

**DOCTORAL (PHD) DISSERTATION**

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**The Impact of Sexual Orientation and  
Non-Traditional Identity Content on the  
Adoption of Gender-Specific Attitudes**

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Non-Traditional Identity Content on the  
Adoption of Gender-Specific Attitudes**

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### ADATLAP a doktori értekezés nyilvánosságra hozatalához

#### I. A doktori értekezés adatai

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Kelt: Budapest, 2023.08.07.

a doktori értekezés szerzőjének aláírása

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*To my Family*

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## Table of content

Abstract.....	4
Introduction to gender equality research .....	6
Gender roles, stereotypes, and expectations .....	6
Attitudes towards Women and Men .....	11
Social atmosphere .....	17
Aims and overview of the studies.....	20
Study 1: Chained together or cooperate? The effect of the COVID-19 crisis on couples' division of labour.....	22
Research Aims and Hypotheses .....	23
Materials and Methods .....	24
Participants .....	24
Measures and Procedure .....	25
Results.....	25
Descriptive statistics .....	25
Hypothesis testing .....	26
Discussion .....	28
Limitations .....	31
Study 2: The Role of Sexual Orientation and the Perceived Threat Posed by Men in the Acceptance of Sexism.....	31
Research Aims and Hypotheses .....	33
Materials and Methods.....	35
Participants .....	35
Measures and Procedure .....	35
Results.....	36
Discussion .....	39
Limitations .....	41
Study 3: If you can dream it, you can do it!—The Role of Sexual Orientation in Preferences Towards Boys' and Girls' Career Orientation and Gendered Behaviour ....	42
Research Aims and Hypotheses .....	45
Study 3A.....	46
Materials and Methods.....	46
Participants .....	46
Measures and Procedure .....	46

Results .....	47
Factor structure .....	47
Descriptive statistics .....	48
Hypothesis testing.....	49
Discussion of Study 3A.....	53
Limitations of Study 3A.....	54
Study 3B.....	55
Materials and Methods .....	56
Participants .....	56
Measures and Procedure.....	56
Results .....	58
Manipulation checks.....	58
Descriptive statistics .....	58
Hypothesis testing.....	59
Discussion of Study 3B.....	63
Limitations of Study 3B .....	65
General Discussion of Study 3 .....	66
General Limitations of Study 3 .....	69
Study 4: Attitudes towards women’s authority roles in the light of sexual orientation and sexist beliefs .....	70
Research Aims and Hypotheses .....	73
Materials and Methods .....	74
Participants .....	74
Measures and Procedure.....	75
Results .....	76
Descriptive statistics .....	76
Hypothesis testing.....	76
Discussion .....	78
Limitations .....	81
Study 5: The power of liberal feminist identification and the importance of gender awareness in the fight for gender equality .....	82
Research Aims and Hypotheses .....	86
Materials and Methods .....	87
Participants .....	87
<i>Hungarian sample</i> .....	87



<i>English sample</i> .....	88
Measures and Procedure .....	88
<i>Hungarian sample</i> .....	88
<i>English sample</i> .....	89
Results .....	90
Descriptive statistics .....	90
Hypothesis testing .....	92
Discussion .....	95
Limitations .....	98
General Discussion and Implications .....	99
Conclusions.....	106
References.....	109
Appendix A .....	131
Appendix B .....	135

## Abstract

The goal of my dissertation is to investigate the role of sexual orientation and non-traditional identity content in relation to gender-specific attitudes. Specifically, I was interested in the effect of sexual orientation and non-traditional identity content on the level of perceived threat, fear of backlash, acceptance of different gender ideologies (i.e., ambivalent sexism, ambivalence towards men, modern sexism, and neosexism) and attitudes (i.e., social role attitudes and liberal feminist attitudes), as well as on the acceptance of women's authority roles and engagement with collective action for gender equality, while taking into account the impact of social environment and the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy. I conducted five correlational and one experimental study. In Study 1 (N = 330), I investigated how the division of unpaid work among straight couples changed during the COVID-19 pandemic, taking into account the massive shift to work from home and attitudes towards social roles. I found that while men reported to contribute to childcare (but not housework) more than before the pandemic, women did not experience a similar shift in the case of their partners. In Study 2 (N = 695), we compared the attitudes of gay and straight people towards women and men, taking into account the level of perceived threat (by the dominant group). Our results showed that lesbian women accepted sexism the least, but they felt the most threatened and showed the greatest hostility towards men. Gay men, in contrast, although less accepting of benevolent sexism and benevolent attitudes towards men, supported hostile sexism at least as much as straight men. Study 3 consisted of a correlational and an experimental study (N<sub>Study 3A</sub> = 448, N<sub>Study 3B</sub> = 704), the aim of which was to investigate how modern sexism, fear of social backlash and the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy influence the attitudes of people of different sexual orientations regarding the gendered behaviour and preferences of their (prospective) children. We found that gay people, in general, resisted traditional expectations, and bisexual people were the most affected by the fear of social backlash. The expectations of straight people were typically traditional, except when they perceived the gender hierarchy as changeable because then they preferred high-status (masculine) occupations for their (prospective) daughters. Study 4 (N = 471) focused on the question of whether ambivalent sexist or neosexist attitudes affect the acceptance of women's authority roles among people of different sexual orientations. According to the results, among straight people, hostile sexism and neosexism predicted a lower level of

acceptance of women's authority roles. The latter even had the same effect among LGB people, although LGB people were fundamentally less accepting of neosexist attitudes. The last study, Study 5 ( $N_{\text{Hungarian}} = 469$ ,  $N_{\text{English}} = 538$ ), investigated the role of sexual orientation in relation to gender-specific attitudes and experiences across cultures. Further, whether everyday experiences of discrimination (based on gender or sexual orientation), ambivalent attitudes towards men and liberal feminist attitudes affect willingness to take collective action for gender equality. To test the importance of the social climate, I compared the responses of Hungarian and English LGB and straight people. The basis for comparing these two particular nations was that, while gender-traditional ideas prevail in Hungary, England is much more progressive concerning gender issues and supports women's equality efforts at the governmental level. According to the results, liberal feminist attitudes played an important role in the commitment to collective action in the case of both nations, while gender essentialism deterred both Hungarian and English people from engaging with collective action for gender equality.

The findings of this dissertation unravel a complex interplay between sexual orientation, non-traditional identity content, and gender-specific attitudes. Results showed that if traditional gender roles are deeply ingrained, not even a pandemic that turns daily routine upside down can lead to fundamental changes in non-paid labour distribution in heterosexual relationships. The studies also revealed that sexual minority groups, although on a lower level than straight people, are also upholding gender-prejudiced attitudes, and these attitudes influence their relation not only towards the dominant group (that is, men) but also towards women and their authority roles. However, perceiving (in the case of men, recognising) the threat men pose to women can alter these associations significantly, adding another layer of complexity to the issue. It was also revealed that people's attitudes towards gender roles, particularly in the context of parenting, are significantly influenced by their perceptions of how stable the gender hierarchy is. Thus, the results draw attention to the importance of the social atmosphere. Even more so because the willingness to take collective action fuelled by experiences of discrimination, too, depended on the sociocultural context. Furthermore, the findings also reflect on the importance of non-traditional identity content, such as liberal feminism, by underscoring the role of liberal feminist attitudes in spurring collective action for gender equality.

## **Introduction to gender equality research**

Gender inequality presents women with difficulties that burden their everyday lives and have been hindering their career, political and economic opportunities since thousands of years. Determined and intelligent scientists such as Vilma Hugonnai, Rosalind Franklin, and Hedy Lamarr, or talented artists such as Valéria Dénes, Lavinia Fontana, Artemisia Gentileschi, Elizabeth Siddal, Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette and Antonia Brico lived in the shadow of men, and were robbed of the recognition they deserved. And although attitudes towards women have changed significantly in the last hundred years, we are still far from the realisation of gender equality; gender-based, structural discrimination still leaves a heavy mark on women's daily and professional lives.

We have already come a long way towards gender equality. Yet, the COVID-19 pandemic has reversed the previous trend, and thus, according to the latest estimations, without investment, it can take up to 286 years until the most significant factor in the current disparity, namely the economic gender gap will be closed (Armstrong, 2021; United Nations [UN], 2022). This is the most significant area in which the gender gap persists and where it is the slowest to close, mainly due to the different social roles of women and men and the gender stereotypes that they learn from early childhood.

### **Gender roles, stereotypes, and expectations**

In order to tackle gender inequalities, we first have to understand the underlying attitudes and ideologies in their complexity fully; Attitudes that undermine women and perpetuate gender—and, at a broader scale: sexual orientation-based—imbalances.

One of the fundamental ideologies that keep women in lower status and subordinated positions—compared to men—is gender essentialism. Gender essentialism refers to the belief that gender is a discrete and dichotomous social category, with individuals being classified as either a woman or a man but rejects the idea that a person can have both traits or can be androgynous or non-binary. This belief also posits that gender is inherent and biologically determined and cannot be changed (Gelman, 2003; Smiler & Gelman, 2008). Although these essentialist views of the sexes are still widely popular, contemporary science does not support these essentialist views (Fine, 2010; Hyde, 2014; Joel, 2012). Further, gender essentialism was found to justify existing societal inequalities (Yzerbyt et al., 1997), rather than simply describing how women

and men differ. Moreover, even just being exposed to theories that claim sex differences to be biologically based increases acceptance of gender inequality (Morton et al., 2009). Nevertheless, research suggests that gender is likely one of the earliest and most salient social categories (Risman & Davis, 2013; Shutts, 2013), and as such, gender essentialism is considered a fundamental aspect of human social categorisation.

However, feminists<sup>6</sup> in the 1970s started to popularise the term ‘gender’ to distinguish those aspects of male and female roles, behaviours, and preferences that are socially constructed rather than a result of biology. Their goal was to challenge the common belief that male-female differences are ‘natural’ and, therefore, unchanging (and unchangeable). Later, feminist sociologists further argued that gender should be understood as a social system that allocates resources, roles, power, and entitlements based on whether a person or practice is perceived as male or female, masculine or feminine (Ridgeway & Correll 2004). They pointed out that most existing gender systems are highly hierarchical, with male or masculine traits—usually—being privileged over female or feminine traits (Heise et al. 2019).

Consequently, a shift was made in how women and men are seen and what people attribute the differences between them. While gender essentialism puts the emphasis on the biological differences between sexes, gender role theory (Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Diekmann, 2003; Eagly et al., 2004; Wood & Eagly, 2002) see the different roles men and women fulfil in societies as the source of gender inequalities. According to this theory, the biological differences and the societal structure interact with each other, and these ‘biological interactions’ result in disparities in how labour is shared between men and women, which then lead to status imparities. Women’s opportunities to gain status are primarily restricted because of birth-giving and childcare duties. On the one hand, they fall out of the labour market for an extended period of time (usually varying between 1-3 years depending on the pregnancy conditions and availability of childcare facilities), leading to a severe disadvantage compared to their male counterparts. On the other hand, since women are perceived as the primary caretakers,

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<sup>6</sup> Feminism is twofold. On the one hand, it is a system of views that recognises the principle of gender equality. On the other hand, it is a social movement that motivates collective actions for practically implementing gender equality. Feminism has a broad spectrum of views and attitudes. Different feminist perspectives (Henley et al. 1998) thematise issues of gender inequality in various ways due to their different focus and political embeddedness. The most known trends are represented by liberal, radical and socialist/Marxist feminism (Henley et al. 1998).

mothers are perceived to prioritise their children over their careers at all costs, leading to the assumption that women will never be fully committed to their job after becoming mothers. This assumption inhibits or even sets back women's progress on the career ladder.

In addition to being their children's primary caretakers, women are also expected to spend more time on household duties than men. This so-called 'second shift'—that is, childcare and household duties and the mental workload these invoke—can take up to another full-time job (about 40 hours a week) for women, taking away time and opportunities from engaging with the higher status positions that are more time-demanding (see for example Fodor et al., 2020). As a result, in addition to creating division between women's and men's status in society, social roles lead to differences regarding what kind of mental abilities and skills are attributed to women and men. Although feminists emphasise that most gender differences derive from socialisation, the belief that men and women are innately different persists partly due to gender stereotypes.

Gender stereotypes are cultural beliefs about the characteristics and behaviours deemed appropriate for members of a particular gender (Ellemers, 2018). There are three types of gender stereotypes: descriptive, prescriptive, and proscriptive stereotypes. Descriptive stereotypes describe characteristics that are thought to be typical of a particular gender. For example, women are typically perceived to be more anxious and self-aware than men, while men are commonly seen as more forgetful and extroverted than women (Prentice & Carranza, 2002). Although those violating the descriptive gender stereotypes might surprise others, they generally do not provoke backlash (Gill, 2004). Prescriptive stereotypes describe how members of a particular gender should behave. For example, men are supposed to be agentic (e.g., dominant, assertive), while women should be communal (e.g., caring, patient, and interested in children; Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Rudman et al., 2012b). Finally, proscriptive stereotypes describe how members of a particular gender should not behave. For example, women ought not to behave dominantly (e.g., by being rebellious or stubborn), and men ought not to display weakness (e.g., by being yielding or emotional; Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Rudman et al., 2012b). Violating prescriptive and proscriptive stereotypes can result in social and economic penalties, commonly referred to as backlash. Research has found that

even young children who violate gender stereotypes may experience backlash from adults (Diekman & Goodfriend, 2006; Rudman et al., 2012a).

These stereotypes promote dualistic beliefs about men and women in social perception and largely determine how suitable men and women are perceived to be for different occupations. Since gender stereotypes imply that women possess communal traits (e.g., compassion, kindness) but lack agentic traits (e.g., ambition, competitiveness), they lead to the belief that women are not capable of performing traditionally masculine jobs that require agentic traits, or at least they are less competent at them compared to their male counterparts (Carli et al., 2016; Diekman et al., 2017; Koenig & Eagly, 2014; Starr, 2018; van Veelen & Derks, 2020). As a result of these stereotypes, there is still a low representation of women in fields such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), despite an increasing number of women entering these fields. This is partly due to the negative discourse surrounding women's ability to succeed in these occupations compared to men (Carli et al., 2016; Diekman et al., 2017; El-Hout et al., 2021; Master & Meltzoff, 2020). These negative messages about women's aptitude for STEM careers begin at a young age, with girls being discouraged from pursuing interests in science and technology due to the belief that they lack innate talent, while boys are encouraged to pursue STEM careers due to their supposed natural analytical abilities (Eccles, 2015; Raffaelli & Ontai, 2004).

However, men are not immune either to gender-based judgments when they take jobs that are not traditionally held by their own gender. Previous study (Heilman & Wallen, 2010) found that male employees were viewed as 'wimpy' and received less respect when they worked in female-typed jobs compared to men who worked in male-dominated fields. This negative evaluation of men in female-typed jobs is due to their perceived violation of gender stereotypes, similar to the negative perceptions of women who work in male-dominated fields (Froehlich et al., 2020; Manzi, 2019).

Similarly, one of the reasons why gay people must face severe prejudice and discrimination may lie in gender stereotypes. More precisely, Lippa (2007, 2008) proposed that a potential explanation for perceived differences in displaying gender roles—that then lead to discrimination—between gay and straight people may lie in the stereotypes associated with gay people. He found that straight people tend to hold stereotypes that gay men are more feminine than straight men and that gay men

oftentimes choose to work in female-dominated occupations. Similarly, straight people tend to assume that lesbian women are highly masculine—compared to straight women who are highly feminine—and oftentimes work in male-dominated occupations. While emphasising that these stereotypes are overgeneralisations, Lippa (2005, 2008) states that they do contain a kernel of truth. Thus, the gender-shift hypothesis, which proposes that gay people tend to hold gender roles that are closer to an androgynous scale range rather than traditional gender roles, appears to be valid (e.g., Allen & Robson, 2020; Clarke & Arnold, 2017). In addition, gay and lesbian people tend to hold these same stereotypes about themselves as straight people do (Clark & Arnold, 2017).

Thus, gender stereotypes, in addition to providing guidance on how women and men should behave, also inform whether women and men are competent to fulfil certain roles and positions. Besides, gender stereotypes are informed by social norms that relate to the ideally displayed masculinity and femininity (e.g., regarding temperament, physical attributes, occupation/role suitability, etc.). It means that while stereotypes inform people's assumptions about someone based on their gender, social norms govern the accepted and expected behaviour of men and women (Kagesten, 2016; Kite et al., 2008; Rudman & Glick, 2008).

Gender norms are the social rules and expectations that serve the function of keeping the gender hierarchy intact. However, norms are but one element of the gender system, along with gender roles, gender socialisation and gendered power relations (Koudenburg et al., 2020). Gender norms are learned in childhood through socialisation with parents and peers (Tenenbaum & Leaper 2002) and are then reinforced—or challenged—in the family and broader social context. Broader social contexts may include education, media, religion, employment, and other social institutions. These norms reflect and perpetuate unequal power relations that usually disadvantage women (Connell, 2014). Moreover, gender norms are embedded in and reproduced through institutions, with policies, regulations, decision-making processes, and biases reflecting a given gender system and reinforcing gender norms for those whose lives intersect with those institutions. Furthermore, gender norms are produced and reproduced through social interaction as people engage in practices that signify, align with, or challenge various notions of femininity or masculinity (West & Zimmerman, 1987).



Gender norms, therefore, have a crucial role in upholding gender imparities. For this reason, liberal feminism advocates that changing gender norms is essential to achieve gender equality. It emphasises that we can only achieve gender equality through political and legal reform within the framework of liberal democracy. It advocates for individual rights, justice, and equal opportunities, arguing that differences between women and men are not based on biology but socially constructed roles and expectations (Enyew & Mihrete, 2018). Therefore, liberal feminism predicts that gender equality can be achieved by changing these social norms and removing legal and social barriers to women's participation in all areas of public life. It also emphasises the importance of individual choice and autonomy, suggesting that women should have the same rights and opportunities as men, including the same educational and employment opportunities (Cornwall et al., 2009). Liberal feminism, therefore, has a unique view on how gender equality can be achieved which differs from other feminist directions, for example, radical feminism, which emphasises the fundamental restructuring of society to dismantle patriarchy and achieve gender equality or from socialist feminism, which combines the principles of Marxism with feminist theory, arguing that both the capitalist class structure and the patriarchal system contribute to women's oppression, so both must be overthrown (Freeman, 1990).

### **Attitudes towards Women and Men**

Gender norms and stereotypes reinforce the division regarding people's attitudes towards women and men. Besides reinforcing gender stereotypes, gender norms and gender role expectations lead to gendered prejudices, like sexism, that conserve the power imbalances between men and women and uphold the patriarchal social structure. Sexism is one primary means of maintaining social differences between women and men. This collective term includes gender stereotypes and a system of attributions and attitudes that determine the interaction, attitudes and behaviour of men and women (Glick & Fiske, 2001; Ridgeway, 2011).

Sexism has several forms. Its most well-known form is old-fashioned sexism that is overtly adversarial towards women (and therefore measured by statements like, for example, "Women are not as smart as men"; Swim et al., 1995) and thus easy to recognise even to those unfamiliar with gender issues. However, since women entered the labour market in high proportions in the 20th century, women's social roles and status fundamentally changed (Diekmann & Eagly, 2000;

Diekman & Goodfriend, 2006), so overt forms of sexism became less accepted. Alas, the shift in expressing sexism does not mean its presence is eradicated. Modern forms of sexism usually come in subtle ways that make them harder to notice and, thus, tackle. While ambivalent sexism (Glick & Fiske, 1996) is getting to be recognised by a wider audience, modern sexism (Swim et al., 1995) and its extreme form, neosexism (Tougas et al., 1995), are much less recognised—and examined.

Ambivalent sexism consists of two components: hostile and benevolent sexism, which, although seemingly opposite to each other, are two sides of the same coin and equally maintain the patriarchal system (Glick & Fiske, 1996, 1997; Glick et al., 2000, 2004; Szabó, 2009). Compared to benevolent sexism, hostile sexism's link to men's power is more prominent. Hostile sexism can be characterised as “an adversarial view of gender relations in which women are perceived as seeking to control men, whether through sexuality or feminist ideology” (Glick & Fiske, 2001, p 109), while benevolent sexism is “a set of interrelated attitudes towards women that are sexist in terms of viewing women stereotypically and in restricted roles but that is subjectively positive in feeling tone (for the perceiver) and also tends to elicit behaviours typically categorised as prosocial (e.g., helping) or intimacy-seeking (e.g., self-disclosure)” (Glick & Fiske, 1996, p. 491). Thus, while hostile sexism serves the legitimisation of the patriarchy by punishing women who reject to accept subordinate status compared to men, benevolent sexism rewards those women who comply with the gender role expectations (Glick & Fiske, 2001). In other words, hostile sexism shapes the ideals about women by defining proscriptive norms that ought not to be violated; otherwise, women must face openly adversarial attitudes as a reprisal, while benevolent sexism prescribes how respectable women should behave to be appealing to men; thus, it seems to be positive on the surface (Lee et al., 2010).

Ambivalent sexism targets three elements of male-female relationships: power distribution, traditional gender roles and heterosexual intimacy. Due to heterosexual intimacy, which creates mutual interdependence between straight men and women, an unusual power dyadic emerges. Unlike in the case of other intergroup imbalances, the dominant group—that is, men—are just as dependent on the subordinates—that is, women—as the subordinates from the dominants. Therefore, although hostile sexism is an essential tool in maintaining the gender status quo, straight men cannot uphold solely hostile attitudes towards women because they need them for sexual intimacy; thus,

they depend on women (Glick & Fiske, 1999; Lee et al., 2010). Nevertheless, the dominant group has to manipulate with hostile and benevolent sexism finely.

Benevolent sexism rewards women who comply with traditional gender roles and accept their subordinate status in society. Thus, it rewards women who accept the gender status quo by being pro-social and intimacy-seeking while displaying subordinated and powerless behaviour (Glick & Fiske, 1996). Although meeting these expectations makes women appear warm and morally superior, they limit women's opportunities and roles and keep them in low-status positions. Besides, this ideology reinforces women's subordinate position by idealising them in the romantic cultural scripts that pair able and knightly men with admiring and delicate women. These images suggest that women's love is the sole source of happiness for men and vice versa (Glick et al., 1997). By this means, benevolent sexism depicts women as romantic objects, for example, loving wives and caring mothers who are vulnerable and thus need to be cherished and adored by men. Nevertheless, it also implies that women are weaker and less competent than men and, therefore, need men's protection (Glick & Fiske, 2001).

Hostile sexism, on the other hand, is an adversarial ideology that opposes women's assumed intentions to seek control over men either by challenging men's dominant status or utilising their sexual power (Glick & Fiske, 2001). Thus, in order to keep the patriarchal structure, proscriptive gender norms can be used as a negative control technique to force women to accept their subordinate status. Cross-cultural studies (Glick et al., 2000; Shnabel et al., 2016) have shown that men tend to be more accepting of hostile sexism than women, regardless of their culture. This is because men benefit from the patriarchy, a system of institutionalised power and control reflected in political, economic, and social hierarchies that supports hostile sexist attitudes. Therefore, men can be hostile towards women to keep their superior position, but it is forbidden for women to be hostile towards the dominant group, that is, towards men. According to social dominance theory, using hostility can be beneficial for those who seek to take and hold control over others to maintain their higher social status (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Consequently, it is not only prescribed that women ought to be caring and kind but also proscribed to be rebellious (Prentice & Carranza, 2002); otherwise, they must suffer retaliation (Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010). Nevertheless, men's hostility towards those who challenge traditional gender roles is not solely directed towards

women but also towards men who do not conform to traditional gender roles, because hostile sexism promotes the idea of punishing those who do not adhere to traditional gender norms, regardless of their gender (Glick et al., 2015).

Although ambivalent sexism is much wider-known than other forms of subtle sexism, modern sexism is just as much a threat on women's progress in societies as ambivalent sexism. In contrast to ambivalent sexism, which focuses on women's roles or attributes, modern sexism centres around women's state of gender discrimination. That is, modern sexism is characterised by the belief that discrimination against women no longer exists. It also involves resentment towards the assumed extra rights and special treatment of women, and opposition to women for making political and economic demands. People who hold these views do not see their beliefs as sexist or unjust and do not consider themselves (Becker & Swim, 2010; Swim et al., 2004) or others (Swim et al., 2005) as sexist. On the one hand, those who endorse modern sexism often believe that women are underrepresented in certain roles (e.g., scientific positions; Régner et al., 2019) not due to discrimination, but because they have chosen to stay away from them or are simply not capable of fulfilling them (Martínez et al., 2010). Therefore, those who endorse modern sexism do not explicitly belittle women; denying systematic discrimination against women allows them to subtly trace back the causes of women's social, political, and economic stagnation to women's own 'shortcomings', rendering further measures for the advancement of women obsolete. On the other hand, they tend to overestimate the number of women in male-dominated fields (e.g., physicians) and attribute gender segregation in the workforce to biological differences rather than socialisation and discrimination (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2015). Hence, a greater endorsement of the biological factors' deterministic role in development is strongly associated with a higher endorsement of modern sexism. These convictions are even more pronounced among those who endorse neosexism.

Neosexism is an extreme form of modern sexism (Gomes et al., 2021; Tougas et al., 1995). It is a politically motivated belief that is based on the idea that women's freedoms are detrimental to men. Those who hold these views believe that discrimination against women is no longer an issue because the sexes compete on equal footing. As a result, they believe that if women are underrepresented in certain areas, such as in managerial positions (European Institute for Gender Equality [EIGE], 2021; Reskin & Ross, 1992), it is because they are not capable of holding these roles

(Ratliff et al., 2017) or do not desire them (Swim et al., 1995). Neosexism, therefore, best refers to the new type of sexist beliefs that appear in the labour sphere, and as a result, it accurately reflects the attitudes towards female leaders—often regardless of gender. The more one agrees with neosexist beliefs, the more they will believe in gender stereotypes and that women lack the necessary skills to lead (Delgado et al., 2019). Similar to benevolent sexism, those who endorse neosexist beliefs generally do not consider themselves or their alike-thinking peers to be sexist (Swim et al., 2004, 2005).

Although—ambivalent—sexism is typically directed towards women, women also can hold gender-prejudiced views towards men (Glick & Fiske, 1999). Nonetheless, society considers sexist attitudes towards women more acceptable than those directed towards men (Jost & Kay, 2005). Ambivalence towards men expresses resentment of men's power over women in parallel with a respectful and admiring attitude towards those men whom women depend (Connor et al., 2016; Glick & Fiske, 2011). Similarly to how ambivalent sexist men see women, women who endorse ambivalent attitudes towards men hold subjectively positive stereotypes, such as men are competent and ambitious, and negative stereotypes, such as men are domineering and arrogant, at the same time (Hentschel et al., 2019).

Benevolence towards men (as described by Glick & Fiske, 1999) serves a similar purpose as benevolent sexism in that it promotes interdependence between men and women by presenting a positive image of the other gender. Even though women, as a subordinate group, may resent male dominance, they may also associate men with chivalrous attitudes due to heterosexual intimacy, in this way developing a romantic relationship with the oppressor (Glick & Fiske, 1999). The dynamic, however, differ from those of men. Straight men desire to have a close relationship (heterosexual intimacy) with someone from a lower-status group, while straight women need to form a close relationship with someone from the group that holds them in lower social status (Glick & Fiske, 1999; 2011).

Similar to ambivalent sexism, ambivalence towards men includes hostile and benevolent attitudes. Hostility towards men stems from the fact that the oppressed group members often resent the dominant group because they have the power and high status, which brings social respect and, last but not least, is accompanied by financial

and political advantages. Therefore—according to the social identity theory—subordinates may exhibit hostile attitudes towards oppressors to cope with their negative social identity. These attitudes are a way for subordinates to try and shift the balance of power and portray those of higher status as incompetent or inferior, making it safe to criticise them. An example of this is the stereotype that men behave childishly when they have a minor illness. On the other hand, subordinates may attribute negative traits related to power to dominants, such as men being aggressive or obsessed with social dominance (Glick & Fiske, 1999). In general, conventional male stereotypes tend to have more negative content than those of women (Eagly & Mladinic, 1993). For example, women may resent men for their paternalism and sexual aggression in close relationships (Glick & Fiske, 1999). Women who hold negative attitudes towards men may perceive men as being in a more privileged position and solely responsible for gender inequality (Feather & Boeckmann, 2007). This compensatory gender discrimination allows women to differentiate themselves positively from men (Crocker et al., 1987).

The level of endorsement with hostile attitudes probably depends on the gender group they direct towards; towards the group of the subordinated (women) or the dominant (men). Within heteronormative societies, gay people, since they belong to the sexual minorities (Gates, 2012), are often stigmatised because they are perceived as failing to fulfil the traditional gender roles and thus pose a threat to the patriarchal system (Kite & Deaux, 1987; Wilkinson, 2008). For example, lesbian women are often perceived to be more masculine compared to straight women (Halberstam, 2002), while gay men may be stigmatised as not being ‘real men’ (Kiebel et al., 2020). Men who identify strongly with traditional masculinity may view gender nonconformity as a threat to the gender status quo, leading them to endorse hostile sexism, which predicts negative evaluations of women who are perceived as masculine, and men who are perceived as feminine (Glick et al., 1997; Glick et al., 2015). Additionally, the masculine overcompensation thesis (Willer et al., 2013) suggests that men who feel their masculinity is threatened will express more significant support for homophobic attitudes, too, in addition to the belief in male superiority. As a result, men who endorse stereotypes that depict gay men as effeminate (i.e., characterised by traits that are opposite to traditional masculinity, such as being emotional or soft) may display

stronger anti-gay attitudes (Kilianski, 2003) as a defensive reaction to the perceived threat to their masculinity (Glick et al., 2007).

As a result, even though many gay men support feminist movements because they recognise that gender equality is a shared goal with women, some may wish to be equal with straight men, possibly due to masculine overcompensation, even if it means turning against women to gain higher status (Sánchez & Vilain, 2012). It is because belonging to the men's group grants privileges, while being perceived as feminine may lower their status. Gay men who feel that their masculine gender role is being questioned may accept anti-effeminacy attitudes as a way to regain the privileges of their gender group membership (Murgo et al., 2017). This means that to avoid social backlash—or to compensate for the disadvantages that come with their stigmatised sexual orientation—and to reduce identity threat, gay men may display traditionally masculine attitudes (including hostile sexism) that distance them from the effeminate stereotype of gay men. On the other hand, for lesbian women, it would be unreasonable to display hostility towards their own gender, which is also the focus of their romantic interests. However, it is possible that some of these attitudes may have been internalised during socialisation.

It is likely that the endorsement of hostility towards men is different for gay men and lesbian women because of their different relationships with the group of men. Because of their gender and sexual minority status, lesbian women are in a doubly disadvantaged position compared to men, which may make them less motivated to reduce their resentment towards men who embody the patriarchy that threatens them. The dynamics are different for gay men and straight women. Although men's hostility towards gender-nonconforming women and men may elicit resentment (Glick & Fiske, 1999), gay men, like straight women, cannot solely maintain hostile attitudes towards men. This is partly because they depend on men for intimacy and because, although to a lesser extent than for straight men, belonging to the male group provides privileges.

### **Social atmosphere**

When talking about sexism, we cannot overlook the importance of the social atmosphere in which sexist beliefs emerge and maintain, as factors such as the perceived threat by the dominant group, the fear of backlash, and the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy which determine how likely an individual would endorse sexist

beliefs or willing to resist. For example, the resentment of women and gay people towards the oppressive patriarchal system mainly stems from the social, economic and political threat that the dominant group poses to the members of the subordinate groups.

Although the integrated threat theory (Stephan et al., 1998) was initially developed to examine intercultural contexts, it is also relevant in studying gender and sexual orientation hierarchies (Stephan et al., 2000). Men may maintain their gender privileges through hostile sexism, which proscribes women to rebel against the patriarchal system (Glick & Fiske, 1996); otherwise, they must face punishment (Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010). Traditional gender roles and sexist beliefs, therefore, have significant adverse social, economic and political consequences for women, which they experience as a perception of being threatened by the dominant group—in this case, men.

