

Objectives

To investigate female sexual quality of life (SQoL) in women of reproductive age living with severe obesity seeking bariatric surgery and the impact of bariatric surgery on female SQoL.

Design

Prospective cohort study of women 18-45 years undergoing bariatric surgery. Participants were recruited pre-operatively and followed for 2 years post-operatively. Validated SQoL questionnaire (SQoL-f) pre-operatively, and at 3, 6, 12 and 24 months post-operatively.

Method

SQoL-f was selected because it is independent of sexual orientation or relationship status. Scores range from 0 to 90 and are transformed into % (higher % represents greater SQoL). A global score is given and a sub-scale score for 4 'factors: psychosexual feelings, self-worthlessness, sexual and relationship satisfaction and sexual repression. Repeated measures ANOVA compared SQoL-f scores (both overall and by individual factor) over the five time-points and compared procedure type (bypass vs sleeve).

Results

N=78 women consented, of whom n=52 (67%) completed the baseline and ≥ 1 follow-up questionnaire.

No significant effect of procedure type on overall score (**Fig 1**) or individual factor scores was seen. Starting and final scores were lower for gastric bypass recipients vs gastric sleeve, however this was not significant and score trajectories over time were comparable.

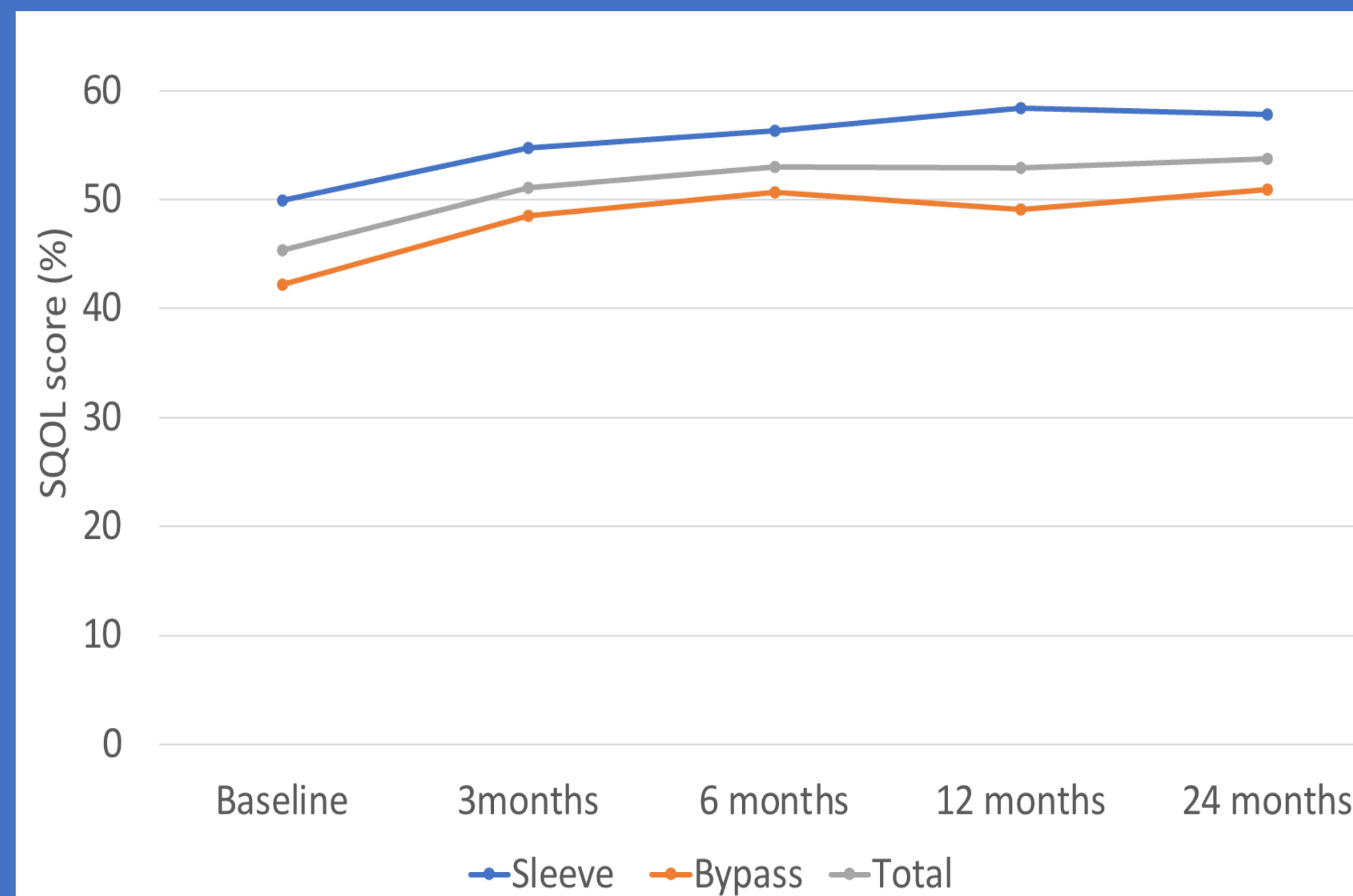


Figure 1: Overall Sexual Quality of Life score over time for all women having bariatric surgery and by individual procedure type (Intention to treat analysis, n=78)

Older age was associated with lower SQoL-f scores at all timepoints ($p < 0.05$) with the exception of 24months post-op ($p = 0.52$).

