



Technology-Facilitated Abuse

Dr Madeleine Janickyj & Dr Leonie Maria Tanczer, UCL





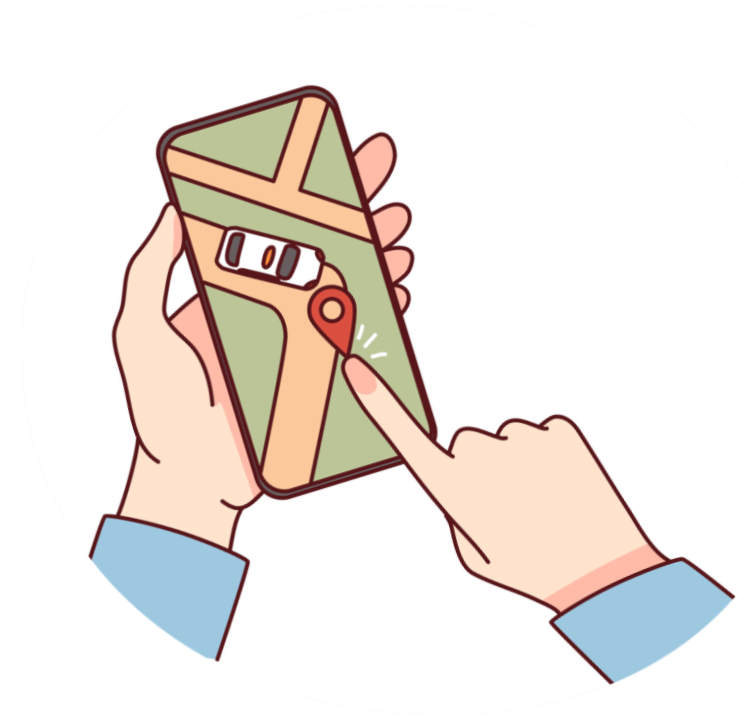
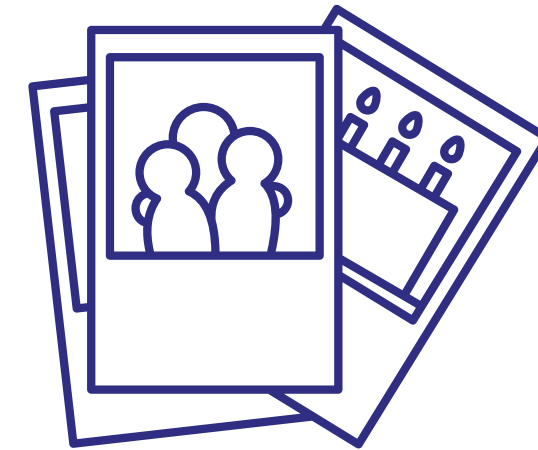
The VISION research is supported by the **UK Prevention Research Partnership** (Violence, Health and Society; MR-VO/), a Consortium funded by the British Heart Foundation, Chief Scientist Office of the Scottish Government Health and Social Care Directorates, Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, Economic and Social Research Council, Health and Social Care Research and Development Division (Welsh Government), Medical Research Council, National Institute for Health and Care Research, Natural Environment Research Council, Public Health Agency (Northern Ireland), The Health Foundation, and Wellcome.

The views expressed are those of the researchers and not necessarily those of the UK Prevention Research Partnership or any other funder.

What is Tech Abuse?

Tech abuse is the **(mis)use and repurposing of connected systems** to perpetrate other ‘**traditional**’ forms of abuse.

It spans from abusive acts/behaviours exacerbated through technology to abusive acts/behaviours made possible through the technology.



Help-Seeking Behaviours & Support Services

Help-seeking behaviours are the steps victim/survivors take to find support, in this case from abuse.

Can follow various routes:

- Professional Agencies,
- Helplines,
- Volunteer organisations.

Support services are organisations which provide various forms of advice and help to different groups.

In the UK there are both voluntary organisations and statutory services tailored to help people with problems around:

- Physical & Mental Health,
- Protection of Children,
- Legal advice.



Methodology

Data

1,525 tech abuse referrals from the UK-based Domestic Abuse Charity *Refuge*



20 questions on **Tech Abuse**

3 questions on **Help-Seeking Behaviour**

5 pieces of **socio-demographic** information:

- (1) the perpetrator's **gender** identity,
- (2) the **relationship** between the victim/survivor and perpetrator,
- (3) the victim/survivor's **immigration** status,
- (4) the victim/survivor's **parental** responsibilities,
- (5) whether the perpetrator had been in the **armed forces**

Data Analysis

7 personas were derived using **solely the demographic information available**.

First, the **most common** victim/survivor was identified (A- Alex) as the “**average**” victim/survivor here.

6 more personas were informed by a **specific demographic group each**.

