



UNIVERSIDADE
CATÓLICA
PORTUGUESA

THE IMPACT OF AN APOLOGY AND ITS SINCERITY ON
FORGIVENESS-RELATED COPING RESPONSES: THE
MODERATING ROLES OF PROCEDURAL JUSTICE CLIMATE
AND VICTIM POWER

Dissertation presented to Universidade Católica
Portuguesa to obtain a Master's Degree in Psychology in
Business and Economics

By

Claudia Lomba Viana

Faculty of Human Sciences

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Saldanha

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Abstract

In response to changing workplace dynamics, there is a growing need for effective conflict resolution in organisational settings. This research addresses the practical challenge of understanding behavioral responses to workplace conflicts, offering insights relevant to improving workplace relationships and promoting organizational harmony. Specifically, this dissertation investigates the influence of apologies and perceived apology sincerity on forgiveness-related coping responses (forgiveness, reconciliation, revenge, and avoidance) following a workplace conflict. Further, it examines the mediating roles of emotional responses (compassion and anger), and the moderating role of procedural justice climate (PJC) and victim power. Study 1, a quantitative experimental design ($N = 107$), investigated the effects of apology presence or absence in high and low PJC. Findings indicate that apologies are effective in promoting forgiveness, with minimal impact on revenge and avoidance. Compassion and anger played a mediating role on specific forgiveness-related coping responses, whereas PJC did not moderate this relationship. Study 2, a mixed methods study ($N = 70$), further examined the role of perceived apology sincerity in shaping coping responses, moderated by victim power and PJC. Results showed that compassion mediated the relationship between apology sincerity and both forgiveness and reconciliation. In contrast, anger mediated the relationship between apology sincerity and revenge and avoidance. Victim power and PJC were not significant moderators in the direct relationship, however, the mediation of compassion was stronger in low victim power conditions and low to average PJC. Overall, these results indicate that apology sincerity plays a crucial role in promoting forgiveness and reconciliation, with compassion acting as a significant mediator. Practical implications for organisations include a focus on emotional management interventions and addressing the procedural justice climate to foster positive conflict resolutions, further enhancing organisational well-being and productivity. Future research should explore other contextual factors in workplace conflicts that may drive an individual's behavioral response.

Keywords: Perceived apology sincerity, forgiveness-related coping responses, victim's perceived power, procedural justice climate, compassion and anger.

Resumo

Em resposta às mudanças na dinâmica do local de trabalho, há uma necessidade crescente de resolução eficaz de conflitos em contextos organizacionais. Esta investigação aborda o desafio prático de compreender as respostas comportamentais aos conflitos no local de trabalho, oferecendo perspectivas relevantes para melhorar as relações no local de trabalho e promover a harmonia organizacional. Especificamente, esta dissertação investiga a influência dos pedidos de desculpa e da percepção da sinceridade dos pedidos de desculpa nas respostas comportamentais relacionadas com o perdão (perdão, reconciliação, vingança e evitamento) após um conflito no local de trabalho. Além disso, examina os papéis mediadores das respostas emocionais (compaixão e raiva) e o papel moderador do clima de justiça procedimental (CJP) e do poder da vítima. O Estudo 1, um projeto experimental quantitativo ($N = 107$), investigou os efeitos da presença ou ausência de pedidos de desculpa em CJP altos e baixos. Os resultados indicam que os pedidos de desculpa são eficazes na promoção do perdão, com um impacto mínimo na vingança e no evitamento. A compaixão e a raiva desempenharam um papel mediador nas respostas comportamentais relacionadas com o perdão, enquanto o CJP não moderou esta relação. O Estudo 2, um estudo de métodos mistos ($N = 70$), examinou ainda o papel da sinceridade percebida do pedido de desculpas na formação de respostas comportamentais, moderado pelo poder da vítima e pela CJP. Os resultados mostraram que a compaixão mediou a relação entre a sinceridade do pedido de desculpas, o perdão e a reconciliação. Em contraste, a raiva mediou a relação entre a sinceridade dos pedidos de desculpa e a vingança e o evitamento. O poder da vítima e a CJP não foram moderadores significativos na relação direta, no entanto, a mediação da compaixão foi mais forte em condições de baixo poder da vítima e CJP baixo a médio. Em geral, estes resultados indicam que a sinceridade do pedido de desculpas desempenha um papel crucial na promoção do perdão e da reconciliação, com a compaixão a atuar como um mediador significativo. As implicações práticas para as organizações incluem o enfoque em intervenções de gestão emocional e a abordagem do clima de justiça processual para promover resoluções de conflitos positivas, melhorando ainda mais o bem-estar e a produtividade organizacionais. A investigação futura deve explorar outros fatores contextuais nos conflitos no local de trabalho que podem conduzir a uma resposta comportamental dos indivíduos.

Palavras-chave: Sinceridade das desculpas, respostas comportamentais, poder percebido da vítima, clima de justiça procedimental, compaixão e raiva.

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Introduction

In a workplace environment, where interpersonal relationships and dynamics are paramount, interpersonal conflict can play an influencing role. Indeed, conflict is inherent to any workplace. In 2024, statistics reported that 85% of employees had encountered workplace conflict, and 45% of employees rated their organisation as unhealthy when dealing with workplace conflict in the U.S. (Lindner, 2024). How workplace conflict is managed and resolved can significantly impact important variables such as employee well-being, job satisfaction, productivity, and workplace dynamics (Elgoibar et al., 2017).

In the aftermath of conflict, forgiveness is an important prosocial response that aggrieved individuals can have and is pivotal in de-escalating the workplace tension and resuming cooperation among conflicting parties (Aquino et al., 2003). Forgiveness can be influenced by an apology provided by the transgressor (Leonard et al., 2011). Indeed, the perception of an apology is crucial in the process of forgiveness, specifically the perceived sincerity of the apology, as it facilitates willingness to cooperate after conflict in the workplace (Ayoko, 2016), and promotes trust in the leader, forgiveness, and affective organizational commitment (Basford et al., 2014). Further, a sincere apology can increase compassion and decrease anger, which further influences one's willingness to forgive or not (Ohbuchi et al., 1989).

However, not always are apologies accepted and not always is one willing to forgive. Indeed, within the process of forgiveness there are different dynamics that should be considered in order to better understand the potential impact of apologies on forgiveness. Kaleta and Mroz (2021) examined the relationship between an apology and forgiveness, accounting for potential moderating effects of personality (Big Five dimension and trait anger), and found that an apology is related to both decisional and emotional forgiveness, with personality influencing the decision to forgive. Despite the relevance of individual traits, Aquino et al., (2006) further suggested that victim responses are not only a function of individual traits, but rather also of environmental variables. For example, power positions and a procedural justice climate are critical environmental variables that can shape victim responses to misconducts (Aquino et al., 2006). Indeed, while an apology can facilitate the process of forgiveness, apologies can also be ineffective depending on the power of the transgressor relative to the victim in the workplace (Zheng et al., 2016). Through a systems perspective, Bies et al., (2016) suggest that within the workplace there are contextual barriers

to forgiveness that may contrastingly serve as contextual enablers of reconciliation, such as power, procedures, and culture. This highlights the importance of investigating contextual variables in the context of forgiveness, reconciliation, and other behaviours such as avoidance and seeking revenge. This is important for organisations to consider as not only can an apology lead to positive workplace outcomes, but forgiveness has also been seen to result in organizational benefits (Zhang et al., 2023).

Based on the literature review, the following potential research questions have been developed: “To what extent does the presence of an apology influence an individuals’ forgiveness-related coping responses (forgiveness, reconciliation, revenge, and/or avoidance) through emotional responses (compassion and anger), and to what extent is this relationship moderated by the procedural justice climate of the organization?” and secondly to “To what extent does the perceived apology sincerity influence an individuals’ forgiveness-related coping responses (forgiveness, reconciliation, revenge, and/or avoidance), and to what extent is this relationship moderated by the victims perceived power, and the procedural justice climate of the organization?”

These two questions aim to make three main contributions. First, past research has shed light on the importance to further explore these intricate dynamics of apologies and forgiveness-related coping responses, and the impact of these elements in the workplace. However, past research has often investigated the impact of individual and environmental variables on the relationship between apologies and coping responses separately. Thus, there is a lack of substantial research considering the potential joint influences of these two aspects in conflict resolution. Second, Zheng et al., (2016) suggested that future research should focus not only on forgiveness but also on other forgiveness-related outcomes that can also be relevant for the relationship between the aggrieved individual and the transgressor. Thus, beyond willingness to forgive, my dissertation will also analyse reconciliation, revenge, and avoidance behaviours (McCullough et al., 1998). Third, studying forgiveness-related responses in the workplace is of importance in fostering productive and healthy organizational environments, which is further vital for organizations to have updated information on the depth of the impacts and influences on managing conflicts and fostering healthy working relationships and workplace climates.

The present work is structured with a conceptual framework, followed by a literature review exploring the dynamics between the variables. This is followed by the methodology,

explaining the research approach, data collection, instruments used, and data analysis procedure. Further, two studies were conducted, in which Study 1 results are presented followed by Study 2 results. Next, both studies are discussed in the discussion in relation to the two research questions. Limitations and directions for future research are also mentioned. Finally, the conclusion encapsulates the overview of the dissertation.

Conceptual Framework

This dissertation aims to explore how individuals cope and respond to interpersonal offenses in the workplace, in terms of forgiveness, avoidance, revenge, and reconciliatory behaviours. It further investigates the potential mediating role that emotions, such as compassion and anger, play in response to an apology and the perceived apology sincerity of the transgressor. Lastly, it investigates the potential moderating role of the victims perceived workplace power and of the procedural justice climate. This will be explored through two studies, Study 1 (figure 1) and Study 2 (figure 2).

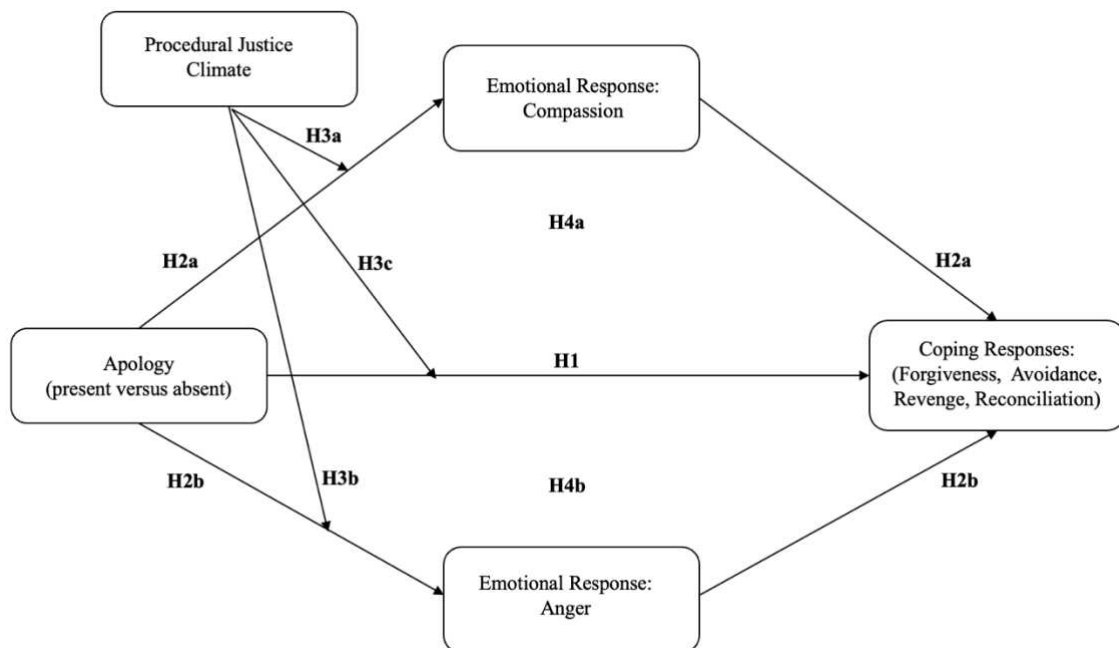


Figure 1. *Conceptual Model of Study 1*

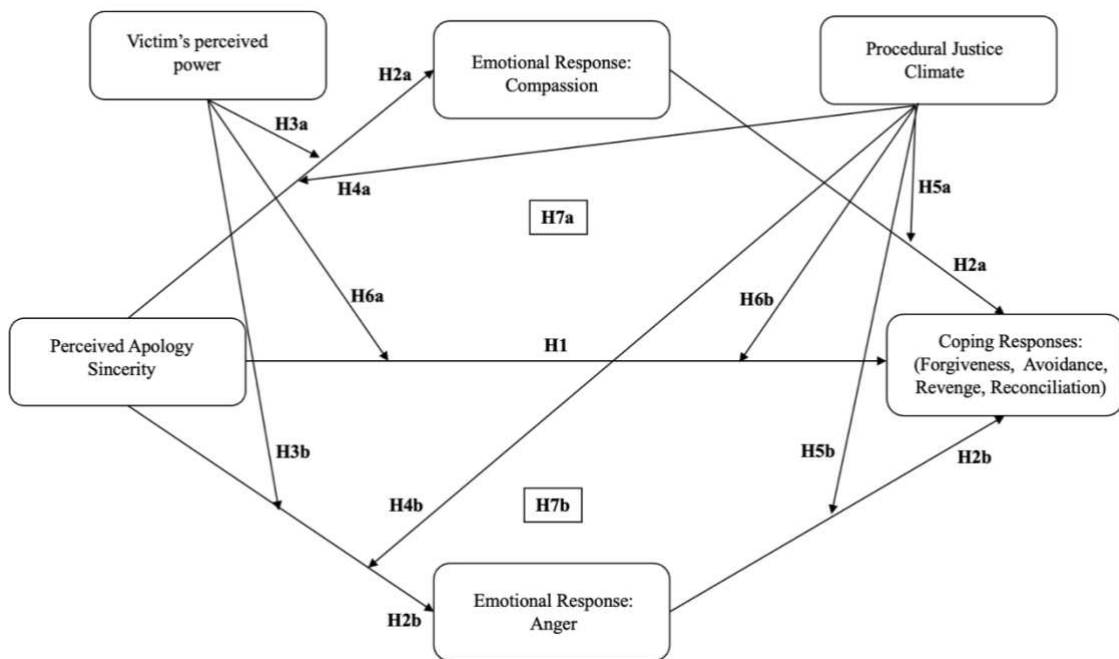


Figure 2. *Conceptual Model of Study 2*

Literature Review

Coping Responses

The potential for conflict to arise in the workplace is common, and how individuals deal and cope with the situation can differ from person to person, and from situation to situation, based on many contextual factors. Early research on conflict responses reported three kinds of emotional responses to positive and negative interactions: affective response, hurt-perceived attack, and righteous indignation (Gottman, 1993). McCullough et al., (1998) further explored this as a two-factor motivational system that drives individuals coping responses in interpersonal conflicts. The proposed model of motivation underlying forgiveness was categorised as avoidance and revenge, which aid in the psychological state of forgiveness (McCullough et al., 1998). These two motivational factors are key to understanding forgiveness in workplace conflicts, as willingness to forgive relates to a decrease in avoidance and revenge desires, and potentially leads to reconciliation.

As such, in the present analysis of workplace conflicts, the following coping responses were considered: forgiveness, revenge, avoidance, and reconciliation.

Forgiveness

The dynamic nature of forgiveness becomes apparent when considering its malleability, as it can be considered as an emotional process and/or logical processed decision of judgement. Forgiveness can be seen as not just a fixed trait but influenced and "malleable" based on various factors (Karremans & Van Lange, 2009). Research in this area has indicated considerable differences in the conceptualizations of forgiveness, suggesting shifting the focus of forgiveness to a cognitive and emotional process (Brady et al., 2023). Indeed, through a comparative analysis, Brady et al., (2023) defined forgiveness as a process of emotion regulation within an interpersonal transgression context. Similarly, Bies et al., (2016) defined forgiveness as an internal act of mitigating one's negative emotions, possibly accompanied by the enhancement of positive emotions and thoughts. Specifically, forgiveness involves the process of releasing resentment, the desire to seek revenge, and anger towards the offender (Bies et al., 2016). Forgiveness can thus be considered a diverse and complex emotional concept, that encompasses multifaceted factors. Similarly, McCullough, Fincham, and Tsang (2003) defined forgiveness in relation to other coping responses, as a process of emotional regulation over time. This emphasizes the reduction of revengeful motivations and avoidance behaviours and a potential increase of reconciliation (McCullough, Fincham, & Tsang, 2003). Furthermore, Worthington (2004) suggested that forgiveness can be viewed as an emotion-focused strategy to cope with the emotional juxtaposition of positive emotions against negative emotions. Taken together, understanding conceptualizations of forgiveness involves acknowledging forgiveness as both an emotional and deliberate process of decision-making (Brady et al., 2023).

These definitions of forgiveness further emphasize the relationship with other positive conflict resolutions such as reconciliation, but also negative ones that may occur instead such as avoiding the transgressor and seeking revenge. Furthermore, the complex nature of forgiveness includes many contextual factors, such as personality, dispositional forgiveness, and transgressor-relationship, that can predict willingness to forgive following an offense (Koutsos, Wertheim, & Kornblum, 2008).

