

Running head: LEADING CAUSES OF DEPRESSION

Research Proposal

**What are the Leading Causes of Depression in both the States  
and Saipan?**

EN 202 – 01

Northern Marianas College

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Authors note:

This research proposal was written and required for EN 202 - 01 instructed by Dr.  
Kimberly Bunts – Anderson

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### Abstract

A study of depression was conducted by a Northern Marianas College (NMC) student, as part of an English assignment. The project looks at the current status of people who has gone through depression here on the island of Saipan and the States. Data for the project was collected through surveys of residents, questionnaires and interviews with experts. Initial findings suggest that depression may be problematic across the island. Experts claim that prevention of depression is impossible. Surprisingly, initial comments from authorities indicate that the only possible way of preventing depression is by surrounding oneself with people who show love and affection.

What are the Leading Causes of Depression in both the States and Saipan?

According to Dr. John in Psych Central depression is a mental disorder that can be common to many people affected by their daily lives. Depression is a disorder that leaves people feeling stress, irritated, sad, worthless, and hopeless most of the times. It is called a disorder because it is out of the ordinary and is not easy to be understood by many (Grohol, 2016). They start to isolate themselves from everyone, which becomes really lonesome and may lead to suicidal thoughts. The reason why some people get depress is because sometimes they start to overthink about a problem and may feel guilty about it, they analyze about little things too much. Most of the people who notice others with depression may be aware about it but are not sure how to help that's person. Others are ashamed to ask for help or tell someone when they notice that they have the symptoms of depression because they feel that they will be isolated from everyone.

Furthermore, according to Young (2014) in BMC Psychiatry when someone is going through depression it may lead to many deadly thoughts. Some people may think that they are alone and try to solve it. When others are depress sometimes it leads to doing self-mutilation thinking they can forget what they are feeling when in reality it probably may become worse. Others treat depression by seeing a psychologist and go through therapy to talk about it or simply talk to a close family friend to release what you feel. There are some cases where some people would "hang out" or "make friends" with the wrong group thinking it will make them feel better, but when it is the wrong crowd the feeling starts to feel heavier and it just feels like it is getting covered up. They try to

relieve their depression by drinking or smoking, which sometimes can lead to an addiction, which gives them another problem. Some people find self-harm or overdosing helpful to cover up the pain and sadness when they are going through depression, but actually nothing much changes, it just hides what you feel sometimes.

### Literature Review

The research will talk about dealing with a disorder called depression. The student researcher will analyze if there are any differences between depression in the States and here in the CNMI. Since getting depress is known here in the CNMI either because of overthinking about problems, which makes them stress or it really becomes a disorder when you feel hopeless. The student researcher decided that it would be good to share about what are the reasons and what we can do to help them or how they can help themselves. This research paper will answer these questions:

1. What are the different causes of depression in the States and here in the CNMI?
2. What may be the leading cause of depression?
3. How does Saipan residents perceive
  - Depression
  - People with depression
  - Importance about depression
  - Assistance for depression

To find out more about the topic of depression the student researcher will do a pilot survey online, 10 different students from grades 7<sup>th</sup> – college. The researcher will interview 2 parents and some teenagers about what they know about depression and

others who does not know much about it. Since it also deals with mental health I will also interview and gather information from majors of psychology and health. The student researcher will give survey questions to a nurse and a psychologist. This will help me get more information and learn more about the topic of depression.

<u>RESEACH SCHEDULE</u>	<u>WRITING SCHEDULE</u>
<b>Aug. 25 - 30</b> Gather some information of what may cause depression	<b>Sept. 1</b> Start writing about what I learned and gathers so far
<b>Sept. 2</b> Proposal Rough Draft #1 Due	<b>Sept. 6</b> Add more to rough draft and make corrections
<b>Sept. 5 – 9</b> Interview people who have experience depression, friends, teachers, psychologists and families	<b>Sept. 13</b> Fix Rough Draft #1 (final)
<b>Sept. 12 – 16</b> Do pilot survey (online, on campus or outside of campus)	<b>Sept. 30</b> Start organizing literature
<b>Sept. 20 – 23</b> Gather all information	<b>Oct. 03</b> Organize methodology
<b>Oct. 05 – 20</b> Gather all data from survey monkey (FINAL), gather letter and interviews from experts	<b>Oct. 11</b> Input all data collected
	<b>Nov. 30</b> Finish final research paper

Speaking about depression, according to Costello (2016) studies indicate that women are most likely to get more depress than men. While men stress about a certain problem women tend to stress about it even more. After a while men tend to just leave it alone and let it go while women start to over thinking about the problem. The cause of this is because of this certain hormone in both male and female's body. Both male and female have (CRF) Corticotropin Releasing Factors hormones that gets released when a person is stressed, however it usually stays in most females that is the reason they tend to

get more stressed leading to depression. Comparing this data to the ones the student researcher have collected it is quite similar but at the same time not that easy to explain because the survey was given out randomly.

The student researcher's project started out by collecting information from books and online sources about depression. In the beginning the researcher looked for several topics that may be interesting and beneficial for the whole community and oneself. While collecting different information and putting together what the researcher knew, they started to see if the schedule that was prepared was going according to plan. The researcher noticed that they had to make some changes in the research that was being made.

During the research about depression, the student researcher initially conducted a research at NMC and made an online survey. It took them several weeks to gather all the information from different sources. A pilot study of convenience with the student's peers was conducted on September 05, 2016. The study was designed using the free option of [surveymonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com) and distributed electronically to 20 of the researcher's peers. With the help of the website, the student researcher was able to easily generate important questions for the research. Also it was easier to distribute the survey to willing participants since the website is beginner friendly. After the initial survey, the student researcher started a final survey, which resulted to total 52 different students and outsiders, 20 students in NMC, 27 in different schools on island, and 5 outside of the CNMI. Classmates in the same class provided 20 of unexpected information and the survey was extended to a wider group.

The next step is to prepare letters and schedule interviews to experts that have experiences about this topic. The expert's experiences will be able to accumulate more informational responses about the topic. The experts that will be interviewed are psychology teachers, psychiatrists, and nurses who have experienced about depression. Since the experts are familiar with the topic they should be able to provide me with more accurate data than from the pilot survey that was made online. The final thing that the student researcher will do is to gather all new data and put it together to see their final results.

