

Responses to Betrayal and Its Resolution: The Role of Hatred and Reconciliation

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Declaration

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Abstract

Background: The pervasive rise of hate in society is a pressing concern, with betrayal serving as a significant catalyst for its development. As a complex and multifaceted emotion, hate poses a significant obstacle to reconciliation. Despite its relevance, the intricate relationship between betrayal and the emergence of hate remains inadequately explored in current research.

Aims & Objectives: This study aims to investigate the role of hate in the context of betrayal and explore potential strategies for its mitigation. It focuses on three main themes: (a) the distinctions and commonalities between interpersonal and institutional betrayal, including acts of commission and omission; (b) the relationship between betrayal and hate and their psychological impact; and (c) the effectiveness of restorative versus retributive strategies in mitigating betrayal and hate.

Methods: This study adopts a three-phase explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, consisting of an online survey (quantitative) and semi-structured interviews (qualitative), integrated through side-by-side Joint Displays (Guetterman et al., 2015). Findings are discussed through the framework of Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, 1997).

Main Findings: The study identified five key findings: a) Hate, as a dissonant emotion, triggers prolonged psychological tension and sustained internal conflict. b) Promoting peace at both individual and societal levels requires balancing the expression of hate, leading to harm and division, with its suppression, which may result in adverse health outcomes. c) Hate drives retributive efforts differently in personal versus institutional betrayals, distinguishing a more wounded “personal” hate and a more systemic “impersonal” hate. d) High levels of betrayal are linked to self-transcendence values that foster reconciliation, while intense hate aligns with self-enhancement values that promote retribution. e) In interpersonal contexts, acts of betrayal through commission elicit stronger feelings of hate than those of omission. However, when it comes to institutional betrayals, both types are equally condemned, as institutions are held to higher standards of accountability.

Conclusions & Implications: Betrayal, identified as a complex and dissonant emotion linked to negative health outcomes, can lead to various forms of hate. Distinguishing between these different expressions of hate and finding an effective balance between their expression and suppression is critical due to their significant personal and societal implications, especially in a time marked by deep polarisation and divisions within our society.

Summary

Background: The widespread prevalence of hate in society presents a critical and urgent concern. One critical mechanism by which hate may emerge is through the experience of betrayal. Betrayal, in its various forms, has the potential to ignite and perpetuate distinct expressions of hate. Crucially, hate often serves as a powerful barrier to reconciliation, entrenching divisions and making resolution more challenging. Despite the importance of understanding betrayal's role in fostering hate, the relationship between different types of betrayal and the development of hate is insufficiently explored in current research. This study aims to bridge this gap by offering a comprehensive understanding of how betrayal generates hate and by identifying effective approaches for its resolution.

Methodology: This research employs an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, grounded in a pragmatic epistemological framework. The study consists of three phases: Phase I involves collecting narratives on interpersonal and institutional betrayal by commission and omission and their relationship with hate through an online survey, followed by in-depth analysis using semi-structured interviews in Phase II. In Phase III, qualitative and quantitative results are integrated through side-by-side Joint Displays (Guetterman et al., 2015). The findings are then discussed within the framework of Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, 1957), offering deeper insights into the psychological mechanisms underlying hate and betrayal.

Methods: A purposive sample (n=1379) was recruited from the general population through a survey distribution company (SurveySwap) in November 2022. The survey was distributed in U.S., U.K. & Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland and Canada as English-speaking countries. A stratified purposive sample of n=20 individuals from the same sample were recruited to participate in semi-structured interviews. Quantitative findings were analysed through statistical methods while qualitative findings were analysed through Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clark, 2006). Results were integrated through side-by-side Joint Displays (Guetterman et al., 2015) to generate the meta-inferences for the study.

Main Findings: The study yielded five main findings. First, hate was identified as a dissonant emotion with harmful effects on both physical and mental health. It highlighted the need to balance the expression of hate, which can lead to harm and division, with its suppression, which may cause adverse health outcomes. The study also found that institutional betrayal evokes more intense feelings of hate, while interpersonal betrayal sparked a stronger desire for revenge, revealing two distinct forms of hate: personal vs impersonal. Restorative approaches, such as apologies, were evaluated as more effective in addressing interpersonal harm, whereas retributive and compensatory measures were preferred in cases of institutional betrayal. Nonetheless, in cases of interpersonal betrayal, the distinction between commission and omission played a crucial role—restorative strategies were preferred for acts of omission, while retributive approaches were favoured for acts of commission. However, in institutional betrayal, this distinction was less pronounced, likely due to the higher expectations of accountability from institutions. Additionally, individual value systems significantly influenced responses to justice. Those who prioritised personal success, achievement, and power were more inclined towards retribution or dismissal of resolution efforts, while individuals valuing community well-being leaned towards restorative strategies.

Discussion and Conclusions: The findings revealed a complex relationship between hate and betrayal. Hate is conceptualised as a dissonant emotion that creates psychological tension as individuals strive to reconcile the socially stigmatised experience of hatred with a desire to maintain a positive self-image. The analysis further highlights critical distinctions between interpersonal and institutional betrayal, as well as between acts of commission and omission. Moreover, it demonstrates how personal values can drive responses to betrayal, affecting the effectiveness of restorative and retributive resolution strategies. Ultimately, the results underscore the urgent need to raise awareness of the harmful effects of hate and betrayal on both psychological and physical well-being. They further highlight the critical need of promoting reconciliation and foster accountability to cultivate both interpersonal and systemic trust, crucial for healing the divisions exacerbated by hate.

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Chapter I – Introduction of the Research

1.1 Purpose and Organisation of the Dissertation

This PhD research has been undertaken as part of the NETHATE Consortium (Network of Excellence of Training on HATE), a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Innovative Training Network (ITN) investigating the impact of hate in our society, the dynamics of its spread in online and offline fora, the strategies for its mitigation, and its effects on victims and bystanders.

The Consortium is a multidisciplinary network comprising ten universities and one non-governmental organisation (NGO) as the primary beneficiaries, alongside fourteen partner organisations. These partners include two government ministries, two companies, and ten NGOs, all of which are deeply engaged in preventing and counteracting hate. The Consortium offers early-stage researchers (ESRs) an extensive training programme that is multidisciplinary and inter-sectoral in nature. The research projects within the Consortium are organised into three principal work packages: Psychology and Neuroscience (WP1), Technology and Social Media (WP2), and Culture, Ideologies, and Religion (WP3).

This PhD project (ESR2) belongs to the WP1 (Psychology & Neuroscience), and is a mixed-methods study designed to investigate the dynamics of interpersonal and institutional betrayal, their potential to generate hatred, and the effectiveness of restorative and retributive resolution strategies in mitigating their aftermaths. The project has been conducted in three phases: initially, narratives about betrayal, hatred, and reconciliation were collected from the general population via an anonymous online survey (Phase I). These narratives were further explored through semi-structured interviews (Phase II). Finally, the findings from both phases were integrated (Phase III), and the theoretical framework of Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, 1957) was applied to gain deeper insights into the complexity of the phenomena investigated. Through a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods designed to explore perceptions of betrayal and hate and to illuminate their underlying mechanisms, this study aims to enhance our understanding of how betrayal—whether in personal or institutional contexts—acts as a catalyst for the emergence of hate, as well as how its effects might be mitigated.

This study has obtained ethical approval from the Faculty of Health Sciences Research Ethics Committee at Trinity College Dublin (refer to Appendix A for the Letter of Ethical Approval).

1.2 Research Background

1.2.1 Defining Betrayal: Interpersonal vs Institutional and the Impact of Commission vs. Omission

Betrayal is defined as the breach of trust that occurs when an individual or entity fails to fulfil the expectations of loyalty within the relationship, often resulting in significant emotional, relational, or social harm. At its core, betrayal signifies a violation within a relationship characterised by mutual reliance, an expectation of loyalty, or an ethical obligation. Such a breach undermines the integrity of the relationship, causing deep hurt and disillusionment for the betrayed party (Elangovan & Shapiro, 1998; Freyd, 1996; Rachman, 2010). Betrayal can manifest in numerous contexts, ranging from personal relationships to institutional and societal systems, underscoring its far-reaching impact and the intricate dynamics of trust and power within these connections.

Interpersonal betrayal, defined as the profound sense of harm caused by the intentional actions or omissions of someone trusted (Rachman, 2010), has been extensively documented to produce a wide array of adverse psychological and emotional consequences. These consequences often manifest as profound distress, severely undermining an individual's mental well-being and potentially leading to long-term psychological challenges (Rachman, 2010). Examples of interpersonal betrayal include being cheated on by a romantic partner, which is among the most frequently reported forms of betrayal in intimate relationships (Charny & Parnass, 1995; Fitness & Fletcher, 1993) and the refusal of assistance during times of need from close friends, which can severely damage trust and relational bonds (Fehr, 2004). Additionally, discovering that trusted colleagues have disclosed confidential information you entrusted to them (Elangovan & Shapiro, 1998) or experiencing a broken promise made by a family member (Jones et al., 1997) are further instances of betrayal that can strain or sever relationships.

The damaging effects of interpersonal betrayal are particularly significant because they undermine core beliefs about relationships and security, leading to a disrupted sense of self-worth and personal safety (Fitness, 2001). Individuals who experience betrayal might develop trust issues, emotional dysregulation, and symptoms similar to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Gobin & Freyd, 2014). The repercussions of betrayal extend far beyond their immediate emotional impact, affecting long-term psychological outcomes and the ability to form trusting relationships in the future (Smith & Freyd, 2013). Furthermore, the impact of betrayal reverberates in the social domain, often leading to social withdrawal, difficulties in forming new relationships, and isolation (Jones & Burdette, 1994). This isolation can exacerbate the emotional wounds inflicted by betrayal, creating a vicious cycle that is challenging to break. In short, interpersonal betrayal constitutes a complex and deeply impactful form of trauma, exerting profound and enduring effects on an individual's emotional, psychological, and social well-being.

On the other hand, institutional betrayal is defined as the wrongdoings perpetrated by an institution upon individuals who depend on the institution, including the failure to prevent or respond supportively to wrongdoings committed within the institution (Smith & Freyd, 2014). Examples of institutional betrayal include the cover-up of negligence within healthcare settings, which has garnered significant attention, particularly in light of the Covid-19 pandemic's impact on the healthcare system (Adams-Clark & Freyd, 2021; Tamaian et al., 2017). Additionally, institutional betrayal is evident in the failure to respond to reports of sexual assault (Smith & Freyd, 2014), the lack of workplace equity in academic environments (Pyke, 2018), and the retaliation against whistle-blowers who expose wrongdoings within organisations (Ahern, 2018).

When individuals experience betrayal by institutions that fail to protect or act in their best interests, the psychological distress can be profound. The experience of betrayal, especially from institutions that are supposed to safeguard their members, can evoke a strong sense of injustice, leading to deep-seated anger and resentment. These emotions are often directed not only at the institution itself but also at the broader societal structures that the institution represents. Institutional betrayals erode trust in authority and established structures, leading to feelings of powerlessness, disillusionment, and vulnerability (Smith & Freyd, 2013). This breakdown in trust not only exacerbates social

inequalities and deepens societal divisions but also contributes to a broader deterioration of societal norms and values, as individuals lose faith in the fairness and integrity of institutional systems. As trust diminishes, efforts towards social justice and equality are undermined, fostering an environment where resentment and mistrust can intensify polarisation and conflict.

Interpersonal and institutional betrayal can manifest in two distinct forms: betrayal by commission and betrayal by omission (Smith & Freyd, 2014). Betrayal by commission involves an active, deliberate act of disloyalty or harm, such as lying, cheating, or deceiving someone. This type of betrayal is an overt breach of trust, where the betrayer consciously decides to act against the interests of the betrayed party. Examples of betrayal by commission in interpersonal relationships includes actions such as deliberately lying, spreading harmful rumours, or engaging in infidelity. In institutional contexts, it can manifest as fraud, corruption, or deliberate misrepresentation of information.

On the other hand, betrayal by omission occurs when someone fails to act in situations where their intervention is expected or needed. Examples of betrayal by omission in interpersonal settings might involve neglecting to offer support to close ones during critical times and forgetting about or not following through on promises and commitments made to a friend or loved one. In institutional settings, acts of omission may include overlooking ethical violations, failing to report misconduct, or withholding crucial information that could prevent harm. Although it is characterised by inaction rather than a direct act, betrayal by omission can be equally damaging, as it undermines trust and can cause significant emotional harm. These two forms of betrayal highlight the complexity of trust dynamics and the various ways in which trust can be violated, whether through active harm or through the failure to act when necessary.

In conclusion, betrayal—whether in interpersonal or institutional contexts, and whether through acts of commission or omission—can inflict profound and lasting trauma, severely compromising victims' mental and physical health. One notable consequence of betrayal is its potential to provoke feelings of hatred, a topic that will be explored in the next section.

1.2.2 Betrayal and the Emergence of Hate: A Retributive Response

Hatred is a significant social issue that has increasingly captured the attention of scholars and policymakers, particularly in relation to its expression through phenomena such as hate crimes and hate speech, which pose a serious threat to the democratic values of our society. The pervasive spread of hate across online and offline fora have underscored the critical necessity for in-depth academic inquiry to highlight its underlying mechanisms.

Hatred is commonly understood as a powerful and negative emotional reaction marked by aversion, disgust, and hostility toward a person or entity (Allport, 1954; Ben-Ze'ev, 2000; Royzman et al., 2005; Sternberg, 2003). The debate surrounding the nature of hatred—whether it is classified as an emotion, a motive, or an attitude—has engaged scholars across various disciplines, including psychology, philosophy, and sociology.

One view regards hate as an emotion, characterised by feelings of hostility and aversion (Ben-Ze'ev, 2018; Goodvin, 2019; Landweer, 2020; Szanto, 2020). Another perspective frames hate as a motive—an internal force that drives goal-directed behaviours, often leading to harmful or vengeful actions (Rempel & Burris, 2005). A third approach characterises hate as a sentiment—an enduring, socially influenced disposition shaped by cultural attitudes toward specific individuals or groups, which subtly influences perceptions of the target over time (Deonna & Teroni, 2012; Vendrell Ferran, 2021).

From a psychological standpoint, scholars (Fischer & Giner-Sorolla, 2016; Fischer, 2018; Halperin, 2008) have reconciled the apparent tension between conceptualising hate as an emotion and as a sentiment by proposing that hate can initially manifest as an emotional reaction to a specific event, but often evolves into a long-term state. This enduring form of hate generalises from a single event to shape broader perceptions of a group or individual, attributing malicious intent to those seen as dangerous. Unlike emotions such as anger, which is typically reactive and tied to specific situations, hate involves appraisals that foster a stable perception of the target as inherently threatening or evil (Fischer et al., 2018; Fischer & Roseman, 2007; Halperin, 2008; Halperin et al., 2011). This distinction has important implications for understanding hate both at the interpersonal and intergroup levels (Martínez et al., 2022; Fischer et al., 2018). Staub (2005) enhances this

understanding by examining how hate emerges in intergroup conflicts, transitioning from individual emotional reactions into collective sentiments that perpetuate prolonged hostility and violence. Halperin et al. (2011) delve further into the role of entrenched animosities in shaping perceptions and behaviours within long-standing intergroup conflicts, illustrating how such hostilities can persist across generations, even when immediate threats have diminished.

Some scholars, on the other hand, conceptualise hate as an attitude (Ekman, 1992; Brudholm, 2010; Murphy, 1989; Gee, 2014). Brudholm (2010) frames hate as a retributive attitude, characterised by a complex interplay of emotions, cognitions, and moral judgments that emerges in response to perceived injustices. This perspective posits that when individuals feel wronged, they may develop a sense of hate that calls for punishment or retribution, aiming to restore a sense of moral balance (Brudholm, 2010; Gee, 2014; Murphy, 1988). This suggests that retributive hate, being closely linked to the concept of justice, serves to uphold social order, ensuring that transgressions are met with consequences that deter future violations. The individual harbouring hate perceives the target as deserving of moral condemnation, reinforcing the belief that retribution is justified.

In summary, hatred is a complex phenomenon encompassing emotional, motivational, and attitudinal dimensions, which together inform its persistence and effects on individuals and society. This complexity highlights the diverse contexts in which hatred arises and its potential consequences for interpersonal and intergroup relations.

One significant trigger of hatred is betrayal, which strikes at the core of trust and loyalty—foundational elements of human relationships. Trust is crucial for maintaining social bonds, and when it is violated, the emotional fallout can be severe. This violation leads to a sense of moral outrage and a strong need for psychological self-defence. Research by Fitness (2001) highlights how betrayal, particularly in close relationships, can provoke intense emotional reactions that may develop into deep-seated hatred. It has been further argued that the profound emotional wounds caused by the betrayal provoke initial feelings of fear and anger that, if not resolved, can turn into a more enduring hurtful emotional state. This transformation is particularly likely when the betrayal is perceived

as a serious threat to personal security or the integrity of a close relationship, leading to long-lasting resentment and, ultimately, hatred (Shapiro, 2016).

Moreover, research in social psychology suggests that feelings of betrayal are closely linked to perceptions of unfairness, and this sense of injustice can fuel a desire for retribution, which can be expressed as hate. The betrayed person may seek to restore a sense of balance or justice by harbouring hate or even seeking to harm the betrayer (Fitness, 2001; Finkel et al., 2002). Additionally, betrayal often leads to a breakdown in social relationships, isolating the betrayed individual and leaving them without the social support necessary to process their emotions healthily. This isolation can exacerbate negative emotions, causing them to fester and grow into hate. In this context, hate becomes a coping mechanism, allowing the betrayed individual to distance themselves emotionally from the pain of the betrayal and the person who caused it (Fitness, 2001). In summary, these processes work together to transform the emotional pain of betrayal into sustained feelings of hate, which serve as both a psychological defence and a retributive attitude.

In conclusion, understanding hatred that stems from betrayal as a retributive attitude provides valuable insights into its emotional and moral complexities. This form of hatred intensifies the desire for retribution, complicating the aftermath of the betrayal and leading to profound psychological consequences. The challenge lies in the fact that societal laws aim to discourage and penalise hate-driven behaviours, placing a considerable psychological burden on those who experience these feelings (Fischer et al., 2018; Walters, 2019). As a result, this hatred not only exacerbates social divisions but also imposes additional psychological strain on both victims and the wider community.

1.2.3 Mitigating Hate & Betrayal: Restorative vs. Retributive Resolution Strategies

When retributive hatred is allowed to fester, it can foster a desire for retribution, perpetuating a destructive cycle of vengeance. This form of hatred is driven by a profound need to restore a perceived imbalance of justice through punitive actions against the wrongdoer. While such a retributive approach may appear justified in the context of

betrayal or harm, it frequently exacerbates tensions and entrenches divisions, fostering an environment where violence and animosity proliferate.

An alternative to this cycle of retributive hatred can be found in the principles of restorative justice, which emphasise healing, accountability, and reconciliation rather than punishment. While retributive practices are described as unilateral processes, focusing on punishing wrongdoers in proportion to the severity of the damage (Wenzel et al., 2008), restorative approaches are reconciliation-based justice practices (Gentile, 2018), prioritising the restoration of relationships and the repair of damage caused, involving all affected parties through dialogue and negotiation among victims, offenders, and communities (Wenzel et al., 2018).

Research by Braithwaite (2002) demonstrates that restorative justice practices, such as victim-offender mediation and community circles, can diminish feelings of resentment by providing victims with the opportunity to articulate their pain and enabling offenders to accept responsibility for their actions. This process not only meets the emotional and psychological needs of the victim but also aids in the reintegration of the offender into the community, thereby reducing the likelihood of recidivism. Moreover, restorative justice shifts the focus from retribution to the broader objective of societal healing by endeavouring to repair the social fabric torn by acts of betrayal or harm. Zehr (2013) argues that restorative justice creates opportunities for personal growth and community cohesion by encouraging all parties to collaborate towards a resolution that acknowledges the harm inflicted and seeks to make amends. This approach not only mitigates the detrimental effects of retributive hatred but also cultivates a culture of peace and mutual respect, which is crucial for the long-term stability of relationships and communities.

In conclusion, while hatred may arise in response to betrayal or harm as a means of seeking justice, its propensity to perpetuate cycles of retribution and conflict ultimately makes it a self-destructive force, often leading to a ruinous path of vengeance and prolonged animosity. This study will therefore explore the different impact of restorative and retributive approaches on hatred and betrayal mitigation, aiming to understand how restorative strategies can disrupt the cycle of hatred and promote healing, as well as the

mechanisms by which retributive methods might intensify animosity and extend the harm they seek to address.

1.2.4 Influences on Restorative vs. Retributive Attitudes

Recent studies have showed the existence of different strategies to cope with betrayal according to distinct social domains and relational contexts; for instance, when betrayal happens in the social domain, i.e. trust relationships within strangers based on social norms, compensation is preferred above receiving an apology, whereas, in the personal domain, i.e. a trust relationship based on previous close interactions, receiving an apology is preferred over compensation (Joskowicz–Jablonek & Leiser, 2013). Further studies support this context-dependent approach. McCullough et al. (2000) highlights that in close, communal relationships, forgiveness is often facilitated by empathy and the restoration of harmony. In hierarchical relationships, such as those between employers and employees, resolution may focus more on formal reparation or boundary enforcement rather than emotional reconciliation.

Additionally, research by Aquino et al. (2001) suggests that the severity of betrayal and subsequent desire for revenge are influenced by power dynamics within relationships. In unequal power relationships, betrayed individuals may lean towards retributive strategies to restore justice and equality. Conversely, more egalitarian relationships may favour restorative approaches that seek to mend relationships and rebuild trust. Consequently, adherence to restorative or retributive justice is shaped by a combination of multiple factors, including the nature of the relationship, the context of the betrayal, individual values, psychological motivations, and cultural norms.

Ideological factors, such as the belief that justice should focus on healing and reconciliation, may drive a preference for restorative justice (Zehr, 2013), while the belief that justice must be punitive may drive a preference for retributive justice (Wenzel et al., 2008). Cultural norms are also pivotal; societies with a long history of punitive legal systems are more likely to adhere to retributive principles, whereas cultures that emphasise community and reconciliation may lean towards restorative approaches (Ren & Gray, 2009). Moreover, according to Schwartz's Theory of Basic Values (Schwartz,

2012), individuals who prioritise values such as benevolence, empathy, and universalism are more inclined to support restorative justice, which focuses on healing, reconciliation, and the reintegration of offenders into society. Conversely, those who value authority and power may favour retributive justice, which emphasises punishment as a response to wrongdoings (Okimoto et al., 2012).

Understanding the factors that shape orientations towards restorative or retributive justice is critical for designing interventions that effectively prevent the escalation of negative emotions, such as hatred, and promote constructive conflict resolution. Accordingly, this study will examine how interpersonal dynamics, institutional contexts, acts of commission and omission, and characteristics such as the significance attributed to fundamental values influence the tendency towards restorative or retributive efforts following instances of betrayal.

1.3 Problem Statement

Despite growing recognition of the connection between betrayal and hatred, there is still a substantial gap in research focused on how betrayal contributes to the emergence and intensification of hatred. This lack of thorough exploration into the mechanisms by which betrayal fosters hate, as well as effective avenues for reconciliation, is particularly concerning given the recent surge in hate-driven harms within our societies, which pose serious threats to democratic values and social stability.

The impact of hate and betrayal has distinct implications at both individual and societal levels. On one hand, betrayal and hatred are profound burdens for those who endure them, with the resulting emotional turmoil causing significant detrimental effects on both physical and mental health. On the other hand, these emotions pose a broader societal threat, fuelling the escalation of conflicts and the proliferation of harmful incidents in both online and offline environments, such as hate speech and hate crimes. Furthermore, the pervasive nature of these emotions can erode trust within communities, undermine social cohesion, and perpetuate cycles of conflict and violence.

Therefore, it is essential to investigate how restorative strategies, which prioritise healing and reconciliation, compare to retributive approaches, which focus on punishment, in

order to gain valuable insights into the most effective methods for preventing the escalation of negative emotions and breaking the destructive cycle of hate.

In conclusion, there is an urgent need to investigate how betrayal functions as a catalyst for hatred and to develop strategies to mitigate its impact. This research aims to deepen our understanding of the complex relationship between betrayal and hatred, offering actionable insights designed to inform and shape policies and interventions that foster peace, support sustainable conflict resolution, and prevent the escalation of hatred within our societies.

1.4 Research Contributions

This study makes several substantial contributions to the understanding of betrayal and hatred, addressing critical gaps in the existing literature and offering novel insights with theoretical, empirical, and practical implications.

A key contribution of this research is its novelty. It is among the first to systematically examine the role of betrayal in the emergence and escalation of hatred, considering both interpersonal and societal contexts. By distinguishing between betrayal by commission and betrayal by omission, this study enhances our understanding of how different forms of betrayal contribute to the intensification of hate. Furthermore, it explores the comparative effectiveness of restorative and retributive approaches in mitigating the consequences of betrayal-induced hatred, a dimension that has been overlooked in previous research.

By integrating psychological insights into the broader discourse on hate, which has traditionally been dominated by political science, sociology, and legal studies, this research expands the scientific understanding of hatred's cognitive and emotional underpinnings, as well as the psychological mechanisms through which betrayal fosters hatred. Notably, while existing research has largely focused on preventing and counteracting hate, it has often neglected the internal struggle between expressing and suppressing it. This study highlights the significance of this psychological tension, demonstrating how unaddressed or repressed hatred can perpetuate cycles of

resentment and hostility. By uncovering these overlooked cognitive and emotional processes, this research provides a foundation for more effective interventions that address both the outward manifestations of hate and its deeper psychological drivers.

Methodologically, this study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative analyses to capture the complexity of betrayal-induced hatred. Given the impact of social desirability biases and cognitive dissonance on self-reported expressions of hate, relying solely on quantitative data could introduce significant biases and underreporting. By integrating qualitative insights, this research provides a more comprehensive understanding of individuals' experiences, enhancing the validity, reliability, and interpretive depth of its findings.

Beyond its theoretical and methodological contributions, this study carries significant practical and policy implications. By identifying the key psychological and sociological factors that drive the escalation of hatred following betrayal, it offers valuable insights for policymakers, conflict resolution practitioners, and community leaders. These findings can inform the development of targeted interventions aimed at mitigating hate-driven harms, fostering social cohesion, and promoting sustainable peacebuilding efforts.

Ultimately, by bridging theoretical advancements with empirical evidence and real-world applications, this research provides actionable strategies to disrupt the cycle of betrayal and hatred, supporting broader efforts to foster reconciliation and social justice, while contributing to the cultivation of a more just, tolerant, and peaceful society.

1.4 Research Aims and Objectives

The study is structured around three primary research aims, each addressing specific research questions. The aims of this study are :

Research Aim 1: Investigating the Relationship between Interpersonal and Institutional Betrayal and their Connection with Hate

- What are the differences between interpersonal and institutional betrayal?
- What are the differences between interpersonal and institutional hate?

- What is the correlation between interpersonal and institutional betrayal and hate?
- How do emotional responses to interpersonal hate and betrayal compare with those to institutional hate and betrayal?
- What is the influence of Schwartz Values' dimensions (self-enhancement vs. self-transcendence) on interpersonal and institutional betrayal and hate?

Research Aim 2: Exploring the Efficacy of Restorative and Retributive Resolution Strategies in Mitigating Interpersonal and Institutional Betrayal

- What are the differences in the effectiveness of retributive strategies in addressing interpersonal and institutional betrayal?
- How do the correlations between hate, punishment, and retribution differ in the contexts of interpersonal and institutional betrayal?
- How does the correlation between interpersonal and institutional hate differ in relation to the desire for revenge?
- Is there a significant difference in the impact of an apology following interpersonal betrayal compared to institutional betrayal?
- How do self-enhancement and self-transcendence values (Schwartz, 2012) influence the evaluation of restorative and retributive strategies in the context of interpersonal and institutional betrayal?

Research Aim 3: Examining the Impact of Interpersonal and Institutional Betrayal by Commission and by Omission on Hate and Resolution Strategies

- What is the difference in the extent of harm caused by interpersonal versus institutional betrayal when comparing acts of commission and omission?
- How do levels of hate and betrayal vary between interpersonal and institutional betrayal when comparing acts of commission and omission?
- Do higher levels of hate differentially influence attitudes towards punishment in cases of interpersonal and institutional betrayal by omission versus commission?
- What is the differential impact of restorative versus retributive resolution strategies in addressing interpersonal and institutional betrayal by commission compared to betrayal by omission?

This study's research aims necessitate the integration of qualitative and quantitative methodologies, highlighting the importance of a mixed-methods approach. By combining qualitative insights with quantitative findings, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex phenomena being examined, ultimately informing effective interventions and policies to prevent betrayal and its potential to incite hate.

1.5 Theoretical Frameworks

This study employs Betrayal Trauma Theory (Freyd, 1996) and Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, 1957) as foundational frameworks to examine the phenomena of interpersonal and institutional betrayal and hatred.

Betrayal Trauma Theory (Freyd, 1996) posits that when a trusted individual or institution violates the trust placed in them, it results in a distinct form of trauma. This trauma arises from the disruption of important relationships, particularly those where the victim is dependent on the betrayer for survival, support, or significant emotional needs. The theory highlights that this breach of trust can lead to severe psychological and emotional distress, as the victim often suppresses or denies the betrayal to maintain a relationship that cannot easily be severed (Freyd & Birrell, 2013). The concept of betrayal trauma is crucial in understanding how the disruption of trust—whether within interpersonal or institutional relationships—can lead to lasting psychological harm, manifesting as emotions such as anger, mistrust, and hatred.

Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, 1957), explores the psychological discomfort that occurs when an individual experiences a conflict between their existing beliefs, values, or attitudes and new information or actions that contradict these established notions. This dissonance creates a state of internal tension and discomfort, as individuals strive for consistency in their thoughts, beliefs, and behaviours. According to the theory, this discomfort acts as a powerful motivator, driving individuals to alleviate the dissonance by either altering their beliefs, acquiring new information that supports their existing beliefs, or downplaying the significance of the conflicting information (Harmon-Jones & Mills, 2019). In the context of betrayal, where trust has been compromised, cognitive dissonance

becomes especially pronounced, as the individual grapples with the inconsistency between their previous trust in a person or institution and the reality of the betrayal.

Feeling hatred and being betrayed are aversive experiences that are inconsistent with beliefs we have of ourselves as good, worthy, and deserving. In essence, our sense of self is under threat when we are betrayed and experience resulting hatred, which manifests as an inner conflict. This inner conflict or cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957) is likely to be a source of significant distress. As dissonance theory states, this distress will only dissipate once the dissonance has been reduced or attention has been diverted away from it. If this inner conflict remains unresolved, the anger experienced by the betrayed individual may persist and become a driving force behind long-term efforts to achieve resolution, such as through the pursuit of justice or acts of retaliation. However, the expression of hatred through revenge inevitably generates new internal conflicts, particularly with regard to one's self-perception as righteous. Alternative approaches, such as restorative practices, though potentially more constructive, often lack immediacy and may require direct interaction or negotiation with the offending party. Consequently, the process of reducing cognitive dissonance may initially intensify before it diminishes. Pursuing justice through legal avenues may prolong the experience of stress, as the dissonance remains unresolved until a satisfactory outcome is achieved. During this time, the focus remains centred on the conflict, and the discomfort may become a dominant factor in a person's life. In summary, hatred exacts a heavy toll on those who harbour it, and without resolution, the underlying dissonance can persist for years, becoming a source of profound and enduring suffering.

Betrayal Trauma Theory (Freyd, 1996) and Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, 1957) provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the profound impact of betrayal and its potential to give rise to hatred. Betrayal Trauma Theory highlights the psychological and emotional consequences of betrayal, illustrating how it can perpetuate and intensify negative emotions like hatred over time. Meanwhile, Cognitive Dissonance Theory offers insight into the cognitive processes that facilitate the transformation of betrayal into hatred, emphasising how conflicting beliefs and emotions can sustain or exacerbate these feelings and shape attitudes toward either restorative or retributive

approaches. This integrated perspective enhances our understanding of the link between betrayal and hatred, while also guiding the development of targeted interventions to help individuals and communities address and reduce the destructive effects of betrayal-induced hate.

1.6 Structure of the Dissertation

The structure of this dissertation is organised into nine chapters, as follows:

Chapter I (Introduction) introduces the research, outlining the background and motivation for the study. It details the research aims and objectives, and presents the theoretical frameworks underpinning the research, concluding with an overview of the dissertation structure.

Chapter II (Literature Review) presents a narrative review of the literature, which was instrumental in identifying key concepts and theories that shaped the development of the research methodology. It explores three primary thematic areas around which the literature is organised and demonstrates how each contributed to the research framework and overall direction.

Chapter III (Methodology) presents the rationale for adopting pragmatism as the epistemological approach and for selecting a mixed-methods design for this study. It outlines the qualitative and quantitative methodologies employed, including vignettes, template analysis, and thematic analysis. Finally, it addresses the ethical challenges associated with online research and the strategies implemented to mitigate them.

Chapter IV (Methods) details the methods implemented during each phase of the mixed-methods study. It provides a thorough, sequential breakdown of the strategies used for sampling, the methods for recruiting participants, and the approaches for managing and analysing data.

Chapter V (Survey Findings) presents the quantitative findings from the survey. It discusses the demographic characteristics of the participant sample, addresses specific

hypotheses derived from the literature, and explores several additional aims that contribute to the primary research objectives of the study.

Chapter VI (Interview Findings) introduces the qualitative findings of the study, beginning with an overview of the interview participants' characteristics. It then presents the analysis of the qualitative data collected from the semi-structured interviews, employing Template Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Chapter VII (Integration of Findings) integrates the findings from the quantitative survey and qualitative interviews through the use of side-by-side Joint Displays (Guetterman et al., 2015), allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the study's outcomes.

Chapter VIII (Discussion) presents the discussion of the findings, revisiting the integrated results through the lenses of Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, 1957).

Chapter IX (Contributions) outlines the key contributions and recommendations of this study, emphasising their importance for academia, practitioners, and policymakers. It also assesses the study's strengths and limitations, followed by a discussion of its implications for future research. The chapter concludes with a reflective analysis of the overall research journey before presenting the final conclusions.

Chapter II – Literature Review of Foundational Theories and Concepts

This chapter presents a narrative review of the literature that forms the conceptual and theoretical foundation of this research. A broad and interpretive analysis of literature from various fields was conducted (Section 2.1) and established a foundation for the study based on three emerging areas of focus: (a) the complex and multi-dimensional aspects of interpersonal and institutional betrayal (Section 2.2); (b) the psychological and emotional impact of betrayal, with a focus on the development of hatred (Section 2.3); and (c) restorative and retributive approaches to addressing betrayal (Section 2.4). By integrating diverse interdisciplinary perspectives, this chapter provides a comprehensive examination of current academic discourse, establishing the theoretical and analytical framework for the research.

2.1 Narrative Review: Search Methodology

The original intention of conducting a systematic or systematised review to explore the intersection of betrayal, hate and their mitigation strategies revealed significant challenges. These challenges primarily arose from the breadth and interdisciplinary nature of the topic, which spans across multiple fields, including psychology, philosophy, sociology, and law. The literature on each of these topics is vast and diverse, making systematic integration difficult without oversimplifying complex concepts or missing critical nuances. The following factors made a systematic approach unfeasible for this study:

- **Interdisciplinary Disparities:** Research on betrayal, hate, and their mitigation spans multiple disciplines, each employing distinct methodologies, terminologies, and areas of focus. Integrating these diverse approaches into a cohesive systematic review presents the risk of overlooking critical insights unique to each discipline.
- **Conceptual Complexity:** Each of the key concepts are themselves broad and nuanced. They are applied in a variety of contexts (e.g., individual relationships, systemic injustice, criminal justice reform), and the literature often addresses

different levels of analysis, making it difficult to develop uniform criteria to shape a systematic review.

- **Lack of Homogeneity:** The studies in these areas vary widely in their research questions, methodologies, and theoretical frameworks, preventing the possibility of synthesising findings in a quantitatively or even qualitatively standardised manner.

As a result, a narrative review was deemed the most appropriate methodological approach for exploring these interconnected topics. A narrative review allows for flexibility in integrating insights from various disciplines, methodologies, and theoretical perspectives, while maintaining a focus on interpretative synthesis.

2.1.1 Search Strategy for the Narrative Review

Databases of peer-reviewed and other scholarly articles accessible in Trinity College Dublin were used to explore the literature (Academic Search Complete, PsycINFO, PubMed, Google Scholar, JSTOR, APA, Web of Science and ProQuest Dissertations & Theses). A broad and adaptable set of search terms was used to retrieve literature on three main themes: betrayal, hate, and the impact of restorative and retributive strategies on their mitigation. These terms were then combined in various ways to capture the diversity of how these concepts are discussed across different disciplines. The following approach to the literature search was undertaken:

Primary Keywords:

This search yielded a comprehensive range of material relevant to the research. The term “mitigation” originally considered provided an overly varied thematic yield and was replaced with “justice”. Key subthemes were identified within these three keyword and examined in greater depth as follows:

- **Betrayal:** Interpersonal betrayal, institutional betrayal, betrayal trauma
- **Hate:** Hatred, animosity, hostility
- **Justice:** Restorative justice, retributive justice, reconciliation, justice systems

Expanded Keywords:

The following variations were used to capture more relevant articles and to ensure a comprehensive search that covers different aspects of betrayal, hate, and justice. Subthemes started to emerge and were addressed in the following manner:

- **Betrayal:** *Betrayal AND (trauma OR institutional OR interpersonal)*: This helped gather materials that explore betrayal in different settings, from personal to systemic levels.
- **Hate:** *Hate AND (hostility OR resentment OR animosity)*: These terms were applied to capture both emotional and psychological responses to hate.
- **Justice:** *Justice AND (restorative OR retributive OR punishment OR restoration)*: This allowed the search to focus on both justice frameworks and broader concepts like restoration and punishment.

Combined Search Strings:

Following this, keywords were combined to explore intersections between concepts, such as how betrayal or hate interacts with justice frameworks:

- **Betrayal + Hate:**
 - *Betrayal AND Hate (e.g., institutional betrayal AND hate)*: This search revealed literature on the emotional consequences of institutional betrayal.
- **Betrayal + Justice:**
 - *Betrayal AND Justice (e.g., betrayal trauma AND retributive justice)*: This search provided insights into how retributive justice handle the impact of betrayal.
- **Hate + Justice:**
 - *Hate AND Justice (e.g., hatred AND restorative justice)*: This combination helped to explore the restorative responses to hate.

The search was refined according to the specific database and academic field, employing synonyms and alternative terms to account for variations in terminology across disciplines. For instance, institutional betrayal may be referred to as organisational

betrayal in certain fields, and the concept of hate may be framed differently across legal, psychological, and sociological studies. Unlike a systematic review, where the search strategy is predefined and followed strictly, the narrative review process allows for iterative refinement of search terms and sources. As literature was reviewed, additional key terms and concepts emerged, leading to adjustments in the search strategy. This iterative process ensured that the review remained comprehensive and responsive to the evolving understanding of the topic. For instance, during initial searches, it became clear that betrayal by commission and betrayal by omission are important aspects related to interpersonal and institutional betrayal, prompting the inclusion of these search terms and sources.

2.1.2 Synthesis of the Literature

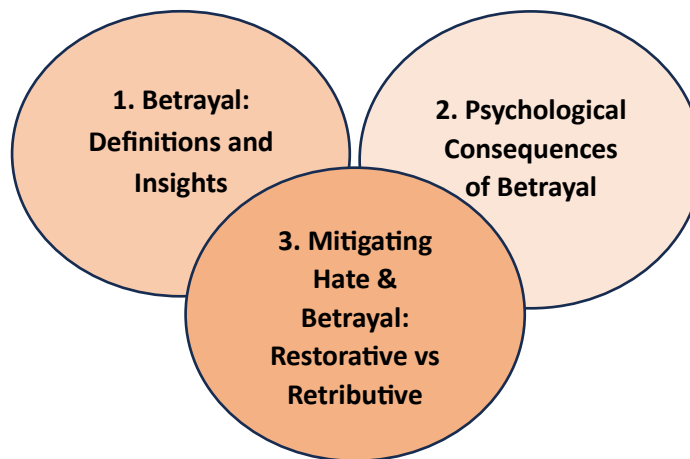
Given the narrative nature of this review, the synthesis of findings was thematic and integrative rather than focused on systematic aggregation. Literature was grouped according to three themes, as follows:

1. **Betrayal: Definitions and Insights:** Explores the psychological and sociological characteristics of interpersonal and institutional betrayal, further distinguishing between betrayal by commission (active harm) and betrayal by omission (neglect).
2. **Psychological Consequences of Betrayal:** Examines the consequences of betrayal, including the emergence of betrayal trauma (Freyd, 1996), and explores the relationship between trauma and the emergence of feelings of hatred.
3. **Mitigating Betrayal & Hate: Restorative vs. Retributive Justice:** Compares restorative and retributive justice approaches in addressing betrayal and hate, particularly in terms of healing or exacerbating harm.

This synthesis in themes allowed for a conceptual exploration of how betrayal and hate are understood and responded to across different contexts, and how justice frameworks either mitigate or intensify these issues. As relevant papers were identified, their reference lists were examined, creating a snowballing effect that led to the discovery of key authoritative works. This iterative approach allowed for gradual immersion into the interdisciplinary literature on interpersonal and institutional betrayal, hate and

restorative vs. retributive resolution strategies. This flexible method helped to refine the scope of inquiry, as different aspects of the study demanded varying levels of attention at different times. Notably, the overlap between themes (see Figure 2.1) made it challenging to maintain a strict focus, as the interconnectedness of the topics often blurred the boundaries between key concepts.

Figure 2.1 - Key Themes in the Literature Review: Betrayal, Hate, and Justice



The flexibility of a narrative review allowed for a broad exploration of the intersection between betrayal, hate, and justice. However, it also comes with certain limitations to the chosen approach. For instance, the reliance on thematic relevance brought in a degree of subjectivity in the selection of literature. Also, the variable process of selection and deselection makes it hard for other scholars to repeat the exact process. Additionally, the interdisciplinary nature of the literature brings a variety of conceptualisations of key terms, which may present challenges for straightforward comparisons. Despite these limitations, this narrative review offered a comprehensive synthesis of the complex intersections between betrayal, hate, and justice, serving as a valuable and consistent foundation throughout the research.

2.2 Betrayal: Conceptualisations and Insights Emerging from the Literature

This section explores the conceptualisation of betrayal as emerging in the review and examine insights regarding how it impacts various levels of trust and relationships in Section 2.2.1. Next, it addresses interpersonal (Section 2.2.2) and institutional betrayal

(Section 2.2.3) separately. Finally, it distinguishes between betrayal by commission and betrayal by omission in Section 2.2.4.

2.2.1 Betrayal: Overview of the Dynamics of Trust in Relationships

Betrayal has been broadly conceptualised as a breach of trust or confidence that occurs when someone violates the expectations of loyalty of another person, and can be broadly defined as “a voluntary violation of mutually known pivotal expectations of the trustor by the trusted party (trustee), which has the potential to threaten the well-being of the trustor” (Elangovan & Shapiro, 1998).

Perceptions of what constitutes betrayal are fundamentally subjective and depend on relationship knowledge structures—people’s theories, beliefs, and expectations about relationships in general, and their own relationships in particular (Elangovan & Shapiro, 1998; Fitness, 2001; Holmes, 1991). It also relies on individuals' trust that their partners will share or respect these beliefs and meet their expectations (Elangovan & Shapiro, 1998; Holmes, 1991). Trust is, therefore, integral to betrayal due to its close connection with relational expectations. For instance, Borum defined interpersonal trust as “a willingness to accept vulnerability or risk based on expectations regarding another person’s behaviour” (Borum, 2010).

Despite the inherent risks, trust is fundamental to almost all human interactions, perhaps as a matter of principle or social conditioning. Levy (2022) suggests that while trusting others exposes us to potential harm, the benefits—such as deeper relationships and social cohesion—often outweigh the risks. Uslaner (2018) further supports this, arguing that trust significantly enhances life satisfaction and reciprocal relationships within society. However, the willingness to trust others exposes us to the risk of betrayal if they violate those expectations and take advantage of us.

Different types of relationships entail distinct expectations, which can lead to varying perceptions of betrayal when unmet. Social Exchange Theory (SET) provides a framework for understanding interpersonal relationships by emphasising the cost-benefit analysis individuals perform when forming and maintaining connections (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano et al., 2017; Homans, 1958; Thibault & Kelley, 1959). Relationships are built on perceived

rewards (e.g., emotional support, companionship) and costs (e.g., time, emotional strain). When expectations are unmet, feelings of betrayal may emerge. The implications of SET can vary across different types of relationships, including romantic, friendships, familial, and professional, as distinct expectations shape different perceptions of betrayal (Cook & Emerson, 1987).

Clark and Mills (2012) differentiate between communal relationships—characteristic of marriages and familial ties, where partners care for one another's welfare without expecting immediate rewards—and exchange relationships, typical of client-provider interactions, where partners are not responsible for each other's welfare and benefits should be promptly reciprocated. Failing to meet these obligations can result in perceived betrayal due to violations of fairness and reciprocity. Such differences in relationship orientations set the stage for specific types of betrayal; for example, a misalignment between someone viewing a relationship as communal while another sees it as exchange-based often leads to dissatisfaction and feelings of injustice. This complexity is further exacerbated in relationships that evolve over time, such as friendships transitioning into business partnerships, where expectations for fairness and care may blur (Dirks & Skarlicki, 2009).

Fiske (1992) introduced the Relational Models Theory (RMT), which includes authority ranking relationships, where individuals are positioned in a linear hierarchy determined by factors such as power, expertise, or age, and market pricing relationships, in which interactions are perceived as exchanges based on the value of goods, services, or contributions, alongside communal and exchange relationships.

The Expectancy Violations Theory (EVT) suggests that individuals have specific expectations for behaviour based on social norms and personal experiences. When these expectations are violated, it leads to cognitive and emotional responses. In close relationships, unexpected negative behaviours, such as dishonesty or infidelity, contrast sharply with anticipated positive behaviours, resulting in feelings of betrayal (Burgoon, 2015). This theory highlights the importance of expectation management in maintaining relationship satisfaction and trust. Adams' Equity Theory (1965) emphasises that individuals seek fairness in their relationships, expecting a balance between contributions

and benefits. When there is a perceived imbalance, such as one partner feeling they give more than they receive, it leads to resentment and perceptions of betrayal. A relevant example of this mechanism is the workplace setting, where perceived inequities in workload, recognition, or compensation can result in feelings of betrayal and decreased job satisfaction.

The Investment Model of Commitment Processes (Rusbult et al., 1998) posits that commitment in relationships is influenced by satisfaction, the quality of alternatives, and the investments made into the relationship. When one partner feels that their investments (time, emotional energy, resources) are not reciprocated or valued, it can lead to experiencing betrayal. For instance, in romantic relationships, if one partner feels that their emotional or financial investments are being exploited, it may be seen as a betrayal of the commitment (Rusbult et al., 1980). Keltner et al. (2003) highlights the significant role that power asymmetry plays in both causing and shaping the perception of betrayal. Those in positions of power may either overlook or justify their betrayals, while those with less power may engage in betrayal as a form of resistance. A summary of the theories related to relationships, expectations, and betrayal is provided at Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 – Summary of the Theories related to Relationships, Expectations, and Betrayal

Theory	Core Concepts	Relation to Betrayal
Social Exchange Theory (SET) Blau (1964); Cropanzano et al. (2017); Homans (1958); Thibaut & Kelley (1959)	Focuses on how individuals evaluate relationships through a cost-benefit analysis of perceived rewards (e.g., emotional support) versus costs (e.g., time).	When expectations based on this analysis are unmet, feelings of betrayal can arise as individuals feel their investments are disregarded.
Communal vs. Exchange Relationships Clark & Mills (2012)	Distinguishes between communal relationships (where care is given without expectation of immediate reward) and exchange relationships (where reciprocity is essential).	Betrayal may occur when obligations are unmet in either type, particularly when one partner has a different view of the relationship's nature.
Relational Models Theory (RMT) Fiske (1992)	Classifies relationships into types, including authority ranking (based on hierarchy) and market pricing (value-based exchanges).	Violations of expected roles and exchanges can result in perceived betrayal due to imbalances in authority or equity.

Expectancy Violations Theory (EVT) Burgoon (2015)	Explores how individuals have specific behaviour expectations that are influenced by social norms; violations result in emotional and cognitive responses.	Negative unexpected behaviours (e.g., dishonesty) create feelings of betrayal when they clash with anticipated positive behaviours.
Equity Theory Adams (1965)	Focuses on the need for fairness in relationships, expecting a balance between contributions and benefits.	Perceived inequities, such as one partner contributing more without adequate reciprocation, lead to resentment and feelings of betrayal.
Investment Model of Commitment Rusbult et al. (1998)	Proposes that relationship commitment is influenced by satisfaction, perceived alternatives, and the investments made.	Perceived lack of reciprocity in investments (e.g., emotional energy) can lead to feelings of betrayal.
Power Dynamics and Betrayal Keltner et al. (2003)	Examines the influence of power asymmetry in relationships.	Those in power may justify betrayals, while those with less power may act out of resistance, experiencing betrayal differently.

In conclusion, betrayal occurs when one party violates key expectations or norms within a relationship, but its impact varies significantly by context. The next sections explore how betrayal manifests in both interpersonal and institutional contexts, highlighting their distinct dynamics.

2.2.2 Interpersonal Betrayal

Interpersonal betrayal has been defined as “a sense of being harmed by the intentional actions, or omissions, of a person who was assumed to be a trusted and loyal friend, relative, partner, colleague or companion” (Rachman, 2010). Rachman identifies five common forms of betrayal: harmful disclosures of confidential information, disloyalty, infidelity, dishonesty, and failure to provide support in times of need. Acts of betrayal frequently involve multiple elements, particularly the combination of infidelity, dishonesty, and disloyalty. Betrayals in trustful interpersonal relationships are typically unexpected and come as a shocking surprise; as a result, they are often initially met with disbelief, accompanied by emotional responses such as grief, anger, and self-doubt (Rachman, 2010). Additionally, betrayals erode self-esteem, damage trust, and impair one’s capacity to establish future relationships (Gobin & Freyd, 2014).

The form in which interpersonal betrayal manifests itself depends on the nature of the relationship, the type of trust violation, and the intentions behind the betrayal. Each type can have distinct psychological effects and may involve different kinds of perpetrators. It is often seen in romantic contexts, as romantic partners are most frequently cited as perpetrators of betrayal (Jones & Burdette, 1994). Common expectations in romantic relationships include mutual trust, emotional support, fidelity, and respect (Norona et al., 2018). Fidelity is a fundamental expectation in romantic relationships, with breaches such as infidelity representing significant betrayal that leads to deep emotional wounds (Beltrán-Morillas et al., 2019). Infidelity, whether sexual or emotional, often results in significant emotional pain, loss of trust, and psychological distress (Warach & Josephs, 2021). Therapy in its aftermath usually aims to rebuild trust and enhance communication (Lonergan et al., 2021; McCullough et al., 2007). Respecting personal boundaries and treating partners with dignity is crucial, as individuals expect their privacy to be honoured. Open communication is also vital for expressing feelings and resolving conflicts (Reiter & Gee, 2008). Violations of these expectations can result in emotional trauma and reduced relationship satisfaction, complicating future connections (Gobin & Freyd, 2014).

