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Background

The UNAIDS 95-95-95 targets encompass testing and treatment outcomes for people living with HIV (PLWH). These targets do not include quality of life (QoL) for people living with HIV, leading to calls for a fourth 95.

The PozQoL tool which measures quality of life was developed specifically for PLWH in Australia. This is the first instance of the tool being used to measure quality of life for PLWH in Ontario.

Methods

The OHTN Cohort Study (OCS) follows PLWH at 15 clinics in Ontario.

The PozQoL contains 13 questions with answer options ranging from 1 to 5 (not at all to extremely). The tool has four sub-scales: health concerns, psychology, sociology, and functionality. Negatively worded questions are recoded so that positive outcomes correspond with higher values. Only those who completed all questions in the scale were included.

PozQoL overall mean, sub-group means, and associations with demographic characteristics were calculated using SAS 9.4.

Results

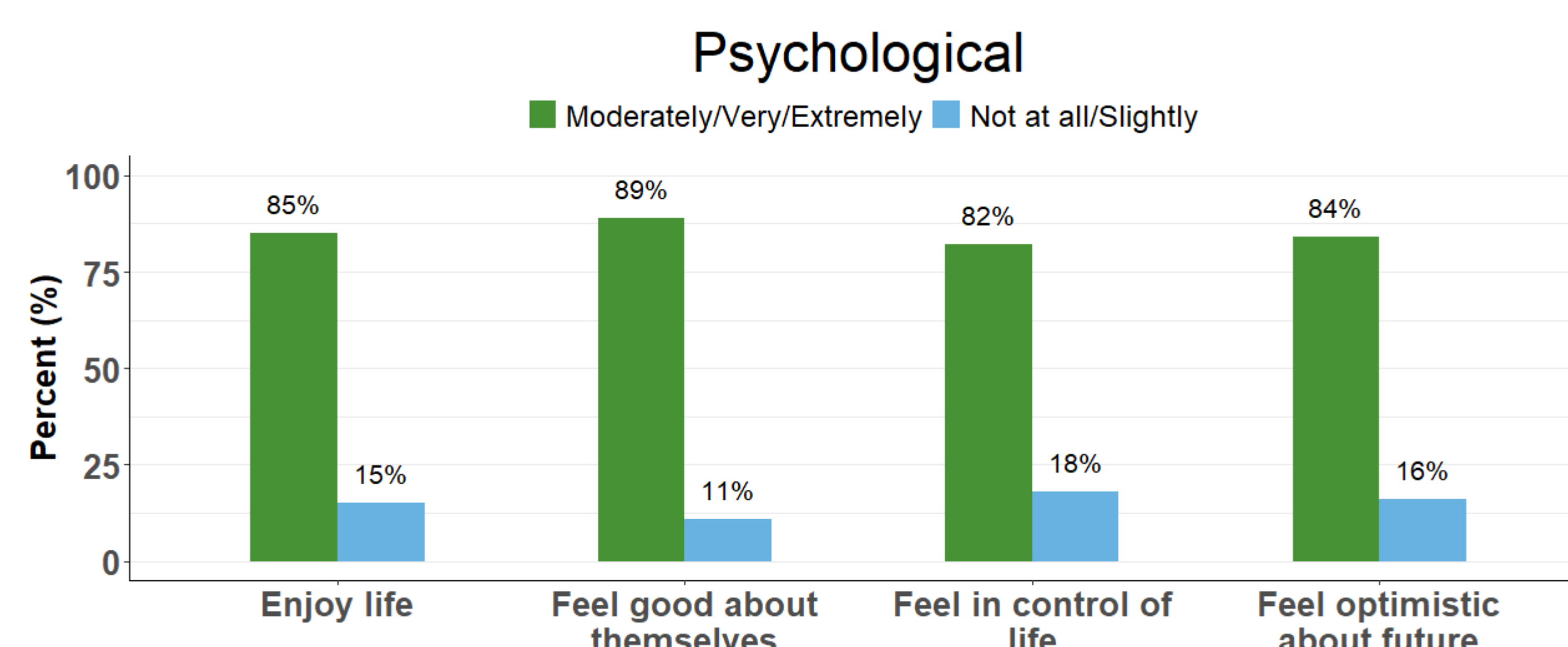
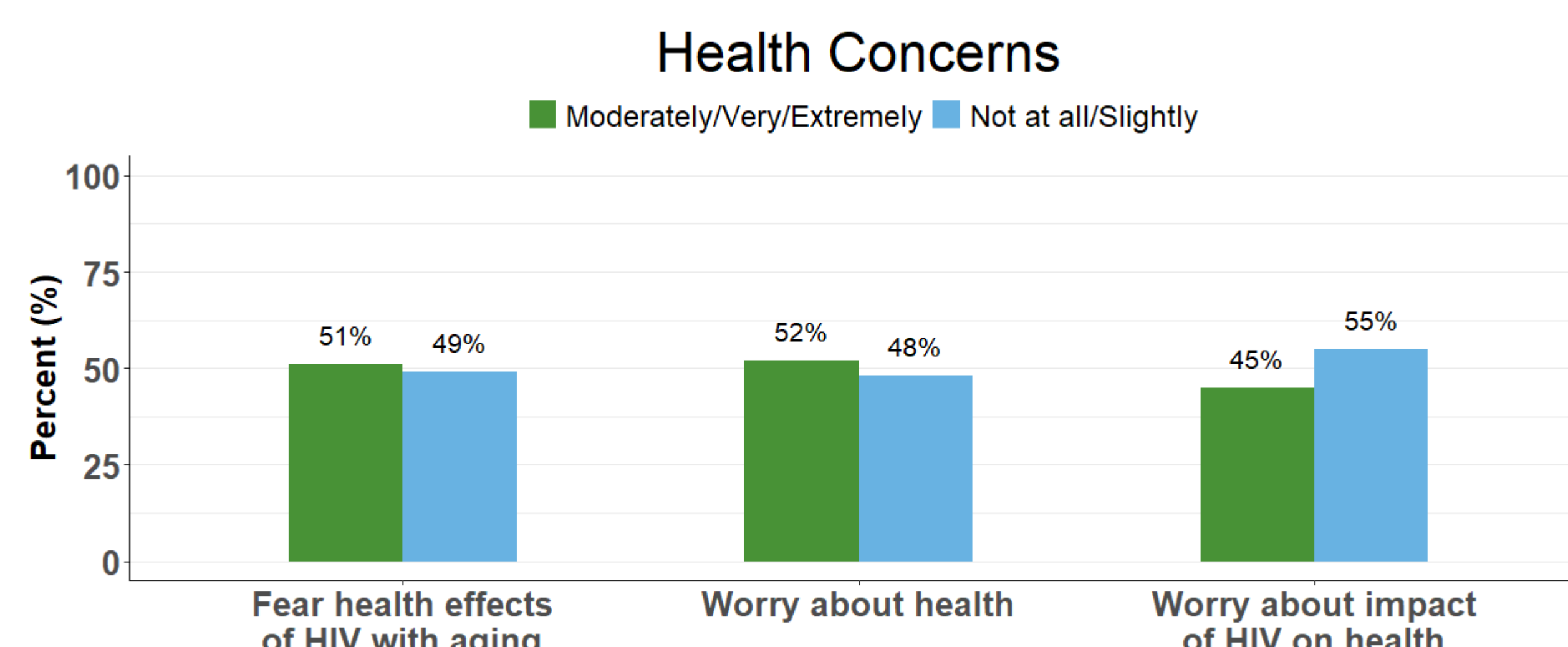
Cohort Description

In 2022, 2258 PLWH completed the annual OCS questionnaire. Demographic characteristics describe the cohort as:

