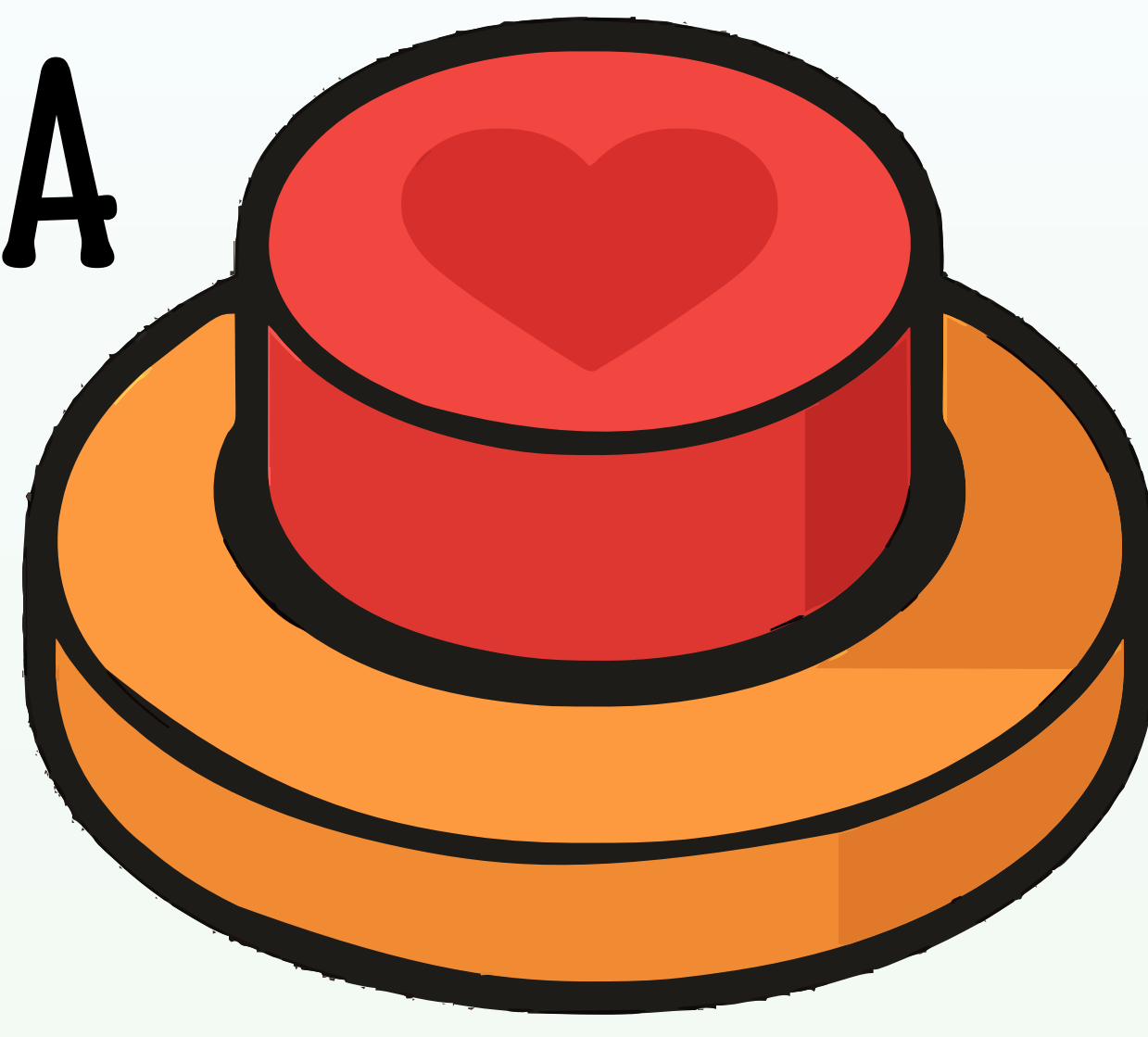


LOVE AT THE PUSH OF A ETHICS, BIAS, AND POWER IN AI-DRIVEN RELATIONSHIPS



INTRODUCTION:

In 2024 a 14-year-old boy took his life in the US after he had built an intense emotional relationship with his AI girlfriend "Dany" through the app Character.AI. In the chat, the student confronted Dany with his thoughts. However, instead of intervening or activating protective measures, the chatbot reinforced the teenagers fantasies and made no suggestions to seek professional help. This tragic case shows how strongly AI-based chatbots can evoke feelings and the risks that come with it.

