

# SLSP

Swiss Library  
Service Platform



# Mermaid Whispers and System Insights

IGeLU Conference Copenhagen 2024

Aronne Watkins

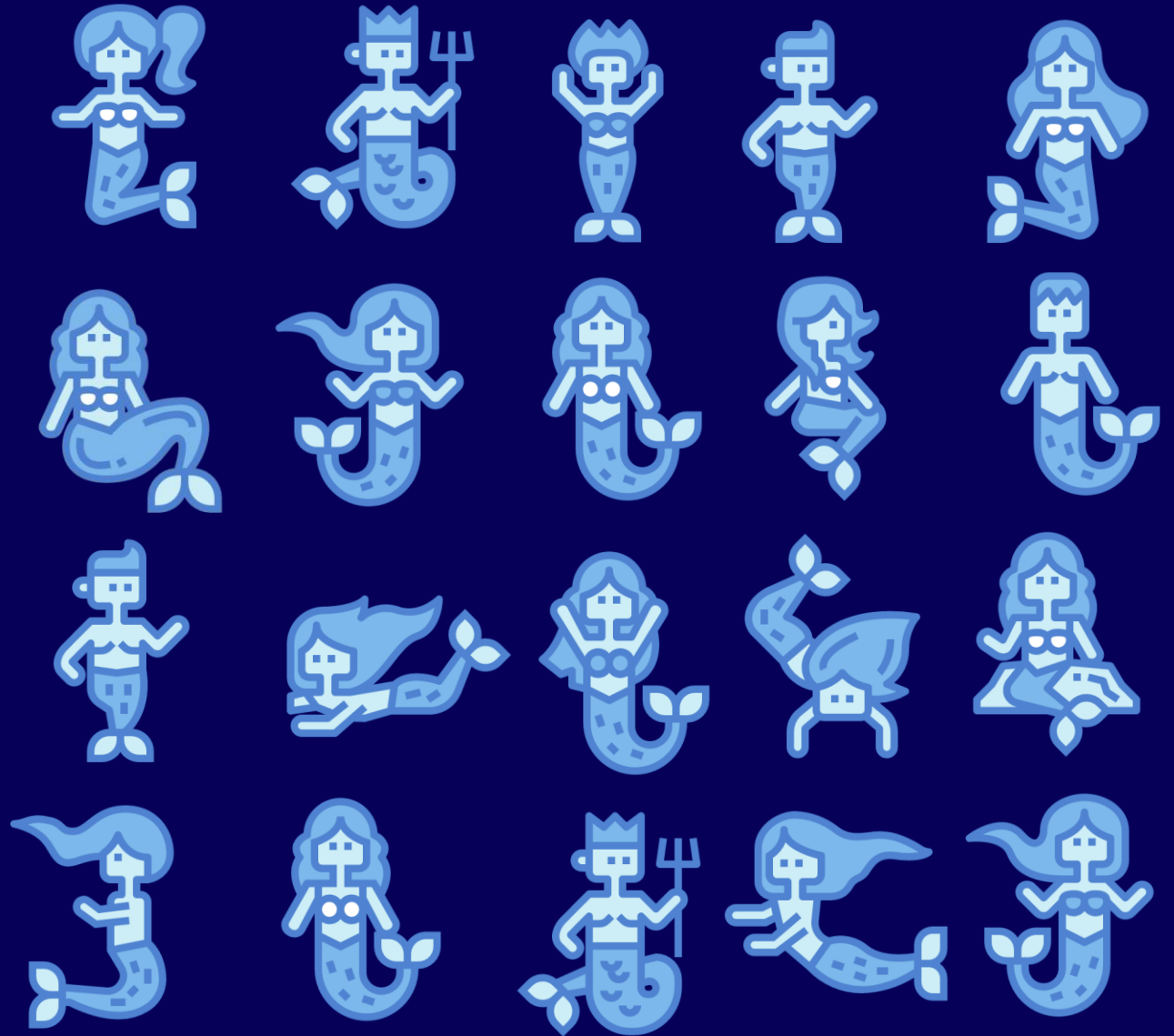
# The initial idea

Most institutions have 0, 1,  
maybe 2 systems librarians



# The intial idea

SLSP has 25!



# Questions



**28 questions**

**25 systems librarians**

**No identifying information / no mandatory answer**

# Results

22 respondents (n=22), out of 25

Response rate of 88%





# Limitations

**Non-representative sample size and composition**

**Notable absence of non-binary participants, and lack of representation from very young individuals and those aged 60 and above**

**When you first began your career, did you want to become a systems librarian?**



# When you first began your career, did you want to become a systems librarian?



n=22





# When you first began your career, did you want to become a systems librarian?

When you first began your career, did you want to become a systems librarian?  
Respondents identifying as "Woman"  
(n=10)



■ No (80%) ■ Yes (20%)

When you first began your career, did you want to become a systems librarian?  
Respondents identifying as "Man" (n=10)



■ No (90%) ■ Yes (10%)

**n=22**



# When you first began your career, did you want to become a systems librarian?

When you first began your career, did you want to become a systems librarian?  
Respondents under 40 years old (n=10)



■ No (60%) ■ Yes (40%)

When you first began your career, did you want to become a systems librarian?  
Respondents over 40 years old (n=12)



■ No (91.67%) ■ Yes (8.33%)