Close friends share mutual expectations about each other's behaviour based on common understandings of friendship rules, such as maintaining privacy, offering support, and keeping confidences (Argyle et al., 1985). Violating these expectations through actions like gossip or exclusion can be perceived as betrayal, potentially leading to the breakdown of the friendship (Fehr, 1996). Friendships, built on trust and shared experiences, are especially vulnerable to misalignment in expectations. Joskowicz-Jablonek and Leiser (2013) noted that such betrayals often arise when one friend perceives a gap between expected loyalty and actual behaviour, resulting in a deterioration of the friendship.

In family settings, betrayal can take various forms, often tied to power dynamics and emotional dependencies. Betrayal by a caregiver, such as a parent neglecting or abusing a child, is particularly devastating because of the inherent reliance on that caregiver for emotional and physical well-being (Freyd, 1996). The impact of such betrayal is profound, leading to complex trauma. Familial betrayal is not limited to parent-child relationships; it can also occur between siblings, where issues like favouritism create significant

relational rifts. Studies have shown that children who experience betrayal from caregivers are more likely to face trust and attachment issues later in life, complicating their emotional recovery and affecting future interpersonal relationships (Freyd, 1996; Freyd, 2003).

Although the workplace can be a setting for institutional betrayal (see next section), it is also a frequent context for interpersonal betrayal, manifesting in violations of professional trust, such as sabotage, undermining colleagues, and breaches of confidentiality (Reina & Reina, 2000). These betrayals can arise from colleagues or superiors and often occur in competitive environments with hierarchical dynamics (Tepper, 2007). Betrayals by supervisors or colleagues disrupt team cohesion and reduce morale, negatively impacting job satisfaction and overall organisational culture (Aquino & Thau, 2009). Fitness (2000) identified common betrayal-related offenses, such as lying and exploitation, as significant sources of anger among coworkers. Additionally, violations of the “psychological contract”—employees' beliefs about mutual obligations such as fairness and respect—can provoke outrage and lead to workplace deviance (Morrison & Robins, 1997; Bordia et al., 2008).

Betrayal can occur not only within interpersonal bonds but also erode trust in societal structures (Smith & Freyd, 2014). In this context, it is essential to examine how betrayal within institutional settings—whether by governments, corporations, or other entities—undermines public trust and destabilises social cohesion. This issue will be explored in the subsequent section.

2.2.3 Institutional Betrayal

While the previous section focused on interpersonal betrayal, this section examines institutional betrayal, where the perpetrators are entities such as governments, corporations, or educational systems (Freyd, 2008). Institutional betrayal is defined as the “wrongdoings perpetrated by an institution upon individuals dependent on that institution, including failure to prevent or respond supportively to wrongdoings by individuals (e.g., sexual assault) committed within the context of the institution” (Freyd, 2008; Smith & Freyd, 2014).

The term institutional betrayal was introduced by Freyd in early 2008 and further elaborated in various publications (Platt et al., 2009; Smith & Freyd, 2013; Freyd & Birrell, 2013; Smith & Freyd, 2014). Research on institutional betrayal has focused on various settings, such as higher education, military contexts, healthcare, and religious institutions, illustrating how inadequate responses to misconduct and systemic discrimination exacerbate trauma and deepen institutional mistrust.

Regarding educational settings, Carroll (2017) and Pyke (2018) highlight how mishandling reports of abuse in universities exacerbates trauma and contributes to distrust through the lack of workplace equity in academia, bullying and retaliation. Smidt et al. (2021) emphasise the severe mental health impacts of institutional betrayal, linking it to increased depression and anxiety among students. Similarly, Stader and Williams-Cunningham (2017) analyse institutional betrayal following campus sexual assault, while Wright et al. (2017) focus on institutional betrayal as one of added risks of study-abroad risks for students.

Institutional betrayal, particularly in the context of sexual violence, occurs when institutions create hostile environments that normalise abuse. This can lead to difficulties in reporting incidents, mishandling of complaints, attempts to cover up wrongdoing, or retaliation against survivors. Survivors of sexual assault often experience a double betrayal: first from the perpetrator and then from the institution that fails to protect and support them (Smith & Freyd, 2013; Smith & Freyd, 2014; Smith et al., 2016; Linder & Myers, 2018; Pinciotti & Orcutt, 2021). Additionally, Lee et al. (2021) examine how institutions responding to intimate partner violence can further betray victims through inadequate support, exacerbating their emotional and psychological suffering.

In military contexts, Andresen et al. (2019) and Monteith et al. (2016) have explored how hierarchical structures contribute to institutional betrayal, particularly in the context of failure to address sexual trauma within the military culture, leading to severe mental health issues like PTSD and reinforcing a culture of blind loyalty and silence.

In healthcare, Smith (2017) and Tamaian (2019) address how neglect and systemic discrimination harm marginalised patients, undermining trust and exacerbating health disparities. Examples of institutional betrayal in this context include inadequate patient

support and retaliation against whistleblowers (Ahern, 2018). The failures of institutions to provide protection during the COVID-19 pandemic have also been scrutinised, particularly regarding their impact on vulnerable populations (Klest et al., 2020; Adams-Clark & Freyd, 2021).

Institutional betrayal has also been documented in high schools (Lind et al., 2020) and religious institutions (Denney et al., 2018). In high schools, students may feel betrayed when policies fail to protect them from bullying or harassment. In churches, betrayal can occur when institutions prioritise their reputation over addressing abuse, leading to significant harm for congregants. Research shows that betrayal trauma within religious communities is widespread, particularly through sexual abuse by clergy and emotional manipulation (Denney et al., 2018). Moreover, the concept of institutional betrayal extends to professional associations, with Dadouch & Lilly (2021) revealing how failures to support journalists can exacerbate mental health challenges. Beamish (2001) highlights how governmental or corporate failures during environmental crises can foster public mistrust.

Cultural betrayal trauma, a specific form of institutional betrayal, occurs when trauma is inflicted by members of an individual's own cultural or ethnic group. According to Gómez's Cultural Betrayal Trauma Theory (CBTT), these betrayals violate intracultural trust, intensifying trauma's psychological impact (Gómez, 2021; Gómez, 2017). Addressing this trauma requires culturally competent policies to restore trust within marginalised communities. Gómez & Gobin (2020) highlight that cultural betrayal and institutional failures exacerbate trauma among ethnic minorities, compounding the effects of racial and cultural discrimination. Similarly, Becker (2022) discusses how BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Colour) students face unique institutional betrayals, particularly regarding hate and bias incidents.

Warren and Bordoloi (2021) highlight the critical role of male allyship in addressing institutional betrayal, particularly in workplace environments where women are subjected to sexism, misogyny and systemic gender-based inequalities. However, such allyship is often limited, leaving these issues unaddressed. Collectively, these studies underscore the pervasive impacts of institutional betrayal across gender, race, and

culture, highlighting the need for stronger institutional accountability (Gómez & Gobin, 2020; Becker, 2022; Warren & Bordoloi, 2021).

When institutions fail to uphold trust, the consequences manifest in both practical and psychological forms. On a practical level, this can lead to health issues, fatalities, and financial hardships. Psychologically, its impact is equally profound and parallels that of interpersonal betrayal, resulting in betrayal trauma, diminished psychological well-being, and a reluctance to seek help from institutional authorities (Smith & Freyd, 2014). At the same time, the psychological impact can worsen the tangible consequences, creating a cycle where mental and practical damages amplify one another (Smith & Freyd, 2014).

Acknowledging the impact of betrayal at both interpersonal and institutional levels is crucial for developing effective support systems for those affected. Table 2.2 presents a comparative analysis of the differences between interpersonal and institutional betrayal.

Table 2.2 – Comparative Analysis of Interpersonal and Institutional Betrayal

	Interpersonal Betrayal	Institutional Betrayal
Definition	Betrayal committed by an individual, often someone close or trusted (e.g., family, friends, partners).	Betrayal committed by an institution, failing to protect or actively harming individuals (e.g., universities, governments, religious organisations).
Context	Occurs within close personal relationships, where trust and emotional bonds are strong.	Occurs in a structured organisation where there is an expectation of protection, safety, or support.
Example	A romantic partner cheats or a close friend betrays a secret.	A university mishandling sexual assault allegations or a hospital neglecting patient safety.
Power Dynamics	Often involves individual power dynamics; typically one person has authority over another.	Involves larger, systemic power dynamics where institutions hold significant authority over vulnerable individuals or groups.
Psychological Impact	Can lead to trust issues, trauma, depression, and anxiety, primarily due to the violation of personal trust.	Causes psychological harm, such as feelings of abandonment, helplessness, and compounded trauma due

		to the scale of betrayal from a trusted institution.
Scope of Harm	Primarily affects individuals or small groups directly involved in the betrayal.	Can have far-reaching effects, impacting many individuals, including entire communities or populations dependent on the institution.
Extent of the Trust Violation	Trust is broken on a personal level, where the betrayer is someone the individual relies on emotionally.	Trust is broken on a systemic level, where individuals rely on institutions for justice, protection, or services.
Social Implications	Damage might be confined to personal relationships and/or extend to the victim's social circle.	Has broader societal implications, contributing to public distrust, and systemic inequality.
Accountability	Typically addressed through personal reconciliation or justice, and can require legal actions.	Can require institutional reforms, public accountability, policy changes, or legal action.
Healing Process	Involves rebuilding trust in interpersonal relationships and addressing betrayal trauma.	Involves trauma-informed care, institutional reforms, policy changes, and rebuilding public trust in systemic structures.

2.2.4 Betrayal by Commission and by Omission

Another distinction highlighted by the literature is that betrayal can manifest itself through both acts of commission and omission (Smith & Freyd, 2014). Betrayal by commission refers to deliberate actions where harm is actively inflicted, often with clear intent. In interpersonal relationships, this might involve a partner engaging in an extramarital affair, deliberately lying or manipulating to gain an advantage, or purposefully violating agreements and trust. Similarly, within institutional settings, acts of commission may include retaliating against whistleblowers, deliberately concealing misconduct, or enabling corrupt practices to flourish by turning a blind eye to unethical behaviour.

Conversely, betrayal by omission refers to harm that arises from inaction or neglect, where key opportunities to prevent or mitigate damage are missed (Smith & Freyd, 2014). In interpersonal relationships, this may involve a partner failing to offer emotional support

during a crisis, ignoring significant problems that require attention, or passively allowing harmful behaviours to continue unchecked. Within institutional frameworks, omission might take the form of failing to implement protective measures against harassment, neglecting to enforce anti-discrimination policies, or perpetuating a culture where reporting wrongdoing is discouraged or ignored. Although these betrayals are not rooted in explicit action, they can cause equally profound harm by fostering an environment of negligence.

While both forms of betrayal can cause significant harm, they are often perceived and judged differently. Research on moral judgement indicates that acts of commission are generally viewed as more morally reprehensible than acts of omission. In theories of moral judgement, the action principle posits that harm resulting from action is perceived as more intentional and blameworthy than harm resulting from inaction (Bostyn & Roets, 2016; Cushman, 2006; Cushman, 2013). This is largely because acts of commission are more overt and associated with a higher degree of perceived intent, whereas omissions can be seen as less deliberate. A key psychological concept that explains this phenomenon is omission bias, which refers to the tendency to judge harmful actions more harshly than harmful inactions, even when outcomes are identical (Baron & Ritov, 2004). Individuals often feel less morally responsible for harm caused by inaction, viewing it as less intentional. For instance, a healthcare provider who administers harmful treatment is typically judged more severely than one who neglects to provide necessary care, despite both leading to negative outcomes. This perception is rooted in the belief that intentional actions carry greater moral culpability, consistent with research showing that people attribute more blame and stronger negative emotions to actions than to inactions (Spranca et al., 1991). Omission bias is further reinforced by loss aversion and status quo bias, two psychological phenomena that drive a preference for inaction. Loss aversion posits that individuals are more motivated to avoid losses than to acquire equivalent gains, which can lead to inaction when there is a risk of negative outcomes. Status quo bias similarly reflects the preference for maintaining the current state of affairs, even when change could prevent harm (Kahneman et al., 1991; Samuelson & Zeckhauser, 1988). Together, these theories reveal a complex interplay between cognitive biases,

ethical reasoning, and emotional responses in how we evaluate harm by omission versus commission.

In conclusion, both betrayal by commission and betrayal by omission can lead to equally harmful consequences, yet they are often perceived and judged differently, due to cognitive processes and biases which underscore the complexities of human moral judgment and decision-making. Actions of commission—where harm is caused by deliberate actions—are typically regarded as more morally culpable than acts of omission, which involve harm stemming from neglect or inaction. Regardless of context, both forms of betrayal can have significant and lasting effects, and understanding the mechanisms behind these perceptions is crucial. A summary of the core differences between betrayal by commission and omission is presented in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3 – Contrasts between Betrayal by Commission and by Omission

	Betrayal by Commission	Betrayal by Omission
Definition	Harm caused by deliberate actions or decisions.	Harm resulting from neglect or failure to act.
Moral Culpability	Generally viewed as more morally culpable.	Often perceived as less culpable or intentional.
Intent	Involves intentional wrongdoing.	May involve unintentional neglect or inaction.
Emotional Response	Typically elicits stronger emotional reactions.	May evoke feelings of disappointment or indifference.
Attribution of Responsibility	Greater personal responsibility attributed to the individual.	Responsibility often attributed to external circumstances.
Psychological Factors	Influenced by action principle and stronger blame attribution.	Affected by omission bias and tendency to excuse inaction.
Perception of Harm	Immediate and clear harm perceived.	Harm may be less visible or recognised over time.
Examples	Lying, cheating, stealing.	Failing to offer help, ignoring a problem, neglecting responsibilities.
Impact on Relationships	Can lead to a breakdown of trust and significant conflict.	Can cause feelings of abandonment or lack of support.

2.3 The Consequences of Betrayal: Betrayal Trauma and Hate

This section delves into the impact and psychological consequences of betrayal (Section 2.3.1). Betrayal Trauma Theory (Freyd, 1996) is introduced in Section 2.3.2. Following this, the emergence of hate as an emotional response to betrayal is explored (Section 2.3.3). Finally, the concepts of power, control and agency are discussed in relation to betrayal and hatred (Section 2.3.4).

2.3.1 The Psychological Impact of Betrayal

In theories of emotions, the experience of betrayal is considered to take place at a deep, visceral level (Frijda, 1988; Oatley, 1992). The impact of betrayal can vary according to several factors, including the relationship with the perpetrator, the significance of the betrayal, the extent of the harm caused (Rachman, 2010), and individual personality traits (Forbes et al., 2005). The intensely emotional impact of betrayal motivates efforts to understand its underlying mechanisms and can elicit a variety of negative emotions (Fitness, 2011).

One of the immediate consequences of betrayal is a disruption to the victim's sense of security and stability. Trust, once broken, can lead to feelings of vulnerability and anxiety, as the betrayed person questions their own judgment and whether they can trust others again in the future (Gobin & Freyd, 2014). This emotional turmoil can cause a ripple effect, sometimes leading to social withdrawal as individuals struggle to process the betrayal. The betrayal often shakes their confidence in their ability to navigate relationships, resulting in hesitancy or avoidance of future connections to protect themselves from potential hurt (Rachman, 2010; Lee & Selart, 2015). This phenomenon, known as "betrayal aversion", describes the tendency of victims to lower their willingness to trust others after experiencing betrayal (Aimone & Houser, 2013). As a result, the betrayed victims become hypervigilant and cautious in forming new relationships, limiting their ability to build healthy, supportive connections (Rotenberg, 2010).

Moreover, betrayal can lead to a deep sense of loss and grief. This is particularly true when the relationship with the perpetrator is close, such as a partner, family member, or long-term friend. The victim not only mourns the relationship but also the loss of the identity

they had within that relationship (Baumeister et al., 1994). Betrayal often forces individuals to confront a painful reality—that the person they trusted may not have been who they believed them to be. This realisation can cause feelings of abandonment, disappointment, and sometimes guilt or shame, as victims wonder if they somehow missed warning signs or contributed to the betrayal (Platt & Freyd, 2015). Psychological consequences often extend to cognitive and behavioural changes as well. Victims may experience rumination, obsessively thinking about the betrayal and replaying the events leading up to it in an attempt to make sense of what happened (Jones & Burdette, 1994). This constant mental revisiting of the betrayal can increase levels of stress and anxiety, contributing to symptoms of depression and mental health struggles (Rachman, 2010). Victims of betrayal also commonly report feelings of humiliation and a damaged sense of self-worth, particularly if the betrayal involves public exposure or social humiliation (Lee & Selart, 2015).

Over time, negative consequences can escalate into severe emotional and psychological distress, particularly in deeply dependent or intimate relationships, leading to betrayal trauma (Freyd, 1996). Betrayal Trauma Theory (BTT) (Freyd, 1996) explains that when betrayal occurs in relationships where the victim relies on the perpetrator for emotional or physical well-being—such as in parent-child or intimate partner dynamics—the trauma can have lasting effects (Platt & Freyd, 2015). Victims may suppress the emotional impact of betrayal to preserve the relationship, leading to dissociation, emotional numbness, and difficulties in processing the betrayal— a phenomenon known as “betrayal blindness” (Freyd & Birrell, 2013). This trauma disrupts core beliefs about trust and safety, with significant consequences for mental and emotional health.

2.3.2 Betrayal Trauma Theory (BTT)

Freyd's (1996) conceptualisation of betrayal trauma provides a foundational framework for understanding the psychological and physical manifestations of trauma resulting from experiences of betrayal. Betrayal trauma refers to the psychological harm that arises when trust is broken, creating a conflict between external reality and a necessary system of social dependence on others or institutions (Freyd, 1996). This betrayal can lead to

deep emotional distress, especially when it occurs in relationships or institutions that are crucial for one's survival or basic needs.

In intimate relationships where a victim relies on the perpetrator for emotional or physical well-being, such as in parent-child or intimate partner dynamics, or when trusted organisations—such as religious institutions, schools, or government agencies—violate that trust through abuse or neglect, the resulting trauma can be profound. The trauma often manifests as a struggle to reconcile the betrayal with the need for security, leading to psychological responses like dissociation, denial, and self-blame (DePrince & Freyd, 2002; Freyd & Birrell, 2013). Empirical studies have shown that betrayal-induced trauma can lead to chronic stress, anxiety, depression, and other mental health struggles (Smith & Freyd, 2014). Physiologically, such trauma may result in heightened stress levels and compromised immune function (Gobyn & Freyd, 2014).

Betrayal trauma theory emphasises understanding how breaches of trust within significant relationships affect an individual's sense of reality, self-worth, and future ability to trust others. Research indicates that trauma inflicted by a close, trusted individual is associated with greater unawareness and more severe psychological (e.g., post-traumatic stress, hallucinations, depression) and physical health outcomes (e.g., higher incidence of physical illnesses, more sick days) compared to trauma perpetrated by someone unknown (Freyd et al., 2005; Goldsmith et al., 2009; Gómez et al., 2014). This theory has been instrumental in guiding both research and therapeutic approaches to address the complex dynamics of trauma stemming from interpersonal and institutional betrayals.

When betrayal occurs within a trusted institution, it can exacerbate the psychological and emotional toll of the trauma, violating the sense of safety in a larger protective structure (Smith & Freyd, 2014). For instance, survivors of sexual assault may experience institutional betrayal when their claims are dismissed, minimised, or mishandled by the institution involved, such as a university or workplace. This added layer of betrayal can result in heightened feelings of isolation, helplessness, and distrust—not only towards the institution but also towards broader systems of support and authority (Smith & Freyd, 2013). Moreover, it can compound the mental health outcomes associated with the trauma, contributing to symptoms like anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress

disorder (PTSD). Betrayal Trauma Theory suggests that betrayal disrupts not only interpersonal relationships but also intrapersonal harmony, where victims may feel a deep sense of self-betrayal or inadequacy for having trusted the wrong person (Freyd, 1996).

An important aspect of betrayal trauma is the phenomenon called “betrayal blindness”, at the core of Betrayal Trauma Theory (BTT) (Freyd, 1996). This refers to the act of intentionally ignoring or forgetting the betrayal, often occurring in relational contexts where the victim relies on the betrayer, making it disadvantageous to dissolve the relationship (Gobin & Freyd, 2014). This phenomenon can inhibit individuals from seeking help or addressing their trauma (Freyd & Birrell, 2013).

To deepen our understanding of betrayal's impact, Martha Fineman's vulnerability theory provides a compelling framework by emphasising the inherent human dependence on others, both in interpersonal relationships and within institutional structures. Fineman distinguishes between two types of vulnerability: embodied vulnerability, which reflects our physical and emotional reliance on others for care, and embedded vulnerability, which shapes our experiences and outcomes as we interact with broader societal systems. Fineman argues that embodied vulnerability is inherent to the human condition, making betrayals in close, emotionally intimate relationships especially harmful. Similarly, institutional betrayal is damaging because it undermines the embedded vulnerability we experience as members of society (Fineman, 2017; Fineman, 2019). Furthermore, Fineman critiques traditional notions of resilience, which often place the burden of recovery on the individual. She posits that resilience is a socially constructed concept, largely dependent on the strength of institutional support rather than personal coping mechanisms (Fineman, 2019). This perspective shifts the focus from individual resilience to the capacity of institutions to provide adequate care and support in times of crisis, underscoring that institutional failures can magnify the impact of betrayal.

The following section will examine how betrayal trauma can lead to the emergence of hatred, further complicating the psychological aftermath of betrayal.

2.3.3 Hate as a Response to Betrayal

Psychologically, betrayal disrupts the trust that forms the foundation of relationships, often triggering emotions such as grief, anger, shock, and sadness (Haden & Hojjat, 2006; Rachman, 2010). As these emotions intensify, individuals frequently experience feelings of self-doubt, disappointment, and shame—especially when the betrayal comes from a close or trusted relationship (Platt & Freyd, 2015; Lee & Selart, 2015). Among these emotional responses, hate emerges as a particularly significant and enduring outcome, especially when the individual perceives themselves as wronged, humiliated, or deeply disrespected by someone they once trusted (Fitness, 2001). The sense of injustice and the shattered expectations of trust can fuel deep-seated animosity towards the betrayer, complicating not only interpersonal relationships but also the individual's emotional well-being (Mikula et al., 1998). Understanding the link between betrayal and hate underscores the long-lasting impact of trust violations on an individual's psychological and social worlds.

Hate is a multifaceted experience that emerges from complex cognitive evaluations and intense emotional responses (Ben-Ze'ev, 2000; Fischer et al., 2018). It often arises from a negative evaluation of individuals or groups, influenced by personal experiences, cultural contexts, and social interactions (Staub, 2005). This multifaceted nature of hate underscores the interplay between individual and broader societal factors, highlighting the challenges in addressing and mitigating its impact (Halperin, 2008; Halperin et al., 2011). Hate can emerge in both interpersonal and intergroup contexts, each driven by different dynamics. On an interpersonal level, hate is often viewed as the counterpart of love, sharing similar traits of intensity and duration (Aumer et al., 2016; Shapiro, 2016; Ben-Ze'ev, 2018). At the intergroup level, hate fuels conflicts, political intolerance, and war, where it serves to justify aggression and dehumanisation of the "other," often reinforcing societal divisions (Halperin, 2008; Halperin et al., 2011).

Sternberg's triangular theory of hate offers a useful framework for understanding this emotion, proposing that hate is driven by three key components: negation of intimacy (a desire for distance), passion (emotional responses such as anger or fear), and

commitment (a long-term desire to harm or destroy the object of hate) (Sternberg, 2003). These components generate different kinds of hate depending on their interaction.

Royzman et al. (2005) explore the nature of hate and emphasise that it is not a distinct emotion but rather a disposition or tendency to experience a variety of negative emotions depending on the situation. This approach highlights how hate can emerge as a persistent state, influencing different emotional responses over time. This model is particularly relevant for understanding betrayal-driven hate, where repeated feelings of violation and mistrust can fuel a sustained animosity. This perspective helps to explain how the initial emotional shock of betrayal can develop into deeper and more complex forms of hate, as emotions evolve and embed themselves into long-term psychological states. Furthermore, Vendrell Ferran (2021) categorises hate into normative, retributive, ideological, and malicious forms based on whether the target is replaceable and if the cause is rational or abstract. Within this framework, betrayal-driven hate fits mainly into retributive hate, where wrongdoings lead to hatred towards an irreplaceable betrayer or normative hate, which arises from a perceived violation of social norms and expectations. This type of hate reflects a deep-seated response to the feeling of injustice, as the individual grapples with the emotional fallout of betrayal. Brax and Munthe's (2013) framework on hate crime examines how personal feelings of betrayal can be amplified by broader collective ideologies and social dynamics. They argue that when acts of betrayal resonate with societal norms or are reinforced by group dynamics, such as a community condemning an individual for breaching cultural expectations, the resulting hatred can extend beyond personal grievances. This collective aspect transforms personal betrayal into a societal issue, where hatred can become a mechanism for social exclusion or punitive actions against the betrayer. Consequently, betrayal-driven hate is not just an individual emotion but is supported and intensified by social structures, evolving from personal revenge into a collective form of retribution. This perspective is relevant to understanding how societal contexts can legitimise and escalate feelings of hatred, thereby creating an environment where betrayal has broader implications beyond the personal level.

Moreover, several psychological theories examine the origins and mechanisms of hate, highlighting distinct emotional, cognitive, and social dimensions. Betrayal can disrupt in-group trust, creating an out-group dynamic. When a member of an in-group betrays another, it fractures the group's cohesion, casting the betrayer as an outsider (Kramer, 2017). This shift often triggers hatred, as out-groups are seen as threats (Reedy & Hurst, 2023). At the intergroup level, Halperin et al. (2012) describe "chronic hatred", a stable emotional attitude that strengthens in-group bonds by fostering hostility toward out-groups. This dynamic, where "in-group love" grows at the expense of "out-group hate", organises individuals' social worlds. Intergroup hate, like interpersonal hate, involves attributing harmful or malicious intent to the out-group, reinforcing perceptions of their inherent evil. Such appraisals can fuel desires for revenge and lead to efforts to exclude or eliminate the out-group, either physically or psychologically (Halperin et al., 2012; Fischer et al., 2018).

Kernberg's psychoanalytic theory further elucidates the understanding of hate, particularly in clinical contexts. According to Kernberg (1998), extreme hatred has been seen to correlate with borderline personality disorders and may stem from early childhood traumas. For individuals who experience betrayal, hatred can emerge as a defence against feelings of abandonment or vulnerability. Frijda explains that emotions like hate arise from how individuals interpret their experiences. When betrayal is seen as a personal attack, it leads individuals to assess the situation as harmful or threatening. This cognitive appraisal can spark feelings of anger and resentment, which may ultimately escalate into hatred as emotional responses intensify based on the perceived level of harm (Frijda, 1993).

These theories highlight the complex interplay of psychological, social, and cognitive factors that shape hate in response to betrayal. Gaining insight into these dynamics is crucial for understanding how betrayal-driven hate affects both interpersonal and institutional relationships. The next section will explore how power, control, and agency influence the experience and expression of betrayal and the hate it can generate.

2.3.4 Power, Control and Agency in Betrayal and Hate

The dynamics of betrayal and hate are deeply rooted in the sociological constructs of power, control and agency. Classical and contemporary sociological theories provide a lens through which these forces can be examined, revealing how power structures shape both interpersonal relationships and institutional systems. Max Weber (1978) conceptualises power as the ability to impose one's will despite resistance, a framework applicable to interpersonal betrayals and institutional authority. Michel Foucault (1975) expands this understanding, arguing that power operates less through direct coercion and more through discourse, surveillance, and social norms, subtly shaping individual perceptions and limiting choices. These mechanisms lie at the heart of betrayal, leveraging power imbalances to manipulate and silence victims. In interpersonal betrayal, individuals with greater power—whether emotional, financial, or psychological—reinforce control, making it difficult for victims to recognise or escape harmful relationships (Freyd, 1997). Dependence on a betrayer for financial stability, emotional security, or social belonging can create vulnerabilities that deepen the impact of betrayal and sustain toxic dynamics (Bartholomew & Allison, 2006). Psychological manipulation, such as gaslighting, further distorts reality, eroding victims' self-trust and reinforcing their entrapment (Abramson, 2014).

Institutional betrayal magnifies these dynamics through structural, cultural, and procedural mechanisms that sustain systemic harm while shielding institutions from accountability. Institutions maintain control by regulating access to resources, justice, and dominant narratives, often silencing victims through bureaucratic obstacles and cultural conditioning (Smith & Freyd, 2014). Structural inequality disproportionately impacts marginalised groups, deepening social hierarchies through policies that limit economic opportunities, weaken legal protections, and restrict access to essential services (Bourdieu, 1986). Cultural narratives normalise oppression by embedding harmful practices into institutional traditions, making betrayals difficult to recognise or challenge (Foucault, 1975). Procedural barriers, such as complex grievance processes or burdensome evidence requirements, further disempower individuals seeking justice (Platt et al., 2009). These tactics create a climate of institutional gaslighting, where organisations outwardly promote justice and inclusivity while perpetuating systemic

discrimination (Ahmed, 2012). This betrayal is particularly damaging when institutions meant to protect individuals—such as workplaces, schools, or legal systems—prioritise self-preservation over accountability.

Hate, both interpersonal and institutional, operates as a mechanism of power that reinforces marginalisation while maintaining the privilege of dominant groups. In interpersonal contexts, hate can be shaped by prejudice, ideological bias, and social conditioning, creating an environment where discrimination is normalised and justified (Allport, 1954). Through implicit biases and explicit acts of hostility, hate at this level sustains societal divisions and perpetuates systemic oppression. In contrast, within institutional settings, hate functions through legal systems, media representation, and systemic exclusion, disproportionately harming marginalised communities (Crenshaw, 2013). Structural inequalities embedded within policies—such as discriminatory sentencing laws, exclusionary immigration policies, and racialised policing—demonstrate how institutions uphold social hierarchies. Foucault's (1975) concept of disciplinary power illuminates how institutions strategically regulate behaviour through surveillance, incarceration, and normalised discourse—creating what Mbembe (2006) terms "necropolitics", where states exercise sovereignty by determining whose lives are valuable and whose are disposable. Butler (2004) extends this analysis through the framework of "precarious life", demonstrating how certain populations are rendered ungrievable within dominant social paradigms. Central to maintaining these structures is dehumanisation—the psychological process reducing targeted groups to subhuman status (Haslam, 2006)—which has justified atrocities from slavery to genocide and continues in contemporary forms through stereotypical media portrayals, xenophobic immigration policies, and criminalisation of marginalised identities. These mechanisms operate alongside material barriers like employment discrimination, healthcare inequities, and educational disadvantages, creating a self-reinforcing cycle of oppression (Crenshaw, 2013; Feagin, 2013; Nesson, 2014).

Despite these power imbalances, agency remains a crucial force in resisting betrayal and hate. Pierre Bourdieu's (1990) concept of habitus suggests that while individuals are shaped by social structures, they are not entirely bound by them and can push back through lived practices and resistance. Similarly, Anthony Giddens' (1984) structuration

theory highlights human agency as a means of challenging oppressive systems, emphasising that individuals and communities can reshape institutions through what Scott (1990) terms both "public" and "hidden transcripts" of resistance. Social movements such as the civil rights movement, feminist activism, and LGBTQ+ advocacy illustrate collective resistance against systemic discrimination (Armstrong & Bernstein, 2008). These movements employ what Keck and Sikkink (2014) describe as "transnational advocacy networks" to pressure institutions and states toward accountability. Critical pedagogy and consciousness-raising efforts (Freire, 2000) further empower marginalised groups by exposing power structures and equipping individuals with the tools to challenge them. Institutional courage, as advocated by Freyd (2014), encourages organisations to acknowledge and address internal betrayals, fostering transparency and accountability. Restorative justice models (Zehr, 2013) provide alternative pathways for healing and reconciliation, prioritising community empowerment over punitive measures. Through education, activism, and structural change, individuals and communities reclaim power, resist systemic oppression, and work toward a more equitable society.

The next section explores how betrayal and hate can be addressed through two distinct justice approaches: restorative justice and retributive justice. Each offers a unique response to harm, with different implications for accountability, healing, and systemic change.

2.4 Mitigating Betrayal and Hate: The Role of Restorative and Retributive Justice

In the previous paragraph, the consequences of betrayal on victims were discussed. This section examines how the moral harm caused by betrayal can act as a catalyst for conflict resolution (2.4.1). It then analyses two primary justice systems that take different approaches to achieve this resolution: restorative justice and retributive justice (2.4.2). Next, a tailored approach to addressing betrayal is explored (2.4.3), followed by an examination of the factors shaping attitudes towards restorative and retributive justice (2.4.4). Finally, the relationship between betrayal-driven hate as a retributive response and its potential to obstruct reconciliation are discussed (2.4.5).

2.4.1 The Moral Harm of Betrayal as Drive for Conflict Resolution

Betrayal is not merely an emotional injury; it represents a profound violation of ethical norms that disrupts one's moral compass. When trust is broken—whether by leaders, peers, loved ones, or through personal failings—the repercussions extend beyond the immediate relationship, undermining both personal integrity and social cohesion (Nash & Litz, 2013). The drive for resolution stems from more than just emotional healing; it reflects a fundamental need to restore the ethical foundation of the relationship and to achieve justice (Hannon et al., 2010). Victims often experience intense emotions like outrage, shame, and guilt, which can prompt the wrongdoer to acknowledge their actions and seek to repair the harm (Alles, 2018). This process of reparation is essential for rebuilding the victim's damaged sense of self (Gobin & Freyd, 2014).

Betrayal can be seen as a moral transgression, with responses ranging from forgiveness to revenge, each driven by different psychological needs (McCullough et al., 2014). Violations of trust can lead to existential crises, shattering one's identity and faith in others (Brémault-Phillips et al., 2019). Moral repair requires not only rectifying harm but also reconstructing a fractured sense of self. Unresolved moral injuries can lead to persistent guilt and shame, damaging well-being and relationships (Bravo et al., 2020; Bryan et al., 2018). Thus, the drive to resolve moral injuries involves restoring justice and fairness, essential for re-establishing trust in relationships and society. For instance, this quest for justice can be interpreted within the context of the "belief in a just world" (BJW), which posits that individuals have a fundamental need to believe that the social world is orderly, predictable, and fair (Lerner, 1980). When betrayal occurs, it disrupts this belief, leading to heightened feelings of anxiety and disillusionment. Research indicates that individuals with a strong BJW are more likely to attribute blame to victims, rationalising the betrayal as a means of maintaining their worldview (Hafer, 2000; Hafer & Bègue, 2005). This tendency can complicate the healing process, as victims may feel invalidated or dismissed.

In summary, the need for moral repair in the aftermath of betrayal often includes efforts to reestablish a sense of justice that aligns with one's beliefs about fairness. Individuals may seek retribution as a way to restore balance and reaffirm their conviction that

wrongdoings should not go unpunished (Bies & Tripp, 2005). Conversely, some may find solace in restorative justice approaches, which emphasise dialogue and reconciliation, thereby addressing both the emotional and ethical dimensions of betrayal (Walker, 2006). By examining diverse strategies for moral repair, individuals can engage in healing processes that aim to rebuild trust in both personal relationships and broader societal contexts. This study emphasises two specific approaches to addressing betrayal: retributive justice, which focuses on punishment and accountability, and restorative justice, which prioritises healing and reconciliation. The subsequent sections will delve into each method in greater detail, exploring their implications for moral repair and trust restoration in the aftermath of betrayal.

2.4.2 Restorative vs. Retributive Justice Approaches

To address the harm caused by betrayal, various strategies can be employed, with this study focusing on retributive and restorative justice. Retributive justice, commonly adopted in Western criminal justice systems, is based on the principle of "just desert", which posits that punishment should be proportionate to the severity of the wrongdoing (Wenzel & Okimoto, 2016). This approach emphasises punitive measures to uphold moral order and reinforce accountability, with the offender held responsible primarily to the state, rather than the victim. Retributive justice does not require the offender to acknowledge guilt or show remorse, focusing instead on determining culpability and employing punishment as a deterrent for both the individual and potential future offenders (Carlsmith et al., 2002). In cases of interpersonal betrayal, such as infidelity during divorce proceedings, retributive measures may involve financial compensation or unfavourable custody arrangements, addressing the breach but often failing to provide emotional closure (Johnson, 2013). In institutional betrayal, such as corporate fraud or governmental misconduct, retributive justice often entails criminal prosecution, fines, or imprisonment. These punitive measures signal societal condemnation of the betrayal but do little to repair the relationships damaged by the breach of trust or to involve victims in the justice process (Haller, 2002).

In contrast, restorative justice, which emerged from dissatisfaction with conventional punitive systems, offers an alternative that centres on healing and reconciliation. Rooted

in theories of communitarianism and relational justice, this approach seeks to return the resolution of the conflict to the stakeholders—victims, offenders, and their communities (Zehr, 2013). Unlike retributive justice, restorative justice emphasises direct accountability to victims, where offenders are encouraged to admit wrongdoing, express remorse, and make amends through reparative actions such as restitution or community service (Braithwaite, 2004). This inclusive approach involves all parties in a process designed to promote emotional and psychological healing for victims, as well as the rehabilitation of offenders (Umbreit, 1994). In the context of interpersonal betrayal, victim-offender mediation is often utilised, where offenders provide apologies and make amends for their behaviour, helping to restore relational balance and emotional closure (Braithwaite, 2004). Research indicates that victims of betrayal who receive genuine apologies report greater satisfaction and a stronger sense of justice (Sherman et al., 2007).

A prominent example of restorative justice is South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), where perpetrators of apartheid-era harms were encouraged to publicly admit wrongdoing and seek reconciliation with their victims (Gibson, 2006). Beyond personal healing, the program aimed to rebuild national trust through truth-telling, documenting crimes, and public apologies. However, some critics argue that the lack of punitive measures, such as imprisonment or fines, can leave victims to feel that justice remains unfulfilled, especially in cases of widespread betrayal (Verdoolaege, 2016). Moreover, betrayal-driven hate can motivate offenses, such as hate crimes, representing forms of social injustice extending beyond individual victims to inflict harm on entire communities (Walters, 2019). Studies show that hate crimes deeply impact the emotional and behavioural well-being of those who identify with the victim, highlighting the need for approaches that focus on community healing (Paterson et al., 2019). Restorative justice (RJ) engages the community by promoting empathy and understanding, providing victims with meaningful gestures of remorse that aid in their healing. Unlike punitive measures, which often escalate hostility and obstruct recovery, restorative justice prioritises reconciliation, helping to rebuild social trust and address communal vulnerabilities (Walters, 2019).

In summary, retributive and restorative justice provide distinct frameworks for addressing the moral injury caused by betrayal. Retributive justice emphasises punishment and

accountability to reinforce moral boundaries, while restorative justice focuses on healing, reconciliation, and restoring relationships. The choice between these approaches depends on the nature of the harm and the needs of those affected. The following section explores each of the strategies used in restorative and retributive justice and how they are applied and evaluated in cases of betrayal.

2.4.3 Resolution Strategies in Response to Betrayal

The literature examined provide accounts of various strategies within the frameworks of retributive and restorative justice. Typical approaches in restorative justice include apologies and restoration, while the concepts of punishment and retribution are associated with retributive justice. Other strategies, such as restitution and compensation, can be utilised in both justice frameworks. Each of these strategies will be briefly examined.

Apologies represent a way for the wrongdoer to express regret and disavow wrongful intentions, aiming to “take back” the moral harm of the insult that underpins resentment. Apologies can be public, especially in cases of institutional betrayals, or private, such as in personal relationships, or both. Each type of apology aims to address the harm caused and foster healing (Zutlevics, 2002). A sincere apology carries “moral significance”, reflecting the wrongdoer's understanding of the consequences of their actions and offering the victim the power to accept or reject it (Schneider, 2000). However, apologies must be genuine to offer relief. Some may be self-serving, aiming to reduce penalties, or lack true acknowledgment of guilt, such as “empty apologies” that fail to admit responsibility (Schneider, 2000).

In addition to apologies, victims may demand restitution or compensation. Restitution aims to restore the victim to their pre-harm status by returning what was taken or repairing damage, whether financial, emotional, or material (Lollar, 2014). This might involve reimbursing lost money, covering medical bills, restoring rights, or helping victims find employment (Shepard, 2014). Restitution is more personal than punishment or fines paid to the state, as it directly addresses the victim's suffering. Compensation, on the other hand, does not necessarily seek to return the victim to their pre-harm status but compensates them for the loss with something of equivalent value, usually in the form of

monetary payment (Mégret , 2010). It is crucial to recognise that not all moral wrongs can be simply reversed by returning stolen goods or paying financial compensation. Joëlle Milquet, the EU Special Adviser on victims' compensation, emphasised this by proposing a shift from financial compensation to reparation, which includes broader support measures like recognition, care, and restitution —an approach referred to as reparation “in kind” (Milquet, 2019). While apologies, when sincere, indicate a shift in attitude, restitution and compensation do not necessarily reflect a change in belief. A wrongdoer may pay large sums without accepting personal responsibility or acknowledging the injustice (Zutlevics, 2002). Still, paying restitution can be seen as an effort to “set right” the wrong, a concept tied to both restorative justice and the idea of justice restoration.

Moreover, restoration is central to restorative justice. Its goal is not just to punish but to restore both the victim and the offender to a state of balance (Braithwaite, 2002). In personal relationships, restoration can involve counselling, rebuilding trust, or reintegrating the wrongdoer into the community. In institutional betrayals, it might include structural reforms to prevent future harm, as seen when whistleblowers expose systemic fraud in corporate settings. Restorative measures like these help restore trust in institutions (Johnstone & Van Ness, 2013).

Retributive justice, on the other hand, focuses on the notion of “just deserts”, stating that an offender who violates the law deserves punishment proportional to the harm caused (Wenzel et al., 2008). Punishment is conceptualised as serving multiple functions: maintaining social order, deterring crime, and demonstrating the consequences of wrongdoing (Carlsmith et al., 2002). Punishment and retribution aim to impose suffering on offenders as a form of justice, aiming to not only act as deterrents but also reaffirm societal norms. However, such cases often fail to address the need for direct restitution to the victims or institutional reform (Wenzel & Okimoto, 2016).

The urge to make an offender pay can extend beyond the criminal justice system into a desire for revenge, often fuelled by anger and feelings of betrayal (Aquino et al., 2001; Bies & Tripp, 2005). Revenge serves as a response to perceived injustice, aiming to restore the victim’s rank by diminishing the offender’s (Bradfield & Aquino, 1999; Sievers & Mersky, 2006). However, this desire does not always lead to action (Schumann & Ross,

2010). While revenge is a form of "private justice" driven by subjective feelings of harm and often exceeding proportionality, punishment is a public, legally enforced response that seeks to be proportionate to the crime (McCullough et al.,2001).

In summary, restorative justice strategies—through apologies, restitution, and restoration—directly engage with the emotional and social aspects of betrayal, aiming to heal both interpersonal and institutional relationships. By contrast, retributive justice prioritises punishment and deterrence, focusing on retribution as a way to uphold societal norms but often falling short in addressing the deeper emotional and relational damage caused by betrayal. A comparison of their differing approaches to dealing with betrayal is provided at Table 2.4.

Table 2.4 – Differences between Restorative and Retributive Approaches

	Restorative Justice	Retributive Justice
Focus	Repairing relationships and addressing harm.	Punishment and accountability for wrongdoing.
Goal	Reconciliation and healing.	Justice through penalty or punishment.
Process	Involves dialogue between affected parties (e.g., victim, perpetrator, community).	Imposes penalties based on established rules/laws.
Outcome	Mutual understanding, apology, and reparation.	Consequences for the wrongdoer (e.g., fines, sanctions, imprisonment).
Emphasis on Victims	Empowers victims, allowing them to express impact and needs.	Focuses on the offense rather than directly involving the victim.
Institutional Betrayal	Aims to rebuild trust between the institution and affected individuals.	Imposes institutional reforms or penalties without fostering direct reconciliation.
Interpersonal Betrayal	Seeks to restore personal relationships and repair emotional harm.	Focuses on assigning blame and punishing the betrayer.
Hate and Betrayal Dynamics	Reduces hostility through empathy and mutual recognition of harm.	Can exacerbate feelings of hate by reinforcing adversarial dynamics.
Community Involvement	Active participation in the resolution process.	Limited community engagement.

Long-term Impact	Promotes long-term healing and social reintegration.	May lead to ongoing resentment or division.
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2.4.4 Attitudes Towards Restorative and Retributive Approaches

Beliefs and preferences regarding retributive and restorative justice are influenced by a range of psychological, social and cultural factors. Research indicates that responses to betrayal differ based on the nature of the relationship: individuals tend to prefer compensation when dealing with strangers, while they place a higher value on apologies in intimate relationships (Joskowicz-Jablonek & Leiser, 2013). According to McCullough et al. (2000), forgiveness in close relationships is often rooted in empathy and a desire for harmony. Aquino et al. (2001) emphasise that power dynamics significantly shape responses to betrayal; those in lower-power positions are more likely to seek retribution, as they may feel a need to assert control or restore balance through punitive measures. In contrast, egalitarian relationships tend to favour restorative approaches, as both parties are more focused on rebuilding trust and preserving mutual respect. Preferences for justice types are contingent upon the nature of relationships, contextual factors, individual values, and cultural norms. A desire for revenge, coupled with beliefs in punitive justice, often leads to a preference for retributive measures (Wenzel et al., 2008). Cultural influences play a crucial role in shaping responses to conflict: societies that emphasise punishment are more inclined toward retributive justice, while community-oriented cultures favour restorative practices (Ren & Gray, 2009). Research further indicates that cultural background moderates conflict responses; in collectivist cultures, where group harmony is prioritised, responses to betrayal often differ markedly from those in individualist cultures, which emphasise personal autonomy and self-determination (Joo et al., 2019). Okimoto et al. (2012) further elucidate these dynamics by positing that individuals who prioritise self-transcendence—including values such as empathy and concern for others (Schwartz, 2012) —are more likely to support restorative justice, as they aim to rebuild relationships and foster harmony. In contrast, those who emphasise self-enhancement, including values like power and achievement (Schwartz, 2012), may prefer retributive methods, focusing on punishment and dominance (Okimoto et al., 2012).

Recognising the impact of these factors is crucial for developing interventions that facilitate effective conflict resolution. Additionally, the emergence of hate significantly influences whether restorative or retributive approaches are adopted. Betrayal-driven hate can amplify negative emotions, complicating the resolution process. The following section will explore how hatred shapes attitudes towards conflict resolution.

2.4.5 Hate as an Obstacle to Reconciliation

As previously discussed, betrayal often results in deep moral and emotional injury, prompting individuals to seek resolution. However, the emergence of hatred in the aftermath complicates this process significantly. Hate is well-known for its ability to obstruct reconciliation (Gross et al., 2013; Halperin, 2008; Halperin et al., 2011). One form of this hatred, termed “retributive hatred” (Brudholm, 2010; Gee, 2014; Murphy, 1988), exemplifies this challenge. Retributive hatred typically emerges in response to perceived harm or wrongdoing and is driven by a complex interplay of moral outrage, feelings of injustice, and the desire for retribution (Brudholm, 2010; Gee, 2014; Murphy, 1988). In this context, hatred is not a fleeting emotional reaction but a sustained, deeply rooted response shaped by cognitive evaluations and moral judgments (Brudholm, 2010).

Retributive hatred is directed not at superficial attributes of the betrayer but at their moral character and actions. It arises from a perceived need to rectify the moral imbalance caused by betrayal, with an emphasis on restoring justice. Canton (2015) explores how societal and psychological roots feed into retributive emotions, arguing that retributive emotions are part of upholding moral order, as they express society’s need for accountability in the wake of ethical violations. Similarly, Murphy (1988) emphasises the personal and social functions of retributive emotions such as hatred and resentment, arguing that they stem from the profound sense of personal injustice and the need for moral vindication. Such emotions not only condemn the wrongdoer’s actions but also serve a broader role in reinforcing societal moral norms. Retributive hatred, then, transcends individual grievances, focusing on the immorality embodied by the betrayer and demanding their moral accountability.

In this context, Gee (2014) argues that retributive hatred should be classified among the “reactive attitudes” identified by Strawson (2008)—those attitudes related to holding

others responsible based on the perceived quality of their will. Retributive hatred is considered reactive because it responds to moral demands and expectations about how individuals ought to treat one another. It carries moral significance, as it reflects a response grounded in moral content. The hostility associated with retributive hatred differs from malice and spite, as it is driven by a sense of defiance and moral entitlement rather than competition. Unlike simple hatred, which arises from a general dislike for something unpleasant, retributive hatred follows moral violations and wrongdoings. Additionally, in contrast to prejudicial hatred, which devalues individuals based on their identity and characteristics, retributive hatred focuses on specific traits relevant to moral judgment, representing an aversion directed at attributes linked to moral failure. Therefore, the disvalue and hostility found in retributive hatred are significantly different from other forms of hatred like prejudice, malice, and spite (Gee, 2014).

The persistence of retributive hatred obstructs reconciliation efforts focused on empathy and healing. Understanding its dynamics is crucial for developing interventions that address betrayal and promote reconciliation.

2.5 Impact of the Literature Review on Study Design and Methodology

This narrative review provided critical insights into the complexities of betrayal, hate, and their mitigation strategies. It began by outlining the key distinctions and similarities between interpersonal and institutional betrayal, and highlighted the significance of distinguishing between acts of betrayal by commission and by omission. This differentiation proved particularly valuable for the development of the survey instrument and the interview schedule. Additionally, insights from Betrayal Trauma Theory (Freyd, 1996) offered a deeper understanding of the coping mechanisms individuals use in response to betrayal and how these mechanisms may lead to emotions such as hatred. Furthermore, exploring theories of hate illuminated the concept of retributive hatred (Brudholm, 2010; Gee, 2014; Murphy, 1988)—hatred that arises from perceived wrongdoings—and its influence on individuals' restorative and retributive attitudes. This exploration was crucial in shaping strategies for addressing betrayal and deepening the understanding of its broader implications for conflict resolution and healing. The literature on restorative and retributive justice further informed the research

methodology, providing valuable guidance on navigating the complexities of betrayal and conceptualising effective resolution strategies.

