

THE ATTITUDES OF THE FUTURE SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL AGENTS TOWARD RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

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PURPOSES

- To analyse the attitudes of future socio-educational workers from Spain towards intercultural and interreligious dialogue.
- To identify factors relating to these attitudes.

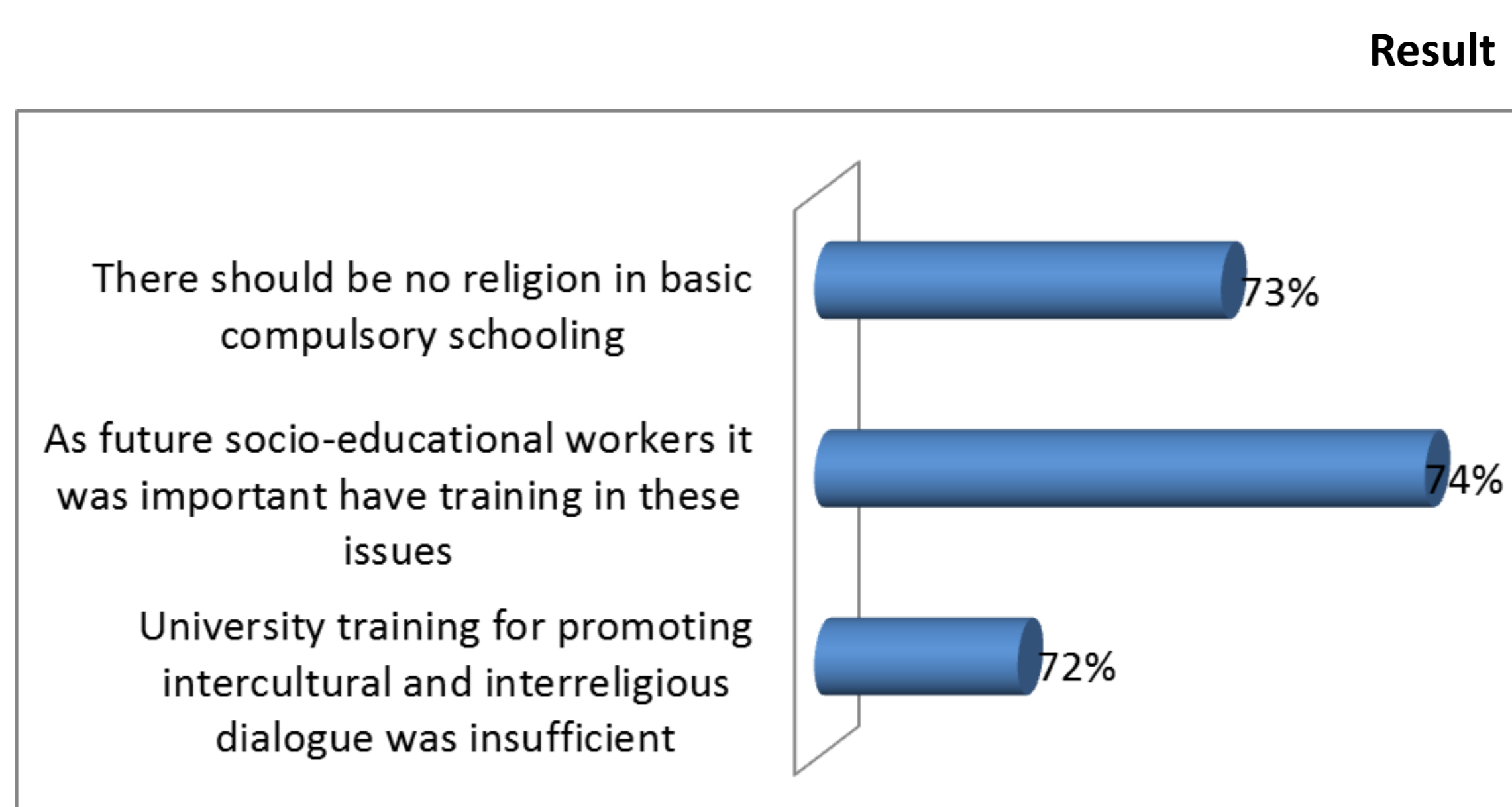
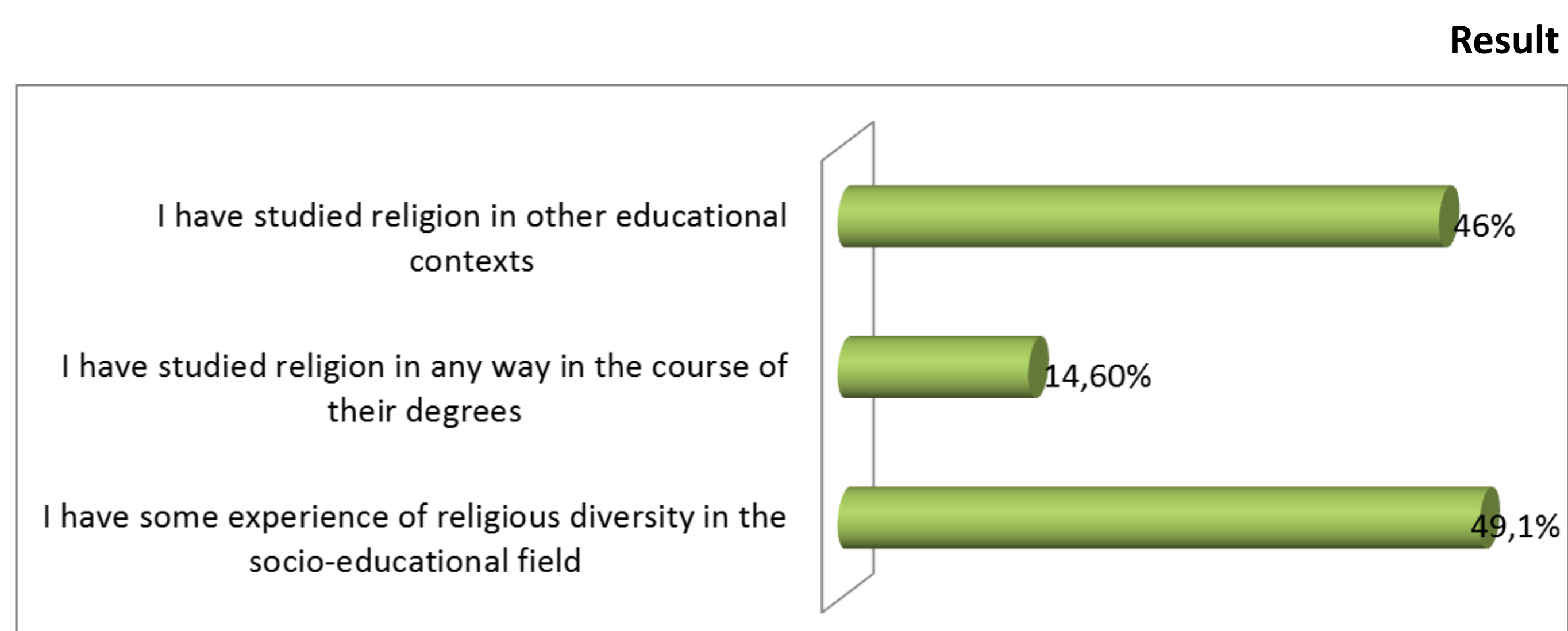
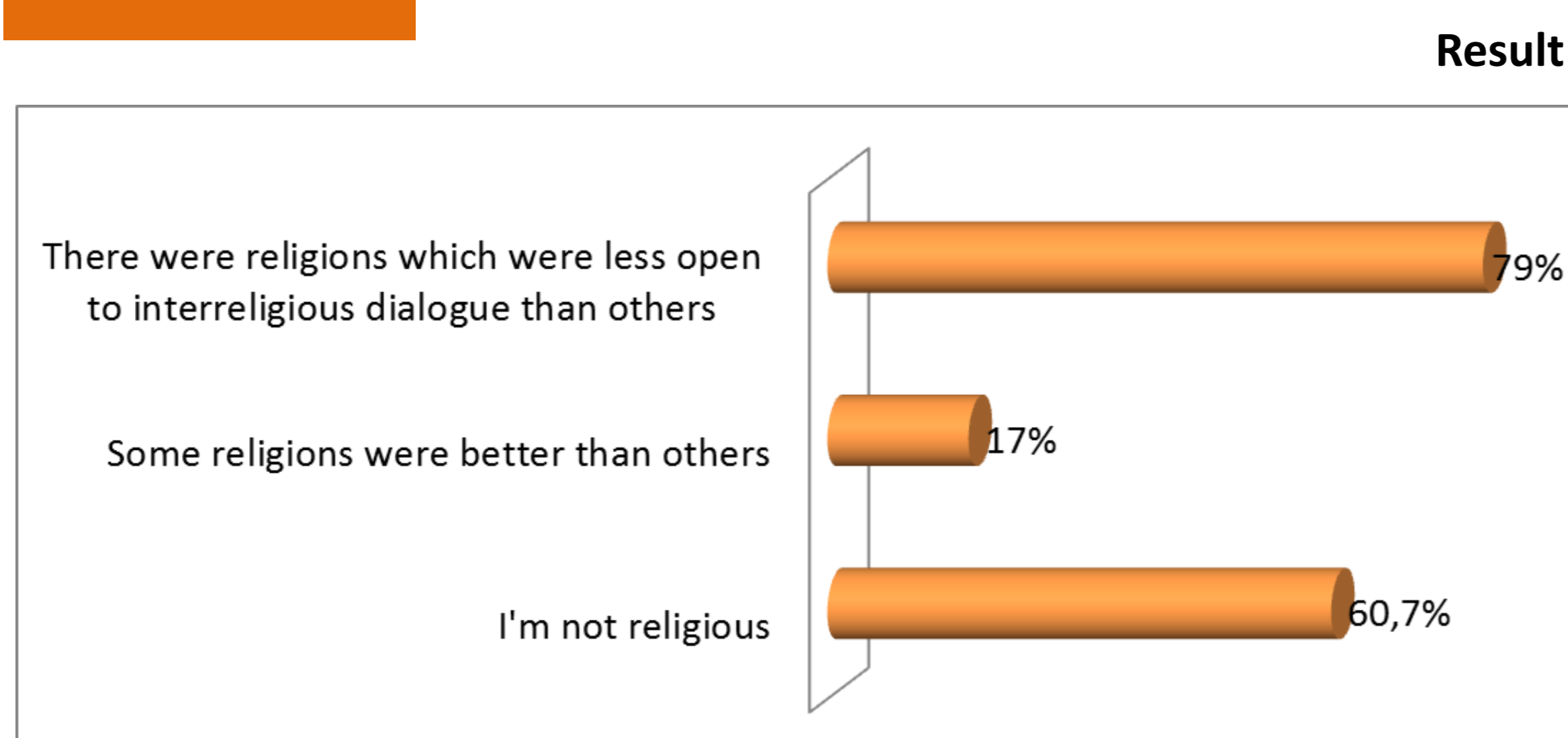
SAMPLE

