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Victimisation, violence perpetration, and attitudes towards violence among boys and girls from Barbados and Grenada

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VICTIMISATION, VIOLENCE PERPETRATION, AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS VIOLENCE AMONG BOYS AND GIRLS FROM BARBADOS AND GRENADA

Daniel Boduszek, Agata Debowska, Ena Trotman Jemmott,
Hazel Da Breo, Dominic Willmott, Nicole Sherretts, & Adele D Jones

NONE
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Preventing Domestic Violence



University of
HUDDERSFIELD
Inspiring tomorrow's professionals



Victimisation, violence perpetration, and attitudes towards violence among boys and girls from Barbados and Grenada

A brief survey report

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NOTES ON AUTHORS

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QRM-TU

Quantitative Research Methods Training Unit

Survey design, staff training, and all quantitative analyses included in the current report were provided by the **Quantitative Research Methods Training Unit** (QRM-TU). The QRM-TU is located at the University of Huddersfield and directed by Professor Daniel Boduszek. The Unit is devoted to the development and application of advanced quantitative methods and modelling methodologies to diverse issues and topics in health and social sciences.

The focus of the QRM-TU is on designing survey studies, experiments, and quasi-experiments, as well as analysing data using advanced statistics, such as Propensity Score Analysis and Latent Variable Modelling. Both groups of techniques are rapidly becoming an integral part of mainstream statistics and are currently used for analysing complicated data sets in different subject areas. Latent variable models have a wide range of applications, including the area of child maltreatment, where latent class modelling is increasingly used to examine patterns of co-occurrence between different forms of abuse. However, many of these techniques are still underutilised in practice, partly due to lack of awareness and available training in these advanced statistical methods.

The Quantitative Research Methods Training Unit (QRM-TU) offers consultancy services and series of training sessions, which aim to develop the knowledge, understanding, and skills necessary to specify, test, and interpret latent variable statistical models and propensity score matching techniques.

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The Social Work Unit, Faculty of Social Sciences, UWI, Barbados
The Sweet Water Foundation, Grenada
UN Women Multi-Country Office for the Caribbean, Barbados

LIST OF ACRONYMS

BPW	Business and Professional Women's Club of Barbados
CADRES	Caribbean Development Research Services
CAN	Child abuse and neglect
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CSA	Child sexual abuse
d	Cohen's d (effect size statistic)
GBV	Gender-based violence
GBPV	Gender-based physical violence
GDP	Gross domestic product
GNI	Gross national income
GNOW	Grenada National Organization of Women
HDI	Human Development Index
HDR	Human Development Report
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IRBC	Immigration and Refuge Board of Canada
M	Mean (average score)
N	Number of participants
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
p	Probability
QRM-TU	Quantitative Research Methods Training Unit
SD	Standard deviation
U	Mann-Whitney U statistic
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
WHO	World Health Organization
WMH	World Mental Health

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Interpersonal violence is widespread in the Eastern Caribbean, which may be a remnant of the violent colonisation history noted in the region. Although official statistics on the occurrence of interpersonal violence are collected in Barbados and Grenada, such acts tend to be under-reported. As such, the aim of this project was to gain a better insight into the prevalence of violence victimisation and violence perpetration, as well as the level of acceptance of interpersonal violence, including gender-based violence (GBV), among girls and boys from Barbados and Grenada. **To overcome the problem of under-reporting and to understand how violence is perceived from the children's perspective**, the current study used self-report, anonymous survey methodology.

Specific Objectives

- (1) To assess the prevalence of exposure to violence in the family (including verbal violence, violence against animals, non-interpersonal violence, physical violence towards family members, and serious violence threat) among children from Barbados and Grenada.
- (2) To examine the prevalence of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse in and outside the family among boys and girls.
- (3) To explore girls' and boys' perception of gender-based physical violence, attitudes towards male physical domestic violence, acceptance of social norms regarding physical violence against girls, as well as general beliefs about violence.
- (4) To investigate the prevalence of violent and bullying behaviour among boys and girls.

Participants

The study was carried out among 1378 children and adolescents from Barbados ($n = 908$) and Grenada ($n = 470$). To accurately measure violence perpetrated *against* and *by* children, it was crucial to select a sample of young people that most closely approximates the age at which the violence is occurring. Since conducting a structured self-report survey among very young children would be practically and ethically inappropriate, respondents aged between 9 and 17 years were asked about their experiences. To reduce the chance of recall bias (i.e., the tendency of people to forget, not report, or inaccurately report events that occurred a long time ago), the sample did not include youths aged 18 years or older. The sample consisted of 662 boys (M age = 13.02 years, $SD = 2.16$) and 689 girls (M age = 12.95 years, $SD = 2.19$). Barbadian youths were recruited from six primary schools, five secondary schools, and one youth offender centre. Grenadian youngsters were recruited from four primary schools, four secondary schools, and one youth offender centre.

Results

- Fifty two per cent of participating children in Barbados and almost 60% of children in Grenada were exposed to family verbal violence directed towards their mothers or siblings.
- Girls in both countries were more likely to observe verbal violence in the family than boys.

- Approximately 26% of children in Barbados and 47% of children in Grenada observed someone in their family being violent towards pets.
- More than 35% of children in Barbados and 33% of children in Grenada observed non-interpersonal violence (i.e., violence directed against property, such as breaking or destroying something on purpose) perpetrated by someone in their family.
- Boys in both countries, compared with girls, were more likely to have observed non-interpersonal violence in the family.
- Nearly 30% of children in Barbados and approximately 40% in Grenada were exposed to physical violence in the family.
- Almost 19% of children in Barbados and approximately 25% in Grenada were exposed to serious violent threat made by a family member and directed against their mother or siblings.
- Nearly 28% of the Barbadian sample and almost 38% of the Grenadian sample reported having experienced physical abuse in the family.
- Barbadian boys were more likely to experience physical abuse in the family in comparison with Barbadian girls.
- Almost 35% of youths in Barbados and almost 41% in Grenada indicated having experienced emotional abuse in the family.
- In Grenada, emotional abuse in the family was more common among girls than boys.
- In excess of 9% of youths from Barbados and almost 13% from Grenada admitted having experienced sexual abuse in the family.
- Boys in both countries were more likely to report having experienced sexual abuse in the family compared with girls.
- Nearly 38% of the Barbadian sample and almost half of all Grenadian children indicated that they had experienced physical abuse outside the family.
- In Barbados, boys were more likely to experience physical abuse outside the family than girls.
- Nearly 60% of youths in Barbados and almost 70% in Grenada reported having experienced emotional abuse outside the family.
- Grenadian girls reported more experiences of emotional abuse outside the family than boys.

- More than 13% of participating youngsters from Barbados and more than 18% from Grenada admitted having experienced sexual abuse outside the family.
- Sexual abuse outside the family was more common among Barbadian boys than girls.
- More than 56% of Barbadian children and nearly 66% of Grenadian children indicated agreement with the statement that most boys hit their girlfriends. Girls were more likely to agree with the statement than boys.
- Nearly 51% of youngsters from Barbados and nearly 62% of youngsters from Grenada thought that most husbands hit their wives. Girls were more likely than boys to think this is the case.
- Over 57% of children from Barbados and nearly 53% of children from Grenada indicated agreement with the statement that most girls hit their boyfriends. Boys, compared with girls, were more likely to agree with this statement.
- Over 43% of children from Barbados and nearly 43% of children from Grenada indicated agreement with the statement that most wives hit their husbands. Boys were more likely to agree with this statement than girls.
- Boys from Barbados and Grenada, compared with girls from the two countries, were more accepting of male physical domestic violence, social norms regarding physical violence against girls, as well as use of violence in general.
- Boys from both countries were more likely to engage in violent and bullying behaviour than girls.

Recommendations

- Empower children through age appropriate educational programmes, focusing on explaining children's rights, what constitutes abuse, and how and to whom such experiences can be reported. Since a child abuse and neglect (CAN) case is most likely to be investigated when a child self-reports abuse, such educational programmes are crucial to child protection efforts.
- Support parents who are at an increased risk of using physical and emotional violence against their children, through appropriate workshops concentrating on improving their parenting skills, equipping them with non-violent discipline techniques, and offering a holistic approach to family functioning.
- Professionals who have contact with children should be trained at entry and service levels to recognise signs of abuse. This appears especially important in Grenada, where professionals are legally mandated to report suspected abuse.

- Although there are media campaigns in both countries aimed at all adults in the society which seek to raise the awareness of the frequency and unacceptability of child maltreatment, as well as challenge social norms which condone violence against children, the effectiveness of these campaigns needs to be evaluated and they need to be strengthened.
- Children with aggressive tendencies should be recognised as early as possible. Training for childcare professionals in recognising problem behaviour which may continue into adolescence should be provided.
- Programmes for youths, with a particular focus on boys, are needed to challenge their violence-accepting attitudes and provide a socially acceptable outlet for aggression. In this context, it may be beneficial to consider the potential benefits of prosocial video games, which scaffold children's experience and challenge pro-violence attitudes using narrative and audio-visual content.
- Future research should aim to (a) further explore children's experiences of child abuse and neglect, (b) inquire into barriers and enablers to recognising and reporting suspected child abuse among professionals who come into contact with children, and (c) explore parents' attitudes towards using physical and emotional violence towards their own children, and identify those at an increased risk of using such tactics.

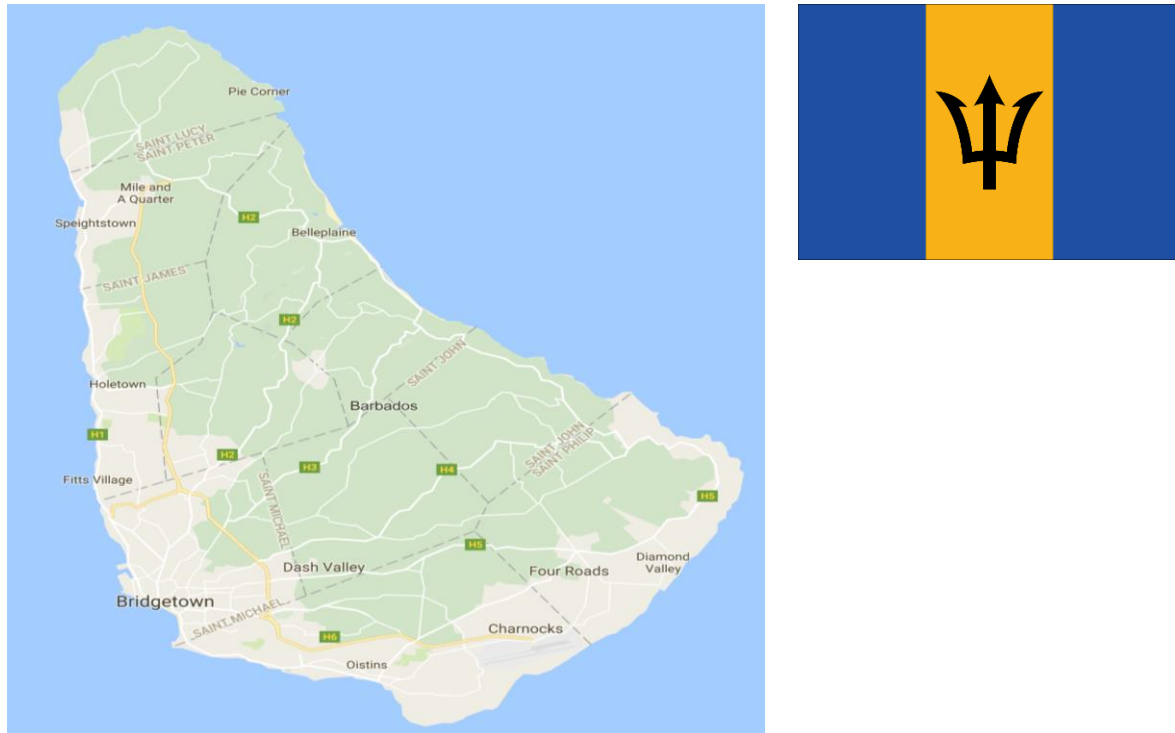
1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 Country Profiles

Barbados

Barbados is an island in the North Atlantic Ocean, located at 13°10' north of the equator and 59°32' west of the Prime Meridian. It is the most easterly isle of the Caribbean, with a land size of 166 sq miles (430 sq km).

Figure 1.1 *Map and flag of Barbados*



Source: Google maps

The country's population has been estimated at 291,495 (July 2016), which makes Barbados the most densely populated nation in the Eastern Caribbean. Approximately one-third of its inhabitants live in urban areas and 92.4% are of African descent. The following is a breakdown of the population by age (Central Intelligence Agency [CIA], 2017a):

- 0 – 14 years:** 18.13% (male – 26,421; female – 26,434)
- 15 – 24 years:** 13.03% (male – 18,888; female – 19,083)
- 25 – 54 years:** 44.35% (male – 64,430; female – 54,842)
- 55 – 64 years:** 13.18% (male – 18,036; female – 20,396)
- 65 years and over:** 11.31% (male – 13,216; female – 17,749)

In 2015, Barbados had a Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.795, and was listed in the high human development category (54th rank out of 188 countries and territories). Life expectancy at birth for the total population in 2016 was estimated at 75.3 years (males: 73 years; females: 77.7 years). Mean years of schooling (i.e., years that a person aged 25 years or older has spent in formal education) in 2015 was 10.5, whereas the expected years of schooling (i.e., total years of schooling that a child of school entrance age can expect to receive) was 15.3.

The majority of the population (75.6%) declare to be Christian (CIA, 2017a; Human Development Report [HDR], 2016a).

Barbados is a parliamentary democracy under a constitutional monarchy and an independent nation of the British Commonwealth (CIA, 2017a). With the nation's gross national income [GNI] per capita amounting to \$14,952 in 2015 (HDR, 2016a), the World Bank (2017) classified Barbados as a high-income economy. Barbados is also the wealthiest and most economically developed state in the Eastern Caribbean. Traditionally, most of the country's income came from sugarcane cultivation, but there has been a recent increase in tourism, construction, financial services, and exports of goods and services. In 2016, services constituted 85.5% of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP). Approximately 11% of Barbadians were unemployed in 2016 (CIA, 2017a). Despite the fact that girls perform better at school than boys (as evidenced by grades) and more women than men have university education, female employees represent the majority of individuals earning less than \$500 per week. Poverty is concentrated among households headed by women (with the rate of poverty of 19.4% for such households, compared with 11.5% among men-headed households), which may be partly affected by the very high rate of adolescent pregnancy (40.8 in 2012) and the lack of laws which would mandate equal pay for equal work for the two sexes (Caribbean Development Bank [CDB], 2016; US Department of State, 2017a).

Grenada

Grenada is an Eastern Caribbean country comprising a main island (called Grenada) and smaller surrounding islands, covering 133 sq miles (344 sq km) of land. It is located between the Caribbean Sea and Atlantic Ocean, northwest of Trinidad and Tobago and northeast of Venezuela. Grenada's geographical coordinates are 12°07' N, 61°40' W.

Figure 1.2 Map and flag of Grenada



Source: Google maps

Grenada has a population of 111,219 people (July 2016 est.), 82.4% of whom are of African descent. Most Grenadians live in the capital of St. George's and along the coast. In 2016, the following population age structure was reported for Grenada (CIA, 2017b):

0 – 14 years: 24.15% (male – 13,935; female – 12,928)
15 – 24 years: 15.55% (male – 8,609; female – 8,684)
25 – 54 years: 40.36% (male – 23,001; female – 21,891)
55 – 64 years: 10.10% (male – 5,753; female – 5,476)
65 years and over: 9.84% (male – 5,041; female – 5,901)

In 2015, Grenada had an HDI of 0.754, which positioned the country at 70 out of 188 countries and territories and put it in the high human development category. Life expectancy at birth for the total population in 2016 was estimated at 74.3 years (males: 71.7 years; females: 77.1 years). Mean years of schooling among Grenadians in 2015 was 8.6, whereas expected years of schooling – 15.8. As in Barbados, most inhabitants (86.4%) declare to be Christian (CIA, 2017b; HDR, 2016b).

Grenada is a parliamentary democracy and a member of the Commonwealth (CIA, 2017b). In 2015, the GNI per capita reported for Grenada was \$11,502 (HDR, 2016b), placing the country in the World Bank's (2017) upper middle income economy category. The nation's GNI per capita increased by 68.9% between 1990 and 2015, suggesting a significant economic growth. Grenada's economy relies predominantly on tourism, and 76.6% of its GDP comes from the services sector (CIA, 2017b). In 2013, as many as 34% of Grenadians were unemployed. Unemployment rate for women was 40%, whereas for young women – 63% (Ministry of Social Development and Housing, 2014). Moreover, Grenada has the highest number of women-headed households among the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) member countries. Although law mandates equal pay for equal work for the two sexes, women-headed households tend to be the poorest in the country, with 44% of female heads being classed in the three lowest consumption quintiles, compared with 18.6% of male heads (CDB, 2014; US Department of State, 2017b).

1.2 Gender-based Violence (GBV) against Women and Girls: Prevalence and Prevention

GBV, especially physical and sexual violence, affects a large number of women and girls in the Caribbean, with the risk of exposure to GBV being among the highest in the world (Jeremiah, Gamache, & Hegamin-Younger, 2013; Jeremiah, Quinn, & Alexis, 2017; Reid, Reddock, & Nickening, 2014). Le Franc, Samms-Vaughan, Hambleton, Fox, and Brown (2008), in a population-based study among 3,401 respondents from three Caribbean nations (Barbados, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago), demonstrated that 73.4% of female participants had experienced violence victimisation, which was predominantly perpetrated by a relationship partner (66.7%). The study also revealed that general interpersonal violence and partner violence did not commonly co-occur. This suggests that violence against women and girls may have its specific aetiology, such as unequal power relations between men and women in the region.

