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The Predoctoral Psychology Internship Imbalance: The Impact on Unmatched Applicants

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The Predoctoral Psychology Internship Imbalance: The Impact on Unmatched Applicants

by

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DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Psychology in the Department of Clinical Psychology
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The undersigned have examined the dissertation entitled:

**THE PREDOCTORAL PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP IMBALANCE:
THE IMPACT ON UNMATCHED APPLICANTS**

presented on October 13, 2013

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Abstract

The predoctoral internship is a required component of training to complete a doctoral degree in the field of psychology. Most psychology students participate in the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) Match in hopes of securing an internship that meets their training needs and complements their developing professional identities. However, there are more applicants than there are positions available, and the imbalance rate is considered to have reached crisis proportions, with approximately a quarter of psychology students remaining unplaced following the Match. The implications of not matching to an internship are devastating to the applicants. The impacts of the imbalance are well-known statistically, including the high number of students who do not match each year, the financial and professional implications of postponing internship completion, and the percentage of growth in number of applicants compared to the smaller percentage of growth in number of internship positions available. A topic with little research has been the personal experiences of the applicants who do not match, and how not matching affects individual well-being and professional development. This dissertation is a research study designed to explore the experiences of students who, through their participation in the APPIC Match process, did not acquire an internship. A review of research on the internship crisis provided the background history of one of the most influential causes of “not matching,” the imbalance in available internship sites. The experiences of unmatched applicants were gathered by means of a two-part electronic survey. The first part of the survey was conceptualized from research publications about the effects of the internship imbalance on unmatched applicants. The second part of the survey is the Brief COPE measure, a flexible assessment instrument designed utilizing Lazarus and Folkman’s (1984) theory of stress, appraisal, and the coping process to assess the use of several different types of coping

mechanisms. The first research question, “which consequences of not matching are most prominently stressful among students who do not find an internship through the APPIC Match?” was answered utilizing the responses of participants on the first part of the survey. The second research question, “which methods of coping are most prominently evident among students who do not find an internship?” was answered utilizing the responses of participants on the second part of the survey, the Brief COPE. Results indicate several stressful consequences of not matching, as well as several commonly utilized coping methods among unmatched applicants. This research is intended to (a) inform and empower students, doctoral programs, and other stakeholders to become advocates for increasing the number of available internships, and (b) provide information about how the internship imbalance affects unmatched applicants based on Lazarus and Folkman’s theory of stress, appraisal, and the coping process.

Keywords: *Internship, Predoctoral Psychology Internship, APPIC Match*

Chapter 1

In attempting to uphold the quality of psychologists entering the field, many psychology students are met with undue hardship caused by unfavorable options for completing their degree. Most psychology students participate in the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) Match in hopes of securing an internship that meets their training needs and complements their developing professional identities. However, there are more applicants than there are positions available, and the imbalance rate is considered to have reached crisis proportions. The implications of not matching to an internship are devastating to the applicants. The impacts of the imbalance are well-known statistically, including the high number of students who do not match each year, the financial and professional implications of postponing internship completion, and the percentage of growth in number of applicants compared to the smaller percentage of growth in number of internship positions available. A topic with little research has been the personal experiences of the applicants who do not match, and how not matching affects individual well-being and professional development. This research study is designed to explore the experiences of students who, through their participation in the APPIC Match process, did not acquire an internship. Their experiences were gathered by means of an electronic survey, conceptualized from research publications about the internship imbalance and Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) theory of stress, appraisal, and the coping process, as well as utilization of the Brief COPE measure. A review of research on the internship crisis provides the background history of one of the most influential causes of "not matching," the imbalance in available internship sites. The psychological consequences will first be considered from research findings on biases toward individuals who do not match, characteristics of applicants, and specific limitations that some applicants may face, increasing the distress

associated with an already stressful process. Second, the psychological consequences will be conceptualized through the lens of Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) theory on stress, appraisal, and the coping process. The research questions of the study, listed below, are answered through subjecting survey responses to means of central tendency. This research is intended to (a) inform and empower students, doctoral programs, and other stakeholders to become advocates for increasing the number of available internships, and (b) provide information about how the internship imbalance affects unmatched applicants based on Lazarus and Folkman's theory of stress, appraisal, and the coping process.

Prilleltensky's (2012) model of social injustice can be applied to the APPIC Match in many ways. Prilleltensky would consider the APPIC Match a "suboptimal condition" due to a lack of resources for the individuals who need them. The lack of resources is considered "injustice" or unfairness, which can cause negative emotional and physical consequences to the individual, and poor outcomes for the system as a whole (Prilleltensky, 2012). Prilleltensky states that well-being requires the needs of the people and the system within which they interact to advance at the same pace. In other words, a healthy system would be one in which the number of internships increased on pace with the number of applicants. While individuals can often cope with adversity in one area of life, such as educational or occupational, by focusing on strengths in other areas, such as interpersonal, the most optimal overall thriving occurs when all areas are free of adversity (Prilleltensky, 2012). Subjective components that contribute to an individual's well-being "include a sense of control, mastery over the environment, positive emotions, perceptions of life satisfaction, and self-determination" (p. 4, Prilleltensky, 2012). In a system such as the APPIC Match, where there are not enough resources for everyone, and not always a just explanation for who receives the resources (Phillips, 2011), the above listed

components that contribute to an individual's well-being may not always be present in the applicants. In addition, the system may feel oppressive and untrustworthy to students, who are required to complete an internship prior to graduation but not guaranteed that they will be able to obtain one through the APPIC Match.

Prilleltensky (2012) explains that a good process would be one that builds trust, respect, control, and empowerment within the individuals. It is hard to see how the standing APPIC Match process could foster trust, control, or empowerment in applicants, as it is guaranteed that the system in its current state will fall short of meeting the needs of many applicants. Research indicates that a sense of oppression and lack of faith in the ability of a system to take care of individuals' needs often results in suffering (Prilleltensky, 2012). Fortunately, this suffering is not a permanent state of being, and a critical experience, such as not matching, leads to the revelation that something is wrong with the system (Prilleltensky, 2012). Critical experiences lead to critical consciousness, which involves the realization that it is possible to take control and make changes to the system (Prilleltensky, 2012). One way to enhance critical consciousness is to raise awareness of the perspectives of individuals impacted by the critical experience, in this case, giving a voice to applicants who remain unmatched. Prilleltensky explains that participation in activities designed to increase critical consciousness lead to meaningful social action. The primary goal of this study is to increase critical consciousness about the varying impacts of the internship imbalance by gathering information about unmatched applicants' experiences. According to Prilleltensky's theory, this will increase critical consciousness and lead to increased critical action toward alleviating the internship imbalance crisis.

Multiple articles have been published about the imbalance. Some try to place blame, some offer suggestions for fixing the problem, and some simply cry for help. There have been

conferences held to bring several psychological organizations together, all of which represent different stakeholders in the Match, with the goal to collaborate and find solutions to the imbalance. While the efforts have not resulted in a significant impact on the imbalance, the ideas are presented here as a starting point toward finding a solution.

Statement of the Problem

The predoctoral psychology internship is often considered a capstone training experience required for completion of a doctoral degree in psychology (Callahan, Collins, & Klonoff, 2010). However, there is a growing disparity between the number of students who need internships and the number of internships available. In fact, there have been more students seeking internships than could be accommodated by the number of placements for at least two decades, likely longer, and at this point the imbalance is considered by some in the field to have reached crisis proportions (Baker, McKutcheon, & Keilin, 2007; Emmons, Kenkel, Newman, Perl, & Mangione, 2006; Grus, McCutcheon, & Berry, 2011; Hatcher, 2011(a); Hatcher, 2011(b); Hutchings, Mangione, Dobbins, & Wechsler, 2007; Kaslow & Keilin, 2006; McCutcheon, 2011; Rodolfa, Ko, & Peterson, 2004; Schaefer et al., 2011; Stedman, Schoenfeld, Carroll, & Allen, 2009). Although there have been many hypotheses about why the imbalance exists and how to fix the problem, little progress has been made at this point toward lessening the gap (Hatcher, 2011a & 2011b).

Every year many students participate in the APPIC Match in hopes of finding an internship placement. However, despite time, effort, and money spent on applications and interviews, approximately a quarter of the applicants will not match to an internship site (APPIC, 2012a). The implications of not matching can be devastating to a student, whether the devastation comes financially, emotionally, or mentally, and it is unknown how not matching

affects one's ability to become licensed, practice ethically, or obtain a satisfying career (Baker et al., 2007). The number of students unmatched and the suggested next steps to take for matching to an internship in subsequent years have appeared in numerous publications. However, the psychological experiences of the students who do not match have not been studied formally.

This information is a necessary and valid component of our understanding of the crisis in available internships for the current demand (Prilleltensky, 2012); I propose that this information promises to provide a new perspective on the internship imbalance, and empower students, doctoral programs, and other stakeholders to become more involved in the ongoing efforts to increase the number of internship positions available. The theoretical foundation of this study consists of two levels: (a) the individual consequences of not acquiring an internship through the APPIC Match according to various published articles and (b) Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) theory of stress, appraisal, and the coping process as relevant to the experiences of unmatched applicants in the APPIC Match.

The current state of the internship imbalance subjects applicants to a process, which, from the outset can be considered unfair, because the lack of resources to meet the needs of all involved introduces an artificial selection bias. Within clinical psychology, this injustice has been conceptualized individually and therefore discounted as "usually a temporary setback" (Phillips, 2011), and many students will overcome such adversity by finding ways to emotionally cope and be resilient, by adapting or compensating through methods such as finding social support and reforming the meanings of their experience (Prilleltensky, 2012). However, Prilleltensky states that "it would be unjust to either expect or pretend that most people escape injustice unscathed." Lazarus and Folkman (1984) define coping as "constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are

appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person” (p. 141). There are both positive and negative components to adapting and compensating in the face of adversity. Adaptation and compensation allow survival and well-being in unfavorable conditions; however, they also build tolerance and compliance with the unfavorable conditions (Prilleltensky, 2012). Observing the long-standing problem of the imbalance, and the unsuccessful attempts to resolve the problem, can impose a sense of helplessness to overcome the injustice of the imbalance. The published efforts to understand and purport solutions to the problem are presented below, and because they are extensive with little relief resulting from the actions taken, they possibly induce a sense of helplessness in stakeholders, “or the sentiment that there is no point in trying further” (p. 17, Prilleltensky, 2012). However, it is important to recognize that many stakeholders have taken some sort of responsibility and action toward reducing the problem. Due to the lengthy process inherent in many of the actions currently being implemented to correct the problem over the next several years, it will be helpful to continue assessing the internship imbalance in various ways. New perspectives and data will provide periodic boosts in enthusiasm and enhance the efforts over time until the crisis is alleviated.

It is widely known within the field of psychology that there are many underserved populations and continuous needs for mental health services. Therefore, growth in psychology programs is supported by workforce needs, and growth of internship programs is needed to meet the growing number of doctoral level psychology students. The inability of the APPIC Match to meet the training needs of every qualified student seeking an internship is a significant impediment to providing an adequate supply of quality-trained psychologists. In addition, the failure of the field to keep pace with the growth of psychology programs and provide enough quality internship programs to meet students’ training needs has caused hardship on students in

the field. It is important to research the extent of the hardship faced by students seeking an internship for completion of their doctoral program's training requirements. Related concerns are ethical considerations to the demand of tuition and requirement to complete an internship for degree conferral, without guaranteed availability of a quality internship program. Therefore, it is also important to assess how unmatched applicants are appraising and coping with their situation.

Rationale and Implications of this Study

One purpose of this study is to contribute to the rising sense of responsibility among the educational leadership of APA to develop immediate solutions to the inadequate numbers of internships, and to eschew for the time being the quagmire of the politics of program sizes. In order to raise support for increasing the number of quality internship programs, it is important to research the experiences of psychology students whose needs for internship placement are unmet by the APPIC Match.

Secondly, to support the research and expanding efforts to increase the number of available internships in the field, it is also important to apply a widely accepted theory of coping, Lazarus and Folkman's theory of stress, appraisal, and the coping process, to the study of the individual experiences of unmatched internship applicants. Students who do not find a placement through the APPIC Match either search elsewhere for internship opportunities, or participate in the Match in subsequent years. Both of these options involve great stress for the student for various reasons to be discussed further within the literature review. Some brief examples include: financial strain due to accruing another year of tuition, application costs during a second round of the Match, delayed entry into a paid position in the field, or acceptance of an unpaid position; mental strain due to reallocating time for dissertation, research, or school work to finding or creating an internship that meets the requirements of the academic institution

and the state licensing board, and the training needs of the individual student; and emotional strain due to self-doubt, possible relocation away from family and social support systems, and resentment or hostility toward the field of psychology. Although the hardship experienced due to these stressors associated with not matching are considered to be a temporary setback (Phillips, 2011), Prilleltensky (2012) suggests that it would be unreasonable to expect that most of these students endure the process of not matching without some type of suffering. Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) model of stress, appraisal, and the coping process will be discussed in detail below, and was used to guide the assessment of unmatched applicants' experiences and methods of coping.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Historical Background of the Internship Crisis

The literature presented here is in support of this research study. First, discussion begins with the history of the APPIC Match and the growth of the imbalance, followed by several hypotheses about why the imbalance occurred and how to fix the imbalance. This is followed by research on the characteristics of applicants, including the processes involved with training to readiness for internship. Finally, literature is presented to support the argument that efforts to solve the internship problem be spent on increasing the number of internships, rather than efforts to reduce the numbers of student applicants.

History of the Imbalance within the APPIC Match

In 1968, APPIC was created to coordinate the predoctoral internship Match in psychology (Baker et al., 2007). The purpose of having a coordinated Match was to help internship sites select high quality internship applicants, and to limit the questionable practices of many sites in their attempts to recruit such applicants (Hatcher, 2011b). However, as there is an abundance of internship applicants and a shortage of internship positions, the problem does not appear to lie in the ability of the internship sites to find high quality students. Rather, the problem lies in the ability of students to find high quality training sites.

Prior to 1999, there was no formal collection of data about the Match and therefore little information about the balance between internship availability and student applicants (Baker et al., 2007). What little information is available suggests that there has been an imbalance since at least 1972 (Grus et al., 2011). While there are many postulations about why such an imbalance exists, the simple fact is that the rate of applicants in the APPIC Match has increased at an exponentially higher rate than the number of internship placements (Baker et al., 2007).

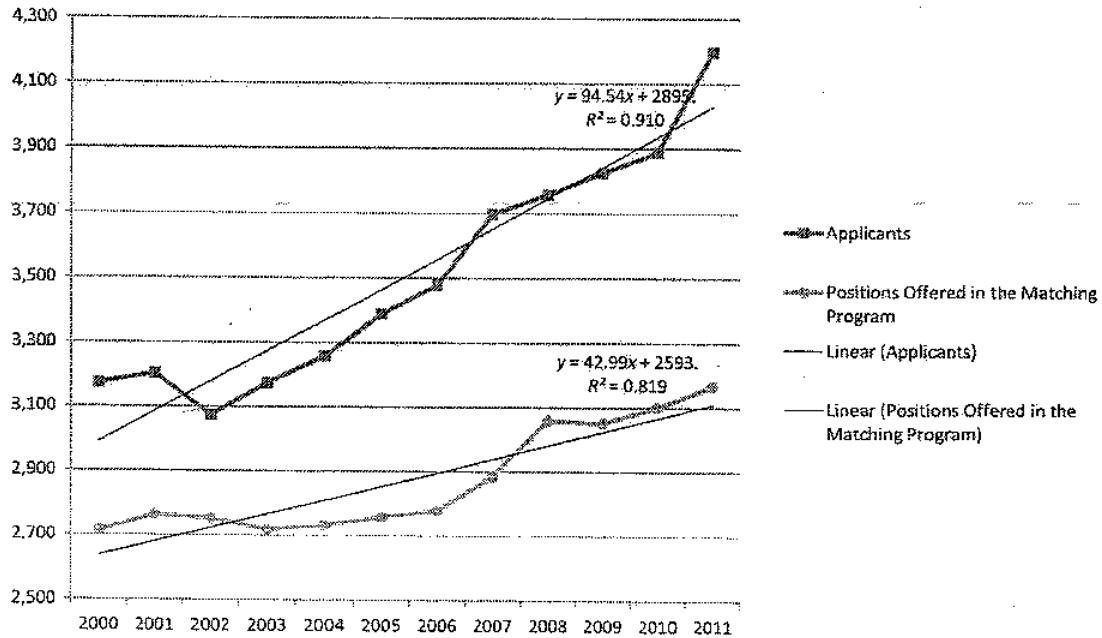


Figure 1. The rate of increase in internship positions available versus applicants participating in the APPIC Match from 2000-2011 by Hatcher (2011a).

