

Council of Europe International Cooperation Group on  
Drugs and Addictions



# GENDER DIFFERENCES AND TRENDS IN SUBSTANCE USE AMONG TUNISIAN ADOLESCENT STUDENTS

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- **Coordination:**
  - National Institute of Health (INSP)
- **Partners:**
  - **Tunisia**
    - Ministry of Health (DMSU)
    - Ministry of Education (ONE)
    - Tunisian Society of Addictology
  - **International (technical and financial support)**
    - Pompidou Group, Council of Europe
    - Scientific advisor :Institute of Clinical Physiology, National Research Council – CNR, Italy

No conflict of interest regarding the presentation of these results

- Psychoactive substances use and addiction → **major public health problem in Tunisia** among vulnerable people as **YOUTH (MedSPAD)**
- For prevention & control, need for:
  - **Regular epidemiological surveillance**
  - &**
  - **Identification of high risk groups**
- We aim to study gender differences in substance use prevalence and its trends among school youth



**Students population:** Adolescents aged 16 to 18 (birth cohort 2005-2003).

**Students school grade:** 1st - 2nd year high schools.

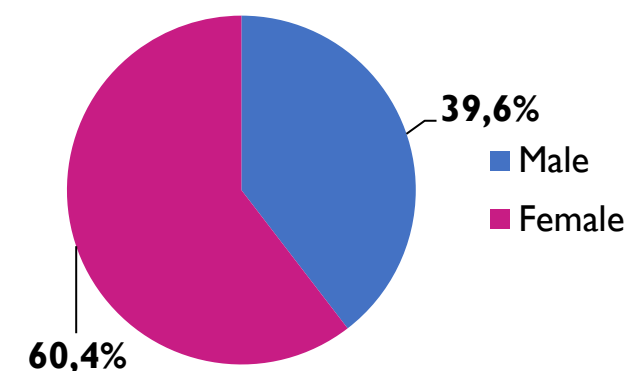
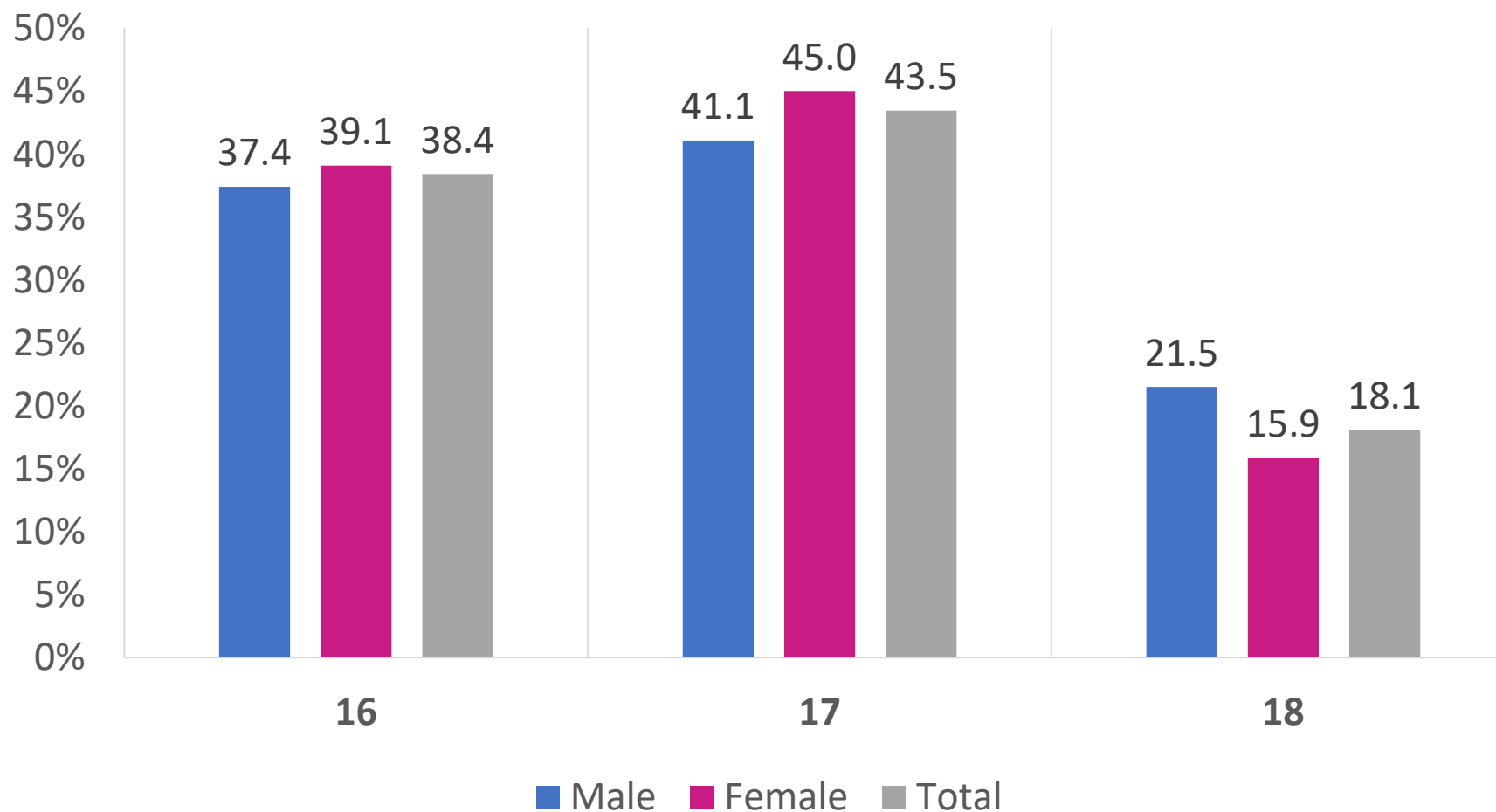
**Sampling Method:** Random Cluster Sampling.

**Data Collection Time:** April-June 2021.

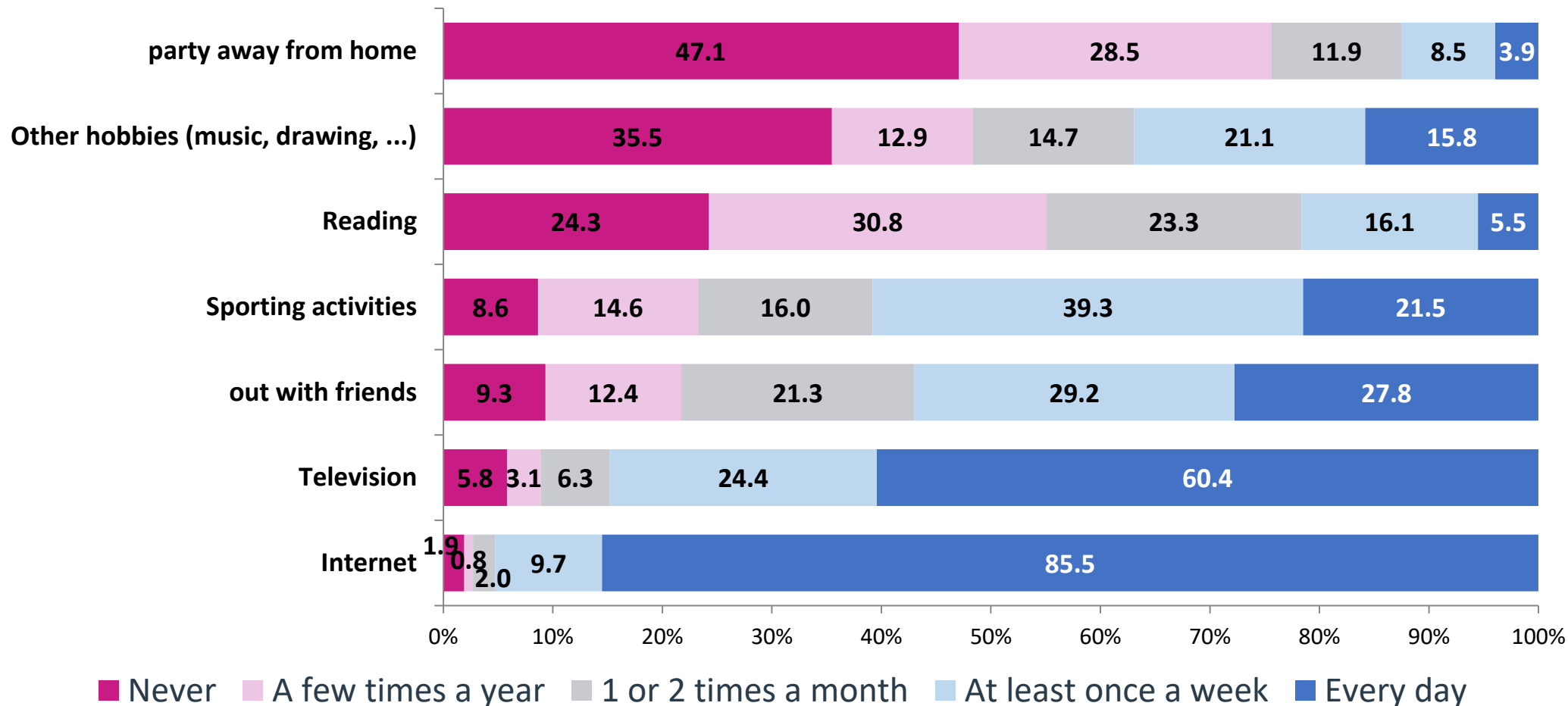
**Data Collection Mode:** Paper & Pencil.

**Sample Size:** 6201 students from 327 schools/classes.

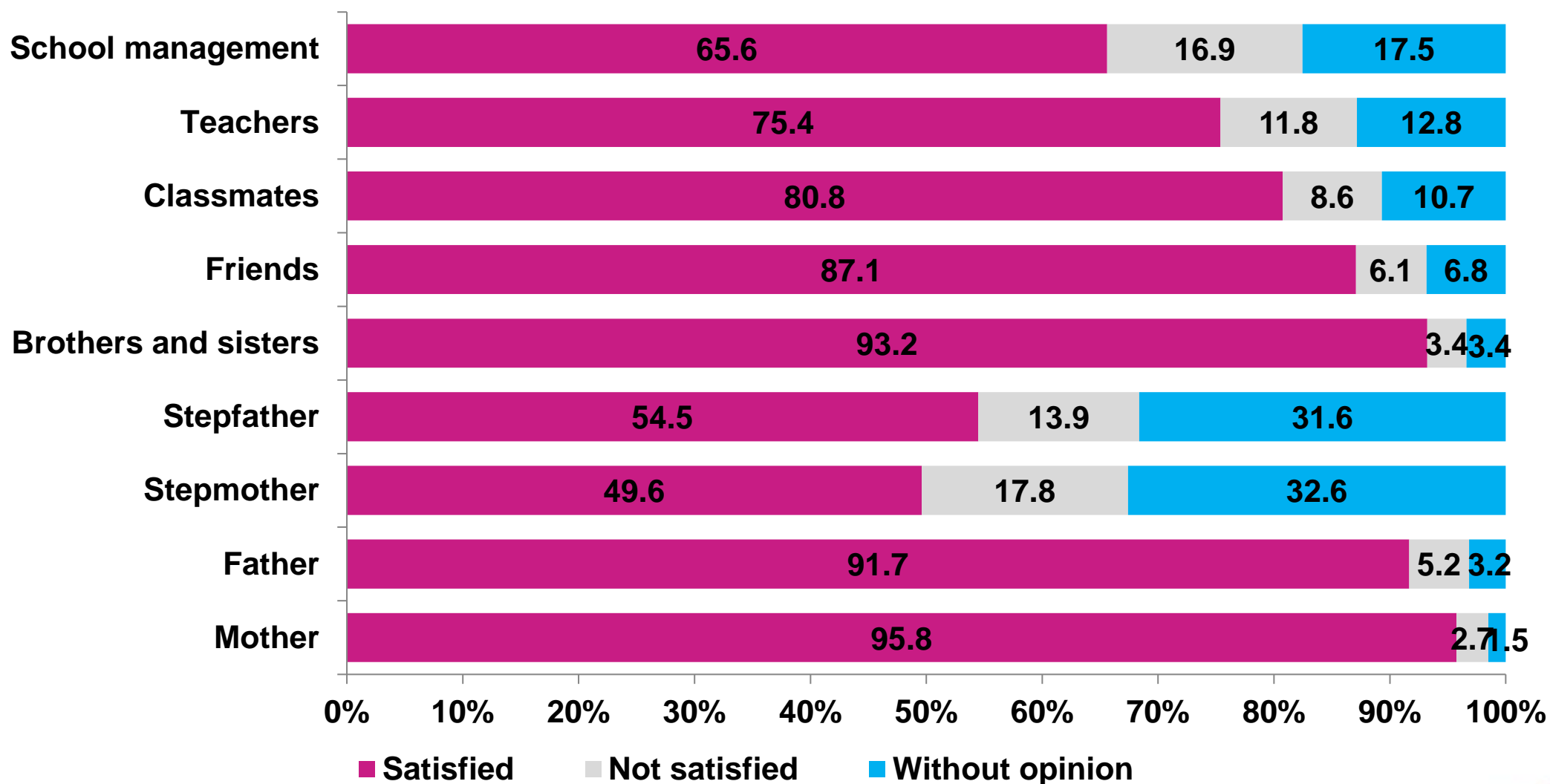
### Distribution of the sample by age and gender