Barbados and Grenada have ratified major international as well as regional human rights agreements addressing gender inequality, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Inter-American Convention on the

Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women. Both countries have also developed and implemented national Domestic Violence Acts. In Barbados, the 1992 Domestic Violence (Protection Orders) Act was amended to the Domestic Violence (Protection Orders) (Amendment) Act, 2016. This now defines domestic violence, makes greater provision for the safety of victims of domestic violence and introduces perpetrators' accountability. In 2010 Grenada's Domestic Violence Act No. 19 of 2010 was enacted and the National Domestic violence and Sexual Abuse Protocol in 2011. Additional legislation for protection against sexual violence, the Sexual Offences Act 1992, exists in Barbados. Rape, including spousal rape, is criminalised in both countries, and the maximum penalty is life imprisonment in Barbados and flogging or 30 years' imprisonment in Grenada. The implementation of anti-abuse legal developments, however, is significantly obstructed by slow response time to emergency calls, insensitive interviewing methods used by the police, insufficient provision of services for victims/survivors, inconsistent training of staff dealing with GBV, and overlooking important evidence by the authorities. Additionally, sexual harassment remains a serious concern in both countries, which may be partly due to the lack of criminal penalties for such acts (CDB, 2014, 2016; Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada [IRBC], 2013, 2017; US Department of State, 2017a, b). Arguably though, in the case of Barbados, sexual harassment may fall under the "any other means" clause [Domestic Violence (Protection Orders) (Amendment) Act, 2016].

Barbados

In Barbados, research conducted by the Caribbean Development Research Services (CADRES) (2014) on behalf of UNICEF's Office for the Eastern Caribbean Area, found that 76% of the 600 participating adults saw domestic violence as a major problem, and 36% knew someone who experienced domestic violence by a spouse/partner. The magnitude of the problem is reflected in two recent reports, which stated that violence against women remains widespread in Barbados (Freedom House, 2015; US Department of State, 2017a). The exact incidence of GBV, including domestic violence, remains unknown, due to inadequate mechanisms of collecting and evaluating data as well as under-reporting by victims/survivors who may fear retaliation from the perpetrator (IRBC, 2017). According to data presented in the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Report (2016), however, the problem of insufficient data collection on domestic violence was addressed in 2013 when a special police unit, the Family Conflict Intervention Unit, was formed. The unit recorded 220 cases of domestic violence between June and December 2013, and a further 423 cases in 2014. Additionally, between 2003 and 2015, 62 deaths were linked to domestic violence (IRBC, 2017).

In a bid to reduce the incidence of domestic violence and increase reporting rates, the Barbadian Welfare Department offers counselling services to victims/survivors and perpetrators. There are also training programmes for clergy who counsel those involved in domestic violence, as well as domestic violence awareness programmes for school children. A non-governmental organisation, Business and Professional Women's Club of Barbados (BPW), operated a crisis centre and, with financial support from the government, a shelter for victims of GBV and human trafficking (US Department of State, 2017a).

Grenada

Instances of GBV in Grenada are recorded by the Royal Grenada Police Force. The data suggests that most victims of GBV are women and girls, but boys and men also experience this form of violence (CDB, 2014). In 2014, there were 257 documented cases (184 females) and in 2015, there were 696 reported cases of domestic violence, 479 of which involved a female victim. Although the number of reports increase every year, domestic violence is still underreported in Grenada (US Department of State, 2017b). Further, between 2005 and 2009, seven out of 73 murders in the country were domestic homicides by an intimate partner against a female victim. In the period 2000-2010, there were 1,630 cases of sexual offences recorded, including indecent assault (718), defilement of a female (496), and rape (317). In response to the rising incidence of GBV against women, and in particular GBV perpetrated by an intimate partner which is rarely reported to the authorities, the Ministry of Social Development and the Grenada National Organization of Women (GNOW) commissioned the development of the National Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse Protocol for Grenada, which was brought into force in May 2011 (CDB, 2014). To support victims of GBV, in 1999 the Government also opened Cedars Home - a temporary shelter for those affected by such violence. Whilst at the establishment, victims are provided with support services, such as personal counselling, childcare, as well as conflict resolution and life skills training. Nonetheless, services for victims are scarce and there is no economic support for the poorest clients upon leaving the shelter (CADRES, 2009).

Concluding remarks

In considering that GBV is widespread in Barbados and Grenada, a multi-sectoral approach to prevention and empowerment of women has been recommended, including school-based programmes addressing acceptance of violence against women, rehabilitation of perpetrators, as well as introduction of policies leading to greater economic independence of women (CDB, 2014). It has also been recognised that, in order to effectively tackle and eradicate GBV, violence-supportive attitudes need to be challenged (World Health Organization [WHO], 2009). Extant research suggests that such attitudes may be affected by childhood experiences of victimisation (Debowska, Boduszek, & Willmott, 2017). To date, however, studies exploring Barbadians and Grenadians' attitudes towards GBV are scarce, which impedes the development of appropriate prevention and intervention strategies.

1.3 Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN): Prevalence and Prevention

CAN is a serious public health issue worldwide, including the Eastern Caribbean (UNICEF, 2006; WHO, 2016). Despite its low visibility, domestic violence, including child maltreatment, is considered to be the most prevalent form of violence in the Caribbean and Latin America (Imbusch, 2011). Considered from a socio-historical perspective, high incidence of CAN in the Caribbean can be affected by the violent colonisation history and slavery, as well as insufficient political and legal frameworks which would protect the most vulnerable members of society (Jeremiah *et al.*, 2017; Jones, Trotman Jemmott, Maharaj, & Da Breo, 2014). Barbados and Grenada, however, recognise the problem of child maltreatment and in 1990 both nations ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which

obliges States to take all necessary steps to ensure that children's rights are protected and respected.

Barbados

In Barbados, the Child Care Board, which is a Statutory Corporation established by the Child Care Board Act 1969 (amended 1981), has a mandate for the care and protection of children, including the provision of child care centres for children and their guardians in need of protection, counselling services, foster care, as well as coordinating and managing reports of CAN. Other legislation which make provision for the care and protection of children include the Adoption Act 1955 (amended 1981), the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act 1904 (amended 1981), the Protection of Children Act 1990, the Sexual Offences Act 1992, and the Domestic Violence (Protection Orders) Act 1992 (amended 2016) (UNICEF, 2013, 2015a). In response to the findings of a study conducted by UNICEF/UNIFEM in collaboration with the University of Huddersfield (Jones & Trotman Jemmott, 2009), the National Action Plan (NAP) for addressing child sexual abuse in Barbados was developed. Child pornography is illegal. The Child Care Board advocates stricter child protection regulations, but problems with staffing and finances have made it difficult to respond appropriately to each report of children's rights violation (US Department of State, 2017a).

Between 2008 and 2013, 3519 cases of child abuse involving 4868 children were recorded by the Child Care Board. The most common form of maltreatment was neglect ($n = 1471$ cases; 41.8%), followed by physical abuse ($n = 861$; 24.5%). There were 836 recorded cases (23.8% of all cases) of child sexual abuse (CSA); 86.5% of CSA perpetrators were known to the victim. With 342 (10%) recorded cases, emotional abuse was the least common form of maltreatment. Of the total number of cases, 57.6% ($n = 2803$) involved girls. As many as 88.6% ($n = 782$) of CSA victims were female (UNICEF, 2015a). However, it was noted that CSA cases in which a girl is victimised, are more rigorously investigated compared with those involving male victims, which may discourage boys from reporting CSA. Among the challenges to prevent CSA, insufficient focus on gender dimensions is frequently highlighted (UNICEF, 2013). In a self-report survey conducted by the National Task Force on Crime Prevention (2010), 9% of primary school children aged between 7 and 11 years admitted to having been touched in their private parts without their permission. Further, even though there have been attempts to reduce corporal punishment in schools, physical discipline is still widely used and accepted, both for children at home and in schools. Indeed, most cases of physical abuse are reported to stem from physical punishment (CADRES, 2014). A survey conducted by the Barbados Statistical Service (2014) demonstrated that 75% of children aged 2-14 years were subject to at least one type of violent punishment by a household member in the 30 days preceding the survey. Severe physical punishment was experienced by 6% of children. Given the widespread societal acceptance of physical violence against children, the incidence of physical abuse may be significantly under-reported.

Grenada

The Child Welfare Authority of Grenada was created in 1998 to ensure efficient care and protection of Grenadian children (as described in the Child Protection Act 17, 1998). In the first years of its existence, the Authority was not mandated to protect children from abuse.

This changed in 2010 when the Child Protection and Adoption Act was implemented and the Authority was established with the sole responsibility for child protection, adoption, and fostering in the country. In 2011, the Child Welfare Authority was replaced by Child Protection Authority. This change resulted in a more effective recording and management of CAN cases (UNICEF, 2015b).

According to official data on child maltreatment collated by the Child Protection Authority, there were 1503 cases of child victimisation during the period 2009-2013, and the number of reported cases increased annually. Physical abuse was the most prevalent type of maltreatment ($n = 524$; 34.9%), followed closely by neglect/abandonment ($n = 497$; 33.1%) and sexual abuse ($n = 438$; 29.1%). As for emotional abuse, there were only 44 (2.9%) reported cases during the five-year period. In 2009, 2010, and 2012, no reports of emotional abuse were made (UNICEF, 2015b). Trends which render girls more susceptible to sexual abuse include incest and involvement with older men who provide financial support. Boys of deprived socio-economic background were found to be among the most vulnerable victims of sexual abuse. Boys are, however, also unlikely to report this type of victimisation due to fear of being branded homosexual. In 2013, the National Child Abuse Reporting Protocol, which made reporting by professionals mandatory, was introduced. Categories of mandatory reporters include, among others, social workers, teachers, parents, and law enforcement officers. It has been noted, however, that the mandatory provision of the law is not effectively enforced (UNICEF, 2013).

Abused children in Grenada who are subject to relevant court orders are placed in a government-operated home or private foster homes. Abusers face penalties ranging from five to 15 years' imprisonment. The maximum penalty for rape of a child younger than 14 is 30 years' imprisonment, whereas rape of a victim aged between 14 and 16 carries a sentence of up to 15 years in prison. Sale and trafficking of children for prostitution as well as child pornography are also prohibited by the law (US State of Department, 2017b).

1.4 Youth Violence

Public health specialists identified child maltreatment as the most worrying manifestation of violence in the Caribbean, due to its serious and extensive long-term consequences, including behavioural problems and violence perpetration (Imbusch, 2011; World Bank, 2003). Indeed, youths exposed to violence at home and in the community, may grow to perceive violence as an effective conflict resolution strategy, resulting in a cyclical pattern of abusive behaviour (Debowska & Boduszek, 2017; Debowska, Willmott, Boduszek, & Jones, 2017).

Barbados

Violence among children and adolescents in Barbados appears to be widespread. In a report on juveniles in Barbados, the National Task Force on Crime Prevention (2010) indicated that 21% of primary school children and 43% of secondary school children used force to get what they wanted from someone at school. Additionally, 50% of primary school children and 64% of secondary school students admitted to having been in a fist fight at school. As for more serious offences, 5% of primary school and 18% of secondary school children admitted to taking a weapon (other than a gun) to school in order to harm someone. Finally, 10% of primary school and 19% of secondary school students reported that they were a member of a gang. Marshall-Harris (2011), in a study looking at the effects of domestic violence on children

in Barbados, found that of the 274 juveniles brought before the District A Juvenile Court during February 2006 and July 2010, 79 were documented to come from violent families. Of the 79 youngsters, 19 were charged with violent crimes (such as assault and wounding). Barbadian children from violent families were also noted for frequently fighting at school, as well as being withdrawn and aggressive (CADRES, 2009).

In Barbados, the age of criminal responsibility is 11 years. Juvenile offenders up to the age of 16 years are tried in a Juvenile Court. Barbados established the Juvenile Liaison Scheme in 1983. It was designed to manage children between seven and 16 years old who engage in or are at risk of engaging in criminal activity. During the period 2011-2013, 669 children (mostly males) were referred to the scheme for general behavioural problems ($n = 473$) or involvement in criminal activity ($n = 196$), such as theft, assault, being armed with an offensive weapon, causing a disturbance, or wandering. Additionally, between 2011 and 2013, 386 youths were arrested. Most arrested juveniles were males, but the number of female arrests increased by 185% from 2011 to 2013. Key offences of children arrested included assault, burglary, causing a disturbance, wounding, theft, and serious bodily harm. Assault was the most common offence for both sexes (Sealy-Burke, 2015; UNICEF 2015b).

Grenada

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed concerns regarding efficient management of Grenadian juvenile offenders, who were often held in adult detention centres. The Committee noted a lack of adequate facilities and trained personnel to work with children in the juvenile justice system (Government of Grenada, 2007). Since then, Grenada has made significant progress in the development of its juvenile justice system. The Juvenile Justice Act 2012, establishing a judicial process for children accused of committing a crime, was passed. The legislation introduced the new age of criminal responsibility, which was raised from seven to 12 years. The Act also prohibited the sentences of life imprisonment and flogging or whipping, as well as indicated that the welfare and wellbeing of children should be of paramount importance (UNICEF, 2015b).

In the period 2009-2013, 1326 juvenile (individuals aged 9-17 years) arrests were made; 86% ($n = 1144$) of all arrests were males. The lowest number of arrests was recorded in 2009 (females $n = 28$; males $n = 86$) and the highest in 2011 (females $n = 95$; males $n = 280$). Key offences for arrest were stealing, housebreaking and stealing, causing harm, obscene language, assault, wounding, and drug related offences. Most offences were committed by adolescents aged 16 and 17 years, accounting for 27.9% ($n = 370$) and 67.9% ($n = 900$) of all arrests respectively. Further, between 2009 and 2013, 105 youths aged 17 years and under were detained at the Richmond Hill Prison, including 91 (86.7%) children on remand, 12 (11.4%) children who were convicted, and two (1.9%) children awaiting trial. Of the total population of children in custodial care, 94 (89.5%) were male and 11 (10.5%) were female (UNICEF, 2015b). In 2016, the Bacolet Juvenile Rehabilitation and Treatment Centre was opened as an alternative to sending young people who find themselves in trouble with the law to the Richmond Hill Prison.

1.5 Study Aim

As indicated above, violence against women and children as well as interpersonal violence in general appears to be widespread in Barbados and Grenada. The official statistics, however, do not reflect the magnitude of the problem, due to ineffective recording and under-reporting by victims/survivors. Therefore, the aim of this project was to build a better understanding of violence victimisation, violence perpetration, and attitudes towards violence among girls and boys in Barbados and Grenada, **as seen through the eyes of children**. Since research evidence in the area of child victimisation indicates that self-report surveys elicit more honest responses than face-to-face interviews (Rumble, Ramly, Nuryana, & Dunne, 2017), self-report, anonymous survey methodology was utilised in the current investigation.

Impact aim

The findings will provide crucial information regarding the prevalence of violence perpetrated *against* children and *by* children, as well as the levels of acceptance of various types of violence, including GBV, among children in Barbados and Grenada. It is envisaged that the results can inform future policy and practice and provide the evidence base for enhancing prevention and intervention strategies in the two countries, subsequently leading to safer, violence-free communities.

Specific objectives

1. To assess the prevalence of exposure to violence in the family (including verbal violence, violence against animals, non-interpersonal violence, physical violence towards family members, and serious violence threat) among Barbadian and Grenadian male and female youths.
2. To examine the prevalence of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse in and outside the family among boys and girls.
3. To explore girls' and boys' perception of gender-based physical violence, attitudes towards male physical domestic violence, acceptance of social norms regarding physical violence against girls, as well as general beliefs about violence.
4. To investigate the prevalence of violent and bullying behaviour among boys and girls.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Participants

The study was conducted among 1378 children and adolescents from two Eastern Caribbean countries – Barbados ($n = 908$) and Grenada ($n = 470$). In order to accurately measure violence perpetrated *against* and *by* children, it was imperative to select a sample of young people that most closely approximates the age at which the violence is occurring. Since conducting structured surveys among very young children would be both practically and ethically inappropriate, respondents 9 to 17 years of age were asked about their experiences. The sample did not include people 18 years or older in order to reduce the chance of recall bias (i.e., the tendency of people to forget, not report, or inaccurately report events that occurred a long time ago). As for gender distribution, there were 662 boys (M age = 13.02 years, $SD = 2.16$) and 689 girls (M age = 12.95 years, $SD = 2.19$) (for country details please see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1 *Sample gender distribution for Barbados and Grenada*

Gender	Barbados ($N = 908$) Frequency (%)	Grenada ($N = 470$) Frequency (%)
Male	385 (42.4%)	284 (60.4%)
Female	516 (56.8%)	181 (38.5%)
Missing data	7 (0.8%)	5 (1.1%)

Of the total sample, 74.8% of participants came from rural areas and 25.2% from urban areas of the two countries (for country details see Table 2.2).

Table 2.2 *Location distribution for Barbados and Grenada*

Location	Barbados Frequency (%)	Grenada Frequency (%)
Village	553 (68.4%)	402 (87.4%)
Town	256 (31.6%)	58 (12.6%)

Barbadian youths were recruited from six primary schools, five secondary schools, and one youth offender centre. Grenadian youngsters came from four primary schools, four secondary schools, and one youth offender centre (details presented in Table 2.3).

