



“Hard on the Heart”

Examining the Risk Factors and Vulnerabilities of KTV Hostesses in Phnom Penh

Sampling




- ▶ 50 girls working as hostesses at a KTV venue in three different areas in Phnom Penh.
- ▶ Purposeful, convenience sampling methods were used.

Sampling


- ▶ Three areas in Phnom Penh: Mai Da Street, ToulKork, and RusseyKeo.
- ▶ A total of 14 KTV venues were included.
- ▶ All 50 interviews were conducted at respective KTV venues.



Ethical Considerations

- ▶ Field researchers trained with UNIAP Ethical Guidelines for Human Trafficking Research.
 - ▶ Participants were given references for counseling, legal aid, and additional assistance at end of each interview.
 - ▶ Respondents were informed of their right to refuse to answer any questions or end the interview at any time.
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Pilot Study

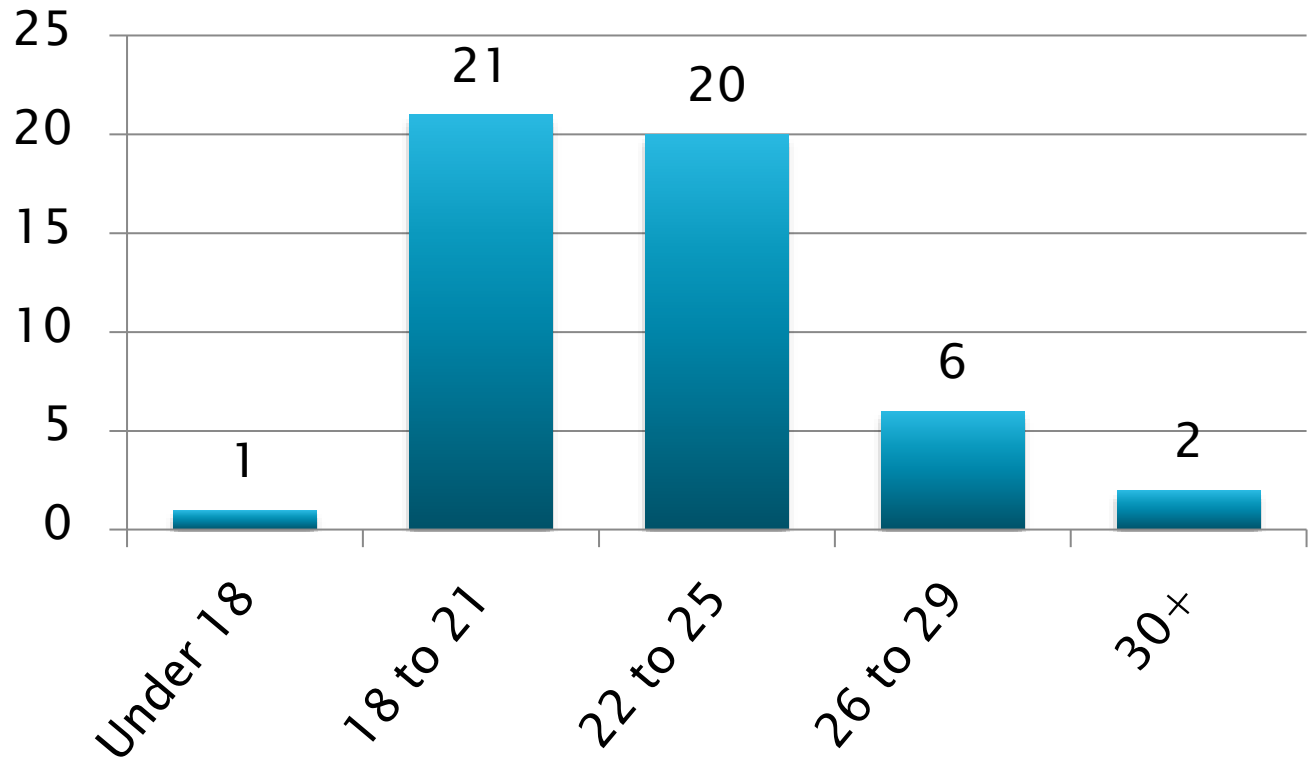
- ▶ Total of 5 respondents: 4 from beer gardens and 1 from a KTV venue.
 - ▶ 2 of the 5 were meeting customers for sex.
 - ▶ Changed focus from only sexual exploitation to gaining holistic understanding of risk factors and vulnerabilities of all girls working at KTV venues.
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Demographics


Age of Respondents

Mean age:
22.5 years old

66% are
considered
youth based
on UNICEF's
definition (15–
24 years)

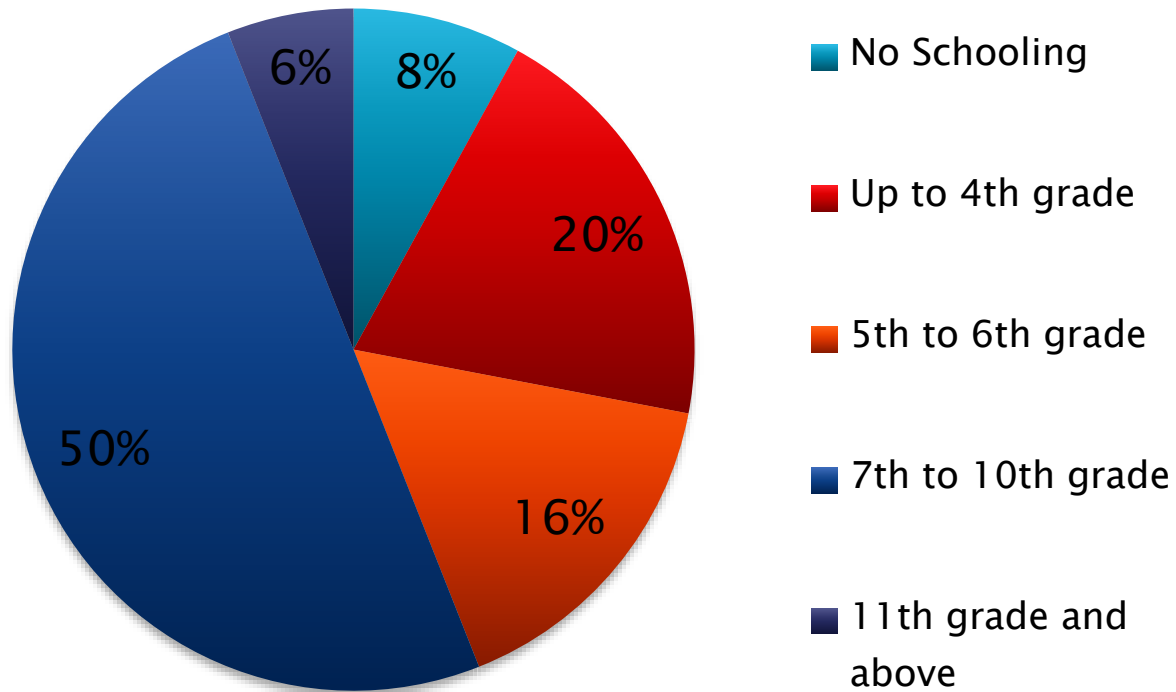


Demographics

- ▶ From 12 different areas in Cambodia: 20% from Kandal; 12% from Kompong Cham and Kompot; 10% from Prey Veng, Kompong Thom, and Phnom Penh.
 - ▶ Marital status: 66% single, 30% divorced, and 4% married.
 - ▶ Of the total respondents, 26% had children.
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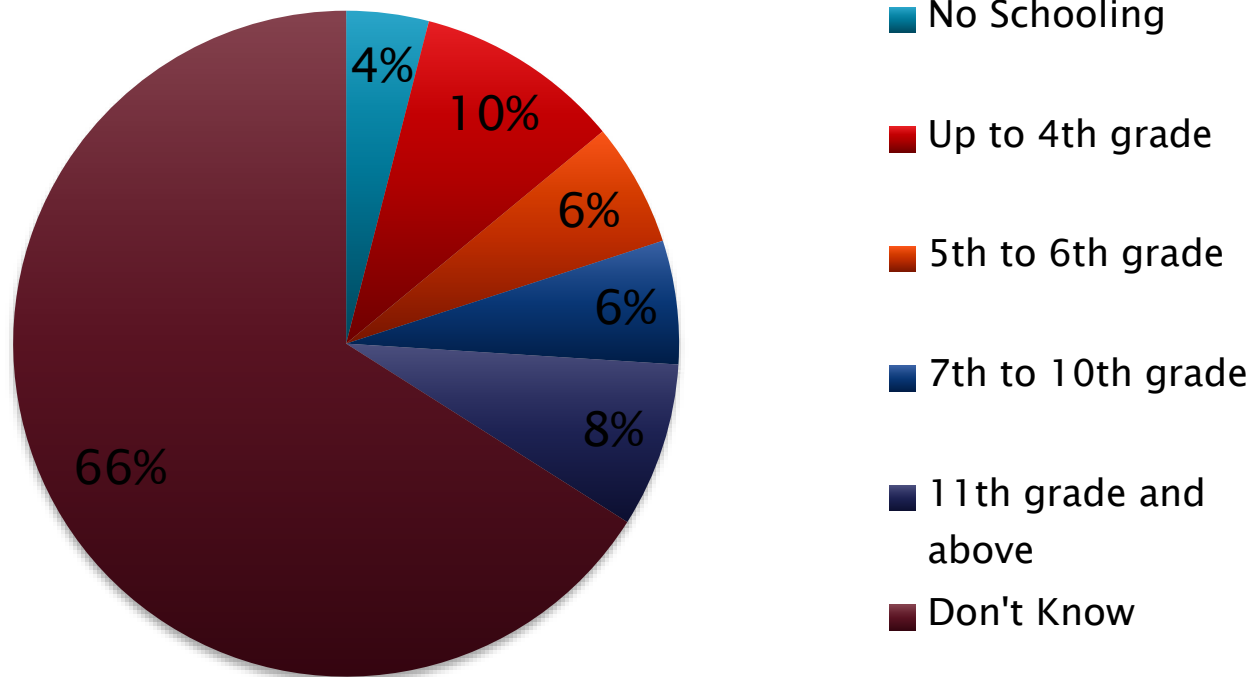
Education

