

SECOND YEAR STUDENTS' OPINION ON THEIR PERFORMANCE IN A COMPULSORY GROUP PROJECT

KEYWORDS: Group projects; High Education; Physiotherapy.

INTRODUCTION

The distribution of ECTS credits within any subject typically includes three major blocks: theory, practical and projects or seminars. Such three blocks, normally, are taken into account in order of assessing the performance in any subject. In most of the compulsory subjects of the Degree in Physiotherapy at University of Vigo, the completion of a group or individual project is necessary to pass, however the model of such project could vary based upon each subject.

OBJECTIVE

To analyse second year Physiotherapy students' opinion on their performance in a compulsory group project of the subject "General Physiotherapy" at University of Vigo.

METHODOLOGY

Timing and design	A cross-sectional descriptive study was developed. The study has been carried out at the end of the first semester of the academic course 2014-2015 in the Faculty of Physiotherapy, University of Vigo, Spain.
Subjects	54 second year Physiotherapy students' enrolled in the subject "General Physiotherapy" (85.71% of the enrolled). The 54 students who had participated in the study were divided in 12 work groups.
Instruments	The questionnaire used was the Spanish version of the questionnaire on group project work by Bourner, Hughes y Bourner [1], an adapted form on the questionnaire by Garvin et al. [2]. It is a self-completion questionnaire to assess the perception of the students on a group project, and in our study it was used after the compulsory work project of the subject above commented. The questionnaire includes 17 items. For the current study, the items 1 to 11 were used, except the open-ended questions (questions 5 and 8).
Participation	Was voluntary.
Statistical analysis	The descriptive statistical analysis was done using SPSS. Results are expressed in absolute frequencies and proportions or percentages, and in means and standard deviations. To compare variables, the Pearson index and the T-student test were used. Significant differences were calculated for a p value of <0.05.

RESULTS

The main results are shown in table 1 and in figures 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Question*		N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
1. Work together on the project was a... experience.	From "not enjoyable" to "enjoyable"	54	1	5	3.87	.802
	From "frustrating" to "satisfying"	54	1	5	3.48	.906
	From "dull" to "stimulating"	54	2	5	3.44	.744
	From "not creative" to "very creative"	54	1	5	3.96	.776
	From "difficult" to "easy"	54	2	5	4.11	.664
	From "poor learning" to "learning"	54	1	5	3.44	.816
2. At the end of the project I felt ...	From "ignorant about topic studied" to "knowledgeable about topic studied"	54	2	5	4.07†	.696
	From "lacking in confidence" to "confident"	54	3	5	3.93†	.723
	From "less flexible in thought" to "more flexible in thought"	54	3	5	3.78‡	.691
	From "dependent" to "independent"	54	2	5	3.67‡	.801
	From "Incompetent" to "competent"	54	2	5	3.91‡	.708
	From "unenthusiastic" to "enthusiastic"	54	2	5	3.72†	.685
	From "less creative" to "more creative"	54	2	5	3.56‡	.664
	From "ignorant about topic studied" to "knowledgeable about topic studied"	54	1	5	1.96	.971
3. At the beginning of the Project I felt ...	From "lacking in confidence" to "confident"	54	1	5	3.19	.913
	From "less flexible in thought" to "more flexible in thought"	54	2	4	3.04	.548
	From "dependent" to "independent"	54	1	5	3.07	.908
	From "Incompetent" to "competent"	54	1	5	3.17	1.042
	From "unenthusiastic" to "enthusiastic"	54	1	5	3.28	.834
	From "less creative" to "more creative"	54	1	4	2.93	.610

* Each question is composed by different aspects which are scored in a five-point Likert scale.

† Significant differences (p<0.01) between the different aspects which integrates question 2 and 3 (Before and at the end of the project).

‡ Significant differences (p<0.001) between the different aspects which integrates question 2 and 3 (Before and at the end of the project).

Table 1. Descriptive data of the three first questions of the questionnaire.

