

Tracer study of VLS researchers

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Objectives

Village Level Studies (VLS) program of ICRISAT has been an avenue for learning and capacity building for researchers. Objective of the study is to trace researchers (from 1975 – 2013) who availed research opportunities through VLS. Specifically, information sought through this study is:

- How diverse were the VLS researchers?
- How they benefitted from the research exposure and opportunities provided through VLS?
- How their association with VLS contributed in expanding the stock of scientific knowledge?
- Did the VLS training and the resulted capacity building lead to any organizational output?
- How the capacities built through the VLS benefitted a wider community?

Data and Methods

Data Source

- ICRISAT Learning Systems Unit (LSU) Database and VLS Databank
- 227 prospective respondents; Tracked 120 (using email IDs).

Methodology

- Tracer study methodology
- Survey designed as PDF forms; Also as online SurveyMonkey questionnaire.

Survey

- Sent through emails; Followed up to 4 times after the initial email
- Survey dissemination over September to November 2014.

Response Rate

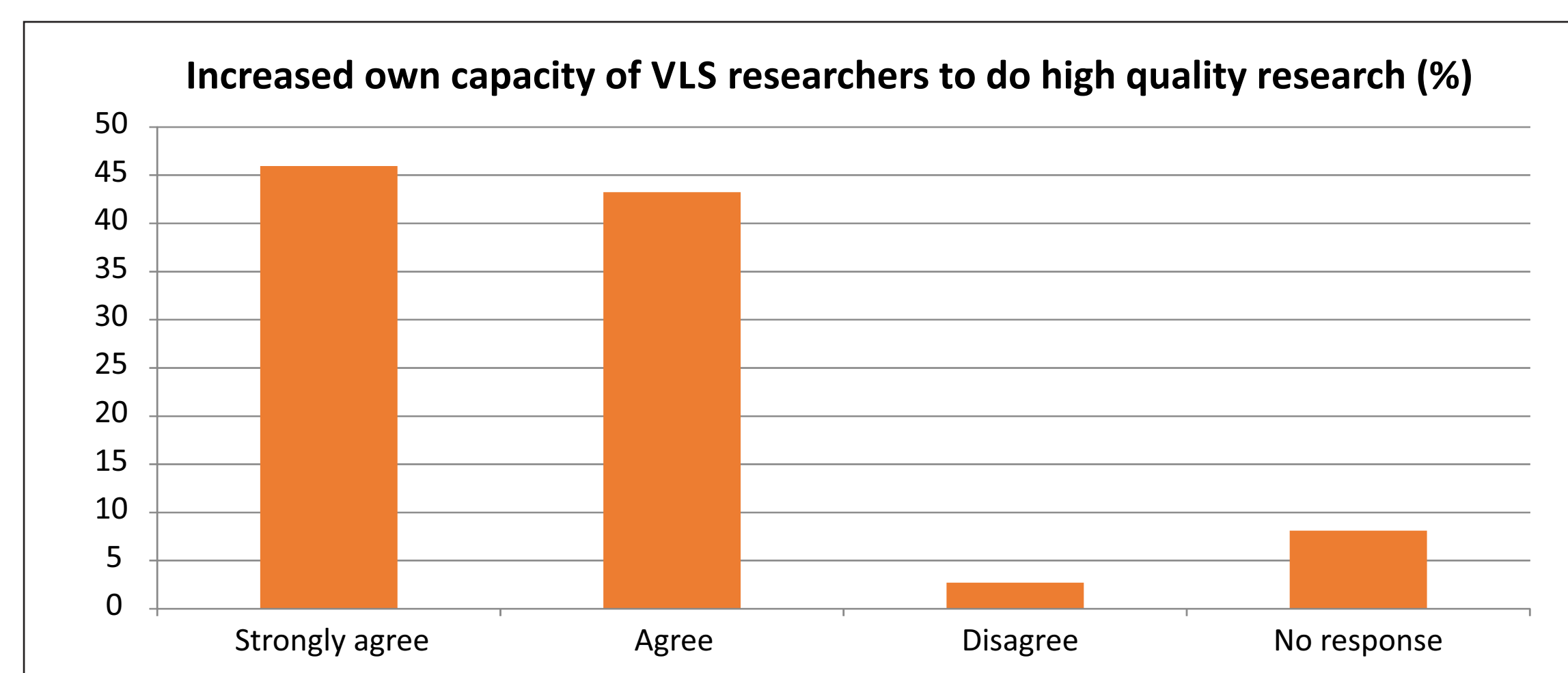
- 47 out of 120.

