

# **Analysis of Feedback from Participants of Starr Commonwealth's *Trauma-Informed Resilient Schools* and *Children of Trauma and Resilience* Courses**

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## Executive Summary

**Starr Commonwealth** (Starr) is a non-profit organization in Albion, MI that provides community-based programs, education, and behavioral health services surrounding the identification of trauma symptomologies and **trauma-informed care**. Starr has partnered with **Statistics in the Community** (STATCOM) to assist in providing statistical support for their program of work. In a first project, STATCOM has analyzed the **learning outcomes** and feedback received from participants in Starr's **Trauma-Informed Resilient Schools** (TIRS) and **Children of Trauma and Resilience** (COTR) courses. From the results of the questionnaires, most participants found the course to be **useful and beneficial**, and overall, participants were **highly satisfied** with the content and materials of the course, the instructor, and the teaching quality. Further, most course-takers professed a **mastery of course concepts**, a **willingness to take another Starr course**, and would make **strong endorsements** of the course to their colleagues.

## TIRS Course Description

**Trauma-Informed Resilient Schools (TIRS)** teaches school professionals how to create trauma-informed schools and classrooms. The training focuses on resilience, exploring the core values and beliefs of educators, and places an emphasis on understanding how trauma impacts children and their school experience. Lastly, proactive strategies such as fostering connections, prioritizing social and emotional skills, establishing safety, and promoting play are presented. This course provides detailed information and concrete actions that answer not just the “why” but also the “how” to create the best classroom and school supports for traumatized students and the school professionals who serve them.

### Key Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of the course, participants will be able to:

- Identify at least five questions to ask to promote a trauma-informed and resilience-focused mindset when working with students in the school setting.
- Discuss the four universal needs and provide examples to support each.
- Describe how trauma impacts the deep and outer brain functions specifically in the school setting.
- Identify at least five proactive strategies for every classroom.

**Target Audience:** All professionals in schools/educational settings. Foundational course for Starr Certified Trauma and Resilience Practitioner (CTRP) or Certified Trauma and Resilience Trainer – Educational Track. Audience Examples: Aspiring Educators, Teachers, Administrators, Para-Professionals, etc. (i.e., anyone working with students or making decisions about students).

## COTR Course Description

**Children of Trauma and Resilience (COTR)** introduces participants to a trauma-informed and resilience-focused mindset and teaches participants about toxic stress and trauma, how to help process those experiences, and how to foster and nurture characteristics of resilience. This course begins with a strong focus on resilience and includes an exploration of how core values and beliefs direct the way professionals work with children. The four universal needs of all human beings as explained by the Circle of Courage model including belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity are explained and discussed. Participants learn about the experience of trauma as one that impacts a person's body and shown a demonstration of trauma's impact on the brain. Participants learn the importance of sensory-based interventions and how to assess a child's private logic and universal needs. Finally, participants practice the development of trauma-informed and resilience-focused support plans for youth.

### Key Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of the course, participants will be able to:

- Discuss the four universal needs and provide examples to support each.
- Describe how trauma impacts the deep and outer brain functions.
- Identify at least five symptoms and reactions of toxic stress and trauma that may mimic other mental health disorders.
- Provide at least three examples of behavior supports for youth who do not have all of their universal needs met.

**Target Audience:** Any and all child-caring professionals across various fields (e.g., Clinical, Education, Healthcare, etc.). Foundational course for Starr Certified Trauma and Resilience Practitioner (CTRP) or Certified Trauma and Resilience Trainer – Clinical Track. Audience Examples: Clinical Practitioners, Social Workers, Counselors, Physicians, Nurses, Community Advocates, etc. (i.e., a wide audience of professionals, parents/caregivers/foster parents, and child advocates).

## Overview

### Who took STARR Commonwealth's TIRS and COTR courses?

Nearly 3,300 individuals completed a course. Most were **Americans**, from Michigan and Ohio, though many were based in Georgia, Texas, and Canada, and 15 other countries were represented. The majority of participants worked in **school and special education**, followed next by community-based settings. Participants largely learned of the courses by **word of mouth** or **email**.

### How satisfied were participants with these courses?

Overall, participants found **both courses** – particularly the COTR course – **very beneficial** and were **highly satisfied** with course content and instructors. Participants professed **mastery of course concepts**, **willingness to take another Starr course**, and strong **endorsements of the course** for colleagues.

### Which participants were *most* satisfied with the courses?

Perceptions were **particularly positive among participants who voluntarily enrolled** in courses compared to those for whom enrollment was mandatory. In addition, positive appraisals of the courses were more common among **younger** participants, **female** participants; perceptions were mostly **consistent across** participants of different **race identities and ethnicities**.

## Introduction

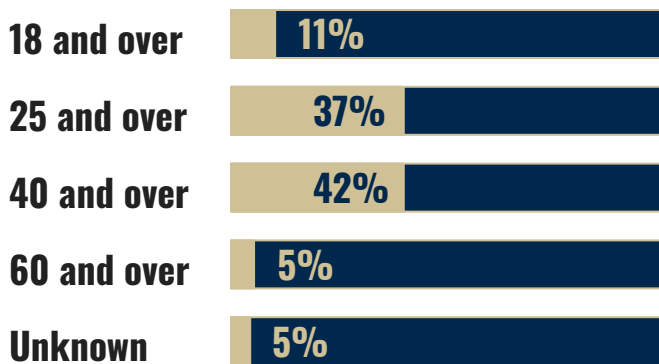
**Starr Commonwealth (Starr)** provides community-based programs, education, and behavioral health services surrounding the identification of trauma symptomologies and **trauma-informed care**. Part of Starr's mission is to increase accessibility to trauma-informed, resilience-focused, evidence-based intervention tools and programs. As part of this work, Starr Commonwealth offers **online courses** and **virtual trainings** centered upon two certification tracks: an education and a clinical track. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, much of the online education-based programming has been offered free of charge over the past year, leading to increased participation. This has applied to two courses in particular (1) the **Trauma-Informed Resilient Schools (TIRS)** course, as part of the education track, and the **Children of Trauma and Resilience (COTR)** course, as part of the clinical track. The TIRS course teaches school professionals how to create **trauma-informed schools** and **classrooms**. The course focuses on resilience, exploring the core values and beliefs of educators and places an emphasis on understanding how trauma impacts children and their school experience. The COTR course introduces participants to a **trauma-informed** and **resilience-focused mindset** and teaches participants about toxic stress and trauma, how to help process those experiences, and how to foster and nurture characteristics of resilience.

