

Assessment and management of patients in the acute stages of recovery following traumatic brain injury in adults – a worldwide survey

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Introduction

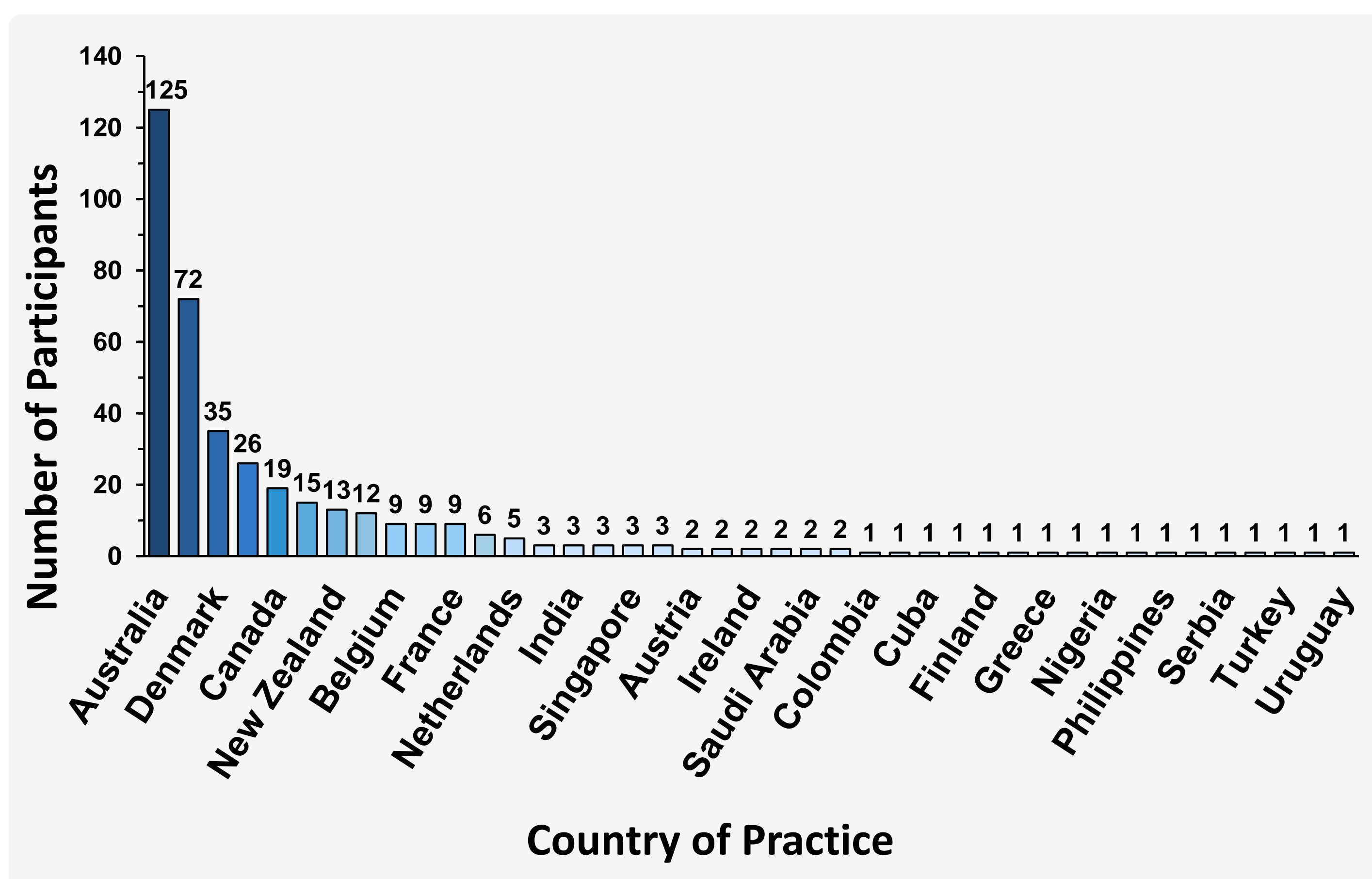
- Most individuals with traumatic brain injury (TBI) experience a period of confusion following emergence from coma, termed post-traumatic amnesia.
- Recent guidelines suggest the importance of assessment and consistent management during this phase, but current practice worldwide remains unknown.

