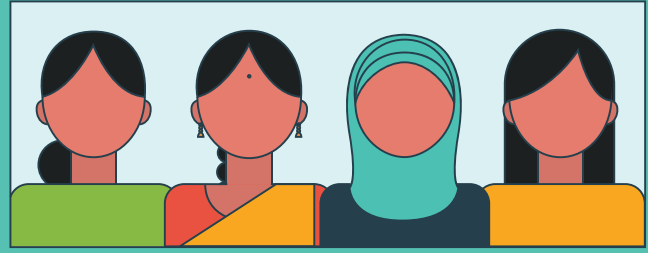


GENDER DISCRIMINATORY SOCIAL NORMS AND THEIR IMPACT ON RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS OF WOMEN:

A participatory research carried out in the Northern Province



Research Participants

532



Jaffna	112	Vavuniya	172
Kilinochchi	91	Mannar	94
Mullaitivu	63		



Data Collection Methods

Questionnaires: 532

Key Interviews with:



Religious Leaders



Academics



Social Activists

Focus Group Discussions with:



Women-Headed Households



Victims of Sexual and Gender Based Violence



Women Ex-combatants



Women with Disabilities



Victims of Child Marriage

Key Social Norms Prevalent in the Northern Province:

Ranked according to their Strength¹

- 1 Women should not talk in public places
- 2 Wives should sustain their family lives at any cost
- 3 Only men should engage in labor-intensive work
- 4 Childcare is mainly the duty of women
- 5 Cooking and household chores are mainly women's work

Confine women's role to the domestic sphere



- 6 Women should not go to police stations
- 7 Women should not complain about their husbands
- 8 Family members should not allow women to complain against sexual violence
- 9 Female victims of sexual violence are unchaste
- 10 Women should not complain against sexual violence

Emphasize the concept of a 'good woman' and 'chastity'

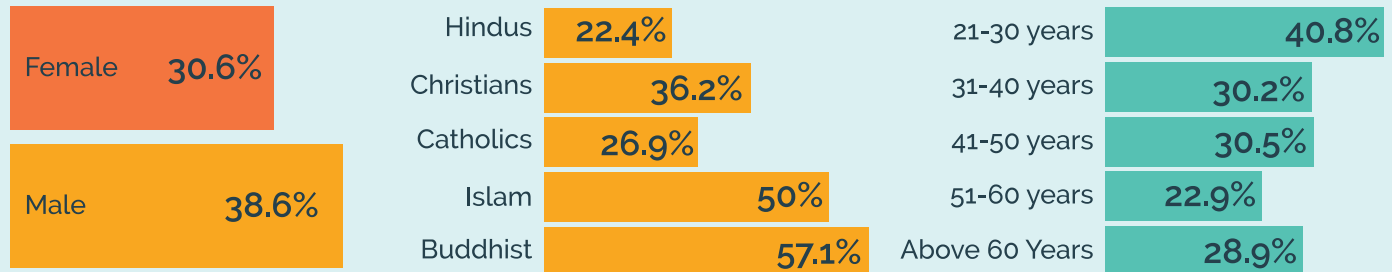


¹Strength is measured using the SNAP Framework

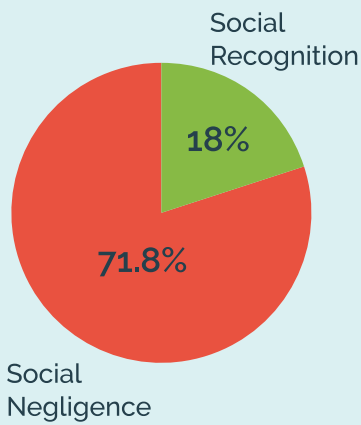
What Ties Women to the Domestic Sphere?