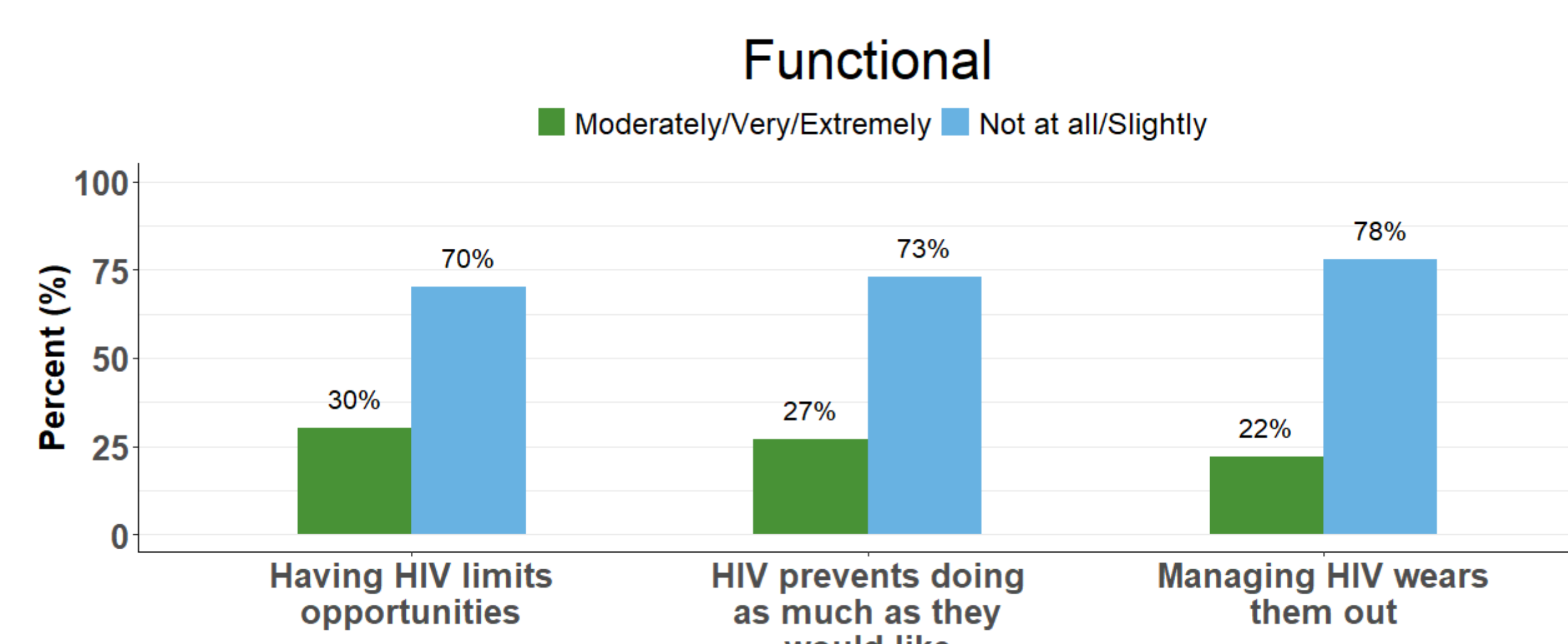
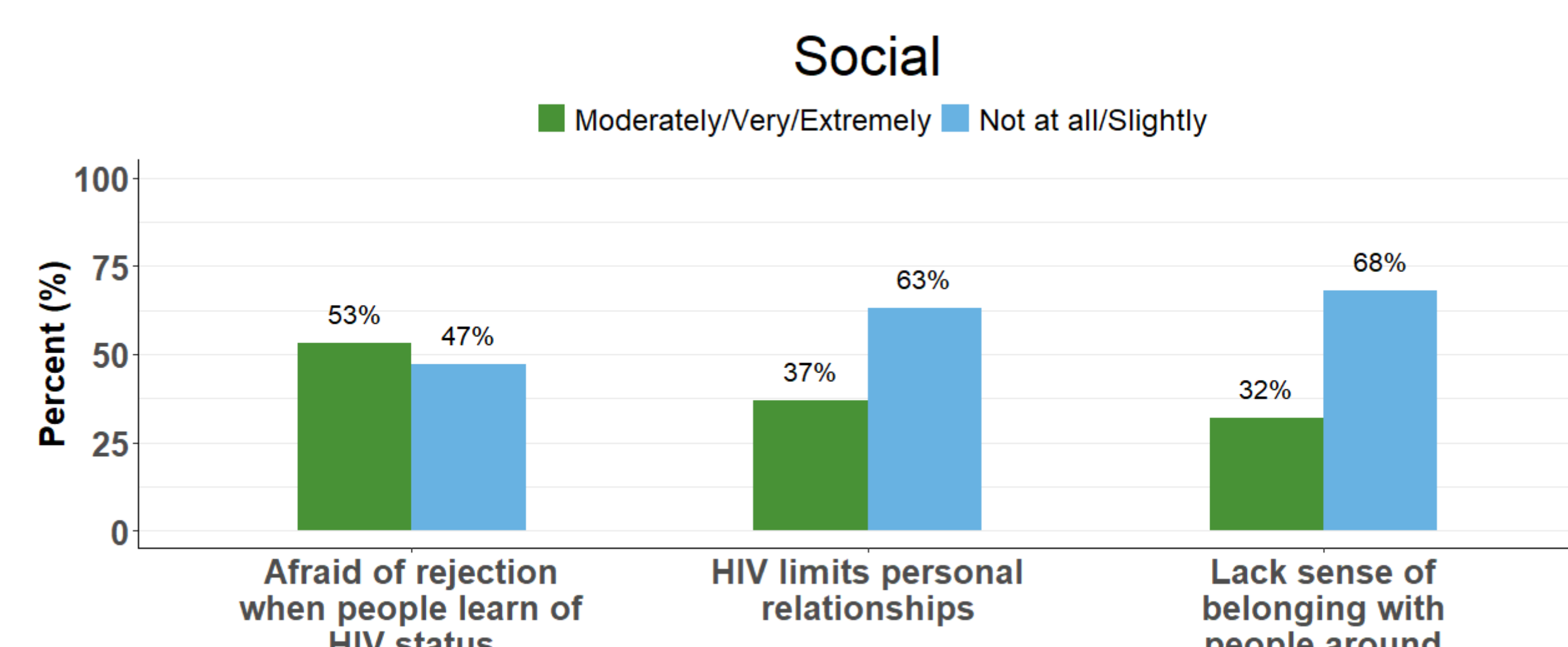
- Median age 55 years
- 76% male, 23% female, 1% trans female, trans male, two spirit, or gender non-conforming
- 57% gay, 34% heterosexual, 6% bisexual, 3% lesbian, queer, or other sexual orientation
- 59% white, 22% black, 5% Latin American, 4% East/South-east Asian, 3% Indigenous, 3% South Asian, 3% multi-racial
- 81% rated their general health as good, very good, or excellent
- 56% had an annual personal income of <\$40,000
- Median time living with HIV was 18 years

