Jordanian Opinions, Knowledge and Attitudes to COVID-19

Magenta FZC
25/03/2020

Contents

INTRODUCTION

MAGENTA is a social and behavioural change research and communications agency, headquartered in Amman, Jordan. In response to the current COVID19 situation in the Kingdom, the government has taken proactive measures to contain the virus. MAGENTA deployed a rapid poll to garner population insights around (1) Awareness of required behaviours, (2) fears and worries and (3) priority needs. The poll was deployed through technology that allows MAGENTA to survey respondents remotely through in-app polling/ surveying. Data collection took place between the 23rd and 24th of March 2020.

Our hope is that this data will prove useful for policy-makers and programme designers and that the survey can be rolled out on a regular basis to track these important indicators.

DEMOGRAPHICS

A total of 423 responses were collected during this window for data collection. Figures 1, 2, and 3 below show the disaggregation of data across the gender, age, and governorate classifiers (respectively).

Figure 1: Gender Breakdown
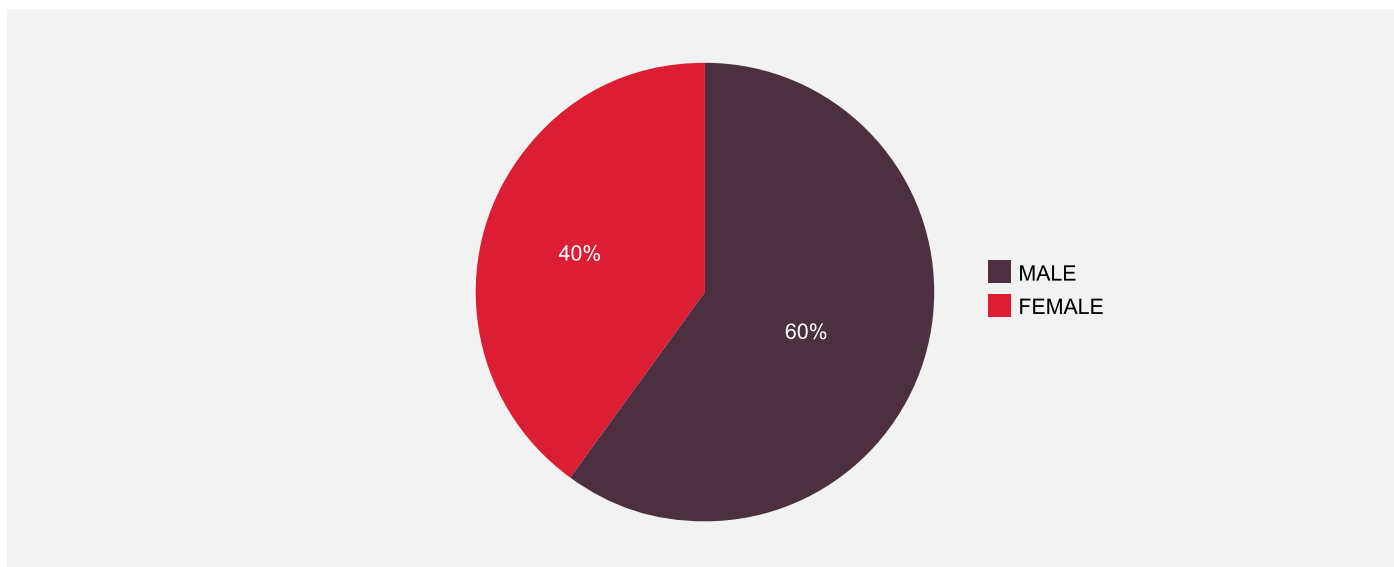
Figure 2: Age Groups Breakdown
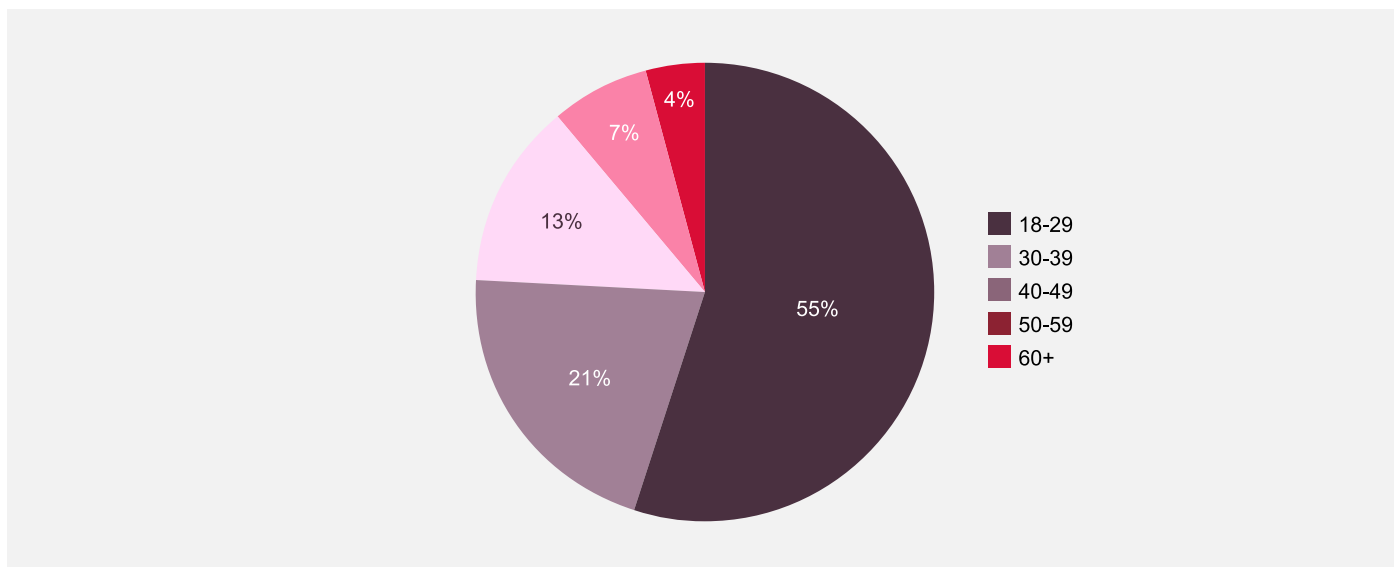
Figure 3: Governorates Breakdown
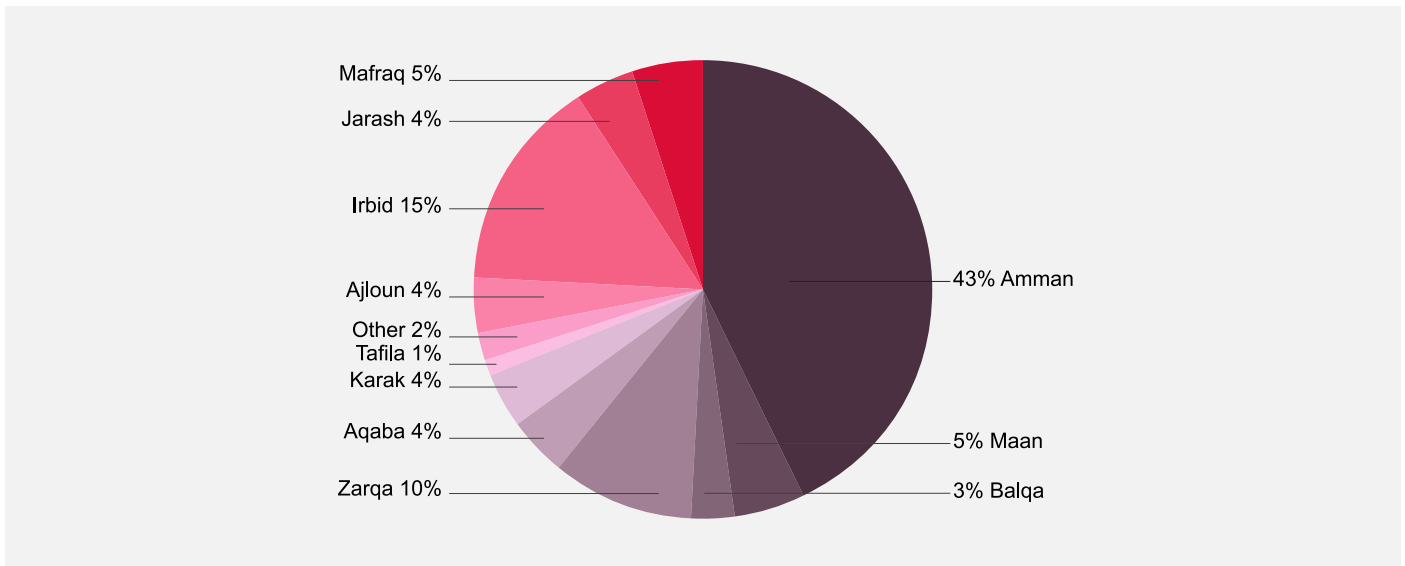
As noted in Figure 3 above, the data represented in this report doesn't reflect an accurate representation of governorates. As such, disaggregation of data on a governorate level won't be included in this round of reporting on the polling.

AWARENESS

The Threat COVID-19 Poses to Jordan
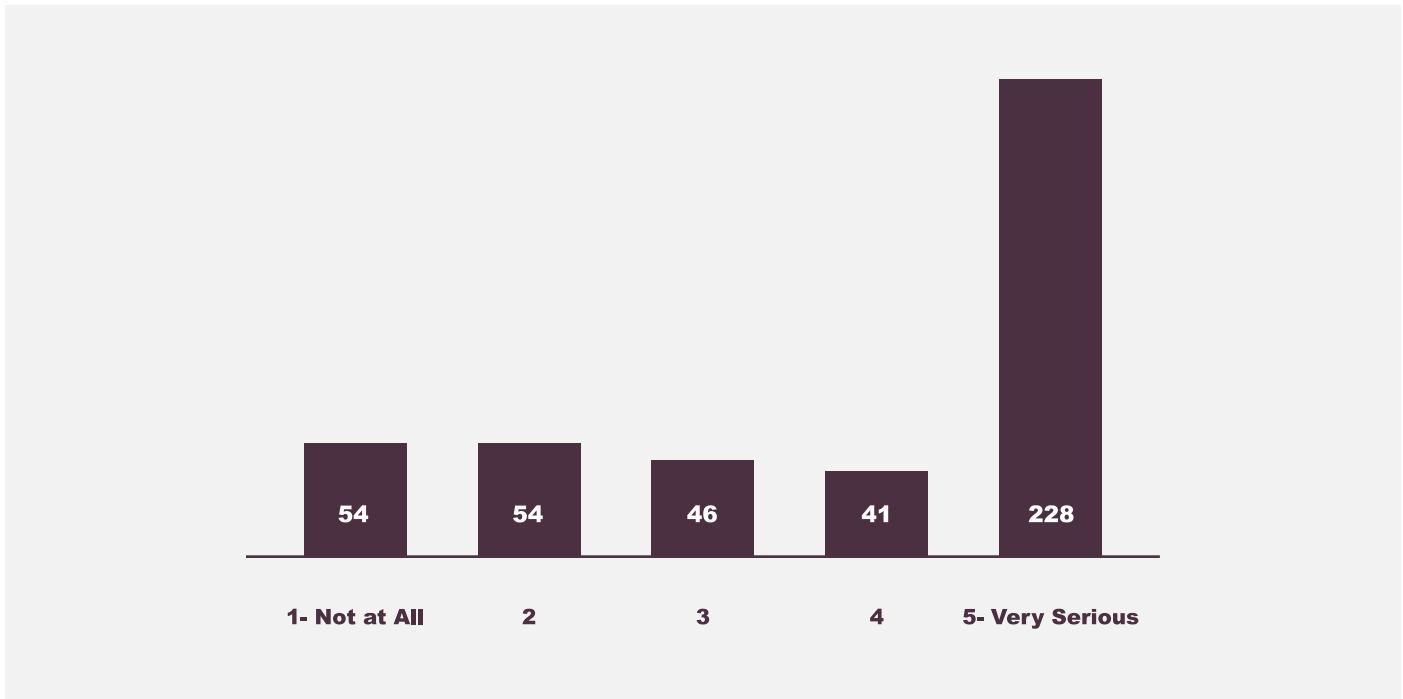
Figure 4: In your opinion, how serious is the threat that coronavirus poses to Jordan?