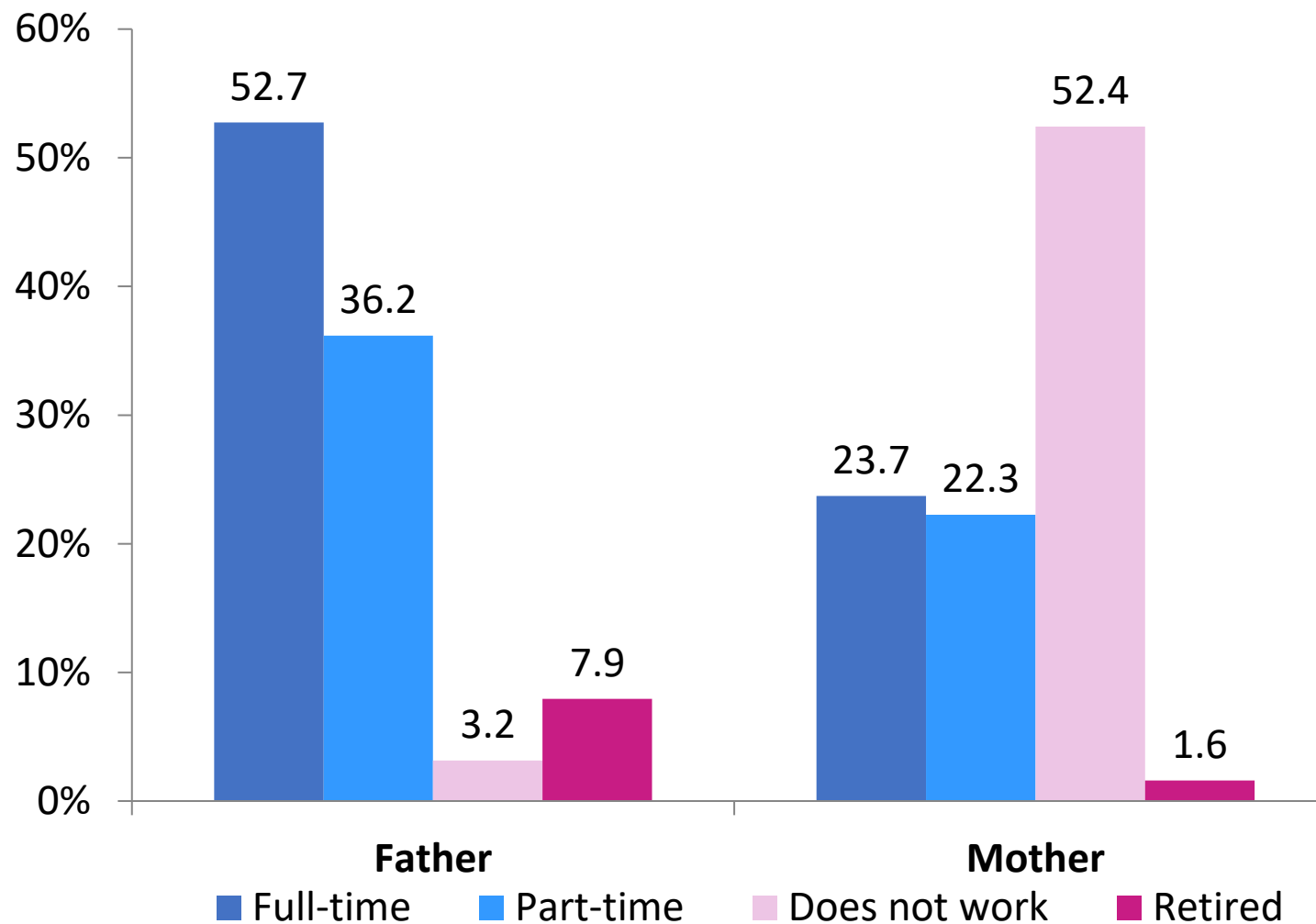
### Frequency of leisure activities among high school students (16-18 years)