According to the surveys that were sent out, a total of 52 individuals participated, ages ranging from 16 – 35. The initial survey contained mostly closed ended questions to motivate short responses (see Appendix A). About 70% of the individuals stated defined depression as an emotion while 30% declared it as an illness. A total of 6 participants gave a different answer that did not really state what they thought depression meant. Most of the participants seem to have a misunderstanding about what depression truly is. Fifty-one answered seriously while one did not but still decided to take the survey, probably as a joke. A large amount of individuals seem to be aware of others who may be experiencing depression and the patients (people who are depressed) usually deals depression by themselves, keeping themselves busy, or talking to a friend or family member about what they are feeling. Many also think that people who are experiencing depression mostly need help and a friend who understands and listens to what they feel. Surprisingly, half of the participants answered that they either had someone in their family who is going through depression, who used to be depressed, and around 2 who are depressed. About 64% individuals have tried to help someone who is going through



depression, however; only some listened to their advice, while others pushed them away. They felt like it was really difficult to help someone who did not want to be help, but then again, some would continue to ask for help even if it looked like nothing was changing about that person. Most participants somewhat knew about what depression actually is, while only about 10% actually knew what it is. Statistics show that the leading causes of depression are from any type of abuse, conflicts between friends and family, and major events happening in one's life. Many of the individuals seem to have symptoms of depression, but are not really aware of it. It is better if they continue to take care of themselves to prevent them from getting to depressed. In the survey most of the participants said that depression can be treated by surrounding oneself with positive people and with time and love.

Three important letters were sent out to an expert who has an important role on the topic of depression (see Appendix B). A psychologist, who studies about the mental and behavior process of a person, a psychiatrist who specializes in mental health, such as mental disorders, and a nurse who have a good knowledge about a person's mental and physical health when dealing with depression. However, only 2 out of 3 experts replied and gave very detailed answers (see Appendix C), the psychologist and nurse. According to Professor Jones, the psychologist, he stated that depression comes from within the brain and affects the behavior of a person. Everyone is affected differently and may act a different way. While on the other hand, Nurse Jalad responded that no one is sure what causes depression, but that there are some factors that do such as, broken relationships or post partum delivery.

Both Jones and Jalad replied that depression is not something that can be easily treated or prevented. Most likely, anyone may get depressed at times, but the Jones also answered that it may come from origin or mental state, and prevention depends on the person whether they can help themselves. Nonetheless, Jalad gives a different approach, stating that social support is really important because to help a person who is going through depression, people need to reach out to that individual. Give the person quality time, moral and spiritual support (Jalad, 2016). The fact that the Professor Jones is from Texas and Nurse Jalad is from Saipan, it lets us visualize that both places are completely different. In Houston, Texas they have the Texas Medical Center, which has the “highest concentration of finest hospitals, clinics, research universities and colleges in the world!” as told by the Professor Jones. Though, here in Saipan Nurse Jalad informs us that they do have a designated area for people, who are experiencing mental illnesses, which is the Commonwealth Health Center, Psych Ward.

Professor Jones and Nurse Jalad both advise that individuals who are going through depression to seek professional help, but also gave two different answers. For instant, if it is a different situation dealing with education a person should seek help from their counselors or if it is a personal problem to seek help spiritually. Both have also agreed that being surrounded by friends and families who are positive and supports you does help a person from depression. Even pets can help people relieve their depression.

### Discussion

In 2016, Grohol, J. stated that many individuals do not comprehend what depression actually is. Some people think that it is a disease, but depression is actually a mental disorder. A mental disorder is an illness that happens within the brain and puts people through a specific emotional state. Depression is one of the major disorders that can happen to anyone without them realizing it. Both studies of depression here in Saipan and the States are really similar to one another. If a professional research was conducted, there may be numerous of possibilities here on Saipan. Throughout the whole research report the student researcher found some mistakes that they made in their survey after it was given out. The researcher realized that they have forgotten to include a question asking about where the participant is from to know whether it is from Saipan or in the States. Only a certain amount of information from people in the States was collected. As for the letters to the experts, the student researcher felt that more time was needed. But overall the student researcher felt that they learned new things about depression and that it is an accomplishment to be able to share this report to their fellow colleagues.

### Conclusion

As a final point, depression is an important topic that everyone should be aware of especially in their island or country. Without knowing what depression is no one will be able to help prevent it. As study shows depression is a bit impossible to be prevented, but as long as a person tries to keep themselves busy with positive ideas depression will not get to them as easy as they think it will. Depression is a mental disorder that is out of the ordinary. The only way to treat depression is to seek help, if a person does not want to help themselves then no one will be able to.

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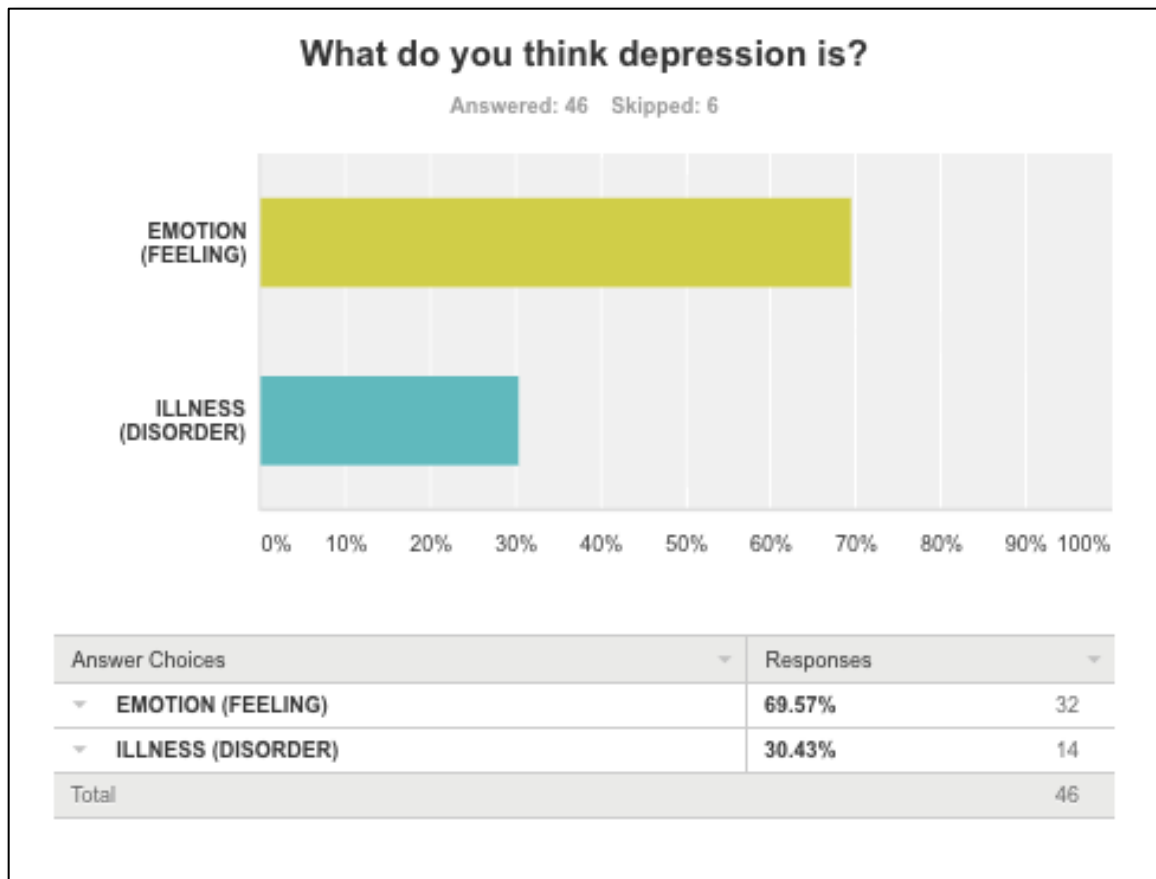
# Appendices

