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The Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices of Mask Use for COVID-19 Among the Students of the University of the West Indies in Trinidad and Tobago

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Introduction

- Coronavirus Disease 2019 was declared a pandemic on March 11, 2020.
- Facemasks are recommended by the WHO to prevent droplet and aerosol transmission even in vaccinated persons
- The study aims to investigate the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of mask use for COVID-19 among the student population of The University of West Indies, St. Augustine.

Objectives

1. To determine students' knowledge on the importance of mask wearing in the mitigation of the spread of COVID-19.
2. To determine the knowledge of proper mask wearing etiquette among the UWI students.
3. To evaluate to what extent the UWI student population participates in mask wearing.
4. To investigate the proportion of the student population that is affected by inaccessibility of masks and assess the factors that influence this.

Methodology

- ❖ Study design: cross-sectional
- ❖ Study population: Students of UWI St Augustine
- ❖ Sample size: 400, CI: 95%
- ❖ Sampling: Convenience
- ❖ Data collection tool: Questionnaire
- ❖ Data analysis: SPSS Version 27

Results

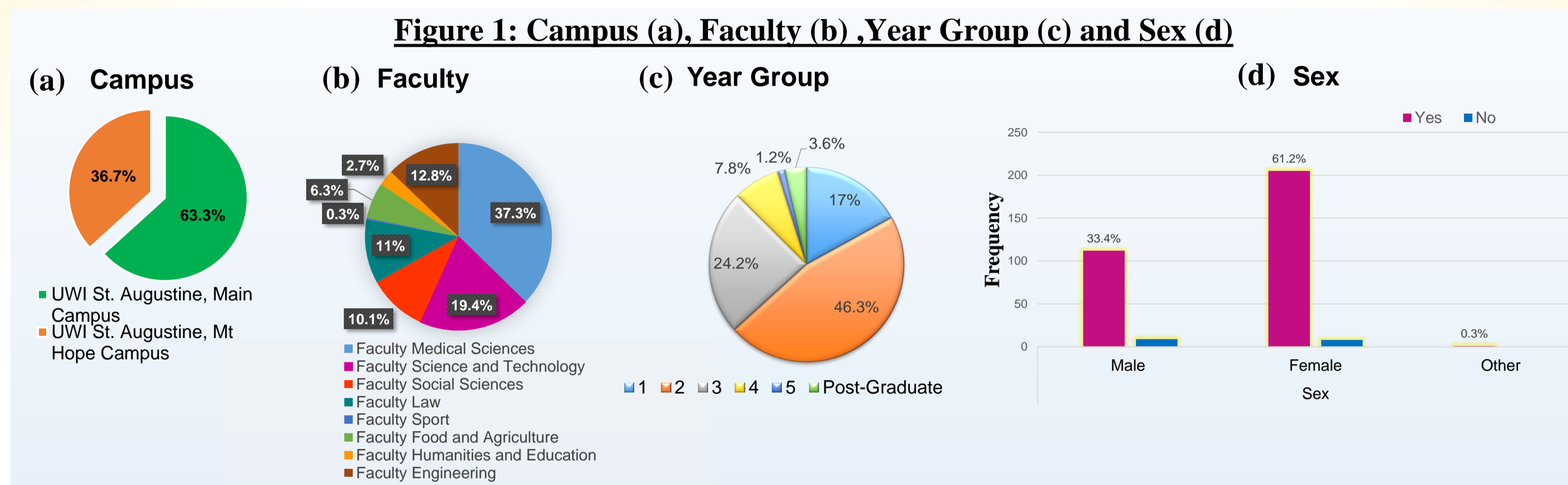


Figure 2: Knowledge of Facemask Mitigation for COVID-19 Spread by Faculties of Students

