



The Unspoken Price Tag Of Applying To Plastic Surgery And Other Competitive Surgical Residences: A 2015-2025 Systematic Review



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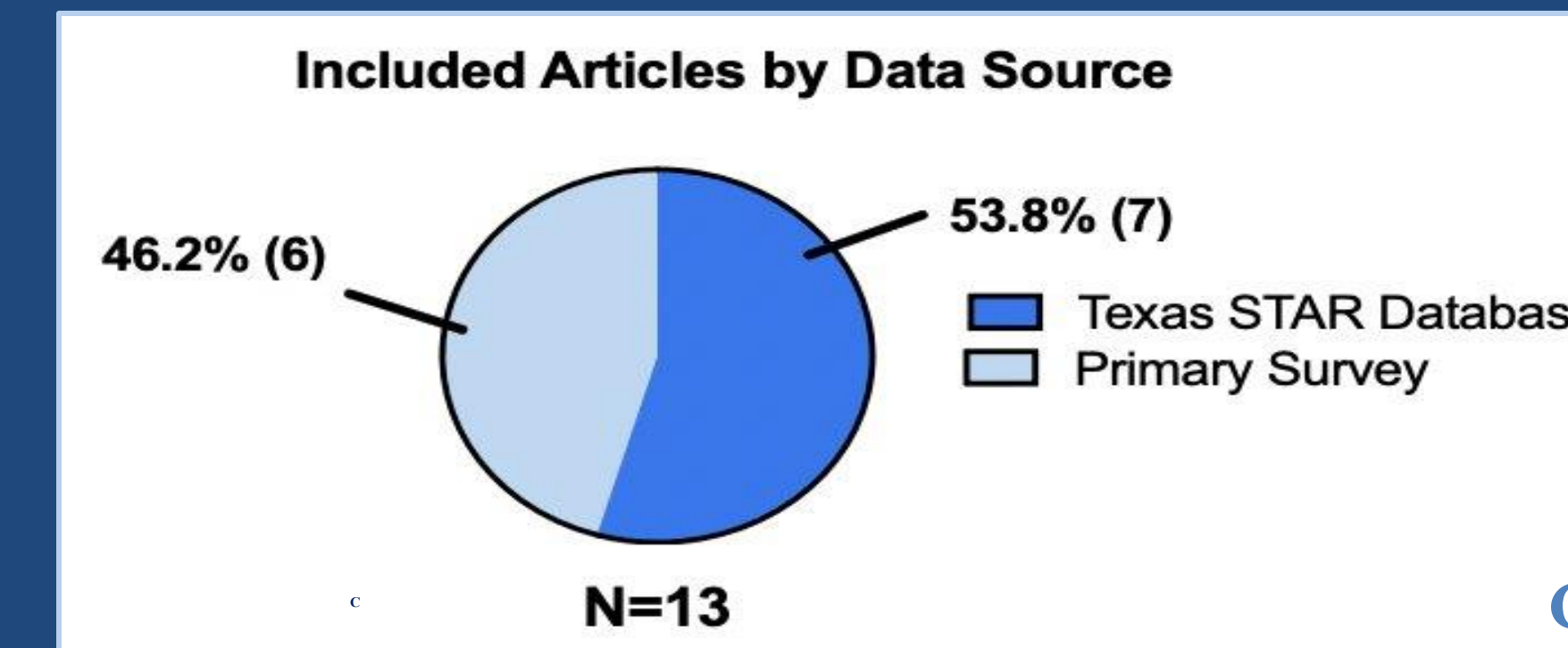
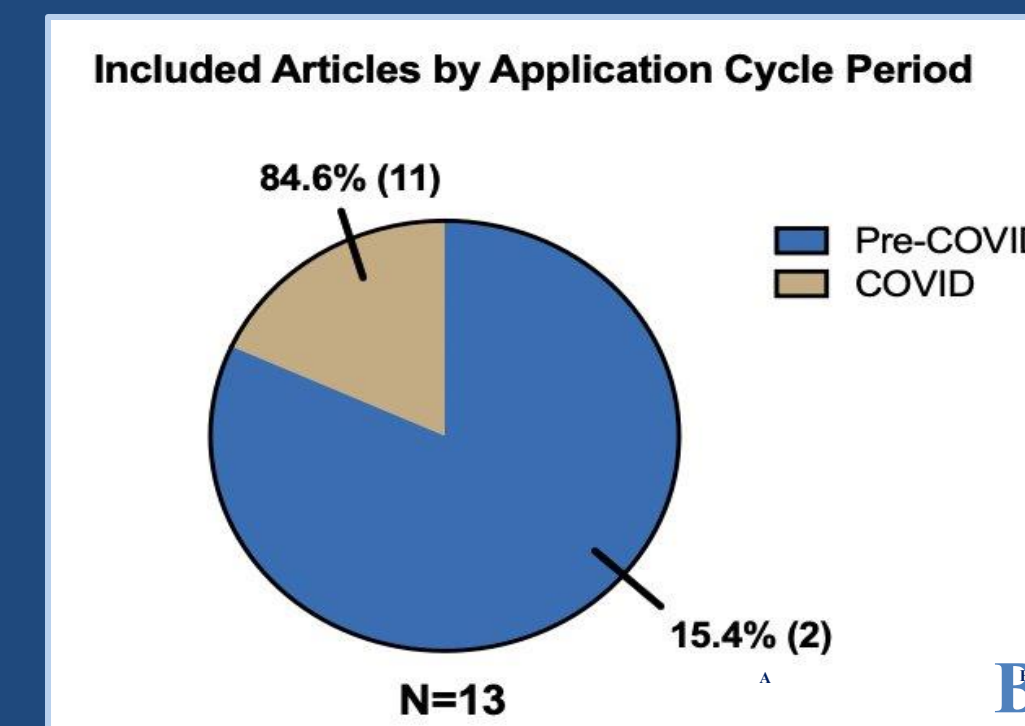
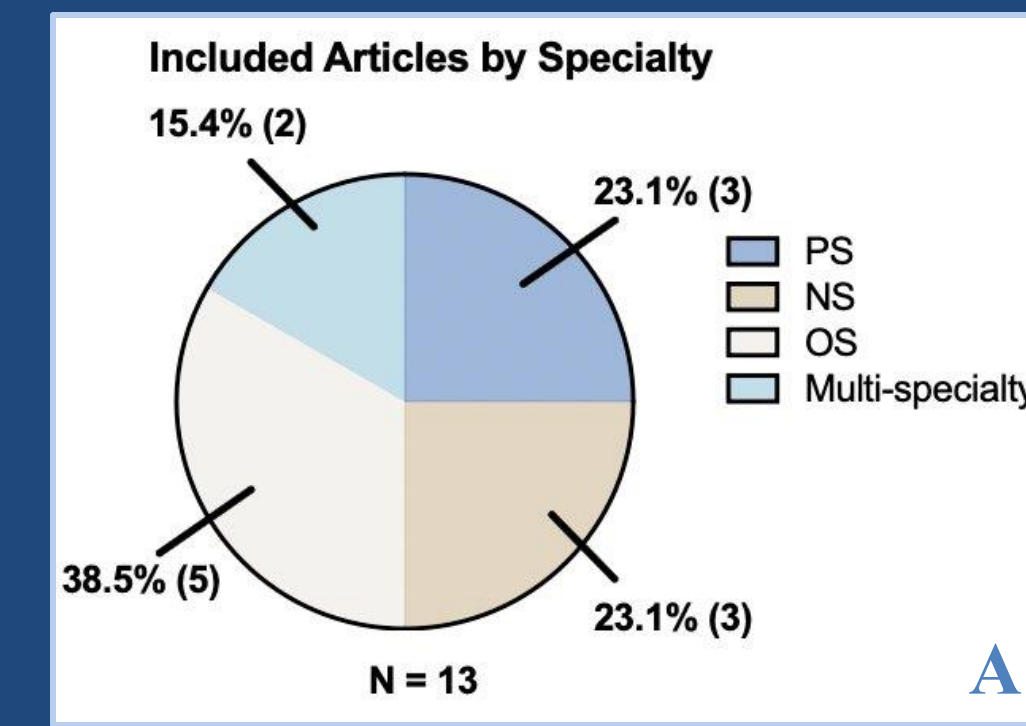
INTRODUCTION