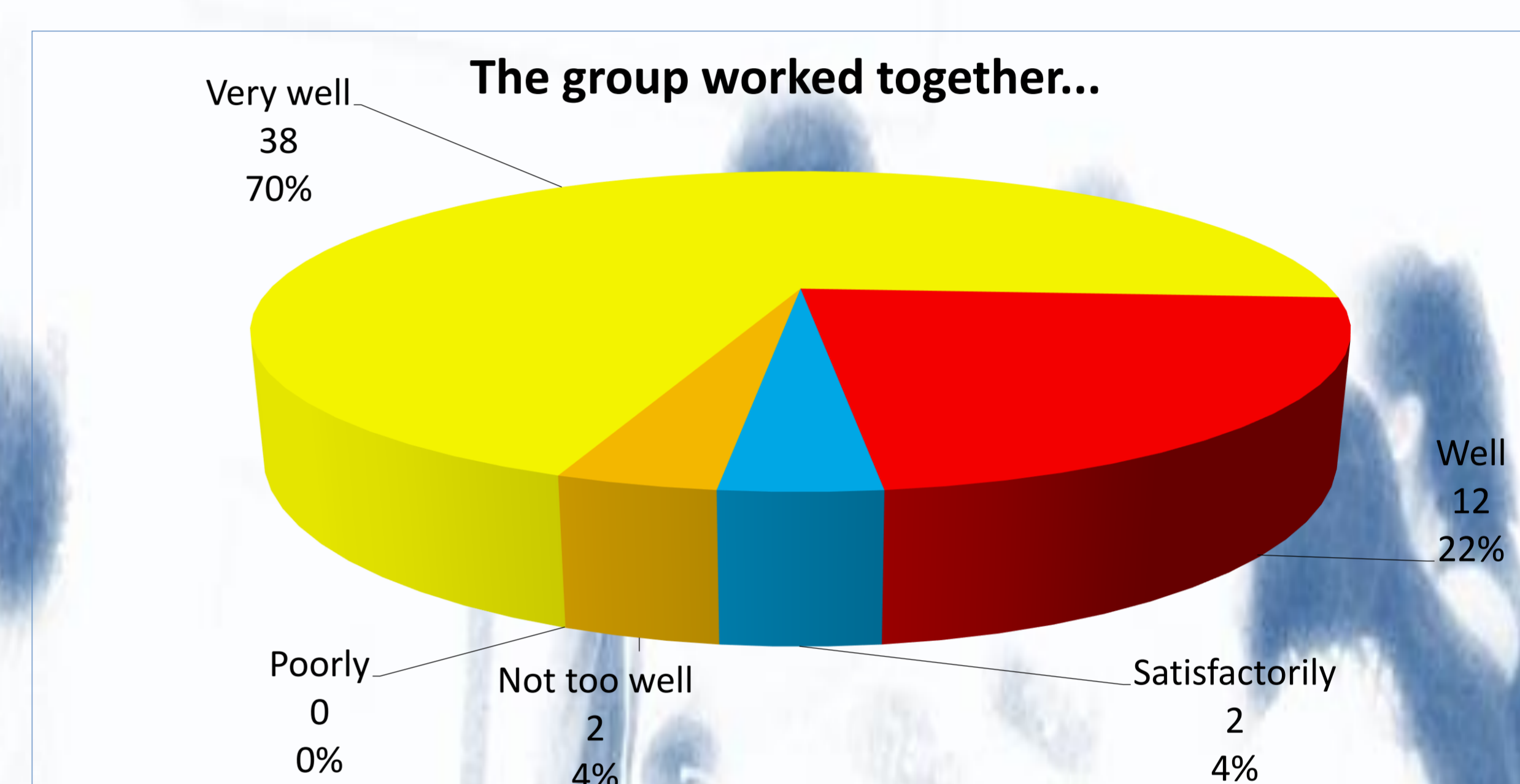


Figure 1. Data related to the question about if the other participants had worked in group.

