"We passed the trust on": Strategies for security in #MeToo activism in Sweden

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Abstract. The #metoo movement can serve as a case for how networked online environments can provide settings for the mobilization of social movements, while also entail serious risks for those involved. In Sweden, over hundred thousand people were engaged in activities against sexual harassments and abuse, where social media were used to collect testimonies and to draft and discuss petitions that were later published in print news media. While HCI research on trust focus on how people trust technical systems, the authorities behind the system, or the user generated data, trust between peers in vulnerable communities is less researched. In this study, based on semi-structured interviews and a survey that involved 62 organizers of the Swedish #metoo movement, we therefore look into the question of how a secure and supportive environment was achieved among participants despite the scale of the activism. The result shows how trust was aggregated over networks of technical systems, institutions, people, shared values and practices. The organizers of the petitions used tools and channels at their disposal such as e.g. already established social media contexts that enabled the #metoo petitions to be formed easily and spread quickly. Establishing a supportive culture based on recognition and shared values was central for the movement. However, when the activism was scaled up, strategies were used to increase security by clarifying rules and roles, limiting access to information, restricting access to groups, and limiting the scope of communication.

Introduction

Networked online environments can effectively serve as settings for the organization and mobilization of social movements, e.g the environmental movement early on used social media to engage a broad public around substantive issues (DeLuca et al., 2016; Goodwin & Jasper, 2014; Pang & Law, 2017). Other examples of activism where social media played a role include the Arab Spring (AlSayyad & Guvenc, 2015; Smidi & Shahin, 2017), the Occupy Movement (Kavada, 2015), and movements such as the Gezi protests in Turkey (Haciyakupoglu & Zhang, 2015), and Ukraine's Euromaidan Uprising (Bohdanova, 2014).

Campaigns such as #metoo show how online spaces provide opportunities for victims of discrimination, harassment and abuse to come out and get support from other victims, and to participate in public debates around these issues. Simultaneously, research also points at the negative and practical consequences, which may render the digital feminist activism risky, exhausting and overwhelming (Mendes et al., 2018).

What characterized the #metoo movement in Sweden 2017-2018 is how well coordinated it was, despite being made up predominantly by grassroots initiatives. An important difference between the Swedish #metoo movement and other similar movements (such as the Arab spring) is that traditional media have usually been in opposition to the grassroots movements. In contrast, the Swedish #metoo movement used social and traditional media in a coordinated and remarkably efficient effort. The organizers managed to mobilize large groups through social networks, and then spread their agenda nationally through the largest and most influential newspapers. Judging from the public interest (Zachariasson, 2017), as well as the number of articles published in newspapers (Eklund, 2018), the Swedish #metoo movement can be described as very successful. The movement was also able to establish a feminist agenda focusing on structural problems, beyond the individual cases (Svärd, 2017). A broad mobilization took place in the form of lists of demands petitioned to the government, action plans by politicians and employers, as well as a large number of seminars and education organized around the country (Annebäck, 2018; Berglund, 2017; Samordningsgruppen för metoo, 2018). However, the framing of the movement as a success story obscures questions of obstacles that evolved along the way, concerning for example risks for those involved.

In the Swedish #metoo movement, perceived risks concerned not becoming employed, or losing one's current employment because of the participation, or facing the social stigma of being a victim of sexual abuse. There were also fears of becoming target of threats or continued harassment. These risks had to be realized and handled in order for organizers to be able to gather participants and collect their stories and signatures.

This paper seeks to understand how the organizers of the #metoo petitions handled these risks and how they established a secure environment and gained participants' trust.

Background: Research on trust

In research on human computer interaction (HCI), trust is a central concept, as HCI to a large extent is about making people rely on the technology to solve different tasks. When navigating the topic of "trust online", the literature is dominated by research mainly on different types of e-commerce solutions (Corritore et al., 2003; Kracher et al., 2005), there is also research on e-government systems (Bannister & Connolly, 2011; Corbett & Le Dantec, 2018a, 2018b), and e-health systems (Beldad et al., 2010). The focus in these areas is mainly on how consumers and citizens can feel confident in systems that handle sensitive data such as money or medical records (Wang & Emurian, 2005). When it comes to trust in people, the focus has often been on the relationship between the citizen/consumer and the authority/service, and thus not directly about the trust in peers (Corbett, 2018a). A focus that is more about trust in peers is about trusting the reliability of user-generated data. The large amount of information available online creates an information crisis where trust in informal networks, rather than central institutions, are becoming increasingly important. For example, it may be in a situation where activists do not trust the official information, such as during the Gezi protests in Turkey (Haciyakupoglu, 2015). Here, the technology instead created an opportunity to "aggregate trustworthiness"(Jessen & Jørgensen, 2011) from a large number of sources, where social trust and technical affordances interact (Haciyakupoglu, 2015).