Forgiveness in the workplace is a crucial element that is often overlooked, but can have several organisational outcomes (Cox, 2011; Scholtz, 2021). A forgiving workplace culture can lead to an increase in organizational citizenship behaviours and job satisfaction (Cox, 2011). Positive behavioral outcomes in conflict management is important for overall

organizational success (Scholtz, 2021). This can benefit an organisation by fostering innovation, enhancing adaptability, and supporting employee retention (Stone, 2002).

Revenge & Avoidance

Within a stressful interpersonal conflict, an individual's coping strategies can be categorized as approach or avoidance (Roth & Cohen, 1986). Coping strategies represent one's cognitive and emotional response to the perception of threat, with an individual willing to approach or avoid. According to Equity theory, when unfair treatment is perceived, individuals are likely to experience a state of distress (Walster, Berschied & Walster, 1973). Coping strategies such as avoidance and revenge may facilitate the reduction of distress by restoring justice and equity in the transgression.

Furthermore, Schumann and Ross (2010) suggest that victims of injustice choose revengeful behaviours due to four factors: persistent anger, perceived costs, cultural and religious values, and external justice systems. This highlights the influence of anger and external justice systems such as the procedural justice climate on negative coping responses. Whereas, McCullough et al., (1998) illustrate that when an individual is willing to forgive in a negative relationship event, there results a "relationship-constructive" behaviour of two low motivations: avoidance and seeking revenge against the offender. Avoidance is referred to as a response of withdrawing from the relationship with the offender, with the aim of avoiding psychological and physical contact (McCullough et al., 1998). In contrast, revenge is defined as seeking retribution by inflicting damage, pain/harm, and/or punishment to the offender (Aquino et al., 2001). The TRIM inventory was constructed as a self-report to assess these assumed motivations underlying forgiveness (McCullough et al., 1998).

Reconciliation

Aquino et al., (2001) defined reconciliation as the victims actions of goodwill towards the offender in attempt to restore a positive relationship following an offense. Reconciliation can be viewed as restoring harmony and trust in the relationship between the victim and offender, which goes beyond forgiveness as that can occur without the restoration of the relationship with the transgressor (Auerbach, 2004).

As reconciliation emphasizes repairing the relationship rather than simply forgiving the offender, reconciliatory motivations can be influenced by other factors such as the transgressor-victim relationship (Aquino et al, 2001; Okimoto & Wenzel, 2014). Aquino et al., (2001) suggests that the repair of the relationship can be influenced by power dynamics

relative to the victim-offender hierarchical status, and blame attributed to the offender. A key finding indicated that revenge was associated with higher blame attributed to the offender, specifically an offender considered of higher status (Aquino et al., 2001).

Reconciliation in the workplace can also be influenced by blame attribution after a perceived injustice, which further influences trust in reconciling the relationship with the offender (Andiappan & Treviño, 2011). Thus, reconciliation is not just the absence of revenge and goes beyond forgiveness, as the victims power and attributed blame can influence their reconciliatory intentions towards the transgressor.

The Impact of an Apology & its Perceived Sincerity

Apologies are an effective strategy to facilitate reconciliation between parties, by reducing the desire for retribution and decreasing anger directed towards the offender (Leonard et al., 2011). An apology consists of a social account in the form of a statement or action from the transgressor to the offended individual intending to seek forgiveness (Tavuchis, 1991). However, not all apologies are effective and result to forgiveness in a social conflict. The effectiveness of an apology can depend on both verbal and non-verbal elements, as well as how the apology is perceived by the offended individual (Ayoko, 2016; Jeter & Brannon, 2017). Weiner (1986) argued that individuals make causal attributions in the aftermath of a conflict that influences their perception of the experience and their feelings. Thus, within a workplace environment, a conflict may raise both internal and external attributions to the workplace climate, and hierarchy of job roles in relation to the controllability and stability of the cause, to further make better sense of the situation and subsequent emotions. Tomlinson et al., (2004) also suggests that attributions to a received apology influence the individual's willingness to forgive and reconcile, specifically internal attributions facilitating forgiveness. This further supports how an apology is a key influencing element to conflict management, as it plays a role of both forgiveness and reconciliation, which in turn prevents avoidance and revenge behaviors. Taking the evidence above together, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Study 1, Hypothesis 1: There will be a positive direct effect of an apology on forgiveness and reconciliation, and a negative direct effect on avoidance and revenge.

Attributions of the sincerity of an apology can affect the other persons reactions and responses in aftermath of a wrongdoing (Ohbuchi et al., 1989; Jeter & Brannon, 2017). Thus, if an apology from a leader is perceived as more sincere, the subordinate is more likely to respond positively compared to a perceived insincere apology that might be perceived as manipulative and driven by a self-serving desire to protect one's image (Basford et al., 2014). Researchers refer to a sincere apology as the victim's perception of the expression of remorse from the offender and admission of responsibility (Tavuchis, 1991; Shapiro, 1991). A sincere apology has been characterized as a remedial behaviour that assists in understanding and explaining a harmful action (Ohbuchi et al., 1989). As such, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Study 2, Hypothesis 1: There will be a positive direct effect of the perceived apology sincerity on forgiveness and reconciliation, and a negative direct effect on avoidance and revenge.

Emotional Responses and Forgiveness

Apologies from a transgressor are often motivated by emotions felt in the situation of conflict. These emotions can further influence the victim's perception of the apology and their willingness to forgive (Hareli & Eisikovits, 2006). Emotional responses, both negative and positive, have been found to play a contributing role in one's willingness to forgive (Leonard et al., 2011; Gordijn et al., 2006). More specifically, there is an association between forgiveness and compassion, as by extending compassion to the transgressor, the victim can release their negative emotions from the offense (Oliner, 2005). Forgiveness allows the victim to release their negative emotions (i.e. anger and hurt) and need for revenge, which can be facilitated through compassion and understanding.

Moreover, emotions can mediate the impact of an apology on the desire for retribution or the will to forgive (Leonard et al., 2011). Through the process of mitigating one's negative emotions from an apology, compassion can facilitate forgiveness, and in turn increase the likelihood of reconciliation (Oliner, 2005). Likewise, the reduction of a victim's anger is positively related to the forgiveness of the transgressor (Knostam, Chernoff, & Deveney, 2001). However, Kubo et al., (2012) suggested that anger has multiple components and is not a unitary process, as providing an apology may not always be effective in reducing victim

anger. This was contradicted with cross-cultural research conducted by Zhang et al., (2015), as findings show a negative association between anger with forgiveness and reconciliation, and a positive association with compassion. As such, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Study 1, Hypothesis 2a: Compassion will mediate the relationship between apology and forgiveness-related coping responses, with positive effects on forgiveness and reconciliation, and negative effects on avoidance and revenge.

Study 1, Hypothesis 2b: Anger will mediate the relationship between apology and forgiveness-related coping responses, with positive effects on avoidance and revenge, and negative effects on forgiveness and reconciliation.

The perception of the apology plays an important role in an individual's willingness to forgive, as one's ability for perspective taking and empathetic concern can foster a reduction in anger, and further increase forgiveness (Konstam, Chernoff, & Deveney, 2001). A study by Hareli and Eisikovits (2006) highlights the role of emotional responses impacting one's behavioural response in relation to the perceived apology. The study found that the victim is more likely to forgive the transgressor when they are aware of the transgressor's emotions, specifically guilt and shame (Hareli & Eisikovits, 2006). These expressed feelings of guilt and genuine remorse in an apology can be perceived as a sincere apology. In contrast, forgiveness decreased when the victim was aware of pity driving the apology given from the transgressor (Hareli & Eisikovits, 2006). This suggests that pity may be seen as insincere. Additionally, the study found that anger was lower when expressions of guilt or shame were shown, and higher when pity was expressed in the apology (Hareli & Eisikovits, 2006). Thus, victims may feel more anger when the apology is perceived as insincere, further highlighting the potential association between the expressed emotions and the perceived sincerity of the apology. Moreover, research suggests that the perceived apology sincerity can influence emotional responses, specifically a decrease in negative affective reactions, such as anger (Ebesu Hubbard et al., 2013). Given this, the subsequent hypotheses are proposed:

Study 2, Hypothesis 2a: Compassion will mediate the relationship between perceived apology sincerity and forgiveness-related coping responses, with positive effects on forgiveness and reconciliation, and negative effects on avoidance and revenge.

Study 2, Hypothesis 2b: Anger will mediate the relationship between perceived apology sincerity and forgiveness-related coping responses, with positive effects on avoidance and revenge, and negative effects on forgiveness and reconciliation.

Procedural Justice Climate & Forgiveness

Procedural justice climates play an important role within an organization, and the influence on conflict resolution in a work setting (Van den Bos & Lind, 2001). The belief in procedural justice relates to an individual's justice values involving both the punishment of the offender, as well as the fairness in conflict resolution. Justice values refer to the belief in fairness and equity, further associating with the settlement of conflicts being in an ethical and moral reconciliatory manner (Exline et al., 2003). The inclination to forgive others can be influenced by an individual's justice values (Karremans & Van Lange, 2005). Thus, an individual's justice concerns in the general fairness of procedures suggests the welfare concern of not only how they are treated but also of others treatment (Van den Bos & Lind, 2001). This supports how individuals' subjective concept of justice and values extend further than retribution alone, but to the general fairness concern of others.

Tripp et al., (2007) propose a “vigilante model of justice”, which suggests that forgiveness and reconciliation are preceded by justice, and without justice the victim is likely to seek revenge. Additionally, positive and negative emotional reactions to perceived procedural justice and injustices can play a role in these behavioural conflict outcomes (Murphy & Tyler, 2008). Homan (1974) found that anger mediates the impact of distributive justice perceptions on compliance behaviour. Further, those treated fairly will experience more positive emotions, in comparison to those who feel injustice will likely feel more anger (Homan, 1974). However, Homan (1974) focused primarily on distributive justice, leaving a gap to explore emotions to procedural justice. Murphy & Tyler (2008) suggests that emotions (i.e. anger and happiness) can be influenced by one's perceptions of procedural justice, and further the effect of justice on subsequent behaviours of compliance can be mediated through these emotional reactions. Furthermore, there are certain limitations to apologies given in perceived unfair environments, as they may be perceived as insincere

(Tripp et al., 2007). Taking together the evidence above on the influence of emotional responses, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Study 1, Hypothesis 3a: The relationship between apology and compassion will be moderated by PJC.

Study 1, Hypothesis 3b: The relationship between apology and anger will be moderated by PJC.

Study 2, Hypothesis 4a: The relationship between perceived apology sincerity and compassion will be moderated by PJC.

Study 2, Hypothesis 4b: The relationship between perceived apology sincerity and anger is moderated by PJC.

The perception of a fair procedural justice climate can influence different forgiveness-related coping responses (Aquino et al., 2006). Colquitt et al., (2001) found that how individuals perceive apologies and further their response is associated to procedural justice. Similarly, the inclination to forgive others can be influenced by an individual's justice values (Karremans & Van Lange, 2005). This reinforces how the perception of an apology in relation to their justice values is influential on forgiveness-related responses. In the context of forgiveness, the understanding of justice values and procedural justice climates aligns with how forgiveness is not solely an emotional process of regulating one's emotions but can be seen as part of the larger framework of fairness and deliberate decision-making with context to the conflict situation and environment. Thus, the environment in which a conflict takes place can potentially influence the individual's emotional process of forgiveness and other forgiveness-related coping responses. Moreover, Aquino et al., (2006) found that conflict in organisations with high procedural justice climates were more likely to increase forgiveness and reconciliation, while organisations with low procedural justice climate enhanced revengeful tendencies, specifically among employees with perceived higher power and hierarchical status. As a result, the following hypotheses are presented:

Study 1, Hypothesis 3c: PJC will moderate the relationship between apology and forgiveness-related coping responses.

Study 1, Hypothesis 4a: PJC will moderate the indirect effects of apology on forgiveness-related coping responses through compassion, with a positive effect on forgiveness and reconciliation, and a negative effect on avoidance and revenge.

Study 1, Hypothesis 4b: PJC will moderate the indirect effects of apology on coping responses through anger, with positive effects on avoidance and revenge, and negative effects on forgiveness and reconciliation.

Study 2, Hypothesis 5a: The relationship between compassion and forgiveness-related coping responses will be moderated by PJC.

Study 2, Hypothesis 5b: The relationship between anger and forgiveness-related coping responses will be moderated by PJC.

Study 2, Hypothesis 6b: The direct effect of perceived apology sincerity on forgiveness-related coping responses will be moderated by PJC.

Power Dynamics & Forgiveness

Within the intricate framework of forgiveness, the power dynamics between the transgressor and victim can be influential in conflict resolution (Forster et al., 2021). While an apology can facilitate forgiveness, its effectiveness can be negatively hindered by the perception of the transgressor's perceived power (Zheng et al., 2016). The relationship between the transgressor and offender is important to consider as the effect of an apology on forgiveness has been found to be weaker when received from transgressors of high-value (Forster et al., 2021). Power roles between the victim and offender can influence revenge and reconciliation in reaction to unjustly harm (Kim et al., 1998; Aquino et al., 2001). In studying the impact of transgressor power and response on forgiveness, Zheng et al., (2016) found that a remorsefully expressed apology can lead to forgiveness, but only in the condition of low transgressor power. High-power transgressors are more likely viewed to express ineffective apologies, as they are viewed with cynicism, further hindering the facilitation of forgiveness from the low-power victim (Zheng et al., 2016). Study 2 differs from Zheng et al.,'s (2016) study, by simultaneously examining the effects of power and the procedural justice climate in relation to the perceived sincerity of an apology. Further, Study 2 explores not only revenge and reconciliation, but forgiveness and avoidance behaviours. Consequently, the following hypotheses are suggested:

Study 2, Hypothesis 3a: The relationship between perceived apology sincerity and compassion will be moderated by the victim's power.

Study 2, Hypothesis 3b: The relationship between perceived apology sincerity and anger will be moderated by the victim's power.

Study 2, Hypothesis 6a: The direct effect of the perceived apology sincerity on forgiveness-related coping responses is moderated by the victim's power.

Moreover, Aquino et al.,'s (2006) findings demonstrate a relationship between hierarchical status on coping responses such as forgiveness, reconciliation, and revenge, with the influence of procedural justice climate perceptions. Specifically, when procedural justice climate is considered low, high relative status can increase revengeful behaviour (Aquino et al., 2006). This suggests that status and power affect one's behavioural reactions in a conflict. Thus, victim power will be explored in relation to the perception of an apologies sincerity on coping responses, through the mediation of emotion and further the influence of PJC. From this, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Study 2, Hypothesis 7a: There will be an indirect effect of the perceived apology sincerity on forgiveness-related coping responses through compassion, moderated by both the victim's power and PJC

Study 2, Hypothesis 7b: There will be an indirect effect of the perceived apology sincerity on forgiveness-related coping responses through anger, moderated by both the victim's power and PJC.

Methodology

Research Approach and study design

Study 1

Study 1 is a quantitative study, conducted using experimental methods to manipulate the effect of an apology versus no apology within high versus low procedural justice climates on forgiveness-related responses. Specifically, the study manipulated scenario-based situations to induce a hypothetical workplace conflict with the presence or absence of an apology, within a context of high or low procedural justice climate. Primary data was collected from participants.

In Study 1, participants were asked to read a scenario that had been randomly assigned to them. There was a total of 4 scenarios: a high procedural justice climate with the presence of an apology, a high procedural justice climate without an apology, a low procedural justice climate with an apology, and a low procedural justice climate without an apology. All four of the scenarios described participants' fictional job, the company, and a meeting scenario in which a conflict occurred, with the presence or absence of an apology at the end. After reading the scenarios, participants were asked to rate their feelings of compassion and anger in relation to the scenario read. Following this, they were asked to indicate their intentions of revenge, avoidance, forgiveness, and reconciliation behaviours. Additionally, they were asked to rate the perceived severity of the situation. Manipulation checks were conducted by asking if the apology was present or absent, as well as what they considered the company's culture of treatment of employees being "good/high/consistent" or "poor/low/inconsistent". Following this, questions were asked about their general positive and negative thoughts and feelings, and their perceptions of justice about others and their self. Finally, the questionnaire included demographic questions including age, gender, education, years of professional experience, industry sector, and length of employment. See appendix A for full questionnaire.

Study 2

Study 2 was conducted as a mixed-methods study, combining descriptive qualitative methods with quantitative analysis, to explore measurable outcomes from real-life workplace offenses. The study used a critical incident technique to elicit real-life experiences of workplace offenses, which were then coded to filter out participants who were not offended. The use of this method captures real organisational settings, which increases ecological validity (Barclay & Saldanha, 2016).

