



A Survey of Early-Career Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists: Career Choices and Practice Trends

Andrea Mann, D.O., M.Phil.,¹ Julia Langer, MHS,² Nicole Quiteiro, M.D.,² Shashank V. Joshi, M.D.,³ Thomas Tarshis, M.D., MPH.²
¹The University of Chicago, Department Psychiatry & Behavioral Neuroscience, ²Bay Area Children's Association, Oakland and San Jose, California, ³Stanford University School of Medicine Division of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry

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Objective

1) To understand the demographic characteristics of early career child and adolescent psychiatrists (CAP), 2) to better understand factors involved in career satisfaction and treatment delivery, and 3) to examine which non-clinical factors may influence decisions about the type of practice early career CAPs pursue.

Background

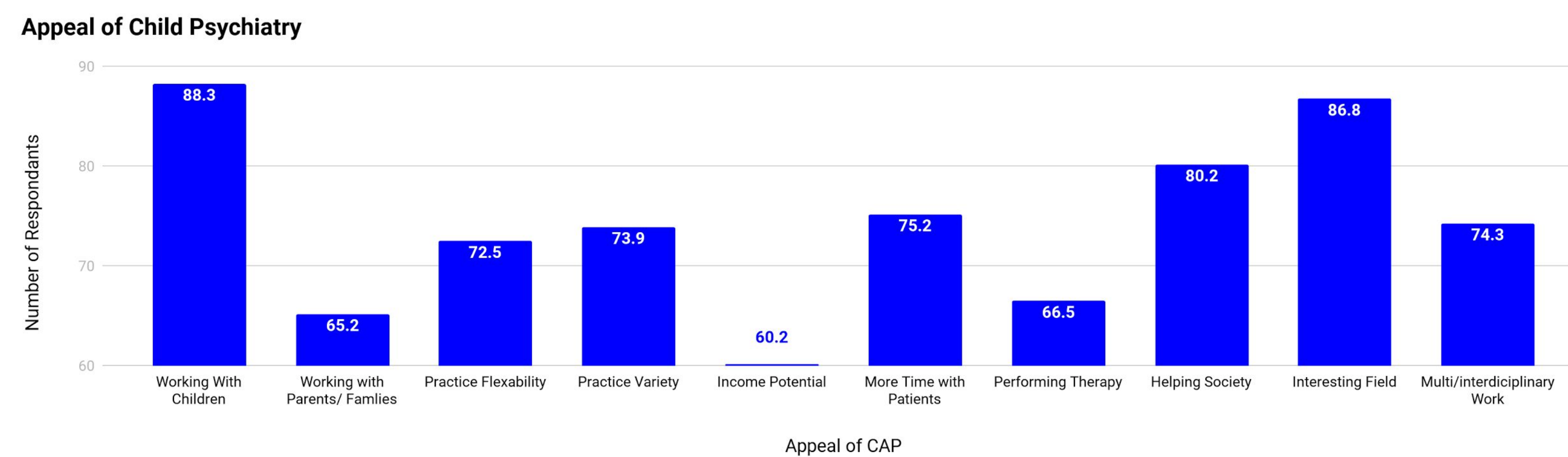
Child and adolescent psychiatry has been classified as a shortage specialty for over three decades (1, 2). Changes in mental health policy and clinician reimbursement rates, decreasing graduate medical education funding, and diminishing research funds have affected the training environment for CAPs, and have implications about recruitment into the field (3). Factors involved in recruitment, incentives and barriers to career satisfaction, and treatment delivery are important to addressing this workforce shortage. To date, only one systematic survey has examined practice patterns and subjective work perceptions of early CAP (4). More research is required to understand how to recruit and retain practicing CAPs who deliver quality care to a growing population of vulnerable children.

Methods

Data was collected from fellows and early career CAPs from September 2016 to December 2016 through a 44 item web-based survey called the Child Psychiatry as a Profession (CPAAP) survey. Eleven multiple choice and 33 Likert scale ratings ranging from 0 (not at all) to 100 (very much) were used to assess clinician perspectives. Participants were recruited at an American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry annual event and through emails sent to all 125 U.S. CAP training programs. The survey was divided into four sections (1) CAP exposure and aspects of the specialty that are most appealing, (2) desirable practice characteristics and personal factors affecting career choices, (3) confidence in different treatment modalities and job satisfaction, and (4) demographic information. Upon completion of the questionnaire participants had the opportunity to enter their email address into a raffle to win a \$50 Amazon gift card. Data was analyzed using basic descriptive statistical analyses and t-tests comparing male and female results.