Initial Observations from the Study

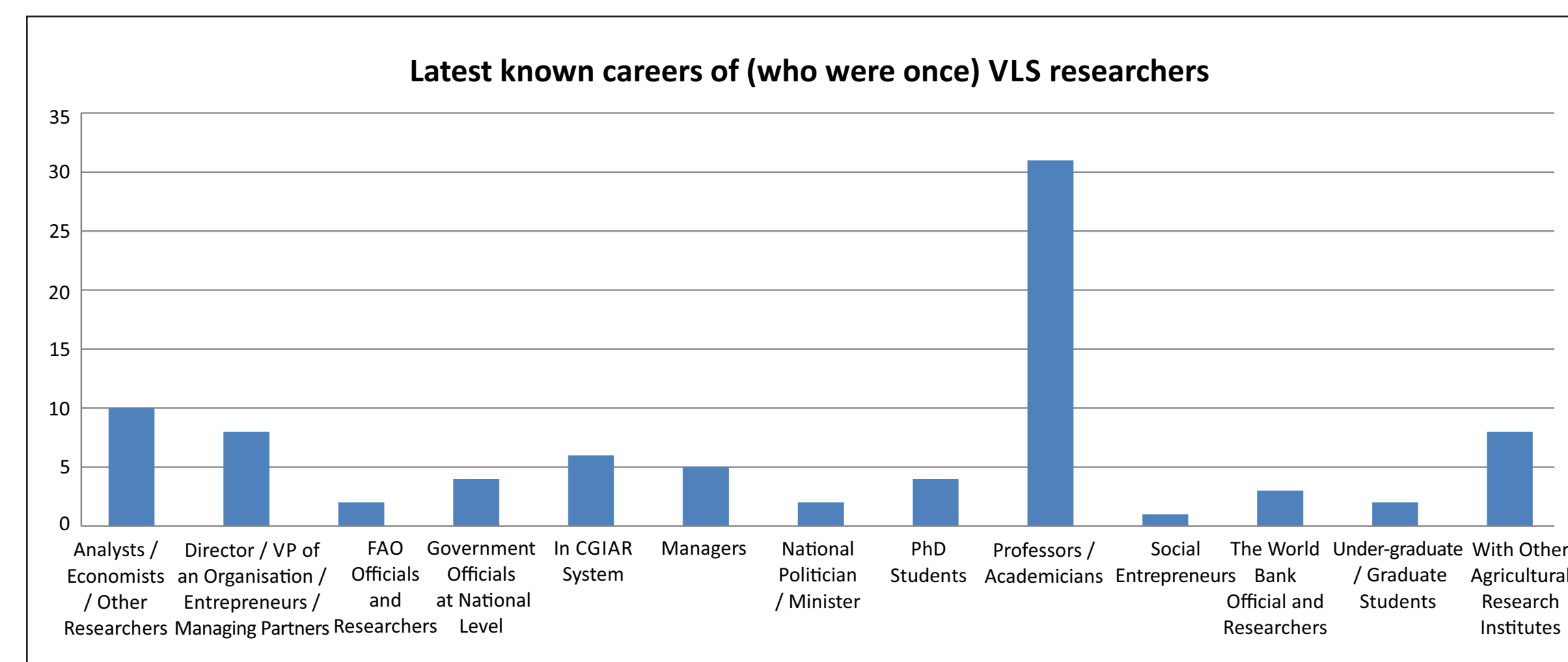
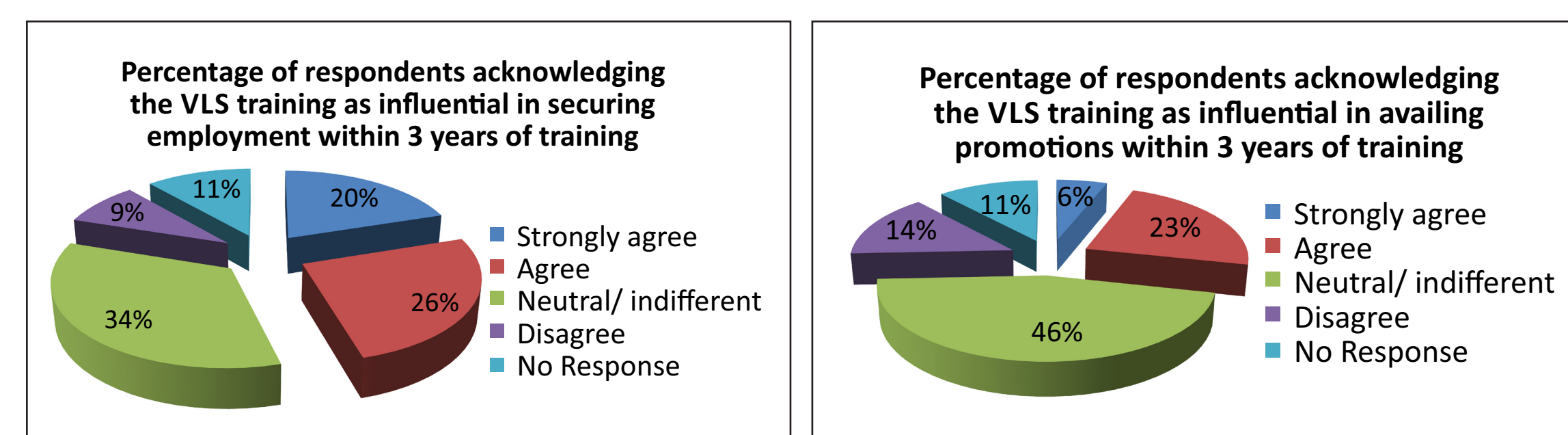
Researchers from Across the Globe

