

**PILOT STUDY TO INVESTIGATE THE INFLUENCE OF THE TIMING OF STUDENT
CLINICAL EXPERIENCES AND STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS IN THE HIRING
OF NEW GRADUATES**

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This Scholarly Project, submitted by Kjersten Skjold and Allison Vosgerau in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Physical Therapy from the University of North Dakota, has been read by the Advisor and Chairperson of Physical Therapy under whom the work has been done and is hereby approved.

(Graduate School Advisor)

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ABSTRACT

Background and Purpose: Clinical experiences provide the student with the opportunity to practice technical skills as well as soft skills. This opportunity may benefit the student in future employment at the clinical facility. As the clinical experiences are at various time periods throughout the coursework, many students feel that the later sessions of clinical experiences may be more beneficial in employment opportunities upon graduation. Students also feel that grade point average plays an important role in potential employment opportunities.

Methods: A survey was developed to identify the influence clinical experience session times and student characteristics that support future employment with the clinical site. The survey was sent to 148 potential participants from 20 different states. Scores were tabulated from the survey; age, gender and practice setting were cross-tabulated with overall results to determine any trends in responses.

Participants: Sixty-six clinical instructors, CCCE's and clinic managers from sixteen different states responded to the survey. The participants were from various physical therapy clinics including, pediatric, inpatient acute, inpatient rehab, outpatient ambulatory care, home health, rural and private practice. There were 20 (31.7%) males and 43 (68.3%) females who participated in the survey.

Results: There were no differences in responses about the timing of clinical experiences and the influence on future employment with the facility. Both clinical experience sessions (midway or later in the program) provide an equal opportunity for future employment with the clinical site. Grade point average was not an important factor when considering a recent graduate for employment. Personality traits or soft skills, play an important role in considering a recent graduate for employment with clinical experience site. Communication, interpersonal skills and

professionalism are the most important soft skills a recent graduate can obtain to support future employment opportunities.

Discussion: Evidence from this study can support current physical therapy students and other healthcare professional students in the decision-making aspects of clinical experiences with the intent of future employment at clinical experience facility. Also, physical therapy students will be better informed about the importance of enhancing soft skills during physical therapy coursework to provide increased employment opportunities.

CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Clinical experiences are the capstone to physical therapy education applying clinical and professional skills in real life situations. Clinical experiences give health professional students the opportunity for hands on learning. Health professional students participating in clinical experience are able to enhance and refine their skills prior to joining the workforce through hands-on learning. The length, duration and timing in the educational curriculum differ between schools and also between each specific health professional programs, such as physical therapy and occupational therapy. Sometimes the clinical experiences are at the end of the student's educational program or sometimes the clinical experiences are integrated throughout the educational curriculum with a component upon completion of the program. However, there is no proven method as to which clinical experience process is most successful. The bottom line is that clinical experiences are extremely beneficial to the student in multiple ways. Physical therapy students at the University of North Dakota have the opportunity to complete four full-time clinical experiences. Two of these experiences occur midway through the program following the first full year of classroom education and the third and fourth experience occur following the completion of classroom education. Often students select clinical experiences under the assumption that their final clinical experiences are more important in professional development and career opportunities as opposed to their initial clinical experiences.

While there is some information regarding the characteristics that employers seek in new physical therapy hires, there is no clear information regarding the influence of clinical experiences as a student on his or her chance of being hired at the facility of choice. Based on the limited amount of evidence, this study is investigating the main characteristics that physical therapy department managers consider when hiring new physical therapy graduates and if the completion of an early or late clinical experience at their facility influences the process.

The purpose of this study is to expand on the information that currently exists regarding what characteristics employers seek in entry-level physical therapists and to investigate whether or not the timing of the completed clinical experience, early or late in the curriculum, influences the likelihood of being employed within the organization.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Potential employers often look for certain characteristics other than grade point average when seeking out potential physical therapists for hire. These characteristics termed “generic abilities” by May et al¹¹ have become some of the most important aspects of the physical therapist that are considered in the hiring process. The generic abilities May identified are commitment to learning, interpersonal skills, communications skills, use of time and resources, use of constructive feedback, problem solving, professionalism, responsibility, critical thinking and stress management. Physical therapy students often do not realize that these generic abilities are equally as important as having a strong educational background. Stumbo, Thiele and York¹⁴ hypothesized that there would be a difference in ranking of generic abilities between two generations of physical therapists, “baby boomers” and “generation X”. Although, these two generations have experienced different lifestyles that have impacted their views on patient care, there was no significant difference between the two generations; both generations identified similar rank of importance for the generic abilities. However, Stumbo, Thiele and York¹⁴ did identify a difference between the current study of generic abilities rank order and the prior study from May et al¹¹. Currently, critical thinking and problem solving have become the most important generic abilities for physical therapists entering the workforce.¹⁴ May et al identified commitment to learning and interpersonal skills as most important characteristics for physical therapists¹¹.

