervalued

Appendix S

Table of overall themes

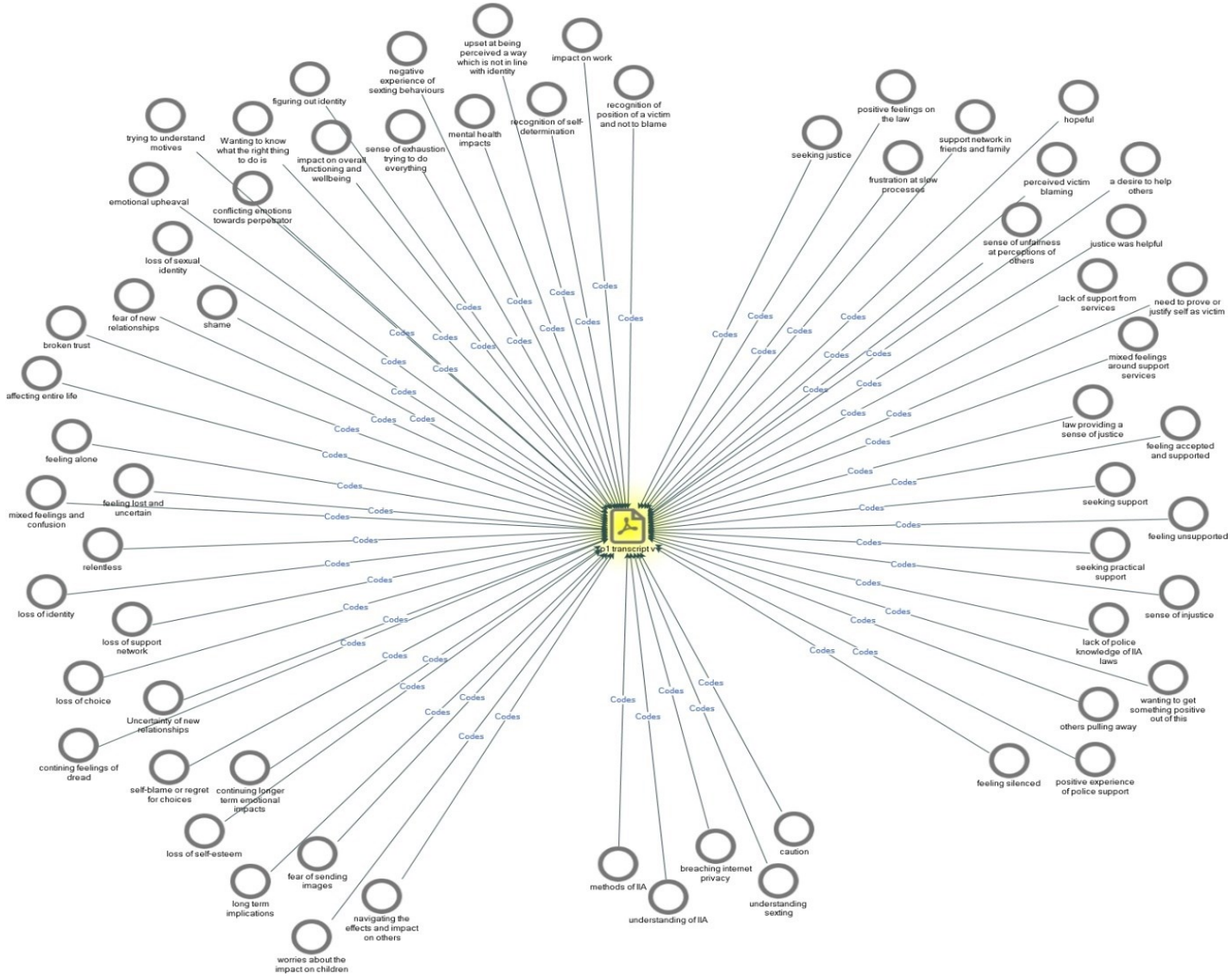
SUPERORDINATE	SUBORDINATE	KEY WORD/PHRASE
PERSONAL APOCALYPSE	*Internal battle*	It made her question her choices She felt responsible She was absolutely broken She can never seem to rest Wounds re-opening It's a minefield of how damaging it is It's like a constant abuse She was battling this It's eaten her entire life
	Grabbing for the strands of myself	It just changed who she was I feel like someone stole my best friend Not being able to be who you are freely I don't know if can piece my life back together I don't recognise who I am It's a part of me now Everything's a bit wrong Trying to grab at you know the strands of me that I still have I didn't believe that was who I was
STRANDS OF THE SOCIAL WEB	*It takes a village*	Connection with another person You need real connections It takes a village to help somebody It's just the tip of the iceberg
	Nothing to be ashamed of	They shouldn't feel guilty or bad It's about being there for one another it's not about criticising choices we make Everyone was being supportive and caring I wasn't made to feel like I had done anything wrong Had it not been for them I don't know if I'd be here now They wanted to hold my hand through it Makes me feel less alone
	Judgements	Afraid of judgement Worry that I was going to come across in a certain way I didn't want people to think those things I'm afraid of judgement from people who are small minded and cruel That people will judge me rather than the person responsible for doing the horrible thing they did Not being able to be who you are freely It's humiliating

INFERIOR CREATURES	*Fair game*	Women have been seen as inferior creatures The whole fabric of society needs to change They were used as an object Feeling that someone's got a right to you, a right to your body The most crushing sense of injustice That we're not people They think we're fair game It's definitely 100% because I was the girl I got all the stick for it There is some rather backwards thinking people who will place the blame on the woman basically
	Impotent Rage	Nothing you can do makes it better Boarding up a house in a crisis I just felt really powerless to be honest The sort of impotent rage that you get from this situation I'm just really angry That your voice just doesn't matter