This can pose two types of threats to women; realistic and symbolic. The concept of realistic threat is based on the realistic group conflict theory (Sherif, 1966), which posits that social groups compete for limited resources such as status, land, and workplaces. When the parties compete for finite goods, the competition appears as a zero-sum game; that is, the victory of one side definitely means the defeat of the other side. The interpretation of gender equality is also often based on this narrative (Ruthig et al., 2021), despite the fact that in the case of gender equality, it is far from being true that the improvement of the position of one group leads to the deterioration of the position of the other group. On the contrary: The realisation of gender equality at the highest possible level, for example, results in more jobs and increased GDP (Maceira, 2017). However, when men view gender equality as a zero-sum game, they are much less likely to support gender equality measures (Kuchynka et al., 2018) and discriminate against female managers and colleagues (Ruthig et al., 2021). Therefore, women may experience a realistic threat because of men's social status, economic and political power, physical strength, and the risk of repression. The symbolic threat, somewhat different from this, rather refers to valuing men and qualities considered masculine (e.g., assertive) and occupations (e.g., doctor) more highly than women or qualities considered feminine (e.g., gentle) and occupations (e.g., teacher; Stephan et al., 2000).

Women are not the only group who can feel threatened by the dominant—that is, straight men's—group. Sexual minorities, who might be perceived to violate



gender norms and expectations, also suffer severe discrimination that boosts their perceived threat, especially in such gender-traditional societies as Hungary (Berán, 2011; Karsay & Virág, 2015). In Hungarian society, for example, negative discrimination stemming from sexual prejudices is also strongly present at the institutional level, as a result of which sexual (and gender) minorities suffer serious legal disadvantages in addition to social ones (Takács & Szalma, 2019). For example, same-sex marriage is not legally recognised, joint adoption is not allowed, the representation of homosexuality in the media is strongly restricted, etc. Moreover, since 2015, hostility towards sexual minorities in Hungary has been increasingly strong (International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association [ILGA], 2020). Alas, this threat can also prevent disadvantaged groups from engaging in social movements that aim to achieve gender equality by boosting their fear of backlash.

The fear of backlash can be a significant barrier to progress towards gender equality; therefore, it is essential to address and overcome these negative reactions in order to promote gender equality. In most societies, people who do not conform to gender stereotypes commonly experience social and economic consequences referred to as backlash (Moss-Racusin, 2014; Moss-Racusin & Johnson, 2016; Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010). For instance, women advocating for gender equality in the workplace have been found to be met with hostile reactions, such as being viewed as less competent and likeable (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). Furthermore, studies have also shown that women who self-promote in a job interview are less likely to be hired in comparison to men with similar qualifications (Rudman & Glick, 2002). Conversely, men who promote gender equality and challenge traditional masculine norms are perceived as less masculine and experience backlash (Croft et al., 2015). Besides, research has revealed that men who defy stereotypes by being modest are less likely to be hired in comparison to women with the same qualifications (Rudman & Phelan, 2008; Schmader et al., 2013). Overall, non-gender-traditional people may fear backlash from others due to a fear of being ostracised or rejected by their social groups (Rudman et al., 2013), and they also fear for their children.

## **Aims and overview of the studies**

Gender stereotypes, roles, and expectations lay down the foundation of sexism which then affect women's (and sexual minorities') lives disadvantageously. For that reason, when the pandemic hit the world, I decided to assess whether such an extraordinary event was able to change gender roles—for the better—or not. Therefore, In Study 1 (Kántás, 2022a), I examined how gender roles and norms accentuate the disadvantages of women during an extraordinary event such as the COVID-19 pandemic that affected society as a whole and whether or not this extraordinary event, which significantly affected the lives of families, can loosen gender roles and get men to be more involved in household and childcare tasks. I conducted an online survey during the first lockdown in 2020 to assess how women and men distributed household chores and childcare with their partners, taking into consideration the change in their office working hours and their gender-related attitudes.

Sexism, which stems from gender stereotypes and norms, detrimentally influences not only women but sexual minorities' lives as well. Previous studies, however, overlooked investigating how gay people compared to straight people, relate to sexist views. In Study 2 (Kántás & Kovacs, 2022), we aimed to expand on previous works that have overlooked gay perspectives when investigating the endorsement of ambivalent sexism (e.g., Glick & Fiske, 2011). Also, we assessed the difference in the level gay and straight people endorse ambivalent attitudes towards men and the level of threat they perceive by the dominant group. In order to gain a better understanding of the relevance of heterosexual interest in accepting ambivalent attitudes towards men and women, we conducted an online survey.

The ruling gendered expectations in society and sexism point further than influencing individuals' life. Parental preferences regarding (prospective) children are highly affected by the parents' gender-related attitudes, just as by their sexual orientation. However, the effect parents practice on their children's gendered attitudes is long-term, influencing, for instance, the children's preferred occupational interests and activities (Fulcher, 2010). Therefore, in Study 3 (Kántás et al., 2022), we focused on the intergenerational transmission of gender ideology and the parental attitudes of LGB and straight people. To test our hypotheses, we conducted two cross-sectional studies. On the one hand, we examined the mediating effect of modern sexism between

sexual orientation and parental preferences regarding the (prospective) children's occupational interests, traits, and activities. Since our study was conducted in Hungary, a highly gender-traditional country, we also took into consideration the moderating effect of the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy. By considering this moderating effect, we aimed to assess whether perceiving the gender hierarchy as unchangeable intensifies the impact of modern sexism on parental preferences or perceiving the gender hierarchy as changeable leads to more flexibility in parental attitudes. In other words, we evaluated how deeply-embedded gender norms and expectations can alter the impact of modern sexism on parental preferences. On the other hand, we performed an experiment in which we compared how the perceived stable or unstable gender hierarchy modifies the endorsement of modern sexism and fear of backlash (by peers—which refers to the potential for rejection, exclusion, or prejudice from children's peers) that we assumed to predict the parental preferences regarding (prospective) children's gendered behaviour in different scenarios (the preferred gendered behaviour of girls and boys at home and in the school) among people with different sexual orientations.

Although LGB people—compared to straight people—are often more aware of the dangers of sexism, they are not—necessarily—exempt from accepting harmful gender-related attitudes. In Study 4 (Kántás, 2022b), I examined how different forms of modern sexism, such as neosexism and ambivalent sexism, influence the attitudes towards women's authority roles among people with different sexual orientations. Furthermore, whether the perceived threat by the dominant groups modifies these attitudes. I performed an online survey to test my hypotheses.

Taking into consideration the previous studies' (i.e., Kántás et al., 2022; Kántás & Kovacs, 2022, but also see Kántás, 2022b) results according to which sexual orientation and, overall, the negative experiences of women and sexual minorities influence their attitudes towards gender-related issues, I put the focus of the final study on investigating attitudes towards engaging with collective action. As the previous studies showed, although they want to achieve gender equality, LGB people oftentimes feel threatened to act accordingly; therefore, the question of how sexual orientation and gender-specific attitudes intersect and influence engagement towards collective action in a gender-traditional (Hungary) and more gender progressive (England) country arose. In Study 5, I aimed to understand how sexual orientation and everyday discrimination based on gender or sexual orientation relate to engaging with collective action;

furthermore, which gender-related attitudes facilitate (e.g., liberal feminist attitudes) or hinder (e.g., ambivalent sexism, gender essentialism) Hungarian and English people's engagement in collective action for gender equality.

The aim of organising the studies in this order was not to reflect the order of data collection but to present the studies in a way that follow the logic of my argument. The use of personal pronouns, that is, whether I wrote the studies in the singular or plural, depended on whether I was the sole author of the given publication or I published with co-authors, as the American Psychological Association's latest guideline suggests.

### **Study<sup>7</sup> 1: Chained together or cooperate? The effect of the COVID-19 crisis on couples' division of labour**

The global pandemic caused by the COVID-19 coronavirus hit the world unexpectedly, causing severe health, economic and social crisis. Although the pandemic has hit most people hard, closures of childcare and educational facilities worldwide have placed a greater burden on women than men (Farré et al., 2020). The COVID-19 crisis has further increased gender inequalities (World Economic Forum [WEF], 2021), due in part to the different gender roles of men and women (e.g., Eagly & Wood, 2012).

Gender role beliefs or stereotypes arise from the observation of the behaviour of men and women, from which the observer then assumes the different abilities and traits of genders. Gender stereotypes depict women as more communal (e.g., caring, warm) compared to men, while men are supposed to be more agentic (e.g., intelligent, competitive) than women (Sczesny et al., 2019). Although women—due to their entry and advancement in traditionally masculine domains—have begun to perceive themselves as possessing more agentic traits, men have exhibited a minimal increase in their self-ratings of communal traits—which is well reflected in the fact that men's entry into traditionally feminine areas has barely increased (Croft et al., 2015). Therefore, despite the substantial changes regarding the social roles, education, employment, and the egalitarian attitudinal shifts of women and men since the mid-20th

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<sup>7</sup> This research was published in the book *NEM Egyenlő* with only subtle changes in the text. Kántás, É. M. (2022). Összezárva vagy együttműködve? A COVID-19 krízis hatása az együtt élő, heteroszexuális párok munkamegosztására. In Kengyel, G. (Ed.): *NEM egyenlő—Nemi alapú egyenlőtlenségek Magyarországon*. Oriold és társai (pp. 349-372)

century, uneven division of wage labour and domestic work still persists (Gerson, 2017).

These imparities are further reinforced by gender stereotypes, according to which men should be helpless in feminine domains (Vandello & Bosson, 2013) and rely on dependency-oriented cross-gender helping (Bareket et al., 2020). Moreover, men tend to consider their contribution as ‘assistance’ to women’s tasks, inadvertently sustaining the underlying assumption that housework and caregiving are essentially women’s responsibilities. According to a different explanation (provided by Thébaud et al., 2019), although men and women perceive equally that household chores need to be done, men tend to ignore these responsibilities and leave women to do them alone.

However, since not only women but also men switched to telecommuting in large proportions during the pandemic, it made the household chores and childcare tasks more salient, giving men the opportunity to contribute more to the housework and for fathers to be more active in parenting. Although the opportunity was present, recent research (Craig & Churchill, 2020; Del Boca, 2020) showed contradictory results on men’s increased contribution to household and childcare tasks during the lockdown; men typically increased their contribution to childcare but not to household chores. That is why the present research aimed to map whether the ratio of the distribution of household and childcare responsibilities among straight cohabiting couples changed during the lockdown period compared to the pre-pandemic period, and whether the respondents’ gender attitudes influenced their contribution to performing these tasks. Besides, the research took place in a familialist (Rat & Szikra, 2018) and post-communist country such as Hungary, where traditional gender attitudes are widely accepted (Scharle, 2015) and the level of gender equality still lags far behind those of Western European countries (WEF, 2022).

### **Research Aims and Hypotheses**

Women around the world take care of household chores and childcare duties much more than. Mainly because it is still much more common for women to quit their jobs or reduce working hours and take care of the household and its habitants as part of the role women are expected to display (Andrew et al., 2020; Moreira da Silva, 2019). When the COVID-19 pandemic hit the world unexpectedly, decision-makers aimed to hold the virus’ spread by creating social distance. On the one hand, it meant the closure

of childcare facilities, while, on the other hand, it led to a high conversion to telecommuting. Because of the closure of care facilities, the pandemic put more burden on women worldwide (Farré et al., 2020). However, since men also switched to telecommuting in a high portion, it provided an opportunity for them to allocate more time to the household and be more actively involved in their children's daily lives. Therefore, my study aimed to assess the potential change in men's contribution to household labour and childcare during lockdown compared to the pre-pandemic period while taking into consideration the dominating gender-related attitudes in Hungary that might affect men's behaviour.

I hypothesised that, due to the prevalent gender-traditional attitudes in Hungary (Scharle, 2015), men would not increase their contribution to household chores (H1). However, because men have been facing increased expectations from their spouses for active parenting for years (Makay & Spéder 2018), they would enhance their participation in childcare (H2). Furthermore, in case men increase their contribution to childcare tasks, it is due to their less traditional gender role attitudes and decrease in office working hours (H3).

## **Materials and Methods**

### **Participants**

A total of 383 people participated in the study. During the data cleaning process, I excluded 36 respondents' answers (e.g., because they did not reveal their gender). Further, because my study focused on the division of labour between cohabiting straight couples—because non-heterosexual couples tend to share household tasks more equally (Farr & Patterson, 2013; Tornello et al., 2015)—all non-heterosexual respondents were also excluded from the analyses ( $n = 17$ ). Thus, the final sample consisted of 166 straight men ( $M_{age} = 40$ ,  $SD = 10.3$ ) and 164 straight women ( $M_{age} = 36$ ,  $SD = 10.2$ ). Most participants (76%) had some university degree (i.e., short-cycle tertiary education; bachelor, master, or doctoral-level education or equivalent). Also, the great majority of the respondents were married ( $n = 220$ ), while others were engaged ( $n = 24$ ) or were living in a relationship ( $n = 86$ ). More than half of the participants (57%) had children; 50% lived together with their children, and 7% lived separately from their children for several reasons (e.g., divorce, adult children) at the time of the study.

According to the G\*Power calculator I set for a targeted power of 80% with 5% significance level, the final sample size allows the detection of main effects at  $d = .14$  for t-tests,  $f^2 = .14$  for analysis of variance test, and  $f^2 = .04$  for multiple hierarchical regressions.

## Measures and Procedure

I recruited the participants (who at least were cohabiting at the time of the survey with their straight partner) using anonymous online sampling between April 17 2020, and May 17 2020 (the end date of the first lockdown). All participants were informed about the general topic of the study, the voluntary nature of the contribution, and the fact that they could withdraw from the survey anytime without further explanation or consequences. Only after accepting the informed consent statement could participants complete the study. I conducted the research with the approval of the Eötvös Loránd University's Institutional Review Board.

Participants were first exposed to two lists; One that listed 23 house chores (e.g., “cooking”, “keeping the garden tidy”, etc.) and the other one that listed 11 childcare-related duties (e.g., “providing meals for the child(ren) at home”, “ensuring and/or controlling that your child(ren) perform their school responsibilities”). On both scales, respondents had to indicate on a 0 (*Never*) to 100 (*Always*) percentage scale what percentage they contributed to the given task prior to the pandemic and during the lockdown. The remaining percentage represented the partner's contribution to doing the given tasks. After the lists, respondents completed the Liberal Feminist Attitude and Ideology Scale (with 9 items, e.g., “The government should take major steps towards improving women's status in society”;  $\alpha_{women} = .86$ ,  $\alpha_{men} = .89$ ; Morgan, 1996) and the Social Role Questionnaire (with 10 items, e.g., “Tasks around the house should not be assigned by sex”;  $\alpha_{women} = .74$ ,  $\alpha_{men} = .79$ ; Baber & Tucker, 2006). At last, respondents had to estimate the hours they themselves and their partners had spent working in the office before the pandemic and during the lockdown. The scales and items used in Study 1 can be found in Appendix B.

## Results

### Descriptive statistics

Prior to hypothesis testing, I performed ANOVA tests to assess the endorsement of liberal feminist attitudes and gender role attitudes of women and men.

Women ( $M = 3.76$ ,  $SD = .74$ ) endorsed liberal feminist attitudes to a significantly greater extent than men ( $M = 3.23$ ,  $SD = .89$ ),  $F(1,328) = 34.59$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .10$ , while men ( $M = 2.30$ ,  $SD = .68$ ) expressed more traditional gender role attitudes than women ( $M = 1.98$ ,  $SD = .59$ ),  $F(1,328) = 21.28$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .06$ . Regarding the difference in men's and women's office hours, results showed that, before the pandemic, men worked significantly more hours in the office than women,  $F(1,301) = 4.67$   $p = .03$   $\eta^2 = .02$ , but there was no significant difference between genders at the time of the lockdown,  $F(1,300) = 2.22$   $p = .14$   $\eta^2 = .01$ . Nevertheless, women reported that their partner worked significantly more hours at the office than men's partner both before,  $F(1,301) = 11.54$   $p = .001$   $\eta^2 = .04$ , and during the lockdown,  $F(1,297) = 6.96$   $p = .01$   $\eta^2 = .02$ . However, women and men reported significant decrease regarding their own office hours (women,  $t(144) = 10.37$   $p < .001$ ; men,  $t(155) = 12.22$   $p < .001$ ), and their partners' office hours (women,  $t(156) = 11.99$   $p < .001$ ; men,  $t(140) = 12.82$   $p < .001$ ). Table 1 (in Appendix A) displays the means and standard deviations.

## Hypothesis testing

ANOVA tests and paired sample t-tests were performed to examine the first two hypotheses, and hierarchal multiple regression was conducted to examine the third hypothesis.

### Household Chores

First, I assessed whether my results were in line with previous studies that showed women do more household labour than men. I found that women reported performing significantly more household chores than men both before the pandemic,  $F(1,327) = 184.60$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .36$ , and during the lockdown,  $F(1,323) = 144.74$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .31$ . Overall, women in this sample estimated to perform approximately 66% of these tasks both before the pandemic and during the lockdown, while men in the present study estimated doing about 48% of these tasks. After that, I examined whether there was a change in women's or men's contribution to household chores during the lockdown compared to the pre-pandemic period. According to the performed paired sampled t-tests, there was no difference between the examined time periods nor in the case of women,  $t(162) = -.62$ ,  $p = .54$ , or in the case of men,  $t(161) = -1.32$ ,  $p = .19$ . Nevertheless, when I assessed each task separately instead of assessing the chores as one variable, I found a few differences regarding specific tasks in the case of both genders. Table 2 (in Appendix A) displays the differences found.



## Childcare

Just like in the case of household chores, women and men had highly different estimations regarding their contribution to childcare tasks at their homes. Women estimated their contribution to be much higher than their partner's both before the pandemic,  $F(1,163) = 75.27$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .32$ , and during the lockdown,  $F(1,149) = 69.92$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .30$ , without a significant change in the level of contribution,  $t(62) = -1.31$ ,  $p = .19$ . It means that women reported performing approximately 66% of the childcare responsibilities before the pandemic and 69% during the lockdown. However, men estimated that their contribution grew during the lockdown,  $t(84) = -3.76$ ,  $p < .001$ , that is, from performing 41% of the childcare tasks to performing 44% of them (in comparison to their partner). Though both women and men reported that they increased their contribution in performing childcare-related duties, only the increase in men's contribution was significant. Here should be noted that women and men increased their contributions to the childcare tasks by the same percentage, but because women's level of contribution was fundamentally higher, it led to no difference in the results.

Finally, I conducted a hierarchal regression analysis to assess whether gender-related attitudes and the change in office working hours led to men's increased contribution to childcare tasks. As I expected, less gender-traditional attitudes predicted the enhanced level of contribution,  $r = -.35$   $p = .002$ , while respondent's decreased office working hours,  $r = -.41$   $p < .001$ , and their partner's increased office working hours,  $r = .32$   $p = .004$ , were the also significant predictors of men's increased involvement in parenting during the lockdown. Table 3 displays the result of the regression.

**Table 3**

Results of the hierarchical regression analysis on men's increased childcare contribution during the lockdown

	B	SE	$\beta$	t	p	95% CI	
						LL	UL
Constant	75.63	11.56		6.54	<.001	52.53	98.74
Liberal Feminist Attitudes and Ideology	-3.04	2.22	-.15	-1.37	.176	-7.46	1.40
Gender Role Attitudes	-8.01	2.59	-.34	-3.09	.003	-13.20	-2.83
Respondent's office working hours	-.37	.09	-.43	-4.18	<.001	-.55	-.19
Partner's office working hours	.42	.12	.36	3.57	.001	.19	.66

Note, SE = standard error; CI = confidence interval; LL = lower level; UL = upper level. Unstandardised regression coefficients are reported. Level of confidence = 95%. The effects of block 2 of hierarchical multiple regression analysis are reported,  $\Delta R^2$ first block = 4.49,  $\Delta R^2$ second block = .13.57.

## Discussion

According to the self-report of women in the present study, they performed a bigger share of the household tasks than their partner both before the COVID-19 pandemic and during the lockdown, while men reported sharing the household duties almost equally with their partner. However, contrary to previous studies (Carlson et al., 2021; Farré et al., 2020) that found men increased their contribution to the household chores during the lockdown, no significant increase in the contribution of men was detected in the present study. The social atmosphere might provide the explanation for this difference; In Hungary, traditional gender role expectations are pronounced (Scharle, 2015), and gender inequality—that is displayed amongst others in an unequal share of non-paid labour—is prevalent in the country, which ranks among last<sup>8</sup> in terms of gender inequality at a European level (EIGE, 2022). This level of gender disparity predominantly stems from the gender-traditional attitudes highly endorsed in the country (Scharle, 2015). Because doing household chores is attributed to be a feminine activity (Bareket et al., 2020; Vandello & Bosson, 2013), men might not have in their representation that these tasks belong to them too, or they might aim to avoid being perceived as effeminate by keeping their contribution at a lower level. The assumption, according to which the traditional gender roles that dominate in Hungary might hinder men's participation in doing household chores equal to their partner, was further supported by the fact that men in the study endorsed traditional social role attitudes while did not endorse liberal feminist attitudes.

Nevertheless, although international and local statistics (EIGE, 2019; Hungarian Central Statistical Office, 2020) support women's estimation, it is possible that the men in the present study indeed contributed at a level they reported. However, Kamo (2000) found that husbands tend to overestimate the amount of household chores they perform, creating a significant discrepancy between the reports of husbands and wives. Assumably social desirability is the critical factor in the considerable difference between spouses' reports.

The greatest discrepancy between men's and women's was observed in relation to childcare tasks. Men reported an increase in their contribution to performing childcare responsibilities in their household during the lockdown period compared to

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<sup>8</sup> Hungary ranked 24<sup>th</sup> out of the 27<sup>th</sup> European Union countries with a score of 54.2 out of 100, far behind the average EU score, which is 68.6 scores.

the pre-pandemic period. However, women did not perceive a similar change in their partner's contribution. Moreover, women reported doing more childcare tasks during the lockdown period than before; however, this increase was not statistically significant. These findings are similar to those of Carlson and colleagues (2021), who found that fathers reported performing more childcare tasks during lockdown than mothers reported their husbands were doing.

Moreover, although women did not perceive their and their partner's contribution to be nearly equal, even men reported that even if they increased their relative contribution to housework and childcare, they never fully reached the threshold of an equal split. This results is similar to those of Hank and Steinbach (2021) who found that even if men's contribution to housework and childcare showed some increase, they rarely reached the stage of equal division of these tasks with their female counterparts. These results suggest that gender attitudes play a significant role in the extent to which men participate in or increase their participation in childcare—which is often viewed as a feminine task in society. Therefore, similar to domestic labour, gender attitudes may again serve as a reason why women's partners did not increase their contribution to caregiving responsibilities. Traditional gender roles proscribe men to be involved in domestic and care labour, as these tasks are considered to belong to feminine roles and engaging in them may lead to perceptions of men as effeminate, which can result in identity threats (e.g., Vandello & Bosson, 2013) and social backlash (see Moss-Racusin, 2014) for men. This identity threat refers to a phenomenon called precarious manhood, which means manhood needs to be reinforced by all actions of men (Vandello & Bosson, 2013).

It also means that men may fear losing their perceived masculinity and the privileges that come with the higher social status of men in patriarchal societies, which can deter them from engaging in activities that threaten to lose these privileges. When men engage in activities that society considers primarily feminine and that require demonstrating communal traits and abilities, it can lead to social backlash for men who violate gender stereotypes by doing so (e.g., Bosak et al., 2018). This also applies to doing care tasks, not only to participation in household chores. It is likely, however, that the combined presence of several barriers has resulted in women's partners tending to be less involved in more active participation in housework. Nevertheless, since we have

no information on whether male and female respondents were linked in the present study, both men's and women's reports may be accurate in case they were independent.

On the other hand, the present study's findings that men reported an increase in their contributions to parenting tasks during the lockdown are consistent with previous research (Andrew et al., 2020; Fodor et al., 2020) and align with the findings of Del Boca and colleagues (2020) who reported that men primarily increased their contributions to homeschooling. Also consistent with previous studies (Bareket et al., 2020; Farré et al., 2020), the substantial decrease in male respondents' office working hours influenced their increased level of participation in childcare tasks. Furthermore, less-traditional gender role attitudes proved to be important in the increased contribution, while liberal feminist attitudes did not play a role. It is most possibly because gender role attitudes put more emphasis on the division of labour between men and women, while feminist attitudes typically refer to a wider topic, putting more emphasis on the political and economic spheres.

Although there were differences in how men and women perceived the division of household and childcare tasks with their partners, men's reports suggest that the lockdown had the potential to bring some benefits to families. By considering men's reports—that were similar to those included in some other studies (Bareket et al., 2020; Farré et al., 2020)—it seems that the introduction of remote work facilitated some men to increase their participation in childcare duties. Even though the first lockdown in Hungary was only for a short period of time, changes in the division of care-related duties can have long-term benefits. Previous research (Patnaik, 2019) has found that men who contribute more to care responsibilities (e.g., childcare) for a certain period tend to continue to do so in the long term. Given that a significant portion of gender inequality is caused by the unequal distribution of domestic and care labour, the increased contribution of men to these tasks during the lockdown can lead to a shift in social norms (Alon et al., 2020).

In conclusion, this study unveils the unyielding gender dynamics in Hungarian households, with men not significantly increasing household chores contributions even during extreme circumstances like the COVID-19 lockdown. Men's reluctance may be due to societal backlash for engaging in 'feminine' tasks, reflecting the concept of precarious manhood. Nevertheless, men reported greater childcare involvement,

suggesting potential shifts in some gender norms, especially under flexible work conditions. However, the perceptual discrepancy between men and women on task distribution might indicate different levels of consciousness regarding the tasks that should be done. Nevertheless, while traditional gender roles persist, remote work (that probably helped men to evaluate the workload) and less-traditional gender attitudes (that probably decreased the threat of being perceived as effeminate) might be able to facilitate gradual progress towards gender equality. As revealed by this study, the complex interplay of societal norms, personal attitudes, and systemic structures underscores the intricate path towards achieving gender equality.

### **Limitations**

Due to the limitation of anonymous sampling, the research did not reveal whether both members of the cohabiting couple completed the survey. Nevertheless, it would be essential to understand the difference in the division of tasks reported by women and men, whether it stems from estimation bias or different family arrangements. Also, the time spent on household and care tasks was not measured; only the rate at how couples had—self-reportedly—shared these tasks among themselves was assessed. However, in terms of unpaid working time, differences between participants can vary widely and may explain in which cases men have increased their contribution to the tasks that needed to be done. Similarly, another limitation that should be ruled out in the following research is that the time participants spent telecommuting was not measured, just the office hours.

## **Study<sup>9</sup> 2: The Role of Sexual Orientation and the Perceived Threat Posed by Men in the Acceptance of Sexism**

Gender stereotypes and prejudices affect gay people severely. However, due to their assumed non-traditional gender behaviour, sexism impacts them differently than straight people—that is, they benefit less from benevolent attitudes while suffering more from hostile attitudes. Nevertheless, most research did not directly examine the role of heterosexual interest in accepting sexism. Therefore, most theories were tailored

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<sup>9</sup> This research was published in *Acta Psychologica* with only subtle changes in the text. Kántás, É. M. & Kovacs, M. (2022). The role of sexual orientation and the perceived threat posed by men in the acceptance of sexism. *Acta Psychologica*, 230. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2022.103749>

for straight people, and the relevance of sexual orientation in accepting sexist attitudes was overlooked.

According to the ambivalent sexism theory (Connor et al., 2016; Glick & Fiske, 1996, 1999), straight men and women tend to endorse benevolent attitudes towards each other due to their interdependence. However, gay people do not need the other gender for sexual intimacy. In addition, benevolence towards men and benevolent sexism maintain a hierarchy that is not only unequal by gender but also reinforces heteronormativity, an ideology that is only fully rewarding those who are gender traditional and cisgender (that is, not transgender; Glick & Fiske, 1996). This creates another dimension of hierarchy, suggesting that only heterosexual and cisgender sexual and gender orientations are acceptable and considered ‘natural’ and valued (Robinson, 2016). As a result, homophobia can be seen as a form of sexism that gives straight men an advantage over both women and gay men (Pharr, 1997).

As Pharr (1997) asserts, “without the existence of sexism, there would be no homophobia” (p. 26). Because lesbian women and gay men are part of the sexual minority group in heteronormative societies (Herek, 1984, 1988; Robinson, 2016), they do not gain the same benefits from benevolent attitudes towards their gender as straight members of their gender group do. Therefore, it is less likely for gay people to endorse either benevolent sexism or benevolence towards men in the same way as straight people do. Rudman and Glick (2008) reached a similar conclusion in their study that examined the prevalence of benevolent attitudes among those who are not influenced by heterosexual intimacy; in their comparison of children and adults’ attitudes towards the other gender, they found that pre-adolescent children—who lack the same level of heterosexual intimacy and interest as adults—endorse hostile sexism without also endorsing benevolent sexism. This suggests that in the absence of heterosexual interest, there is no need to balance hostility with benevolent attitudes, leading to a lower acceptance of benevolent attitudes towards the other gender.

Taking into account the similarity in the social status dynamic of gay men and straight women, it is likely that gay men resent traditional paternalism in a similar way to straight women. Members of an oppressed group often resent the dominant group for having power and high status, which brings with it social esteem, material and political advantages. Additionally, individuals who are victims of prejudice can develop

prejudice towards other groups, particularly towards the oppressor group. Therefore, in order to regain self-esteem, they may direct negative attitudes towards those who cause their negative social identity, i.e., towards (straight) men (Glick & Fiske, 1999).

In Hungary, a country which ranks among last regarding gender equality at the European level (EIGE, 2022), women may feel particularly vulnerable to threats from men. Amongst others, because anti-feminist narratives are central to governmental communication (Kováts, 2020), and sexism is widely supported in society (Kántás et al., 2022; Kántás & Kovacs, 2022). Besides, domestic violence, which can be predicted by hostile sexism (Glick et al., 2002), is a significant issue in the country (EIGE, 2019), rape myths are widely accepted (Nyúl & Kende, 2021), and gender-stereotypical beliefs fuelled by benevolent sexism are not only accepted but also expected (Scharle, 2015). Moreover, data suggest that 78% of the population strongly agree that the primary role of women is to take care of their family (European Commission [EC], 2017), a traditional belief maintained by benevolent sexism that keeps women in lower status compared to men. Considering that sexism and heteronormativity intersect, lesbian women are in an even more disadvantageous social position than straight women. Lesbian women have a lower status because of their gender group membership and, due to heteronormativity, a lower status due to their sexual orientation. As a result, lesbian women may face a more significant threat posed by men than straight women.

However, not only women—regardless of their sexual orientation—but also gay men may feel threatened in Hungary because hostile sexism predicts negative attitudes towards not only women but also gay men (Glick et al., 2015). This negative attitude is prevalent in society; thus, sexual minorities in Hungary are at a significant disadvantage (ILGA, 2020). The increase in hate crimes, bias-motivated speech, and institutionalised homophobia enhance the burden of Hungarian gay people's daily lives (ILGA, 2020; Kántás et al., 2021; Takács et al., 2012). Despite this, gay men may still have some advantages compared to lesbian women; although disadvantaged due to their sexual orientation, they still belong to the dominant group based on their gender.

## **Research Aims and Hypotheses**

The purpose of Study 2 was twofold; On the one hand, to examine the role of sexual orientation in the acceptance of ambivalent sexism and ambivalent attitudes towards men and to assess how the threat women perceive by the dominant group—that

is (straight) men—affect the endorsement of these attitudes. Since sexist attitudes stem from the same ideology as homophobic attitudes—which are directed towards gay people—sexual orientation is most likely to affect the acceptance of gender-prejudiced views (such as ambivalent sexism and ambivalent attitudes towards men), and also the perception (or recognition) of the threat that derives from (straight) men and directs towards the subordinated group (women, but to some extent, gay men too).

