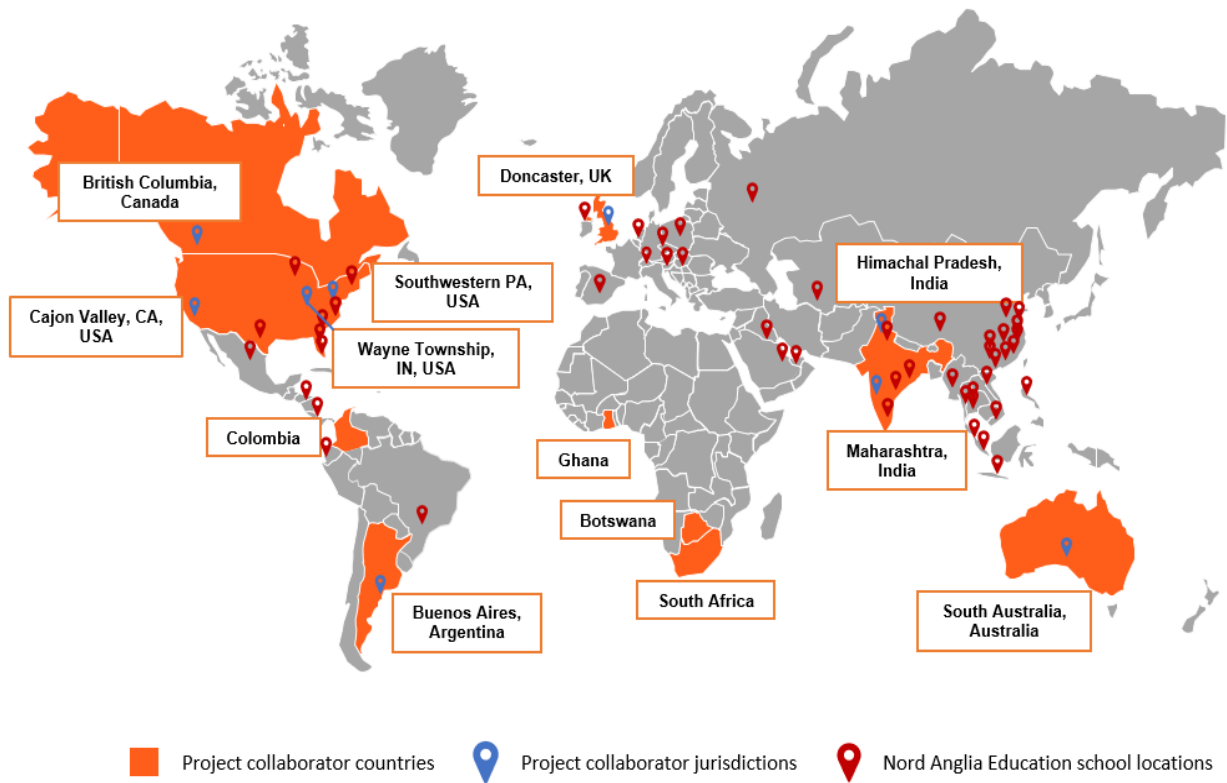


PERSPECTIVES FROM PARENTS IN COLOMBIA

Rebecca Winthrop

Mahsa Ershadi

Jessica Alongi



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IN EDUCATION NETWORK

In January 2020, the Center for Universal Education (CUE) at Brookings launched a new project focused on family and parent engagement in education.¹ The project emerged out of CUE’s work on harnessing [education innovations](#) to address inequality and help all young people, regardless of the community in which they are born, develop the full breadth of competencies and skills they will need to thrive in work, life, and citizenship in the 21st century. In 2019, CUE conducted consultations across countries 15 countries with over 50 education decisionmakers—from ministers of education to school leaders—that were focused on advancing teaching and learning strategies that supported whole child development, or as some call it, the development of academic plus 21st century skills. A recurring theme from the consultations was a desire of decisionmakers to have more and better strategies for engaging parents and families. Together with 41 project collaborators across 10 countries, members of CUE’s [Family Engagement in Education Network](#), CUE has been exploring what it takes to build strong family-school partnerships, especially in contexts striving to address inequality and deliver a broad suite of skills and competencies for their children.

EDUCATION IN COLOMBIA

Colombia’s education system serves about 9.3 million students, as of 2017. Of these students, 81.7% were enrolled in public school, while the other 18.7% were enrolled in private school (“OECD Reviews of School Resources: Colombia 2018,” 2018). Nearly all private schools are located in cities (World Education News + Reviews, 2020).

Education in Colombia includes preschool education (preschool and kindergarten), basic primary education (grades 1-5), basic secondary education (grades 6-9), and

¹ The suggested citation for this report is: Winthrop, R., Ershadi, M., & Alongi, J. (2021, March). *Family engagement in education network technical report: Perspectives from parents in Colombia*. Center for Universal Education at Brookings.

² We use the term “parent” throughout to denote a child’s parent, guardian, or caregiver.

upper secondary education (grades 10-11). School is compulsory for all children grades 1-9 (Colombian Education, n.d.), and all curricula for these grades are determined by the Ministerio de Educación Nacional (MEN) in Bogota (World Education News + Reviews, 2020). After completing grade 9, students may decide to move onto secondary education, which is split into two branches: the academic branch and the technical branch. The academic branch is geared largely towards the liberal arts, while the technical branch focuses on specific skills for the job market (Colombian Education, n.d.). While the MEN offer some suggested curricular guidelines for these schools, the curricula are ultimately decided by the schools themselves (World Education News + Reviews, 2020).

The number of years a student in Colombia spends in education rose by 40% between the years of 2000 and 2010 (“Education in Colombia,” 2016). However, in 2018, only 42.5% of 15-17-year-olds were enrolled in upper secondary education (World Education News + Reviews, 2020).

Colombian students performed below the OECD average in science, reading, and math on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2015. However, compared to 2006, there was a large improvement in scores across all of these areas. Colombia had the second largest improvement in science scores, the fourth largest improvement in reading scores, and the seventh largest improvement in math scores compared to 52 other education systems (“Programme for International Student Assessment,” 2016).

SURVEY OF PARENTS

From June 29, 2020 to August 8, 2020, CUE distributed a 28-item live call survey to parents and caregivers of students enrolled in Colombia. A total of 1,800 primary caregivers responded to the survey. To collect data representative of the population in Colombia, we determined our sample sizes before commencing data collection by assuming that the student population in this jurisdiction was equal to the parent population, thus using a conservative approach, which dismissed the possibility of

siblings. We set our confidence level at 95% and margin of error at 5%, according to guidelines for research activities (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). Based on our prior calculations, we aimed to collect 384 responses from primary caregivers in Colombia. All survey items were optional such that respondents could choose to provide a response to a question without having responded to a previous question. As a result, the response proportions per survey item options do not always sum to 100%.

SURVEY AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

A selection of survey responses is presented below. The order in which the results are presented here does not reflect the order in which the respondents completed the questions on the survey. However, CUE will share the survey instrument upon request. Please send inquiries to: leapfrogging@brookings.edu.

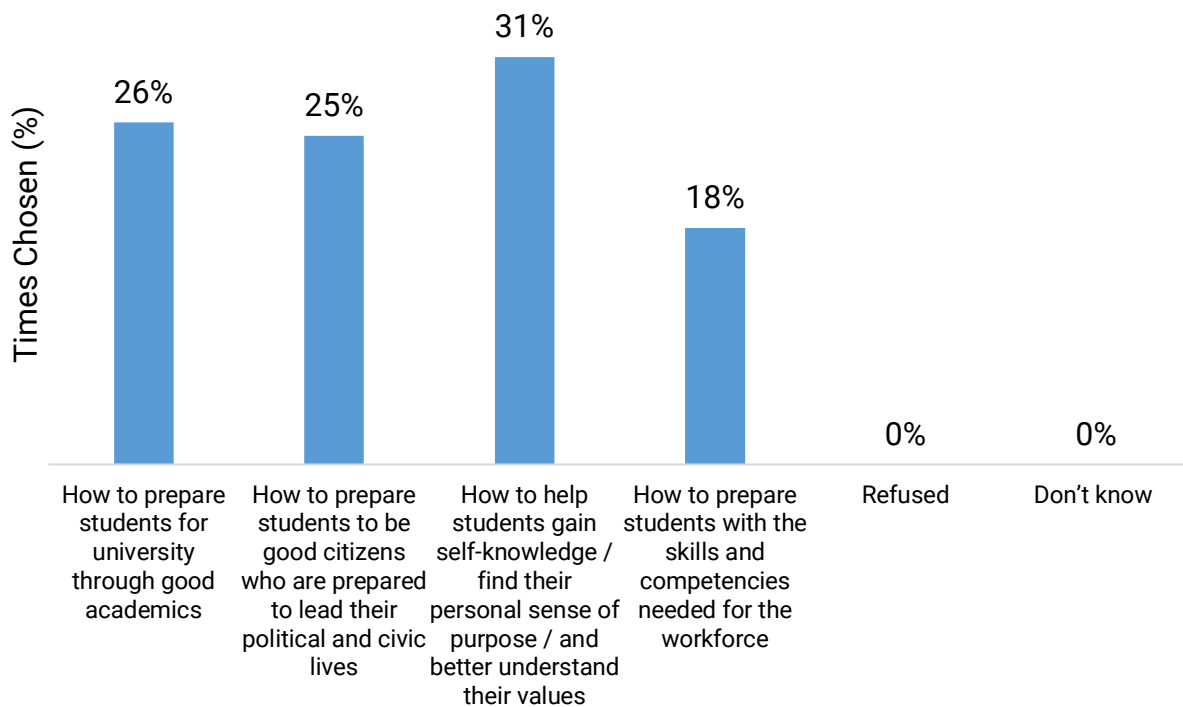
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank our project collaborators at the Ministerio de Educación Nacional de Colombia, without whom we would not have been able to conduct this survey.

