



# Marriage as Risk

A mixed method Study of Influence of Sociocultural Factors on

**Women Living** with **HIV/AIDS**  
in Delhi, India

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Women constitute almost 50% of the population but the HIV which was centred around male population is gradually affecting women despite their non-risky behaviour. There is a need to look into the sociocultural interplay.

## Background

**Biological vulnerability:**

**Sociocultural vulnerability:** Low status, Illiteracy, restricted mobility, silence over matters of sex and sexuality.

**Outcome of patriarchy (male dominance) and internalized patriarchal values by women:** Domestic violence, trafficking, violation of reproductive rights, rape.

*Gender Inequality index: India ranks 135 HDI and 127 in GII. (UNDP HDR, 2015).*

## Methods:

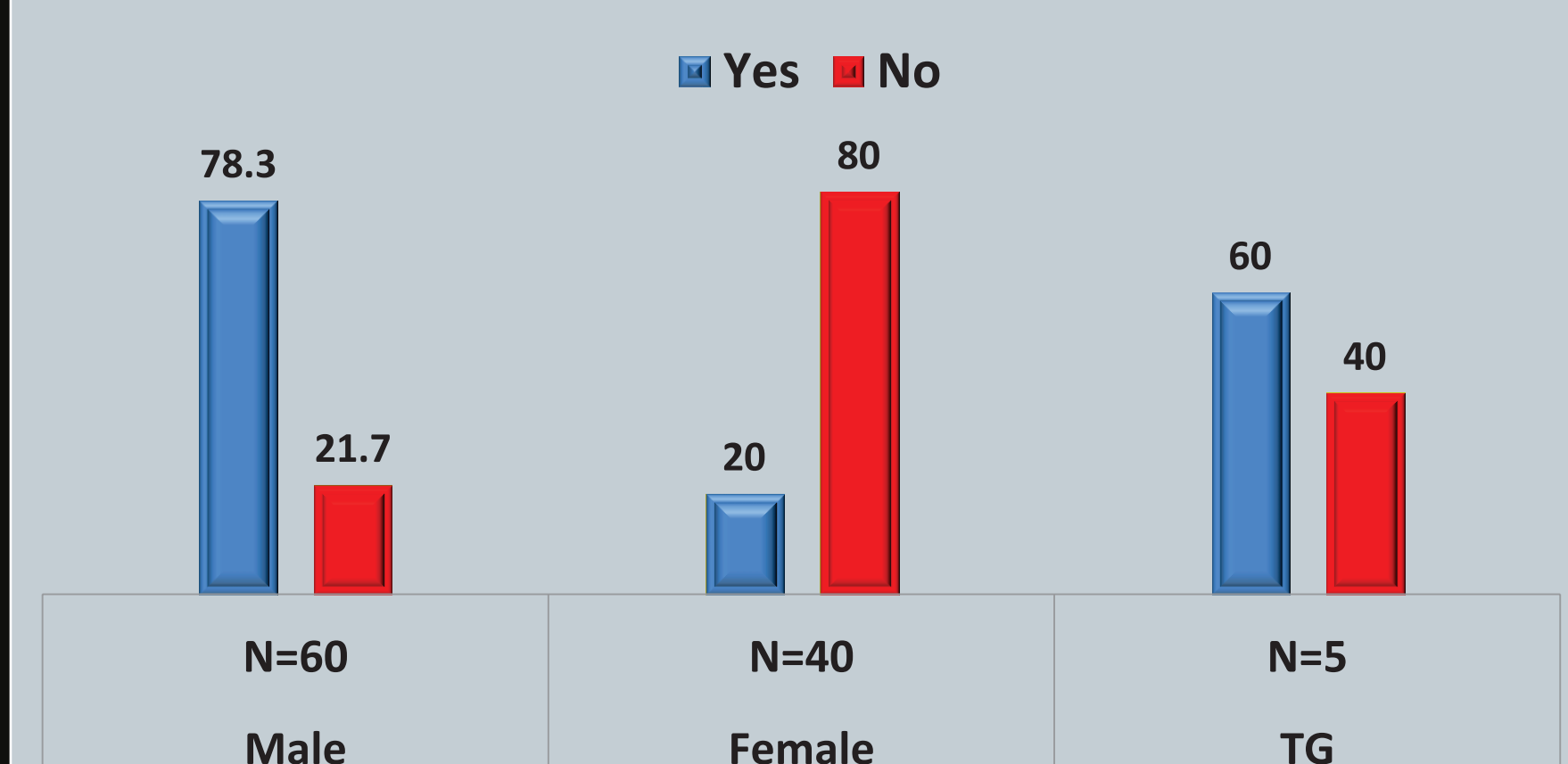
Mixed method research employing semi-structured interview was conducted after obtaining consent; with 105 HIV positive persons. Focus group discussions and case study of willing participants were taken.

