

Forcible, Drug-Facilitated, & Incapacitated Sexual Assault Among Undergraduate Women Using a Canadian University Sample

Alexandria Parsons¹, Amanda Champion², & Cory L. Pedersen²
Simon Fraser University¹, Kwantlen Polytechnic University²

BACKGROUND

TERMS

Forcible Sexual Assault (FSA): unwanted sexual contact/intercourse, due to force/threat of force.

Drug-Facilitated Sexual Assault (DFSA): unwanted sexual contact/intercourse while victim is too intoxicated/high from alcohol or drugs given without her knowledge or consent.

Incapacitated Sexual Assault (ISA): unwanted sexual contact/intercourse while victim is too intoxicated/high to consent after voluntarily consuming alcohol or drugs.

Drug-Related Sexual Assault (DRSA): general term includes both ISA & DFSA.

U.S. RESEARCH

- SA among university women is 5X higher than non-university women (Kilpatrick, et al., 2007).
- During the first year of university, 1/7 women report experiencing ISA and 1/10 report experiencing FSA (Carey et al., 2014).
- ISA shown to be more commonly reported than FSA → need to explore the conditions under which these assaults occur.
- Supports assertion that alcohol/drug use increases a woman's risk for SA victimization by impairing her ability to fend off attack (Abbey, 2002).

THE CURRENT STUDY

- Statistics Canada: Women aged 15 -2 years most likely to be victims of SA.
 - No Canadian research has examined conditions under which SA occurs.
- MAIN PURPOSE** → understand SA experiences of Canadian university women and the conditions under which it occurs.
- SECONDARY PURPOSE** → compare self-reported alcohol/drug consumption patterns in victims of DFSA and ISA.

METHODS

PARTICIPANTS

- 170 females from local post-secondary institutions were recruited.
 - M_{age} = 23.00 years; SD = 7.9 years.

DESIGN & PROCEDURE

- Participants → convenience + snowball sampling from the university research pool & advertising posters at multiple Western Canadian Universities.
- A 20-45 minute, anonymous online survey (Qualtrics.com).

MEASURES

- DEMOGRAPHICS → age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, university status.
- SEXUAL ASSAULT SURVEY → FSA or DFSA/ISA experience.
- DRUG & ALCOHOL SURVEY → past/present drug/alcohol use, drug/alcohol consumption preceding assault, and contextual factors of the assault (Lawyer, Resnick, Bakanic, Burkett, & Kilpatrick, 2010).

RESULTS

DEMOGRAPHICS

Figure 1. Sexual Orientation (%)

