

INTRODUCTION & OBJECTIVE

- Benefit finding (BF) refers to positive effects following a distressing life event such as a cancer diagnosis
- Growing acceptance of life's deficiencies, spiritual growth or enhanced interpersonal relationships are examples for such potential changes in personal and social life
- BF has been associated with improved health outcomes (well-being, optimism, depression, stress-response biomarkers)
- Aim of the study was to investigate the prevalence of BF and its determinants in (very-) long term prostate cancer (PCa) survivors in Germany

- 6,379 patients from the German multi-center database "Familial PCa" were contacted via mailed annual follow-up questionnaire in 2018
- Prevalence of BF was assessed using the validated German version of the 17-item, 5-point Benefit Finding Scale
- We evaluated associations between BF and:
 - sociodemographic characteristics
 - clinical characteristics at diagnosis and during follow-up
 - the perceived severity of the disease (single item, 4-point scale)
 - psychological factors (depression: Patient Health Questionnaire-2, anxiety: General Anxiety Disorder-2 scale)

METHODS

Table 1: Sociodemographic, clinical and psychosocial characteristics

Key characteristics	
Age at survey (years; mean ± SD)	77.4 ± 6.4
School education: <i>low</i> (%)	41.3
Partnership: <i>yes</i> (%)	85.4
Family history of PCa: <i>yes</i> (%)	38.5
Time since diagnosis (years; mean ± SD)	14.8 ± 3.8
Ongoing treatment at survey: <i>yes</i> (%)	13.5
Depression (PHQ-2 ≥ 3) (%)	7.5
Anxiety (GAD-2 ≥ 3) (%)	6.1
Perceived severity of the disease: <i>high</i> (%)	25.1
Type of primary treatment: <i>surgery</i> (%)	97.9

Table 2: BFS items with frequency of high endorsement (defined as scoring either 4 or 5 on a 5-point Likert-scale)

Rank	Having had prostate cancer...	% (4 or 5)
1	has taught me how to adjust to things I cannot change	63.8
2	has helped me take things as they come	60.2
3	has shown me that all people need to be loved	59.5
	...	
15	has made me more aware and concerned for the future of all human beings	38.6
16	has contributed to my overall emotional and spiritual growth	31.9
17	has led me to meet people who have become some of my best friends	20.9

RESULTS

- 4,252 PCa survivors were included; response rate was 66.7%
- The prevalence of moderate-to-high BF was 59.7%

