

Children Of the Cohort (CHOC) study : Exploring parenting desire among people with HIV in Switzerland

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Introduction

Although HIV is now a chronic condition with an excellent life expectancy, some personal aspects affecting people with HIV (PWH), such as parenting desire, are relatively understudied. This study aimed to explore parenting desire among PWH in Switzerland.

Results

- 697/2565 participants were female median age 54 years old (IQR 45 – 61)
- 423 (16.5%) were of African origin
- 2452 (95.6%) had undetectable HIV-RNA plasma viral loads (< 50 copies/mm3)
- 1205 (47%) participants were men having sex with men (MSM)
- 1052 (41%) participants were with a stable partner
- 1052 (41%) participants had at least one child

Figure 1 : Population's social characteristics

Methods

- The SHCS is a multicenter, prospective cohort study enrolling adult PWH in Switzerland within seven university centers.
- A structured questionnaire co-designed with patient and public involvement was embedded in one of the biannual follow-up visits from September 2022 to October 2023.
- There was no exclusion criteria.
- Descriptive analyses are presented as mean (with interquartile range) for continuous variables and proportion for categorical values. Univariable and multivariable ordered logistic regression analysis identified factors associated to the desire of becoming parent and having the discussion with a physician.

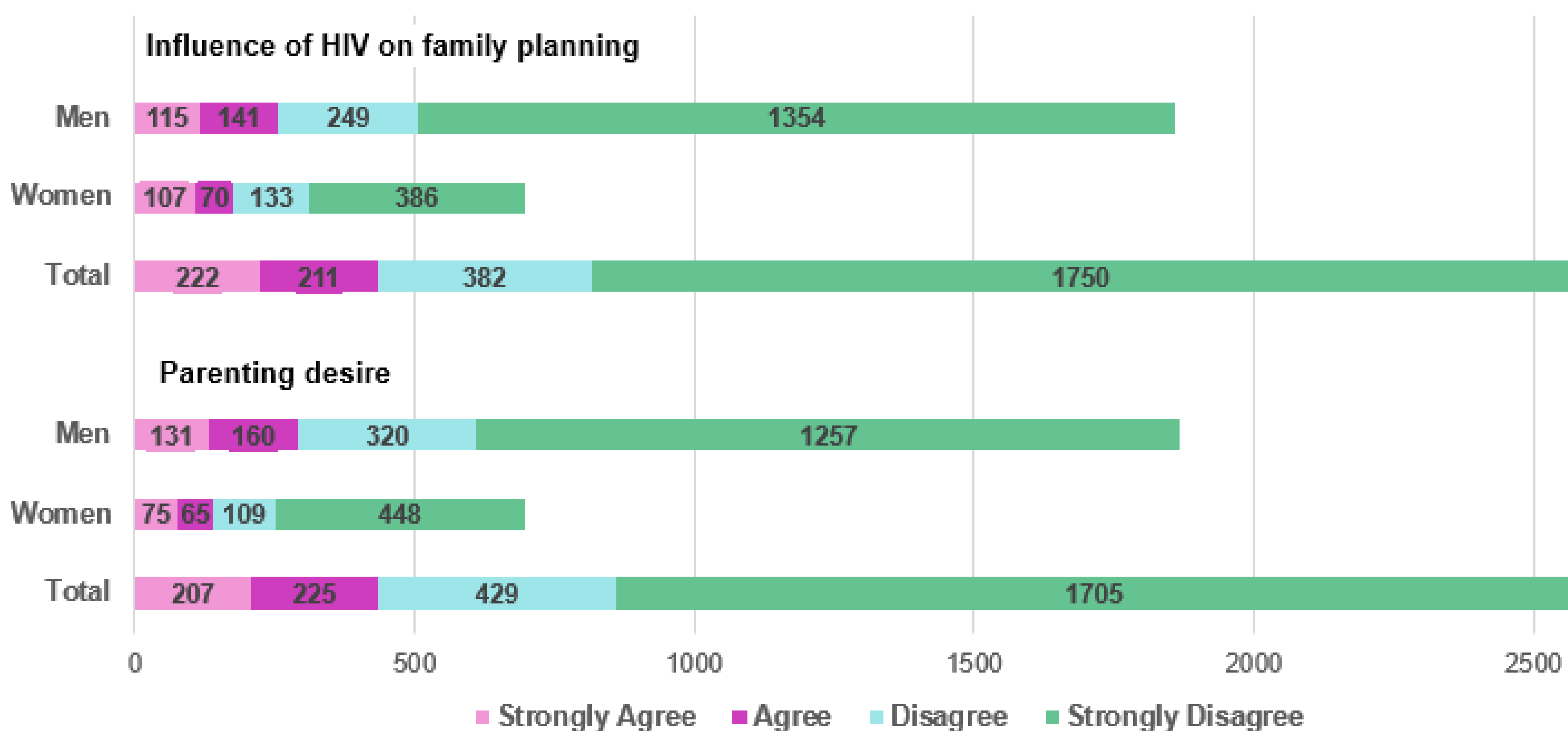


