



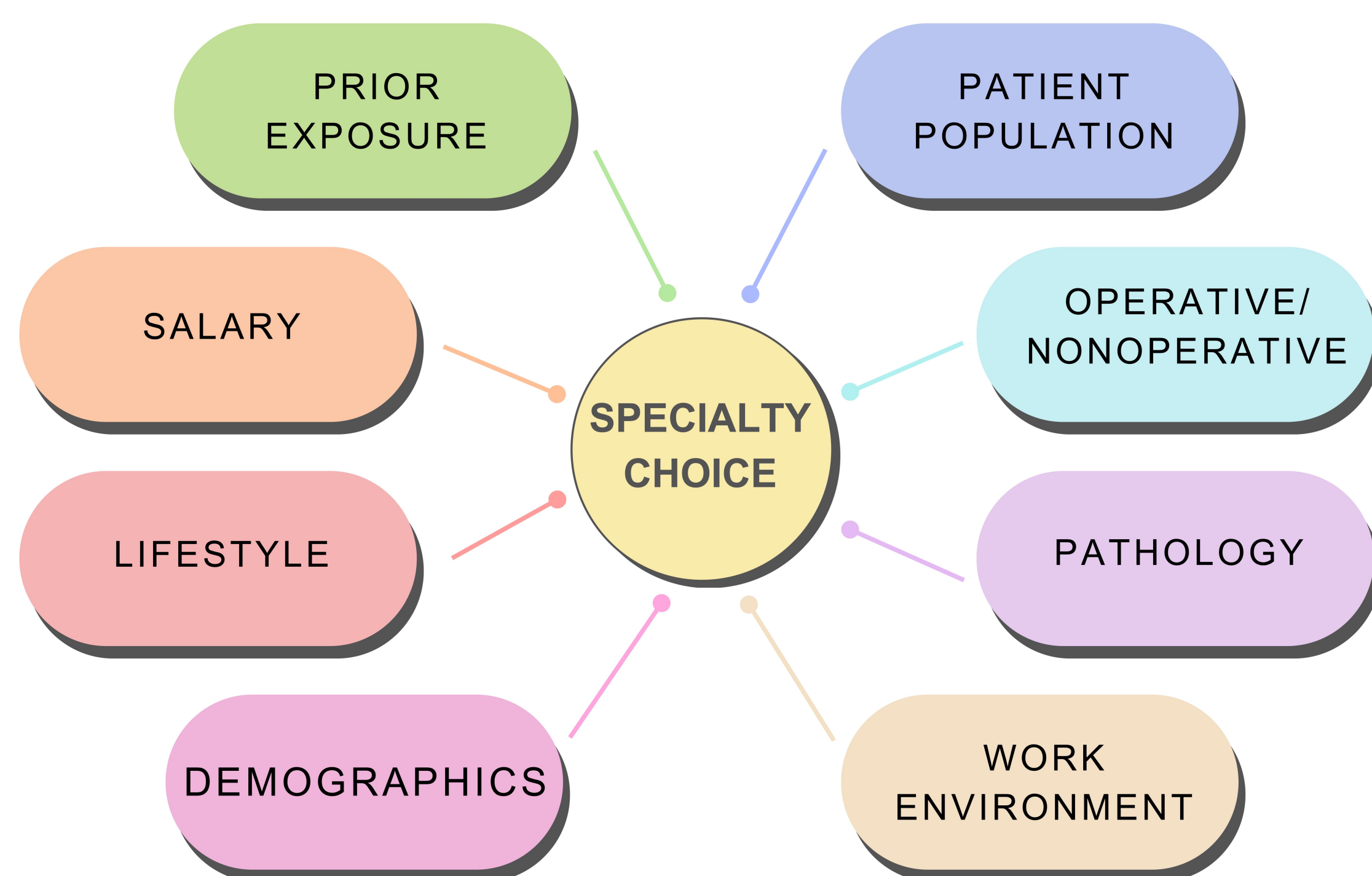
# Pre-Matriculation Experiences Minimally Impact the Specialty Interests of First-Year Medical Students