SURVEY FINDINGS

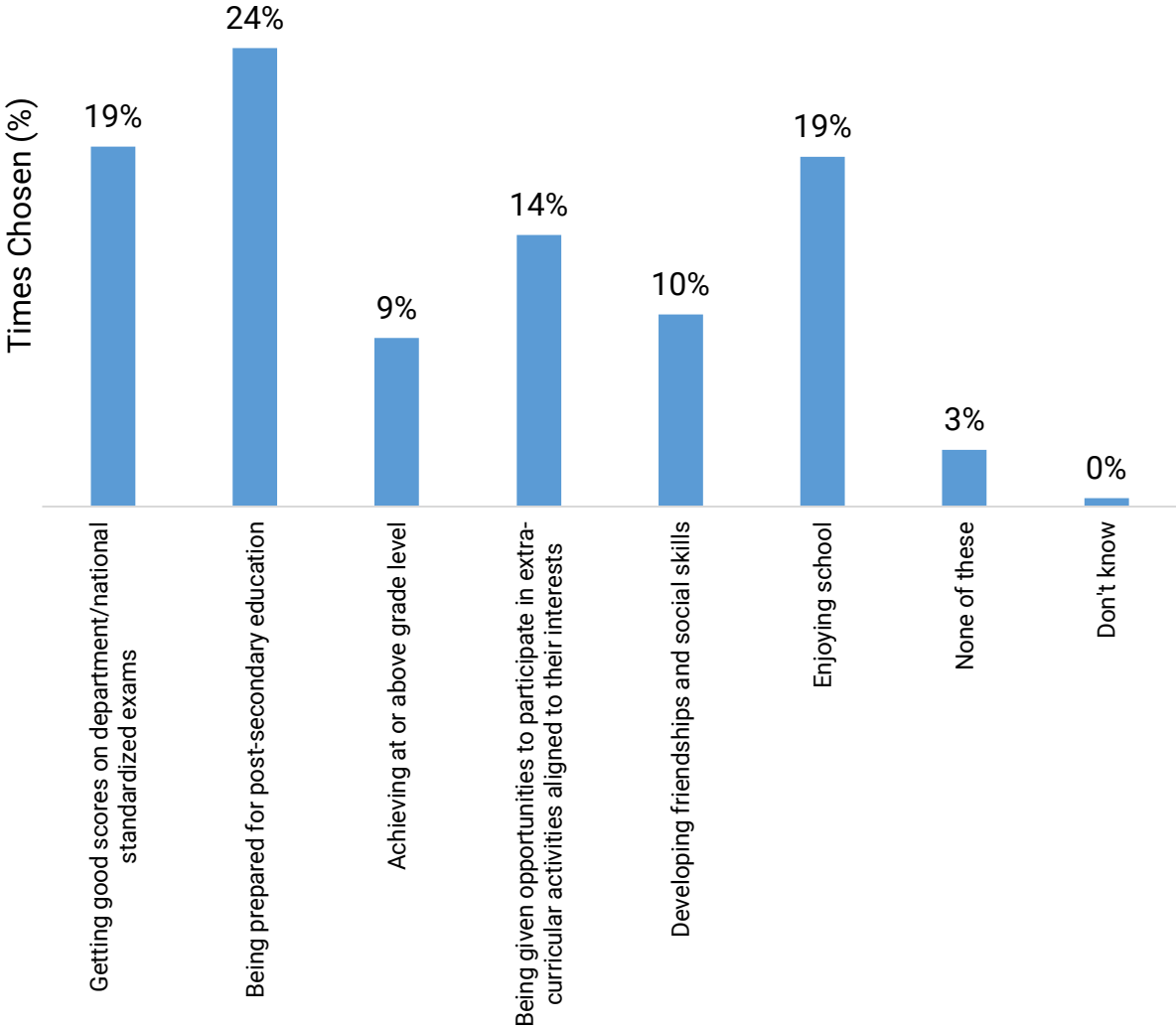
Parents' beliefs on the purpose of school and perceived alignment with teachers

Research shows that teacher training has the strongest impact on changes in instruction that students receive. Which one of the following teacher trainings should a principal of a school choose for teachers to attend? (sample size=1800)



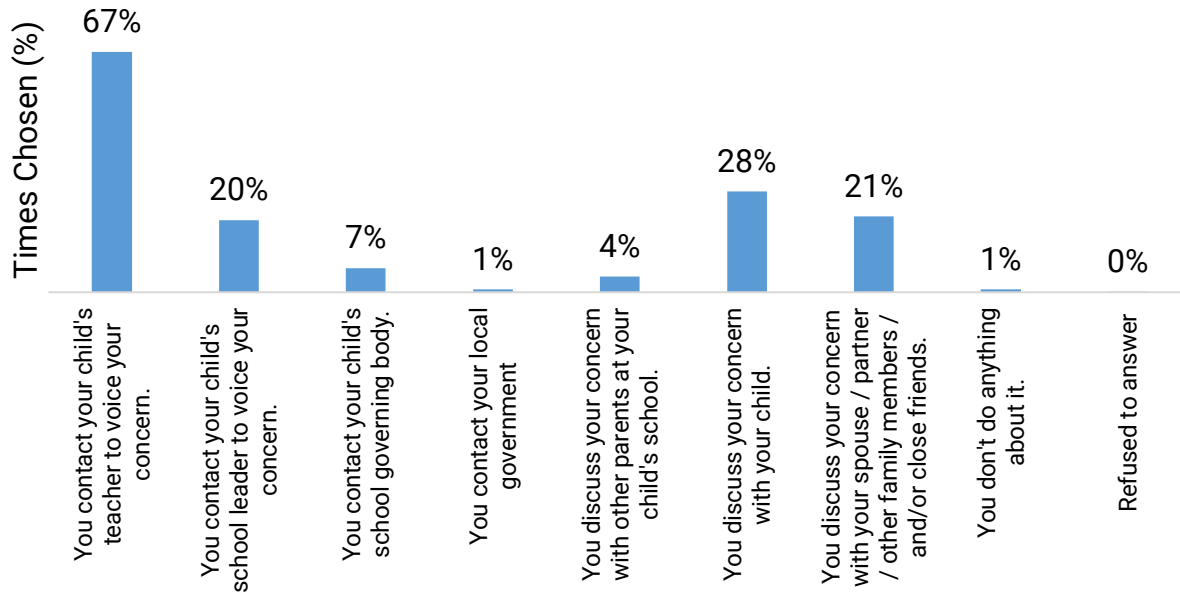
Parents' indicators of quality and perceived alignment with educators

Would you say you are satisfied the MOST with your child's education when your child is...
(sample size=1800)

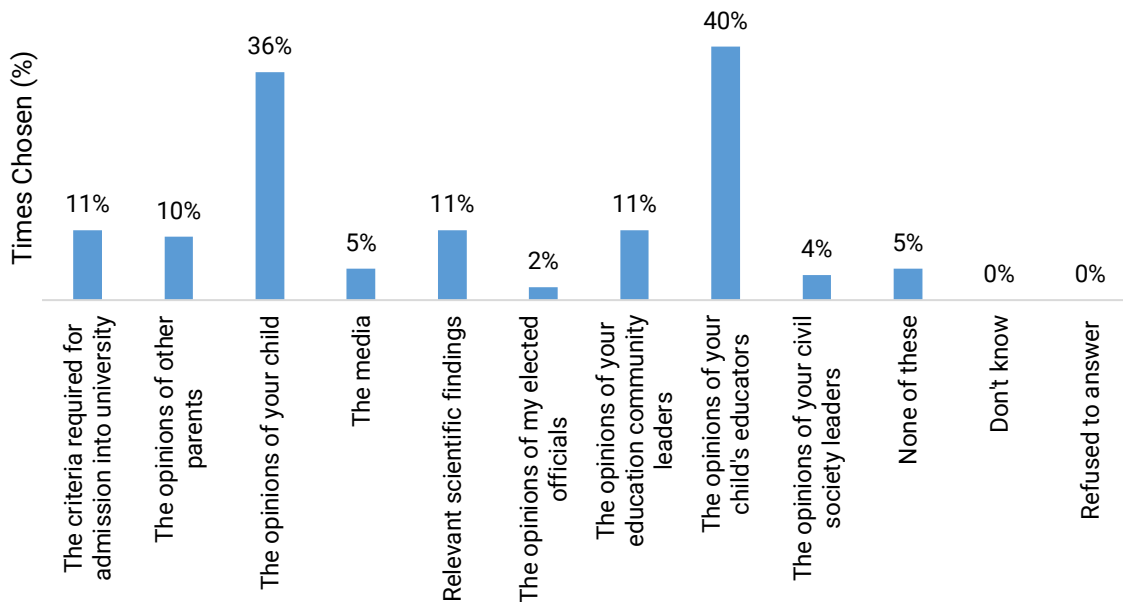


Parents' sources of information

**How do you react when something about your child's education bothers or upsets you?
(sample size=1800)**

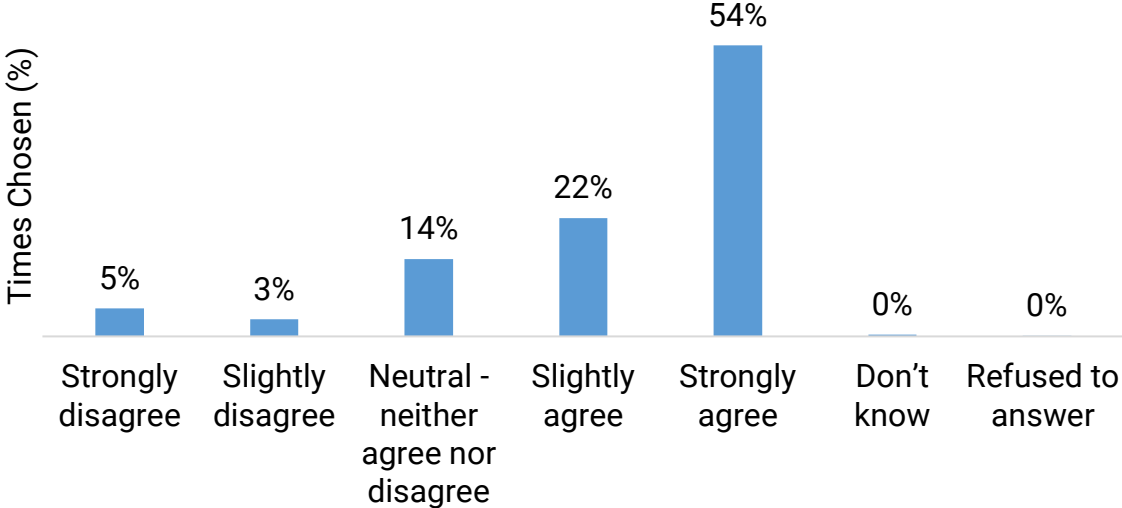


**What influences your perspective about what makes for a good quality education for your child?
(sample size = 1800)**

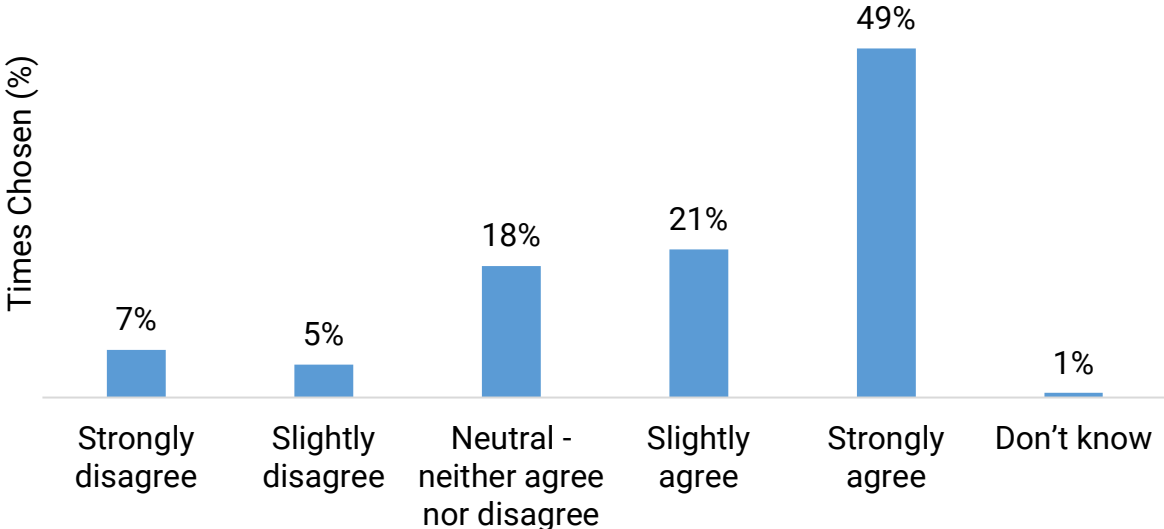


Parents' trust of and perceived alignment with teachers

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement: Your child's teachers share your beliefs about what makes a good education (sample size=1800)

