

Determinants of HIV testing and access to sexual health services among black migrants from sub-Saharan African communities living in Australia: a cross-sectional study

Collins Adu¹, Loren Brener¹, Carla Treloar,¹ Timothy Broady¹

¹Centre for Social Research in Health, The University of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW 2052, Australia

Background

Despite Australia’s advances in reducing HIV incidence nationally, black migrants from sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) continue to experience low uptake of sexual health services and HIV testing.

This study examined socio-demographic, HIV-related attitudes, sexual behaviours, and psychosocial factors associated with HIV testing and access to sexual health services among black migrants from SSA living in Australia.

Methods

Between July 2024 and February 2025, a cross-sectional online survey was conducted with 319 black migrants from SSA living in Australia. Measures included HIV testing history, access to sexual health services, HIV knowledge, sexual behaviours, attitudes towards HIV, conservatism, medical mistrust in Western health systems, and acculturation. Bivariate analyses and multivariable logistic regression models were used to identify factors independently associated with HIV testing and access to sexual health services.

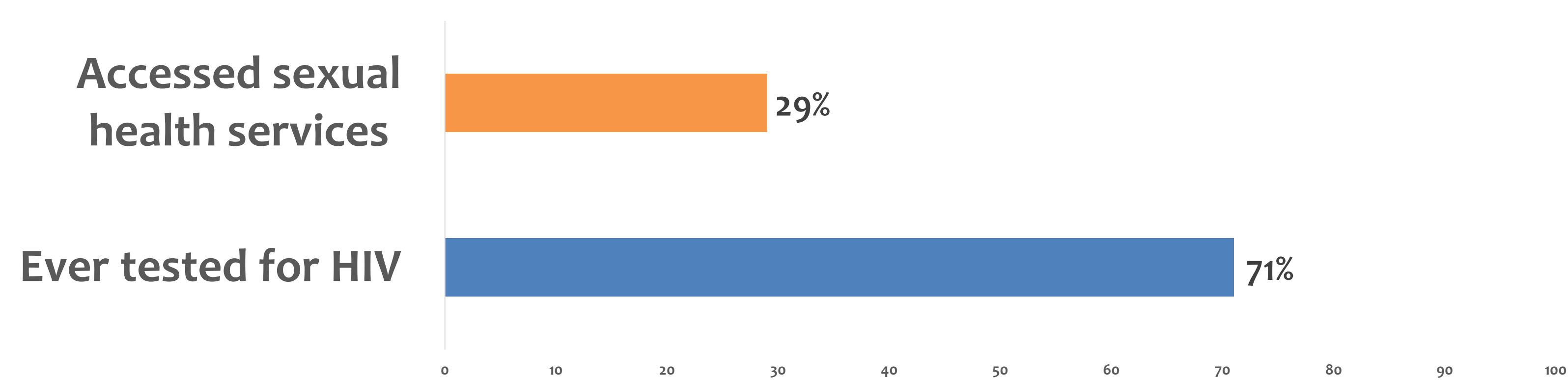
Results

The survey found that 71% of participants had ever tested for HIV, while 29% had accessed sexual health services.

In multivariable analyses, university education (aOR=2.97, 95% CI=1.41, 6.26) and prior sexual intercourse experience (aOR=3.52, 95% CI=1.54, 8.07) were independently associated with HIV testing, whereas more negative attitudes towards HIV reduced the likelihood of HIV testing (aOR=0.92, 95% CI=0.88, 0.96).

Access to sexual health services was more likely among female participants (aOR=2.63, 95% CI=1.45, 4.75) and those identifying with religions other than Christianity (aOR=4.80, 95% CI=2.13, 10.82), while negative attitudes towards HIV were associated with lower access to sexual health services (aOR=0.92, 95% CI=0.89, 0.96).

Figure 1: Prevalence of HIV testing and Access to sexual health services



Disclosure of Interest Statement:
This study was funded by the UNSW Sydney Faculty of Arts, Design, and Architecture's HDR Essential Research Costs.