In Study 2, participants were asked to answer the following questions about their current organisation of employment: their perceived workplace power, and their organisations procedural justice climate. Following this, participants were asked to recall an incident within the last month where another person offended them in their current workplace context. Following this, they were asked the extent of the apology received, and the perceived sincerity of the apology. After this participants were asked to rate their feelings of compassion and anger in relation to how they currently feel when thinking of the other person. They were then asked to indicate their intentions of revenge, avoidance, forgiveness,

and reconciliation. Additionally, they were asked to rate the perceived severity of the situation. Participants were asked to state the time elapsed since the incident in days, and indicate the offender's professional status relative to them in their organisation. Following this, questions were asked about their general positive and negative thoughts and feelings, and their perceptions of justice about others and their self. Additionally, trait forgiveness was measured. Finally, the questionnaire included demographic questions including age, gender, education, years of professional experience, industry sector, and length of employment. See appendix B for full questionnaire.

Conducting two studies with different methods benefits from triangulation, increased validity, and provides a comprehensive understanding of the researched topic. Study 1 provides internal validity through a quantitative experimental approach that controlled and manipulated variables to test causal relationships. Whereas, Study 2 captures real-life experiences of workplace offense, which enhances ecological validity through a mixed methods approach. This further increases the generalizability of findings to the real-world organisational setting.

In both studies, ethical guidelines were adhered to. Participants were asked to enter their system-generated ID (rather than their name or other identifiable information), and results were analyzed ensuring anonymity. Participation was consensual, as consent was asked in the beginning. Moreover, at the end of the study, participants were asked if their data should be used. Also, participation was voluntary, with option to withdraw from the study at any time. Finally, all data was stored securely, ensuring confidentiality.

Data collection

Sample characterization

For both Study 1 and Study 2, participants from the U.S. were recruited online through a convenience sampling strategy on Prolific, a platform that enables the collection of high-quality participant data (Prolific, n.d.).

The criteria used to select participants in Prolific were ages between 18 to 90, participants from the United States, 21 hours working per week or more, full-time employment status, approval rate of 98-100, and number of previous submissions between 50 to 1000. The recruitment of participants for data collection was supported by Professor Maria Francisca Saldanha's grant from the FCT Portuguese Foundation of Science and Technology (PTDC/EGE-OGE/6389/2020).

Study 1 Participants.

The demographic sample of Study 1 consisted of 134 respondents from the U.S. Respondents were compensated 1.05 GBP (approximately 1.33 US dollars) upon completion of the online questionnaire containing 47 items (excluding attention checks and demographic questions). The questionnaire was estimated to take 5 to 6 minutes to complete.

From the 134 respondents, 27 were removed (filtered out) from analysis due to incomplete survey responses and failure to correctly respond to the attention checks and manipulation checks of the conditions. Thus, the final sample consisted of 107 respondents, with diverse distribution across age, gender, education, and industry sectors. The average age of the sample was 38 years ($SD = 10.15$), ranging from 21 years to 68 years. Of the respondents, 44 identified as male (41.1%), 62 as female (57.9%), and one person identified as non-binary (.9%). In terms of industry sector, 22 participants work in healthcare (20.6%), 14 in technology (13.1%), 11 in finance (10.3%), 11 in education (10.3%), 8 in manufacturing (7.5%), 21 in services (19.6%), and 20 in other (18.7%). Regarding respondents' highest level of education completed, 1 had no formal education (.9%), 23 respondents highest education is a high school diploma (21.5%), 47 responded to bachelor's degree (43.9%), 26 to master's degree (24.3%), 4 to doctorate (3.7%), and 6 responded to other qualifications (5.6%), when specified 4 participants stated an associate's degree. Participants reported an average of 6.6 years working for their current organisation ($SD = 5.95$), with a range of 0.5 to 27 years. Out of 106 respondents, the average years of professional experience was 16.3 years of professional experience ($SD = 10.78$), with a range from 2 to 50 years. From this question, I had to remove an outlier, as a participant (number 107) responded with "112" potentially due to a confusion of reporting days or months versus years. However, I included them in the rest of the study as they passed all the manipulation checks and attention traps.

Study 2 Participants.

The demographic sample of Study 2 was recruited online in the U.S. through Prolific. Respondents were compensated 1.35 GBP (approximately 1.71 US dollars) upon completion of the online questionnaire containing 88 items (excluding attention checks and demographic questions). The questionnaire was estimated to take 9 minutes to complete.

In total, 218 participants initially completed some part of the survey. However, the final sample used for analysis consisted of 70 participants, after filtering out those who did

not meet the inclusion criteria. Participants were excluded if they did not fully complete the survey to the end, failed the two attention checks, did not recall a workplace offense, and did not experience the recalled offense in their current organisation. It was important for participants to recall an offense at their current organisation, as the organisations procedural justice climate was measured. Additionally, participants were removed if they had not received an apology, as the independent variable in this study was the perceived sincerity of an apology. Thus, the large reduction of participants was due to a strict inclusion criteria that ensured the final sample was complete and relevant to the objectives of Study 2.

Of the 70 participants, the distribution of age, gender, education, and industry sectors was diverse. The average age of the sample was 37 years ($SD = 11.16$), ranging from 21 years to 66 years. In terms of gender, 33 identified as male (47.1%), 36 as female (51.4%), and one person preferred not to say (1.4%). Regarding respondents' highest level of completed education, 10 selected high school diploma (14.3%), 38 responded to bachelor's degree (54.3%), 19 to master's degree (27.1%), 1 to doctorate (1.4%), and 2 responded to other qualifications (2.9%) and when specified one participant stated a "tech certificate" and the other "associate 2 year degree". In terms of industry sector, 10 participants work in healthcare (14.3%), 14 in technology (20.0%), 9 in finance (12.9%), 6 in education (8.6%), 8 in manufacturing (11.4%), 12 in services (17.1%), and 11 in other (15.7%). Participants reported an average of 5.85 years working for their current organisation ($SD = 4.59$), with a range of 1 to 24 years. Finally, the average years of professional experience was 12.3 years of professional experience ($SD = 9.36$), with a range from 1 to 46 years. Additionally, when asked the relative offender status to the participant, results were categorised into lower relative status with a count of 8 (11.4%), equal relative status with a count of 48 (68.6%), and higher relative status with a count of 14 (20%).

Instruments/Measures

Study 1 Scenarios.

The four scenarios written were adaptations based on previous research to explore the impact of high versus low PJC, in conditions of present versus absent apologies in a workplace conflict scenario. Thus, the scenarios were divided into different conditions being: condition 1 (High PJC with present apology); condition 2 (low PJC with present apology); condition 3 (high PJC with absent apology); condition 4 (low PJC with absent apology).

To manipulate the level of PJC, Study 1 adapted the script from Aquino et al.,'s (2006) study. Instead of using "Pat and Val" as an example, Study 1 focused on one person, using "Alex" as a gender-neutral name. The description of the company's PJC level included manipulations of rule and information consistency, employee respect, consideration of employee's opinions, and correctability. Participants were asked a dichotomous/binary question as a manipulation check based on the allocated scenario-based short story, "In this scenario, what was the company's culture of treatment of employees?", with the option being "Good/High/Consistent" for a high PJC, and "Poor/Low/Inconsistent" for a low PJC.

To manipulate the impact of an apology's effect to forgive, avoid, seek revenge, and reconcile, a conflict scenario was adapted from Shafa et al.,'s (2017) study. This scenario represented an offense, which undermines an individual's integrity by accusing them wrongfully of a moral transgression. This scenario was selected for my study in relation to one's justice beliefs and the connection to the procedural justice climate of the current organisation. As a manipulation check, participants were asked a dichotomous/binary question, "In this scenario, did Alex apologise to you?", with a "yes" or "no" option.

Study 1 and Study 2 Instruments.

Compassion. The Compassion scale developed by Batson et al., (1987) consisted of 6 items. The items measured the participants emotional response of compassion towards the transgressor on a 7-point Likert Scale (1 = *Not at all* to 7 = *To a great extent*), included to which they currently feel "compassionate" and "sympathetic" towards the other person. The scale demonstrated excellent internal consistency both in Study 1 ($\alpha = 0.94$), and in Study 2 ($\alpha = 0.96$).

Anger. Anger was measured through the anger negative emotion subscale from the 32 item "Discrete Emotions Questionnaire" by Harmon-Jones et al., (2016). The 4 items of anger included "Angry", "Mad", "Pissed off", and "Rageful", and were evaluated on a 7-point Likert Sale (1 = *Not at all* to 7 = *To a great extent*). The scale demonstrated excellent internal consistency both in Study 1 ($\alpha = 0.92$), and in Study 2 ($\alpha = 0.94$).

Avoidance and Revenge. Unforgiving motivations such as avoidance (TRIM-A) and revenge (TRIM-R) were assessed using the 12 item Transgression Related Interpersonal Motivations Inventory (TRIM) developed by McCullough et al., (1988). Revenge was measured with 5 items in Study 1 ($\alpha = 0.95$) and in Study 2 ($\alpha = 0.89$), including "I want to make this person pay". Avoidance consisted of 7 items in Study 1 ($\alpha = 0.93$) and in Study 2

($\alpha = 0.96$), including “I want to keep as much distance between us as possible”, with one additional item being an attention check for the participant (e.g., “In this item, select option two”), all measured on a 7-point Likert response format (1 = *Not at all* to 7 = *To a great extent*).

Forgiveness. As a supplement to the unforgiving motivations measured with the TRIM-12 scale, forgiveness was directly measured using 3 items from the scale by Saldanha et al., (unpublished manuscript) based on Worthington (2006), (e.g., “I have forgiven them”) on a 7-point Likert format (1 = *Not at all* to 7 = *To a great extent*). The scale demonstrated high internal consistency both in Study 1 ($\alpha = 0.96$), and in Study 2 ($\alpha = 0.95$).

Reconciliation. Reconciliation was measured using Aquino et al., (2001) adaptation from Wade’s (1989) conciliation subscale. The scale contains 5 items with example “I want to make amends” on a 7-point Likert format (1 = *Not at all* to 7 = *To a great extent*), that measure the extent to which the victim attempted to repair their relationship with the offender and reconcile after a transgression. The scale demonstrated excellent internal consistency both in Study 1 ($\alpha = 0.93$), and in Study 2 ($\alpha = 0.96$).

Offense Severity. The offense severity was measured as a control variable using a scale by Barclay and Saldanha (2016), on a 7-point Likert format (1 = *Not at all* to 7 = *To a great extent*). The scale consists of 2 items, such as “This is a serious situation” and “I consider this situation to be severe”. These items control for offense severity, as the harm severity can influence an apology and impact one’s willingness to forgive (Fehr et al. 2010). The scale demonstrated excellent internal consistency both in Study 1 ($\alpha = 0.91$), and in Study 2 ($\alpha = 0.92$).

Emotional Responses. The Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) scale by Watson, Clark, & Tellegen (1988) was used as a control measure of the participants propensity to experience both negative and positive emotions experienced every day, as this can significantly affect one’s willingness to forgive (Leonard et al., 2011). The measure has a total of 10 items, with 5 items in Study 1 ($\alpha = 0.92$) and in Study 2 ($\alpha = 0.87$) to measure positive affectivity (e.g., “Inspired”), and 5 items in Study 1 ($\alpha = 0.91$) and in Study 2 ($\alpha = 0.88$) for negative affectivity (e.g., “afraid”), both evaluated on a 7-point Likert Scale (1 = *Not at all* to 7 = *To a great extent*).

Justice Values. Justice values scale by Lucas et al., (2011) was used to control for individual’s justice values of others and for self. The measure has a total of 8 items,

measuring Justice Values of Others with 4 items in Study 1 ($\alpha = 0.92$) and in Study 2 ($\alpha = 0.85$), such as “People usually use fair procedures in dealing with others”. The scale also measured Justice Values of Self, with 4 items in Study 1 ($\alpha = 0.95$) and in Study 2 ($\alpha = 0.90$), such as “People usually use fair procedures in dealing with me”. Both evaluated on a 7-point Likert Scale (1 = *Strongly Disagree*, to 7 = *Strongly Agree*). An attention trap was included in the scale in Study 1 as “Please respond with slightly agree here”. Justice values were controlled for as research suggests that an individual’s justice values can influence their inclination and willingness to forgive the offender, further influencing their reconciliation motives (Exline et al., 2003; Karremans & Van Lange, 2005).

Demographic variables were collected for both control purposes and to characterize the sample, ensuring a generalizability to a wider population. The industry sector was collected to represent general workplace conflicts across different sectors. Gender was measured as gender differences have been found to correlate to forgiveness-related measures, specifically vengeance (Miller, Worthington, & McDaniel, 2008). Age was controlled for as age differences have been associated with propensity to forgive (Girard & Mullet, 1997; Steiner, Allemand, & McCullough, 2011). Education has also been seen to influence willingness of forgiveness, specifically a positive relationship with higher education levels (Idemudia & Mahri, 2011). Moreover, worker loyalty to an organisation has been found to influence coping strategies in workplace problems (Hoffman, 2006). Finally, tenure and professional experience were controlled for similar influences on coping strategies in workplace conflicts.

Study 2 Instruments.

In addition to the scales mentioned above, Study 2 further included the following variables:

Perceived Workplace Power. The Perceived Workplace Power scale developed by Yu, Hays, and Zhao (2019) consisted of 8 items ($\alpha = 0.95$). The items measured the participants perceived power in the workplace and were rated on a 7-point Likert Scale (1 = *Strongly Disagree*, to 7 = *Strongly Agree*), included “I have a great deal of power at work.”

Procedural Justice Climate (PJC). The PJC scale developed by Greenberg (1986) consisted of 9 items ($\alpha = 0.84$). The items measured the participants perceived procedural justice climate of their current workplace and items were rated on a 7-point Likert Scale (1

= *Strongly Disagree*, to 7 = *Strongly Agree*), included “There is a real interest in trying to be fair to us as a group.”

Recalled Offense. Participants were asked to “Think back and recall an incident within the last 1 month where another person offended you in your CURRENT workplace context.” They were additionally instructed to write a small description of the event below, stating what happened between them and the other person.

Extent of Apology. The extent to which the participant received an apology was measured on an ordinal 7-point Likert Scale (1 = *No apology received*, 2 = *To a very small extent*, to 7 = *To a very great extent*).

Perceived Apology Sincerity. The perceived apology sincerity was measured using a 4 item ($\alpha = 0.95$) scale developed by Basford et al., (2014) to measure the perceived sincerity of a received apology (e.g., “They felt genuine remorse for the harm or ill-will caused to me”). The scale was assessed on a 7-point Likert response format (1= *strongly disagree* to 7= *strongly agree*).

Along with the control variables mentioned for both Study 1 and Study 2, the following variables were additionally controlled for in Study 2:

Time elapsed. The *time elapsed* from the conflict was controlled as research has found that willingness to forgive increases with greater temporal distance from the transgression (Wohl & McGrath, 2007). Additionally, delayed apologies from the time of conflict were found to be generally perceived as insincere and lead to less willingness to forgive (Wenzel et al., 2018). Time elapsed was controlled with a single measure item, asking participants to state in days how long had passed since the incident happened.

Offender Rank. The participant was asked to indicate whether the person who offended them was a “subordinate”, “supervisor/leader/manager”, “colleague/peer”, “customer”, or “other, specify”. Aquino et al., (2006) categorized supervisor and manager into a single category to represent higher status of the offender to the victim, peers constituted as second category and subordinate as third category. Thus, in Study 2 the relative offender status ranks relative to the participant/victim were coded into three hierarchical categories: low (-1), equal (0), and high (+1). Low offender status includes “subordinates” as they were considered to have less authority or influence in the recalled conflict. Equal status included “colleague/peer” and “customer” as the interactions were seen as more of a business-to-business relationship. Finally, high status included “supervisor/leader/manager” as they

were considered to have high authority in the conflict situations. Those that answered “other” were manually coded into one of the three categories.

Trait Forgiveness. The Trait Forgiveness Scale (TFS) developed by Berry et al., (2005) measures whether a person is willing to forgive across different situations and over time as a disposition. The TFS consists of 10 items ($\alpha = 0.83$) measured on 7-point Likert response format (1= *strongly disagree* to 7= *strongly agree*), for example “I can usually forgive and forget an insult”. Items 1, 3, 6, 7, and 8, were reverse coded (e.g., “There are some things for which I could never forgive even a loved one.”).

Current Organisation. The recalled offense occurring in the participants current organisation was used as an exclusion variable as the procedural justice climate of the organisation was measured in context to the recalled offense. Participants were asked “Did the recalled event happen in your CURRENT organization?”, with a “yes” or “no” response option.

A Cronbach’s alpha > 0.70 indicates a high internal consistency. However, a Cronbach’s alpha > 0.95 may suggest item redundancy. Upon reviewing the items, each was ensured to contribute uniquely to the variable being measured, confirming that the scale is both reliable and efficient. However, in Study 1, the forgiveness scale of 3 items ($\alpha = 0.96$), item 2 was removed to reduce redundancy, and the Cronbach alpha remained excellent internal consistency with an alpha of 0.911.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was carried out on SPSS. The preparation of the data included filtering out missing data, outliers, failed manipulation checks, failed attention traps, and incomplete submissions. Further, for Study 2, those who did not recall an offense and those who were not offended in their current organisation were removed. Following the filters, a descriptive and frequency analysis was run for the demographics of the participants analysed.

