



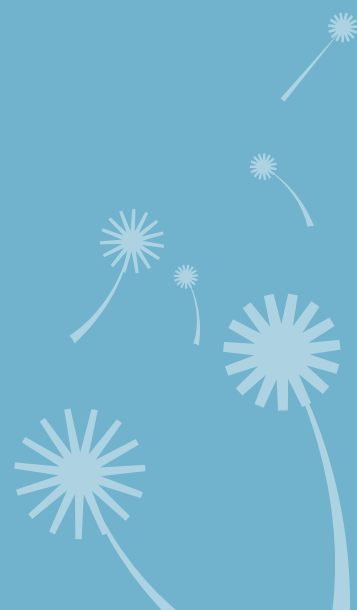
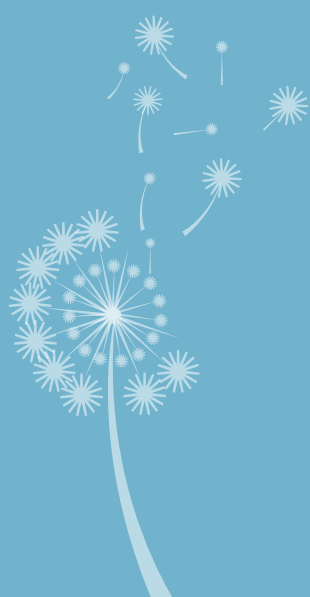
Emotional Education for Early School Prevention

Desk Research, Analysis of online questionnaires and interviews

ITALY

Developed by

Centro per lo Sviluppo Creativo “Danilo Dolci”



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INDEX

Desk Research	3
1. Links in literature/research between Emotional Education and Early School Leaving	3
2. Policies or projects to support Emotional Education in Italian schools. Practices already existing in the Italian school system.	7
3. Statistics about Early School Leaving in Italy	14
Online Questionnaires Results	15
Analysis of Online Questionnaires	42
Analysis of Interviews.....	51
Bibliography	60

Desk Research

1. Links in literature/research between Emotional Education and Early School Leaving

According to a research (Codiglioni)¹, Early School Leaving and school dropout can be also linked to the pupil's discomfort at school. The research is mainly focused on secondary schools' students.

The decision to leave school is often taken when students cannot see the link between their school experience and the satisfaction of their needs and desires. Adolescents should be helped in discovering and understanding their emotions and listening to them.

Some of the reasons behind early school leaving can be:

- an insufficient motivation to learn and study;
- a decrease in this motivation because of uncertainty and insecurity in finding a job after school;
- integration problems in the class and problems in interacting with adults too;
- discomfort in staying in the class, absence of well-being.

For these reasons it is important to increase the number of projects focused on guidance during middle school. Students should be supported in discovering their aptitudes and capacities and in improving their capacities in deciding by their own.

Teachers have a role in preventing ESL as they should favour positive interpersonal relations among students and promote meeting moments with the all class and each student.

According to Codiglioni, it could be useful to activate group meetings: moments during which students can tell anything about themselves and on how they feel. By putting into words their

¹ Codiglioni, F., *Dispersione scolastica. Sapere, saper fare e saper essere nella dimensione scolastica: verso nuove "comunità di ricerca"*. Retrieved from <http://lms.teleskill.it/tlc-uploads/77/library/2264/Cod.pdf>

emotions and feelings, students could relate with the others' moods and emotions. Through these group meetings, they could learn from each other and support each other in overcoming daily challenges.

It is also important to develop in students their socio-emotional skills to manage the relation with themselves and the others. Some of these skills can be:

- the ability to get support from peers and adults;
- identifying strategies used by others and being able to use them;
- being able to self-motivate;
- dealing with stressful situations.

When the student feels comfortable in the school environment and consider it as the place where he/she can grow both from a cultural and personal viewpoint, he/she can overcome dissatisfaction and disappointment sometimes leading to ESL.

According to another research by Fondazione Centro di Orientamento Alessandria², among the factors determining school failure, an important role is played by the emotional ones as motivation, willingness, the control of emotions and self-esteem.

According to some theorists (Darwin, Freud, Atkinson), motivation is an innate personality trait that cannot be modified so much; while others (Maslow, 1954; Vroom, 1964; McGregor) consider it as a set of values and beliefs influenced by recent experiences and by different variables. In this last perspective, a student can be highly motivated in geography, but not in mathematics because of previous experiences in this subject. According to this theory, teachers have an important role, so great opportunities and responsibilities, in motivating their students.

² Fondazione Centro di Orientamento Alessandria, *Curare la demotivazione. Teorie, riflessioni, spunti operativi per la prevenzione dell'insuccesso scolastico*. Retrieved from <http://cird.uniud.it/master/demotivazione%20medie%20inf.pdf>

Many studies identified self-esteem and self-awareness as fundamental premises to be motivated during the learning process³. When self-awareness is lacking, a student cannot identify his/her aptitudes and talents.

During the school period, self-esteem can determine the motivation and the success of the learning path. These factors along with emotional variables as the anxiety level and the stress management can determine the school failure or success and influence the future educational and professional choices.

One of the theories on motivation is the **attribution theory** (Heider F., 1958; Kelley H.H., 1967; Weiner B., 1992), the process by which individuals perceive an event from an emotional viewpoint and explain the causes of an event. People react and build their opinion not only on personal and situational variables, but also on the basis of motivational factors and emotional variables.

A student can perceive his failure as determined by:

- internal factors, namely as his/her own responsibility, or;
- external factors, namely as the fault of someone or something else (e.g., the teacher, the difficulty of the test, etc.).

Students who believe that it is possible to influence their results at school through commitment, studying, concentration during lessons are more responsible in relation to their school performance.

In another research (Lucangeli, 2011)⁴, it is stressed how important is motivation in the school success. The aim of educators and school is not only the transmission of knowledge, but also to promote in students a sense of control over events and learning processes.

³ Ibidem., p. 12

⁴ Lucangeli D., *Orientamento formativo ed educazione affettivo-emozionale a sostegno dell'interesse e della motivazione dello studente: è possibile insegnare a "voler apprendere"?*, Piano Nazionale Orientamento - Studi e Documenti degli Annali della Pubblica Istruzione, 2011, pp. 237 – 246. Retrieved from <http://www.orientamentoirreer.it/sites/default/files/materiali/2011%20MIUR%20lucangeli.pdf>

An important role is played by motivation, a set of internal and external pressures that promote the commitment in studying, opposed to others that determine school leaving and avoidance.

Motivation to learn is based both on cognitive and emotional components: in order to promote the willingness to learn in students, the learning process has both to increase the competences and to foster emotional and cognitive well-being.

When speaking about motivation and learning, another element to take into consideration is the **self-efficacy** (Bandura, 2000), namely the belief to be able to do something. Bandura considers this element a crucial one to obtain successful results. Self-efficacy refers to the ability to self-evaluate skills and competences and it can be encouraged and promoted.

According to Boscolo (2002), the teacher is the one that can act on the motivational orientation through the didactic activities implemented, the evaluation methodologies adopted. So, teachers can have an important role in stimulating and maintaining students' motivation.

According to Convigton (2000), demotivational behaviours can happen if students feel threatened their value. To react to such a threat, teachers and educators should encourage students in competing with themselves and not among them. Individual learning objectives should be set in order to:

- adapt them to the real capacity of the student;
- recognize the different ways in which a student can manage the learning process.

These different researches show how important, among the emotional components, motivation and self-esteem are for determining school success or failure. A correct education and teachers with competences in this field can be one of the ways to reduce and act on ESL.

Maurizio Gentile (1999)⁵ stressed that school success cannot be considered as an individual event for which only the student is responsible, but as influenced also by school organization and

⁵ Gentile C.M, (1999). Successo formativo, dinamica adolescenziale e orientamento. In A. Bongiorno, *Orientamento: fra crescita personale ed educazione alla scelta*, Palermo (pp. 19-24). Palermo; IPSIA MEDI.

the relationship between teacher and student. In this perspective, teachers and their relations with students are crucial in determining school success.

According to him, school operational autonomy⁶ is an important too I to address this issue as it allows: a greater flexibility of the curriculum; the possibility to adopt the didactic of multiple intelligences; recognition of the affective sphere in the educational relation; etc.. By promoting emotional education and wellbeing among the students, it is possible to act on one of the reasons leading to school drop-out, i.e. discomfort at school.

2. Policies or projects to support Emotional Education in Italian schools. Practices already existing in the Italian school system.

In the Italian national guidelines for primary education⁷ curriculum, issued by the Ministry of Education in 2012, it is underlined the importance of educating children in dealing with their own emotions. According to these guidelines, pupils of primary school should develop their cognitive, emotional, social and ethic dimensions. For this reason, emotional education (*educazione all'affettività*) is included in the curriculum and schools are encouraged to implement projects in this field.

For instance, music education should foster the emotional intelligence by developing their ability to symbolically formalize emotions.

One of the aims of the school is to improve students' ability in dealing with school, familiar and social situations, by achieving:

- awareness of own emotions and a broaden emotional vocabulary;
- awareness of the relation between thought and emotions;
- cooperation among students to deal with emotions.

⁶ According to the D.P.R. (Decree of the President of the Republic) n.275/99, the Ministry of Education lays down a general framework (i.e., general objectives of the educational process, specific learning objectives for pupils' skills, subjects on the minimum national curriculum, general criteria for pupils' assessment, ect.); while each school draws up its own educational offer plan which is the basic document setting out the cultural and planning identity of the school. (The Italian Education Sysytem, I Quaderni di Euridice n.30, INDIRE. Retrieved from http://www.indire.it/lucabas/lkmw_img/eurydice/quaderno_eurydice_30_per_web.pdf)

⁷ Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca, *Indicazioni nazionali per il curricolo della scuola dell'infanzia e del primo ciclo d'istruzione*. September 2012. Retrieved from http://www.indicazioninazionali.it/documenti_Indicazioni_nazionali/indicazioni_nazionali_infanzia_primo_ciclo.pdf

School has the task to foster positive emotions and reducing the rise of excessively negative feelings. Each learning process should lead the student to self-regulate emotions and learn how to control them.

On the basis of the National guidelines, some schools have implemented projects on emotional education:

- *Educare all'affettività*⁸(in English, Emotional Education): this project has been implemented in the middle school “C. Nivola” in Capoterra (CA) during the school year 2015/16. The project is based on the idea that the emotional education is an integral part of the human being and its identity, so it is fundamental in the overall education of the person. An efficient emotional education promotes an open dialogue among teachers and students.

Based on the idea that the capacity to make choices depends also on a good self-knowledge, the project aimed at activating the improvement of the educational and social relations and of the class personality through the involvement of students and teachers.

As part of the project, learning modules for teachers and workshop for students have been implemented. The project has been implemented during school hours with 2-hours long meetings. A total number of 18 classes have been involved:

- 9 first year classes, which followed an emotional education path;
- 9 second year classes, which followed a path aiming at guiding them in their future choices by helping them in discovering their interests and attitudes.

The activities in the classroom have been followed by two psychologists to support teachers' work.

Before the activities started, a needs analysis has been done through meeting among teachers and the project coordinator (a teacher from the school).

The general objectives of the project were:

⁸ Scuola secondaria di primo grado “C. Nivola” Capoterra, *Progetto “Educare all'affettività”*, 2015/2016. Retrieved from http://scuolamediacapoterra.it/attachments/article/1052/Progetto%20affettivit%C3%A0%20a.s.%202015_16.pdf

- to support students' learning process by facilitating relational environment in the class;
- to favour the self-knowledge and self-acceptance;
- to implement the emotional competences at an individual and group level;
- to develop students' self-knowledge and self-confidence and his/her decisional capacities development.

The specific objectives of the project can be divided into four main dimensions to be developed:

- emotional and cognitive dimension to support students in discovering their emotions and be aware of them;
- relational and affective dimension to stimulate the reflection on the different ways to express their feelings and to relate with others;
- a school and professional guidance to support students in developing their interests and attitudes and be more aware of them;
- training for teachers to give them tools and skills to manage relational dynamics within the class.

In order to reach these aims, an interactive learning methodology has been used by using tools as: brainstorming, debates, group works, questionnaires, role-playing, etc.

“Vogliamoci bene!”, progetto sull'educazione all'affettività⁹ (in English, “Caring for each other! Project on affective education): this project has been implemented in the primary school “I. Calvino” in Vignola (MO). The main aim of the project has been to support students in accepting and respecting themselves and the others for who they are and what they express. It is easier to relate to the world if you are able to relate with yourself.

The relational climate among students before the project was good, but there were still some students to integrate, in particular:

⁹ Boni R., Cammeda D., *“Vogliamoci bene!”*. Educazione all'affettività nella scuola primaria. Tesi conclusiva dell'anno di prova per i docenti neoassunti in ruolo. School year 2010/2011. Retrieved from <http://www.direzionededidattica-vignola.it/allegati/75/Vogliamoci%20bene!%20-%20Educazione%20all'affettivit%C3%A0%20nella%20scuola%20primaria.pdf>

- a student with language difficulty then converted in a learning disability;
- a foreign student with speech disorder and learning disability;
- a student with speech disorder.
-

The project has foreseen 6 meeting of 2 hours on different themes:

- *Gift:* it has been asked what they mean for gift and to tell the most important gift they would like to receive. Then, they wrote on a paper a gift they would like to give to someone.
- *Memories:* each student said what he/she means for memory and said the most beautiful memory of his/her life.
- *I know myself:* each student introduced him/herself with three distinctive adjectives and/or characteristics. On the basis of these characteristics, the teacher asked pupils to connect to the ones with common characteristics so to create a network. Then, pupils have been invited to think about differences and similarities among them.
- *The network:* at the beginning of the activity, the teacher encouraged the students to think about the previous activity *I know myself*. Then, the students wrote their name on a flipchart and created connections, through coloured lines, among students with common characteristics. At the end of the activity, the flipchart has been put on the wall of the classroom so that students could look at it and remember the connections among them.
- *A friend is...:* at the beginning of the activity, the teacher encourages students to tell what a friend is for each of them. After this consideration, each student wrote on a paper three characteristics of a friend, which are the similarities and differences between them and what this friend likes and what not. In this way, the children can learn how to deal with someone's characteristics they don't like, by exploring their tolerance capacity.
- *The personal journal:* this has been the last meeting of the project. Students reflected on the whole experience with the project and expressed their

consideration. The teacher gives to each pupil a personal journey in which they could retrace the different stages of the projects by describing the activities done

and expressing their comments. It has been asked to children also to compile an evaluation questionnaire so that they could rework their path both in a personal and collective way.

Beyond the evaluation questionnaire to the students, meetings with teachers have been organized to evaluate the activities. Teachers said they noticed an improvement in the relations and interactions within the class. Moreover, children are more open to dialogue and to a pacific resolution of conflicts.

Some parents reported that their children appreciated the activities and the importance of understanding emotions and feelings different situations might cause.

- *Progetto: le emozioni*¹⁰ (in English, Project: emotions): the project has been implemented in the I.C.S. “C. Tura” in Pontelagoscuro (FE). It has been implemented in the early childhood classes. It is based on the assumption that the emotional dimension is an integral part of a person’s education. School should involve students also on the emotional and motivational level, not only on the cognitive one.

It is necessary to develop relational competences and cultivate the emotional intelligence to: have satisfying interpersonal relations; improve the class environment; increase cooperation and solidarity within the class; create a learning community; increase empathy at school, in family and community.

The project has been thought as a path during which children can discover and recognize their emotions. In a first moment, the focus has been on how they could perceive their emotions through their body and voice and the music. Then, they started to associate their emotions to images, colours and words. For instance, some flash cards with different facial expressions have been shown to children and it has been asked to them which emotions

they think these faces are showing. It has been asked to them also to associate emotions and colours that can represent these emotions (e.g., red as love, resistance, danger, fire; yellow as sun, happiness; green as life, growth, luck; etc.).

¹⁰ I.C.S. “C. Tura” – Pontelagoscuro, Scuola d’infanzia Statale “Villaggio Ina”, *Progetto: le emozioni*. Retrieved from <http://scuole.comune.fe.it/2130/attach/cosmetura/docs/progetto%20emozioni.pdf>

- *Disegnare le emozioni*¹¹ (in English, Drawing emotions): the project has been implemented in I.C.S. in Villasimius (CA) during the school year 2005/06. The school includes early childhood, primary and middle classes. The assumption behind this project is that a growth in emotional and relational capacities among children can have positive effect and help in overcoming their discomfort.

The main aims have been:

- to improve pupils' ability to recognize, define and comprehend their emotions;
- to give to students the tools to express their feelings, the negative ones too;
- to develop among students solidarity, collaboration and sharing.

As the project has been thought for children, it has been chosen the drawing as a tool to express emotions, expectations, desires and conflicts. The use of images can help in expressing what is difficult to say by words, by being free from logical and sequential restrictions.

After the graphic elaboration of their emotions, pupils have been invited to share their emotions and impressions with the group. Teachers paid particular attention in building an empathic environment helpful in communicating and reflecting.

Some cooperation games have been done together with dramatization moments. The project helped students in familiarizing with the main emotions (happiness, sadness and anger) and in expressing and communicating them.

During the follow-up, teachers expressed their appreciation for the project and a good impression on the consequences it had on students.

¹¹ Senes E., Carmelita M., *Disegnare le emozioni. Progetto di educazione all'affettività*. Retrieved from <http://ospitiweb.indire.it/~caic0001/disegnare%20le%20emozioni/Disegnare%20le%20emozioni.ppt>

- In a paper written by M. Gentile (2010)¹² is reported an activity (group sessions) carried out in a secondary school in Palermo. The aim of the activity was to facilitate involved students' development of the ability to think and building their identity.

The group was composed by 9 students (4 girls and 5 boys), aged 14, from a disadvantaged socio-cultural background (e.g., unemployed parents or in jail, poor areas of the city, etc.). The group met for one hour once a week. Before starting the activity, meetings between psychologists and teachers of the school have been organized. During those meetings, the following common characteristics among the students involved have emerged:

- restlessness during lessons;
- ADHD;
- learning disorder;
- aggressive behaviour;
- demotivation;
- shyness and diffidence;
- deviant behaviour (e.g., pilferage, selling soft drug, etc.)

The criteria used to select the students to involve have been:

- age (as homogeneous as possible);
- gender balance;
- different classes;
- relational disorder;
- learning disorder.

All the students involved experienced different kinds of deprivation in their lives: emotionally, linguistically and on a cognitive level. Those negative experiences prevented them to develop their ability to turn their emotions and feelings in thoughts and learning.

¹² Gentile M., La difficile costruzione dell'Identità in un gruppo di adolescenti in situazione di disagio scolastico (2010). In Novelli M.C. (ed.) *Lavorare con il gruppo specializzato. Teoria e Clinica.*, Franco Angeli Edizioni, Milano, pp. 165-182

During the group sessions, the students had the opportunity to share their emotions, feelings, fears and hopes. At the beginning, students were reluctant to share their thoughts and they felt not completely free to share whatever they wanted with the group. After many sessions, almost 50, the students were able to share their emotions and were able to interpret their emotions.

3. Statistics about Early School Leaving in Italy

According to the Italian educational system, education is compulsory for at least 10 years and is aimed at achieving a secondary school diploma or a three year vocational qualification before the 18th year of age (Law n. 296/2006). This means that education is compulsory from 6 to 16 years old. Students who have not obtained a secondary school diploma and are aged between 16 and 18 years are considered at risk of dropout.

According to ISTAT (the Italian national of statistics), young people aged between 18 and 24 who not completed the mandatory education and are not attending any professional or training course are considered early school leavers.

In Italy, in 2014, early school leavers were the 15% (17, 7% among males and 12, 2% among females), overcoming the national goal of 16% as fixed by the EU 2020 Strategy. The division on the territory is the following one: 12% in the North, 12.4% in the Centre and 19.4% in the South¹³.

These figures show that the major incidence is among women and South Italy.

In 2015, the NEET “Not (engaged) in Education, Employment or Training” are 2, 3 million, the 25, 7% among young people aged between 15 and 29. (Istat, 7th April 2016)¹⁴.

Part of the information regarding the international field are collected in the common international research.

