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Determining barriers for establishing an ideal optometric practice

Abstract

238 optometrists representing the graduating classes of 1991, 1996, and 1998 from Pacific University College of Optometry were surveyed to determine potential barriers to establishing their ideal practice. 96 optometrists (40%) responded to the survey, representing 14 different modes of practice. Overall, the number one barrier for Pacific graduates was debt load with 92% of optometrists agreeing. Other significant barriers were start up costs, (87% agreeing), low initial salary (86%), lack of savings (88%), and lack of business education (87%). Some interesting barrier trends also evolved from this survey. Notably, lack of business education has become less of a barrier when comparing responses from 1991, 1996, and 1998. Competition in the optometric/ophthalmologic market had become a greater barrier for 1998 graduates compared to graduates of 1996, and 1991. Qualifying for insurance plans and finding a suitable practice location have also become emerging barriers for 1998 graduates as compared to graduates from 1991 and 1996. The survey also inquired about annual income, future prospects for the field of optometry, what keeps optometrists enthusiastic about the profession and the possibility of doing it all over again.

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Willard Bleything

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DETERMINING BARRIERS FOR ESTABLISHING
AN IDEAL OPTOMETRIC PRACTICE

By

JASON BOLENBAKER
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A thesis submitted to the faculty
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Advisor:

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AN IDEAL OPTOMETRIC PRACTICE

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Biographies

Jason Bolenbaker is from Reno, Nevada. He received his undergraduate degree in Microbiology from Washington State University. He graduated from the honors program at Washington State University. He plans on returning to Reno, Nevada to practice optometry.

Boyd Robertson is from Richland, Washington. He received his undergraduate degree in Zoology from Washington State University. He plans on returning to Tri-Cities, Washington to practice optometry.

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Abstract

238 optometrists representing the graduating classes of 1991, 1996, and 1998 from Pacific University College of Optometry were surveyed to determine potential barriers to establishing their ideal practice. 96 optometrists (40%) responded to the survey, representing 14 different modes of practice. Overall, the number one barrier for Pacific graduates was debt load with 92% of optometrists agreeing. Other significant barriers were start up costs, (87% agreeing), low initial salary (86%), lack of savings (88%), and lack of business education (87%).

Some interesting barrier trends also evolved from this survey. Notably, lack of business education has become less of a barrier when comparing responses from 1991, 1996, and 1998. Competition in the optometric/ophthalmologic market had become a greater barrier for 1998 graduates compared to graduates of 1996, and 1991. Qualifying for insurance plans and finding a suitable practice location have also become emerging barriers for 1998 graduates as compared to graduates from 1991 and 1996. The survey also inquired about annual income, future prospects for the field of optometry, what keeps optometrists enthusiastic about the profession and the possibility of doing it all over again.

Introduction

Every year new graduates venture into the real world of optometry. They are confronted with decisions on how to find their ideal practice setting while trying to maximize their finances, deal with coworkers, patients and insurances all while providing patient care. These aspects of optometry can serve as barriers to establishing their ideal practice and can even lead to discouraged and disenchanting optometrists who become bitter about their profession.

Kloos ¹ conducted a survey on the challenges new graduates face in a changing profession. Responses from United States graduating class of 1983, 1985, and 1987 revealed that high expenses and debt load, coupled with low fees disappointed many new practitioners. According to Kloos many of the respondents found dealing with business aspects frustrating and stressful. Yet another disappointment for recent graduates was the lack of respect they received as doctors amongst the medical community.

Marino ² polled optometry students on challenges they would anticipate facing. Among the responses, she found that inadequate business education, lack of locations, and debt management would be the primary obstacles.

Another barrier that recent graduates might face is the aspect of managed care, as predicted by Barnett ³. He states that, qualifying for insurance plans and understanding how to maximize benefits and make money from patients with managed care plans would be a challenge for the new practitioner.

This study was designed to determine if the aforementioned barriers are still problems for recent graduates. We organized the questions about barriers into five categories: financial, educational, political, business, and personal. We also asked whether they would go through optometry school again knowing what they had to deal with, and whether or not they would encourage their son or daughter to go into optometry. The objective of these final questions was to get a feel for how optometrists are viewing the future of the profession. We also asked them what aspects of optometry are keeping them enthusiastic and successful.