Figure 1 shows the rate of increase for both internship positions and applicants between the years 2000 and 2011, while Figure 2 demonstrates the rate of difference that has grown between the number of applicants and internships (Hatcher, 2011a).

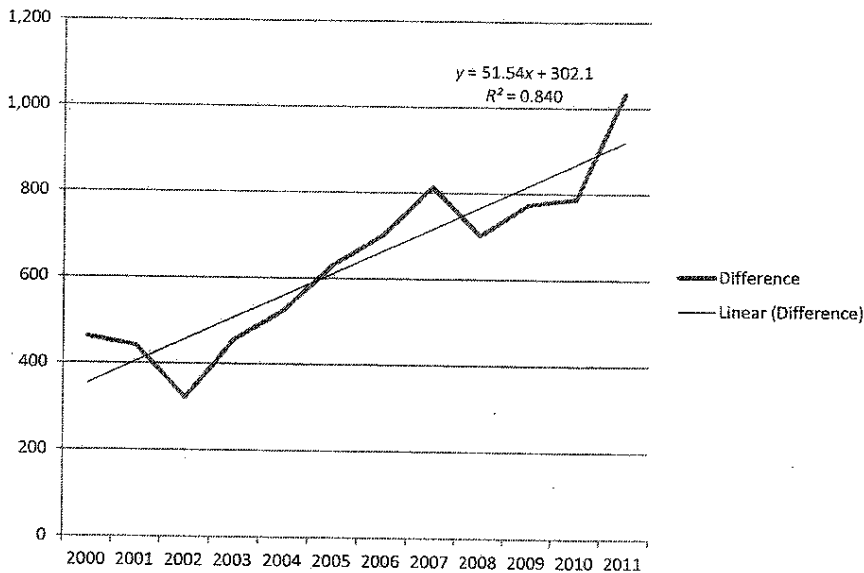


Figure 2. Growth rate of the difference in number of applicants and positions from 2000-2011 by Hatcher (2011a).

Hypotheses About Why the Imbalance Exists

Beliefs about the cause of the imbalance tend to fall within one of two categories: (a) too many students or (b) not enough internships. One of the prominent beliefs about the nature of the imbalance is that some educational programs enroll more students than they should. This is based on their inability to be held accountable for the number of students they are contributing to the applicant pool. Currently, there is a disconnect between most schools and internship programs because even though the academic program requires completion of an internship before degree conferral (and many require the student to continue paying tuition while on internship), most academic programs do not take responsibility for finding students internships or providing financial support for the students while on internship (Hatcher, 2011b).

Baker et al. (2007) suggest that the increase in gap each year corresponds to the growth of for-profit graduate programs. Because for-profit programs that enroll more students make more money, there is little incentive for these academic institutions to voluntarily reduce admission rates (Hatcher, 2011b). Keilin, Baker, McCutcheon, and Peranson (2007) state that the imbalance is mostly due to increased applicants in the Match from clinically focused PsyD programs, and identify an increased gap that coincides with the opening of new PsyD programs. This has led many professionals to place blame on for-profit, clinically focused PsyD programs for greedily enrolling more students, without care that they are adding to the already overflowing pool of internship applicants (Hatcher, 2011b; Keilin et al., 2007; Milville, Adams, & Juntunen, 2007). However, match rates indicate that PhD students have a higher match rate than PsyD students. According to Neimeyer, Rice, and Keilin (2007), in 2011 75% of PsyD applicants and 84% of PhD applicants matched. In addition, applicants from PhD programs matched to APA accredited sites at a significantly higher rate than PsyD students (Neimeyer et al., 2007). For this

reason, there now appears to be an implied hierarchy among many professionals in the field, which ranks PhD students above PsyD students as better trained and more ethical applicants (Keilin et al., 2007; Parent & Williamson, 2010).

The other side of the debate is that there are too few internships, rather than too many students. Hutchings et al. (2007) point out that the settings in which psychology is practiced have diversified; yet internships tend to remain in traditional settings. These traditional sites may prefer the type of training provided to PhD students, while PsyD students may be better suited to practice in the newer, more diverse areas of psychology. Even though the need for more clinically focused programs has been voiced at various psychological conferences over the past century, and the academic community has responded, there have not been enough new, diverse clinically focused internship sites created to keep pace with new academic programs (Mangione, VandeCreek et al., 2006). Without internships in these settings, PsyD students continue to be at a disadvantage for finishing their degrees and acquiring these jobs, with lower match rates and ultimately a worse reputation within the field.

In general, even though the match rate is currently higher for PhD students, the fact remains that there are both PhD and PsyD students who are unable to find internship matches. Stedman (2007) states simply that there are not enough internships for internship-ready students. Overall, the National Council of Schools and Programs of Professional Psychology (NCSPP) feels that there are three problems contributing to a shortage of internships. One, as mentioned above, is the lack of internships in diverse settings. Another is the decreased financial support for academic training activities in psychology, leading to inability to maintain funding for current internship positions or create new ones. Finally, the disconnection between doctoral programs

and internship programs results in a lack of responsibility for finding students quality placements (Hutchings et al., 2007).

Hypotheses About How to Fix the Imbalance

Many suggestions exist within the literature for resolution of the internship imbalance. The majority of solutions suggested are means to reduce the number of students in the applicant pool. For example, McGrath (2011) suggested that the establishment of more rigorous standards for accreditation, such as minimum Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores or a high faculty to student ratio, will inherently lower the number of students admitted to programs. Currently, as McGrath (2011) explains, accreditation standards cause an economic disparity between the cost-benefit ratios of doctoral programs versus internship programs. Internship programs are required to provide a stipend to meet the cost of living for the local area, without the promise of financial gain from intern services (McGrath, 2011). On the other hand, even after accounting for the costs of providing an education, a doctoral program makes a definitive profit from each student that it enrolls. Therefore, there is more incentive to continue increasing enrollment rates than to build new internship positions (McGrath, 2011).

Other suggestions that accreditation should be used to help reduce the size of the applicant pool state that programs which do not meet pre-set match rates should enter a remediation period. While in remediation, these programs would be required to restrict enrollment or develop new internship positions until their match rates improve (Collins et al., 2007; Lally & Paszkiewicz, 2011; Milville et al., 2007; Parent & Williamson, 2010; Stedman, Schoenfeld, Carroll, & Allen, 2009). A very powerful study by Parent and Williamson (2010) supports the idea that there are identifiable programs that are putting more than their fair share of students into the internship applicant pool. Their study examined all 391 academic programs

participating in the Match between 2000 and 2006, and identified 15 programs responsible for 32% of the unmatched applicants during those years (Parent & Williamson, 2010). In other words, 15 programs, which is only 4% of the total number of programs participating in the Match, were responsible for nearly a third of all unmatched applicants. In addition, these 15 programs contributed 22% of the total applicant pool for those years (Parent & Williamson, 2010). Worth mentioning is that 14 of the 15 programs were APA accredited institutions. In addition, 14 of the programs were PsyD and 1 was PhD. However, Parent and Williamson make special note that the study did not find that large programs specifically were responsible for unfair contribution of applicants to the pool. There were large programs included in the data set that were able to match their students at a fair rate. Therefore, degree and size of program were not found to be related to match rate and unequal contribution to the applicant pool (Parent & Williamson, 2010). Stedman et al. suggest that programs with such poor match rates should be required by APA to reduce entering class size by 20%, and if a specific program is still unable to meet a 50% match rate the following year, that program should lose accreditation.

An initial attempt to reduce the number of students has been to encourage graduate programs to practice voluntary restraint of admission rate (Baker et al., 2007; Madson, Hasan, Williams-Nickelson, Kettman, & Van Sickle, 2007; Rodolfa, Bell, Bieschke, Davis, & Peterson, 2007). In addition, graduate programs are now required to provide match data, and undergraduate students should be made aware of the Match rates of the programs they are considering (Collins et al., 2007; Madson et al., 2007; Rodolfa et al., 2007; Rozensky, Grus, Belar, Nelson, & Kohut, 2007). APPIC and the American Psychological Association of Graduate Students (APAGS) are two groups that support the plea to practice voluntary restraint of

admissions, required disclosure of match rates, and dissemination of match information to prospective graduate program applicants (Madson et al., 2007; Rodolfa et al., 2007).

Another idea about the overflow of applicants is that some students are sent to the Match before they are ready. Evidence suggests that academic training directors spend increasingly more time helping students appear proficient on their applications and in their interviews, hoping to rise above the competition (Milville et al., 2007). Collins, Callahan, and Klonoff (2007) propose a model for training graduate students that is tailored to the defined purpose of internship. They state that the purpose of internship is to be consistent with prior graduate training, integrate science and practice, and continue to develop the rising professional identity. Collins, Callahan, and Klonoff (2007) suggest that by focusing on a developmental approach to readiness for internship, graduate programs can increase their match rates. Similarly, many authors suggest modifying the application process into a universal competency based rating system or portfolio that would allow the specific training, activities, research, and practice of each applicant to be easily reviewed and compared to others (Collins et al., 2007; Kaslow & Keilin, 2006; McCutcheon, 2011). The implied reasoning behind proposing a competency-based model is that those students who are least qualified will be the ones who are left unmatched. Therefore, requiring that certain competencies be met before entering the Match inherently lowers the number of students in the applicant pool.

On the other side of the argument are professionals who advocate for increasing the number of internship positions to meet the needs of all students in the Match. One of the aforementioned reasons listed by NCSPP for the shortage of internships is lack of funding (Hutchings et al., 2007). There are a number of authors who propose that efforts to expand internship positions and open new sites should be focused on advocating for increased federal

funding of training in psychology (Hutchings et al., 2007; Madson et al., 2007; McCutcheon, 2011; Rodolfa et al., 2007; Rozensky et al., 2007; Schaefer et al., 2011). Hutchings et al. and Schafer et al. question the lack of access psychology training programs have to the federal funding allotted to medical training programs. This is one area where psychologists could advocate for inclusion, expanding available funds for training and gaining recognition of psychology as a health profession. In addition to advocating for federal funding, Hutchings et al. suggest numerous creative options for funding internships. Some of those listed include have doctoral programs use tuition charged to the student on internship as stipend money, encourage state psychological associations to allot funds to internships they endorse, create APA and minority fellowships, use work study funds, and seek funding from private organizations that support training in psychology (Hutchings et al., 2007).

In addition to increasing funding, Humphreys (2000), Hutchings et al. (2007), Kaslow and Keilin (2006), Mangione, Borden et al. (2006), Mangione, VandeCreek et al. (2006), Milville et al. (2007), Rodolfa et al. (2007), and Schaefer et al. (2011) suggest creative and innovative ways to expand the number of internship slots available. These authors argue that due to the expanding roles of psychologists in the work force, it would be wise to offer internship training in more diverse settings. As most of the newer roles of psychologists exist within clinical settings, this would increase the amount of suitable internship matches for students from clinical programs (Hutchings et al., 2007). In addition, Emmons et al. (2006) and Hutchings et al. support the development of half-time internships. Emmons et al. feel that students who complete half-time internships experience a longer developmental process, resulting in more productivity and skill development, less anxiety, and prolonged opportunity for exposure to a variety of populations and service models. NCSPP member schools have been asked to take an

active role in seeking suitable training sites and initiating new internships, and many have taken to the challenge by offering financial support to internships, providing consultation about program development, and directly helping new sites become established (Hutchings et al., 2007). NCSPP has also encouraged the growth of half-time programs, as there are many sites which may not have the resources to meet accreditation standards if they host full-time interns, and many interns who, for various reasons mentioned above, would prefer to complete internship at a two-year, half-time pace (Hutchings et al., 2007).

The California Psychology Internship Council (CAPIC) is now a well-established example of one region collaborating to increase the supply of internships for qualified students (Emmons et al., 2006; Hutchings et al., 2007; Schaefer et al., 2011). CAPIC began with five doctoral psychology programs and 75 internship sites, and has now expanded to 32 programs and 169 sites, with more than 600 positions available (Schaefer et al., 2011). Many of the positions are half time, allowing sites with limited resources to offer internship positions and allowing underserved populations to receive services through interns, while maintaining training standards similar to those required by APPIC (Hutchings et al., 2007). Similar to the collaboration achieved by CAPIC sites, many internships in the APPIC Match exist in a consortium format, allowing multiple regional sites to combine resources and offer internship training that meets the needs of interns, as well as the underserved populations in the area (Emmons et al., 2006; Hutchings et al., 2007). In addition, some graduate programs have embraced the creation of affiliated or “captive” sites. These programs work with local placements that exclusively accept interns from their school. The school funds the internship and controls the placement of students, ensuring that all receive a quality internship experience (Hutchings et al., 2007; Milville et al., 2007; Rodolfa et al., 2007; Schaefer et al., 2011).

As may have been gleaned by now, NCSPP has taken an active role in attempting to fix the imbalance by working to increase the supply of internships (Hutchings et al., 2007). APPIC is also active in addressing the shortage of internships through several means. This includes mentoring and consulting with new and developing programs, encouraging the pursuit of accreditation, advocating for funding, allowing half-time internships to become accredited, educating students about increasing their chances for matching, and collecting data and surveys each year to provide comprehensive information about match statistics (Baker et al., 2007).

Thorp, O'Donohue, and Gregg (2005) suggest a solution unrelated to increasing the supply of internships or decreasing the pool of applicants; they propose eliminating the internship as a requirement for licensure. They reviewed the history of the creation of the internship requirement. At the Boulder Conference in 1949, APA decided to mandate a one-year full-time internship requirement for conferral of the doctorate degree because few psychologists of the time demonstrated clinical readiness to assess and treat military service members during World War II (Thorp et al., 2005). Now, however, most students enter the Match with 2,000 hours or more of practicum experience, and are required to complete an additional 2,000 hours during internship. Thorp et al. go on to state that most licensing boards require more than 1,000 hours of supervised postdoctoral experience, resulting in at least 5,000 hours of practice before students can even apply for licensure. This is more than any other licensable health profession (Rodolfa et al., 2004). Some believe this is overkill, and that the extensive practicum training that students receive currently should be enough at the predoctoral level. Thorp et al. state that there is no evidence that internship training is superior to practicum training, and a formalized internship experience should be an optional post-doctoral endeavor. They feel that enough students value the type of structured training provided by an internship that many will still

choose to complete one to satisfy post-doctoral requirements for supervised practice. However, requiring the completion of internship before degree conferral results in exorbitant financial strain from the cost of applying, traveling to interviews, possibly moving, and additional tuition paid, and undue stress from the current state of the internship shortage, potential need to relocate and leave family or loved ones for a year, and the time taken from other important activities, such as publishing articles or completing dissertation (Thorp et al., 2005). Although Thorp et al. (2005) present a logical argument, few psychologists have embraced this as a viable option, as many feel that their own internship was important in the development of their professional skills and identity. Additionally, many psychologists continue to believe that internship training should be more advanced than the training provided at the practicum level (Baker et al., 2007; Grus et al., 2011; McCutcheon, 2011). Studies must be conducted comparing practicum and internship level training on professional development.

Finally, there are advocates for addressing the internship imbalance from both the supply and demand side. These authors propose a combination of the above-mentioned suggestions. For example, APAGS has been active in advocating for increased funds for psychological training, helping applicants prepare to be competitive applicants, educating undergraduate students about the crisis faced by applicants in the internship match process, promoting truth in advertising match rates by graduate programs, and asking graduate admissions to practice voluntary restraint (Madson et al., 2007). McCutcheon (2011) states that a competency based model is necessary to ensure readiness to practice, admissions rates should be driven by workforce needs, and mandatory accreditation of internship and graduate programs is essential to advocate for funding. Rodolfa et al. (2007) promote truth in advertising match rates by graduate programs, voluntary graduate admissions reductions, increased preparation of applicants,

advocating for funding, and creating affiliated or “captive” sites. Finally, Stedman et al. (2009) explain how the use of accreditation to increase graduate programs’ responsibility for placing students will call for both a drop in admissions and an increase in efforts to create internship positions to meet their own student needs.

