

So Many APA Continuing Education (CE) Options, So Little Time *What do Psychologists Want and Need?*

Symposium presented at the
2019 APA Convention, Chicago

The need...

- The knowledge base of psychology is constantly growing and evolving
- Durability (i.e., “half-life”) estimates: 6-7 years
- Current knowledge becomes obsolete quickly
- This creates a continuous, pervasive need for *high quality* education (including CE)

Availability of high quality CE...

- Psychologist employment will grow by 19% between 2014 and 2024 (vs. 7% average growth overall)
- Quality education still needed after graduation
- Hundreds of CE sponsors across the US
- Thousands of workshops, seminars, webinars, etc
- We consider the literature on CE in psychology, and opinions of 6,500 psychologists...

Our symposium...

- *What 6,500 psychologists say about their CE interests, preferences, and needs*
- *CE and stage of career: A descriptive analysis with a focus on trauma*
- *Apples and oranges: Comparing CE interests and satisfaction across employment settings*
- *Discussants*

What 6,500 psychologists say about their continuing education interests, preferences, and needs

Bruce S. Liese, PhD*

Sergej Grunevski, BS*

Cofrin Logan Center for Addiction Research and Treatment

University of Kansas

*No conflicts of interest to report

Concerns about CE in Psychology

- Major flaws in the way CE is conducted & evaluated
- The science of CE is fragmented, underdeveloped
- Health professionals focus on requirements rather than personal knowledge gaps
- Many regulatory organizations tend to focus on minimal, narrowly defined CE competencies

Concerns about CE in Psychology

- Common approaches: mostly *lectures, traditional settings, specific intervals, teacher-driven content*
- Literature offers guidance about general principles but provides little specific information about how to best support learning
- It is very difficult to determine the effectiveness of instructional methods

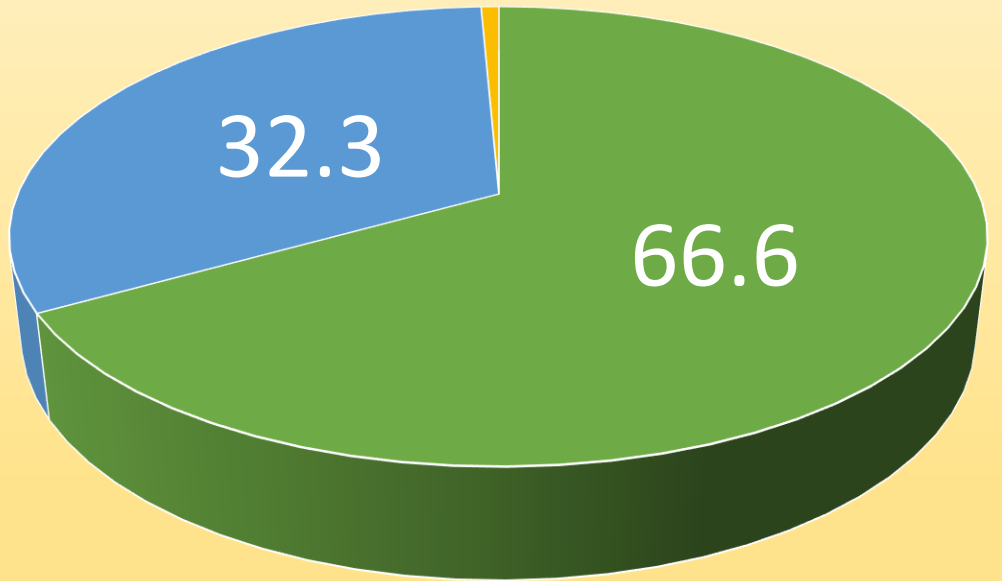
Methods

- An online survey link was sent to 45,000 psychologists by the APA offices of CE and CESA
- The survey asked about:
 - Demographics (gender, race, professional stage of development, and workplace setting)
 - Preferred topics
 - Reasons for participating in CE programs
 - Delivery methods (modes and formats)
 - Extent to which needs are met

Sample Characteristics

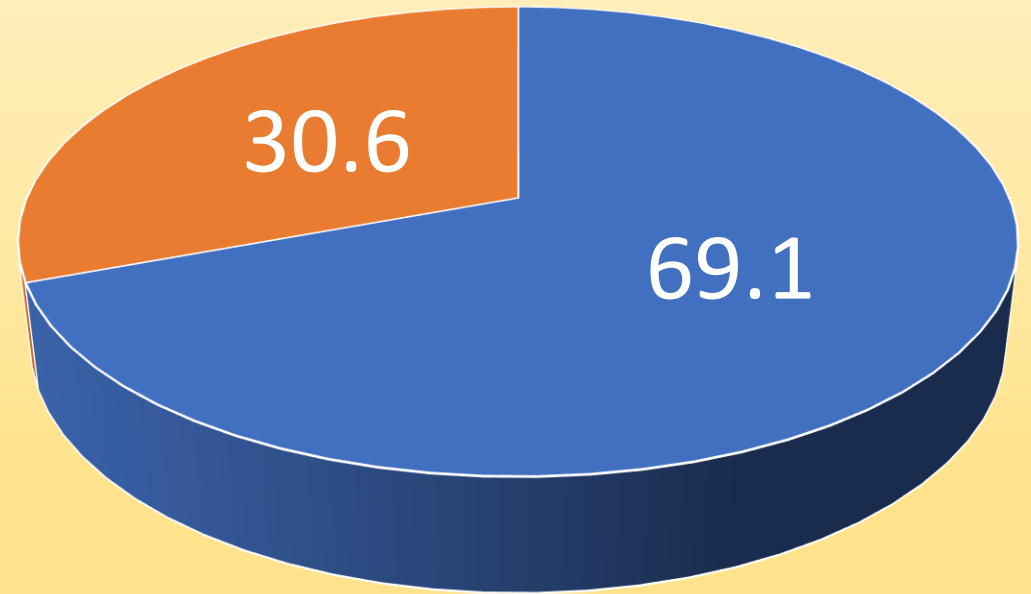
Mean age = 49.65 yrs. (SD = 15.55)

Gender
(n = 6,451)



Female Male Other

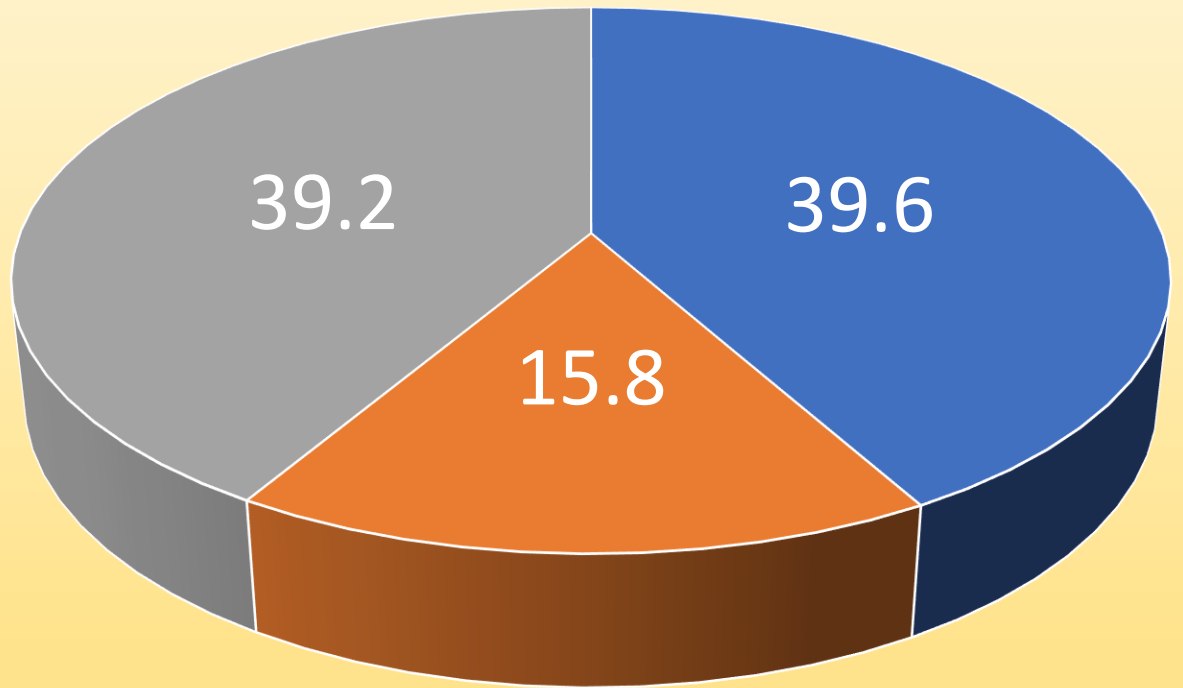
Licensure Status
(n=6,471)



