



***Survey on Gender Perceptions  
August, 2012***

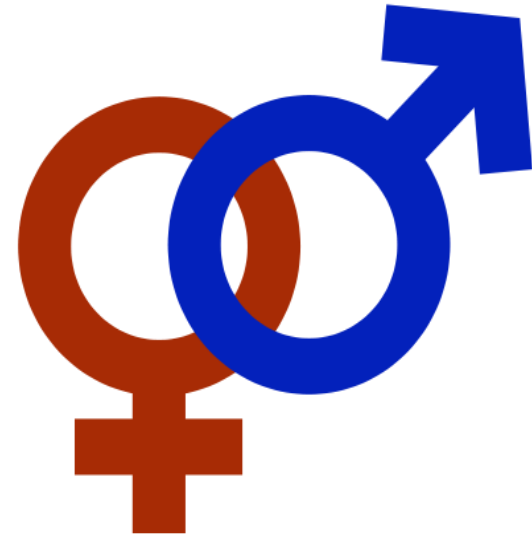
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# Background: *About the LIN Center for Community Development*

- The ***LIN Center for Community Development*** is a non-governmental and not-for-profit organization founded in 2009.
- The LIN Center's mission is “to foster a culture of philanthropy and social responsibility by providing support services to local not-for-profit organizations, skilled volunteers and donors that are committed to building strong communities”.
- The ***LIN Center*** facilitates coordination between for-profit and not-for-profit organizations (NPOs) by providing a platform where donors, volunteers and NPOs can interact and pool resources, thereby enabling NPOs to provide access to opportunities, for the less privileged members of the community.

# The Need for Research: Survey Background

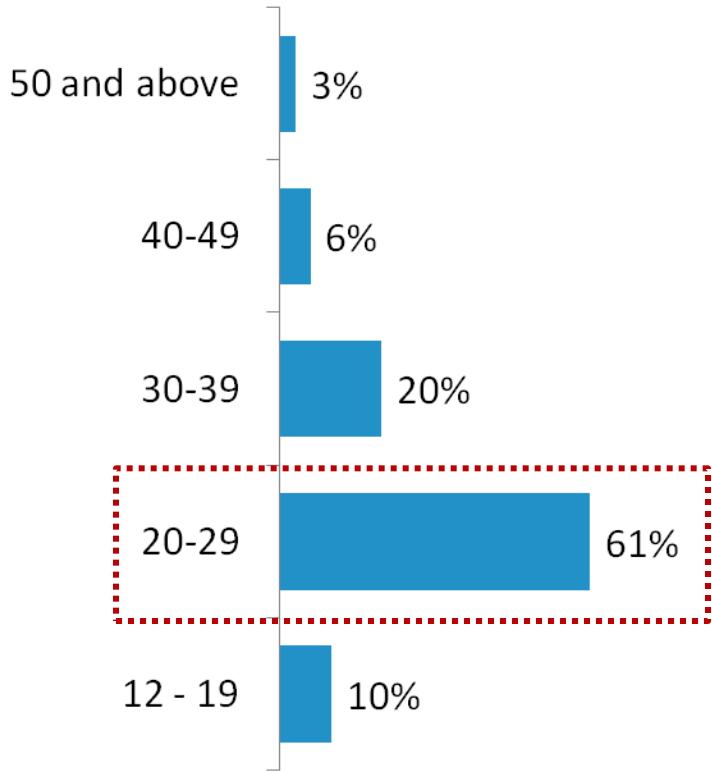
- LIN envisions a society where all members are respected and have equal access to opportunities.
- Vietnamese women are commonly known for their commitment to their families, communities and country. Nevertheless, women tend to suffer disproportionately due to gender discrimination, domestic violence and social disparities in access to public services, economic opportunities and income. Particularly disadvantaged are migrant women, widows, older women, single mothers and women with disabilities, who face additional challenges when it comes to taking advantage of opportunities generated by Vietnam's entry into the global economy.
- LIN is organizing the community to offer a challenge grant later this year. The grant is designed to help NPOs that are addressing the needs of women.
- This survey was designed to gain a better understanding about current perceptions and attitudes of Ho Chi Minh City residents towards gender roles and expectations.

# Methodology

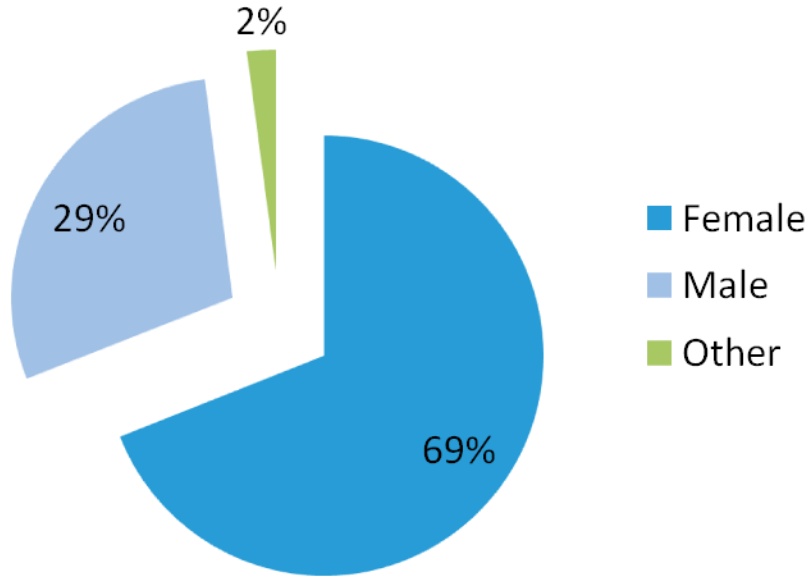
- The questionnaire was based on existing surveys conducted in other countries.
- The survey was administered, both online and offline, from 17 July to 8 August.
  - A survey link was sent to valid email addresses from LIN's contact database and on LIN's Facebook page and website.
  - The survey was taken, offline, by participants at the RMIT Career Fair.
- A total of 189 responses were collected.
- A survey with closed-ended and open-ended questions was used for qualitative and quantitative data acquisition.
- The following report highlights indicative findings from our research.