Level of Education



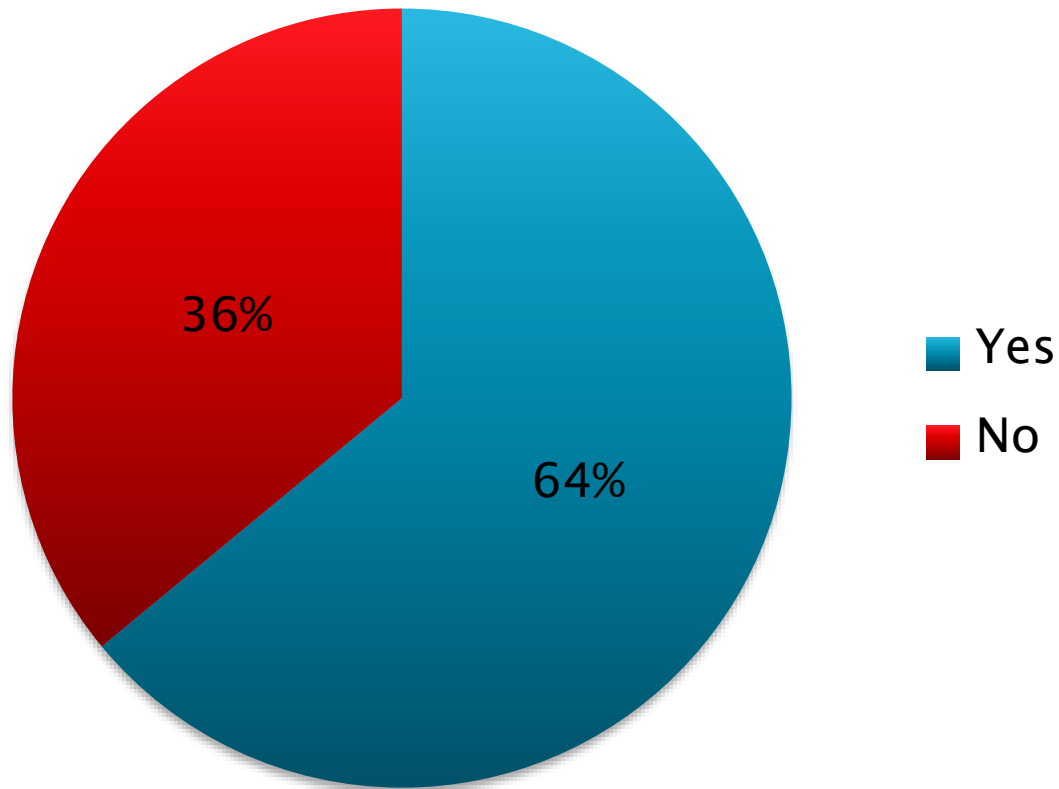
Family Background

What is your father's educational level?



Family Background

Does your family owe any debt?

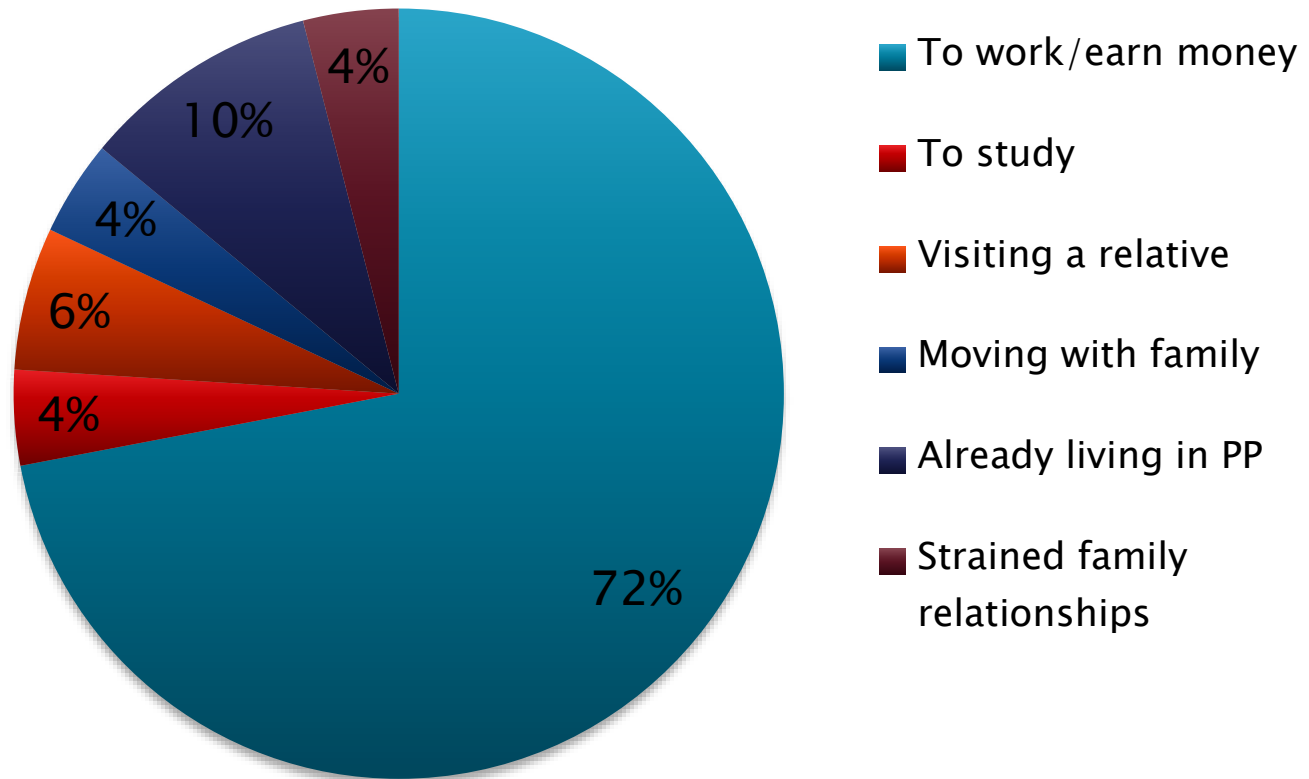


The range of debt owed was from 66 USD to 10,000 USD.

The median amount of debt owed was 750 USD.

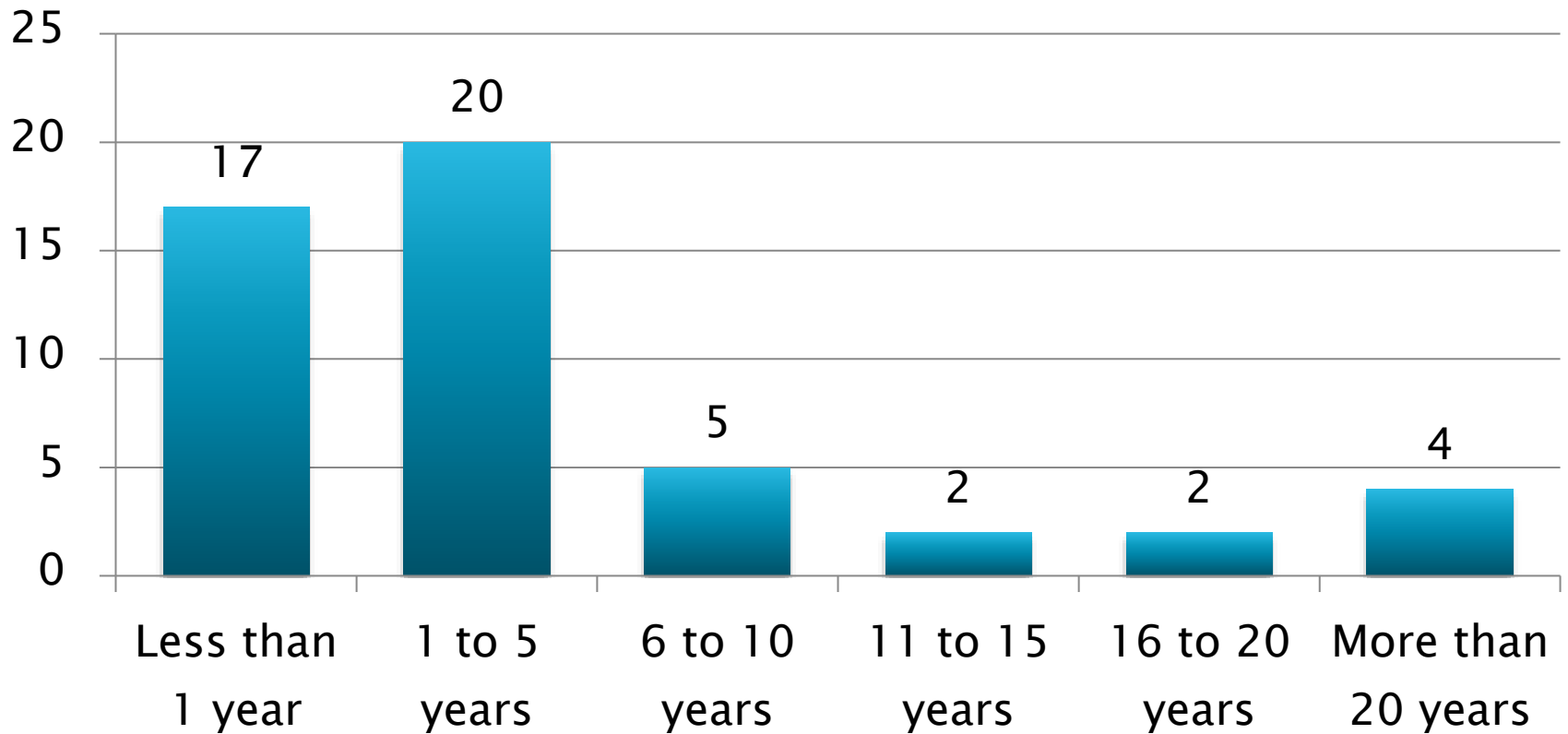
Migration

Why did you come to Phnom Penh?



