

# Investigating the Technology Usages and Job Skill Preferences of Worksite Wellness Professionals

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## BACKGROUND

As businesses continue to recognize the benefits of a happy, healthy, high-performing workforce, job prospects for experienced worksite wellness professionals are projected to grow much faster than the national average (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019). Work experience is very important to career growth, but equally so is the recognition of current trends and being in the right place with the right skill sets to take advantage of the opportunities presented. As a method of creating, evaluating, and disseminating this practical list of current trends and desired skill sets, this study explored the technology usages and job skill preferences of practicing worksite wellness professionals.



## OBJECTIVES

- 1) Identify the technologies currently being used by a sample of practicing worksite wellness professionals in each of the Seven Areas of Responsibility for health education specialists
- 2) Identify the preferred job skills for entry-level employment in a worksite wellness setting from the perspective of a sample of practicing worksite wellness professionals

## STUDY DESIGN

Those individuals who work in a worksite wellness setting were eligible to participate in the study. All research data was collected via electronic survey emailed on two separate occasions to 20 current and former colleagues of the primary investigator. The Qualtrics survey used for data collection was an instrument designed specifically for this research and included three general sections:

**Section 1** requested study participants to list the technologies which are currently being used by either the individual or someone else in the individual's department to complete work-related tasks.

**Section 2** requested study participants to rank a list of preferred job skills via Likert scale for entry-level employment in the individual's department. We chose these particular strategies based on our own advocacy experience, recommendations from our colleagues, and widespread availability and ease of use (Hancher-Rauch, Gebru, & Carson, 2019).

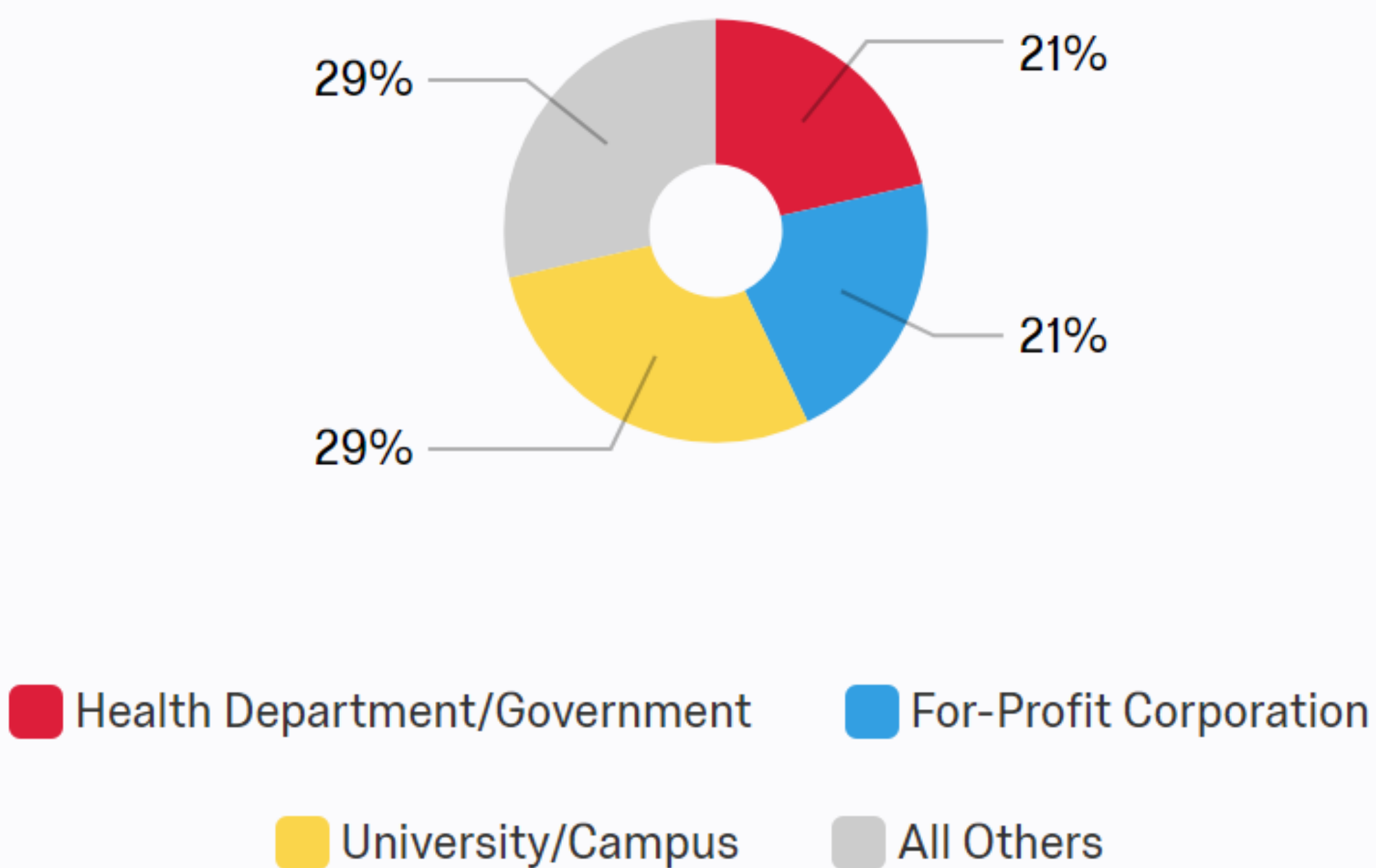
**Section 3** assessed demographics and applicable work practice details.