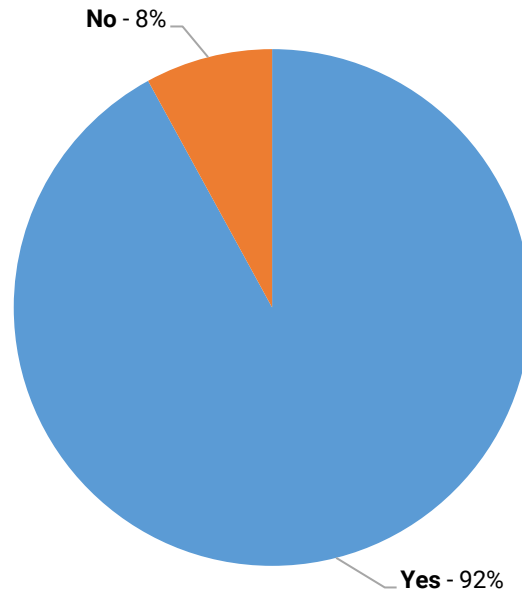


To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement: Your child's teachers are receptive to your input and suggestions (sample size=1800)

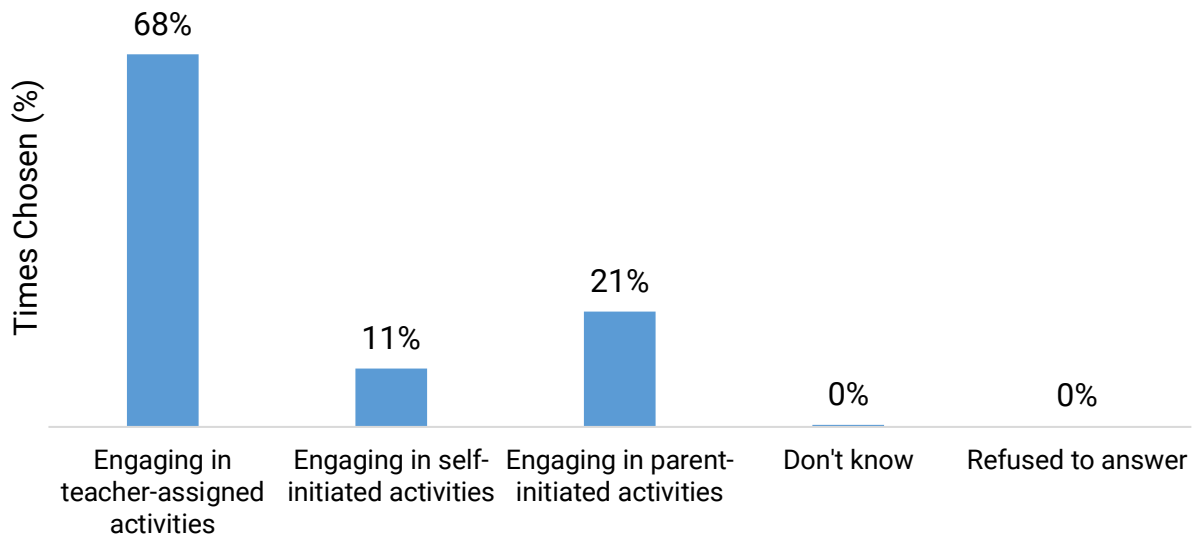


Parents' opinions on pedagogy

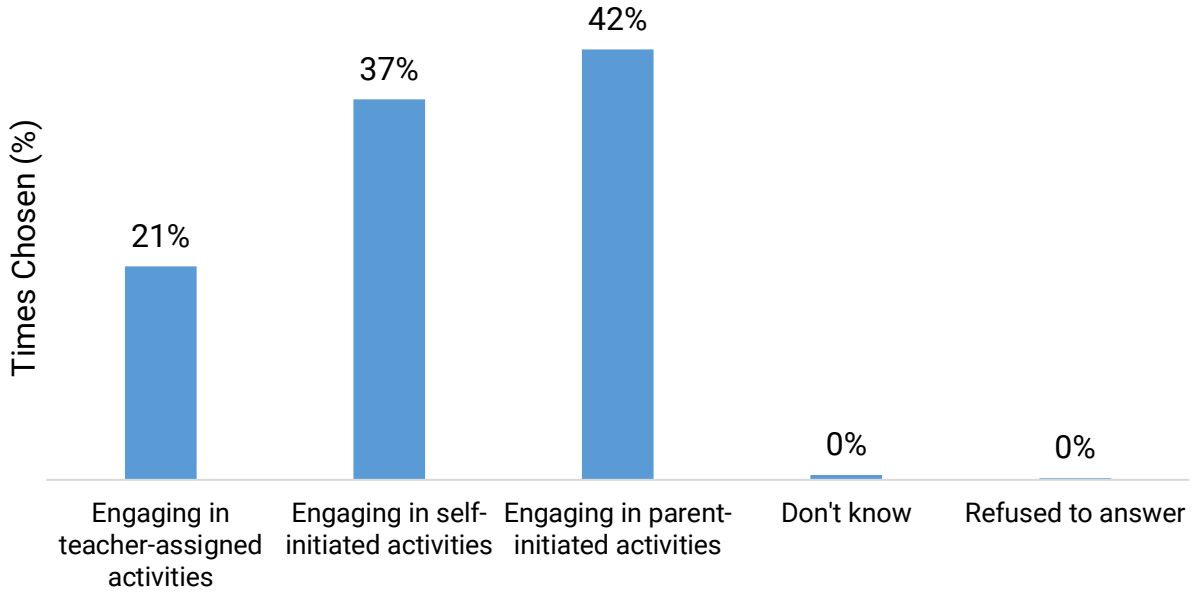
**Is your child currently distance learning from home?
(sample size=1800)**



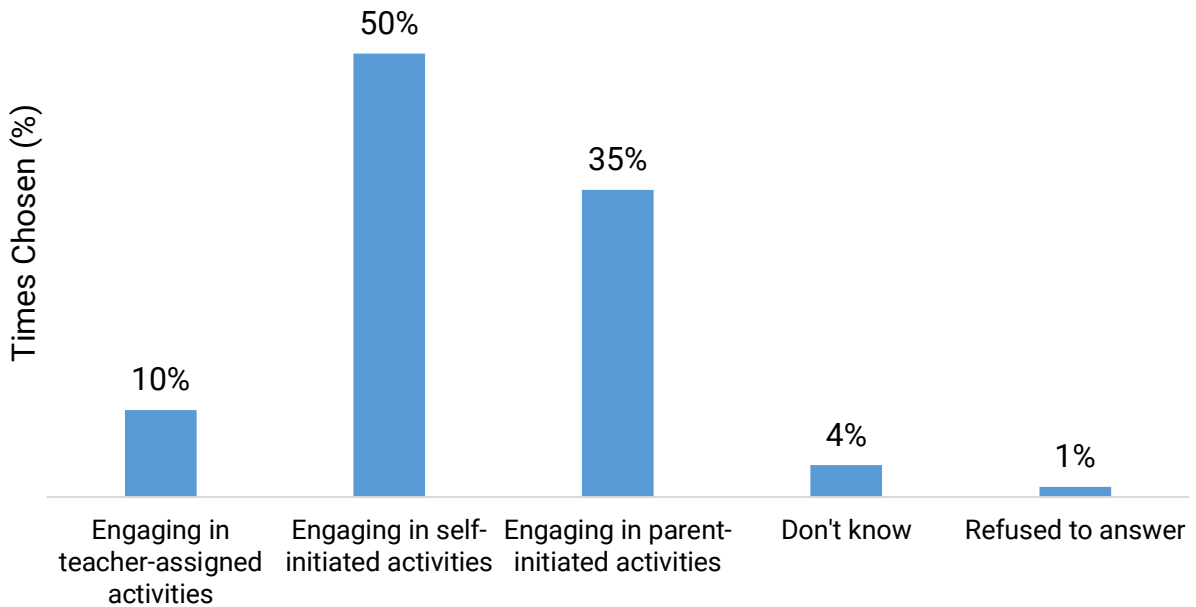
**On which of the following activities is your child spending their time the MOST?
(sample size=1794)**



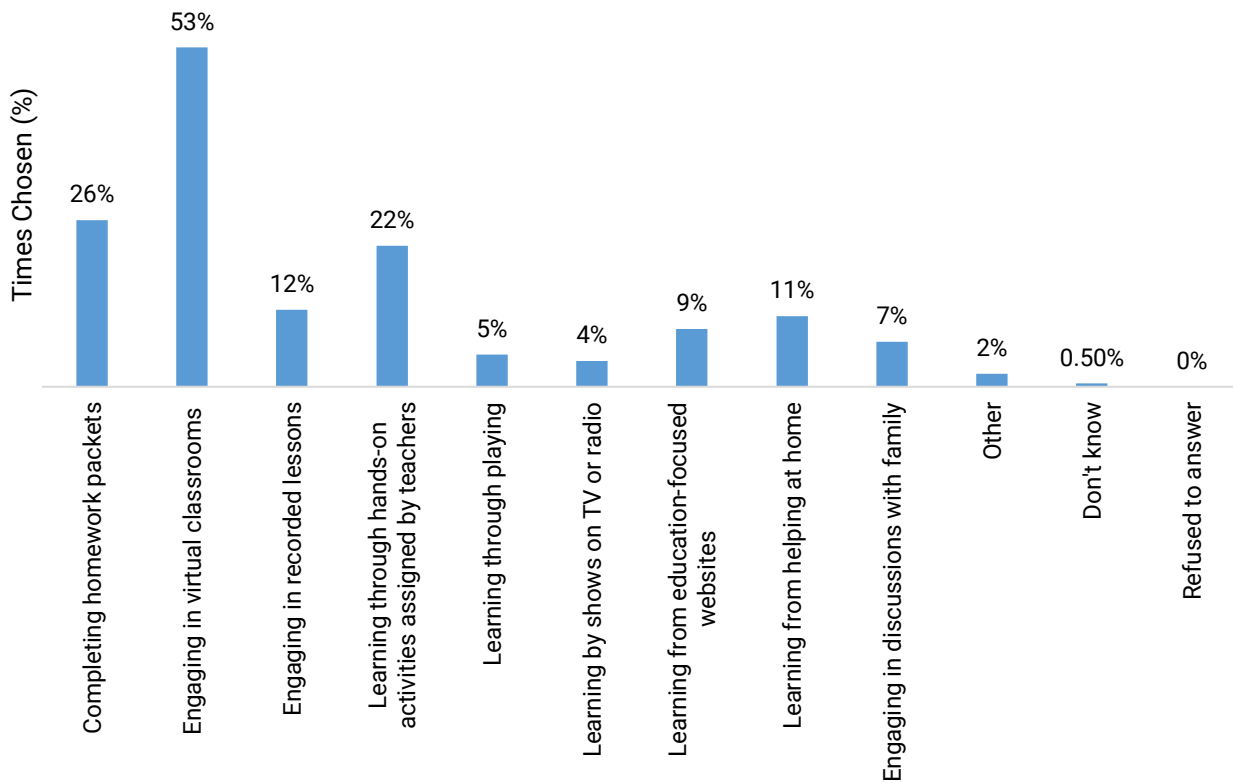
**On which of the following activities is your child spending their time the SECOND MOST?
(sample size=1784)**