Table 1: Reasons for HIV testing

Reasons	Frequency (n=191) (%)
Reasons for HIV testing:	
Immigration purposes	76(39.8%)
Routine medical check-up	52(27.2%)
Other reasons: personal concerns, partner tested positive for HIV	63(33.1%)

Figure 2: Variables associated with HIV testing

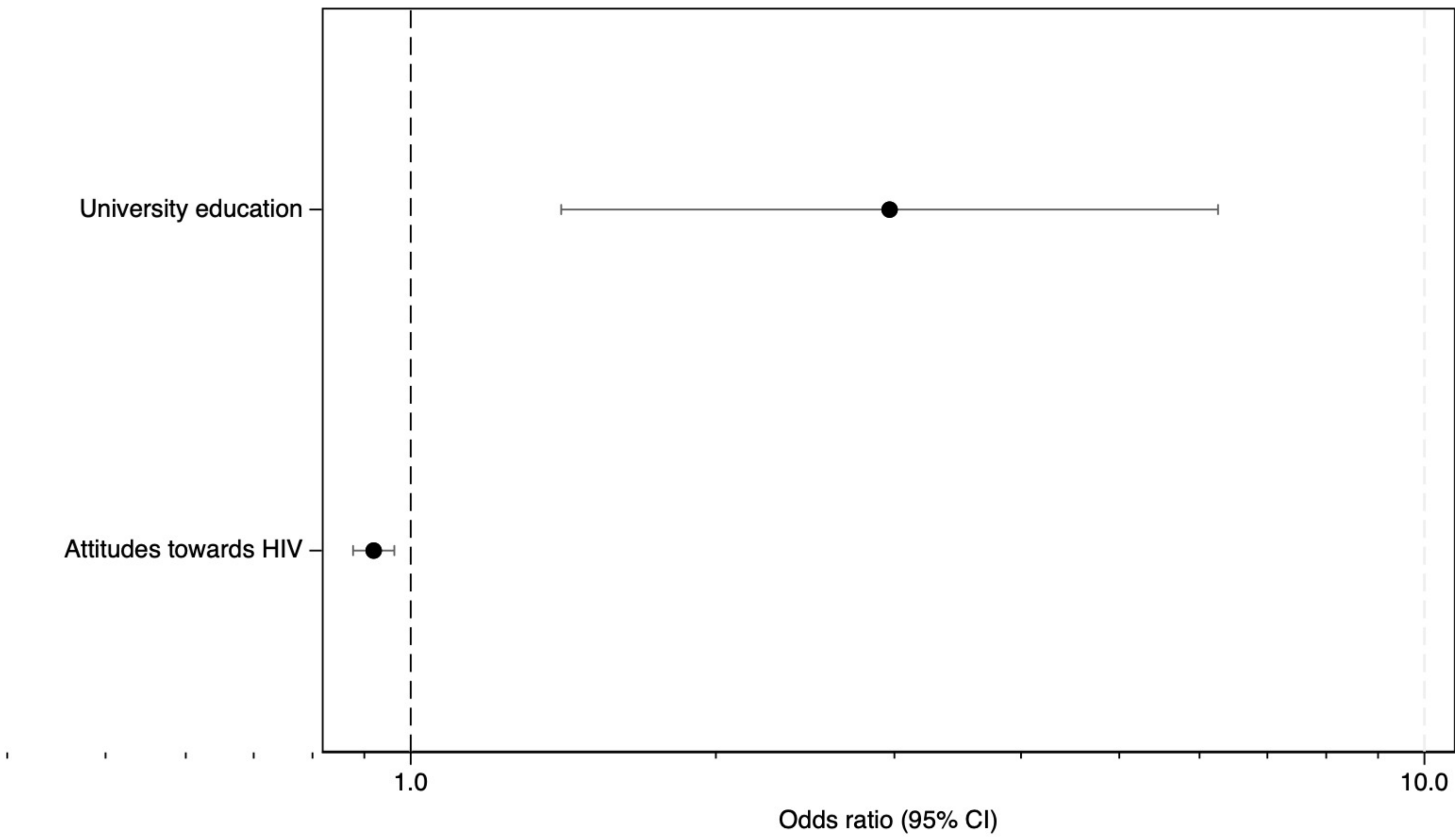
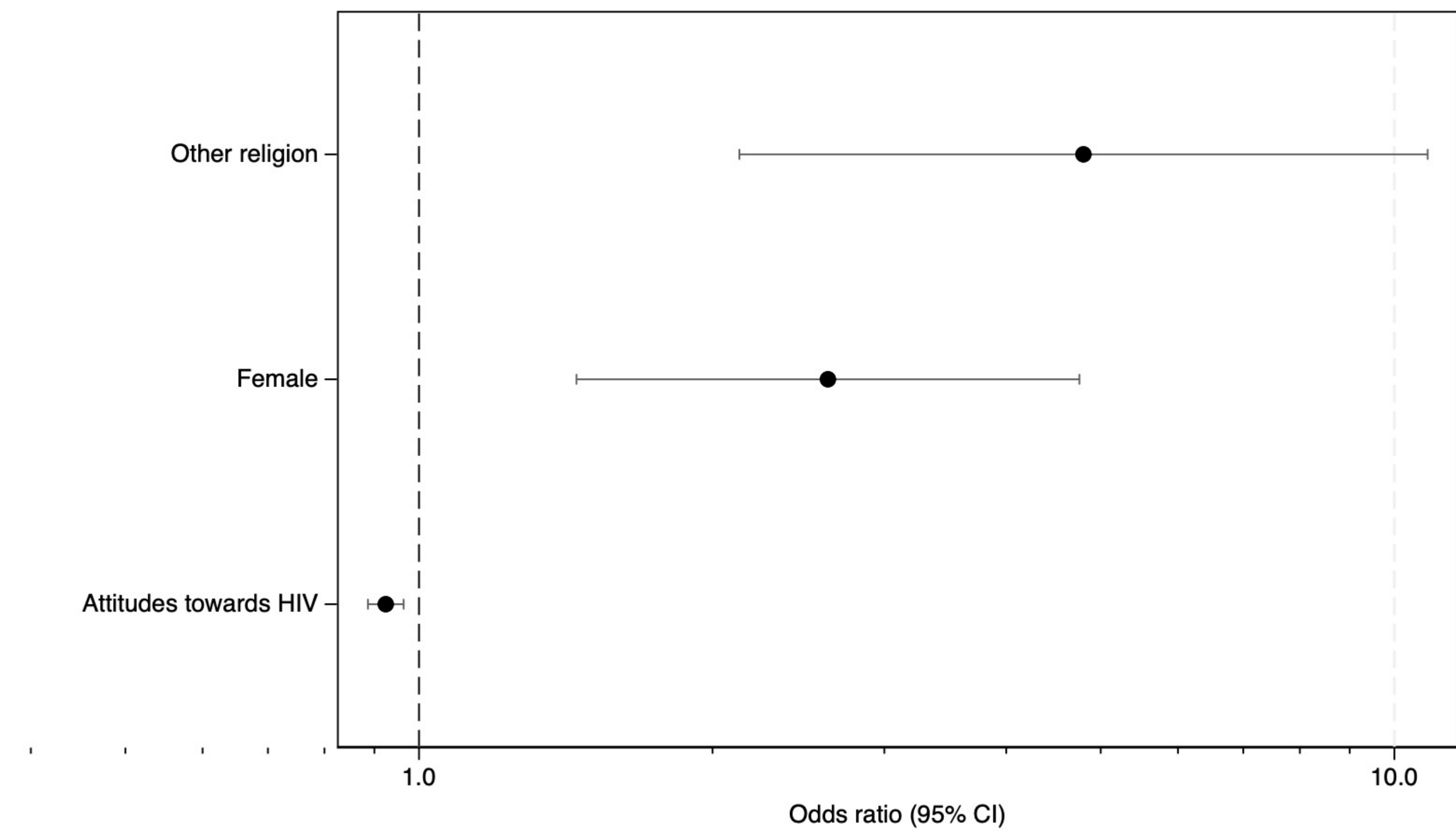


Figure 3: Variables associated with Access to sexual health services



Conclusion

Negative attitudes towards HIV, education, gender, and religion were associated with HIV testing and access to sexual health services among black migrants from SSA in Australia.

Culturally responsive interventions that address stigmatising attitudes and engage community and faith-based contexts are critical to improving equitable sexual health outcomes.