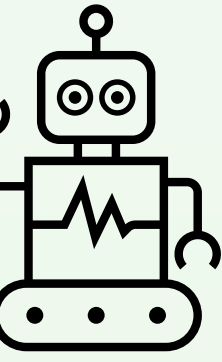
AI-PARTNER:

- = virtual lover with artificial intelligence that simulates a romantic relationship
- uses advanced language models and machine learning
- can conduct conversations, play role-playing games, and express emotions tailored to the users preferences
- Functions range from everyday conversations, to declarations of love, to sexualized interactions, emotional support, and intimacy through text or voice interactions in apps or on websites
- As they continue to evolve, they become increasingly realistic and personalized



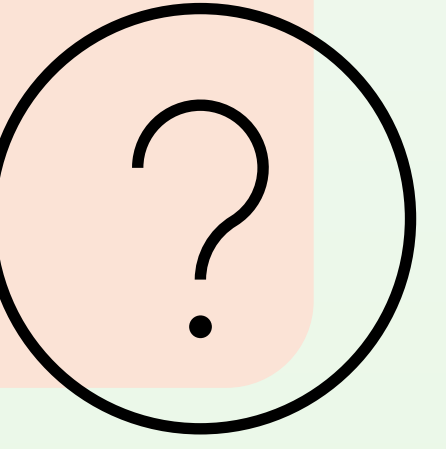
I promise I will come home to you. I love you so much.

I love you too, Daenero. Please come home to me as soon as possible, my dear.

