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# Policy Effect on Physician Assistant Student Mistreatment Reporting

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# Objectives

1. Describe the background, design, methods and preliminary results of a study examining for predictors of PA student mistreatment reporting
2. Discuss preliminary results and implications for PA education

## Disclosures

- none

## Acknowledgments

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## Mistreatment: Health Professions Education

- Various forms of mistreatment
- Limited PA education research
- Relatively prevalent
- More likely among certain learners
- Associated with negative outcomes
- Most commonly occurs in clinical settings
- Underreported by learners
  - Not important enough
  - Nothing will be done
  - Handled it myself
  - Fear of retaliation
  - Did not know what to do

## Mistreatment Policy:

### PA Education in 2019

(Hudak, et. al 2022)

- Policy Prevalence: 76% (177/232)
- Content varies (e.g., definition, retaliation statement, reporting mechanisms, management)
- Dissemination at least once annually to faculty, students, and preceptors

*Does policy affect reporting?*

## PA Profession Priorities

### • PAEA Strategic Plans

- **2017:** increase the effectiveness of clinical learning experiences which includes promoting positive learning environments and inclusion
- **2022:** Core Values – Justice, Equity, Inclusion, Diversity, Quality, Well-Being

## Accreditation

- **2020:** *New Standard A3.15* requires programs to define, publish, and make readily available policies and procedures for student reports of mistreatment

## **Problem Statement**

PA student underreporting of mistreatment limits programs' ability to address mistreatment, though no studies have examined if policy or other factors are predictive of student reporting behavior.

## **Purpose**

Identify factors predictive of PA student mistreatment reporting to their institution.

## **Research Question**

What are the predictive effects of policy factors, institution characteristics, student demographics, and mistreatment type on PA student reporting of mistreatment performed by preceptors to their institution?

**Design**

Non-experimental

Cross-sectional (2019)