Table 2.3 *Sample distribution across recruitment sites for Barbados and Grenada*

School	Barbados ($N = 908$) Frequency (%)	Grenada ($N = 470$) Frequency (%)
Primary	260 (28.6%)	132 (28.1%)
Secondary	600 (66.1%)	318 (67.7%)
Youth offenders	48 (5.3%)	20 (4.2%)

Children were also asked about their perceived family financial situation (Question included in the survey: Do you think your family has enough money for the things it needs?). Responses are provided in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4 *Perceived family financial situation reported by children from Barbados and Grenada*

	Barbados Frequency (%)	Grenada Frequency (%)
There are times when my family doesn't have enough money for food or rent or things we need.	196 (23.2%)	167 (37.2%)
We have enough money to pay for what we need.	461 (54.6%)	221 (49.2%)
We have enough money to buy extra things.	187 (22.2%)	61 (13.6%)

2.2 Sample Size Calculation

The study sample was stratified by country (Barbados and Grenada), school level (primary, secondary, and youth offending centre), and gender. The total minimum sample required for this project was 1,094. Calculations were based on a 95% confidence interval and +/- 5% margin of error. The number of respondents was adjusted to account for a maximum 30% non-response rate due to refusals and unavailability.

2.3 Study Procedure

The same standardised procedures were used in each country. Local data collection recruitment and training, data collection procedures, and quality control were guided by the best practice guidelines for the conduct of survey research across cultures and countries outlined by the World Mental Health (WMH) Data Collection Coordination Centre (www.ccsgr.isr.umich.edu).

- 1) In Barbados, permission for conducting the project was granted by the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, and in Grenada – by the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development.
- 2) Ethical approval for the project was granted by the University of Huddersfield (UK) Ethical Board.
- 3) Participating establishments (primary and secondary schools, and youth offending centres) were purposively selected by the research team and Principals of all institutions agreed to take part.
- 4) The training session for all researchers covered the following topics: the purpose of the study, data collection methods and study design; sampling procedures and assignment of sampling areas; issues surrounding confidentiality; sensitivity towards study participants; children's rights; referral services and procedures; identification and appropriate management of adverse responses; data collector safety related matters; and human subjects research protection.
- 5) Printed self-reported anonymous surveys were delivered by local researchers to all selected institutions/schools and distributed opportunistically among participants (parental consent was gained prior to participation). Participation was voluntary and without any form of reward.
- 6) Data collection occurred in classroom settings and was monitored by local researchers and teachers.
- 7) Participating youngsters were provided with both a verbal and written summary of the informed consent, along with verbal instructions on how to complete the questionnaire. In addition, youths were informed verbally that they should not participate in the study

if they did not want to, and that they did not have to inform anyone of the specific reason for not participating.

- 8) All participants were provided with information about how to access support services in the event of distress, re-traumatisation, or the need to report concerns about risk of harm.
- 9) Upon completion, surveys were collected by a local researcher and participants were debriefed.

2.4 Survey Development

Defining the construct and context

After reviewing literature and consulting with local researchers and stakeholders, we articulated the constructs to be measured. Based on previous research, **exposure to violence in the family** was represented by five questions with four response options (1 = never, 2 = sometimes, 3 = often, 4 = almost always): (1) How often does anyone in your family hurt your mum or sister's/brother's feelings by calling them names, swearing, yelling, threatening them, or screaming at them? (2) How often does anyone in your family hurt or tried to hurt a pet in your home on purpose? (3) How often does anyone in your family break or destroy something on purpose, such as punching a wall, smashing a picture, or something similar? (4) How often does anyone in your family do something to hurt your mum's or sister's/brother's body, such as hitting them, punching them, kicking them, choking them, shoving them, or pulling their hair? (5) How often does anyone in your family threaten to use a knife, gun, or other object to hurt your mum or sister/brother?

Violence victimisation in the family was measured by the following three questions with four response options (1 = never, 2 = sometimes, 3 = often, 4 = almost always): (1) How often does an adult in your family do something to hurt your body, such as hitting you, kicking you, or beating you up? (2) How often does an adult in your family hurt your feelings by making fun of you, calling you names, threatening you, or saying things to make you feel bad? (3) How often does an adult in your family touch your private parts when you don't want them to, make you touch their private parts, or force you to do something sexual you don't want to?

Violence victimisation outside the family was measured by three questions: (1) How often does someone at school or in your community hurt you by grabbing, slapping, punching, or kicking you? (2) How often does someone at school or in your community hurt your feelings by making fun of you, calling you names, threatening you, or saying things to make you feel bad? (3) How often does someone who is not in your family, touch your private parts when you don't want them to, make you touch their private parts, or force you to do something sexual you don't want to?

Perception of gender based physical violence was measured by four statements with four response options (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree): (1) Most boys hit their girlfriends; (2) Most husbands hit their wives; (3) Most girls hit their boyfriends; (4) Most wives hit their husbands.

Attitudes towards male physical domestic violence was assessed using five items with four response options (1 = it's really wrong, 2 = it's sort of wrong, 3 = it's sort of OK, 4 = it's perfectly OK). Items were drawn from the Attitudes towards Domestic Violence Questionnaire (Fox & Gadd, 2012). The specific items were: (1) Do you think it is OK for a man to hit his girlfriend or wife if he says he is sorry afterwards? (2) Suppose a woman really embarrasses her boyfriend or husband, do you think it is OK for him to hit her? (3) Do you think it is OK for a man to hit his girlfriend or wife if he thinks she deserves it? (4) Suppose a woman hits her

boyfriend or husband, do you think it is wrong for him to hit her back? (5) Do you think it is OK for a man to hit his girlfriend or wife if he is drunk? Scores ranged from 5 to 20, with higher scores indicating increased acceptance of male domestic violence. In the current study, composite reliability for the measure was 0.76 among boys and 0.71 among girls.

Social norms regarding physical violence against girls were assessed with five items indexed on a 4-point Likert scale (1 = it's really wrong, 2 = it's sort of wrong, 3 = it's sort of OK, 4 = it's perfectly OK). Items were borrowed from Adolescent Social Norms regarding Violence and Gender – Prescribed Norms (Foshee, Linder, MacDougall, & Bangdiwala, 2001): (1) It is OK for a boy to hit his girlfriend if she did something to make him mad, (2) It is OK for a boy to hit his girlfriend if she insulted him in front of friends, (3) A girl who does things that could make her boyfriend jealous deserves to be hit, (4) Sometimes boys have to use violence to get their girlfriends under control, (5) It is OK for a boy to hit a girl if she hit him first. Scores ranged from 5 to 20, with higher scores indicating increased acceptance of violence against girls. Composite reliability for the scale was 0.82 for boys and 0.78 for girls.

General beliefs about violence were measured with four items indexed on a 4-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree). Items were borrowed from the Revised Normative Beliefs Measure – General belief questions (Huesmann & Guerra, 1997): (1) If you're angry, it is OK to say mean things to other people; (2) In general, it is OK to yell at others and say hurtful things; (3) It is usually OK to push or shove other people when they make you angry; (4) Sometimes a person doesn't have any choice but to fight. Scores ranged between 4 and 16. Higher scores indicate greater acceptance of the use of interpersonal violence. In the current sample, composite reliability for the total scale was 0.74 for both boys and girls.

Violent behaviour was measured by four statements with four response options (1 = never, 2 = 1-2 times, 3 = 3-4 times, 4 = 5 or more). Participants were asked to report their behaviour in the past 30 days: (1) I hit back when someone hit me first; (2) I encouraged others to fight; (3) I pushed, shoved, slapped, or kicked others; (4) I got into a physical fight because I was angry. Composite reliability for the scale was 0.74 for boys and 0.69 for girls.

Bullying behaviour was measured by four statements with four response options (1 = never, 2 = 1-2 times, 3 = 3-4 times, 4 = 5 or more). Participants were asked to report their behaviour in the past 30 days: (1) I teased others; (2) I said things about someone to make others laugh (made fun of someone); (3) I threatened to hit or hurt another person; (4) I called another person names. Composite reliability for the scale was 0.79 for boys and 0.78 for girls.

Cognitive testing and pilot test of the survey

The initial survey was administered to respondents representing the likely target population, in a manner reflecting the likely administration context. The pilot test revealed some minor problems with the survey via respondent feedback and observation. All comments were incorporated in the final survey (see constructs described above).

2.5 Data Entry, Data Management, and Data Analysis

Collected data was entered into SPSS 23 by research assistants. The training in data entry, data management and data analysis was facilitated by Quantitative Research Methods Training Unit (QRM-TU) based at the University of Huddersfield.

To explore differences between boys and girls on items included in exposure to violence in the family, violence victimisation in and outside the family, violence perpetration, and perception on gender-based physical violence, we used Mann-Whitney U tests. Usually, the

Mann-Whitney U test is used when the data is ordinal or when the assumptions of the t-test are not met.

To explore differences between boys and girls on total scores of attitudes towards male physical domestic violence, social norms regarding physical violence against girls, and general beliefs about violence, independent samples t-test was used. Cohen's d (effect size statistic) was used to indicate the standardised difference between two means. Cohen (1977) suggested that $d = 0.2$ be considered a small effect size, 0.5 represents a medium effect size, and 0.8 denotes a large effect size.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Exposure to Violence in the Family

Exposure to violence in the family was defined as an observation of any violence within the family without being a direct victim. In this survey, we asked children and adolescents about their exposure to verbal violence, violence against animals, non-interpersonal violence, physical violence against family members, and serious violent threat. We also investigated differences between boys and girls from both countries in their observations.

Fifty two per cent of participating children in Barbados and almost 60% in Grenada were exposed to verbal violence directed towards their mothers or siblings. Over 5% of children in Barbados and 7% in Grenada indicated to have observed such behaviour almost all the time (for details see Table 3.1). Mann-Whitney U test (Barbados $U = 2.268$, $p = 0.023$, girls M rank = 445.51, boys M rank = 409.95; Grenada $U = 2.529$, $p = 0.011$, girls M rank = 243.36, boys M rank = 214.13) shows that girls in both countries were significantly more likely to report observing verbal violence in the family. For details see Figures 3.1a and b.

Table 3.1 *Exposure to verbal violence (Question in the survey: How often has anyone in your family hurt your mum or sister's/brother's feelings by calling them names, swearing, yelling, threatening them, or screaming at them?)*

	Barbados Frequency (%)	Grenada Frequency (%)
Never	415 (48%)	184 (40.4%)
Sometimes	325 (37.6%)	203 (44.6%)
Often	78 (9%)	36 (7.9%)
Almost always	47 (5.4%)	32 (7%)

Figure 3.1a *Gender differences in exposure to verbal violence (Barbados)*

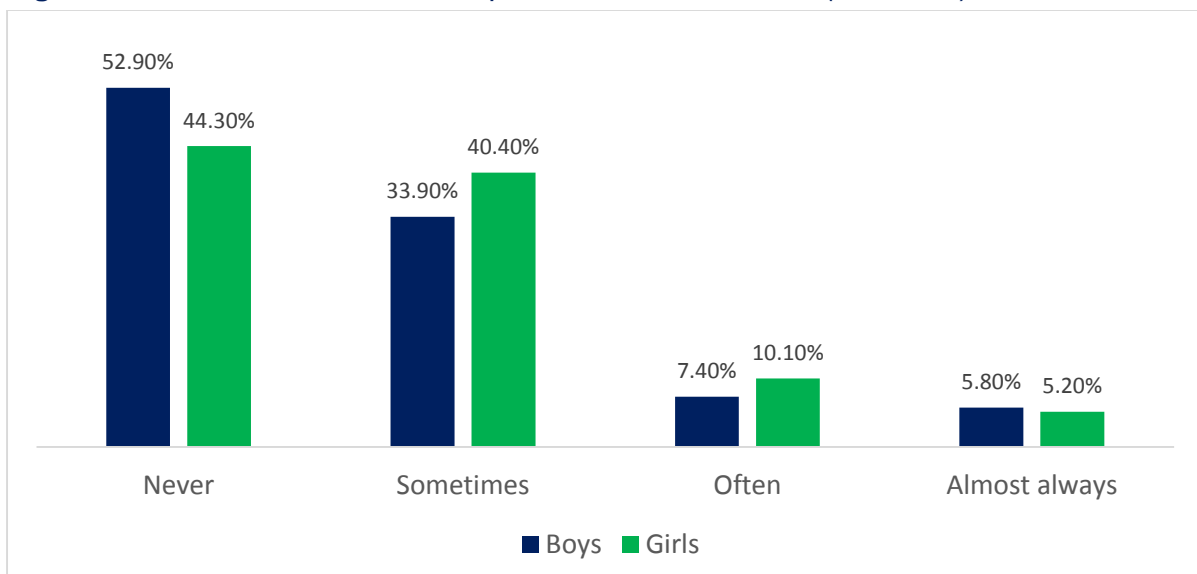
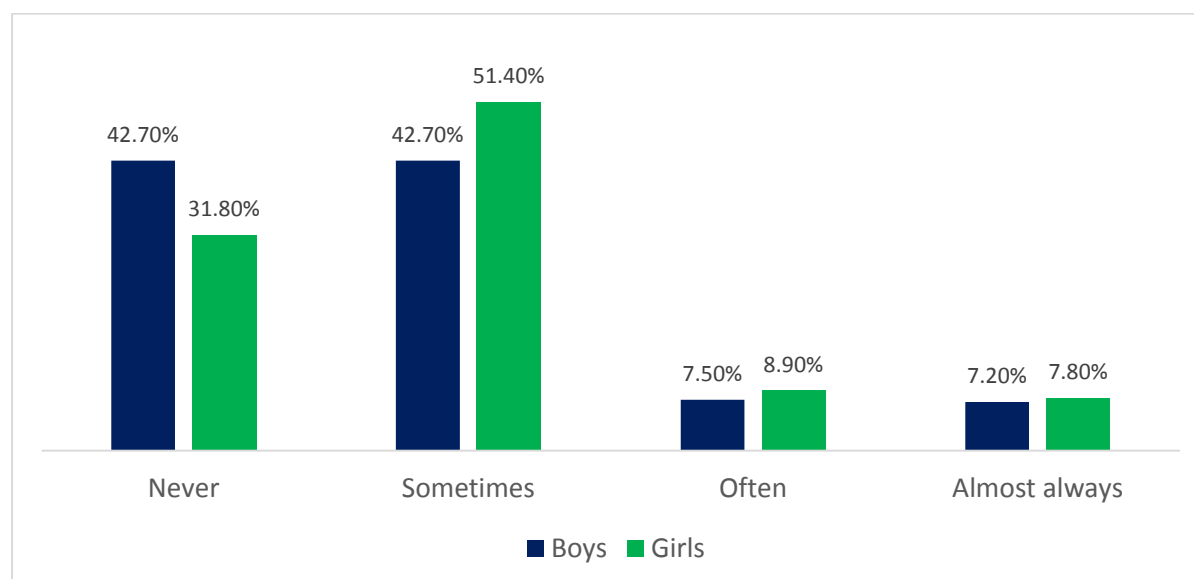


Figure 3.1b Gender differences in exposure to verbal violence (Grenada)



Almost 26% of children in Barbados and approximately 47% in Grenada observed violence directed towards pets, with 3.1% of children in Barbados and 6.2% in Grenada having been exposed to such behaviour very frequently (for details see Table 3.2). Mann-Whitney U test showed no significant differences between boys and girls in both countries (Barbados $U = 1.896$, $p = 0.065$, girls M rank = 419.85, boys M rank = 446.30; Grenada $U = 0.432$, $p = 0.666$; girls M rank = 219.52, boys M rank = 224.42). For details see Figures 3.2a and b.

Table 3.2 Exposure to violence against animals (Question in the survey: How often has anyone in your family hurt or tried to hurt a pet in your home on purpose?)

