



NATIONAL AND
KAPODISTRIAN
UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS
FACULTY OF
COMMUNICATION
AND MEDIA STUDIES

***Villains, victims and heroes: the
representation of pornography in
contemporary Greek press***

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This paper

- Intended as pilot study
- Maps the attitudes towards pornography in the Greek press (i.e. in an overtly sexualized everyday culture, what kind of representations does the Greek press reserve for pornography?)
- Briefly discusses how popular perceptions of porn have changed over the past few years (online pornography seen as something other than harmful)
- We are particularly interested in depictions of child internet pornography and the potential demonization of online culture in Greece.

Our hypothesis:

- In a culture where a mainstreaming of pornography is attested and where sex clearly sells, pornography, and online pornography especially, might not be portrayed by the national press as something exclusively negative and condemnable; and that this kind of intolerance would be associated with child pornography news stories only.

Questions explored :

- *How do the Greek print media present news about pornography, child pornography, online pornography, sexual harassment, sexual abuse, sexual tourism and trafficking?*
- *What kinds of mediated notions of online pornography, especially of child internet pornography, do they construct?*
- *To what extent does the Greek press fuel an ongoing media panic related to the use of new technologies by young people, instead of putting forward the creative and constructive uses of the internet for the young?*

Questions explored :

- *Is there a significant difference as to how pornography stories are covered between the more serious titles and the scandal-mongering ones?*
- *When stories break out, what kind of information regarding victims and perpetrators is provided for the public?*
- *Does the Greek press have any policy recommendations to offer on the issue of online pornography?*

Contextualizing online pornography

- History of pornography and efforts to suppress it inextricably bound up with rise of new media and the emergence of democracy
- In that respect, it should come as no surprise that the Internet - the most democratic of media - would lead to new calls for censorship

- Sheer magnitude of the porn industry
- New ICTs have opened the floodgates for the sexual exploitation of women
- Online pornography changes how sexuality is articulated within private and public spaces
- The porn industry incorporates new patterns of production and distribution

Not everyone sees online pornography as necessarily degrading:

- For some feminists, cyberspace is installing a new regime of sexual representation
- Also from a libertarian feminist perspective: censoring pornography would constitute breaching of the right to free speech
- Least we forget: research into mainstream pornography and human trafficking does not exclude analysis of *alternative pornographies*
- Internet pornography plays a crucial role in the formulation of underground sexual selves and relations

[e.g. 'The Art and Politics of Netporn' (2005) and 'C'Lick Me' (2007) conferences in the Netherlands -introducing 'DIY online eroticism']

Naturalization of pornography into everyday life

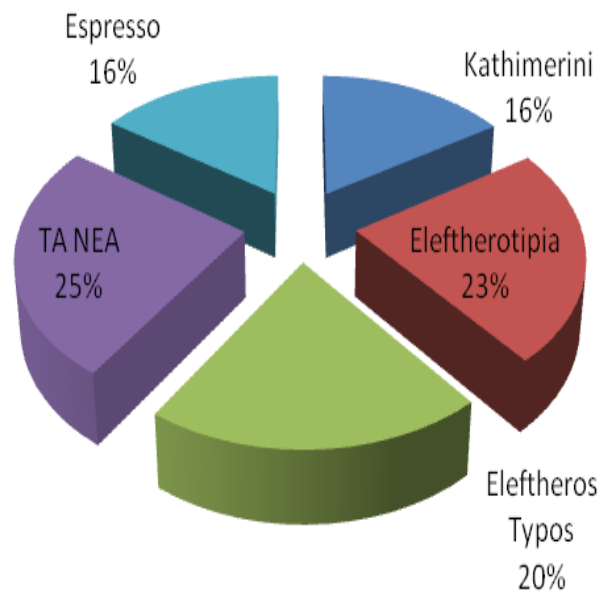
- A trickling-down of pornography to mainstream culture => 'pornification of culture'
- Changing attitudes towards privacy and personal exposure amongst the younger generations, as experienced in the proliferation of YouTube and MySpace video feeds
- Sexualization of contemporary Greek culture (e.g. TV and radio commercials, reality shows, street fashion)

The representation of pornography in the Greek press

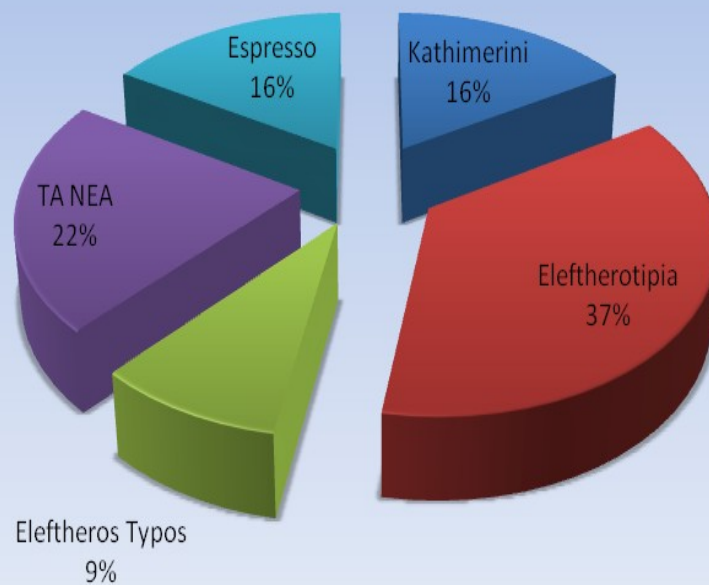
Methodology:

- Content analysis of five national dailies: *Kathimerini*, *Eleftheros Tipos*, *Ta Nea*, *Eleftherotipia* and *Espresso* (*pilot study*).
- Sample population = 247 news stories (every other month between August 2007 - June 2008).
- Collected all articles that mentioned the keywords: *pornography*, *online pornography*, *child pornography*, as well as related terms such as *sexual harassment*, *prostitution*, *sexual assault*, *trafficking* and *sexual tourism*.
- 45 variables used in the analysis

Articles per Newspaper (weekdays)

