

Literature Review

Stress in College Students

- Between 1985 and 2002, students who reported being "frequently overwhelmed" increased from 16% to 27% (Brougham, Zail, Mendoza, & Miller, 2009)
- The potential transition into a new environment, adapting to higher academic demands, and learning to live independently are some of the major aspects that may increase the stress levels in the life of a college student (Lin & Huang, 2013)
- Stress that comes along with transition into college is one of the main contributors to academic burnout in college students (Lin & Huang, 2013).

Stress and Gender

- Overall, females tend to report experiencing higher stress levels in comparison to men (Lin & Huang, 2013; Cohen & Janicki-Deverts, 2012; Brougham, Zail, Mendoza, & Miller, 2009; Matud, 2004).

Why is this important?

- Many studies have investigated the difference in coping strategies in response to stress between men and women (Brougham, Zail, Mendoza, & Miller, 2009; Matud, 2004), but they have not looked at factors other than gender that might predict the difference in stress levels that are usually reported.

Methods

Participants:

- 243 Brigham Young University (BYU) students who also, at the time of the study, were active members of The Church of Jesus Christ Latter-Day Saints (LDS).
- 152 women, 91 men
- Between the ages of 18 and 38 ($M = 20.3$, $SD = 3.27$)
- Despite the religious characteristics of this sample, previous research shows that LDS families are not significantly different from the general population.
- The homogeneity of the group may have controlled for other potential extraneous and nuisance variables, that could impact stress.

Procedure:

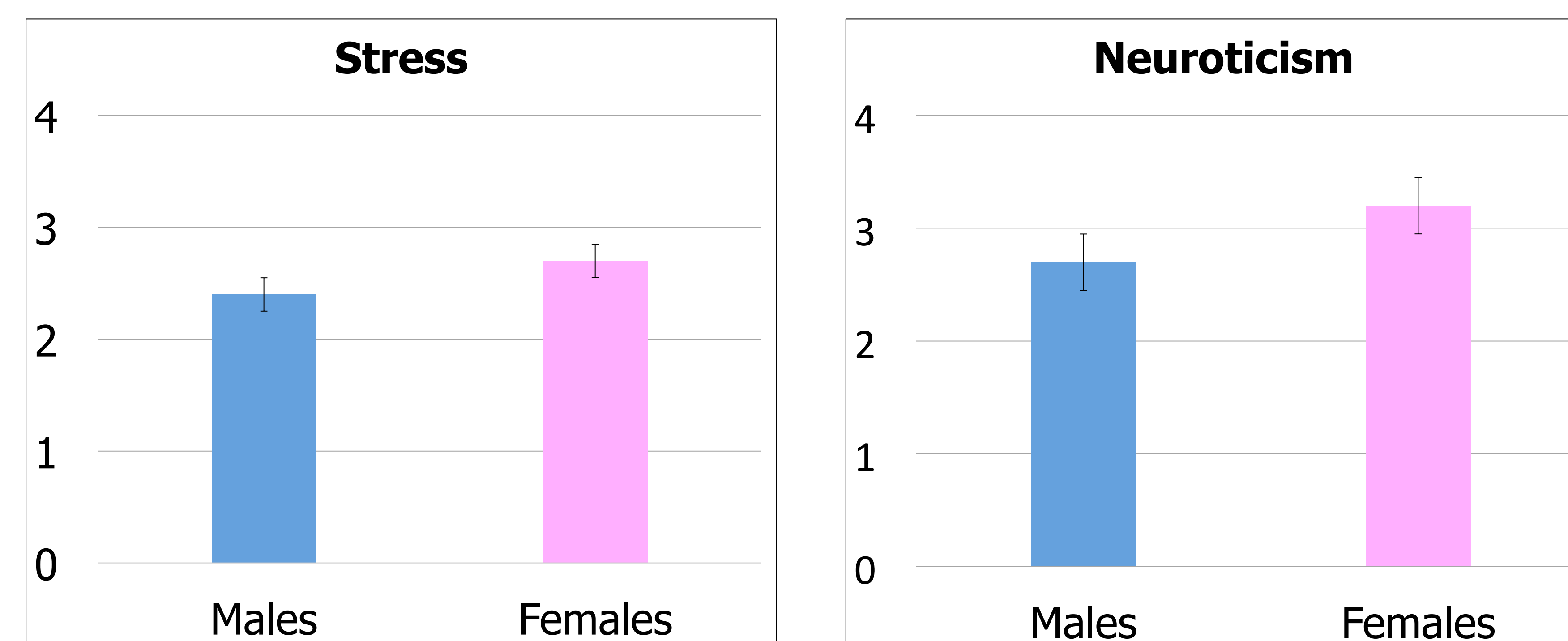
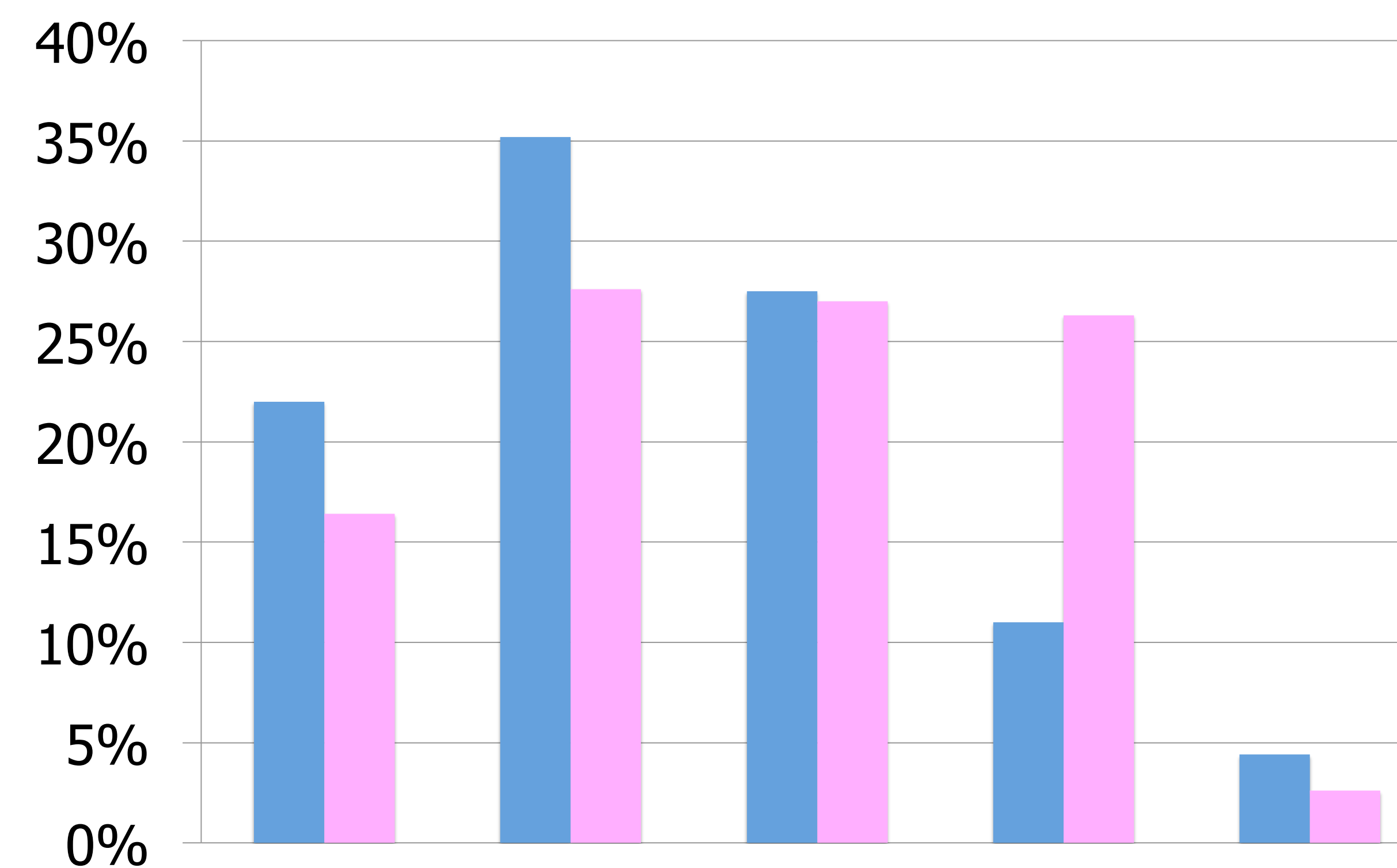
