
Patterns of Development and Practice in Today's BDSM Subcultures: Results From A Survey of SM Practitioners

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Patterns of Development and Practice in Today's SM Subcultures.

Outline

- Introduction
 - Overview
 - Genesis of the Project
 - Content of Questionnaire
 - Design Considerations
- Demographics:
 - General
 - Sexual
- Analysis
 - Predictors of BDSM Practices
 - Gender and BDSM Orientation
- Conclusion

Introduction: Overview

- This presentation reviews initial results from a survey of SM Practitioners (n=1056) conducted via an Internet website between July, 1998 and September, 1999. The web site is located at BDSM.SexResearch.org.
- The overall goal of the study is to conduct a broad “census” of the current BDSM subcultures.
- Data collection continues, with a total of 1121 surveys completed and an additional 2561 surveys initiated as of 4th. November, 1999.
- This presentation provides an overview of the study and provides a selection of preliminary findings

Software: Filemaker Pro, WebStar, Lasso. Data were converted to SPSS 9.0 for analysis. The base survey instrument produced a dataset of 1,056 variables.

Introduction: Genesis of the Project

- Jacques' previous work as an author and publisher on the topic of BDSM indicated a lack of broad demographic and sexual practice data regarding to BDSM subcultures. This is true in both the academic and subculture literatures.
- , The project has active collaborators who are professional researchers , but has employed subcultural consultants, networks and organizations to publicize the survey and to enlist respondents.
- Due to the resources (social, technical, and financial) required, a project of this magnitude is not likely to be performed often.

Introduction: Design Considerations

- Credibility of researchers in eyes of academe and the BDSM sub-cultures.
- Convenience sample of BDSM practitioners (only).
- Response rate considerations
 - Length of questionnaire
 - Number of respondents
 - Quality of sample
 - Publicity
- Form of questions and layout
- Qualitative and quantitative data
- Reliability and validation
 - Interviews
 - Patient Project
- Ability, Opportunity, and Cost
 - Access to sub-culture
 - Technology

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Introduction: Content of Questionnaire

- Personal and Family History
 - Age, Education, Ethnicity, Religion (education, belief, practice), job...
 - Environment (past and current)
 - Family composition, setting.
 - Abuse (physical, emotional, and/or sexual; source; and specific nature of abuse)
 - Disabilities
- Sexual and BDSM Development
- Psychosexual profile (BDSM and conventional sexual practices)
 - Attitudes
 - Interests
 - Experience
- Balanced F Scale (modified California Fascist Scale, Byrne, 1974)
- Self-Monitoring Scale (Snyder, 1974)
- Volunteer Bias, Sexuality, & Personality (Trivedi and Sabini, 1998)

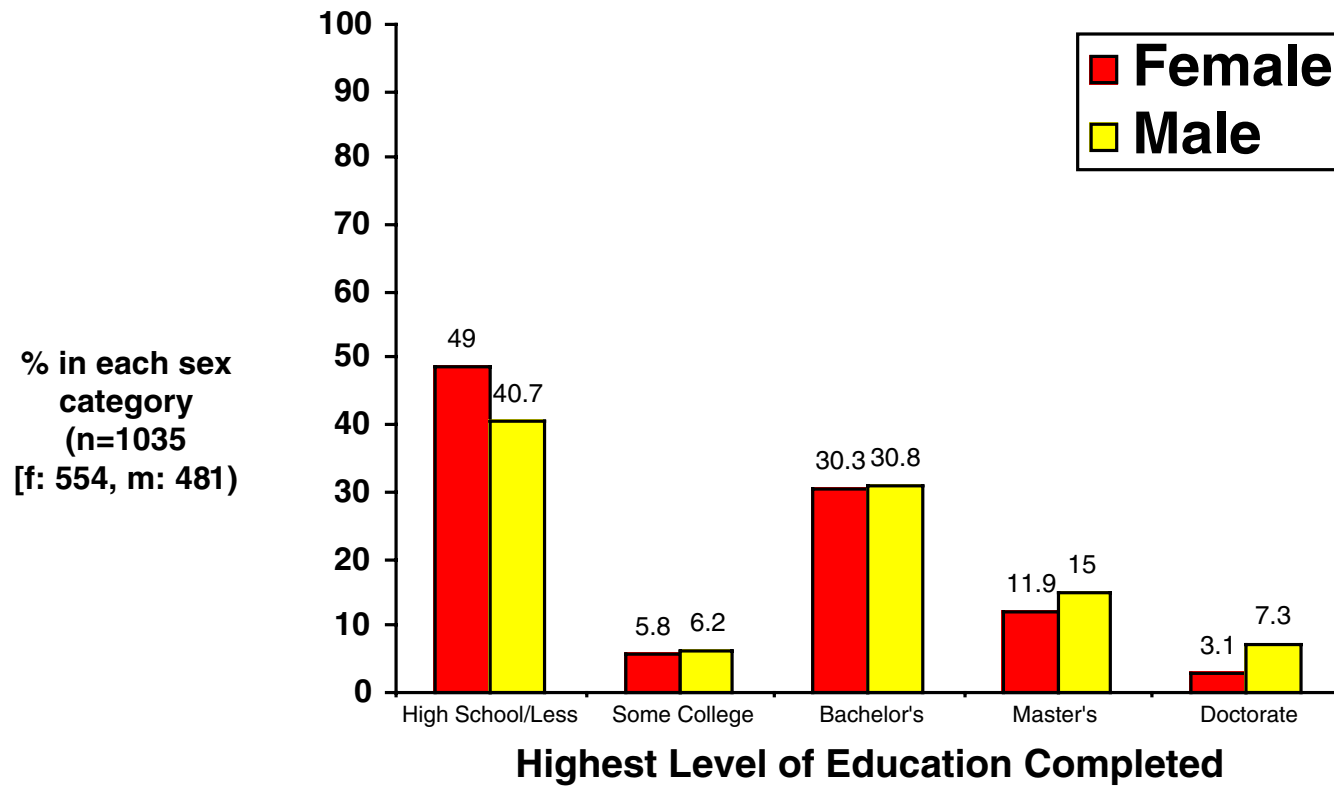
Demographics: General: Match with Target Population

- Overall sample size n=1056
- Biological Sex: 53.7% Female; 46.3% Male.
- Average age of respondent is 38.4 years (median 38, mode 29)
- Correspondence between biological sex and current gender orientation: Male: 97.7%; Female 98.6%.

BDSM/Fetish Orientation:

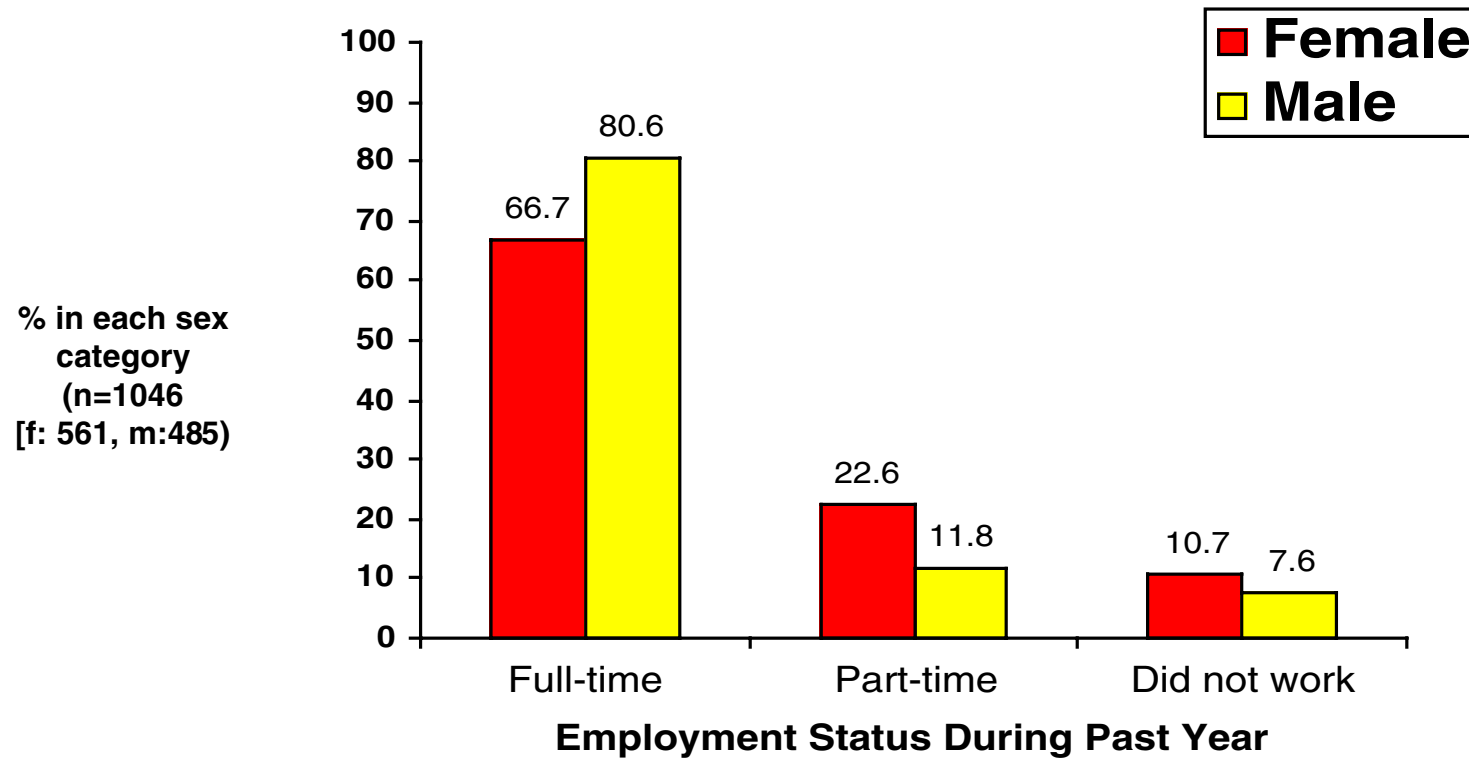
- 99% (n=1052) express an interest in participating in BDSM activities.
- 89% (n=940) have been involved in a BDSM relationship at some point in their lives.
- 77.3% (n=816) of the overall sample are currently in a BDSM relationship.
- 55.9% (n=590) are associated with a BDSM-related social organization.
- 38.9% (n=411) are active participants in a BDSM organization.

Demographics: Education



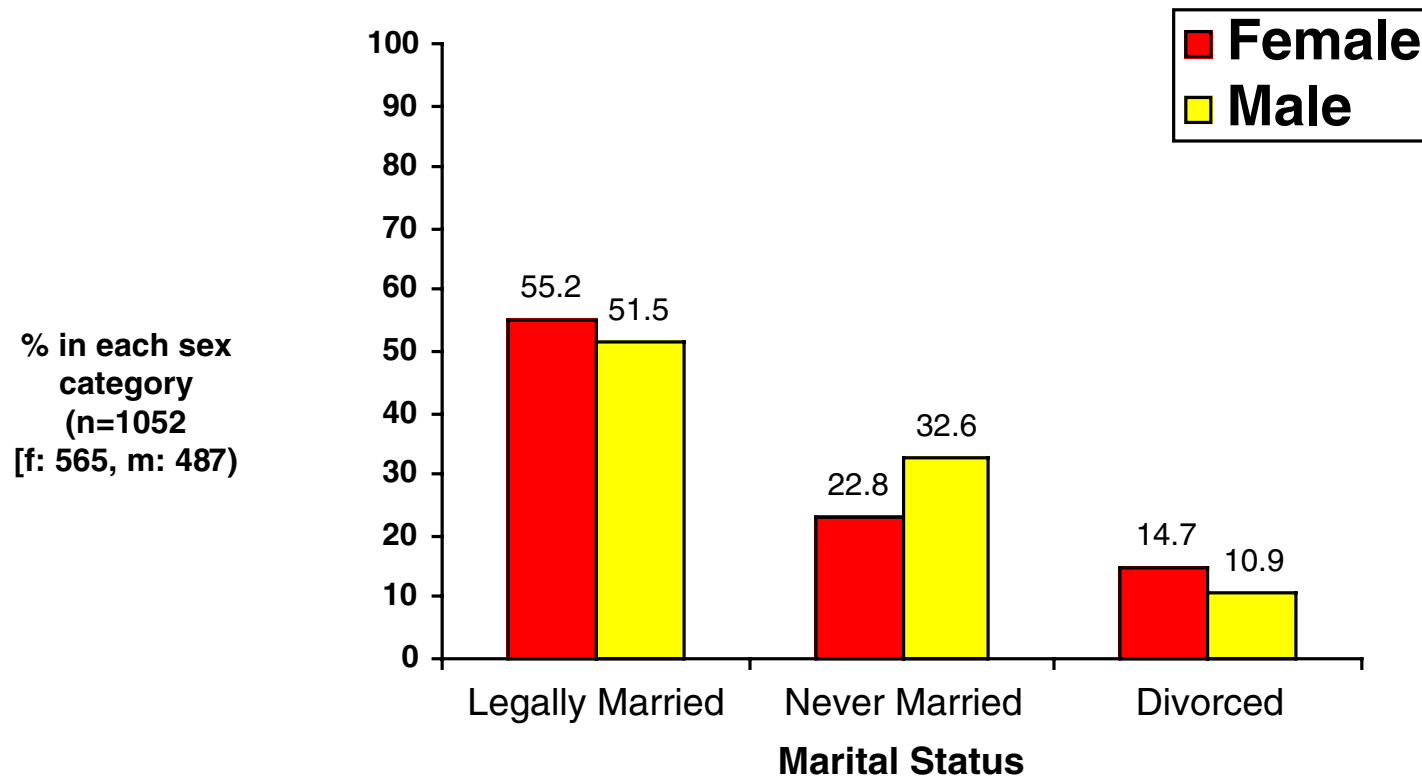
$\chi^2 P < .05$

Demographics: Employment Status



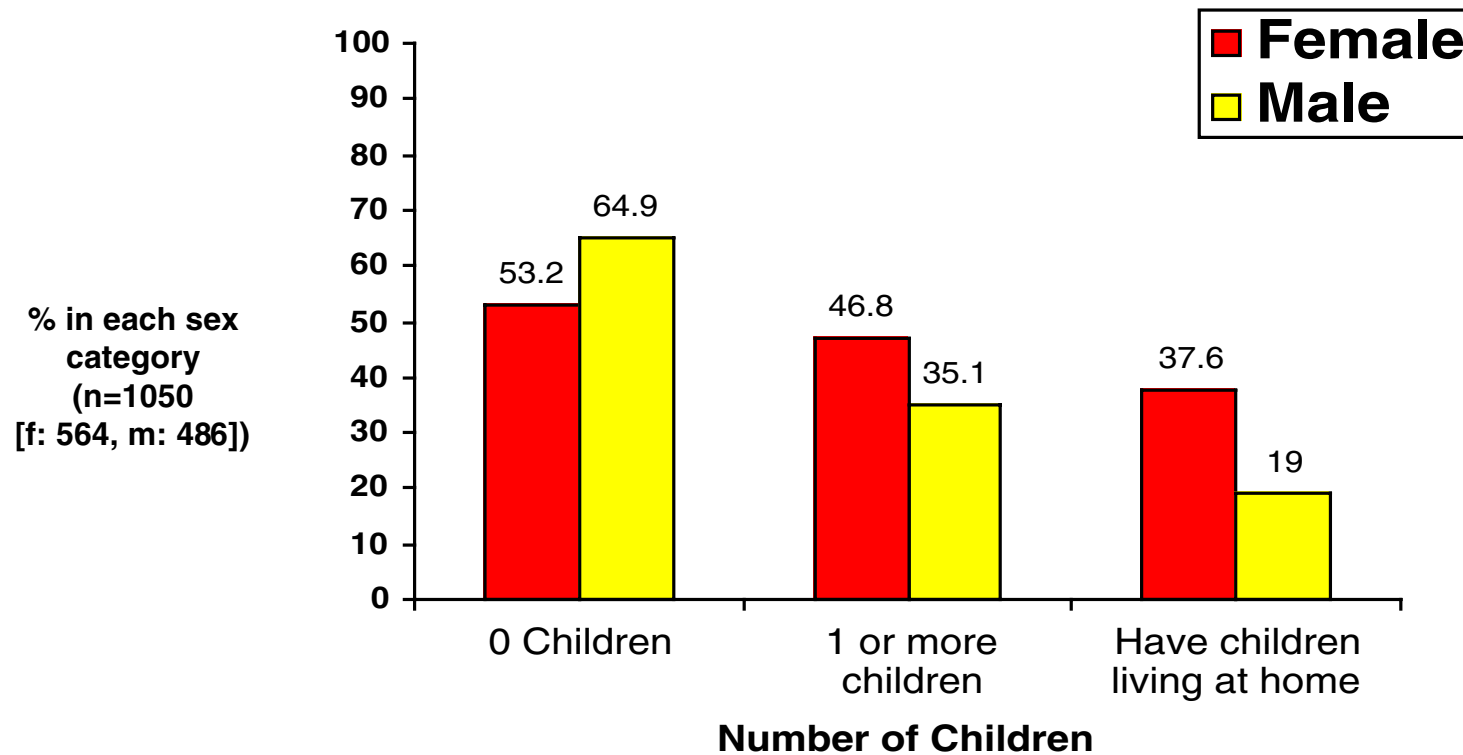
χ^2 $P < .01$

Demographics: Marital Status



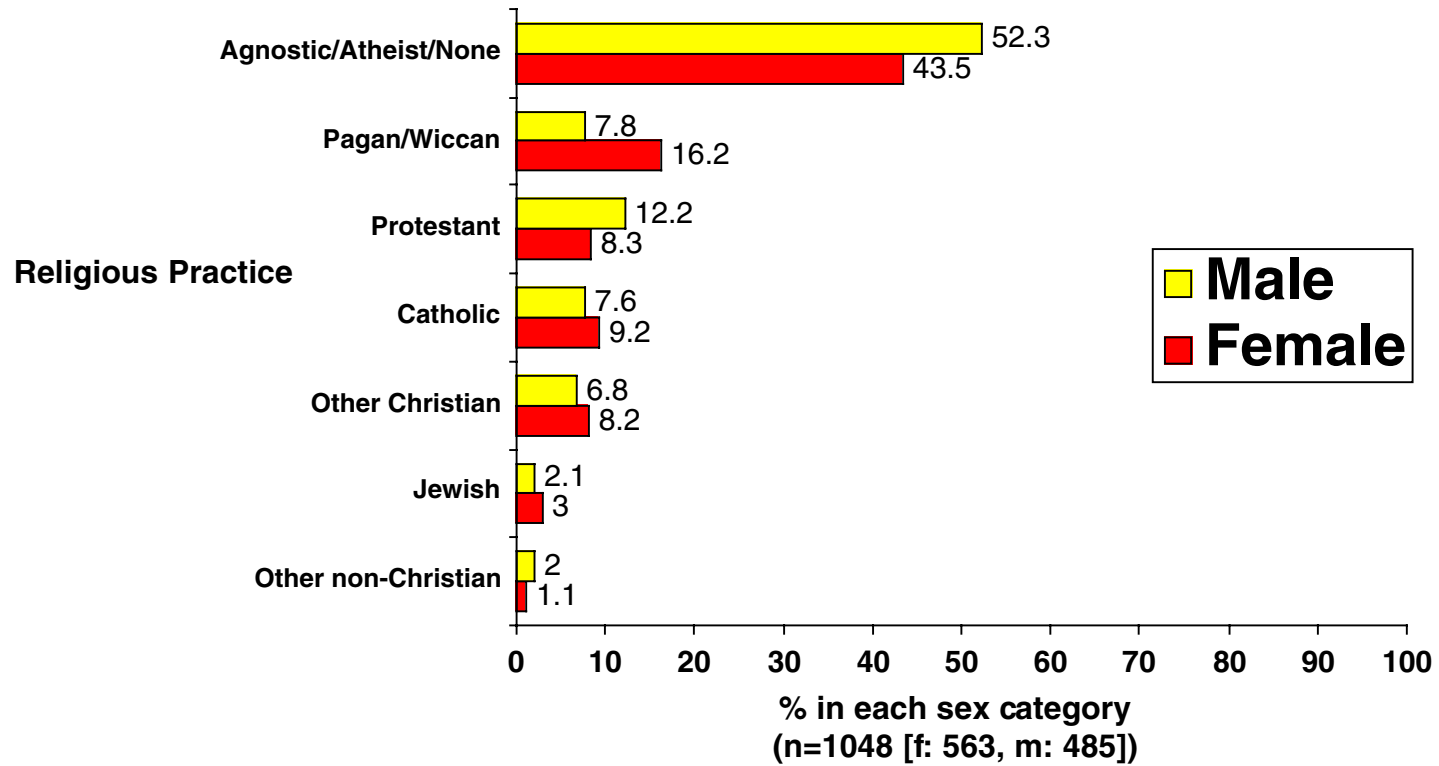
χ^2 $P < .01$

Demographics: Children



$\chi^2 P < .01$

Demographics: Current Religious Practice



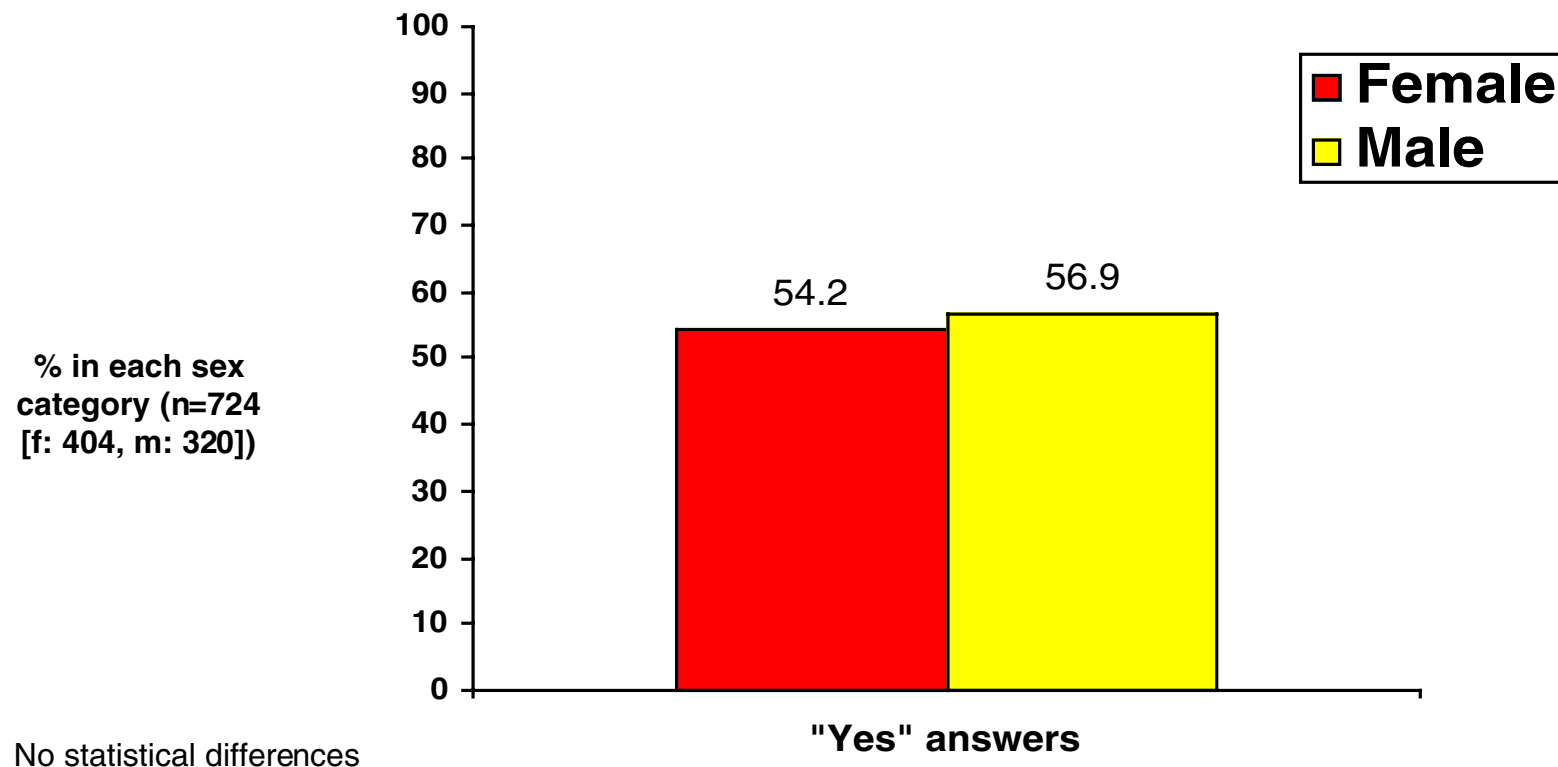
C^2 $P < .01$

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Demographics: Participation in social organizations

- The majority of respondents are active participants in non-sex organizations in their communities.