The majority of respondents (54%) believed COVID-19 to pose a very serious threat to Jordan. While only about 12.5% believed it was not serious at all. When disaggregating by gender, the only noticeable difference was females slightly higher propensity to rank it as very serious more frequently. Males on the other hand, ranked it as "not at all serious" or "somewhat serious" with slightly higher proportionality.
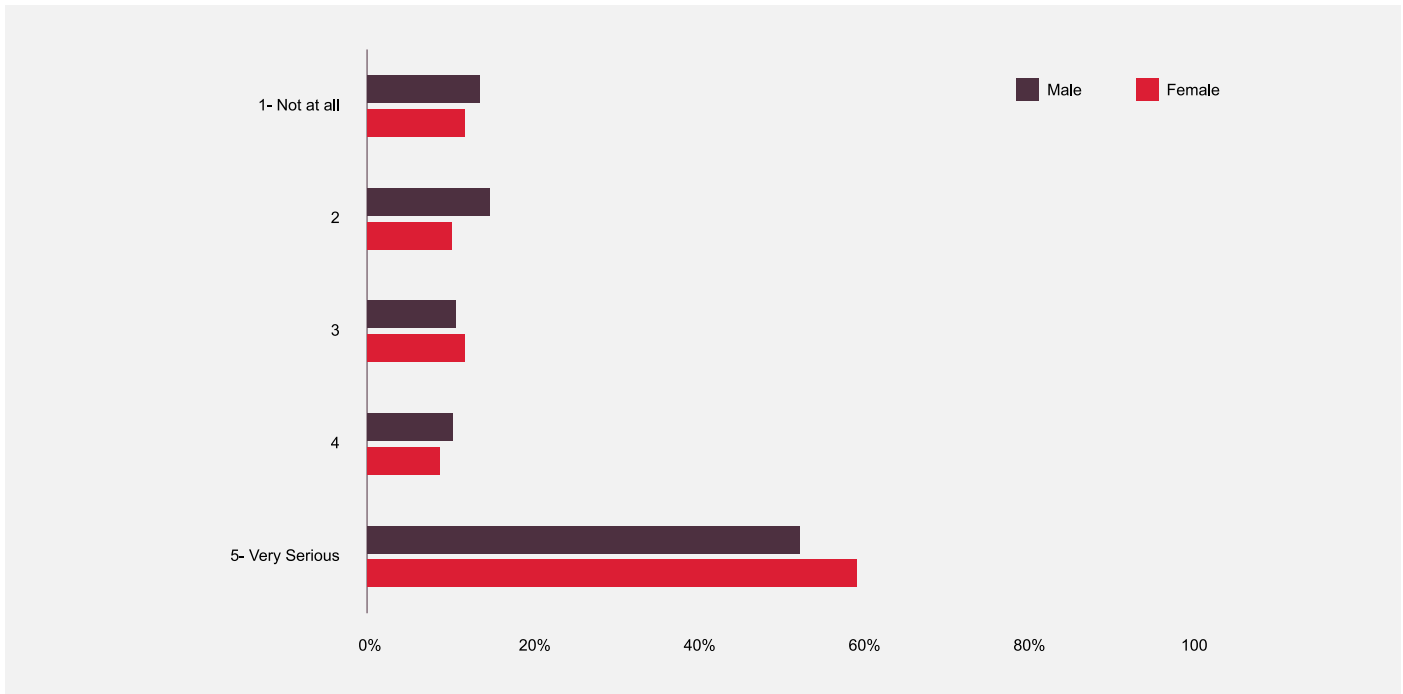
Figure 5: In your opinion, how serious is the threat that coronavirus poses to Jordan?

When asked about how they believed the coronavirus spread (in a multiple choice question), the most frequently selected answer was "through touching surfaces that someone with corona has touched". The least frequently selected answer as shown in Figure 6 below was mosquito bites. Only 11% selected the option referring to interacting with goods imported from infected countries.
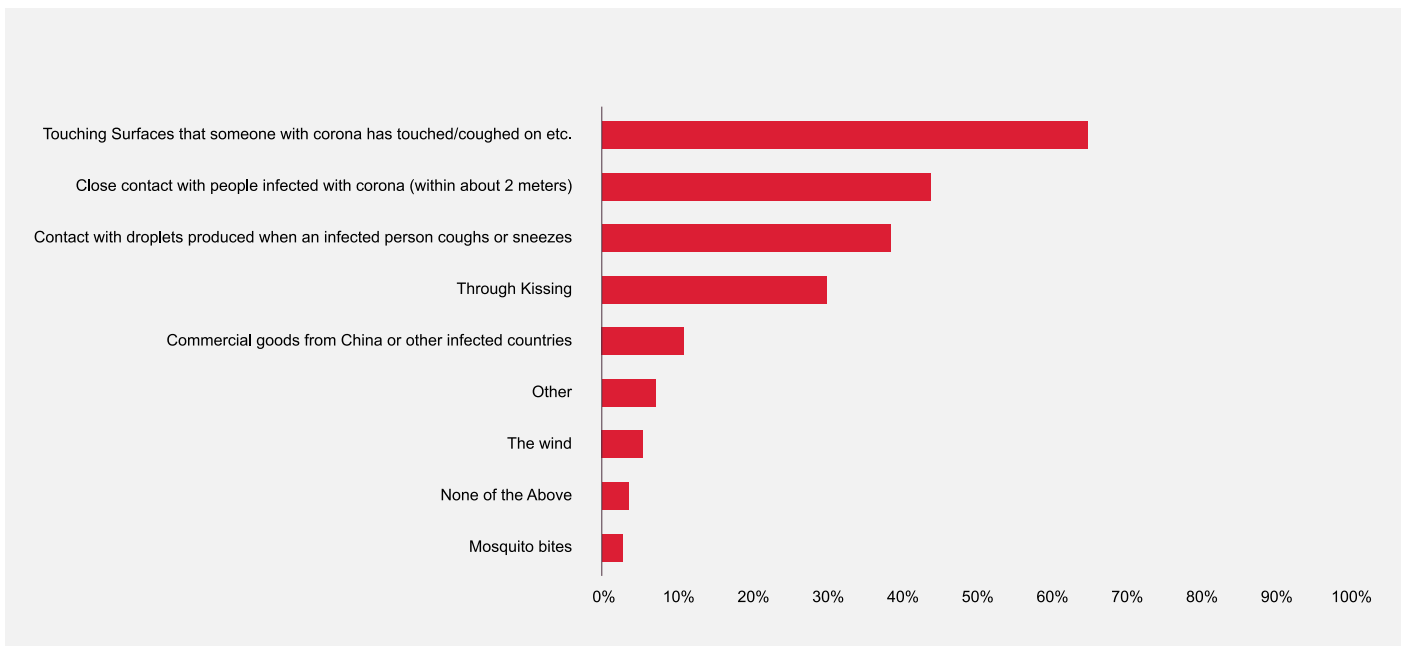
Figure 6: How is the Corona Virus spread?

Female respondents more frequently selected the "touching surfaces" option, but noticeably selected all other options less frequently than males.
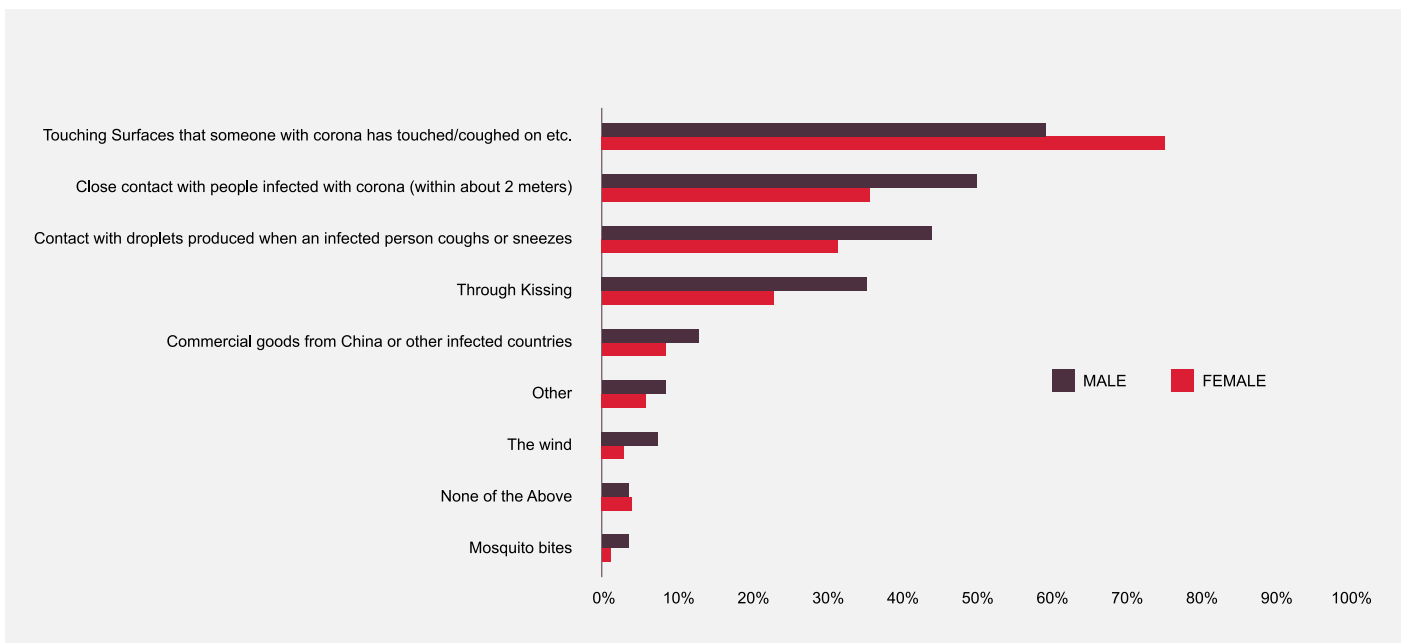
Figure 7: How is the Corona Virus spread?

In terms of awareness of symptoms, 40% of respondents believed that a person carrying COVID-19 would show physical symptoms that include coughing, or paleness. This is very problematic as such a misunderstanding could easily lead to higher rates of Jordanians contracting the disease.
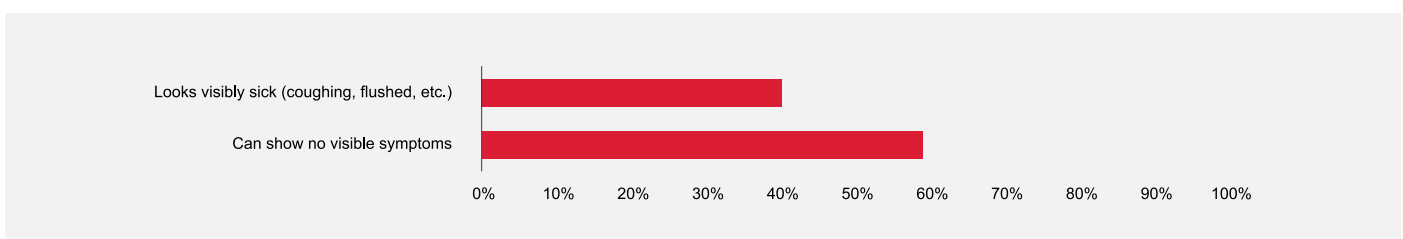
Figure 8: Symptoms of someone carrying the Corona Virus

