

Facing Violence

Language references of rape cases in media

Communication Practices, Diversity and Inclusion

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Initial

After deciding the topic of our project, each of us researched articles about rapes that took place in their Country. Everyone analysed their own case and then, together, we compared them in order to provide some guidelines for our target (both journalists and the public). All of us participated in the writing process: we produced descriptions of each case and also of samples for each country about the media representation of Giselle Pelicot, the international case we chose.

Each member also contributed with their skills to the final result: Kyriaki worked on the final output, the website, the podcast and the rest of the group uploaded the content and text that we wanted to include. Anna created the guidelines both for media and the public; Alba compared the articles; Mihaela created the content about her case and the French case and Margherita worked on the final presentation and filled the group project's report.

Website: <https://herwordspd.wordpress.com/>

Outline

The project focuses on the portrayal of sexual violence against women in the media, a critical and often neglected issue that demands examination and action. This topic is frequently underreported, misrepresented or sensationalized in media coverage. In many countries, media outlets either fail to cover such incidents or do so inadequately.

Gender equality has always been a goal for democratic societies. There are many measures that can be taken in order to guarantee that: we can act on work spaces, on education, but also in media. We wanted to focus on how newspapers talk about rape because the way the things are narrated and the words that are used are still an issue, also in democratic societies.

The starting point of our work was section J of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. In point n. 236 written in the section J, we can read:

“The continued projection of negative and degrading images of women in media communications - electronic, print, visual and audio - must be changed. Print and electronic media in most countries do not provide a balanced picture of women's diverse lives and contributions to society in a changing world. [..]”

(Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, p. 99)

This point was quite inspirational for our work, because we can see everyday women who are pictured in a degrading and unfair way in the media. We decided to decline this point in the sphere of gender violence because, as we read in the Chair's summary of the Commission on the Status of Women, violence against women is an obstacle in developing a true democratic society and it's a phenomenon that has increased, in fact many countries have developed more severe laws and policies to limit this kind of violence (Commission on the status of

women, 2010). Action is vital in order to limit this huge problem and to create awareness in many contexts: institutions, media, public.

Also the Joint Declaration of Freedom of Expression and Gender Justice recognizes the Internet and digital technologies as powerful weapons that can promote equality and women empowerment. We can read:

“Recognising the importance of the internet and digital technology in bolstering freedom of expression and access to information globally, and promoting the empowerment of women and others who experience discrimination and marginalisation;”

(Joint Declaration of Freedom of Expression and Gender Justice, p. 1)

Unfortunately, we know that through the Internet can be spread news that don't contribute to the empowerment of women, on the contrary they continue to picture women without empathy and without enhancing their courage and their strength, talking about the specific case of sexual violence.

While researching for literature, we found a bachelor degree thesis written by a University of Padova's student: Alice Cordioli. The title of her work is *Cultura dello stupro e rappresentazione mediatica della violenza sessuale*, (Rape Culture and the Media Representation of Sexual Violence). We found it very interesting firstly because she's a student of our university and we wanted to give importance to her work. Secondly, we thought that it was the exact topic that we were looking for when starting our research.

“Nelle parole che usiamo vengono, inevitabilmente, allo scoperto pregiudizi, stereotipi e abitudini linguistiche. Spesso il tutto avviene inconsapevolmente poiché il parlante sente la lingua come normale e normale è ciò che non si discosta dalla norma, dall'uso quotidiano. Tuttavia, se nella nostra quotidianità costruiamo relazioni sociali usando linguaggi oppressivi e discriminanti, è poi inevitabile che la società si modelli in modo oppressivo e discriminante. La lingua parlata da una comunità riflette la realtà in cui vive, come afferma la sociolinguista Vera Gheno: «siamo esseri narranti e narrati e le parole sono uno snodo fondamentale del nostro modo di conoscere»”

(Alice Cordioli, page 23)

According to Alice Cordioli, words make visible prejudices and stereotypes in societies, and that's what moved us to make a linguistic research about articles that talked about sexual violence in five different countries. How a sexual violence's case is narrated in media tells a lot about a country and its society and culture.

However, we searched for academic papers and researches about how sexual violence was represented in media and we found some articles about it. There's Camille Aroustamian's work: she conducted a qualitative content analysis of 195 articles, from 2017 to 2018, from the Washington Post and New York Times about the cases of Harvey Weinstein, Bill Cosby and Brock Turner. From her research she found out that reporters don't describe sexual

violence in an appropriate and accurate way, and they use sympathetic words for the perpetrators (Aroustamian, 2019).

Aroustamian focused on three big and famous cases, where unfortunately the perpetrators are famous all over the world. We preferred to concentrate on national and local cases instead, choosing just one famous and international case to make a better comparison from different countries.

We read another research from Ar-Raniry State Islamic University, Banda Aceh, Indonesia that analysed the lexicon used in two online newspapers: The Jakarta Post and The Guardian; the first one is an Indonesian newspaper, the second one is a British newspaper (Rasdaneva, 2018). This work was interesting to us because it compares articles from newspapers of different countries and for this reason we thought to include it in our research.

Looking at the researches that have been done about this topic, made us thinking that sexual violence is an issue that regards every country, all over the world. For this reason we decided to concentrate on this aspect. We want to contribute to the research that has been done and continues to be done about the representation of sexual violence in media through the analysis of the cases of each of our countries.

We also know that depending on the culture, descriptions of violence can change a lot, and we want to use the variety of mother tongues of the group as the strength of the linguistic approach. We want to read between the lines and see how through grammatical structures and choices of vocabulary the message can hide the stereotypes and prejudices, and create the guideline to try to avoid that as much as possible, having in mind which aspects should we consider before writing out an article about rape and sexual violence.

Goal and target

The main target on this project are media outlets: promoting a more responsible, compassionate and in-depth approach to reporting violence against women is the only way to render the global size of the problem and to call for action from people (secondary target). Analyzing the way that the media is giving voice to this kind of news that involves sexual violence against women, we would be able to approach the main target.

Our final goal is to produce some guidelines both for media outlets and people. We want to raise awareness on the importance of the words that are used in media when there are this kind of news; we want also to give some guidelines to people in order to make them develop a critical view of the news that they read, to guide them and make them understand the importance of an article written in a fair way and that pictures victims and perpetrators with proper terms.

Methodology

To conduct this research, we decided to select one case for each member of the group related to our country. By doing this, we analysed one case from Spain, one from Greece, one from Moldova and two from Italy, one that had a national impact and one that was more local. Additionally, we searched for an international case to spot the differences between the various “national” cases and to see how a more international case was narrated.

To do so, we were inspired by the GMMP 2020’s criterias in the selection of the news outlets that we wanted to analyse. We selected news outlets with different political orientation, in order to spot differences about how the same case was narrated in different digital platforms.

Alba worked on the spanish case of *La Manada*, a highly publicized sexual assault incident that occurred on July 7, 2016, during the traditional San Fermín festival in Pamplona, Spain. A group of five men, who called themselves "La Manada" (The Wolf Pack), raped an 18-year-old woman at the entrance of a building. They recorded videos of the assault and shared them in a WhatsApp group.

Kyriaki worked on the Greek case of *Zoi Dalaklidou*, a 34-year-old woman from Xanthi, Greece, involved in a horrific act of gender-based violence. On December 27, 2012, Zoi was brutally attacked, raped, and burned alive by *Christos Papazoglou*, a 27-year-old man. The crime occurred as Zoi was returning home from a night out. Papazoglou, who admitted to the crime, later claimed to have been under the influence of alcohol at the time. The brutality of the act shocked the nation, sparking widespread outrage and reigniting discussions about systemic misogyny, victim-blaming, and the societal response to violence against women.

Mihaela worked on the Moldovan case. It is about the doctor from the Psychoneurological Boarding School in *Bălți*, who for several years is supposed to have raped 16 women with disabilities, forcing them to have abortions and sterilizations. The women were subjected to physical and psychological abuse in an environment meant to protect them, so that doctor used his position of authority to silence victims through intimidation and punitive threats, ensuring compliance.

