Positivity of Disposition, Hope, and Optimism: The Nexus with Sexual and Gender Identity

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Acknowledgements

Data Collection Limitations

- Initially, we had planned to examine the link between subjective wellbeing and income by sexual orientation, relying a new set of crowdsourced data (5,000 participants).

- While the data collection is ongoing, we faced extreme difficulties at the onset, due to the invasion of our survey by bots, increasingly difficult to weed out given the widespread use of the AI.

- Consequently, we developed increasingly more sophisticated ways to eliminate them and maintain data integrity (BTW, we will be happy to share our protocols if you face similar issues (email: Maryam.Dilmaghani@SMU.CA).

- However, we have been substantially delayed. As such, we decided to present a compatible paper, using our previously collected data (+1000 observations).

Harvey Milk, Hope Speech, 25 June, 1978

- *"And in San Francisco, three days before Gay Pride Day, a person was killed just because he was gay. And that night, I walked among the sad and the frustrated at City Hall in San Francisco and later that night as they lit candles on Castro Street and stood in silence, reaching out for some symbolic thing that would give them hope. These were strong people, whose faces I knew from the shop, the streets, meetings and people who I never saw before but I knew. They were strong, but even they needed hope."*

Abstract-1

- Quantitative evidence on how sexual and gender minorities (SGMs) stand with respect to ***hope and optimism*** compared with their cisgender heterosexual peers is sparce.

- However, as hope and optimism are shaped by past experiences, and the SGM people generally have less advantageous lived experiences, less favorable hope and optimism outcomes among them are very likely.

- Using Canadian data comprising **a recently collected original dataset on the SGMs** (**N=1,189**) and the Canadian General Social Survey of 2016, the present study examines how sexual and gender identity associates with hope and optimism.

Abstract-2

- At constant levels of current socioeconomic attainment, the SGMs are found **markedly less hopeful** than cisgender heterosexual women and men.

- Large gaps are also found by sexual/gender identity **regarding optimism about future life and future financial state**. For the optimism outcomes, the SGM gaps are somewhat larger with cisgender heterosexual men than with cisgender heterosexual women.

- Within the SGM groups, there are differences in magnitudes of their gaps with cisgender heterosexuals. But, overall, the magnitudes of these gaps are not statistically significantly different from each other.

- These gaps are **dampened by the degree of outness,** especially by outness among the family members.

Literature Review-1

- Initially, relegated to psychology and health science, now, Hope and Optimism are increasingly considered by economists and policymakers.

- The application is featured in works of several Nobel prize laureates, such as Duflo, Banerjee, and Heckman.

- Specifically, Hope is considered a crucial element that can prevent an individual (or a nation) from being stuck in a **Poverty Trap.**

Literature Review-2

- Hope and Optimism are critical in shaping **future aspirations.**

- Hope is distinguished from Optimism, for this sense of agency.

- Hope contains a sense of agency that helps mobilizing effort towards aspiration, so a more important factor in determining future outcomes than optimism.

- Both the antecedents and the consequences of Hope and Optimism are important for the scholarship and policymaking on **preventing socioeconomic and financial inequalities**.

Data-1

- Data on the Sexual and Gender Minorites are sparce. Especially, there is virtually no large dataset with such "niche" questions as Hope and Optimism.

- So, **despite multiple obstacles,** I have collated my own data. I gathered 1,189 LGBT+ observations, and I combined it with the General Social Survey of 2016 (General Population Data).

- The LGBT+ sample is non-random, crowdsourced.

- Generally of good quality, given multiple measures, it is a bit younger than the official statistics.

Sexual and Gender Identity Questions

- Multiple options (Asexual, Bisexual, Gender Fluid, Non-binary, Gay, Lesbian, Pansexual…).

- Hence, the sample is identifying individuals based on both both sexual orientation and gender identity

- The options are from the Canadian Government's Identity Disclosure survey for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

- The survey was completed online, and then merged with the GSS 2016.