The 50-59 age demographic had the highest rate of correct answers for this question at 71%. While other

age groups fluctuated between 58% and 62%.
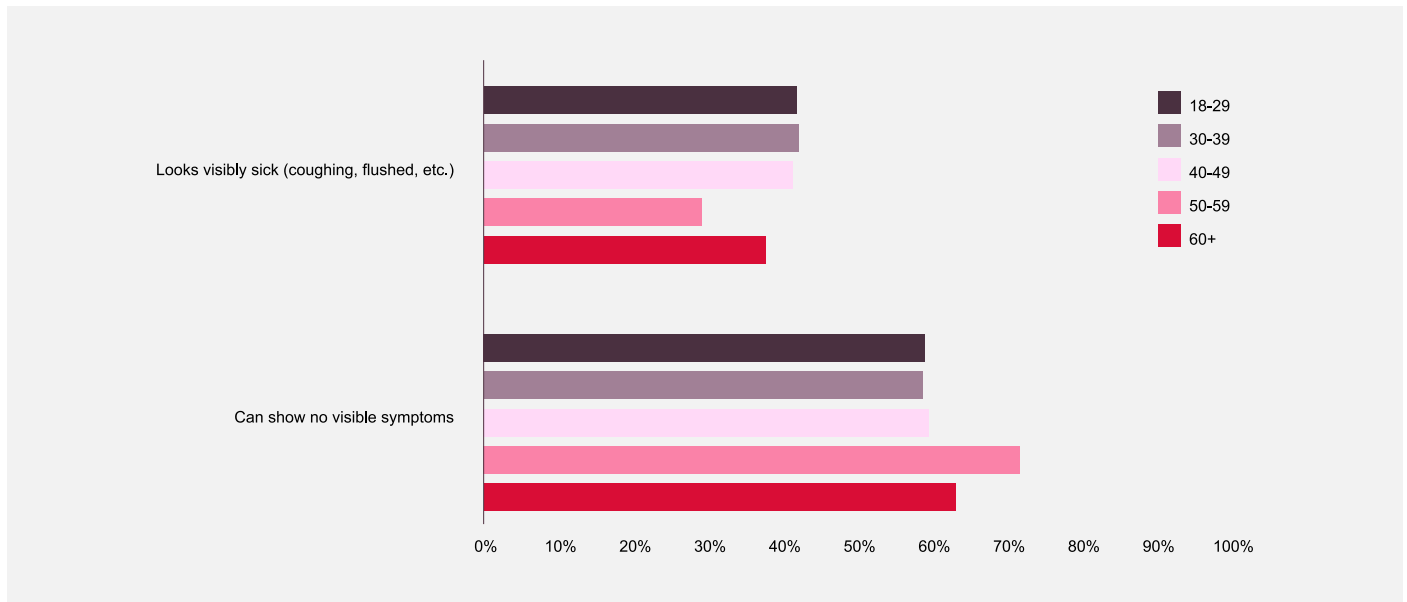
Figure 9: Symptoms of someone carrying the Corona Virus

To further test their understanding of the virus, respondents were asked about when they believed a person carrying the virus would be contagious. 23% of respondents indicated they would only be contagious when showing symptoms of the disease.
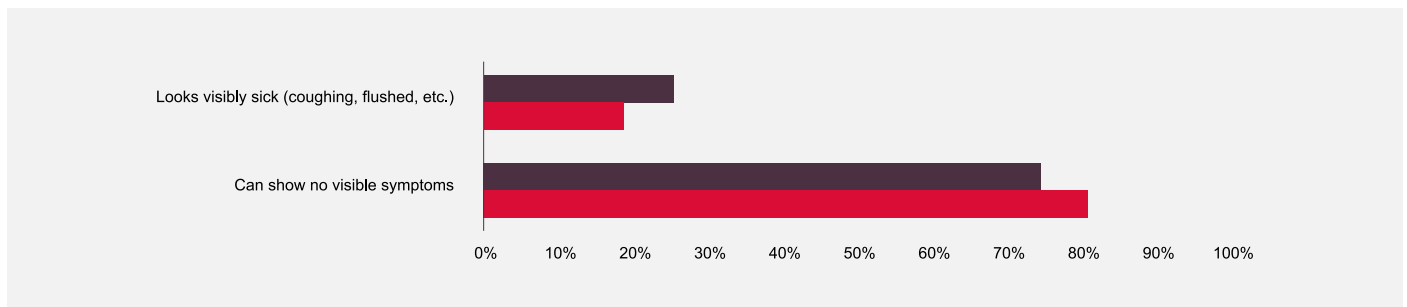
Figure 10: When is a person carrying COVID-19 contagious?
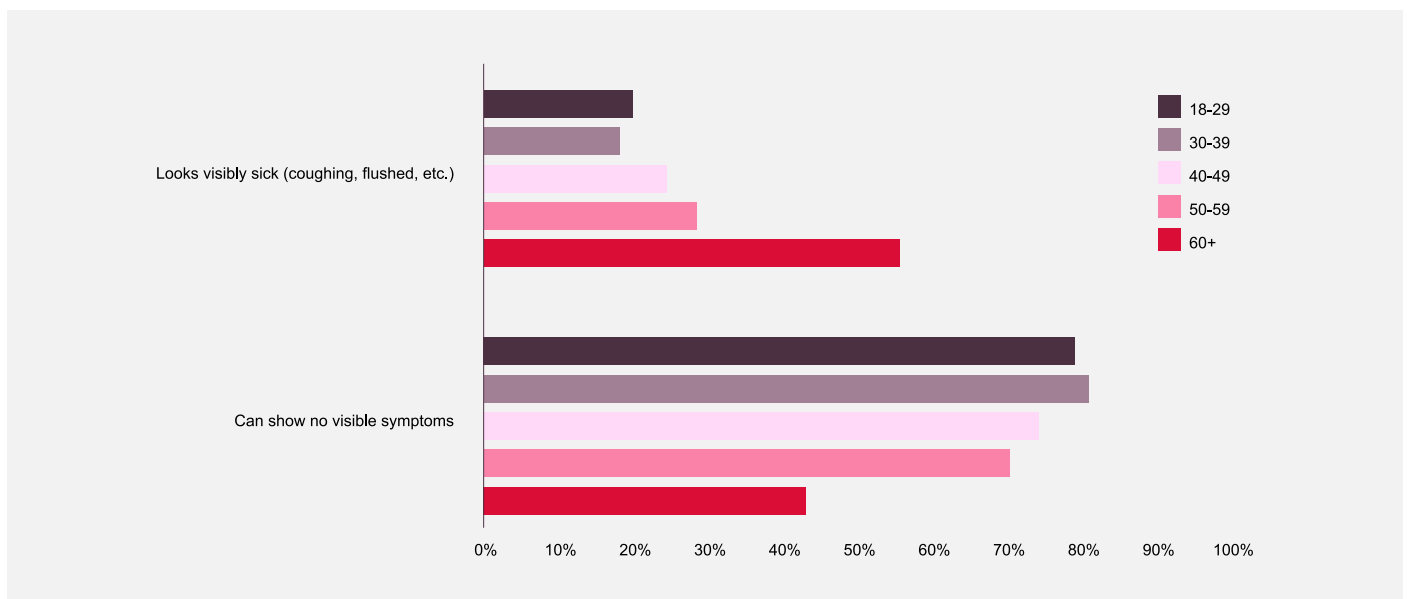
Figure 11: When is a person carrying COVID-19 contagious?

Respondents belonging to the 60+ age group were the largest age group to select the "only when showing visible sign of the disease" option. This is problematic seeing how they're statistically the most at risk age group among the polled sample, indicating a misconception that needs to be corrected.

BEHAVIOUR

The poll also attempted to get a better understanding of the behaviours respondents adopted to protect themselves against COVID-19.
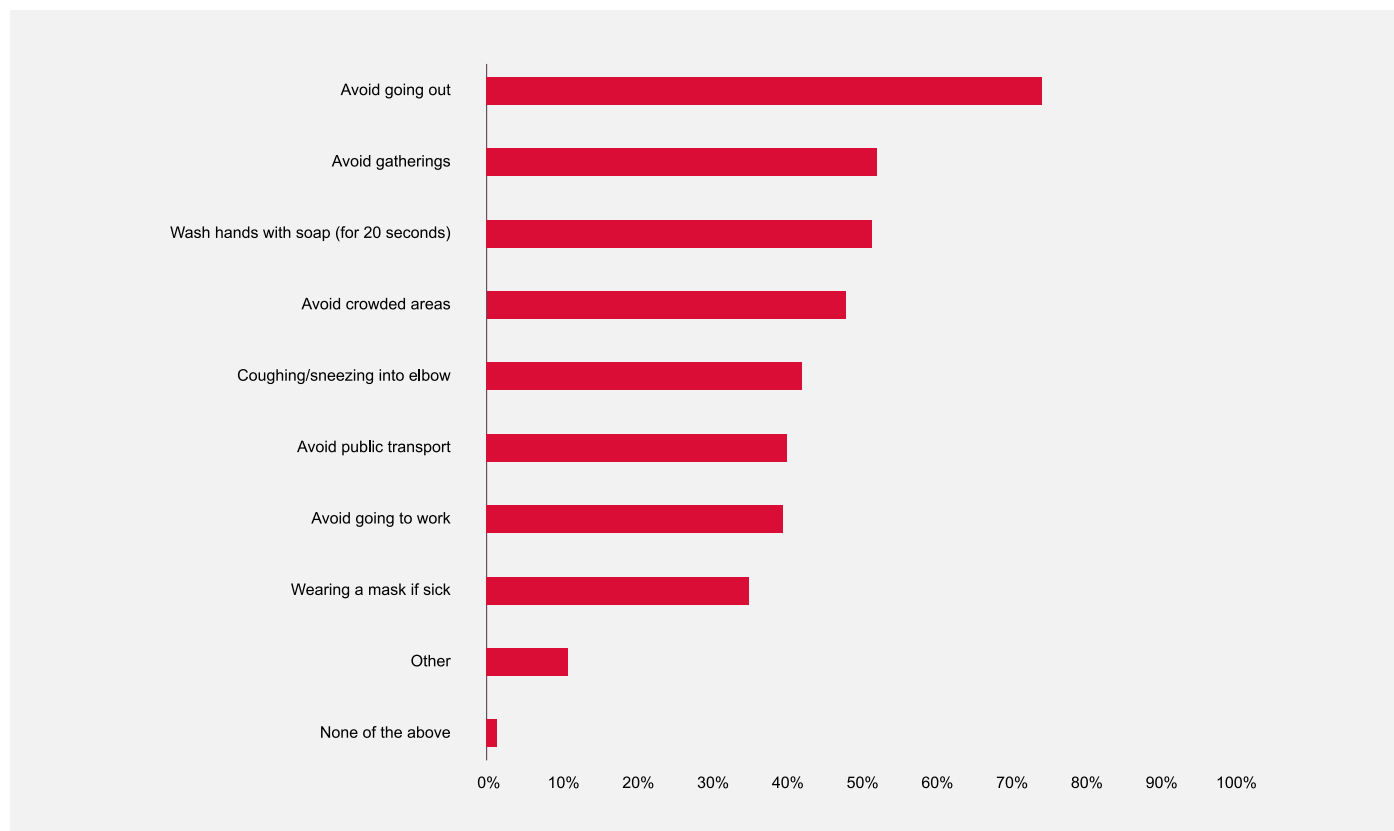
Figure 12: What are you doing with your family to keep them safe during the corona pandemic?

The highest response rate recorded was for avoiding leaving the house, followed by avoiding gatherings and washing hands for a minimum of 20 seconds. The lowest percentage of behaviours adopted was for the "wearing masks if sick" option. Only 2% mentioned they aren't performing any of these behaviours.

