Physiotherapy students' attitudes toward interprofessional education at program entry and completion: a three-year cohort

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INTRODUCTION

- Interprofessional education (IPE) prepares students for future interprofessional collaborations in the workplace
- Effective interprofessional collaborations enables efficient communication and teamwork between clinicians
- Traditional IPE delivery transitioned into alternative methods during the pandemic

OBJECTIVE

To compare interprofessional collaboration readiness from program entry to graduation in entry-level, Master of Science physiotherapy (PT) students during the pandemic years

METHODS

- PT students who experienced pandemic-related classroom disruptions were included
- Students were invited to complete the Readiness to Interprofessional Learning Scale (RIPLS) at program entry and completion (Figure 1)
  - Analyzed via Wilcoxon rank sum test or Wilcoxon signed-rank test, effect sizes reported as Somer's D (D)
  - STATA 17.0/BE was used, and $p<0.05$ considered statistically significant

DESCRIPTION OF RIPLS

- ❖ 19 item scale, scored using a 5-point Likert scale (1 - strongly disagree to 5 – strongly agree)
- ❖ Provides a total score and 4 subscales (range of scores):
  - ➤ *Subscale 1*: Teamwork & Collaboration (9 – 45)
  - ➤ *Subscale 2*: Negative Professional Identity (3 – 15)
  - ➤ *Subscale 3:* Positive Professional Identity (4 – 20)
  - ➤ *Subscale 4:* Roles & Responsibilities (3 – 15)
- ❖ Total score ranges from 19 (low readiness) to 95 (high readiness)
- ❖ Scores for subscales 2 and 4 are reversed before totaling scores

