

A Canadian Gender Study



METHODOLOGY

The research consisted of an online survey with a representative national sample of 3,000 adults, randomly selected from LegerWeb.com's online survey panel.

- The sample includes 1,000 men and 2,000 women. Women were oversampled because they were the focus of this research.
- A typical public opinion research survey samples 1,000 people. The large sample size drawn for this survey allowed us to conduct more in-depth analysis based on key population characteristics such as gender, age and education.
- The data was weighted to 2016 Census figures to ensure representation by age, gender and region of Canada.

The margin of error associated with a probability based sample of this size is +/- 1.79% 19 times out of 20.

The survey was conducted from February 16th to February 23rd, 2018.

The survey questionnaire was designed by the Hill+Knowlton Strategies research team in consultation with Plan International Canada.



Period Stigma



OVERVIEW

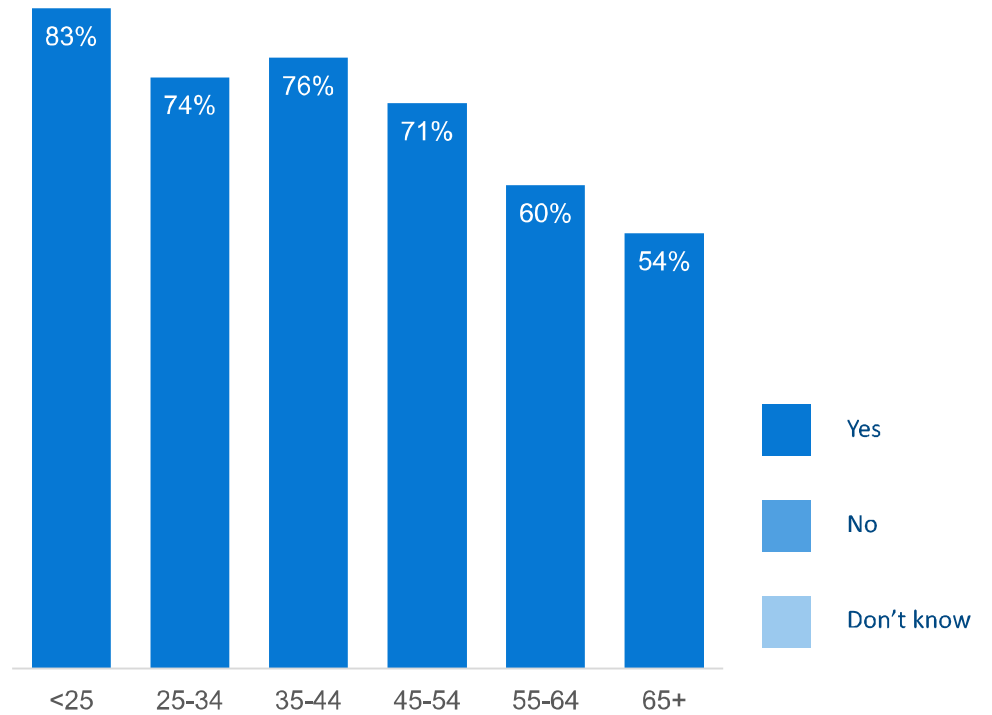
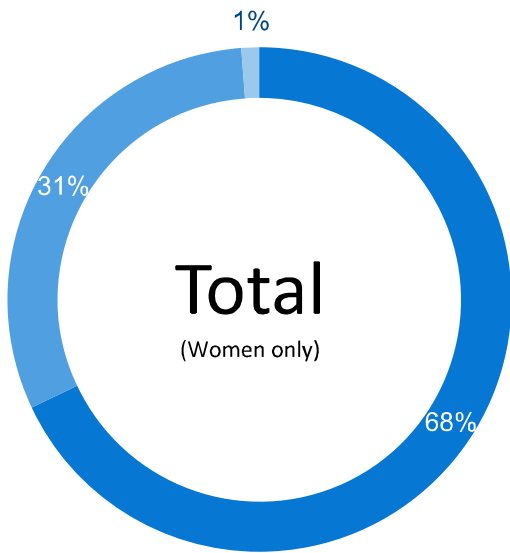
What's clear from this research is that periods are a barrier to participation for women in Canada, with 68% of women having felt that their period prevented them from full participation in an activity (and, this goes up to 83% among women under 25 years of age). More than half (55%) of women have missed school or work or declined social activities because of their period. This number is particularly high at 70% for women under 25. Period leaks are an issue for women of all ages, with three quarters (74%) of women having had a period leak at work or school. And 86% of women have been unprepared when their period started.

Periods are also considered by most women to be a taboo subject. Nearly two-thirds of women (63%) have felt that they had to hide that they were bringing a tampon or pad to the washroom at work or school (this number jumps to 81% for women under 25). More than half (56%) try not to let male colleagues at school or work know that they're having their period. However, women are much more comfortable relating to other women when it comes to their periods. Nearly two-thirds (63%) of women agree that periods are an easy topic of conversation with their female friends, and this comfort increases the younger a woman is, with 72% of women under 25 and 71% of women ages 25-34 feeling this way. And less than a third of women (28%) agree that they try not to let their female colleagues at work or school know that they're having their period.

Periods are also a cause of anxiety for Canadian women. Nearly a quarter (23%) of women, and a third (33%) of women under 25, have struggled to afford menstrual products for themselves or their dependants. Almost 6 in 10 women (59%) have felt anxiety or dread when their period was late (77% of women under 25, and 70% of women ages 25-34). Beyond anxiety, social shaming around periods is a reality faced by Canadian women, where 57% report having had other people accuse them of PMS, including nearly three-quarters (74%) of women under 25, two-thirds (67%) of women ages 25-34 and 69% of women ages 35-44.