Starr has partnered with **Statistics in the Community (STATCOM)** to assist in providing statistical support for their program of work. STATCOM has analyzed the learning outcomes and **feedback received** from participants in the TIRS and COTR courses. The feedback instruments, designed by members of Starr Commonwealth, consist of Likert-type questions on the quality of the courses and respondent's satisfaction. Responses for this wave of analysis were collected up until February 11, 2021. Contained in **this report is a summary** of the feedback survey results from the TIRS and COTR courses, prepared by members of STATCOM, to aid members of Starr leadership in their understanding of the course outcomes.

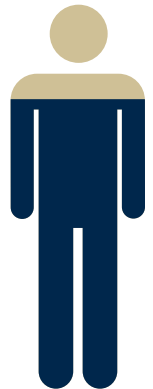
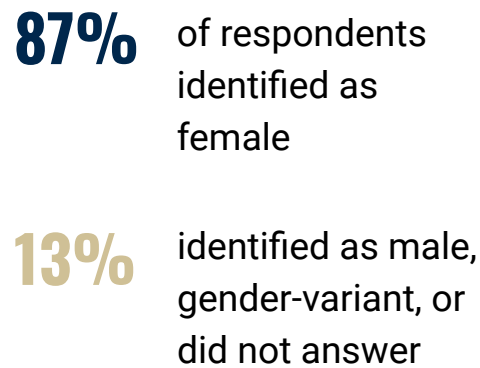
## TIRS Participant Demographics

There were **2,268 participants** in the **Trauma-Informed Resilient Schools** course. The majority of respondents were between **25-40 years** old (42%) or **41-55 years** old (37%). Additionally, the majority of participants were **female** (87%), **White** (80%), and **non-Hispanic** (82%). Many respondents had a **Master's degree** (42%) or a **Bachelor's degree** (26%), and **5 years** (IQR: 2-12 years) experience.

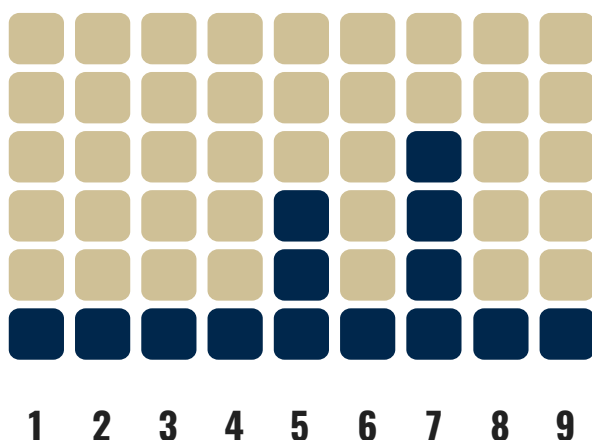
### Age



### Gender Identity



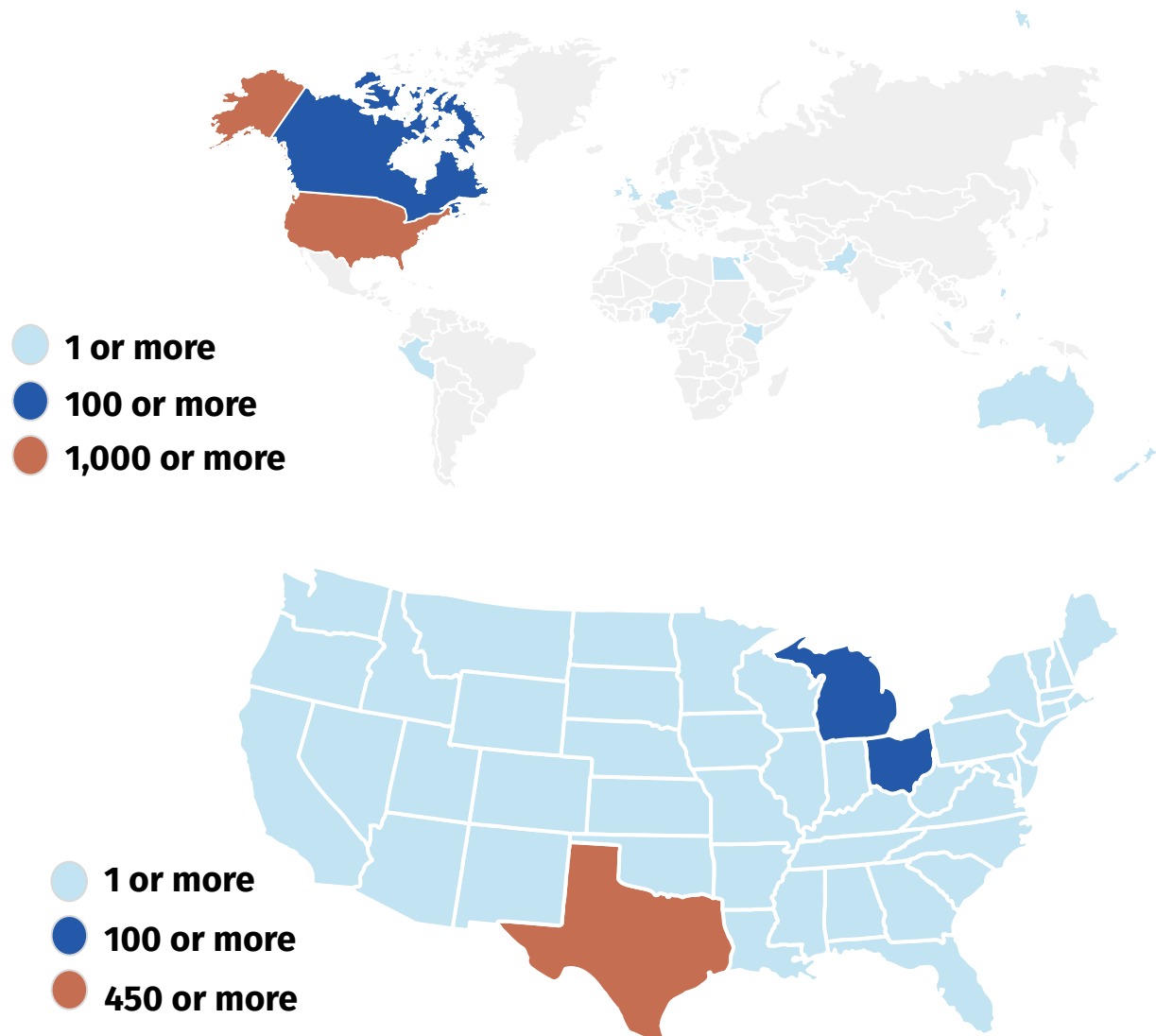
### Education Level



1. Some high school
2. High school diploma or GED
3. Some college
4. Associate's degree
5. Bachelor's degree
6. Some graduate school
7. Master's degree
8. Doctoral degree
9. Prefer not to answer