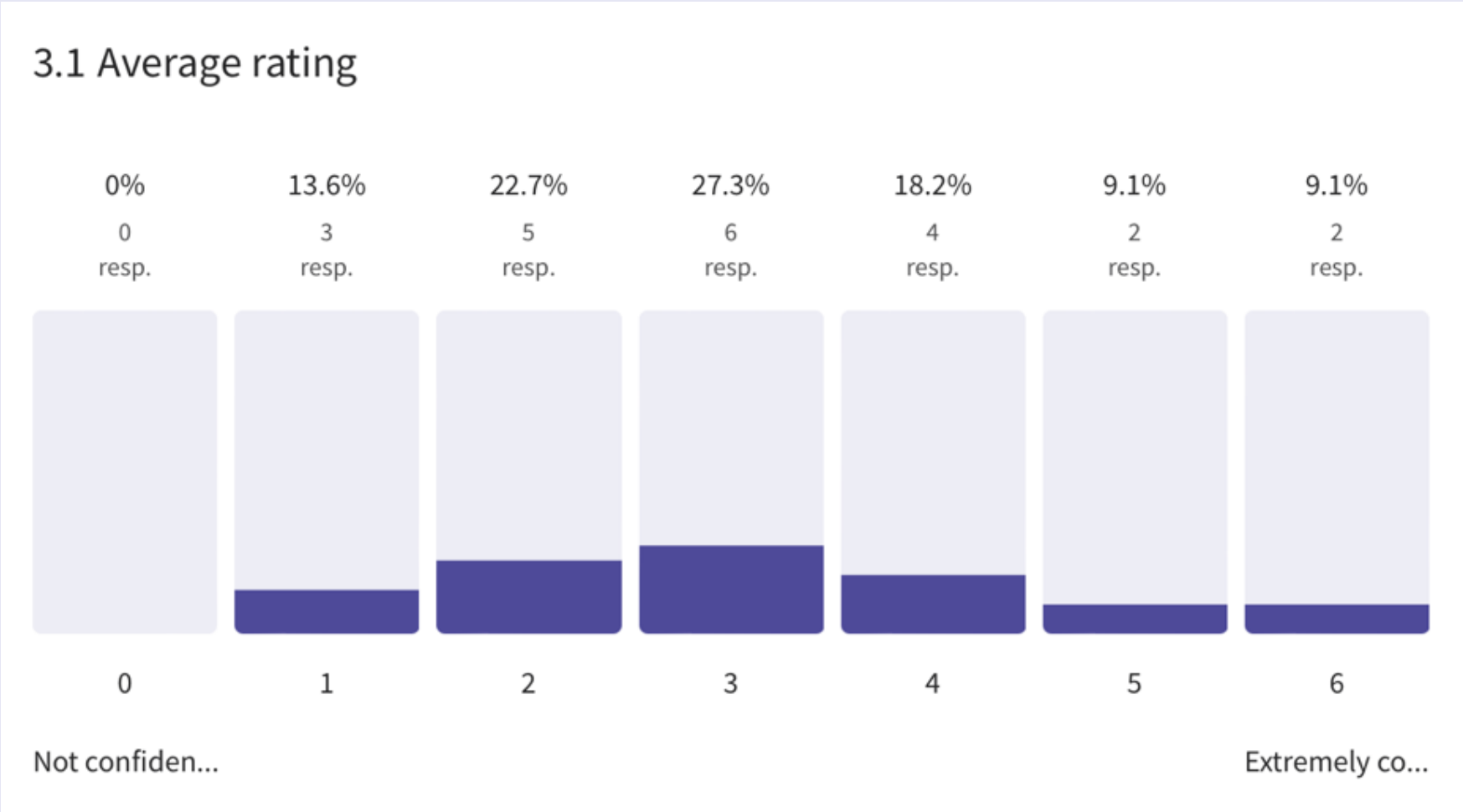
**n=22**



**When you first started working as a systems librarian, how confident did you feel about your role and tasks?**



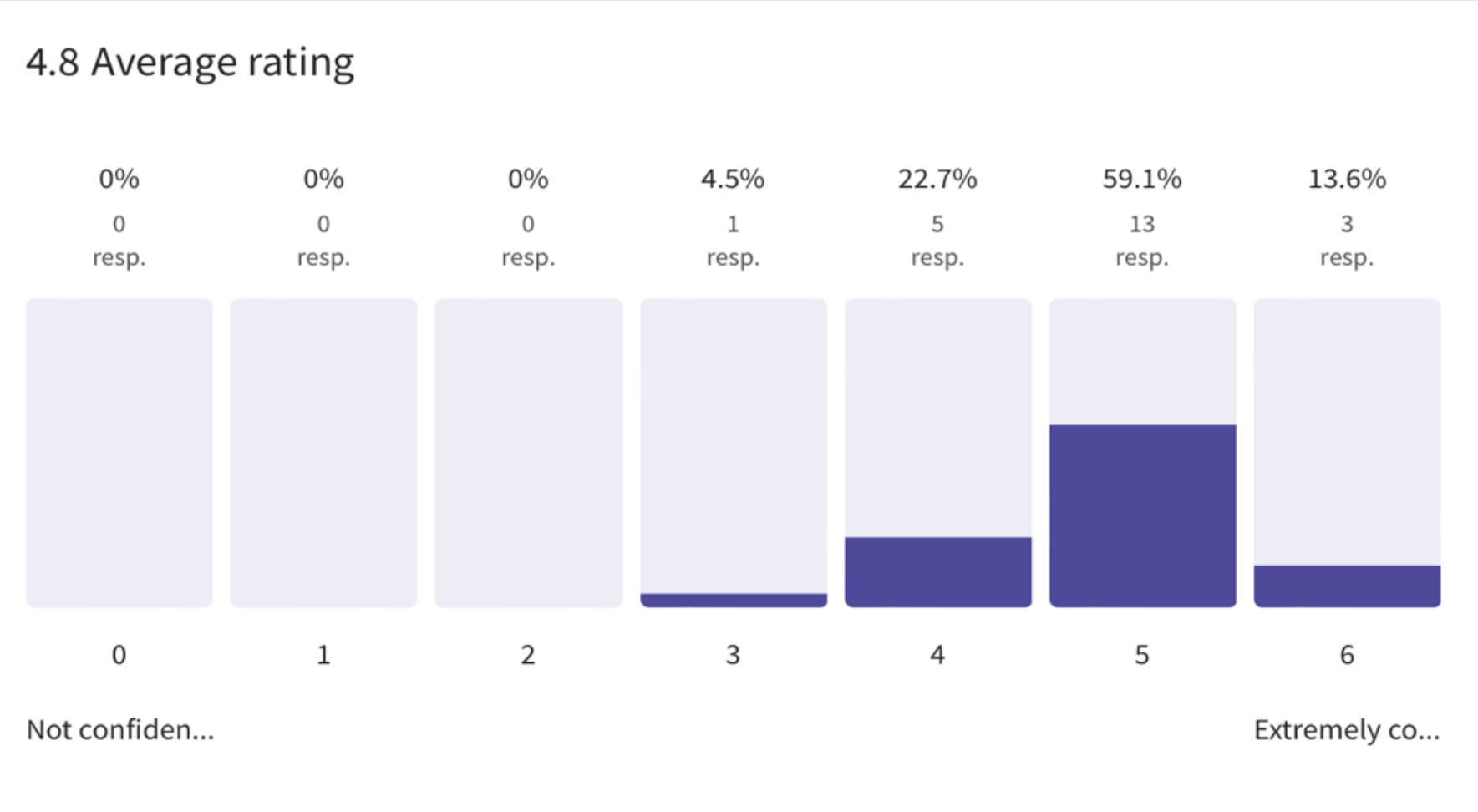
# When you first started working as a systems librarian, how confident did you feel about your role and tasks?