Clinical experiences assist the physical therapy student in enhancing knowledge and skills learned through classroom education. The clinical experiences allow the student to synthesize and apply classroom education to work in the clinic. The hands-on learning that clinical experiences provide support the student in transitioning to the professional role. Clinical instructors assist in identifying the student's capabilities prior to entering the physical therapy workforce at the end of his or her clinical experiences. Jette et al⁶ identified those qualities that clinical instructors use to categorize a student as entry-level. Seven attributes were recognized by clinical instructors as influencing their decision making of entry-level. These seven attributes (knowledge, clinical skills, safety, clinical decision making, self-directed learning, interpersonal communication and professionalism) parallel the generic abilities put forth by May et al¹¹. Jette et al⁶ and May et al¹¹ provide students with the idea that becoming a physical therapist is not only about education, but also about the interpersonal abilities one possess.

Upon reviewing literature, there is a lack of research regarding what employers seek when hiring physical therapy graduates. Mathwig et al¹⁰ most closely resembles the purpose and design of this study. Mathwig investigated the selection criteria of physical therapy employers when hiring entry-level physical therapists in New York. A survey was developed and sent to 320 managers of physical therapy departments. This study found that the three most important criteria for the hiring of a recent physical therapy graduate were good written/verbal communication skills, strong professional and time management skills, and clinical experience in this specific type of setting. Other criteria ranked highly were APTA membership and specific PT program of completed education, especially for the private practice setting. Ambulatory care ranked highly the completion of a master's degree and females ranked letters of recommendation higher than their male counterparts.

Other health care professions have explored these topics as well. A study by Mulholland and Derdall¹² in 2004 explored what employers seek when hiring occupational therapists. Using a survey, the study was divided into two main components. The first focused on characteristics specific to experienced occupational therapists during the hiring process. The second component identified characteristics of new occupational therapy graduates when considered for employment. Overall, the survey revealed the five most frequently mentioned characteristics when hiring experienced occupational therapists as level of experience, team skills, practice skills and abilities, communication, and interpersonal skills. Mulholland and Derdall¹² also indicated that for new graduates that most frequent responses included acknowledgement of differences between new occupational therapists and experienced occupational therapists, willingness to learn, fieldwork placements, willingness to seek help, and ability to work independently.

Contrary to the belief by many physical therapy students, a study published in the physical therapy journal by Rheault and Shafernich-Coulson¹³ indicated that there was no significant relationship between professional grade point average (GPA) and clinical performance. However, the study did find a significant correlation between pre-professional GPA and professional GPA. This study dispels the myth among physical therapy students that GPA is a defining factor in their employment search. GPA was also not mentioned in any of the studies above as an important factor in hiring rehabilitation professionals or highly ranked selection criteria when hiring entry level therapists. In fact, this study specifically states that there is no correlation between GPA in the physical therapy program and success in a clinical setting.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

In order to address the research question, a survey was developed. The survey included questions related to the characteristics employers seek in entry-level physical therapists and also the importance of clinical experiences and the timing of the clinical experience in relation to the hiring process. A list of potential participants was derived from the University of North Dakota Department of Physical Therapy clinical site database. A request to participate in research through the University of North Dakota was submitted and reviewed by the IRB committee prior to submission of survey to participants (Appendix A). In order to obtain data, a survey was developed to identify characteristics that employers seek and whether a student completing a clinical experience at a facility increases the potential employment opportunities. Using surveymonkey.com, the survey was created to explore the research question. Consent to participate was obtained and participants were informed the data would be reported in aggregate and would not be linked to a participant. The survey included demographic details, Likert scale questions, as well as two open-ended questions and rank order for professional characteristics (Appendix B). Email addresses were obtained from clinical site contact information. An email stating the research question and link to the survey was sent to the participants. Three weeks later, a reminder email with the link to the survey was sent to participants that did not respond to the initial request. Data was collected using Survey Monkey software. Overall results were

recorded from the respondents. Age, gender and practice setting were each cross-tabulated with the overall results in order to identify any patterns of responses between these groups.

