

Issues surrounding Pregnancy, Childbirth and Childcare for Korean female medical students and residents



Hwa Sook Kim, MD-PhD
Korean Medical Women's Association

Introduction

- Statistics Korea - average number of babies born was only 1.15 → lowest birth rate
- Korean government has promoted pregnancy for the past decade
- However, the effect of such policy has not reached the medical field
- Pregnancy, childbirth and childcare result stressful consequences for female medical students and residents

Methods

- Questionnaires

- 3rd and 4th year female medical students

1,905 - given 1,209 (63.5%) - answered

- Female residents

3,805 - given 1,223 (32%) - answered

- Collected data was carefully reviewed

Results

- If there weren't any limits on maternity leave
 - 75% of 1209 students still were reluctant to have child during medical school
 - 43% of 1223 residents wanted to have 2 children and 39% wanted to have one child

more than 3

2%

2 children

9%

1 child

14%

not want

75%

1209 Students
no limits

0%

20%

40%

60%

80%

more than 3

6%

2 children

43%

1 child

39%

not want

12%

1,233 Residents
no limits

0%

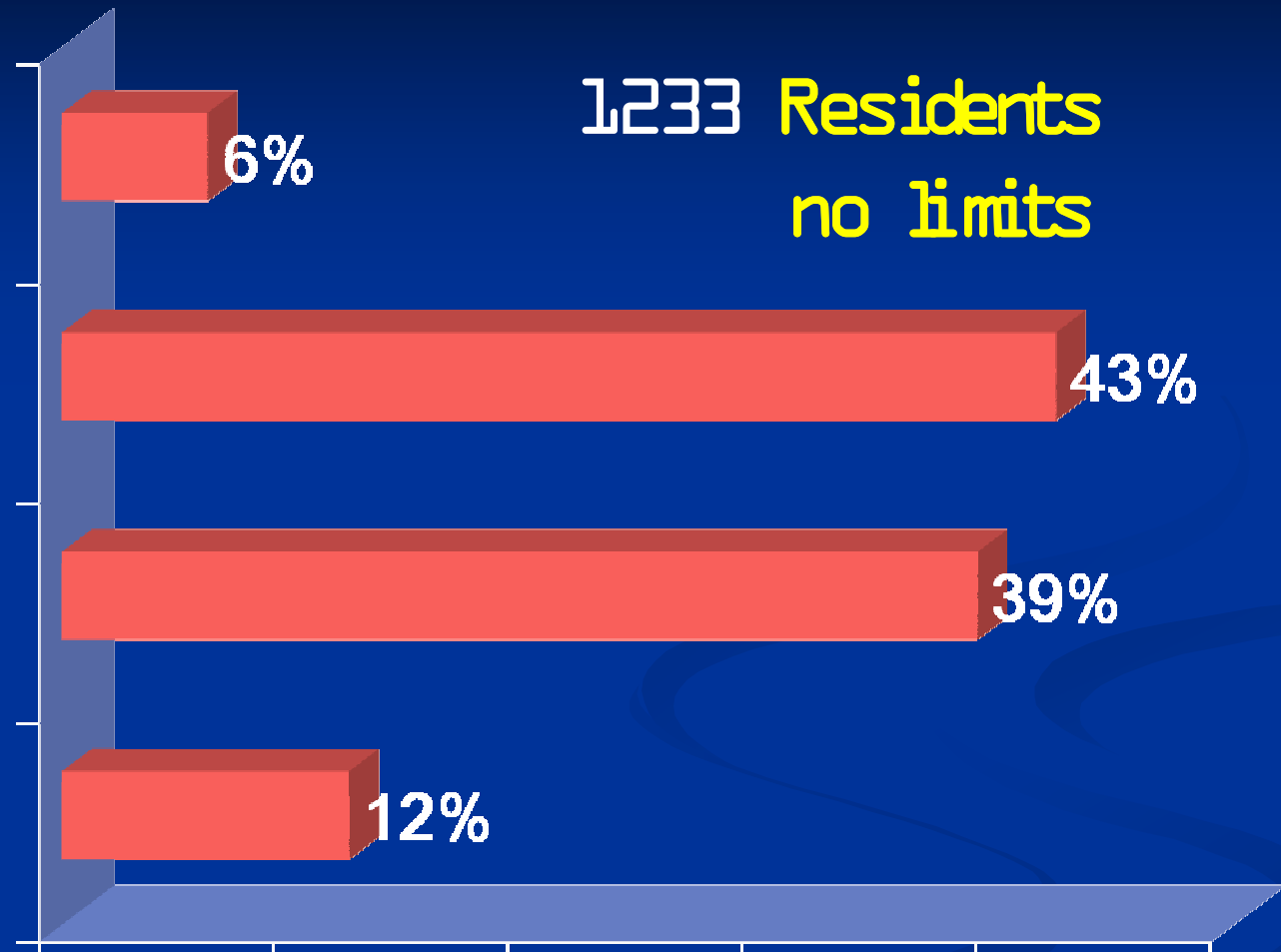
10%

20%

30%

40%

50%



Results

- Under the current 3 months maternity leave policy
 - 49% of students wanted to have 2 children during their future residency
 - 57% of residents wanted to have one child