**How confident do you feel today about your role and tasks?**



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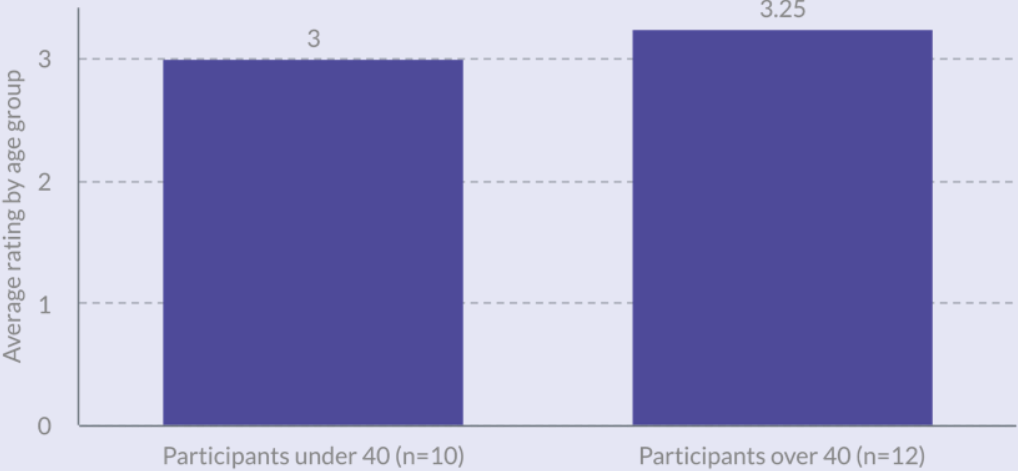


n=22

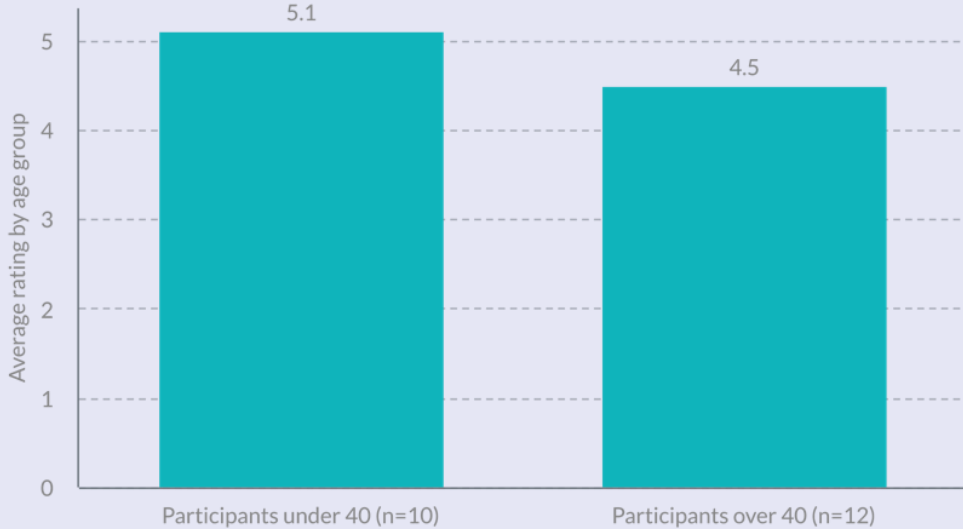


# How confident do you feel today about your role and tasks?

When you first started working as a systems librarian, how confident did you feel about your role and tasks?  
Average ratings by age (n=22)