In an attempt to bring together all invested parties of the internship process and combine goals, the Council of Chairs of Training Councils (CCTC) held an imbalance-focused meeting in 2008. The meeting included the education directorate staff from the APA, APAGS, APPIC, the Council of Combined and Integrated Doctoral Programs in Psychology (CCIDPIP), the Council of Counseling Psychology Training Programs (CCPTP), the Council of Directors of School Psychology Programs (CDSPP), the Council of University Directors of Clinical Psychology (CUDCP), and NCSPP (Grus et al., 2011). Each group sent one representative with decision empowerment on behalf of the group, and all agreed to four concepts at the beginning of the meeting. These included:

1. There is a collective responsibility to take action to fix the imbalance;
2. Collaborative efforts will benefit all involved;
3. Continuing attention is required and short-, mid-, and long-term strategies must be developed;
4. Actions taken to increase the supply of internship positions must ensure the quality of training provided (Grus et al., 2011).

Halfway through the first day of the meeting, representatives contacted their groups to make decisions about what actions they would commit to. Eleven action steps were developed and two were dropped. The two that were dropped were to let market forces naturally resolve the Match imbalance and to eliminate the internship requirement (Grus et al., 2011).

The first action step, targeted by APPIC and doctoral training councils (which includes CCPTP, CUDCP, NCSPP, CDSPP, and CCIDPIP), is to develop innovative ways of increasing internship slots in existing accredited internships. This includes the activity of NCSPP member programs mentioned above, and also incorporates the collection and dissemination of data about how existing programs have been successful at expanding (Grus et al., 2011). The second action step asks doctoral training councils, APPIC, and APAGS to come to agreement upon minimum requirements to participate in the Match. The third action step, handled by APA and doctoral training councils, is to explore and find ways to decrease barriers to internship programs seeking accreditation (Grus et al., 2011). APA has addressed this action step by approving an internship stimulus package in 2012 that allots up to \$3 million over a three year period toward helping unaccredited internship sites seek accreditation. The stimulus package is expected to increase the number of APA accredited internship positions by up to 520. The fourth action step, to develop toolkits to help start new internships, expand positions in existing internships, and become accredited, is directed at the collaborative efforts of APA, APPIC, and doctoral training councils. APPIC and APAGS are to work together on the fifth action step, which involves making changes to the Match. Some suggestions have been to limit participation in the Match to accredited programs (Grus et al., 2011) or to have an earlier selection process for students in accredited programs (Milville et al., 2007). APA and doctoral training councils made the commitment to lessen the imbalance by either increasing the number of internship positions or decreasing the number of students in the applicant pool. All training councils have demonstrated progress on this sixth action step (Grus et al., 2011).

The seventh action step, agreed to by all groups involved in the meeting, is to hold a national training conference to bring attention to many factors impacting the field, including the

Match imbalance (Grus et al., 2011). The eighth action step, a workforce analysis, is the responsibility of APA. APA has organized the Center for Psychology Workforce Analysis and Research (CPWAR) to collect data about the current and projected need for psychological services throughout the country (Lally & Paszkiewicz, 2011). The ninth and tenth action steps are related, and are collaborative efforts by all groups at the meeting. The ninth step is to disseminate information about program match statistics, and the tenth is to make greater efforts to spread the information to prospective graduate students (Grus et al., 2011). Finally, doctoral training councils, APA, and APAGS will be involved in the eleventh action step, which is advocacy for federal funding of internship programs.

In relation to the structure of the CCTC meeting, many professionals in the field are invested in Hatcher's (2011b) call for a governance structure. Hatcher equates the internship imbalance to a common-pool resource problem. The tragedy of the commons, an economical phenomenon, happens when there is unrestricted access to a common-pool resource. The resource becomes overused by consumers and results in overall loss to all involved. There is no individual incentive to restrict use of the commons, which leads to the overwhelming collective cost of a depleted resource (Hatcher, 2011b). In psychological training, internships are considered to be the resource, and graduate programs are considered to be the consumers. Each graduate program benefits financially from increasing the amount of applicants they put into the commons, and no one program can be held accountable for causing the depletion of available internship positions (Hatcher, 2011b). Hatcher explains how APPIC successfully created a governance structure for its common pool resource, internship applicants. The Match allows internship programs, as the consumers, fair and equal access to quality applicants, who comprise the commons. However, Hatcher explains that graduate programs have not yet been successful

at collaborating to create a successful governance structure for their common pool resource, available internship positions. There must be a fair and equivalent manner to control the amount of access, or number of internship applicants, that graduate programs have in the Match (Hatcher, 2011b).

While there are no restrictions on which doctoral programs can send applicants to the Match and how many applicants they can send, there are specific criteria that APPIC requires for an internship site to participate in the Match (Hatcher, 2011b), effectively reducing the number of available internship sites. If no standards existed, Hatcher (2011b) believes that the supply of internships would undoubtedly meet the needs of the applicant pool. However, standards are a necessity in the ethical practice of psychology. In order to relieve the tragedy of our commons, two core problems must be addressed. First, appropriation problems involve the regulation of the resource in order to maintain reasonable cost to consumers (Hatcher, 2011b). In terms of the imbalance, too many doctoral programs and student applicants cause inflated costs to students in the form of excessive practicum hours, time spent on application materials and interviews, time taken away from research, publication, and dissertation, and ultimately, the inability to obtain a match (Hatcher, 2011b). These costs must be controlled. Second, provision problems involve maintaining a healthy supply of the resource. For the imbalance, this means determining how to increase the availability of quality internships. Hatcher proposes that the problem is the lack of a responsible party for keeping the quality of the commons while restricting access (by imposing limitations) to the resource.

Hatcher (2011b) indicates that the collaboration of multiple investors of the imbalance problem during the CCTC meeting in 2008 was an important step toward creating a governance structure for graduate programs. He implies that CCTC should consider taking a governance

charge in psychology training by explaining that it has become an increasingly cohesive group with a shared sense of purpose (Hatcher, 2011b). Hatcher states that CCTC demonstrates an ability to bring together all parties involved in the imbalance problem, facilitate communication, build trust and cohesion, address key differences, and lead ongoing integrative negotiation among all parties.

The governing body would be required to maintain the pursuit of quality education as a guiding principle in commons access (Hatcher, 2011b). Hatcher raises the concern that some graduate programs may be apprehensive about the cost-benefit ratio of participating in a governance structure that places limitations on the use of the internship pool. However, he provides three incentives that are universal across programs, including the commitment of CCTC to find an inclusive solution for all involved, the dismay APAGS expresses at student suffering, and APPIC's commitment to solving the problem, regardless of the fact that there is no personal advantage to APPIC for lessening the imbalance gap (Hatcher, 2011b). He then suggests that, as APPIC has regulated the participation of specific internship programs, it could also regulate the participation of specific graduate programs by requiring that, in order to send applicants to the Match, the programs must be a member of, and comply with, the guidelines of the governance group. Therefore, the benefit of complying with a governance structure for access to the internship pool would outweigh the costs of meeting the governance group's requirements for membership (Hatcher, 2011b).

It is clear that many professionals have opinions about the cause of the imbalance, and related hypotheses about how the Match may become more balanced. The workforce analysis by APA's CPWAR could provide a lot of important information about which steps will be the most important to take. If data indicates that there are many unemployed psychologists and few

positions that need filling, thus suggesting an oversupply in the profession, it would be logical to focus more on the action steps that limit the number of students in psychological programs. If data indicates that there are many positions that need to be filled, suggesting a shortage in the field, it would be logical to focus more on the action steps that increase the amount of internship positions.

Data collection is ongoing and CPWAR has yet to publish their research findings. However, the workforce analysis has been divided into separate projects and some of the completed data has been presented via PowerPoint at professional conferences (Lally & Paszkiewicz, 2011). Hart and Pate's (2011) presentation at the 83rd Annual Meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association revealed some of the preliminary findings of CPWAR. Fortunately for psychologists and up-and-coming students in the field, it appears as though nearly all psychologists find employment if they wish to be employed. Specifically, 89.4% of PhDs and 97.3% of PsyDs are employed (Hart & Pate, 2011). More importantly, of those who are unemployed, the majority have chosen to retire or chosen not to seek employment. Only 0.8% of PhDs and 0.7% of PsyDs are unemployed and seeking employment. Therefore, less than 1% of psychologists who wish to be working are unemployed. Hart and Pate also provide data that indicate specific populations whose needs are not currently being met by the number of psychologists available, including corrections, chronically mentally ill, veterans and the military, youth, geriatric, and the retiring community of baby boomers. In addition, it appears as though nearly all new psychologists (90.9%) entering the field are employed within 6 months of graduation (Hart & Pate, 2011). Overall, the data indicates that the field of psychological practice is fully capable of supporting the number of students being trained in psychology programs and seeking employment as new psychologists.

Nevertheless, the APPIC Match is not able to support the number of students trying to complete their degree and enter the field of practice. Prior to the workforce analysis completed in 2011, it was popular belief that there were more psychologists entering the field than were needed in the economy (Parent & Williamson, 2010; Rozensky et al., 2007; Stedman, 2007; Stedman et al., 2009). However, the more recent findings of CPWAR indicate that there actually is not an oversupply of psychologists in the field (Lally & Paszkiewicz, 2011). In fact, there appears to be a shortage of necessary psychological services within certain populations, and few psychologists who are in need of employment and seeking to fill such positions (Hart & Pate, 2011). Therefore, the current job market for psychological services is fully capable of handling the amount of students in psychological training programs (Lally & Paszkiewicz, 2011). In fact, many clinical programs have modified their models of training in order to increase the supply of psychologists in underserved populations, yet the stock of available internships has been unable to keep pace with the diversified training needs of the students in such programs (Hutchings et al., 2007). This is particularly devastating, as many students may have entered the field in the interest of working with the populations who continue to suffer a shortage of psychological services.

Now that evidence exists that shortcomings in psychological services exist within populations that clinically focused students may be more suited to serve, perhaps professionals who see a hierarchy between PsyD and PhD students could reconsider their beliefs. Hatcher (2011a) states, if match rates dropped to 50% due to some universal loss of internship funding, the additional 25% of students who would not match are no less qualified now than they were before. Likewise, let us not assume that the majority of those 25% who currently do not match are less qualified or less worthy than the 75% who do. Let us instead assume that they are

well-prepared to enter internship, as endorsed by their training directors, but have been unable to find a site only because of the shortage of available training opportunities to meet their individual situations. The cost that students face is much more than financial, especially considering the personal and educational challenges, thrills, and journeys they have endured, to finally reach the finish line with fingers crossed that they will not become part of the many applicants who are unable to find a quality match that year. It is important to take into account the impact that not matching has on the applicants. The students who face such fierce competition in the current state of the Match, especially within this field which encourages ethical practice with an open, diverse mindset, are right to challenge the ethics of a system which demands their money for tuition but is unable to guarantee the final training experience required for degree completion and entrance into the practicing field (Baker, 2011).

The Applicants

Another area of focus for investigators interested in the imbalance has been to find out whether or not there are certain characteristics that make an applicant more or less likely to match with an internship. In 2007, applicants from APA and CPA accredited programs matched at a rate of 82.2% while applicants from non-accredited programs matched at a rate of 69.3% (Keilin et al., 2007). In that year, 90% of unmatched students felt that the imbalance between number of applicants and positions contributed to their remaining unmatched (Keilin et al., 2007). As previously mentioned, there are more internship sites in the Match that have been developed by and for research-oriented individuals, and therefore students from these types of programs have a higher match rate (Hatcher, 2011b). This places students more interested in quality clinical training at a disadvantage (McCutcheon, 2011).

In addition to program characteristics, students who are limited by personal factors such as geographical restrictions, disabilities, or special needs also face increased challenges in the Match (Hutchings et al., 2007). These individuals may be forced to choose from a limited selection of internships, less able to focus on goodness of fit with professional skills and interests, and therefore less likely to match. Students with disabilities may be unable to easily maneuver the hectic travel schedule that interviews often require, and may have difficulty completing certain requirements of the applications. Females may feel the need to hide a pregnancy for fear of the impact on decision-makers during the application and interview process (Hutchings et al., 2007). This inherently gives certain individuals a greater advantage, including those who are not restricted geographically, or by disabilities and special needs. Hutchings et al. state that these “nontraditional students,” whose access to education and training within the field of psychology has been advocated for and become increasingly available, are the ones to feel most disadvantaged during the internship selection process. One way for many of these students to meet their needs and complete an internship might be through sites that are unfunded or half-time. However, there is a significant shortage of half-time positions available and some schools do not allow their students to accept unfunded positions, further limiting students who could benefit from completing their internship requirement through training at these types of sites (Hutchings et al., 2007). Unmatched individuals in 2007 felt that applying to a limited geographic area, random factors or “luck,” applying to too few sites, inability to relocate, bias against type of degree, large numbers of students from the same program, and lack of support from their academic program contributed to their remaining unmatched (Keilin et al., 2007).

Callahan et al. (2010) attempted to study the characteristics of successfully matched interns. However, their study only included students from programs that are members of the

Council of University Directors of Clinical Psychology (CUDCP), specifically because these training programs tend to be more scientifically modeled and therefore tend to match at a higher rate (Callahan et al., 2010). The only significant result they found to influence matching versus not matching is the number of interviews an applicant was offered.

In spite of the above evidence that there are many rational explanations for why some applicants are unable to find a suitable match (reasons which are unrelated to the student's training, ethics, or professional ability), Keilin et al. (2007) state "it is reasonable to assume that our profession's weakest students are less likely to be matched" (p. 235). This bias is likely shared by other psychologists, including internship directors, and can cast a negative light on those applicants applying in the Match a second or third time around. Therefore, second and third time applicants may also be at a disadvantage, on top of any reasons that contributed to their difficulty matching the first time around.

How students become applicants. Every student in a doctoral psychology program knows the pressure of competing for one of a limited number of positions. They had to endure applications, essays, and possibly interviews to get into their undergraduate program. They have possibly also endured a similar process for a master's program and have definitely endured the process for entry into their current doctoral program. Once they have been admitted, doctoral students are required to complete a sequence of classes, which includes reading, research, exams, individual and group projects, presentations, and papers. In addition, students in the field of psychology are required to pass a set of comprehensive examinations, participate in various field-training experiences through practica, and complete a dissertation. It is usually very clear to a student and the faculty within the first few years whether or not the student is properly matched by interests, strengths, and weaknesses, to the training program he or she is in. At

various points students may choose to leave or be asked to leave the program, some of the more common reasons being class performance, practicum evaluations, comprehensive exams, family complications, and other various personal reasons. Most importantly, it is prior to the Match that students are “weeded” out of the system.

As mentioned before, most students complete over 2,000 hours of practicum by the time they enter the Match (Callahan et al., 2010; Thorp et al., 2005), and have completed nearly all of the required educational instruction by their academic program. By the time students enter the Match, they have clear ideas about their training interests and tangible expectations about what type of training they would like on internship in order to solidify their growing professional identities. In fact, training directors firmly believe that the students they send to the Match are ready for internship, and that the internship imbalance should not serve as a “gate-keeping” function within the field (Callahan et al., 2010; Milville et al., 2007). Students have already been eliminated from the training program or have been asked to wait another year and complete additional requirements by the time they enter the Match. When students who enter the Match do not place at a site, training directors feel it is primarily because of students’ self-imposed geographic restrictions, followed by applying to too few sites, supply and demand imbalance, interpersonal competency issues, applying only to competitive sites, or having too few practicum hours (Milville et al., 2007).

Training directors spend increasingly more time with students each year as the imbalance worsens attempting to help students look better on their applications and improve their interviewing skills (Hatcher, 2011b). However, as Hatcher rightfully questions, who are they hoping to beat out of the internship pool? Given the increasing competition, students are rising to the challenge of outshining fellow students in various ways. In order to prepare for

completing the APPIC Match application, students keep track of their training activities during each practicum, including client characteristics such as age, sex, ethnicity, and presenting problem. They keep track of the types of services provided to clients, including group, individual, or family treatment, assessments, psychotherapy models used, and how many hours spent with each client. Some students complete extra practica to increase their hours of experience with a specific population, service, or treatment model. Some devote as much time as they can toward the completion of their dissertation. Others attempt to publish as many articles or present in as many conferences as possible. Overall, students have become more and more qualified to practice in the field specifically due to the competition they face and trying to become the more qualified applicant. Unfortunately, not all of these highly qualified individuals will be able to complete their degree in the timeline they imagined due to the internship imbalance.