**On which of the following activities is your child spending their time the THIRD MOST?
(sample size=1785)**



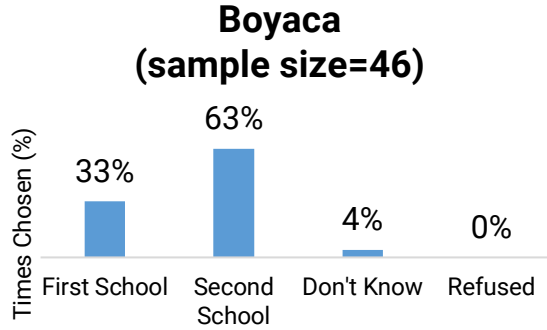
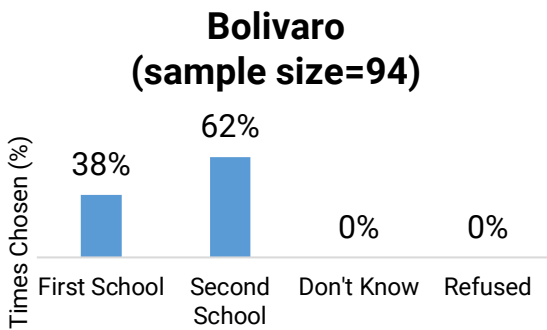
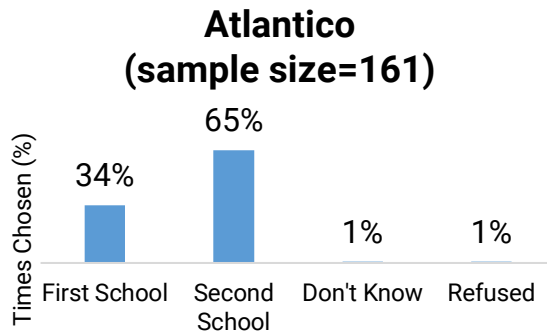
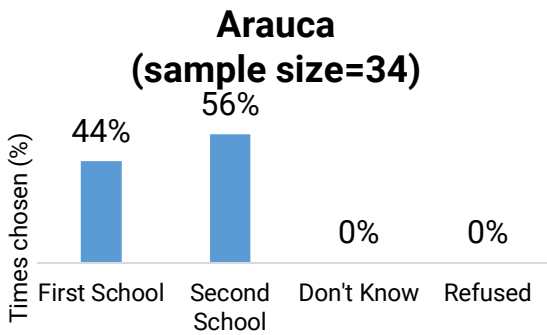
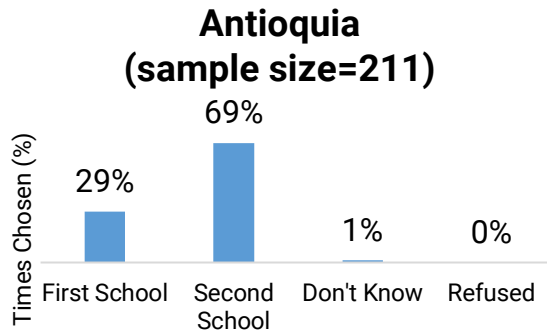
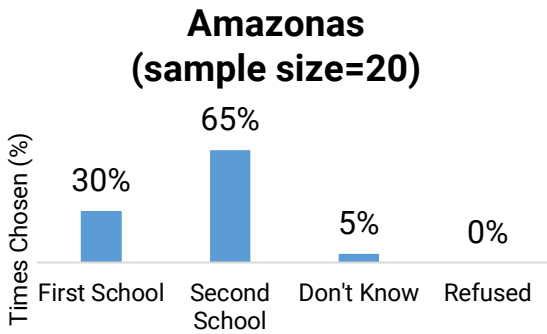
**When you think about the different ways in which your child is or was learning during their school closure, which are you satisfied with?
(sample size=1800)**

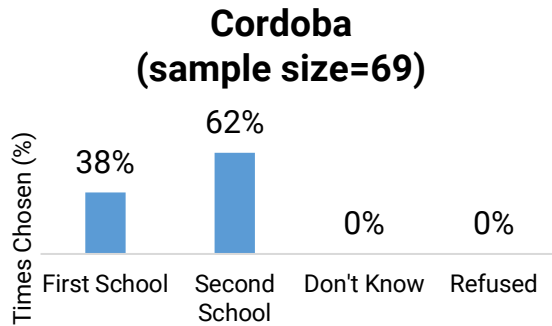
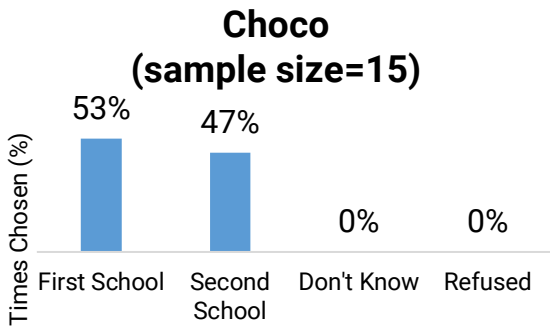
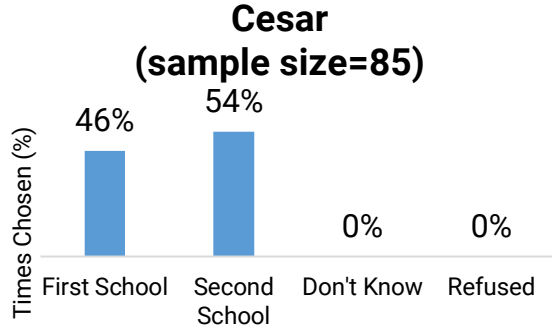
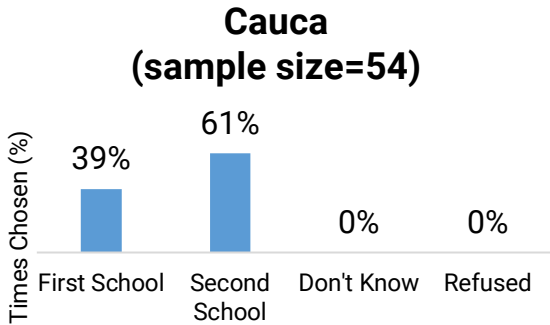
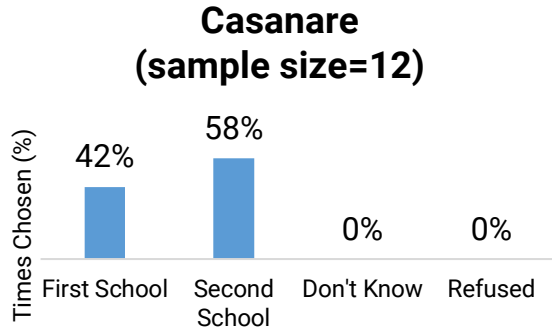
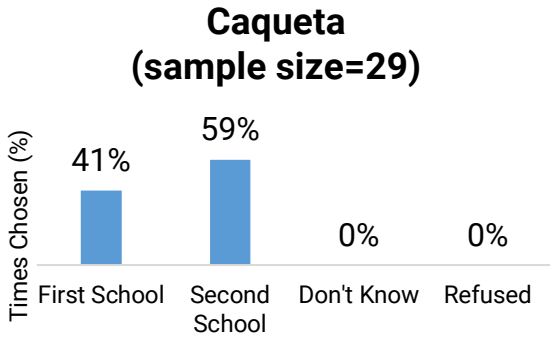
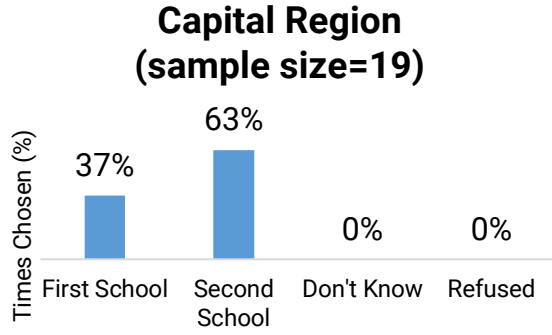
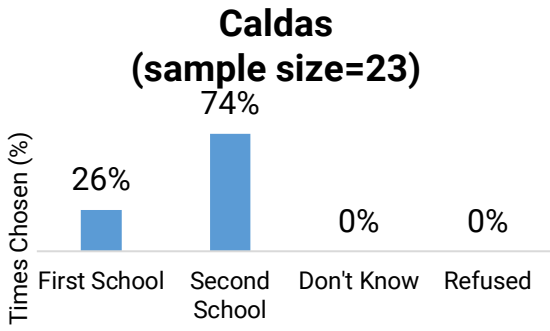


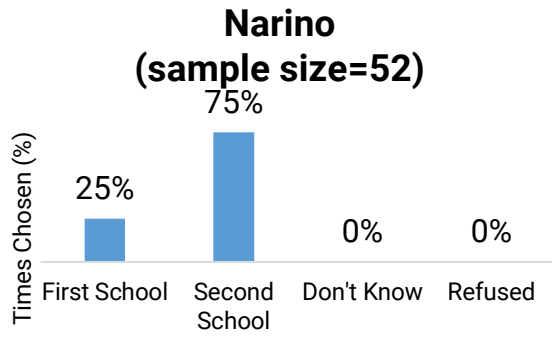
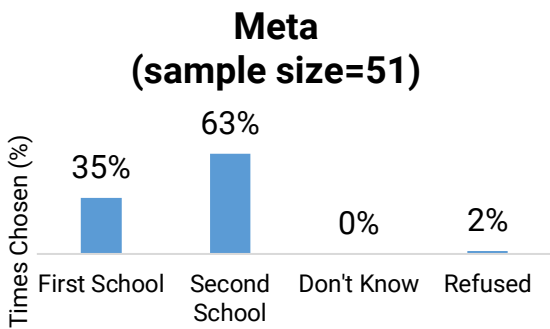
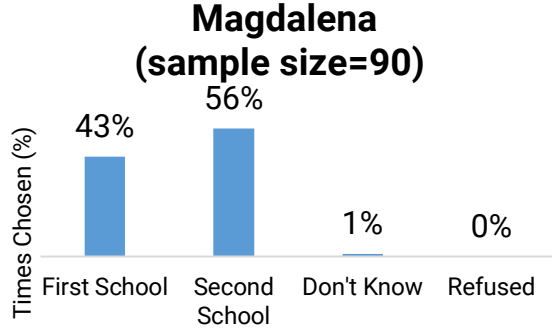
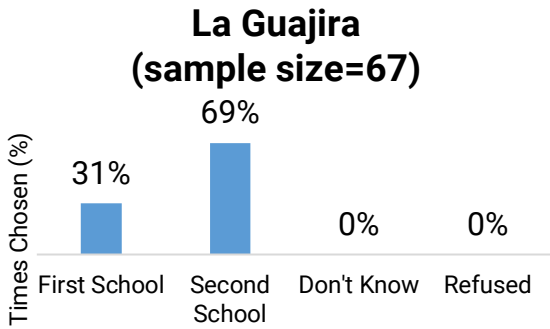
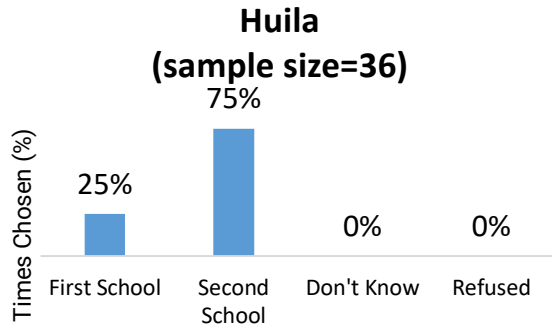
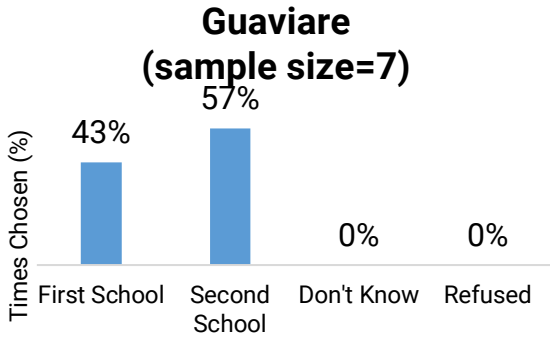
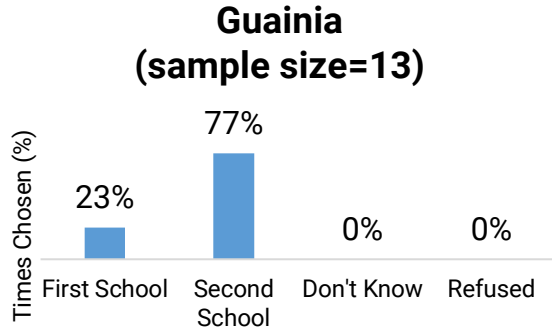
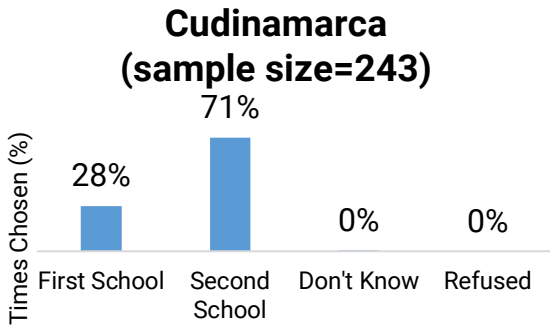
**Parents were presented with a scenario of 2 classrooms and asked:
 “Which would you suggest that your friend chose to send her child to?”
 (sample size=1800)**