Surgical residency is among the most competitive training pathways

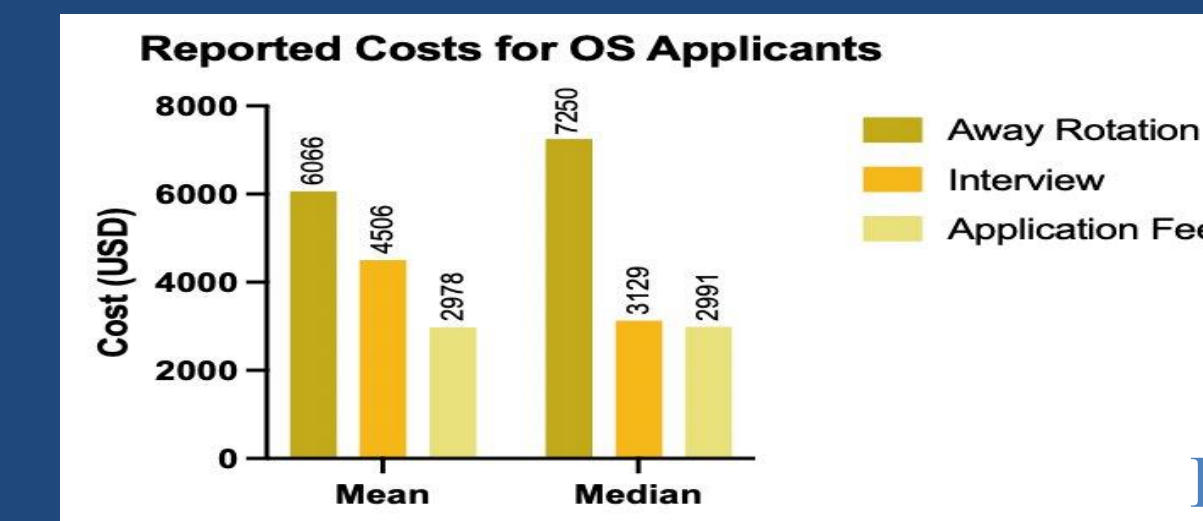
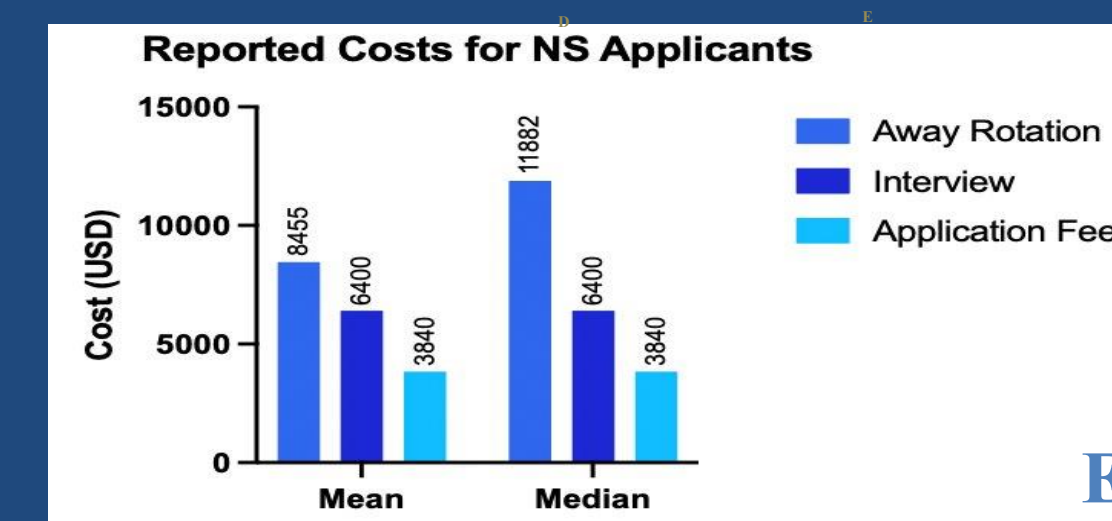