Licensed Not Licensed

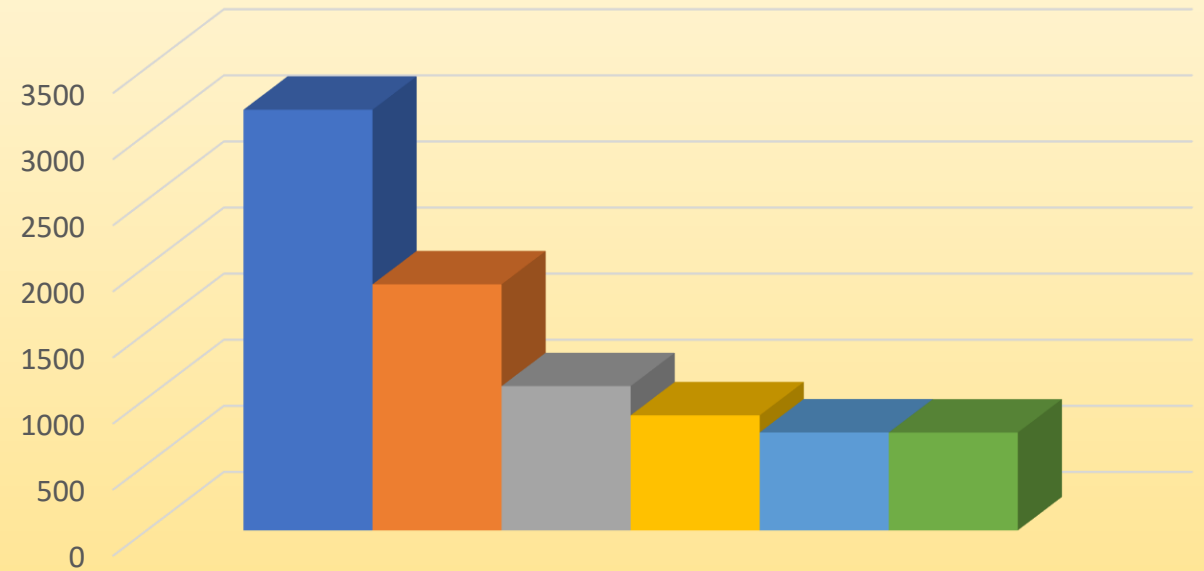
Sample Characteristics

Career Stage (n=6,140)