PozQoL Items

Half of OCS participants feared the health effects of HIV as they aged, and worried about their health and the impacts of HIV on their health. However, most enjoyed life, felt good about themselves, feel in control of their life, and optimistic about the future.

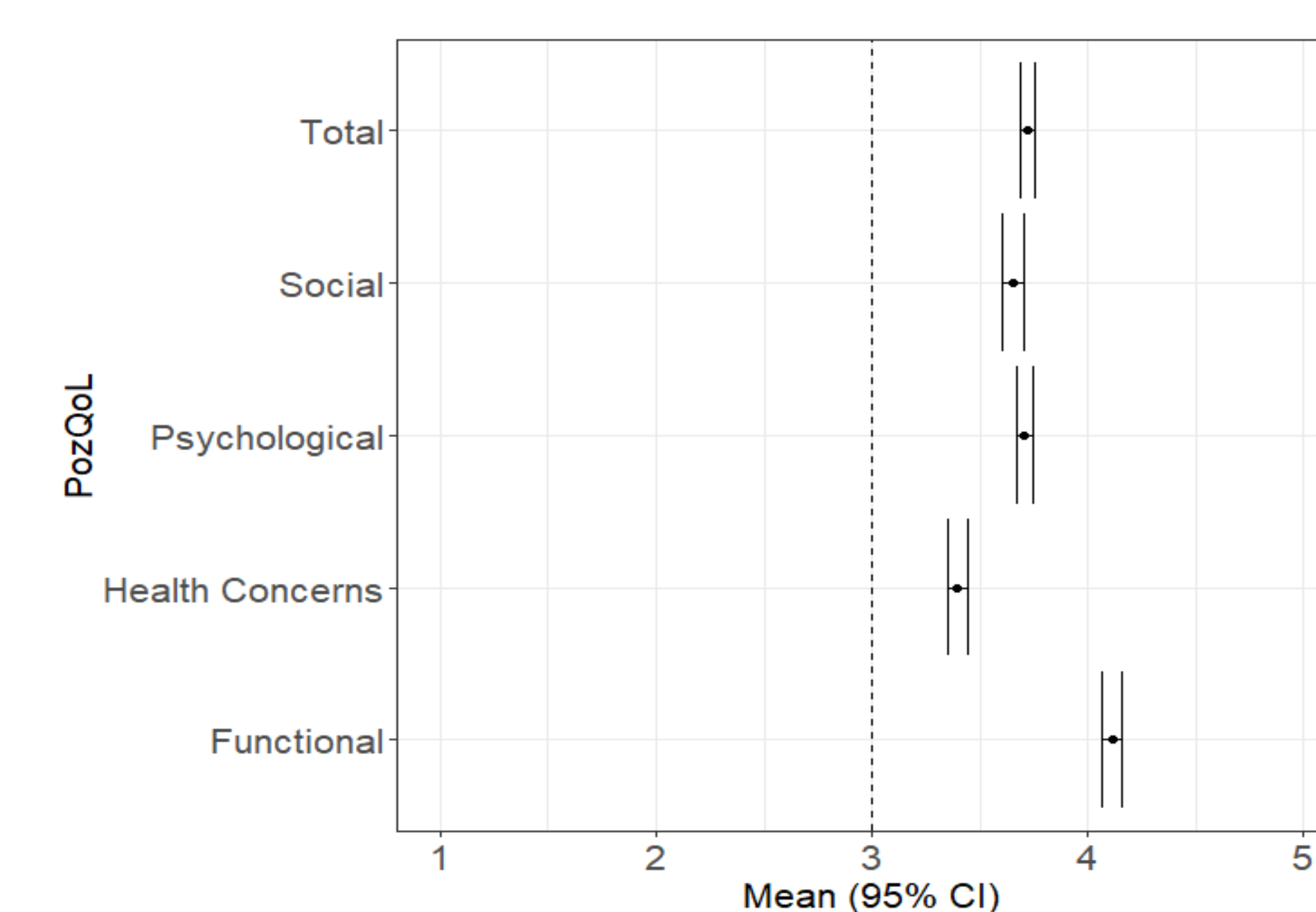


Afraid of being rejected when people learn of their HIV status was of concern to half of participants, while 1/3 felt HIV limited personal relationships and created a lack of sense of belonging. Functionally, most participants felt that having HIV did not limit opportunities, prevent them from doing as much as they'd like, and that managing HIV does not wear them out.