more than 3

8%

2 children

49%

1 child

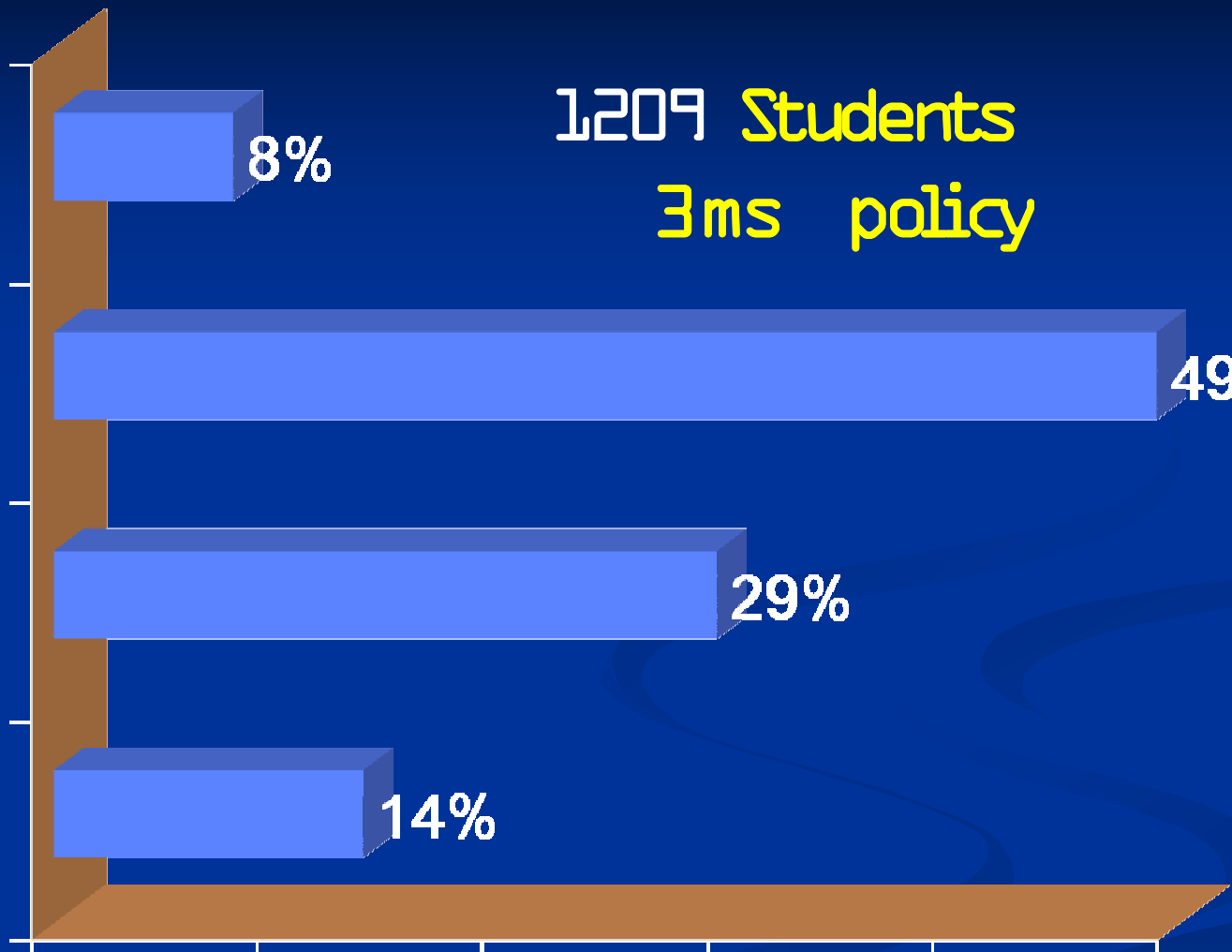
29%

not want

14%

1209 Students
3ms policy

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50%



more than 3

