

## BACKGROUND

SEM is known for depicting unrealistic depictions of the male and female body and its proportions.

Previous research indicates:

- ✓ Media images have a negative effect on body image and self-esteem
- ✓ Increased internet accessibility has led to easier access to SEM
- ✓ Lack of research in SEM exposure on body image and self-esteem

**Does exposure to sexually explicit material (SEM) negatively influence one's body image and self-esteem?**

## HYPOTHESES

1. Females will report lower body image and esteem scores relative to their male counterparts, regardless of condition
2. Mean scores of body image and self-esteem: control condition > media condition > SEM condition

## DESIGN & PROCEDURE

3 (condition) X 2 (gender) quasi-experimental design with randomized conditions:

- SEM: shown 20 SEM gender-balanced images
- Media: shown 20 media gender-balanced images
- Control: shown no images

### MEASURES

1. **Self-Esteem Scale (SES; Rosenberg, 1965);  $\alpha = .90$**

- Scale Range: 1-4,  $M = 2.82$ ,  $SD = .50$
- Ex. "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself."

2. **Body Exposure During Sexual Activities Questionnaire (BESAQ; Cash et al., 2004);  $\alpha = .75$**

- Scale Range: 1-5,  $M = 3.47$ ,  $SD = .52$
- Ex. "I am self-conscious about my body during sexual activity."

3. **Genital Esteem Scale (GES; Winter, 1989)**

a) Male Subscale ( $\alpha = .91$ )

- Scale Range: 1-5,  $M = 3.50$ ,  $SD = .61$
- Ex. "I am satisfied with the length of my erect penis."

b) Female Subscale ( $\alpha = .91$ )

- Range: 12-60,  $M = 3.30$ ,  $SD = .73$
- Ex. "I am satisfied with the attractiveness of my vulva."

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Figure 1. Ethnicity (%)

