

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Retirement in Female Otolaryngologists

Arunima Vijay BA¹, Nick Sahlollbey BS², Michele M. Carr DDS MD PhD³

1. University of Florida College of Medicine, Gainesville, FL 2. University of Ottawa, Faculty of Medicine, Ottawa, ON

3. Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences at the University at Buffalo, Department of Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery, Buffalo, NY



INTRODUCTION

Female physicians were at **higher risk of burnout**, and **subsequent retirement** compared to male counterparts during the **COVID-19 pandemic**.¹⁻³

Female otolaryngologists were **among** those with the **highest risk for exposure to SARS-CoV-2**.⁴⁻¹¹

OBJECTIVE

To describe the impact of the pandemic on retirement plans among female otolaryngologists.

METHODS

A **cross sectional survey** asked otolaryngologists to share demographic information and **rank 17 factors influencing their retirement on a Likert Scale**.¹²

4 factors were pandemic-related, and **13 were independent** of the pandemic.

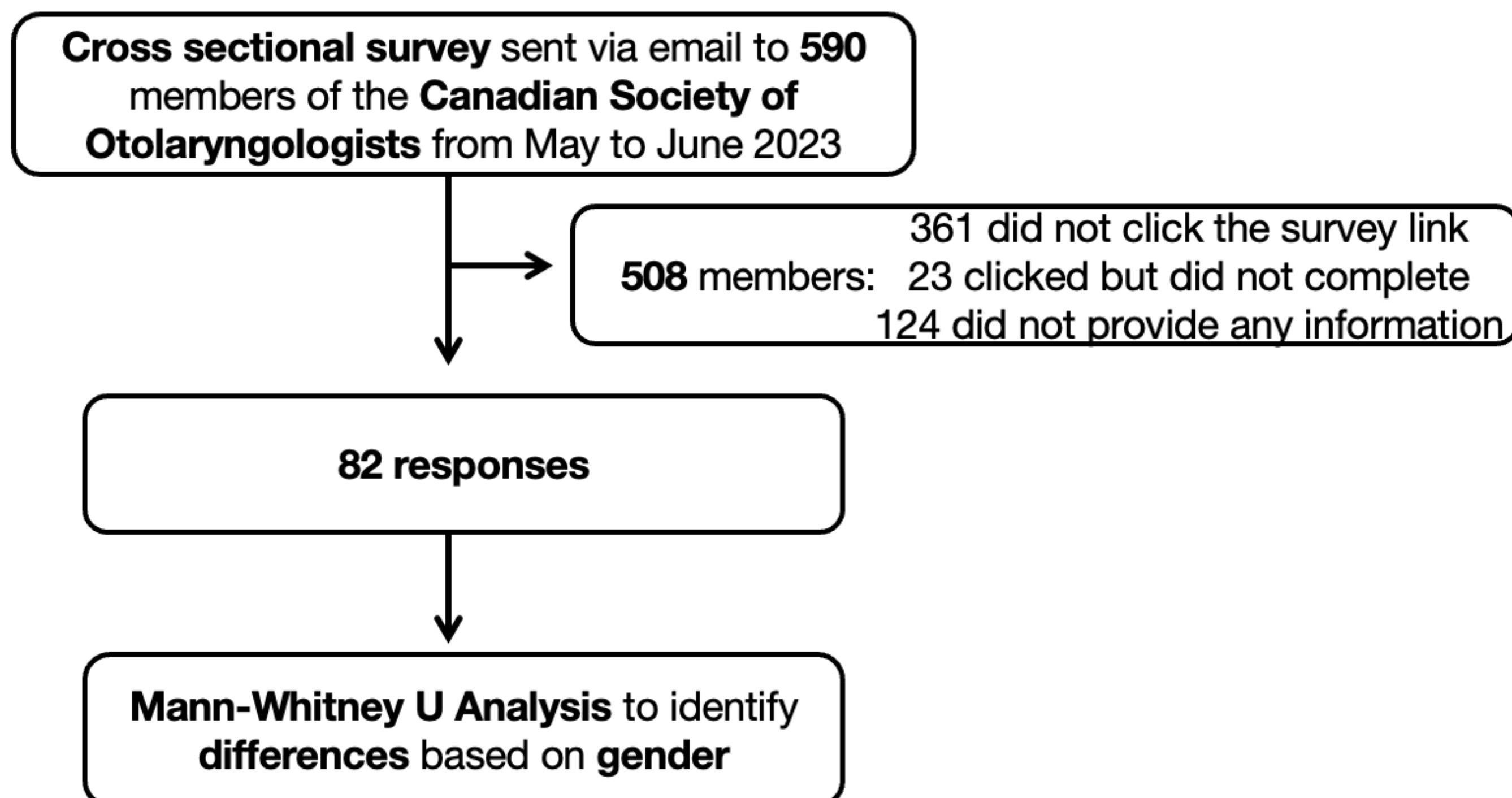


Figure 1: Methods flow chart showing attrition, collected responses, and statistical analysis.