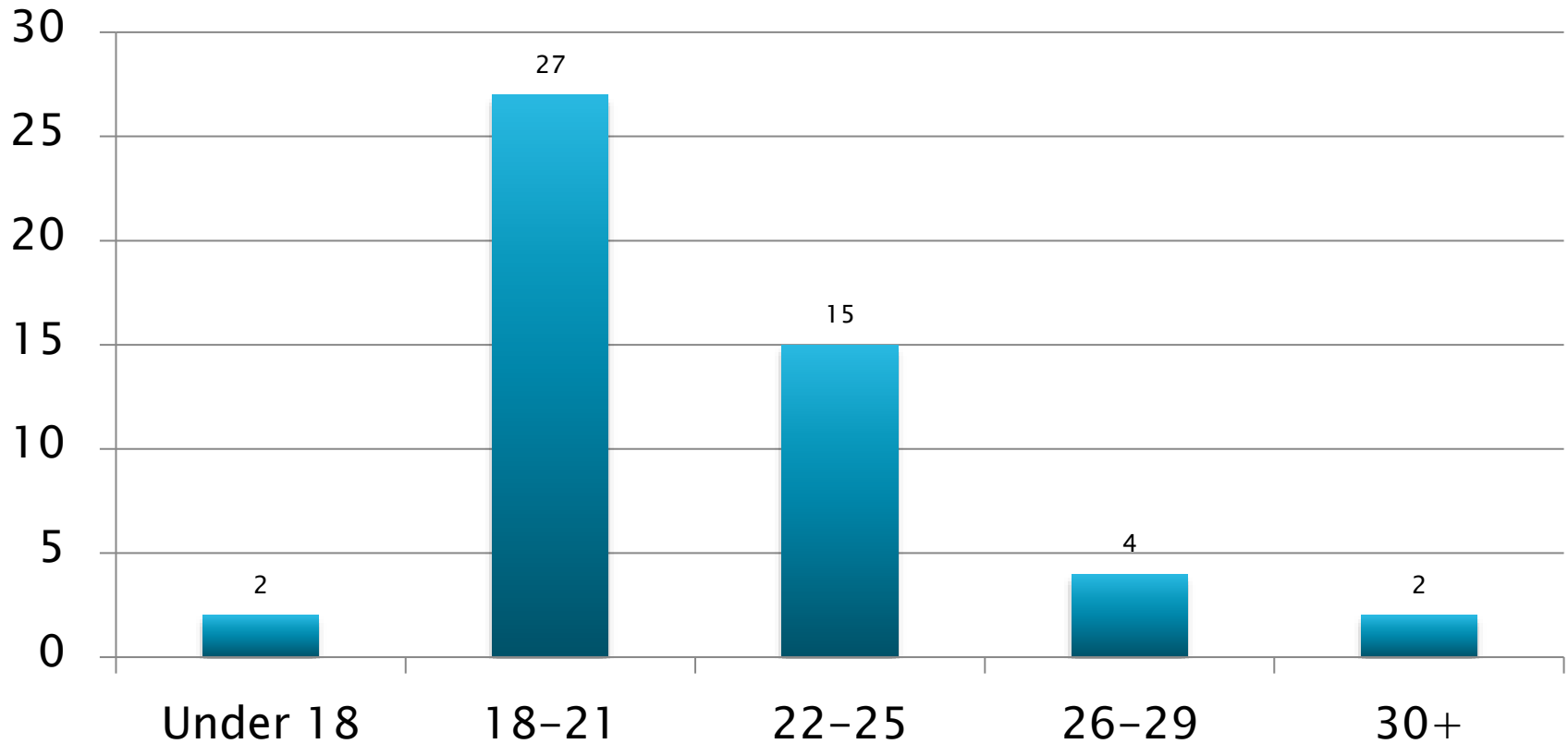
Migration

How long have you been living in Phnom Penh?



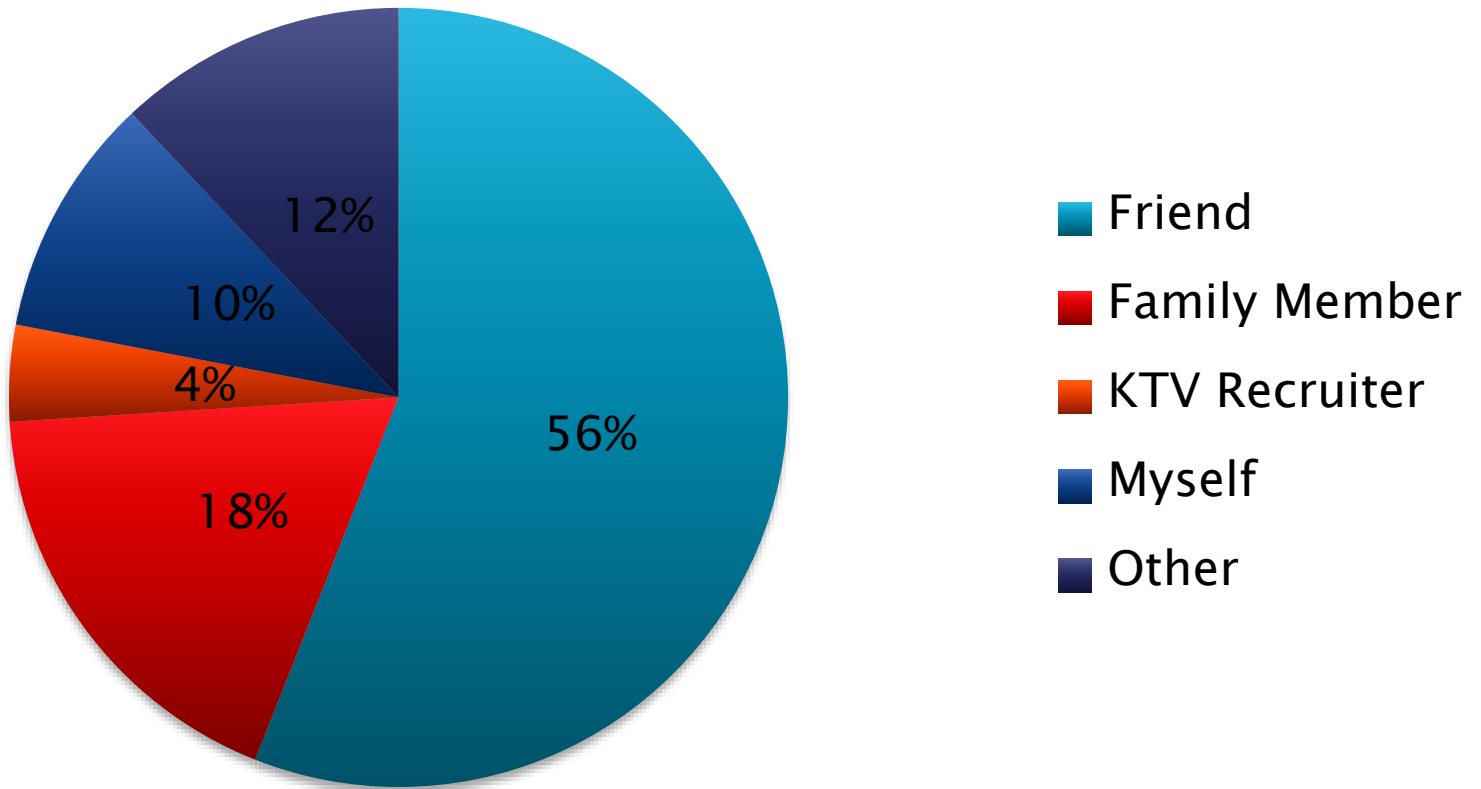
Introduction to KTV

Age Respondents Began Working at a KTV Venue



Introduction to KTV

Who introduced you to the KTV?



Introduction to KTV

- ▶ “When I was working at the factory, my husband became violent towards me so I ran away from him. That’s why I came here.”

Introduction to KTV

- ▶ “This job is easy but it’s hard on the heart.”

Introduction to KTV

- ▶ “I was forced to come here. If it was not for my relative, I would not have come. My mom has no idea what really happens here.”

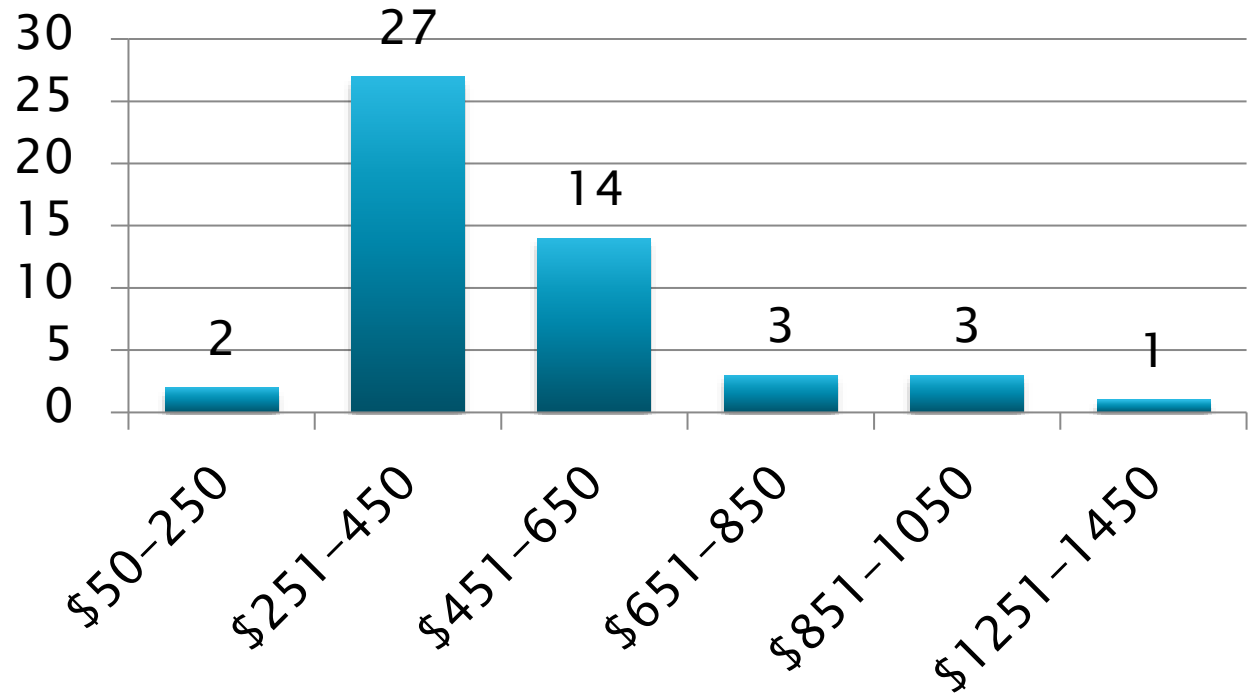
Introduction to KTV

- ▶ “I need money to help my family. My parents are sick. Because I have no education, I have no option.”