Respondents were asked about what they thought other members of the community were doing to protect themselves from the virus. This was done with the purpose of informing our understanding of how widespread the individuals believe the community adherence to positive behaviours pertaining to COVID-19 is.
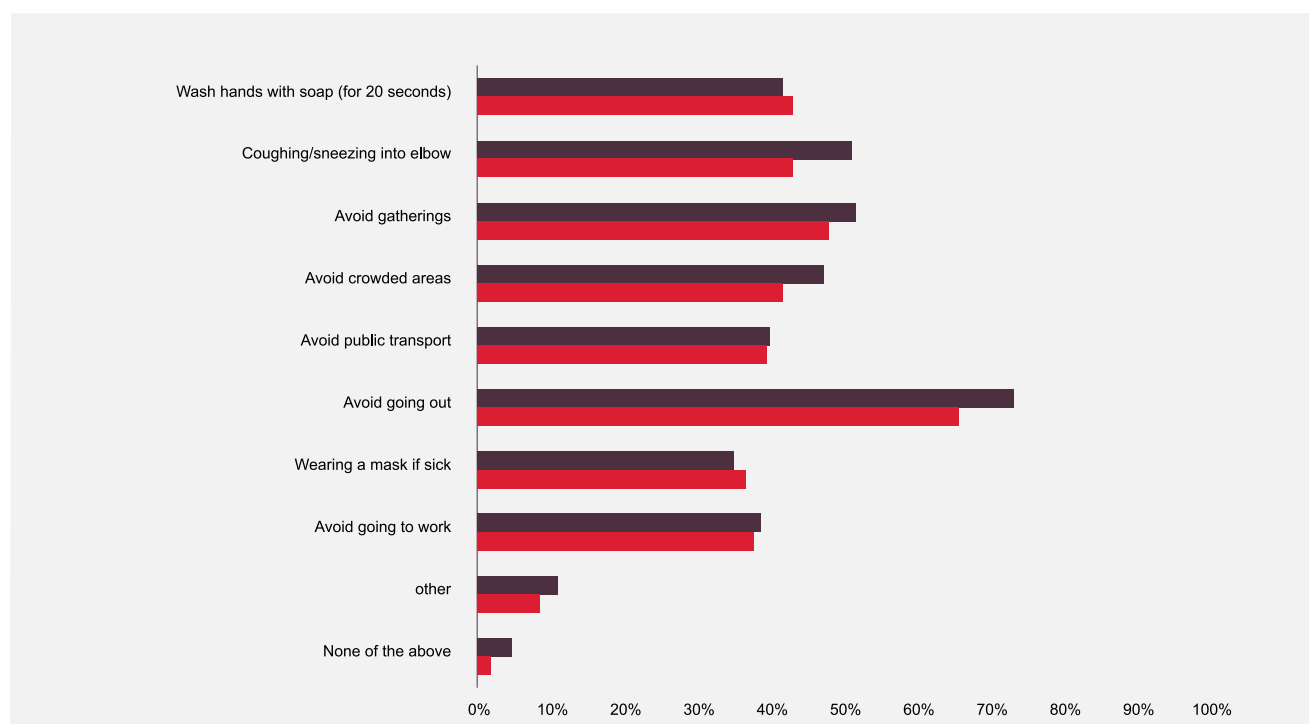
Figure 13: What individuals are doing (Eggplant) vs. what they believe the community is doing (Crimson)

As shown in Figure 13 above, for all suggested behaviours (with the exception of wearing masks if sick), response rates for behaviours the individual is adopting were slightly higher than those they believed others were adopting in their communities.

The poll also attempted to gauge the reach of the inaccurate messaging surrounding ineffective/ harmful behaviour within the polled sample.

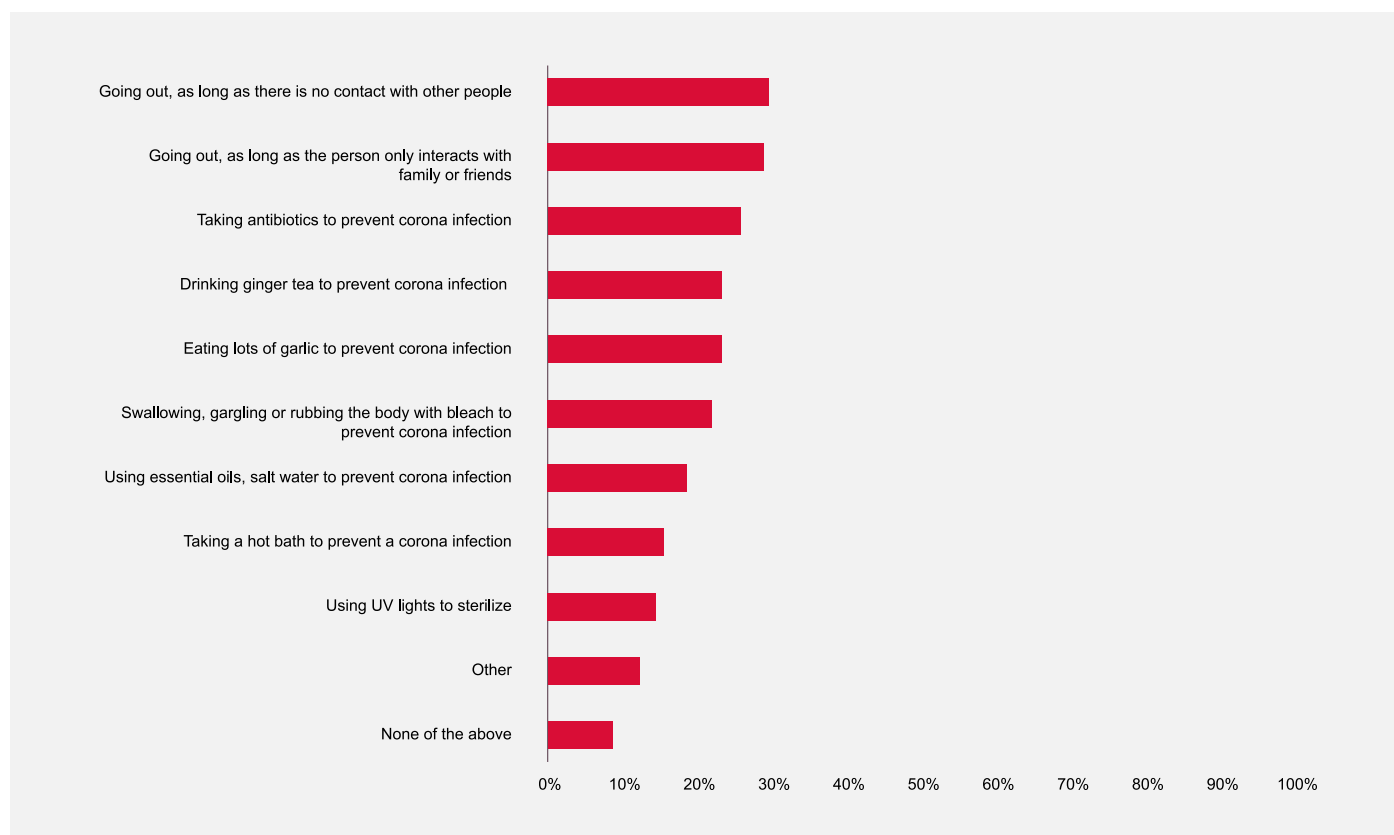**Figure 14: Which of these ineffective behaviours have you or someone you know or seen done?**

About 30% noted that they have heard about or personally know people who have been leaving their homes provided they only interact with family members or avoid crowds. About 15% of respondents have heard of the misinformation regarding drinking or gargling with detergent as a way to fight the virus. All of the suggested behaviours were heard by 12%-30% of participants indicating the constant need to counter such messaging and correct misconceptions.

NEWS & INFORMATION

When asked about the top two primary sources they've been following to keep informed about developments pertaining to the virus, the most frequently relied on sources were Local TV stations (32%), Government press briefings (31%) and Social media (29%). All in all, international organizations and the government's recently launched COVID-19 website were relied on to a lesser degree (8% and 14% respectively). Religious leaders were the least depended on source with a mere 2% of respondents choosing that option.
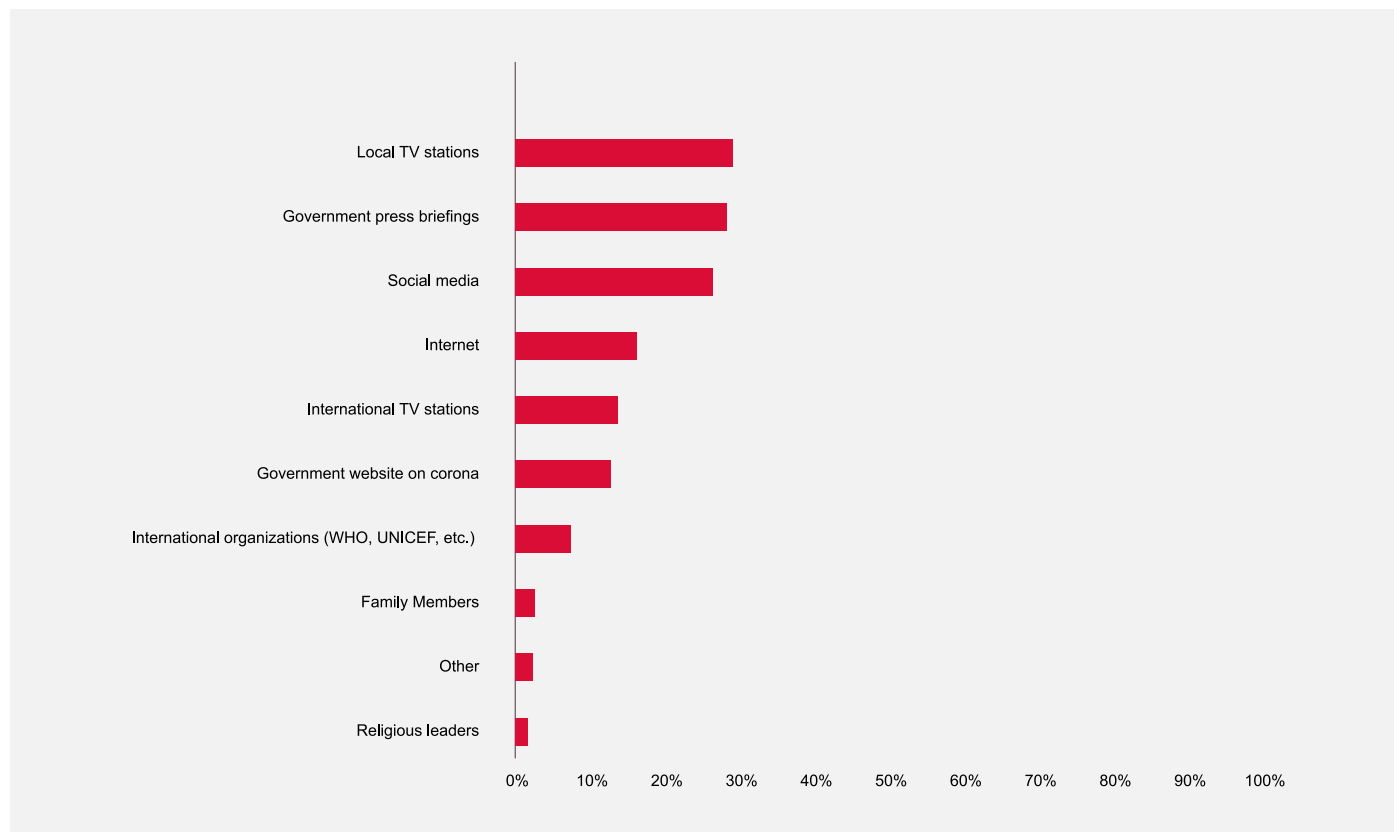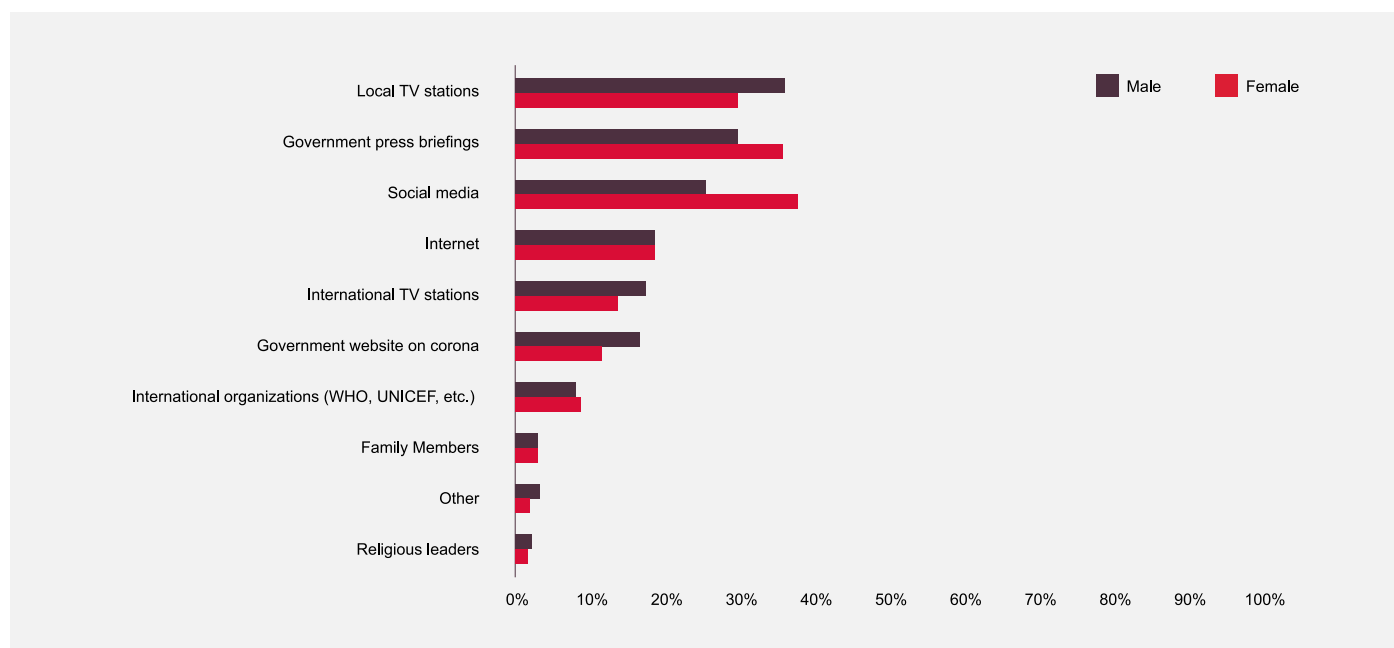

