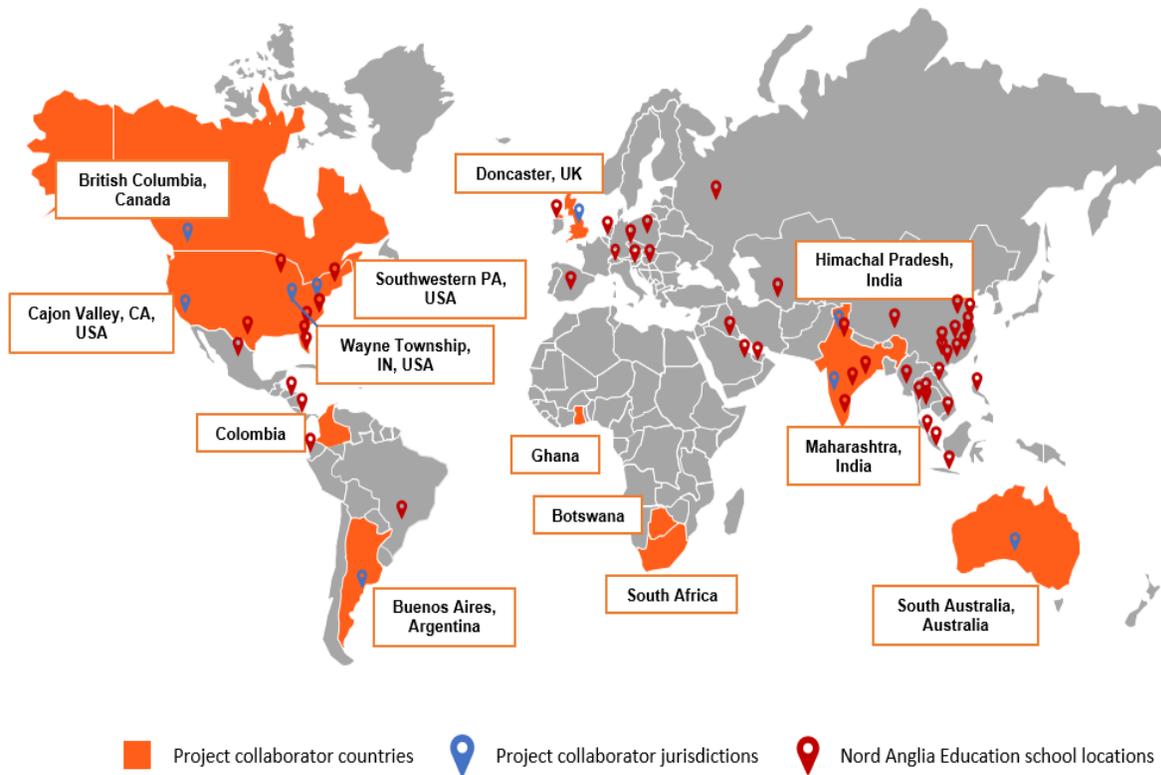


## PERSPECTIVES FROM PARENTS IN MAHARASHTRA, INDIA

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## 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.<sup>1</sup> The project emerged

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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 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 INDIA**

The COVID-19 pandemic caused mandatory shutdowns and mass disruption of schooling worldwide. In India, more than 320 million students were affected (UNESCO, 2020). Educators and administrators responded to the crisis by rapidly shifting in-class lessons to online, radio and SMS instruction so that students could continue to learn remotely; however, with many households lacking access to technology, millions of students have not been able to access schooling over the last year (Parth et al., 2020). In households with access to remote learning, parents<sup>2</sup> and families have been given a front row seat to how and what their children learn “in school,” while, in other households, the lack of schooling has become top of mind for parents. Across the country, academic outcomes and student success hinge on parent involvement now more than ever before.

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<sup>2</sup> We use the term parent throughout to denote a child's parent, guardian, or caregiver.

## **MAHARASHTRA**

Maharashtra is a state in western India with a population of approximately 112 million people, of which 45% live in cities, including the state capital Mumbai (World Bank, 2018). The state's GDP is above the national average as a result of strong growth in the services sector in the last 15 years, and the state boasts one of the highest rates of salaried workers in India (World Bank, 2018). The poverty rate is 17%, lower than the national rate, and mobile phone usage is high at a rate of 91 connections per 100 people (Niti Aayog, 2019). Per capita net state domestic product is 191,736 rupees (approximately \$2,630 USD) (Reserve Bank of India, 2019).

