

Misogyny Hate Crime Evaluation
Professor Louise Mullany and Dr. Loretta Trickett
June 2018. Embargoed until 9th July 2018, 0:00:01

Research Summary

This research assesses the impact of the Misogyny Hate Crime policy, introduced by Nottinghamshire Police in April 2016. In the two years that have passed since the policy's introduction, it is important and timely to assess the impact that the policy has had on the everyday lives of the general public living in Nottinghamshire, as well as its effect on the police. Also important to assess are the current levels of street harassment and sexual harassment in public spaces in Nottinghamshire.

With these objectives in mind, the research team combined survey methods with focus groups and interviews. 679 people from Nottinghamshire participated. In order to recruit the broadest cross-section of the general public – both women and men – the research team advertised through a variety of means including a wide range of local media outlets and social media. Participants were sourced from a variety of different Nottinghamshire areas and their ages ranged from 16-79.

Since the Misogyny Hate Crime policy was first initiated in Nottinghamshire, other police forces have started to introduce the policy. However, Nottinghamshire remains the trailblazer. For policing, this evaluation therefore provides other forces with invaluable information, advice and resources. The research also provides points on how to further improve practice for all agencies involved in this work.

Overall Recommendations

- Roll out the policy nationally to increase publicity and reporting – there is clear support for the policy from men and women in the general public, as well as victims who have reported.
- Raise awareness of the policy through sustained publicity campaigns that are intersectional* in their approach.
- Change negative attitudes and behaviours that perpetuate Misogyny Hate Crime through educational campaigns. Include campaigns that actively and positively engage boys and men.
- Emphasise to the Police that the policy is really aimed at improving the recording and responses to criminal offences which are not currently being reported and to also record incidents to improve intelligence gathering and to reassure the public.
- Use a multi-agency approach to work alongside the Police to bring about sustained social and cultural change.
- Review the wording of the policy. Members of the public, women and men, and the Police viewed the term 'misogyny' as too elitist/academic. Many respondents thought 'hate crime' was an unhelpful term. Consideration should therefore be given as to whether the policy needs to be renamed to 'gender hate crime' or similar, or whether education about what the terms mean would be a better approach. A refresher course on hate crime should take place.

Key Findings

- Misogyny Hate Crime is highly prevalent. Of those who responded, 93.7% had experienced or witnessed street harassment in Nottinghamshire.
- Only 6.6% of victims reported incidents of Misogyny Hate Crime to the police. This is partly owing to the 'normalisation' of these incidents and the need for more publicity surrounding the policy.
- Of those that did report, 75% had a positive experience of reporting and interacting with the Police. In total, 100% of those who reported said that they would report again.
- High percentages of women have experienced harassment at the higher end of the crime continuum. This includes unwanted sexual advances (48.9%), groping (46.2%), sexually explicit language (54.3%) and indecent exposure (25.9%).
- A quarter of respondents reported that they had experienced sexual assault (24.7%) and a fifth of respondents reported that they had experienced online abuse (21.7%).
- 74.9% of women reported that the incident had had a long-term impact on them.
- 63.1% of women changed their behaviour as a consequence of the harassment. They reported feelings of intimidation and living in fear of what may happen to them in public spaces, an infringement of their human rights.
- Women from black and minority ethnic (BME) groups often experience Misogyny Hate Crime and Race Hate Crime simultaneously and report feeling doubly vulnerable to attack. This is an example of what is meant by the term *intersectionality.
- 45.6% of respondents thought educational strategies should be implemented to change societal attitudes.
- Many of the male respondents find the behaviour characteristic of Misogyny Hate Crime completely unacceptable and want to prevent it from happening. They value the opportunity to be consulted and want to help by being integrated and included in discussions and training.

Acknowledgements

This research was conducted for the Nottingham Women's Centre with funding from the Office of the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner. Dr. Trickett's research team at Nottingham Trent University included Adam Asmal, who was responsible for designing and conducting the survey and Bethan Poysner, who was part of the focus group, interview and transcribing team. Professor Mullany's focus group and interview team at the University of Nottingham included Vanessa Augustus, Gavin Brookes and Tristan Emerson. Data transcription was also provided by Tristan Emerson, Victoria Howard and Fabio Parente.