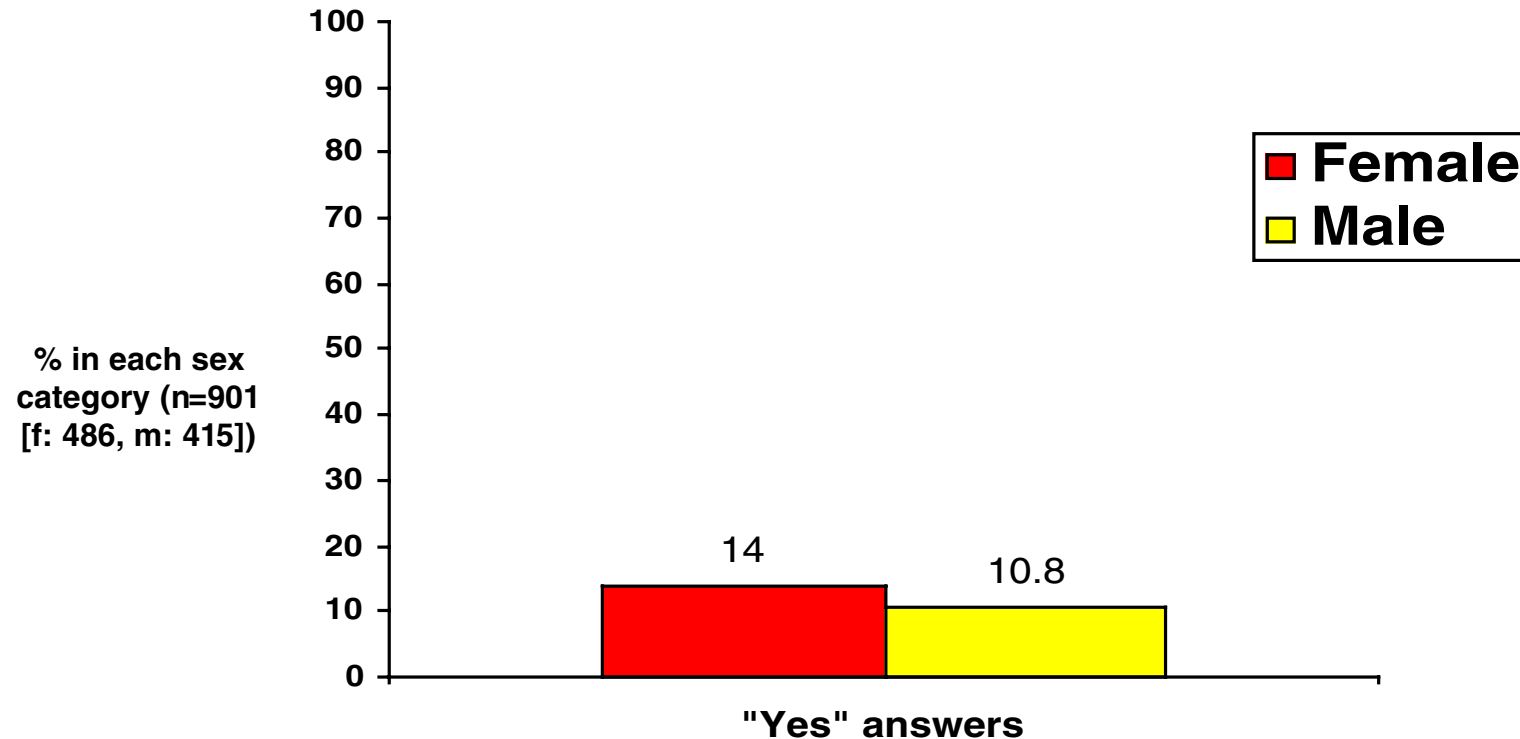
Participation in non sex-related social organizations



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Demographics: Geographic mobility due to BDSM

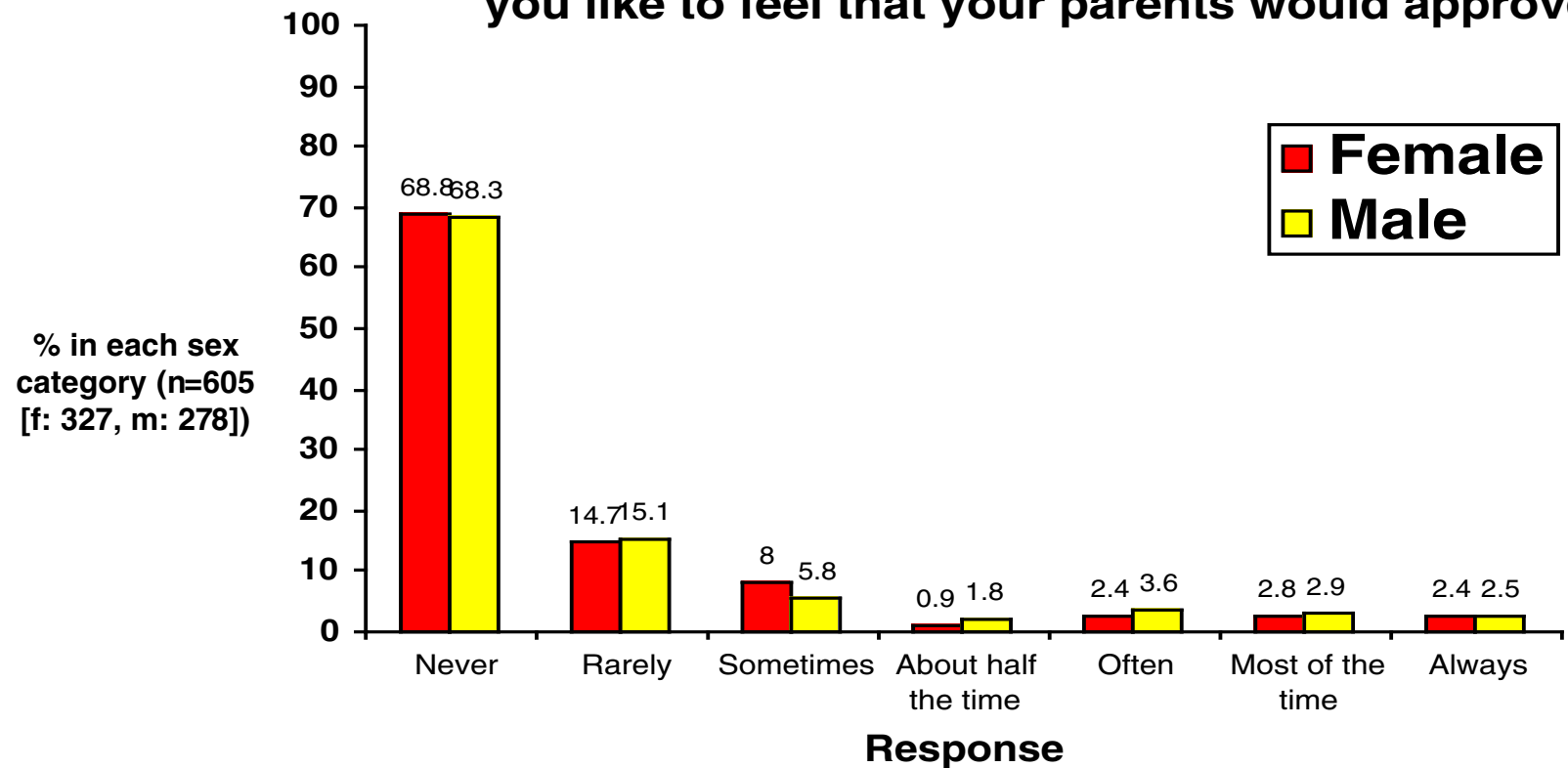
Have you ever moved specifically for a reason related to your interest in BDSM?



No statistical differences

Demographics: Parental Approval

Concerning your most sexually arousing fantasy/activities, when having sex, you like to feel that your parents would approve.



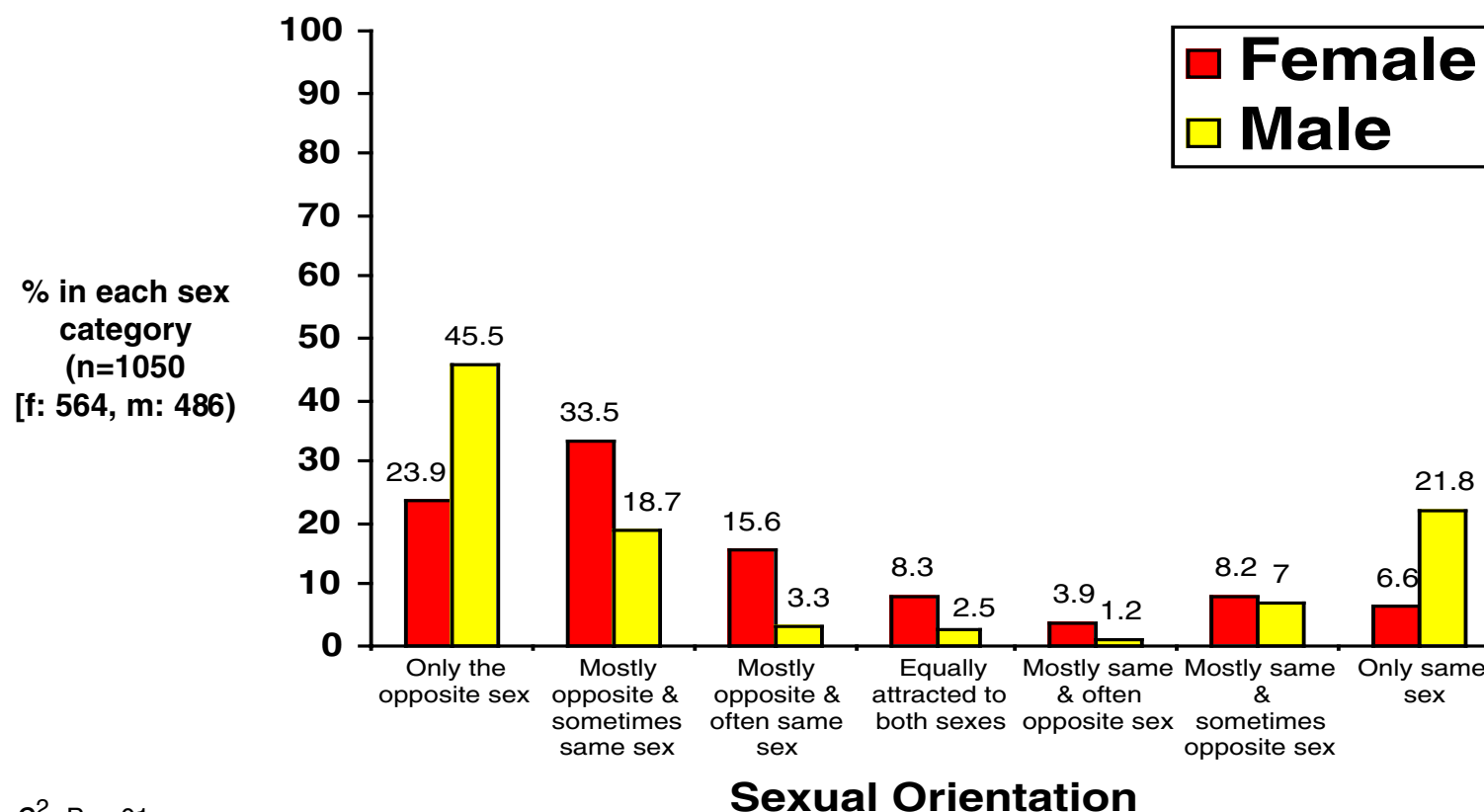
No statistical differences

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Sexual Demographics: Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation was measured using the 7-point Kinsey scale.

Fewer females placed themselves on the poles than did the males.

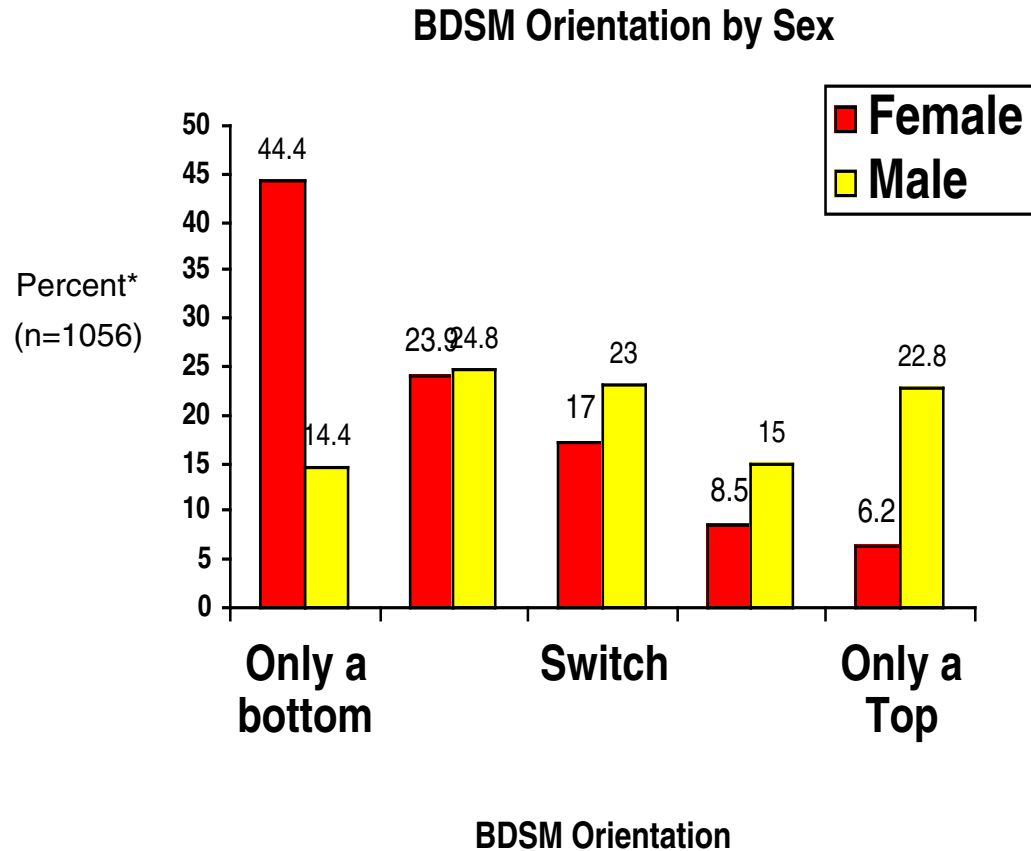


$\chi^2 P < .01$

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Sexual Demographics: BDSM Orientation

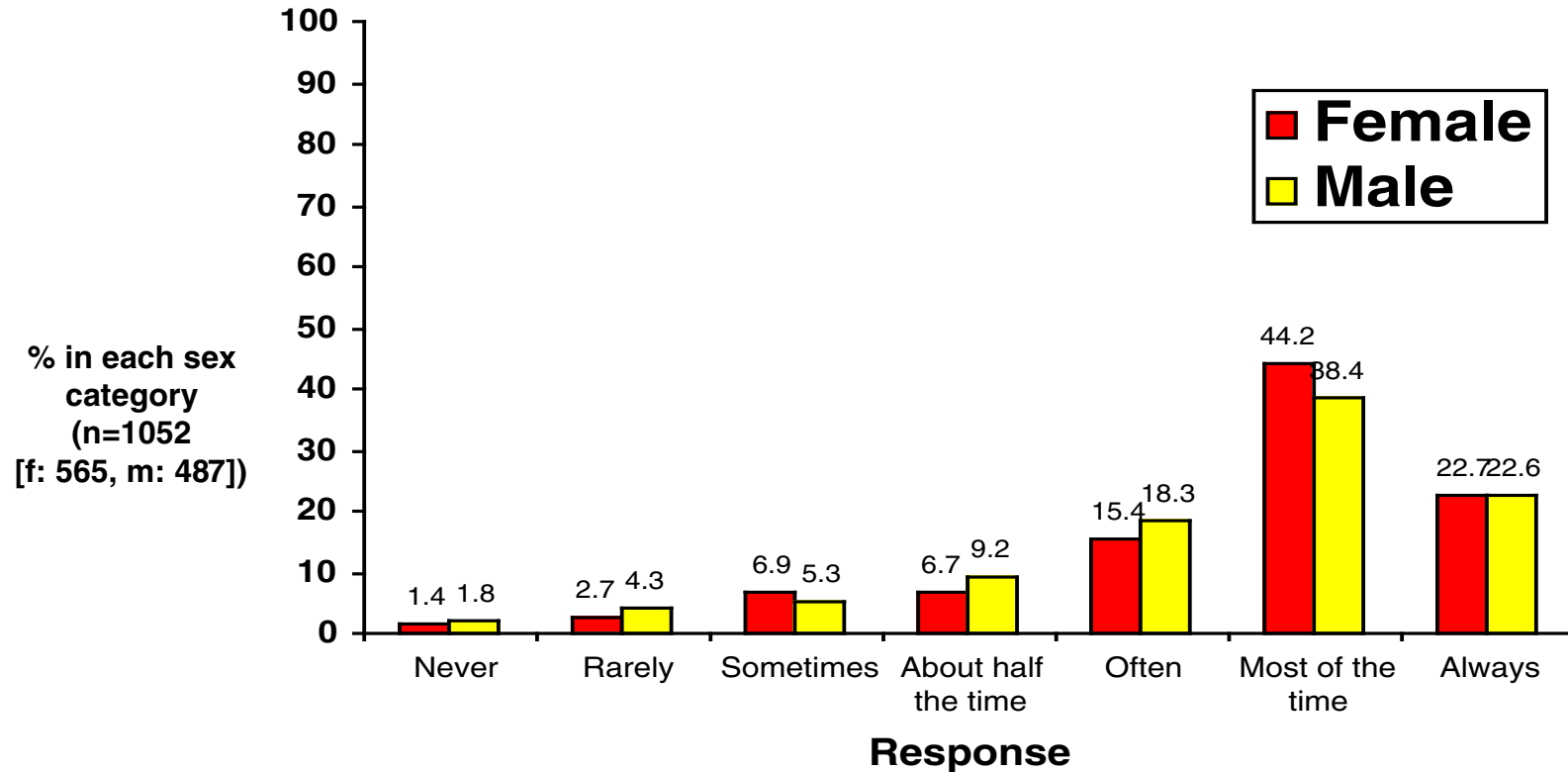
- Distribution of Sex and BDSM Orientation differs from previous samples of SM practitioners (e.g. Spengler 1977; Moser 1979; Breslow et al. 1986; Moser and Levitt 1987).
- This sample contains larger number and percentage of females, and high percentage of females with a submissive BDSM orientation.



* Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.
Sex difference significant at p=.000.

Sexual Demographics: Need for Orgasm During Sex

In general, how much do you feel the need to reach orgasm during sexual activity?

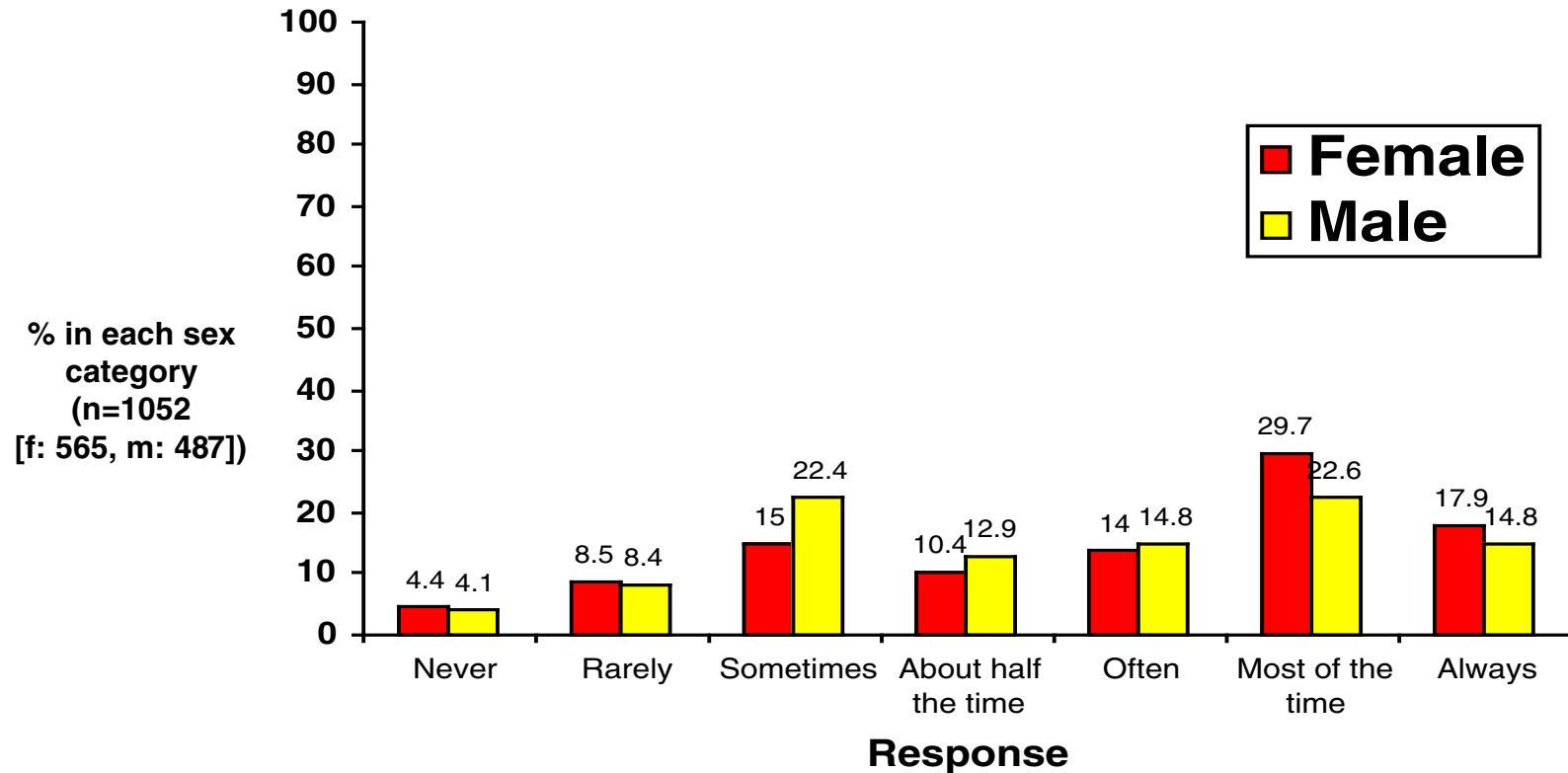


No statistical difference

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Sexual Demographics: Need for Orgasm During BDSM

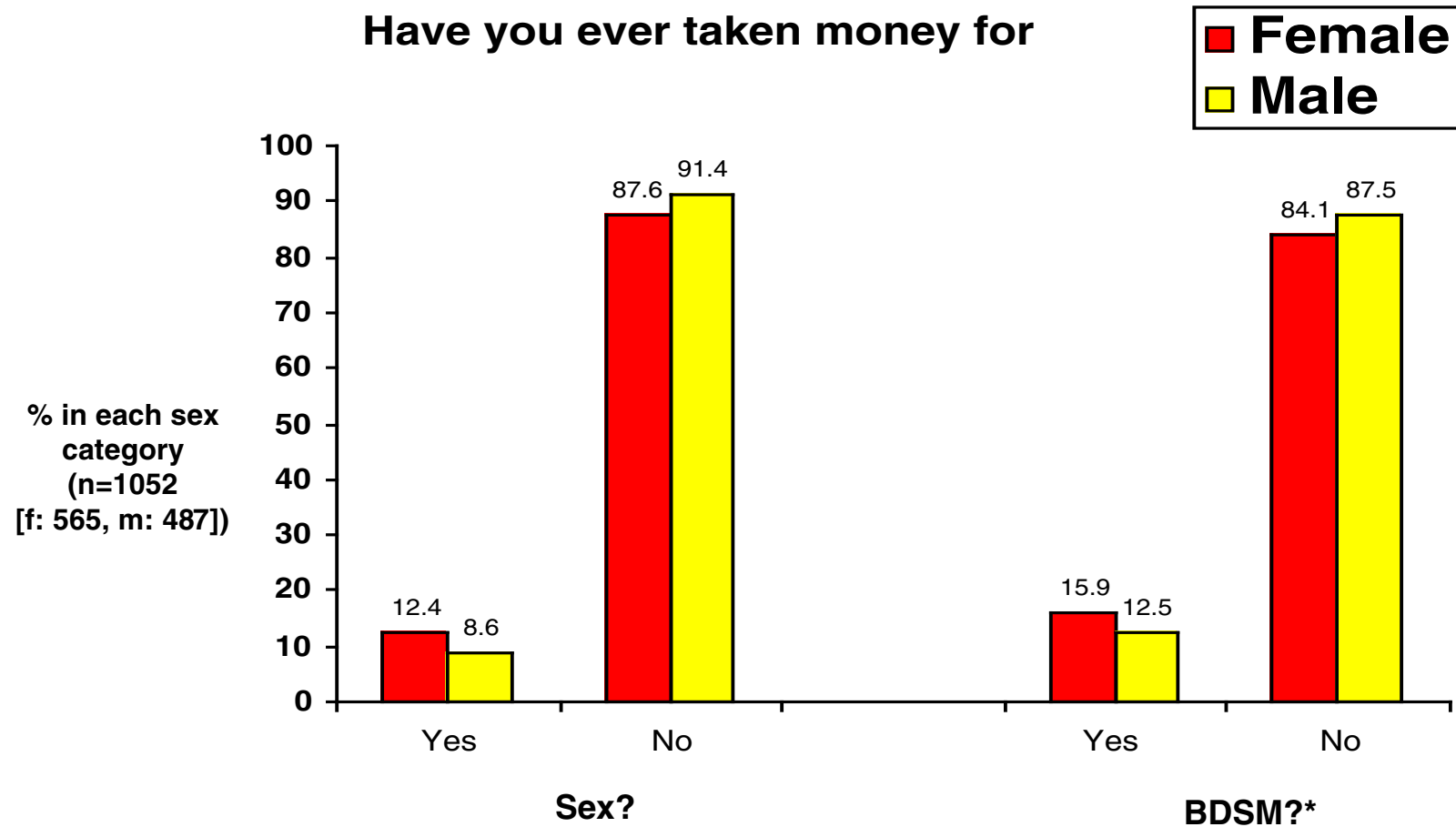
In general, how much do you feel the need to reach orgasm during BDSM activity?



$\chi^2 P < .05$

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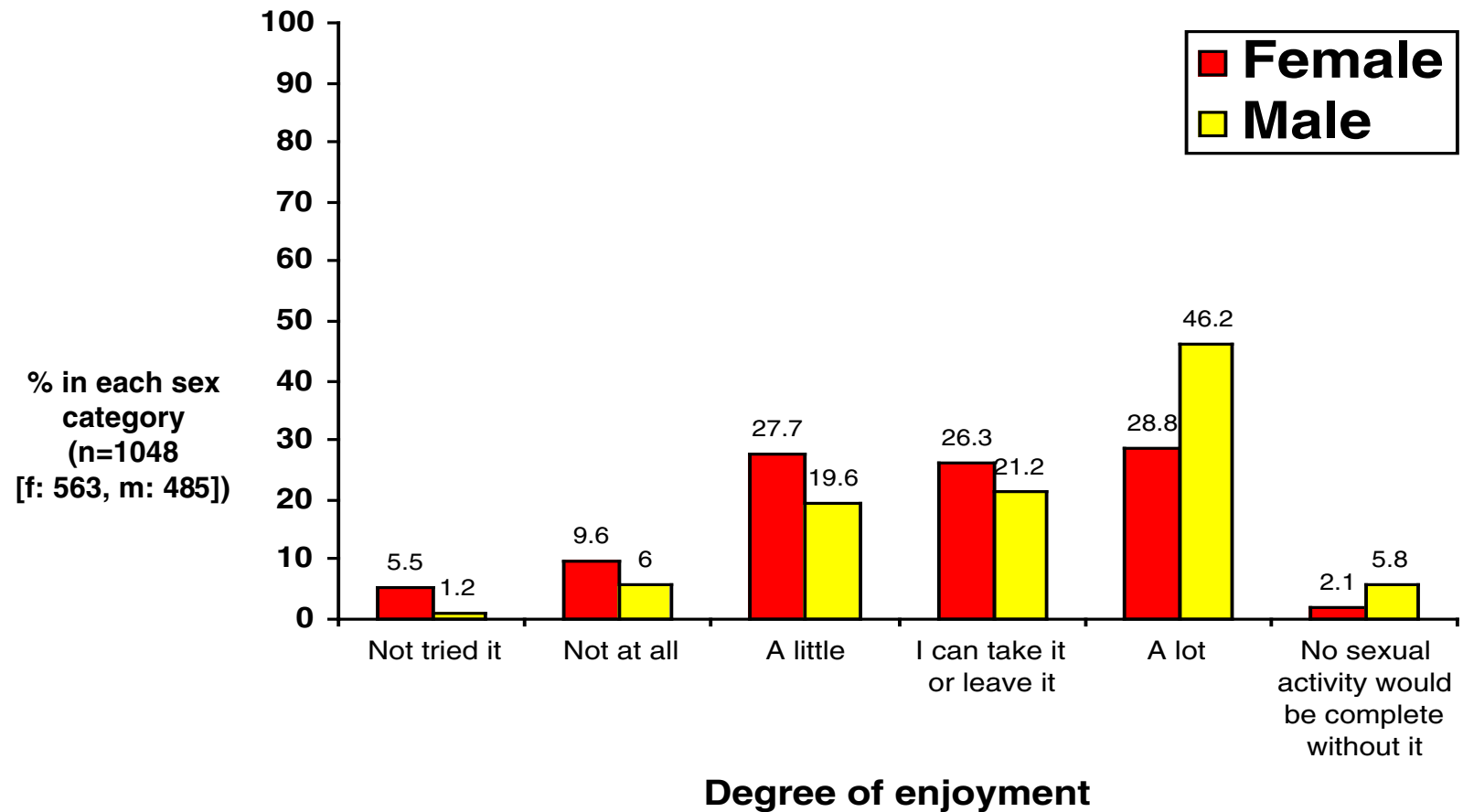
Sexual Demographics: Sex Work



* $\chi^2 P < .01$

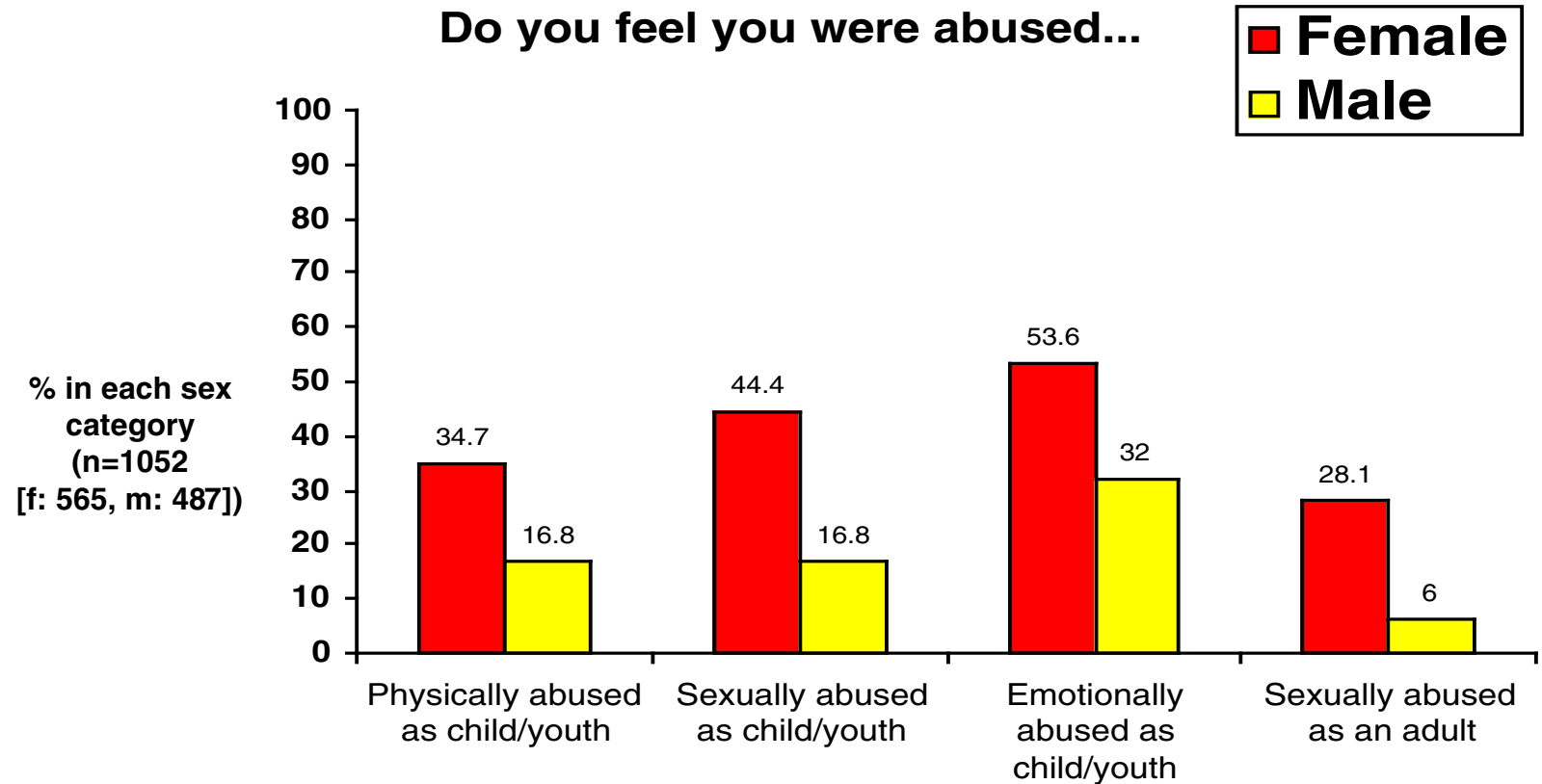
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Sexual Demographics: Enjoyment of Fetish Play