This framework provides a nuanced understanding of how people navigate betrayal in various contexts, integrating perspectives from various disciplines. It emphasises the importance of employing methodologies that consider both personal and systemic influences when examining various forms of betrayal and their resolution, highlighting the need for a mixed-methods approach. In conclusion, this narrative review synthesised key theoretical perspectives and empirical evidence, offering a valuable framework for examining the dynamics of betrayal, hatred, and their mitigation in a comprehensive and meaningful way.

Chapter III – Methodology

This chapter introduces the methodology of the study, covering its philosophical foundations and theoretical framework. Section 3.1 will begin by presenting an overview of research paradigms and worldviews, introducing pragmatism as the epistemological foundation for this research. Following this, Section 3.2 will explore the mixed-methods approach adopted for this study, elaborating on the choice of an explanatory sequential design. Section 3.3 will further outline and justify the choice of the qualitative and quantitative methods employed, including the use of vignettes, thematic analysis, and template analysis. Ethical considerations related to online research and their relevance to this study will be examined in Section 3.4. Subsequently, Section 3.5 will discuss the importance of acknowledging the researcher's positionality in the study. Finally, Section 3.6 will offer a summary of the chapter, establishing the foundation for the outline of the methods in Chapter IV.

3.1 Research Paradigms

Research studies are typically guided by research paradigms, reflecting philosophical perspectives on truth and reality relevant to the research theme, questions, aims and objectives. Paradigms are important as they inform methodological choices in data collection, analysis, interpretation, and reporting. The word “paradigm” is derived from the Greek παράδειγμα (paradeigma), meaning “pattern, example, or sample”, which originates from the verb παραδείκνυμι (paradeiknumi), which translates to “to exhibit, represent, or expose”. This etymological background highlights the term's foundational role in denoting models or frameworks that guide scholarly thought and practice.

There are two predominant perspectives to be considered within the literature. One perspective aligns with Thomas Kuhn's notion, who defined the term paradigm as the shared generalisations, beliefs, and values within a community of specialists regarding reality and knowledge. Kuhn described a paradigm as an “accepted model or pattern” guiding research efforts or “exemplars shared by a community”, representing an intellectual framework and a set of concrete puzzle-solutions within a scientific

community (Kuhn, 1997). This view emphasises that scientific progress occurs within these established paradigms until anomalies accumulate, leading to paradigm shifts.

Conversely, another perspective embraces the concept of paradigms as "worldviews", where a paradigm serves as a framework reflecting researchers' assumptions about reality, methodology, and epistemology (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This viewpoint depicts a paradigm as "a way of thinking about and making sense of the complexities of the real world" (Patton, 2002). The conceptualisation of paradigms as worldviews allows for the recognition of multiple, coexisting paradigms, offering a pluralistic and flexible approach to research (Mertens, 2015; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2010), which is the approach adopted in this study. Research paradigms, such as post-positivism, constructivism, participatory frameworks, and pragmatism, are characterised by key philosophical elements: axiology (the role of values), ontology (assumptions about reality), epistemology (how knowledge is acquired), and rhetoric (shared research language) (Creswell, 2009). Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) refer to these as "dimensions of contrasts", which define the philosophical foundations of a study and enable comparison across paradigms.

The following section will analyse how these elements align with pragmatism as the chosen research paradigm and methodology. Given the complex, multidisciplinary nature of hate that arises from betrayal and approaches to mitigate it, a flexible paradigm like pragmatism is essential for exploring their interconnections.

3.1.1 Ontology and Epistemology

The initial step in formulating the research design is the articulation of the relevant ontology (Creswell, 2009). Ontology, fundamentally concerned with the nature of truth and reality, refers to the philosophical study of existence and dictates one's view and interpretation of the world. It examines whether there is one objective reality shared by all or whether reality is unique to each individual based on their experiences (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

The ontological stance of researchers shapes their interpretation of what constitutes "facts" and whether such "facts" exist. Two contrasting positions dominate ontological approaches in research: objectivism and subjectivism. Research findings from an

objectivist perspective are typically presented quantitatively, using empirical data that stands independently for any observer. Subjectivism, on the other hand, views knowledge, particularly concerning social phenomena, as socially constructed. It asserts that individuals create their own understanding of social realities (Greene, 2006). Subjectivism is closely linked with the interpretivist or constructivist perspective, which emphasises qualitative research methods like interviews to explore how people experience social reality. This perspective allows researchers to observe and interpret how participants construct and perceive their own realities.

These approaches coincide with the epistemology or the nature of knowledge and specifically the relationship between the researcher and the subject being researched (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). Epistemology has been historically dominated by two traditional approaches; positivism, positing an objective stance, where knowledge exists independently of the researcher's perspective, and in contrast, interpretivism, viewing knowledge as co-constructed through interaction between the researcher and the subject being researched (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

Considering the ontological and epistemological perspectives for this study, it can be argued that both objective and subjective approaches may be applicable concurrently (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). Scholars have posited that objectivity and subjectivity do not need to be mutually exclusive (Greene, 2006). In exploring themes such as betrayal and hate, it is crucial to acknowledge both the subjective nature of these experiences and the objective impact they have on individuals and society. Pragmatism allows for an integration of these perspectives, recognising an independent shared reality while also valuing the subjective dimensions of personal experiences. This approach advocates for the use of methods that best address the specific research questions at hand, balancing both objective observations and subjective insights.

3.1.2 Pragmatism as the Epistemological Foundation of This Study

Pragmatism recognises an independent shared reality while also valuing the subjective dimensions of personal experiences. This approach advocates for the use of methods that best address the specific research questions at hand, balancing both objective observations and subjective insights. Consequently, pragmatism embraces a plurality of

methods (Maxcy, 2003). From an epistemological standpoint, pragmatism assumes that the relationship between the researcher and the knowledge under investigation is neither separate (positivism) nor co-constructed (interpretivism) but in fact lies on a continuum. This conceptual continuum has at one end a more positivist/post-positivist viewpoint, that knowledge is independent of the researcher. It has at the other end the interpretivist viewpoint, that knowledge is co-constructed. At times during the research, a highly interactive relationship may be necessary for addressing complex questions, while at other times, interaction may not be required at all. This perspective suggests that knowledge is neither entirely objective nor entirely subjective; rather, it emerges from the interplay between the two (Hall, 2013).

Pragmatism, as a research paradigm, advocates for using the philosophical and methodological approaches most effective for addressing the specific research problem (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2008) while remaining mindful of practical resource constraints. As the epistemological foundation of this study, pragmatism tackles debates about objective truth by focusing on practical solutions and real-world effectiveness (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). As such, a pragmatist worldview allows researchers to incorporate both qualitative and quantitative data to gain a comprehensive understanding of a research subject. In this study, both quantitative and qualitative dimensions are grounded in participants' thoughts and experiences related to interpersonal and institutional betrayal and hate. These phenomena are neither entirely rooted in objective reality nor confined to subjective perceptions; rather, they are dynamic and multifaceted. Pragmatism bridges these dimensions, making it an ideal framework for investigating these research topics.

3.1.3 Axiology

Axiology examines the role of values in research, highlighting how a researcher's own values influence the research process (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). The axiological differences between research paradigms can be significant. Positivists advocate for a clear separation between the researcher and the subject being researched, to uphold objectivity and mitigate bias. In contrast, constructivists argue that research is inherently value-laden, making it impossible to fully separate the researcher from the subject being studied (Ryan, 2018). Interpretivists contend that researchers' values are fundamentally

linked to the inquiry. As Schwandt (2000) points out, all research is influenced by personal and societal values, complicating claims of absolute objectivity.

The pragmatic perspective proposes that values can be biased and unbiased depending on the research design that is being used to answer the research questions. For pragmatists, values precede a search for descriptions, theories, explanations, and narratives. Pragmatic research is driven by anticipated consequences. Pragmatists select research topics guided by the relevance these topics hold within their own value systems. (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

This study aims to minimise biases while acknowledging the researcher's values in its design and interpretation. This investigation is driven by a deep concern for the harmful effects of hatred on individuals and society, underscoring the researcher's commitment to understanding its impact and developing effective mitigation strategies. This aligns with the goal of the funding body, the NETHATE Consortium, to advance knowledge and address the societal consequences of hate.

3.1.4 Rhetoric

Rhetoric, often overlooked in literature, plays a crucial role in multidisciplinary studies. Traditionally, research language is shaped by the specific discipline it originates from, using assumptions and meanings relevant to that field (MacDonald, 2017). This study, intersecting multiple disciplines—such as psychology, sociology, philosophy, and conflict resolution—blends diverse terminologies from each field, highlighting the interdisciplinary nature of the research.

3.2 The Research Methodology: Mixed-Methods

Research methodology encompasses the comprehensive framework guiding the research process, from theoretical foundations to data collection and analysis. Mixed-methods research, increasingly recognised as a distinct approach within the social sciences, integrates both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. This dual approach utilises a variety of data collection tools, enabling researchers to address complex research problems while minimising the limitations often associated with single-method studies (Creswell, 2013; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

Adopted frequently by those with a pragmatic worldview, mixed-methods can be characterised as a third methodology, possessing its own paradigmatic perspective and distinctive inquiry methods (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017; Curry & Nunez-Smith, 2015). In practice, mixed-methods can be applied sequentially or concurrently. Sequential mixed-methods analyse data in a specific order, where one approach builds on the findings of the other, whereas concurrent mixed-methods involve the simultaneous collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell, 2013; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2010). Creswell (2013) identifies six types of sequential mixed-methods research designs, which are distinguished by their data collection phases, timing, and weighting. The characteristics and differences among these different types of mixed-methods designs are summarised in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 – Comparison of Sequential and Concurrent Mixed-Methods Designs

Design Type	Sequence of Phases	Primary Method	Purpose	Key Characteristics
Sequential Explanatory	Quantitative → Qualitative	Quantitative	Explain and refine quantitative results	Initial quantitative data collection, followed by qualitative insights to deepen understanding.
Sequential Exploratory	Qualitative → Quantitative	Qualitative	Develop hypotheses for broader testing	Initial qualitative exploration to identify themes, followed by quantitative testing of developed hypotheses.
Sequential Transformative	Qualitative → Quantitative	Qualitative	Promote social change based on findings	Initial qualitative immersion followed by quantitative measurement of interventions' effects.
Concurrent Triangulation	Simultaneous	Both (Qualitative & Quantitative)	Enhance validity through triangulation	Collects and analyses both data types separately, then integrates them for a nuanced perspective.

Concurrent Embedded	Simultaneous	Primarily one (Qualitative or Quantitative)	Augment primary method with supplementary insights	One method is prioritised while the other provides additional context, addressing gaps in the primary method.
Concurrent Transformative	Simultaneous	Both (Qualitative & Quantitative)	Generate solutions for positive change	Iterative data collection and analysis to create actionable insights for change within a system.

In this study, the design choice was influenced by several important factors, particularly the alignment with the research question and the researcher's epistemological stance. As the research questions in this study aim to measure the extent of betrayal and hatred while also gaining insight into individuals' thought processes surrounding these topics, the chosen method necessitates both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Instead of simply collecting qualitative or quantitative data, by employing a mixed-methods research design, the study balances the statistical power and generalisability of quantitative data with the rich, contextual understanding provided by qualitative data, thereby gaining a more comprehensive view of the research problem than either approach could offer independently (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The study's methodology is designed to explain both the observable actions and the deeper, implicit values and assumptions related to interpersonal and institutional betrayal and how they can fuel hate. These implicit values influence what participants actually do, rather than what they claim to do (Hitlin & Pinkston, 2013). This is crucial when examining sensitive topics such as betrayal and hate, which carry strong negative connotations affecting their expression through mechanisms such as social desirability bias (Hawdon et al., 2024). The selected methodology employs the benefits of mixed-methods, thus enhancing the study's ability to capture nuanced insights from various data sources.

3.2.2 The Rationale for an Explanatory Sequential Design

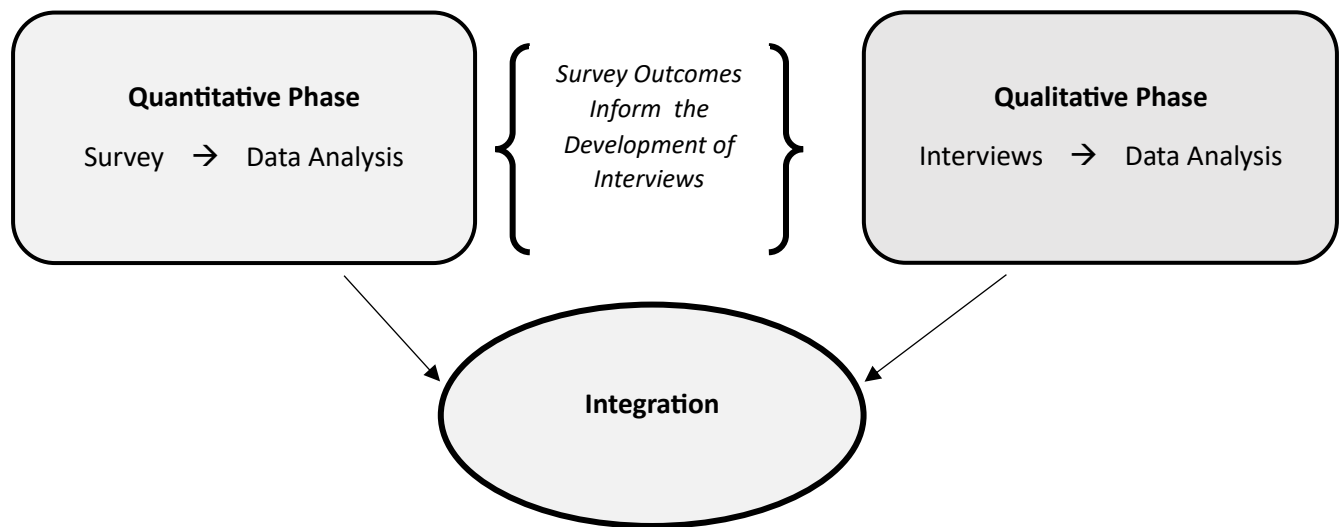
The decision on the timing of the data collection determines whether the research is convergent, explanatory, or exploratory, seeking to explain or explore the phenomena of interest (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017; Curry & Nunez-Smith, 2015). Whether the phases

of the research are conducted together, or sequentially, is considered a matter of purpose but may also be influenced by the availability of resources. In addition to timing, the weighting is also considered in some studies, where a greater emphasis is placed on either the quantitative or qualitative data collection. Another important aspect to consider is whether to integrate the two types of data at various stages: during data collection, analysis, interpretation, or across all three phases. Despite the importance of data integration in mixed-methods, it is an aspect considered “under theorised and understudied” (Greene, 2006). Integration of datasets in mixed-methods remains the most challenging aspect of the methodology, with the qualitative data merely embellish the quantitative data or viceversa (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017; Curry & Nunes-Smith, 2015; Guetterman et al., 2015). In this study, having established the timing of the current study as sequential, with the quantitative data followed by the qualitative data collection, as one informs the other, the selected design is sequential. Reviewing the purpose, the study is explanatory in nature, with the qualitative data explaining the quantitative findings. The selected mixed method research design is therefore an explanatory sequential mixed method design. The integration technique used is side-by-side Joint Display, merging quantitative and qualitative findings to provide clear and comprehensive insights (Guetterman et al., 2015). The design involves a three-phase process:

- Phase 1 collects survey data to examine the relationship between interpersonal and institutional betrayal, their link to hate, and the impact of restorative and retributive strategies on their mitigation.
- In Phase 2, semi-structured interviews are conducted to provide a more nuanced interpretation of the quantitative results, offering deeper insights into participants’ perspectives. This qualitative phase is shaped by the findings of Phase 1, aiming to enrich and clarify the survey data.
- Finally, Phase 3 integrates both datasets using Joint Displays, generating the meta-inferences that address the study’s research objectives (Guetterman et al., 2015).

The process is exemplified in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1 – Explanatory Sequential Design for This Study



3.3 Qualitative and Quantitative Methodologies of the Study

3.3.1 Vignettes as a Method for Quantitative and Qualitative Inquiry

Vignettes are short narratives about fictional characters in specific situations that research participants are asked to evaluate and respond to (Finch, 1987). Vignettes have often been used alongside other data collection methods in research studies. They are employed in both quantitative studies, such as surveys, as well as in qualitative research methods, including interviews and focus groups, to explore participants' beliefs and perspectives (Hughes & Huby, 2004). The development of vignettes often draws on previous research findings (Carlson, 1996; McKeganey et al., 1995) or real-life scenarios to create relatable stories for participants (Rahman, 1996). Participants are typically asked to identify with the characters and provide insights into how they perceive the characters' actions or emotions in given circumstances, or how they would react themselves (Barter and Renold, 1999).

In quantitative studies, vignettes are incorporated into surveys to present respondents with hypothetical scenarios. This approach helps to elicit more detailed and context-specific responses than traditional survey questions (Schoenberg & Ravdal, 2000). By using vignettes, researchers can systematically manipulate key variables within the scenarios to observe how different factors influence participants' responses (Alexander &

Becker, 1978). In qualitative research, vignettes are used as “ice-breakers” at the beginning of interviews and within focus groups to help set the stage for initial discussions (Hazel, 1995). They shift the focus from personal experiences to more abstract scenarios, making it easier for participants to discuss sensitive or controversial topics (Rahman, 1996).

Vignettes offer several strengths when used in surveys and interviews, enhancing the quality and depth of data collected. First, they provide participants with a specific and visible context to express their thoughts about particular social circumstances, rather than abstract concepts (Finch, 1987). This approach elicits more nuanced and thoughtful responses, leading to richer data (Jenkins et al., 2010). Additionally, by presenting hypothetical situations with fictional characters, vignettes reduce social desirability bias, enabling respondents to share their true opinions more freely (Hughes, 1998). Moreover, presenting vignettes from a third-person perspective allows participants to distance themselves from the situation, making it less personally threatening. This distancing is particularly important when exploring sensitive topics, as it helps facilitating the discussion by providing a degree of separation between the respondent and the subject matter (Barter & Renold, 2010). Moreover, vignettes offer flexibility in response options, allowing researchers to explore a range of possible reactions and capture complex judgments about behaviours, attitudes, and decisions (Alexander & Becker, 1978; Finch, 1987). They also provide insights into decision-making processes and underlying beliefs, while enabling researchers to control and systematically manipulate key variables to understand their effects on responses (Schoenberg & Ravdal, 2000; Evans et al., 2015). Finally, vignettes enable researchers to investigate complex situations, behaviours, and normative issues in a manner that approximates real-life complexities while maintaining the time efficiency of survey research (Finch, 1987). These strengths make vignettes a valuable tool in surveys and interviews for capturing complex, nuanced data, minimising biases, and engaging respondents effectively.

3.3.2 The Use of Vignettes in this Study

In this study, the use of vignettes is particularly beneficial due to the sensitive nature of topics like betrayal, hate, and reconciliation. Discussing these complex emotions directly

can be challenging; however, the third-person perspective of vignettes enables participants to explore these feelings indirectly. By engaging with fictional scenarios, participants feel more comfortable addressing negatively connoted emotions, fostering a safe distance that encourages open and honest expression. Vignettes also serve as a bridge between the survey and interview phases of the research. Initially, they act as “ice-breakers”, facilitating discussions on sensitive subjects. During interviews, vignettes provide concrete examples that clarify emerging questions and issues. They empower participants by allowing them to control the interaction—deciding when to introduce personal experiences, if at all. This distance between the researcher and participants enables exploration of views without necessitating personal disclosure (Bradbury-Jones et al., 2014; Budd & Kandemir, 2018). Participants who prefer not to discuss personal experiences can stay within the context of the vignette, while others may interject and reference personal experiences.

Incorporating vignettes into the interview process enhances engagement by providing variety and creating a supportive environment. This approach facilitates smoother conversations and deeper engagement with the topics. Additionally, including vignettes in both quantitative and qualitative data collection enriches understanding by contextualising responses, thereby improving the integration and interpretation of data.

3.3.3 Challenges of Using Vignettes

While the use of vignettes offers numerous advantages, several limitations must be considered. One significant challenge is the disconnection between belief and action—the perceived gap between hypothetical scenarios and real-life social situations (Hughes & Huby, 2004; Thurman, 1986). Individuals’ beliefs about how they would respond may not align with their actual behaviour. This concern is particularly relevant when vignettes are used as a stand-alone research method; however, this study mitigates the issue through a mixed-methods design. By employing vignettes in both quantitative and qualitative phases, the topics are explored from both third-person and first-person perspectives. Furthermore, as Finch (1987) notes, inconsistency between belief and action is not inherently problematic. Research should prioritise understanding the processes of meaning-making and interpretation leading to outcomes, rather than the outcomes

themselves, which are context-dependent. In line with this argument, this study prioritises understanding the intricate processes through which betrayal, hate, and reconciliation are internally navigated, rather than simply assessing the consistency between belief and action.

Another consideration is the balance between specificity and ambiguity. Researchers must be mindful of the assumptions participants may “fill in” while interpreting vignettes, such as the gender or ethnicity of the characters. This can complicate drawing broad conclusions about normative beliefs or practices based solely on this data (Finch, 1987). In this study, vignettes were employed as a non-directive technique, allowing participants to make their own assumptions by using gender-neutral language and omitting specific details about nationality or ethnicity of vignettes’ subjects. This approach shifts the focus from identifying specific triggers to leveraging ambiguity as a strength, enabling respondents to interpret situations on their own terms (Barter & Renold, 1999).

3.3.4 Template Analysis for Vignette Validation

In vignette research, achieving ecological validity is crucial to ensure that scenarios accurately reflect real-life situations, enhancing the generalisability of findings (Murphy et al., 2024). Given the innovative nature of the vignettes in this study, it was essential to assess whether participants' perceptions aligned with the intended emotional and psychological constructs. To do this, the vignettes underwent validation through Template Analysis, a method of thematic analysis that utilises hierarchical coding while allowing flexibility tailored to the study's needs (Brooks et al., 2015; King, 2012).

Template Analysis involves developing a coding template from an initial data subset, which is iteratively revised throughout the analysis process to accommodate insights and emerging themes (Brooks & King, 2012; Brooks et al., 2015). This technique is particularly suitable for validating vignettes due to its structured yet adaptable approach. Unlike other thematic coding methods, Template Analysis encourages researchers to focus on areas with the richest data related to the research question, without requiring an explicit distinction between descriptive and interpretive themes. This flexibility enables researchers to concentrate on salient aspects of the data, leading to rich and contextually relevant insights. Moreover, Template Analysis aligns well with pragmatism, which

prioritises practical application over strict theoretical frameworks (Brooks & King, 2012). It allows researchers to develop coding templates that incorporate both predefined categories and emergent themes, fostering ongoing refinement of analytical frameworks. This dynamic process ensures that findings remain relevant and applicable to real-world contexts. Through Template Analysis, this study validated the vignettes and effectively bridged the gap between survey and interview data, ensuring that the identified themes accurately reflected the intended constructs.

3.3.5 Interview Methodology: Thematic Analysis

Qualitative research is often regarded as an integrative and multifaceted discipline (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011), with the researcher compared to a “bricoleur” (Denzin, 1994). This metaphor underscores the researcher’s capacity to navigate the tensions among various methods and interpretations, combining multiple methodological perspectives to capture the complexity of lived experiences and social phenomena.

In this study, interviews provide deeper insights into participants' perceptions and experiences, offering a nuanced understanding of themes initially explored through survey vignettes. The semi-structured format balances flexibility with consistency, allowing to probe specific responses while maintaining uniformity across participants (Gill et al., 2008).

Thematic Analysis (TA) has been chosen as the method for analysing qualitative data from the interviews in this study. TA is a widely used approach for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within qualitative data, offering deeper insights into underlying meanings and connections (Braun & Clarke, 2006). According to Braun and Clarke (2006), a theme represents a meaningful aspect related to the research question and highlights significant patterns emerging from the dataset. Crucially, the importance of a theme is not determined solely by its frequency within the data, but by its relevance in addressing the aims and questions of the research (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Braun and Clarke (2006) provided a step-by-step guide to Thematic Analysis, comprising six phases; notably, the phases do not follow a linear fashion but instead a recursive process, involving constantly moving back and forth within the dataset. The six phases of Thematic Analysis are:

- 1) Familiarisation with the data: where the researcher becomes familiar with the dataset, reading it multiple times and taking notes as early analytical insights and observations.
- 2) Coding: Initial codes are developed, as a way to capture the semantic and conceptual meaning of the data.
- 3) Searching for themes: The researcher groups all the coded data relevant to a specific topic to construct a theme, by looking for meaningful and coherent patterns in the data in relation to the research questions of the study.
- 4) Reviewing themes: the researcher assesses whether the identified themes convey a coherent narrative, evaluating if they consistently represents the codes and the whole dataset, and analysing the relationship between the themes, potentially employing a thematic map.
- 5) Defining and naming themes: the researcher defines informative names for themes and constructs a narrative to explain how they relate to the research questions.
- 6) Writing up: relates to writing a report telling the reader a story about the data and contextualising it within the framework of existing literature.

This study followed the six-step process of Thematic Analysis to identify key themes within the dataset. According to Braun and Clarke (2013), researchers should further specify whether their coding is conducted at a semantic (explicit) level, which focuses on surface meanings, or at a latent (interpretative) level, which uncovers deeper patterns. Additionally, it is important to distinguish whether the coding approach is deductive or inductive (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

Semantic and Latent Coding

The semantic level of analysis is closely related to what is explicitly stated by participants, providing the surface level meanings whilst latent coding, going beyond what is explicitly stated, requires interpretative efforts and explores the dimensions underlying the surface (Braun & Clarke, 2013). In this study, Thematic Analysis combined both the semantic and the latent level. While a descriptive analysis of the data was conducted to value participants' perspectives and present the content as they communicated it, emphasis was also placed on the researcher's interpretative work to convey the deeper meanings,

ensuring that both the explicit content and the underlying implications of participants' responses were thoroughly examined.

Deductive and Inductive Analysis

Deductive coding is considered a top-down, “theory-driven” approach, where the data is coded through the lenses of a pre-defined theoretical framework or codebook based on the study's research questions and the existing literature. Conversely, inductive coding, also called “open coding”, is a ground-up, “data-driven” approach, where the codes are produced by analysing the raw textual data, without any pre-existing theoretical or conceptual framework, and the narratives and themes emerge from the data itself. While it is helpful to distinguish between an inductive or deductive way of coding, the analysis rarely uses only one of these approaches and often uses a combination of both (Braun and Clarke 2013). A good analysis is recommended to use a mix of both approaches, following a theoretical framework while remaining open to emerging themes and ideas. Nonetheless, one approach usually predominates over the other, prioritising either theory-based or data-based meaning (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

This study uses a combination of an inductive and a deductive approach. While a structured framework was employed to ensure that the themes aligned with the research question, participants were provided with a space to freely share their thoughts and experiences, thus incorporating both predetermined theoretical constructs and spontaneous insights into the analysis.

3.3.6 Integration Through Joint Displays

Joint Displays are a visual technique designed to integrate and present both qualitative and quantitative findings within a unified framework (Guetterman et al., 2015; Guetterman et al., 2021) These displays highlight specific connections between the qualitative and quantitative components of a project. Furthermore, they include an interpretation—referred to as an integrated finding or meta-inference (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2008)—which synthesises the results, offering a more comprehensive understanding of the research outcomes. This method enhances transparency in mixed-methods research by visually mapping the relationships between datasets (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017), making it easier to draw meaningful conclusions.

By presenting qualitative and quantitative findings side-by-side, Joint Displays allow researchers to compare and contrast data from different sources, revealing deeper insights that might be overlooked when considering each dataset in isolation. Fetters et al. (2013) highlight the utility of Joint Displays in providing a visual means of integration, enhancing the interpretation of mixed-methods data by aligning themes, patterns, and statistical results in a coherent manner. Moreover, Guetterman et al. (2015) emphasise that Joint Displays not only support the merging of data but also help in identifying inconsistencies, corroborating evidence, and generating new research questions. This method of integration is particularly useful for elucidating complex issues such as betrayal, hate, and their mitigation, as it enables the synthesis of observable behaviours from quantitative surveys with experiences, values and assumptions uncovered through qualitative interviews. In this study, the use of side-by-side Joint Displays has proven crucial for presenting an immediate and easily accessible means to compare data, allowing for a clear and concise representation of the study's findings and facilitating a comprehensive analysis of the multifaceted issues being examined.

3.4 Ethical Considerations in Online Research

Adhering to ethical standards in research is essential, especially with the increasing prevalence of online methodologies, which require careful consideration that extends beyond mere procedural compliance. This shift, accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic, has expanded the use of online surveys and interviews, making research more flexible and accessible while introducing unique ethical challenges (Strachan, 2021). Although online research provides advantages, such as broader participant reach and cost-efficiency, it raises issues around informed consent, anonymity, privacy, data quality, and the nature of virtual researcher-participant relationships (Engward et al., 2022).

This mixed-methods study, initially planned to be conducted both online and offline, was conducted fully online to involve a geographically diverse sample. Notably, when given the option for in-person meetings, participants expressed a preference for the online format, reflecting an increased acceptance of online methods. This section will explore the ethical considerations of conducting online research, addressing challenges and solutions specific to online surveys (Section 3.4.1) and online interviews (Section 3.4.2),

before discussing positionality in research in Section 3.5 and concluding with a summary in Section 3.6.

To identify and manage ethical challenges and ensure compliance with data protection legislation, a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been carried out for this study. The DPIA has been reviewed by the Data Protection Office of Trinity College Dublin, which has released an approval note for the study. The study has been approved by the Faculty of Health Sciences Research Ethics Committee (Level II) of Trinity College Dublin (see Appendix A for the Letter of Ethical Approval).

3.4.1 Ethical Issues in Online Survey Research

In recent years, online surveys have emerged as a prevalent methodology in social sciences research. This approach offers numerous advantages over traditional offline surveys, including the rapid and cost-effective collection of large datasets. Additionally, online surveys can reach diverse geographic and demographic populations, enhancing representativeness (Van Selm & Jankowski, 2006). However, several challenges must be considered, such as low response rates, sampling issues, and data quality concerns (Nayak & Narayan, 2019; Manfreda et al., 2008). As the popularity of this method continues to rise, addressing ethical considerations is paramount. This section will explore key ethical issues in survey research, including: 1) informed consent and the right to withdraw, 2) technological issues and data quality, 3) safeguarding participants' privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality, and 4) the use of incentives. Each topic will outline the main ethical considerations and detail the strategies employed by the researcher to mitigate these challenges within the context of this study.

1) Informed Consent and Right to Withdraw

Informed consent is a crucial ethical requirement in research, ensuring participants have the necessary information to make an informed choice about their involvement (Roberts & Allen, 2015). This process demands transparent communication, which can be difficult to achieve in virtual settings (Flicker et al., 2004). In online research, consent is often implied through agreement to terms via email or online statements (Warrell & Jacobsen, 2014). However, challenges include verifying participants' understanding and identities,

especially when it comes to factors such as mental capacity, which can affect the reliability of their responses (Vehovar & Manfreda, 2017). Best practices involve obtaining explicit consent, typically by presenting an information sheet at the beginning of an online survey, where participants indicate their consent by checking a box. Conducting pilot tests on consent forms and surveys is essential for identifying and addressing potential issues (Varnhagen et al., 2005). In this study, an information sheet was displayed on the initial survey page, requiring participants to confirm their consent before proceeding, and a pilot test was conducted to refine the instrument based on the feedback received.

Furthermore, participants should have the right to withdraw from the survey at any point, including the option to not share previously submitted information (Regmi et al., 2016). It is also vital that participants feel no pressure to disclose uncomfortable information. Researchers must allow participants the option to skip questions or leave the survey at any time. In this study, participants were clearly informed that they could withdraw at any point by simply exiting the survey, with a guarantee that doing so would result in the permanent deletion of any responses they had provided.

2) Technological Issues and Data Quality

Ensuring data quality is a fundamental aspect of ethical research, as it validates the efforts of participants, the resources employed, and the investments made by funders. Several factors can compromise data quality in online survey research. A significant concern is sampling bias, which occurs when the characteristics of the sample differ from those of the target population (Riffenburgh, 2012). Online surveys often attract respondents who are more active on the internet, potentially introducing biases related to income, age, and access to technology.

Moreover, survey response rates have been declining over the past few decades (Peytchev, 2013), resulting in higher sampling errors and potential non-response bias, which refers to differences between respondents and non-respondents on the topic of interest. Factors influencing non-response bias include technical issues, perceived lack of anonymity, survey fatigue, and the burden of frequent participation requests (Porter et al., 2004). Careless responding, where participants provide inconsistent answers due to

disinterest or fatigue, negatively impacts representativeness and validity (Roberts & Allen, 2015). Intentional misrepresentation, or survey fraud, poses another challenge, as some participants may manipulate responses for personal gain (Singh & Sagar, 2021).

To mitigate these issues, this study employed a survey distribution company (SurveySwap). This platform facilitates targeted distribution to the intended population through verified user registration, enhancing data quality. Individualised, one-time survey links prevented multiple submissions, thus reducing the risk of survey fraud and encouraging thoughtful responses. SurveySwap conducts pilot tests to identify and resolve potential technical issues, ensuring a smooth user experience and providing support for participants facing difficulties. To mitigate survey fatigue and avoid careless responses, strategies were implemented, including simplifying the survey format and incorporating an attention check.

3) Privacy, Anonymity, Confidentiality

The advanced capabilities of survey tools necessitate careful consideration of privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality issues in online survey research. While often used interchangeably, these concepts have distinct meanings. Anonymity refers to the complete withholding of participants' identities, while confidentiality involves safeguarding the information and opinions collected during research from unauthorised disclosure. Privacy protection encompasses participants' rights to control access to their involvement in a study (Eysenbach & Wyatt, 2002).

Although participation in web-based surveys may seem fully anonymous, participants' internet protocol (IP) addresses can still be traced. To maintain anonymity and confidentiality, it is crucial to remove IP addresses from the dataset before storage (Barchard & Williams, 2008; Benfield & Szlemko, 2006). Additionally, unique tracking links can compromise anonymity by linking survey responses to respondents' email addresses, highlighting the need for their removal from the dataset. Even with no collection of IP addresses or identifying information, risks of breaches to anonymity and privacy remain due to potential hacking and other malicious activities.

In this study, strict adherence to GDPR and Data Protection regulations has been implemented. Key measures included not collecting IP addresses, using individualised survey links, and eliminating any connections between personal information and survey responses. A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been conducted to identify and mitigate potential risks.

4) Use of Incentives

Over the past decade, the decline in response rates has led to an increased use of incentives in online survey research (Manzo & Burke, 2012). While the use of incentives is not discouraged as long as they are not “excessive or inappropriate” (AERA, 2011), their application should be approached with caution. Incentives can enhance recruitment and response rates (Görizt, 2006), but they may also introduce bias, as participants motivated solely by incentives might not accurately represent the target population. Furthermore, the prospect of receiving an incentive could encourage participants to provide socially desirable or expected answers to ensure they qualify for the reward. Consequently, although monetary incentives can improve low response rates, they may also increase the risk of survey fraud (Singh & Sagar, 2021). Additionally, it is essential to clearly communicate that incentives will be provided regardless of withdrawal to avoid pressuring participants or making them uncomfortable about leaving the study.

In this study, participants’ compensation has been managed by the survey distribution company, SurveySwap, which offered reasonable incentives, such as monetary rewards or platform credits, ensuring transparency and fairness in the process.

3.4.2 Ethical Issues in Online Interview Research

Online interviews have gained significant popularity, especially following the Covid-19 pandemic, which led to their widespread adoption as a commonly used method for engaging participants. Key advantages include rapid recruitment, minimal ecological impact compared to in-person interviews, and the convenience of eliminating geographical barriers, thereby reducing travel costs and time commitments for both participants and researchers (Opdenakker, 2006; Hanna, 2012; Deakin & Wakefield,

2014). Additionally, online formats facilitate instant transcription (Engward et al., 2022) and benefit from the ongoing advancement of technology (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014). However, ethical considerations warrant careful attention. This section will discuss: 1) the digital barrier between participants and the interviewer, 2) informed consent and the right to withdraw, 3) technological issues affecting data quality, 4) concerns regarding privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality, and 5) the use of incentives.

1) Breaking the Digital Barriers: Building Closeness in Virtual Spaces

When conducting online research, researchers must consider the unique dynamics of the digital environment. While online platforms facilitate access to geographically distant participants, they may also create a “digital barrier” that hinders the development of a strong researcher-participant relationship, potentially affecting the depth of dialogue and disclosure compared to face-to-face interactions (Engward et al., 2022).

The immediacy of online communication, combined with the digital divide between researchers and participants, can create contrasting perceptions of the online environment, making it essential for researchers to remain mindful of these dynamics. Acknowledging their role as outsiders within the participants' social context is crucial. Researchers should prioritise the participant's experience, be attentive to subtle non-verbal cues, and strike a balance between thorough inquiry and participant comfort (Engward et al., 2022). For instance, Krouwel et al. (2019) found that while video calls and face-to-face interviews yielded similar volumes of data regarding word count and topic coverage, in-person interviews often elicited more detailed responses per topic, indicating deeper engagement. Nonetheless, these differences do not outweigh the advantages of online interviews, such as convenience and time efficiency. Engward et al. (2022) also noted that participants often perceive online interviews as quicker and more immediate, with openings feeling less personal and closings more abrupt. In this study, participants reported surprise at the brevity of online interviews; however, this did not diminish the quality of the data. The transcripts generated rich thematic codes, and participants expressed satisfaction about the experience during debriefing.

Another consideration is that while remote interviewing technology can inadvertently collect metadata beyond speech, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technology lacks the

peripheral information and visual prompts of face-to-face interactions. This limitation can shape researchers' assumptions, question types, and overall interview approach. While researcher bias exists in both settings, the reduced contextual data in online environments may allow participants to present themselves more aligned with their desired self-image, potentially constraining interpretative frameworks. Thus, researchers should ask more attentive and expansive questions about participants' environments and experiences relevant to the research. The ability of researchers to establish relationships in an online environment will include creating a feeling of closeness with participants, by showing understanding, sensitivity and empathic listening, so that the absence of physical presence does not disrupt the building of togetherness (Hanna & Mwale, 2017).

2) Informed Consent and Right to Withdraw

The procedures for obtaining informed consent in online interviews are similar to those used in traditional in-person settings. Typically, researchers email participants a consent form, which includes details outlined in the Participant Information Leaflet (PIL) and contact information of the research team (Hewson, 2016; Lobe et al., 2020). Participants are asked to review and electronically sign the form to indicate their consent. Importantly, the consent form must clearly state that participants have the right to withdraw from the study at any time during data collection. In online interviews and focus groups, withdrawal is straightforward and voluntary, simply requiring participants to disconnect from the session (Hewson 2016; Lobe et al., 2020). In this study, participants received the Participant Information Leaflet (PIL) and the consent form via email. They were instructed to carefully review these documents and were provided with contact details of the researcher in case they had any questions or needed further clarification. Following Trinity College Dublin (TCD) regulations, a seven-day interval was observed between participants receiving the signed consent form and the scheduled interview. This period allowed participants adequate time to consider or reconsider their participation. On the day of the interview, consent was reaffirmed with participants. They were reminded of their right to withdraw from this study without needing to provide a reason. These steps ensured that participants were well-informed and had ample opportunity to make informed decisions regarding their involvement in the research.

3) Technological Issues and Data quality

When conducting online remote interviews, it is essential to consider the potential technical challenges that can compromise data quality. These challenges include sound and video quality issues, accessibility of webcams and audio equipment, audio/video transmission delays, software compatibility problems, and the risk of data loss due to technological malfunctions and connectivity issues (Chiumento et al., 2018). Participants often encounter significant obstacles during online interviews, including setup difficulties, connection stability and call reliability. Inadequate home or office setups can exacerbate these challenges, resulting in disruptions from insufficient internet bandwidth, outdated hardware, limited webcam and microphone capabilities and low device battery life, leading to dropped calls, connectivity losses, and audio/video lags (Archibald et al., 2019).

Such technical difficulties are more commonly experienced by participants than researchers, highlighting disparities in access to reliable high-speed internet and familiarity with videoconferencing platforms. Although the overall online experience is generally regarded as satisfactory due to its convenience and interactive features, to mitigate issues related to technical difficulties, researchers should help participants become familiar with the technology by providing clear instructions or practice sessions prior to interviews (Archibald et al., 2019). In this study, the researcher promptly addressed any lags or audio issues, offered assistance when needed, and extended interview times to accommodate technical disruptions. During debriefing, participants expressed satisfaction with the process, underscoring the importance of proactive support in ensuring a smooth interview experience.

4) Privacy, Anonymity, Confidentiality

The advent of digital technologies has challenged long-standing beliefs about privacy, influencing political, economic, and academic discussions (Matzner & Ochs, 2019). In online research, absolute confidentiality is unattainable due to the inherent nature of computer networks beyond the researcher's control. To ensure confidentiality, it is essential to implement robust data collection and storage practices, such as using encrypted servers and password-protected files.

Managing both physical and virtual environments is crucial for maintaining privacy in online research. Since no platform guarantees complete security, participants must be thoroughly informed to make decisions about using the technology. Researchers should understand the platform's settings and prevent unauthorised access by sharing session links on an invitation-only basis. This approach mitigates risks like “Zoom bombing” and safeguards participants’ privacy (Lobe et al., 2020). When conducting interviews, researchers should protect participants' privacy by ensuring confidentiality in their chosen settings. For audio-only interviews, using headphones can prevent eavesdropping, while video interviews should take place in secure locations where screens are not visible to others. Participants should also be advised to choose private spaces to avoid observation or overhearing. However, researchers have limited control over participants' locations (British Psychological Society, 2021) and may only partially access their environments, which could lead to interruptions and affect non-verbal cue interpretation (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014). This is especially important when discussing sensitive topics, as the presence of others may influence disclosure (Engward et al., 2022).

The concept of anonymity in qualitative online research is complex, as achieving complete anonymity is often considered unachievable; typically, at least one individual—the primary researcher—is aware of participants' identities (Van den Hoonaard, 2003). Consequently, safeguarding anonymity becomes a responsibility that extends not only to the researcher but also to everyone engaged in the research process (Saunders et al., 2015). Anonymisation is a continuum, requiring researchers to balance identity protection with data integrity (Scott, 2005). In this study, participant identities were known only to the primary researcher, who used pseudonyms and ensured the deletion of video and audio recordings after transcription. Steps were taken to prevent identifying details from appearing in reports and publications. Privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality concerns were thoroughly addressed through a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA), which was reviewed and approved by the Data Protection Officer (DPO) at Trinity College Dublin.

5) Use of Incentives

As previously discussed in relation to survey research, studies have consistently shown that the use of incentives can enhance response rates in online studies without

compromising the quality of the data and even encouraging participation from underrepresented groups (Singer & Ye, 2013). Providing incentives as compensation for participants' time and involvement is considered an ethical practice, especially for socially and economically vulnerable participants, as it recognises their efforts and provides them with an economic reward. However, it is crucial to ensure that incentives do not compromise the voluntariness of participants' consent. Researchers must avoid any form of coercion or undue influence to persuade participants into participating in the research. To avoid this, the compensation provided should be reasonable and commensurate with the level of effort and time participants contribute to the research (Rodriguez et al., 2003). In this study, online vouchers served as incentives to encourage participation and recognise participants' contributions, enhancing their engagement and valuing the time and effort they invested in participating.

In summary, adhering to best practices is crucial for ensuring ethical standards of online research. Researchers must prioritise participant protection, promote their well-being, and safeguard their rights. Table 3.2 provides an overview of the procedures implemented in this study to uphold ethical standards for both the survey and interviews.

Table 3.2 – Strategies Implemented to Address Ethical Challenges of Online Research

	Survey	Interviews
1) Informed Consent & Right to Withdraw	Informed consent sheet: Provided at the beginning of the survey, outlining details of participation. Right to withdraw: Participants may leave the survey at any time, having their data being permanently deleted.	Informed consent: Participants received detailed information about their involvement in the study. Reflection period: A 7-day interval was provided between obtaining consent and conducting interviews, allowing participants time to consider their participation. Consent reaffirmation: On the day of the interview, participants were asked to confirm their consent and were reminded of their right to withdraw.

2) Technological Issues & Data Quality	Recruitment through survey distribution company: Engagement of specialised company for participant recruitment. Personalised one-time links: Provided individualised, single-use links to ensure secure and unique access. Insertion of attention checks: Included attention checks within the survey to screen out inattentive responses.	Additional time for instruction: Allocated extra time to guide participants on using the online settings. Testing on Microsoft Teams: Conducted multiple trials on the selected platform to ensure functionality and resolve any potential issues.
3) Privacy, Anonymity, Confidentiality	Anonymised data: Ensured that all data was anonymised to protect participant identities. Deletion of links: Removed any connections between participants' data and their IDs to further safeguard anonymity.	Pseudonymisation: Implemented a meticulous process of pseudonymisation to protect participants' identities while maintaining the value and trustworthiness of the collected data. Data Deletion: Video recordings and audio files were promptly deleted after the transcription process was completed.
4) Use of Incentives	Compensation: Provided through the survey distribution company to ensure fairness and transparency.	Compensation: Online vouchers of a reasonable amount were distributed to participants.

3.5 Acknowledging Positionality in Research on Hate

In qualitative research, the researcher is not a neutral observer but an active participant whose background, beliefs, and experiences shape the study (Creswell, 2013; Berger, 2015; Holmes, 2020). Acknowledging my positionality—my social, cultural, and professional background—was crucial in understanding how it influenced my research approach, interactions with participants, and data interpretation. As a White Western

researcher, I acknowledge that my social and cultural background inevitably shapes how I approach the study of hate in society, recognising that my lived experiences differ from those of individuals and communities most directly affected by hate. This awareness necessitates ongoing critical reflexivity to ensure that my research remains ethical and inclusive, limiting bias (Finlay, 2002; Bourke, 2014). To uphold these principles, I implemented several key strategies:

a) Reflexivity and Self-Interrogation

Reflexivity is essential in qualitative research, as it requires ongoing self-awareness and critical engagement with one's own role in the research process (Dodgson, 2019). Throughout this research, I maintained a reflexive journal to critically examine my assumptions, biases, and positionality. By actively engaging with my preconceptions, I sought to ensure that my perspectives did not distort participants' narratives or lead to interpretive bias.

b) Centring the Voices of Participants

In the process of drawing conclusions, especially from qualitative data, my approach was to let participants' voices take centre stage (Tracy, 2010). Rather than imposing my own interpretations too early, I prioritised direct quotations and rich, descriptive narratives so that participants could tell the story they wanted to tell. This approach ensured that participants' words were presented authentically, rather than being filtered or overly mediated by my analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Themes emerged inductively from participants' insights rather than being imposed by pre-existing theoretical frameworks.

c) Collaborative and Ethical Research Practices

Recognising the limitations of my own standpoint, I actively engaged with scholars, activists, and community members with diverse perspectives (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Milner, 2007). This collaborative approach helped to challenge any unconscious biases and provided a more comprehensive and responsible analysis of the issue. Notably, engaging with the Glencree Centre for Peace & Reconciliation and actively participating in several groups and initiatives countering hate in Europe has been instrumental in this process. These engagements not only enriched my understanding of the issue from multiple

perspectives but also reinforced my commitment to conducting research that is both ethically grounded and socially impactful (Mertens, 2012).

d) Integrating Multiple Perspectives in Mixed-Methods

By employing integration through Joint Displays, I systematically compared and integrated multiple forms of evidence to enhance the depth and validity of my analysis (Guetterman et al., 2015). This methodological approach ensured that no single perspective—particularly one influenced by my own positionality—dominated the interpretation. By incorporating diverse data sources, including qualitative narratives and quantitative insights, I was able to cross-validate findings and strengthen the reliability of the research (Fetters et al., 2013). This integration of multiple perspectives not only reinforced the robustness of the study but also allowed for a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the complex social issue under investigation.

Conducting entirely unbiased research is inherently complex, as all researchers operate within distinct social, cultural, and ideological frameworks that influence their perspectives. However, acknowledging these limitations enhances the transparency, accountability, and ethical integrity of the research process. By engaging in continuous reflexivity and critically assessing the influence of positionality, scholars can contribute to a more rigorous and ethically responsible academic discourse. This is especially crucial in research on hate, where critically reflecting on positionality helps ensure fairness and to inclusivity, fostering more meaningful and socially responsible research.

3.6 Summary

This chapter details the study's methodology. It begins by outlining the theoretical foundations in Section 3.1, where the characteristics of research paradigms—such as ontology, axiology, epistemology, and rhetoric—are discussed. Within this framework, pragmatism emerges as the guiding epistemological approach, shaping the methodological choices made throughout the study. Section 3.2 delves into the rationale for adopting a mixed-methods design, highlighting its distinct advantages for examining complex and sensitive subjects like hate, betrayal and their mitigation. The complexity of these topics requires an approach that combines both qualitative and quantitative methods, enabling researchers to address the limitations inherent in relying on a single

method alone. In Section 3.3, the chapter explores the development and application of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies in this research. Techniques such as vignettes, thematic analysis, and template analysis are discussed, with a focus on how each method is tailored to address the study's research questions. Recognising the critical role of ethics, Section 3.4 addresses the challenges posed by online research. It explores ethical issues related to conducting surveys and interviews in virtual settings, outlining the strategies implemented to navigate these complexities while maintaining rigorous ethical standards.

Overall, this chapter offers a cohesive overview of the study's methodology, laying the groundwork for the detailed discussion of methods in Chapter IV.

Chapter IV – Methods

This chapter details the research methods employed in this study. This mixed-method study includes a quantitative phase, where narratives on hate and betrayal were collected from the general population via an online survey (Phase I, Section 4.1), followed by a qualitative phase, involving an in-depth examination of the research topics through semi-structured interviews (Phase II, Section 4.2). Qualitative and quantitative data were then merged using side-by-side Joint Displays (Guetterman et al., 2015), which are visual representations aligning qualitative and quantitative data to facilitate their comparison and integration. The integration of these methods enabled the derivation of the study's integrated findings, allowing for a thorough and multifaceted exploration of the subject matter (Phase III, Section 4.3). The chapter concludes with a summary (Section 4.4).

4.1 Phase I: Survey

4.1.1 Participants, Sampling and Recruitment

A total of 1400 participants were recruited to participate in the anonymous online survey. To ensure to target the general population, a survey distribution company (SurveySwap) was appointed. The survey was distributed in the United States, Canada, the Republic of Ireland, and the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, aiming to target English-speaking populations. The inclusion criteria required participants to be aged 18 and above and willing to share their thoughts and/or experiences on the themes of betrayal, hate and reconciliation.

The required sample size was determined at a 95% Confidence Interval (CI), i.e. a range of values including a population value within a degree of confidence, and a 3% Margin of Error, a statistic indicating the percentage by which the findings may deviate from the actual population value. In this case, a 95% confidence interval with a 3% margin of error means that the statistic will be within 3 percentage points of the real population value 95% of the time.