1%

2 children

9%

1 child

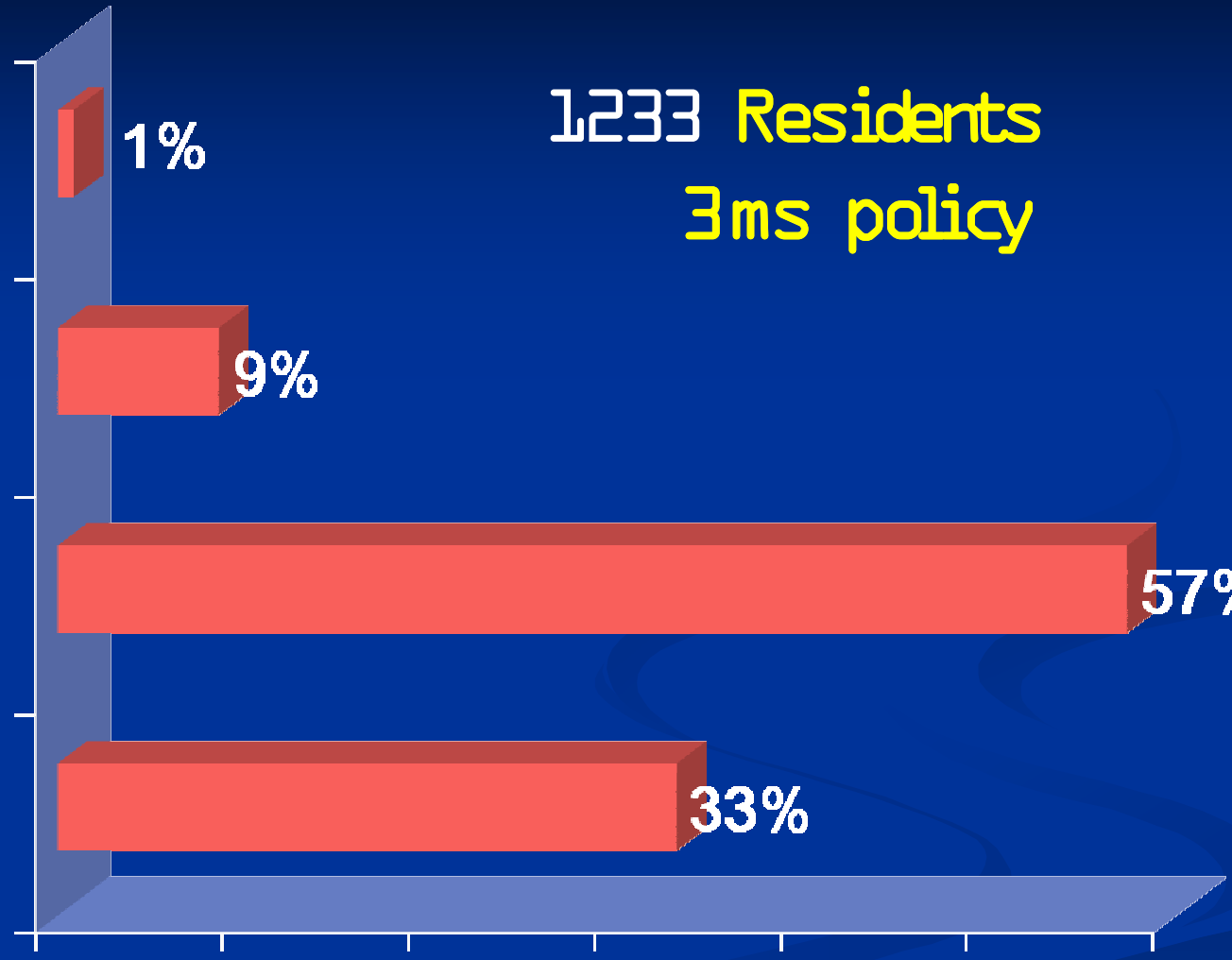
57%

not want

33%

1233 Residents
3ms policy

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60%



Strict maternity leave in Korea