Outness Questions

- How many people know about your sexual orientation/gender identity at…

- **Dimensions of question:**
  - Work
  - Family
  - Friends
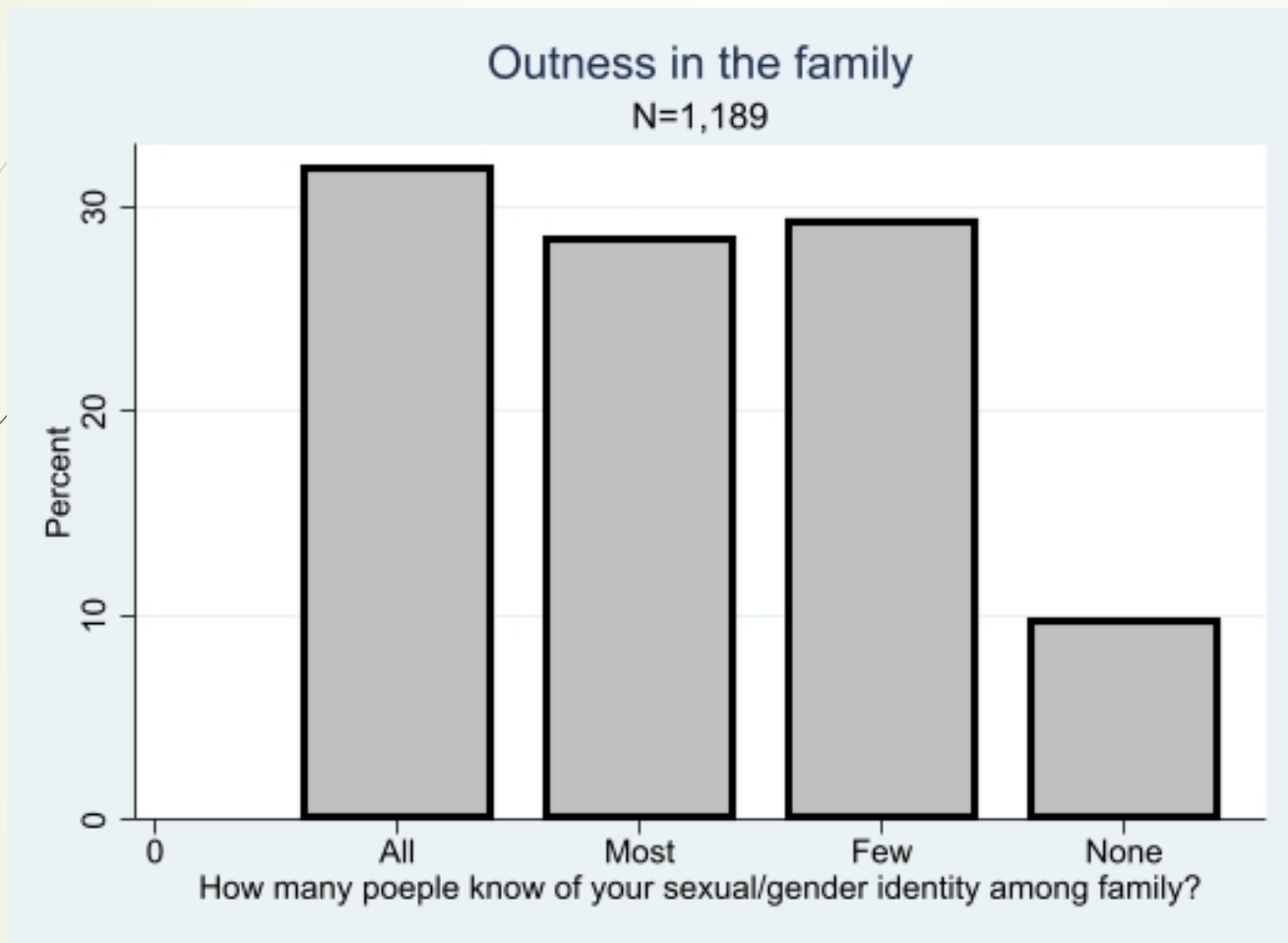- **Response:** All; Most; Few; No one; Not applicable

Outness Statistics

- Overall Outness in the sample: **28.34%**

  - Sexual Orientation Outness: **24.09%**

  - Gender Identity Outness: **31.03%**

- (Based on responses of All and Most across relevant dimensions).