Employment

Median income
for past three
months: \$420

Income for past 3 months

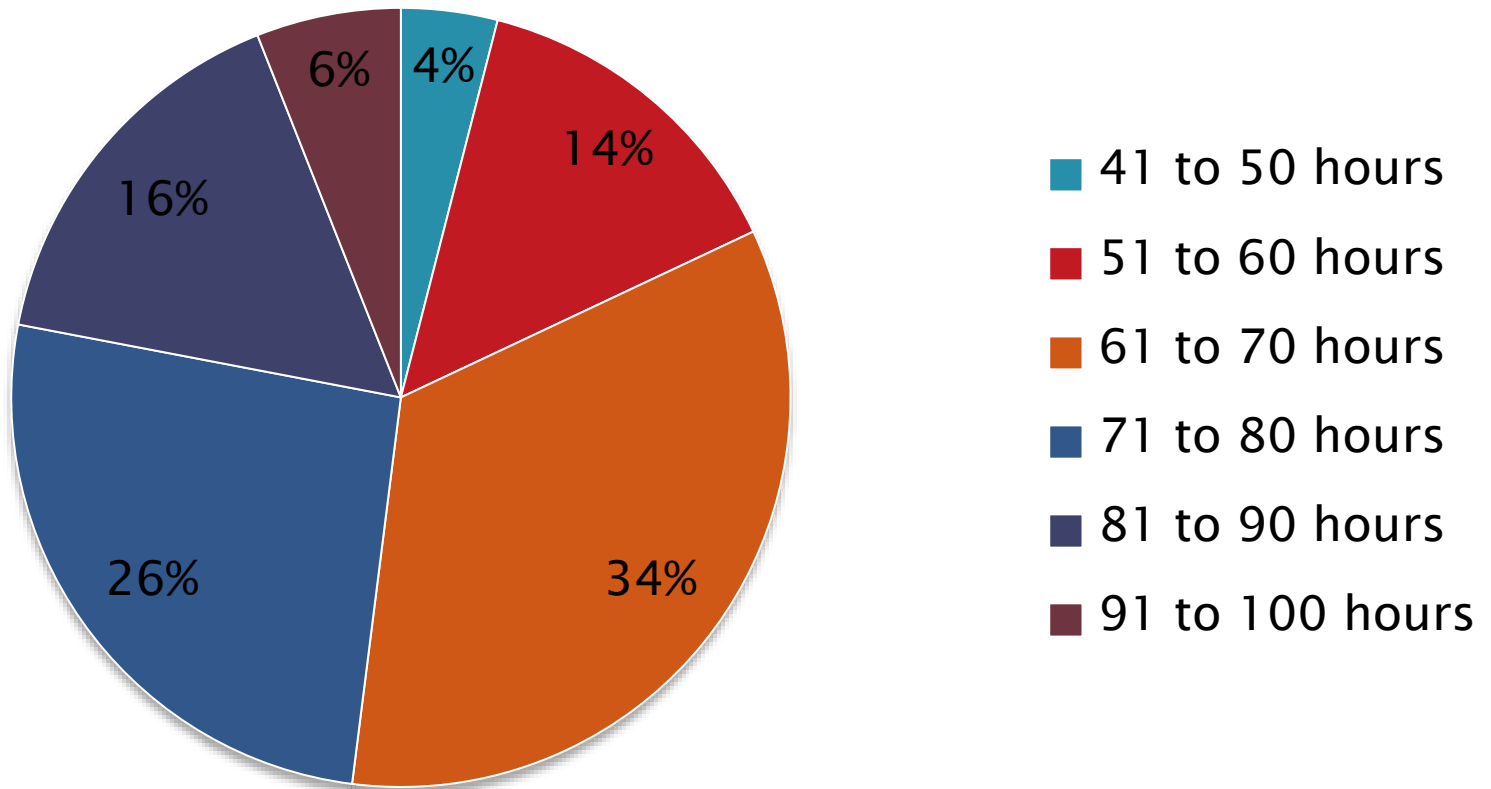


Employment


- ▶ Weekly income ranged from \$17.50 to \$95 with a median of \$37.50
 - Salary ranged from \$12.50 to \$35, median: \$25
 - Tips ranged from \$0 to \$50, median: \$15
 - Five respondents received incentives ranging from \$1.50 to \$30, median: \$10

Employment

How many hours did you work last week?



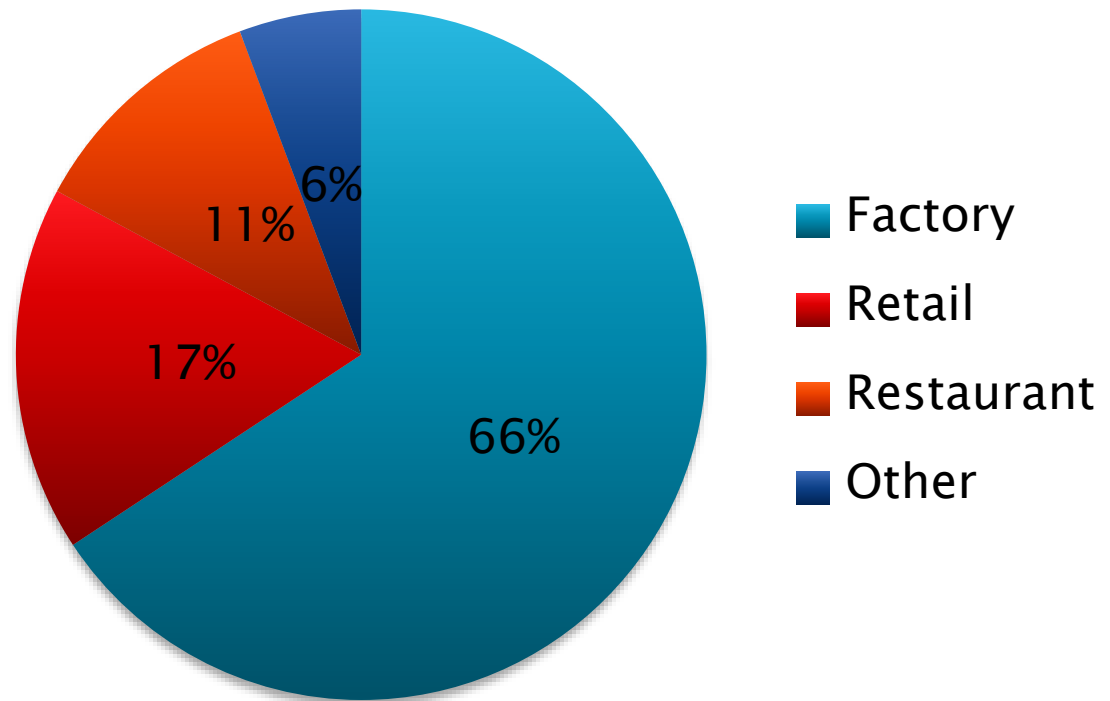
Employment

- Pay is deducted for days missed.
 - Top expense for respondents was sending money home to families.
 - 86% respondents lived at KTV venues and did not pay for lodging or food but were required to work everyday.
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Employment

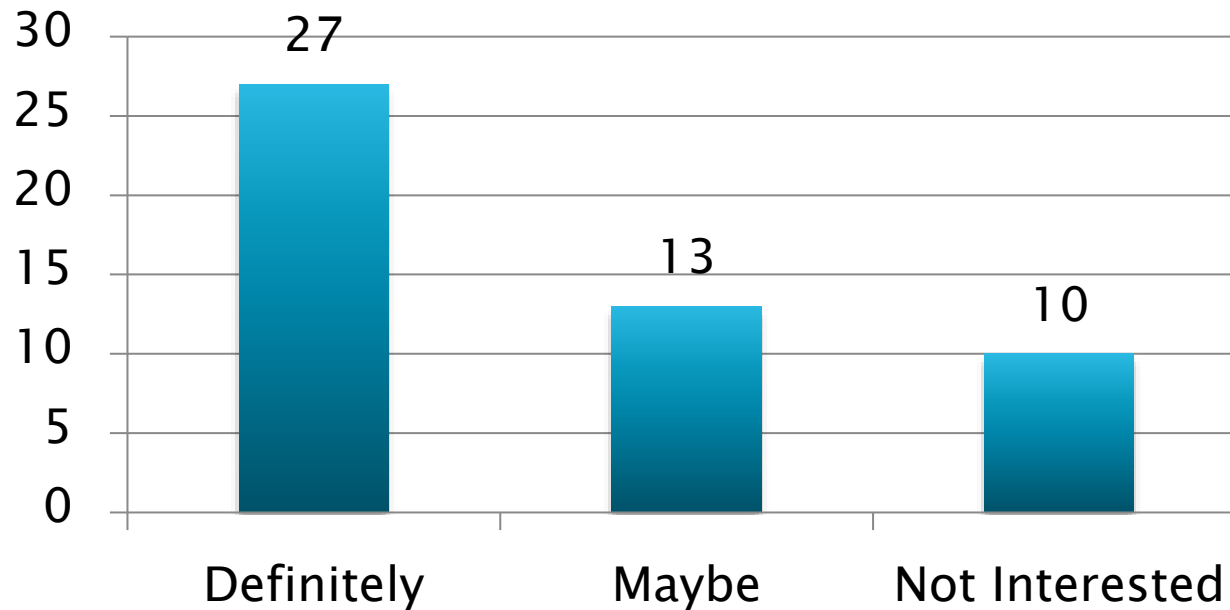
Where did you work before coming to the KTV?

74% of respondents worked elsewhere prior to working at the KTV venue.



