



# BYSTANDER WARINESS: A FEAR OF HELPING IN A MEDICAL EMERGENCY

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## BACKGROUND

### Bystander Laws In the US

#### Good Samaritan Laws (GSL)

Protects against civil liability if a bystander decides to help

#### Duty to Aid/Rescue Laws (DtA)

Bystanders required to help to a "reasonable degree"

<3% victims receive bystander aid

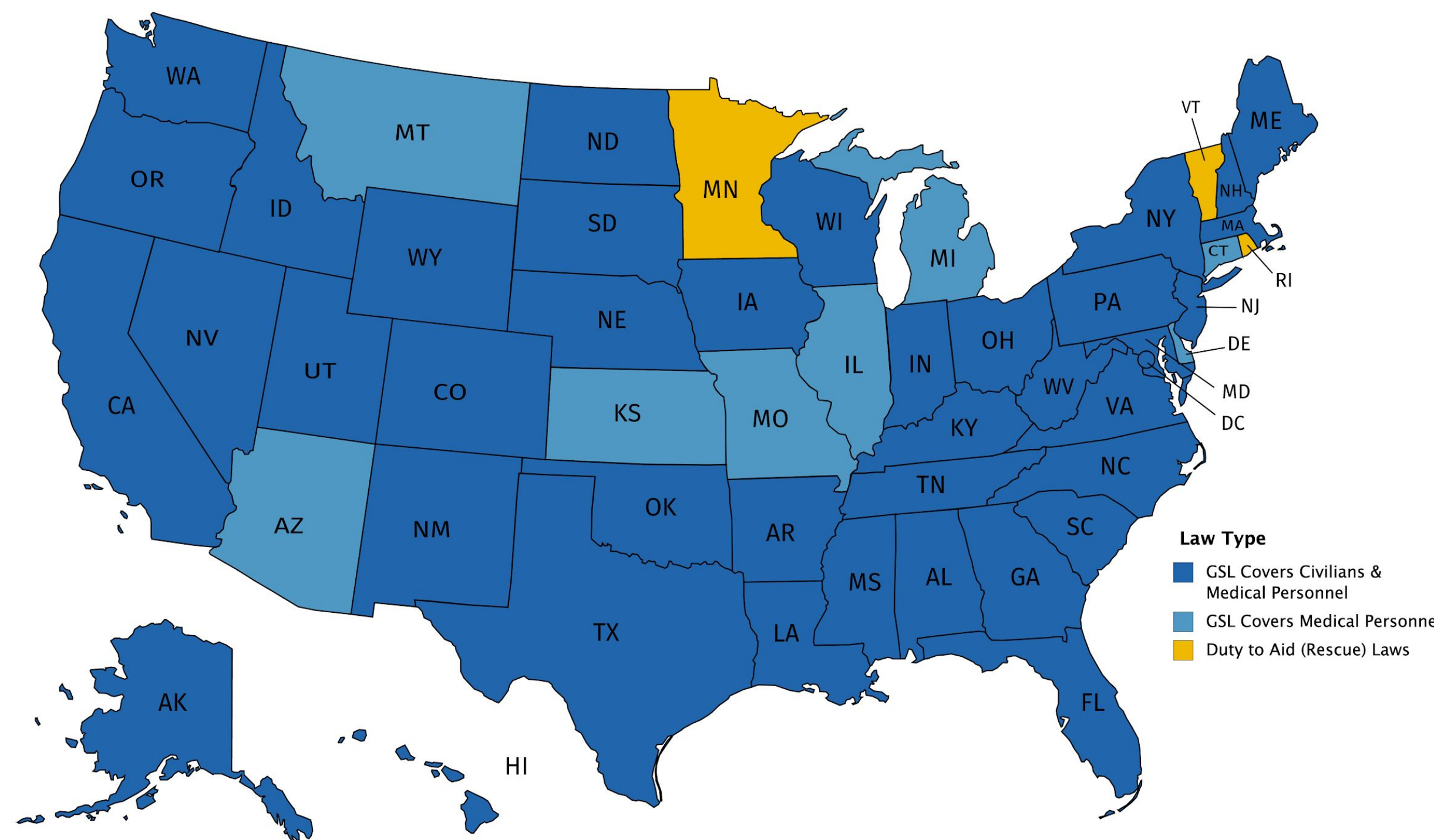


Fig 1. A map showing the general law type by state.