## DEMOGRAPHICS/WORK PRACTICE DETAILS

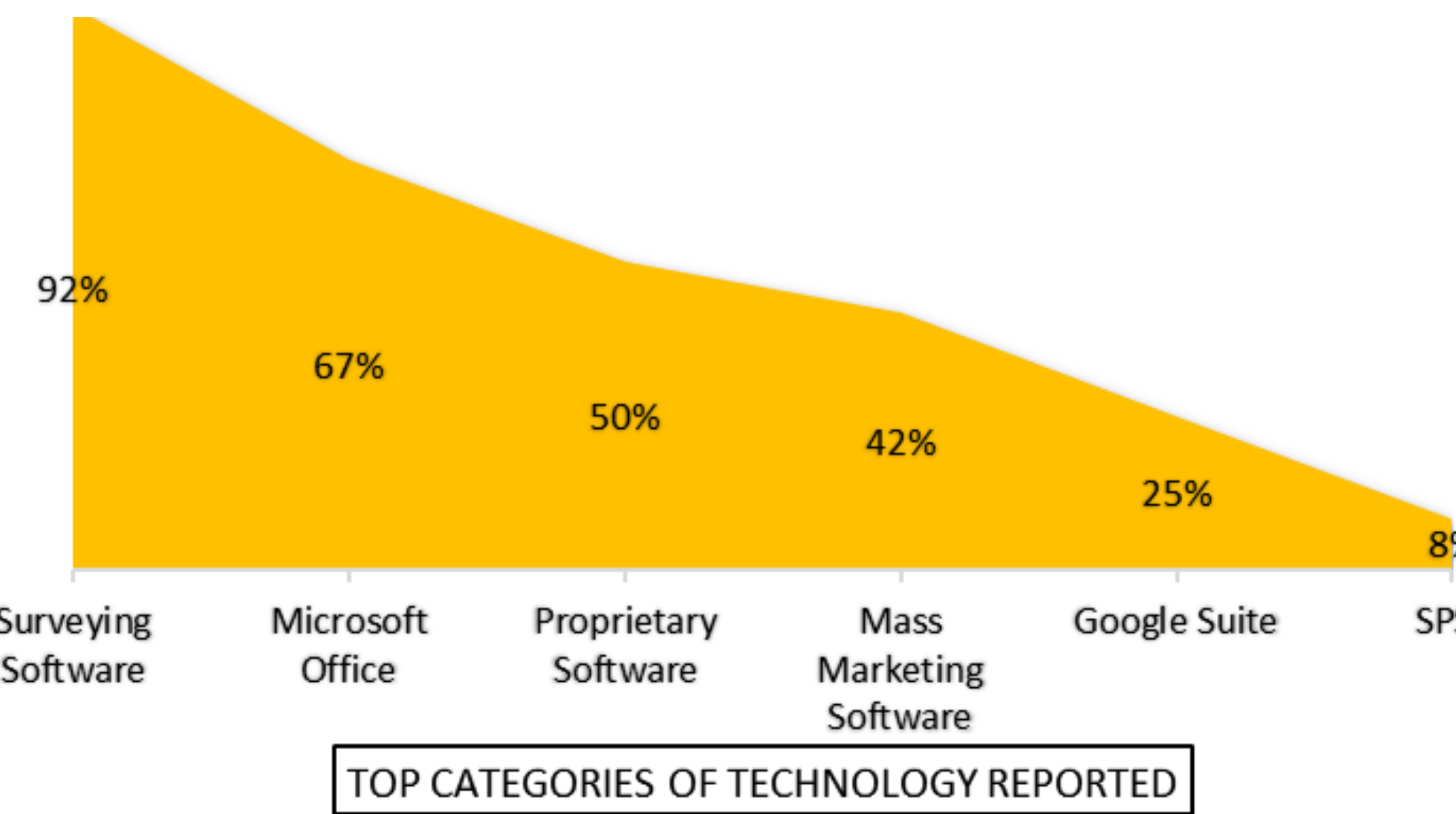
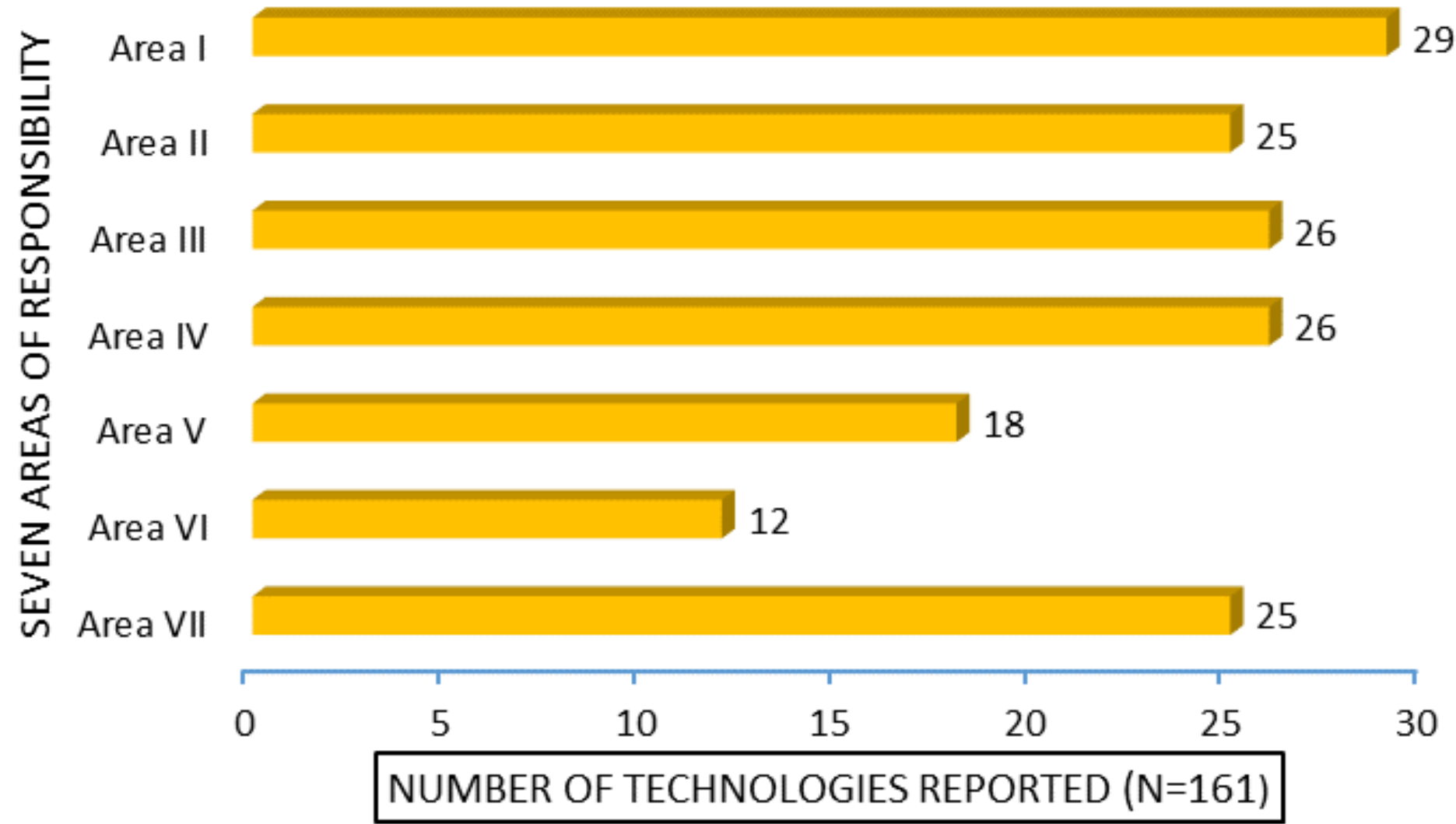
Variable	Total
Number	12
Gender (% male)	50
Age (mean)	32.5±4.3
Highest level of edu completed	6-BS, 5-MS, 1-PhD
CHES® or MCHES® certified (% yes)	42
Years employed in worksite wellness setting (mean)	6.4±4.3
Current job level	1-Per Diem, 3-Entry, 5-PC, 2-PM
Responsible for hiring new employees at site (% yes)	27

