

3. Musculoskeletal Injuries Amongst Massage Therapists: A Cross-Canada Survey

Wayne J. Albert¹ and Nadine Currie-Jackson²

¹Human Performance Lab, Faculty of Kinesiology,
University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, NB, Canada

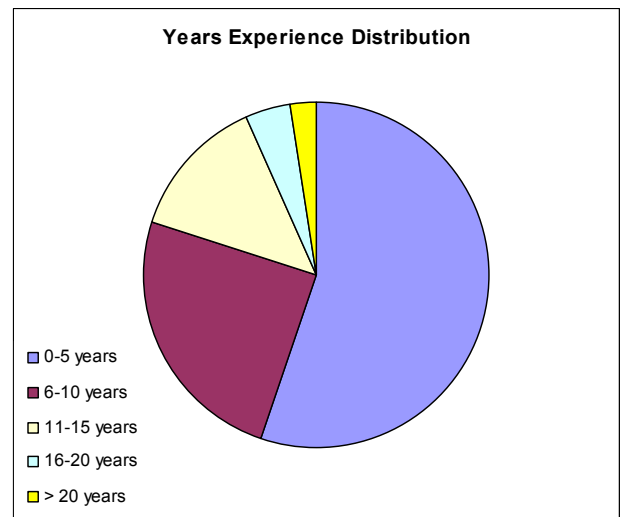
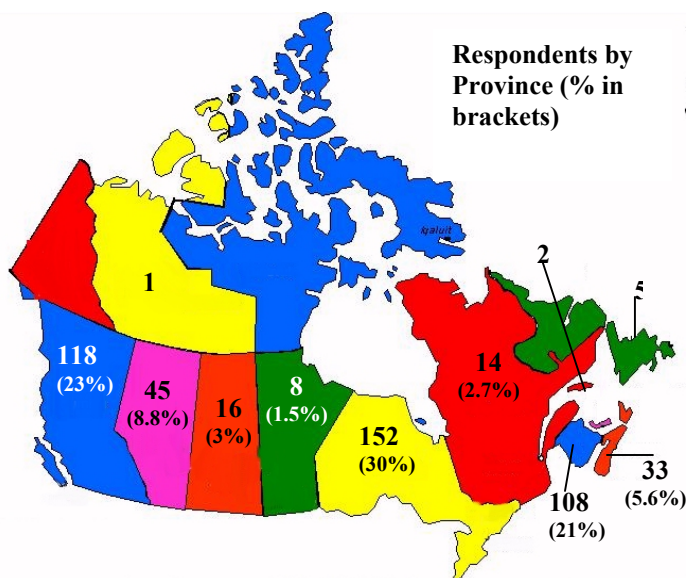
²Atlantic College of Therapeutic Massage, Fredericton, NB, Canada

Introduction

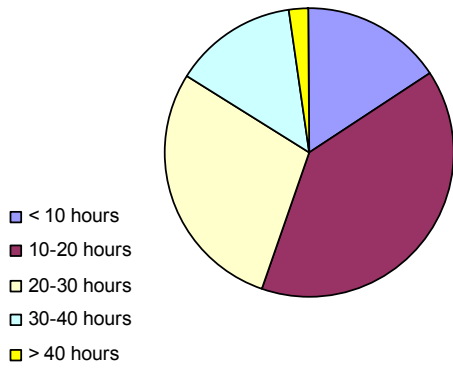
In the Winter of 2006, a Web-based survey was administered on the ACTM web page. Registered Massage Therapists (RMT) from across Canada were informed and invited to take part in the survey that asked investigated the prevalence of musculoskeletal pain. The survey focused on the upper extremity only, asking about low back, neck, shoulder, wrist and thumb pain. An advertisement was sent out in the *Massage Therapy Canada* magazine and emails were sent to the Provincial Associations for distribution to their registered members. The remainder of this report highlights some of the results.

Demographics

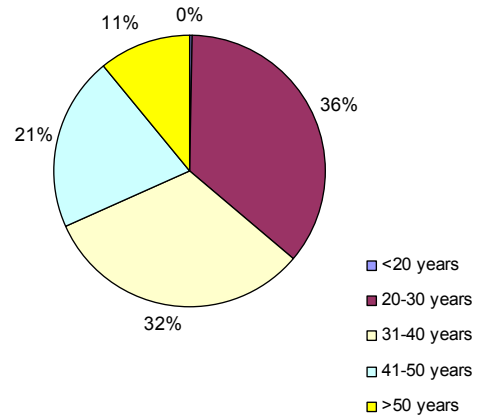
A total of 506 RMT answered the survey. The British Columbia, Ontario and New Brunswick constituted the majority of the respondents. The following four illustrations outline the number of participants in each province, the overall age distribution of the therapists involved in the survey, their years experience and the number of hours they work on average per week..



Work Distribution



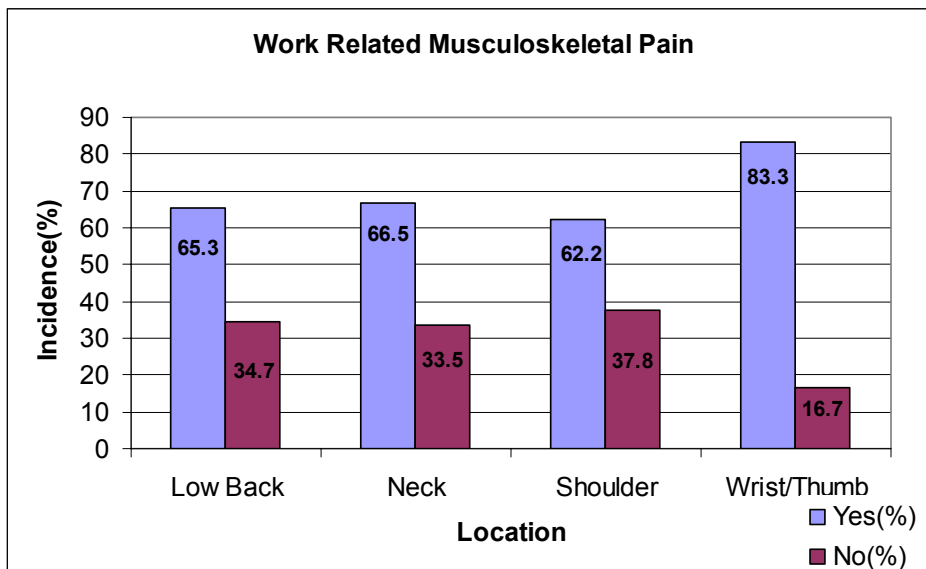
Age Distribution



Pain Reporting

The reporting of low back, neck, shoulder and wrist and thumb pain was higher than expected, with over 60% of respondents reporting low back pain related to work, and over 80% reporting pain in the wrist and thumb. It is interesting to note that the prevalence of pain was higher for younger age groups which naturally correlates with those with less years of work experience reported higher prevalence of pain. Less than 10% of respondents reported changing work activities, however, over 75% reported seeking medical treatment for their pain. A little over 20% of the respondents reporting using a massage aid to help them while they were in pain.

Work Related Musculoskeletal Pain



Affect of Therapist Age on Low Back Pain