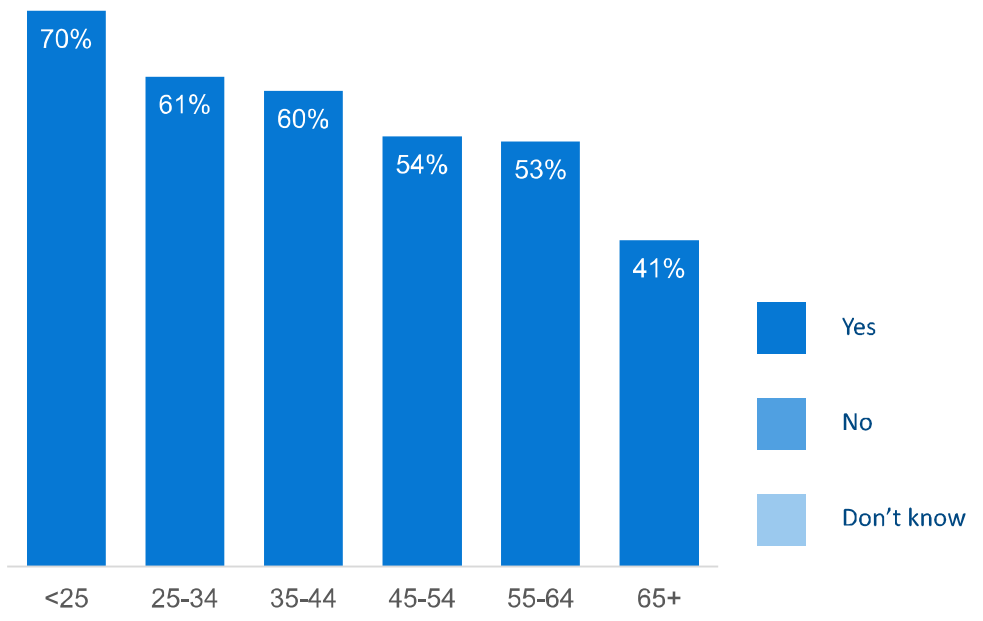
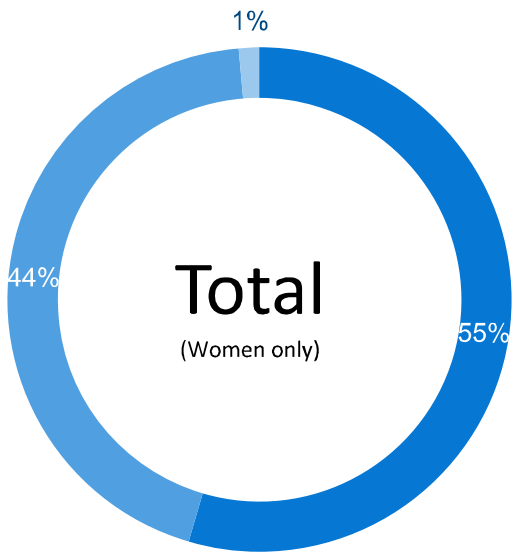
DETAILED FINDINGS

Q: Have you felt your period ever prevented you from full participation in an activity?



Please indicate whether you have experienced any of the following due to your period: Felt your period ever prevented you from full participation in an activity?
Feb 16-23, 2018; Weight: Age, gender, region; base n = 2,000

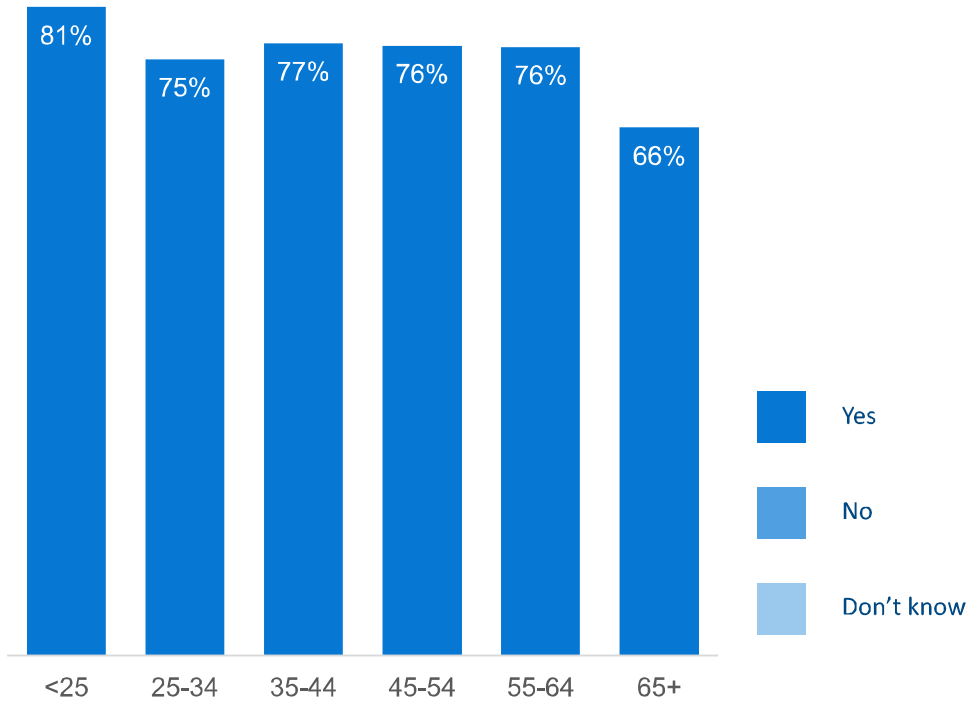
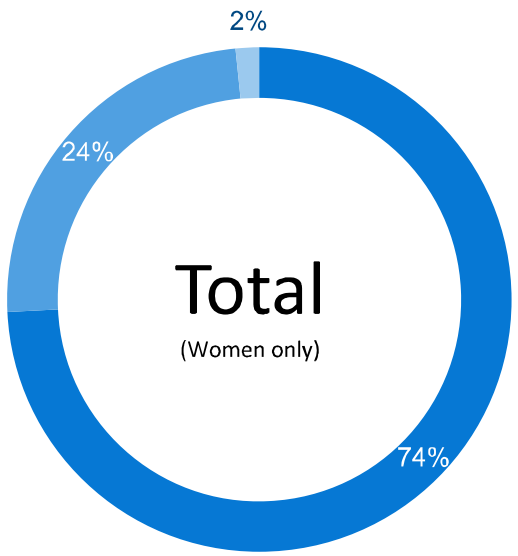
Q: Have you missed work or school, or declined social activities because of your period?