χ^2 $P < .01$

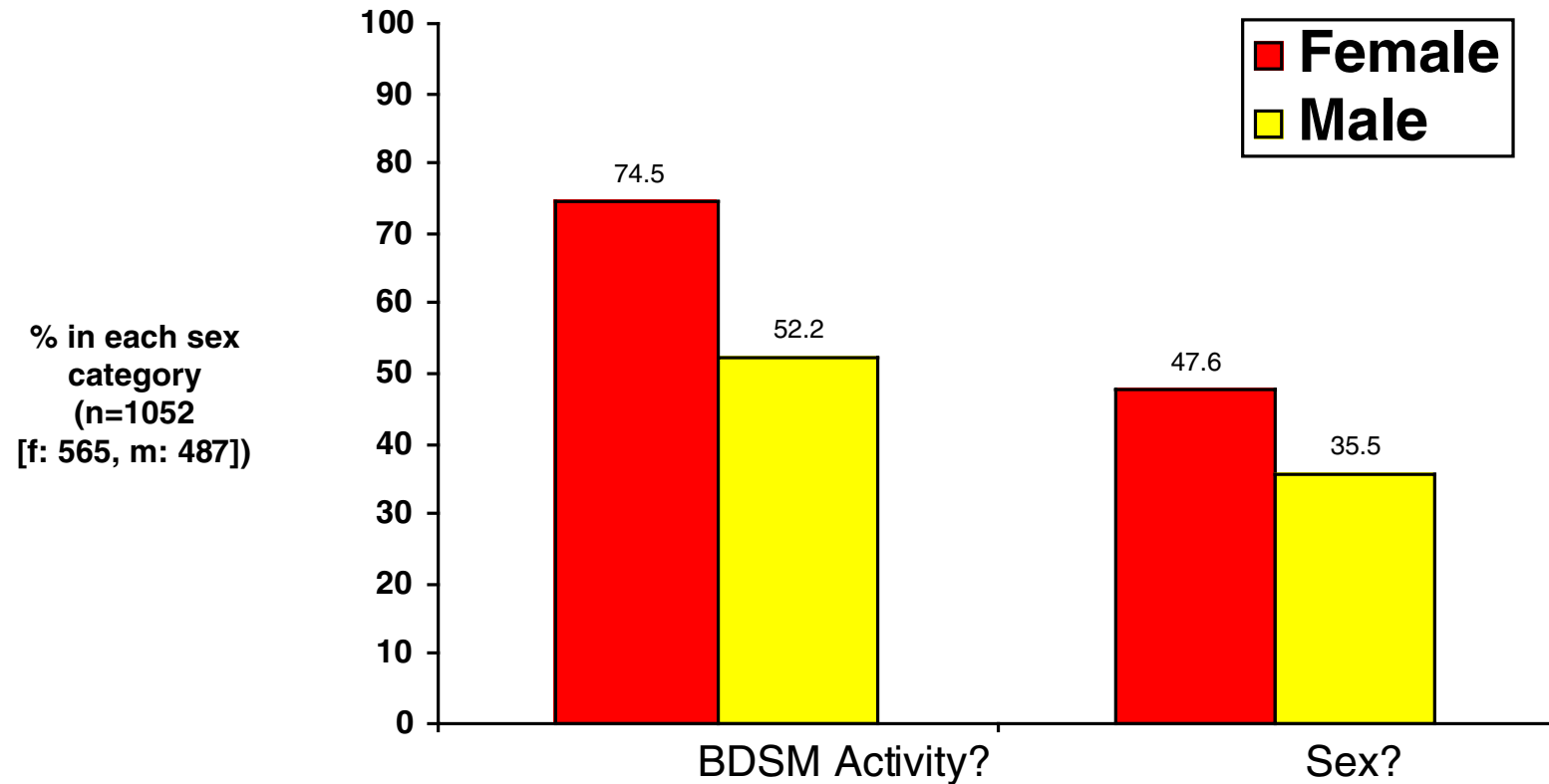
Demographics: Feelings of Abuse



χ^2 $P < .01$

Sexual Demographics: Sexual mentors

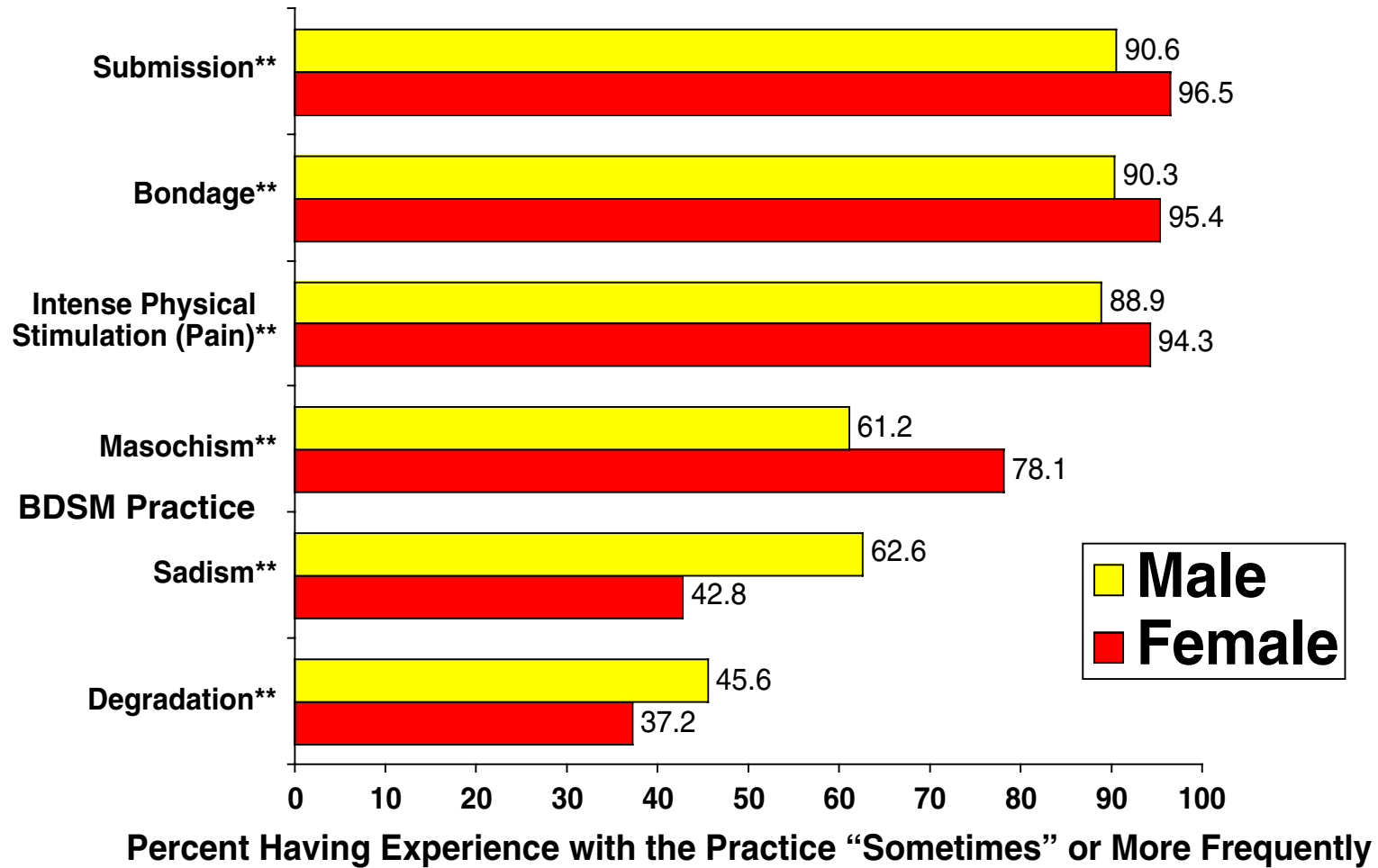
Have you had someone who was a teacher/mentor for:



χ^2 P < .01

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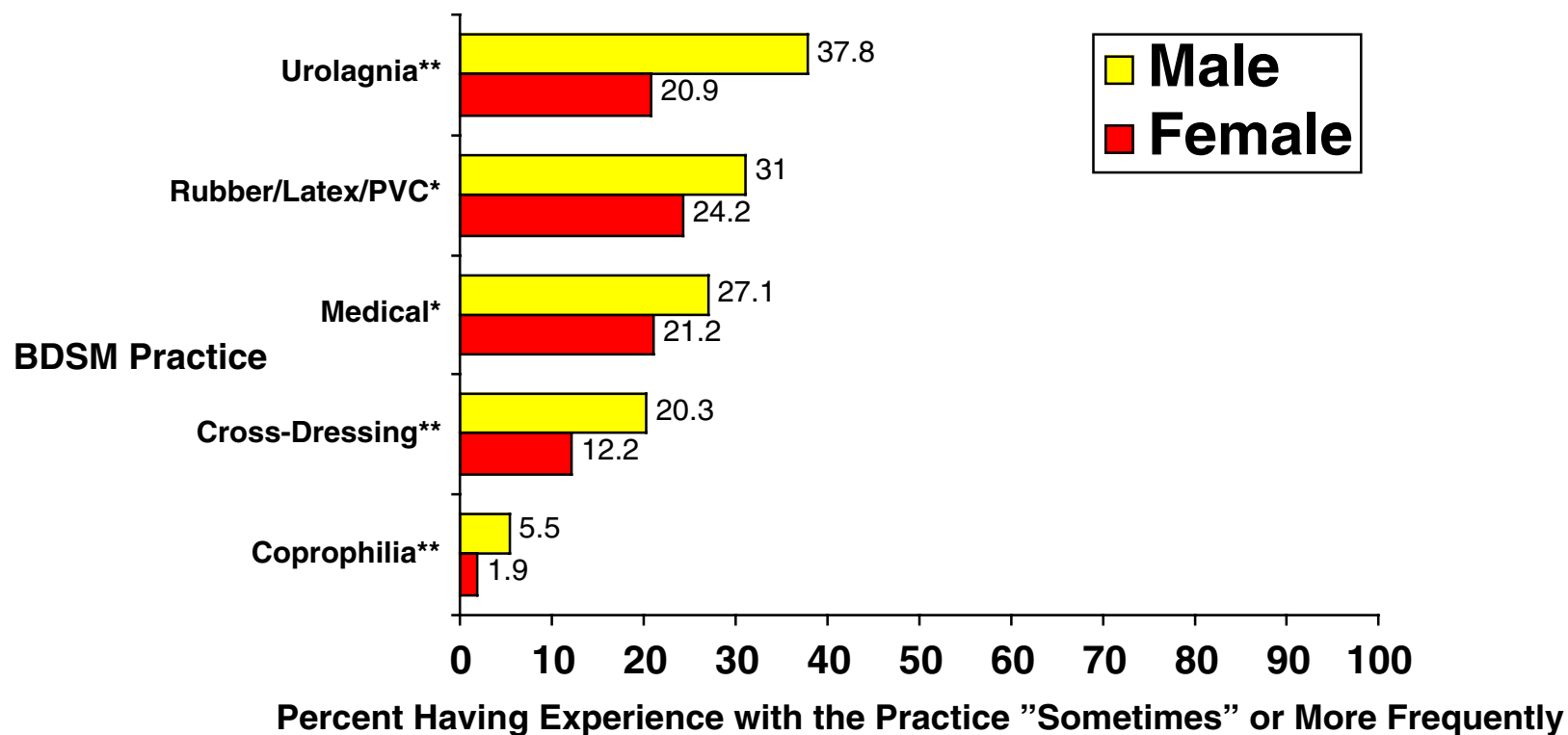
Demographics: BDSM Practices



χ^2 *P < .05 **P < .01 (n=10560)

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Demographics: BDSM Practices

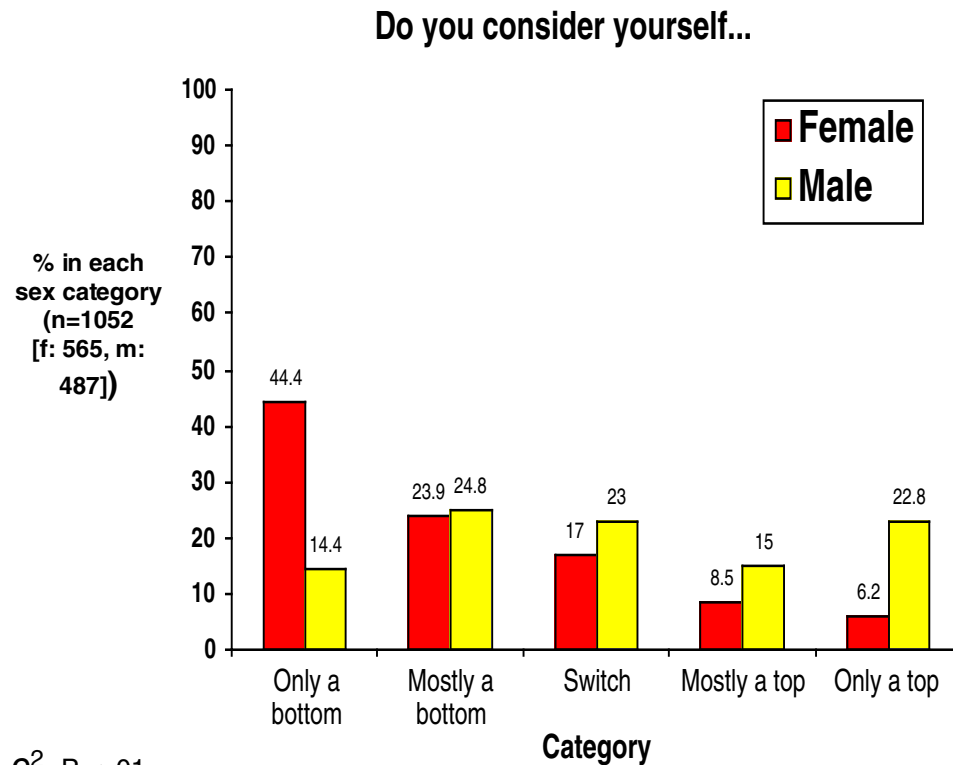


χ^2 *P < .05 **P < .01 (n=10560)

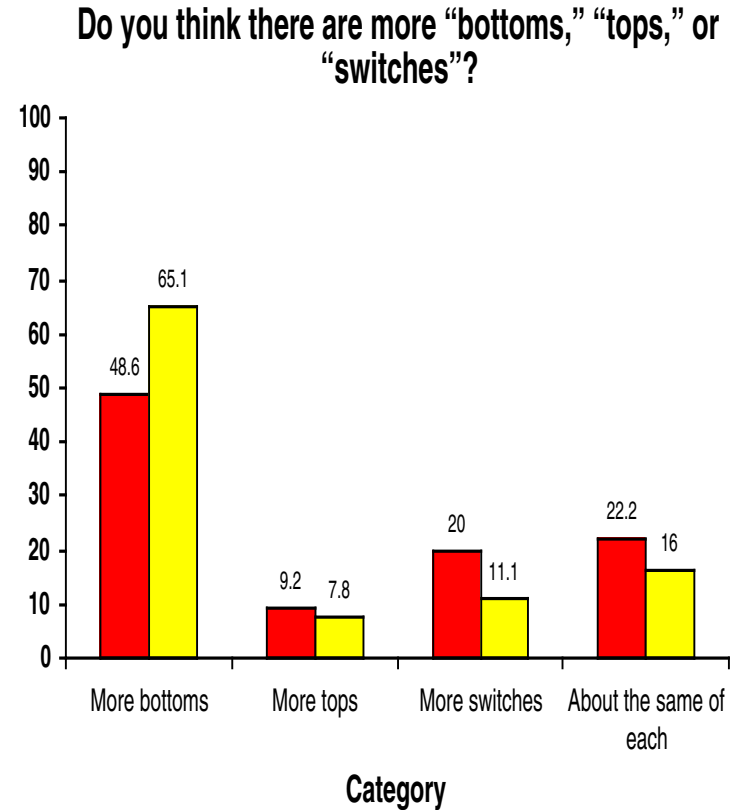
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Demographics: BDSM Orientation

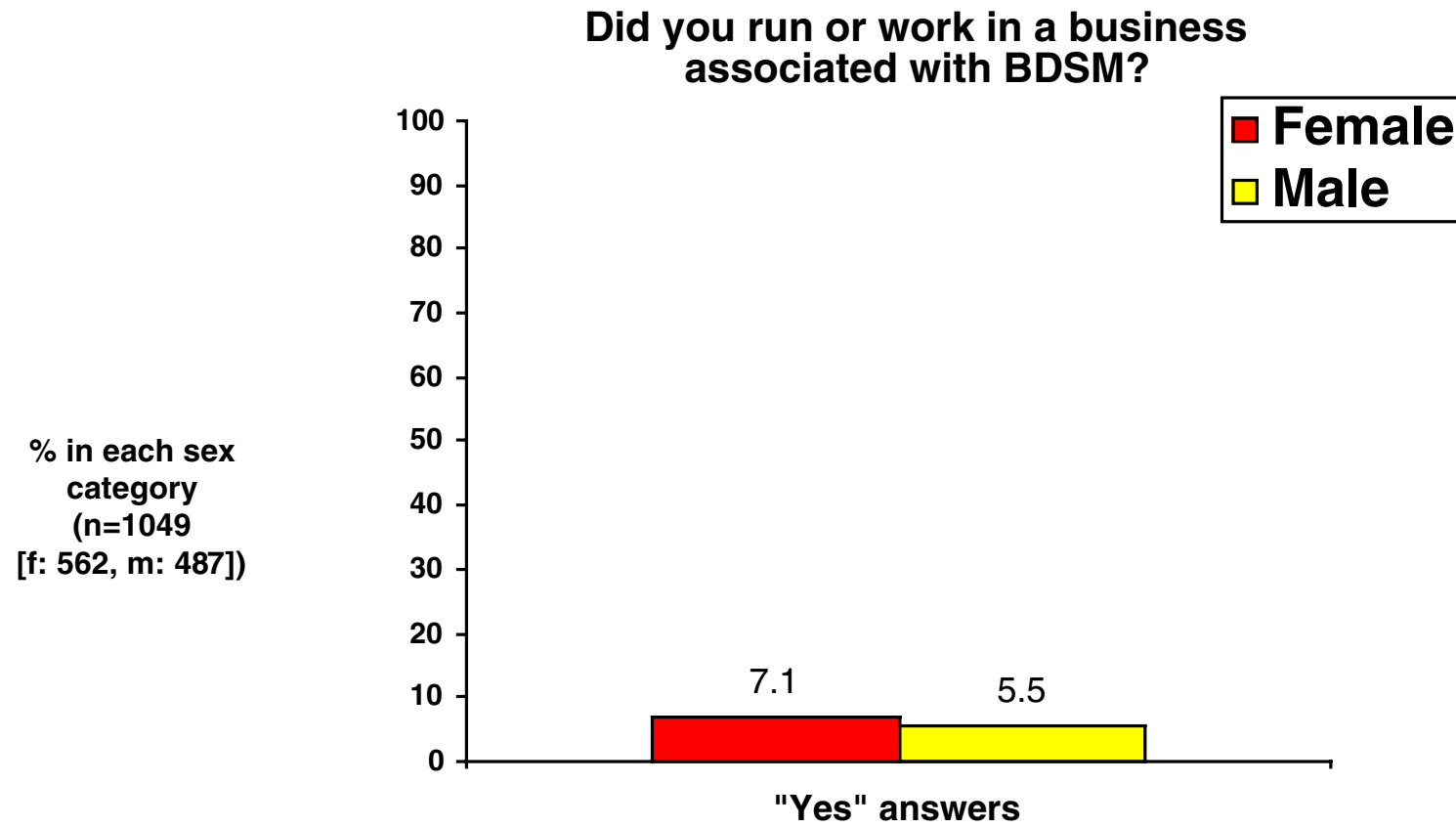
- Respondents' perceptions of the distribution of BDSM practices did not match the actual sample distribution.



$\chi^2 P < .01$



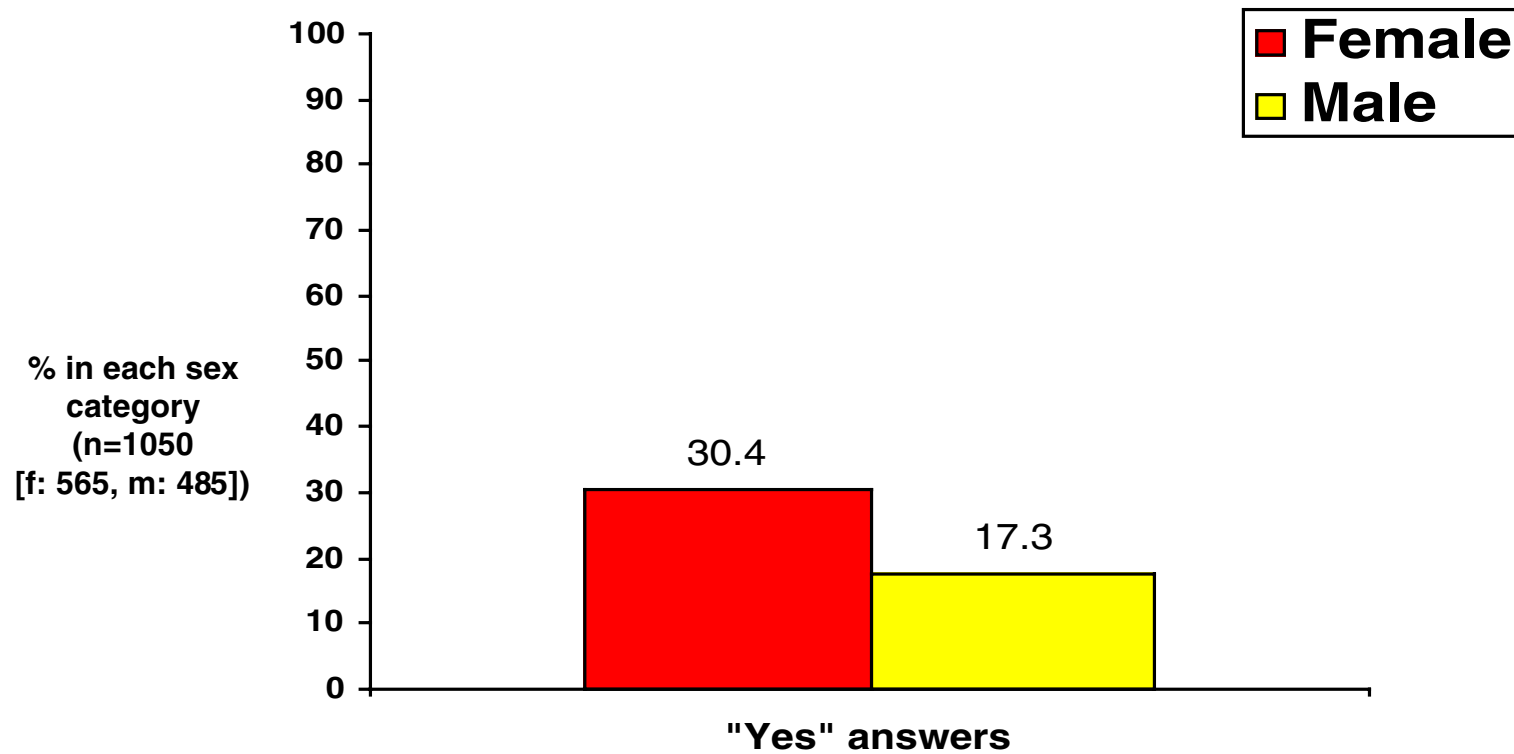
Demographics: Association with BDSM businesses



No statistical differences

Demographics: Broken Home

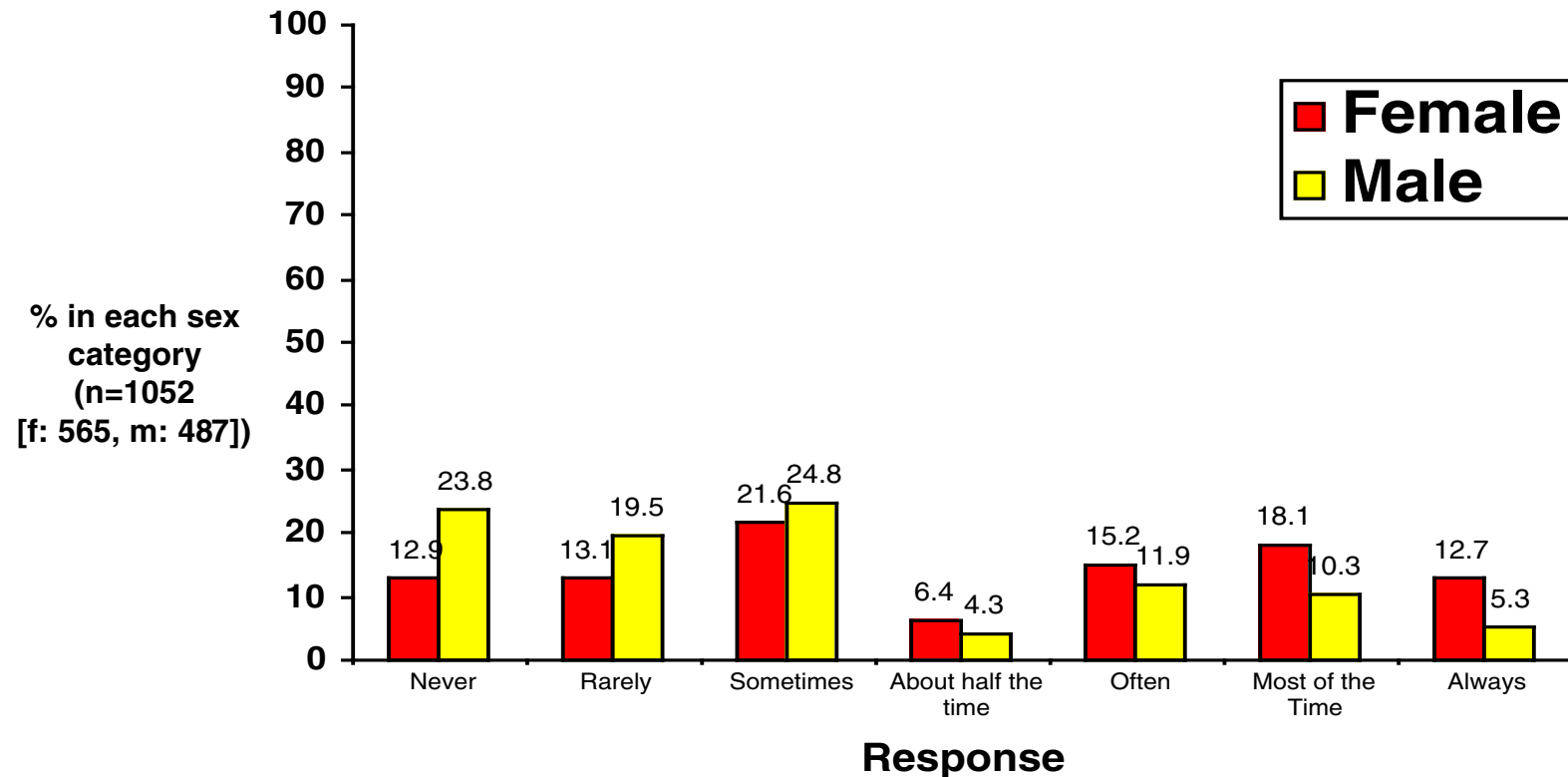
Do you feel you came from a broken home?