PARTICIPANTS
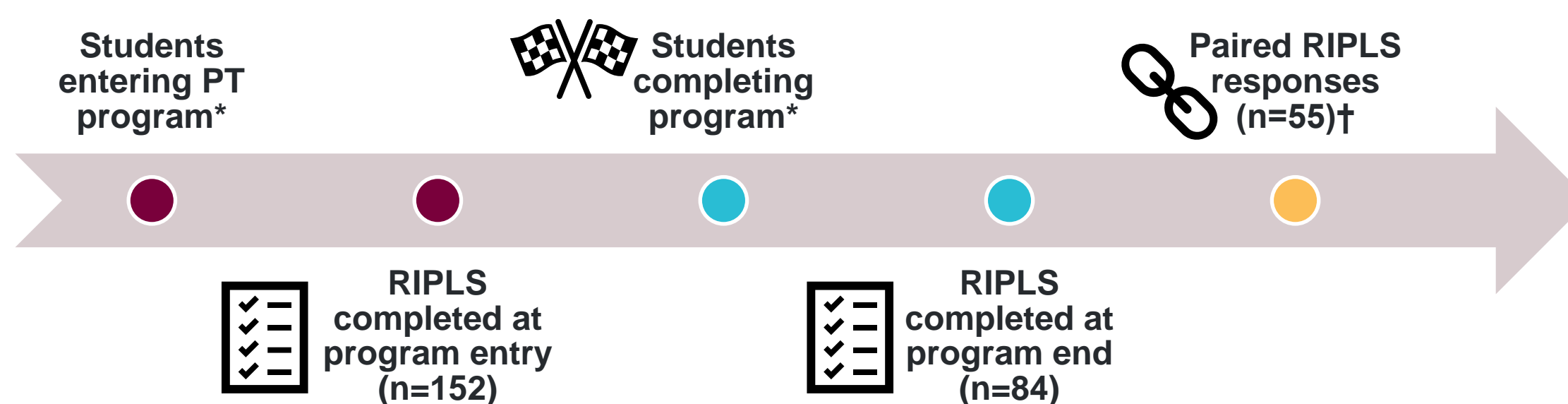
Figure 1: Timeline diagram of data collection for each cohort; *for 3 cohorts (2019 – 2021; 2020– 2022; 2021 – 2023); †Responses were paired based on student generated code-names and not all students who completed RIPLS at program entry completed the RIPLS at program end
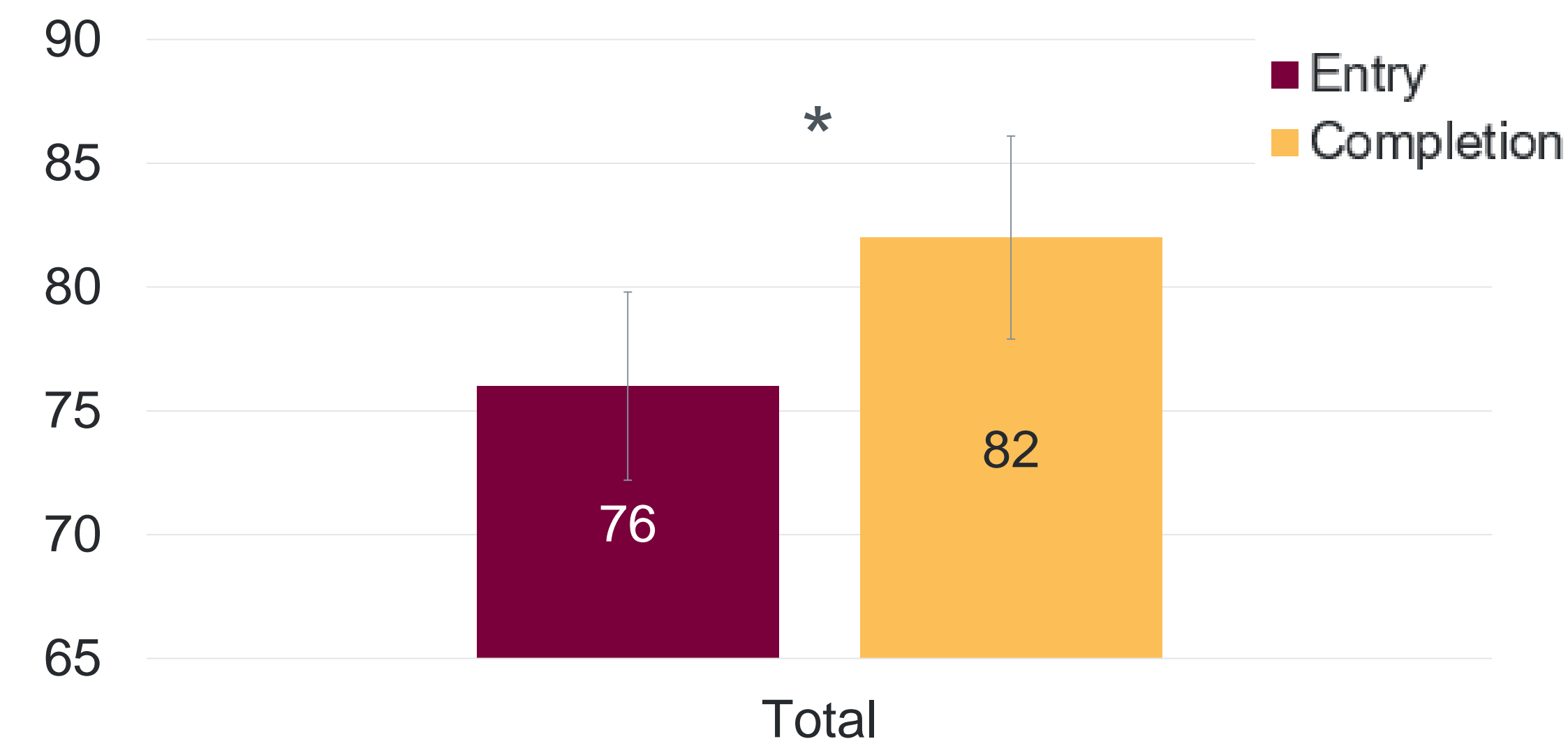
Gender Distribution
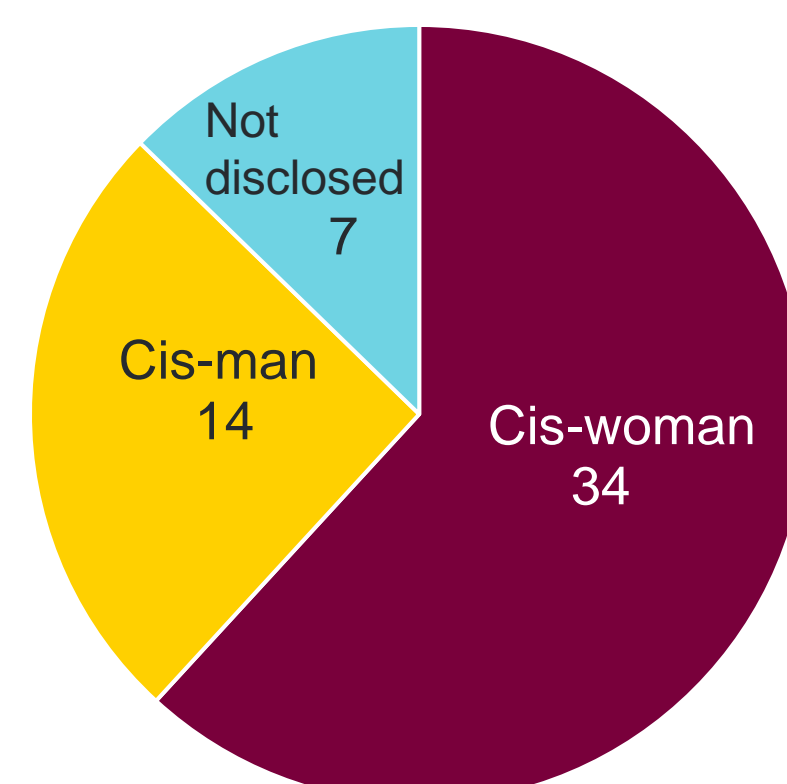
Mean Age (±S.D.)
24.67±0.68 years