Margherita worked on the first Italian case, the one that was narrated in national media. The case is about a group sexual violence that happened in Palermo in the summer of 2023. The case involved eight boys, one of them still minor, who made the girl drink during the night, and when she was staggering they brought her in a place hidden from the crowd and raped her. While they were perpetrating this terrible violence, they were also making a video that they sent to some friends through Whatsapp and that they deleted after.

Finally, Anna worked on the second Italian case. This case was chosen as a lesser known and local rape case that happened in the little town where one of us lives (Italy). The facts reported in the articles happened in 2019; the survivor was 15/16 at the time of the two-days-long rape that involved drugs and three attackers, two males and a female.

The international case we chose is the Gisèle Pelicot case. Her husband, Dominique Pelicot, drugged and raped her for over a decade, also inviting other men to their house. Now Gisèle is 72, and she's become a symbol of the fight against rape and violence, being a strong and important voice for all the women that can't speak up. We searched for articles from Greece, Italy, Spain, and Moldova, analyzing narrative framing, language, and tone to uncover broader societal attitudes and journalistic practices surrounding sexual violence.

To make a correct analysis and comparison of the articles, we created an Excel table where everyone could fill the spaces sticking to some criterias:

- Victim-Blaming: words/phrases that imply the victim's culpability (e.g., "provoked," "put themselves in that situation").
- Perpetrator-Excusing: language minimizing responsibility (e.g., "boys will be boys," "it was a mistake").
- Pain pornography: language describing scabrous details. Trauma pain, or pain pornography, refers to media that excessively showcases a group's pain and trauma for entertainment purposes (Brittany Johnson, 2024).
- Is the word victim used? Do they use the word survivor/other?
- Is the perpetrator depicted as a criminal?
- Gender of the journalist

We chose this analysis' method because it's quite accurate and it made us able to make a comparison between articles from different countries and different subjects. At the same time, it's a method that left us free to add further observations about our cases, even if they didn't fit in the categories that were written on the table. The result is that we have got a homogeneous analysis, which made us able to do a good comparison, but we've also got some personal thoughts that we believed were important to highlight in our single cases. Finally, to also provide a chart in which we could resume in percentages the data we found, we used ChatGPT to create a pie chart for each example. We also used AI to compare the five cases and to create some guidelines both for the media and the public. Obviously, every answer that ChatGPT gave us it's been revised by us before putting it in the project.

In the following part you can read more about the findings of the cases.

Group sexual abuse in Palermo - Italy (case 1)

I analysed 4 articles from three different newspapers. Two articles were from Corriere della Sera, one of the most important newspapers in Italy, an article was from Il Manifesto, a left wing newspaper, and the other one was from Libero Quotidiano, a right wing newspaper. I decided to choose this case because I remember the moment when I heard the news on TV and I read articles on the Internet. I immediately thought that it was a terrible crime, a terrible violence. I was surprised when I noticed how some online newspapers and some informative pages on social networks talked about the case, and so I decided to examine it in depth.

The content analysis of the articles revealed several key findings. Notably, there is a low percentage of victim-blaming and perpetrator-excusing content, both at 5%.

Empathy for the survivor is evident in 20% of the articles. However, the word “victim” is rarely used, and, more generally, supportive language about the victim is not widely employed. While the articles generally condemn the event, they avoid adopting aggressive tones or taking strong stances in denouncing the crime.

What is particularly problematic, however, is the high percentage of pain pornography indicators (25%). Many articles describe highly scabrous details of the events. For instance, one article from *Corriere della Sera* included explicit quotes from the perpetrators during the assault, such as: “*Andiamo, forza che ti piace*” (“Come on, you like it”), “*Stiamo facendo un bordello*” (“We are making a mess”), and “*Stai attento a questi video, non è che spunta che l’avete stuprata*” (“Be careful, maybe it will come out that you raped her”) (*Corriere della Sera*, 2023). Pain pornography, or trauma porn, refers to media that excessively showcases a group’s pain and trauma for entertainment purposes (Brittany Johnson, 2024). The Italian Order of Journalists defines this practice as an abuse perpetrated by journalists through their reporting (*Ordine dei giornalisti, Consiglio nazionale*, 2022).

An accusatory tone toward the perpetrators is present in 15% of the articles, but this is insufficient. In many instances, the perpetrators are referred to as “young boys,” and the word “rapist” is rarely, if ever, used. Language reflects societal attitudes (Alice Cordioli, 2023), and it is concerning that in coverage of a group sexual assault, some journalists avoid labeling the perpetrators as “rapists.”

Additional observations also merit attention. In three out of four articles, the accompanying image is a frame from a surveillance camera showing the censored victim surrounded by the eight perpetrators as they lead her to the location of the assault. This is a disturbing choice of imagery. Even though the victim is censored, alternative visuals could have been used to convey the story without exploiting the scene.

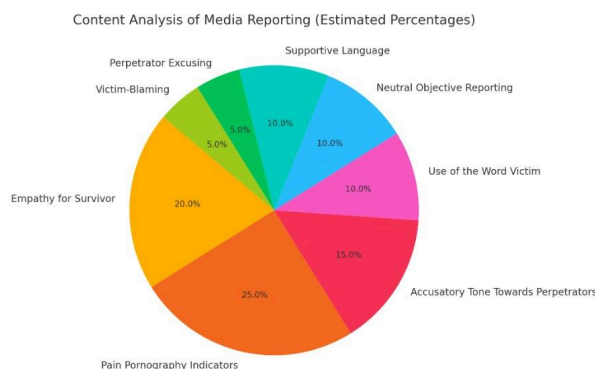
Another notable issue is seen in an article from *Il Manifesto*. Only the first half of the piece is dedicated to the sexual violence in Palermo; the second half discusses a femicide that occurred in Naples. It would have been more appropriate to separate the two cases into distinct articles, as this division dilutes the attention given to both tragedies.

An interesting case arises in an article from *Libero Quotidiano*. Here, the author uses the Palermo assault as an opportunity to criticize the left-wing party, which opposes Salvini’s proposal for chemical castration for sexual offenders. The focus shifts from the crime itself to political polemics. The title exemplifies this approach: “*Stupro di gruppo a Palermo, ‘evirare il maschio’: la donna che fa impazzire la sinistra*” (“Group sexual abuse in Palermo, ‘castrate the male’: the woman that makes the left party go mad”) (*Libero Quotidiano*, 2023).

A final aspect to highlight is that the most condemning article, and the one that used strong and heartfelt words in describing the event, is the second article from *Corriere della Sera*:

“Palermo, dopo lo stupro i violentatori sono andati in rosticceria. Poi l’ira: «La prendo a testate, non doveva denunciare»” ("Palermo, after the rape, the perpetrators went to a rotisserie. Then the rage: 'I'll headbutt her, she shouldn't have reported it.'") (*Corriere della Sera*, 2023). The journalist is a woman. This is the only case where the journalist's name is indicated; in the other articles, the journalist's name is not mentioned. I think this is quite significant because it's the only article where you can sense that the topic was deeply felt.

In conclusion, this analysis reveals that many steps must be taken to ensure a more sensitive and fair approach to discussing sexual violence. In Italy, the topic is still treated in a neutral manner, often without explicitly supporting the victim. The lexicon used is frequently inappropriate; journalists should refer to victims and perpetrators using accurate terms. For instance, referring to a rapist as a “young boy” or failing to use the word “victim” throughout an entire article does not adequately reflect the gravity of the crime of sexual violence. Additionally, there should be no presence of pain pornography indicators, as exploiting someone's pain for sensationalism is deeply unethical. The Italian Order of Journalists has expressed its intention to take measures to limit this phenomenon (*Ordine dei giornalisti, Consiglio nazionale*, 2022). To address these issues, we will provide guidelines for both journalists and the public to highlight the problem and propose solutions.