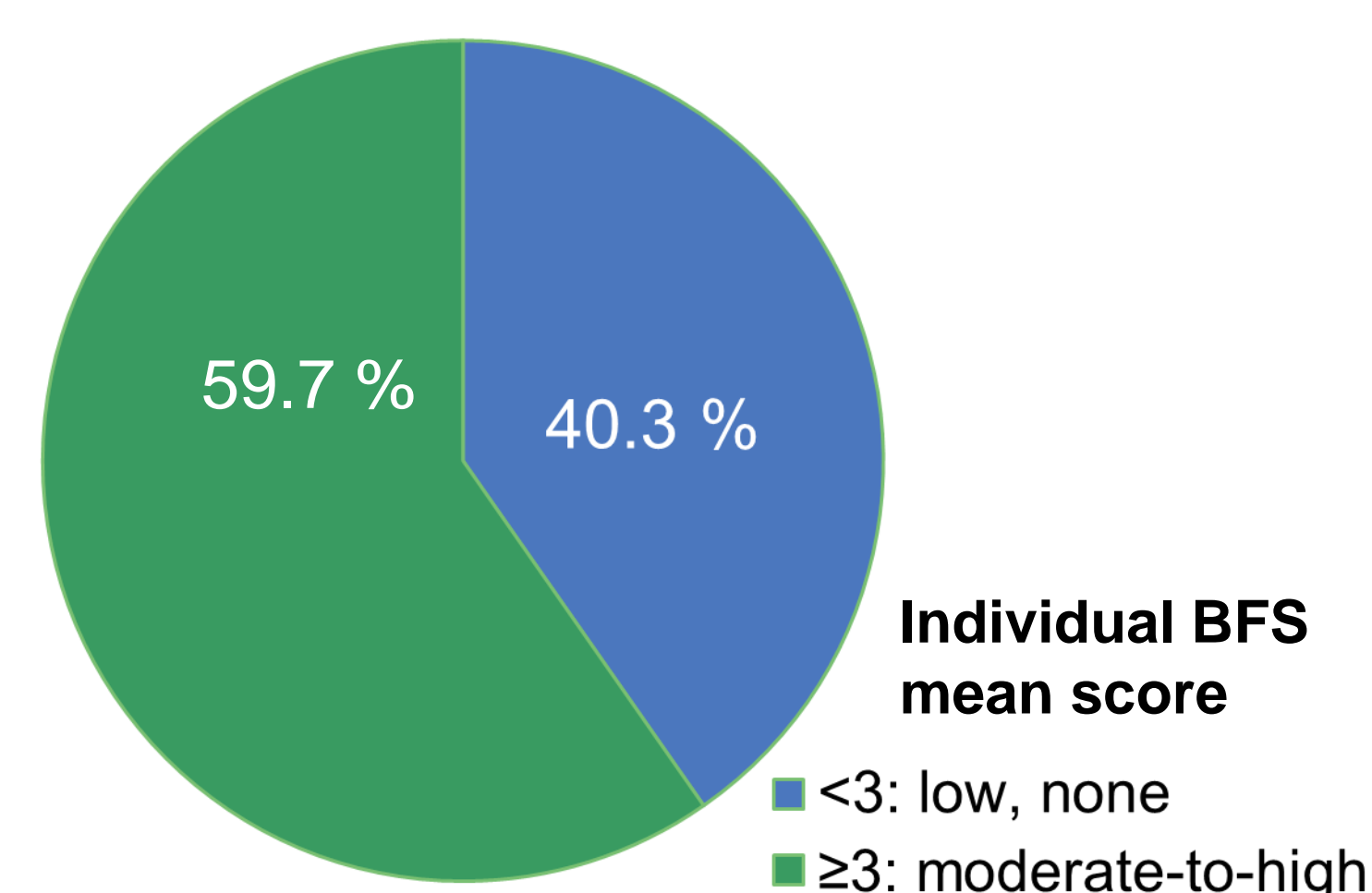


Figure 1: Prevalence of BF in the study population

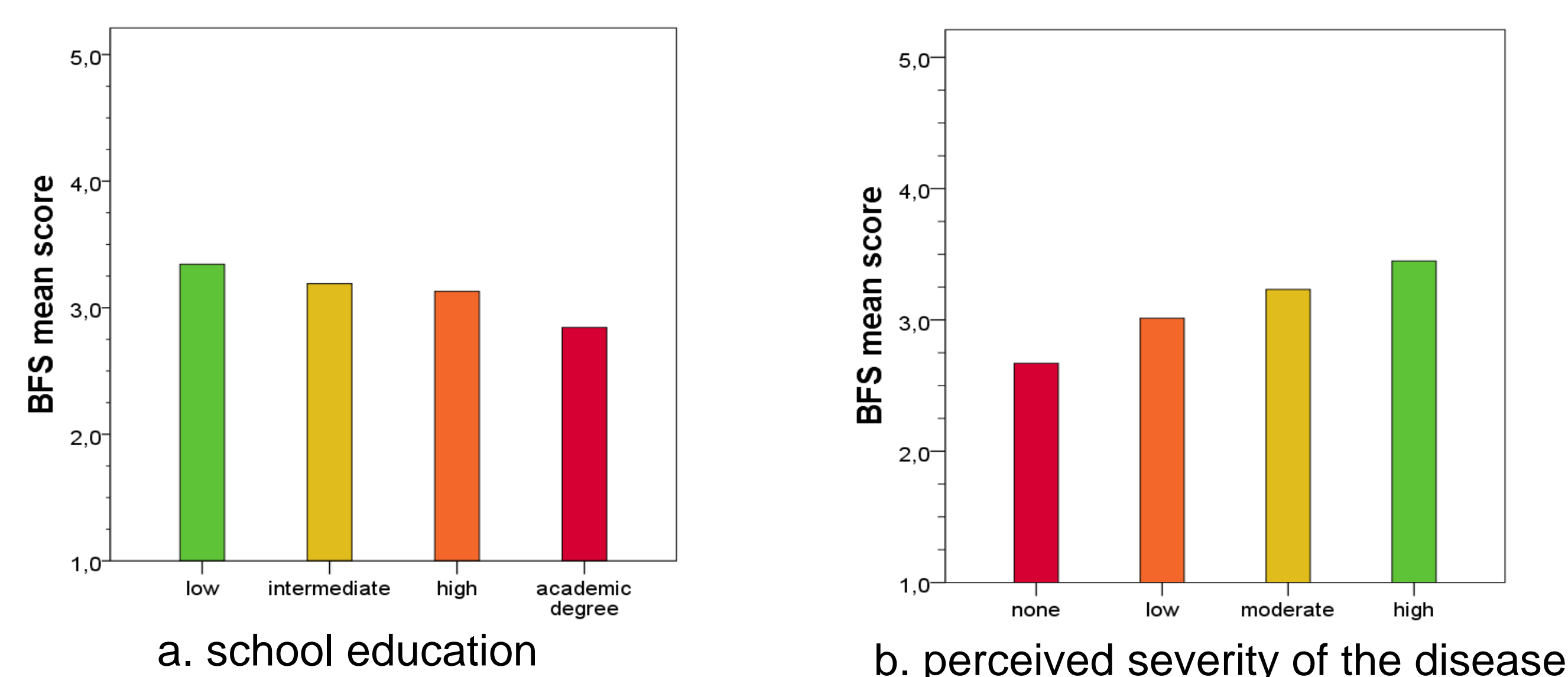


Figure 2: Bivariate correlation between BF and
a. school education level
b. perceived severity of the disease

Table 3: Multiple linear regression analysis (n=3,297)

Variables	β	p value
Age at survey	0.092	<0.01
School education	- 0.181	<0.001
Partnership	0.014	ns
Children	0.037	<0.05
Age at diagnosis	- 0.113	<0.001
Second primary cancer	- 0.002	ns
Family history of PCa	- 0.021	ns
PSA level at diagnosis	- 0.016	ns
Biochemical recurrence during follow-up	0.024	ns
Biochemical recurrence at survey	0.002	ns
Ongoing treatment at survey	0.030	ns
Depression (PHQ-2)	- 0.051	<0.05
Anxiety (GAD-2)	0.044	ns
Perceived severity of the disease	0.217	<0.001
R ² (Adj. R ²)	0.10 (0.096)	

β standardized coefficient; BF benefit finding; BFS Benefit Finding Scale; GAD General Anxiety Disorder; ns not significant; PHQ Patient Health Questionnaire; PCa prostate cancer; PSA prostate specific antigen; R² explained variance; SD standard deviation

CONCLUSION

- Prevalence of benefit finding in long-term PCa survivors was 60%
- Foremost predictive for benefit finding were: a higher perceived severity of the disease, a lower school education level, and younger age at diagnosis (green in Table 3)
- Not predictive were the clinical course of the PCa or the family history of PCa (grey in Table 3)