



Dinawan Dreaming: Pre-service teachers seeing the world with fresh eyes

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AUCEA Next Steps Conference, 2012





Dinawan Dreaming by Donna Moodie

A snapshot – USQ 2008



- 1,987 staff members
- 24,756 students
- 20,718 Bachelor or postgraduate
- Top 3 international China, Malaysia & India.
- Student to academic rate: 21/1
- On Campus
- 2,234 international students from 85 + countries
- Online
- 5,169 international students

University Vision



- broad participation in HE/significant contributions to research/community development.
- graduates... meet challenges/rapidly changing world
- world-class research, innovation and practice in sustainable futures
- excellence, innovation and creativity/socially inclusive/building skills base/progressing regional, national and global sustainability.
- **Competitive Business Advantage:** highest quality educational experience irrespective of student location/lifestyle.

The Context: Global Competition



- Education and Technology: means towards global competitiveness
- Nation and State: investment, measuring, reporting
- Schools: Curriculum, assessment, reporting, performance-based funding
- Universities – Research climate and practices of teacher education informed by an audit culture

The Vision and the Practice?



- Education for Creativity/the Arts
 - Education for Sustainability
 - Embedding Indigenous Perspectives
 - Education for Diversity, Equity and Social Justice
 - Holistic Learner - Wellbeing
 - *ACARA (2010); MCEETYA (2008)*
 - Maths, Literacy, Science focus in curriculum
 - Teacher anxiety about H&S
 - Hidden curriculum of values, beliefs
 - Testing, reporting, competition
- Dowling (2008).*

Research: Pre-service Teachers 2010



- 115 out of 537 year 1 students responded
- 85.1% female and 82.9% aged 17 – 30
- 93.8% believe creativity and sustainability are very or extremely important for teaching
- 82.1% believe understanding nature is important for a sustainable 21st century
- Minimal experience in the arts or natural environments in secondary school

Findings – pre-service teachers



- Limited experience of engaging with natural environments (Malone, 2007)
- Safe space is ‘in my room’
- Students reported concerns about safety, dirt, disease, unfamiliar animals, being outdoors “bats were disgusting and noisy I hate them”
- “I feel locked in my head”

Experiencing the Land – 3 Ways



- Main group (120) : 6 hours' immersion in a natural environment over 3 weeks.
- Smaller group (12): full day's immersion experience – the focus of this presentation
- Gummingurru Stones Site
- Amarroo Environment Centre
- Cobb and Co Museum
- Multugerra Monument (*Tabletop Mountain*)

The Painting – 3 Ways of Seeing



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The stars and the Earth



- Donna:...what I'm trying to paint is... the gaps....the emu is not an outline of the stars...it's actually the gaps between the stars... sort of the black clouds or the blackness that's in the milky way.
- When that emu appears it was the right time to harvest emu's egg for food...it's linked to natural resource management

The Journey – Gowrie Mountain



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Photo by Tim Swinson

Re-viewing the land - story, place and meaning

Experiencing the Site



- Donna and Ben take us onto the site, with permission. A family of kangaroos watch as we arrive...
- Donna tells the story of the site and shows us the many different types of stones brought there from all over Queensland to ceremonies
- Students a little tired, passively listening

Gummingurru Stones Site



- Ceremonial place where young men were initiated. Jarowair country.
- Bunya Mountains - feasts and gatherings every 3 years
- Bunda – a young Jarowair man told Ben Gilbert of the site's purposes: 1960s, Queensland Museum recorded site.
- 2008 Returned to Gummingurru Aboriginal Corporation a 'resurrection of the site'.



- ..whatever the little bird was.. and they sort of both trailed off and just looked.. at the bird and said that, you know... for us this is an omen of a death or you know something bad has happened.
- So we'll prepare for the worst and within the next couple of days, we will get the news that someone has passed away and we have a funeral to attend...