Participation in the Match process. Applicants who wish to participate in the Match must register to complete the APPIC Application for Psychology Internships (AAPI) online at <https://portal.appicas.org>. This is where students report specific details about their training and educational experiences, and upload curriculum vitae (CV), essays, and any supplemental materials requested by an internship site. It is through this website that students select the internship programs to which they wish to apply and submit their application. Information about the internship programs that participate in the Match is available at http://www.appic.org/directory/search_dol_internships.asp. Training directors must verify their students' AAPIs in order for them to submit applications to internships. In addition, students must request recommendation letters from supervisors or other professionals familiar with their work and have them upload their letters directly to the AAPI. They must give their letter writers

enough advanced notice to have the letters completed and uploaded by the application deadline set by the internship site.

Internship staff evaluate applicants and choose who to invite for interviews and who to rank order for placement. Applicants register for the Match at <http://www.natmatch.com/psychint/applregister.html>. After students have been notified of their application status and complete interviews, the rank order list is due to the National Matching Service by a specified deadline. There is strict guidance that no information about rank order is to be revealed by sites or applicants to each other (National Matching Services Inc. [NMS], 2012). Both internship sites and applicants must submit a rank order list by the specified deadline in order to participate in the Match. A matching algorithm is used to match applicants to internship sites based on the rank order lists submitted by both. On match day, an email is sent to each applicant that states whether or not he or she matched, and if so, to which site. There is an abbreviated phase two Match for applicants who do not match in phase one, and then a post-vacancy match service is hosted by APPIC for those who do not participate in or match during phase two.

Applicants must pay for each internship program they apply to in phase one. The cost is \$35 for the first application, and \$10 for each subsequent application. Once the applicant hits 15 applications, the fees begin to increase (APPIC, 2012b). This is an effort to control the amount of applications a student submits by encouraging each applicant to carefully consider how many and which sites to apply to, which subsequently controls the number of applications each internship site receives for review. Students must pay \$130 to register for the Match if their school is a member of APPIC or the Canadian Council of Professional Psychology Programs (CCPPP), or \$160 if their school is not a member of either (NMS, 2012). All fees in the application and match process are non-refundable. In addition, students may have to pay fees to

their undergraduate institutions to have their transcripts uploaded if that is an application requirement of an internship site. If students are offered in-person interviews at distant sites, they must pay travel and lodging costs. The average applicant participating in the 2011 Match spent \$1,812 in the process of applying, interviewing, and participating in the Match (APPIC, 2011a).

In addition to the costs of applying to the Match, students often put aside class work, dissertation, research projects, or other important clinical activities to complete the application process. This can result in delayed completion or substandard quality of completed work. In addition, students who receive interviews often give up time in class or at practicum to travel to and participate in interviews. The waiting process after applications have been submitted can also take a toll mentally and emotionally on applicants. As they observe others being contacted by sites, they begin to wonder whether their own applications have been rejected or chosen for interview. Concentration can become affected and demoralization may be experienced by those who receive rejections. Some applicants receive few or no interviews, and may feel embarrassed and inadequate compared to their peers.

Implications of not matching. Applicants who do not match to an internship site may feel demoralized (Madson et al., 2007), embarrassed, and may have their professional competence questioned by themselves and others (Callahan et al., 2010; Keilin et al., 2007). Milville et al. (2007) suggest that not matching can lead to resentment and hostility toward the field of psychology due to a training system that requires completion of an internship that is not guaranteed to each student. Unmatched applicants may face a year-long delay in degree conferral, licensure, entry to the job market, and may incur an extra year's worth of tuition fees, and costs of participating in the Match again (Keilin et al., 2007; Larkin, 2011; Madson et al.,

2007). Those who do participate in subsequent Matches contribute to the increasing overflow of students in the applicant pool. Those who do not participate in the Match seek internship experiences outside of the Match system, which raises a number of new stressful issues for the individual and the profession as a whole (DeMers, 2011; Hutchings et al., 2007; Madson et al., 2007).

Hatcher (2011b) describes how the significantly higher number of licensure applicants each year compared to the number of matched interns per year indicates that virtually all students who do not match through APPIC are successful at finding internship-equivalent experiences that qualify them for licensure. Since most states do not require an accredited internship for licensure, students are able to find internships that meet the minimum requirements set by their state without returning to the APPIC Match system (DeMers, 2011). The match imbalance has created such great levels of pressure for students that they are willing to accept unfunded positions or attend unaccredited programs (Kaslow & Keilin, 2006; Larkin, 2011). In order to do this, students are often forced to pull together some type of training experience that will pass their state requirements for licensure, which may offer substandard supervision and fewer opportunities for skill development (Madson et al., 2007). The 2007 survey of unmatched applicants revealed that approximately 234 new positions were created after the Match, with more than a third of them unaccredited, a fifth unpaid, and more than half with no benefits (Keilin et al., 2007). It is unknown how these unregulated internships affect future licensure ability, employability, and professional skill while on the job (Baker et al., 2007). In addition, the increased number of students who complete such internship experiences brings into question the quality of their training and the quality of the profession of psychology as a whole.

Stress, Appraisal, and Coping

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) state that individuals' psychological well-being and coping are centrally related to how they perceive a particular encounter, and how they focus on ways to change their thoughts, feelings, and actions related to the encounter. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) define a stressful encounter as one which the person considers "taxing or exceeding his or her resources and endangering his or her well-being" (p. 20). How one person defines a situation as stressful is mediated by his or her appraisal of the situation, which is broken down into primary appraisal and secondary appraisal. Primary appraisal is a person's perception of the level of threat of the situation, and secondary appraisal is a person's perception of various ways to respond to the situation, including what, if anything can be done (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Both primary and secondary appraisal determine how an individual copes with the situation, coping being the execution of some or all of the possible responses (Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub, 1989).

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) define two types of coping. The first, emotion-focused coping, are efforts a person engages in to reduce or manage the emotional distress associated with a stressful encounter. The second, problem-focused coping, are efforts a person engages in to problem-solve or alter the stressful situation. If during primary appraisal, the situation is considered stressful, there are three possible stress appraisal processes that may occur (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). First is a harm/loss appraisal, indicating that some sort of damage has already been obtained at the time of the appraisal of the situation. Second is a threat appraisal, indicating that some type of harm or loss is anticipated. Third is a challenge appraisal, indicating a potential for gain or growth (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). All three types of appraisals are considered stressful in that they call for the implication of adaptive measures of coping.

However, the types of coping implemented may be influenced by how threatening the situation is perceived to be during primary appraisal. Perceiving a situation as a threat evokes negative emotions, and perceiving a situation as a challenge may evoke positive emotions such as eagerness, excitement, and exhilaration (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Threat and challenge are not mutually exclusive appraisals of one situation, and can occur simultaneously, and even shift as the stressful encounter unfolds. However, the positive associations of perceiving the situation as a challenge rather than a threat are assumed to equate to more healthful coping responses in the individual (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). During primary appraisal the person determines what is at stake, and during secondary appraisal the person determines what can be done, if anything, to manage the outcome of the stressful situation. It is the interaction of these two appraisals that determine the degree of stress associated with the situation, and the types of emotional and behavioral responses (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) provide the example that, “all other things equal, if the person is helpless to deal with a demand, stress will be relatively great because the harm/loss cannot be overcome or prevented. If a person has a high stake in the outcome, meaning that it touches a strong commitment, helplessness is potentially devastating” (p. 35). Applied to the internship imbalance, this model of stress, appraisal, and coping suggests that an unmatched applicant’s response to the situation of not matching would be determined by his or her perception of how much is at stake during the primary appraisal of the situation, and what can be done about the situation during the secondary appraisal. If an individual appraises the internship imbalance as a threat, believes that he or she has high stakes in the outcome of the situation, and feels that there is not much that can be done to alter the fact that he or she has not matched, he or she may experience a greater stress response and helpless reaction to not matching.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study include:

1. Which consequences of not matching are most prominently stressful among students who do not find an internship placement through the APPIC Match?
2. Which methods of coping are most prominently evident among students who do not find an internship placement through the APPIC Match?

Chapter 3: Methodology

In order to bring light to the individual experiences of the rising number of students affected by the imbalance, an electronic survey containing several questions about the stressors associated with the internship imbalance was created. The electronic survey was distributed to students who participated in the APPIC Match but were not placed at an internship site through the Match during the 2011, 2012, or 2013 Match years. The survey was divided into two sections, the first of which addressed personal stressors that an applicant might experience while seeking an internship during the current imbalance crisis. The second section addressed coping techniques that may have been used by the applicant since being informed that he or she did not place at an internship through the APPIC Match.

Participants

Individuals were asked to participate in the survey if they participated in the 2011, 2012, or 2013 APPIC Matches, without the result of matching to a site during any one or more of these years. These years were chosen because the 2011 APPIC Match was the first year that eliminated the old “clearing house” after the Match, and implemented a two-phase system with a Post-Match Vacancy Service (APPIC, 2013b). The survey was emailed to over 400 Directors of Clinical Training (DCTs), who then forwarded the survey email to their students and alumni. Only 13 DCTs could not be contacted, either because their contact information was unavailable or they did not return an email or phone call. Participants accessed the survey by clicking on a link embedded in the email, which brought them to an informed consent page. Participants were given one month to complete the survey. Cochran’s (1977, as cited in Bartlett, Kotrlik, & Higgins, 2001) sample size formula for continuous survey variables was used to determine the target sample size for this study, resulting in a target sample size of 114. Given the total

population of unmatched students from the years 2011-2013 is estimated to be just over 3,000 (APPIC, 2011b, 2012a, 2013a), 114 would be an acceptable target sample size for the study. However, all responses ($n = 131$) received within the one-month time frame were included in the final data analysis.

Instrument

Data was collected in an electronic survey format. The literature reviewed above informed the development of the questions in the first part of the survey about the implications of not matching. Each question asked the rater to indicate whether the specific item was relevant to the participant's personal experience, and then rate how he or she was affected by the items that were relevant on a Likert scale. Individuals were asked to rate the highest level of effect that they experienced for each item in order to obtain data about the greatest impact of the internship imbalance on the personal experiences of unmatched applicants. This initial part of the survey was sent to 11 students from the researcher's affiliated university who were known to meet criteria for participation in the survey. These students reviewed the survey items, and 4 of them responded with comments about the study, with one participant requesting to add items to the list. These items were included in the final version of the survey.

The second part of the survey asked participants to indicate how much they utilized various types of coping responses after not matching through the APPIC Match. The COPE Inventory is a broad range assessment of coping responses to a specific event, whose development was primarily informed by Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) theory of stress, appraisal, and the coping process, with the incorporation of more recent studies of coping variables (Carver et al., 1989). Due to length and redundancy of items, especially for use in research studies, a Brief COPE was created (Carver, 1997). The Brief COPE demonstrates

similar acceptable validity and reliability to the full COPE, and is comprised of two items for each of the 14 scales, resulting in 28 total items (Carver, 1997). The tense and wording of the items, as well as which scales are used can be modified for the needs of the researcher. The Brief COPE was used as the second half of the electronic survey to assess the coping experiences of the individual unmatched applicants. At the end of the survey, there were four optional, open-ended questions for participants to comment on or add information about their personal experiences of not acquiring internship placement through the APPIC Match.

Analyses

The research questions of this study were answered by subjecting every survey item to measures of frequencies and central tendency. The open-ended questions were analyzed for content by identifying and coding common responses among participants, and assigned a percentage based on how many participants endorsed responses within the coded categories. The research questions for this study were:

1. Which consequences of not matching are most prominently stressful among students who do not find an internship placement through the APPIC Match?
2. Which methods of coping are most prominently evident among students who do not find an internship placement through the APPIC Match?

Chapter 4: Results

This chapter presents the analyses of each survey question, which includes means, standard deviations, and tables of frequencies and percentages.

Responsibilities of Undergraduate and/or Masters Programs

The first survey item asked students to rate their level of agreement that their undergraduate or master's program should have made them more aware of the internship imbalance (Table 1). The mean participant rating was 2.6 with a standard deviation of 1.38.

Responsibilities of Doctoral Programs

The next three questions queried unmatched applicants about the role of their doctoral programs in the imbalance (Table 2). First, participants were asked to rate their level of agreement that the doctoral programs to which they applied should have made them more aware of the internship imbalance. The rating mean was 2.93 with a standard deviation of 1.37. Next, participants used the same scale to indicate their level of agreement that the doctoral program they attended should have made their Match rates more available to applicants. This question was only applicable to non-APA accredited programs, as the APA requires accredited programs to publish their Match rates. Only 19 participants responded to this survey item, suggesting that the majority of the participants were from APA programs. Of these 19 participants, the rating mean was 2.68 with a standard deviation of 1.45. Finally, participants were asked to indicate on the same scale their level of agreement that their doctoral program did not prepare them well enough for the Match. The rating mean for this item was 2.34 with a standard deviation of 1.24.

Table 1

Responsibilities of Undergraduate and/or Masters Programs

	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>Agree somewhat</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree very much</u>	<u>Completely agree</u>
<i>n</i>	29	34	18	15	16
%	23.77	27.87	14.75	12.30	13.11

Note. Mean = 2.6, SD = 1.38, Not Applicable = 10 (8.2%).

Table 2
Responsibilities of Doctoral Programs

	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>Agree somewhat</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree very much</u>	<u>Completely agree</u>
1. Should have made applicants more aware of the internship imbalance					
<i>n</i>	21	31	27	18	23
%	17.36	25.62	22.31	14.88	19.01
2. Should have made Match rates more available to applicants					
<i>n</i>	4	7	3	1	4
%	4.55	7.95	3.41	1.14	4.55
3. Did not prepare them well enough for the Match					
<i>n</i>	34	49	13	16	10
%	27.87	40.16	10.66	13.11	8.20

Note. #1 Mean = 2.93, SD = 1.37 Not Applicable = 1 (0.83%); #2 Mean = 2.68, SD = 1.45, Not Applicable = 69 (78.41%); #3 Mean = 2.34, SD = 1.24, Not Applicable = 0 (0%).

Effects of Stressors Related to Program Requirements

Two items asked participants to rate the level of stress they experienced due to the specific limitations their programs have for the types of internships they are able to consider (Table 3). The majority of participants to these items (61.78% or *n* = 75 on the first item and 57.88% or *n* = 70 on the second item) indicated “non applicable,” suggesting that the majority of applicants do not experience the following limitations. The first item stated, “my program does not allow me to apply to part-time internships” and asked participants to rate their level of stress as 1 = “not at all stressful,” 2 = “slightly stressful,” 3 = “somewhat stressful,” 4 = “moderately stressful,” and 5 = “extremely stressful.” The rating mean on this scale was 1.33 with a standard deviation of 1.44.

Table 3
Program Requirements

	<u>Not at all stressful</u>	<u>Slightly stressful</u>	<u>Somewhat stressful</u>	<u>Moderately Stressful</u>	<u>Extremely Stressful</u>
1. Not allowed to apply to part-time internships					
<i>n</i>	21	31	27	18	23
%	17.36	25.62	22.31	14.88	19.01
2. Not allowed to apply to unaccredited internships					
<i>n</i>	4	7	3	1	4
%	4.55	7.95	3.41	1.14	4.55

Note. #1 Mean = 2.93, SD = 1.37; #2 Mean = 2.68, SD = 1.45; #3 Average score = 2.34, SD = 1.24.

The second item used the same scale mentioned in the previous item to ask unmatched applicants to rate the level of stress they experience due to their program not allowing them to apply to unaccredited internships. The rating mean was 2.12 with a standard deviation of 1.32. With the majority of participants responding N/A to this question as mentioned above, 57.82% of participants were enrolled in programs that do not require their students to apply only to APA-accredited internships. It is highly probable that the remaining 42.18% ($n = 51$) of participants' programs did not have this requirement.

Applying to Internships from a Non-APA Program

Participants were asked to indicate, using the scale from the previous two questions, the level of stress they experienced during the APPIC Match due to their program being unaccredited (Table 4). The majority of participants ($n = 99$, 82.5%) indicated this was “non-applicable,” suggesting that most of the survey participants were from APA-accredited doctoral

Table 4
Applying from a Non-APA Program

	<u>Not at all Stressful</u>	<u>Slightly Stressful</u>	<u>Somewhat stressful</u>	<u>Moderately Stressful</u>	<u>Extremely Stressful</u>
<i>n</i>	7	1	18	15	16
%	5.83	0.83	14.75	12.30	13.11

Note. Mean = 3.33, SD = 1.85, Not Applicable = 99 (82.5%).

programs. Twenty-one participants rated their level of stress, suggesting that these individuals come from non-APA accredited programs. Of these 21 participants, the mean of their ratings was 3.33 with a standard deviation of 1.85.