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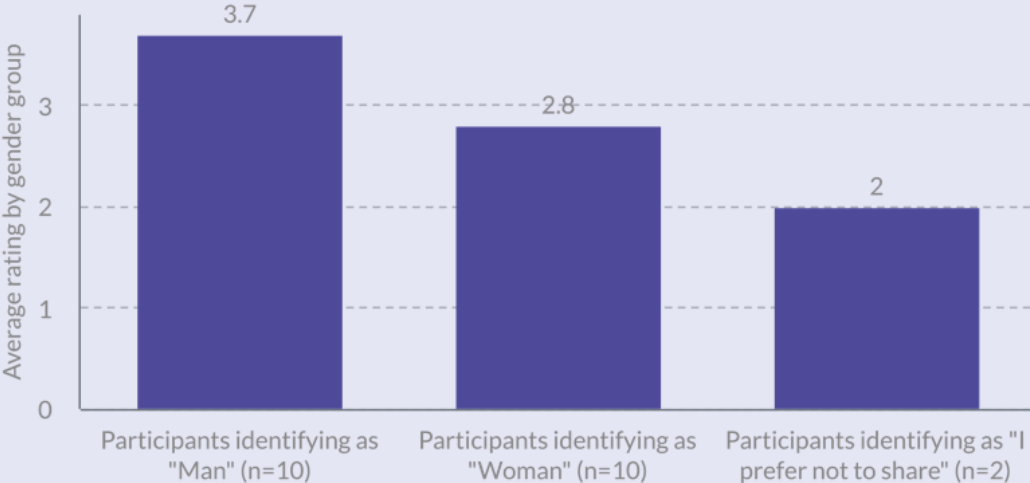
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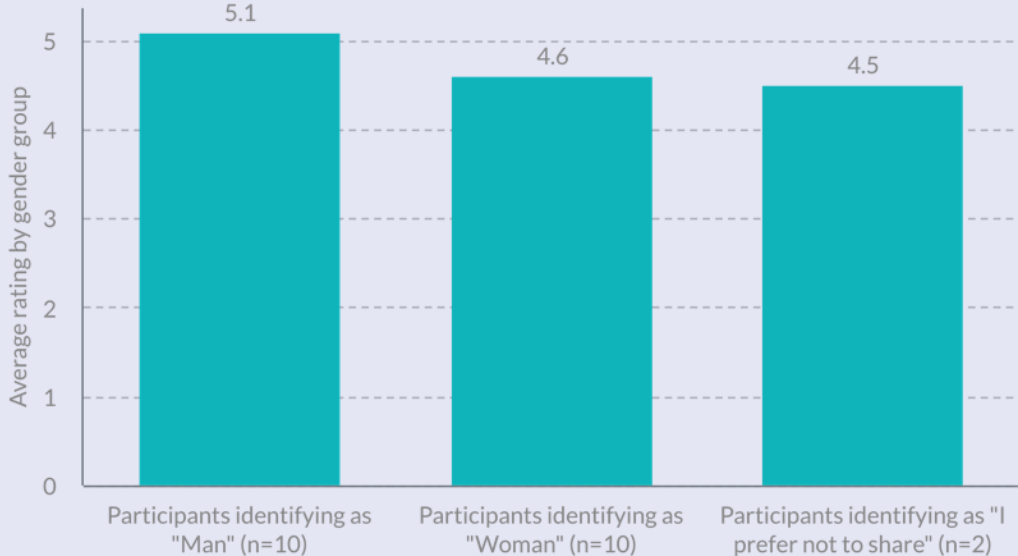
# How confident do you feel today about your role and tasks?

When you first started working as a systems librarian, how confident did you feel about your role and tasks?

Average ratings by gender (n=22)



How confident do you feel today about your role and tasks?  
Average ratings by gender (n=22)