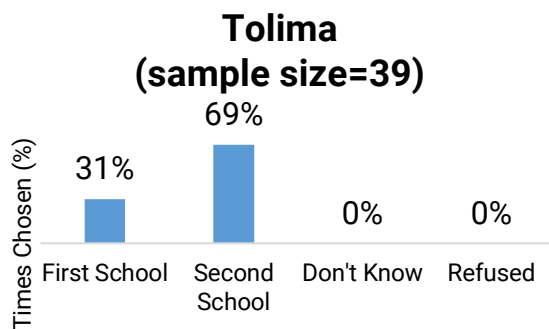
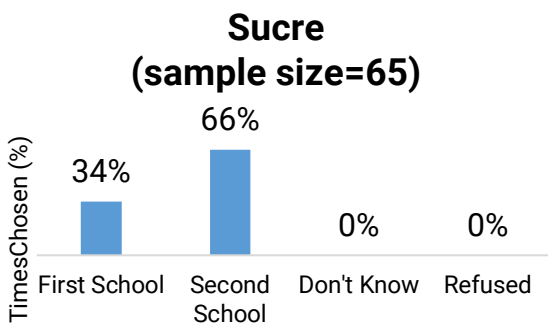
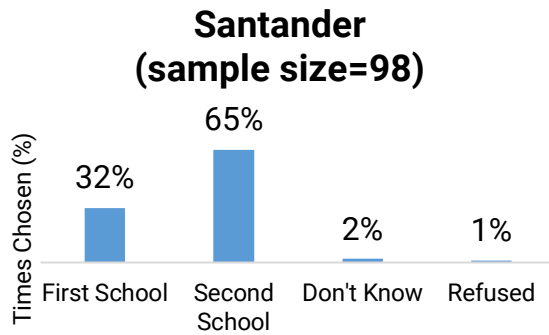
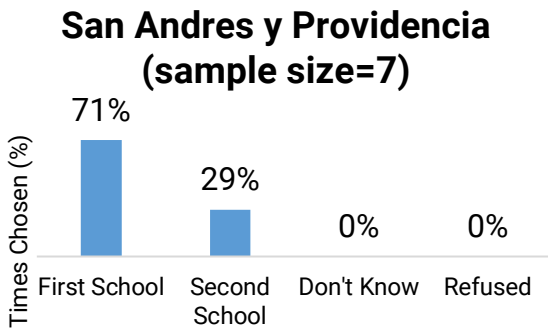
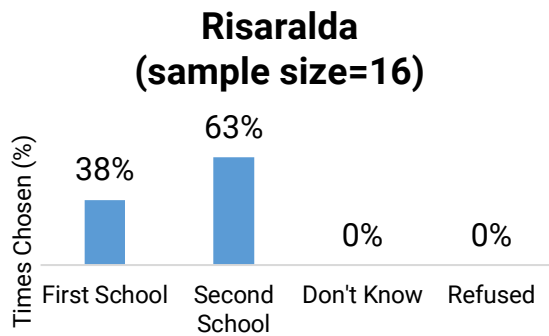
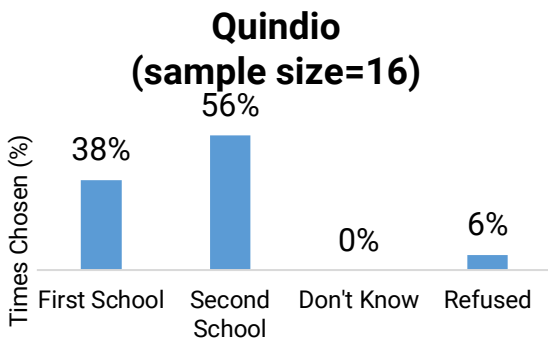
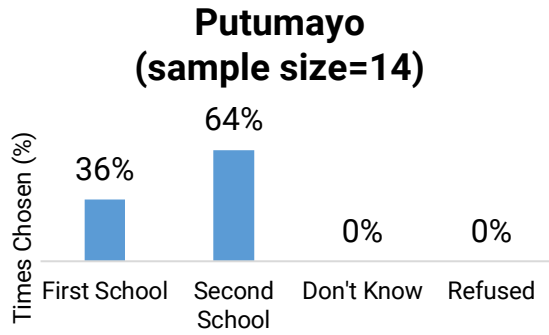
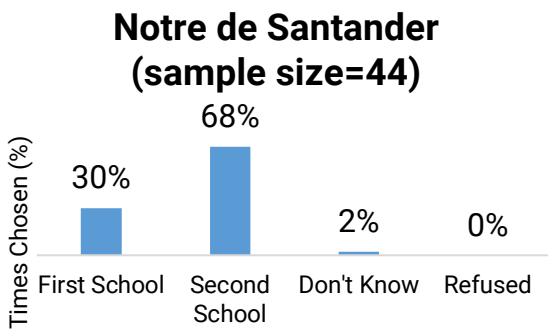
First School: Children are sitting in a classroom in rows of desks facing the front of the class and taking notes while listening to the teacher who is standing at the front of the room reviewing course material.

Second School: Children are in a classroom sitting in small groups facing each other and working together on a class project. The teacher is walking around the room answering questions the children have.

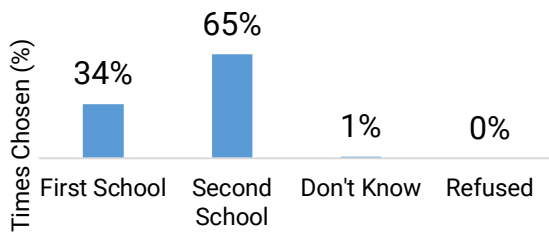




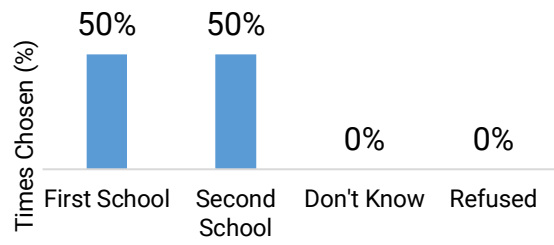




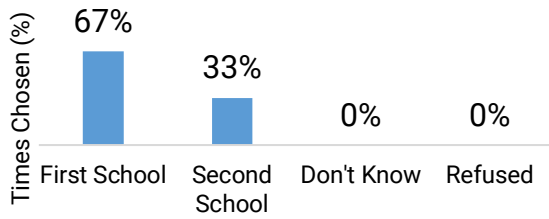
Valle del Cauca (sample size=106)



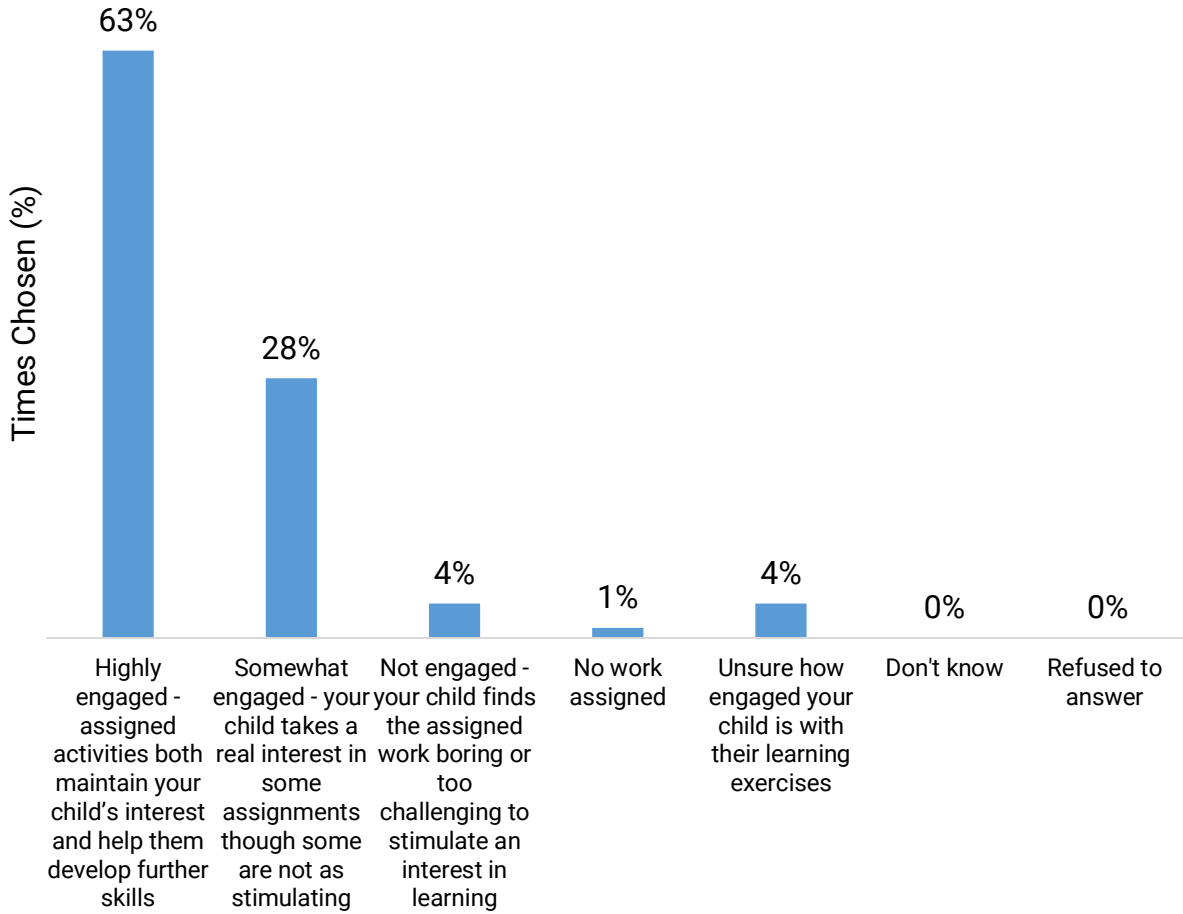
Vaupes (sample size=4)