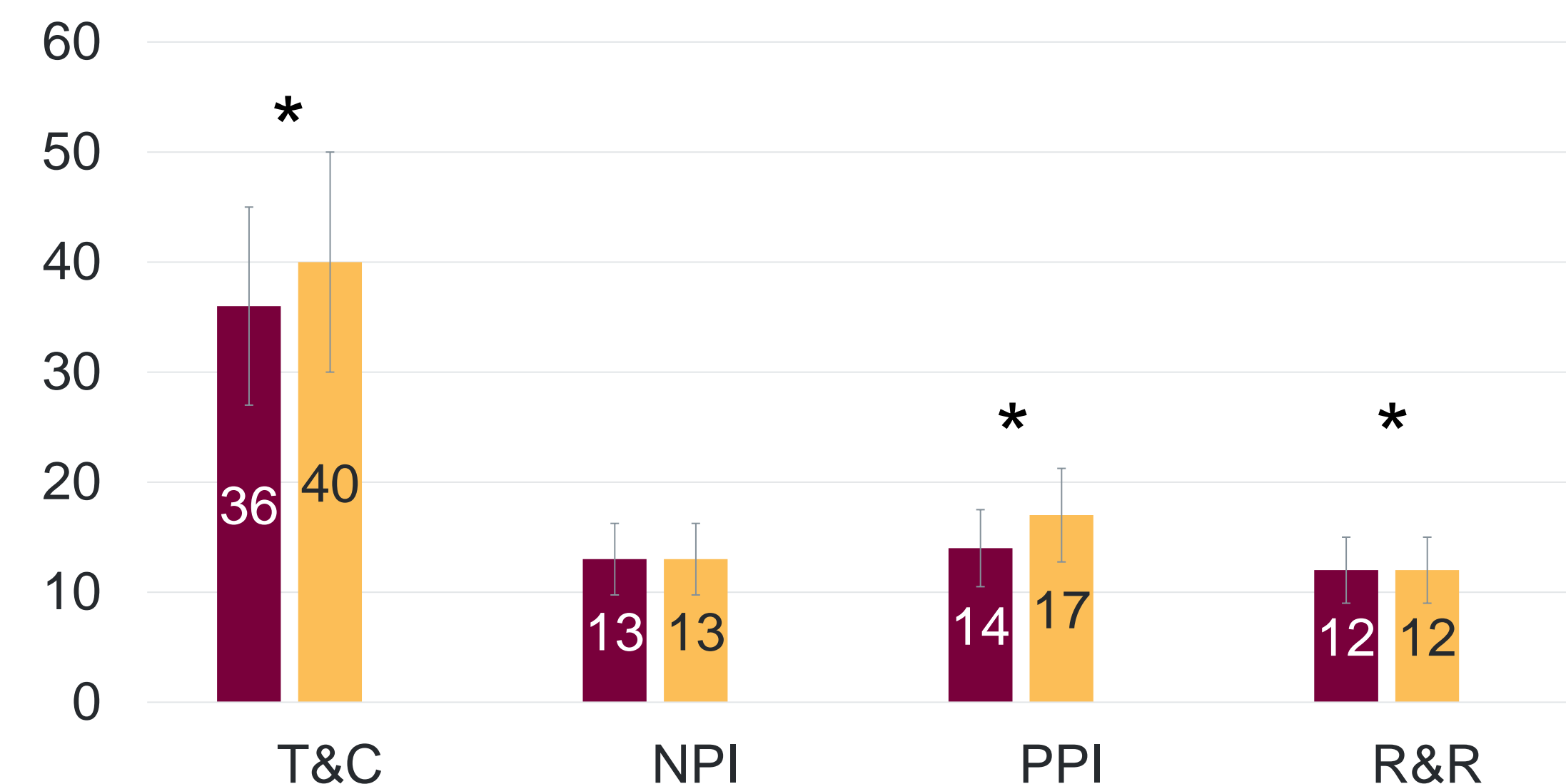**Figure 2:** Respondents' characteristics – Gender and mean age.

RESULTS

RIPLS Median Total Scores

Figure 3: Median total score (value in bars); significant differences in scores at program entry and completion with effect size (D) = 0.33.

RIPLS Median Subscale Scores

Figure 4: Median subscale scores (value in bars); significant differences in scores at program entry and completion are indicated by *asterisks for p-values <0.05. The effect sizes (D) for T&C, PPI and R&R were 0.48, 0.52 and 0.10, respectively.
Abbreviations: T&C – Teamwork and collaboration; NPI – Negative professional identity; PPI – Positive professional identity; R&R – Roles and responsibilities.

CONCLUSIONS

- Increased in 3 subscales and total scores:
  - ➤ Teamwork and Collaboration
  - ➤ Positive Professional identity
  - ➤ Roles and responsibilities

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Non-conventional approaches to IPE is still impactful at improving PT students' perceptions and readiness toward IPE

- Non-traditional methods may be a feasible solution to increase flexibility and engagement from students
- Future studies need to evaluate and compare the changes to students' IPE readiness across:
  - ➤ Years before and after the pandemic
  - ➤ Other health professional programs

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