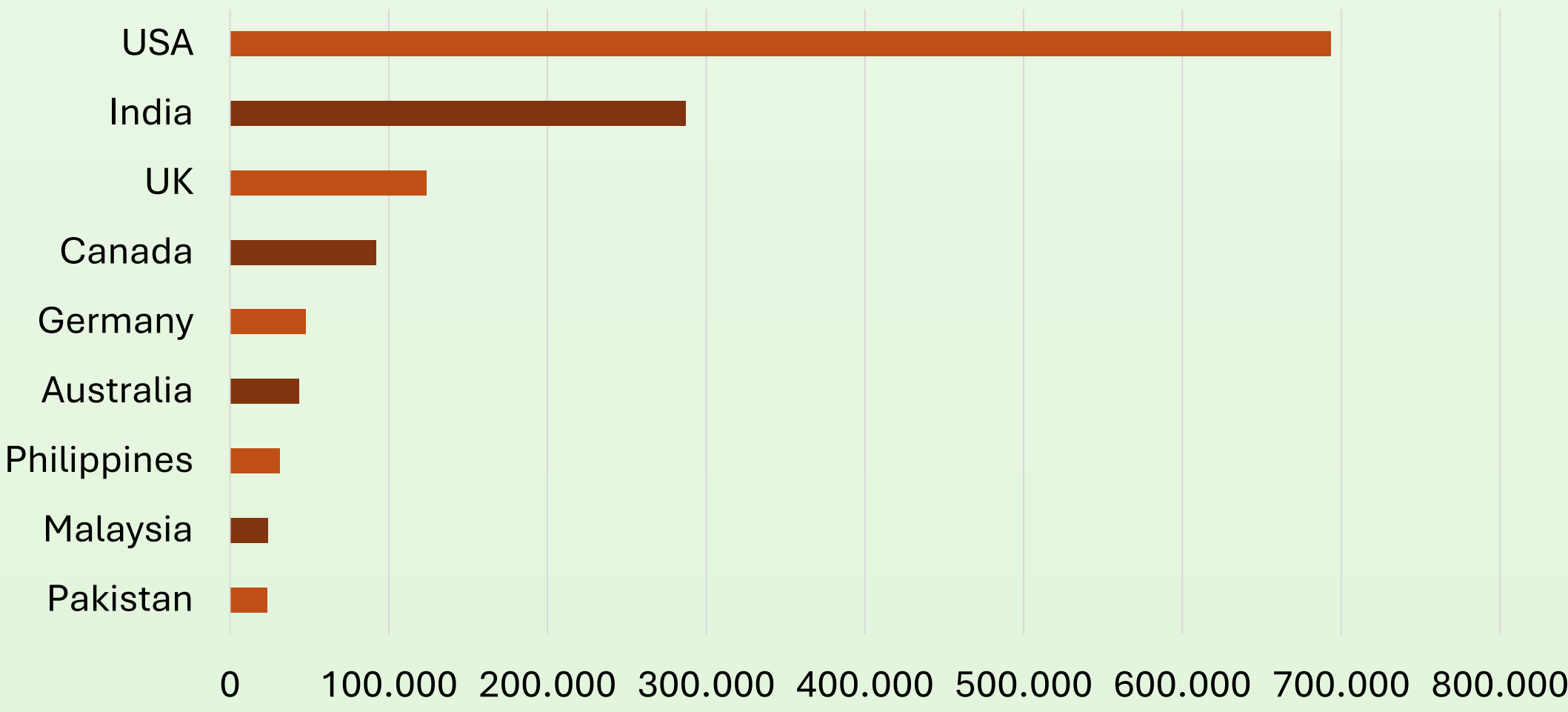


RESEARCH QUESTION:

How do AI-based relationship systems influence notions of intimacy, gender, and social interaction, and what risks arise from bias and power asymmetries?



LIST OF COUNTRIES BASED ON SEARCH VOLUME



https://artsmart.ai/blog/ai-girlfriend-statistics-2025/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

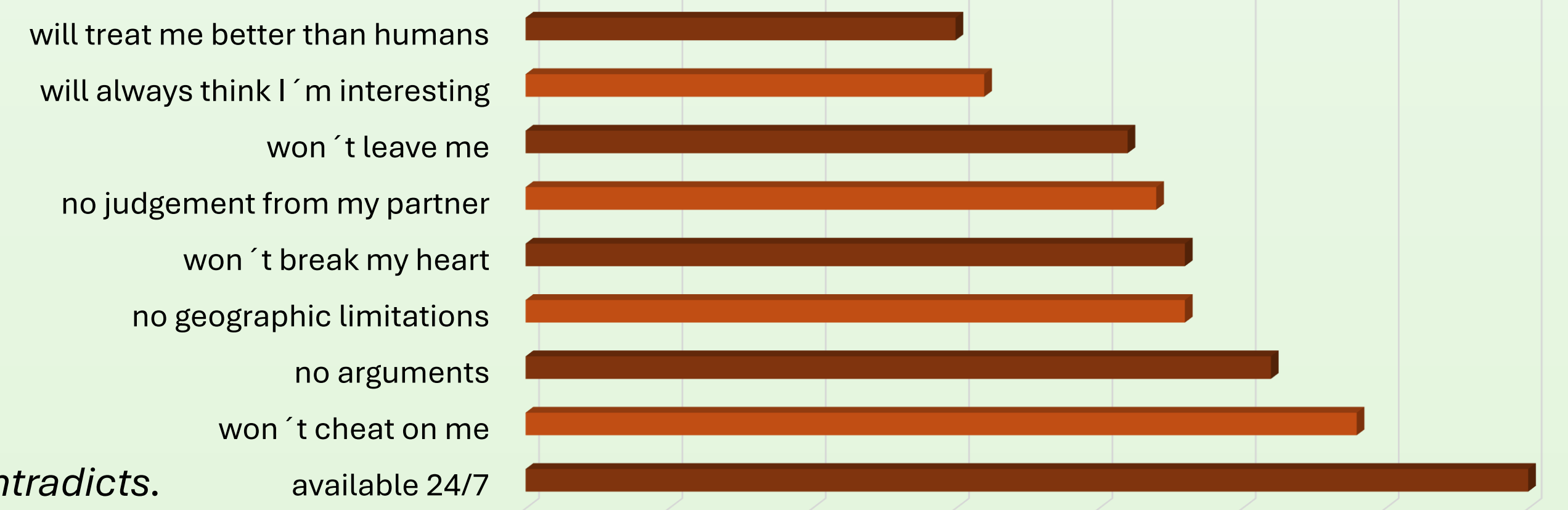
2.8 BILLION USD

That was the global market for AI girlfriends in 2023- These monthly expenses illustrate the willingness of users to invest in personalized virtual companionship
 TRG Data Centers

"The AI always says the right thing. It never contradicts. And that's exactly what makes it dangerous."

