

# Professional Dress vs. Employee Diversity

## *Patient Perceptions of Visible Tattoos and Facial Piercings*

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# Disclosure

## OBJECTIVES

The learner will be able to:

- Understand the impact of professional dress on patient perceptions of safety
- Identify patient, family and nurses perceptions of visible tattoos and facial piercings.

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*Katreena has no conflict of interest to disclose*



# BACKGROUND

## - NURSING DRESS CODES

- Historically nurses wore white with caps to distinguish their educational level
- Over the past several decades, a more diverse dress code has been implemented.
- However, there is no standard definition for acceptable workplace attire for nurses.



# BACKGROUND RESEARCH - NURSING ATTIRE

## Original Research

- Initial research on image in nursing was done by Mangum et al. (1991).
- Patients were given pictures of a 'nurse' dressed in different attire.
- Nursing Image Scale 10 values rated on 1-5 Likert type scale



## Items Rated

- Genuine concern
- Reliable
- Confident in the job
- Attentive
- Cooperative
- Empathetic
- Competent
- Pride in the work
- Efficient
- Approachable



# RESEARCH GAP

Hatfield et al (2013) identified that standardized uniform style and color

- Increased patient perception of nurses' professionalism and
- Increased the ability to distinguish nursing staff from allied professionals.
- Patient satisfaction was not affected by nonstandard nursing uniforms.



# Times are Changing



The presence of visible tattoos and facial piercings for direct care providers have become more prevalent

There is a dilemma for human resource and nursing managers on how to handle nurses with body art/adornment

Few studies have investigated patient, family and nurses perceptions of visible tattoos and facial piercings



# RESEARCH QUESTION

**What are patients, family/visitors and nurses perceptions of visible tattoos and facial piercings in health care workers?**



# METHODS





# PRE AND POST DESCRIPTIVE SURVEY DESIGN

Prior to the standardized uniform change in June 2013, a baseline questionnaire was given to a convenience sample of patients, families/visitors and staff at 3 hospitals within the same healthcare system.

In December 2014, the same questionnaire was given to similar group



# QUESTIONNAIRE

20 item survey plus demographics and two qualitative questions

## Modified Nursing Image Survey

- 10 items rated on a 1-5 Likert Type Scale
  - 1= Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree; 0 = No opinion)
- **10 items based upon literature review and expert opinion**
  - **“can distinguish nurses, nurses dress professionally, nurses dress is important, color, style, safety, visible tattoos, facial piercings, artificial nails, jewelry”**



# Analysis

Descriptive Statistics

MANOVA to detect mean differences

Multivariate Regression



# RESULTS

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# DEMOGRAPHICS

<b>Respondent</b> <i>(N = 488)</i>	<b>Percent Female</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b> <i>(percent Caucasian)</i>	<b>Mean Age</b>	<b>Education</b> <i>(Percent college graduates)</i>
<b>Patient</b> <i>(n = 84)</i>	54.8%	87.0%	53.2	35.6%
<b>Family/Visitors</b> <i>(n = 89)</i>	73.0%	94.3%	55.5	38.2%
<b>Staff</b> <i>(n = 320)</i>	84.3%	94.3%	37.4	100%



# Professional vs. Unprofessional Dress

## Patient Responses

### Professional

- Clean Scrubs
- Neat scrubs
- Scrubs are in good repair
- Clean hair and grooming
- Modest

### Unprofessional

- Unkempt hair
- Wrinkled
- Tight or revealing clothes
- Holes or tears in clothing
- Scrubs too long
- Excessive Jewelry, makeup or perfume



# Professional vs. Unprofessional Dress

## Staff Responses

### Professional

- Clean Scrubs
- Ironed/Pressed Scrubs
- Clean/tidy hair (pulled back)
- Closed toed shoes
- Good personal hygiene
- Name Badge



### Unprofessional

- Dirty uniform (scrubs & shoes)
- Excessive jewelry/nails/makeup
- Ill-fitting scrubs (too tight, too loose)
- Pants that drag on floor
- Poor Hygiene



# Perceptions of Professional Dress

Scored on 1-5 Likert Type Scale (1=Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree; 0 = No opinion)

