



# JOB AND CAREER SATISFACTION IS RELATED TO PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND RELATIONAL WELL-BEING OF PHYSICAL THERAPISTS



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## Introduction

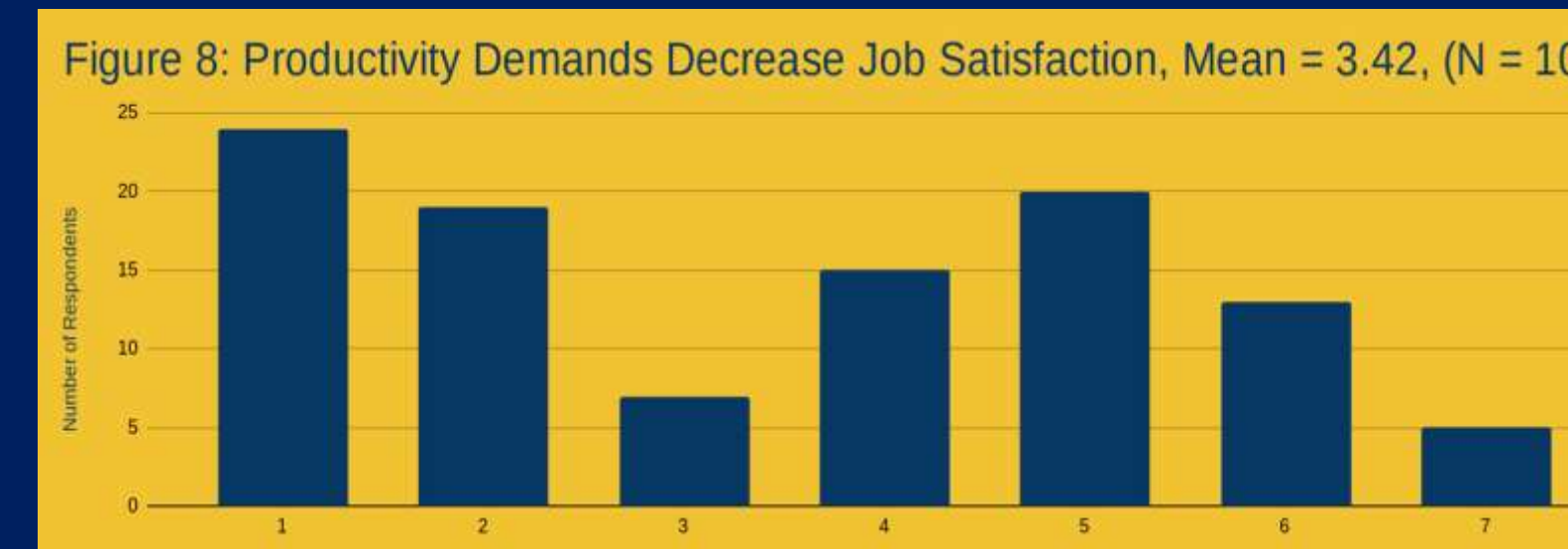
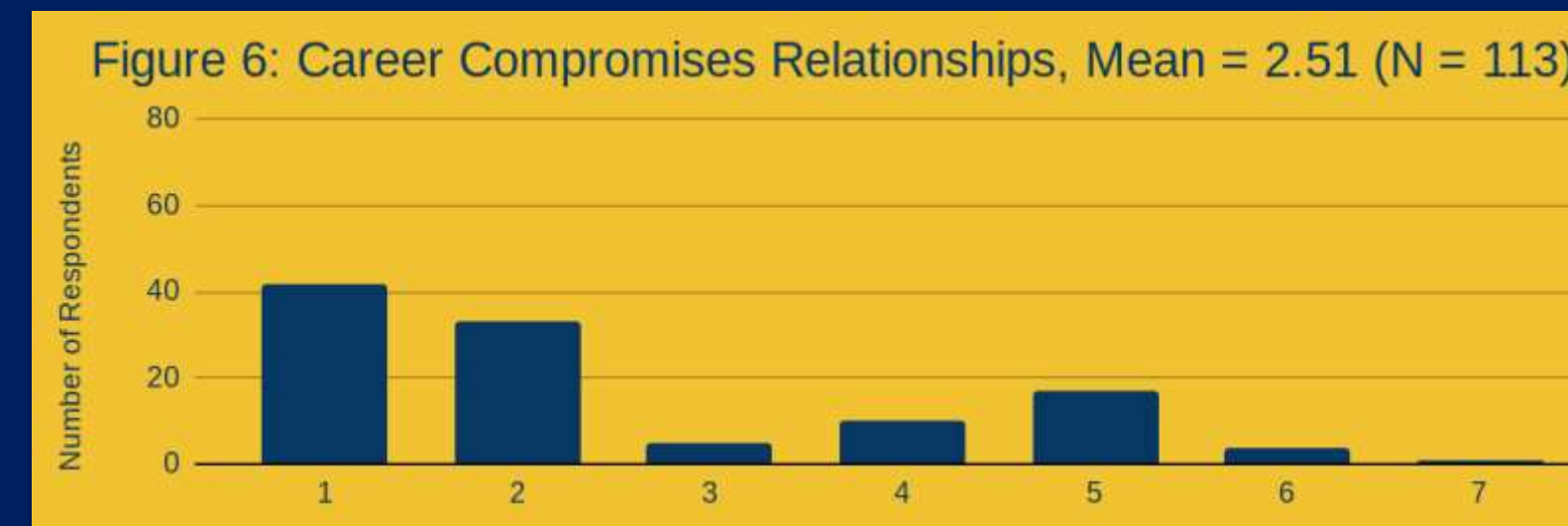