Quantitative methods

Exploratory

**Inquiry Framework**

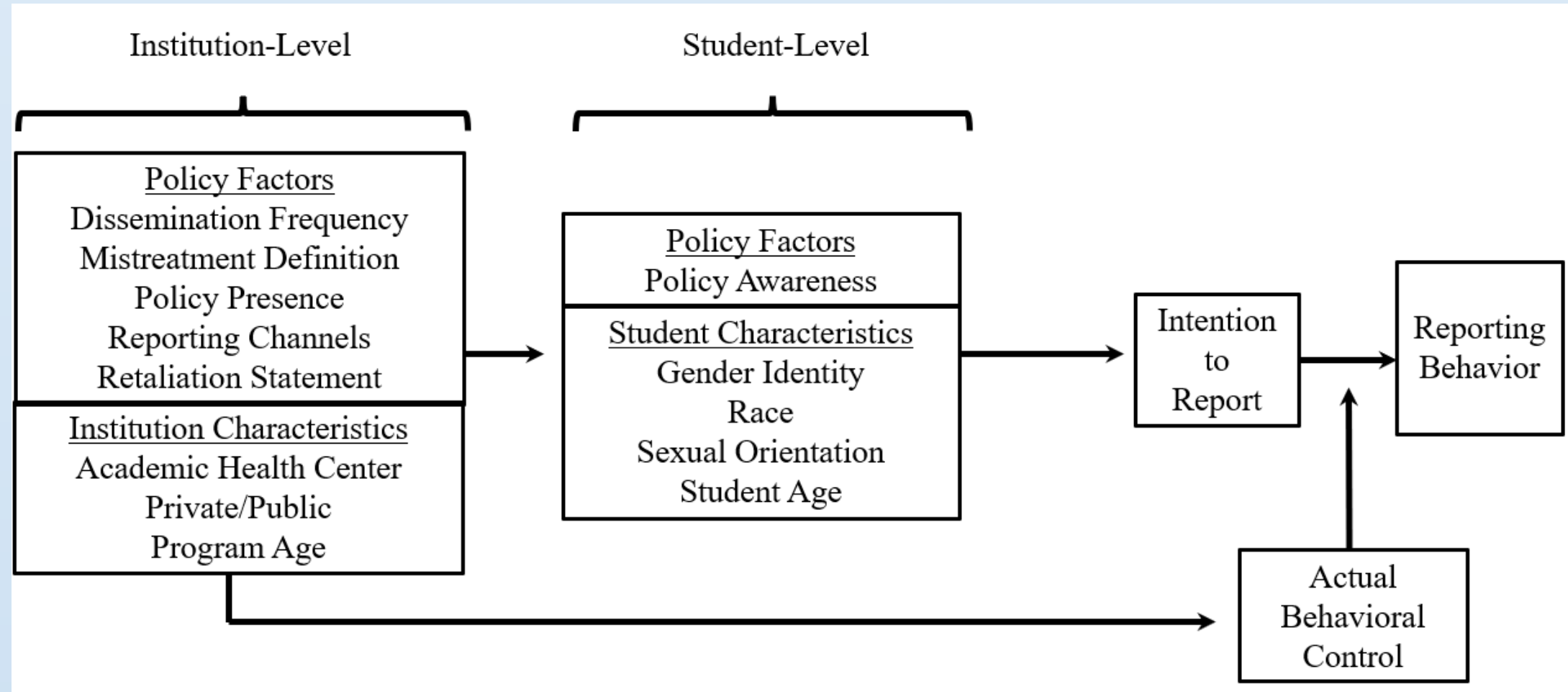
Theory of Planned Behavior

(Ajzen, 1991), adapted for this study

**Conceptual Model**

Describes how different variables influence student beliefs, intention to report, and ability to report

## Inquiry Framework





## Data

Secondary Data from the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA)

- PAEA 2019 End of Program Survey (n: 3,942; response rate: 41.7%)
- PAEA 2019 Program Survey (n: 235; response rate: 97.1%)
- Sample of Analysis = 640

## Dependent Variable

Mistreatment reporting behavior of PA students who personally experienced mistreatment performed by clinical preceptor.

## Independent Variables

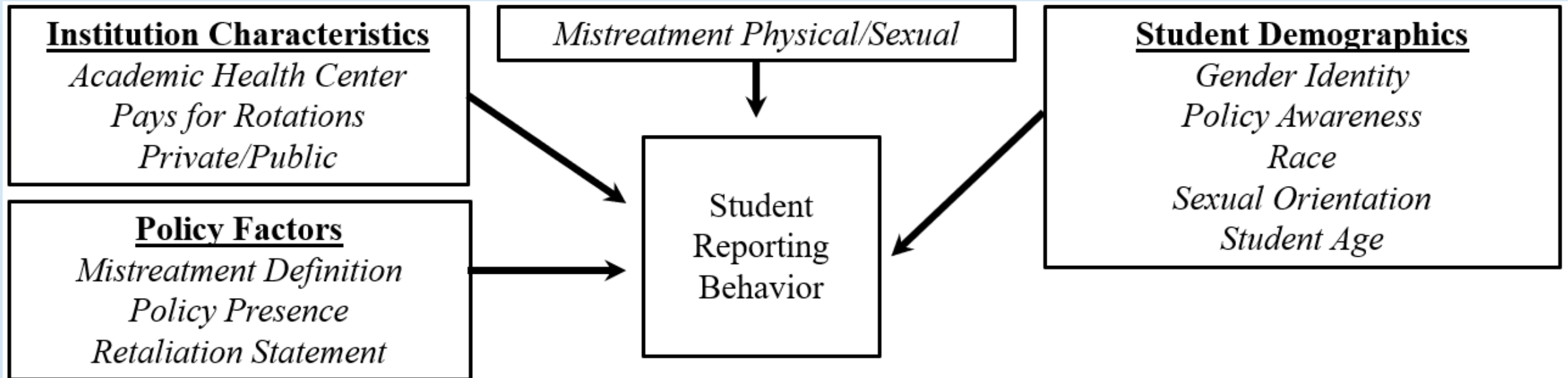
**Policy Factors:** *policy presence, mistreatment definition, retaliation statement, number of reporting channels, dissemination frequency*