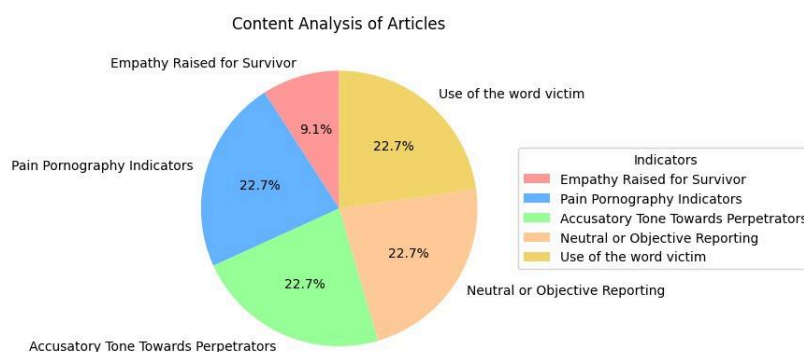
- **Empathy for Survivor: 20%**
- **Pain Pornography Indicators: 25%**
- **Accusatory Tone Towards Perpetrators: 15%**
- **Use of the Term 'Victim': 10%**
- **Neutral Objective Reporting: 10%**
- **Supportive Language: 10%**
- **Perpetrator Excusing: 5%**
- **Victim-Blaming: 5%**

Local Rape Case - Italy (case 2)

The representation of this particular case distances itself from the others: to our surprise, there was no presence at all of victim-blaming or perpetrator-excusing language; the facts were mostly reported neutrally, with many judiciary/police reports quotes directly reported in the articles. Moreover, the way these quotes were included in the texts gave them a general accusatory tone towards the perpetrators. However, the representation is far away from being perfect as it is heavily characterized by the pervasive and recurring elements of pain pornography. The words nightmare (“incubo”), oppressor/butcher (“il carnefice”), scandal and shock are the frame between which the details of the abuse are meticulously drawn on paper. This is not a new way of operating: as reported by “Atti di Convegno, Marina di Ravenna 28-29 Novembre 2003”, the conference proceedings of the second National Conference of the Centers against violence, the shocking, morbid and sensational representation of the events plays an important role in the creation of stereotypes and discrimination. Furthermore, the proceedings underline how this is reinforced by describing the woman as fragile, weak, insecure and incapable of defending herself, another instance that can be found in all of the articles. The survivor is described as a victim, a teenager that was betrayed by someone she trusted, a minor, a little girl daughter of immigrant parents.

From a political point of view the newspapers are mainly private/local/independent, with only one being a conservative newspaper. However, we didn’t find major differences in the representation of the case, with the only exception of having the foreign nationality of the two male attackers and the immigrant status of the parents of the survivor underlined in the conservative newspaper.

In conclusion, the representation of this case might generally seem better than the others since it seems to have a prevailing neutral and objective perspective when describing the events. However, when analyzed in depth, it reveals a pervasive presence of indicators that shouldn’t be present when reporting on this topic. Journalists need to change the way survivors are depicted, empowering their choice instead of depicting them as victims, and the details of the events have to be banned from media (unless the survivor consents to it) as they don’t respect the survivor trauma and are described only for sensationalizing the article.



- **Victim-Blaming Language:** 0% (None of the articles contained victim-blaming language).
- **Perpetrator-Excusing Language:** 0% (None of the articles excused the perpetrators).
- **Empathy Raised for Survivor:** 40% of the articles (2 out of 5 articles raised empathy for the survivor).
- **Pain Pornography Indicators:** 100% of the articles (all five included such indicators like nightmares, graphic details, and community shock).
- **Accusatory Tone Towards Perpetrators:** 100% of the articles.
- **Neutral or Objective Reporting:** 100% of the articles, with a slight variation for the conservative newspaper.
- **Use of the word Victim:** 100% of the articles

“La Manada” Case - Spain

To talk about the event, we need to go back in time to July 7, 2016. In Spain, the San Fermín festival, one of the most popular traditions in the country, is held in Pamplona, where people from around the world come to witness the bull spectacle (also known as “corrida de toros”). The events occurred on the first night of the festival, when José Ángel Prenda Martínez, Antonio Manuel Guerrero Escudero, Jesús Escudero Domínguez, Alfonso Jesús Cabezuelo Entrena, and Ángel Boza Florido took a girl into a doorway of a building and raped her, while recording and sharing the video through a WhatsApp group called “La Manada.”

That same night, she reported the incident to the police. The men were arrested later that day, as the news of the events began to spread while the festival was still ongoing. It had a significant impact on society, making it a key case for feminism in Spain. The repercussions of the #MeToo movement shifted the focus of this case to the Spanish judicial authorities, who were under the weight of public opinion and the responsibility of handling the case.

The articles focus on explaining the facts, allowing us to analyze the language they use to describe the events. In the different articles analyzed, it is noticeable that the political inclination of the newspaper affects how the events are explained. While they do not use words that specifically support the victim, the tone suggests that most newspapers aim for objectivity, while also trying to portray the victim in a neutral light. What is interesting about these articles is that, while the editorial staff tries to maintain neutrality, there is a clear underlying stance that can be detected between the lines. The words, when analyzed individually, seem neutral, but in context, they take on a new meaning that fosters an unusual empathy for the aggressors or creates a bittersweet tone that diminishes the credibility of the victim or the fairness of the judgment. This opens the door to unnecessary opinion and debate.

The content analysis, explored through the pie chart, shows how the media coverage of the case uses different outlets to frame the narrative. The language used to describe the trauma of the survivor is presented in a neutral tone, depicting her as a victim of sexual violence. The articles highlighted her vulnerability and the emotional weight of the incident, with some showing more support and solidarity than others. Although the language used could be considered accurate, it posed a problem for the description of the events, as 15% of the articles included details of the assault, raising ethical concerns about sensationalism.

While these details aimed to inform readers, the vivid descriptions risked exploiting the reporting person's suffering for dramatic effect. For example: "La joven declaró que al verse rodeada entró en shock y se sometió a los actos sexuales con los ojos cerrados, con una actitud pasiva y deseando que todo terminara cuanto antes." ("The young woman stated that when she was surrounded, she went into shock and submitted to the sexual acts with her eyes closed, with a passive attitude, hoping it would be over as soon as possible."), (Diario de Navarra, 2018).

Nearly a fifth of the coverage (20%) focused on holding the perpetrators accountable, using harsh language to condemn their actions. However, in my personal opinion, I did not feel that they used particularly harsh language towards the perpetrators. While it is true that they described them, mostly, as aggressors, I do not see it as harsh language in a case where harassment is being discussed.

A smaller percentage (10%) relied heavily on the term "victim" to describe the survivor, reinforcing her position as someone wronged, but sometimes failing to emphasize her resilience. This was followed by another small fraction of articles (3%) that provided background details about the perpetrators, which could be perceived as excuses or mitigating factors, raising concerns about bias in favor of the defendants.

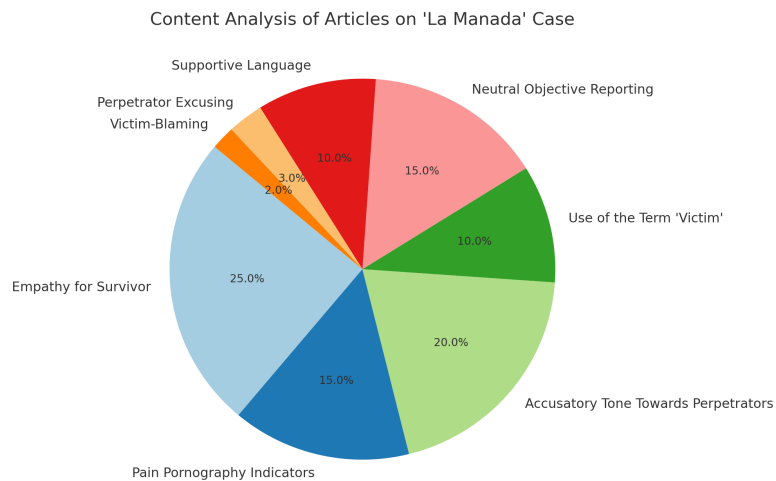
While rare, some coverage (2%) subtly questioned the survivor's behavior and choices, reflecting attitudes that shift partial blame onto the victim rather than focusing solely on the perpetrators' actions.