Another relevant aspect of online trust is personal security. Within this area, the relation between the desire for self-exposure and the possibility of being anonymous has been demonstrated when for example; it applies to sensitive subjects (Birnholtz et al., 2015), vulnerable groups such as victims of sexual abuse (Andalibi et al., 2016), or women who miscarriage (Andalibi & Forte, 2018). At the same time, research on people's safety awareness on social media shows that even though there are concerns that sensitive information is coming out, one chooses to trust that it works, as the benefits of sharing experiences and getting support are perceived as so valuable that it outweighs the risks. This also applies to vulnerable groups such as illegal immigrants in the United States (Guberek et al., 2018).

Undoubtedly, trust is something central to online communication and also a broad and multifaceted concept that means different things in different contexts, why for the sake of clarity we here would like to define it and explain how we relate to the concept in this paper.

Following Haraway(1991), technology can be seen as a kind of prosthesis, which extends our "arms" and allows us to stretch beyond our bodies and reach what we previously could not reach. In this view, trust is about trusting that the arms can reach out and carry what we expect them to do. There is always a risk that the prosthesis will fall off, but most of the time it goes well. The moment of risk means that trust is required, which is why risk and trust are closely associated. The more risk, the greater is the trust needed.

When it comes to technologies such as social media, these are not primarily artifacts but consists of humans, sometimes very large amounts of people that one might not even have a personal relationship with, but it might be a common interest that brought one together. In these cases, the trust is not so much a matter of trust in technical systems, trust in authorities, trust in information, or trust in particular people, but trust in shared values and practices. For example, it may be about belonging to an idea, or a shared experience, which is sufficiently strong or revolutionary to motivate the individual to, for example, take the risk of trusting strangers in publics (Wang, 2005).

Trust is also linked to distance. Simplified, the greater the distance, the greater the trust required. It can be about physical distance, temporal distance, emotional or social distance (Corbett, 2018a). Here, trust can be seen as a process of bridging distances, a process that can be described in various phases such as *developing*, *building*, and *maintaining* trust (Rousseau et al., 1998). In the development phase, trust is about *a calculated and weak confidence*. Trust in this phase is mainly cognitive and is about relying on clear evidence and strong external structures such as laws and systems. In the construction phase, trust is more about *experience built through interactions over time*. People and situations that have previously been reliable are trusted again. The third phase, maintaining trust, is less about calculations and more about belonging, and takes its point of departure in *shared values and benevolence*. One not only trusts that the system will work, and that people are predictable, but one trusts that this is motivated by shared values.

Data and method

To understand how different factors such as social trust and technical affordances played a role in the organization of #metoo, this study employs a mixed methods approach, consisting of a survey and semi-structured interviews.

The survey was distributed to the organizers of all 79 petitions that were initiated between November 2017 and June 2018. The number of contact persons varied per petition group, as well as how contact information was provided. Some groups provided group-aliases that transferred e-mail to all the organizers of the petition in question, and others provided individual addresses of one or a few of

the organizers. Some petitions were organized by groups of people, whereas others by just one person. The petitions differed in reach as well: some gathered over 10 000 participants, whereas other groups were smaller and more closely knit. We distributed the survey to 105 organizers and got responses from 62 organizers of 50 petitions within two weeks.

The 62 organizers of the 50 petitions (see appendix 1) came from all over Sweden, from Malmö in the south to Kiruna in the very north. One person lived in the neighboring Finland. 31 lived in Stockholm, the capital of Sweden, and 4 in Gothenburg, which is the second largest city. The remaining 27 respondents lived in different small towns or rural areas. The organizers were between 20 and 70 years old with the majority (44 of 62) between 30 and 50 years old. Educational levels were high, 54 of 62 had a college education, which is twice as many as in the general Swedish population (SCB, 2018).

The seven interviewed informants ranged from being in their twenties to 50+. Their previous experiences as organizers were mixed, from no experience at all to a lifelong experience of media activism. Before becoming the organizer of a petition, many of them already had access to some sort of professional network online; they could for example serve as moderators for social media groups gathering people from their industry or be responsible for an e-mail lists that connected former classmates.

The survey asked questions about how the petitions were organized, what tools and methods were used, how news media was contacted, and what role security and trust played in the petitions' organization.