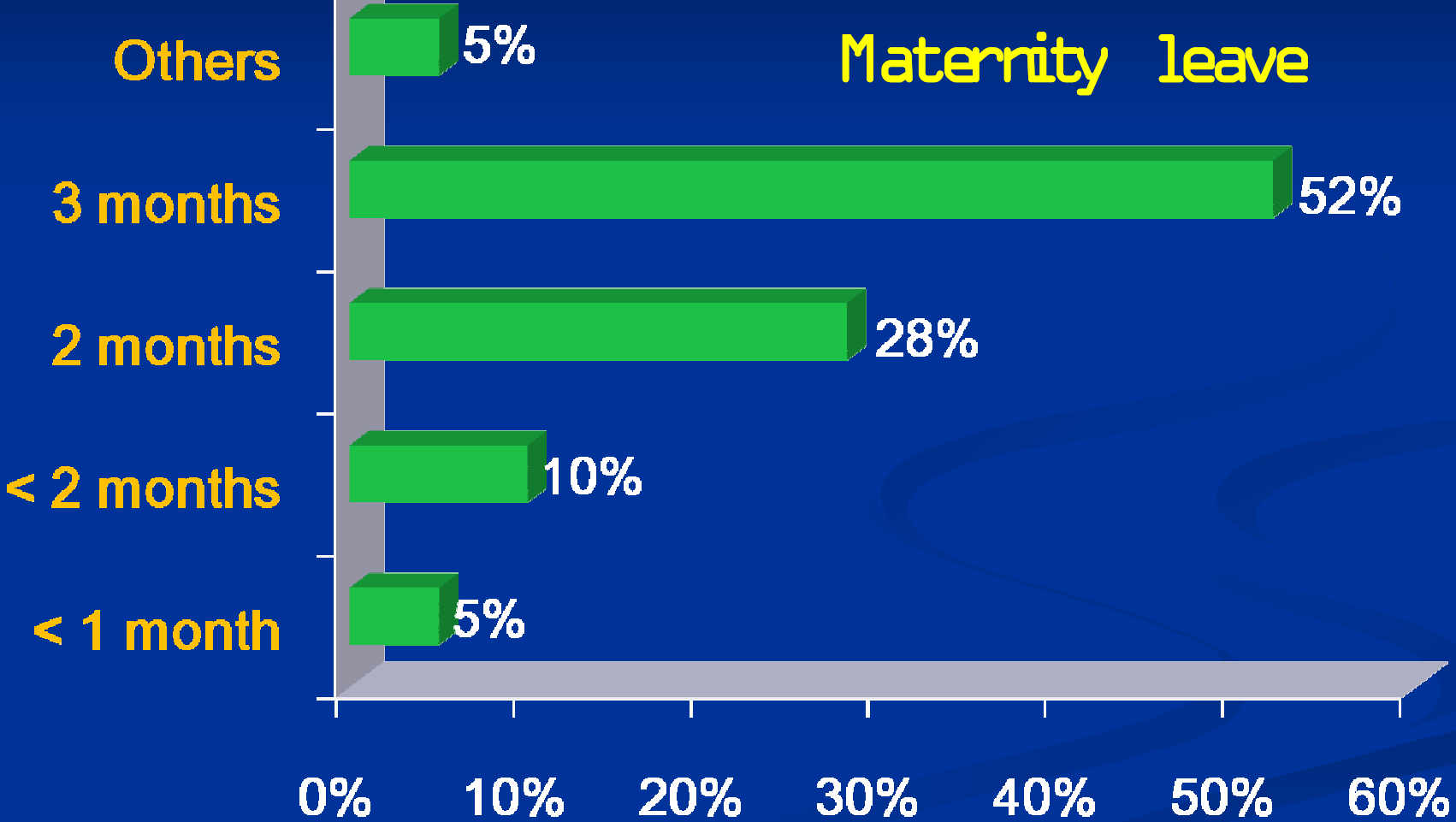
- Strict maternity leave policy : maximum 3 months
- Absent exceeding 3 months : missed training time
- Forced to take the exam the following year