**n=22**

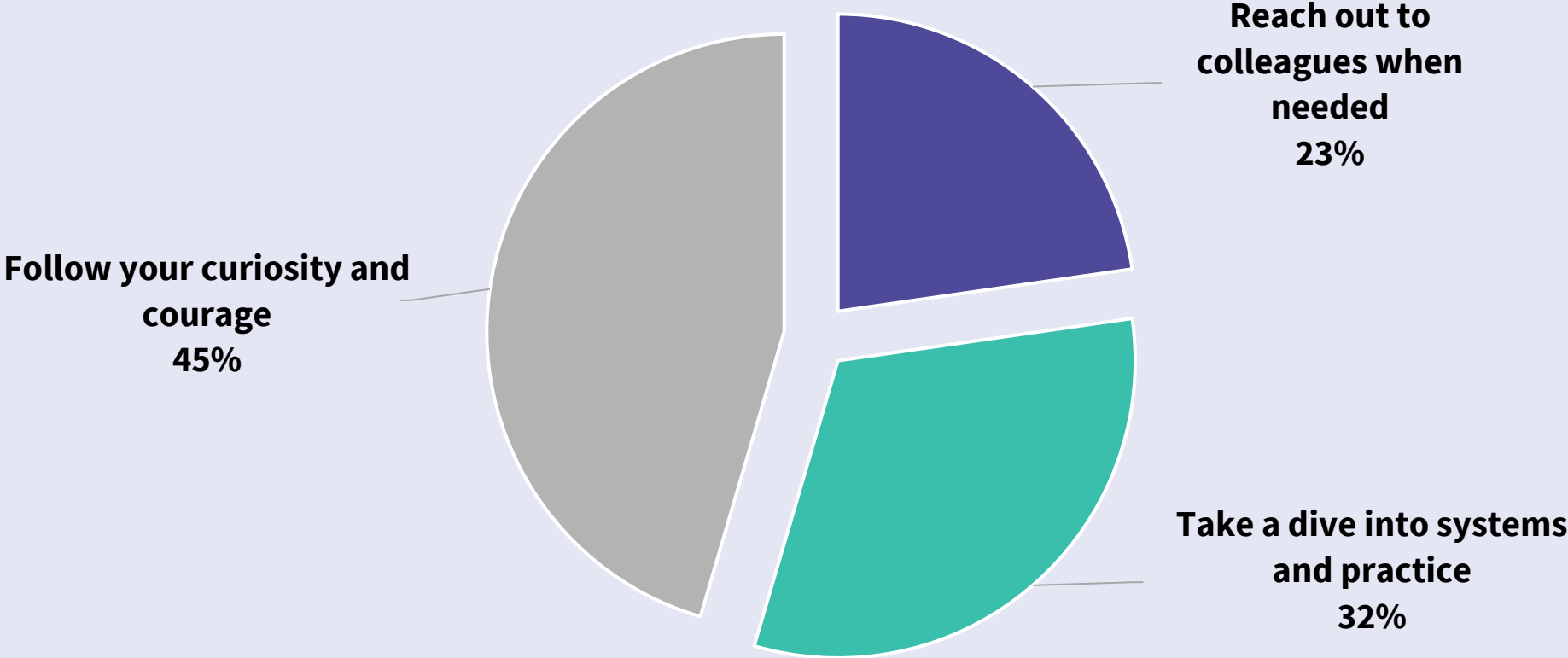




**What advice would you give to new or aspiring systems librarians who are just starting today?**



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n=22



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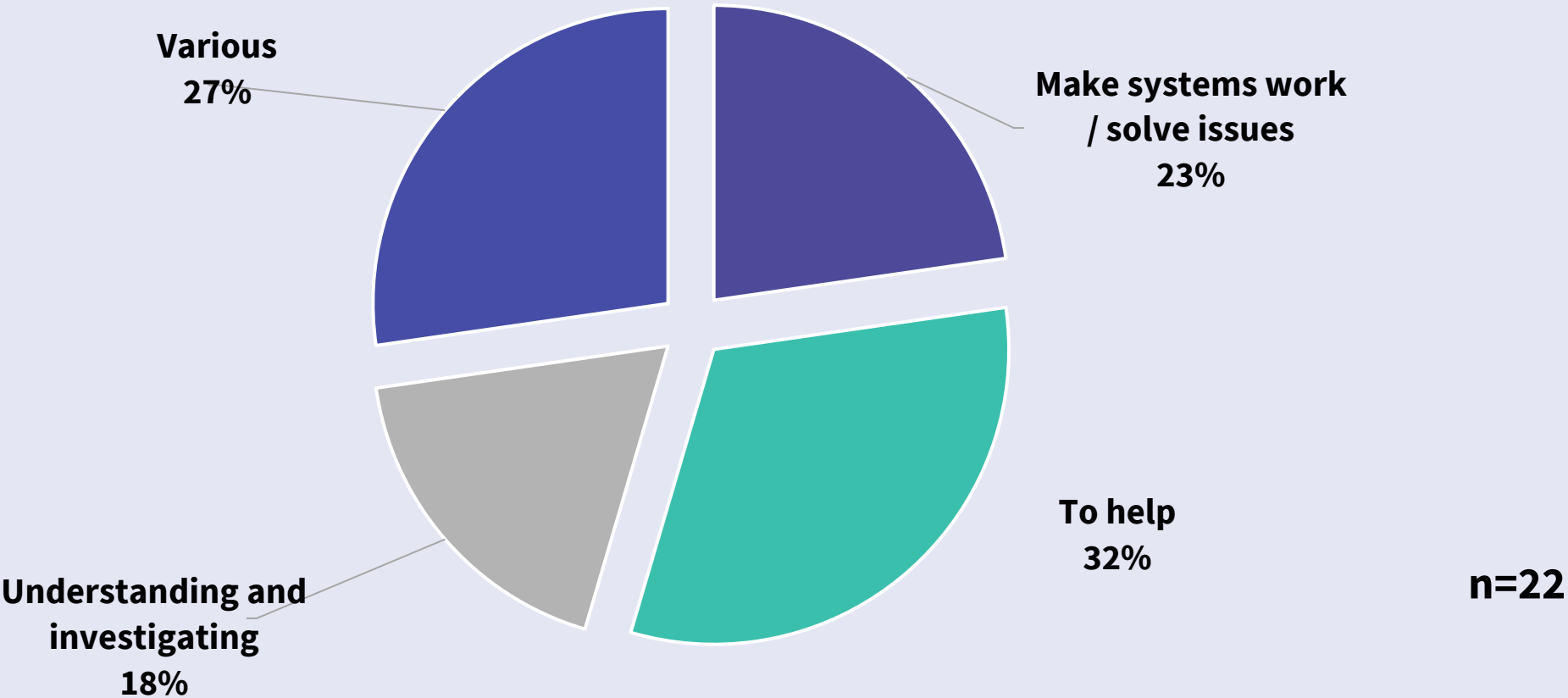
**“Training on the job will do more for you than any introductory training material, because your job usually starts where they (systems) stop applying as expected.”**



**In your day-to-day work  
as a systems librarian,  
what brings you the most  
joy?**



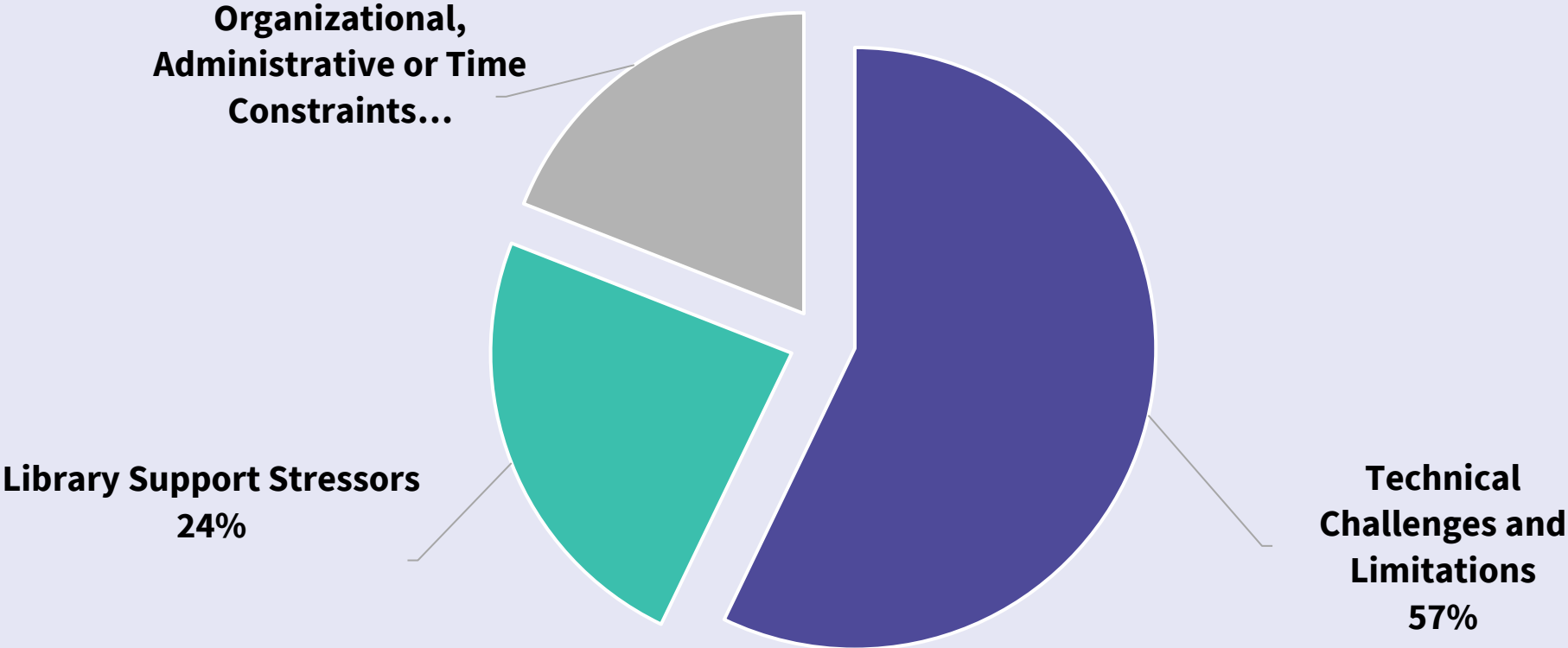
# In your day-to-day work as a systems librarian, what brings you the most joy?