- From more than 40 institutions and 30 nations

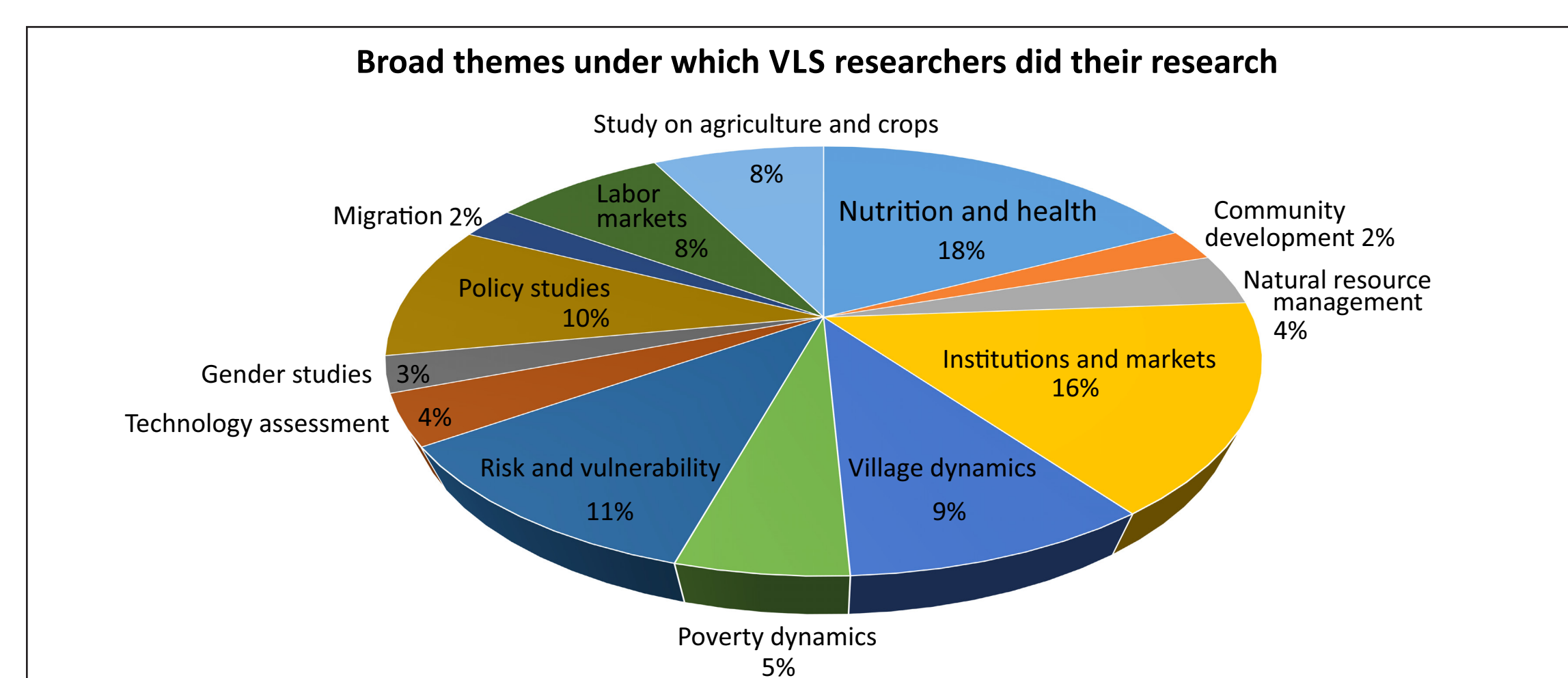
Influence on Human Capacity Building



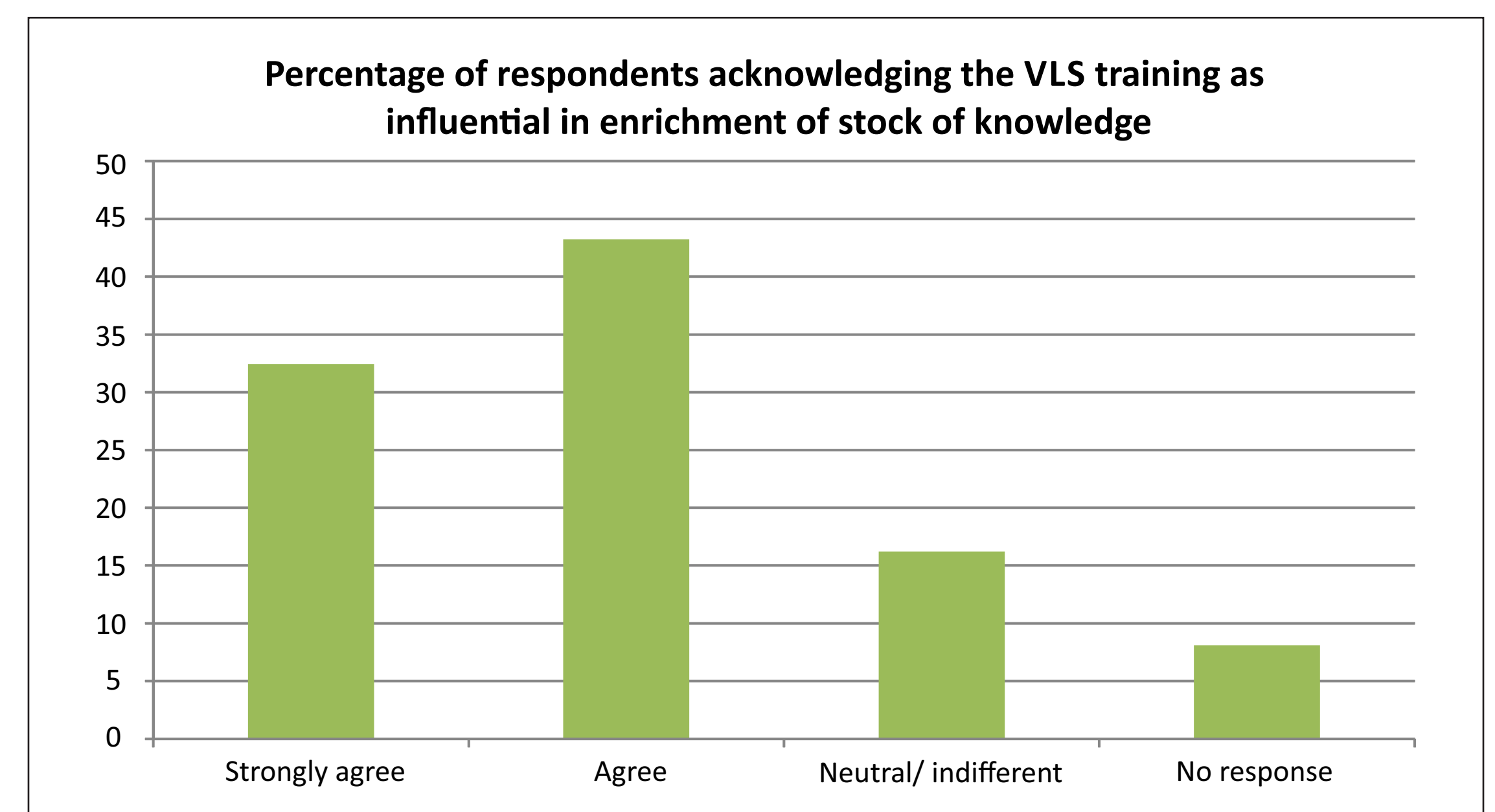