Participants

Participants were collected from the University of North Dakota's physical therapy department list of clinical sites. Surveys were sent to 148 participants from twenty different states. These participants included clinical instructors, CCCEs and clinic managers from the University of North Dakota physical therapy program's clinical database. There were 148 successful email transmissions to twenty different states with a total of 66 respondents ranging from sixteen states.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Out of the 148 surveys sent, there were 66 responses to the survey. Responses came from 16 of the 20 states representing multiple areas of the country including the Northwest, Southwest, Southeast, and Midwest. Of those 66 responses, 20 were males (31.7%) and 43 were females (68.3%). Physical therapists represented 88.9% of the respondents, while 3.2% were occupational therapists and 7.9% classified themselves as other which included responses from a physical therapy assistant, speech pathologist, administrator, athletic trainer, and a human resources recruiter. In terms of practice setting, outpatient ambulatory care totaled 44.4% of the responses, followed by inpatient acute with 34.9% , inpatient rehab with 25.4%, pediatric with 22.2%, private practice and rural both with 17.5% and home health at 9.5%.

The majority of the responses were made by clinicians between 51-60 years of age at 30.2% along with clinicians 41-50 years of age at 30.2%. Clinicians between the ages of 31-40 years of age accounted for 27% of the responses. A response rate of 9.5% were clinicians less than 30 years of age and clinicians greater than 60 years of age made up 3.2% of the responses. Figure 1 depicts the number of responses by age range and practice setting. Clinicians with a master's degree made up 43.5% of the responses, followed by bachelor's degrees at 25.8%, entry-level doctorate at 17.7% and advanced doctorate at 12.9%. There were no clinicians with an advanced business degree included in the results. Managers comprised of 42.6% of the

responses for a total of 26 out of 66, while 49.2% indicated they were CCCE's and 8.2% indicated that they were CI's.

Of those that were managers 44.2% had been held that position for 0-5 years, 40.4% had held that position for greater than 10 years and 15.4% had been managers for 6-10 years.