Please indicate whether you have experienced any of the following due to your period: Missed work or school, or declined social activities because of your period?

Feb 16-23, 2018; Weight: Age, gender, region; base n = 2,000

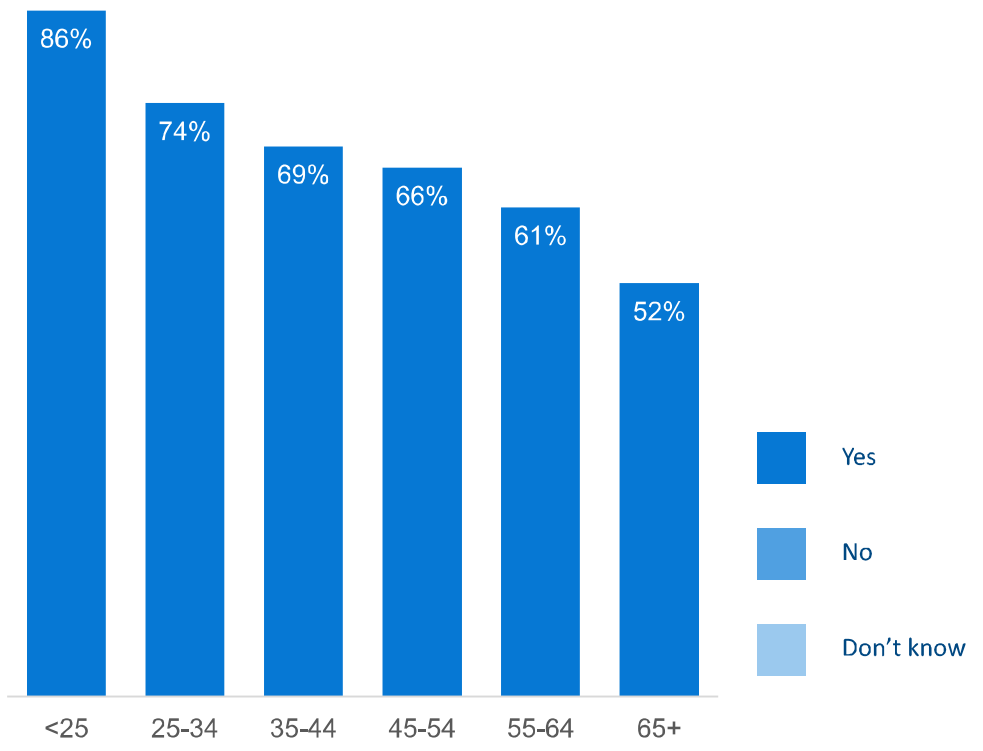
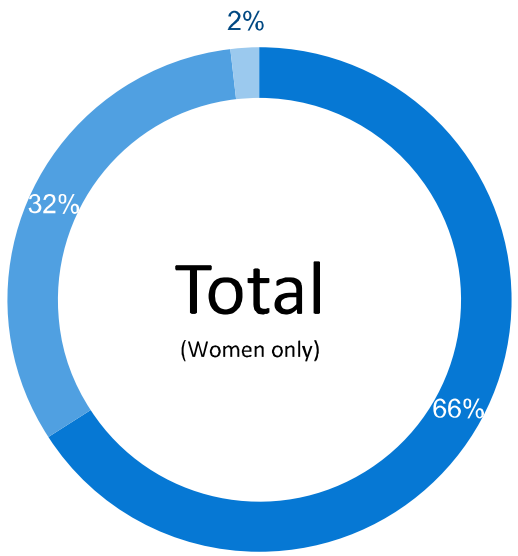
Q: Have you had a period leak at work or school?



Please indicate whether you have experienced any of the following due to your period: Had a period leak at work or school.

Feb 16-23, 2018; Weight: Age, gender, region; base n = 2,000

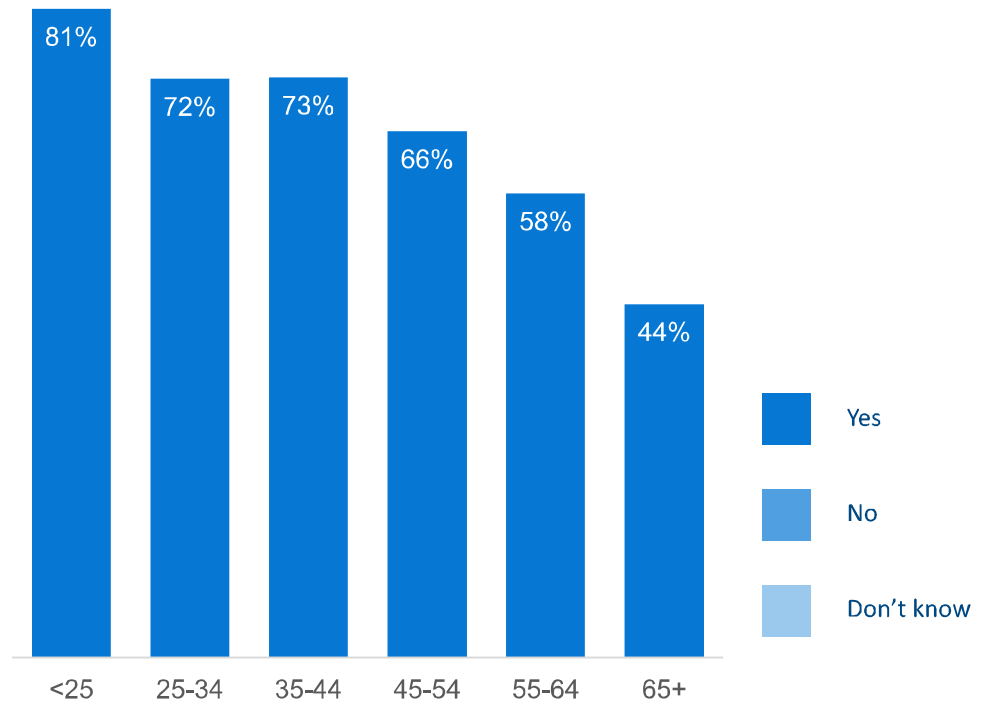
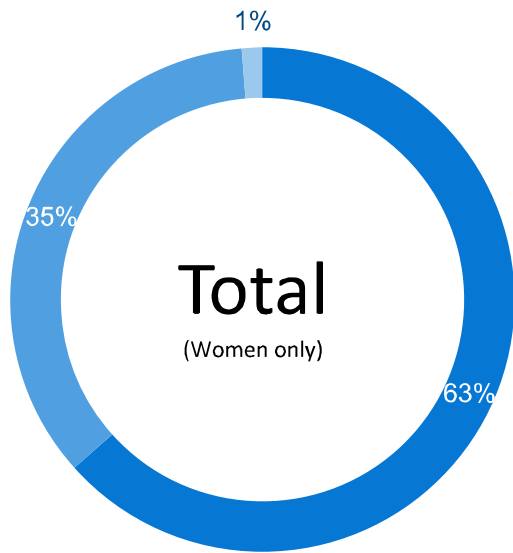
Q: Have you been unprepared when your period started?



