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Making a Good Impression: Best Practices for the Residency Interview Day

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Background

- Residency interviews are an expensive process for both applicants¹ and residency programs²
- The number of programs each applicant interviews at is increasing³
- Programs need to be more competitive, but have limited contact with the applicants
- The interview day provides a way for the applicants and programs to mutually evaluate each other
- Specialty-specific studies have been done looking at applicant preferences for the interview day
- A project looking at universal factors throughout a health network has not yet been done

Problem Statement

This project sought to identify what medical residents view as the most important universal factors and preferences during the residency interview day that influence rank order of programs, using a multidisciplinary approach at a single institution.

Methods

- Deemed “not human subjects research” by the institutional IRB
- 35-question survey; questions pulled from existing specialty-specific projects and piloted through an academic department
- Survey was distributed to all the house staff of a single institution’s residency programs (n=229)
- Paper copies distributed from 10/2018 to 2/2019. Electronic survey link sent on January 29, 2019 with a follow-up email on February 8, 2019
- Data was collected via Project REDCap and analyzed using Excel and Tableau Desktop
- Data analyzed using quantitative and qualitative analysis

Results

- 144 participants (63%)
 - 48.6% male, 50% female, 1.4% not identified
 - 68.8% aged 25-30, 23.6% aged 21-35, 6.3% aged over 35
 - 31 EM, 26 IM, 20 general surgery, 18 OBGYN, 17 FM, 12 Pediatrics, 8 neurology, 6 plastic surgery, 5 transitional year