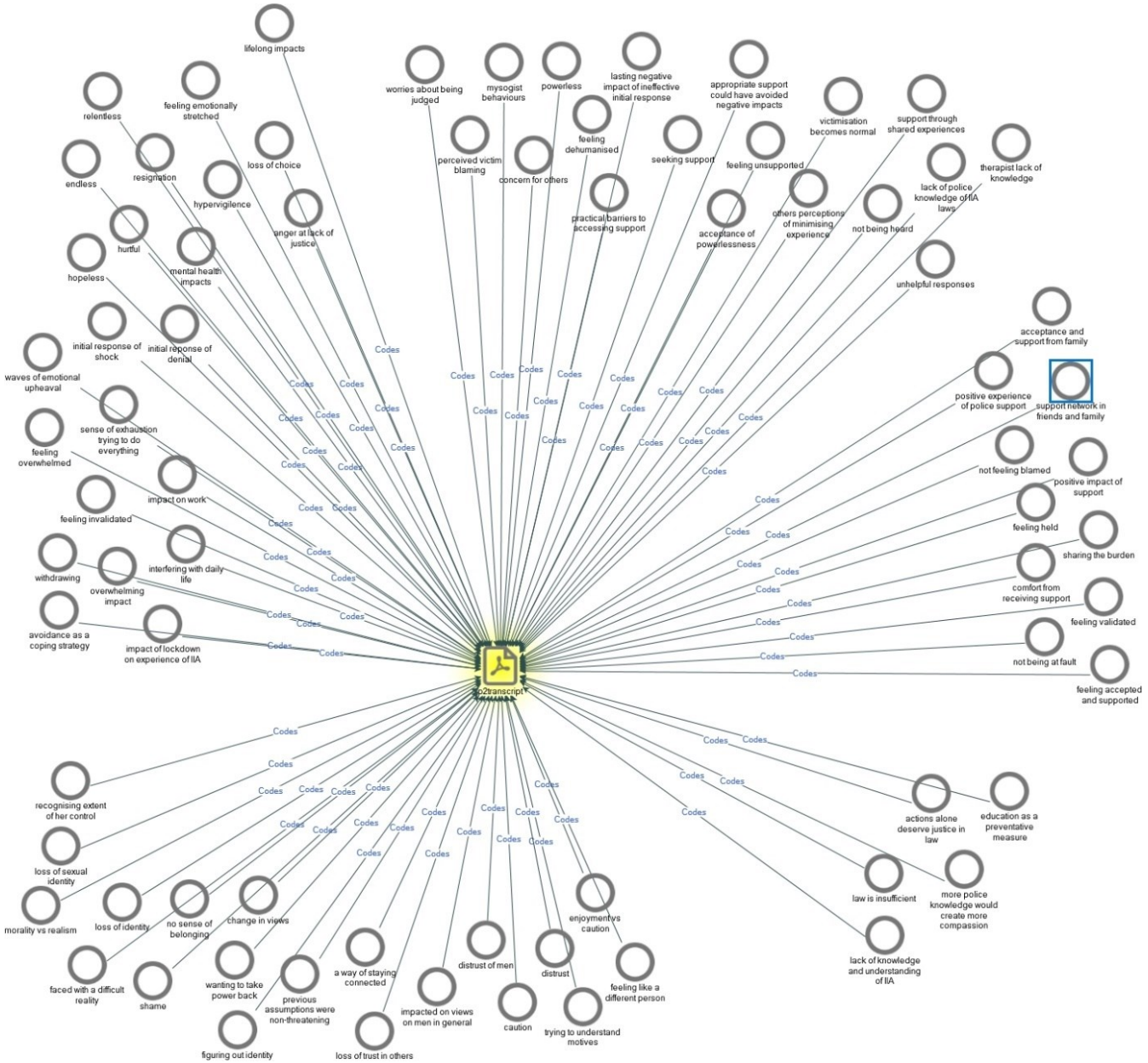
Appendix T

Map of codes for Individual Participants

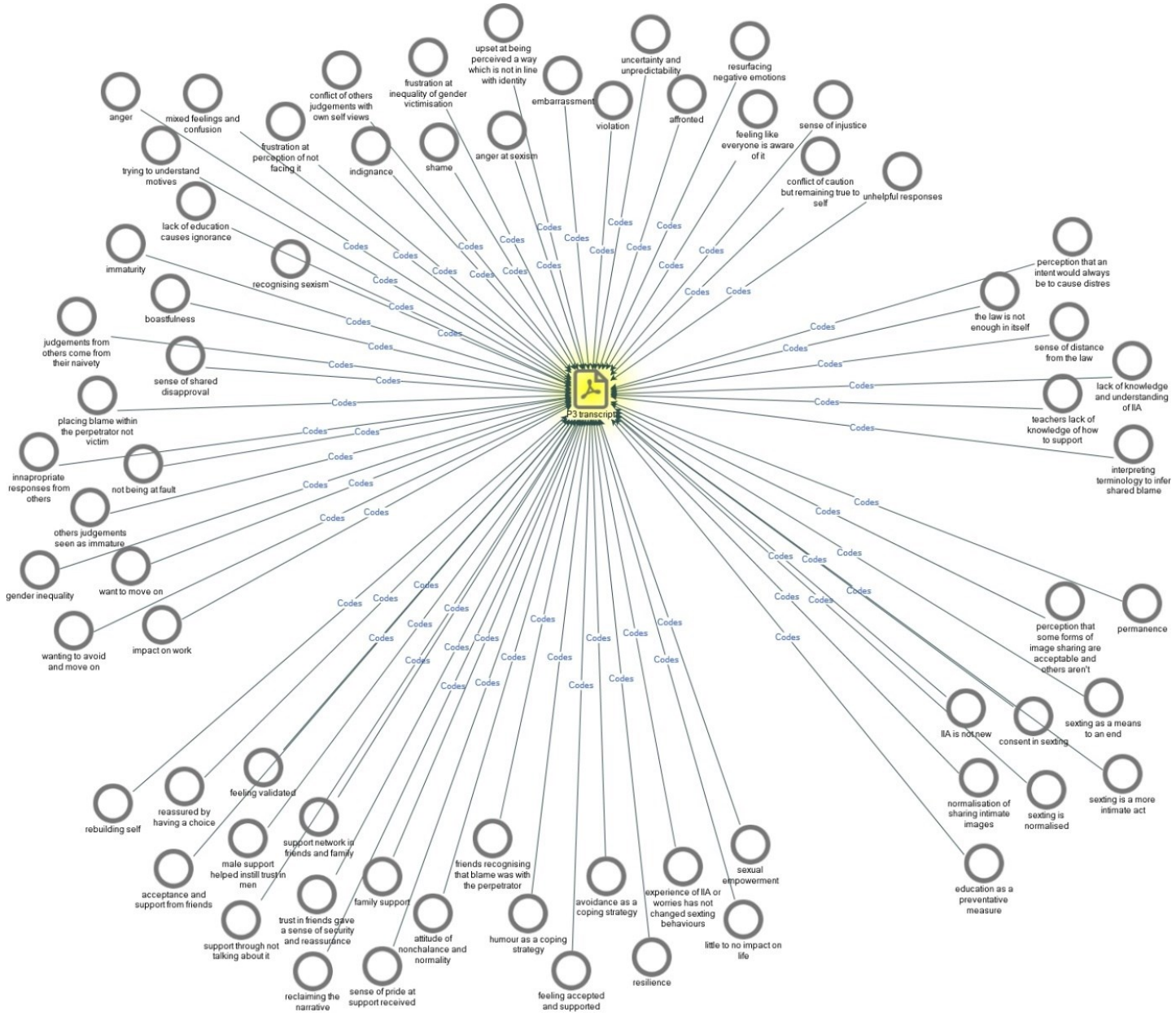
Participant 1. Penelope



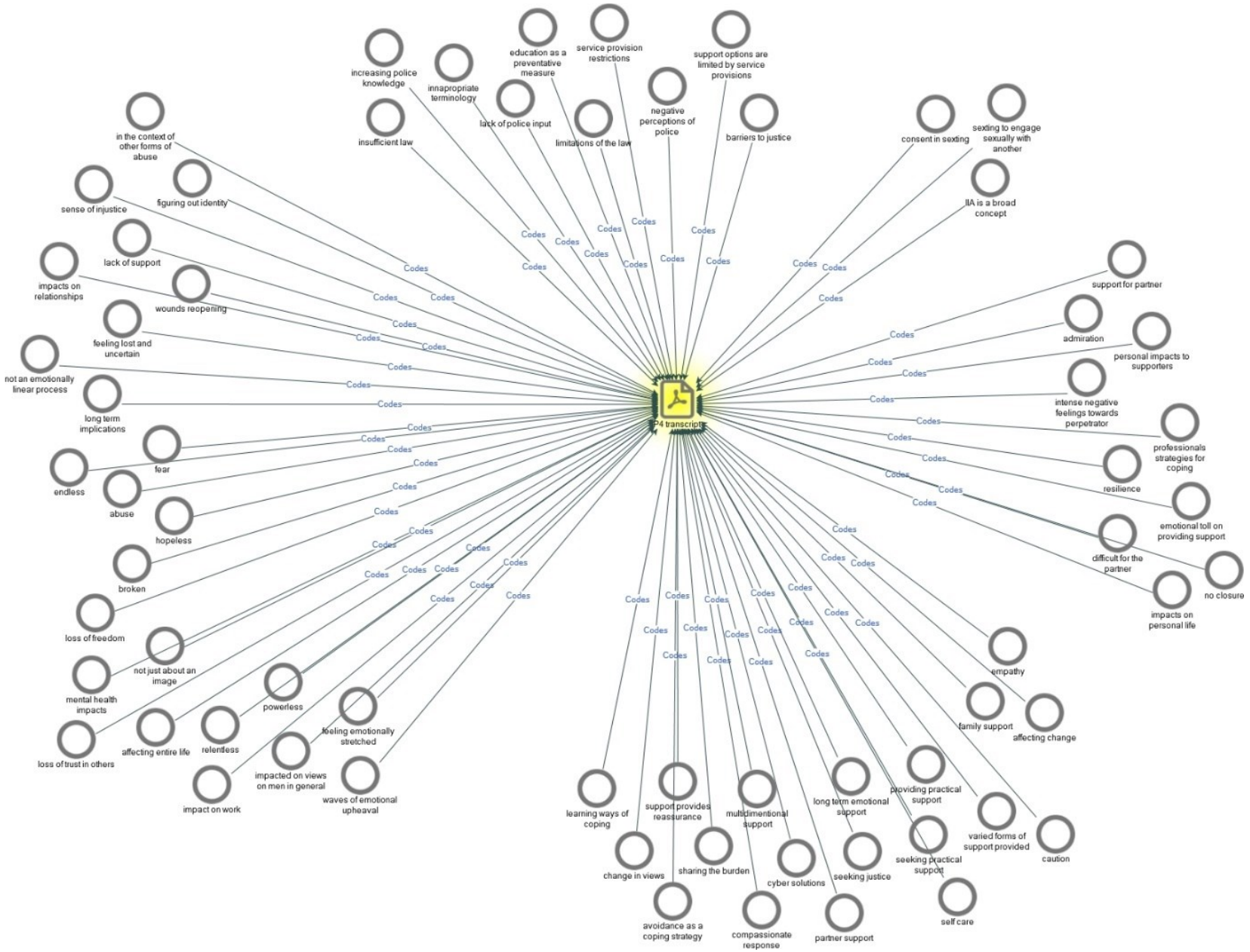
Participant 2. Rose



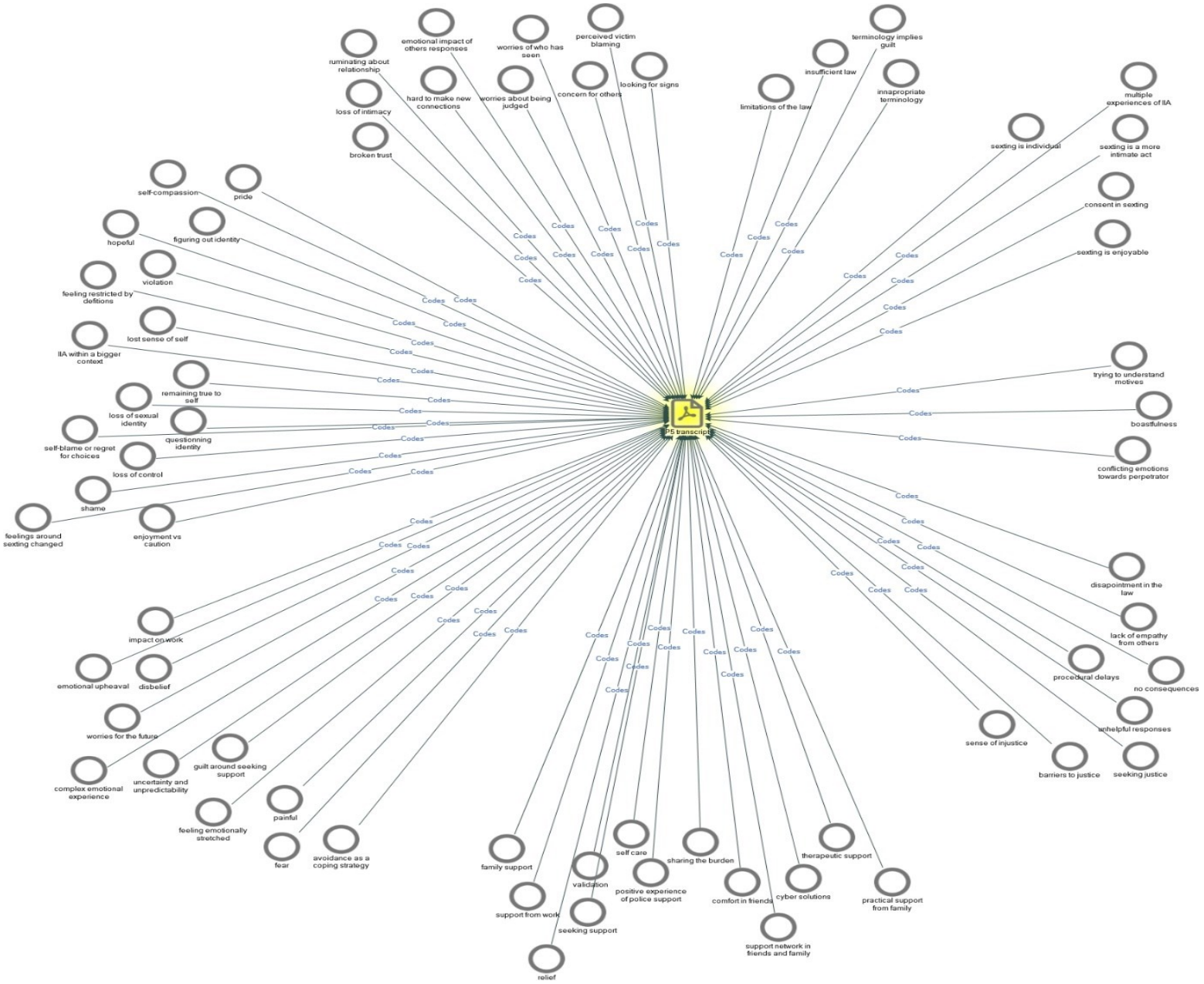
Participant 3. Ruby



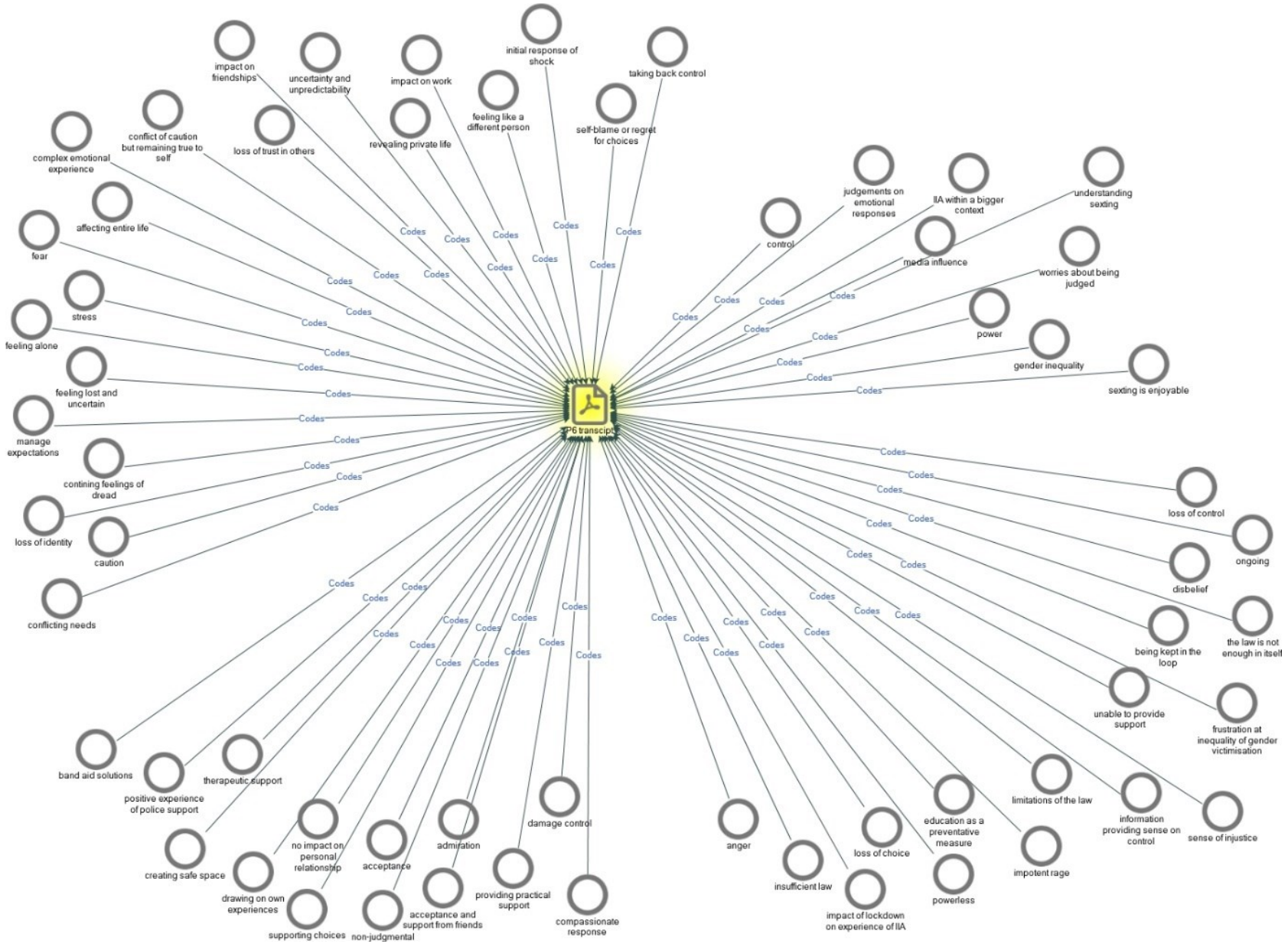
Participant 4. Kim



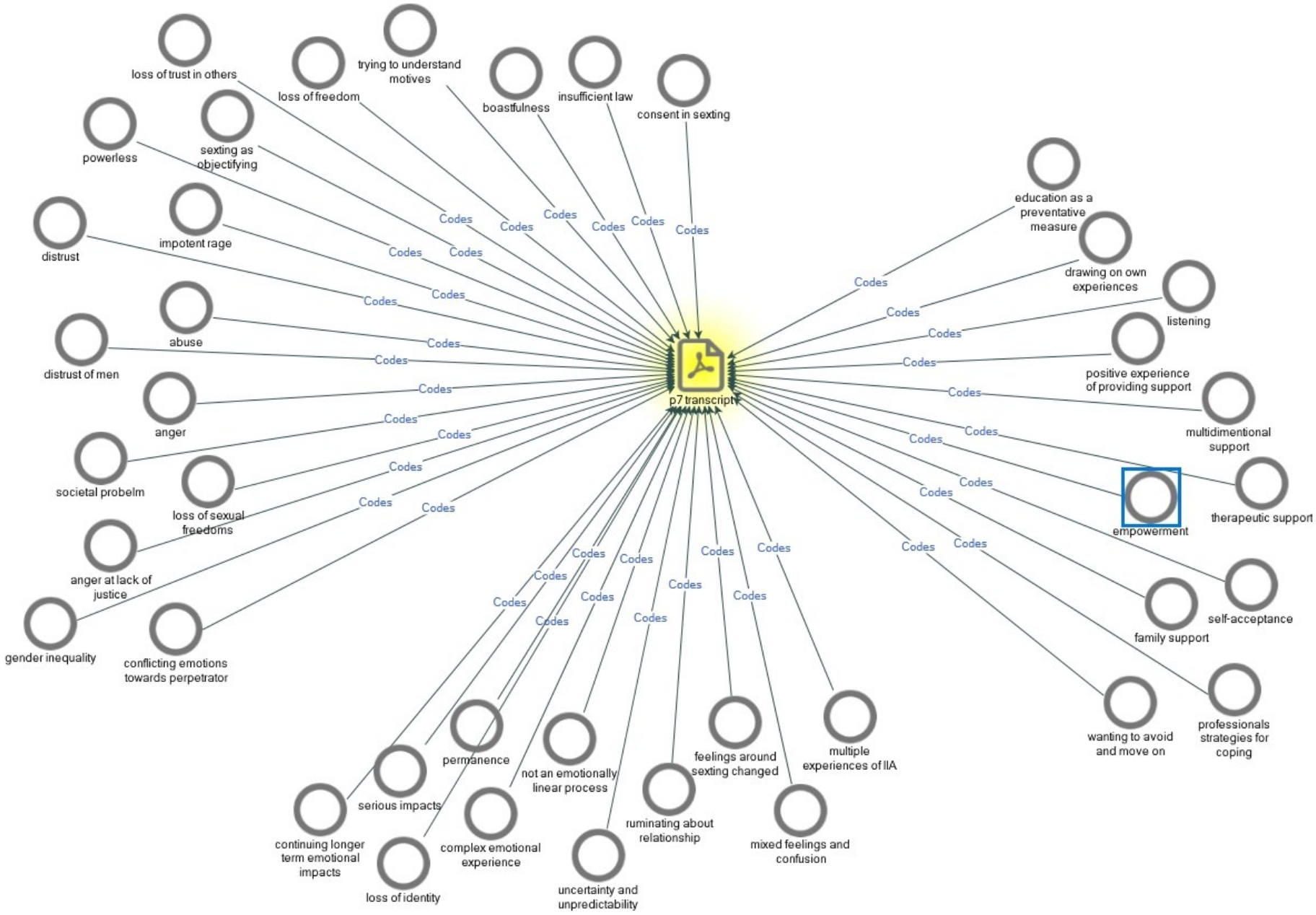
Participant 5. Daisy



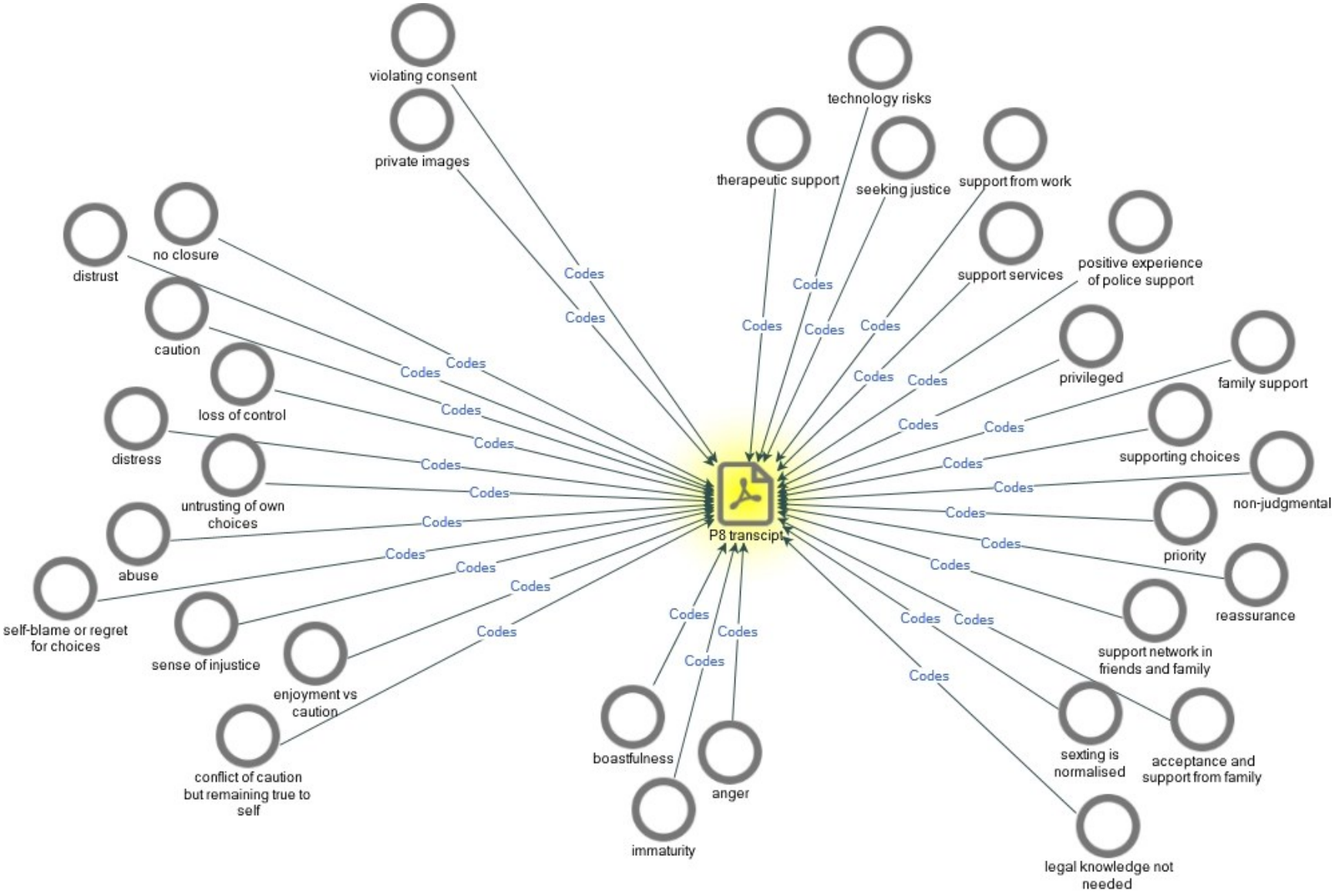
Participant 6. Freya



Participant 7. Barbara



Participant 8. Robyn



Appendix U

Spreadsheet of Code Prevalence for Participants and Groups

code	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	F&F	Prof	victims	support
a desire to help others	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
a way of staying connected	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
abuse	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	2	0	3
acceptance	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
acceptance and support from family	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1
acceptance and support from friends	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
acceptance of powerlessness	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
actions alone deserve justice in law	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
admiration	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	2
affecting change	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
affecting entire life	5	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	5	2
affronted	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
anger	0	0	2	0	0	4	1	1	5	1	2	6
anger at lack of justice	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1
anger at sexism	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
appropriate support could have avoided negative impacts	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
attitude of nonchalance and normality	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
avoidance as a coping strategy	0	1	4	1	4	0	0	0	0	1	9	1
band aid solutions	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
barriers to justice	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
being kept in the loop	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
boastfulness	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	2	2
breaching internet privacy	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
broken	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
broken trust	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	5	0
caution	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	2	1	2	3
change in views	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2
comfort from receiving support	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
comfort in friends	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
compassionate response	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	2
complex emotional experience	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	1	2	1	3
concern for others	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
conflict of caution but remaining true to self	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	2	0	1	2
conflict of others judgements with own self views	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