Figure 15: What are your primary sources of information around the corona crisis?

Some differences did exist when disaggregating by gender, however. Most notably, as shown in Figure 16 below, males relied slightly more on Local TV stations, while females relied slightly more on government press briefings and social media.

Figure 16: What are your primary sources of information around the corona crisis?

When disaggregated by age-groups, it was noticeable that respondents belonging to the 50-59 and 60+ age groups most frequently chose Local TV stations as a primary source of information. Respondents aged

40-49 relied more frequently on Government press briefings, 30-39 years old relied on social media more frequently, while 18-29 years old relied almost equally on Social Media, local tv stations, and Government press briefings.
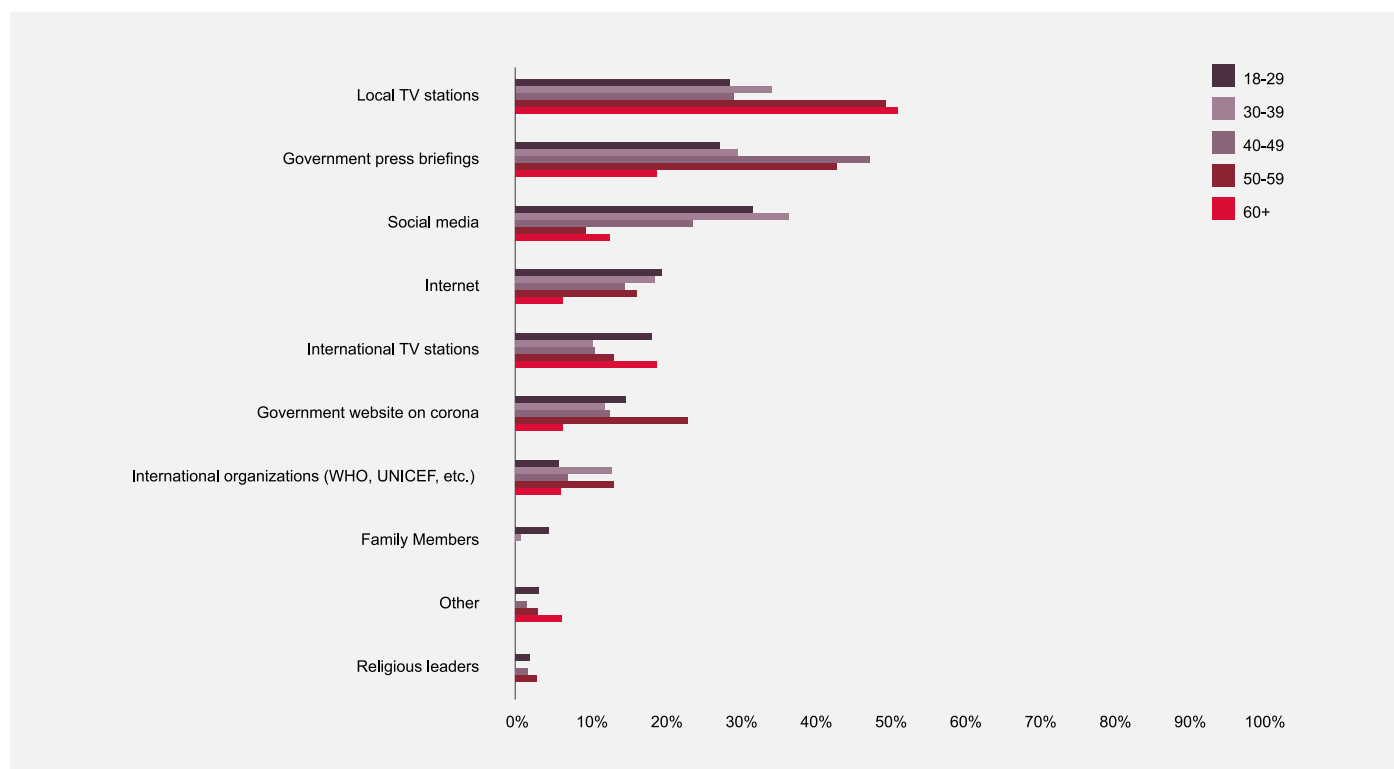
Figure 17: What are your primary sources of information around the corona crisis?

The poll also asked respondents about how much they trusted each of these sources, as shown in Figure 18 below. Interestingly, while they were almost equally prioritised in terms of reliance as a news source, government press briefings were reported to be more trusted than local TV stations (by an approximate margin of 18%)
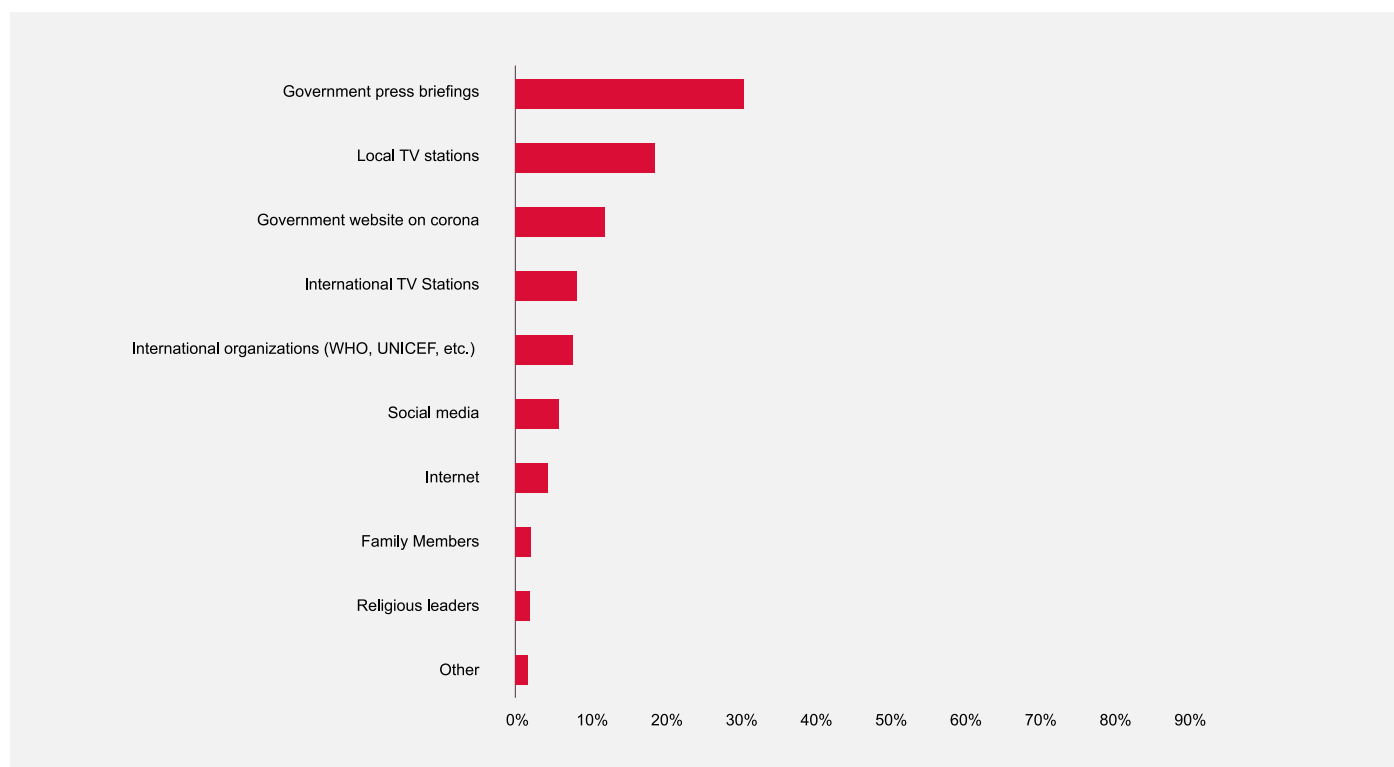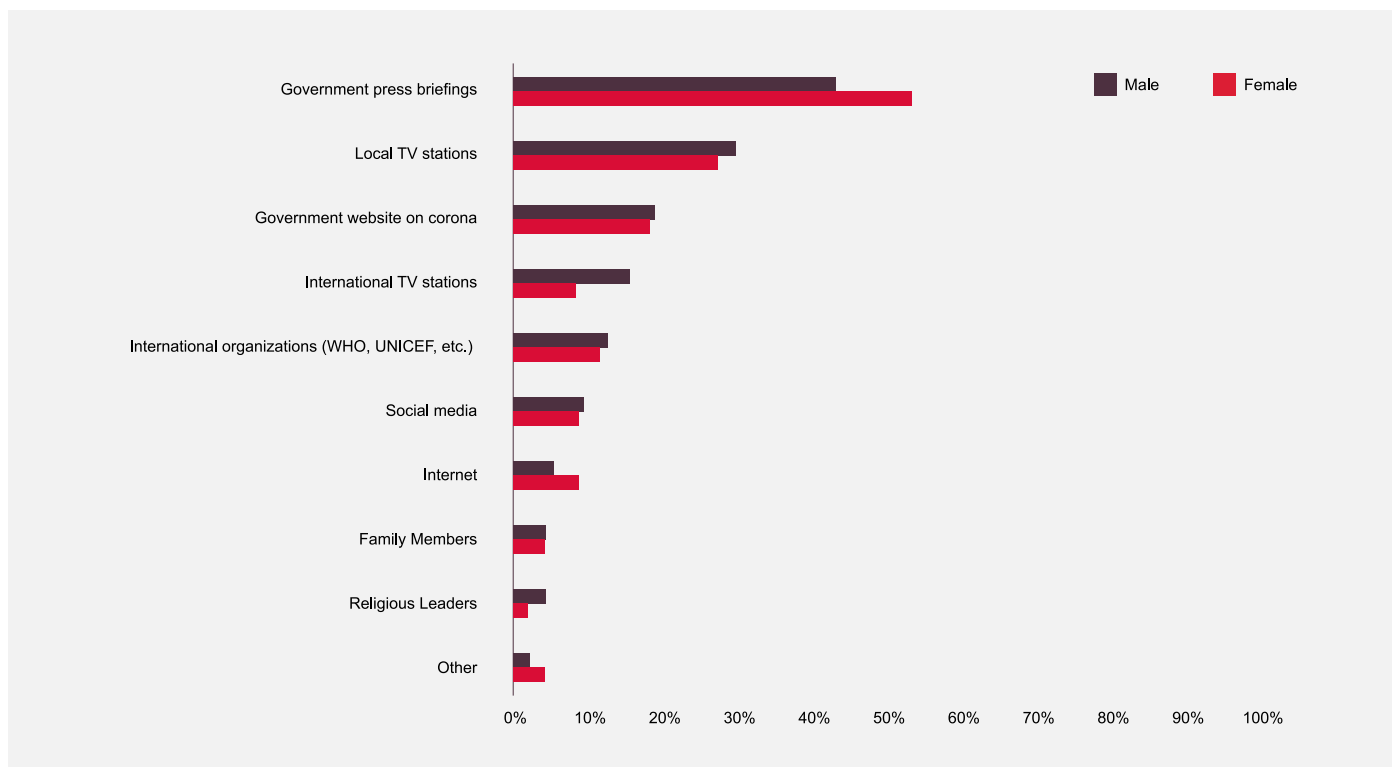

Figure 18: What are your primary sources of information around the corona crisis?