Aim

- This survey aimed to elucidate current international practice in assessment and management of patients in the acute stages of recovery after TBI.

Participants

- 376 participants (68.8% females), from 41 countries, mostly neuropsychologists, rehabilitation physicians and occupational therapists (OTs), with an average 12.8 years' experience. All were working in the acute care of adult patients with TBI.

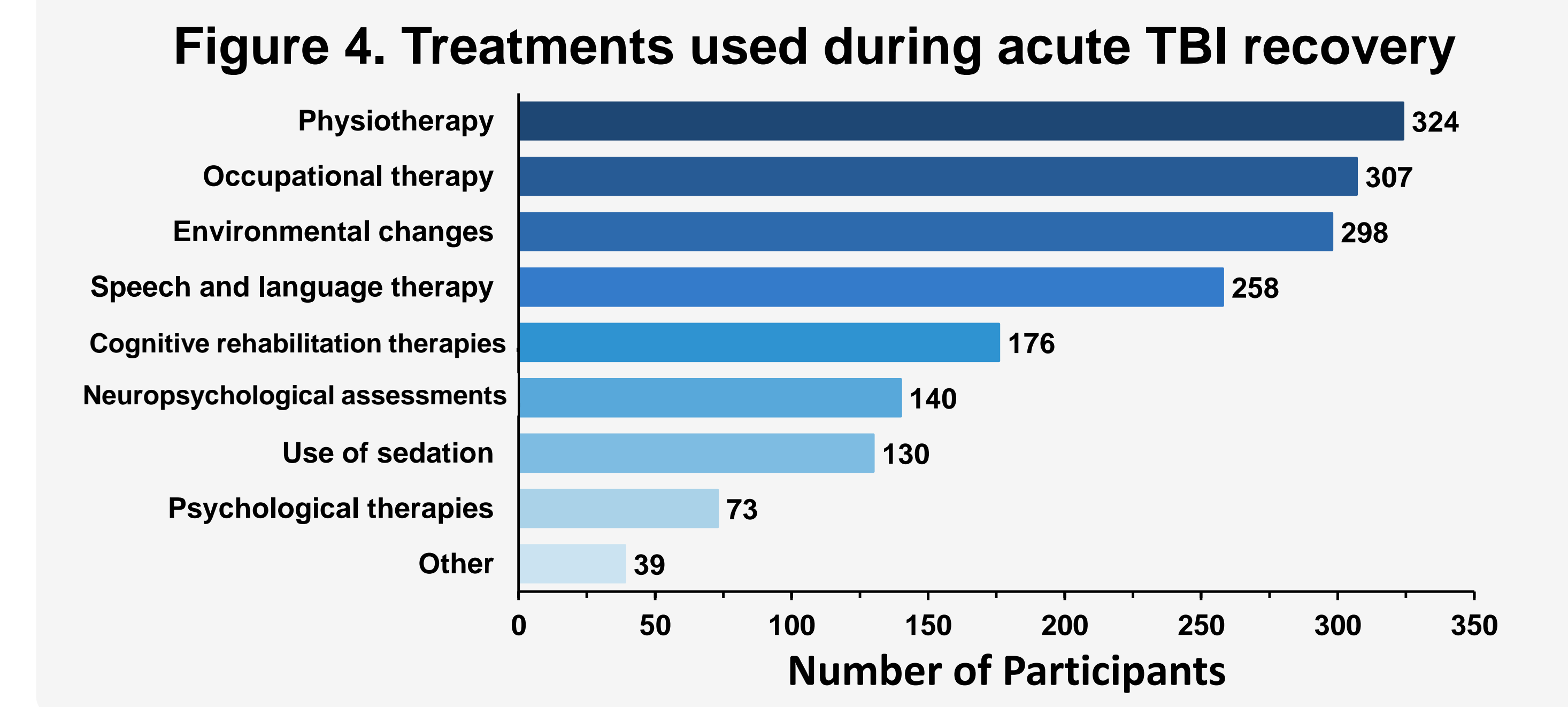
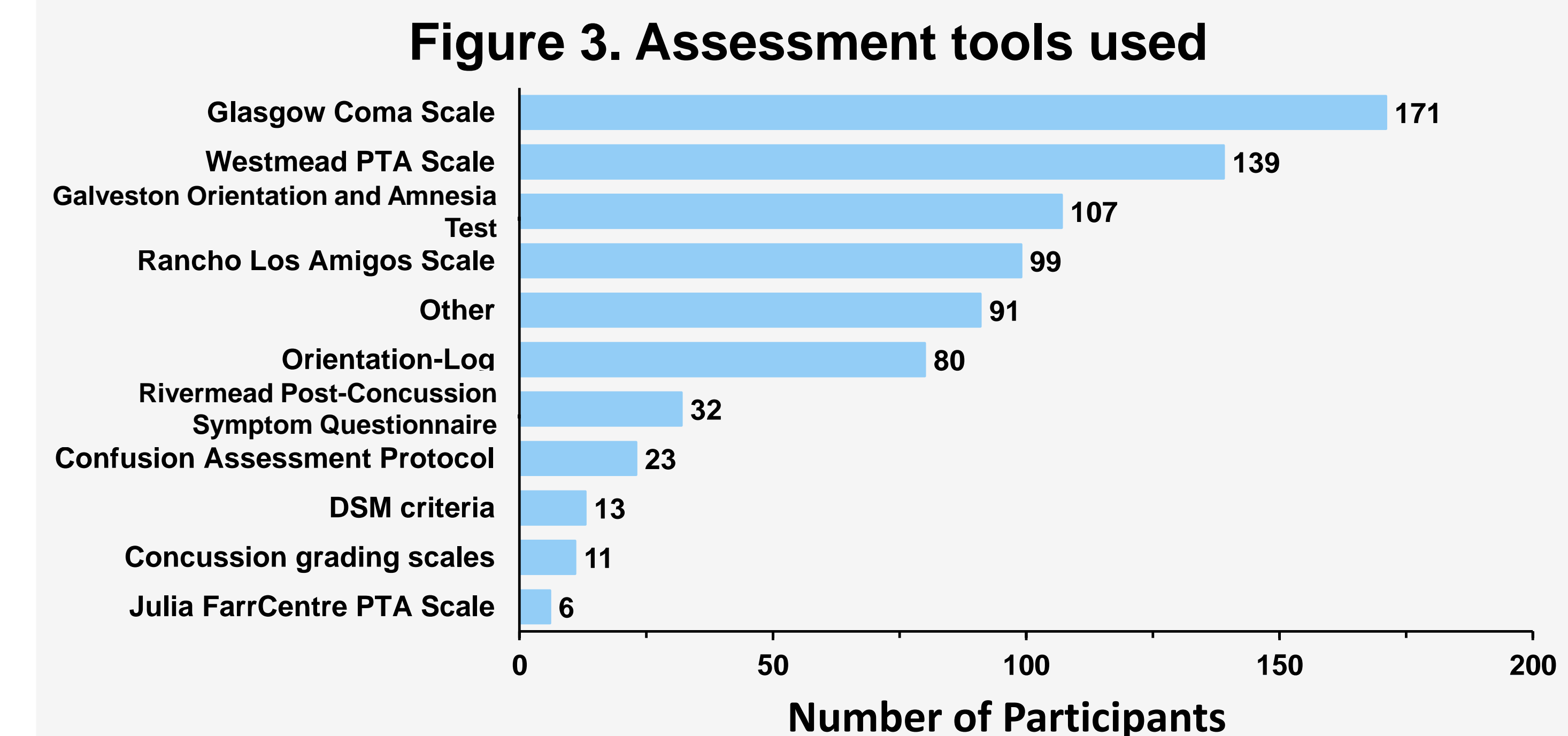