	Barbados Frequency (%)	Grenada Frequency (%)
Never	642 (74.1%)	237 (52.8%)
Sometimes	140 (16.2%)	132 (29.4%)
Often	57 (6.6%)	52 (11.6%)
Almost always	27 (3.1%)	28 (6.2%)

Figure 3.2a *Gender differences in exposure to violence against animals (Barbados)*

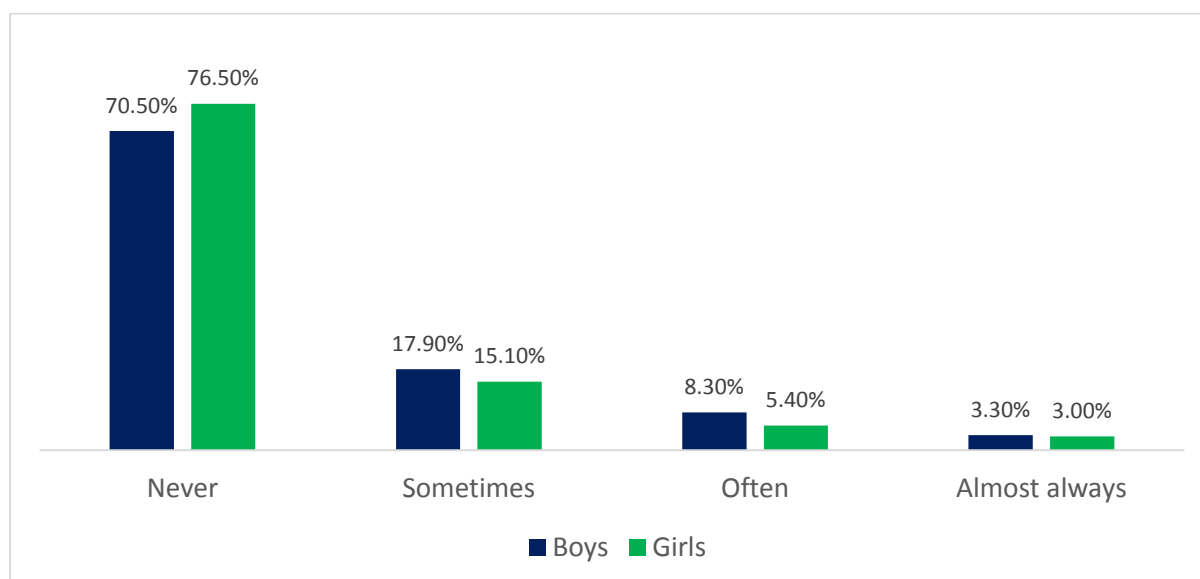
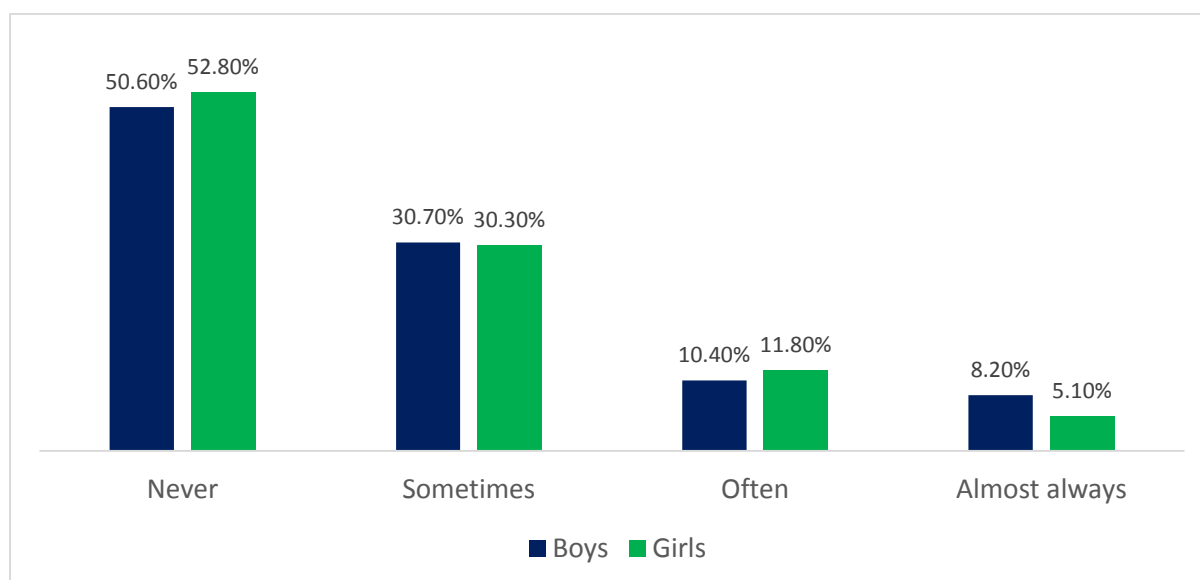


Figure 3.2b *Gender differences in exposure to violence against animals (Grenada)*



In excess of 35% of children in Barbados and 33% in Grenada observed non-interpersonal violence (i.e., violence directed against property, such as breaking or destroying something on purpose), with 4.4% of children in Barbados and 5.5% in Grenada having observed this behaviour almost always (for details see Table 3.3). Mann-Whitney U test revealed that boys in both countries, compared with girls, were significantly more likely to report this behaviour (Barbados $U = 2.936$, $p = 0.003$, girls M rank = 411.63, boys M rank = 454.22; Grenada $U = 3.871$, $p < 0.001$; girls M rank = 199.01, boys M rank = 239.31). For details see Figures 3.3a and b.

Table 3.3 *Exposure to non-interpersonal violence (Question in the survey: How often has anyone in your family break or destroy something on purpose, such as punching a wall, smashing a picture, or something similar?)*

	Barbados Frequency (%)	Grenada Frequency (%)
Never	558 (64.7%)	300 (66.5%)
Sometimes	193 (22.4%)	88 (19.5%)
Often	74 (8.6%)	38 (8.4%)
Almost always	38 (4.4%)	25 (5.5%)

Figure 3.3a *Gender differences in exposure to non-interpersonal violence (Barbados)*

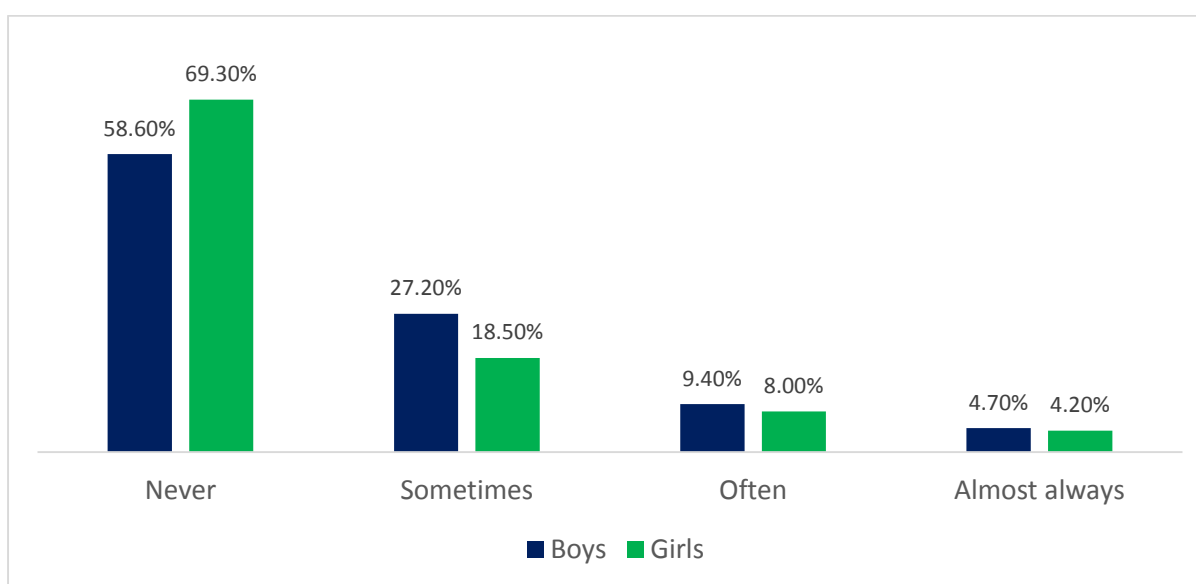
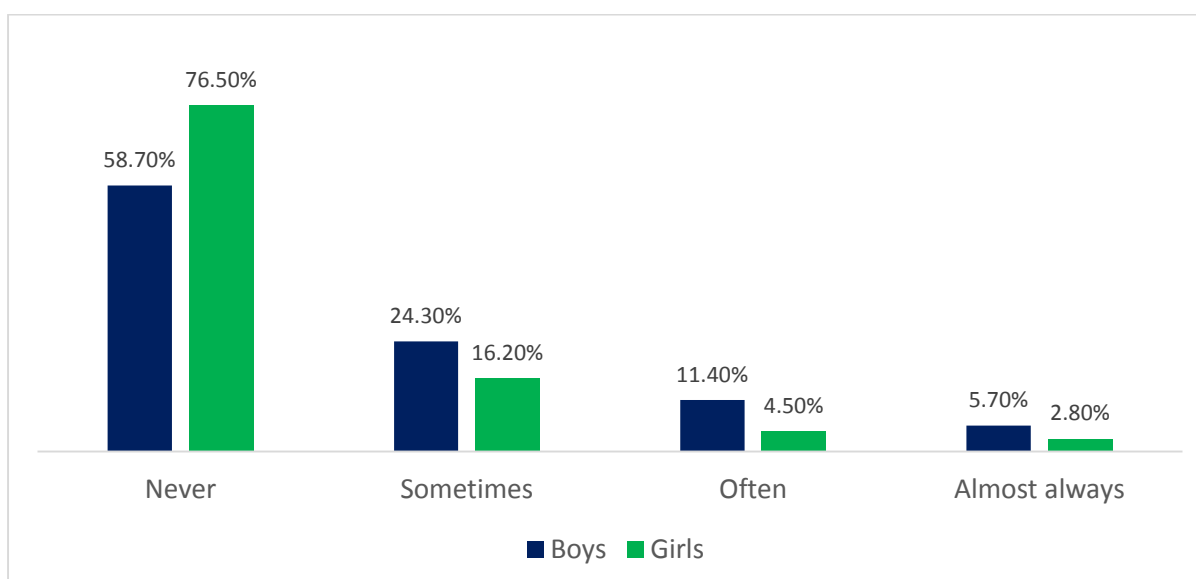


Figure 3.3b *Gender differences in exposure to non-interpersonal violence (Grenada)*



Nearly 30% of children in Barbados and approximately 40% in Grenada were exposed to physical violent behaviour directed against family members, with 4.2% of children in Barbados

and 6.4% in Grenada having experienced this behaviour almost all the time (for details see Table 3.4). Mann-Whitney U test shows no significant differences in exposure to physical violent behaviour against family members between boys and girls in both countries (Barbados $U = 1.764$, $p = 0.078$, girls M rank = 417.29, boys M rank = 441.65; Grenada $U = 30.393$, $p = 0.695$; girls M rank = 226.10, boys M rank = 221.82). For details see Figures 3.4a and b.

Table 3.4 *Exposure to physical violent behaviour towards family members (Question in the survey: How often does anyone in your family do something to hurt your mum's or sister's/brother's body, such as hitting them, punching them, kicking them, choking them, shoving them, or pulling their hair?)*

	Barbados Frequency (%)	Grenada Frequency (%)
Never	598 (69.6%)	272 (60.4%)
Sometimes	182 (21.2%)	121 (25.7%)
Often	43 (5%)	28 (6.2%)
Almost always	36 (4.2%)	29 (6.4%)

Figure 3.4a *Gender differences in exposure to violent behaviour towards family members (Barbados)*

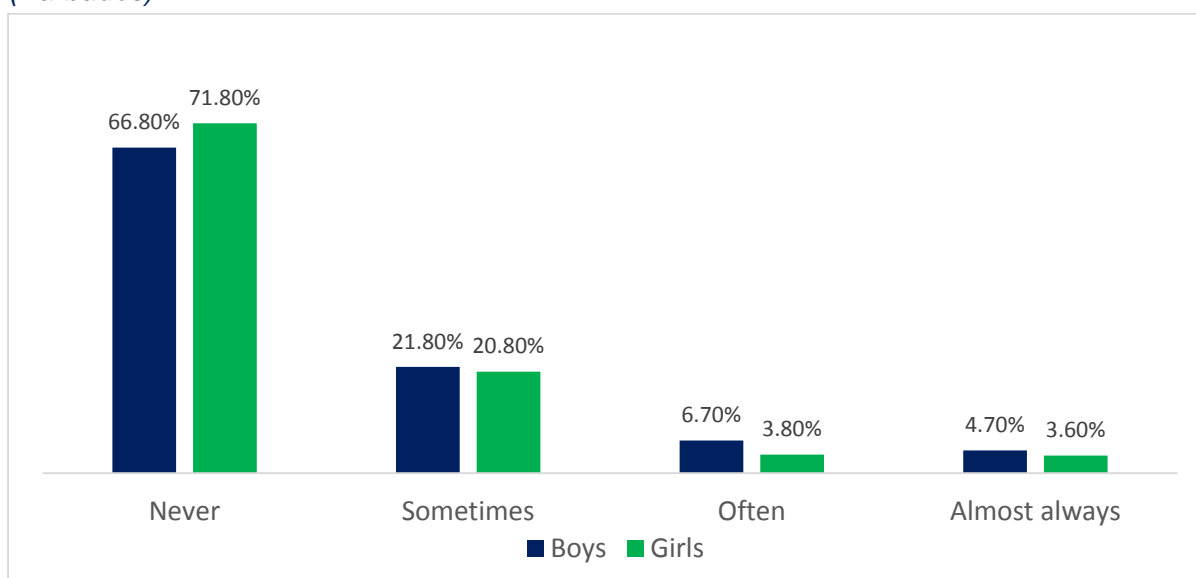
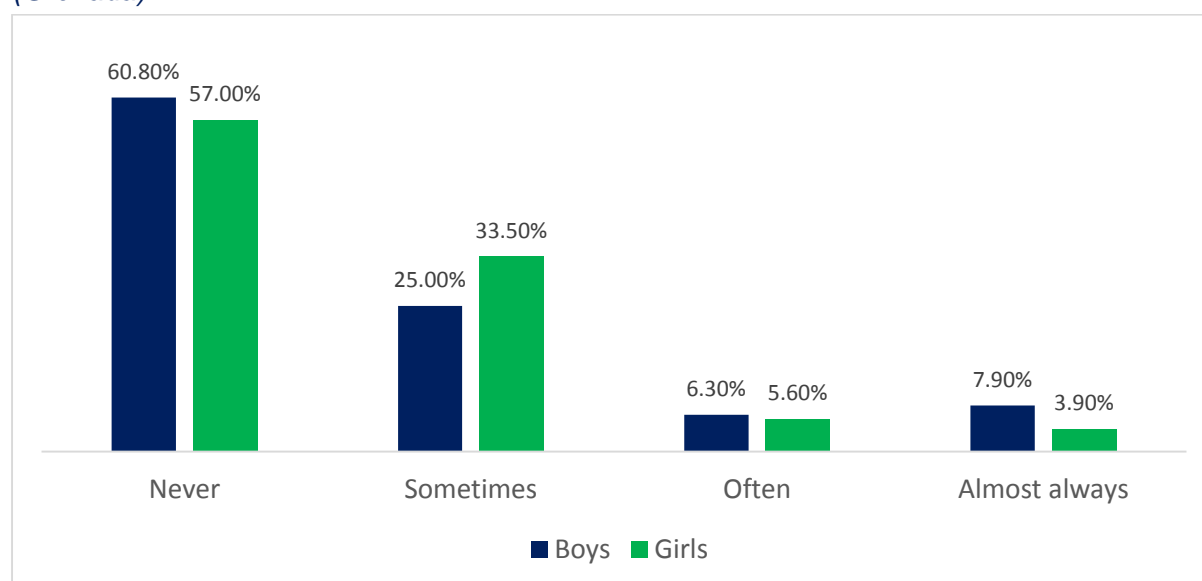


Figure 3.4b Gender differences in exposure to violent behaviour towards family members (Grenada)



Almost 19% of children in Barbados and approximately 25% in Grenada were exposed to serious violent threat directed against their mother or siblings, involving a knife, gun, or another object. Nearly 4% of children in Barbados and Grenada have experienced such behaviour almost every day (for details see Table 3.5). Mann-Whitney U test shows no significant differences between boys and girls in exposure to this behaviour in both countries (Barbados $U = 0.069$, $p = 0.945$, girls M rank = 426.83, boys M rank = 426.04; Grenada $U = 1.335$, $p = 0.182$; girls M rank = 215.81, boys M rank = 228.47). For details see Figures 3.5a and b.

Table 3.5 Exposure to serious violent threat (Question in the survey: How often does anyone in your family threaten to use a knife, gun, or other object to hurt your mum or sister/brother?)

	Barbados Frequency (%)	Grenada Frequency (%)
Never	697 (81.3%)	336 (74.7%)
Sometimes	100 (11.7%)	69 (15.3%)
Often	30 (3.5%)	29 (6.4%)
Almost always	30 (3.5%)	16 (3.6%)

Figure 3.5a *Gender differences in exposure to serious violent treat (Barbados)*

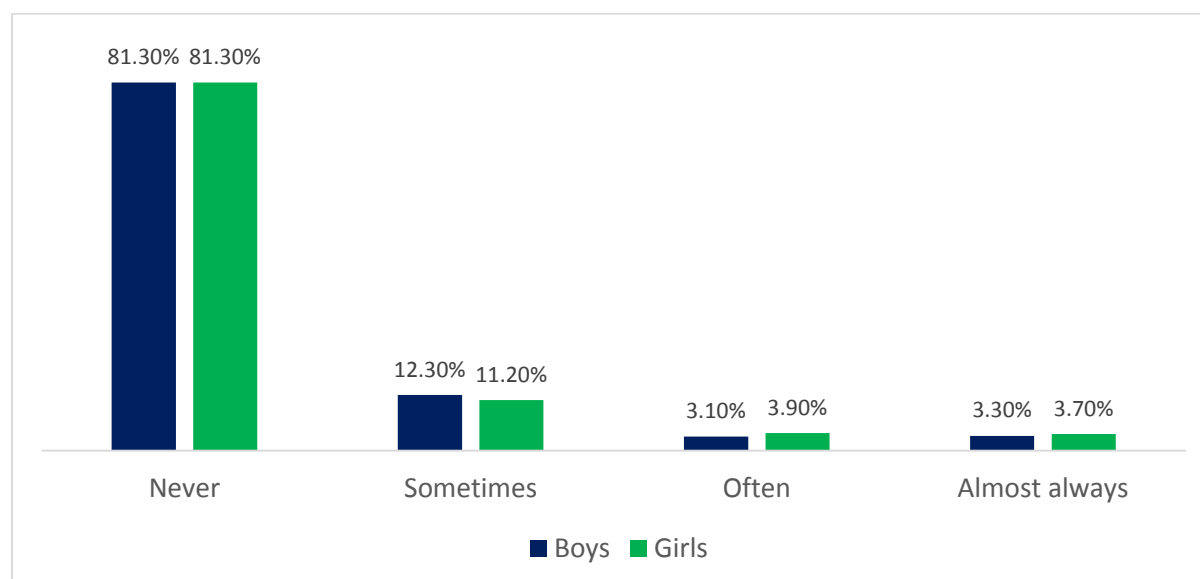
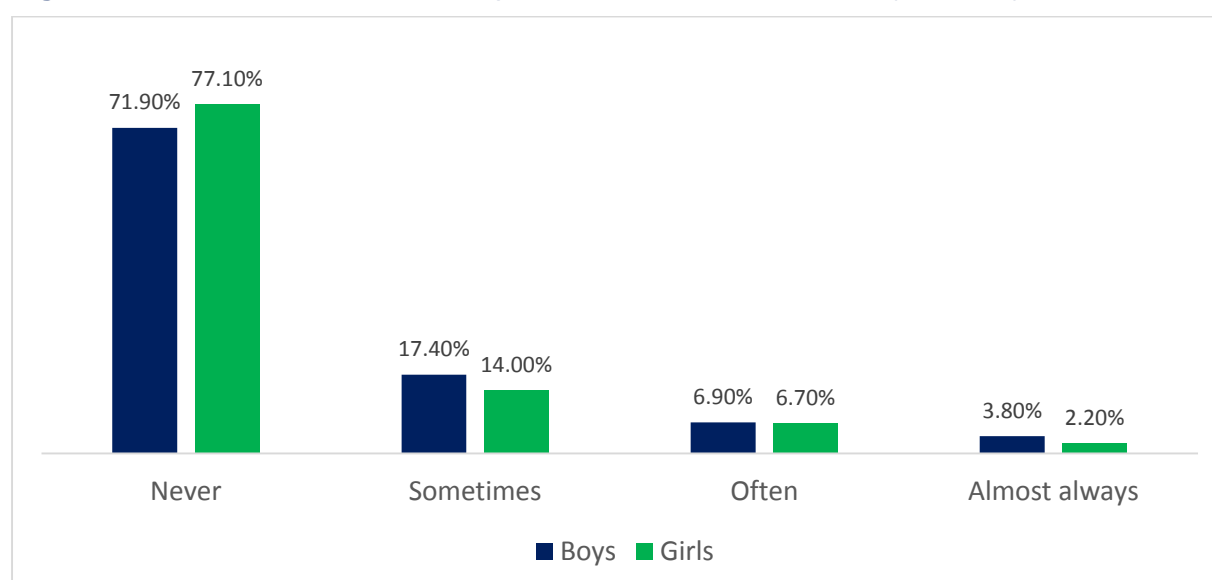


Figure 3.5b *Gender differences in exposure to serious violent treat (Grenada)*



3.2 Violence Victimization in the Family

Violence victimisation in the family was defined as direct experiences of physical (operationalised as having been hurt by hitting, kicking, or beating), emotional (having been made fun of, called names, threatened, or having been told things that make the child feel bad), and sexual abuse (having had private parts touched without the child's permission, having been made to touch someone else's private parts, or forced to do something sexual) perpetrated by an adult family member. Prevalence of and gender differences in violence victimisation were examined.