■ Early Career ■ Mid-career ■ Late career

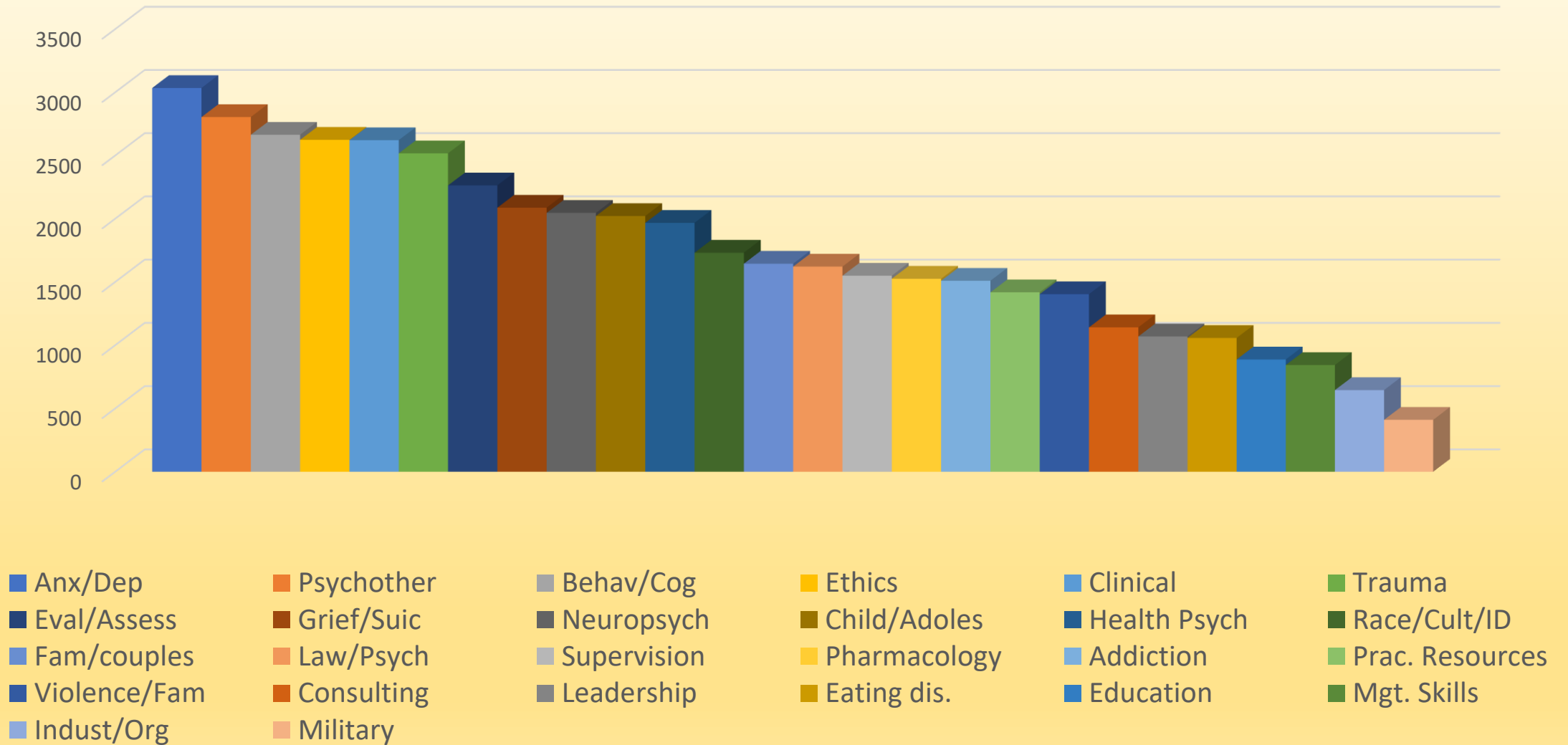
Work Setting



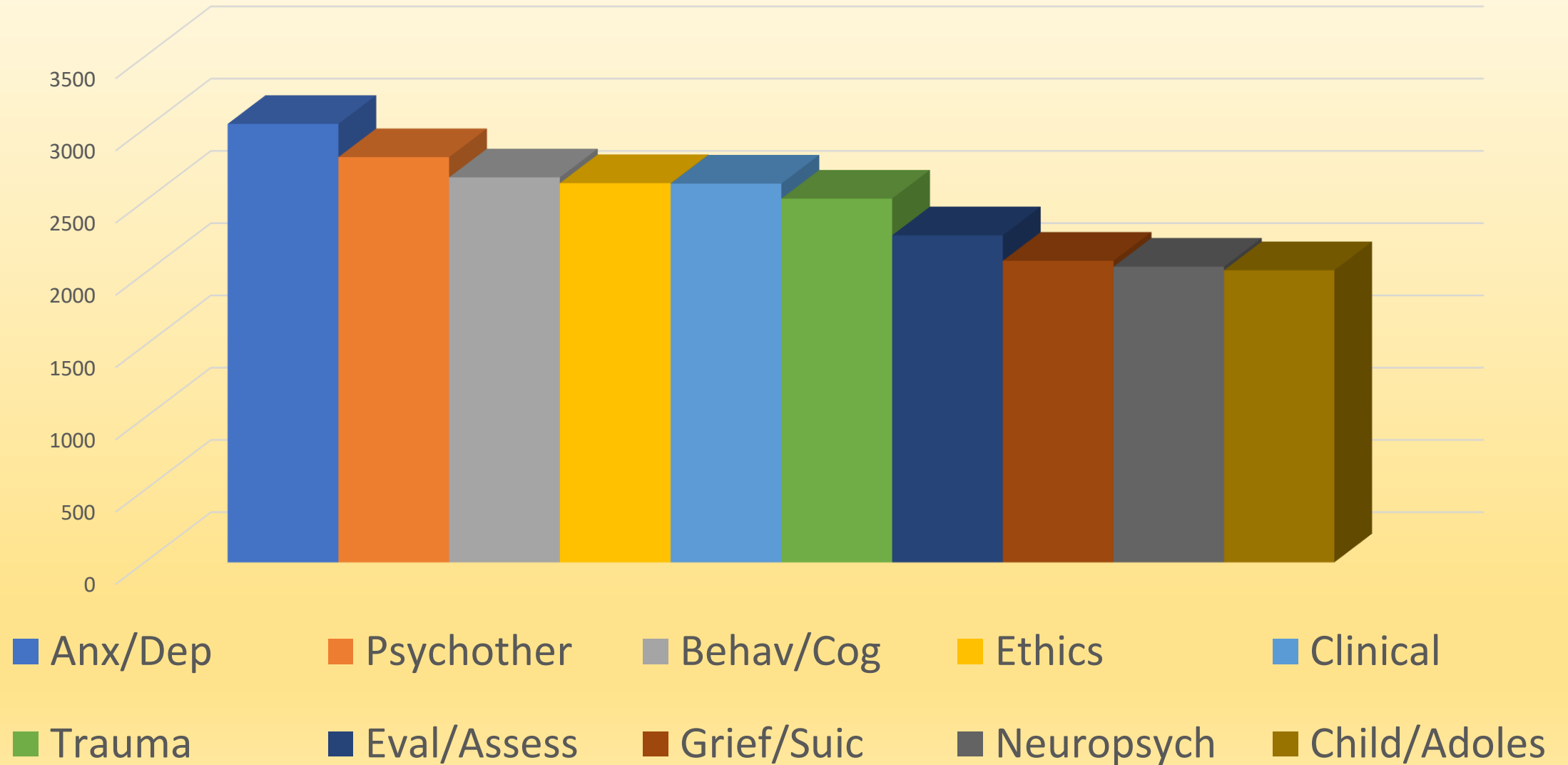
Category 1

■ Priv. Pract. ■ Univ/4-yr coll
■ Hospital ■ Mgt/Consult.
■ School system ■ Government