Figure 19: What are your primary sources of information around the corona crisis?

Government briefings were also noticeably more trusted by females than they were by males. While males had more trust in international TV stations.

Interestingly, when comparing the sources respondents rely on for information on the virus with the level of trust they gave such sources, some discrepancies can be noticed as illustrated below in Figure 20. Notably, government briefings were trusted 15% more than they were relied on. Perhaps most notably though, while 29% noted that they rely on social media as a source for information, only 9% of respondents noted that they trust it. This could point towards the saturation of social media as a medium with COVID-19 related information and misinformation. It could also justify why government briefings were relied on slightly lower than they were trusted since they happen once a day, a meager amount when compared to the volume of information circulated constantly on social media.
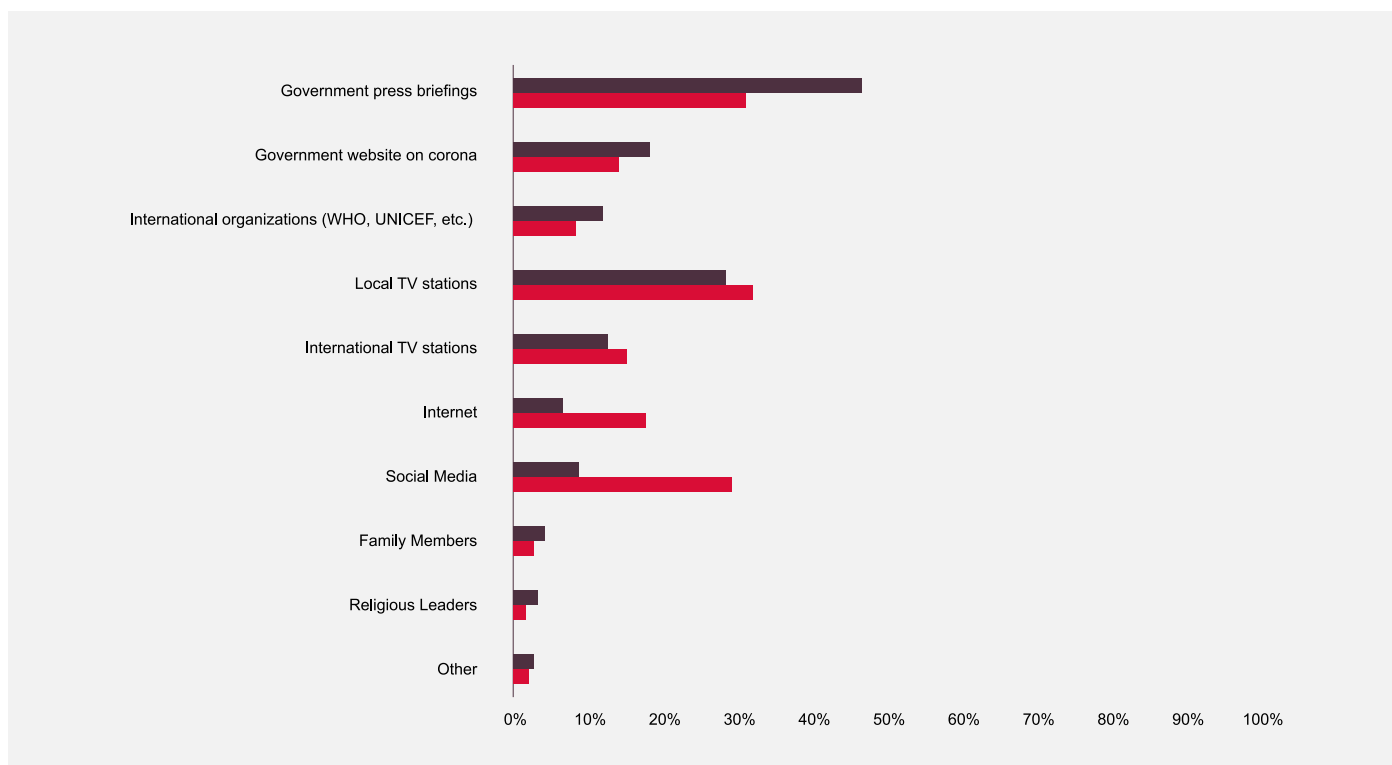
**Figure 20: Trusted Sources of Information (Eggplant) Vs. Relied on Sources of Information (Crimson)**

NEEDS
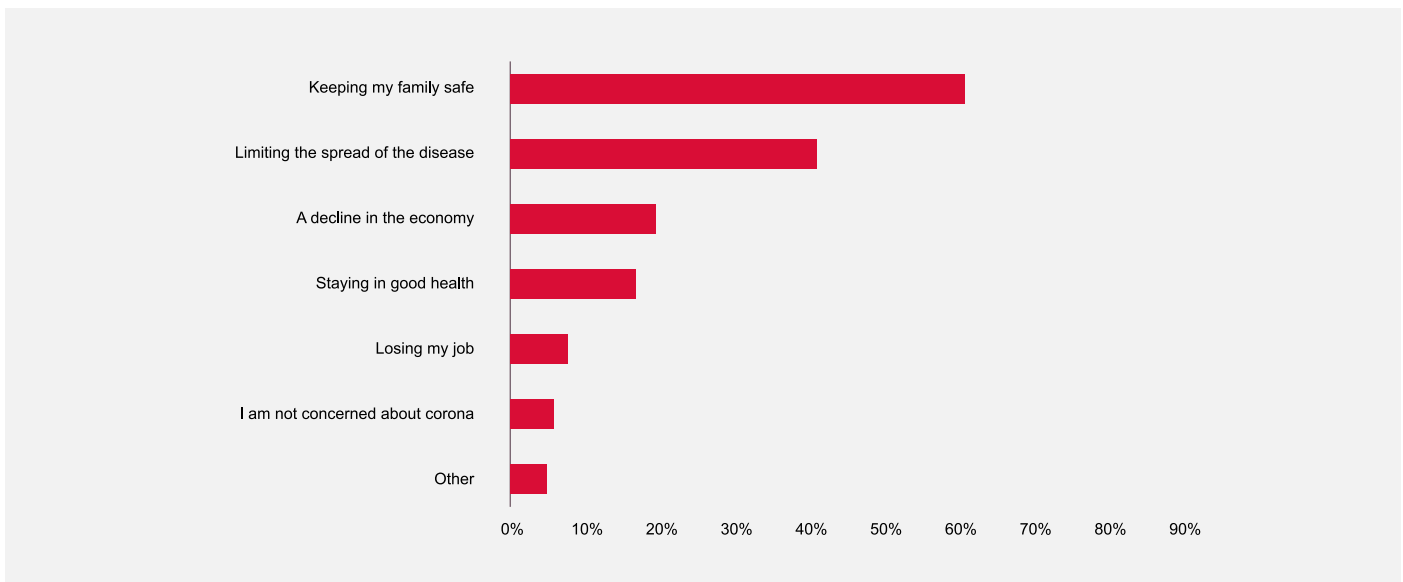
Figure 21: During the Corona Outbreak, I'm Most Concerned About:

When asked to rank the two issues that cause them most concern during the outbreak of the virus, the two most selected options were: "Keeping my family safe", and "Limiting the spread of the disease". When disaggregated by gender, very minor changes can be noticed as illustrated in Figure 22 below. Most notably, Females prioritised limiting the spread of the disease 9% more than males did.
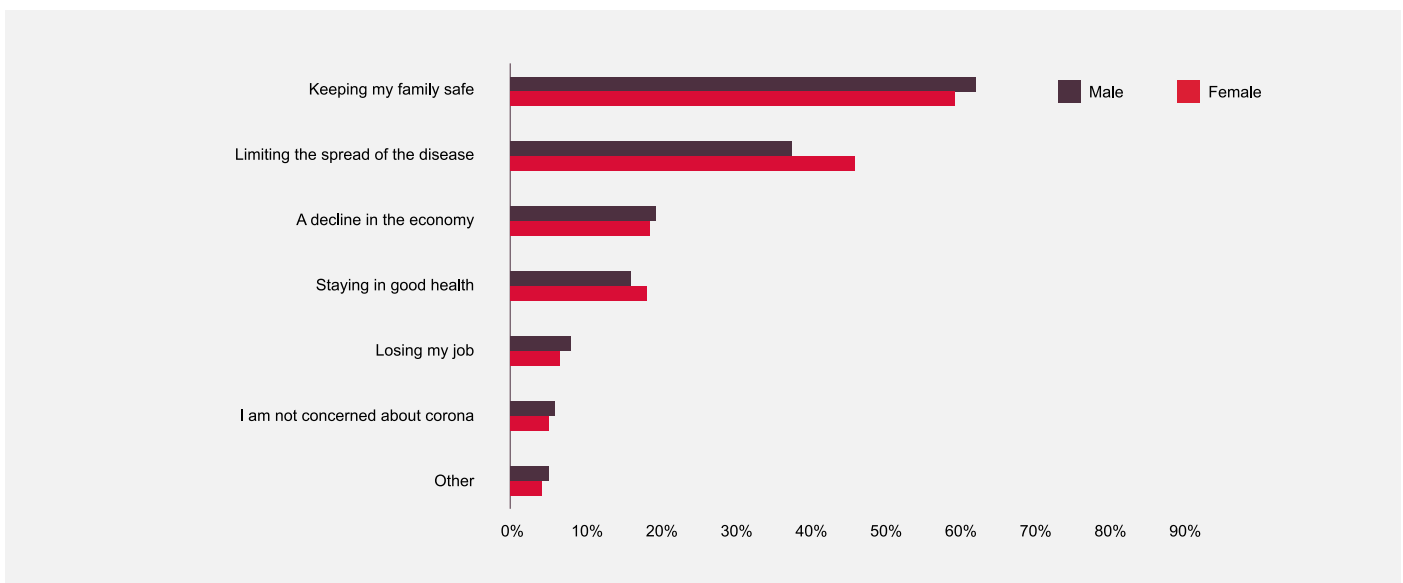
**Figure 22: During the Corona Outbreak, I'm most concerned about:**