- Gender: 60 males, 40 females 05 Transgender.
- Marital Status: 63 married, 19 unmarried, 23 ever married.
- Sexual Orientation: 84 heterosexual, 14 homosexual and 07 bisexual.

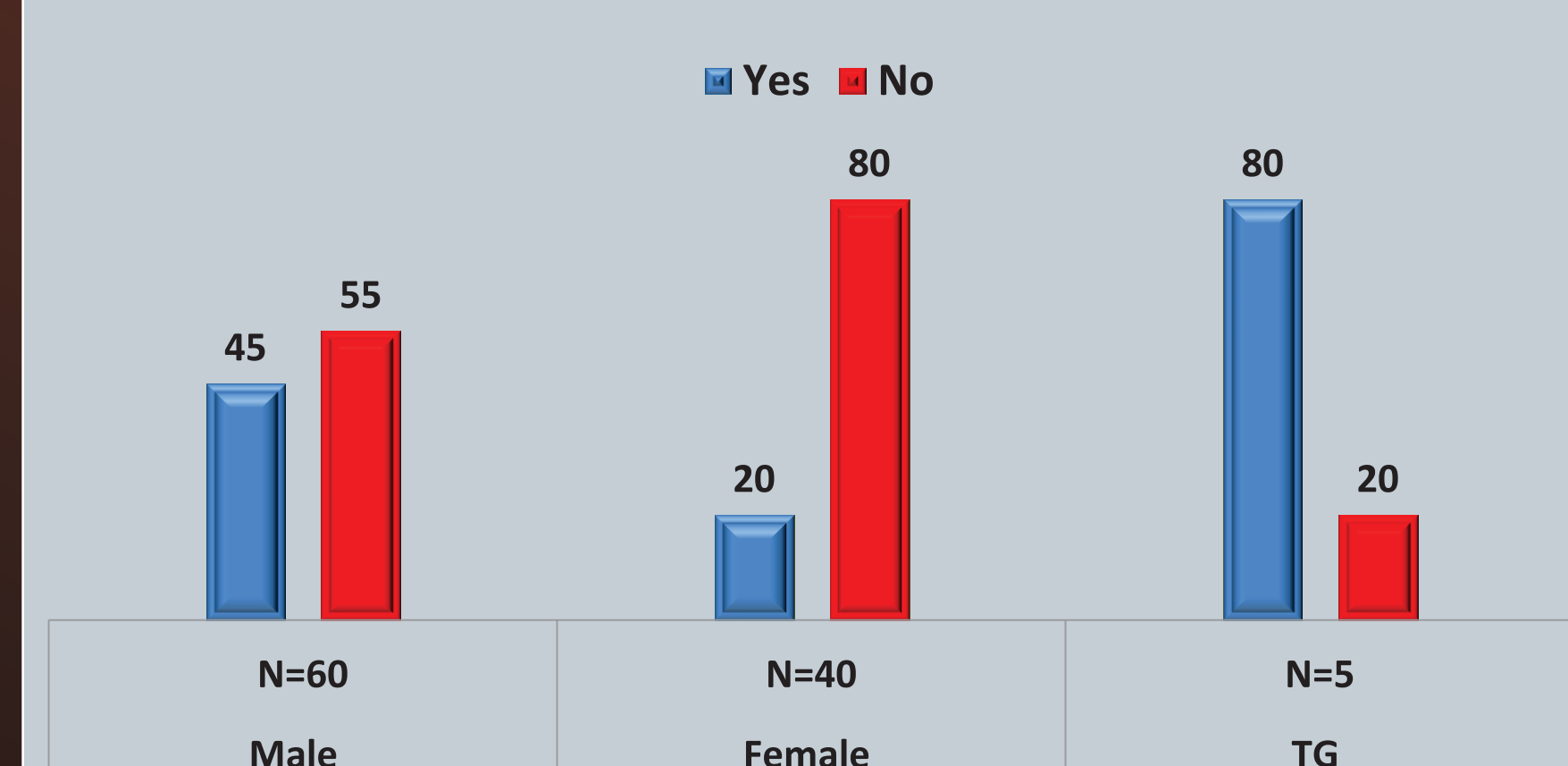
## Results:

- All 40 females were diagnosed with HIV after Marriage
- 10 underwent delivery after HIV diagnosis.
- Only 01 had consented for expansion of family.
- 21 were diagnosed first.
- Access to healthcare services was significantly affected by gender.
- Disclosure: 33 males and 01 female did not disclose.

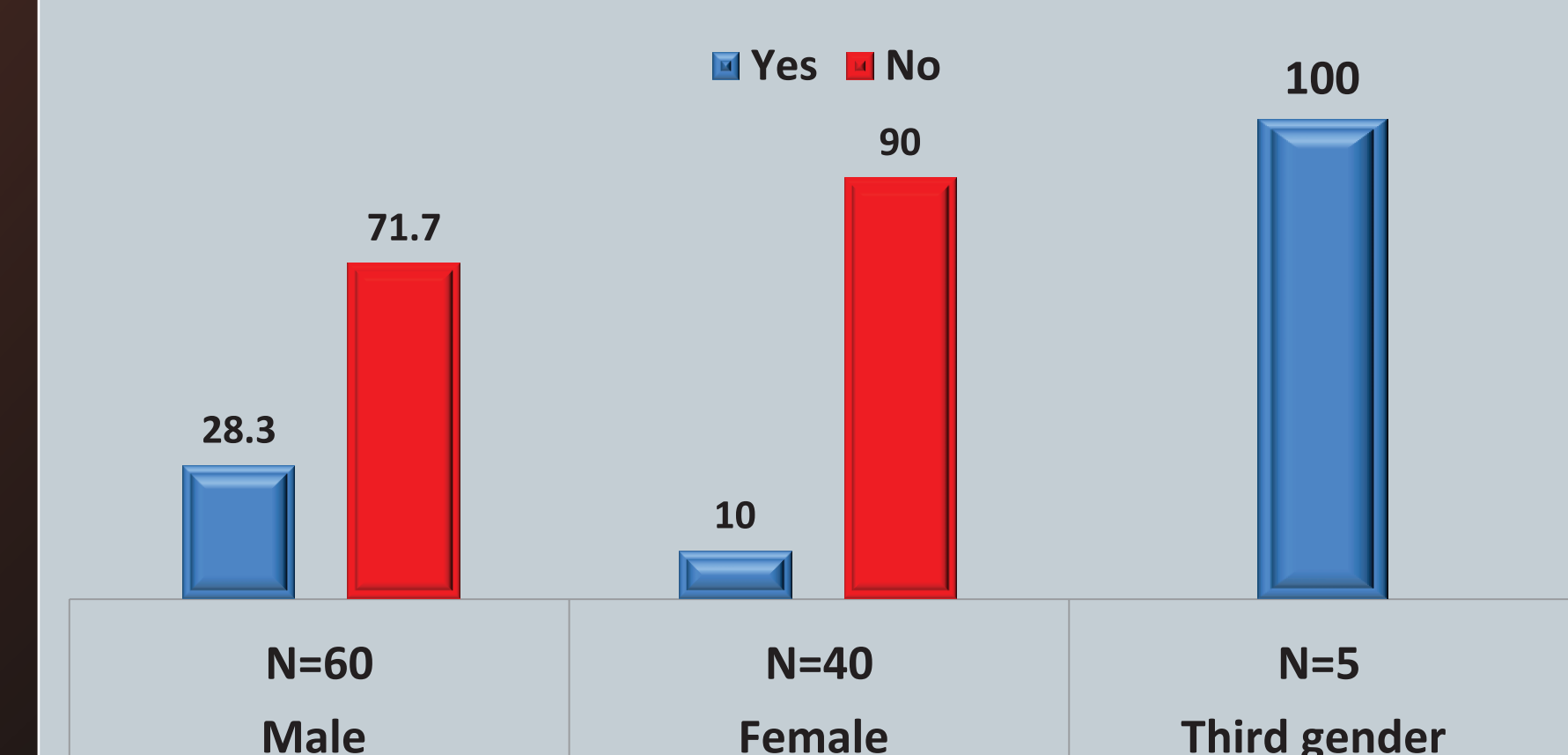
### Substance abuse by Gender



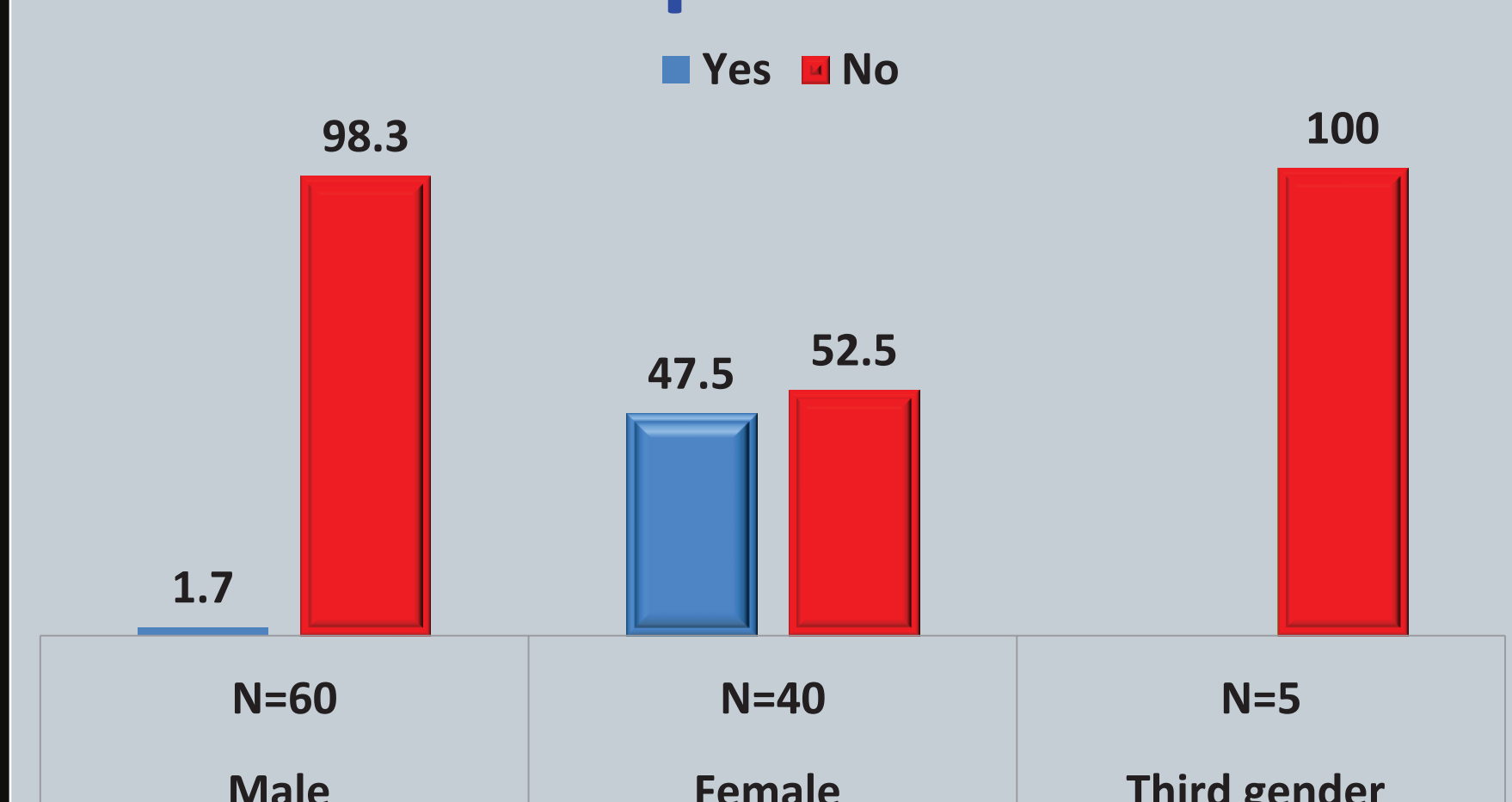
### Commercial sex activity by Gender



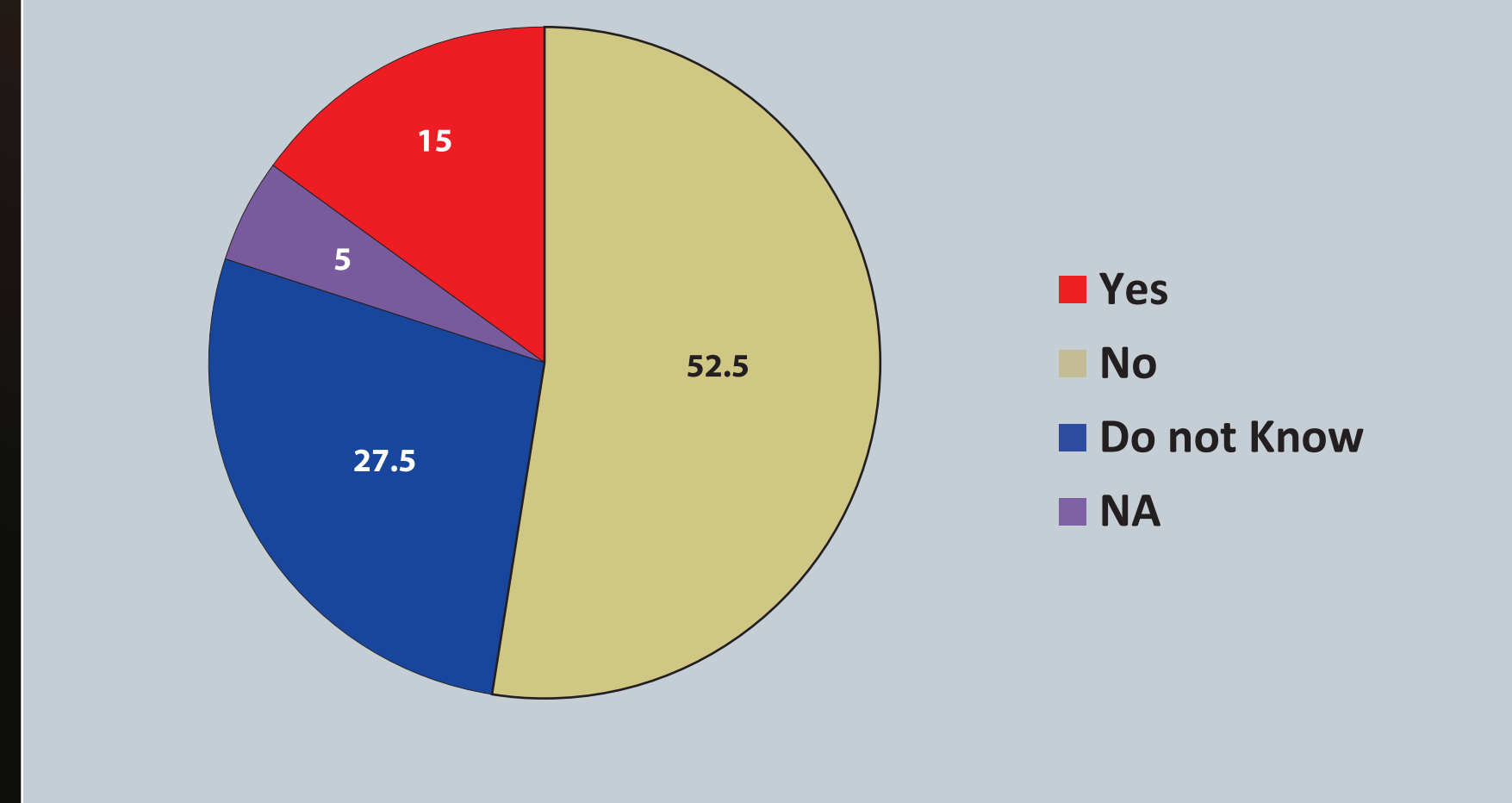