Personal Stressors Related to Not Matching

Several items assessed the effects of specific aspects associated with not matching on individuals’ experiences. For most of the items, participants answered their level of agreement on a Likert-type scale of 1 to 5, 1 being “not at all” and 5 being “completely agree.” The first item was “I worried about adding to the oversupply of students seeking internships” (Table 5). The rating mean on this item was 2.38, with a standard deviation of 1.44, with the majority of participants (*n* = 48, 39.34%) indicating “not at all.”

Another item was, “I worry/worried about my degree conferral, licensure, and entry into a paid position in the job market being delayed.” The rating mean on this item was 4.04 with a standard deviation of 1.35. A third item stated “I worry/worried about paying extra tuition and fees due to not matching.” The rating mean on this item was 3.87 with a standard deviation of 1.42. The fourth item stated “I worry/worried about incurring extra costs for participating in the Match more than once.” The average rating on this item was 3.95 with a standard deviation of 1.40.

Table 5
Personal Stressors

	<u>Not At All</u>	<u>Agree Somewhat</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree Very Much</u>	<u>Completely Agree</u>
1. Worry over adding to the oversupply					
<i>n</i>	48	21	24	17	17
%	39.34	17.21	19.67	13.93	13.93
2. Worry about degree conferral, licensure, and entry to the field					
<i>n</i>	9	12	10	17	66
%	7.76	10.34	8.62	14.66	56.90
3. Worry about paying extra tuition and fees					
<i>n</i>	12	10	17	13	59
%	10.34	8.62	14.66	11.21	50.86
4. Worry about extra costs of repeating the match					
<i>n</i>	11	11	10	17	60
%	9.57	9.57	8.70	14.78	52.17
5. Hostility or resentment					
<i>n</i>	13	14	17	26	45
%	11.21	12.07	14.66	22.41	38.79

Note. #1 Mean = 2.38, SD = 1.44, Not Applicable = 3 (2.46%); #2 Mean = 4.04, SD = 1.35, Not Applicable = 2 (1.72%); #3 Mean = 3.87, SD = 1.42, Not Applicable = 5 (4.31%); #4 Mean = 3.95, SD = 1.40, Not Applicable = 6 (5.22%); #5 = Mean = 3.66, SD = 1.39, Not Applicable = 1 (0.86%).

A fifth question asked unmatched applicants' if they experienced some type of hostility or resentment toward the field, another person, a program, and/or an institution due to the APPIC Match Imbalance. The rating mean for this item was 3.66 with a standard deviation of 1.39.

Table 6
Personal Stressors (continued)

	<u>Not At All</u>	<u>Agree Somewhat</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree Very Much</u>	<u>Completely Agree</u>
6. Feeling judged or pitied by others					
<i>n</i>	9	33	23	15	33
%	7.69	28.21	19.66	12.82	28.21
7. Blame or criticism from others					
<i>n</i>	57	26	8	7	15
%	48.72	22.22	6.84	5.98	12.82
8. Feeling demoralized					
<i>n</i>	12	16	19	25	41
%	10.26	13.68	16.24	21.37	35.04
9. Feeling sad or left behind					
<i>n</i>	11	11	10	17	60
%	9.57	9.57	8.70	14.78	52.17

Note. #6 Mean = 3.27, SD = 1.36, Not Applicable = 4 (3.42%); #7 = Mean = 2.09, SD = 1.39, Not Applicable = 4 (3.42%); #8 = Mean = 3.59, SD = 1.38, Not Applicable = 4 (3.42%); #9 = Mean = 3.93, SD = 1.27, Not Applicable = 6 (5.17%).

The sixth question asked unmatched applicants if they felt judged or pitied by others for not matching (Table 6). The average rating for this item was 3.27 with a standard deviation of 1.36. The seventh question asked if unmatched applicants experienced blame or criticism for not matching. The average rating for this item was 2.09 with a standard deviation of 1.39. The eighth item was, “I felt demoralized due to not matching.” The rating mean for this item was 3.59 with a standard deviation of 1.38. A ninth item stated “I felt sad or left behind by peers who found an internship placement.” The overall rating mean for this item was 3.93 with a standard deviation of 1.27.

Three items asked participants to indicate whether they felt embarrassed or ashamed in response to specific factors of the internship application process. The first item asked how the participant felt about not receiving any interviews. Half of participants (50%; $n = 58$) indicated “non-applicable,” suggesting that approximately half of the survey participants received at least one interview. There were 18.97% ($n = 22$) of participants that indicated that they felt “embarrassed,” 8.62% ($n = 10$) indicated that they felt “very embarrassed,” 11.21% ($n = 13$) indicated that they felt “ashamed,” and 4.31% ($n = 5$) indicated that they felt “very ashamed.” Only 6.9% ($n = 8$) indicated “none.” The second item asked how the participant felt about their academic program’s reputation when representing themselves to internship sites. The majority of participants ($n = 87$, 75%) indicated “none,” with 15.52% ($n = 18$) indicated “embarrassed,” 3.45% ($n = 4$) indicating “very embarrassed,” and 3.45% ($n = 2$) indicated “ashamed.” Finally, the third item asked participants to indicate how they feel about the impact of their not matching on their program’s reputation. Nearly half (49.14%; $n = 57$) responded “none,” while 27.59% ($n = 32$) indicated “embarrassed,” 2.59% ($n = 3$) indicated “very embarrassed,” 12.07% ($n = 14$) indicated “ashamed,” and 3.45% ($n = 4$) indicated “very ashamed.”

Effects of Changing What One Looks for in an Internship

Five questions addressed unmatched applicants’ personal experiences of changing their search criteria in order to increase their ability to find an internship (Table 7). Survey participants were asked to use a rating scale of 0-5 to indicate if they had considered each of the five items, and if so, how stressful they would describe that experience. On the scale, 0 represented “no,” 1 represented “yes, this was not stressful,” 2 represented “yes, this was slightly stressful,” 3 represented “yes, this was somewhat stressful,” 4 represented “yes, this was moderately stressful,” and 5 represented “yes, this was extremely stressful.” For those

individuals who reported 0, their response was treated as “N/A,” as their response indicated that they did not consider the item part of their experience. Therefore, these responses were not included in the overall rating so as not to skew the level of stress rated by individuals who did endorse the item as part of their experience. This is consistent with how all other items throughout part one of the survey that do not include “N/A” responses were handled in the calculation of the overall point rating. Therefore, the overall rating for all items that use this scale are also based on a Likert scale rating of 1-5, retaining consistency of item rating scale throughout part one of the survey.

The first question was “compromising my training interests to find an internship placement,” to which 17.54% of participants ($n = 20$) indicated “no,” that they did not consider this. Only 4.39% ($n = 5$) said that they considered compromising their training interests and did not find this stressful. Ratings from the rest of the participants yielded a mean of 3.42 on this item and a standard deviation of 1.21 for this item. The second item was “broadening my search criteria to find an internship placement,” to which 8.85% of participants ($n = 10$) indicated “no,” that they did not consider this, and only 1 participant (0.88%) indicated that this item was “non-applicable.” The rating mean for this item was 3.23, with a standard deviation of 1.32. The third item was, “lowering my training standards to find an internship placement,” to which 18.58% ($n = 21$) said “no,” they did not consider this, and 2.63% ($n = 3$) responded “non-applicable.” The rating mean for this item was 3.49 with a standard deviation of 1.24. The fourth item was, “widening the geographical area in which I was originally willing to seek an internship,” to which 21.05% ($n = 24$) indicated that they did not consider this, while 6.14% ($n = 7$) responded “non-applicable.” The rating mean for this item was 3.23 with a standard deviation of 1.57. Finally, the fifth item was, “relocating away from family or support systems,” to which 21.93%

Table 7
Modifying Search Criteria

	<u>Not stressful</u>	<u>Slightly Stressful</u>	<u>Somewhat Stressful</u>	<u>Moderately Stressful</u>	<u>Extremely Stressful</u>
1. Compromising my training interests					
<i>n</i>	5	19	21	25	21
%	4.39	16.67	18.42	21.93	18.42
2. Broadening my search criteria					
<i>n</i>	13	18	26	23	22
%	11.50	15.93	23.01	20.35	19.47
3. Lowering my training standards					
<i>n</i>	6	16	18	26	23
%	5.31	14.16	15.93	23.01	20.35
4. Widening the geographical area					
<i>n</i>	20	8	14	15	26
%	17.54	7.02	12.28	13.16	22.81
5. Relocating away from family or support systems					
<i>n</i>	20	15	8	14	28
%	17.54	13.16	7.02	12.28	24.56

Note. #1 Mean = 3.42, SD = 1.21; #2 Mean = 3.23, SD = 1.32; #3 Mean = 3.49, SD = 1.24; #4 Mean = 3.23, SD = 1.57; #5 Mean = 3.17, SD = 1.61.

(*n* = 25) reported “no,” they did not consider this, and 3.51% (*n* = 4) reported “non-applicable.”

The rating mean for this item was 3.17 with a standard deviation of 1.30.

Stressors of Venturing Outside of the APPIC System

Several items specifically addressed the personal experiences of unmatched applicants who considered alternatives to the APPIC system after not matching (Tables 8 and 9). A total of 36.21% (*n* = 42) of participants indicated that they were considering internship options outside of

APPIC. The other 63.79% ($n = 74$) were routed to the next section of the survey (coping techniques) and did not respond to these items. The first eight items asked participants to use the scale listed in the previous five questions to rate their experiences.

The first was, "I met, or plan on meeting, with a site that does not currently have an internship to discuss the possibility of creating an internship at that site," to which 41.46% ($n = 17$) responded "no" that this was not their experience, and 7.32% ($n = 3$) responded "non-applicable." The rating mean for this item was 3.19 with a standard deviation of 1.25. The second item was, "I have been in contact with facilities that are interested in training interns but are unable or unwilling to meet all of the requirements set forth by my academic program and/or state licensing boards." Nearly half (48.72%; $n = 19$) of participants reported "no," that this was not their experience, and 5.14% ($n = 2$) reported "non-applicable." The rating mean was 3.89 on this item with a standard deviation of 1.23. Third, was the item, "I am helping/may end up helping to develop a new internship site," to which 52.50% ($n = 21$) responded "no" and 5% ($n = 2$) responded "non-applicable." The rating mean was 2.76 on this item with a standard deviation of 1.30. Fourth, participants rated the following item: "I have accepted, or may possibly accept, an unpaid internship position." Nearly half (46.15%; $n = 18$) of participants responded "no" and 10.26% ($n = 4$) responded "non-applicable." The rating mean was 4.35 with a standard deviation of 1.17. The fifth item was similar to the question above, except that it asked participants to rate their experience accepting a low-paid internship position. A total of 35.90% ($n = 14$) responded "no" and 7.69% ($n = 3$) responded "non-applicable." The rating mean was 3.82 with a standard deviation of 1.42.

Table 8
Stressors of Venturing Outside of the APPIC System

	<u>Not at all</u> <u>Stressful</u>	<u>Slightly</u> <u>Stressful</u>	<u>Somewhat</u> <u>stressful</u>	<u>Moderately</u> <u>Stressful</u>	<u>Extremely</u> <u>Stressful</u>
1. Meeting with a site to discuss starting an internship					
<i>n</i>	1	7	4	5	4
%	2.44	17.07	9.76	12.20	9.76
2. Facilities interested but unable to meet requirements to establish an internship					
<i>n</i>	1	2	2	6	7
%	2.56	5.13	5.13	15.38	17.95
3. Developing a new internship program					
<i>n</i>	3	5	4	3	2
%	7.5	12.5	10.0	7.5	5.0
4. Accepting an unpaid internship					
<i>n</i>	0	2	4	3	8
%	0.0	5.13	10.26	7.69	20.51
5. Accepting a low-paid internship					
<i>n</i>	2	3	4	3	10
%	5.13	7.69	10.26	7.69	25.64

Note. #1 Mean = 3.19, SD = 1.25, Not Applicable = 20 (48.78%); #2 = Mean = 3.89, SD = 1.23, Not Applicable = 21 (53.86%); #3 = Mean = 2.76, SD = 1.30, Not Applicable = 23 (57.50%); #4 = Mean = 4.35, SD = 1.17, Not Applicable = 22 (56.41%); #5 Mean = 3.82, SD = 1.42, Not Applicable = 17 (43.59%).

The sixth item was “I have accepted, or may possibly accept, an internship position that does not offer fringe benefits, such as health insurance.” Only 12.5% (*n* = 5) responded that this was not their experience. The rating mean for this item was 3.66 with a standard deviation of 1.51. The seventh item asked participants to rate the item, “I have accepted, or may possibly accept, an unaccredited internship position.” Only 10.53% (*n* = 4) indicated this was not their

Table 9
Stressors of Venturing Outside of the APPIC System (continued)

	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>Agree somewhat</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree very much</u>	<u>Completely agree</u>
6. Accepting an internship without benefits					
<i>n</i>	5	4	5	5	16
%	12.5	10.0	12.5	12.5	40.0
7. Accepting an unaccredited internship					
<i>n</i>	2	6	5	8	12
%	5.26	15.79	13.16	21.05	31.58
8. Accepting an internship of questionable quality or supervision					
<i>n</i>	1	1	3	1	4
%	2.56	2.56	7.69	2.56	10.26

Note. #6 Mean = 3.66, SD = 1.51, Not Applicable = 5 (12.5%); #7 Mean = 3.67, SD = 1.31, Not Applicable = 5 (13.16%); #8 Mean = 3.6, SD = 1.43, Not Applicable = 29 (74.36%).

experience and 2.63% (*n* = 1) responded “non-applicable.” The rating mean was 3.67 with a standard deviation of 1.31. The final item stated “I have accepted, or may possibly accept, an internship position at a site of questionable quality or questionable supervision.” The majority of participants (64.10%, *n* = 25) indicated “no” and 10.26% (*n* = 4) reported that this item was “non-applicable.” The rating mean was 3.6 with a standard deviation of 1.43.

Four additional items asked participants to rate their level of concern on a scale of 1 = “not at all concerned,” 2 = “slightly concerned,” 3 = “somewhat concerned,” 4 = “moderately concerned,” and 5 = “extremely concerned” (Table 10). The first item was, “I may face obstacles to becoming licensed following the completion of an unaccredited internship.” The rating mean was 3.22 with a standard deviation of 1.58. The second item was “I may face obstacles to obtaining specific jobs that I am interested in following the completion of an unaccredited internship.” The rating mean was 3.24 with a standard deviation of 1.40. The third

Table 10
Modifying Search Criteria

	<u>Not at all Concerned</u>	<u>Slightly Concerned</u>	<u>Somewhat Concerned</u>	<u>Moderately Concerned</u>	<u>Extremely Concerned</u>
1. Facing licensure obstacles after an unaccredited internship					
<i>n</i>	8	6	5	6	12
%	20.0	15.0	12.5	15.0	30.0
2. Facing obstacles to obtaining jobs of interest after an unaccredited internship					
<i>n</i>	5	8	8	7	10
%	12.50	20.0	20.0	17.5	25.0
3. Facing obstacles to obtaining jobs of interest after an unrelated internship					
<i>n</i>	10	5	4	5	7
%	25.0	12.5	10.0	12.5	17.5
4. My credibility may be questioned due to the internship I accept					
<i>n</i>	4	15	4	7	8
%	10.26	38.46	10.26	17.95	20.51

Note. #1 Average score = 3.22, SD = 1.58; #2 Average score = 3.24, SD = 1.4; #3 Average score = 2.81, SD = 1.6; #4 Average score = 3, SD = 1.38.

item was, “I may face obstacles to obtaining specific jobs that I am interested in following the completion of an internship unrelated to my training interests.” The rating mean was 2.81 with a standard deviation of 1.60. Finally, the last item was “My credibility may be questioned due to the type of internship position I accept.” The rating mean was 3 with a standard deviation of 1.38.