As a way to get complementary information and to deepen our understanding, semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven petition organizers, from a number of contexts: IT industry, construction industry, the forest industry, agriculture, and equestrian sports. Informed consent was gathered, and all names of participants and the petitions have been omitted to ensure anonymity.

Each interview lasted between 50 and 70 minutes and began with a brief overview of the purpose of the research, followed by a series of questions asking the informant; to describe their background and role in the organization of the petition, what ideas and values that influenced the organization, how the petition was organized, how it was distributed, about the role of security and trust, and what they had learned from the experience.

The interviews were recorded and transcribed. All data were in Swedish, thus the quotes have been translated into English. The interview material, as well as open-ended questions in the survey, were analyzed thematically in an approach inspired by grounded theory, where a first open-coding of the data was followed by more focused coding to develop salient categories. The paper focuses on the result of the survey of communication tools and processes and on one of the main themes that emerged from the analysis of the open survey answers and the interviews; security strategies.

Results

Communication tools and processes

The tools for initiating and developing the petitions varied from IRL meetings to phone calls, e-mail, collaborative writing to social media and survey tools. Social media, in most cases meant Facebook. Facebook was used by almost all petitions. E-mail or messenger were used in half of the cases, and Google docs was used in 1/3 of the petitions. Twitter and Instagram were foremost used in addition to Facebook, as a way to distribute the petitions.

After the initiating phase, testimonies were collected through e-mail, social media and survey tools. One fourth of the petitions used some sort of survey tool to collect testimonies and signatures, the other either used a Facebook group, or had a dedicated e-mail address. In the final distribution phase when the result of the petition was communicated to its stakeholders, social media was central, but also IRL meetings such as seminars, meetings with journalists and decision makers, became important.

The smaller group of organizers usually used a Facebook group, Messenger group or chat as an exclusive channel to communicate among themselves. Most organizing groups maintained a close and continual contact through different tools.

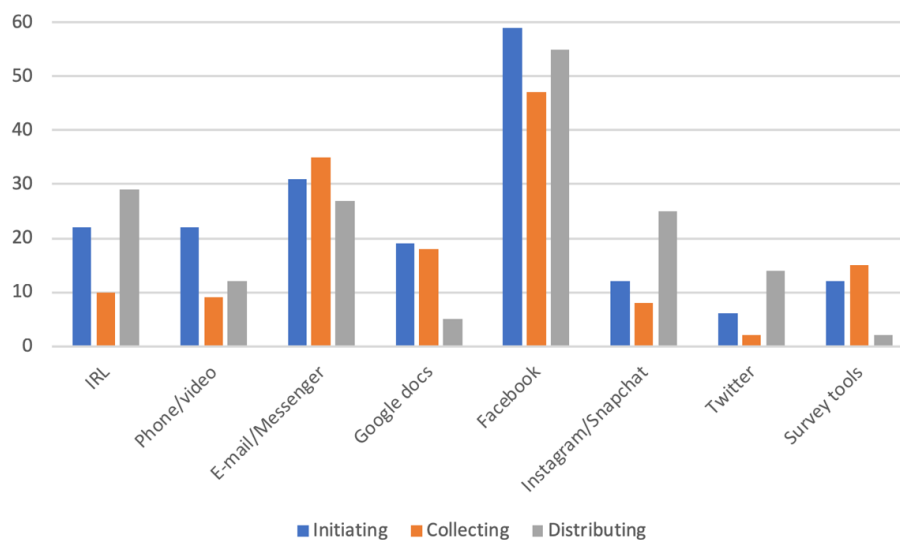Figure 1. The amount of organisers that used different tools in different parts of the process; when *initiating* petitions, *collecting* testimonies, and *distributing* petitions.

The organizer of the petitions used a combination of methods and tools to communicate, and the processes could look very different from case to case. For example, one petition started as a discussion thread in a Facebook group that

already gathered thousands of women from the industry. When the first #metoo petitions were published, the issue was discussed in this discussion thread and several participants asked for a petition in their own industry. In response, one of the participants in the discussion thread quickly put together a manifesto and set up a survey tool to collect signatures online and created an e-mail address that others could send their testimonies to. She posted information about the petition in the open Facebook group, which meant that the petition quickly received a wide distribution. After a few hours she had enough material for drafting an article proposal aimed to a leading newspaper. The whole process from idea to draft went very fast and took no more than 4-5 hours. To get help to develop and complete the article, she asked the others in the discussion thread, and in this way a group was formed around the continued work.

Other petitions developed much slower. It was not uncommon that testimonies were published semi-public in closed Facebook groups, which generated long discussions on each individual case. In some petitions, the text was developed collectively, not only by the organizers, but all members of the group came with opinions, and the text was examined in detail and discussed intensively before it was sent for publication. Several such cases took place in Facebook groups with over thousands of participants.

