

FINANCIAL SPECULATION AND PROBLEM GAMBLING: ARE FEMALE PLAYERS AT RISK?

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INTRODUCTION

- Speculative financial market activities (SFMA) refer to short-term, high-risk financial instruments.
- Popular SFMAs include day trading and cryptocurrency. Such activities are similar to traditional gambling in that they are chance-based and present a high risk of financial loss [1].
- Previous research has demonstrated a link between SFMA involvement and increased problem gambling severity [2,3].
- Study of the relationship between participation in SFMAs and traditional gambling is a new and growing area of research. Currently, little is known about underlying factors that may account for the increased propensity for problem gambling among people who engage in both gambling and SFMAs (identified as speculative gamblers in the present research).
- The goal of the present research was to compare the profiles of female and male speculative gamblers to examine gender-based differences that may account for speculative gamblers' increased risk of experiencing problem gambling.

METHODS

- **Recruitment**
 - Using the Alberta Gambling Research Institute (AGRI) National Project Online Panel dataset, N = 1,206 individuals who had participated in traditional gambling activities and SFMAs in the past 12 months were identified.
- **Measures**
 - Age at the time of the survey.
 - Problem Gambling Severity Index (PGSI).
 - Gambling Fallacies Measure (GFM).
 - Number of gambling activities engaged in.
 - Preferred types of gambling activities (later categorized into skill-based or chance-based).
 - Presence of current depression, anxiety, and substance use disorder (SUD) symptoms.
 - Endorsement of experience with non-substance and non-gambling-related behavioural addictions.
- **Statistical analyses**
 - Mann-Whitney U tests.
 - Fisher's exact tests.

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

- Mean age: 45.6 ± 16.1 years.
- Gender distribution: 32.8% female; 67.2% male.