# Demographic Profile of Respondents

Age

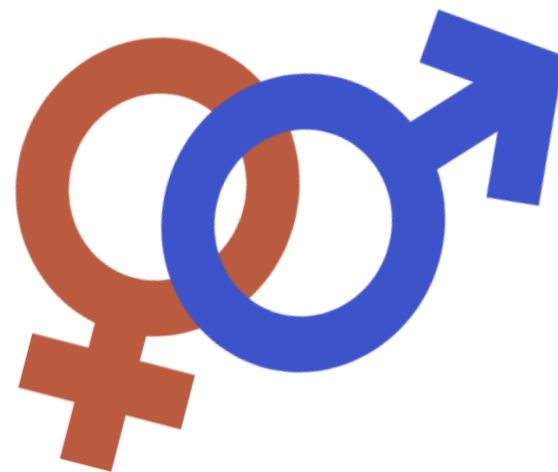


Gender





*Executive Summary*



# Executive Summary

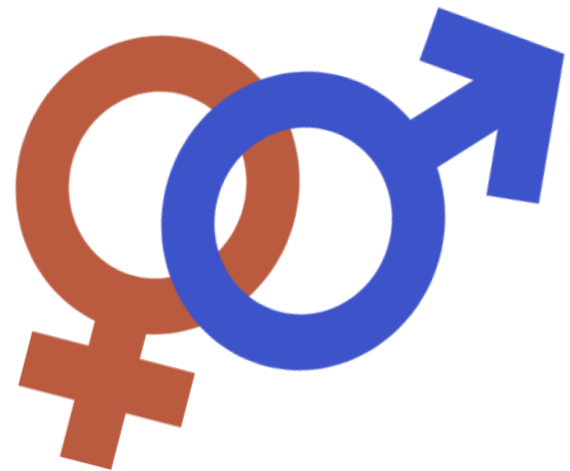
- Women are perceived as having a fair amount of autonomy in terms of household decision-making, where decisions are made jointly or, in some cases, exclusively by the female
- For most people, having a career is primarily seen as a way for a female to maintain her financial independence; additionally, a number of people believe that a career is not only financially helpful, but also helps women stay current and connected with the world
- The general perception is that compared to men, women have additional pressures to deal with; they have less freedom of choice due to family responsibilities which take precedence over other concerns; they also have to deal with more challenges at work, and have less leisure time compared to men
- Overall, gender roles do not seem to influence the types of job women apply to – however, there are 26% of respondents who do limit their professional avenues based on gender



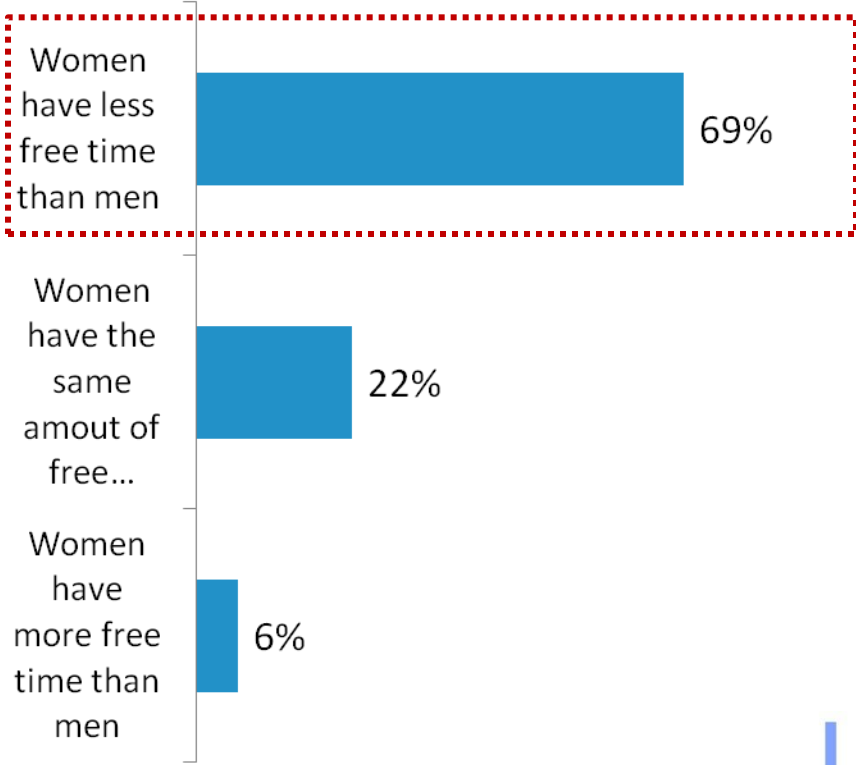
# Executive Summary

- Equality of pay is supported by the majority
- Most respondents feel that the dearth of women in top positions is linked to the fact that women prioritize their families over their careers
- Being the primary earner is still seen as the responsibility of the male partner and women are expected to prioritize taking care of children over their careers
- Respondents feel that gender stereotypes are most prevalent in the work environment, followed by politics and the news media
- People feel that most gender stereotypes in the media will decline in the near future
- In general, respondents had a positive outlook about the future, where they feel that there will be positive changes for women's rights and safety