Vichada (sample size=6)

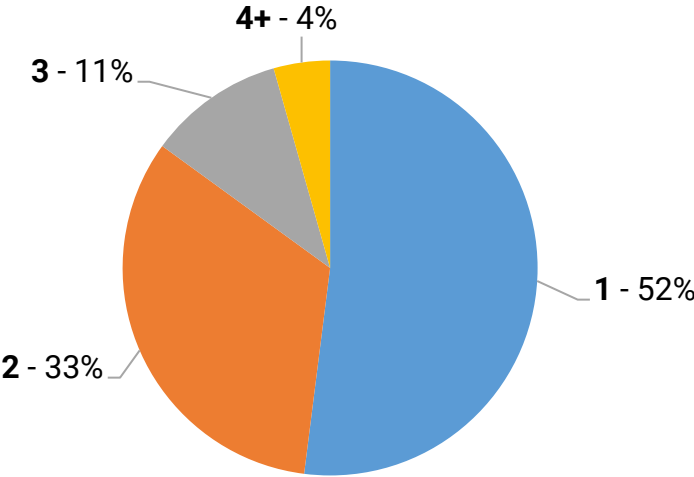


**How engaged is your child with the activities their teacher has assigned?
(sample size=1800)**

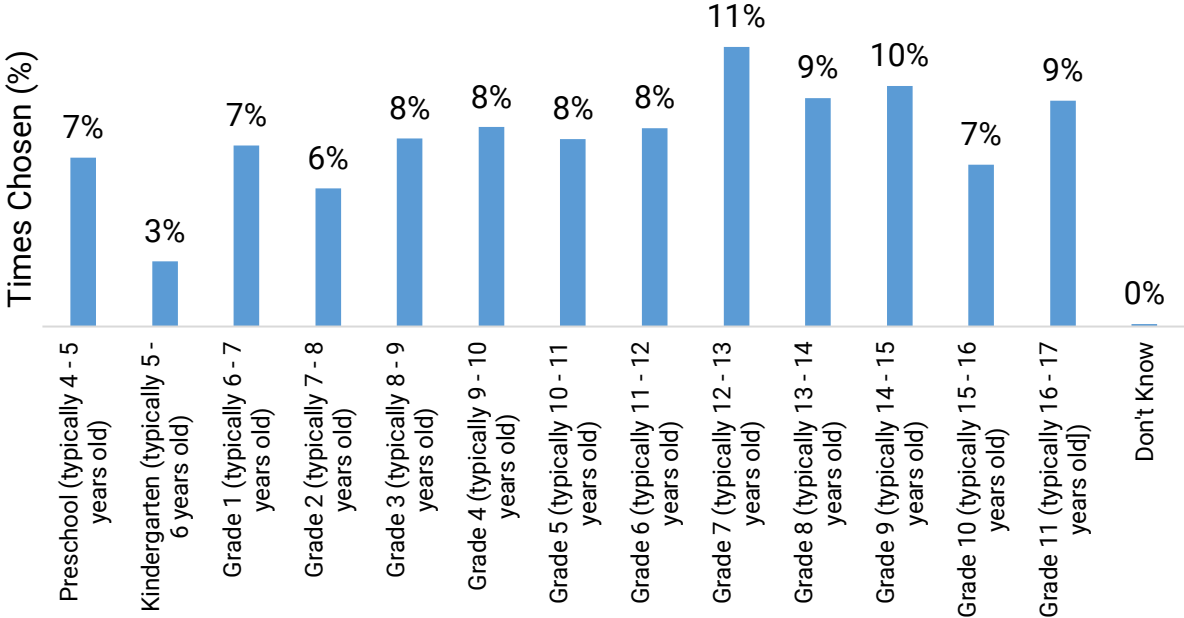


Demographics of survey respondents from Colombia

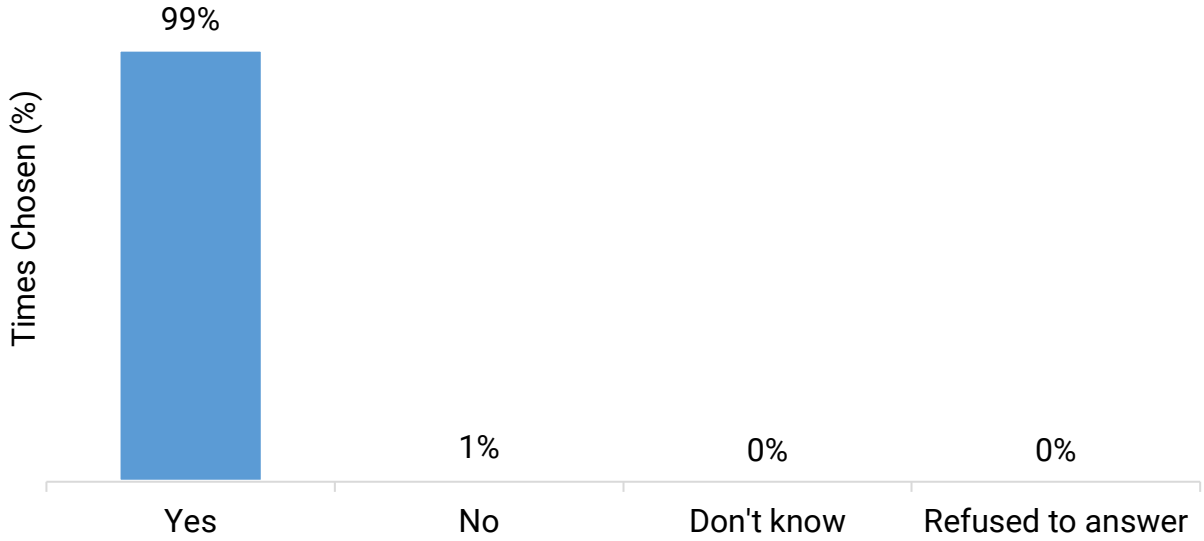
**How many children do you have who are currently in kindergarten through senior high school and live at home with you?
(sample size=1800)**



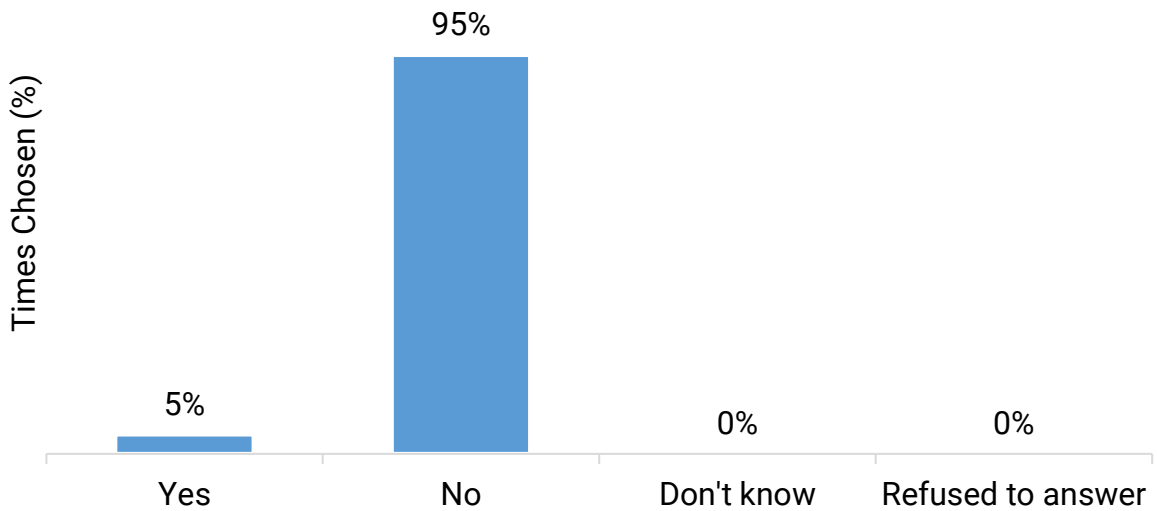
**In which year is your oldest child who is enrolled in school (kindergarten to senior high school)?
(sample size=1800)**



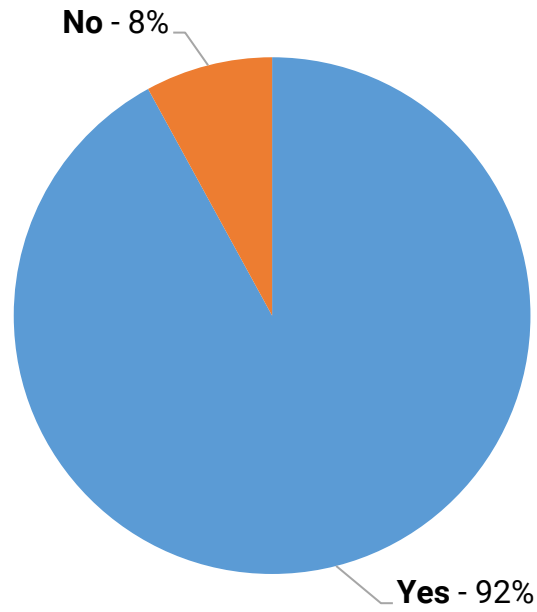
**Did your child's school close because of COVID-19?
(sample size=1800)**



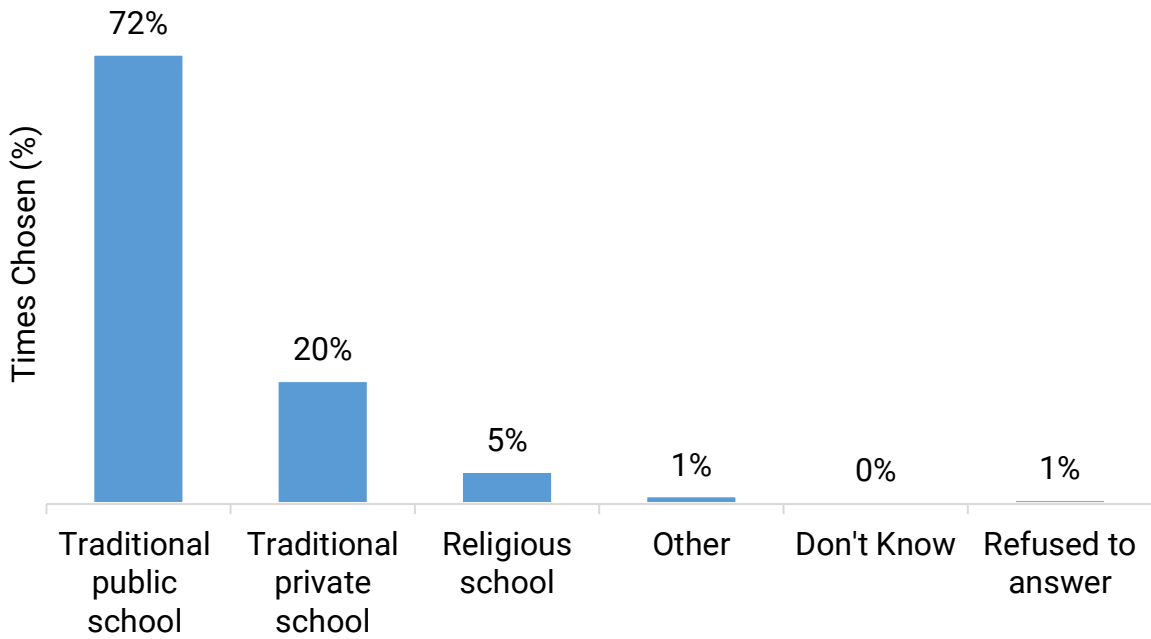
**Did your child's school reopen after closure because of
COVID-19?
(sample size=1776)**