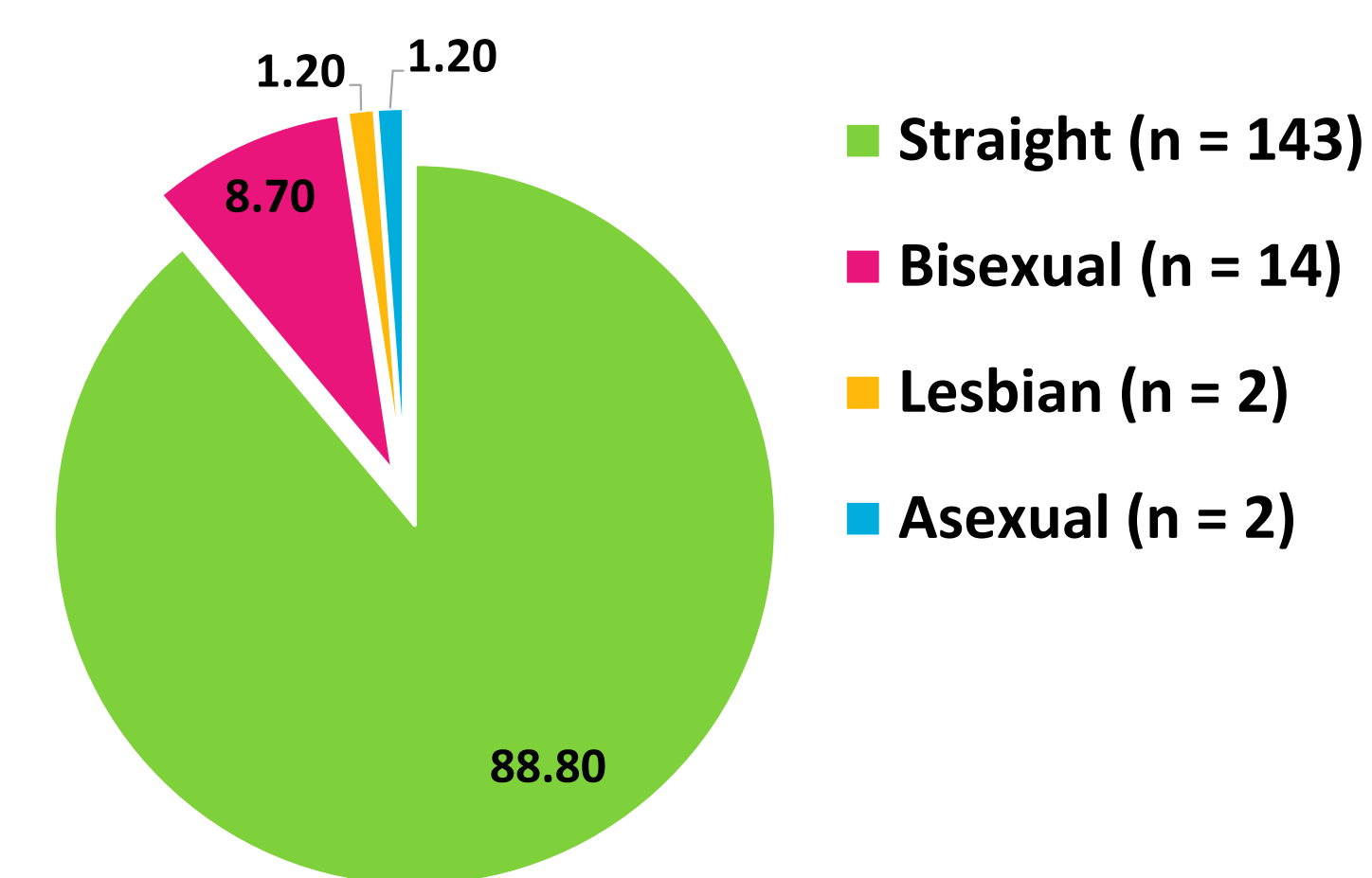