Appendix A  
 Survey Questions About Depression

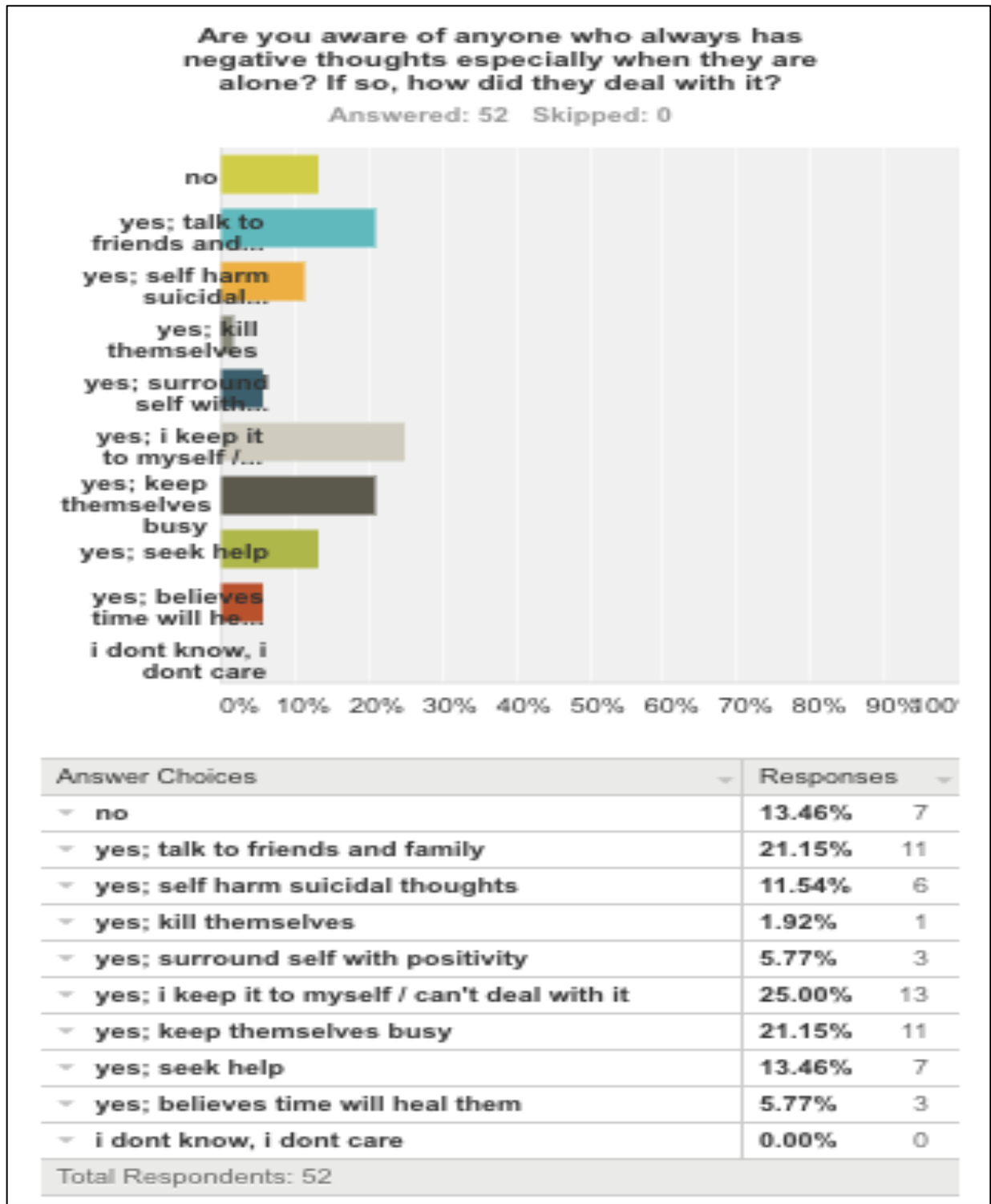
The following statistics will show:

1. How many percentage of people think that depression is an EMOTION or ILLNESS
2. If people are aware of it
3. People’s thoughts about someone experiencing depression
4. How many individuals know about someone in their family experiencing depression
5. How many have tried helping someone who is depressed
6. How many people know about depression
7. Some leading causes of depression
8. A percentage of people who have felt depression
9. How depression may be treated