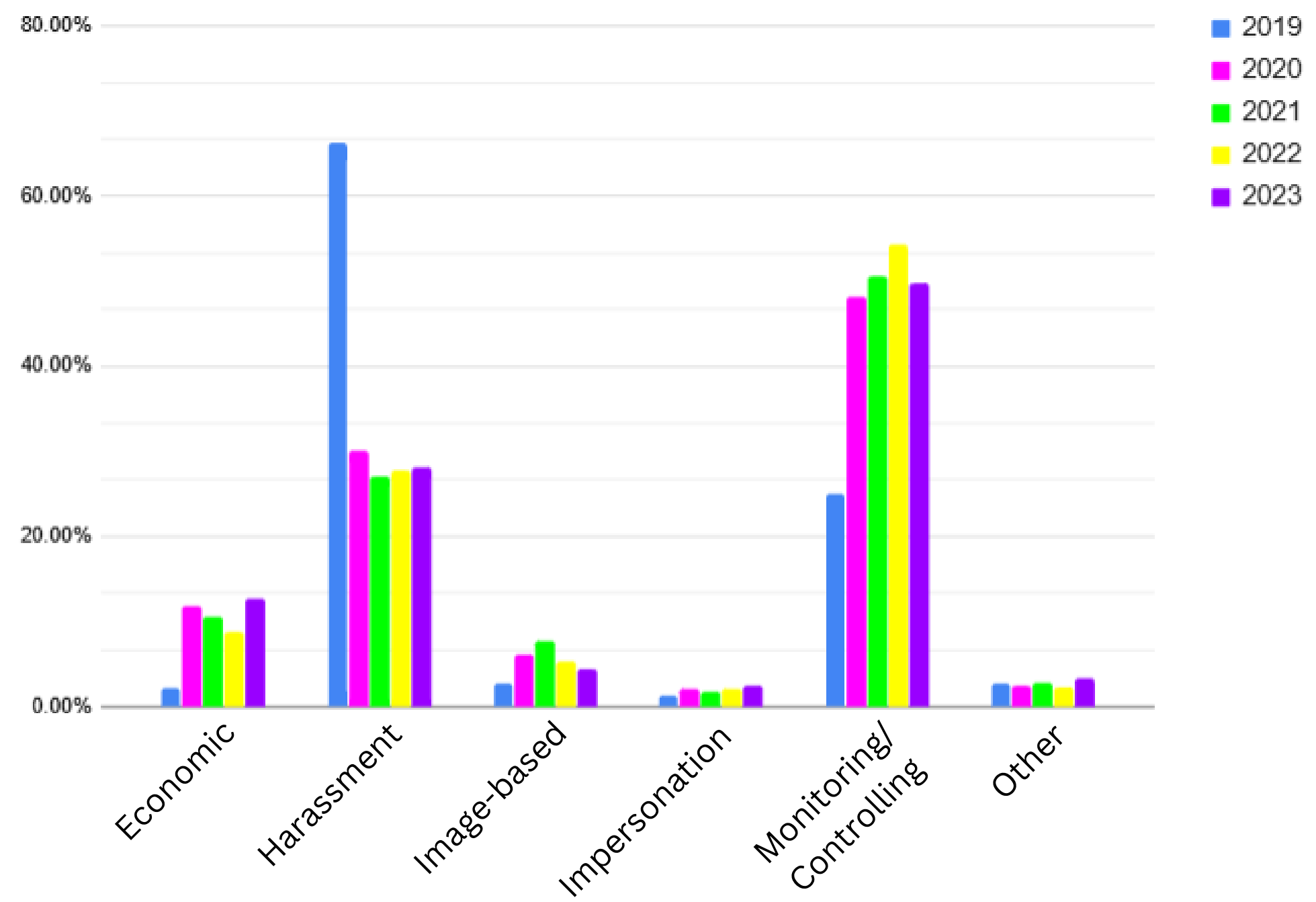


Results

What types of tech abuse are happening?

Monitoring/ Controlling	48.68%
Harassment	30.97%
Economic	10.08%
Image-based	5.91%
Other	2.51%
Impersonation	1.83%

How has this changed?



Results



Name: Alex
Attribute: Most prevalent
Sought help: 5.20%

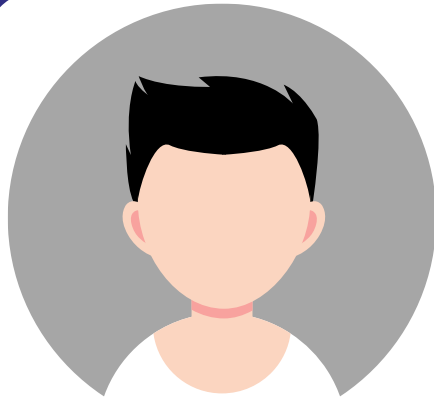
Tech abuse experienced:
Harassment & Having their tech monitored.

Help needed:
Unknown



Name: Bailey
Attribute: No children
Sought help: 5.66%

Tech abuse experienced: Abuse via social media & Image-based abuse.
Help needed: Blocking and removing content



Name: Ezra
Attribute: Perpetrator in the armed forces
Sought help: 5.26%

Tech abuse experienced: Location tracking, economic abuse, & monitoring behaviours.
Help needed: Securing location & home devices



Name: Charlie
Attribute: Insecure Immigration status
Sought help: 0%

Tech abuse experienced: Economic abuse & Image-based abuse
Help needed: Unknown



Name: Frankie
Attribute: Familial perpetrator
Sought help: 0%

Tech abuse experienced: Monitoring behaviours, harassment & economic abuse.
Help needed: Securing accounts & financial abuse



Name: Dakota
Attribute: Perpetrator is an acquaintance
Sought help: 12.5%

Tech abuse experienced: Harassment via social media, dating apps, & gaming sites.
Help needed: Securing their accounts



Name: Georgie
Attribute: Female perpetrator
Sought help: 3.92%

Tech abuse experienced: Location tracking & abuse via social media
Help needed: General advice



Implications

- (1) **Platforms and digital systems** should proactively **recognise abuse** and offer clear **response and reporting mechanisms**
- (2) There is a need for further **training, recognition, and legislation** around tech abuse for the Police and other professional agencies to ensure victim/survivors can **get effective support through these avenues**.
- (3) More must be done in recognition of those **who do not have the media literacy or the technology (that is not monitored)** to **educate** themselves about the types of **support** available.
- (4) Technologies must be **developed with victim/survivors** in mind.



Comments from Emma Pickering

Refuge