Please indicate whether you have experienced any of the following due to your period: Been unprepared when your period started?

Feb 16-23, 2018; Weight: Age, gender, region; base n = 2,000

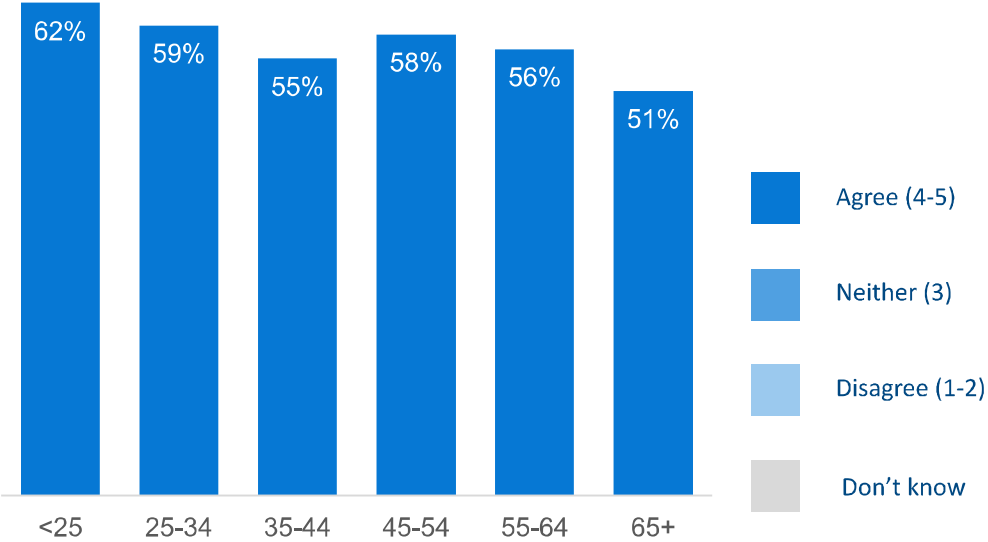
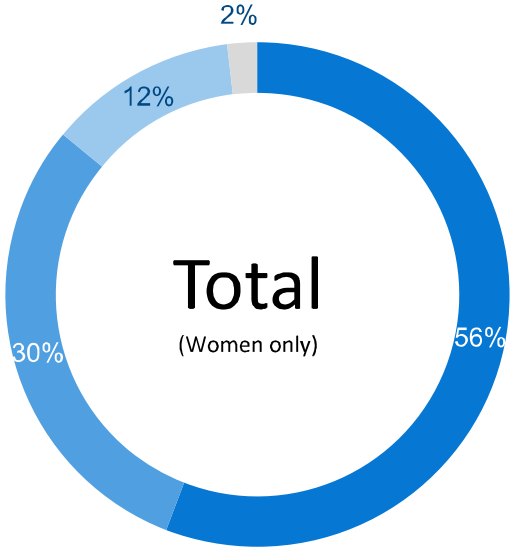
Q: Have you felt you had to hide that you were bringing a tampon or pad to the washroom at work or school?



Please indicate whether you have experienced any of the following due to your period: Felt you had to hide that you were bringing a tampon or pad to the washroom at work or school?

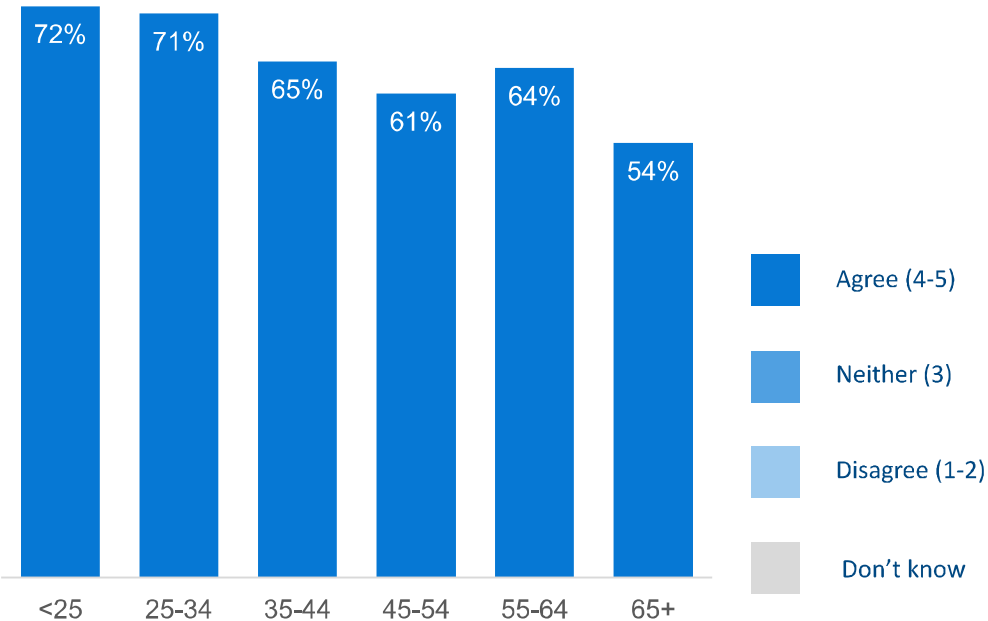
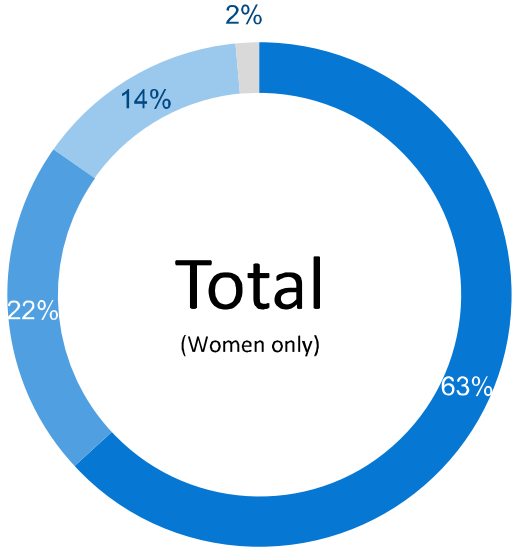
Feb 16-23, 2018; Weight: Age, gender, region; base n = 2,000