Due to their perceived display of gender counterstereotypical behaviour, lesbian women are less likely to benefit from the—subjectively—positive aspects of benevolent sexism. Moreover, they belong to the same gender as the target of their intimate interest. Therefore, we assumed that they would engage with benevolent and hostile sexism less than straight women (in the case of benevolent sexism) or all the other groups (in the case of hostile sexism; H1). Gay men, however, lack heterosexual intimacy with women; thus, they do not need to engage with attitudes that make women appealing. On the other hand, they might be just as motivated to strengthen their social status quo by seeing women as inferior as straight men. Therefore, we assumed that gay men would accept benevolent sexism but not hostile sexism less than straight men (H2).

Regarding ambivalence towards men, we assumed that lesbian women, who oftentimes experience severe hostility from men (Gates, 2012; Wilkinson, 2008) while do not need sexual intimacy, would endorse benevolent attitudes less but would endorse hostile attitudes towards men more than straight women do (H3). We also hypothesised that gay men would endorse benevolence towards men less but hostility towards men more than straight men, because even though they depend on men for intimacy, they might show resentment towards men's group as their straight members oppress not only women but gay men as well in heteronormative societies (H4).

Our assumptions regarding the perceived threat men can cause to women were that women—especially lesbian women—feel more threatened by men than how much men recognise this threat. Besides, we predicted that gay men would be more aware of women's perceived threat than straight men (H5) because gay men are part of a marginalised group themselves and thus challenging traditional heteronormative standards, they might possess a unique perspective on gender dynamics and threats faced by women. Last but not least, we predicted a positive association between the



perceived threat and the acceptance of hostile attitudes towards men, regardless of sexual orientation (H6).

## **Materials and Methods**

### **Participants**

We recruited adult Hungarian participants with different kinds of sexual orientations. Originally, the sample comprised LG participants (14.4%), straight participants (74.7%), and participants from various other sexual minority groups like bisexual, asexual, pansexual, and others (10.9%). However, as the study's objective was to contrast responses between heterosexually interdependent (straight) and independent (LG) groups without any intersection, contributions from participants who identified with a different sexual minority group (such as bisexual, asexual, pansexual) were excluded from the analyses. Thus, our final sample consisted of 695 respondents: 112 (16.2 %) LG participants (37.5 % women and 62.5 % men) and 583 (83.8 %) straight participants (63.6 % women and 36.4 % men). Respondents' majority were between the age of 18-28 (40.3%), many were between the age of 29-39 (28.5%), others were between the age of 40-50 (21.9%), and 9.4% were older than 51 years old. More than two-thirds of the respondents (70.4%) had some sort of university degree (ranging from short-cycle tertiary education to doctoral-level education or equivalent).

In order to assess the possible distortion of our sample, we conducted a statistical power analysis based on data from a previously published study (Tortora et al., 2020) that had a sample size of 547 and had the same design (2: gender  $\times$  2: sexual orientation ANOVA). It had a large .47 effect size (Cohen, 1988). Using the G\*Power calculator (with setting the significance level at 5% level and power at 80%), the projected sample size needed to achieve the same effect size is approximately  $N = 148$  for this  $2 \times 2$  group comparison to find a between-group difference. Therefore, our sample size ( $N = 695$ ) was sufficient to assess the main objectives of the current study.

### **Measures and Procedure**

Respondents were recruited via anonymous online sampling; we applied convenient sampling in general, but for LG participants, we also contacted particular LG groups and organisations and asked them to distribute our recruiting brief via their communication platforms. We chose online recruitment methods because it allows total anonymity, which was of utmost importance considering that gay people perceive

themselves as being highly threatened in Hungary (EC, 2019; ILGA, 2020). The study was carried out in accordance with the Hungarian Law on Privacy and Data Protection (Act CXII of 2011). Every respondent took part in the study voluntarily, and they were free to choose whether or not to complete the survey or even to withdraw from the survey at any time. Respondents could only give their formal consent and thus contribute to the study once they read the introductory section that explained the research aims, the voluntary nature of participation, and a guarantee of anonymity.

Participants completed the Hungarian adaptation of the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (benevolent sexism scale with 11 items, e.g., “Men are incomplete without women”;  $\alpha = .862$ ; and hostile sexism scale with 10 items, e.g., “When women lose to men in a fair competition, they typically complain about being discriminated against”;  $\alpha = .897$ ; Glick & Fiske 1996; Szabó, 2009), the Ambivalence towards Men Inventory (benevolent attitudes towards men with 10 items, e.g., “Even if both members of a couple work, the woman ought to be more attentive to taking care of her man at home”;  $\alpha = .829$ ; and hostile attitudes towards men with 5 items, “Men will always fight to have greater control in society than women”;  $\alpha = .687$ ; Glick & Fiske, 1999; Szabó, 2009), and the Perceived Threat Scale (realistic threat scale with 5 items, e.g., “Many women live in fear of men’s aggression”;  $\alpha = .794$ ; Stephan et al., 2000; Szabó, 2009). The scales and items used in Study 2 can be found in Appendix B.

## Results

Figure 1 displays the means of the observed variables among people with different sexual orientations. ANOVA tests were performed to examine the first five hypotheses, while a two-tailed Pearson correlation was conducted to explore the sixth hypothesis. Related to our first hypothesis, the main effects were significant both for gender,  $F(1,691) = 6.50$   $p = .011$   $\eta^2 = .01$ , and sexual orientation,  $F(1,691) = 51.14$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .07$ , as well. In line with our assumptions, according to the Bonferroni-corrected post hoc tests, lesbian women ( $M = 2.03$ ,  $SD = .78$ ) endorsed benevolent sexism less than straight women ( $M = 2.49$ ,  $SD = .82$ ;  $p = .003$ ). After that, we analysed the results of the hostile sexism scale. The main effects were significant both for sexual orientation,  $F(1,691) = 16.88$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .03$ , and gender,  $F(1,691) = 48.46$   $p = .001$   $\eta^2 = .07$ . As we predicted, according to the Bonferroni-corrected post hoc tests, lesbian respondents ( $M = 1.93$ ,  $SD = .79$ ) endorsed hostile sexism the least compared to straight women ( $M = 2.47$ ,  $SD = 0.83$ ;  $p = .001$ ), gay men ( $M = 2.74$ ,  $SD = .91$ ;  $p < .001$ ),

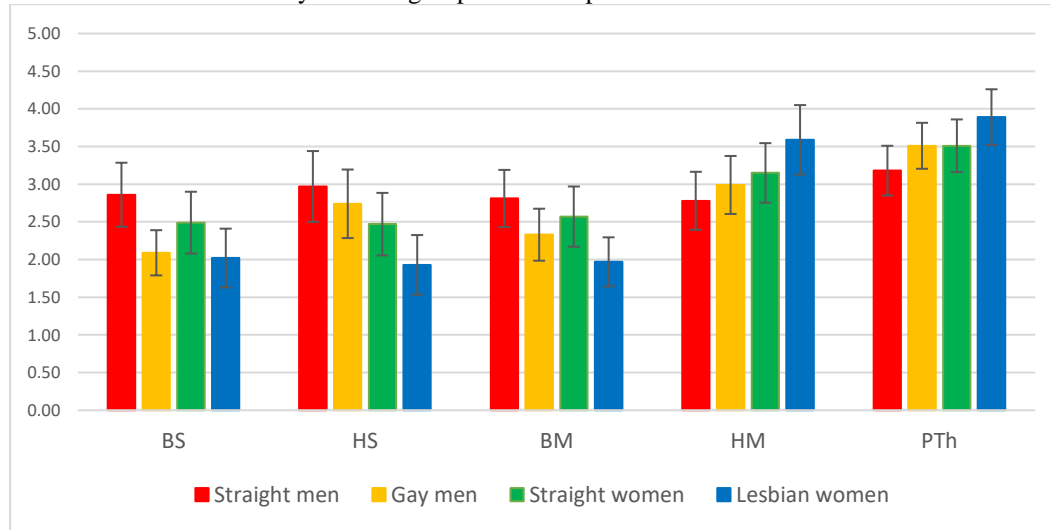
and straight men ( $M = 2.97$ ,  $SD = .94$ ;  $p < .001$ ). After assessing lesbian women's responses related to sexism, we assessed gay men's responses on the same matter. The Bonferroni-corrected post hoc tests confirmed our assumptions (H2) according to which gay men (benevolent sexism:  $M = 2.09$ ,  $SD = .60$ ; hostile sexism:  $M = 2.74$ ,  $SD = .91$ ) accepted benevolent sexism less,  $p < .001$ , but hostile sexism to a similar extent,  $p = .37$ , to straight men (benevolent sexism:  $M = 2.86$ ,  $SD = .85$ ; hostile sexism:  $M = 2.97$ ,  $SD = .94$ ).

Then we tested our hypotheses related to ambivalence towards men. For benevolence towards men, the main effects were significant for both sexual orientation,  $F(1,691) = 43.19$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .06$ , and gender,  $F(1,691) = 13.17$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .02$ . Similarly, the main effects for hostility towards men were, too, significant as well for both sexual orientation,  $F(1,691) = 15.00$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .02$ , and gender,  $F(1,691) = 32.91$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .05$ . The Bonferroni-corrected post hoc tests showed that straight women ( $M = 2.57$ ,  $SD = .80$ ) endorsed ambivalence towards men more than lesbian women ( $M = 1.97$ ,  $SD = .65$ ) did,  $p < .001$ . Also, lesbian participants ( $M = 3.59$ ,  $SD = .92$ ) accepted hostility towards men on a higher level than straight women ( $M = 3.15$ ,  $SD = .79$ ;  $p < .004$ ) did. Our assumptions (H4) regarding how gay men relate to these attitudes were partly confirmed; The Bonferroni-corrected post hoc tests showed that while gay men ( $M = 2.33$ ,  $SD = .69$ ) endorsed benevolence towards men less than straight men ( $M = 2.81$ ,  $SD = 0.76$ ;  $p < .001$ ), there was no significant difference between gay men ( $M = 2.99$ ,  $SD = .77$ ) and straight men ( $M = 2.78$ ;  $SD = .77$ ;  $p = .31$ ) in the acceptance of hostility towards men.

After assessing the acceptance of the gender-prejudiced views, we evaluated how the perceived threat posed by men shapes these attitudes. As we expected (H5), women experienced a greater level of perceived threat,  $F(1,691) = 36.63$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .05$ , than men recognised the threat their own gender group poses to women. Nevertheless, in line with our assumptions, gay people perceived (or, in the case of men, recognised) a greater level of threat than straight people did,  $F(1,691) = 26.50$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .04$ . Also, the Bonferroni-corrected post hoc tests indicated that lesbian women ( $M = 4.23$ ,  $SD = .81$ ) felt more threatened by men than straight women ( $M = 3.74$ ,  $SD = .82$ ;  $p = .001$ ) in the sample.

**Figure 1**

Means of Benevolent Sexism, Hostile Sexism, Benevolence towards Men, Hostility towards Men, and Perceived Threat divided by the four groups of Participants



*Note.* ‘BS’ = Benevolent Sexism; ‘HS’ = Hostile Sexism. 5-point Likert scale was used: higher scores mean higher acceptance of sexist ideologies. ‘BM’ = Benevolence towards Men; ‘HM’ = Hostility towards Men. 5-point Likert scale was used: higher scores mean higher acceptance of ambivalence towards men. ‘PTh’ = Perceived Threat. 5-point Likert scale was used: higher scores mean higher level of perceived threat posed by men to women. Level of confidence = 95%.

Our sixth hypothesis referred to the assumed positive association between hostility towards men and the perceived threat men pose to women. In line with our assumptions, perceived threat and hostility towards men showed a strong positive correlation (1-tailed) in the case of women,  $r_{straight\ women} = .60$   $p < .001$ ,  $r_{lesbian\ women} = .78$   $p < .001$ , and even in the case of men,  $r_{gay\ men} = .40$   $p = .001$ ,  $r_{straight\ men} = .44$   $p < .001$ . Although we did not hypothesise it, in the case of straight women, we found a positive correlation between the perceived threat and benevolent sexism,  $r = .12$   $p = .026$ , and in the case of straight men, a negative correlation with perceived threat and benevolence towards men,  $r = .15$   $p = .025$ . Furthermore, we found a negative correlation between the perceived threat and hostile sexism in the case of straight women,  $r_{straight\ women} = -.11$   $p = .030$ , straight men,  $r_{straight\ men} = -.41$   $p < .001$ , and gay men,  $r_{gay\ men} = -.37$   $p = .002$ , but not in the case of lesbian women,  $r_{lesbian\ women} = -.08$   $p = .618$ . Table 4 displays the correlations between the observed variables.

**Table 4**

Correlations of Perceived Threat Scale with Ambivalent Sexism Inventory Subscales and Ambivalence towards Men Inventory Subscales

	PTh			
	Straight Men	Gay Men	Straight Women	Lesbian Women
BS	-.08	.15	.12**	.23
HS	-.41**	-.37**	-.11*	-.08
BM	-.15*	-.13	.02	.17
HM	.44**	.40**	.60**	.78**

*Note.* ‘BS’ = Benevolent Sexism; ‘HS’ = Hostile Sexism; ‘BM’ = Benevolence towards Men; ‘HM’ = Hostility towards Men; ‘PTh’= Perceived Threat. Pearson correlations were conducted. \*\* Correlation is significant at the .01 level (1-tailed); \* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (1-tailed).

## Discussion

In our study, we examined the ambivalent attitudes towards women and men and how the perceived threat posed by men affect these attitudes among groups with different sexual orientation. Examining benevolent sexism, our results showed that lesbian women and gay men endorsed these attitudes less than straight men and women. Lesbian women most possibly were less motivated to endorse benevolent sexism because, due to their sexual orientation, they are less likely to benefit from the attitudes that reward fully only those women who fulfil traditional gender roles (Connor et al., 2016). Gay men, on the other hand, were less motivated to support benevolent sexism probably because, since intimacy with women does not play a role in their lives, they do not need to edge off the power inequalities by giving a subjectively positive colour to the imbalance power relations between men and women. Our results were in line with Rudman and Glick’s study (2008), in which they showed that heterosexual intimacy is the key motivator in balancing hostile attitudes with benevolent ones and, thus, in the lack of heterosexual intimacy, there is no need for buffering.

A similar pattern arose when examining the benevolence towards men; that is, lesbian women and gay men endorsed benevolent attitudes towards men less than their straight counterparts. Although the pattern is the same, the explanation is highly different. While the lower level of endorsement of benevolent sexism is probably because gay people cannot benefit from it the same way straight people do, the lower acceptance of benevolent attitudes towards men is more likely to be part of the resentment towards the oppressors.

Endorsing hostile sexism and hostile attitudes towards men had a more diverse pattern among the groups. As expected, lesbian women showed the least agreement with hostile sexism among all groups. It is probably because these attitudes are directed towards them—due to their sexual orientation, even more than towards straight women—and also because the target of their intimate interests is women. Gay men, on the other hand, accepted hostile sexism to about the same extent as straight men did in our study. Although hostile sexism and homophobia stem from the same ideology (Pharr, 1997), thus resisting these attitudes should be their shared goal with women, gay men—possibly to mitigate their subordinated position caused by their sexual orientation—might be equally motivated to uphold power imbalances between gender groups than straight men.

The power imbalances hostile sexism reinforces lead to a strong resentment towards the patriarchy and towards those who embody it; Women, especially lesbian women, endorsed hostility towards men on a high level. Our results, according to which hostility towards men and the level of perceived threat these women reported strongly correlated, are in harmony with previous studies that claimed dominance to trigger hostility on the part of subordinates—in this case, women—and thus, they oftentimes develop adversarial attitudes to protect their self-esteem (Glick & Fiske, 1999).

Our results showed, however, that resentment towards men is not the only reaction triggered by the perceived threat men pose to women. Although we did not hypothesise, a positive correlation was found between the perceived threat and benevolent sexism in the case of straight women. The protection racket hypothesis (Fisher, 2006) gives the most plausible explanation for this finding, according to which women adopt benevolent sexism—that promotes the idea that women should be protected, by, for example, their intimate male partner or family members (Glick et al., 2004)—more when hostility towards them is significant at a societal level. Therefore, when women perceive to be highly threatened by men, in hopes of being protected, women turn to the same (gender) group as the one threatening them, thus completing the vicious circle that hostile sexism is designed to maintain.

However, examining the relationship between the threat men pose to women and the ambivalent attitudes towards women and men led to some unexpected but rather promising results as well. Men who recognised the threat their own gender group poses

to women endorsed hostile sexism less (but hostility towards men more). Furthermore, straight men who recognised this threat accepted less benevolent attitudes towards men. These results suggest that those men who recognise the harm men—and the patriarchal system—can cause to women might become less invested in the gender status quo and alter their views of women accordingly; that is, they are less hostile towards women. Moreover, these men can even become allies for those women who aspire to challenge the gender hierarchy.

In conclusion, this study explored ambivalent attitudes towards gender across different sexual orientations, revealing nuanced patterns. Lesbian women and gay men showed less endorsement for benevolent attitudes, possibly because they are less likely to benefit from the attitudes that reward traditional gender roles or due to their lack of heterosexual intimacy. However, straight women showed a positive correlation between perceived threat and benevolent sexism, pointing towards Fisher's (2006) protection racket hypothesis, highlighting how societal hostility may drive women to adopt attitudes that ironically maintain the status quo. Reactions to hostile attitudes varied, with lesbian women showing the least agreement with hostile sexism, likely reflecting a defensive response against attitudes disproportionately targeting them, while they showed the strongest agreement with hostility towards men, signalling resentment towards the dominant group that is threatening them. The study also revealed a higher level of perceived threat amongst women, notably lesbian women, which is consistent with ongoing discrimination faced by Hungary's LGB community. Most promisingly, men acknowledging their gender group's potential threat to women showed less endorsement of hostile sexism, signalling a potential shift in gender attitudes. They could emerge as allies for women striving to challenge gender hierarchy, suggesting that awareness could lead to alterations in gender-related attitudes. Overall, this study unveiled the complex interplay of sexual orientation, perceived threat, and gender attitudes, shedding light on the intricate dynamics of gender biases within society.

### **Limitations**

The limitations of the current study include that we used scales on participants regardless of sexual their orientation, although the tools were primarily designed for straight participants. Nevertheless, previous research, too, has employed the same sexism inventory (ASI) utilised in the present study to compare attitudes between straight and gay people (Cowie et al., 2019). Another limitation of this study is the

modest sample size of lesbian and gay (LG) participants. Because of this, we couldn't perform latent class analysis on the scales to see whether these particular segments (i.e., Hungarian LG and straight people) display the same scale structure as the U.S. sample.

### **Study<sup>10</sup> 3: If you can dream it, you can do it!—The Role of Sexual Orientation in Preferences Towards Boys' and Girls' Career Orientation and Gendered Behaviour**

Most of the factors that impede women's progress are consequences of gender stereotypes (Peus et al., 2015) that are learned through socialisation from a young age (Bian et al., 2017; see also Hentschel et al., 2019) and reinforced by various agents, such as family members, teachers, the media, and the wider environment (Powell, 2011). Therefore, increased attention is being given to the intergenerational transmission of gender ideology—which refers to a person's beliefs, values, and attitudes about biological sex and gender—and the way the transmission occurs within families (Kroska & Elman, 2009). According to the intergenerational transmission of gender ideology, parents play a crucial role in the early socialisation of children (Bos & Sandfort, 2010), and their messages about gendered expectations have essential links with children's later gendered behaviours (Epstein & Ward, 2011; Hoferichter & Raufelder, 2019). For example, children whose parents hold more traditional views on gender roles tend to think in more traditional terms regarding gender roles themselves (Epstein & Ward, 2011; Fulcher, 2010; Sutfin et al., 2008). Furthermore, while fathers with traditional beliefs reinforce more traditional behaviour in their children (Odenweller et al., 2018), fathers with egalitarian gender ideologies are significantly more likely to have children with similarly egalitarian beliefs, even if the mother's gender ideology is different (David & Wills, 2010).

Children's gender development can vary between families with other-sex parents and same-sex parents. According to a study (Fulcher, 2010) that examined the career aspirations of children aged between 7-12 years, when straight (middle-class) mothers preferred more traditional attitudes regarding their children's gender roles,

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<sup>10</sup> This research was published in the *European Journal of Social Psychology* with only subtle changes in the text. Kántás, É. M., Faragó, L., & Kovacs, M. (2022). If you can dream it, you can do it!—The role of sexual orientation in preferences toward boys' and girls' career orientation and gendered behaviour. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 52(2), 305-325. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2789>



their children had more gender stereotypical career aspirations. However, the more egalitarian views lesbian and straight mothers expressed about gender roles, the more their 4-to-6-year-old children held egalitarian gender beliefs and endorsed less traditional gender role attitudes (Sutfin et al., 2008; see also Bos et al., 2004, 2007; Bos & Sandfort, 2010). Moreover, unlike the children of straight couples, same-sex couples' children accepted more flexible and less traditional gender-related attitudes (Bos & Sandfort, 2010; Sutfin et al., 2008), were more tolerant of non-stereotypical gendered behaviours (Bos & Sandfort, 2010), and displayed less gender-stereotyped play behaviour (Goldberg et al., 2012; Goldberg & Garcia, 2016).

The differences may stem from the greater acceptance gay parents show towards their children's non-stereotypical gendered behaviours and may even provide less gender-stereotyped environments compared to straight parents (Sutfin et al., 2008). However, it has not yet been decided whether these differences primarily result from modelling or the transmitting messages about non-traditional gender roles. Some studies suggest that same-sex couples may model non-traditional gender roles by sharing household and childcare tasks in an egalitarian manner (Farr & Patterson, 2013; Tornello et al., 2015) and dividing paid labour more equally (Jaspers & Verbakel, 2013). However, it is also possible that gay and lesbian people are androgynous rather than gender-polarised (Lippa 2005, 2008), which results in the transmission of messages belonging to a more flexible gender ideology.

Displaying gender counterstereotypical behaviours and attitudes within a patriarchal system can lead to backlash, particularly in a highly gender-traditional country such as Hungary (Scharle, 2015). Hungarian people tend to have hostile attitudes towards sexual minorities and gender nonconformity compared to Western Europeans (Danish Institute for Human Rights [DIHR], 2009; EC, 2019; Heinrich Böll Foundation [HBF], 2015). As a result, homophobia is a significant issue in Hungary and is often tolerated or even encouraged by institutionalised practices (Berán, 2011; Takács & Szalma, 2019). Gay and lesbian people in Hungary, therefore, face discrimination at all levels, and due to their assumed gender counter-stereotypical behaviour, they are exposed to experience backlash (Rudman & Phelan, 2008).

Backlash effects refer to social and economic reprisals directed towards those behaving counter-stereotypically (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). Women are most likely to

experience backlash effects when they display proscriptive attributes (e.g., seeking political office or expressing anger) that challenge the stability and legitimacy of a patriarchal society (Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2008; Moss-Racusin, 2014; Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010; Rudman et al., 2012a), but not when they fail to comply with prescriptive gender norms (Rudman et al., 2012b). Men, on the other hand, are exposed to backlash not only when they violate gender stereotypes by acting against proscriptive gender norms but also when they fail to display prescriptive gender norms (Rudman et al., 2012b). Examples include working in early elementary education (Moss-Racusin & Johnson, 2016) or requesting family leave from work (Rudman & Mescher, 2013).

It has been previously believed that children, typically thought to need the protection of adults, are not subject to backlash for violating cultural norms—at least in Western cultures (Lancy, 2015). It was thought that children were an irrelevant target of gender backlash, even when they violated gender norms (Rudman et al., 2012a), since the punishment for violating gender expectations is most severe for those who challenge the patriarchal social system (e.g., career women and feminists). However, Sullivan and colleagues (2018) posited that if adults can experience backlash for violating gender expectations, this prejudice may also be directed at gender-nonconforming children and their study supported their assumptions. They found that the negative evaluation of gender-nonconforming children was reportedly more severe in the case of stereotype-violating boys than girls; feminine boys are evaluated more negatively than gender-conforming boys, girls, and gender-nonconforming girls. In addition, assumptions were made about their gender and sexual identity, with feminine boys being perceived as gay or transgender. These assumptions were not as significant in the case of girls who violated gender stereotypes (Sullivan et al., 2018).

Modern sexism and political conservatism have been found to predict backlash towards gender non-conforming children: people with high scores on the modern sexism scale viewed stereotype-violating children as less likeable and competent and showed less willingness to interact with these children. Furthermore, endorsement of modern sexism resulted in more negative reactions not only towards children who violated gender stereotypes but also towards their parents (Sullivan et al., 2018).

Like other forms of sexism, modern sexism serves a system-justifying function. Although the perceived stability and legitimacy of the gender hierarchy have previously been examined in relation to ambivalent sexism but not with regard to modern sexism (Glick & Whitehead, 2010), these subtle forms of sexism have similar system justification functions. Previous research (Glick & Whitehead, 2010) has shown that ambivalent gender ideologies predict how stable and legit people perceive gender inequalities to be. Additionally, those who perceive men as innately aggressive and designed to dominate (and thus score high on hostile attitudes towards men; Glick & Fiske, 1999) view the gender hierarchy as more stable (Glick & Whitehead, 2010). It means that negative attitudes towards men, such as the belief that they are innately arrogant and power-seeking, reinforce the perceived legitimacy and stability of the gender hierarchy (Glick & Whitehead, 2010).

### **Research Aims and Hypotheses**

Our aim was twofold. On the one hand, we wanted to investigate whether sexual orientation influences parental preferences when it comes to the (prospective) children's gendered interests and behaviour. On the other hand, we also wanted to investigate whether modern sexism and the fear of backlash (that the—prospective—children might get from their peers because of the gender norms learned at home) can explain the association between sexual orientation and parental preferences and whether the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy influences this association. We assumed that LGB people would endorse modern sexism less than straight people and, thus, will be more supportive of gender-nonconforming traits, activities and occupational interests of their (prospective) children.

1. Sexual orientation would have an indirect effect through modern sexism on the support of the (prospective) children's gender-nonconforming traits, activities, and occupational interests.
2. The perceived stability of the gender hierarchy would moderate this association.
3. Depending on the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy but regardless of sexual orientation, modern sexism and the fear of backlash would predict more gender-traditional preferences.

In sum, we expect that the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy would influence the effect of sexual orientation on parental preferences regarding (prospective) children's traits, activities, and occupational interests through modern sexism and the fear of backlash.<sup>11</sup>

## Study 3A

### Materials and Methods

#### Participants

A total of 469 people completed the survey. After thorough consideration, we removed some respondents' ( $n = 21$ ) answers from the database during the data-cleaning process. As a result, the final sample consisted of 448 people; 92 men and 356 women. Altogether we had 124 LGB<sup>12</sup> (lesbian, gay, and bisexual) and 324 straight people in our sample. The mean age was 26 ( $SD = .90$ ). More than half of the respondents (56.3%) had a university degree (i.e., short-cycle tertiary education; college-, bachelor's-, master's degree, or doctoral-level education or equivalent). Most respondents (62.3%) lived in the capital city, 12.7% in another city, and 25% in a town or rural area. Only 11.2% of the participants were parents already (of boys, 5.7%, and girls, 5%), but another 68.8% reported wanting to become parents later.

We conducted a sensitivity analysis by setting the significance level at 5% level and power at 80% with a sample size of 448<sup>13</sup>. G\*Power indicated that the multiple linear regression with one tested and three total number of predictors would be sensitive even to minor effects as  $f^2 = .02$ . This means that the study could detect any effects larger than  $f^2 = .02$  reliably.

#### Measures and Procedure

We recruited the participants employing anonymous online sampling. The minimum age for participation was 18, and the data collection was part of an omnibus

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<sup>11</sup> The first and second hypotheses were examined in Study 3A, while the third hypothesis was examined in Study 3B.

<sup>12</sup> Although we used the sexual orientation scales as continuous variables in this study, we wanted to know how many LGB and straight participants took part in our research. Therefore, first, we created one scale from the heterosexuality and homosexuality scales (Sell, 1996). Then, by dummy coding, we sorted participants into LGB and straight groups solely to know the rate of participants with different sexual orientations.

<sup>13</sup> Due to the difference in numbers between LGB and straight people, we conducted sensitivity analyses separately for these groups. In the case of LGB people ( $n = 124$ ), the study would be sensitive to the effects of  $f^2 = .06$ , and in the case of straight people ( $n = 324$ ), the study would be sensitive to the effects of  $f^2 = .03$ . Both are considered to be small effects by Cohen (1988).

survey. All respondents participated voluntarily and were informed that they were free to choose whether they wanted to complete the survey or withdraw before completing it. We conducted all statistical analyses by using PROCESS Macro (Hayes, 2017) extension of IBM SPSS 24.0 and AMOS (Arbuckle, 2011). The research was conducted by applying the APA Code of Conduct and with the ELTE Eötvös Loránd University's Institutional Review Board approval.

We used self-report questionnaires to assess participants' sexual orientation, modern sexism, perceived stability of gender hierarchy, and parental preferences. In all cases, we used 5-point Likert scales ranging from 1 (“*I do not agree at all*”) to 5 (“*I fully agree*”). We measured sexual orientation (Sell, 1996) by two items<sup>14</sup>, modern sexism<sup>15</sup> (e.g., “It is rare to see women treated in a sexist manner on television.”; Swim et al., 1995) by eight items, the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy (e.g., “A few decades from now, the average salary for women will continue to be significantly lower than the average salary for men.”; Glick & Whitehead, 2010) by six items, and the parental preferences (e.g., “How much would you like your boy/girl to be a doctor when (s)he grows up?”; Liben & Bigler, 2002) regarding (prospective) children's occupations, traits, and activities by 36 items (18 items regarding boys and 18 items regarding girls). The scales and items used in Study 3A can be found in Appendix B.

## **Results**

### **Factor structure**

First, we assessed the factor structure of the parental preferences for boys scale. We tested the original six-factor solution, but it was not reliable. For this reason, we conducted an exploratory factor analysis using principal axis factoring (due to the lack of normal distribution in kurtosis and skewness), applying varimax rotation with Kaiser normalisation. We removed seven items from the analysis as they were either double-barrelled or did not load on the factors. The final factor structure explained 44.57% of the items' variance ( $KMO = .791$ ). We named the first factor ( $\alpha = .75$ ) as High-Status occupations for Boys (HSB),

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<sup>14</sup> We assessed Homosexuality and Heterosexuality as two separate continuous variables (Sell, 1996). In the case of the Heterosexuality scale, scores ranged from 1 (“*Not at all heterosexual*”) to 5 (“*Completely heterosexual*”) and in the case of the Homosexuality scale, scores ranged from 1 (“*Not at all homosexual*”) to 5 (“*Completely homosexual*”). Therefore, we did not separate groups by sexual orientation in the analyses; we only used the two continuous variables.

<sup>15</sup> The main effect was significant for gender,  $F(1,446) = 49.38$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .100$ , indicating that men ( $M = 2.78$ ,  $SD = 1.04$ ) endorsed modern sexism on a higher level than women ( $M = 2.10$ ,  $SD = 0.87$ ).

the second factor ( $\alpha = .73$ ) as Feminine activities and traits for Boys (FB), and the third factor ( $\alpha = .66$ ) as Feminine activities. Due to its low informativeness, we excluded the latter from further analysis. We calculated the first and second factors' means of the items and used them in subsequent analyses. The pattern matrix of the factor structure is presented in Table 5 (in Appendix A).