*Key Findings*



## Who has more/less leisure time?

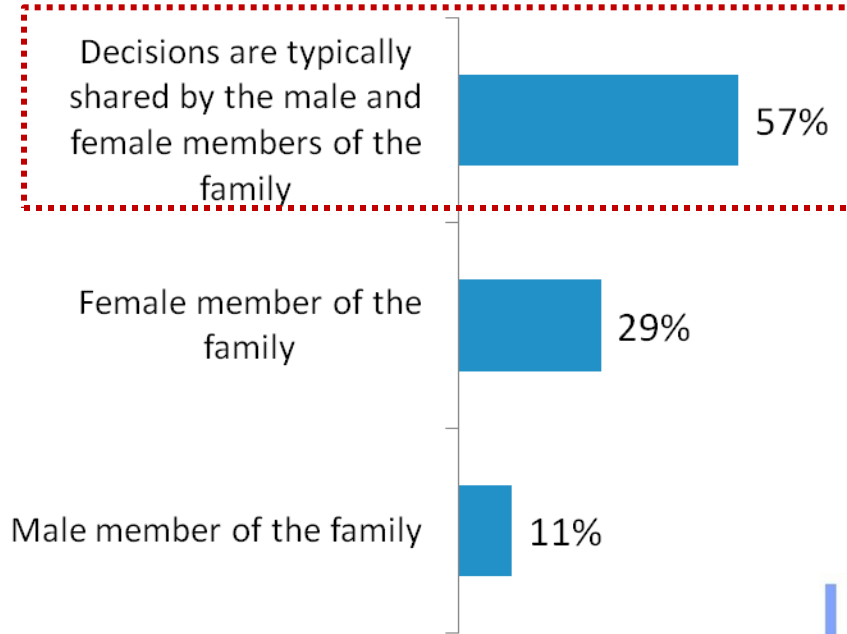


*Women are generally seen to have less leisure time as compared to men*

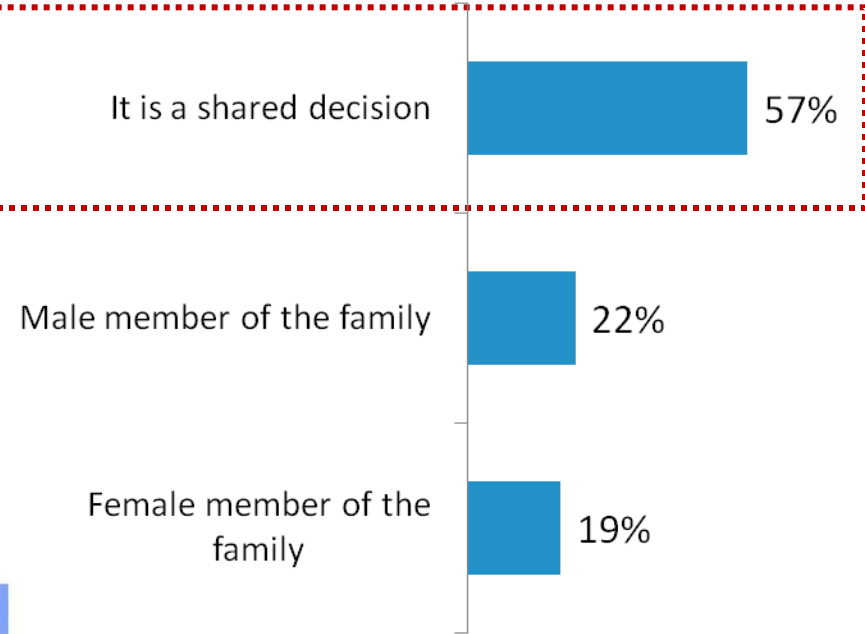
# Household Decision Making

- The majority of respondents (57%) feel that both types of decisions are made jointly by male & female members
- 29% of respondents feel women are more likely to make non-financial decisions rather than males, whereas 22% feel that men are the primary decision makers for financial decisions

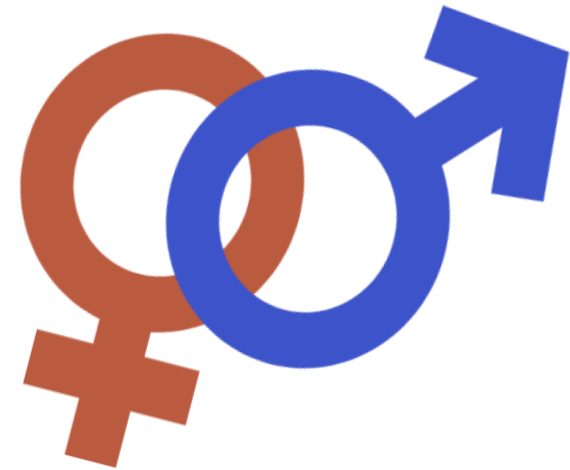
Who makes non – financial household decisions?



Who makes financial household decisions?