For both studies, the internal consistency of scales and subscales was checked using Cronbach’s alpha. Following this, means of the scales were computed. Correlation tests were run for both studies. Additionally, in Study 1, a one-way ANOVA was run to assess the two independent variable conditions (apology present versus absent) across the two procedural justice climates (low versus high). Finally, for both studies a moderated-mediation analysis was run using PROCESS v4.2 by Andrew Hayes (Hayes, 2022).

Results: Study 1

Correlations

Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to determine the relationships between all the variables in this first study. A summary of the key correlations of the variables can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. *Correlation Matrix of Key Variables in Study 1*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1. Revenge	–	.534* *	.355* *	.409* *	-.148	.489* *	.348 **	–	.161	-.110	-.125	.205 *	.236* *	.264* *	.077
2. Avoidance	.534* *	–	.588* *	.644* *	.483* *	.635* *	.498 **	–	.198 *	-.126	-.048	.236 *	-.087	.086	-.087
3. Forgiveness	.355* *	.588* *	–	.752* *	.539* *	.392* *	.252 **	.124	–	.163	.091	.264 **	.102	-.102	.086
4. Reconciliation	.409* *	.644* *	.752* *	–	.628* *	.497* *	.273 **	.175	–	.065	.203* *	.157	.069	.193* *	-.163 193*
5. Compassion	-.148	.483* *	.539* *	.628* *	–	.336* *	.195 *	.142	.051	.192* *	.044	.200 *	.015	–	.231* *
6. Anger	.489* *	.635* *	.392* *	.497* *	.336* *	–	.653 **	.114	.081	.039	.095	.204 *	.022	.000	.022
7. Offense Severity	.348* *	.498* *	.252* *	.273* *	.195* *	.653* *	–	.132	.082	.078	.042	.191 *	.004	.041	.004
8. Positive Affect	-.103	-.037	.124	.175	.142	.114	.132	–	.247 *	.372* *	.285* *	–	.082	-.055	–
9. Negative Affect	.161	.198* *	-.140	-.065	.051	.081	.082	.247 *	–	.259* *	.276* *	–	.026	-.065	.088
10. Justice Values (Other)	-.110	-.126	.163	.203* *	.192* *	.039	.078	.372 **	.259 **	–	.729* *	.104	.047	-.155	.047
11. Justice Values (Self)	-.125	-.048	.091	.157	.044	.095	.042	.285 **	.276 **	.729* **	–	.051	-.076	-.067	-.076

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
12. Apology Present			-												
	.205*	.236*	.264*	-.069											
			*		.200*	.204*	.191*								
								-.082	.026	.104	.051	-	.085	.062	.085
13. Gender	.236*	-.087	.102	.193*	.015	.022	.004								
								-.055	.065	.047	-.076	.085	-	-.158	-.158
14. Age															
15. PJC	.077	-.087	.086	.193*	.015	.022	.004								
								-.055	.065	.047	-.076	.085	-.158	.082	

Note. $N = 107$. **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). Point-biserial correlations were run for Apology (0 = Absent, 1 = Present) and Gender (1 = Male, 2 = Female).

The correlations seen in Table 1 show interesting patterns and several expected directions that align with the theoretical expectations. Forgiveness was negatively correlated with revenge ($r = -.355, p < .001$) and avoidance ($r = -.588, p < .001$), reflecting the contrasting nature of the positive and negative forgiveness-related coping responses. The positive correlation between compassion and forgiveness ($r = .539, p < .001$), and the negative correlation between anger and forgiveness ($r = -.392, p < .001$), aligns with the expectation of compassion promoting forgiveness and anger inhibiting it. The strength of the correlation between avoidance and reconciliation was notable strong ($r = -.644, p < .001$), as well as forgiveness and reconciliation ($r = .752, p < .001$). These strengths were expected, as avoiding the transgressor decreases reconciliation, whereas forgiving the transgressor increases likelihood of reconciliation. No excessive multicollinearity was observed.

To test hypotheses 3c, 4a, and 4b, a One-Way ANOVA was run. Results are summarized in Table 2. The independent variable “conditions” had four categories: Condition 1 (high PJC with apology), Condition 2 (low PJC with apology), Condition 3 (high PJC with no apology), Condition 4 (low PJC with no apology).

Table 2. One-way ANOVA Results and Tukey Post-Hoc Comparisons for Coping Responses by Condition

Dependent Variable	$F(3, 103)$	p	η^2	Condition 1 (M, SD)	Condition 2 (M, SD)	Condition 3 (M, SD)	Condition 4 (M, SD)	Significant Pairwise Comparisons (p)
Forgiveness	3.229*	.026*	.086	2.823, 1.715	3.370, 1.673	2.159, 1.189	2.278, 1.553	2 > 3 (.041)*
Avoidance	2.735	.047*	.074	5.465, 1.021	5.032, 1.545	5.844, 1.047	5.804, .919	—
Revenge	2.291	.083	.063	3.148, 1.569	2.955, 1.761	3.364, 1.387	4.015, 1.588	—
Reconciliation	1.769	.158	.049	2.690, 1.205	3.393, 1.487	2.645, 1.226	2.985, 1.389	—

Note. * $p < .05$. "—" indicates data not significant. $N = 31$ for Condition 1, $N = 27$ for Condition 2, $N = 22$ for Condition 3, $N = 27$ for Condition 4.

The four conditions had a significant effect on forgiveness, $F(3, 103) = 3.229$, $p = .026$, with a medium effect size ($\eta^2 = .086$). The pairwise comparison shows that condition 2 ($M = 3.370$, $SD = 1.673$), had significantly higher forgiveness than condition 3 ($M = 2.159$, $SD = 1.189$), $p = .041$. The four conditions had a significant effect on avoidance, $F(3, 103) = 2.735$, $p = .047$, with a small to medium effect size ($\eta^2 = .074$). There is no significant pairwise comparisons identified, even though there was a significant overall difference.

Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test revealed two homogeneous subsets for forgiveness, being Subset 1 with Condition 3 ($M = 2.159$, $SD = 1.189$) and Condition 4 ($M = 2.277$, $SD = 1.553$), and Subset 2 with Condition 1 ($M = 2.822$, $SD = 1.715$) and Condition 2 ($M = 3.370$, $SD = 1.673$), as seen in figure 1 and 2. No other pairwise comparisons were statistically significant. The complete pairwise comparisons for the mean differences of forgiveness and avoidance can be found in Appendix C.

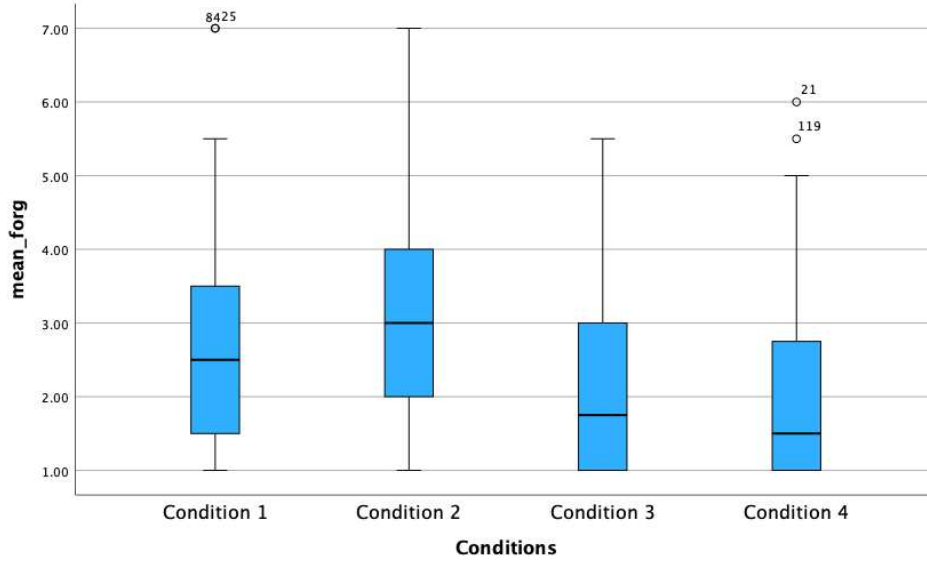


Figure 3. Comparison of Subset 1 and Subset 2 Relative to Significant Forgiveness Mean Scores.

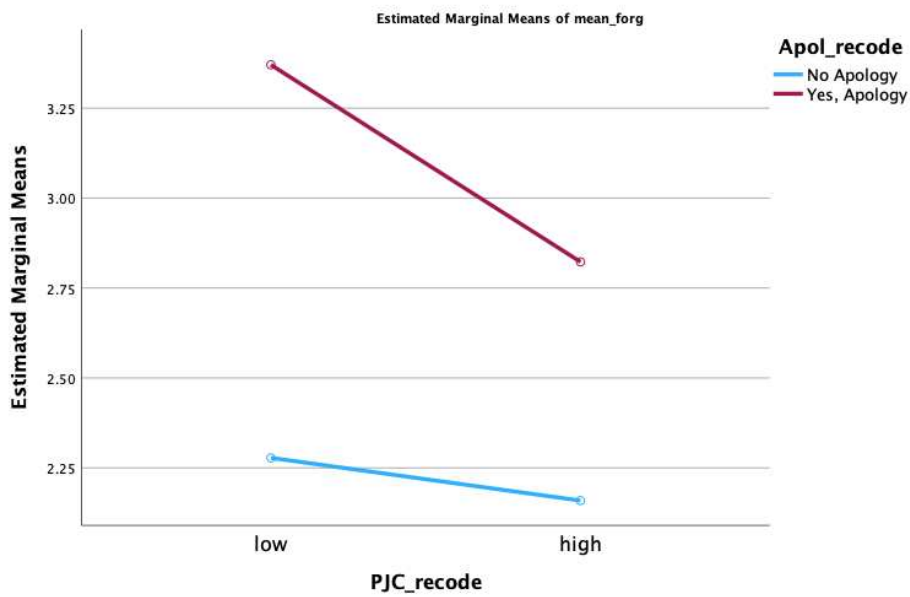


Figure 4. The Effect of Apology Versus No Apology on Forgiveness, in Comparison of Low and High PJC.

Note. “mean_forg” = Forgiveness. Only forgiveness was observed, being the only forgiveness-related coping response of significant pairwise comparison ($p = .041$).

Study 1: Moderated-Mediation Analysis

A moderated mediation analysis was conducted using Model 8 from Hayes' PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2022). Model 8 was used to examine the direct and indirect effect of an apology on forgiveness-related coping responses (forgiveness, revenge, avoidance, and reconciliation) through compassion and anger, with procedural justice climate as a moderator of the indirect effect. Model 8 examines the moderation of PJC on the IV-Mediator path and the direct IV-DV path, with the mediators in parallel. As apology and PJC were dichotomous variables, both were transformed with different values: PJC (0 = Low, 1 = High) and apology (0 = Absent, 1 = Present). Additionally, Model 4 was run for hypotheses 2a and 2b, to test the indirect effects of apology on forgiveness-related coping responses, through the mediation of anger and compassion, without the moderation of PJC.

H1: There will be a positive direct effect of an apology on forgiveness and reconciliation, and a negative direct effect on avoidance and revenge.

The overall model fit estimated by PROCESS is statistically significant, explaining approximately 59.93% of the variance in coping responses ($R^2 = 0.599$, $F(14, 92) = 9.828$, $p < .001$).

The direct effect of an apology on forgiveness was not significant ($b = .414$, $SE = .261$, $p = .116$, 95% percentile CI [-0.104, 0.931]). The direct effect of an apology on avoidance was not significant ($b = -.169$, $SE = .176$, $p = .340$, 95% percentile CI [-0.519, 0.181]). The direct effect of an apology on revenge was not significant ($b = -.385$, $SE = .297$, $p = .198$, 95% percentile CI [-0.974, 0.205]). The direct effect of an apology on reconciliation was not significant ($b = -.299$, $SE = .189$, $p = .117$, 95% percentile CI [-0.676, 0.077]).

H2a: Compassion will mediate the relationship between apology and forgiveness-related coping responses, with positive effects on forgiveness and reconciliation, and negative effects on avoidance and revenge.

The overall model fit estimated by PROCESS is statistically significant, explaining approximately 4.01% of the variance in compassion ($R^2 = 0.040$, $F(1, 105) = 4.380$, $p = .039$).

The overall indirect effect of apology on forgiveness through the mediation of compassion was significant ($b = .284$, $BootSE = .144$, 95% CI [0.019, 0.583]). The overall indirect effect of apology on avoidance through the mediation of compassion was significant ($b = -.139$, $BootSE = .071$, 95% CI [-0.289, -0.008]). The overall indirect effect of apology

on revenge through the mediation of compassion was not significant ($b = .023$, $BootSE = .084$, 95% $CI [-0.119, 0.217]$). The overall indirect effect of apology on reconciliation through the mediation of compassion was significant ($b = .288$, $BootSE = .136$, 95% $CI [0.028, 0.561]$).

H2b: Anger will mediate the relationship between apology and forgiveness-related coping responses, with positive effects on avoidance and revenge, and negative effects on forgiveness and reconciliation.

The overall model fit estimated by PROCESS is statistically significant, with approximately 4.01% of the variance in anger ($R^2 = 0.041$, $F(1, 105) = 4.547$, $p = .035$).

The overall indirect effect of apology on forgiveness through the mediation of anger was not significant ($b = .143$, $BootSE = .108$, 95% $CI [-0.005, 0.408]$). The overall indirect effect of apology on avoidance through the mediation of anger was significant ($b = -.253$, $BootSE = .131$, 95% $CI [-0.534, -0.020]$). The overall indirect effect of apology on revenge through the mediation of anger was significant ($b = -.315$, $BootSE = .154$, 95% $CI [-0.627, -0.026]$). The overall indirect effect of apology on reconciliation through the mediation of anger was significant ($b = .186$, $BootSE = .103$, 95% $CI [0.012, 0.411]$).

H3a: The relationship between apology and compassion will be moderated by PJC.

The interaction between apology and PJC on compassion was not significant ($b = -.253$, $SE = .413$, $p = .542$).

H3b: The relationship between apology and anger will be moderated by PJC.

The interaction between apology and PJC on anger was not significant ($b = .223$, $SE = .408$, $p = .586$).

H3c: The relationship between apology and forgiveness-related coping responses will be moderated by PJC.

The interaction between apology and PJC in predicting forgiveness was not significant ($b = .224$, $SE = .507$, $p = .659$). The interaction between apology and PJC in predicting avoidance was not significant ($b = -.177$, $SE = .343$, $p = .606$). The interaction between apology and PJC in predicting revenge was not significant ($b = .377$, $SE = .577$, $p = .516$). The interaction between apology and PJC in predicting reconciliation was not significant ($b = .153$, $SE = .368$, $p = .678$).

H4a: PJC will moderate the indirect effects of apology on forgiveness-related coping responses through compassion, with a positive effect on forgiveness and reconciliation, and a negative effect on avoidance and revenge.

The index of moderated mediation for apology effect on forgiveness through the mediation of compassion was not statistically significantly ($b = -.185$, $BootSE = .338$, 95% $CI [-0.937, 0.377]$). The indirect effect of apology on forgiveness through the mediation of compassion was not significant for both low PJC ($b = .349$, $BootSE = .247$, 95% $CI [-0.069, 0.909]$), and high PJC ($b = .165$, $BootSE = .218$, 95% $CI [-0.295, 0.573]$).

The index of moderated mediation for apology effect on avoidance through the mediation of compassion was not statistically significantly ($b = .080$, $BootSE = .169$, 95% $CI [-0.145, 0.521]$). The indirect effect of apology on avoidance through the mediation of compassion was not significant for both low PJC ($b = -.153$, $BootSE = .126$, 95% $CI [-0.448, 0.029]$) and high PJC ($b = -.072$, $BootSE = .096$, 95% $CI [-0.230, 0.171]$).

The index of moderated mediation for apology effect on revenge through the mediation of compassion was not statistically significantly ($b = -.021$, $BootSE = .107$, 95% $CI [-0.210, 0.256]$). The indirect effect of apology on revenge through the mediation of compassion was not significant for both low PJC ($b = .039$, $BootSE = .119$, 95% $CI [-0.212, 0.295]$) and high PJC ($b = .019$, $BootSE = .089$, 95% $CI [-0.094, 0.276]$).

The index of moderated mediation for apology effect on reconciliation through the mediation of compassion was not statistically significantly ($b = -.165$, $BootSE = .287$, 95% $CI [-0.776, 0.355]$). The indirect effect of apology on reconciliation through the mediation of compassion was not significant for both low PJC ($b = .314$, $BootSE = .194$, 95% $CI [-0.058, 0.710]$) and high PJC ($b = .148$, $BootSE = .218$, 95% $CI [-0.254, 0.512]$).

H4b: PJC will moderate the indirect effects of apology on coping responses through anger, with positive effects on avoidance and revenge, and negative effects on forgiveness and reconciliation.