The interviews show that later petitions learned from previous petitions' experiences and were thus more cautious about how they e.g. used social media or with publishing their private email addresses.

To sum up, the organizers of the petitions used tools and channels at their disposal such as already established social media contexts. Most often different tools and channels were combined. Facebook seems to have been used by almost all petitions and had a central role in the whole development of the petitions both as a way to reach out and as a forum for discussion.

Strategies for security

While the whole idea of #metoo was to make sexual harassment visible and defy the shame of having been exposed, it meant great risks for the victims to come out with their stories. The disclosures could, for example, lead to unpleasant consequences both socially and professionally, in the form of social exclusion, threats and harassment. Legally, accusations that cannot be substantiated in concrete evidence or other witnesses, can lead to the person reporting the case being sentenced and punished for defamation. On the other hand, perpetrators pointed out publicly may suffer from extreme consequences that are not proportional to the possible crime. It is therefore not surprising that one central themes in the open questions in the survey and in the interviews were about security strategies.

The material points to five comprehensive strategies for security where the first emphasizes a supportive community and openness, and the other four are strategies for security with the aim to regulate and control.

Security through a supportive community

Most petition organizers emphasized the importance of a trustful environment where the participants dared to talk about their experiences and could receive support and encouragement from others with similar experiences. The study shows how they gave special importance to a supportive culture in which the victims were not questioned and were a generous culture where established through active and collective moderating.

Establishing safe and trusting forms of dialogue was central to the organization of the petitions. It was crucial to create a situation where people who previously might never have told others about their experiences, could get recognition for these, and open themselves up without being questioned or risking their identity coming out. The situation was based on confidence in the organizers and their ability to harbor trust.

> "Most stories were submitted to me and [the other organizer]. Some released their stories in the Facebook group, which created trust so that other people also dared to share. This in turn created trust. But to send by e-mail felt more secure and we were careful to ask before posting the stories that this really was ok. I am thinking that we showed great respect, from the beginning, and that this was a good start. We as organizers set rules for what we could talk about and not in the group.
>
> I believe the security of these groups is largely based on the evidence of how widespread the problem is. If, for the first time, you feel that you are listened to and taken seriously, and if you feel for others in the group, then the interests to break the social rules is not so great." (Survey answer from organizer of one of the petitions)

Being recognized, transparency, and having seen everyone else contributing, created another kind of trust, a trust in the community of a collective experience. Contributing with a traumatic experience became meaningful when they got feedback from a large group and heard other share their experiences, and when they come out this contributes to more sharing. An encouraging environment for discussion characterized by generosity and without judging or blaming, was an explicit ambition that was raised by several organizers of the petitions. This supportive culture was also reproduced by the participants.

Several of the organisers also had a readiness to handle people who needed more support, for example by providing information about people or organizations that provide legal or psychological support.

> "We as administrators and coordinators took an active role and set the tone in the comment fields. There were never hatred or bullshit, instead many pointed out how good the mood was. The focus was on "Thank you for telling us" and always reminding you that there was the opportunity to get more support. We worked a lot with responsiveness and for example using languages that did not exclude. From the very beginning, we created an opportunity for anyone who wanted to talk to a person in charge at our federal office if they needed more

support and / or wanted to report a perpetrator, to possibly move on in some way." (Survey answer from organizer of one of the petitions)

The organizers were subjected to a lot of pressure during an intense time period, and in the questionnaire about how they did to create security and safety in the organizing group, we get many similar answers that emphasize a communicative strategy where all means are used to have close contact with the group:

"We had our own WhatsApp group where we supported and pepped each other all the time."

"A lot of conversations, support and a constant checking with each other."

"Mainly through active contact and support between us. We replaced each other when there were tougher discussions in our Facebook group."

"Continuous communication between us, we met a lot and talked a lot about what was sent to us."

"We who organized were in different places so could not meet physically but had close contact over Messenger so we would always be on the same wavelength."
(Survey answer from five organizers of different petitions)

Some organizers knew each other personally before, which facilitated communication. But many were not familiar before the call, or just superficially familiar before, and found each other through the shared engagement on the issue.

Security through clear rules and roles

A strategy that contributed to creating a trusting environment in many petition groups was the development and communication of clear rules. Attitudes were also developed and disseminated between the petition groups, largely via the overall coordination group, which gathered the organizers.