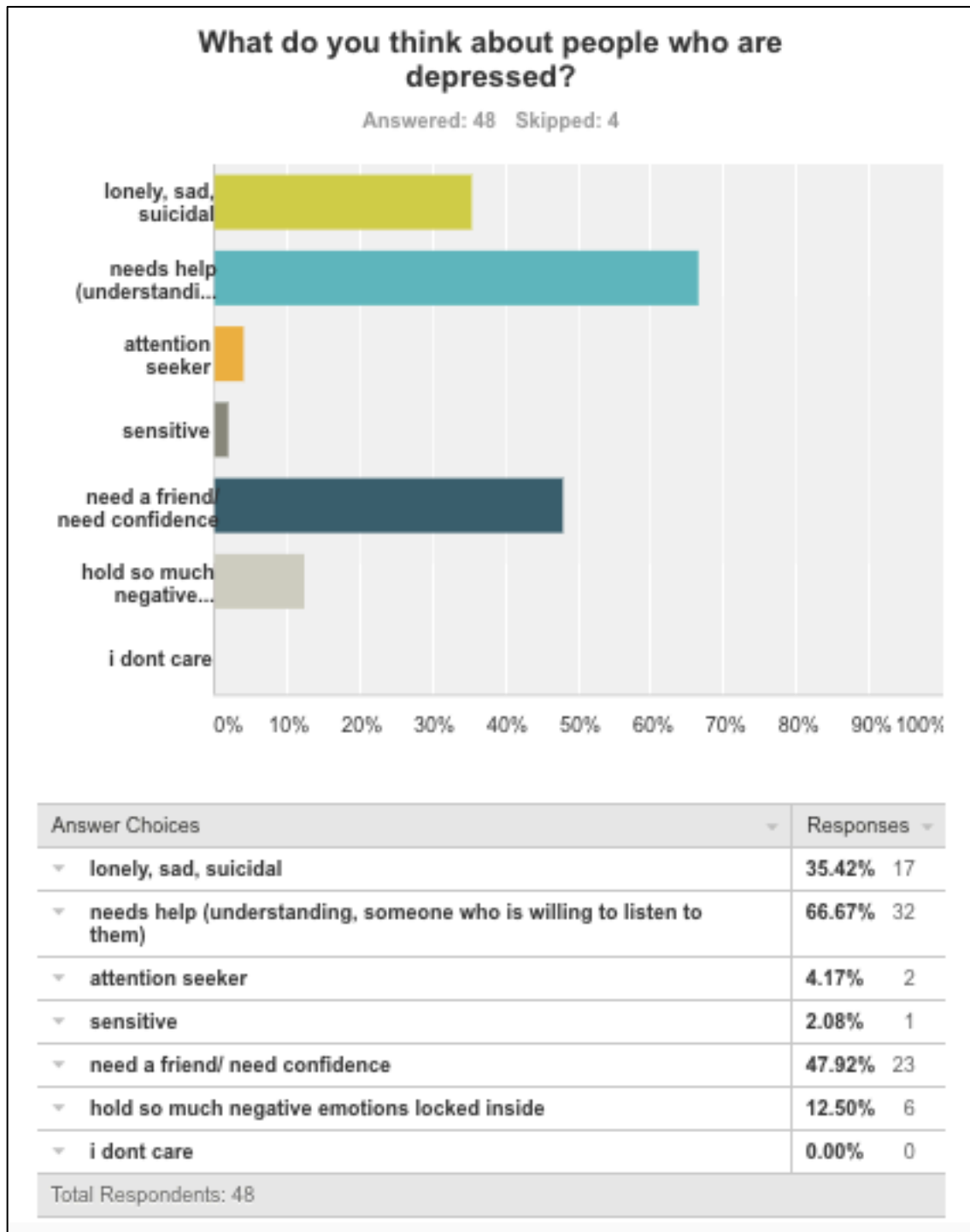
1A.



2A.

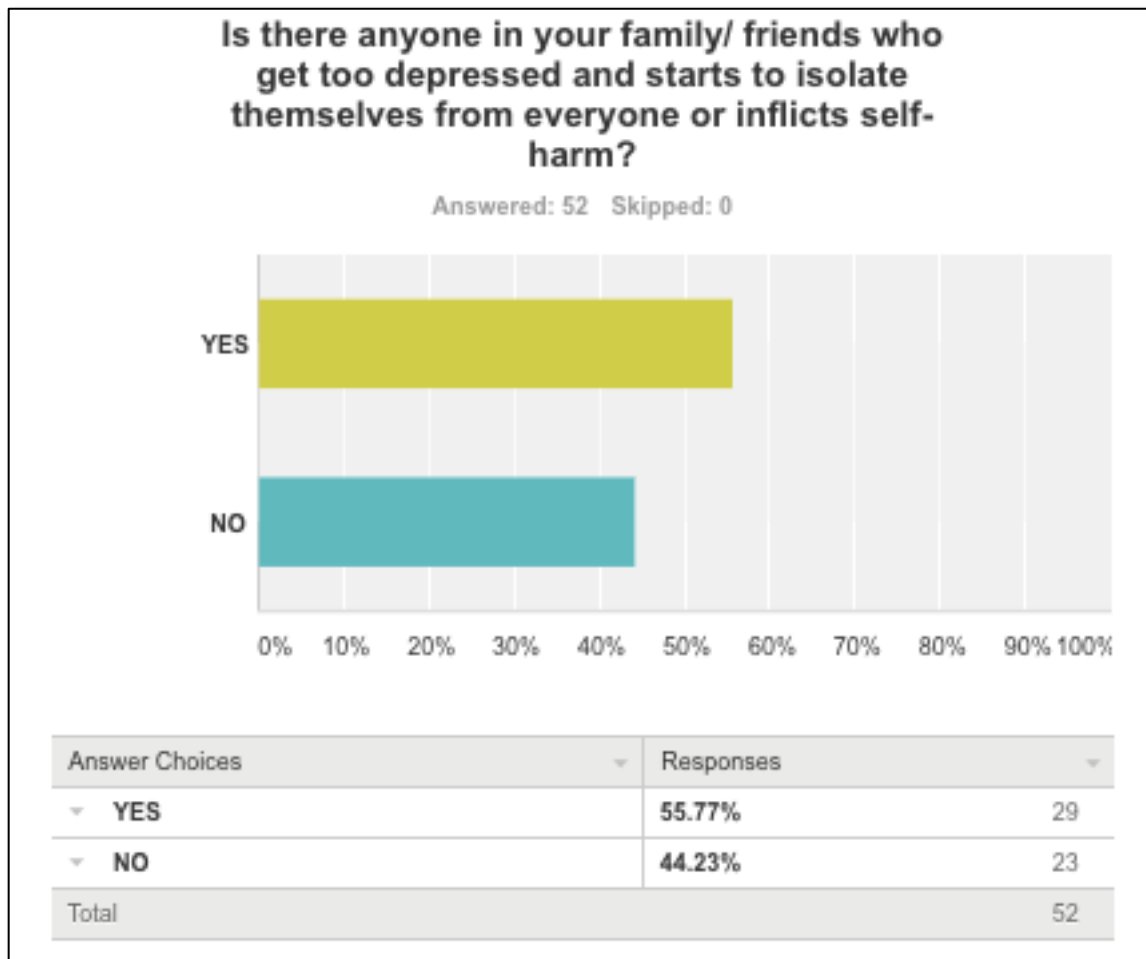


3A.