Different ways of seeing



-it is almost like if you give it power, it will have life, if you give it power it will be true... you're giving it power and you could make it true so you kind of go, you know, if you don't believe it then it is not going to happen.
- As an indigenous person and non-indigenous person, we're actually seeing the world in different ways

The Stones – Mapping the Sky



Picture:

<http://www.gummingurru.com.au/Photos>

Ben plays didge for us...and
we sit quiet for a while

- Circle
- Turtle
- Kangaroo
- Star Spiral
- Snake with unborn children in belly
- Emu
- Catfish
- Spiral starburst



- Making a difference for an environmentally sustainable world
- Queensland Environmentally Sustainable Schools Initiative (QESSI).
- A more familiar way of knowing the land....



Cobb and Co Museum



- First contact
- Impact of settlement
- Settler History
- Another perspective on Gummingurru site
- National Carriage Collection
- <http://www.cobbandco.qm.qld.gov.au/>
- Boxes' of resources for teaching

Multuggera Monument

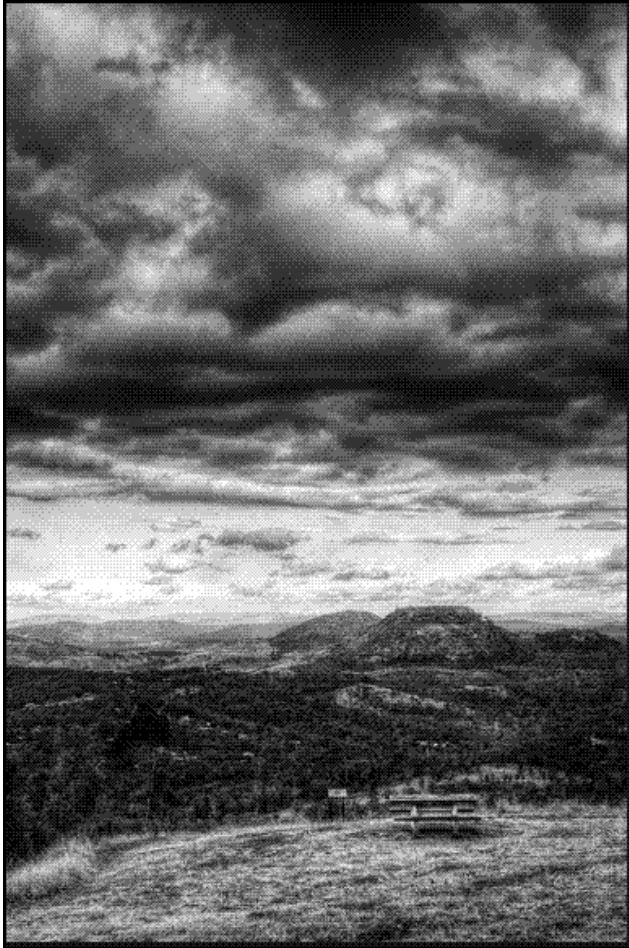


Photo by Tim Swinson

- Tabletop mountain...or Multuggera monument
- Contradictory ways of seeing and knowing the land
- Tragic, confronting and changing meaning

Student responses – post immersion



- I felt transformed to do something wonderful
- It was amazing to see the world like that
- I'll never forget it...so peaceful
- I got on so well with my group...freer than in class
- I used to play outside...as a child. Spending time outside reminded me of that. It was so...liberating.