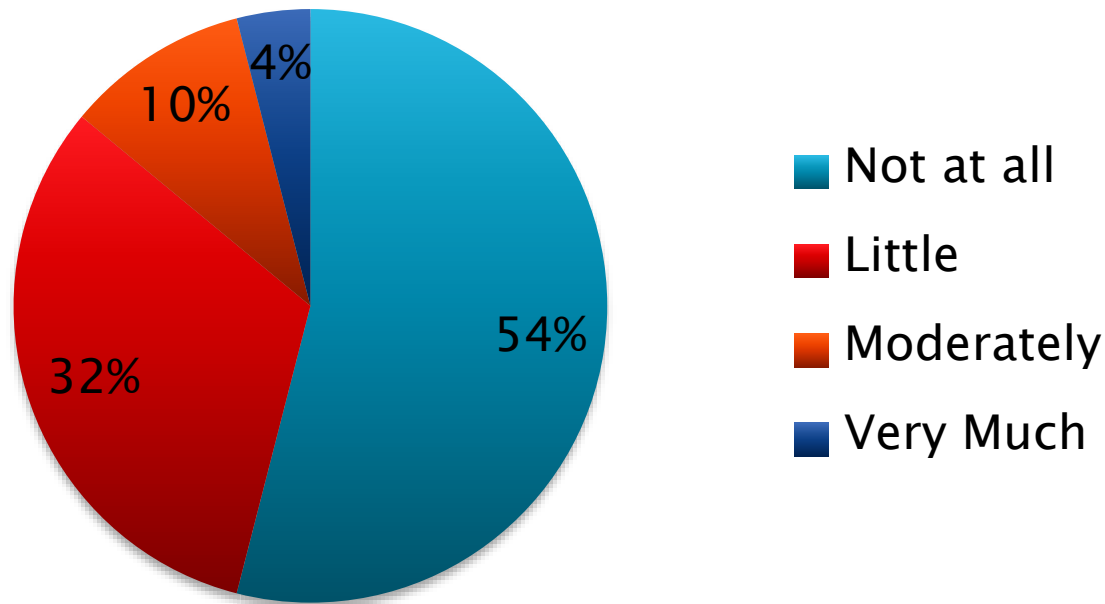
Employment

Would you accept another job paying 80 USD a month?



Social Relationships

Does working at a KTV affect your personal relationships?



BUT...92% stated that people from their villages do not know.

Social Relationships

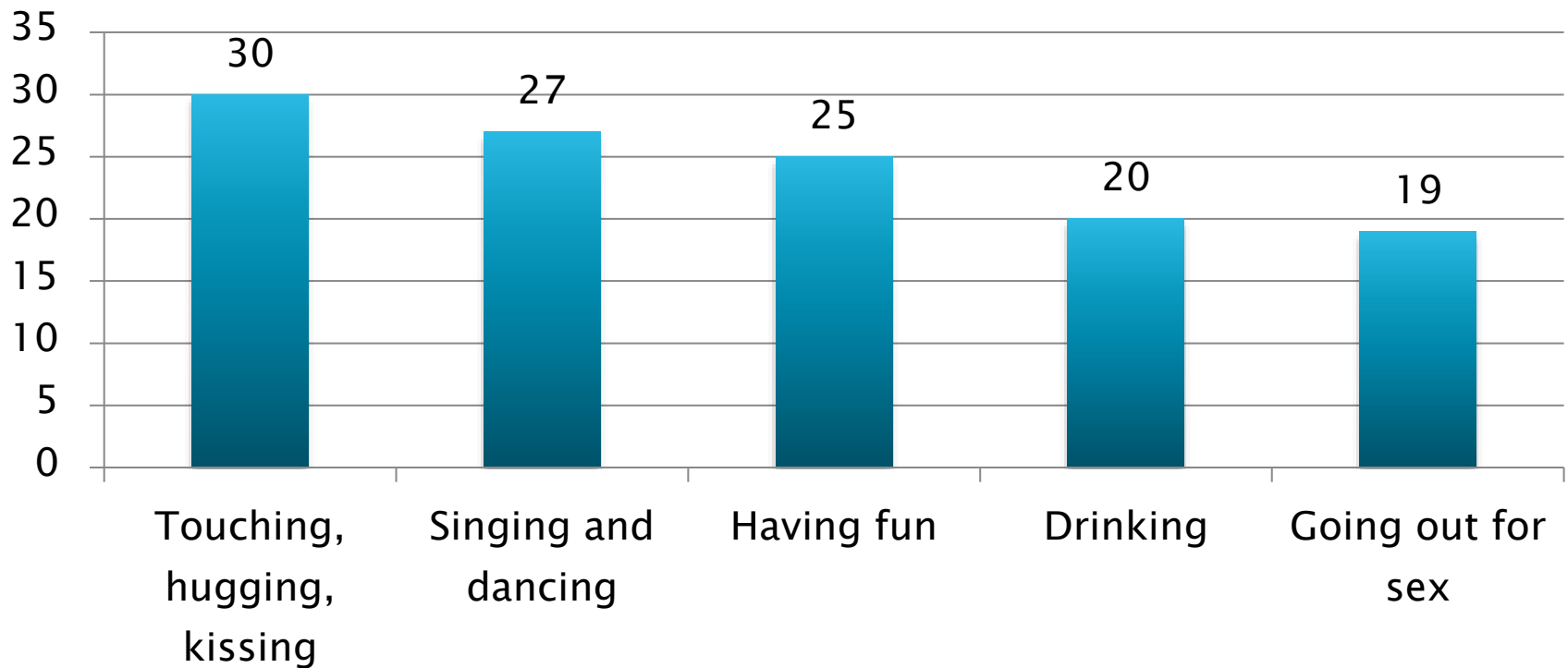
- ▶ “There are two boys who want to date me but they can’t ask their parents for permission because of my job at the KTV.”

Social Relationships

- ▶ “My job at the KTV affects my friendships and my family’s reputation; they look down on me.”

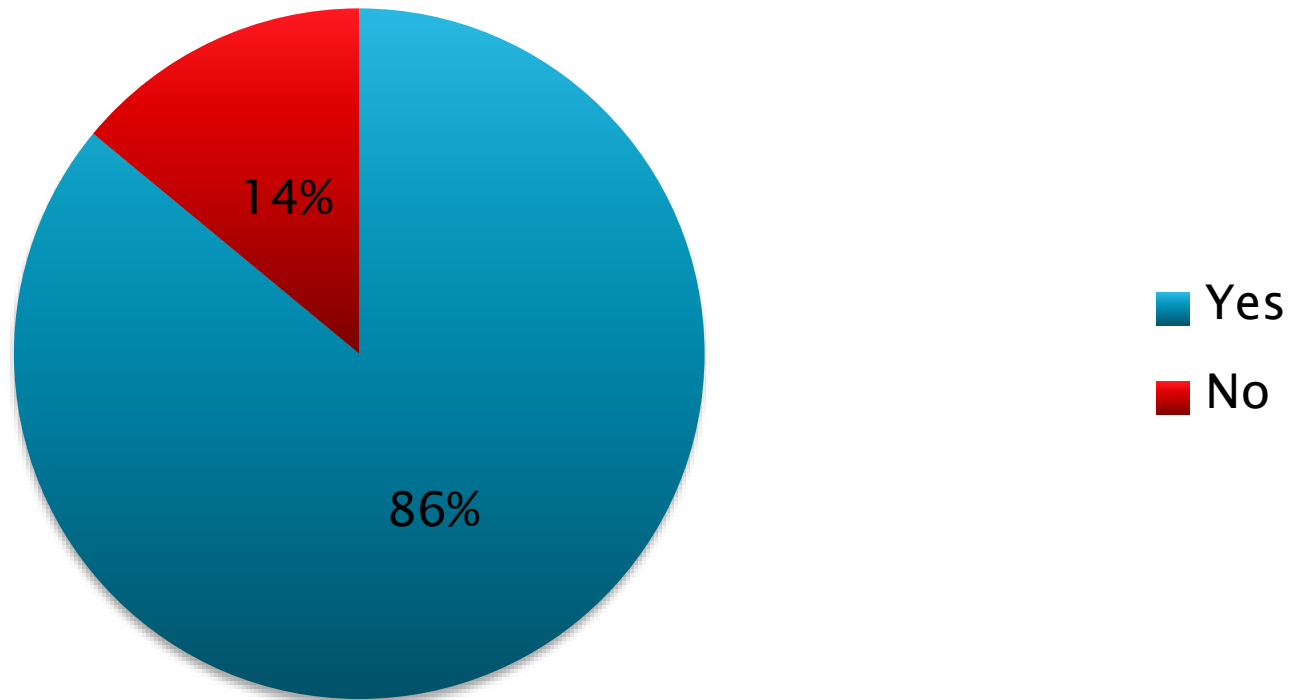
Stigma and Discrimination

What do customers expect of hostesses?
(Open-Ended Question)