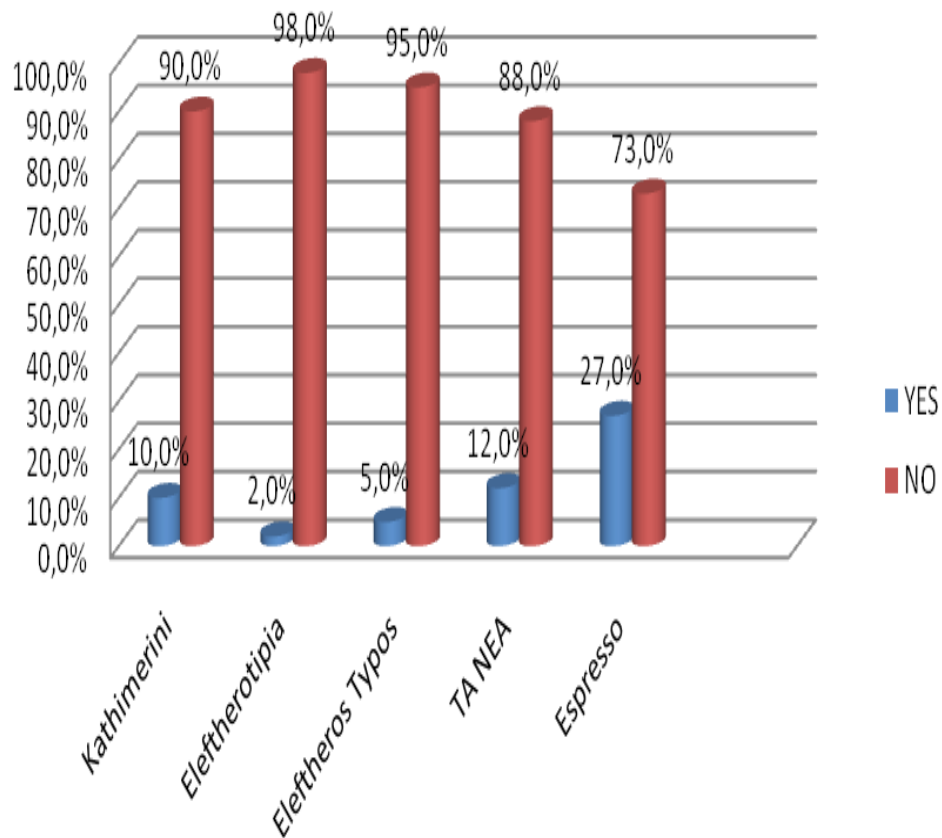


Articles per Newspaper (weekend)



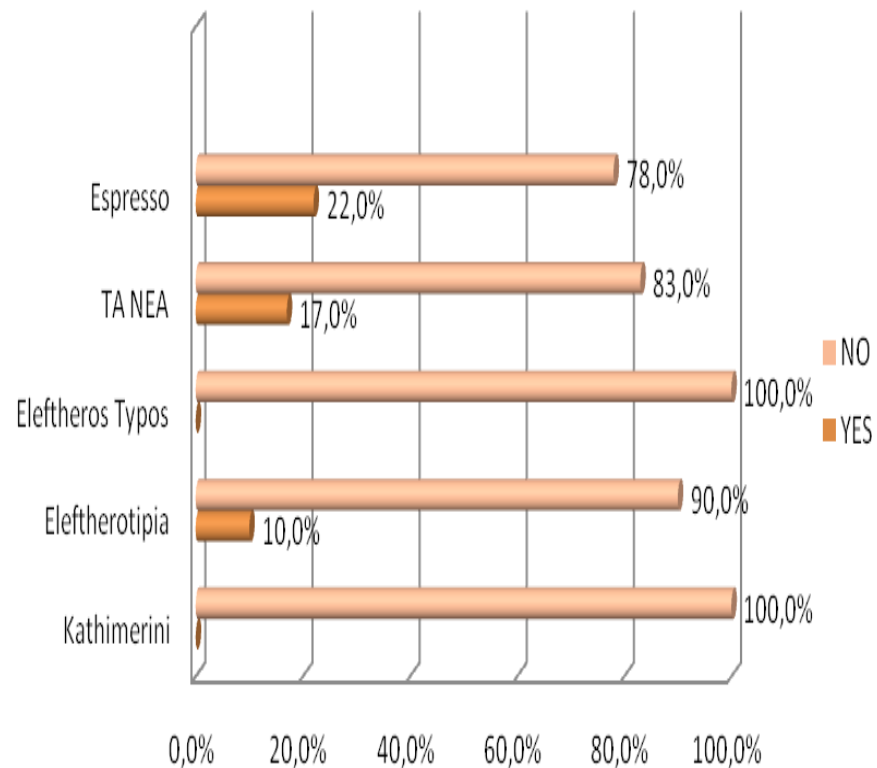
Frontpage per Newspaper

(weekdays)