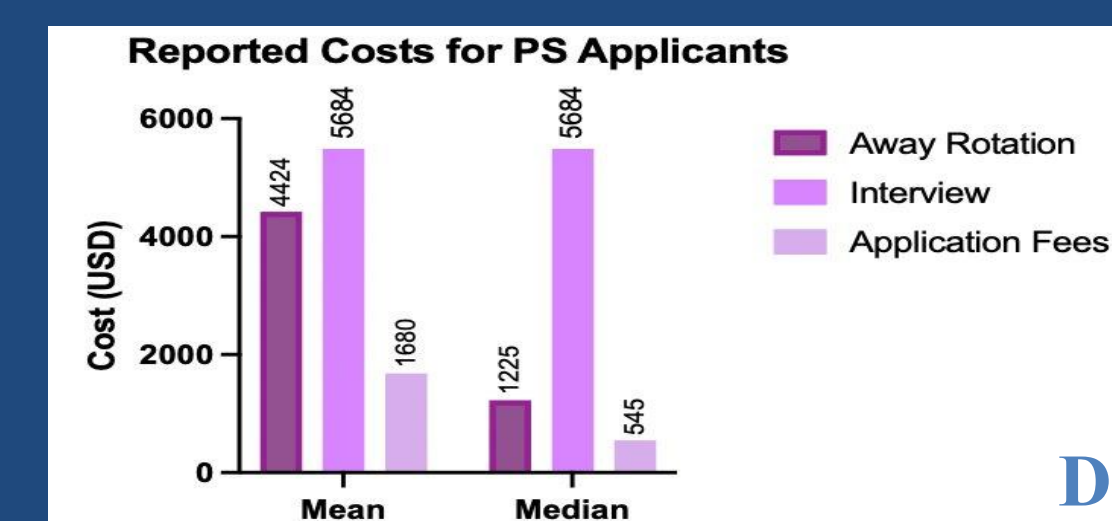
Plastic surgery, neurosurgery, and orthopedics have among the lowest match rates, making the final year of medical school critical for applicants.