Figure 2. HIV influence on family planning and Parenting desire

- 432 (16.8%) expressed parenting desire for the future and 433 (16.9%) stated that HIV influenced family planning decisions (figure 2).
- Parenting desire was associated with young age (<45 years old) and being of African origin (Figure 3).
- 544/2565 participants (21.3%) had discussed family planning with their HIV physician. Among those, 72% of women had had discussions with their HIV physician against 46% of heterosexual men and 13% of MSM.
- Discussing family planning was associated with being female, having higher education and a desire to become parent (Figure 3).

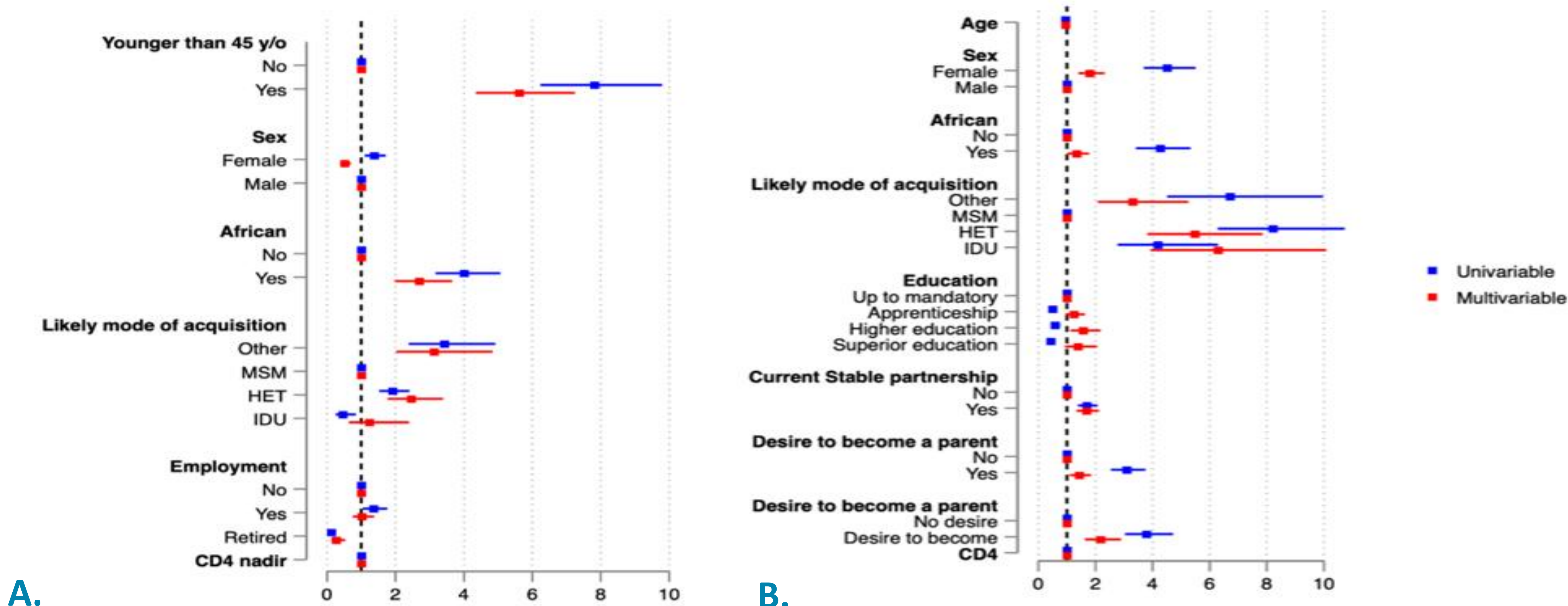


Figure 3. Uni and multivariable logistic regression analysis of factors associated with parenting desire (A) and family planning discussion with a doctor (B) Abbreviations : Men having Sex with Men (MSM) ; Heterosexual (HET), Intravenous Drug Use (IDU)

Conclusion

In this sample of PWH, a minority expressed parenting desire, possibly due to the high median age of participants. Of participants who did express parenting desire, we observed a marked disparity between men and women in terms of who had discussed family planning with their HIV physicians. This disparity was further marked between heterosexual men and MSM. Whilst surrogacy is prohibited in Switzerland, MSM have access to parenthood in other ways. Our findings suggest room for improvement whereby HIV physicians proactively invite parenting desire discussion among all PWH.