Nearly 28% of the Barbadian sample and almost 38% of the Grenadian sample reported to have experienced physical abuse in the family. In excess of 2% of children in Barbados and 6% in Grenada experienced physical violence almost every day (for details see Table 3.6).

Mann-Whitney U test shows that boys in Barbados were significantly more likely to report experiencing this type of abuse in comparison with girls ($U = 2.979$, $p = 0.003$, girls M rank = 405.15, boys M rank = 445.17). There are no gender differences for the Grenadian sample ($U = 0.394$, $p = 0.694$; girls M rank = 219.00, boys M rank = 223.22). For details see Figures 3.6a and b.

Table 3.6 *Physical abuse in the family (Question in the survey: How often does an adult in your family do something to hurt your body, such as hitting you, kicking you, or beating you up?)*

	Barbados Frequency (%)	Grenada Frequency (%)
Never	607 (71.7%)	276 (61.7%)
Sometimes	155 (18.3%)	101 (22.6%)
Often	67 (7.9%)	43 (9.6%)
Almost always	18 (2.1%)	27 (6%)

Figure 3.6a *Gender differences in physical abuse in the family (Barbados)*

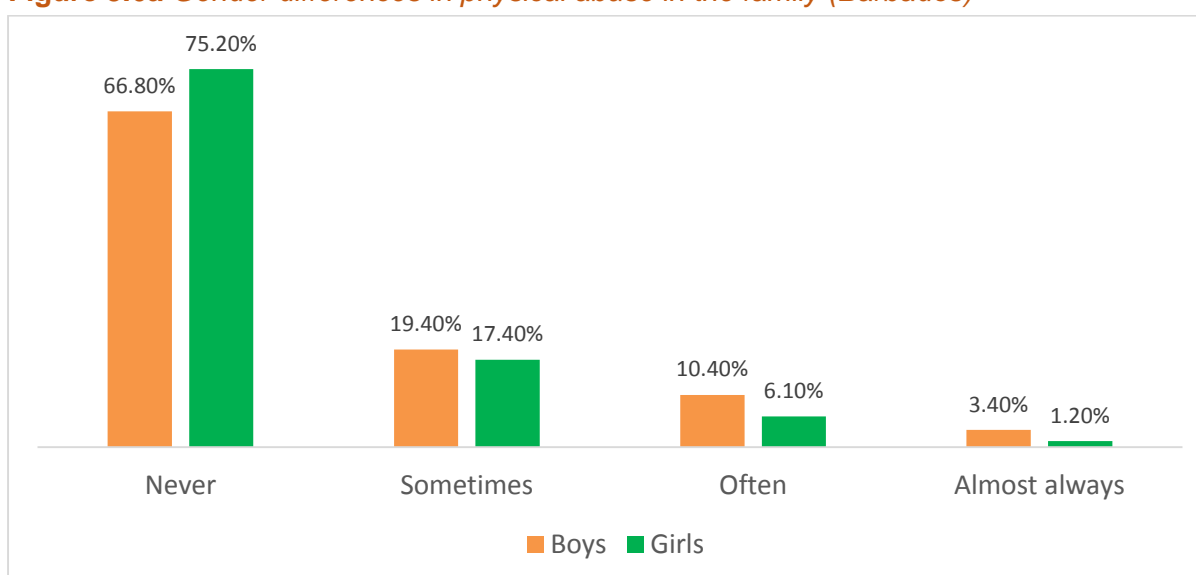
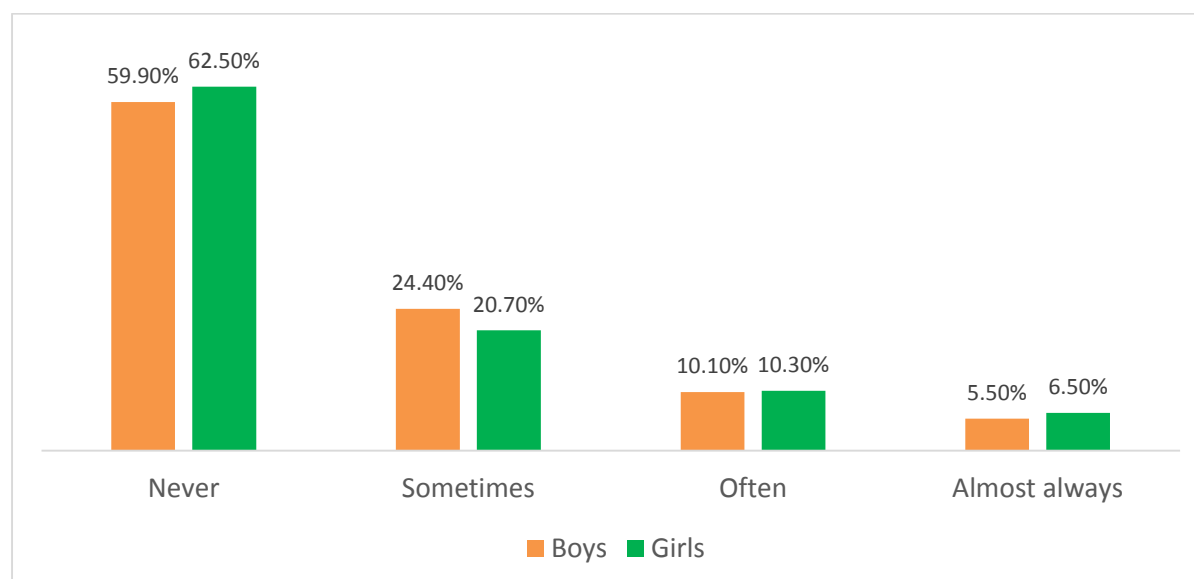


Figure 3.6b Gender differences in physical abuse in the family (Grenada)



Almost 35% of youths in Barbados and almost 41% in Grenada indicated they had experienced emotional abuse in the family. Nearly 5% of children in Barbados and nearly 6% in Grenada reported experiencing emotional abuse almost every day (for details see Table 3.7). Mann-Whitney U test shows that girls in Grenada are significantly more likely to report experiencing emotional abuse in the family than Grenadian boys ($U = 2.127$, $p = 0.033$, girls M rank = 235.89, boys M rank = 212.89). No gender differences for the Barbadian sample were detected ($U = 0.500$, $p = 0.617$; girls M rank = 424.54, boys M rank = 417.37). For details see Figures 3.7a and b.

Table 3.7 Emotional abuse in the family (Question in the survey: How often does an adult in your family hurt your feelings by making fun of you, calling you names, threatening you, or saying things to make you feel bad?)

	Barbados Frequency (%)	Grenada Frequency (%)
Never	549 (64.8%)	263 (58.7%)
Sometimes	201 (23.7%)	111 (24.8%)
Often	57 (6.7%)	48 (10.7%)
Almost always	40 (4.7%)	26 (5.8%)

Figure 3.7a Gender differences in emotional abuse in the family (Barbados)

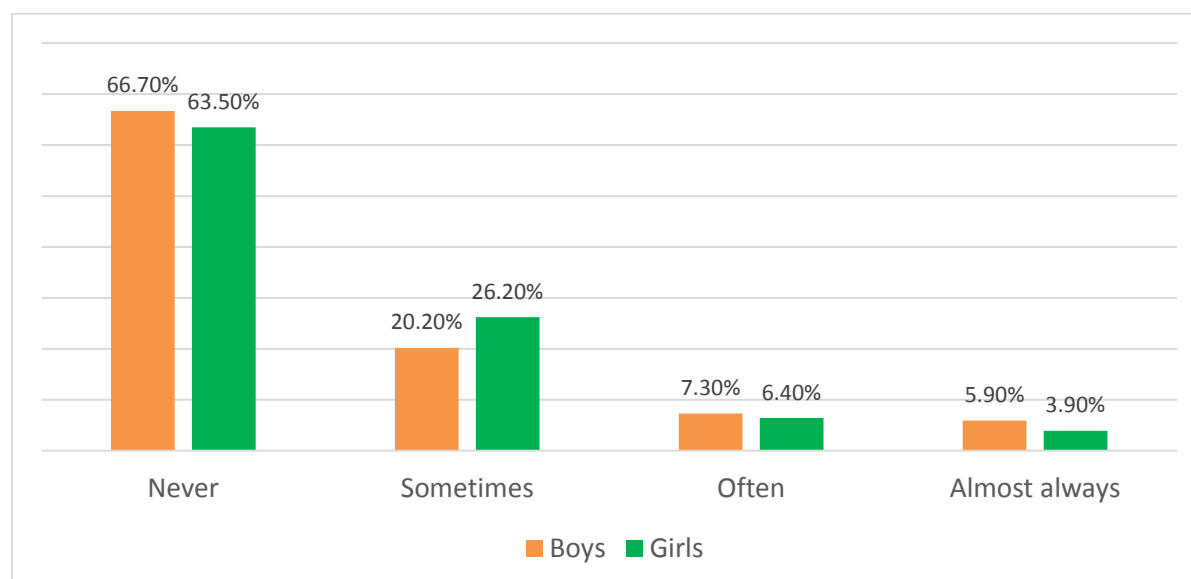
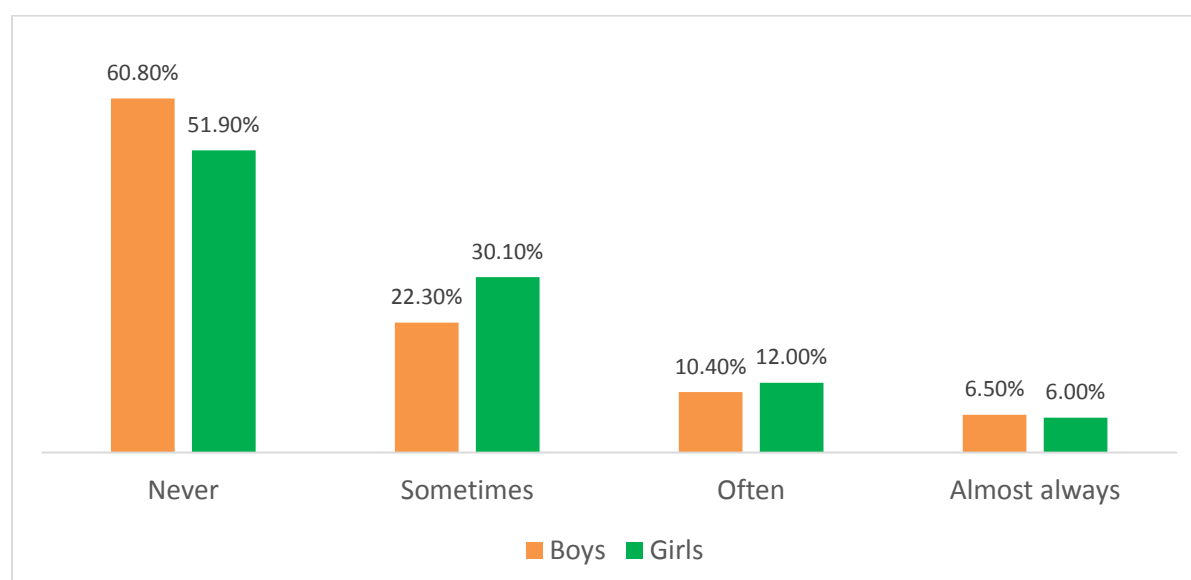


Figure 3.7b Gender differences in emotional abuse in the family (Grenada)



More than 9% of participating youngsters from Barbados and almost 13% from Grenada admitted having experienced sexual abuse in the family. Nearly 2% of children in Barbados and nearly 4% in Grenada reported to have been sexually abused almost every day (for details see Table 3.8). Mann-Whitney U test shows that boys in both countries were significantly more likely to report having experienced sexual abuse in the family compared with girls (Barbados $U = 2.017$, $p = 0.044$, girls M rank = 413.26, boys M rank = 430.59; Grenada $U = 2.805$, $p = 0.005$; girls M rank = 210.52, boys M rank = 230.59). For details see Figures 3.8a and b.

Table 3.8 *Sexual abuse in the family (Question in the survey: How often does an adult in your family touch your private parts when you don't want them to, make you touch their private parts, or force you to do something sexual you don't want to?)*

	Barbados Frequency (%)	Grenada Frequency (%)
Never	766 (90.7%)	391 (87.3%)
Sometimes	44 (5.2%)	22 (4.9%)
Often	19 (2.2%)	18 (4%)
Almost always	16 (1.9%)	17 (3.8%)

Figure 3.8a *Gender differences in sexual abuse in the family (Barbados)*

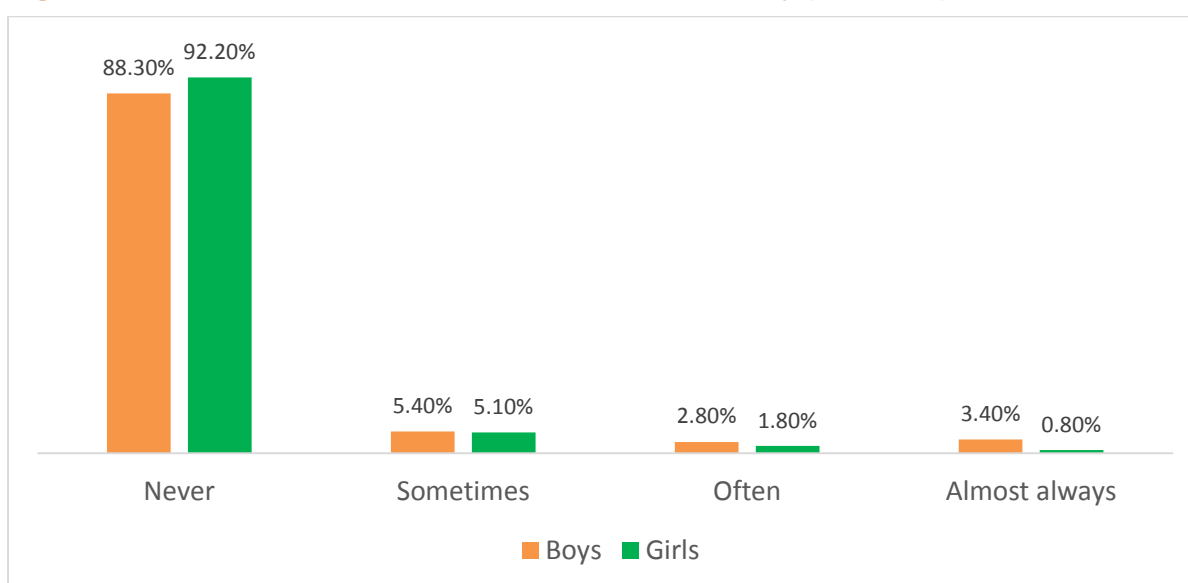
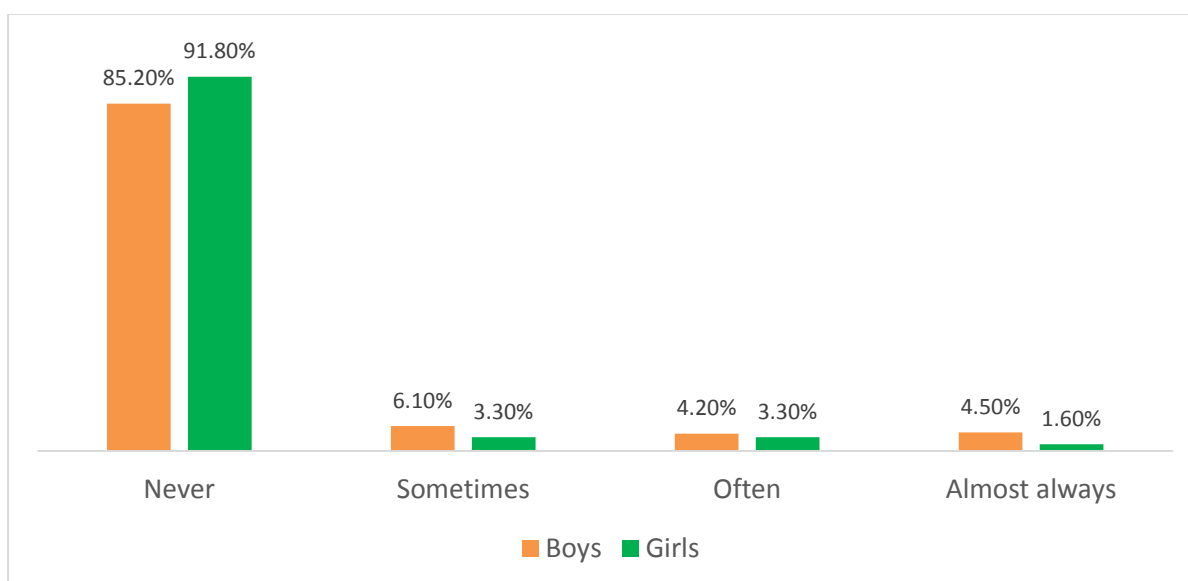


Figure 3.8b *Gender differences in sexual abuse in the family (Grenada)*



3.3 Violence Victimisation Outside the Family

Violence victimisation outside the family was defined as direct experiences of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse (please see section 3.2 for operational definitions of the three types of abuse) perpetrated by an adult. Prevalence of and gender differences in violence victimisation were assessed.