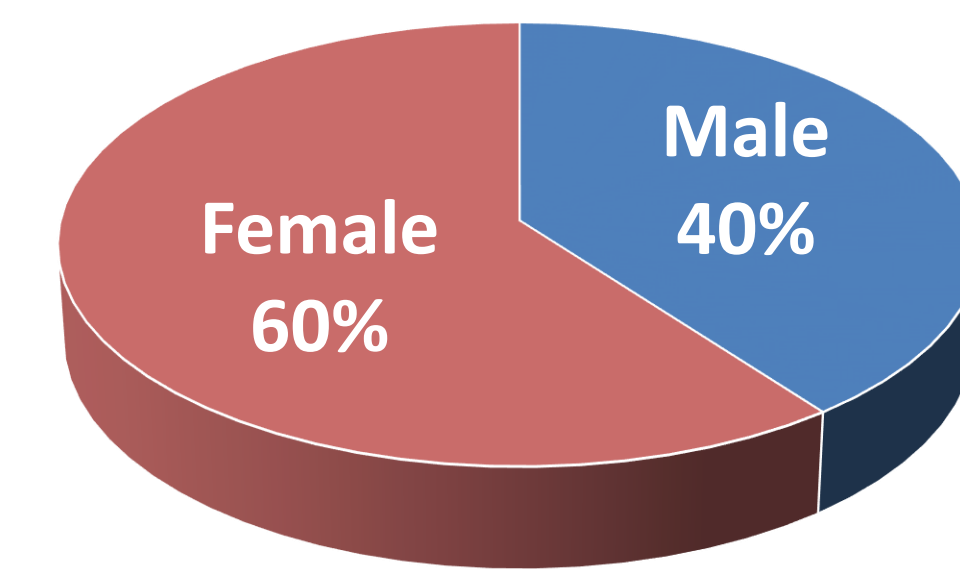
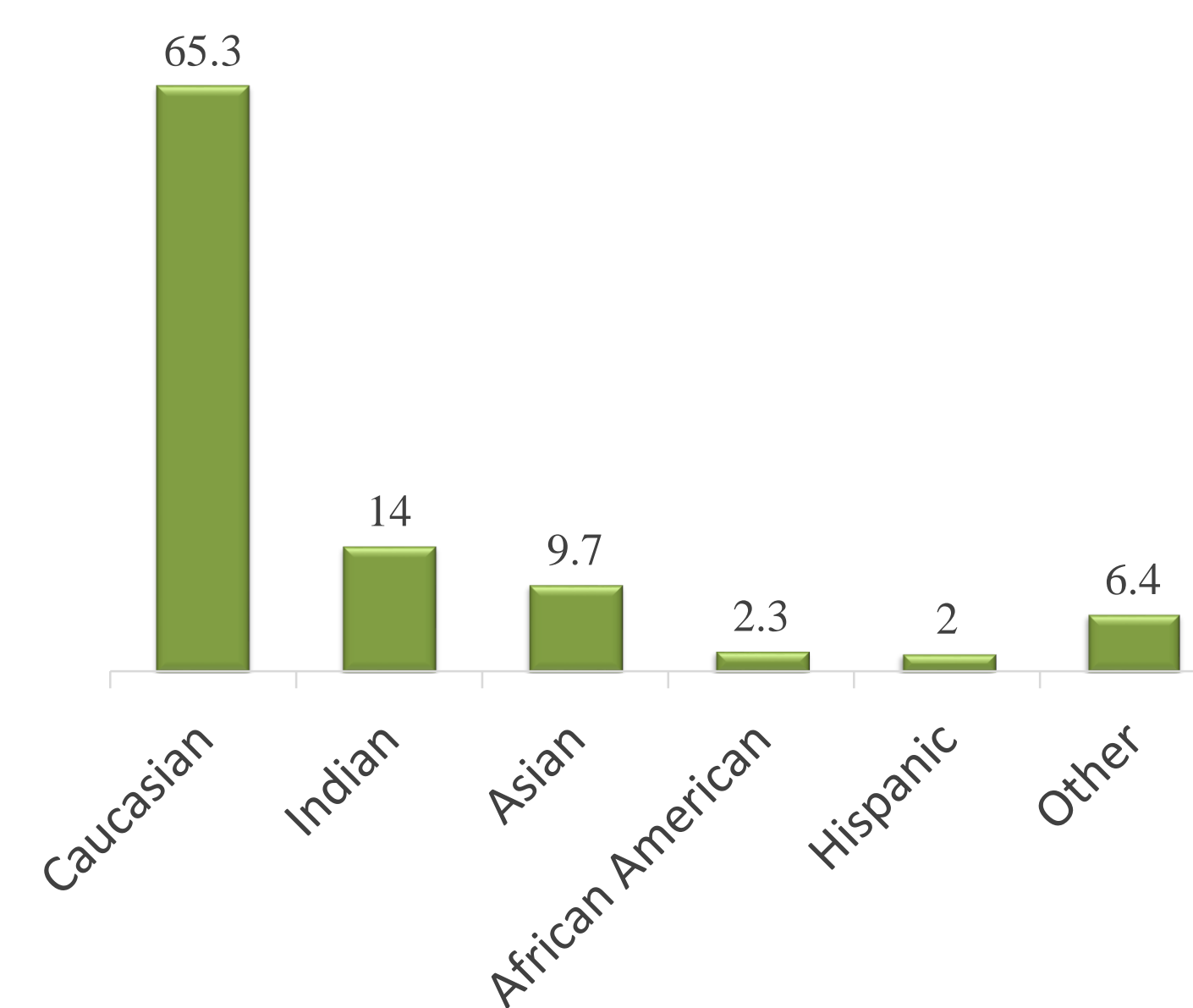