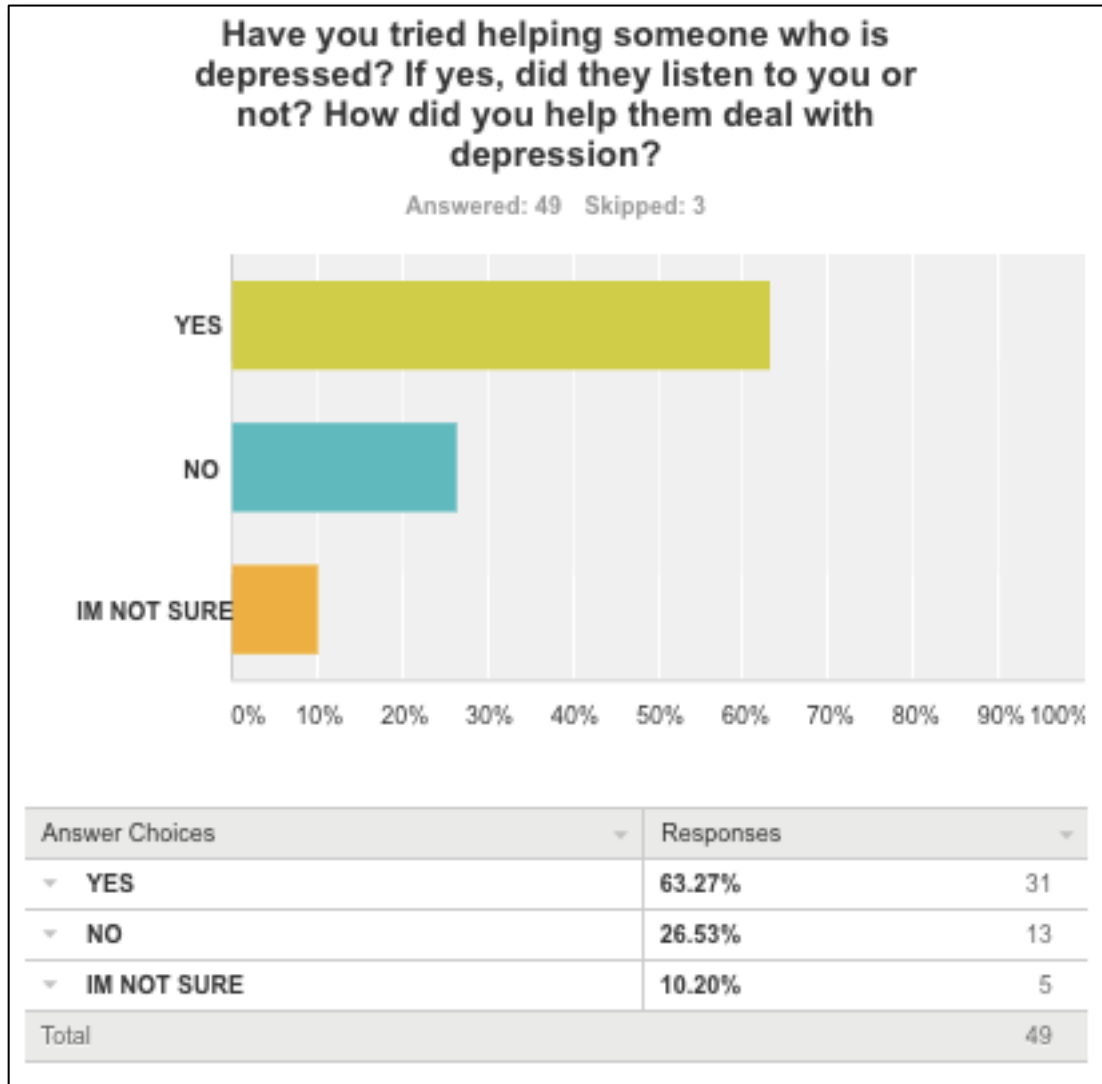




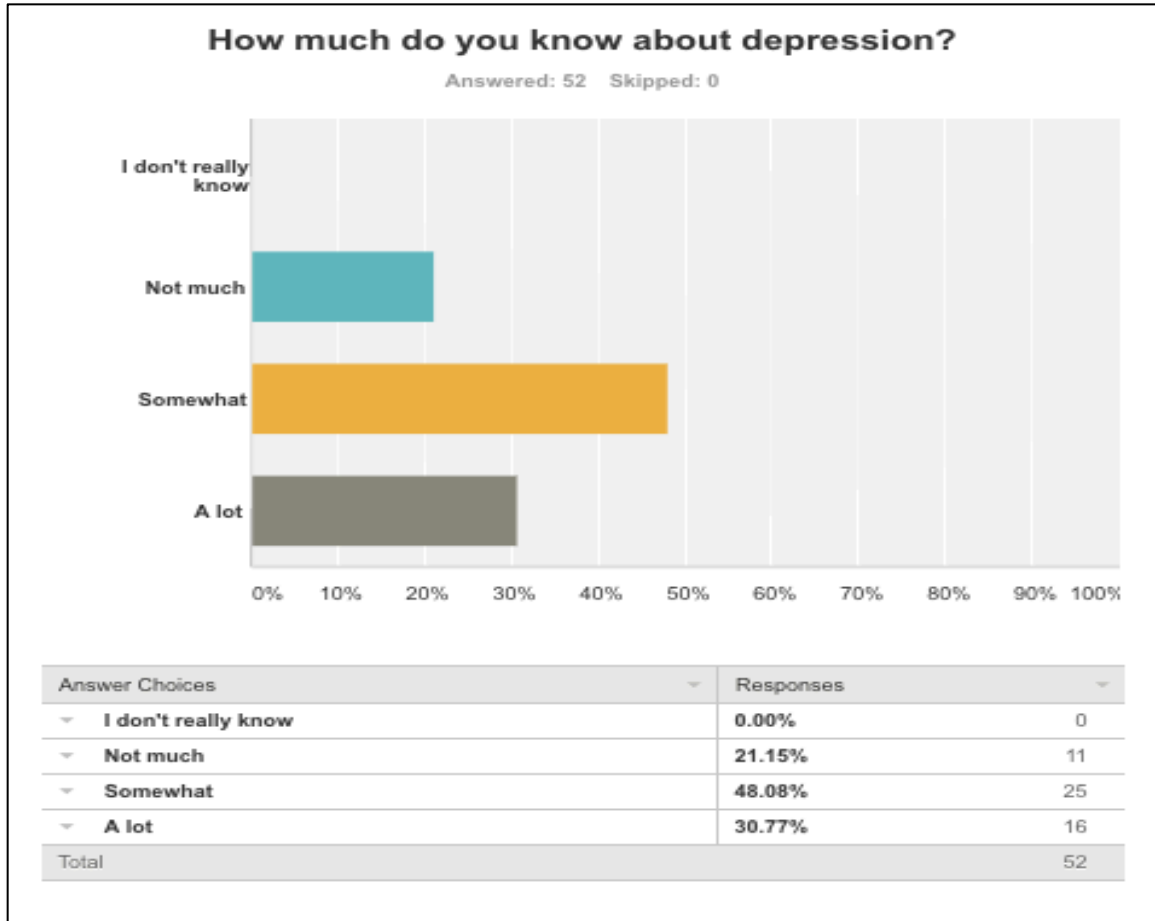
4A.