Nearly 38% of the Barbadian sample and almost 50% of the Grenadian sample indicated to have experienced physical abuse outside the family. In excess of 3% of children in Barbados and almost 5% in Grenada reported experiencing physical violence almost every day (for details see Table 3.9). Mann-Whitney U test shows that boys in Barbados were significantly more likely to report experiencing this type of abuse in comparison with girls ($U = 4.527$, $p < .001$, girls M rank = 400.09, boys M rank = 466.38). There are no gender differences for the Grenadian sample ($U = 0.474$, $p = .636$; girls M rank = 227.22, boys M rank = 221.85). For details see Figures 3.9a and b.

Table 3.9 *Physical abuse outside the family (Question in the survey: How often does someone at school or in your community hurt you by grabbing, slapping, punching, or kicking you?)*

	Barbados Frequency (%)	Grenada Frequency (%)
Never	537 (62.4%)	227 (50.2%)
Sometimes	238 (27.7%)	162 (35.8%)
Often	56 (6.5%)	42 (9.3%)
Almost always	29 (3.4%)	21 (4.6%)

Figure 3.9a *Gender differences in physical abuse outside the family (Barbados)*

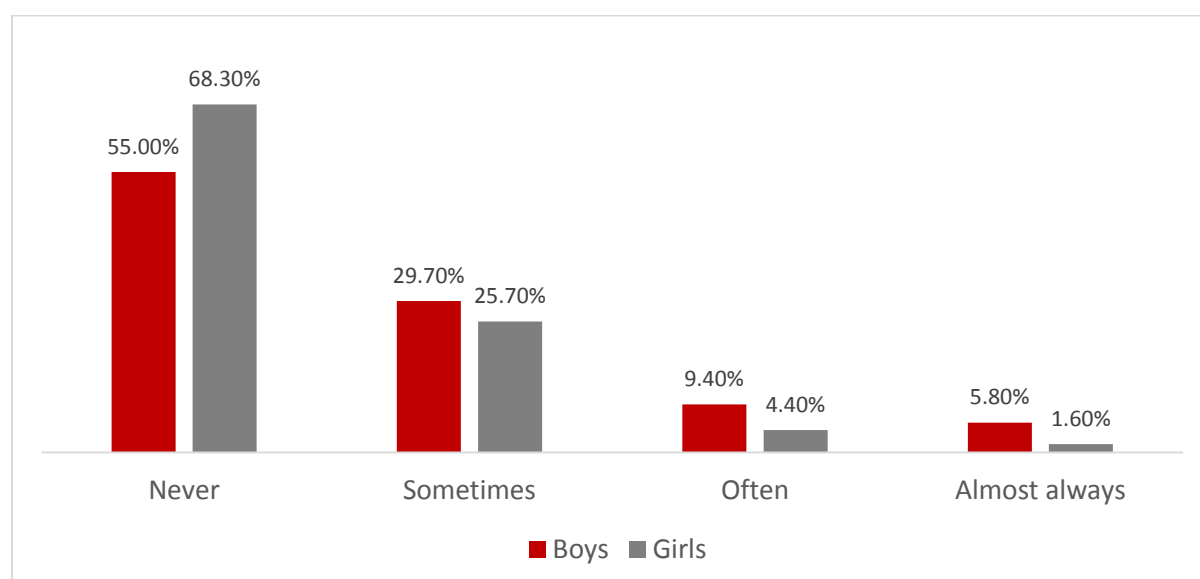
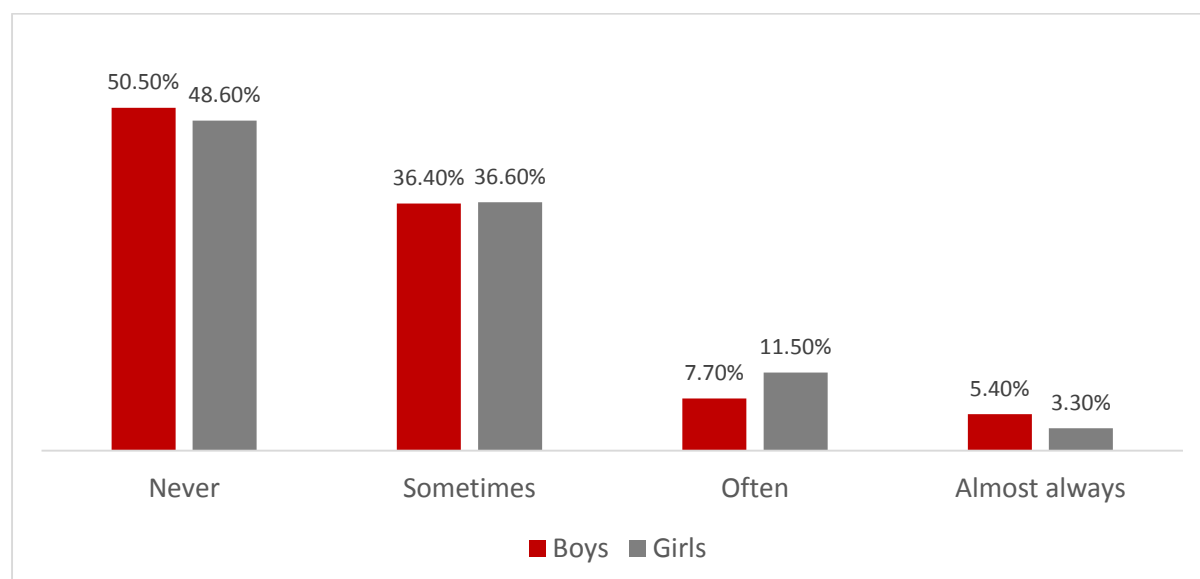


Figure 3.9a *Gender differences in physical abuse outside the family (Grenada)*



Nearly 60% of youths in Barbados and almost 70% in Grenada reported to have experienced emotional abuse outside the family. More than 7% of children in Barbados and Grenada reported experiencing emotional abuse almost every day (for details see Table 3.10). Mann-Whitney U test shows that girls in Grenada were significantly more likely to report experiencing emotional abuse outside the family than boys ($U = 2.656$, $p = 0.008$, girls M rank = 241.78, boys M rank = 211.24). No gender differences for the Barbadian sample were detected ($U = 0.377$, $p = 0.706$; girls M rank = 428.51, boys M rank = 422.49). For details see Figures 3.10a and b.

Table 3.10 *Emotional abuse outside the family (Question in the survey: How often does someone at school or in your community hurt your feelings by making fun of you, calling you names, threatening you, or saying things to make you feel bad?)*

	Barbados Frequency (%)	Grenada Frequency (%)
Never	346 (40.4%)	130 (28.8%)
Sometimes	334 (39%)	221 (49%)
Often	112 (13.1%)	66 (14.6%)
Almost always	64 (7.5%)	34 (7.5%)

Figure 3.10a *Gender differences in emotional abuse outside the family (Barbados)*

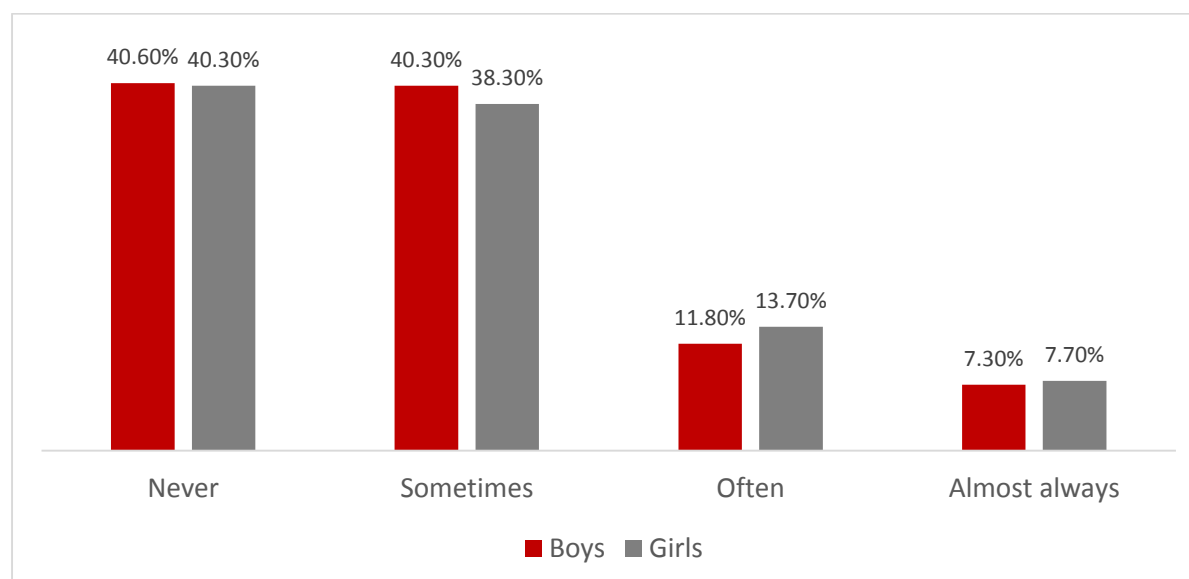
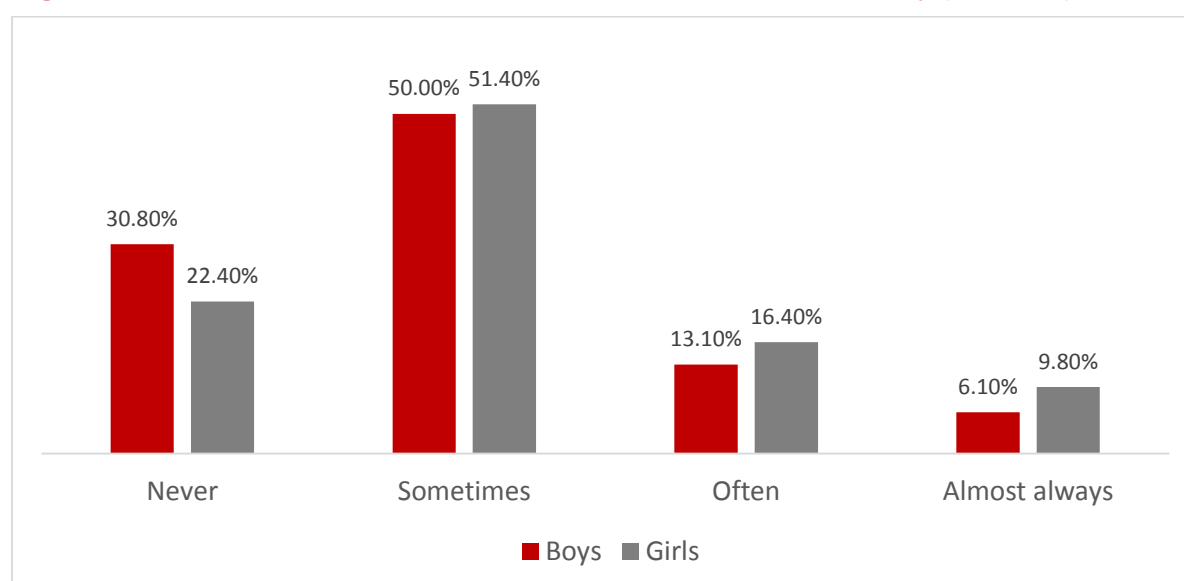


Figure 3.10b *Gender differences in emotional abuse outside the family (Grenada)*



More than 13% of participating youngsters from Barbados and more than 18% from Grenada admitted having experienced sexual abuse outside the family. One and a half per cent of children in Barbados and nearly 3% in Grenada reported to have been sexually abused almost every day (for details see Table 3.11). Mann-Whitney U test shows that boys in Barbados were significantly more likely to report having experienced sexual abuse outside the family compared with girls ($U = 2.790$, $p = 0.005$, girls M rank = 410.28, boys M rank = 438.11). There were no statistically significant differences between the two sexes in the Grenadian sample ($U = 1.715$, $p = 0.086$; girls M rank = 213.39, boys M rank = 227.84). For details see Figures 3.11a and b.

Table 3.11 Sexual abuse outside the family (Question in the survey: How often does someone who is not in your family, touch your private parts when you don't want them to, make you touch their private parts, or force you to do something sexual you don't want to?)

	Barbados Frequency (%)	Grenada Frequency (%)
Never	736 (86.8%)	364 (81.4%)
Sometimes	66 (7.8%)	44 (9.8%)
Often	33 (3.9%)	27 (6%)
Almost always	13 (1.5%)	12 (2.7%)

Figure 3.11a Gender differences in sexual abuse outside the family (Barbados)

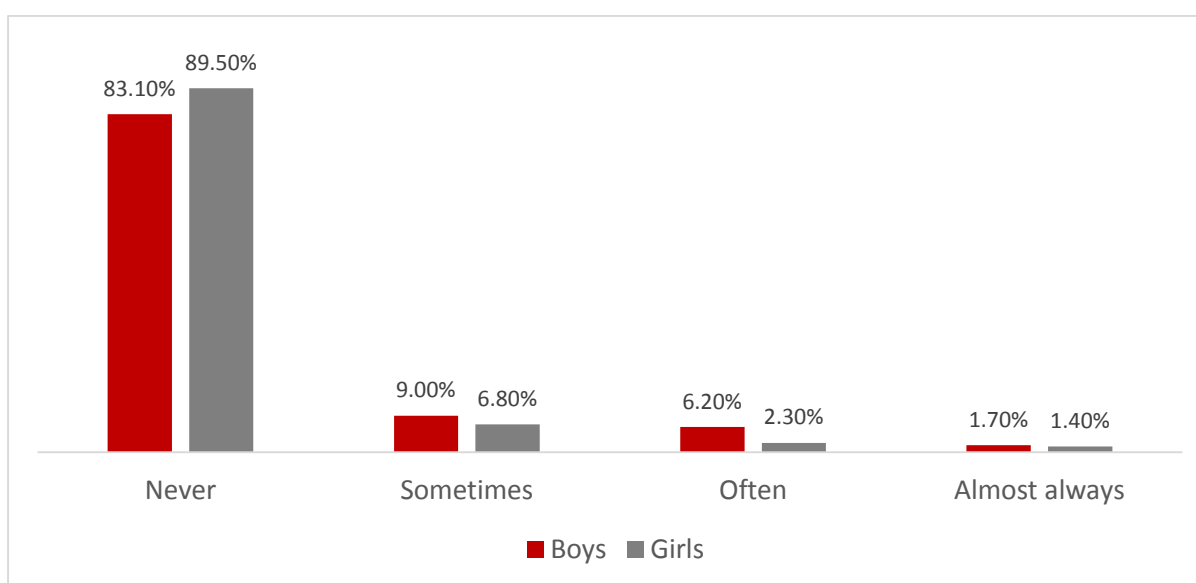
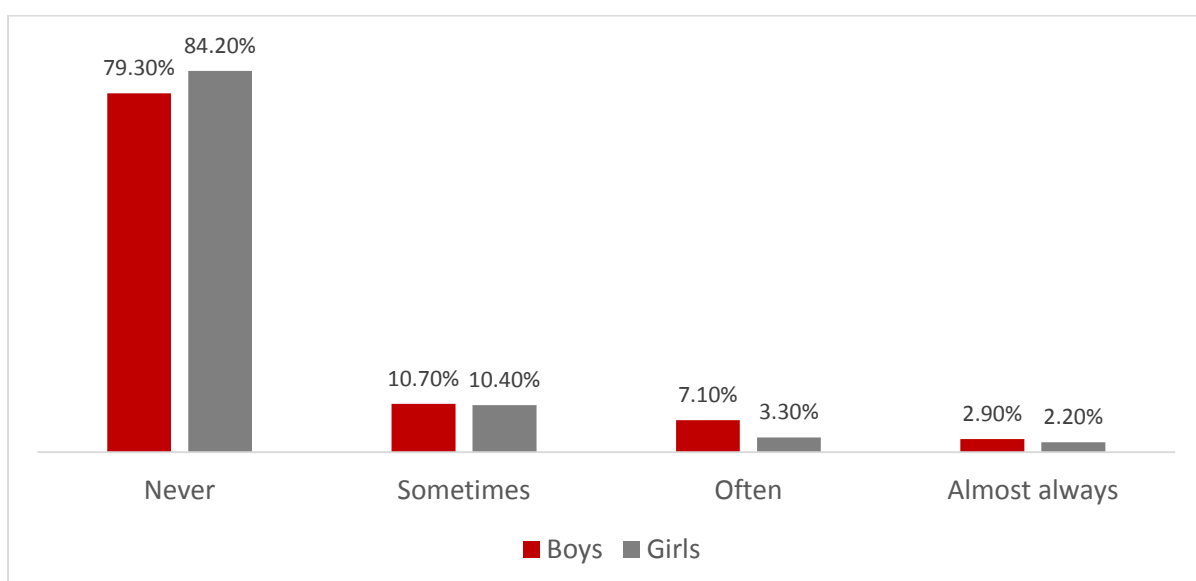


Figure 3.11b Gender differences in sexual abuse outside the family (Grenada)



3.4 Perception of Gender-Based Physical Violence

Perception of the prevalence of gender-based physical violence (GBPV) inquired into male-on-female as well as female-on-male violence. Perception of prevalence of GBPV and gender differences in such perceptions were assessed.