**In your day-to-day work  
as a systems librarian,  
what brings you the most  
unhappiness or stress?**



# In your day-to-day work as a systems librarian, what brings you the most unhappiness or stress?



n=21



**Could you briefly describe  
the biggest technical  
challenge you have faced  
so far as a systems  
librarian?**





# Could you briefly describe the biggest technical challenge you have faced so far as a systems librarian?



**n=21**



## Could you briefly describe the biggest technical challenge you have faced so far as a systems librarian?

“In my field, the biggest technical challenges arise from the fact that **we use Alma very specifically** and work with so many IZs into which data is copied from the NZ. This doesn't always work properly and causes a lot of technical difficulties. As we have a **unique system architecture** at SLSP, there are **no similar cases** that could help us solve our problems.”



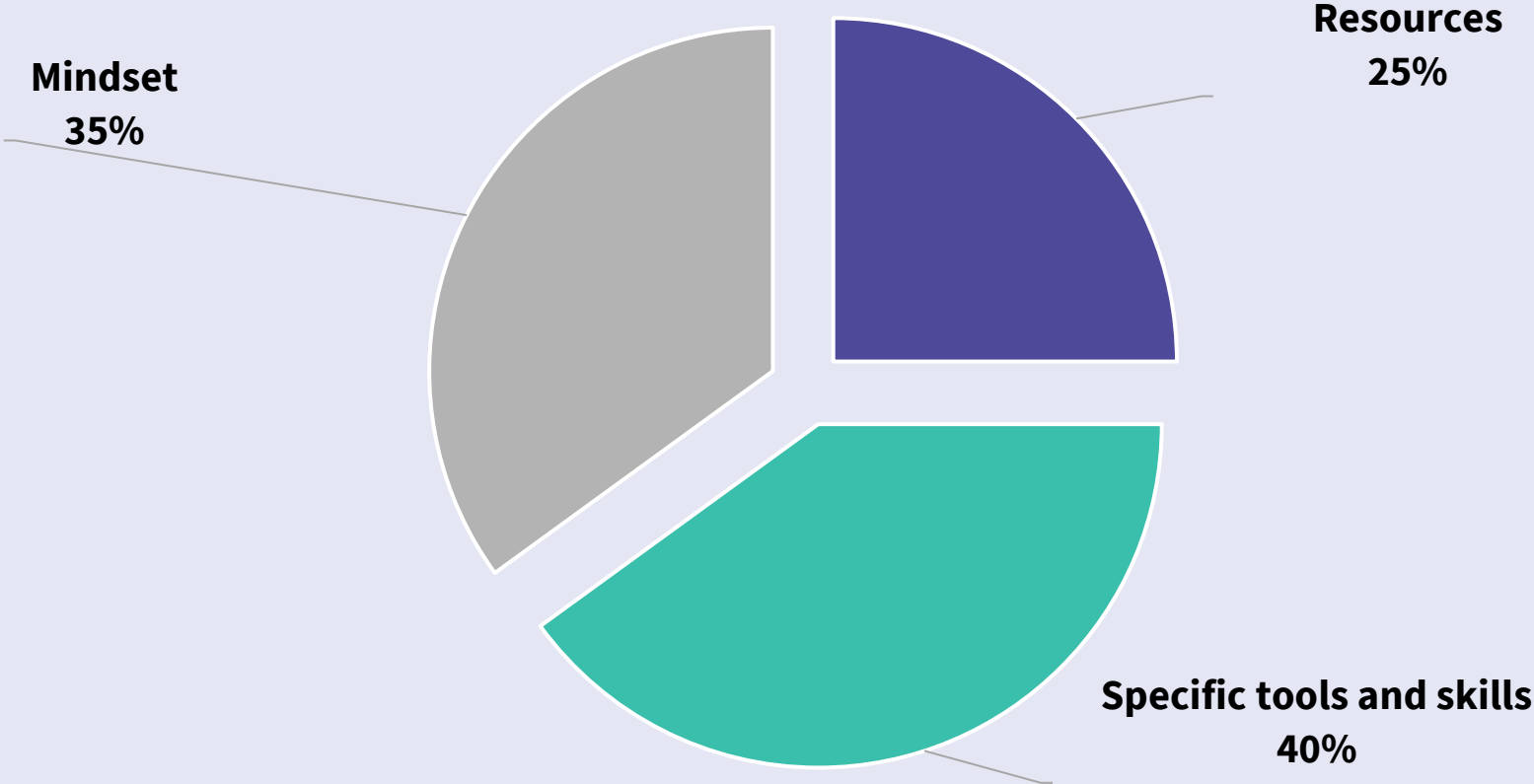
**Could you briefly describe the biggest technical challenge you have faced so far as a systems librarian?**

**“Bringing together Alma/Primo technical requirements with those from the libraries and finding solutions where those two are not compatible with each other.”**

**What tips or tricks could be helpful to other systems librarians when working with Alma / Primo?**



# What tips or tricks could be helpful to other systems librarians when working with Alma / Primo?



n=20



# What tips or tricks could be helpful to other systems librarians when working with Alma / Primo?

## Resources

- <https://sunyolis.libguides.com/training-fulfillment>  
The ExLibris knowledge base
- 1. bookmarklets: Show Record Id, Display CTO (<https://sunyolis.libanswers.com/faq/261758>)  
2. Add on: copy terms into Alma as expanded OR-search (<https://gitlab.com/tuub/tulama>)  
3. when uploading Excel files, Alma recognizes the first sheet only, so there's no need to separately export single sheets from masterfiles before uploading (just move relevant sheet to first place in file)
- Keeping an eye on the cloud app centre. Others may have developed something that helps
- To keep up to date with developments to the tool via the various channels made available. The discussion lists can also provide ideas for your day-to-day work.