Q: Agree/ Disagree: I try not to let male colleagues at school or work know that I'm having my period.



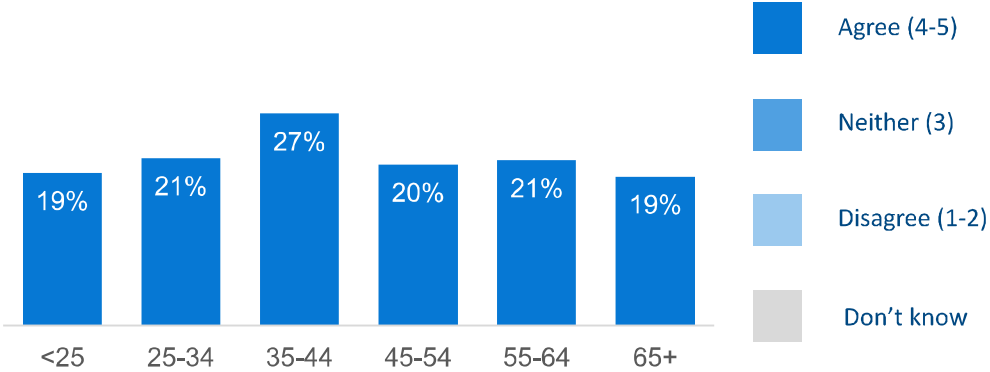
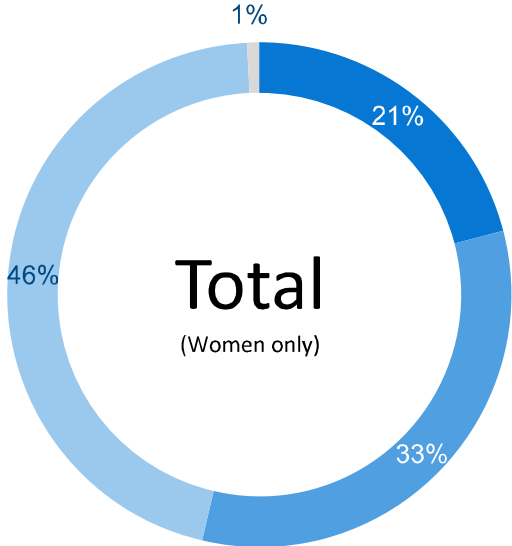
Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: I try not to let male colleagues at school or work know that I'm having my period. Feb 16-23, 2018; Weight: Age, gender, region; base n = 2,000

Q: Agree/ Disagree: Periods are an easy topic of conversation with my female friends.



Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: Periods are an easy topic of conversation with my female friends.
Feb 16-23, 2018; Weight: Age, gender, region; base n = 2,000

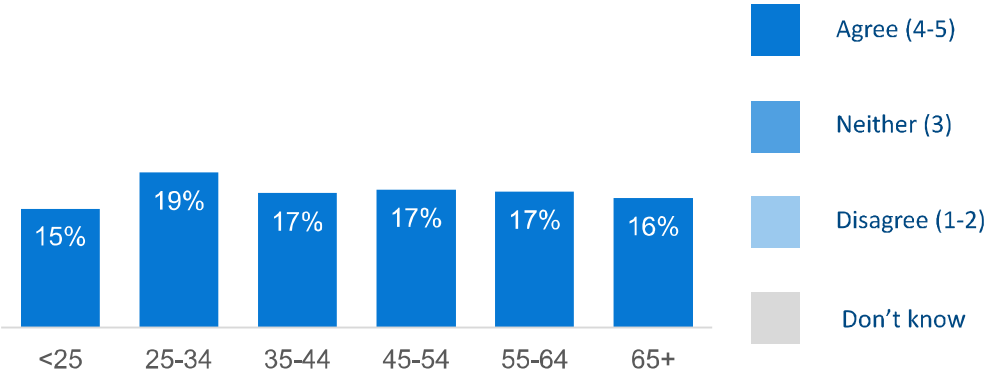
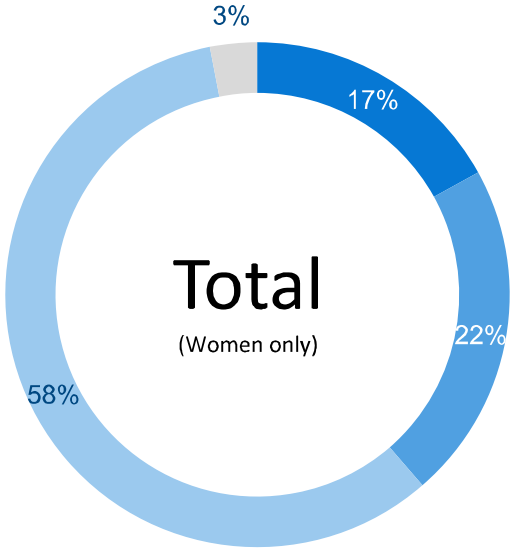
Q: Agree/ Disagree: I am uncomfortable talking about my period.



Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: I am uncomfortable talking about my period.

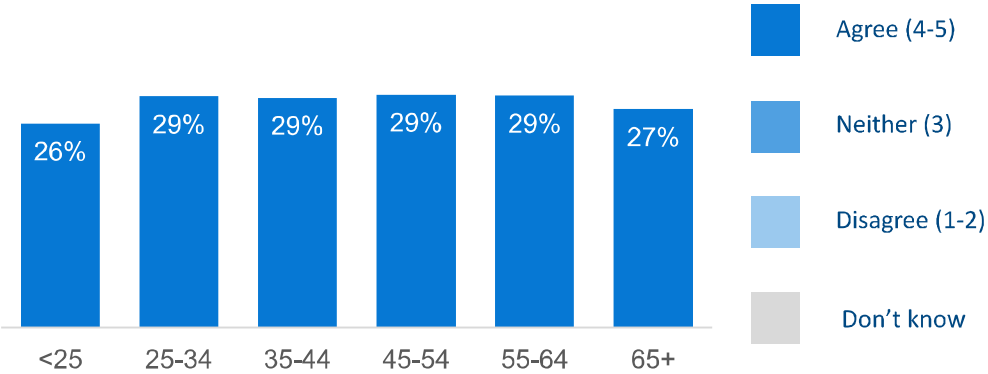
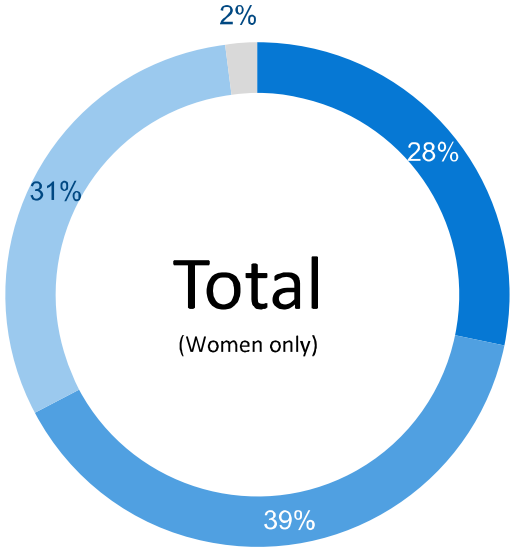
Feb 16-23, 2018; Weight: Age, gender, region; base n = 2,000

Q: Agree/ Disagree: I am uncomfortable talking about my period with my intimate partner.



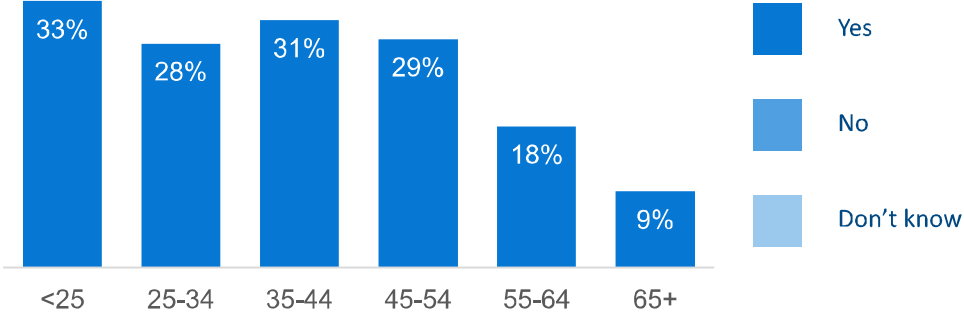
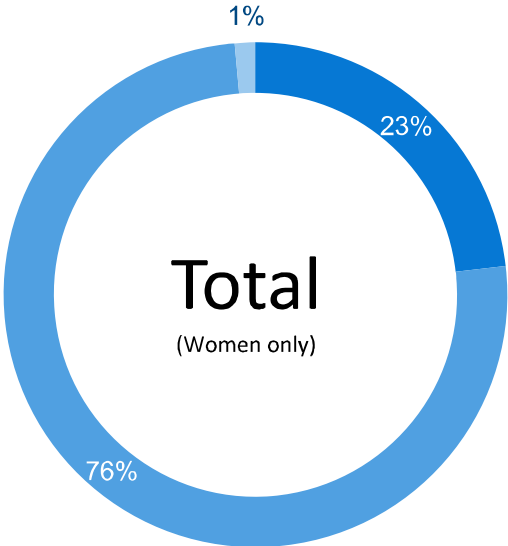
Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: I am uncomfortable talking about my period with my intimate partner.
 Feb 16-23, 2018; Weight: Age, gender, region; base n = 2,000

Q: Agree/ Disagree: I try not to let female colleagues at school or work know that I'm having my period.



Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: I try not to let female colleagues at school or work know that I'm having my period. Feb 16-23, 2018; Weight: Age, gender, region; base n = 2,000