### **Education Indicators**

A total of 21.9 million primary and secondary level students are enrolled in 108,804 public and private schools in the state (Government of Maharashtra, n.d.). Students in Maharashtra attend private schools at a higher rate than the country-level average (World Bank, 2018). The adjusted net enrollment rate of students in Class 1 through Class 10 is 81%, and the average dropout rate at the secondary school level is 11% annually (Niti Aayog, 2020). Across Classes 3,5, 8, and 10, 73% of students receive minimum level proficiency on national learning assessments (Niti Aayog, 2020).

### **Key Initiatives**

#### *SAMAGRA SHIKSHA*

Samagra Shiksha is a national-level initiative that takes a holistic approach to improving school effectiveness from pre-primary to Class 12. The initiative has several components, including a focus on improving quality education, addressing social and gender gaps in education, and promoting vocational skills development (Ministry of Education Government of India, 2020). In Maharashtra, the plan is being implemented by the state government and includes the provision of free uniforms and textbooks for qualifying students, transportation funding for children in remote areas, and the introduction of vocational education at the secondary level (Maharashtra Prathamik Shikshan Parishad, 2021).

## *DIKSHA*

The DIKSHA campaign is a national-level effort that works to provide all teachers with access to technology. A core feature of the campaign is the National Teacher Platform, which provides teacher training on digital technologies and resources for use in the classroom. (National Portal of India, n.d.) Many state governments, including Maharashtra, have added their own initiatives to support the campaign. One example is the Abhyasmala campaign, a partnership between the Maharashtra State Council for Educational Research and Training (SCERT) and Leadership for Equity, which distributed daily education lessons to teachers and families via WhatsApp (Leadership for Equity, 2020).

## *E-BALBHARATI*

e-Balbhharati is led by the Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research and publishes free online textbooks in pdf format (Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research, n.d.). Downloads of the mobile phone application have surged during the COVID pandemic, which has kept schools closed (Bhatkhande, 2020).

## *STARS*

Maharashtra is one of six states in India to receive funding under the STARS (Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States), a five-year initiative funded by the World Bank. The program in Maharashtra will include a focus on improving the quality of pre-primary education, establishing a teacher training certificate program, and reducing school dropout rates (Bhatkhande, 2021).

## **SURVEY OF PARENTS**

From October 3, 2020 to November 8, 2020, CUE and project collaborator Leadership for Equity distributed a 24-item live call survey to parents and caregivers of students in Junior KG to Class 12 in Maharashtra. A total of 3,152 primary caregivers responded to

our survey. To collect data representative of the population of Maharashtra, 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 apriori calculations, we aimed to collect 385 responses from primary caregivers in Maharashtra. All survey items were optional such that respondents could choose to provide a response to a subsequent 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. CUE will however share the survey instrument upon request. Please send inquiries to: [leapfrogging@brookings.edu](mailto:leapfrogging@brookings.edu).