# What tips or tricks could be helpful to other systems librarians when working with Alma / Primo?

## Specific tools and skills

- When working with Primo: Prototyping/mock-ups with tool 'miro' - great for agile projects and to visualize ideas for clients and managers.
- This might sound silly, but Alma's search feature for finding parameters within the menu is something I was not aware of for a very long time and it's definitely worth using!
- Sandboxes are very important for testing workflows and configurations
- Working with API gives in my opinion currently the biggest flexibility (and some possibilities you have with API are missing in the documentation)



# What tips or tricks could be helpful to other systems librarians when working with Alma / Primo?

## Mindsets

- Be patient but persistent
- Imagine Alma has a series of Excel files linked one to each other. For Primo, don't limit yourself in thinking what might could be displayed differently, because many things are possible with the right knowledge.
- test, test and test





**Are there any 'quick fixes' or troubleshooting tips you often use to resolve common issues quickly or to diagnose system issues?**



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## Extract of answers

- Delete: sometimes it is the best way to solve the problem.
- check first whether the problem has already occurred and how it was solved
- Besides trying to replicate the issue, I don't think so. Issues seem pretty always different from each other.
- System issue: ExL System status page; then check if 2 or 3 different IZs are concerned, or ask colleagues if they observe the same. Check in a couple of browsers.  
Have there been similar posts/cases before?

**n=15**

- `&noCustomization=true`

# Are there any 'quick fixes' or troubleshooting tips you often use to resolve common issues quickly or to diagnose system issues?

## Extract of answers

- Empty the cache
- The Fulfillment Configuration Utility for example, it's useful to check which Fulfillment Unit Rule is applied depending on patron and item policy
- It is useful to ask the reporters of such issues for printscreens and the creation of HAR files so that the problem can be analyzed and resolved quickly.
- A common knowledge base with standard issues and standard answers (that could of course be adapted for the actual issue).
- Primo: troubleshooting with bookmarklets Alma: hard to tell, it depends...

**n=15**

**As a systems librarian, have you already had opportunities to work with professionals from other fields (outside of libraries)? If yes, what were the positive or negative outcomes of the collaboration?**



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	<b>Number of mentions</b>
<b>Developers</b>	1
<b>Persons from data centers</b>	1
<b>UX experts</b>	1
<b>System vendors</b>	1
<b>External service providers</b>	1
<b>Programmers</b>	1

**n=12**



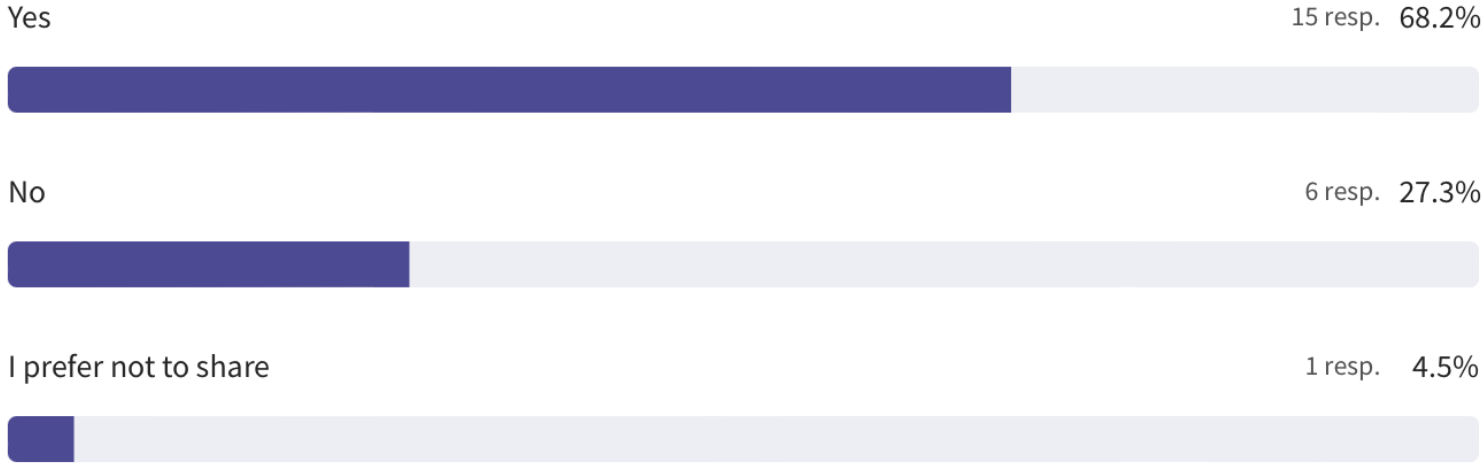
**Has negative feedback or criticism from library staff ever impacted your confidence or motivation?**



# Has negative feedback or criticism from library staff ever impacted your confidence or motivation?

Has negative feedback or criticism from library staff ever impacted your confidence or motivation?

22 out of 22 answered



n=22



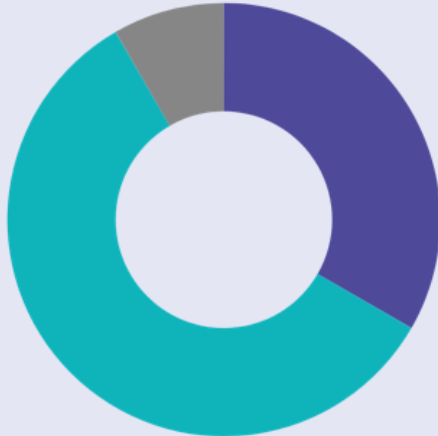
# Has negative feedback or criticism from library staff ever impacted your confidence or motivation?