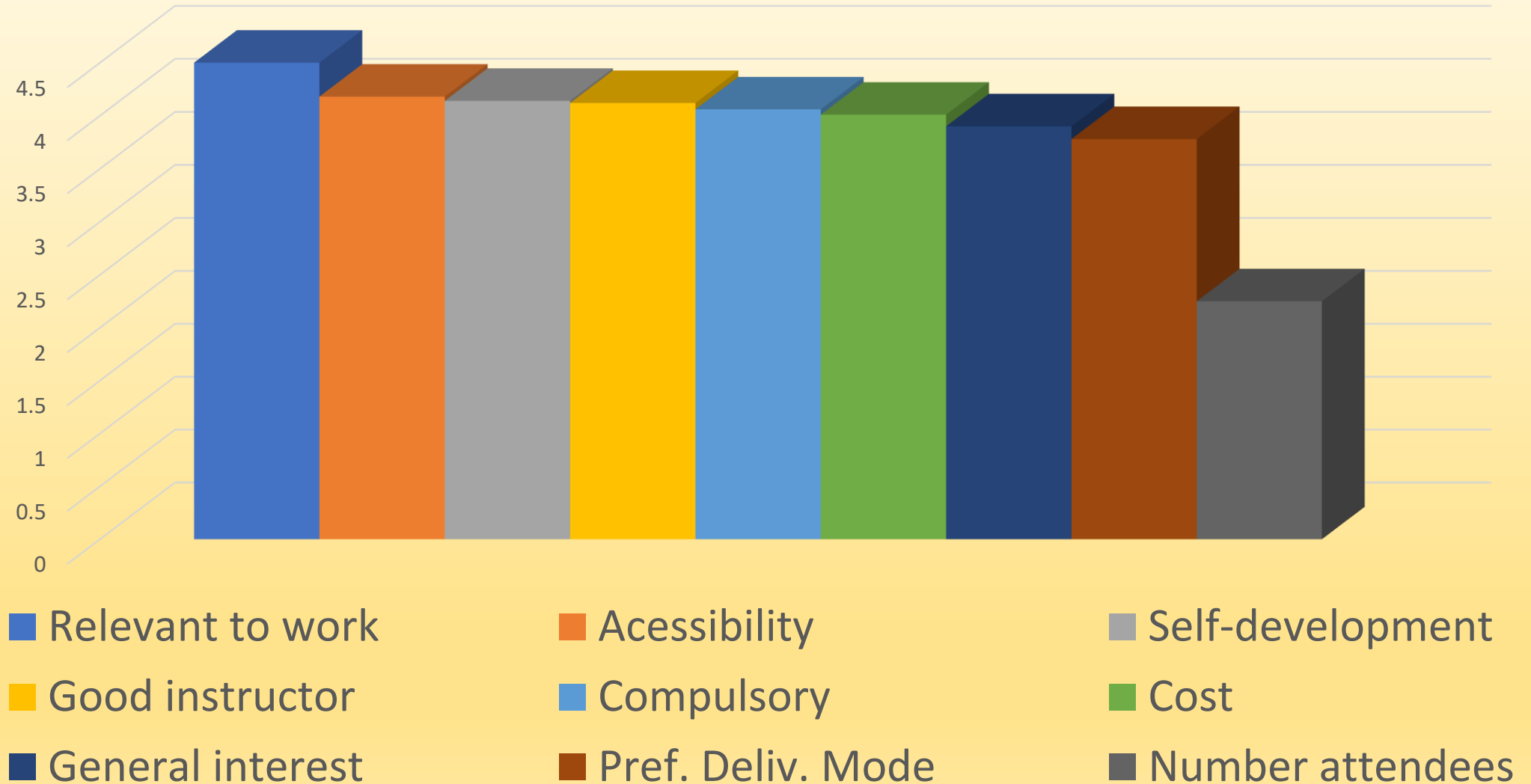
Topics of Interest



Top Ten

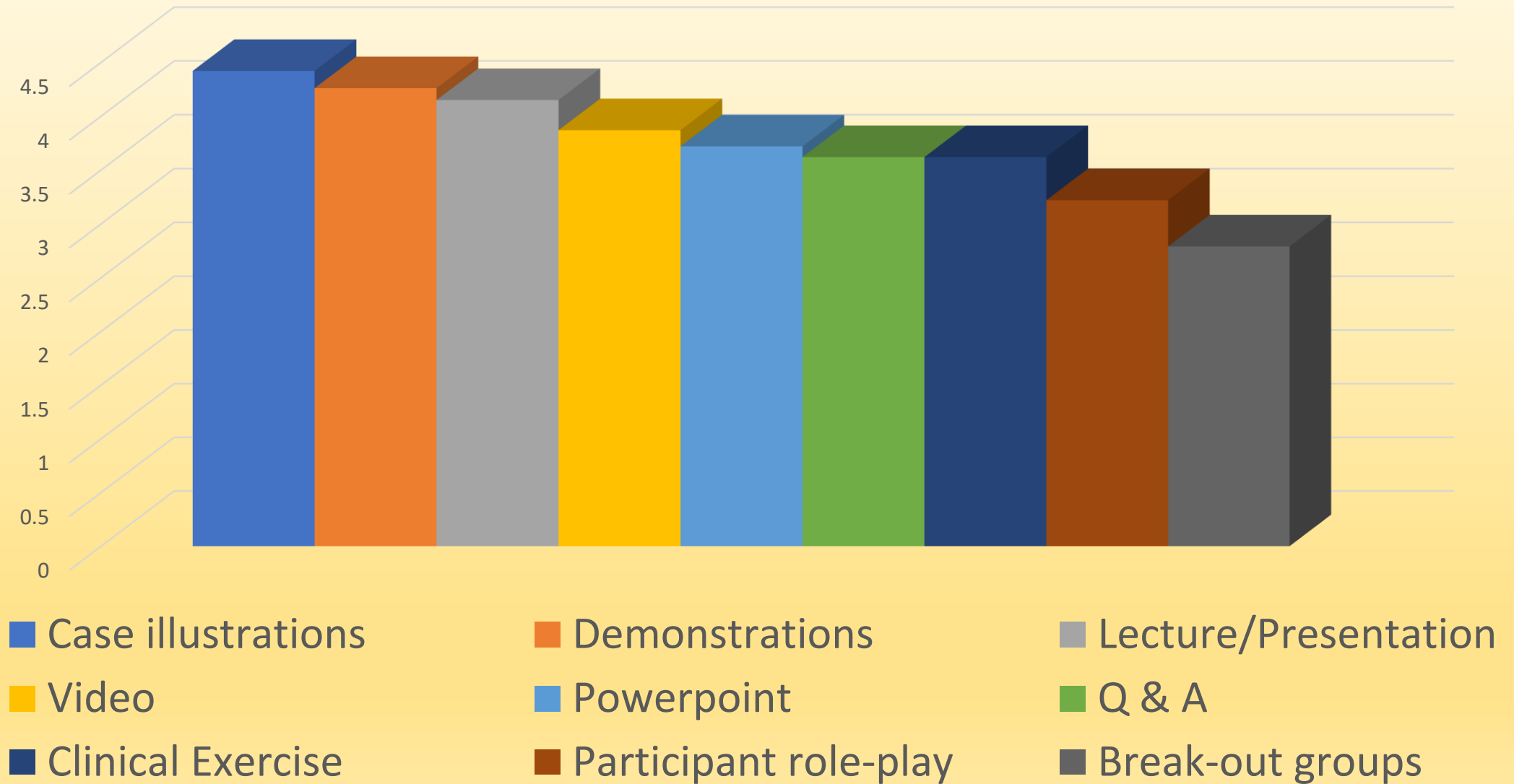


Factors influencing sign-up for CE



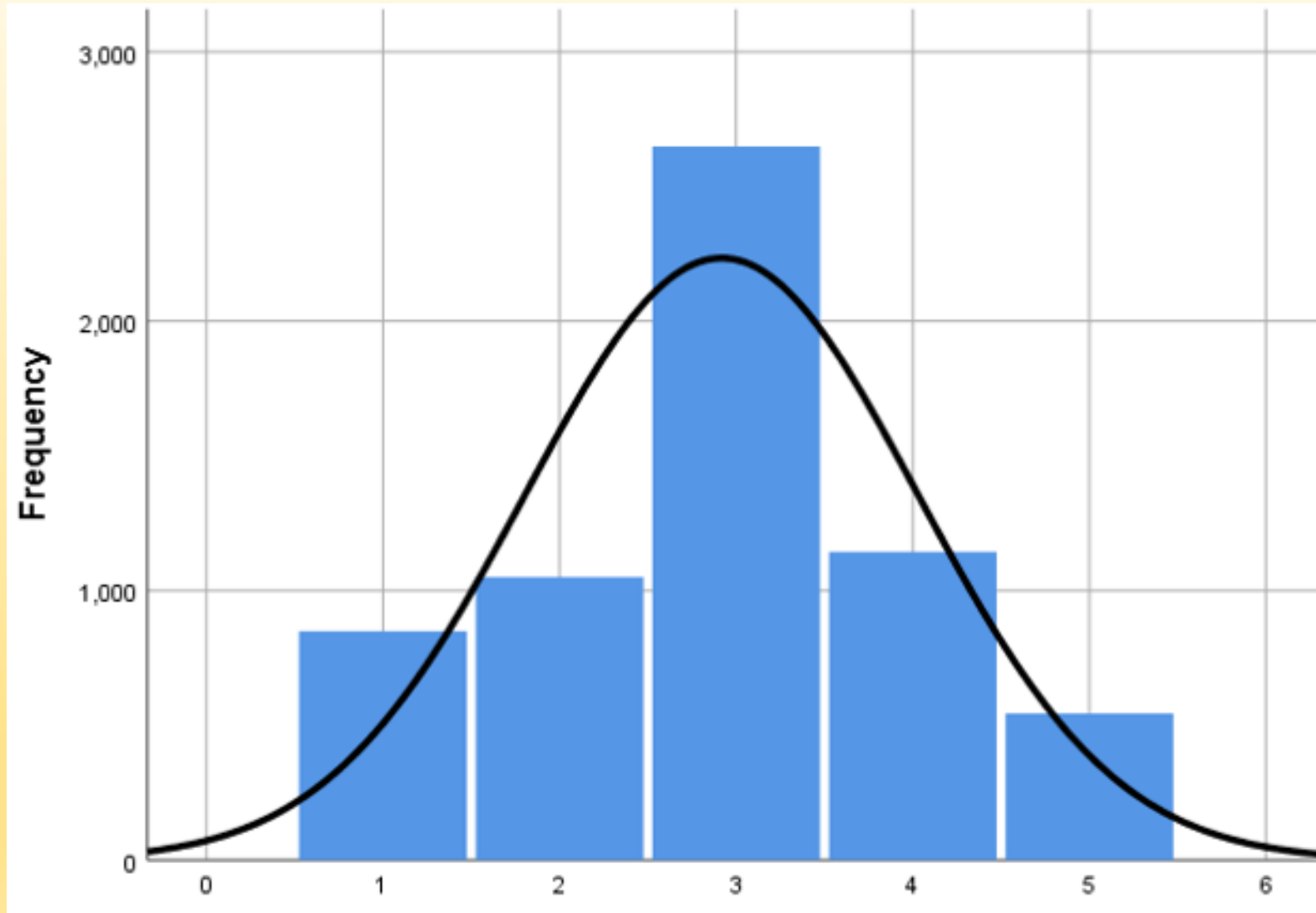
5 = very important; 1 = unimportant

Teaching formats that facilitate learning



5 = Very much, 1 = Very little

To what degree were your CE needs met?



5 = very much, 1 = very little; $M = 2.92$ ($SD=1.11$)

Key Points

- Results of this survey provide a window into the preferences and experiences of thousands of psychologists, and it is available to all
- Survey results provide information about preferred topics, teaching methods, and methods of delivery – and there are few surprises
- Overall descriptive statistics provide some valuable information, but they leave us with more questions than answers
- Hence we take a deeper dive by focusing on stage of career and practice setting
- First: stage of career with focus on trauma...

Continuing Education and Stage of Career: A Descriptive Analysis with a Focus on Trauma

J. Kim Penberthy, Ph.D., ABPP

Theresa M. Schultz, Ph.D.