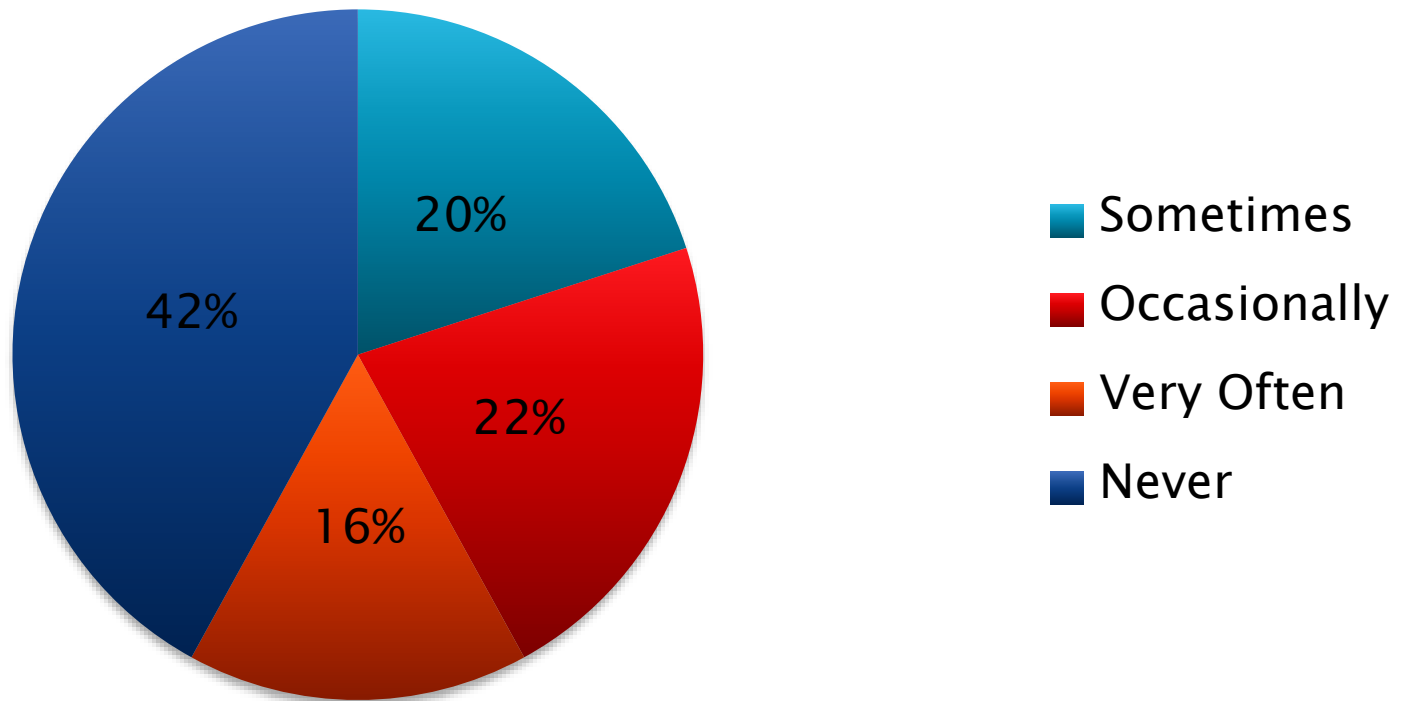
Stigma and Discrimination

Has a customer ever asked you to do something that made you feel uncomfortable?



Stigma and Discrimination

How often have you experienced discrimination from the customers?



Stigma and Discrimination

- ▶ “When I ask them to stop crossing boundaries, they say ‘Why can’t I do that to you? Aren’t you a KTV girl?’”

Stigma and Discrimination

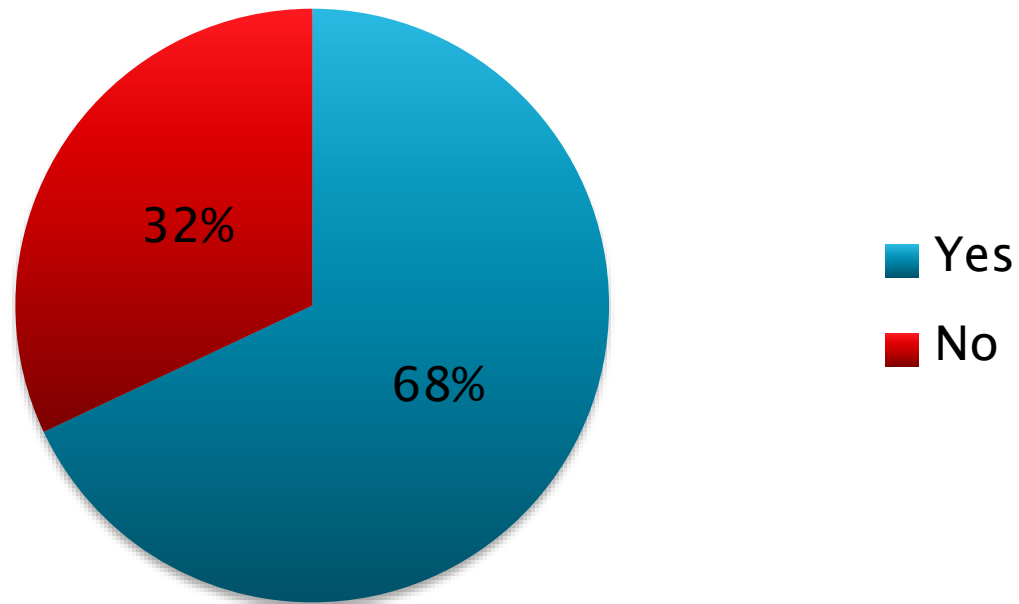
- ▶ “One customer threw alcohol on me. He thought he could do whatever he wanted to me, because I’m a KTV girl.”

Stigma and Discrimination

- ▶ “Some customers stigmatize us by saying all KTV girls are sex workers.”

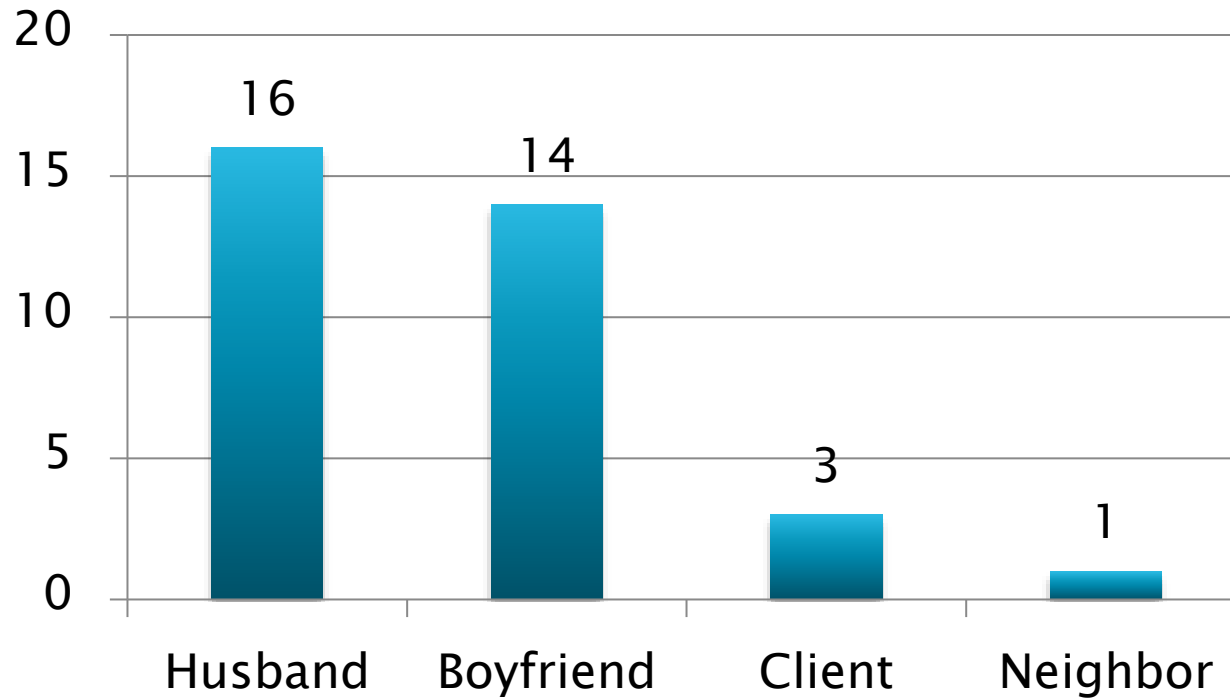
Sexual Experiences

Have you ever had a sexual relationship?



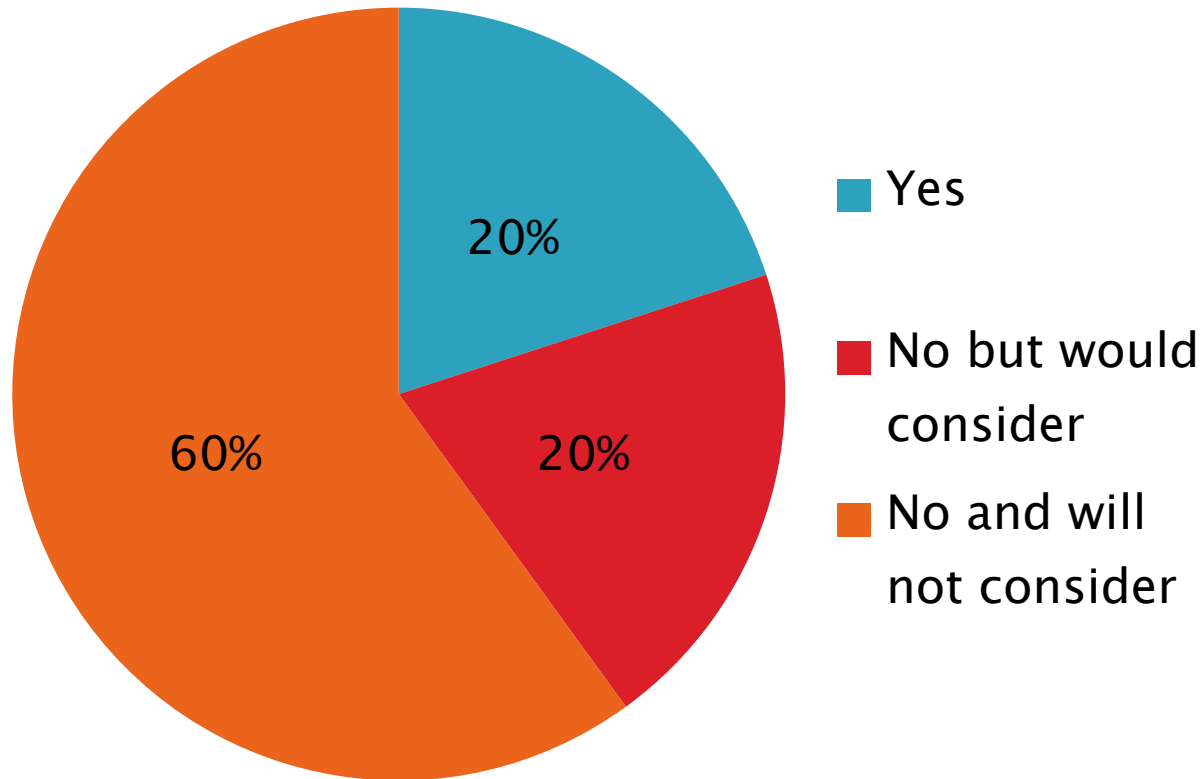
Sexual Experiences

First Sexual Partner



Sexual Experiences

Do you meet customers for sex?



Sexual Exploitation

- ▶ “In my previous KTV job, my boss did not give me my salary and even forced me to have sex with the customers.”