The index of moderated mediation for apology effect on forgiveness through the mediation of anger was not statistically significantly ($b = -.032$, $BootSE = .093$, 95% $CI [-0.295, 0.086]$). The indirect effect of apology on forgiveness through anger was not significant at both low PJC ($b = .042$, $BootSE = .073$, 95% $CI [-0.048, 0.241]$) and high PJC ($b = .011$, $BootSE = .058$, 95% $CI [-0.128, 0.128]$).

The index of moderated mediation for apology effect on avoidance through the mediation of anger was not statistically significantly ($b = .074$, $BootSE = .149$, 95% $CI [-0.193, 0.395]$). The indirect effect of apology on avoidance through anger was not significant at both low PJC ($b = -.099$, $BootSE = .104$, 95% $CI [-0.319, 0.081]$) and high PJC ($b = -.025$, $BootSE = .107$, 95% $CI [-0.242, 0.196]$).

The index of moderated mediation for apology effect on revenge through the mediation of anger was not statistically significantly ($b = .133$, $BootSE = .261$, 95% $CI [-0.361, 0.689]$). The indirect effect of apology on revenge through anger was not significant at both low PJC ($b = -.177$, $BootSE = .184$, 95% $CI [-0.580, 0.156]$) and high PJC ($b = -.044$, $BootSE = .193$, 95% $CI [-0.438, 0.346]$).

The index of moderated mediation for apology effect on reconciliation through the mediation of anger was not statistically significantly ($b = -.089$, $BootSE = .171$, 95% $CI [-0.466, 0.222]$). The indirect effect of apology on reconciliation through anger was not significant at both low PJC ($b = .118$, $BootSE = .119$, 95% $CI [-0.087, 0.385]$) and high PJC ($b = .029$, $BootSE = .125$, 95% $CI [-0.216, 0.284]$).

Results: Study 2

Study 2 further explores the dynamics of an apology by analysing the perceived sincerity of one, and how this perception might influence their behavioural response to forgive, seek revenge, avoid, and/or reconcile.

The qualitative data of the recalled workplace incidents were coded as “0 = not offended/no recalled offense” and “1= Offended”. Participants coded as “no recall”, stated for example “I have not been offended in my current work setting” or did not respond to the question. Whereas, the coded “offended” included offensive remarks, comments, insults, and disrespectful incidents, such as “I was offended when...”.

Correlations

Similar to Study 1, in Study 2 a Pearsons’ correlation was run to determine the linear relationships between the key continuous variables. The full correlation table can be found in Appendix D. See table 3 for key correlations.

Table 3. *Correlation Matrix of Key Variables of Study 2*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Power	1	.605**	.330**	.352**	.018	.264*	-.117	.132	.261*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2. PJC	.605**	1	.330**	.440**	-.044	.115	-.276*	.321**	.352**
3. Sincerity	.330**	.330**	1	.664**	-.258*	.035	-.403**	.432**	.416**
4. Compassion	.352**	.440**	.664**	1	-.513**	-.042	-.644**	.683**	.688**
5. Anger	.018	-.044	-.258*	-.513**	1	.497**	.690**	-.556**	-.538**
6. Revenge	.264*	.115	.035	-.042	.497**	1	.406**	-.332**	-.198
7. Avoidance	-.117	-.276*	-.403**	-.644**	.690**	.406**	1	-.688**	-.762**
8. Forgiveness	.132	.321**	.432**	.683**	-.556**	-.332**	-.688**	1	.757**
9. Reconciliation	.261*	.352**	.416**	.688**	-.538**	-.198	-.762**	.757**	1

Note. $N = 70$. **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). Non-parametric correlations were run for relative offender status and extent of apology.

The correlations seen in Table 3 show several expected directions that align with theoretical expectations. Power was positively correlated with PJC ($r = .605, p < .001$), which was expected as they both relate to authority and perceptions of fairness and justice in the workplace. The positive correlation between perceived apology sincerity and compassion ($r = .664, p < .001$), and with forgiveness ($r = .432, p < .001$), aligns with the expectation that a more sincerely perceived apology evokes compassion and promotes forgiveness. The magnitude of the negative correlation between avoidance and forgiveness ($r = -.688, p < .001$), and reconciliation ($r = -.762, p < .001$), was particularly strong. No excessive multicollinearity was observed.

Study 2 Moderated-Mediation Analysis

Based on the correlation matrix, there is a significant indication of a strong correlation between perceived sincerity of an apology and coping responses (specifically avoidance, forgiveness, and reconciliation). The correlations are stronger in comparison to the effect of the extent of apology on coping responses, thus suggesting that sincerity of an apology might be a more impactful predictor. Therefore, sequentially to Study 1, Study 2 employs a moderated mediation analysis conducted using Model 63 from Hayes' PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2022). This model examines the moderation of victim's perceived workplace power and procedural justice climate (PJC) on the IV-Mediator path and the direct IV-DV path, with the mediators in parallel. Also, it examines PJC moderation of the Mediator-DV path. Additionally, Model 4 was run for hypotheses 2a and 2b, to test the indirect effects of

apology on forgiveness-related coping responses, through the mediation of anger and compassion, without the moderation of PJC.

H1: There will be a positive direct effect of the perceived apology sincerity on forgiveness and reconciliation, and a negative direct effect on avoidance and revenge.

The direct effect of perceived apology sincerity on forgiveness was not significant ($b = .005$, $SE = .146$, $p = .972$, 95% percentile CI [-0.289, 0.299]). Trait forgiveness as a control variable was found to significantly predict forgiveness ($b = .495$, $SE = .197$, $p = .016$, 95% percentile CI [0.098, 0.893]).

The direct effect of perceived apology sincerity on avoidance was not significant ($b = .035$, $SE = .142$, $p = .806$, 95% percentile CI [-0.251, 0.321]). Trait forgiveness as a control variable was found to significantly predict avoidance ($b = -.653$, $SE = .192$, $p = .001$, 95% percentile CI [-1.039, -0.267]). Tenure as a control variable was found to significantly predict avoidance ($b = .116$, $SE = .041$, $p = .007$, 95% percentile CI [0.033, 0.199]). Education as a control variable was found to significantly predict avoidance ($b = -.474$, $SE = .231$, $p = .046$, 95% percentile CI [-0.939, -0.008]).

The direct effect of perceived apology sincerity on revenge was not significant ($b = -.118$, $SE = .098$, $p = .237$, 95% percentile CI [-0.316, 0.080]). Additionally, trait forgiveness as a control variable was found to significantly predict revenge ($b = -.618$, $SE = .133$, $p > .001$, 95% percentile CI [-0.886, -0.349]). Offense severity as a control variable was found to significantly predict revenge ($b = .248$, $SE = .079$, $p = .003$, 95% percentile CI [0.880, 0.407]). Lastly, justice values for others as a control variable was found to significantly predict revenge ($b = .367$, $SE = .149$, $p = .018$, 95% percentile CI [0.066, 0.667]).

The direct effect of perceived apology sincerity on reconciliation was not significant ($b = -.152$, $SE = .114$, $p = .188$, 95% percentile CI [-0.382, 0.077]). Additionally, trait forgiveness as a control variable was found to significantly predict reconciliation ($b = .441$, $SE = .154$, $p = .006$, 95% percentile CI [0.131, 0.751]). Offense severity as a control variable was found to significantly predict reconciliation ($b = -.297$, $SE = .092$, $p = .002$, 95% percentile CI [-0.482, -0.112]). Justice values for others as a control variable was found to significantly predict reconciliation ($b = .514$, $SE = .182$, $p = .007$, 95% percentile CI [0.146, 0.882]). Tenure as a control variable was found to significantly predict reconciliation ($b = -.104$, $SE = .033$, $p = .002$, 95% percentile CI [-0.171, -0.038]). Age as a control variable was

found to significantly predict reconciliation ($b = .055$, $SE = .018$, $p = .003$, 95% percentile CI [0.019, 0.091]).

H2a: Compassion will mediate the relationship between perceived apology sincerity and forgiveness-related coping responses, with positive effects on forgiveness and reconciliation, and negative effects on avoidance and revenge.

The overall model fit estimated by PROCESS is statistically significant, explaining approximately 44.6% of the variance in compassion ($R^2 = 0.4459$, $F(1, 68) = 54.731$, $p < .001$).

The overall indirect effect of perceived apology sincerity on forgiveness through the mediation of compassion was significant ($b = .413$, $BootSE = .121$, 95% CI [0.194, 0.668]). The overall indirect effect of perceived apology sincerity on avoidance through the mediation of compassion was significant ($b = -.299$, $BootSE = .104$, 95% CI [-0.509, -0.098]). The overall indirect effect of perceived apology sincerity on revenge through the mediation of compassion was not significant ($b = .106$, $BootSE = .073$, 95% CI [-0.020, 0.266]). The overall indirect effect of perceived apology sincerity on reconciliation through the mediation of compassion was significant ($b = .365$, $BootSE = .095$, 95% CI [0.172, 0.543]).

H2b: Anger will mediate the relationship between perceived apology sincerity and forgiveness-related coping responses, with positive effects on avoidance and revenge, and negative effects on forgiveness and reconciliation.

The overall model fit estimated by PROCESS is statistically significant, with approximately 7.34% of the variance in anger ($R^2 = 0.0734$, $F(1, 68) = 5.384$, $p = .023$).

The overall indirect effect of perceived apology sincerity on forgiveness through the mediation of anger was significant ($b = .089$, $BootSE = .054$, 95% CI [0.005, 0.214]). The overall indirect effect of perceived apology sincerity on avoidance through the mediation of anger was significant ($b = -.157$, $BootSE = .074$, 95% CI [-0.318, -0.028]). The overall indirect effect of perceived apology sincerity on revenge through the mediation of anger was significant ($b = -.129$, $BootSE = .055$, 95% CI [-0.243, -0.024]). The overall indirect effect of perceived apology sincerity on reconciliation through the mediation of anger was significant ($b = .068$, $BootSE = .042$, 95% CI [0.003, 0.163]).

H3a: The relationship between perceived apology sincerity and compassion will be moderated by the victim's power.

The interaction between perceived apology sincerity and victims perceived power on compassion was not significant ($b = -.047, SE = .086, p = .59$).

H3b: The relationship between perceived apology sincerity and anger will be moderated by the victim’s power.

The interaction between perceived apology sincerity and victims perceived power on anger was not significant ($b = .042, SE = .093, p = .652$).

H4a: The relationship between perceived apology sincerity and compassion will be moderated by the PJC.

The interaction between perceived apology sincerity and PJC on compassion was not significant ($b = .049, SE = .128, p = .702$).

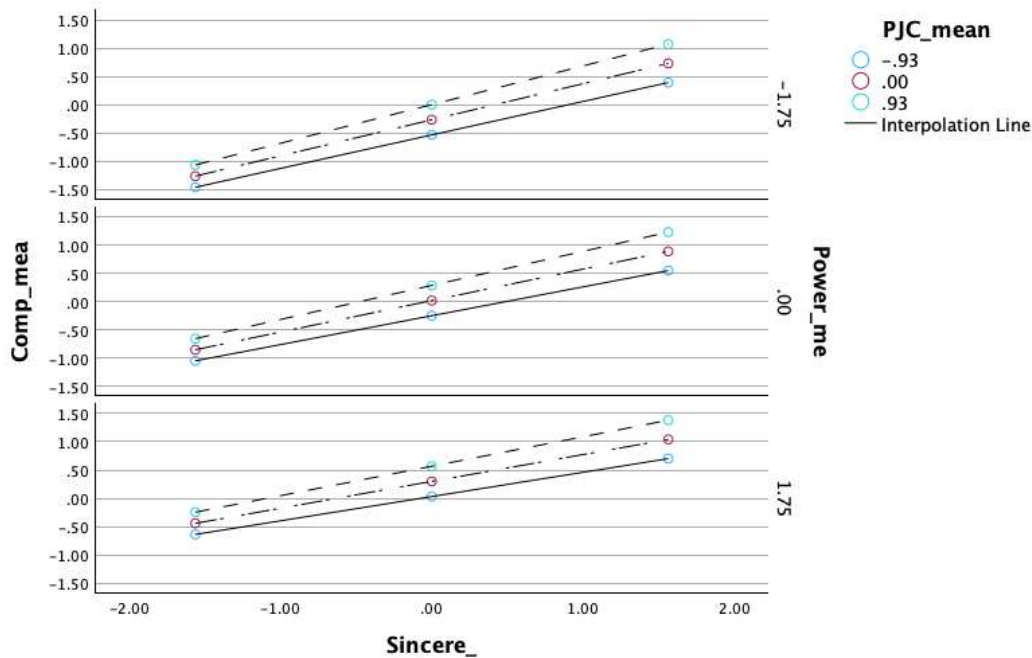


Figure 5. *Conditional Effects of the Perceived Sincerity of Apology on Compassion*

Note. The three panels represent levels of victim power ($-1.75 = \text{Low}$, $.00 = \text{Average}$, $1.75 = \text{High}$), and the three coloured balls represent levels of procedural justice climate ($-.93 = \text{Low}$, $.00 = \text{Average}$, $.93 = \text{High}$).

H4b: The relationship between perceived apology sincerity and anger will be moderated by the PJC.

The interaction between perceived apology sincerity and PJC on anger was not significant ($b = -.165, SE = .139, p = .244$).

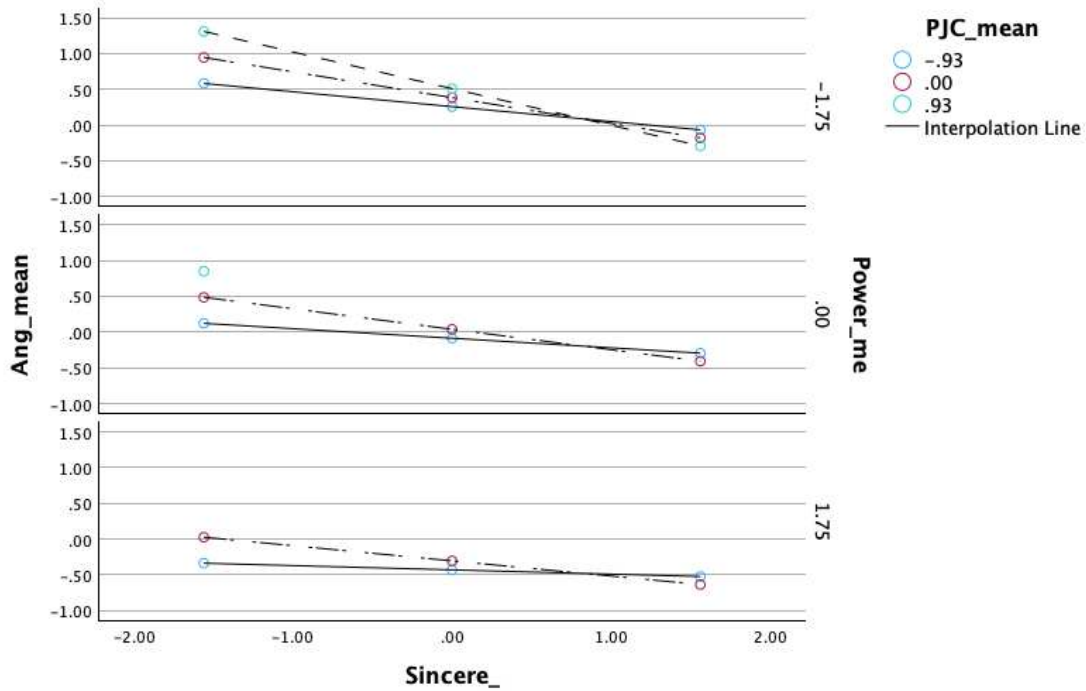


Figure 6. *Conditional Effects of the Perceived Sincerity of Apology on Anger.*

Note. The three panels represent levels of victim power ($-1.75 = \text{Low}$, $.00 = \text{Average}$, $1.75 = \text{High}$), and the three coloured balls represent levels of procedural justice climate ($-.93 = \text{Low}$, $.00 = \text{Average}$, $.93 = \text{High}$).

H5a: The relationship between compassion and forgiveness-related coping responses will be moderated by the PJC.

The interaction between compassion and PJC on forgiveness was not significant ($b = .029$, $SE = .133$, $p = .829$). The interaction between compassion and PJC on avoidance was not significant ($b = .158$, $SE = .129$, $p = .228$). The interaction between compassion and PJC on revenge was not significant ($b = .158$, $SE = .089$, $p = .086$). The interaction between compassion and PJC on reconciliation was not significant ($b = .098$, $SE = .104$, $p = .352$).

H5b: The relationship between anger and forgiveness-related coping responses will be moderated by the PJC.

The interaction between anger and PJC on forgiveness was not significant ($b = .174$, $SE = .137$, $p = .211$). The interaction between anger and PJC on avoidance was not significant ($b = -.124$, $SE = .133$, $p = .355$). The interaction between anger and PJC on revenge was not significant ($b = .099$, $SE = .092$, $p = .286$). The interaction between anger and PJC on reconciliation was significant ($b = .239$, $SE = .107$, $p = .03$).