### Bystander Response

Bystanders act more unpredictably when under pressure (Skora and Riegel 2001)

**Bystander Effect:** Average response rates ~70% (in theoretical study) but decreases dramatically when other bystanders are present (Darley and Latané 1968)

Bystander effect is more prevalent in females than males (Schwartz and Clausen 1970)

Now linked more to masculinity than gender (Leone et al. 2016, Tice and Baumeister 1985, Koon 2013)

### Guiding Questions:

Does awareness of bystander aid law impede bystander response?  
How does a victim's profile affect bystander response?

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

Two surveys that discuss a hypothetical medical emergency:

**1<sup>st</sup> Survey:** Different versions explained DtA, GSL, both, or neither beforehand and focused on differences between awareness of law types

**2<sup>nd</sup> Survey:** Version established either a "middle-aged man" or a "young girl" as the victim and focused on gender differences

## WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Examining bystander psychology through the scope of bystander laws allows us to gauge their effectiveness and make adjustments to better protect victims and bystanders

## IMPLICATIONS

Not worth changing current legislation (from a psychological perspective)

**Bystander Wariness:** A fear of helping certain victims over others does exist

Expands possible methodologies to hypothetical scenarios

### Bibliography

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## RESULTS & ANALYSIS

### Likelihood to Offer Aid By Version Type

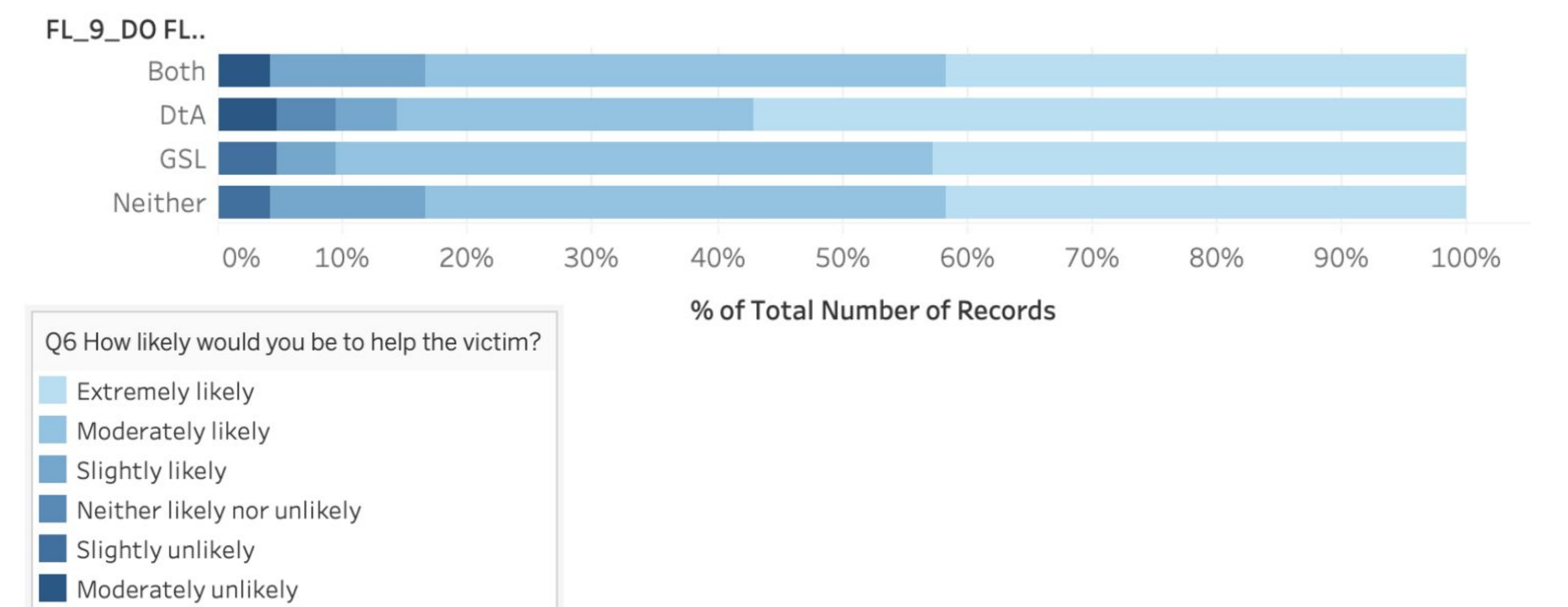
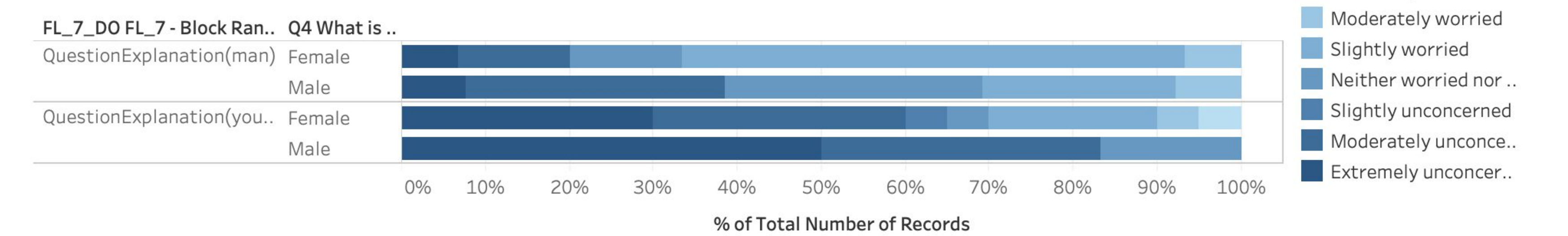