Sexual Exploitation

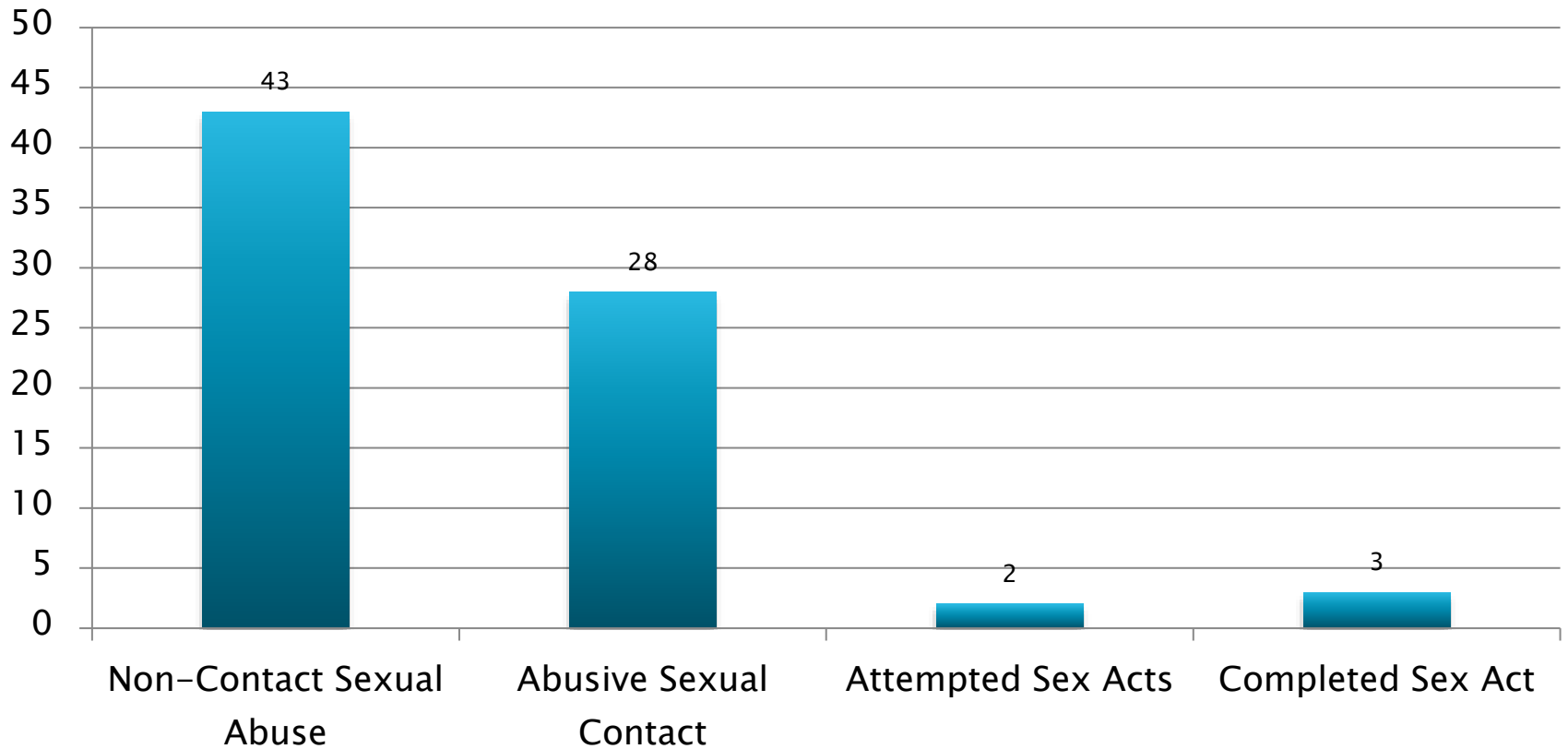
- ▶ “I go out with customers when there is an emergency in my family.”

Sexual Exploitation

- ▶ “My baby needed formula, so I went out with a customer so I could buy it for her.”

Sexual Violence

Occurrence of Sexual Violence (Open-Ended Question)



Sexual Violence

- ▶ “Last week, a Chinese client forced me into the bathroom and tried to take my clothes off. The manager and boss helped me in time and kicked him out.”


Sexual Violence

- ▶ “Two girls here have been drugged by customers...but the managers saw that the girls passed out and took them to the hospital before the customers did anything.”


Sexual Violence

- ▶ “Everything to me is uncomfortable. I am disgusted with myself when they touch me.”

Health and Substance Abuse

- ▶ About half, 56%, stated they had received sexual health education and services from various NGOs.
 - ▶ 82% were able to identify sex as a means of HIV/AIDS transmission and 42% knew of someone with HIV/AIDS.
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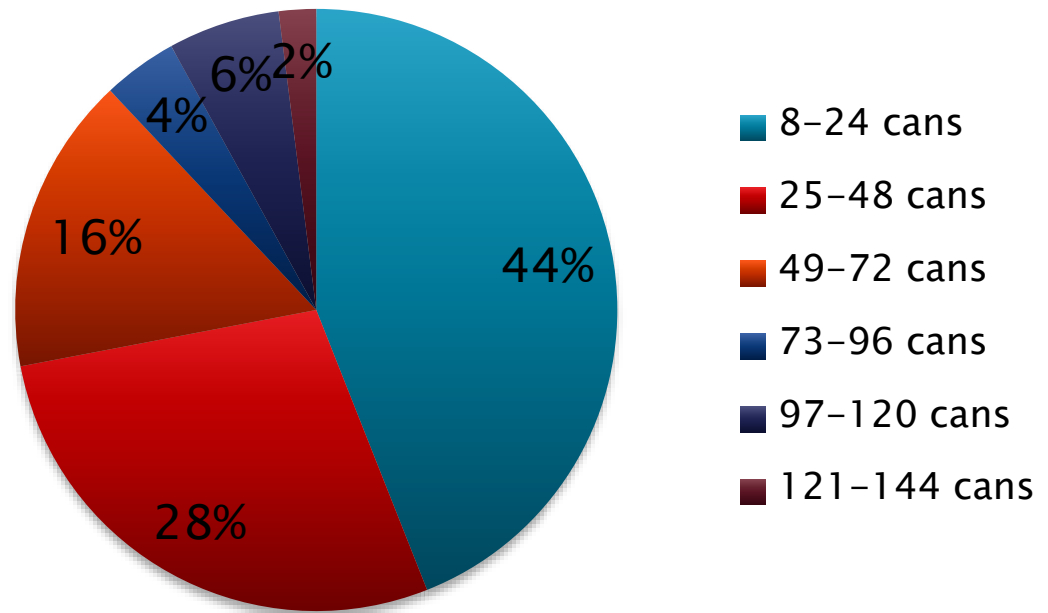
Health and Substance Abuse

- ▶ 80% stated that they had been sick within the past three months.
 - ▶ Headaches, stomachaches, colds, and high temperatures were common among respondents.
 - ▶ Typhoid, post-abortion complications, and difficulty breathing were also briefly mentioned.
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Health and Substance Abuse

According to the US Center for Disease Control, heavy drinking is defined as more than 1 drink per day for a woman. Binge drinking occurs when a woman consumes 4 or more drinks within 2 hours.

How much alcohol have you consumed within the past week?



Faith

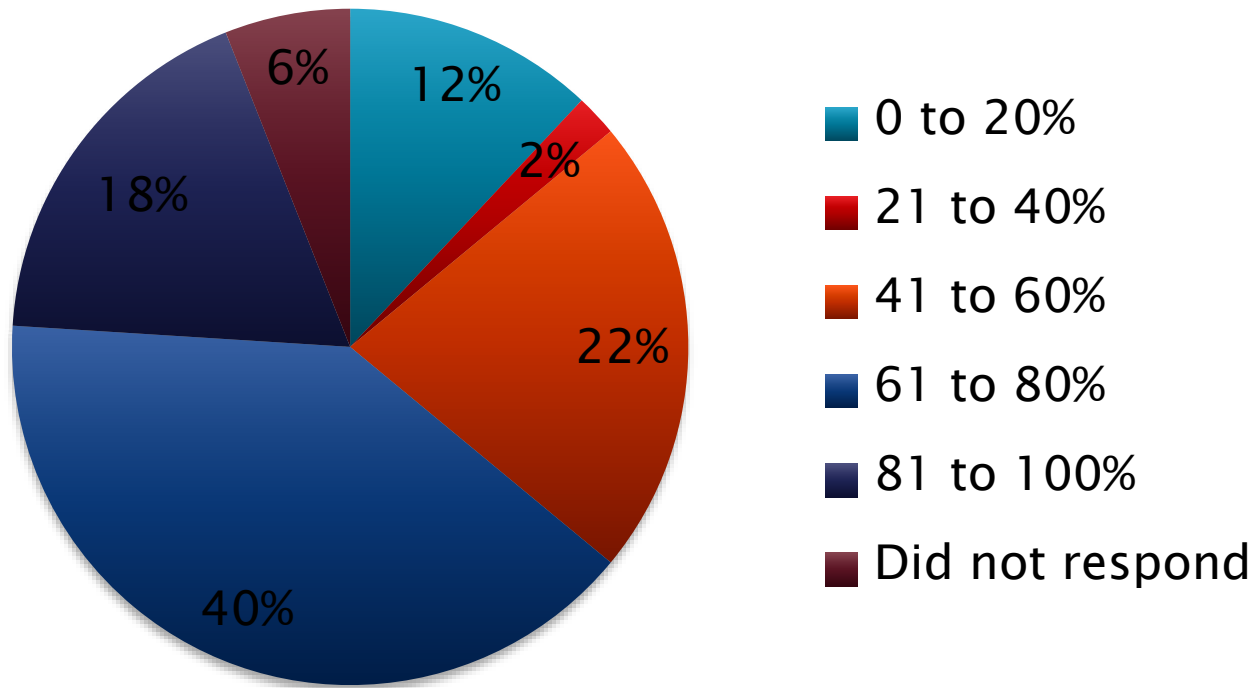
- ▶ When asked about their faith, 98% of respondents stated that they have a faith.
 - ▶ Of those stating they have a faith, 89% stated they follow Buddhism, 10% Christianity, and 2% Islam.
 - ▶ 84% indicated that they pray/worship regularly.
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Value and Self-Worth

- ▶ What does respect mean to you?
 - Good behavior
 - When others call me 'bong'
 - Being polite
 - Disciplining me and encouraging me
 - Not looking down on me