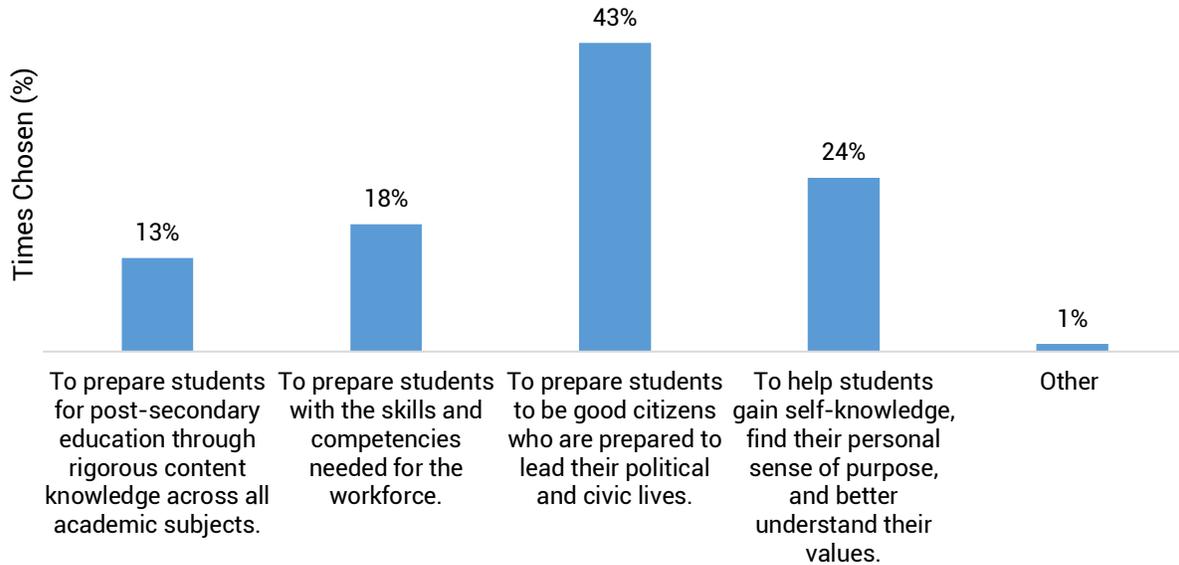
## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We would like to thank our project collaborators at Leadership for Equity, government partners at Pune Municipal Corporation, Pune District, and Nashik District, as well as officials of the Department of School Education, Maharashtra, without whom we would not have been able to conduct this survey.