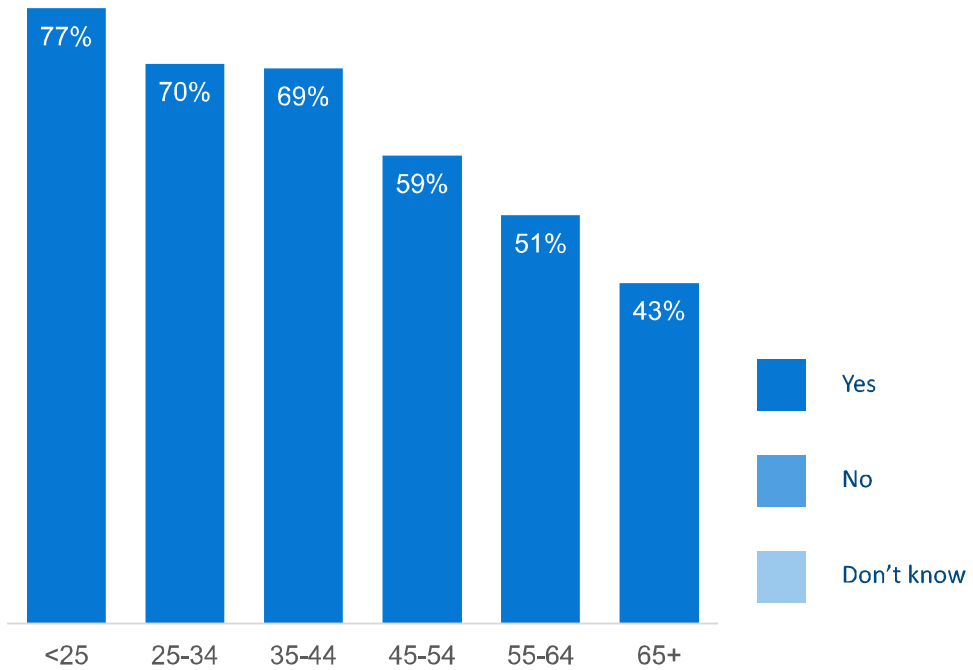
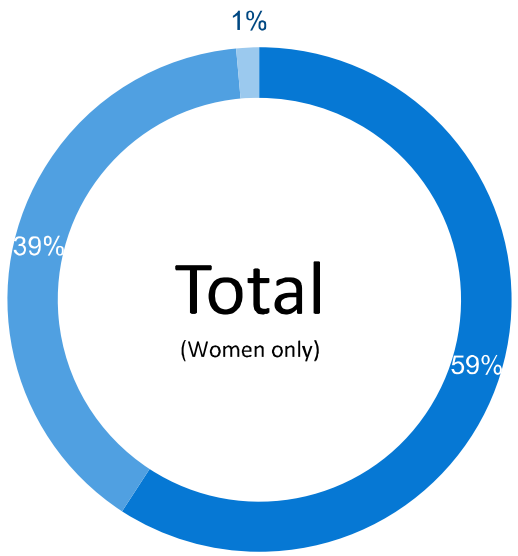
Q: Have you struggled to afford menstrual products for yourself or dependents?



Please indicate whether you have experienced any of the following due to your period: Struggled to afford menstrual products for yourself or dependents?

Feb 16-23, 2018; Weight: Age, gender, region; base n = 2,000

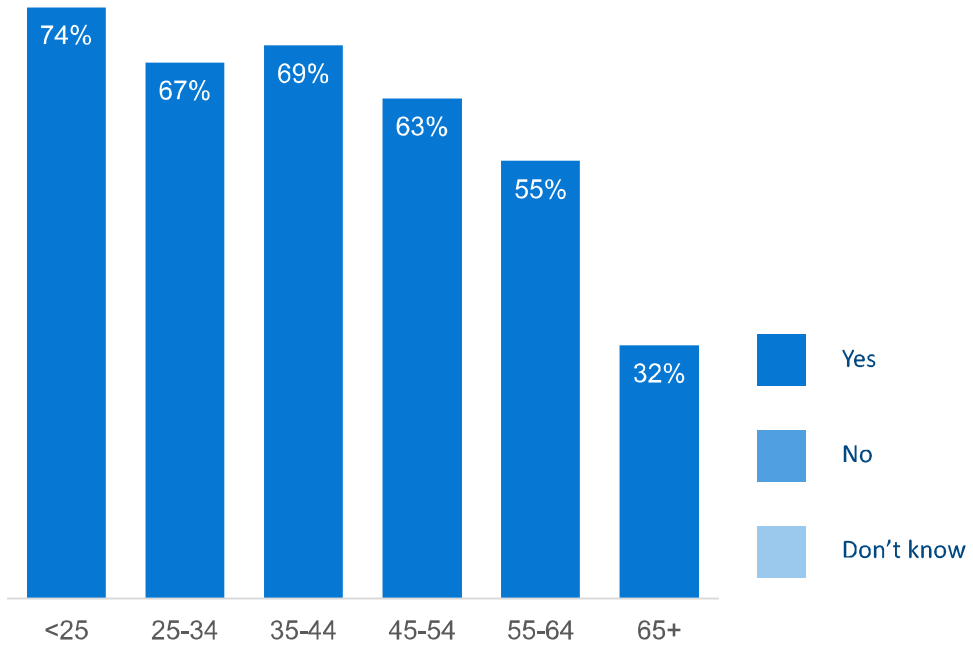
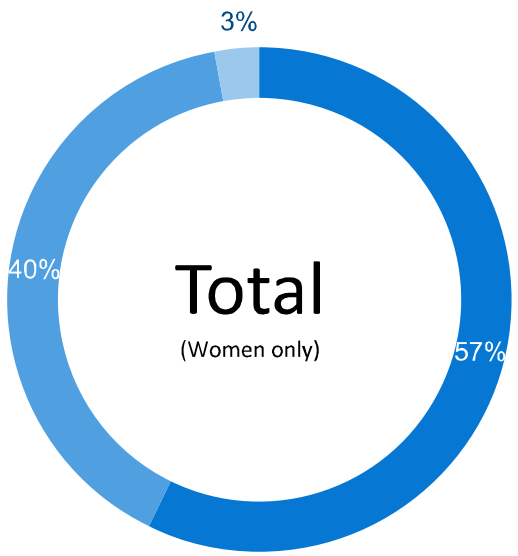
Q: Have you felt anxiety or dread because your period was late?



Please indicate whether you have experienced any of the following due to your period: Felt anxiety or dread because your period was late?

Feb 16-23, 2018; Weight: Age, gender, region; base n = 2,000

Q: Have you had other people accuse you of “PMS”?



Please indicate whether you have experienced any of the following due to your period: Had other people accuse you of “PMS”?

Feb 16-23, 2018; Weight: Age, gender, region; base n = 2,000

APPENDIX

Please indicate whether you have experienced any of the following due to your period: Felt your period ever prevented you from full participation in an activity.

