

**Title:**

There is more Domestic Violence than you think!

**Category:**

11-14 years

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# There is more Domestic Violence than you think!

By: Marie Buhagiar, Maya Callus, Amy Caruana, Micaela Catania,  
Kayleigh Grech, Julia Pace and Michela Tonna.

Our study examines people's attitudes towards domestic violence in our society.

Our aim is to raise awareness about

"1 in 4  
Maltese  
women are  
victims of  
domestic  
violence."

domestic violence and  
how it can be reduced,  
thus leading to  
sustainable

development in the human environment.

We have gained another perspective on the realities of the situation, and we hope

this report will both educate and raise awareness about domestic violence.



A purple ribbon is the symbol of awareness of domestic violence and support to its victims.

"Every 20 seconds  
someone becomes a  
victim of domestic  
violence in the  
USA."

This research is based on interviews with Ms Stephanie Mizzi, a social worker, and Ms Elaine Compagno, the co-ordinator of SOAR, a support group for Domestic Violence victims. We prepared

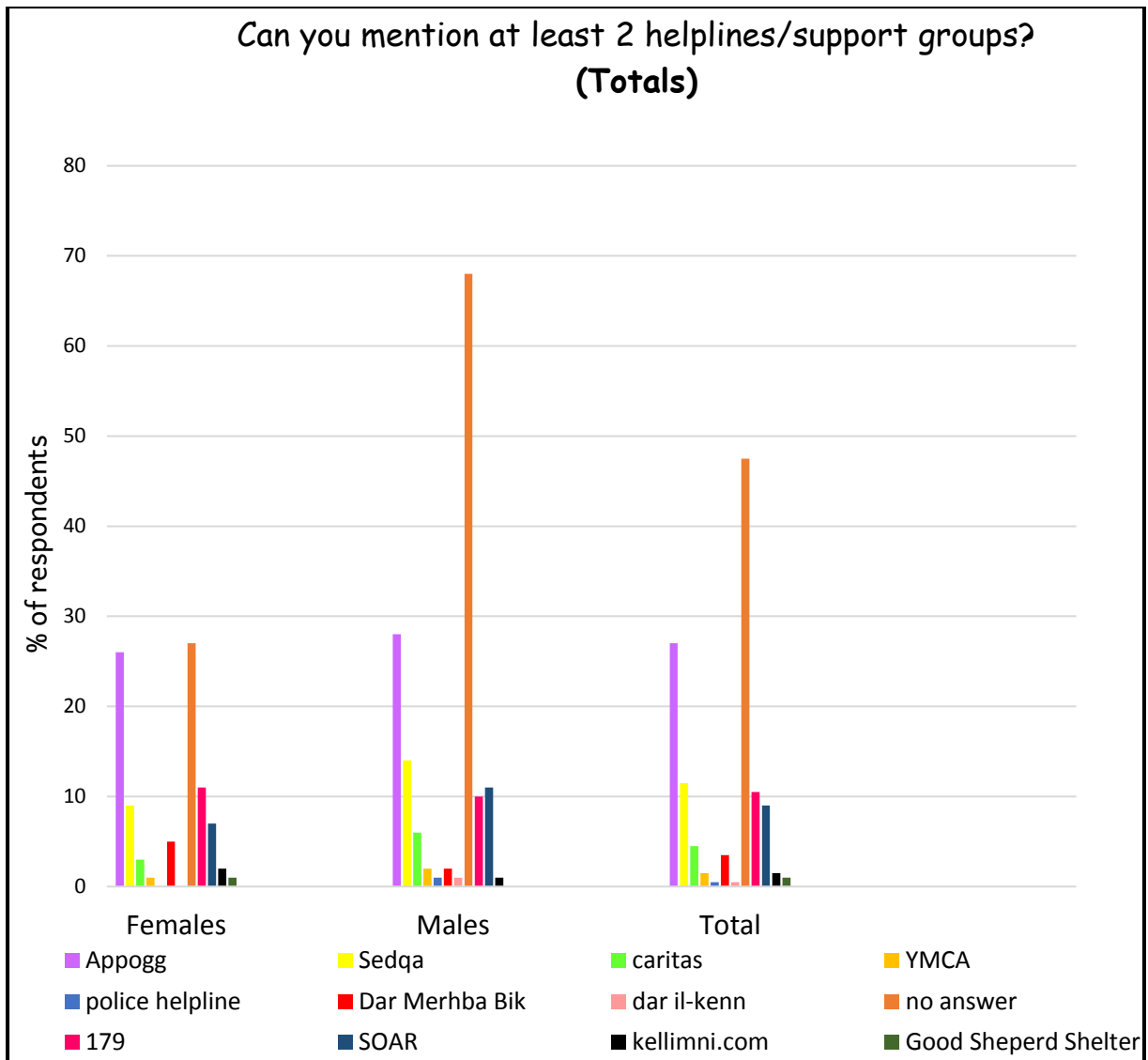
our questionnaires by creating a set of questions regarding domestic violence which were then handed out to 200 different people from different

age groups and occupations, seeking opinions and information from various people from the Maltese society.

A good amount of our respondents (85.5%) are aware of this serious issue, though females are more aware of it than males. However, some of our male respondents think they don't have enough knowledge about domestic violence. This point is evidently seen when asked about the importance of raising awareness. Females (90%) also strongly believe in raising awareness, probably because they believe they are more likely to be victims. On the other hand, a few males think that it is not that important. Both



males and females are aware of the helplines and some support groups for domestic violence victims, though not as much as one would wish. The most frequently mentioned were Appoġġ, Dar Merħba Bik and 179.



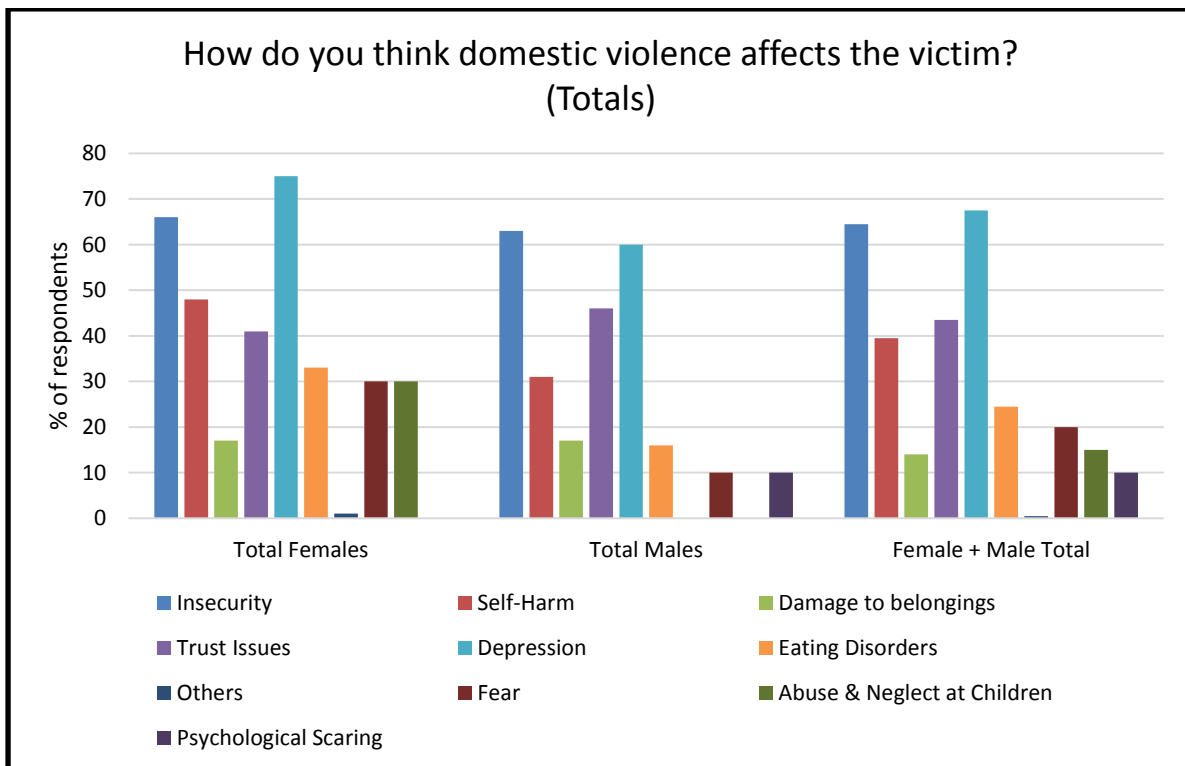
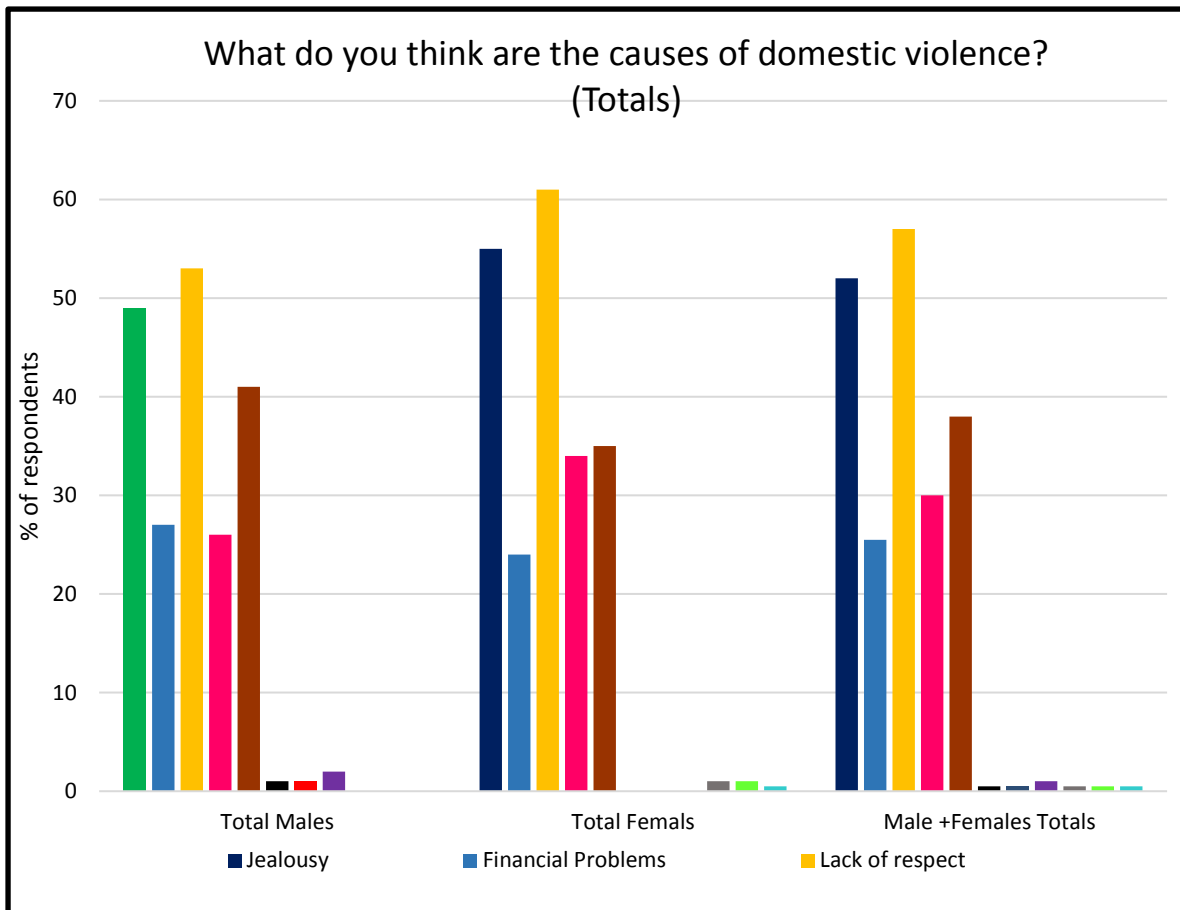
We think it is increasingly important to raise more awareness about domestic violence and where to find help as the statistics are not reassuring. Crime Malta Annual Crime Review (2015) states:

‘Domestic violence has experienced a consistent increase year-on-year reaching 7% of all offences.’

Dr. Roberta Lepre, director of Victim Support Malta, stated in an interview to the Malta Independent (12<sup>th</sup> June 2014) that this may be because “Victims are now more than ever finding the courage to take action and report the abuse” rather than because of an increase in domestic violence. But, whatever the cause, it is scary that Crime Malta Annual Review (2015) ranks it as the third most prevalent crime in Malta and people need to know how to cope. This is especially important given the fact that many victims of domestic violence still do not report the abuse, so the incidence is higher. 32% of our respondents know someone who has experienced domestic violence. Males 12-20 and females older than 55, are the categories of people who know less domestic violence victims. Maybe these are the categories less likely to talk about the subject.

Most of our respondents (55.5%) think that females aged between 26 and 45 are most likely to be victims of domestic violence, whilst those over 61 are not affected much by it. They also think physical abuse is the most common form of domestic violence.

Our respondents identify the following causes and effects of domestic violence:



Both sexes agree that, due to fear and low self-esteem, the victims will be afraid to raise their voice and few are those victims who have the courage to stop it. Therefore, we must always support and encourage whoever is going through domestic violence without being judgemental. Victims, and also their relatives, have the right to speak up for themselves and report their abuser to the police.

Although there are some laws related to domestic violence, a staggering 57% of our respondents think they are not effective. 30% of our female respondents don't even know about these laws which is very disappointing. Very few (7%) of our respondents think these laws are useful.

“Many women are angry and let down by the system that is supposed to protect them”

(Ms. Elaine Compagno, during our interview)

On the other hand, both sexes think it is very important to raise more awareness about this issue. 71% of females think teaching about this subject in school would be very effective. Males (64%) agree with this too. Respectively, media campaigns (61%) and government campaigns (40%) are considered effective as well, and both genders agreed these could help raise awareness across society, reaching people of all ages. Males (72%) think it

is more important that domestic violence is tackled in girls' schools. Both genders think it would be quite effective to raise awareness about domestic violence in boys' schools, as this can help increase gender equality.

There are many ways to improve this situation. Sustainable education about this subject could help future generations understand its symptoms and effects and decrease gender inequality. We can help by being activists for this cause and help raise more awareness at any age. Nobody should be afraid to speak up, even about a suspicion; all reports are kept anonymous.

“You have a right to go and report this, you have a right to leave your home”

(Ms. Elaine Compagno, during our interview)



Many children are also affected by domestic violence.

Many people have gone through domestic violence, and in severe cases, the victim has ended up dead. We hope this research will raise more awareness about domestic violence and that society will act to prevent this issue from getting worse.

“When it comes to abuse, you believe there’s no way out. There is always help. There is always a way out.”

(Donna Mulvey Jones, Head of Post Production for FremantleMedia UK.)

Therefore, we would like to end this article by asking schools to tackle this subject and help teenagers achieve empowerment, self-respect and how to seek help when necessary, which are all very important in our quest for sustainability.