¹³ http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=DCCV_ESL&Lang=

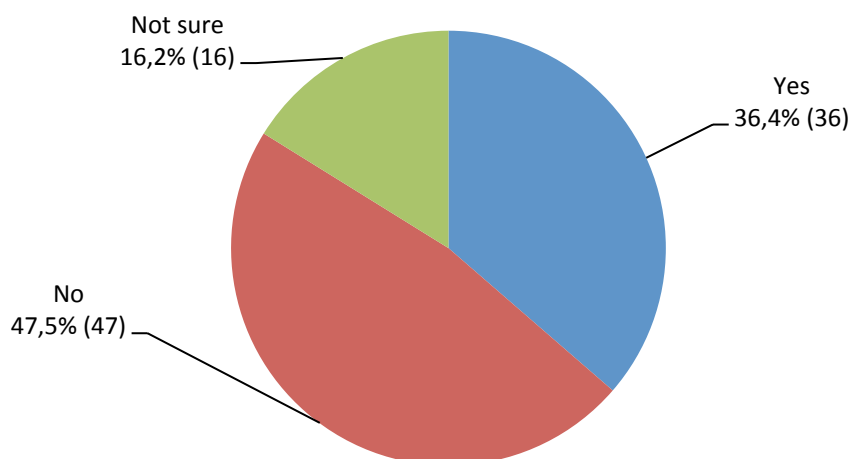
¹⁴ [http://noi-italia.istat.it/index.php?id=1&no_cache=1&tx_usercento_centofe\[categoria\]=5&tx_usercento_centofe\[action\]=show&tx_usercento_centofe\[controller\]=Categoria&cHash=9789dfecb3efc8fdb6f34413b2c38c](http://noi-italia.istat.it/index.php?id=1&no_cache=1&tx_usercento_centofe[categoria]=5&tx_usercento_centofe[action]=show&tx_usercento_centofe[controller]=Categoria&cHash=9789dfecb3efc8fdb6f34413b2c38c)

Online Questionnaires Results

Total answers collected:

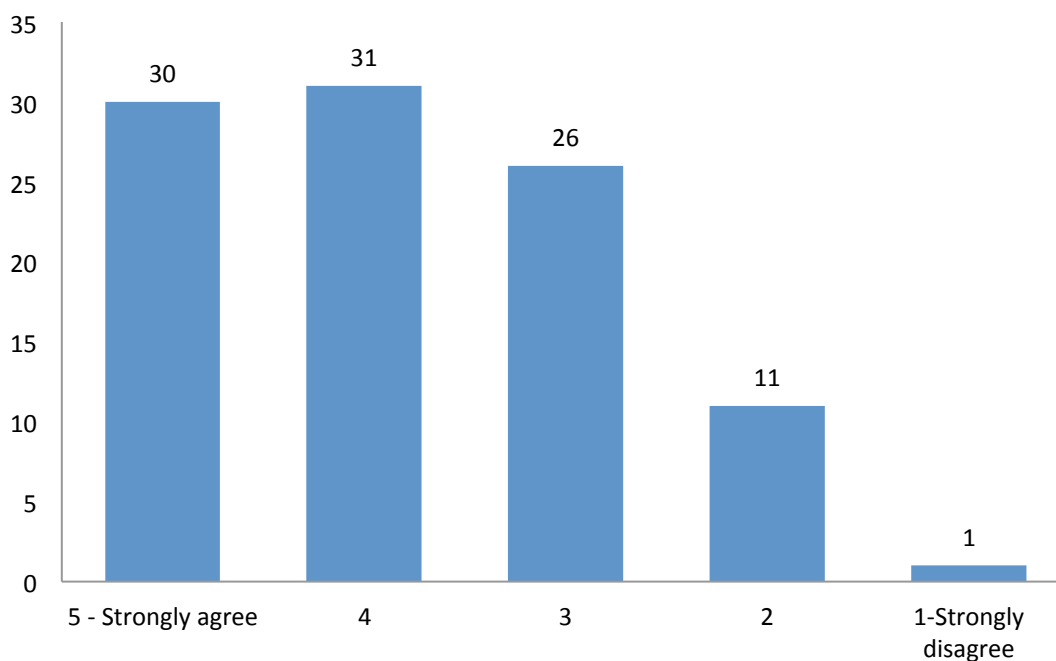
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1. As far as you remember, was Emotional Education part of your initial teacher education?

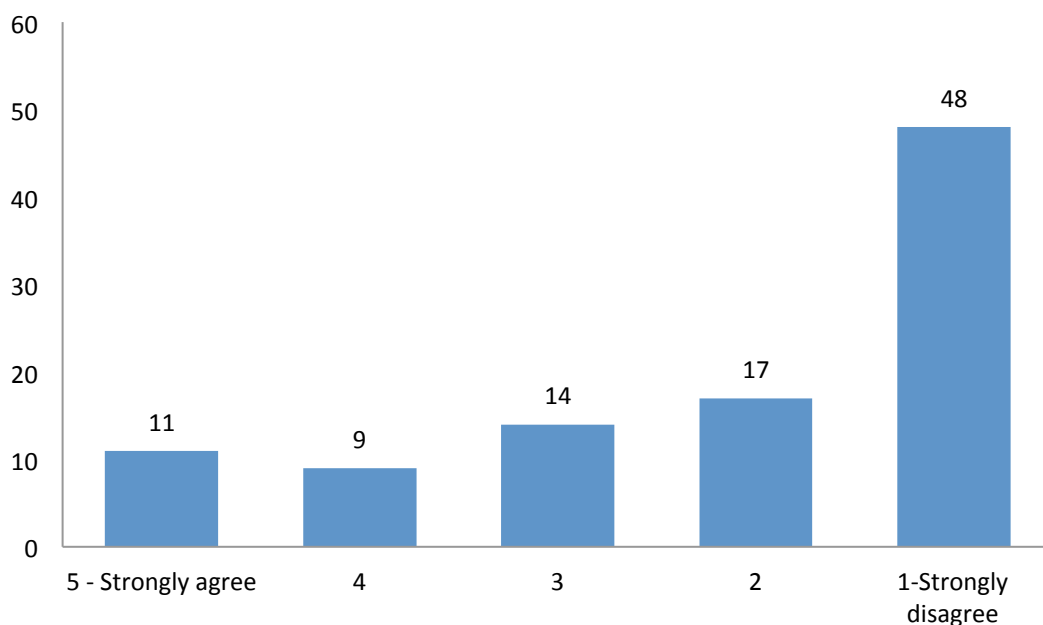


2. Please choose the following scale that describes your situation as far as Emotional Education is concerned:

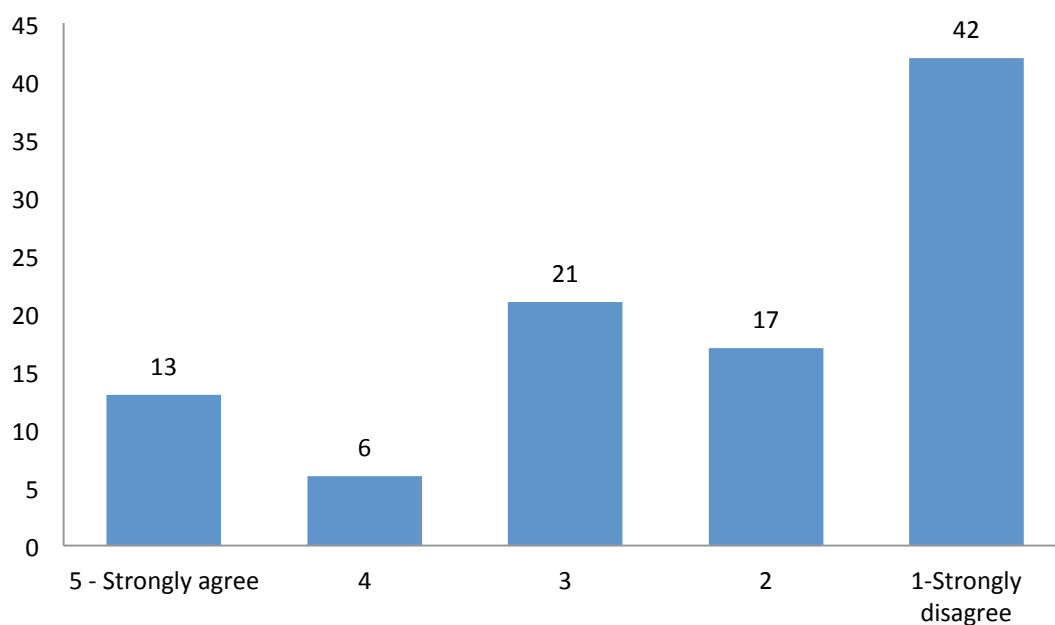
a. I am confident that I do my best to provide for my students Emotional Education.



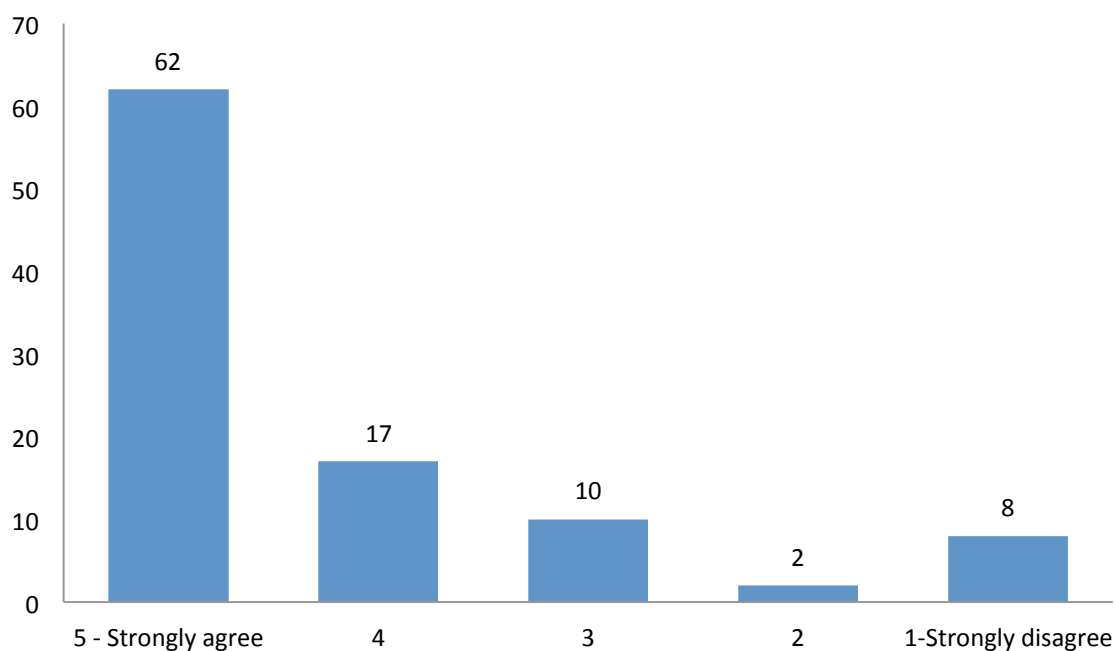
b. *I have completed a professional development programme in Emotional Education recently, and I am confident that I do my best to provide for my students Emotional Education.*



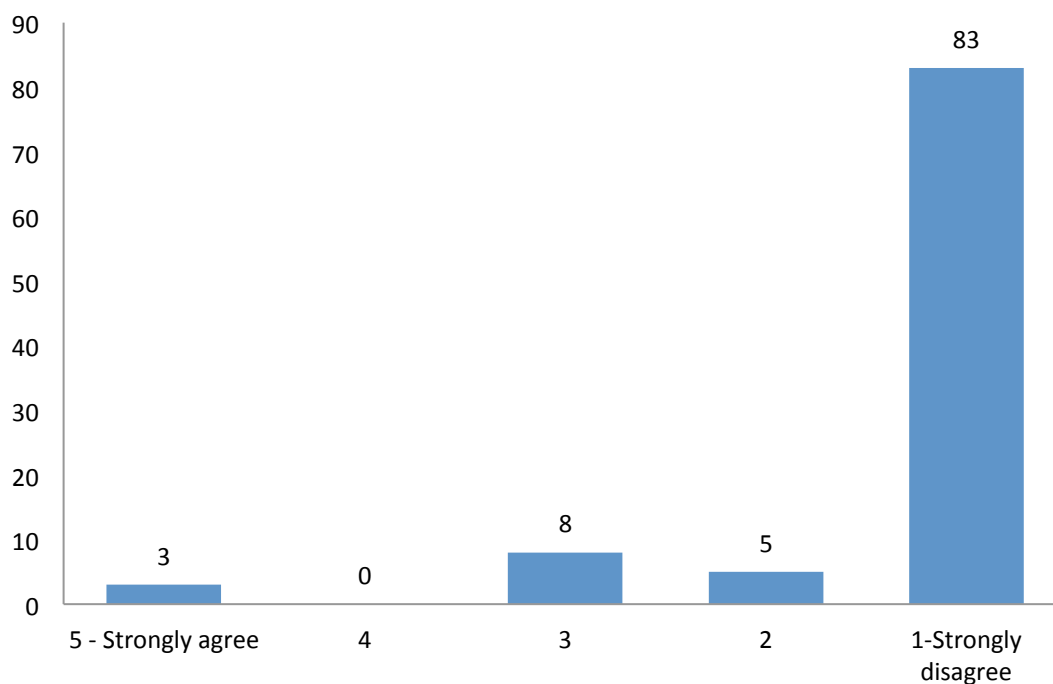
c. *I have completed a professional development programme in Emotional Education recently, and-as I would like to learn more-I am seeking new programmes in Emotional Education to participate in.*



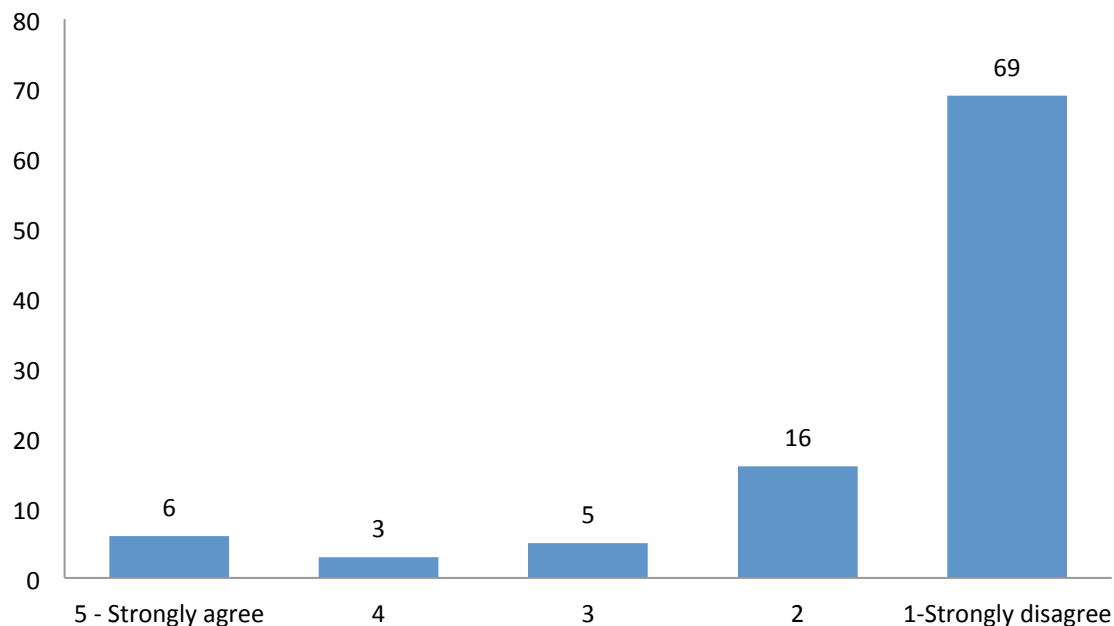
d. *I haven't participated in a professional development programme in Emotional Education, but I'd like to do so in the near future.*



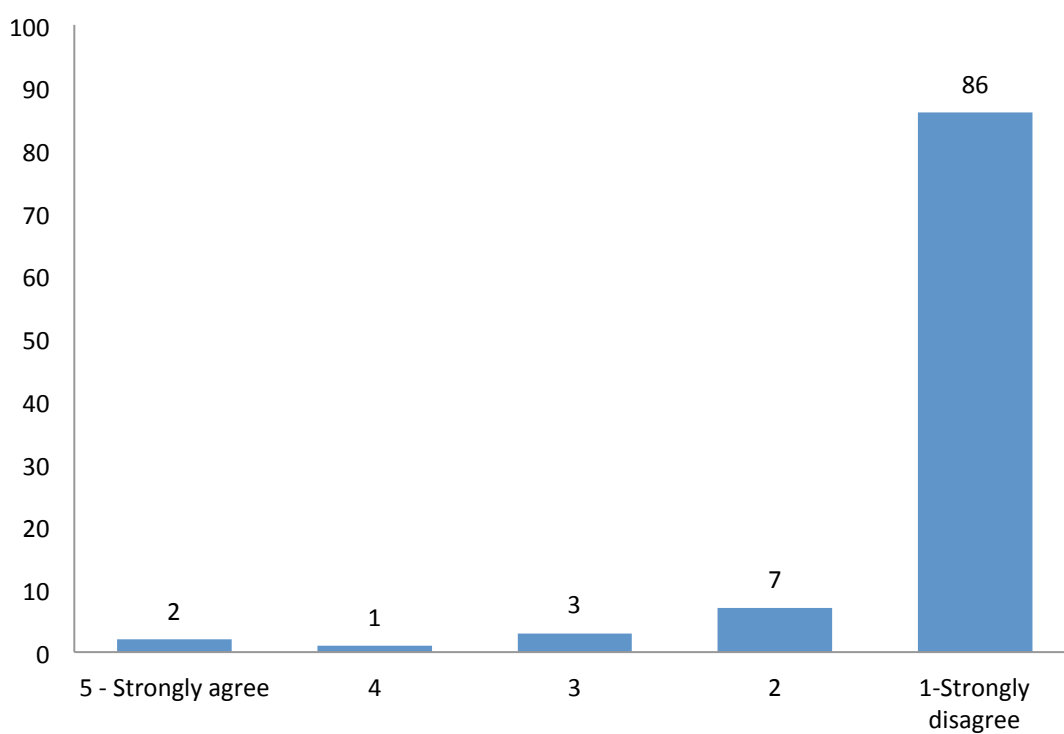
e. *I haven't participated in a professional development programme in Emotional Education, and I do not intend to do so in the near future.*



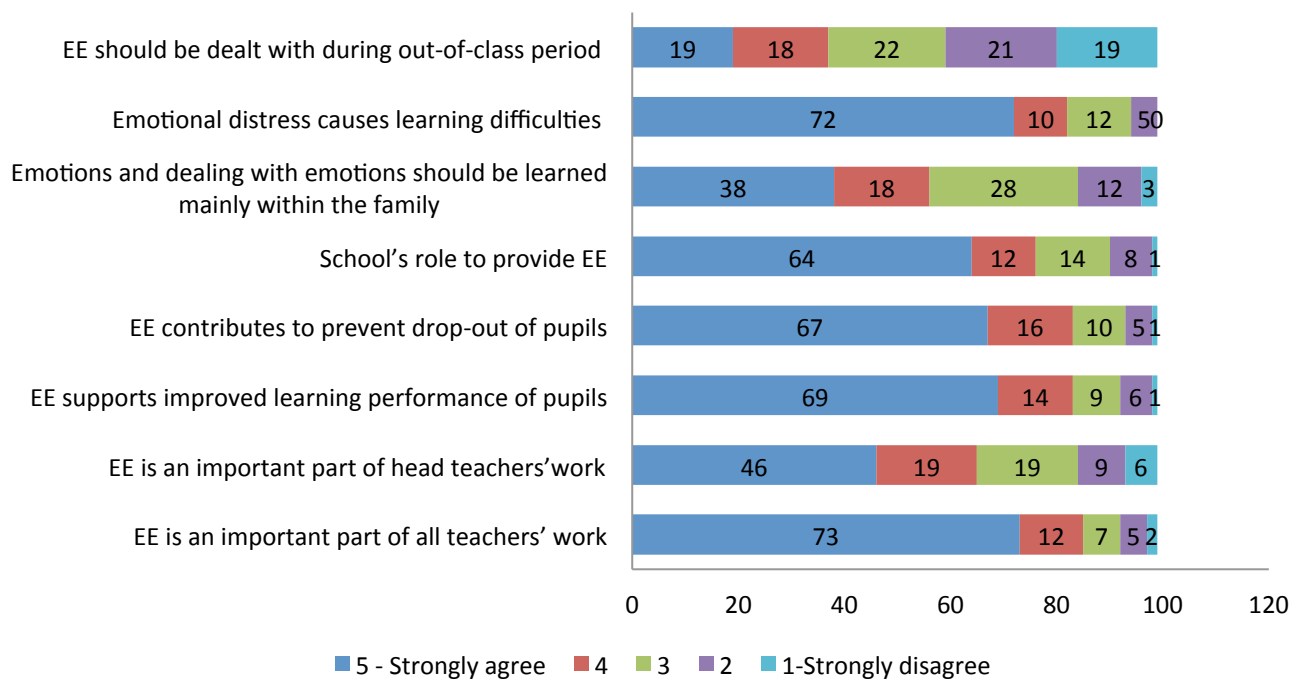
f. *I haven't participated in a professional development programme in Emotional Education and I would only do so if my superior told me to.*



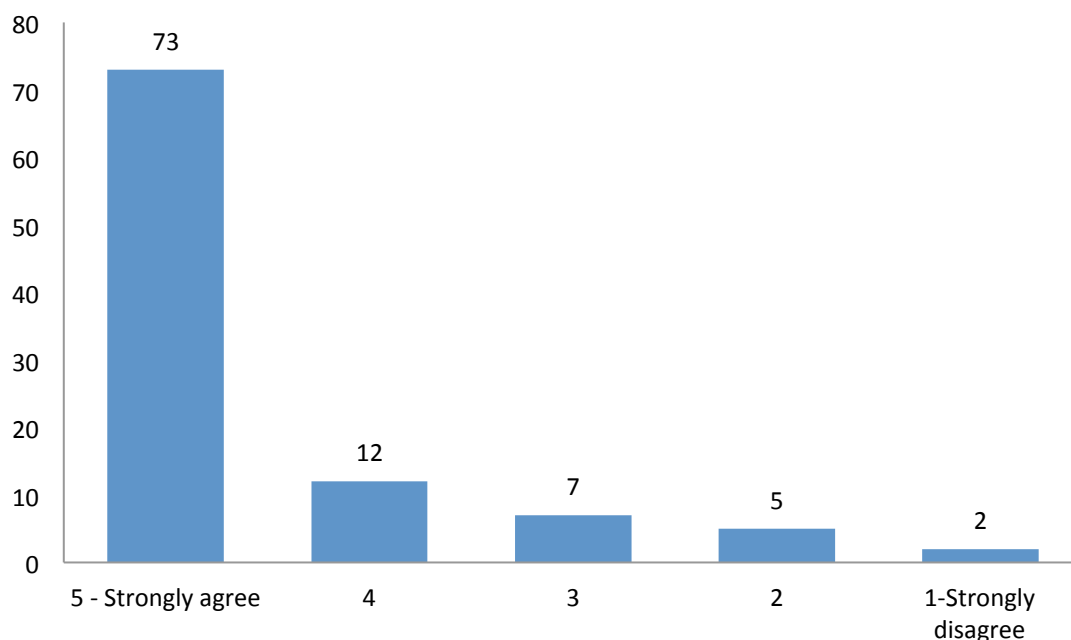
g. *Emotional Education in not part of my job.*



