




PA Researchers in Their Own Words: Why They Do It, And What Do They Think Will Promote PA-Led Research?

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DISCLOSURES:
I have no conflicts to
declare



OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

1. Identify key factors that motivate PAs to conduct research.
2. Explain how mentorship could overlap the motivations of experienced PA researchers with the needs of emerging PA researchers.

OVERVIEW

1. BACKGROUND

4. LIMITATIONS

3. RESULTS

2. METHODS

5. CONCLUSION

1. BACKGROUND

BACKGROUND

- Some have argued that PA-led research should be increased.
- We know that there is a subset of PA researchers who contribute greatly to the overall volume of scholarly activity.
- Among those who publish, the top 25th percentile of PA researchers produces most of the published research by PAs.

IN THE LITERATURE: PROPOSED WAYS TO IMPROVE PA RESEARCH PARTICIPATION.

- Material support (protected time, funding, promotion, and staff)
- Educational support (training faculty, PA curriculum development, and doctoral trained staff)
- Social support (peer collaboration, culture of research, and mentorship)

PREDICTORS OF FUTURE RESEARCH AMONG MEDICAL STUDENTS

1. Medical students who participate in research voluntarily are more likely to conduct research in the future.
2. The strongest predictor of future participation in research was a preexisting passion for research.

2. METHODS

METHODS

PA research contributors to JPAE and JAAPA between 2011 and 2020 were noted. The authors in the upper quartile of publications were identified; Surveys were emailed to 65 authors. Two qualitative questions were posed:

1. What changes do you think are necessary for more PAs to be involved in conducting research?
2. Why do you participate in research?

3. RESULTS

RESULTS: 34% RESPONSE RATE

- Twenty-two respondents answered the question, “What changes do you think are necessary for more PAs to be involved in conducting research?”
- Twenty respondents answered the question, “Why do you participate in research?”



RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender

Male	63%
Female	37%

Race

White	91%
Black	4.5%
Prefer not to answer	4.5%

Ethnicity

Non-Hispanic	91%
Hispanic	4.5%
Prefer not to answer	4.5%

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

- **Number of years as a PA**
 - ≥ 15 years 91%
 - 10-14 4.5%
 - 4 or fewer 4.5%
- **Education level**
 - Doctoral degree 68%
 - Master's degree 27.5%
 - Bachelor's degree 4.5%

Work setting

PA program faculty or administrators	59%
Retired	14%
Others	27%
Medical science liaison, clinical practice, director of advanced practice providers, professor	

faculty scholarly training support PA opportunities

research need time teaching funding conduct program

WHAT CHANGES
DO YOU THINK
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RESEARCH?

WHAT CHANGES DO YOU THINK ARE NECESSARY FOR MORE PAS TO BE INVOLVED IN CONDUCTING RESEARCH?

Major code	Frequency
Material Time, funding, staff, statistician	28
Education Accreditation, curriculum, training, research degrees	16
Social Mentorship	5
Professional	3

Inductive codes highlighted in yellow



WHAT CHANGES DO YOU THINK ARE NECESSARY FOR MORE PAS TO BE INVOLVED IN CONDUCTING RESEARCH?

Major code	Frequency
Material	28
Time 7	
Funding 9	
Staff 3	
Statistician 2	

“protected scholarly time,”
“time while at work.”
“protected time”

“increase possibility of funding” “funding specific to PAs”
“funding opportunities for PA-focused research”

“programs that lack appropriate staffing and/or funding cannot support research as teaching is the major focus”

“Supply free access to a biostatistician”

WHAT CHANGES DO YOU THINK ARE NECESSARY FOR MORE PAS TO BE INVOLVED IN CONDUCTING RESEARCH?

Major code	Frequency
Education	16
Accreditation	4
Curriculum	3
Training	5
Research degrees	2

“Accreditation does not have a minimum number of faculty”

“Accreditation standard mandating each program have a faculty member in position of research director”

“make a research project the capstone of a master's program”

“More emphasis on traditional on-campus face-to-face Ph.D. program participation”

“More training and emphasis.”

WHAT CHANGES DO YOU THINK ARE NECESSARY FOR MORE PAS TO BE INVOLVED IN CONDUCTING RESEARCH?

Major code	Frequency
Social	5

“mentoring by experienced PA researchers”

“encourage mentorships with researchers”

“More mentorship”

“Programs must adopt culture of research”

WHAT CHANGES DO YOU THINK ARE NECESSARY FOR MORE PAS TO BE INVOLVED IN CONDUCTING RESEARCH?

Major code	Frequency
Professional	3

“encouragement from AAPA and state academies”

“two PubMed indexed journals with limited publication capacity”

“The 4 organizations (among other stakeholders) should consider what are the most salient research questions of our current time.”

requirement PA profession **research** advance **enjoy** important
knowledge answer questions PA

WHY DO YOU
PARTICIPATE
IN RESEARCH?

WHY DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH?

Major Code	Frequency
Altruism	15
Joy	10
Intellectual	7
Material	4
Social	1

Inductive
codes

A white rectangular box containing the text "Inductive codes" is positioned to the right of the table. Two blue arrows point from the left side of this box to the "Altruism" and "Intellectual" rows of the table, indicating that these codes are derived from the data in those rows.

WHY DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH?

Major Code	Frequency
Altruism	
Professional	6
Knowledge	4
Medical	5
	15

“elevate the PA profession and be at national “tables.””

“research is important to advance the PA profession.”

“impact through discovery and dissemination of new knowledge to advance educational and clinical practice”

“help people practice medicine effectively”

“I love being involved in cutting edge treatments for my patients.”

WHY DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH?

Major Code	Frequency
Joy	10

“I enjoy it,” “I enjoy it,” “I enjoy it.”

“I enjoy writing,” “I like to write,” “passionate,” “enjoyment”

WHY DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH?

Major Code	Frequency
Intellectual	7

“intellectual
curiosity,”
“learning and
exploring new
topic areas”

“interested in
answering
questions”

“answer
important
questions.”

WHY DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH?

“Employment requirement”

Major Code	Frequency
Material	4

“requirement for advancement within institution.”

“Promotion requirement”

WHY DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH?

Major Code	Frequency
Social	1

“Collaboration”

WHAT CHANGES DO PA RESEARCHERS IN THE COHORT RECOMMEND TO INCREASE PA INVOLVEMENT IN RESEARCH?

More of the following:

- Training
- Funding
- Protected time
- Mentorship

MAIN REASONS WHY ACCOMPLISHED PA RESEARCHERS PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH?

- They want to help others.
- They enjoy it.
- Research satisfies intellectual curiosity.



WHAT OTHER OBSERVATIONS CAN WE MAKE?

- White males were overrepresented in the study.
- This is surprising given that the PA profession is female dominant.
 - Only 37% of respondents were female.
- The lack of racial and ethnic diversity could be reflective of insufficient diversity in the PA profession as a whole.
- More research is needed to determine if PA-led research is disproportionately impacted by lack of diversity.

4. LIMITATIONS

STUDY LIMITATIONS

- Small sample size
- Reliability limitations due to single researcher coding

5. CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

Needs of novice
PA researchers:

Motivations of
experienced PA
researchers:

MENTORSHIP AND RESEARCH ABOUT MENTORSHIP

The intersection of needs
and motivation

intellectual
curiosity

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