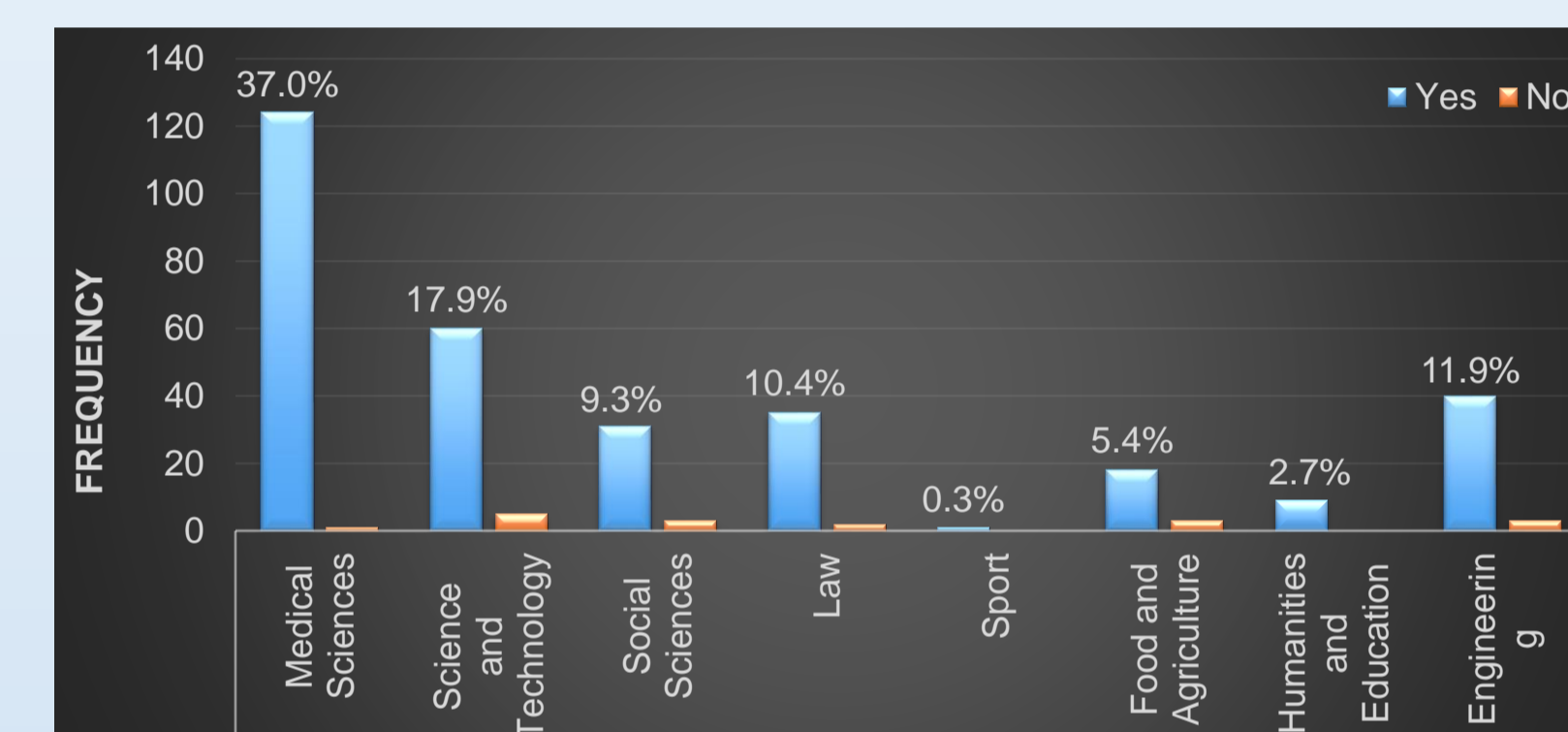


Figure 3: Students' frequency of response to mask change after use