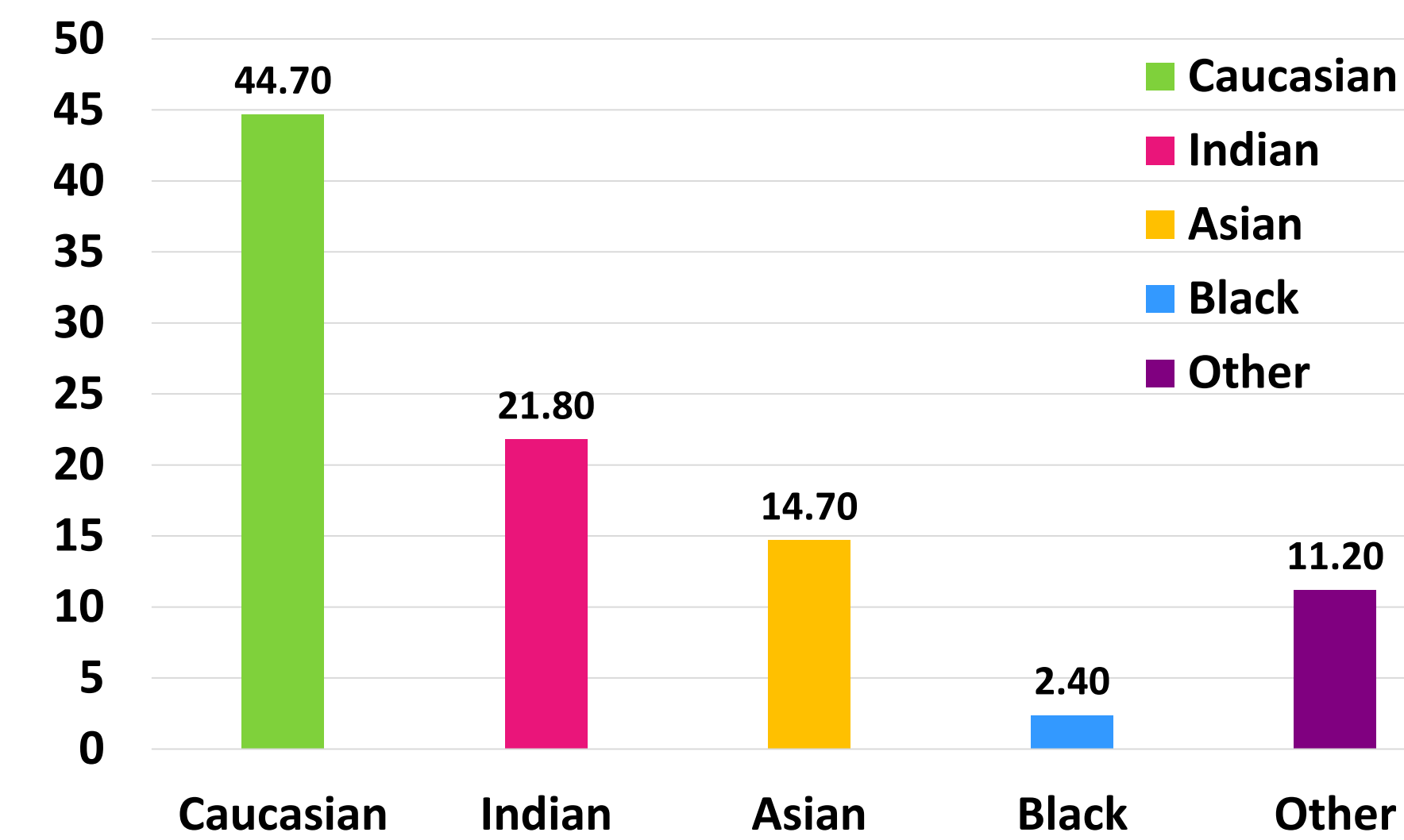


