

VareseNews

“If he beats me up, the guilt is mine.”

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It is not easy to overcome the stereotypes which go with the delicate topic of gender-based violence, also among young generation. This is shown by the answers of over **1,300 students of Italian upper-schools** collected in a questionnaire distributed by the **Community ScuolaZoo** for the campaign “**Indifesa**” of **Terre des Hommes**. The data collected and spread on the occasion of the **International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women**, portray a situation which is far from reality and certainly troubling.

As regards the victims, there persists a widespread ideal of making the woman guilty, even if in an indirect way. Almost 70% of young boys interviewed agree with the statement that “**if a woman is constantly ill-treated she is guilty because she is continuing living with this man.**” Among other things, for almost 4 boys in 10, the violence is considered as a fact “inner the couple” with nobody else should interfere.

The torturer, instead, finds a lot of explanations. Over 80% of the interviewees are completely or partially in agreement with the statement that “men who mistreat do this because they have problems with alcohol or drugs” while for 90% of young people the “psychic imbalances” would cause violence.

These data arouse more than one perplexity on how the gender-based violence in Italy is explained. But even more concern springs from the fact that, in any case, hurt a too jealous girlfriend is justify by more than 20% of the interviewees.

A positive fact, maybe the only one encouraging, comes from the relationship with the children. **According to 74.8% of these young people, domestic violence must not be borne by victims, not even for the presumed love for the children.** Maybe it is still little, but at least is seems to clearly emerge the awareness that a violent relationship breeds other violence or disquiet.

Less evident, but perhaps even more interesting for the bottom lines that seems to bring out, is the framework that comes from the answer to the questions about the role of the woman and the gender-based stereotypes, but it is far from being reassuring. In fact, if is true that for

almost 92% of interviewees “the important decisions for what concern family must be taken as mutually agreed between spouses,” is also true that:

55.4% is very or partially in agreement with the statement that **“it is the man, who must manage the family;”**

59.3% is in agreement with the statement that **“taking care of the house and the family is a woman prerogative;”**

65.5% is in agreement with the statement that in our society **“the role of the woman is mostly that of being mother”**, but here we do not know if is it only an observation of facts or and idea of a “natural” sharing of roles.

So conveys the idea, also among young people aged between 14 and 18, that some tasks are more “natural” for women, since that for 44,6% of the interviewees “men are not able to carry out domestic activities” while about 30% are very or partially in agreement with the idea that for a man is “humiliating to carry out domestic works.”

In order to fight against preconceptions and discrimination which are in the ideas of preteens and to provide teachers and parents with the effective tools to identify situations of inconvenience, which are potentially dangerous, Terre des Hommes has led meetings of awareness and prevention of the gender-based discrimination in the middle schools. From these courses, with the sponsorship of the Office of Equal Opportunity, has been created the first manual for middle schools, which has taken the title of the course itself

“Di Pari Passo” published by Settenove. In terms of violence against children, Terre des Hommes realized 5 animated short films of “Mimì Fiore di cactus”. This is a drop in an ocean of stereotypes and ignorance.

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