- The consistency (SO<GI) indicates **data quality.**

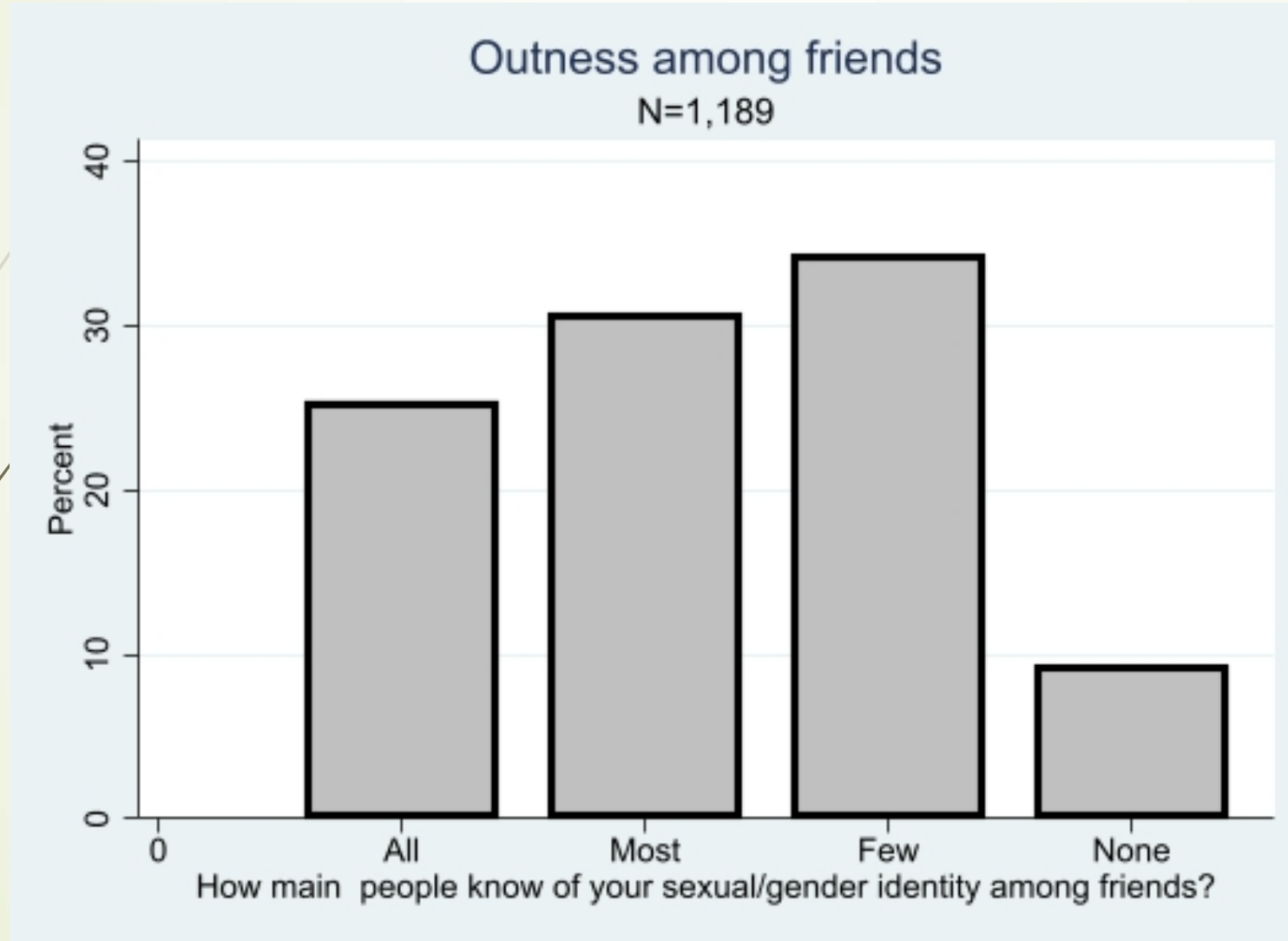# ➡Dimensions of Outness

(Also showing **data quality:** In