## References and Acknowledgements:

### References:

CrimeMalta Annual Review (2015)

[http://www.crimemalta.com/documents/CrimeMalta\\_Annual\\_Report\\_SF\\_2015.pdf](http://www.crimemalta.com/documents/CrimeMalta_Annual_Report_SF_2015.pdf)

The Malta Independent, 12<sup>th</sup> June 2014, *Domestic violence reports almost double in four years.*

<http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2014-06-12/news/domestic-violence-reports-almost-double-in-four-years-5441388548/>

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<http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20170216/local/reports-of-domestic-violence-on-the-rise.639740>

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Renee Laiviera, 8<sup>th</sup> December 2016, *Empowering survivors of gender-based violence:*

<http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20161208/life-features/Empowering-survivors-of-gender-based-violence.633217>

## What is Domestic Violence?:

<https://socialdialogue.gov.mt/en/Commission%20on%20Domestic%20Violence/Pages/About%20Domestic%20Violence/What-is-domestic-violence.aspx>

## Links to pictures:

### Purple Ribbon:

[https://www.google.com.mt/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwj\\_2oq8mtTSAhVLvxQKHXYhBA0QjRwIBw&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.pinterest.com%2Fpin%2F302304193708571908%2F&psig=AFQjCNE1XnI\\_j6T-Dh1tRy1JdWAZbu895w&ust=1489519431703416](https://www.google.com.mt/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwj_2oq8mtTSAhVLvxQKHXYhBA0QjRwIBw&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.pinterest.com%2Fpin%2F302304193708571908%2F&psig=AFQjCNE1XnI_j6T-Dh1tRy1JdWAZbu895w&ust=1489519431703416)

### ‘Together we can end domestic violence!’:

<https://www.google.com.mt/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwizn5311tXSAhXBChoKHSCMDc0QjRwIBw&url=http%3A%2F%2Flifejackets.com%2Fshop%2Fcategory.aspx%3Fcatid%3D75&psig=AFQjCNEigY2ttZJNysn4HERC41KrE0Ne7g&ust=1489570027584976>

### Boy crying because of violence:

[https://www.google.com.mt/search?sa=G&hl=mt&q=domestic+violence+victims&tbm=isch&tbs=simg:CAQSlwEJpUxbbzoiC0YaiwELEKjU2AQaBAGACAMMCxCwjKcIGmIKYAgDEijJDq8ZyA6wGbYZ8QTuBO8E0w7SDvMx-yXjLPQs0jP3LOksoSSfJLIgJbDvJxhpCC2vm0IAFQwhrOs6gAfEKz4GdRHuPRBoeVz1ywS8Z5HETFrCfuMcOVD3gAgBAwLEI6u\\_1ggaCgoICAESBGKxOQQM&ved=0ahUKEwiH6L\\_bq9vSAhUCbRQKHe0MDsgQwg4IFSgA&biw=1366&bih=662#imgsrc=GRSIb\\_mzCC5h5M:](https://www.google.com.mt/search?sa=G&hl=mt&q=domestic+violence+victims&tbm=isch&tbs=simg:CAQSlwEJpUxbbzoiC0YaiwELEKjU2AQaBAGACAMMCxCwjKcIGmIKYAgDEijJDq8ZyA6wGbYZ8QTuBO8E0w7SDvMx-yXjLPQs0jP3LOksoSSfJLIgJbDvJxhpCC2vm0IAFQwhrOs6gAfEKz4GdRHuPRBoeVz1ywS8Z5HETFrCfuMcOVD3gAgBAwLEI6u_1ggaCgoICAESBGKxOQQM&ved=0ahUKEwiH6L_bq9vSAhUCbRQKHe0MDsgQwg4IFSgA&biw=1366&bih=662#imgsrc=GRSIb_mzCC5h5M:)

### **Acknowledgments:**

We would like to Ms Stephanie Mizzi, a social worker, and Ms Elaine Compagno, the coordinator of SOAR, for their time and for teaching us so much about this topic enabling us to raise awareness about domestic violence.

We would also like to thank all our respondents for taking the time to fill in our questionnaires and giving us their opinions about domestic violence.

Finally, we would also like to thank our parents and teachers for supporting and helping us all throughout this interesting project.

**Proof of Dissemination:**

As required, our project is exhibited on the school premises and it is also accessible on the school website [www.saintfrancissecondary.com](http://www.saintfrancissecondary.com).

We have also sent our report to *The Sunday Times* and *The Malta Independent on Sunday*, though we have no guarantee that it will be published.

## Appendix 1: Sample of Respondents

200 respondents									
100 males					100 females				
20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
12-18	19-25	26-35	36-54	55+	12-18	19-25	26-35	36-54	55+
yrs	yrs	yrs	yrs	yrs	yrs	yrs	yrs	yrs	yrs

## Appendix 2: Template for questionnaires

Sex:	
Male	
Female	

Age:	
12-18	
19-25	
26-35	
36-54	
55+	

Status:	
Single	
Married	
Separated	
Divorced	
Widowed	

1. Are you aware of Domestic Violence? (*Għandek taġġrif dwar il-vjolenza domestika?*)

Yes	
No	
Not enough	

2. Do you think that it is important to raise awareness about domestic violence in Malta? (*Taħseb li huwa importanti li jkun hawn aktar għarfien dwar il-vjolenza domestika?*)

Very Important	Important	Not That Important	Not Important

3. Are you aware of the helplines and support groups for victims of domestic violence? (*Konxju/a dwar is-servizzi li hawn relatati mal-vjolenza domestika?*)

Yes	
No	

- 3b. Can you mention at least 2? (*Tista' ssemmi tnejn? )*

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4. Do you know anyone who has experienced domestic violence? (*Taf lil xi hadd li għadda minn esperjenza ta' vjolenza domestika?*)

Yes	
No	
I'm not sure	

5. Who do you think experiences the most domestic violence? (*Min taħseb li jgħaddi minn l-iktar vjolenza domestika?*)

Males Less than 12		Females Less than 12	
Males 12-25		Females 12-25	
Males 26-45		Females 26-45	
Males 46-60		Females 46-60	
Males 61+		Females 61+	

6. Which do you think is the most common type of domestic violence? (*Liema taħseb hija l-iktar tip ta' vjolenza domestika komuni?*)

(You may tick more than one/ Tista' timmarka iktar minn waħda)

Physical	
Sexual	
Financial	
Emotional	
Neglect	
Other	

7. What do you think are the causes of domestic violence? (*X'taħseb li huma r-raġunijiet li jwasslu għal vjolenza domestika?*)

(You may tick more than one/ Tista' timmarka iktar minn waħda)

Jealousy	
Financial Problems	
Lack of Respect	
Gender Inequality	
The abuser feels insecure	
Other	

8. How do you think domestic violence affects the victim? (*X'taħseb li huma l-effetti li tħalli l-vjolenza domestika fuq il-vittmi?*)

(You may tick more than one/ Tista' timmarka iktar minn waħda)

Insecurity	
Self Harm	
Damage to belongings	
Trust Issues	

Depression	
Eating disorders	
Others	

9. Do you think all victims of domestic violence try to do something about it?

*(Taħseb li kull minn jgħaddi minn vjolenza domestika jtkellem?)*

Yes	
No	
I don't know	

9b. Why? *(Għalfejn?)*

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10 Do you think the law deals effectively with abusers? *(Taħseb li l-ligi hija effettiva ma' min jabbuża?)*

Yes	
No	
I don't know	

11 Do you think there needs to be more awareness about this issue? *(Taqbel li għandu jkun hawn iktar għarfien dwar din il-kwistjoni?)*

Yes	
No	
I don't know	

11b. If yes, how? (*Jekk iva, kif?*)

(You may tick more than one/ Tista' timmarka iktar minn waħda)

Media campaigns	
In schools	
Government campaigns	
Appropriate laws	
Other:	

12 How important do you think it is that this cause is tackled in girls' schools?

(*Kemm taħseb li huwa importanti li dan is-sugġett jiġi ndirizzat fi skejjel tal-bniet?*)

Very Important	Important	Not That Important	Not Important

12b. How important do you think it is that this cause is tackled in boys' schools?

(*Kemm taħseb li huwa importanti li dan is-sugġett jiġi ndirizzat fi skejjel tas-subien?*)

Very Important	Important	Not That Important	Not Important

12c. Why? (*Għalfejn?*)

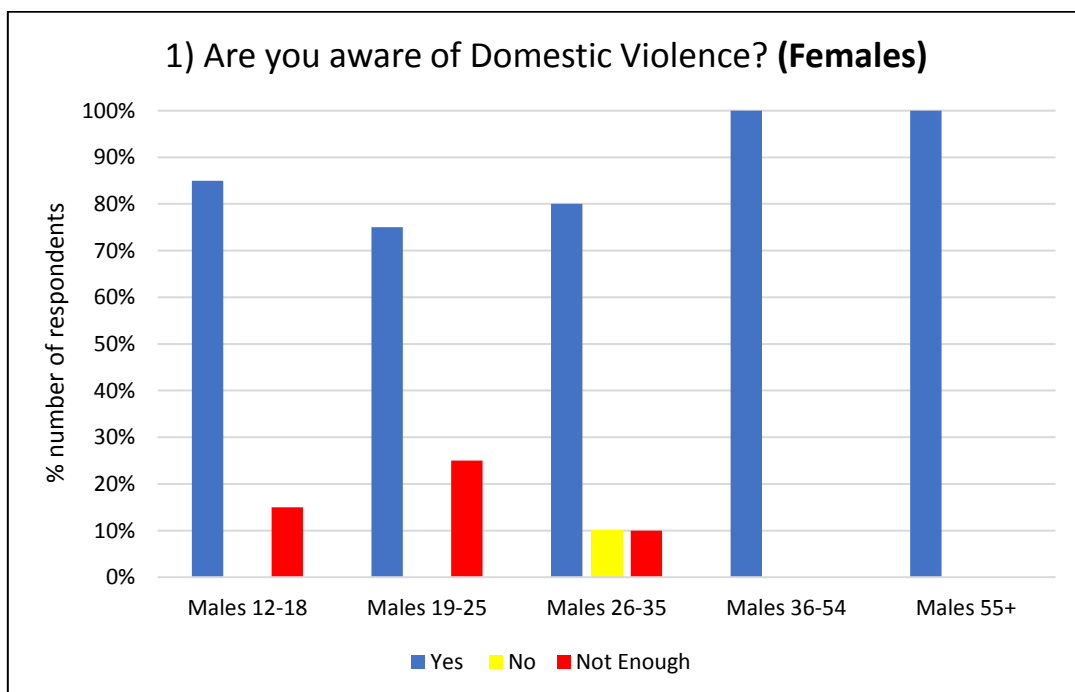
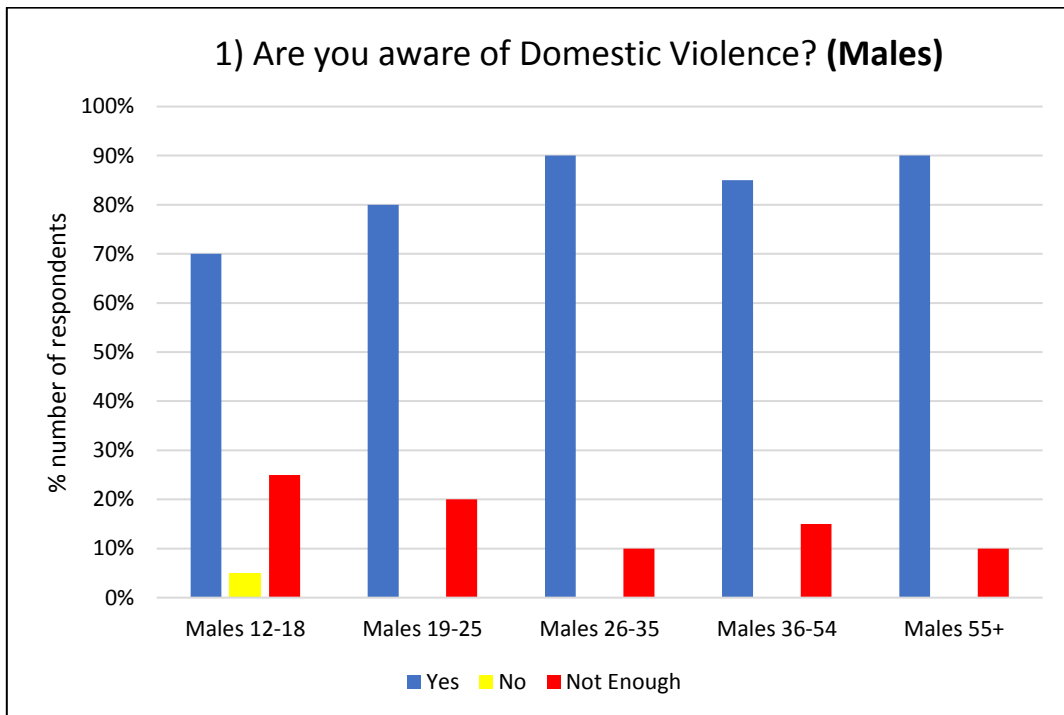
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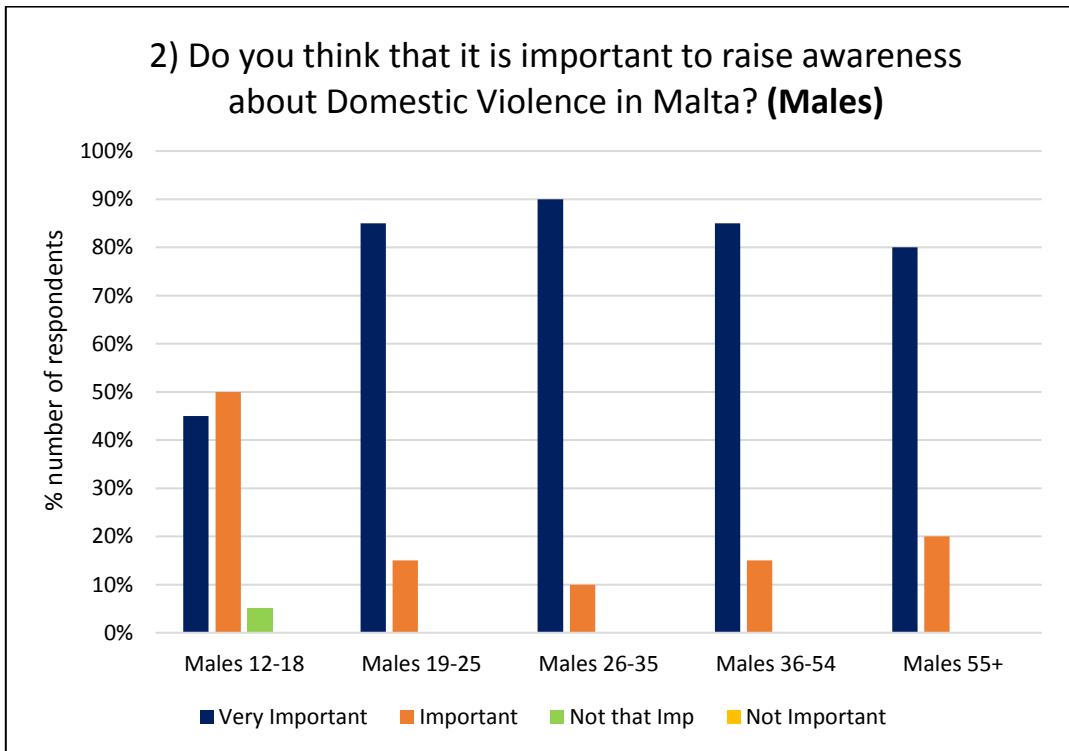
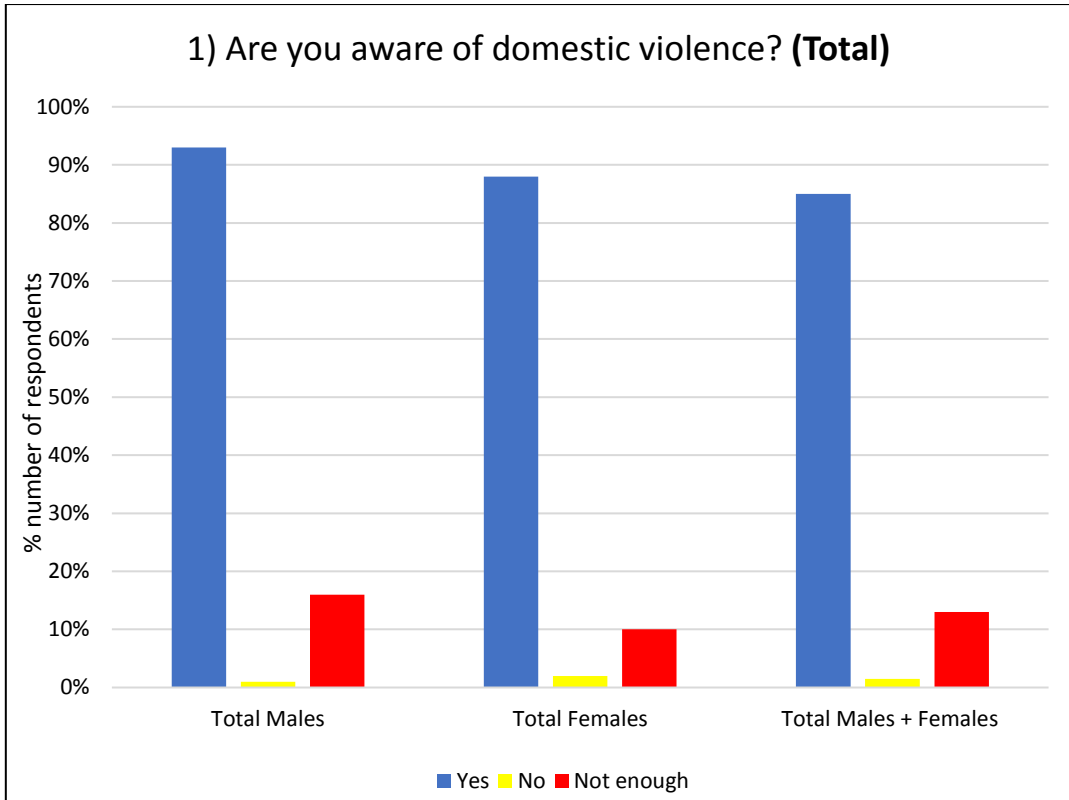
Thank you for your co-operation and for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