The population included in the study comprised the final-year students at the faculties of Pedagogy, Social Education, Social Work and Teacher Training at four Catalan state universities.
The sample consisted of a total of 574 students from the 2014-15 academic year.
84.8% women and 15% men.
The average age was 23.
The vast majority were born in Catalonia (92.7%), with 4.7% born in the rest of Spain and only 2.6% outside the country.

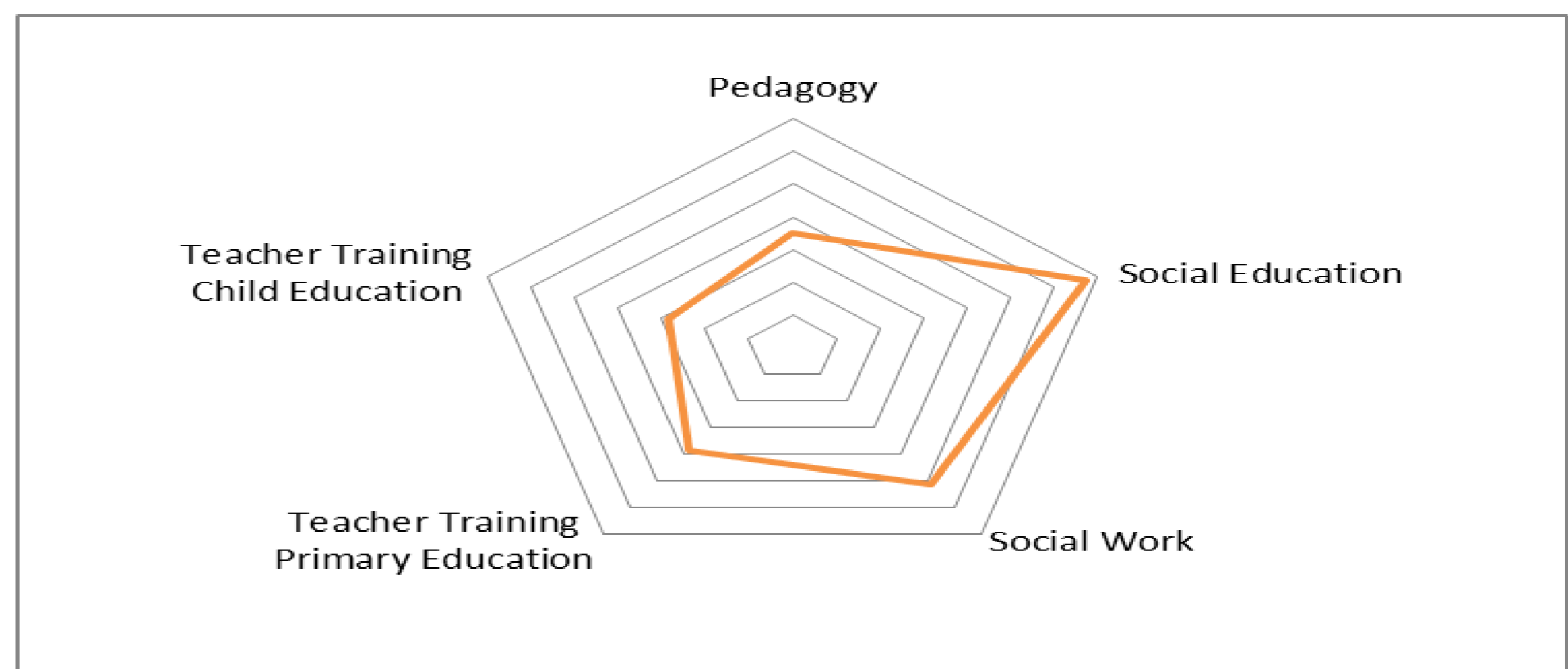
METHOD AND MATERIAL

A diagnostic study was carried out, by means of a survey, of students on Primary and Child Education, Social Education, Social Work and Pedagogy degrees (future socio-educational workers). A Likert scale was designed to measure attitudes, of 49 items. The instrument was considered valid and reliable, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.906.

RESULTS



Scores for attitudes scale
Average of 21 points out of 75 was recorded. Attitudes that were not particularly favourable. Especially resistant to the idea that education should play an important role in managing religious and cultural diversity and promoting interreligious dialogue. Students at the University of Barcelona stood out, with slightly more favourable attitudes than the rest of the sample.



CONCLUSIONS

1. The unfavorable attitude towards cultural and religious diversity, and interreligious dialogue, we believe is due to the lack of training in religious matters of students, as experts have already remarked. Our results suggest that, despite the current attitudes of future socio-educational workers and their lack of university training in these issues, they feel the need for such training due to the search for education found in other areas and the presence of the issues in their day-to-day lives, including their teaching experience in external practicums.
2. Participants did not see the inclusion of religious education in basic schooling (compulsory primary and secondary education) as important. In our view this is because the students' concept of religious studies is akin to Knitter's (2008) substitution model, which is that traditionally imparted in Catholic religious schooling.
3. The human geography of Barcelona, with its greater religious and cultural diversity, and with the numerous initiatives for intercultural and interreligious dialogue that the city offers, may lie behind the less unfavourable attitudes of its future socio-educational workers towards cultural and religious diversity, especially in terms of discrimination and presence in the public sphere.