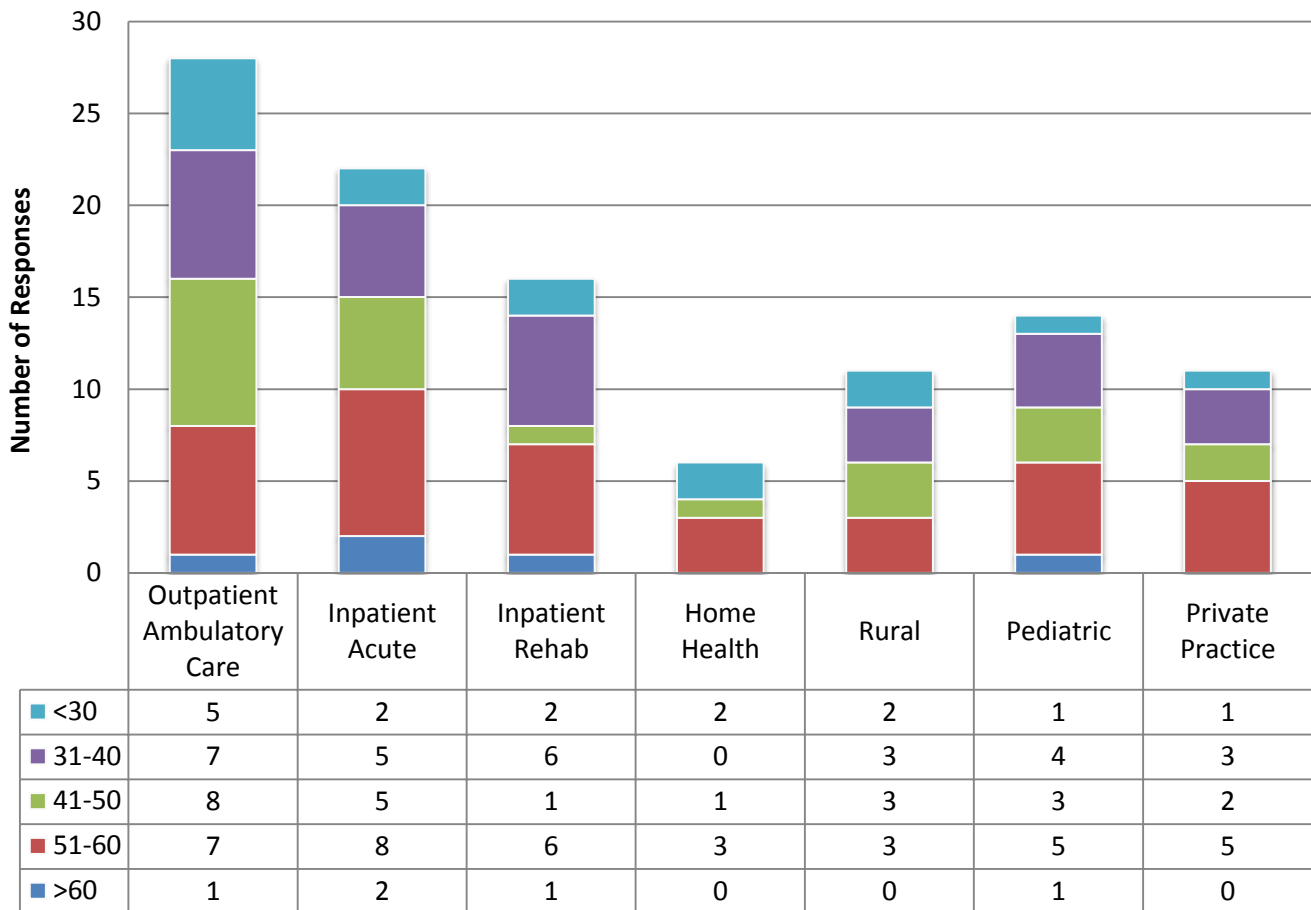


Figure 1. Cross tabulation of practice setting and age range.

More than half of the responses indicated that they accept physical therapy students for clinical experiences in order to evaluate them for employment. Figure 2 illustrates that 33.3% agreed and 17.5% strongly agreed with the statement that their facility accepts physical therapy students for clinical experiences to evaluate them for potential employment. When broken down

into practice settings, private practice and inpatient acute care agreed most with the statement that they accept students for clinical experiences to evaluate them for potential employment. Twenty-seven percent of the responses from the private practice setting agreed and 36.4% strongly agreed with this statement for a total of 63.6% in agreement. A total of 63.6% of the responses from inpatient acute care were also in agreement with this statement. Fifty percent agreed and 13.6% strongly agreed.

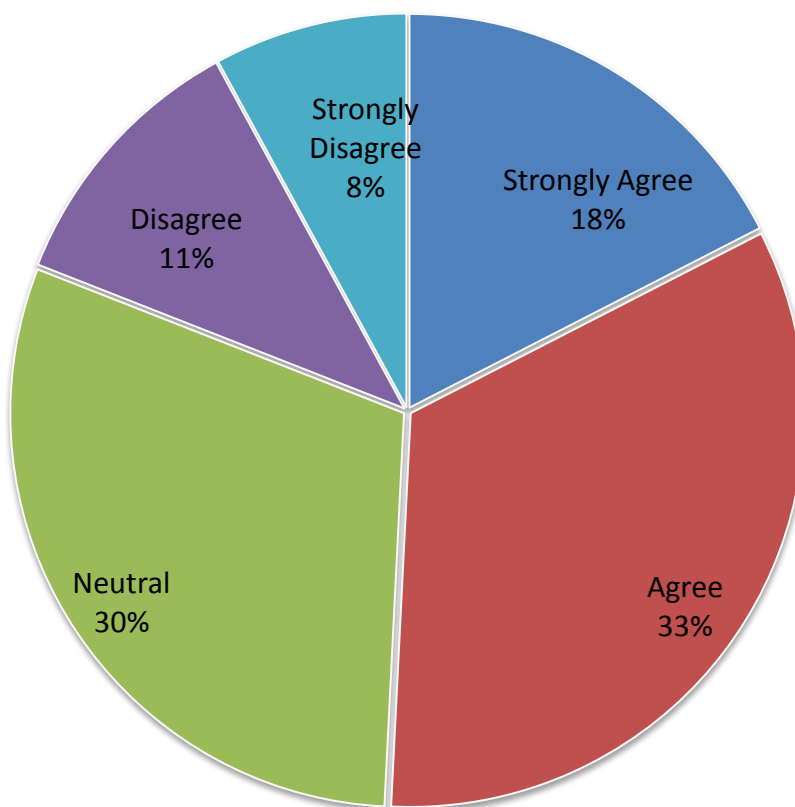


Figure 2. Percentage of PT facilities that evaluate PT students for potential employment during clinical experiences.

When asked if it was common for students who have completed a clinical experience at their facility to apply for a job at their facility 49.2% agreed with the statement, 15.9% strongly agreed with the statement. 39.7% strongly agreed and 30.2% agreed with the statement that their

facility has hired a recent physical therapy graduate that completed a clinical experience at their site.