### HIV diagnosis due to risk behavior



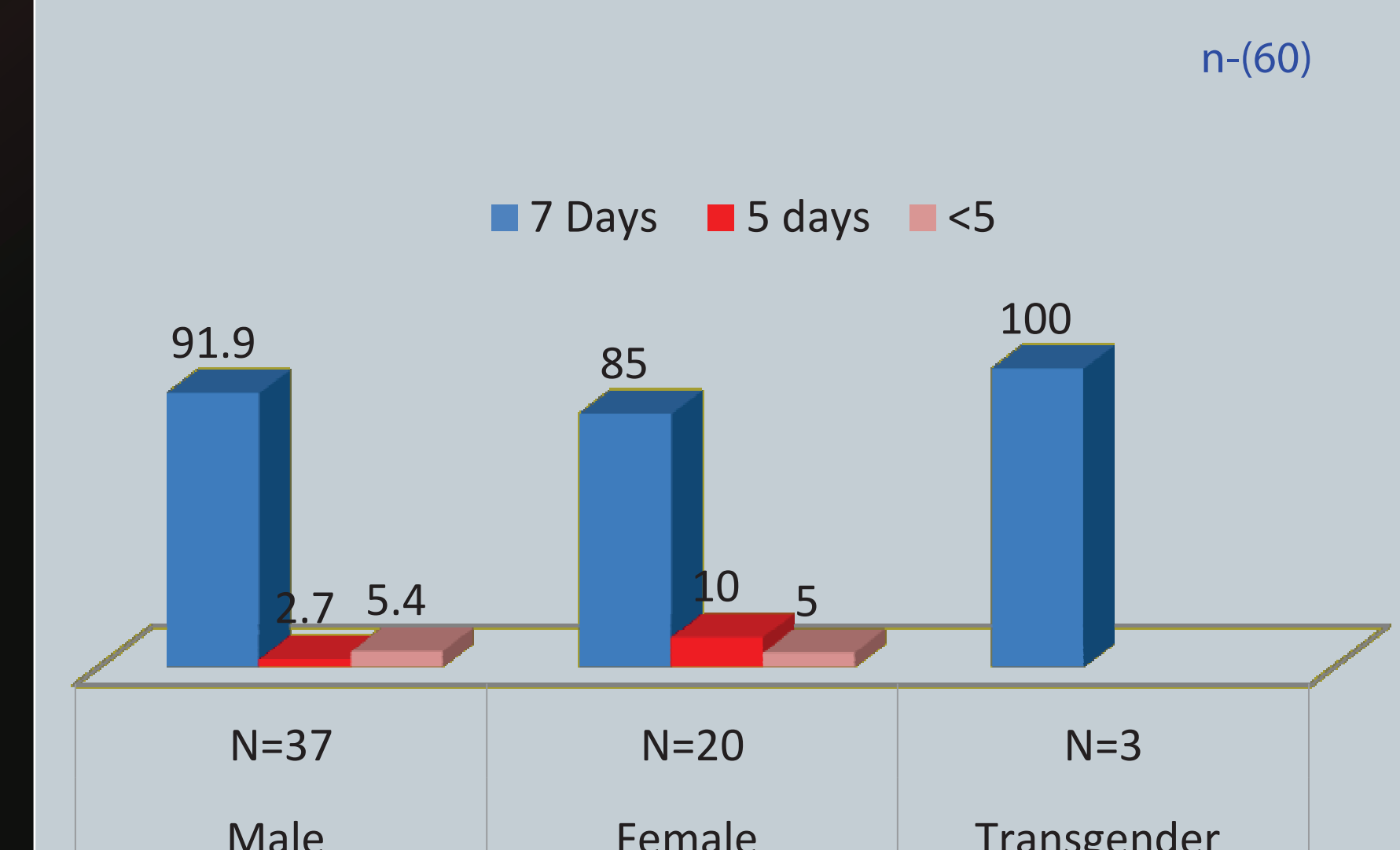
### HIV diagnosis due to Partner's positive status



### Male partner knew that he had HIV



### Adherence by recall of last week



## Conclusion

Combined results of men's and women's behavior reflect cultural factors playing a significant role in increased vulnerability resulting in increasing number of women getting infected, with marriage being the only risk. This bias is further accentuated post infection.