### Perceived satisfaction with relationships with others

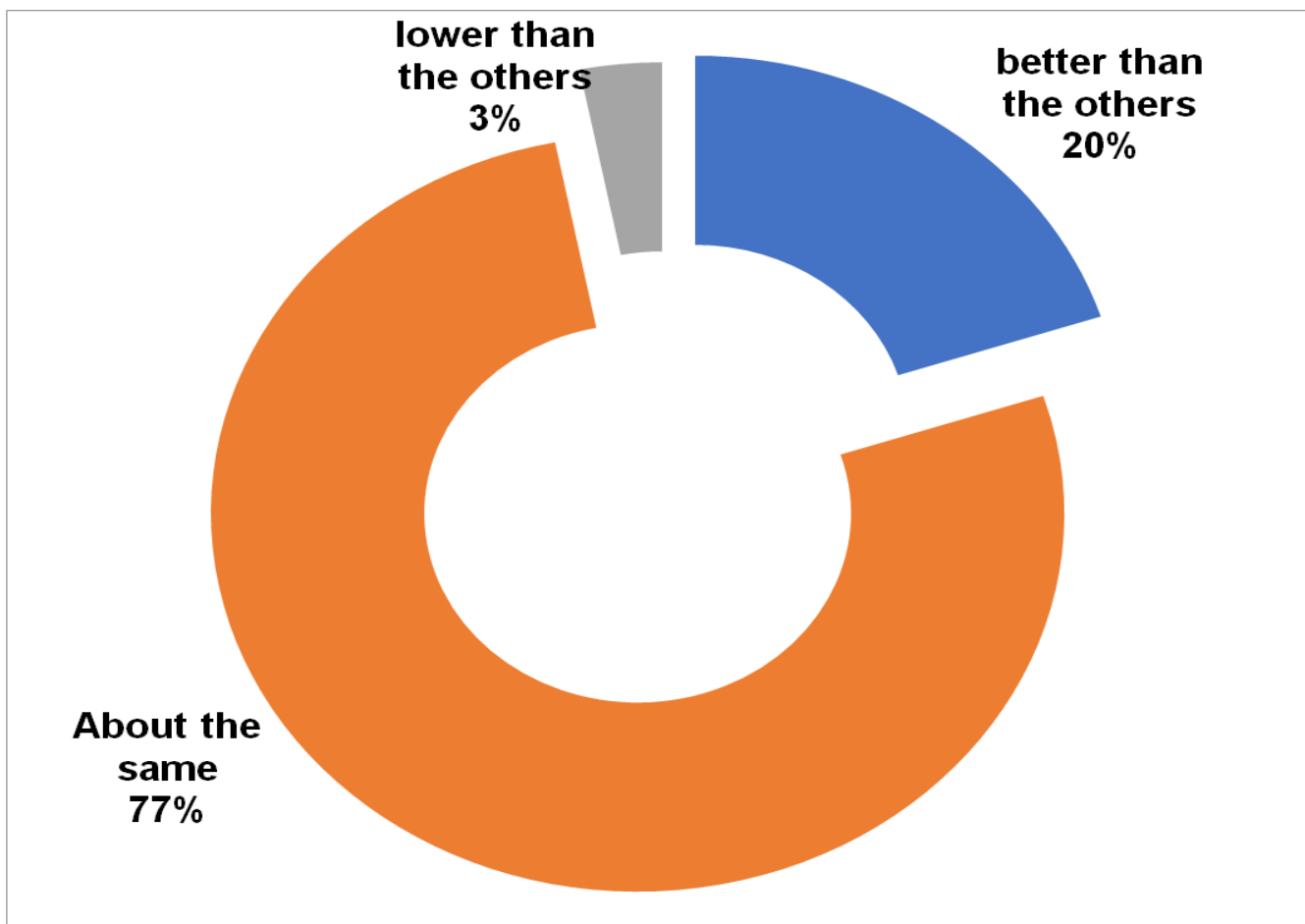


### Working situation of parents



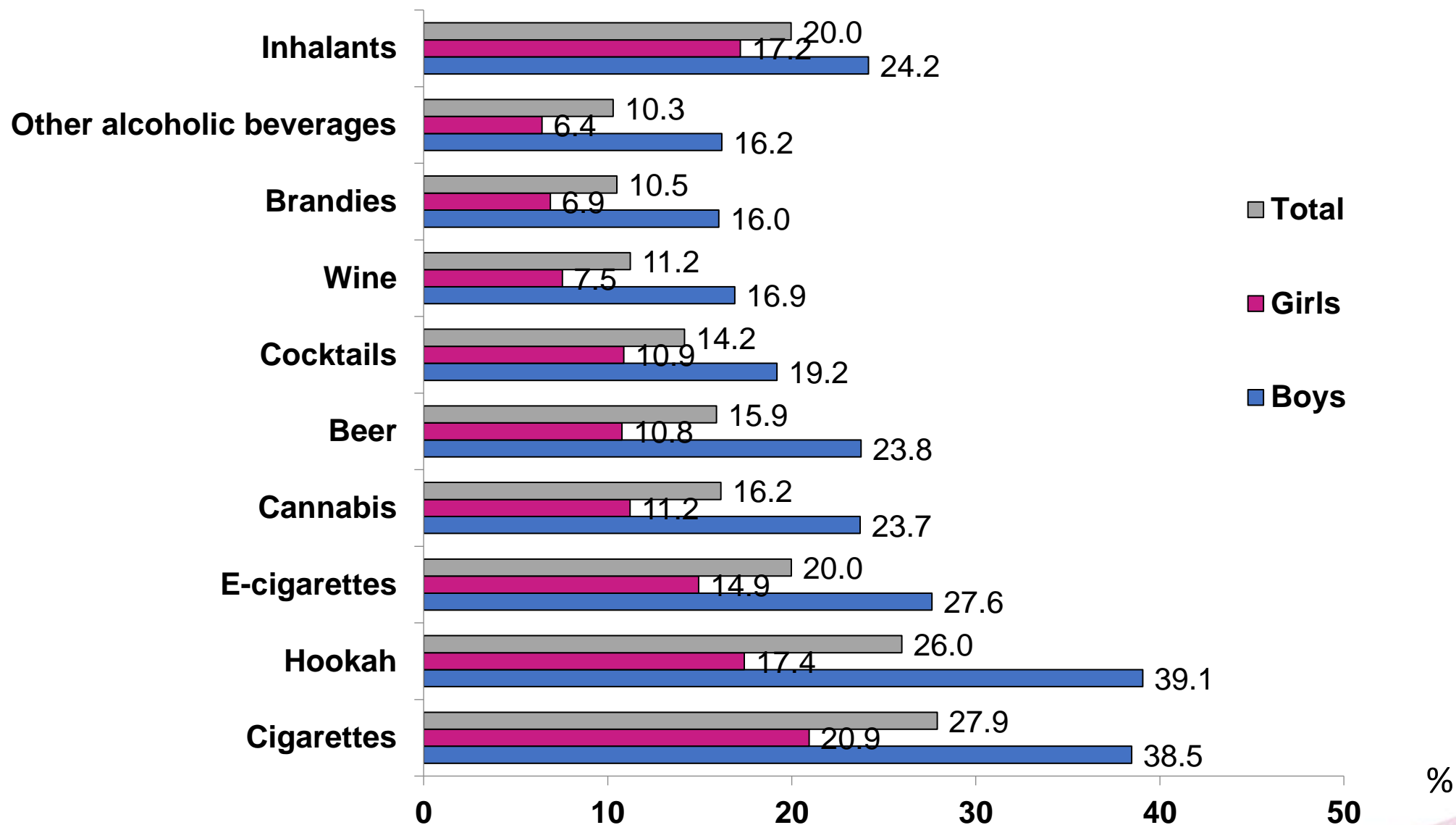


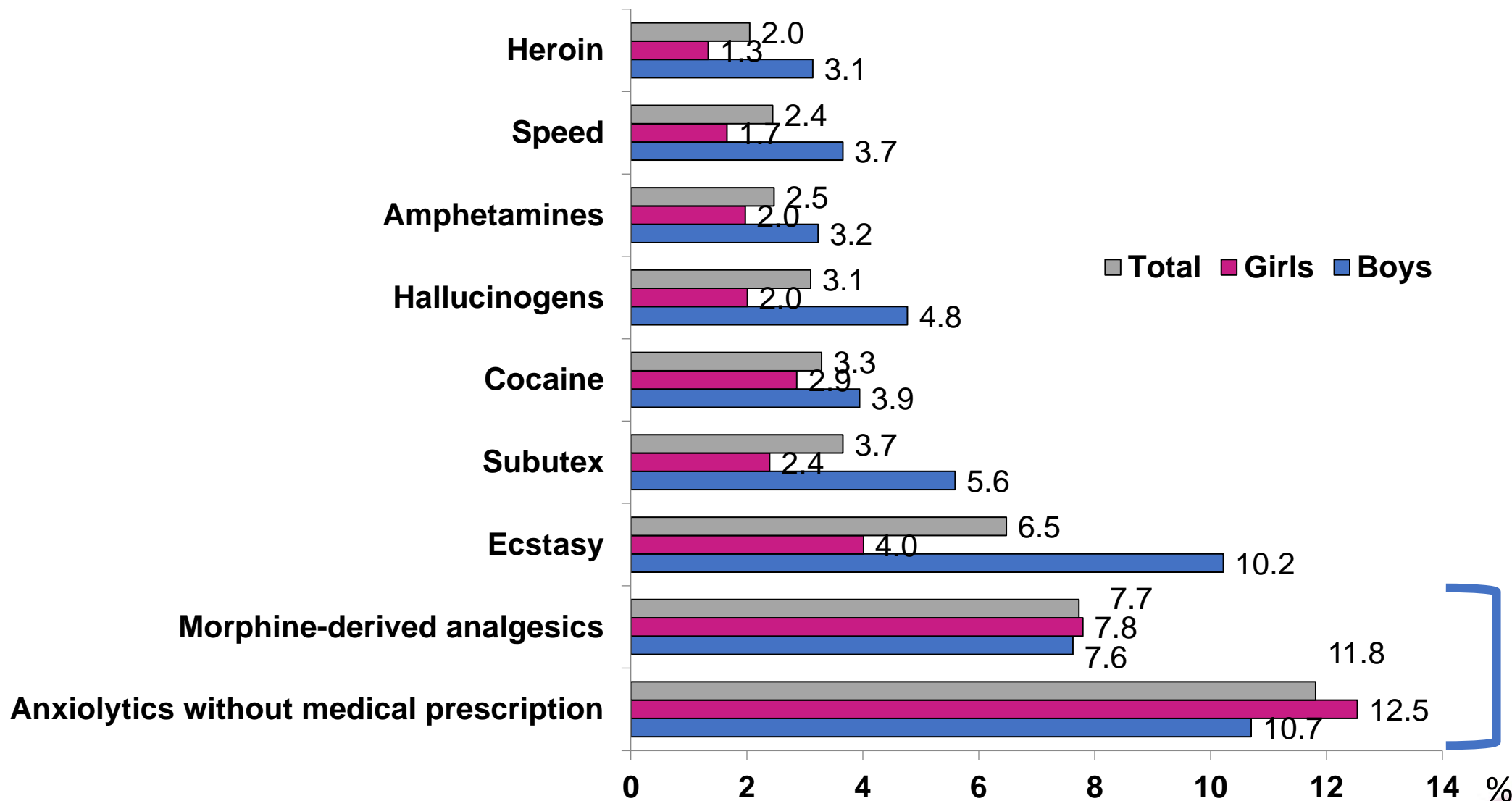
### Financial/Other Status

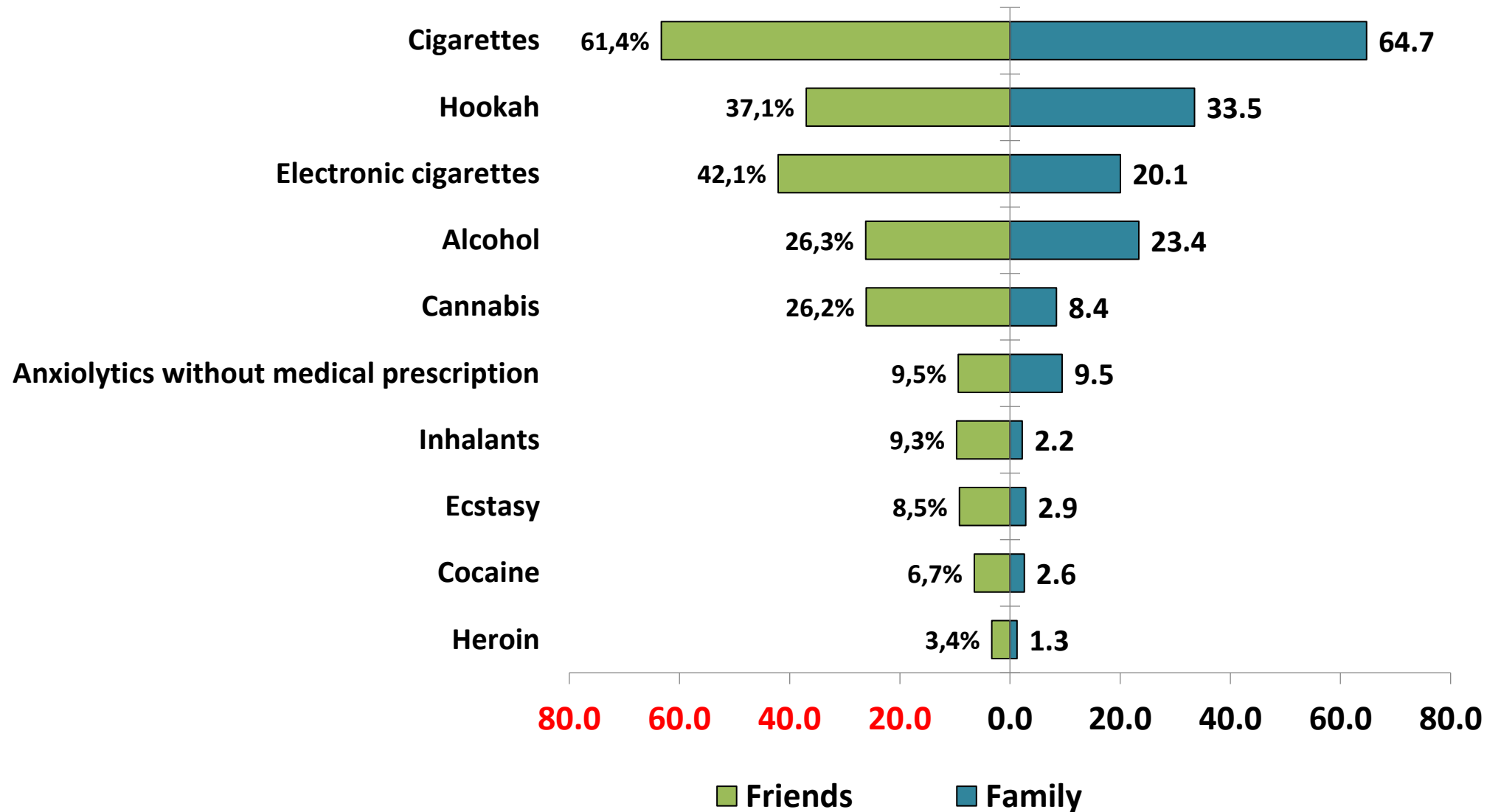


# Accessibility to drugs





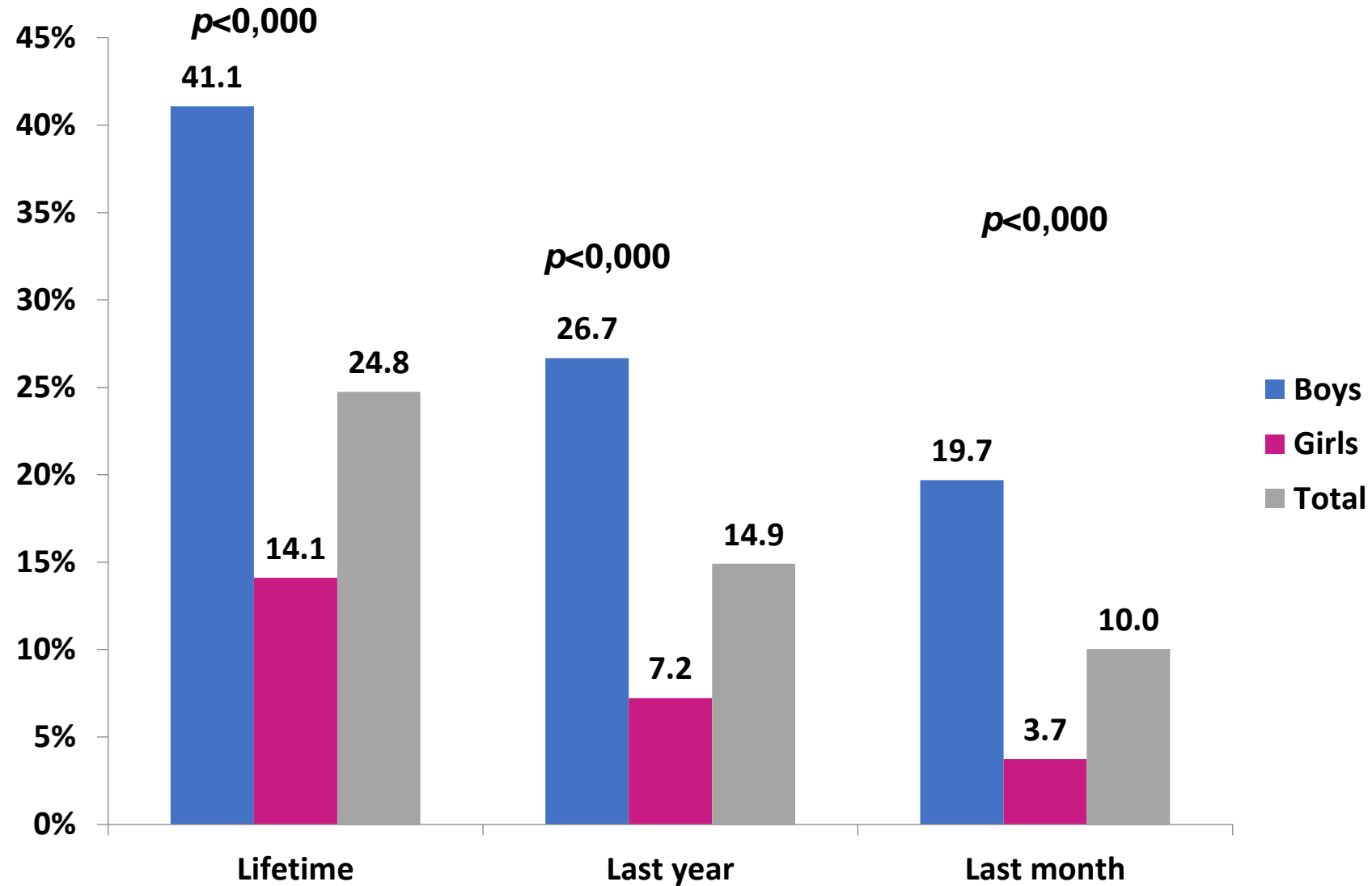




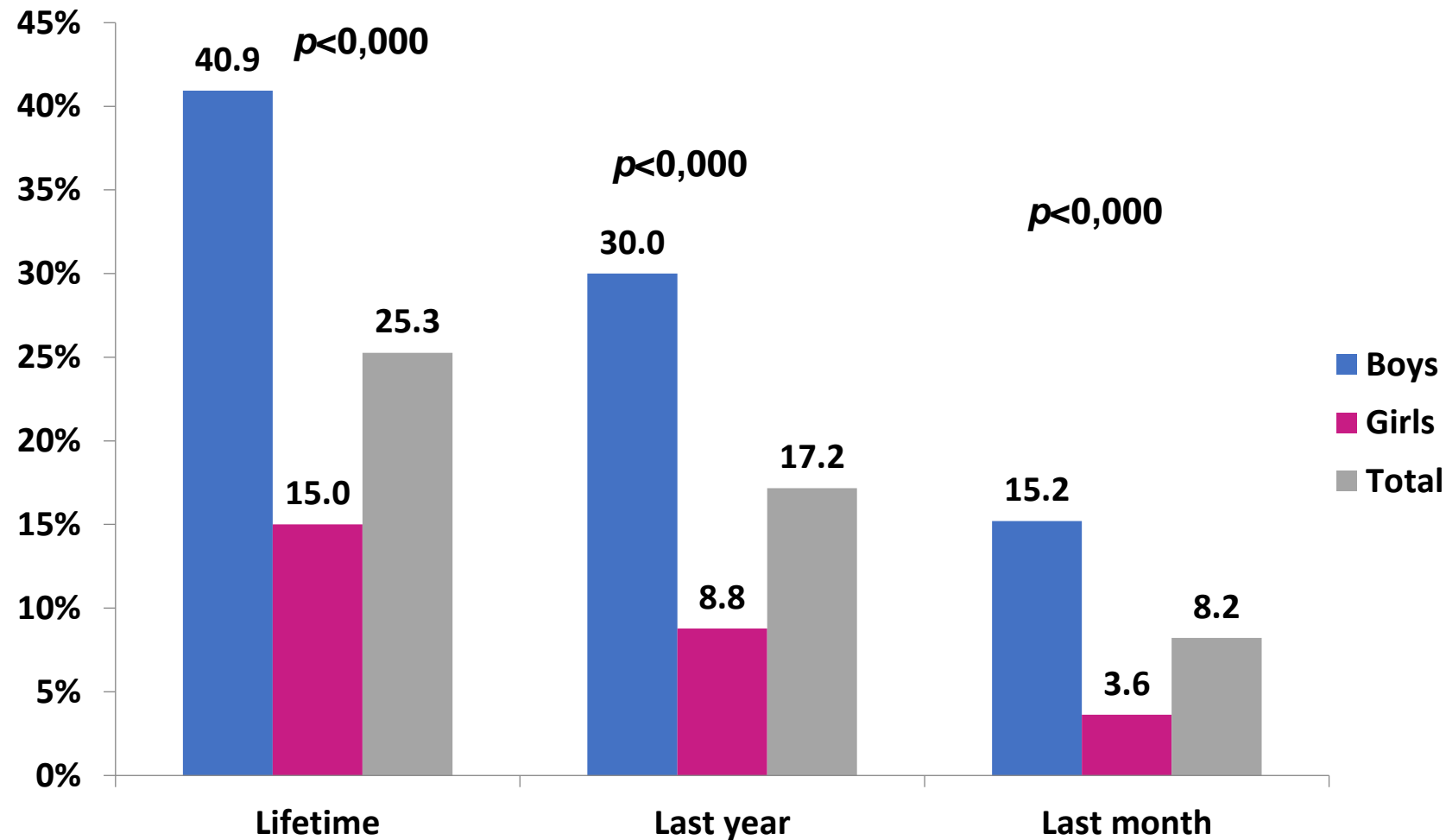
## Use of psychoactive substances by high school students