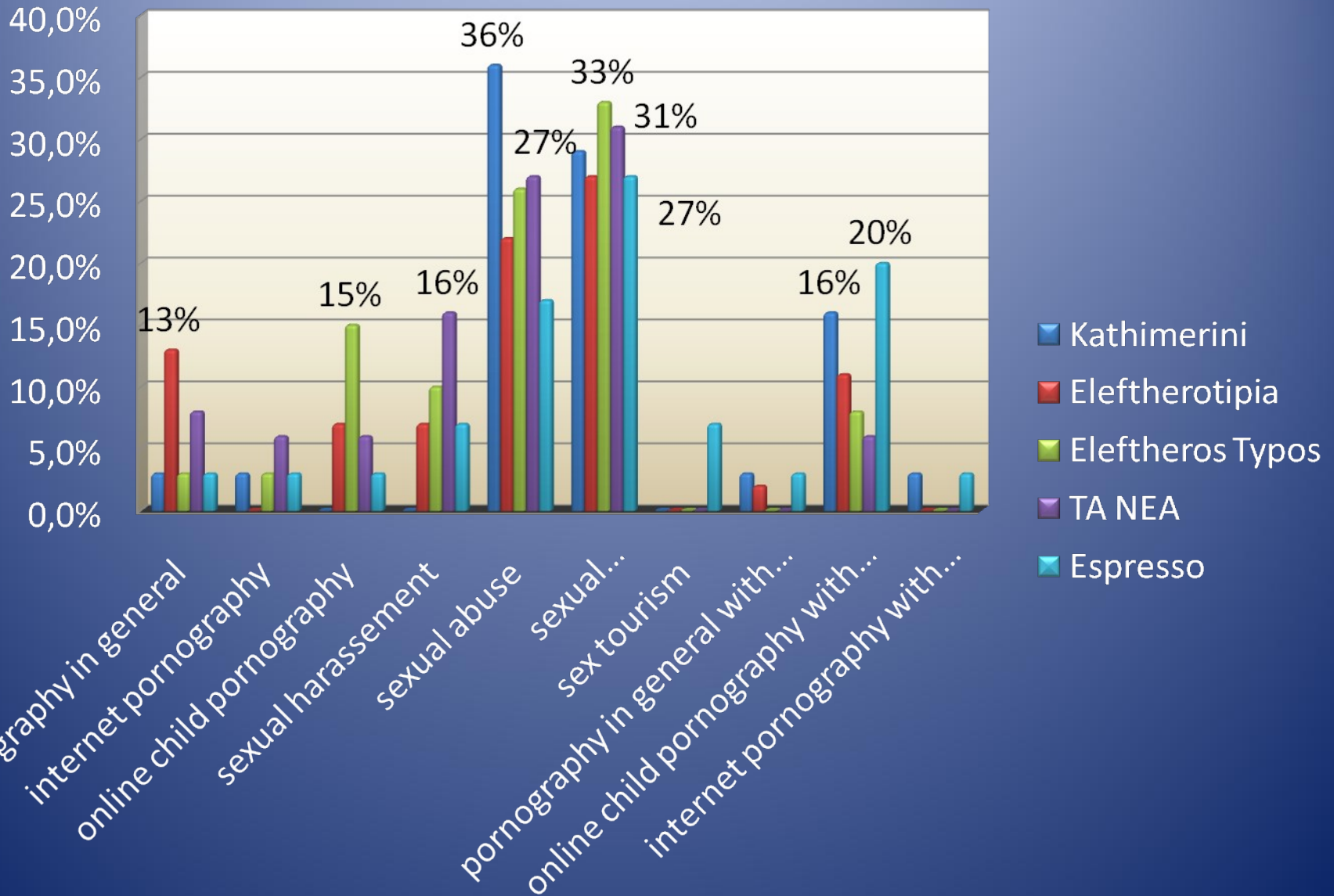
Front page per Newspaper

(weekend)



Subject Angle

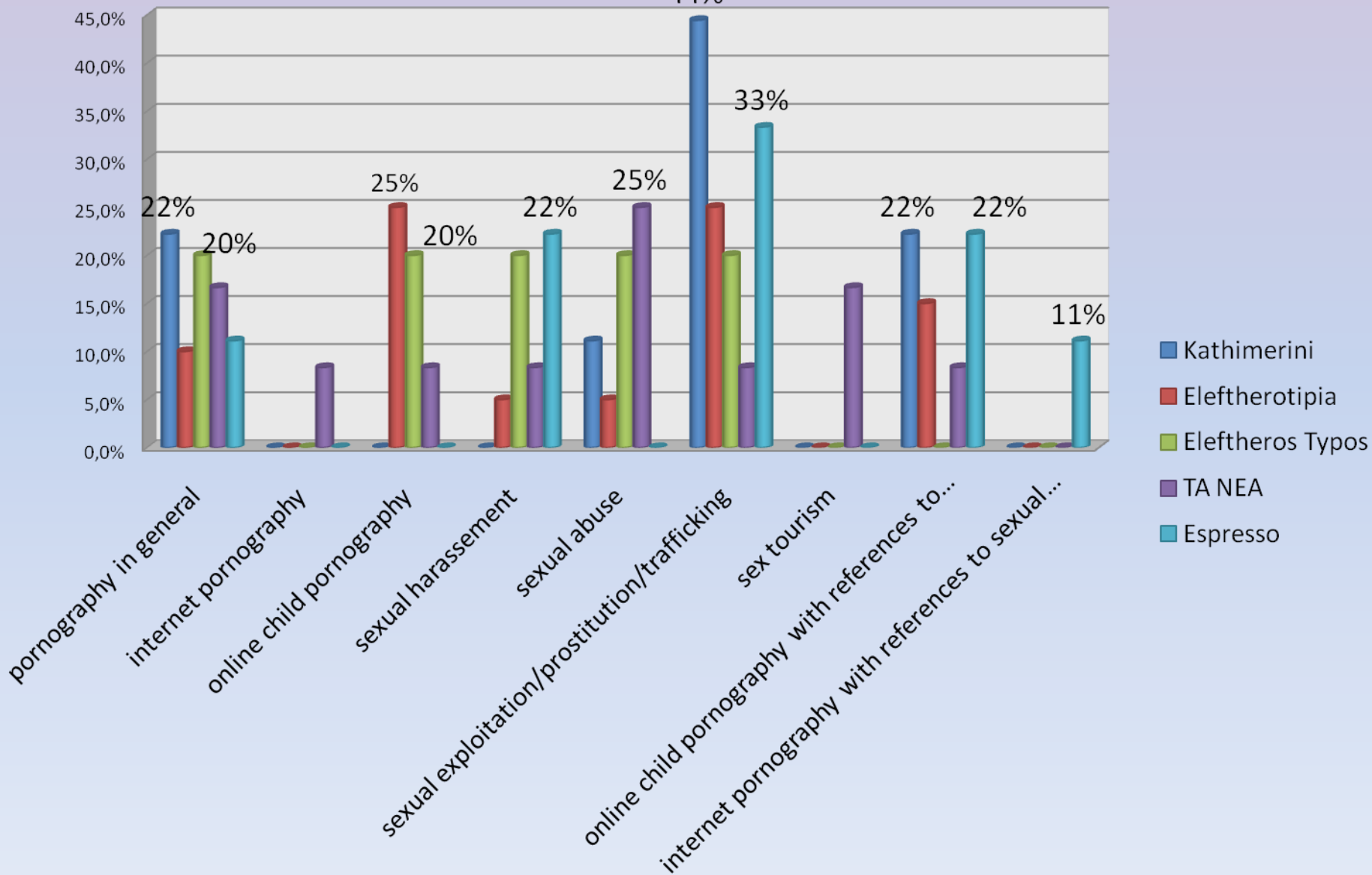
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Subject Angle