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## Background

- There are many factors that influence medical students' ultimate decision of which specialty to pursue
- Factors include prior exposure to the specialty, salary, specialty culture, type of medicine, lifestyle and more (Figure 1)
- Student demographics may also impact specialty decisions
- Understanding how these factors impact specialty choice can help educators design medical school curricula and career exploration opportunities
- Previous studies have focused on factors determining a career choice in surgery
- Little work has focused on students' desires to match into competitive specialties



**Figure 1. Factors influencing medical students' eventual specialty choice.**

**Objective:** The objective of this study was to identify factors associated with students' interest in competitive specialties.

**Hypothesis:** We hypothesized that students with more clinical and research experience upon entry to medical school would have greater interest in competitive specialties.

## Methods

Survey administered via RedCap to first-year medical students upon matriculation.

Survey was divided into: Demographic Information, Pre-Matriculation Experiences, and Specialty Interests



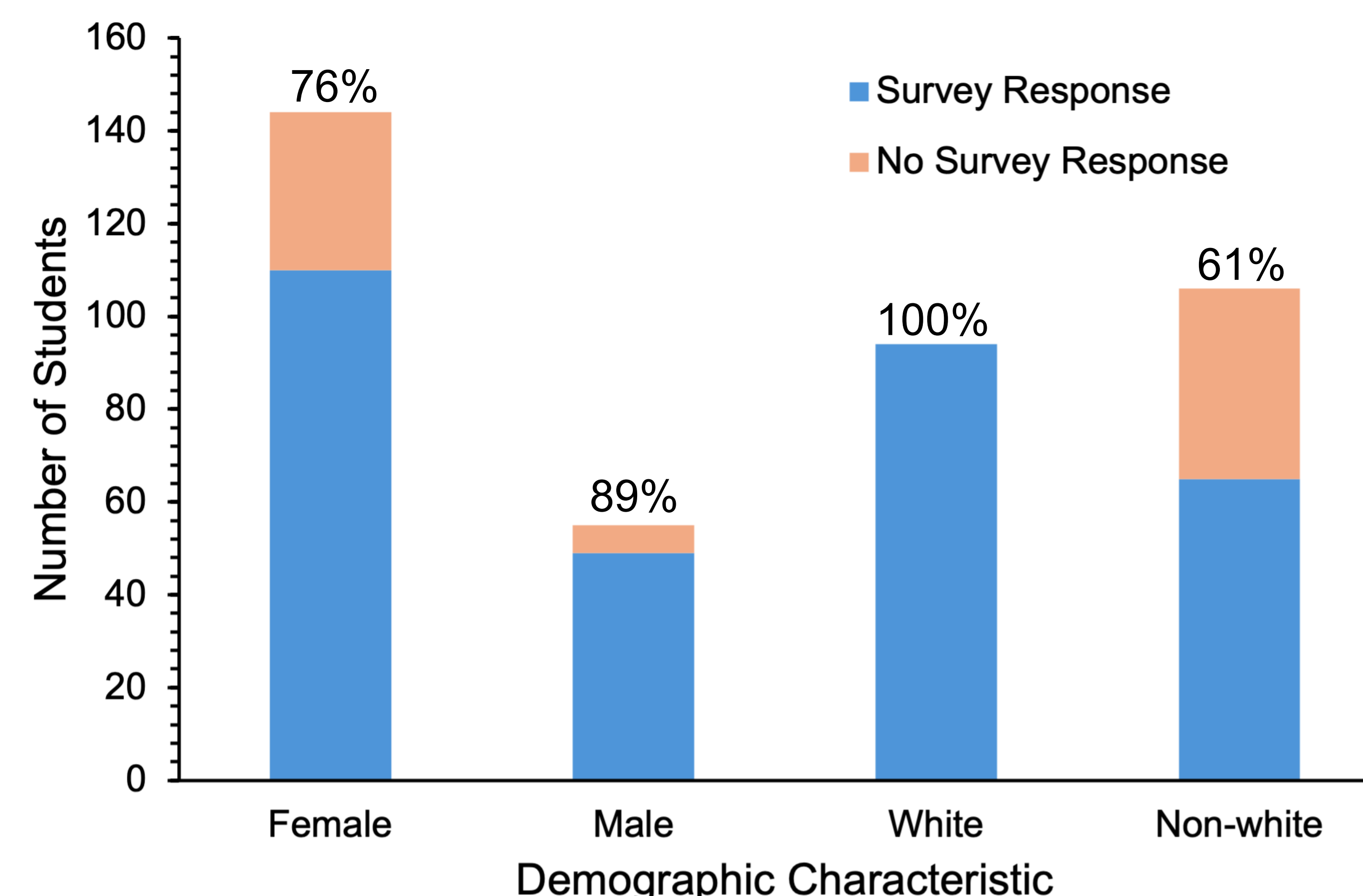
Scan to view RedCap Survey.