What has been surprising is that, in general, these newspapers have been objective (with the exception of the one focused on a right-wing audience). However, during the research, I came across several opinion columns from the most widely read newspapers, such as ABC and El País.

Although they have not been analyzed, as this project is focused on presenting the events in a rational way, they are very interesting because they open up a social debate: I find this concerning, because a topic as shocking as a gang rape should not be open for debate. There was clear evidence— in this case, videos of the events— so even if everyone likes to have an opinion, it partly opens a loophole for the complainant's words to be questioned. As has been the case in other situations, the phrase "I believe you, sister" has become a feminist rallying cry for this very reason: because everyone believes they are entitled to their opinion.

This is the same as we have observed in this analysis. The articles and papers that have been reviewed in this case are fully aware that they are positioning themselves in a situation where they should be completely objective. Yet, we can see how the right-wing newspaper emphasizes conditioned views and incites debate in the face of obvious evidence.

Language is a silent weapon that must be taken into account, and sometimes you need to read between the lines to understand the underlying message about a fact. In this case, the vocabulary was mostly objectively appropriate. However, if you look a little deeper, you can perceive the intention behind the way it was written.



- **Empathy for Survivor: 25%**
- **Pain Pornography Indicators: 15%**
- **Accusatory Tone Towards Perpetrators: 20%**
- **Use of the Term 'Victim': 10%**
- **Neutral Objective Reporting: 15%**
- **Supportive Language: 10%**
- **Perpetrator Excusing: 3%**
- **Victim-Blaming: 2%**

Greek case

The language used in media coverage of cases like Zoi Dalaklidou's reflects broader societal narratives about gender-based violence, victim "hood", and criminal accountability.

Analyzing the wording, tone, and presentation in different articles shows how they subtly or clearly shape public opinion.

By reading the articles, it has been shown that the coverage from the articles has a neutral or sympathetic description. For example, terms like "the unfortunate Zoi" focus on her victim "hood" rather than her choices as a person.

Furthermore, phrases like “Zoi was returning from a night out,” according to Meyers (1997), shift the narrative focus to her actions, implying that her decisions like going out late contributed to the crime, reflecting elements of victim-blaming.

Conversely, emotional sayings such as “Your smile... is our angel” or “We miss you” humanize the victim, emphasizing her individuality and the emotional loss felt by her family. These personal tributes create a poignant contrast with the clinical descriptions of the crime (Van Dijk, 1988).

The articles frequently employ explicit and graphic details to highlight the brutality of the crime, such as references to rape, abuse, and being burned alive. While such descriptions evoke shock and outrage, they may also risk desensitizing audiences or sensationalizing the violence (Jewkes, 2015).

In contrast, some articles use clinical terminology, such as “the body of the 34-year-old,” which adopts a detached tone and focuses on the aftermath without emotional engagement. This neutrality, while maintaining objectivity, may distance audiences from the human tragedy (Galtung & Ruge, 1965).

Perpetrators are often referred to with neutral identifiers such as “the 27-year-old Christos Papazoglou” or “the perpetrator.” While factual, this framing may reduce the perceived severity of the crimes by avoiding overt condemnation (Entman, 1993).

According to Benedict (1992) the phrases such as “He was under the influence of alcohol” or “He had never shown signs of violence” frame the crime as an aberration rather than a calculated act. As a result they risk shifting the attention from the violence to external factors that “harmed” the character of the perpetrator.

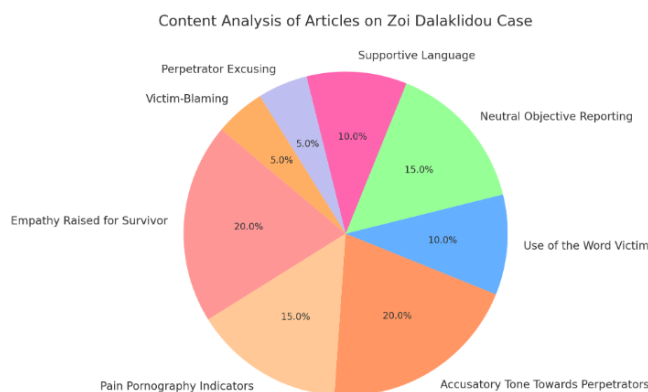
According to Goffman (1974) descriptions of the perpetrator as “socially isolated” or “panicked” humanize him and make him seem less countable for his actions, saying that his actions were the result of his struggles rather than his choices.

On the other hand, the use of emotional language, like “brutal attack” and “heinous crime,” strongly criticizes the perpetrator's actions. These words reinforce the gravity of the incident but may overshadow broader discussions about preventing such violence (Van Dijk, 1988). Similarly, temporal framing, such as “Who could have imagined what would happen?” constructs a narrative of unpredictability and inevitability, presenting the tragedy as a rare, unforeseeable event rather than as part of a broader pattern of violence against women (Cavender & Bond-Maupin, 1993).

These reports often show how society is still with an old mindset as they are uncomfortable with saying directly that it is gender-based violence. As the journalist focuses on the victim's details rather than having a critical mindset and discussion about the violence that occurred (Meyers, 1997).

Journalists, while trying to use sympathetic language for the victims and humanize them, can reduce their identities to their victim hood (Christie, 1986). The same happens when they frame the perpetrator's action as impulsive or unpredictable, as it shifts the focus away from the basic issue (Entman, 1993).

In conclusion the media's language significantly shapes public understanding and attitudes toward violence against women. While sympathetic portrayals of victims and graphic depictions of crimes draw attention to the tragedy, balanced narratives that emphasize systemic issues and unequivocal accountability for perpetrators are essential. Avoiding subtle victim-blaming or undue sympathy for criminals is crucial for fostering a more informed and just discourse.



Empathy Raised for Survivor: 20%

Pain Pornography Indicators: 15%

Accusatory Tone Towards Perpetrators: 20%

Use of the Word Victim: 10%

Neutral Objective Reporting: 15%

Supportive Language: 10%

Perpetrator Excusing: 5%

Victim-Blaming: 5%

Podcast script:

Welcome to Her Words, where we talk about how the media uses language to shape how we see violence against women. Today, we'll discuss how media coverage reflects societal views on gender-based violence, victimhood, and accountability. When covering cases like Zoi Dalaklidou's, articles often focus on the victim's life in ways that shape public opinion. For instance, phrases like "the unfortunate Zoi" emphasize her role as a victim, while details like "Zoi was returning from a night out" can subtly suggest her choices contributed to the crime. This reflects elements of victim-blaming. Some articles, however, use emotional phrases like "Your smile is our angel," which humanize the victim and show the loss felt by loved

ones. These tributes contrast with graphic descriptions of the crime, like references to rape or being burned alive. While such details create outrage, they can also sensationalize or desensitize readers. The way perpetrators are described matters too. Neutral terms like “the 27-year-old Christos Papazoglou” avoid condemning the crime outright. Meanwhile, phrases like “He was under the influence of alcohol” or “He had never shown signs of violence” frame the crime as an isolated event, not part of a broader issue. This can make perpetrators seem less accountable by focusing on their struggles rather than their actions. Journalists often avoid directly naming gender-based violence, focusing instead on victim details or the unpredictability of the crime. While sympathetic portrayals humanize victims, they also risk reducing them to their suffering. Similarly, framing perpetrators’ actions as impulsive shifts attention away from systemic issues of violence against women. In the end, the language used in media coverage shapes how we understand these tragedies. It’s essential for journalists to strike a balance—highlighting the human loss without reinforcing harmful narratives. Thank you for listening to Her Words. Let’s keep questioning how we talk about violence and push for better conversations.