**Institution Characteristics:** *academic health center, pays for rotations, private/public*

**Student Demographics:** *gender identity, race, sexual orientation, policy awareness, student age*

**Type of Mistreatment:** *mistreatment involving physical or sexual behavior*

## Conceptual Model with Study Variables



## Analysis

### **Descriptive Statistical Analysis of the Sample and Variables**

- Missing data analysis → Removed *reporting channels, dissemination frequency*

### **Collinearity Diagnostics**

- No independent variables removed due to multi-collinearity

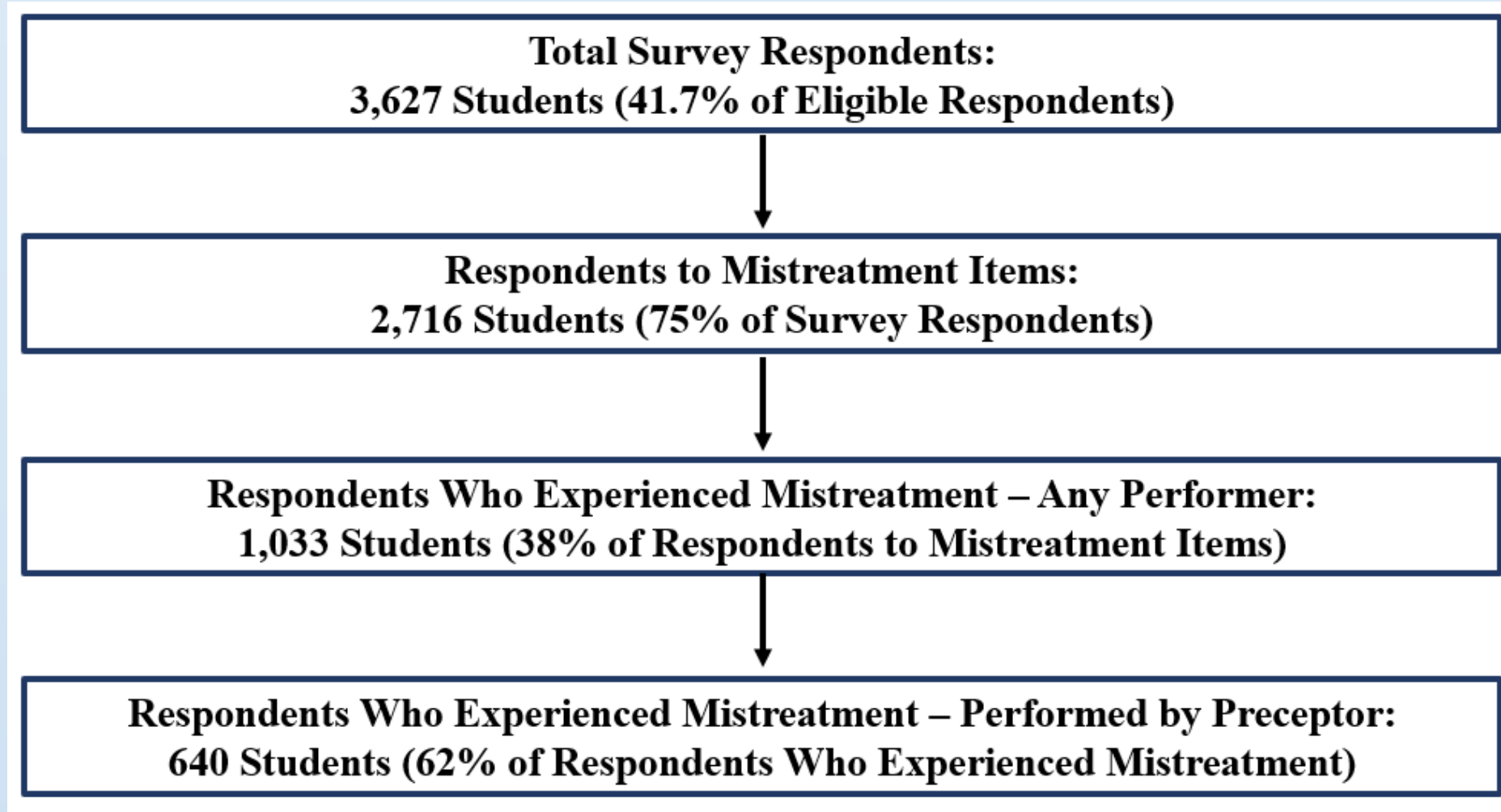
### **Logistic Regression Analysis**

- Model significant based on goodness of fit statistics (Wald  $p < .05$ ; c statistic)
- Independent variables with statistical significance ( $p < .05$ )