Karen Schmaling, Ph.D., ABPP

August 9, 2019

APA Annual Convention, Chicago, IL

Why focus on trauma?

- Incidence
- Complexity
- Pervasive impact
- Need for trauma expertise
- Need for self-care



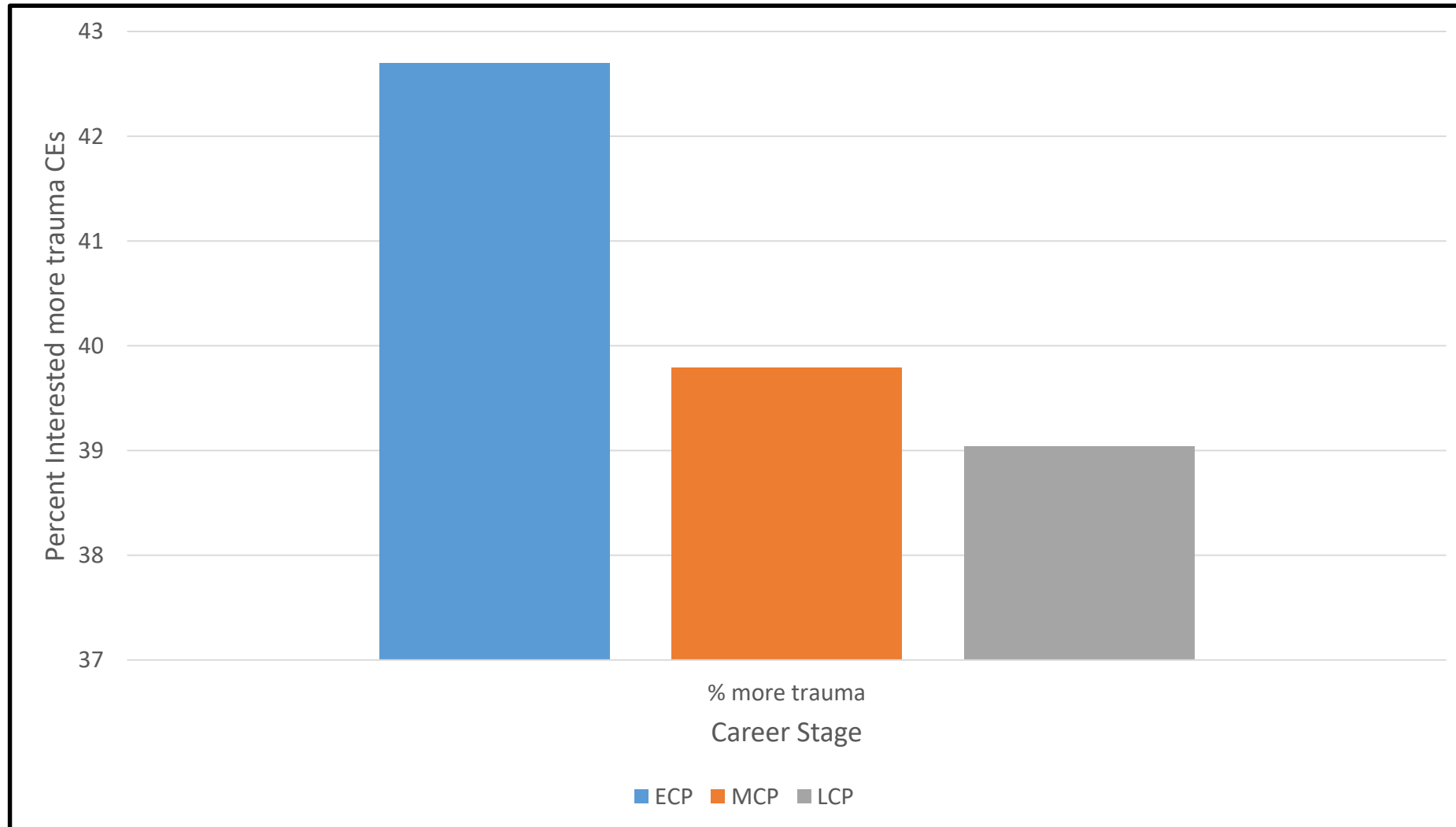
What we know about CE in Trauma for Psychology Professionals

- **Number of survey questions:** 20
- **Respondents:** $N = 6489$
- **Career stage**
 - **41.8% ECP=Early Career Psychologist** (10 years or less work)
 - 16.7% MCP=Mid Career Psychologist (11-20 years' work)
 - 41.4% LCP=Late Career Psychologist (21 or more years' work)
- **Gender**
 - **67.2% female**; 32.6% male; 0.2% trans (M2F and F2M)
- **Employment settings** (> 100% as endorsed all that applied)
 - **49.1% Independent Practice**
 - **28.7% University**
 - 6.4% Business; 11.4% Government 11.4%; 16.8% Hospital; 7.0% Consulting/Management; 11.4% School; 18.3% Other.

Basic Considerations for Trauma & CE

- A deeply distressing or disturbing experience
- Unique individual experience
- Can have negative physical and psychological impacts
- Traumatized individuals and communities are vulnerable
- Ineffective treatment or treatment by inexperienced/unskilled therapists can be unhelpful at best and harmful at worst!
- Increased demand has led to APA Policies to promote increased funding, awareness, and training

Who is interested in education about trauma?



Early Career Learners Interested in Trauma

- **Likely to have exposure to trauma in some form**
 - 70.4% people world-wide report 1 traumatic event; 30.5% report ≥ 4 ¹
 - Females' rate of PTSD 2-3X that of males²
 - Females: Higher rates of sexual assault/domestic abuse than males²
 - Exposure to vicarious trauma and trauma prevalent in media
- **Tend to value education that**
 - Is cost-effective
 - Has quality instructors
 - Enhances self-development
 - Is relevant to professional work
 - Is effectively delivered and taught



¹Benjet, C., Bromet, E., Karam, E. G., Kessler, R. C., McLaughlin, K. A., Ruscio, A. M., ... Koenen, K. C. (2016). The epidemiology of traumatic event exposure worldwide: Results from the World Mental Health Survey Consortium. *Psychological Medicine*, 46(2), 327–343.

²Olf, M. (2017). Sex and gender differences in post-traumatic stress disorder: An update. *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*, 8(sup4), 1351204.

Implications for Educators

- Stakes are high and the population is vulnerable!
- Early career psychologists are interested in trauma
- May have had prior exposure to trauma
- Relevant trauma education is optimal (i.e., what “matters” to the learner)
- Early education about prevention, prevalence, interventions and support may be beneficial, but needs to be well-informed
- Need for education about how to determine high quality trauma education materials

Key Points

- **Broader implications include consideration of**
 - Target audience
 - Available resources
 - Delivery format and teaching methods
 - Context – e.g., environment and employment settings



Apples and Oranges: Comparing CE Interests and Satisfaction across Employment Settings

Meghan W. Cody, Ph.D.

Ronald T. Brown, Ph.D.

Anna-Leigh Powell, M.S.