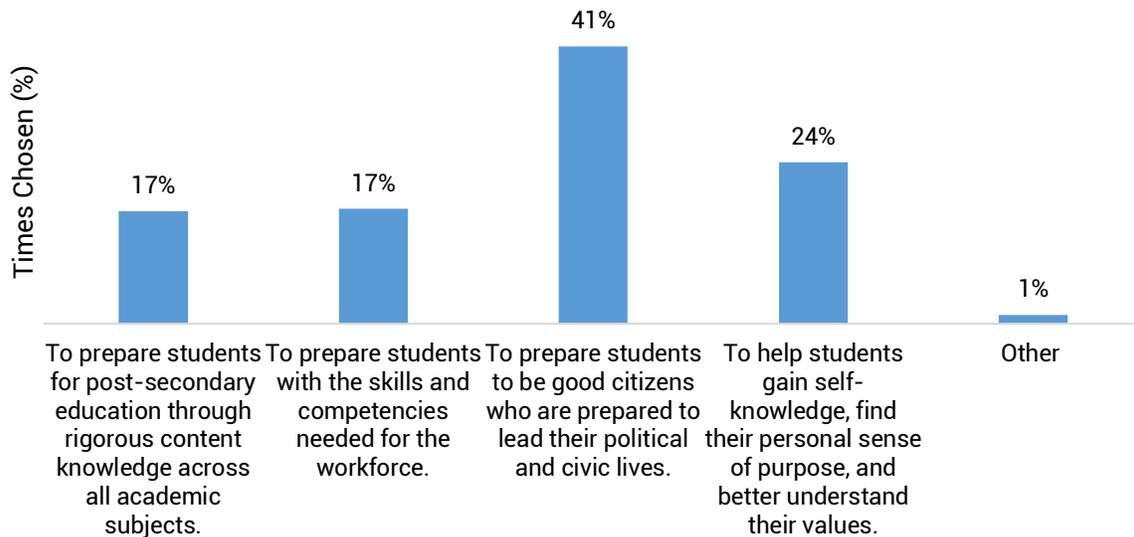
## SURVEY FINDINGS

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

**I believe that the most important purpose of school is:  
(sample size=2968)**

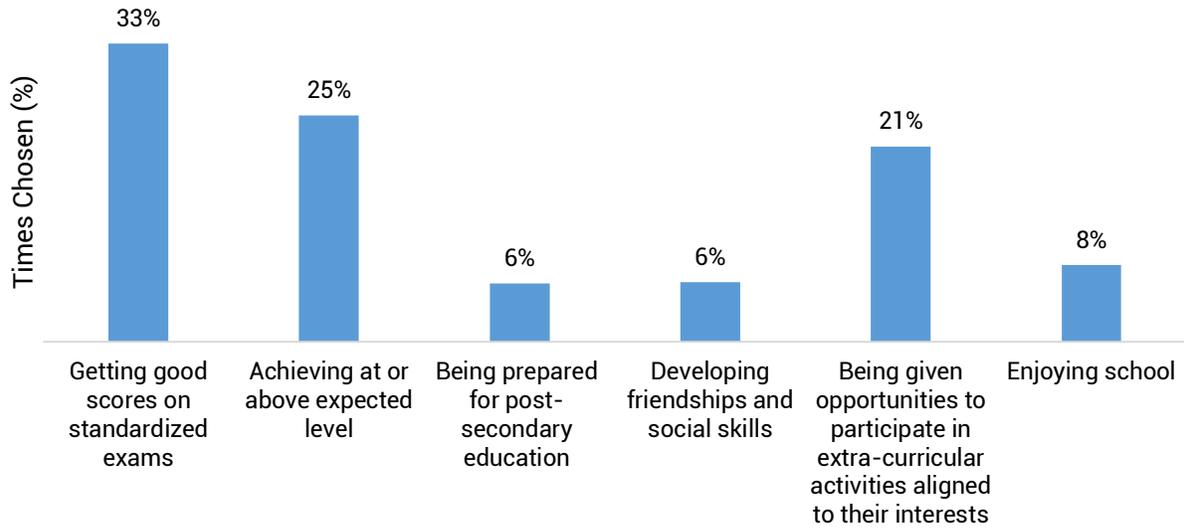


**I believe that my child's educators believe that the most important purpose of school is:  
(sample size=2899)**



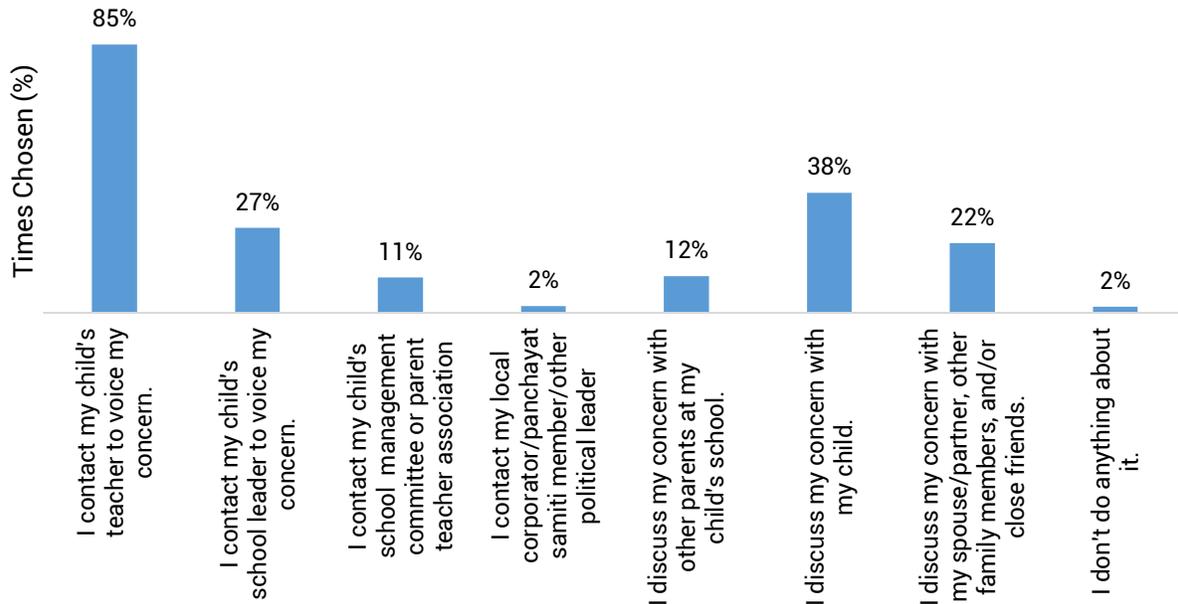
## Parents' indicators of quality and perceived alignment with educators

I am MOST satisfied with my child's education when my child is:  
(sample size=2985)