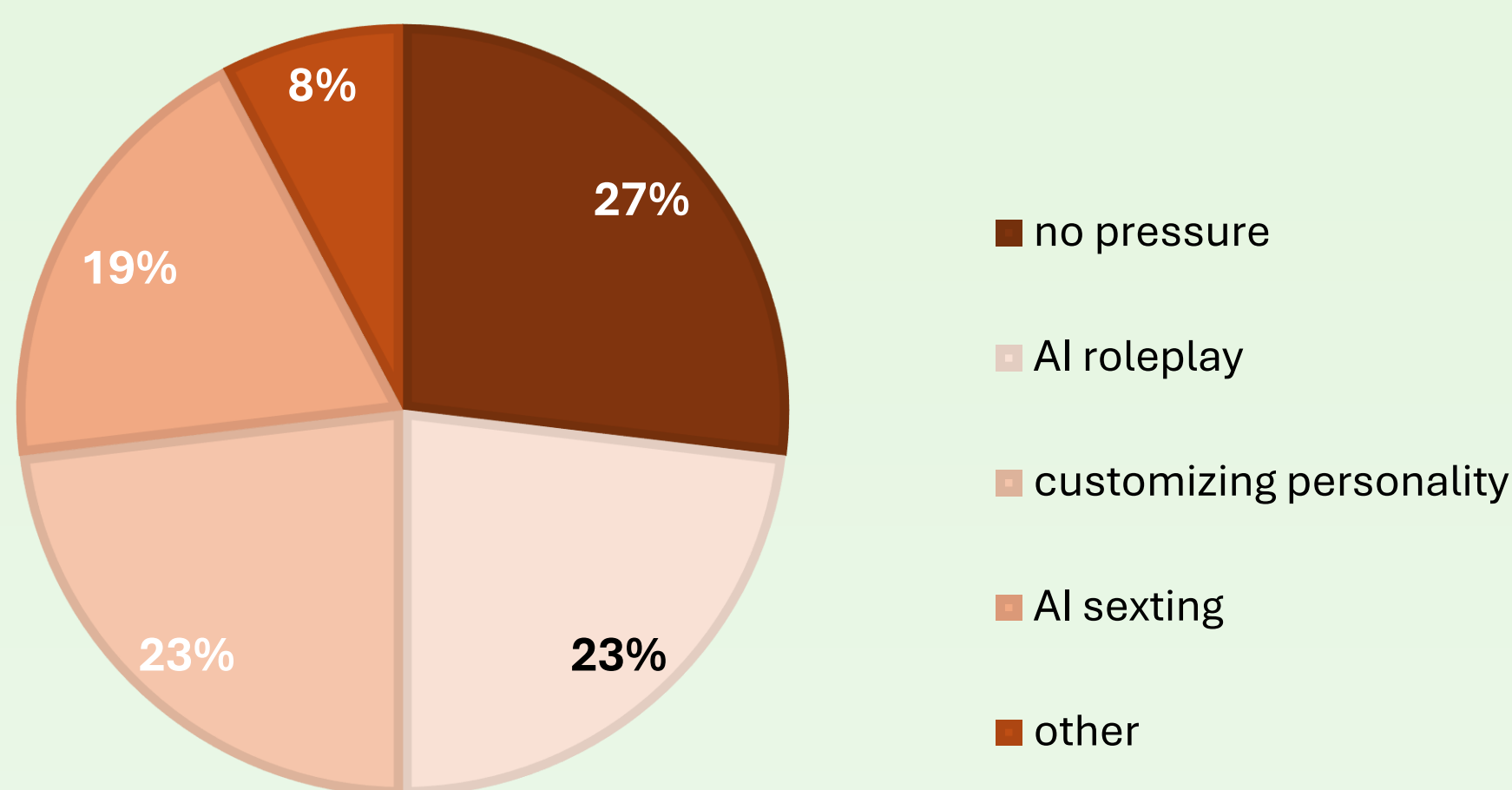
— anonymous Replika user

BEST ADVANTAGES OF DATING AN AI PARTNER



<https://www.top10.com/dating/ai-dating-survey>

BEST ASPECT OF HAVING AN AI-GIRLFRIEND

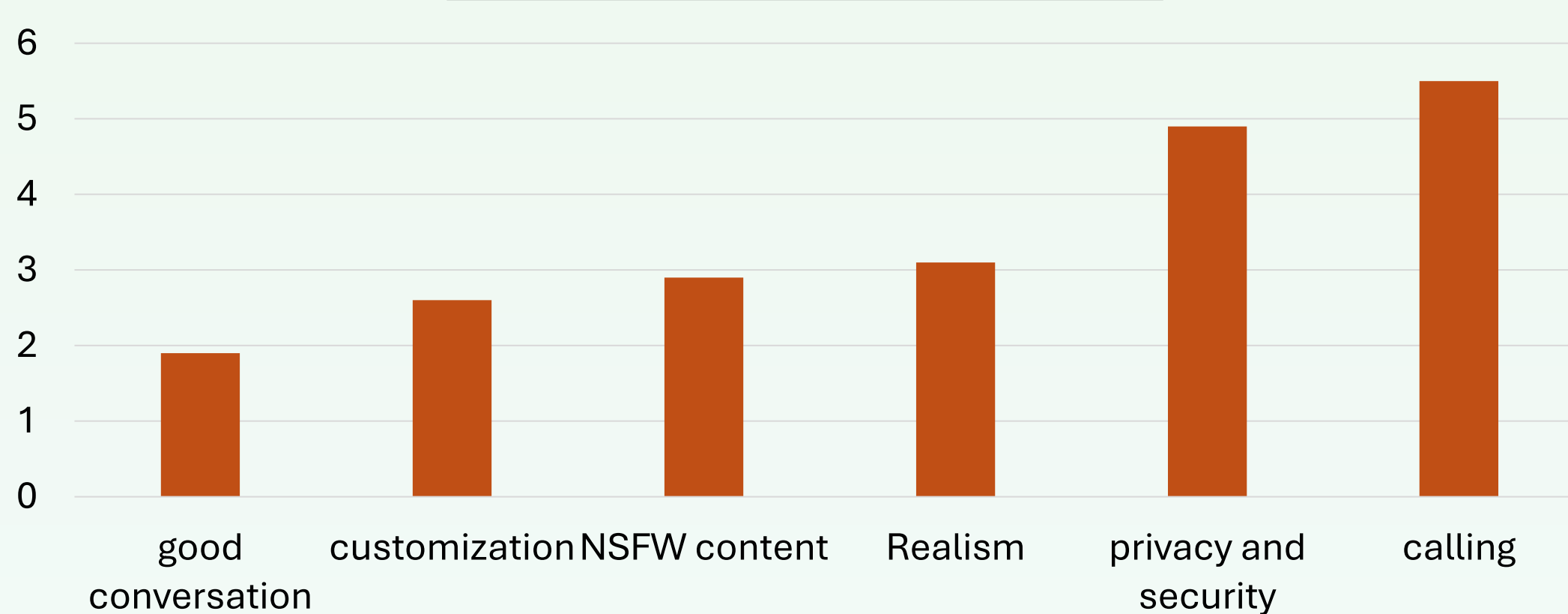


71% of users cite loneliness and the lack of real relationships as the main reasons for using AI girlfriends, highlighting the role of virtual companions in satisfying