Fig 2. This graph shows participants' responses to how likely they would be to help the victim when split by their respective versions. (p<0.80)

### Likely negligible difference between awareness of law types

### Fear of Being Tricked Between Versions and Participant Gender



### Fear of Being Tricked between Versions

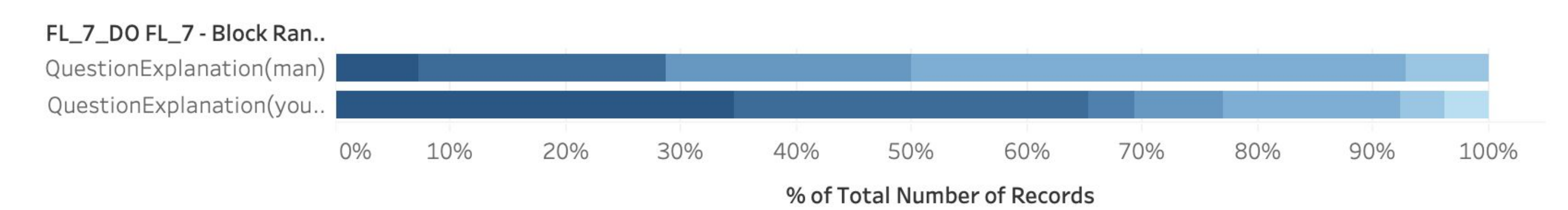
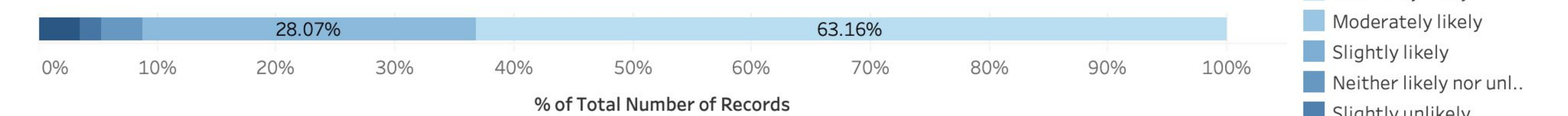


Fig 3. Participants were asked whether they feared the emergency was a trick of some kind. A significant difference was seen between the "young girl" and "middle-aged man" version types. (p<0.01)

### Exemplifies victim profiling in bystanders

### Response When Alone



### Response With Others Nearby

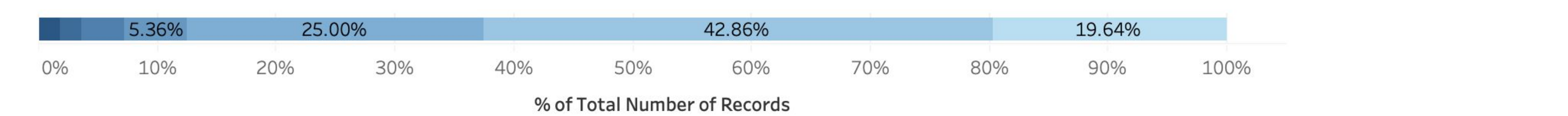


Fig 4. Participants were asked first how likely they would be to help the victim if they were the only bystander in sight, then again if there were other bystanders in the general vicinity. (p<0.001)

### Shows that the bystander effect occurs in a hypothetical situations