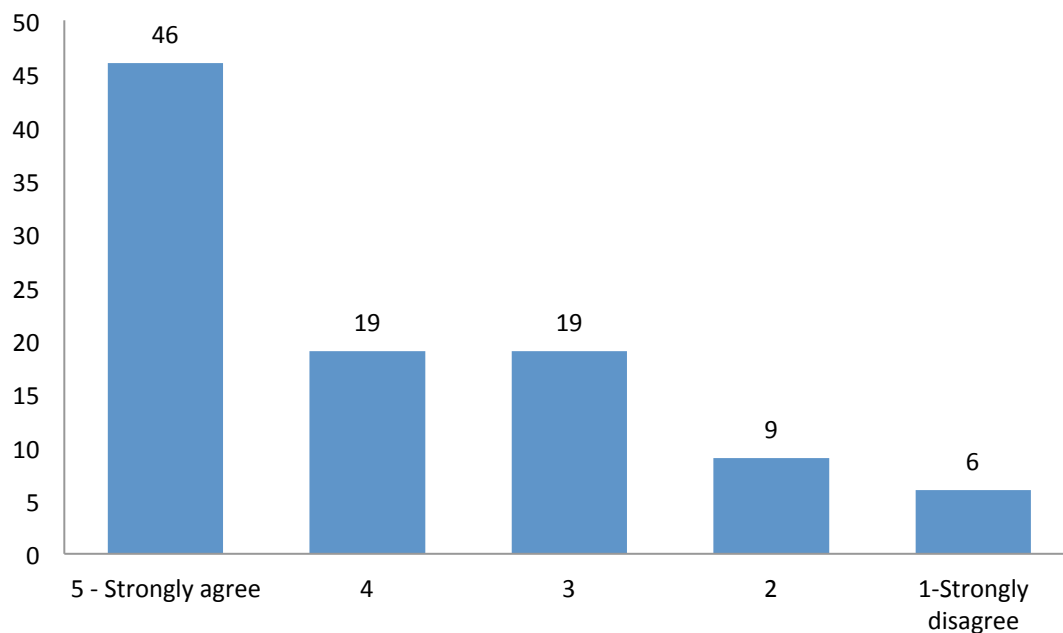
3. Please use the following scale (5- Strongly Agree; 1- Strongly disagree) to indicate how much you agree with the following statements:



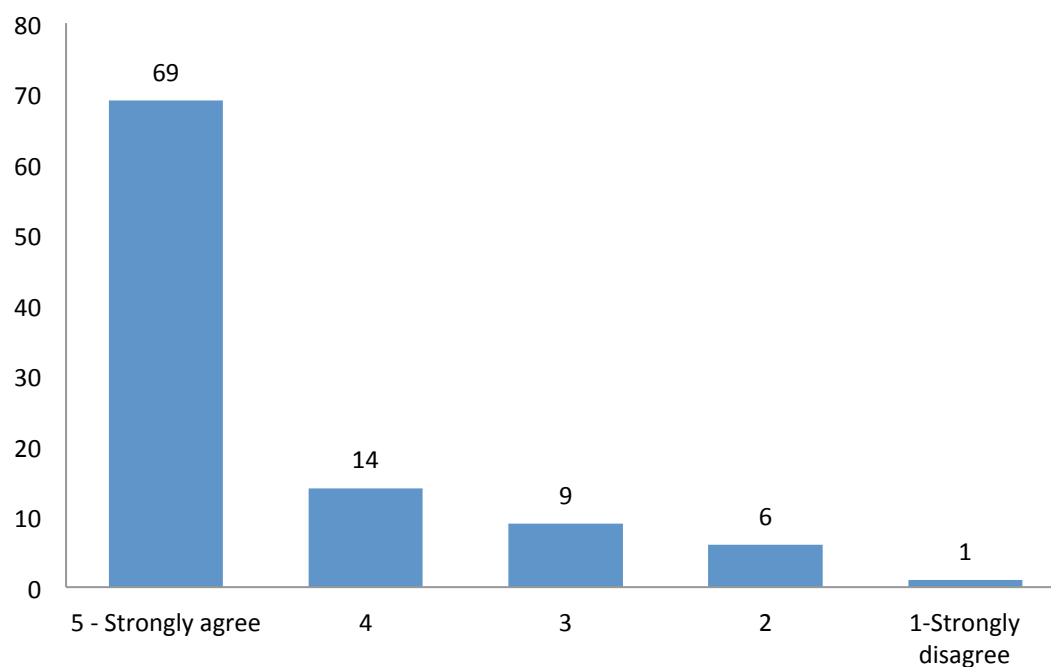
a. Emotional Education is an important part of all teachers' work.



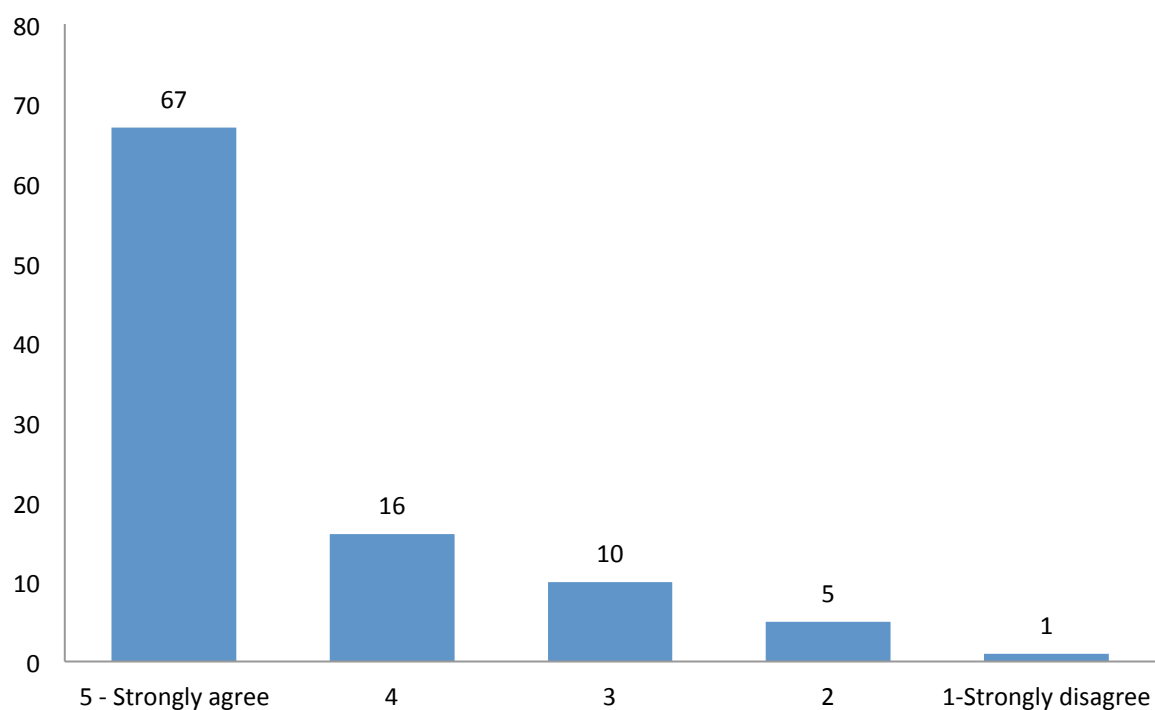
b. Emotional Education is an important part of head teachers' work.



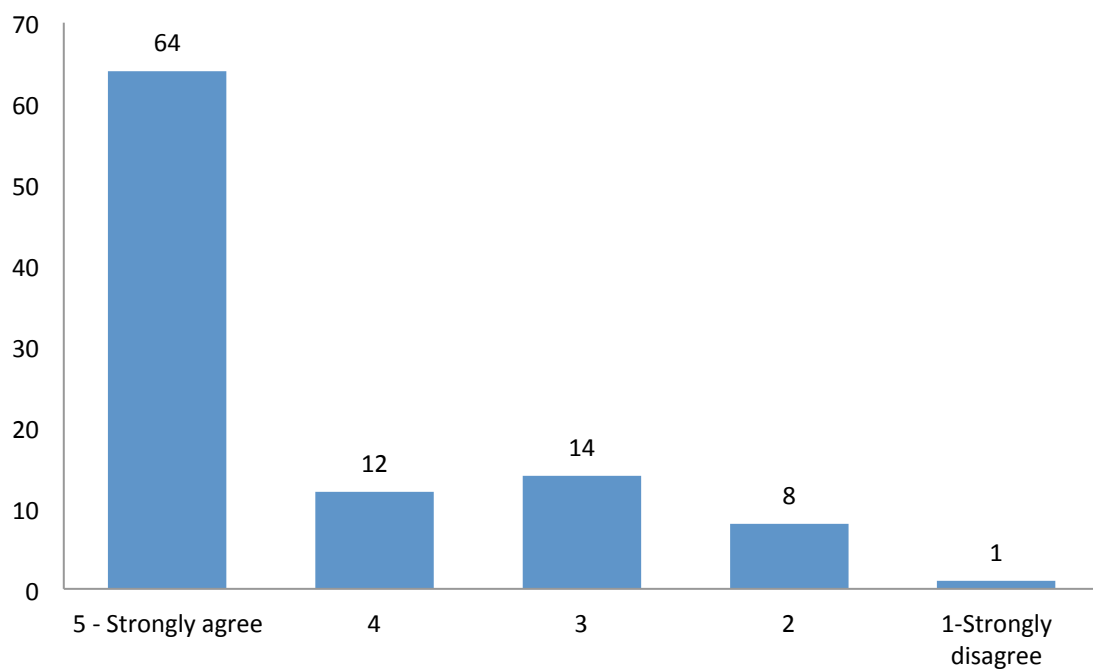
c. Emotional Education supports improved learning performance of pupils.



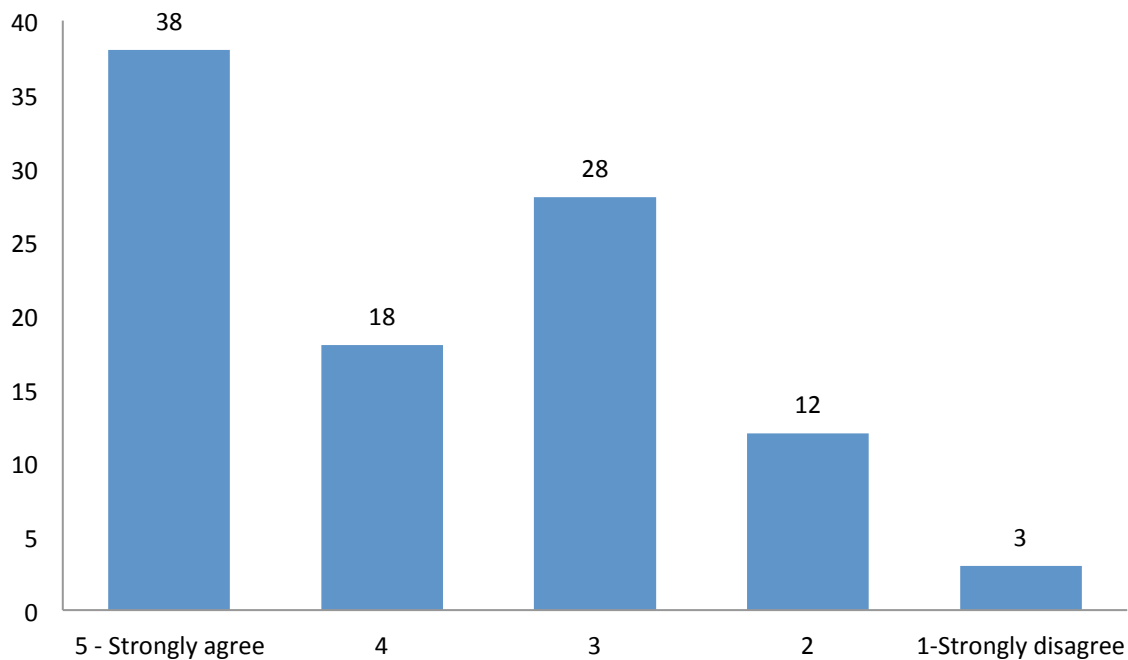
d. *Emotional Education contributes to prevent drop-out of pupils.*



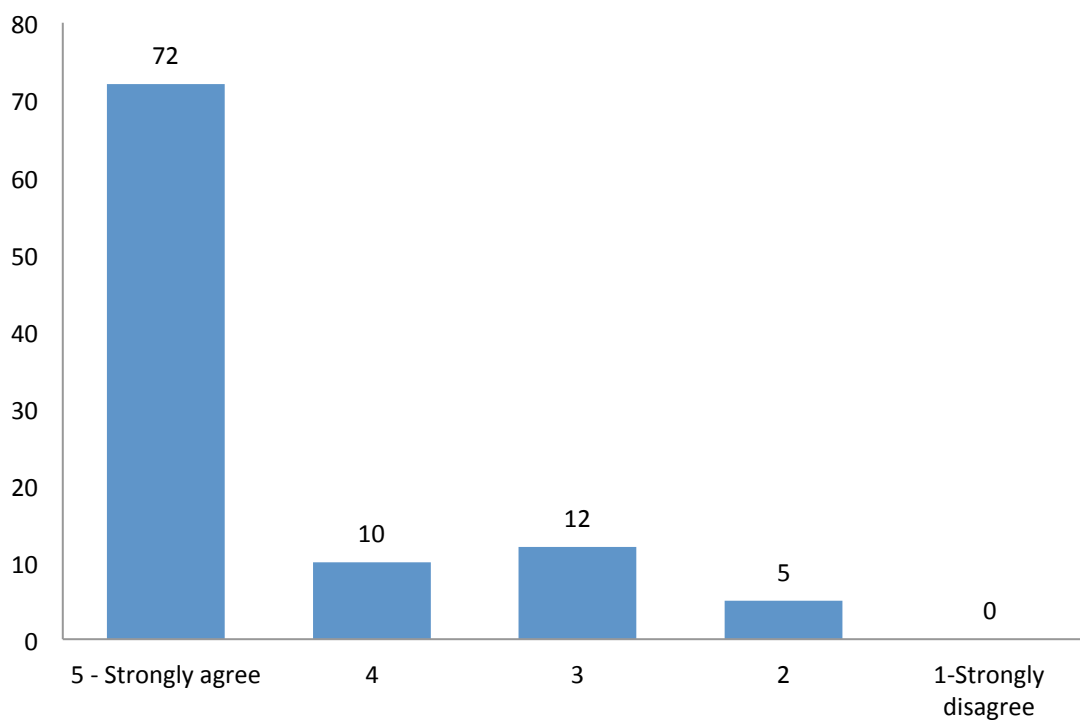
e. *It is school's role to provide education that results in emotionally healthy individuals.*



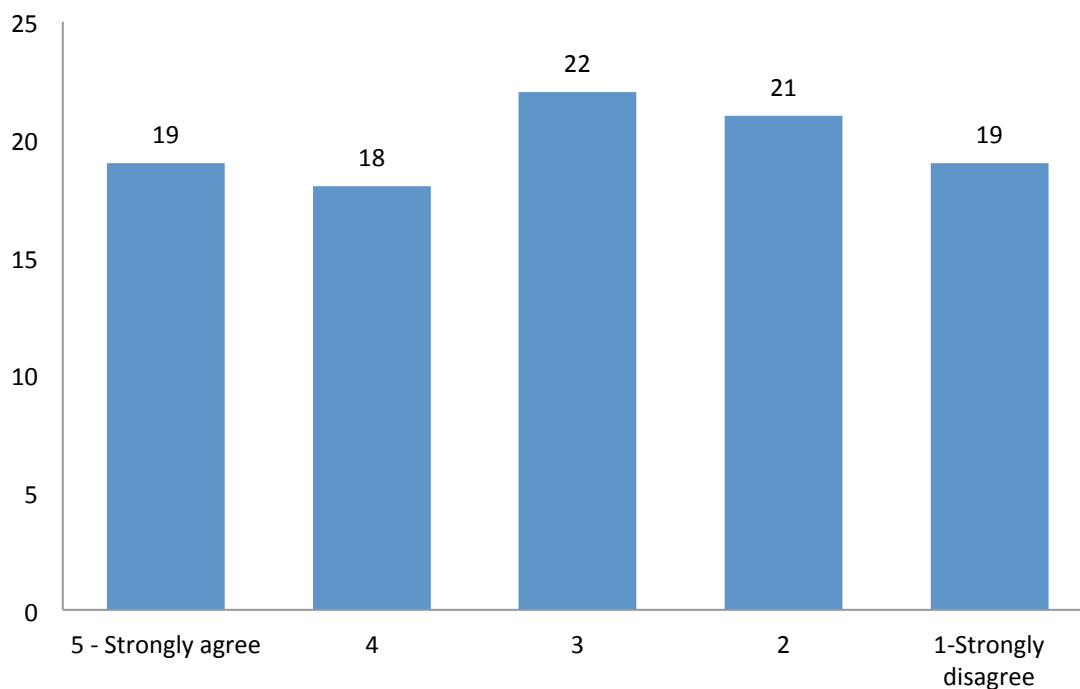
f. Emotions and dealing with emotions should be learned mainly within the family.



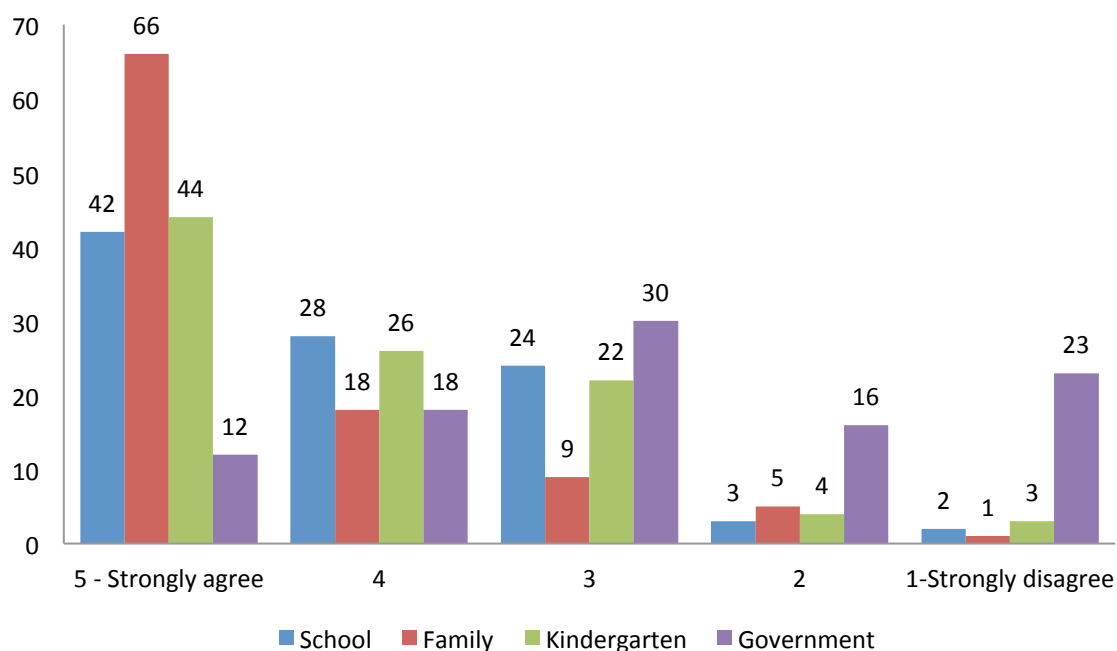
g. Emotional distress causes learning difficulties.



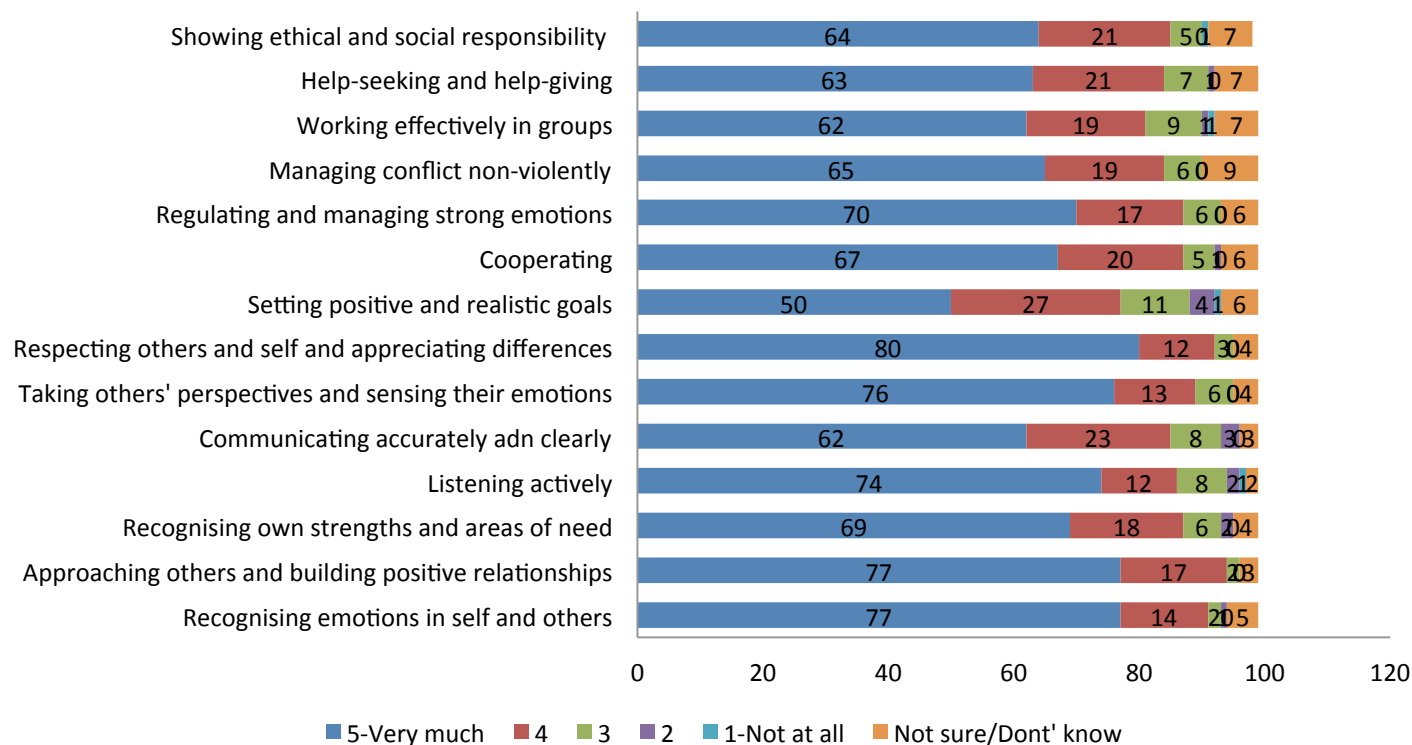
h. Emotional Education should be dealt with during out-of-class period.