2019 Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association, Chicago, IL

Comparing Apples to Oranges

- Different types of psychologists have different CE needs

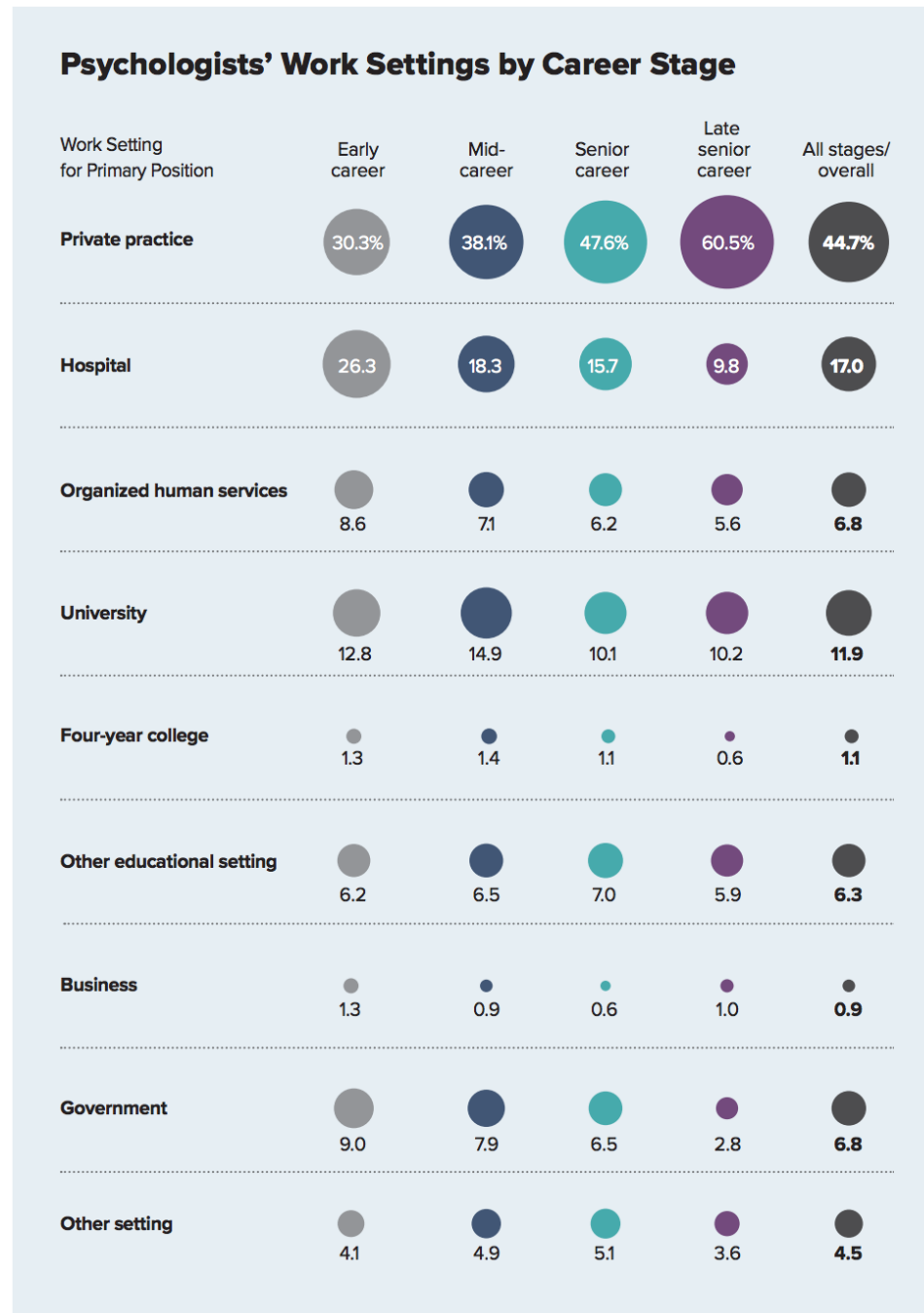
- Career stage
- Age, gender, location, etc.
- Types of clients served
- **Employment setting**



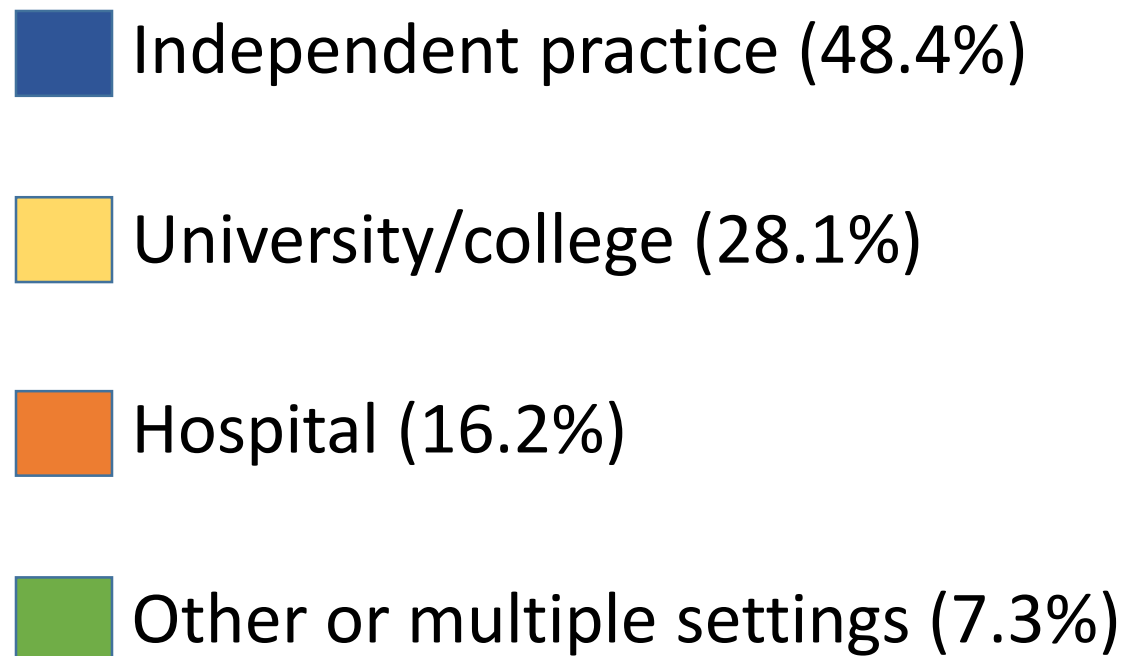
- What are we missing when we ignore these distinctions?

Where do psychologists work?

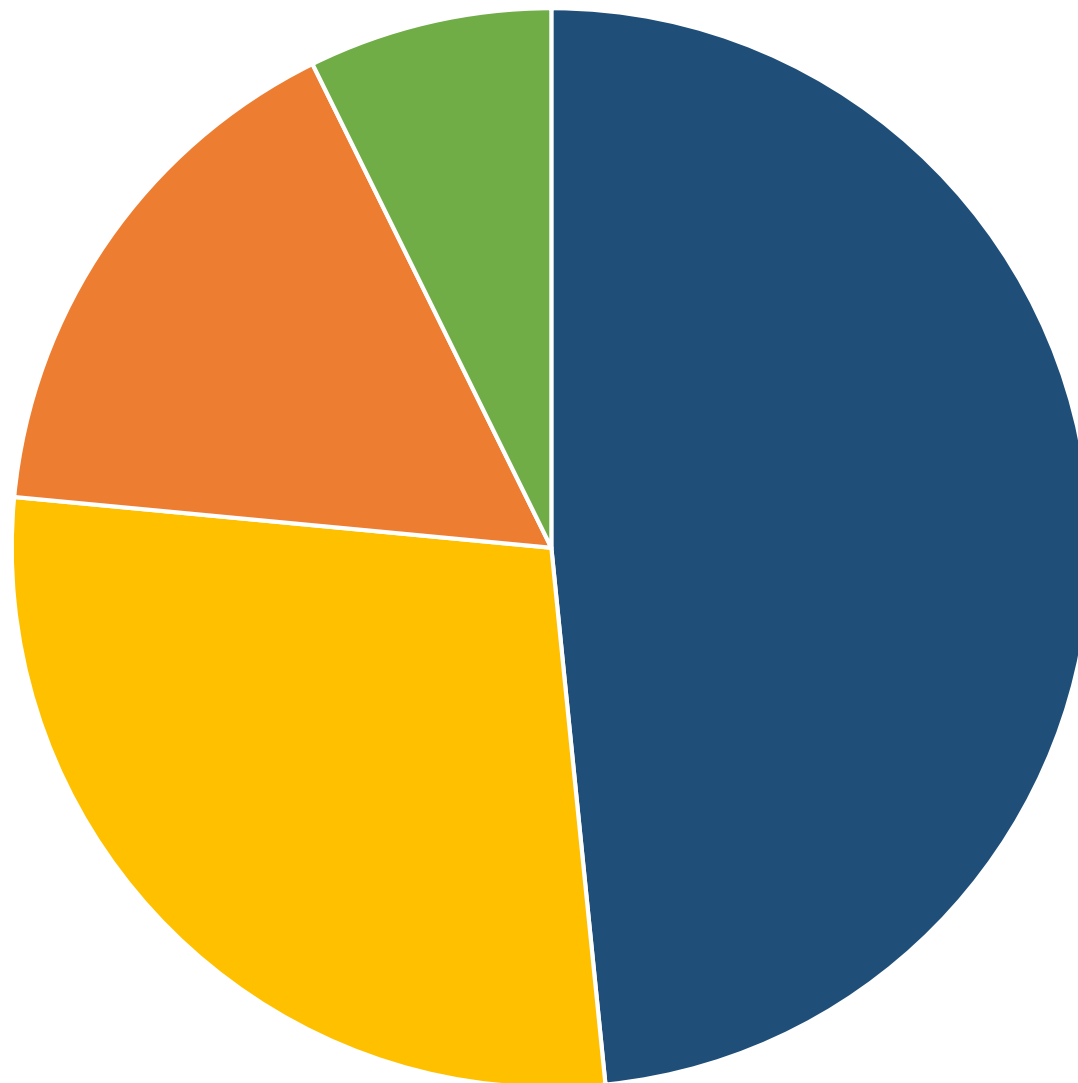
(<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2017/11/datapoint>)