theory, the outness is likely higher among family/friends than at work. The data shows the same.)
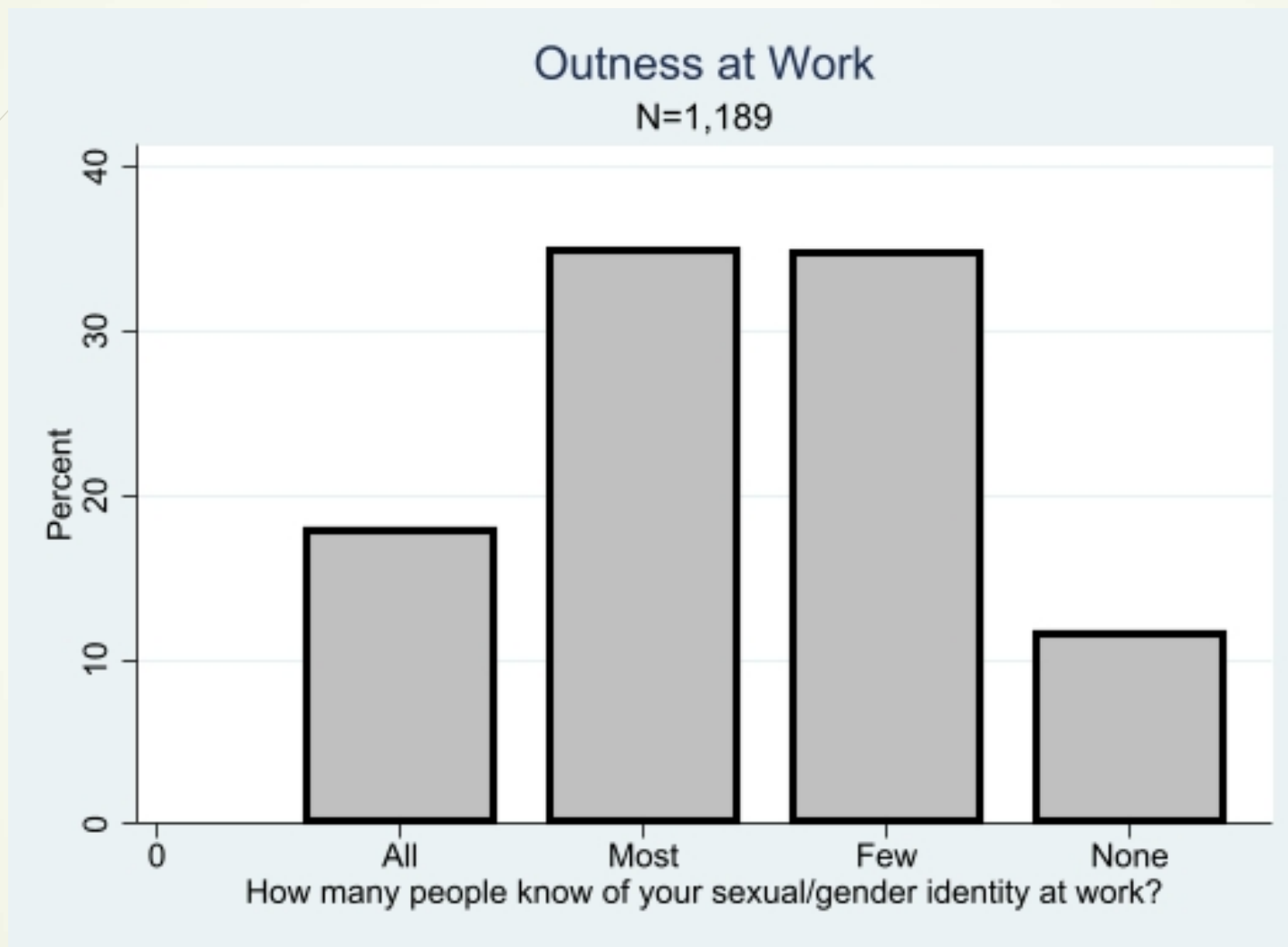
Figure-1