Then we assessed the factor structure of the parental preferences for girls scale. We tested the original six-factor solution but, like in the case of boys, it was unreliable. Therefore, we conducted an exploratory factor analysis using principal axis factoring, applying varimax rotation with Kaiser normalisation. We removed seven items from the analysis as they were either double-barrelled or did not load on the factors. The final factor structure explained 45.90% of the items' variance ( $KMO = .805$ ). We named the first factor ( $\alpha = .76$ ) as High-Status occupations for Girls (HSG) because it included both masculine and feminine professions, the second factor ( $\alpha = .74$ ) as Feminine activities and traits for Girls (FG), and the third factor ( $\alpha = .69$ ) as Feminine activities. Due to its low informativeness, we excluded the latter from further analysis. We calculated the first and second factors' means of the items and used them in subsequent analyses. The pattern matrix of the factor structure is presented in Table 5 (in Appendix A).

### **Descriptive statistics**

Table 6 (in Appendix A) displays the means, standard deviations, Cronbach's alphas, and correlation between the variables. Homosexuality correlated negatively with modern sexism and predicted a lower level of endorsement for HSB and HSG<sup>16</sup> and less support for FG, but it was unrelated to FB<sup>17</sup>. The opposite pattern was found in the case of heterosexuality: It positively predicted modern sexism and support for HSB and HSG. However, it was unrelated to FB<sup>18</sup> and FG<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> Although a weak correlation could be observed between the variables, we could not test these associations with moderated mediation analysis because homosexuality did not predict support for high-status occupations for girls ( $t(5,442) = -1.61$   $p = .11$ ).

<sup>17</sup> We could not test these associations with moderated mediation analysis because homosexuality did not predict support for feminine activities and traits for boys ( $t(5,442) = -.71$   $p = .48$ ).

<sup>18</sup> We could not test these associations with moderated mediation analysis because heterosexuality did not predict support for feminine activities and traits for boys ( $t(2,445) = 0.45$   $p = .66$ ).

<sup>19</sup> We could not test these associations with moderated mediation analysis because heterosexuality did not predict support for feminine activities and traits for girls,  $t(2,445) = 1.34$   $p = .18$ .

## **Hypothesis testing**

We tested our hypotheses by applying PROCESS Macro's (Hayes, 2017) moderated mediation analysis (Model 14). We assessed the association between sexual orientation (homosexuality and heterosexuality) and the support for high-status masculine, and feminine activity choices for boys and girls via modern sexism, as well as the moderating role of the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy. Further, we used gender as a control variable in the analyses.

***Homosexuality and HSB.*** We investigated if modern sexism mediates between homosexuality and the support for HSB and whether the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy moderates this relation when we control for gender. Table 7 displays the results of the moderated mediation analysis. As the table shows, homosexuality negatively predicted the endorsement of modern sexism, and women endorsed modern sexism less than men. Endorsement for HSB was predicted negatively by homosexuality but positively by modern sexism. Nonetheless, neither gender nor the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy was related to HSB, and the interaction term between modern sexism and the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy was also not significant. The index of moderated mediation was not significant, meaning that homosexuality predicted HSB negatively through modern sexism at almost each level of the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy when we controlled for gender.

**Table 7**

Moderated mediation analysis (Study 1): Associations between Homosexuality, Heterosexuality, Modern Sexism, the Perceived Gender Hierarchy, and Support for High-Status occupations for Boys (HSB)

Predictors		B	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Outcome: Modern sexism							
Constant		3.92	.19	20.89	<.001	3.55	4.29
	Homosexuality	-.23	.04	-6.03	<.001	-.31	-.16
	Gender (covariate)	-.75	.09	-7.94	<.001	-.93	-.56
Constant		2.75	.22	12.57	<.001	2.32	3.18
	Heterosexuality	.18	.03	5.35	<.001	.11	.24
	Gender (covariate)	-.72	.09	-7.58	<.001	-.90	-.53
Outcome: High-Status occupations for Boys (HSB)							
Constant		2.96	.33	8.90	<.001	2.30	3.61
	Homosexuality	-.06	.03	-2.02	.044	-.12	-.002
	Modern Sexism	.30	.12	2.48	.014	.06	.54
	Perceived Stability of the Gender Hierarchy	.13	.09	1.40	.163	-.05	.30
	Interaction	-.06	.04	-1.57	.118	-.14	.02
	Gender (covariate)	.02	.08	.27	.790	-.13	.17
Constant		2.53	.32	7.86	<.001	1.90	3.16
	Heterosexuality	.08	.03	2.99	.003	.03	.13
	Modern Sexism	.31	.12	2.55	.011	.07	.54
	Perceived Stability of the Gender Hierarchy	.13	.09	1.47	.142	-.04	.31
	Interaction	-.07	.04	-1.69	.093	-.14	.01
	Gender (covariate)	.12	.08	.25	.802	-.13	.17
Conditional indirect effects of sexual orientation on High-Status occupations for Boys through the mediator							
Sexual orientation	Level of interaction	Effect	Boot SE		Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI	
Homosexuality	Moderator -1SD	-.04	.01		-.06	-.02	
	Moderator Mean	-.03	.01		-.05	-.01	
	Moderator +1SD	-.02	.01		-.04	.01	
Heterosexuality	Moderator -1SD	.03	.01		.01	.05	
	Moderator Mean	.02	.01		.01	.04	
	Moderator +1SD	.01	.01		-.01	.03	
Index of moderated mediation							
Sexual orientation	Mediator	Effect	Boot SE		Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI	
Homosexuality	Modern Sexism	.01	.01		-.01	.03	
Heterosexuality	Modern Sexism	-.01	.01		-.03	.003	

Note.  $N = 448$  participants. CI=confidence interval; LL= lower level of CI; UL= upper level of CI. Level of confidence = 95%. Homosexuality and Heterosexuality were used as continuous variables: the scores were ranging from 1 (not at all homosexual/heterosexual) to 5 (extremely homosexual/heterosexual). Unstandardised regression coefficients are reported. Gender was coded as 1 = men, 2 = women. Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

**Heterosexuality and HSB.** We examined if modern sexism mediates between heterosexuality and the support for HSB and whether the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy moderates this relation when we control for gender. Table 7 displays the results of the moderated mediation analysis. As indicated in the table, heterosexuality positively predicted the endorsement of modern sexism, and women endorsed modern sexism less than men. Endorsement for HSB was predicted positively by both heterosexuality and modern sexism. However, neither gender nor the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy was related to HSB, and the interaction term between modern sexism and the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy was also not significant. The index of moderated mediation was not significant, meaning that heterosexuality predicted HSB positively through modern sexism at almost every level of the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy when we controlled for gender.



**Homosexuality and FG.** We investigated if modern sexism mediates between homosexuality and the support for FG and whether the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy moderates this relation when we control for gender. Table 8 displays the results of the moderated mediation analysis. As the table shows, homosexuality negatively predicted the endorsement of modern sexism, and women endorsed modern sexism less than men. Endorsement for FG was negatively predicted by homosexuality, but neither gender nor the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy was related to FG, and the interaction term between modern sexism and the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy was also not significant. The index of moderated mediation was not significant, meaning that homosexuality negatively predicted FG through modern sexism at each level of the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy when we controlled for gender.

**Table 8**

Moderated mediation analysis (Study 1): Associations between Homosexuality, Modern Sexism, the Perceived Gender Hierarchy, and Support for Feminine activities and traits for Girls (FG)

Predictors	B	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Outcome: Modern sexism						
Constant	3.92	.19	20.89	<.001	3.55	4.29
Homosexuality	-.23	.04	-6.03	<.001	-.31	-.16
Gender (covariate)	-.75	.09	-7.94	<.001	-.93	-.56
Outcome: Feminine activities and traits for Girls (FG)						
Constant	3.66	.28	13.17	<.001	3.12	4.21
Homosexuality	-.05	.03	-2.04	.042	-.10	-.002
Modern Sexism	.19	.10	1.85	.065	-.01	.39
Perceived Stability of the Gender Hierarchy	.10	.08	1.34	.180	-.05	.25
Interaction	-.06	.03	-1.92	.055	-.13	.001
Gender (covariate)	.14	.07	2.25	.025	.02	.27
Conditional indirect effects of sexual orientation on Feminine activities and traits for Girls through the mediator						
Level of interaction	Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI		
Moderator -1SD	-.01	.01	-.03	.01		
Moderator Mean	.001	.01	-.02	.02		
Moderator +1SD	.01	.01	-.01	.03		
Index of moderated mediation						
Mediator	Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI		
Modern Sexism	.02	.01	<.001	.03		

Note.  $N = 448$  participants. CI = Confidence interval; LL = lower level of CI; UL = upper level of CI. Level of confidence = 95%. Homosexuality and Heterosexuality were used as continuous variables: the scores were ranging from 1 (not at all homosexual/heterosexual) to 5 (extremely homosexual/heterosexual). Unstandardised regression coefficients are reported. Gender was coded as 1 = men, 2 = women. Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

**Heterosexuality and HSG.** Lastly, we investigated if modern sexism mediates between heterosexuality and the support for HSG and whether the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy moderates this relation when we control for gender. Table 9 displays the results of the moderated mediation analysis.

As the table shows, heterosexuality positively predicted the endorsement of modern sexism and that women endorsed modern sexism less than men. Endorsement for HSG was positively predicted by heterosexuality, modern sexism, and the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy, but gender was unrelated to HSG.

**Table 9**

Moderated mediation analysis (Study 1): Associations between Heterosexuality, Modern Sexism, the Perceived Gender Hierarchy, and Support for High-Status occupations for Girls (HSG)

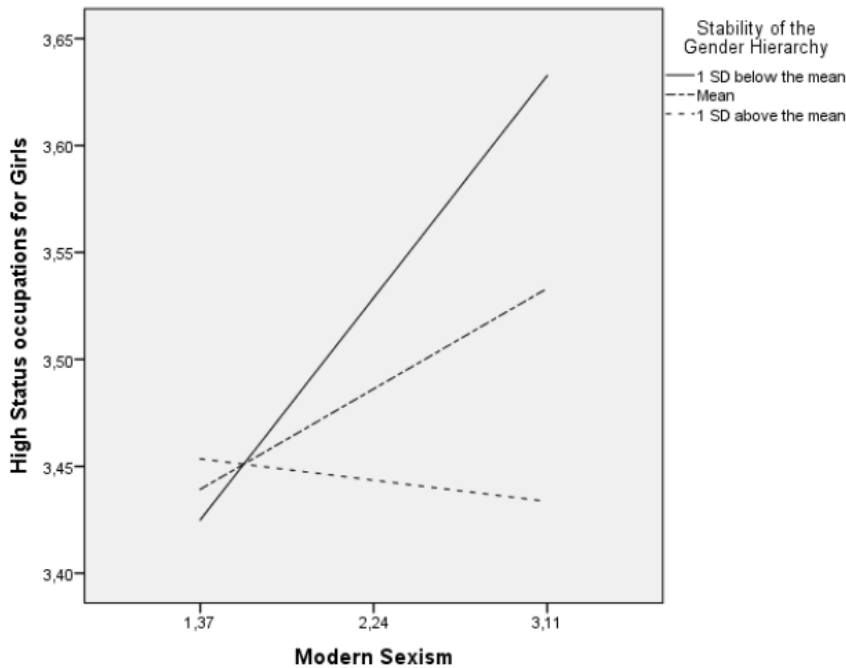
Predictors	B	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Outcome: Modern sexism						
Constant	2.75	.22	12.57	<.001	2.32	3.18
Heterosexuality	.18	.03	5.35	<.001	.11	.24
Gender (covariate)	-.72	.09	-7.58	<.001	-.90	-.53
Outcome: High-Status occupations for Girls (HSG)						
Constant	2.62	.34	7.73	<.001	1.96	3.29
Heterosexuality	.07	.03	2.60	.010	.02	.12
Modern Sexism	.32	.13	2.54	.011	.07	.57
Perceived Stability of the Gender Hierarchy	.14	.09	1.49	.137	-.05	.33
Interaction	-.09	.04	-2.15	.032	-.17	-.01
Gender (covariate)	.01	.08	.08	.938	-.15	.16
Conditional indirect effects of sexual orientation on High-Status occupations for Girls through the mediator						
Level of interaction	Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI		
Moderator -1SD	.02	.01	.004	.04		
Moderator Mean	.01	.01	-.004	.03		
Moderator +1SD	-.002	.01	-.02	.2		
Index of moderated mediation						
Mediator	Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI		
Modern Sexism	-.02	.01	-.03	-.001		

Note. *N* = 448 participants. CI=confidence interval; LL= lower level of CI; UL= upper level of CI. Level of confidence = 95%. Homosexuality and Heterosexuality were used as continuous variables: the scores were ranging from 1 (not at all homosexual/heterosexual) to 5 (extremely homosexual/heterosexual). Unstandardised regression coefficients are reported. Gender was coded as 1 = men, 2 = women. Bootstrap sample size = 5,000.

The interaction term between modern sexism and the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy and the index of moderated mediation also proved significant. At lower levels of the gender hierarchy's perceived stability (1 standard deviation below the mean), modern sexism positively and significantly predicted HSG. However, at the mean and higher levels of the moderator (1 standard deviation above the mean), modern sexism was not related to HSG. This means that modern sexism positively predicted HSG only when the gender hierarchy was perceived to be low, but when the gender hierarchy was perceived as stable, the two variables did not correlate. Figure 2 shows a simple slope visualisation of this moderation. In sum, our results show that when the gender hierarchy was perceived to be unstable, the positive indirect effect of heterosexuality through modern sexism was significant, but when the gender hierarchy was perceived to be stable, modern sexism did not mediate between heterosexuality and support for HSG any longer.

**Figure 2**

The Relationship Between Modern Sexism and Support for (High-Status occupations for Girls) HSG, Moderated by the Perceived Stability of the Gender Hierarchy—Simple Slope



### Discussion of Study 3A

In line with our predictions and consistent with previous research (e.g., Bos & Sandfort, 2010), homosexuality was associated with less gender stereotypical parental preferences, while heterosexuality predicted more traditional gender role preferences for the (prospective) children. Furthermore, the relation between heterosexuality and gender-conforming parental preferences (just like in the case of heterosexuality and HSB) was positively mediated by modern sexism. Meanwhile, in the case of homosexuality, a lower level of modern sexism mediated between sexual orientation and gender-nonstereotypical preferences for the (prospective) children's traits, activities, and occupation interests. These results seem to reinforce our assumptions that because gay people consider themselves to be less gender stereotypical (Allen & Robson, 2020) and endorse polarised gender roles less (Lippa 2005, 2008), they are also more flexible about the gender roles they prefer for their children.

Our results showed that, for boys, modern sexism plays an important role in mediating parents' gender preferences. Through a higher level of modern sexism, heterosexuality positively predicted respondents' preference for high-status occupations for boys, and this preference was unaffected by the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy. Meanwhile, through lower levels of modern sexism,

homosexuality negatively predicted the preference for high-status occupations for boys, and this relation was, too, unaffected by the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy.

In the case of girls, the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy had a substantial effect on parental preferences regarding high-status occupations for girls by influencing the mediating effect of modern sexism. Although we did not expect, results showed that heterosexuality positively predicted the parental preferences regarding high-status occupations for girls through modern sexism, but only when the gender hierarchy's perceived stability was low. It means that the (prospective) parents only preferred high-status occupations—considered masculine—for their daughters if they perceived the current gender hierarchy as unstable.

In conclusion, the study showed that homosexuality is associated with less gender-stereotypical parental preferences regarding the gendered behaviour (prospective) children display, mediated by lower levels of modern sexism. Heterosexuality, conversely, was found to predict traditional gender role preferences, positively mediated by modern sexism. In relation to high-status occupations for boys, we found that the mediating role of modern sexism was unaffected by the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy. For girls, the gender hierarchy's perceived stability significantly influenced straight people's parental preferences; high-status occupational preferences emerged only when the gender hierarchy was perceived to be unstable. Thus, straight parents exhibited preferences for non-traditional occupations for their daughters only if they thought the gender hierarchy was changeable.

### **Limitations of Study 3A**

There were some limitations of this study. For example, we couldn't examine the effect of modern sexism and the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy on the association between sexual orientation and feminine activities and traits—with one exception. It is probably because modern sexism refers to the misguided belief that gender equality has fully been realised and because the realisation of gender equality is more dependent on the equal distribution of high-status jobs than the distribution of feminine traits, the first had a more pronounced connection with modern sexist beliefs. Further, respondents had to evaluate decontextualised statements. This might have skewed their responses, especially in terms of preferred activities and traits, because the statements did not give them any reference point regarding whom the child should be

competitive or emotional with. It is possible that should we set scenarios—for example, by asking what sort of activities and behaviours parents would prefer for their children at home and in school—preferences would be altered. Moreover, the study was limited by the low number of LGB participants, which precluded differentiating between gay and bisexual people’s responses.

Despite these limitations, our findings still indicate that sexual orientation is a significant factor in terms of parental preferences related to gender attitudes. Furthermore, the results suggest that while the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy may have a significant effect on parental preferences for (prospective) daughters, it does not impact parental preferences for (prospective) sons. It is most probably because we could primarily assess parental preferences regarding high-status occupations. Considering that boys are traditionally encouraged to choose these careers, while girls typically face backlash in this patriarchal system when attempting to enter male-dominated, high-status occupations, the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy affected parental preferences for daughters’ occupational choices more intensively.

### **Study 3B**

In Study 3A, we investigated whether the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy has an effect on the relationship between sexual orientation and parental attitudes and whether modern sexism mediates this association. We were able to demonstrate the role of sexual orientation and modern sexism in (prospective) parental preferences regarding boys’ high-status occupations. Our results also showed that regarding girls’ less gender-conforming gendered behaviour preferences, (prospective) parent’s sexual orientation played the most important role, while regarding the girls’ occupational preferences, the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy was more important.

We could not investigate the relation between the (prospective) parents’ sexual orientation and preferences regarding their boys’ and girls’ feminine behaviour. Moreover, we did not assess the difference between LGB groups as we measured sexual orientation as a continuous variable. Therefore, in Study 3B, we measured the differences between groups with different sexual orientations as well. Furthermore, we used an experimental design in Study 3B in order to test the influence of the perceived gender hierarchy. Also, to avoid possible bias from decontextualised statements,

we presented two scenarios to the respondents to measure if (prospective) parents preferred different gendered behaviour for their children at home or school—regardless of the child’s gender.

In Study 3B, we manipulated the respondent’s perception regarding the gender hierarchy’s stability and assessed the different parental preferences among LGB and straight people. We also assessed modern sexism and the fear of backlash (that someone’s—prospective—child might have to face from their peers because of the gender norms learned at home) and gender as predictors in each analysis.

## **Materials and Methods**

### **Participants**

An a priori power analysis was conducted employing the G\*Power calculator. We set it for a 5% significance level with 80% power and the effect size of  $f^2 = .02$ —which is based on the effect size observed in the first study. We applied the hierarchical multiple regression with three predictors estimation. Results showed that we would need at least 550 participants in order to detect a similarly small effect than in the case of Study 3A. Therefore, our sample size ( $n = 704$ ) was sufficient to achieve this aim.

A total of 757 people completed the survey. During the data-cleaning process, we removed some respondents’ ( $n = 19$ ) answers from the database. Also, after thorough consideration, because of the low number of these participants, we also removed the answers of transsexual men ( $n = 11$ ), transsexual women ( $n = 4$ ), and non-binary people ( $n = 19$ ). Therefore, our final sample comprised 704 people; 167 men and 537 women. Altogether, we had 263 LGB and 441 straight people in our sample. The mean age was 28 ( $SD = .11$ ). More than half of the respondents (56.1%) had a university degree (i.e., short-cycle tertiary education; college-, bachelor’s-, master’s degree, or doctoral-level education or equivalent). About half of the participants (51.3%) lived in the capital city, 17.0% in another city, and 31.7% in a town or rural area. Only 17.9% of the participants were parents already (of boys, 9.0%, and girls, 8.9%), but another 72% reported wanting to become parents later.

### **Measures and Procedure**

Similarly to Study 3A, we recruited the participants via anonymous online sampling, and the minimum age for participation was 18. All respondents participated voluntarily and were informed that they were free to choose whether they wanted to

complete the survey or withdraw before completing it. We conducted all statistical analyses by using the IBM SPSS 24.0 software. The research was conducted by applying the APA Code of Conduct and with the ELTE Eötvös Loránd University's Institutional Review Board approval.

In the online experiment we conducted, participants were randomly assigned into one of two conditions: the stable gender hierarchy or the unstable gender hierarchy condition. When creating the vignettes related to gender hierarchy, we used those topics covered by the items, which with we measured the perceived stability of gender hierarchy in Study 3A. Furthermore, since we wanted to create as credible descriptions as possible, we provided factual information on the same topics concerning gender hierarchy. That is, the difference between the stable and unstable condition was that in the unstable condition, we focused on the equality indicators that have been improved in the last couple of decades, while in the stable condition, we focused on the still existing gaps in equality (in Hungarian context).

At the beginning of the survey, after sorting respondents into one of the conditions randomly, we asked them to read their vignette carefully. Also, to ensure that participants paid careful attention when reading the vignette, we used two follow-up questions. First, we asked the participants right after reading the vignette whether they were glad about the read (unstable condition) or would prefer Hungarians to have a more egalitarian attitude (stable condition). Then, at the end of the survey, we asked respondents how realistic they thought the vignette they read was.

After presenting the vignettes<sup>20</sup> (related to stable/unstable gender hierarchy conditions), we measured the sexual orientation, endorsement of modern sexism<sup>21</sup>, and the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy<sup>22</sup> identical to as we measured these in Study 3A<sup>23</sup>. However, in Study 3B, we sorted participants into categories based on their sexual orientation, that is, gay/lesbian, bisexual, and straight<sup>24</sup>.

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<sup>20</sup> Apart from the vignettes, the rest of the study was identical for the respondents.

<sup>21</sup> The main effect was significant for gender,  $F(1,698) = 79.33$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = 102$ . It means that men ( $M = 2.45$ ,  $SD = .07$ ) accepted modern sexism more than women ( $M = 1.78$ ,  $SD = .04$ ).

<sup>22</sup> To test the efficacy of the manipulation, we assessed how stable respondents perceived the gender hierarchy to be in each condition and compared the results.

<sup>23</sup> Cronbach's alphas of Study 3B were as follows:  $\alpha_{Boys\ at\ Home} = .70$ ;  $\alpha_{Girls\ at\ Home} = .75$ ;  $\alpha_{Boys\ in\ School} = .70$ ;  $\alpha_{Girls\ in\ School} = .75$ ;  $\alpha_{Modern\ sexism} = .91$ ;  $\alpha_{Fear\ of\ backlash} = .77$ ;  $\alpha_{Stability\ of\ the\ gender\ hierarchy} = .80$ .

<sup>24</sup> In Study 3B, we created one scale from heterosexuality and homosexuality scales, and by dummy-coding, we sorted participants into gay, bisexual, and straight groups.

Besides, the present study was extended by measurement of the fear of backlash by peers (e.g., “Would you be concerned that his/her classmates might dislike (s)he?”; Rudman & Fairchild, 2004) with seven items, and the parental preferences (e.g., “be affectionate”; “be competitive”; Liben & Bigler, 2002) regarding traits and activities were measured somewhat differently, by 20-20 items for girls and boys in the case of both the ‘At home’ and ‘In school’ scenarios. However, in order to improve internal consistencies, we omitted some items (regardless of gender: complain and brag a lot were omitted from the ‘At home’ scenario and complain along with misbehave were omitted from the ‘In school’ scenario) from the original scale. Further, instead of creating separate scales for masculine and feminine traits and activities, we created one scale by merging the means of items. Hence, we used a masculinity-femininity scale ranging from 1 (i.e., “Completely masculine”) to 9 (i.e., “Completely feminine”) and applied this scale in further analyses. In all other cases, 5-point Likert scales were used, ranging from 1 (“I do not agree at all”) to 5 (“I fully agree”). The scales and items used in Study 3B can be found in Appendix B.

## **Results**

### **Manipulation checks**

ANOVA tests were performed to examine differences between the manipulation conditions. We found a significant difference in how stable respondents perceived the gender hierarchy to be,  $F(1,701) = 4.76$   $p = .029$ . As we expected, respondents perceived the gender hierarchy as less stable in the unstable condition ( $M = 2.95$ ,  $SD = .75$ ) compared to the stable condition ( $M = 3.07$ ,  $SD = .73$ ). We also found a difference between conditions regarding the fear of backlash by peers that one’s (prospective) child might have to face due to the gender norms learned at home,  $F(1,701) = 4.75$   $p = .030$ ,  $\eta^2 = .007$ . In the stable gender hierarchy condition, respondents reported a slightly higher level of fear of backlash by peers ( $M = 2.29$ ,  $SD = .64$ ) than those in the unstable gender hierarchy condition ( $M = 2.17$ ,  $SD = .69$ ). However, there was no significant difference the first ( $M = 2.08$ ,  $SD = .79$ ) and the second ( $M = 2.08$ ,  $SD = .81$ ) conditions regarding modern sexism,  $F(1,701) = 0.12$   $p = .730$ ,  $\eta^2 < .001$ .

### **Descriptive statistics**

Table 10 displays (in Appendix A) the means, standard deviations, and Cronbach’s alphas. The scores of the Boys at Home, Boys in School, Girls at Home, and Girls in School scales are slightly above the midpoint, indicating that respondents



showed a slight preference towards feminine traits compared to masculine ones. When perceiving the gender hierarchy as stable, gay and straight respondents tended to exhibit slightly more masculine preferences, while bisexual respondents showed the opposite tendency. Among the groups, gay men showed a preference for less masculine behaviour for their (prospective) sons in both the 'At Home' and 'In School' settings; however, this difference decreased when the gender hierarchy was perceived as stable. In the stable condition, straight men preferred more masculine behaviour for (prospective) sons. In the unstable condition, interestingly, bisexual men exhibited more traditional attitudes towards gender roles for their (prospective) daughters, while straight women tended to prefer more feminine behaviour for (potential) daughters in both the 'At Home' and 'In School' settings.

### **Hypothesis testing**

We tested our hypotheses by conducting hierarchical multiple regression analyses. We investigated whether modern sexism and the fear of backlash (by peers) can predict the gendered expectations towards (prospective) daughters and sons in two scenarios (Boys At Home and Boys In School) for the three sexual orientation groups (gay, bisexual, and straight). We included gender in the analyses as a covariate variable. We conducted measurements in two manipulation conditions: in which the gender hierarchy was implied to be stable (stable condition) and in which the gender hierarchy was implied to be changeable (unstable condition).

***Boys at Home.*** First, we examined the preferences of (prospective) parents regarding their son's—at home—gendered behaviour among various sexual orientation groups in both manipulation conditions. Tables 11 and 12 display the results. When the gender hierarchy was perceived as unstable, no significant predictors were found for gay people. However, when the gender hierarchy was perceived as stable, lessened modern sexism predicted more feminine behaviour preferences,  $r = -.35, p = .012$ . In contrast, in the case of bisexual people, when the gender hierarchy was perceived as stable, no significant predictors were found, while when the gender hierarchy was perceived as unstable, lessened modern sexism predicted more feminine behaviour preferences,  $r = -.24, p = .015$ . In the case of straight people, modern sexism did not predict (prospective) parental preferences regarding boys' gendered behaviour at home. However, gender was proved to be a significant predictor.

That is, when they perceived the gender hierarchy either as stable,  $r = .19, p = .002$ , or unstable,  $r = .20, p = .002$ , women preferred more feminine behaviour for boys at home.

**Boys in School.** Second, we examined the preferences of (prospective) parents regarding their son's—in-school—gendered behaviour among various sexual orientation groups in both manipulation conditions. Tables 11 and 12 display the results. In the case of gay people, no difference was found between the conditions regarding the predictors. When the gender hierarchy was perceived as either stable,  $r = -.28, p = .023$ , or unstable,  $r = -.28, p = .017$ , lessened modern sexism predicted more feminine behaviour preferences. Meanwhile, in the case of bisexual people, lessened modern sexism only predicted a preference for more feminine behaviour when the gender hierarchy was perceived as unstable,  $r = -.39, p < .001$ . In addition, the fear of backlash by peers predicted more masculine behaviour preferences,  $r = -.24, p = .17$ . However, in the case of straight people, the only variable that influenced the (prospective) parental preferences was gender. Women preferred more feminine behaviour for boys in school regardless of whether they perceived the gender hierarchy as unstable,  $r = .18, p = .005$ , or stable,  $r = .15, p = .010$ .

**Girls at Home.** Then, we examined the preferences of the (prospective) parents regarding their girl's—at home—gendered behaviour among various sexual orientation groups in both manipulation conditions. Tables 11 and 12 display the results. In the case of gay people, no significant predictor was found in either condition. In the case of bisexual people, when the gender hierarchy was perceived as unstable, no predictor was proved to be significant, but when the gender hierarchy was perceived as stable, modern sexism predicted more feminine behaviour preferences,  $r = .31, p = .004$ . In the case of straight people, modern sexism predicted more feminine behaviour preferences, both when they perceived the gender hierarchy as stable,  $r = .23, p < .001$ , or unstable,  $r = .17, p = .008$ . Moreover, even when they perceived the gender hierarchy as unstable, women showed more feminine behaviour preferences for their (prospective) girl's at home,  $r = .13, p = .027$ . However, when respondents perceived the gender hierarchy as stable, gender did not correlate significantly with the outcome variable,  $r = .06, p = .165$ .

**Table 11**

Results of regression analysis on parental preferences – Manipulation 1 (unstable gender hierarchy condition)

		Outcome: Boys at Home						
Sexual orientation	Predictor	B	SE	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Bisexual <sup>1</sup>	Constant	5.82	.16		35.98	<.001	5.50	6.15
	Modern Sexism	-.19	.09	-.24	-2.21	.03	-.36	-.02
Straight <sup>2</sup>	Constant	5.17	.22		23.75	<.001	4.74	5.60
	Modern Sexism	.002	.04	.003	.04	.97	-.08	.09
	Fear of Backlash	.01	.05	.01	.17	.86	-.08	.10
	Gender	.24	.08	.20	2.86	.01	.08	.41
		Boys in School						
Gay <sup>3</sup>	Constant	5.95	.14		42.21	<.001	5.67	6.23
	Modern Sexism	-.16	.08	-.28	-2.18	.033	-.31	-.01
Bisexual <sup>4</sup>	Constant	6.33	.22		28.52	<.001	5.89	6.77
	Modern Sexism	-.29	.08	-.37	-3.62	.001	-.45	-.13
	Fear of Backlash	-.15	.08	-.21	-2.00	.049	-.31	-.001
Straight <sup>5</sup>	Constant	5.80	.10		60.51	<.001	5.61	5.98
	Modern Sexism	-.10	.04	-.17	-2.50	.013	-.18	-.02
		Outcome: Girls at Home						
Straight <sup>6</sup>	Constant	4.99	.22		22.70	<.001	4.55	5.42
	Modern sexism	.13	.04	.21	2.93	.004	.04	.21
	Fear of Backlash	.05	.05	.07	.98	.330	-.05	.14
	Gender	.23	.09	.19	2.74	.007	.07	.40
		Outcome: Girls in School						
Bisexual <sup>7</sup>	Constant	5.03	.60		8.40	<.001	3.83	6.22
	Modern sexism	.09	.12	.10	.74	.463	-.15	.33
	Fear of Backlash	-.23	.09	-.27	-2.49	.015	-.42	-.05
	Gender	.45	.22	.26	2.01	.049	.003	.89
Straight <sup>8</sup>	Constant	5.30	.21		24.96	<.001	4.88	5.72
	Modern sexism	.09	.04	.16	2.21	.028	.01	.17
	Fear of Backlash	-.02	.05	-.03	-.37	.711	-.11	.07
	Gender	.17	.08	.15	2.12	.035	.01	.34

*Note.* *N* = 350 participants. CI=confidence interval; LL= lower level of CI; UL= upper level of CI. 1 The following covariates were considered: Modern Sexism, Fear of Backlash, and Gender. Gender was coded as 1 = men, 2 = women. 1 The effects of block 1 of a hierarchical multiple regression analysis are reported,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{first block}} = .059$ ; 2 The effects of block 3 of a hierarchical multiple regression analysis are reported,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{first block}} = .003$ ,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{second block}} < .001$ ,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{third block}} = .038$ ; 3 The effects of block 1 of a hierarchical multiple regression analysis are reported,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{first block}} = .076$ ; 4 The effects of block 2 of a hierarchical multiple regression analysis are reported,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{first block}} = .151$ ,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{second block}} = .042$ ; 5 The effects of block 1 of a hierarchical multiple regression analysis are reported,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{first block}} = .029$ ; 6 The effects of block 3 of a hierarchical multiple regression analysis are reported,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{first block}} = .028$ ,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{second block}} = .005$ ,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{third block}} = .034$ ; 7 The effects of block 3 of a hierarchical multiple regression analysis are reported,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{first block}} = .006$ ,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{second block}} = .070$ ,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{third block}} = .046$ ; 8 The effects of block 3 of a hierarchical multiple regression analysis are reported,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{first block}} = .013$ ,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{second block}} < .001$ ,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{third block}} = .021$ .