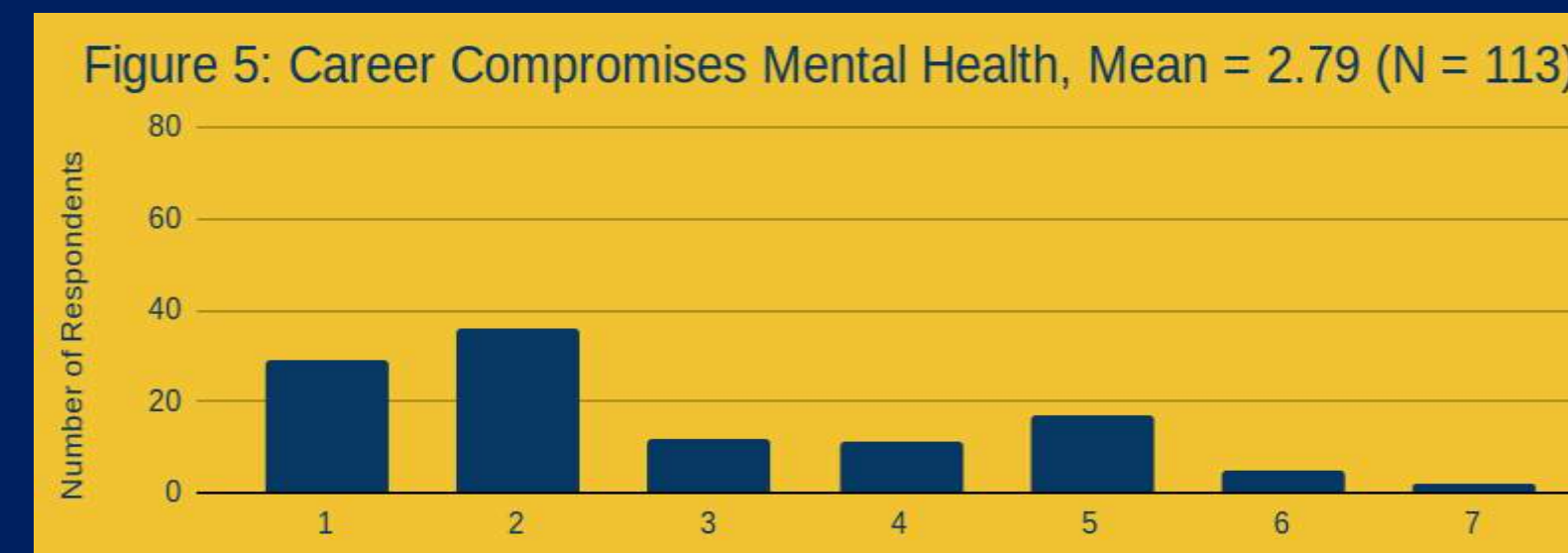
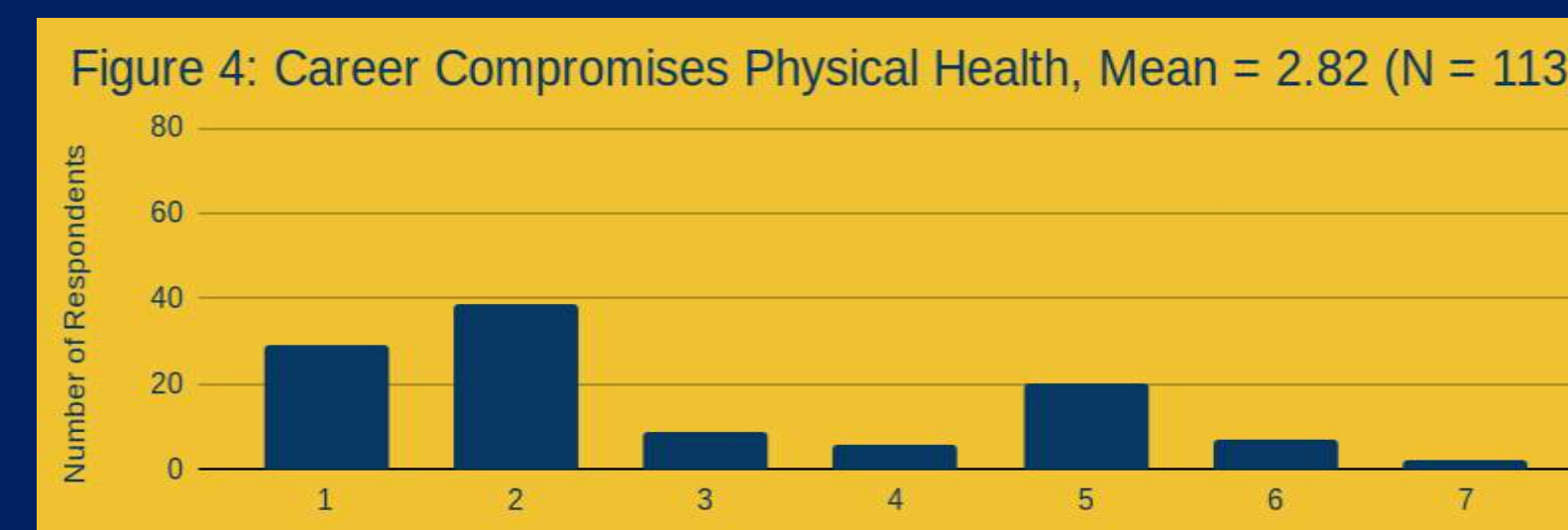
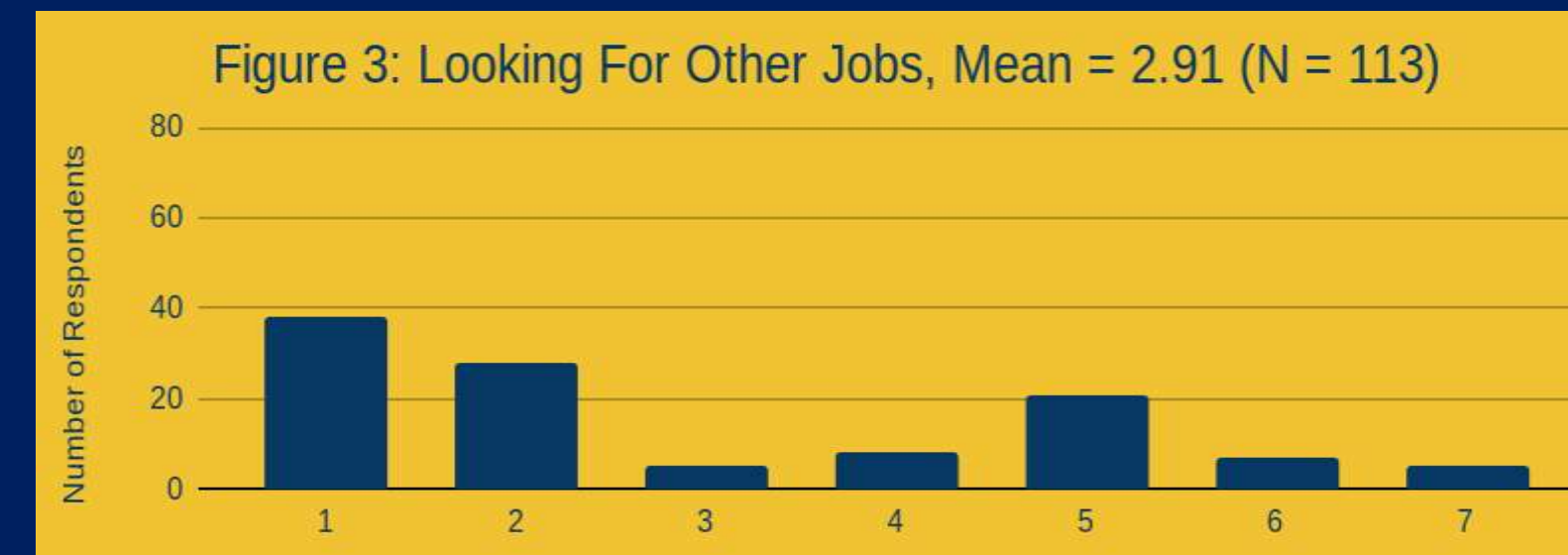
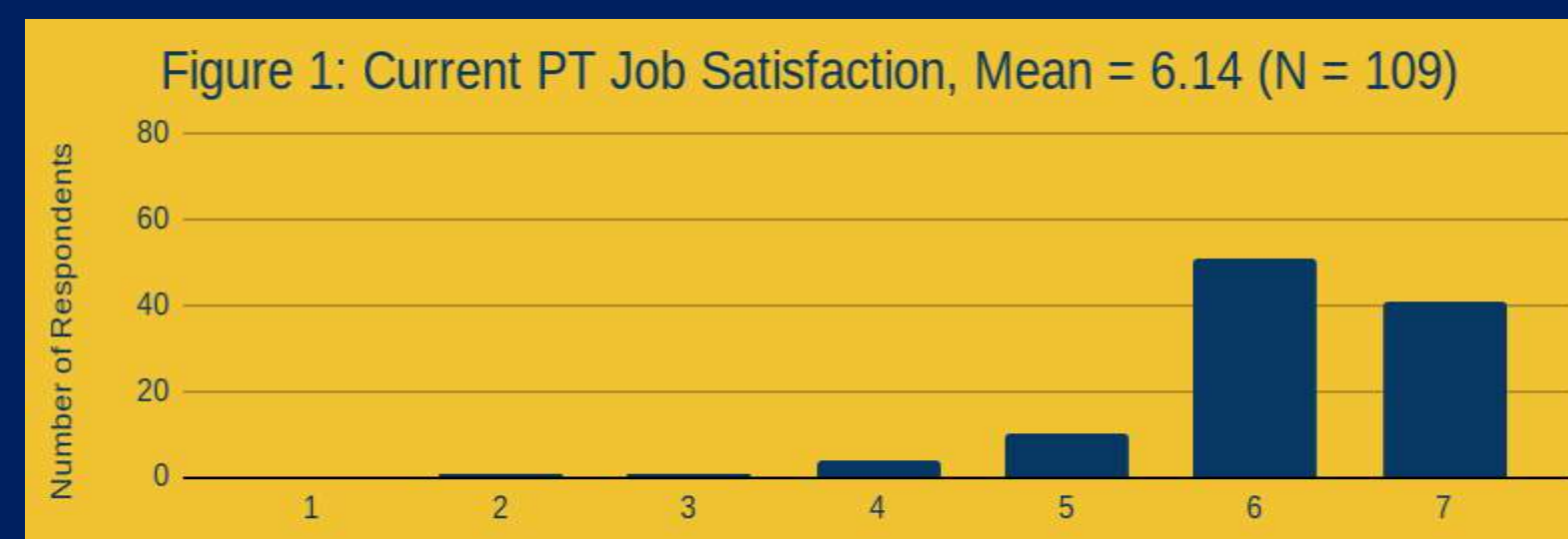
The conditions of employment often affect job and career satisfaction. Research shows that physical therapists (PT) with high demands and low control may be at increased risk for both turnover and work-related pain (1). Specifically, research assessed the effects of work in physical therapy on variables such as physical health (1,2,5) and stress (1). These issues, in addition to the emotional and relational well-being of PT in the United States of America (USA) have not been studied, other than one study of PT in Wisconsin (3). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to assess the relationship between a variety of subject variables and the physical, mental, and relational well-being of PT in the USA.

