



Perceptions of Research Fellowships for Otolaryngology Residency Applicants: A Survey of Program Directors

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Overall, **72% of respondents** recognized **downsides** to completing a research fellowship and typically **recommend** that **15% of their students** should complete these programs.

Introduction

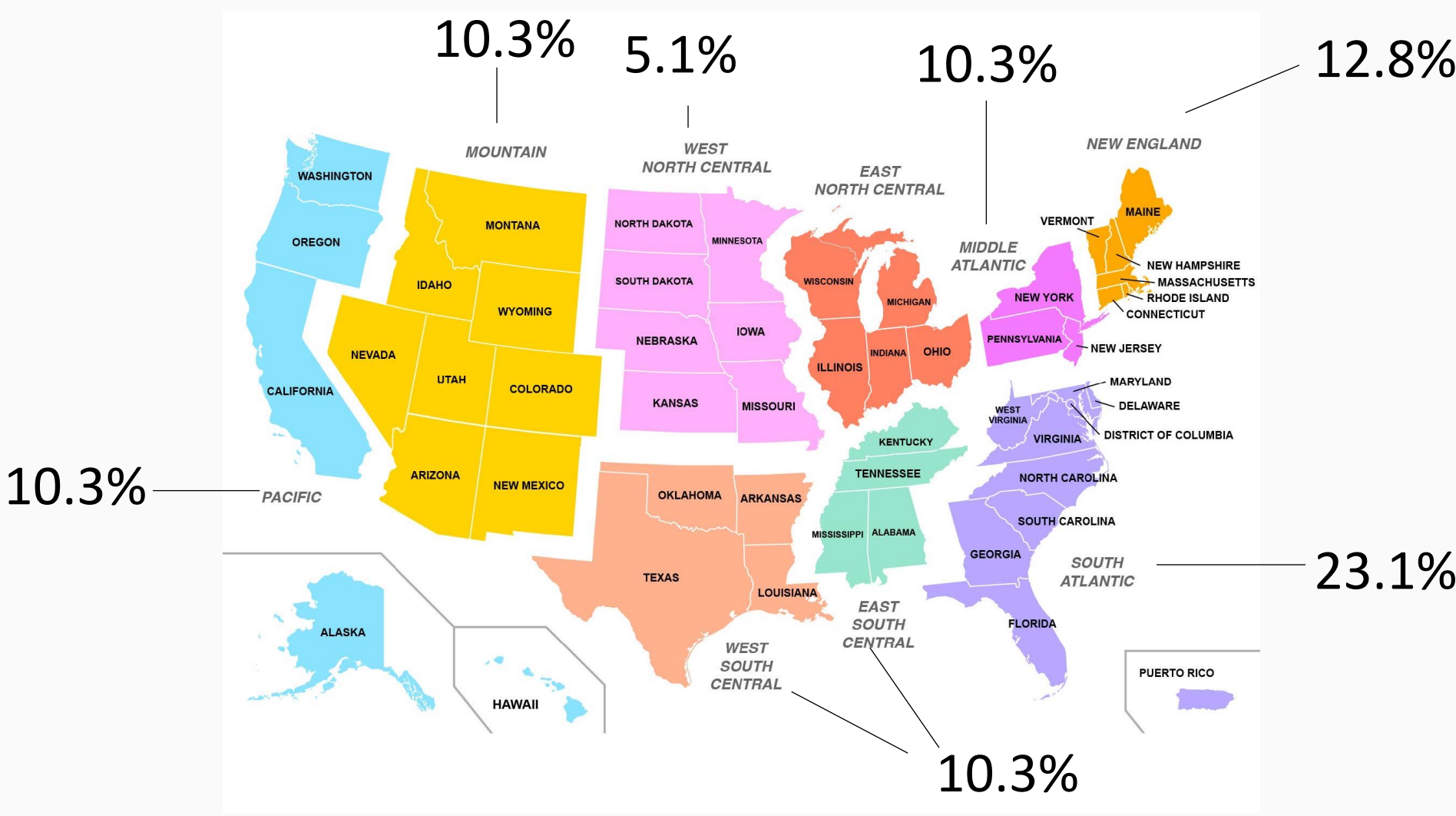
- The Otolaryngology match rate is one of the most competitive specialties in the NRMP match.
- Average ENT match is ~75% per year.
- There is an increasing trend in the total # of research products for matched applicants.
- The purpose of this study is to understand program directors' opinions of how they view fellowships regarding applicant's competitiveness.