conflicting emotions towards perpetrator	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	2	1
conflicting needs	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
consent in sexting	0	0	1	1	2	0	1	0	0	2	3	2
continuing feelings of dread	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	1	2

continuing longer term emotional impacts	9	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	9	1
control	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
creating safe space	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
cyber solutions	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
damage control	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	2
difficult for the partner	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
disapointment in the law	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	4	0
disbelief	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
distress	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
distrust	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	2
distrust of men	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	1
drawing on own experiences	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	2
education as a preventative measure	0	2	4	3	0	1	1	0	1	4	6	5
embarrassment	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
emotional impact of others responses	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
emotional toll on providing support	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
emotional upheaval	5	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	7	0
empathy	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	3
empowerment	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1
endless	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
enjoyment vs caution	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	2	0	2	2
experience of IIA or worries has not changed sexting behaviours	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
faced with a difficult reality	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
family support	0	0	2	1	2	0	1	4	4	2	4	6
fear	0	0	0	1	4	1	0	0	1	1	4	2
fear of new relationships	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
fear of sending images	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
feeling accepted and supported	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
feeling alone	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
feeling dehumanised	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
feeling emotionally stretched	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	1
feeling held	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
feeling invalidated	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
feeling like a different person	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
feeling like everyone is aware of it	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
feeling lost and uncertain	6	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	2	1	6	3
feeling overwhelmed	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
feeling restricted by defitions	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
feeling silenced	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0