20 (24.4%) of participants were **female**, and **all females were 65 or younger**, whereas 25 (40.3%) of males were 65 or older (Table 1).

8 (40%) of females reported earlier dates of retirement post pandemic compared to 12 (19.3%) of men.

Females reported burnout, workload, quality of life, personal and loved ones' health, and pandemic related concerns as **significantly more important to retirement** than male counterparts. (Figures 2, 3).

Demographic Characteristic	N (total)	%
Age		
49 and younger	24	29.3
50 - 60	21	25.6
61 - 70	23	28.0
71 and older	14	17.1
Ethnicity		
Asian	12	14.6
Black or African American	0	0
Caucasian	61	74.4
Indigenous	0	0
Other	9	11
Gender		
Female	20	24.4
Male	62	75.6
Employment status		
Full time	59	72
Part time	10	12.2
Not currently employed	13	15.9
Estimated retirement date		
2023-2026	22	27.2
2027-2030	16	18.5
2031 onwards	32	39.5
Already retired	12	14.8

Table 1: Participant demographics.

RESULTS

Significant Non-Pandemic Factors Influencing Retirement among Female and Male Otolaryngologists

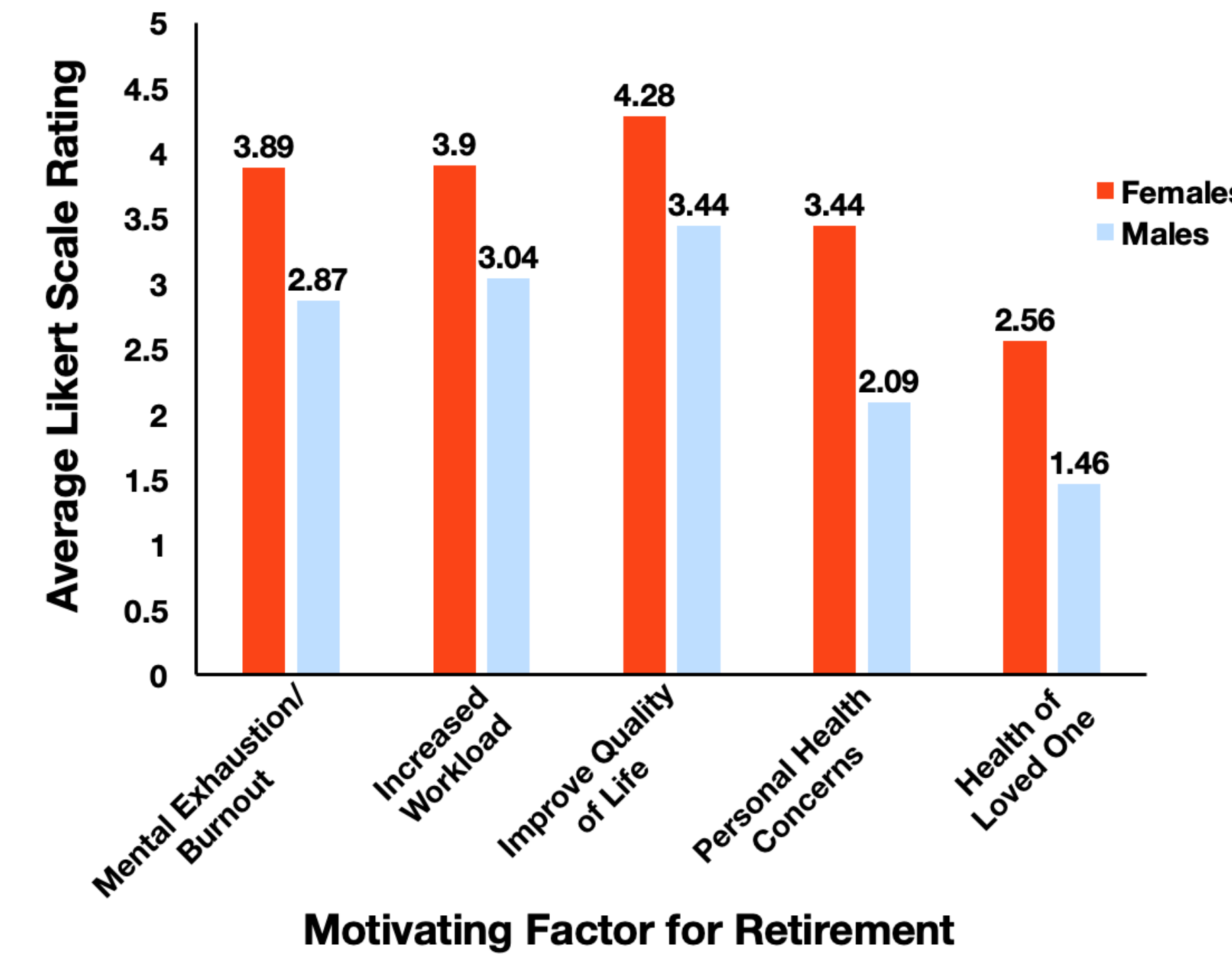


Figure 2: Significantly different non-pandemic related factors influencing retirement among females and males ($p < .05$).

Significant Pandemic Factors Influencing Retirement among Female and Male Otolaryngologists

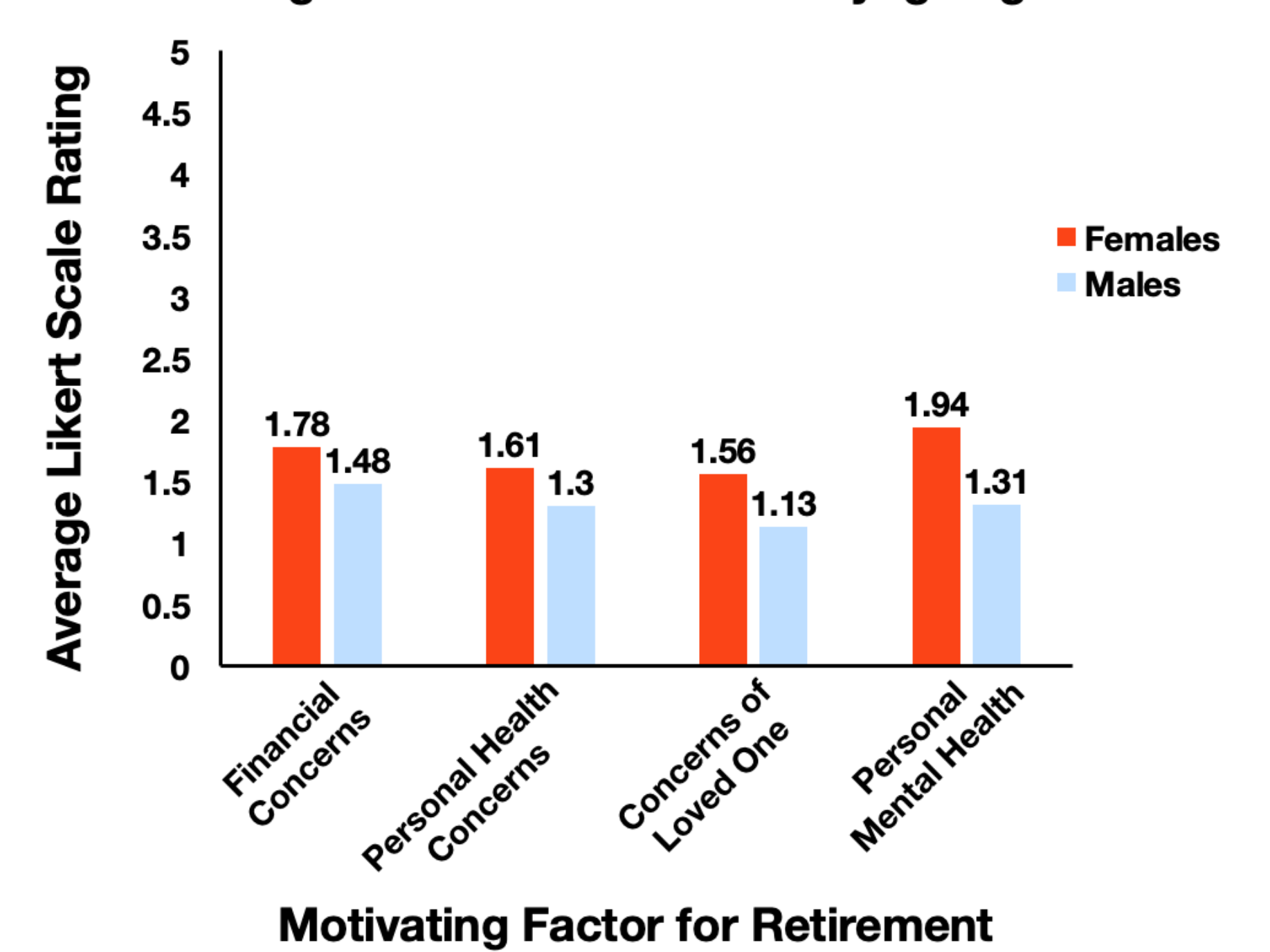


Figure 3: Significantly different pandemic related factors influencing retirement among females and males ($p < .05$).