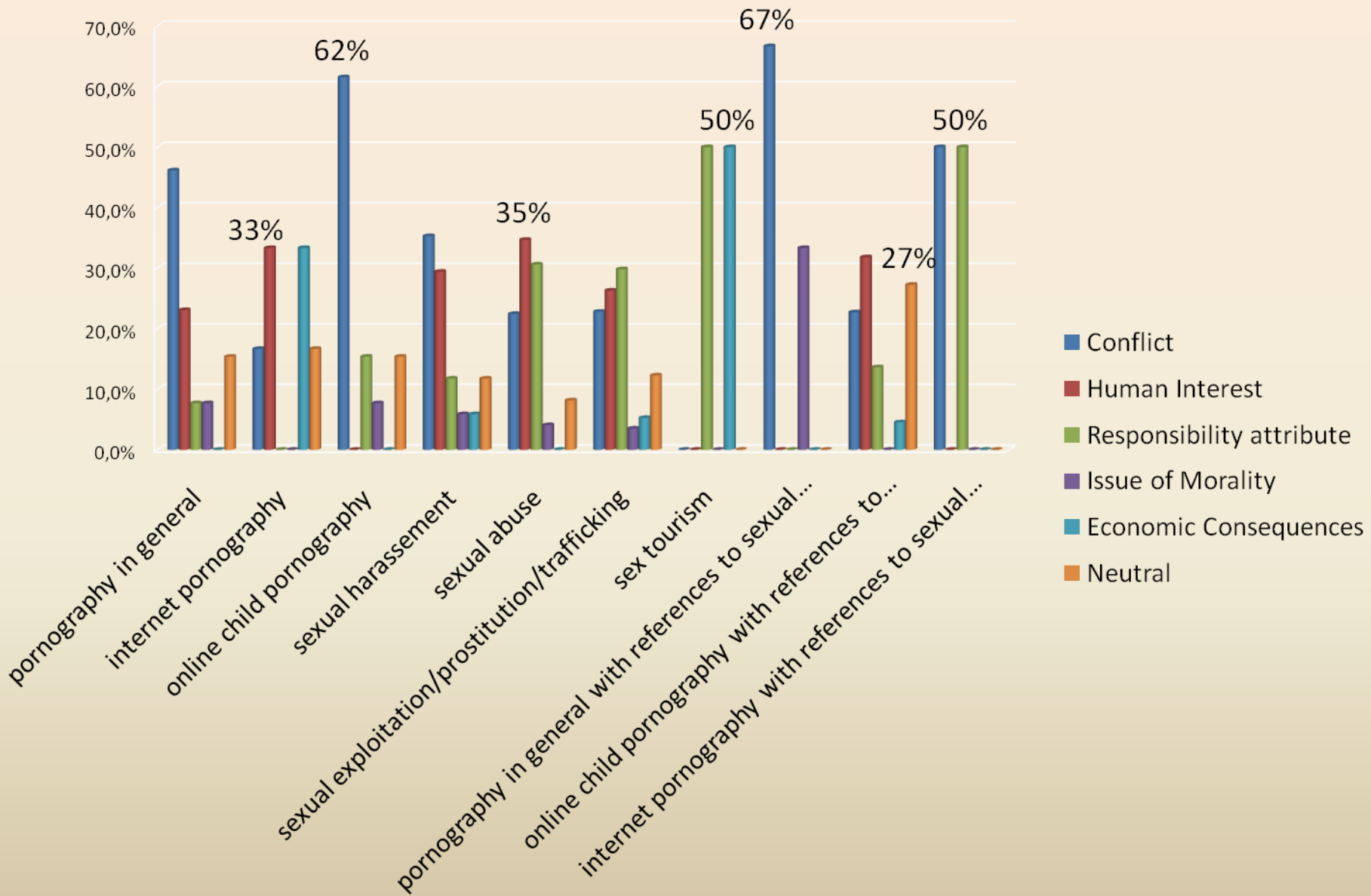
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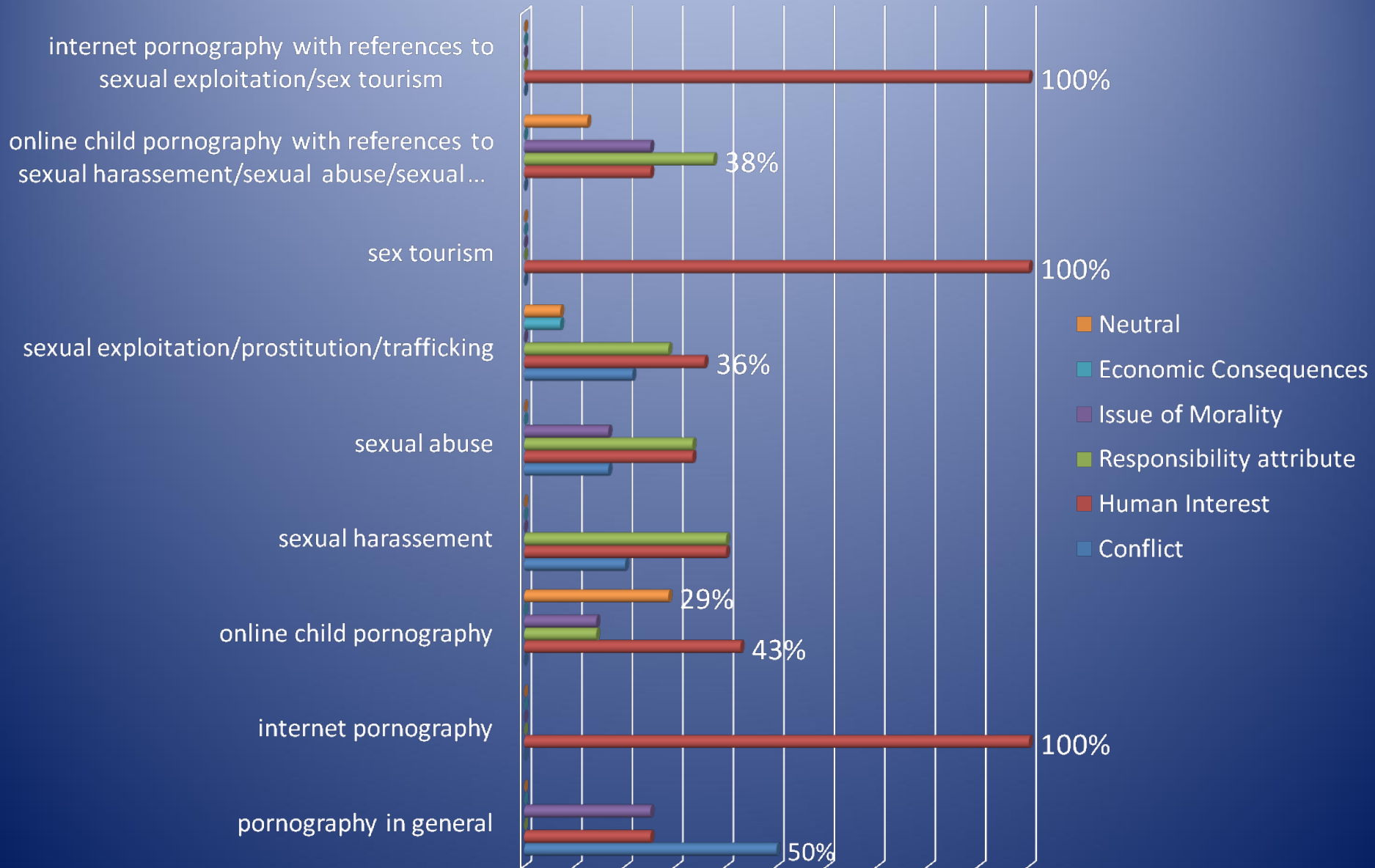
Subject Angle Framing

(weekdays)