Moral and sexual abuse - Moldova

The articles cover the case of a doctor in the psychiatry department, S. Florea, sentenced for sexually assaulting numerous women, that happened in Moldova, Bălți, in 2016. They investigate different viewpoints, counting the victims' declarations, legal activities, and public discourse. While some of the statements, such as "m-am dezbrăcat și eu că mă temeam să nu mă închidă în blocul 2," highlight the victims' fear, they risk being misinterpreted as cooperation, perpetuating victim-blaming narratives. But there was no direct victim blaming at all.

All three articles have similar neutral reports and use professional terminology while describing the case. These articles show empathy for the victims and call for reform of the system. However, we notice that they do not use the term "survivor" but "victim", which highlights the general image of the person's role. Likewise, we note that the accused tried to justify himself, mentioning that there were no bodily injuries as evidence. This tactic questions the judicial system, framing the perpetrator as unjustly accused. The accused person abused his power, forcing the victims to remain silent, and women were frightened, threatened and isolated. This was a local case that expanded due to cruelty and violation of women's rights into a national one. In a way, the European organizations that take care of women with disabilities accused the country of the lack of protection and lack of necessary care for people with disabilities.

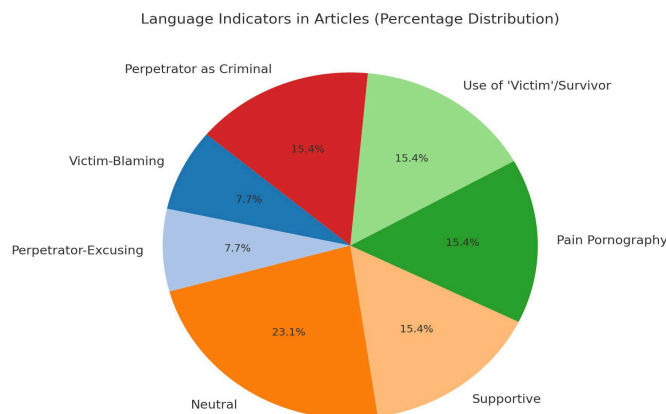
The rape case in the city of Balti, Republic of Moldova was widely reported and received widespread negative attention because here we can see the institutional neglect and failures of the Moldovan system. It is about the doctor from the Psychoneurological Boarding School in Bălți, who for several years is supposed to have raped 16 women with disabilities, forcing them to have abortions and sterilizations. The women were subjected to physical and

psychological abuse in an environment meant to protect them, so that doctor used his position of authority to silence victims through intimidation and punitive threats, ensuring compliance. In this paper, we will reflect on the inhumane crime committed, analyze the language and terminology used, but also we will meditate on systemic changes that can influence in a positive way the future of women who need protection and care.

Sexual violence is a sensitive topic or in some cases taboo (in some countries) for cultural or other reasons. The way journalism approaches these topics plays a major role in shaping public perception, and framing the narratives around justice and accountability (Chorbajian, 2000). Therefore, we observe a clearly highlighted difference between these articles. “Ziarul de gardă” has a more emotional tone, emphasizing the victim's vulnerability and emphasizing the crime committed by the doctor, while the other article emphasizes institutional change (Mdac.org, 2016). To combat state negligence we should promote equality "measures to ensure that they benefit from all human rights and fundamental freedoms"(Astrahan, 2013). Phrases such as “a fost condamnat?” (“was convicted”) and “s-a făcut oare dreptate?” (“was justice served?”) convey skepticism about the adequacy of the judicial response. Through the diagram mentioned above, we can see that the defendant was trying to protect himself and motivate his actions (7.7%), while also influencing the patient's actions through threats and fear.

By studying the work "Just words: law, language and power" by Conley and O'Barr , we understand that legal narratives are taken from the existing powers in society. Phrases such as ("women with disabilities" versus "patients"), highlight the person's belonging to a specific category of people, which can affect them both negatively and positively, thus still placing them in the group of people with specific needs. Marxist theory is well defined in the case of the doctor and the patient who is part of a lower social class. The term “violat” (“violated”) is consistently used across sources, directly naming the crime and avoiding euphemisms, which aligns with best practices for ethical reporting (Jewkes, 2015). “Just Words: Law, Language, and Power (2000)” explores how legal language shapes power dynamics, particularly in cases of sexual violence. The paper "A study of language used in magazine reports of rape and sexual assault trials", emphasizes the importance of linguistic choices in representing survivors. From what we can see, the article on the jurnal.tv page prioritizes hearing the voices of the victims. However, the risk of retraumatization through sensationalist reporting underscores the need for careful editorial decisions.

The media and the way it presents information can accentuate stereotypes and sensationalize suffering (Media and Crime, 2015). In our work we observe a formal and balanced presentation of information, emphasizing system change. As a result, articles employ varied linguistic strategies to address the Bălți case. Therefore, I believe that the professionalism of journalists and the way they present information has a major impact on readers and society. I believe we could be more emotionally sensitive towards people with disabilities and demand justice for them.



Neutral Reporting: 23.1%

Supportive Language: 15.4%

Pain Pornography: 15.4%

Use of 'Victim' : 15.4%

Perpetrator Portrayed as a Criminal: 15.4%

Victim-Blaming: 7.7%

Perpetrator-Excusing: 7.7%

Comparison of the cases

Media reporting analysis across Countries

The portrayal of sexual violence in media plays a pivotal role in shaping public perception, influencing societal attitudes, and fostering systemic change. This analysis explores the adherence of media outlets from the five cases (Spain, Italy - both national and local - Moldova and Greece) we analysed, to the survivor-centered reporting guidelines.

The detailed analysis is focused on linguistic and narrative tendencies, such as victim-blaming, perpetrator-excusing, neutral tones, supportive language, and the presence of “pain pornography”.

We could observe that, regardless of the case, there are some common patterns on the journalist writing that makes even more visible the problem that media has when representing sexual violence. Therefore, we would like to classify it as it is presented in the guidelines, thus it will be easier to see the similarities and differences between cases. As we mentioned before, the AI helped to make a classification of the comparison, which highlights the strength and weaknesses of each case.

1. EMPATHY AND SURVIVOR-CENTERED REPORTING

STRENGTH:

- **CASE MOLDOVA:** The media emphasized systemic failures and showed empathy without sensationalizing the survivor's experience. The language is focused on the bravery of survivors while providing broader context on systemic abuse institutions.
 - Emphasized systemic abuse and survivor bravery.
The language avoided blaming survivors and highlighted their resilience, as in *"Trebuie să transformăm furia pe care aceste violuri ne-o cauzează în determinarea de a lupta pentru a le ajuta pe femeile de la Bălți să trăiască viața pe care o merită."* (We must transform the anger these rapes cause us into determination to fight for the women of Bălți to live the lives they deserve.)
- **CASE ITALY (Local):** Media made some efforts to highlight the survivor's experience empathetically, particularly in terms of emphasizing betrayal and emotional impact.
 - Emphasized betrayal by a trusted figure, stating, *"Si fidavano di quella trentunenne di Trissino,"* underscoring the emotional impact on the survivor.

WEAKNESSES:

Greek and Spanish media often fell short of using empowering terms such as "survivor," defaulting to "victim," which can inadvertently reduce agency. Also, some articles subtly imply victim culpability by focusing on the victim's action before the event, such as going out at night or consuming alcohol.

- **CASE GREECE:** Coverage of Zoi Dalaklidou's murder frequently referred to her as *"άτυχη Ζωή"* (unfortunate Zoi), emphasizing her fate rather than her resilience.
 - Greek articles often emphasize the victim's activities, such as "returning from a night out," potentially suggesting risk-taking behavior.
- **CASE SPAIN:** Case "La Manada", reporters used terms like *"joven madrileña"* (young Madrid girl) rather than "survivor," while focusing on her intoxication, subtly detracting from her agency.
 - Coverage of "La Manada" case sometimes indirectly places responsibility by highlighting the victim's presence at the event

2. AVOIDANCE OF PAIN PORNOGRAPHY

Most of the articles analysed shows that graphic details are included, which risks sensationalism or voyeurism.