"Clear directives on publishing in the group. We were clear about how we safeguarded anonymity and total anonymization of testimonies (no one was allowed / could publish testimonies in the group. Testimonies were first sent to e-mail that we admins later published without names and places or other "disclosure" in the group). Additions to the group needed to be approved by the contact person and us in admin. The group was secret and not searchable." (Survey answer from organizer of one of the petitions)

Active moderation was another source of security. Those who moderated the groups worked actively to ensure that the rules on anonymization and generosity were complied with, and they closed down discussion threads that didn't follow the code of conduct. They also reminded the participants about the rules and the goal of the campaign as a way of improving the level of discussion.

Likewise, another safety measure was to appoint one or a few people who acted as spokesmen for the group. Clearly speaking for all the anonymous voices of the petition was a way of removing focus from individual organizers, and instead emphasizing a collective voice.

Security by limitation of information

The trust was also based on the fact that names did not spread - neither on victims nor perpetrators. Technical affordance was fundamental to effective

implementation. The technical security was (somewhat surprising) nothing that the organizers experienced as risky, instead it was the human factor that they could be worried about: it was crucial to be able to trust that members of the group did not spread the name and information further.

A basic principle that all groups have embraced was anonymity: The right to be anonymous, but also to let others, even perpetrators, be anonymous in the testimonies. Active moderators ensured that this was complied with in testimonies as well as group discussions in social media. This mainly concerns what is communicated externally and to other members, but in a few groups, there were full internal anonymity, ie those who left testimonies were anonymous also to the organizers, and that the organizers were anonymous to the participants.

All groups had restricted access to information about the victims, and to the uncensored testimonies. In the relatively open groups, however, many testimonies were published directly by victims, which meant that the person then became known to the whole group which could consist of thousands of people, sometimes with serious consequences.

> "To avoid testimonies leaking from the group, we started collecting them in a separate document and deleting them from the Facebook group. This turned out to be too late. A woman was contacted by her perpetrator after her testimony leaked." (Survey answer from organizer of one of the petitions)

Following this event, members were asked to send their testimonies either directly to the organizers, or through a form that allowed full anonymity. Here, different considerations needed to be taken into account and balanced against each other. While it was important that information did not leak out, the sharing of testimonies and feedback on these stories was important to develop a trustful atmosphere that made more people dare to testify. This was resolved in some petitions by making the administrators share the testimonies on social media, allowing the victims to be kept anonymous, while people still were being able to discuss the testimony and publish their support.

> "We had rigid rules on anonymity in the group, for having the security to share. This meant that it was mainly us administrators that shared the testimonies in the Facebook group." (Survey answer from organizer of one of the petitions)

It seems that the need to be anonymous was perceived as being particularly important in tightly connected networks, where everyone knew everyone. Firstly, because there was too much to lose if it came out that you participated in the #metoo activism, as there were few possible new workplaces to switch to. Partly, the perpetrators, or the perpetrators' relatives, were often well known and included in their social network, which meant that they (or other people with an interest in the issue, such as human resource managers at companies), easily could access information in social media by looking over the shoulders of a partner or simply by sharing login information with a family member.

Some petition organizer therefore chose to be completely anonymous and did not have any named organizers or signatures at all. This approach of total anonymity, even towards journalists, could create difficulties in reaching out and gaining legitimacy, but was sometimes a necessary way to go to avoid reprisals from colleagues and family, or for fear of what the public light would entail.

Security by limiting access

One way to ensure that information did not seep out of the group was to carefully check and limit new members. A related security issue concerns the power imbalance of the group, to ensure that unauthorized persons did not gain access to the group:

> "Here is the crux ... it was decided, for example, that no journalists would be allowed to join the group. Then part of the admin group went in with the argument "but that's my friend" and added these people again. Also industry professionals / service persons at [industry name] were added with the same argument against the group's will, even though the group assumed to be a group for [professional identity]. Thus, they were expected to tell sensitive stories to their employers, who in some cases leaked information into [the industry company]." (Survey answer from organizer of one of the petitions)

Here they were careful about not accepting managers or employers as participants, or teachers mixed with students. A closely related dilemma is the cases where some member is closely related to a person who has power over the others in the group. Sometimes participants left the group voluntarily as they experienced that their participation reduced the trust within the group. But many times, questions about power imbalance and dependency conditions could be a dilemma, which sometimes made the organizers take other paths, and use other tools than just Facebook:

> "We didn't want to bring in some of them [who had high positions or worked as a person responsible for staff] who we knew about. So, we never arranged such a [Facebook group], but instead we spread the Google form via Messenger and yes, we sent it to our nearest network, and so it spread. So then it became so that one could pass it around and say that it comes from a safe source. It was as if we passed the trust on." (Interview)

For most petitions, the question of who would participate was simple: Women in the industry. Many petitions spoke in the names of women and non-binary. But in several cases, discussions arose about the question of who would be allowed to participate. The least controversial was the separatism, to exclude non-women, as including men was seen as the presence of potential perpetrators and could reduce the trust within the group. But in industries where the career paths were a little unclear, a discussion also emerged about the significance of boundary drawing and why industry-specific manifestations had an importance.