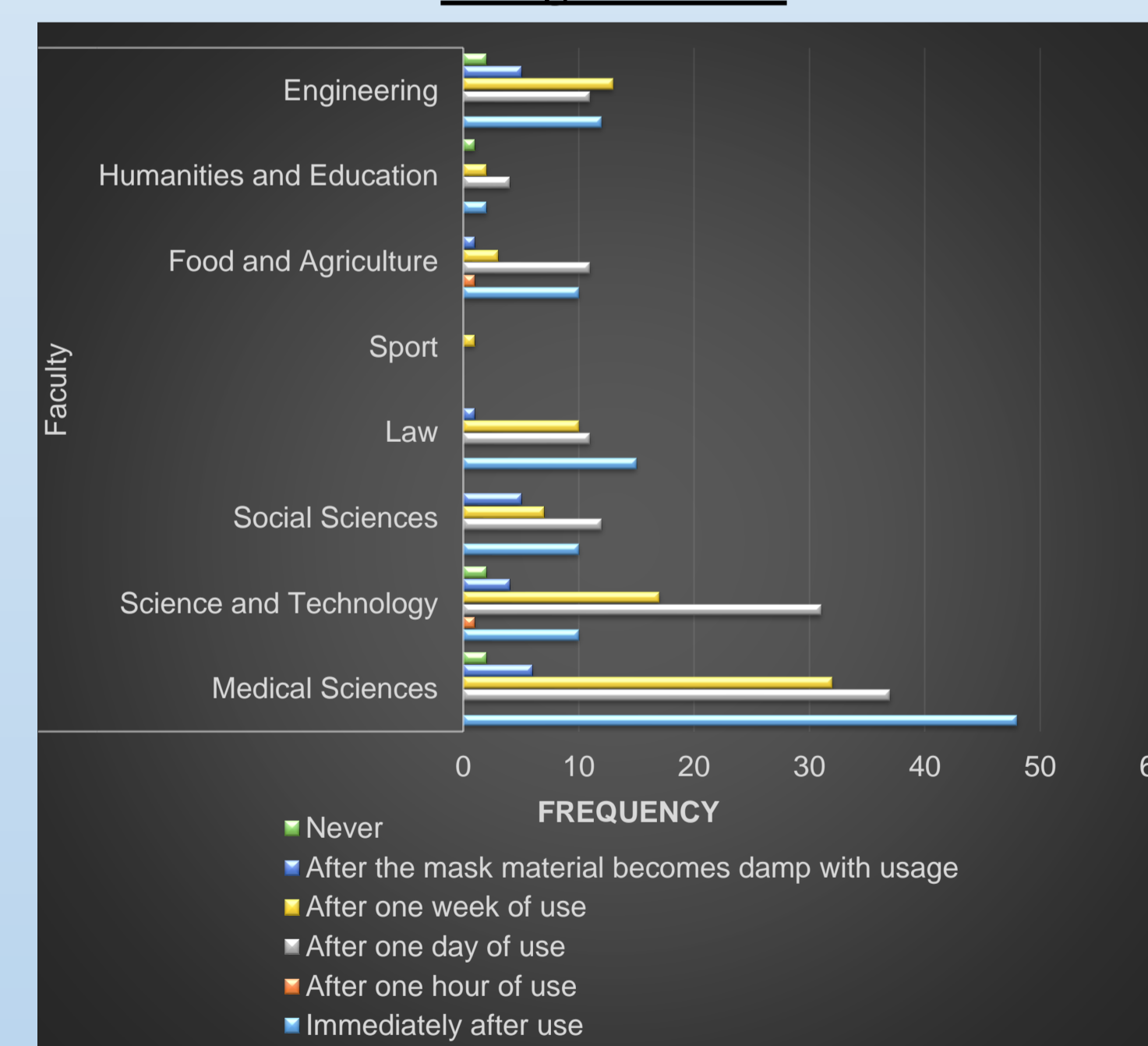


Figure 4: Students' frequency of response to "When do you think it is best to change/wash facemasks?"