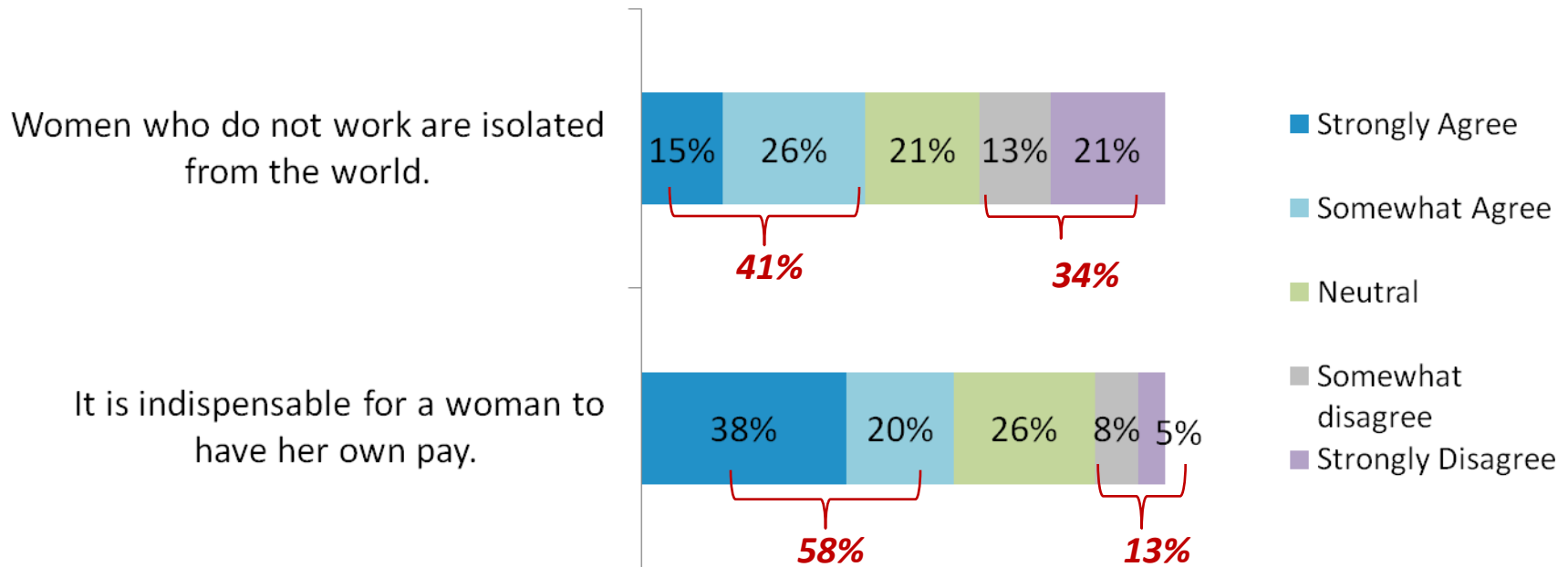


# *Gender & the Work Environment*

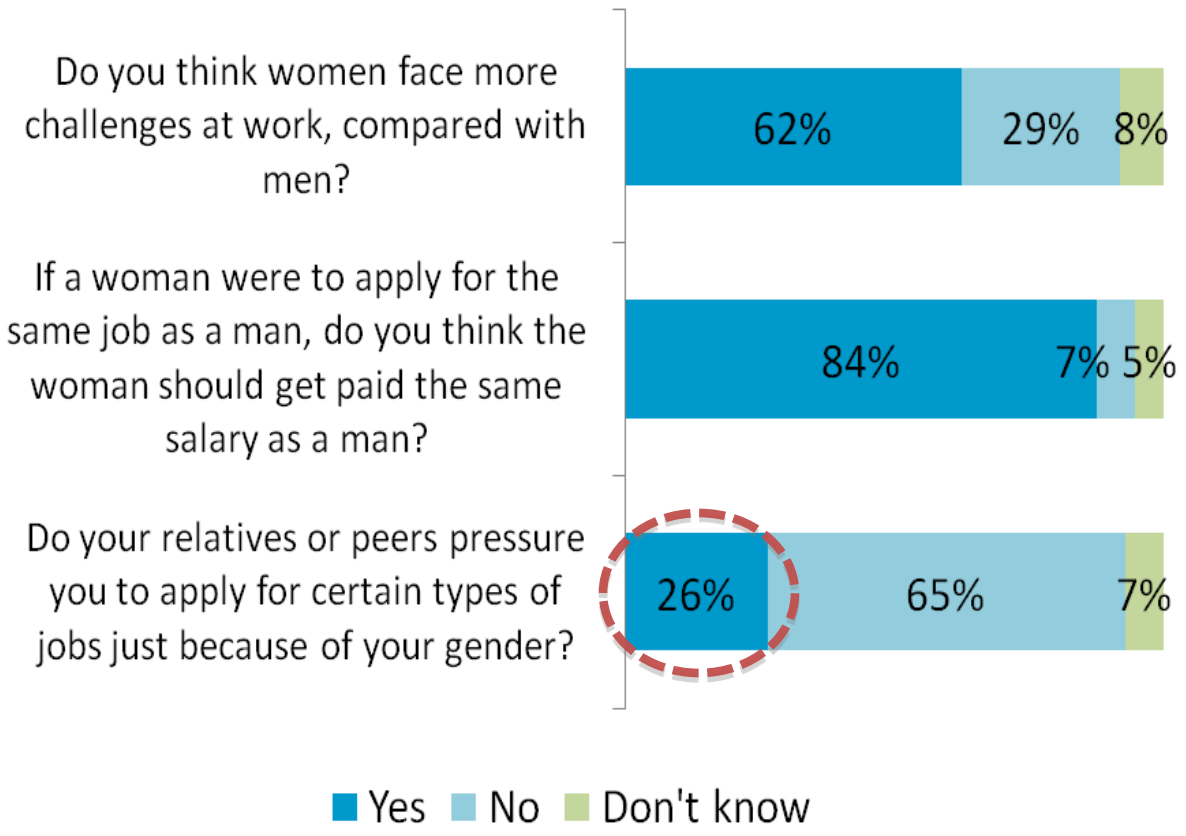


# Women and Work

- *The majority of respondents feel that financial independence is essential for women*
- *Similarly, a significant number of respondents feel that women without a career are disconnected from the world*



# Women and Work



- *Women seem to be faced with more challenges in the work environment compared to their male colleagues*
- *84% of respondents support the equality of pay – grades for men and women*
- *At least one quarter of our respondents said that they were pressured to apply for certain jobs because of their gender*



## Challenges Women Face at Work

### Traditional Assumptions/Perceptions

- *“Vietnam still does not completely break free from man-dominated society. Thus, although women role in work place has improved a lot, there are some situations in which their voice is intentionally or unintentionally ignored. For example, in a meeting, women's opinions are not taken seriously by others, especially men. Moreover, women who are brought up in male-dominated families may not have the courage to stand up for themselves. When their voice s are ignored, they accept it and do not do anything to change the situation. It makes men think that women are weak and obedient. To sum up, women have to cope with traditional assumptions about women’s roles and themselves.”*
- *“[Women are] overlooked for advancement over their male counterparts, paid less than men, and have less time to socialize. It is not always seen appropriate for women to socialize with clients, family duties, etc. “*
- *“Less freedom because of their family responsibilities. For example: They are not allowed (or it is frowned upon) to have jobs which require frequent business trips away from home.”*
- *“Expectation of performance is different for women, meaning that they must be able to manage more menial and lower end administrative tasks as well as high end executive decision making.”*



# Women and Work

## *Challenges Women Face at Work*

### **Balancing Work and Family**

- *“Balancing career and family life is a more difficult issue for woman than men because of social ideas about motherhood as the inherent natural choice for women.”*
- *“Women normally prioritize their families more than men do, so besides working at their companies, they have to spend more time in order to take care of their own homes. If they want to achieve as much as a man does, they will have to work even harder .”*
- *“Women often have to balance home life and career, so they easily get stressed and sometimes cannot make a wise decision at work. Moreover, women are more sensitive than men. When they make a decision, they often care more about what people think of their decision rather than the effect of the decision, which makes women likely to lose the opportunity to shine compared with men.”*
- *“Need to take care of family responsibilities during working hours, concern for coworkers emotional well-being.”*
- *“Women have to give birth to children and take care of their children, so they do not have as much time as men to focus on their career.”*

## Challenges Women Face at Work

### Workplace Policy Challenges

- *“Sexual discrimination at work continues to be rampant - even within global companies who ought to know better and protect their female staff members better. Working in a predominantly male surroundings, cultural peculiarities (e.g. male employees not willing to be governed by a woman).”*
- *“Authority systematically questioned and takes time to be rooted whatever the female manager's proven skills may be.”*
- *“Challenges of safety, movement and capacity of women's bodies in the social sphere are also important risk factors.”*
- *“Gender discrimination when applying for the same job position.”*
- *“Lack of recognition for female manager's work, especially in case of success.”*



## Challenges Women Face at Work

### Government Policy Challenges

*“Vietnam is one of the most progressive countries in the world in terms of women's empowerment. The challenges of the woman-company relationship dynamic in Vietnam is, to a large extent, rooted in social protection policies designed to help women, but which make hiring women into well paid positions over men into a much greater liability for a company that is not already highly profitable.*