1 Women should not talk in public places

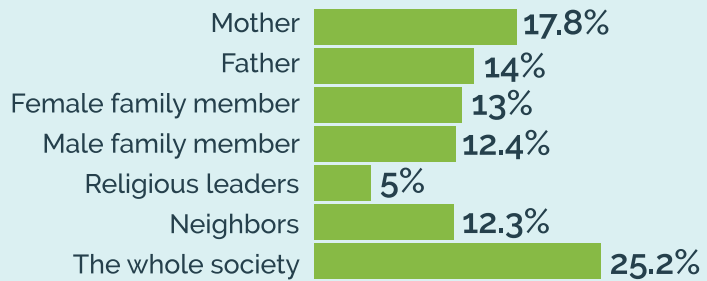
a Agreed



b Social response if the woman violates the norm

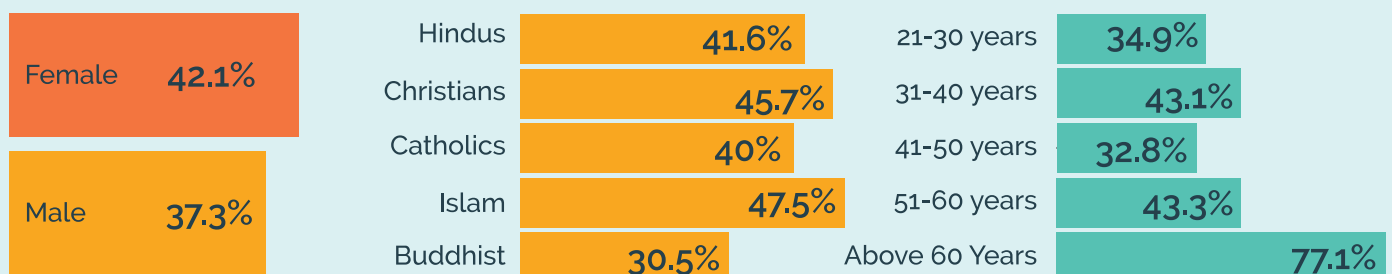


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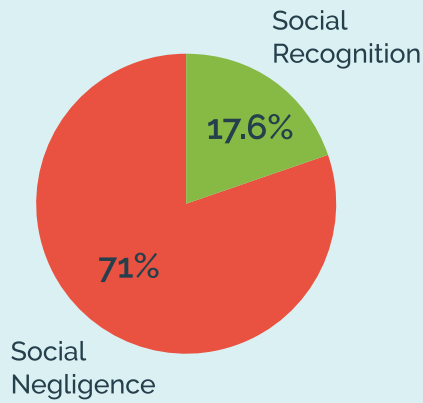


2 Wives should sustain their family lives at any cost

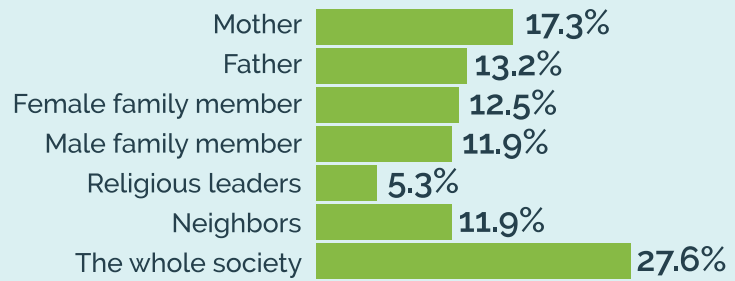
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b Social response if the woman violates the norm

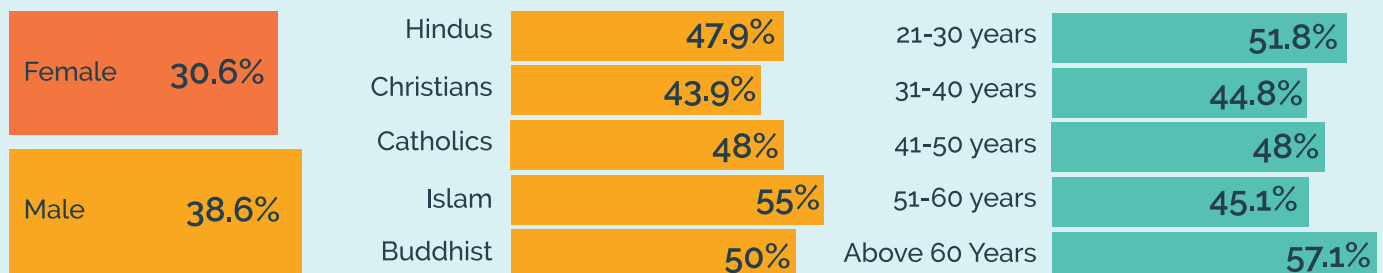


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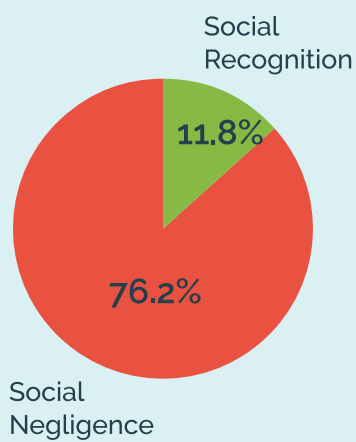