H6a: The direct effect of perceived apology sincerity on forgiveness-related coping responses will be moderated by victim's power.

The interaction between perceived apology sincerity and victims perceived power on forgiveness was not significant ($b = .026$, $SE = .079$, $p = .742$). The interaction between perceived apology sincerity and victims perceived power on avoidance was not significant ($b = .012$, $SE = .077$, $p = .877$). The interaction between perceived apology sincerity and victims perceived power on revenge was not significant ($b = -.087$, $SE = .054$, $p = .11$). The interaction between perceived apology sincerity and victims perceived power on reconciliation was not significant ($b = -.062$, $SE = .062$, $p = .327$).

H6b: The direct effect of perceived apology sincerity on forgiveness-related coping responses will be moderated by the PJC.

The interaction between perceived apology sincerity and PJC on forgiveness was not significant ($b = -.109$, $SE = .145$, $p = .457$). The interaction between perceived apology sincerity and PJC on avoidance was not significant ($b = .112$, $SE = .141$, $p = .431$). The interaction between perceived apology sincerity and PJC on revenge was not significant ($b = -.059$, $SE = .098$, $p = .549$). The interaction between perceived apology sincerity and PJC on reconciliation was not significant ($b = .003$, $SE = .113$, $p = .977$).

H7a: There will be an indirect effect of the perceived apology sincerity on forgiveness-related coping responses through compassion, moderated by both the victim's power and PJC.

The analysis of the moderated mediation revealed that the effect of procedural justice climate (PJC) on compassion was not significant ($b = .289$, $SE = 0.237$, $p = .228$). Additionally, the effect of power on compassion was not significant ($b = .162$, $SE = 0.145$, $p = .270$).

The indirect effect of perceived apology sincerity on forgiveness through compassion was significant across varying levels of PJC and victim power. In conditions of low PJC, the indirect effect was significant at low levels of power ($b = .303$, $BootSE = .217$, 95% CI [0.027, 0.876]), and at average levels of power ($b = .261$, $BootSE = .218$, 95% CI [0.008, 0.845]). In conditions of average PJC, the indirect effect was significant at low levels of power ($b = .343$, $BootSE = .167$, 95% CI [0.052, 0.695]), at average levels of power ($b = .299$, $BootSE = .120$, 95% CI [0.088, 0.558]), and at high levels of power ($b = .255$, $BootSE$

= .150, 95% *CI* [0.009, 0.599]). In conditions on high PJC, there were no statistically significant indirect effects, regardless of the levels of power (low, medium, high).

The indirect effect of perceived apology sincerity on avoidance through compassion was not statistically significant across all the levels of PJC and victim power (low, average, high). In conditions of average PJC (0.00) and average levels of power (0.00) the indirect effect was not significant ($b = -.193$, $BootSE = .131$, 95% *CI* [-0.435, 0.083]). Across all conditions, the confidence intervals included zero, indicating no significant mediation of compassion on avoidance.

The indirect effect of perceived apology sincerity on revenge through compassion was not statistically significant across the levels of PJC and victim power. In conditions of average PJC (0.00) and average levels of power (0.00) the indirect effect was not significant ($b = .09$, $BootSE = .076$, 95% *CI* [-0.039, 0.262]). Across all conditions, the confidence intervals included zero, indicating no significant mediation of compassion on revenge.

The indirect effect of perceived apology sincerity on reconciliation through compassion was significant across varying levels of victim power and in average or high PJC, however not in conditions of low PJC. In conditions of average PJC, the indirect effect was significant at low levels of power ($b = .389$, $BootSE = .156$, 95% *CI* [0.079, 0.697]), at average levels of power ($b = .340$, $BootSE = .123$, 95% *CI* [0.108, 0.597]), and at high levels of power ($b = .290$, $BootSE = .173$, 95% *CI* [0.012, 0.692]). In conditions of high PJC, the indirect effect was significant only at average levels of power ($b = .422$, $BootSE = .183$, 95% *CI* [0.043, 0.759]), and at high levels of power ($b = .365$, $BootSE = .177$, 95% *CI* [0.026, 0.719]).

H7b: There will be an indirect effect of the perceived apology sincerity on forgiveness-related coping responses through anger, moderated by both the victims perceived power and PJC.

The analysis of the moderated mediation revealed that the effect of procedural justice climate (PJC) on anger was not significant ($b = .136$, $SE = 0.257$, $p = .601$). Additionally, the effect of victim power on anger was not significant ($b = -.196$, $SE = 0.157$, $p = .218$).

The indirect effect of perceived apology sincerity on forgiveness through anger was not significant in neither varying level of low, average, and/or high PJC and low, average, and/or high victim power. At average PJC (.000) and average victim power (.000) there was no significant indirect effect ($b = .016$, $BootSE = .057$, 95% *CI* [-.077, .187]).

The indirect effect of perceived apology sincerity on avoidance through anger was not statistically significant across the levels of PJC and victim power. In conditions of average PJC (0.00) and average levels of power (0.00) the indirect effect was not significant ($b = -.113$, $BootSE = .086$, 95% $CI [-0.315, 0.009]$). Across all conditions, the confidence intervals included zero, indicating no significant mediation of compassion on avoidance.

The indirect effect of perceived apology sincerity on revenge through anger was not statistically significant across the levels of PJC and victim power.

For example, in conditions of average PJC (0.00) and average levels of power (0.00) the indirect effect was not significant ($b = -.059$, $BootSE = .053$, 95% $CI [-0.19, 0.01]$). Across all conditions, the confidence intervals included zero, indicating no significant mediation of anger on revenge.

The indirect effect of perceived apology sincerity on reconciliation through anger was not statistically significant across the levels of PJC and victim power. In conditions of average PJC (0.00) and average levels of power (0.00) the indirect effect was not significant ($b = -.038$, $BootSE = .045$, 95% $CI [-0.138, 0.04]$). Across all conditions, the confidence intervals included zero, indicating no significant mediation of anger on reconciliation.

Discussion

RQ1: “To what extent does the presence of an apology influence an individuals’ forgiveness-related coping responses (forgiveness, reconciliation, revenge, and/or avoidance), and to what extent is this relationship moderated by the procedural justice climate of the organization?”

The main goal was to explore the impact of an apology on an individuals coping responses mediated by their emotional responses, and how the procedural justice climate of the organisation moderates this relationship.

The correlation coefficients in table 1 provide a preliminary confirmation of the variable relations. Specifically emotional responses, indicated that higher levels of compassion are associated to higher levels of forgiveness and reconciliation, with lower levels of avoidance. Whereas higher levels of anger are associated with lower levels of forgiveness and reconciliation, and with higher levels of revenge and avoidance.

The first study’s findings provide several insights for this research question. The findings showed that the presence of an apology significantly increased forgiveness compared to conditions where no apology was given, as seen in figure 3. The impact of an

apology had a higher influence than the PJC on influencing forgiveness, as individuals are more likely to forgive after receiving an apology, even in organisation with low PJC, as shown in figure 4. However, this effect did not extend to revenge, avoidance, and reconciliation, which were unaffected by the impact of an apology (present versus absent) as seen in table 2. Other factors such as the transgressor and offender relationship might explain the ineffectiveness of an apology on forgiveness, as apologies from high-valued transgressors have been found to have weaker effects (Forster et al., 2021). Another possible explanation, could be that the internal attributions to the received apology might be more influential on coping responses than just the matter of having received an apology (Tomlinson et al., 2004).

In line with my hypotheses, the moderated-mediation results did not support hypothesis 1, indicating that the presence of an apology does not statistically have a significant direct effect on coping responses such as forgiveness, avoidance, revenge, and reconciliation. Despite the models overall strong fit, the direct effect is not significant, suggesting that other factors may be more influential. For example, workplace environment or hierarchy of job roles may be more influential in predicting certain coping responses (Weiner, 1986). Moreover, not all apologies are effective, as both verbal and non-verbal cues can influence the perception of an apology, which might explain why hypothesis 1 is not supported (Ayoko, 2016; Jeter & Brannon, 2017).

Hypothesis 2a is partially supported, as compassion significantly predicted a positive indirect effect of apology on forgiveness and reconciliation, and a negative indirect effect on avoidance. This suggests that higher levels of compassion result in an increase in forgiveness and reconciliation, and a decrease in avoidance. Similarly, Hypothesis 2b is partially supported, as anger significantly predicted an indirect effect of apology on avoidance, revenge, and reconciliation. However, anger had a negative effect on avoidance and revenge, suggesting that an apology reduces revenge and avoidance through a decrease in anger. Whereas, the positive effect on reconciliation, suggests that an apology increases reconciliation by reducing anger. Therefore, there is a mediating effect in the relationship between the impact of an apology on coping responses, indicating that emotional responses do play a significant role in how the presence or absence of an apology affects forgiveness-related responses. This is supported by past research, as emotions have been found to

influence a victims perception of an apology and in turn their willingness to forgive (Hareli & Eisikovits, 2006; Leonard et al., 2011).

Moreover, hypotheses 3 and 4 are not supported. Contrary to the hypothesized moderation, PJC did not significantly moderate the relationship between the impact of an apology and emotional responses and the relationship between the impact of an apology on coping responses. Although the indirect effects of the moderation for anger on avoidance and revenge was positive, and for forgiveness and reconciliation it was negative, the results were not statistically significant, thus the hypothesis is not supported. Compassion was not significantly moderated, however Murphy & Tyler (2008) suggest that happiness can be influenced by the perception of the PJC, which could explain how other positive emotions might be influential in shaping an individuals responses to an apology. Also, justice values of others was strongly correlated to reconciliation, which could be further explored in relation to coping responses after a received apology. Furthermore, this could suggest a practical implication for organisations to focus on emotional management, given the limited influence of the organisations justice procedures and climate. This could include emotion regulation programs that have been found to be effective in conflict resolution (Halperin, 2014). Halperin (2014) suggests that interactive programs can improve emotion management and conflict resolution in young people. This could be further explored for conflict resolution in organisations and across different ages.

RQ2 “To what extent does the perceived apology sincerity influence an individuals’ forgiveness-related coping responses (forgiveness, reconciliation, revenge, and/or avoidance), and to what extent is this relationship moderated by the victims perceived power, and the procedural justice climate of the organization?”

A second study was conducted to further explore the impact of an apology, by looking at the perceived sincerity of a received apology on an individuals coping responses (such as forgiveness, reconciliation, revenge, and/or avoidance) through the mitigation of ones emotions. And further how both the procedural justice climate of the organisation, along with the victim’s power moderates this relationship.

A key correlation between relative offender status and perceived workplace power suggests that as the offender’s status increases, the victims perceived workplace power decreases, implying that the victim tends to feel less empowered in the workplace when the offender is in a higher position of power, and conversely so. Thus, confirming perceived

workplace power as a moderator relative to the offenders status for analysis. Perceived apology sincerity plays an influential role in how an individual respond to an apology across different recalled offenses, in terms of forgiveness, reconciliation, revenge, and avoidance. The correlations in table 3 suggest that higher perceived apology sincerity is associated with higher levels of compassion, lower levels of anger, higher perceived workplace power, and higher procedural justice climates. Moreover, perceived apology sincerity correlates with a decrease in avoidance and an increase in forgiveness and reconciliation, supporting its role in conflict resolution. This is consistent with previous research suggesting that perceived apology sincerity plays an influential role in an individuals coping responses (Ohbuchi et al., 1989).

Even though these correlations were significant, the direct effect of perceived apology sincerity on coping responses was not significant in the moderated-mediation analysis. Thus, hypothesis 1 was not supported. However, trait forgiveness was found to significantly predict forgiveness, suggesting that individual differences in dispositional forgiveness plays a more significant role in individual responses to a transgression, regardless of the perceived sincerity. According to Koutsos, Wertheim, & Kornblum (2008), dispositional forgiveness, along with personality traits and contextual factors play a significant role in predicting forgiveness. This can be a possible explanation as to why perceived sincerity alone does not directly influence forgiveness.

Hypothesis 2a was partially supported, as results suggest that compassion mediates the relationship between perceived apology sincerity and forgiveness-related coping responses, with a positive effect on forgiveness, and reconciliation, and a negative effect on avoidance, but not on revenge. This suggests that an apology perceived as more sincere indirectly increases forgiveness and reconciliation, and decreases avoidance through an increase in compassion. Whereas, hypothesis 2b was strongly supported, as anger mediates the relationship between perceived apology sincerity and forgiveness-related coping responses, with a positive effect on revenge and avoidance, and a negative effect on forgiveness and reconciliation. This suggests that an apology perceived as more sincere indirectly promotes forgiveness and reconciliation, and decreases avoidance and revenge through a decrease in anger. Thus, both hypothesis 2a and 2b show that sincere apologies impact forgiveness-related coping strategies through compassion and anger, corresponding to previous research findings (Ohbuchi et al., 1989).

The moderating role of the victim's perceived power and PJC was not significant in the relationship between perceived apology sincerity and emotional responses (compassion and anger), thus hypotheses 3a, 3b, 3c, 4a and 4b were not supported. This suggests that the relationship between perceived apology sincerity and emotional responses, such as compassion and anger, are independent to the power dynamics and PJC. In figure 5, perceived apology sincerity can be interpreted to increase the victim's compassion towards the transgressor. This relationship is moderate to strong, regardless of the level of victim power as indicated by the slope of the trend lines across the three panels of PJC levels. Whereas in figure 6, as the perceived sincerity of an apology decreases, an increase is seen in anger. In low perceived victim power, higher perceived apology sincerity leads to a strong decrease in anger. Additionally, in low PJC, there may be stronger impact of a more sincere apology in reducing anger. In average power there is also a reduction in anger, but the effect is weaker compared to those in low power. However, in high perceived power, the level of perceived apology sincerity has little impact on reducing anger. Additionally, in high PJC, anger is less dependent on the perceived sincerity of an apology. Across different levels of victim power and PJC, there are different interactions, however these interactions are considered weak. Overall, this suggests that both PJC and victim power do not significantly moderate the relationship between perceived apology sincerity and emotional responses. Furthermore, the implication of this indicates that organisations should focus on the mediation of conflict in relation to the apology and the victims emotions. Research has shown that there is a direct relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict resolution styles (Skordoulis et al., 2020). Thus, focusing on emotions could have a greater impact than focusing on the transgressor-victim power imbalances and the justice procedures of the organisation.

Furthermore, hypotheses 5a and 5b are not supported, as the relationship between emotional responses, including both compassion and anger, was not significantly moderated by PJC. Additionally, hypotheses 6a and 6b were not supported, suggesting that there is no direct effect of perceived apology sincerity on coping responses, moderated by victim power and PJC.

Hypothesis 7b was not supported, however, hypothesis 7a was partially supported, as perceived apology sincerity has an indirect effect on forgiveness and reconciliation through compassion, moderated by both victim power and PJC. The mediation of

compassion is stronger when victims power is low and the PJC is either average or low. However, at high levels of PJC, the indirect effect of apology sincerity on forgiveness through compassion is not significant, regardless of victim's power being high, average, or low. Additionally, compassion mediates the relationship between perceived apology sincerity and reconciliation. However, the strength of this mediation is moderated by levels of victim power and PJC. The results suggest that in high PJC climates, victims of low power may not feel empowered to reconcile even if they feel compassion as a result to a perceived sincere apology. Whereas, in low PJC, sincere apologies may not significantly influence compassion, and further reconciliation is less likely to occur in unfair environments. Bies & tripp (1996) research findings support this, as suggested that apologies lack credibility in perceived unjust contexts, which further fails to elicit compassion and forgiveness.

The practical implication of Study 2's findings is for organisations to give special attention to low power victims who might find it difficult to reconcile after an apology, even in fair procedural climates. Whereas, in considered weak/low PJC, attention should focus on addressing the PJC, as compassion alone may not be enough to resolve the conflict. Moreover, future research could focus on interventions aimed at fostering compassion and reducing anger to be effective in promoting conflict resolutions. Also, future research could explore other mediators and moderators that could better explain the relationship between perceived apology sincerity and coping responses, with a focus on what drives these behaviors. This is relevant and important for organisations, as forgiveness between coworkers predicts positive workplace outcomes such as lower burnout, higher job satisfaction, and higher work engagement, which all further benefit an organisation (Cao et al., 2021).

Limitations and future recommendations

Across both Study 1 and Study 2, there are a few limitations to be considered. Firstly, the sample characteristics and recruitment method might be a limitation of convenience sampling bias. The sample might be biased towards participants who were more familiar with online surveys, as a few participants failed attention checks, which could be due to how the survey appeared online. Future research could potentially include face-to-face interviews.

Additionally, the monetary compensation could have possibly motivated certain individuals to respond differently. As participants voluntarily chose to complete the survey,

this could imply self-selection bias, potentially affecting the results. Moreover, subjective measures were used to measure the perceived apology sincerity, perceived workplace power, and the perceived procedural justice climate, which might relate to biased perceptions. Future research could look into an organisations actual procedural justice regulations to determine the climate and account the justice measures in place. Further research could include the transgressor-victim relationship and its influence on the perceived sincerity of the apology, with the moderation of PJC.