# MedSPAD Tunisia 2021: Prevalence of cigarette use by gender

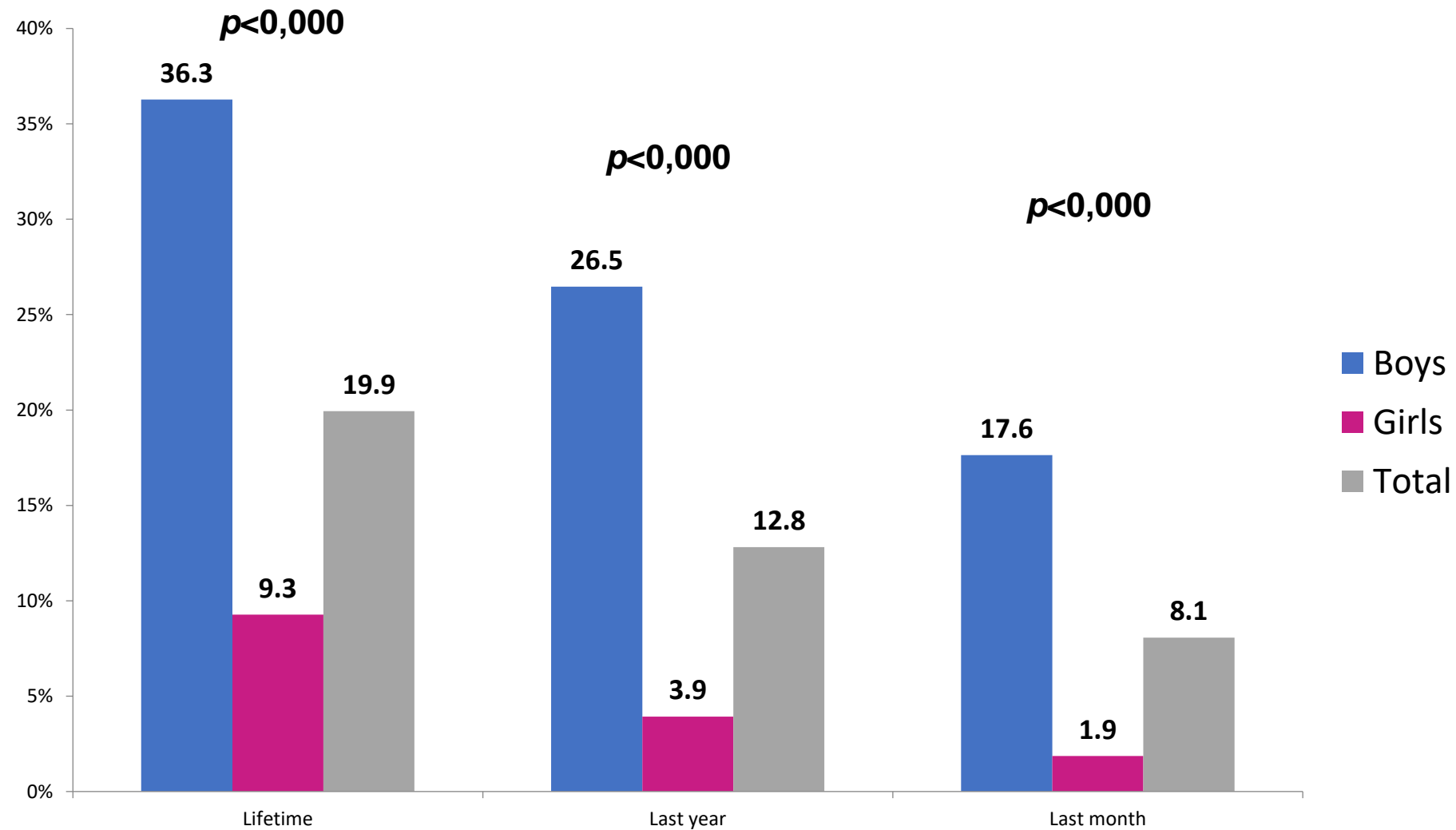


# MedSPAD Tunisia 2021: Prevalence of e-cigarette use by gender

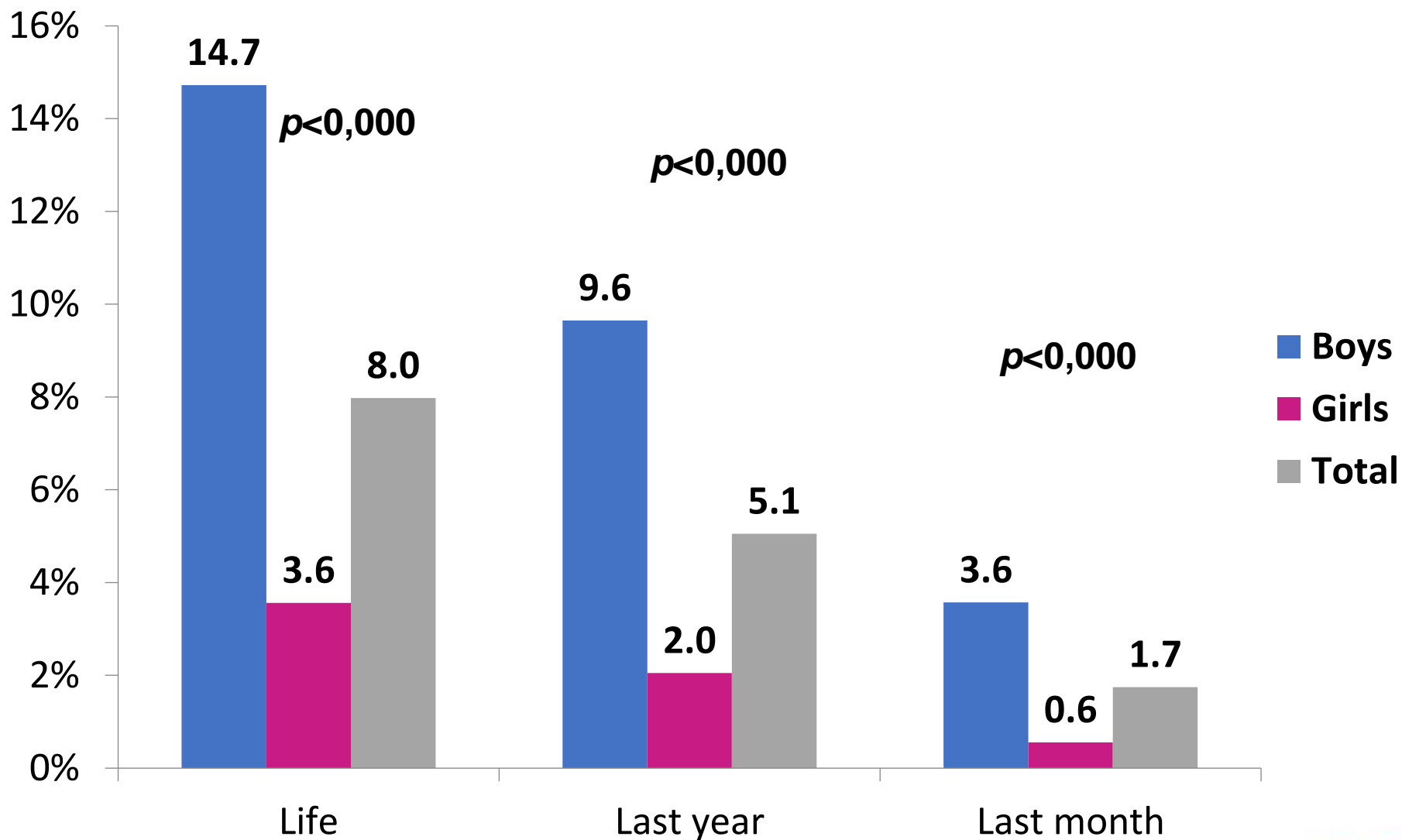




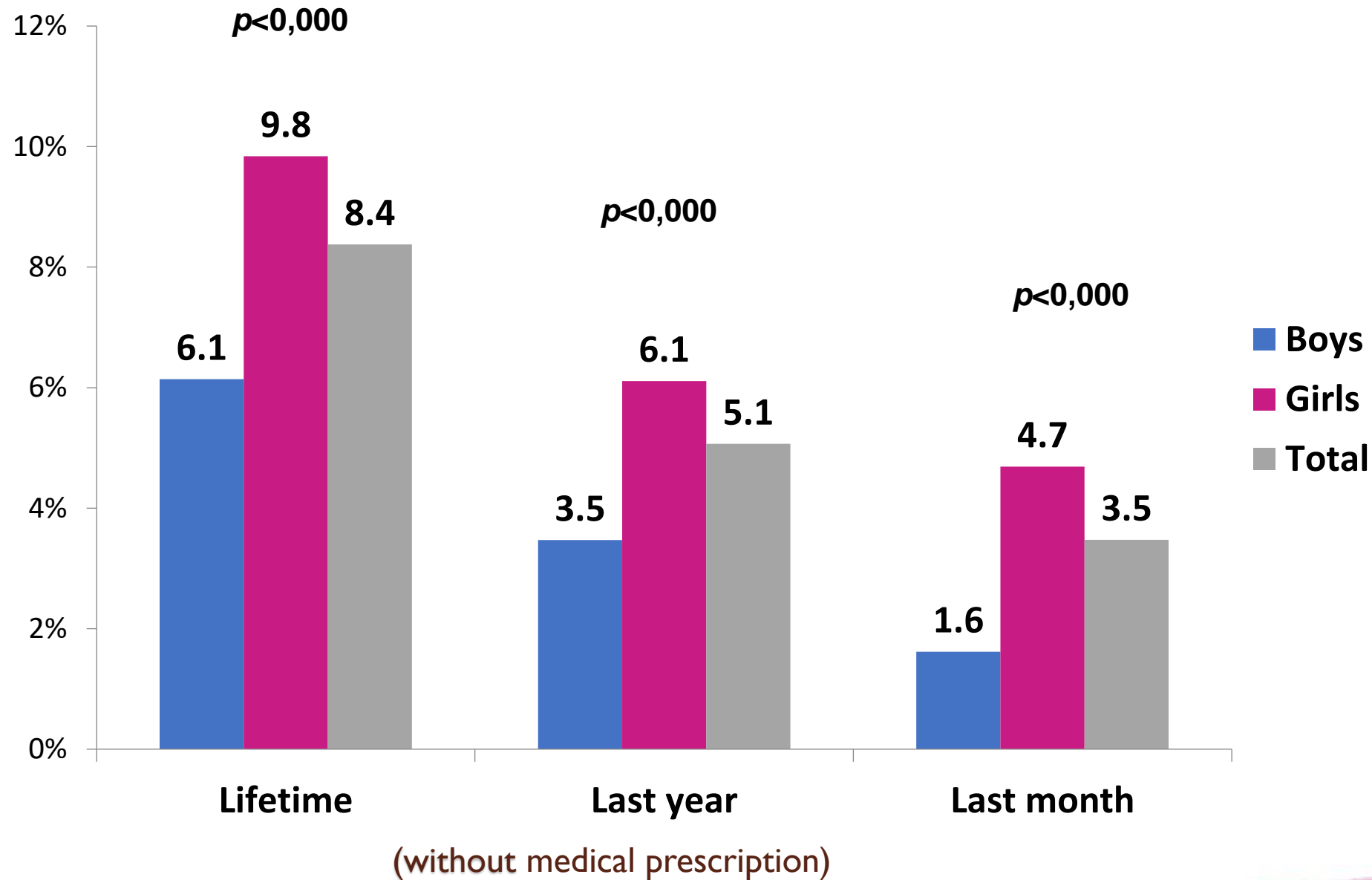
# MedSPAD Tunisia 2021: Prevalence of hooka use by gender

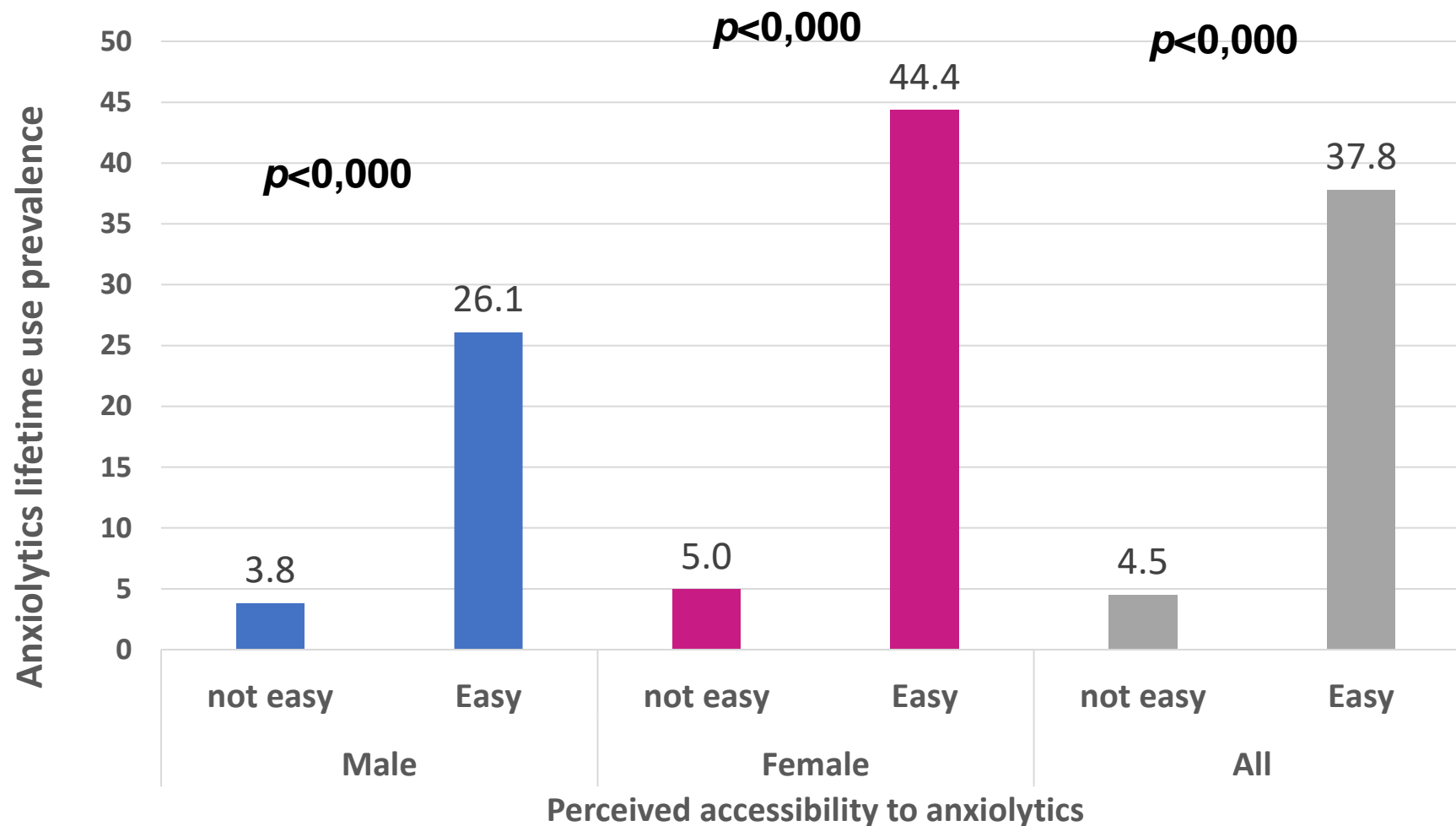


# MedSPAD Tunisia 2021: Prevalence of alcohol use by gender



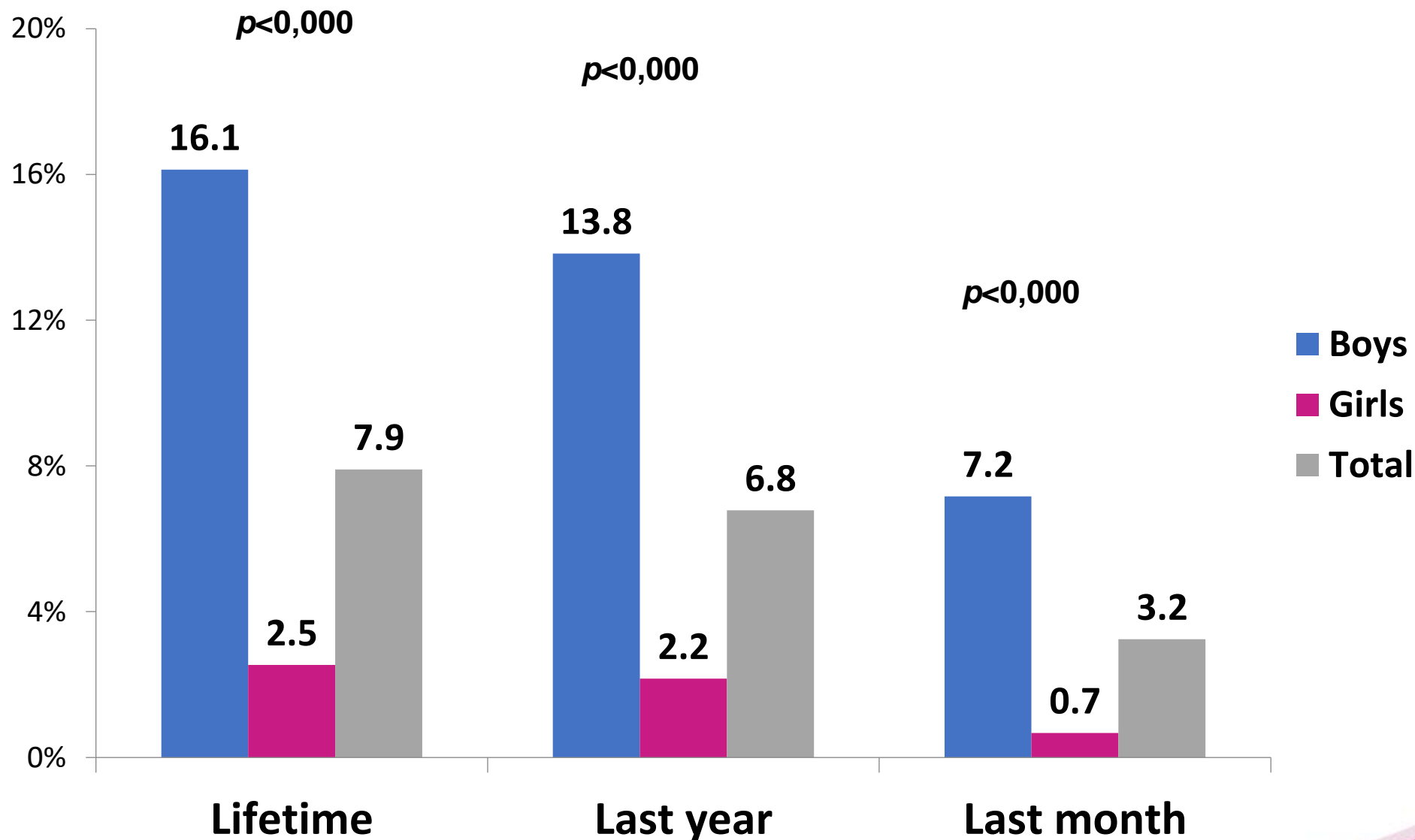
# MedSPAD Tunisia 2021: Prevalence of anxiolytics use by gender