3 Only men should engage in labor-intensive work

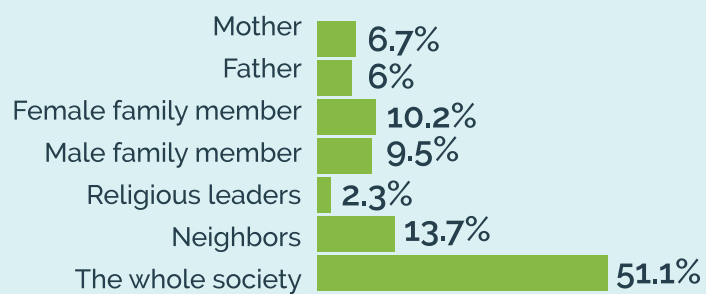
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b Social response if the woman violates the norm

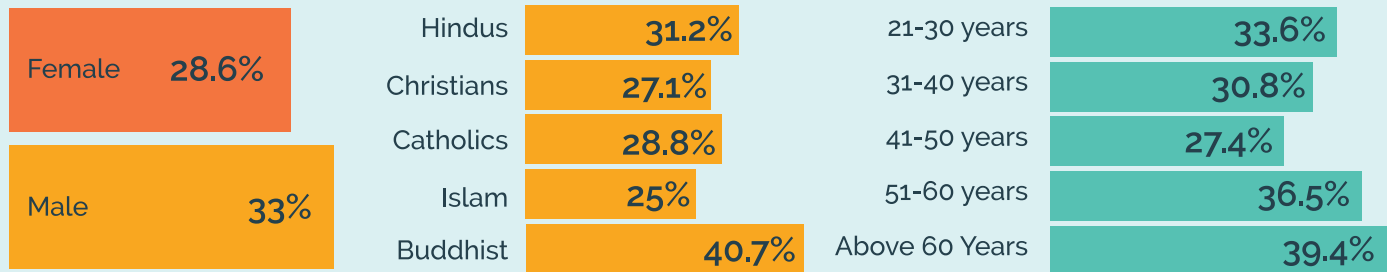


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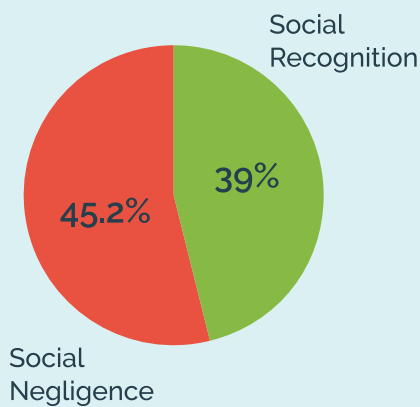


4 Childcare is mainly the duty of women

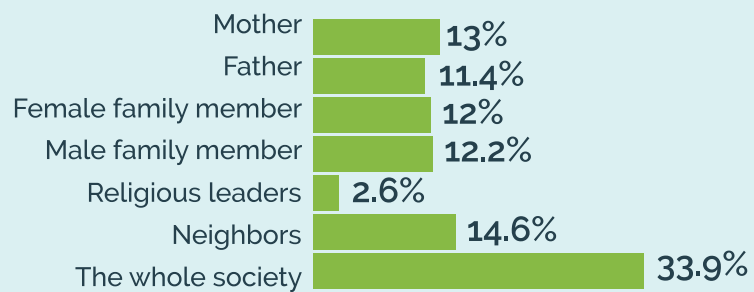
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b Social response if the woman violates the norm