Highest Ranked Factors Influencing Retirement among all Otolaryngologists

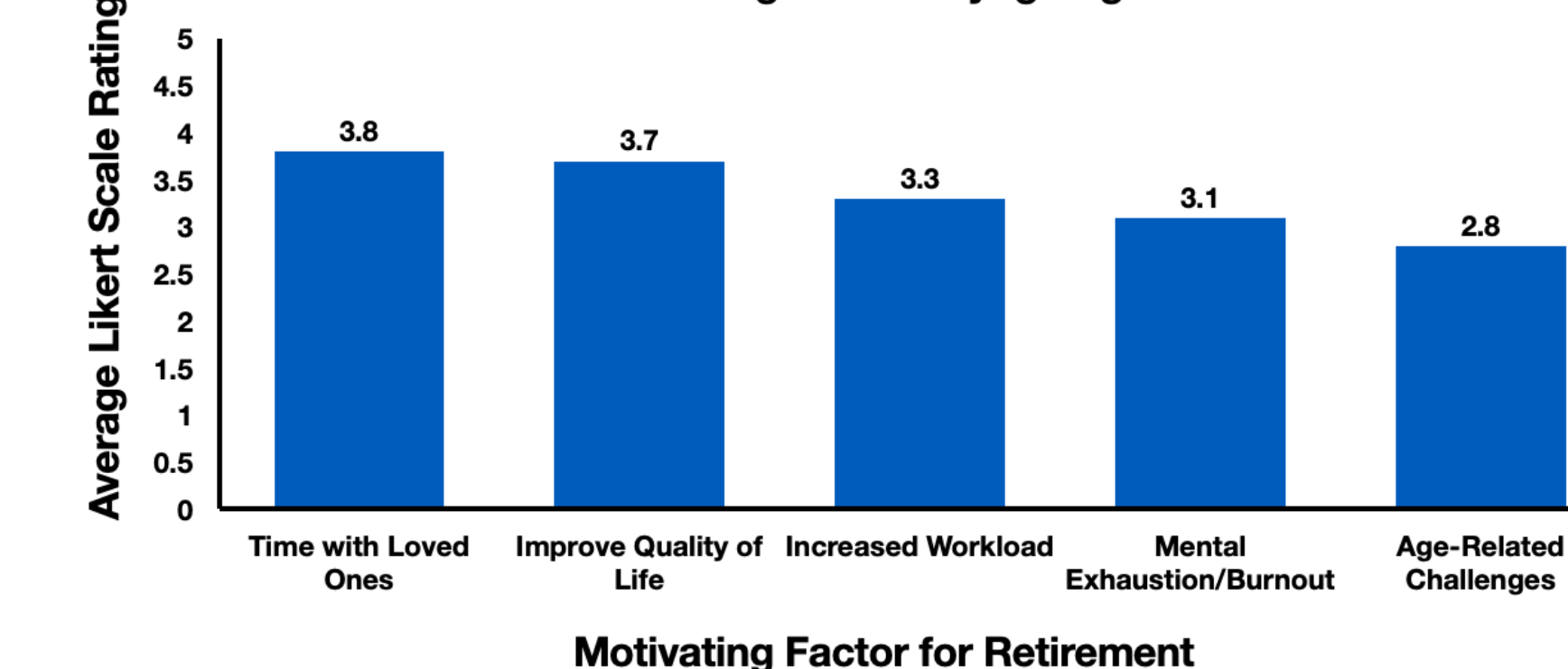


Figure 4: Highest ranked factors among total survey population.

LIMITATIONS

Limited generalizability due to Canadian population.

Nonresponse bias likely with the study's **18% response rate**.

Majority were Caucasian.

CONCLUSION

Pandemic related factors and burnout disproportionately affected retirement among female otolaryngologists.

More females reported earlier retirement post pandemic, which may **exacerbate pre-existing gender inequalities** in the otolaryngology workforce.

REFERENCES