An attention check was placed in the middle of the survey. The use of attention checks has been shown to help in filtering out inattentive respondents, thereby enhancing the reliability of the collected data. Moreover, attention checks are particularly effective in

online surveys, where the risk of inattentive responses is higher due to the remote nature of participation (Abbey & Meloy, 2017; Muszyński, 2023). As a result, 21 participants were excluded from the analysis for failing the attention check, resulting in a final sample of 1379 respondents.

Demographics: Respondents provided information about the following personal characteristics: Age Group (18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55+), Gender (Female, Male, Non-binary, Other, Prefer not to say), Education (No formal education, High School, Professional/Vocational Training, Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, Doctoral Degree, Other, Prefer not to say) and Country of Residence (selected from a comprehensive list provided by Qualtrics, including 194 countries).

Compensation and Correspondence: Participants received monetary compensation through the company SurveySwap, in accordance with the company's regulations. Respondents earned credits for completing the survey, which could be used to purchase other services on the platform or be redeemed at any time. No further correspondence was scheduled with participants.

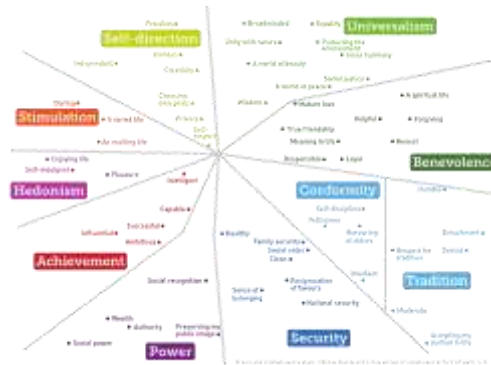
4.1.2 Survey Protocol

After obtaining informed consent, participants were asked to provide basic demographic information, including gender, age group, country of residence, and educational background. They were then shown a figure illustrating the ten basic Schwartz Values (Schwartz, 2012) alongside with their respective definitions, and were asked to rate the importance of each value to them using a 5-point Likert scale. Following this, each participant was shown four vignettes selected from a total set of sixteen betrayal vignettes: eight interpersonal betrayal vignettes (comprising four by omission and four by commission) and eight institutional betrayal vignettes (also comprising four by omission and four by commission). Participants were presented with one vignette from each category (1 interpersonal betrayal by commission, 1 by omission, 1 institutional betrayal by commission, and 1 by omission). This method was employed to prevent repetition and overlap between vignettes, thereby reducing the likelihood of automatic responses due to familiarity. The order of vignette presentation was systematically randomised. Figure 4.1 presents an overview of the survey flow.

Figure 4.1 – Overview of the Survey Flow

1) Ten Basic Schwartz Values (Schwartz,2012)

a) Based on the image and the definition presented below, rate the importance attributed to each of the ten basic Schwartz's values, defined as what motivates our beliefs and behaviours in life (5-point Likert Scale).



The figure is retrieved from Potts, D. (2015). The Schwartz theory of basic values and some implications for political philosophy. Policy of truth.



2) Interpersonal and Institutional Betrayal Vignettes

(1 Interpersonal by Commission / 1 by Omission) + (1 Institutional by Commission , 1 by Omission)



- Please rate the intensity of the emotions you might experience (10-point Likert Scale): Fear; Anger; Sadness; Disgust; Self-doubt; Abandonment; Betrayal; Hate; Desire for revenge; Anxiety; Others: please specify (text box).
- How would you rate the extent of the harm? (10-point Likert scale)
- What is most hurtful in this vignette? (Open-ended question)
- Imagine these possible continuations of the vignette and indicate how each of these would make you feel (7-point Likert Scale, from "Extremely Worse" to "Extremely Better"): Apology; Restitution; Restoration; Compensation; Punishment.



3) Wrap-up Questions

- Plausibility** - Could you imagine the situations described in real life? (5-point Likert Scale)
- Trust in Close Ones** - How much do you usually trust your close ones? (10-point Likert Scale)
- Trust in Institutions**- How much do you usually trust the institutions? (10-point Likert Scale)

Participants were asked to evaluate the vignettes as though they were personally experiencing the events described. For each vignette, participants self-reported the intensity of emotions they would feel—such as fear, anger, sadness, disgust, abandonment, self-doubt, betrayal, hatred, desire for revenge, anxiety, and others—using a 10-point Likert scale. Subsequently, they were asked to rate the extent of the harm on a 10-point Likert scale, then describe in brief what they found most hurtful in the vignette through an open-ended question, and finally evaluate how different resolution strategies (apology, restitution, restoration, compensation, punishment, retribution) would make them feel using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from “Extremely Worse” to “Extremely Better”.

Mitigation strategies, though tailored to each specific vignette, followed a consistent pattern across all betrayal scenarios. This approach ensured consistency throughout the survey and facilitated a cohesive analysis of responses. At the end of the survey, participants were asked three final questions designed to evaluate the plausibility of the vignettes, as well as their overall level of trust in loved ones and institutions, providing important insights for interpreting the results. Participants were subsequently directed to a page inviting them to provide their contact details (email) if interested in participating in an online interview for a deeper exploration of the survey's topics (Phase II) (refer to Appendix E for the Interview Invitation). Finally, participants were thanked for their contribution.

4.1.3 Informed Consent

Before beginning the survey, participants were presented with a consent form on an introductory page that offered detailed information about the survey's content and structure. This included the estimated time required for completion, the funding organisation, and confirmation of ethical approval (see Appendix B, p.1, for the Survey Consent Form). Participants were informed that the survey is part of a PhD research project and were assured that their responses would remain anonymous. Participants were explicitly notified that by proceeding with the survey and submitting their responses, they would be considered to have fully read and understood the provided information and to have formally consented to participate in the survey. The survey was carefully

designed to ensure that participants retained the right to decline to answer any specific questions if they chose, and to withdraw from the study at any point simply by exiting the survey, thereby ensuring the permanent deletion of their data.

4.1.4 Structure and Development of Survey Vignettes

Sixteen vignettes were developed, drawing upon real-world examples of interpersonal and institutional betrayal. Specifically, eight vignettes depicted episodes of interpersonal betrayal, intended as “the sense of being harmed by the deliberate actions or omissions of an individual who was presumed to be a trusted and loyal friend, relative, partner, colleague, or companion” (Rachman, 2010). The subsequent eight vignettes illustrated institutional betrayal, defined as “wrongdoings committed by an institution against individuals dependent on that institution, including the failure to prevent or adequately respond to wrongdoings (e.g., sexual assault) perpetrated within the institution” (Smith & Freyd, 2014). Within these two categories, each set of vignettes was further divided into four vignettes depicting betrayal by commission, where the betrayal is actively inflicted by the perpetrator, and four depicting betrayal by omission, where the betrayal arises from the neglect of protective or responsive actions (Smith & Freyd, 2014). A detailed overview of the vignettes and their content is provided in Table 4.1.

Interpersonal betrayal was explored across four key relational contexts: romantic partners, family members, friends, and colleagues. These relationships were selected for their central significance in individuals' lives, each characterised by varying levels of trust, intimacy, and emotional investment. Romantic partners were included due to the deep emotional bonds and high expectations of loyalty inherent in such relationships (Charny & Parnass, 1995). Family relationships, rooted in deep emotional ties, can result in profound psychological harm when betrayal occurs (Freyd, 1996). Friendships, which are built on a history of positive interactions and shared experiences, also carry significant emotional and social repercussions when trust is breached (Jones et al., 1997). Finally, betrayal within professional settings, such as in relationships with trusted colleagues, can disrupt workplace trust, severely impacting personal well-being and professional dynamics (Elangovan & Shapiro, 1998). By investigating betrayal in diverse relational

contexts, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of its psychological impact.

In selecting the perpetrators of institutional betrayal, government, healthcare, and workplace institutions were chosen for both their significant influence on individuals' lives as well as their critical roles in upholding societal norms and maintaining public trust. Governments, as powerful entities responsible for creating and enforcing laws, can engage in institutional betrayal through policies or practices that erode public trust and fail to protect citizens' rights (Smith & Freyd, 2014). Similarly, healthcare institutions, which hold a position of trust and responsibility, may betray this trust by failing to provide adequate care, mishandling patient data, or prioritising profit over patient welfare (Smith, 2017; Brewer, 2021). Workplaces, central to individuals' daily lives, can commit institutional betrayal by perpetrating and/or neglecting issues such as discrimination, harassment, or unsafe working conditions, thereby violating the trust that employees place in their employers (Smidt et al., 2023). These institutions were chosen as they represent critical areas where institutional betrayal can manifest, profoundly affecting individuals' well-being as well as societal cohesion.

Mitigation strategies, while tailored to each specific vignette to ensure realism and plausibility, were developed in accordance with the principles of both restorative and retributive justice. Restorative strategies focus on repairing harm through reconciliation, healing, and restoring relationships between victim and perpetrator, emphasising dialogue and mutual understanding to rebuild trust (Braithwaite, 2002; Menkel-Meadow, 2007). In contrast, retributive strategies centre on punishment and deterrence, guided by the principle of “just deserts”, ensuring that penalties match the severity of the offense (Wenzel & Okimoto, 2016; Carlsmith & Darley, 2008). While restorative approaches prioritise healing, retributive strategies aim to enforce accountability and prevent future misconduct.

Survey participants were presented with six reparation strategies as potential resolution options:

- a) **Apology:** This study conceptualises an apology as an expression of regret that seeks to address the harm caused. Apologies can be public, private, or sometimes

Table 4.1 – Survey Vignettes Content: Interpersonal and Institutional Betrayal by Commission and by Omission

Interpersonal Betrayal		Institutional Betrayal	
By Commission	By Omission	By Commission	By Omission
Double Surprise (Romantic Partner): You organise an anniversary surprise party for your partner, inviting colleagues and common friends. Your partner cancels last-minute, claiming work obligations.		Falsely Accused (Government): A government office worker, falsely accused of leaking confidential information, attempted suicide and survived, but has been unable to return to work since. Later, an investigation uncovered evidence proving the office worker's innocence.	
You later discover that your partner was celebrating elsewhere, leaving you to handle the guests alone.	You later discover that your partner forgot about the anniversary.	The Government threatened the officer not to divulge the findings and put a gag order on the investigation.	The Government promised to make the findings public and restore the officer's reputation, but never did.
The Lost Flat (Family): You need to secure a new flat but cannot afford the deposit, so you ask your parents for a loan. They agree and instruct your siblings to transfer the money. However, the transfer is not completed, leading to the loss of the flat.		Fatal Negligence (Healthcare): A mother and baby died in a hospital under mysterious circumstances. The hospital claims to have conducted an investigation showing they were not at fault. However, when the baby's parent sought clarification, the hospital refused to respond to inquiries or return calls.	
Later, you discover that your siblings took the money for their own use instead of transferring it.	Later, you discover that your siblings forgot to complete the transfer.	The parent initiates court proceedings, which uncover the hospital's negligence and expose the lies in the testimonies of doctors and nurses.	The parent initiates court proceedings, revealing that the investigation was poorly conducted, and doctors and nurses claimed to have no recollection of the events.
Sold-Out Friendship (Friend): Your friend promises to buy tickets for both of you to see your favourite band, which is finally performing in town, with the understanding that you'll reimburse them after your payday.		Twice Harassed (Workplace): A colleague confides in you about being sexually harassed by the manager. You help them report the issue to HR, who promises to investigate. However, weeks later, you notice the manager still faces no consequences.	
As the event approaches, your friend admits they forgot to buy your ticket. Later, you find out they lied and went to the concert with someone else.	As the event approaches, your friend admits they forgot to buy your ticket.	When you ask HR for an explanation, they accuse you and your colleague of causing discord within the team and threaten you to stop making negative insinuations about the manager.	When you ask HR for an explanation, both you and your colleague receive vague and misleading answers.
The Missed Promotion (Colleague): You share an idea with a trusted colleague that you believe could lead to a promotion at your company, and ask them to help arrange a meeting with their manager. However, days go by without any updates.		Broken Election Promises (Government): After the war, a new government promised to distribute international aid to victims. However, after winning the election, victims who submitted applications were denied their requests and received no financial assistance.	
You later discover that your colleague presented your idea to the manager as their own and obtained a promotion because of it.	You later discover that your colleague never tried to contact the manager for you as promised, and you lose the opportunity of being promoted.	The government dismantled the commission responsible for distributing international aid, and the funds intended for victims were redirected to increase the salaries of government officials.	No meetings were scheduled for the aid distribution commission, and there is no clarity on how the funds have been allocated.

encompass both contexts. The effectiveness of apologies lies in their ability to convey genuine remorse and facilitate reconciliation, thereby restoring trust and social harmony (Petrucci, 2002; Kiefer et al., 2020; Witvliet et al., 2020).

- b) **Restitution:** Restitution aims to restore the victim pre-harm status as much as possible, by addressing the impact and consequences of the wrongdoing. This process can involve returning stolen or damaged property, reimbursing financial losses and expenses incurred as a result of the harm, such as medical bills or therapy costs, and reinstating rights that were violated. Additionally, restitution may extend to providing broader support, for instance assisting victims in securing new employment opportunities if their ability to work was compromised (Cares et al., 2015; Witvliet et al., 2008). This approach ensures that victims are not only compensated for their immediate losses but are also supported in their recovery.
- c) **Restoration:** Restoration involves the combination of an apology and restitution with a formal acknowledgment of responsibility for the harm caused. In this study, reparation is conceptualised not merely as the transfer of resources from the injurer to the victim but as a process that must also include the injurer's acknowledgment of the wrongfulness of their actions (Boxill, 1972; Quinn, 2003).
- d) **Compensation:** Unlike restitution, which aims to re-establish the victim's pre-harm status, compensation seeks to provide a remedy proportional to the damage incurred. It typically involves offering something of equivalent value, often as monetary payments (Boxill, 1972; Nickel, 1976).
- e) **Punishment:** In alignment with the principle of "just deserts", punishment entails that those who violate rules or laws deserve consequences, with the severity of the punishment matching the seriousness of the offense (Wenzel et al., 2008; Carlsmith, 2006). Importantly, in this study, punishment is administered by other characters in the vignettes rather than by the victim. This approach maintains a clear distinction between punishment and retaliation, ensuring consistency across various mitigation strategies.
- f) **Retribution:** Retribution combines elements of restitution and punishment, following the principles of retributive justice (Carlsmith & Darley, 2008). This approach involves punishing the offender based on the wrongdoing's severity while also ensuring they compensate the victim in proportion to the harm suffered.

4.1.5 Vignettes Validation through Template Analysis

In vignette research, it is crucial to ensure that scenarios accurately reflect real-life situations to achieve ecological validity, thereby enhancing the generalisability of findings to real-world contexts. This process involves verifying that the vignettes genuinely represent the constructs under investigation (Murphy et al., 2024).

Given the novel approach of the vignettes, it was crucial to establish a method for assessing whether participants' perceptions of the betrayal vignettes aligned with the intended emotional and psychological constructs. In this study, the validation of the vignettes was conducted by analysing participants' responses to an open-ended question included in the online survey, which asked them to describe the most hurtful aspect of each of the sixteen betrayal vignettes (i.e., "What's most hurtful in this scenario?"). This approach allowed for the assessment of whether the vignettes effectively captured the intended emotional and psychological constructs related to betrayal, ensuring their alignment with the study's objectives.

The responses were analysed using Template Analysis, a type of thematic analysis that involves developing a coding template from a subset of data, which is then iteratively applied, refined, and revised (Brooks et al., 2015; King, 2012). Template Analysis was chosen for its ability to balance the identification of predefined themes with the exploration of whether participants' subjective experiences corresponded with the intended constructs.

Through the analysis of participants' responses, Template Analysis effectively identified recurring themes central to the experience of betrayal, such as feelings of trust violation, neglect and abandonment, and dishonesty. The analysis also confirmed that participants clearly distinguished between interpersonal and institutional betrayal, as well as between acts of omission and commission in these contexts (see Section 5.2.2, Chapter V for a description of findings from Template Analysis). For the detailed results of Template Analysis for each betrayal vignette, refer to Appendices C (interpersonal betrayal) and D (institutional betrayal). The results supports the conclusion that the vignettes were effective instruments for investigating the complex emotional and psychological

dimensions of various kind of betrayals, thereby enhancing the overall reliability and validity of the research findings.

4.1.6 Survey Pilot

In the initial phase of this study, a survey pilot was conducted to assess the feasibility and effectiveness of the research instrument. The survey pilot was circulated among the members of the NETHATE Consortium. Its primary objectives were to verify that the vignettes exhibited a satisfactory level of plausibility, and to evaluate the clarity of the survey questions, the comprehensibility of the response options, and the overall flow of the questionnaire.

The pilot was conducted from April 5th to April 22nd, 2022. Of the 32 individuals invited to participate, 11 completed the survey pilot. Results showed that the average completion time for the survey was 27 minutes, with a range from a minimum of 19 minutes to a maximum of 33 minutes. Participants rated their overall experience with an average of 4.22 out of 5, indicating a strong positive response. The level of enjoyment received a rating of 3.20 out of 5, reflecting moderate satisfaction. The plausibility of the scenarios was rated at 3.20 on a scale of 1 to 4, suggesting that participants generally found the scenarios to be realistic.

Qualitative feedback was gathered through open-ended questions to identify any ambiguities or areas for improvement. Participants highlighted several positive aspects of the survey, including the diverse range of vignettes featuring both interpersonal and institutional actors, such as partners, family members, government entities, and companies. The variety of emotions elicited and the different resolution strategies were also appreciated. Moreover, the visually appealing layout, particularly the use of icons, the engaging process of imagining the vignettes, and the overall realism and plausibility of the scenarios were well-received by participants. Nonetheless, they suggested several areas for improvement, including the need to shorten the survey by reducing the number of vignettes presented. As a result, a decision was made to display only one vignettes per category instead of the full set, and the text was condensed to improve conciseness.

Additionally, the reparation options were refined and the content was simplified to improve overall coherence.

Based on the feedback received, adjustments were made to improve the quality of data collection for the subsequent phases of the research. These insights were instrumental in refining the survey instrument for the main study, enhancing its validity and reliability.

4.1.7 Hypotheses and Exploratory Aims of The Survey

This section will outline the relevant hypotheses and exploratory aims to be tested through the survey, alongside with their corresponding rationales. Based on a comprehensive analysis of the literature (see Chapter II), the following five hypotheses have emerged:

Hypothesis 1: Betrayal by commission is perceived to lead to a higher extent of the harm than betrayal by omission.

Research in moral judgment and decision-making supports the assumption that betrayal by commission is perceived as more harmful than betrayal by omission. The action principle posits that harm caused by action is judged to be more accountable than harm resulting from inaction (Cushman et al., 2006). Furthermore, the phenomenon known as “omission bias” suggests that harm inflicted through an act of commission, such as active betrayal, is perceived as more morally wrong than harm resulting from the omission of a necessary or supportive action, such as betrayal by omission, even when the outcomes are identical (Baron & Ritov, 2004). Therefore, it is hypothesised that harm resulting from betrayal by commission will be evaluated as more severe than harm resulting from betrayal by omission.

Hypothesis 2: Betrayal by commission is perceived to lead to higher levels of hatred and betrayal than betrayal by omission.

Research has shown that harm caused by commission, involving deliberate and intentional wrongdoing, is typically perceived as more severe and elicits stronger emotional responses than unintentional harm. This heightened moral outrage is due to the direct and deliberate nature of the act, compared to harm by omission, which is often seen as less intentional (Cushman et al., 2006). Building on this argument, and consistent with research indicating

that individuals tend to attribute greater blame and stronger negative emotional responses to actions rather than inactions (Spranca et al., 1991), it is hypothesised that betrayal by commission will elicit heightened feelings of hate and betrayal compared to betrayal by omission.

Hypothesis 3: Higher levels of hatred resulting from betrayal are associated with higher perceived effectiveness of retributive strategies.

Several studies have identified a type of hate known as “retributive hate” (Brudholm, 2010; Gee, 2014; Murphy, 1988) which emerges as a response to perceived wrongdoing or injustice and drives a desire for retribution. Unlike other forms of hate, such as simple or prejudicial hatred, malice, or spite, retributive hate is a moral response to serious breaches of normative expectations, and is directed towards individuals perceived as deserving punishment for their actions or moral culpability. Consequently, it is hypothesised that individuals experiencing intense hatred following betrayal would be more likely to endorse retributive strategies aimed at punishing the offender rather than restorative approaches focused on reconciliation and reparation.

Hypothesis 4: Retributive strategies are expected to be evaluated as more effective than restorative strategies in instances of betrayal by commission. Conversely, in instances of betrayal by omission, restorative strategies are anticipated to be evaluated as more effective than retributive strategies.

The different evaluations of betrayal by commission and omission, shaped by the severity of moral judgment and related emotional responses, suggest that these types of betrayal may have distinct impacts on the effectiveness of restorative versus retributive strategies. As previously discussed, harm resulting from betrayal by commission is often judged more harshly than harm resulting from betrayal by omission (Hypothesis 1), potentially leading to more intense feelings of hate and betrayal (Hypothesis 2). Since hatred, as a retributive attitude, is anticipated to motivate retributive efforts (Hypothesis 3), it is hypothesised that retributive strategies will be evaluated as more effective in cases of betrayal by commission, where the extent of harm and the resulting hatred are anticipated to be more severe. Conversely, in cases of betrayal by omission, where betrayal might be judged

with less severity, restorative strategies are expected to be perceived as more effective than retributive strategies.

Hypothesis 5: Self-enhancement values are expected to show a positive correlation with a retributive orientation, whereas self-transcendence values are anticipated to be positively correlated with a restorative orientation in the context of interpersonal and institutional betrayal.

Schwartz Values, introduced by psychologist Shalom H. Schwartz in 2012, represent universal values that guide human behaviour through motivational goals. Research indicates that these core values significantly influence individuals' evaluations of reparation strategies and justice orientations (Okimoto et al., 2012). The bipolar dimension of self-enhancement versus self-transcendence contrasts values like power and achievement, which focus on personal success, with values like universalism and benevolence, which emphasise concern for others (Schwartz, 2012). Studies suggest that a retributive orientation aligns with self-enhancement values, particularly power, while a restorative orientation is associated with self-transcendence values (Feather, 1996; Okimoto et al., 2012; Wenzel et al., 2008). Based on these findings, it is hypothesised that individuals who prioritise self-enhancement may perceive betrayal as a threat to their personal status, leading them to endorse retributive responses to restore perceived losses. In contrast, those who prioritise self-transcendence might view betrayal through compassion and empathy, focusing on repairing relationships rather than seeking revenge (McKee & Feather, 2008). Therefore, self-enhancement values are expected to correlate positively with a retributive orientation, while self-transcendence values are anticipated to correlate positively with a restorative orientation following betrayal.

Finally, the study includes five exploratory aims designed to enhance our understanding of the primary research questions. These aims focus on examining potential moderating variables, investigating additional factors that may influence the outcomes, and exploring unexpected patterns in the data. Specifically, the following exploratory aims emphasise transitioning from the distinction between commission and omission to the broader differences between interpersonal and institutional betrayal. The study's five exploratory aims are as follows:

Exploratory Aim 1: To investigate the differences in the levels of hate and betrayal following interpersonal and institutional betrayal.

Exploratory Aim 2: To explore the correlations between hate, betrayal, and other emotions following interpersonal and institutional betrayal.

Exploratory Aim 3: To examine the differential effectiveness of restorative versus retributive strategies in interpersonal versus institutional betrayal.

Exploratory Aim 4: To explore the differences in the correlation of hate with punishment and retribution following interpersonal versus institutional betrayal.

Exploratory Aim 5: To investigate the correlation between Schwartz's values and their bipolar dimension self-transcendence vs. self-enhancement with interpersonal and institutional betrayal and hate.

4.2 Phase II - Qualitative Semi-Structured Interviews

4.2.1 Participants, Sampling and Recruitment

Participants (n=20) were recruited from the sample population that completed the online survey, with the objective of generating novel insights and providing a deeper explanation of the initial quantitative findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

The study utilised a stratified purposive sampling strategy to ensure comprehensive representation of all relevant subgroups within the population (Curry & Nunez-Smith, 2014). This approach involved identifying distinct strata based on key characteristics, specifically gender, age, and country of residence. Participants expressing interest in being interviewed were then categorised into these strata and purposively selected to ensure balanced representation of each group.

The sample size was also carefully considered. According to Braun and Clarke (2013), for medium-sized thematic analysis projects, such as professional doctorate theses, the recommended sample size is between 6 to 15 participants. This range is considered adequate to capture a diverse array of perspectives while maintaining the study's manageability. However, in accordance with best practices in qualitative research, the sample size was not set in advance. Instead, it was guided by the concept of data

saturation, where data collection continues until no new themes or insights emerge (Fusch & Ness, 2015). This approach prioritises flexibility and responsiveness to the data over rigid adherence to a fixed number. By adopting this method, the study aimed to minimise potential biases and ensured that the sample size was robust enough to facilitate a comprehensive and rigorous thematic analysis.

Initially, a total of 399 participants expressed interest in being interviewed. Invitations were issued in multiple rounds, with one to five participants from each stratum being contacted via email at a time. A total of 210 participants received an invitation email. Of these, 25 individuals responded and agreed to participate in the interviews. Those who agreed were then provided with a detailed explanation of the study's procedures and asked to review and sign the consent form if they accepted the terms. Ultimately, 20 participants signed the consent form and attended their scheduled interviews, while the remaining five withdrew from the process.

Compensation and Correspondence: Participants received an online voucher as compensation for their time and effort. Vouchers were distributed via the One4All platform for residents of the Republic of Ireland, and through Amazon for participants in the UK and Northern Ireland, U.S., and Canada. The voucher amount was equivalent to €30, converted into the local currency on the day of issuance. At the conclusion of the interview, participants were informed that they could contact the researcher to request a copy of the research report and any outcomes resulting from the study after its publication or dissemination. No further correspondence with participants has been scheduled.

4.2.2 Interview Protocol

Participants who expressed interest in the interviews by providing their contact details at the end of the online survey, and were later selected through stratified sampling, received an email invitation. This email included an overview of the online interview format and a consent form detailing the terms of participation.

Once the signed consent forms were received, participants were offered a range of time and date options to suit their schedules. Interviews were then scheduled at mutually agreed-upon times, taking into account the 7-day interval established between obtaining

consent and conducting the interviews, which provided participants with sufficient time to reflect on their decision to participate. Participants were subsequently provided with a link to access the interview and were encouraged to contact the researcher if they required any additional information.

The online interviews were conducted via Microsoft Teams, the platform selected in accordance with Trinity College Dublin's regulations. The online format was chosen to allow participation from individuals residing in different countries. Although participants from the Republic of Ireland were given the option for in-person interviews, all opted for the online format, highlighting the convenience of this approach.

On the day of the interview, participants were briefed on the interview process, including its relevance to the survey topic, the expected duration of 30 to 60 minutes, and their right to refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time without providing a justification. Participants were then asked to consent to proceed with the interview and to have it recorded, with the understanding that only the audio would be stored for transcription, while the video recording would be destroyed immediately afterwards. Finally, participants were asked to reaffirm their consent before the interview commenced.

At the conclusion of the interview, participants were given the opportunity to debrief with the interviewer, ask questions about the research, and share their thoughts on the interview process. They were also informed of their right to request access to their transcripts and to withdraw from the study at any time prior to the publication of results.

4.2.3 Participant Information Leaflet and Informed Consent

A link to download the Participant Information Leaflet (PIL) for this study was provided on the interview invitation page, following the completion of the survey (refer to Appendix E for the Interview Invitation). The PIL includes comprehensive details about the study's objectives, participation requirements, data processing procedures in compliance with GDPR, participants' rights, funding sources, ethical approval, and contact information of both the researcher and the Data Protection Officer. Additionally, it clearly indicated that the study is part of a PhD (refer to Appendix H for the Interview PIL).

The study's primary aim was described as enhancing our understanding of betrayal and hateful behaviours to advance peacebuilding efforts and the development of effective mitigation strategies. Eligibility was open to individuals aged 18 and above, with the goal of capturing a broad spectrum of perspectives. Participants were informed that they would receive a €30 online voucher as compensation for their participation.

The consent form comprised 19 sections, providing detailed information about the study, data processing, funding sources, potential future use of the data, and contact details of the researcher (refer to Appendix G for the Interview Consent Form).

4.2.4 Interview Schedule

The interview schedule was developed to examine the differences and similarities between interpersonal and institutional betrayal, their potential to incite hate, and the effectiveness of restorative and retributive resolution strategies in mitigating them. Additionally, it explored the specificities of betrayal by omission and commission, offering a thorough investigation of these complex dynamics. A summary of the interview schedule, including brief descriptions and example questions, is presented in Table 4.2.

To familiarise participants with the topic, the interviews began with a brief recap of some of the vignettes presented in the survey, which were introduced as reference points for the discussion. Participants were informed that they could revisit the vignettes at any time, either to take a break from discussing sensitive topics or to clarify concepts. The discussion was initiated by inquiring whether participants believed the vignettes depicted instances of betrayal (Introductory Questions). Following this, the interview structure was organised into six thematic areas. First, Definitions and Characteristics of Betrayal (1) explored the definitions and specificities of betrayal, including the distinctions and similarities between interpersonal and institutional betrayal. Next, Lived Experiences and Betrayal and Mitigation Strategies (2) focused on participants sharing their experiences with interpersonal and institutional betrayal, as well as discussing actual or potential strategies for their mitigation. The third area, Betrayal by Omission and Commission (3), delved into the specificities of betrayal by omission and by commission within both interpersonal and institutional contexts. The fourth thematic area, Relationship with Hatred (4), involved participants conceptualising hate and discussing its connection with betrayal. The fifth

thematic area, Definition of Interpersonal and Institutional Hate (5), explores participants' personal definitions of hate and examines how these definitions differ between interpersonal and institutional contexts. Finally, Reconciliation (6) addresses participants' definitions of reconciliation and the feasibility and desirability of achieving reconciliation when hate arises following betrayal (see Appendix F for the Interview Schedule).

Table 4.2 – Summary of the Interview Schedule

Thematic Area	Objective	Example Questions
Introductory questions	Familiarising participants with the topic of betrayal and explaining the use of vignettes as a method for safely discussing this sensitive subject.	a) Welcome, and thank you for participating in this interview. You were invited based on your participation in a survey where you evaluated instances of harm caused by trusted individuals (Interpersonal) and by institutions (Institutional). Additionally, you assessed various strategies for mitigating such harm. a) Recalling those vignettes, what are your thoughts about them? b) Do you think that betrayal relates to vignettes? If so, how?
1. Definition of betrayal; Differences and similarities between interpersonal and institutional betrayal	Exploring participants' definitions of betrayal and the specificities of interpersonal and institutional betrayal.	a) How would you define betrayal? b) Do you think there is a difference between betrayal committed by a loved one (e.g., [the researcher mentions one of interpersonal betrayal vignette]) and betrayal perpetrated by an institution (e.g., [the researcher mentions one institutional betrayal vignette])?
2. Lived experiences of interpersonal and institutional betrayal and their mitigation	Discussing experiences of interpersonal and institutional betrayal, as well as their mitigation.	a) Can you think about an episode of betrayal that happened to you, somebody you know, or you have heard on the news? b) To mitigate feelings of betrayal and repair the harm, what has or could have been done?
3. Differences between betrayal by omission and	Investigating the specificities of interpersonal and institutional betrayal by	a) Do you think there is a difference between betrayal by omission and betrayal by commission?

betrayal by commission	commission and by omission.	b) How do they differ in the context of interpersonal versus institutional betrayal?
4. The relationship of hatred with betrayal	Examining the relationships between betrayal and hate.	a) Recalling episodes of betrayal previously discussed, do you think hatred relates to them? If so, how?
5. Definition of hate, differences between interpersonal and institutional contexts	Exploring definitions of hate and how they differ in the context of interpersonal and institutional betrayal.	a) How would you define hate? b) Do you believe that hate differs when it stems from interpersonal compared to institutional betrayal?
6. Reconciliation and the impact of hate on reconciliation	Examining definitions of reconciliation and its complexities when hate emerges from betrayal.	a) How would you define reconciliation? b) Do you think that reconciliation can be possible when hate is involved? If so, how?

The interview schedule was generally adhered to, with transitions between thematic areas adjusted as needed to align with the natural flow of the conversation, ensuring a more engaging and meaningful dialogue. Flexibility was maintained to allow participants to explore relevant topics in greater depth, fostering richer insights and a more nuanced understanding of the issues discussed.

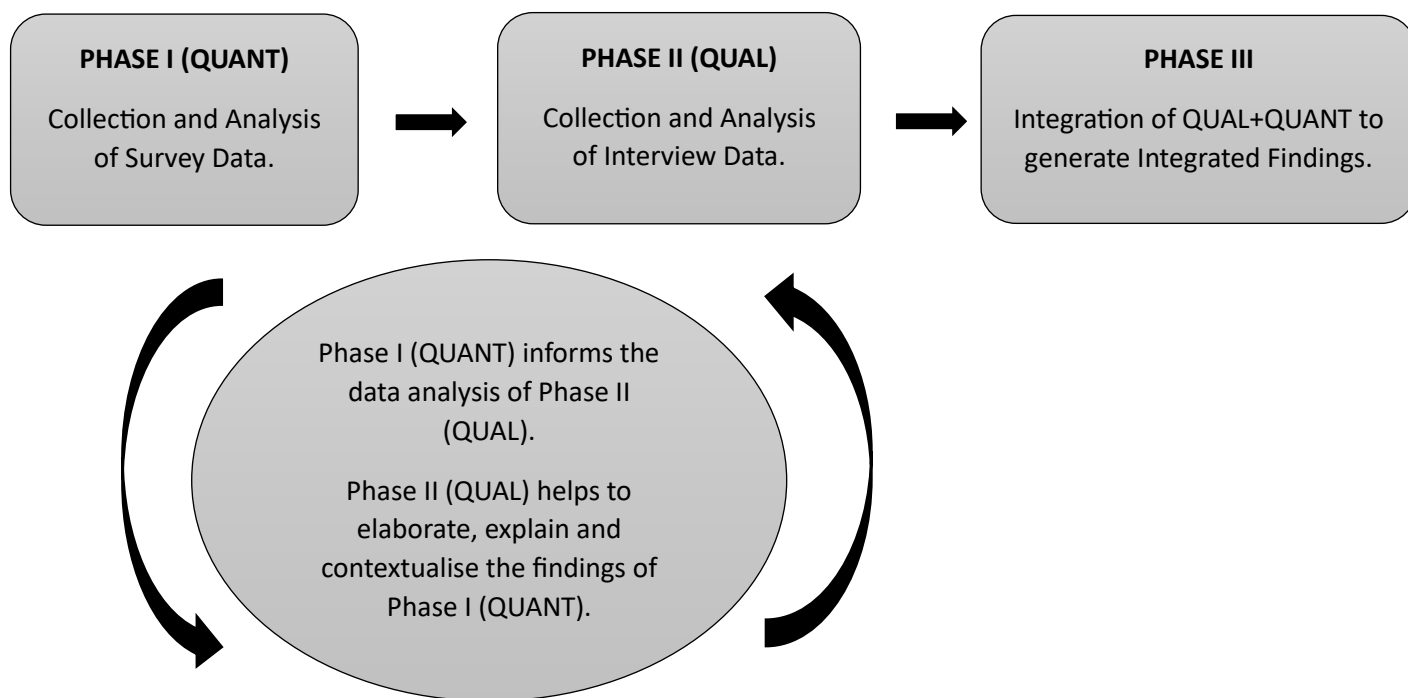
4.3 Phase III – Integration of Findings

Integration involves combining quantitative and qualitative methods, ensuring they complement and inform each other throughout the research process. Integration of the data can occur at various stages, depending on the study design: during the conceptualisation of the study (design level), throughout data collection and analysis (methods level), or after independent analysis of datasets (interpretation and reporting level) (Fetters et al., 2013). The chosen approach for integrating findings in this study is the use of Joint Displays, a visual method (such as a table or figure) that effectively combines qualitative and quantitative results within a single framework (Guetterman et al., 2015; Guetterman et al., 2021). These displays emphasise connections between the two components and include an interpretation—often called integrated findings or meta-inference (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2008)—that captures their combined meaning.

In this study, the quantitative and qualitative findings are presented sequentially in Chapters V and VI, respectively. These findings are subsequently integrated through side-

by-side Joint Displays in Chapter VII. Integration occurred both during data analysis—where insights from the quantitative phase (Phase I) informed the data analysis of the qualitative phase (Phase II)—and during interpretation (Phase III). Figure 4.2 provides an overview of the integration process for this study.

Figure 4.2 – Methods for Integrating Study Findings



These displays integrate quantitative variables and scales with qualitative quotes and themes. By using a side-by-side juxtaposition technique, the findings are visually presented, allowing for clear analysis and effectively highlighting both the similarities and differences across data sources (Fetters & Tajima, 2022). The integration addresses whether the findings converge, diverge, complement each other, or if a finding is present in one dataset but absent in the other, referred to as “silence” (Fetters et al., 2013; O’Cathain et al., 2010). Silence may emerge due to the differing strengths of various methods in analysing certain aspects of the phenomenon. Moreover, unexpected silences can prompt further investigation or enhance the understanding of the phenomena.

In this study, the quantitative data offered initial insights into the phenomena, while the qualitative data shed light on participants' personal experiences. The survey offered a structured and objective framework for exploring the topic, whereas the interviews allowed participants to share their personal stories, adding depth and nuance to the

findings. This integration is crucial given the complexity of the subject matter, resulting in a more comprehensive understanding of the topic.

4.4 Summary

This chapter outlined the study's methodology, which employs a mixed-methods design comprising three phases: quantitative (Phase I), qualitative (Phase II), and integration (Phase III). This approach was selected to address the complex nature of the research subject. Integrating quantitative and qualitative data is essential for capturing the nuances of complex and multifaceted topics like hate and betrayal. Quantitative methods provide a systematic overview of patterns and trends, while qualitative methods explore the nuances of individual experiences, offering rich insights for a comprehensive analysis. By combining through visual tools like Joint Displays (Guetterman et al., 2015), the study aims to present the findings clearly and accessibly, which is crucial given the topic's complexity. The following chapters will present findings from the quantitative phase (Chapter V) and the qualitative phase (Chapter VI) before integrating them in Chapter VII.

Chapter V – Survey Findings

This chapter provides a detailed analysis of the quantitative research findings from Phase I of this study, conducted through an online survey. It is organised as follows: Section 5.1 introduces the demographic characteristics of the participants, offering a comprehensive overview of their profiles. Section 5.2 discusses the preliminary data analyses, including normality assessment, evaluation of the vignettes for plausibility and ecological validity, and an overview of general trust levels in individuals versus institutions. Section 5.3 tests the study's hypotheses, while Section 5.4 addresses the exploratory aims, offering an in-depth analysis of the results. Finally, Section 5.5 summarises the chapter, highlighting key insights and conclusions.

5.1 Participants' Demographics

A total of 1400 participants initially took part in the online survey. Following the exclusion of 21 participants who failed the attention check, the final sample comprised 1379 participants. Table 5.1 provides a summary of the demographic characteristics of the survey respondents.

Table 5.1 – Demographics of Survey Participants

Gender		
	N	%
Male	593	43.6
Female	761	56.0
Non-binary	4	0.3
Other	2	0.1
Age Group		
18-24	132	9.6
25-34	318	23.1
35-44	317	23.0
45-54	247	17.9
55 and over	362	26.3
Prefer not to say	2	0.1
Country of Residence		
Canada	262	22.3
Republic of Ireland	174	14.8

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	293	25.0
United States of America	438	37.3
Other	7	0.6
Education		
No formal education	15	1.1
High School	451	32.8
Professional/Vocational Training	266	19.4
Bachelor's Degree	438	31.9
Master's Degree	156	11.4
Doctoral Degree	22	1.6
Other	17	1.2
Prefer not to say	8	0.6

Regarding age, most participants belonged to the age group 55+, and a significant representation was observed among the age groups 25-34 and 35-44. Conversely, the age group 18-24 exhibited the fewest participants. In terms of gender, the sample demonstrated an almost equal representation of male and female respondents, with a slightly higher proportion of participants identifying as female. The limited representation of nonbinary and other gender identities highlights a critical area for future research, emphasising the need for a more comprehensive and inclusive understanding of experiences. Regarding country of residence, the majority of respondents were from the United States, with significant numbers from Canada, Ireland, and the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland. Since the survey only targeted the four aforementioned English-speaking countries, the small percentage of participants from other countries (0.1%, coded as "Other") likely reflects their country of origin or nationality (e.g., Angola, Austria, Belarus). Concerning educational background, the majority of participants reported having completed high school, professional/vocational training, or holding a bachelor's degree, reflecting a diverse spectrum of educational attainment among the respondents.

5.2 Preliminary Analyses

5.2.1 Distribution of Normality

The initial step is to assess whether the survey data follows a normal distribution, as this determines the appropriate statistical methods for subsequent analyses. To assess

normality, both graphical and statistical methods were used. Q-Q plots, histograms, and box plots were employed for visual inspection, revealing deviations from normality. The Shapiro-Wilk (Shapiro & Wilk, 1965) and Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Massey, 1951) tests also rejected the null hypothesis of normality. Skewness and kurtosis values confirmed these findings, indicating the need for non-parametric methods.

Hypotheses and exploratory aims were tested through Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test and Spearman's Rank-Order Correlations. The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was selected due to its appropriateness for data that do not adhere to normality assumptions (Wilcoxon, 1945). It is especially useful for analysing paired samples, such as the comparisons between interpersonal and institutional betrayal and between betrayal by omission and commission, which makes it suitable for this study. Correlations were analysed using Spearman's Rank-Order Correlations due to their suitability for non-parametric and ordinal data, providing a robust measure of association (Spearman, 1987).

5.2.2 Vignettes Validation

As discussed in the previous chapter, the second focus of preliminary analyses is to validate the survey vignettes, to ensure they reflect the constructs they aim to measure. This was achieved by analysing participants' responses to an open-ended question about the most hurtful aspect of each betrayal vignette (i.e., "What's most hurtful in this scenario?"). Template Analysis was employed to systematically identify key themes and patterns emerging from participants' responses (Brooks et al., 2015; King, 2012).

The coding process proceeded as follows: Initially, textual data for each scenario were coded individually (e.g., Romantic Partner Betrayal by Commission). Next, the codes were reviewed within each broader category (e.g., Interpersonal Betrayal by Commission) and then further refined across overarching themes (e.g., Interpersonal Betrayal). This iterative approach ensured that the codes effectively captured the main themes and topics. Responses encompassing more than one theme were double-coded (e.g., "*Being cheated and lied to*" was coded as both "Betrayal & Broken Trust" and "Lies & Dishonesty"; "*That an institution dedicated to care betrayed its foundation*" was coded as both "Betrayal & Broken Trust" and "Injustice & Unfairness"). Invalid responses, such as numbers or nonsensical text, were recoded as missing data.

Seven main themes emerged from the analysis. Among these, four themes were common to both interpersonal and institutional betrayal vignettes, while two themes were specific to each type of betrayal. The common themes are: 1) Lies & Dishonesty, which focuses on deceitful behaviour as the most hurtful aspect, 2) Betrayal & Broken Trust, directly mentioning being betrayed as the primary concern, 3) Neglect & Abandonment, encompassing the victims' feelings of neglect and their unmet needs, and 4) Betrayal's Consequences, referring to the practical repercussions of the act of betrayal, for instance losing a promotion or a financial aid, or facing gag orders or reputational damages. Additionally, two distinct themes emerged, each specific to a different type of betrayal; while interpersonal betrayal sees the emergence of the theme 5) Relational Bond, referring to the pain specifically tied to the bond and unmet expectations within a close relationship, institutional betrayal sees the emergence of 6) Injustice & Unfairness, emphasising the unfairness of the betrayal's consequences and the sense of injustice experienced by the victims. Furthermore, the theme of 7) Unintentionality emerged exclusively in vignettes of interpersonal betrayal by omission, while it was absent in cases of interpersonal betrayal by commission and both types of institutional betrayal, consistent with the theoretical framework of this study. A summary of themes and their prevalence is presented in Table 5.2. (See Appendix C for Template Analysis findings on interpersonal betrayal vignettes and Appendix D for those on institutional betrayal vignettes).

Table 5.2 – Overview of Findings from Vignettes Template Analysis

Interpersonal Betrayal		Institutional Betrayal	
By commission	By Omission	By Commission	By Omission
1. Betrayal & Broken Trust (n=380, 32.20%)	1. Neglect & Abandonment (n=403, 34.5%)	1. Betrayal's Consequences (n=270, 19.82%)	1. Betrayal's Consequences (n= 281, 27.5%)
2. Lies & Dishonesty (n=227, 19.24%)	2. Betrayal's Consequences (n=151, 12.9%)	2. Injustice & Unfairness (n=246, 18.06%)	2. Injustice & Unfairness (n=265, 25.9%)
3. Neglect & Abandonment (n=170, 14.41%)	3. Betrayal & Broken Trust (n=147, 12.6%)		3. Lies & Dishonesty (n=118, 11.6%)

4. Relational Bond (n=149, 12.71%)	4. Relational Bond (n=118, 10.1%)	3. Neglect & Abandonment (n=185, 13.58%)	4. Neglect & Abandonment (n= 156, 15.3%)
5. Betrayal's Consequences (n=148, 12.54%)	5. Lies & Dishonesty (n=57, 4.9%)	4. Lies & Dishonesty (n=133, 9.77%)	5. Betrayal & Broken Trust (n= 91 , 8.9%)
	6. Unintentionality (n=24, 2.1%)	5. Betrayal & Broken Trust (n=121, 8.89%)	
<i>*Missing percentages have been coded as "Others" as they did not belong to any of the aforementioned categories. As a result of this and double-coding of some textual data, percentages do not total 100%.</i>			

The Template Analysis confirmed that the vignettes effectively captured the intended constructs, demonstrating a clear distinction in participants' perceptions of interpersonal versus institutional betrayal. Interpersonal betrayal was primarily characterised by themes reflecting emotional harm, with feelings of betrayal notably pronounced in instances of harm by commission, while neglect was more salient in cases of harm by omission. In contrast, institutional betrayal emphasised the consequences of betrayal, focusing on the practical outcomes associated with both commission and omission. The theme of unintentionality emerged exclusively in the context of interpersonal betrayal by omission, aligning with the study's theoretical framework and findings. Furthermore, while interpersonal betrayal underscored the theme of Relational Bond, institutional betrayal highlighted themes of Injustice and Unfairness, illustrating the contrast between personal and collective experiences of betrayal. These findings not only enriched our understanding of the quantitative results but also ensured that participants accurately engaged with the nuanced elements of the vignettes, thereby enhancing the validity of the overall analysis.

5.2.3 Plausibility of the Vignettes

The overall plausibility of the betrayal vignettes was rated by participants using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "Not At All" to "Very Much". The distribution of responses revealed that participants found the vignettes to be mostly moderately (33.0%) and highly plausible (26.4%) in real-life situations (M=3.40, SD=1.09). This pattern suggests that the

vignettes resonated with participants to a considerable extent, implying a perceived realism in the portrayal of betrayal within both interpersonal and institutional contexts.

5.2.4 General Levels of Trust in People vs. Institutions

The general levels of trust that respondents have in people compared to institutions were assessed by asking participants to rate them on a 10-point Likert scale. Subsequently, a Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was then conducted to evaluate the differences between them (Table 5.3).

Table 5.3 – General Levels of Trust in Loved Ones vs. Trust in Institutions

	Mdn (IQR)	Z	p	r
Trust in Loved Ones	8.00 (5.00-9.00)	-24.95	>.001	-0.68
Trust in Institutions	5.00 (2.00-6.00)			

The results showed that trust in loved ones was significantly higher than trust in institutions, highlighting a notable disparity between personal relationships and institutional entities. This finding establishes a critical baseline for interpreting the study's subsequent results.

5.3 Hypotheses Testing

This section presents the results of the hypothesis testing conducted in this study. The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test for related samples was employed to evaluate Hypotheses 1, 2, and 4, while Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation analysis was used to assess Hypotheses 3 and 5 (for a detailed description of the survey's hypotheses and aims, see Section 4.1.7 in Chapter IV.).

5.3.1 Hypothesis 1: Betrayal by commission is perceived to lead to a higher extent of the harm than betrayal by omission.

Participants were asked to rate the extent of harm in each betrayal vignette on a 10-point Likert scale. Results show that perceived harm in both interpersonal and institutional

betrayal by commission was significantly higher than by omission ($p < .001$), supporting the hypothesis (Table 5.4).

Table 5.4 – Comparison of extent of the harm following Interpersonal and Institutional Betrayal by Commission vs. by Omission (Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test)

Extent of the Harm Interpersonal					Extent of the Harm Institutional				
Commission vs. Omission					Commission vs. Omission				
Mdn (IQR)-C.	Mdn (IQR)-O.	Z	p	r	Mdn (IQR)-C.	Mdn (IQR) – O.	Z	p	r
7.00 (5.00- 9.00)	5.00 (3.00- 7.00)	-12.87	<.001	-0.39	8.00 (5.00- 10.00)	7.00 (5.00- 10.00)	-3.35	<.001	-0.10

This effect was especially pronounced in interpersonal betrayal, suggesting a less defined distinction between harm from actions versus omissions in institutional contexts.

5.3.2 Hypothesis 2: Betrayal by commission is perceived to lead to higher levels of hatred and betrayal than betrayal by omission.