We defined competitive specialties defined as having a match rate <90% as per the National Resident Matching Program.

Responses analyzed in R using univariate and multivariate logistic regression,  $p < 0.05$ .

## Results

159 of 200 first-year medical students (80%) completed the survey

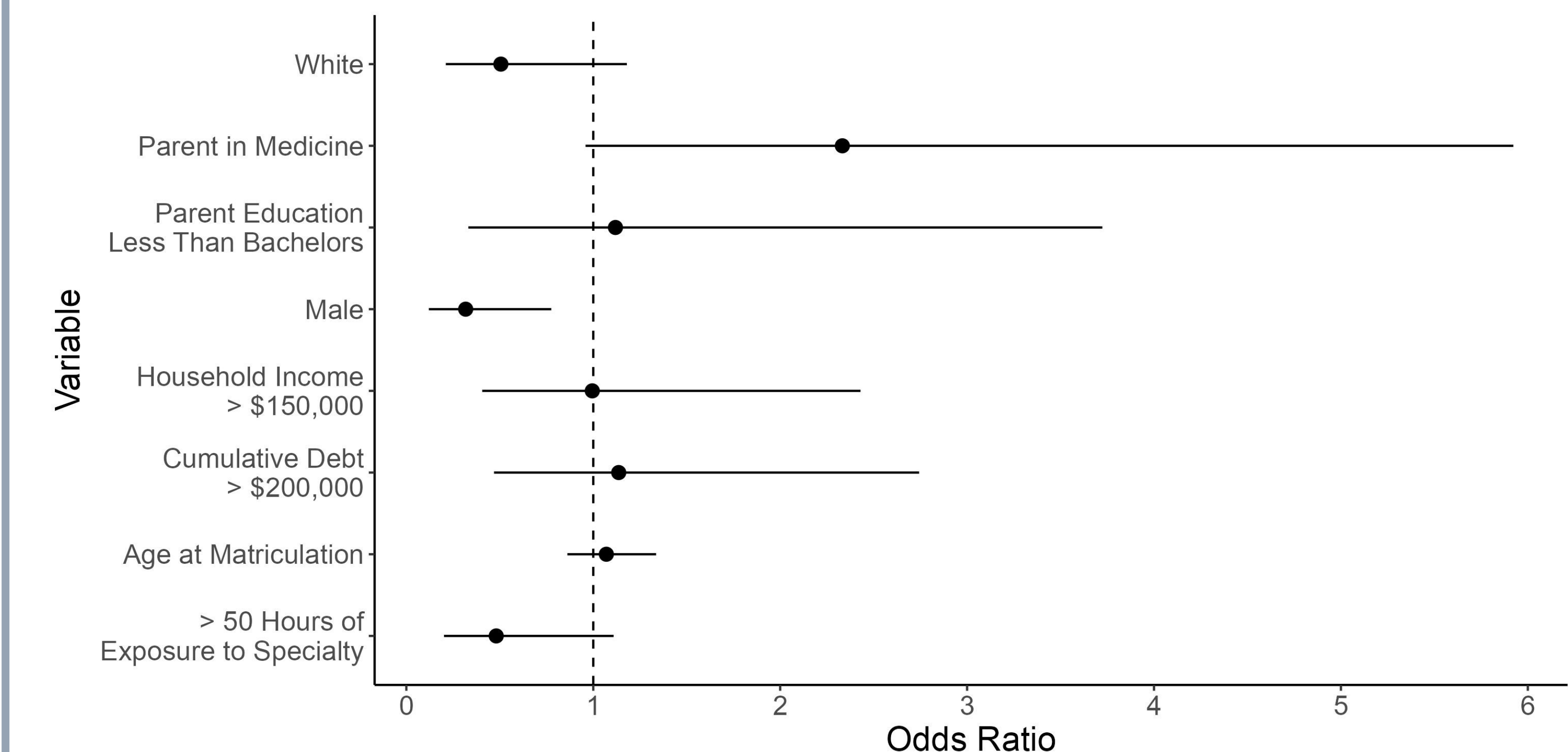


**Figure 2. Number of Survey Respondents Compared to Overall Class Value.** The median age of survey respondents was 24 years old. Race was self-reported using the multiple-choice options from the US census. Percent indicates the proportion of survey respondents compared to the overall class for that characteristic.

## Results (cont.)

49% reported their top choice as a competitive specialty

- Male students had less interest in competitive specialties
- Students with >50 hours of clinical or research experience in their top specialty were not more likely to be interested in a competitive one