feeling unsupported	8	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	0
feeling validated	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
feelings around sexting changed	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1
figuring out identity	3	1	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	1	8	1

friends recognising that blame was with the perpetrator	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0
frustration at inequality of gender victimisation	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
frustration at perception of not facing it	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
frustration at slow processes	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0
gender inequality	0	0	3	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	3	2
guilt around seeking support	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
hard to make new connections	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
hopeful	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
hopeless	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1
humour as a coping strategy	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
hurtful	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
hypervigilence	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
IIA is a broad concept	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
IIA is not new	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
IIA within a bigger context	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
immaturity	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	3	1
impact of lockdown on experience of IIA	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	3	0	1	3
impact on friendships	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
impact on overall functioning and wellbeing	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0
impact on work	4	4	1	1	4	1	0	0	1	1	13	2
impacted on views on men in general	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
impacts on personal life	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
impacts on relationships	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
impotent rage	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	2
in the context of other forms of abuse	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
increasing police knowledge	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
indignance	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
information providing sense on control	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	2
initial reponse of denial	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
initial response of shock	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
innapropriate responses from others	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
innapropriate terminology	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
insufficient law	0	0	0	2	1	2	3	0	2	5	1	7
intense negative feelings towards perpetrator	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	3
interfering with daily life	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
interpreting terminology to infer shared blame	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