*Take for instance state mandated 4 months of pregnancy leave which is scheduled to turn into a “generous” 6 months of leave next year. Yes, according to the laws that will go into effect, a company will be required to pay a full year’s salary for a woman who works half a year during the child bearing process. It does not matter for how long before maternity leave she worked for the company or for how long after she plans to work for the company, the company must pay.*

*Also, law prohibits laying off or firing a woman if she is pregnant. That means if you are managing a business and you HAVE to lay people off, you have to lay off your non-pregnant staff first, then to pay 6 months of salary for maternity leave for which your business will not get any labor in exchange. On the surface such policies appear to be progressive and empowering for women... However, these policies have very serious financial implications for a small or medium sized company if the company is faced with candidates 18-35 years old and decisions about what makes financial sense. Such prohibitively costly policies will certainly not lead to more women being hired and might lead to systematic demotions or an increase of informal labor agreements or piecemeal incentive payment systems which offer no social protection.*

## Challenges Women Face at Work

### Government Policy Challenges

*As these are state mandated policies, companies that comply with this policy do not create a moral debt or a legal obligation for employees to return to work after paid leave is over.*

*That said, in Vietnam, women are much more efficient and smarter than their male counterparts. Women make for more loyal employees and tend not to engage in collecting multiple pay checks from different companies which is not uncommon for men to do and they don't need quite as much oversight as their male counterparts.*

*So when faced with a male and a female candidate, regardless of this consideration being one that can legally factor into the decision to hire or not, the struggle for upper management is to calculate the efficiency of a male worker vs that of a female worker- taking into consideration the likely tenure of each employee and the likelihood that the woman will become pregnant during this tenure. If the two are perceived as being equally efficient and smart, then policies related to pregnancy leave are going to hurt the prospects of a young woman being considered for an advanced position... if she is faced with the same reality wherever she goes, then during these prime years for career advancement, she will not advance with the same ease as her male counterparts.”*

# Women and Work

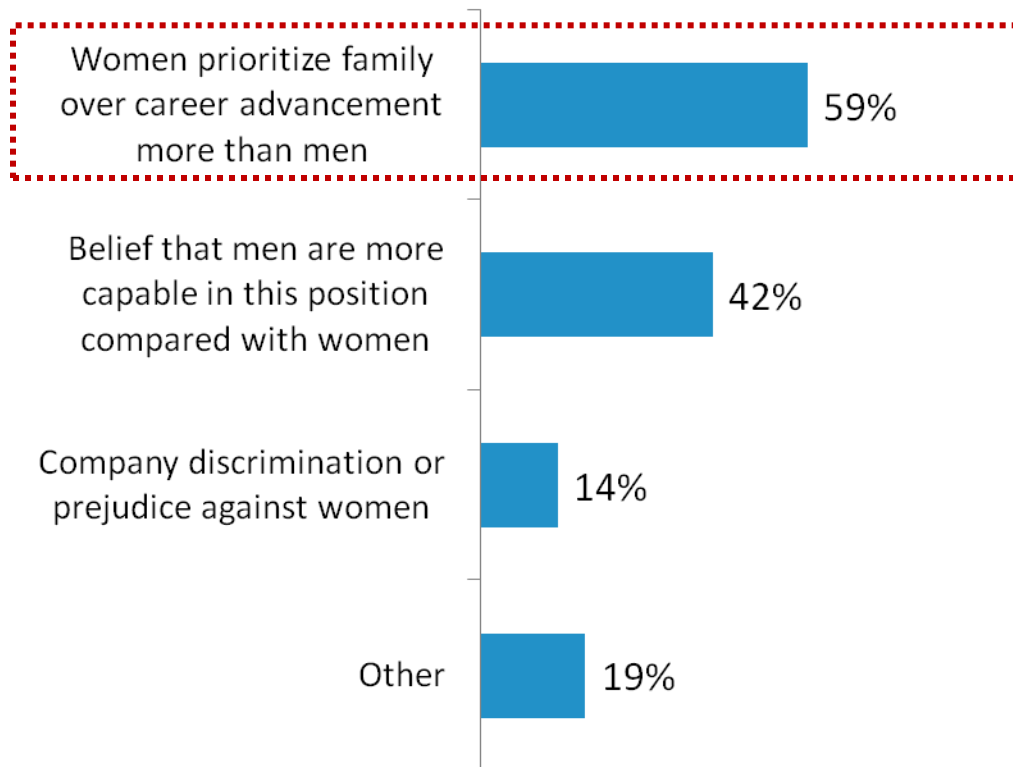
## *Challenges Women Face at Work*

### **Other Challenges**

- *“Physically, women are weaker than men.”*
- *“When it comes to pregnancy or periods, women have to suffer a lot, and their work will also be affected. To keep up with the men, extra work is required.”*
- *“Women are more likely to suffer from sexual harassment.”*