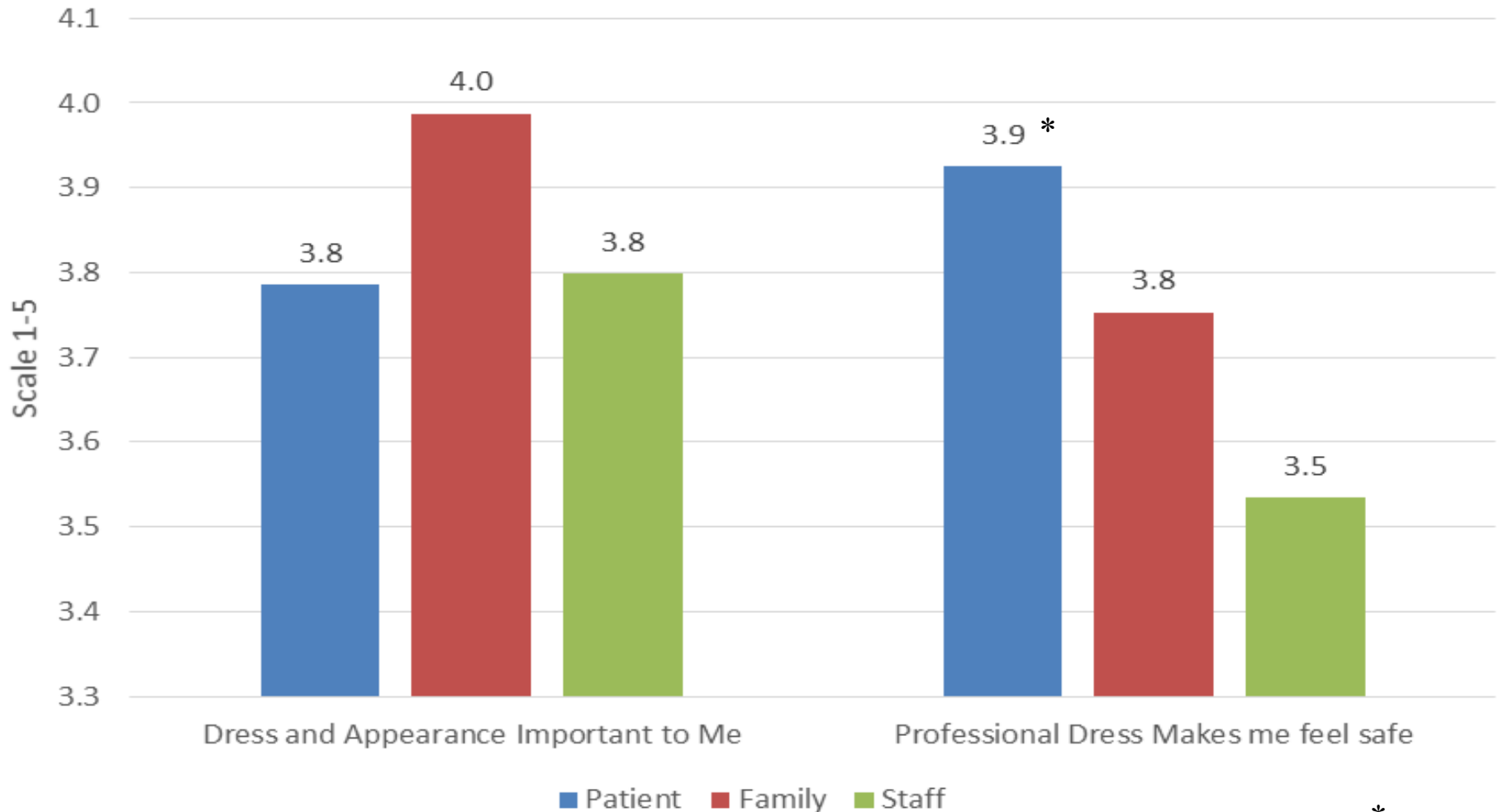
1. The dress and appearance of the nurses is important to me
2. It makes me feel safe when my nurses are dressed professionally





# Patient/Family, Visitor and Staff Perceptions of Professional Dress

(Patient n = 84 Family/Visitor n = 80 Staff n = 327)



\* p<(.05)