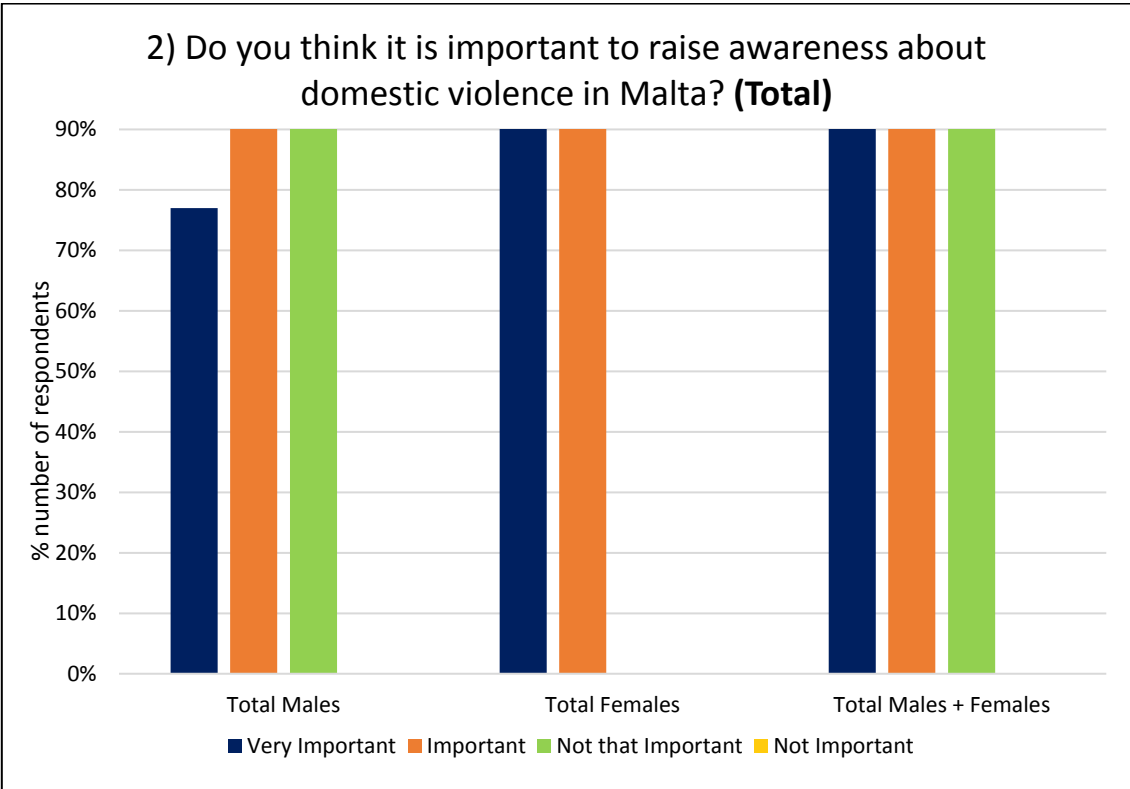
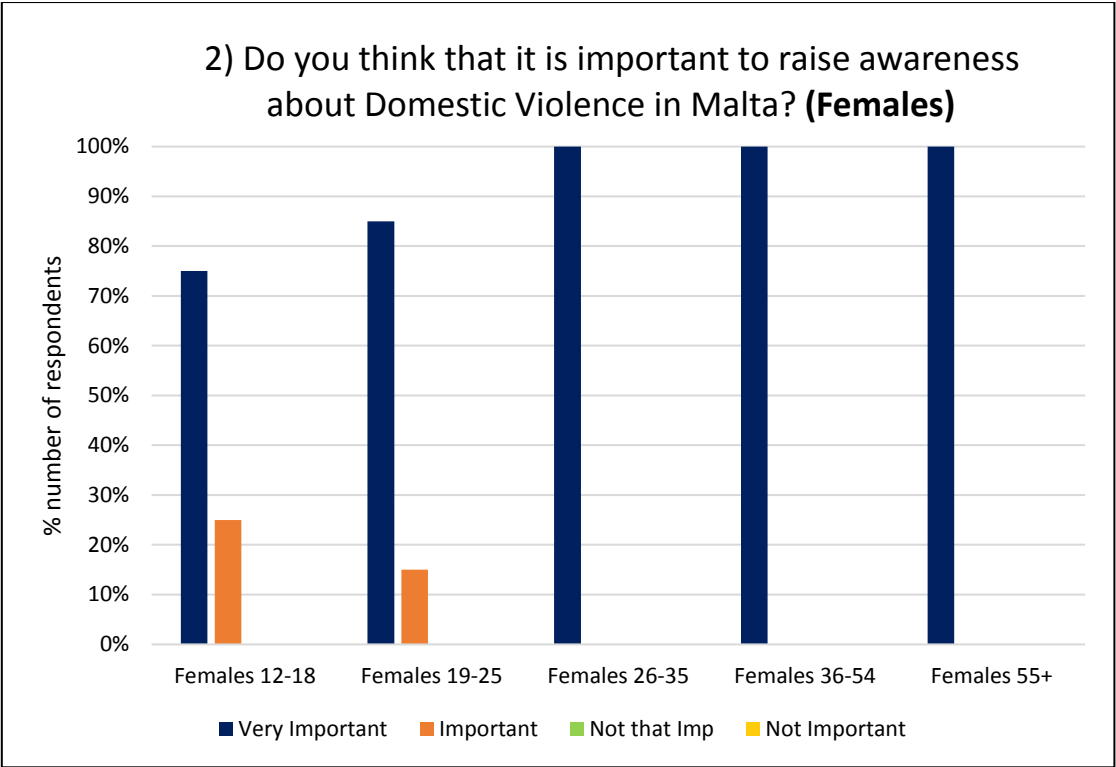
### Appendix 3: Template for interviews

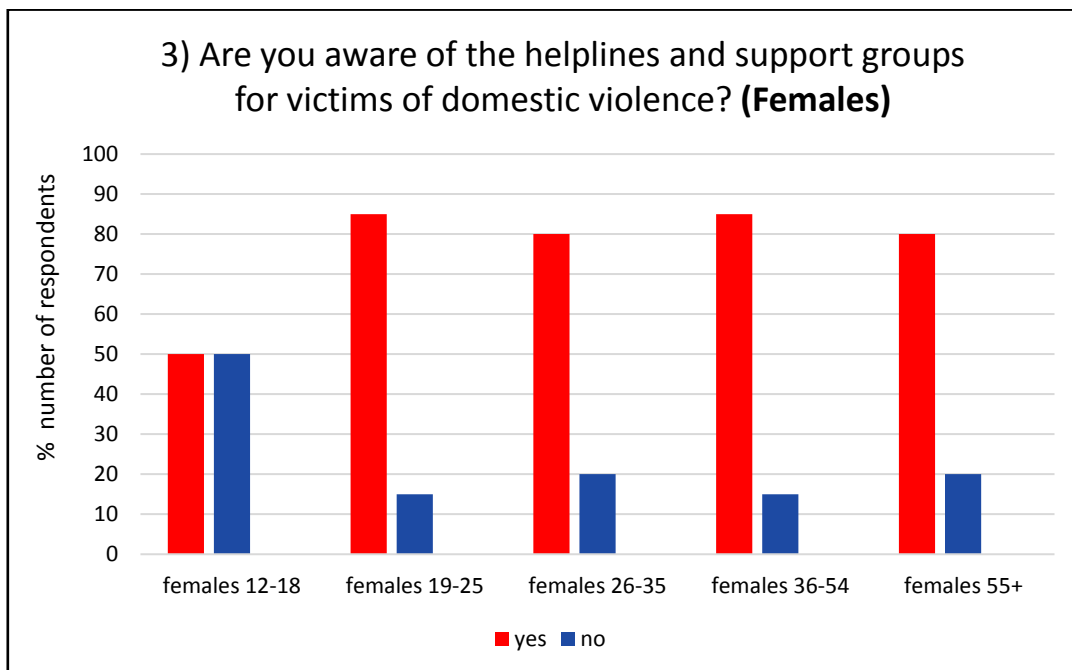
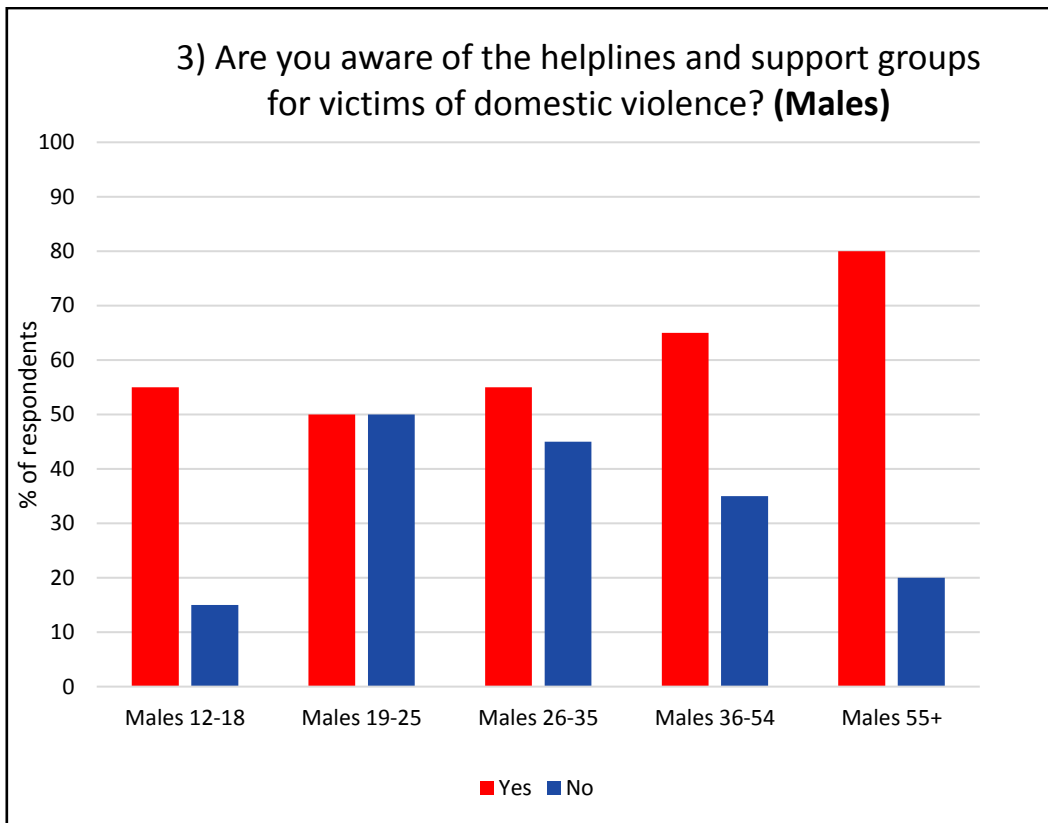
1. Can you please explain briefly what your job is?
2. Why did you choose this job? Do you enjoy helping people?
3. How does your job affect your life?
4. What can we students do to raise awareness about domestic violence and regarding the help victims can find?
5. How does a victim's experience of abuse affect the person? How long does it take to recover?
6. How many people (approximately) do you help every month?
7. If I know someone who is being abused, how can I help? What can I do?
8. Was there a case that stood out from the rest? Why and how did you handle it?
9. Is domestic violence always physical?
10. What are the main causes of abuse?
11. Which category in society suffers the most from domestic violence? (men/women/children/elderly etc)
12. What are the main effects of abuse?
13. Do all people who undergo abuse ask for help? Why?
14. Are the laws of domestic violence effective enough?
15. Are there any statistics you can share with us, and which we can share with the people who read our article and the students in our school?
16. What can be done locally to decrease domestic violence?