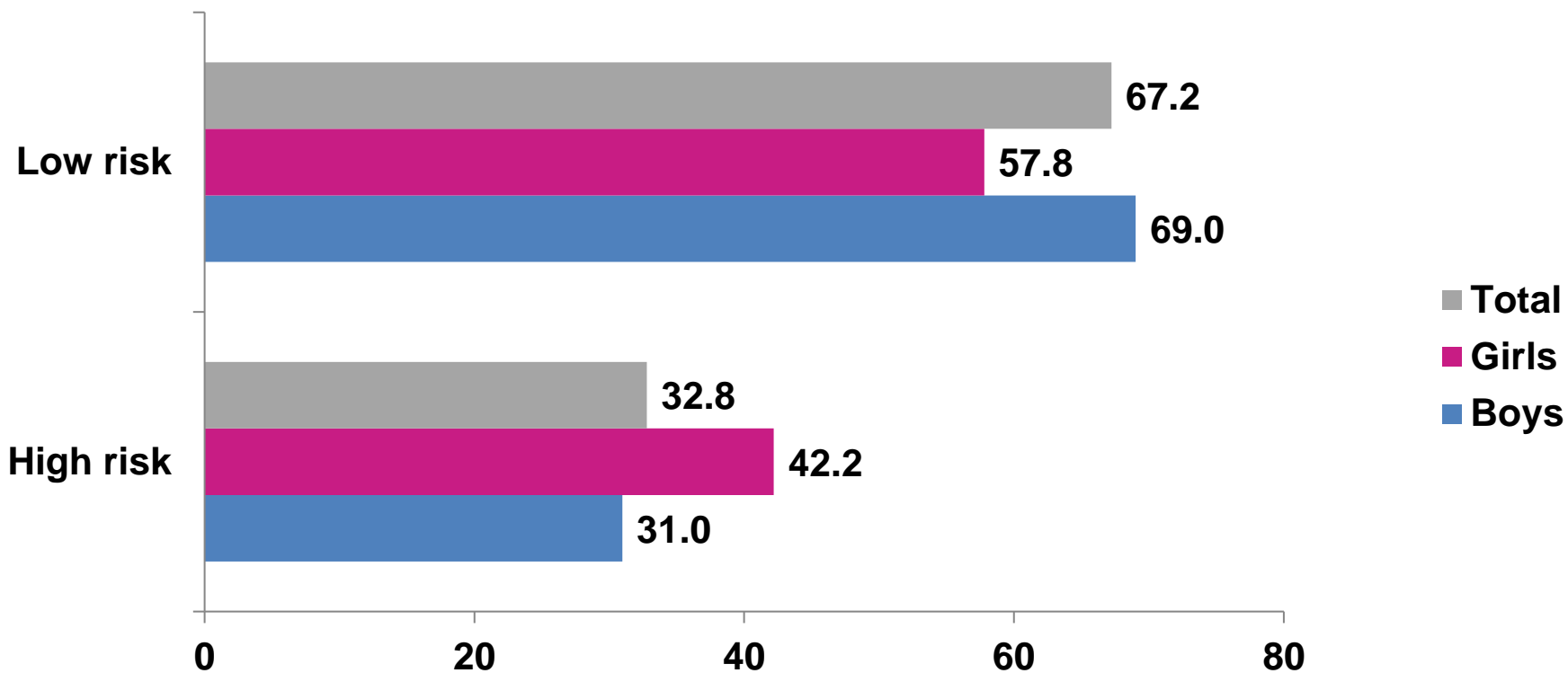




%

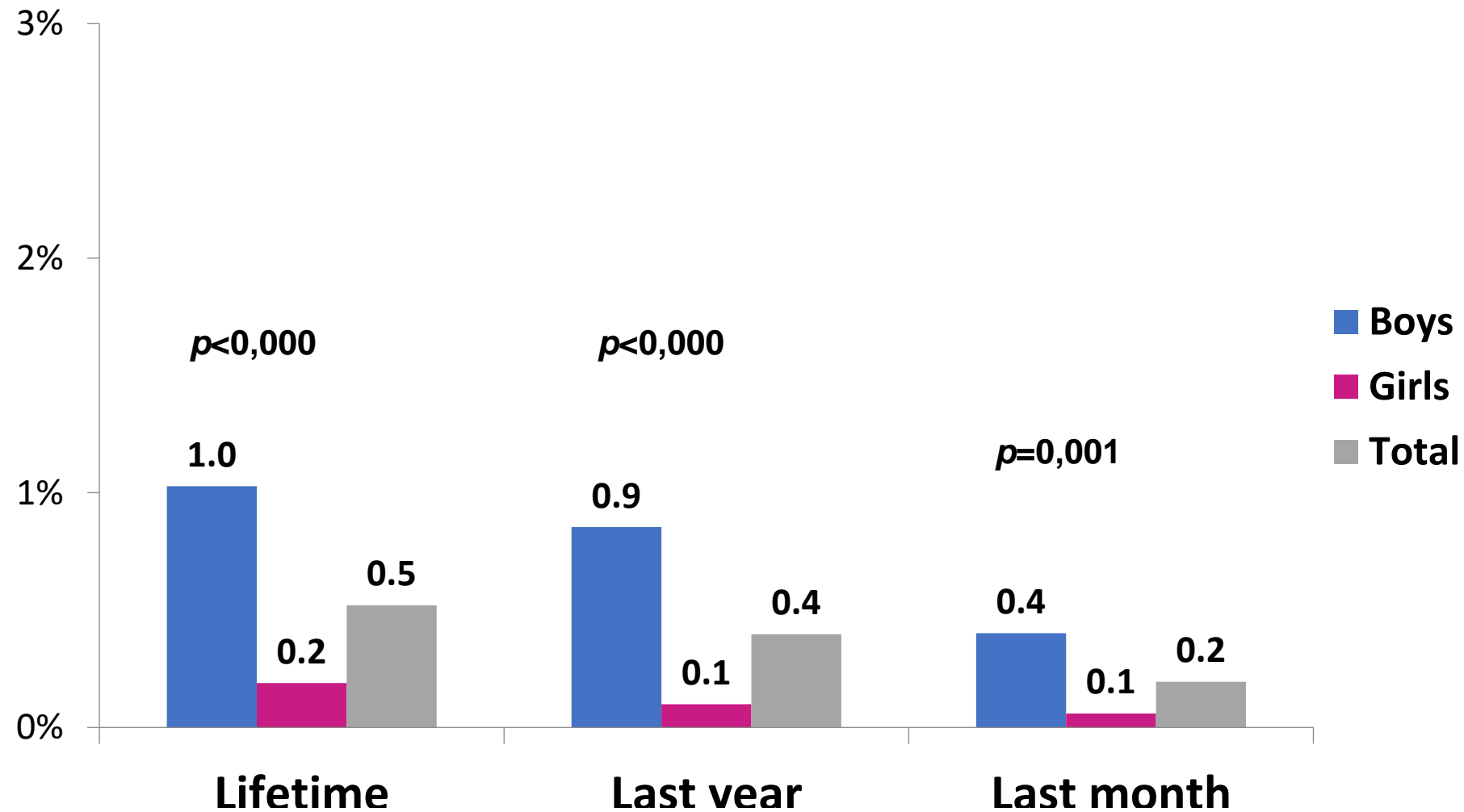
# MedSPAD Tunisia 2021: Prevalence of cannabis use by gender



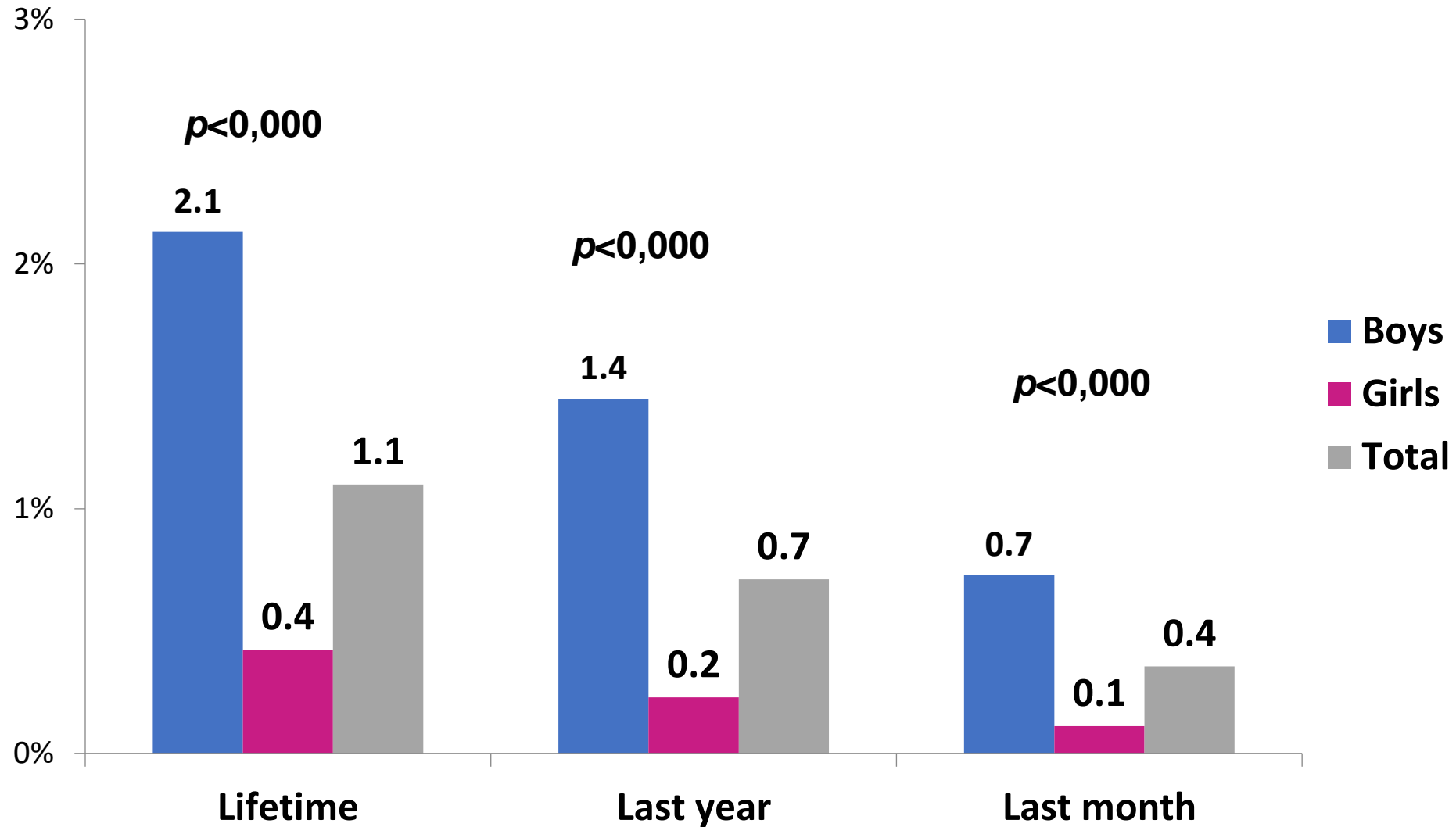


Distribution of Cannabis users (% , Cannabis Abuse Screening Score)