Outness in the family
N=1,189

How many poeple know of your sexual/gender identity among family?
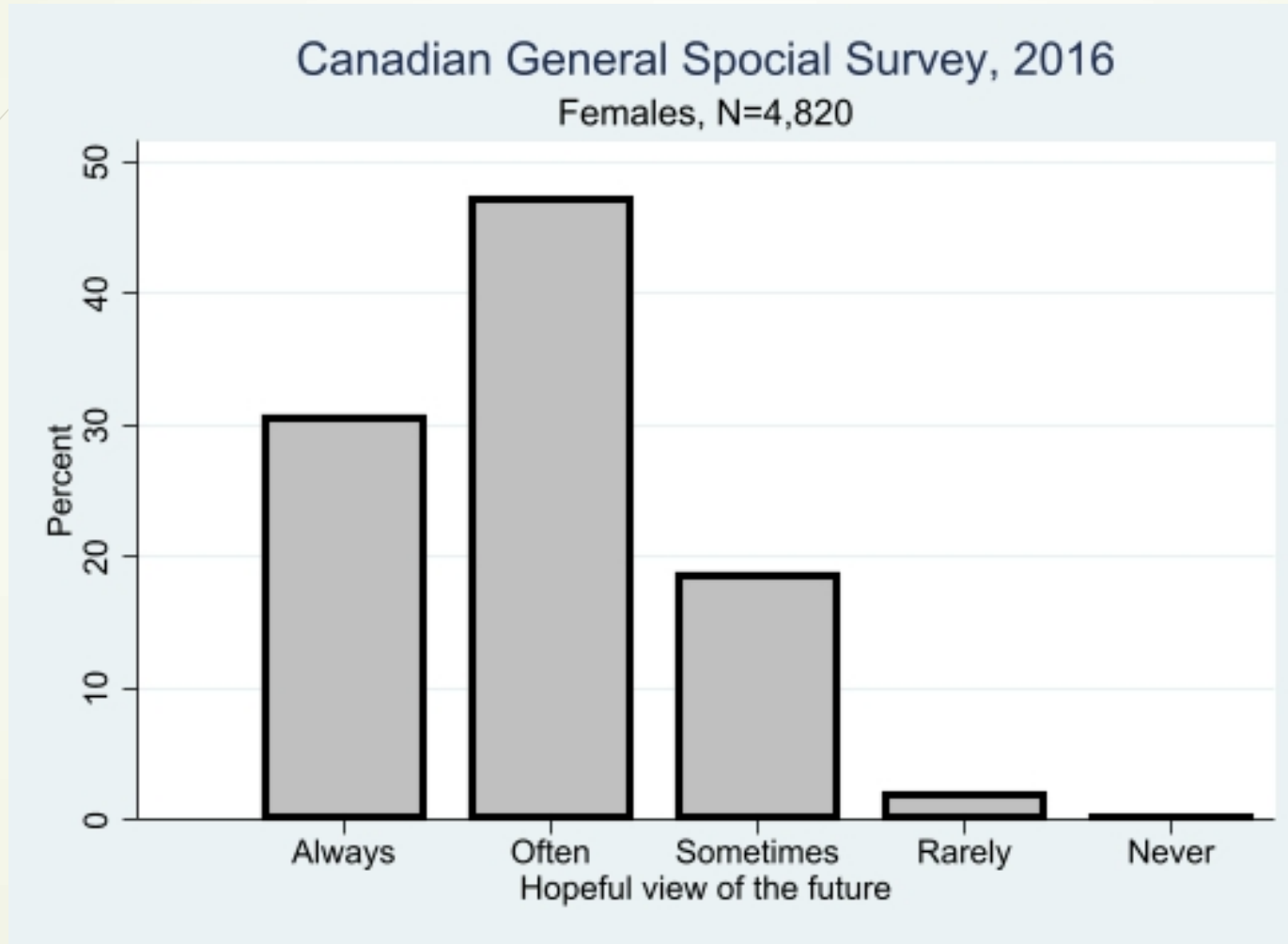
Figure-2

Figure-3

Outness at Work
N=1,189

Hope Question

- Question: How often would you say you have a **hopeful** view of the future?
- Always (365); Often (240); **Sometimes (160); Rarely (60); Never (0)**

- <u>**Not**</u> **Hopeful** (0-1): Higher Odds for LGBT+, especially for the "Not out"