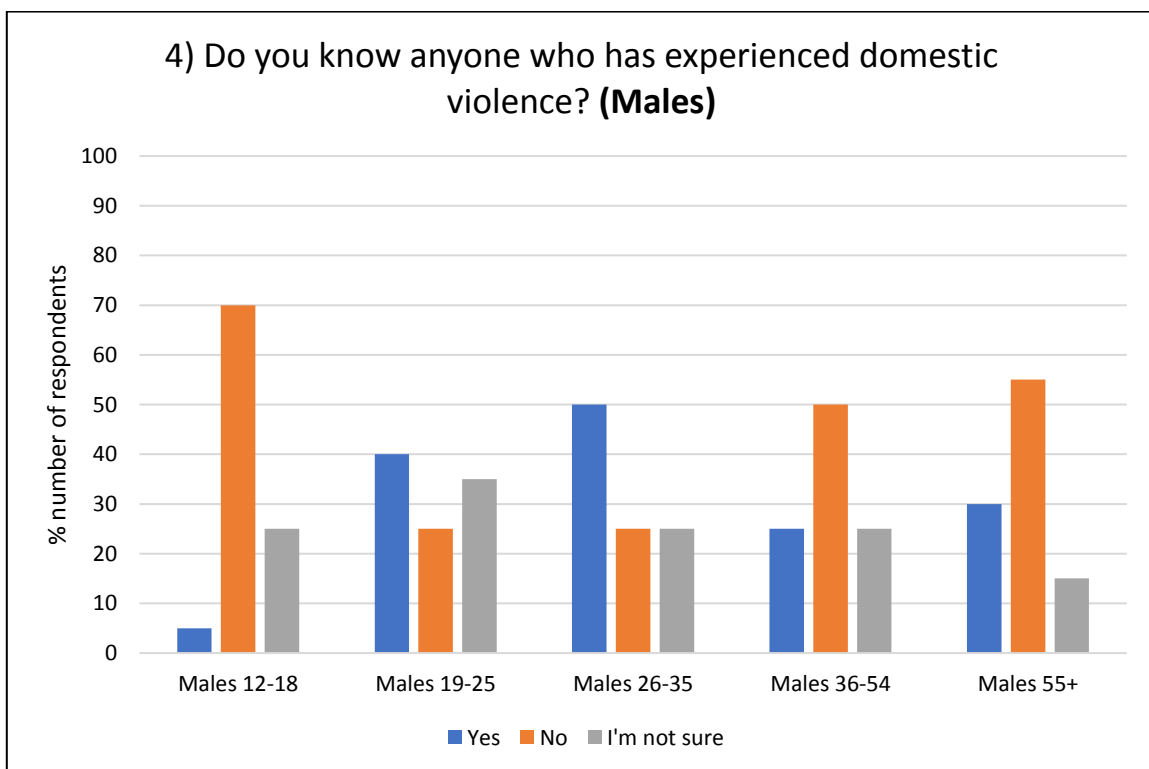
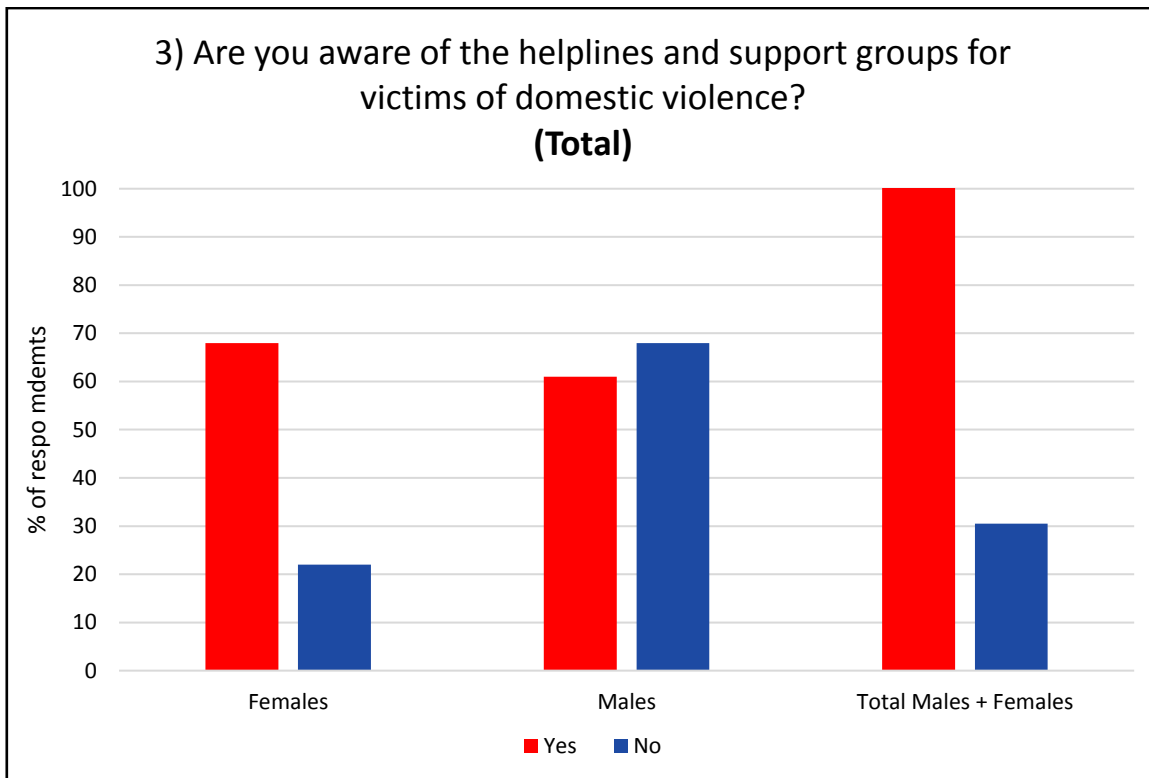
## Appendix 4: Data gathered from our research



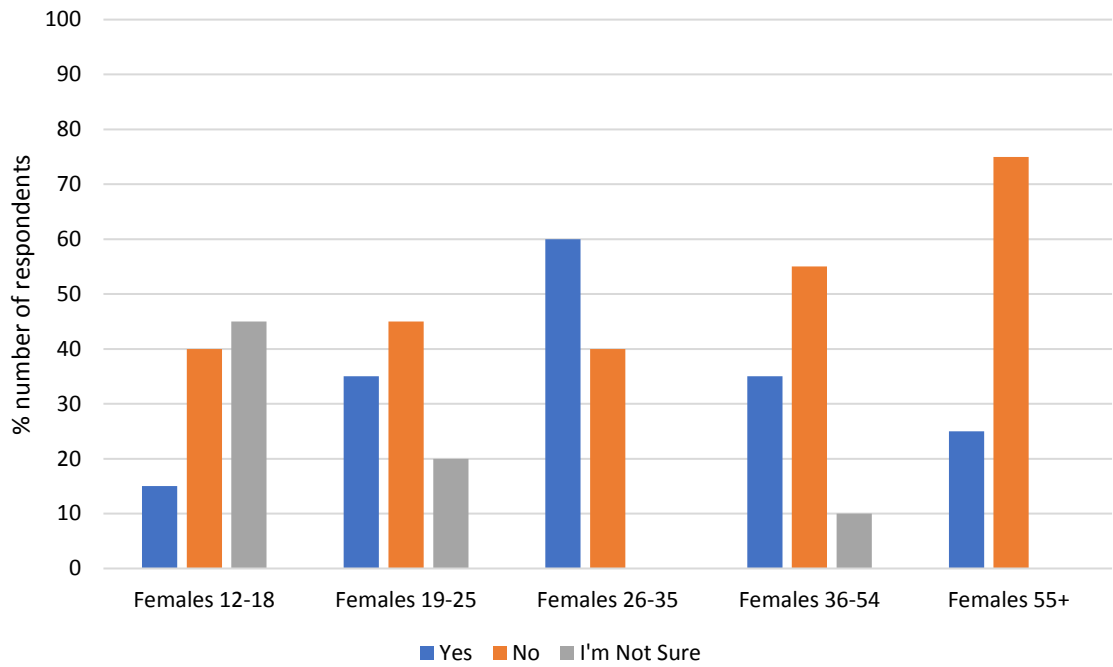




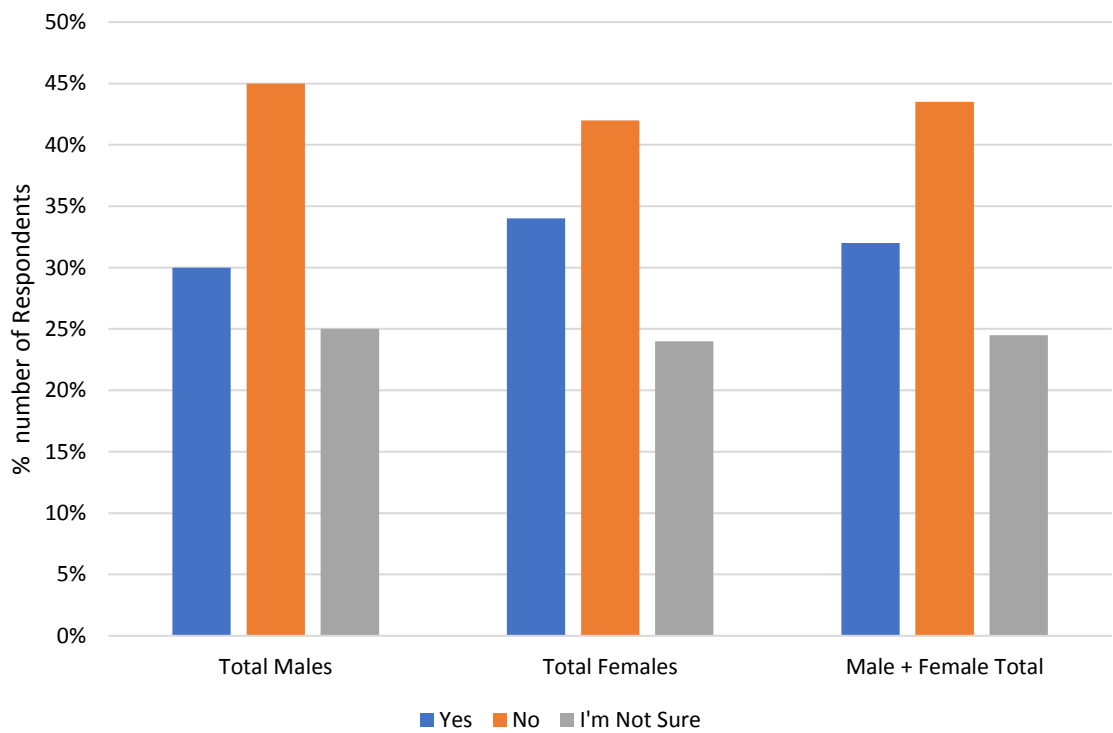




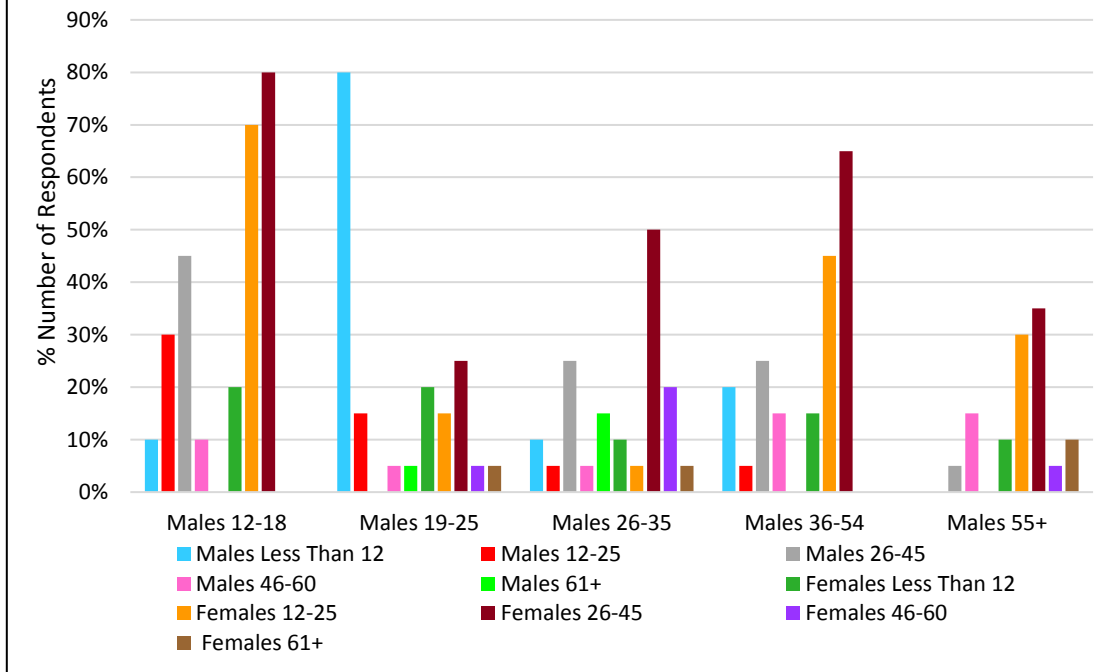
4) Do you know anyone who has experienced domestic violence? **(Females)**



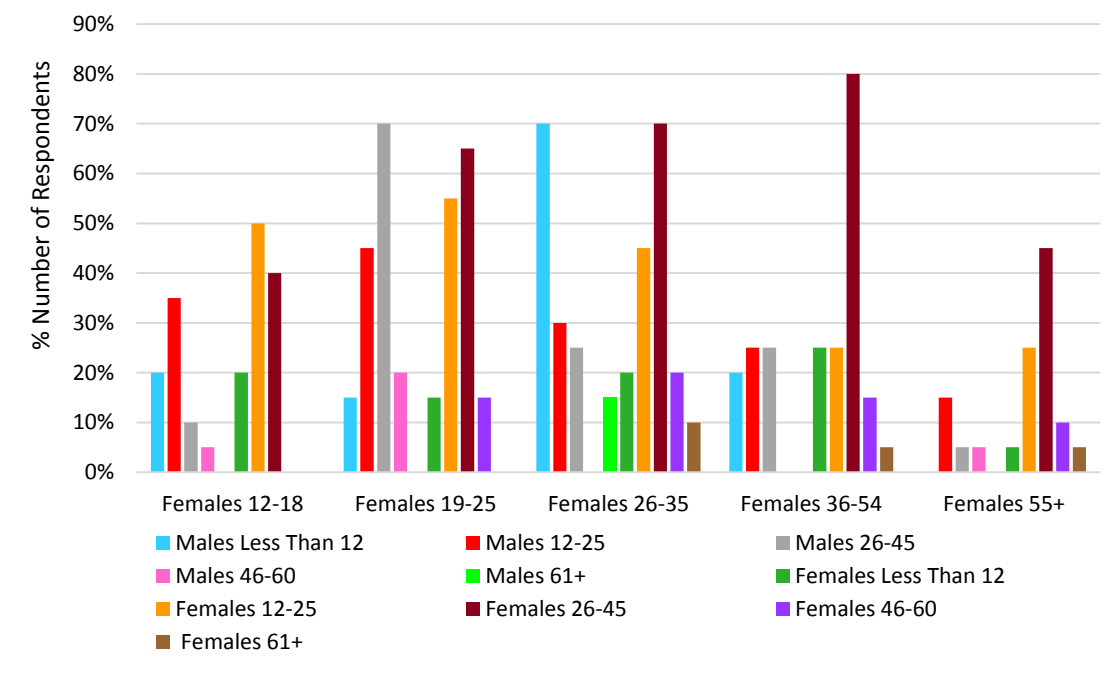
4) Do you know anyone who has experienced domestic violence? **(Totals)**