Figure 2. Ethnicity (%)



FREQUENCY OF SEXUAL ASSAULTS

Table 1. Different Types of Sexual Assault Reported by University Women in Sample

TYPE OF ASSAULT	N TOTAL INCIDENCE (n = 170)	% OF FEMALE SAMPLE REPORTING
ANY FORCIBLE ASSAULT	50	29.3
Sex Acts Forced	17	10
Sex Play Forced	13	7.6
Attempted Intercourse Forced	13	7.6
Intercourse Forced	7	4.1
ANY DRUG-RELATED ASSAULT	91	53.6
Sex Acts Forced	21	12.4
Sex Play Forced	39	22.9
Attempted Intercourse Forced	21	12.4
Intercourse Forced	10	5.9

Drug-facilitated Sexual Assault Versus Incapacitated Sexual Assault

Of those participants who reported experiencing any form of DRSA:

- 84.6% knowingly took alcohol/drugs (predominantly alcohol and marijuana) prior to assault → ISA
- 3.8% were given alcohol/drugs unknowingly prior to assault → DFAS
- 11.5% stated both voluntary and non-consensual consumption of alcohol/drugs prior to assault

VICTIM-PERPETRATOR RELATIONSHIP

Figure 3. Forcible Sexual Assault (%)

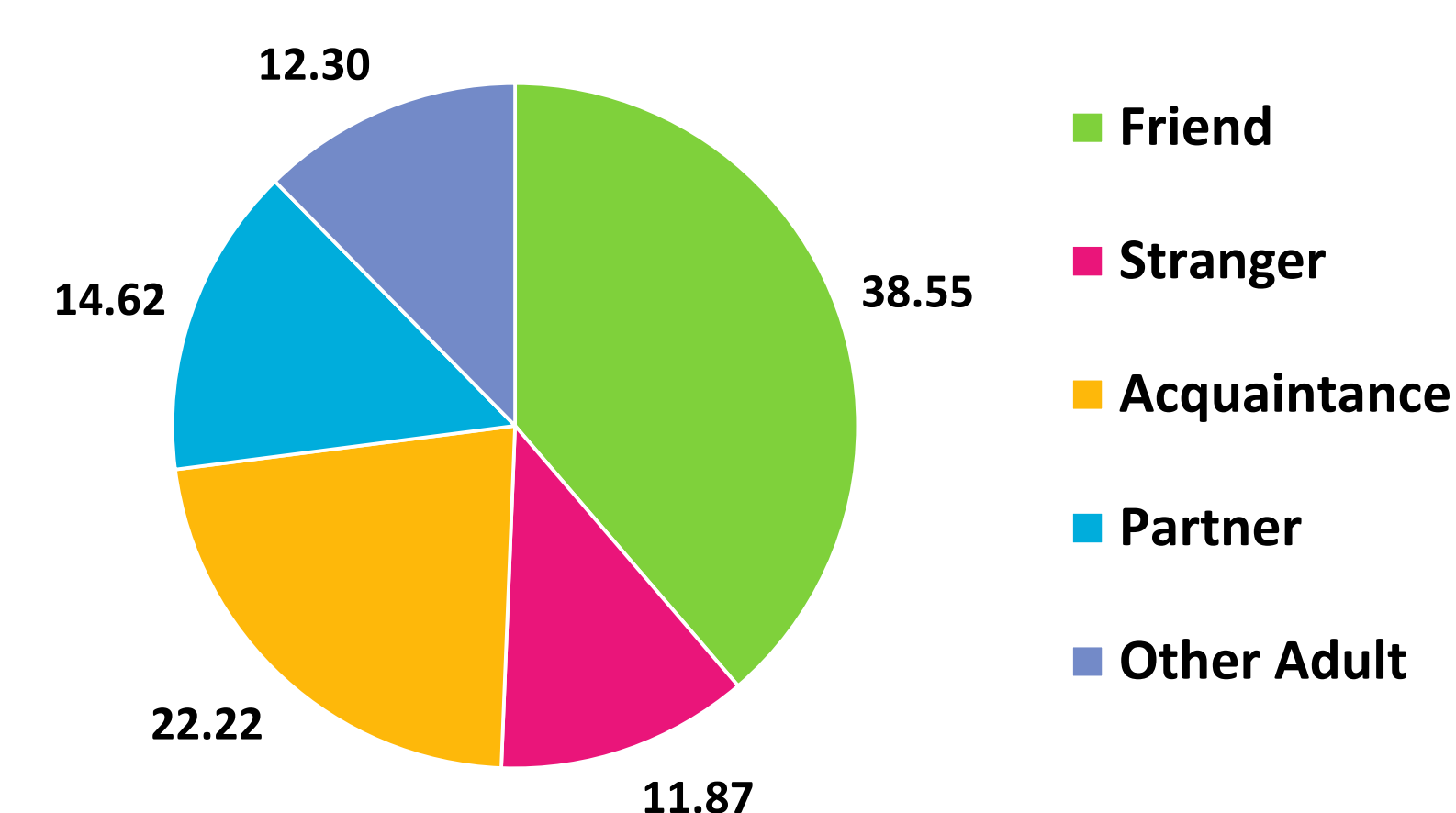
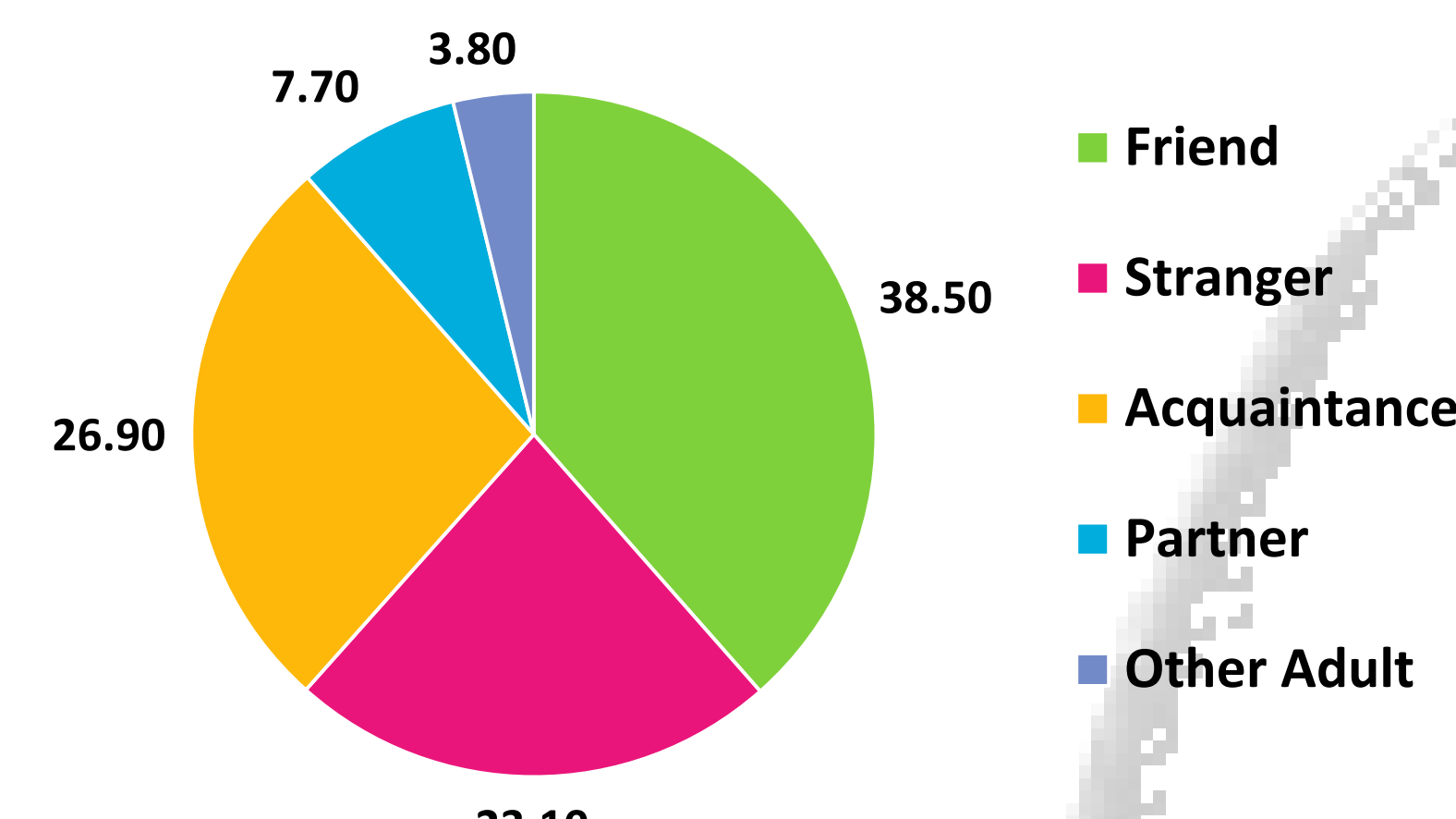