This information is important in order to help optometry students become educated as to how to adapt to a changing profession and how to be successful in a competitive market and what to expect once they leave school. In addition, this study may provide information concerning the reason as to why optometry school and medical school applicants have decreased in the past few years.

Methods

238 surveys were sent to graduates from Pacific University College of Optometry. We specifically polled the graduating classes of 1991, 1996, and 1998. We collected demographic information such as where they are practicing, how long they stayed in their first practice mode and how long they have been in their current practice mode. We also wanted to know what type of practice they were in immediately after they graduated along with their current practice mode. We also asked how much money they are currently earned. The 5 categories were financial barriers, educational barriers, political barriers, business barriers, and personal barriers. Optometrists were able to rate each listed barrier on a 5 point scale from agreeing strongly to disagreeing strongly.

Lastly we designed the survey to poll the optometrists as to what keeps them interested in optometry and what has brought them success.

Results

96 optometrists responded to our survey, which represents 40% of our potentially polled population.

Table I depicts our respondent demographics; how many optometrists from each class responded and the state representation. Overall, each class responded with an equal representation. Optometrists from Oregon, Minnesota, and Colorado accounted for approximately 30% of the responses. The regional responses from optometrists were as follows: 38% from northwest states, 22% from western states, 34% from midwest states, and 6% from eastern states.

Table I. Responses from Classes and State Representation

PUCO 1998: 31 PUCO 1996: 31 PUCO 1991: 34

State # of representatives Percent

AK	3	3.1
AZ	2	2.1
British Col.	5	5.2
CA	5	5.2
CO	9	9.4
CT	1	1.0
FL	2	2.1
HI	3	3.1
IA	2	2.1
ID	6	6.2
IL	2	2.1
MI	1	1.0
MN	10	10.4
MT	3	3.1
ND	5	5.2
NM	1	1.0
NV	1	1.0
OK	1	1.0
OR	13	13.5
SD	3	3.1
TX	1	1.0
UT	4	4.2
VA	2	2.1
WA	7	7.3
WY	4	4.2
TOTAL	96	

Table II represents the first mode of practice immediately after graduation. The most frequent mode was employment as an associate by another established optometrist. 34% of those surveyed fell into this category. The next most frequent mode of practice just after graduation was employment by a commercial or chain store. 14% of those surveyed fell into this category. 13% of those surveyed fell into the category of being employed by hospital or were independent contractors. In addition another 12 % started out in a solo practice.

Table II. First Mode of Practice

<u>Mode of Practice</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Solo Practice	12	12.5
Shared Expense Practice	1	1.0
Shared Expense Partnership w/Optomtrist	7	7.3
Shared Expense Partnership w/Ophthal.	0	0
Other Shared Expense Arrangements	5	5.2
Employed Associateship w/Optomtrist	33	34.4
Employed by Ophthalmologist	5	5.2
Employed by HMO	1	1.0
Employed by Government or Military	8	8.3
Employed by Chain	13	13.5
Employed by Other (hospital, independent contractor)	12	12.5
TOTAL	96	

Ava. Time Spent in 1st Mode of Practice

1991: 5.54 Yrs, 1996: 3.44 Yrs, 1998: 2.04

Table III shows their current mode of practice. The most frequent response was solo practice with 25%. Next came those in a partnership practice at 16%. Another 16% find employment as an associate with another optometrist. Table 3 also contains information concerning the average amount of time spent in their current mode of practice along with the percentages of those who have stayed in the same practice modality since graduation. 32-35% of those surveyed have not made any modality changes

Table III: Current Mode of Practice

<u>Mode of Practice</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Solo Practice	24	25%
Shared Expense Practice	4	4%
Shared Expense Partnership w/Optometrist	15	15%
Shared Expense Partnership w/Ophthalmol.	0	0%
Other Shared Expense Arrangements	7	7%
Employed Associateship w/Optometrist	15	15%
Employed by Ophthalmologist	3	3%
Employed by HMO	5	5%
Employed by Government or Military	3	3%
Employed by Chain	10	10%
Employed by Other	11	12%
Total	97	

Avg. Time Spent in Current Mode of Practice

1991: 7.41, 1996 : 3.73, 1998: 2.49

1991: 32% of those surveyed have not changed practices since graduation

1996: 32% of those surveyed have not changed practices since graduation

1998: 35% of those surveyed have not changed practices since graduation

Table IV provides income per year information. For the class of 1991, 71% of respondents make over \$75,000. 56% of respondents from the class of 1996 make over \$75,800. 52% of respondents from the class of 1998 make \$50,000-\$74,999, with another 23% in the \$75,000-\$99,999 range.