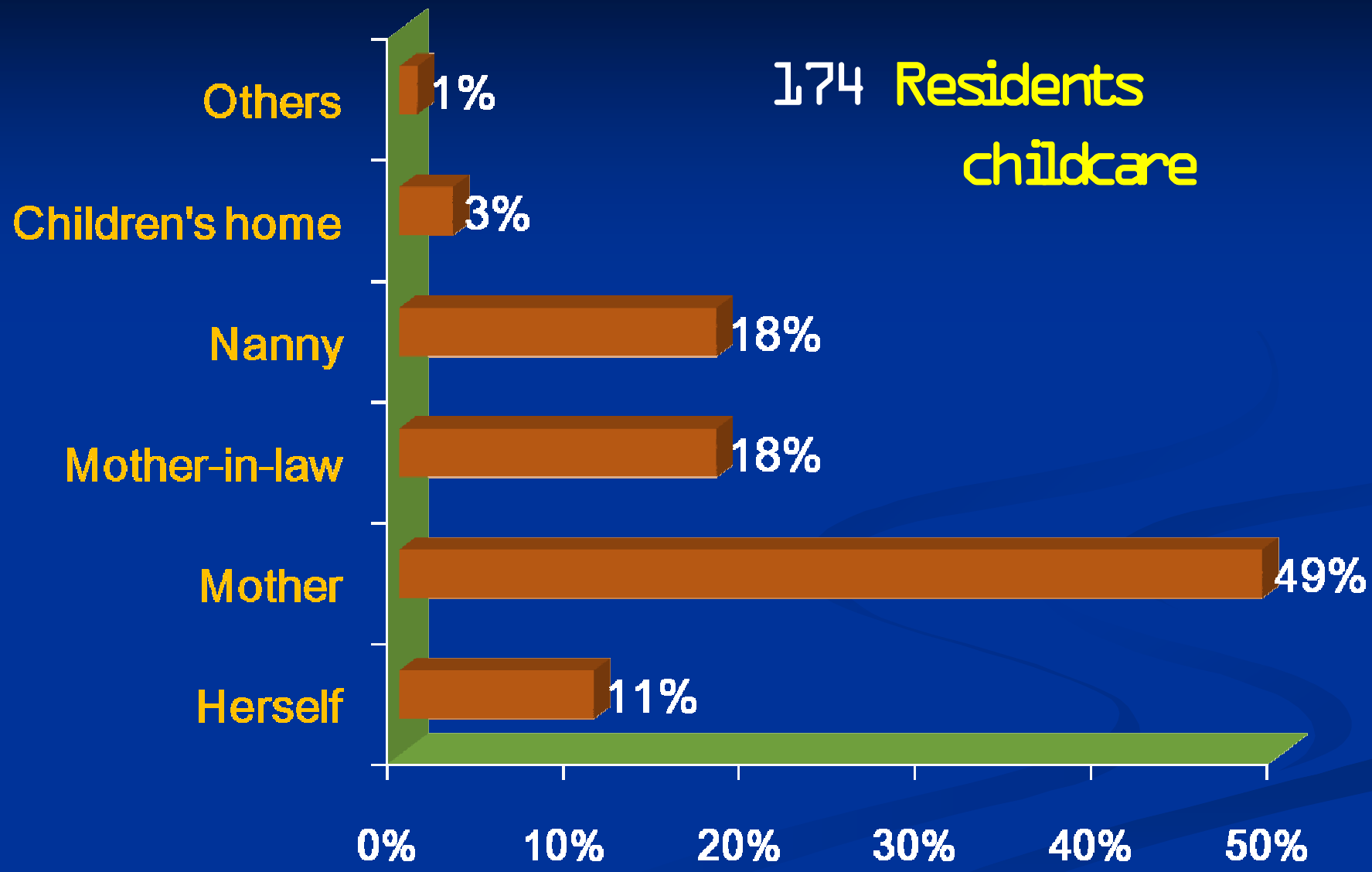
Results

- Among 1,74 residents who gave birth during residency
 - 52% took 3 months maternity leave while 28% took 2 months leave
 - The childcare after giving birth was provided by mother(49%), mother-in-law(18%), nanny(18%)

174 Residents

Maternity leave





Results

- The issues surrounding childcare among 174 residents
 - Psychologic stability of the child (37%)
 - Insufficient time spent with the child(32%)
 - Inability to be with the child in times of sickness(19%)
 - Financial and others(12%)

Residents' Suggestions

- 42% : 24 hour in-hospital childcare center
- 21% : Clear and practical maternity leave policy
- 13% : 24 hour childcare facilities outside the hospital
- 10% : Financial support and control of working time each
- 4% : Others

Conclusion

- Most female residents of child-bearing age wanted to have children during residency
 - Practical maternity leave policy
 - Proper nearby childcare facilities
- promote pregnancy among female physicians which would eventually increase in childbirth rate

Thank you !