# MedSPAD Tunisia 2021: Prevalence of cocaine use by gender

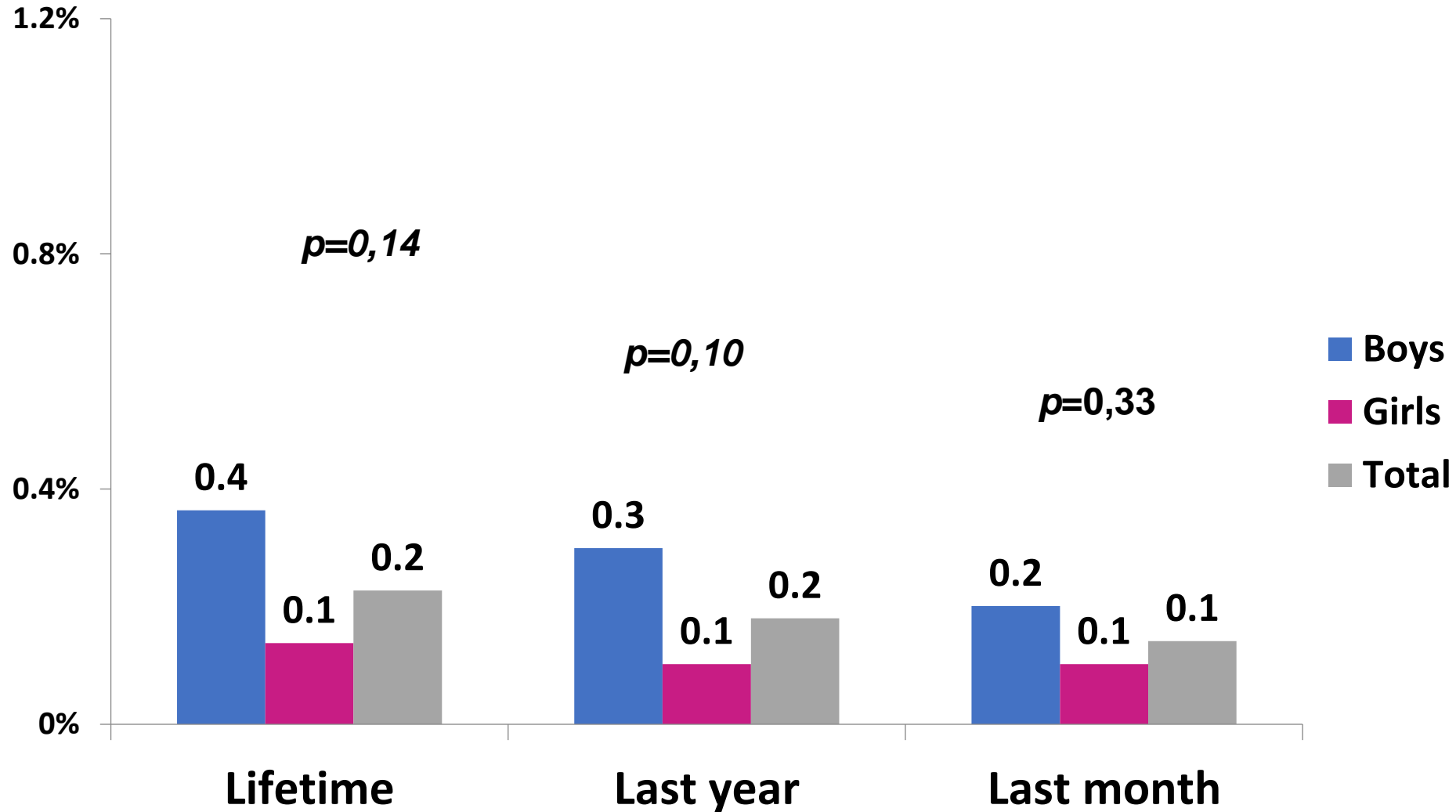


# MedSPAD Tunisia 2021: Prevalence of ecstasy use by gender

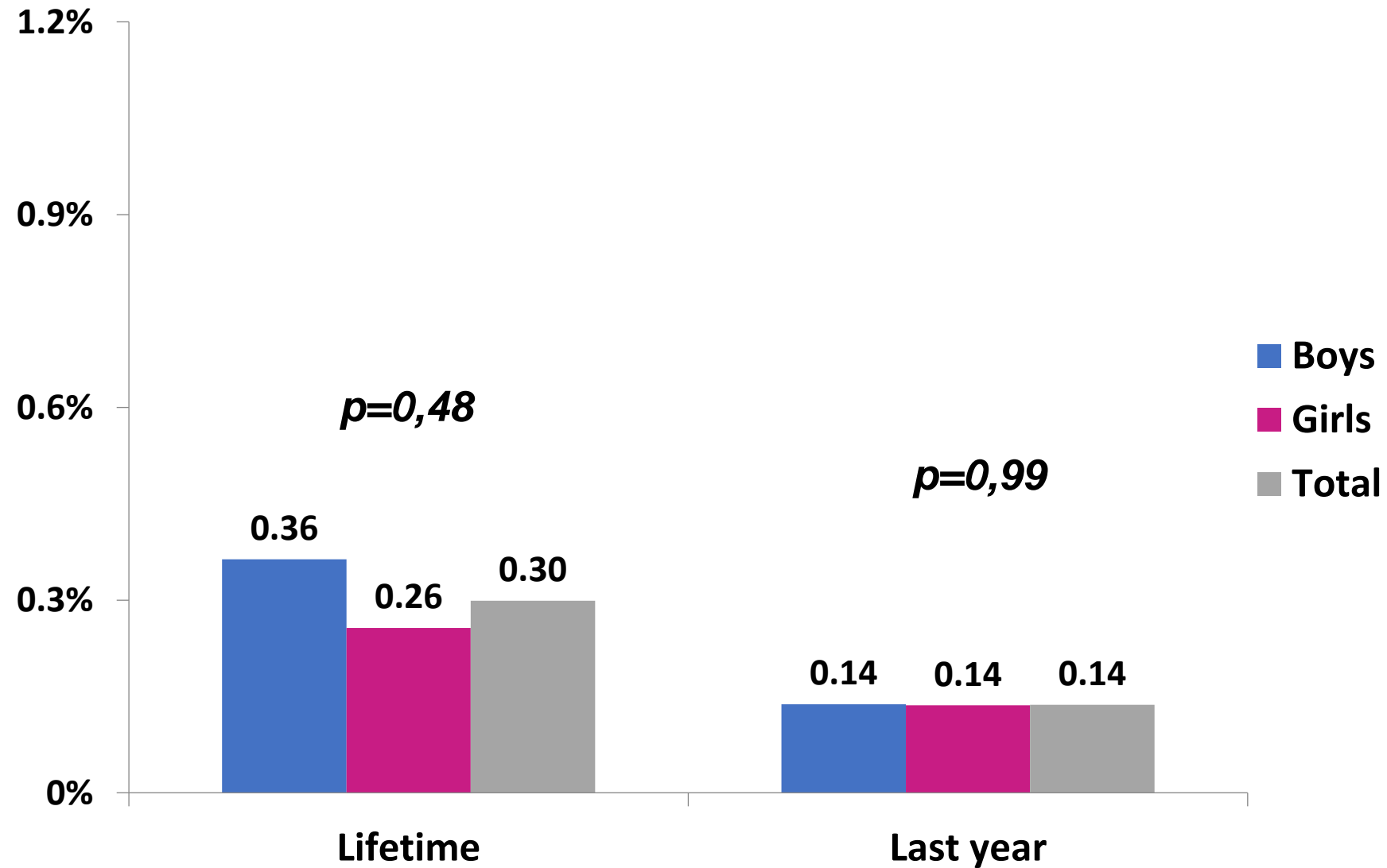


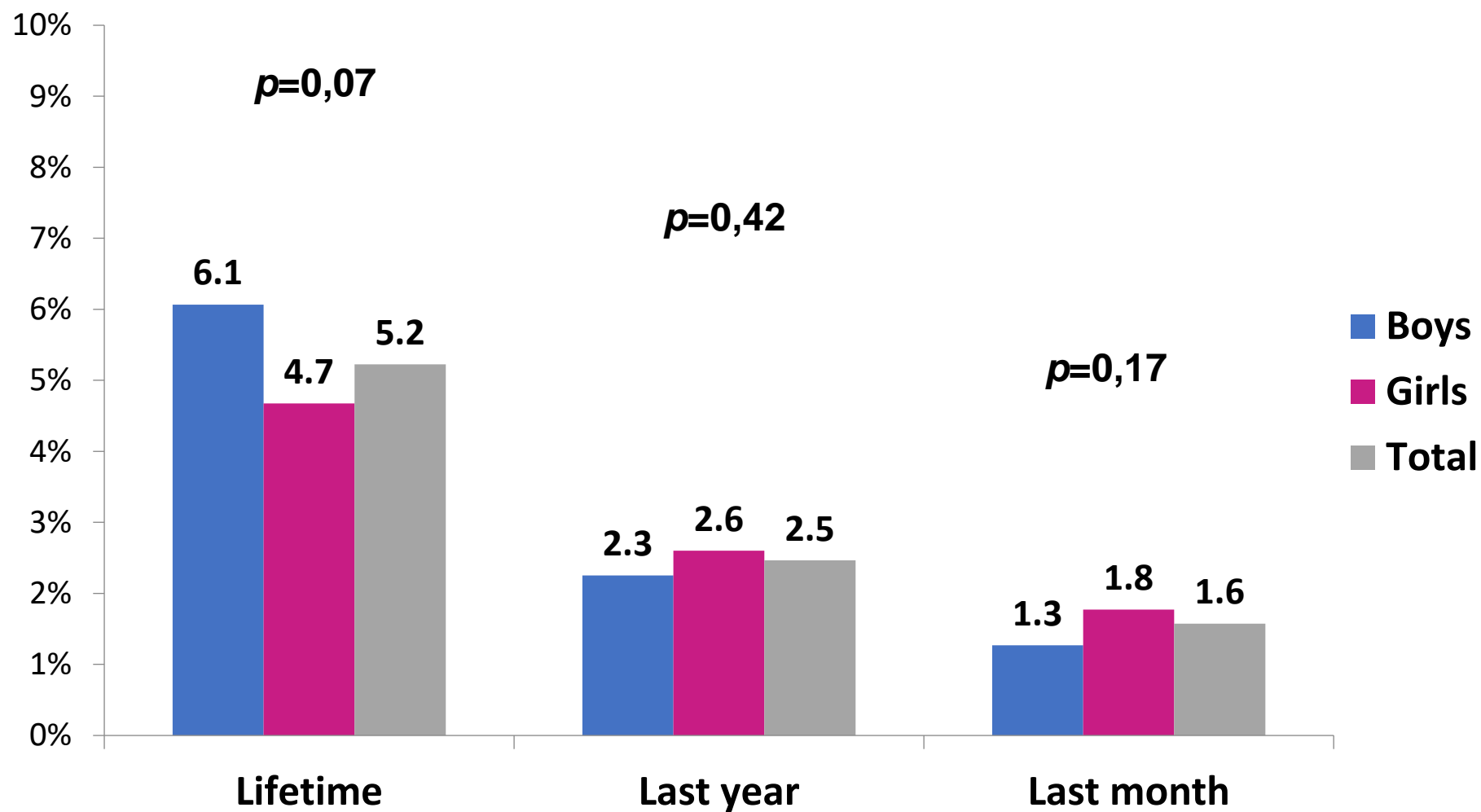


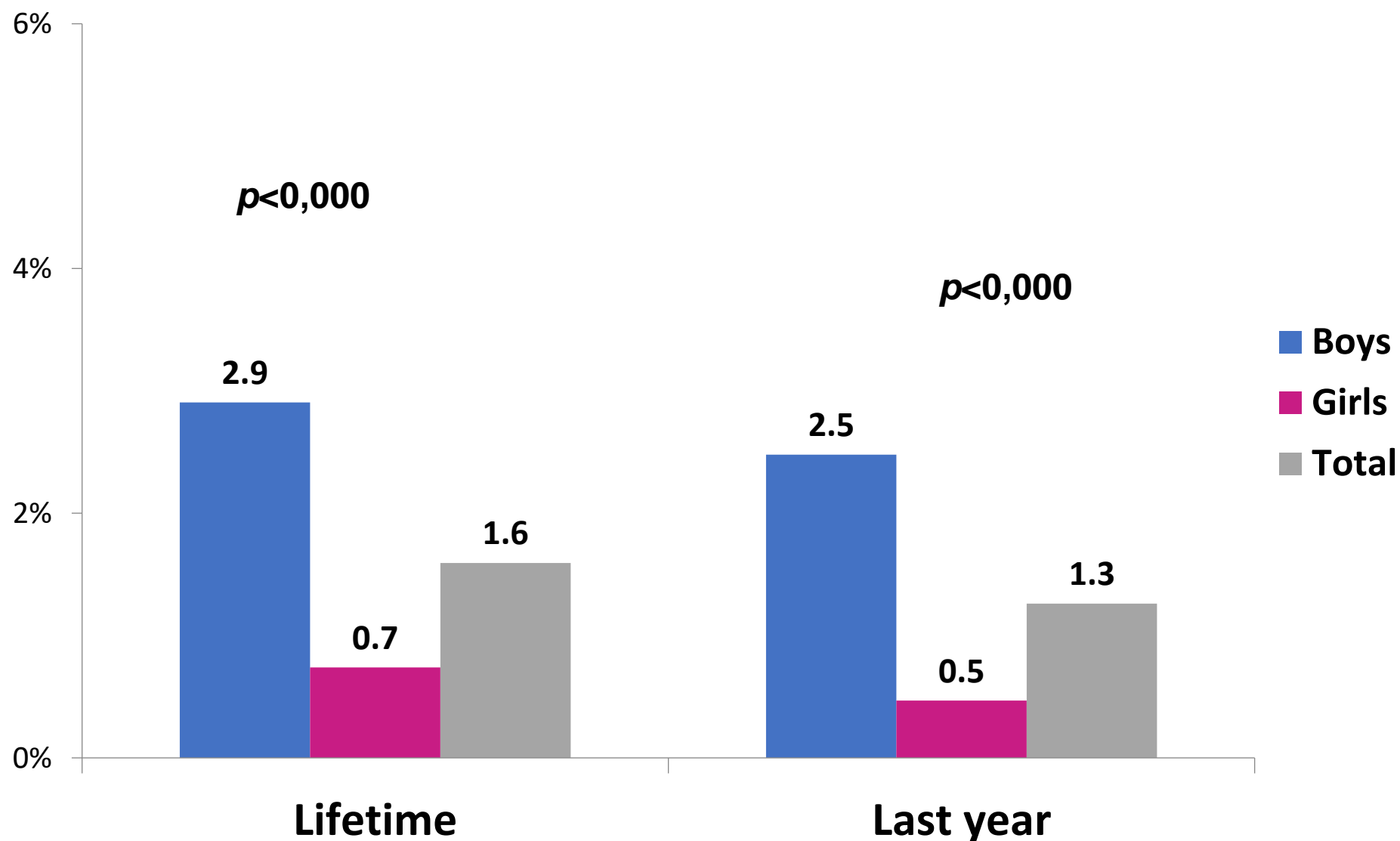
# MedSPAD Tunisia 2021: Prevalence of heroin use by gender