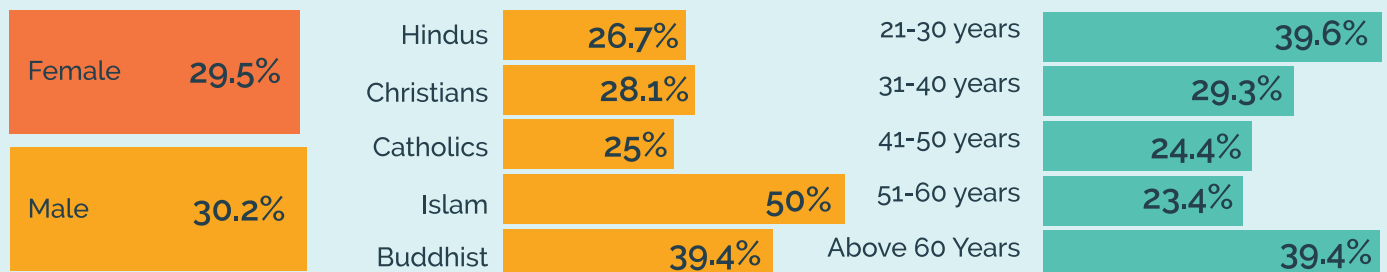


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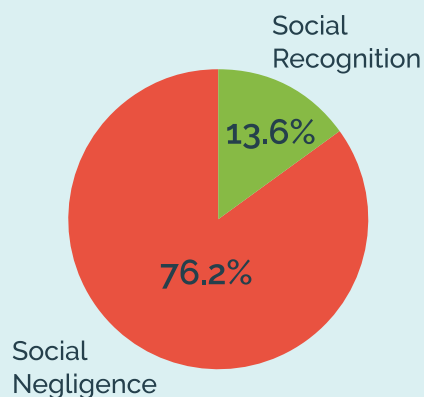


5 Cooking and household chores are mainly women's work

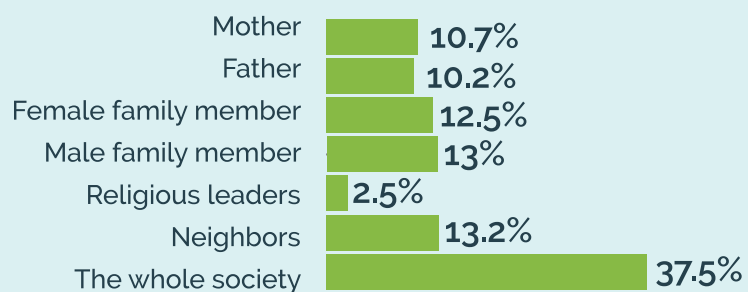
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b Social response if the woman violates the norm



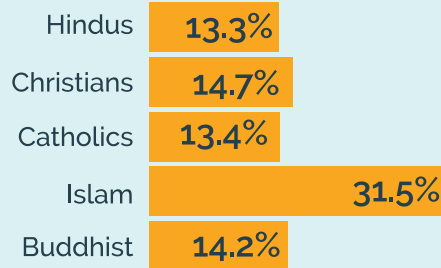
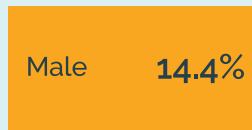
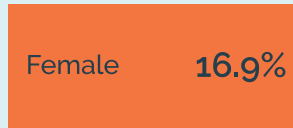
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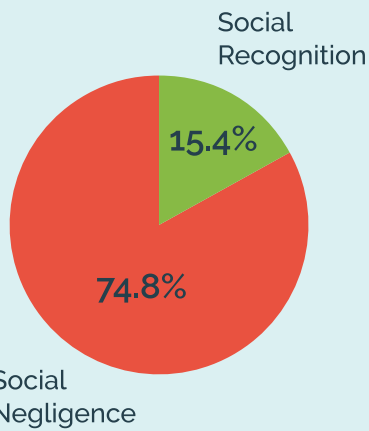
Concept of The 'Good Woman' And 'Chastity'

1 Women should not go to police stations

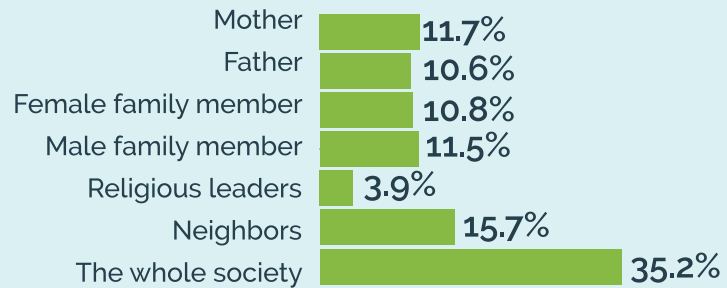
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b Social response if the woman violates the norm