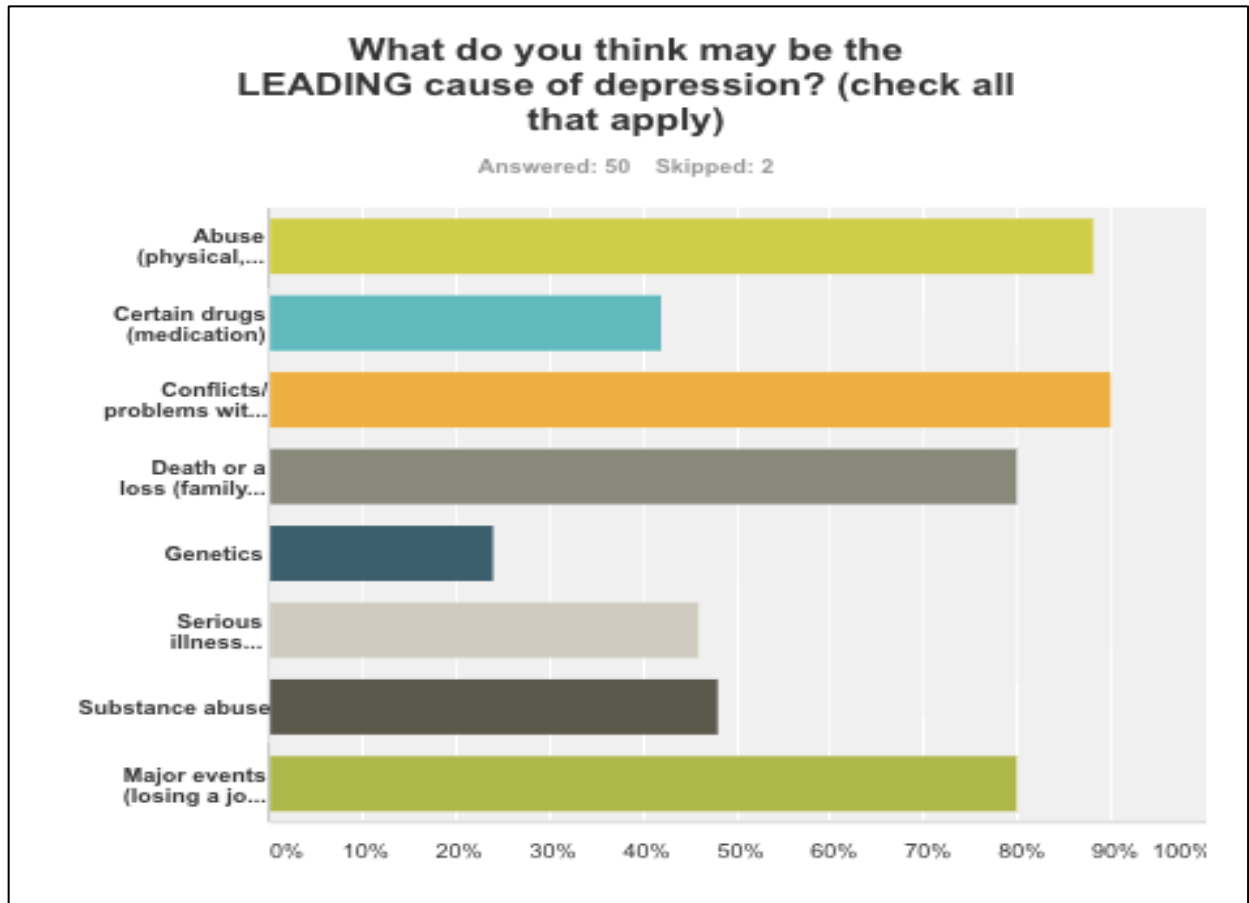
5A.



6A.