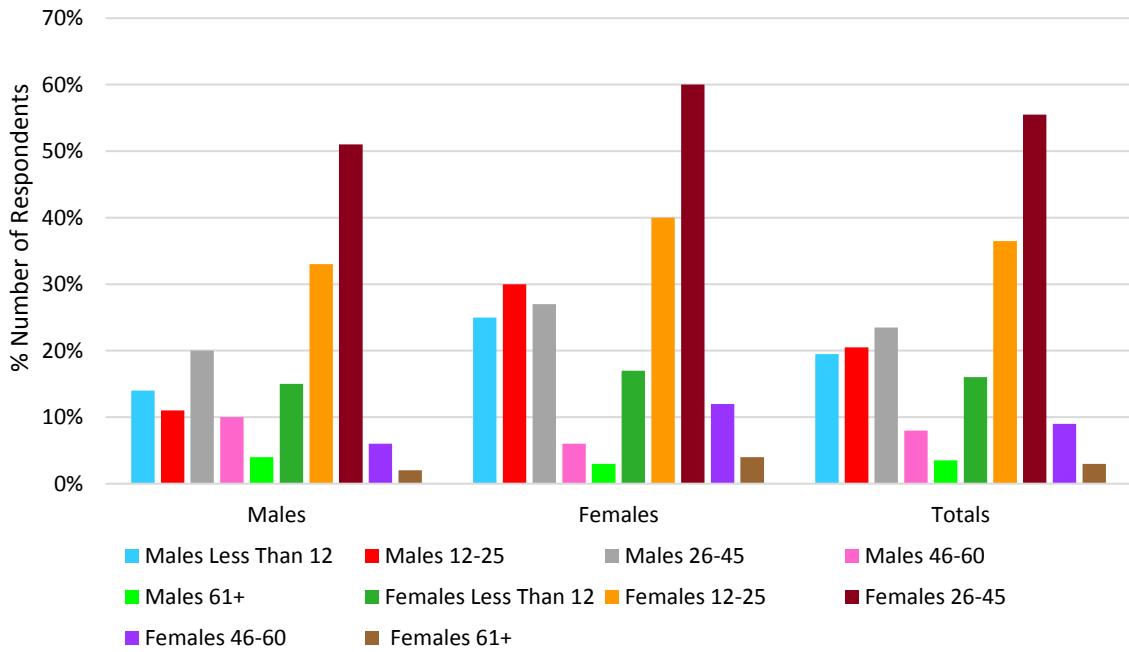
### 5) Who do you think experiences the most domestic violence? (Males)



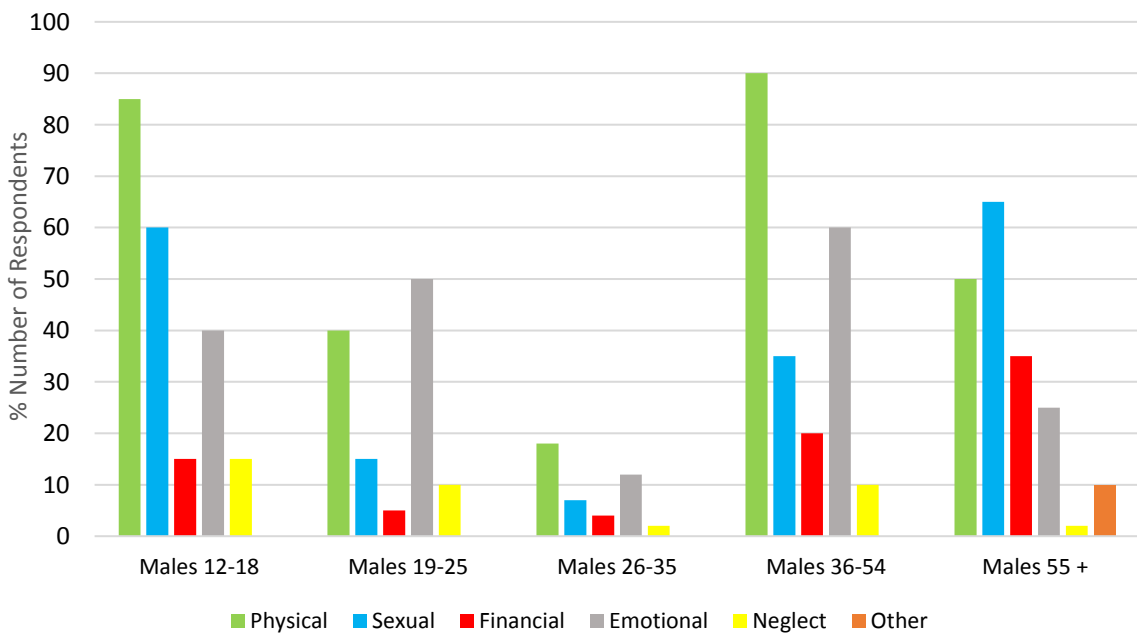
### 5) Who do you think experiences the most domestic violence? (Females)

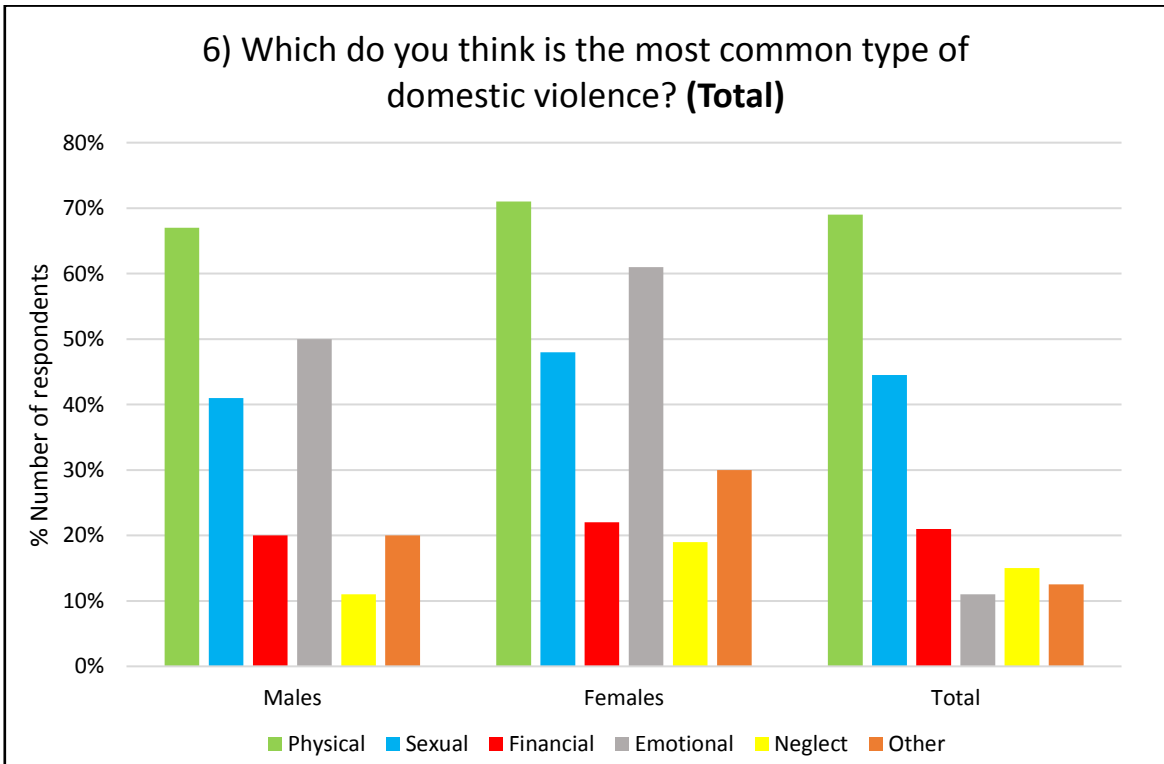
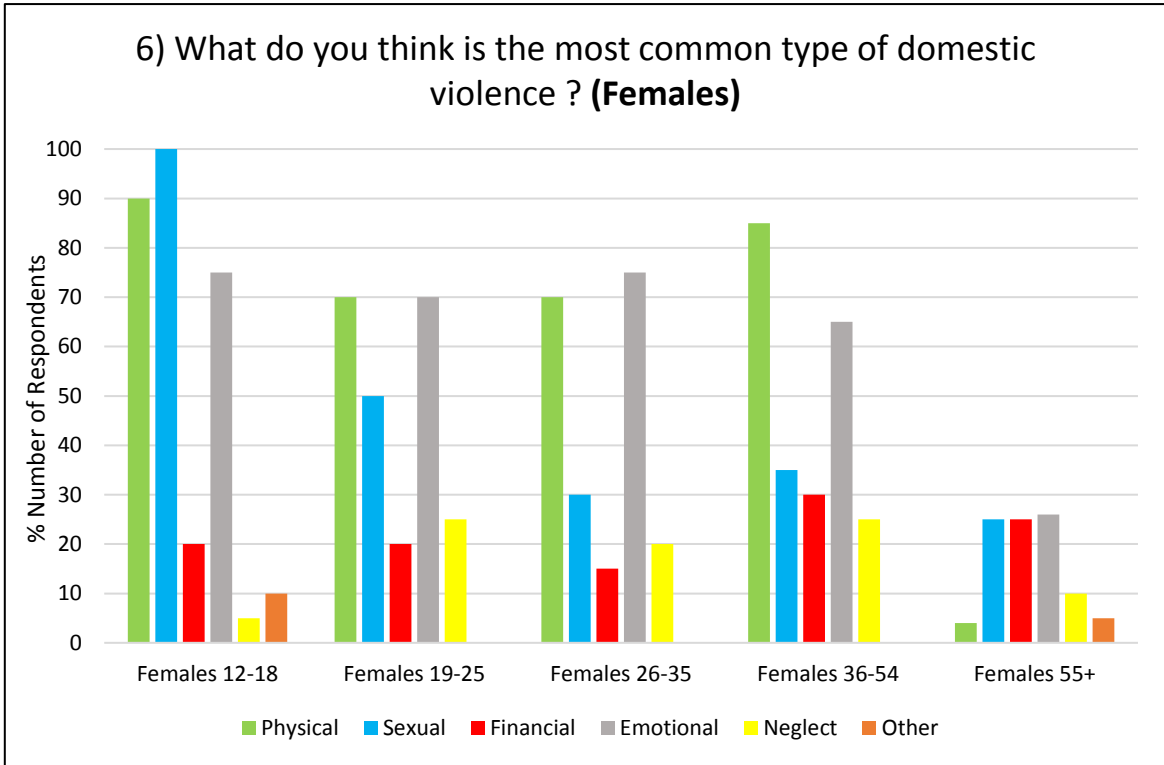