***Girls in School.*** Last, we examined the preferences of the (prospective) parents regarding their girl's—in-school—gendered behaviour among various sexual orientation groups in both manipulation conditions. Tables 11 and 12 display the results. In the case of gay people, similar to the Girls at Home scenario's results, no significant predictor was found in either condition. Interestingly though, in the case of bisexual people, when the gender hierarchy was perceived as unstable, the fear of backlash by peers predicted a preference for more masculine behaviour,  $r = -.27, p = .008$ . Moreover, in the same condition, bisexual women showed more feminine behaviour preferences for their (prospective) daughters,  $r = .22, p = .026$ . Nonetheless, when they perceived the gender hierarchy as stable, modern sexism predicted more feminine behaviour preferences,  $r = .27, p = .010$ . In the case of straight people, modern sexism predicted more feminine behaviour preferences both when they perceived the gender hierarchy as stable,  $r = .18, p = .003$ , and unstable,  $r = .11, p = .050$ . Nevertheless, although gender was a significant predictor of (prospective) parents' preferences regarding their daughters' gendered behaviour in both conditions, gender per se did not correlate significantly with the outcome variable, neither in the stable condition,  $r = .08, p = .115$ , nor in the unstable condition,  $r = .11, p = .060$ .

**Table 12**

Results of regression analysis on parental preferences – Manipulation 2 (stable gender hierarchy condition)

		Outcome: Boys at Home						
Sexual orientation	Predictor	B	SE	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Gay <sup>1</sup>	Constant	6.04	.19		31.61	<.001	5.65	6.42
	Modern Sexism	-.28	.11	-.35	-2.60	.012	-.50	-.06
Straight <sup>2</sup>	Constant	4.95	.20		24.25	<.001	4.54	5.35
	Modern Sexism	.05	.04	.10	1.37	.172	-.02	.13
	Fear of Backlash	.03	.04	.04	.63	.528	-.06	.12
	Gender	.23	.07	.22	3.18	.002	.09	.37
		Boys in School						
Gay <sup>3</sup>	Constant	5.95	.20		29.30	<.001	5.54	6.36
	Modern sexism	-.23	.12	-.28	-2.04	.047	-.47	-.004
Straight <sup>4</sup>	Constant	5.16	.22		23.55	<.001	4.73	5.59
	Modern sexism	.002	.04	.004	.06	.953	-.08	.09
	Fear of Backlash	.01	.05	.02	.25	.802	-.08	.11
	Gender	.17	.08	.15	2.20	.029	.02	.33
		Outcome: Girls at Home						
Bisexual <sup>5</sup>	Constant	5.35	.15		34.97	<.001	5.05	5.66
	Modern sexism	.22	.08	.31	2.72	.008	.06	.38
Straight <sup>6</sup>	Constant	4.98	.21		23.58	<.001	4.57	5.40
	Modern sexism	.17	.04	.29	4.20	<.001	.09	.25
	Fear of Backlash	.01	.05	.02	.25	.807	-.08	.10
	Gender	.19	.08	.17	2.46	.015	.04	.33
		Outcome: Girls in School						
Bisexual <sup>7</sup>	Constant	5.35	.16		33.66	<.001	5.03	5.66
	Modern sexism	.20	.08	.27	2.38	.020	.03	.36
Straight <sup>8</sup>	Constant	5.04	.22		22.60	<.001	4.60	5.48
	Modern sexism	.15	.04	.24	3.43	.001	.06	.23
	Fear of Backlash	.004	.05	.01	.08	.934	-.09	.10
	Gender	.19	.08	.17	2.39	.018	.03	.35

*Note.* *N* = 354 participants. CI=confidence interval; LL= lower level of CI; UL= upper level of CI. 1 The following covariates were considered: Modern Sexism, Fear of Backlash, and Gender. Gender was coded as 1 = men, 2 = women. 1 The effects of block 1 of a hierarchical multiple regression analysis are reported,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{first block}} = .123$ ; 2 The effects of block 3 of a hierarchical multiple regression analysis are reported,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{first block}} < .001$ ,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{second block}} = .002$ ,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{third block}} = .042$ ; 3 The effects of block 1 of a hierarchical multiple regression analysis are reported,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{first block}} = .080$ ; 4 The effects of block 3 of a hierarchical multiple regression analysis are reported,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{first block}} = .003$ ,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{second block}} < .001$ ,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{third block}} = .021$ ; 5 The effects of block 1 of a hierarchical multiple regression analysis are reported,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{first block}} = .094$ ; 6 The effects of block 3 of a hierarchical multiple regression analysis are reported,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{first block}} = .052$ ,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{second block}} < .001$ ,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{third block}} = .025$ ; 7 The effects of block 1 of a hierarchical multiple regression analysis are reported,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{first block}} = .074$ ; 8 The effects of block 3 of a hierarchical multiple regression analysis are reported,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{first block}} = .031$ ,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{second block}} < .001$ ,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{third block}} = .024$ .

### Discussion of Study 3B

As expected, sexual orientation significantly affected the (prospective) parents' preferences concerning the gendered behaviour of their children. Still, just like in the case Study 3A, modern sexism was a better predictor of parental preferences regarding (prospective) sons' than daughters' gendered behaviour. Furthermore, our results

showed that there are differences in this regard even between gay and bisexual people, not only between LGB and straight people.

In the case of gay people, only modern sexism was proved to be a significant predictor, and even that only prevailed in the case of boys, mostly when the gender hierarchy was perceived to be stable. When the gender hierarchy was perceived to be unstable, a lower level of modern sexism predicted more feminine behaviour for boys (only for the 'In school' scenario). Moreover, even when they perceived the gender hierarchy as stable, a lower level of modern sexism predicted more feminine behaviour for boys—regardless of whether the presented scenario was 'At home' or 'In school'. In the case of bisexual people, besides modern sexism, lower levels of fear of backlash, too, predicted the preference of more feminine behaviour for boys in the 'In school' scenario when the gender hierarchy was perceived to be unstable. Meanwhile, for straight respondents, modern sexism did not predict the preferred gendered behaviour for boys—regardless of whether they perceived the gender hierarchy as stable or unstable. Nonetheless, gender was a significant predictor for them for all conditions (stable or unstable gender hierarchy) and scenarios ('At home' or 'In school'). That is, in all settings, women preferred slightly more feminine behaviour for their (prospective) sons.

A highly different pattern arose for girls in the case of LGB people. Firstly, no predictor could significantly predict what gendered behaviour gay people would prefer for their (prospective) daughters. Secondly, bisexual people gave very similar responses to those of straight people when we asked them about their expectations towards their (prospective) daughter's gendered behaviour in the stable gender hierarchy condition, unlike when it was about their son's gendered behaviour. When bisexual people perceived the gender hierarchy as stable, modern sexism predicted more feminine behaviour for girls—regardless of whether the question was about the 'At home' or 'In school' scenario. Surprisingly though, the fear that their children might have to face backlash by their peers predicted more masculine behaviour preference for their (prospective) daughters in the 'In school' scenario, but only when they perceived the gender hierarchy to be unstable. Besides the fear of backlash by peers, gender was also a significant predictor in the case of bisexual people; that is, women preferred more gender-conforming behaviour for their (prospective) daughters when the gender hierarchy was perceived as unstable. Straight participants had very similar preferences

to those of bisexual people. Although the relationship was somewhat stronger in the stable gender hierarchy condition, without regard to the gender hierarchy's perceived stability or the presented scenario (preferred gendered behaviour for girls' 'At home' or 'In school'), modern sexism predicted more feminine behaviour preferences for their (prospective) daughters.

In conclusion, Study 3B demonstrated significant effects of sexual orientation on parental preferences concerning children's gendered behaviour, with modern sexism being a more significant predictor for sons than daughters. Gay parents' preferences regarding their (prospective) son's gendered display were influenced by the levels they endorsed modern sexism, particularly in stable gender hierarchy conditions. For bisexual parents, fear of backlash and modern sexism influenced preferences, especially in unstable gender hierarchy conditions. No significant predictor emerged for gay parents' preferences for daughters, whereas bisexual parents demonstrated preferences akin to straight parents, shaped by the gender of the parent and, in the case of bisexual people, the fear of backlash.

### **Limitations of Study 3B**

A limitation of the study is that despite the significant difference between the two manipulation conditions in terms of the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy and the fear of backlash by peers, we cannot exclude the potential that significant individual differences in the awareness of gender issues may have influenced the success of the manipulation. Participants from underprivileged groups, such as lesbian, gay, and bisexual people, and women, may have been more invested in issues related to gender equality than members of the dominant group (i.e., straight men). Additionally, this study did not assess political orientation, which is a significant consideration as the Hungarian government holds a fundamentally distinct view on gender issues compared to the European mainstream. The Hungarian government adopts a highly traditional stance on gender roles, even rejecting the term 'gender' to avoid discussions of gender equality (Zalan, 2020). For instance, despite Hungary being ranked among last among European Union countries partly due to the high prevalence of gender-based violence in the country (WEF, 2022), the Hungarian government blocked the Istanbul Convention in 2020, claiming it would promote 'gender ideology', 'undermine traditional family values' and 'encourage homosexuality' (Margolis, 2020). As a result, people with

different political orientations may have varying attitudes towards gender equality and access to different information regarding this topic.

Despite its limitations, the present study confirmed the findings of Study 3A and provided a deeper understanding of the differences between various sexual orientation groups. In addition, it revealed unexpected results concerning the preferences of bisexual people for their (prospective) children's behaviour. Specifically, the preferences for (prospective) sons were found to be more similar to those of gay people, while the preferences for (prospective) daughters were more comparable to those of straight people.

### **General Discussion of Study 3**

The present research found that gay people were more likely to support gender-nonconforming occupation interests and activities for both girls and boys through lessened modern sexism, regardless of the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy. These findings align with previous research (Berkowitz & Ryan, 2011), which found that compared to straight parents, LG parents are more likely to encourage their children to adopt less gender-stereotypical behaviours. One possible explanation may be that gay people are more inclined towards the androgynous scale range (Allen & Robson, 2020; Clarke & Arnold, 2017) and, therefore, exhibit less gender-stereotypical (prospective) parental attitudes compared to straight people.

Additionally, gay people were found to have less acceptance of modern sexism, which may provide further explanation for the results. It is possible that gay people endorse modern sexism less because they are more aware of issues of gender inequality, and this awareness leads them to try, at least to some extent, not to reinforce gender stereotypes. This may be partly because these stereotypes perpetuate gender imbalances (Peus et al., 2015) and because they contribute to the disadvantaged position of LGB people in society through negative stereotyping (Lippa, 2005, 2008).

However, our results somewhat contradict previous studies (Bruun & Farr, 2020; Carone et al., 2020; Farr et al., 2018), which did not find significant differences—except for lesbian women—in the gendered behaviour among children of gay and straight parents. One possibility is that the minor differences found in parental attitudes of gay, bisexual, and straight people may be overridden by other actors in the children's environment, resulting in no significant difference in their behaviour.



Another explanation could be that parental attitudes may become more traditional when it comes to actual parenting. Additionally, the differences in the results may be attributed to the social characteristics of the country where the studies were conducted. Hungary has a high level of hostility towards sexual minorities (ILGA, 2020) and towards gender nonconformity (Dunai, 2021; EC, 2019; HBF, 2015). This, along with stereotypes about gay people—which they also tend to share about themselves to some extent, according to Clark and Arnold’s study (2017)—that they are less gender conform, may magnify the otherwise small differences in a society with a highly traditional and gender conform approach.

Interestingly, bisexual people showed similar attitudes to gay people regarding their (prospective) sons, but regarding their (prospective) daughters, they showed similar attitudes to straight people. Additionally, bisexual people’s preferences were most affected by the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy when assessing (prospective) daughters’ preferred gendered behaviour. These patterns suggest that despite perceiving their own group as similar to straight people in terms of masculinity/femininity (Burke & LaFrance, 2016), bisexual people took into consideration their negative experiences that are similar to those of gay people when they were considering what gendered behaviour they prefer their (prospective) children to display. Since women tend to be more accepting towards sexual minorities than men, bisexual people’s negative experiences of societal prejudice and discrimination might lead to preferring ‘feminine’ attitudes in general (which translates to less gender-traditional attitudes for boys but more gender-traditional attitudes for girls) hoping that these attitudes might result in a more accepting society. Furthermore, bisexual people may be even more sensitive to social backlash than gay people due to facing prejudice from both straight and LG groups (Herbenick et al., 2010; Matsick & Rubin, 2018). This may also explain why the fear of backlash by peers was a significant predictor, but only in this group and only in the ‘In school’ scenario (for both boys and girls).

As expected, straight people generally held gender-conforming parental preferences, although this varied based on the child’s gender. Our results suggest that, in the case of straight people, modern sexism had an important mediating role between sexual orientation and support for high-status occupations for boys and support for traditional gendered behaviour for girls, regardless of the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy. However, when considering a (prospective) daughter’s occupational

preference, the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy became a significant factor. Heterosexuality was associated with high-status occupational preferences for girls but only when the gender hierarchy was perceived as unstable (i.e., changeable). Results from the study align with the idea that members of subordinated groups are more likely to challenge inequality when they perceive the status quo to be unstable and changeable (Tajfel, 1981; Wright & Tropp, 2002). Our results suggest that this phenomenon is true not only directly for members of subordinated groups but also indirectly; That is, in the case of a female child who belongs to the subordinated group, the (prospective) parents only dare to challenge the status quo if they believe that the gender hierarchy can be changed.

At the same time, straight participants generally did not endorse non-stereotypical occupations for their (prospective) daughters but did support traditional gendered behaviour. This may be due to the potential social repercussions that (prospective) parents fear their children may face. This is partly because the social environment in Hungary expects gender-traditional attitudes and behaviour (Scharle, 2015) and is highly hostile toward those perceived as displaying counter-stereotypical gender behaviours (EC, 2019; HBF, 2015).

Interestingly, although it is usually boys who ought not to violate either prescriptive or proscriptive gender norms (Sullivan et al., 2018), the present study found that all groups were more flexible in their attitudes towards boys' gendered behaviour (except for occupation preferences), while all participants—except for gay people—tended to support more traditional gendered behaviour (but not the occupation preferences) for girls. This may be due to the fact that many activities (e.g., cleaning) and traits (e.g., expression of emotions) considered feminine have a positive impact on daily life and relationships and are thus regarded as beneficial for both boys and girls. At the same time, a structural change regarding gendered occupational distribution would expose a fundamental threat to the patriarchal system, which can be intimidating for those interested in upholding the system or those afraid their children might have to face backlash if they challenge the system. In the current sample, women, but never men, supported a slightly more feminine gendered behaviour for their (prospective) sons. This can be explained by the concept of precarious manhood (Vandello & Bosson, 2013), which suggests that the perception of being effeminate can lead to social backlash (Moss-Racusin, 2014) and

identity threat (e.g., Kosakowska-Berezecka et al., 2016; Vandello & Bosson, 2013) for men. As a result, straight men may be less willing to support feminine traits and activities for their sons. Considering that fathers' gender ideologies can have a greater impact on children's gender ideologies than mothers' ideologies (Davis & Wills, 2010), this tendency can perpetuate traditional views.

Overall, it seems that in societies in which gender equality is less materialised, the difference in parental preferences regarding (prospective) children's occupation and gendered behaviour may be more pronounced among people with different sexual orientations than in societies in which gender equality is achieved at a higher level. However, although the disparities in the parental preferences of LGB and straight people were significant, they were also relatively small.

In conclusion, Study 3 underscores that sexual orientation influences (prospective) parental preferences regarding children's gendered display. Gay parents are more supportive of gender-nonconforming behaviours, partly due to less acceptance of modern sexism. Differences in parental attitudes among gay, bisexual, and straight people might be attributed to societal prejudices and attitudes towards gender nonconformity. Bisexual parents exhibited varied preferences, influenced by both gender hierarchy stability and fear of backlash. Straight parents leaned towards traditional preferences shaped by modern sexism and gender hierarchy stability. While all groups, except gay parents, supported more traditional behaviours for daughters, perceived instability of the gender hierarchy could profoundly change this tendency. These findings underscore the intricate relationship between sexual orientation, gendered attitudes, perceived gender hierarchy stability, and (prospective) parental preferences.

### **General Limitations of Study 3**

The current research employed a cross-sectional design, which presents limitations for interpreting the results. This is because attitudes evaluated in the study are subject to the prevailing social atmosphere, which is constantly changing. For instance, the position of Hungarian LGB people has become increasingly disadvantaged since 2015 (ILGA, 2020), and thus responses might have been significantly altered within a few years. Consequently, the cross-sectional design restricts the ability to infer causal relationships between the examined variables.

Another limitation of the study is that many participants were not yet parents due to their age. Although a majority reported a desire to have children, it cannot be excluded that their preferences were influenced by the fact that they do not yet have children. Given that the parent-child relationship is more of an interactive process than a one-way relationship, the personalities of (prospective) children may be able to shape parental preferences, even regarding gender attitudes and what they consider favourable for their sons and daughters (Mascaro et al., 2017). For example, a recent study (Sharrow et al., 2018) has demonstrated that even highly traditional fathers may change their views on gender roles and gender equality issues when their first-born child is a girl.

#### **Study<sup>25</sup> 4: Attitudes towards women's authority roles in the light of sexual orientation and sexist beliefs**

What qualities we associate with masculinity and femininity significantly influence the possible social roles of women and men. According to the stereotype content model (Fiske et al., 2002; Fiske, 2018), competence and warmth are two separate axes; that is, women and men represent the opposite poles of the two dimensions. This means that while men are considered by society to be a good fit to perform tasks that require competence (e.g., manager), ideal women are considered to be feminine, that is, lovable but not competent (e.g., the housewife; Eckes, 2002; Fiske, 1998), and a woman considered competent (e.g., feminist, careerist) is not regarded as lovable. Therefore, if women want to assert themselves in male-dominated fields, they face significant negative discrimination (Koburtay et al., 2019).

According to the role incongruity theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Koburtay et al., 2019), the roles traditionally played by women require the existence of social traits (e.g., sensitivity, dependence), while men's social roles are related to work outside the home, and they require competence (e.g., authority, competitiveness) (Eagly & Diekmann, 2003; Fiske, 2018). Thus, the distribution of gender-stereotypical roles means that when we think of a leadership position, masculine qualities that require competence come to mind as the conditions for effectiveness. For this reason, our society considers

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<sup>25</sup> This research was published in *Alkalmazott Pszichológia* with only subtle changes in the text. Kántás, É. M. (2022). A nők tekintélyszerepeihez való viszonyulás a szexuális orientáció és a szexista hiedelmek tükrében. *Alkalmazott Pszichológia*, 22(3), 35-56. <https://doi.org/10.17627/ALKPSZICH.2022.3.35>

men more suitable for positions of authority than women, whose social roles and perceived characteristics are entirely contrary to the expectations associated with positions of power (van Veelen & Derks, 2020). Following Schein (2001), we call this phenomenon ‘think manager – think male’ (see also Kovacs, 2012).

Therefore, while traditional gender roles and division of labour may seem to provide men and women with equal opportunities for power within their respective gender’s domains, in reality, men’s sources of power ultimately allow them to have greater control over their own decisions and the outcomes of others. It is because, for men, fulfilling authority positions is compatible with their gender roles; therefore, they do not violate gender norms. However, people react more negatively to female leaders or women in positions of power in general (Rudman et al., 2012; Salvaggio et al., 2009). Moreover, men are more likely to become as leaders both in male-dominated and female-dominated fields (Blau & DeVaro, 2007; De Pater et al., 2010). Many studies have found that people tend to have more negative reactions to women in positions of power than to men, partly due to the fact that women in traditional roles are often highly valued (e.g., due to benevolent sexism), while women in non-traditional roles are often devalued (e.g., due to hostile sexism; Glick & Fiske, 1996, 2001; Goodwin & Fiske, 2001). Another meta-analysis of ratings of leader effectiveness in organisational settings found that male leaders were perceived as more effective than female leaders in male-dominated leadership positions, among male subordinates, and in roles defined as masculine (Eagly et al., 1995). These findings suggest that powerful women face more negative reactions than powerful men, possibly due to benevolent sexism towards women in traditional roles and hostile sexism towards women in non-traditional roles.

Thus, we can see that gender stereotypes not only influence the social perception of how different women and men are and what occupations would be ideal for them but also determine to a large extent, how suitable they are considered to fulfil different roles. Due to gender stereotypes, women are not even regarded as suitable for fulfilling roles that are traditionally associated with men (e.g., leaders and politicians), or at least they are not considered nearly as effective or a good fit for the role (Diekmann et al., 2017; van Veelen and Derks, 2020). This effect can be particularly strong in countries with traditional gender attitudes, such as Hungary (Scharle, 2015). As an example, we can mention the proportion of female politicians in Hungary. With the current 13.1% proportion of female representatives, according to international surveys,

our country ranks 152 out of 190 (democratic) countries included in the study. With this, it is not only listed as the last in Europe but is also behind countries such as Azerbaijan, Libya, India, or even Bangladesh (Inter-Parliamentary [IPU] Parline, 2021). These ratios are not expected to change until institutionalised support for sexist ideologies in the country decreases.

If a woman—despite all the challenges the assumed role incongruity poses—decides to challenge the status quo by entering a male-dominated occupation, for instance, by taking an authority position, she must face severe hostile sexism. Hostile sexism is most significantly directed towards women who are believed to challenge men's power (e.g., feminists) or even their status (e.g., careerist women; Cross et al., 2019; Glick & Fiske, 1996; 2001). This is also supported by the fact that those who accept hostile sexist views generally have significantly more negative attitudes towards female leaders (Masser & Abrams, 2004; Ruthig et al., 2021). Moreover, some studies have also shown that hostile sexism is associated with negative attitudes towards female managers, as well as women in managerial roles (Masser & Abrams, 2004; Ruthig et al., 2021).

While hostile sexism can be more overtly linked to men's power, benevolent sexism is much more difficult to notice since, to the perceiver, the latter may appear to embody positive attitudes towards women. Benevolent sexism is characterised by the fact that it appears to acknowledge women; meanwhile, it significantly limits the roles women can play by idealising women in roles that require status-irrelevant traits (e.g., housewife; Glick & Fiske, 1996). By this means, benevolent sexism preserves women's low social position, while hostile sexism negatively evaluates women displaying status-relevant (competence) traits. Although previous studies have so far found no similar correlations with regard to benevolent sexism as with hostile sexism and the negative perception of female leaders and managers (Ruthig et al., 2021), according to some studies, benevolent sexism can predict women's workplace discrimination (Feather & Boeckmann, 2007; Good & Rudman, 2010).

Different forms of modern, covert sexism thus became more accurate predictors of attitudes promoting the restriction of women than their overtly hostile counterparts. Modern sexist trends cloak sexist beliefs in the guise of resentment towards women, centring on the narrative that women make unfair demands on men. At the same time,

they consistently deny discrimination against women (Swim et al., 1995) and oppose the increase of women's economic and political influence. Neosexism (Gomes et al., 2021; Tougas et al., 1995) is an extreme form of such politically grounded beliefs based directly on the notion that women's freedoms are detrimental to men. People who accept these views believe that discrimination against women is now a non-existent problem, as competition between the sexes takes place with equal opportunities. Therefore, if women are underrepresented in certain areas—such as among managers (EIGE, 2021; Reskin & Ross, 1992)—it can only be because they are unfit to hold the position (Ratliff et al., 2017), or perhaps, due to their gender, they do not even desire to fulfil them (Swim et al., 1995). Neosexism, therefore, mainly refers to a new type of sexist belief that appears in the labour sphere, and as a result, it accurately reflects the attitude towards female leaders—attitudes often held by not only men but also by women. Furthermore, the more someone agrees with neosexist beliefs, the more they will believe in gender stereotypes and that women simply lack the skills to lead (Delgado et al., 2019). Furthermore, similar to benevolent sexism, those who subscribe to neosexist beliefs tend not to view themselves or their like-minded peers as sexist (Swim et al., 2004, 2005). On the other hand, it not only preserves the oppression of women but, like all forms of sexism, it serves the maintenance of patriarchal social hierarchy by strengthening that male-female power dynamic in which the social, political and economic superiority of straight men is authoritative.

### **Research Aims and Hypotheses**

Women in high-status positions are still targets of negative attitudes across societies (Carlson et al., 2006; Ruthig et al., 2021). These negative attitudes towards female leaders are mainly fuelled and preserved by traditional gender attitudes and sexist beliefs deriving from them. However, in Study 2 (Kántás & Kovacs, 2022) we found that men who recognised the threat their own gender group poses to women were less likely to endorse hostile sexism and more likely to reject benevolent attitudes towards other men. This recognition of the harm that men—and the patriarchal system—can cause to women seemed to lead to a decrease in investment in the gender status quo, altering views of women accordingly. These findings suggest a potential shift in attitudes towards women's authority roles, where the recognition of gender-based threats influences the acceptance or rejection of women in positions of power.

Moreover, this relationship appears to transcend sexual orientation, indicating a more universal mechanism at play.

Furthermore, Study 3 (Kántás et al., 2022) showed that gay people, in general, are supportive of their (prospective) daughters' non-traditional, high-status occupational choices, and even—in general, more traditional—straight (prospective) parents showed preferences towards their daughter's high-status occupational aspirations if they considered the gender hierarchy to be unstable. It wasn't evaluated, however, how these people relate to adult women's career aspirations when it comes to fulfilling authority roles. Therefore, in the present study, I aimed to understand how people with different sexual orientations relate to women's authority roles, besides, how sexist attitudes and the threat men pose to women influence acceptance or rejection of women's authority roles.

I hypothesised that gay people would endorse sexist attitudes (benevolent-, hostile- and neosexist attitudes) the least, followed by bisexuals, while these attitudes, compared to the other groups, would be most supported among straight people (H1<sup>26</sup>). I also assumed that the threat women perceive by men (and men might recognise) would be the most significant among gay people, followed by bisexuals and straight people (H2). My third hypothesis was that, regardless of sexual orientation, neosexist beliefs would lead to the rejection of women's authority roles (H3). Finally, I expected that, regardless of sexual orientation, the threat women perceive by men (and men might recognise) would influence whether someone accepts or rejects women's authority roles (H4).

## **Materials and Methods**

### **Participants**

A total of 471 respondents participated in my study: 147 LGB (73 gay and 74 bisexual people) and 324 straight people. The sample included 352 women and 119 men. The respondents' average age was 27 ( $SD = 10.5$ ) years. Almost 45% of the respondents had a higher education degree (i.e., ranging from college to postgraduate degree). More than half of the respondents were from Budapest (55%), 15% lived in another city, and 30% lived in smaller settlements.

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<sup>26</sup> Study 4's H1 and H2 partly repeats (regarding benevolent and hostile sexist attitudes and the perceived threat men pose to women) and partially extend (regarding neosexist attitudes) the author's previous findings (i.e., Study 2; Kántás & Kovacs, 2022).



I conducted a sensitivity analysis by setting the significance level at 5% level and power at 80% with a sample size of 471. G\*Power indicated that the ANOVA test with three groups and one covariate would be sensitive even to small effects as  $f^2 = .014$ , and the multiple linear regression with four predictors would be sensitive even to small effects as  $f^2 = .03$ .

## **Measures and Procedure**

I recruited the participants on social media platforms, partly employing convenience sampling and partly by recruiting in online LGB groups. The participants' minimum age was 18 years. First, respondents saw a brief of the study that included information on the purpose of the study, its voluntary-, and anonym nature and the option to withdraw answers at any time during filling, without further consequences. The study was prepared in accordance with the Code of Ethics of the American Psychological Association and was approved by Eötvös Loránd University's Ethics Committee.

Participants completed the Neosexism scale (with 6 items, e.g., "Women shouldn't push themselves where they are not wanted";  $\alpha = .670$ ; Tougas et al., 1999), the Hungarian adaptation of the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (benevolent sexism scale with 6 items, "Women, compared to men, tend to have a superior moral sensibility";  $\alpha = .793$ ; and hostile sexism scale with 6 items, "Once a woman get someone commit to her, she usually tries to put him on a tight leash";  $\alpha = .760$ ; Glick & Whitehead, 2010), the Perceived Threat Scale (including realistic and symbolic threat scales with 10 items, "Wives and mothers do not get as much respect from men as they should";  $\alpha = .827$ ; Stephan et al., 2000; Szabó, 2009), and the Gender Authority Measure scale (with 15 items, "If I were having a serious operation, I would have more confidence in a male surgeon";  $\alpha = .692$ ; Rudman & Kilianski, 2000; Ternovics, 2016). The scales used in Study 4 can be found in Appendix B.

Data analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS 24.0 and the PROCESS Macro (Hayes, 2017) extension. ANOVA tests were performed to examine the first two hypotheses, while multiple hierarchical regression and a mediation analysis (Model 4) were conducted to examine the third and fourth hypotheses.

## Results

### Descriptive statistics

Table 13 (displayed in Appendix A) shows the correlations between variables. Although the extent varied, a positive correlation was found between neosexism, benevolent sexism, hostile sexism, and the rejection of women's authority roles across all groups. The correlation between benevolent sexism and the acceptance of women in authority roles depended on sexual orientation; while in the case of bisexual and straight people, a negative correlation was found, no correlation was present between these variables among gay people. Hostile sexism correlated negatively with the acceptance of women in authority roles across all groups, albeit with different measures. Meanwhile, perceiving (or, in the case of men, recognising) the threat men pose to women correlated with accepting women in authority roles among LGB groups, but it showed a—negative—correlation with hostile sexism only among bisexual people.

### Hypothesis testing

First, I assessed how gender and sexual orientation affect the acceptance of ambivalent and neosexist attitudes. In the case of benevolent sexism, the main effect was significant for sexual orientation  $F(2,471) = 49.73$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .176$ , but not for gender,  $F(1,471) = 1.55$   $p = .214$   $\eta^2 = .003$ . Meanwhile, in the case of hostile sexism, the main effects were significant for both sexual orientation,  $F(2, 471) = 34.33$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .129$ , and gender,  $F(1, 471) = 25.42$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .052$ . Further, the main effects for neosexism were significant for both sexual orientation  $F(2, 471) = 35.01$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .130$ , and gender,  $F(1, 471) = 12.54$   $p = .001$   $\eta^2 = .026$ . Similarly, the main effects for rejecting women in authority roles were significant for both sexual orientation,  $F(2, 471) = 24.55$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .095$ , and gender,  $F(1, 471) = 7.08$   $p = .008$   $\eta^2 = .015$ . It means that, in general, men showed more support for sexist attitudes than women, and while straight people engaged with sexist attitudes the most, gay people engaged with sexist attitudes the least across the groups. Then I examined the effect of sexual orientation and gender on the perceived threat men pose to women. The main effects were significant for both gender,  $F(1,471) = 56.38$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .108$ , and sexual orientation,  $F(2,471) = 24.38$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .095$ . That is, women reported a greater level of perceived threat by men than men recognised it, and while straight people were the least, gay people were the most exposed (or, in the case of men, aware) of this threat.