The financial burden associated with applying to these specialties remains poorly characterized.

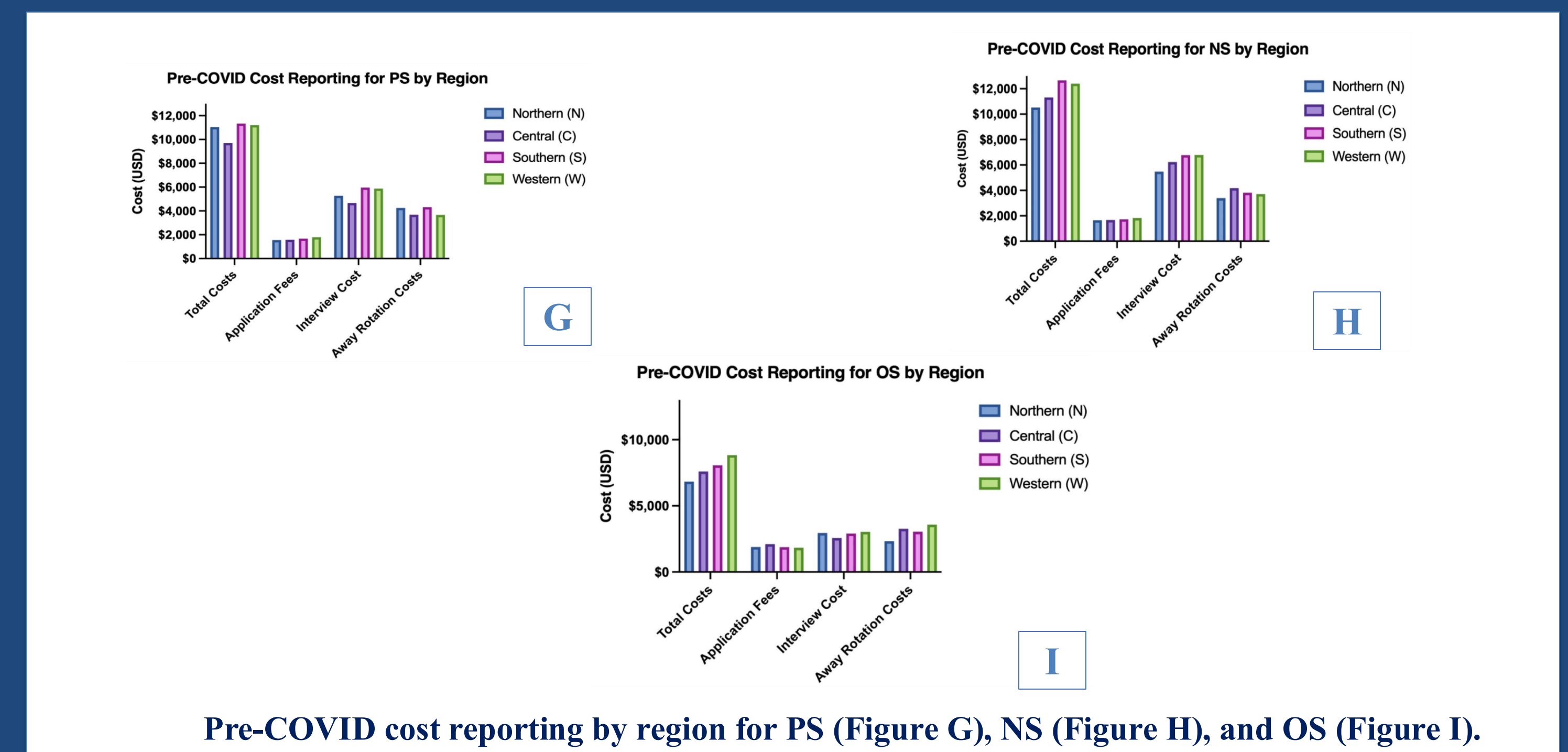
RESULTS



Proportion of Studies by Specialty (Figure A), Publication Period (B), and Data Source (Figure C)



Mean and Median Reported Costs of Application Cycle-Related Fees for PS (Figure D), NS (Figure E), and OS (Figure F)

