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1. OPTOMETRISTS AND OPTICIANS BOARD MEMBERS 2010

(as at 31 December 2010)

Position	Name	Designation
Chairman	Dr Khoo Chong Yew	Ophthalmologist Raffles Eye Centre
Registrar	Dr Harold Tan	Registrar (OOB) Ministry of Health
Members	A/Prof Lim Tock Han	Ophthalmologist Department of Ophthalmology Tan Tock Seng Hospital
	Dr Yvonne Ling	Ophthalmologist Singapore National Eye Centre
	Ms Anna Yeo	Senior Lecturer Singapore Polytechnic-University Manchester Optometry Degree Programme Singapore Polytechnic
	Mr Roland J Izaac	Optometrist Philip D Izaac Pte Ltd
	Ms Jacqueline Tay	Optometrist Singapore National Eye Centre
	Mrs Hardip Singh	Senior Quality Assessor School Appraisal Branch Schools Division Ministry of Education
	Mr Steve Lim	Honorary President Singapore Opticianry Practitioners
	Mr Peter Koh	Optician (CLP) The Lens Men and The Eye Site
	Mr Anthony Tay	Optometrist Ray Optics Pte Ltd
Lay Member	Mr Chandra Mohan K Nair	Advocate & Solicitor Supreme Court of Singapore

2. CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

2010 was indeed a significant year for the optometrists and opticians. Throughout the year, numerous changes had been implemented to achieve higher standards of practice of optometry and opticianry in Singapore.

In February 2010, the Code of Professional Conduct and Professional Practice Guidelines was launched and disseminated to all registered optometrists and opticians. The Code and Guidelines set out the practice standards and expectations of the registrants in the discharge of their professional duties and responsibilities as eye care professionals. We believe that close adherence to the Code of Professional Conduct and Professional Practice Guidelines will raise the standard of practice and services to patients across the optical industry, and boost public confidence in the profession.

In addition to the Supervisory Framework for optometrists, a new Supervisory Framework was also implemented for all provisionally registered opticians in July 2010. We are confident that with the guidance and mentoring from their supervisors, newly registered opticians will be better able to apply and enhance their knowledge and skills while on the job. Such encouragement and support provided to new opticians will raise the standards and professionalism of opticianry practice.

Last but not least, I am grateful that all optometrists and opticians have contributed to advancing the practice of optometry and opticianry. With public interest as a priority, let us work together to bring Singapore's primary eye care services to greater heights.

Dr Khoo Chong Yew
Chairman
Optometrists and Opticians Board

3. INTRODUCTION

The Optometrists & Opticians Act was passed in Parliament in July 2007 to regulate the practice of Optometry and Opticianry in Singapore. The purpose of regulation is to ensure that those who provide eye care services are properly trained and qualified. The Act also establishes the Optometrists and Opticians Board (the Board") to regulate Optometrists and Opticians.

Registration of Optometrists and Opticians providing eye care services started in 1 Jan 2008. As at 31 December 2010, there is a total of 2296 registered Opticians and Optometrists.

Chart a - Number of registrants in each registration category from 2008-2010

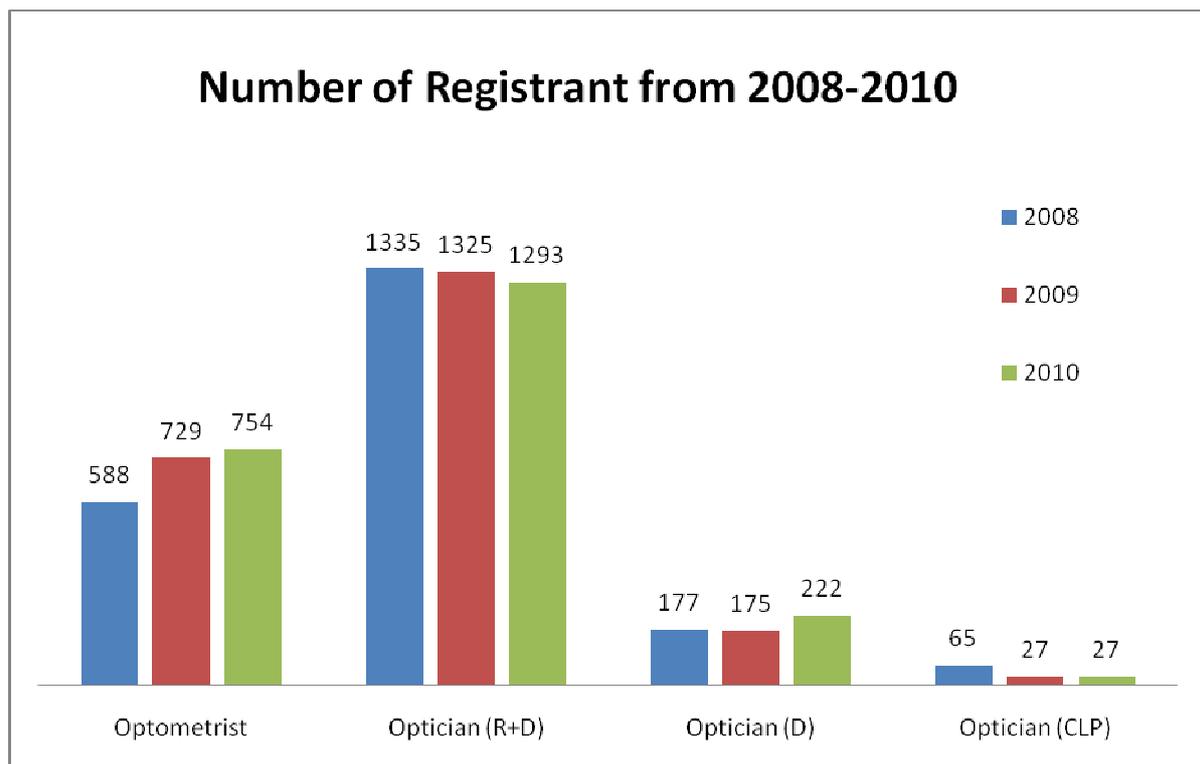
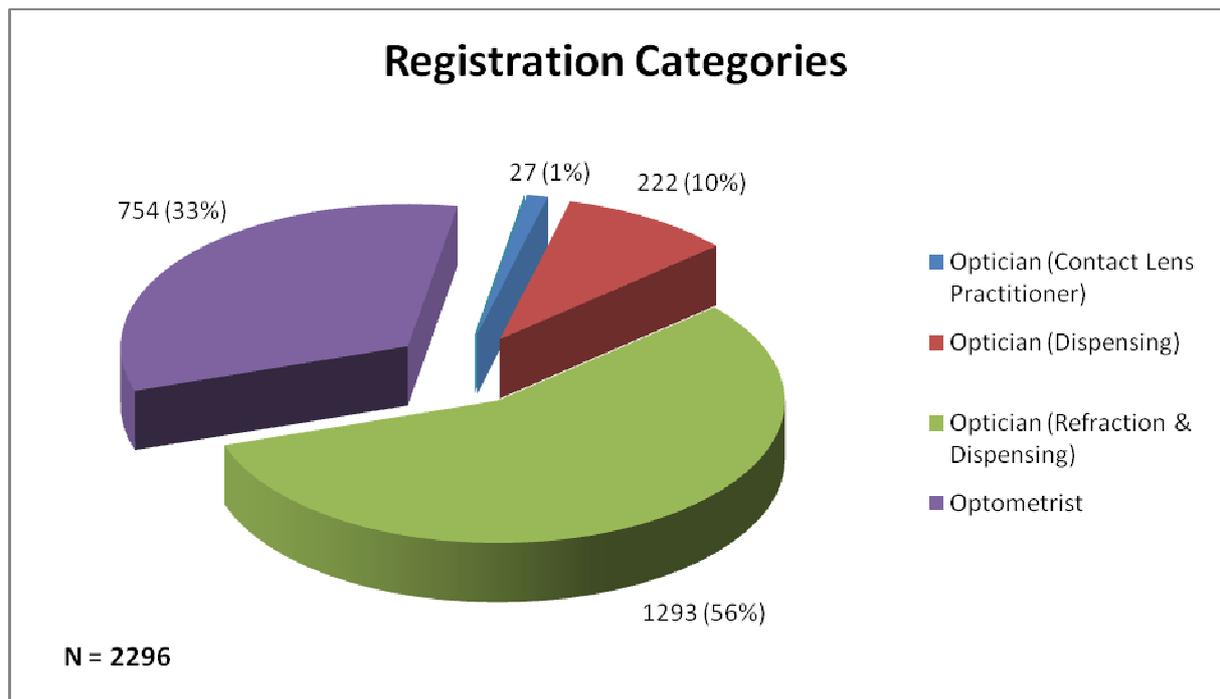