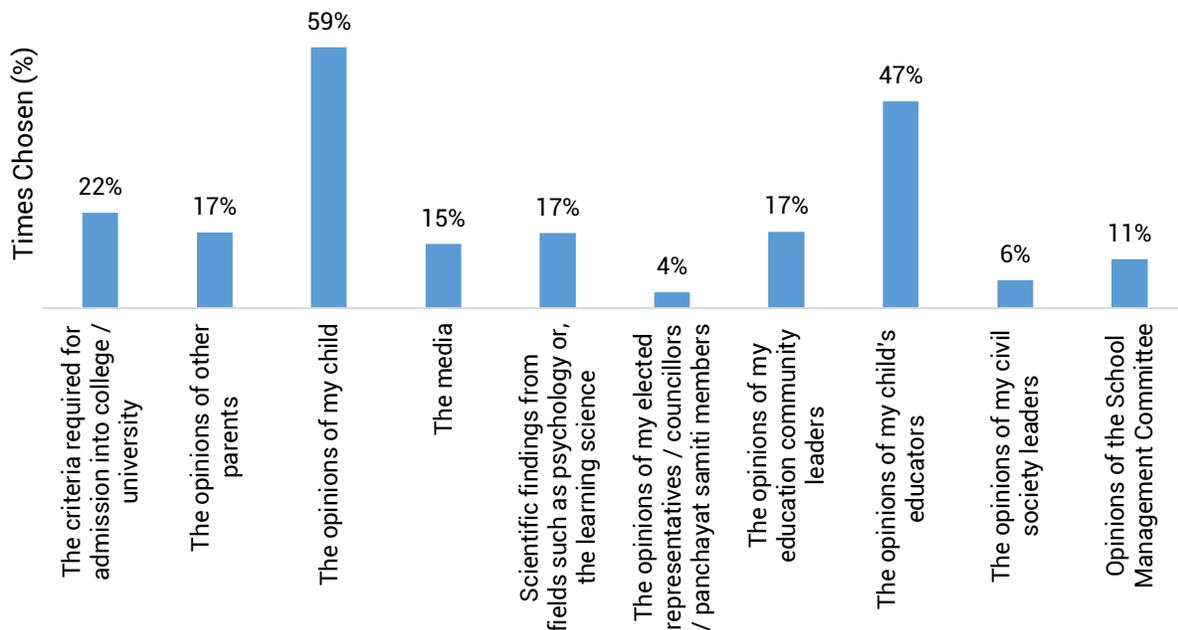


## Parents' sources of information

### How do you react when something about your child's education bothers or upsets you? (sample size=3012)

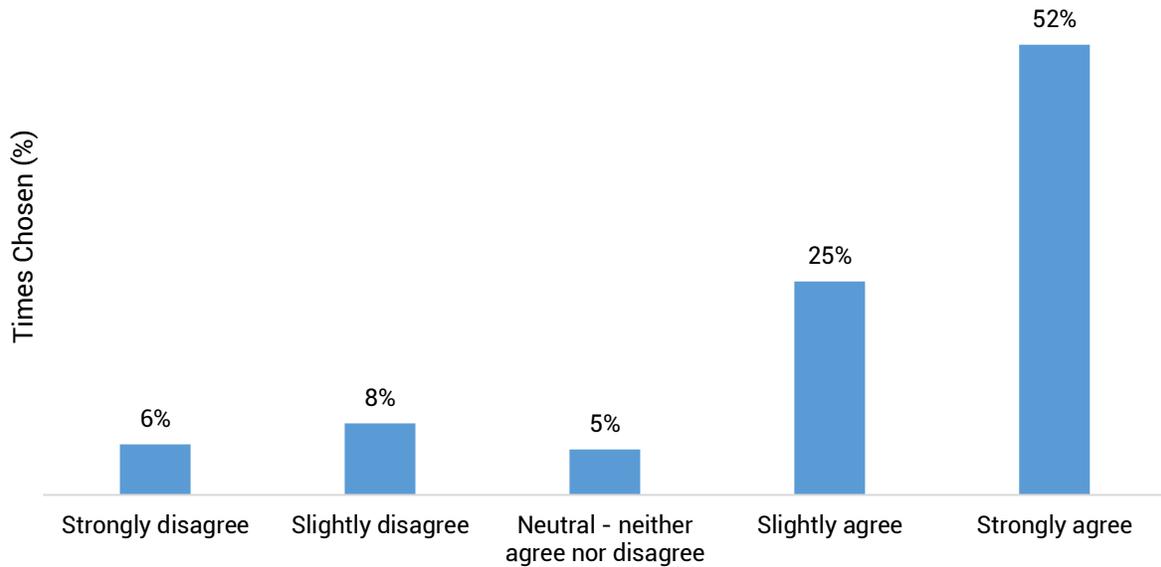