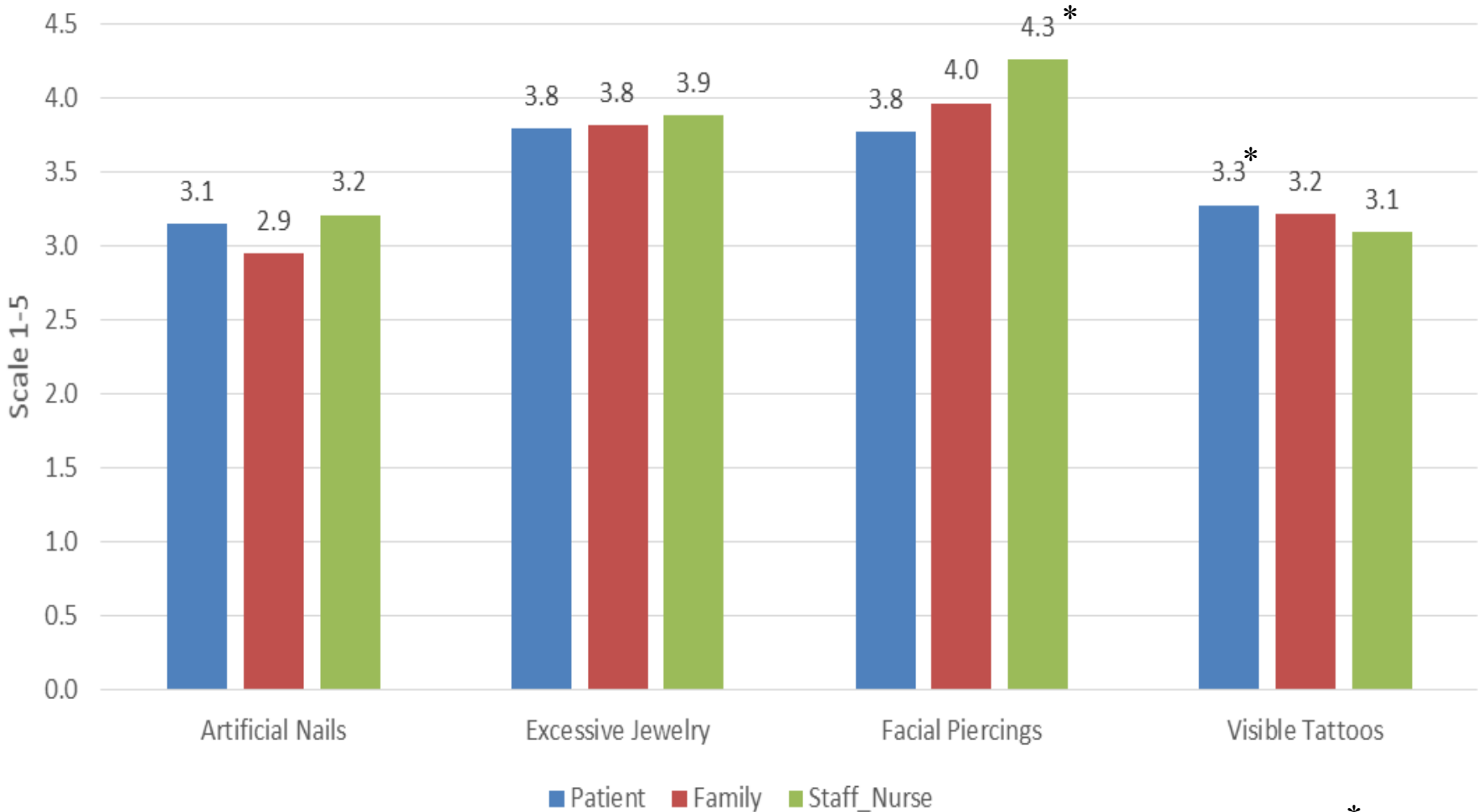
# Body Art/Adornment Questions

Scored on 1-5 Likert Type Scale (1=Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree; 0 = No opinion)

1. It makes me uncomfortable when my nurses have visible tattoos
2. It is okay for nurses to have visible facial piercings while at work (Reverse Coded)
3. I think it is unprofessional for nurses to have artificial nails
4. Nurses should not wear excessive jewelry while at work