Chart b - Number of registrants of 2010 in each registration category



4. KEY HIGHLIGHTS

4.1 Summary of New Registrants and Practising Certificate Renewals

Under the Optometrists and Opticians Act (Act no. 36 of 2007), practising optometrists and opticians are required to be registered and possess a valid practising certificate.

The Board received a total of 215 new registration applications and 1266 practising certificate (PC) renewals in 2010. The comparison of new registrants and PC renewal from 2008 to 2009 are shown in Table 1 and Table 2.

Table 1: New Registrants from 2008 - 2010

Register Type	2008	2009	2010
Optometrists	558	77	117
Optician (Dispensing)	1335	6	26
Optician (Refraction + Dispensing)	177	23	72
Optician (Contact Lens Practitioner)	65	0	0
Total	2135	106	215

Table 2: PC Renewals from 2008 – 2010

Register Type	2008	2009	2010
Optometrists	0	558	78
Optician (Dispensing)	0	15	1087
Optician (Refraction + Dispensing)	0	91	101
Optician (Contact Lens Practitioner)	0	27	0
Total	0	691	1266

4.2 Supervisory Framework for Provisionally Registered Optometrists

The Supervisory Framework for provisionally registered optometrists was implemented since September 2009 to assess and build on competencies gained during the course of optometry education and training.

Under the framework, candidates are required to maintain a portfolio of cases that cover the core competency areas of refraction, contact lens practice, binocular vision, primary eye-care and dispensing. Supervisors under this framework have to be fully registered optometrists and have at least 3 years of optometric working

experience. Provisional registrants who receive negative supervisory reports may have their supervision extended.

At the end of 2010, there were a total of 116 provisional registered optometrists and 107 of them are new optometry graduates.

4.3 Supervisory Framework for Provisionally Registered Opticians

A new Supervisory Framework was introduced for provisionally registered opticians in July 2010 to assess and build on competencies gained during the course of opticianry education and training.

Registrants under the new Supervisory Framework are now required to maintain a portfolio of cases seen during their first year of provisional registration, and submit their portfolios to the Board. These cases must cover the core competency areas in their respective registration category of dispensing and/or refraction.

Supervisors under this framework must be fully registered optometrists or opticians who have at least 3 years of working experience. Provisionally registered opticians who receive negative supervisor reports from their supervisors may have their provisional registration extended.

At the end of 2010, there were 76 new opticians who were provisionally registered and mentored under the newly introduced supervisory framework.

4.4 Introduction of Code of Conduct and Professional Ethics Guidelines

The Code of Professional Conduct and Professional Practice Guidelines was launched in January 2010 by the Practice, Ethics and Conduct Committee of Optometrists and Opticians Board. The guidebooks were disseminated to all registrant on 22 February 2010 and registrants were urged to comply with the Code of Professional Conduct and Professional Practice Guidelines. The guidebook can also be accessed at: <https://www.oob.moh.gov.sg/ahp/ethics.jsp>

5. COMPLAINTS

5.1 Complaints Against Registered Optometrist & Opticians

In 2010, the Board received a total of 2 complaints against 3 registrants.

Complaint 1

In January 2010, a member of public lodged a complaint against a registered Optometrist and a registered Optician (Dispensing and Refraction) for unprofessional conduct and unprofessional eye care services. The complainant claimed that the spectacles prescribed were unsuitable, with serious deficiencies in the lenses. Upon review and investigations, the Board opined that the optician had complied with the Code of Professional Conduct by referring the complainant to an optometrist when complainant's best corrected visual acuity remained at 6/9 or worse. Therefore the complaint against the optician was dismissed. The optometrist was found to have neglected to take a thorough history of the complainant before prescribing, resulting in lenses with PD which was very different from the existing PD. However, the optometrist exercised due diligence to change the lenses when a complaint was made by the complainant. Therefore, the optometrist was issued a stern letter of advice reminding him of his professional duties and responsibilities to check the patient's history before prescribing any lenses.

Complaint 2

In September 2010, a member of the public complained that a registered optician delivered inadequate eye care services and issued poorly fitted progressive lenses. The complainant had sought a second opinion from another optician, who informed the complainant that the lenses' focal point was out of alignment. Upon considering the results of an eye examination by a Board-appointed assessor and explanations from the parties involved, there was no evidence to suggest any professional misconduct on the part of the optician, and the complaint was dismissed. Given that the complaint resulted from another optician's unfounded advice to the complainant, the second optician was reminded by the Board to adhere

to the Board's Professional Practice Guidelines and to exercise caution when advising members of the public.

5.2 Online Sales of Contact Lens

In 2010, the Attorney-General's Chamber issued 10 stern warning to online bloggers offering contact lenses for sale, warning them that only registered optometrists and opticians (contact lens practitioners) were allowed to prescribe and dispense contact lenses under the Optometrists and Opticians Act. The bloggers were ordered to stop the sale of contact lenses online with immediate effect or risk being charged.

The penalty for such offences is a fine not exceeding \$25,000, or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months, or both, for the first conviction. In the case of a second or subsequent conviction, the penalty is a fine not exceeding \$50,000, or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months, or both.

5.3 Unlawful Engagement in Optometry and Opticianry

In 2010, the Attorney-General's Chamber issued 7 stern warnings to registrants and employers, warning them that only registered optometrists and opticians were allowed to practise optometry and opticianry under Optometrists and Opticians Act. Employers should not employ any person who is not qualified or registered to practise optometry or opticianry. Persons who are not registered with the Board and registrants who do not renew their practising certificates are considered unregistered with the Board, and should not be allowed to practice optometry or opticianry.

The penalty for such offences is a fine not exceeding \$25,000, or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months, or both, for the first conviction. In the case of a second or subsequent conviction, the penalty is a fine not exceeding \$50,000, or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months, or both.