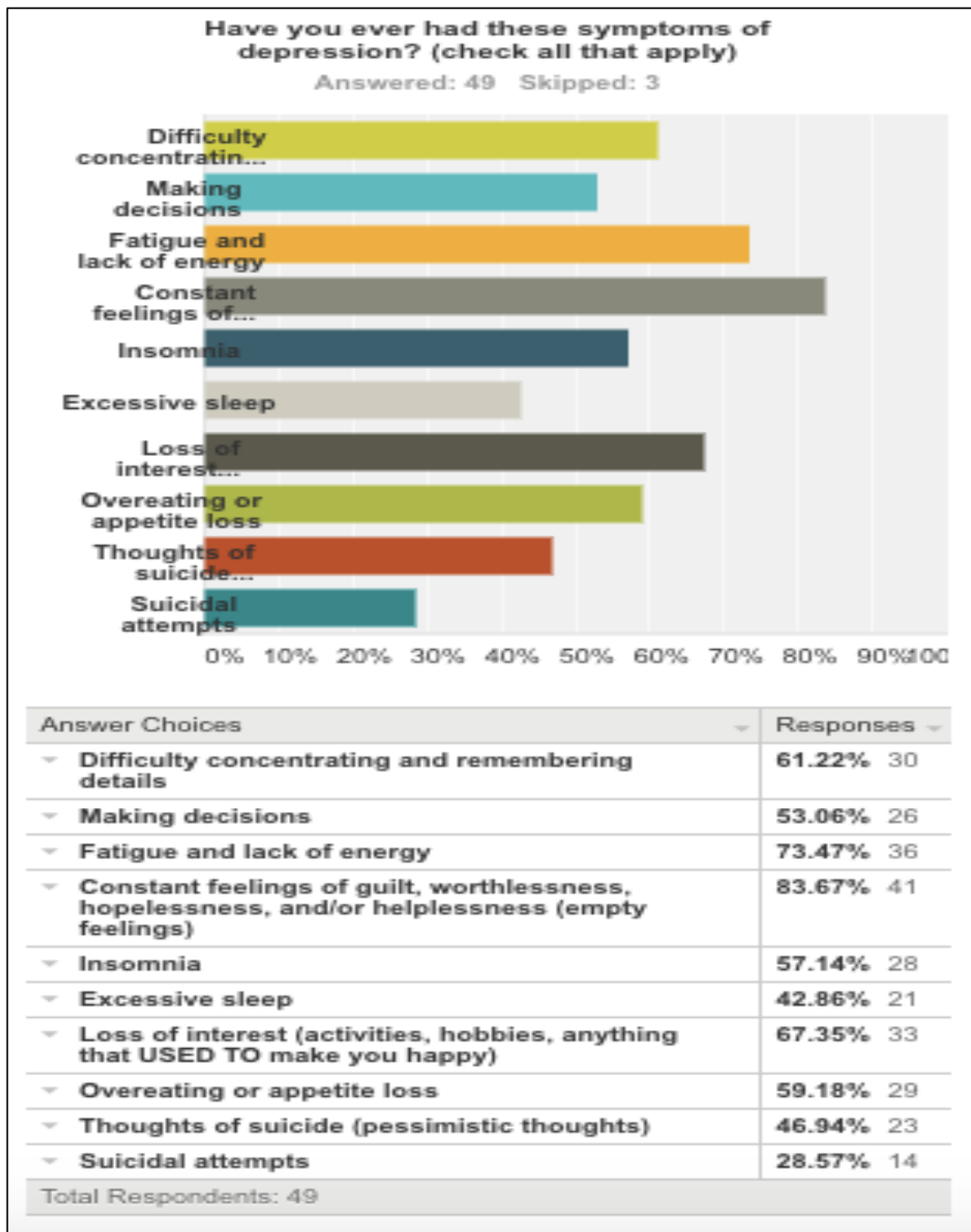


7A.

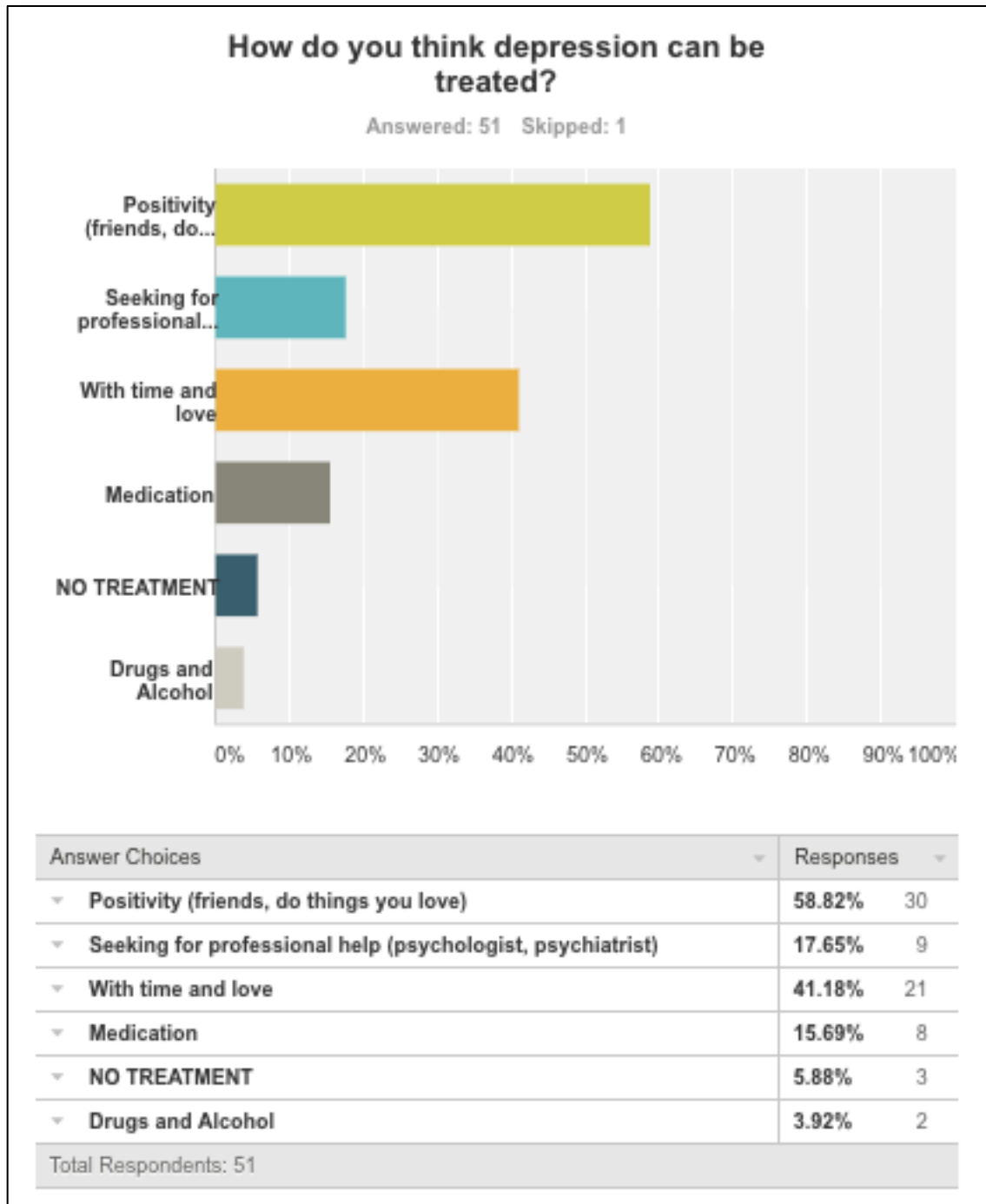


Answer Choices	Responses
Abuse (physical, sexual, emotional)	88.00% 44
Certain drugs (medication)	42.00% 21
Conflicts/problems with friends/family (personal problems)	90.00% 45
Death or a loss (family/friend)	80.00% 40
Genetics	24.00% 12
Serious illness triggered by another medical condition	46.00% 23
Substance abuse	48.00% 24
Major events (losing a job, getting married, school)	80.00% 40
Total Respondents: 50	

8A.