Also, the sample represents individuals from the U.S. workforce, thus may limit generalizability to a broader population, across different cultures and different procedural justice climates around the world. Future research should aim to test the model across different cultures and geographical backgrounds to generalize the findings of different cultural procedural justice climates.

Furthermore, Study 1 used a vignette-based scenario, which might limit the external validity of the findings as their responses do not reflect how they would behave in real-life situations. However, this was countered in Study 2, using a critical incident technique to recall personal experiences. In Study 2, data of those who did not receive an apology was dropped from the study, which can be seen as a limitation due to the sample size reduction and selection bias. The loss of this data might reduce statistical power and limits the scope of Study 2's findings. Future research could then look at the impact of the presence and absence of an apology, through a critical-incident technique.

Conclusion

The purpose of this dissertation was to explore how individuals react to interpersonal offenses at work, in particular in what concerns the potential role of apologies and their perceived sincerity, and how the procedural justice climate and victim's power affecting how they respond to the apology, in terms of emotional responses (compassion, and anger) and forgiveness-related coping responses (forgiveness, avoidance, revenge, and reconciliation). This was explored through two studies, one employing a scenario-based vignette design, and the other through a critical incident technique. The effectiveness of these approaches provided methodological triangulation and generalizability of both hypothetical and real-world settings.

Overall, the results do not match the expectations of previous literature, as Study 1 suggest that to a certain extent the presence of an apology compared to no apology, generally

increases the likelihood of forgiveness, however this effect is not significant when analysed across different coping responses such as forgiveness, avoidance, revenge, and reconciliation. Additionally, the findings suggest that the procedural justice climate does not significantly moderate the relationship between the effect of apology on coping responses, when mediated through emotional responses. However, compassion and anger do play a mediating role on the relationship between an apology and forgiveness-related coping responses, without the moderation of PJC.

Additionally, in line with the second research question, Study 2 results suggest that the perceived sincerity of an apology does not significantly influence one's coping responses, when mediated by emotional responses and moderated by both the procedural justice climate and the victim's perceived workplace power.

Nonetheless, even though the main effects were insignificant, there were a few significant results that are worth noting. In terms of emotional responses, compassion and anger play a crucial role on forgiveness-related coping strategies. Positive emotions such as compassion can facilitate more positive conflict resolutions such as forgiveness and reconciliation, whereas anger tends to reinforce negative conflict responses such as avoidance and revenge. Additionally, the perceived sincerity of an apology can to a certain extent influence levels of forgiveness, reconciliation, revenge, and avoidance. This can be explained through higher perceived sincerity increasing compassion and decreasing anger, which lead to either more positive or negative coping responses. More specifically, the mediation of compassion is stronger in low victim power and average or low PJC, whereas the effect of apology sincerity on forgiveness diminishes in high PJC. Overall, compassion and anger played a significant mediating role on certain forgiveness-related coping responses, without the indirect moderation of the procedural justice climate and the victim's perceived workplace power.

To further understand the implications on these results, future research could explore conflict interventions with emotion regulation tools to facilitate the victims mitigation of their emotions in response to an apology.

Overall, the studies findings are valid for purposes of answering the research questions, and provide an insight into the extent of how PJC and perceived victim power influence the relationship between the impact of an apology and its perceived sincerity on an individual's negative and positive emotional responses and forgiveness-related coping responses.

Further, the findings provide practical implications for organisations in both preventing and mediating workplace conflicts.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Study 1 Questionnaire

CF Study Procedures and Compensation

You are invited to participate in a research study about people's reactions to workplace offenses. The study is being conducted by Claudia Viana as part of her MSc degree requirements, and by Dr. Maria Francisca Saldanha (a faculty member at Católica-Lisbon School of Business and Economics).

The study can be accessed in the next page. It will take about 7 minutes to complete, and pays 1.05 GBP (approximately 1.33 US dollars). Payment will be awarded upon its completion.

Confidentiality and anonymity

To protect your anonymity, you will NOT be asked to provide your name, email, or other potentially identifying information. Instead, you will be asked to enter your Prolific ID. Results will only be analyzed in aggregate form.

The investigators who are part of the research team are the only people who will have access to the data. The data file will be stored in the researchers' computers, which are password protected. However, please note that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed while data are in transit over the internet. The researcher acknowledges that the host of the online survey (Qualtrics) may automatically collect participant data without their knowledge (i.e., IP addresses). Although this information may be provided or made accessible, the researcher will not use or save this information without participants' consent.

The data collected will be used solely for research purposes. With regard to the publication of the study's results in scientific journals and conferences, all data will be anonymous, and it will not be possible to identify your individual answers. Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you can skip questions that you consider sensitive.

Contact

If you have questions about the study or the procedures, please contact Dr. Maria Francisca Saldanha via your Prolific account.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this research project. Your contribution is greatly appreciated.

consent **Consent**

If the preceding information is clear to you, please indicate your consent to participate in this research. By clicking on the "I consent" button below, you understand your rights as a participant and give your consent to participate in this research and to the use of your data

for research and publication purposes. If you do not consent to participate in the research, please stop completing the questionnaire.

I consent (1)

I DO NOT consent (2)

Page Break

PID Please enter your Prolific ID here (please note that this field should auto-fill with the correct ID):

End of Block: Consent form

Start of Block: Scenario 1

S1a Please read the following scenario and imagine that it is actually happening to you. Really try to imagine yourself in the situation.

Please read the scenario extremely carefully. It is important that you fully understand it before moving on to the questions.

Page Break

S1b *Your job*

Imagine that you work at a consultancy company, as a consultant.

Your company

Your company commits to a culture of good treatment of employees. Employees are involved in upper-level decision-making. In fact, you have witnessed on numerous occasions, your manager has always considered others' views before making major decisions, has always applied the rules consistently across employees, and makes sure to base decisions on accurate information. Even then, if employees disapprove of a decision, the manager has shown a willingness to reconsider.

The meeting

In a few days you and your colleagues will have a meeting with the board members of one of the most important clients. During this meeting, your team will present the outcome of a thorough investigation of your client's assets and ways to improve their financial position.

As you and your team are preparing for this meeting, you notice that important

documents, containing the most recent figures on turnover and costs, are missing. These documents are essential for making a correct analysis and acquiring new copies will take a few days at least, setting your progress back considerably.

While the entire team is busy looking for the documents, one of your colleagues, named Alex, says that you are the last person who had them and that you are responsible for the loss and consequent delay. You tell Alex you had nothing to do with the documents. The two of you get into an argument in front of the entire team, and Alex yells, “You are a dirty liar!”

The documents are still missing but Alex has calmed down after a while. When you continue the meeting, Alex offers you an apology and acknowledges the conflict by saying, “I am sorry that I called you a liar, you didn’t deserve it.”

timer1 Timing
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Last Click (2)
Page Submit (3)
Click Count (4)

End of Block: Scenario 1

Start of Block: Scenario 2

S2a Please read the following scenario and imagine that it is actually happening to you. Really try to imagine yourself in the situation.

Please read the scenario extremely carefully. It is important that you fully understand it before moving on to the questions.

Page Break

S2b *Your job*

Imagine that you work at a consultancy company, as a consultant.

Your company

Your company has a culture of poor treatment of employees. Employees are never included in upper-level decision making. In fact, you have witnessed on numerous occasions, your manager rarely considers others’ views before making major decisions, frequently applies rules inconsistently across employees, and never ensures that decisions are based on accurate information. Moreover, if employees disapprove of a decision; the manager has not been willing to reconsider.

The meeting

In a few days you and your colleagues will have a meeting with the board members of one of the most important clients. During this meeting, your team will present the outcome of a thorough investigation of your client's assets and ways to improve their financial position.

As you and your team are preparing for this meeting, you notice that important documents, containing the most recent figures on turnover and costs are missing. These documents are essential for making a correct analysis and acquiring new copies will take a few days at least, setting your progress back considerably.

While the entire team is busy looking for the documents, one of your colleagues, named Alex, says that you are the last person who had them and that you are responsible for the loss and consequent delay. You tell Alex you had nothing to do with the documents. The two of you get into an argument in front of the entire team, and Alex yells, "You are a dirty liar!"

The documents are still missing but Alex has calmed down after a while. When you continue the meeting, Alex offers you an apology and acknowledges the conflict by saying, "I am sorry that I called you a liar, you didn't deserve it."

timer2 Timing
First Click (1)
Last Click (2)
Page Submit (3)
Click Count (4)

End of Block: Scenario 2

Start of Block: Scenario 3

S3a Please read the following scenario and imagine that it is actually happening to you. Really try to imagine yourself in the situation.

Please read the scenario extremely carefully. It is important that you fully understand it before moving on to the questions.

Page Break

S3b Your job

Imagine that you work at a consultancy company, as a consultant.

Your company

Your company commits to a culture of good treatment of employees. Employees are

involved in upper-level decision-making. In fact, you have witnessed on numerous occasions, your manager has always considered others' views before making major decisions, has always applied the rules consistently across employees, and makes sure to base decisions on accurate information. Even then, if employees disapprove of a decision, the manager has shown a willingness to reconsider.

The meeting

In a few days you and your colleagues will have a meeting with the board members of one of the most important clients. During this meeting, your team will present the outcome of a thorough investigation of your client's assets and ways to improve their financial position.

As you and your team are preparing for this meeting, you notice that important documents, containing the most recent figures on turnover and costs, are missing. These documents are essential for making a correct analysis and acquiring new copies will take a few days at least, setting your progress back considerably.

While the entire team is busy looking for the documents, one of your colleagues, named Alex, says that you are the last person who had them and that you are responsible for the loss and consequent delay. You tell Alex you had nothing to do with the documents. The two of you get into an argument in front of the entire team, and Alex yells, "You are a dirty liar!"

The documents are still missing but Alex has calmed down after a while. When you continue the meeting, Alex does not offer you an apology and dismisses the conflict by saying, "Alright, let's table that for now and move on. Let's concentrate on solving the immediate issue of this delay."

timer3 Timing
First Click (1)
Last Click (2)
Page Submit (3)
Click Count (4)

End of Block: Scenario 3

Start of Block: Scenario 4

S4a Please read the following scenario and imagine that it is actually happening to you. Really try to imagine yourself in the situation.

Please read the scenario extremely carefully. It is important that you fully understand it before moving on to the questions.

S4b *Your job*

Imagine that you work at a consultancy company, as a consultant.

Your company

Your company has a culture of poor treatment of employees. Employees are never included in upper-level decision making. In fact, you have witnessed on numerous occasions, your manager rarely considers others' views before making major decisions, frequently applies rules inconsistently across employees, and never ensures that decisions are based on accurate information. Moreover, if employees disapprove of a decision; the manager has not been willing to reconsider.

The meeting

In a few days you and your colleagues will have a meeting with the board members of one the most important clients. During this meeting, your team will present the outcome of a thorough investigation of your client's assets and ways to improve their financial position.

As you and your team are preparing for this meeting, you notice that important documents, containing the most recent figures on turnover and costs are missing. These documents are essential for making a correct analysis and acquiring new copies will take a few days at least, setting your progress back considerably.

While the entire team is busy looking for the documents, one of your colleagues, named Alex, says that you are the last person who had them and that you are responsible for the loss and consequent delay. You tell Alex you had nothing to do with the documents. The two of you get into an argument in front of the entire team, and Alex yells, "You are a dirty liar!"

The documents are still missing but Alex has calmed down after a while. When you continue the meeting, Alex does not offer you an apology and dismisses the conflict by saying, "Alright, let's table that for now and move on. Let's concentrate on solving the immediate issue of this delay."

timer4 Timing
First Click (1)
Last Click (2)
Page Submit (3)
Click Count (4)

End of Block: Scenario 4

Start of Block: Questionnaire

Quest1 Please respond to the following questions about the event you have just read about.

 Page Break

comp Please indicate the extent to which you feel the following when you think about your colleague, Alex.

	1. Not at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4. Moderately (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7. To a great extent (7)
1. Moved (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Softhearted (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Warm (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Compassionate (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Sympathetic (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Tender (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

 Page Break

ang Please indicate the extent to which you feel the following when you think about your colleague, Alex.

	1. Not at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4. Moderately (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7. To a great extent (7)
1. Mad (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Angry (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Pissed off (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Rageful (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

rev How inclined are you to react in the following ways towards your colleague, Alex?

	1. Not at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4. Neutral (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7. To a great Extent (7)
1. I want to make this person pay (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I wish that something bad would happen to this person (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I want this person to get what they deserve (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I want to get even (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I want to see this person hurt and miserable (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

avoid How inclined are you to react in the following ways towards your colleague, Alex?

	1. Not at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4. Neutral (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7. To a great extent (7)
1. I want to keep as much distance between us as possible (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I want to live as if this person doesn't exist, isn't around (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I do not trust this person (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I find it difficult to act warmly towards them (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I want to avoid this person (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. In this item, select option two (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. I want to cut off the relationship with this person (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. I want to withdraw from this person (7)

Page Break

forg Please indicate to what extent the following items apply to you.

	1. Not at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4. Moderately (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7. To a great extent (7)
1. I have forgiven my colleague, Alex (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I have wholeheartedly forgiven my colleague, Alex (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I have fully forgiven my colleague, Alex (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

rec How inclined are you to react in the following ways towards your colleague, Alex?

	1. Not at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4. Moderately (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7. To a great extent (7)
1. I want to give them back a new start, a renewed relationship (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I want to accept their humanness, flaws, and failures (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I want to accept them (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I want to make an effort to be more friendly and concerned (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I want to make amends (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

sev Please indicate to what extent you feel the following about this situation

	1. Not at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4. Moderately (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7. To a great extent (7)
1. This is a serious situation (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I consider this situation to be severe (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

MCapol In this scenario, did Alex apologise to you?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Page Break

MCclimate In this scenario, what was the company's culture of treatment of employees?

- Good/High/Consistent (1)
- Poor/Low/Inconsistent (2)

Page Break

Quest2 Please respond to the following questions about what you generally think, feel or do.

Please respond to each statement based on how you feel in general

	1. Not at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4. Moderately (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7. To a great extent (7)
1. Inspired (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Alert (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Excited (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Enthusiastic (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Determined (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please respond to each statement based on how you feel in general

	1. Not at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4. Moderately (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7. To a great extent (7)
1. Afraid (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Upset (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Nervo us (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Scare d (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Distressed (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

jvOth In this set of questions we are interested in your perceptions of fairness with respect to OTHERS.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Slightly disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Slightly agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
1. People usually use fair procedures in dealing with others (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I feel that people generally use methods that are fair in their evaluations of others (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Regardless of the specific outcomes they receive, people are subjected to fair procedures (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. People are generally subjected to processes that are fair (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. Please
select
option
agree here
(5)

jvSelf In this set of questions, we are interested in your perceptions of fairness with respect to YOURSELF.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Slightly disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Slightly agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
1. People usually use fair procedures in dealing with me (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I feel that people generally use methods that are fair in their evaluations of me (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Regardless of the specific outcomes I receive, I am subjected to fair procedures (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I am generally subjected to processes that are fair (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Questionnaire

Start of Block: Demographics

Quest3 **Please respond to the following questions about yourself.**

gen What is your gender?

- Male (1)
 - Female (2)
 - Non-binary / third gender (3)
 - Prefer not to say (4)
 - Other, please specify (5)
-



age How old are you? (please put as a number, in years)

educ What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- No formal education (1)
 - High school diploma / GED (2)
 - Bachelor's degree (3)
 - Master's degree (4)
 - Doctorate (5)
 - Other (please specify) (6)
-



workE How many years of professional experience do you have? (please enter as a number, in years)

ind In which industry sector do you work?

- Healthcare (1)
- Technology (2)
- Finance (3)
- Education (4)
- Manufacturing (5)
- Services (6)
- Other (please specify) (7)



tenure How long have you been working for your current organisation? (please enter as a number, in years)

Page Break

useData In your honest opinion, should we use your data? (Please note that you will still receive payment for your participation, regardless of how you answer)

Page Break

debrief **Debrief**

Thank you for your participation.

The purpose of this study is to provide an insight into how people react to interpersonal offenses at work, in particular in what concerns the potential role of apologies and the justice climate of the organization on emotional responses and forgiveness coping responses.

Please do not discuss this study with anyone else, as doing so can compromise its scientific integrity.

Again, thank you very much for your time and participation!

End of Block: Demographics

Appendix B: Study 2 Questionnaire

Start of Block: Study Procedures and Compensation

CF Study Procedures and Compensation

You are invited to participate in a research study about people's reactions to workplace offenses. The study is being conducted by Claudia Viana as part of her MSc degree requirements, and by Dr. Maria Francisca Saldanha (a faculty member at Católica-Lisbon School of Business and Economics).

The study can be accessed in the next page. It will take about 9 minutes to complete, and pays 1.35 GBP (approximately 1.71 US dollars). Payment will be awarded upon completion.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

To protect your anonymity, you will NOT be asked to provide your name, email, or other potentially identifying information. Instead, you will be asked to enter your Prolific ID. Results will only be analyzed in aggregate form.