  - Out: **25.15%**
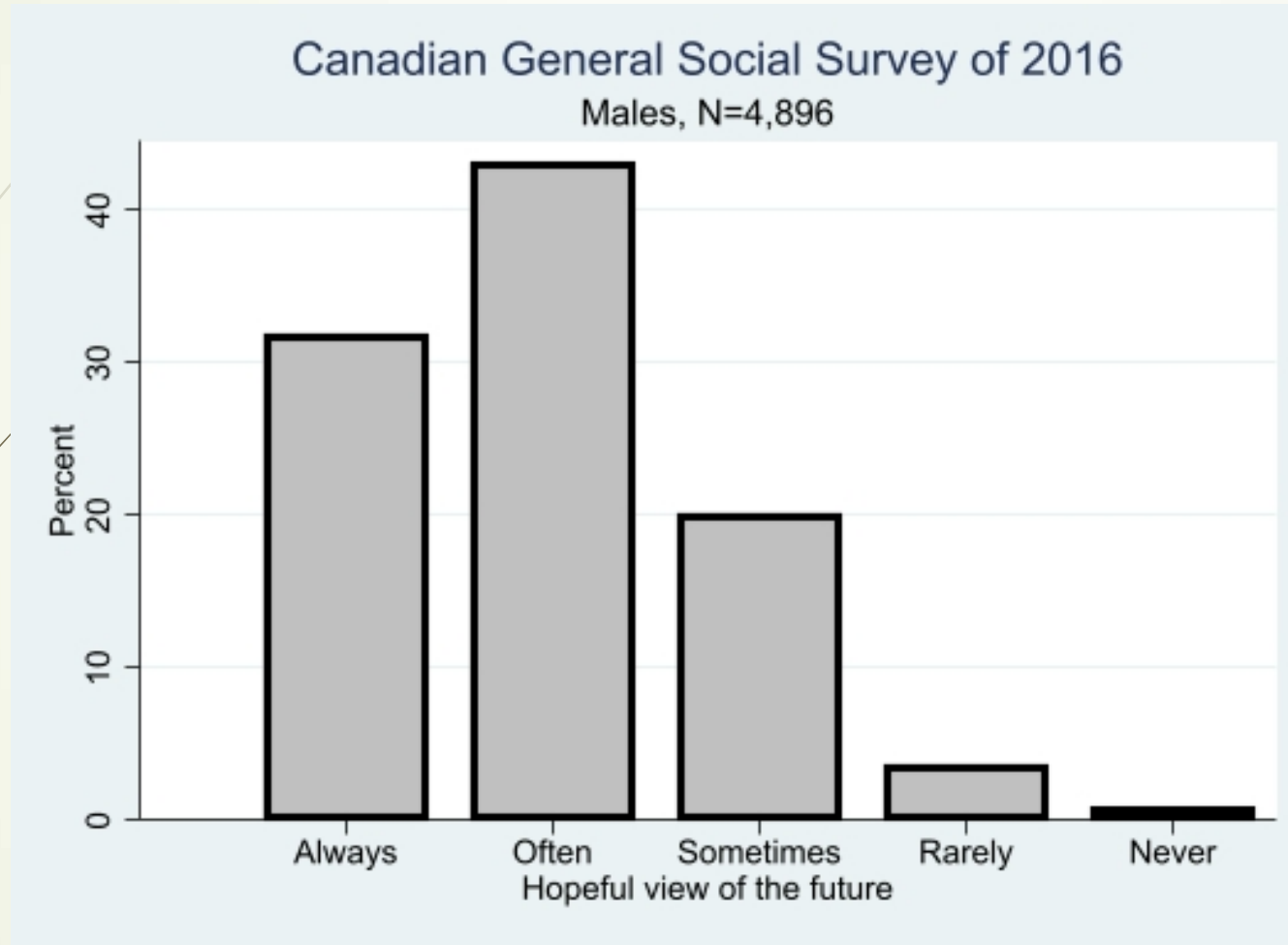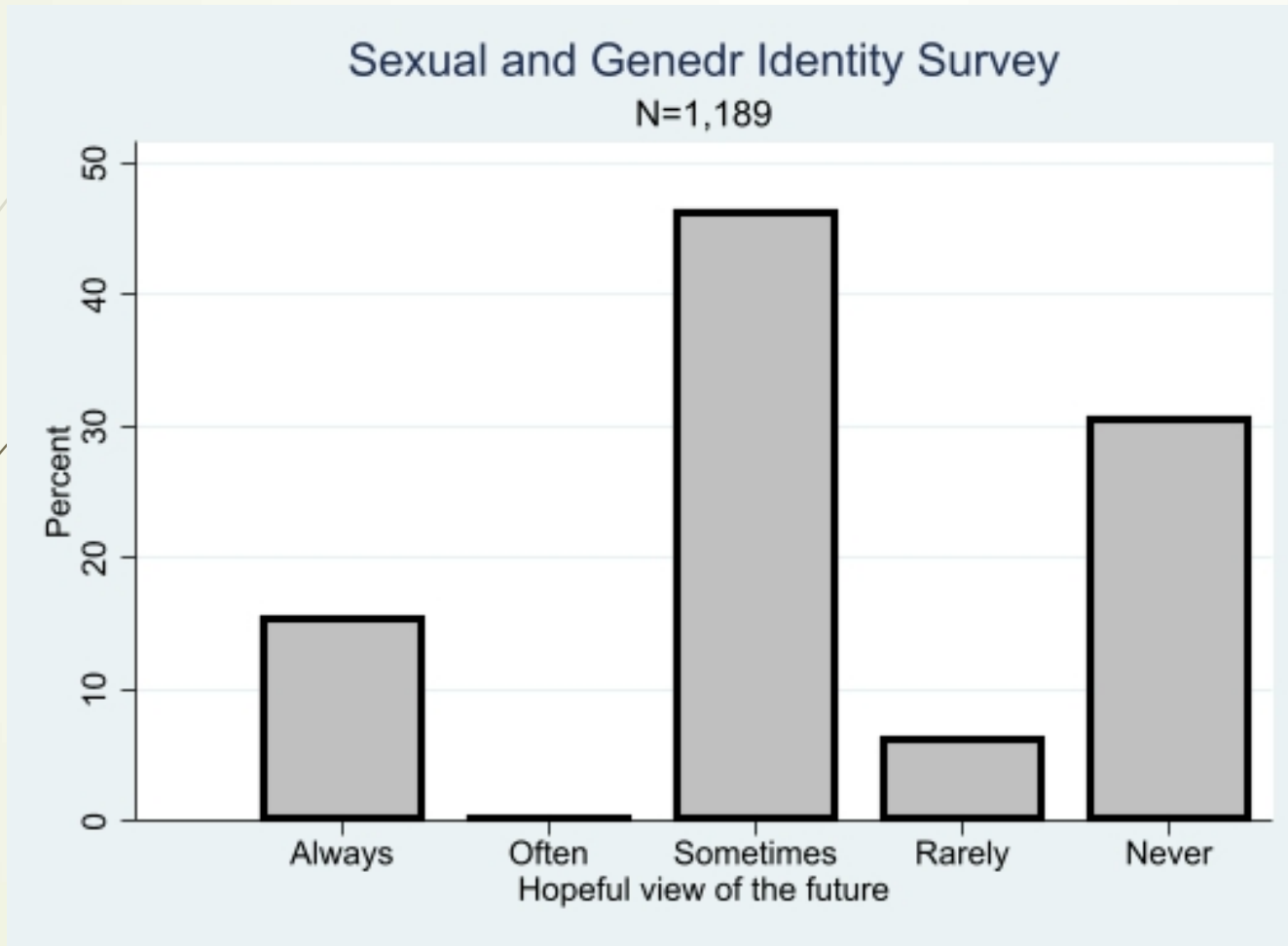 - Non out: **47.68%**
  - Non-LGBT+: **22.77%**