C^2 $P < .01$

Demographics: Sadism of Partner

Concerning your most sexually arousing fantasy/activity, do you like your partner to feel sadistic?

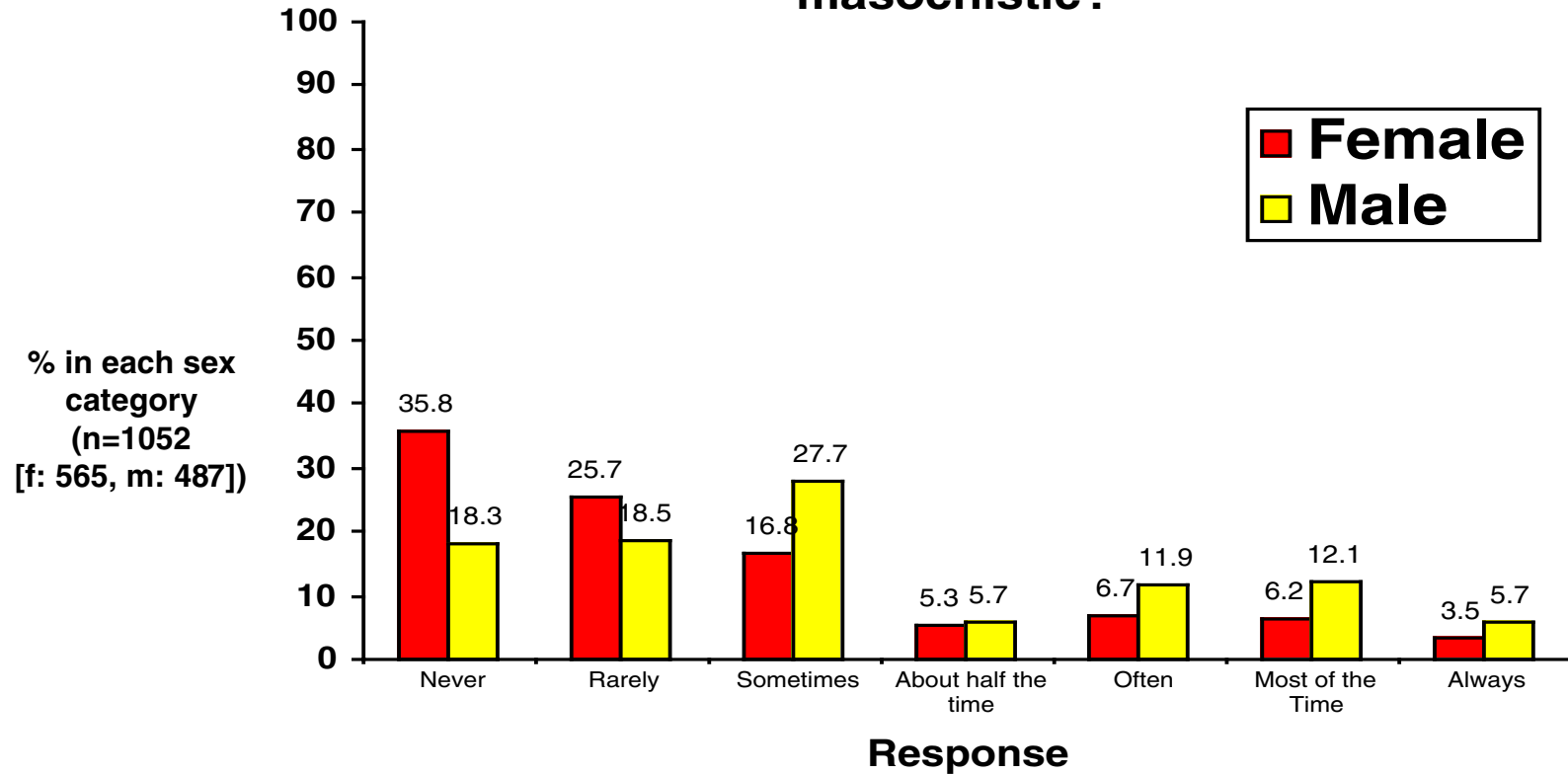


$\chi^2 P < .01$

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Demographics: Masochism of Partner

Concerning your most sexually arousing fantasy/activities, do you like your partner to feel masochistic?

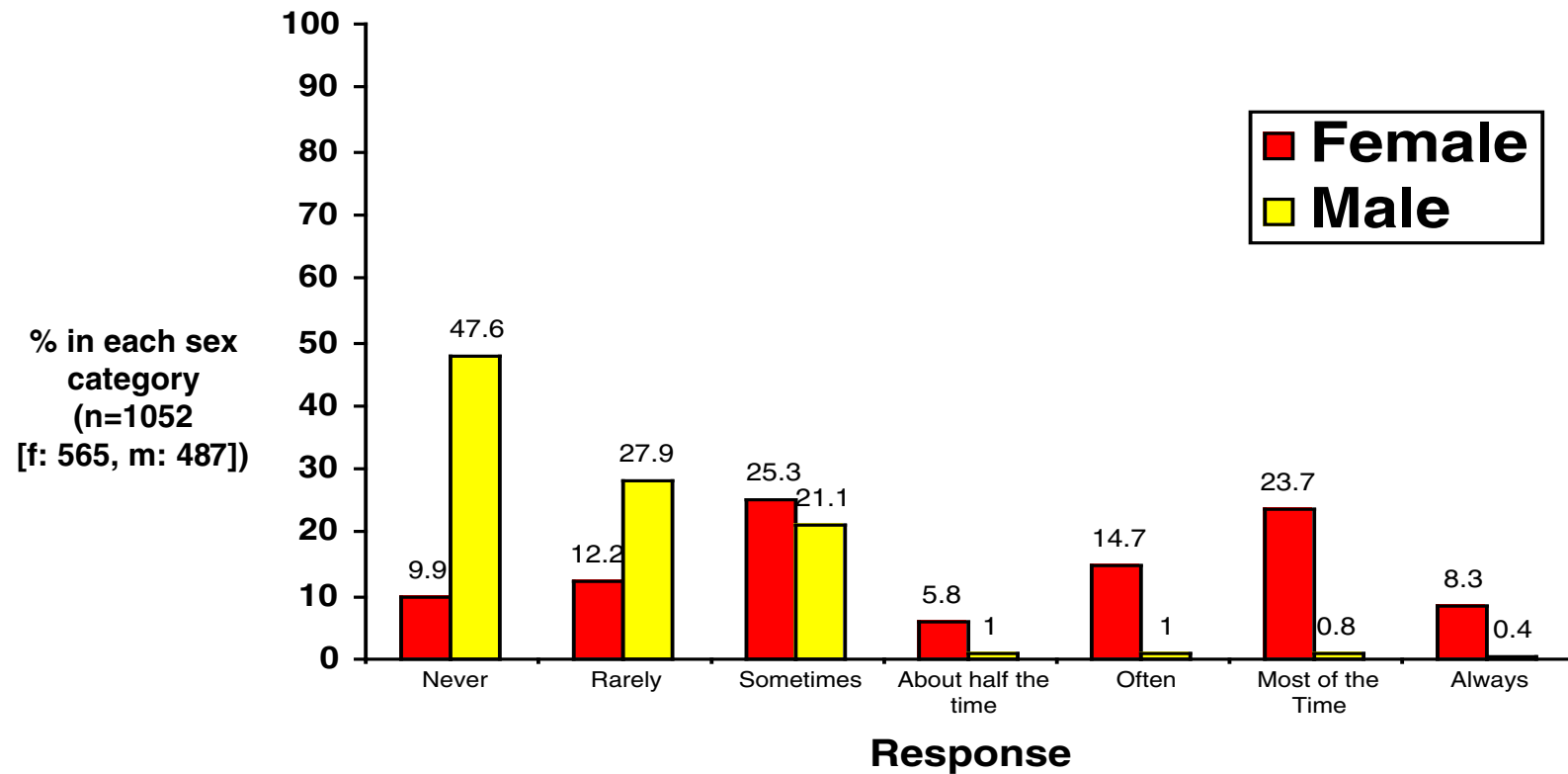


χ^2 P < .01

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Demographics: Use of Vibrators

When masturbating, how often do you use vibrators?

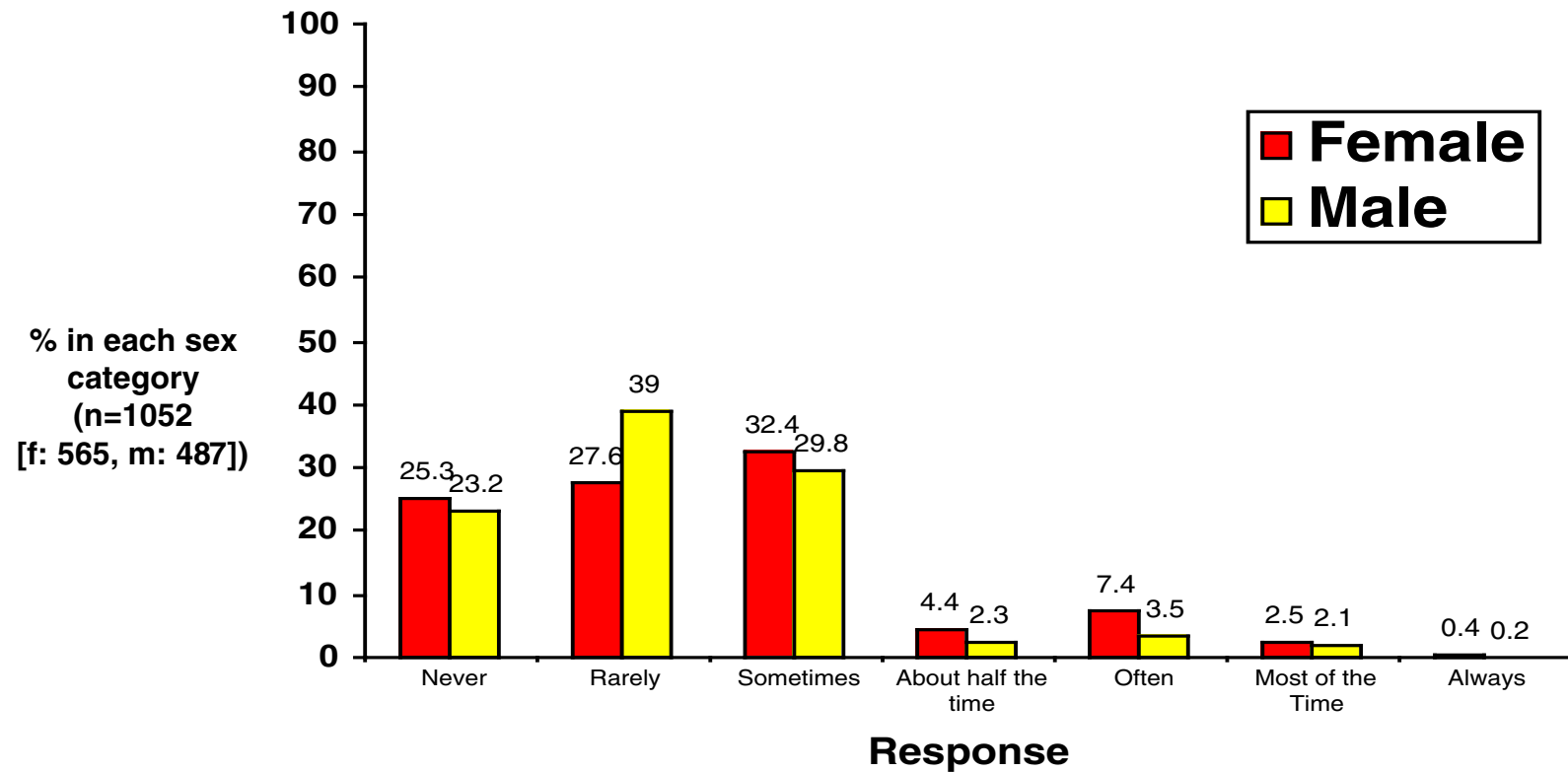


χ^2 $P < .01$

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Demographics: Use of Sex Books

When masturbating, how often do you use sex books?

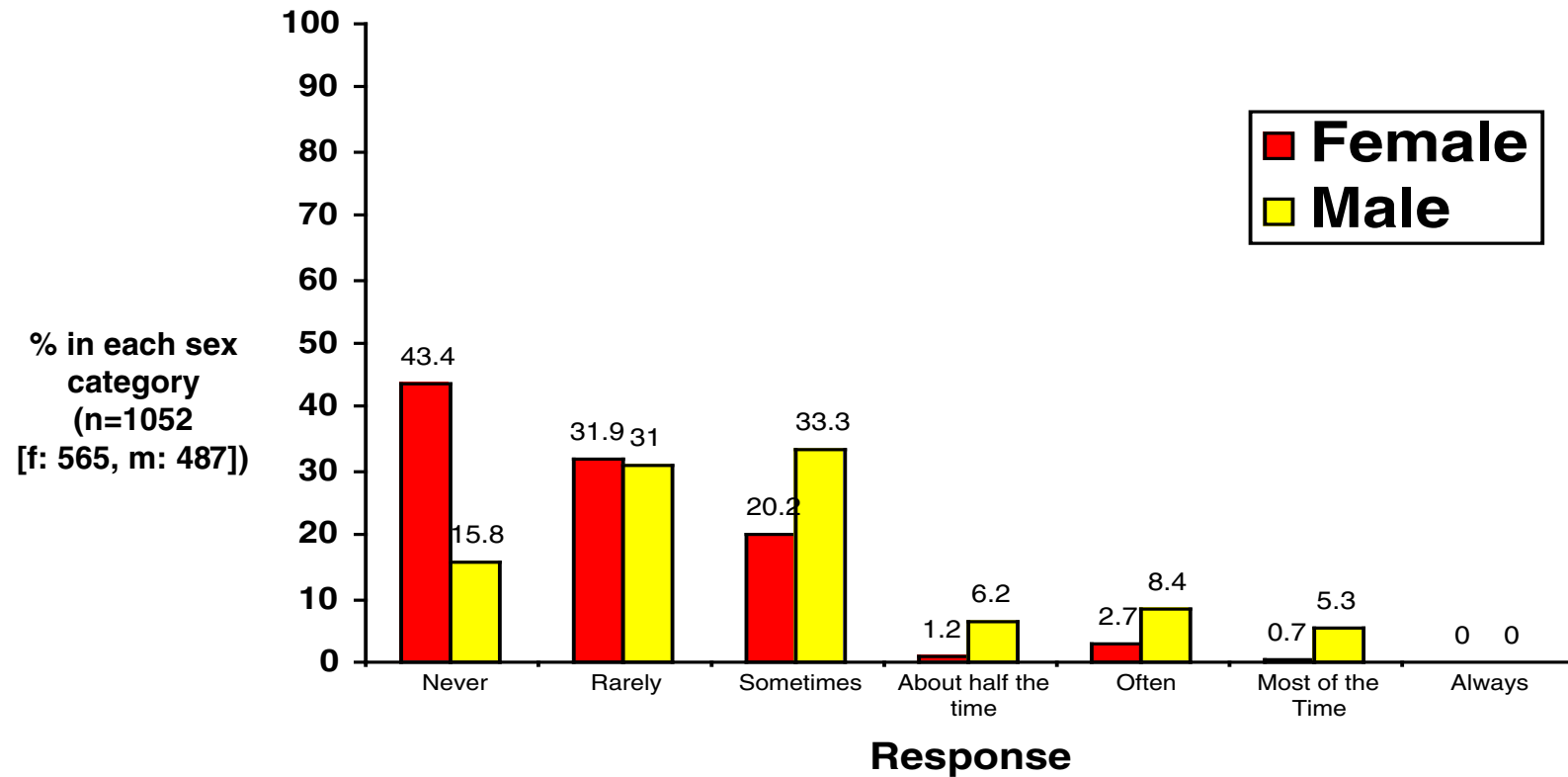


C^2 $P < .01$

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Demographics: Use of Sex Magazines

When masturbating, how often do you use sex magazines?

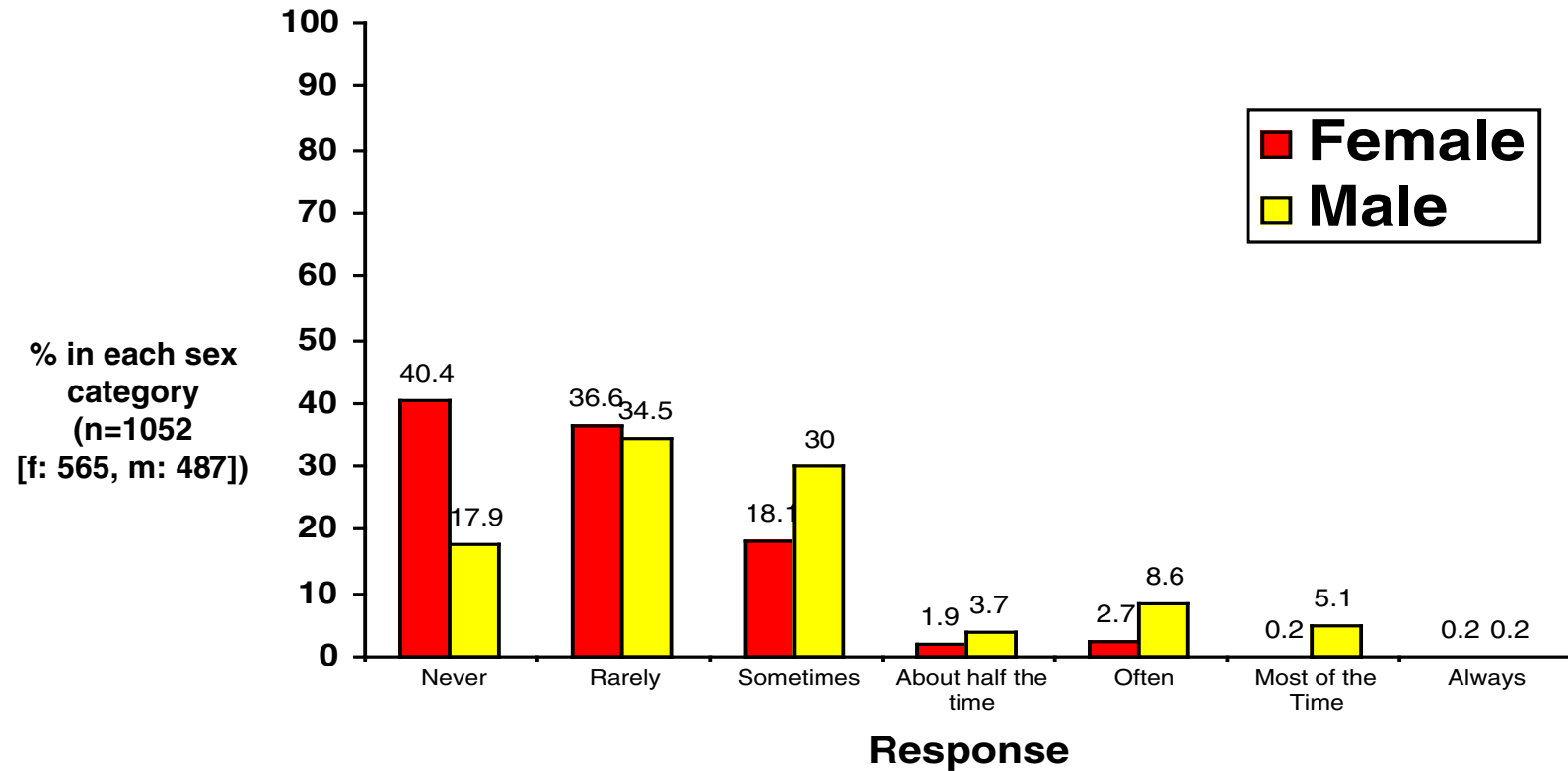


χ^2 $P < .01$

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Demographics: Use of Sex Videos

When masturbating, how often do you use sex videos?

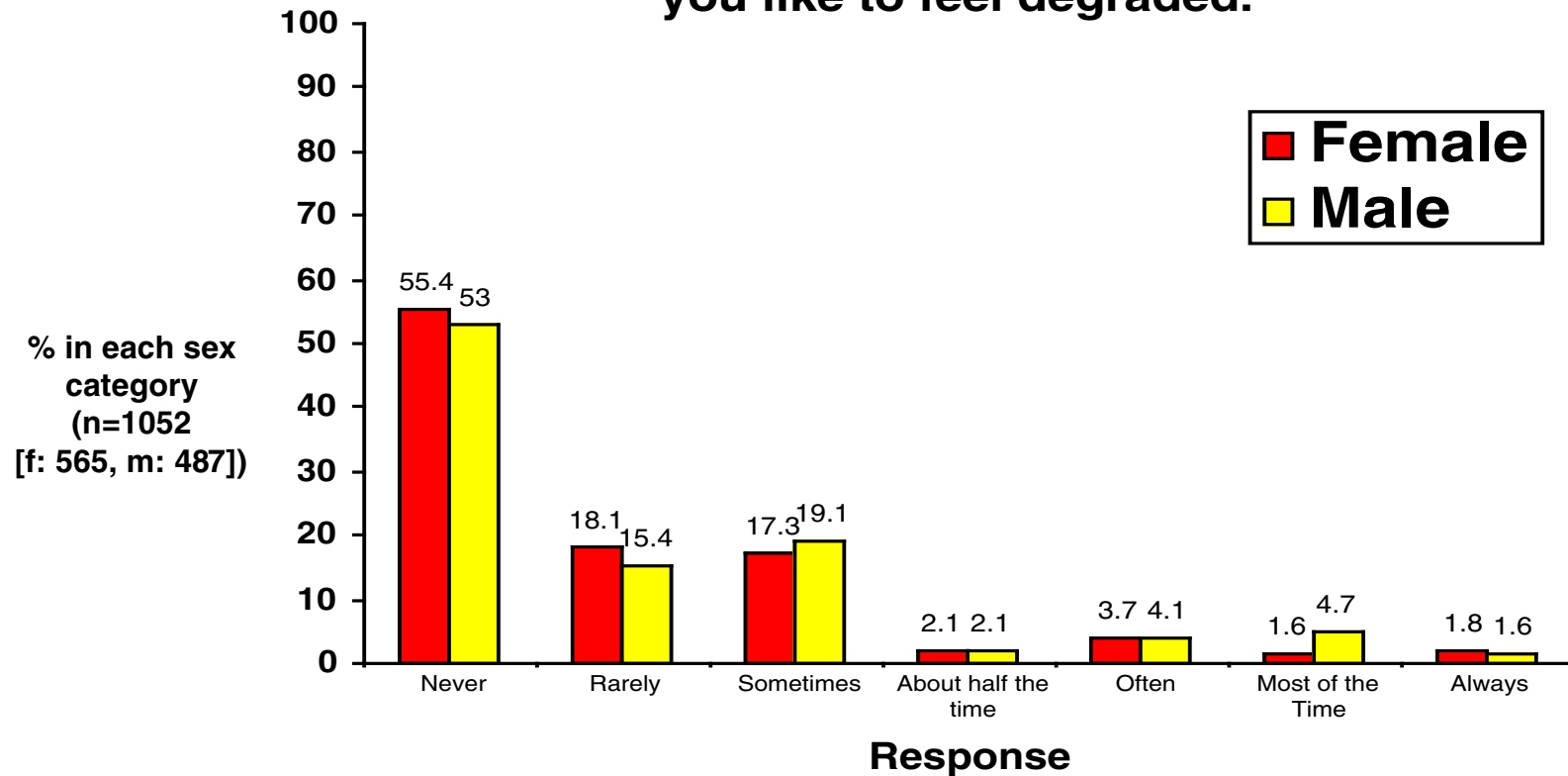


χ^2 $P < .01$

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Demographics: Feeling of Degradation

Concerning your most sexually arousing fantasy/activities, when having sex, you like to feel degraded.

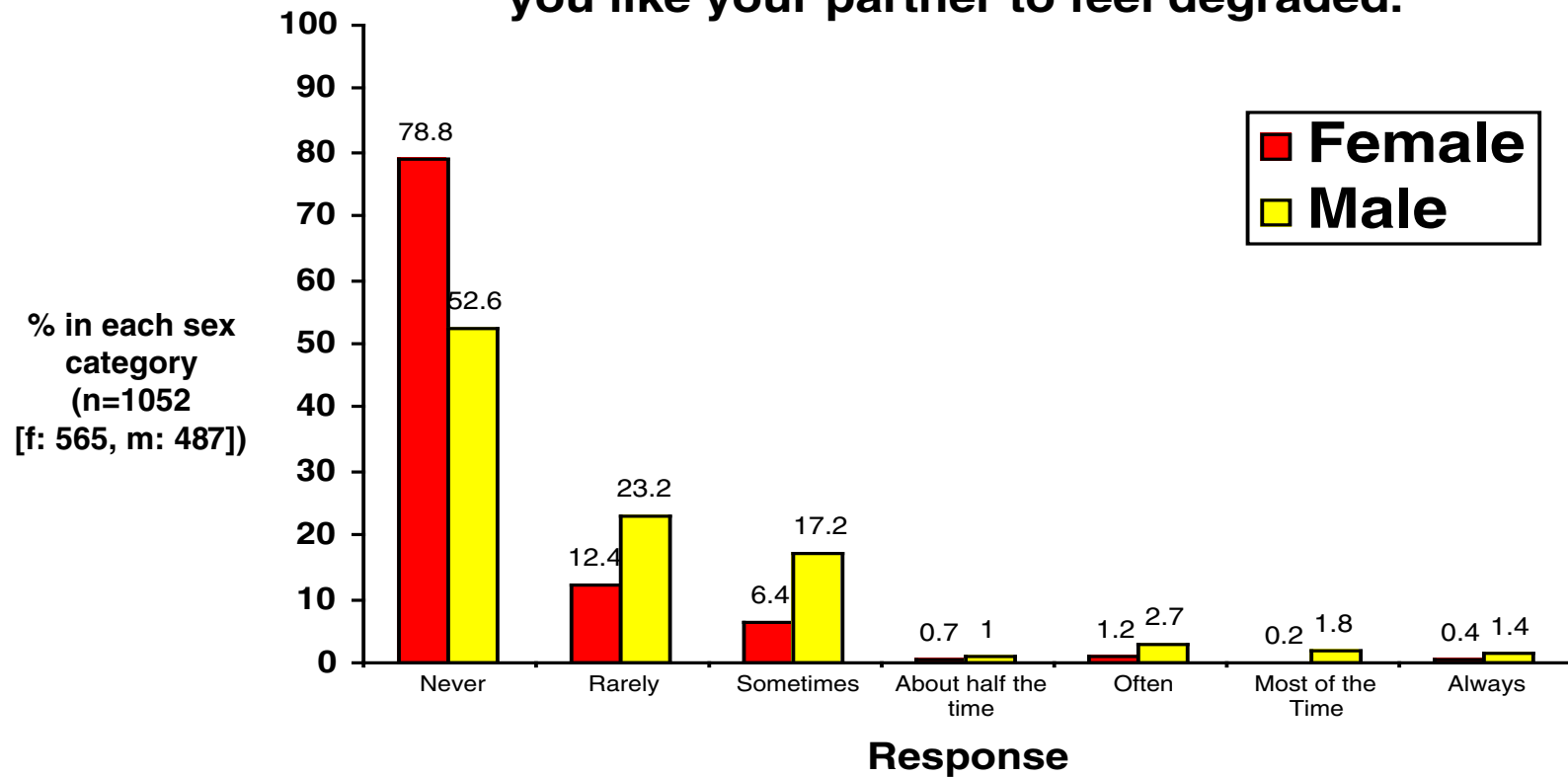


No statistical differences

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Demographics: Degradation of Partner

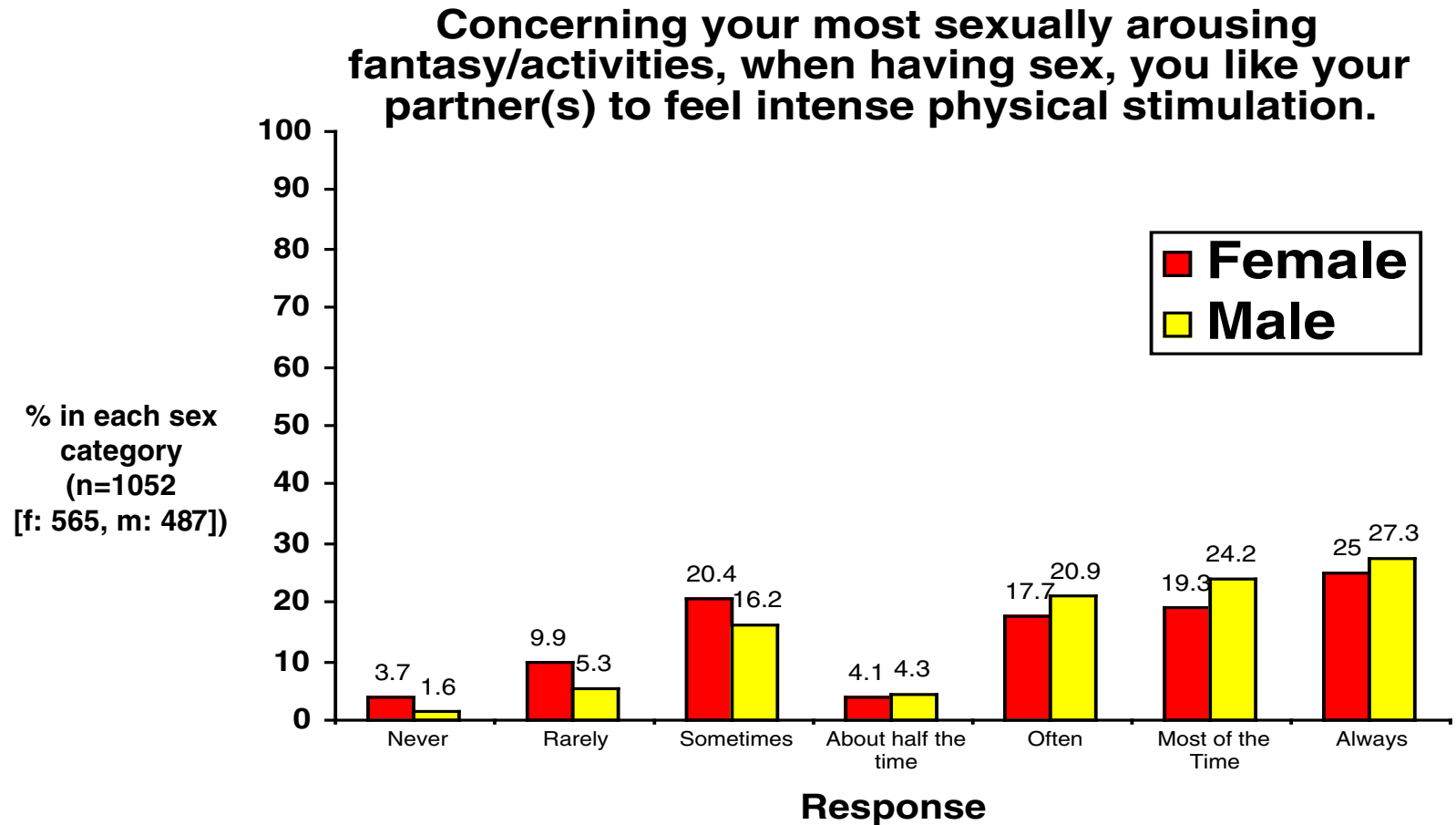
Concerning your most sexually arousing fantasy/activities, when having sex, you like your partner to feel degraded.