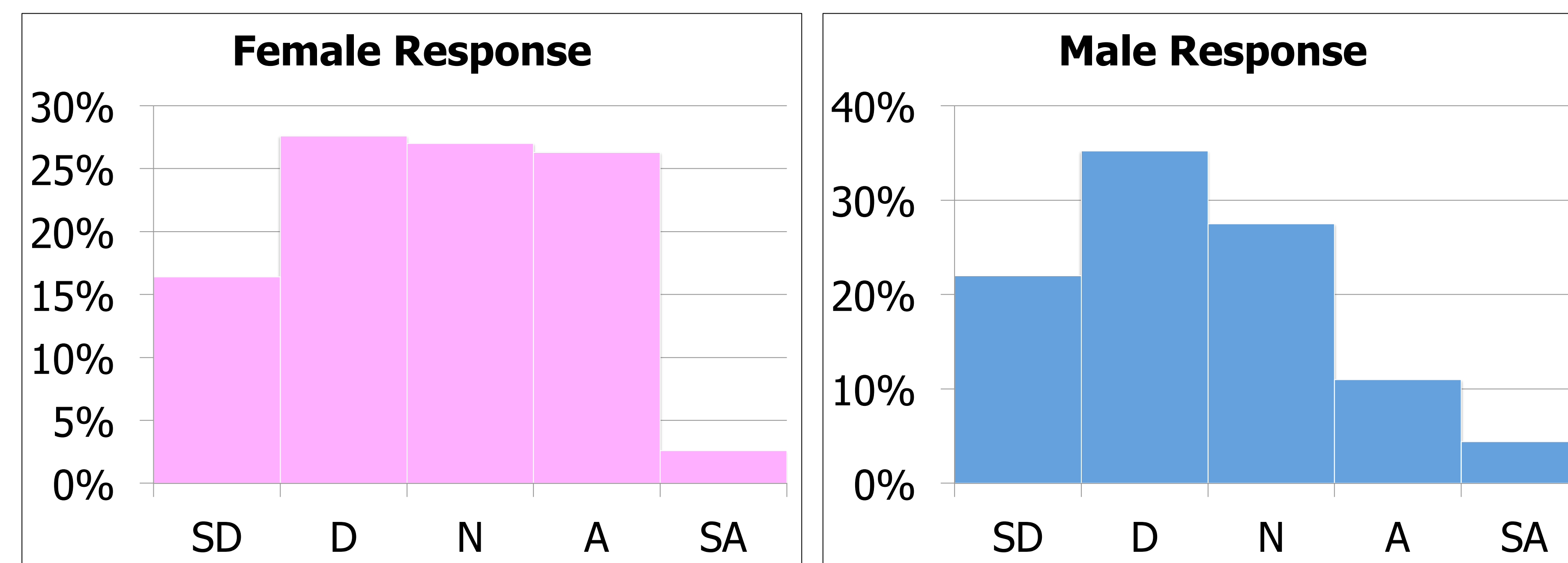
- Archival Research
- Data obtained from an online survey conducted at BYU