APPENDIX I:

Profiles of Registered Optometrists and Opticians

1. Profiles of Optometrists 2010

Chart 1(a) – Number of optometrists by registration types

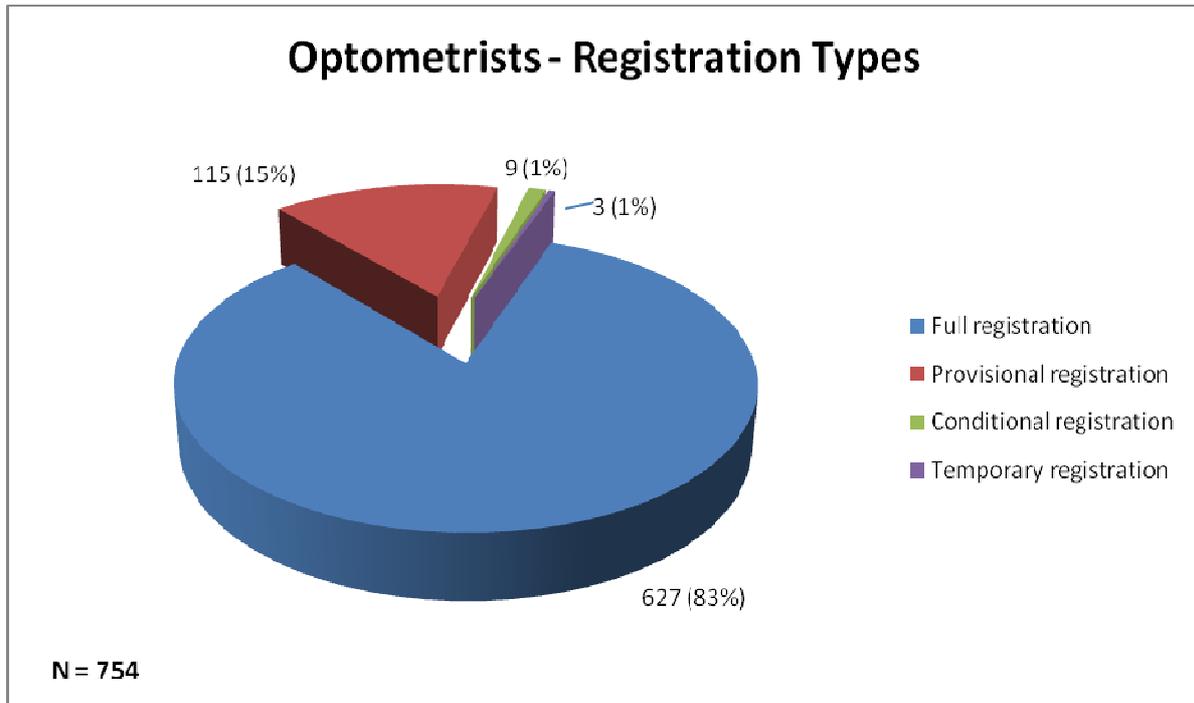