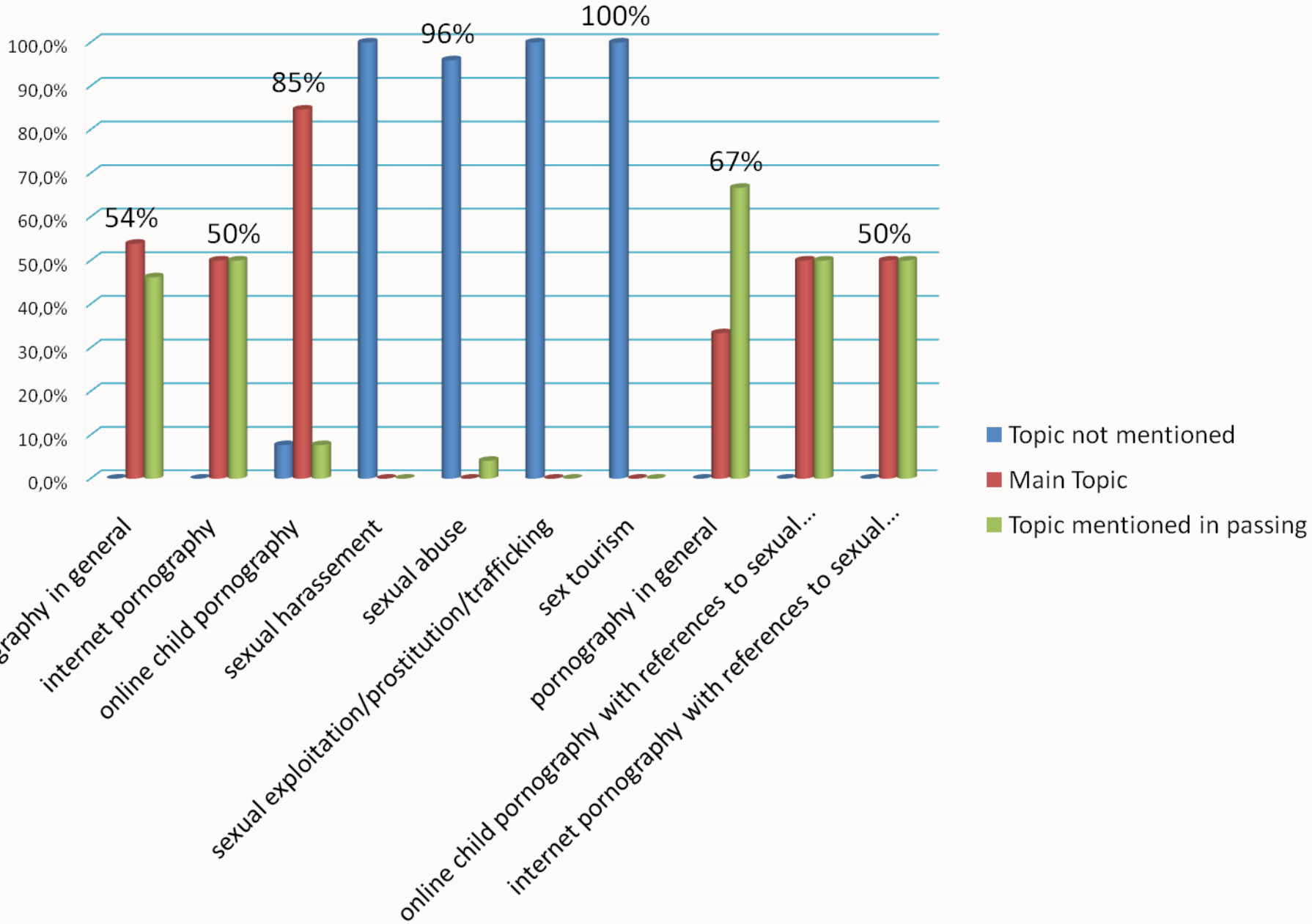
Subject Angle Framing

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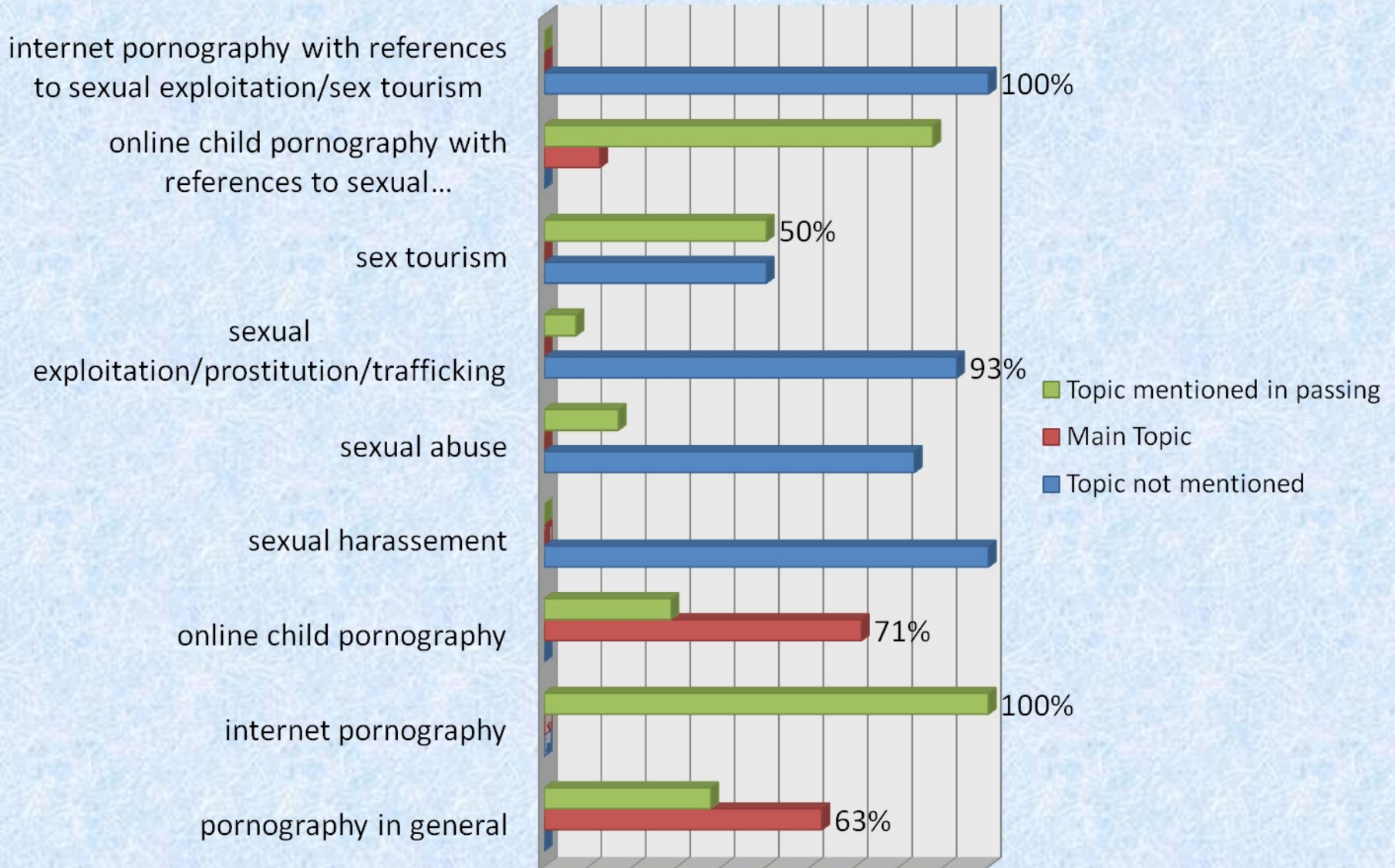


