

ABSTRACT

THESIS: Graduate and Undergraduate Perspectives of the Graduate Admissions Process in Speech-Language Pathology

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Graduate admissions in Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) has become a critical area of study, as service delivery demands continue to increase. The purpose of this study was to identify potential barriers to the growth of the profession by analyzing the perspectives of undergraduate and graduate students regarding the graduate admissions process in SLP. Additionally, the socioemotional health factors of stress and perfection among undergraduate and graduate respondents were analyzed. This study utilized a cross-sectional survey design to investigate 112 undergraduate and 75 graduate respondents' perspectives on graduate admissions, as well as differences on dependent measures of perceived stress and perfectionism. Results revealed significant differences on perspective theme 1, Admissions Criteria. Undergraduate respondents agreed strongly with survey items, whereas graduate respondents disagreed. These data suggest significant differences between undergraduate and graduate students in their perspectives of the admissions criteria of SLP training programs. On a dependent measure of stress, respondents' scores revealed significantly higher perceived stress among undergraduate respondents; however, both groups scores fell in the range of moderate perceived stress. On a dependent

measure of perfectionism, both undergraduate and graduate respondents exhibited two distinctly different profiles of perfectionism. Undergraduate respondents were characterized as maladaptive perfectionists, while graduate respondents were characterized as adaptive perfectionists. Potential barriers to the growth of the profession were identified, and various considerations for training programs were discussed to address recruitment efforts and increase the retention of students in the profession.