Utilization of Coping Techniques by Unmatched Applicants

To assess types of coping utilized by survey participants when they did not match, participants were asked to rate all 28 items from the Brief COPE measure on a Likert-type scale of 1 = “I did not do this at all,” 2 = “I did this a little,” 3 = “I did this some,” 4 = “I did this a lot.”

There was no “non-applicable” item for these questions. There are 14 scales from the Brief COPE, each consisting of 2 items. See Table 1 in Appendix.

Self-Distraction scale. The first item from the Self-Distraction scale was, “I turned to work or other activities to take my mind off of not matching.” Only 7.41% ($n = 8$) responded “not at all,” 37.96% ($n = 41$) responded “a little,” 32.41% ($n = 35$) responded “some,” and 22.22% ($n = 24$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 2.69, with the standard deviation 0.90. The second item was, “I did things to think about it less, such as going to movies, watching TV, reading, daydreaming, sleeping, or shopping.” Only 12.04% ($n = 13$) responded “not at all,” 37.04% ($n = 40$) responded “a little,” 28.70% ($n = 31$) responded “some,” and 22.22% ($n = 24$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 2.61, with the standard deviation 0.97.

Active Coping scale. The first item from the Active Coping scale was, “I concentrated my efforts on doing something about not matching.” Only 3.70% ($n = 4$) responded “not at all,” 12.04% ($n = 13$) responded “a little,” 23.15% ($n = 25$) responded “some,” and 61.11% ($n = 66$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 3.42, with the standard deviation 0.84. The second item was, “I took action to try to make the situation better.” Only 1.85% ($n = 2$) responded “not at all,” 12.96% ($n = 14$) responded “a little,” 26.85% ($n = 25$) responded “some,” and 58.33% ($n = 63$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 2.69, with the standard deviation 0.79.

Denial scale. The first item from the Denial scale was, “I said to myself ‘this isn’t real’.” A majority of participants (62.96%; $n = 68$) responded “not at all,” 25% ($n = 27$) responded “a little,” 10.19% ($n = 11$) responded “some,” and 1.85% ($n = 2$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 1.51, with the standard deviation 0.75. The second item was, “I refused to believe that this happened to me.” Again, the majority of participants (81.48%; $n = 88$) responded “not at all,” 15.74% ($n = 17$) responded “a little,” 2.78% ($n = 3$) responded “some,” and no

participants reported that they did this “a lot.” The mean rating was 1.21, with the standard deviation 0.47.

Substance Use scale. The first item from the Substance Use scale was, “I used alcohol or other drugs to make myself feel better.” A majority of participants (65.74%; $n = 71$) responded “not at all,” 22.22% ($n = 24$) responded “a little,” 9.26% ($n = 10$) responded “some,” and 2.78% ($n = 2$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 1.49, with the standard deviation 0.78. The second item was, “I used alcohol or drugs to help me get through it.” Similarly, a majority of participants (75%; $n = 81$) responded “not at all,” 13.89% ($n = 15$) responded “a little,” 7.41% ($n = 8$) responded “some,” and 3.70% ($n = 4$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 1.40, with the standard deviation 0.78.

Use of Emotional Support scale. The first item from the Use of Emotional Support scale was “I got emotional support from others.” Only 4.63% ($n = 5$) responded “not at all,” 12.04% ($n = 13$) responded “a little,” 31.48% ($n = 34$) responded “some,” and 51.85% ($n = 56$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 3.31, with the standard deviation 0.84. The second item was, “I was comforted and understood by someone.” Again, only 2.78% ($n = 3$) responded “not at all,” 15.74% ($n = 17$) responded “a little,” 30.56% ($n = 33$) responded “some,” and 50.93% ($n = 55$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 3.3, with the standard deviation 0.83.

Use of Instrumental Support scale. The first item from the Use of Instrumental Support scale was, “I got advice or help from people.” Only 1.87% ($n = 2$) responded “not at all,” 14.02% ($n = 15$) responded “a little,” 35.51% ($n = 38$) responded “some,” and 48.6% ($n = 52$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 3.31, with the standard deviation 0.78. The second item was, “I got advice or help from people about what to do.” Again, only 3.7% ($n = 4$) responded “not at all,” 23.15% ($n = 25$) responded “a little,” 35.19% ($n = 38$) responded “some,”

and 37.96% ($n = 41$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 3.07, with the standard deviation 0.87.

Behavioral Disengagement scale. The first item from the Behavioral Disengagement scale was, “I gave up trying to deal with not matching.” The majority of participants (69.44%; $n = 75$) responded “not at all,” 12.96% ($n = 14$) responded “a little,” 10.19% ($n = 11$) responded “some,” and 7.41% ($n = 8$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 1.56, with the standard deviation 0.95. The second item was “I gave up my attempts to cope.” Again, the majority of participants (80.56%; $n = 87$) responded “not at all,” 13.89% ($n = 15$) responded “a little,” 4.63% ($n = 5$) responded “some,” and 0.93% ($n = 1$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 1.26, with the standard deviation 0.59.

Venting scale. The first item from the Venting scale was “I said things to let my unpleasant feelings escape.” A total of 24.53% ($n = 26$) responded “not at all,” 33.96% ($n = 36$) responded “a little,” 28.30% ($n = 30$) responded “some,” and 13.21% ($n = 14$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 2.30, with the standard deviation 0.99. The second item was, “I have expressed my negative feelings.” Only 2.78% ($n = 3$) responded “not at all,” 21.30% ($n = 23$) responded “a little,” 42.59% ($n = 46$) responded “some,” and 33.33% ($n = 36$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 3.06, with the standard deviation 0.81.

Positive Reframing scale. The first item on the Positive Reframing scale was, “I tried to see not matching in a different light, to make it seem more positive.” Only 8.33% ($n = 9$) responded “not at all,” 22.22% ($n = 24$) responded “a little,” 35.19% ($n = 38$) responded “some,” and 34.26% ($n = 37$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 2.95, with the standard deviation 0.95. The second item was, “I looked for something good in my experience of not matching.” Again, only 11.11% ($n = 12$) responded “not at all,” 25.93% ($n = 28$) responded “a little,”

27.78% ($n = 30$) responded “some,” and 35.19% ($n = 38$) responded “not at all.” The mean rating was 2.87, with the standard deviation 1.02.

Planning scale. The first item from the Planning scale was, “I tried to come up with a strategy about what to do next.” Only 1.85% ($n = 2$) responded “not at all,” 3.7% ($n = 4$) responded “a little,” 24.07% ($n = 26$) responded “some,” and 70.37% ($n = 76$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 3.63, with the standard deviation 0.65. The second item was, “I thought hard about what steps to take.” Similarly, only 1.85% ($n = 2$) responded “not at all,” 8.33% ($n = 9$) responded “a little,” 25.93% ($n = 28$) responded “some,” and 63.89% ($n = 69$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 3.52, with the standard deviation 0.73.

Humor scale. The first item from the Humor scale was, “I made jokes about not matching.” A total of 35.51% ($n = 38$) responded “not at all,” 33.64% ($n = 36$) responded “a little,” 12.15% ($n = 13$) responded “some,” and 18.69% ($n = 20$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 2.14, with the standard deviation 1.10. The second item was, “I made fun of the situation.” Nearly half (51.85%; $n = 56$) responded “not at all,” 28.70% ($n = 31$) responded “a little,” 11.11% ($n = 12$) responded “some,” and 8.31% ($n = 9$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 1.76, with the standard deviation 0.96.

Acceptance scale. The first item from the Acceptance scale was, “I accepted the reality of the fact that this happened to me.” Only 1.87% ($n = 2$) responded “not at all,” 2.80% ($n = 3$) responded “a little,” 35.51% ($n = 38$) responded “some,” and 59.81% ($n = 64$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 3.53, with the standard deviation 0.65. The second item was, “I learned to live with it.” Again, only 2.78% ($n = 3$) responded “not at all,” 13.89% ($n = 15$) responded “a little,” 31.48% ($n = 34$) responded “some,” and 51.85% ($n = 56$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 3.32, with the standard deviation 0.82.

Religion scale. The first item from the Religion scale was, “I tried to find comfort in my religion or spiritual beliefs.” Approximately half (55.56%; $n = 60$) responded “not at all,” 18.52% ($n = 20$) responded “a little,” 8.33% ($n = 9$) responded “some,” and 17.59% ($n = 19$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 1.88, with the standard deviation 1.16. The second item was, “I prayed or meditated.” Again, half (50.47%; $n = 54$) of participants responded “not at all,” 22.43% ($n = 24$) responded “a little,” 12.15% ($n = 13$) responded “some,” and 14.95% ($n = 16$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 1.92, with the standard deviation 1.11.

Self-Blame scale. The first item from the Self-Blame scale was, “I criticized myself.” Only 11.21% ($n = 12$) responded “not at all,” 41.12% ($n = 44$) responded “a little,” 27.10% ($n = 29$) responded “some,” and 20.56% ($n = 22$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 2.57, with the standard deviation 0.94. The second item was, “I blamed myself for not matching.” Similarly, 16.67% ($n = 18$) responded “not at all,” 45.37% ($n = 49$) responded “a little,” 17.59% ($n = 19$) responded “some,” and 20.37% ($n = 22$) responded “a lot.” The mean rating was 2.42, with the standard deviation 1.0. .

Open-Ended Responses

At the end of the survey, there were four optional, open-ended questions for participants to comment on or add information about their personal experiences of not acquiring internship placement through the APPIC Match. A majority of participants responded to each question, and the content of the responses were coded for similarities and analyzed using measures of central tendency.

Suggestions to APA from unmatched applicants. The first optional open-ended item asked “What do you suggest should be done by APA about the internship imbalance?” Ninety-three participants responded to this item, with several responses containing more than one

answer to the question. Coding resulted in 10 categories of suggestions by survey participants, with an additional four responses that did not fit neatly into any category.

A total of 33.33% ($n = 31$) of responses indicated that APA should make the accreditation process easier and/or more affordable for internship sites. Similarly, 24.73% ($n = 23$) of responses indicated that APA should provide more financial support for the start-up of new internships or expansion of currently accredited sites. Next, 30.11% ($n = 28$) of responses indicated that the number of students in the Match should be limited through several means. Suggestions included APA regulating how many students programs are allowed to accept each year, creating stricter accreditation requirements for doctoral programs (such as holding them responsible financially or threatening loss of accreditation based on match rates, or requiring a limit on the number of students as part of the accreditation requirements), and stopping accreditation of new programs until the internship imbalance is resolved.

A total of 8.6% ($n = 8$) of responses indicated that the Match process should be changed in several possible ways, including separate Matches based on type of degree or specialization, requiring accredited internships to only accept students from accredited programs, only allowing students from APA programs to participate in the Match, or requiring the prioritization of students from APA accredited programs or who have remained unmatched for more than one year, such that they would participate in an initial Match and all others would compete for remaining positions in a following Match. An additional 6.45% ($n = 6$) of responses indicated that APA should focus their efforts on expanding the diversity of types of sites that offer accredited internships. Also, 5.38% ($n = 5$) of responses indicate that more information about the imbalance should be disseminated, such as the consequences of not matching, and providing enough accredited internships for their students, by either creating their own internships, or

Table 11
 What do you suggest should be done by APA about the internship imbalance?

Category	<i>n</i>	Percent
APA should make the accreditation process easier and/or more affordable for internship sites	31	33.33
APA should provide more financial support for the start-up of new internships or expansion of currently accredited sites	23	24.73
The number of students in the Match should be limited through several means	28	30.11
The Match process should be changed in several possible ways	8	8.6
APA should focus their efforts on expanding the diversity of types of sites that offer accredited internships	6	6.45
More information about the imbalance should be disseminated, such as the consequences of not matching, and statistics about the Match being split into accredited vs. non-accredited sites	5	5.38
Doctoral programs should be held fully accountable for providing enough accredited internships for their students, by either creating their own internships, or helping to fund the creation of new sites	4	4.3
Doctoral programs should further enhance the expertise of the students they are placing in the Match, or ensure the students meet more site requirements	3	3.23
Future employers should not restrict their employment opportunities to only psychologists who completed APA internships	2	2.15
State licensure requirements should be changed to be more accepting of hours accrued at non-accredited internships	2	2.15

Note: *n* = 93; multiple responses to items included

helping to fund the creation of new sites. Additionally, 3.23% (*n* = 3) responses indicated that doctoral programs should further enhance the expertise of the students they are placing in the Match, or ensure the students meet more site requirements. Another 2.15% (*n* = 2) of responses indicated that future employers should not restrict their employment opportunities to only psychologists who completed APA internships. Similarly, 2.15% (*n* = 2) of responses indicated

that state licensure requirements should be changed to be more accepting of hours accrued at non-accredited internships. Additional responses included reallocating funds at sites where interns receive higher stipends so they can accept more students at a lower stipend each, charging fees to programs that accept large numbers of students and placing the money towards the creation and accreditation of new internship sites, and allowing students to count hours earned in supervised employment in place of internship. One final response indicated that there is “little opportunity or reason for the APA to do anything differently.”

Self-perceptions of professional development of unmatched applicants. The second optional open-ended response item stated “What thoughts do you have at this moment about your professional development?” 85 participants responded to this item, with several responses containing more than one answer to the question. Coding resulted in 9 categories of responses by survey participants, with an additional four responses that did not fit neatly into any category. A total of 35.88% ($n = 22$) of participants felt “fine,” “okay,” “good,” or “hopeful” about their professional development following not matching. An additional 23.17% ($n = 19$) of participants indicated that they had grown or learned through not matching and/or the activities or experiences they had completing or were anticipating on completing before attempting to apply again. A total of 16.47% ($n = 14$) of participants indicated that not matching had a negative impact on them in some personal way, while 12.94% ($n = 11$) indicated that not matching had a negative impact on them in a professional way. An additional 5.88% ($n = 5$) indicated that they felt unsure about their future in the profession. On a positive note, 4.7% ($n = 4$) indicated that they were happy with the internship they ended up with after having to wait another year to be matched. An additional 2.35% ($n = 2$) indicated that they found an internship that meets their requirements. A total of 2.35% ($n = 2$) indicated that they were “frustrated” but remaining

Table 12

What thoughts do you have at this moment about your professional development?

Category	<i>n</i>	Percent
The felt “fine,” “okay,” “good,” or “hopeful” about their professional development following not matching	22	35.88
They had grown or learned through not matching and/or the activities or experiences they had completing or were anticipating on completing before attempting to apply again	19	23.17
Not matching had a negative impact on them in some personal way	14	16.47
Not matching had a negative impact on them in a professional way	11	12.94
They felt unsure about their future in the profession	5	5.88
They were happy with the internship they ended up with after having to wait another year to be matched	4	4.7
They found an internship that meets their requirements	2	2.35
They were “frustrated” but remaining positive	2	2.35
They have regrets about entering the field	2	2.35

Note: $n = 85$; multiple responses to items included

positive, and 2.35% ($n = 2$) indicated that they have regrets about entering the field. Additional responses included being “angry” about choice of profession, feeling that it is “unjust” that two similarly rigorous internships are not considered equal only because one is unaccredited, and caring less about professional development and taking it less seriously. A final response was, “I think requiring both internship and postdoctoral training increases the stress of finding sites and dealing with school loans.”

Steps unmatched applicants are taking. The third optional open-ended response item stated “What are your next steps (or what were your next steps) after not matching?” One

Table 13

What are your next steps (or what were your next steps) after not matching?

Category	<i>n</i>	Percent
Their plan was to improve their application and apply again through several means, such as increasing their experience through work or advanced practica, completing their dissertation, or editing their essays	49	49
They intended to become licensed to practice at the masters level	22	22
They accepted a non-accredited internship	20	20
They participated in the Match a subsequent year and were successfully placed	14	14
They are still seeking an internship, either through the post-match vacancy service or some other means	8	8

Note: *n* = 100; multiple responses to items included

hundred participants responded to this item, with several responses containing more than one answer to the question. Coding resulted in 5 categories of suggestions by survey participants, with an additional two responses that did not fit neatly into any category. Nearly half (49%; *n* = 49) of participants indicated that their plan was to improve their application and apply again through several means, such as increasing their experience through work or advanced practica, completing their dissertation, or editing their essays. Additionally, 22% (*n* = 22) indicated that they intended to become licensed to practice at the masters level. Another 20% (*n* = 20) indicated that they accepted a non-accredited internship, while 14% (*n* = 14) indicated that they participated in the Match a subsequent year and were successfully placed. A total of 8% (*n* = 8) indicated that they are still seeking an internship, either through the post-match vacancy service or some other means. One additional response stated “I have given up and no longer care much if I find an internship position in the future.” A second additional response stated “If I do not

match next year, I will file a class action lawsuit against the APA in addition to my own Ph.D. program for failing to inform me up front of the terrible odds of getting matched for internship. I have done the legal research and consulted school attorneys in preparation for this likelihood.”