C^2 $P < .01$

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Demographics: Physical Stimulation of Partner

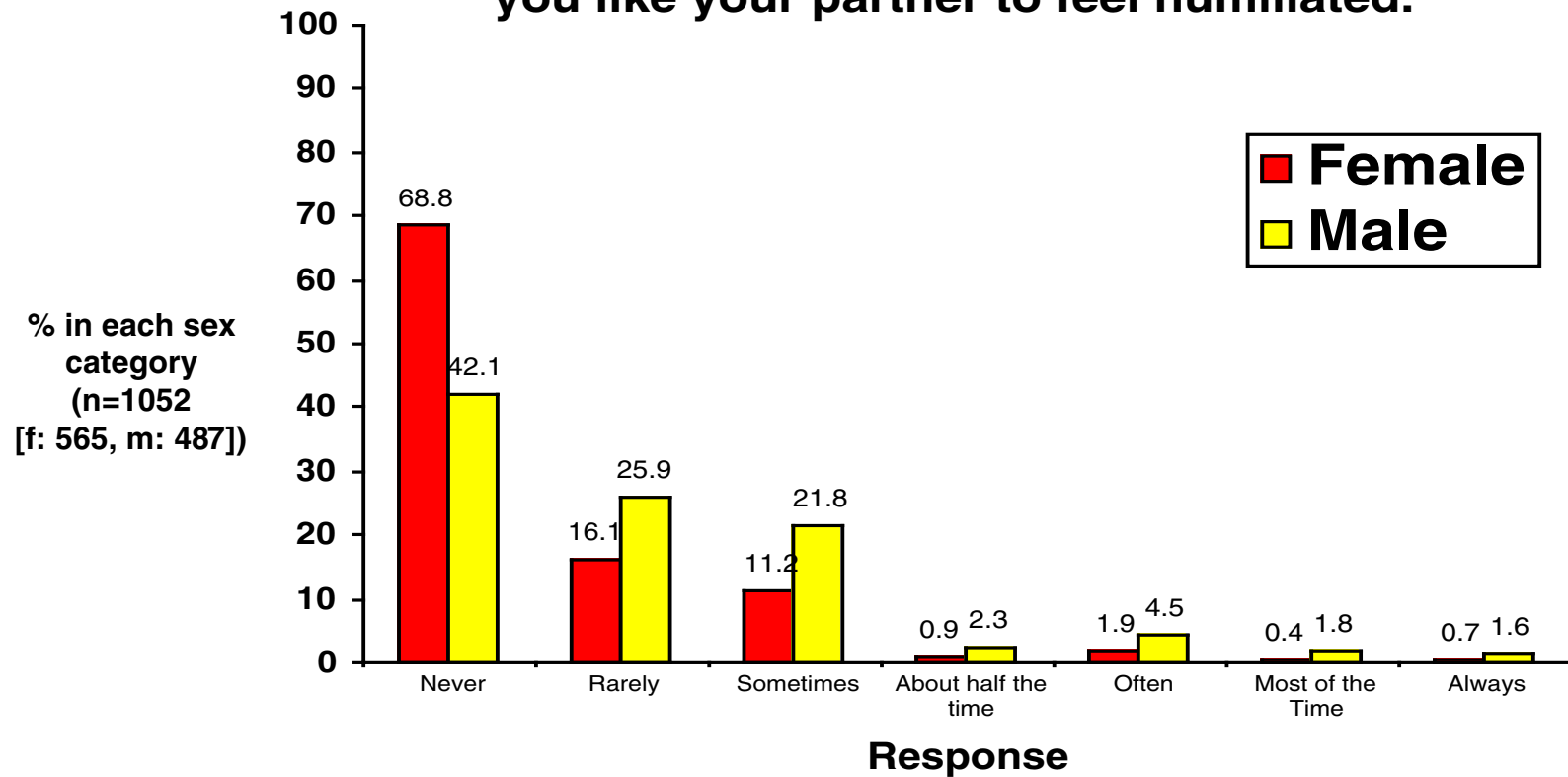


$\chi^2 P < .01$

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Demographics: Humiliation of Partner

Concerning your most sexually arousing fantasy/activities, when having sex, you like your partner to feel humiliated.

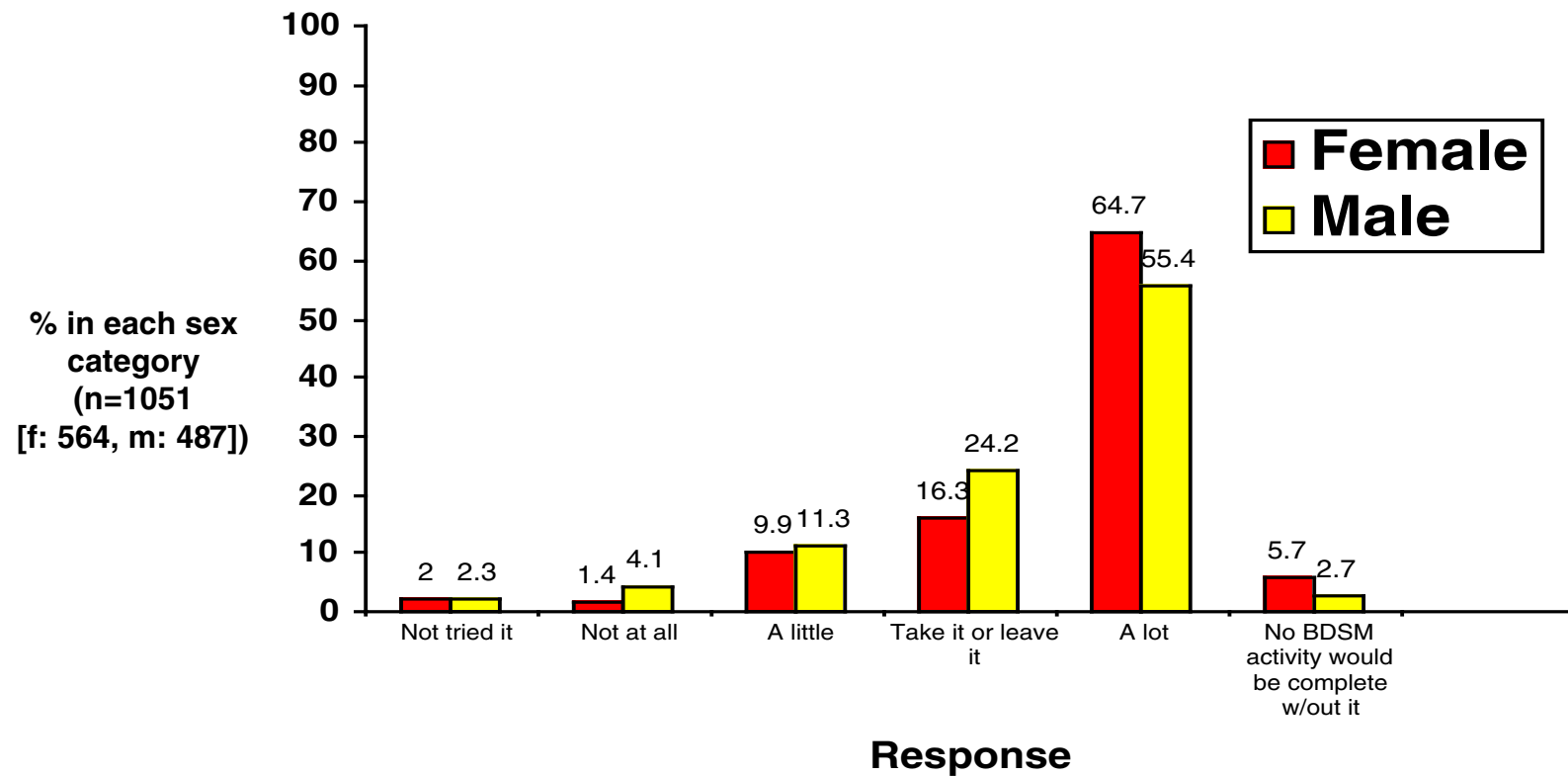


$\chi^2 P < .01$

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Demographics: Masturbation by Partner

Generally, how much do you like masturbation by your partner(s).

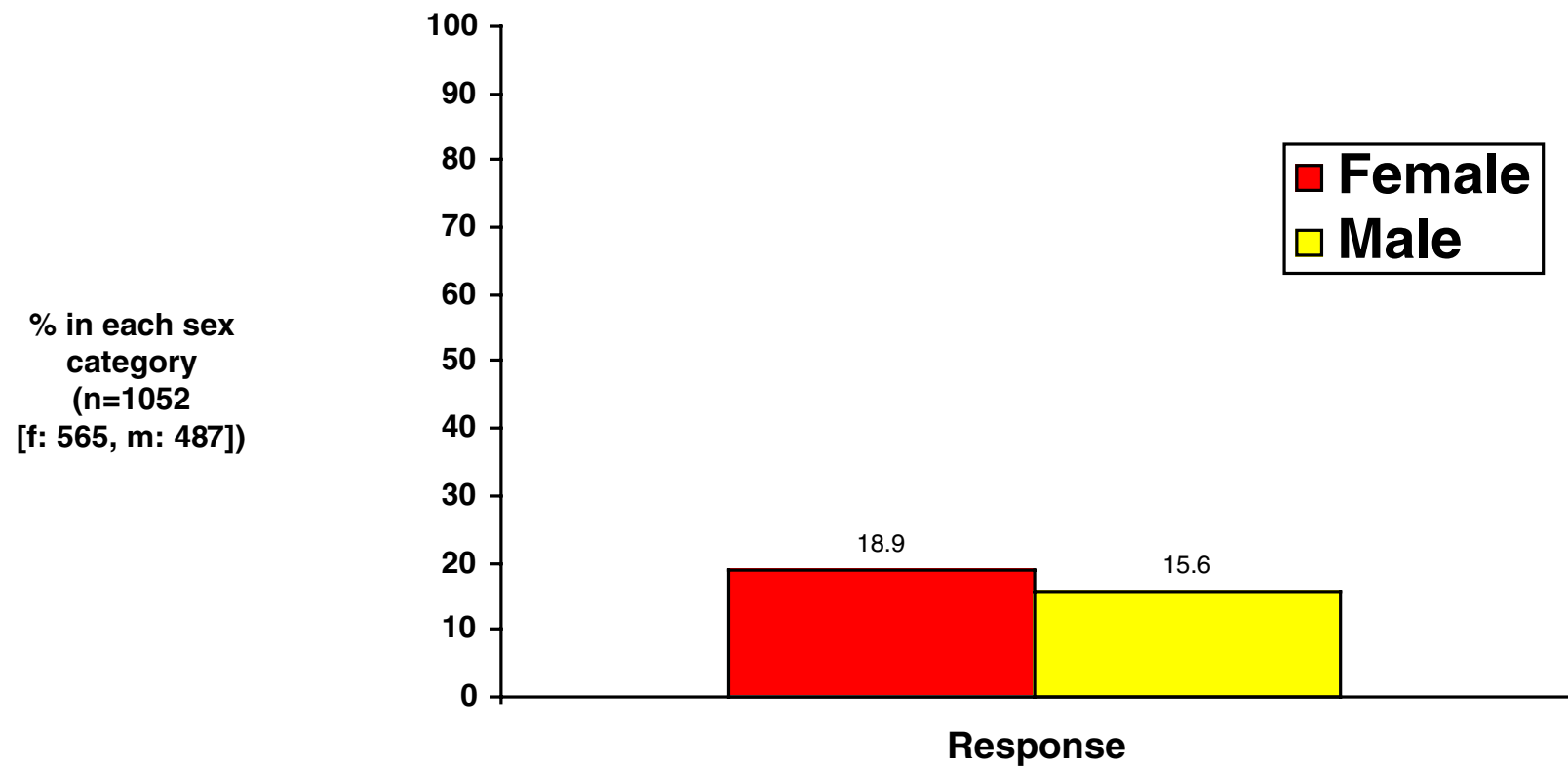


C^2 $P < .01$

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Demographics: Handicaps

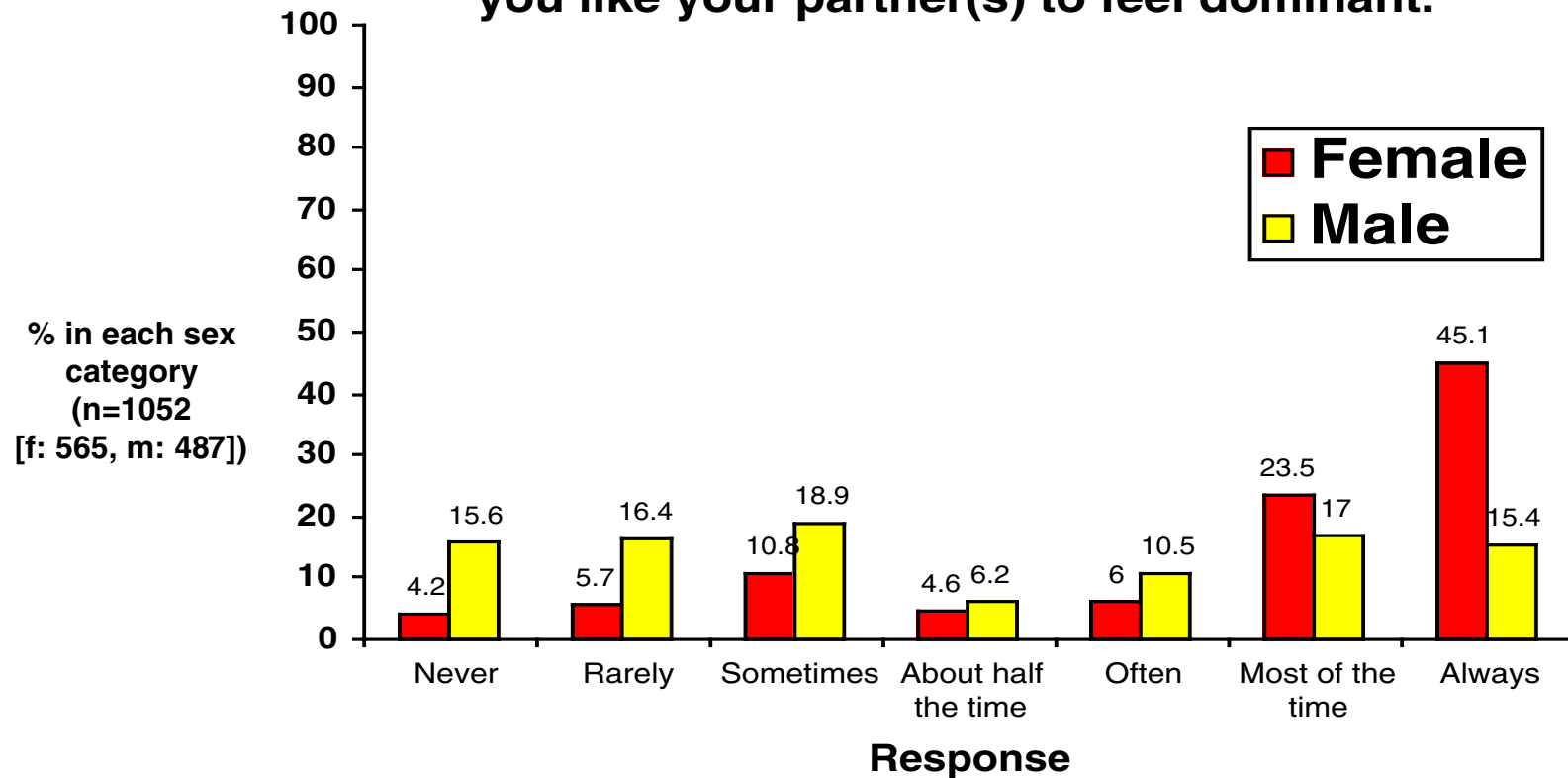
Do you have any handicaps?



C^2 $P < .01$

Demographics: Partner's Feeling of Domination

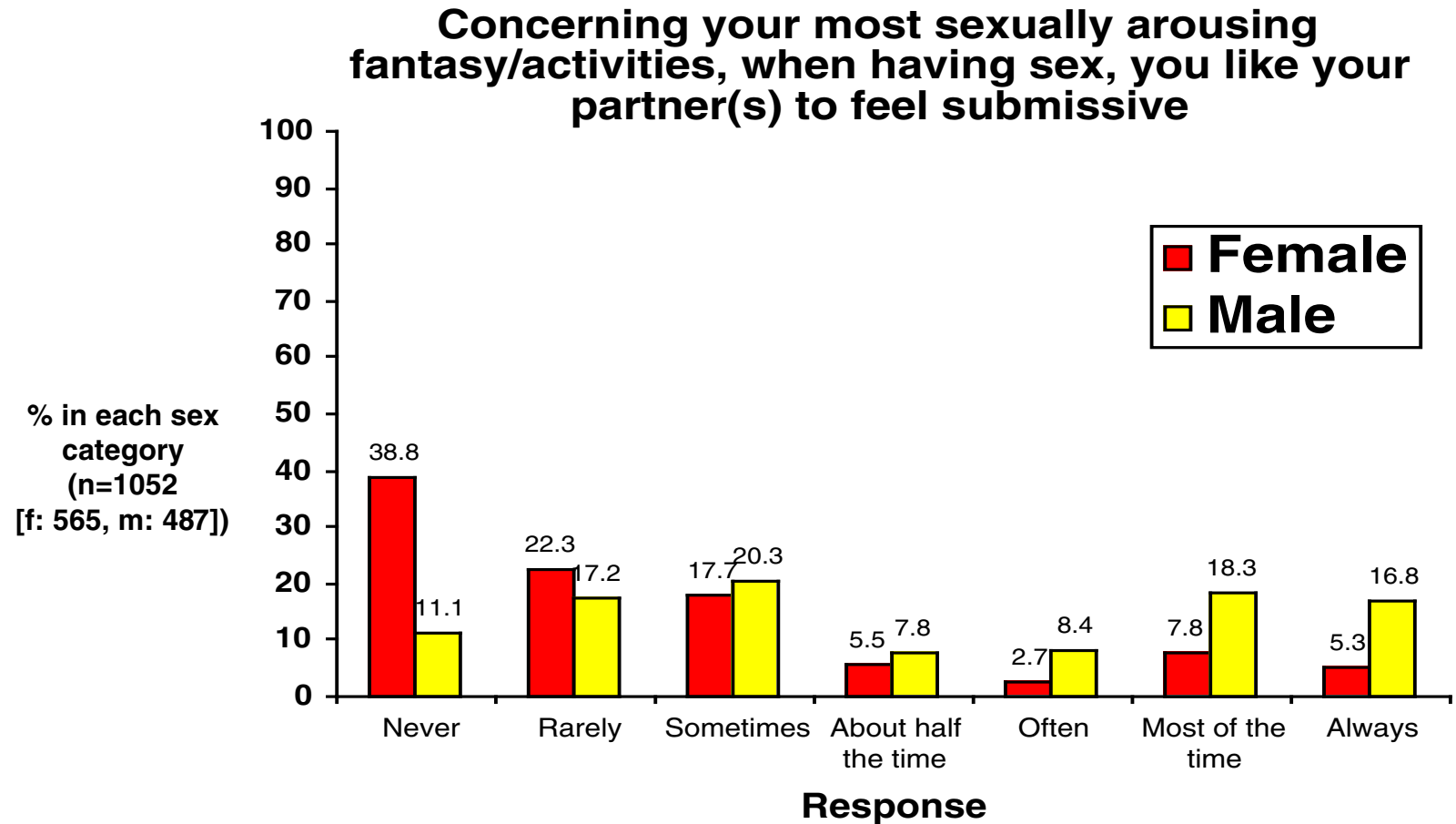
Concerning your most sexually arousing fantasy/activities, when having sex, you like your partner(s) to feel dominant.



χ^2 $P < .01$

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Demographics: Partner's Feeling of Submission

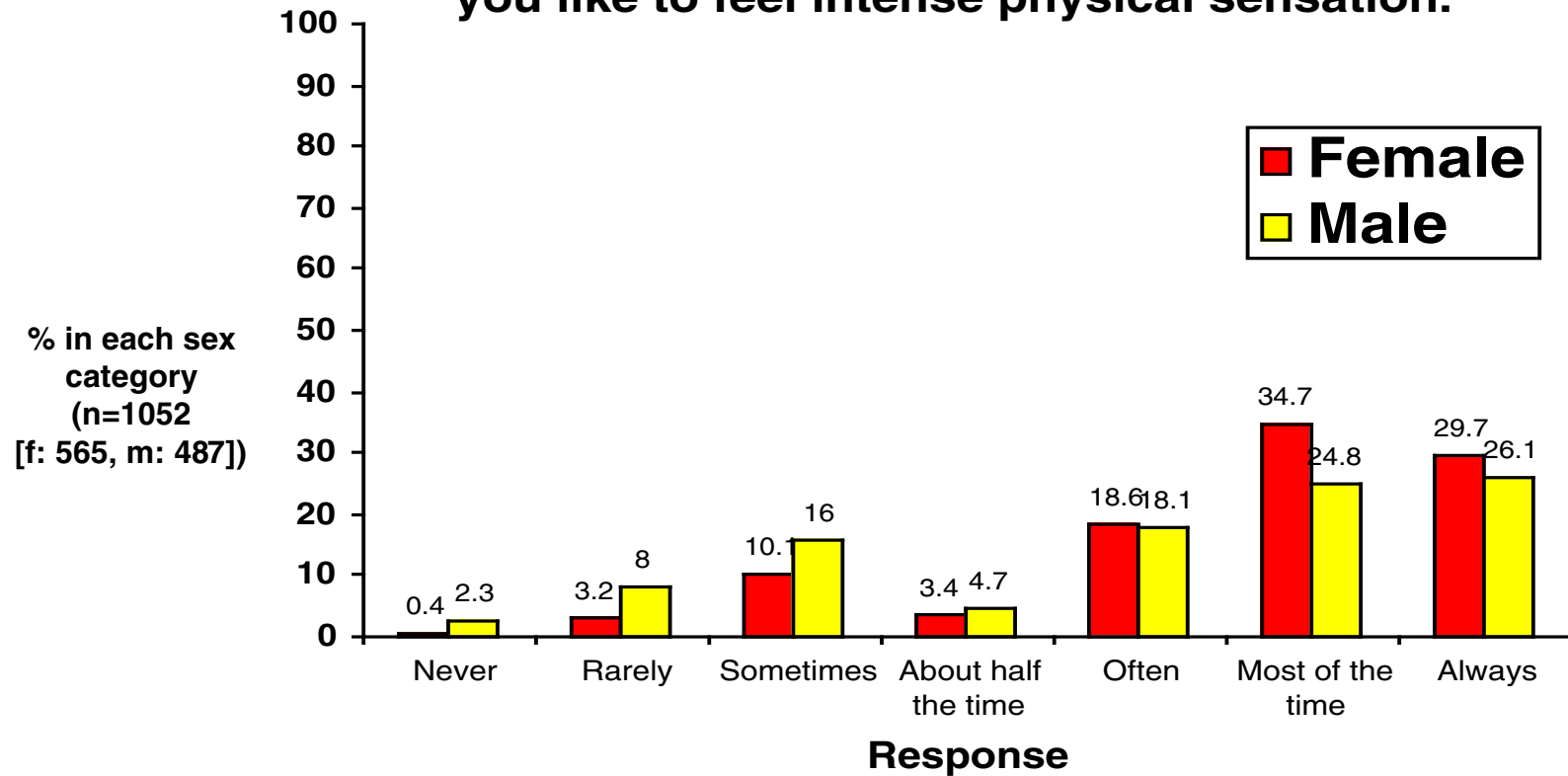


χ^2 $P < .01$

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Demographics: Feeling Intense Physical Sensation

Concerning your most sexually arousing fantasy/activities, when having sex, you like to feel intense physical sensation.