STRENGTHS:

- Moldovan and Greek media generally avoided explicit or voyeuristic descriptions, focusing instead on the broader impact of the crime and its legal context.
 - **CASE MOLDOVA:** The focus remained on survivors' testimonies and systemic accountability, such as the quote, *"Acesta s-a folosit de poziția sa și le-a amenințat pe femei."* (He exploited his position and threatened the women.)

- **CASE GREECE:** Articles avoided gratuitous descriptions of violence, focusing instead on the systemic implications of the crime. For example, the murder was described as “tragic” without delving into graphic detail.

WEAKNESSES:

- Italian national media includes graphic details of violence and publishing unsettling images, such as surveillance footage depicting the victim and perpetrators together.
 - **CASE ITALY (National):** Coverage of the Palermo gang rape included explicit details about the crime, such as verbatim quotes from the perpetrators’ recorded conversations, e.g., *"Eravamo 100 cani, una gatta."* (We were 100 dogs, one cat.) This crosses into pain pornography by focusing excessively on the perpetrators' words and actions.
 - **CASE SPAIN:** Reports included comments of the conversation in the whatsapp group chat where they shared their assault.

3. TONE TOWARD PERPETRATORS

STRENGTH:

- **CASE MOLDOVA:** reporting explicitly identified the perpetrators as criminals and consistently held them accountable for their actions, reinforcing their role in the crime without minimizing responsibility.
 - The perpetrator (Dr. Florea) was explicitly described as a criminal who exploited power, e.g., *"Psihiatru a fost găsit vinovat pentru săvârșirea infracțiunii de viol."* (The psychiatrist was found guilty of rape.)
- **CASE GREECE and SPAIN:** media used terms like “the perpetrator” and provided factual details about their actions.
- **CASE ITALY (Local):** uses an accusatory tone, which emphasizes the organized nature of the crime.
 - Phrases like *"Sul fatto che tutto fosse stato organizzato dal terzetto, procura e militari dell'Arma avrebbero ben pochi dubbi."* (‘About the fact that everything had been organised by the trio, the prosecution and the military of the Arma would have little doubt.’).

WEAKNESSES:

- **CASE ITALY and SPAIN:** reports softened the portrayal of perpetrators by emphasizing their youth or personal struggles, such as intoxication or social isolation.
 - **CASE ITALY (National):** National media minimized perpetrators’ responsibility by framing them as “boys” or focusing on their intoxication, e.g., *"I ragazzi di 19 anni."* (“Boys of 19 years old”).
 - **CASE SPAIN:** In “La Manada,” perpetrators were often referred to by their professions or as *"cinco jóvenes sevillanos"* (five young Sevillians), softening the perception of their culpability. Or also, writing a full article about their lives, picturing them as ordinary people.

4. NEUTRAL AND OBJECTIVE REPORTING

Objective terms like “allegation” or “trial” are used without inserting emotional bias or evaluative language.

STRENGTHS:

- **CASE GREECE** and **SPAIN**: maintained neutral tones in certain instances, especially in legal reporting, ensuring objectivity while avoiding unnecessary dramatization.
 - **CASE GREECE**: Reporting on Zoi Dalaklidou’s murder emphasized judicial outcomes without presuming guilt or innocence, e.g., “*Ο δράστης τον οποίο προσδιόρισε η αστυνομία.*” (The perpetrator identified by the police).
 - **CASE SPAIN**: Outlets like Diario de Navarra focused on legal proceedings with factual reporting, avoiding emotionally charged language.
- **CASE ITALY** (Local): achieved a balance by providing factual accounts of legal proceedings without undermining the survivor’s credibility.

WEAKNESSES:

- **CASE ITALY** and **SPAIN**: framed survivors’ actions in a way that could be interpreted as victim-blaming. This approach undermines the objectivity of the reporting.
 - **CASE ITALY** (National): National media often veered into dramatization, with descriptions such as “*Una casa degli orrori.*” (A house of horrors.)
 - **CASE SPAIN**: Reports included phrases like “*Los hechos que presuntamente obligaron a hacer a la víctima.*” (The acts they allegedly forced the victim to perform), which implied doubt.

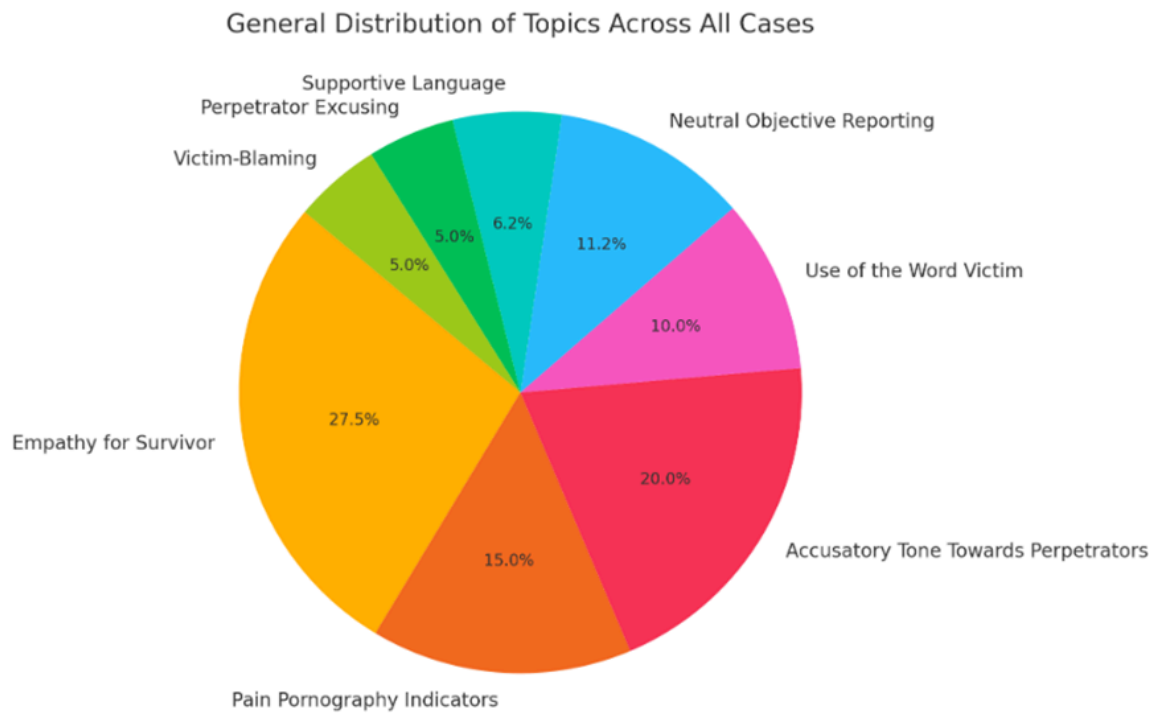
5. USE OF BROADER CONTEXT:

STRENGTHS:

- **CASE MOLDOVA**: Media excelled in contextualizing crimes within systemic issues, such as institutional abuse and societal attitudes toward sexual violence.
- **CASE ITALY** (Local): Media also highlighted community betrayal in cases involving trusted figures, connecting individual incidents to broader patterns of violence.

WEAKNESSES:

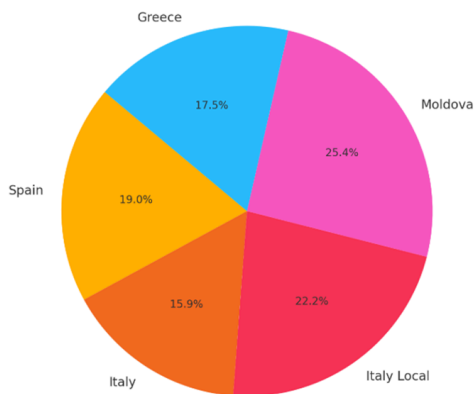
- **CASE SPAIN** and **GREECE**: media often isolated incidents, focusing narrowly on the events without addressing larger societal or systemic concerns. This limits the potential impact of reporting to inspire change.
 - **CASE GREECE**: Articles on Zoi Dalaklidou’s murder rarely extended beyond the crime itself to discuss broader issues like gender violence in Greek society.