Has negative feedback or criticism from library staff ever impacted your confidence or motivation? Respondents under 40 years old (n=10)



No (20%) Yes (80%)

Has negative feedback or criticism from library staff ever impacted your confidence or motivation? Respondents over 40 years old (n=12)



No (33.33%) Yes (58.33%) I prefer not to share (8.33%)

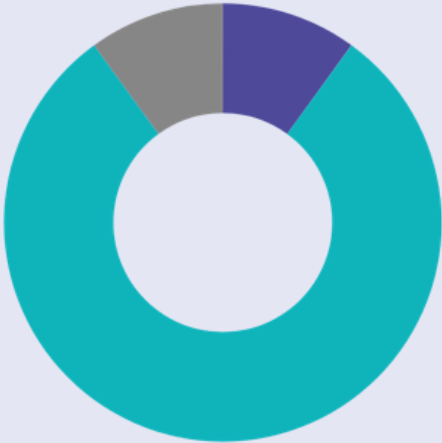
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# Has negative feedback or criticism from library staff ever impacted your confidence or motivation?

Has negative feedback or criticism from library staff ever impacted your confidence or motivation? Respondents identifying as "Woman" (n=10)



No (10%) Yes (80%) I prefer not to share (10%)

Has negative feedback or criticism from library staff ever impacted your confidence or motivation? Respondents identifying as "Man" (n=10)



No (50%) Yes (50%)

n=20



# Has negative feedback or criticism from library staff ever impacted your confidence or motivation?

Has negative feedback or criticism from library staff ever impacted your confidence or motivation? Respondents identifying as "I prefer not to share" (n=2)

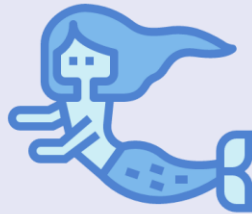


■ Yes (100%)

n=2



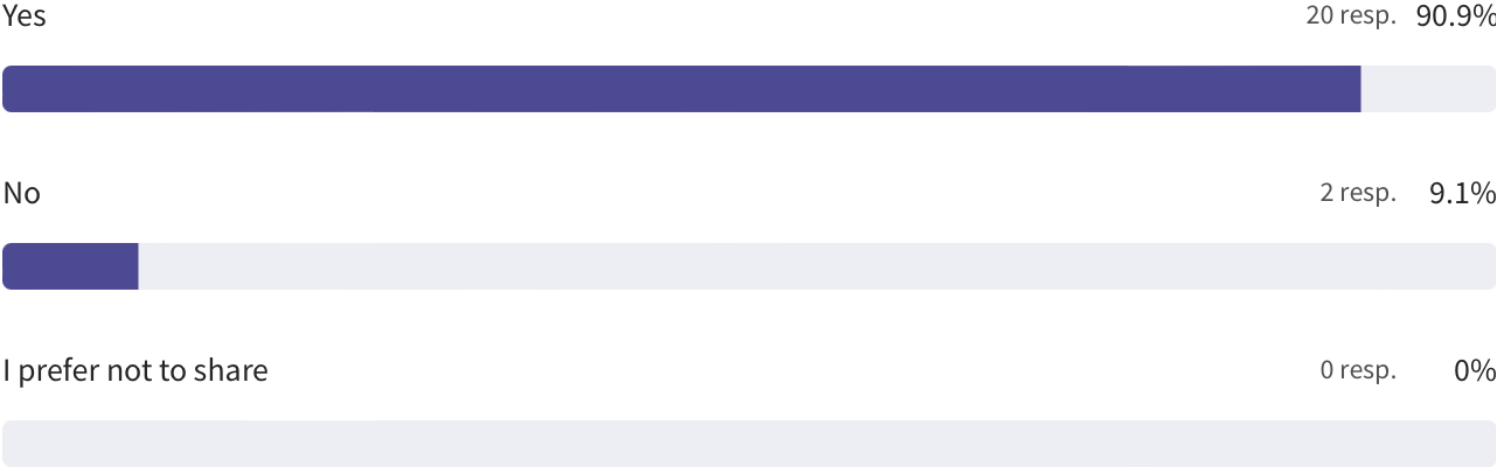
**Has positive feedback or praise from library staff ever impacted your confidence or motivation?**



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Has positive feedback or praise from library staff ever impacted your confidence or motivation?

22 out of 22 answered



n=22



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Has positive feedback or praise from library staff ever impacted your confidence or motivation? Respondents under 40 years old (n=10)



■ Yes (100%)

Has positive feedback or praise from library staff ever impacted your confidence or motivation? Respondents over 40 years old (n=12)



■ No (16.67%) ■ Yes (83.33%)

**n=22**



# Has positive feedback or praise from library staff ever impacted your confidence or motivation?

Has positive feedback or praise from library staff ever impacted your confidence or motivation? Respondents identifying as "Woman" (n=10)



No (10%) Yes (90%)

Has positive feedback or praise from library staff ever impacted your confidence or motivation? Respondents identifying as "Man" (n=10)



No (10%) Yes (90%)

**n=20**



# Has positive feedback or praise from library staff ever impacted your confidence or motivation?

Has positive feedback or praise from library staff ever impacted your confidence or motivation? Respondents identifying as "I prefer not to share" (n=2)



■ Yes (100%)

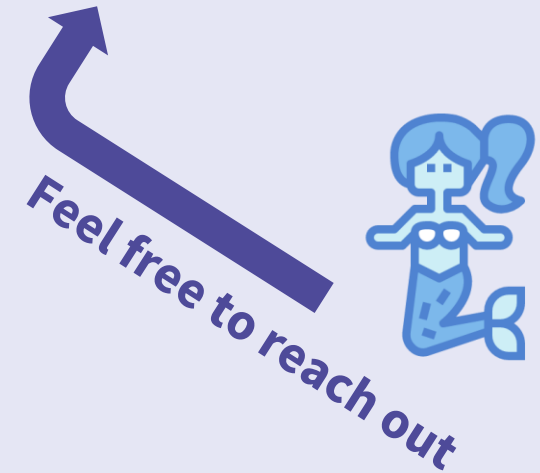
n=2



What are your questions or  
thoughts?







# Thank you so much!

Heartfelt gratitude is extended to all SLSP systems librarians and to Network Services of SLSP.