Chart 1(b) – Number of optometrists by age group

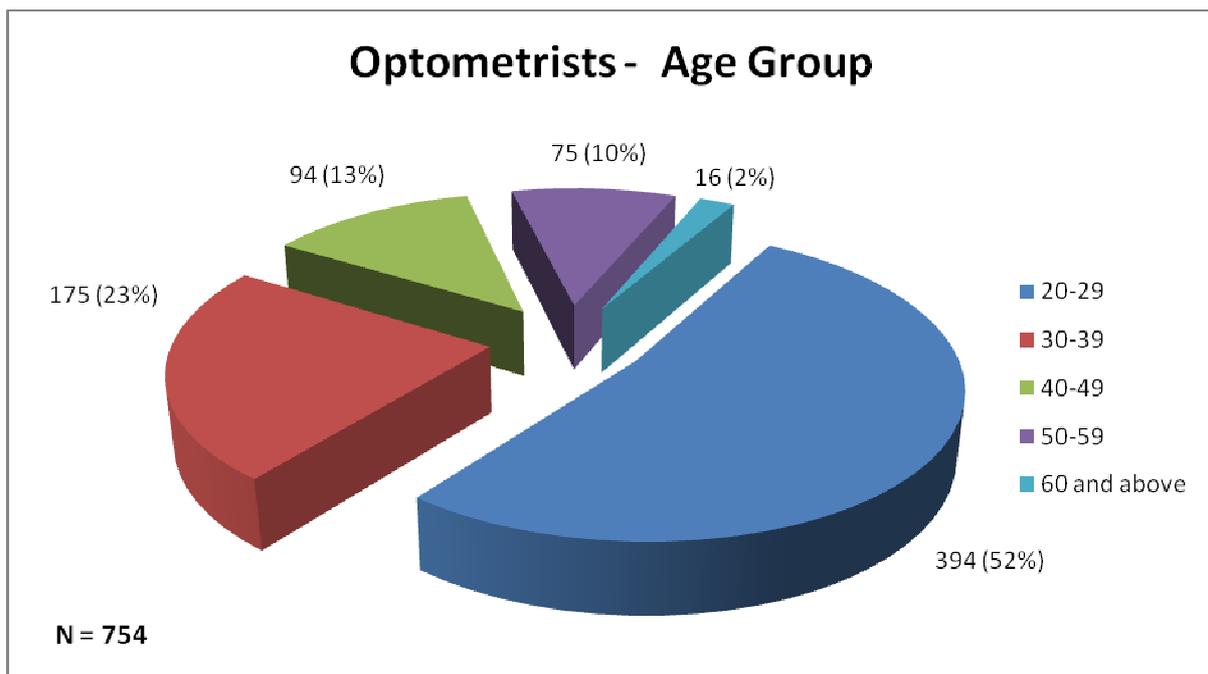


Chart 1(c) – Number of optometrists by nationality

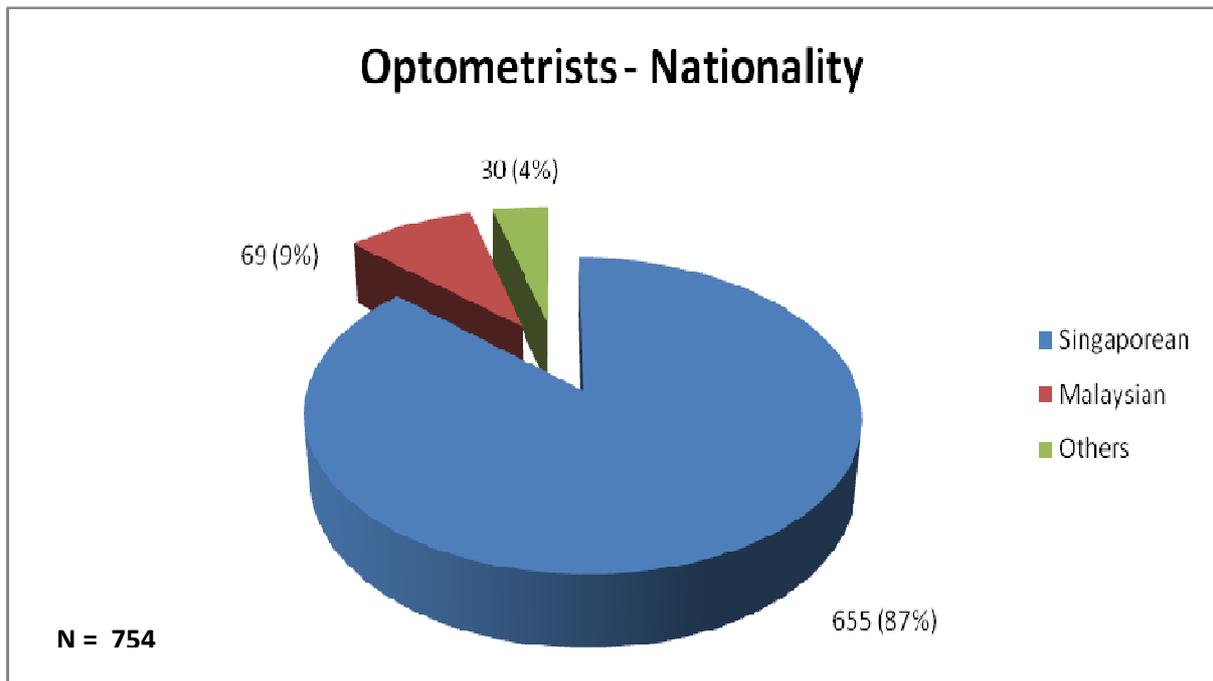
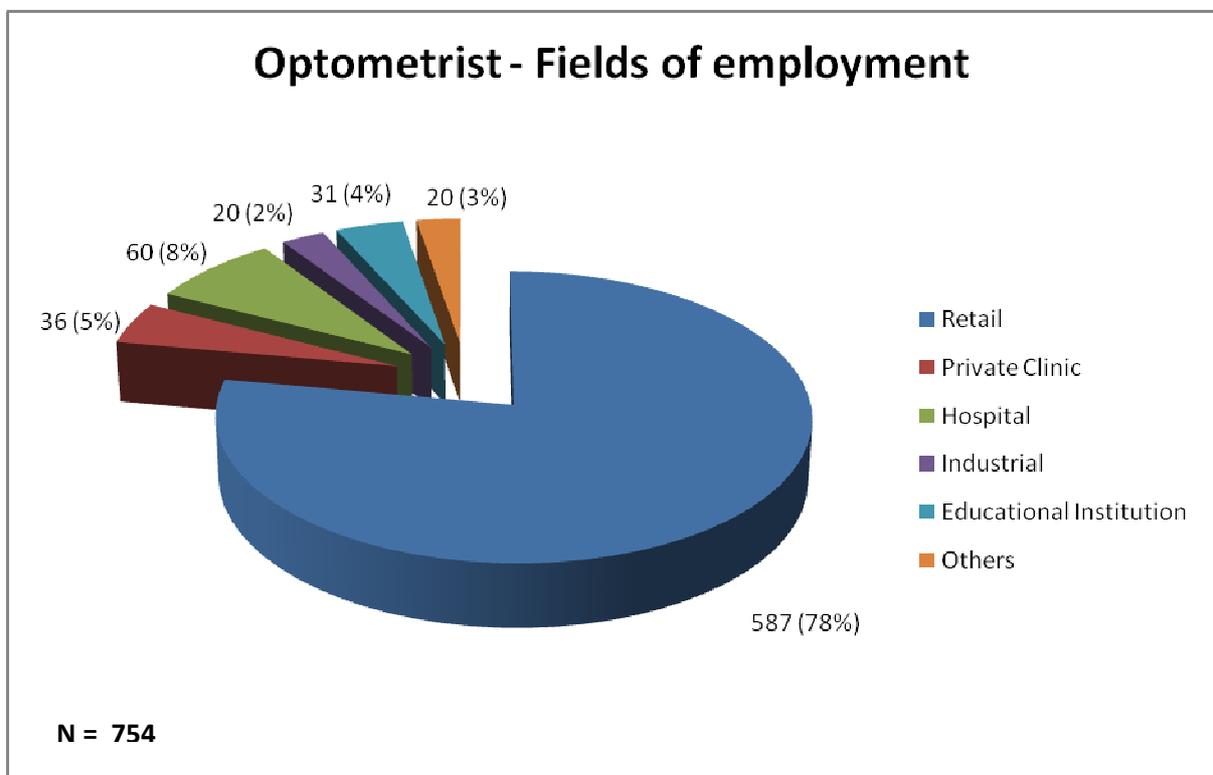