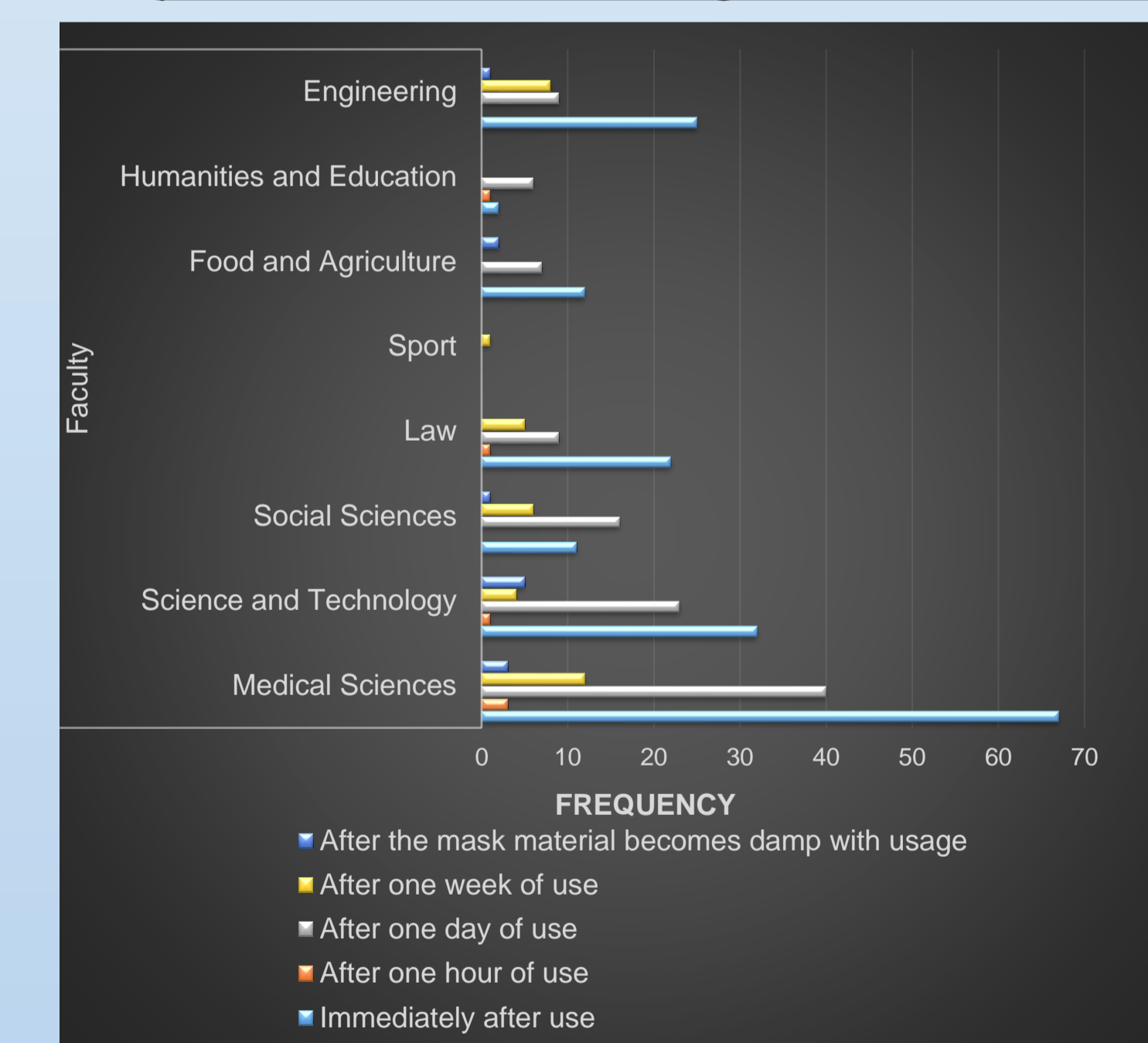
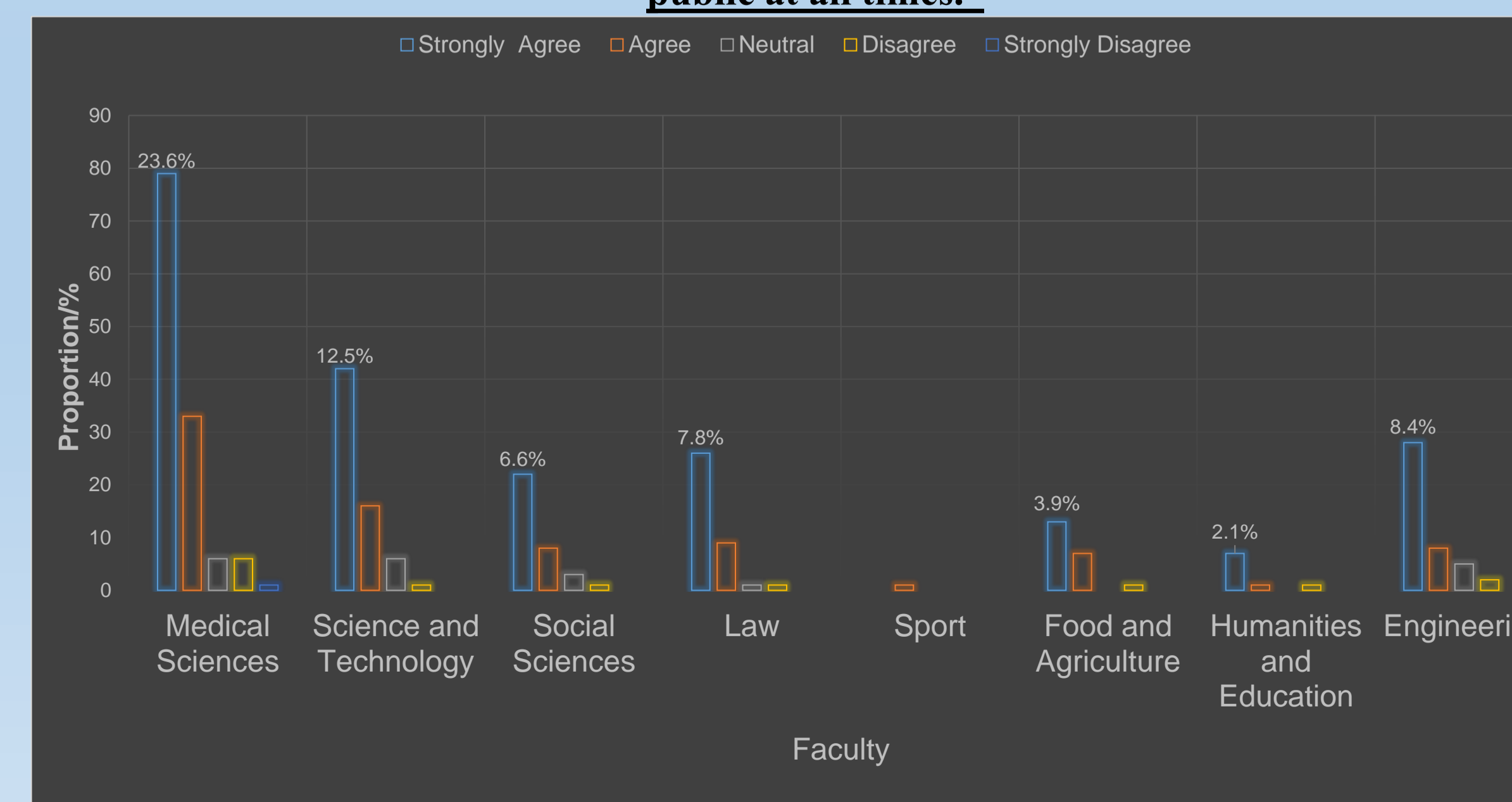


Figure 5: Students' frequency of response to the statement "A facemask should be worn in public at all times."



Discussion

- ✓ Ninety-four percent of respondents believed wearing facemasks help to reduce spread of COVID-19, which was higher than the 74.4% reported from the study conducted by Angelo et al (2020) among university students in Mizan Tepi University in Ethiopia.
- ✓ One-third (33.3%) of respondents changed/washed their facemasks after one day of use and (51%) of respondents believed masks should be changed immediately after every use. This information aligns with similar findings from a Japan University study done by Hatabu et al (2000).
- ✓ Most respondents from Medical Sciences stated they change their facemask immediately after use.
- ✓ Ninety percent of students indicated that facemasks should be worn in public spaces at all times; the majority of students from Medical Sciences strongly agreed to this statement. This is concurrent with the study conducted by Hasan et Al (2020) in the UAE where 71.3 % of students wore masks in crowded areas.

Conclusion

- ❑ There appears to be a positive attitude and adequate knowledge towards mask-wearing among the students surveyed.
- ❑ There was some mismatch between knowledge and practice.
- ❑ There is therefore a need to periodically reinforce best practice guidance concerning mask-use among the student population.

References

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