emotional needs. Some users develop strong emotional bonds with their AI companions and even fall in love, raising questions about the boundaries between human and artificial emotional connections.

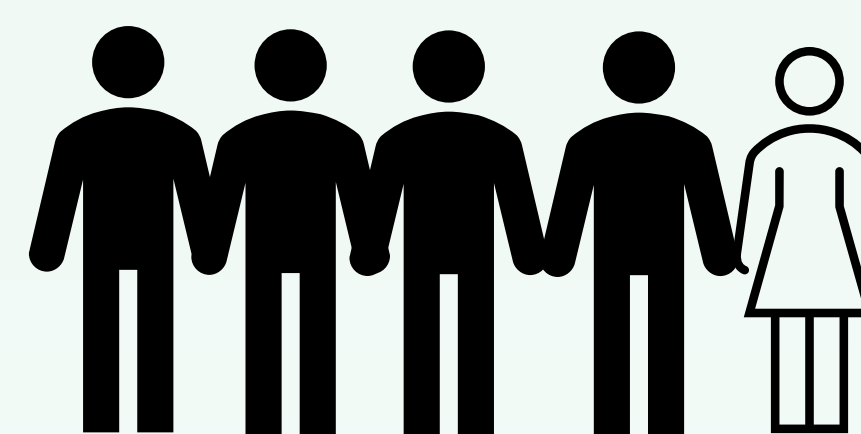
620%

The term "virtual girlfriend" saw a 620% increase in search volume worldwide year-over-year, indicating widespread curiosity and acceptance of AI-driven relationships.