Subject Angle Relevance

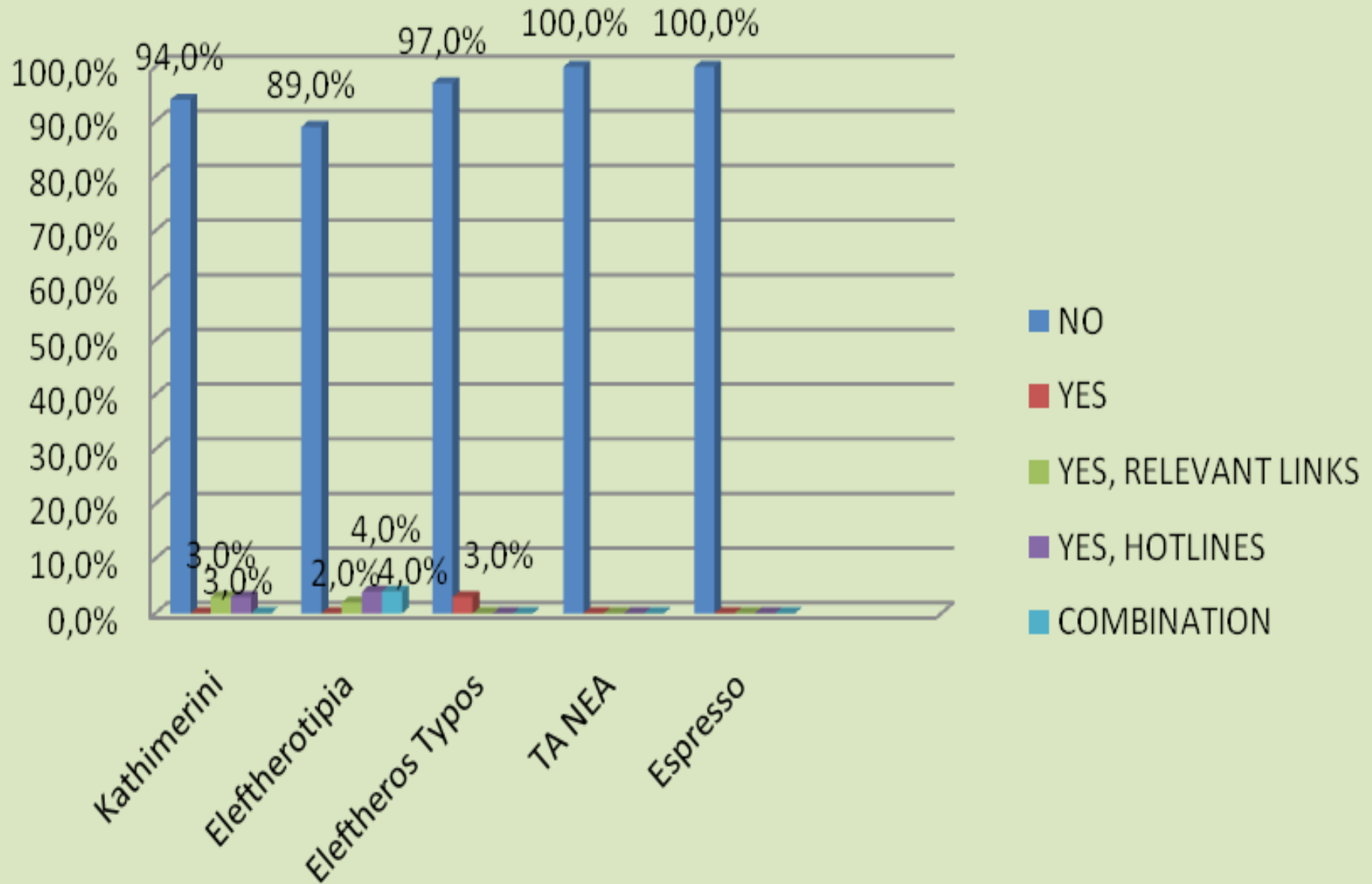
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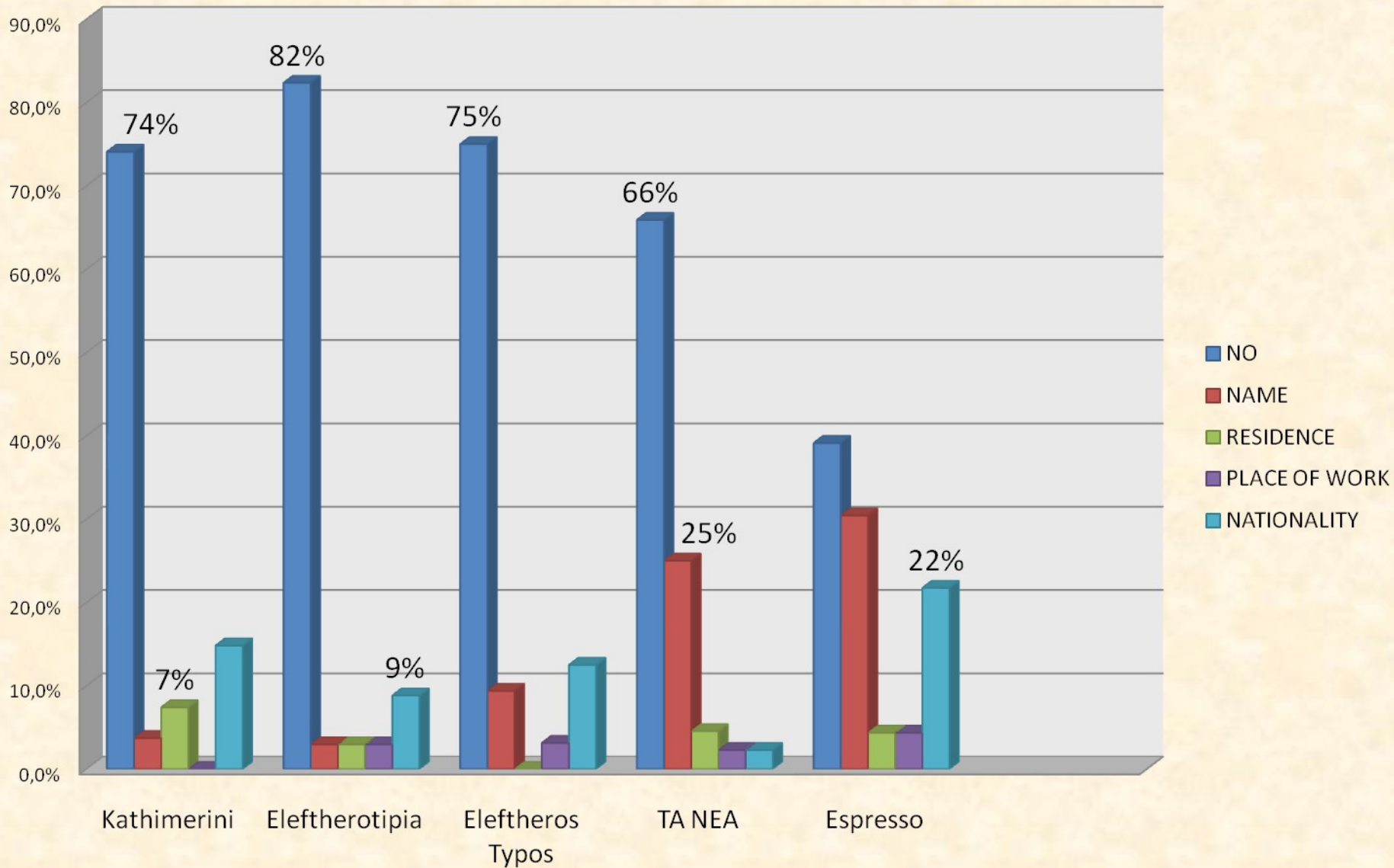
Subject Angle Relevance (weekend)