judgements from others come from their naivety	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
judgements on emotional responses	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
justice was helpful	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0

lack of education causes ignorance	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
lack of empathy from others	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
lack of knowledge and understanding of IIA	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
lack of police input	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
lack of police knowledge of IIA laws	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0
lack of support	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
lack of support from services	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
lasting negative impact of ineffective initial response	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
law is insufficient	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
law providing a sense of justice	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
learning ways of coping	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
legal knowledge not needed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
lifelong impacts	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
limitations of the law	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	2
listening	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1
little to no impact on life	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
long term emotional support	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
long term implications	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
looking for signs	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
loss of choice	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	1
loss of control	0	0	0	0	5	1	0	1	2	0	5	2
loss of freedom	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	2
loss of identity	1	2	0	0	0	2	1	0	2	1	3	3
loss of intimacy	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
loss of self-esteem	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
loss of sexual freedoms	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1
loss of sexual identity	2	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	6	0
loss of support network	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
loss of trust in others	0	2	0	1	0	1	2	0	1	3	2	4
lost sense of self	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
male support helped instill trust in men	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
manage expectations	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	2
media influence	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
mental health impacts	6	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	8	1
methods of IIA	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
misogynist behaviours	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
mixed feelings and confusion	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	1
mixed feelings around support services	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
morality vs realism	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