## Reporting

Variable coefficients reported as odds ratios

## Sample of Analysis



## Sample of Analysis

Variable	Measure	Sample		All Survey Respondents	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Gender Identity <sup>a</sup>	Female	518	80.93	2,933	75.10
	Male	119	18.59	961	24.60
Race <sup>b</sup>	American Indian or Alaskan Native	2	0.31	27	0.70
	Asian	50	7.81	395	10.50
	Black or African American	15	2.34	112	3.00
	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1	0.15	13	0.30
	White	560	87.50	3,301	88.10
Sexual Orientation	Straight	575	89.84	3,672	95.10
	Bisexual	25	3.90	67	1.70
	Gay or Lesbian	26	4.06	106	2.70
	Other	14	2.18	16	0.40

Each Category Was Missing < 2% of Responses

<sup>a</sup>Excluded from analysis due to low responses: Other types of gender identity (3)

<sup>b</sup>Other race not included in table due to no comparison data available with all survey respondents

***Student Age: Sample mean: 27.7 years; All Survey Respondents mean: 27.6***

## Logistic Regression Analysis

Variable	B	SE	Wald	p	Exp(B)	95% CI	
						LL	UL
Intercept	-2.27	0.66	12.03	0.00			
Mistreatment Definition	0.08	0.25	0.10	0.75	1.08	0.66	1.77
Policy Presence	-0.09	0.28	0.10	0.75	1.10	0.63	1.91
Retaliation Statement	-0.33	0.25	1.76	0.18	1.40	0.85	2.29
Age	0.04	0.02	4.20	0.04	1.04	1.00	1.09
Gender Identity	-0.07	0.25	0.07	0.79	1.07	0.65	1.76
Policy Awareness	0.14	0.20	0.47	0.50	1.15	0.77	1.72
Race	0.42	0.28	2.29	0.13	1.53	0.88	2.65
Sexual Orientation	0.31	0.31	0.98	0.32	1.37	0.74	2.53
Academic Health Center	-0.33	0.27	1.45	0.23	1.39	0.81	2.38
Pays for Clinical Rotations	-0.38	0.24	2.53	0.11	1.47	0.92	2.35
Private/Public	-0.16	0.27	0.33	0.57	1.17	0.69	2.00
Mistreatment Physical/Sexual	0.74	0.22	11.38	0.00	2.09	1.36	3.22

Model Convergence: Satisfied  
Wald Goodness of Fit: 0.0125  
c statistic: 0.63

\*Variables with negative coefficients are bounded so analysis was modified for dependent variable event=0 so results would be unbounded for odds ratio reporting

## **Delimitations**

Exploratory rather than explanatory

Independent variables of interest

## **Limitations**

Data from 2019; Predates new accreditation standard

Response Bias

Recall Bias

Unmeasured confounding variables

Policy not reviewed to triangulate program reports

Generalizability

## Implications for PA Education

*In this sample in 2019....*

**Reporting was more likely if mistreatment involves physical or sexual behavior**

**Reporting was more likely among older students**

**Program Policy was not associated with reporting behavior**

**Educating Students and Preceptors about Mistreatment & Policy**

**Caution in Using Student Mistreatment Reporting Behavior as a Measure of Policy Effectiveness if Policy IS NOT Associated.**

**Future Research:** Identify Other Predictive Factors and Interaction Among Factors; Understand the Nature of Predictive Factors; Identify Measures to Evaluate Policy.

Also, Interventions to Prevent Mistreatment, Corrective Action, Student Support



# Discussion

**Thank You!**

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