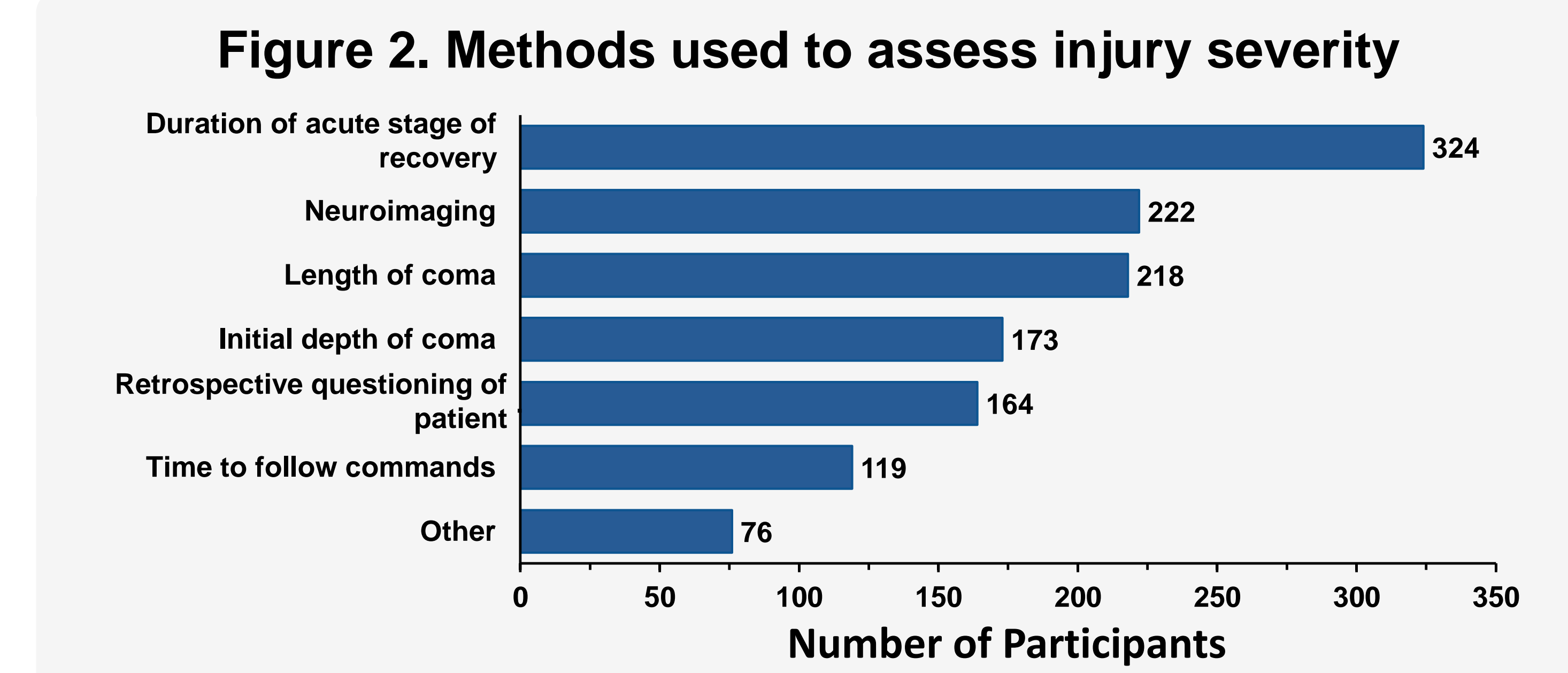
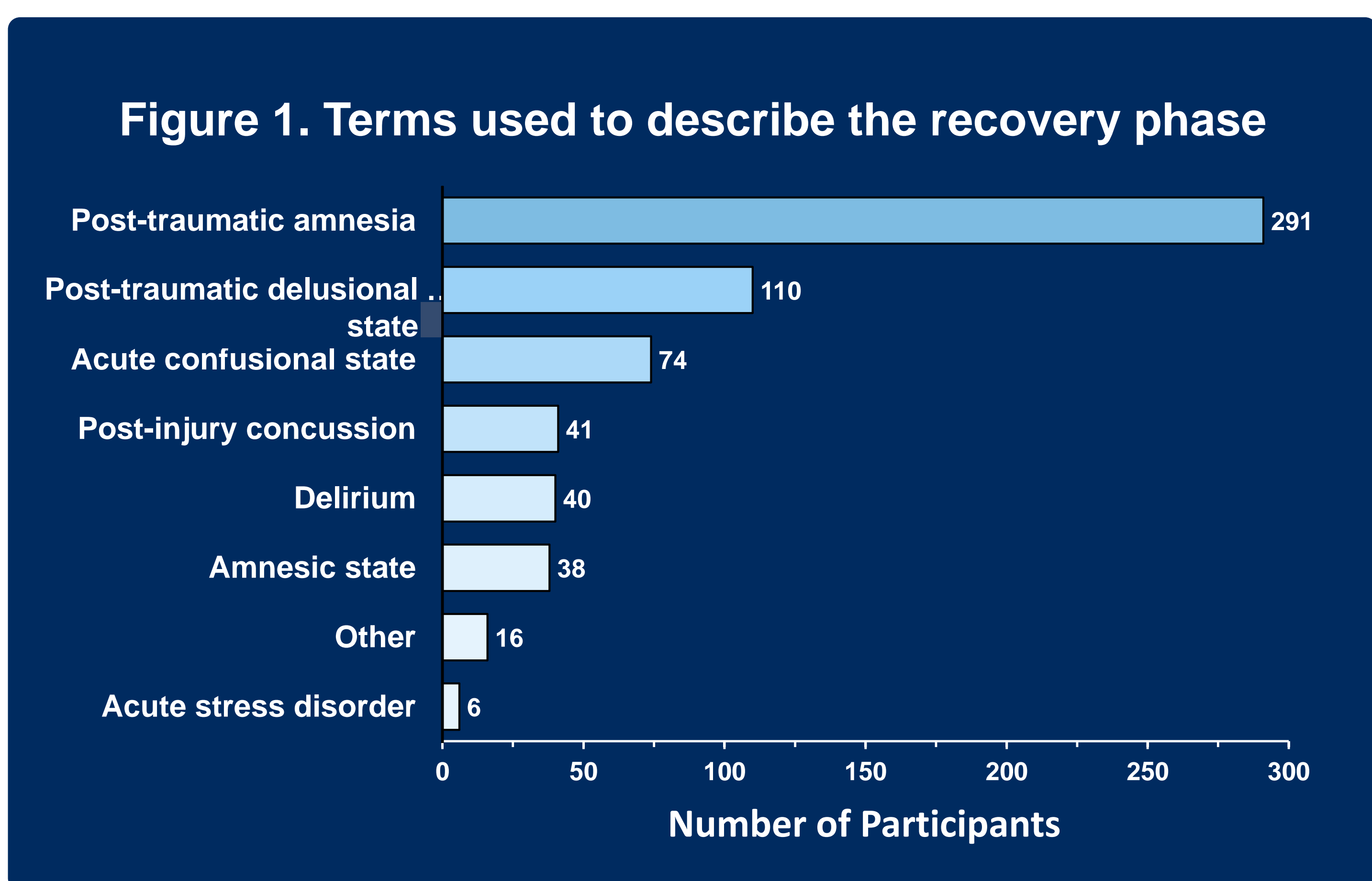


Measures

- Web-based survey distributed via email and brain injury networks worldwide.
- It included items defining the acute stage of recovery after TBI, measurement of TBI severity and the acute recovery period (assessment tools used, frequency of measurement, and clinical staff involved in measurement), clinical indicators of emergence from the acute stage of recovery, and therapies provided to patients during acute recovery.

Results

- Most clinicians described this acute period as post-traumatic amnesia and used its duration to indicate injury severity.
- More than 85% used a tool to assess patients; in order of frequency, the Glasgow Coma Scale (GCS), Westmead PTA Scale (WPTAS), Galveston Orientation and Amnesia Test, Rancho Los Amigos Scale and O-Log.
- Meeting criteria on the assessment tool or clinical judgement determined emergence from this phase, indicated by recovery of orientation, day to day memories, ability to follow commands or participate in rehabilitation.
- Most patients had physiotherapy, OT, speech therapy, and environmental changes, with a third of participants indicating sedating medication was prescribed during this phase.



Conclusion

- Survey findings suggest PTA is a widely recognised and measured TBI recovery phase, used to determine injury severity and readiness for therapy.