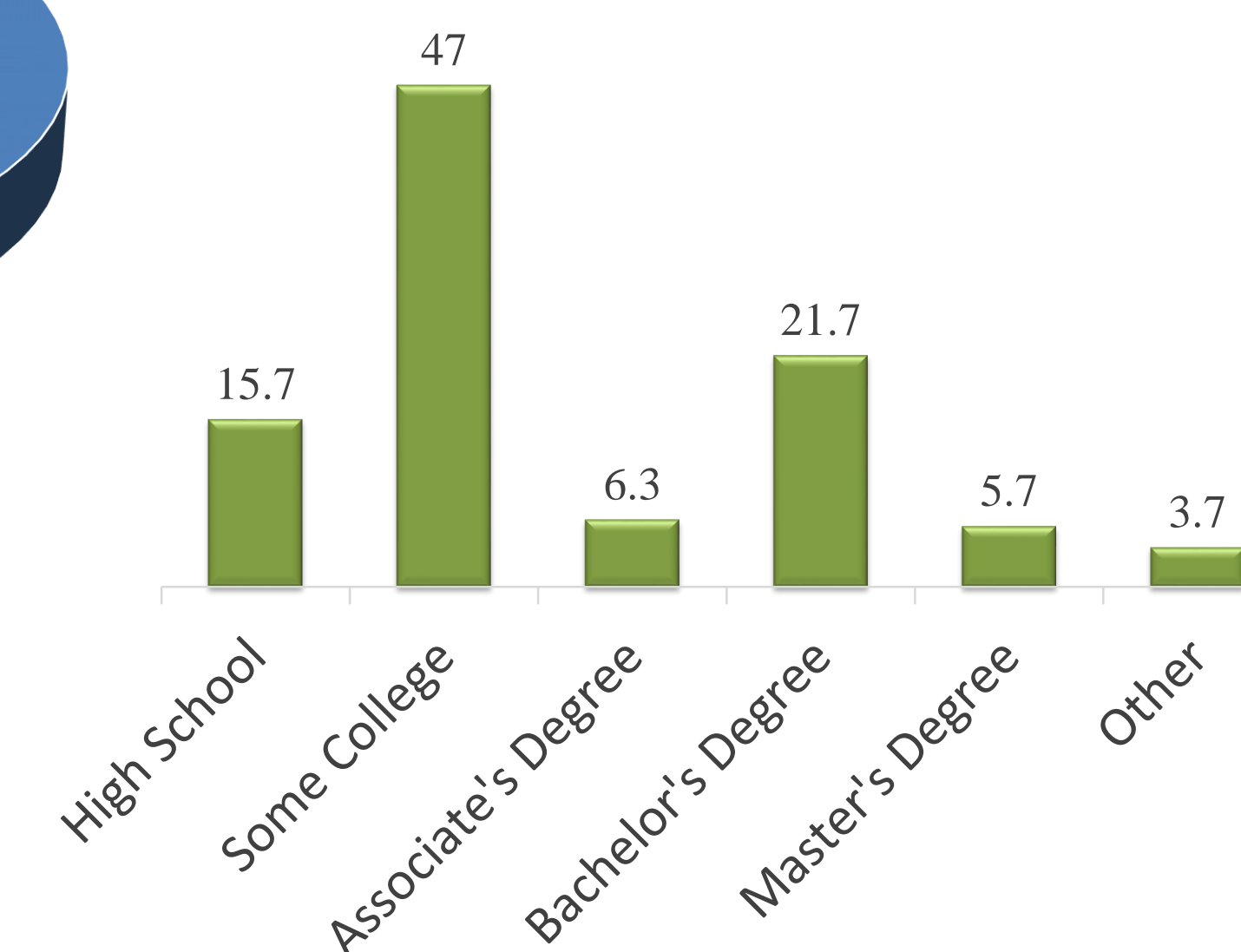