## TIRS Participant Geography

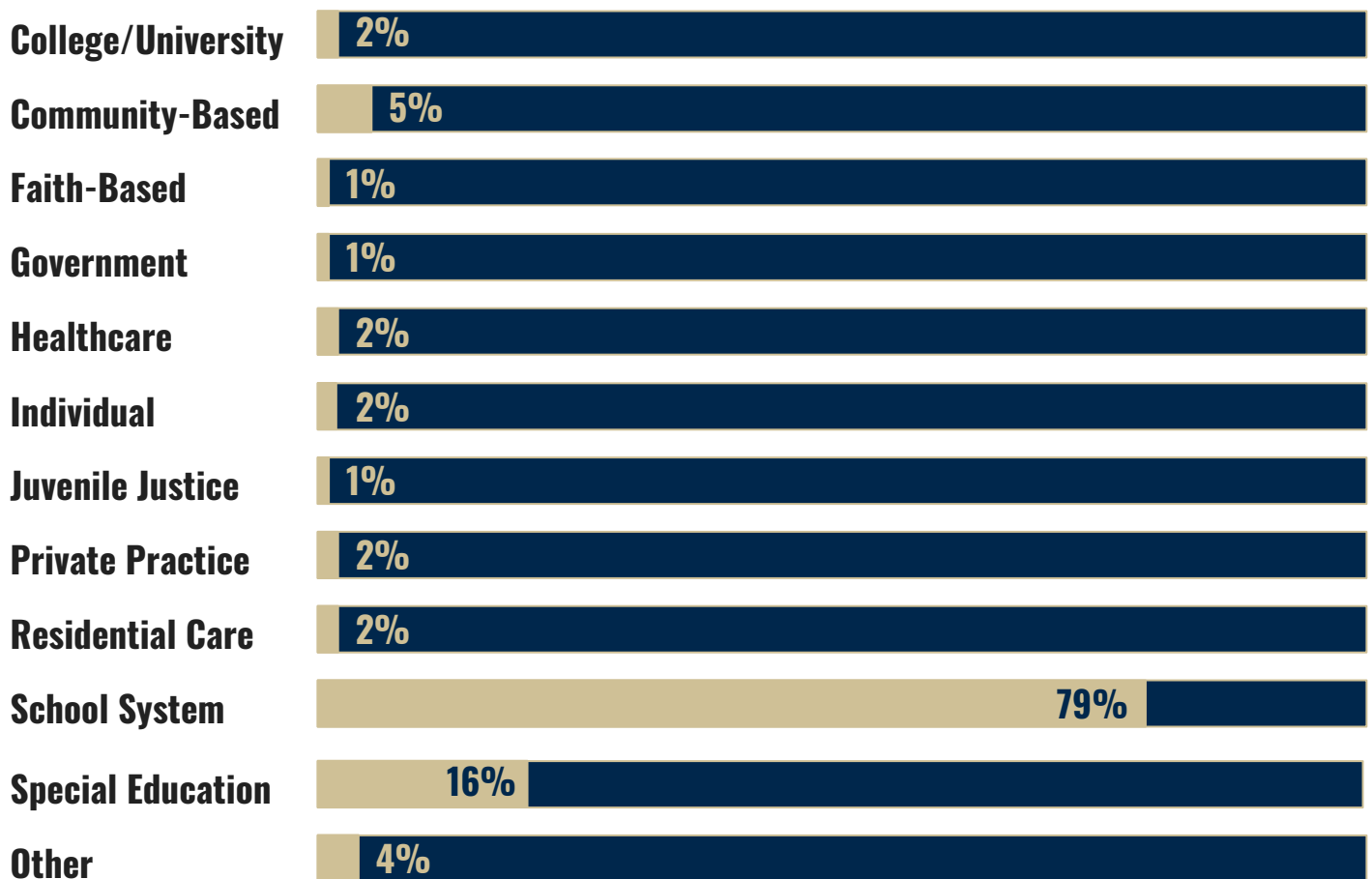
The vast majority of course participants work in the **United States** (78%) or, to a lesser extent, Canada (6%). However, **14 countries are represented** by the TIRS course. Focusing on those respondents in the United States, we see that the greatest percentages of Trauma-Informed Resilient Schools participants were from **Texas** (20%), **Michigan** (13%), and **Ohio** (8%).





## TIRS Participant Work Setting

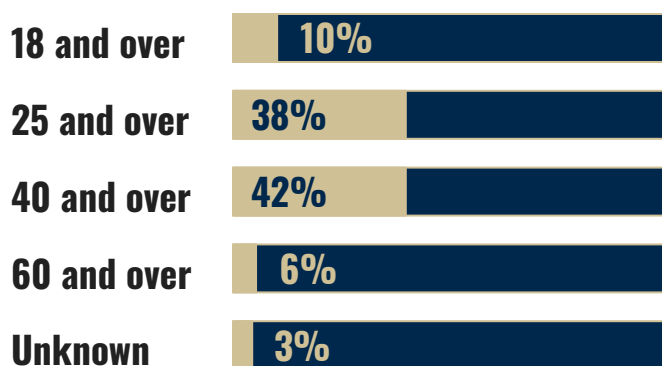
We examined the two “choose all that apply” questions pertaining to work setting and knowledge of the trainings. A majority of respondents indicated working in a **school system** (79%). Further, most participants heard of these trainings through either e-mail (32%) or word of mouth (25%).



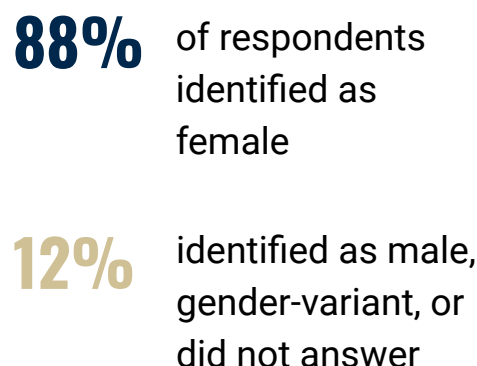
## COTR Participant Demographics

There were **1,029 participants** in the **Children of Trauma and Resilience** course. The majority of respondents were between **25-40 years** old (42%) or **41-55 years** old (38%). Additionally, the majority of participants were **female** (88%), **White** (77%), and **non-Hispanic** (86%). Many had a **Master's degree** (49%) or a **Bachelor's degree** (22%), and **5 years** (IQR: 2-11 years) experience.