Giving a voice to unmatched applicants. The fourth optional open-ended response item stated “What, if anything, would you add about your internship-seeking experience that was not included in this survey?” Sixty-one participants responded to this item, with several responses containing more than one answer to the question. However, qualitative review of responses indicated a wide variation in content, including 20 discernible categories of two or more responses, and 19 additional responses that did not fit neatly into any category (see Table 2 in Appendix). The most popular response, that the actual process of participating in the Match is itself extremely stressful, aside from the actual stress of not matching, was endorsed by 27.87% ($n = 17$) of survey participants. Additionally, 14.75% ($n = 9$) indicated that the financial burden of the process needs to be further accentuated through the survey and/or to APA. A total of 13.11% ($n = 8$) of participants mentioned how family played a role in the matching process, including being geographically restricted and the added stress of feeling pressured to relocate for internship. An additional 11.48% ($n = 7$) indicated that they experienced a lack of support, primarily from their doctoral programs, or a mixed amount of support from different faculty, while 3.29% ($n = 2$) mentioned feeling well supported by family, peers, and/or their program. Another 9.84% ($n = 6$) commented on a lack of control they felt within the Match process. Also, 9.84% ($n = 6$) of participants described how they experienced increased stress during the Match process due to specialization (such as fewer internships with training opportunities in specific interests) or type of degree (school psychology specifically was mentioned the most). A total of 8.2% ($n = 5$) commented on the increased level of stress due to having to repeat the process more

than once when participating in the Match in subsequent years, while 8.2% ($n = 5$) indicated concern over how doctoral programs are preparing applicants for the Match. Another 8.2% ($n = 5$) mentioned the impact of feeling misled by internship sites, either in their representation of what experiences the program offers or in the feedback applicants received in or after interviews. An additional 8.2% ($n = 5$) endorsed some type of negative affective response to not matching, such as lowered self-confidence, distress, or embarrassment. Similarly, 4.92% ($n = 3$) endorsed resentment toward the field or Match system, 4.92% ($n = 3$) endorsed anger about the process or at APA, 4.92% ($n = 3$) felt that the field or system is unethical due to the Match, and 4.92% ($n = 3$) suggested that unmatched applicants should be refunded all costs of participating in the Match. Additionally, 4.92% ($n = 3$) experienced stigma, shame, attribution, and/or blame toward unmatched applicants. Notably, 4.92% ($n = 3$) endorsed a positive experience, including gaining a better understanding of interests, having a “wonderful mentor,” or the additional year before applying again being the best year of graduate training. Another 3.28% ($n = 2$) of participants indicated increased stress due to lack of feedback from internship sites and 3.28% ($n = 2$) indicated concern over the response of doctoral programs to their unmatched applicants. Finally, 3.28% ($n = 2$) mentioned that the medical association does not subject residents to such a stressful process, and 3.28% ($n = 2$) commented on factors of the Match that are in direct contrast to specific values or scientific evidence in our field, such as “do no harm” and consistency in parent-child or spousal relationships.

Additional individual responses include discouraging others from the field of psychology, feeling abandoned by APA and that the clinical training in this country is a “sham,” difficulty finding support from individuals who have not gone through the Match, and feeling “punished” despite doing “everything right.” One participant felt the need to balance being him/herself with

“playing the game” and presenting him/herself in a way that is perceived as desirable to internship sites. Another participant indicated that “emails from Greg Keilin and the APPIC team were out of control” and demonstrated lack of “empathy for how stressful this situation” is. Other participants indicated that doctoral programs should have alternatives in place for students who do not match, that the system should have guaranteed internships for all students rather than a complicated Match system, that several good training sites being unaccredited results in unmatched highly qualified applicants, and that internship year carries too much weight in the grand scheme of overall clinical training. One participant reported that in attempts to increase experience, improve the application, and reapply, time was taken away from dissertation, and now this individual worries about completing dissertation in a timely manner. Another participant reported that not matching puts his/her entire life on hold, including family, career, income, licensure, and other future plans. Comments included that it is unjust to limit future employment based on accreditation status, that many of the 25% of unmatched applicants are good students and competent clinicians, and that the experiences of unmatched applicants is a neglected issue by APA. One participant reported that he/she applied only to sites with which he/she had no prior experience, impacting his/her Match outcome, and one participant indicated that feedback he/she received from sites about not matching suggest that internship directors “focused on interpersonal/cultural/gender differences,” against APPIC policies. Finally, one participant indicated interest in gathering information about how many interviews unmatched applicants received, while another participant commented on how unmatched applicants should use the extra year to their advantage.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Prominent Stressors of Not Matching

This research is intended to (a) inform and empower students, doctoral programs, and other stakeholders to become advocates for increasing the number of available internships, and (b) provide information about how the internship imbalance affects unmatched applicants based on Lazarus and Folkman's theory of stress, appraisal, and the coping process. The first research question of this study was "which consequences of not matching are most prominently stressful among students who do not find an internship placement through the APPIC Match?" This question can be answered by reviewing the central tendencies of participants' ratings on the first part of the survey. All questions were rated on a scale of 1 to 5 and the overall rating is the average of all responses.

Of the stressors assessed in the survey, the most highly rated responses were found among the items endorsed by participants whose stressors were associated with considering an internship outside of the APPIC Match system. The following is a list of those stressors, from most stressful to least stressful, based on the rating means, included in parentheses. It is important to point out that these ratings are based only on individuals who did have the experiences listed, because the overwhelming majority did not endorse these items.

1. Attending an unpaid internship (4.35);
2. Meeting with facilities that are interested in training interns but unable to meet the requirements set by the academic program or licensing board (3.89);
3. Attending a low-paid internship (3.82);
4. Attending an unaccredited internship (3.67);
5. Attending an internship that does not offer benefits, such as health insurance (3.66);

6. Attending an internship site of questionable quality or questionable supervision (3.6);
7. Potentially facing obstacles to obtaining specific jobs of interest following completion of an unaccredited internship (3.24);
8. Potentially facing obstacles to licensure following the completion of an unaccredited internship (3.22);
9. Meeting with a site that does not have an internship to discuss the possibility of creating one (3.19);
10. Credibility potentially being questioned due to the type of internship attended (3.00);
11. Potentially facing obstacles to obtaining specific jobs of interest following the completion of an internship unrelated to the participant's training interest (2.81); and
12. Helping to develop a new internship site (2.76).

The one item in particular that has an extremely low number of raters is “attending an internship of questionable quality or supervision.” It is good to know that only 10 participants endorsed this experience, suggesting that the majority of students seeking internships outside of the APPIC Match feel that their site is of at least satisfactory quality and supervision; however, the ratings of those ten participants who do question their site's quality indicate a significant level of stress related to that experience. Reviewing the stressors involved in seeking an internship outside of the APPIC Match, 10 out of 12 of those assessed appear to be at least somewhat stressful, while attending an unpaid internship appears to be the most stressful experience for students seeking an internship outside of the APPIC system.

The rest of the survey items from the first part of the survey were available for all participants to respond to. The following items, from the remainder of the survey, are listed in

order from most stressful to least stressful based on the overall rating, with the rating in parentheses:

1. Delayed degree conferral, licensure, and entry into a paid position in the job market (4.04);
2. Incurring extra costs for participating in the Match more than once (3.95);
3. Feeling sad or left behind by peers who matched (3.93);
4. Paying extra tuition and fees due to not matching (3.87);
5. Experience of hostility or resentment toward the field, another person, a program and/or an institution due to the APPIC Match imbalance (3.66);
6. Feeling demoralized due to not matching (3.59);
7. Lowered personal training standards to find an internship placement (3.49);
8. Compromised personal training interests to find an internship placement (3.42);
9. Feeling judged or pitied by others for not matching (3.27);
10. Broadened search criteria (3.23);
11. Widened geographical area of consideration (3.23);
12. Consideration of relocating away from family or support systems (3.17);
13. Belief that the doctoral programs to which participants applied should have made them more aware of the imbalance (2.93);
14. Belief that the undergraduate or master's programs of the participants should have made them more aware of the imbalance (2.6);
15. Worry about adding to the oversupply of students seeking internship (2.38);
16. Belief that the doctoral program did not prepare them well enough for the Match (2.34);

17. Restriction by doctoral program to only apply to accredited internships (2.12);
18. Feeling blamed or criticized for not matching (2.09); and
19. Restriction by doctoral program to only apply to full-time internships (1.33).

Additionally, the two items rated only by participants from non-accredited doctoral programs, applying to internships from a non-accredited program, and that Match rates should have been made more available to students, were rated at 3.33 and 2.68, respectively. It appears as though applying to internships from a doctoral program that is not accredited is a primary stressor for students from these programs, even more so than stressors such as feeling judged or pitied by others, broadening search criteria or geographic area of consideration, and relocating away from support systems.

Overall it appears that the experience that most unmatched applicants find most stressful is delayed degree conferral, licensure, and entry into a paid position in the field. This was the only item that exceeded an overall rating of “moderately stressful,” with another 12 out of 21 stressors listed as at least somewhat stressful. It is significant, and alarming, that 13 of the above 21 stressors are considered at least “moderately stressful” to most participants. First and foremost, less than 10% of respondents indicated that they did not worry about delaying their degree conferral, licensure, and entry into a paid position in the field. An overwhelming majority reported worry about this survey item, suggesting that this is of primary importance in the personal experiences of unmatched applicants. Similarly, the majority of survey participants (over 50%) endorsed worry over the second and fourth-highest rated items, incurring extra costs for participating in the Match more than once and paying extra tuition and fees due to not matching. It is important to recognize that all three of these top items have a significant financial impact on unmatched applicants, and as was suggested in the free-response items, unmatched

applicants believe that the financial impact of not matching has not received enough attention in this survey, nor in the field. It seems likely from these results that financial burden may be one of the primary overall stressors for unmatched applicants.

The third-highest rated stressor, feeling sad or left behind by peers, also appears to be a primary stressor for unmatched applicants, with only 10.34% of survey participants indicating that they did not feel sad or left behind by peers who matched. The fifth-highest rated item may be alarming and unsettling for many professionals in the field: experiencing some type of hostility or resentment toward the field, another person, a program, and/or institution due to the APPIC Match imbalance. With nearly 39% of participants indicating “completely agree” and another 22% indicating “agree very much,” most students in the field blame some level of resentment and hostility they feel on the imbalance. Only 12% of survey participants indicated that they did not experience resentment or hostility towards someone or something related to the field due to the imbalance. Similarly, the sixth-highest rated item, feeling demoralized due to not matching, was only denied by 14% of survey participants, and the tenth-highest rated item, feeling judged or pitied by others, was only denied by 11% of participants. Most students experienced some level of demoralization, judgment, and pity, which they directly relate to not matching to an internship through the APPIC Match.

The remainder of the items that were considered at least moderately stressful were items related to changing internship search criteria in an attempt to find a placement after not matching. All five of these items from the original survey complete the top 13 stressors for unmatched applicants, including lowering training standards, compromising training interests, widening geographical area, broadening search criteria, and relocating away from support systems.

The rest of the items were considered slightly stressful overall for survey participants, with the exception of the one item that did not appear to be stressful to most participants: being restricted by doctoral program to only apply to full-time internships. Apparently, most survey participants who are restricted to apply to only full-time internships do not find this limitation stressful.

Finally, there were three items that asked participants about their experience of embarrassment or shame related to not matching. The first item, embarrassment or shame due to not receiving any interviews, was only endorsed by half of survey participants, suggesting that approximately half of survey participants received at least one interview during the APPIC Match process. For those who did not receive interviews, only a small percentage (6.9%, $n = 8$) endorsed not feeling any embarrassment or shame. For the most part, those who experienced this endorsed embarrassment (27.59%, $n = 32$), but there were also individuals who felt shame (15.52%, $n = 18$). The second item, feeling embarrassment or shame about their academic program when representing themselves to internship sites, was denied by most participants (75%). Of the remaining 25%, most experienced embarrassment, with only 2 participants endorsing shame. Finally, approximately half of participants denied feeling embarrassment or shame about the impact of their not matching on their programs' reputations, with the majority of the rest experiencing embarrassment, and a few feeling ashamed.

Overall, it is apparent that there can be as many as three dozen stressors that affect an individual who does not receive an internship placement through the APPIC Match. This supports several of the previously mentioned implications of not matching from the literature, plus presents evidence of many other stressors that have been insinuated but never formally assessed. Madson et al. (2007) suggested that applicants who do not match to an internship site

may feel demoralized, which was confirmed by 86.32% of participants. Milville et al. (2007) suggested that not matching can lead to resentment and hostility, a reaction confirmed by 87.93% of participants. Keilin et al. (2007), Larkin (2011), and Madson et al. (2007) reported that unmatched applicants may face a year-long delay in degree conferral, licensure, and entry to the job market, and may incur an extra year's worth of tuition fees and costs of participating in the Match again. An overwhelming 90.52% of survey participants endorsed worry over delays in professional development, 85.25% worried about paying an extra year's worth of tuition due to not matching, and 85.21% worried about the cost of participating in the Match more than once. DeMers, Hutchings et al., and Madson et al. indicated that participants who choose to seek an internship outside of the APPIC Match face a whole new set of stressful issues, which was also confirmed by the ratings of individuals who had several of these extra experiences. In addition, given the abundance of responses, and particularly the diversity of the responses, to the optional open-response items, it is apparent that a simple numeric rating of stress or concern related to specific experiences of not matching does not suffice to express the impact of the imbalance on unmatched applicants. The succinct summarization of the open-response items does not accurately represent the distress that was observed within the content of several of the specific responses by survey participants.

Coping with Not Matching

The second research question of this study was “which methods of coping are most prominently evident among students who do not find an internship placement through the APPIC Match?” This question can be answered by reviewing the overall ratings for survey participants on part two of the survey, the Brief COPE. All questions were rated on a scale of 1 to 4, and the overall rating is the average of all responses. There were two items per coping scale, and the

average of the overall ratings of the two items was calculated to produce the rank ordered list of coping mechanisms: (a) planning what to do next; (b) accepting and integrating the experience of not matching; (c) taking an active approach to do something about not matching; (d) using emotional support systems; (e) seeking help or advice from others; (f) positive reframing of the experience; (g) venting or expressing negative feelings about not matching; (h) using activities to self-distract; (i) criticizing or blaming self; (j) using humor about the situation; (k) relying on religious or spiritual beliefs; (l) using substances; (m) giving up; and (n) denying this happened.

The last five items (humor, religion, substances, giving up, and denial) overall were used little to none as coping mechanisms for unmatched applicants. Although religion can be a positive coping mechanism, it appears that most survey participants do not rely on religion as a coping mechanism for not matching. Similarly, although humor could be viewed as a positive or a negative coping mechanism, it appears as though most survey participants prefer to use other methods of coping with not matching. Fortunately what might be considered the most negative coping mechanisms on the survey, substance use, giving up, and denial, were not endorsed by the majority of survey applicants.

It is highly plausible that a group of professional students whose primary course of instruction focuses at least somewhat on helping people deal with adversity leads them to choose healthier coping mechanisms to deal with not matching. All but 2 participants (1.85%) indicated that they tried to come up with a plan about what to do next or thought hard about what steps to take at least a little, while the majority responded “some” or “a lot” to these items. Similarly, the majority of survey participants indicated that they accepted and integrated their experience of not matching, and took an active approach to do something about their situation. Most participants sought out emotional support and help or advice, and tried to positively reframe their situation.

At least 75% of survey participants vented their negative feelings about matching in some way. Finally, most participants also relied on self-distraction to some extent to cope with the experience of not matching.