Most Common Employment Settings



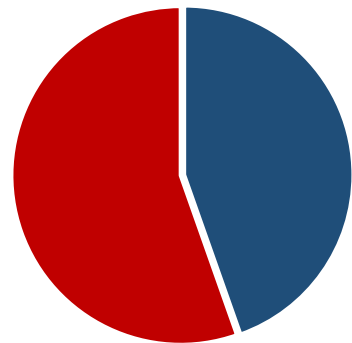
• $N = 6,489$



Differences between Employment Settings

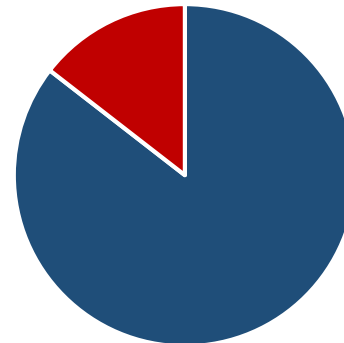
- Independent practitioners older
 - Mean age **55.7 years** (vs. 43.1 years)
- University/college psychologists less likely to be licensed
 - **44.6%** licensed in academic settings (vs. 85.5% in other settings)

University/College



■ Licensed ■ Not Licensed

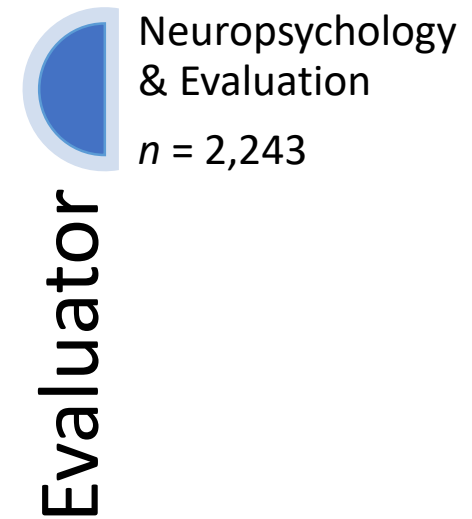
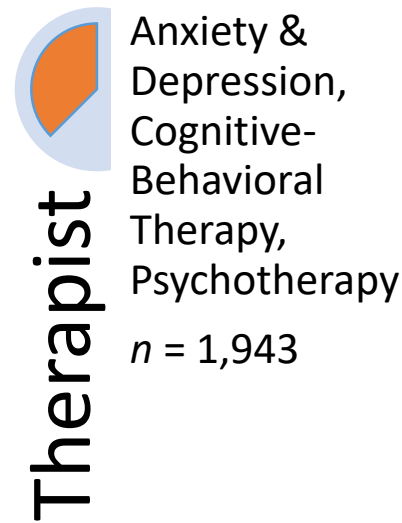
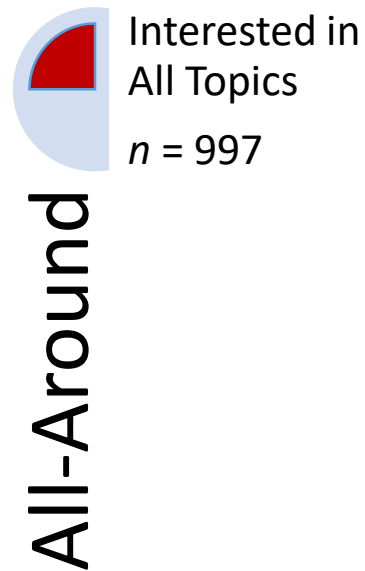
Other Settings



■ Licensed ■ Not Licensed

Groupings by Interests

- Respondents were placed into clusters based on topics they endorsed as wanting to learn more about



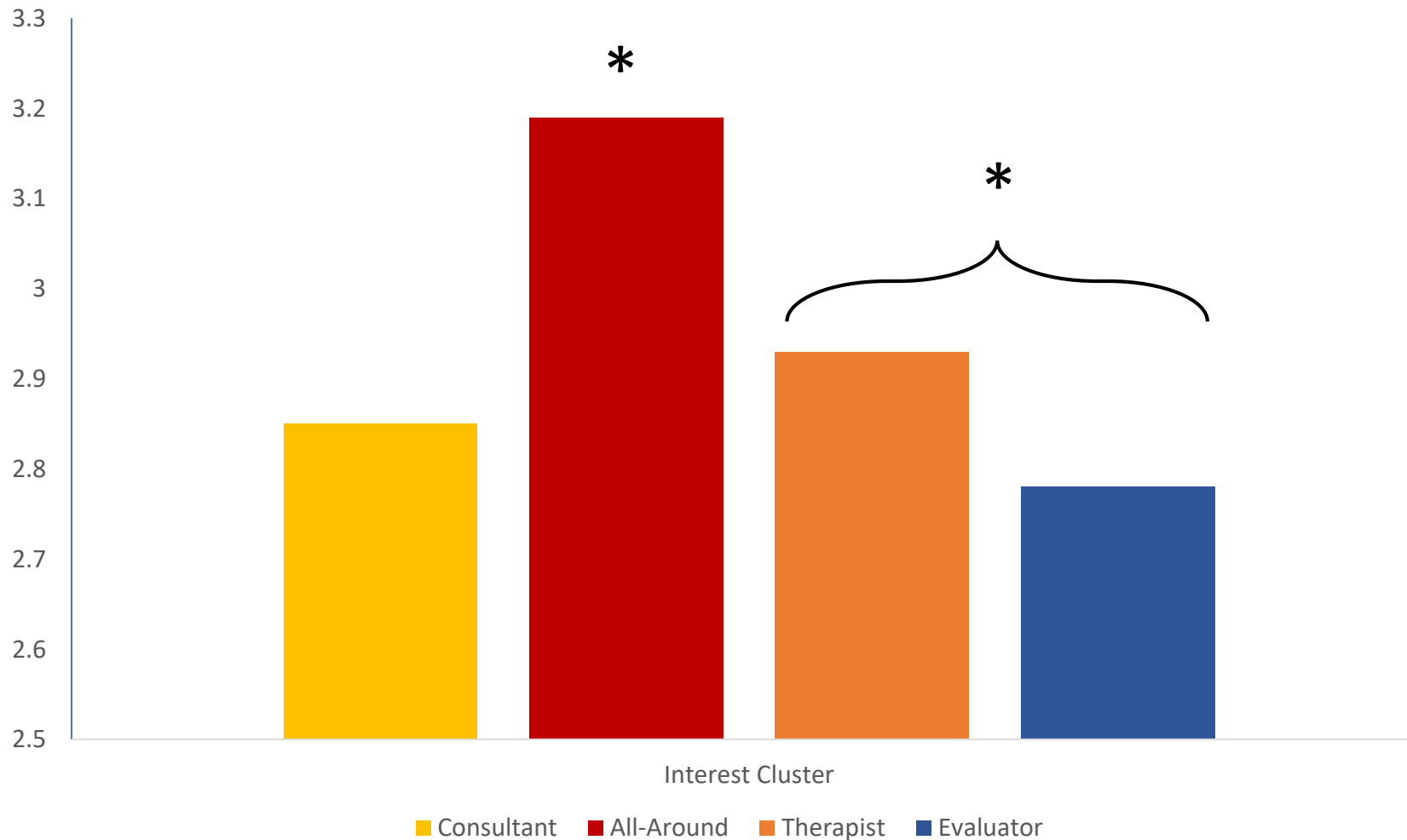
Do psychologists with different CE interests work in different employment settings?