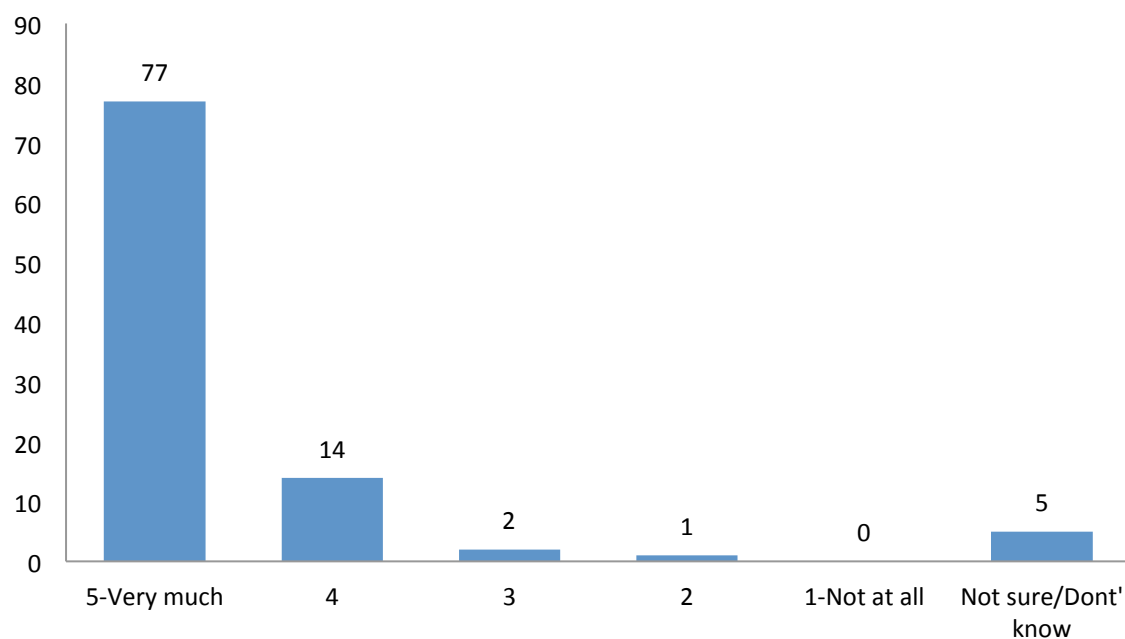
4. Please use the following scale (5-Strongly agree; 1- strongly disagree) to give more information on who you feel is most responsible for Emotional Education:



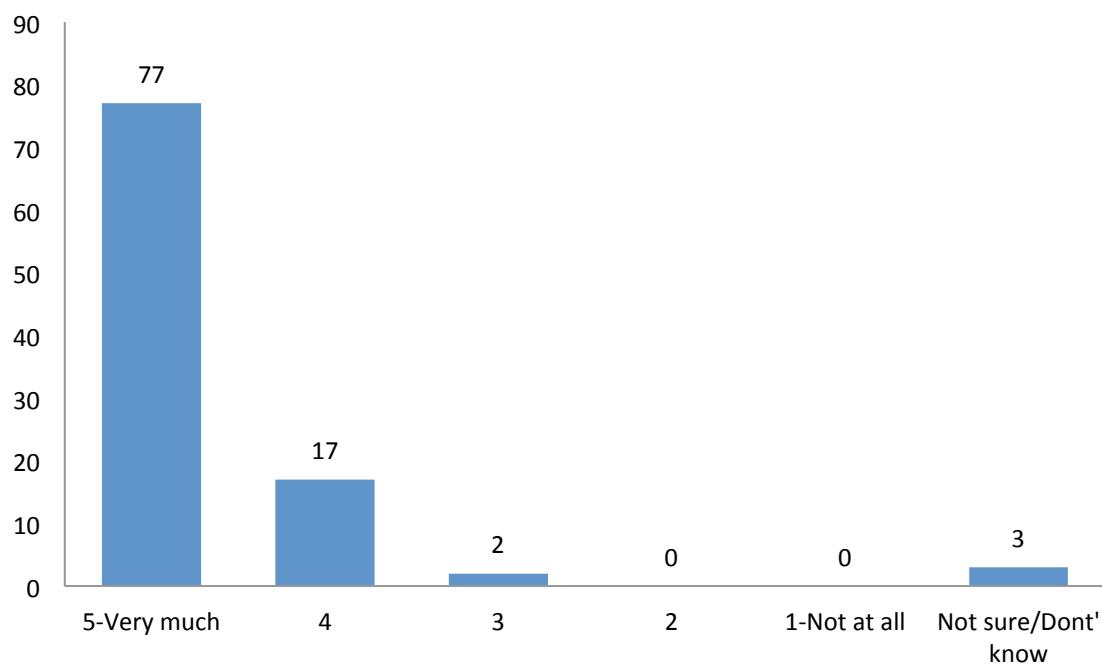
5. How much do you think the following competences is part of the emotional intelligence? (1-Not at all: 5-Very much)



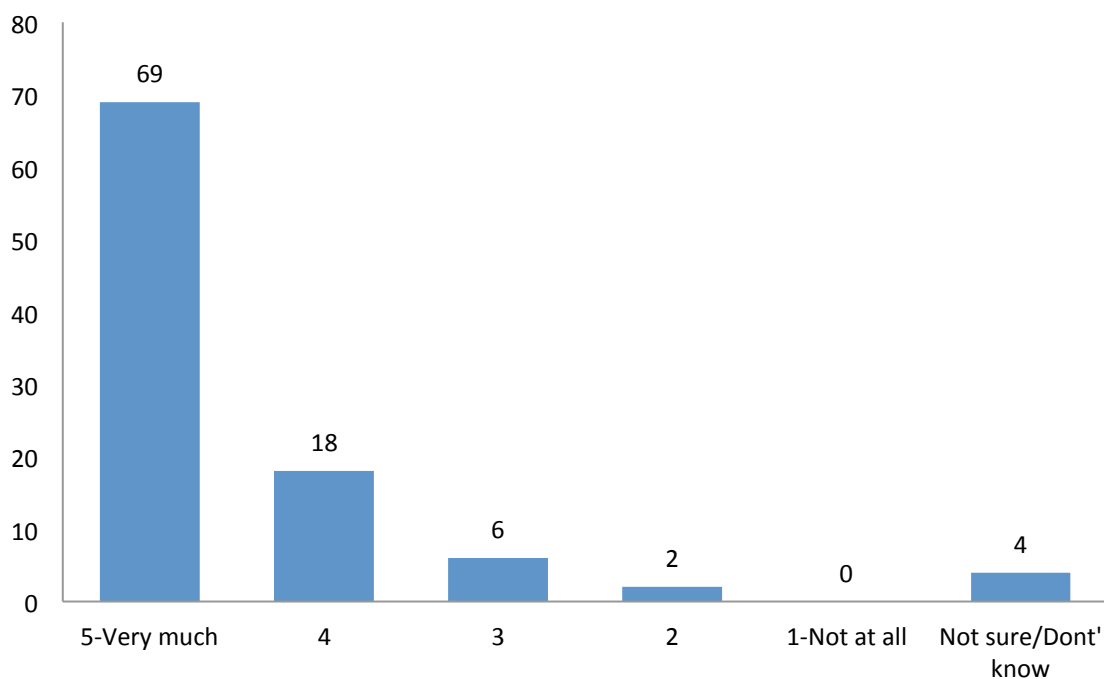
a. Recognising emotions in self and others.



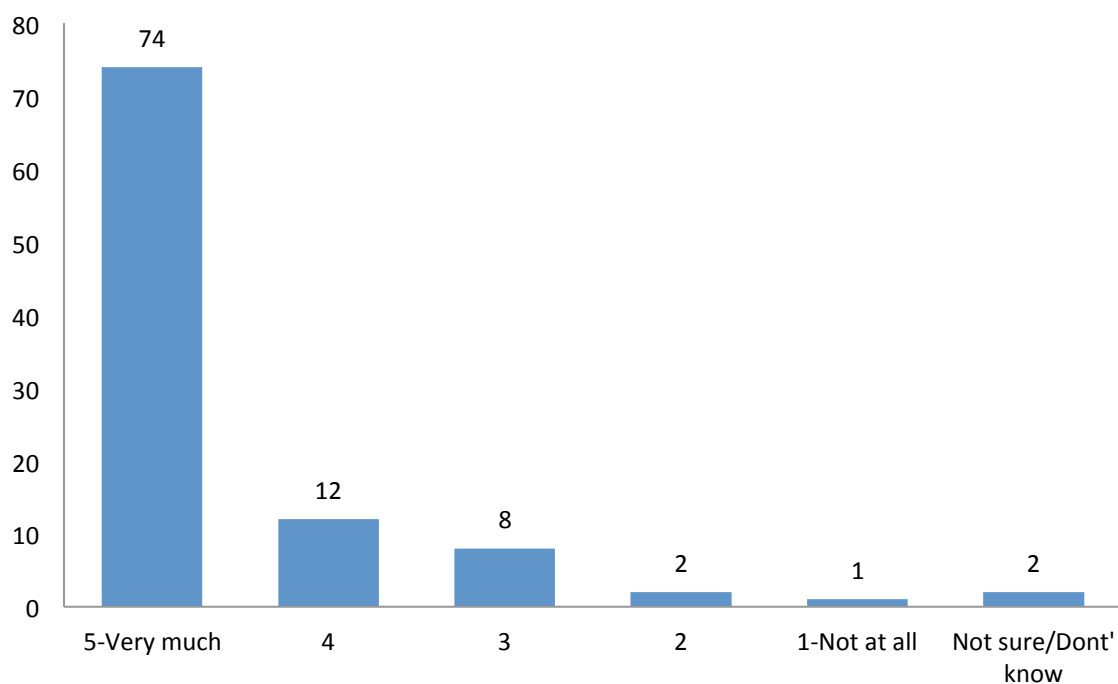
b. Approaching others and building positive relationships.



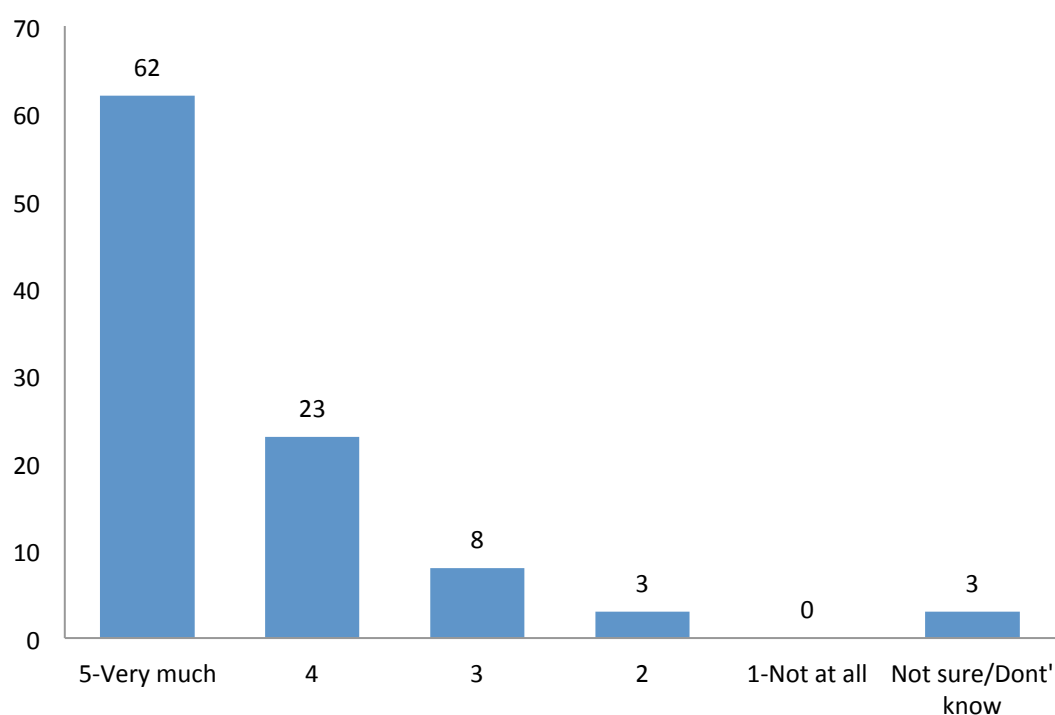
c. Recognising own strengths and areas of need.



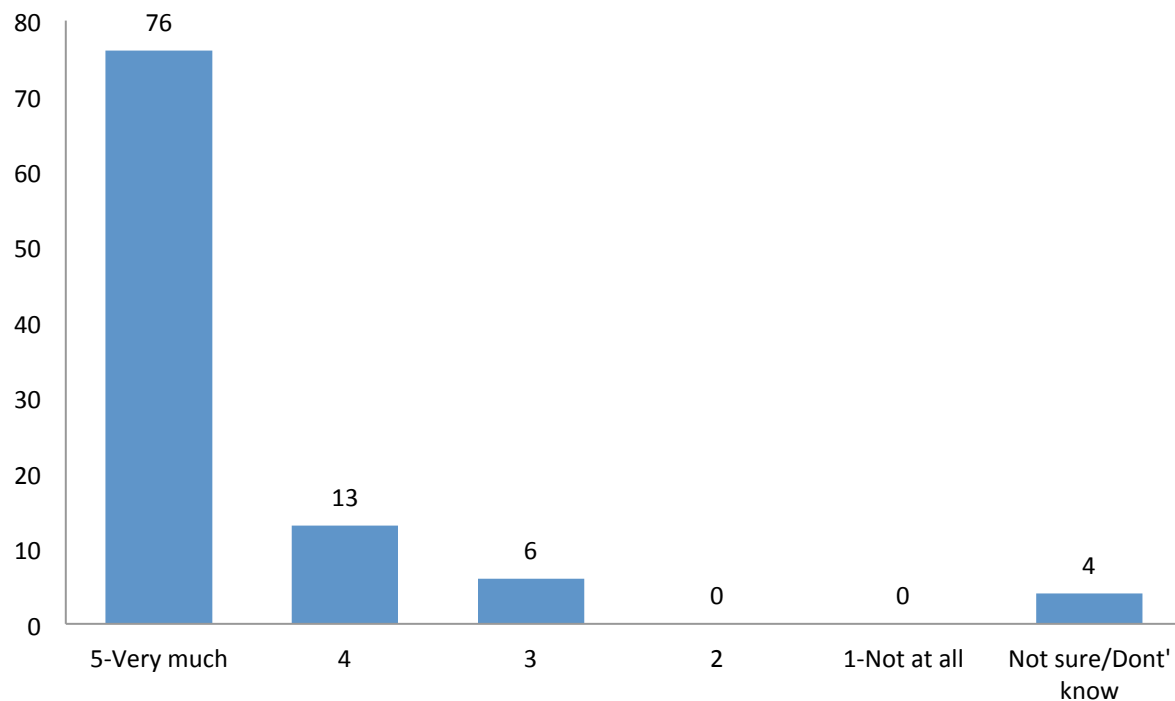
d. *Listening actively.*



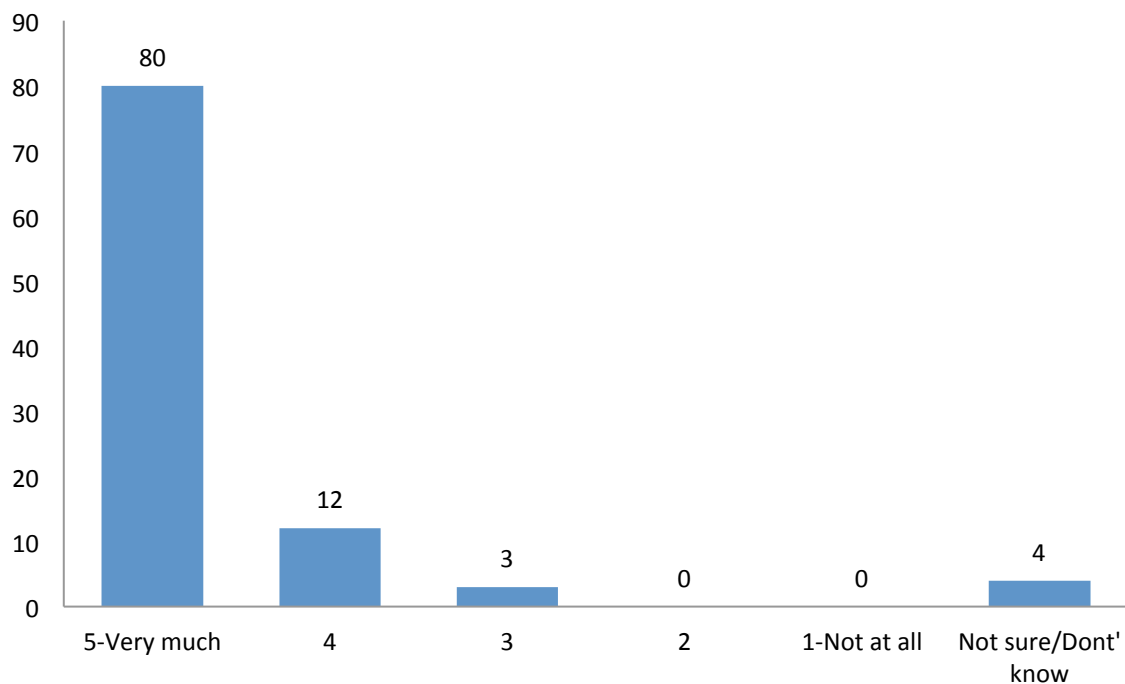
e. *Communicating accurately and clearly.*



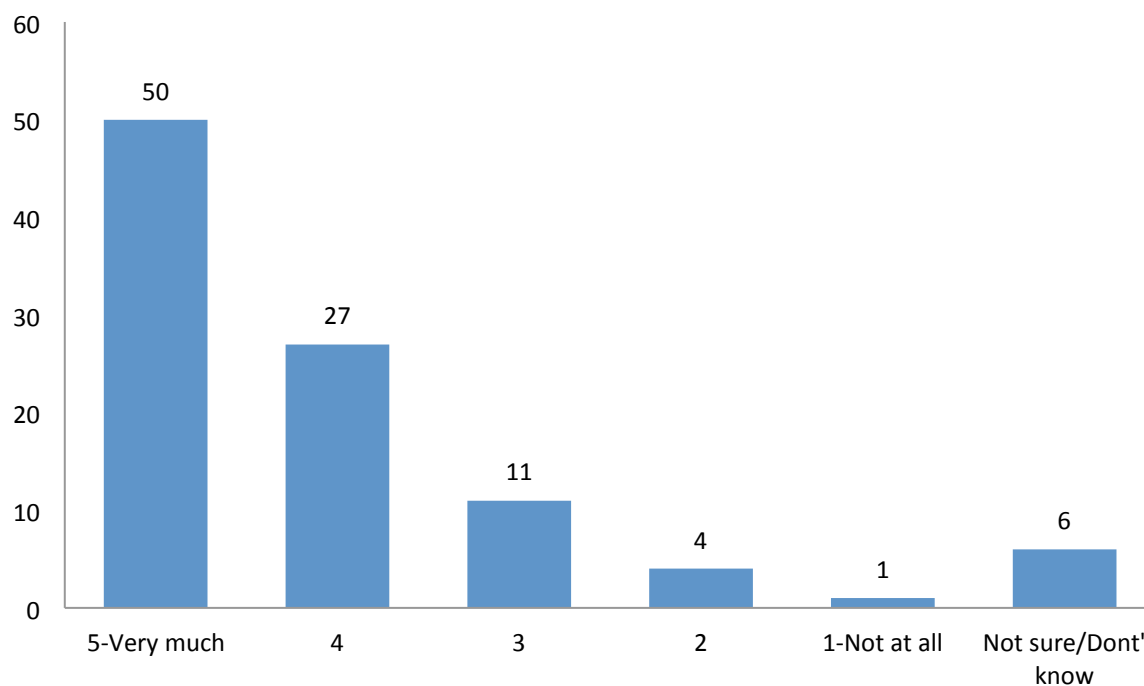
f. Taking others' perspectives and sensing their emotions.