To evaluate whether betrayal by commission elicits higher levels of hatred and betrayal compared to betrayal by omission, Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Tests were conducted. These tests compared participants' emotional responses to interpersonal and institutional betrayal vignettes rated on a 10-point Likert scale, with 0 indicating “Not at All” and 10 indicating “Highly Intense”. The results of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Tests are summarised in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5 – Comparison of intensity of emotions following Interpersonal and Institutional Betrayal by Commission vs. by Omission (Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test)

Interpersonal						Institutional				
Commission vs. Omission						Commission vs. Omission				
	Mdn (IQR)- C.	Mdn (IQR)- O.	Z	p	r	Mdn (IQR)- C.	Mdn (IQR)- O.	Z	p	r

Fear	3.00 (1.00- 6.00)	2.00 (1.00- 5.00)	-6.23	< .001	-0.17	5.00 (3.00- 8.00)	5.00 (2.00- 7.00)	-4.74	< .001	-0.13
Anger	8.00 (5.00- 10- 00)	6.00 (4.00- 9-00)	- 15.68	< .001	-0.42	8.00 (6.00- 10.00)	8.00 (5.00- 10.00)	-5.37	< .001	-0.14
Sadness	5.00 (7.00- 9.00)	6.00 (4.00- 8.00)	-8.05	< .001	-0.22	7.00 (5.00- 9.00)	7.00 (5.00- 9.00)	-0.13	.892	-0.001
Disgust	7.00 (4.00- 9.00)	5.00 (2.00- 8.00)	- 15.56	< .001	-0.43	8.00 (5.00- 10.00)	8.00 (6.00- 10.00)	-2.21	.027	-0.06
Self-Doubt	4.00 (1.00- 7.00)	4.00 (1.00- 7.00)	-2.51	0.12	-0.07	4.00 (1.00- 6.00)	3.00 (1.00- 6.00)	-0.68	.496	-0.01
Abandonment	6.00 (4.00 -9.00)	5.00 (2.00- 8.00)	- 10.99	< .001	-0.30	6.00 (3.00- 8.00)	5.00 (2.00- 8.00)	-2.52	.012	-0.07
Betrayal	9.00 (6.00- 10.00)	6.00 (3.00- 9.00)	- 17.66	< .001	-0.49	8.00 (5.00- 10.00)	7.00 (5.00- 9.00)	-4.12	< .001	-0.11
Hate	5.00 (2.00 -8.00)	4.00 (1.00- 6.00)	- 12.79	< .001	-0.36	6.00 (3.00- 9.00)	6.00 (3.00- 9.00)	-0.47	.637	-0.01
Desire for Revenge	4.00 (1.00 -7.00)	3.00 (1.00- 6.00)	- 10.56	< .001	-0.30	5.00 (2.00- 8.00)	5.00 (2.00- 7.00)	-0.32	.749	-0.009
Anxiety	5.00 (2.00 -8.00)	5.00 (2.00- 7.00)	-5.13	< .001	-0.14	6.00 (3.00- 9.00)	5.00 (3.00- 8.00)	-4.92	< .001	-0.13

The results of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test for emotions following interpersonal betrayal indicate a significant difference between omission and commission in the intensity of all emotions, except self-doubt. Specifically, fear, anger, sadness, disgust, betrayal, hate, abandonment, desire for revenge, and anxiety were all rated as significantly more intense in interpersonal betrayal by commission vignettes compared to

omission vignettes. Regarding emotions following institutional betrayal, the Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Tests indicated that the intensity of fear, anger, anxiety, and betrayal was significantly higher in commission vignettes than in omission vignettes. However, no significant differences were found in levels of hate or other emotions, such as disgust, abandonment, sadness, and desire for revenge, which exhibited similar intensity between omission and commission. Notably, the effect sizes were generally larger in interpersonal vignettes, indicating a more pronounced difference in emotional responses between commission and omission in this context.

The results suggest that in interpersonal contexts, both betrayal and hate are perceived as significantly more intense following acts of commission compared to acts of omission. In institutional contexts, while the intensity of fear, anger, anxiety, and betrayal is also higher in commission vignettes, the intensity of hate and other emotions remains consistent across both omission and commission, partially supporting the hypothesis. This pattern indicates that, although betrayals by commission tend to provoke stronger feelings of betrayal, omissions can evoke equally intense hatred and other emotions within institutional settings.

5.3.3 Hypothesis 3: Higher levels of hatred resulting from betrayal are associated with higher perceived effectiveness of retributive strategies.

Retributive hatred is defined a type of hatred stemming from wrongdoings that is expected to motivate retributive actions (Brudholm, 2010; Gee, 2014; Murphy, 1988). Accordingly, it is hypothesised that higher levels of hatred following betrayal will correspond to a greater perceived effectiveness of retributive strategies. Building on previous findings (see Hypothesis 2), which indicate that betrayal by commission elicits stronger feelings of hate than betrayal by omission in interpersonal contexts, the hypothesis suggests that hatred stemming from interpersonal betrayal by commission will be linked to a stronger perceived effectiveness of retributive strategies compared to hatred arising from betrayal by omission. Additionally, it predicts no significant differences in levels of institutional hatred following commission or omission.

To test this hypothesis, a Spearman's Rank-order Correlation analysis was conducted to explore the relationship between the intensity of hatred and the perceived efficacy of

punitive and retributive strategies following both institutional and interpersonal betrayal by commission and omission (Table 5.6). The strengths of these correlations were then compared using the Fisher's Z-Transformation to assess whether significant differences existed in the correlation between hate and the perceived effectiveness of punishment and retribution in cases of interpersonal versus institutional betrayal by commission and omission.

Table 5.6 – Spearman's Rank-Order Correlations of Interpersonal and Institutional Hate by Commission and by Omission with Punishment and Retribution

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1.Hate_Int_Com.	--											
2.Hate_Int_Omi.	.537**	--										
3.Hate_Inst_Com.	-.029	-.019	--									
4.Hate_Inst_Omi.	.538**	.472**	-.020	--								
5.Int_Com_Punish.	.209**	.029	-.057*	.093**	--							
6.Int_Omi_Punish.	.130**	.292**	-.034	.076**	.135**	--						
7.Int_Com_Retrib.	.197**	-.002	-.017	.083**	.655**	.134**	--					
8.Int_Omi_Retrib.	.115**	.240**	-.008	.101**	.161**	.668**	.122**	--				
9.Inst_Com_Punish.	.111**	-.024	-.014	.158**	.240**	.146**	.253**	.176**	--			
10.Inst_Omi_Punish.	.115**	-.004	.002	.181**	.278**	.151**	.274**	.195**	.605**	--		
11.Inst_Com_Retrib.	.105**	-.003	-.036	.135**	.242**	.157**	.268**	.205**	.725**	.571**	--	
12. Inst_Omi_Retrib.	.107**	-.005	-.009	.175**	.235**	.136**	.272**	.193**	.578**	.736**	.627**	--

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

*Correlation is significant at 0.05 level

The analysis revealed that interpersonal hatred arising from omission correlated more strongly with punishment ($r = .292$) than interpersonal hatred resulting from commission ($r = .209$). This difference in correlations was statistically significant ($z = -2.25$, $p = 0.02$), indicating that, contrary to the initial hypothesis, hatred following betrayal by omission was more closely linked to punishment. Furthermore, no significant difference was found in the relationship between hate arising from commission versus omission regarding retribution ($p = 0.25$). This suggests that, in interpersonal contexts, when the levels of hatred resulting from betrayal are similar, the type of betrayal (commission vs. omission) does not significantly influence the perceived effectiveness of retribution. In institutional

contexts, results showed that institutional hatred resulting from commission does not correlate with punishment, while institutional hatred from omission does ($r = .181$). A similar pattern was observed for retribution ($r = .175$).

These findings challenge the hypothesis that hatred from commission is more linked to punishment, revealing instead that hatred from omission is more closely associated with it in interpersonal contexts. The lack of a significant difference in the relationship between hatred and retribution across commission or omission suggests stable motivations for retribution. Additionally, the unexpected correlation between institutional hatred from omission and punishment suggests that omissions in institutional relationships may evoke a stronger sense of injustice.

5.3.4 Hypothesis 4: Retributive strategies are expected to be evaluated as more effective than restorative strategies in instances of betrayal by commission. Conversely, in instances of betrayal by omission, restorative strategies are anticipated to be evaluated as more effective than retributive strategies.

To assess whether retributive strategies are perceived as more effective than restorative strategies following harm caused by action (betrayal by commission), and whether restorative strategies are perceived as more effective following harm caused by inaction (betrayal by omission), a series of Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Tests for related samples were conducted (see Table 5.7). The analysis revealed significant differences in the perceived efficacy of resolution strategies in interpersonal betrayal vignettes, specifically between betrayal by omission and betrayal by commission.

Participants evaluated apology, restitution, restoration, and compensation as more effective following betrayal by omission, while punishment and retribution were viewed as more effective in cases of betrayal by commission. Despite these observed distinctions, the effect sizes were small, suggesting that while preferences for resolution strategies vary by betrayal type, the magnitude of these differences is modest. In contrast, the analysis of institutional betrayal vignettes found no significant differences in the perceived effectiveness of resolution strategies between betrayal by omission and betrayal by commission.

Table 5.7 – Comparison of effectiveness of Resolution Strategies in Interpersonal and Institutional Betrayal by Commission vs. by Omission (Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test)

	Interpersonal					Institutional				
	Commission vs. Omission					Commission vs. Omission				
	Mdn (IQR)- C.	Mdn (IQR)- O.	Z	p	r	Mdn (IQR)- C.	Mdn (IQR)- O.	Z	p	r
1. Apology	5.00 (4.00- 5.00)	5.00 (4.00- 6.00)	- 4.37	<.001	-0.11	4.00 (4.00- 6.00)	4.00 (4.00- 5.00)	- 1.85	.236	-0.05
2. Restitution	5.00 (4.00- 6.00)	5.00 (4.00- 6.00)	- 3.22	.001	-0.08	5.00 (4.00- 6.00)	5.00 (4.00- 6.00)	- 0.12	.897	-0.003
3. Restoration	5.00 (4.00- 6.00)	5.00 (4.00- 6.00)	- 2.63	.008	-0.07	5.00 (4.00- 6.00)	5.00 (4.00- 6.00)	- 0.23	.811	-0.006
4. Compensation	4.00 (4.00- 5.00)	4.00 (4.00- 5.00)	- 7.09	<.001	-0.19	4.00 (4.00- 6.00)	5.00 (4.00- 6.00)	- 2.53	.011	-0.06
5. Punishment	4.00 (4.00- 5.00)	4.00 (3.00- 5.00)	- 6.22	<.001	-0.16	4.00 (4.00- 5.00)	4.00 (4.00- 6.00)	- 0.02	.984	-0.001
6. Retribution	4.00 (3.00- 6.00)	4.00 (3.00- 5.00)	- 4.53	<.001	-0.12	5.00 (4.00- 6.00)	5.00 (4.00- 6.00)	- 0.87	.382	-0.02

In conclusion, hypothesis 4 is partially supported: retributive strategies are perceived as more effective following betrayal by commission, while restorative strategies are deemed more effective following betrayal by omission, although with a modest effect size. However, this pattern was observed only within the context of interpersonal betrayal, with no significant differences in institutional settings.

5.3.5 Hypothesis 5: Self-enhancement values are expected to show a positive correlation with a retributive orientation, whereas self-transcendence values are anticipated to be positively correlated with a restorative orientation in the context of interpersonal and institutional betrayal.

To examine whether self-enhancement values—a dimension of Schwartz Values (Schwartz, 2012) including values such as power and achievement, which emphasise personal success and dominance over others—correlate positively with a retributive orientation, and whether self-transcendence values—a dimension prioritising others people’s welfare, including values like universalism and benevolence—correlate positively with a restorative orientation following both interpersonal and institutional betrayal, a Spearman’s Rank-Order Correlation analysis was conducted (Table 5.8).

Results of the Spearman’s Rank-Order Correlation show that, in interpersonal betrayal, self-enhancement values negatively correlates with apology and restoration. Self-transcendence positively correlates with all strategies except punishment, with higher correlations with restoration and apology. Conversely, in institutional betrayal, the results show that self-enhancement negatively correlates with all strategies, while self-transcendence positively correlates with all strategies. In conclusion, the analysis partially supports the hypothesis: self-transcendence values are linked to a preference for restorative strategies, and self-enhancement values negatively correlate with typically restorative strategies like apology and restoration, but only in cases of interpersonal betrayal. In contrast, for institutional betrayal, self-enhancement values negatively correlate with both justice strategies, while self-transcendence positively correlates with both strategies, suggesting that the context of betrayal might significantly influence how individuals align their value systems with justice responses.

Table 5.8 – Spearman's Rank-Order Correlations of Self-enhancement vs. Self-Transcendence with Restorative and Retributive Strategies following Interpersonal and Institutional Betrayal

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1.Self_Enhancement	--													
2.Self_Transcendence	.257**	--												
3.Apology_Interpersonal	-.082**	.230**	--											
4.Restitution_Interpersonal	-.049	.178**	.603**	--										
5.Restoration_Interpersonal	-.137**	.259**	.651**	.759**	--									
6.Compensation_Interpersonal	.029	.135**	.548**	.606**	.538**	--								
7.Punishment_Interpersonal	.043	.037	.161**	.352**	.261**	.282**	--							
8.Retribution_Interpersonal	.000	.096**	.242**	.452**	.400**	.334**	.713**	--						
9.Apology_Institutional	-.117**	.227**	.538**	.450**	.485**	.367**	.218**	.278**	--					
10.Restitution_Institutional	-.174**	.259**	.490**	.471**	.537**	.361**	.175**	.271**	.738**	--				
11.Restoration_Institutional	-.187**	.269**	.490**	.469**	.557**	.349**	.175**	.267**	.733**	.842**	--			
12.Compensation_Institutional	-.098**	.208**	.455**	.456**	.475**	.371**	.230**	.300**	.682**	.711**	.686**	--		
13.Punishment_Institutional	-.100**	.205**	.396**	.398**	.436**	.313**	.286**	.314**	.636**	.647**	.650**	.639**	--	
14.Retribution_Institutional	-.140**	.213**	.382**	.406**	.480**	.293**	.274**	.330**	.601**	.671**	.714**	.670**	.801**	--

***Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level*
**Correlation is significant at 0.05 level*

5.4 Analysis of Exploratory Aims

This section introduces the findings of the study's five exploratory aims, tested through Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Tests for related samples (Aim 1 and 3) and Spearman's Rank-Order Correlations (Aim 2, 4, 5 and 6).

5.4.1 Exploratory Aim 1: To investigate the differences in the levels of hate and betrayal following interpersonal and institutional betrayal.

To investigate Exploratory Aim 1, which examines the differences in emotions experienced following interpersonal and institutional betrayal, Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Tests were conducted. Results of the tests showed a significant difference between interpersonal and institutional hate and betrayal (Table 5.9). Specifically, institutional betrayal resulted as significantly higher than interpersonal betrayal, and institutional hate as significantly higher than interpersonal hate. Notably, the effect was more pronounced for hate than for betrayal. Regarding other emotions, all were more evaluated as more intense in the context of institutional betrayal, except for self-doubt, which was higher in interpersonal contexts, and abandonment, which showed no significant differences.

Table 5.9 – Comparison of Intensity of Emotions following Interpersonal and Institutional Betrayal (Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test)

	Interpersonal vs. Institutional Betrayal				
	Mdn (IQR)- Int.	Mdn (IQR)- Inst.	Z	p	r
1.Fear	3.00 (1.00-5.50)	5.50 (3.00-7.00)	-19.47	< .001	-0.52
2.Anger	7.00 (5.00-9.00)	8.00 (5.50-9.50)	-11.46	< .001	-0.31
3.Sadness	6.50 (5.00-8.50)	7.00 (5.00-9.00)	-6.08	<.001	-0.16
4.Disgust	5.50 (4.00-8.00)	8.00 (5.50-9.50)	-18.92	<.001	-0.52
5.Self-Doubt	4.00 (2.00-6.00)	4.00 (1.50-6.00)	-5.26	<.001	-0.15
6.Abandonment	5.50	5.50	-1.26	.206	-0.03

	(3.50-7.50)	(3.50-8.00)			
7.Betrayal	6.50 (5.00-8.50)	7.00 (5.00-9.00)	-2.77	.006	-0.07
8.Hate	4.50 (2.50-6.50)	5.50 (4.00-7.50)	-12.16	<.001	-0.35
9.Desire for Revenge	4.00 (1.50-6.00)	5.00 (2.50-7.00)	-10.18	<.001	-0.29
10.Anxiety	5.00 (3.00-7.00)	6.00 (4.00-8.00)	-10.52	<.001	-0.30

5.4.2 Exploratory Aim 2: To explore the correlations between hate, betrayal, and other emotions following interpersonal and institutional betrayal.

Spearman's Rank-Order Correlations were computed to examine the relationships between hate, betrayal, and other emotions following interpersonal (Table 5.10) and institutional (Table 5.11) betrayal.

Table 5.10 – Spearman's Rank-Order Correlations of Emotions following Interpersonal Betrayal

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.Fear_Int.	--									
2.Anger_Int.	.136**	--								
3.Sadness_Int.	.290**	.589**	--							
4.Disgust_Int.	.327**	.713**	.551**	--						
5.Selldoubt_Int.	.662**	.269**	.394**	.376**	--					
6.Abandonment_Int.	.448**	.538**	.614**	.578**	.637**	--				
7.Betrayal_Int.	.198**	.758**	.580**	.743**	.378**	.659**	--			
8.Hate_Int.	.461**	.581**	.407**	.654**	.485**	.537**	.591**	--		
9.DesireForRevenge_Int.	.492**	.418**	.267**	.542**	.480**	.453**	.464**	.804**	--	
10.Anxiety_Int.	.574**	.402**	.478**	.465**	.600**	.590**	.460**	.491**	.478**	--

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

*Correlation is significant at 0.05 level

In interpersonal betrayal, the analysis first revealed that all emotions were positively correlated with one another, with each correlation reaching statistical significance. This

finding suggests that individuals experiencing heightened levels of one emotion also tend to report elevated levels of others, indicating an overall increase in emotional intensity and a less differentiated emotional experience. Additionally, the analysis showed that interpersonal hate and betrayal were correlated with each other and exhibited similar patterns of correlation with other emotions, such as anger, disgust, and abandonment, although with different strengths.

Table 5.11 – Spearman's Rank-Order Correlations of Emotions following Institutional Betrayal

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.Fear_Inst.	--									
2.Anger_Inst.	.343**	--								
3.Sadness_Inst.	.524**	.648**	--							
4.Disgust_Inst.	.349**	.819**	.679**	--						
5.Selfdoubts_Inst.	.658**	.102**	.315**	.148**	--					
6.Abandonment_Inst.	.595**	.454**	.578**	.477**	.591**	--				
7.Betrayal_Inst.	.443**	.721**	.654**	.708**	.296**	.681**	--			
8.Hate_Inst.	.316**	.343**	.299**	.343**	.294**	.352**	.353**	--		
9.DesireforRevenge_Inst.	.442**	.387**	.337**	.370**	.483**	.520**	.472**	.424**	--	
10.Anxiety_Inst.	.664**	.437**	.558**	.430**	.560**	.649**	.553**	.320**	.441**	--
**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level										
*Correlation is significant at 0.05 level										

Similar to interpersonal contexts, emotions related to institutional betrayal were all positively correlated to each other, indicating that participants generally experienced uniformly higher or lower levels of emotions in response to institutional betrayal. Furthermore, as observed in interpersonal vignettes, institutional betrayal and hate were associated with a similar set of emotions, such as anger, disgust, and abandonment, though the intensity of these correlations differed. Following the Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation analysis, Fisher's Z Transformation was applied to identify which emotions exhibited the strongest correlations with interpersonal and institutional betrayal and hate (Table 5.12).

Table 5.12 – Comparison of Correlations of Emotions with Hate and Betrayal following Interpersonal and Institutional Betrayal (Fisher's Z-Transformation)

	Interpersonal Betrayal				Institutional Betrayal			
	Betrayal(r)	Hate (r)	Z	p	Betrayal (r)	Hate (r)	Z	p
1.Fear	0.19	0.46	-2.07	<0.05	0.44	0.31	1.03	0.30
2.Anger	0.75	0.58	2.28	<0.05	0.72	0.34	3.84	<0.001
3.Sadness	0.58	0.40	1.60	0.10	0.65	0.29	3.29	<0.001
4.Disgust	0.74	0.65	1.21	0.22	0.70	0.34	3.66	<0.001
5.Selldoubt	0.37	0.48	-0.91	0.35	0.29	0.29	0.01	0.99
6. Abandonment	0.65	0.53	1.33	0.18	0.68	0.35	3.22	<0.001
7.Desire for Revenge	0.46	0.80	-4.23	<0.001	0.47	0.42	0.41	0.67
8. Anxiety	0.46	0.49	-0.27	0.78	0.55	0.32	2.02	<0.05

The results reveal significant differences in emotional responses to betrayal and hate. Anger shows a statistically significant difference in its correlation strength between betrayal and hate in both interpersonal ($p < 0.05$) and institutional ($p < 0.001$) contexts, being much more strongly associated with betrayal, especially in institutional settings. Similarly, sadness, disgust, and abandonment also display highly significant differences between their correlations with institutional betrayal and hate ($p < 0.001$), suggesting that these emotions are more closely linked to betrayal than hate in institutional contexts. Regarding fear, the difference in correlation between interpersonal betrayal and hate is significant ($p < 0.05$), indicating a stronger association with interpersonal hate. Anxiety also shows a significant difference in the institutional context ($p < 0.05$), with a stronger connection to institutional betrayal than hate. The most pronounced difference, however, involves the desire for revenge, which shows a highly significant difference in the interpersonal context ($p < 0.001$) and is much more strongly correlated with hate than with betrayal. This suggests that vengeful feelings are particularly prominent in response to interpersonal hate compared to institutional contexts. Overall, the results demonstrate

distinct emotional correlations with betrayal and hate depending on the interpersonal or institutional context, offering important insights.

5.4.3 Exploratory Aim 3: To examine the differential effectiveness of restorative versus retributive strategies in interpersonal versus institutional betrayal.

To evaluate the distinct effectiveness of restorative versus retributive strategies following interpersonal and institutional betrayal, Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Tests were conducted (Table 5.13).

5.13 – Comparison of Effectiveness of Resolution Strategies for Interpersonal and Institutional Betrayal (Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Tests)

	Interpersonal vs. Institutional Betrayal				
	Mdn (IQR)- Int.	Mdn (IQR)- Inst.	Z	p	r
1.Apology	4.50 (4.00-5.50)	4.50 (4.00-5.50)	-6.76	< .001	-0.18
2.Restitution	5.00 (4.00-5.50)	5.00 (4.00-6.00)	-3.94	< .001	-0.10
3.Restoration	5.00 (4.00-6.00)	5.00 (4.00-6.00)	-.005	.996	-0.00
4.Compensation	4.50 (4.00-5.00)	4.50 (4.00-5.50)	-3.86	< .001	-0.10
5.Punishment	4.00 (3.50-4.50)	4.50 (3.50-5.50)	-10.18	< .001	-0.27
6. Retribution	4.00 (3.50-5.00)	5.00 (4.00-6.00)	-11.46	< .001	-0.31

The analysis reveals that all strategies, except restoration, exhibit significantly different impacts between interpersonal and institutional betrayal. Specifically, restitution, compensation, punishment, and retribution are rated as significantly more effective in addressing institutional betrayal, whereas apologies are perceived as more effective following interpersonal betrayal.

In conclusion, these findings indicate that retributive and compensatory measures, such as restitution and compensation, are evaluated as more effective in institutional contexts, where addressing both practical and financial consequences alongside emotional harm is essential. In contrast, apologies are considered more effective in interpersonal situations, where the primary focus is on healing emotional wounds and restoring relational dynamics.

5.4.4 Exploratory Aim 4: To explore the differences in the correlation of hate with punishment and retribution following interpersonal versus institutional betrayal.

To test whether differences exist in the correlation of hate with punishment and retribution following interpersonal versus institutional betrayal, a Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation analysis was first conducted to examine the relationship between the intensity of hatred and the perceived efficacy of punitive and retributive strategies in both contexts (Table 5.14). Following this, Fisher's Z Transformation was used to compare the strength of these correlations between the two types of betrayal.

Table 5.14 – Spearman's Rank-Order Correlations of Interpersonal and Institutional Hate and Betrayal with Retributive Strategies

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Hate_Int.	--					
2. Hate_Inst.	.387**	--				
3. Punishment_Int.	.242**	.028	--			
4. Retribution_Int.	.208**	.056*	.713**	--		
5. Punishment_Inst.	.065*	.119**	.286**	.314**	--	
6. Retribution_Inst.	.070*	.100**	.274**	.330**	.801**	--

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level
 *Correlation is significant at 0.05 level

The results of the analyses show that the correlation between hatred and punishment is stronger in instances of interpersonal betrayal ($r = .242$) than in institutional betrayal ($r = .119$), with a significant difference ($z = -3.17$, $p < .001$). A similar pattern, albeit with a lower effect size, was observed for retribution, observing a stronger correlation in interpersonal contexts ($r = .208$) compared to institutional ($r = .100$), with a significant difference ($z = -$

2.76, $p = .0003$). These results suggest that a deeper emotional impact stemming from interpersonal betrayal might lead to stronger retributive responses.

5.4.5 Exploratory Aim 5: To investigate the correlation between Schwartz's values and their bipolar dimension self-transcendence vs. self-enhancement with interpersonal and institutional betrayal and hate.

To investigate the relationship between Schwartz values and interpersonal and institutional hate and betrayal, a Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation analysis was conducted (Table 5.15). Although the correlations observed in the study reached statistical significance, they were relatively weak in magnitude, indicating only a modest relationship between these variables. The Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation analysis revealed that interpersonal betrayal significantly correlates with values such as security, universalism, self-direction, benevolence, and tradition. In contrast, institutional betrayal has the strongest correlation with universalism, followed by security, self-direction, benevolence, and tradition. Notably, both forms of betrayal negatively correlate with power.

Table 5.15 – Spearman's Rank-Order Correlations of Interpersonal and Institutional Betrayal and Hate with Schwartz's Values

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Betrayal_Int.	--													
2. Betrayal_Inst.	.508**	--												
3. Hate_Int.	.591**	.321**	--											
4. Hate_Inst.	.268**	.353**	.387**	--										
5. Power	-.059*	-.078*	.191**	.098**	--									
6. Benevolence	.124**	.154**	.018	.041	.209**	--								
7. Security	.247**	.260**	.049	.077**	.025	.432**	--							
8. Achievement	.080**	.097**	.142**	.095**	.453**	.327**	.362**	--						
9. Tradition	.127**	.122**	.112**	.109**	.258**	.314**	.350**	.443**	--					

10	.152	.180	.030	.069	.127	.389	.463	.415	.404	--			
Selfdirection	**	**		*	**	**	**	**	**				
11.Universali sm	.199	.278	.056	.119	.049	.416	.445	.306	.268	.524	--		
	**	**	*	**		**	**	**	**	**			
12. Stimulation	.081	.120	.129	.121	.329	.324	.327	.482	.370	.416	.429	--	
	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**		
13. Hedonism	.006	.031	.164	.123	.423	.245	.181	.401	.312	.297	.259	.532	--
			**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	
14.Conformit v	.067	.101	.055	.112	.284	.303	.256	.333	.411	.270	.326	.324	.355
	*	**		**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**

****Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level**

***Correlation is significant at 0.05 level**

Regarding hatred, both interpersonal and institutional hate positively correlate with power. Interpersonal hate is most strongly associated with power, followed by hedonism, achievement, stimulation, and tradition. In contrast, institutional hate primarily correlates with hedonism, stimulation, universalism, conformity, and tradition.

These findings reveal two distinct patterns: while betrayal is linked to values that promote the well-being of others and communities, hate is connected to values focused on self-gratification and dominance over others. Subsequently, an additional correlation analysis was conducted to explore the distinctive correlations between the Schwartz values' bipolar dimensions self-enhancement vs. self-transcendence with interpersonal and institutional hate and betrayal (Table 5.16).

Table 5.16 – Spearman's Rank-Order Correlations of Interpersonal and Institutional Betrayal and Hate with Self-Enhancement vs. Self-Transcendence

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.Self_Transcendence	--					
2.Self_Enhancement	.257**	--				
3.Betrayal_Int.	.201**	-.015	--			
4.Betrayal_Inst.	.269**	-.018	.508**	--		
5.Hate_Int.	.050	.208**	.591**	.321**	--	
6.Hate_Inst.	.103**	.121**	.268**	.353**	.387**	--

****Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level**

***Correlation is significant at 0.05 level**

The findings show a significant association between self-enhancement and hate, while self-transcendence is linked to experiences of betrayal. Additionally, self-transcendence has a weak correlation with institutional hate, suggesting that community-oriented values may influence how this form of hatred is perceived.

5.5 Summary of Quantitative Findings

This chapter presented the quantitative findings of the study, including preliminary analyses, hypothesis testing results (Table 5.17), and outcomes of exploratory aims (Table 5.18).

Five major hypotheses were tested, most of which received partial support. The results indicate that harm from betrayal by commission, due to its direct and intentional nature, is perceived as significantly more intense than harm from omission (Hypothesis 1). In interpersonal contexts, both betrayal and hatred are stronger in commission scenarios. In institutional contexts, commission evokes stronger feelings of fear, anger, anxiety, and betrayal, while hatred remains consistent across both commission and omission scenarios (Hypothesis 2). Notably, hatred related to omission in interpersonal contexts is more strongly associated with attitudes toward punishment, challenging the initial hypothesis that commission would be more linked to retributive desires (Hypothesis 3). Additionally, restorative strategies are seen as more effective for addressing interpersonal betrayal by omission, while retributive strategies are preferred for commission. However, no differences in perceived impact were found in institutional contexts (Hypothesis 4). Lastly, self-enhancement values correlate with a preference for retributive justice, while self-transcendence values align with restorative strategies, though this is only evident in interpersonal betrayal. For institutional betrayal, self-enhancement values show a negative correlation with all justice strategies, whereas self-transcendence values positively correlate with all responses. This indicates that the betrayal context strongly shapes the alignment of values with justice preferences (Hypothesis 5).

Regarding the exploratory aims, the study examined five key objectives, as summarised in Table 5.18. These aims expanded upon the hypotheses, which primarily focused on the distinction between commission and omission, by delving deeper into the differences

Table 5.17 – Summary of Findings from Survey Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Method of Analysis	Findings
Hp1: Betrayal by commission is perceived to lead to a higher extent of the harm than betrayal by omission.	Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Test	The extent of harm in interpersonal and institutional betrayal by commission is significantly higher than the extent of the harm in interpersonal and institutional betrayal by omission, possibly due to the more direct and intentional nature of actions involved in harms by commission.
Hp2: Betrayal by commission is perceived to lead to higher levels of hatred and betrayal than betrayal by omission.	Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Test	In interpersonal contexts, betrayal and hatred are perceived as significantly more intense in commission scenarios compared to omission. In institutional contexts, while fear, anger, anxiety, and betrayal are stronger in commission scenarios, hatred and other emotions remain consistent across both omission and commission, indicating that omissions may provoke equally intense emotions as commission in institutional settings.
Hp3: Higher levels of hatred resulting from betrayal are associated with higher perceived effectiveness of retributive strategies.	a) Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation b) Fisher's Z-Transformation	The findings challenge the initial hypothesis that commission-related hatred would be more strongly correlated to punishment. Instead, they show that omission-related hatred in interpersonal contexts is more closely linked to punishment. The consistent relationship between hatred and retribution suggests a stable drive for retribution across betrayal types. Surprisingly, institutional hatred from omission, rather than commission, is correlated with punishment.
Hp4: Retributive strategies are expected to be evaluated as more effective than restorative strategies in instances of betrayal by commission. Conversely, in instances of betrayal by omission, restorative strategies are anticipated to be evaluated as more effective than retributive strategies.	Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Test	Restorative strategies (apology, restitution, restoration) are generally evaluated as more effective following interpersonal betrayal by omission. In contrast, retributive strategies (punishment, retribution) are evaluated as more effective following for betrayal by commission. However, in institutional contexts, the analysis revealed no significant difference in the perceived effectiveness of resolution strategies between betrayal by omission and betrayal by commission, possibly reflecting the complexity of responses to institutional betrayal, where both omission and commission may be viewed as equally severe.
Hp5: Self-enhancement values are expected to show a positive correlation with a retributive orientation, whereas self-transcendence values are anticipated to be positively correlated with a restorative orientation in the context of interpersonal and institutional betrayal.	Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation	Self-enhancement values are linked to a preference for retributive justice and self-transcendence with restorative strategies, but only in cases of interpersonal betrayal. In contrast, for institutional betrayal, self-enhancement values negatively correlate with all justice strategies, while self-transcendence positively correlates with all strategies, indicating that the context of betrayal may play a crucial role in how individuals align their values with preferred justice responses.

Table 5.18 – Summary of Findings from Survey Exploratory Aims

Exploratory Aim	Method of Analysis	Findings
Aim 1: To investigate the differences in the levels of hate and betrayal following interpersonal and institutional betrayal.	Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Test	Institutional betrayal is perceived as significantly higher than interpersonal betrayal, and the intensity of institutional hate is also notably higher, highlighting a deeper sense of violation perceived in institutional contexts.
Aim 2: To explore the correlations between hate, betrayal, and other emotions following interpersonal and institutional betrayal.	a) Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation	The results show significant differences in emotional responses to betrayal and hate. Anger, sadness, and abandonment are more strongly associated with betrayal, especially in institutional contexts, while the desire for revenge is more linked to interpersonal hate. Fear and anxiety also differ, with fear being more correlated to interpersonal hate and anxiety showing a stronger connection to institutional betrayal.
	b) Fisher's Z-Transformation	
Aim 3: To examine the differential effectiveness of restorative versus retributive strategies in interpersonal versus institutional betrayal.	Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Test	Retributive approaches, such as punishment and retribution, and compensatory measures, such as restitution and compensation, are evaluated as more effective for addressing institutional betrayal, while restorative strategies, such as offering an apology, are considered more effective in cases of interpersonal betrayal.
Aim 4: To explore the differences in the correlation of hate with punishment and retribution following interpersonal versus institutional betrayal.	a) Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation	Despite higher levels of hate following institutional betrayal (Aim 1), the correlation between hate and the desire for punishment and retribution is stronger in cases of interpersonal betrayal, suggesting that personal betrayal more directly fuels retributive efforts.
	b) Fisher's Z-Transformation	
Aim 5: To investigate the correlation between Schwartz values and their bipolar dimension (self-transcendence vs. self-enhancement) with interpersonal and institutional betrayal and hate.	Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation	Self-enhancement is weakly associated with increased levels of hate, whereas self-transcendence is modestly linked to the experience of betrayal. Furthermore, self-transcendence shows a weak correlation with institutional hate, suggesting that this form of hate may stem from a perceived violation of community-oriented values.

between interpersonal and institutional contexts. The findings highlighted that institutional betrayal is perceived as more severe than interpersonal betrayal, with higher levels of associated hate (Aim 1), indicating a greater emotional impact in this context. Additionally, the study revealed distinct emotional responses between interpersonal and institutional contexts (Aim 2). Anger, sadness, and abandonment are more strongly connected to betrayal, particularly in institutional settings, while the desire for revenge stands out as being more tied to interpersonal hate. Fear shows a stronger link to interpersonal hate, and anxiety is more closely associated with institutional betrayal, highlighting how emotional responses vary depending on whether the betrayal or hate is personal or systemic. The study further showed that retributive approaches, such as punishment and retribution, and compensatory measures, such as compensation and restitution, are perceived as more effective for addressing institutional betrayal, whereas restorative strategies, like apologies, are preferred for interpersonal betrayal (Aim 3). Despite the higher levels of hate following institutional betrayal, the desire for retribution was more strongly correlated with interpersonal betrayal, likely due to its immediate and personal nature (Aim 4). Lastly, an examination of self-enhancement and self-transcendence values revealed differing influences on how individuals respond to betrayal, particularly within institutional settings (Aim 5). Self-enhancement was weakly associated with increased levels of hate, while self-transcendence was modestly linked to the experience of betrayal. Moreover, self-transcendence showed a weak correlation with institutional hate, indicating it may arise from violations of community-oriented values.

The next chapter will present the qualitative findings of the study (Chapter VI), which will be subsequently integrated with the quantitative findings in Chapter VII through the use of side-by-side Joint Displays (Guetterman et al., 2015). This integrated approach will enhance the analysis by highlighting the interplay between qualitative and quantitative data, providing a deeper understanding of the results and implications of the study.

Chapter VI – Interview Findings

This chapter presents the outcomes of the qualitative analysis of semi-structured interviews conducted as Phase II of this study. This analysis introduces the themes and subthemes identified through Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Building on the quantitative survey findings (Chapter V), the interviews aimed to deepen the understanding of participants' experiences and perceptions regarding interpersonal and institutional betrayal, as well as the effectiveness of restorative and retributive strategies in mitigating betrayal and the associated feelings of hatred. Seven main themes emerged, each with several subthemes. Section 6.1 introduces the participants' demographics, while Section 6.2 outlines the interview process. The outcomes of Thematic Analysis are detailed in Section 6.3, and Section 6.4 discusses the conclusions drawn from the analysis.

6.1 Participants' Demographics

A total of 20 participants were interviewed. Participants were recruited from the sample who completed the online survey (for the demographics of the survey participants, see Table 5.1, Chapter V), by means of an interview invitation presented upon survey completion (refer to Appendix E for the Interview Invitation). From an initial pool of 399 individuals, a final sample of 20 was selected through stratified purposive sampling to ensure representation of all relevant subgroups. A description of interview participants' demographics is provided at Table 6.1.

Table 6.1 – Demographics of Interview Participants

<i>N=20</i>		
	N	%
Gender		
Female	11	55.0
Male	9	45.0
Age Group		
18-24	2	10.0
25-34	4	20.0
35-44	4	20.0
45-54	4	20.0
55+	6	30.0
Country		
Canada	7	35.0

Republic of Ireland (ROI)	5	25.0
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	5	25.0
United States of America	3	15.0
Education		
High School	7	35.0
Bachelor's Degree	8	40.0
Master's Degree	3	15.0
Professional / Vocational Training	2	10.0

Regarding gender, 55% of participants identified as female, while 45% identified as male. In terms of age, the largest demographic group comprised individuals aged 55 and older, accounting for 30% of the sample. The age groups of 25-34, 35-44, and 45-54 were equally represented, each comprising 20% of the participants. The youngest group, aged 18-24, was the least represented, accounting for 10%. In terms of country of residence, Canada was the most represented, accounting for 35% of participants, followed by the Republic of Ireland (ROI), and the U.K. and Northern Ireland, each with 25%. The U.S. was represented by 15% of participants. With respect to the highest level of education, the largest proportion of participants, comprising 40% of the sample, held a bachelor's degree. This was followed by participants who had completed high school, accounting for 35%. A smaller group, 15% of participants held a master's degree, while 10% had completed professional or vocational training.

6.2 The Interview Process

Interviews were conducted online on Microsoft Teams. The duration of the interviews varied, spanning from 25 to 60 minutes each, with an average length of 40 minutes. The interview schedule (see Appendix F for the Interview Schedule) aimed to address several key topics, including:

- a) Definition and Conceptualisation of Betrayal: Exploring the differences and similarities between interpersonal and institutional betrayal.

- b) The Impact of Lived Experiences of Betrayal: Examining participants' experiences of interpersonal and institutional betrayal, and evaluating the effectiveness of different reparation strategies on their mitigation.
- c) Distinctions Between Betrayal by Omission and Betrayal by Commission: Analysing the different forms of betrayal by commission and by omission and their implications.
- d) The Relationship Between Hatred and Betrayal: Investigating how feelings of hatred are connected to experiences of betrayal.
- e) Definition of Hatred: Defining hate and its manifestations in interpersonal versus institutional contexts.
- f) The Influence of Hatred on Reconciliation: Assessing the impact of hate on the process of reconciliation.

Although the interview schedule was followed to ensure a structured framework and address the research questions of this study, an open approach was adopted during the interviews. This flexibility facilitated the emergence and exploration of new themes, encouraging open dialogue and enhancing understanding of the subject matter. The interviews took place in a comfortable and informal virtual setting. Participants were given the option to turn off their cameras to safeguard their privacy and create a more comfortable environment. Participants highlighted that discussions about betrayal and hate are often overlooked or avoided in typical conversations. Moreover, they articulated difficulties when asked to provide definitions or conceptualise hate and betrayal, reflecting the complexities of these topics. Some participants shared personal experiences and highlighted that they had not previously disentangled these emotions in such depth. The majority of participants expressed appreciation for the interviews, indicating that the process encouraged introspection on subjects usually left unaddressed.

6.3 Findings from Thematic Analysis

Thematic Analysis, as described by Braun and Clarke (2006), provided a meaningful framework for analysing the interviews. Despite the diversity of participants' responses, recurring themes emerged, providing a cohesive perspective on the findings. The interviews were transcribed, pseudonymised, and coded in accordance with Braun and

Clarke's six-step process (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This method facilitated the identification of seven principal themes, each encompassing several subthemes. A summary of these themes and subthemes is presented in Table 6.2.

6.3.1 Theme 1: Perspectives on Betrayal

The first theme explores various perspectives on betrayal. Subtheme 1.1 articulates participants' definitions of betrayal, while Subtheme 1.2 delves into its impact on victims, motivating the “desire to move on”. Subtheme 1.3 analyses how the adverse experience of betrayal leads to avoidance, hindering reconciliation and affecting future relationships.

Subtheme 1.1 – What is Betrayal : Towards a Definition

At the beginning of the interviews, participants were asked to recall the scenarios from the survey's vignettes and share their thoughts about them. As they acknowledged that the situations depicted in the vignettes represented instances of betrayal, they were asked to define betrayal in their own words. Several consistent patterns emerged from their responses: first, betrayal was characterised as a “misuse of trust” within a relationship, distinguishing it from merely “bad behaviours”.

I think betrayal has to start when you trust somebody, it can't just happen out of nowhere. So if you're just a random person, that's not really betrayal, but more of a bad behaviour from your side, because I didn't place my trust in you, for you to betray that trust. (P4, Male, 25-34, U.K. & N.I.)

In addition to the violation of trust, betrayal has been conceptualised as a breach of expectations. This includes the failure to act in the best interest of oneself and the relationship in cases of interpersonal betrayal, and the failure to fulfil the duty of care towards citizens in cases of institutional betrayal.

Betrayal is when a person or Institution takes your trust and blows it [...] and does something else than what you expected that they were gonna do for you. (P3, Female, 35-44, ROI)

Alongside with a violation of trust and expectations, betrayal is closely linked to notions

Table 6.2 – Themes Identified through Thematic Analysis

Themes		
1. Perspectives on Betrayal : Definitions of betrayal, its consequences on physical and mental health and coping mechanisms to deal with its aftermaths.		
Subthemes	Description	Example Quotes
1.1 What is Betrayal: Towards a Definition	Definitions and conceptualisation of betrayal.	"Betrayal it's like a feeling that you have inside of you, and different people have different definitions of betrayal." (P4)
1.2 The Desire to Move On: Consequences of Betrayal on Health	Tension motivating efforts to move on to avoid consequences of betrayal on health and well-being.	"You just want to get on in your life and move, because that leads to illness, harbouring all those feelings." (P3)
1.3 "Cutting my losses": The Rise of Avoidance	Avoidance as a mechanism to cope with the aftermaths of betrayal.	"To cut my losses early means that you don't have to face the stress, the trauma, the drama behind it ever again." (P14)
2. Personal vs. Impersonal Betrayal : How experiences of interpersonal and institutional betrayals are perceived on personal or impersonal levels.		
2.1 The Heartbreak of Interpersonal vs. the Anger of Institutional	Different emotional responses to interpersonal and institutional betrayal.	"Personal betrayal is probably where you're going to get your heartbreak [...] in an institution type of thing, you're going to be more angry, more up in arms about it." (P12)
2.2 Betrayal of a Personal Bond vs. Duty of Care	Interpersonal and institutional betrayals break different types of bonds due to the distinct nature of the relationships involved.	"An institution can betray as well as a person, because if they're employing people, they have a duty of care towards them." (P8)
2.3 The Role of the Community in Institutional Betrayal	Interpersonal betrayal leads to isolation, while community support plays a key role in institutional betrayal.	"When it is personal, it's just a bit more wounded. If an institution does it, it's done to a lot of people, so it isn't as personal." (P7)
3. Speaking Up: Empowerment or Responsibility? : The impact of speaking up after betrayal, with the potential to empower victims as well as to burden them.		
3.1 Raising Awareness in the Betrayer by Speaking Up	Making the betrayal perpetrator aware to save the relationship and preventing betrayal from spreading.	"If the victim never speaks up, the perpetrator either doesn't know or doesn't care." (P18)
3.2 The Burden of Failing to Advocate for Yourself	When feeling unable to speak up, betrayal victims experience powerlessness and self-doubt.	"Perhaps, I should have said more, I should have stood up for myself." (P13)
3.3 The Need for a Third Party or/and an Ally	A neutral third party and/or an ally is needed to provide support following betrayal.	"I would look for a support group [...] those are definitely the ones that can get you through a lot of things." (P14)
4. "Culmination, Illness, Insanity"- The Challenges of Experiencing Hate : Perspectives on the challenging experience of hate and the discomfort it generates.		
4.1 The Difficulty in Defining Hate	Difficulties experienced by participants when asked to define and express the meaning of hate.	"It's hard to define these things , like I know how I feel when I feel hate, but I cannot say exactly." (P10)

4.2 Hating to Hate	The unpleasant tension and discomfort caused by experiencing hate.	"When my boys were growing up, I told them-hates is a bad word. Say you don't like it, but don't say hate." (P12)
4.3 The Vicious Cycle of Hate & Betrayal	How betrayal and hate fuel themselves through a destructive cycle.	"Because the person that betrayed you was acting with hatred, and the person who got betrayed, might respond with hatred." (P18)
5. The Need to be Heard and Acknowledged : The crucial elements for a successful interpersonal and institutional reconciliation.		
5.1 The Desire for Reconciliation	A successful reconciliation entails ensuring that all voices are heard and acknowledged.	"I want them to at least acknowledge the fact that they hurt me, and that's just what being heard is." (P15)
5.2 "Going the extra mile" – Apology, Remorse, Communication (Interpersonal Betrayal)	Interpersonal reconciliation is shaped by the need for an apology, remorse and communication.	"In your personal life you don't go to court, you just try to resolve things [...] communication is the key there." (P17)
5.3 "Fixing it by actions" - Compensation, Transparency and Accountability (Institutional Betrayal)	Institutional reconciliation focuses on the need for compensation, transparency and accountability.	"To repair it from an institution, I would expect them to fix that by actions." (P10)
6. The Contrasts of Betrayal: Intentionality, Empathy, and the Drive for Retribution : How perceived intentionality and empathy towards the perpetrators of betrayal shape the resulting hate and influence the efficacy of restorative and retributive attitudes.		
6.1 Interpersonal Forgetfulness vs. Institutional Neglect	Intentionality behind betrayal by omission is perceived differently depending on whether it occurs in interpersonal or institutional contexts.	"If it's a person, you'd assume they have a reason [...] whereas if it's a company or the government, you probably won't accept excuses so much." (P5)
6.2 Faceless Institutions, Hate and Institutional Punishment	Punishment towards Institutions is perceived as less condemnable than towards individuals.	"It's easier to hate an institution than a person who you know, because institutions can be seen as kind of faceless." (P3)
6.3 Interpersonal Punishment and Personal Hate	The victim faces discomfort when contemplating hate and punishment in interpersonal contexts.	"Even if someone did something wrong to me and they get punished, I don't feel better. I empathise with that person." (P10)
7. A Timely Reconciliation to Prevent Hate : The emergence of time as a crucial factor in shaping the experience of betrayal, hate and reconciliation.		
7.1 Betrayal "Sticks in your Head"	Betrayal lingers in the victims' lives when reconciliation is not achieved.	"Do you know what we're talking? Probably 40 years ago and it still sticks in my head." (P12)
7.2 Hate Builds Up with Time	When reconciliation is not timely, feelings of hate can build up from betrayal.	"If you hated someone for all your life, is not gonna be as easy to forgive or to reconcile." (P1)
7.3 Time Can Heal or Wound	The most appropriate timing for reconciliation is inherently subjective.	"I'd say time heals, doesn't it? [...] but then equally, you want me to apologise as soon as possible. So maybe you need more than one apology." (P15)
7.4 Time to Rebuilt Trust	The necessity of time to facilitate reconciliation and rebuild trust.	"As human beings [...] we don't change instantaneously, we have to process things. There is a time to figure out, either at a personal or institutional level [...] All of these things take time." (P18)

of dishonesty, deception, and the feeling of being let down, defined as “being dishonest, lying about what you have done” (P9). Moreover, betrayal has been described as “the decision to mislead or protect yourself over the needs or wants of the other individual” (P18). It has further being depicted as “someone getting something and you getting the short end of the stick, and them doing it, no matter what it takes – breaking loyalty, commitments, relationships – to get what they need done” (P11), underscoring the profound sense of injustice and violation that often accompanies betrayal. Finally, betrayal is described as an event that strikes on a deeply personal and emotional level.

If they said they would deliver something and it hasn't come to the letterbox, they haven't done what they would do or supposed to do, but I wouldn't use the word betrayal. Betrayal is a lot more personal, isn't it? I It's a little bit more emotional.
(P7, Male, 55+, U.K. & N.I.)

In conclusion, the core components of betrayal encompass the breach of a relationship based on trust or duty of care, where an individual or an institution violates your expectations by either exploiting you directly or neglecting your needs to safeguard themselves.

Subtheme 1.2 – The Desire to Move On: Consequences of Betrayal on Health

When discussing the aftermath of betrayal, a prominent theme that emerged was the “desire to move on”. This desire arises from the aversive experience of betrayal, described as a pervasive tension affecting both mind and body. In this context, efforts to move on are seen as crucial for mitigating betrayal's impact on physical and mental health.

I personally avoid those kind of things for health reasons, so that I don't find myself going through health issues in the future [...] because when people say you have health issues, the number one thing is stress, and betrayal causes that. You can't sleep at night, you get stressed, your health deteriorates in time. (P14, Male, 25-34, Canada)

Besides inducing a mix of negative feelings and emotions, including anger, sadness, despair, shock, and upset, betrayal has been described as generating an unpleasant

tension in the body:

And I think at the point of betrayal [...] it's here that you feel it. There's a tension here, in your body. Not just your heart, your whole body tenses up. (P5, Male, 55+, U.K. & N.I.)

Participants further highlighted that, if this tension is not resolved, it can lead to prolonged emotional distress, negatively affecting one's overall well-being.

I think you just want to get on in your life and move on to the next thing, because if you start wallowing back there the whole time, you're never gonna get out of that mindset, of upset and anger. And as I said before, that leads to illness, harbouring all those feelings. (P3, Female, 35-44, ROI)

Subtheme 1.3 – “Cutting My Losses”: The Rise of Avoidance

Participants acknowledged betrayal as a common occurrence in daily life. However, the strategies individuals use to cope with its aftermath vary considerably, influenced by factors such as personality traits and past experiences. Notably, moving on from the consequences of betrayal is sometimes viewed as a personal journey and responsibility, as a “test of your character” (P4).

I think it happens to everybody [...] It depends how you deal with it, how you react to it, what's your previous experience [...] Are you knowledgeable about how to deal with the issues, do you raise it with the appropriate authorities? How do you deal with it personally? It's test of your character [...] Because it can affect your mental health, and if you don't have that knowledge and experience, it would give you anger, resentment, vengeance, all these bad feelings that will come out, maybe at a the later stage, or with the next partner ? (P4, Male, 25-34, U.K. & N.I.)

The concept of “moving on” lacks a standardised approach, as it can involve strategies such as forgiveness, forgetting, avoidance, acceptance, and others. Among the various mechanisms mentioned for moving on, avoidance emerged as one of the most commonly referenced strategies. Avoidance has been defined as “cutting my losses”, implying a

deliberate act of distancing oneself mentally and physically from the situation or the individuals involved. Victims perceive avoidance as a self-defence mechanism, aimed at safeguarding themselves and prevent the potential re-traumatisation that may arise from further betrayals.