- Those in the **Consultant** cluster were evenly spread across settings.
- Those in **All-Around** and **Therapist** clusters were most likely to be in independent practice.
- Those in the **Evaluator** cluster were most likely to be in either independent practice or university/college settings.

Satisfaction with APA CE Programming

“To what extent do APA continuing education programs meet your CE needs?”

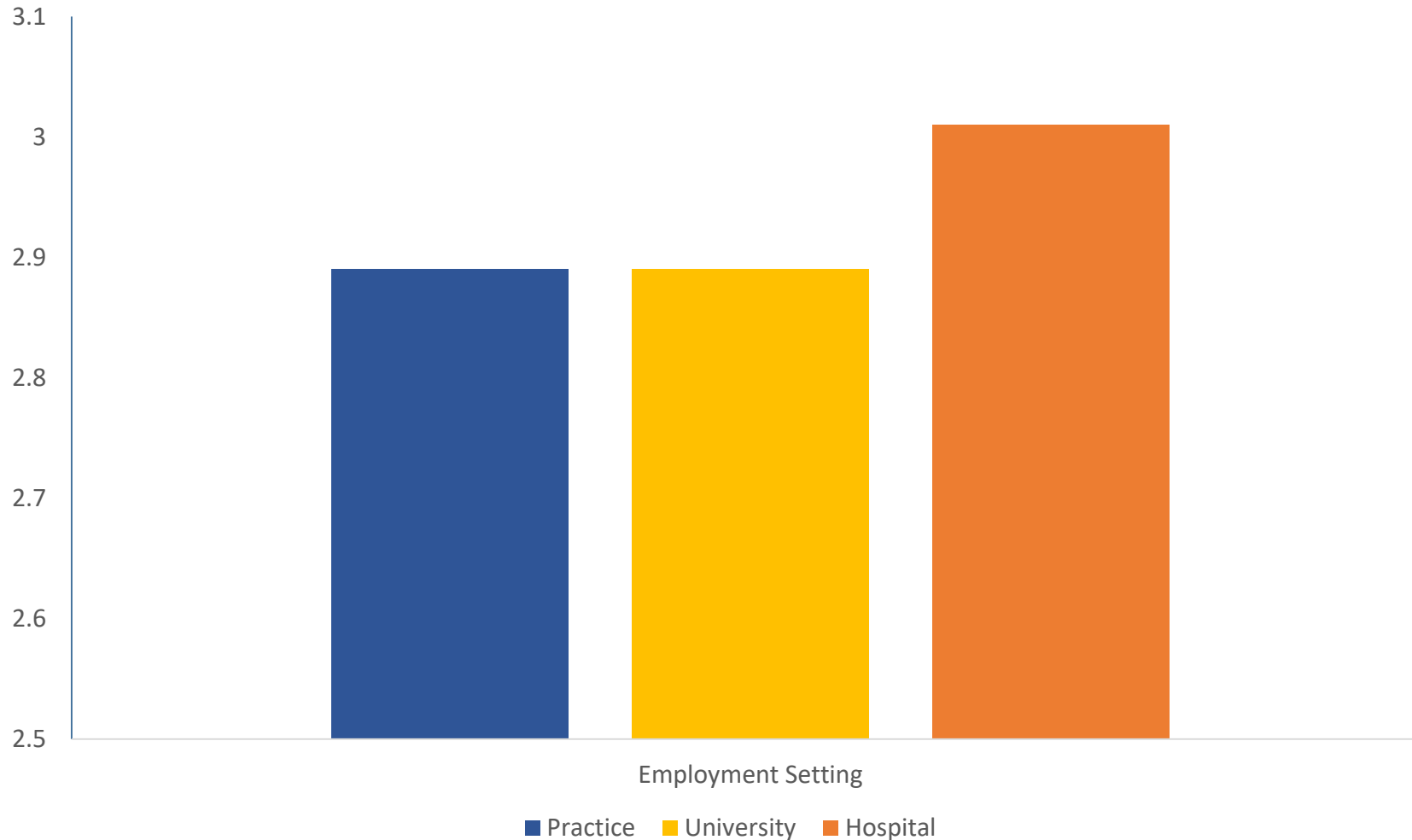
(5 = *very much*, 1 = *very little*)



Satisfaction with APA CE Programming

“To what extent do APA continuing education programs meet your CE needs?”

(5 = *very much*, 1 = *very little*)



Implications

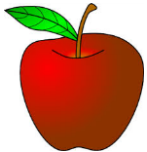

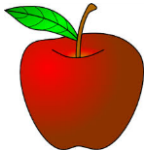

- It is important to prepare your students for the jobs they will have!
- Many academically oriented training psychologists who teach prioritize what psychologists might need to succeed in university/college settings, yet ...
 - Only about 13% of psychologists in the U.S. (28% of respondents to the survey)
 - Majority in independent practice or healthcare

Implications



- Largest cluster was interested in neuropsychology
- Independent practice and academic settings
- Had the lowest satisfaction with current CE offerings
- Need more training opportunities at all stages (pre- and post-graduate) in neuropsychology and assessment, because psychologists are interested in these topics, and their needs are not being met in the traditional academic setting

Key Points

-  Psychologists in different employment settings report similar satisfaction with CE. *(Although note the possible range of interpretations of the survey question.)*
-  ... But they have different types of interests that cluster together.
-  Those with interests in neuropsychology and evaluation are less satisfied with current CE programs.
-  Instead of offering programs that only meet the needs of “apples” or “oranges,” we can do better at meeting the needs of all learners.



SO MANY CE OPTIONS, SO LITTLE TIME:

CEC PANEL DISCUSSION

Greg Neimeyer, PhD and Antoinette Minniti, PhD

2019 APA Annual Convention, Chicago, IL



Quick Review

- Overview of CE survey and landscape
- CE interests, preferences, needs of psychologists
- CE and career stage – looking at trauma
- CE interests and satisfaction across employment settings
- Application to the teaching of psychology

Activity and Take-homes

- Ongoing questions to consider:
 - *How can I use this new knowledge?*
 - *How does this apply to my practice and what I do?*
 - *What might I do differently based on what I have learned?*

- Respond to the following:
 - *Identify one change you would like to make in your practice/role based on this presentation*
 - *Then, indicate a level of commitment to that change (1=low; 5=high)*
 - *Input a calendar reminder for 1-2 months from today – review and revise*

Source: Neimeyer, G. J. (nd). Enhancing learning through commitment to change.

Also see: Neimeyer, G. J., & Taylor, J. M. (2019). Advancing the assessment of professional learning, self-care, and competence. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 50(2), 95-105.

Thank You