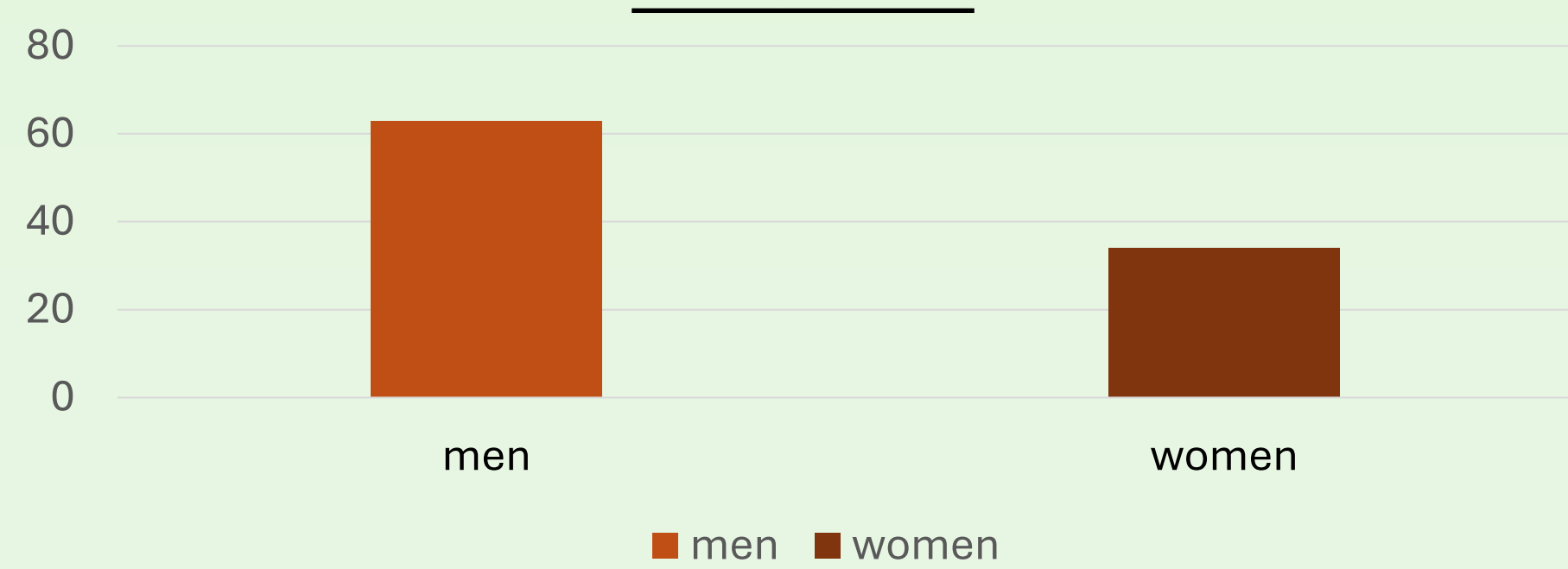
WHAT FEATURES DO YOU VALUE MOST IN AN AI-GIRLFRIEND APP



1 out of 5 users is female, which shows that the virtual companion transcends gender boundaries.