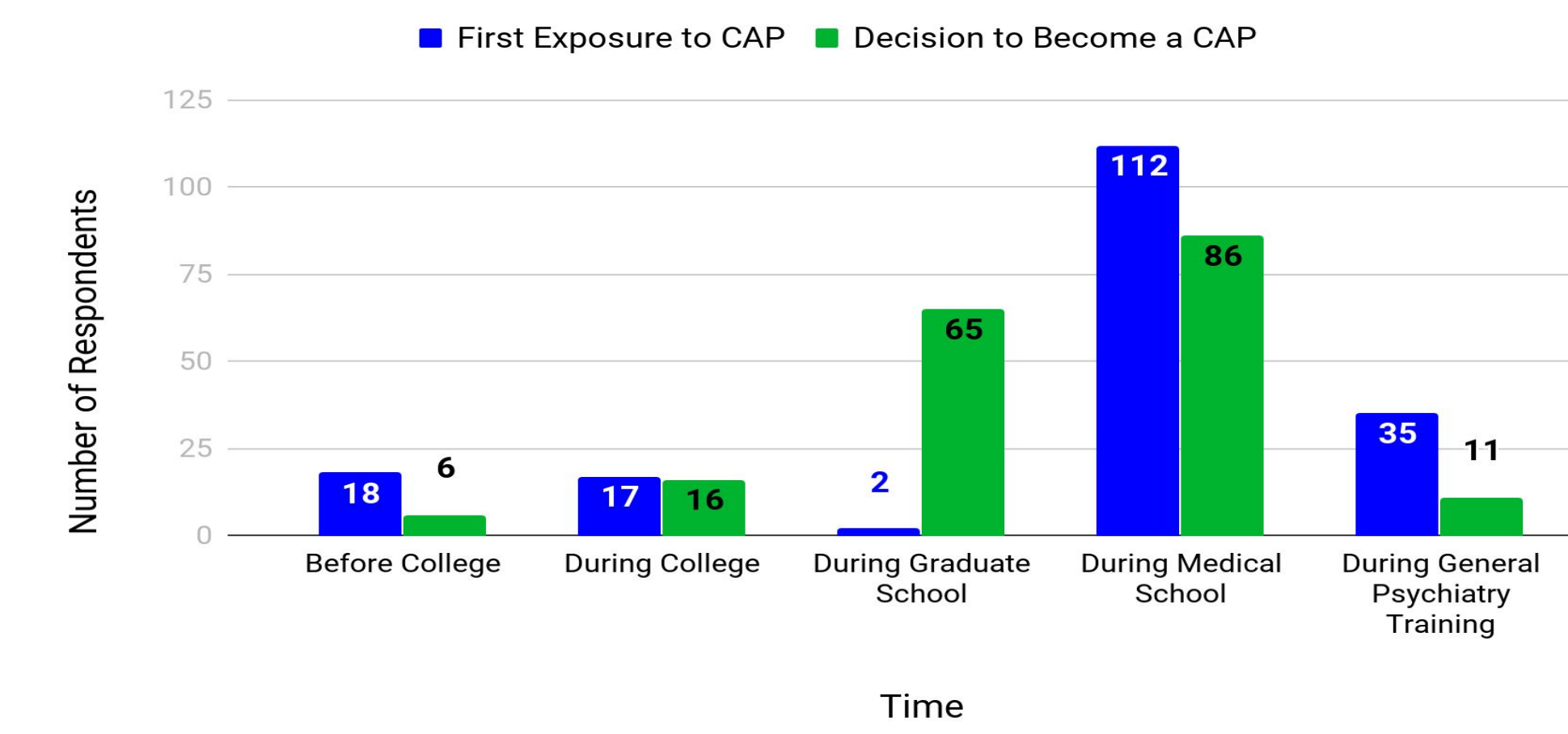
Results

Of the 184 survey respondents, 115 (62.5%) were fellows and 69 (37.5%) were early career psychiatrists; 66.8% were female (n=123); and the mean age was 33.8 years (ranging from 28 to 51). Most respondents were first exposed to CAP during medical school (n=112, 60.8%). The majority decided to pursue CAP as a career either during medical school (n=86, 46.7%) or during general training (n=65, 35.3%). Most respondents expected full time salaries between \$175,000 and \$250,000 just out of fellowship. Forty-five percent owed more than \$150,000 in educational debt. The top reasons for pursuing a career in CAP included: working with children, working in an interesting field, and helping society. The fewest number of providers were interested in working for an academic research institution or at a for-profit organization. Males (x=85.7, SD 22.9) compared to females (x=77.5, SD 25.3) were significantly more interested in pursuing full time work (p > 0.05). Males (x=32.0, SD 33.1) compared to females (x=25.6, SD 26.6) were also more interested in academic research careers, but this didn't reach statistical significance (p=0.16).