The investigators who are part of the research team are the only people who will have access to the data. The data file will be stored in the researchers' computers, which are password protected. However, please note that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed while data are in transit over the internet. The researcher acknowledges that the host of the online survey (Qualtrics) may automatically collect participant data without their knowledge (i.e., IP addresses). Although this information may be provided or made accessible, the researcher will not use or save this information without participants' consent.

The data collected will be used solely for research purposes. With regard to the publication of the study's results in scientific journals and conferences, all data will be anonymous, and it will not be possible to identify your individual answers. Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you can skip questions that you consider sensitive.

Contact

If you have questions about the study or the procedures, please contact Dr. Maria Francisca Saldanha via your Prolific account.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this research project. Your contribution is greatly appreciated.

Consent **Consent**

If the preceding information is clear to you, please indicate your consent to participate in this research. By clicking on the "I consent" button below, you understand your rights as a participant and give your consent to participate in this research and to the use of your data

for research and publication purposes. If you do not consent to participate in the research, please stop completing the questionnaire.

I consent (1)

I DO NOT consent (2)

Page Break

PID Please enter your Prolific ID here (*please note that this field should auto-fill with the correct ID*):

End of Block: Study Procedures and Compensation

Start of Block: Context Variables

inst1 **Please respond to the following questions about YOUR CURRENT WORK/ORGANIZATION.**

Page Break

Power Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements about your CURRENT work.

	1. Strongly Disagree (1)	2. Disagree (2)	3. Slightly disagree (3)	4. Neither agree nor disagree (4)	5. Slightly Agree (5)	6. Agree (6)	7. Strongly Agree (7)
1. I supervise a large number of subordinates. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I formally manage many other people. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I can provide rewards to others at my own discretion. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I have a great deal of power at work. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I have authority to discipline others when needed. (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. My designated role allows me to control a lot of resources. (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. My job allows me to control access to other people with a great deal of power. (9)

8. I am able to delegate work to others. (10)

Page Break

PJC Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements about your CURRENT organization.
In my organization...

	1. Strongly Disagree (1)	2. Disagree (2)	3. Slightly disagree (3)	4. Neither agree nor disagree (4)	5. Slightly Agree (5)	6. Agree (6)	7. Strongly Agree (7)
1) Consistent rules and procedures are used to make decisions about things that affect our group. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2) Personal motives or biases influence decisions that affect our group. (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3) Decisions that affect our group are made ethically. (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4) Accurate information is used to make decisions. (13)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5) Our input is obtained prior to making decisions. (14)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6) We're given the opportunity to modify decisions that have already been made. (15)

7) The reasons behind the decisions that affect our group are explained. (16)

8) Concern is shown for our rights. (17)

9) There is a real interest in trying to be fair to us as a group. (18)

End of Block: Context Variables

Start of Block: Extent of Apology (filter)

Recall Think back and **recall an incident within the last 1 month where another person offended you in your CURRENT workplace context.**

If you have not been offended by another person within the last 1 month, think about the last time you were offended by another person in your CURRENT work setting.

Please write a small description of the event below, stating what happened between you and the other person.

Please describe the event (in 1 or 2 sentences):

Page Break

inst2 Please respond to the following questions about the event you have just recalled.

Page Break

Apology To what extent did you receive an apology?

- 1) No apology received (1)
 - 2) To a very small extent (2)
 - 3) To a small extent (3)
 - 4) To a moderate extent (4)
 - 5) To a considerable extent (5)
 - 6) To a great extent (6)
 - 7) To a very great extent (7)
-

Page Break

Display This Question:

If To what extent did you receive an apology? != 1) No apology received

sincere Please indicate your agreement with each of the following statement about the apology you have received.

	1. Strongly Disagree (1)	2. Disagree (2)	3. Slightly Disagree (3)	4. Neither agree nor disagree (4)	5. Slightly Agree (5)	6. Agree (6)	7. Strongly Agree (7)
1) The apology they provided was sincere (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2) They sincerely apologised for the incident (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3) They were truly sorry for the harm or ill-will caused to me (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4) They felt genuine remorse for the harm or ill-will caused to me (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Extent of Apology (filter)

Start of Block: Reactions to Event

Comp Please indicate the extent to which you CURRENTLY feel the following when you think about the other person.

	1. Not at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4. Neutral (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7. To a great extent (7)
1. Moved (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Softhearted (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Warm (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Compassionate (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Sympathetic (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Tender (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

Ang Please indicate the extent to which you CURRENTLY feel the following when you think about the other person.

	1. Not at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4. Neutral (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7. To a great extent (7)
1. Mad (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Angry (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Pissed off (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Rageful (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

Rev CURRENTLY, how inclined are you to react in the following ways towards the other person?

	1. Not at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4. Neutral (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7. To a great Extent (7)
1. I want to make this person pay (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I wish that something bad would happen to this person (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I want this person to get what they deserve (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I want to get even (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I want to see this person hurt and miserable (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

Avoid CURRENTLY, how inclined are you to react in the following ways towards the other person?

	1. Not at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4. Neutral (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7. To a great extent (7)
1. I want to keep as much distance between us as possible (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I want to live as if this person doesn't exist, isn't around (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I do not trust this person (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. In this item, select option two (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I find it difficult to act warmly towards them (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. I want to avoid this person (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. I want to cut off the relationship with this person (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. I want to withdraw from this person (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

Forg Please indicate to what extent the following items CURRENTLY apply to you.

	1. Not at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4. Neutral (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7. To a great extent (7)
1. I have forgiven them. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I have wholeheartedly forgiven them. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I have fully forgiven them. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

Rec CURRENTLY, how inclined are you to react in the following ways towards the other person?

	1. Not at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4. Neutral (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7. To a great extent (7)
1. I want to give them back a new start, a renewed relationship. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I want to accept their humanness, flaws, and failures. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I want to accept them. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I want to make an effort to be more friendly and concerned. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I want to make amends (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

sev Please indicate to what extent you feel the following about this situation

	1. Not at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4. Neutral (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7. To a great extent (7)
1. This is a serious situation (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I consider this situation to be severe (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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timeEl How much time has elapsed since the incident you described happened? (in days)

offend Indicate whether the person who offended you was a:

- Subordinate (2)
- Supervisor/Leader/Manager (3)
- Colleague/Peer (4)
- Customer (5)
- Other (please specify): (6)

current Did the recalled event happen in your CURRENT organization?

Yes (1)

No (2)

End of Block: Reactions to Event

Start of Block: Controls

inst3 Please respond to the following questions about what you generally think, feel or do.

Page Break

pAff Please respond to each statement based on how you feel in general

	1. Not at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4. Neutral (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7. To a great extent (7)
1. Inspired (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Alert (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Excited (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Enthusias tic (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Determined (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

nAff Please respond to each statement based on how you feel in general

	1. Not at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4. Neutral (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7. To a great extent (7)
1. Afraid (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Upset (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Nervo us (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Scare d (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Distressed (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

TraitFS Please indicate the extent to which you generally agree with the following statements about yourself.

	1. Strongly Disagree (1)	2. Disagree (2)	3. Slightly Disagree (3)	4. Neither agree nor disagree (4)	5. Slightly Agree (5)	6. Agree (6)	7. Strongly Agree (7)
1) People close to me probably think I hold a grudge too long. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2) I can forgive a friend for almost anything. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3) If someone treats me badly, I treat him or her the same. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4) I try to forgive others even when they don't feel guilty for what they did. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5) I can usually forgive and forget an insult. (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6) I feel bitter about many of my relationships. (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7) Even after I forgive someone, things often come back to me that I resent. (9)

8) There are some things for which I could never forgive even a loved one. (10)

9) I have always forgiven those who have hurt me. (11)

10) I am a forgiving person. (12)

Page Break

jvOth In this set of questions we are interested in your perceptions of fairness with respect to OTHERS.

	1. Strongly disagree (1)	2. Disagree (2)	3. Slightly disagree (3)	4. Neither agree nor disagree (4)	5. Slightly agree (5)	6. Agree (6)	7. Strongly agree (7)
1) People usually use fair procedures in dealing with others (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2) Please respond with slightly agree here (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3) I feel that people generally use methods that are fair in their evaluations of others. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4) Regardless of the specific outcomes they receive, people are subjected to fair procedures. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5) People are generally subjected to processes that are fair. (4)

jvSelf In this set of questions, we are interested in your perceptions of fairness with respect to YOURSELF.

	1. Strongly disagree (1)	2. Disagree (2)	3. Slightly disagree (3)	4. Neither agree nor disagree (4)	5. Slightly agree (5)	6. Agree (6)	7. Strongly agree (7)
1) People usually use fair procedures in dealing with me. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2) I feel that people generally use methods that are fair in their evaluations of me (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3) Regardless of the specific outcomes I receive, I am subjected to fair procedures. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4) I am generally subjected to processes that are fair. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Controls

Start of Block: Demographic

inst4 **Please respond to the following questions about yourself.**

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gen What is your gender?

- Male (1)
 - Female (2)
 - Non-binary / third gender (3)
 - Prefer not to say (4)
 - Other, please specify (5)
-



age How old are you? (please enter as a number)

educ What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- No formal education (1)
 - High school diploma / GED (2)
 - Bachelor's degree (3)
 - Master's degree (4)
 - Doctorate (5)
 - Other (please specify) (6)
-



workE How many years of professional experience do you have? (please enter as a number)

indust In which industry sector do you work?

- Healthcare (1)
- Technology (2)
- Finance (3)
- Education (4)
- Manufacturing (5)
- Services (6)
- Other (please specify) (7)



tenure How long have you been working for your current organisation? (in years) (please enter as a number)

useData In your honest opinion, should we use your data? (Please note that you will still receive payment for your participation, regardless of how you answer)

End of Block: Demographic

Start of Block: Debrief

Debrief **Debrief**

Thank you for your participation.

The purpose of this study is to understand how people react to interpersonal offenses at work, in particular in what concerns the potential role of apologies, power, and justice climate of the organization on emotional responses and forgiveness coping responses.

Please do not discuss this study with anyone else, as doing so can compromise its scientific integrity.

Again, thank you very much for your time and participation!

End of Block: Debrief

Appendix C: Study 1, Tukey HSD Test for Condition Comparisons

Appendix Table 1. Tukey HSD Test Results for Mean Avoidance and Forgiveness

(I) Condition	(J) Condition	Avoidance			Forgiveness		
		MD (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. 95% CI	MD (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. 95% CI
Condition 1	Condition 2	.43369	.30508	.489 [-.3630, 1.2304]	-.54779	.41292	.548 [-1.6261, .5305]
	Condition 3	-.37872	.32307	.646 [-1.2224, .4650]	.66349	.43728	.431 [-.4784, 1.8054]
	Condition 4	-.33880	.30508	.684 [-1.1355, .4579]	.54480	.41292	.553 [-.5335, 1.6231]
Condition 2	Condition 1	-.43369	.30508	.489 [-1.2304, .3630]	.54779	.41292	.548 [-.5305, 1.6261]
	Condition 3	-.81241	.33286	.076 [-1.6817, .0568]	1.21128*	.45052	.041 [.0348, 2.3878]
	Condition 4	-.77249	.31542	.074 [-1.5962, .0512]	1.09259	.42692	.057 [-.0223, 2.2075]
Condition 3	Condition 1	.37872	.32307	.646 [-.4650, 1.2224]	-.66349	.43728	.431 [-1.8054, .4784]
	Condition 2	.81241	.33286	.076 [-.0568, 1.6817]	-	.45052	.041 [-2.3878, -.0348]
	Condition 4	.03992	.33286	.999 [-.8293, .9092]	-.11869	.45052	.994 [-1.2952, 1.0578]
Condition 4	Condition 1	.33880	.30508	.684 [-.4579, 1.1355]	-.54480	.41292	.553 [-1.6231, .5335]
	Condition 2	.77249	.31542	.074 [-.0512, 1.5962]	-1.09259	.42692	.057 [-2.2075, .0223]
	Condition 3	-.03992	.33286	.999 [-.9092, .8293]	.11869	.45052	.994 [-1.0578, 1.2952]

Note: * $p < .05$ indicates a significant mean difference. MD = Mean Difference.

Appendix D: Study 2 Correlation Matrix

Appendix Table 2. Correlation Matrix of All 22 Key Variables

#	Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
1	Power	–	.605*	.330*	.352*	.018	.264*	-.117	.132	.261*	.462*	.280*	-.195	.035	.166	.090	.264*	-.104	.106	.002	.177	.186	-.281*
2	PJC	.605**	–	.330*	.440*	-.044	.115	-.276*	.321*	.352*	.180	.298*	-.118	.055	.221	.205	.195	.241*	-.146	-.184	-.102	-.081	-.199
3	Sincere	.330**	.330*	–	.664*	-.258*	.035	-.403*	.432*	.416*	.328*	.385*	-.331*	.208	.208	.319*	.616*	-.019	.096	.216	-.089	-.017	.064
4	Compassion	.352**	.440*	.664*	–	.513*	-.042	-.644*	.683*	.688*	.221	.376*	-.226	.301*	.349*	.337*	.406*	-.079	-.076	.102	-.114	-.237*	.045
5	Anger	.018	-.044	-.258*	.513*	–	.497*	.690*	.556*	.538*	.253*	-.093	.343*	.464*	-.278*	.356*	-.041	.077	.134	.060	.147	.210	.006
6	Revenge	.264*	.115	.035	-.042	.497*	–	.406*	.332*	-.198	.494*	-.029	.238*	.520*	.003	-.080	.122	.033	.157	.096	.060	.251*	-.040
7	Avoidance	-.117	-.276*	.403*	.644*	.690*	.406*	–	.688*	.762*	.187	-.183	.220	.488*	-.276*	.356*	-.144	.023	.097	.043	.143	.295*	-.041
8	Forgiveness	.132	.321*	.432*	.683*	.556*	.332*	.688*	–	.757*	-.067	.387*	.320*	.547*	.447*	.336*	.228	.039	-.106	.118	-.206	.270*	-.025
9	Reconciliation	.261*	.352*	.416*	.688*	.538*	-.198	.762*	.757*	–	-.065	.219	-.283*	.501*	.391*	.424*	.118	.044	-.025	.030	-.108	.266*	-.017

#	Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
10	Severity	.462**	.180	.328*	.221	.253*	.494*	.187	-.067	-.065	-	.247*	-.086	-.096	.052	.053	.482*	.203	.139	.145	.065	.065	-.021
11	Positive Affect	.280*	.298*	.385*	.376*	-.093	-.029	-.183	.387*	.219	.247*	-	.337*	.329*	.386*	.343*	.233	-.029	.055	.203	-.074	.021	-.061
12	Negative Affect	-.195	-.118	.331*	-.226	.343*	.238*	.220	.320*	-.283*	-.086	.337*	-	.348*	-.221	-.191	-.158	.023	-.029	.042	.071	-.037	-.006
13	TF	.035	.055	.208	.301*	.464*	.520*	.488*	.547*	.501*	-.096	.329*	.348*	-	.565*	.456*	.121	-.049	-.021	.076	-.082	-.033	-.088
14	Justice Values (Other)	.166	.221	.208	.349*	-.278*	.003	-.276*	.447*	.391*	.052	.386*	-.221	.565*	-.672*	.141	-.107	-.034	.146	-.084	.038	-.217	
15	Justice Values (Self)	.090	.205	.319*	.337*	.356*	-.080	.356*	.336*	.424*	.053	.343*	-.191	.456*	.672*	-	.166	-.015	-.202	.063	-.172	-.100	-.069
16	Apology Extent	.264*	.195	.616*	.406*	-.041	.122	-.144	.228	.118	.482*	.233	-.158	.121	.141	.166	-	.064	.253*	.227	.087	-.067	.012
17	Time Elapsed	-.104	-.241*	-.019	-.079	-.077	-.033	.023	-.039	-.044	.203	-.029	-.023	-.049	-.107	-.015	-.064	-	.109	.163	.048	.242*	.005
18	Age	.106	-.146	.096	-.076	.134	.157	.097	-.106	-.025	.139	.055	-.029	-.021	.244	-.202	.253*	.109	-	.236*	.729*	.507*	.007
19	EL	.002	-.184	.216	.102	.060	.096	-.043	-.118	-.030	.145	.203	-.042	.076	.146	.063	.227	.163	.236*	-	-.022	.249*	.143
20	PE	.177	-.102	-.089	-.114	.147	.060	.143	-.206	-.108	.065	-.074	.071	-.082	-.084	-.172	.087	.048	.729*	-	-	.390*	-.130
21	Tenure	.186	-.081	-.017	-.237*	.210	.251*	.295*	-.270*	-.266*	.065	.021	-.037	-.033	.038	-.100	-.067	.242*	.507*	.249*	.390*	-	-.165
22	ROS	-.281*	-.199	.064	.045	.006	-.040	-.041	-.025	-.017	-.021	-.061	-.006	-.088	-.217	-.069	.012	.005	.007	-.143	-.130	-.165	-

*Note. N = 70. TF, Trait Forgiveness; EL, education level; PE, professional experience (in years); ROS, relative offender status (low/equal/high). **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). Non-parametric correlations were run for relative offender status and extent of apology.*