### 5) Who do you think experiences the most domestic violence? (Totals)

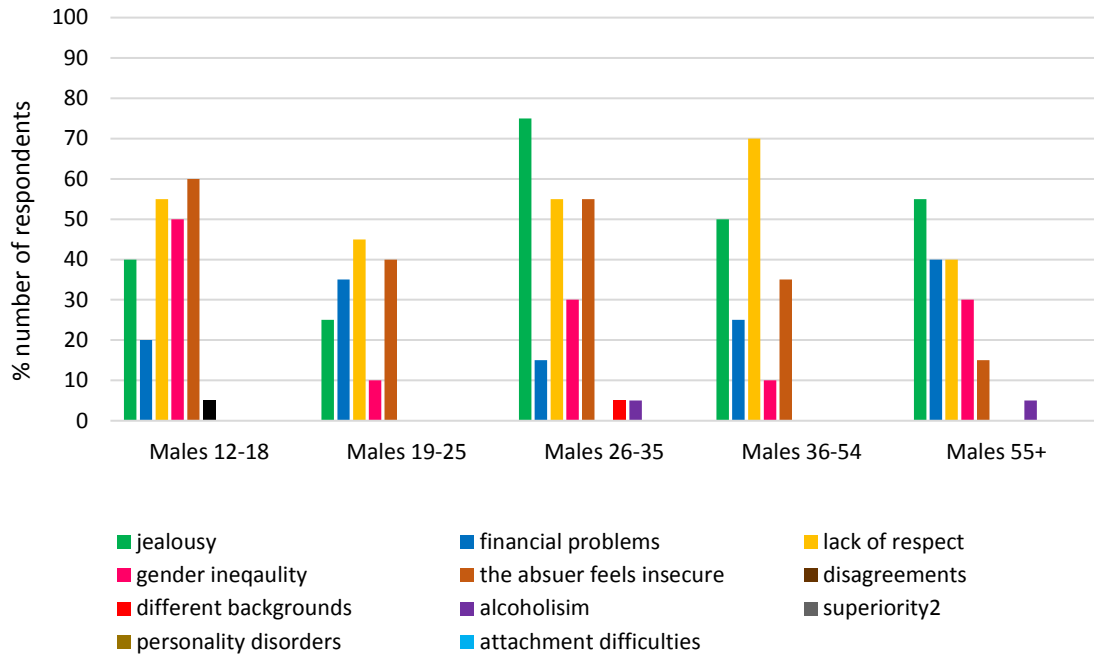


### 6) What do you think is the most common type of domestic violence? (Males)

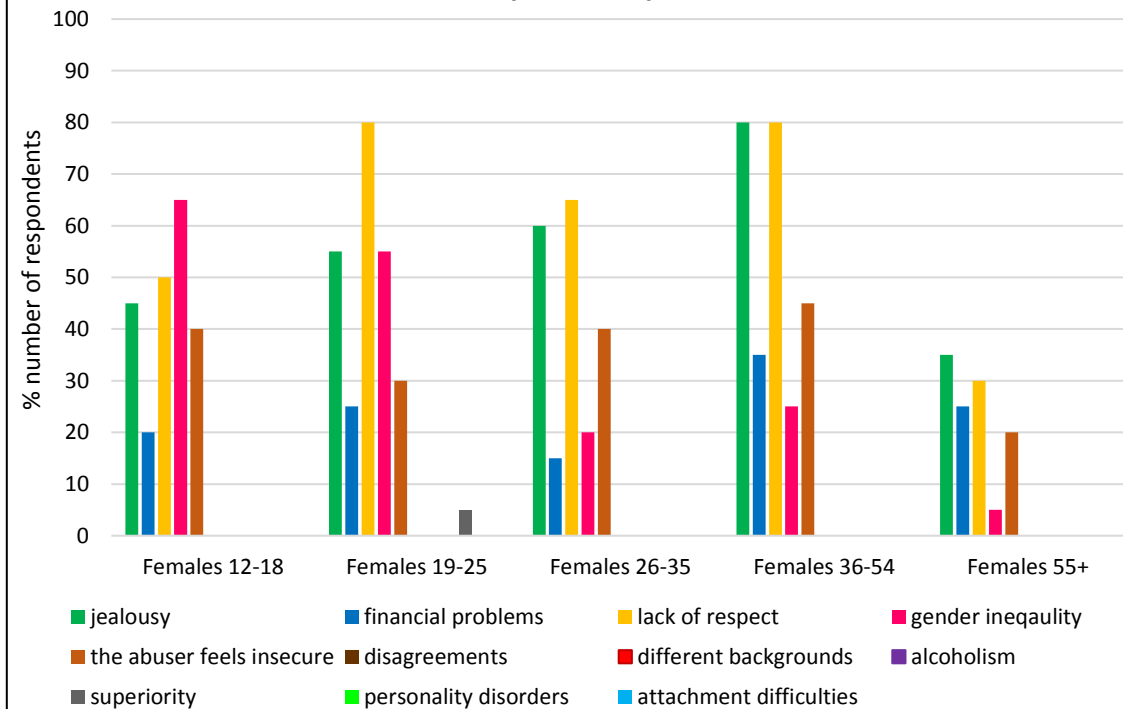




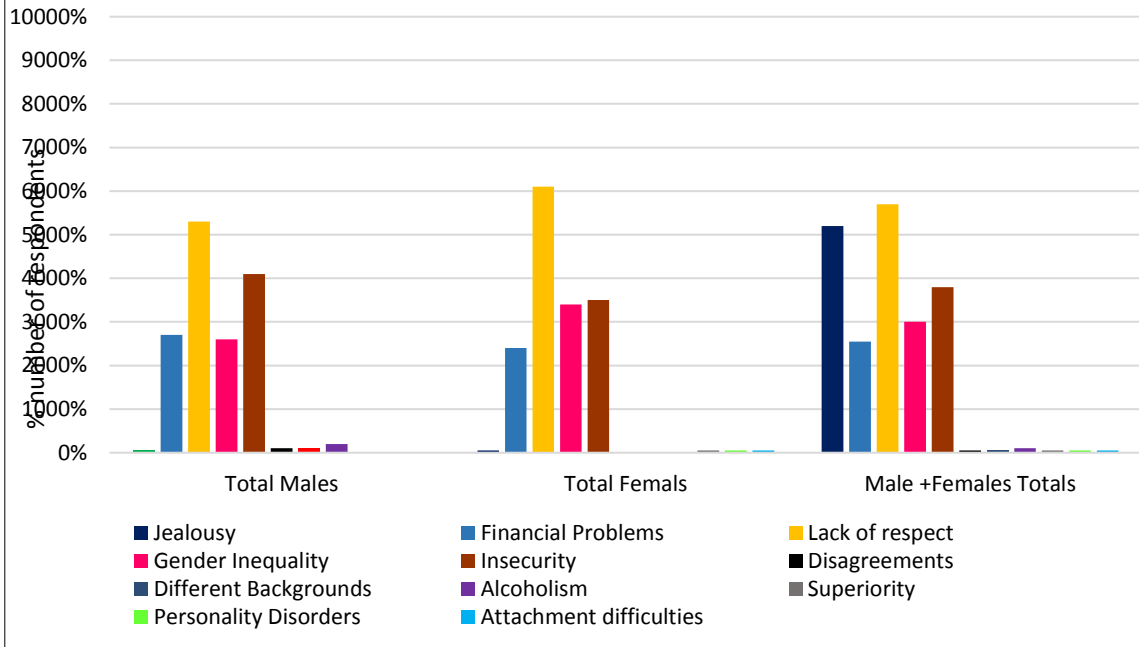
### 7) What do you think are the causes of domestic violence? (Males)



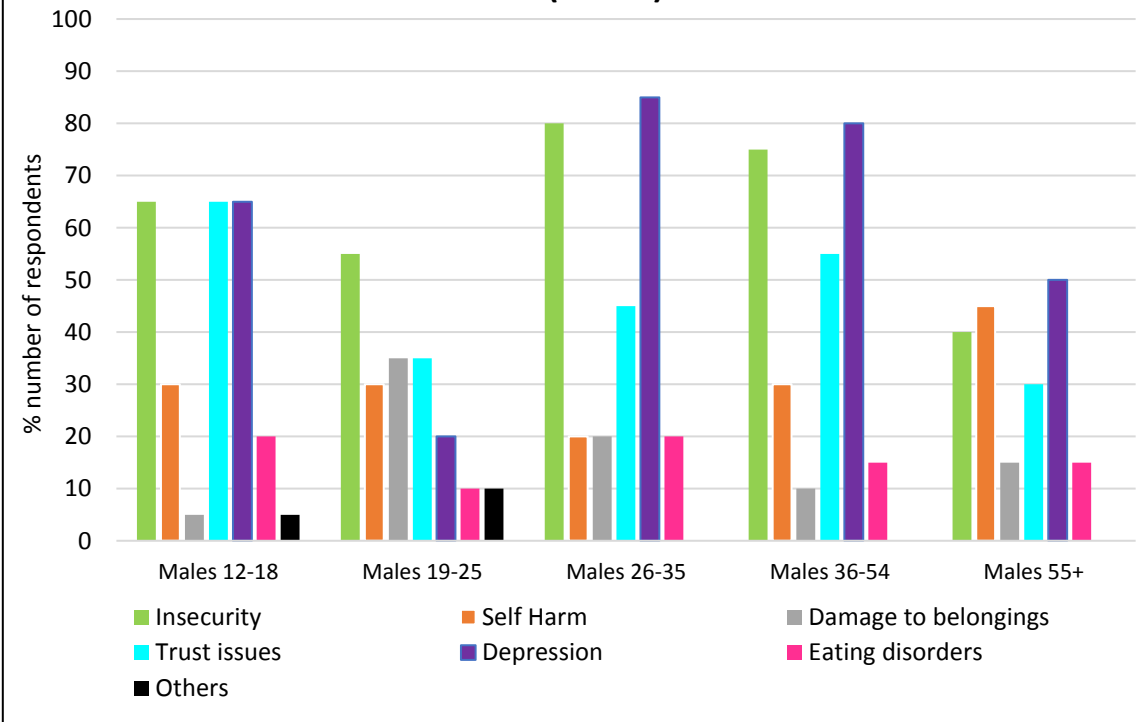
### 7) What do you think are the causes of domestic violence? (Females)



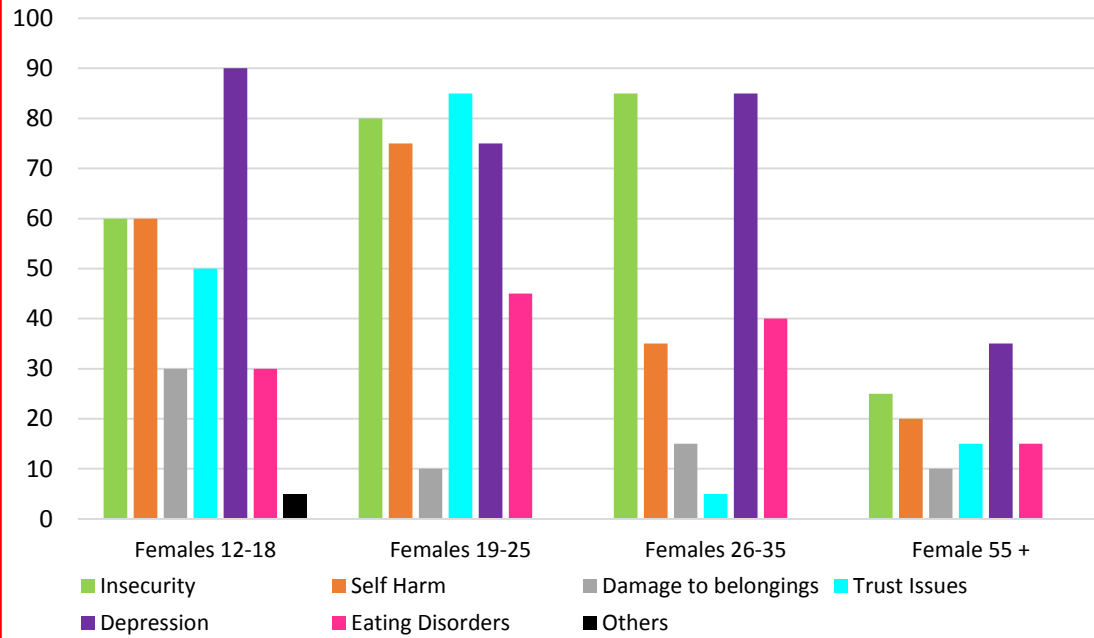
### 7) What do you think are the causes of domestic violence? (Totals)



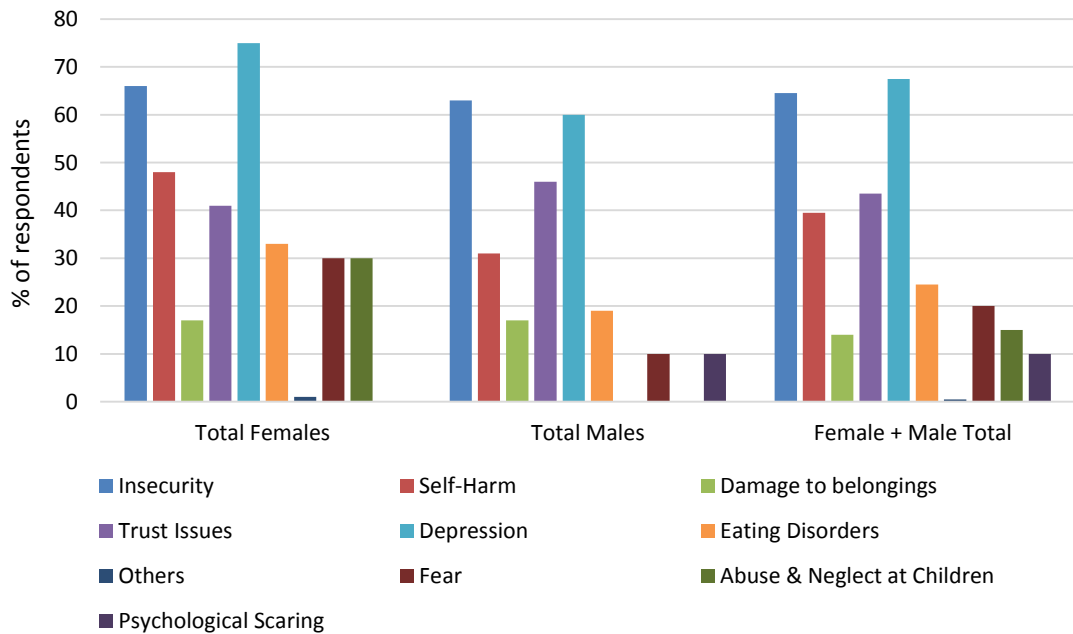
### 8) How do you think domestic violence affects the victim ? (Males)



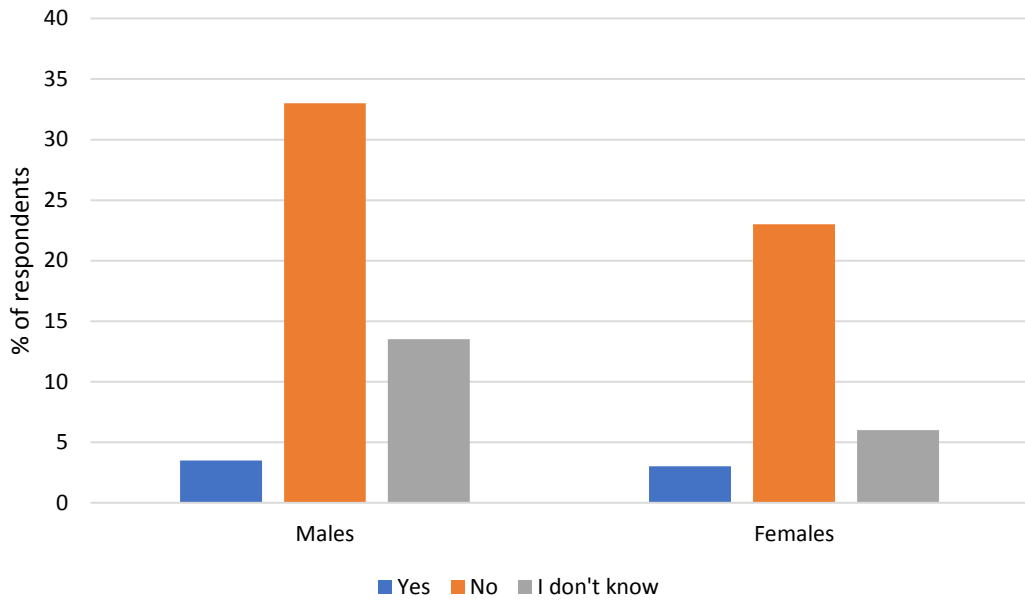
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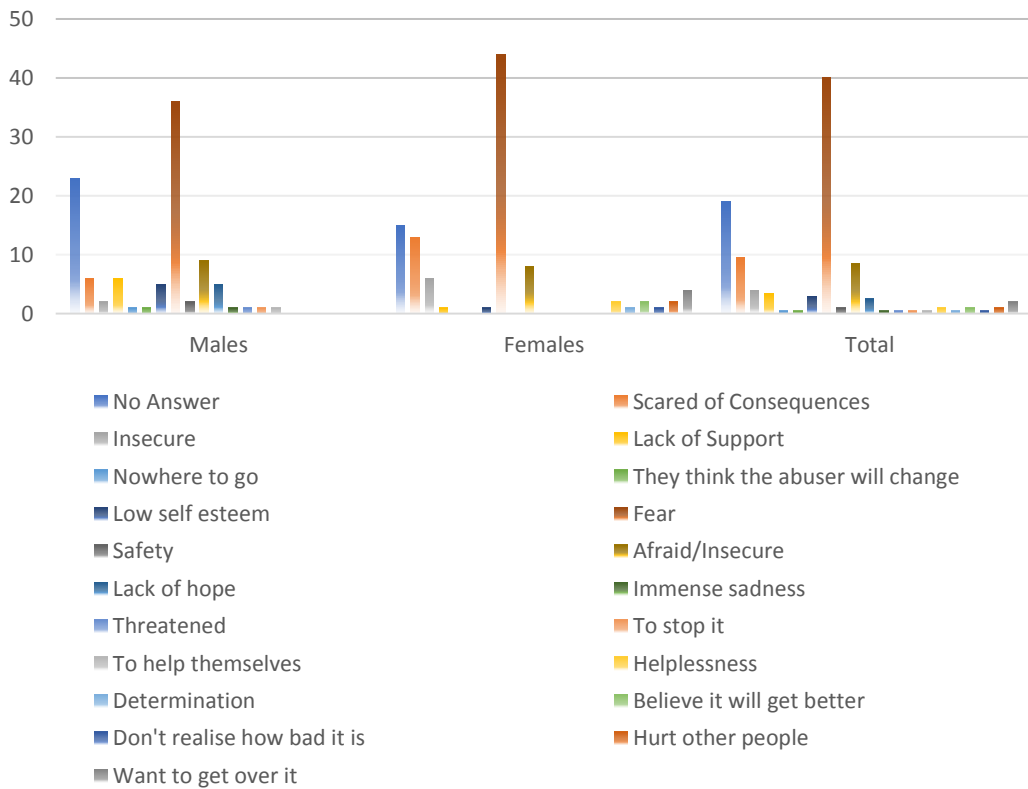
### 8. How do you think domestic violence affects the victim? (Totals)