As illustrated in Figure 3, when comparing the likelihood of considering a recent graduate for employment if they have completed a clinical at their facility 25 respondents (39.7%) agreed and 13 respondents (20.6%) strongly agreed that the new graduate is likely to be considered for employment if they have completed a clinical experience **prior** to finishing physical therapy coursework, while 28 respondents (44.4%) agreed and 15 respondents (23.8%) strongly agreed that the applicant is likely to be considered for employment if they have completed a clinical experience at their facility **after** their physical therapy coursework is finished.

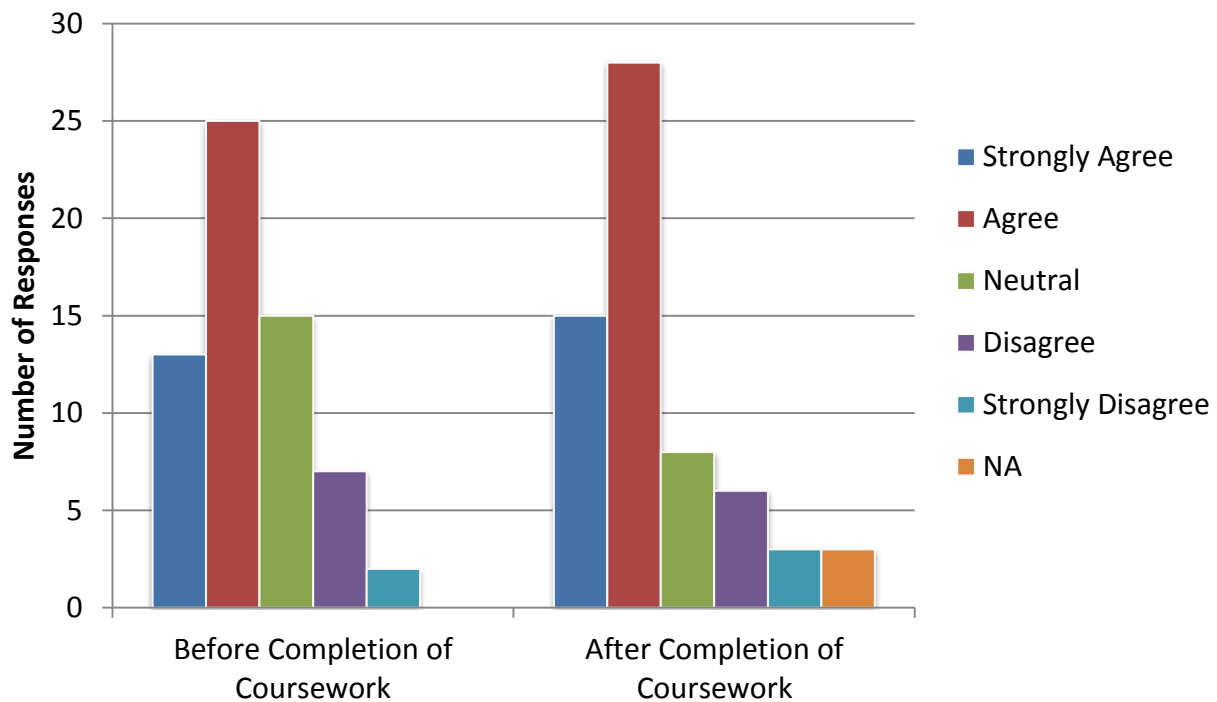


Figure 3. Number of PT managers likely to consider PT student for employment before coursework is complete versus after coursework is complete.

The majority of the responses disagreed (37.1%) and strongly disagreed (12.9%) with the statement that their facility is more likely to hire new grads from a specific physical therapy program. The majority of the responses also disagreed (38.7%) and strongly disagreed (17.7%) with the statement that GPA is a consideration when looking to hire a recent physical therapy graduate. Figure 4 depicts the level of agreement regarding this statement. While the overall results showed that GPA was not a consideration when considering employment of a recent physical therapy graduate, 45% of the responses from private practice setting alone agreed with the statement that GPA was a consideration when hiring a recent physical therapy graduate. Lastly, 39.7% of the responses indicated that they were neutral when it came to being more pleased with new hires that have completed a clinical experience at their facility than new hires that have not.