Methods and Materials

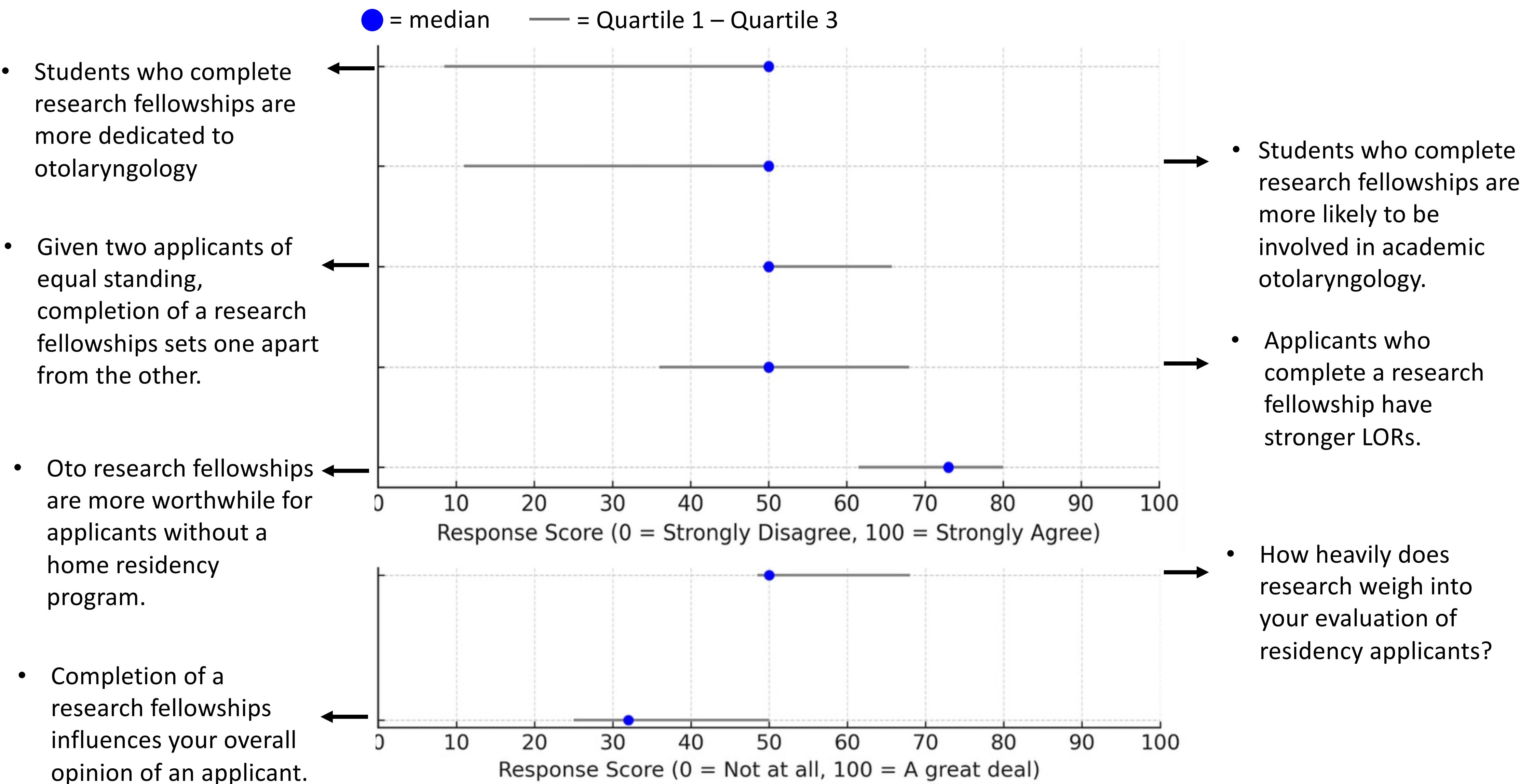
- Study Design:** Cross-Sectional Survey to program directors and assistant program directors of accredited Otolaryngology residency programs in the U.S.
- Outcomes:** Multiple choice, Likert-scale (0-100), short answer, and free response questions regarding opinions of research fellowships.
- Analysis:** Descriptive statistics, qualitative analysis of free responses.

Respondent Demographics

N= 39 respondents (25% response rate)



Results



Qualitative Analysis

- N = 13 free responses
- 2 Positive Comments
- 3 Mixed Comments
- 8 Negative Comments
- "It is a great opportunity only if one takes it because they want to do the research or don't have a home program..."
 - "... many students are completing research fellowships for all of the wrong reasons. Students that take the time off to do this should have a genuine interest in research and understand the risks of taking time away to do this..."
 - "...another 'gap year' only adds more delay, more debt, and adds time before they can start earning and saving money. For this reason, research years heavily favor those students who can afford to make the decision which deepens some of the cultural divide within our specialty..."

Discussion

- Overall, perceptions and opinions of medical student research fellowships were mixed.
- Fellowships may provide benefits for those who truly want to pursue an academic career or for those without a home residency program.
- However, they may carry downsides if only completed to increase residency competitiveness especially if applicants are less productive than anticipated.

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