more police knowledge would create more compassion	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
multidimensional support	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	3
multiple experiences of IIA	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1

navigating the effects and impact on others	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0
need to prove or justify self as victim	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
negative experience of sexting behaviours	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
negative perceptions of police	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
no closure	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	2	1	0	3
no consequences	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
no impact on personal relationship	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
no sense of belonging	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
non-judgmental	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	5	6	0	0	6
normalisation of sharing intimate images	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
not an emotionally linear process	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	3
not being at fault	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
not being heard	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
not feeling blamed	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
not just about an image	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	3
ongoing	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	2
others judgements seen as immature	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
others perceptions of minimising experience	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
others pulling away	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
overwhelming impact	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
painful	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
partner support	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
perceived victim blaming	3	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	6	0
perception that an intent would always be to cause distres	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
perception that some forms of image sharing are acceptable and others aren't	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
permanence	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	1
personal impacts to supporters	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
placing blame within the perpetrator not victim	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
positive experience of police support	1	2	0	0	2	1	0	1	2	0	5	2
positive experience of providing support	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1
positive feelings on the law	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
positive impact of support	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
power	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
powerless	0	1	0	2	0	3	1	0	3	3	1	6
practical barriers to accessing support	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
practical support from family	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
previous assumptions were non-threatening	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0