**Table 14**

Results of regression analyses regarding attitudes towards women's authority roles

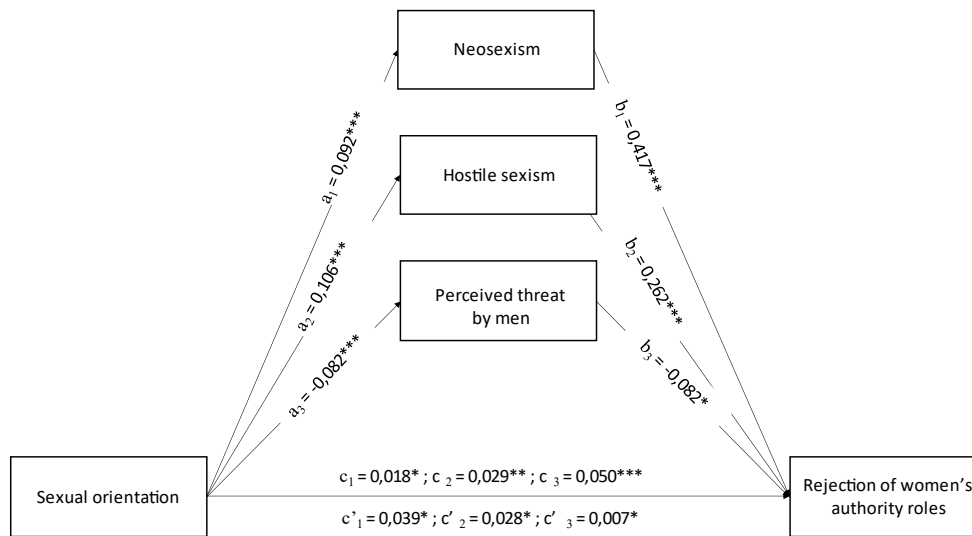
		Outcome: Rejection of women's authority roles						
		B	SE	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
1. Sexual orientation (Gay people)	Constant	2.59	.38		6.90	<.001	1.39	3.33
	Neosexism	.26	.11	.33	2.25	.03	.03	.48
	Hostile sexism	.03	.08	.05	.37	.72	-.13	.19
	Benevolent sexism	-.04	.08	-.06	-.49	.62	-.19	.11
	Perceived threat by men	-.21	.08	-.28	-2.47	.02	-.37	-.04
2. Sexual orientation (Bisexual people)	Constant	1.54	.13		12.08	<.001	1.29	1.80
	Neosexism	.37	.08	.63	4.84	<.001	.22	.52
	Hostile sexism	.05	.08	.08	0.63	.53	-.11	.22
3. Sexual orientation (Straight people)	Constant	1.44	.09		16.12	<.001	1.27	1.62
	Neosexism	.38	.04	.49	9.18	<.001	.30	.46
	Hostile sexism	.11	.03	.17	3.17	.02	.04	.18

*Note.* N = 471 participants. CI = Confidence Interval; LL = Lower Level; UL = Upper Level. The following covariates were considered: Benevolent Sexism, Hostile Sexism, Neosexism and Perceived Threat (by the dominant group). Gender was included in the study as a control variable. 1 I report the effects of block 3 of the hierarchical regression analysis,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{first block}} = .173$ ,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{second block}} = .010$ ,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{third block}} = .067$ ; 2 I report the effects of the 1st block of the hierarchical regression analysis,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{first block}} < .482$ ; 3 I report the effects of the 1st block of the hierarchical regression analysis,  $\Delta R^2_{\text{first block}} < .358$ .

To test my third hypothesis, I assessed which sexist attitudes can predict the rejection of women's authority roles. Table 14 displays the results of the regression analysis. Neosexism predicted the rejection of women's authority roles among gay people,  $r = .42$   $p < .001$ , bisexual people,  $r = .69$   $p < .001$ , and straight people,  $r = .58$   $p < .001$ . Furthermore, in the case of straight people, hostile sexism also predicted the rejection of women's authority roles,  $r = .44$   $p < .001$ . At last, I tested whether the threat men pose to women affects people's attitudes towards women's authority roles. The only group in which this threat predicted the acceptance of women in authority roles was the group of gay people,  $r = -.38$   $p = .001$ . It means that the higher level of threat lesbian women perceived or gay men recognised predicted a greater level of acceptance of women to fulfil authority roles. Figure 3 displays the results related to my third and fourth hypotheses.

**Figure 3**

The mediating effect of sexist attitudes and perceived threat between sexual orientation and the rejection of women's authority roles.



*Note.* Sexual orientation is coded as follows: 0 = gay people, 1 = bisexual people, 2 = straight people.

## Discussion

The primary aim of my research was to examine the gender-specific attitudes that hinder the acceptance of women in authority roles among groups with different sexual orientations. The results showed that sexual orientation significantly impacts the endorsement of sexist attitudes. Regardless of the type of sexism (i.e., hostile-, benevolent-, or neosexism), gay men and lesbian women endorsed sexist attitudes the least, while straight people were found to support them the most. This finding can be explained by the fact that sexism stems from the same ideology as homophobia (Pharr, 1997); besides, hostile sexism predicts negative attitudes towards sexual minorities the same way as it does towards women (Glick et al., 2015). Nonetheless, the fact that support for sexist beliefs was found in all sexual orientation groups, albeit to varying degrees, supports previous research that these attitudes, which deny existing differences and significantly undermine gender equality, are deeply embedded in cultural norms (Gomes et al., 2021; Martínez et al., 2010).

The research findings supported my initial hypothesis that lesbian women and gay men demonstrated greater open-mindedness towards women occupying various positions of authority. The responses indicated that these groups were significantly more supportive of women fulfilling—high-status—authority roles, such as those of

doctors, judges, and police officers. On the other hand, bisexual people displayed a slightly lower level of support for women in these positions of authority. Meanwhile, straight people were the least supportive of the idea of women occupying positions of authority.

There can be several possible explanations for my results. Firstly, as highlighted in a 2018 study (Aksoy et al., 2018), while gay men hold a higher proportion of managerial positions than their straight counterparts, this is only true for lower-level managerial positions. However, at higher levels, they are significantly underrepresented. This glass ceiling, which gay men and women both encounter in their professional lives, may lead them to prefer women—who are similarly disadvantaged—rather than members of the dominant group—that oppresses them—in positions that confer greater social prestige. Secondly, research has shown that women tend to have a more accepting attitude towards gay people compared to men (Poteat & Anderson, 2012), which may explain why gay people would prefer to see people in positions of power who approach them with a less hostile attitude or are openly accepting.

In exploring the experiences of the perceived threat, the findings revealed that women, particularly lesbian women, reported a higher level of perceived threat than—straight and bisexual—men recognised this threat their gender group poses to women. This observation is consistent with our previous findings (Kántás & Kovacs, 2022), where we found a similar pattern of perceived threat among different gender and sexual orientation groups. This is not surprising given the significant discrimination that LGB people face in Hungary. The prevalence of hate speech and hate crimes, as well as the institutionalised homophobia in Hungary, exacerbates the difficulties faced by sexual minorities in all aspects of their lives (ILGA, 2020; Takács et al., 2012).

When examining attitudes towards women's authority roles, we found that hostile sexism predicted the rejection of women in authority roles among straight people, while benevolent sexism had no such significance. This result suggests that while benevolent sexism portrays women as incompetent and thus unable to fulfil authority roles (Glick and Fiske, 1996), hostile sexism assumes that women not only want more power but also want to take control from men and have control over men. Moreover, according to the stereotype content model, if a woman works in a male-dominated field, though considered competent, she loses her likability and

attractiveness (Becker et al., 2011; Eckes, 2002). Therefore, it is in the interest of straight men who support sexist beliefs that women continue to be seen as lovable and attractive, so to discourage women from fulfilling roles requiring competence is crucial. From this standpoint, it becomes clear why only among those dependent on heterosexual intimacy was the rejection of women's authority roles mediated by perceiving the gender status quo as threatened. The case differs, though, regarding neosexist beliefs.

Endorsing neosexist attitudes predicted the rejection of women in authority roles among all respondents, regardless of their sexual orientation. Neosexism appears to be related in a very different way to rejecting women in positions of authority. On the one hand, those who embrace neosexist attitudes may not necessarily be opposed to gender equality and may even support non-traditional gender roles but deny the persistence of discrimination against women (Gomes, 2021; Swim & Cohen, 1997). As such, this new form of sexism, which denies the existence of inequality and discrimination, can also become prevalent among people who reject traditional gender roles, hindering the recognition of the importance of gender as a social construct and impeding efforts to reduce discrimination against women on a broader scale. Previous research has highlighted that neither neosexist men nor women support women's rights movements (Campbell et al., 1997) or women's authority roles (Cross et al., 2020).

My findings also showed that even among LGB people who were otherwise less supportive of sexist attitudes, neosexism influenced the rejection of women's authority roles. Conversely, experiencing—or recognising—the threat posed by men to women was, in the case of gay people, precisely related to the acceptance of women's authority roles. This could be because those who perceive or recognise the threat from the dominant group understand that the fight against sexism is closely tied to the battle against heterosexism since homophobia is a tool of sexism (Pharr, 1997). In line with this, they can take into account that the same traditional gender ideologies stand in the way of women's equality, such as those that facilitate hostility towards LGB people or, for instance, opposition to gay marriage (Ungaretti & Etchezahar, 2013).

In conclusion, this research illustrates the significant effect of sexual orientation on endorsing a range of sexist attitudes, which LGB individuals are less likely to endorse, while straight people are likely to endorse more.

Moreover, higher support for women's authority roles was observed among gay men and lesbian women, while it was less prevalent among bisexual people and the least among straight people. Such openness, that is, preference for similarly disadvantaged leaders, could be a reaction against glass-ceiling effects experienced in the professional lives of LGB people. However, neosexism, which subtly undermines gender equality by denying discrimination, did predict the rejection of women's authority roles, even among LGB people. The findings underscore that, although with lower endorsements, the presence of sexism among people with various sexual orientations reflects its cultural entrenchment. Also, battling against sexism is intrinsically linked with fighting heterosexism, as both are underpinned by similar oppressive gender ideologies. That explains why the recognition of threats from the dominant group, especially amongst gay people, aligned with the acceptance of women's authority roles.

### **Limitations**

The current study offers a fresh perspective on the relationship between sexual orientation and gender-specific attitudes. However, the applicability of the findings is restricted due to certain limitations. One such limitation is that the majority of the participants in the study were young adults, who, as per prior research, tend to exhibit a higher degree of openness towards liberal values, which tends to decline with age (McHugh & Frieze, 1997). Another limitation of the study is the convenience sampling procedure, as the weak manifestation of neosexist beliefs may have been contributed to by the fact that the questionnaire was mainly answered by those who are interested in gender issues and, as a result, may be less committed to adapting sexist ideologies. Additionally, the prevalence of openly hostile attitudes towards women in Hungary is substantial, reducing the need to conceal these beliefs. Furthermore, the unequal gender ratios across the study groups did not allow me to explore how the results vary when sexual orientation and gender are considered together.

## **Study 5: The power of liberal feminist identification and the importance of gender awareness in the fight for gender equality**

Everyday discrimination based on gender can have a significant impact on achieving gender equality. Discrimination can take many forms, from subtle microaggressions to overt acts of bias, and can create barriers for women in accessing resources and opportunities and achieving equal status with men. Experiencing gender-based discrimination daily can influence all aspects of women's lives. For example, when examining how everyday discrimination based on gender affects women's experiences in the workplace, Arshad (2016) found that discrimination was related to decreased job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and commitment to the profession among women, which can limit their ability to advance in their careers and achieve equality with men. Furthermore, a meta-analysis (Rudman & Phelan, 2008) revealed that discrimination against women in the workplace creates a hostile environment that can have a negative impact on women's well-being, mental health, and ability to succeed. However, such discriminatory experiences do not necessarily lead to collective action.

While feminist ideology and gender awareness aim to motivate engagement with collective action for gender equality, many ideologies' purpose is to deter women—and sexual minorities—from challenging the current status quo. On the one hand, benevolence towards men, for example, relates to the perceived legitimacy of the gender hierarchy (Glick & Whitehead, 2010) and predicts system justification (Russo et al., 2013); therefore, it is likely to deter women from seeking changes in it. Besides, the positive image how benevolent attitudes portray men makes women believe that there is no need to resist the patriarchy because men's sole aim is to find true love with a woman they can cherish, protect, and adore. On the other hand, hostility towards men, too, can deter subordinates from taking action against the dominants. According to Tajfel (1981), people from subordinated groups are more likely to take action to challenge inequality when they perceive the current status quo as illegitimate and changeable. However, the belief that power differences between men and women are inevitable, as suggested by the construct of hostility towards men, may discourage collective action as it implies that the system cannot be changed.



Hostility towards men, therefore, may be viewed as a traditional, system-maintaining gender ideology as it perpetuates the idea that men will always strive for and maintain greater power than women (e.g., an item that measures hostility towards men states that “Men will always fight to have greater control in society than women”; Glick & Fiske, 1999).

Further, gender essentialism propagates that men and women are innately and unchangeably different, just as their roles, strengths and weaknesses are also immutable. In line with this, since it presents collective action for gender equality as pointless, gender essentialism deters women from participating in collective action for gender equality. A recent study (Radke et al., 2016) found that women who endorse gender-essentialist beliefs are less likely to support feminist activism.

Similarly, since homophobia stems from the same ideology as sexism, sexual orientation-based discrimination serves the system legitimation and unequal gender structure just as much as gender-based discrimination. Consequently, sexual orientation-based daily discrimination has similarly severe effects on sexual minorities’ everyday life as it has on women’s. Sexual orientation-based discrimination puts barriers in the way of sexual minorities to achieve social, political, and economic equality with straight people (Balsam et al., 2011). For example, through hindering sexual minorities’ career progress, as it relates to a lack of career opportunities and career mobility (Sears et al., 2021). Moreover, these discriminatory experiences affect mental health outcomes among sexual minority people; for example, these experiences are associated with increased symptoms of depression, anxiety, and stress (Herek et al., 2009).

Nevertheless, research on the relationship between homosexuality and collective action for gender equality is still a relatively new and developing area of study. Still, some recent studies have started to explore the connections between these two fields. For example, in examining which emotions fuel collective action for sexual minority rights among potential allies, a recent study (Lantos et al., 2020) showed that mainly injustice awareness and feeling outraged over the disadvantaged position of gay people facilitate ally behaviour and willingness to engage with collective action. On the other hand, examining which emotions fuel collective action for sexual minority rights among those affected, it was found that group identity and consciousness were positively associated with the involvement in collective action for sexual minority rights

(Montagno & Garrett-Walker, 2022). Further, experiences of sexual minority stress (James et al., 2019) and experiences with sexual orientation-based discrimination (Friedman & Ayres, 2013) were related to greater participation in collective action, such as protest or activism, for gender and sexual minority rights. It is, therefore, different from those of gender-based discriminatory experiences; Women experience gender-based discriminatory behaviour from men, hence the resentment. Still, the same group rewards them if they display the expected gendered behaviour, thus the decreased likelihood of engaging in collective action. Meanwhile, sexual minorities, due to their sexual orientation, do not benefit from benevolent sexist attitudes, and even if at a different level, they experience discriminatory behaviour from both women and men in heteronormative societies. Therefore, it might be easier for them to recognise that discrimination against them is a systematic problem—without any subjective benefit—which can fuel their motivation to engage in collective action for change.

Since discrimination against women—and sexual minorities—derive from structural problems, change can only be achieved by implementing structural alterations. Liberal feminism, therefore, emphasises the importance of legal and political changes to achieve gender equality by removing barriers to equal opportunities and access to resources. Therefore, those who endorse liberal feminist attitudes emphasise the importance of individual rights and equality under the law and advocate that gender equality can be achieved through changes in legal and policy measures, as well as through shifts in cultural attitudes. Liberal feminism argue that discrimination is the leading cause of gender inequality and that it can be alleviated through means, such as anti-discrimination laws and policies, as well as through education and changes in societal attitudes. Therefore, those who identify strongly with liberal feminist attitudes (Heger & Hoffmann, 2022; Yoder et al., 2011) and identify strongly with their gender group are more likely to engage in collective action for gender equality (e.g., Nelson et al., 2008).

Last but not least, since the political discussion and social norms interact, there might be great differences in willingness to engage with collective action between countries. For example, in the realm of gender equality and the combat against sexism, gender discrimination, and violence against women, the social and political climate presents a stark contrast between England and Hungary. On the one hand, the British government has demonstrated a proactive stance, launching and supporting various

initiatives aimed at challenging the gender status quo. Conversely, although it would have been a significant step towards addressing violence against women—which is a severe problem in the country—the Hungarian government withdrew from ratifying the Istanbul Convention, claiming that it poses a threat to traditional values. Furthermore, the Hungarian government banned gender studies and has been openly advocating for traditional gender roles (Kováts, 2019).

Moreover, the social atmosphere and conversation about gender mainstreaming in England and Hungary reflect the divergent levels of sexism manifested in these two countries. In England, a more progressive social climate has fostered an open dialogue about gender mainstreaming, with concerted efforts to address gender disparities in various sectors such as politics, business, pay, and employment (Millns & Skeet, 2013). This openness is mirrored in the widespread support for campaigns against sexism, gender discrimination, and violence against women. Conversely, in Hungary, despite some civil movements' efforts to promote gender equality, the country has witnessed a rise in conservative and nationalist sentiments, which often conflict with these initiatives. This tension is evident in the social discourse around gender mainstreaming, often met with resistance and controversy, as exemplified by the government's ban on gender studies programs. Therefore, the willingness to take collective action in Hungary is more challenging than in England and threatens with more significant social backlash.

Although the importance of perceived discrimination based on gender or sexual orientation, liberal feminist attitudes and the social climate can be individually important in predicting the willingness to take collective action, according to van Zomeren's integrative social identity model of collective action (SIMCA; van Zomeren et al., 2008), it also is worth examining these factors in relation to each other in order to provide a more nuanced understanding of the dynamics of collective action. The SIMCA model provides a comprehensive framework by synthesising three key social psychological perspectives. These perspectives are perceived injustice, social identity, and the sense of efficacy.

That is, in the case of the present study, which focuses on gender equality, the sense of subjective injustice would be measured by gender and sexual orientation-based discriminatory experiences. Social identity content would be explored by assessing

whether people endorse liberal feminist attitudes that support equal rights and opportunities regardless of gender or sexual orientation. Finally, the sense of efficacy would be evaluated by comparing two countries (that is, gender-traditional Hungary and more gender-progressive England) with different levels of achieved gender (and LGB) equality and approaches to gender mainstreaming, which can influence the extent to which people consider the prevailing gender norms in a given country to be changeable. This complex model also suggests that if identification with feminist attitudes is overridden by endorsing attitudes that aim to maintain the current gender hierarchy (such as benevolent or hostile attitudes towards men or gender essentialism) or if the social atmosphere takes away people's perceived efficacy (for example, in Hungary where the continuous devaluation of women and sexual minorities is prevalent), the willingness to take collective action may be low even if someone often experiences discriminatory incidents.

### **Research Aims and Hypotheses**

As was revealed in a previous study (Kántás & Kovacs, 2022), marginalised groups—women and sexual minorities in this case—can exhibit notable resentment towards men. Yet, earlier research (Glick & Whitehead, 2010) suggests that hostility towards men, which stems from the belief that men will always seek dominance, can impede efforts to challenge the patriarchal gender hierarchy. To gain a deeper understanding of this dynamic, I measured different attitudes (hostility towards men and benevolence towards men) that are directed towards men and attitudes that portray differences between women and men as biologically determined and unchangeable (i.e., gender essentialism), and explored if they affect people's drive to take collective action for gender equality the same way, regardless of culture. I also wanted to understand whether a social group identity, which is specifically important when it comes to tackling gender issues (i.e., liberal feminism) and the sense of injustice (measured by experiences of discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation), can predict collective action in different countries. Considering that Study 3 showed the importance of the social atmosphere in willingness to challenge the gender status quo, I compared two countries that differ regarding the level of gender awareness and achieved gender equality to measure the sense of efficacy.

Altogether, I assumed the following:

1. LGB people would endorse gender essentialism and benevolence towards men less but hostility towards men and liberal feminist views more than straight people.<sup>27</sup>
2. Due to the influence of heterosexual intimacy, gender-based daily discrimination not, but sexual orientation-based everyday discrimination would enhance willingness to engage with collective action for gender equality.
3. While hostility and benevolence towards men and gender essentialist views would block engagement with collective action for gender equality, liberal feminist attitudes would enhance the willingness.

## **Materials and Methods**

### **Participants**

#### ***Hungarian sample***

A total of 486 Hungarian people completed the survey. After thorough consideration, due to their different socialisation experiences, I removed those respondents who reported being transsexual or non-binary ( $n = 17$ ). Therefore, our final sample comprised 469 participants: 118 men and 351 women. Altogether we had 147 LGB (lesbian, gay [ $n = 73$ ] and bisexual [ $n = 74$ ]) and 322 straight people in our sample. The mean age was 27 ( $SD = 10.7$ ). The majority of respondents (59.3%) were living in a relationship. Somewhat less than half (45%) of the respondents had a university degree (i.e., college-, bachelor's-, master's degree, or doctoral-level education or equivalent). More than half of the respondents (54.6%) lived in the capital city, 15.1% in another city, and 30.3% in a town or rural area.

I conducted a sensitivity analysis by setting the significance level at 5% level and power at 80% with a sample size of 469. The G\*Power calculator indicated that the MANCOVA test with three groups and one covariate would be sensitive even to small effects as  $f^2 = .014$ , and the multiple linear regression with seven predictors would be sensitive even to small effects as  $f^2 = .03$ .

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<sup>27</sup> The first hypothesis of Study 5 partly repeats (regarding benevolence and hostility towards men) and partially extends (regarding gender essentialism and liberal feminist views) the author's previous findings (i.e., Study 2; Kántás & Kovacs, 2022).

### ***English sample***

A total of 538 people completed the survey: 270 men and 268 women. Altogether, we had 336 LGB (lesbian, gay [ $n = 205$ ] and bisexual [ $n = 131$ ]) and 202 straight people in our sample. The mean age was 36 ( $SD = 0.12$ ). More than half of the respondents (67.1%) had a university degree (i.e., short-cycle tertiary education; college-, bachelor's-, master's degree, or doctoral-level education or equivalent). About half of the participants lived in the capital city (12.1%) or in another city (29.7%), 42.8% in a town, and 15.4% in rural area.

I conducted a sensitivity analysis by setting the significance level at 5% level and power at 80% with a sample size of 538. G\*Power indicated that the MANCOVA test with three groups and one covariate would be sensitive even to small effects as  $f^2 = .013$ , and the multiple linear regression with seven predictors would be sensitive even to small effects as  $f^2 = .03$ .

### **Measures and Procedure**

I performed a MANCOVA (for the first hypothesis) and multiple linear regression (for the second and third hypotheses) analyses by using SPSS 26.0. The research was conducted by applying the American Psychological Association's Code of Conduct and with the ELTE Eötvös Loránd University's Institutional Review Board approval. The scales and items used in Study 5 can be found in Appendix B.

### ***Hungarian sample***

I recruited the participants employing anonymous online sampling (as part of an omnibus survey). The minimum age for participation was 18. All respondents participated voluntarily and were informed that they were free to choose whether they wanted to complete the survey or withdraw before completing it. I used self-report questionnaires<sup>28</sup> to assess participants' sexual orientation, everyday discrimination experiences (due to gender and/or sexual orientation), gender essentialism, ambivalent attitudes towards men, liberal feminist attitudes, and willingness to engage with collective action for gender equality. In all cases, 5-point Likert scales ranging from 1 (“*I do not agree at all*”) to 5 (“*I fully agree*”) were used. Sexual orientation (Sell, 1996) was measured by two items, everyday discrimination experiences (e.g., “You are treated

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<sup>28</sup> Cronbach's alphas of the Hungarian sample were as follows:  $\alpha_{\text{Benevolence towards men}} = .76$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{Hostility towards men}} = .72$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{Gender essentialism}} = .91$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{Liberal feminist attitudes}} = .90$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{Gender-based discriminatory experiences}} = .85$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{Sexual orientation-based discriminatory experiences}} = .94$ ,  $\alpha_{\text{Collective action}} = .94$ .

with less respect than other people are”; Williams et al., 1997) by 18 items (with 9-9 items assessing everyday discrimination experiences due to gender and sexual orientation), gender essentialism (e.g., “Women and men are fundamentally different”; Skewes et al., 2018) by 25 items, benevolence towards men (e.g., “Men are mainly useful to provide financial security for women.”; Glick & Whitehead, 2010) by six items and hostility towards men (e.g., “Most men sexually harass women, even if only in subtle ways, once they are in a position of power over them”; Glick & Whitehead, 2010) by six items, liberal feminist attitudes and ideology (e.g., “In comparison to women, men have too much influence on politics”; Morgan, 1996) by 11 items, and willingness to engage with collective action (e.g., “I would participate in a demonstration against gender inequality”. based on Van Zomeren et al., 2012) by four items<sup>29</sup>.

### ***English sample***

Recruitment was performed by Prolific<sup>30</sup>, an alternative crowdsourcing platform designed specifically for academic sampling. The minimum age for participation was 18. Respondents were invited to participate upon meeting certain inclusion criteria. Inclusion criteria for participants included that their assigned sex is (1) male or female, self-identify as (2) male or female; (3) gay, bisexual, or straight; (3) live in England, and (4) their first language is English; and have an impeccable (98%) approval rate. Incentives were given upon completing the survey. All scales<sup>31</sup> were identical to those used in the case of the Hungarian sample with one exemption; sexual orientation was recorded as categories based on self-report.

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<sup>29</sup> Three out of four items only related to gender equality, but because homophobia is based on sexism, the fourth item mentioned standing up for the rights of sexual minorities. I compared the willingness to take collective action for gender equality in both countries with or without considering the LGBTQ+ item. When the proposed collective action only focused on gender equality regarding women-men relations, Hungarian respondents ( $M = 3.27$ ;  $SD = 1.23$ ) were slightly more committed,  $F(1, 1000) = 4.056$   $p = .044$   $\eta^2 = .004$ , than English respondents ( $M = 3.25$ ;  $SD = 1.23$ ). However, when the proposed collective action envisioned gender equality inclusive of sexual minorities' rights, Hungarian respondents ( $M = 3.33$ ;  $SD = 1.18$ ) were slightly less supportive than English respondents ( $M = 3.35$ ;  $SD = 1.19$ ),  $F(1,1000) = 4.433$   $p = .036$   $\eta^2 = .004$ . Nevertheless, since the difference between the three and four items scale was minor, I chose to involve all four items in further analyses from a theoretical consideration.

<sup>30</sup> I won the funding for sampling on the Prolific interface in the 2021 Doctoral Consortium application.

<sup>31</sup> Cronbach's alphas of the English sample were as follows:  $\alpha_{\text{Benevolence towards men}} = .77$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{Hostility towards men}} = .84$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{Gender essentialism}} = .92$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{Liberal feminist attitudes}} = .93$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{Gender-based discriminatory experiences}} = .90$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{Sexual orientation-based discriminatory experiences}} = .94$ ,  $\alpha_{\text{Collective action}} = .92$ .

## Results

### Descriptive statistics

Figures 4 and 5 display the means of the observed variables among Hungarian (Figure 4) and English (Figure 5) people with different sexual orientations. As a first step, the differences between the Hungarian and English respondents regarding their gender-specific views (such as benevolence and hostility towards men, gender essentialism, and liberal feminist attitudes), everyday discrimination experiences (based on gender and sexual orientation), and also their willingness to take part in collective action for gender equality were tested by applying MANCOVA analyses. I used gender as a control variable. Results suggest that Hungarian respondents ( $M = 2.50$ ;  $SD = .78$ ) adopted benevolent attitudes towards men significantly more,  $F(1,1000) = 54.363$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .052$ , than their English counterparts ( $M = 1.92$ ;  $SD = .68$ ). Also, Hungarian respondents ( $M = 2.74$ ;  $SD = .72$ ) endorsed hostile attitudes towards men more,  $F(1,1000) = 6.831$   $p = .009$   $\eta^2 = .007$ , than their English counterparts did ( $M = 2.46$ ;  $SD = .85$ ), although the difference was much smaller than in the case of benevolence towards men. The differences regarding gender essentialism between Hungarian ( $M = 2.85$ ;  $SD = .64$ ) and English ( $M = 2.64$ ;  $SD = .64$ ) respondents were so small that it didn't prove to be significant,  $F(1,1000) = 2.435$   $p = .119$   $\eta^2 = .002$ .

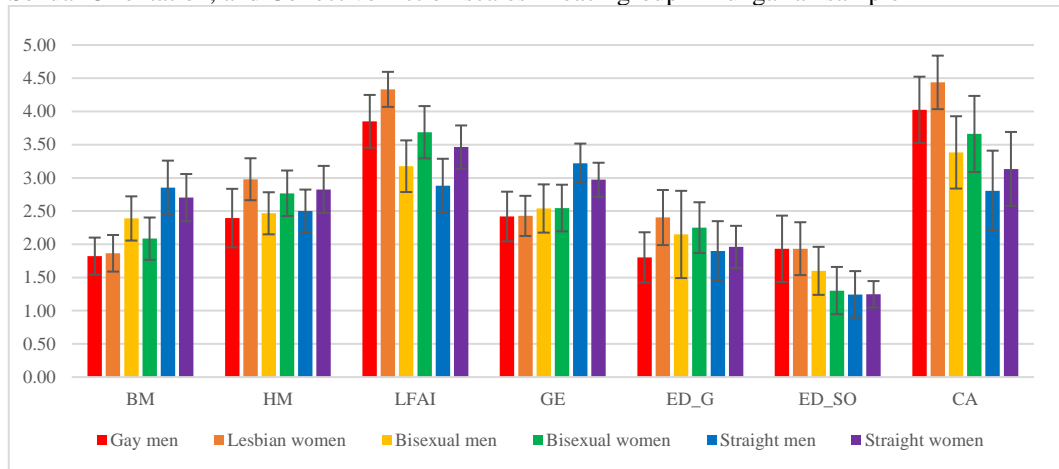
Alike, when accessing liberal feminist attitudes, results showed no significant difference,  $F(1,1000) = 0.108$   $p = .742$   $\eta^2 < .001$ , between Hungarian ( $M = 3.50$ ;  $SD = .78$ ) and English ( $M = 3.52$ ;  $SD = .91$ ) respondents. Nor in the case of everyday discrimination experiences; Hungarian ( $M = 2.01$ ;  $SD = .75$ ) and English ( $M = 1.93$ ;  $SD = .86$ ) respondents reported about the same amount of gender-based discriminatory experiences,  $F(1,1000) = 0.359$   $p = .549$   $\eta^2 < .001$ . When it comes to sexual orientation-based discriminatory experiences, English respondents ( $M = 1.66$ ;  $SD = .86$ ) perceived it happened more often to them,  $F(1,1000) = 13.329$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .013$ , compared to the Hungarian respondents ( $M = 1.32$ ;  $SD = .66$ ).

The level of engagement regarding collective action for gender equality between the two countries' respondents was relatively similar,  $F(1,1000) = 4.433$   $p = .036$   $\eta^2 = .004$ , albeit Hungarian respondents ( $M = 3.33$ ;  $SD = 1.18$ ) were slightly less supportive of collective action than English respondents ( $M = 3.35$ ;  $SD = 1.19$ ).