Influence on Career



Contributions to Stock of Knowledge

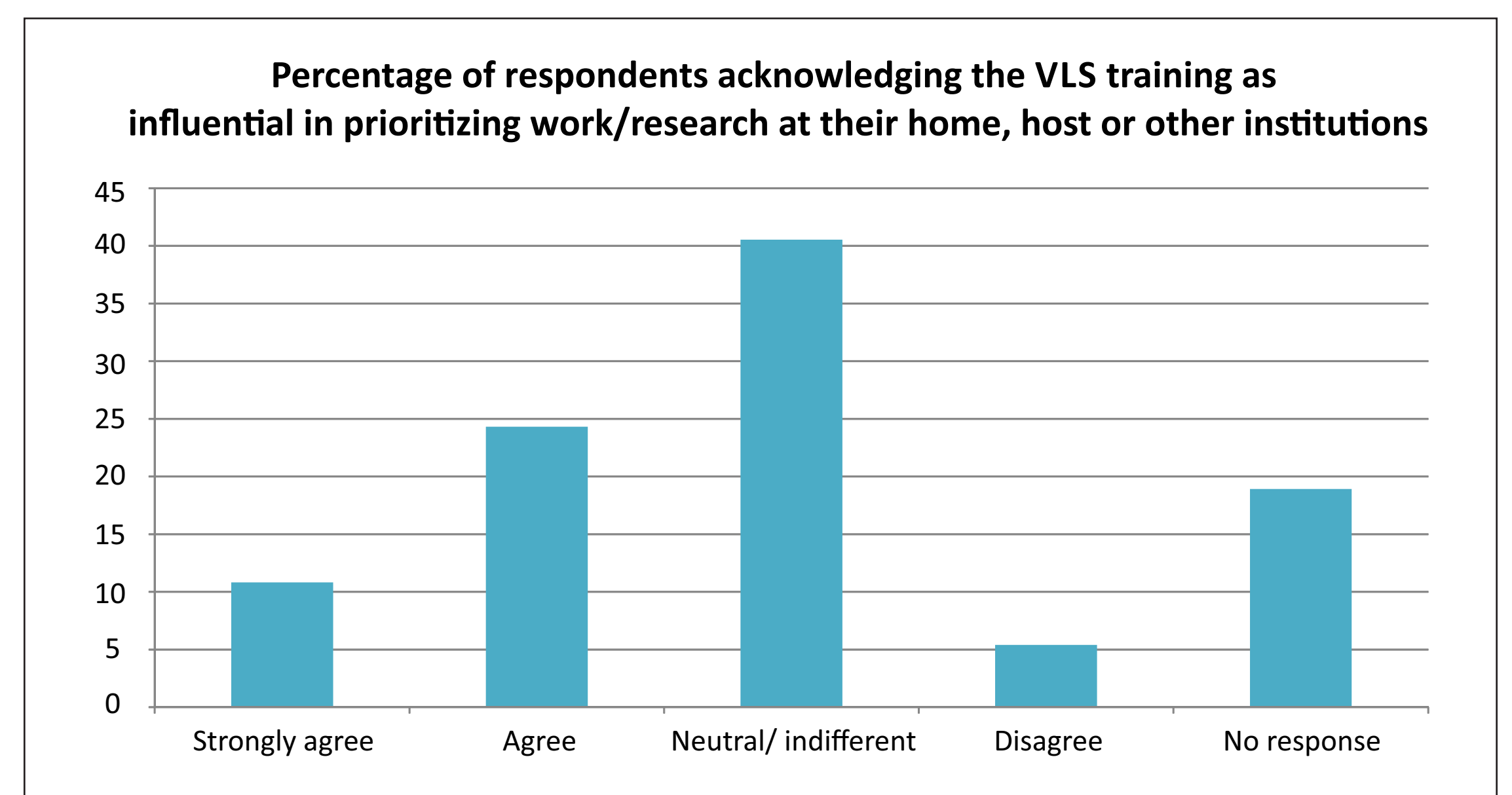


- Respondents indicated their research relevant for themselves (87%) and their institutions (77%)
- Training facilitated identification of new research problems (67%) and contributed in refinement of research methodologies (65%)