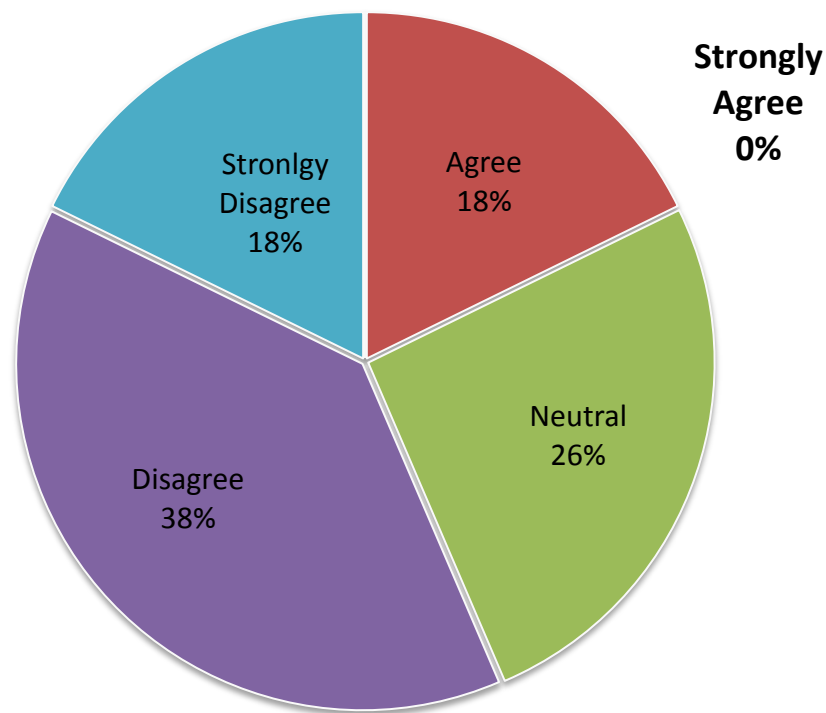


Figure 4. Percentage of PT managers that agree GPA is a consideration when considering a recent graduate for employment.

Ranked 1-5 with 1 being the most important characteristic. The top 5 characteristics that managers look for in recent physical therapy graduates are as follows:

1. Communication skills & Professionalism (tied)
2. Interpersonal skills
3. Critical thinking
4. Commitment to learning.

When evaluating the most important characteristics based on practice setting pediatric, inpatient acute and outpatient ambulatory care ranked professionalism as number one, while rural and home health ranked critical thinking as number one. Private practice setting selected commitment to learning as the most important characteristic and inpatient rehab ranked communication skills at number one.

There were also variations for the most important characteristics among age ranges as well. Clinicians less than thirty years of age ranked commitment to learning and professionalism in the top spot. This age range was also one of the few that ranked technical abilities in the top five most important characteristics. Professionalism ranked highest for clinicians between the ages of 31 and 40 years old. The most important characteristic for clinicians in the 41 to 50 year old range was communication skills. Interpersonal skills were ranked as the most important characteristics for clinicians between the ages of 51 and 60 years old. This age range also ranked technical abilities in the as one of the most important characteristics in the fifth spot tied with commitment to learning and responsibility. Lastly, clinicians over the age of sixty ranked communication skills and use of time and resources when considering a new graduate for hire.

Fifty-four clinicians provided open ended responses when asked about any advantages related to hiring a recent physical therapy graduate who had completed a clinical experience at

their site. These responses were grouped into three different categories based on how frequently they were mentioned throughout the responses. The first category includes the student's familiarity with the facility, system, organization, policies and completed orientation which was mentioned as an advantage 32 times. The other category mentioned frequently was the manager's ability to assess whether or not the student would be a good fit in the department and organization which was mentioned 28 times. Lastly, assessment of the student's clinical skills and strengths and weakness' during the student's clinical experience was mentioned 19 times.

There were a total of 46 responses to the question regarding disadvantages of hiring recent PT graduates who had completed a clinical experience at that facility. Categories for disadvantages included none which was referred to 23 times, the difficult transition between student and employee mentioned 14 times, and the likelihood of passing over better candidates was mentioned twice.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The results of this study provide physical therapy students and other health professional students participating in clinical experiences with information regarding the importance clinical site choice with the anticipation of career path. Also, students can benefit from the results of this study as it stresses the importance of personality characteristics and soft skills when considered for potential employment. Physical therapy programs will be able to utilize the information to support students' growth in soft skills throughout the educational coursework. Instructors can encourage students to enhance personality characteristics in order to better employment opportunities for the future. The results provide information about the changing field of physical therapy with regards to the importance of critical thinking and problem solving. This study concluded that there was no difference in the timing of clinical experience (midway or later) and potential employment of recent graduate with the clinical site. Although there is limited literature in this area, these results align with the research that has been completed.