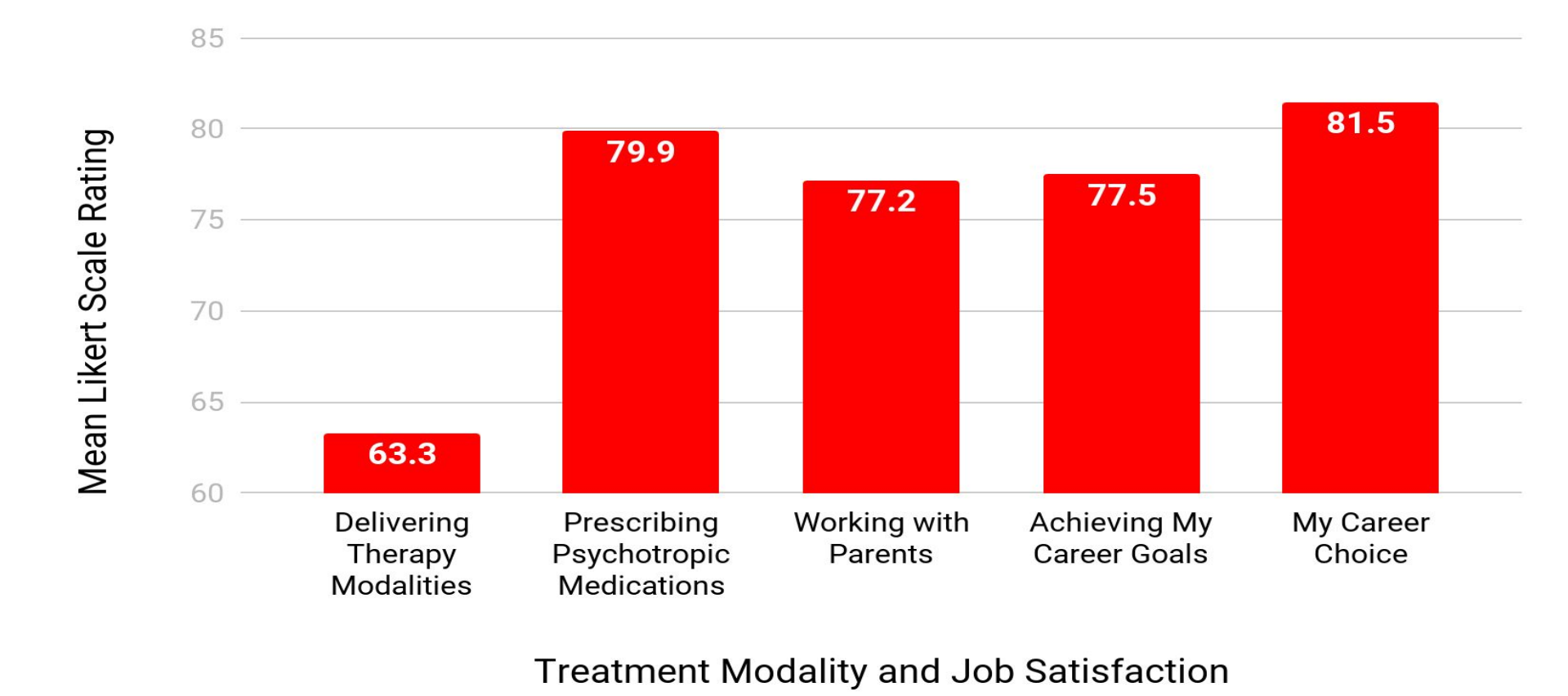


Results - Continued

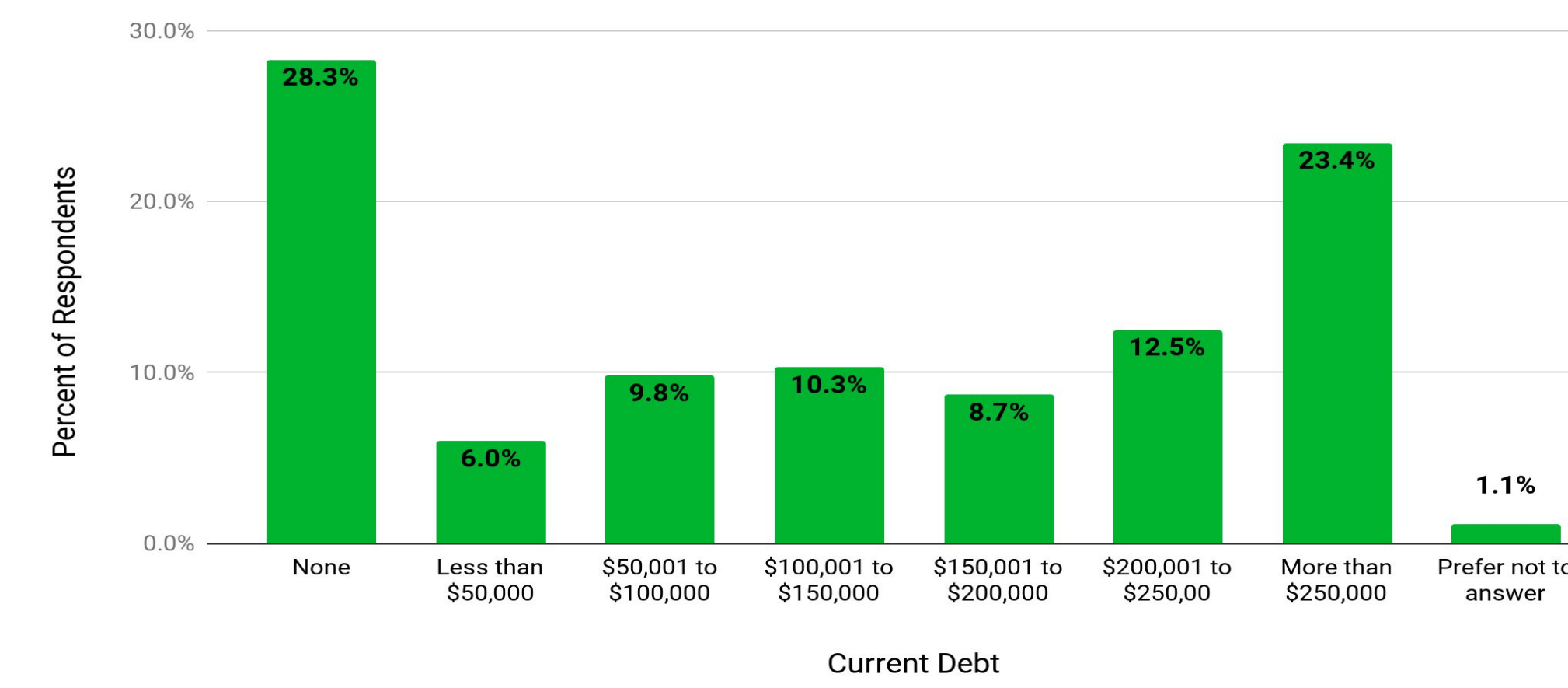
CAP Exposure and Career Decision



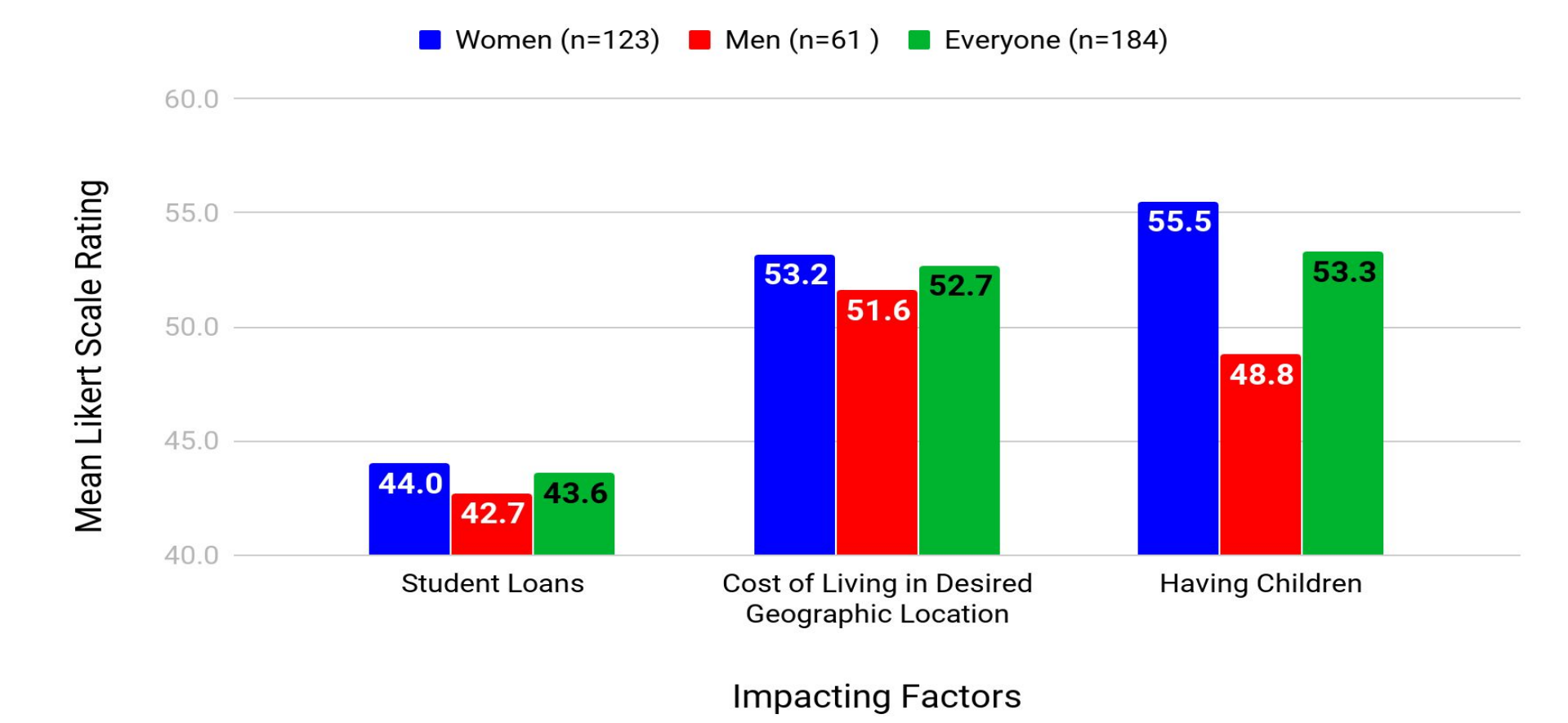
Confidence



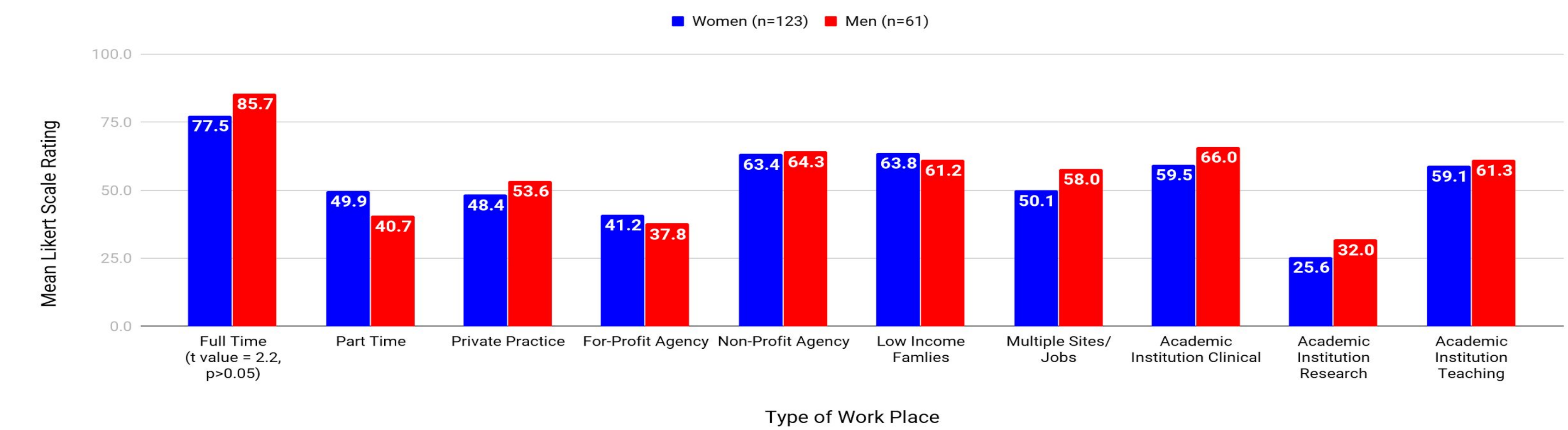
Current Student Loan Debt



Factors Impacting Job Selection



Desired Work Environment for Women and Men



Conclusion

The best time to encourage individuals to become child and adolescent psychiatrists is during medical or graduate school. There is not a significant gender difference in career choice but there is in amount of desired work time. Despite significant student loan debt, the vast majority of child and adolescent psychiatrists are motivated to enter the field for altruistic reasons and rated high confidence in their career choice.

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