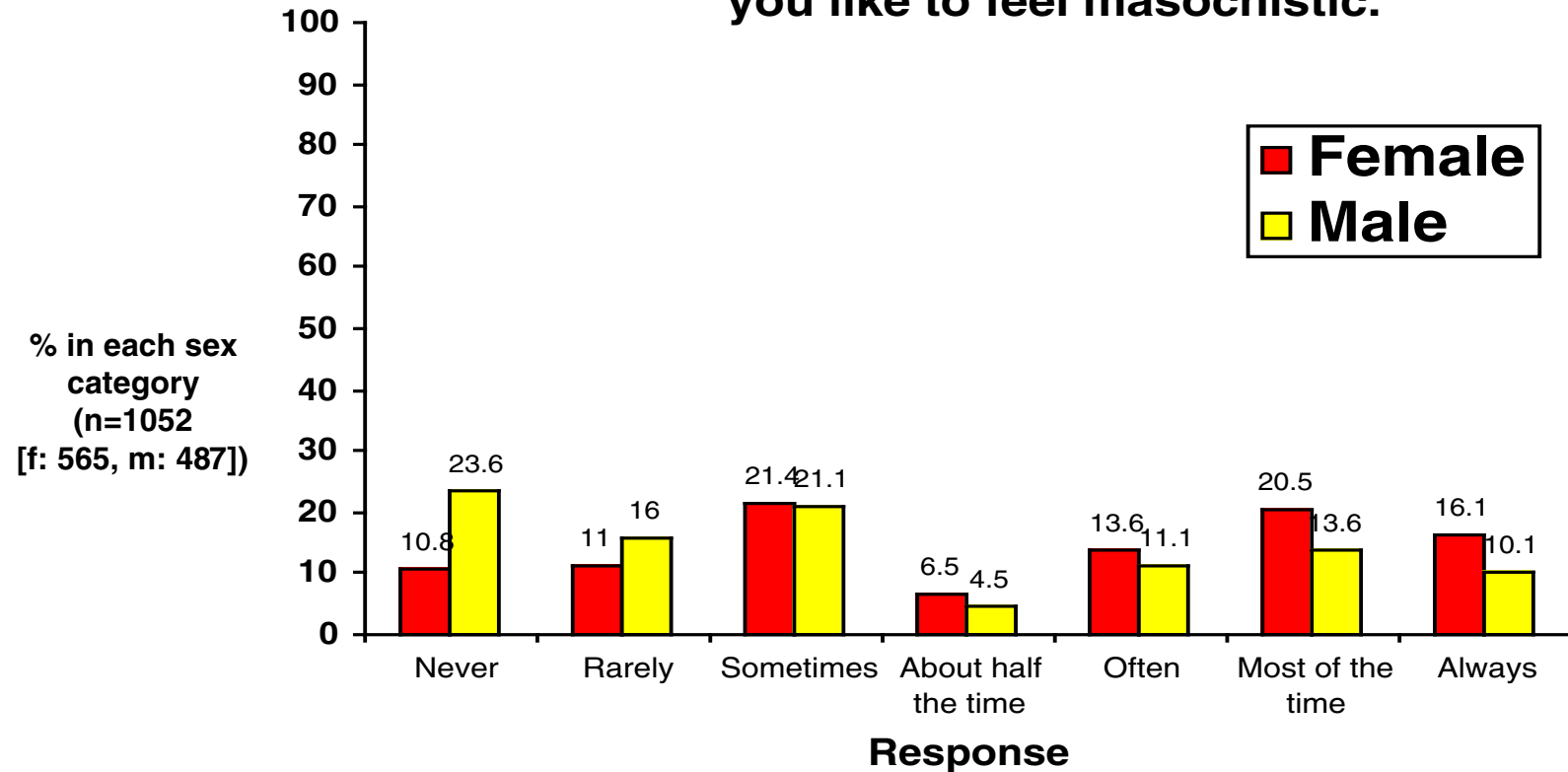


χ^2 $P < .01$

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Demographics: Feelings of Masochism

Concerning your most sexually arousing fantasy/activities, when having sex, you like to feel masochistic.

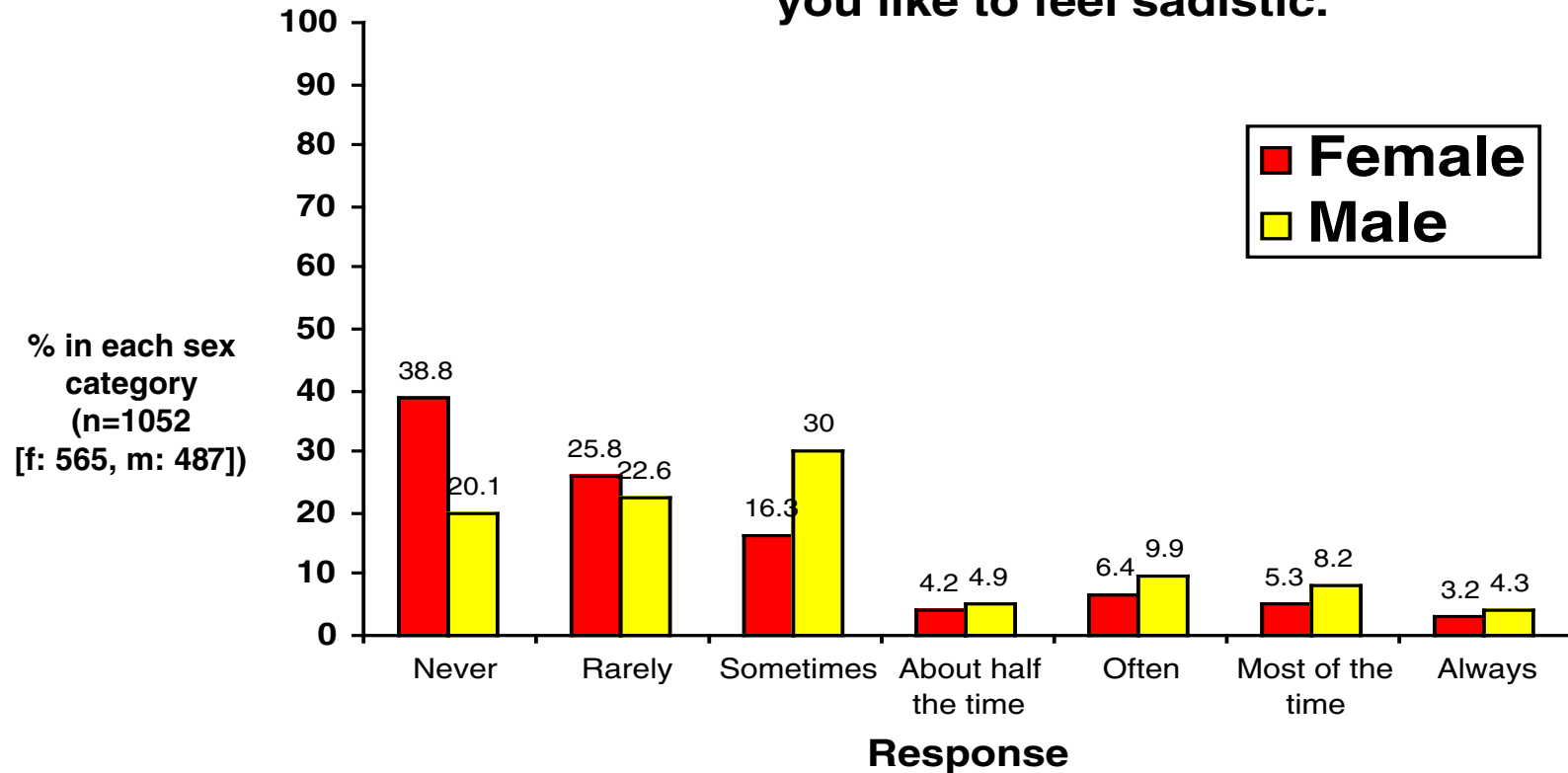


χ^2 $P < .01$

Patterns of Development and Practice in Today's SM Subcultures.

Demographics: Feelings of Sadism

Concerning your most sexually arousing fantasy/activities, when having sex, you like to feel sadistic.

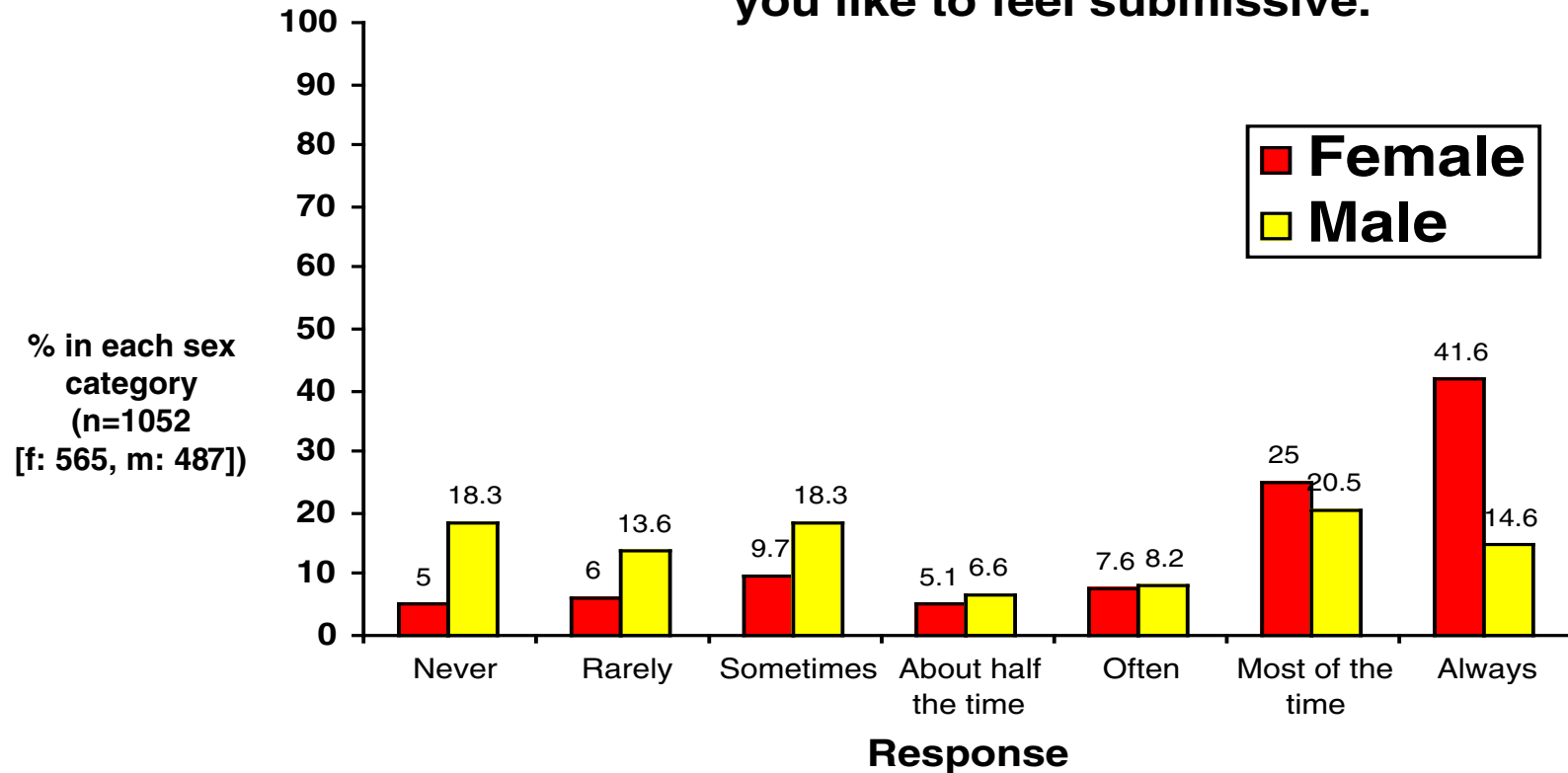


χ^2 $P < .01$

Patterns of Development and Practice in Today's SM Subcultures.

Demographics: Feelings of Submission

Concerning your most sexually arousing fantasy/activities, when having sex, you like to feel submissive.

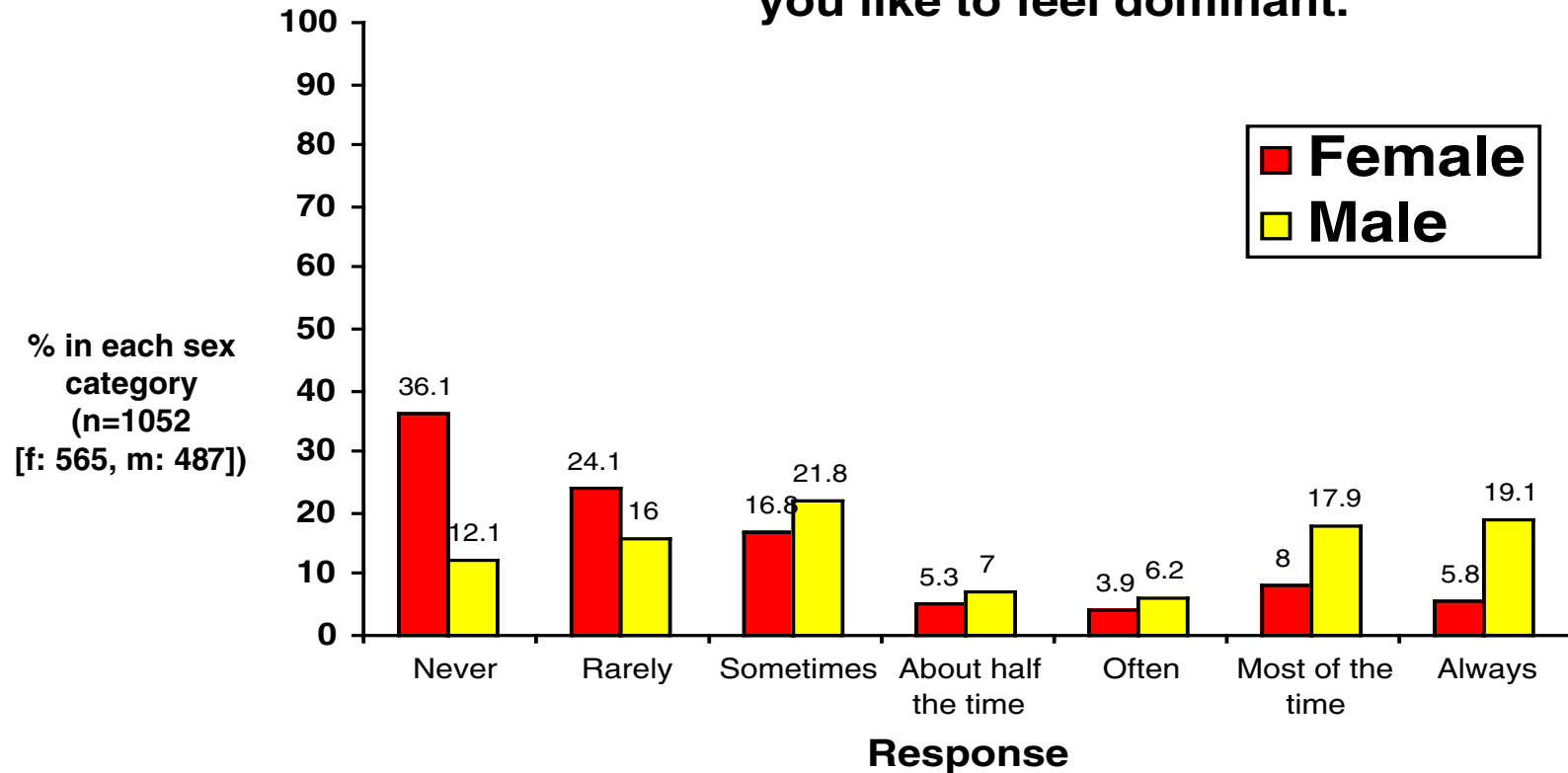


χ^2 $P < .01$

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Demographics: Feelings of Domination

Concerning your most sexually arousing fantasy/activities, when having sex, you like to feel dominant.

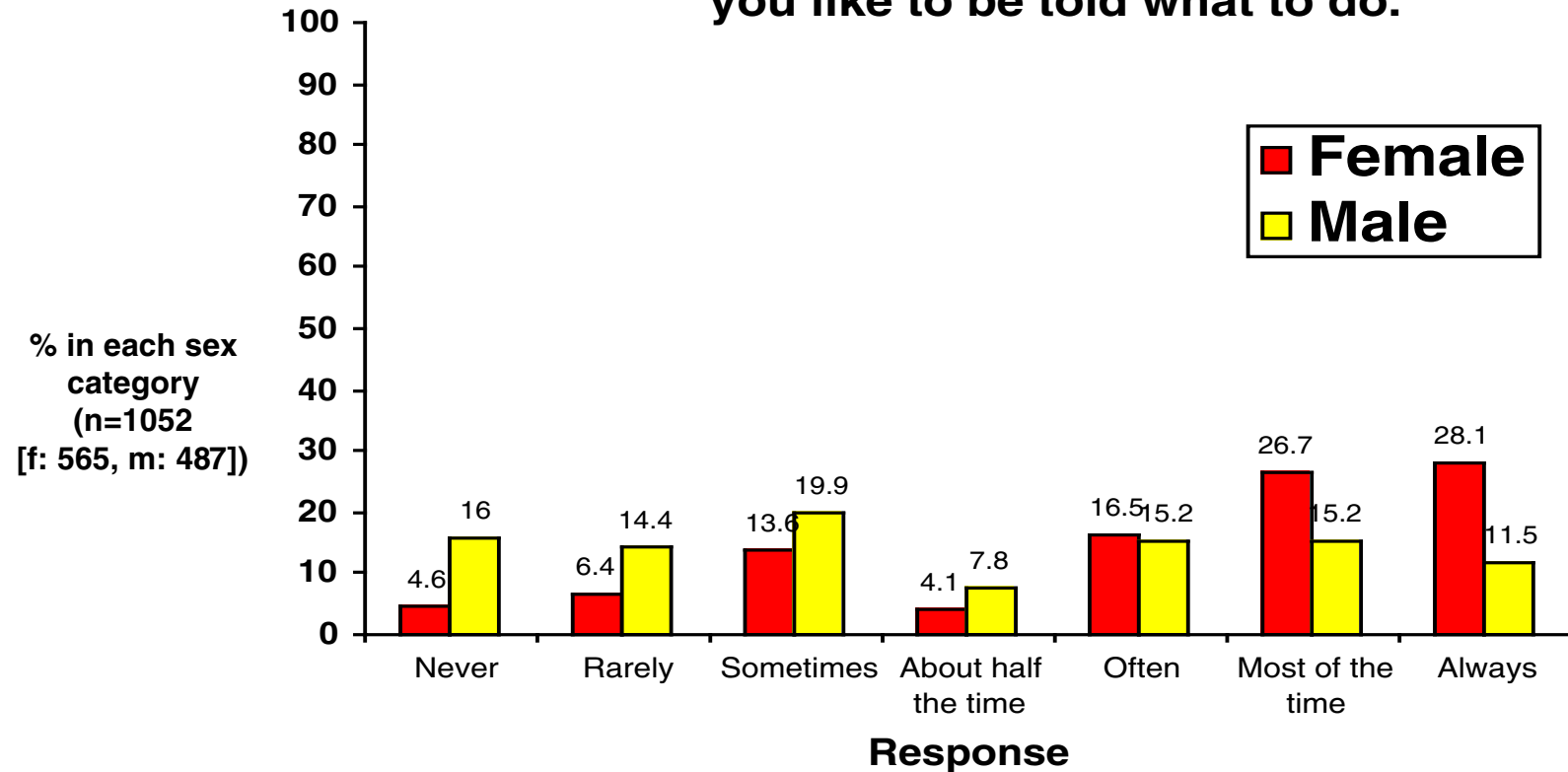


χ^2 $P < .01$

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Demographics: Being Told What to Do

Concerning your most sexually arousing fantasy/activities, when having sex, you like to be told what to do.

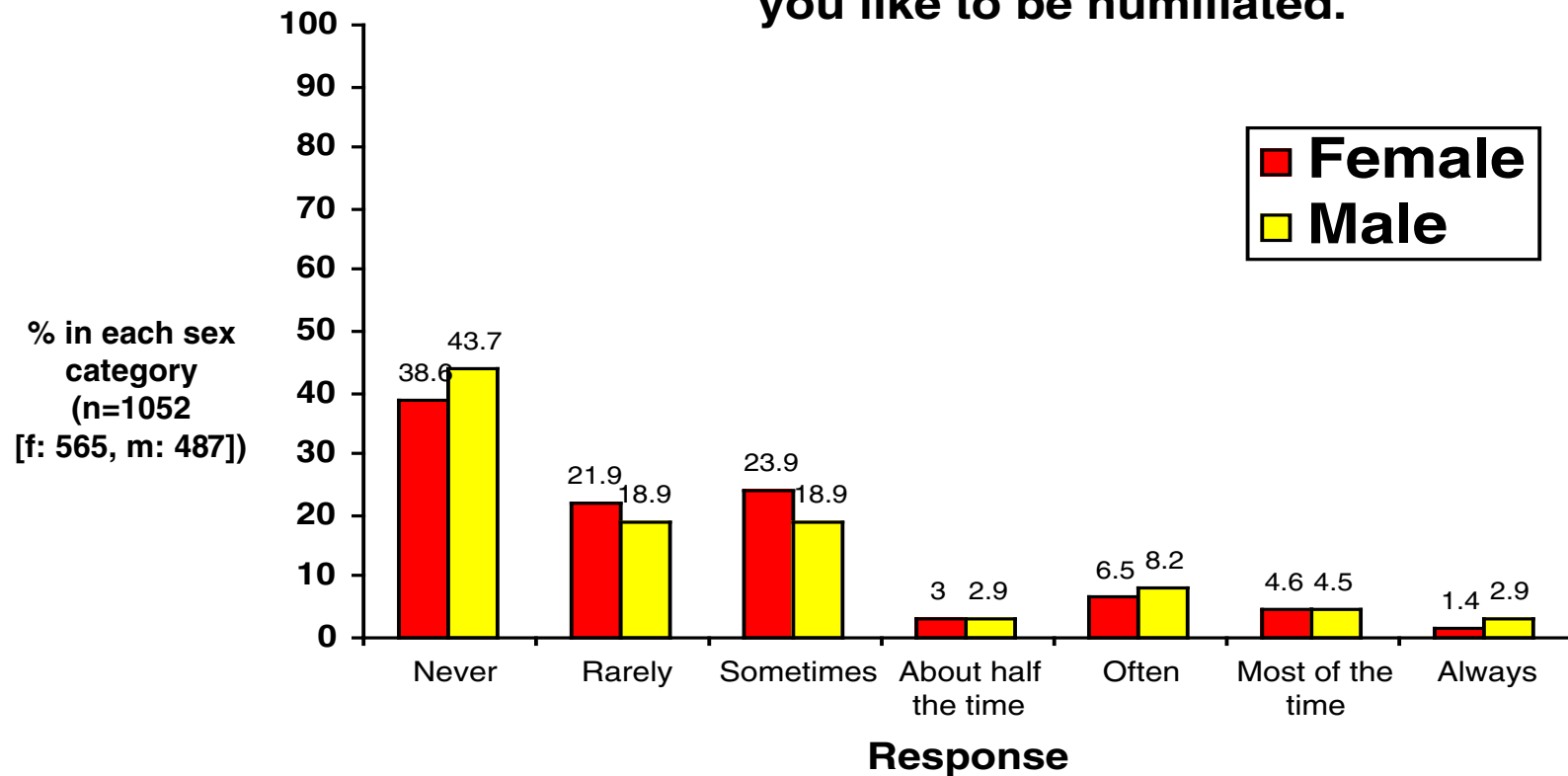


χ^2 $P < .01$

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Demographics: Desire to be Humiliated

Concerning your most sexually arousing fantasy/activities, when having sex, you like to be humiliated.

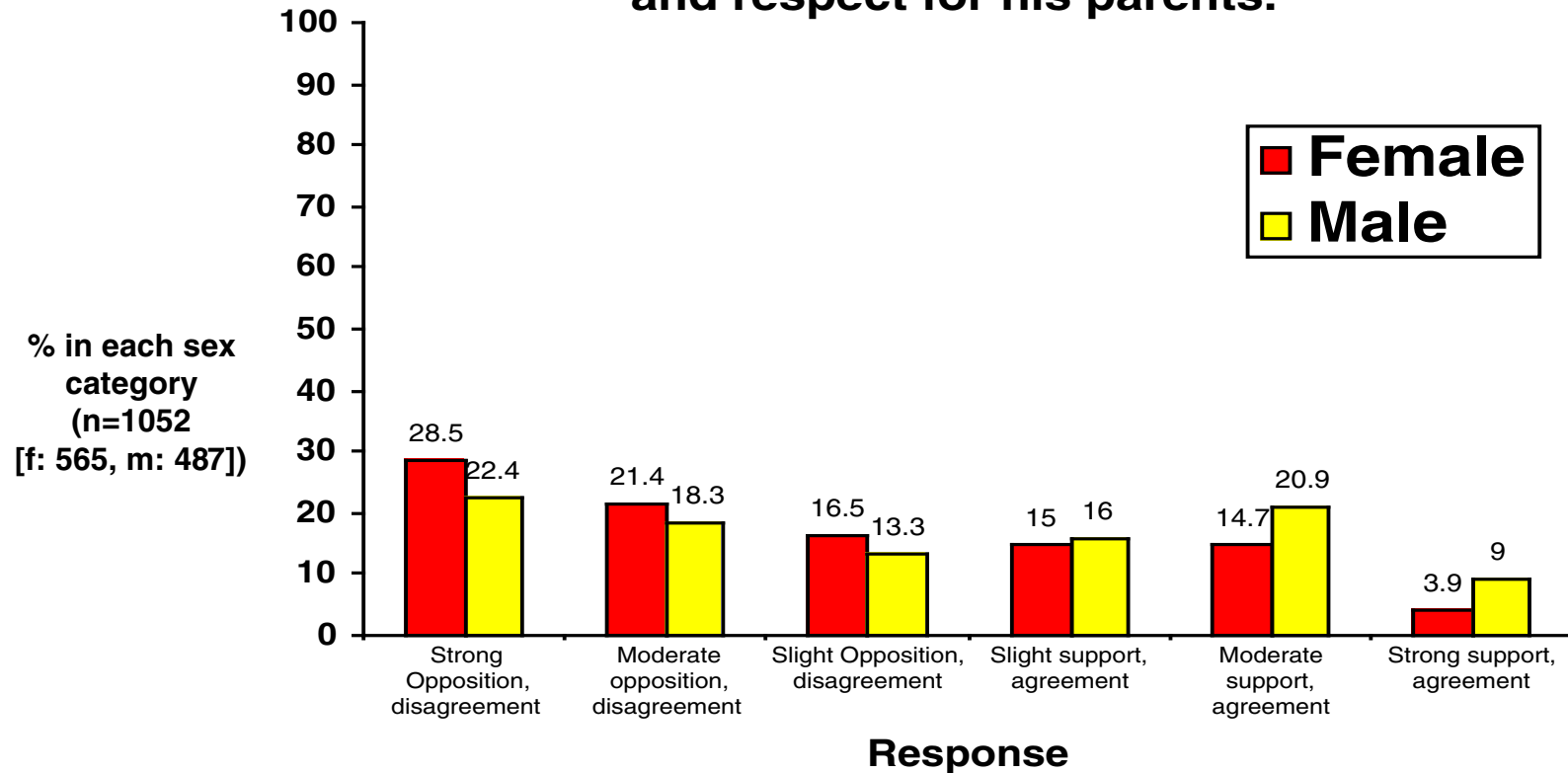


No statistical difference

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Demographics: Fascism Scale

There is hardly anything lower than a person who does not feel a great love, gratitude, and respect for his parents.

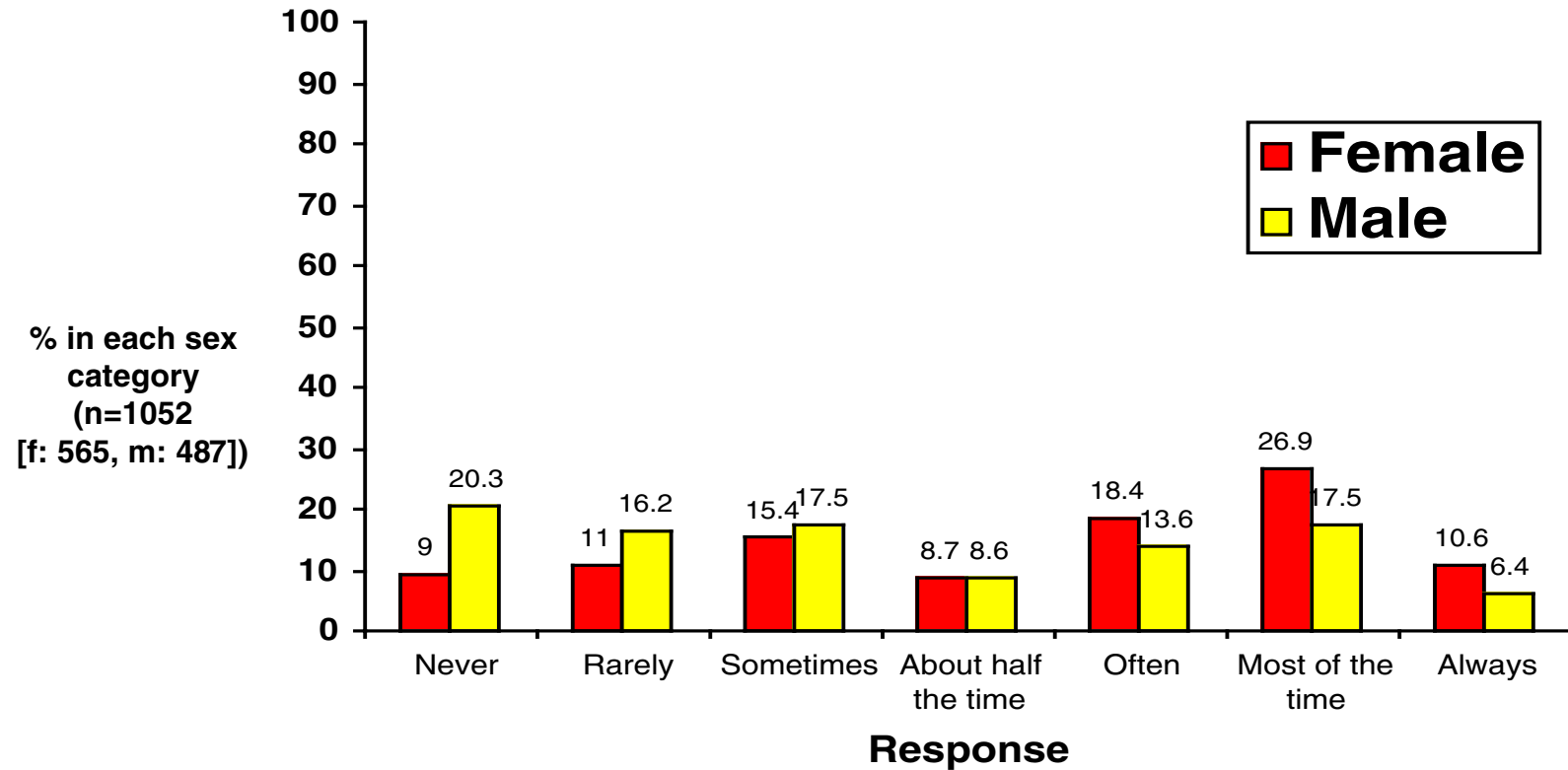


$\chi^2 P < .01$

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Demographics: Sexual Masochism

How sexually masochistic are you?