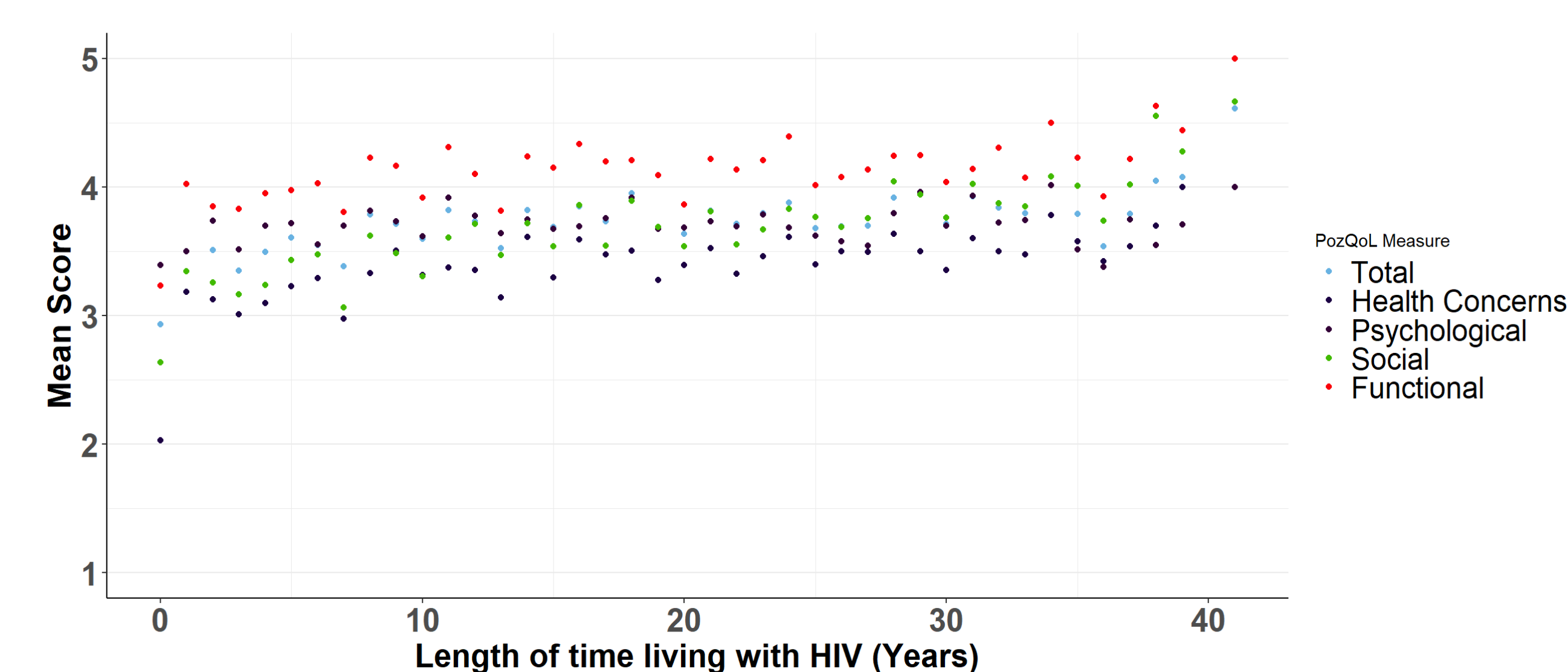
Total and Subgroup Means

The PozQoL total mean was 3.71. The health concerns subgroups had a lower mean (3.4), the psychological and social means were similar to the overall mean (both 3.7), while the functional subgroup had the highest mean of 4.1.



PozQoL and Length of Time Living with HIV

PozQoL total and subgroup mean scores were consistent across length of time living with HIV. Lower PozQoL measures for those most recently diagnosed with HIV and those living with HIV the longest may be skewed by small denominators within those groups.



Discussion

QoL is an important indicator for HIV treatment care and support. PLWH in the OCS show high scores for QoL, but more support is necessary to ensure that PLWH feel confident about their health and free of stigma.

References

Brown G, Mikołajczak G, Lyons A, Power J, Drummond F, Cogle A, Allan B, Cooper C, O'Connor S. Development and validation of PozQoL: a scale to assess quality of life of PLWH. BMC Public Health. 2018 Apr 20;18(1):527.

Acknowledgements

The authors gratefully acknowledge the OHTN Cohort Study team, people living with HIV who volunteer to participate in the OHTN Cohort Study, OCS Governance Committee and Scientific Steering Committee members, interviewers, data collectors, research associates and coordinators, nurses and physicians who provide support for data collection, OCS staff for data management, IT support, and study coordination. We also acknowledge Public Health Ontario, for supporting linkage with the HIV viral load database. The OHTN Cohort Study is supported by the Ontario Ministry of Health. <http://ohtncohortstudy.ca/acknowledgements/>