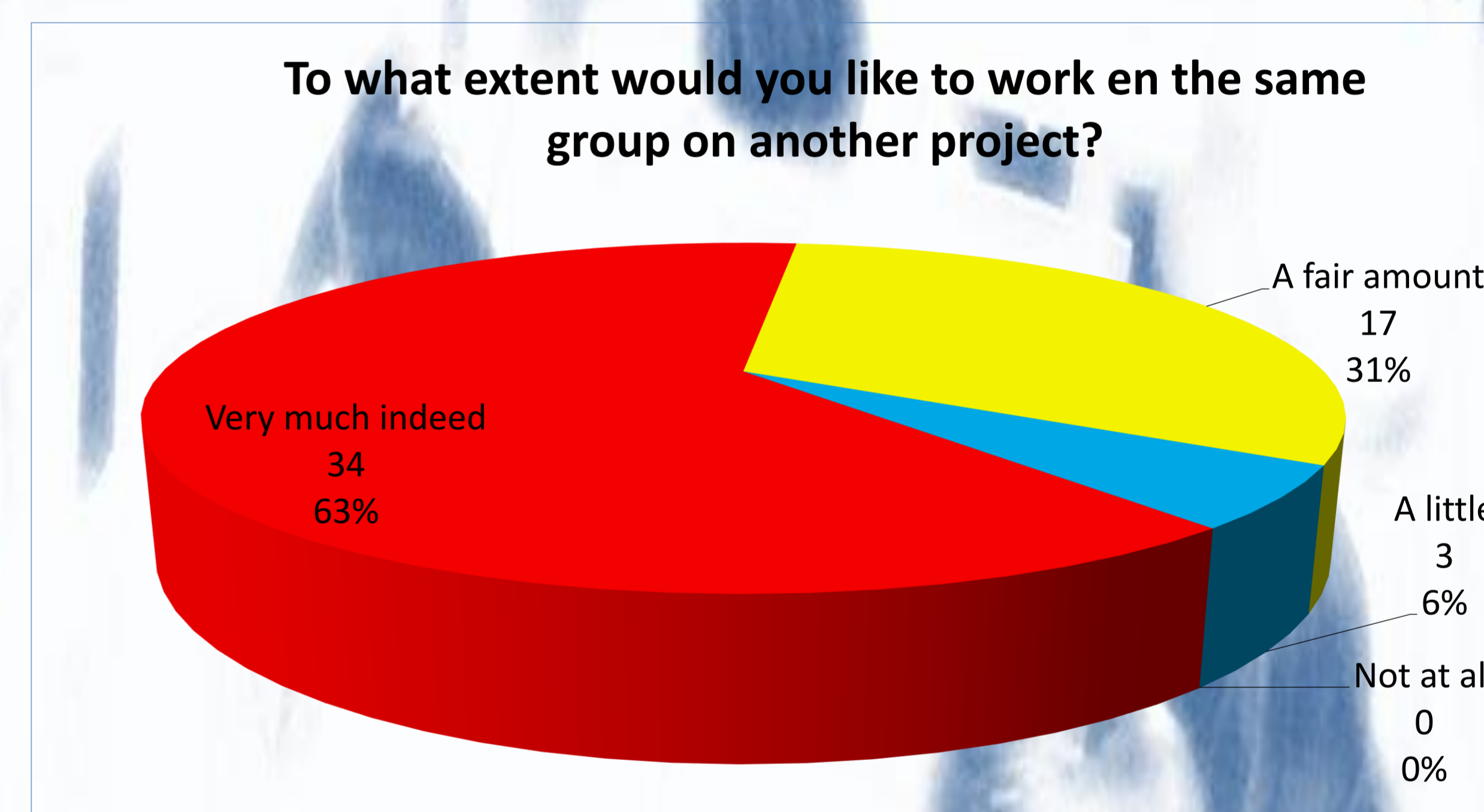


Figure 2. Data related to the question about if they would like to work again with the same group.

How did you rate the outcome of the project?