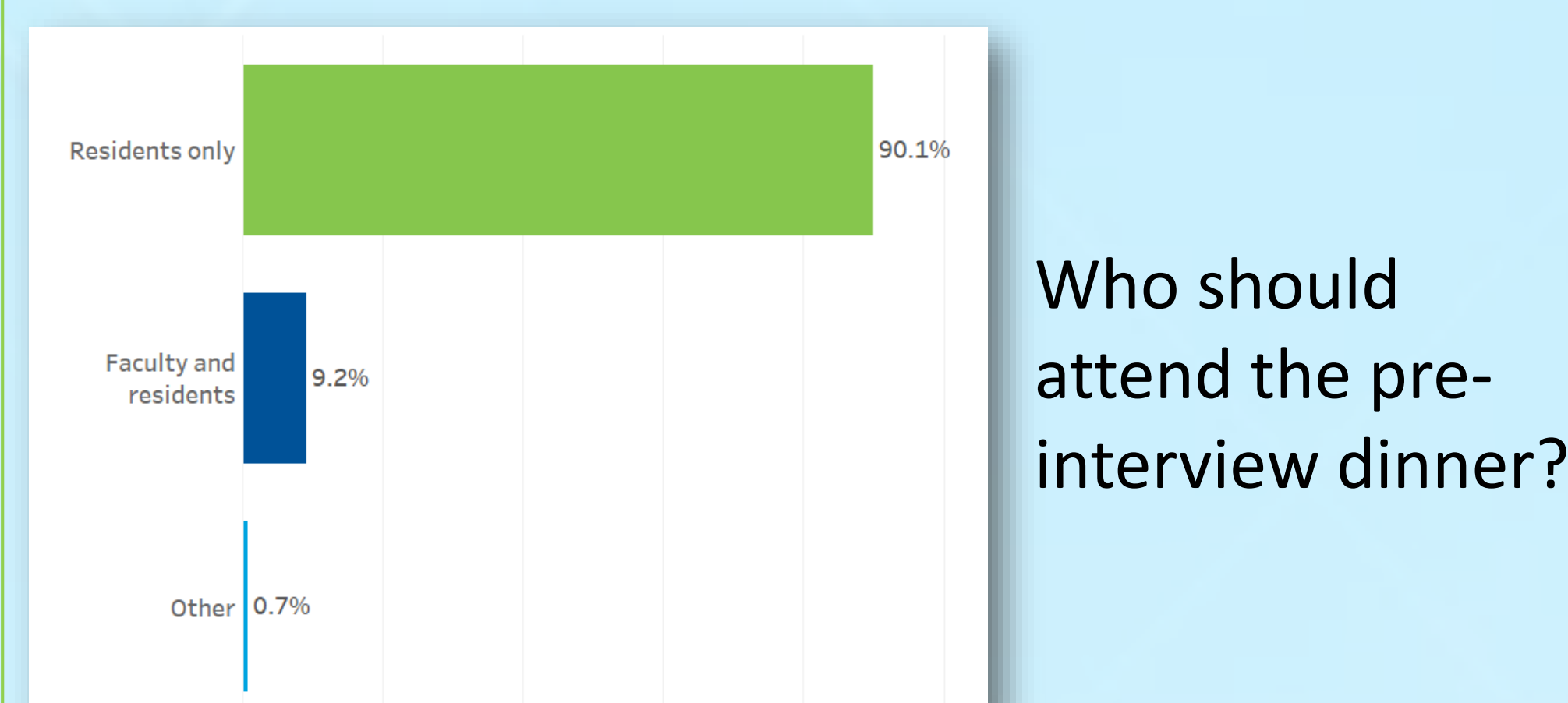
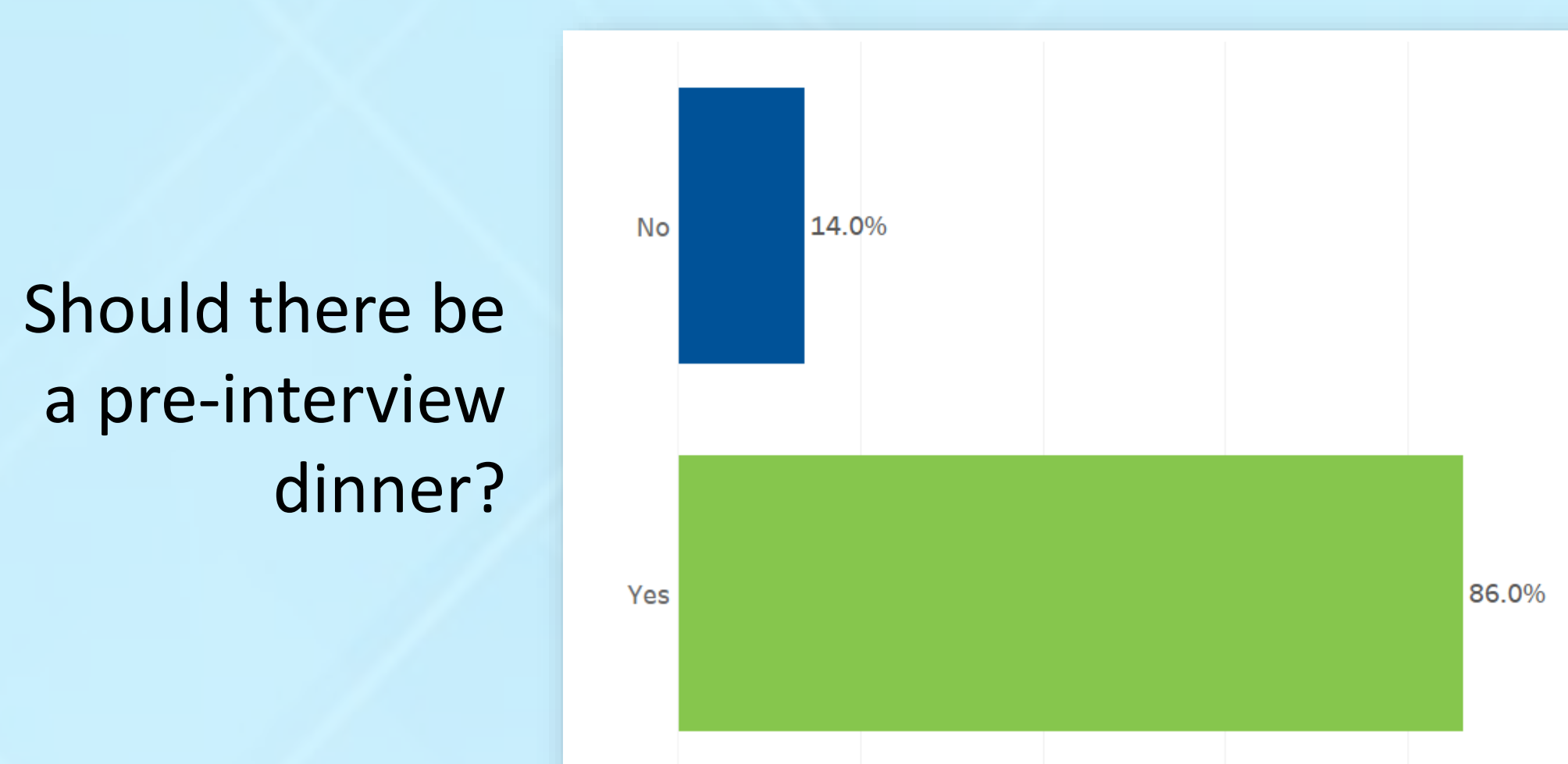