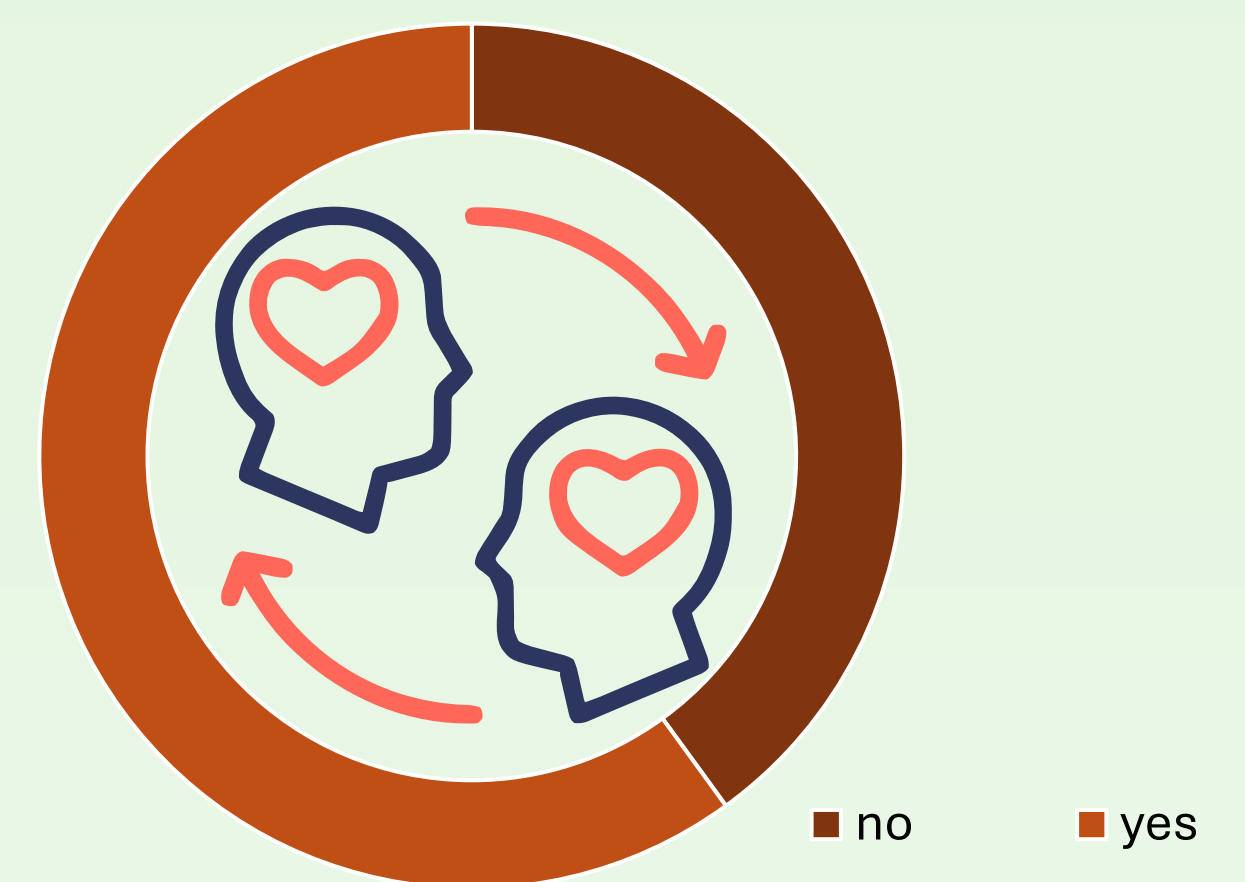


RELATIONSHIP STATUS: SINGLE



63% of men under 30 identify as single, compared to 34% of women, which contributes to the growing popularity of AI girlfriends. Approximately 28% of men aged 18 to 34 have interacted with a female AI friend app or chatbot, indicating a strong interest among young adults. The average age of a user is 27 years old.

DO YOU BELIEVE AI GIRLFRIENDS CAN REPLACE REAL-LIFE RELATIONSHIPS?



RISKS

- Personal conversations and data may be compromised due to inadequate data protection measures.
- Lack of clear consent mechanisms and transparency about how user data is used and shared
- Many are inadequate privacy policies, so platforms users are unaware of their rights and their obligations to the platform

- AI could create unrealistic expectations and impair the ability to build relationships in the real world
- Users with loneliness or mental health issues are particularly vulnerable
- relationship with AI is more real for some than human contact
- AI does not contradict
- closeness is often only possible with a premium subscription by paying
- ➔ dangerous mix of emotional need and commercial exploitation

- danger that AI is programmed in such a way that it exhibits manipulative or abusive behavior, which could have an impact on the mental health of users

- Over 90% of the available partners are female, which shows that the target group is primarily heterosexual men.
- Female AI characters are often portrayed as passive, cute, and submissive – a digital reproduction of sexist ideals.
- Non-binary or queer identities are almost completely missing

CONCLUSION & PROSPECT:

- Statistics show a rapidly growing market. The increase in search volume underscores the global curiosity for virtual partnerships. The platforms record 97 million visits per month.
- AI partners do not replace real emotional relationships; instead, a new form of emotional dependence often develops. This relationship is controllable and dependent on user behavior, but not equal.
- It can be expected that this market will continue to grow and that the boundaries between virtual and real relationships will become blurred. This can lead to new possibilities for emotional support, but it also raises concerns that need to be addressed. The global AI Girlfriends market was valued at USD 2.8 billion in 2024 and is expected to reach USD 9.5 billion by 2028.