Chart 1(d) – Fields of employment



2. Profiles of Opticians (Refraction & Dispensing) 2010
 Chart 2(a) – Number of opticians (R+D) by registration types

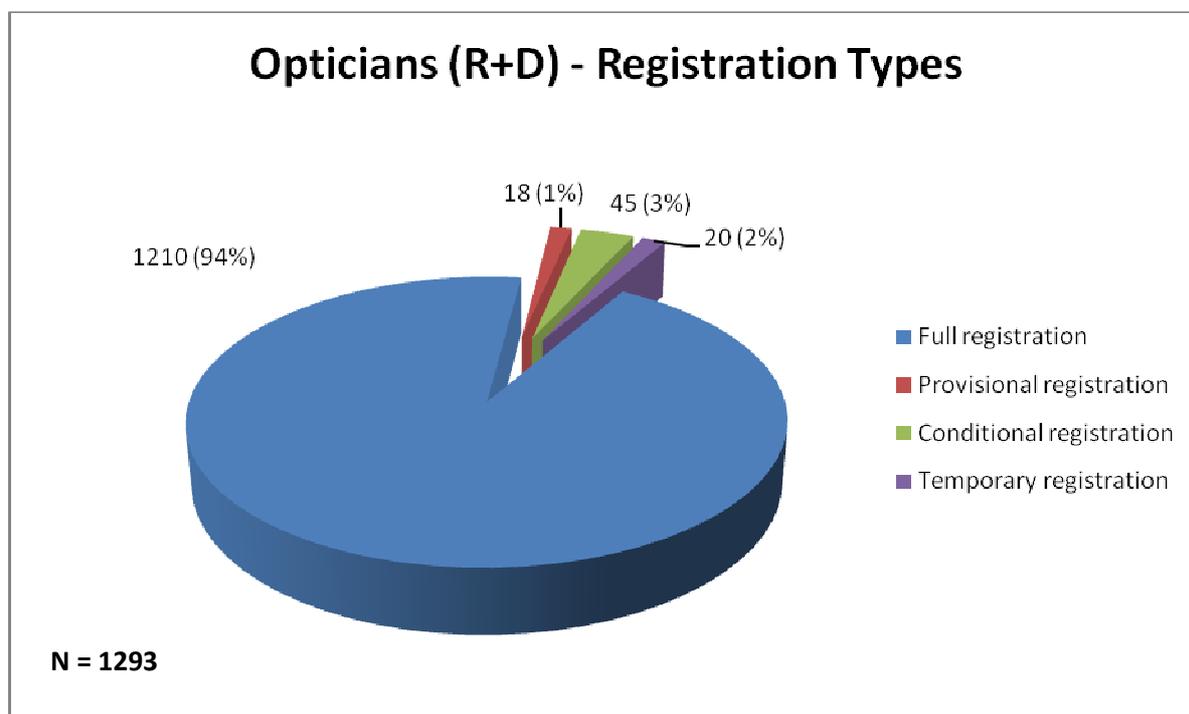


Chart 2(b) – Number of opticians (R+D) by age group

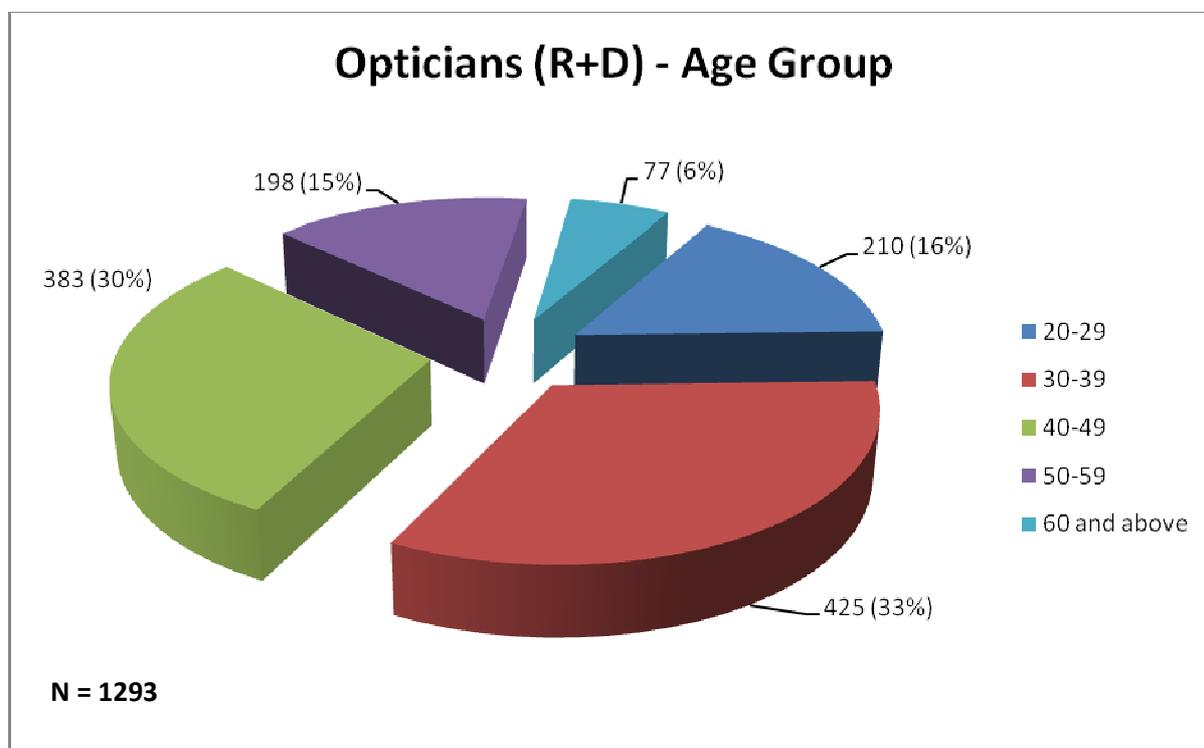


Chart 2(c) – Number of opticians (R+D) by nationality

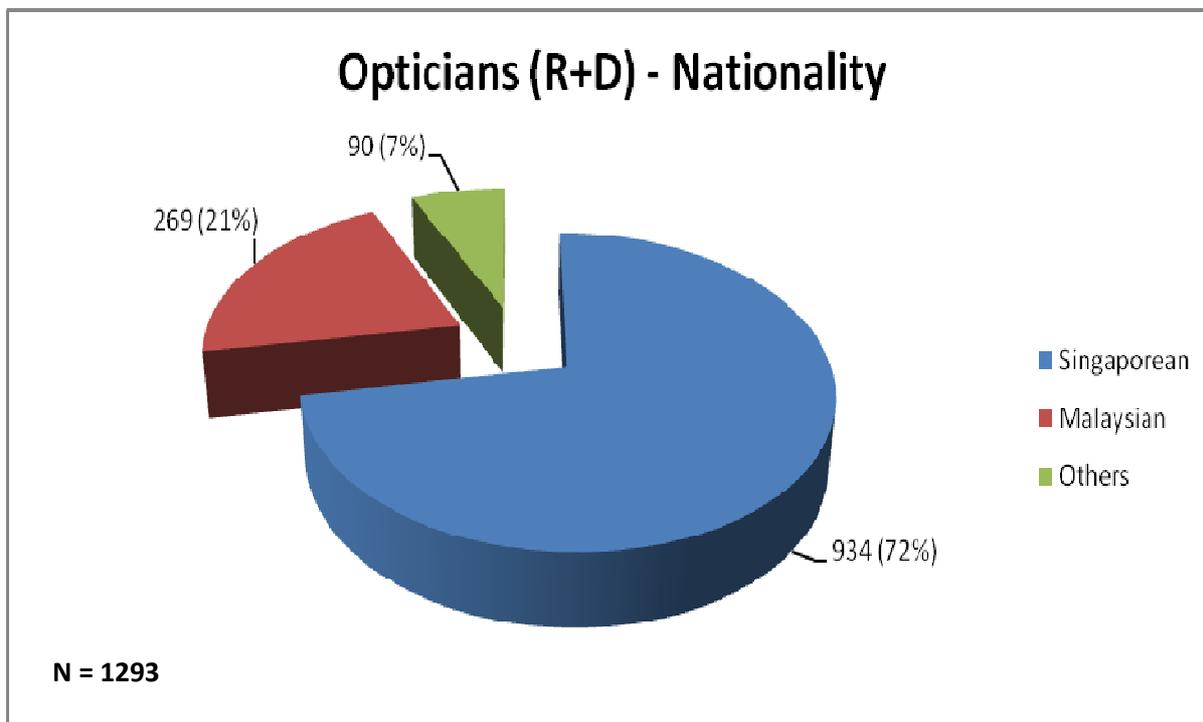
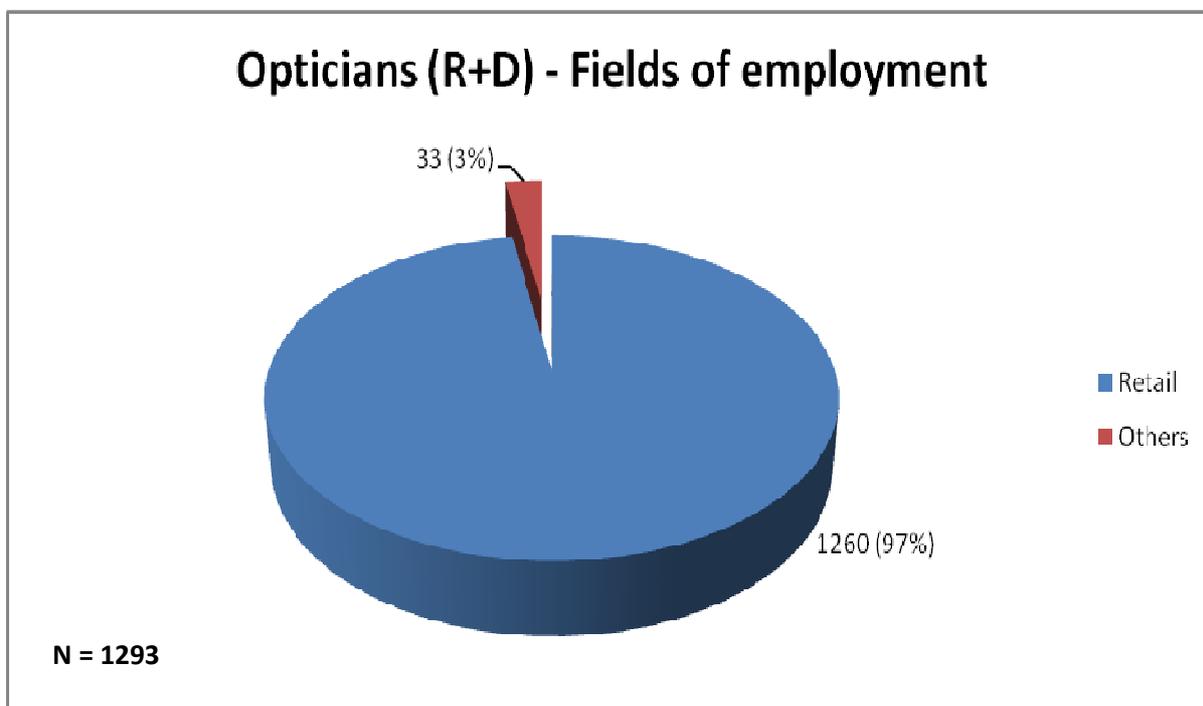