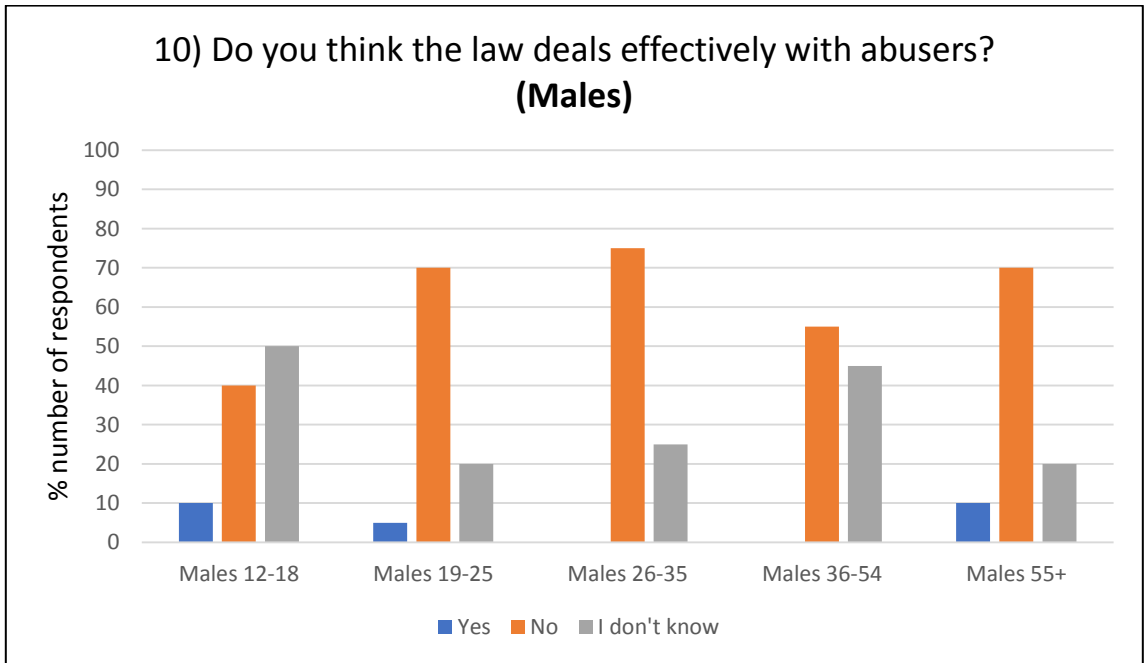
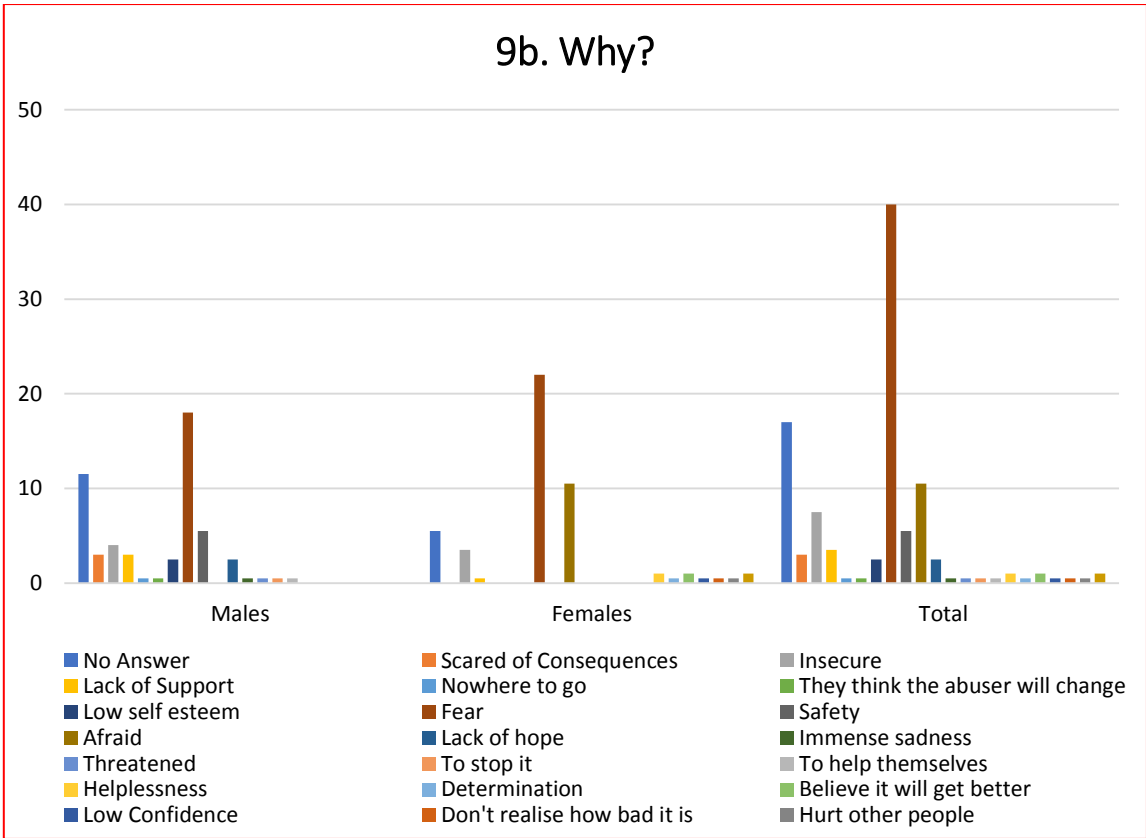


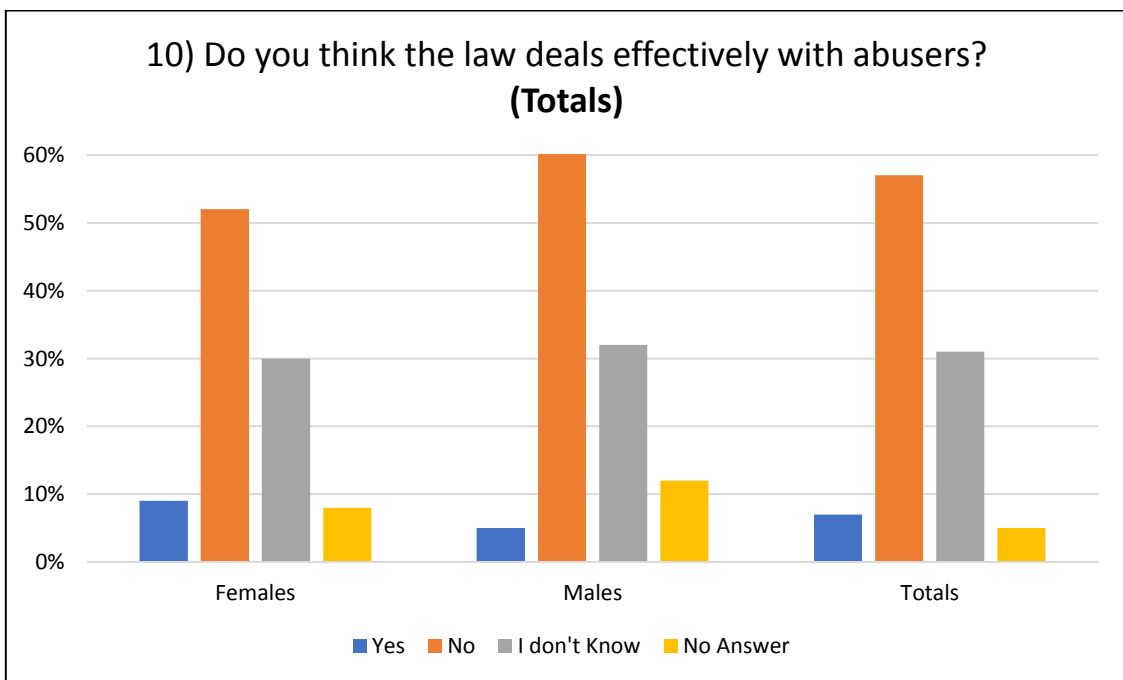
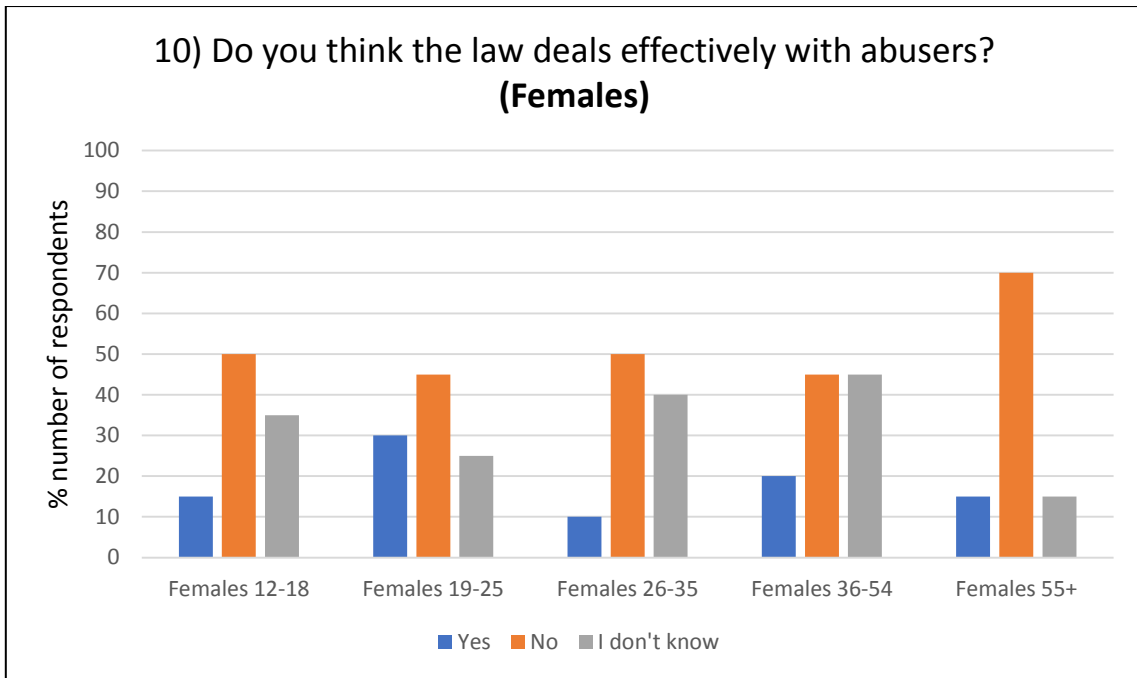
### 9. Do you think all victims of domestic violence try to do something about it?

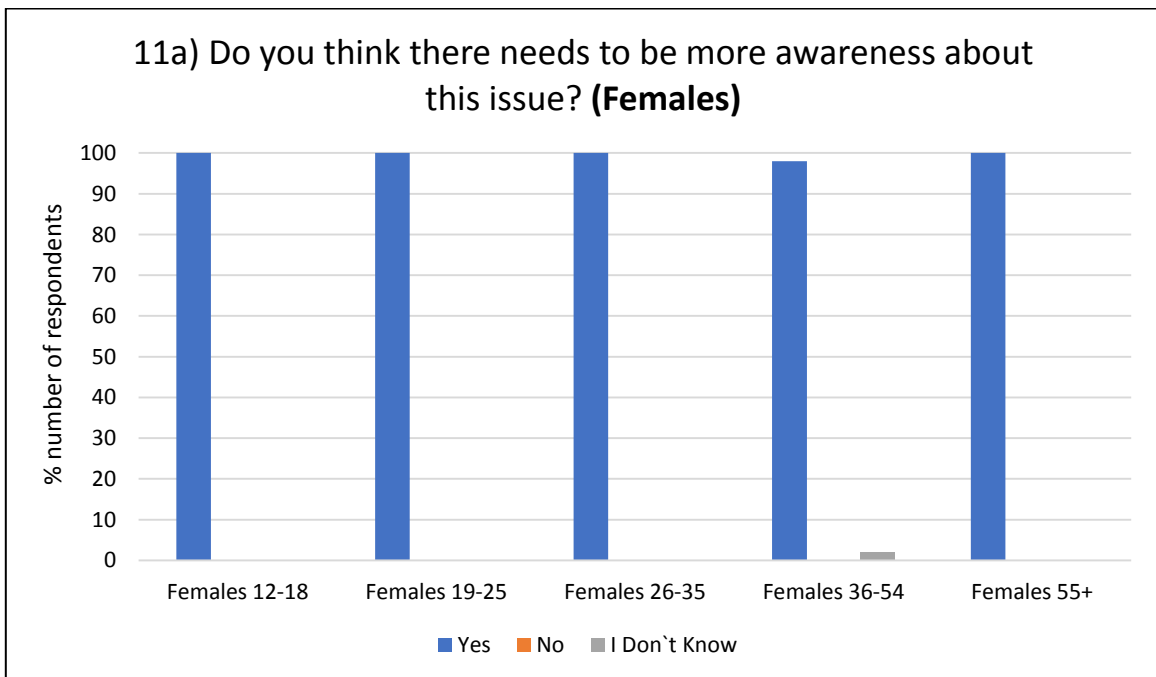
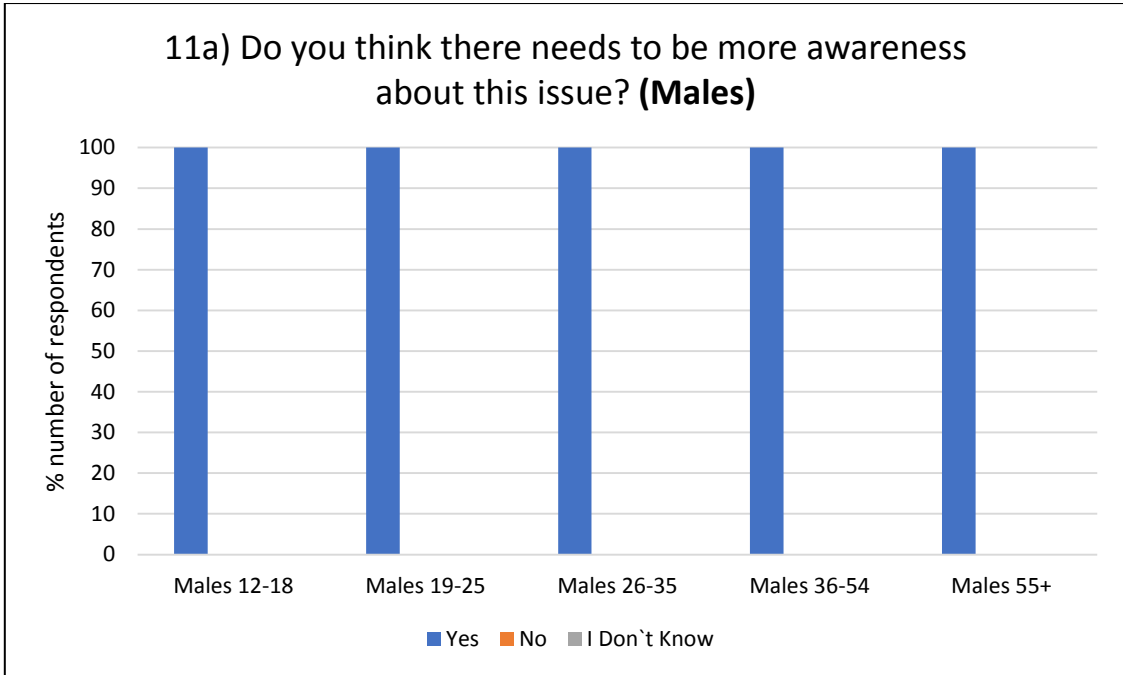