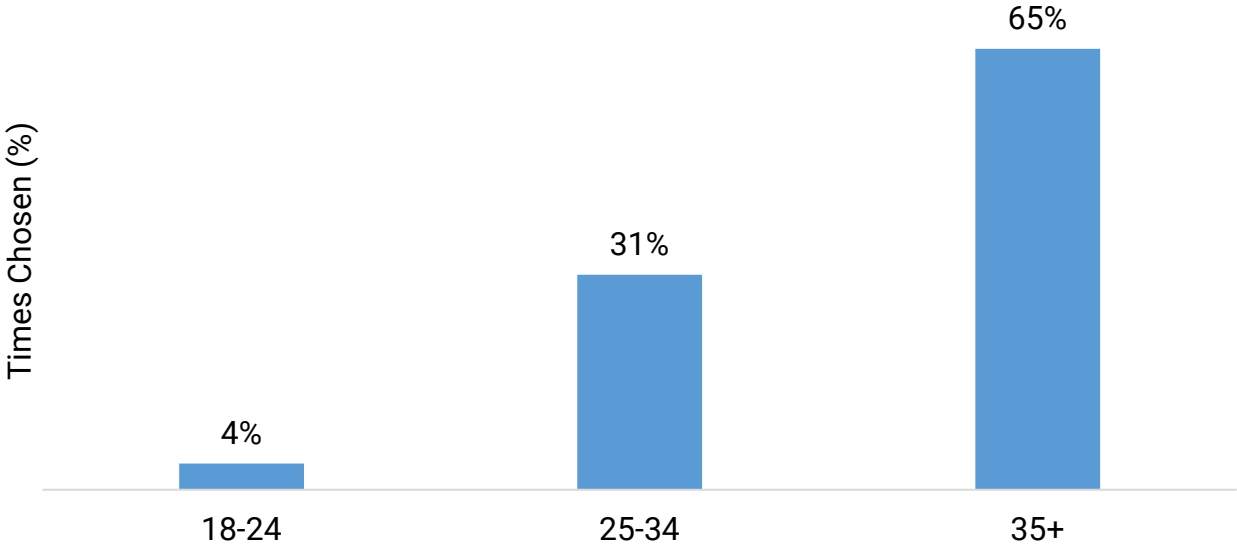
**Is your child currently distance learning from home?
(sample size=1800)**



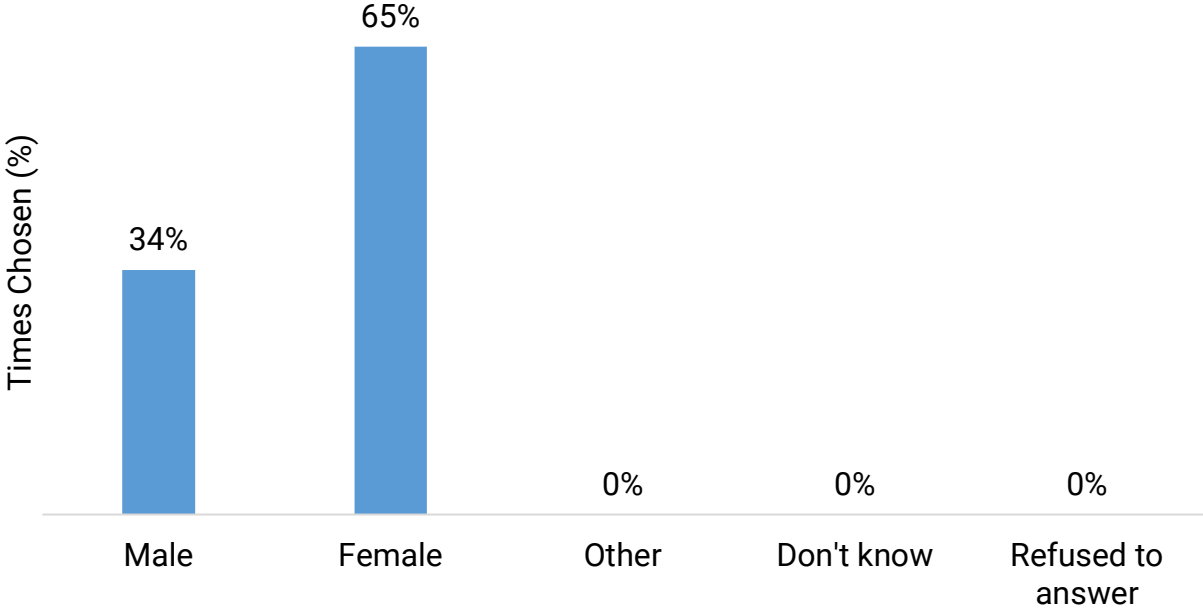
**In what type of school is your child enrolled?
(sample size=1800)**



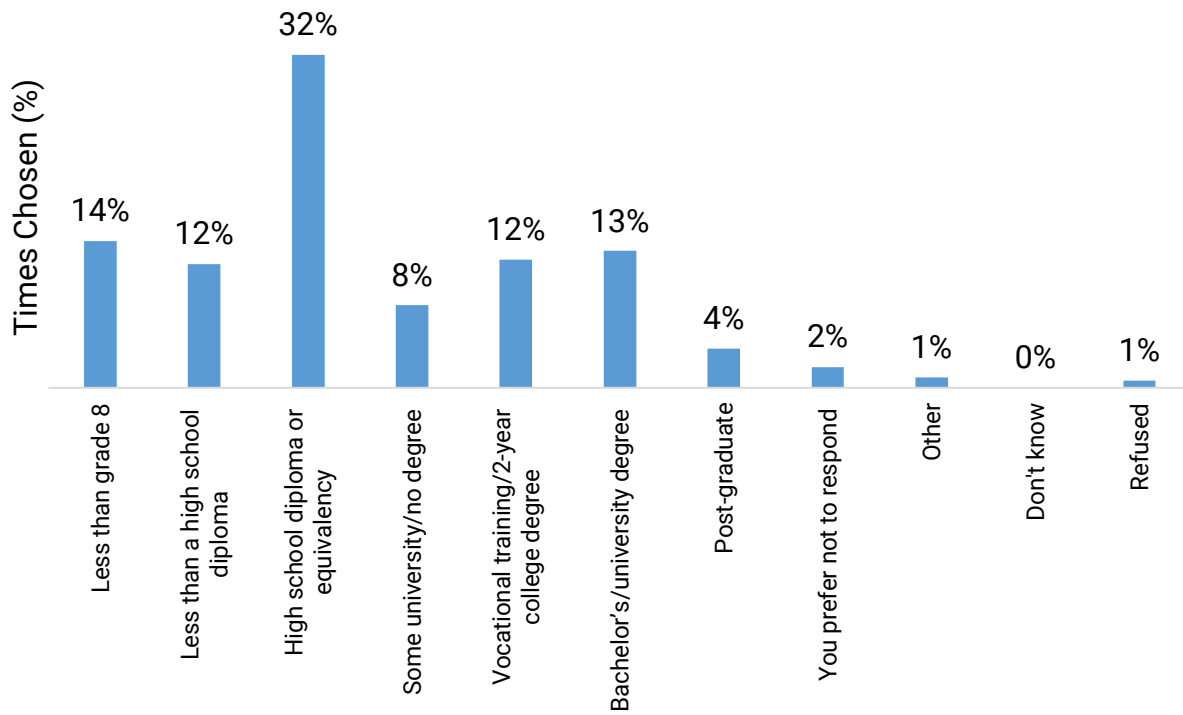
**How old are you?
(sample size=1800)**



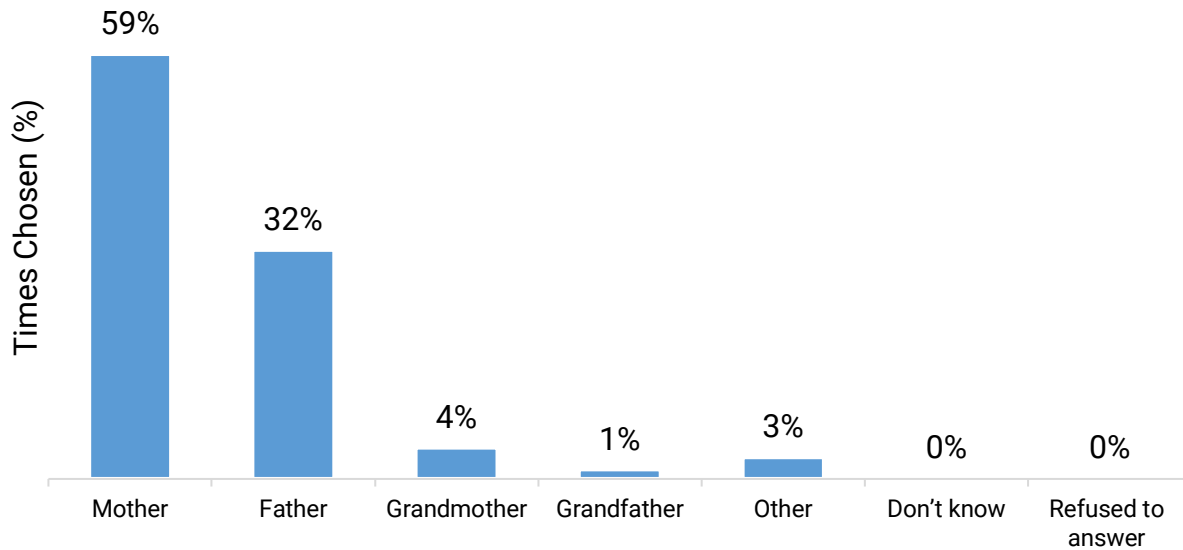
**What is your sex?
(sample size=1800)**



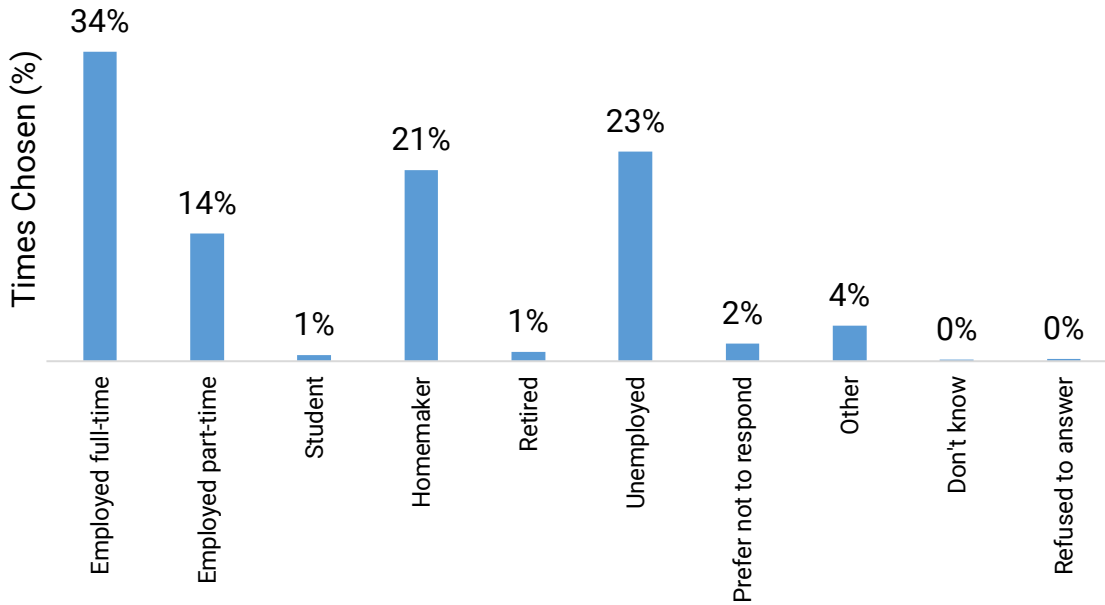
**What is your highest level of education attained?
(sample size=1800)**