Value and Self-Worth

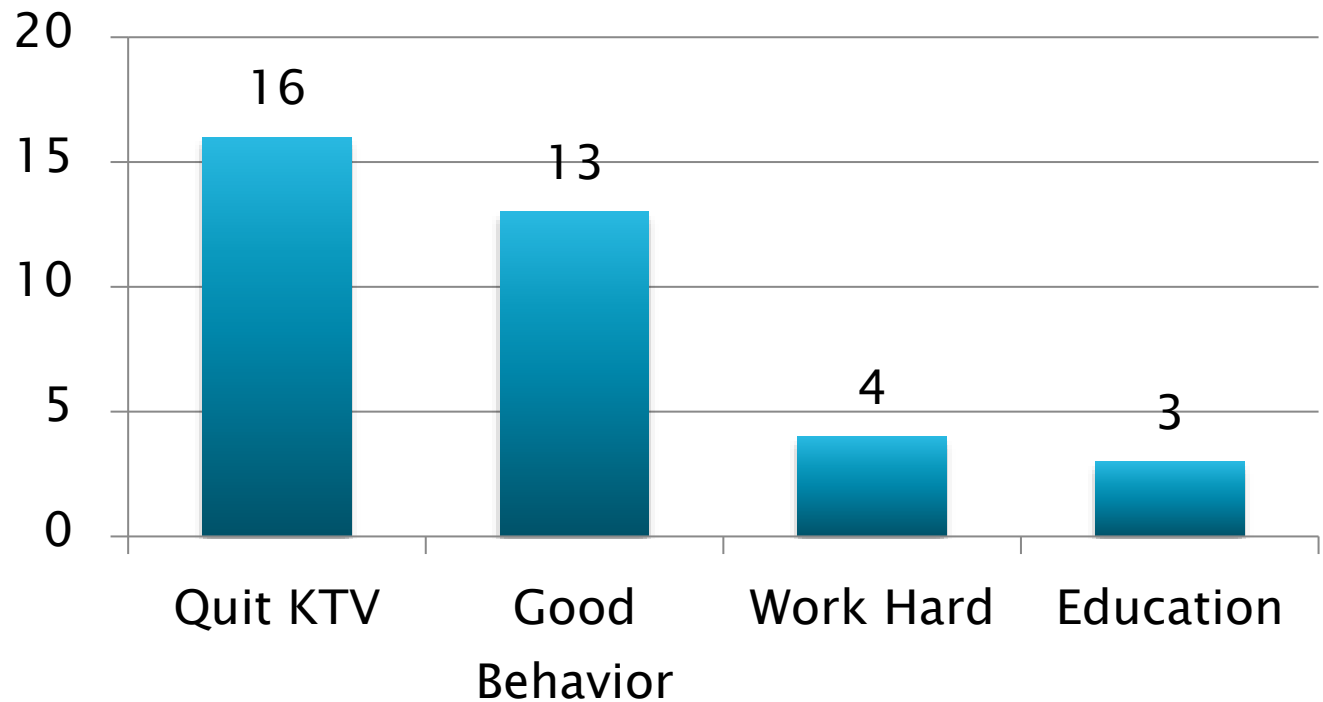
How much value do you have as a person?



Value and Self-Worth

“Because I work here, there’s nothing I can do to increase my value.”

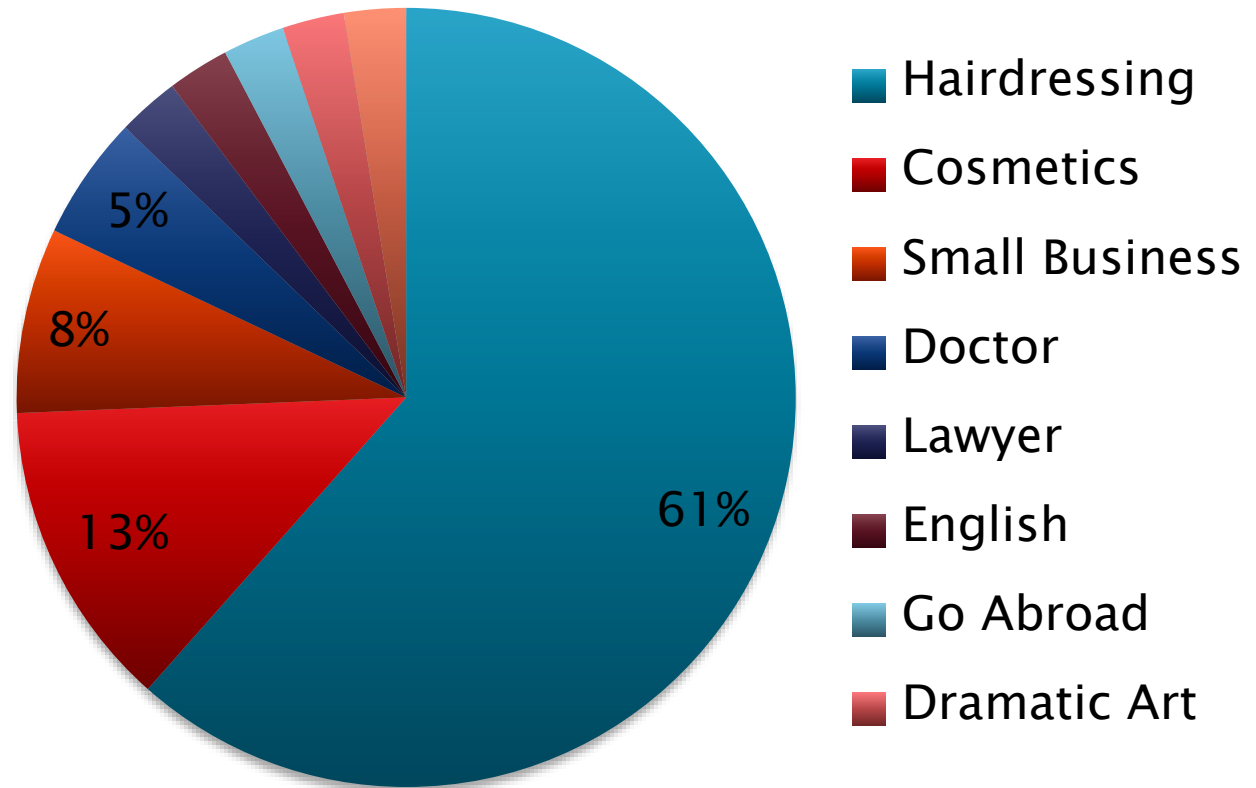
What can you do to increase your value? (Open-Ended Question)



Future Plans

Desired Skills

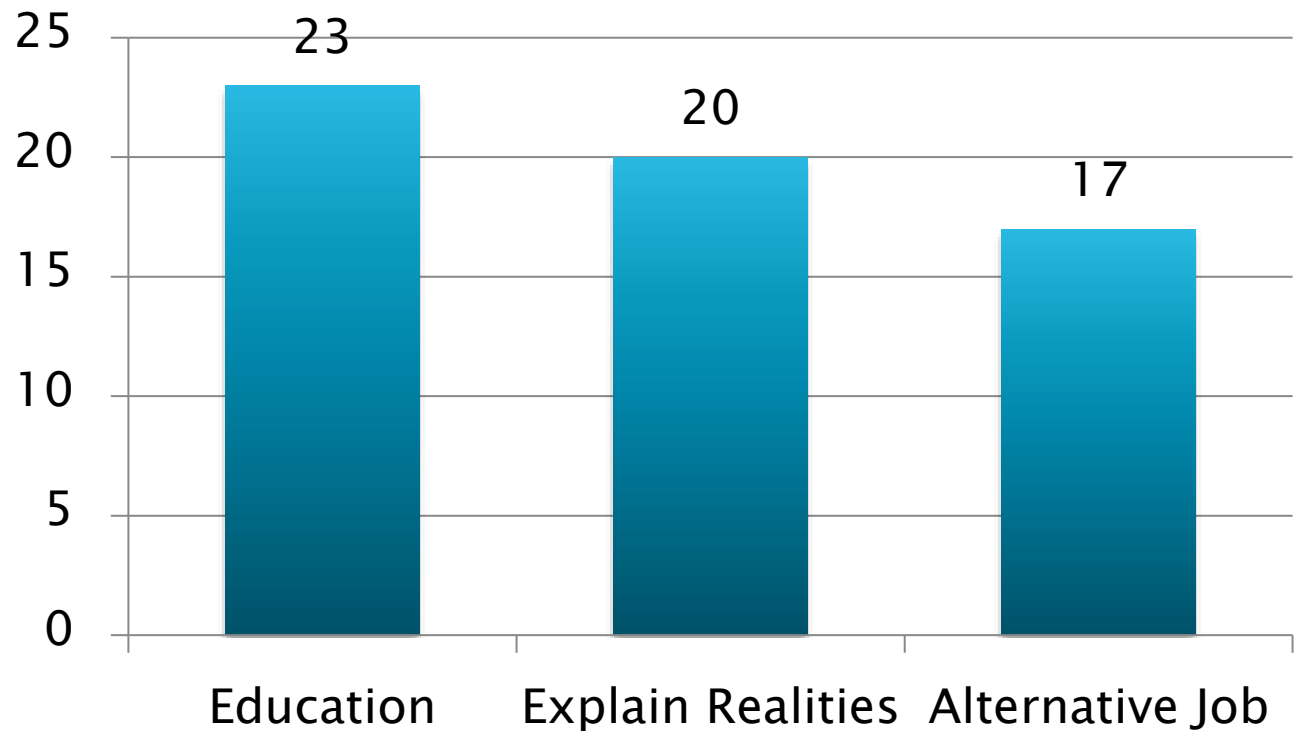
90% of respondents expressed an interest in learning English.




Prevention

What can be done to prevent others from coming to work at KTV venues?
(Open-Ended Question)

When asked, all 50 respondents stated that they would not recommend this job to their sister.



From the respondents...

- ▶ “I hope NGOs can help us with trainings so that we don’t have to work here anymore.”
 - ▶ “Please help me get out of this. I want to have enough education so I can do something else.”
 - ▶ “...don’t look down on, discriminate, or trample over us. We are like you. We have hearts.”
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Discussion

- ▶ Did any of the findings stand out or surprise you?