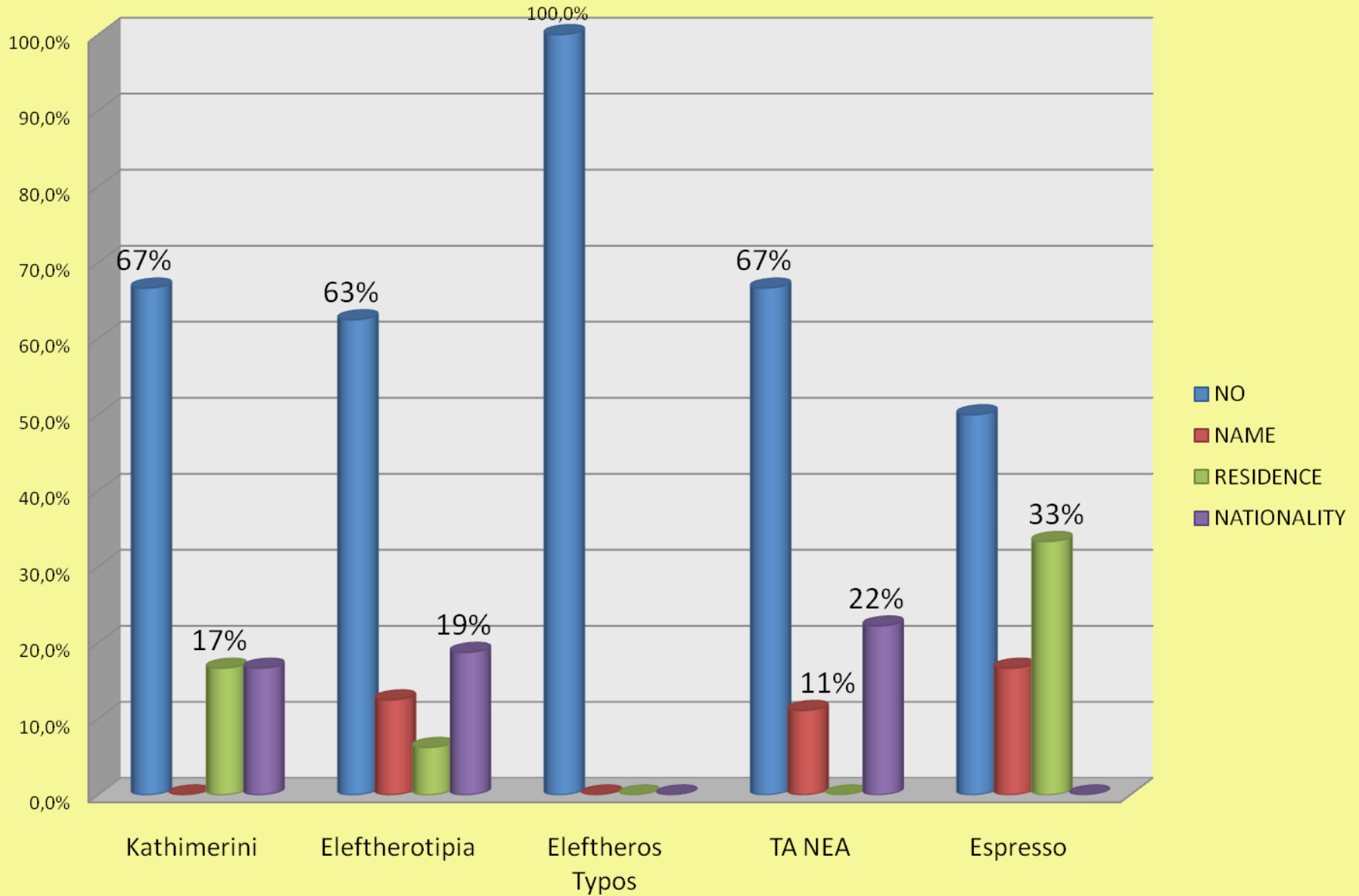
Additional Information



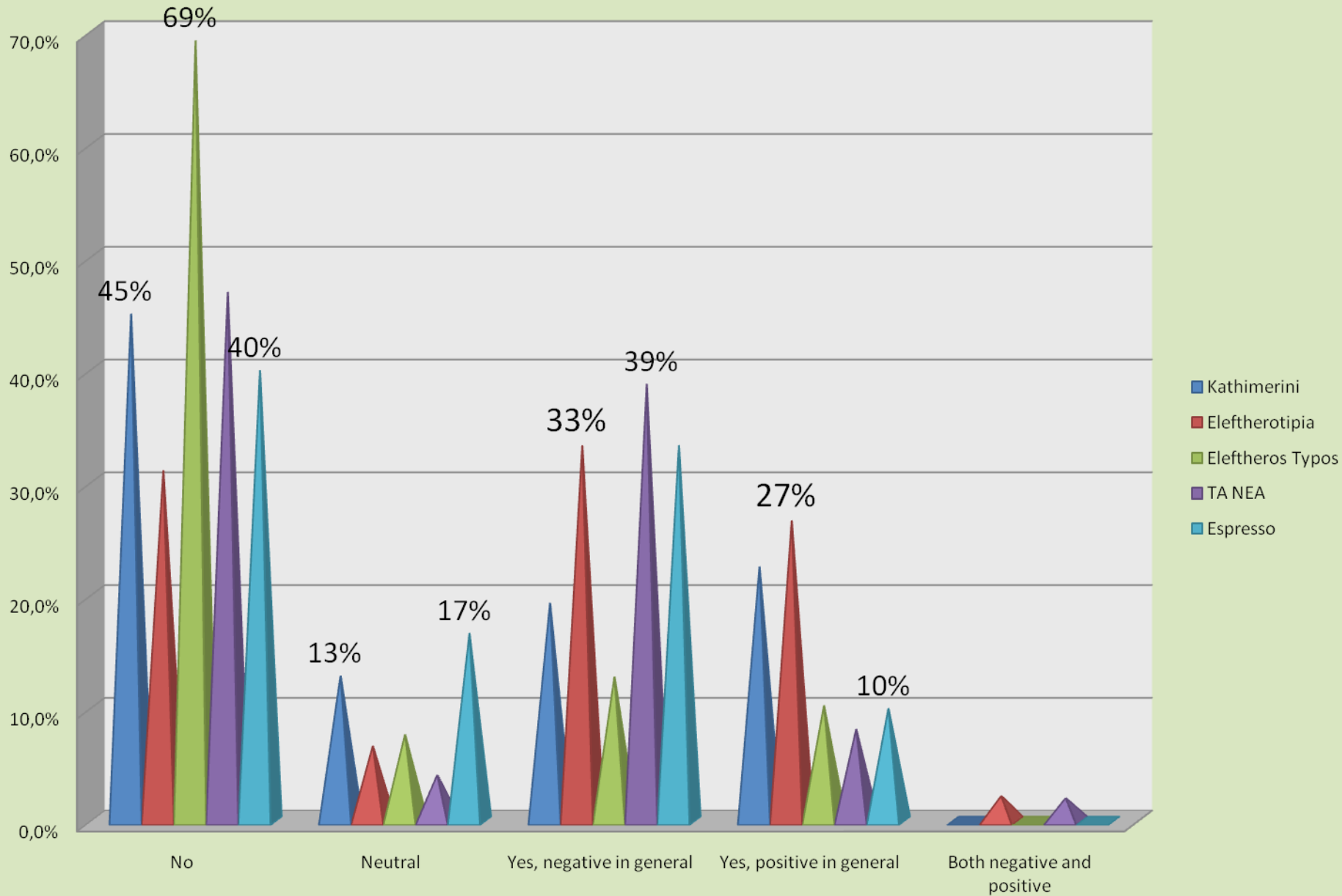
Personal Data on Perpetrator (weekdays)



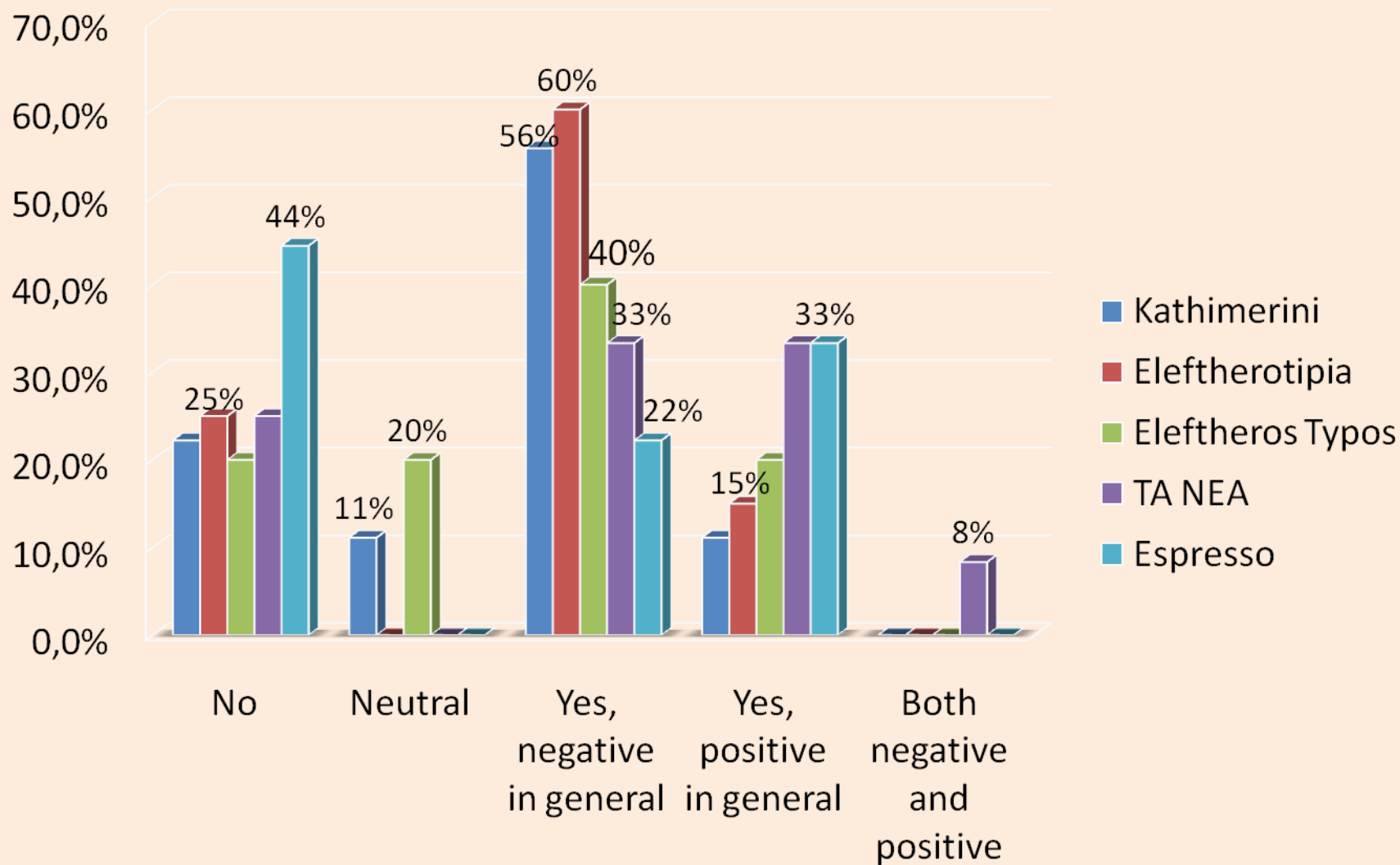
Personal Data on Perpetrator (weekend)



Journalistic Stance (weekdays)



Journalistic Stance (weekend)



Conclusions- emerging trends

- Pornography (i.e. child pornography; internet pornography) under-discussed, under-represented in the Greek press
- When talking about 'pornography', the Greek press usually refers to porn as artistic expression
- **Child pornography** and **online pornography** are discussed as something evil while **porn** is presented as an **alternative way of expression**.
- Journalists usually take a precautionary position, advising parental supervision of children's use of new technologies (rather than mediation);
- They also rarely fail to outline the multiple risks associated with internet surfing -no mentioning of constructive uses of online technologies => print media discourse in Greece reproduces a stereotypically pessimistic vision of new technologies
- Journalistic discourse usually involves a **surface coverage** of events occurred, academic conferences, new legislation etc; extensive and in-depth analysis and research is largely absent. Similarly, **no policy recommendations** as to how to deal with regulatory gaps are offered.