### Key Observations:

- 1) Even split of males and females
- 2) Average age in the low 30's with several years of practical experience
- 3) All four categories of current job level were represented
- 4) 75% reported they current work for a University/Campus, Health Department/Government, and/or For-Profit Corporation
- 5) 75% reported they have a Master's Degree and/or CHES® certification
- 6) 66% of those responsible for hiring reported they have a Master's Degree and/or CHES® certification



## TECHNOLOGIES CURRENTLY BEING USED



### Key Observations:

- 1) An average of 13.4 technologies were reported per person
- 2) The greatest number of technologies reported were used to Assess Needs, Resources and Capacity for Health Education/Promotion
- 3) The four most commonly reported software programs used include Survey Monkey, Excel, Word, and PowerPoint
- 4) The nine remaining job skill categories tended to focus on items traditionally addressed in the curricula for Kinesiology and/or Public Health students

### Highest scored job skills for entry-level employment

- 4.9 – Have a great attitude and want to learn
- 4.7 – Practice what you preach
- 4.5 – Work with a variety of populations
- 4.4 – Job shadowed or worked at a variety of work locations
- 4.3 – Tech savvy

### Lowest scored job skills for entry-level employment

- 2.8 – Basic knowledge of supplements/steroids/HGH/amphetamines
- 3.3 – Health coaching certified
- 3.5 – Basic ergonomics knowledge
- 3.5 – Previous gym experience
- 3.6 – Personal training certified

## CONCLUSIONS

Nearly half of US worksites offer a worksite wellness program and almost three-quarter of these organizations have an individual responsible for managing the program (Linnan, Cluff, Lang, Penne, & Leff, 2019). The most successful professionals in the health and fitness industry are able to offer the best product, whether being personal training, health coaching, pedagogy, or merchandise sales, to the correct customer. Worksite wellness operates on a slightly different plane than most other health and fitness jobs, as more senior career positions are available. Unfortunately, job turnover in these positions tends to be very low, and success in a horizontal hierarchy lies with the ability to align with the stakeholders who surround you (Ashkenas, 2012, March 27). Thus, the seeking of additional training in the technologies and skill sets identified in this study may help aspiring worksite wellness professionals stand out from the competition and achieve career growth.



## REFERENCES

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