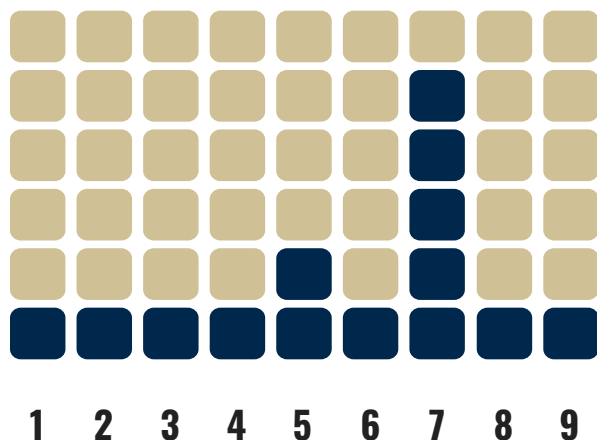
### Age



### Gender Identity



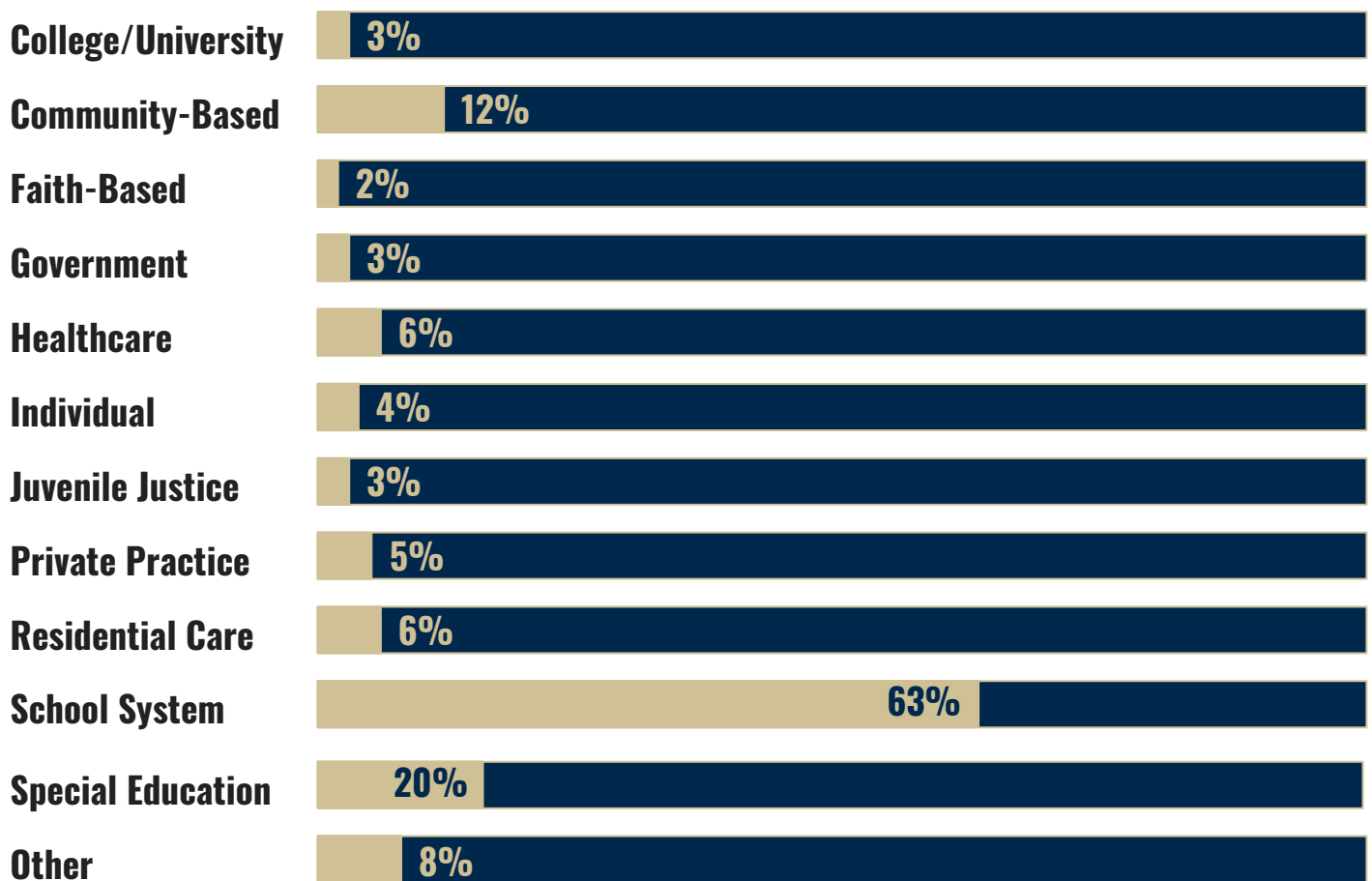
### Education Level



1. Some high school
2. High school diploma or GED
3. Some college
4. Associate's degree
5. Bachelor's degree
6. Some graduate school
7. Master's degree
8. Doctoral degree
9. Prefer not to answer