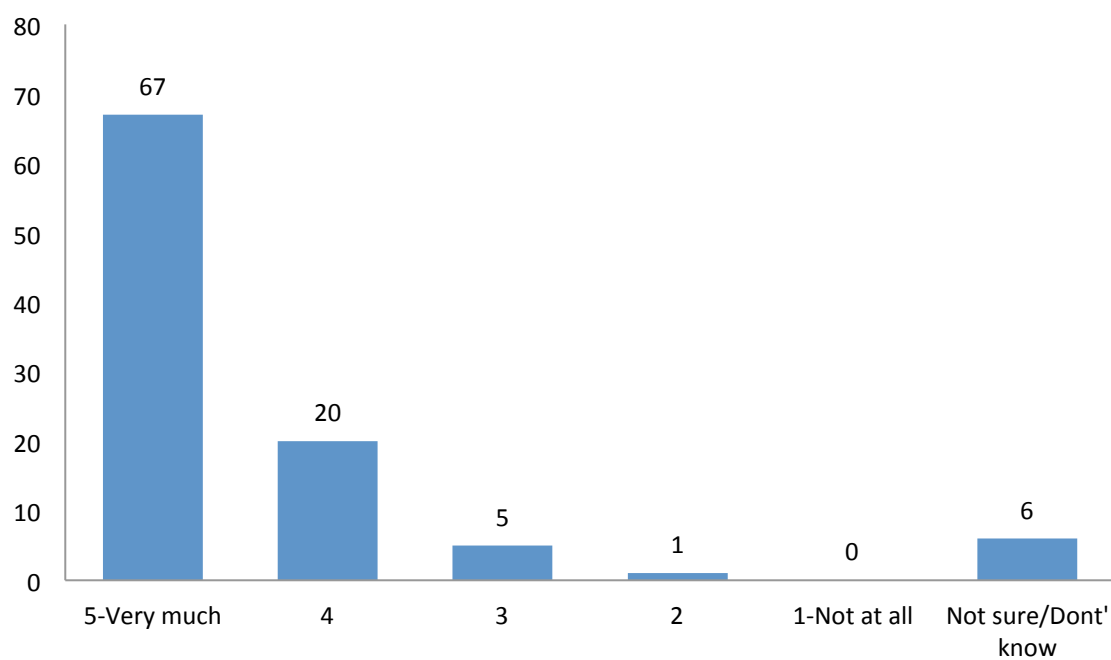
g. Respecting others and self and appreciating differences.



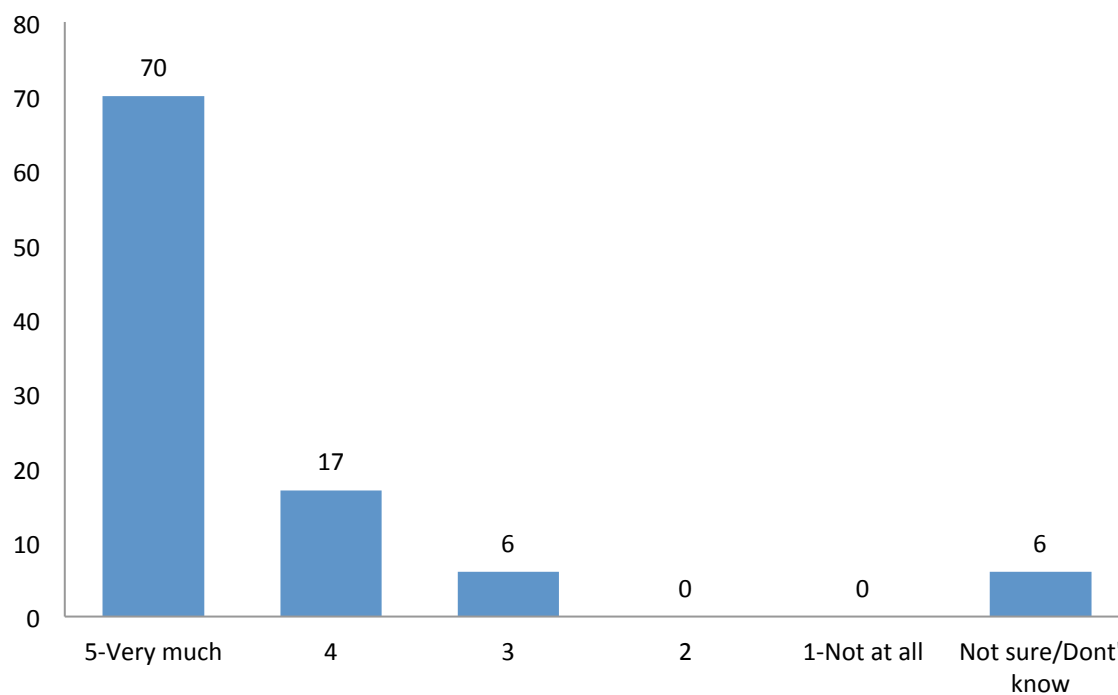
h. Setting positive and realistic goals.



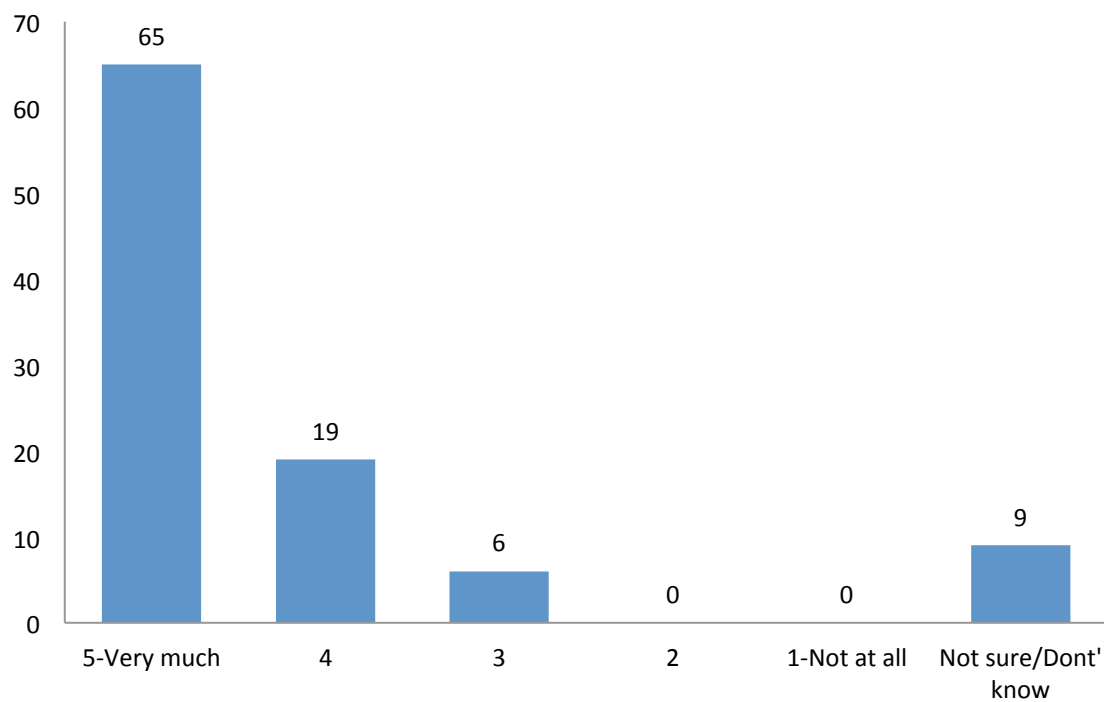
i. Cooperating.



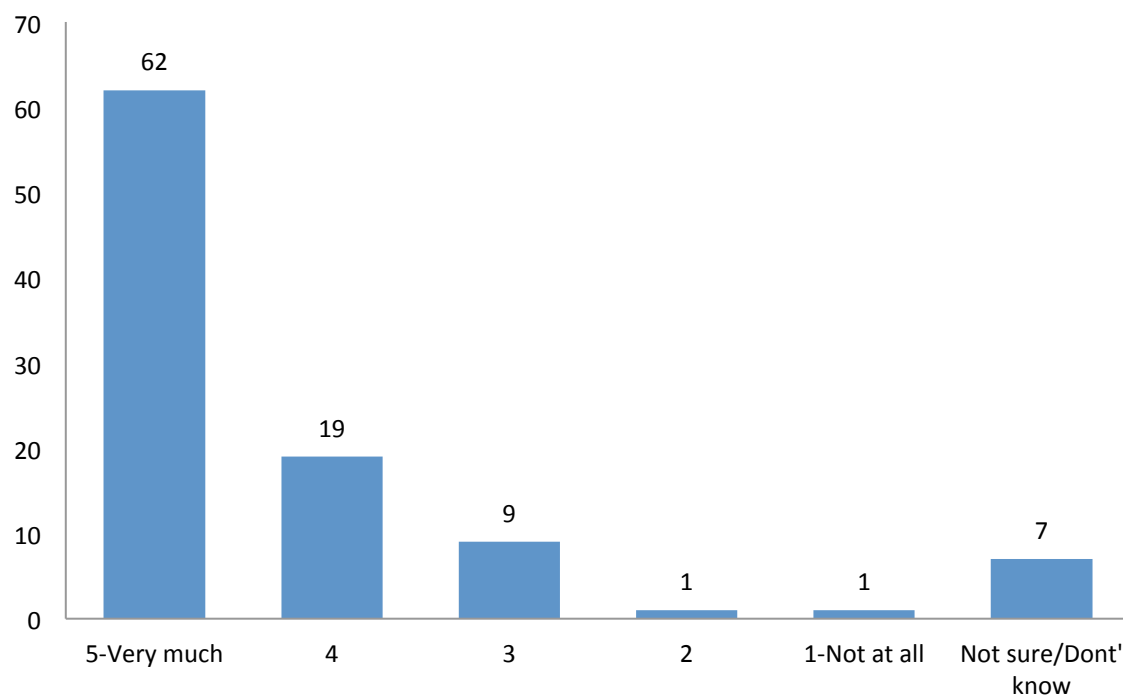
j. Regulating and managing strong emotions.



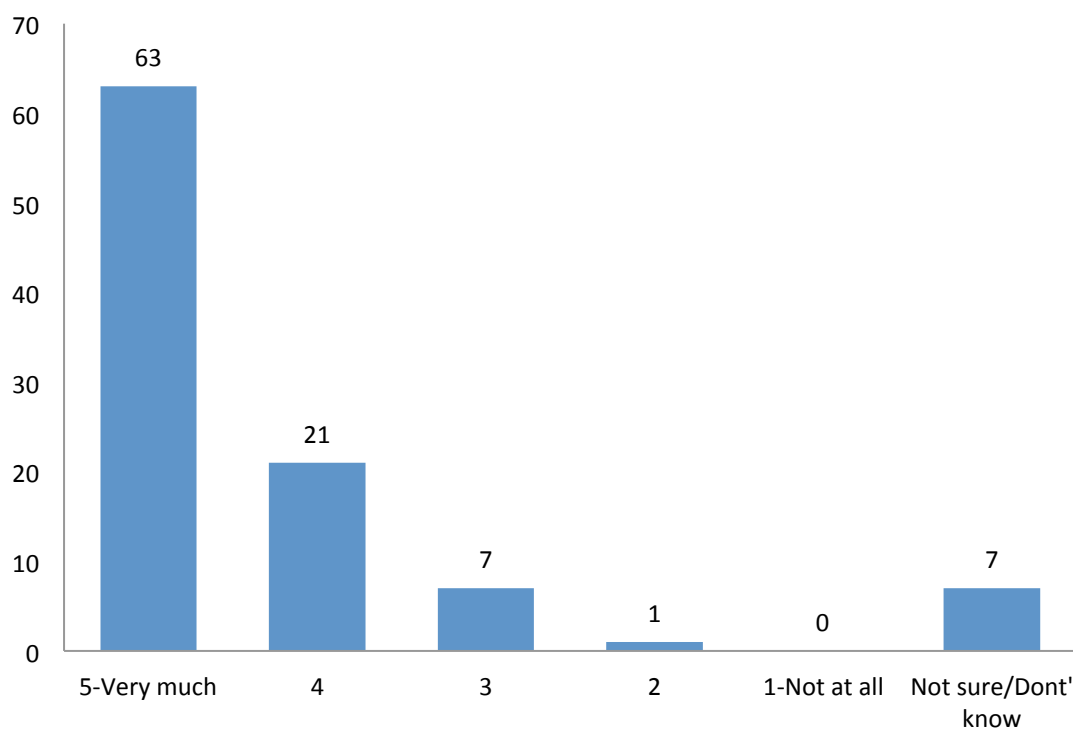
k. Managing conflict non-violently.



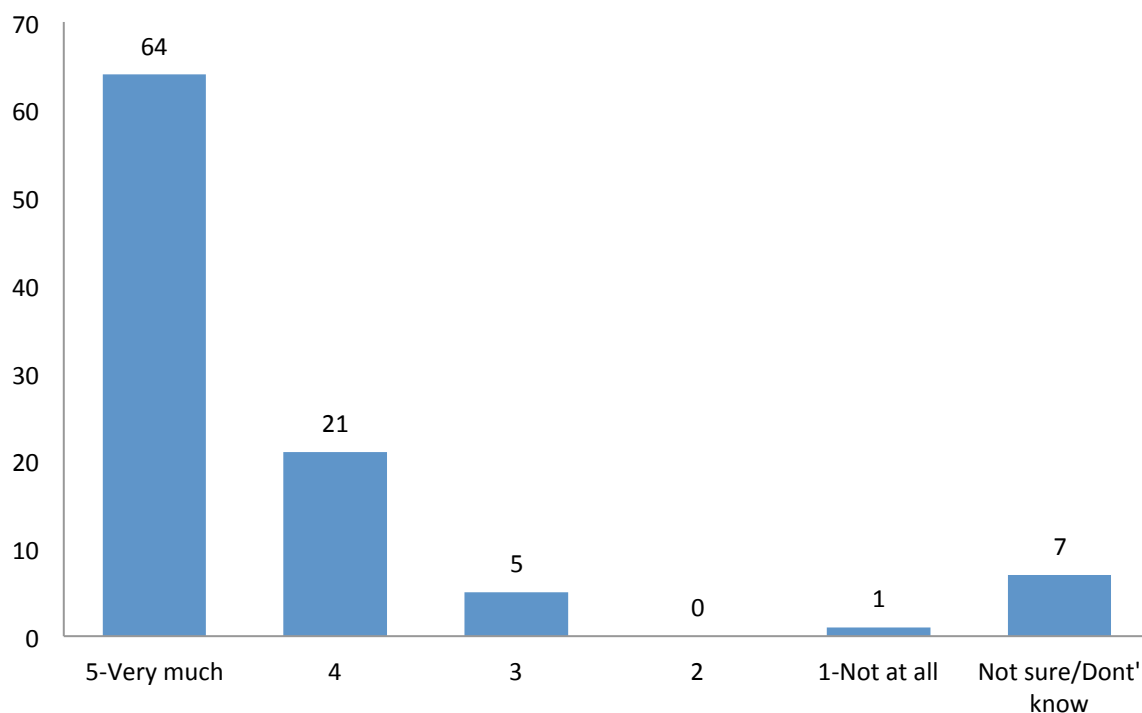
l. Working effectively in groups.



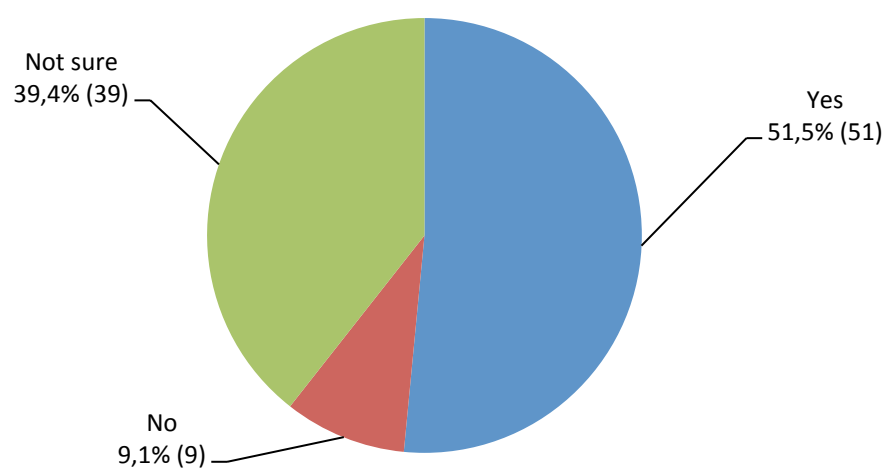
m. Help-seeking and help-giving.



n. Showing ethical and social responsibility.

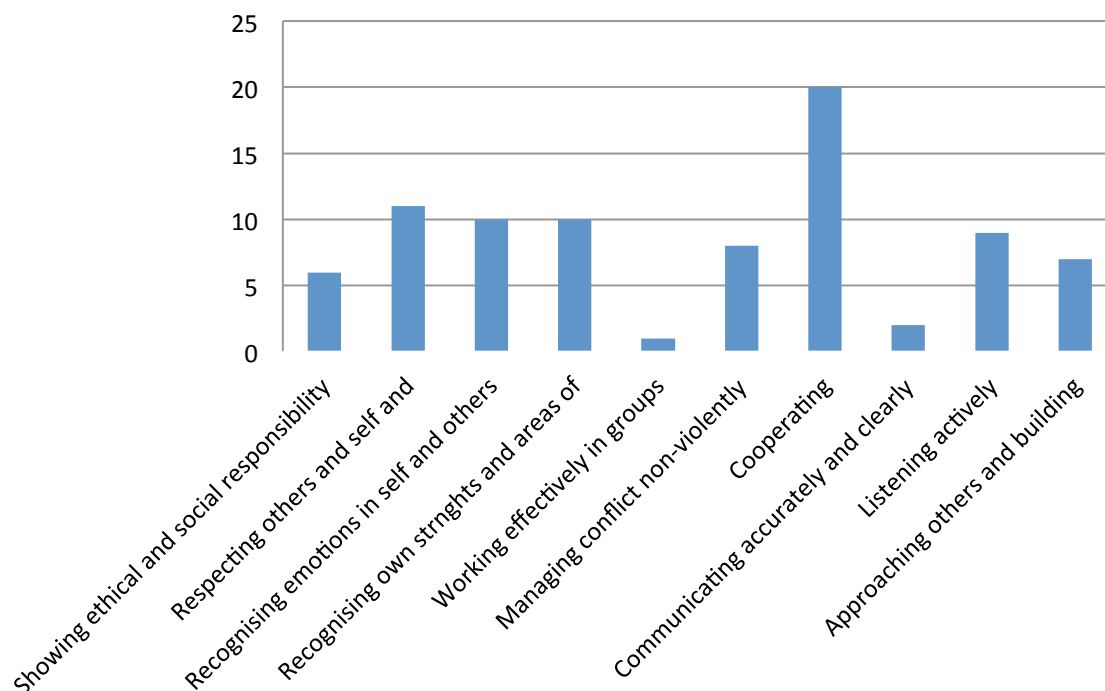


6. Are there any Emotional Education-related learning outcomes/competences in your school curriculum (the one that guides your own teaching)?

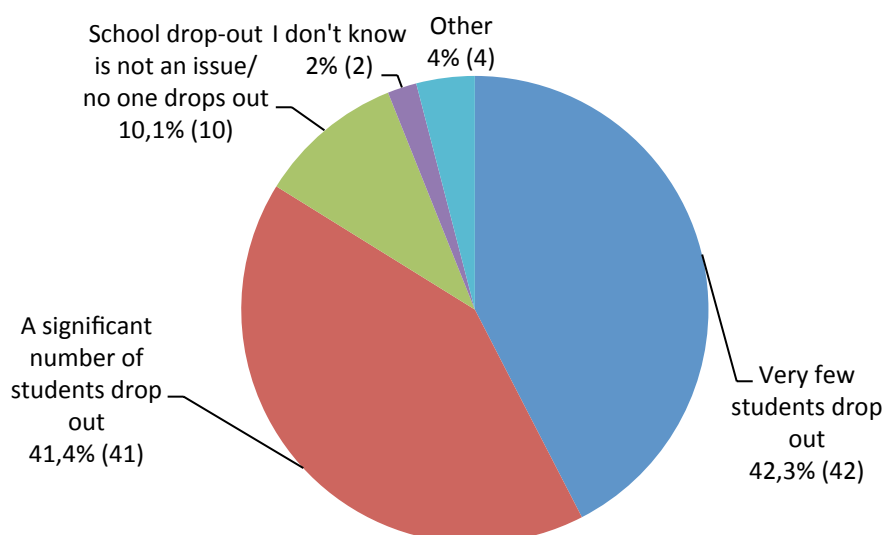


7. If YES at 6, please name or identify from the list above at least one Emotional Education-related learning outcome stated in your curriculum:

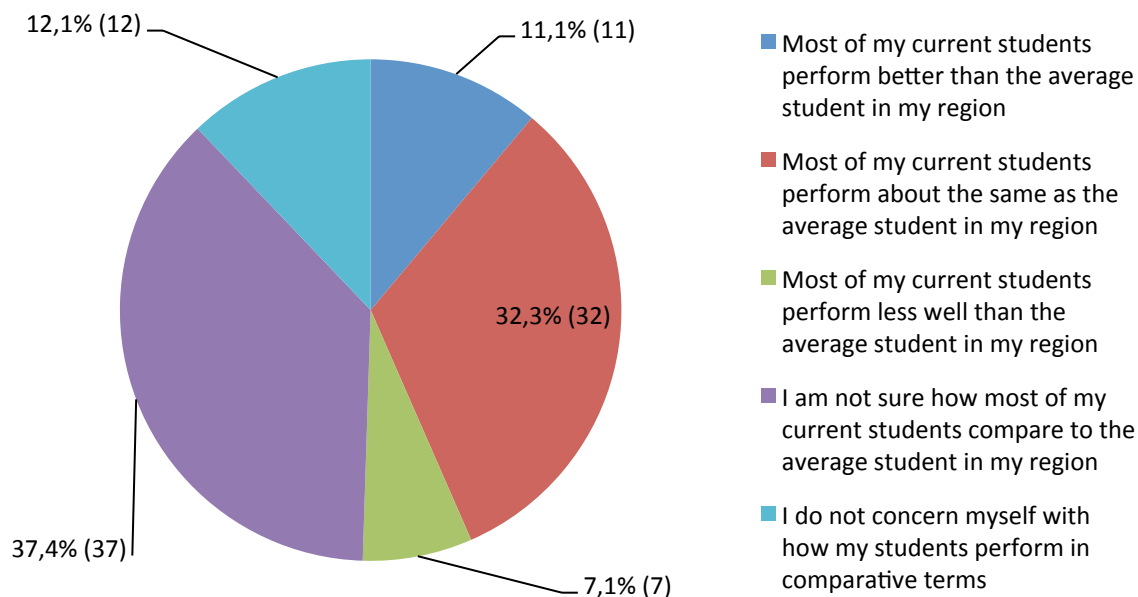
(The graphic shows the competences mostly mentioned by respondents)