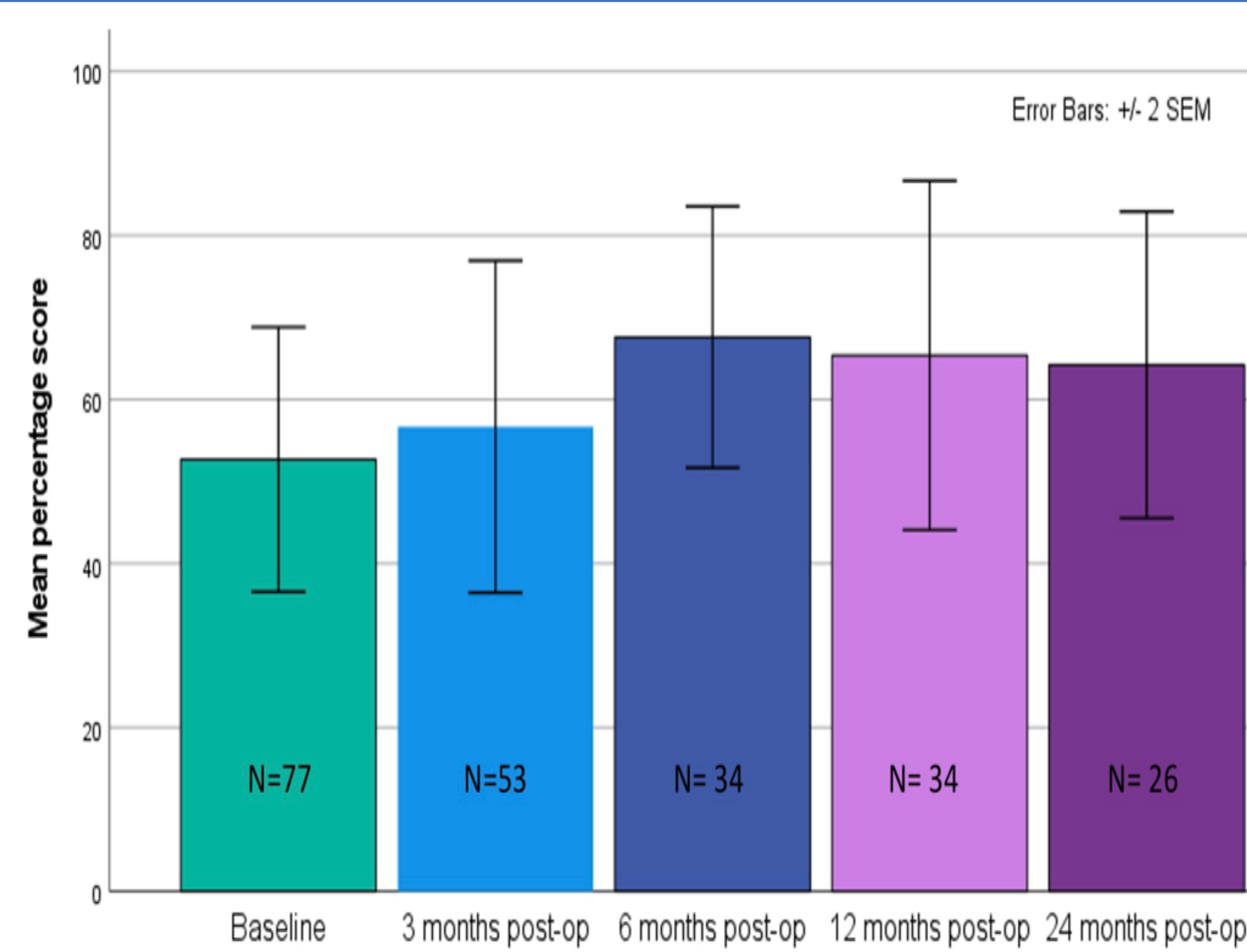


Figure 2: Overall Sexual Quality of Life scores at baseline and follow-up for women of reproductive age undergoing bariatric surgery (completer analysis)

A significant time effect was demonstrated for overall SQoL ($p < 0.001$, **Fig 2**) and independently for psychosexual feelings ($p < 0.001$), self-worthlessness ($p = 0.003$) and sexual repression ($p < 0.001$, **Fig 3**). No effect of time was seen for sexual and relationship satisfaction ($p = 0.117$).