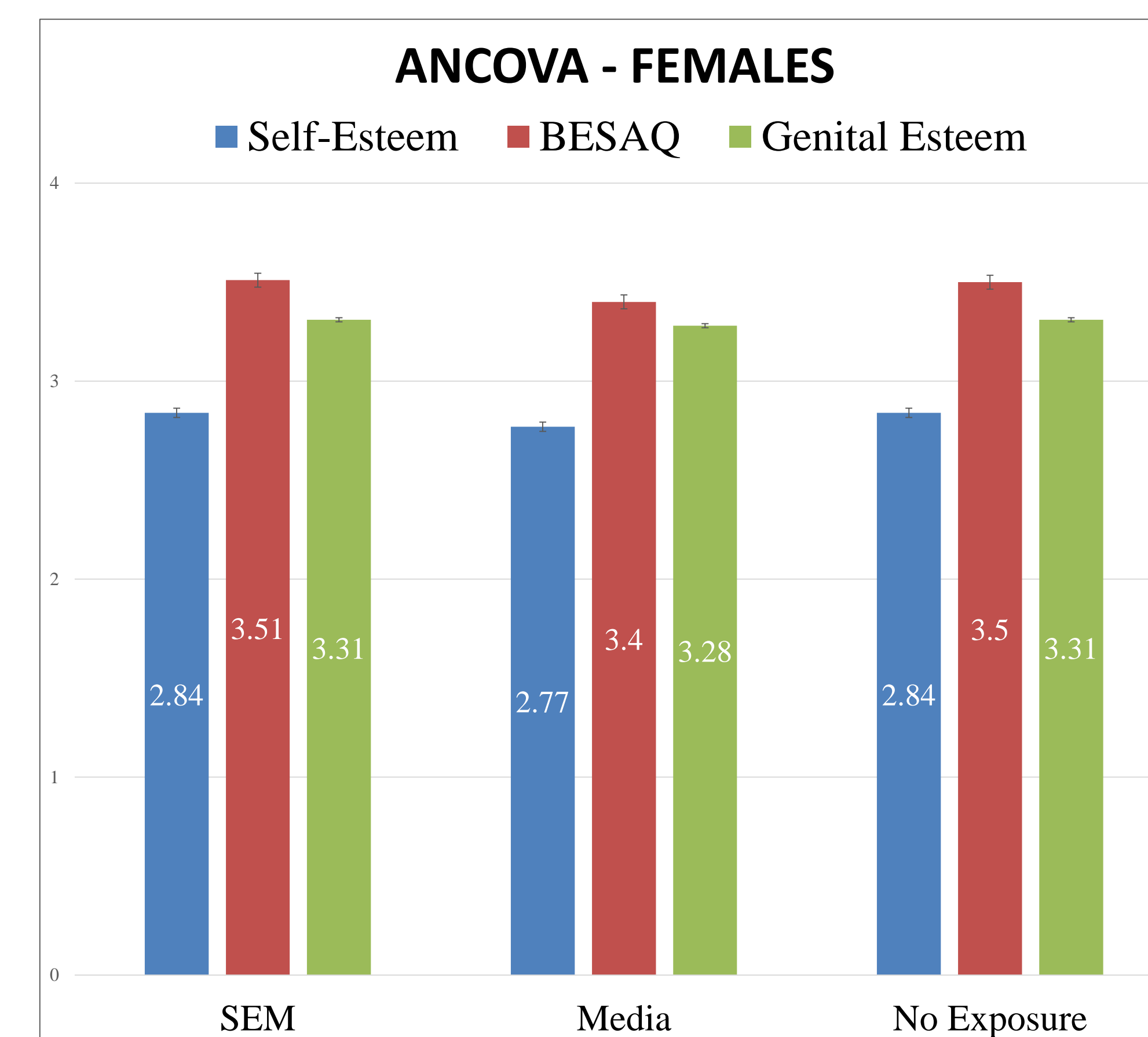
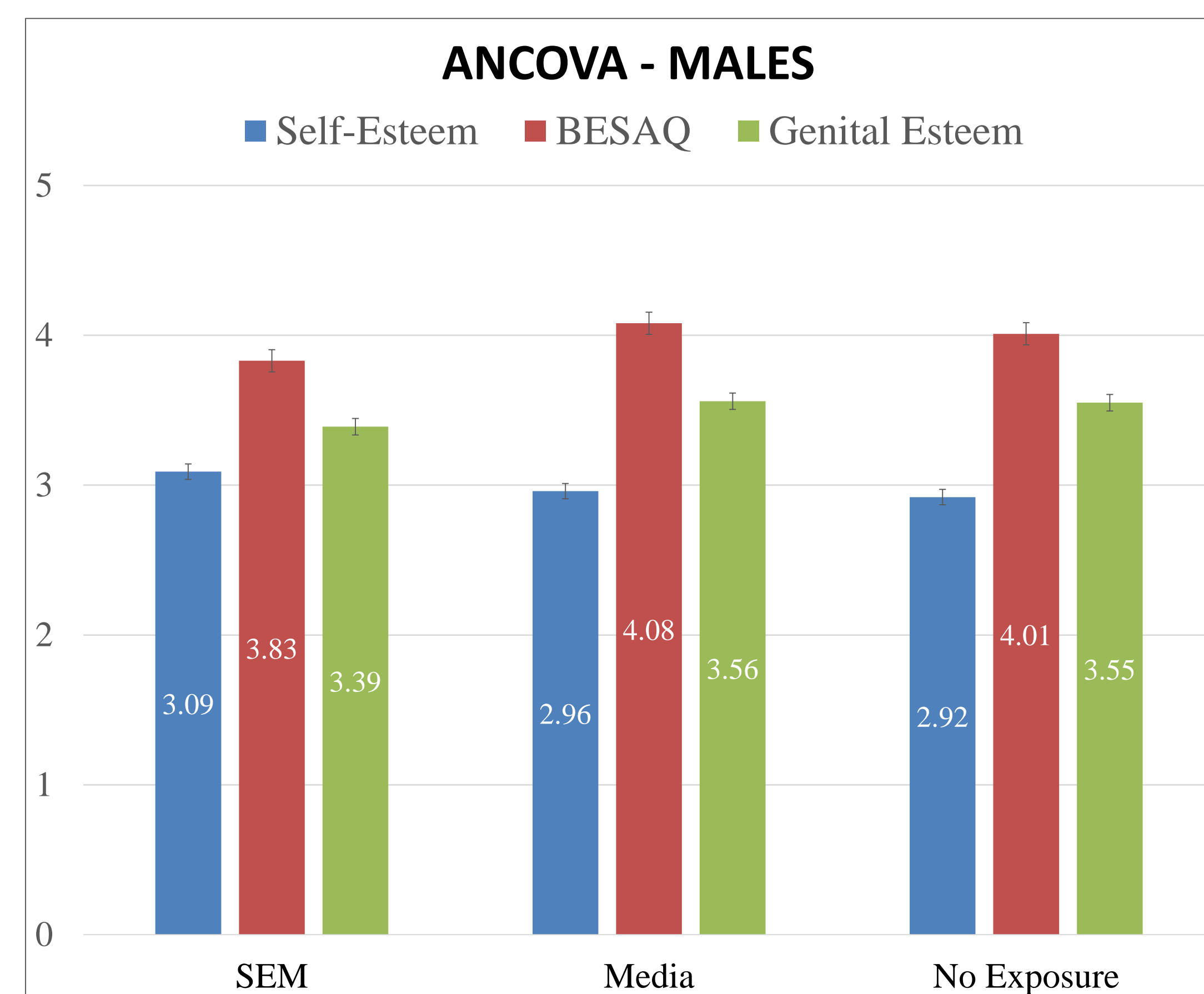