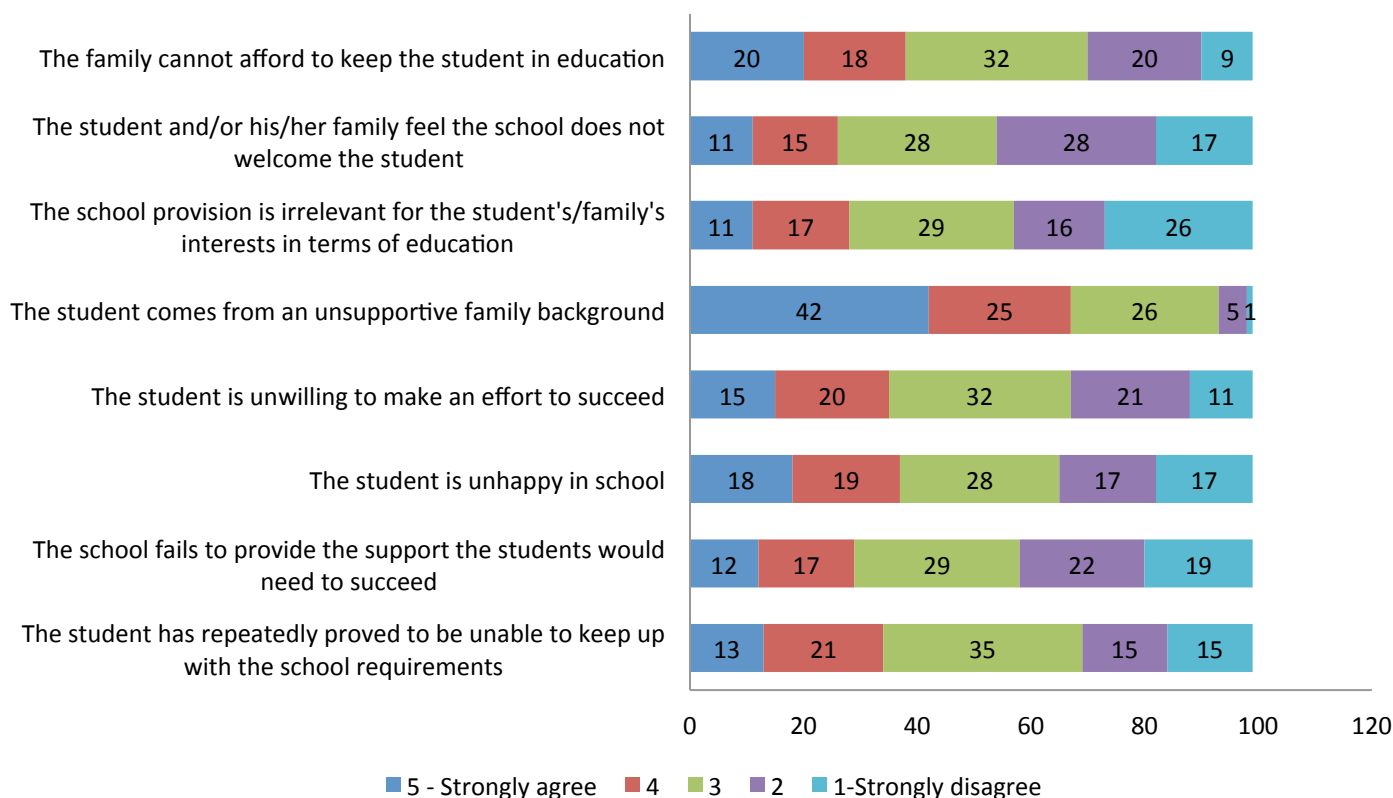
8. Please choose the best statement defining the current situation regarding Early School Leaving in the school that you currently teach:



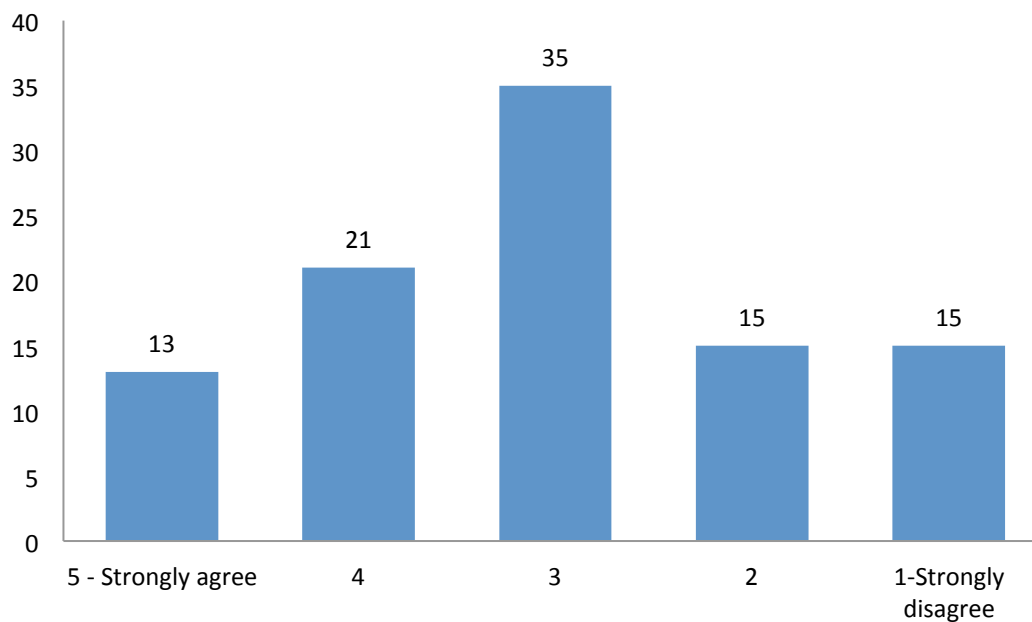
9. Please choose the best statement about your students who you currently teach:



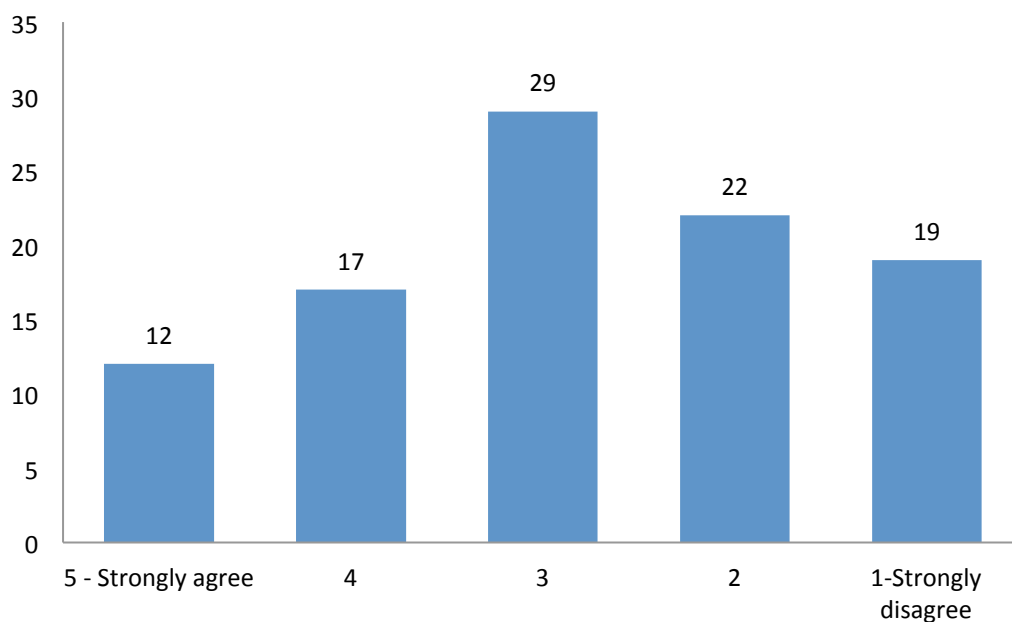
10. Please use the following scale (5-Strongly agree; 1- Strongly disagree) to define the (top) factors contributing the most to early school leaving/school drop-out in your region:



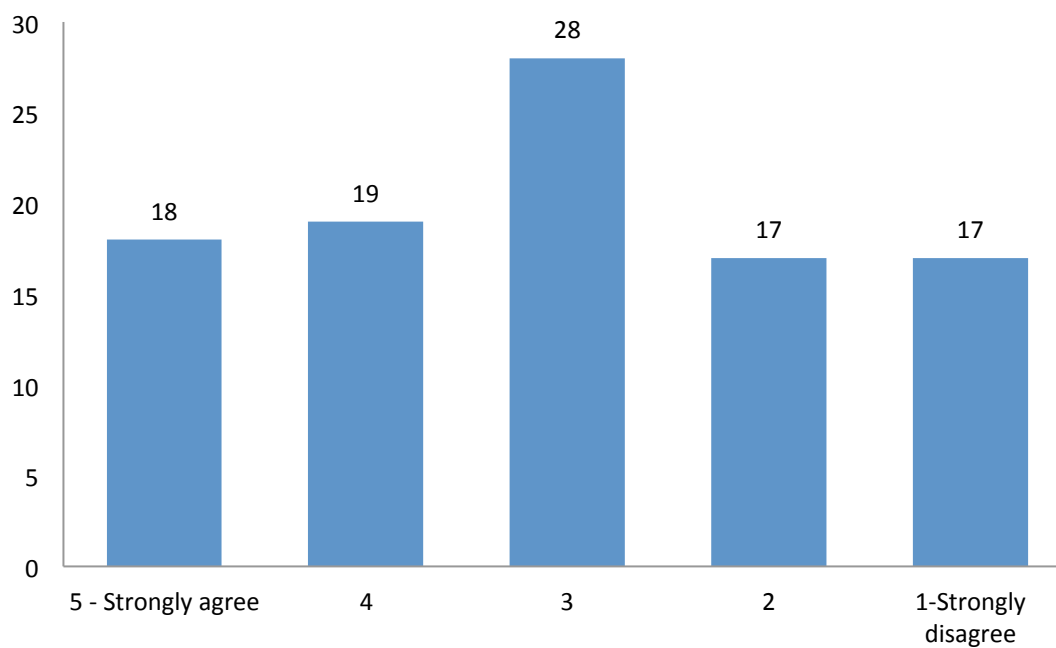
a. *The student has repeatedly proved to be unable to keep up with the school requirements.*



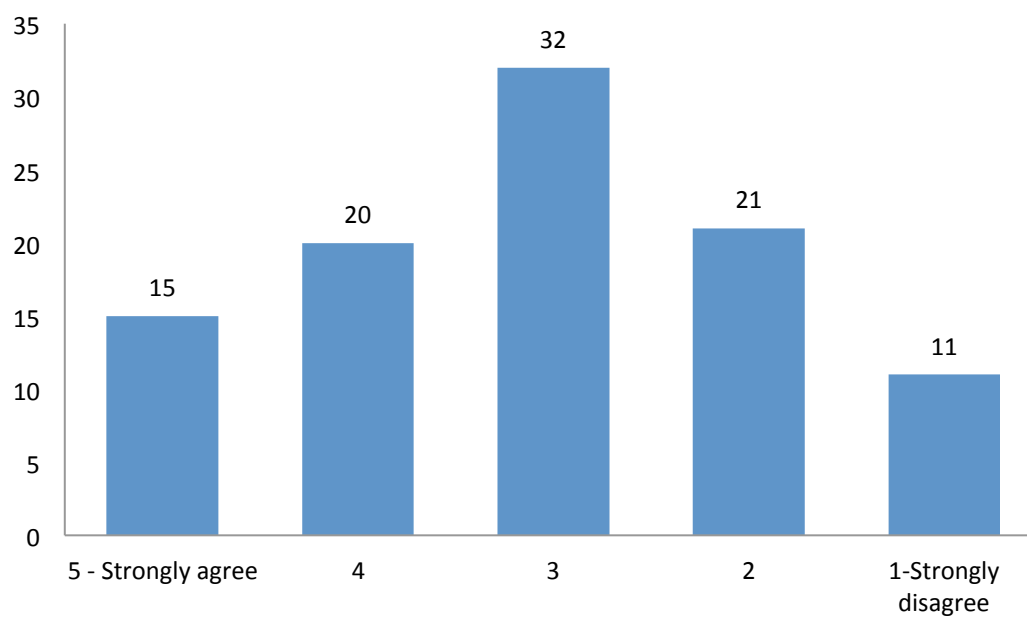
b. *The school fails to provide the support the students would need to succeed.*



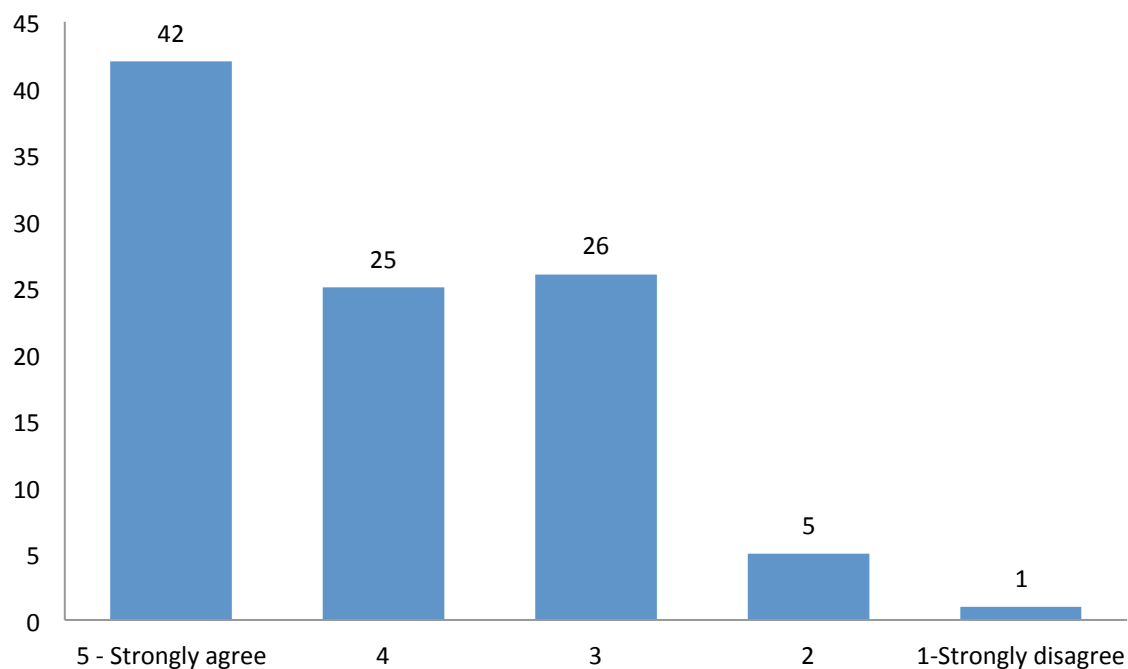
c. *The student is unhappy in school*



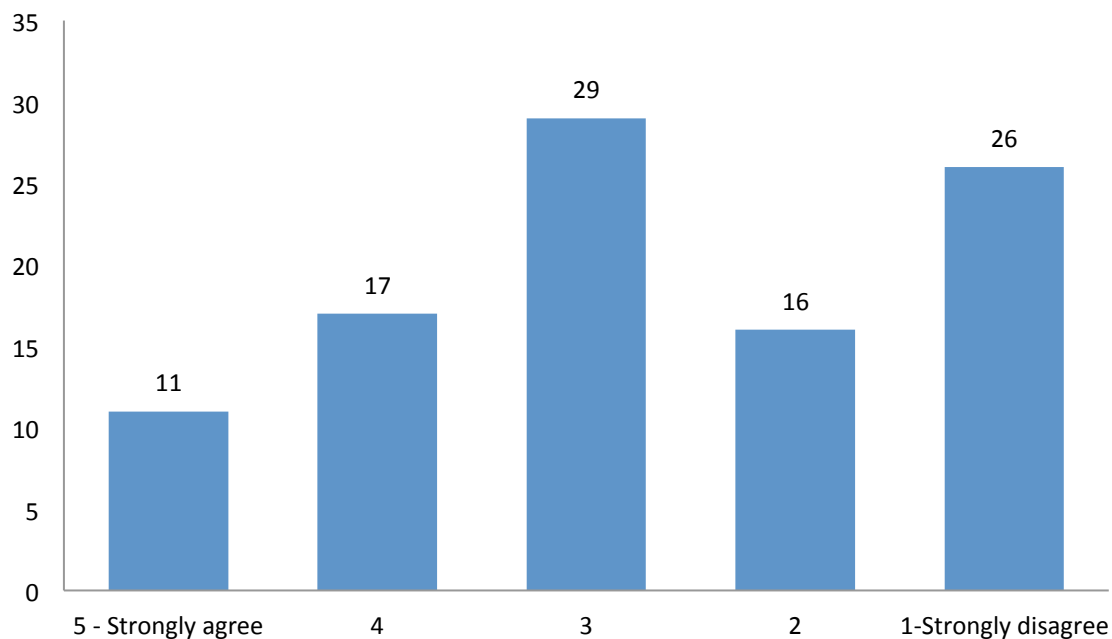
d. *The student is unwilling to make an effort to succeed.*



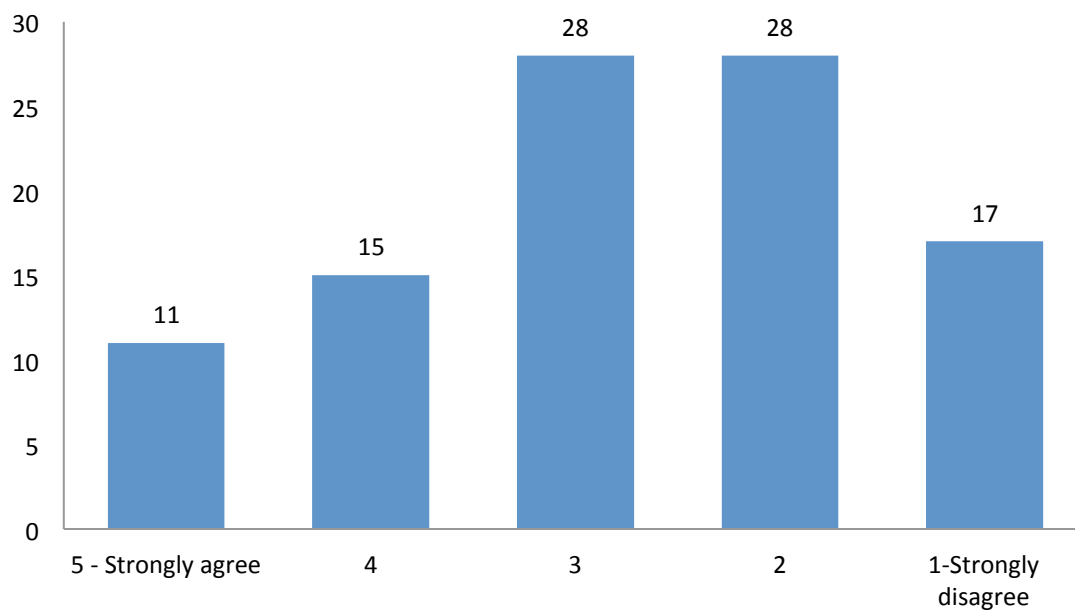
e. *The student comes from an unsupportive family background.*



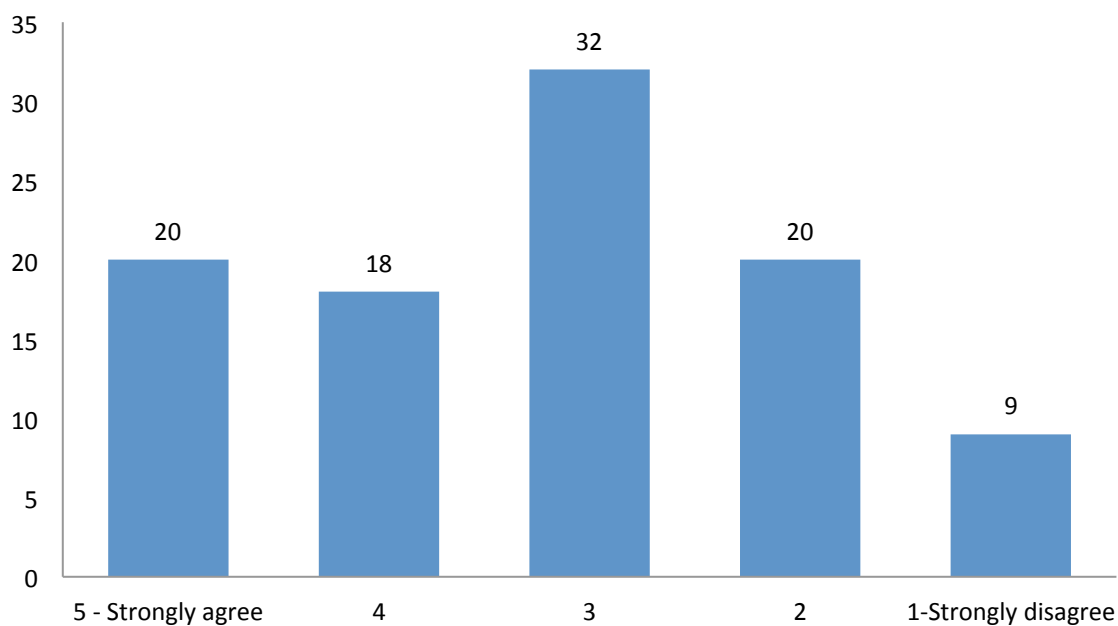
f. *The school provision is irrelevant for the student's/family's interests in terms of education.*