With this analysis we could see that the cultural variance is really high, specifically when it comes to different countries displaying a variety of tendencies in victim and perpetrator portrayals, reflecting cultural attitudes towards crime reporting. We have to highlight that the impact of terminology through the consistent use of terms like “victim” or “survivor”, profoundly shapes public perception of the individual and their experience. And we would also like to mention the systemic issues underreported, which even though it is mentioned by few articles, is still a problem, as it is still focusing on individual events instead of systemic problems.

We would like to recommend to have in mind, when writing the media reports, to:

Media Adherence to Guidelines by Country (Based on Document Analysis)



- Promote survivor-centric language.
- Avoid sensationalism.
- Have a balanced representation.
- Highlight systemic issues.

The analysis we did underscores the critical role of survivor-centered reporting in shaping public understanding and discourse around sexual violence.

Moldova's media demonstrated the strongest alignment with ethical reporting practices, emphasizing systemic accountability and survivor resilience. In contrast, Italian and Spanish media often fell short by engaging in sensationalism or minimizing perpetrators' responsibility.

By adopting consistent, trauma-informed practices, media outlets can better serve survivors and promote a more informed and compassionate society.

Gisèle Pelicot - International case

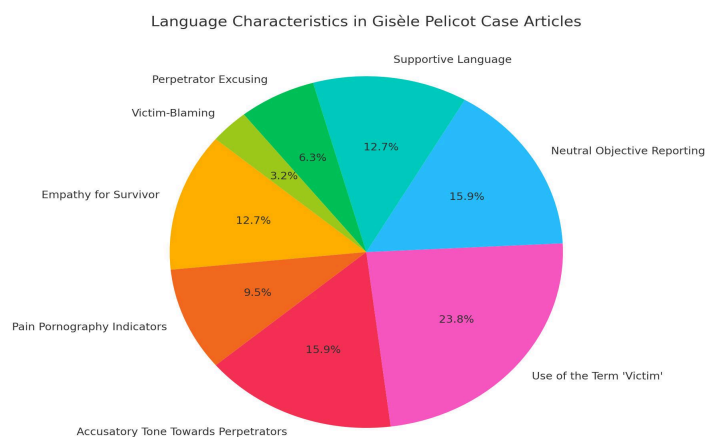
The press presents the Gisele Pelicot case based largely on different aspects: Italy emphasizes societal change and public awareness, Spanish media emphasize legal frameworks and Moldovan articles tie the case to systemic corruption and societal failures. In some articles, we observe the victimization of the person and in others the emphasis on her courage, which allowed her to speak openly about the case. Mostly the predominant language is objective and neutral, but still in some articles there are details of the abuse. These details tension the ethics of journalism, but our cases used terminology that showed professionalism.

The case of Gisèle Pelicot is a representation of abuse that highlights two basic problems from the start: the presence of domestic violence and the significant male dominance in the family. This case has become international because of its cruelty, but it must be noted with regret that there are many similar cases.

This analysis examines the language used in reporting the case, drawing on research about media representation of violence and abuse. This case explore media coverage from Italy, Greece, Spain, and Moldova, analyzing narrative framing, language, and tone to uncover broader societal attitudes and journalistic practices surrounding sexual violence. The press presents the Gisele Pelicot case based largely on different aspects: Italy emphasizes societal change and public awareness, Spanish media emphasize legal frameworks and Moldovan articles tie the case to systemic corruption and societal failures. On the other hand, Greek media similarly with Zoi's Dalaklidou case, they represent the facts and they don't move forward to deeper connections with society change and public awareness. Especially, they highlight the victim and it's actions rather than the actions of the perpetrator.

The term “victim” was predominantly used in the articles, though there were occasional references to Gisèle Pelicot as a “survivor.” Studies show that the choice of words influences public perceptions of both the survivor and the perpetrator (Chorbajian, 2000; Jewkes, 2015). From a pragmatic point of view, this choice of words demonstrates that Gisele Pelicot is seen as a person with positive qualities, “brave and courageous”. Terms like “symbol of resilience,” “icon of courage,” and “fighter” were used in Italy, Greece, and Moldova to emphasize her strength and power. We saw that there are no negative articles about this case, all articles are quite objective. Neutral and professional terms such as “trial,” “conviction,” “sentence,” and “prosecutor” were prominent in Spanish and Italian media. Also, interesting to mention, female journalists tended to adopt more empathetic language towards the victim. The perpetrator was consistently labeled as a “rapist/criminal” in all articles. As negative characteristics, in the article from Moldova we can see details of the abuse, such details bordered on sensationalism, raising ethical concerns about “pain pornography”, and also in some Moldovan and Spanish articles, phrases like “misunderstanding,” “game,” or “participation in fantasies”, tries to minimize the guilt of the accused.

As a result, the media must balance the need for objective reporting with the ethical responsibility to avoid sensationalism and support survivors. The case of Gisèle Pelicot offers a valuable lens for understanding how media narratives can shape public perceptions of justice, accountability, and societal change.



Empathy for Survivor: 12.7%

Terms like "courage," "struggle," and recognizing Gisèle as a "symbol of resilience", demonstrated empathy toward the survivor.

Pain Pornography Indicators: 9.5%

The articles included detailed descriptions of the abuse, focusing on explicit aspects of the crimes.

Accusatory Tone Towards Perpetrators: 15.9%

Most articles adopted an accusatory tone, clearly labeling Dominique Pelicot as a “rapist” and detailing his actions without excusing or justifying his behavior.

Use of the Term 'Victim': 23.8%

The term "victim" was predominantly used across the articles. However, some publications alternated between “victim” and “survivor” .

Neutral Objective Reporting: 15.9%

Neutral and objective language, such as legal terms like "trial," "conviction". This type of narrative avoids judgment and emotionality towards the victim.

Supportive Language: 12.7%

Terms like “brave” and “inspiring” were used to describe Gisèle Pelicot, highlighting respect.

Perpetrator Excusing: 6.3%

Phrases like “I thought it was part of the game” or “they were told they would be participating in the couple's fantasy” were used to minimize the perpetrator’s responsibility.

Victim-Blaming: 3.2%

Victim-blaming was rare.

The case underscores the need for continued reflection on how language shapes our perceptions of justice, accountability, and empathy.

Guidelines**Media guidelines**

- **Survivor-Centered Reporting**
 - **Respect Privacy:** Avoid sharing details that could identify the survivor (name, address, workplace, or other specifics), unless the survivor consents to it.
 - **Blur Relationships:** If the perpetrator is known to the survivor, avoid describing relationships in ways that might identify the survivor, unless the survivor consents to it.

- **Use Survivor-Preferred Terms:** Refer to individuals as "survivors" rather than "victims," unless quoting legal or medical terminology or if the individual prefers "victim."
- **Avoid Passive Voice About Perpetrators:** Place responsibility on the perpetrator.
- **Avoid Reinforcing Rape Myths**
 - **Don't Focus on Irrelevant Details:** Do not mention what the survivor was wearing, their level of intoxication, or their past relationships unless directly relevant to the case.
 - **Challenge Myths Head-On:** If relevant, include facts to counteract common myths, such as "Most assaults are committed by someone the survivor knows."
- **Use Appropriate Language**
 - **Avoid Blaming Language:** Do not imply that the survivor's actions (what they were wearing, where they were, or their behavior) contributed to the assault.
 - **Neutral Descriptions of the Perpetrator:** Use terms like "the accused" or "the perpetrator" unless a conviction has been made.
 - **Avoid Sensationalism:** Refrain from using dramatic or exploitative language to describe the incident. Stick to factual reporting.
- **Address Public and Legal Perceptions:**
 - **Avoid Language of Doubt:** Do not imply skepticism about the survivor's claims unless there is verifiable evidence. Words like "alleged" can imply doubt but are sometimes necessary for legal accuracy.
 - **Be Neutral About Legal Outcomes:** Avoid presuming guilt or innocence; instead, report on facts like charges, evidence, or court rulings.
- **Avoid Pain Pornography At All Cost: Be Accurate Without Details**
 - **Limit Graphic Descriptions:** Avoid unnecessary or explicit details about the assault, which can retraumatize survivors and readers.
 - **Fact-Check Rigorously:** Ensure the accuracy of all claims, especially when citing legal proceedings or allegations
 - **Respect Boundaries:** If describing evidence or testimony, focus on its relevance to legal proceedings without delving into sensational details.
- **Contextualize the Issue**
 - **Include Broader Context:** If appropriate, provide information on systemic issues, such as societal attitudes toward sexual violence or statistics about prevalence, without overshadowing the specific story.
 - **Avoid Isolating the Incident:** Frame the story in a way that acknowledges broader patterns rather than treating it as an anomaly.
- **Avoid Harmful Stereotypes**
 - **Challenge Myths:** Do not perpetuate misconceptions, such as those implying certain demographics are more likely to commit or experience sexual violence.
 - **Intersectional Awareness:** Recognize how factors like race, class, and gender identity might influence public perceptions and reporting.