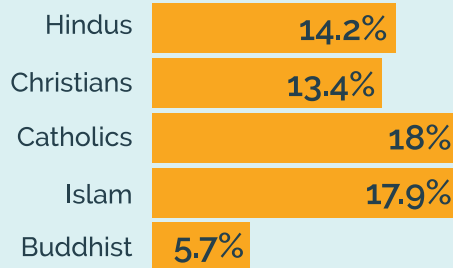
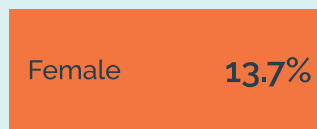


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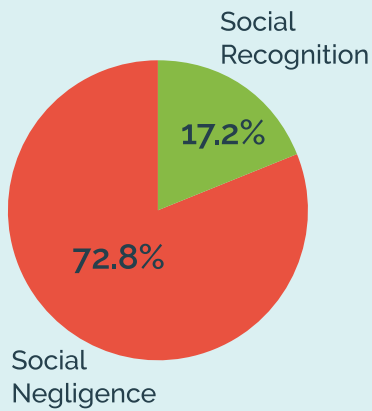


2 Women should not complain about their husbands

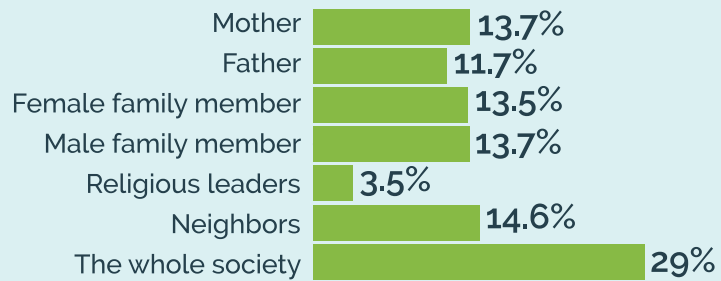
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b Social response if the woman violates the norm

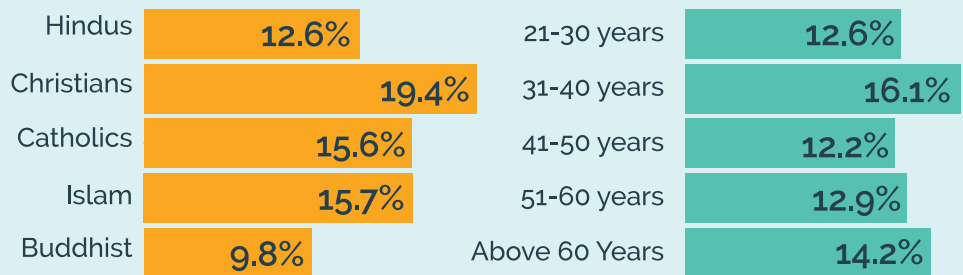
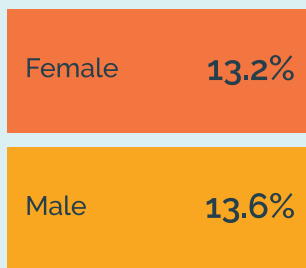


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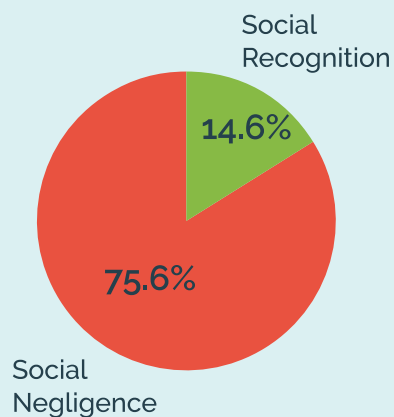


3 Family members should not allow women to complain against sexual violence

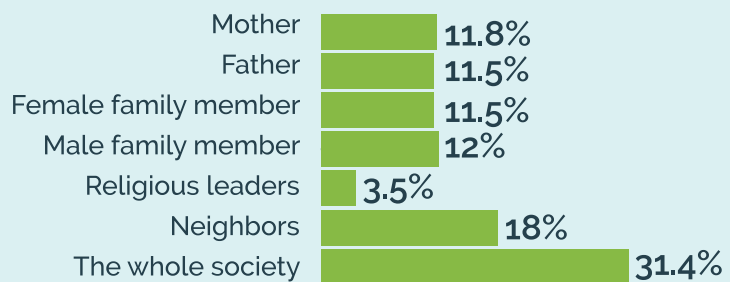
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b Social response if the woman violates the norm

