



# Impact of private practice experience on Residency Performance

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## Background

- Pediatric dentistry is one of the most sought-after residency programs
  - 744 applicants competing for 440 positions.
- There are no studies currently that assess how prior practice experience impacts residency performance.
- Future resident preparedness is harder to assess
  - Transition from letter grades to P/F
  - National Board of Dentistry Examination is P/F
- Currently, there are no acceptable metrics to predict how a resident will perform in residency.
  - Predental GPA better predicted dental school performance than experience in the dental field
- Purpose:** To understand how prior experiences affect residents' overall perception and preparedness

## METHODS

- Web-based surveys distributed to all Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) accredited pediatric dentistry residency programs (Dec 2022-Feb 2023)
  - 16-item survey to all first year residents
  - 8-item survey to all program directors
- The survey to residents asked questions about demographics, prior practice experience, residency type, skills commonly used by pediatric dentists, perceived level of difficulty of their program, and their stress levels
- The survey to program directors asked about demographics, program type, and comparing skills of residents with and without prior practice experience.
- Results were analyzed using Crosstabs and Spearman correlation coefficients as well as Mantel-Haenszel chi-square tests

## RESIDENT SURVEY RESULTS

Question	Demographic	p-value
How confident are you in your operative skills?	Gender (Male)	0.038
	Age	0.003
	Prior practice Experience	0.006
How confident are you in treating complex patients?	University-based program	0.034
	Gender (Male)	0.007
	Prior private practice experience	.010

Question	Demographics	p-value
What is your confidence level in your communication skills with parents	Gender (Male)	0.014
	Private practice	0.025
How confident are you in your skills when compared to your peers	Gender (Male)	0.031
	Prior private practice experience	0.027
	Dental school GPA	0.04

## RESULTS

- The response rates for residents and program directors were respectively 12.5% and 20.5%.
- Residents who had prior practice experience were statistically more confident in their skills in operative ( $p=0.006$ ) and communicating with parents ( $p=0.025$ ), but when it came to non-pharmacologic behavior management and communicating with children there was no statistical significance between no prior experience and prior practice experience.
- The program directors' survey found a statistical difference in the operative skills ( $p=0.001$ ) and communicating with parents of residents with prior experience ( $p=0.017$ ).
- There was no statistical difference in the perceived difficulty and stress levels of residents with prior practice experience and no prior practice experience.
- Male residents were statistically more confident than females in skills such as operative ( $p=0.038$ ), treating complex patients ( $p=0.007$ ), and communicating with parents ( $p=0.014$ ).

## PROGRAM DIRECTOR SURVEY RESULTS

Question	Not at all	Slightly Better	Better	Significantly Better	p-value
How do the operative skills of your residents with prior practice experience compared to your residents without practice experience?	2 (9%)	1 (5%)	12 (55%)	7 (32%)	0.001
How do skills compare when communicating to parents between residents with prior experience compared to those who have no prior practice experience?	1 (5%)	4 (18%)	10 (45%)	7 (32%)	0.017

## DISCUSSION

- Aim: Determining if previous experience impacted the perceived skill and stress levels of residents.
- Residents with prior practice experience were **more confident in their operative and communication skills with parents.**
- Residents with prior practice experience are just as stressed
- Residents with private practice experience think **residency is just as difficult** as residents with no experience.
- Female residents are less confident** when compared to their male peers in skills such as **operative dentistry, treating complex patients, and communicating with parents.**
- Program directors believed residents with prior experience only had better skills in operative and communicating with parents.

## CONCLUSION

- Residents with prior experience are more confident in skills such as operative and communicating with parents.
- Residents with prior practice experience need as much guidance and education in skills specific to pediatric dentistry like non-pharmacological behavior management and communication with children.
- Female residents may need more guidance than males to be confident in their skills.

## REFERENCES



## SURVEY