Table IV. Income per Year

<u>Salary Range</u>	<u>1991</u>		<u>1996</u>		<u>1998</u>	
	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Less than 20,000	0	0	0	0	1	3.2
20,000-29,999	0	0	1	3.2	0	0
30,000-39,999	4	11.8	1	3.2	1	3.2
40,000-49,999	1	2.9	3	9.7	1	3.2
50,000-74,999	4	11.8	5	16.1	16	51.6
75,000-99,999	14	41.2	6	19.4	7	22.6
100,000-150,000	7	20.6	9	29	4	12.9
More than 150,000	3	8.8	4	12.9	1	3.2
No responses	1	2.9	2	6.5	0	0

Table V shows that the class of 1998 works more hours per week on average than the other two classes but not by a great margin. The class of 1998 worked 38.1 hours a week, compared to 36.7 and 35.3 by the classes of 1991 and 1996 respectively.

Table V. Average Hours Currently Working/Week

<u>1991</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1998</u>
36.7	35.3	38.1

Table VI displays the results from the question of what keeps optometrists enthusiastic about the profession. The top 3 categories are primary care, disease, and co-management. Contact lenses, pediatrics, and new advances in technology were also significant in keeping optometrists enthusiastic.

Table VI. What Keeps Optometrists Enthusiastic

<u>Type of Care</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1998</u>
Primary Care	94%	90%	93%
Disease	91%	70%	84%
Contact Lenses	59%	70%	70%
Vision Therapy	17%	29%	22.5%
Sports Vision	14%	16%	10%
Pediatrics	61%	51%	48%
Low Vision	11%	9%	19%
Geriatrics	50%	35%	45%
Co-management	73.5%	74%	64%
Laser	41%	54%	26%
Advances in Technology	50%	70%	70%

Table VII displays what non-optometric aspects keep optometrists happy. Helping individuals, interacting with patients, and having the freedom to be your own boss were the top three categories. Two interesting points of data were also uncovered from this part of the survey. The classes of 1991 and 1996 viewed optometry as less than prestigious in the medical society, whereas the class of 1998 view themselves as doctors in high regard among the medical community. Also, an average of almost 50% would not recommend optometry to their children.

Table VII. What Optometrist Like Most About Their Job

Category	1991	1996	1998
Helping Individuals	94%	93%	97%
Patient Interaction	94%	90%	100%
Being Own Boss	82%	90%	100%
Income	65%	80%	71%
Prestige of Being a Doctor	41%	45%	82%
Flexible Working Hours	68%	68%	65%
Would you recommend your child to become an optometrist	53%	58%	42%

Table VIII lists the potential barriers that exist in establishing an ideal practice after graduation. The number one barrier was undoubtedly debt, with 92% of all respondents agreeing. Start up costs for equipment, building space and the like was also a barrier with 87% of respondents agreeing. Insufficient savings, low initial income, and lack of business education were also significant barriers. As Pacific University has augmented the business education aspect of their curriculum in recent years the 1998 class did not view this as a significant barrier unlike the class of 1991 where 96% of the respondents viewed it as one. Lack of management skills was also a significant barrier that has decreased significantly in recent graduating years. Conversely, competition within the optometric market was viewed as a barrier by the class of 1998 with 95% of respondents agreeing whereas the earlier classes did not have as much of a problem with this barrier. In fact, this was the number one barrier for the class of 1998. Similarly, the location of the practice was more of a barrier for the more recent graduating classes. Another interesting point of data the survey uncovered was that for newer graduates it has become harder to qualify for insurance plans.