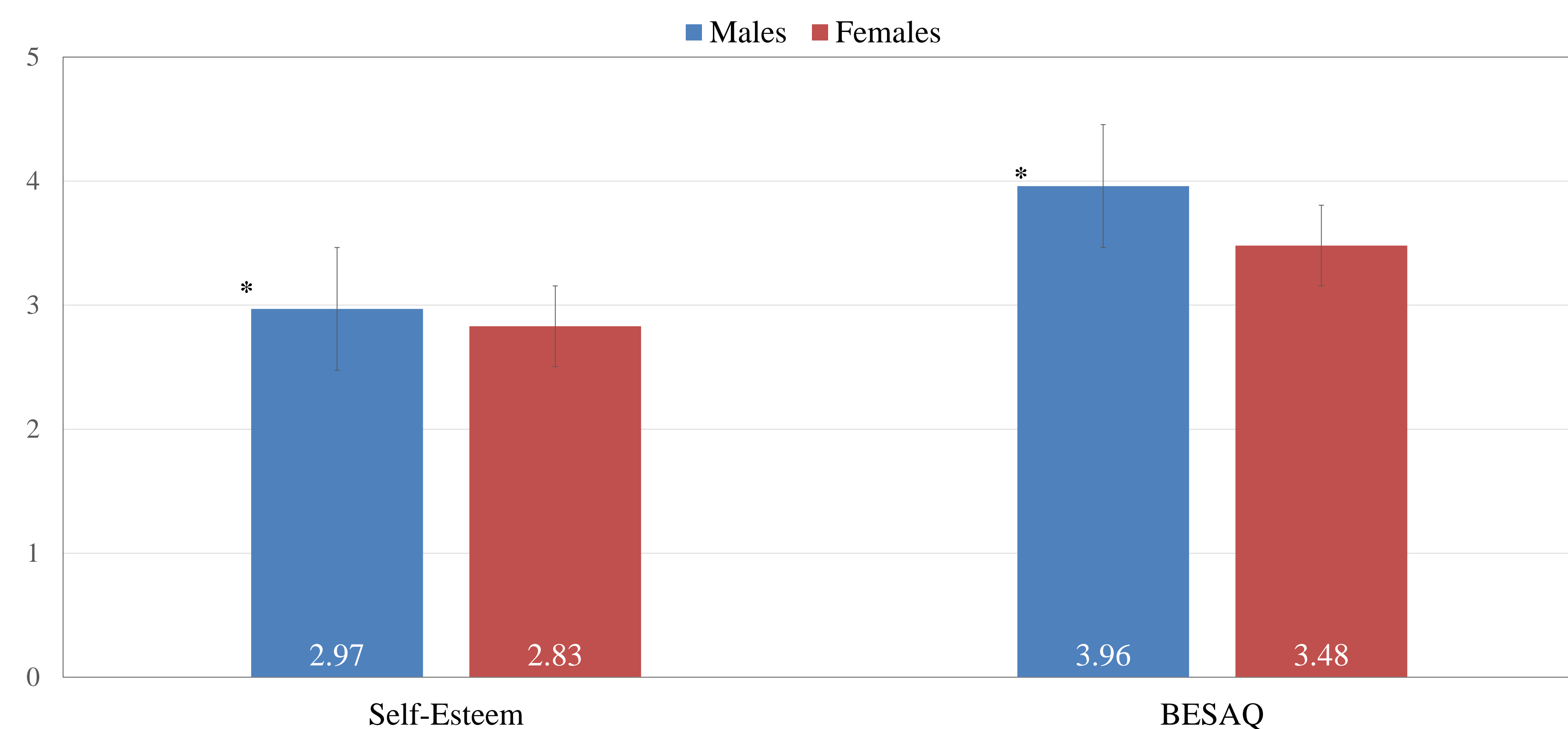