No correlations between weight related indices (absolute weight(kg)/excess weight(kg)/BMI(kg/m²)/waist:hip ratio) and SQoL-f scores.

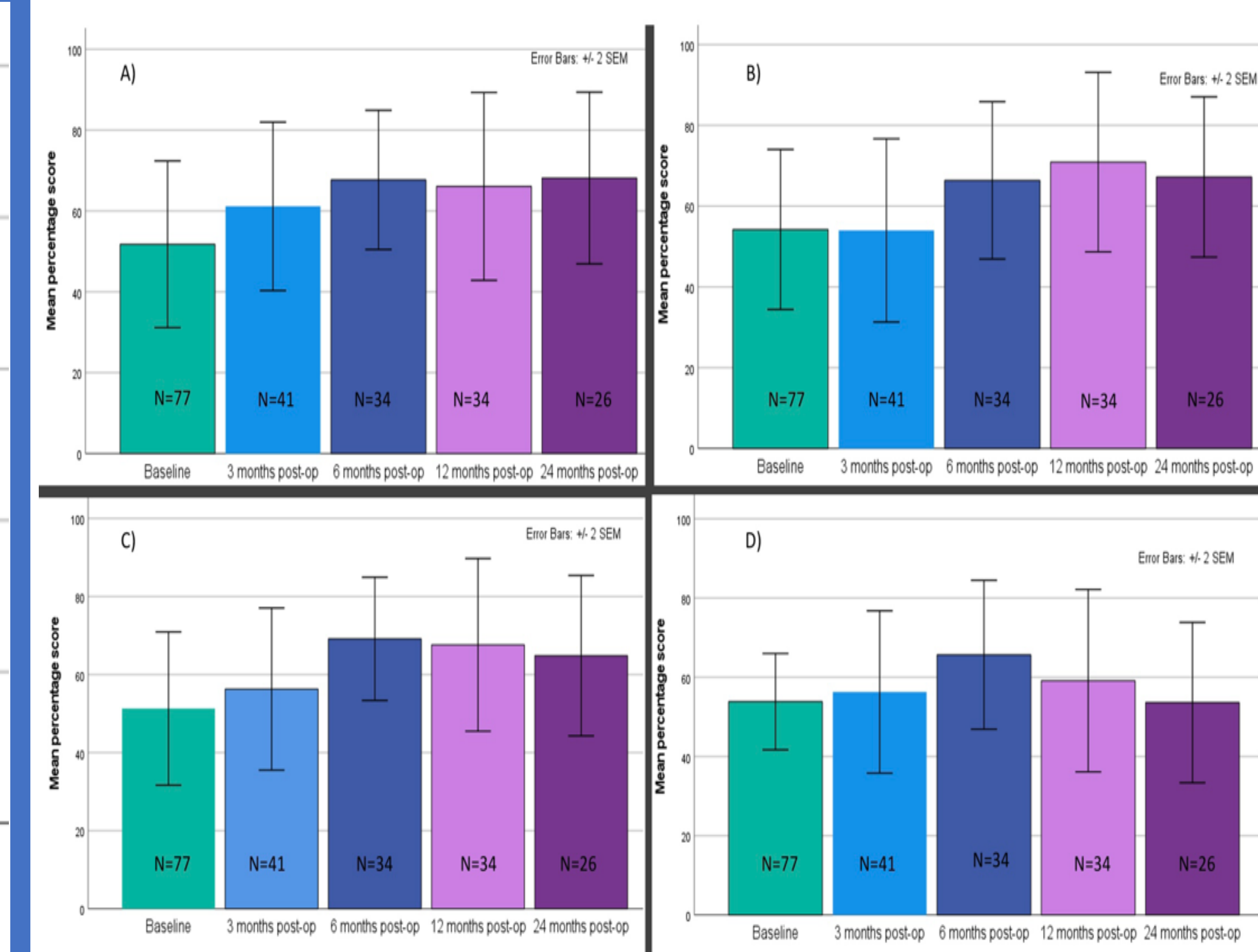


Figure 3: Sexual Quality of Life scores over time by individual factors; A) Self worthlessness; B) Sexual Repression; C) Psychosexual feelings; D) Sexual and relationship satisfaction

Conclusion

Modest and sustained improvements (to 24months) in SQoL-f scores were demonstrated in women of reproductive age after bariatric surgery.

The only area to not demonstrate improvement was sexual and relationship satisfaction.

The results were independent of procedure type or anthropometric measurements.