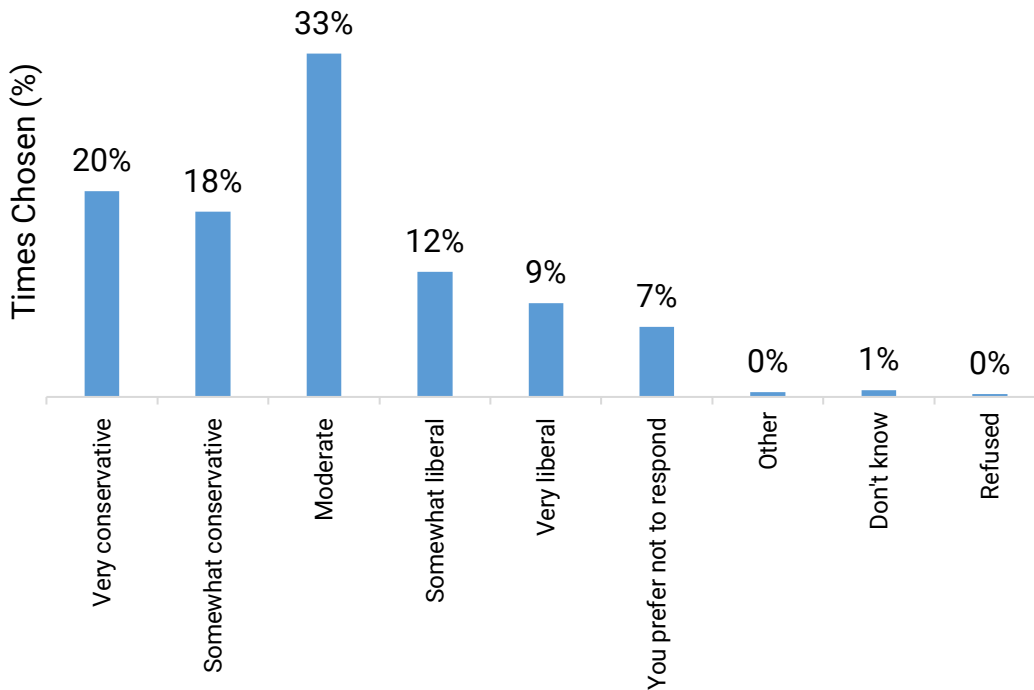
**What is your relationship to your oldest child?
(sample size=1800)**



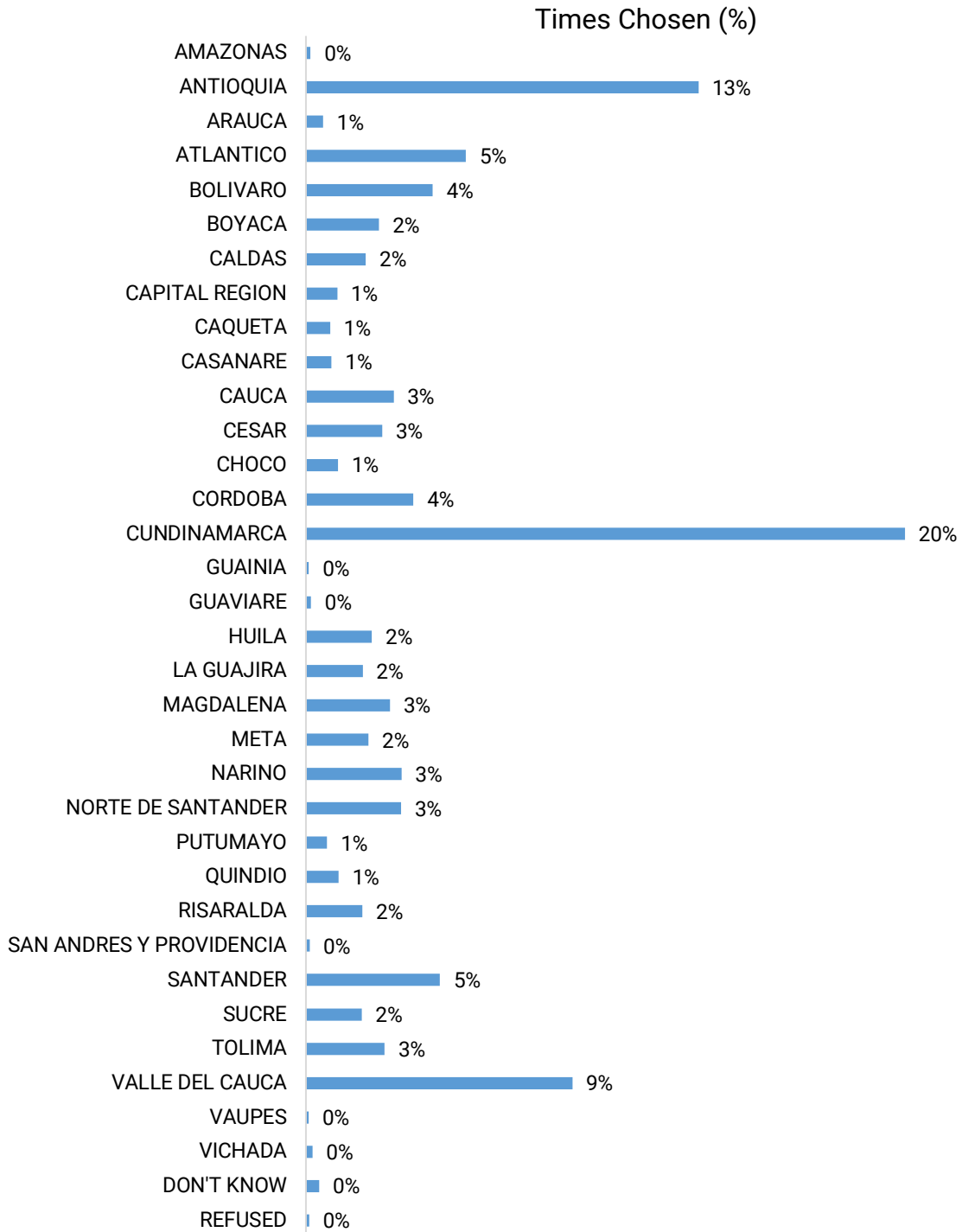
**What is your current employment status?
(sample size=1800)**



**When thinking about social issues, do you consider yourself to be..?
(sample size=1800)**

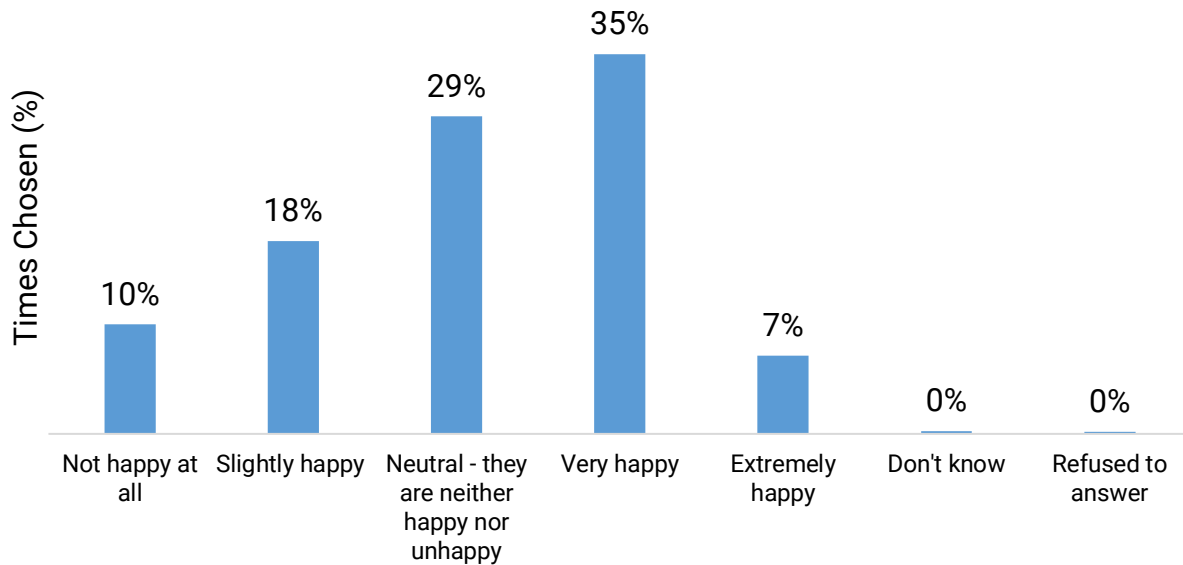


What region do you currently live in? (sample size=1800)

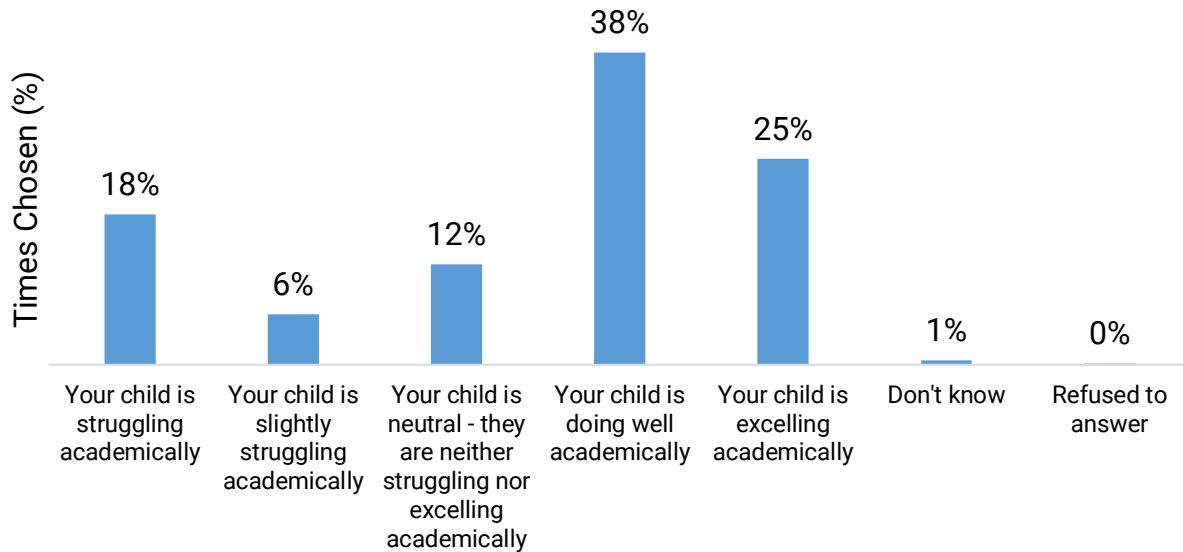


Parents' satisfaction with their children's education

**At the time of this survey, how happy is your child with their education? Would you say your child is...
(sample size=1800)**



**How well do you believe your child is doing academically right now? Would you say...
(sample size=1800)**



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