### 9B. WHY?

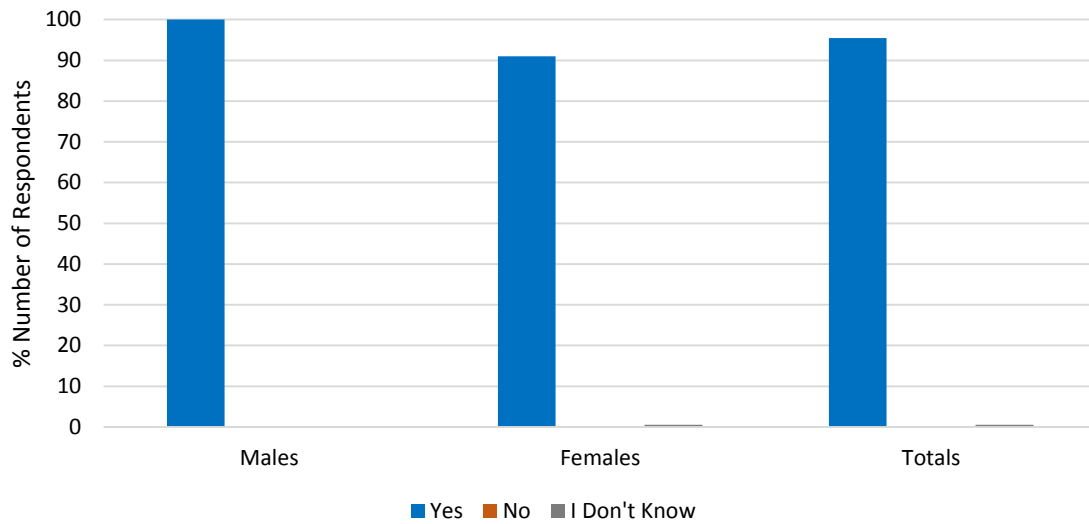




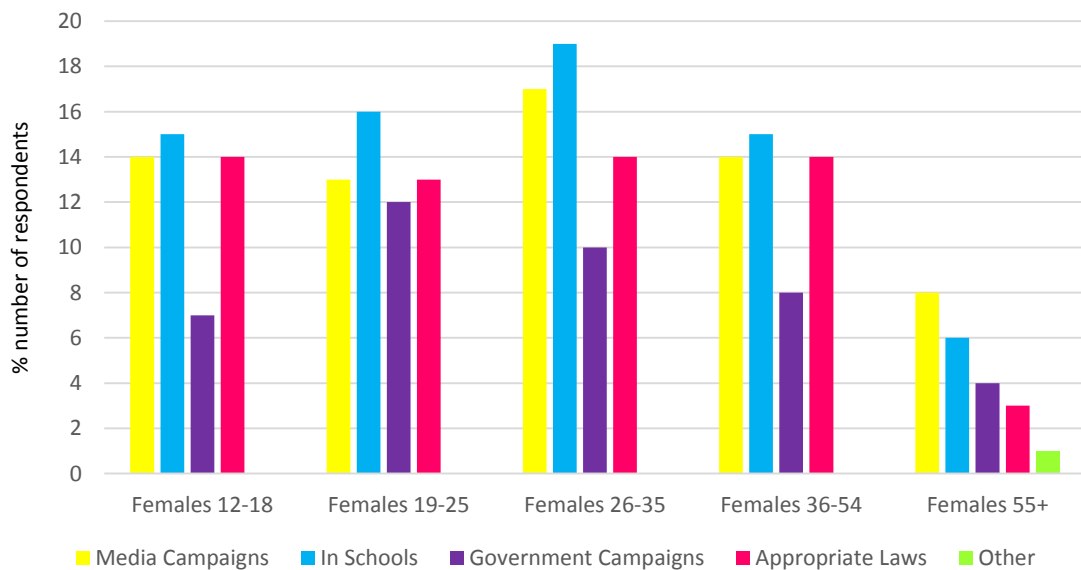


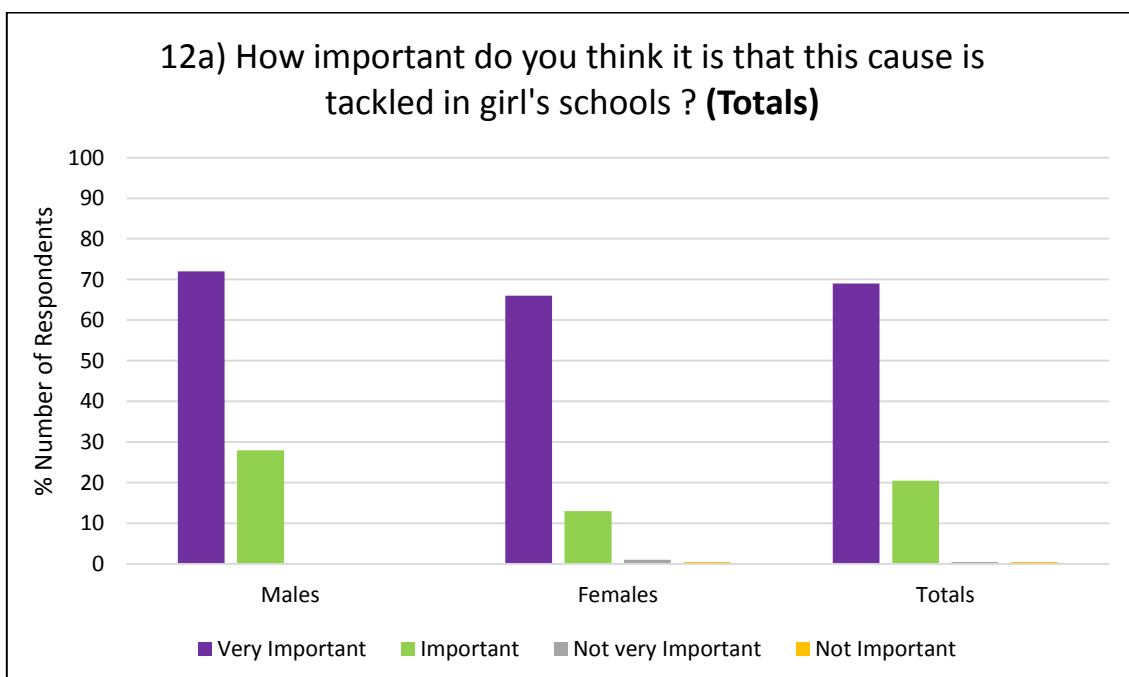
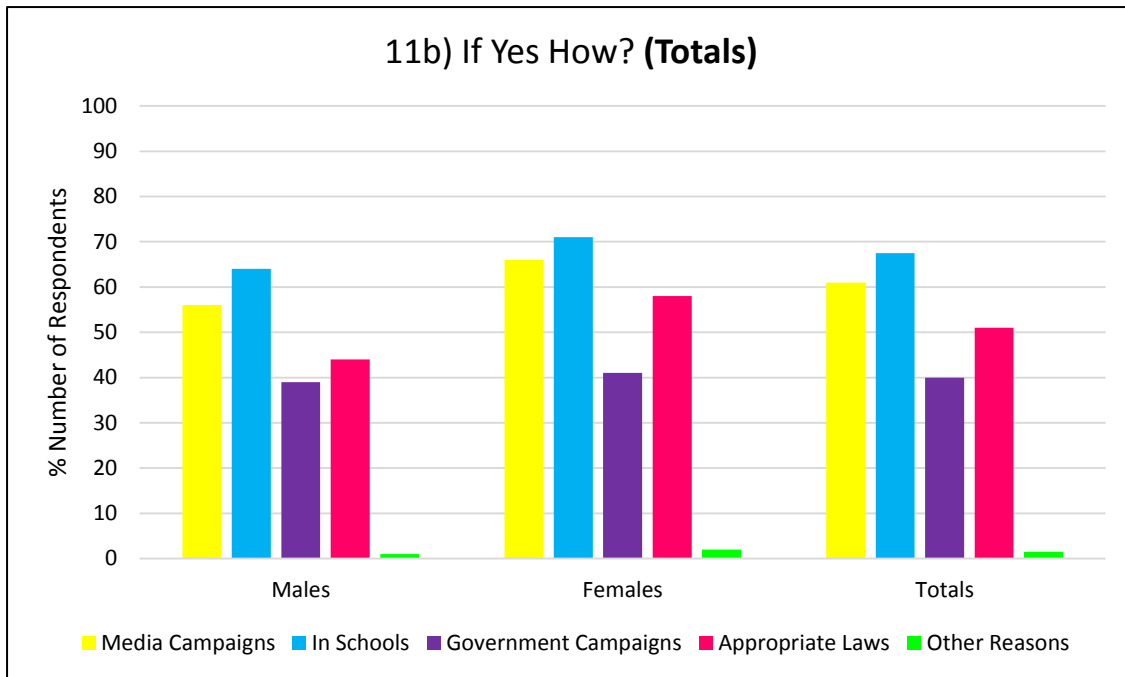


### 11a) Do you think there needs to be more awareness about this issue? (Totals)

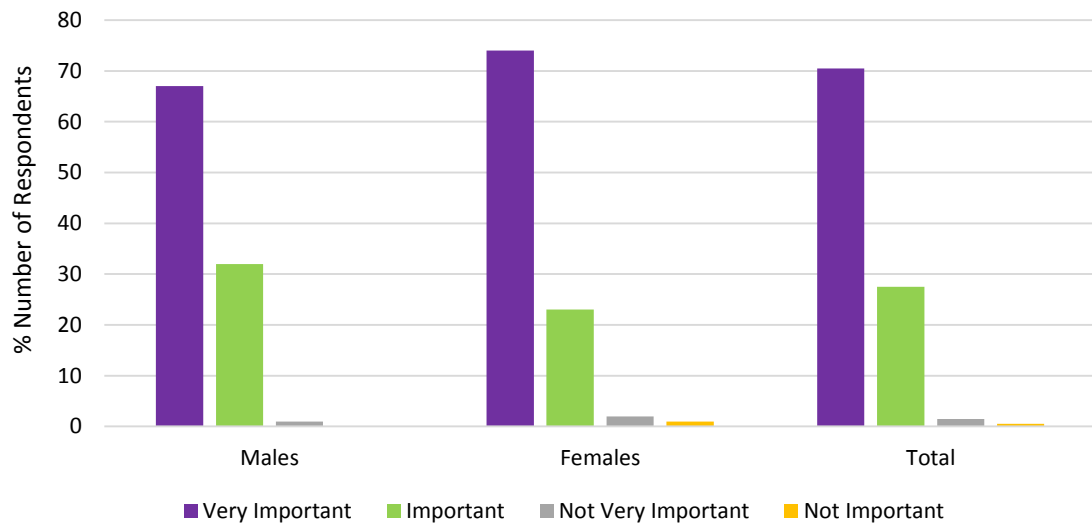


### 11b) If yes, how? (Females)

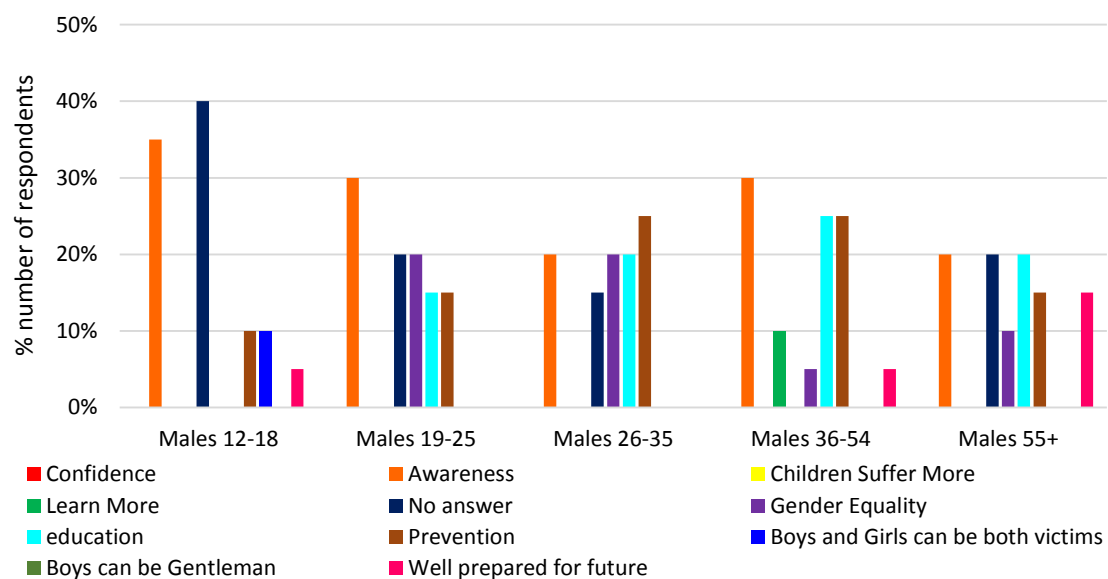




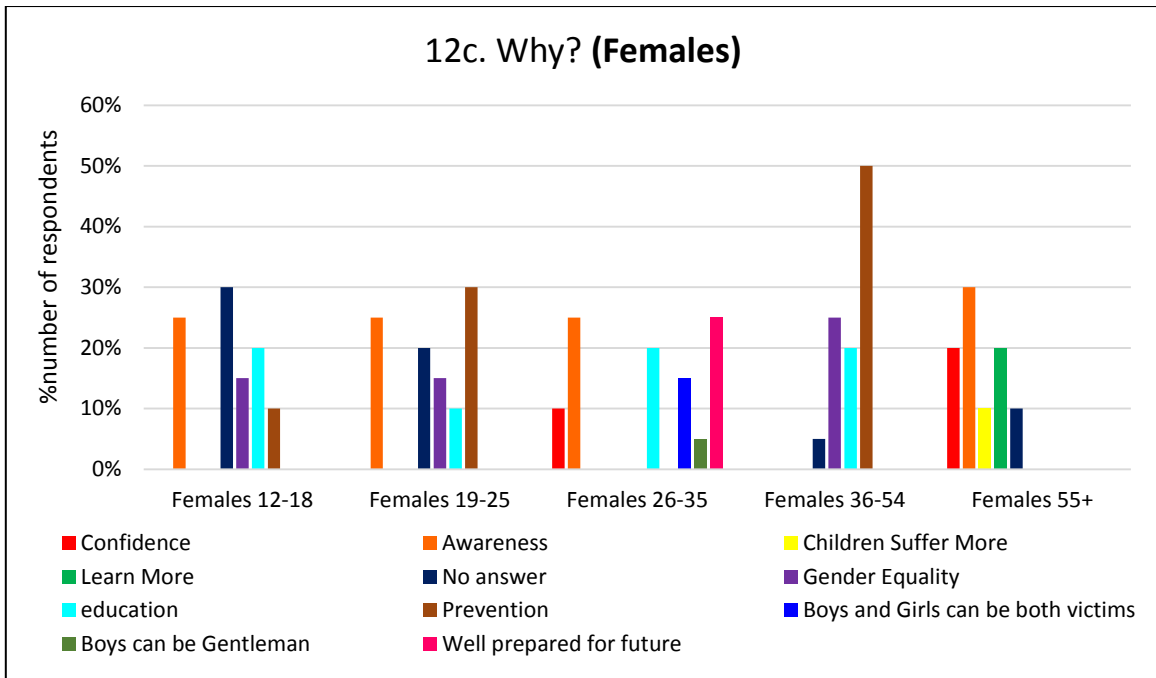
### 12b) How important do you think it is that this cause is tackled in boy's schools ? (Totals)



### 12c. Why? (Males)



### 12c. Why? (Females)



### 12c) Why ? (Totals)