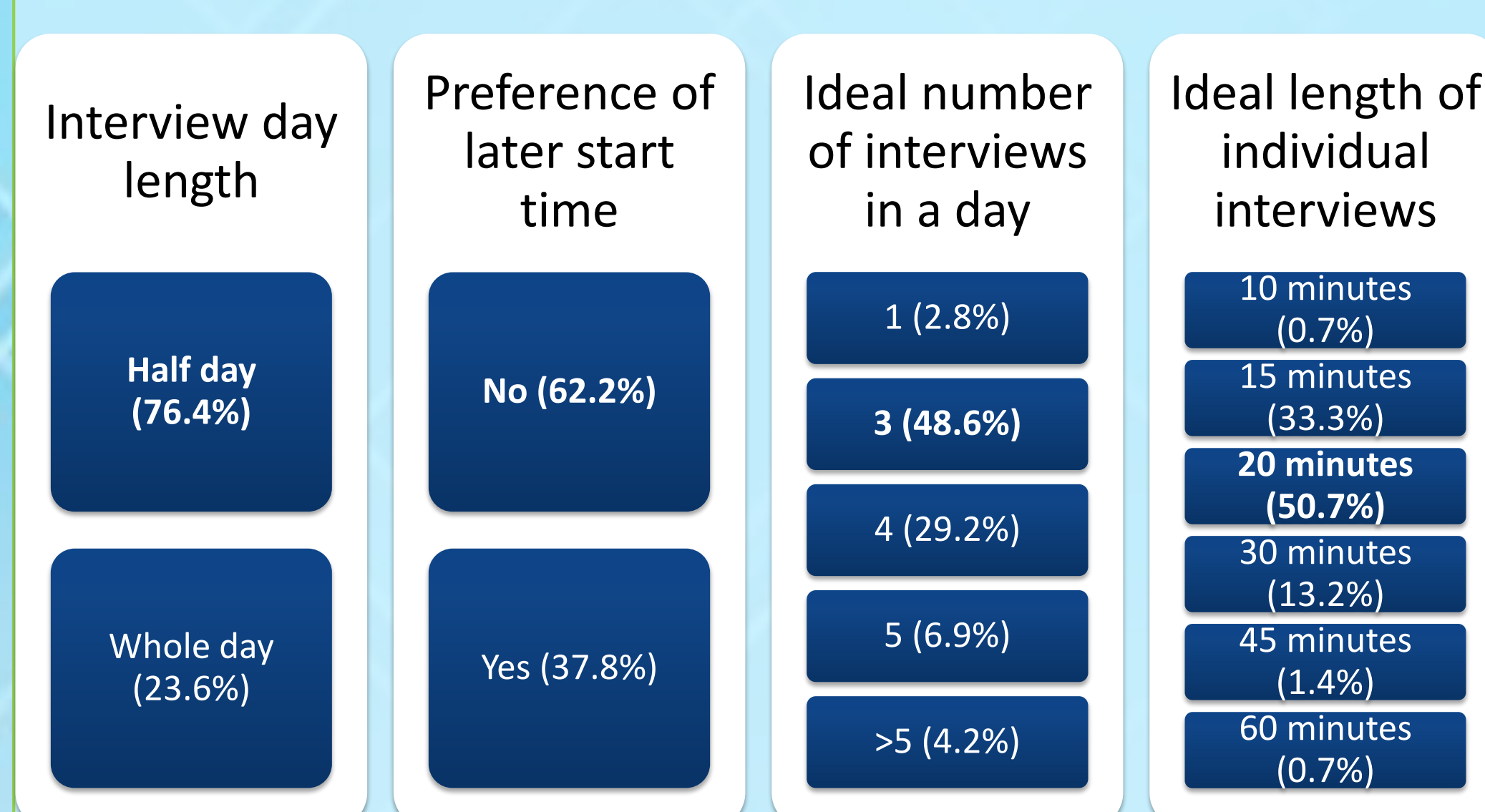