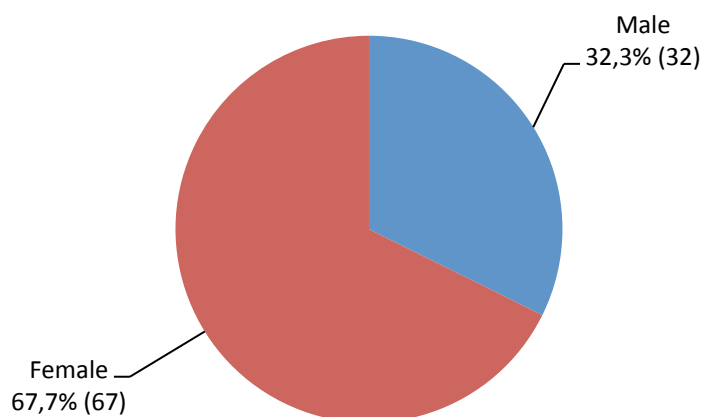
g. *The student and/or his/her family feel the school does not welcome the student.*



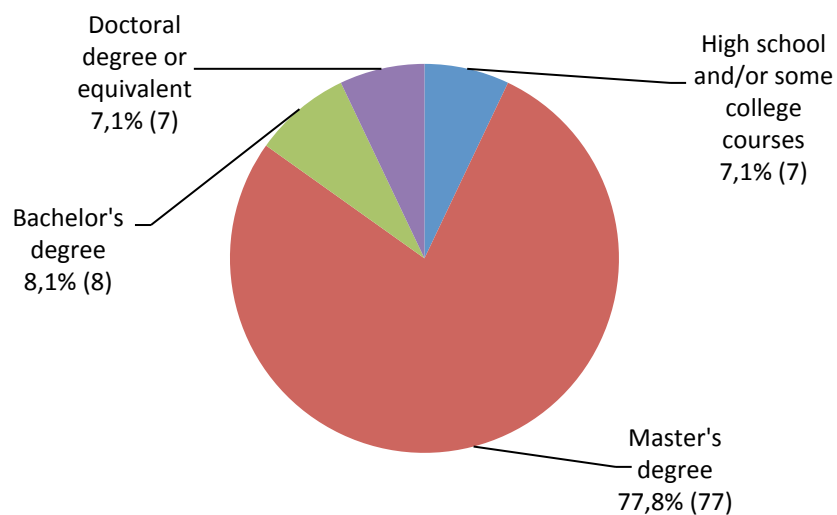
h. *The family cannot afford to keep the student in education.*



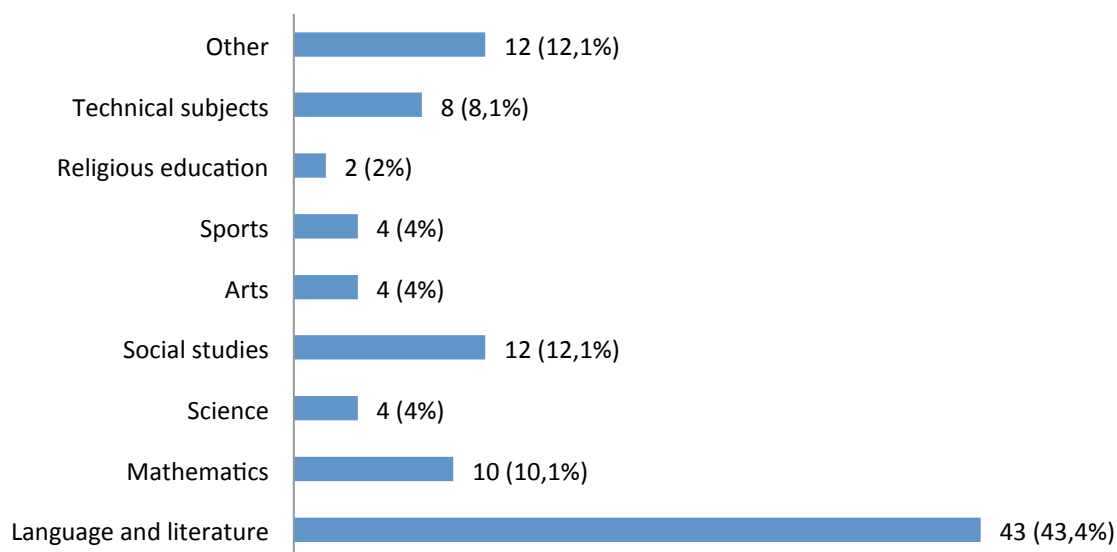
13. Gender:



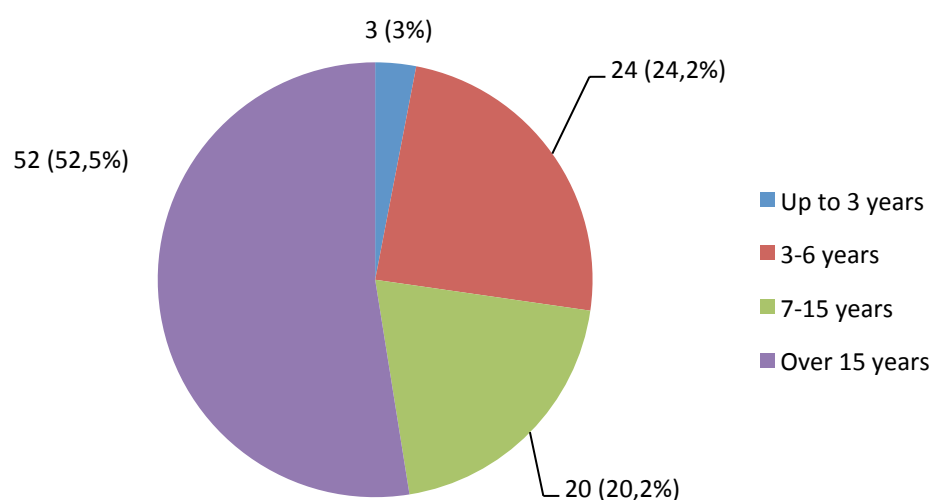
14. The level of formal education you have completed:



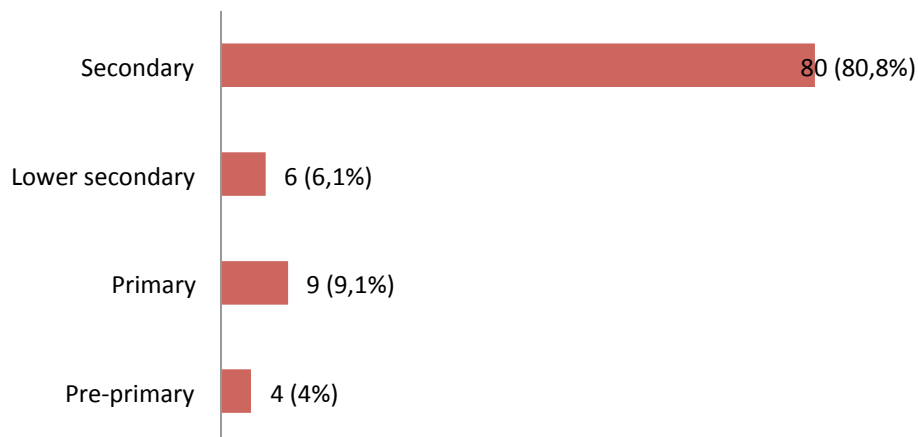
15. I teach:



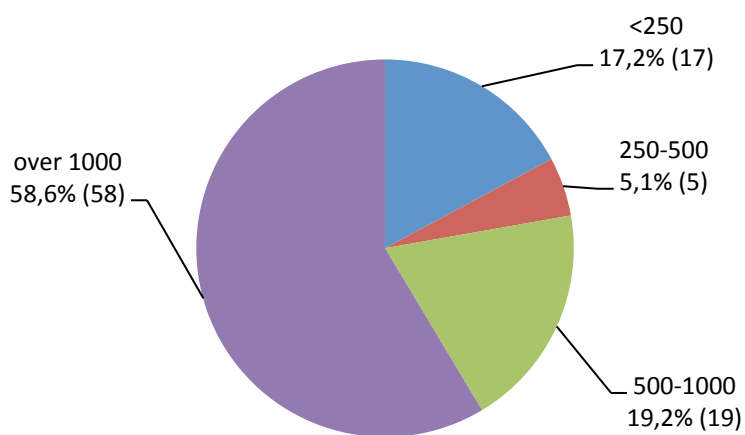
16. I have been teaching for:



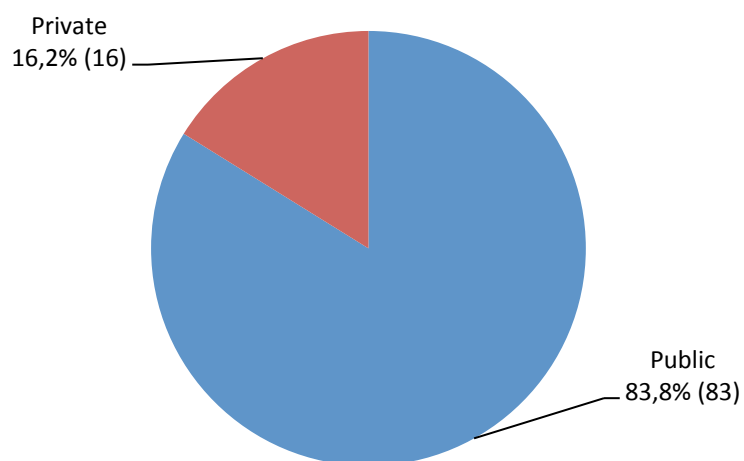
18. Type of current school:



19. How many students does your school have?



20. Your school is:

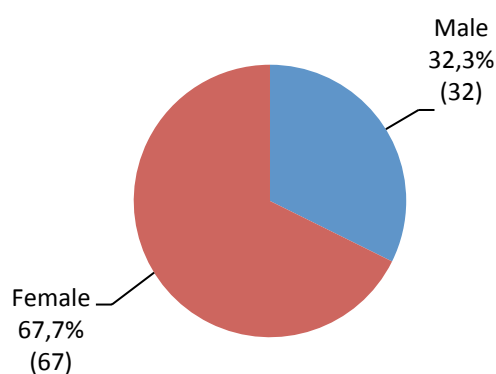


Analysis of Online Questionnaires

1. Background information

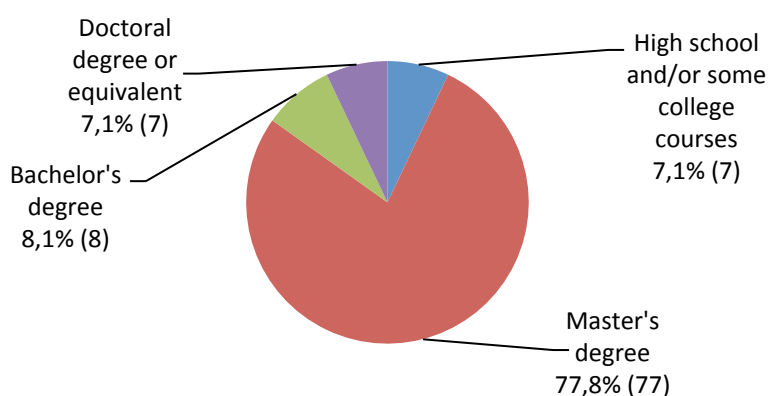
Who responded to the Online Questionnaire:

The questionnaire has been conducted among 99 teachers in different schools of Palermo, Italy. The majority of respondents are females (67,7%), whereas the 32,3% are males.



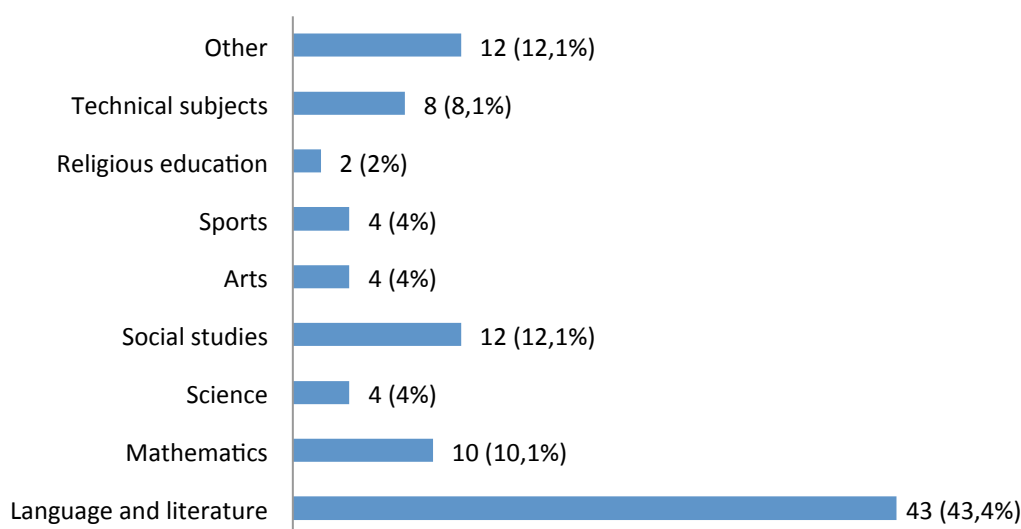
Graph. 1

As far as concerns the educational background, the large majority (77,8%) of respondents has a Master Degree.



Graph. 2

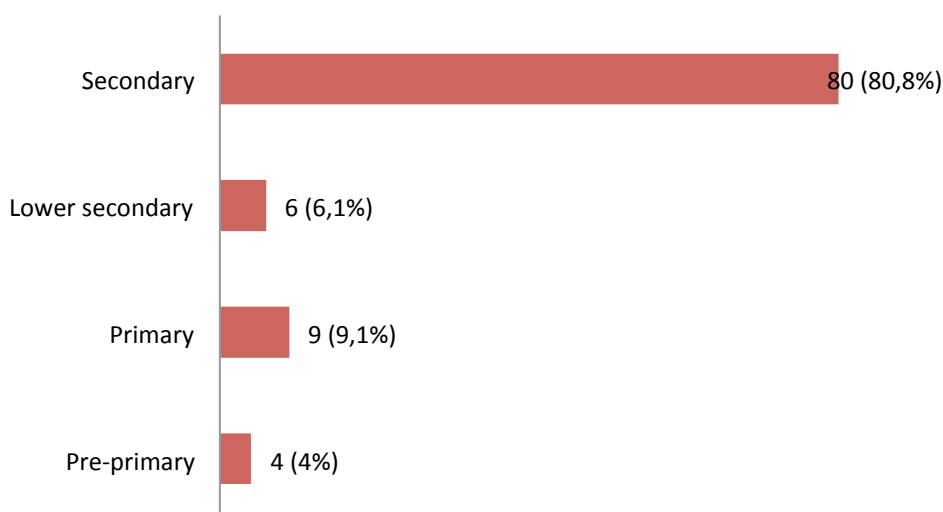
The majority of respondents teach language and literature (43,4%).



Graph. 3

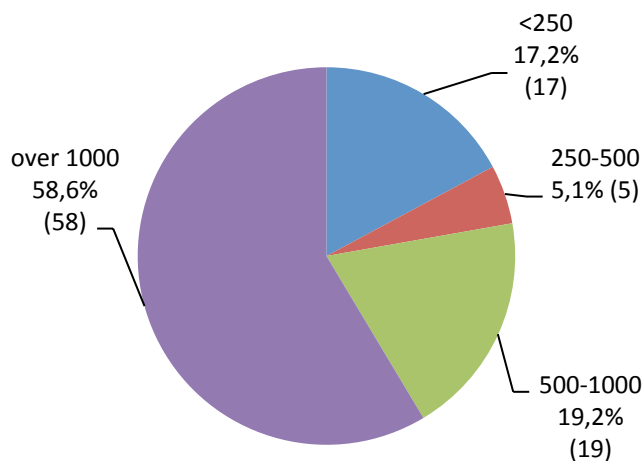
Many of the respondents have a long experience in teaching: the 52,5% over 15 years; the 24,2% between 3 and 6 years; and, the 20,2% between 7 and 15 years. Only the 3% has experience up to 3 years.

Most of respondents teach in a public school (83,8%). The type of schools they teach in is divided as showed in the following graphic.



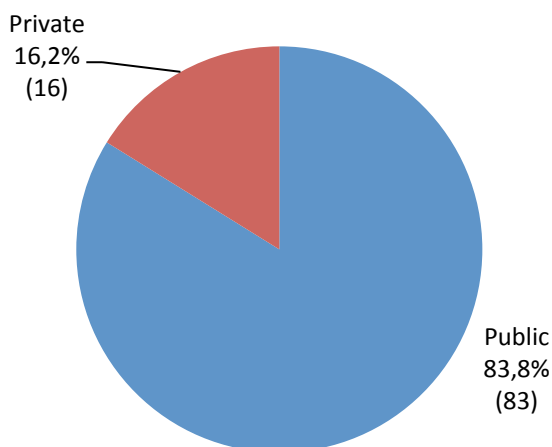
Graph. 4

The large majority of respondents work in a school with more than 1000 students (58,6%). The other percentages are showed in the following graphic:



Graph. 5

Finally, the large majority of the teachers involved in our research teaches in public school:



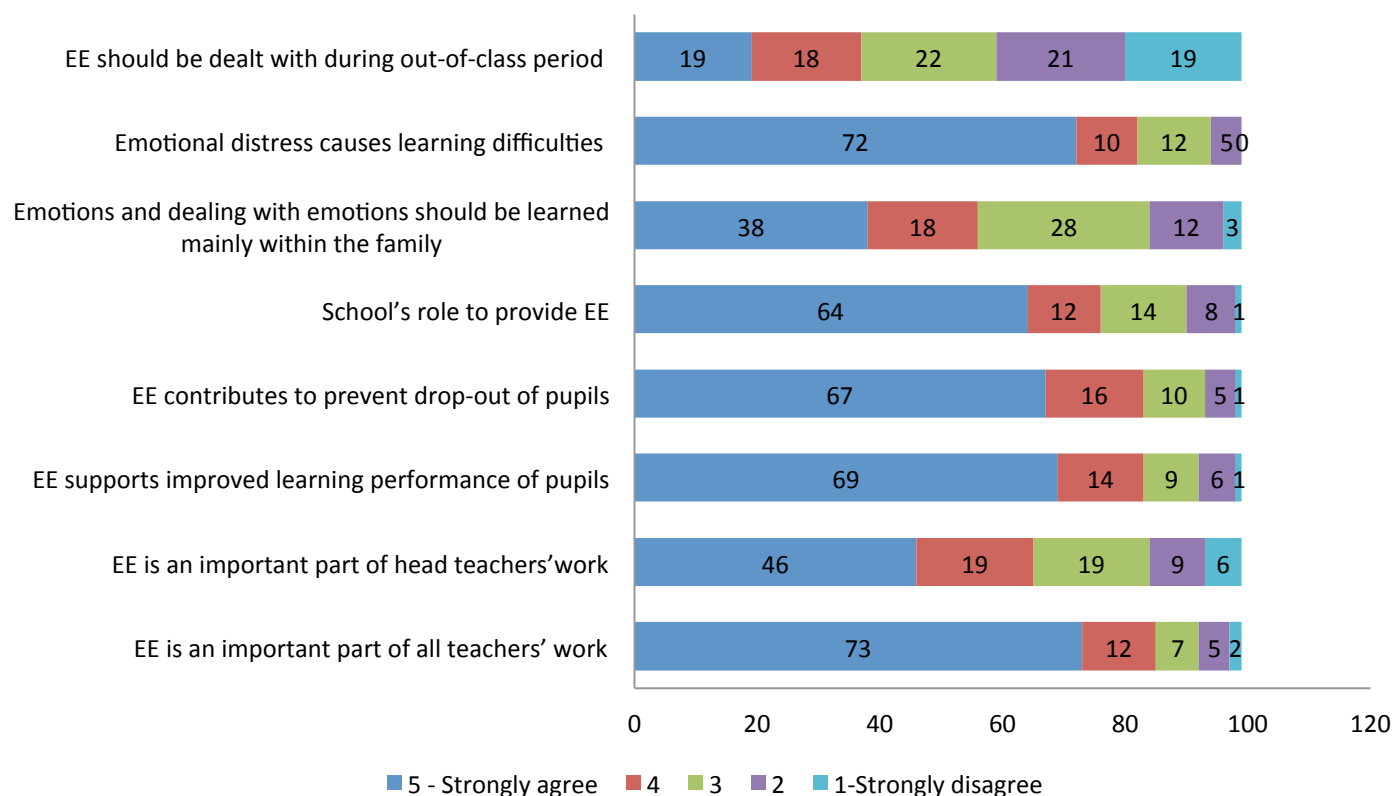
2. How do the teachers conceptualize the Emotional Education in your country ?

The large majority of teachers participating to the research think that EE is an important part of all teachers' work (73,74%) and of head teachers' work (46,46%).

The 83,83% of respondents strongly agree or agree that EE supports improved learning performance of students and that it contributes to prevent drop-out of pupils. The 83% strongly agree or agree that emotional distress causes learning difficulties.