9A.



Appendix B  
Letters to Experts

**1B. Psychologist**

<https://www.facebook.com/jon.christoph.7>

October 19, 2016

Dear Christopher Jones,

My name is Milagros King. I am a student studying at the Northern Marianas College (NMC). I am a Liberal Arts student major. I am writing this letter to request for your thoughts about the topic of the “**causes of depression**”. I would like to gather information about how depression is caused. This should only take 5 minutes or less of your time. I am also hoping to get more information from you, since are a psychology teacher, about how depression may affect all of us

Please e-mail me whether or not you are able to answer my questions. I will try to be very flexible with my time. I look forward to this valuable information.

Thank you so much.

Sincerely,

Milagros King

[milagrosking13@gmail.com](mailto:milagrosking13@gmail.com)

[milagros.king@my.marianas.edu](mailto:milagros.king@my.marianas.edu)

**2B. Psychiatrist**

[joyoblea@yahoo.com](mailto:joyoblea@yahoo.com)

October 19, 2016

Dear Nurse Oblea,

My name is Milagros King. I am a student studying at the Northern Marianas College (NMC). I am a Liberal Arts student major. I am writing this letter to request for your thoughts about the topic of the “**causes of depression**”. I would like to gather information about how depression is caused. This should only take 5 minutes or less of your time. I am also hoping to get more information from you, since are a psychiatrist, about how depression may affect all of us.

Please e-mail me whether or not you are able to answer my questions. I will try to be very flexible with my time. I look forward to this valuable information.

Thank you so much.

Sincerely,

Milagros King

[milagrosking13@gmail.com](mailto:milagrosking13@gmail.com)

[milagros.king@my.marianas.edu](mailto:milagros.king@my.marianas.edu)



**3B. Nurse/ Doctor**

[maricecj@yahoo.com](mailto:maricecj@yahoo.com)

October 19, 2016

Dear Nurse Jalad,

My name is Milagros King. I am a student studying at the Northern Marianas College (NMC). I am a Liberal Arts student major. I am writing this letter to request for your thoughts about the topic of the “**causes of depression**”. I would like to gather information about how depression is caused. This should only take 5 minutes or less of your time. I am also hoping to get more information from you, since you are a certified nurse, about how depression may affect all of us

Please e-mail me whether or not you are able to answer my questions. I will try to be very flexible with my time. I look forward to this valuable information.

Thank you so much.

Sincerely,

Milagros King

[milagrosking13@gmail.com](mailto:milagrosking13@gmail.com)

[milagros.king@my.marianas.edu](mailto:milagros.king@my.marianas.edu)

Appendix C  
Questionnaires to Experts (with feedback)

### **1C. Psychologist**

#### **1. In your opinion what do you think causes depression?**

Like most "affected" moments in thought...depression can have many root causes: a situation(s) or be organic.... brain dysfunction, genetic deformation in the brain and/or a tumor or lesion, head trauma. Depending on the age onset sometimes behavioral, experiential, physically induced external caused depression has differing treatments and outcomes. Everyone will have differing kinds and amounts.

#### **2. From what you have studied, is there anything that can be done to prevent a person from being depressed?**

Prevention is impossible as, clinically, severity, how long onset, how long lasting, how deep will determine treatment modalities. Everyone gets depression.... I would tell you the incidence is higher in Saipan but that would be a case study. But really it depends on its origin, again, biochemical/physiological or mental state.

#### **3. Is there a program or facility for depression in your designated area? If so, what is it called and where is it located at?**

Facilities in my area? ... THIS IS THE TEXAS MEDICAL CENTER IN HOUSTON, TEXAS...it has the highest concentration of finest hospitals, clinics, research universities and colleges in the world! If you ever come visit we can play a game of Croquet on the field right in the middle of it! There are behavioral and med-surge everywhere!!! We invented modern healthcare...

#### **4. What would you advise a person who is going through depression?**

Seek professional help.... also depends on the setting and the issues they present. If an educational institution.... the school counselor... If it is something not school related then to a professional counselor...there are not many on Saipan. The best I have met on Saipan is Jennifer Maritita.... confidentiality is very important!!!!

#### **5. In your experience or from what you have learned, does surrounding yourself with optimistic people help you get through depression?**

YES! ... Always surrounding yourself with positive people is best!!! Not a high school clique or group that just say yes ... but honest intelligent people! ...Colleagues who care when you are in professional settings you will find them.... not surrounding yourself by people who want to not knowingly impose their limits...lastly...we all experience depression from time to time...loss of family, loss of friends.... a dog, cat.... school...Especially the big one!!! Having to have a career...to work, make money and not wake up in some bad relationship with kids and a horrible lover! Having to decide what relationship.... what family.... how to have a career, make big bucks and keep a family stable is enough to drive anyone crazy...The solution: education... My personal experience is that depression, for me, has been in travelling.... not having family or friends stable.... I know people all over the world.... don't mind telling you just went through a break up...she was very materialistic.... that should have been depressing but I don't personally let outer, worldly things affect me like others. I also have many friends but don't really allow their influences as what works for others doesn't often work for me.... but in the past.... when I got depressed beyond what I thought normal...(time and intensity) I spoke with a colleague.... that helped. So...hope that helps.... stay in school.... education always ends well!

**Thank you for your time.**



**3C. Nurse/ Doctor****1. In your opinion what do you think causes depression?**

No one knows what causes Depression but there are varieties of contributing factors that may lead to it. It can occur after post partum delivery, recovery from severe illness, death in the family, broken marriage or relationship, change of environment, unhappy surroundings (in a jobsite), personal problems, low grades, family conflict, substance abuse or even climate change. Most of the time people get depressed for no reason at all. It must be in their genes.

**2. From what you have studied, is there anything that can be done to prevent a person from being depressed?**

Depression is not a preventable condition. Social support is absolutely essential. We have to find ways to reach out to them. Give the person quality time, moral and spiritual support.

**3. Is there a program or facility for depression in your designated area? If so, what is it called and where is it located at?**

Yes. CHC- Psyche Ward

**4. What would you advise a person who is going through depression?**

Renew relationship with God.  
Seek Professional help if condition worsens.

**5. In your experience or from what you have learned, does surrounding yourself with optimistic people help you get through depression?**

Yes, most specially Family and friends. Prayers help a lot. God knows best.

**Thank you for your time.**