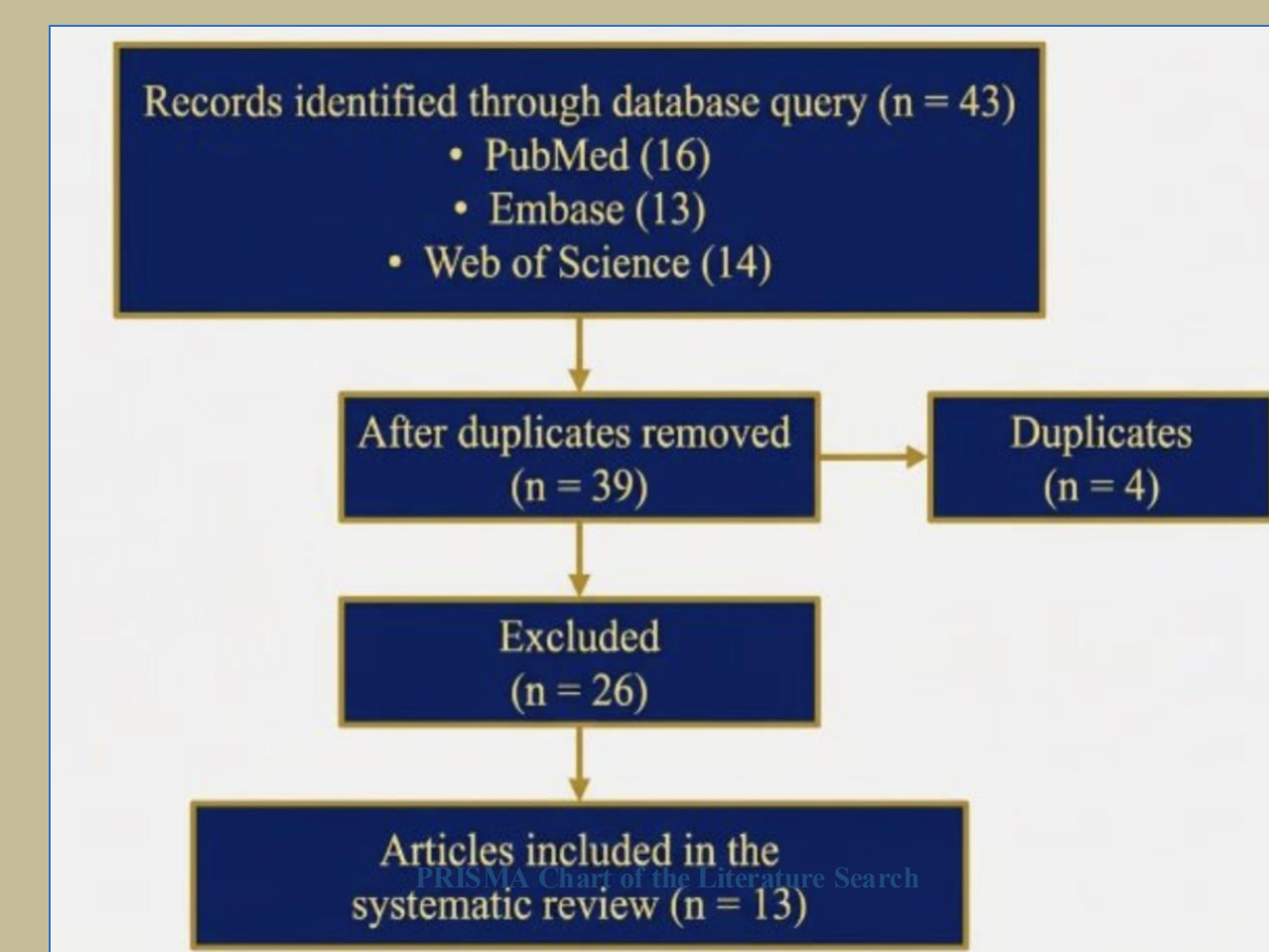


Pre-COVID cost reporting by region for PS (Figure G), NS (Figure H), and OS (Figure I).

OBJECTIVE

1. Summarize published cost reporting for 4th-year medical student residency application expenses.
2. Compare the financial burden among PS, NS, and OS applicants by geographic region and application cycle period.

METHODS



PRISMA Chart of the Literature Search

SIGNIFICANCE AND CONCLUSIONS

- Most studies focused on OS applicants, pre-COVID application cycles, or Texas STAR data.
- PS and NS applicants reported **higher total costs** than OS applicants.
- Future studies should **quantify specialty-specific cost drivers** (program density, travel burden, interview format) to inform **targeted reforms**.

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