Implications of the Results

One important postulation by the literature is that students who complete non-accredited internships may receive questionable training and supervision. However, 74.36% of participants who reported seeking internships outside of the APPIC Match did not indicate that this was part of their experience, suggesting that the majority of students believe that their non-accredited internship sites, or potential sites that they have considered, offer adequate training and supervision. This is supported by several statements reported in the open-response items, including that “there are many good training sites that are unaccredited resulting in unmatched highly qualified applicants,” and that “it is ‘unjust’ that two similarly rigorous internships are not considered equal only because one is unaccredited.” In addition, the most popular suggestion to APA on the open-response items was to make the accreditation process easier or more affordable. This suggests that participants believe there are many more adequate training opportunities than those currently available in the Match, yet these non-accredited sites have some type of difficulty meeting all of APA’s rigorous accreditation standards, or finding the finances to apply for APA review. Therefore, if APA adjusted some of their less important criteria, or reduced the financial requirements, more sites would become accredited and enter the Match, alleviating the internship imbalance. It is interesting that this is the most popular suggestion from unmatched applicants, as it is only vaguely mentioned as one of the 11 action steps (action step three) from the CCTC meeting, and it is implied that the primary barrier is financial. Although APA has allotted \$3 million recently for the creation and expansion of

internships, APA has not addressed the call from students that accreditation requirements for internships are too rigorous. In addition, it remains difficult for nontraditional sites to become accredited, limiting the availability of training in the diverse areas that more and more psychology students are entering the field to serve. Creating internships in more diverse settings to meet the rising diversity of training interests of students currently in the field has been a primary suggestion for improving the imbalance by several authors (Humphreys, 2000; Hutchings et al., 2007; Kaslow & Keilin, 2006; Mangione, Borden et al., 2006; Mangione, VandeCreek et al., 2006; Milville et al., 2007; Rodolfa et al., 2007; and Schaefer et al., 2011).

Another common belief previously reported within the field is that the internship imbalance is related to too many students participating in the Match. This is supported by the second most popular open-response for suggestions to APA, that the number of applicants should be limited in some way, such as APA placing a cap on the number of students a program can enroll, creating stricter accreditation requirements for doctoral programs, or stopping the accreditation of new programs until balance is created within the Match system. Unfortunately, it appears as though the workforce data has not yet been officially published to demonstrate that several populations have mental health needs that continue to be unmet by the field, and that most psychologists are able to find employment fairly easily, suggesting that demand is still high for continued training and development of new psychologists. However, the suggestion made that accreditation be paused until the balance in the Match system is restored should be considered, as this seems to suggest a redirection of accreditation efforts toward internships rather than academic institutions, and future accreditation may be more easily balanced between programs and internship sites once the Match has become more manageable.

Above all, it is important to recognize the distress experienced by the unmatched applicants. As mentioned above, Prilleltensky (2012) identifies both positive and negative components to adapting and compensating in the face of adversity. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) have identified two types of coping, emotion-focused, to manage emotional distress, and problem-focused, to attempt to resolve or alter the situation. The high utilization of various coping skills within this population suggests an adaptive and resilient group of individuals, especially given that the most prominent coping mechanisms used are the healthier styles of coping (planning, accepting, taking an active approach, and seeking advice and emotional support, as opposed to self-criticism, substance use, and denial). However, as Prilleltensky has stated “it would be unjust to either expect or pretend that most people escape (not matching) unscathed.” It is evident that even among the use of several coping techniques, the majority of unmatched applicants still experience a significant amount of stress in their experience, with several individual responses indicating that this is the most, or one of the most, stressful experiences the participant has ever encountered. Lazarus and Folkman describe how appraisal of a situation as either a threat or a challenge will present in different responses. This is often based upon how much is at stake in the situation. A threat will tend to evoke negative emotions, whereas a challenge is more likely to evoke positive feelings such as eagerness, excitement, and exhilaration. Based on the level of stress and concern endorsed on survey items, unmatched applicants view their situation as a threat rather than a challenge. The ratings of many survey items and individual answers to open-response items support this sense of threat, such as the need to further accentuate the financial burden of the Match process and of repeating the Match process, the report of many students that some aspect of the system is “unethical,” the dismay expressed by participants about being pressured to consider relocating away from family or

social supports, lack of control unmatched applicants experienced, resentment, hostility, lowered self-confidence, distress, shame, stigma, punishment, lack of empathy, and worry over licensure, credibility, future employment, and finances, and all other experiences endorsed by survey participants.

Some participants commented on positive experiences they had, such as supportive family, mentors, and programs, and gratitude for the extra year they had to learn, grow, and gain other experiences. However, the majority of participants accentuated the necessity of change to the current system, and several expressed dismay at the lack of progress thus far. Specific responses that stood out as representative of the nature of the current internship imbalance “crisis” include:

- “I’m really angry with APA as a whole. I’ve heard several people speak to this, saying how awful it is and how they’re working hard to fix the imbalance, but I don’t see much improvement. Plus, the financial burden is terrible! I may not be able to complete my degree because of financial hardship that I hadn’t planned on;”
- “My self-confidence took a major and long-standing hit;”
- “I find it personally and professionally offensive and dismaying that a field whose main purpose is to help others has allowed this internship imbalance to reach the ridiculous levels of the past several years. Where is the “do no harm” when it comes to training a new generation of professional researchers and practitioners??
- ... (I was sexually abused as a child by my father) [and not matching] is the SECOND worst experience of my life. Based on what WAS the worst experience of my life, I believe that is saying A LOT;”

- “Going through the entire process [a 2nd time] of applying, waiting for interviews, and even preparing for interviews, I adopted such an angry, resentful, hopeless perspective that I was constantly trying to shift. I sought out immense support ... up until I saw I was matched, I am not sure I ever believed I was actually going to be;”
- “I suggest that APA quit telling people they’re doing something about it and actively get more sites involved in the accreditation process;”
- “This imbalance does NOT just affect careers. This affects every aspect of people’s lives. I am delaying having children... One of my cohort members was explicitly informed by her husband that if she did not get an internship and they had to delay starting a family by another year, he would file for divorce. This is more than statistics, percentages, or match rates. This is early career psychologists LIVES. APA needs to take a good hard look at how this imbalance, this CRISIS, is detrimentally affecting the very future of the field of psychology.”

While these are some of the more emotionally laden responses on the survey, several individuals reported similar experiences, in addition to several others not reported here. In addition, it is important to recognize the suggestions of the unmatched applicants, many of which support those previously mentioned in the literature review, and some new ideas. Importantly, most students in the field who have experienced the impacts of the imbalance firsthand believe that APA needs to take action by reducing the imbalance. The most popular suggestions for that action include the proposed solution in the literature to increase funding for creating new internships or expanding existing ones (Hutchings et al., 2007; Madson et al., 2007; McCutcheon, 2011; Rodolfa et al., 2007; Rozensky et al., 2007; Schaefer et al., 2011), and also a

suggestion that was not as prevalent in the literature, reducing accreditation requirements for internships. It is hard for applicants to understand how or why APA has maintained such high financial requirements in the face of such a long-standing crisis. Hopefully, now that unmatched applicants have been given the opportunity to voice their experiences, APA will have more incentive to take action with the suggestions provided in the literature review and also in the survey responses.

Recommendations

These findings can be considered important suggestions to APA based on the survey responses of unmatched applicants about the impacts of not matching:

1. Consider reducing the cost of becoming an accredited internship site;
2. Consider barriers that current sites face in meeting accreditation requirements and make changes or exceptions when feasible;
3. Pause the accreditation of doctoral programs until the crisis is resolved;
4. Consider adjusting the accreditation requirements of doctoral programs, especially those that have demonstrated a disproportionately large contribution to the imbalance;
5. Publish workforce data to demonstrate the scientific support for increasing the number of internships;
6. Utilize workforce data to support the creation of internships in more diverse settings according to the needs of the general population;
7. Consider changing the system as a whole, such that there may be separate processes for different types of degree or specialization based on the specific strengths in training of those specializations and degrees;

8. Consider urging licensing boards and future employers to consider the fact that internship is only one year of clinical training, and most students complete over 2,000 hours of practicum training prior to beginning internship, which is more than any other licensable field of practice.

An additional consideration might be working toward a system in which students are guaranteed an internship placement, similar to the medical student system. While some of these suggestions have been previously published, others are not prevalent within the literature on how to fix the imbalance. Reducing costs and/or advocating for increased funding is suggested by Hutchings et al., 2007, Madson et al., 2007, McCutcheon, 2011, Rodolfa et al., 2007, Rozensky et al., 2007, and Schaefer et al., 2011. In addition, reducing financial barriers and/or increasing funding are goals in action steps 3 and 11 from the CCTC meeting. Adjusting accreditation standards for doctoral programs is also suggested by Collins et al., 2007, Lally & Paszkiewicz, 2011, McGrath, 2001, Milville, Adams, & Juntunen, 2007, Parent & Williamson, 2010, and Stedman, et al., 2009. Although action steps 2 and 5 from the CCTC meeting suggest making changes to who can participate in the Match, there is no specific action step to review and make changes to the requirements for doctoral programs to become accredited or maintain APA status.

Workforce data is in the works, and it is apparent from the biases in the literature, and also the responses of unmatched applicants, that the perception remains that there is an oversupply of psychologists. The preliminary data demonstrates that there is not likely an oversupply in the field at this time, and there remains a shortage of mental health services for many populations. It is of utmost importance to get this data published as soon as possible to help define the appropriate direction to mediate efforts for resolving the imbalance crisis. Three suggestions made by students that were not prevalent in the literature include pausing accreditation of

doctoral programs until the crisis is resolved, considering changing the Match to have different tracks for degrees and specializations, and urging licensing boards and future employers to reconsider their internship requirements or expectations.

Limitations of this Study

This research was intended to (a) inform and empower students, doctoral programs and other stakeholders to become advocates for increasing the number of available internships, and (b) provide information about how the internship imbalance affects unmatched applicants based on Lazarus and Folkman's theory of stress, appraisal, and the coping process. Although a wealth of information was provided that supported these intentions, it is clear that the survey items could not capture every unmatched applicant's personal experience. While the open-response items provided more opportunity to capture individual experiences, there was such diversity in the reported experiences of survey participants that it was at times difficult to assess the impact of a specific endorsed stressor on all participants, and impossible to focus on all aspects reported in the responses. Some of the open-ended themes were redundant to some survey items. The qualitative findings could be developed into survey questions for a future survey.

Additionally, as many students endorsed they would have liked information about the degrees and specializations of unmatched applicants, this survey intentionally did not assess or compare levels of stressors among different types of degrees and specializations. Although it was considered during the creation of this survey to collect that information, the length of the survey became a concern, and several items were eliminated based on prioritization. It would be ideal to assess the various effects of not matching based on applicant differences such as degree and specialization, but that did not fall within the scope of this project.

Despite the listed limitations, this study was able to support its intentions and adequately answer the research questions. Future researchers are encouraged to pursue the limitations of this study in order to continue advocating for the relief of the internship imbalance crisis.

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Appedix A

Coping Mechanisms Utilized by Unmatched Applicants

		I did not do this	I did this a little	I did this some	I did this a lot
Self-Distraction Scale	I turned to work or other activities to take my mind off of not matching				
	<i>n</i>	8	41	35	24
	%	7.41	37.96	32.41	22.22
	I did things to think about it less				
	<i>n</i>	13	40	31	24
	%	12.04	37.04	28.70	22.22
Active Coping Scale	I concentrated my efforts on doing something about not matching				
	<i>n</i>	4	13	25	66
	%	3.70	12.04	23.15	61.11
	I took action to try to make the situation better				
	<i>n</i>	2	14	25	63
	%	1.85	12.96	26.85	58.33
Denial Scale	I said to myself 'this isn't real'				
	<i>n</i>	68	27	11	2
	%	62.96	25.00	10.19	1.85
	I refused to believe that this happened to me				
	<i>n</i>	88	17	3	0
	%	81.48	15.74	2.78	0.00
Substance Use Scale	I used alcohol or other drugs to make myself feel better				
	<i>n</i>	71	24	10	2
	%	65.74	22.22	9.26	2.78
	I used alcohol or drugs to help me get through it				
	<i>n</i>	81	15	8	4
	%	75.00	13.89	7.41	3.70
Use of Emotional Support Scale	I got emotional support from others				
	<i>n</i>	5	13	34	56
	%	4.63	12.04	31.48	51.85
	I was comforted and understood by someone				
	<i>n</i>	3	17	33	55
	%	2.78	15.74	30.56	50.93
Use of Instrumental Support	I got advice or help from people				
	<i>n</i>	2	15	38	52
	%	1.87	14.02	35.51	48.6
	I got advice or help from people about what to do				

Scale	<i>n</i>	4	25	38	41
	%	3.7	23.15	35.19	37.96
Behavioral Disengagement Scale	I gave up trying to deal with not matching				
	<i>n</i>	75	14	11	8
	%	69.44	12.96	10.19	7.41
	I gave up my attempts to cope				
	<i>n</i>	87	15	5	1
	%	80.56	13.89	4.63	0.93
Venting Scale	I said things to let my unpleasant feelings escape				
	<i>n</i>	26	36	30	14
	%	24.53	33.96	28.30	13.21
	I have expressed my negative feelings				
	<i>n</i>	3	23	46	36
	%	2.78	21.30	42.59	33.33
Positive Reframing Scale	I tried to see not matching in a different light, to make it seem more positive				
	<i>n</i>	9	24	38	37
	%	8.33	22.22	35.19	34.26
	I looked for something good in my experience of not matching				
	<i>n</i>	12	28	30	38
	%	11.11	25.93	27.78	35.19
Planning Scale	I tried to come up with a strategy about what to do next				
	<i>n</i>	2	4	26	76
	%	1.85	3.7	24.07	70.37
	I thought hard about what steps to take				
	<i>n</i>	2	9	28	69
	%	1.85	8.33	25.93	63.89
Humor Scale	I made jokes about not matching				
	<i>n</i>	38	36	13	20
	%	35.51	33.64	12.15	18.69
	I made fun of the situation				
	<i>n</i>	56	31	12	9
	%	51.85	28.70	11.11	8.31
Acceptance Scale	I accepted the reality of the fact that this happened to me				
	<i>n</i>	2	3	38	64
	%	1.87	2.80	35.51	59.81
	I learned to live with it				
	<i>n</i>	3	15	34	56
	%	2.78	13.89	31.48	51.85
	I tried to find comfort in my religion or spiritual beliefs				

Religion Scale	<i>n</i>	60	20	9	19
	%	55.56	18.52	8.33	17.59
I prayed or meditated					
	<i>n</i>	54	24	13	16
	%	50.47	22.43	12.15	14.95
I criticized myself					
Self-Blame Scale	<i>n</i>	12	44	29	22
	%	11.21	41.12	27.10	20.56
I blamed myself for not matching					
	<i>n</i>	18	49	19	22
	%	16.67	45.37	17.59	20.37

Appendix B

What, if anything, would you add about your internship-seeking experience that was not included in this survey?

Category	<i>n</i>	Percent
The actual process of participating in the Match is itself extremely stressful, aside from the actual stress of not matching	17	27.87
The financial burden of the process needs to be further accentuated through the survey and/or to APA	9	14.75
Family played a role in the matching process, including being geographically restricted and the added stress of feeling pressured to relocate for internship	8	13.11
Experienced a lack of support, primarily from their doctoral programs, or a mixed amount of support from different faculty	7	11.48
Felt a lack of control during the Match process.	6	9.98
Experienced increased stress during the Match process due to their specialization or type of degree	6	9.98
Felt increased level of stress due to having to repeat the process more than once when participating in the Match in subsequent years	5	8.2
Concern over how doctoral programs are preparing applicants for the Match	5	8.2
Felt misled by internship sites, either in their representation of what experiences the program offers or in the feedback applicants received in or after interviews	5	8.2
Experienced negative affective response to not matching, such as lowered self-confidence, distress, or embarrassment	5	8.2
Felt resentment toward the field or Match system	3	4.92
Felt anger about the process or at APA	3	4.92
Felt that the field or system is unethical due to the Match	3	4.92
Suggested that unmatched applicants should be refunded all costs of participating in the Match	3	4.92

Experienced stigma, shame, attribution, and/or blame toward unmatched applicants	3	4.92
Endorsed a positive experience, including gaining a better understanding of interests, having a “wonderful mentor,” or the additional year before applying again being the best year of graduate training	3	4.92
Increased stress due to lack of feedback from internship sites		
Felt well supported by family, peers, and/or their program	2	3.29
Mentioned that the medical association does not subject residents to such a stressful process,	2	3.29
Commented on factors of the Match that are in direct contrast to specific values or scientific evidence in our field, such as “do no harm” and consistency in parent-child or spousal relationships	2	3.29

Note: $n = 61$; multiple responses to items included