I would say that cut my losses early means that you don't have to face the stress, the trauma, the drama and all the emotion part behind it ever again. (P14, Male, 25-34, Canada)

A common consequence of avoidance is the subsequent difficulty in rebuilding trust once it has been broken. The aversive consequences endured serve as a lens through which future relationships and interactions are viewed, often causing individuals to approach new connections with caution, scepticism, and guardedness, posing considerable obstacles to forming new bonds.

You're tarring everybody with the one brush [...] It can affect your relationship with other people, so that you really are hesitant in letting somebody into your life, in every way possible. And that's just something I learned about human nature there, that maybe there's more going on here than you realise about people, that they have their own personal little battles going on there. (P13, Male, 55+, ROI)

In conclusion, the adverse consequences of betrayal frequently engender a fear of re-experiencing its physical and psychological effects, thereby fostering avoidance and impeding reconciliation. It is essential that reconciliation efforts recognise and address this fear to establish a secure and supportive environment conducive to reconciliation.

6.3.2 Theme 2: Personal vs. Impersonal Betrayal

This theme explores the distinction between “personal” and “impersonal” dimensions of betrayal, which emerged as interviews delved into investigating the similarities and differences between interpersonal and institutional betrayal. Subtheme 2.1 focuses on the distinct emotional impacts of these two aspects of betrayal. Subtheme 2.2 explores how varying levels of expectations shape the experience of each type. Finally, Subtheme 2.3 highlights the personal nature of interpersonal betrayal compared to the societal and

communal characteristics of institutional betrayal.

Subtheme 2.1 – The Heartbreak of Interpersonal Betrayal vs. the Anger of Institutional

One of the first differences identified between interpersonal and institutional betrayal refers to their emotional impact. As one participant eloquently expressed, while institutional betrayal tends to generate “anger”, Interpersonal betrayal gives you the “heartbreak” (P12).

I think the personal betrayal is probably where you're going to get your heartbreak, your upset and your tears [...] In an institution type of thing, you're going to be more angry, more up in arms about it. (P12, Female, 55+, Canada)

Differing emotional responses stem from varying levels of trust. Betrayal by close friends and loved ones, where trust is notably high, significantly intensifies the emotional impact. In contrast, betrayal by institutions tends to evoke less shock, as lower trust levels result in diminished expectations of loyalty and care.

Betrayal from someone that you actually care about hurts deeply like to your soul, and the government...you halfway expect that. (P15, Female, 45-54, U.S.)

Consequently, interpersonal betrayal hits harder emotionally, because of the deep personal connections involved, amplifying the pain. In contrast, institutions are seen as impersonal entities, lacking the same emotional attachment.

I would be much more hurt at the personal level of betrayal, because I think that we have a bond and when someone chooses to violate that, that is a very painful thing. At an institutional level, there's not very many institutions that I have a bond with. I have levels of expectations, and so I am more disappointed when outcomes are not achieved. (P18, Male, 45-54, U.S.)

Subtheme 2.2 – Betrayal of a Personal Bond vs. Duty of Care

As previously emphasised, emotional responses to betrayal are influenced by differing

expectations and levels of trust in personal relationships versus institutions. Participants noted that while institutions, like individuals, can betray trust, the difference lies in the nature of the violation: interpersonal betrayal violates a personal bond, whereas institutional betrayal breaches a duty of care.

I do think an institution, even though it's not a person, can betray as well as a person. Because if they're employing people, they have a duty of care towards them, and if they're not upholding that, I do think it's a betrayal. (P8, Female, 35-44, ROI)

Furthermore, unlike interpersonal relationships, which are chosen, individuals often have no choice but to rely on institutions. Dependence on institutional structures, such as education and healthcare, underscores the responsibility of institutions to uphold ethical and moral standards, ensuring the welfare and well-being of those who rely on them.

There's always talks into talks about how institutions betray customers [...] so you are kind of used to it, even though it's not right to be used to it [...] and you basically think "that's not going to happen to me, because I choose the people in my personal life" [...] while you can't make a choice with the government, for example. (P17, Female, 35-44, U.K. & N.I.)

Differences in trust levels, control, and expectations influence the perceived impact of betrayal and its experience as “personal”. High levels of trust and perceived control in interpersonal relationships intensify the personal impact of betrayal. In contrast, institutional betrayal is often seen as more “impersonal” due to lower levels of trust, reduced expectations, perceived lack of control on the relationship, and the absence of a direct personal connection between the parties involved.

Subtheme 2.3 – The Role of the Community in Institutional Betrayal

The personal versus impersonal nature of betrayal is influenced by the fact that interpersonal betrayal typically targets individuals directly, while institutional betrayal often affects multiple people simultaneously. This collective experience within an institutional context generates a sense of collective harm, making the impact feel less personal. Importantly, this distinction is only qualitative; the level of betrayal remains

constant, but its perception varies based on whether the betrayal feels personal or impersonal.

It's different. I mean, the betrayal levels are still there [...] but it's impersonal. The way I feel, and my neighbours feel and my friends feel [are similar], because they've done it to everybody, whereas if it's a personal one, while people can empathise with it, they can't know what you're going through. (P7, Male, 55+, U.K. & N.I.)

It has been noted that while interpersonal betrayal often feels isolating, leaving individuals to cope with the pain on their own, the shared experience of institutional betrayal within a community can foster solidarity and mutual support. In such cases, the community becomes a source of empathy and understanding, allowing individuals to share their pain and collaboratively work towards healing. While this insight provides a pathway to empower victims, it is crucial to avoid unjustly shifting this responsibility onto communities, especially vulnerable groups that are most lacking in institutional protection.

6.3.3 Theme 3: Speaking Up: Empowerment or Responsibility?

This theme explores the importance of speaking up after betrayal, focusing on communicating the victim's experience to the perpetrator. Speaking up holds both power and responsibility, as it can empower victims but also expose them to additional risks. Subtheme 3.1 discusses the motivations for speaking up, such as safeguarding the relationship and preventing betrayal from spreading. Subtheme 3.2 explores how the failure to speak up burdens victims, and Subtheme 3.3 highlights the importance of a supportive third party and/or ally for victims.

Subtheme 3.1 – Raising Awareness in the Betrayer by Speaking Up

The act of speaking up after experiencing betrayal is recognised as crucial for achieving resolution. Participants emphasised the importance of communicating the hurt caused and the emotional impact of the betrayal to the perpetrator, as the betrayers can sometimes be unaware of the extent of their actions.

In my situation, I was hurt, and the way I dealt with it was that I removed myself from the situation and nothing happened. That person didn't know what was going on. Whereas had I thought that my position was worth fighting for, and that there was a future in this working relationship, it would have had to come from me. (P5, Male, 55+, U.K. & N.I.)

It has also been recognised that, in some cases, individuals may betray others inadvertently, without fully grasping the consequences of their actions. However, a distinction here emerges between interpersonal and institutional betrayal: while there may be uncertainty about whether individuals are aware of their betrayal, such doubts are less prevalent when it comes to institutions.

You have to speak in cases of Institutional betrayal, as if you don't nobody cares. With people is a bit different, as they might be unaware of the betrayal. (P14, Male, 25-34, Canada)

Participants frequently observed that victims, bearing the impact of betrayal, often take the lead in seeking resolution. Nonetheless, while speaking up can empower victims, it also places an added burden on them, as they must confront the emotional and psychological challenges of expressing their experiences and seeking resolution.

Resolution usually it comes from the person who's been hurt, because the person who's doing the hurting, a lot of the time, doesn't know that they're doing it. [They think] "Oh well, This is how we always do it, this is how we've always done this". (P5, Male, 55+, U.K. & N.I.)

Notably, it further emerged that while speaking up in interpersonal contexts primarily aims to try to preserve the relationship, in institutional settings, the focus shifts to preventing the betrayal from spreading and impacting others. In cases of institutional betrayal, victims often feel a strong responsibility to "add their voices to the others" (P5) to prevent further harm. This underscores a collective responsibility to safeguard the community and recognise that impact of betrayal extends beyond the immediate victims. By speaking up, individuals seek to raise awareness, hold the perpetrator accountable,

and prevent similar betrayals within the community. One participant described this motivation as follows:

Because I want them to acknowledge that they can't do that, not just to me, but to other people, because who knows how many other people they have already betrayed. So, if it's not just me, I don't know how many more times they're gonna do it. And will they continue it on? So why not stop the damage before it even spreads out further. (P14, Male, 25-34, Canada)

Subtheme 3.2 – The Burden of Failing to Advocate for Yourself

In instances where victims of betrayal recalled being unable to speak up, various emotional responses emerged. Many participants reported feelings of self-blame, guilt, or remorse for not having defended themselves. Some attributed this to a perceived lack of assertiveness, while others felt powerless to address the situation or believed that nothing could be done to repair the harm.

Perhaps I should have said more, I should have stood up for myself. (P13, Male, 55+, ROI)

These feelings of self-blame often stem from a sense of powerlessness or the belief that events should have unfolded differently. Victims may question their own agency in addressing the betrayal, leading to inadequacy and regret, coupled with the fear that speaking up could expose them to further betrayal or trauma. In institutional contexts, this is compounded by the fear of retaliation due to the power imbalance, which acts as a significant deterrent to speaking out.

When you're an employee you have to be very careful about what you say [...] you know, the job is important, earning a living. (P13, Male, 55+, ROI)

The fear of not being believed and the lack of support act as significant barriers for individuals facing institutional betrayal. The response victims receive when reporting betrayal greatly influences their subsequent actions. Unsupportive or dismissive reactions can be particularly devastating, often discouraging victims from speaking up due to concerns about not being believed or taken seriously, thereby deepening their sense of

powerlessness. The fear of retaliation or ostracism further reinforces a culture of silence around institutional betrayal. As one participant illustrated:

If all the blame comes to me, I would feel very negative. I would feel withdrawn [...] and even my confidence would go low, and maybe so would my production. And after everything I do, I will double check my work and I will question my own integrity or sanity – like, have I done things right? because you guys are all ganging up on me. I know I haven't done anything wrong, but why is everybody's ganging up on me? And then you question yourself, and you lose your confidence. (P16, Female, 45-54, Canada)

In conclusion, the willingness to speak up after interpersonal or institutional betrayal depends on relational bonds as well as power dynamics. Addressing an individual typically involves a sense of connection and empowerment, leading to a greater inclination to speak up. In contrast, confronting an institution is more challenging due to the power imbalance and the belief that concerns may be disregarded, complicating efforts towards reconciliation.

Subtheme 3.3 – The Need for a Third Party and/or an Ally

The lack of support and the challenge of self-advocacy, particularly in cases of pronounced power imbalances, highlight the critical need for an ally or support group. Such support can offer emotional reassurance, guidance, and enhance the victim's confidence, aiding them in navigating the aftermath of betrayal and strengthening their position when raising concerns or seeking redress.

I would look for a support group. First, I need to have a group where they will understand the situation [...] those are definitely the ones that can get you through a lot of things. (P14, Male, 34-45, Canada)

Participants mentioned that involving a third party, such as a mediator, counsellor, or legal representative, can be particularly beneficial in cases of institutional betrayal, as it provides a safe and objective platform for expressing concerns, addressing power imbalances, negotiating resolutions and advocating for justice.

They should have called a completely independent party, a neutral party who doesn't know them and who doesn't know us, and that neutral party should hear both side of the stories [...] and then that person should be more like an arbitrator, and all three of us should sit together and tell them who's going wrong and what the next steps would be. (P16, Female, 45-54, Canada)

A significant factor contributing to the lack of support within an organisation in cases of institutional betrayal is often the absence of transparency. Participants noted that when individuals are “kept in the dark” (P11) about ongoing issues, it becomes difficult to gather support and understanding from peers within the organisation. As one participant reflected on her experience: “It would have been nice if somebody would have stood up, but they don't know what was going on” (P15).

Finally, participants highlighted that sometimes resolution must come from “another angle”, often requiring someone other than the person who has been hurt to “start that conversation”. Victims of betrayal are already grappling with its traumatic impact, and placing the responsibility of initiating the conversation on them can further burden their healing process. Moreover, power imbalances inherent in certain situations make it additionally challenging for victims to speak up, as it may expose them to additional adverse consequences. The need for a third-party involvement is exemplified by a participant who referenced child abuse, highlighting the critical role of external support in raising the issue and assisting the victim:

Now, the child maybe too frightened to raise the problem that they had been abused. But it would take somebody else to spot that had happened, to then raise the question from down or sideways. That would either take a fellow colleague whistleblowing, or a line manager or superior officer spotting that that had happened [...] or going sideways, you know, [through] the observation of an independent person observing that child possibly had been abused and raising the questions, like in a school [...] and then the circle comes round. So, restitution could come from another angle, but it would have to be somebody else to see that something had happened to raise that question and to start that conversation, other than the person who had been hurt. (P5, Male, 55+, U.K. & N.I.)

On a concluding note, although the findings highlight the importance of allies and support groups in aiding victims, it is crucial to emphasise that the decision to speak out and pursue reconciliation is deeply personal, with victims retaining full agency over their healing journey.

6.3.4 Theme 4 : “Culmination, Illness, Insanity” – The Challenges of Experiencing Hate

Following the discussion on the aftermath of interpersonal and institutional betrayal, this theme will explore the relationship between hatred and betrayal. First, Subtheme 4.1 will present the definitions of hate provided by participants. Subsequently, Subtheme 4.2 will examine the challenges experienced by participants when encountering and experiencing hatred. Finally, Subtheme 4.3 will analyse how hate and betrayal can reinforce each other, perpetuating a destructive cycle.

Subtheme 4.1 – The Difficulty in Defining Hate

When exploring the connection between hate and betrayal, participants were asked to define hate in their own words. Many expressed hesitation, acknowledging the difficulty of articulating such a complex and emotionally charged experience.

It's actually hard to define these things, like I know how I feel when I feel hate, but I cannot say exactly [...] I just don't want to see or have any interaction with that person, I'm staying away and I feel bad about spending time with that person. (P10, Female, 18-24, ROI)

Hate has been defined as a “four-letter word to sum up a lot of emotions” (P5); participants often described hate using terms such as “an intense dislike” (P20) and “emotional despising” (P3). Regardless of whether the target of hate is a person or an institution, hate emerges as an extreme avoidance and dislike towards the object of hate, defined as “feeling intense disgust and negativity towards someone or something” (P8). Moreover, hating has been described as “wishing the worse on someone” (P11) and, as one participant expressed “dislike someone that much and you wish they were never born” (P12).

Importantly, hate also been defined as “a culmination of various factors which build up” (P5), characterised as a deeper and more enduring sentiment that builds up over time, to distinguish it from other emotions, like anger, described as being more transient.

You wish something bad for somebody, you genuinely wish that. And that's not just anger or something like that [...] because sometimes anger is a different emotion and natural to happen. But I don't think it's hate. Hate is more intentional, more well thought of, more accumulated. (P17, Female, 35-44, U.K. & N.I.)

Moreover, beyond the aversion experienced towards someone, hate often manifests as an inability to recognise any positive qualities in them, while focusing exclusively on their negative traits.

For me hate is not being able to be to see someone. You just can't be in that room with that person. You don't like what they say, you find everything that they do is wrong [...] You don't want to see the good things that they had, but always try to see the bad things in them. (P1, Male, 18-24, Canada)

The connection between hate and prejudice has also been acknowledged, as hate has been defined as “an extreme dislike of somebody that causes you to be prejudice towards them” (P9). Hate has also been depicted as “a desire to see in individual or a group harmed” (P18), leading to efforts to seek vengeance. As one participants described: “Hate would be maybe feeling so strongly that you want bad things to happen to someone [...] like vengeance, taking vengeance against someone on an emotional basis.” (P15)

In this process, by projecting negative feelings into them, victims of hate have been described as deprived of their humanity.

If [hate] is towards a person, then the person is just associated with the bad things that are disliked about them, just not looked at even as a person anymore, but just as an object of rage [...] There are all consuming [thoughts] to maybe to make this person's life [so] bad that it robs them of any humanity. (P2, Female, 55+, Canada)

To conclude, how can we define hate? Hate is a culmination of intense emotions, characterised by an extreme dislike or avoidance, that can lead to retaliatory actions,

prejudice and discrimination, and that often arises “on an emotional basis” (P15). Hate, finally, is “kind of an insanity” (P2).

Hate to me is kind of an insanity. Because by the time that people get to hate, it's not logical anymore. They're hating some ideology there. If they say, I hate these people or I hate those people....they're not referring to individual people and they are not listening to the fact that these are people just like you and I. They are just lashing out at something that they have in their minds that is wrong. (P2, Female, 55+, Canada)

Subtheme 4.2 – Hating to Hate

An intriguing aspect that emerged from the discussions was participants' tendency to distance themselves from the concept of hate, sometimes by expressing a strong desire to exclude such a negatively connoted emotion from their thoughts and their lives. Some mentioned witnessing or hearing about hate but not personally experiencing it, while others asserted that “hatred is not part of my character” (P15).

I have never experienced hate. When my boys were growing up, I told them, “Hates is a bad word, don't say hate. Say you don't like it, but don't say hate”. (P12, Female, 55+, Canada)

This reluctance to acknowledge and engage with hate may be seen as a reflection of the internal conflict between preserving a positive self-image and the intense feelings of contempt associated with hate. Participants often struggled to reconcile their self-perception as morally good individuals with the negative connotations of hate, leading to its denial or avoidance.

Hate is not one of my words. My mom told me “You should never hate anybody”. She said you can hate the things that they do and you can hate what they stand for, but you cannot hate the persons themselves. (P15, Female, 45-54 U.S.)

Subtheme 4.3 – The Vicious Cycle of Hate & Betrayal

The relationship between hate and betrayal is complex and multifaceted. While not every betrayal originates from hate or culminates in it, a recognised connection emerged, where

hate can serve as both a potential motivation for and a consequence of betrayal, creating a circular dynamic. As a motivation, some participants suggested that hate might drive someone to betray others out of envy or desire for what they possess. In this context, betrayal reflects a willingness to exploit trust in order to attain personal advantage, where hate can take the form of prejudice, discrimination, oppression.

[Hate] does lead into that [betrayal], and that's part of the motive too. There's something that you hate about them, that you envy of them. It's all of those things that lead into betrayal, and hate is part of it too. (P14, Male, 25-34, Canada)

Furthermore, as a consequence of betrayal, hate is thought to stem from the failure to process the negative emotions resulting from the betrayal. These unresolved emotions can accumulate over time, eventually evolving into hate.

Betrayal in the end becomes hatred. If somebody has betrayed you, initially it's going to be betrayal, which will turn into hate. And then you can't stand that person, and you just want to be away from that person, because you hate that person so much. (P16, Female, 45-54, Canada)

This suggests that if the aftermath of betrayal is not effectively addressed, hate can linger and continue to impact the individual. As victims struggle with the negative consequences of betrayal, they may develop feelings of hate towards the betrayer, whether a person or institution, perpetuating a destructive cycle. As one participant noted, “once you start into that negative hate, it just continues on” (P14).

Hate definitely plays a role, because the person that betrayed you was acting with hatred, and the person who got betrayed, might respond to being betrayed with hatred. From the victimised perspective, they feel betrayed and as a result they lose trust, lose empathy and they come to hate that organisation or hate that party that did them wrong. (P18, Male, 45-54, U.S.)

Ultimately, the importance of overcoming and preventing hate is highlighted by its potential to lead to obsession, illness, and psychological distress, underscoring the harmful

impact of betrayal and hate on mental health.

It creates anxiety and obsession, sickness, long term [...] you know, if people really hate something or somebody or some group, it eats that person up, and they become bitter and you see it in their faces, and how they are with everything else in their lives. (P3, Female, 35-44, ROI)

In conclusion, if hate is seen as a “culmination”, leading to a spiral that becomes increasingly difficult to escape, it prompts the critical question: what can be done to prevent its consolidation?

6.3.5 Theme 5: The Need to Be Heard and Acknowledged

Following the exploration of the definitions and characteristics of interpersonal and institutional betrayal and their connection to hate, this theme will explore the resolution strategies aimed at mitigating and preventing their harmful consequences. Subtheme 5.1 will address the various definitions of reconciliation provided by participants. Subsequently, Subtheme 5.2 will explore the nuances of interpersonal reconciliation, and Subtheme 5.3 will focus on the specificities of institutional reconciliation.

Subtheme 5.1 – The Desire for Reconciliation

When participants were asked to articulate their personal definitions of reconciliation, it became clear that the need for resolution is regarded as a fundamental aspect of the human experience. When we are betrayed, hurt, or disadvantaged, there is a natural desire to restore balance and make things right.

I believe it's very human thing to feel disadvantaged [by the fact] that somebody did something wrong and to want that back, in a way. (P17, Female, 35-44, U.K. & N.I.)

Various approaches have been mentioned as desirable to achieve reconciliation in the context of betrayal. One perspective equates reconciliation to restitution, intended as efforts to “fix something to make it work like it did before the betrayal” (P10), while some

participants further mentioned that the goal of reconciliation should be “to re-establish trust with the individual, and if it's institutional with the general populace” (P18). Reconciliation has further been defined as “an ability to seek a compromise, a win/win situation” (P13), or, as a participant expressed, “living side by side peacefully and [....] accepting that the other person has a different point of view from you, and not attacking them because of that” (P8). Different definitions of reconciliation after betrayal arise from the subjective nature of victims' needs and experiences, underscoring that reconciliation is not a one-size-fits-all process. However, common features of a successful reconciliation emerged, primarily centring around a recurrent desire: the need to be heard and acknowledged.

I think the main thing that almost anybody wants is an acknowledgement, because you can't do much else, but you can acknowledge the fact that that person is there and that you did something wrong. And they may not be able to apologise at that moment, but if I'm talking to someone, I want them to at least acknowledge the fact that they hurt me [...] and that's just what being heard is. (P15, Female, 45-54, U.S.)

Being heard has been defined as a crucial part of a successful reconciliation, conceptualised as “meeting the person, having a conversation with them, ensuring that your voice is heard, and possibly hearing their side of the story” (P8). This often requires “an acknowledgement of wrongdoing” (P18) from the perpetrator. This acknowledgment is conceptualised as an action that signifies an understanding of the harm inflicted and a commitment to making amends. This may require providing the victim with the necessary time and space to process their emotions and accommodating their needs and feelings.

Taking steps to make things right after the betrayal. Just continuing to acknowledge the person's feelings of betrayal, and just going with what they give you, so you can show that you really understand how they feel and the severity of what you did to cause them to feel like that. (P11, Female, 25-34, U.S.)

Subtheme 5.2 – “Going the extra mile”– Apology, Remorse, Communication (Interpersonal Betrayal)

After emphasising the importance of being heard and acknowledged in reconciliation, the discussion moved to different kinds of resolution strategies. Participants underscored the essential role of an apology in interpersonal contexts – “Start with an apology, because that's the starting point”(P1). In close relationships, an apology may sometimes be enough due to strong relational bonds, whereas institutional betrayals often demand corrective actions. This underscores the importance of elements such as genuine remorse and open communication in interpersonal reconciliation, a process that has been described as “going the extra mile, once again, to that person” (P14).

I would expect them [Institutions] to fix that by actions and with my partner, I would feel really better if he just said that he's sorry for the situation and he will try to fix that. So, in this case, the action would be actually just talking with me and saying that he's sorry, and that would be the difference. (P10, Female, 18-24, ROI)

The emphasis on communication and open dialogue further supports the desire to repair and restore the relationship.

In your personal life, you don't go to court, you just try to resolve things. You try to communicate, you try to understand the other person [...] You try to explain how you feel, why you think something is wrong. I suppose communication is the key there. (P17, Female, 35-44, U.K. & N.I.)

Moreover, beyond an apology and acknowledgment, victims of betrayal seek a commitment to change, demonstrating an intention not to repeat the betrayal in the future. As a participant mentioned: “In a personal relationship, it [reconciliation] would be identifying what they did wrong, acknowledging that they need to work on that, and not doing it again” (P9). In summary, achieving interpersonal reconciliation relies on the principle that “communication is key” (P17). Open dialogue, active communication, and understanding the other person’s perspective are seen as essential components for a successful reconciliation.

Subtheme 5.3 – “Fixing it by actions” – Compensation, Transparency and Accountability (Institutional Betrayal)

A key distinction emerged between the two forms of reconciliation: interpersonal reconciliation is primarily driven by emotional dynamics, shaped by trust and relational bonds, whereas institutional reconciliation is perceived as more effective when it involves tangible actions to address and rectify the situation—defined as “fixing it by actions” (P10).

To repair from an institution, I would expect the actual actions, like [I would expect] them to do wherever they promised to actually do [...] and maybe some apology, but I don't really expect that from them. However, I would expect them to fix that by actions. (P10, Female, 18-24, ROI)

In institutional contexts, participants noted that institutional betrayal often entails monetary loss or the deprivation of services, employment, or benefits, which can be quantified and addressed through financial compensation. Furthermore, in institutional contexts, less emphasis on restorative actions like apologies may reflect the lower trust levels towards institutions. Institutional apologies are often seen as fake, scripted, and self-interested, unlike the more genuine apologies from personal partners or friends.

I feel like someone told them [Institutions] to say sorry so it would look good. They have some advisors, who tell them “it would be nice if you say sorry so that people will like you again”- That's how I feel. (P10, Female, 18-24, ROI)

Moreover, transparency is essential in the process of institutional reparation. Institutions, entrusted with a duty of care to the public, must openly acknowledge any violation of trust, issue apologies, and take corrective actions. This transparency not only signifies accountability but also highlights the institution's commitment to addressing and rectifying the harm caused. Therefore, in cases of institutional betrayal, a private apology is insufficient. A public apology is necessary to ensure that the institution is actively working to address the harm and prevent future betrayals.

They need to acknowledge it to let the public know about it [...] because if the public doesn't know, then who knows what's going to happen again in the future. (P14, Male, 25-34, Canada)

Moreover, it emerged how an institutional apology, to be perceived as sincere, should be “personalised”; as a participant expressed : “You have to acknowledge and personalise

the apology to the individual. I think a general ‘Oh, sorry this happened. Blah, blah, blah, won’t happen again’ is just nonsense and meaningless. It needs to be more personal. They should, you know, mention the person’s name and give a general outline of what happened, so people can see how wrong the person was in that scenario.” (P3, Female, 35-44, ROI)

In conclusion, the effectiveness of reparation strategies in betrayal cases depends on factors such as relationship depth, authenticity, transparency, and trust. Nonetheless, it is crucial to highlight that there is not one-size-fits-all reparation. While understanding the elements of successful reconciliation is important, only the victims retain exclusive knowledge of their own needs. Therefore, it is crucial to listen to them carefully and prioritise their needs in the process.

5.3.6 Theme 6: The Contrasts of Betrayal: Intentionality, Empathy, and the Drive for Retribution

Building on the discussion of the characteristics of reconciliation in interpersonal and institutional contexts, this theme will explore how differences between these forms of betrayal—by influencing the attribution of intentionality, empathy towards perpetrators, and feelings of hate—shape retributive attitudes. Subtheme 6.1 will examine the attribution of intentionality in both interpersonal and institutional betrayal, whether by commission or omission. Subtheme 6.2 will examine how hate is related to betrayal, considering the difference between personal and impersonal betrayals, as well as the role of punishment and retribution in institutional settings. In contrast, Subtheme 6.3 will focus on these issues in the context of interpersonal betrayals.

Subtheme 6.1 – Interpersonal Forgetfulness vs. Institutional Neglect

When discussing the difference between betrayal by commission and omission (Smith & Freyd, 2014), participants highlighted that betrayal by commission, involving active harmful actions by the perpetrator, is generally perceived as a higher level of betrayal than betrayal by omission, which involves a failure to provide protective, preventive, or responsive actions.

I think that there are levels of betrayal, and certainly the one where they kind of

stonewall, and they are just not cooperative—that is not right, it's not ethical, but I don't believe it's at the same level as someone who say “No, we're not going to cooperate it. And on top of that, we're going to hide things”. That to me is a higher level of complicity—or duplicity? (P18, Male, 35-44, U.S.)

Moreover, a distinction emerged between interpersonal and institutional betrayal by omission. In interpersonal relationships, victims often give the benefit of the doubt to the perpetrators, sometimes interpreting the omission as “forgetfulness” rather than a deliberate act.

I think one [by commission] is a betrayal and the other [by omission] is a mistake [...] because if the partner forgot, that's not really a betrayal. It's a human error [...] The person might perceive it as a betrayal, but I don't think that there was a malicious intent. (P18, Male, 35-44, U.S.)

In contrast, within institutional contexts, the distinction between omission and commission is less distinct, and intentionality to betray is more frequently assumed, allowing little room for the benefit of the doubt. As one participant observed: “You wouldn't automatically assume it's deliberate with a person, but you would with an institution” (P20). This is because we expect those close to us to act in our best interests; when they betray us, it fundamentally contradicts our expectations. In contrast, when the perpetrator is an institution, trust tends to be lower.

I think there is a difference. If it's a person, then you'd assume they have a reason and you accept the reason that they were busy or whatever. Whereas if it's a company or a government, you probably won't accept excuses so much, as you'd assume they have processes and rules and regulations. (P20, Male, 45-54, U.K. & N.I.)

The lack of personal connection and the expectation of institutional accountability further result in a different response, where individuals do not internalise the betrayal or engage in self-doubt, as often occurs in interpersonal scenarios.

I would say it's more a reflection on me as a person, feeling like maybe I did

something to deserve that within a relationship, whereas with the institutions I think that they have a responsibility to uphold ethical and moral standards. (P8, Female, 35-44, ROI)

Finally, the different attribution of intentionality between individuals and institutions significantly complicates the ability to empathise with the latter.

I believe that these institutions are there to safeguard people and when they fail to do that, to protect themselves or to protect profit, I have a difficult time empathising with them. (P18, Male, 35-44, U.S.)

Subtheme 6.2 – Faceless Institutions, Hate and Institutional Punishment

Empathy towards institutions is hindered by their perception as “faceless” entities. As previously discussed in relation to the distinction between personal and impersonal nuances of betrayal, this contributes to them being viewed as distant and detached, making it difficult for individuals to connect and empathise with them.

I think on a personal level, then it is really personal. Whereas if it's an institution and you're rageful at that institution, you don't know what parts you're rageful at. (P2, Female, 55+, Canada)

This perception also influences the experience of hate stemming from betrayal. Participants noted that hating an institution differs from hating an individual. As institutions are perceived as faceless, one participant remarked: “if you hate an institution, you don't know what you hate” (P19). This lack of clear accountability further fuels the sense of impersonality, as it becomes difficult to identify those responsible for the betrayal within a government or institution and hold them accountable.

As a result of betrayal, people can hate an institution, but it's not the same thing as hating an individual [...] I think they're more hating the actions of the institution. (P18, Male, 35-44, U.S.)

Perceiving institutions as faceless makes institutional punishment more justifiable than

interpersonal punishment. Although participants indicated that punishment is not always desirable in institutional contexts, they emphasised that it tends to be perceived as less emotionally impactful compared to interpersonal scenarios.

I would say it's easier to hate an institution than a person, because institutions can be seen as kind of faceless, and some people may find it easier to talk negatively about an institution rather than a person, because you don't think you're hurting anyone. You can say lots of terrible things about them and feel like you're not having an impact on them, whereas if you're saying something about a person, you might think could have a negative impact on them. (P3, Female, 35-44, ROI)

This argument is further supported by the distinction often made between individuals at different levels of power. The greater the power an individual holds, the more distant they are perceived, and consequently, the more justifiable their punishment is considered.

I feel bad for that people that are like simple workers there, but they are working in an institution and got punished. But if it's like the president, or some public person, then I have a little bit different feelings about these people. So I would maybe feel bad, but not as bad as I would feel for someone else. (P10, Female, 18-24, ROI)

Subtheme 6.3 – Interpersonal Punishment and Personal Hate

When discussing resolution after interpersonal betrayal, none of the participants expressed a desire to punish the wrongdoer. Instead, the majority emphasised that punishment in this context is viewed as far less effective than other strategies for reparation.

Even if someone did something wrong to me and they got punished, I don't feel better. I empathise with that person [...] You know, the other person it's still a person. As I wouldn't like it for myself or for my best friend, even if the person did something bad to me, I wouldn't want that for him or her. (P10, Female, 18-24, ROI)

The experience of hating someone with whom there was a deep, personal relationship is perceived as profoundly painful, often leaving individuals feeling lost and confused. This stands in contrast to directing such negative emotions towards “impersonal” institutions. This difference arises in part because, when hating an individual, the consequences and impact of that hate are more visible, making it easier to empathise with the person.

I think that in terms of an institution, there is not really a face to it, so you can have more hatred towards it. Versus with a person, you see the person, and especially if you had a relationship with them or an interpersonal type of connection, it's harder to really say “I hate that person”, especially for a prolonged period of time, because eventually the memories come up or good times come into play and it's more just feeling lost or confused. (P11, Female, 25-34, U.S.)

Furthermore, as one participant described, hate is perceived as something that “must be dealt with personally” (P5), underscoring the deeply “personal” impact of hate stemming from interpersonal betrayal.

I think that hate is, very much like love, a very personal thing. And I think that it's very hard to have a personal relationship with an institution. [...] They're an institution, they don't really care about me. (P18, Male, 45-54, U.S.)

Consequently, the negative effects of hate following interpersonal betrayal have been acknowledged as often lingering longer than those associated with institutional hate.

Forget these silly institution, you know they're just not there for me. But if it's something personal, like your family, your friends I think it can you can carry that hate with you for longer. (P4, Male, 25-34, U.K. & N.I.)

In conclusion, understanding how differences in attribution of intentionality and empathy towards the perpetrators shape experiences of hate and retributive attitudes following interpersonal and institutional betrayals is essential for developing effective interventions to address their aftermaths.

6.3.7 Theme 7: A Timely Reconciliation to Prevent Hate

This theme explores the role of time, which emerged throughout the interviews as a key factor in shaping the experiences of betrayal, hate, and reconciliation. Subtheme 7.1 discusses how the adverse effects of betrayal continue to impact victims' lives when reconciliation is not achieved. Subsequently, Subtheme 7.2 articulates how a timely reconciliation can prevent the escalation of negative emotions into hate. Subtheme 7.3 delves into the subjective nature of the perfect timing for reconciliation. Finally, Subtheme 7.4 highlights the role of time in rebuilding trust.

Subtheme 7.1 – Betrayal “Sticks in Your Head”

As participants reflected on past experiences of betrayal, they shed light on the enduring intensity of emotions and the lingering impact of their consequences. While reminiscing betrayal episodes happened in their lives, they acknowledged that the memories of these episodes were still remarkably vivid in the present.

You know, if you do feel betrayed and let down, it's just there constantly. It's always there in the back of your mind whenever you see that person. And for me personally, it doesn't go away. If I see certain people it's as fresh now as it was when it originally happened. (P7, Male, 55+, U.K. & N.I.)

Participants' experiences revealed that, even when betrayal did not end the relationship, it significantly altered it. Without proper reconciliation, the memory of betrayal lingers, making it challenging to rebuild trust. This suggests that when victims attempt to “move on” without resolving the betrayal, its negative aftermaths persist in their lives.

That was a big betrayal for me. And you know what? From that day until this day, it has been seven years now... and I'm still not the same. I mean, I trust him now [...] But if he has to tell that he's leaving, that's fine. Go ahead. So, that feeling of trustworthiness is already gone. (P16, Female, 45-54, Canada)

Subtheme 7.2 – Hate Builds Up with Time

The enduring negative effects of betrayal often arise from the lack of proper resolution, potentially leading to sustained resentment. As participants noted, hate frequently stems from the accumulation of negative emotions over time, underscoring the importance of promptly addressing resolution to prevent these adverse outcomes from escalating into hate.

From feeling betrayed in the past, you do kind of hate the person in the moment, but if that hate dissipates or not, it depends on what happens after and what the solution is [...] like, even in situations where people are injured and killed in an accident, you hear of the families forgiving and moving on. So I think that hatred is temporary, unless someone is becoming obsessive about how they were betrayed.

(P11, Female, 25-34, U.S.)

The previous quote highlights that experiences of hate following betrayal may be temporary if acknowledged and addressed early, preventing them from intensifying into a lasting obsession. Participants indicated that without timely reconciliation, initial hate becomes progressively harder to resolve. As a result, if reconciliation is delayed, hate can solidify and perpetuate itself.

If you start hating each other, but you try to reconcile pretty soon, it's not gonna be too bad [...] but if you hated from a long time and you let that hate field inside your head, and you continue creating fake scenario in your mind, that can influence a lot trying to reconcile with them [...] Because if you hated someone for all your life, is not gonna be as easy to forgive or to reconcile as if you had someone for something that was done pretty recently to you. (P1, Male, 18-24, Canada)

Furthermore, it became evident that the initial emotional response following betrayal, which may diminish over time, is distinct from the subsequent consolidation of negative emotions, which is more challenging to release. This latter emotional state is what is often referred to as hate.

Hate usually depends on the type of betrayal; honestly, some can't get past. But some are really in the extremity of the moment. You're so consumed with feelings

and emotions that you think it's hate, but it's really just the sting feeling of betrayal. But when someone becomes consumed and going off the deep end, that's when they're really not letting all that hatred go. (P11, Female, 25-34, U.S.)

Subtheme 7.3 – Time Can Heal or Wound

Time emerged as a crucial factor in both fostering or preventing hate and determining the success of reconciliation efforts. Participants agreed that for reconciliation, to be effective, must be “timely”. However, what constitutes a timely reconciliation is not universally defined. For some, a prompt apology is essential to prevent escalation and avoid lasting harm, while others may need more time before addressing the issue. On the contrary, for some individuals, if too much time passes between the harm and the resolution, any attempt at reconciliation may become irrelevant, to the point where it “doesn’t matter anymore” (P15).

I guess I'd say time heals, doesn't it? As time goes on you, you forget, your anger burns down, you got other things on your mind, and there's less of an hate at the moment. You might just take it in, accept it and understand it, but then equally [...] you want me to apologise as soon as possible, don't you? So maybe you need more than one apology. (P5, Male, 55+, U.K.)

In conclusion, time has been recognised as having the potential to both heal and wound. This underscores the necessity of carefully considering the unique circumstances and needs of betrayal victims when determining the most appropriate timing for reconciliation.

Subtheme 7.4 – Time to Rebuilt Trust

Finally, participants emphasised that even after timely reconciliation is achieved, the work is not over. A crucial element of successful resolution is the gradual rebuilding of trust, which requires significant time and sustained effort. The persistent fear of being betrayed again, rooted in the lasting memory of the initial betrayal, can present a substantial obstacle to this process.

You need to build that trust again from the start. So it will definitely be a long-term process, because you never know when they can betray you again. That's the fear.
(P14, Male, 25-34, Canada)

Additionally, when examining both interpersonal and institutional contexts, it became evident that rebuilding trust is generally perceived as more achievable with loved ones than with institutions.

To reconcile, if it comes to my friend or partner, then maybe just talking with me would be enough. Also, maybe I'll just need more time to feel better [...] Whether with institutions, even if they do something to fix the situation, I would still be negative about them, and even if they turn out [to be] good, then I would probably trust them slowly, and maybe the hate will go with time, not instantly, but after a lot of long process. (P10, Female, 18-23, ROI)

This difference, in addition to the lower levels of trust in institutions, also stems from the recognition of the greater challenges involved in addressing the behaviour of an entire institution compared to that of a single individual.

I would say that it is much harder to move a ship than a rowboat. And so a person can be a little more agile, in the way they correct their behaviour, than an organisation. (P18, Male, 35-44, U.S.)

Rebuilding of trust is crucial to mitigating the consequences of betrayal, including the potential development of hate. This gradual process is necessary in both interpersonal and institutional contexts, each with its own complexities. On a conclusive note, as emphasised in the following quote, navigating the path towards healing requires time—time to acknowledge past responsibilities and to reflect on how to build a better future:

As human beings [...] we don't change instantaneously. We have to go through things, we have to process things. And that takes time. There is a time to figure out, either at a personal or institutional level – “What are we going to do different? How are we going to protect people in the future?” – All of these things take time. (P18, Male, 45-54, U.S.)

6.4 Summary of Qualitative Findings

In conclusion, seven distinct themes emerged from the interviews, each revealing various aspects of interpersonal and institutional betrayal, as well as the dynamics of hate and reconciliation. Firstly, it was observed that betrayal creates a tension that drives a strong desire to alleviate the discomfort it generates, while the fear of repeated betrayals may impede reconciliation through avoidance (Theme 1). Secondly, the analysis highlights how interpersonal and institutional betrayal carry different nuances based on the personal or impersonal nature of the experience, leading to different emotional responses (Theme 2). Thirdly, the act of speaking out to make the betrayer aware—whether to preserve personal relationships or prevent betrayal from spreading—presents both an opportunity and a burden for the victims. This process is shaped by power dynamics and underscores the critical role of allies and/or support groups (Theme 3). The exploration of hate revealed the challenges in defining it, underscoring the discomfort it generates, and how it can be both a product of and a catalyst for betrayal, thereby perpetuating a vicious cycle (Theme 4). Moreover, key elements of reconciliation were examined, revealing the need to be heard and acknowledged as a common point in both interpersonal and institutional contexts. Interpersonal reconciliation often centres on communication and apology, while institutional reconciliation is more focused on compensatory actions (Theme 5). Additionally, the analysis highlighted how varying attributions of intentionality and empathy towards perpetrators, by shaping how personal or impersonal the betrayal is perceived, influence experiences of hate and attitudes towards retribution and punishment in cases of betrayal (Theme 6). Finally, the discussion underscored the role of time, showing its dual ability to either foster healing or deepen the wounds caused by betrayal. Time emerged as a significant factor in fostering the consolidation of negative feelings into hate, or conversely, providing the necessary space to rebuild trust (Theme 7).

In summary, the aforementioned themes shed light on participants' experiences with betrayal, hate, and their resolution. The subsequent chapter will integrate the qualitative insights derived from the interviews with the quantitative results from the survey, aiming to achieve a coherent understanding of the findings.

Chapter VII – Integration of Findings

Following the independent and sequential analysis of the quantitative and qualitative findings presented in Chapters V and VI, this chapter integrates them to offer a comprehensive understanding of the outcomes of the study. To achieve this integration, the visual methodology of Joint Displays is employed (Guetterman et al., 2015; Guetterman et al., 2021). The Joint Displays presented in this chapter incorporate themes, quotations, findings, and statistics from the two studies within a structured framework. The primary objective is to determine whether the findings converge, diverge, complement one another, or result in “silence”. Convergent findings indicate partial agreement, while divergent findings may appear contradictory or address different dimensions of the same phenomenon. Complementary findings offer additional insights into the same topic, whereas “silence” refers to the lack of shared findings across the studies, observed when a theme or discovery emerges in one dataset but is absent in the other (O'Cathain et al., 2010; Fetters et al., 2013). Silence does not necessarily signify discordance in the findings; rather, it highlights how diverse methods can reveal different aspects of a phenomenon.

Three Joint Displays have been developed to align with the overarching aims and hypotheses of the study:

- Section 7.1 examines the key differences between interpersonal and institutional betrayal, exploring how each relates to hate (Joint Display 1, Table 7.1).
- Section 7.2 evaluates the different influence of restorative versus retributive approaches in resolving both interpersonal and institutional betrayal, and their respective impact on hate (Joint Display 2, Table 7.2).
- Section 7.3 analyses the role of betrayal by commission versus omission in both interpersonal and institutional contexts, investigating how these components influence levels of hate and betrayal, as well as the effectiveness of restorative vs. retributive resolution strategies (Joint Display 3, Table 7.3).

Finally, Section 7.4 summarises the chapter's conclusions, setting the stage for the subsequent Discussion in Chapter VIII, which analyses the findings through the lenses of Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, 1957).

7.1 The Relationship Between Interpersonal and Institutional Betrayal and Hate

Joint Display 1 (see Table 7.1) presents the integrated findings from Research Aim 1, which explores the relationship between interpersonal and institutional betrayal and their connection to hate. The data revealed a high level of complementarity between the qualitative and quantitative results, demonstrating consistency across both methodologies and thereby reinforcing the validity of the findings.

Integrated Finding 1.1 highlights the distinct impacts of interpersonal and institutional betrayal. Quantitative results indicate that feelings of betrayal are more intense following institutional betrayal compared to interpersonal betrayal. The qualitative findings further elucidate this difference, revealing that participants perceive institutional betrayal as eliciting more intense feelings of betrayal because of the breach of duty of care by organisations that are expected to uphold strict policies and regulations. When such expectations are violated, it significantly amplifies feelings of betrayal. Additionally, participants noted that institutional harm tends to affect a larger number of individuals, leading to broader societal consequences. This widespread impact may intensify the sense of betrayal and the consequent harm, as the violation of trust extends beyond the individual to the community or society at large. In contrast, interpersonal betrayal is often mitigated by the personal history and positive interactions shared with the betrayer, where the relational bond and higher levels of trust create a context for empathy and understanding.

Integrated Finding 1.2 reveals a parallel with findings on betrayal within the context of hate. Quantitative findings underscore that perceived levels of hate are reported to be higher following institutional than interpersonal betrayal. Qualitative insights shed light on the mechanisms underlying this phenomenon. Primarily, the absence of personal connections within institutional settings facilitates the experience and expression of hate

Table 7.1 – Joint Display 1: Integrated Findings of Interpersonal and Institutional Betrayal and their Relationship with Hate

Research Question	Summary Quantitative Findings	Summary Qualitative Findings	Integrated Findings
1.1 What are the differences between interpersonal and institutional betrayal?	Institutional betrayal is significantly higher than interpersonal betrayal ($z = -2.77$, $p = .006$, $r = -0.07$).	"I find myself much more bothered by institutional betrayal, because I believe that these institutions are there to safeguard people and when they fail to do that, I have a difficult time empathising with them." (P18)	Complementary: Higher levels of betrayal originate from institutional betrayal compared to interpersonal betrayal, due to the expectation that institutions will uphold certain standards of care and responsibility.
1.2 What are the differences between interpersonal and institutional hate?	Institutional hate is significantly higher than interpersonal hate ($z = -12.16$, $p < .001$, $r = -0.34$).	"I would say that it's easier to hate an institution than a person, because institutions can be seen as faceless [...] and some people may find it easier to talk negatively about an institution, because you don't think you're hurting anyone." (P3)	Complementary: Hating an institution is perceived as less challenging than hating an individual following betrayal, due to weaker bonds and lower levels of trust in institutional relationships.
1.3 What is the correlation between interpersonal and institutional betrayal and hate?	The correlation between interpersonal betrayal and hate is stronger than the correlation between institutional betrayal and hate ($z = 7.67$, $p < .001$).	"Forget these silly institutions, they're just not there for me. But if it's something personal, like your family or your friends, I think you can carry that hate with you for longer." (P4)	Complementary: There are distinct types of hate: impersonal hate, which is overt and systemic, and personal hate, which is deeply wounded and tends to linger longer.
1.4 How do emotional responses to interpersonal hate and betrayal compare with those to institutional hate and betrayal?	Anger, sadness, and abandonment are more strongly associated with betrayal, especially in institutional contexts, while the desire for revenge is more linked to interpersonal hate. Fear is more correlated to interpersonal hate and anxiety to institutional betrayal.	"I think the personal betrayal is probably where you're going to get your heartbreak, and you're going to get your upset and you're going to get your tears [...] In an institution type of thing, you're going to be more up in arms about it" (P12)	Complementary: Interpersonal betrayals tend to evoke stronger, more personal emotions such as fear and the desire for revenge, whereas institutional betrayals trigger a wider array of emotional responses tied to the violation of systemic trust.
1.5 What is the influence of Schwartz values' dimensions (self-enhancement vs. self-transcendence) on interpersonal and institutional betrayal and hate?	Self-enhancement is weakly associated with hate, while self-transcendence is modestly linked to betrayal and weakly to institutional hate ($p < .001$).	"Because I want them to acknowledge that they can't do that, not just to me, but to other people, because who knows how many other hundreds and thousands of people the institution has already betrayed [...] And will they continue it on? So why not stop the damage before it even spreads out further." (P14)	Complementary: Betrayal correlates with the violation of values centred on the well-being of others or communities, while hate is linked to the violation of values focused on self-gratification and dominance. In institutional settings, hate can also relate to self-transcendence, as it often impacts not only the individuals but also the broader community.

towards institutions. Participants indicated that the perceived impersonality and lack of individual accountability inherent in institutions create a more straightforward target for animosity. This contrasts with interpersonal betrayal, where the emotional bonds complicate both the experience and expression of hate.

Integrated Finding 1.3 subsequently reveals an intriguing contrast to the previous two findings. While Integrated Findings 1.1 and 1.2 indicate a stronger sense of betrayal and hate in response to institutional betrayal, this finding reveals that the link between interpersonal betrayal and hate is significantly stronger within interpersonal contexts than within institutional ones.

The apparent contradiction between Findings 1.1 and 1.2, on the one hand, and Finding 1.3, on the other, highlights the distinction between the two types of hate identified in this study: personal and impersonal hate. Personal hate, which often arises from betrayal within close relationships, tends to be more intense and enduring due to the higher expectations of positive outcomes and the closer emotional bonds involved. In contrast, impersonal hate, usually directed towards distant entities such as institutions, is more general and easier to express, as it is perceived as less challenging to experience due to weaker relational bonds and greater perceived distance from the perpetrator. Consequently, while institutional betrayal generates higher overall levels of hate due to its ease of expression, personal hate is more strongly correlated with betrayal, reflecting the deeper emotional impact of broken trust in relationships characterised by strong relational bonds.

Integrated Finding 1.4 highlights the distinct emotional patterns associated with interpersonal and institutional hate and betrayal. The analysis reveals clear differences in emotional responses: anger, sadness, and feelings of abandonment are more strongly tied to experiences of betrayal, particularly within institutional settings, while the desire for revenge tends to be more closely linked to interpersonal hate. Additionally, fear and anxiety show distinct correlations, with fear being more associated with interpersonal hate and anxiety more connected to institutional betrayal.

These findings suggest that interpersonal betrayals are perceived as more personal violations, triggering intense emotions like the desire for revenge and fear. On the other hand, institutional betrayals tend to provoke a broader sense of systemic harm and injustice, contributing to feelings of anger, anxiety and abandonment. This underscores the idea that interpersonal and institutional betrayals, while both harmful, affect individuals differently—interpersonal betrayals feel more personal and emotionally charged, while institutional betrayals carry a weight of social and systemic violation.

Finally, Integrated Finding 1.5 highlights that betrayal and hate are linked to violations of distinct value systems within the framework of the ten basic Schwartz values (Schwartz, 2012) and their bipolar dimensions (self-enhancement vs. self-transcendence). Betrayal appears to be associated with the violation of self-transcendence values, such as universalism and benevolence, which prioritise the well-being of others and the community. Conversely, hate seems to be connected to the violation of self-enhancement values, such as power and hedonism, which focus on self-gratification and dominance over others. In institutional settings, hate also seems to be linked to self-transcendence values, as its impact extends to both individuals and the broader community, thereby encompassing both personal and communal dimensions. This distinction underscores an important point: while hate appears to be more closely aligned with personal dimensions, betrayal seems to be connected to collective values. Understanding these differences is crucial for developing effective resolution strategies tailored to address the distinct emotional impacts and underlying value violations associated with experiences of interpersonal and institutional betrayal.