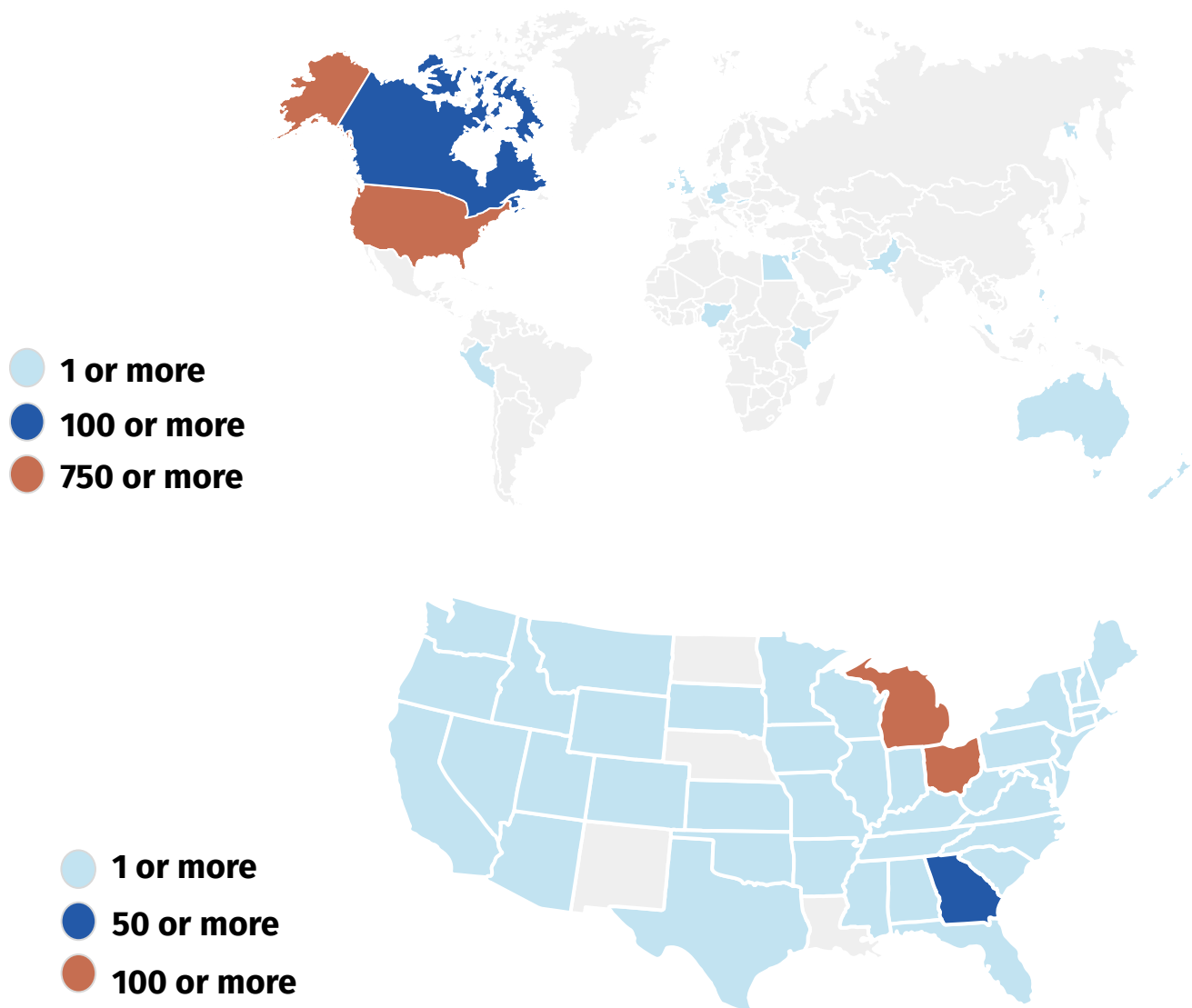
## COTR Participant Work Setting

We examined the two “choose all that apply” questions pertaining to work setting and knowledge of the trainings. A majority of respondents indicated working in a **school system** (63%). Further, most participants heard of these trainings through either e-mail (23%) or word of mouth (30%).



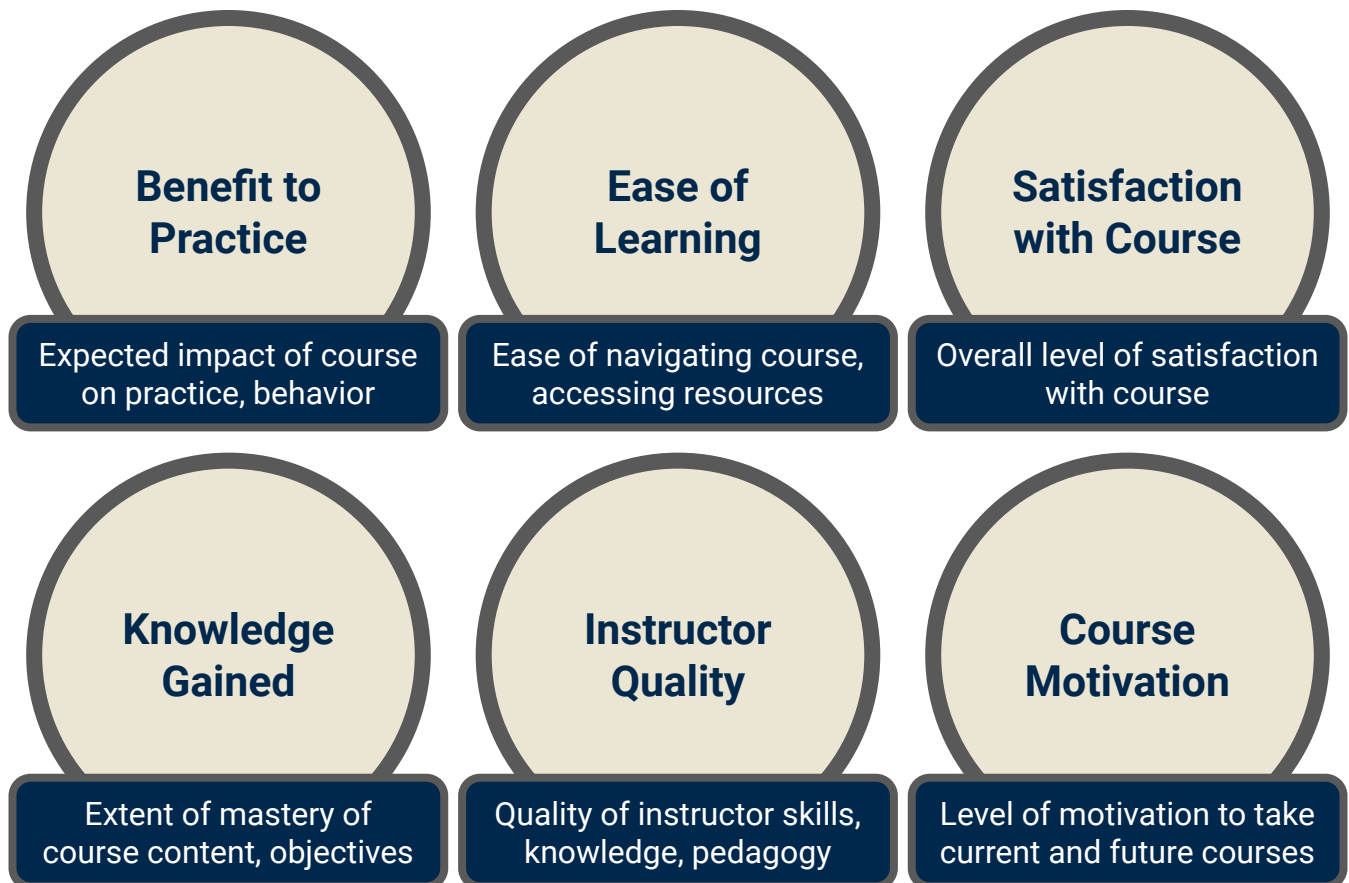
## COTR Participant Geography

The vast majority of course participants work in the **United States** (74%) or, to a lesser extent, Canada (11%). However, **17 countries are represented** by the COTR course. Focusing on those respondents in the United States, we see that the greatest percentages of Children of Trauma and Resilience participants came from **Michigan** (14%) and **Ohio** (18%).