- **Challenge Prejudices:** Proactively address and dispel harmful stereotypes. For example, if the survivor belongs to a marginalized community, note systemic challenges they may face.
- **Handle Interviews/Quotes with Care**
 - **Informed Consent:** Before interviewing survivors, explain your intentions and allow them to set boundaries.
 - **Respect Emotional States:** Be patient and willing to pause or stop the interview if the survivor becomes distressed.
 - **Use Quotes Respectfully:** Avoid rephrasing survivors' words in ways that could misrepresent their experience.
 - **Protect the Survivor's Narrative:** Avoid altering quotes or statements to sensationalize or simplify their story.
- **Consider Your Audience**
 - **Trigger Warnings:** Place content warnings at the start of articles or segments about sexual violence.
 - **Provide Hotline Info:** Include contact information for survivor-support services.
 - **Guide to Further Help:** Mention local organizations or online resources.
- **Audit Your Practices**
 - **Internal Review:** Have editors and other team members review articles for unintentional bias or harmful language.
 - **Seek Feedback:** Engage with survivor advocacy groups or experts in trauma-informed reporting to ensure your work meets ethical standards.

Call to action for the public

- **Speak Up Against Victim-Blaming**
 - **What to look for:** Articles that suggest the survivor's actions, clothing, or choices contributed to the assault.
 - **Action:** Comment respectfully, pointing out the issue.
- **Challenge Stereotypes**
 - **What to look for:** Language that reinforces harmful stereotypes about survivors
 - **Action:** Advocate for language that reflects the diversity of survivor experiences
- **Insist on Survivor-Centered Reporting**
 - **What to look for:** Reports that prioritize the perpetrator's achievements, minimizing the crime or impact on the survivor.
 - **Action:** Encourage balanced reporting
- **Demand Privacy and Consent**

- **What to look for:** Disclosure of personal details that might identify the survivor.
- **Action:** Ask for ethical reporting

- **Call Out Misuse of Language**
 - **What to look for:** Sensational or trivializing terms like "sex scandal" instead of "rape" or "sexual assault."
 - **Action:** Request accurate terminology
- **Promote Trauma-Informed Approaches**
 - **What to look for:** Questions or descriptions that doubt the survivor's credibility or retraumatize them.
 - **Action:** Advocate for empathetic storytelling.
- **Educate and Encourage Constructive Conversations**
 - **What to look for:** Comments or narratives in the article's discussion section that perpetuate myths or misconceptions about sexual violence.
 - **Action:** Share accurate information respectfully.
- **Support Survivor-Led Initiatives**
 - **What to look for:** Articles that fail to mention resources for survivors or support organizations.
 - **Action:** Suggest including helpline information and survivor advocacy groups
- **Hold Media Outlets Accountable**
 - **What to look for:** Systemic patterns of disrespectful or harmful coverage.
 - **Action:** Use formal channels (email or social media) to demand better practices.
- **Show Solidarity with Survivors**
 - **What to do:** Make positive comments that validate survivors' experiences and encourage their strength.
 - **Example:** "Thank you for sharing your story. Your courage helps others know they're not alone."

Challenges and limits

Challenges and limitations could be the resources as many police stations or magazines actually don't show or they aren't even proceeding to do the research that is needed so we have less information to work with.

- rape cases involves sensitive subject /sometimes it's a taboo topic (risk of traumatization)
- cultural differences
- language barrier (could be a barrier to the spreading of information, for e.g: MD articles are in romanian but not all citizens of moldova speak romanian)

As rape is a topic which you can clearly see that the media is not comfortable talking about, we saw as a limitation the resources of information, as many police stations or magazines actually don't show or proceed to do the research that is needed (this limitates the explanation through factual events). Also, as rape cases involves sensitive subjects, sometimes is understood as a taboo topic, and dealing with the risk of traumatization we saw is at a challenge.

The integrants of the group are mostly from different countries, which made the cultural differences influence on the description of sexual violence, challenging also the guidelines we had to use, as they had to be general enough to cover all countries but also specifically on details. Furthermore, this research is based on a small sample. Our aim is to contribute in the studies that have been done in this field, but to be more accurate, this research should be wider, with a bigger sample.

As for challenges on each country's topics, the language barrier could be an issue, as in the Moldova case, which was a limit to the spreading of information, as the articles are in romanian but not all citizens of the country speak it. We could also mention the fact that the Spanish Case had happened in a region where not only they speak spanish, but also euskera, which made us not able to search news through their local language.

Also, in national cases (like Palermo case and "La Manada" case), one challenge was to choose the articles and newspapers sources: there were a lot of media covering the case, and this made it difficult to know which articles to take (in the Spanish Case, we had in mind the geographical position of the events and we took locals and nationals papers).

Talking about the national newspapers in Italy, during the research another challenge was to find free articles to analyse. Many online newspapers don't allow readers to consult their articles, unless they pay a subscription. It's the case for La Repubblica and Il Corriere della Sera, for example.

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Notes

We also attach the work that we did to have the final analysis of each case and the comparison to prove our outcomes.

TARGET AUDIENCE	APPEAL	LANGUAGE	GEOGRAPHY	Article link
Readers in the Navarre region		Spanish	Pamplona	
Catalan speakers plus active citizens.		Catalan	Girona	
Large public		Catalan / Spanish	Barcelona	
Large public		Spanish	Madrid	
People with critic view and progressive.		Spanish	Madrid	
Conservative audience		Spanish	Madrid	
people from 40 y.o. and up, people who don't have radical ideas		italian	Milan	
people from 40 y.o. and up, people who don't have radical ideas		italian	Milan	
old and conservative audience		italian	Milan	
ex communists and young people		italian	Rome	
General population, adults aged 25–55		Greek	Greece	https://www.news
Younger audience, 18–40, lifestyle and entertainment enthusiasts		Greek	athens	https://www.ath
Adults aged 30–60, conservative and populist readers		Greek	athens	https://www.news
Educated, middle-class professionals, aged 35+		Greek	athens	https://www.tanez
Regional audience in the Peloponnese, locals aged 30–65		greek	Patra	https://www.patri
Teachers, educators, union members, and students		greek	athens	https://www.alfav
Adults aged 25–55, interested in sensational and populist news		greek	athens	https://www.trom
Urban professionals, business-oriented adults aged 30–60		greek	athens	https://www.proto
Urban, educated audience, aged 25–55, progressive-leaning		greek	athens	https://www.theto
55% higher class, 50% With degree, 67% between 25-64	local	Italian	Vicenza	
		Italian	Veneto	
People living in Vicenza and in the surrounding areas. It's one of the most read online newspaper of the area, with around 1 million readers.	local	italian	Vicenza	
45-65+ yo, conservative views		Italian	Venezia	
Large public		Romanian	Moldova	
Large public		Romanian	Moldova	

[illegible]