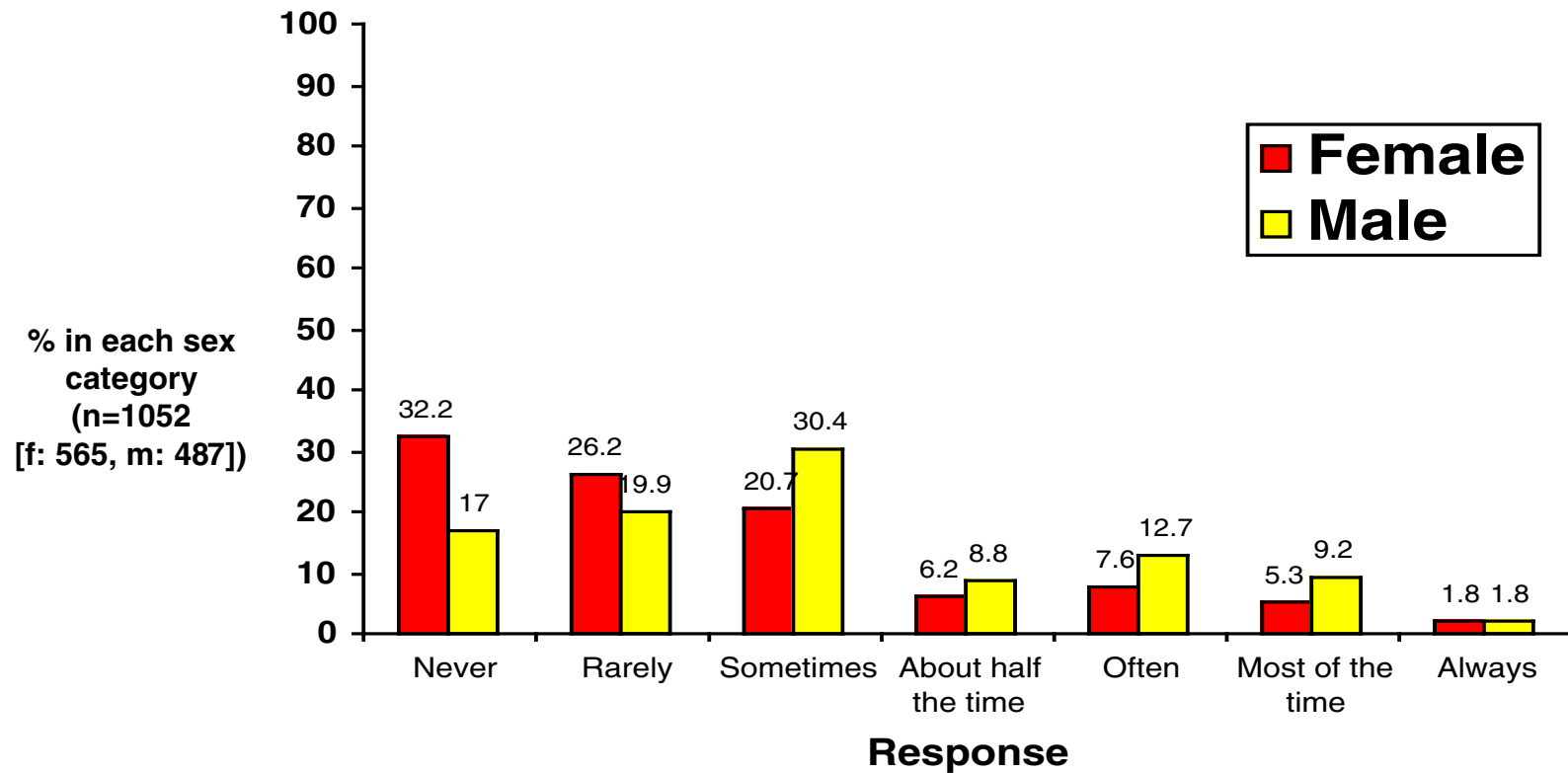


χ^2 $P < .01$

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Demographics: Sexual Sadism

How sexually sadistic are you?

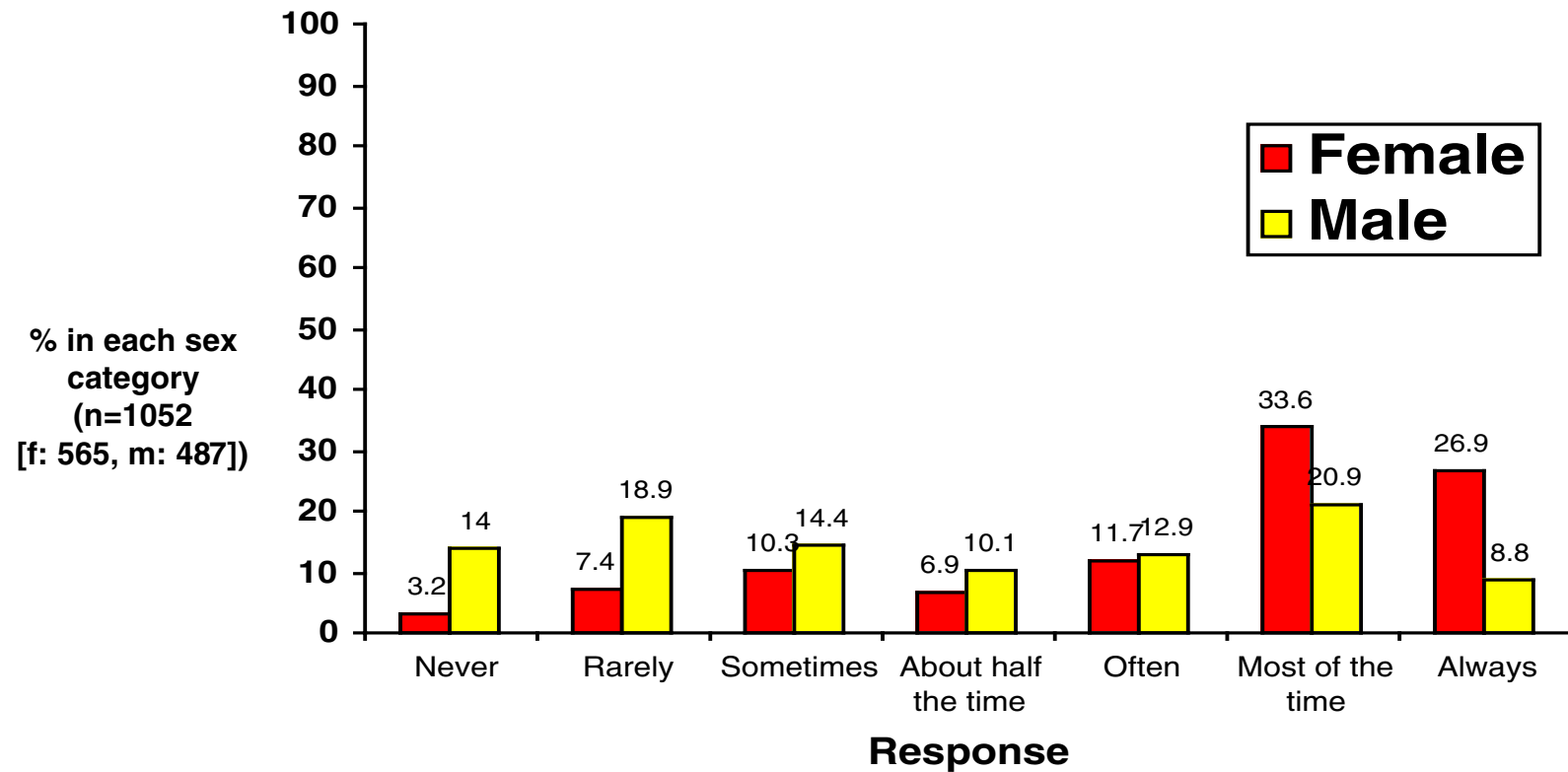


χ^2 $P < .01$

Patterns of Development and Practice in Today's SM Subcultures.

Demographics: Sexual Submission

How sexually submissive are you?

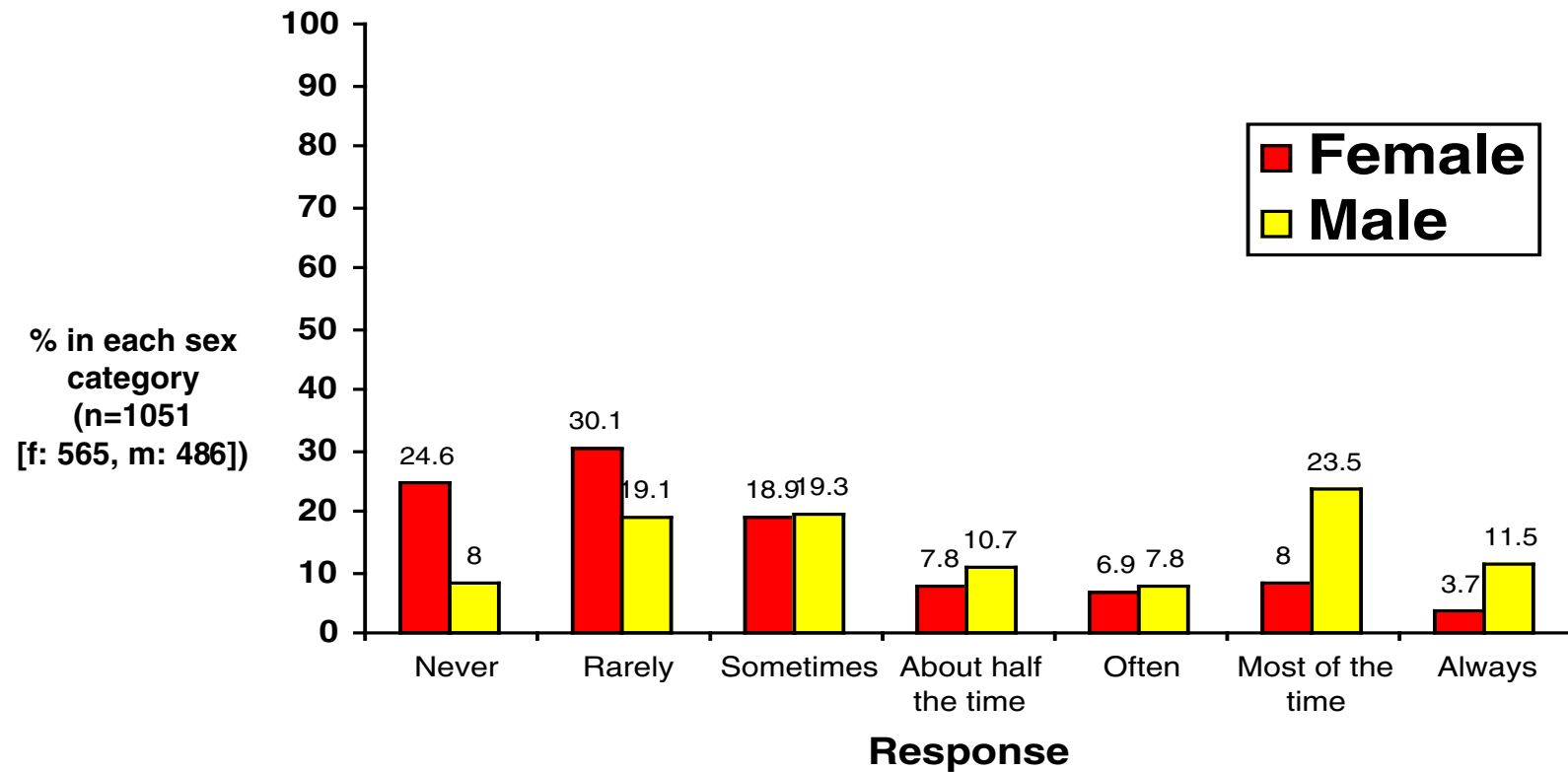


χ^2 $P < .01$

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Demographics: Sexual Domination

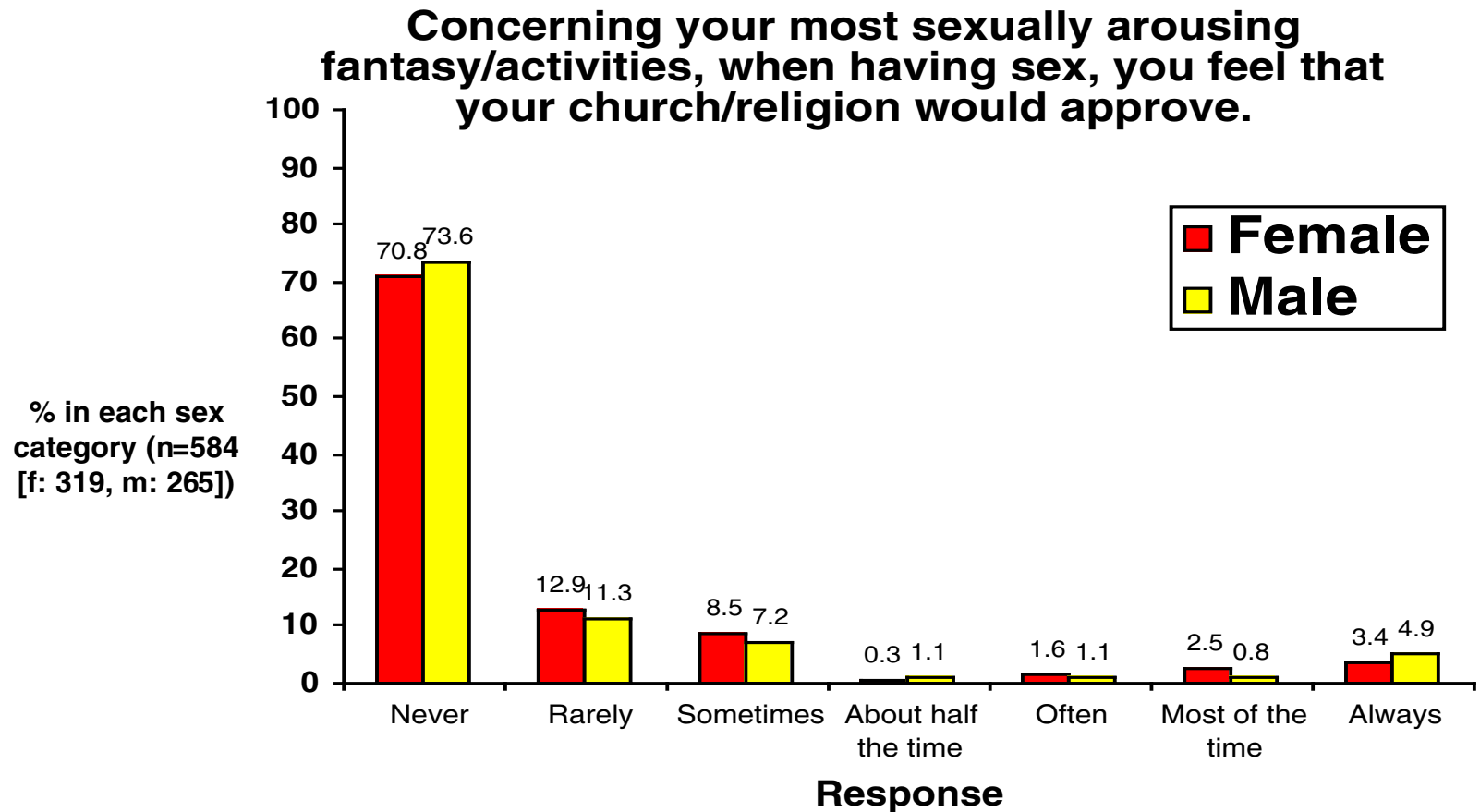
How sexually dominant are you?



χ^2 $P < .01$

Patterns of Development and Practice in Today's SM Subcultures.

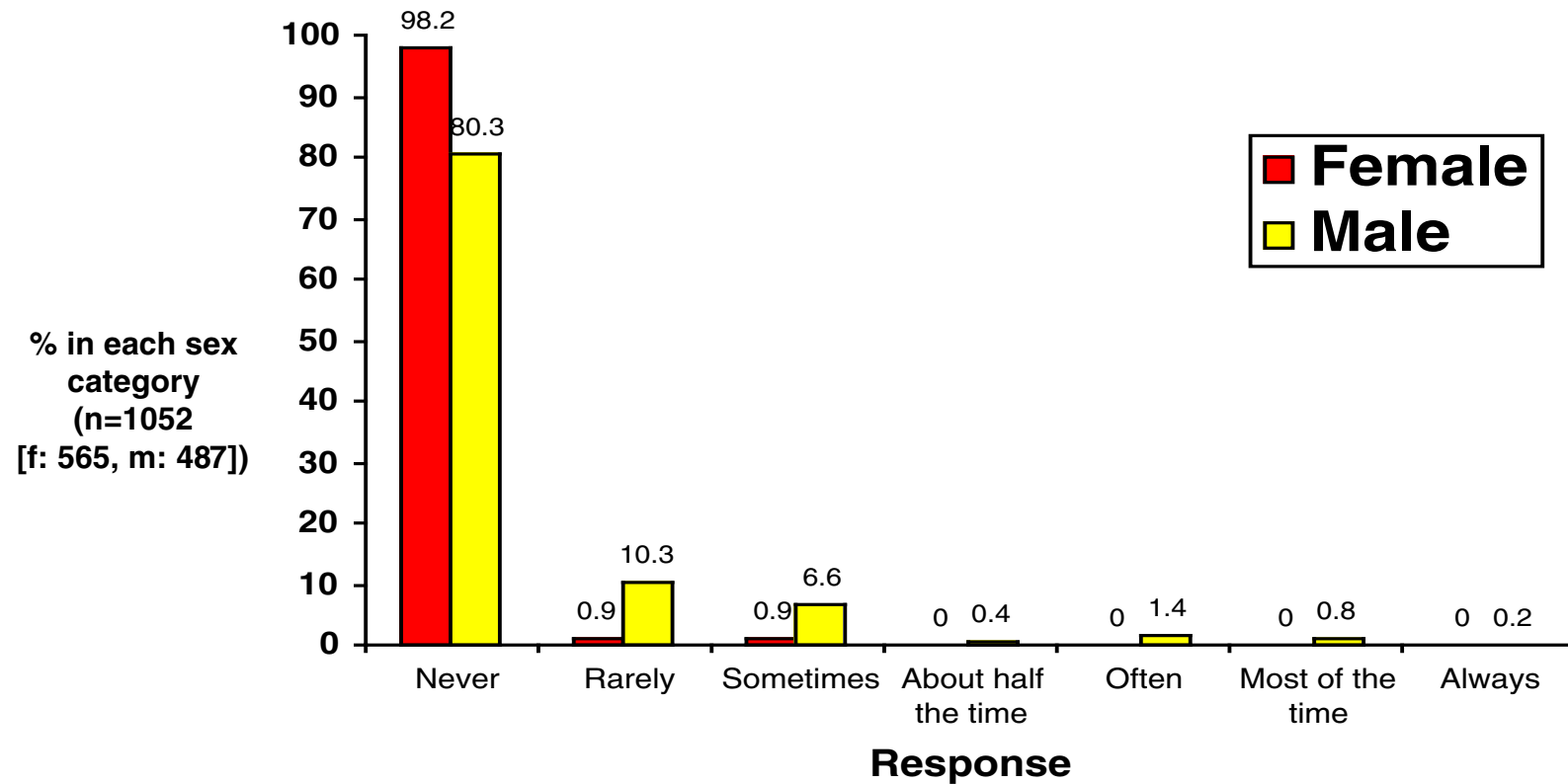
Demographics: Religious Approval



No statistical difference

Demographics: Payment for BDSM

Have you ever paid money for BDSM?

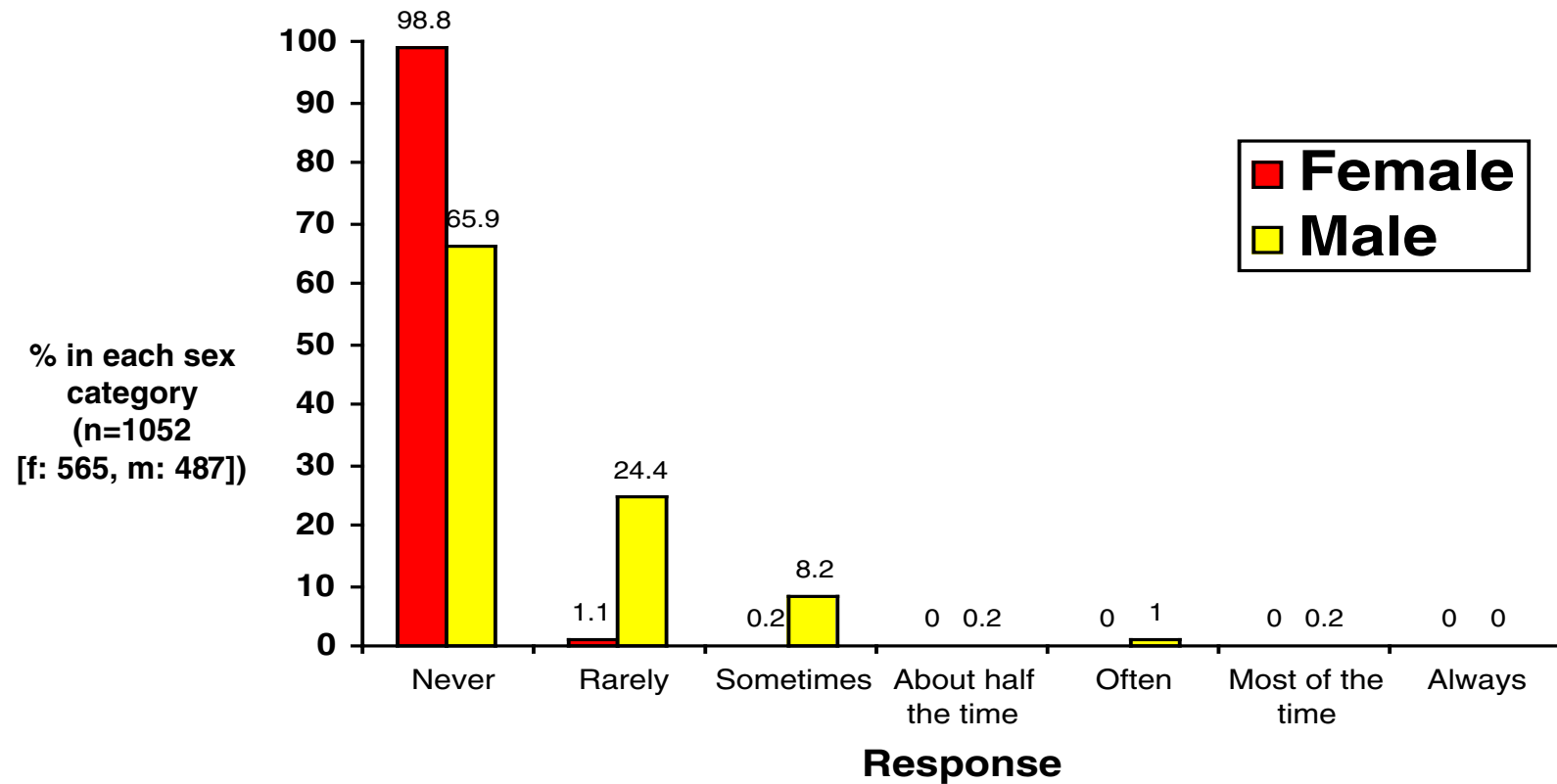


χ^2 P < .01

Patterns of Development and Practice in Today's SM Subcultures.

Demographics: Payment for Sex

Have you ever paid money for sex?

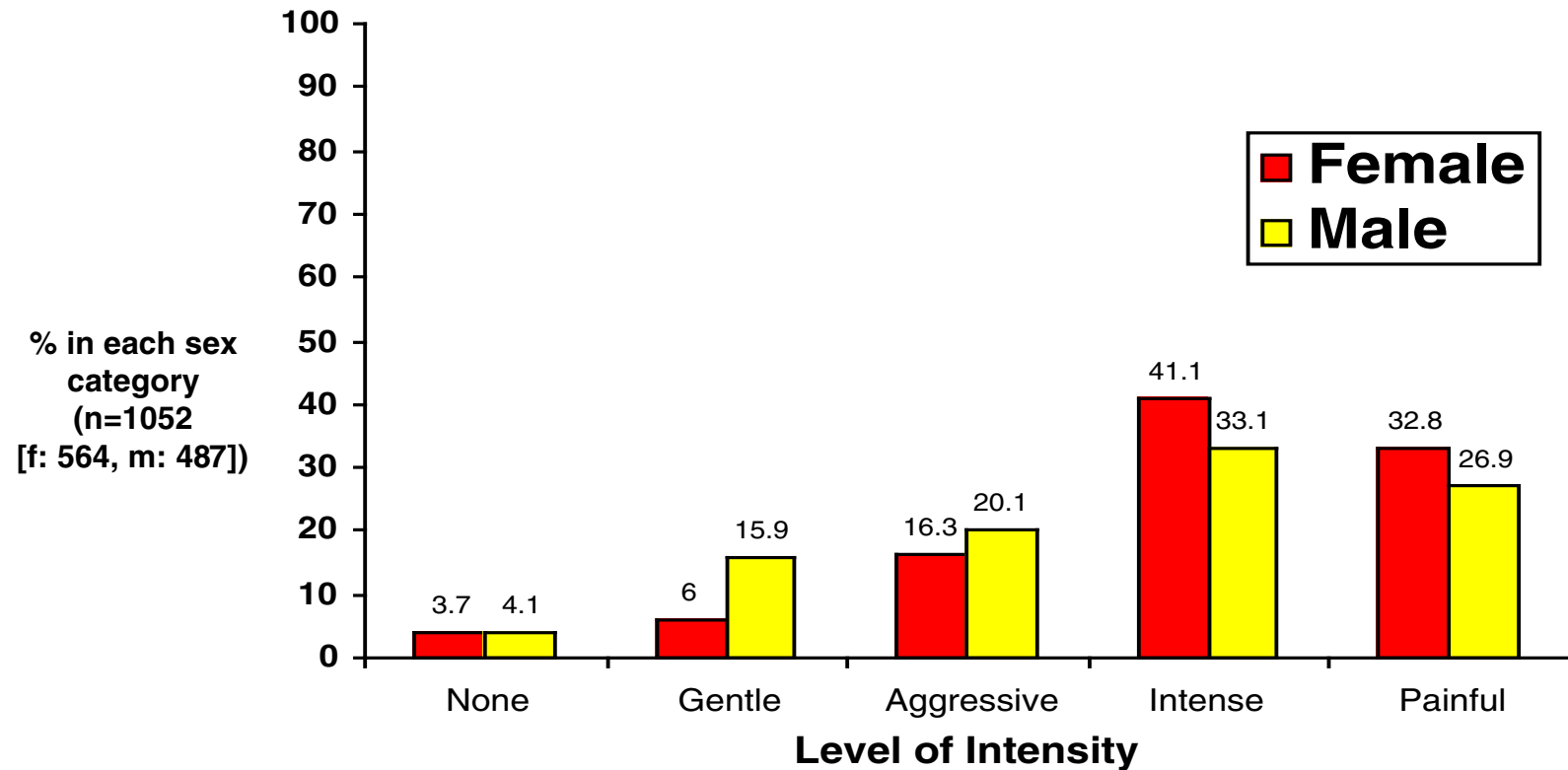


χ^2 $P < .01$

Patterns of Development and Practice in Today's SM Subcultures.