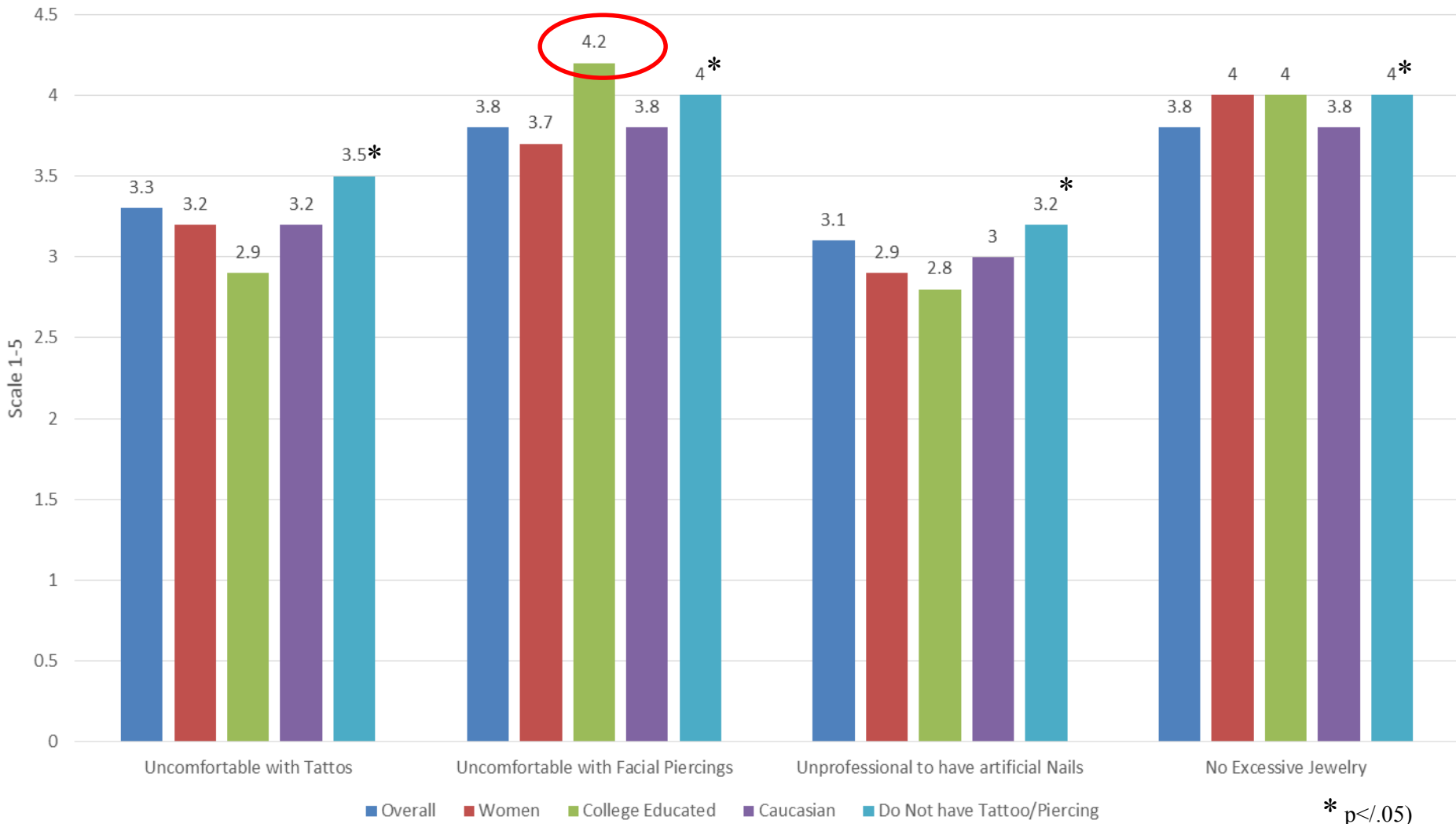


Patient, Family/Visitors and Staff  
Perceptions of Body Art/Adornment  
(Patient n = 71 Family/Visitor n = 69 Staff n = 311)