> "Many people signed the petition, but many have a very vague connection to the industry, but more willingness to be seen and heard, and to be in the limelight that the [...] industry has. Whether someone harasses you in your amateur [context] says more about how society is

at large than how […] the industry looks. " (Survey answer from organizer of one of the petitions)

Foremost, the issue with participation was not about professional identity but about power. Since sexual harassment is seen as an expression of a power structure where those who consider themselves to have more power are those who harass them with less power, it was an important issue that the participants in the group had a fairly equal status so that they were not in different ways potentially contributing to these power schemes, e.g as a manager or client.

The importance of other power structures such as age and sexuality was also a discussion that came up, and made the requirement for equality within the group complicated. The affinity with other vulnerable people collided with the affinity of colleagues, family or others of the same age or other forms of power positions.

> "I took the initiative to a meeting irl afterwards, it was very strengthening to meet people, but I reacted on that most of the people who came to the meeting were heterosexual white women in their 40s-50s .... we did not recruit the young, perhaps because one of the members of the admin did not want to have students in [context] because she taught [there]. I thought we should have included the young. that is my opinion, because they are the weakest and perhaps the most vulnerable, at least it has been so historic. "(Survey answer from organizer of one of the petitions)

Security by limitations in scope

Another security strategy applied by several petitions was limitations in scope. The gathering of testimonies and signatures could e.g. take place for a limited time and the group was then closed down when the petition was published. Another aspect of scope concerns the size of the group. Although it was seen as positive that the petition created interest and engagement, problems arose if they become too big.

The challenge of scaling up a feminist supportive culture developed in smaller groups was made clear by the speed of how the calls were developed, where quick decisions must be taken without any formal leadership. The larger the group became, the more uncertain it became for the participants, as the possibilities for information leaked increased. But above all, it was labor intensive to moderate large, sprawling group discussions that went on around the clock.

> "Our security was never a problem. The most problematic was workload and stress. " (Survey answer from organizer of one of the petitions)

It happened that groups grew uncontrollably, and some administrators felt that they did not manage to administer the group, and that they could not control that the information was not leaking.

> "The larger the group became, the more unsafe it became. We tried to make those who wrote in the group aware of this and think about that we became bigger and that the secrecy became increasingly difficult to maintain. However, the stories that became public were anonymized and when it was published we closed down the group for reasons of confidentiality." (Survey answer from organizer of one of the petitions)

One measure taken to reduce stress was to "pause" the group for a period, when it was not possible to post, to give all participants a much needed rest from the intensive discussions in the forums.

In summary, most groups started from a feeling of trust based on recognition and shared values. But especially when activism was scaled up, strategies were needed to increase security by clarifying rules and roles, limiting access to information, restricting access to groups, and limiting the scope of communication.

Levels of security

At an overall level, the groups applied similar strategies for security, but there was a varying level of security that could be divided into three type groups.
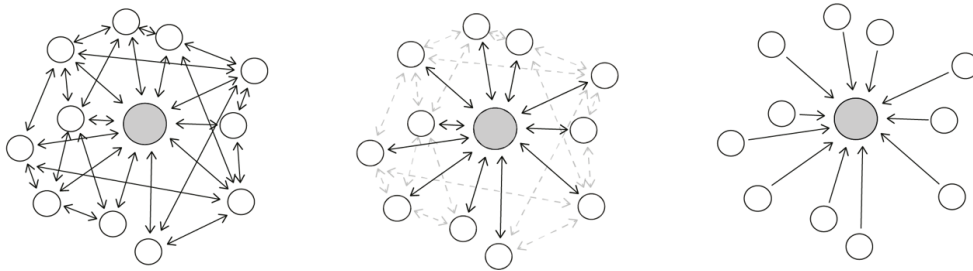

Figure 2: Illustration of information flow on three levels of security: *Community*, where information flow in all directions between the organizers and participants, and participants and participants, and security is based on trust on shared values and community; *Regulation,* where information flows in both directions between the organizers and participants but where the organizers acts as gatekeepers moderating the information flow between participants and participants; *Alienation,* where information flows from participants to organizers, but participants have no means to contact other participants, and can be anonymous also for the organizers.