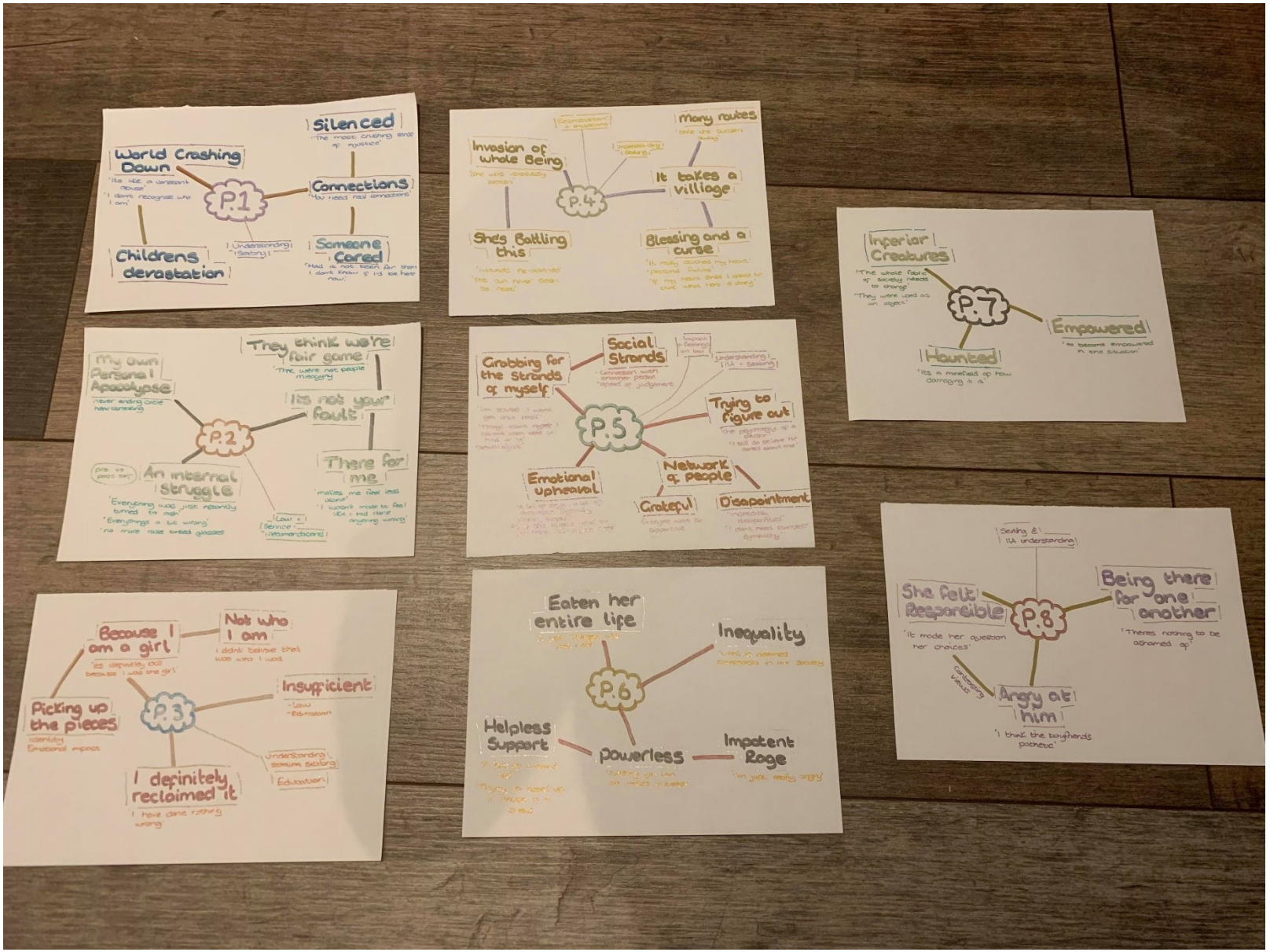
pride	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
priority	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	2
private images	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
privileged	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
procedural delays	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
professionals strategies for coping	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	4	0	4
providing practical support	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	2
questionning identity	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
reassurance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
reassured by having a choice	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
rebuilding self	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
reclaiming the narrative	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
recognising extent of her control	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
recognising sexism	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
recognition of position of a victim and not to blame	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
Recognition of self-determination	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
relentless	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1
relief	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
remaining true to self	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
resignation	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
resilience	0	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	1
resurfacing negative emotions	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
revealing private life	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	2
ruminating about relationship	0	0	0	0	4	0	1	0	0	1	4	1
seeking justice	6	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	7	2
seeking practical support	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
seeking support	10	4	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	18	0
self-acceptance	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1
self-blame or regret for choices	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	3	4	0	3	4
Self-care	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
self-compassion	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
sense of distance from the law	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
sense of exhaustion trying to do everything	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
sense of injustice	10	0	1	2	3	3	0	2	5	2	14	7
sense of pride at support received	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
sense of shared disapproval	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
sense of unfairness at perceptions of others	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
serious impacts	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1
service provision restrictions	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
sexting as a means to an end	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
sexting as objectifying	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1
sexting is a more intimate act	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
sexting is enjoyable	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	2	1

sexting is individual	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
sexting is normalised	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	2	2
sexting to engage sexually with another	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
sexual empowerment	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
shame	5	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	9	0
sharing the burden	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	1
societal problem	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	4	0	4
stress	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
support for partner	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
support from work	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1
support network in friends and family	5	2	1	0	3	0	0	1	1	0	11	1
support options are limited by service provisions	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
support provides reassurance	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
support services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
support through not talking about it	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
support through shared experiences	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0
supporting choices	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	4	5	0	0	5
taking back control	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
teachers lack of knowledge of how to support	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
technology risks	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	2
terminology implies guilt	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
the law is not enough in itself	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
therapeutic support	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	3
therapist lack of knowledge	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
trust in friends gave a sense of security and reassurance	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
trying to understand motives	3	2	2	0	2	0	2	0	0	2	9	2
unable to provide support	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
uncertainty and unpredictability	0	0	1	0	1	3	1	0	3	1	2	4
Uncertainty of new relationships	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
understanding of IIA	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
understanding sexting	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	4	1
unhelpful responses	0	2	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	5	0
untrusting of own choices	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
upset at being perceived a way which is not in line with identity	4	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0
validation	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
varied forms of support provided	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
victimisation becomes normal	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
violating consent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
violation	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
want to move on	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
wanting to avoid and move on	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	1

wanting to get something positive out of this	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Wanting to know what the right thing to do is	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
wanting to take power back	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
waves of emotional upheaval	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2
withdrawing	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
worries about being judged	0	4	0	0	4	3	0	0	3	0	8	3
worries about the impact on children	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	0
worries for the future	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
worries of who has seen	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
wounds reopening	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1