## Survey Item Groupings

**Feedback instruments** asked course participants to respond to 36 **closely related questions**. To simplify their analyses, STATCOM began by combining tightly connected items into composite **domains (themes)** through a statistical method known as factor analysis. This technique uncovered **six distinct** (though highly correlated) themes.



These six composite domains (themes) serve as the **primary outcomes** of interest for evaluating the **quality and effectiveness** of the TIRS and COTR courses, both overall and across different groups of participants.

# Trauma-Informed Resilient Schools

## FEEDBACK RESULTS

Overall, most people who took the TIRS course found the course to be **beneficial**, and the majority of them were **satisfied** with the content and materials of the course, the instructor, and the teaching quality. Over 99% of course-takers found the course **equal to or exceeded their expectations**. The questionnaire results also suggest that over half of the participants prefer taking the course online. Participants also showed a very high likelihood and willingness to **recommend a Starr course** to their colleagues.

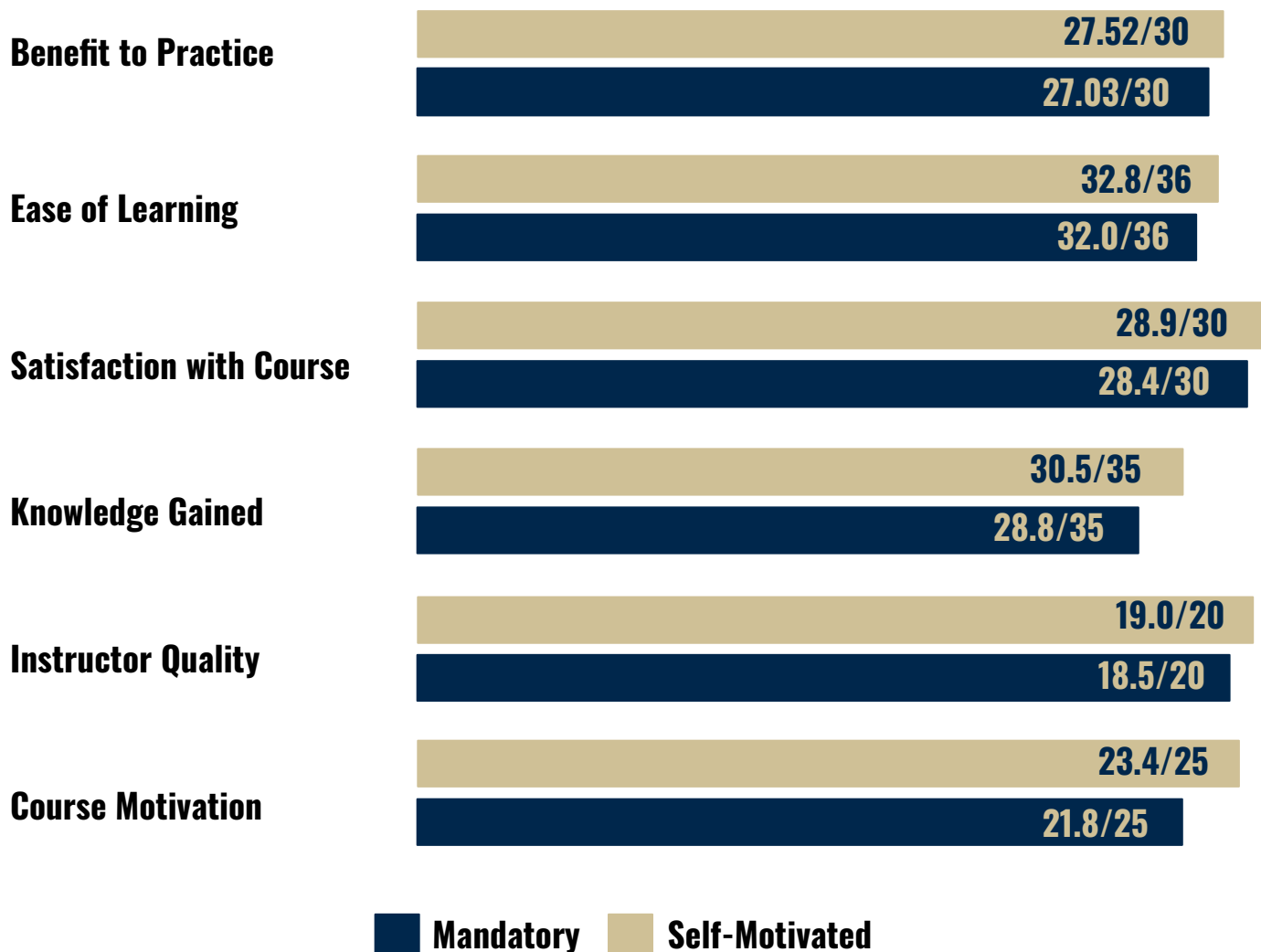


STATCOM also noticed that people took the course with **different motivations**. About 60% of participants reported that this course was mandatory to their jobs and educations, whereas 35% were self-motivated to take it. In order to see whether motivation could influence participants' experience with the course, STATCOM then made an overall **comparison** between mandatory course-takers and self-motivated course-takers by responses to each question.

# Trauma-Informed Resilient Schools

## FEEDBACK RESULTS

Results indicated that **self-motivated participants** tended to be more satisfied with the whole material and aspects of the course and tended to benefit more. However, the differences in responses between these two groups of participants were small. People who took the course to satisfy the requirement of their jobs or educations also **reported high satisfaction** with the content and knowledge gained.



## Children of Trauma and Resilience

### FEEDBACK RESULTS

Like the TIRS, most people who took the COTR course found the course to be **beneficial**, and the majority of them showed good **mastery of course concepts**. People were also very satisfied with the content and materials of the course, the instructor, and the teaching quality. Over 99% of course-takers found the course **equal to or exceeding their expectations**. 97% of participants showed a very high likelihood and willingness to **recommend a Starr course** to their colleagues.