Hope Figure-1

Hope Figure-2

Canadian General Social Survey of 2016
Males, N=4,896

Hope Figure-3

Other Descriptive Statistics

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

	Share† (%)	Out (%)	Age (Years)	Immigrant (%)	University (%)	Income†† (C$)	Hopeful Days	Future Life		Future Finance	
								Easier	Harder	Better	Worse
Cishetero, W.	43.80	---	42.61	21.66	34.67	58,926	258.79	0.198	0.120	0.310	0.093
Cishetero, M.	56.20	---	42.06	23.39	31.05	74,673	256.97	0.231	0.133	0.386	0.078
Trans Man	6.47	56.96	31.71	18.99	60.51	49,437	193.08	0.243	0.341	0.359	0.266
Trans W.	6.49	37.35	29.54	22.20	74.74	55,104	209.46	0.308	0.227	0.315	0.342
Asexual	4.55	84.21	38.34	10.46	79.44	65,706	212.71	0.314	0.101	0.410	0.119
Bisexual	18.77	39.27	28.76	8.92	58.65	54,024	215.68	0.336	0.293	0.337	0.317
Gay Man	38.04	49.24	27.52	17.58	52.71	43,337	229.05	0.370	0.285	0.359	0.287
Lesbian	13.84	39.93	26.20	10.86	52.95	42,860	218.80	0.285	0.432	0.283	0.391

Note: The sexual and gender minority (SGM) data are collected in 2021. The data on cisgender heterosexual (cishetero) women (W) and men (M) are from the Cycle 30 of the Canadian General Social Survey, collected by Statistics Canada in 2016 (GSS-2016).