Table VIII. Barriers in Creating the Ideal Practice

<u>Barriers</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>All</u>
Debt	97%	86%	93%	92%
Start up Costs	96%	82%	83%	87%
Low income	93%	80%	85%	86%
Savings	90%	81%	86%	88%
Lack of Business Education	96%	86%	77%	87%
Competition	78%	65%	95%	79%
Equipment Costs	88%	74%	73%	78%
Lack of Management Skills	82%	70%	75%	76%
Family Obligations	57%	37%	58%	51%
Bad Credit	5%	11%	0%	5%
Lack of Coding and Billing Knowledge	58%	39%	53%	50%
Lack of Clinical Experience	31%	23%	31%	28%
Lack of Continuing Education	11%	3%	4%	6%
Lack of Completing a Residency	14%	7%	14%	11%
Lack of Networking	48%	28%	32%	36%
Problems with State Boards	37%	23%	7%	23%
Problems with Licensing	20%	31%	8%	20%
Not Obtaining Insurance Plans	32%	38%	43%	37%
Location of Practice	23%	32%	50%	35%
Mode of Practice	41%	14%	40%	32%

Discussion

Optometry students face a variety of barriers to establishing an ideal practice. Our survey shows that the top 4 barriers are debt, insufficient savings, start-up costs and low initial income. It is evident that having sufficient funds is essential in establishing an ideal practice. Coming out of school with the pressures of making debt payments forces many young optometrists to choose alternative modes of practice. In analyzing the returned surveys it was apparent that some graduates are employed by commercial chains or other optometrists, or at times a combination of both, in order to earn a living. This enables one to make loan payments, but many obligations accompany these modes of practice often leading to many freedoms being sacrificed and the ideal practice is cast aside. Financial resources allow one to establish the ideal practice. If we were designing the survey over again it would have been interesting to poll the population as to how much their initial salaries were and if that was a significant factor in setting up an ideal practice.

Competition and location were also significant barriers to establishing an ideal practice. Our survey shows that competition and location of practice were two categories that have become more significant barriers to the more recent graduate. This leads to the question of saturation in the ophthalmic market and the need to cut back on applications to optometry school. It would also be beneficial to know if a graduate's primary decision for location of employment is based upon prime living circumstances versus seeking out a location that might not be as inviting, but is in need of an optometrist.

Another barrier that showed an increase in concern for recent graduates is qualifying for insurance plans. With an increase of managed care in optometry, getting on the insurance panel can be a step towards establishing the ideal practice especially if you reside in a certain location dominated by a particular managed care plan. Getting on a plan important in this case among others, but it is also important to have the business savvy to know which plans will give you the greatest return. A good follow up project would be to ask optometrists how they have been successful in choosing which insurance plans to join.

Lack of business education was also a great barrier for optometry students. Negotiating contracts, evaluating insurance plans, understanding legal issues, and figuring the economics of establishing an optometric practice are business aspects currently being addressed at Pacific. The emphasis in business education has changed since 1996, therefore the 1998 graduates do not perceive business education as a barrier compared to 1991 and 1996 graduates.

These barriers can discourage new and old optometrists alike. Roughly 50% of those who responded to the survey would dissuade their children from going into the field of optometry. However, for the majority of those polled, these barriers are only temporary and for some many of the barriers are not faced. At least 33% of each class that was polled has had a stable position or hasn't switched employers. Obviously these individuals have found their passion and are progressing in the profession. Do optometrists jump from practice to practice because they cannot find their passion or are they trying to fulfill financial obligations? Another follow up question to this project would be to ask the optometrists if they considered their current practice as ideal.

Students attending optometry school can take certain steps while attending optometry school that will assist them in their future goals of establishing the ideal practice. One strategy is to utilize debt management while in school. It would be recommended to enter optometry school with the minimal amount of undergraduate debt and minimize the amount of loans necessary to complete optometry school. Another strategy is to set realistic goals, such as giving yourself a five to ten year preparation period before becoming self-employed. Hopefully this information will help new and established optometrists to plan for and overcome the barriers they will face in setting up their ideal practice.