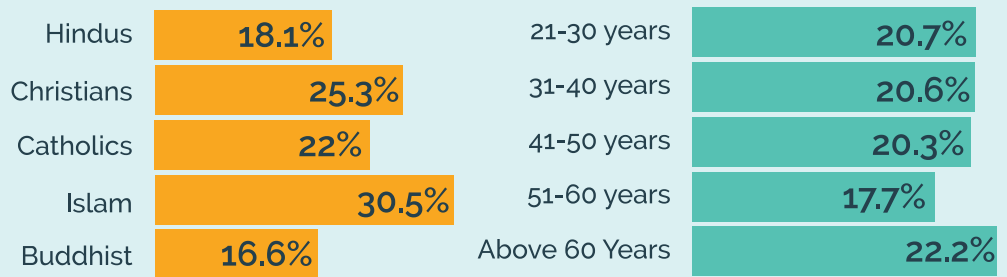
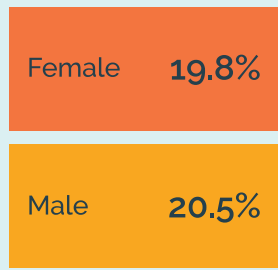


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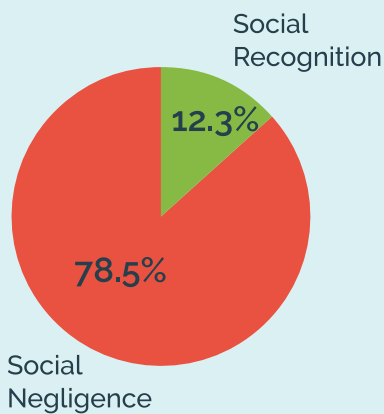


4 Female victims of sexual violence are unchaste

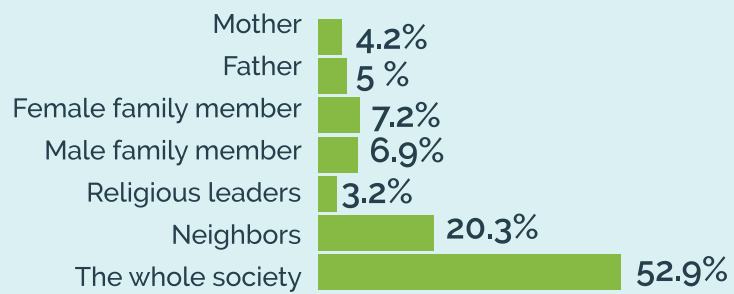
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b Social response if the woman violates the norm

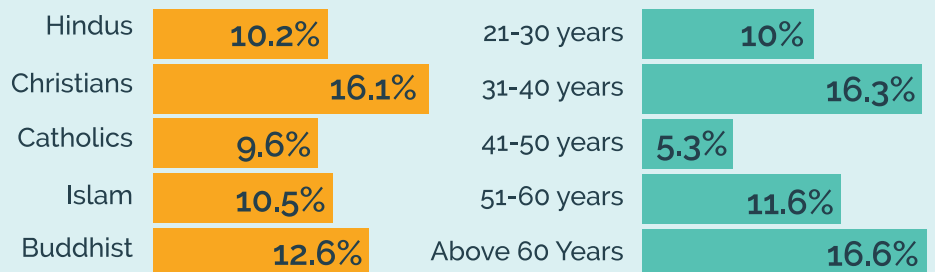
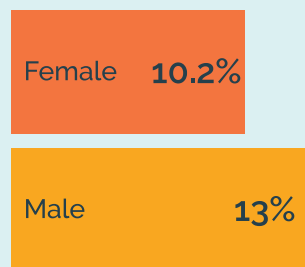


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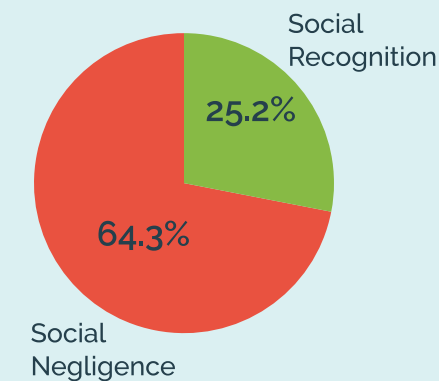