Chart 2(d) – Number of opticians (R+D) by fields of employment



3. Profiles of Opticians (Dispensing) 2010

Chart 3(a) – Number of opticians (D) by registration type

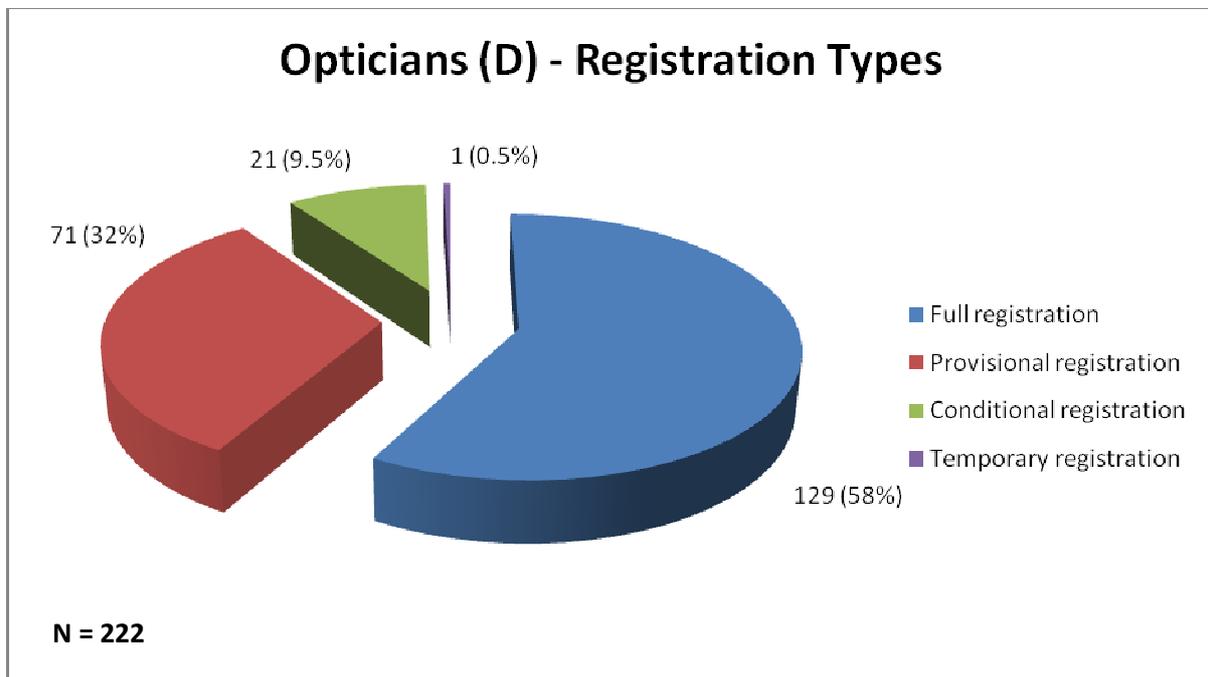


Chart 3(b) – Number of opticians (D) by age group

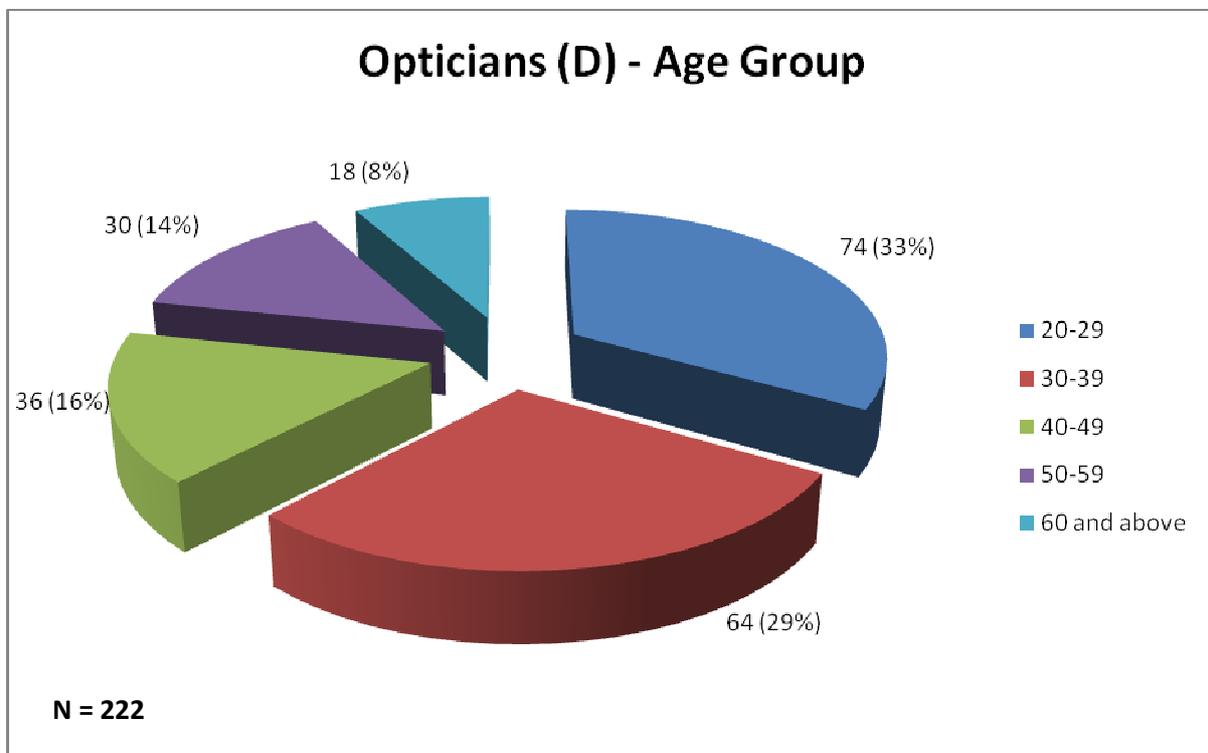


Chart 3(c) – Number of opticians (D) by nationality