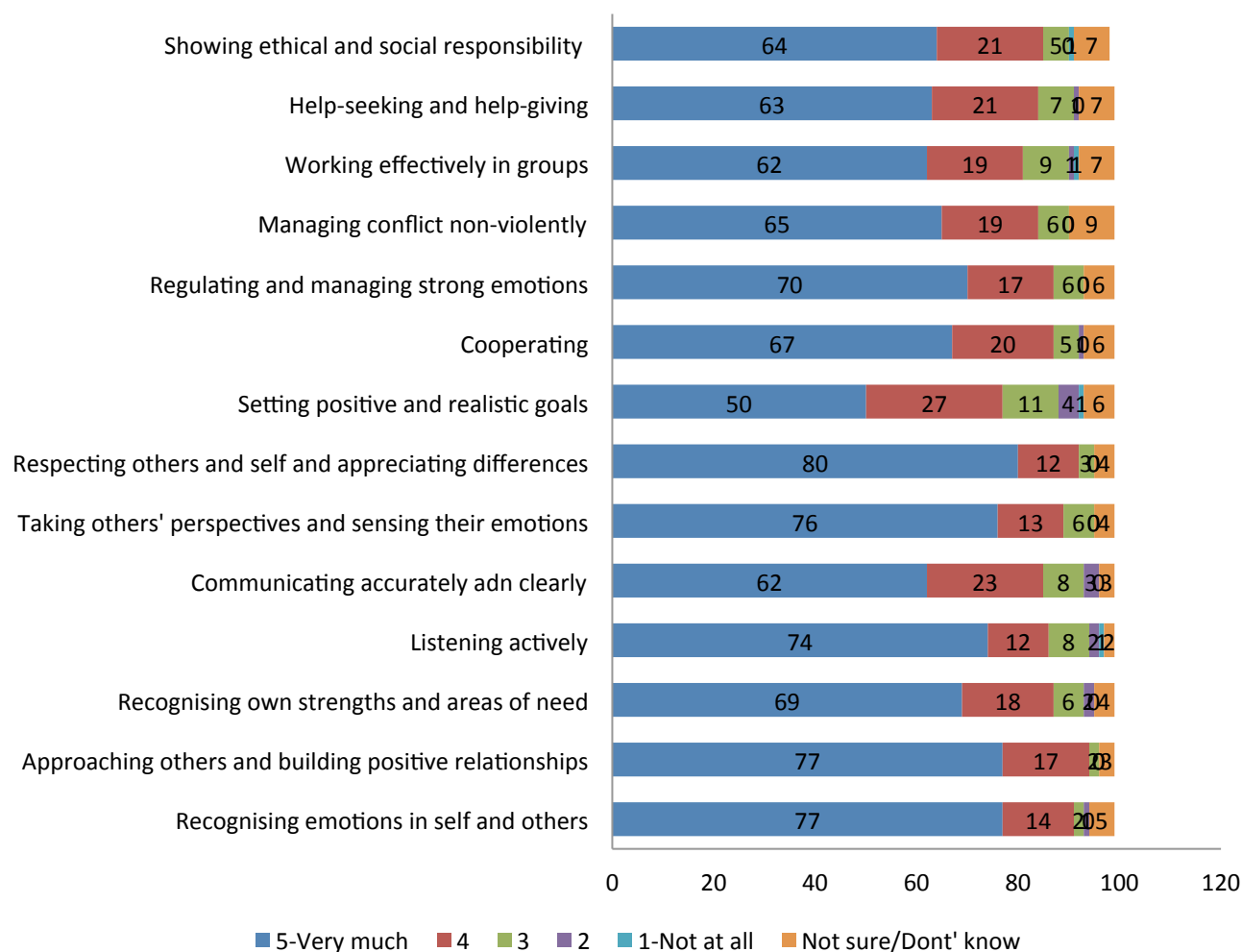
76,76 % strongly agree or agree that one of the school's role is that of providing education that results in emotionally healthy individuals.

As far as concern the role of family in EE, the 38% of respondents strongly agree that EE should be learned mainly within the family, whereas the 28% moderately agree on it.



Graph. 6

All the competences listed in the questionnaire are considered part of Emotional Intelligence.



Graph. 7

As shown by the graphic, the large majority of respondents think that these competences are very much or much part of the EI. The most important ones, according to the results, are:

- approaching others and building positive relationships (95%);
- respecting others and self and appreciating differences (93%);
- recognizing emotions in self and others (93%);
- taking others' perspectives and sensing their emotions (90%).

Most of respondents (47,5%) stated that EE has not been part of their education, whereas the 16,2% are not sure of what EE is.

3. To what extent the teachers think that Emotional Education is part of their role?

Teachers agree that Emotional Education is an important part of their work:

- in the question 2.g, the 87% strongly disagree with the statement “Emotional Education is not part of my job”;
- in the question 3.a, the 74% think that EE is an important part of all teachers’ work.

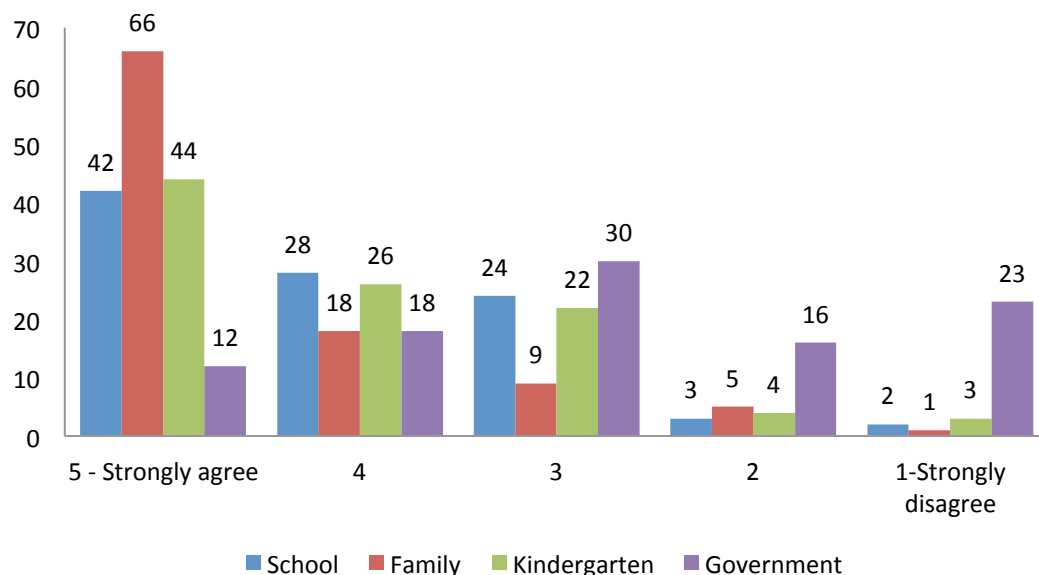
Most teachers (62%) feel somehow confident that they do their best to provide EE for their students.

Few respondents have participated to a professional development programme in EE:

- the 11% strongly agree with the statement “I have completed a professional development programme in Emotional Education recently, and I am confident that I do my best to provide for my students Emotional Education”
- and the 13% strongly agree with the statement “I have completed a professional development programme in Emotional Education recently, and-as I would like to learn more-I am seeking new programmes in Emotional Education to participate in”.

Among the ones who already followed such courses, only the 13% is seeking new programmes in Emotional Education.

As far as regards the context on which teachers think Emotional Education should be taught, the majority of respondents think that a crucial role should be played by family (85%).



Graph. 8

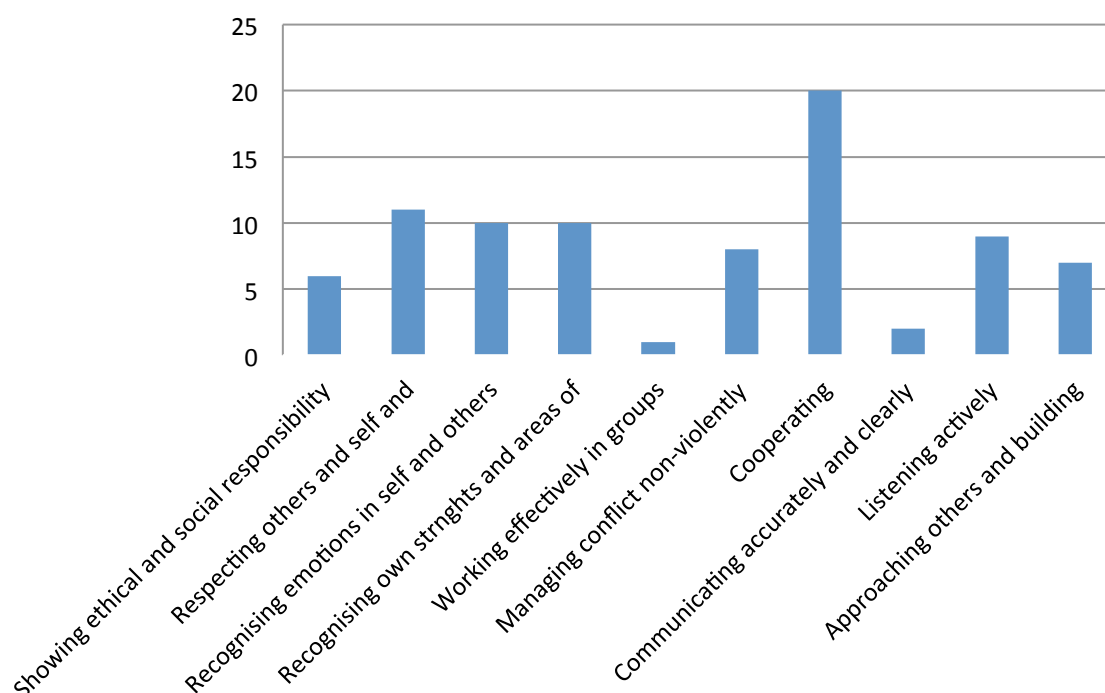
Three respondents added also:

- interaction and collaboration among the interested actors and professionals;
- sport and extracurricular activities;

- sport and cultural associations.

4. How do the teachers think that they can support Emotional Education?

The majority of respondents (51,5%) stated that EE-related learning outcomes and competences are presents in their teachings and school curriculum. Whereas, the 39,4% is not sure about it. In the following graphic, the list of competences that some respondents think are part of their teachings.



Graph. 9

The 80% of respondents stated that they haven't yet participated to a EE professional course, but they would like to do it in the near future.

5. Early School Leaving: how much are teachers aware of the phenomenon?

On the ESL phenomenon in the region, teachers seem to be divided:

- the 42,4% answered that very few students drop out;
- whereas, the 41,4% answered that a significant number of students drop out.

This result can be explained because of differences in the areas in which teachers operate and the kind of institute. For instance, there is a difference in the drop-out rates between VET institute and high schools¹⁵.

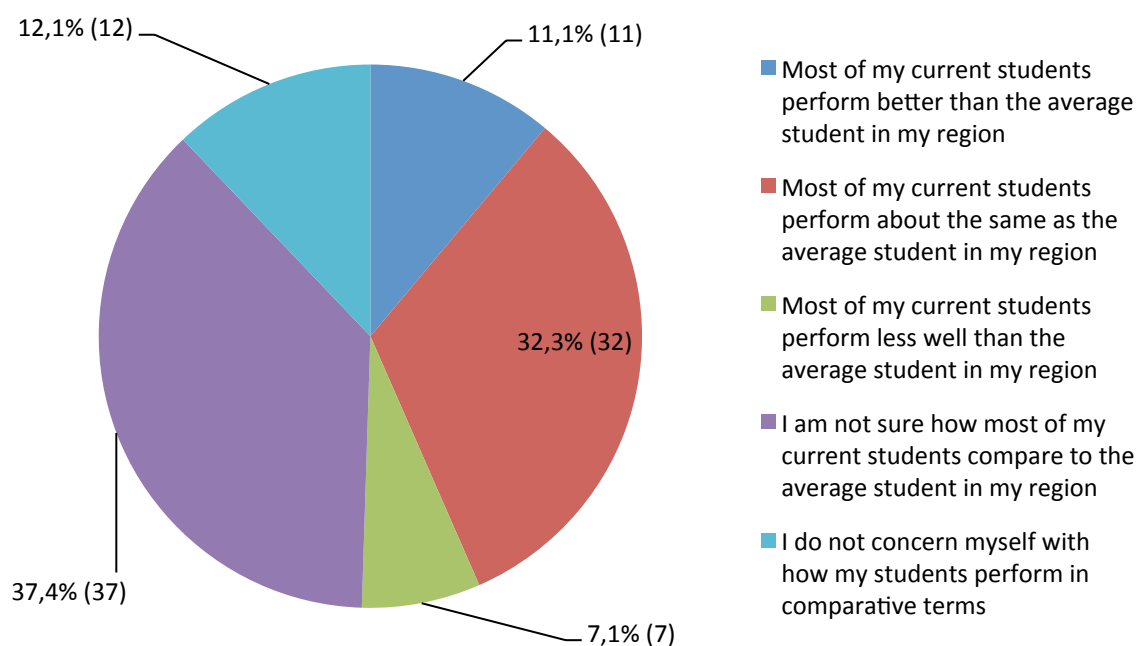
Only 2 respondents are not aware of the situation in their school and the 10% stated that ESL is

¹⁵ 37% in VET institutes, whereas around 19% in high schools. (Tuttoscuola. Dispersione nella scuola secondaria superior statale, 2014. Retrieved from <http://www.cestim.it/argomenti/06scuola/2014-06-Tuttoscuola-Dossier-Dispersione.pdf>)

not an issue in their school.

Most of teachers are not really aware on their students' performance compared to the average students in their region or area (37,4%). The majority (32,3%) of the ones who are aware of it think that most of their students perform as the average students in the region.

Only the 7,1% of respondents think that their students perform less well than average students in the region.



Graph. 10

6. What emotional factors the teachers feel contribute to ESL?

Teachers participating to the research seem to be aware of the role played by emotions and EE in preventing the ESL phenomenon. The 84% of respondents strongly agree or agree that EE can contribute in preventing ESL. In this regard, the large majority of them think that EE contributes in improving the learning performance of pupils (84%) and that emotional distress causes learning difficulties (83%).

Among the factors contributing to ESL that could be linked to EE, some teachers agree that a role is played by:

- the students' unhappiness when in school (37%);
- the students' unwillingness in making an effort to succeed (35%);
- the students and their families' feeling that school does not welcome them (26%).

The large majority of respondents (68%) consider an unsupportive family background as the factor contributing the most to ESL.

8. Conclusions and recommendations

The main conclusions that can be drawn from this research are:

- the large majority of teachers is somehow aware of what EE is: the 84% of them have been able to state if EE has been part or not of their education and almost all of them seem to be aware of the competences of EI;
- very few teachers have participated to a professional development programme in EE; but the majority of them (80%) stated that they would like to participate to such a programme;
- teachers believe that school has a role in providing EE and to provide education that results in emotionally healthy individuals. They are aware that it is part of their job to do that. Even if, according to them, the most important actor in the EE of kids is family;
- many teachers stated that the learning outcomes and competences of EE are already present in their teachings and school curriculum;
- most of the teachers are aware of the role that EE could play in preventing ESL and the majority of them agree that it could contribute in preventing this phenomenon.

On the basis of these results, it is possible to say that teachers are willing to learn more about Emotional Education and the role it can play in improving students' learning performance. Most of the teachers have not participated to a professional development on EE and expressed their willingness to take part to it.

Teachers recognize the need to provide Emotional Education to their students in order to let them grow as emotionally healthy individuals.

Analysis of Interviews

We conducted 8 interviews with:

- 1 teacher of a high school focused on languages and who supports the headmaster in favouring inclusivity;
- 1 psychologist and coordinator of the Observatory on prevention of ESL of the Regional Education Office in Sicily: he has followed and coordinated many projects on this issue since the 1980s’;
- 1 teacher of a VET institution and responsible for the prevention of ESL;
- 1 teacher in a kindergarten who regularly implements activities and laboratories focused on EE;
- 1 vice-president of a third sector association following many projects on ESL;
- 1 psychotherapist involved in many projects on the prevention of ESL;
- 2 teachers of high schools.

The interviews have been conducted face to face, with the exception of two interviewees who responded by email

MAIN THEME	SUB THEME	WORD/ PHRASE	FREQUENCY	Quote from the interviewee
EMOTIONAL EDUCATION	Definition	Recognising your own and others' emotions	5	"It is important to help students in recognizing their own body and emotions " (Teacher in a kindergarten)
		Bringing harmony	1	" Recognising your own and others' emotional sphere " (Teacher in a VET institution)
		Dealing with the emotional and relational sphere	5	" Bringing harmony in the class group and among teachers." (Teacher in a VET institution)
		Development of comprehension and critical skills	1	"Recognising your own and the others; acknowledging yourself " (Vice-president of a third sector association) "More that educating to emotions, we should work on emotions " (Psychotherapist)
		Working on emotions	1	"The Emotional Education complete the education mission, it helps in the whole development of the person " (Teacher in a VET institution)
		Whole development of the person	1	Many of the interviewees agree that Emotional Education is about learning how to deal with your own emotions and, through it, how to recognize others' emotions and deal with them.
	Emotional Education Outcomes	Check if listed among outcomes in questionnaire	7	Each interviewee mentioned at least one of the competences in the questionnaire, as: motivation, team work, recognising emotions, relation skills, communicating accurately, ability to regulate your own behaviour. Moreover, some other competences have been added: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased curiosity; • greater openness to diversity; • ability to understand non-verbal languages.

				<p>“For them (nr. ‘students’ who have followed a EE path¹⁶) there is not diversity; there is only a common space filled with games. In game they are all equal. In the other children (nr., the ones without such path), there is a greater mistrust towards the other and difficulty in speaking about themselves.” (Teacher in a kindergarten)</p> <p>“Positive effects also outside the school environment. Emotional Education can help in favouring the wellbeing of individuals.” (Teacher in a VET institution)</p> <p>“It helps in improving yourself and the relations with others.” (Teacher in a high school)</p>
	<i>Roles of the institutions</i>	Understanding students’ needs	5	<p>Most of the interviewees outlined the need to rethink the education system on the basis of the pupils’ needs.</p> <p>“Education programs should be designed on the students’ needs.” (Psychotherapist)</p>
		Educating emotionally healthy individuals	2	<p>“School should be able to promote, stimulate, reading the students’ needs.” (Teacher in a VET institution)</p> <p>“School should educate emotionally healthy students and teachers should be</p>

¹⁶ One of the interviewees work in a kindergarten where laboratories on how to deal with emotions are implemented and each day children are used to think about how they feel.

		Decoding signs of discomfort	1	<p>able to decode signs of discomfort." (Teacher in a VET institution)</p> <p>During the interviews, it also came out that a fundamental actor in the development of emotionally healthy individuals is <u>family</u>.</p> <p>"It is important to activate a collaboration with the families as they are the first actor in the emotional education" (Teacher in a kindergarten)</p> <p>"Family often is not able to emotionally act on kids, but its role is fundamental in doing that" (Teacher in a VET institution)</p>
		Supporting students in education and life orientation	2	<p>"It is very important the role of the family, there should be collaboration between school and families." (Teacher in a high school)</p>
		Giving students life skills	4	
EARLY SCHOOL LEAVING	<i>Main Factors</i>	No attention to students' needs	7	<p>All interviewees agree that one of the main factors is that there is not great attention to students' needs. The school programs are not designed on the basis of these needs and, for this reason, they should be designed accordingly.</p> <p>Many also outlined a difference between the primary and secondary education.</p>

		Socio-economic factors	5	<p>"In the primary education, the ESL phenomenon is mainly caused by the social and familiar background. Whereas, in the secondary education, along with the previous factors, there is also the discomfort that many adolescents feel which is not linked with social factors." (Psychologist)</p> <p>"There is no communication between school and family; there is not attention to their (nr., families) needs." (Teacher in a kindergarten)</p> <p>"The traditional didactic is no more coherent with students' needs" (Vice-president of a third sector association)</p> <p>"Not adequate attention from teachers to the students' needs." (Teacher in a high school)</p> <p>"It lacks the link between education and the job market", so many families do not see how school can be useful in their children life and the same happens to students" (Psychotherapist)</p> <p>"To prevent the ESL phenomenon, there should also be a work outside school." (Psychotherapist)</p>
		Discomfort	4	
		School failure	3	
		No self-confidence	1	
		Problems with the class group	1	
		No link between school and job market	2	

	Link between Early School Leaving & Emotional Education	EE supports in improving students' motivation and self-confidence	5	<p>Almost all the interviewees see a link between EE and ESL. They outlined the importance of supporting students in dealing their own emotions as a way to overcome their discomfort.</p> <p>“Often students leave education because they feel their needs are not taken into consideration. EE is important in preventing the progressive detachment from school.” (Teacher in a VET institution)</p> <p>“Emotional education favour the creation of a welcoming environment and, in this way, improves their performance.” (Teacher in a kindergarten)</p>
		Welcoming environment	4	<p>One of the interviewee pointed out that EE would have a greater impact if done since the primary school:</p> <p>“There would be a greater influence on kids' behaviour if done during the primary school as a preventive measure.” (Vice-president of a third sector association)</p>
	Solutions			<p>The solutions proposed include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To create collaboration among families, teachers and students: all the interviewees think that this is the starting point in trying to find a solution to the ESL phenomenon. • “A particular attention to the students at risk of ESL. By supporting them in understanding their emotions and creating a welcoming environment, it will be more difficult that they leave school as they will feel understood, stimulated, recognized persons.” (Psychologist) • “It could be useful to promote the collaboration among different countries in order to favour the exchange of good practices in preventing ESL.” (Teacher in a VET institution) • “First of all, we should educate educators.” (Teacher in a kindergarten) • “The final aim should to create a system among the main actors involved in

				<p>the educational process.” (Vice-president of third sector association)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Promoting collaboration among professionals and teachers.” (Teacher in a high school) • “The starting point should be working with and in groups (e.g., peers, different actors). Without the collaboration between different people, there is no way to find a solution. We should focus more on a therapy approach by trying to understand which is the situation in our society and the problems many students at risk of ESL face. There could not be a solution if we do not put in their shoes and we try to impose something from above.” • “We should also learn to students which are their limits and their attitudes.” (Psychotherapist)
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