Age-group disaggregation reveals other insights as well. Keeping the family safe was selected more frequently by respondents between the age of 50-59. While limiting the spread of the disease was most prioritised by respondents over the age of 60. "I'm not concerned about the virus at all" was most frequently prioritised by 18-29 years olds.
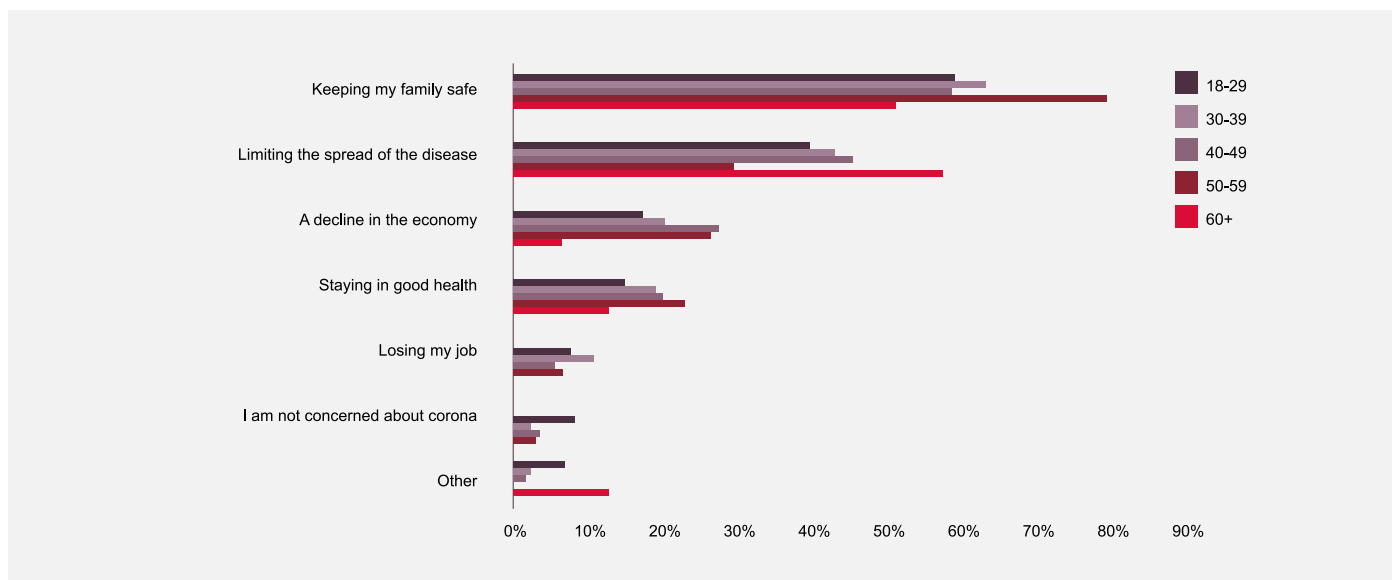
Figure 23: During the Corona Outbreak, I'm most concerned about:

As illustrated in Figure 24 below, respondents were also asked about their top three concerns that pertain specifically to the curfew that was put in place by the government on March 21st. The highest prioritised concern (55%) was: "Making sure my family has food and medicine we need". Uncertainty about the duration of the curfew was the second most selected concern which was chosen by 43% of respondents.
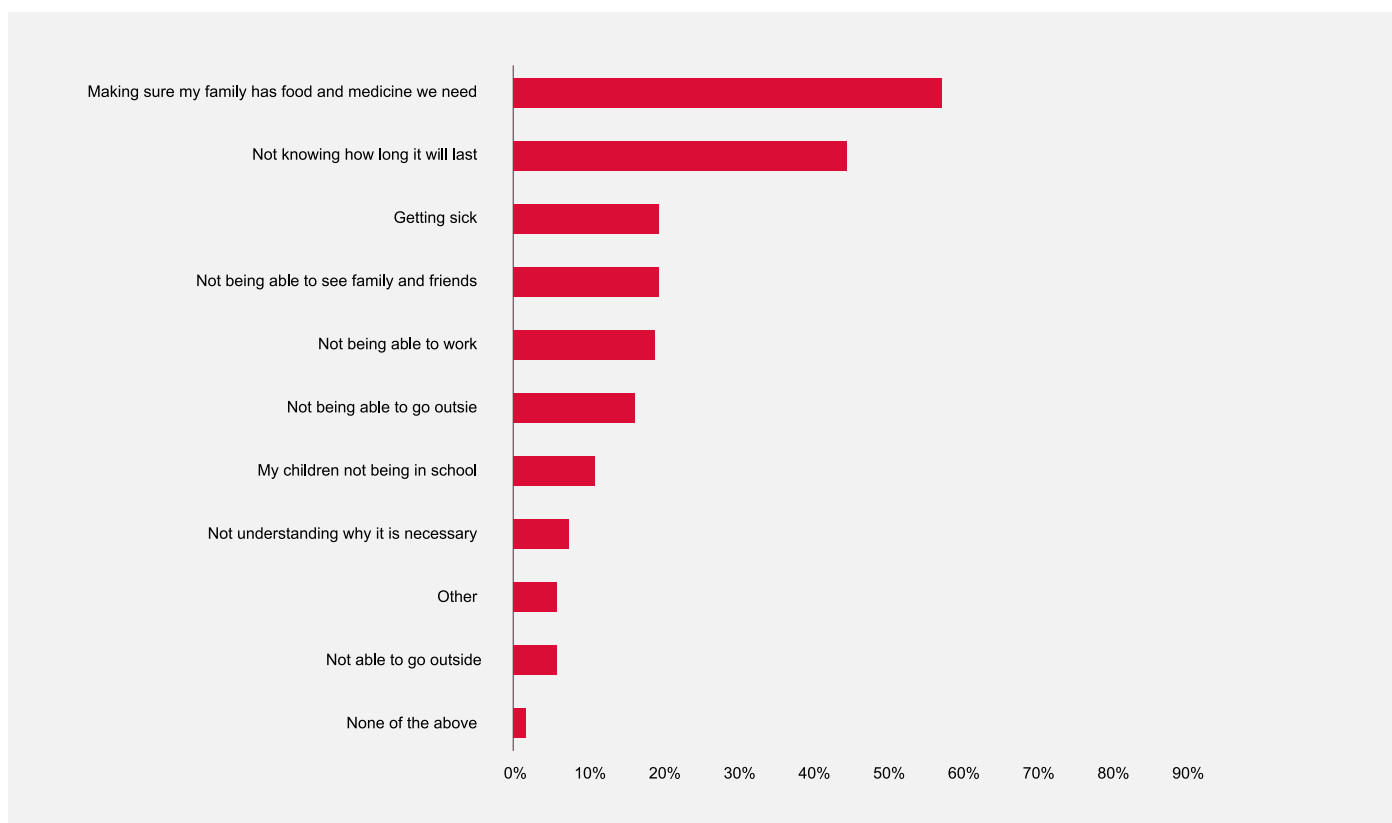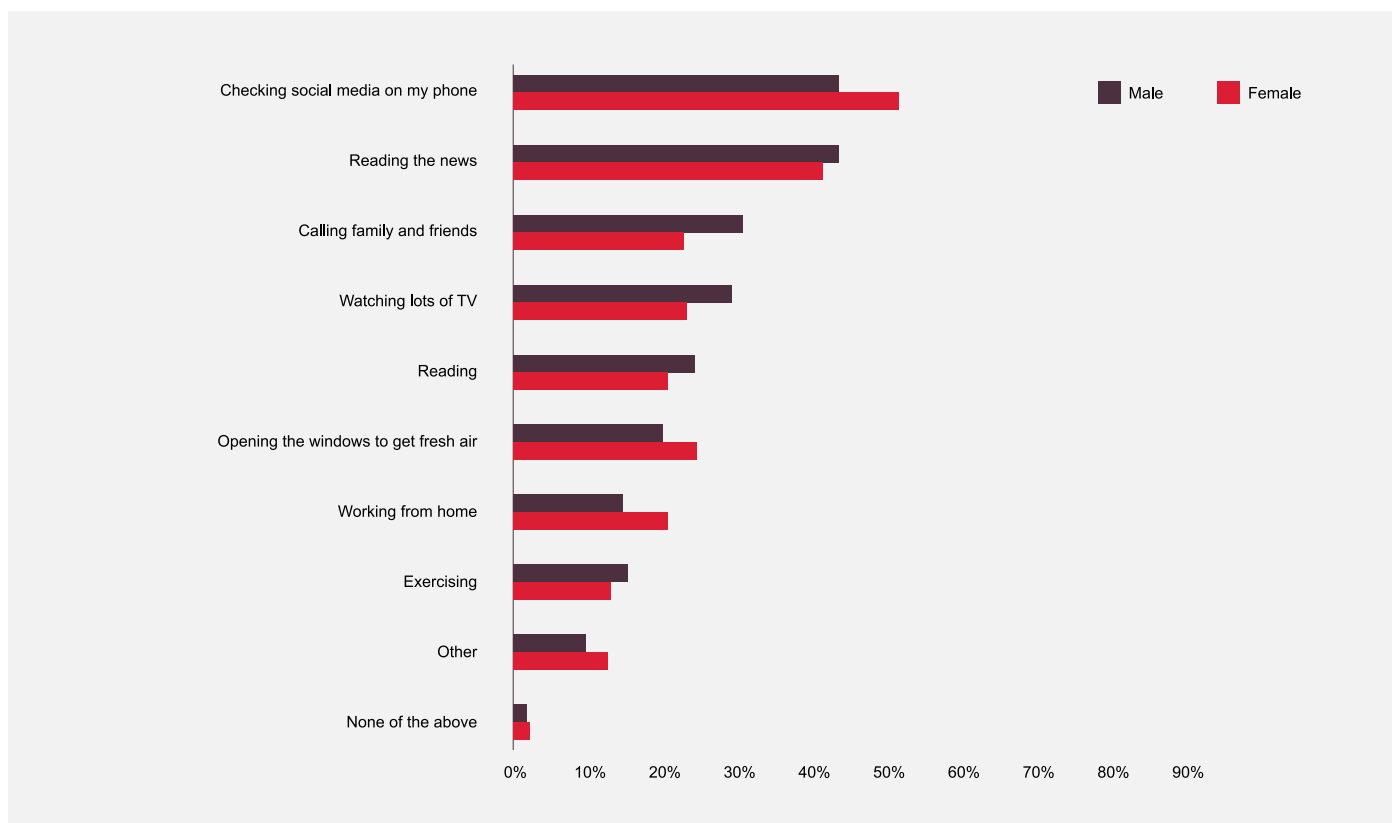

Figure 24: During the Curfew I am most concerned about

Additional trends can be noticed when disaggregating by age groups as well as shown in Figure 25 below. 60+ year olds were the age group that prioritised having food and medicine for the family the least. Inability to work and not knowing how long it will last were mostly chosen by 18-29 and 50-59 year olds.
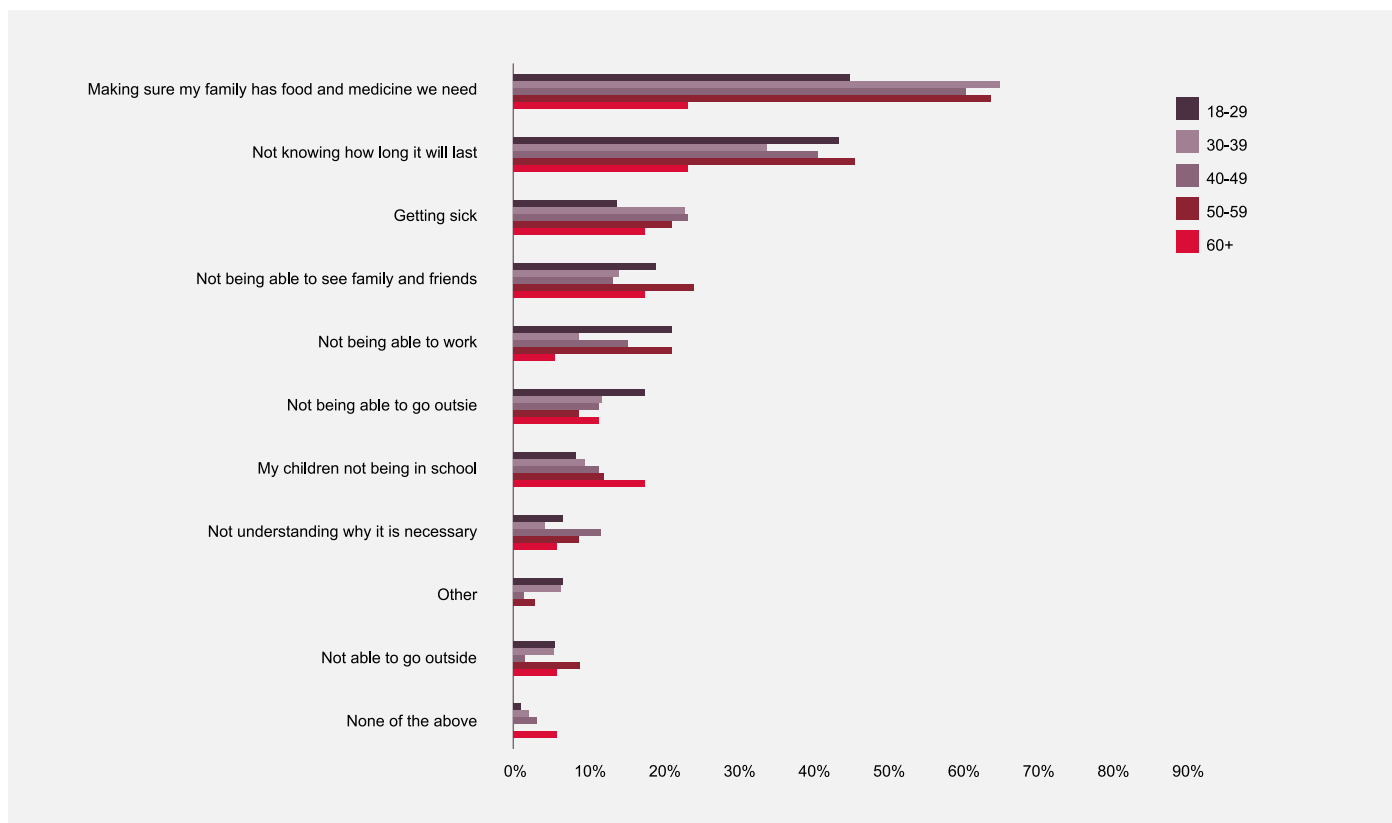
Figure 25: During the Curfew I am most concerned about