7.2 Responding to Betrayal and Hate: The Efficacy of Restorative and Retributive Resolution Strategies in Mitigating Interpersonal and Institutional Betrayal

Following the previous section's analysis of different emotional experiences of hate and betrayal within interpersonal and institutional contexts, Joint Display 2 (Table 7.2) presents integrated findings from Research Aim 2, which examines the distinct impacts of restorative versus retributive strategies on addressing hate and betrayal in both interpersonal and institutional contexts. Consistent with the results in Joint Display 1, the

Table 7.2 – Joint Display 2: Integrated Findings of the Effectiveness of Restorative vs. Retributive Resolution Strategies in Mitigating Betrayal and Hate

Research Question	Summary Quantitative Findings	Summary Qualitative Findings	Integrated Findings
2.1 What are the differences in the effectiveness of retributive strategies in addressing interpersonal and institutional betrayal?	Institutional punishment and retribution are evaluated as significantly more effective than interpersonal punishment ($z=-10.18$, $p<.001$, $r=-0.27$) and retribution ($z=-11.46$, $p<.001$, $r=-0.31$).	“They do deserve to see how they made other people feel. [...] And you could kind of feel bad for them, but in the same sense you really can't, because they've put themselves in that position.” (P11)	Complementary: Punishment and retribution are regarded as more justifiable in instances of institutional than interpersonal betrayal, due to the greater expectation of accountability associated with institutions.
2.2 How do the correlations between hate, punishment, and retribution differ in the contexts of interpersonal and institutional betrayal?	The correlation between interpersonal hate with punishment and retribution is significantly stronger than the correlation between institutional hate with punishment ($z=-3.17$, $p<.001$) and retribution ($z=-2.76$, $p<.003$).	“I personally don't hate anybody or any situation that strongly [...] to want to see somebody punished. But I can imagine that other people who felt more strongly about how they'd been hurt may feel hate, and therefore that stronger emotion would lead to wanting punishment.” (P5)	Divergent: Higher levels of hate after interpersonal betrayal lead to stronger punitive attitudes than in institutional betrayal. However, participants often hesitate to acknowledge it due to the discomfort associated with desiring punishment.
2.3 How does the correlation between interpersonal and institutional hate differ in relation to the desire for revenge?	The correlation between hate and desire for revenge is significantly stronger in interpersonal compared to institutional betrayal ($z=-7.16$, $p<.001$).	“Hate would be feeling so strongly that you want bad things to happen to someone [...] or you take it into your own hands, like vengeance, taking vengeance against someone on an emotional basis.” (P15)	Complementary: Hate arising from interpersonal betrayal fuels a stronger desire for revenge than hate stemming from institutional betrayal, possibly due to the deeper personal hurt involved.
2.4 Is there a significant difference in the impact of an apology following interpersonal betrayal compared to institutional betrayal?	Interpersonal apology is evaluated as significantly more effective than institutional apology ($z=-6.76$, $p<.001$, $r=-0.18$).	“I would expect them [Institutions] to fix that by actions and with my partner, I would feel really better if he just said that he's sorry for the situation and he will try to fix that.” (P10)	Complementary: A restorative approach such as offering an apology is perceived as more effective after interpersonal betrayal, while institutional betrayal often demands compensatory actions.
2.5 How do self-enhancement and self-transcendence values (Schwartz, 2012) influence the evaluation of restorative and retributive strategies in the context of interpersonal and institutional betrayal?	Self-enhancement values negatively correlate with restoration strategies in interpersonal contexts and with all strategies in institutional. Self-transcendence values positively correlates with all strategies in institutional contexts and all interpersonal strategies except for punishment ($p<.001$).	“I wouldn't want anyone to be punished based on my experience alone. If I was one of many occasions that where person had done something, I would then add my voice to other people's voices, to have the whole case against that person.” (P15)	Complementary: Individuals who prioritise self-enhancement often reject restorative strategies in both personal and institutional contexts. In contrast, those who value self-transcendence are more receptive to diverse resolution strategies but generally avoid punitive measures in personal relationships.

findings primarily indicate a complementary relationship between quantitative and qualitative data; however, differences and contrasts also emerge, revealing patterns of divergence.

Integrated Finding 2.1 indicates distinct impacts of punishment and retribution in addressing the effects of interpersonal versus institutional betrayal. Specifically, punishment and retribution are generally viewed as more effective in addressing institutional betrayal, where impersonal dynamics often make punitive measures more acceptable, especially as their impact may not be immediately visible. In contrast, within interpersonal contexts, betrayal often involves deeply personal emotional bonds, where punitive actions may intensify emotional distress rather than mitigate it.

Conversely, Integrated Finding 2.2 reveals that when high levels of hatred stem from betrayal, the desire for punishment and retribution is more pronounced in interpersonal contexts than in institutional ones. This finding adds complexity to earlier conclusions in Integrated Finding 1.3 (Joint Display 1), which showed a stronger link between hatred and interpersonal betrayal compared to institutional betrayal. Integrated Finding 2.2 enhances this understanding by highlighting a strong connection between interpersonal hatred and punitive attitudes, indicating that retributive impulses are often fuelled by the intense emotional impact of personal betrayal.

This outcome is further supported by Integrated Finding 2.3, which reveals a stronger link between the desire for revenge and the experience of hate in interpersonal contexts compared to institutional ones. This indicates that the increased emotional intensity of interpersonal betrayal fuels a stronger impulse for retaliation than is usually observed with institutional betrayal. Nonetheless, while quantitative data clearly show a connection between hate and punitive attitudes following interpersonal betrayal, qualitative findings indicate that participants recognised these emotions only when attributing them to others. This suggests that acknowledging one's own feelings of hate may be difficult due to the discomfort such experiences create, as they conflict with the desire to maintain a positive self-image. As a result, individuals may project their own hostile emotions onto others as a way of preserving their favourable self-perception. This insight is crucial for

understanding the conceptualisation of hate as a dissonant emotion, as presented in Chapter VIII.

Integrated Finding 2.4 shifts the focus from punitive measures to restorative approaches by assessing the perceived effectiveness of apologies in the context of interpersonal versus institutional betrayal. The findings indicate that restorative strategies, such as apologies, are generally considered more effective in interpersonal relationships than in institutional settings. This disparity likely stems from the stronger personal connections and positive histories of interactions inherent in interpersonal contexts, as opposed to the perceived insincerity often associated with institutional apologies. Qualitative interviews further underscore that institutional reconciliation is frequently viewed as being achieved through tangible actions such as compensation, especially when the harm inflicted by the institution involves not only emotional and psychological damage but also financial or material loss.

In conclusion, Integrated Finding 2.5 reveals that individuals who prioritise the bipolar dimension of self-enhancement values (Schwartz, 2012)—such as power and achievement—are generally less inclined towards restorative strategies within interpersonal interactions and often dismiss or reject all forms of resolution in institutional contexts. Instead, they tend to favour retributive measures to reassert their sense of control and dominance. Conversely, those who prioritise self-transcendence values—such as benevolence and universalism—are more likely to endorse a wider range of both restorative and retributive resolution strategies across interpersonal and institutional contexts, while avoiding punitive measures in interpersonal situations. Their preference for restorative approaches, such as apologies and restoration, reflects a tendency towards empathy and the repair of social bonds. In institutional settings, individuals with higher self-transcendence values support both restorative and retributive responses, which may indicate a desire for institutional accountability.

These findings highlight the context-dependent nature of victims' needs and the impact of core personal values on responses to betrayal and resolution strategies.

7.3 Interpersonal and Institutional Betrayal by Commission and by Omission: Impact on Hate and Resolution Strategies

Building on earlier discussions about the differences in interpersonal and institutional betrayal, Joint Display 3 (Table 7.3) presents the integrated findings from Research Aim 3. This analysis examines how acts of betrayal, whether by commission or omission, influence experiences of hate and betrayal, as well as the effectiveness of restorative versus retributive strategies on their mitigation. The results reveal significant complementarity, with consistent patterns identified across the analyses.

Integrated Finding 3.1 indicates that betrayal through acts of commission—intentional actions that breach trust or loyalty—is generally perceived as more harmful than betrayal through acts of omission, which involve neglecting promises or responsibilities. This conclusion is supported by both quantitative and qualitative findings and aligns with the literature on the action principle and omission bias, suggesting that harm from deliberate actions is judged more severely and elicits greater moral condemnation than harm from inaction (Baron & Ritov, 2004; Cushman et al., 2006; Spranca et al., 1991). However, a smaller effect size is noted in cases of institutional betrayal, indicating a less pronounced distinction between acts of commission and omission compared to interpersonal scenarios. The difference between harm caused by commission and harm by omission is more pronounced in interpersonal betrayal, where the perpetrator often receives the benefit of the doubt. In contrast, within institutional contexts, harm by omission is viewed as neglect, reflecting the heightened accountability expected from institutions due to their structured processes, regulatory frameworks, and inherent duty of care to the public.

Further exploring the distinctions between betrayal by omission and commission, Integrated Finding 3.2 shows that in interpersonal contexts, betrayal by commission elicits stronger feelings of hate and a greater sense of betrayal than betrayal by omission. This suggests that deliberate actions, which directly violate trust, are perceived as more emotionally impactful. However, in institutional contexts, while betrayal by commission still provokes stronger feelings of betrayal, the intensity of hate does not significantly differ between commission and omission. This may indicate that, unlike interpersonal omissions,

Table 7.3 – Joint Display 3: Integrated Findings of the Differences in Betrayal by Commission and Omission on Hate and the Impact on Restorative vs. Retributive Resolution Strategies

Research Question	Summary Quantitative Findings	Summary Qualitative Findings	Integrated Findings
3.1 What is the difference in the extent of harm caused by interpersonal versus institutional betrayal when comparing acts of commission and omission?	The extent of the harm following interpersonal and institutional betrayal by commission is evaluated as significantly higher than the extent of the harm following interpersonal ($z=-12.87$, $p<.001$, $r=-0.38$) and institutional ($z=-3.35$, $p=.002$, $r=.099$) betrayal by omission.	“I think there are levels of betrayal, and certainly the one where they are just not cooperative, I don't believe it's at the same level as someone who says—No, we're not going to cooperate, and on top of that, we're going to hide things.” (P18)	Complementary: Betrayal by commission is perceived as significantly more harmful than betrayal by omission in both interpersonal and institutional contexts. The effect is stronger following interpersonal betrayal, suggesting the influence of trust dynamics on perceived intentionality of betrayal.
3.2 How do levels of hate and betrayal vary between interpersonal and institutional betrayal when comparing acts of commission and omission?	Interpersonal betrayal by commission is significantly higher than by omission ($z=-17.66$, $p=.001$, $r=-0.48$) and interpersonal hate by commission is significantly higher than by omission ($z=-12.79$; $p<.001$, $r=0.35$). Institutional betrayal by commission is significantly higher than by omission ($z=-4.12$; $p<.001$, $r=-0.11$). No difference has been found in institutional hate.	“If it's a person, then you'd assume they have a reason, and you accept the reason. Whereas if it's a company or a government, you probably won't accept excuses so much, as you'd assume they have processes and rules and regulations.” (P5)	Complementary: In interpersonal contexts, betrayal by commission elicits stronger feelings of hate and betrayal than betrayal by omission. In institutional contexts, this effect does not reflect on levels of hate, possibly because institutional omission, equating to neglect and a breach of duty of care, precludes the perpetrator from receiving the benefit of the doubt.
3.3 Do higher levels of hate differentially influence attitudes towards punishment in cases of interpersonal and institutional betrayal by omission versus commission?	Interpersonal hate by omission correlates more strongly with punishment ($r=.292$) than hate by commission ($r=.209$; $z=-2.25$, $p=0.02$). No significant difference was found between hate from commission versus omission regarding retribution. In institutional contexts, hate from commission does not correlate with punishment, while hate by omission does ($r=.181$), reflecting a similar pattern for retribution ($r=.175$).	“if they've got a reason or excuse for not doing anything [...] then it's not a betrayal. If it's deliberate, If they on purpose didn't do it, then it's betrayal [...] you wouldn't assume it automatically about the person, but you would about an institution.” (P20)	Complementary: Omission-related hatred in interpersonal contexts has a stronger association with punishment than commission-related hatred. Additionally, institutional betrayal by omission, rather than commission, correlates more with punishment, suggesting omission is seen as more blameworthy in institutional settings.
3.4 What is the differential impact of restorative versus retributive resolution strategies in addressing interpersonal and institutional betrayal by commission compared to betrayal by omission?	Interpersonal apology, restitution, and restoration by omission are significantly more effective than apology ($z=-4.37$, $p<.001$, $r=-0.11$), restitution ($z=-3.22$, $p<.001$, $r=-0.08$), restoration ($z=-2.63$, $p=.008$, $r=-0.07$), and compensation ($z=-7.09$, $p<.001$, $r=-0.07$) by commission. Interpersonal punishment and retribution by commission are significantly more effective than punishment ($z=6.22$, $p<.001$, $r=-0.16$) and retribution ($z=-4.53$, $p<.001$, $r=-0.12$) by omission.	“I believe in the case of institutional [betrayal] many times it's to protect what they have or to gain more. I think it's motivated by organisational gain or organisational territory [...] Ultimately, there's always a willingness to betray, because it wouldn't occur otherwise. Perhaps, in the interpersonal [context], it's easier to understand the motivation.” (P18)	Complementary: Restorative strategies are evaluated as more effective for addressing harm by omission, while retributive strategies are preferred for addressing harm caused by commission in cases of interpersonal betrayal. In contrast, in institutional betrayal, both restorative and retributive strategies are considered equally effective, regardless of the type of harm.

which can be seen as unintentional, institutional omissions are condemned with equal severity as acts of commission. This difference likely stems from the heightened expectations of responsibility and accountability placed on institutions, where the presumption of unintentionality is less easily assumed.

Subsequently, Integrated Finding 3.3 challenges the assumption that hatred arising from acts of commission is more strongly associated with punitive responses. Instead, it reveals that hatred stemming from acts of omission in interpersonal contexts has a stronger correlation with punishment than the one following acts of commission. This finding suggests that the emotional impact of perceived neglect can fuel a desire for retribution, potentially even more than direct harmful actions. This is further reflected in the finding that only institutional betrayal by omission—not commission—correlates with punitive attitudes. This suggests that in institutional contexts, where accountability is highly emphasised, the distinction between betrayal by commission and omission may blur, with omission potentially viewed as even more deserving of punishment.

Integrated Finding 3.4 highlights the varying effectiveness of restorative and retributive strategies in addressing betrayal by commission versus omission. In interpersonal betrayal, restorative approaches—such as apology, restitution, and restoration—are generally viewed as more effective following acts of betrayal by omission, which are often seen as less deliberate. Conversely, retributive strategies, including punishment and retribution, are considered more effective in response to betrayal by commission, where the intentionality of harm is clearer. Notably, the difference in the effectiveness of retributive strategies is much more pronounced, while the variation in restorative strategies is minimal. This might suggest that individuals seeking restoration are less affected by whether harm resulted from action or inaction, whereas those pursuing retribution may temper their response based on perceived intent. In cases of institutional betrayal, however, there is no significant difference in the perceived effectiveness of restorative or retributive strategies following betrayal by commission or omission. Considering the power dynamics and responsibilities inherent to institutions, betrayal by omission cannot be justified in the same manner as it may be for individuals. Furthermore, as neglect can yield consequences as severe, if not more severe, than those arising from deliberate actions, the distinction between acts of commission and omission diminishes in

significance. This shift in perspective emphasises that institutions are held to a higher standard of accountability due to their duty of care.

7.4 Summary of Integrated Findings

This chapter presents the integrated findings of the study, derived from the integration of qualitative and quantitative data following a mixed-methods approach. The findings are organised around three primary aims: first, to explore differences in hate stemming from interpersonal versus institutional betrayal (Joint Display 1); second, to examine the impact of restorative versus retributive strategies on hate (Joint Display 2); and third, to analyse the impact of betrayal by commission and by omission on hate and the effectiveness of different resolution strategies (Joint Display 3). Through the use of side-by-side Joint Displays (Guetterman et al., 2015; Guetterman et al., 2021), the study uncovers convergent, complementary, and divergent insights across various levels of analysis.

Joint Display 1 demonstrates that institutional betrayal results in higher levels of betrayal than interpersonal betrayal, as institutions are expected to uphold standards of care and responsibility. It has been shown that hating institutions is perceived as less emotionally challenging than hating individuals, due to weaker bonds and lower levels of trust. Two distinct forms of hate have been identified: impersonal hate, rooted in systemic issues, and personal hate, which is more sharply felt on an individual level. Findings indicate that interpersonal betrayal evokes stronger emotions such as fear and desire for revenge, while institutional betrayal triggers a broader range of reactions related to systemic violations of trust. It has further been observed that betrayal involves the violation of values centred on the well-being of others, while hate is more closely tied to self-interest and dominance. In institutional contexts, hate has also been linked to self-transcendence, as this type of betrayal typically impacts both individuals and broader communities.

Joint Display 2 suggests that punishment and retribution are considered more justifiable in cases of institutional betrayal, owing to the higher expectations of accountability and the “faceless” nature of institutions. It has been reported that increased levels of hate following interpersonal betrayal lead to a stronger desire for punishment, though participants find it difficult to fully acknowledge it as it contrasts with their positive self-

perception. Evidence further shows that interpersonal betrayal, due to the personal hurt involved, generates a more intense drive for revenge. It has been found that restorative approaches, such as apologies, are viewed as more effective in interpersonal betrayal, while institutional betrayal often necessitates compensatory actions. Moreover, it has been shown that individuals who prioritise self-enhancement tend to reject resolution strategies in both contexts, instead focusing on personal gain. Conversely, individuals who value self-transcendence demonstrate a greater openness to various resolution strategies, though they tend to avoid punitive measures in personal relationships.

Finally, Joint Display 3 shows that betrayal by commission is perceived as a more severe violation than betrayal by omission in both interpersonal and institutional contexts. Nonetheless, when analysing hate, it has been observed that, in interpersonal settings, betrayal by commission provokes stronger feelings of hate compared to omission. The findings also show that hate stemming from omission in interpersonal and institutional betrayals is often associated with a desire for punishment. Furthermore, following interpersonal betrayal, restorative approaches are typically viewed as more effective for addressing harm caused by omission, while retributive measures are preferred for harm from commission. In institutional betrayals, however, both restorative and retributive approaches are considered equally effective, regardless of whether the harm was caused by commission or omission.

The findings offer valuable insights into the complex dynamics of betrayal, hate and their mitigation. The following chapter will further discuss them through the lenses of Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, 1957).

Chapter VIII – Discussion

This section discusses the integrated findings of the study, revisited through the lens of Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, 1957). This chapter is organised into six sections. Section 8.1 presents the integrated findings on the distinctions between interpersonal and institutional hate and betrayal, emphasising the conceptualisation of hate as a dissonant emotion. Section 8.2 explores the consequences of betrayal on both personal and societal levels, highlighting the impact of betrayal trauma on victims' physical and mental health. Section 8.3 examines the different impacts of restorative versus retributive resolution strategies in addressing hate and betrayal in interpersonal and institutional contexts, addressing the roles of personal and impersonal hate. Section 8.4 discusses how the importance attributed to different dimensions of basic Schwartz Values (Schwartz, 2012) can influence the preference for restoration or retribution. Section 8.5 analyses the differences between betrayal by commission and omission, elucidating how expectations and attributions of intentionality shape responses to hate and betrayal. Finally, Section 8.6 provides a summary of the chapter.

8.1 Hate as a Dissonant Emotion: Implications within Interpersonal and Institutional Betrayal

Hate is a complex, multifaceted emotion, often triggered by a range of psychological and social factors (Brudholm, 2010; Fischer et al., 2018; Navarro et al., 2013). Betrayal has been identified as a significant catalyst for the emergence of hate, often evoking a profound sense of violation by eroding trust in both individuals and institutions. The intensity and impact of hate can vary widely depending on the context—such as interpersonal versus institutional harm—highlighting the role of trust and the nature of the relationship between perpetrator and victim. This contextual variation in hate can be understood by conceptualising it as a dissonant emotion, in line with Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, 1957). Cognitive Dissonance Theory, introduced by Leon Festinger in 1957, suggests that when individuals simultaneously hold conflicting beliefs, values, or attitudes, they experience a state of psychological discomfort. This tension compels them to seek resolution by either adjusting their beliefs, seeking out new information to

reconcile the conflict, or downplaying the significance of the inconsistencies (Festinger, 1957).

While expressions of hate are widespread in society, dominant social norms and cultural values, such as tolerance, empathy, and peaceful coexistence, discourage the open expression of hateful feelings. Furthermore, labelling individuals as "haters" or stigmatising them can inadvertently reinforce the very hostility it seeks to diminish (Walters, 2019). These labels often provoke defensive, reactive attitudes, entrenching the very beliefs and behaviours they aim to dismantle. As a result, individuals experiencing hate may face cognitive dissonance—a psychological conflict between their feelings of hate and the belief that these feelings contradict their positive self-image. This complex dissonance can be difficult to resolve, leading individuals to suppress or rationalise their emotions to align their feelings with their self-identity and societal expectations. Coping mechanisms might include rationalising their emotions, seeking justifications, trivialising the conflict, and adopting consonant beliefs—each playing a significant role in how people manage this discomfort (de Vries et al., 2023; McGrath, 2017).

By conceptualising hate as a dissonant emotion, this study further suggests that the differing responses to interpersonal and institutional betrayal can be attributed to the varying levels of cognitive dissonance experienced. It posits that the intensified expression of hate in institutional contexts corresponds to a lower level of cognitive dissonance towards the perpetrator. Institutions are often perceived as “faceless” entities governed by policies and regulations, where the lack of personal connection and the perception of impersonal authority make it cognitively easier to experience and express hate towards them. In cases of institutional betrayal, which occur at a structural or systemic level, the absence of a strong relational bond and inherently lower levels of trust diminish the internal conflict when feelings of hate arise. This distancing effect simplifies the emotional response, in contrast to instances of interpersonal betrayal, where hate more directly conflicts with the relational bond and the history of positive interactions that have been violated. Hatred arising from interpersonal relationships, where expectations of positive outcomes are higher, typically involves a stronger and more enduring response, reflecting the deeper sense of betrayal when trust is unexpectedly and painfully violated. Ultimately, cognitive dissonance provides a valuable framework for understanding the differences in

how betrayal is experienced in interpersonal and institutional contexts, shedding light on the psychological tensions that shape responses to various forms of harm.

8.2 Harboursing vs. Expressing Hate: Personal Challenges and Societal Implications

Findings from this study suggest that the suppression of negative emotions resulting from betrayal can lead to the transformation of these feelings into enduring hatred, which persists despite attempts to manage or suppress it. This observation highlights a key insight: attempting to suppress hate resulting from betrayal may, paradoxically, intensify it. According to Festinger's Cognitive Dissonance Theory (1957), the suppression of unresolved, conflicting emotions—such as hatred arising from betrayal—creates significant psychological tension, which can contribute to adverse psychological and physical health outcomes, including anxiety, depression and other distressing states (Festinger, 1957). Consequently hate, as a dissonant emotion, not only has the potential to exacerbate these negative outcomes but also poses substantial challenges when left unaddressed, ultimately undermining mental health and well-being.

The interplay between expressing and retaining hatred has significant implications not only for individuals, but for society as a whole. While the expression of personal and impersonal hatred fuels desires for vengeance and retribution and contributes to societal polarisation, suppressing these emotions not only consolidates a more enduring form of hatred, which becomes increasingly difficult to eradicate, but also deteriorates health and contributes to long-term psychological strain. At the same time, expressing these emotions without proper guidance and support can incite hateful behaviours within society, such as hate crimes, hate speech, polarisation, and discrimination, thereby causing broader societal harm. This dynamic highlights the critical need to confront and process such emotions to mitigate their harmful effects on both individual mental health and social cohesion, balancing individual and societal needs.

In conclusion, conceptualising hate as a dissonant emotion elucidates its intricate dynamics within both interpersonal and institutional contexts. This encompasses not only the varying expressions of hate depending on the context of the harm but also the tension between personal and societal outcomes when harbouring or expressing hate. The

cognitive dissonance that arises from the conflict between one's self-conception and the experience of betrayal leads to significant repercussions for psychological health and societal harmony. Consequently, understanding the cognitive conflict stemming from experiences of hate and betrayal is essential for fostering individual resilience and cultivating more cohesive relationships within society.

8.3 Restoration and Retribution in Addressing Interpersonal and Institutional Betrayal: Towards Personal and Impersonal Hate

Current research identifies a type of hate termed “retributive hatred” (Brudholm, 2010; Gee, 2014; Murphy, 1988), which is characterised as a response to wrongdoings, and where hostility is driven by a retributive notion of moral desert. Building on this, this study hypothesised that hatred resulting from betrayal would heighten the desire for retribution.

As previously discussed, hate tends to be more intense in the context of institutional betrayal, suggesting that higher levels of hate may correlate with stronger support for punishment. However, further findings indicate a stronger link between hate and betrayal in interpersonal contexts. Moreover, the intensity of hate stemming from interpersonal betrayal correlates with a greater endorsement of punitive responses. Interestingly, these findings reveal a divergence between qualitative and quantitative results. While interview participants often dissociate from punitive desires following interpersonal betrayal, quantitative data reveal a strong association between interpersonal hate and a desire for punishment. This discrepancy may arise from the social stigma surrounding punitive inclinations, leading participants to psychologically distance themselves from punitive desires during face-to-face interactions due to social desirability. In contrast, participants are more willing to admit to a desire for punishment in cases of institutional betrayal.

To explain this difference, Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, 1957) provides again a meaningful framework. As previously noted, interpersonal betrayal results in higher levels of cognitive dissonance, making it difficult to express hatred towards close relationships. This internal struggle can lead to a suppressed but intensified desire to punish those who betray us due to the gravity of the violation. Individuals may restrain these feelings

because the desire to punish loved ones conflicts with their positive self-image. Additionally, the realisation that they were wrong to trust someone is a significant threat to their self-esteem. In contrast, punishing institutions generates less dissonance because they are perceived as impersonal and more deserving of retribution. Hatred directed at institutions often lacks a clear target; individuals may not know precisely whom they are directing their hatred to. When advocating for punitive measures against institutions, the specific impact on individuals is often unclear, which diminishes emotional engagement and reduces dissonance. Moreover, the study reveals that interpersonal betrayal not only intensifies the desire for punitive measures but also diminishes the effectiveness of restorative strategies, such as apologies. This effect is notably less pronounced in institutional contexts, where cognitive dissonance related to punishment is mitigated by a general sense of distrust and the perceived insincerity of institutional apologies.

Building on these findings, this study proposes two distinct forms of hatred: a deeply personal and wounded hatred stemming from direct experiences of betrayal, and a more impersonal, systemic hatred that is less dissonant to articulate and express. Impersonal hatred, typically directed towards abstract entities or groups, elicits minimal cognitive dissonance when punitive desires are expressed. As the focus is on “faceless” institutions rather than on specific individuals, the desire for punishment in this context is more readily accepted and less likely to provoke internal conflict. In contrast, personal hatred, which is deeply rooted in direct experiences of betrayal and emotional harm, engenders significant cognitive dissonance when coupled with punitive inclinations. This form of hatred is directed towards identifiable individuals who have caused harm, thereby creating a conflict between the desire for retribution and prevailing social norms that discourage overt expressions of vengeance, alongside the need to maintain the relationship to preserve emotional stability or to secure practical support. Consequently, individuals often suppress these punitive impulses to avoid the psychological discomfort associated with this dissonance. However, as previously discussed, suppressing these emotions can cause them to persist and intensify, potentially leading to prolonged dissonance and emotional distress.

Understanding the differences between personal and impersonal hatred—and how each shapes desires for punishment—highlights the need for strategies that address the underlying cognitive dissonance involved. By doing so, retributive impulses may be redirected toward motivations for reconciliation and healing, promoting healing on both personal and societal levels.

8.4 Values for Retribution or Reconciliation: Betrayal as a Violation of Self-Transcendence, Hate as a Violation of Self-Enhancement

This research further examined how Schwartz's value dimensions—self-enhancement and self-transcendence—(Schwartz,2012) influence the evaluation of different resolution strategies following hate and betrayal. Aligning with the findings of Okimoto et al. (2012), the study reveals that individuals who prioritise self-enhancement values—centred on personal success, dominance, and self-gratification—are less likely to support restorative measures in cases of interpersonal betrayal. Instead, they tend to favour retributive approaches, motivated the assertion of dominance over those who have wronged them. Conversely, individuals who prioritise self-transcendence values, which emphasise benevolence and universalism, are more inclined to endorse restorative strategies such as apologies and reparations, viewing these measures as crucial for repairing social bonds and promote collective well-being.

In cases of institutional betrayal, this dynamic undergoes a notable shift. Individuals who prioritise self-transcendence values are more likely to support both restorative and retributive approaches, likely reflecting a commitment to accountability and justice. In contrast, those who prioritise self-enhancement demonstrate negative correlations with all strategies, possibly indicating a focus on personal gain rather than the broader implications of betrayal. This distinction underscores the complex motivations underlying responses to institutional betrayal, where self-transcendence promotes a more comprehensive understanding of justice, while self-enhancement fosters a more self-serving perspective.

Moreover, this study identifies two distinct emotional patterns linked to these value orientations: high levels of betrayal are associated with the violation of self-

transcendence values, which emphasise the well-being of others, while high levels of hate are more closely related to the violation of self-enhancement values, which centre on personal gratification and dominance. This distinction is significant as it underscores how personal versus collective dimensions influence the effectiveness of various resolution strategies. Individuals with higher self-transcendence values are more likely to support approaches that aim to restore relationships and heal the community, viewing betrayal as a harm that impacts not only themselves but also others. In contrast, those who prioritise self-enhancement values, driven by self-interest and dominance, are more inclined towards retributive measures, possibly reflecting a personal need for retribution rather than a broader concern for communal healing. Understanding these value-driven responses can help identify protective factors that may prevent hate and support reconciliation, offering valuable insights into how core values influence the pursuit of justice and resolution in the context of betrayal.

8.5 Betrayal by Commission vs. Omission: How Relational Expectations and Perceived Intentionality Shape Hate and Its Mitigation

This study further examined the differences between betrayal by commission (intentional actions) and betrayal by omission (neglect and failure to act). Consistent with the literature on the action principle and omission bias (Baron & Ritov, 2004; Cushman et al., 2006; Spranca et al., 1991), the findings confirm that intentional actions are generally perceived as more harmful than omissions, although with differences between interpersonal and institutional settings. In interpersonal contexts, deliberate acts of betrayal evoke stronger feelings of hate compared to acts of omission. However, this dynamic shifts in institutional contexts. While betrayals by commission are still regarded as severe, the intensity of hatred they generate does not significantly differ from that caused by omissions. This is largely because institutions are held to higher standards of accountability, leading to greater resentment over negligence or failure to act. People may experience a heightened sense of injustice or betrayal when institutions fail to act, resulting in increased resentment and a reduced willingness to extend the benefit of the doubt, which is instead often granted in interpersonal relationships.

The different responses to acts of commission and omission across various contexts underscore the dissonance levels that individuals experience when determining how to react. In interpersonal relationships, the inclination to seek reconciliation often conflicts with the profound feelings of animosity engendered by betrayal. Acknowledging that someone close to us has betrayed our trust can evoke feelings of self-blame for not recognising the signs, which may lead individuals to rationalise acts of omission as mere forgetfulness. Moreover, a history of positive interactions complicates this dissonance, making it difficult to reconcile the notion that a person who has previously treated us well could also engage in betrayal.

Conversely, in institutional contexts, the distinction between harm caused by commission and harm caused by omission tends to diminish. The expectation of accountability inherent in these settings complicates the decision to forgive or overlook omissions. The absence of emotional closeness and the lower levels of trust in institutional relationships often lead individuals to view omissions as more blameworthy and, consequently, less justifiable. This dynamic is reflected in preferences for restoration or retribution; while restorative justice is typically favoured for interpersonal omissions—interpreted as forgetfulness—the distinction fades in cases of institutional betrayal, where omissions may be perceived as even more harmful.

Interestingly, hatred arising from omissions in interpersonal contexts demonstrates a stronger correlation with punitive responses than hatred stemming from acts of commission. Moreover, in institutional settings, betrayal by omission is more closely associated with punitive measures than betrayal by commission, indicating that failures to act are regarded as more deserving of punishment. This suggests that when hatred is involved, individuals may view inaction—whether in personal relationships or institutional settings—as a deeper violation of trust than direct harmful actions. This indicates that hatred can significantly shape the dynamics of betrayal and impact the effectiveness of different resolution strategies.

In conclusion, the complexities surrounding responses to acts of commission and omission reveal the nuanced emotional landscapes individuals navigate in both interpersonal and institutional contexts. While conflict resolution within interpersonal relationships may

lean toward restorative approaches, the nature of institutional betrayal shifts perceptions of harm, often leading to punitive responses. Understanding these dynamics is essential for developing effective strategies to address various types of betrayal and their repercussions, ultimately fostering a greater awareness of their emotional and societal implications.

8.6 Summary of Discussion

This chapter presented an interpretation of the integrated findings through the lenses of Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, 1957), offering a nuanced analysis of the intricate relationship between hate, betrayal and resolution efforts to mitigate them. By conceptualising hate as a dissonant emotion, the psychological tension that arises when individuals experience betrayal across different contexts and perpetrators has been explored. This tension is particularly evident in the struggle to reconcile intense feelings of hate with the desire to maintain a positive self-image. Additionally, the analysis highlighted how perception of harm varies between interpersonal and institutional contexts and examines the values that either foster or inhibit hate and betrayal, shedding light on mechanisms that can facilitate or hinder reconciliation. Moreover, the distinction between betrayal by omission and commission underscores how perceived intent and violated expectations shape emotional responses and influence the effectiveness of mitigation strategies.

This chapter provides insights to help mitigating the pervasive effects of hate and betrayal on individuals and society. It emphasises the urgent need to raise awareness of the profound and harmful impact of experiences of hate and betrayal on mental and physical health. This awareness is crucial for fostering resilience and healing in those affected while promoting broader societal well-being. The next chapter will explore how these insights can address societal challenges and lay the groundwork for future research. Integrating these findings into both theory and practice can deepen our understanding of effective responses to hate and betrayal, helping to build more peaceful societies.

Chapter IX – Contributions of the Study, Recommendations and Conclusion

In this concluding chapter, the original contributions of this research are highlighted, emphasising its significance and presenting key recommendations and conclusions. Section 9.1 outlines how this study deepens our understanding of hate and betrayal while providing recommendations for relevant policies and interventions. Section 9.2 discusses the strengths and limitations of the study, aiming to provide a balanced view of its findings. Section 9.3 details potential directions for future research. Subsequently, Section 9.4 provides a reflection on the research journey. The chapter concludes with final remarks in Section 9.5, summarising the study's broader implications and its impact on the field.

9.1 Contributions of the Study

9.1.1 Contribution 1 – The Burden of Hate: Addressing its Harmful Effects on Mental and Physical Health

This study enhanced our understanding of hate as a complex emotional response to betrayal. It identified hate as a dissonant emotion that, if unresolved, can have detrimental effects on both physical and mental health. By recognising the challenges of dealing with the dissonant character of hate and advocating for targeted interventions that address both its psychological and physiological dimensions, this research has opened up avenues to promote a comprehensive approach to supporting individuals coping with the emergence of hate in the aftermath of betrayal. To achieve this, several recommendations are proposed:

- ✓ **Promote Emotional Awareness and Education:** Implement workshops and community outreach initiatives aimed at increasing awareness of the complexities of hate. These programs should educate individuals about the nature of dissonant emotions, fostering understanding and reducing stigma around seeking help.
- ✓ **Develop Dissonance Reduction Mechanisms:** Encourage professionals to help individuals recognise and resolve cognitive dissonance, reducing mental strain from unresolved conflicts.

- ✓ **Integrate Interdisciplinary Approaches:** Collaborate across fields such as psychology, neuroscience, and sociology to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the psychological and social factors that contribute to betrayal-induced hate.

9.1.2 Contribution 2 – The Duality of Hate: Insights into Personal and Impersonal Dimensions

Hate is widespread in contemporary society, manifesting through hate crimes, hate speech, and other hateful behaviours in both online and offline environments. As hate escalates, understanding its roots and developing prevention strategies is urgent. This study distinguishes two forms of hate: personal and impersonal. Personal hate often arises from interpersonal betrayal, causing profound psychological harm as a violation of a deep relational bond. Impersonal hate, directed at groups or institutions, is more systemic and less challenging to express due to a lack of direct personal connection and perceived consequences of hating. It often fuels prejudice and discrimination tied to broader societal grievances.

Addressing both forms of hate is crucial. Personal hate is often difficult to resolve and can feel isolating for those experiencing it, whereas impersonal hate is linked to societal issues and contributes to social polarisation. Both forms of hate pose significant risks to mental health and social cohesion. To balance emotional expression and reduce polarisation, the study suggests guidelines for a dissonant approach to reconciliation:

- ✓ **Emphasise Humanity:** Encourage empathy by highlighting personal stories and humanity of those who are targets of hate, fostering direct personal connections between conflicting groups to reduce impersonal hate.
- ✓ **Address Personal Grievances:** Create support systems for individuals to seek help and reconciliation following betrayal, promoting therapeutic and restorative justice practices to heal personal wounds.
- ✓ **Institutional Accountability:** Ensure transparency and accountability within institutions to prevent systemic failures.

- ✓ **Community Engagement:** Foster community dialogue and engagement, promoting inclusive community activities that bridge gaps between different societal groups.
- ✓ **Education and Awareness:** Implement educational programs that address the roots of hate and prejudice, raising awareness about the impact of hate on both individuals and communities.
- ✓ **Policy and Legislation:** Develop policies and legislation that not only aim to suppress and remove hate but also address its root causes. Recognising hate as a destructive force stemming from unresolved trauma and underlying tensions is essential for creating comprehensive and effective solutions.

9.1.3 Contribution 3 – Elements of Interpersonal and Institutional Reconciliation

While the study acknowledges that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to reconciliation, it emphasises the importance of considering the nuances of interpersonal and institutional contexts in planning and managing efforts to mitigate betrayal. In interpersonal settings, apologies are highly valued, whereas compensation is more significant in institutional contexts, where apologies may be seen as insincere and compensatory measures more convincingly demonstrate a genuine commitment to repairing harm. Moreover, the research identifies time as a crucial factor in the mitigation of hate following betrayal, emphasising the importance of intervening before negative emotions stemming from betrayal solidify into enduring hatred. As previously discussed, while expressing hate can foster societal polarisation, internalising it may lead to obsession and adverse health consequences. Understanding the transition from betrayal to hate is essential for its prevention. Outlined below are several guidelines to improve the mitigation process following instances of interpersonal and institutional betrayal:

- ✓ **Acknowledging the Harm:** Acknowledging the harm caused is a fundamental step in the reconciliation process. Whether in interpersonal or institutional contexts, recognising and validating the pain and damage inflicted is essential for rebuilding trust and ensuring that subsequent efforts, such as apologies or restitution, are perceived as sincere and meaningful.

- ✓ **Personalised Apologies in Institutional Context:** For apologies to be perceived as sincere in institutional contexts, they need to be personalised and accompanied by a clear acknowledgment of the harm caused.
- ✓ **Emphasis on Restitution:** Restitution is a key element in both restoration and retribution. It underscores the importance of restoring balance rather than focusing on punishment, whether emotional, financial, or both.
- ✓ **Mitigating Hate:** Hate fosters a desire for punishment and weakens the impact of restorative strategies. It is important to address and mitigate hate when engaging in reconciliation.
- ✓ **The Role of Time:** Time is essential in the reconciliation process. It can help mitigate feelings of hurt but can also diminish the effects of reconciliation if not managed properly.
- ✓ **Continuous Reconciliation Efforts:** Reconciliation and peace-building efforts are ongoing processes that require constant attention and care.

9.1.4 Contribution 4 – How to Investigate Dissonant Hate

The recognition of hate as a dissonant emotion has profound implications for its investigation methodologies. Direct inquiries about hate often fail to capture the depth and nuance of its experience due to the reluctance of individuals to acknowledge socially undesirable experiences. Therefore, investigating hate requires a methodological framework that circumvents these barriers. The results of this study suggest that addressing hate necessitates awareness of the dissonance that arises when individuals articulate experiences of hate. Based on these insights, the following guidelines are proposed to investigate hate:

- ✓ **The Use of Indirect Measures (i.e. third-person vignettes):** Alongside direct enquiries about hate, employ indirect measures such as projective techniques, third-person vignettes, and narrative approaches. These methods can reveal underlying emotions while minimising social desirability bias.
- ✓ **Contextualise Questions:** Frame questions within broader contexts that allow respondents to discuss hate in relation to specific situations or behaviours rather

than as a direct emotion. This can help reduce defensiveness and encourage more honest responses.

- ✓ **Ensure Anonymity and Confidentiality:** Ensure to use data collection methods that protect the anonymity and confidentiality of participants, and to be transparent on this matter with participants.
- ✓ **Facilitate Safe Spaces for Expression:** Create environments where participants feel safe to express their emotions without judgment. This can be achieved through the use of skilled facilitators and supportive settings.
- ✓ **Analyse Nonverbal Cues:** Pay attention to nonverbal cues and body language when conducting qualitative interviews. These can provide additional insights into emotions that participants may be unwilling or unable to articulate verbally.
- ✓ **Address Resistance & Cognitive Dissonance:** Recognise and address cognitive dissonance by exploring conflicting feelings and thoughts. This can help uncover deeper emotional truths and provide a more nuanced understanding of hate.

9.1.5 Contribution 5 – Promoting Values for Reconciliation

This study analysed how the importance attributed to the ten Schwartz's basic values (Schwartz, 2012) shapes restorative versus retributive attitudes in instances of betrayal and hate. Specifically, the findings showed that for individuals who prioritise self-enhancement values—focused on self-gratification and dominance— hate is seen as a personal emotion tied to power dynamics and self-interest, often resulting in endorsement of punitive actions to restore personal justice and authority. Conversely, those who emphasise self-transcendence values—emphasising concern for others— view betrayal as a collective issue impacting relational and communal harmony. They are more likely to pursue restorative justice, focusing on restoring relationships and addressing the wider consequences of betrayal. Understanding these dynamics can inform tailored approaches that align with individuals' value systems, promoting healing in both personal and institutional contexts. Key recommendations based on the study's findings include:

- ✓ **Promotion of Self-Transcendence Values for Reconciliation:** To foster reconciliation, promoting societal values that balance personal empowerment with community well-being may encourage attitudes towards reconciliation and reduce hate.

- ✓ **Tailored Approaches for Different Betrayal Contexts:** Reconciliation interventions should reflect the different nuances of interpersonal and institutional betrayal contexts: promoting empathy and understanding for interpersonal betrayal, and focusing on rebuilding trust and addressing systemic issues for institutional betrayal.
- ✓ **Addressing Institutional and Systemic Distrust:** Recognising that individuals placing high values on self-enhancement may harbour mistrust towards institutional responses should encourage interventions aimed at addressing this. This could involve transparency in institutional actions, ensuring accountability, and actively involving affected communities in decision-making processes.

9.1.6 Contribution 6 – Omission vs Commission: Addressing Intentionality to Foster Reconciliation

Findings from this study differentiates between betrayal by commission (intentional actions) and betrayal by omission (neglect), highlighting that intentional actions are typically perceived as more harmful than harm by inaction. In interpersonal contexts, deliberate betrayals evoke stronger feelings of hate than omissions. However, in institutional settings, the intensity of hatred does not significantly differ between the two, likely due to higher accountability standards, which lead to greater resentment for institutional neglect. The findings indicate that both the nature of betrayal and its context influence the effectiveness of mitigation strategies. Restorative approaches are more effective for interpersonal betrayals, especially omissions, while punitive measures are preferred for intentional acts. In institutional contexts, the perceived intent behind betrayal blurs the distinction between restorative and retributive strategies. These insights highlight the importance of perceived intentionality in shaping responses to betrayal, leading to several recommendations to enhance the efficacy of reconciliation efforts:

- ✓ **Recognise Intentionality in Interventions:** When designing reconciliation strategies, it is crucial to assess and communicate the perceived intentionality behind acts of betrayal. Understanding whether a betrayal is viewed as intentional or unintentional can guide efforts to reconciliation.

- ✓ **Facilitate Open Communication:** Encourage open dialogue about the nature of the betrayal, focusing on the intent behind actions. This can help clarify misunderstandings and foster a shared understanding of motivations, which is essential for effective restoration.
- ✓ **Employ Mediators:** In situations where direct communication between victims and perpetrators is challenging, employ trained mediators to facilitate discussions. Mediators can help navigate the complexities of intentionality and facilitate the parties in finding common ground.

9.1.7 Contribution 7 – Achieving Humanisation through Institutional Courage

Empathy towards individuals, especially when personal connections are involved, is nurtured by recognising their humanity and imperfections. In contrast, humanising institutions—entities bound by processes and tasked with supporting citizens—poses a greater challenge due to the power imbalance and vulnerability experienced by individuals relying on them for protection and the pursuit of fundamental rights and needs (Fineman, 2017; Fineman, 2019). To genuinely serve the public, institutions must operate with transparency and accountability. This can be achieved through “institutional courage”, a commitment to truth-seeking and ethical action (Freyd, 2014). Institutional courage involves supporting victims and whistleblowers, engaging in self-examination, and upholding transparency. Research indicates that institutional responses to harm are crucial in fostering a supportive culture that counters societal hate (Smidt et al., 2023; Gómez et al., 2023). The findings of this study reveal that trust in institutions is notably low, with many perceiving them as faceless entities. This perception diminishes public empathy toward these entities, making it unlikely for people to extend them the benefit of the doubt. This underscores the critical role of institutional courage in addressing hate. By promoting transparency, accountability, and support for those harmed, institutions can rebuild public trust and tackle the root causes of institutional hate, ultimately reinforcing their role in countering polarisation and division. Several recommendations follow:

- ✓ **Promote Transparency:** Establish clear policies for public disclosures about institutional operations and decision-making processes to foster trust and accountability.
- ✓ **Strengthen Whistleblower Protections:** Implement robust protection programs for whistleblowers to promote accountability and ethical behaviour within the organisation.
- ✓ **Adopt Restorative Practices:** Incorporate restorative justice principles to repair harm and rebuild trust with individuals affected by institutional actions.
- ✓ **Create Accountability Structures:** Establish independent oversight bodies to monitor institutional practices and effectively address grievances.
- ✓ **Empower Communities:** Actively work to empower individuals and address disparities between institutions and the communities they serve, promoting equity.
- ✓ **Encourage a Culture of Reflection:** Foster an environment of continuous self-examination, encouraging staff to reflect on practices and values to identify areas for improvement.

9.2 Strengths and Limitations of the Study

In scientific research, it is essential to critically evaluate both the strengths and limitations of the study to provide a balanced perspective on its findings and implications. This section highlights the key strengths of this research while addressing limitations that may impact the interpretation and generalisability of the results.

One limitation is that, although the large, multi-country sample aims to enhance the generalisability of the findings across diverse populations, it also complicates the ability to capture insights specific to each context. Cultural, economic, and social differences among countries may uniquely influence the study's variables, which a generalised analysis may not fully capture. Addressing these cultural variations would require a larger, more contextually sensitive sample, allowing for an analysis that takes into account the unique contexts of each country. Moreover, the survey distribution predominantly targeted countries in the global North, which limits the generalisability of the results to these regions. Additionally, the sample showed an underrepresentation of non-binary and

gender non-conforming individuals. This underscores the need for more inclusive methodologies to ensure diverse and representative participation. Future research should strive to be more inclusive and target a broader range of participants, which will enhance the relevance and applicability of its conclusions.

Furthermore, a significant limitation of online research is that it only includes populations with access to computers and the internet, potentially excluding certain demographics, such as the elderly and individuals from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, who often face challenges related to digital access and digital literacy. This digital divide can lead to sampling biases, as the study may not fully capture the experiences and perspectives of these groups (Engward et al.,2022).

Another limitation of the study is the absence of an assessment regarding whether participants had directly experienced institutional or interpersonal betrayal. Although the study's findings revealed that betrayal is a common experience, and participants might have encountered one or both forms of betrayal, individual experiences undoubtedly shape their emotional responses, interpretations, and evaluations of coping strategies. For instance, the lack of personal experience with significant institutional betrayal—such as wrongful imprisonment or unjust legal actions—might lead participants to perceive such betrayals as more abstract and less personally impactful. The same applies to those who have either experienced or not experienced severe interpersonal betrayals, such as betrayal by a close family member or friend, which might elicit stronger emotional reactions. These differences in lived experiences could influence the study's findings, as the intensity and nature of betrayal experienced are likely to affect how participants responded and the strategies they considered as more effective. Moreover, data collection for this project began shortly after Covid-19 restrictions were lifted—a period marked by widespread feelings of diminished trust due to perceived insufficient support during the pandemic. This post-pandemic context likely influenced participants' sense of institutional betrayal.

Finally, this study presents potential confounds between interpersonal and institutional vignettes, particularly in abstraction, familiarity, and moral distance, which may have influenced participants' responses.

A primary confound is abstraction; while interpersonal vignettes are typically framed from a first-person perspective, eliciting direct emotional engagement, institutional vignettes often adopt a more detached, third-person perspective, emphasising systemic factors. Despite this distinction, the strong emotional responses observed in institutional scenarios indicate that participants remain deeply engaged. Future research should standardise narrative perspective and emotional salience to enhance comparability across conditions. Familiarity and narrative structure introduce additional variability. Institutional betrayals often resemble real-world events, increasing the likelihood of heuristic processing and pre-existing biases, whereas interpersonal vignettes tend to be more discrete and self-contained. This structural difference may influence engagement, moral evaluation, and emotional intensity. Future research should systematically manipulate narrative framing to isolate its effects on betrayal perception. Moral distance and diffusion of responsibility present further challenges. Institutional betrayals often involve complex systems with multiple actors, diluting perceived accountability, whereas interpersonal betrayals clearly attribute blame to an identifiable agent. This discrepancy may influence the evaluation of mitigation strategies following betrayal. Future studies should manipulate the perceived agency of institutional actors to assess how attribution of responsibility influences emotional and cognitive processing.

Nonetheless, this study offers several notable strengths, underscoring its significant contributions. A key strength is its novelty: it is the first to directly investigate the connection between betrayal and hate across both interpersonal and institutional contexts, while also examining the distinct roles of betrayal by commission and omission and the impact of restoration and retribution in mitigating hate and betrayal. Given the escalating and harmful effects of hate in contemporary societies, it is essential for researchers to examine mechanisms that contribute to its emergence, such as betrayal. A comprehensive understanding of betrayal dynamics—shaped by relational context and personal values—can guide the development of targeted interventions and policies to prevent and reduce the impacts of hate.