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Appendix A: Questionnaire Form

Please Complete the Following:

- 1) What year did you graduate from optometry school? _____
- 2) In which state are you employed? _____
- 3) Which of the following best describes your FIRST mode of practice after graduation?
 - Self Employed**
 - a. Solo practice
 - b. Shared expense arrangement
 - i. With one or more optometrists
 - ii. With one or more ophthalmologists
 - c. Partnership with one or more optometrists (Joint Ownership)
 - d. Partnership with one or more ophthalmologists (Joint Ownership)
 - e. Other _____
 - Employed**
 - f. Associateship (Employed by optometrist)
 - g. Ophthalmologist/Medical Clinic (Employed by a MD)
 - h. HMO
 - i. Government/Military
 - j. Chain or coporate
 - k. Other _____
- 4) How many years did you stay in this mode of practice? _____
- 5) Which of the following would best describe your CURRENT mode of practice?
 - Self Employed**
 - a. Solo practice
 - b. Shared expense arrangement
 - i. With one or more optometrists
 - ii. With one or more ophthalmologists
 - c. Partnership with one or more optometrists (Joint Ownership)
 - d. Partnership with one or more ophthalmologists (Joint Ownership)
 - e. Other _____
 - Employed**
 - f. Associateship (Employed by optometrist)
 - g. Ophthalmologist/Medical Clinic (Employed by a MD)
 - h. HMO
 - i. Government/Military
 - j. Chain or coporate
 - k. Other _____
- 6) How many years have you been in your current practice mode? _____
- 7) Which of the following best represents your 2000 net annual income
 - a. Less than \$20,000
 - b. \$20,000-29,999
 - c. \$30,000-39,999
 - d. \$40,000-49,999
 - e. \$50,000-74,999
 - f. \$75,000-99,999
 - g. \$100,000-149,999
 - h. Greater than \$150,000
- 8) On average, how many hours a week did you see patients in 2000? _____
- 9) If you had to do it all over again, would you enter the field of optometry?
 - a. Definitely
 - b. Probably
 - c. Not likely
 - d. Never
- 10) With the future trends in mind, would you recommend the field of optometry to your son or daughter?
 - a. Definitely
 - b. Probably
 - c. Not likely
 - d. Never

I) What are the financial barriers you've faced in setting up your ideal practice? Please check the box that most fits your feelings about the following areas as barriers.

	Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
Personal debt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Bad Credit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice Startup Cost	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Low Initial Income	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of Coding/Billing Insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of Savings and/or Investments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

II) What are the educational barriers you've faced in setting up your ideal practice? Please check the box that most fits your feelings about the following areas as barriers.

	Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
Lack of Clinical Experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Lack of Classroom Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of Education in Business Aspects of Practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of C.E. in Specific Topics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of Post Graduate Study	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of Residency Training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of Fellowship Status in Professional Societies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

III) What are the political barriers you've faced in setting up your ideal practice? Please check the box that most fits your feelings about the following areas as barriers.

	Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
Lack of Networking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State Laws Regulating Optometry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State Board Licensure Process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inability to Qualify for Insurance Plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

IV) What are the business barriers you've faced in setting up your ideal practice? Please check the box that most fits your feelings about the following areas as barriers.

	Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
Competition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Equipment Availability/Cost	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of Training in Staff Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Location	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Patient Demographics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Current Practice Mode	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

V) What are the personal barriers you've faced in setting up your ideal practice? Please check the box that most fits your feelings about the following areas as barriers.

	Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
Family Obligations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal Health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health of a Family Member	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

VI) Which of the following areas in optometry keeps you enthusiastic about the profession? Please check the box that most fits your feelings about the following areas.

	Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
Primary Care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ocular Disease and Therapeutics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contact Lenses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vision Therapy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sports Vision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pediatrics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Low Vision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Geriatrics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comanagement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	P	P	<input type="checkbox"/>
Potential Opportunities in Laser Treatments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New Advances in Technology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

VII) Which of the following social/business aspects keeps you enthusiastic about the profession? Please check the box that most fits your feelings about the following areas.

	Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
Helping Individuals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interaction with Patients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to be Your Own Boss	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Income	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prestige of Being a Doctor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flexible Hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

VIII) Please check the box that most fits your feelings about the following statement: I would advise my son or daughter to enter the profession of optometry.

Agree Strongly	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
P	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>