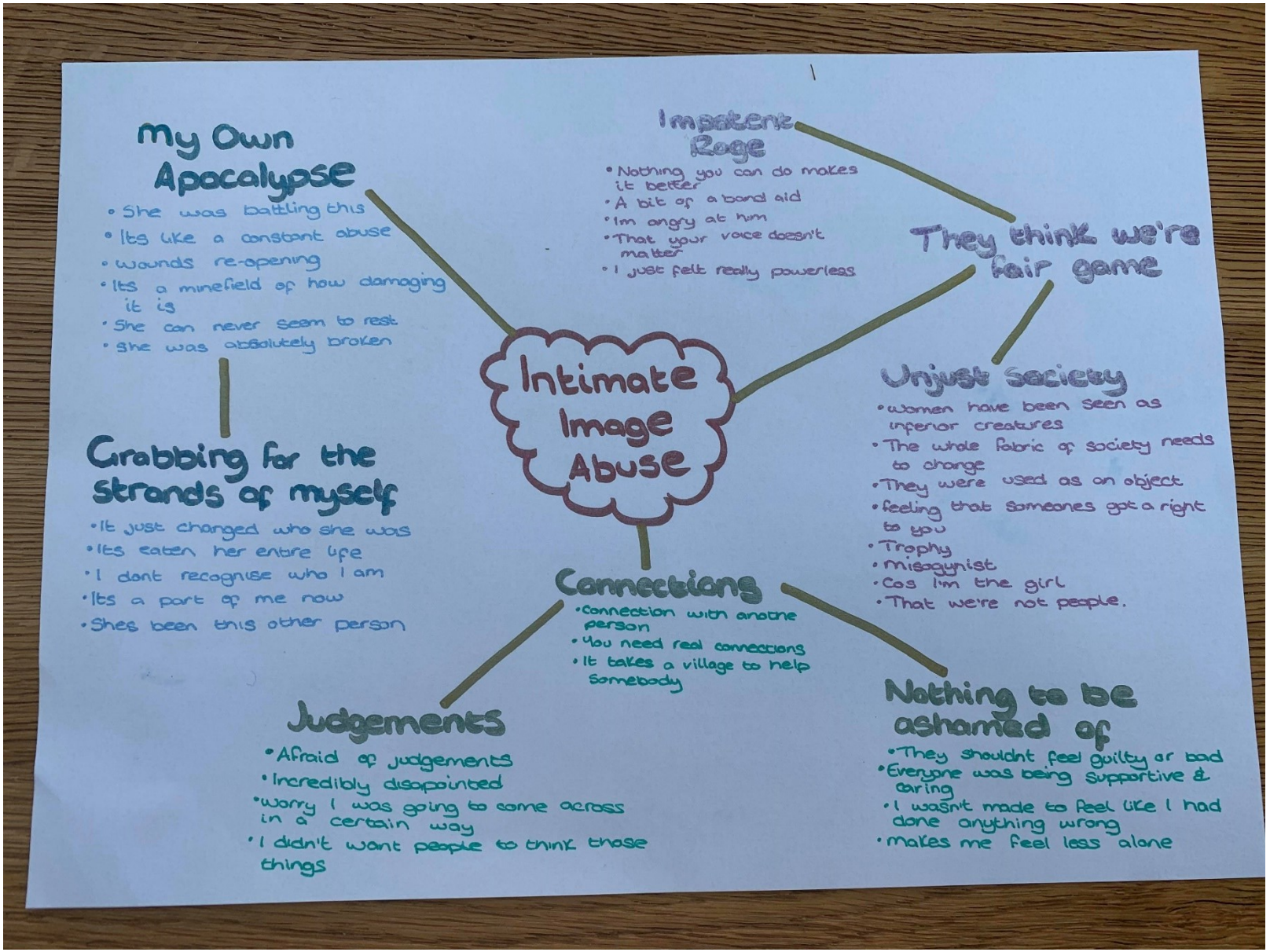
Appendix V

Mind Maps of Themes for Individual Participants



Appendix W

Mind Map of Overall Theme Generation



Appendix X

Table of Recommendations From Participants with Quotes

Recommendation	Quote
Law reform	*"I don't like the aspect that it only counts if it is someone trying to embarrass you or hurt you" … "Just everyone that shares your images without consent"* (Rose, 520 & 531) *"unfortunately, there's like a loophole in the law where you have to have the intent to cause distress."* (Kim, 364-365) "*I'm incredibly disappointed and so angry that despite a confession that this is not technically illegal"* (Daisy, 539-540) *"The same legislation in Scotland is written differently to include recklessness so why isn't ours?"* (Daisy, 514-516) *"I think it's this definition 'to cause harm' thing that its clearly inadequate"* (Freya, 417) *"not with intent to harm. Just sharing it should be punishable"* (Barbara, 320)
Education (school)	*"It [IIA] needs to be spoken about more, it needs to be made categorically clear that it is a crime. That you will serve jail time for it if it's at that level. That it has a devastating impact on people's lives."* (Penelope, 714-716) *"just some education on it" … "if not at school then like on the news or I don't know like a government learning experience I don't know, something that's like easily accessible to all women and girls"* (Rose, 500 & 504-506) *"teaching the boys that it isn't right to share these images and sex is okay you know teaching things like consent"* (Ruby, 564-565) *"I truly believe that the only way we'll ever help these sorts of things is just education*" (Ruby, 644) *"Through schools"* (Kim, 350) *"Better sex ed"* (Freya, 397) *"It could be brought in to education for a start."* (Barbara, 338)
Education (police)	*"Which wouldn't have happened if there had been more knowledge about the law in the police force."* (Rose, 539-540) *"On the base level the police understanding what the crimes are and how to support victims, is the one of the key ways to support victims, so they're not feeling like they're being blamed."* (Kim, 318-319)
Therapeutic support	*"having a therapist who really specialised in the area would have been super helpful because I felt like I was teaching my therapist what it was" (*Rose, 475-476) *"For them to be able to access like ongoing support, like ongoing emotional support would be great" (*Kim, 325-326) *"They should be able to get free counselling"* (Barbara, 308)
Support provisions	*"I would've loved like a support group for people that had had the same thing happen"* (Rose, 471) *"some way of like a good source of information at the centre of this would be really helpful"* (Freya, 390-391) *"we need to put more money into, into the social services into education, into those things that will help children"* (Barbara, 356-357*)*
Media	*"while it is acceptable for example for the paparazzi to publish intimate photos of people like through a window or something like so and so hasn't closed their drapes and like here a photo of them in their hotel room like you see that and that makes it feel somewhat acceptable"* (Freya, 403-406)
Research	*"there's not really much a) legislation on it and b) research"* (Rose, 472-473)