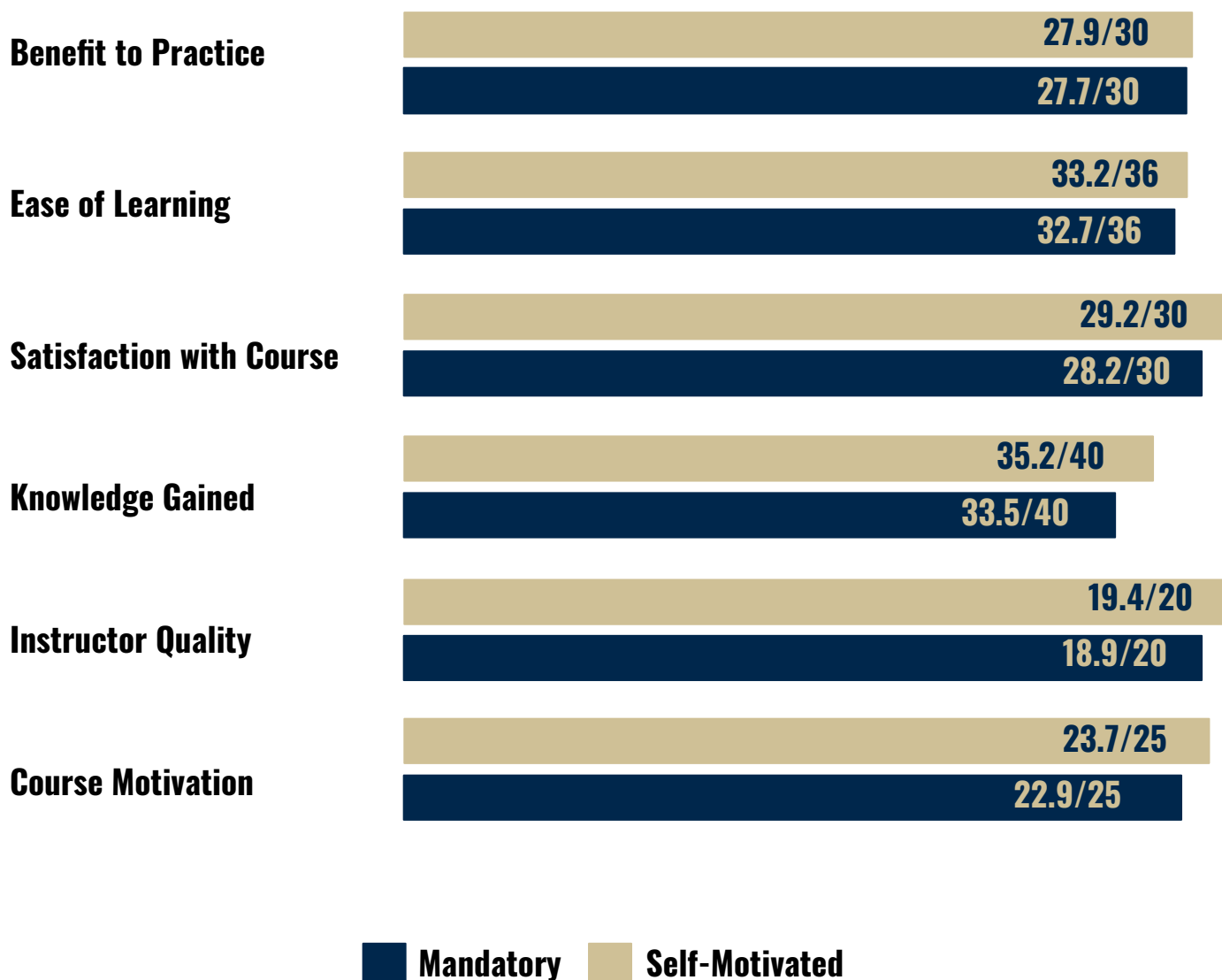
Among COTR participants, about 45% of them reported that this course was mandatory to their jobs and educations, whereas 50% were self-motivated to take it. The proportion of self-motivated course-takers is higher than that of the TIRS course. STATCOM again compared mandatory course-takers and self-motivated course-takers by responses to each question and between these two groups of people by the six question domains.