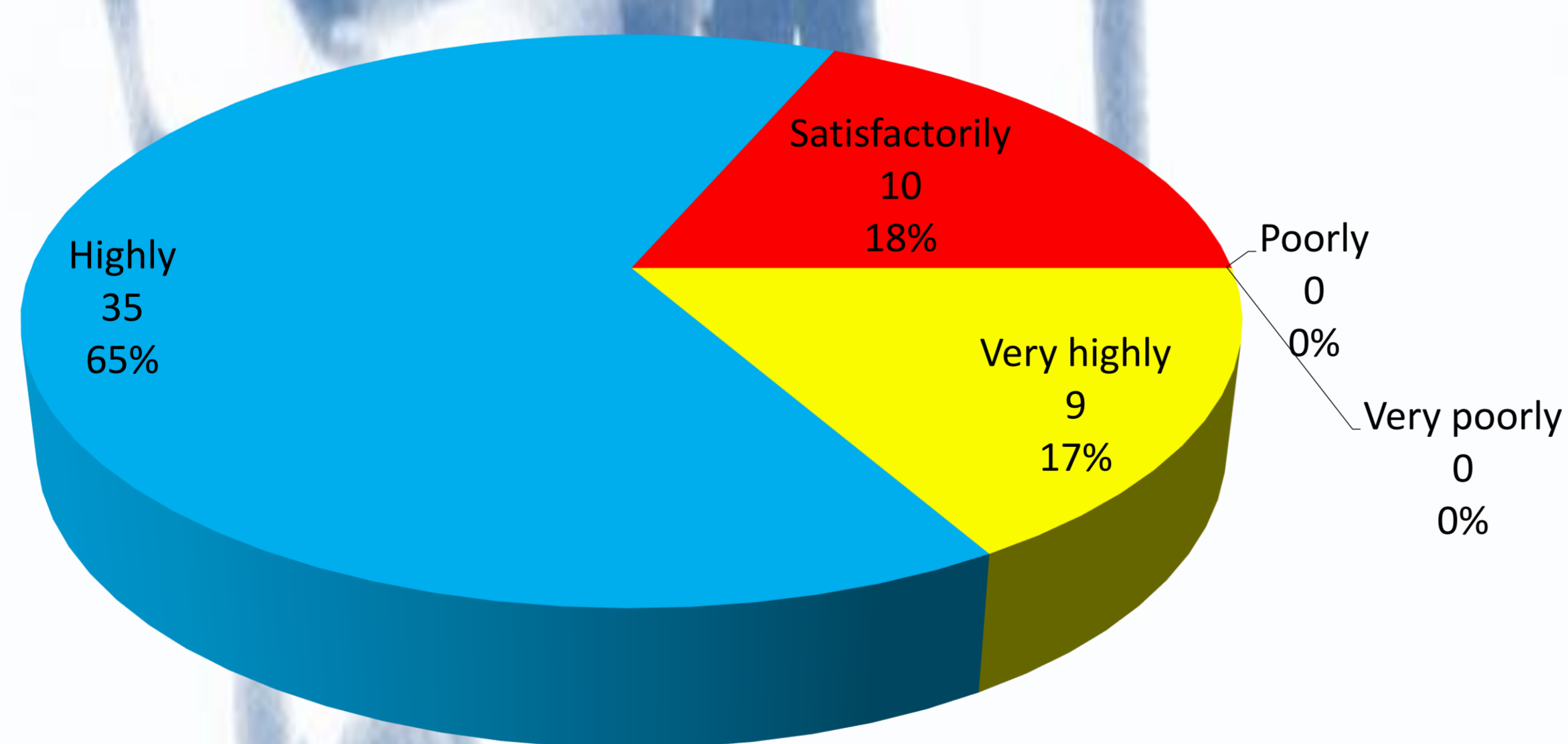


Figure 3. Data related to the question about how they assess the work done.

How much did you learn about yourself and about the rest of your group?

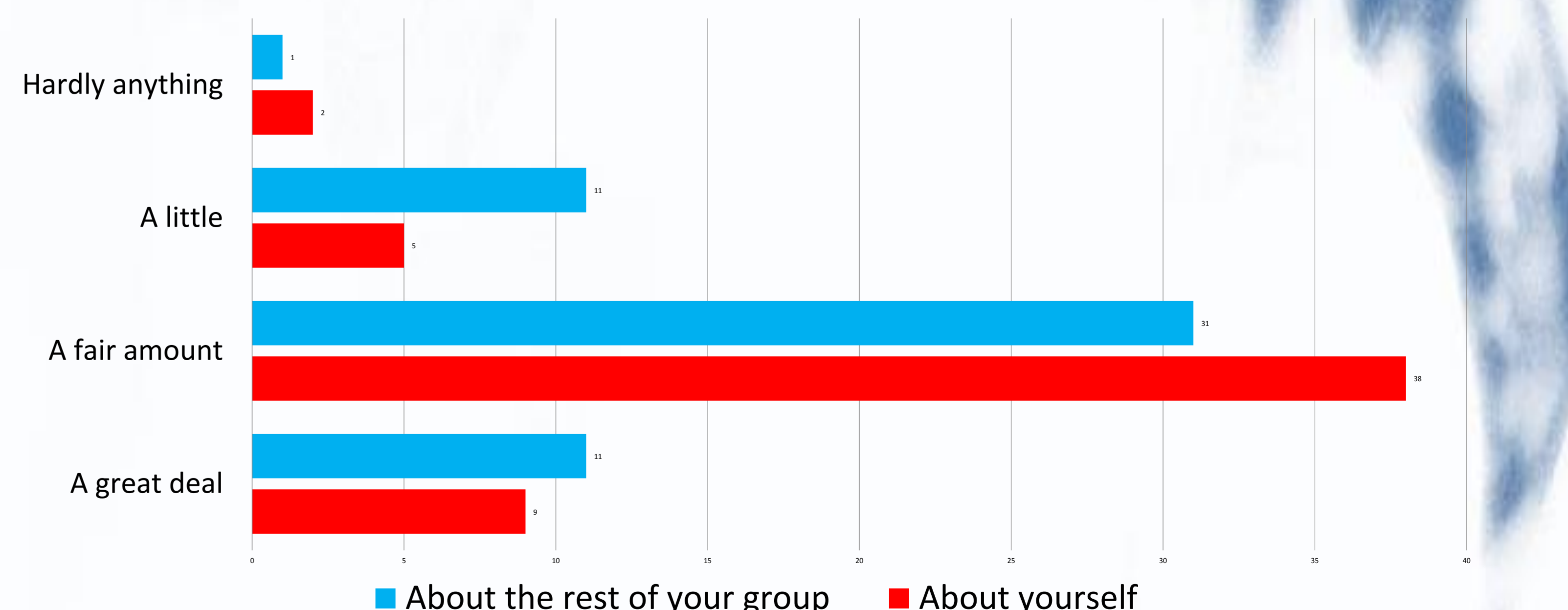


Figure 4. Data related to the question about how much they had learnt from themselves and from the other members of the group at the end of the project.

CONCLUSION

The second year physiotherapy students at University of Vigo seem to assess positively their performance in the project included in the subject "General Physiotherapy". However, although most of the groups seemed to had worked in good working atmosphere, few of them had punctual problems.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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