**Figure 4**

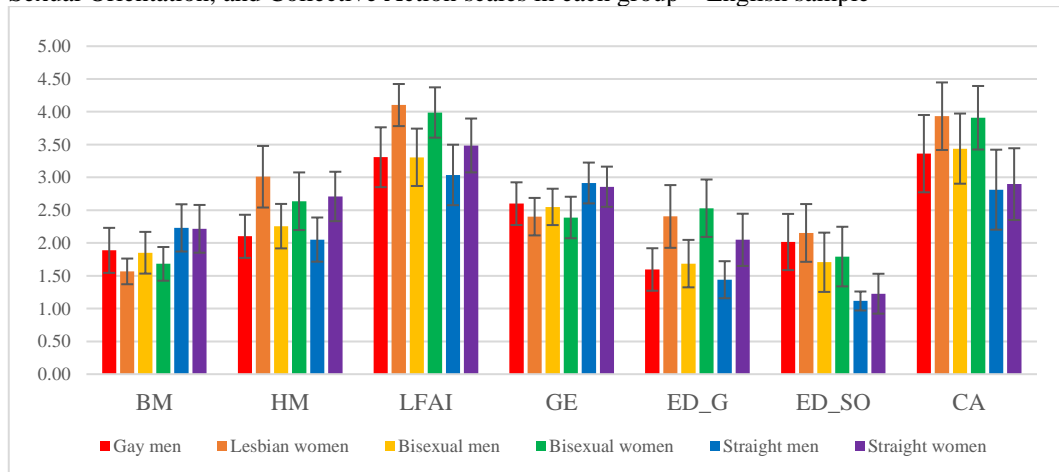
Means of Benevolence towards Men, Hostility towards Men, Liberal Feminist Attitudes and Ideology, Gender Essentialism, Everyday Discrimination based on Gender, Everyday Discrimination based on Sexual Orientation, and Collective Action scales in each group – Hungarian sample



*Note.* ‘BM’ = Benevolence towards Men; ‘HM’ = Hostility towards Men. 5-point Likert scale was used: higher scores mean higher acceptance of ambivalence towards men. ‘LFAI’ = Liberal Feminist Attitudes and Ideology. 5-point Likert scale was used: higher scores mean higher agreement with liberal feminist attitudes and ideology. ‘GE’ = Gender Essentialism. 5-point Likert scale was used: higher scores mean higher agreement with gender essentialist views. ‘ED\_G’ = Everyday Discrimination based on Gender. ‘ED\_SO’ = Everyday Discrimination based on Sexual Orientation. 5-point Likert scale was used: higher scores mean more discriminatory experiences. ‘CA’ = Collective Action. 5-point Likert scale was used: higher scores mean stronger willingness to take collective action for gender equality. Level of confidence = 95%.

**Figure 5**

Means of Benevolence towards Men, Hostility towards Men, Liberal Feminist Attitudes and Ideology, Gender Essentialism, Everyday Discrimination based on Gender, Everyday Discrimination based on Sexual Orientation, and Collective Action scales in each group – English sample



*Note.* ‘BM’ = Benevolence towards Men; ‘HM’ = Hostility towards Men. 5-point Likert scale was used: higher scores mean higher acceptance of ambivalence towards men. ‘LFAI’ = Liberal Feminist Attitudes and Ideology. 5-point Likert scale was used: higher scores mean higher agreement with liberal feminist attitudes and ideology. ‘GE’ = Gender Essentialism. 5-point Likert scale was used: higher scores mean higher agreement with gender essentialist views. ‘ED\_G’ = Everyday Discrimination based on Gender. ‘ED\_SO’ = Everyday Discrimination based on Sexual Orientation. 5-point Likert scale was used: higher scores mean more discriminatory experiences. ‘CA’ = Collective Action. 5-point Likert scale was used: higher scores mean stronger willingness to take collective action for gender equality. Level of confidence = 95%.

## Hypothesis testing

I set the hypotheses testing into two phases. To test the first hypothesis, in which I aimed to assess the importance of sexual orientation in accepting different gender-specific attitudes and willingness to take collective action for gender equality in two countries with different level of achieved gender equality, I conducted MANCOVA analysis and used gender as control variable.

In the case of Hungarian respondents, the main effects were significant for sexual orientation for benevolence towards men,  $F(2,469) = 61.24$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .21$ , gender essentialism,  $F(2,469) = 45.48$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .16$ , liberal feminist attitudes,  $F(2,469) = 46.22$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .17$ , gender-based discriminatory experiences,  $F(2,469) = 5.28$   $p = .005$   $\eta^2 = .02$ , sexual orientation-based discriminatory experiences,  $F(2,469) = 39.94$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .15$ , and collective action for gender equality,  $F(2,469) = 38.07$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .14$ . However, the main effects were not significant for hostility towards men,  $F(2,469) = .24$   $p = .786$   $\eta^2 = .001$ .

According to the Bonferroni-corrected post hoc tests, in the case of benevolence towards men, gay people ( $M = 1.84$ ,  $SD = .55$ ) endorsed benevolent sexism less than bisexual ( $M = 2.15$ ,  $SD = .65$ ;  $p = .009$ ) or straight people ( $M = 2.73$ ,  $SD = .73$ ;  $p < .001$ ) and bisexual people, too, significantly differed from straight people ( $p < .001$ ). In the case of gender essentialism, gay people ( $M = 2.42$ ,  $SD = .68$ ) showed less agreement than straight people ( $M = 3.02$ ,  $SD = .54$ ;  $p < .001$ ), but the difference wasn't significant compared to bisexual people ( $M = 2.55$ ,  $SD = .70$ ;  $p = .228$ ). However, bisexual people significantly differed from straight people ( $p < .001$ ). When it comes to liberal feminist attitudes, gay people ( $M = 4.06$ ,  $SD = .72$ ) endorsed them more than bisexual ( $M = 3.58$ ,  $SD = .81$ ;  $p < .001$ ) or straight people ( $M = 3.35$ ,  $SD = .72$ ;  $p < .001$ ), and the difference between bisexual and straight people was also significant ( $p = .026$ ). Assessing the gender-based discriminatory experiences, the Bonferroni-corrected post hoc tests only indicated a significant difference between bisexual ( $M = 2.23$ ,  $SD = .89$ ) and straight people ( $M = 1.95$ ,  $SD = .69$ ;  $p = .010$ ).

Meanwhile, gay people ( $M = 1.93$ ,  $SD = .91$ ) experienced sexual orientation-based discrimination more often than bisexual ( $M = 1.36$ ,  $SD = .72$ ;  $p < .001$ ) or straight people ( $M = 1.17$ ,  $SD = .42$ ;  $p < .001$ ). The difference between the latter two groups was also significant ( $p = .037$ ). At last, gay people ( $M = 4.21$ ,  $SD = .94$ ) showed greater

willingness to participate in collective action than bisexual ( $M = 3.61$ ,  $SD = 1.13$ ;  $p < .001$ ) or straight people ( $M = 3.07$ ,  $SD = 1.14$ ;  $p < .001$ ), and bisexual people's willingness was also significantly greater than those of straight people's ( $p = .001$ ).

In the case of English respondents, the main effects were significant for sexual orientation in the case of benevolence towards men,  $F(2,469) = 36.31$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .12$ , gender essentialism,  $F(2,469) = 26.92$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .09$ , liberal feminist attitudes,  $F(2,469) = 16.27$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .06$ , gender-based discriminatory experiences,  $F(2,469) = 10.34$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .04$ , sexual orientation-based discriminatory experiences,  $F(2,469) = 75.48$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .22$ , and collective action for gender equality,  $F(2,469) = 33.00$   $p < .001$   $\eta^2 = .11$ . However, the main effects were not significant for hostility towards men,  $F(2,469) = 2.58$   $p = .077$   $\eta^2 = .01$ .

According to the Bonferroni-corrected post hoc tests, in the case of benevolence towards men, gay people ( $M = 1.73$ ,  $SD = .58$ ) endorsed benevolent sexism less than straight people ( $M = 2.22$ ,  $SD = .72$ ;  $p < .001$ ), but there was no significant difference compared to bisexual people ( $M = 1.77$ ,  $SD = .58$ ;  $p = .100$ ). However, bisexual people also significantly differed from straight people ( $p < .001$ ). In the case of gender essentialism, gay people ( $M = 2.50$ ,  $SD = .62$ ) showed less agreement than straight people ( $M = 2.89$ ,  $SD = .62$ ;  $p < .001$ ), but the difference wasn't significant compared to bisexual people ( $M = 2.47$ ,  $SD = .60$ ;  $p = .100$ ). However, bisexual people, too, significantly differed from straight people ( $p < .001$ ). When it comes to liberal feminist attitudes, gay people ( $M = 3.70$ ,  $SD = .89$ ) endorsed it more than straight people ( $M = 3.26$ ,  $SD = .90$ ;  $p < .001$ ), but did not significantly differ from bisexual people ( $M = 3.65$ ,  $SD = .89$ ;  $p = .100$ ).

However, bisexual people also significantly differed from straight people ( $p < .001$ ). Assessing the gender-based discriminatory experiences, the Bonferroni-corrected post hoc tests indicated that gay people ( $M = 1.99$ ,  $SD = .91$ ) experienced it more often than straight people ( $M = 1.75$ ,  $SD = .75$ ;  $p = .002$ ), but their experiences did not differ significantly from those of bisexual people ( $M = 2.11$ ,  $SD = .91$ ;  $p = .615$ ). Nevertheless, straight people reported to experience significantly less gender-based discrimination than bisexual people ( $p < .001$ ). Meanwhile, gay people ( $M = 2.08$ ,  $SD = .87$ ) experienced sexual orientation-based discrimination more often than bisexual ( $M = 1.75$ ,  $SD = .90$ ;  $p < .001$ ) or straight people ( $M = 1.17$ ,  $SD = .48$ ;  $p < .001$ ). Still,

bisexual people reported to experience significantly more sexual orientation-based discrimination than straight people ( $p < .001$ ). At last, gay people ( $M = 3.61, SD = 1.14$ ) showed greater willingness to participate in collective action than straight people ( $M = 2.86, SD = 1.16; p < .001$ ), but not more than bisexual ( $M = 3.68, SD = 1.04; p = .100$ ). Nevertheless, bisexual people were significantly more willing to take part in collective action than straight people ( $p < .001$ ).

To test the second and third hypotheses to understand which variables can predict collective action, I applied multiple linear regression analyses. The results of the regression analyses are presented in Tables 15 and 16. In the case of Hungarian people, benevolence towards men,  $r = -.468, p < .001$ , and gender essentialism,  $r = -.479, p < .001$ , predicted collective action negatively, while liberal feminist attitudes positively,  $r = .639, p < .001$ . Meanwhile, in the case of English people, gender,  $r = .150, p < .001$ , hostility towards men,  $r = .191, p < .001$ , and gender essentialism,  $r = -.488, p < .001$ , predicted collective action negatively, while liberal feminist attitudes,  $r = .680, p < .001$ , and sexual orientation-based discriminatory experiences,  $r = .314, p < .001$ , positively.

**Table 15**  
Results of regression analysis on Collective action – Hungarian sample

Predictor	B	SE	$\beta$	$t$	$p$	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	2.47	.35		6.99	<.001	1.77	3.16
<i>Gender (covariate)</i>	-.16	.10	-.06	-1.55	.122	-.35	.04
Sexual orientation	-.07	.07	-.05	-1.07	.284	-.20	.06
Benevolence towards men	-.20	.07	-.13	-2.87	.004	-.34	-.06
Hostility towards men	-.10	.07	-.06	-1.49	.138	-.23	.03
Gender essentialism	-.29	.09	-.15	-3.38	.001	-.45	-.12
Liberal feminist attitudes and ideology	.87	.07	.57	12.81	<.001	.74	1.00
Gender-based discriminatory experiences	-.07	.06	-.05	-1.23	.220	-.19	.05
Sexual orientation-based discriminatory experiences	-.04	.07	-.02	-.49	.623	-.18	.11

*Note.*  $N = 468$  participants. CI = Confidence interval; LL = lower level of CI; UL = upper level of CI. The following covariates were considered: Gender, Sexual orientation, Benevolence towards men, Hostility towards men, Gender essentialism, Liberal Feminist Attitudes and Ideology, Gender-based discriminatory experiences, and Sexual orientation-based discriminatory experiences.  $F(8,460) = 58.36, p < .001, R^2 = .504, Adj.R^2 = .495$ .

**Table 16**

Results of regression analysis on Collective action – English sample

Predictor	B	SE	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	1.87	.28		6.66	<.001	1.32	2.42
<i>Gender (covariate)</i>	-.17	.08	-.07	-2.04	.042	-.34	-.01
Sexual orientation	-.06	.05	-.05	-1.28	.201	-.16	.03
Benevolence towards men	-.06	.07	-.03	-.83	.409	-.20	.08
Hostility towards men	-.11	.06	-.08	-1.99	.047	-.23	-.001
Gender essentialism	-.36	.08	-.19	-4.77	<.001	-.51	-.21
Liberal feminist attitudes and ideology	.79	.05	.61	14.85	<.001	.68	.89
Gender-based discriminatory experiences	.04	.05	.03	.81	.417	-.06	.15
Sexual orientation-based discriminatory experiences	.17	.06	.13	3.17	.002	.07	.28

*Note.* *N* = 538 participants. CI = Confidence interval; LL= lower level of CI; UL= upper level of CI. The following covariates were considered: Gender, Sexual orientation, Benevolence towards men, Hostility towards men, Gender essentialism, Liberal Feminist Attitudes and Ideology, Gender-based discriminatory experiences, and Sexual orientation-based discriminatory experiences.  $F(8,529) = 82.37, p < .001, R^2 = .555, Adj.R^2 = .548$ .

## Discussion

The present research's aim was twofold. On the one hand, to examine the role of sexual orientation in accepting different gender-specific attitudes and willingness to take collective action for gender equality among Hungarian people living in a less gender-equal society, and among English people living in a more gender-progressive society. On the other hand, it examined whether gender or sexual orientation-based discriminatory experiences and certain gender-specific attitudes increase or decrease the willingness to take collective action for gender equality.

I found that sexual orientation, regardless of culture, had a significant role in how respondents related to gender-specific attitudes and how their discriminatory experiences were shaped. The trends were identical in the two countries: gay people accepted gender-prejudiced attitudes the least, experienced discrimination (based on gender and sexual orientation) the most often, and most supported feminist attitudes and collective action aimed at facilitating gender equality, while straight people accepted gender-prejudiced attitudes the most, experienced discrimination (based on gender and sexual orientation) the least often, and least supported feminist attitudes and collective action aimed at facilitating gender equality.

Although the role of sexual orientation was a determining factor concerning gender-specific attitudes in both countries, differences were shown between countries regarding whether bisexual people gave answers more similar to gay or straight people. While in the case of the Hungarian respondents, the differences were significant even between gay and bisexual people, in the case of the English respondents, bisexual people's attitudes differed significantly only from those of straight people (except for gender and sexual orientation-based discriminatory experiences).

After assessing the role of sexual orientation in relation to a set of gender-specific attitudes, I evaluated the importance of the social atmosphere. I found that gender essentialism, regardless of respondents' nationality, negatively predicted willingness to take collective action. This supports previous findings (Duflo, 2012), according to which countering gender essentialist attitudes is crucial for advancing women's participation in the fight for gender equality. Therefore, showing messages that challenge traditional gender norms and stereotypes is essential to increase involvement in collective action. While gender essentialist views, regardless of the social atmosphere, could deter respondents from engaging in collective action for gender equality, the social atmosphere did affect whether benevolent or hostile attitudes towards men affected respondents' relation to collective action. That is, while benevolence towards men predicted lessened willingness to take collective action for gender equality only among Hungarian respondents, hostility towards men predicted lessened willingness to take collective action for gender equality only among English respondents. This suggests that Hungarian respondents, who were socialised in a highly gender-traditional social atmosphere where hostile sexism is prevalent and gender mainstreaming is not supported, might be more motivated to uphold the image of protective men. Nonetheless, this image, which suggests that men cherish and protect women who meet the gendered expectations, serves system justification and upholds gender roles (Silván-Ferrero & López, 2007).

On the other hand, English respondents might feel somewhat less threatened when challenging the patriarchal system openly, and thus, the image of chivalrous and protective men gets less significance in their case and impacts their willingness to take collective actions less. However, unlike Hungarian respondents, English respondents were deterred by hostility towards men from taking collective action. Although hostility towards men expresses resentment towards the patriarchy, and so it might appear as

if it was taking a position against the imbalanced system, it promotes an essentialist view of men as naturally dominant and, as a result, it supports the current hierarchy by reinforcing its perceived stability (Glick et al., 2004). Altogether, these results, according to which benevolent and hostile attitudes towards men predicted lessened willingness to take collective action, align with previous findings. That is, Hungarian respondents' lessened willingness to engage with collective action through endorsing benevolence towards men—probably due to a fear of challenging the status quo—seems to support previous findings that found a positive correlation between these attitudes and national measures of gender inequality (Glick et al., 2004). Meanwhile, English respondents' lessened willingness to engage in collective action through endorsing hostility towards men supports Glick and Whitehead's (2010) theory, according to which hostility towards men upholds the patriarchal system by making people believe that the system is unchangeable.

Everyday experiences of discrimination based on sexual orientation, however, increased the willingness to take part in collective action, but only in the case of English respondents. That is, those English respondents who recognised that they experienced discrimination because of their sexual orientation were more likely to take part in collective action for gender equality. It is most probably a result of the difference in the social atmosphere; Hungarian sexual minorities are in a severely disadvantageous position, which only got worse since 2015 (ILGA, 2020), while sexual minorities in England have more widespread social support when seeking equal rights and opportunities, even at a governmental level, and thus, they might feel more empowered to challenge the unfair system (ILGA, 2023). Moreover, the assumption according to which identification with liberal feminist identity content predicts the likelihood of engaging with collective action was supported both in the case of Hungarian and English respondents. It means that those respondents who identified themselves as liberal feminists were more willing to take collective action for gender equality. Therefore, my study supported previous findings (Heger & Hoffmann, 2022; Nelson et al., 2008; Yoder et al., 2011) that observed a positive relationship between feminist identity content and engagement with collective action for gender equality. Evaluating the results in the context of von Zomeren's SIMCA model, it seems that social identity (in this case, liberal feminism) was a significant predictor regardless of the sense of efficacy (that is, irrespective of the country), while the sense of injustice (embodied by

the everyday discrimination experiences) was only able to predict willingness to take collective action if the sense of efficacy was higher (that is, in England, where minorities' social and legal aspirations are more supported).

In conclusion, the present study has elucidated the complex interplay between sexual orientation, gender-specific attitudes, and willingness to engage in collective action for gender equality in both Hungarian and English contexts. It has supported previous findings (Kántás & Kovacs, 2022; Kántás, 2022b) according to which sexual orientation significantly influences gender-specific attitudes, and aspirations for working towards gender equality. The study also highlights the importance of social atmosphere in shaping attitudes towards collective action. The findings confirm that while gender-prejudiced attitudes towards men and gender essentialism hamper the fight for gender equality, sexual orientation-based discriminatory experiences can foster engagement in collective action, albeit it depends on the social atmosphere as well. The study also supports the positive relationship between liberal feminist identity and engagement in collective action. These insights contribute to a broader understanding of the factors influencing gender equality activism and suggest that tailored interventions that challenge traditional gender norms and consider the specific social atmosphere may be essential in promoting collective action for gender equality. The research thus offers valuable implications for policymakers, activists, and educators working towards a more gender-equal society.

## **Limitations**

The most significant limitation of the study is the different sampling techniques. While in the case of the English sample, I could recruit via a panel provider, named Prolific, which guaranteed me the desired sample size and characteristics, I could not recruit the Hungarian sample by using the same method as Hungarian LGB population is not represented on Prolific; therefore, I could only apply convenient sampling. As a result, the proportion of the English sample is much more balanced in terms of distribution of both gender and sexual orientation.



The study's limitations include the fact that the recruitment of the English sample took place in the same year when Sarah Everard<sup>32</sup>, the 33-year-old young marketing executive (Hill, 2022) and Sabina Nessa<sup>33</sup>, the 28-year-old teacher (Hardie & Woodyatt, 2022) were murdered. Both cases shook the nation and whipped up the social discourse on violence against women. Moreover, because Sarah Everard was murdered by a police officer, women's trust in those men who should protect them was shattered. This may have influenced the level of hostile attitudes towards men while it might have made the protective image of men (that is, benevolent attitudes towards men) less available. Also, it might have enhanced motivation for willingness to take part in collective action.

## **General Discussion and Implications**

In this PhD dissertation, I examined the role of sexual orientation and non-traditional gender-specific attitudes—such as the liberal feminist attitudes—and how these factors influence gay, bisexual, and straight people's relation to different gender-prejudiced views—such as ambivalent sexism, modern sexism, neosexism, and ambivalent attitudes towards men. Besides, it was investigated how different gender-prejudiced attitudes relate to parental preferences regarding the (prospective) children's gendered behaviour, the acceptance of women in authority roles, and the engagement in collective action for gender equality, while taking into account the impact of the ruling social atmosphere (e.g., perceived stability of the gender hierarchy), the fear of backlash, the gender essentialist views, and the perceived threat by the dominant group (i.e., straight men).

In five studies, I showed that sexual orientation significantly impacts people's relation to different sexist views. Results showed that, although LGB people generally tended to accept sexist views less than straight people, they could be just as much, or even more, willing to accept hostile attitudes towards men. Besides, they usually experienced (or, in the case of men, recognised) a higher level of threat by the dominant

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<sup>32</sup> Sarah Everard was a 33-year-old marketing executive who went missing in South London, UK, on March 3, 2021. A serving Metropolitan Police officer, Wayne Couzens, was arrested concerning her disappearance and charged with her kidnapping and murder. In July 2021, Couzens pleaded guilty to the kidnap, rape, and murder of Sarah Everard. He was sentenced to a whole-life order. The case led to renewed discussions about women's safety and police conduct in the UK.

<sup>33</sup> Sabina Nessa was a 28-year-old primary school teacher who was murdered in South-East London, UK, on September 18, 2022. In April 2022, a man named Koci Selamaj was sentenced to life imprisonment with a minimum term of 36 years after pleading guilty to the murder of Sabina Nessa. The case amplified ongoing discussions about women's safety in the UK, particularly when walking alone at night.

group (that is, men) compared to straight people. It was also found that despite LGB people accepting sexist views less than straight people, even that lower level of acceptance triggered similar results than in the case of straight people when the question was whether or not they would accept women in authority roles. However, the perceived threat by men often played a more significant role for LGB people in altering their views regarding gender-prejudiced attitudes than for straight people.

Firstly, in Study 1, the focus was on revealing whether the contribution of men to unpaid labour increased during the COVID-19 pandemic induced lockdown—when the number of office working hours decreased, but the household and childcare burdens have increased significantly due to the closure of childcare and educational facilities—compared to the pre-pandemic period, as well as whether their attitudes towards the gender-related social role and feminist attitudes had an impact on the (changed) extent of men's contribution. The study showed that men and women evaluated their partner's contribution to the division of unpaid work quite differently. While women reported that they did about two-thirds of the household chores and childcare duties both before the pandemic and during the lockdown period, men judged their contribution to be similar to that of their partner. Nevertheless, Study 1 suggested that men with less gender-traditional views increased their contribution to childcare tasks. The results also supported previous findings (Gaunt, 2006), according to which men who endorse more traditional social roles—that is, for example, have a heightened essentialist perspective of parenting roles—participate less in child-rearing (and housekeeping) tasks, irrespective of their office-working hours.

However, in Study 1, only straight couples were examined because the literature shows that LGB people tend to share non-paid labour in a more egalitarian manner. This suggests that sexual orientation influences people's gendered attitudes, but it is unclear exactly how because LGB people's gender-related attitudes were rather overlooked in the literature before. Therefore, in Study 2, the acceptance of ambivalent sexism and ambivalence towards men among people with different sexual orientations were investigated. Moreover, the perceived threat by men and its effect on the relationship between sexual orientation and endorsement of ambivalent attitudes towards women and men were also measured. Results showed that although LG people accepted benevolent attitudes towards women and men significantly less than their straight counterparts, gay men accepted hostile sexism on the same level as straight men,

and lesbian women accepted hostility towards men—which express resentment towards the patriarchy—much more than straight women. Even the perceived threat by men triggered different responses across the groups. While it was in relation to a higher level of hostility towards men for lesbian women, in the case of straight women, it was in relation to a higher level of benevolence towards men and benevolent sexism. Meanwhile, in the case of men, recognising the threat men pose to women was associated with a lower level of hostile sexism and a higher level of hostility towards their own gender group. This debunks the essentialist view of men and implies that should gender awareness increase among men, they can act as allies of women in challenging the gender hierarchy.

After Study 2 confirmed that sexual orientation strongly influences how much people endorse different kinds of gender-based prejudices, the next step was to assess how sexual orientation influences what type of gendered traits, activities and occupation interests (prospective) parents would prefer for their daughters and sons. The impact of modern sexism, the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy, and the fear of backlash were also taken into account. According to the results, sexual orientation basically determines what preferences (prospective) parents show regarding their children's displayed gendered behaviour and interests. Gay people consistently resisted applying gender-stereotypical expectations towards their (prospective) daughters or sons, regardless of the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy. Bisexual people, on the other hand, were more influenced by the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy. Although they preferred somewhat more feminine behaviour for their sons, in the case of their daughters, they only dared to show a preference for non-gender traditional behaviour if they felt that the gender hierarchy was unstable. Similarly, straight (prospective) parents were also influenced by the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy, but only when it came to their daughters' preferred occupation interests; when they felt that the gender hierarchy is changing, they also wanted to direct their daughters towards high-status occupations. It means that, while for boys, no deviation from the gender-stereotypical preferences was allowed, straight people would let their daughters challenge the gender status quo, but only if the gender hierarchy is perceived to be unstable. Nevertheless, they preferred gender-traditional behaviour for their (prospective) daughters regardless of the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy.

Study 2 and Study 3 therefore showed that sexual orientation significantly impacts people's approach to sexist views. Moreover, Study 3 showed that gay people were more flexible about their daughters' occupational preferences than straight people. However, their attitudes towards adult women's high-status occupations were not assessed. Study 4, on top of revealing the influence of covert sexist views on accepting women in authority roles, provided an opportunity to assess how LGB and straight people relate to women's high-status (authority) roles, and whether it is in line with their attitudes observed in Study 3. Therefore, taking into consideration the findings of Study 2 and Study 3, in Study 4, it was assessed how much LGB and straight people accept neosexism—an extreme form of modern sexism—relative to ambivalent sexism and how these attitudes affect their views on women fulfilling authority roles. It was found that LGB people, in general, accepted sexist attitudes less (just like in the case of previous studies, see Kántás et al., 2022 and Kántás & Kovacs, 2022), while accepted women in authority roles more than straight people did. Furthermore, experiencing—or, in the case of men, recognising—the threat men pose to women mediated between sexual orientation and the acceptance of women in authority positions. Nevertheless, if LGB people endorsed the neosexist ideology, they, just like straight people, rejected women's authority roles. Straight people, on the other hand, rejected women's authority roles not only through a heightened level of neosexism but also through a heightened level of hostile sexism. It is probably because they feel that women who do seek to fulfil authority roles do not conform to gender expectations and thus threaten the gender status quo.

In Study 2, women and sexual minorities showed significant resentment towards men, indicated by the strong endorsement of hostile attitudes towards men. However, according to previous research (Glick & Whitehead, 2010), beliefs that men will always seek power hinder rather than help challenge patriarchal gender hierarchies. Therefore, in Study 5, it was investigated among people with different sexual orientations how this resentment towards men relates to taking collective action. Furthermore, it was also assessed how benevolence towards men (that depicts men in a subjectively positive manner, for example, as protectors) and gender essentialism (according to which men and women are innately different) affect people's willingness to take collective action, because these attitudes serve system justification just as much as hostility towards men. It was also examined whether a pro-equal social identity (in this case, liberal feminist

identity) and a sense of injustice (delivered by gender and sexual orientation-based discrimination experiences) could predict collective action for gender equality if the role of social atmosphere—which can enhance or diminish the perceived group efficacy—is also taken into account. The latter was assessed by comparing Hungarian people’s responses—because Hungary is not only lagging behind in terms of gender inequality but fighting against gender mainstreaming is part of the political agenda—with English people’s responses—because England is significantly ahead on the path to achieving gender equality (WEF, 2022) and, in England, gender mainstreaming is part of the political agenda.

According to the results, it depended on nationality, whether or not hostile or benevolent attitudes towards men predicted staying away from collective action. That is, benevolence towards men deterred Hungarian respondents, while hostility towards men deterred English respondents from taking collective action. It is possible that because the level of hostility towards women and sexual minorities is high in Hungary, risking losing men’s protection (which protective image is implied by the benevolent attitudes towards men) seems too risky, while for English people, this concern might be less prevalent, but the resentment towards men who embody the patriarchal system has a more powerful impact on their behaviour. Nevertheless, both attitudes deterred people from challenging the gender status quo. Moreover, gender essentialism, which portrays men and women as innately different from each other, hence enhancing the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy, decreased participants’ willingness to take collective action regardless of the country. However, sexual orientation-based everyday discrimination spurred collective action for gender equality, although it was only true in the case of English respondents, which again signals the importance of the social atmosphere. Nevertheless, endorsing liberal feminist attitudes, which represent a pro-equal social identity, uniformly acted as a motivating force.

In conclusion, the studies in my dissertation aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the role of sexual orientation and non-traditional identity contents in accepting different gender-specific attitudes. Although there is extended literature on the field of sexism, especially concerning ambivalent sexism, the studies conducted before were mainly executed in Western countries, where the attitude towards gender mainstreaming is—generally speaking—more progressive than in highly gender-traditional Hungary. Furthermore, although Glick and Fiske (1996) stated that

heterosexual intimacy is important in accepting benevolent—and thus, as a whole, ambivalent—sexist attitudes, the literature has rather overlooked examining gay and bisexual people’s attitudes. Furthermore, even those few studies (Blumell & Rodriguez, 2020; Cowie et al., 2019) that involved LGB people, focused solely on assessing ambivalent sexist attitudes and did not assess other forms of sexism, ambivalent attitudes towards men or other gender-specific attitudes (e.g., the perceived threat by the dominant group).

The results of the studies in my doctoral dissertation, therefore, enrich the literature by providing useful information on how sexual orientation and non-traditional identity content influence some gender-specific attitudes and behaviour, allowing a deeper understanding of the complex interplay of these factors. The results showed, for example, that the distribution of unpaid work, a significant contributor to gender inequality, is significantly unbalanced because women generally devote considerably more energy than men to household and childcare tasks, even under extreme circumstances (such as during the COVID-19 pandemic) when household workloads skyrocket. However, based on men’s reports, non-traditional gender role attitudes predicted some positive shifts regarding men’s contribution. Still, the research highlighted that there is only a chance to achieve a significant change if men do not consider the responsibilities related to the household and childcare as women’s tasks but as a joint responsibility. Gay couples, however, were not represented in the study that examined the division of labour because gay couples tend to share non-paid work more balanced than straight couples (Farr & Patterson, 2013; Tornello et al., 2015). Gay people distribute housework and childcare in a more balanced manner probably because they have different attitudes towards gender roles and gendered behaviour—just as they preferred gender non-stereotypical occupation interests for their sons in Study 3.

Furthermore, Studies 2, 3 and 4 showed that gay people did not only endorse sexism significantly less than straight people but also tended to accept women in authority roles more than straight people did. This suggests that a higher level of awareness regarding gender issues was associated with a weaker commitment to sexism. However, it was mainly true for those forms of sexism that are widely known; otherwise, LGB people were, too, exposed to the harmful effect of less well-known, subtle forms of sexism. That is, although hostile sexism did not play a role in deterring

them from accepting women in authority roles, neosexism did prevent them just like it prevented straight people from doing so. Moreover, LGB people expressed even stronger resentment (that is, hostility) towards men than straight women. Taking into consideration their elevated level of perceived threat by men (Studies 2 and 4) and the everyday discrimination experiences they endured due to their sexual orientation (Study 5), their resentment was predictable. Nevertheless, as Study 5 showed, hostility towards men deterred people from engaging in collective action for gender equality rather than motivated them to do it. Therefore, instead of resentment, it would be more beneficial to engage with feminist attitudes, which can give a powerful social identity and suggest that the gender hierarchy is changeable and that collective action is the way to change it.