# MedSPAD Tunisia 2021: Prevalence of subutex use by gender

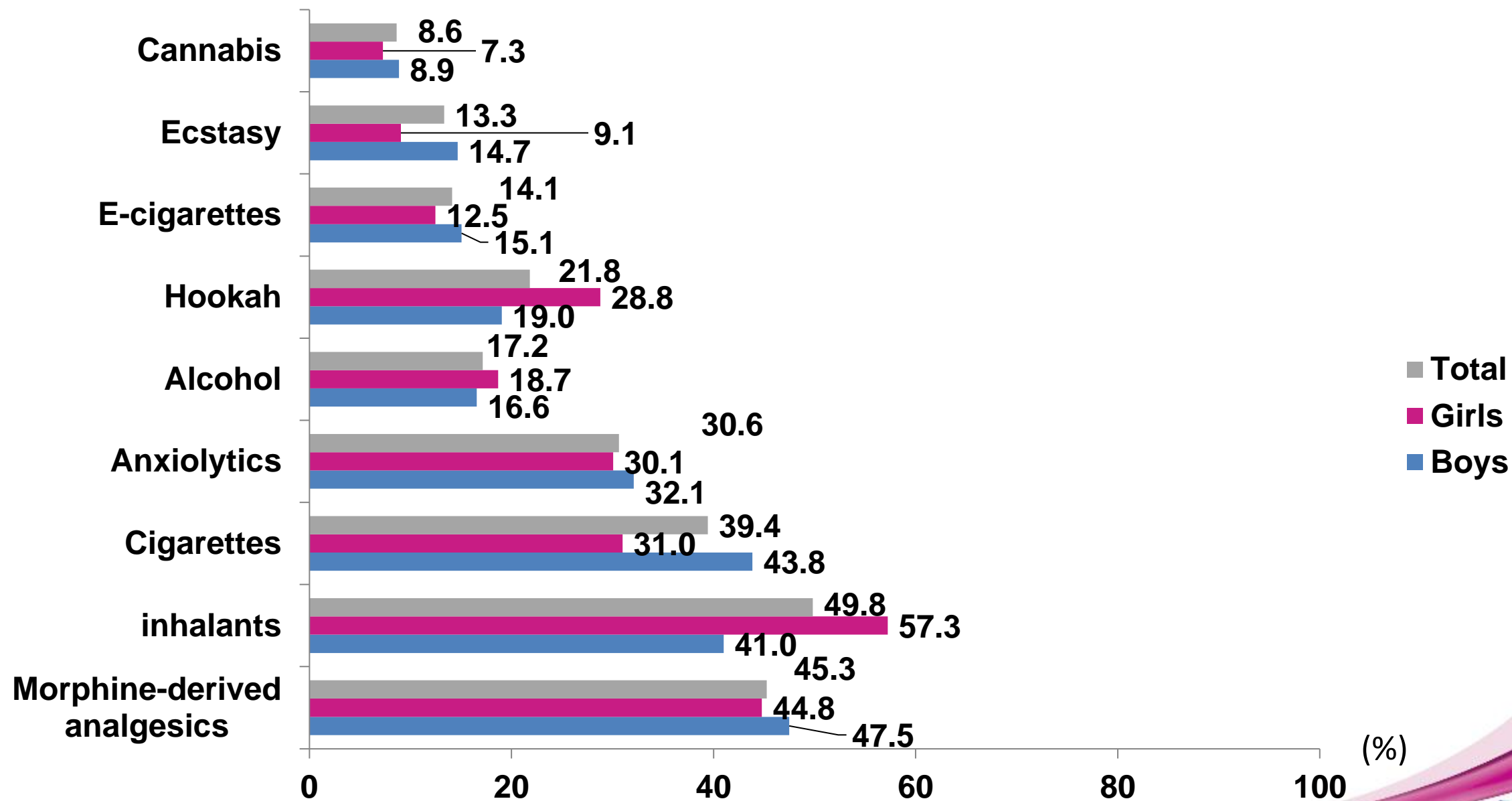


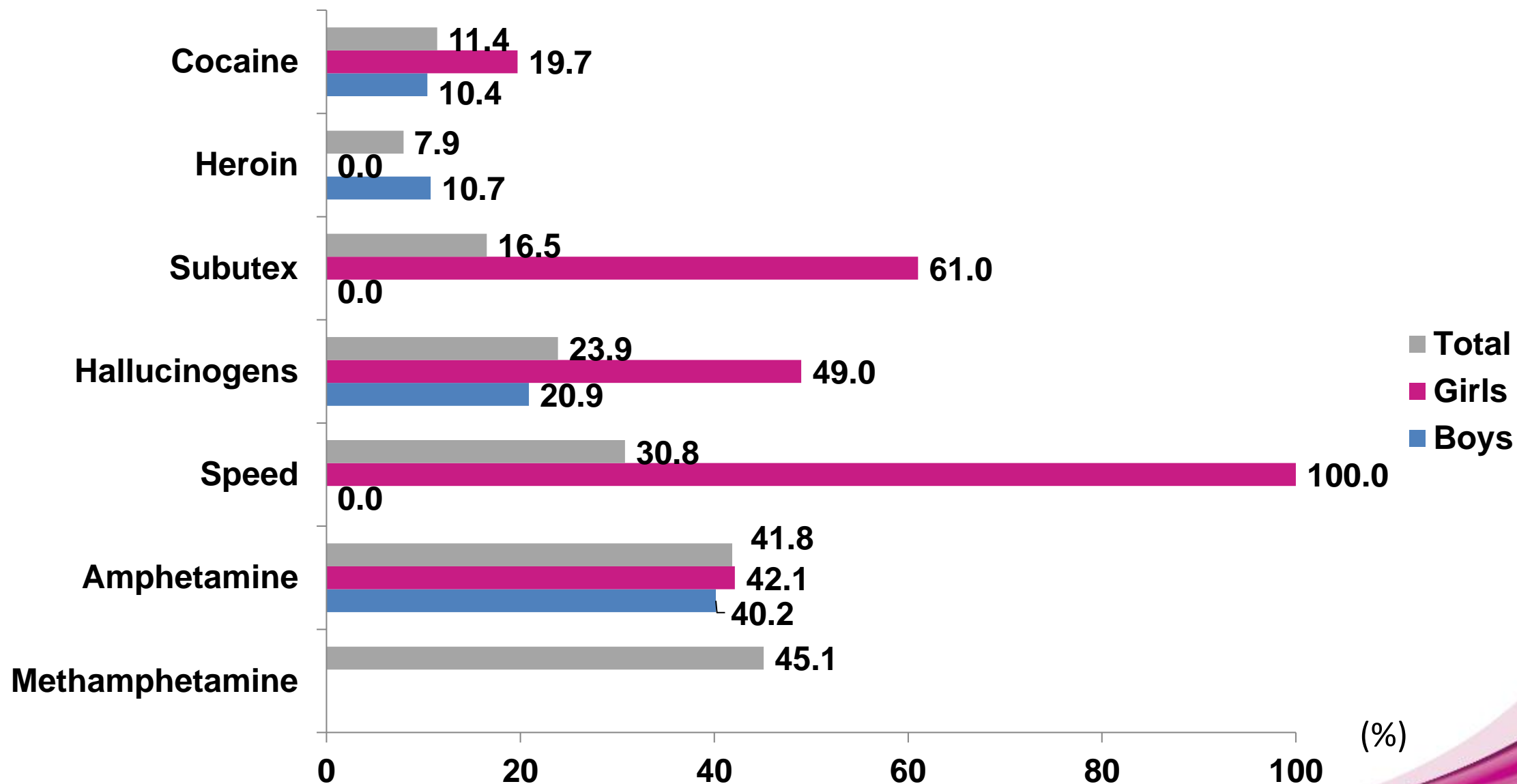


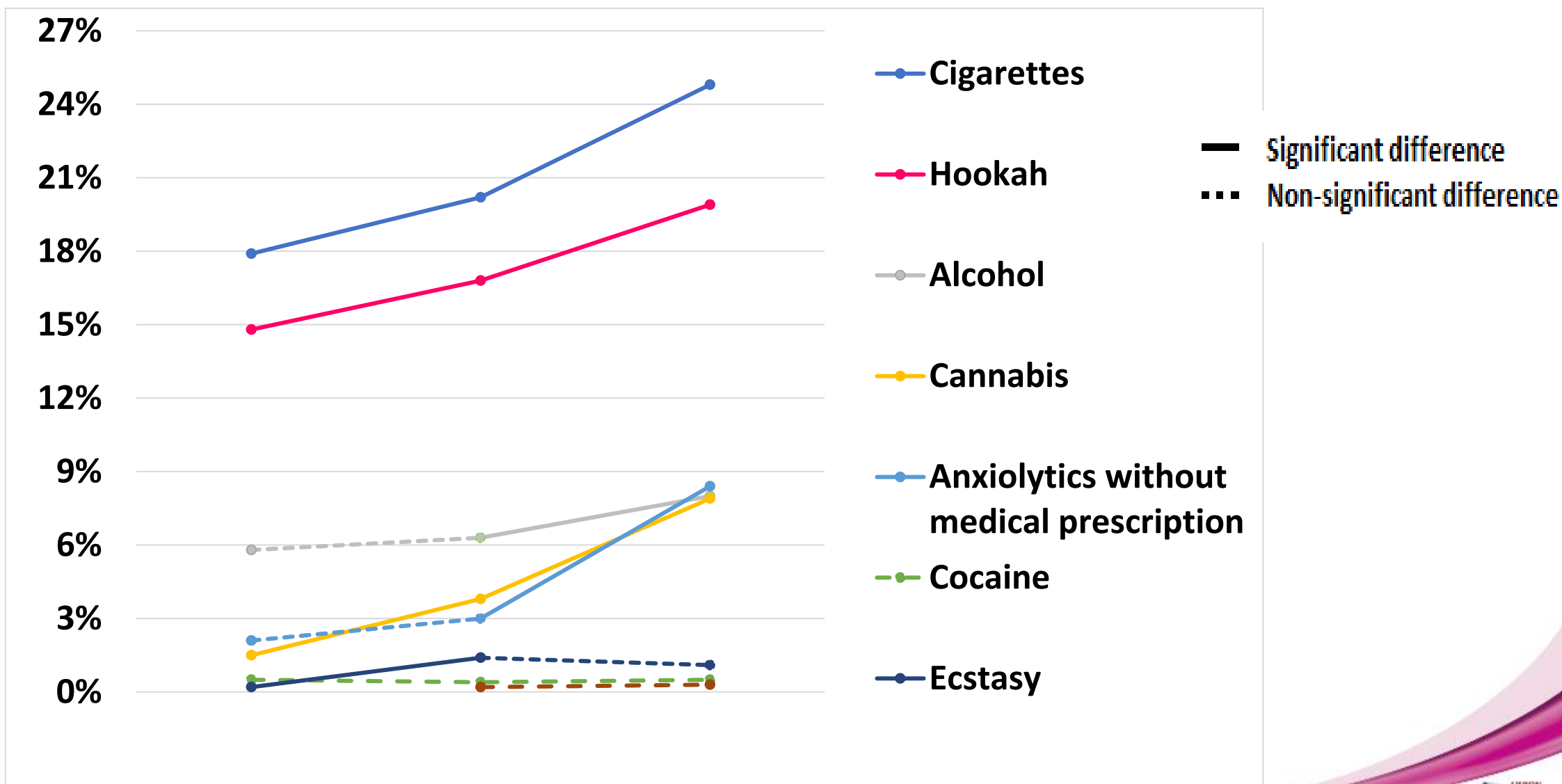


# MedSPAD Tunisia 2021:

## Frequency of early initiation (age 13 years) of PAS use by gender

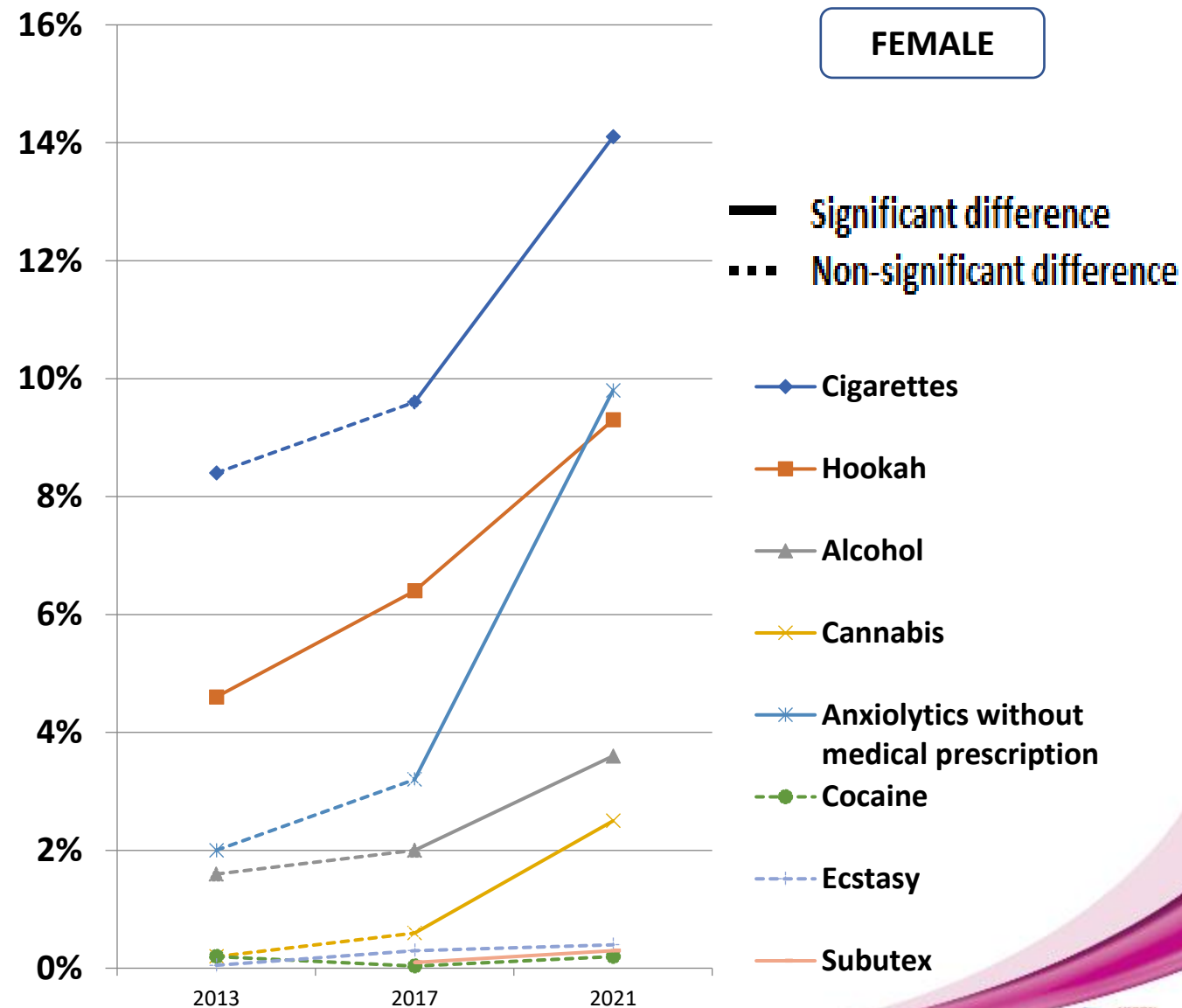
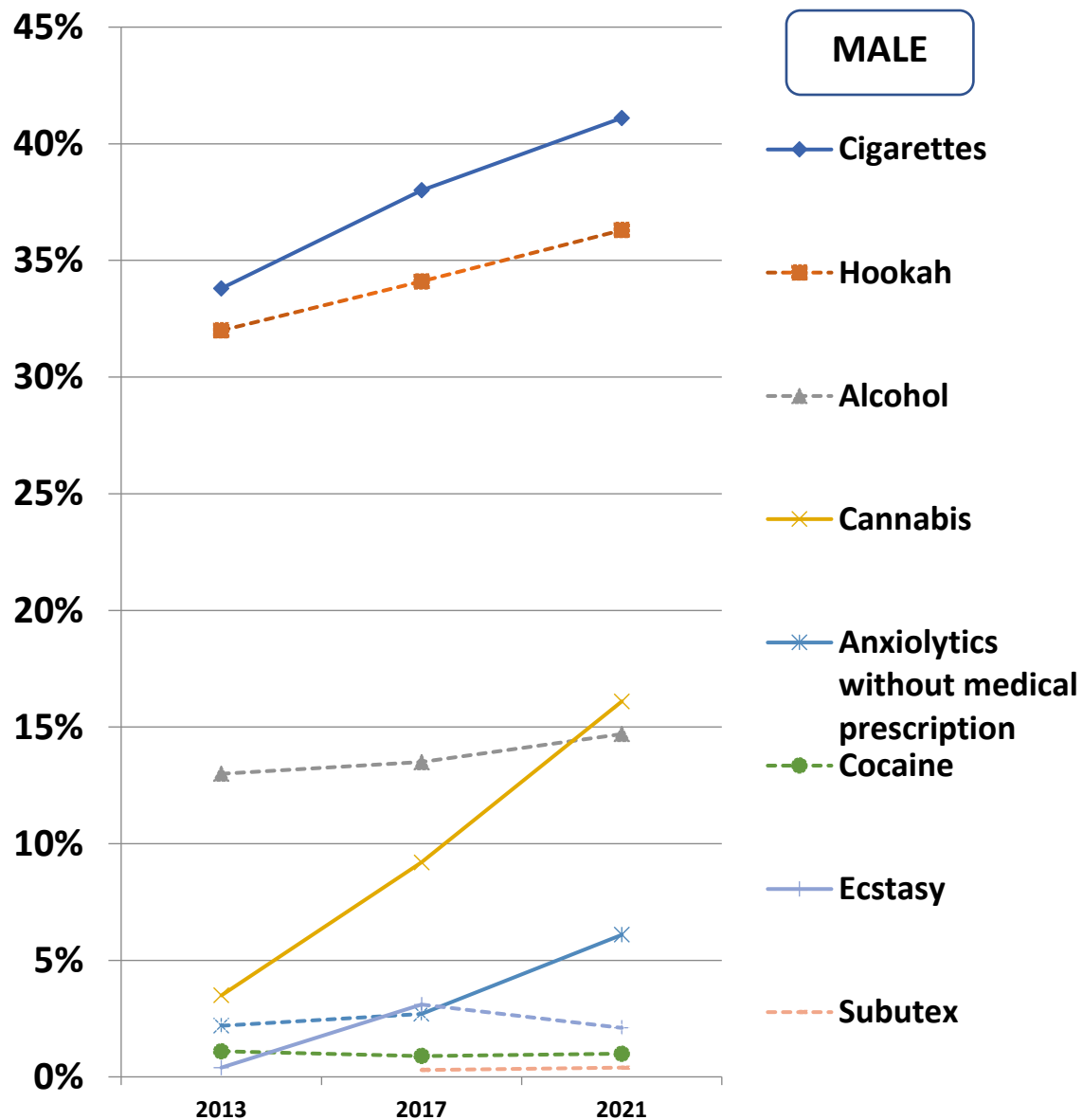