The most frequently chosen way to spend time during curfew was checking social media (52%), and reading the news (47%). Female respondents chose the social media options more frequently than males. Males reported watching TV and calling friends and family more frequently than females. 23% of females work from home when compared to 16% of males.


**Figure 26: Which of the following activities are you doing during the curfew?**

FEARS

When asked about how concerned they were about contracting COVD-19, the majority of respondents who were not at all concerned or relatively unconcerned made up 49% of responses while respondents who indicated they were relatively or extremely concerned made up an approximate 35% of respondents. More worrying however was that the difference between the two extremes was a minor one (7%).
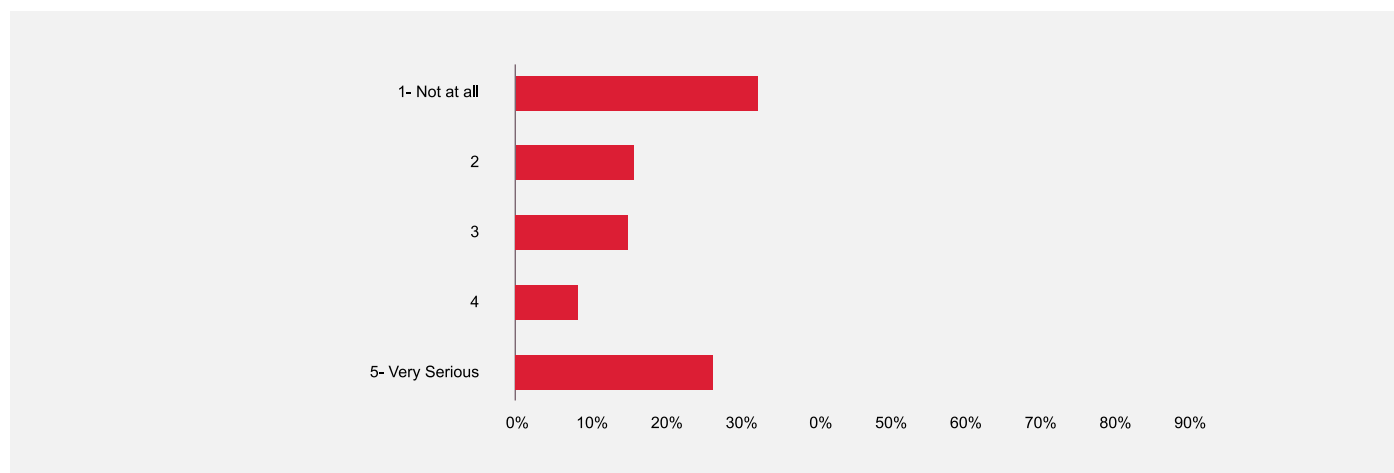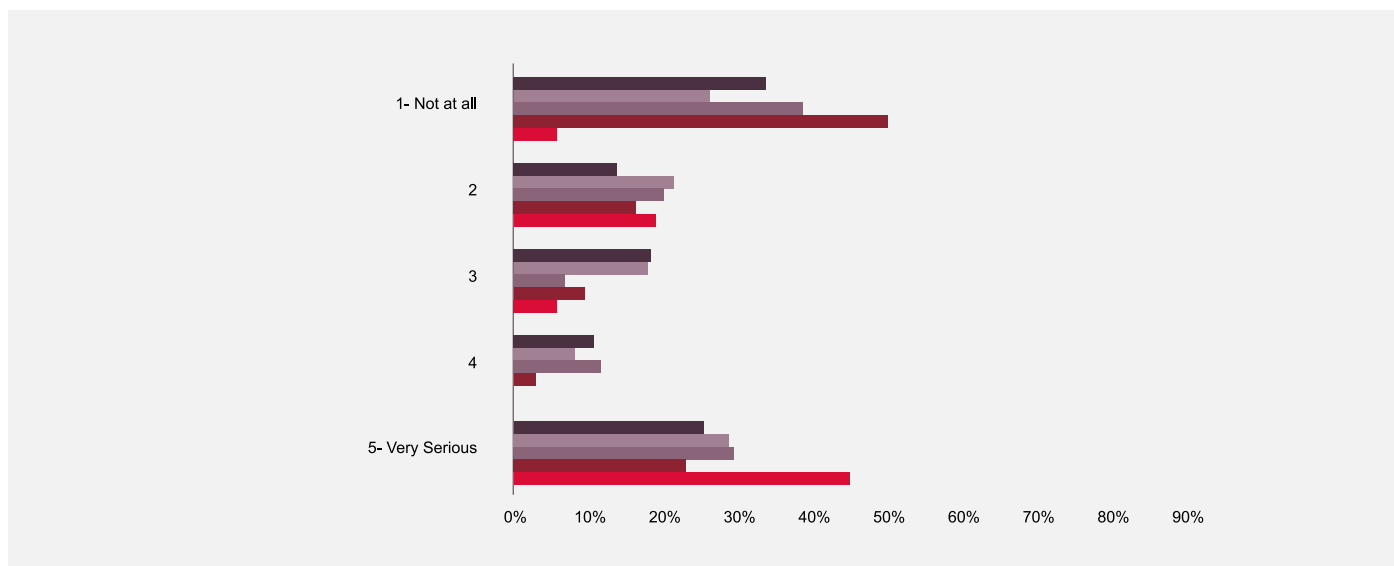

Figure 27: On a scale of 1 to 5, how concerned are you that you will be infected with the coronavirus?

Males indicated they were not at all concerned more often than females did, while females indicated they were extremely concerned more than males did.
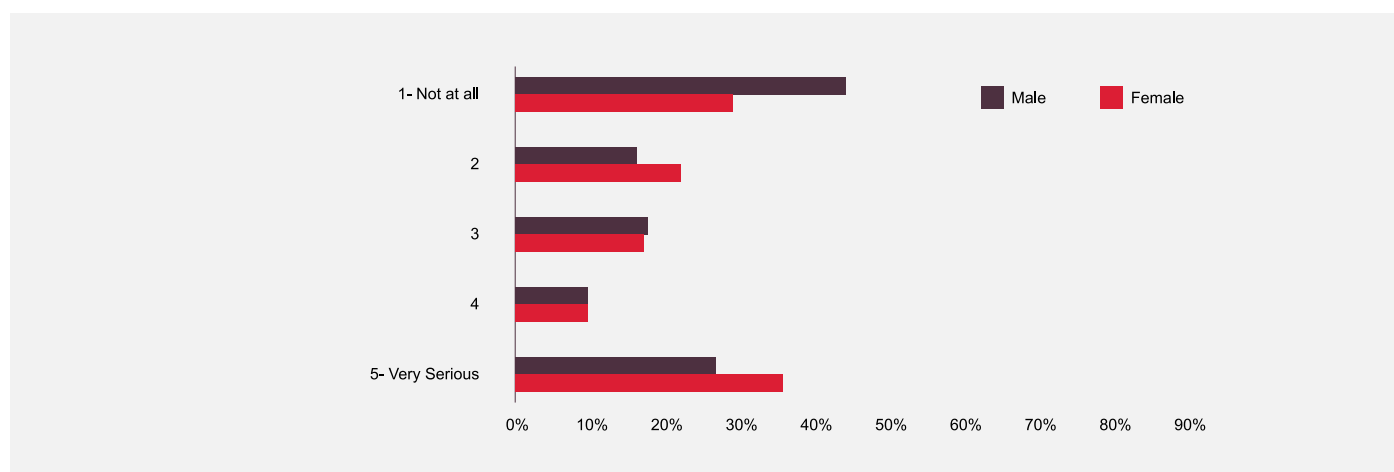

Figure 28: On a scale of 1 to 5, how concerned are you that you will be infected with the coronavirus?

Amongst age groups, 60+ year olds noted they were extremely concerned about contracting the disease more than other age groups. While 50-59 years old noted they were not at all concerned more often than other age groups.

Figure 29: On a scale of 1 to 5, how concerned are you that you will be infected with the coronavirus?

Respondents were also asked about how likely they thought they are to contract COVID, here, we can see that overall reported likelihood of contracting the disease is relatively low as 60% noted they're either not at all likely, or only somewhat likely to contract it.
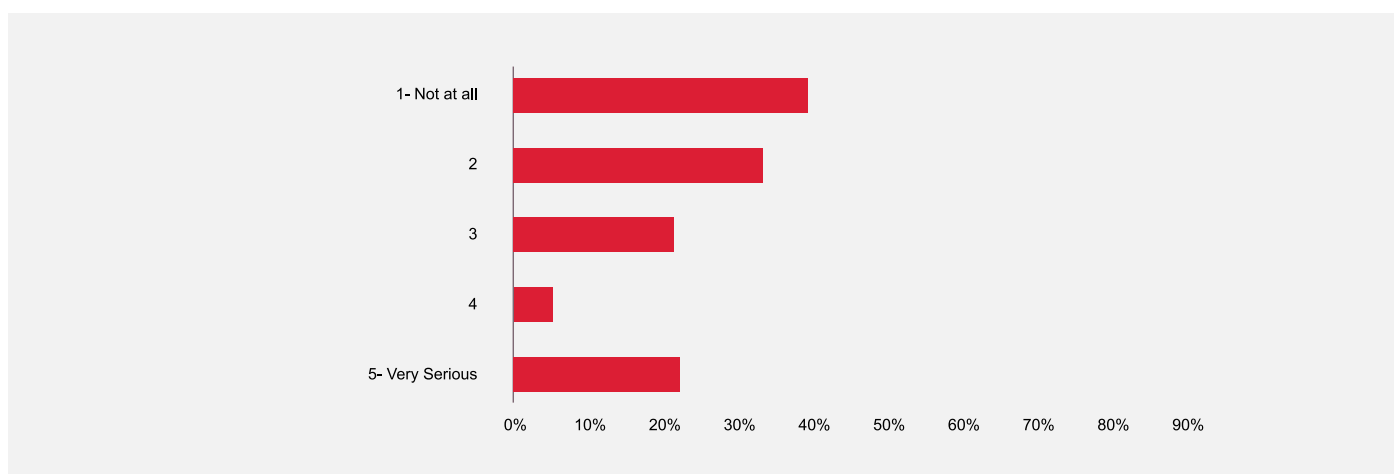
Figure 30: On a scale of 1 to 5, how likely do you think it is that you will be infected with the coronavirus?