### What influences your perspective about what makes for a good quality education for your child? (sample size=3012)

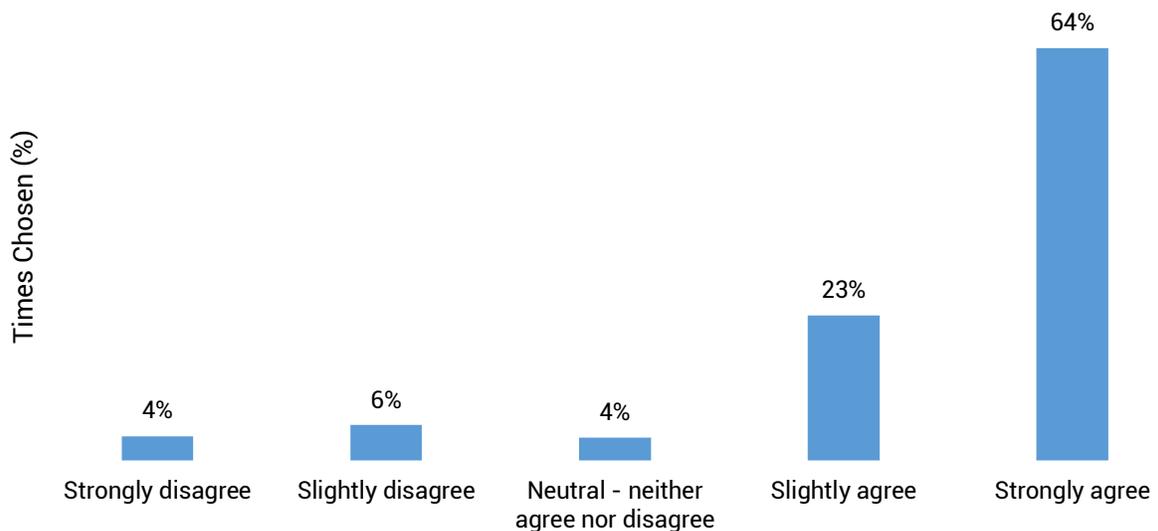


## Parents' trust of and perceived alignment with