# Children of Trauma and Resilience

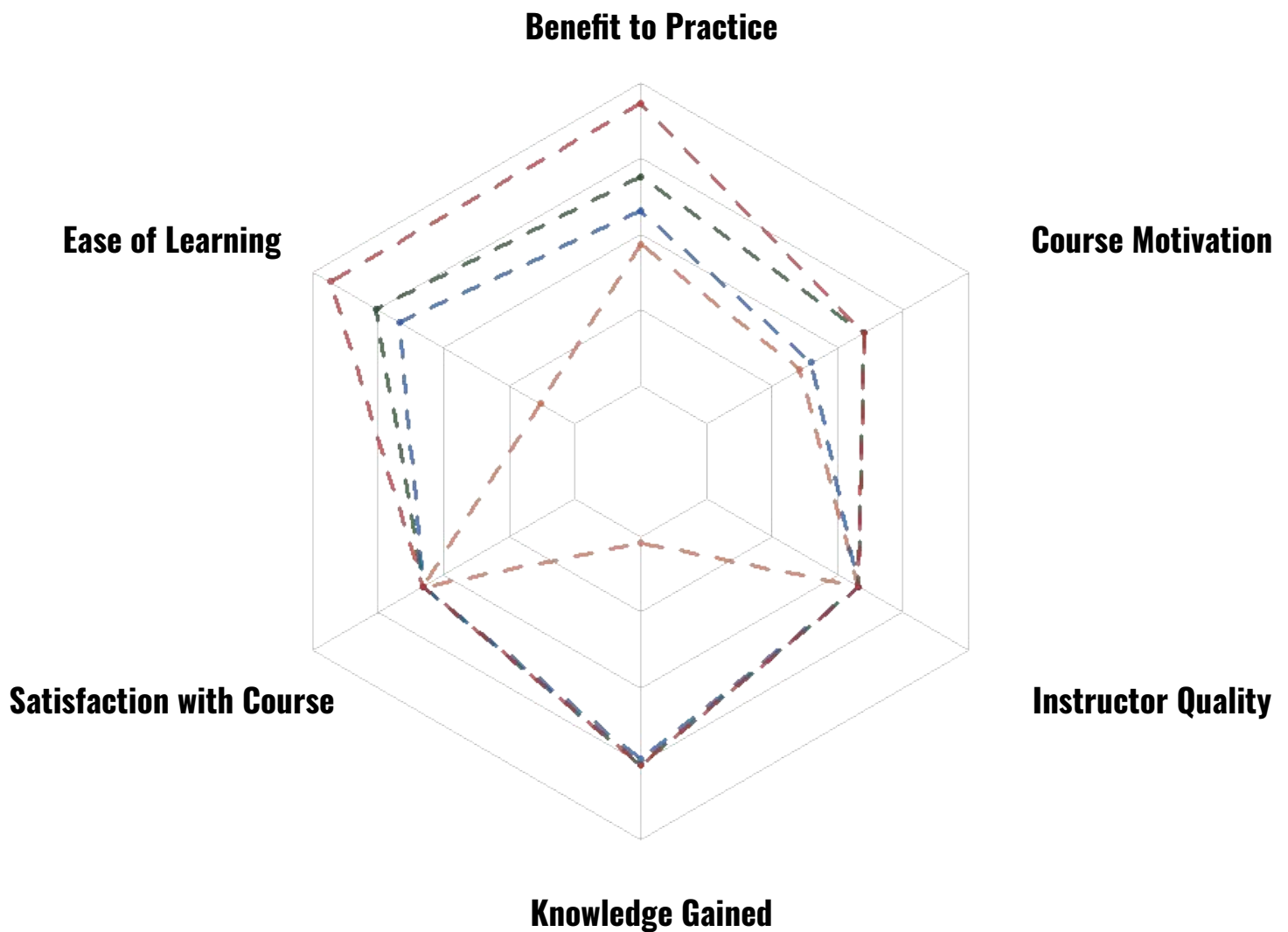
## FEEDBACK RESULTS

Results indicated that **self-motivated** participants tended to be more **satisfied** with the instructor and more likely to report knowledge gained. Differences in responses between these two groups of participants were small. People who took the course to satisfy the requirement of their jobs or educations also reported **high satisfaction** with the content and gained a lot.



## Domains by Participant Age

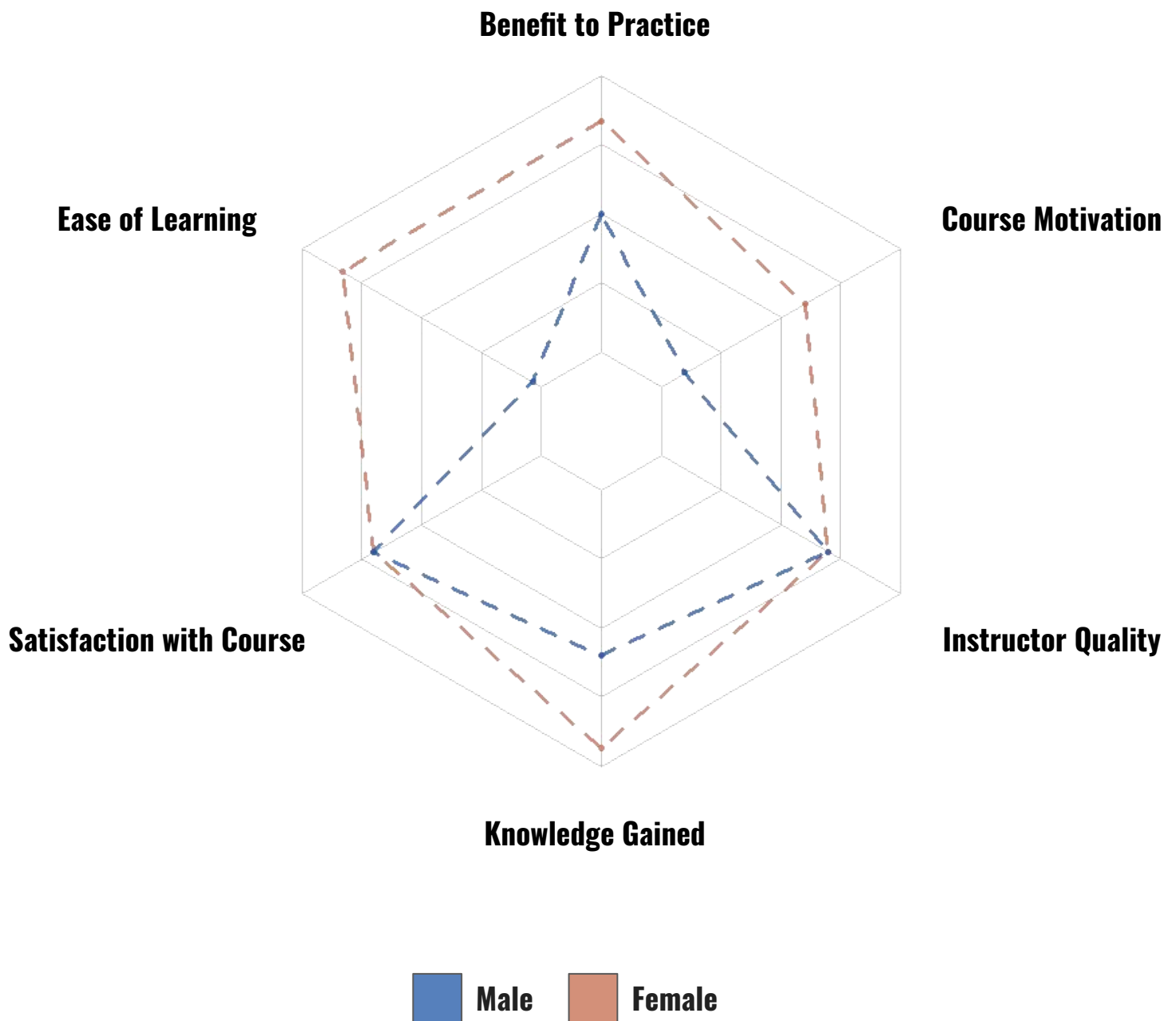
### FEEDBACK RESULTS



18 and over
  25 and over
  40 and over
  60 and over

# Domains by Participant Gender

## FEEDBACK RESULTS



# Statistics in the Community

## ABOUT US

Statistics in the Community (STATCOM) is a **community outreach program** provided by **graduate students** at the **University of Michigan**. The program offers the expertise of our students, **free of charge**, to non-profit governmental and community organizations in the areas of **data organization, analysis, and interpretation**. We are able to provide advice and assistance on a wide variety of statistical issues, including:

1. Survey/sample design and analysis
2. Methods for summarizing and presenting data
3. Interpretation of survey results
4. Development of statistical models
5. Trends analysis
6. And more!

If you are an organization that has **data needs**, we may be able to **help**!

### Website:

<https://sph.umich.edu/biostat/statcom/>

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