Clock time –vs Event time

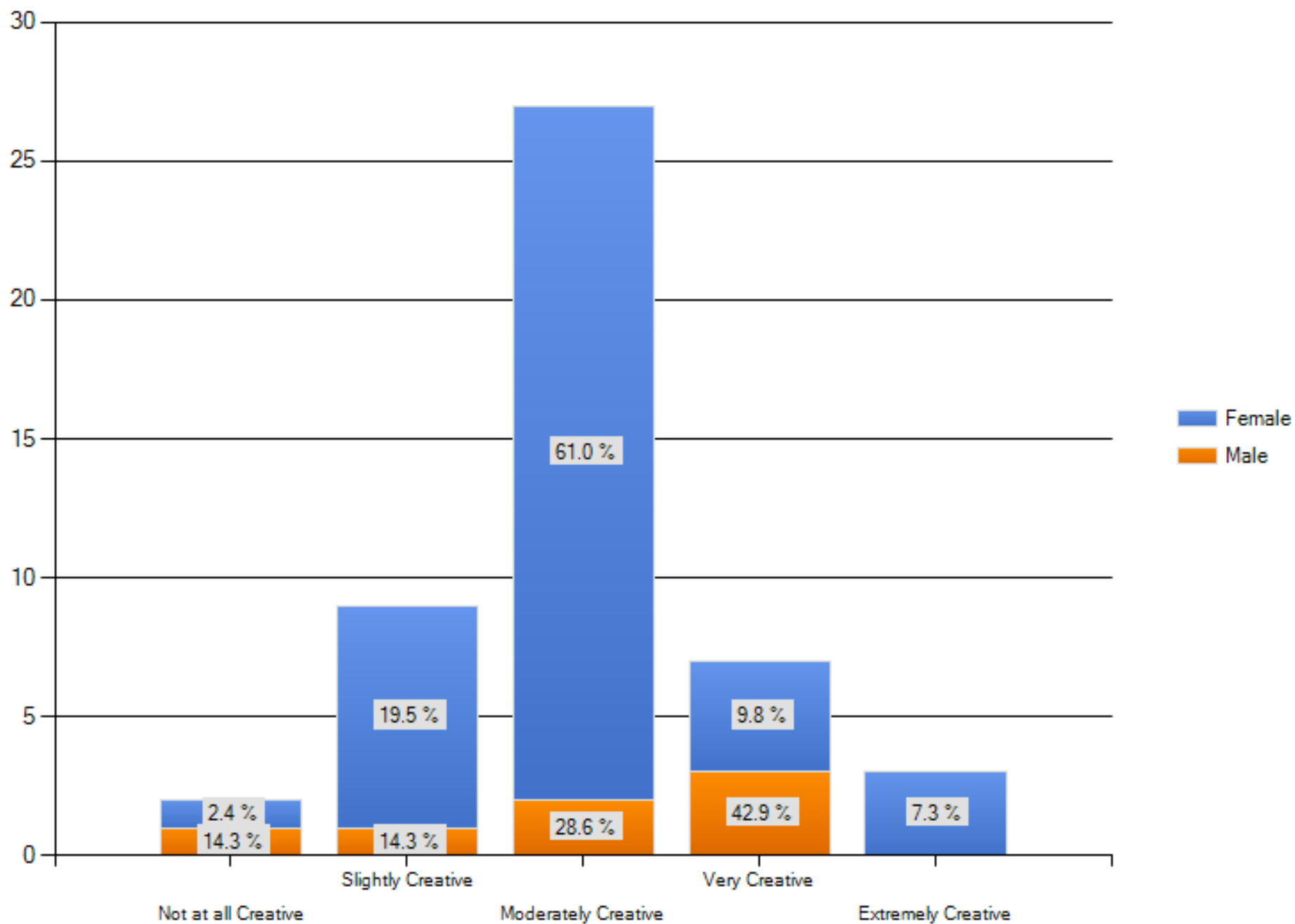


- A shift from western ‘clock time’ to the context and experience-informed ‘event time’ akin with Indigenous ways of Knowing
- “I felt much more relaxed and was able to take in what (the teacher) was saying rather than continuously checking the clock for the time”