Some groups applied a *light security* that relied on fellowship. Organization and collection of testimonies were made in closed groups on social media, to which people belonging to the defined group were invited. The invitations to the group worked according to the snowball principle so that everyone was invited by someone who knew them, so there was a social closeness and community between the participants of these expanded networks.

Other groups had *moderate security* where communications were more regulated. On Facebook, they created hidden and "secure" groups that weren't searchable, that sometimes changed names constantly so that they would be harder to find for outsiders. Anyone invited was checked by the group's administrator, who in some cases also moderated posts before they were posted to ensure that no one posted names or anything else that could harm the safety of

individuals. In this security strategy trust was based on common rules and leadership.

Some groups applied a *strict security* based on alienation where a (sometimes completely) anonymous organizational group collected testimonies via a survey tool. Those who participated had no opportunity to contact each other or see the other participants' contributions. Here, the technology was used to minimize the risk that identifying information were spread by minimizing the possibility for the participants to communicate with each other or with the organizers.

Within these different levels of security, various strategies were used to promote trust and ensure security: a supportive community, clear rules and roles, limiting information, limiting access and scope.

Concluding discussion

The results show that security was a central issue in the organization of the petitions, where various strategies were used to promote trust and ensure security: a supportive community, clear rules and roles, limiting information, limiting access and scope.

The safety of the individuals was important for trust in the organization of the call, but at the same time there was a contradiction between being anonymous and feeling a sense of community and trust in the collective. The organization of the petitions employed a varying degree of security, corresponding with the degree of perceived risk from the participants, ranging from an emphasize on *belonging* and relationships to focusing on *regulation*s, to a situation where the tools and methods enabled *alienation* as a mean to reduce risk:

- From a process of trust through shared values, benevolence and *belonging*. Here, the starting point was the trust due to social closeness and a shared interest with people from an enlarged network. Information flowed in all directions between the organizers and between participants and participants.

- To a process of trust based on pronounced *regulation* and leadership. Here you have learned to not trust anyone who wants to be involved: Information flow in all directions between the organizers and participants and participants, but the organizers acted as gatekeepers and censors.

- To a process of trust that involves calculating and strict security where confidence is weak and the technology is used to enhance *alienation* between users and thus minimized risk and create a social distance. Information flow from participants to organizers, but not the other way.

No organizers expressed concern regarding the risk that the technology would not work or any privacy concerns of technical nature. This tendency is confirmed by previous research, that people choose to rely on technology, even though they should know better (Guberek et al., 2018).

In trust research trust is seen as a process of crossing distances, a process that can be described in various phases such as developing, building, and maintaining trust (Rousseau, 1998), where one phase is based on the other and moves towards trust based on increased community and belonging. In the case of #metoo in Sweden, one can see the different types of trust processes as an expression of the levels of trust in the different industries from which the petitions originated. But one can also see it as a reverse trust process, where trust initially was high, in the beginning when the group was smaller, and then were reduced when the organizers realized the risks and when the groups became larger and exposed to the public. The biggest risk was also experienced in situations where the participants actually came from a tightly knit network and thus knew or understood each other well. Here the risk was that the participants could have conflicting loyalties.

Both the participants and the organizers initiated and participated in processes they seldom had control over and rarely had previous experiences of. The strength to actually implement these risky projects came from previous successful petitions that acted as role models and established a shared set of values and practical examples. Technical affordance was another important factor. A number of easily available technical tools functioned as prothesis that enabled the organization to be scaled up and extended to thousands of participants. Several petitions were made in horizontal networks in social media that organized women in the industry, and there were often already established networks that enabled the #metoo call to be formed easily and spread quickly. The trust that enabled so many to actually participate was not trust in a particular system, trust in an authority or a known person. Instead, the trust can be described as aggregated, it was established through trust in technical systems, institutions, people, shared values and practices, and lots of trust-generating interactions over time both before and during the actual organization of the petitions.

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Appendix 1

Table: List of the 50 hashtags that where included in the survey; translation, date, publisher, amount of signatures, and context.