Figure 2. Gender

Figure 3. Education Level (%)



## MANCOVA AND FOLLOW-UP RESULTS



## PARTICIPANTS

N = 295: Recruited through university and online avenues:

- ✓ Females:  $n = 178$  (Age:  $M = 23.90$ ;  $SD = 6.60$  years)
- ✓ Males:  $n = 117$  (Age:  $M = 27.26$ ;  $SD = 9.02$  years)

## RESULTS

### 1. Gender Differences: MANCOVA with age as a covariate

- ✓ Significant main effect of gender:  
 $F(5, 289) = 28.53$ ,  $p < .001$ ; partial  $\eta^2 = .230$
- ✗ Non-significant main effect of condition
- ✗ Non-significant interaction effect

Separate ANCOVA for males and females

### 2. Effect of Condition: ANCOVA with age as a covariate

- ✗ Non-significant effect for males:
- ✗ Non-significant effect for females

## DISCUSSION

### 1. Significant differences between genders:

- ✓ Females reported lower body image and self-esteem satisfaction relative to males, regardless of condition

### 2. Non-significant effect of condition for males:

- ✗ Males exposed to SEM reported the lowest body satisfaction and genital esteem scores → approached significance

### 3. Non-significant effect of condition for females:

- ✗ Females reported similar body satisfaction, genital esteem, and self-esteem scores across all conditions

### Explanation of Findings:

Females report higher levels of body dissatisfaction than males throughout all stages of life:

- Females are more common objects of sexualization in media
- Males are more frequent consumers of SEM relative to females (e.g. 39% of males consume 3x/week, 7% for females)

### Limitations include:

1. Participation bias → those willing to partake in sexuality research
2. Sensitive subject matter → possible inaccurate self-reported data
3. No data obtained on previous sexual history or SEM exposure