The American Physical Therapy Association provided demographics about the field of physical therapy. In 2013, 69.9% of practicing physical therapists were female and 30.1 percent were male. The mean age of practicing physical therapists are 44 years old, with most of the practicing physical therapists in the age range of 25-29. On average, the number of years in practice was 18.4 years with most of the United States physical therapists practicing for 30 or more years. In 2013, 29.2 percent held doctor of physical therapy degrees with the 2nd highest

being master of physical therapy degrees. The majority of physical therapists work in an outpatient practice setting. Private practice represents about 33% of the physical therapist population.

The participants' demographics provide a very realistic representation of the physical therapy field. Of the 66 respondents, physical therapists made up 88.9%. About 68.3% of women responded participated in the survey, with 31.7% of men responding to the survey. The participants in the current study were in the age range of 41-50 and 51-60. The majority had of respondents held a master's degree (43.4%). The second highest group held entry-level doctorate degree. Of the 66 respondents to current position the majority (49.2%) of respondents were CCCE, organizing clinical experiences for students at the clinical site. The majority of the respondents' practice setting was outpatient ambulatory care at 44.4%.

The results of the survey reveal that clinical experiences do play an important role in employment for new graduates of physical therapy programs. Throughout the various practice settings for physical therapists, it was identified that the majority will be more likely to hire a recent physical therapy graduate that has completed a clinical experience at the facility. However, this study concluded that there is no difference to the timing of the clinical experience in relation to hiring the new graduate that complete a clinical experience at the site. Students should take all clinical experiences seriously as any session can provide employment opportunities upon graduation from the program. The likelihood of considering a recent graduate for employment is the same between each facility where the clinical experience was completed regardless of the clinical experience session (first or second) completed. The open-ended questions about advantages and disadvantages to hiring a recent physical therapy graduate detailed why a student that completed a clinical experience with the facility is more likely to

hired than another. Familiarity with the facility, system, organization and policies gives a student who completed a clinical experience with the facility an advantage. Orientation to facility's policies, procedures, and system will be less time consuming, therefore recently graduated physical therapist will be able to start practicing more quickly; providing the facility with more revenue sooner. A recent graduate who completed a clinical experience at the facility is at an advantage as the clinical instructor and other employees have been able to identify how he or she interacts with the staff and patients to see if the applicant is a "good fit". One respondent stated, "Serves as most complete interview possible." The employer is able to identify personality characteristics, interactions with patients and staff, as well as technical abilities that align with the clinic's mission. Also, the current employees are able to identify the applicant's strengths and weaknesses as he or she has been evaluated by a clinical instructor during the previous clinical experience.

Although the disadvantages to hiring a recent graduate that participated in clinical experience at the facility are fewer, there were some reasons given that would impact the applicant's ability to be offered a job at the facility. Many of the respondents did not believe that there were any disadvantages to hiring a recent graduate that had a previous clinical experience at their site. Responses given as disadvantages included difficult transition between student and employee and a higher likelihood of passing over better candidates for hire. Recent graduates employed by a facility where a clinical experience was completed, may be challenged to accept the responsibility associated with becoming a licensed physical therapist. The transition between student and physical therapist may be difficult at the same clinic as the individual may feel as though he or she is still a student and may not grow into the role of practicing physical therapist. Although the clinical experience has been equated to the most comprehensive interview process,

it also has its downsides. The clinic may overlook other more exceptional candidates for hire. The clinic knows how the recent graduate functions at their clinic and the graduate may not have to complete orientation portraying a better applicant. In reality, the clinic may overlook the superior applicant as the previous student applicant depicts a better option associated with less risk for the clinic.

Overall, the results of the current study correspond well with the results of previous studies conducted by May et al¹¹, Jette et al⁶, and Mathwig et al¹⁰. The general theme of each study concluded that soft skills are the most important characteristics when considering recent physical therapy graduates for employment. Mathwig et al¹⁰ concluded that communication skills, professionalism, time management skills, and clinical experience in the specific type of physical therapy setting were the most important factors when considering to hire a recent physical therapy graduate. The study found that communication skills, and professionalism were ranked as the most important characteristic of recent graduates along with interpersonal skills, critical thinking and commitment to learning but it did not find overall that time management skills and clinical experience in that setting were the most important factors to take into consideration.

The results of this study regarding hiring physical therapy graduates also correlates well with Mulholland and Derdall's¹² findings regarding hiring occupational therapist which found that communication skills and interpersonal skills were two of the most important characteristics when hiring occupational therapists. However, the results of this study differ from Mulholland and Derdall¹² who identified practice skills and abilities as an important factor when hiring an occupational therapist because only a small percentage of physical therapy managers identified technical abilities as an important characteristic to consider when hiring a recent physical therapy

graduate. GPA was also not identified as an important characteristic when hiring a recent graduate of a physical therapy program which was similar to the results of Rheault and Shafernich-Coulson¹³.