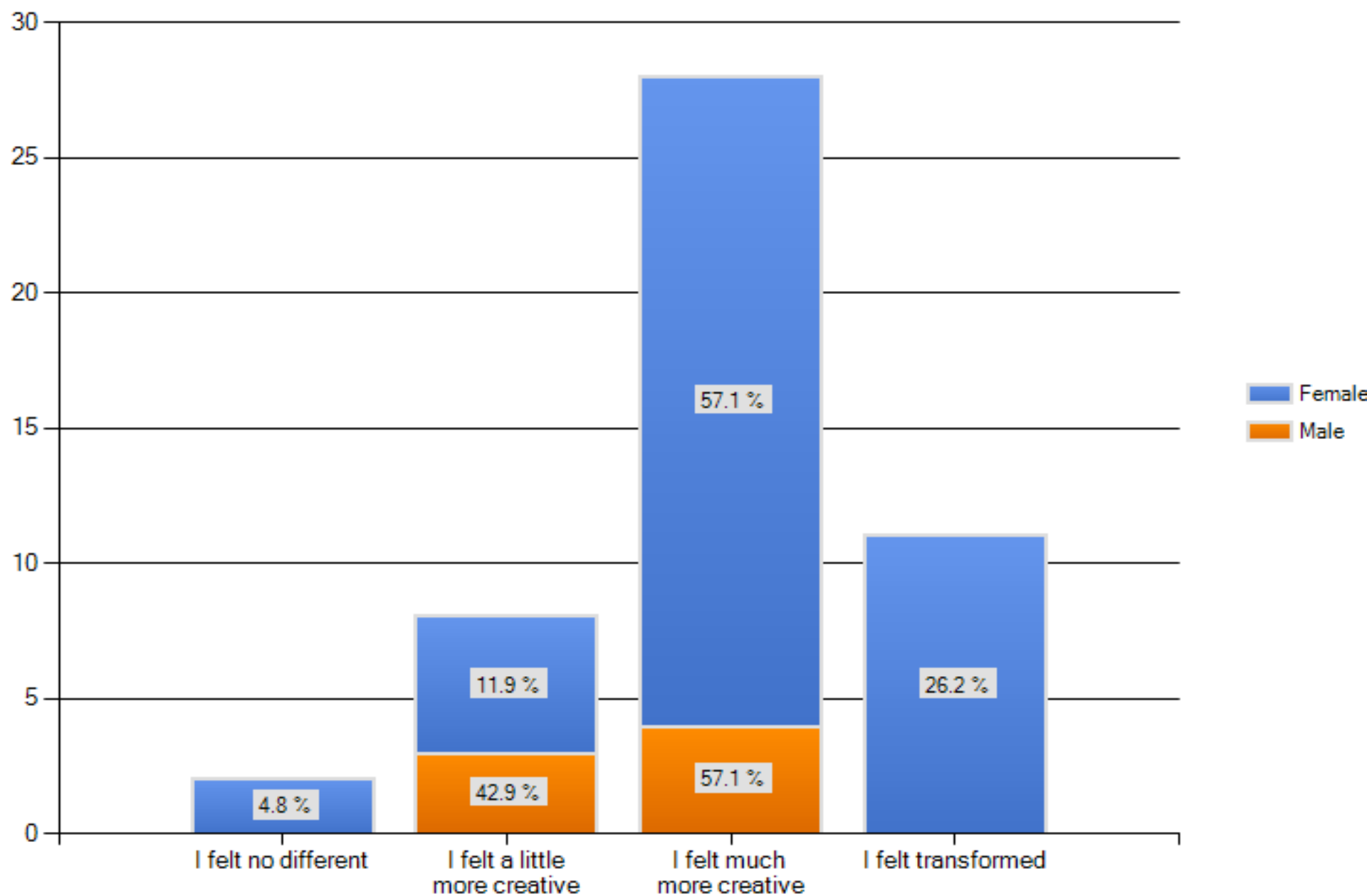


In an educational future where knowledge, appreciation and understanding of the natural world from western or Indigenous perspectives will be important for sustainability education, pre-service teacher education may be required to support learners as they address experiential gaps created by their formal education.