Hashtag	Translation	Date	Publisher	Signatures	Context
#tystnadtagning	Silence, camera action	2017-11-10	Svenska Dagbladet	705	Actors
#imaktenskorridorer	In the corridors of power	2017-11-17	Svenska Dagbladet	1 319	Politicians
#närmusikentystnar	When the music becomes silent	2017-11-17	Dagens Nyheter	1 993	Music industry
#teknisktfel	Technical problem	2017-11-19	Dagens Nyheter	1 139	Technology industry
#deadline	Deadline	2017-11-21	Feministiskt perspektiv	4 084	Journalists
#inteförhandlingsbart	Not negotiable	2017-11-22	ETC	1 501	Union movement
#tystdansa	Silent dancing	2017-11-22	Feministiskt perspektiv, Dagens Nyheter	620	Dancers
#akademiuppropet	Academics' petition	2017-11-24	Svenska Dagbladet	2 400	Academics
#omniberättarlyssnarvi	If you tell we will listen	2017-11-24	Dagens Nyheter	1 299	Psychologists telling about clients' experiences
#vardeljus	Let there be light	2017-11-24	Kyrkans tidning	1 382	Swedish church
#sistaspikenikistan	Last nail in the coffin	2017-11-27	Aftonbladet	4 672	Construction industry, architects
#vårdensomsvek	The health care that failed	2017-11-27	SVT Nyheter	none	Patients
#larmetgår	The alarm is on	2017-11-28	Aftonbladet	none	Emergency services
#sistabriefen	Last brief	2017-11-28	Dagens Nyheter	2 126	Communications industry
#givaktochbitihop	Stand firm and suck it up	2017-11-29	Dagens Nyheter	1 768	Swedish defense
#nykterfrizon	Sober free zone	2017-11-29	Accent - Sveriges största tidning om droger och nyhkterhet	500	Recovered alcoholics
#visparkarbakut	We are bucking	2017-11-29	Dagens Nyheter	1 089	Equestrian
#skiljaagnarnafrånvetet	To separate the wheat from the chaff	2017-11-30	ATL Lantbrukets affärstidning	937	The Green industry
#utantystnadsplikt	Without professional secrecy	2017-11-30	Svenska Dagbladet	10 400	Physicians
#utgrävningpågår	Excavation running	2017-11-30	Dagens Nyheter	387	Archeologists
#vikokaröver	We are boiling with rage	2017-11-30	Dagens Nyheter	1 863	Restaurant industry
#metoobackstage	Metoo backstage	2017-12-01	Svenska Dagbladet	1 614	Television, film and stage production
#slådövörattill, #byss	To turn a deaf ear	2017-12-03	Dagens Nyheter	634	Deaf community
#ålandockså, #högtskalldetklinga	Åland also	2017-12-03	Egen hemsida	1 568	Finnish citizens living on Åland
#konstnärligfrihet	Artistic freedom	2017-12-05	Konstnärernas riksorganisation	1625	Arts and crafts
#nomore	No more	2017-12-06	Dagens Arena	none	School management
#lättaankar	Weigh anchor	2017-12-07	Sjöfartstidningen	1000	Shipping
#utanskyddsnät	Without safety net	2017-12-10	Dagens Nyheter	none	Persons in addiction, criminality or prostitution
#virivermurarna	We are tearing the walls down	2017-12-10	Aftonbladet	954	Prison and probition service
#skrattetihalsen	Choking the laugher	2017-12-11	Dagens Nyheter	80	Comedians
#intedinhora	Not your whore	2017-12-16	Dagens Nyheter	144	Persons in prostitution
#nustickerdettill	Now it will hurt	2017-12-16	Dagens Nyheter	1 309	Health care employees

#bortabrahemmavärst	There is no place worse like home	2018-01-02	SVT Nyheter	718	Persons with experience of domestic violence
#dammenbrister	The pond is breaking	2018-01-02	Astra	6111	Finno-Swedish citizens
#inationensintresse	In the interest of the nation	2018-01-03	Uppsala Nya tidning	826	Students in Uppsala
#obekvämarbetstid	Uncomfortable working hours	2018-01-10	Handelsnytt	377	Commercial employees
#inteminskuld, #påvåravillkor	Not my debt, on our terms	2018-01-14	Dagens Industri	300	Banking, financial and insurance industries
#nostranger	No stranger	2018-01-18	Expressen	500	Victims of racism
#slutvillkorat	No more conditions	2018-01-22	Feministiskt Initiativ	60	Persons with normbreaking disabilities
#nödvärn	Self-defense	2018-01-25	Nödvärn	5 000	The police
#allmänhandling	Public document			Not published	Governmental employees
#exponerad	Exposed			Not published	Photographers
#fordonsindustriuppropet	The transport industry petition			Not published	Transport industry
#husfrid	Domestic peace			Not published	Against domestic violence
#ikulturarbetarnasrum	In the room of the cultural workers			Not published	Cultural workers
#kidstoo	Kids too			Not published	Association for persons related to sexually abused children
#vispelarintemed	We do not play along			Not published	Game industry