# Women and Work: Holding Positions of Importance

## Why are there more male CEO's than female CEO's in Vietnam?

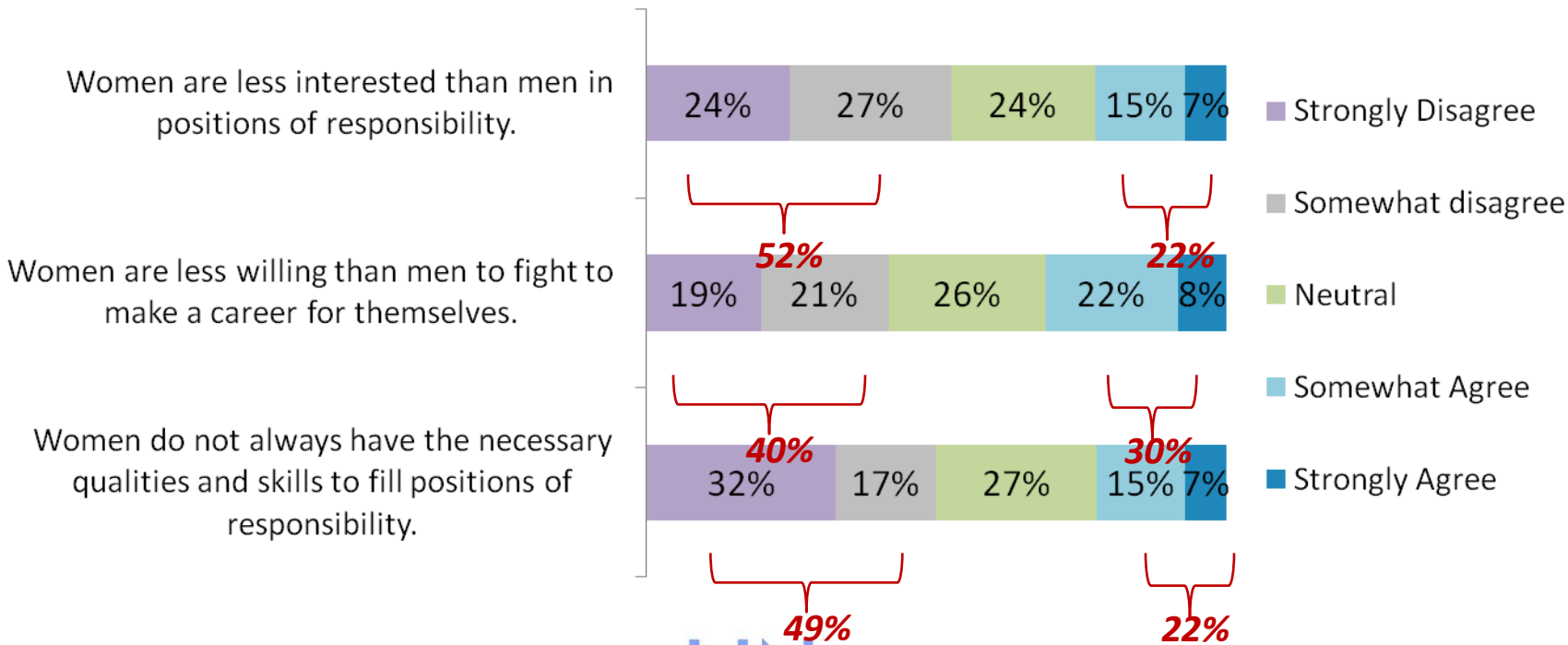


- *Most people feel that there are fewer women in important positions because women prioritize their families*
- *Still, a significant number of people believe that men are better able to handle important positions*
- *14% of respondents feel that companies discriminate against women for top jobs*

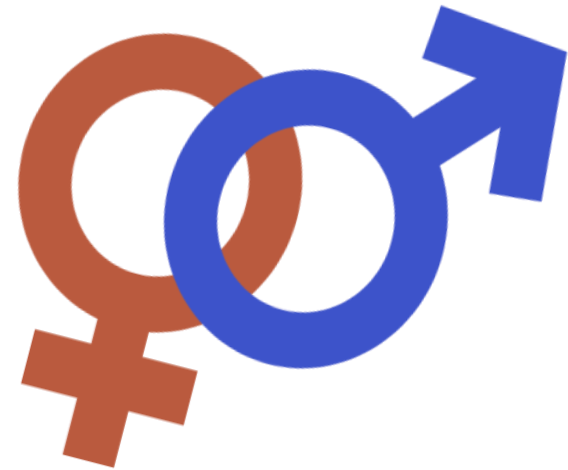
# Women and Work: Holding Positions of Importance

•A commonly held perception is that women are equally interested as men in positions of responsibility – however, 30% of survey respondents feel that women are less willing to fight for their careers compared with men.

•22% of our respondents feel that women lack the necessary skills and qualities to fill positions of responsibility