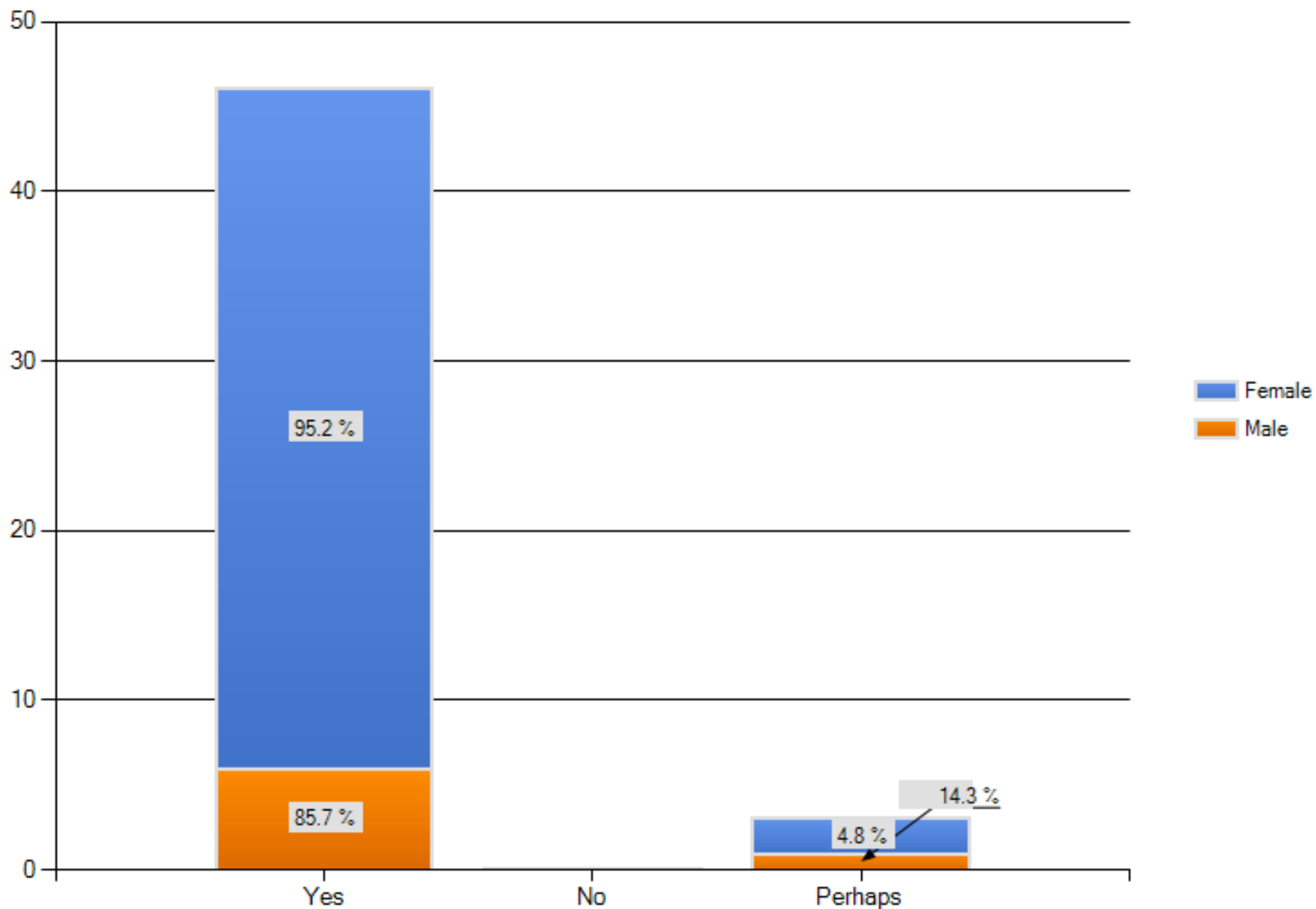
I think of myself as being



How did being in a natural environment (rather than in a classroom setting) impact upon your ability to be creative or to think creatively?



Will you use natural environments to encourage creativity when you are working with students in future?



References and thanks to



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Thank you - Questions Welcome

- Questions are welcome
- If you would prefer to contact me in person with any queries my contact email is:
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