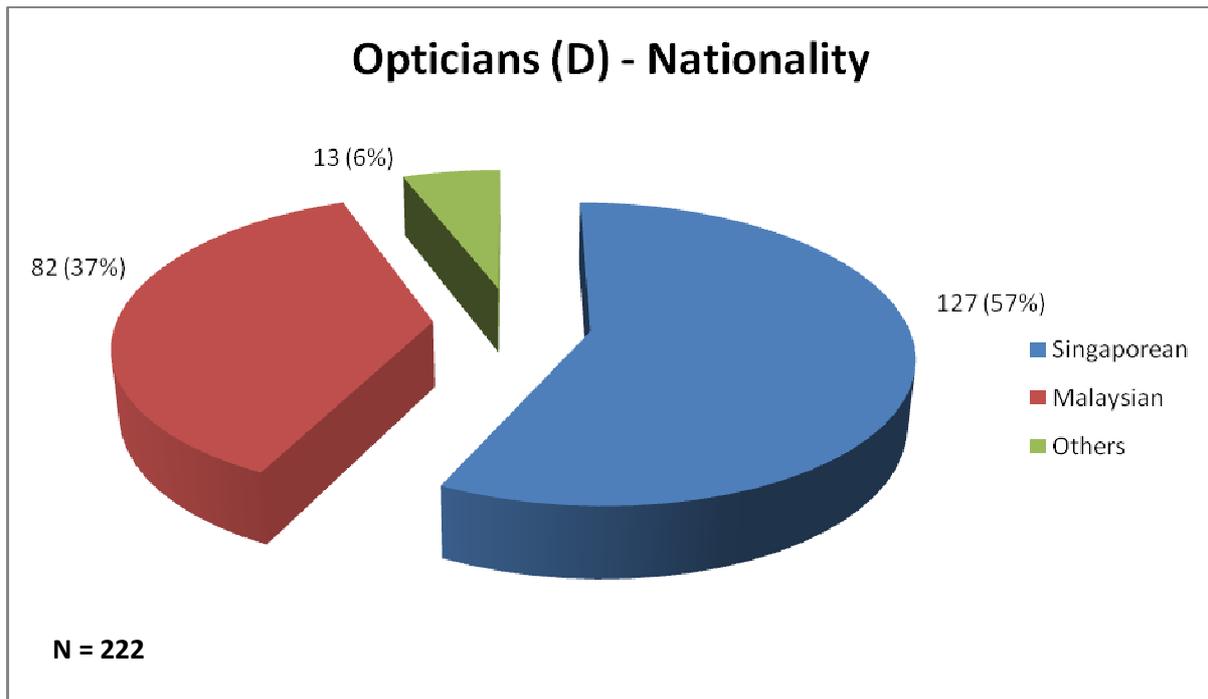
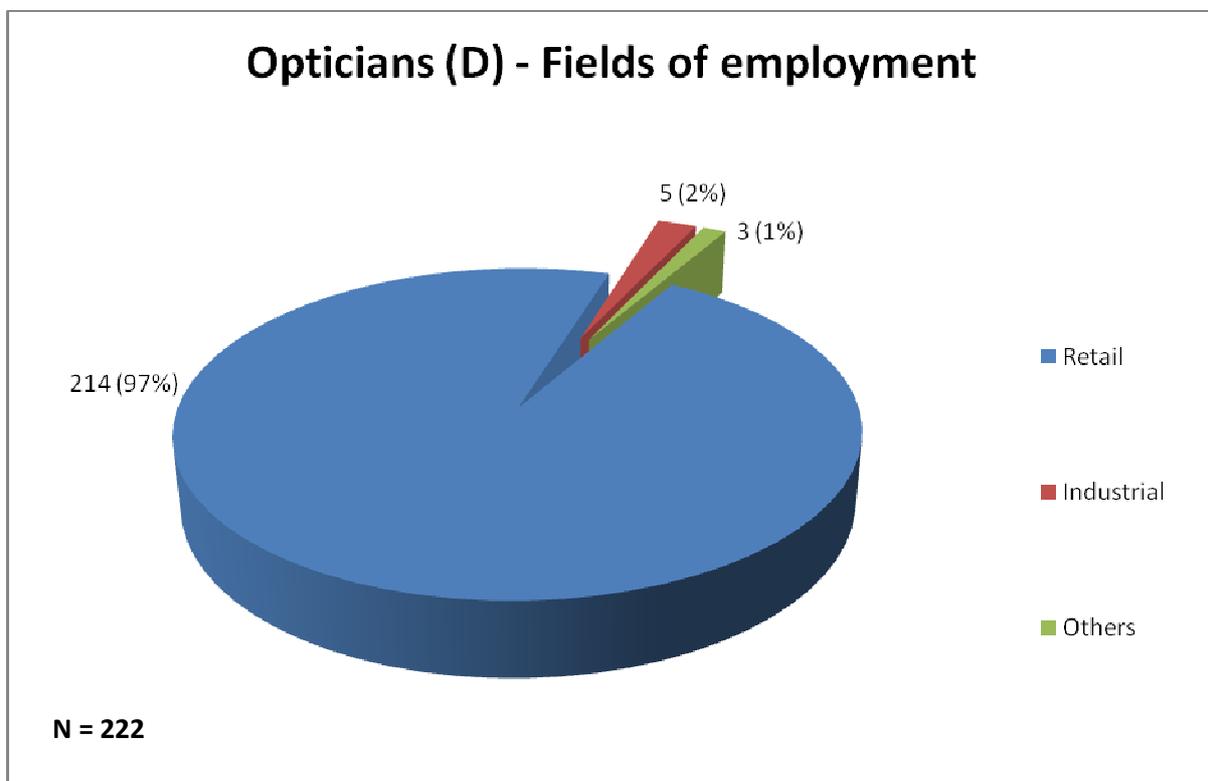


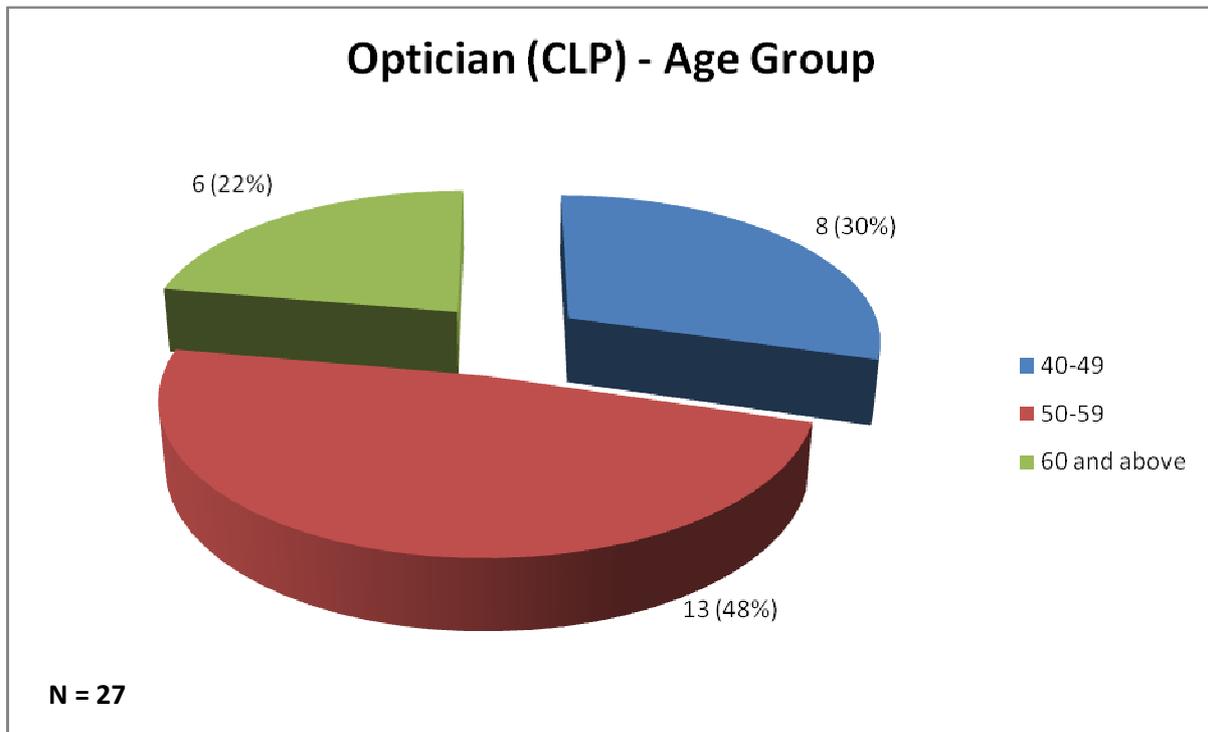
Chart 3(d) – Number of opticians (D) by fields of employment



4. Profiles of Opticians (Contact Lens Practitioner) 2010

There are a total of 27 opticians (CLP) and all are fully registered. All opticians (CLP) are Singaporeans and work in the retail sector.