Measures:

- Abbreviated Personality Inventory: a 10 item short version of the big five inventory
- Rumination Response Scale (Nolen-Hoeksema, 1991)

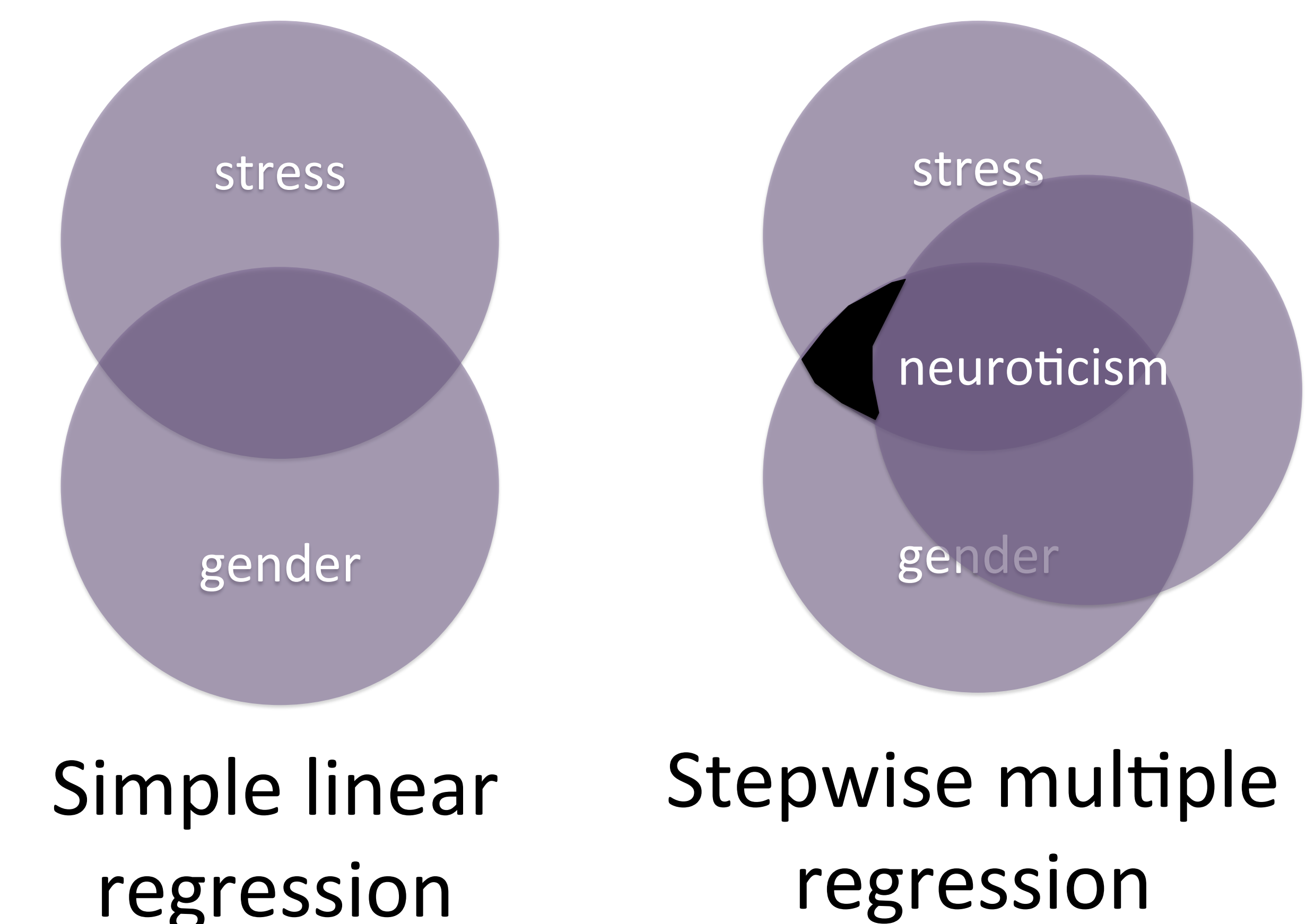
The Relationship Between Gender and Perceived Stress Levels in College Students

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Results

- An initial simple linear regression showed that gender was a significant predictor of stress levels ($\beta = .133$, $p = .04$).
- There was no difference in stress levels between those in a committed relationship and those who were not, $t(215) = -0.51$, $p = .61$. Furthermore, a chi square analysis suggested that females were no more or less likely to be in a romantic relationship than males (60% vs. 55%, $p = .42$) suggesting that relationship status could not account for the relationship between gender and stress levels.
- Although rumination predicted stress levels ($\beta = .15$, $p = .02$), there was no difference in ruminative tendencies between males and females, $t(240) = -.67$, $p = .51$, suggesting that rumination also could not account for the difference in stress levels across genders.
- However, a stepwise multiple regression showed that the neurotic personality type is a better predictor ($\beta = -.368$, $p < .001$) of stress than is gender ($\beta = .005$, $p = .9$) when both were included.
- Because females are more likely to have a neurotic personality type than men, $t(236) = -3.88$, $p < .001$, gender appeared to be a good predictor of stress, but personality type is actually a better predictor.



References

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- Cohen, S., & Janicki-Deverts, D. (2012). Who's stressed? Distributions of psychological stress in the United States in probability samples from 1983, 2006, and 2009. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 42(6), 1320-1334.
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- Matud, M. P. (2004). Gender differences in stress and coping styles. *Personality and individual differences*, 37(7), 1401-1415.
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