May et al¹¹ reflected the importance of interpersonal characteristics in the clinical setting. Generic abilities have changed ranking since May had reported the characteristics. Stumbo, Thiele and York¹⁴ reported a difference in the order of characteristics, with critical thinking and problem solving becoming more important in the recent years. The rank order of generic abilities may have changed due to adoption of APTA's Vision 2020, which focused on the importance of autonomous and evidence-based physical therapy practice. While the generic abilities that May ranked as most important are similar to the top five characteristics that this study identified, however, the order of ranking has changed yet again. The results of this study suggest that communication and professionalism have become the most important characteristics when considering a recent graduate for employment. Results of this study regarded critical thinking skills as the third most important characteristic with May et al¹¹ reporting critical thinking as the ninth most important characteristic. Commitment to learning was ranked as the fifth most important characteristic, whereas May et al¹¹ identified that characteristic as the most important.

The field of physical therapy has been changing since the acceptance of May et al¹¹ generic abilities. Physical therapy has become more of an autonomous practice as physical therapy has ventured into direct access care, which requires increased knowledge, critical thinking and problem solving to provide better care for patients. Communication and professionalism are extremely important in the healthcare field it allows for the ability to understand the patient while portraying a qualified supportive figure to the patient. The patient

will feel more comfortable with a healthcare professional that is able to communicate and offer health advice, he or she will be better able to trust the healthcare provider.

When separating each response of the different practice setting, the pediatric and outpatient setting rank professionalism as the most important generic ability when considering a new graduate for hire. This may be as the outpatient and pediatric settings need to portray a positive, professional demeanor to obtain and maintain patients. The rural and home health setting identified critical thinking as the most important characteristic for new graduates to exemplify. The rural and home health settings require more autonomous work as the physical therapist may be working independently in unconventional settings that lack the typical equipment and space in the majority of physical therapy clinics. The increased independence would require more critical thinking on the physical therapists behalf. Whereas, private practice managers responded that commitment to learning was the most important generic ability. Private practice may value commitment to learning as important skill due to the fact that private practice requires focus on treatments individualized to each patient. The physical therapist has a more important role in the patient's life as a healthcare mentor. Therefore the physical therapist is required to be up to date on evidence based treatment as many patients return to the private practice physical therapist with additional health concerns. Inpatient rehabilitative care regards communication as the number one generic ability for recent graduates to obtain. Inpatient rehabilitation requires the ability to communicate with various personalities, cognitive states and other healthcare professionals. Communication is an important factor in many settings. Therefore, the current study stresses the importance of communication as a generic ability that is heavily reinforced in the clinic and should be equally stressed in education.

When the age of participants was cross-tabulated with the characteristics differences were found among the different age groups in the study. The younger age groups (less than 30 and 31-40) reported professionalism as the most important characteristics of new graduates to have when applying for a job at a clinic. Older age groups (41 and older) identified communication skills and interpersonal skills as the most important qualities in new graduates. Possible explanations for the change could be due to APTA's Vision 2020 as it changed the direction of physical therapy practice. Many of the older age groups have been a practicing physical therapist since the 1990's prior to the adoption of the Vision 2020 statement.

Although, there were many strengths to the current study, there were some limitations. The results accurately represent the physical therapy field; however, there was a limited amount of responses from a few select regions of the United States. Inclusion of more regions of the United States, specifically the northeastern and southeastern regions, may sway the results of the study. Another limitation was that the way the generic abilities were tabulated. Reproduction of the way the survey was structured would be beneficial in the interpretation of the characteristics of recent physical therapy graduates.

In summary, clinical experiences are the capstone of physical therapy education allowing the student to apply technical psychomotor skills, critical thinking and problem solving skills. The clinical experiences are a time for potential employers to evaluate a student in a comprehensive manner both as a student and as a potential employee. Personality characteristics play an essential part in potential employment upon graduation. The data from this study identifies communication skills and professionalism as the most important qualities for a new physical therapist hire. Neither grade point average nor time periods within the curriculum when the clinical experience was placed were key factors in considering the student for future

employment. Also, employers often consider recent graduates that successfully completed a clinical experience with the site, as they are able to view the student's abilities prior to hiring. To assist the student, physical therapy programs should incorporate ways to enhance students' personality characteristics to prepare them for clinical experiences, as well as future employment.

APPENDIX A

IRB form

APPENDIX B

Survey

APPENDIX C

All Results

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