RESULTS

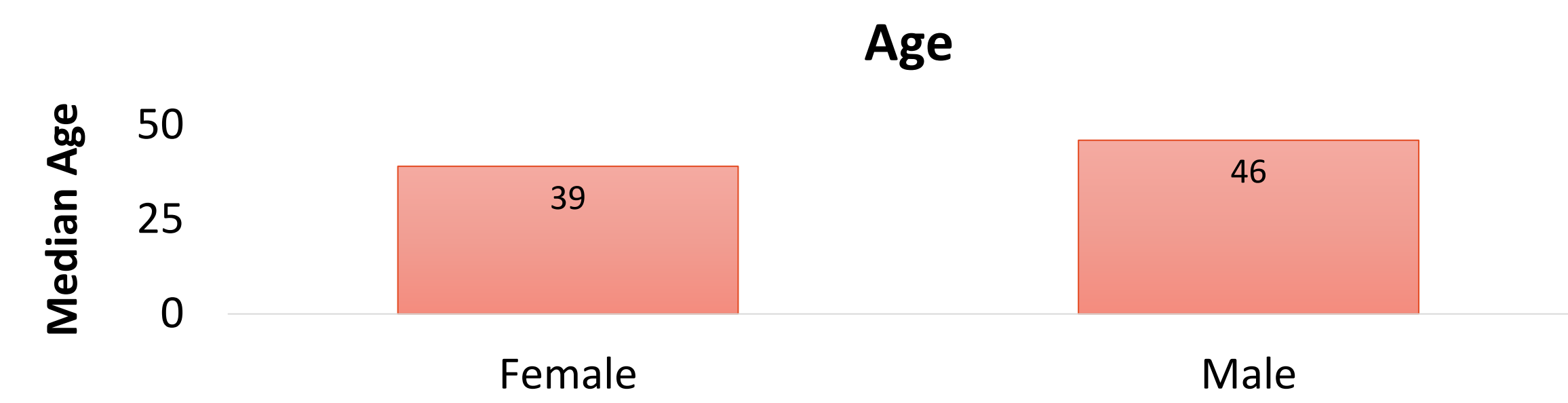


Figure 1. $U = 113,992.50, p < .001, r = .10$



Figure 2. $U = 158,914.00, p = .820, r = .01$

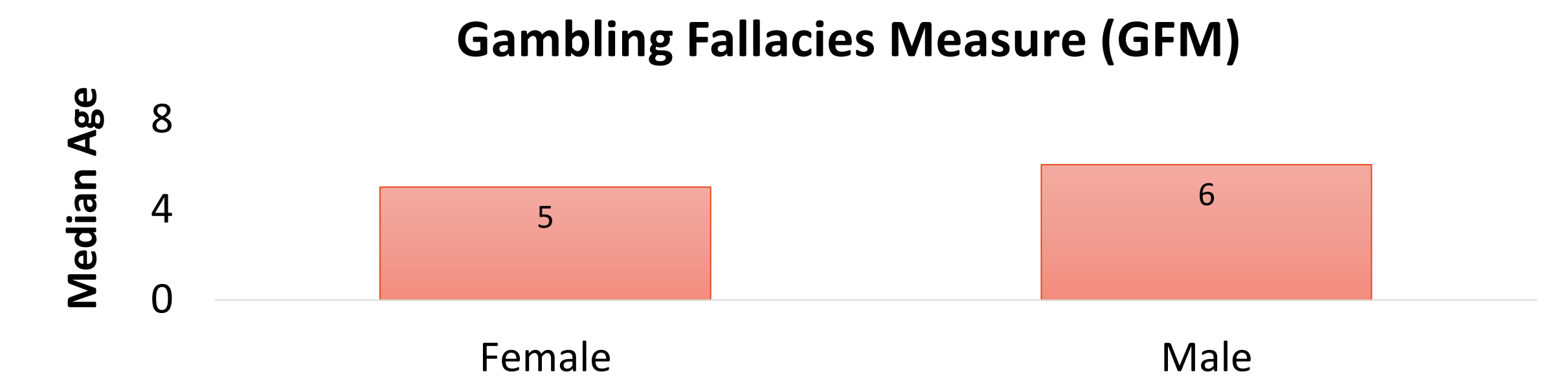


Figure 3. $U = 136,146.50, p < .001, r = .12$

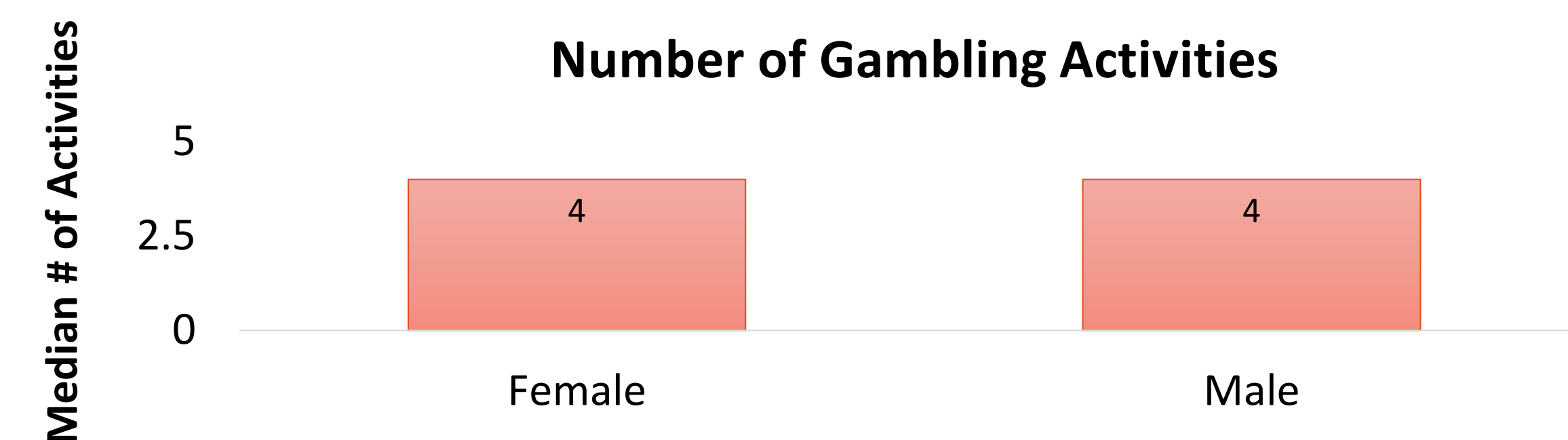


Figure 4. $U = 151,274.50, p = .114, r = .05$

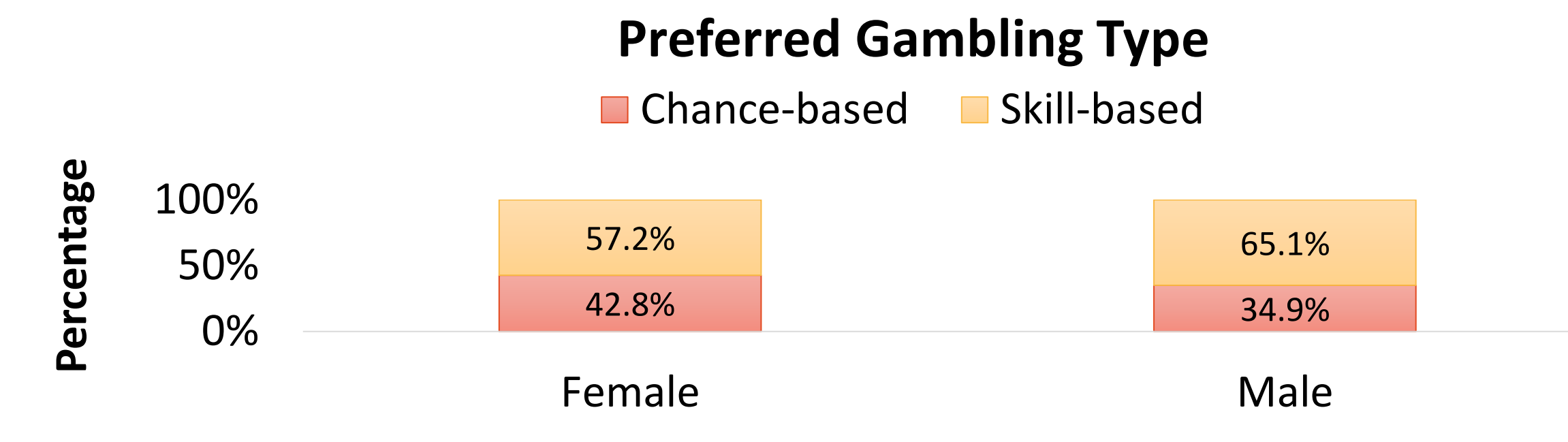


Figure 5. $p = .009, \phi = .076$

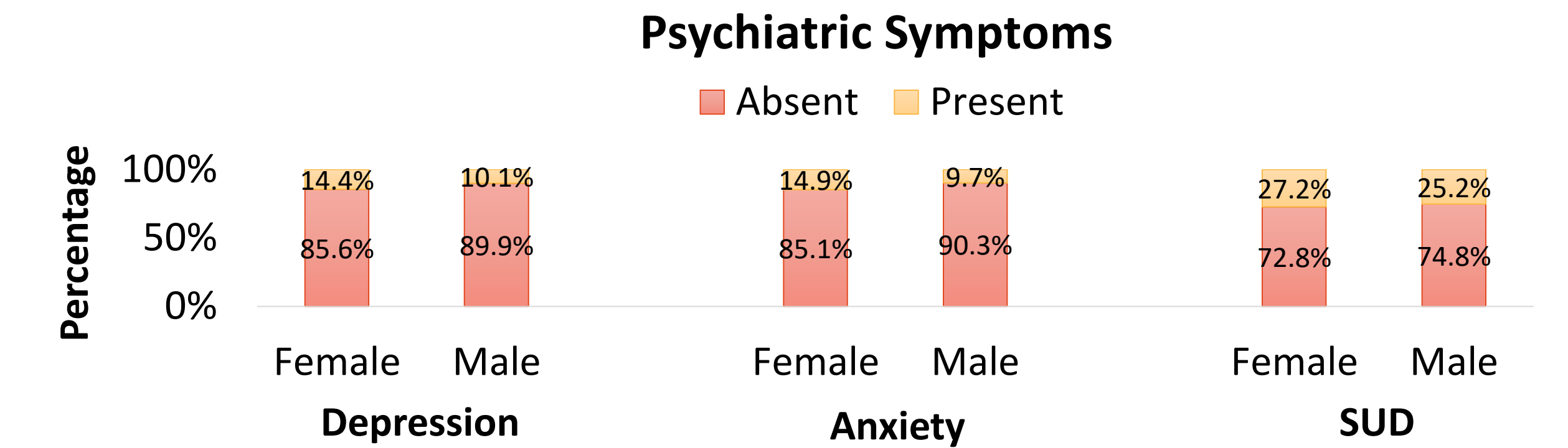


Figure 6. Depression: $p = .034, \phi = .063$. Anxiety: $p = .009, \phi = .077$. Substance use disorder: $p = .523, \phi = .021$

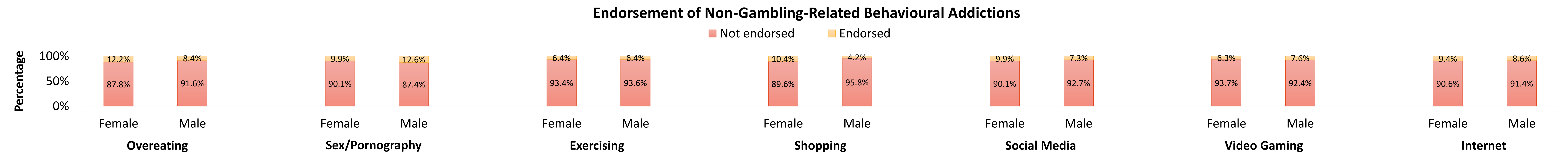


Figure 7. Overeating: $p = .048, \phi = .06$; Sex/Pornography: $p = .182, \phi = .04$; Exercise: $p = .901, \phi = .003$; Shopping: $p < .001, \phi = .12$; Social media: $p = .114, \phi = .05$; video games: $p = .477, \phi = .02$; Internet: $p = .667, \phi = .01$;

SUMMARY

- Although the sample was predominantly male, female speculative gamblers (a) were younger; (b) reported lower scores on the GFM (indicating greater susceptibility to erroneous beliefs about how gambling works); (c) were more likely to play chance-based games such as lotteries and electronic gambling machines (EGMs) rather than skill-based games such as poker and sports betting; (d) were more likely to report symptoms of depression and anxiety; and (e) more likely to report experiencing problems with overeating and shopping.
- No statistically significant differences were found for (a) PGSI scores, (b) the number of gambling activities engaged in, or (c) the presence of substance use disorder symptoms.
- Despite there being no gender differences for problem gambling severity, female speculative gamblers exhibited known risk factors for problem gambling such as younger age, greater endorsement of gambling fallacies, and a preference for chance-based games [4-6], and psychiatric problems found to be comorbid with problem gambling, especially among female players, including depression, anxiety, overeating, and excessive shopping [7].
- These results indicate that gender might play a role in the likelihood that speculative gamblers may engage in risky or problem gambling behaviours. A gender-based approach to understanding how women conceptualize the risks and benefits of gambling, and raising responsible gambling awareness among female players may be warranted. Future research could include a longitudinal examination to determine whether risky behaviours lead to differential increases in gambling severity over time.

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