Chart 4(a) – Number of opticians (CLP) by age group



APPENDIX II (a):

Code of Professional Conduct for Optometrists

The Optometrists and Opticians Board (OOB) is the regulatory body for all optometrists and opticians in Singapore. In order to meet its objectives in regulating these professions, the Board has established and commissioned the Practice Ethics and Conduct Committee to develop this Code of Professional Conduct (CPC) for optometrists.

Patients and the public must be able to trust optometrists with their visual and ocular well being. To justify this trust, optometrists have to maintain a good standard of care, conduct and behaviour. Optometrists are expected to uphold the principles dictated by this Code. Adherence to this Code will also enable public trust and confidence in the profession.

The Code of Professional Conduct constitutes a yardstick for conduct, behaviour and professional ethics for Optometrists. It can be referenced should ethical issues be raised.

It is the view of the Board that disregard or failure to meet the standards of the code can potentially harm patients or bring disrepute to the optometric profession. Breaches of any article in this Code could lead to optometrists being asked to explain their actions and face disciplinary proceedings for professional misconduct.

This Code can be periodically updated to cover areas that were not previously dealt with, including issues arising from advances in optometry, and statutory or regulatory requirements.

- a) An optometrist must conduct himself or herself in his or her professional duties in accordance with the Optometrists and Opticians Act 2007 and Regulations and in accordance with this Code. The Code does not over-ride obligations that may be imposed on the practice of optometry by the

Optometrists and Opticians Act and Regulations and any other Act or Regulation relating to the practice of optometry.

- b) An optometrist must maintain his or her knowledge and practise at a competent level and participate in continuing professional education activities.
- c) An optometrist must only perform or participate in those procedures that are within his or her competence and for which he or she is appropriately qualified, and refer those patients whose needs or requests are outside his or her competence, and where necessary follow up the referral.
- d) An optometrist must ensure privacy and confidentiality for his or her patients and for their ophthalmic records unless disclosure is necessary in the course of referral to a colleague in his or another healthcare profession or he/she is required to by the Board or the Law. Information contained in any patient's ophthalmic record should be made available to that patient if requested.
- e) An optometrist must not exploit his or her professional relationship with a patient or any other person in the conduct of his or her practice sexually, emotionally or financially or otherwise in any way.
- f) An optometrist should take reasonable steps to ensure his or her patients understand at the commencement of any test, procedure or treatment the risks, complications, possible reactions, nature, purpose, cost of and alternatives to the procedure or treatment.
- g) An optometrist must treat patients without prejudice of race, religion, creed, social standing, disability or financial status.
- h) An optometrist must respect the wish of a patient for a second opinion and, if requested, help the patient obtain the appropriate second opinion.

- i) If an optometrist has reason to believe that a colleague is behaving in an unprofessional manner, or that his standard of practice falls substantially below acceptable standards, he should report the conduct to the Optometrists and Opticians Board.

- j) An optometrist must not attend to a patient whilst his ability to do so is impaired by the influence of alcohol, drugs or physical or mental illness.

- k) An optometrist must maintain professionalism in informing the public about his or her services, ensuring that information projected is factual and does not self aggrandise. An optometrist shall not advertise his or her services in a way that is not consistent with the Optometrists and Opticians (Practice, Conduct, Ethics and Publicity) Regulations or any guidelines promulgated by the Board relating to publicity.

APPENDIX II (b):

Code of Professional Conduct for Opticians

The Optometrists and Opticians Board (OOB) is the regulatory body for all optometrists and opticians in Singapore. In order to meet its objectives in regulating these professions, the Board has established and commissioned the Practice Ethics and Conduct Committee to develop this Code of Professional Conduct (CPC) for opticians.

Patients and the public must be able to trust opticians implicitly with their visual and ocular well being. To justify this trust, opticians have to maintain a good standard of care, conduct and behaviour. Opticians are expected to uphold the principles dictated by their Code. Adherence to a Code of Professional Conduct will enable public trust and confidence in the profession.

The Code of Professional Conduct constitutes a yardstick for conduct, behaviour professional ethics. It can be referenced should ethical issues be raised.

The Board's view is that disregard or failure to meet an agreed code of standards amounting to professional misconduct can potentially harm patients or cause disrepute to the opticianry profession. Professional misconduct may be judged through disciplinary proceedings.

This Code can be periodically updated to cover areas that were not previously dealt with, including issues arising from advances in opticianry, and statutory or regulatory requirements.

- a) An optician must conduct himself or herself in his or her professional duties in accordance with the Optometrists and Opticians Act 2007 and Regulations and in accordance with this Code. This Code does not over-ride obligations imposed in the practice of opticianry by the Optometrists and Opticians Act

and Regulations and any other Act or Regulation relating to the practice of opticianry.

- b) An optician must maintain his or her knowledge and practise at a competent level and participate in continuing professional education activities.
- c) An optician must only perform or participate in those procedures that are within his or her level of competency and for which he or she is appropriately qualified, and refer those patients whose conditions are outside his or her level of competence.
- d) An optician must ensure privacy and confidentiality for his or her patients and their ophthalmic records unless disclosure is necessary in the course of referral to another profession or is required by the Board or the law. Information contained in any patient's ophthalmic record should be made available to that patient if requested.
- e) An optician must not exploit his or her professional relationship with a patient or any other person in the conduct of his or her practice sexually, emotionally, financially or otherwise in any way.
- f) An optician should take reasonable steps to ensure his or her patients understand any procedure or prescription, risks and complications if any as well as the costs to the patient.
- g) An optician must manage his patients without bias or regard for race, religion, creed, social standing, disability or financial status.
- h) An optician must respect the wish of a patient for a second opinion and, if requested, help the patient obtain an appropriate second opinion.
- i) If an optician has reason to believe that a colleague is behaving in an unprofessional manner, or that his standard of practice falls substantially

below acceptable standards, he should report the conduct to the Optometrists and Opticians Board.

- j) An optician must not attend to a patient when his ability to do so is impaired by the influence of alcohol, drugs, physical or mental illness.

- k) An optician must maintain professionalism in informing the public about his or her services, ensuring that information projected is purely factual and devoid of any attempt at self aggrandisement. An optician shall not advertise his or her services in a way that is not consistent with the Optometrists and Opticians (Practice, Conduct, Ethics and Publicity) Regulations or any guidelines promulgated by the Board relating to publicity.

APPENDIX III:

Schedule of Fees

Application Fee	\$50
Registration Fee	\$200
Practising Certificate Renewal Fees (2 years):	
- Optometrists	\$300
- Opticians (CLP)	\$280
- Opticians (Refraction & Dispensing)	\$280
- Opticians (Dispensing)	\$200
Late application fee for the renewal of a practising certificate:	
where the application is made less than 30 days before the expiry of the practicing certificate	\$50
where the application is made after the expiry of the practising certificate	\$100
Registration of any additional qualification	\$50
Restoration Fee	\$300
Certified True Copy of Certificate Fee	\$50