More than 56% of Barbadian children and 65.7% of Grenadian children indicated agreement with the statement that most boys hit their girlfriends (for details see Table 3.12). Mann-Whitney U test shows that girls in both countries were significantly more likely to agree with the statement than boys (Barbados $U = 2.325$, $p = 0.020$, girls M rank = 438.01, boys M rank = 399.99; Grenada $U = 3.382$, $p = 0.001$; girls M rank = 246.89, boys M rank = 206.77). For details see Figures 3.12a and b.

Table 3.12 Perception of prevalence of boy-on-girl physical violence (Statement in the survey: Most boys hit their girlfriends)

	Barbados Frequency (%)	Grenada Frequency (%)
Strongly disagree	137 (16.2%)	62 (13.8%)
Disagree	233 (27.5%)	92 (20.4%)
Agree	281 (33.1%)	173 (38.4%)
Strongly agree	197 (23.2%)	123 (27.3%)

Figure 3.12a Gender differences in perception of prevalence of boy-on-girl physical violence (Barbados)

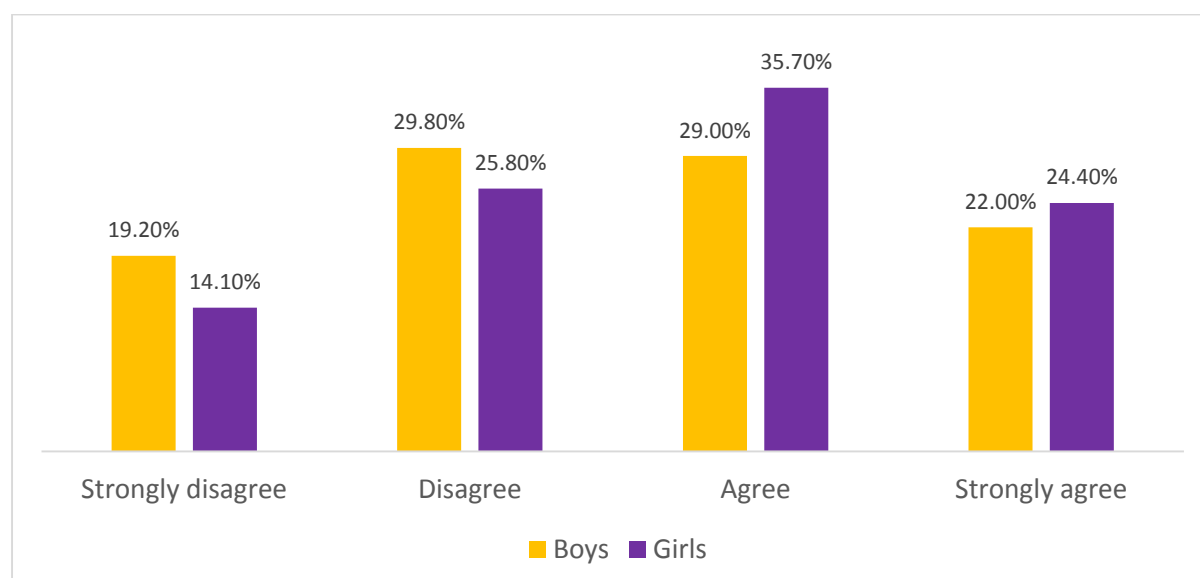
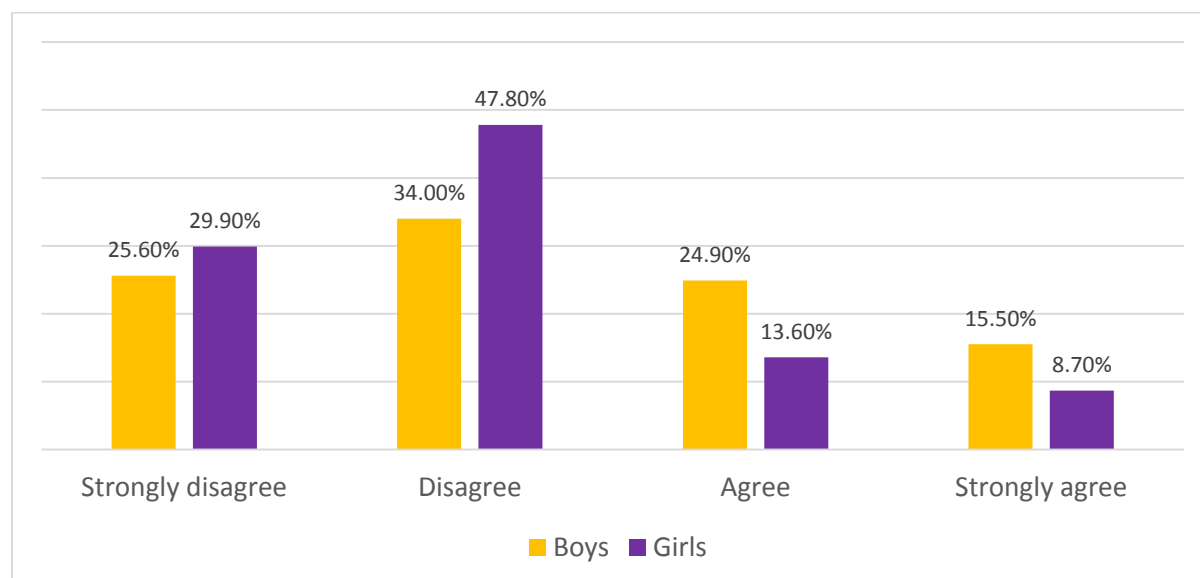


Figure 3.12b Gender differences in perception of prevalence of boy-on-girl physical violence (Grenada)



Nearly 51% of youngsters from Barbados and nearly 62% of youngsters from Grenada indicated agreement with the statement that most husbands hit their wives (for details see Table 3.13). Mann-Whitney U test shows that girls in both countries were significantly more likely to agree with the statement compared with boys (Barbados $U = 1.956$, $p = 0.050$, girls M rank = 433.61, boys M rank = 402.33; Grenada $U = 3.650$, $p < 0.001$; girls M rank = 244.83, boys M rank = 201.99). For details see Figures 3.13a and b.

Table 3.13 Perception of prevalence of husband-on-wife physical violence (Statement in the survey: Most husbands hit their wives)

	Barbados Frequency (%)	Grenada Frequency (%)
Strongly disagree	162 (19.2%)	78 (17.6%)
Disagree	253 (29.9%)	92 (20.8%)
Agree	275 (32.5%)	179 (40.4%)
Strongly agree	155 (18.3%)	94 (21.2%)

Figure 3.13a Gender differences in perception of prevalence of husband-on-wife physical violence (Barbados)

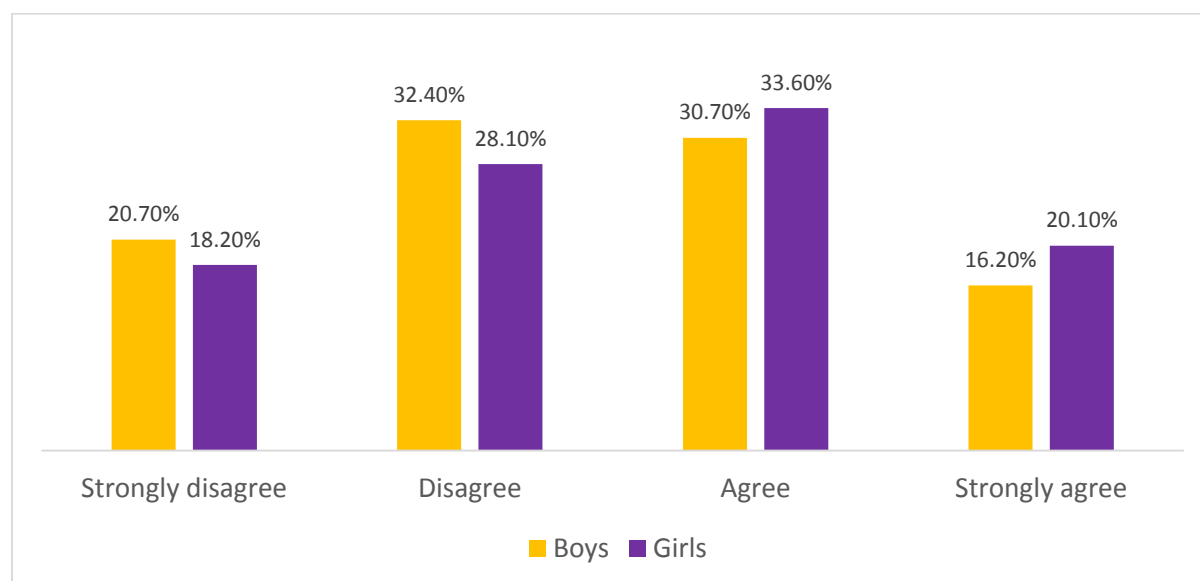
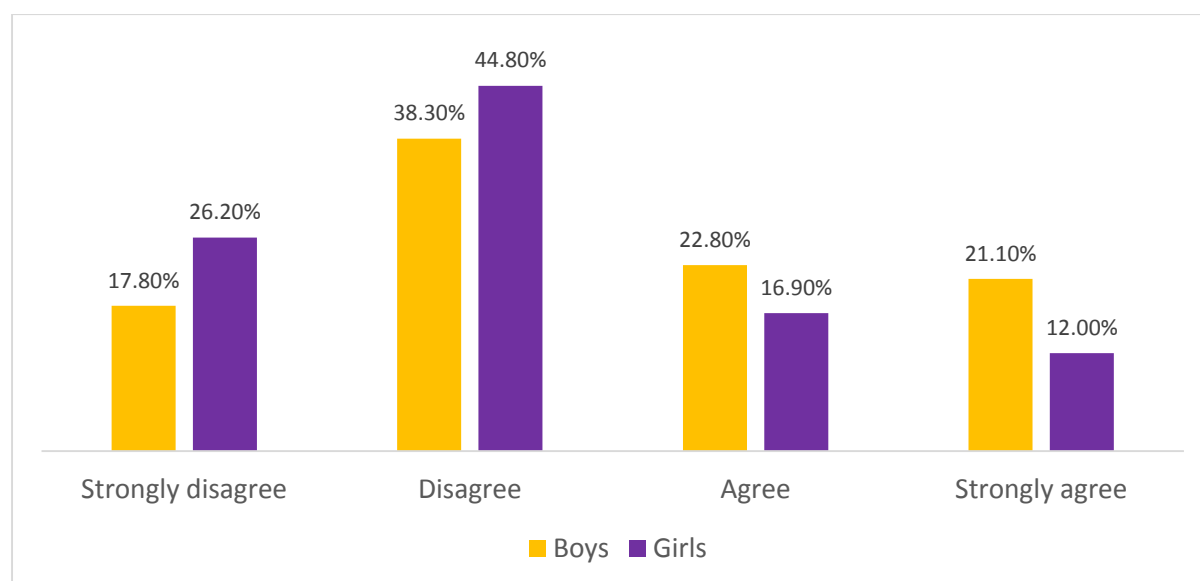


Figure 3.13b Gender differences in perception of prevalence of husband-on-wife physical violence (Grenada)



In excess of 57% of children from Barbados and nearly 53% of children from Grenada indicated agreement with the statement that most girls hit their boyfriends (for details see Table 3.14). Mann-Whitney U test shows that boys from both countries were significantly more likely to agree with the statement in comparison with girls (Barbados $U = 4.210$, $p < 0.001$, girls M rank = 385.72, boys M rank = 453.61; Grenada $U = 2.228$, $p = 0.026$; girls M rank = 204.40, boys M rank = 230.64). For details see Figures 3.14a and b.

Table 3.14 Perception of prevalence of girl-on-boy physical violence (Statement in the survey: Most girls hit their boyfriends)

	Barbados Frequency (%)	Grenada Frequency (%)
Strongly disagree	116 (13.9%)	60 (13.5%)
Disagree	239 (28.7%)	149 (33.6%)
Agree	293 (35.2%)	154 (34.7%)
Strongly agree	185 (22.2%)	81 (18.2%)

Figure 3.14a Gender differences in perception of prevalence of girl-on-boy physical violence (Barbados)

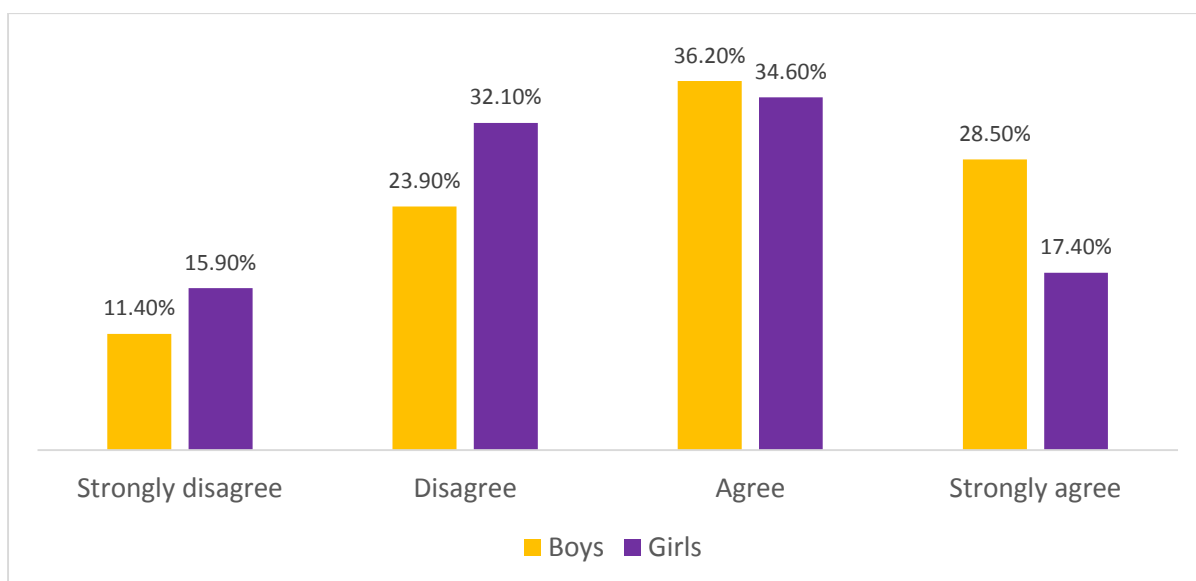
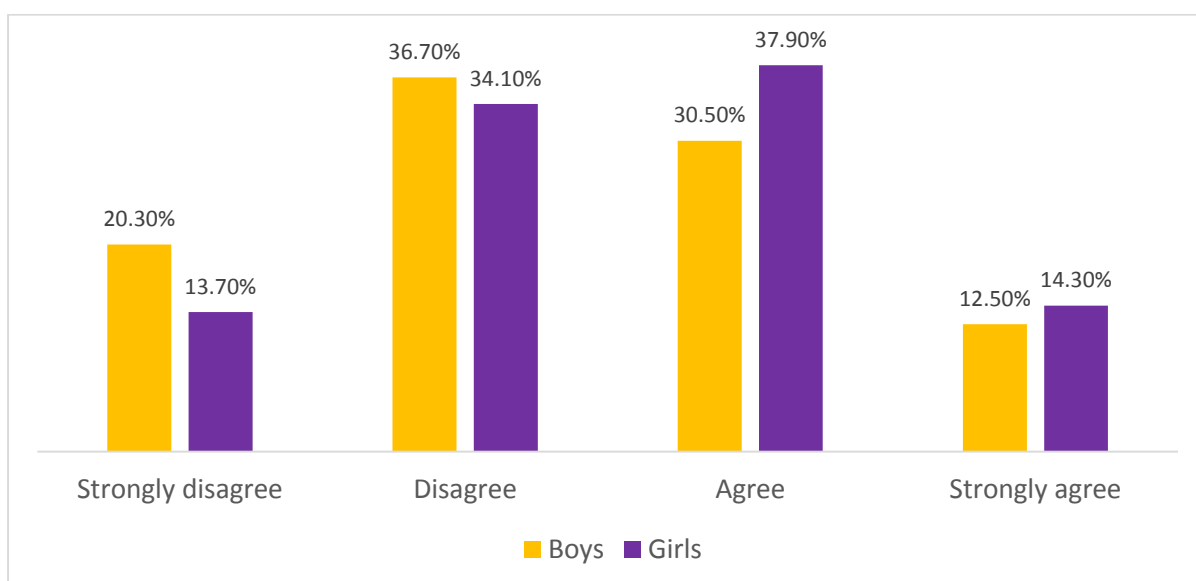


Figure 3.14b Gender differences in perception of prevalence of girl-on-boy physical violence (Grenada)



Over 43% of children from Barbados and nearly 43% of children from Grenada indicated agreement with the statement that most wives hit their husbands (for details see Table 3.15). Mann-Whitney U test shows that boys from both nations were significantly more likely to agree with the statement than girls (Barbados $U = 3.654$, $p < 0.001$, girls M rank = 386.10, boys M rank = 445.02; Grenada $U = 1.981$, $p = 0.048$; girls M rank = 204.51, boys M rank = 227.88). For details see Figures 3.15a and b.