teachers

**My child's teachers share my beliefs about what makes a good education.  
(sample size=2906)**

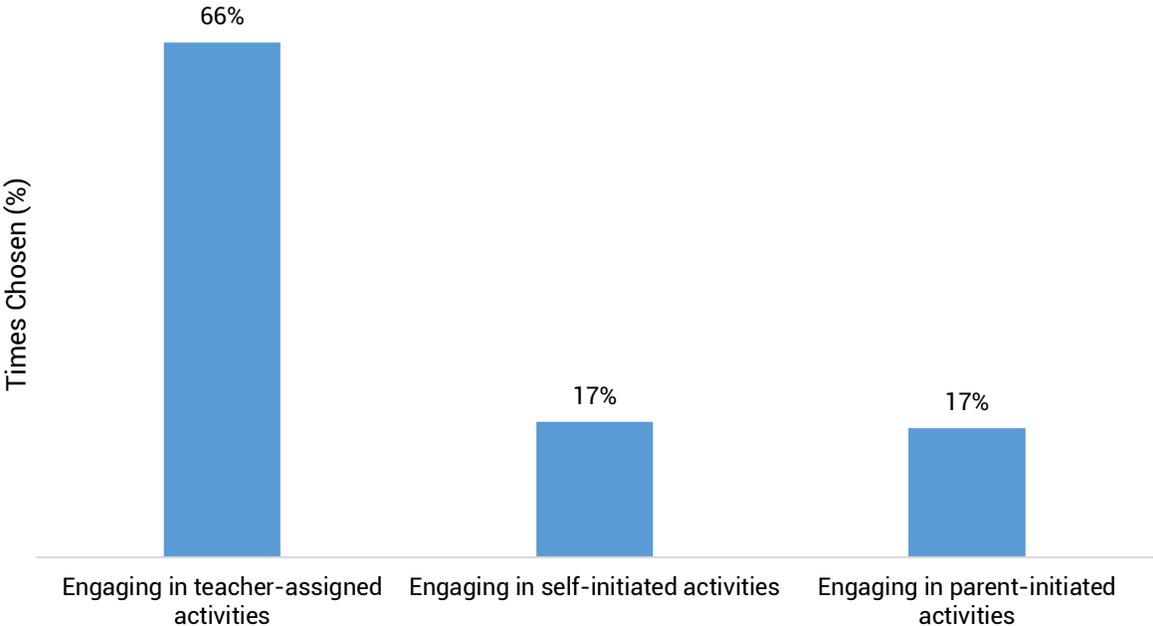


**My child's teachers are receptive to my input and suggestions.  
(sample size=2960)**