Demographics: Intensity of Physical Stimulation

How intense do you like physical stimulation of your own body during BDSM activity?

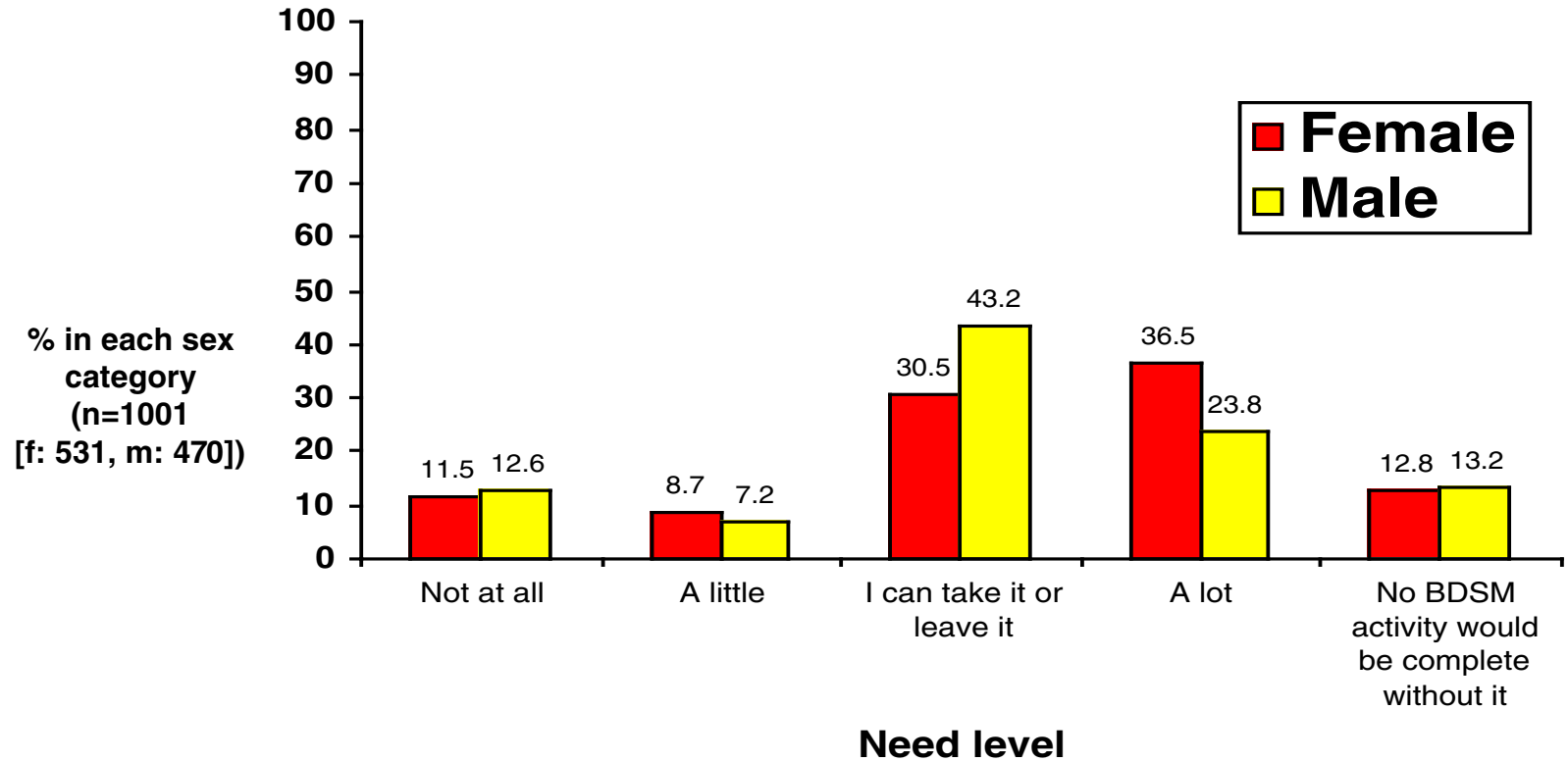


χ^2 $P < .01$

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Demographics: Need for Orgasm During BDSM

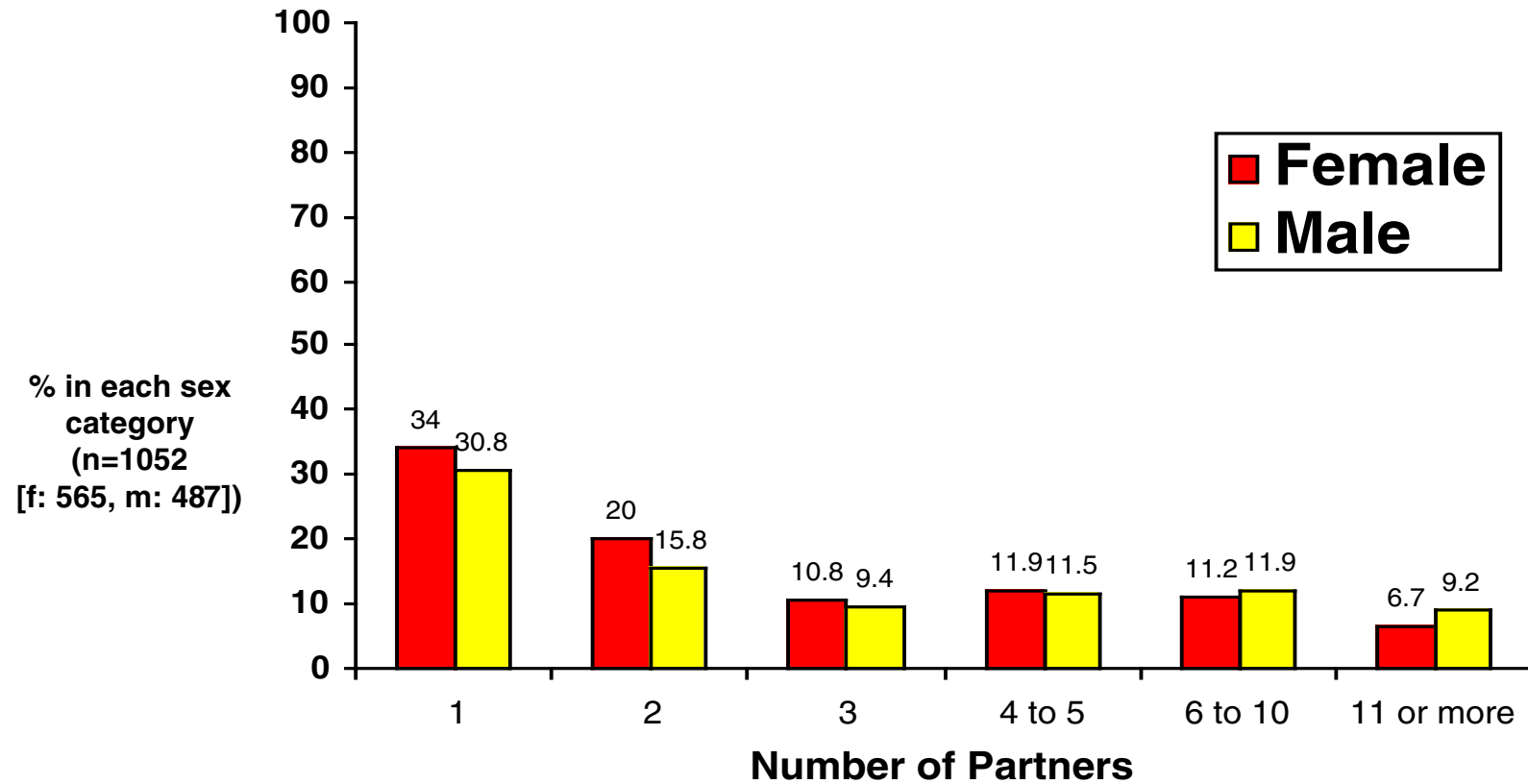
How much do you need to have a sexual orgasm in a BDSM scene?



χ^2 $P < .01$

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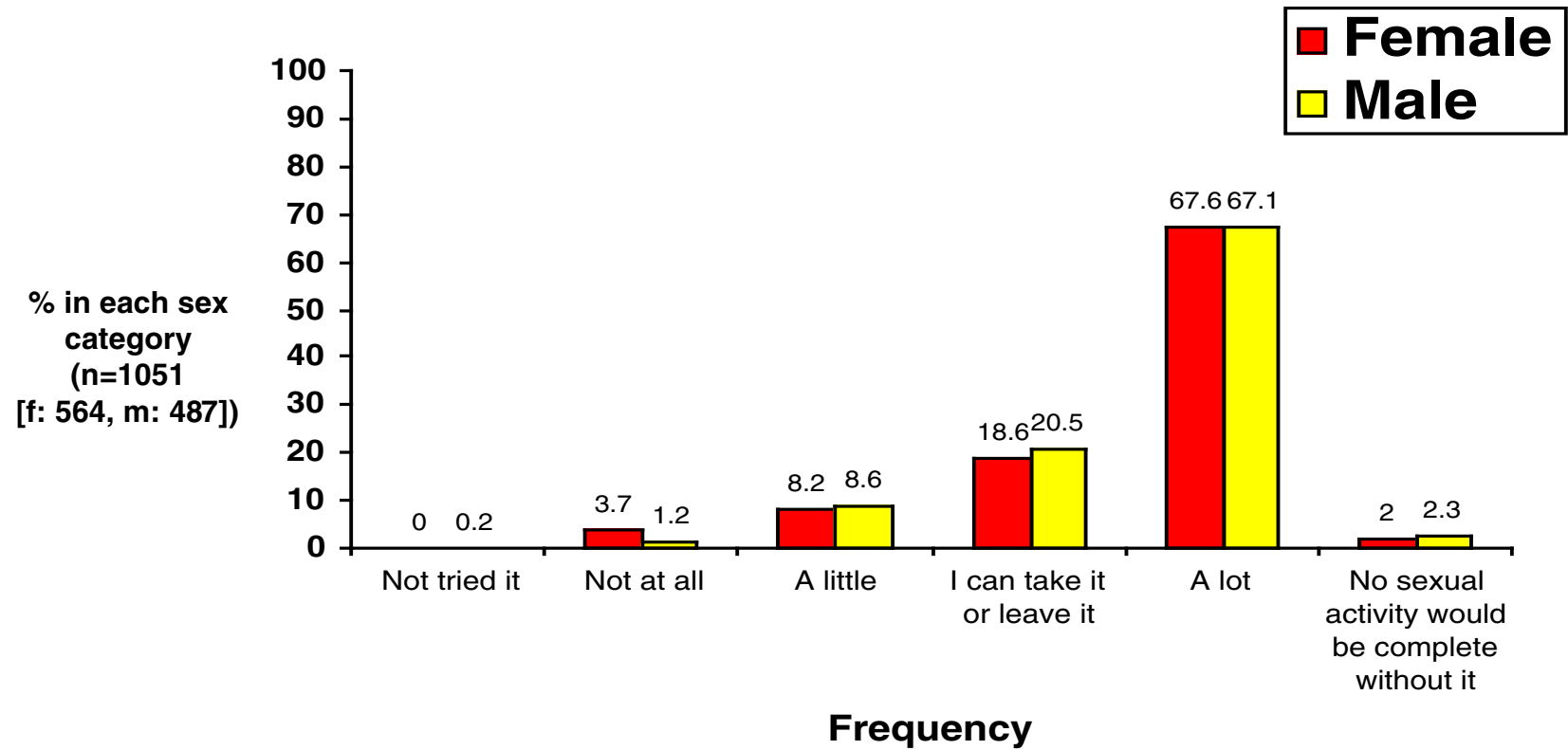
Demographics: Partners for BDSM in Past Year



$\chi^2 P < .05$

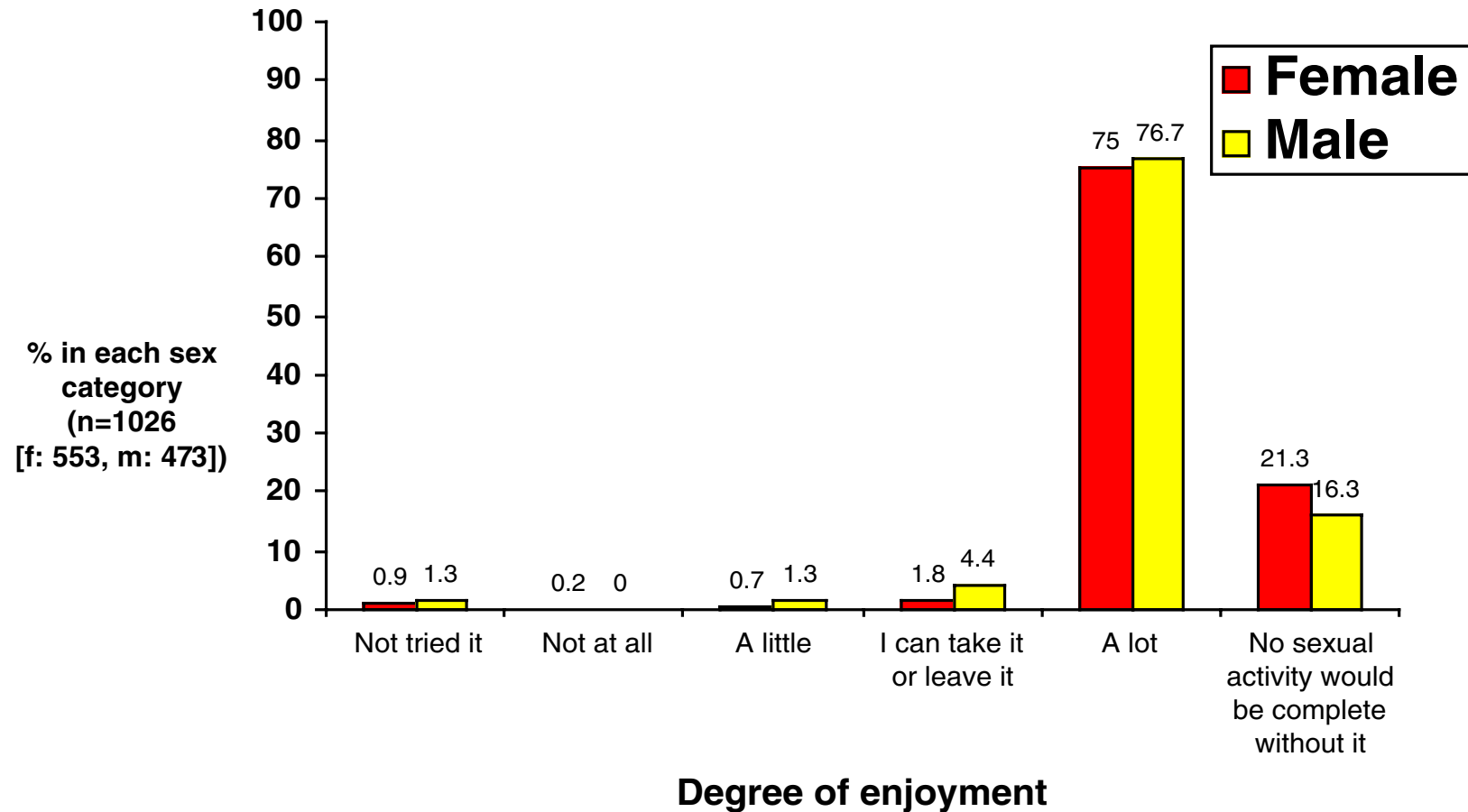
Demographics:

Generally, how much do you like masturbating yourself?



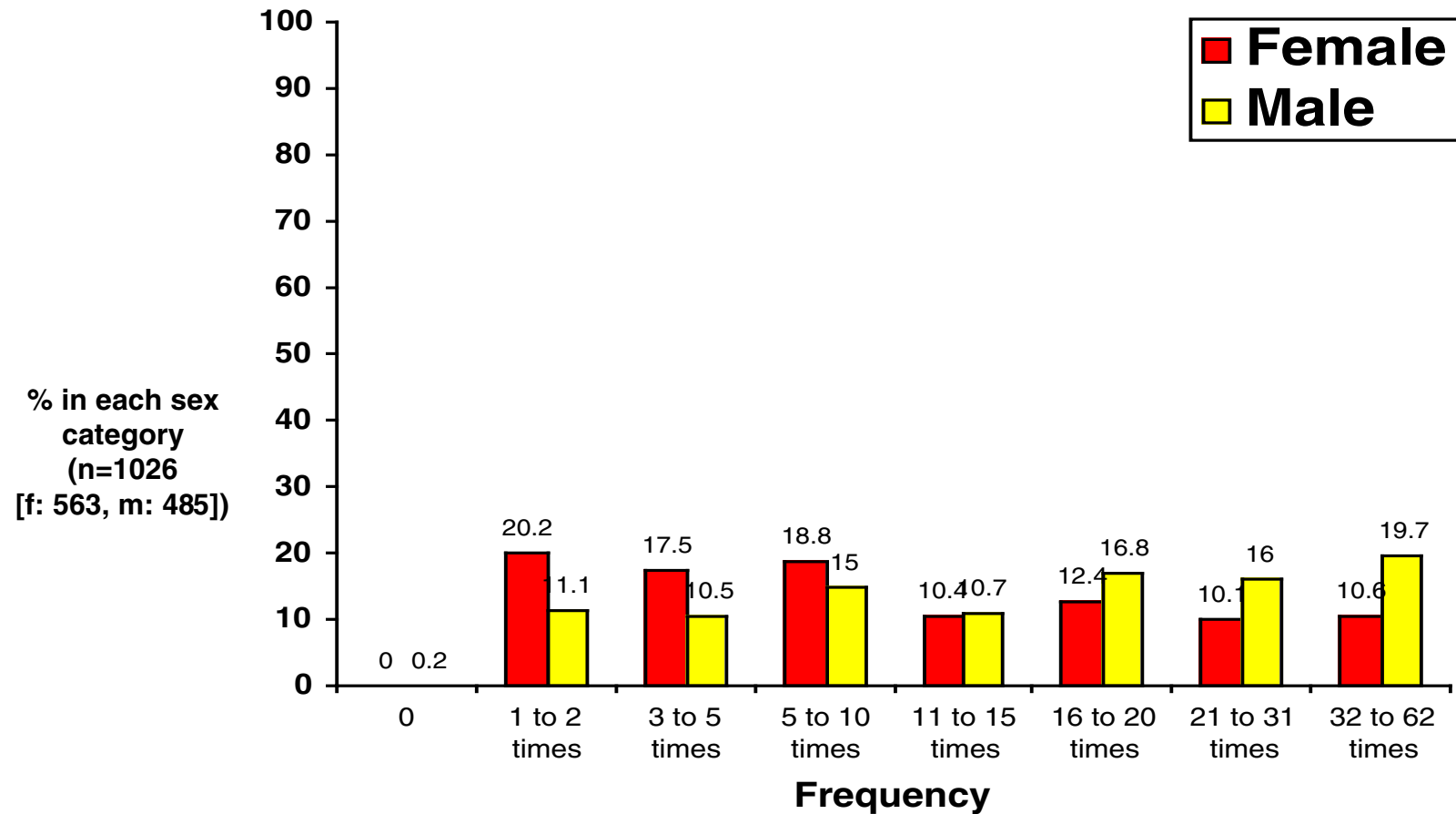
No statistical difference

Demographics: Enjoyment of BDSM



$\chi^2 P < .05$

Demographics: Stimulation by Erotica in Past Month

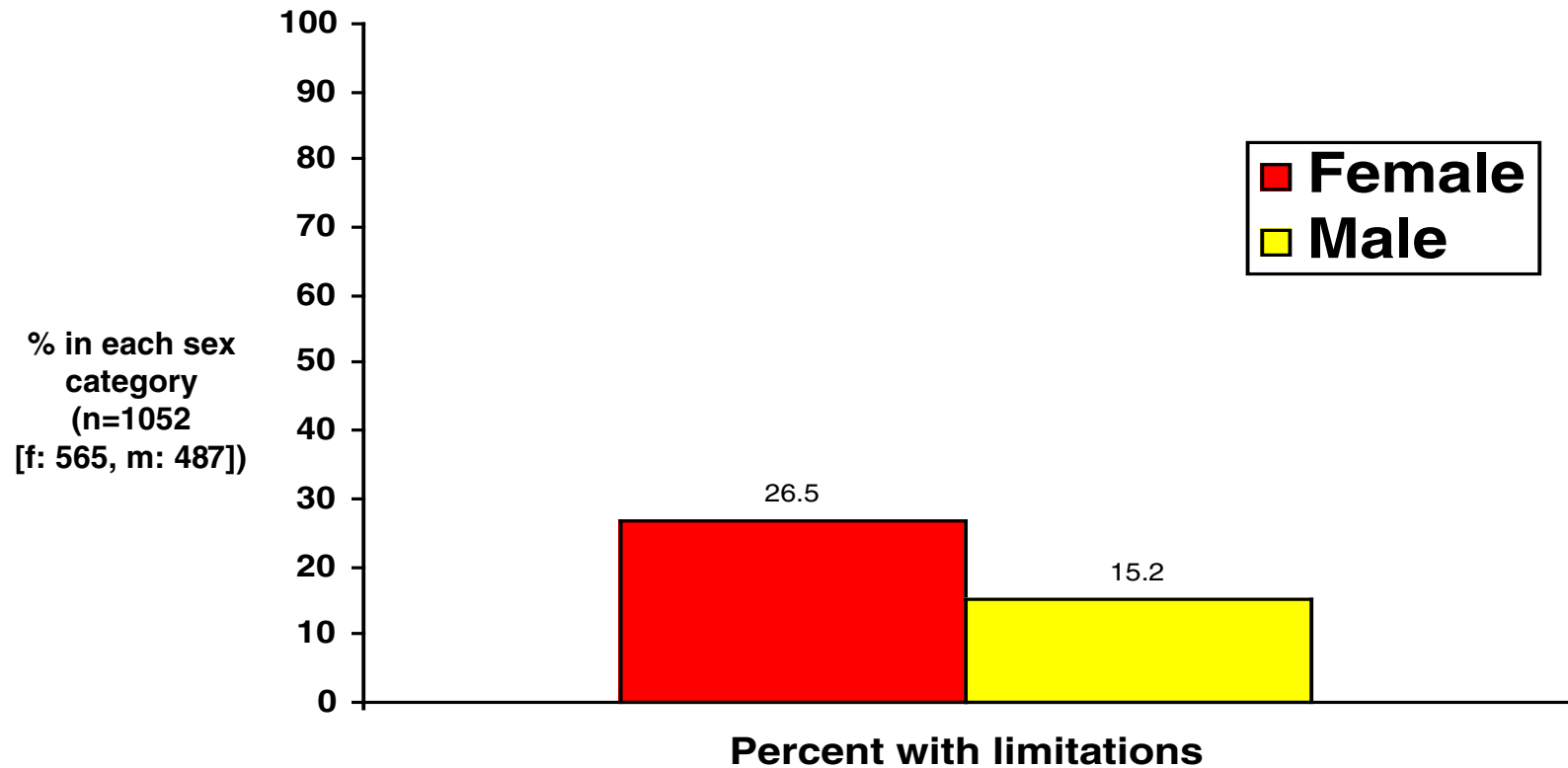


χ^2 $P < .01$

Patterns of Development and Practice in Today's SM Subcultures.

Demographics: Limitations in Activity

Limited in activity due to long-term physical, mental, or health problem?



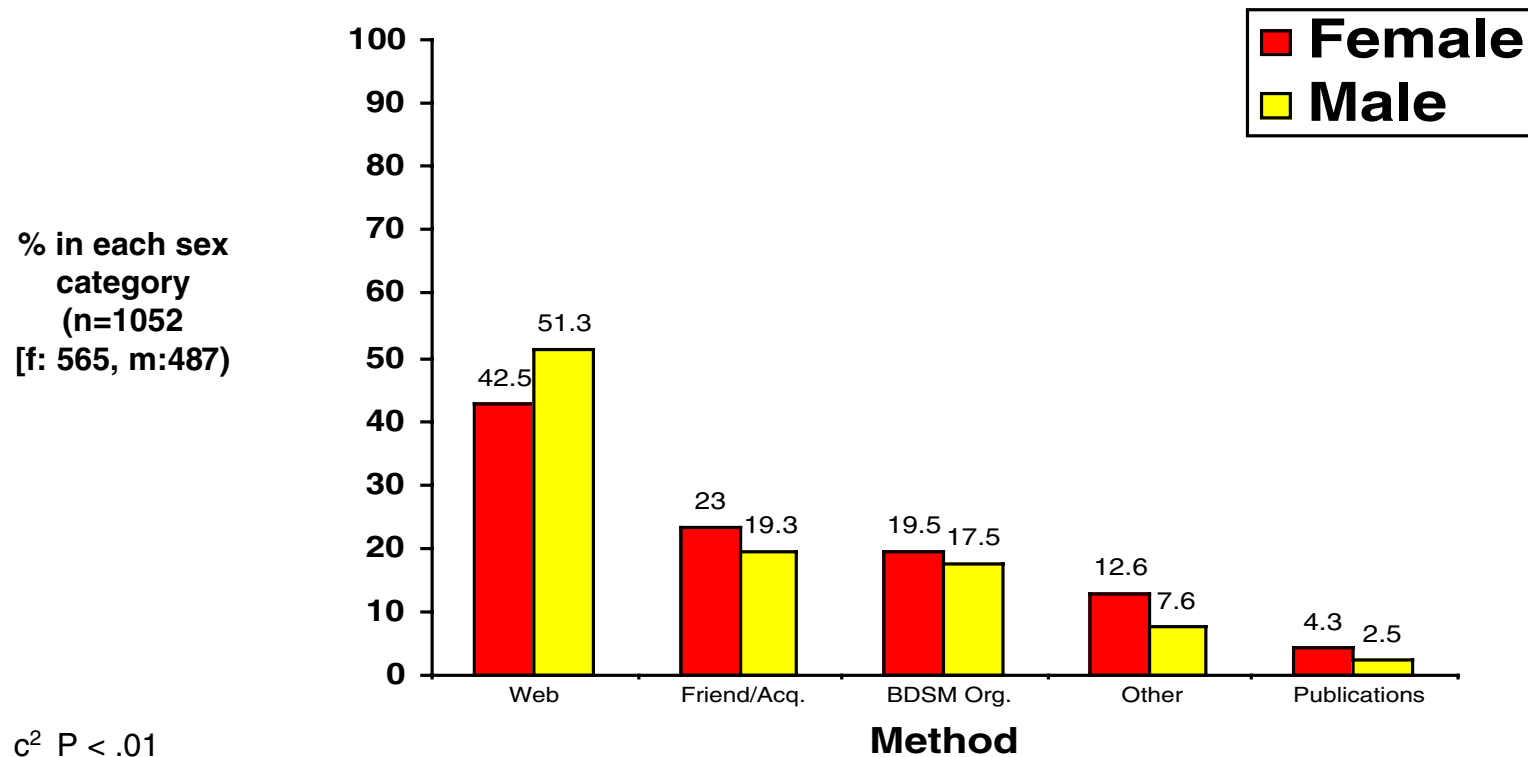
C^2 $P < .01$

Supplemental Slides

Demographics: Method of Finding Survey

The majority of respondents discovered the survey via the Internet. Friend referrals and BDSM organizations were the second and third most significant source of respondents.

Where did you find out about the questionnaire?



Patterns of Development and Practice in Today's SM Subcultures.

Analysis: Predictors of BDSM Practices

- A series of logistic regression procedures were conducted to develop models predictive of specific sexual practices. For the purpose of this presentation we focus on the following: sadism, masochism, rubber/latex/PVC fetishism, leather fetishism.
- The analysis was structured with binary response (dependent) variables and both continuous and categorical explanatory (independent) variables. The response variable was personal experience of the practice (1) “never” or “rarely,” and (2) “sometimes” to “always.”
- Evaluated explanatory variables include the following:

Personal characteristics

- Sex
- Age
- Personal income
- Household income
- Marital status
- Highest education level
- Employment status
- Current religious practice
- Current religious belief
- Sexual Orientation

Family History

- Religion raised
- Sibling order
- Childhood emotional abuse
- Childhood sexual abuse
- Childhood physical abuse
- “Broken” home
- Feeling toward parents
- Parental approval of sexuality

BDSM Experience

- BDSM Orientation
- Participant in BDSM Org
- Had BDSM mentor

Point of Contact

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