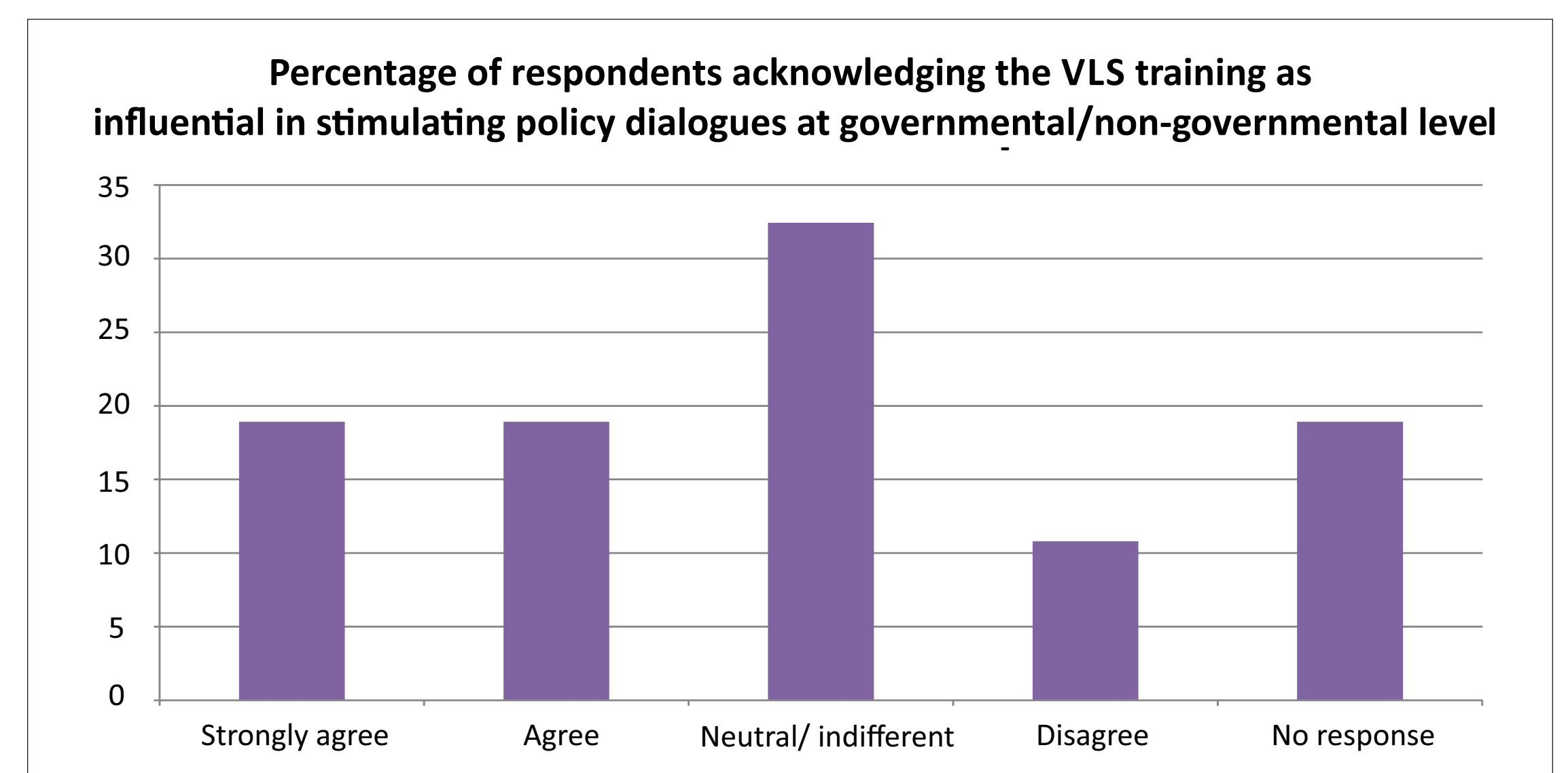


- Publications (As provided by 19 respondents)
 - 24 articles (Journals like: Journal of Development Economics, Econometrica, and Agricultural Systems)
 - 2 books; 1 MPhil Thesis; 1 book chapter.

Organizational Impacts



- Respondents indicated that their training and research led to bring new initiatives beneficial to rural communities (17%) and strengthening capacities in the villages (19%).



Limitations and Way Forward

Limitations

- Limitations of online survey methods in generating details
- Higher chances of subjectivity in responses
- Length of period (1975 – 2013) covered by the study
- Difficulty in quantifying long-term impact of any training
- Difficulty in quantifying impact of stock of knowledge.

Way Forward

- Surveys by contingent valuation methodology; Case Studies.

References

- ACIAR Impact Assessment Series 44 (Gordon and Chadwick, 2007)
- ACIAR Impact Assessment Series 58 (Davis, Jeff et al. 2008)
- Effective Development Group 2006. Master classes, training courses and award program, Vietnam tracer study (October 2006). ATSE Crawford Fund: Melbourne.