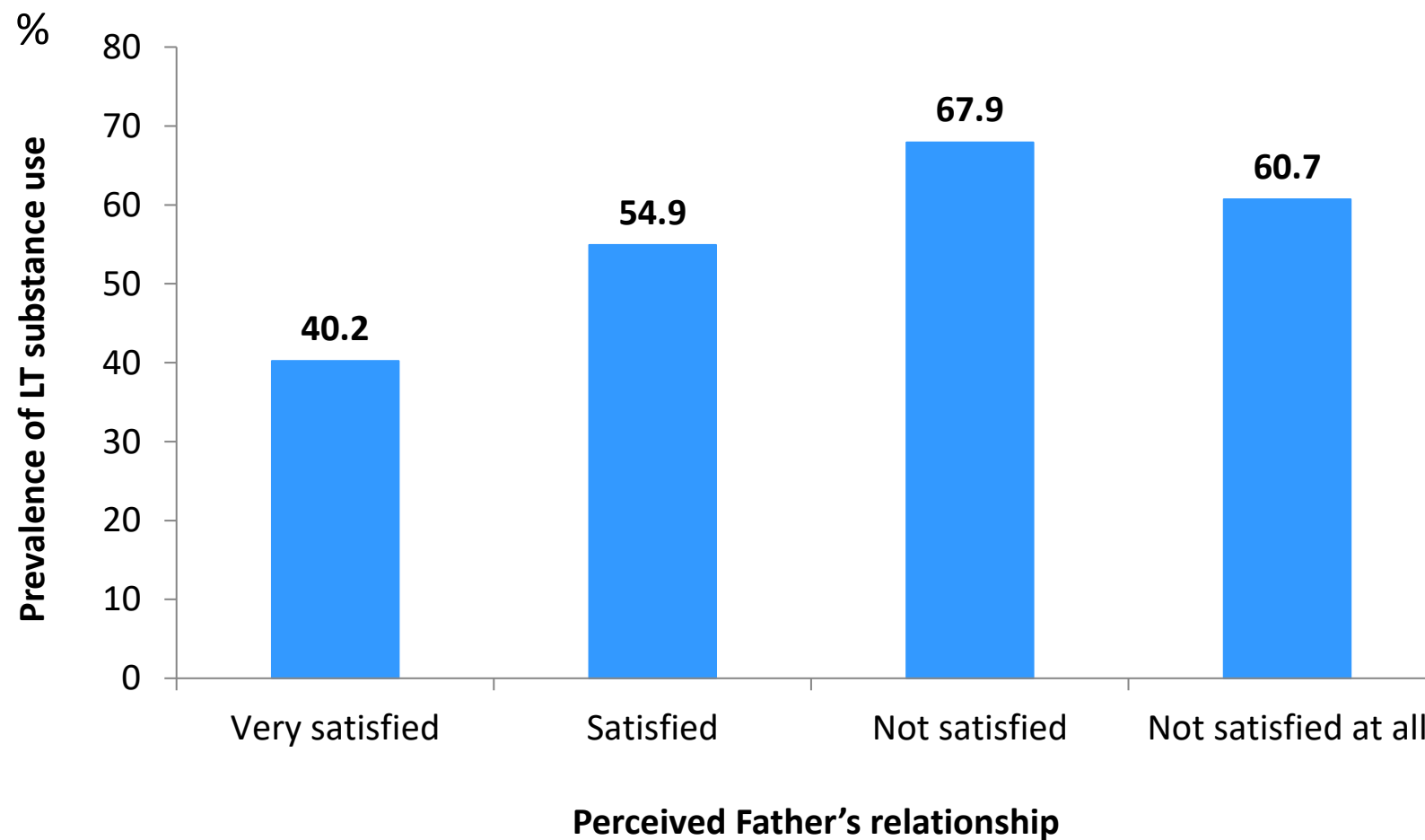


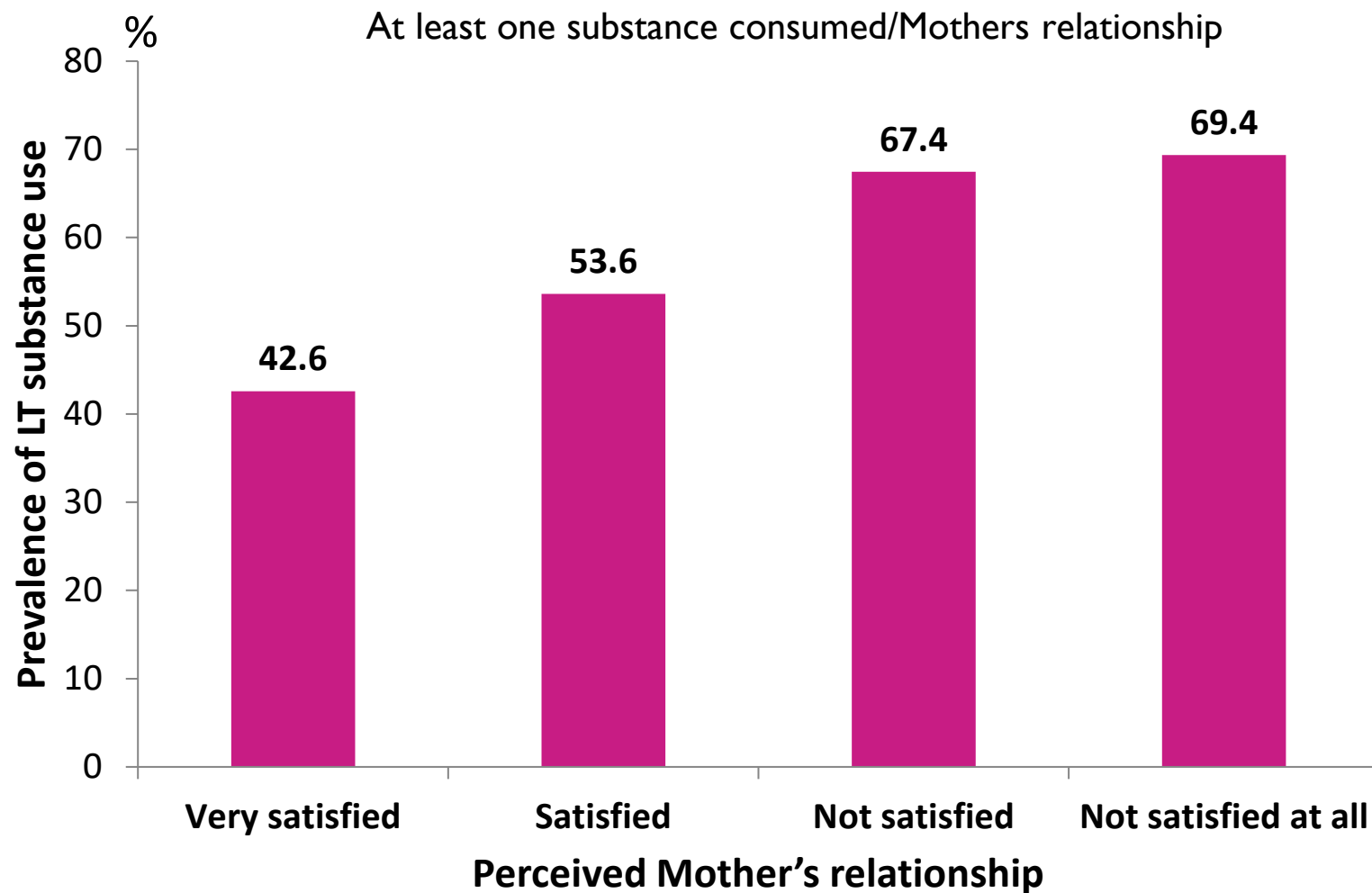
# MedSPAD Tunisia 2021:

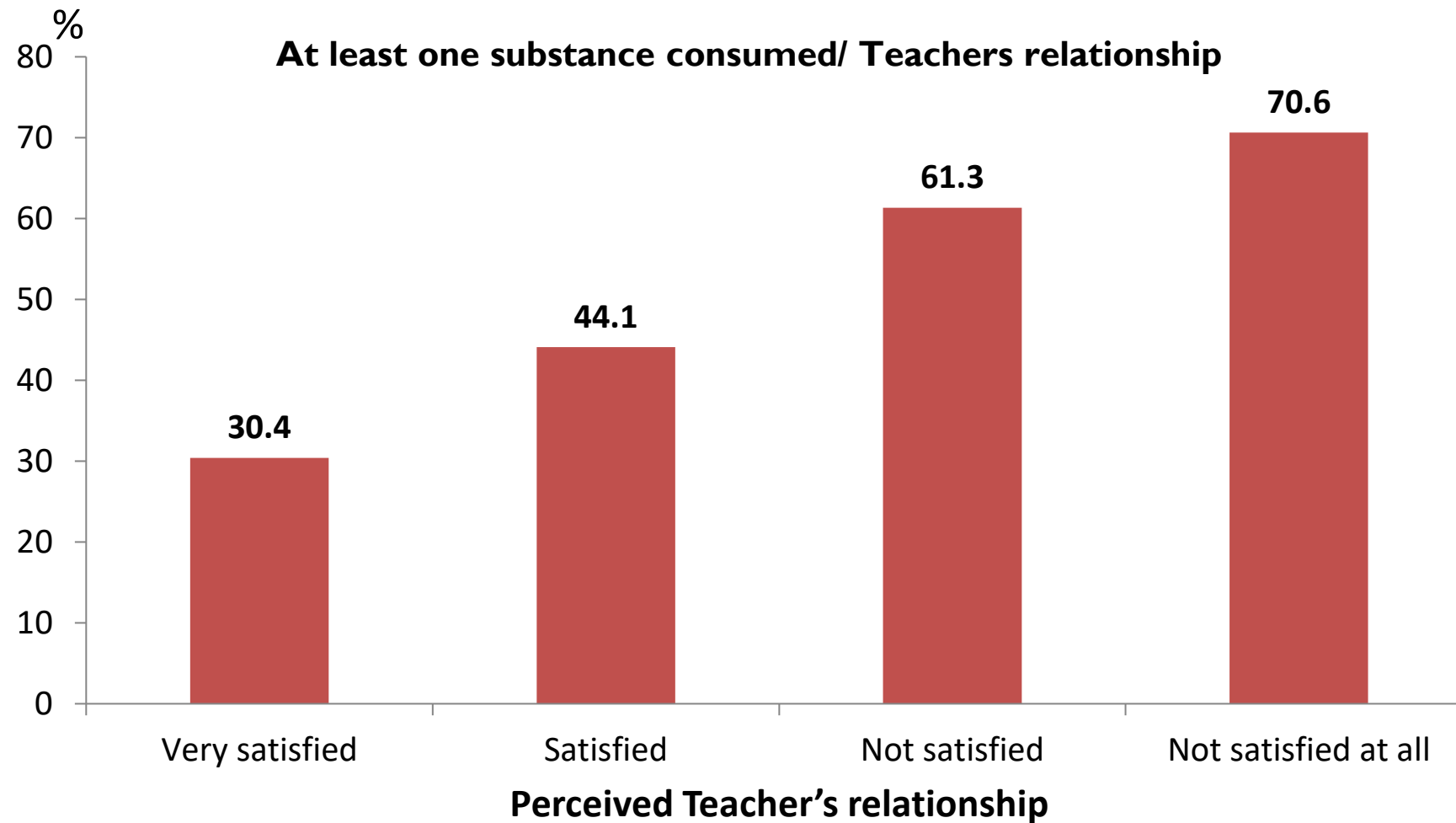
## Trend of psychoactive substances use by gender (2013-2021)

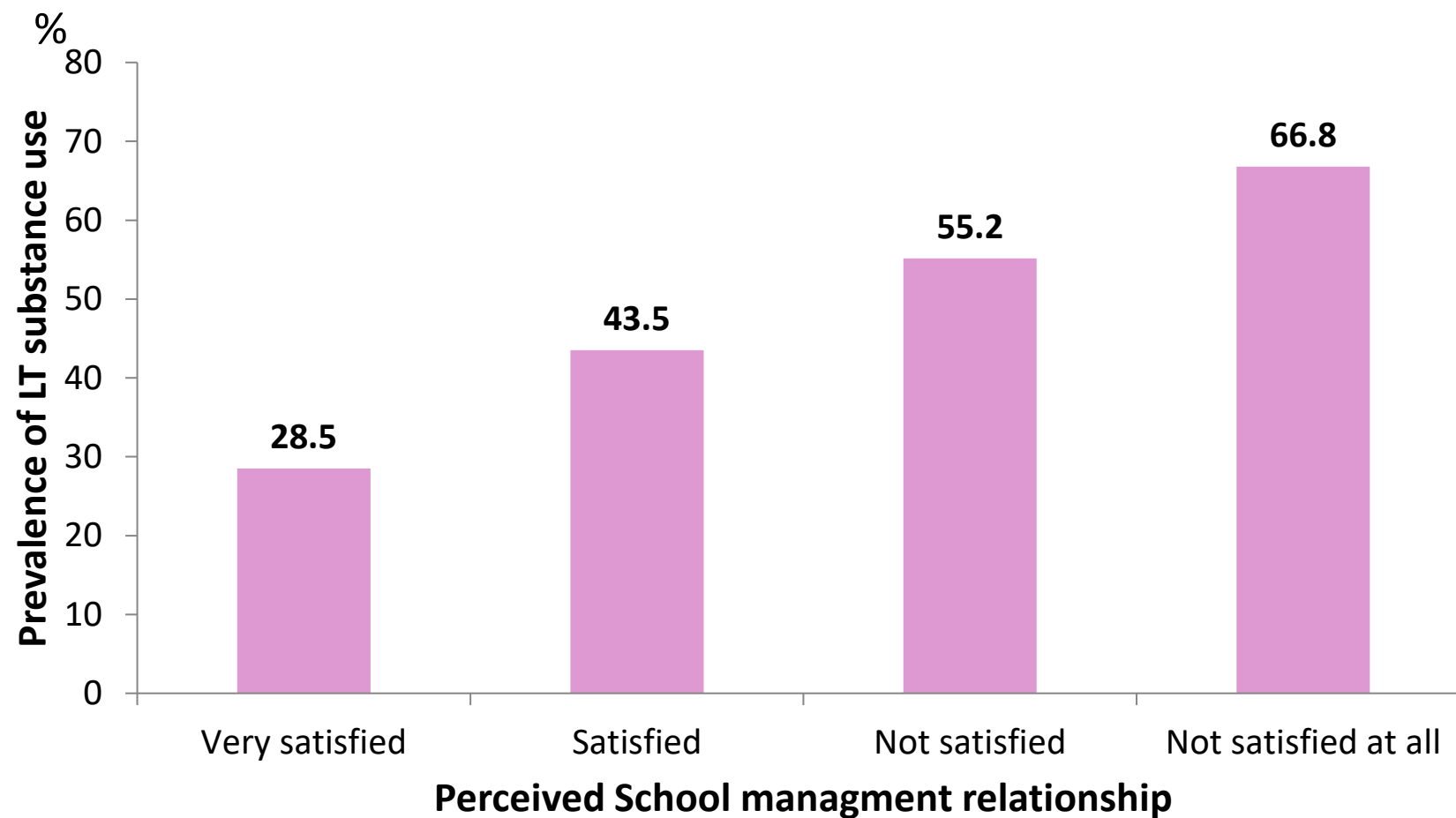












# Conclusions

- MedSPAD III results confirm the evolving trend in the prevalence of use of certain psychoactive substances (PAS) such as tobacco products, alcohol, cannabis and non prescribed anxiolytics
- Perceived PAS accessibility, prevalence of their use and their types were considerably different by gender:
  - Anxiolytics use was higher among girls VS other substances among boys
  - Perceived accessibility gender gaps were concordant (anxiolytics VS others)

# Conclusions

- Gender disparities would reflect differences in risk factors exposure that needs further investigations and targeting of preventive measures.
- More efforts to highlight these specific results are needed to improve the adoption of Evidence based interventions
- However, Promoting Mental and Social Well-Being and Academic Achievement of Children and Youth = Critical Preventative Factor
- Environmental (school, cultural, etc.) and social actions are fundamental & urgent

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**Thank you for your attention**

*Pr. Hajer Aounallah-Skhiri*

*Results of the National MedSPAD III study - Tunisia 2021*