TABLE 1: Likert-Type Survey Questions Rank Ordered by Mean Survey Response

Rank	Survey Question	Mean Response Score
1	Resident satisfaction and happiness	4.7
2	Interactions with residents	4.6
3	The faculty interview	4.3
4	Information regarding didactic education	4.3
5	Organization and efficiency of the interview day	4.2
6	Knowledge of application by the faculty and residents	4.1
7	Tour of the hospital and facilities	4.0
8	Dinner number of residents present	3.5
9	Tour of the city and/or surrounding area	3.1
10	Quality and appearance of the resident call room	3.0
11	Dinner quality	3.0

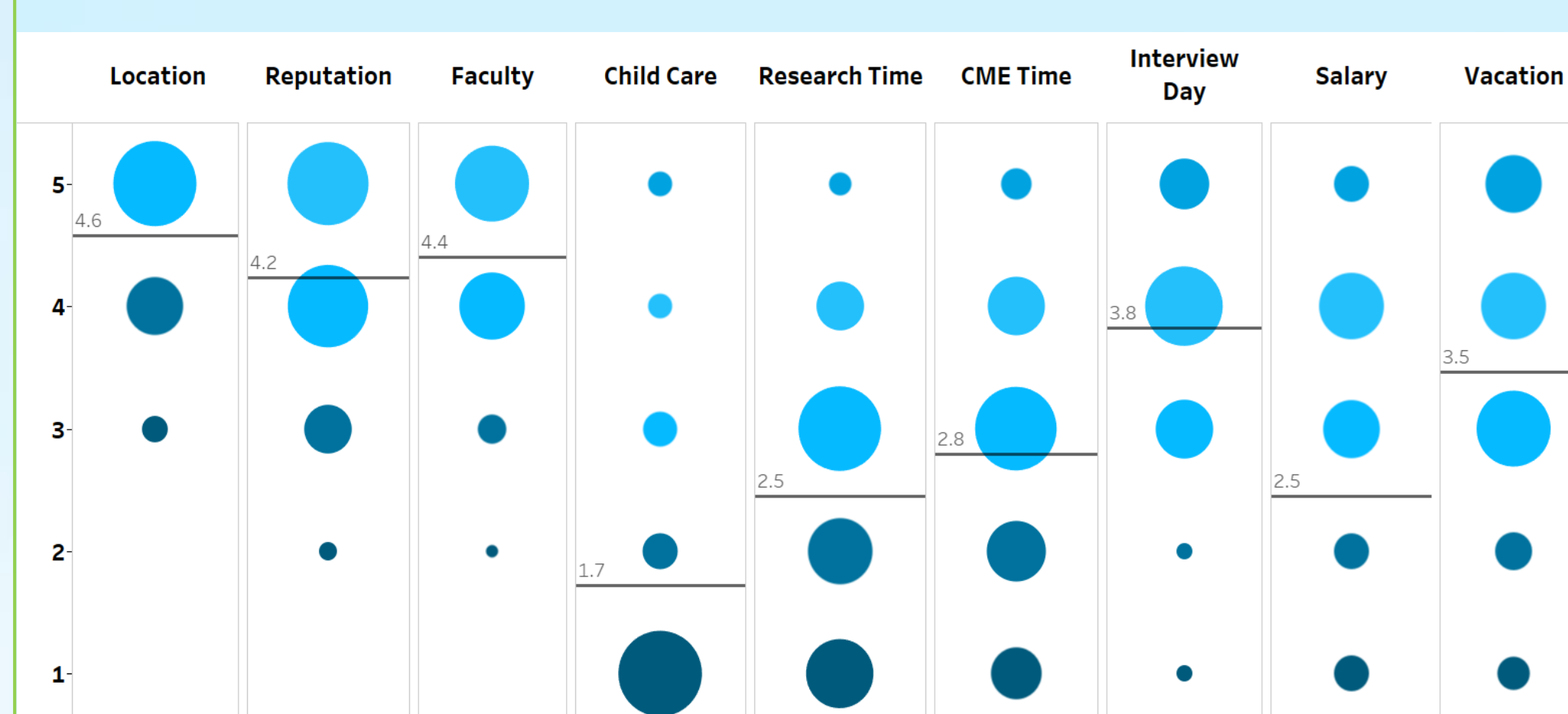


FIGURE 3: Likert Scale Mean Survey Responses. Circle size indicates number of respondents for each answer choice.

Discussion

- Applicants value interaction with residents and faculty during the interview process
 - Highest mean survey response: perception of resident happiness and satisfaction
 - Followed by interactions with residents and the faculty interview
 - Pre-interview dinner with residents only important
 - Informal environment to see “fit”
 - The indicated ideal number of interviews in a day varies from 2-5 interviews
 - This study: majority stated three interviews was the ideal number
 - May be specialty-specific
- SELECT Principles**
- Health Systems- how can we help make better matches?
 - Leadership- see a need and work toward solution in evidence-based manner
- Limitations**
- One health network with differing number of residents in each specialty
 - Potential recall and selection bias

Conclusions

- Residency interview days continue to be important for determining rank-list order
 - Interactions with residents are key
- Data about interview day preferences increases the probability that a program will fill positions with desired interviewed applicants.
- Data may be helpful for new residency programs looking for guidance on how to create a successful residency interview day.

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