5 Women should not complain against sexual violence

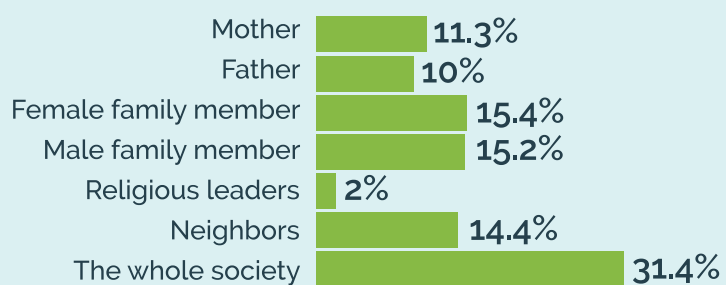
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b Social response if the woman violates the norm



c Reference Groups



Social Practices That Violate The Religious Freedom Of Women

Women/ Girls should not go to temple while they are menstruating

Women/ Girls should not play auspicious musical instruments

Women/ Girls should not be priests in the temples

Hindus



Nuns should not conduct Mass

Reverend Sisters Cannot Baptize

**Christians/
Catholics**



Women/girls should not pray when they are menstruating

Islamic



Women should not go to temples when they are menstruating

Women who go to temples should not touch the feet of the priest while prostrating.

In some Buddhist temples (the upper floor of the Sri Mahabodhi and the place where the sacred tooth relic is kept) women are not permitted to enter.

Women should cover their entire body when they go to the temple

Buddhist



General Root Causes



Male dominance/
patriarchal system



Cultural norms



Religious principles/
traditions



Security concerns



Cultural value attached to the concept of chastity



Concept of family honor



Increased use of drugs



Increased violence against women and girls



Effects of war

General Consequences and Rights violated



Freedom of speech is denied



Access to justice is prevented



Freedom from torture is denied



Freedom of religion, conscience and thought is denied



Freedom of movement is denied



Economic independence of women is denied



Violence against women



Women's talents and knowledge are snubbed



Women's health is jeopardized

How can we TRANSFORM social norms?



The legislature can:

- Amend gender discriminatory laws including the Penal Code and the Thesawalamai Law
- Enact new gender-responsive laws, particularly in terms of procedures on sexual violence cases



The judiciary can:

- Allow private trials for SGBV cases
- Establish separate and special courts to hear SGBV cases
- Avoid adding the names and other details of the survivors of SGBV in judgment reports



The state actors can:

- Review all school text books and remove gender discriminatory texts
- Provide special training to school principals, teachers and other staff on gender discriminatory social norms and their impact
- The importance of economic independence for women and job opportunities for women must be incorporated into the school syllabus
- Plan and implement programs at schools to develop leadership skills among girl children
- Make Practical Technical Skills subject a mandatory subject in all grades after grade Six.
- Train school students to fight against physical violence
- Sensitize all government officers on gender discrimination and gender equality
- Consider gender related aspects when enacting the national action plan



The civil society actors can:

- Conduct awareness programs on gender equality.
- Take initiatives to start wide discussions, discourses and advocacy on gender equality.
- Develop street dramas and short films on gender equality.
- Use social media platforms to record and share the experiences in relation to gender discrimination
- Facilitate self-employment for women to ensure their economic independence
- Take an initiative to ensure equal pay for women who do agriculture/cultivation works



We can:

- Treat our children equally, irrespective of their sex
- Think before following a norm - many of us follow the social rules without knowing its rationale or consequences
- Know your rights and speak up for your rights irrespective of your sex
- Respect all individuals, irrespective of their sex
- Teach gender equality to children at homes

Social norms taught at family level are stronger and harder to change.

Therefore, the change needs to be begun at the family level.



For more information

TRANSFORM Project
Law and Society Trust

📍 No.03, Kynsey Terrace,
Colombo,08

☎ 94 (0) 112684845
📠 94 (0) 11 2686843

✉ info@lstlanka.org
🌐 www.lstlanka.org

TRANSFORM

Building Inclusive Communities and Promoting Women's Leadership
 සමෘද්ධිමත් සමාජ සංවර්ධනයක් සහතික කිරීම සඳහා පුද්ගලික සහ සමාජ සංවර්ධනය ප්‍රවර්ධනය කිරීම
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