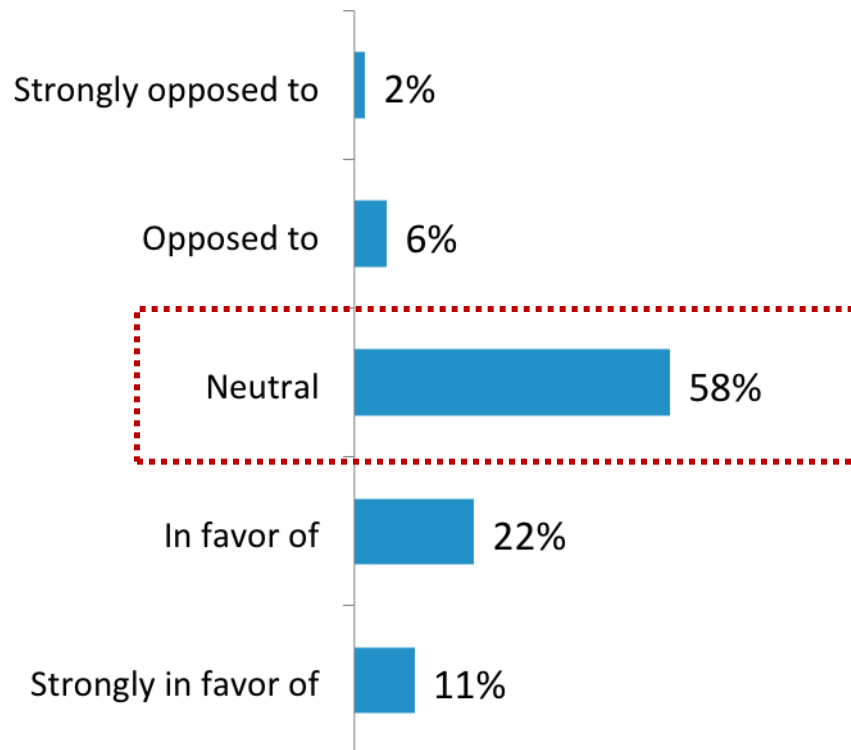
## *Gender Roles*





# Gender Roles: Perception of Male Roles

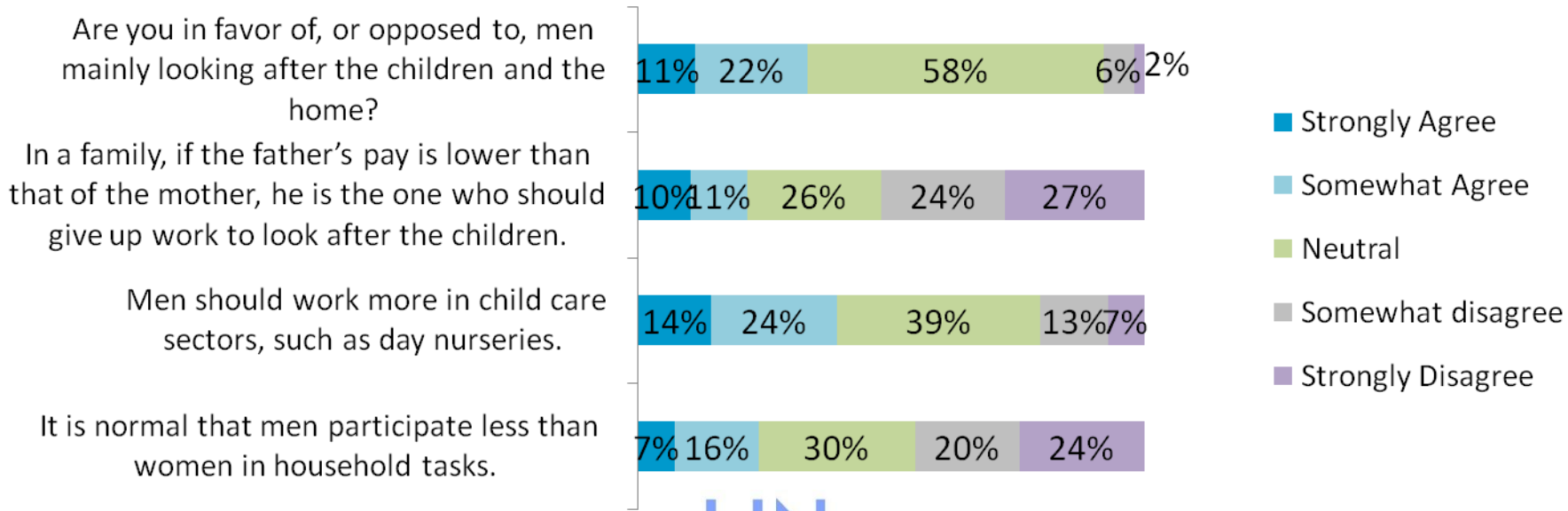
*Are you in favor of, or opposed to, men mainly looking after the children and the home?*



*•Most respondents are neutral or indifferent to which gender looks after the children and the home*

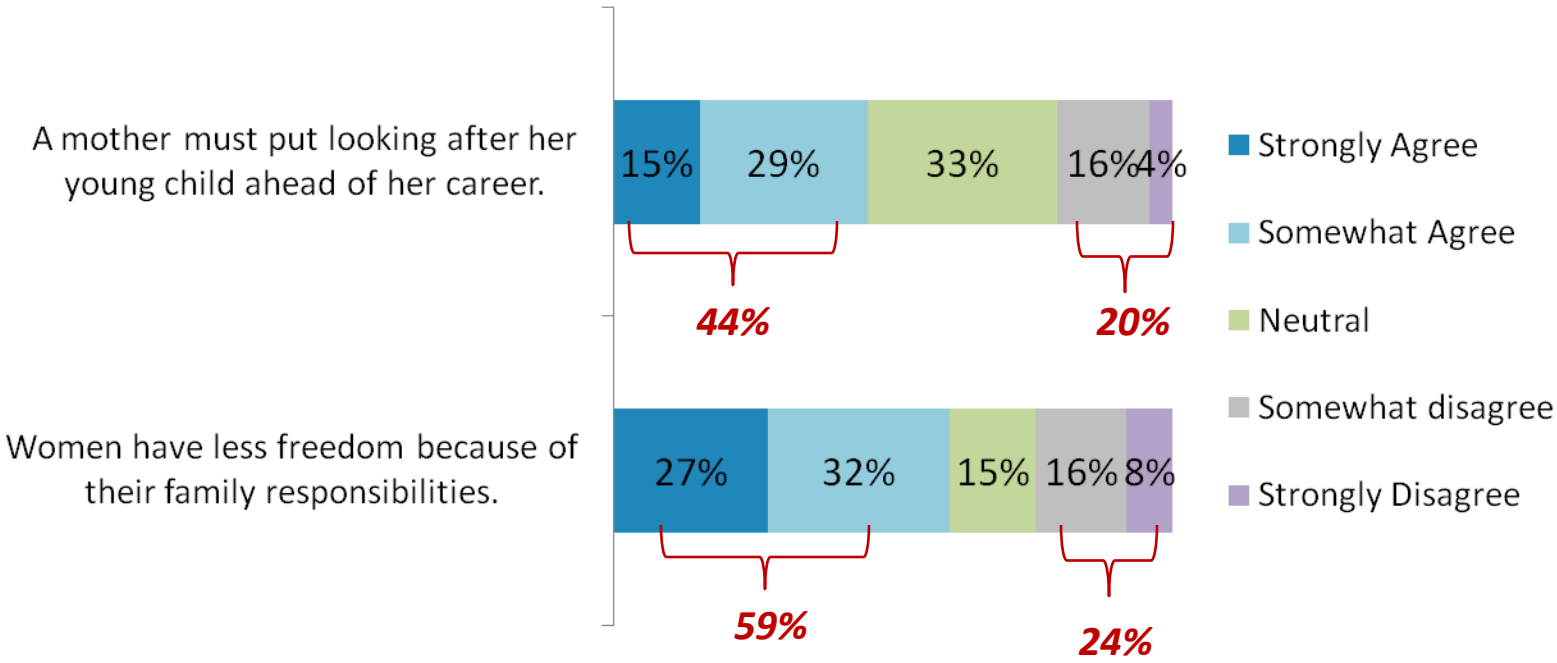
# Gender Roles: Perception of Male Roles

- *Work outside the home is still seen as the responsibility of the male, which can be inferred from 51% of respondents thinking that men who earn less than their female partner should continue to work rather than stay at home with their children.*
- *As far as household chores go, 44% of respondents think that both men and women should contribute equally - however 23% also feel that it is normal if men participate less*



# Gender Roles: Perception of Female Roles

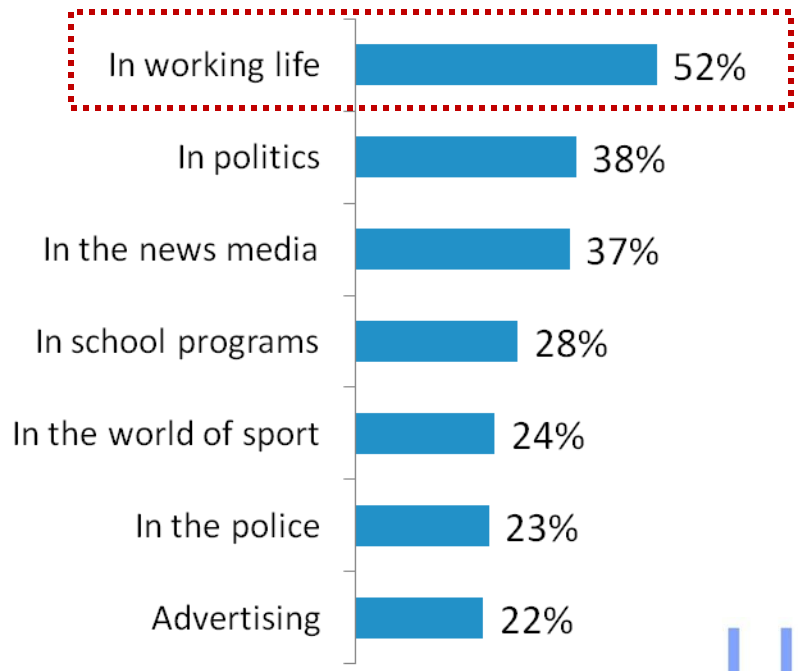
- Over half of respondents (59%) believe that women have less freedom in their decisions and actions because of familial responsibilities
- Nearly half of respondents feel that when faced with a choice between family and career, women should prioritize their children