† The shares are separately computed for the SGM Survey and the GSS-2016.

†† The GSS-2016 incomes are inflation-adjusted to be expressed in 2021 dollars.

Results

- Multivariate Regression is used.

  - $$Y^i = \delta_0 + \sum_{j=1}^{6} \delta_j \times I_j + X\beta + \varepsilon \qquad\qquad i = 1, 2, 3 \qquad (1)$$

- The dependent variables, Y^i, refer to the frequency of hopeful feelings; and 2 binary variables pertaining to optimistic life and financial outlooks.

- Assuming a Linear Probability Model (LPM) for the binary outcomes, all estimations are made using OLS.

- The subscripts i refer to the three outcomes examine: (i) Hopefulness; (ii) Optimism about Life; (iii) Optimism about Finances.

Table 2. Frequency of Feeling Hopeful (Days per Year)

Control Variables	(1) None	(2) +Demog.	(3) +Immigration	(4) +Education	(5) +Income	(6) +Locations	(7) +COVID	(8) +Outness
Trans Man	-33.218***	-32.638***	-32.104***	-30.901***	-31.710***	-30.728***	-30.931***	-30.519***
	(9.764)	(9.962)	(10.379)	(10.418)	(10.551)	(10.141)	(10.145)	(10.117)
Trans Woman	-18.273	-17.311	-19.440	-18.471	-19.368	-20.021	-16.947	-16.136
	(11.614)	(11.668)	(12.059)	(12.282)	(12.452)	(12.278)	(12.166)	(12.667)
Asexual	-41.520***	-37.292***	-35.552***	-38.370***	-38.407***	-37.219***	-35.941***	-60.249***
	(12.846)	(13.130)	(12.874)	(12.946)	(13.016)	(12.723)	(12.819)	(14.934)
Bisexual	-34.692***	-34.195***	-36.625***	-40.052***	-39.903***	-36.789***	-36.560***	-49.748***
	(7.752)	(8.032)	(8.186)	(8.149)	(9.286)	(9.179)	(9.171)	(10.382)
Gay Man	-25.723***	-22.693***	-31.853***	-34.246***	-34.540***	-33.322***	-33.450***	-46.701***
	(5.499)	(6.033)	(6.411)	(6.403)	(6.582)	(6.668)	(6.671)	(8.277)
Lesbian	-37.343***	-34.288***	-40.700***	-44.560***	-45.398***	-43.229***	-43.305***	-55.908***
	(5.427)	(6.027)	(6.500)	(6.526)	(7.453)	(7.508)	(7.510)	(8.714)
Cishetero Woman	1.819	2.367	2.559	2.090	1.960	2.078	2.078	2.078
	(2.437)	(2.448)	(2.418)	(2.426)	(2.509)	(2.502)	(2.502)	(2.503)
Out at Work	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	0.730
								(6.774)
Out to Family	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	13.835**
								(6.702)
Out to Friends	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	10.880
								(6.617)
Observations	10,905	10,905	10,905	10,905	10,905	10,905	10,905	10,905
R-squared	0.000	0.006	0.023	0.027	0.027	0.036	0.036	0.036

Note: Robust standard errors in parentheses; *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. The controls are suppressed to save space. The suppressed controls are a 2nd degree polynomial in age, marital status (dummies for married, common-law, separated/divorced/widowed with single as the reference category), number of children in the household, visible minority and immigrant status, a 2nd degree polynomial of years in Canada (only for immigrants), education (dummies for graduate degree, bachelor degree, and 2-year college), natural logarithm of income, dummies for province/territories of residence, and a dummy for those stating a significant negative impact by the COVID-19. The full set of the results are available upon request.

Conclusions

- The data indicate generally large gaps **by LGBT+ identity** in both Hope and Optimism.

- The gaps indicate **specially large deficits in hope.**

- They were usually strikingly larger for those who are "not out." But, the direction of causality is unclear.

- These deficits can lead to harmful outcomes I terms of mental health, resiliency, aspirations, and socioeconomic attainment.

Thanks a lot for you attention!

Q&A time…

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