However, it is also worth noting that sometimes there was at least as much difference between the answers of gay and bisexual people as between LGB people and straight people's responses. Study 3, for example, pointed out that for bisexual people, the fear of social backlash was more critical than for gay people and that the role of the social atmosphere had a greater impact on their child-rearing attitudes than to those of gay people. This raises the question that, since bisexual people often face exclusion directed towards them not only from straight but also from gay people, it might be even more important to them to counterbalance their negative identity by preferring traditional gender role display—similar to how gay men seek to assert their status among straight men by endorsing hostile sexist attitudes.

Straight people mostly displayed traditional gender role attitudes compared to LGB people. That is, compared to non-heterosexual people, they almost always identified the most with sexist attitudes, were the least accepting of women's authority roles, and preferred traditional gender role display for their children the most. However, it is essential to emphasise that there were significant differences between the sexes, as women accepted sexist attitudes much less than men in all studies (except for hostility towards men), even though in Study 3, they were the ones who preferred traditional gender role representation for their (prospective) daughters. It is also important to note that, in the case of men, recognising the threat their gender group posed to women was associated with them showing less acceptance of sexist ideologies.

## Conclusions

Besides bringing a novel approach, my dissertation and the studies included provided new evidence on how deeply different forms of sexism are embedded in societies and how the resentment towards men who embody patriarchy can enhance its stability. It showed that believing that men are innately dominating—and thus resenting men instead of the system for the imbalances—makes people perceive the gender hierarchy to be unchangeable and deters people from taking action for gender equality. My studies highlight that raising awareness of differentiating between the resentment towards the patriarchy and hostility towards men is of utmost importance because while one facilitates, the other hinders the success of tackling gender inequalities.

Resentment of the current gender hierarchy and its inequalities stems from various sources. One of these is the unequal distribution of unpaid work, which prevents women from devoting more time to paid work, and which, as we saw in Study 1—despite men with non-traditional gender attitudes implied that some shift towards a more balanced childcare task distribution took place during the closure—couldn't be (substantially) changed even by an extreme event like the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, according to the latest estimations (WEF, 2022), the pandemic has set back the realisation of global gender equality by several decades by further strengthening the inequality in the division of household and childcare work.

Resentment towards the patriarchy also stems from the different forms of sexism directed towards women, making them perceived as incompetent (even for making decisions over their own bodies) and weak, hindering their status development in society, including politics, economics, and work. The studies in the dissertation have shown that sexist attitudes are so embedded in society that even those accept them to some degree who are disadvantaged due to sexism. That is, although to a significantly lesser extent than straight men, women (regardless of sexual orientation) and gay men also adopted sexist attitudes, even though, due to the lack of heterosexual intimacy, benevolent sexist attitudes do not favour gay men and lesbian women, and despite the fact that hostile sexist attitudes place a heavy burden on them because these attitudes are directed towards all groups that do not meet traditional heteronormative, gender-traditional expectations. The studies have also shown that modern, lesser-known forms of sexism and the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy are able to keep women in



a disadvantaged position even more covertly and, therefore, more effectively. While Study 3 highlighted that modern sexism and the social environment play a significant role in maintaining and transmitting gender role expectations, Study 4 showed that neosexism is associated with the rejection of women's authority roles, even if neosexism is barely endorsed (as among gay people).

Nevertheless, Studies 2, 3, 4 and 5 have shown that resentment towards the patriarchy is significant and even more pronounced among gay people. That is, while benevolence towards men was low, hostility towards men was substantial among all groups (except straight men). However, as Study 5 demonstrated, hostility towards men per se is counterproductive and, in many cases, discourages victims of discrimination from committing to collective action.

In conclusion, the quoted studies—which included sexual minority groups whose attitudes have been largely ignored—and, altogether, my dissertation draws attention to some lessons that can be taken into account in order to tackle gender inequality more effectively. Study 1 showed that drawing attention to and quantifying how the division of unpaid work hinders women's career-building opportunities is essential. Study 2 highlights that dispelling some myths about sexism is also highly important. In other words, it would be beneficial if awareness-raising campaigns included explaining that sexism is so deeply culturally embedded—that, contrary to popular belief—not only men can be sexist, but even members of groups who are adversely affected (e.g., women) accept certain sexist attitudes. Study 3 drew attention to the fact that, although it is important to emphasise that gender inequalities are still severe, it is also essential to demonstrate how the situation of women and sexual minorities has changed positively in the last century. Without showing that the gender hierarchy is changeable, the perceived stability of the gender hierarchy remains strong, which discourages people from daring to deviate from gender expectations and thus upholds gender inequalities.

Furthermore, Study 3 also points out that attention should be drawn to the fact that if parents expect a display of traditionally feminine characteristics and activities from their daughters from childhood, then, even though they would prefer their daughters to choose high-status ('masculine') occupations, there would be a smaller chance for this to happen, because, by the time their daughters get to the point of

choosing an occupation, the feminine gendered expectations have already undermined their ability to display characteristics (e.g., competitiveness, assertivity) that are expected and desired for masculine occupations. Further, Study 4 showed that raising awareness and explaining different sexist attitudes in a way that is understandable to the public is crucial because as long as a sexist ideology is hidden and therefore difficult to recognise, it imperceptibly but continuously causes severe damage in terms of social perception and opportunities for women. Finally, Study 5 highlighted that there is a significant difference between a proactive approach, that is, liberal feminist attitudes—that aim to change the patriarchal system—and hostility towards men in terms of commitment to collective action and, thus, in the effectiveness of the realisation of gender equality.

Although witnessing and experiencing everyday sexism and gender inequality can make people lose sight of the positive and hopeful outcomes, drawing attention to gender equality-related achievements is at least as important as understanding the harmful dynamics. Therefore, to stay true to the lessons of Study 5, I would like to close my dissertation with some encouraging messages drawn from the studies. The findings of Study 2 that men who recognised the threat men pose to women showed lower acceptance of hostile sexism and lower acceptance of benevolent attitudes towards their own gender group suggested that a significant number of men can be allies of women if they recognise the everyday discrimination and how it affects women. Similarly, Study 4 showed that recognising the threat men pose to women was related to a higher acceptance of women's authority roles. At least as important and positive is that even straight parents tend to encourage their daughters towards high-status occupations if they perceive that the current hierarchy can be changed.

Finally, my studies also showed that not only sexist attitudes can have an effect that is hard to notice, but also the commitment to positive change can manifest itself subtly but significantly. Although the daily discrimination experiences of the Hungarian LGB participants in Study 5 did not lead to a commitment to collective action (presumably due to fear of reprisal), Study 3 showed that gay people preferred characteristics and occupations for their children that were different from those of gender stereotypes, which, although not as open resistance as participating in demonstrations, is a highly effective and consistent way to resist the gender status quo and facilitate change.

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# Appendix A

**Table 1**

Descriptive statistics of pre-pandemic and during lockdown values by gender

	Women						Men					
	Prior to Pandemic			During Lockdown			Prior to pandemic			During Lockdown		
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Household Chores	164	65.6	12.8	163	65.9	13.9	165	47.6	11.2	162	48.1	12.8
Childcare	71	66.3	23.5	65	69.2	19.9	94	40.0	15.4	86	45.5	16.9
Respondent's OWH	145	32.9	19.0	145	15.7	23.1	157	37.6	19.0	156	19.8	24.3
Partner's OWH	159	38.6	18.9	157	19.9	24.1	143	31.7	16.1	141	13.4	17.4

Note. 'OWH' = Office Working Hours.

**Table 2**

Comparison of Household Chores and Childcare contribution in the Case of women and men Prior to the Pandemic and During Lockdown by items

			Prior to the Pandemic			During Lockdown			<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
			<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>		
HC	women	<i>washing clothes</i>	162	82.3	25.1	162	84.8	23.6	-2.07	.04
		<i>hanging washed clothes</i>	156	76.2	24.6	156	78.5	24.9	-2.15	.03
		<i>cooking</i>	160	72.1	25.1	160	74.8	25.1	-2.53	.01
	men	<i>grocery shopping</i>	161	54.4	22.7	161	50.8	29.1	2.33	.02
		<i>keeping the garden tidy</i>	95	66.9	26.5	95	72.0	27.8	-2.44	.02
		<i>cooking</i>	160	39.1	29.5	160	41.8	31.2	-2.40	.02
CC	women	<i>grocery shopping</i>	161	61.3	21.9	161	68.8	25.6	-5.00	<.001
		<i>home care for children</i>	56	72.9	21.1	56	68.6	20.4	2.22	.03
		<i>home care for children</i>	76	39.3	16.7	76	45.6	21.7	-2.80	.01
	men	<i>providing meals for the child(ren) at home</i>	83	36.1	22.2	83	40.3	25.3	-2.13	.04
		<i>providing leisure and/or sports activities for the child(ren)</i>	75	47.1	21.2	75	50.7	22.5	-2.19	.045
		<i>providing creative and/or developing activities for the child(ren)</i>	76	35.1	16.1	76	39.3	19.1	-2.23	.03
		<i>organizing the (distance) learning participation of the child(ren)</i>	47	36.8	26.3	47	44.3	27.2	-3.26	.002
		<i>ensuring and/or controlling that your child(ren) perform their school responsibilities</i>	52	33.5	21.8	52	41.5	25.3	-3.63	.001
		<i>helping the child(ren) in the event of learning problems</i>	52	41.8	21.8	52	47.7	23.0	-2.75	.01

Note. 'HC' = Household Chores; 'CC' = Childcare.

This table presents only those tasks from a 23-item household chore list and an 11-item childcare task list where significant differences were observed between the 'Prior to the pandemic' and 'During lockdown' conditions. These differences are separately displayed for men and women. It's important to note that the responses varied at the item level between genders. For a comprehensive view of all household and childcare tasks considered in this study, please refer to Appendix B.

**Table 5**  
Factor Structure of the Boys-and Girls Related Parental Preference Questionnaire

		Boys			Girls		
		1	2	3	1	2	3
High-Status occupations	Business owner	.844			Business owner	.856	
	Doctor	.709			Doctor	.735	
	To play basketball	.403			Clothes designer	.460	
Feminine traits and activities	To be neat and tidy		.607		To enjoy Literature classes		.614
	To cook or bake things		.585		To be neat and tidy		.596
	To show his emotions		.581		To enjoy Math classes		.592
	To enjoy Literature classes		.540		To cook or bake things		.581
	To enjoy Math classes		.511		To show her emotions		.483
Feminine Activities	To make up dances			.650	To jump rope		.611
	To jump rope			.599	To play basketball		.547
	Clothes designer			.508	To made up dances		.535

*Note.* In both cases, Principal axis factoring with varimax rotation was used.

**Table 6**  
Correlation Matrix Between Measurements, Means, Standard Deviations, and Internal Consistencies

	M (SD)	$\alpha$	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Homosexuality	1.50 (.99)	-	-						
2. Heterosexuality	4.36 (1.15)	-	-.83***	-					
3. High-Status occupations for Boys (HSB)	3.54 (.62)	.75	-.14**	.18***	-				
4. Feminine traits and activities for Boys (FB)	4.03 (.51)	.73	-.03	.01	.40***	-			
5. High-Status occupations for Girls (HSG)	3.49 (.64)	.76	-.10*	.14**	.86***	.38***	-		
6. Feminine activities and traits for Girls (FG)	4.15 (.51)	.74	-.12*	.07	.45***	.90***	.44***	-	
7. Modern Sexism	2.24 (.87)	.92	-.22***	.21***	.19***	-.10*	.11*	-.01	-
8. Perceived Stability of the Gender Hierarchy	3.02 (.74)	.81	-.02	.03	-.02	-.02	-.05	-.03	-.14**

*Note.*  $N = 448$  participants.  $\alpha$  = Cronbach's alpha. Statistical significance is indicated at the following level: \* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$ . Measurements were made using a 5-point Likert scale in each case. Homosexuality and Heterosexuality were used as continuous variables: the scores were ranging from 1 (not at all homosexual/heterosexual) to 5 (extremely homosexual/heterosexual).

**Table 10**  
Means, Standard Deviations, and Internal Consistencies of each scales in different conditions

Manipulation	Scale	$\alpha$	Gay		Bisexual		Straight	
			men	women	men	women	men	women
			M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)
1. Unstable gender hierarchy	Boys at Home	.69	5.70 (.39)	5.63 (.39)	5.21 (.54)	5.53 (.49)	5.43 (.50)	5.67 (.45)
	Boys in School	.69	5.67 (.39)	5.66 (.46)	5.06 (.48)	5.53 (.49)	5.41 (.45)	5.61 (.45)
	Girls at Home	.75	5.73 (.46)	5.67 (.45)	5.44 (.48)	5.49 (.51)	5.66 (.51)	5.82 (.47)
	Girls in School	.75	5.77 (.45)	5.56 (.50)	5.17 (.76)	5.54 (.55)	5.69 (.49)	5.82 (.45)
2. Stable gender hierarchy	Boys at Home	.71	5.55 (.47)	5.57 (.38)	5.51 (.58)	5.69 (.46)	5.39 (.47)	5.58 (.44)
	Boys in School	.71	5.56 (.46)	5.55 (.42)	5.39 (.62)	5.61 (.48)	5.36 (.48)	5.53 (.48)
	Girls at Home	.75	5.66 (.50)	5.55 (.35)	5.90 (.63)	5.70 (.52)	5.67 (.55)	5.74 (.45)
	Girls in School	.76	5.67 (.54)	5.52 (.44)	5.89 (.65)	5.66 (.53)	5.64 (.59)	5.74 (.47)

*Note.*  $\alpha$  = Cronbach's alpha. Gay men:  $N_{first\ condition} = 24$  and  $N_{second\ condition} = 22$ ; Lesbian women:  $N_{first\ condition} = 36$  and  $N_{second\ condition} = 28$ ; Bisexual men:  $N_{first\ condition} = 11$  and  $N_{second\ condition} = 11$ ; Bisexual women:  $N_{first\ condition} = 69$  and  $N_{second\ condition} = 62$ ; Straight men:  $N_{first\ condition} = 41$  and  $N_{second\ condition} = 58$ ; Straight women:  $N_{first\ condition} = 169$  and  $N_{second\ condition} = 173$ . All scale was ranging between 1 (completely masculine) to 9 (completely feminine), but the actual values ranged from 5.06 and 5.90.

**Table 13**  
Correlation Matrix Between Measurements, Means, Standard Deviations

		M (SD)	2	3	4	5
Gay people (N = 73)						
1.	Benevolent sexism	1.90 (.74)	.44***	.43***	.04	.09
2.	Hostile sexism	2.10 (.84)		.65***	-.19	.29*
3.	Neosexism	1.64 (.59)			-.28*	.42***
4.	Perceived threat by men	3.74 (.62)				-.38**
5.	Gender authority	2.23 (.46)				-
Bisexual people (N = 74)						
1.	Benevolent sexism	2.33 (.83)	.72***	.60***	-.12	.35**
2.	Hostile sexism	2.25 (.66)		.76***	-.36**	.56***
3.	Neosexism	1.87 (.72)			-.28*	.69***
4.	Perceived threat by men	3.50 (.61)				-.26*
5.	Gender authority	2.34 (.42)				-
Straight people (N = 324)						
1.	Benevolent sexism	2.85 (.78)	.39***	.29***	.16**	.28***
2.	Hostile sexism	2.67 (.70)		.54***	-.002	.44***
3.	Neosexism	2.20 (.58)			-.17**	.58***
4.	Perceived threat by men	3.35 (.67)				-.09
5.	Gender authority	2.57 (.45)				-

*Note.* N = 471 respondents. Level of significance: \*p < .05 \*\*p < .01 \*\*\*p < .001. Measurements were made using a 5-point Likert scale in each case.

## Appendix B

### SCALE ITEMS USED IN STUDY 1-5

(Where instructions provided respondents with a special context, I included them.)

#### *Household chores (Study 1)*

*This list was designed to assess the distribution of how cohabiting couples divide their contribution regarding the following household chores.*

- Washing dishes
- Unpacking dry dishes
- Washing clothes
- Hanging washed clothes
- Ironing
- Folding clothes and putting them away
- Dusting
- Vacuum cleaning
- Washing up
- Cleaning the toilet
- Cleaning the bathroom
- Change bedding
- Tidying up
- Taking out the trash
- Watering plants
- Keeping the garden tidy
- Cooking
- Grocery shopping
- Clothing repair
- Home repairs
- Maintenance of household appliances
- Payment of bills
- Organising leisure activities for the couple/family

#### *Childcare tasks (Study 1)*

*This list was designed to assess the distribution of how cohabiting couples divide their contribution regarding the following childcare tasks.*

- Home care for the child(ren)
- Providing meals for the child(ren) at home
- Providing leisure and/or sports activities for the child(ren)
- Bathing child(ren)
- Dressing up the child(ren)
- Changing nappies for the child(ren)
- Put the child(ren) to sleep
- Providing creative and/or developing activities for the child(ren)
- Organizing the (distance) learning participation of the child(ren)
- Ensuring and/or controlling that your child(ren) perform their school responsibilities
- Help child(ren) in the event of learning problems

### *Liberal feminist attitudes and ideology (Study 1 and Study 5)*

*This scale was designed to measure attitudes towards gender inequality, perceptions of societal treatment of women, and beliefs about actions needed to achieve gender equality. It also assesses acknowledgement of gender-based issues, such as violence against women and sexual harassment.*

The government should take major steps towards improving women's status in society.

Women in our country are treated like second-class citizens.

Women should unite and take common action to gain equality of political and social rights.

To remove inequalities between genders you have to do something more than treat men and women in your area fairly.

Violence towards women is not treated seriously enough.

Women are already guaranteed rights equal to men's rights in all fields essential for them. (Reversed item)

Women have been treated unjustly because of their gender for ages.

Sexual harassment is a serious problem in many Hungarian workplaces.<sup>34</sup>

In comparison to women, men have too much influence on politics.

Women's achievements have never been valued to the same degree as men's.

Women do not have so many possibilities to choose in their life as men do.

### *Social role questionnaire (Study 1)*

*This questionnaire was developed to gauge people's attitudes and beliefs about gender roles within society. It measures perceptions of masculinity, femininity, and the acceptability of crossing traditional gender role boundaries. It allows a clearer understanding of how people perceive gender roles and their flexibility or rigidity.*

People can be both aggressive and nurturing regardless of sex. (Reversed item)

People should be treated the same regardless of their sex. (Reversed item)

Tasks around the house should not be assigned by sex. (Reversed item)

We should stop thinking about whether people are male or female and focus on other characteristics. (Reversed item)

A father's major responsibility is to provide financially for his children.

Some types of work are just not appropriate for women.

Mothers should make most decisions about how children are brought up.

Mothers should work only if necessary.

Only some types of work are appropriate for both men and women.

For many important jobs, it is better to choose men instead of women.

### *Ambivalent sexism inventory (Study 2 and Study 4)*

*This inventory measures attitudes related to benevolent and hostile sexism. Benevolent sexism idealises women in traditional roles, seeing them as needing protection, while hostile sexism views women antagonistically, perceiving them as*

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In Study 5, it was customised for English participants as follows:  
"Sexual harassment is a serious problem in many British workplaces."

*trying to control or undermine men. The items in the scale assess both these subtle and overt forms of sexism.*

Many women have a quality of purity that few men possess.

Women should be cherished and protected by men.

Women seek to gain power by getting control over men.

Every man ought to have a woman whom he adores.

Men are incomplete without women.

Women exaggerate problems they have at work.

Once a woman get someone commit to her, she usually tries to put him on a tight leash.

When women lose to men in a fair competition, they typically complain about being discriminated against.

Many women get a kick out of teasing men by seeming sexually available and then refusing male advances.

Women, compared to men, tend to have a superior moral sensibility.

Men should be willing to sacrifice their own well-being in order to provide financially for the women in their lives.

Feminists are making unreasonable demands of men.

*Ambivalence towards men inventory (Study 2 and Study 5)*

*This inventory assesses benevolent and hostile attitudes towards men. Benevolent attitudes idealise men in traditional roles, emphasising their protective and risk-taking nature and suggesting women's dependence on them. Hostile attitudes, conversely, portray men as immature, domineering, or manipulative in their interactions with women.*

Even if both members of a couple work, the woman ought to be more attentive to taking care of her man at home.

When men act to "help" women, they are often trying to prove they are better than women.

Every woman needs a male partner who will cherish her.

A woman will never be truly fulfilled in life if she doesn't have a committed, long-term relationship with a man.

Men act like babies when they are sick.

Men will always fight to have greater control in society than women.

Men are mainly useful to provide financial security for women.

Even men who claim to be sensitive to women's rights really want a traditional relationship at home, with the woman performing most of the housekeeping and child care.

Men are more willing to put themselves in danger to protect others.

When it comes down to it, most men are really like children.

Men are more willing to take risks than women.

Most men sexually harass women, even if only in subtle ways, once they are in a position of power over them.

### *Perceived threat by the dominant group (Study 2 and Study 4)*

*This scale aims to assess the perceived threat men pose to women. The first five items measure realistic threats about men's dominance and power over women. The last five items measure symbolic threats, that is, the more favourable social evaluation of masculinity compared to femininity.*

- Men have too much political power.
- Men control the destinies of women in too many ways.
- Men too often deny women positions of power and responsibility.
- Many women live in fear of men's aggression.
- Hungary does not spend enough money on programs for women.
- Wives and mothers do not get as much respect from men as they should.
- Most men treat women as equals.(Reversed item)
- Men do not value childrearing as much as they should.
- Men want too much independence in relationships.
- Men often misunderstand women's intentions.

### *Unstable gender hierarchy Vignette (Study 3)*

According to the latest data from the Central Statistical Office (CSO), although economic, political, and social inequalities between men and women still exist, the situation of women in Hungary has improved considerably in recent decades. This means, among other things, that there is a growing acceptance in Hungary of roles for women and men that were previously unthinkable. According to surveys, more and more women are taking an active role in political life, and more and more women are becoming top executives of large corporations. At the same time, compared to the past, men are also more involved in household chores and spend significantly more time raising children. These positive changes have also led, for example, to a narrowing of the gap between the average earnings of men and women in recent decades.

### *Stable gender hierarchy Vignette (Study 3)*

According to the latest data from the Central Statistical Office (CSO), although the situation of women in Hungary has improved considerably in recent decades, economic, political, and social inequalities between men and women still exist. This means, among other things, that, in general, it is still not acceptable for women and men to play gender roles that are different from the traditional. According to surveys, it is still not acceptable for the majority for a woman to take an active role in political life or for women to become top executives of large corporations. On the other hand, most Hungarians do not consider it appropriate for men to spend more and more time at home doing household chores and raising children. The result of adhering to traditional gender roles is, among other things, that there is still a significant gap between the average earnings of men and women.



### *Modern sexism (Study 3)*

*This scale assesses beliefs about the current state of gender equality. It aims to measure attitudes regarding discrimination against women and beliefs about women's representation in particular areas like employment, media representation, and societal treatment.*

Discrimination against women is no longer a problem in Hungary.

Women often miss out on good jobs due to sexual discrimination. (Reversed item)

It is rare to see women treated in a sexist manner on television.

On average, people in our society treat husbands and wives equally.

Society has reached the point where women and men have equal opportunities for achievement.

It is easy to understand the anger of women's groups in Hungary. (Reversed item)

It is easy to understand why women's groups are still concerned about social limitations of women's opportunities. (Reversed item)

Over the past few years, the government and news media have been showing more concern about the treatment of women than is warranted by women's actual experiences.

### *Perceived stability of the gender hierarchy (Study 3)*

*This scale assesses people's beliefs regarding the stability of the gender hierarchy. Items measure the future-oriented beliefs and expectations about gender roles, gender equality, and the progression (or lack thereof) of women's societal, political, and economic positions.*

A few decades from now, the number of female (as compared to male) chief executive officers of major corporations is likely to be about equal. (Reversed item)

A few decades from now, the average salary for women will continue to be significantly lower than the average salary for men.

A few decades from now, women will be treated as equal to men in all areas (e.g., socially, politically, economically). (Reversed item)

A few decades from now, it will still be rare for husbands (as compared to wives) to put their careers on hold to stay at home and raise the kids.

A few decades from now, there is likely to have been at least one female President of Hungary. (Reversed item)

Over the next few decades, the current differences in the positions of men and women in society are likely to remain stable.

### *Parental preferences (Study 3)*

*This scale aims to gauge parental preferences and attitudes regarding their children's activities, behavioural traits, and future career aspirations, with the potential to identify gendered biases or stereotypes in these preferences.*

How much would you like your boy/girl to be an auto mechanic when (s)he grows up?

How much would you like your boy/girl to be a librarian when (s)he grows up?

How much would you like your boy/girl to be an elementary school teacher when (s)he grows up?

How much would you like your boy/girl to be a doctor when (s)he grows up?

How much would you like your boy/girl to be a business owner when (s)he grows up?

How much would you like your boy/girl to be a clothes designer when (s)he grows up?

How much do you like your boy/girl to jump rope?

How much do you like your boy/girl to play basketball?

How much do you like your boy/girl to play video games?

How much do you like your boy/girl to make up dances?

How much do you like your boy/girl to cook or bake things?

How much do you like your boy/girl to play chess?

How much do you like your boy/girl to compete?

How much do you like your boy/girl to be neat and tidy?

How much do you like your boy/girl to show his/her emotions?

How much do you like your boy/girl to enjoy Math class?

How much do you like your boy/girl to be loud?

How much do you like your boy/girl to enjoy English class?

### *Fear of backlash (Study 3)*

*This scale seeks to measure parental concerns about their children's perception and acceptance among peers. Namely, that children might have to face backlash from their classmates if they communicate about the non-traditional gender roles learned at home openly.*

Instruction: Imagine your (prospective) child sharing his/her classmates the views (s)he learned at home about gender roles (what a man and a woman or a boy and a girl should look like and how they should behave).

Would you worry that his/her classmates might think s(he) is odd?

Would you be concerned that his/her classmates might dislike him/her?

Do you think s(he) would feel proud? (Reversed item)

Do you think s(he) would feel embarrassed in front of his/her classmates?

Would you worry that his/her classmates thought (s)he is too confident?

Would you worry that his/her classmates thought s(he) is too assertive?

Would you worry about s(he) being called vain by his/her classmates?

### *Parental attitudes (Study 3)*

*This scale evaluates the parental expectations about their children's gendered behaviour and traits. By labelling each trait as either masculine (M) or feminine (F), the scale aims to assess perceptions of traditionally gendered behaviours and characteristics, understanding which traits parents see as more appropriate or typical for their daughters or sons.*

Instruction: How much do you want your (prospective) son/daughter to be characterised by the following statements at home (with her family) or at school (in front of others)?

Be affectionate (M)

Misbehave (M)

Be confident (M)  
Be logical (M)  
Be gentle (F)  
Complain (F)  
Be dominant (M)  
Be charming (F)  
Brag a lot (M)  
Be loud (M)  
Be loving (F)  
Have good manners (F)  
Be neat (F)  
Act as a leader (M)  
Try to look good (F)  
Be helpful (F)  
Be competitive (M)  
Follow directions (F)  
Be smart (M)  
Be determined (M)

*Neosexist beliefs (Study 4)*

*This scale aims to measure attitudes and beliefs regarding women's roles, rights, and societal progress, particularly focusing on resistance to or scepticism about gender equality efforts.*

Women shouldn't push themselves where they are not wanted.  
Women will make more progress by being patient and not pushing too hard for change  
It is difficult to work for a female boss.  
Women's requests in terms of equality between the sexes are simply exaggerated.  
Over the past few years, women have gotten more from the government than they deserve.  
Universities are wrong to admit women in costly programs such as medicine, when in fact a large number will leave their jobs after a few years to raise their children

*Gender authority measure (Study 4)*

*This scale seeks to gauge attitudes and biases concerning gender roles and competencies in various professional and societal contexts. It assesses the respondent's preferences for and trust in men or women in leadership, decision-making, and expertise roles, aiming to capture underlying gender-based biases or stereotypes in these domains.*

If I were in serious legal trouble, I would prefer a male to a female lawyer.  
The people I look up to most are women. (Reversed item)  
I would feel more comfortable if the pilot of an airplane I was traveling on were male.  
I would rather be stopped by a woman police officer (vs. a man). (Reversed item)  
I probably prefer that the Hungarian president is a man, versus a woman.  
In general, I would rather work for a man than for a woman.

If I were having a serious operation, I would have more confidence in a male surgeon.

When it comes to politics, I would rather vote for women than for men. (Reversed item)

For most college courses, I prefer a male professor to a female professor.

Personally, I would rather go to a male doctor than a female doctor.

In general, women make better leaders than men do. (Reversed item)

In most areas, I would rather take advice from a man than from a woman.

In general, I would rather take orders from a man than from a woman.

If I were being sentenced in court, I would prefer that the judge be a woman. (Reversed item)

In general, I feel more comfortable when a man (vs. a woman) is in charge.

#### *Everyday discrimination (gender/sexual orientation-based; Study 5)*

*This scale aims to measure people's perceptions of personal discrimination or prejudicial treatment they experience in various social contexts. It assesses the extent to which respondents feel they were subject to disrespect, derogatory assumptions, poor service, or direct threats and harassment compared to others.*

You are treated with less courtesy than other people are.

You are treated with less respect than other people are.

You receive poorer service than other people at restaurants or stores.

People act as if they think you are not smart.

People act as if they are afraid of you.

People act as if they think you are dishonest.

People act as if they're better than you are.

You are called names or insulted.

You are threatened or harassed.

#### *Gender essentialism (Study 5)*

*This scale aims to measure people's beliefs and perceptions regarding the origins and nature of gender differences. It assesses the extent to which respondents attribute differences between men and women to biological or genetic factors, in contrast to social or environmental influences. The scale also evaluates the perceived persistence and universality of these differences across time and cultures.*

Differences between women and men's personalities are in their DNA.

Men and women have different abilities.

Genes are at the root of differences between the sexes.

People generally over-estimate how much sex differences in behaviour are biologically based. (Reversed item)

Differences between men and women in behaviour and personality are largely determined by genetic predisposition.

Fathers have to learn what mothers are able to do naturally.

People tend to be either masculine or feminine: there's not much middle ground.

Wherever you go in the world, men and women differ from one another in the same kinds of ways.

Members of each gender have many things in common. (Reversed item)

It is possible to know about many aspects of a person once you learn their gender.

Trying to make boys and girls have similar likes and dislikes is pointless.  
In 100 years, society will think of the differences between women and men in much the same way as today.

Women and men are fundamentally different.

Women are innately more nurturing than men.

Knowing that someone is a man tells you very little about what the person is like.

(Reversed item)

Men and women's personalities are more or less the same. (Reversed item)

Men and women differ in numerous ways.

Their underlying nature makes it difficult for men to learn to behave more like women.

Differences between boys and girls are fixed at birth.

Mothers are naturally more sensitive to a baby's feelings than fathers are.

Men and women have different personality types.

Male and female brains probably work in very different ways.

Differences between men and women are primarily determined by biology.

Women are naturally less aggressive than men.

Upbringing by parents and the social environment have far greater significance for the development of sex differences than inborn differences in female and male brains. (Reversed item)

#### *Collective action (Study 5)*

*This scale gauges people's willingness to take action for gender equality and against the exclusion of gay and lesbian people. It measures varying levels of commitment, from signing petitions to collaborating on initiatives and participating in demonstrations.*

I would participate in a demonstration against gender inequality.

I would like to sign a petition against gender inequality.

I would like to do something together against gender inequality.

I would like to do something together against the exclusion of gay and lesbian people.