Figure 4. Drug-Related Sexual Assault (%)



RESULTS

STUDENT STATUS

Figure 5. Forcible Sexual Assault (%)

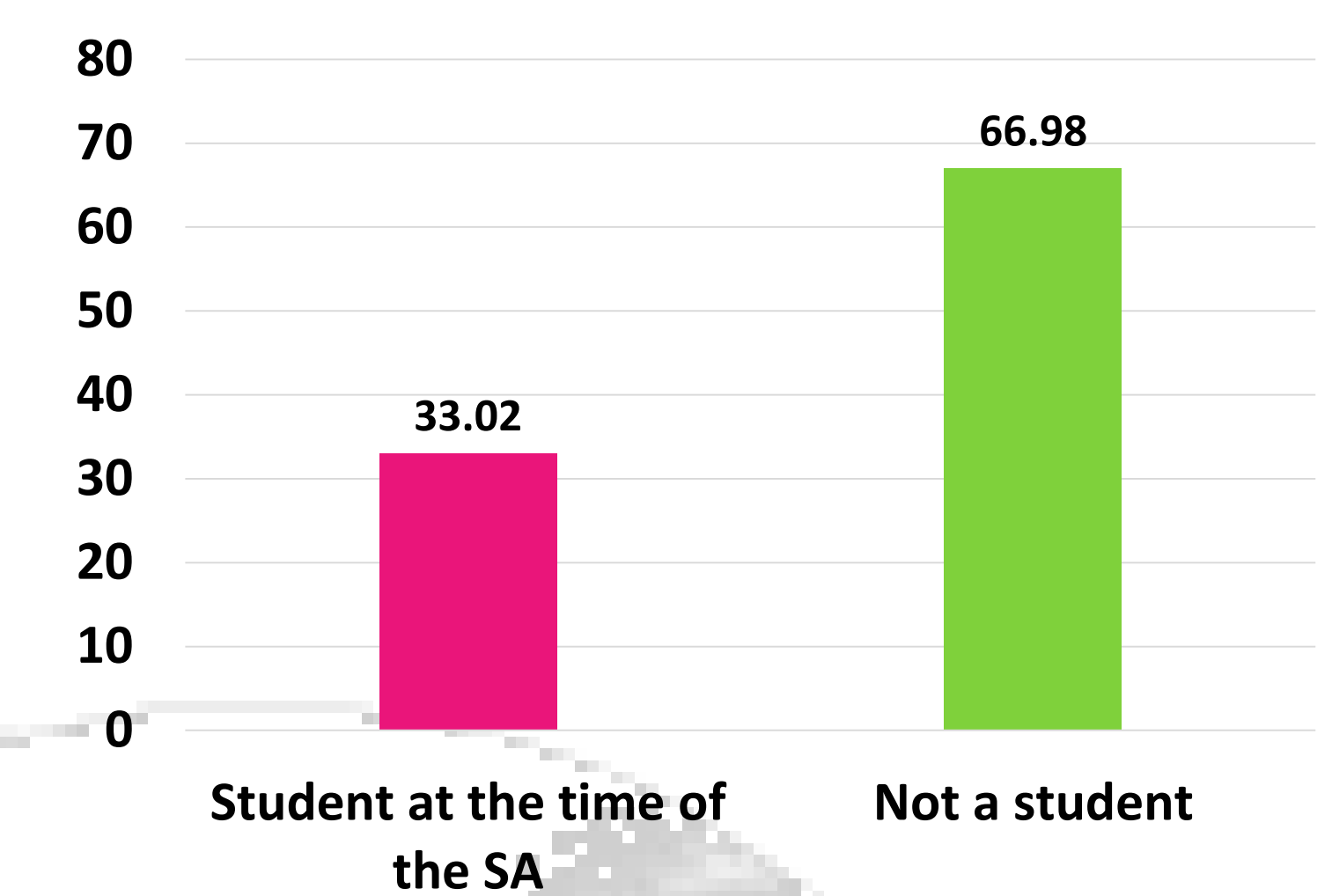
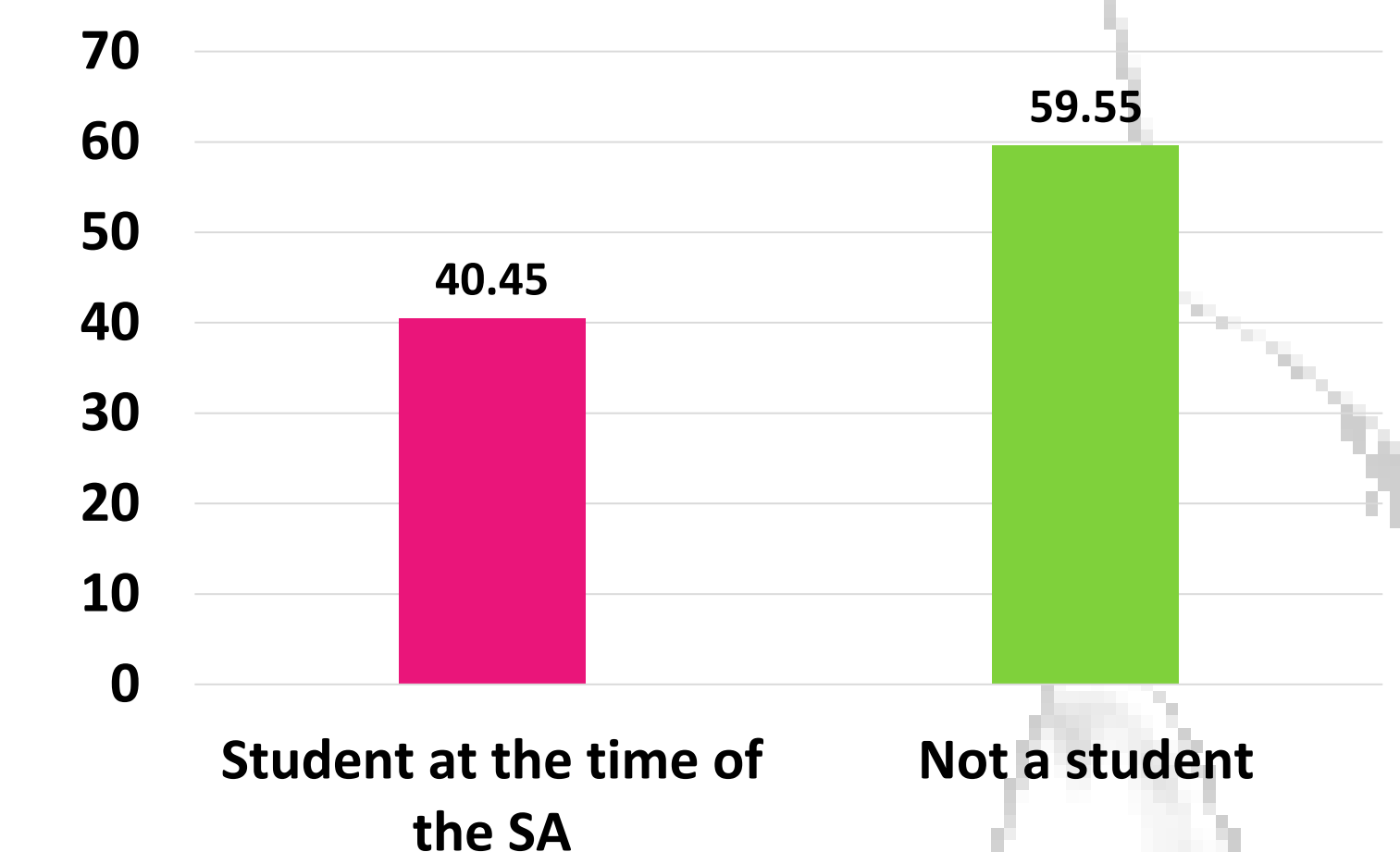


Figure 6. Drug-Related Sexual Assault (%)



DISCUSSION

- Results contribute to our understanding of the conditions under which SA occurs.
- Over half (53.6%) of sampled women report being victims of any DFSA.
- Women reported higher rates of "opportunistic" DFSA, in which the perpetrator takes advantage of someone who has voluntarily ingested drugs or alcohol, as opposed to "proactive" DFSA, in which the perpetrator intentionally administers drugs or alcohol to the victim.
- Data collection is ongoing → efforts to recruit from university campuses – particularly those with on campus residences – are underway.
- At present the findings are in concert with previous research reported from US samples.
- The findings reported here should not be construed to imply that victims of DRSA bear any responsibility for their assault. Perpetrators should always be considered responsible for sexually aggressive behavior and there are no conditions under which victims are to blame for their assault. Rather, any research that sheds light on the mechanisms by which sexual assaults occur is fundamental to informing prevention efforts and developing effective intervention strategies.