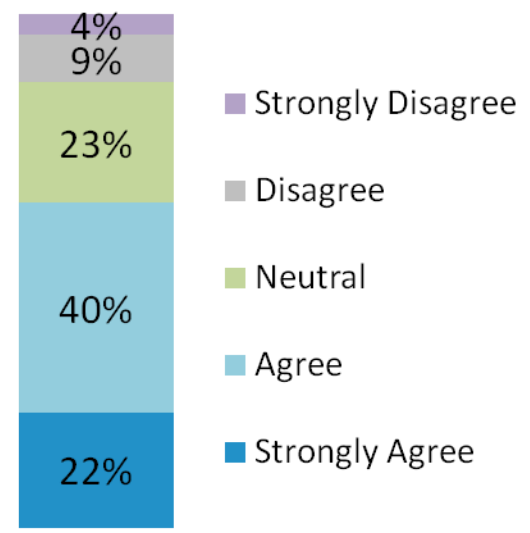
# Gender Stereotypes

- Gender stereotypes are most prevalent in the work environment, though over a third of respondents feel that stereotypes are also prevalent in politics and mass media
- The majority of respondents feel that the stereotypical portrayal of women in media will decline in forthcoming years.

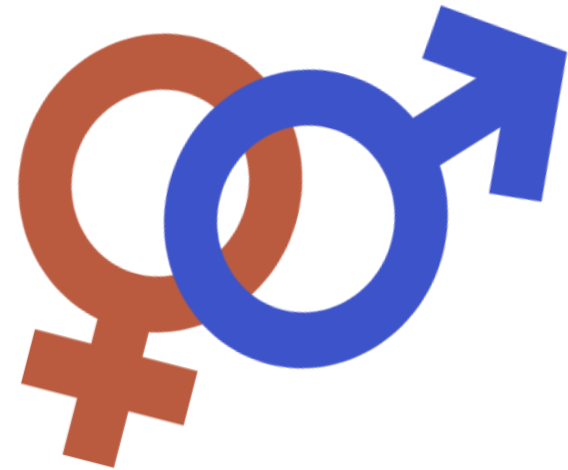
Existence of Gender Stereotypes in various spheres



Will a less stereotyped image of women will be portrayed in the media 20 years from now?



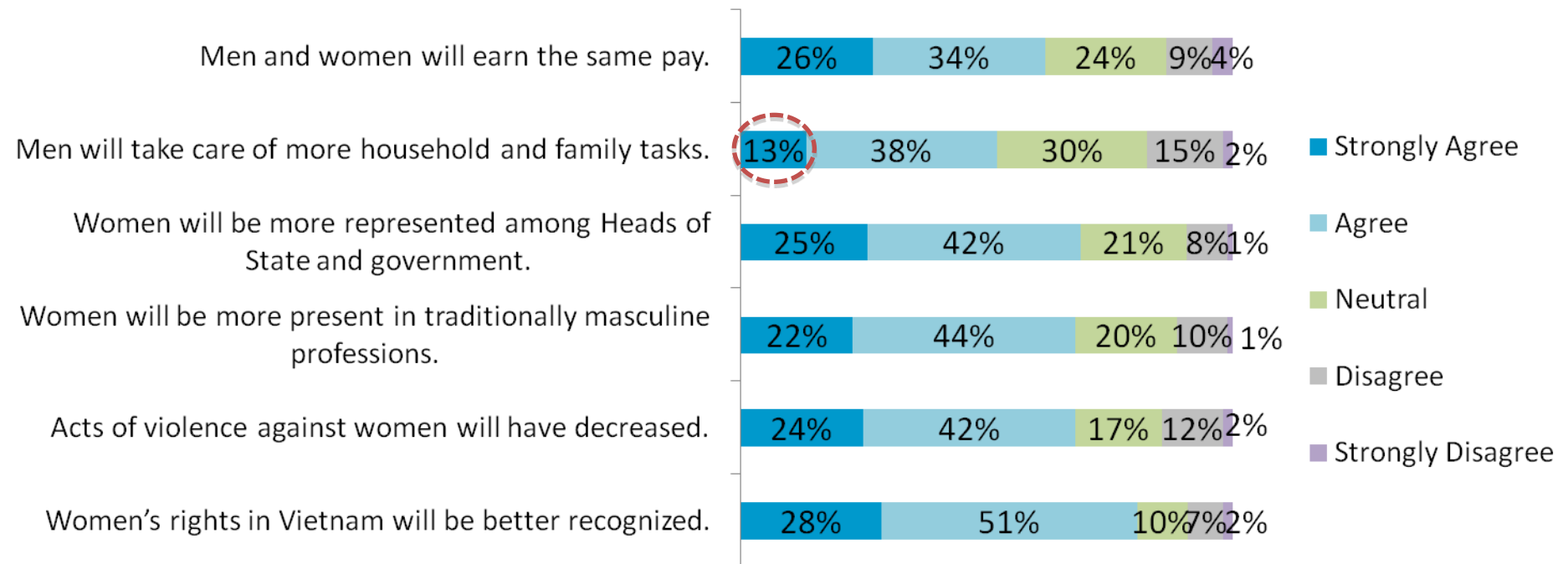
## *Future Developments*



# Future Outlook

• *In general, respondents are optimistic about the future with regards to gender equality, especially with regards to recognition of women's rights, more gender neutral careers & increased safety from violence against women.*

• *Interestingly, respondents are least optimistic about the possibility of men playing an increased role in supporting household tasks.*



## *What Do You Think About The Findings?*

*We welcome and appreciate any comments/feedback via email  
to: [info@LINvn.org](mailto:info@LINvn.org)*