A significant strength of this study lies in its contribution to the psychological understanding of hate, an area that has been overlooked in favour of political,

sociological, and legal frameworks. By examining the cognitive and emotional mechanisms underlying hatred in response to betrayal, this research advances the scientific discourse on moral emotions. It offers a deeper psychological perspective on the formation, reinforcement, and regulation of hate, bridging critical gaps in interdisciplinary research and enhancing our understanding of its psychological underpinnings.

Moreover, this study introduces a conceptual framework that highlights the importance of examining the tension between expressing and suppressing hate. By exploring how individuals process betrayal-induced emotions, it sheds light on the complex interplay between emotional expression and repression—an aspect often overlooked in existing research, which tends to focus on preventing or counteracting hate rather than understanding its internal regulation. Crucially, this study highlights that while overt expressions of hate can be harmful, suppressing these emotions may worsen psychological distress, reinforcing resentment and hostility. Understanding this dynamic is key to developing strategies that address both the outward manifestations of hate and the underlying psychological mechanisms. These findings provide a foundation for interventions that mitigate hate, foster emotional resilience, and promote constructive social engagement, ultimately supporting conflict resolution and sustainable peacebuilding.

Moreover, given the complexity surrounding issues of betrayal and hate, the adoption of a mixed-methods approach has been particularly advantageous for this study. This methodology enabled the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data, which is crucial when exploring sensitive topics where social desirability and cognitive dissonance may inhibit open expression of emotions like hate. Relying solely on quantitative methods could have led participants to underreport these feelings, especially when such emotions clash with their self-image. By incorporating qualitative methods, this study gained a richer and more nuanced understanding of participants' emotions and attitudes, ultimately strengthening the validity of the findings. This highlights the value of employing diverse methodologies when researching sensitive topics, as it allows for a deeper exploration of underlying complexities and yields more comprehensive, meaningful insights.

Beyond its theoretical contributions, this study has significant practical implications. By identifying the psychological mechanisms underlying hatred in response to betrayal, it provides critical insights for developing evidence-based policies in conflict resolution, social justice, and trust restoration across interpersonal and institutional contexts. The findings enhance understanding of how betrayal drives emotional and cognitive processes that fuel hate, informing reconciliation efforts, institutional trust-building, and community interventions. Moreover, by exploring betrayal and hate across both relational and systemic levels, this research identifies context-specific variations, enhancing the relevance and applicability of its findings across different societal settings.

Ultimately, this research aims to guide the development of effective strategies to prevent hate and enhance well-being, supporting the development of a more tolerant and peaceful society.

9.3 Implications for Future Research

The findings of this study have several implications for future research. Recognising the dissonant nature of hate unveils numerous pathways for further inquiry, particularly in examining how mechanisms of dissonance operate distinctively when one is the perpetrator of betrayal versus the victim. Investigating these differences may yield deeper insights into the psychological processes underpinning betrayal and provide guidance for effective mitigation strategies. This includes exploring the role of dissonance induction in moderating hatred and shaping preferences for restorative or retributive responses, thus advancing our understanding of emotional regulation following betrayal.

Moreover, recognising the critical role of time in the reconciliation process, future research might examine the short- and long-term impacts of reconciliation and mitigation strategies across different intervals. Such investigation could yield valuable insights into what constitutes a “timely” reconciliation and how to prevent the lingering effects of betrayal from solidifying into enduring feelings of hate.

Furthermore, as this study provides valuable insights into the general characteristics of betrayal and hate, future research could seek a more contextual understanding of these phenomena in various cultural settings, investigating how they influence the effectiveness of resolution efforts.

In conclusion, the results of this study are intended to inform future research. For instance, its outcomes have contributed to the development of an fMRI paradigm designed to investigate the neural correlates of hate and betrayal, as well as the effectiveness of various resolution strategies, such as apologies versus compensation, on retributive attitudes (see Appendix I for a description of the fMRI paradigm). Future research could explore the neural correlates of betrayal, hate, and reconciliation, thereby further enhancing our understanding of these complex experiences and their interconnections.

9.4 Reflection on the Research Process

This section reflects on the research journey undertaken during the completion of this PhD project, offering a critical perspective on the experience.

Participating in the NETHATE Consortium has been a challenging and enriching experience. Engaging with the subject of hate through the collective insights of a diverse team—including scholars from various academic disciplines, cultural backgrounds, and areas of expertise—has profoundly deepened my understanding of the complexities surrounding this issue. However, such diversity also posed challenges. At times, discussions arose, reflecting differing perspectives and priorities. These moments required us to redefine our shared values and ground rules, fostering a culture of mutual respect and collaboration and becoming opportunities for both personal and professional growth.

Moreover, the opportunity to work in diverse academic and non-academic settings has been crucial for my personal and professional development. During my secondment at the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation, an Irish-based NGO focused on peacebuilding and reconciliation, I gained valuable insights into the peace processes, particularly regarding the legacy of political violence in Northern Ireland. Furthermore, while being involved with the Intercultural and Refugee Programme, I explored the connections between hate, prejudice and discrimination, and gained valuable knowledge in trauma-informed practice, especially in relation to intercultural dialogues among refugees, migrants, and members of diverse communities. Initially intended to span two months, this collaboration extended throughout my entire PhD journey and evolved into a personal commitment alongside my professional responsibilities. I cultivated meaningful

connections with experts and community leaders, which enriched my understanding of the emotional and psychological effects of hate, as well as the positive impact of a community in counteracting and preventing it. I organised and participated in various congresses and events that brought together diverse stakeholders to discuss strategies for peace and to address societal divisions and polarisation. I feel incredibly honoured to have been part of Glencree. This experience has profoundly shaped my approach to peacebuilding and conflict resolution, leaving a lasting impression on my heart. The connections I made and the lessons I've learned have impacted both my personal journey and my professional path in ways I will carry with me forever.

During my secondment at the Institute of Criminology and Legal Policy (Krimo) at the University of Helsinki in May 2023, I had the invaluable opportunity to deepen my understanding of criminological theories and methodologies. I actively engaged with experts across the Faculty, attended seminars, and presented my research at the criminological monthly seminar. These discussions broadened my perspective on framing hate and betrayal within criminological contexts. The connections I made were instrumental in enhancing my knowledge, particularly regarding the forensic implications of my findings. They guided me in developing a more nuanced analysis of the motivations behind betrayal, its consequences for victims, and the broader implications for social cohesion and justice. Overall, this secondment provided a new perspective on my research, providing me with the tools to critically assess betrayal from a criminological perspective. Additionally, my collaboration with other project partners, such as Textgain, provided invaluable insights and allowed me to work alongside experts from various fields. This experience broadened my understanding of critical issues related to preventing and countering hate in online contexts. Furthermore, it allowed me to cultivate my personal interests in the societal implications of artificial intelligence.

Finally, the process of investigating hate often uncovers difficult truths about how politics can shape oppression and discrimination in our world. Facing these realities has highlighted how deeply rooted systems of power and prejudice continue to affect societal norms, policies, and interpersonal dynamics. While this journey has been both challenging and enlightening, it is essential for understanding the broader context in which hate and

injustice persist. This growing awareness has strengthened my commitment to recognising my positionality and addressing these issues with empathy, a thoughtful perspective, and a responsibility to mend the divisions that hate creates.

In conclusion, this PhD journey has been a profound and transformative chapter in my life. Collaborating with dedicated organisations like Glencree and engaging with experts in the NETHATE Consortium has not only expanded my intellectual horizons but also significantly influenced my personal growth. These experiences have deepened my understanding of conflict and reconciliation, providing me with a richer perspective on the human dimensions of hate and healing. I am sincerely appreciative of the opportunities I've had to collaborate, learn, and contribute to research on such important topics, and I emerge from this experience with a renewed commitment to fostering peace and justice in our societies.

9.5 Conclusion of Research

This dissertation makes an original contribution on the intricate dynamics of hate, betrayal, and reconciliation, emphasising theoretical, methodological, and practical implications. The research design facilitated a thorough examination of these phenomena, illuminating the psychological processes and emotional regulation mechanisms involved in processing and addressing the experiences and aftermaths of betrayal. This study offers a novel exploration of the complex relationship between hate and betrayal, highlighting how dissonance mechanisms influence the development of hate in response to betrayal. It examines different forms of betrayal, including interpersonal versus institutional betrayals, as well as betrayal through acts of commission versus omission. The findings reveal how hate often fuels punitive and retributive behaviours, while simultaneously hindering restorative efforts. Furthermore, this research underscores the importance of value orientations in shaping individuals' perceptions of justice and different resolution strategies, advocating for interventions that are sensitive to these differences. This study also emphasises the critical role of time in the processes of hate and reconciliation, stressing the need to align interventions with the desires and needs of victims. Rather than simplifying or offering complementary explanations, this research emphasises the importance of embracing dissonance and

recognising the complexities and contrasts inherent in human behaviour. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study effectively captures the intricacies of these phenomena. It advocates for interventions that are not only more effective but also deeply empathetic, tailored to specific contexts, and grounded in a genuine understanding of human experiences. By doing so, the research confronts an urgent societal issue at a time when compassion and understanding are crucial. Beyond addressing the aftermath of betrayal, the study calls for a unified and inclusive approach to reconciliation, encouraging communities, advocates, and individuals to come together and bridge the divides created by hate.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Letter of Ethical Approval



Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
Trinity College Dublin
Ollscoil Átha Cliath | The University of Dublin

Ms Leda Tortora,
School of Nursing & Midwifery,
Trinity College,
24 D'Olier Street,
Dublin 2,
Ireland

15th December 2021

Ref: 210901
Title of Study: Responses to Conflict and its Resolution

Dear Leda,

Further to a meeting of the Faculty of Health Sciences Ethics Committee held in December 2021. We are pleased to inform you that the above project has ethical approval to proceed.

This study has been ethically approved. We would advise you to seek review and comments on your DPIA from the DPO if required prior to study commencement.

As a researcher you must ensure that you comply with other relevant regulations, including DATA PROTECTION and HEALTH AND SAFETY.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jacintha O'Sullivan".

Prof. Jacintha O'Sullivan
Chairperson
Faculty Research Ethics Committee

Appendix B – The Survey

To access the survey instrument, please click on the figure below. This will open a downloadable PDF version of the survey, allowing for easy access while saving space in the dissertation text.

Introduction

Dear participant, thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey!

This study is part of a PhD research project within the 'Network for Training on Hate' (NETHATE) Consortium, an international research and training project funded by the Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme of the European Commission.

In this survey, you will be presented with four scenarios showing real-life situations. You will be asked to evaluate the scenarios as if these events were happening to you, expressing your thoughts and opinions. At the end of the survey, you will be asked to answer some questions about your experience participating in the survey.

This survey is anonymous, meaning that your identity will not be revealed, and you will not be identifiable from your answers. You have the right to decline to answer and withdraw at any time by exiting the survey.

This survey has been approved by the Research Ethics Committees of the Faculty of Health Sciences, Trinity College Dublin.

By proceeding and submitting your answers, it is assumed that you have read and understood these matters, and you are consenting to take part in this survey.



Demographics

Demographics

Age Group

- ☐ 18-24
- ☐ 25-34
- ☐ 35-44
- ☐ 45-54
- ☐ 55 and over
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Appendix C – Template Analysis of Interpersonal Betrayal Vignettes

Interpersonal Betrayal			
Double Surprise (Romantic Partner) : You organise an anniversary surprise party for your partner, inviting colleagues and common friends. The partner cancels last-minute, claiming work obligations.			
By Commission		By Omission	
You later discover that the partner was celebrating elsewhere, leaving you to handle the guests alone.		You later discover that the partner forgot about the anniversary.	
Theme	Quote	Theme	Quote
1. Lies & Dishonesty	<i>Being cheated and lied to</i>	1. Neglect & Abandonment	<i>My partner showing that remembering the anniversary was important</i>
2. Betrayal & Broken Trust	<i>Being betrayed by my partner</i>	2. Betrayal's Consequences	<i>Being left to deal with all their let down friends</i>
3. Neglect & Abandonment	<i>That my partner chose someone or something over me</i>	3. Lies & Dishonesty	<i>That my partner lied to me</i>
4. Betrayal's Consequences	<i>The embarrassment of telling the guests to go home</i>	4. Betrayal & Broken Trust	<i>My partner failed to keep a promise</i>
5. Relational Bond	<i>That you were disillusioned about your relationship</i>	5. Unintentionality	<i>Sometimes you have to work late</i>
		6. Relational Bond	<i>That the partner puts work before family</i>
Family (The lost flat) : You need to secure a new flat but cannot afford the deposit, so you ask your parents for a loan. They agree and instruct your siblings to transfer the funds. However, the transfer is not completed, leading to the loss of the flat.			
Later, you discover that your siblings took the money for their own use instead of transferring it.		Later, you discover that your siblings forgot to complete the transfer.	
1. Relational Bond	<i>That your own blood, your family, ripped you off</i>	1. Neglect & Abandonment	<i>That your siblings didn't care enough</i>
2. Betrayal & Broken Trust	<i>Family betrayal</i>	2. Betrayal's Consequences	<i>The loss of the flat</i>
3. Betrayal's Consequences	<i>Losing the flat</i>	3. Relational Bond	<i>Family didn't come through for you</i>
4. Neglect & Abandonment	<i>That my siblings let me down when I needed them</i>	4. Betrayal & Broken Trust	<i>That your siblings betrayed you and your parents</i>
5. Lies & Dishonesty	<i>The lack of honesty of the siblings</i>	5. Unintentionality	<i>This looks like an honest mistake</i>

		6. Lies & Dishonesty	<i>That my siblings ghosted me</i>
Friends (Sold-out Friendship) : Your friend promises to buy tickets for both of you to see your favourite band, which is finally performing in town, with the understanding that you'll reimburse them after your payday.			
As the event approaches, your friend admits they forgot to buy your ticket. Later, you find out they lied and went to the concert with someone else.		As the event approaches, your friend admits they forgot to buy your ticket.	
1. Lies & Dishonesty	<i>Being lied to by someone you trusted</i>	1. Neglect & Abandonment	<i>Being forgotten by someone you thought you're important to</i>
2. Betrayal & Broken Trust	<i>A friend betrayed me</i>	2. Betrayal's Consequences	<i>Not seeing my favourite band</i>
3. Neglect & Abandonment	<i>My friend chose someone else over me</i>	3. Relational Bond	<i>That I thought we were friends</i>
4. Relational Bond	<i>When you thought somebody was your friend who did not act like it</i>	4. Betrayal & Broken Trust	<i>Loss of trust in a friend</i>
5. Betrayal's Consequences	<i>Not seeing the band</i>	5. Unintentionality	<i>It could have been done unintentionally</i>
		6. Lies & Dishonesty	<i>The friend lied</i>
Colleague (The missed promotion) : You share an idea with a trusted colleague that you believe could lead to a promotion at your company, and ask them to help arrange a meeting with their manager. However, days go by without any updates.			
You later discover that your colleague presented your idea to the manager as their own and obtained a promotion because of it.		You later discover that your colleague never tried to contact the manager for you as promised, and you lose the opportunity of being promoted.	
1. Betrayal & Broken Trust	<i>Betrayal from a coworker I confided in</i>	1. Betrayal & Broken Trust	<i>They broke my trust and betrayed me by stealing my plan</i>
2. Betrayal's Consequences	<i>That I did not get a deserved promotion</i>	2. Neglect & Abandonment	<i>Not being valued as an employee</i>
3. Neglect & Abandonment	<i>Getting overlooked</i>	3. Betrayal's Consequences	<i>Missed promotion</i>
4. Lies & Dishonesty	<i>Dishonest colleague</i>	4. Relational Bond	<i>That someone you would consider a friend would do that</i>
5. Relational Bond	<i>Betrayal by someone you trusted to the extent of sharing ideas with</i>	5. Lies & Dishonesty	<i>Being misled by my coworker</i>

Appendix D – Template Analysis of Institutional Betrayal Vignettes

Institutional Betrayal			
Government (Falsely Accused) : A government office worker, falsely accused of leaking confidential information, attempted suicide and survived, but has been unable to return to work since. Later, an investigation uncovered evidence proving the office worker's innocence.			
The Government threatened the officer not to divulge the findings and put a gag order on the investigation.		The Government promised to make the findings public and restore the officer's reputation, but never did.	
Theme	Quote	Theme	Quote
1.Betrayal's Consequences	<i>The worker tried to commit suicide</i>	1.Betrayal's Consequences	<i>Being falsely and publicly accused</i>
2. Injustice & Unfairness	<i>The government and your employer should protect you</i>	2.Injustice & Unfairness	<i>The government worker was unfairly treated and suffered great harm while no one took responsibility</i>
3. Neglect & Abandonment	<i>The lack of empathy from the government</i>	3.Neglect & Abandonment	<i>The lack of care in dealing with a suicidal person</i>
4. Betrayal & Broken Trust	<i>The betrayal after finding evidence of innocence</i>	4.Lies & Dishonesty	<i>That the government lied about their promise</i>
5. Lies & Dishonesty	<i>The public being lied to</i>	5.Betrayal & Broken Trust	<i>You have been wronged and betrayed to the core</i>
Healthcare (Fatal Negligence) : A mother and baby died in a hospital under mysterious circumstances. The hospital claims to have conducted an investigation showing they were not at fault. However, when the baby's parent sought clarification, the hospital refused to respond to inquiries or return calls.			
The parent initiates court proceedings, which uncover the hospital's negligence and expose the lies in the testimonies of doctors and nurses.		The parent initiates court proceedings, revealing that the investigation was poorly conducted, and doctors and nurses claimed to have no recollection of the events.	
1. Betrayal's Consequences	<i>The death of mother and baby</i>	1.Betrayal's Consequences	<i>That a mother and baby died and the father is not given the dignity of a clear explanation</i>
2. Lies & Dishonesty	<i>The lies of trusted professionals to cover their backs</i>	2.Injustice & Unfairness	<i>That the organisation supposed to protect people failed</i>
3. Injustice & Unfairness	<i>That an institution dedicated to care betrayed its foundation</i>	3.Neglect & Abandonment	<i>Lack of empathy and support from the hospital</i>
4. Neglect & Abandonment	<i>The hospital's callous disregard for the patient</i>	4.Lies & Dishonesty	<i>The hospital lied about performing investigations</i>

5. Betrayal & Broken Trust	<i>Losing trust of this medical association and the betrayal</i>	5. Betrayal & Broken Trust	<i>The betrayal of the duty of care</i>
Workplace (Twice harassed) : A colleague confides in you about being sexually harassed by the manager. You help them report the issue to HR, who promises to investigate. However, weeks later, you notice the manager still faces no consequences.			
When you ask HR for an explanation, they accuse you and your colleague of causing discord within the team and threaten you to stop making negative insinuations about the manager.		When you ask HR for an explanation, both you and your colleague receive vague and misleading answers.	
1. Injustice & Unfairness	<i>I was treated unequally</i>	1. Injustice & Unfairness	<i>That we are not safe or protected by an employer</i>
2. Betrayal's Consequences	<i>Now our jobs are endangered</i>	2. Betrayal's Consequences	<i>The way I and my co-worker have targets on us</i>
3. Neglect & Abandonment	<i>You stood up for yourself and were not believed</i>	3. Neglect & Abandonment	<i>& Abandonment by management</i>
4. Betrayal & Broken Trust	<i>That the company turned their back on you</i>	4. Betrayal & Broken Trust	<i>The betrayal and intentional avoidance</i>
5. Lies & Dishonesty	<i>The deceit and redirection of blame</i>	5. Lies & Dishonesty	<i>They weren't true to their word</i>
Government (Broken Election Promises) : After the war, a new government promised to distribute international aid to victims. However, after winning the election, victims who submitted applications were denied their requests and received no financial assistance.			
The government dismantled the commission responsible for distributing international aid, and the funds intended for victims were redirected to increase the salaries of government officials.		No meetings were scheduled for the aid distribution commission, and there is no clarity on how the funds have been allocated.	
1. Betrayal & Broken Trust	<i>The broken promise of reparations</i>	1. Lies & Dishonesty	<i>The government lying to their people after a war</i>
2. Lies & Dishonesty	<i>They that blatantly lied to get elected</i>	2. Betrayal & Broken Trust	<i>Breaking the trust of those in need</i>
3. Neglect & Abandonment	<i>Forgetting the people's needs</i>	3. Injustice & Unfairness	<i>My government failed me again</i>
4. Injustice & Unfairness	<i>That the government will do anything to get what it wants and then forgets about the people</i>	4. Betrayal's Consequences	<i>People depending on the aid were denied it</i>
5. Betrayal's Consequences	<i>People losing everything and not being compensated</i>	5. Neglect & Abandonment	<i>& You thought you were going to be helped but got abandoned</i>

Appendix E – Interview Invitation



Thank you for completing this survey!



This survey showed episodes of betrayal and different ways in which we respond to it. Your contribution will help improve our understanding of this complex topic.

We are also looking to interview people, to include **people's personal voices and experiences** to the study.

Have you ever experienced, or witnessed, betrayal by a trusted one or an Institution?

If this survey reminded you of a story that you would like to share with us, you are invited to participate in a **one-to-one interview!**



Depending on your wish, this can take place in person (for residents in Ireland), online or by phone. The interview will most likely last between 30-60 minutes, but the time it takes may vary depending on how much you want to share. The interview will take place in a manner respectful of your ideas and opinions and aims to be a 'safe space' where you can openly discuss your thoughts.

If you are interested in participating, please download a copy of the Participant Information Leaflet (PIL) [here](#) and retain this for your records, submit your contact details below, and we will contact you.

Your contact details will not be associated with your answers to this survey in any way, that will remain anonymous.

Participation is confidential and on a voluntary basis.

We offer a 30 euro compensation bonus for your time and effort.

If you have any questions about this survey or research, please feel free to contact Ms Leda Tortora [email: ltortora@tcd.ie].

*** only if you want to participate in the interview, fill the form below with your email and we will contact you.**

Email

Appendix F – Interview Schedule

Dear participant, thank you for taking the time today. This interview will be a conversation on your experiences and thoughts on issues such as conflict, its resolution, betrayal, and hate in society and personal relationships. This interview will last approximately 30-60 minutes, but the time it takes may vary depending on what you want to share. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and you can request to withdraw at any time without having to provide a reason. Please feel free to decline to answer any questions you might feel uncomfortable replying to. If you feel distressed talking about something you do not wish to share, please do let me know, and we will stop the interview. If you consent to it, we will record this interview. Do you have any questions?

Now, we can officially start the interview.

1. Welcome to this interview. As previously said, we asked you to participate in this interview to discuss topics such as conflict, its resolution, hatred, and betrayal. We invited you through a survey, where we asked you to evaluate episodes of betrayal by trusted ones (interpersonal), for instance, a lying partner and an unreliable friend, and by society (institutional), for example, negligence in healthcare and failure to intervene after reported harassment in the workplace. Also, we asked you to evaluate different ways to mitigate the harm.

- a. Recalling those scenarios, what are your thoughts about them?

- b. Do you think that betrayal relates to scenarios?

- If yes, how?

- If not, why?

- c. How would you define betrayal?

2. How common do you think episodes of betrayal are in everyday life? Can you think about an episode like that ever happened to you, to somebody you know, or that you have heard on the news?

- a)** If participants say something like that happened to them, to somebody they know or they heard it on the news:

Can you tell me more about it?

When this happened to you/ to somebody you know/you heard it on the news, was something done to reduce or repair the harm?

If yes, what? Was it effective? Can you tell me more about it?

If it was not effective, what could have been done better?

If not, why? What could have been done?

- b)** If participants say it never happened to them and they never heard it on the news:

If you would be asked to imagine a situation involving betrayal, how would you describe that?

To reduce feelings of betrayal and repair the harm, what could be done? Can you tell me more about it?

- 3.** Recalling episodes of betrayal previously discussed, do you think that hatred plays a role in how we react to them and/or what we need to resolve the conflict?

If yes, how?

If no, why?

- 4.** Have you experienced hatred in your life? What was that like?

Thank you for taking the time for this interview today. Your participation will help understand better issues of conflict, its resolution, betrayal, and hate. Do you have any questions for me?

Appendix G – Interview Consent Form

Responses to Betrayal and its Resolution: the Role of Hatred and Reconciliation

Centre ID: 1741

Coded ID

Identification Number for study: 210565

Dear participant,

this is the consent form for the study “**Responses to Betrayal and its Resolution: the Role of Hatred and Reconciliation**”, conducted by Trinity College Dublin as part of the NETHATE (Network of Excellence of Training on HATE) Consortium, an international research and training project funded by the Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme of the European Commission. Thank you for reading the information sheet about this study.

There are **19 sections** in this form. Each section has a statement and asks you to initial if you agree. The end of this form is for the researchers to complete. To participate in this research, please read and sign this form. Initial the box if you agree with the statement. Please feel free to ask any questions you may have when reading each of the statements.

As a prerequisite to joining the study, please note that consent must be given to section 7 or 8, or both.

Thank you for your interest in participating in this study

Researcher: Leda Tortora **E-Mail:** ltortora@tcd.ie

General

1. I confirm I have read and understood the Information Leaflet for the above study. The information has been fully explained to me and I have had the opportunity to ask questions, all of which have been answered to my satisfaction.	
2. I understand that this study is entirely voluntary, and if I decide that I do not want to take part, I can stop taking part in this study at any time without giving a reason. I understand that deciding not to take part will not affect me in any way.	
3. I understand that all information will be kept private and confidential and that my name will not be disclosed.	
4. I understand that I can contact the research team if I need further clarification and information about this study at any time, and researchers' contact details have been provided to me in the Participant Information Leaflet (PIL).	

5. I agree to take part in this research study having been fully informed of the risks, benefits and alternatives which are set out in full in the information leaflet which I have been provided with.	
6. I agree to being contacted by researchers by email and/or phone as part of this research study .	

Data processing

7. IN- PERSON INTERVIEWS: I consent to my interview being audio-recorded. I understand that only Ms Leda Tortora and Prof Dr Jan de Vries will have access to the interview recordings and transcripts and that the interview's original audio-recording will be used only to proceed to transcription and, as soon as transcription is completed, will be permanently destroyed.	
8. ONLINE INTERVIEWS: I consent to my interview being audio and video recorded. I understand that I can turn off my camera at any time, and that only Ms Leda Tortora and Prof Dr Jan de Vries will have access to the interview recordings and transcripts. I understand that the interview's recording will only be used only to extract the audio component and then will be permanently destroyed , while the audio file will be securely stored and will be permanently destroyed as soon as transcription is completed.	
9. I consent to the researcher taking notes during the interview.	
10. I understand that this form will be held for a period of seven years, as per TCD policy, will be stored in a secure locked cabinet at all times and that access to it will be restricted to Ms Leda Tortora and Prof Dr Jan de Vries.	
11. I understand that personal information about me, including the transfer of this personal information about me outside of the EU, will be protected in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation.	
12. I understand that there are no direct benefits to me from participating in this study.	
13. I understand that a transcript of the interview will be provided to me, upon my request. I understand that I have the right to request deletion of any section of it, without having to give a reason.	
14. I understand that the information provided by me will be pseudonymised, meaning that names might be substituted by pseudonyms and any details of interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I talk about might be disguised. I understand that my identity will remain anonymous in any report on results of this research study.	

Appendix H – Interview Participant Information Leaflet (PIL)

Name of Study: Responses to Betrayal and its Resolution: the Role of Hatred and Reconciliation

Site	Trinity College Dublin
Principal Investigator(s) and Co-Investigator(s) (insert names, titles and contact details)	Ms Leda Tortora , PhD student, School of Nursing And Midwifery Trinity College, 24 D'Olier Street ,Dublin 2, email: ltortora@tcd.ie Prof Dr Jan de Vries , Assistant Professor of Psychology and Subject Leader School of Nursing and Midwifery Trinity College, Dublin 24 D'Olier Street ,Dublin 2, email: devriej@tcd.ie
Study Organiser/ Sponsor (if applicable)	'Network for Training on Hate' (NETHATE) funded by the Horizon 2020 Programme.
Data Controllers	Trinity College Dublin (for research data)
Data Protection Officer	Data Protection Officer Secretary's Office Trinity College Dublin Dublin 2

Dear Participant,

Thank you for expressing your interest in being interviewed for this study on conflict and its resolution. This study is part of the European 'Network for Training on Hate' (NETHATE) Consortium, and is conducted by Ms Leda Tortora and Prof Dr Jan de Vries at Trinity College Dublin. Please read this information sheet carefully. If after reading it you are still happy to participate, we will contact you to arrange a time and date to interview. You can choose to attend the interview at a place of convenience for you, including the possibility of having it online. Please feel free to contact us for any questions. Don't feel rushed or under pressure to make a decision. This leaflet has five main parts:

Part 1 – The Study

Part 2 – Data Protection

Part 3 – Costs, Funding and Approval

Part 4 – Future Research

Part 5 – Further information

Part 1 – The Study

Why is this study being done?

This study is part of a PhD project within the 'Network for Training on Hate' (NETHATE) Consortium, an international research and training project funded by the Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme of the European Commission, aiming to examine the dynamics of the spread of hatred in society, as well as mitigation and reconciliation strategies.

We are conducting interviews to find out more about people's attitudes and experiences about conflict and its resolution. Your participation will help us in gathering experiences from people (18 years or over) from all walks of life. The overall aim of this project is to provide an enhanced understanding of hateful behaviours to promote peacebuilding and implement successful restoration strategies.

Do I have to take part? Can I withdraw?

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You can change your mind about taking part in the study and withdraw at any time, even if the study has started, before the publication of the study's results, without having to give a reason.

What happens if I change my mind?

If you choose not to continue to take part, this will not affect you in any way. If you change your mind before the interview takes place, you only need to tell us. If you change your mind during the interview, the interview will be immediately interrupted, and if you ask so, the recording and notes will be destroyed. If you request to be excluded from the study after the interview, you will be asked to fill in a withdrawal form. If you want, you can ask for the recording and transcript to be destroyed. However, it will not be possible to destroy data already used in research reports or publications.

If you wish to withdraw after the interview has taken place, please contact Ms Leda Tortora [PhD Student at School of Nursing and Midwifery TCD, email: ltortora@tcd.ie], who will be able to organize it for you.

How will the study be carried out?

You will take part in a one-on-one interview aimed at gathering your thoughts, opinions and experiences about conflict and how to mitigate it through reparation strategies.

- **When and where will the study take place?**

You can choose to attend the interview in person at a place and time of convenience to you. This should be a quiet place where the interview can take

place without disruptions. You can suggest a location, or we can offer for the interview to take place in a suitable room at Trinity College Dublin. If you wish, we can also conduct the interview virtually using an online platform (Microsoft Teams).

- **What will happen in general terms?**

This study focuses on your opinions and experiences with conflict and its resolution. The conflict can be interpersonal as well as with society or communities. We will ask you to comment on some real-life scenarios and share your thoughts about them. The interview will most likely last between 30-60 minutes, but the time it takes may vary depending on how much you want to share.

- **How many people will be taking part in the study?**

We are welcoming everybody who wishes to take part in the study and tell her/his story. Most likely we will interview 15-20 people in person.

What will happen if I decide to take part?

You will have provided your contact details, either after completing the online survey or through other channels. Subsequently you will be contacted by phone or email to arrange a time to meet for the interview. In advance of this we will send you detailed information on the study and will ask you to complete a consent form. The interview will be arranged at a time at least a week after you have provided your consent. You can withdraw your consent and cancel the interview, if you wish so, at any time, and without having to provide a reason. At the date of the interview you will be asked to confirm your consent.

On the day of the interview, you will meet the interviewer, who will explain to you all the procedures in detail. You will be verbally informed about data protection policies and your data subject rights, and it will be made clear that you can withdraw at any point without any consequence for you. You will be encouraged to ask any question you may have about the interview and the project, and we will make sure to answer these questions to your satisfaction. After this, we will ask you to sign the consent form. This includes consent for the interview to be audio-recorded. If you do not consent to the recording but still wish to be interviewed, we will ask you to consent to the interviewer taking notes during the interview. You will receive a copy of the consent form to keep.

The interview will take place in a manner respectful of your ideas and opinions and aims to be a 'safe space' where you can openly discuss your thoughts. The interview will be audio-recorded, unless you object to this. The recording is only necessary to transcribe the interview; once the transcription is completed, the original recording will be permanently destroyed. Transcriptions of the interviews will be analysed to identify core features of hatred and reconciliation strategies. We are particularly interested in your

experiences with and knowledge of the impact of hate and how to mitigate it through conflict resolution strategies.

If you choose to conduct the interview online, we will contact you to arrange a suitable day and time, and then you will be provided with a link to join the interview on Microsoft Teams. If you consent to it, the interview will be initially audio and video recorded; immediately after the recording, the audio will be separated from the video and stored for transcriptions, while the original video recording will be permanently destroyed. You will be informed that you can turn off your camera, if you wish so, before the recording and at any time during the interview.

What will happen to the recording, notes and transcript of the interview?
--

The handling of recordings, notes and transcripts of the interview will take place in a manner that is designed to fully ensure your anonymity and will be in compliance with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). This legal framework provides guidelines on data protection and privacy for citizens of the European Union (EU), which also apply in Ireland (<https://www.dataprotection.ie/en/individuals/data-protection-basics/principles-data-protection>). This study is bound by these regulations.

Following your interview, the text of the recording will be transcribed. Your name will be substituted by a coded ID and used only to identify your files. The interview recording will only be accessed by the research team and will not be presented at any public presentation of the study. Under the Freedom of Information Act you can request access to any information we stored about you at any time. The digital recording and transcript, identified only by the coded ID, will be stored in a secure place in a locked office in Trinity College Dublin. Once the transcription is completed, you can request a copy. At your request we can send a copy of the interview transcript by post or email (on a password-protected file). You can request us to change or delete any section of the transcription at any time without having to give a reason. A copy of the interview recording can also be provided, if requested. The soft copy (digital copy) of the transcript will be held in an encrypted file on a password-protected computer, while the hard copy (paper copy) will be stored in a locked cabinet in an office in Trinity College Dublin. Nobody except the research team will have access to the files.

After the transcription, the original recorded interview will be destroyed. Your data won't be used in any future research without your explicit consent. The information you provided in the study will remain confidential and anonymous. Your name, your interview recordings and your interview transcripts won't be disclosed to other parties. We will remove from the

transcription any extract containing personal information that might reveal your identity, and we will substitute names with pseudonyms and will not refer to situations that could lead to your identification. Your name will never appear in any publications about this study.

If you decide to withdraw your participation after your interview has taken place, all recordings, notes and transcripts referring to your interview will be permanently destroyed. Withdrawing from the study will be possible only before publication of the study's results.

Are there any benefits to taking part in this research?
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There is no direct benefit to you from taking part in this study. However, you may find it interesting to share your opinions and beliefs about conflict and what can be done to reduce it. Your participation will help advance current knowledge on mechanisms to prevent conflict and promote peacebuilding and reconciliation strategies.

Are there any risks to me or others if I take part?
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We will constantly take care that all procedures are done safely. In the unlikely event that the interview will cause you distress, we will immediately stop the interview. We will never put pressure on you to answer a question you feel uncomfortable answering. In case you feel upset after the interview, we will provide support in the form of debriefing and direct you to support services to assist you, if you request so. You will be provided with relevant contact details. If you wish so, it is also possible continue the conversation with the interviewer or her supervisor. You can call us or email us if you have any request or concern.

Will I be told the outcome of the study? Will I be told the results of any tests or investigations performed as part of this study that relate to me?
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The results of the study will be reported in scientific journals and presented at scientific conferences and workshops. No information which reveals your identity will be disclosed. If you would like to receive information about the results of the study, please let us know, and we will forward to you a report of the study.

COVID-19 and contact tracing

To protect the health and safety of all participants and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic, all procedures related to this study will be performed in a Covid-friendly manner. Trinity College has developed plans for a safe working environment during the COVID-19 pandemic in keeping with Government and College guidelines.

Researcher and Participant Screening

The researcher who will interview you has completed Trinity's online COVID-19 induction training. If your interview takes place in Trinity, an up-to-date log of activity within the facility will be maintained by research staff for contact tracing purposes. The researcher will complete and file an activity log for each interview.

The researcher will contact the participants one day prior to the scheduled testing, to complete a COVID-19 symptom questionnaire by phone, to establish if they are free of any COVID-19 symptoms and whether or not they have been in recent contact with a known COVID-19 case. If an interview in person is planned, this will proceed only if participants confirm that they are free of COVID-19 symptoms and they did not recently come in contact with somebody affected by COVID-19.

The interviewer will also complete the COVID-19 symptom questionnaire, take her own temperature and log in to the SafeZone app on the day of testing. The testing will only proceed if research staff members do not show COVID-19 symptoms and have not been in contact for a minimum of 7 days with the 'COVID-19 questionnaire' positive staff member.

The participant will repeat the COVID-19 questionnaire on the day of the interview. The temperature of the study participant will be taken and recorded via an infrared thermometer. If it is suspected that any of the persons have been exposed to COVID-19, or the temperature of anyone is high (37.5C and above), the interview will not proceed, the study participant and research staff will have to leave, and everyone will have to contact the appropriate medical personnel (GP, College Health or HSE) for follow-up. If a participant or researcher is unwell enough not to be able to return home by themselves, they should be directed to the designated isolation room in Trinity College (for instance in TCIN, room 3.02) and their GP or designated emergency will be contacted for advice.

Important: Any members of the public deemed high risk according to HSE guidelines (e.g. those aged over 60 or with history of heart disease or lung conditions) should avoid participating in a face-to-face interview, unless they have been fully vaccinated. Participants will also be asked to carefully consider their participation if they are likely to be in contact with individuals (e.g. family members) who are at high-risk. In this case, an online interview may be suggested.

We will retain the COVID-19 symptom questionnaire for two weeks after the scanning session for contact tracing purposes. After that period, when the risk of having been diagnosed with COVID-19 or having been in contact with somebody diagnosed with COVID-19 is minimum, the questionnaire will be destroyed.

Part 2 – Data Protection

What information about me (personal data) will be used as part of this study?

We will collect and process only essential personal data needed for this research study, according to the data minimisation principle, Art. 5 GDPR.

The personal data being collected for this study are participants' signatures (informed consent), basic demographic information, interview audio-recordings and interview transcripts. Your data will be pseudonymised, meaning that personally identifiable information will be substituted by a coded ID (a pseudonym). Any personal data, such as demographics, will only be used for statistical analysis to rule out the possibility that these factors influence the study results. The interview recordings will be destroyed as soon as the transcription process is completed. We won't share any personally identifiable information with other parties under any circumstances.

What will happen to my personal data?

Your personal data will be pseudonymised, meaning that we will substitute any identifiable personal information about you with a coded ID. At the beginning of the testing session, we will assign a coded ID to your personal data. This code is unique and will be communicated to you at the end of the session. The coded ID will be stored in a password-protected, encrypted Excel file in an office in Trinity College and deleted upon completion of the study (2024). Demographic information, interview audio-recordings and interview transcripts will be encrypted and securely stored in a Trinity-owned computer accessible only to the research team and on a secure Microsoft OneDrive account accessible only to the primary researcher (Ms Leda Tortora). Findings from this study will be published in scientific journals and presented at congresses and workshops, but your participation will always remain anonymous.

Interview audio-recordings will be destroyed as soon as transcription is completed. Consent forms, demographic information and interview transcripts will be retained for seven years, as per TCD policy, after which they will be destroyed.

COVID-19 symptom-screening questionnaire and contact tracing information will only be used to minimise the risk of exposure and inform participants if we discover that they have been in contact with an individual who subsequently tested positive for COVID. These data will be stored and processed entirely separately from the participant's experimental data.

Who will access and use my personal data as part of this study?
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Personal data collected during the study will be kept confidential. Only the primary researcher and her supervisor will have access to the original data. No personal data will be shared with third parties. Your name will not be used in any publication or report resulting from this research study. Personal data will not be disclosed to the scientists carrying out the statistical analyses. The project does not involve the sharing of data with other departments or business units in Trinity College. At any point your personal data will leave the State.

Will my personal data be kept confidential? How will my data be kept safe?

We value your privacy, and have measures in place to ensure to protect your confidentiality and keep your data safe. It is important that you know that all persons carrying out the research ,or otherwise having access to your personal data, are bound by a professional code of secrecy (like doctors) or a contractual code of secrecy (that would mean disciplinary action for employees who disclosed or facilitated unauthorised access to the personal data).

Everyone involved in this project has had training in data protection law and practice. This study has had a Data Protection Impact Assessment carried out to identify any data protection risks and to ensure they are minimised. The findings from this study may be published in scientific journals but your personal identity will never be disclosed. All data will be collected and stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the EU General Data Protection Regulation ('GDPR').Your personal data, e.g. name and address, will be kept strictly separate from the demographics, the interview audio-recordings and the interview transcripts. Your consent form will be stored separately from all your other data, ensuring your anonymity. All participants will be assigned a coded ID; every data collected will be saved using this ID and stored in a secure location. Non-identifiable personal information and the narratives collected for this study (interview audio-recordings and transcripts) will be registered and analysed on password-protected computers. We will retain any hard copies of research information in locked cabinets at all times.

Situations where breaking confidentiality is required

We will maintain confidentiality as far as it is possible. However, if during the study you disclose any criminal activity, including information implying that you or someone you mention might be in significant danger of harm and unable to act for themselves, we may have to discuss it with you and inform relevant agencies.

Confidentiality will be breached if the research team has a strong belief or evidence exists that the participant committed a criminal act or there is a serious risk of harm or danger to either the participant or another individual. This may relate to issues surrounding physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse, concerns for child protection, rape, self-harm, suicidal intent or criminal activity. In addition, disclosure is required as part of a legal process or Garda investigation. In such instances, information may be disclosed to significant others or appropriate third parties without permission being sought. Where possible, a full explanation will be given to you regarding the necessary procedures and also the intended actions that may need to be taken.

By completing the consent form you are agreeing to the confidentiality terms stipulated in this section of the information sheet.

What is the lawful basis to use my personal data?
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By law we can use your personal information only for scientific research (in the public interest). The study is conducted by Trinity College under its official authority as a university, under the Universities Act 1997. We will also ask for your explicit consent to use your data as a requirement of the Irish Health Research Regulations. The study will comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) at all times.

What are my rights?

You have the following rights regarding any identifiable information that we collect about you during this research study. If data are fully anonymised, these rights do not apply.

You are entitled to:

- The right to access to your data and receive a copy of it;
- The right to restrict or object the processing of your data;
- The right to request correction or deletion of any inaccurate information about you (unless this information relates to a positive COVID result, as this is a notifiable disease under the Infectious Diseases Regulations);
- The right to request the deletion of your data;
- The right to receive your data in a portable format and to have it transferred to another data controller, and to reuse your personal data for your own purposes;

- The right not to be subject to a decision based solely on automated processing, including profiling.

By law you can exercise the following rights in relation to your personal data, unless the request would make it impossible or very difficult to conduct the research. You can exercise these rights by contacting the Trinity College Data Protection Officer, Secretary's Office, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin 2, Ireland. Email: dataprotection@tcd.ie. Website: www.tcd.ie/privacy.

Part 3 – Costs, Funding and Approval

Has this study been approved by a research ethics committee?

Yes, this study has been approved by the Faculty of Health Research Ethics Committee. Approval was granted on 15/12/2021.

Who is organising and funding this study? Will the results be used for commercial purposes?

The study is organised by Trinity College Dublin and is funded by the 'Network for Training on Hate' (NETHATE) Consortium, an international research and training project of the Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme of the European Commission. There is no commercial aspect related to this study.

Is there any payment for taking part? Will it cost me anything if I agree to take part?

You will be offered a €30 completion bonus as a compensation for your time and effort .

Part 4 – Future Research

Will my personal data be used in future studies?

Data collected in this study will not be used for any future research without your explicit consent

Part 5 – Further Information

Who should I contact for information or complaints?

If you have any concerns or questions, you can contact:

- Principal Investigator: Ms Leda Tortora, PhD student, School of Nursing And Midwifery Trinity College, 24 D'Olier Street ,Dublin 2, email: ltortora@tcd.ie

- Data Protection Officer, Trinity College Dublin: Data Protection Officer, Secretary's Office, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin 2, Ireland. Email: dataprotection@tcd.ie. Website: www.tcd.ie/privacy.

Under GDPR, if you are not satisfied with how your data is being processed, you have the right to lodge a complaint with the Office of the Data Protection Commission, 21 Fitzwilliam Square South, Dublin 2, Ireland. Website: www.dataprotection.ie

Will I be contacted again?

You should feel free to contact us, but we will not contact you again unless you express the wish for us to do so. You will be given a copy of this information leaflet and the signed Consent Form to keep.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this information sheet!

Appendix I – The fMRI Paradigm (Modified Trust Game)

This Appendix outlines the development of a functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) paradigm informed by the findings from this mixed-methods study. The primary goal of this fMRI paradigm is to gain a deeper understanding of the cognitive processes underlying trust-related decisions and the experiences of betrayal and its mitigation.

The paradigm is based on a modified version of the traditional trust game, a well-established paradigm in behavioural economics and psychology for studying trust-based decision-making. In the classic trust game, one participant, the "trustor", is given a sum of money and must decide how much to invest in the "trustee". The invested amount is typically tripled, after which the trustee decides how much of the increased sum to return to the trustor. The trustor's decision relies on the expectation that the trustee will reciprocate, but the trustee may choose not to reciprocate, keeping most or all of the money—a decision often perceived as a betrayal.

The classic trust game provided the foundation for this new paradigm. Here, the trustor and trustee start each trial with the same initial sum of money (in points). A key feature is that the trustee can be either an individual or an organisation, mirroring the study's findings on the differences between interpersonal and institutional betrayal. Examples of interpersonal and institutional players are represented in **Figure 1**.

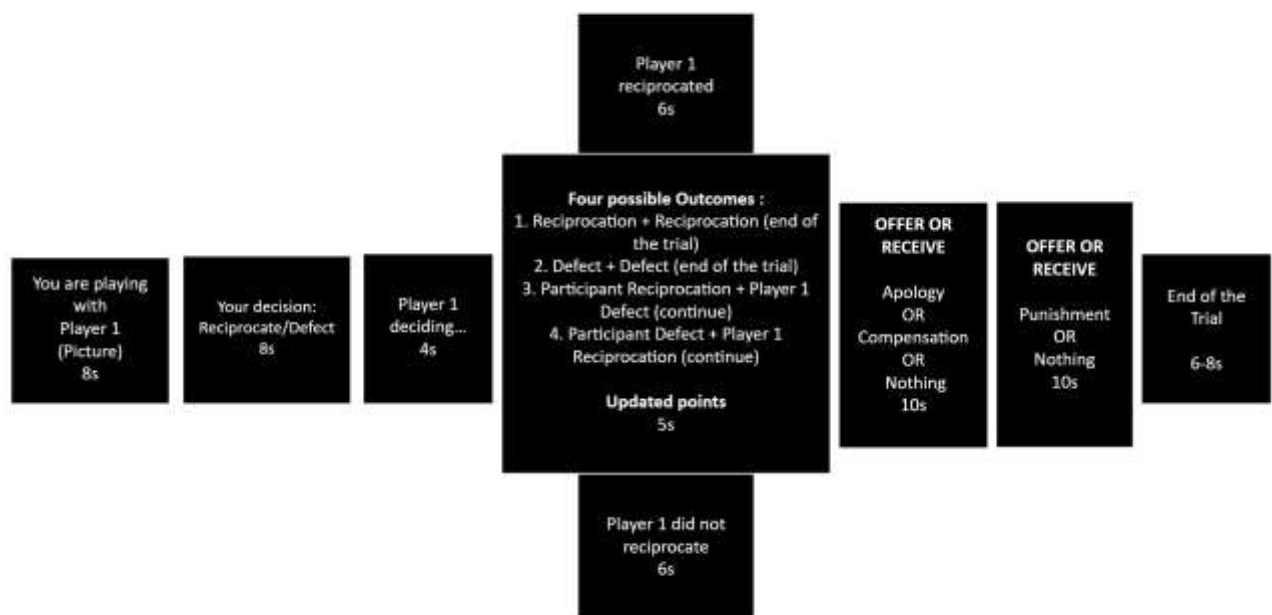
Figure 1 - Types of Trustee in the Modified Trust Game (Interpersonal vs Institutional)



** The above images are AI-Generated*

Participants are informed that if both parties choose to reciprocate, they will each receive double their initial sum (**Reciprocation**). Conversely, if both choose not to reciprocate, they will both lose the entire reward (**Non-Reciprocation**). Crucially, neither party knows the other's decision before making their own choice. In addition to reciprocation and non-reciprocation, the paradigm includes two other scenarios: **Betrayal Encountered** occurs when the trustor chooses to reciprocate, but the trustee does not, resulting in the trustee keeping all the money and leaving the trustor with nothing. Conversely, **Betrayal Inflicted** takes place when the trustor decides not to reciprocate while the trustee does, allowing the trustor to retain all the money while the trustee ends up with nothing. Subsequently, the paradigm introduces another novel element through the addition of a **Resolution Phase**, followed by a **Punishment Phase**. An example trial is shown in **Figure 2**.

Figure 2 - fMRI Trial Example



The resolution and punishment phases are activated only in scenarios where betrayal occurs, whether by committing or experiencing it. The **Resolution phase** provides both the betrayed and the betrayer with an opportunity to attempt to repair the harm. Since players can both betray and be betrayed, they can both send and receive reparation options. The trustor and the trustee can choose between three options: 1) apologise, 2)

compensate, or 3) take no action. The apology is conveyed through a text message, symbolising a verbal acknowledgment of wrongdoing, while compensation involves the return of a portion of the money taken, representing a tangible effort to rectify the harm caused. Following the Resolution phase, the game introduces a **Punishment Phase**, offering participants the option to punish or refrain from punishing their counterpart. The punishment mechanism involves subtracting points from the counterpart, which are not personally gained but redistributed to the researcher or next player, ensuring that the punishment is driven by a desire to address the betrayal, rather than motivated by financial gain.

The three phases of the paradigm serve several key purposes. First, they offer a structured approach to exploring the psychological and emotional responses to “personal” vs “impersonal” betrayal. Second, they enable the evaluation of different reparation strategies in mitigating betrayal. Third, the punishment phase provides insights into how apology or compensation, or the lack thereof, influences decisions to punish or not punish the betrayer. Overall, this modified trust game is a valuable experimental tool for examining the complex dynamics of trust, betrayal, and reparation in both interpersonal and institutional settings. By integrating empirical findings from this mixed-methods study, the fMRI paradigm aims to serve as a foundation for future research on trust restoration and conflict resolution by offering a nuanced perspective on the interplay between trust, betrayal, and reconciliation.