## Methods

- 113 PT (Age =  $54.8 \pm 4.52$  years) participated. Subjects included 75 women and 37 men, from 39 states. Subjects provided written informed consent prior to participating and the study was approved by the Institutional Review Board.
- The survey instrument was sent via conventional mail to 500 PT in the USA whose information was obtained from the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA). A qualitative, cross-sectional conventional mail survey instrument was used to characterize background and position profile of PT.
- The validated survey instrument, National Role Delineation of Physical Therapists, was adopted from a previous published research study of physical therapists (3). The survey contained 33 open-ended and fixed-response questions, resulting in 452 pages of data.
- Pearson's correlation coefficients were used to determine the relationship between subject variables and measures of job satisfaction.
- Descriptive data were analyzed, using Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS 27.0).
- Answers to open-ended questions were content-analyzed according to previously published recommendations (4).

## Results

- PT satisfaction with their career was negatively correlated with a compromise of their physical ( $r = -0.20$ ,  $p = 0.034$ ), mental ( $r = -0.39$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ) and relational ( $r = -.44$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ) well-being.
- PT satisfaction in their current position was negatively correlated with a compromise of their self-reported physical ( $r = -0.32$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ), mental ( $r = -0.39$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ), and relational ( $r = -0.46$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ) well-being.
- No correlations were found ( $p > 0.05$ ) between subject gender, age, salary, hours worked per week, time of start or end of work day, and their physical, mental, or relational well-being.
- Figures 1 and 2 display current PT job and career satisfaction, respectively. Figure 3 shows potential career change. Figure 4 demonstrates the degree to which physical health is compromised due to profession. Figure 5 displays mental health compromised due to profession. Figure 6 shows the degree to which non-work relationships are compromised. Figure 7 demonstrates if productivity demands are manageable. Figure 8 indicates if productivity demands decrease job satisfaction of PT.



## Discussion

This is the first study to assess the physical, mental and relational well-being of PT. Results show that job and career satisfaction are related to variables such as subject physical, mental, and relational well being, as shown for chiropractors (7) and other PT (3).

These wellness variables were not related to variables such as gender, age, salary, or hours worked per week. Subjects in the current study demonstrated high mean job and career satisfaction, consistent with other rehabilitation professionals (3,7). They report infrequent thoughts about a career change, consistent with other sources (1,3,7), and demonstrate a low mean score for their career compromising physical, mental and relational wellbeing, as previously reported (1,3). The current study demonstrates a relatively low mean score of productivity demands decreasing job satisfaction for PT, consistent with other data (3, 7, 8).

## Conclusion

Few PT experience compromised physical, mental, and relational health due to their work. This information can be used by current and prospective PT students to evaluate the effects of the profession on their well-being. Employers and employees should realize that job satisfaction has global effects on PT wellness.

## References

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