Table 3.15 *Perception of prevalence of wife-on-husband physical violence (Statement in the survey: Most wives hit their husbands)*

	Barbados Frequency (%)	Grenada Frequency (%)
Strongly disagree	201 (24.3%)	105 (23.8%)
Disagree	269 (32.6%)	147 (33.3%)
Agree	229 (27.7%)	135 (30.6%)
Strongly agree	127 (15.4%)	54 (12.2%)

Figure 3.15a *Gender differences in perception of prevalence of wife-on-husband physical violence (Barbados)*

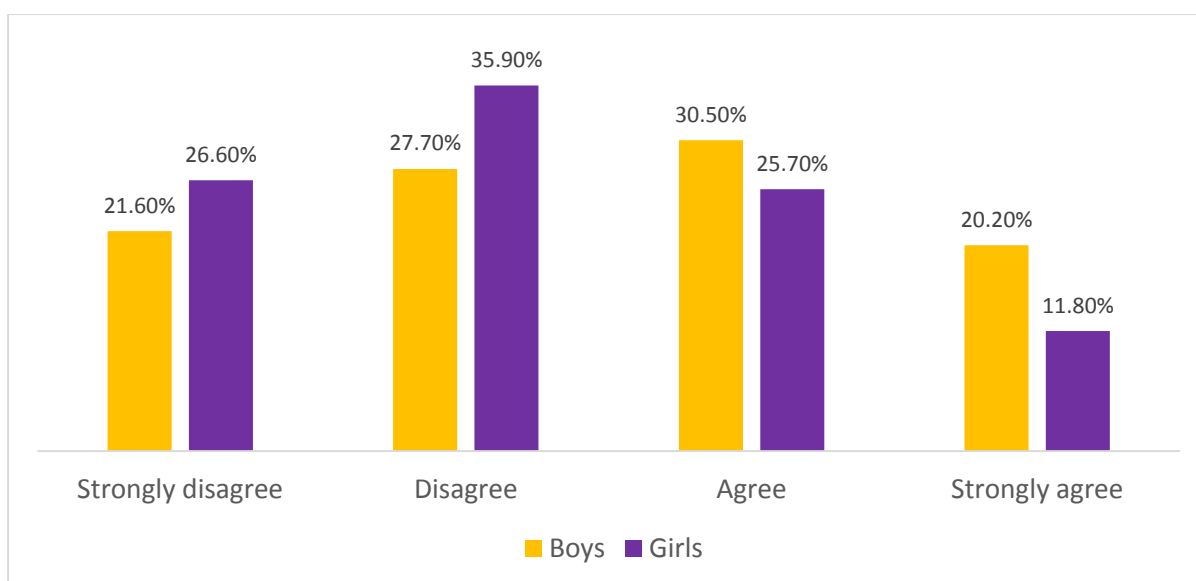
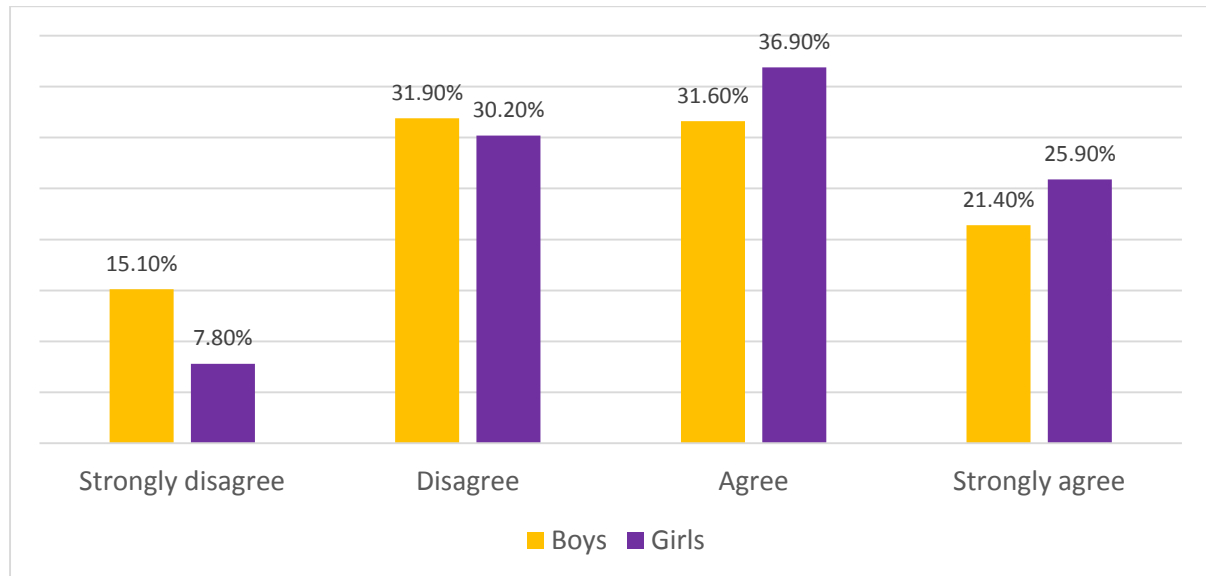


Figure 3.15b Gender differences in perception of prevalence of wife-on-husband physical violence (Grenada)



3.5 Attitudes towards Male Physical Domestic Violence

Attitudes towards male physical domestic violence inquired into children's level of acceptance of physical violence perpetrated by a man against his wife/girlfriend under different circumstances, such as when the woman embarrasses her partner or when the man is drunk (please see Methodology section for the specific questions). Independent samples t-tests indicate that boys from both countries were more accepting of male physical domestic violence than girls (for details see Table 3.16).

Table 3.16 Gender differences in attitudes towards male physical domestic violence

	Barbados			Grenada		
	Males	Females		Males	Females	
	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>t value (d)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>t value (d)</i>
Attitudes (domestic)	9.36 (3.72)	7.76 (2.99)	6.47*** (0.47)	9.49 (3.87)	8.33 (2.87)	3.62*** (0.34)

Note. *M* = mean, *SD* = standard deviation. Cohen (1977) suggested that *d* = 0.2 be considered a small effect size, 0.5 represents a medium effect size, and 0.8 denotes a large effect size.

p* < 0.05, *p* < 0.01, ****p* < 0.001

3.6 Social Norms Regarding Physical Violence against Girls

Social norms regarding physical violence against girls inquired into situations in which it may be considered OK for a boy to hit his girlfriend, such as when a boy is jealous or when a girl hits her boyfriend first (please see Methodology section for the specific questions). Independent samples t-tests show that Barbadian and Grenadian boys, compared with their female counterparts, were more accepting of social norms regarding physical violence against girls (for details see Table 3.17).

Table 3.17 *Gender differences in social norms regarding physical violence against girls*

	Barbados			Grenada		
	Males	Females	<i>t</i> value (<i>d</i>)	Males	Females	<i>t</i> value (<i>d</i>)
	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)		<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	
Social norms	10.21 (4.17)	7.98 (3.31)	8.13*** (0.59)	10.09 (4.21)	8.90 (3.31)	3.35*** (0.31)

Note. *M* = mean, *SD* = standard deviation. Cohen (1977) suggested that *d* = 0.2 be considered a small effect size, 0.5 represents a medium effect size, and 0.8 denotes a large effect size.

p* < 0.05, *p* < 0.01, ****p* < 0.001

3.7 General Beliefs About Violence

General beliefs about violence refer to attitudes towards using interpersonal emotional and physical violence, without specifying the gender of the person against whom the violence is perpetrated (please see Methodology section for the specific questions). Independent samples t-tests demonstrate that boys from both countries were more accepting of using such violence than girls (for details see Table 3.18).

Table 3.18 *Gender differences in general beliefs about violence*

	Barbados			Grenada		
	Males	Females	<i>t</i> value (<i>d</i>)	Males	Females	<i>t</i> value (<i>d</i>)
	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)		<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	
General beliefs	8.91 (2.75)	7.90 (2.59)	5.26*** (0.38)	8.89 (2.98)	8.04 (2.48)	3.09** (0.31)

Note. *M* = mean, *SD* = standard deviation. Cohen (1977) suggested that *d* = 0.2 be considered a small effect size, 0.5 represents a medium effect size, and 0.8 denotes a large effect size.

p* < 0.05, *p* < 0.01, ****p* < 0.001

3.8 Violent Behaviour

Violent behaviour inquired into the use of physical violence or threats of physical violence against another person (please see Methodology section for the specific questions). Independent samples t-tests reveal that boys from Barbados and Grenada were engaging in more violent behaviours than girls (for details see Table 3.19).

Table 3.19 *Gender differences in violent behaviour*

	Barbados			Grenada		
	Males	Females		Males	Females	
	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>t value (d)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>t value (d)</i>
Violent behaviour	8.29 (3.20)	7.29 (2.77)	4.76*** (0.33)	8.14 (3.01)	7.16 (2.62)	3.62*** (0.35)

Note. *M* = mean, *SD* = standard deviation. Cohen (1977) suggested that *d* = 0.2 be considered a small effect size, 0.5 represents a medium effect size, and 0.8 denotes a large effect size.

p* < 0.05, *p* < 0.01, ****p* < 0.001

3.9 Bullying Behaviour

Bullying behaviour refers to aggressive behaviour used to intimidate or influence another person (please see Methodology section for the specific questions). Independent samples t-tests show that boys from the two Eastern Caribbean countries were involved in more bullying behaviours compared with girls (for details see Table 3.20).

Table 3.20 *Gender differences in bullying behaviour*

	Barbados			Grenada		
	Males	Females		Males	Females	
	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>t value (d)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>t value (d)</i>
Bullying	8.74 (3.45)	8.02 (3.40)	2.99** (0.21)	8.37 (3.31)	7.60 (2.99)	2.50** (0.24)

Note. *M* = mean, *SD* = standard deviation. Cohen (1977) suggested that *d* = 0.2 be considered a small effect size, 0.5 represents a medium effect size, and 0.8 denotes a large effect size.

p* < 0.05, *p* < 0.01, ****p* < 0.001

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Although Barbados and Grenada have implemented international and national laws which criminalise interpersonal violence, including domestic violence and child maltreatment, such acts are still widespread in the region. Further, official statistics do not reflect the magnitude of the problem. One of the reasons for this is under-reporting of violence by victims/survivors, due to fear of retaliation from a known offender, insensitive interviewing methods, insufficient provision of services for victims/survivors, inconsistent training of staff, and overlooking important evidence by the authorities (CDB, 2014, 2016; IRBC, 2013, 2017; US Department of State, 2017a, b). It is estimated that each year only 1% of children in a population come to the attention of child protection services (Gilbert *et al.*, 2009). Indeed, when official child maltreatment incidence rates in Barbados and Grenada are converted into period prevalence, it appears that between 2008 and 2013 approximately 1-2% of youths suffered from physical and sexual abuse. In contrast, the current investigation revealed that nearly 28% of Barbadian children and almost 38% of Grenadian children experienced physical abuse in the family. Almost 38% of the Barbadian sample and almost half of all Grenadian children indicated to have experienced physical abuse outside the family. Child physical abuse may be under-reported in part due to social acceptability of using corporal punishment by parents and teachers to 'discipline' children (Barbados Statistical Service, 2014; CADRES, 2014). Sexual abuse in the family was self-reported by more than 9% of youth from Barbados and almost 13% from Grenada. Prevalence of sexual abuse outside the family was even higher, amounting to 13% among Barbadian and 18% among Grenadian youths. Children who are sexually abused may fear social ostracism as well as feel ashamed and guilty, believing they may have 'provoked' such victimisation, which can result in significant under-reporting of such violence (Jones & Trotman Jemmott, 2009; UNICEF, 2013). Finally, emotional abuse seems to be the most under-reported form of abuse, which can be related to the fact that children do not construe the way they are treated as abusive. Despite emotional abuse being the least common type of abuse according to official records in both countries, the present study suggests that nearly 35% of youths in Barbados and almost 41% in Grenada have experienced emotionally abusive treatment from a family member. Even more children self-reported emotional abuse outside the family – 60% in Barbados and 70% in Grenada. Therefore, in spite of both countries' efforts to eradicate violence against children, there is still a need for a better recognition, coordination, and management of CAN cases, which may require an increased budget and staffing of child protection services. Greater participation of children in addressing the problem of child maltreatment should also be considered, including empowerment programmes and more research studies with youths to further explore their abuse experiences.

The present study also revealed some important gender differences in victimisation experiences. For example, Barbadian boys were more likely to suffer from physical abuse in and outside the family in comparison with Barbadian girls. In Grenada, emotional abuse in and outside the family was more common among girls than boys. Despite females being commonly conceptualised as more vulnerable victims of sexual abuse, boys in both countries were more likely to report having experienced sexual abuse in the family than girls. This discrepancy between official and self-reported statistics may be in part due to the fact that sexual abuse

cases against a female child are more readily investigated than those involving a male child. Additionally, boys were previously suggested to be more likely than girls to not share sexual abuse experiences with anyone, especially when the perpetrator was male, due to fear of being branded homosexual (UNICEF, 2013). As for gender differences in exposure to violence in the family in the current study, girls were more likely than boys to be exposed to verbal violence, whereas boys more often observed non-interpersonal violence. These findings indicate that prevention strategies aimed at children should be designed specifically for male or female audiences.

Children who are victimised may grow to accept violence and view it as a viable conflict resolution strategy, subsequently resulting in the intergenerational transmission of violence. The present study shows that children see violence as a commonplace occurrence, with more than half of children from both countries having indicated that male-on-female as well as female-on-male physical violence happens in most relationships. Additionally, boys from Barbados and Grenada, compared with girls, were demonstrated to be more accepting of male physical domestic violence, social norms regarding physical violence against girls, as well as use of violence in general. Male youths in the current investigation were also more likely to engage in violent and bullying behaviour than girls, which is reflected in the gender composition of juvenile arrests in both Eastern Caribbean countries. Although appropriate legislative framework is crucial for tackling violence and rehabilitating perpetrators, legislation alone will not interrupt the cyclical pattern of violence. As such, a greater investment in early recognition of problem behaviour and outlet programmes seems crucial in this Eastern Caribbean context.

Recommendations

Preventing child abuse

- Empower **children** through age appropriate educational programmes, focusing on explaining children's rights, what constitutes abuse, and how and to whom such experiences can be reported. A special emphasis should be placed on corporal punishment, which appears commonplace in both countries. Given that emotional abuse is especially difficult to recognise by children, a list of unacceptable behaviours along with appropriate examples should be presented. Discussions around sexual abuse need to consider cultural sensitivities. Gender differences in child abuse experiences ought to be considered at programme design stage, and separate lessons for boys and girls may be required. In recognising that a CAN case is most likely to be investigated when the affected child self-reports abuse, such educational programmes are crucial to child protection efforts and, with financial support from the government, should be included in the formal education curricula in both countries.
- Support **parents** who are at an increased risk of using physical and emotional violence against their children, through appropriate workshops concentrating on improving their parenting skills and equipping them with non-violent discipline techniques. Additionally, services offering a holistic approach to family functioning were found effective in reducing family violence against children in the United States (Olds & Kitzman, 1993). Although such programmes may not be directly transported into the Eastern Caribbean

context due to cultural and system differences, they may serve as an inspiration for creating similar programmes in Barbados and Grenada.

- **Professionals** who have contact with children, such as teachers, medical doctors, social workers, and police officers, should be trained at entry and service levels to recognise signs of abuse. This appears especially important in the Grenadian context, to support professionals who are legally mandated to report suspected abuse. Worthy of note, prior research demonstrated that adults with greater self-perceived social support are more likely to express a positive attitude towards reporting suspected child sexual abuse (Humphries, Debowska, Boduszek, & Mattison, 2016), indicating that discussions around support for adults making a report should constitute an integral part of such training.
- The present study shows that **adults outside the family** are responsible for a large proportion of child maltreatment, including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. Thus, a media campaign raising the awareness of the frequency and unacceptability of such occurrences, as well as challenging social norms which condone violence against children, could play a vital role in child protection. The 'Break the Walls of Silence' (BWS) campaign based on research carried out by the University of The West Indies, Trinidad, and Tobago (Reid, Reddock, & Nickening, 2014) and adopted by UNICEF (Eastern Caribbean) in 2012 for regional implementation is, in part, an answer to this call. However, the BWS campaign focuses only on child sexual abuse and hence similar initiatives should be designed to address physical and emotional abuse.

Preventing youth violence

- Antisocial behaviour in childhood is an important predictor of juvenile delinquency. Thus, children with aggressive tendencies should be recognised by **childcare professionals** as early as possible. Training in recognising problem behaviour which may continue into adolescence without appropriate intervention should be provided.
- Programmes for **youths**, with a particular focus on boys, are needed to challenge their violence-accepting attitudes and provide a socially acceptable outlet for aggression. In this context, it may be beneficial to consider the potential benefits of prosocial video games, which scaffold children's experience and challenge pro-violence attitudes using narrative and audio-visual content. A growing body of empirical evidence demonstrates an association between playing a prosocial video game and positive social outcomes (Greitemeyer & Mügge, 2014).

Research

- Research into child abuse experiences and violent behaviour is scarce in the Eastern Caribbean context, which significantly impedes the development of an effective and efficient child protection system. Therefore, future research should aim to (a) further explore **children's experiences** of child abuse and neglect, with a specific focus on victim-perpetrator relationship and age at onset of abuse, (b) study **victims/survivors' experiences** of child protection and support services (c) inquire into barriers and

enablers to recognising and reporting suspected child abuse among **professionals who come into contact with children**, and (d) explore **parents' attitudes** towards using physical and emotional violence towards their own children (including what they consider to be acceptable), and identify those at an increased risk of using such tactics.

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