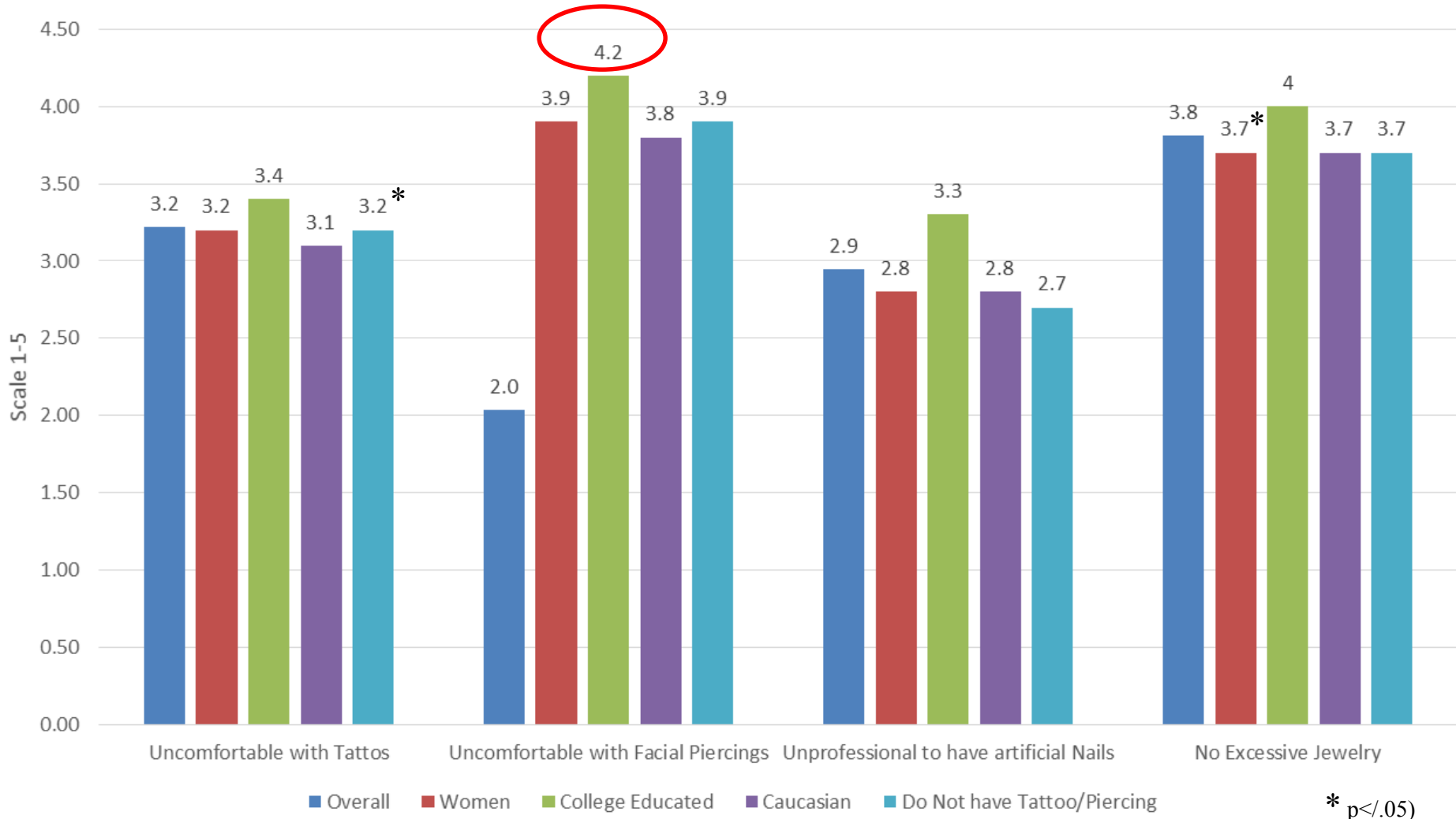


\* p<(.05)

# Patient Perceptions of Body Art/Adornment BY Gender, Education, Ethnicity and Presence of Tattoo/piercing



Family/Visitors  
 Perceptions of Body Art/Adornment  
 BY Gender, Education, Ethnicity and Presence of Tattoo/piercing



\* p < .05)

# Patients Perceptions of Body Art/Adornment

## Results of multivariate analysis

### Uncomfortable with facial piercings

18.5% of the variance was explained by patients who were female, did not have piercings or tattoos and had a college education

### Uncomfortable with visible tattoos

12.3% of the variance was explained by patients who did not have piercings or tattoos and had a college education



# CONCLUSIONS



# Body Art/Adornment

Patients, Families/Visitors and Staff generally are not comfortable with

- Facial Piercings
- Excessive Jewelry
- Visible tattoos
- Artificial Nails

Differences in responses were identified by gender, ethnicity, education level and presence of body art

- *Listed in order of strongest discomfort level*





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