Column %	Age Women						
	Total	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Yes	68%	68%	83%	74%	76%	71%	60%
No	31%	31%	17%	26%	22%	27%	39%
Don't know	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	2%	1%
Column n	68%	68%	83%	74%	76%	71%	60%

Please indicate whether you have experienced any of the following due to your period:
Missed work or school, or declined social activities because of your period.

Column %	Age Women						
	Total	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Yes	55%	70%	61%	60%	54%	53%	41%
No	44%	30%	37%	38%	45%	46%	58%
Don't know	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Column n	2,000	208	322	321	354	347	448

Please indicate whether you have experienced any of the following due to your period: Had a period leak at work or school.

Column %	Age Women						
	Total	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Yes	74%	81%	75%	77%	76%	76%	66%
No	24%	19%	23%	22%	22%	22%	33%
Don't know	2%	0%	3%	1%	2%	2%	1%
Column n	2,000	208	322	321	354	347	448

Please indicate whether you have experienced any of the following due to your period:
 Been unprepared when your period started.

Column %	Age Women						
	Total	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Yes	66%	86%	74%	69%	66%	61%	52%
No	32%	14%	24%	30%	32%	37%	46%
Don't know	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Column n	2,000	208	322	321	354	347	448

Please indicate whether you have experienced any of the following due to your period: Felt you had to hide that you were bringing a tampon or pad to the washroom at work or school.

Column %	Age Women						
	Total	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Yes	63%	81%	72%	73%	66%	58%	44%
No	35%	19%	27%	27%	31%	41%	54%
Don't know	1%	0%	1%	0%	3%	1%	2%
Column n	2,000	208	322	321	354	347	448

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: I try not to let male colleagues at school or work know that I'm having my period.

Column %	Age Women						
	Total	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Disagree (1-2)	12%	11%	17%	16%	11%	10%	9%
Agree (4-5)	56%	62%	59%	55%	58%	56%	51%
1- Strongly disagree	7%	5%	7%	8%	7%	6%	7%
2	5%	7%	10%	7%	4%	3%	3%
Neither (3)	30%	26%	23%	29%	29%	32%	37%
4	18%	28%	22%	16%	18%	14%	15%
5 – Strongly agree	38%	34%	37%	38%	40%	41%	36%
Don't know	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	3%	3%
Column n	2,000	208	322	321	354	347	448

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:
 Periods are an easy topic of conversation with my female friends.

Column %	Age Women						
	Total	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Disagree (1-2)	14%	14%	12%	13%	16%	13%	14%
Agree (4-5)	63%	72%	71%	65%	61%	64%	54%
1- Strongly disagree	5%	7%	3%	4%	6%	4%	4%
2	9%	7%	9%	9%	10%	9%	10%
Neither (3)	22%	14%	17%	21%	21%	22%	29%
4	25%	28%	27%	26%	23%	21%	25%
5 – Strongly agree	38%	44%	44%	39%	37%	43%	30%
Don't know	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%
Column n	2,000	208	322	321	354	347	448

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: I am uncomfortable talking about my period.

Column %	Age Women						
	Total	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Disagree (1-2)	46%	54%	48%	48%	45%	44%	40%
Agree (4-5)	21%	19%	21%	27%	20%	21%	19%
1- Strongly disagree	27%	31%	31%	25%	26%	26%	26%
2	18%	22%	18%	23%	19%	17%	14%
Neither (3)	33%	27%	30%	25%	34%	35%	40%
4	14%	14%	14%	15%	14%	14%	11%
5 – Strongly agree	7%	5%	7%	11%	6%	7%	7%
Don't know	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Column n	2,000	208	322	321	354	347	448

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: I am uncomfortable talking about my period with my intimate partner.

Column %	Age Women						
	Total	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Disagree (1-2)	58%	59%	65%	65%	56%	57%	52%
Agree (4-5)	17%	15%	19%	17%	17%	17%	16%
1- Strongly disagree	41%	41%	45%	45%	41%	41%	35%
2	17%	18%	21%	19%	15%	15%	16%
Neither (3)	22%	20%	14%	17%	23%	24%	29%
4	10%	10%	11%	9%	11%	9%	10%
5 – Strongly agree	7%	5%	8%	8%	6%	8%	7%
Don't know	3%	7%	2%	2%	4%	3%	3%
Column n	2,000	208	322	321	354	347	448

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: I try not to let female colleagues at school or work know that I'm having my period.

Column %	Age Women						
	Total	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Disagree (1-2)	31%	41%	38%	31%	27%	28%	26%
Agree (4-5)	28%	26%	29%	29%	29%	29%	27%
1- Strongly disagree	17%	23%	19%	17%	14%	17%	14%
2	14%	18%	19%	14%	13%	11%	12%
Neither (3)	39%	32%	33%	39%	41%	41%	44%
4	14%	18%	16%	13%	14%	15%	12%
5 – Strongly agree	14%	7%	13%	16%	15%	14%	15%
Don't know	2%	1%	1%	1%	3%	2%	3%
Column n	2,000	208	322	321	354	347	448

Please indicate whether you have experienced any of the following due to your period:
Struggled to afford menstrual products for yourself or dependents.

Column %	Age Women						
	Total	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Yes	23%	33%	28%	31%	29%	18%	9%
No	76%	64%	71%	68%	70%	81%	90%
Don't know	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%
Column n	2,000	208	322	321	354	347	448

Please indicate whether you have experienced any of the following due to your period: Felt anxiety or dread because your period was late.

Column %	Age Women						
	Total	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Yes	59%	77%	70%	69%	59%	51%	43%
No	39%	22%	29%	30%	39%	48%	55%
Don't know	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%
Column n	2,000	208	322	321	354	347	448

Please indicate whether you have experienced any of the following due to your period: Had other people accuse you of “PMS”.

Column %	Age Women						
	Total	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Yes	57%	74%	67%	69%	63%	55%	32%
No	40%	24%	31%	28%	34%	42%	65%
Don't know	3%	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Column n	2,000	208	322	321	354	347	448