- Parent in medicine and cumulative debt > \$200k are trending towards higher OR, though not statistically significant

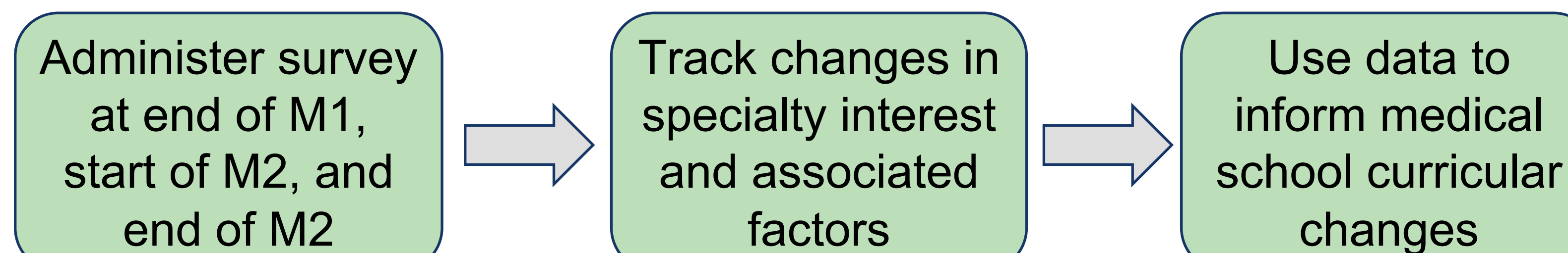


**Figure 3. Multivariate Logistic Regression Predicting Interest In A Competitive Specialty.** Odds ratios and their corresponding 95% confidence intervals are shown for a multivariate regression model.

## Discussion

- Few factors captured by the survey predicted interest in competitive versus non-competitive specialties
- Minimal impact of pre-matriculation experiences indicates that specialty interest primarily develops during medical school
- Research into how interest changes during medical school may help guide the structure of medical education and career exploration opportunities during undergraduate medical training

## Future Work



## Acknowledgements

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