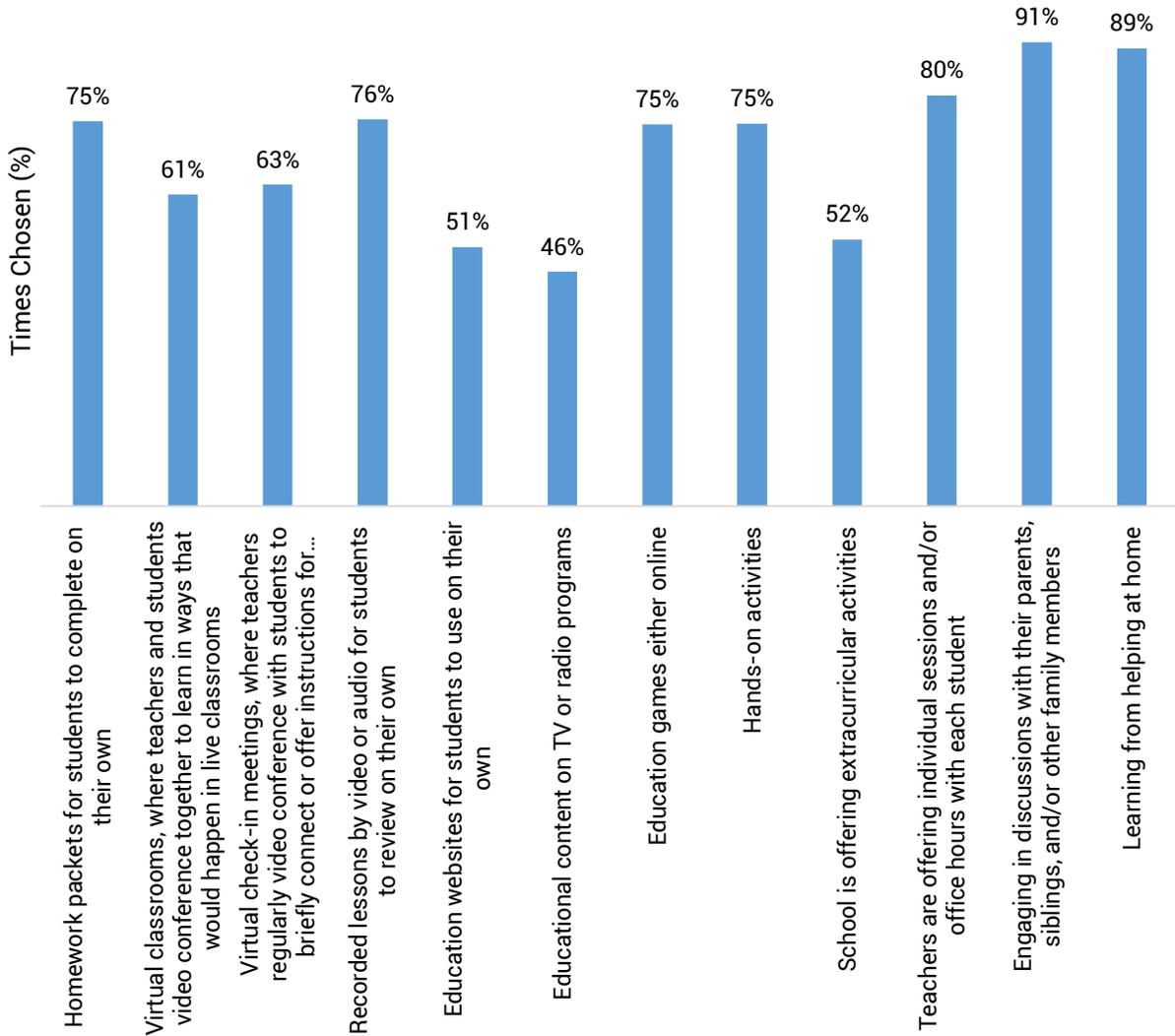


Parents' opinions on pedagogy

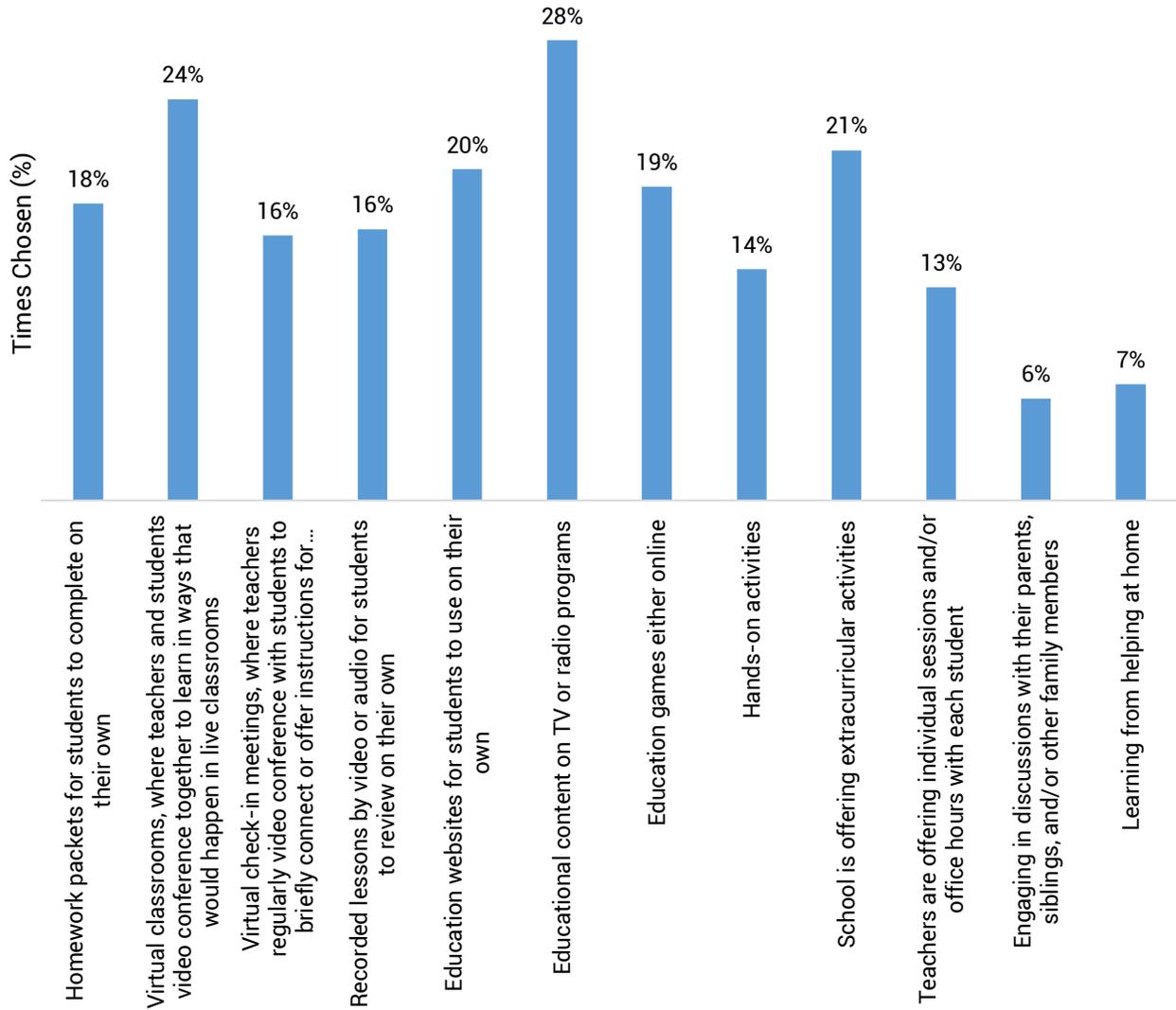
How did your child spent the majority of their time in the last two weeks?  
(sample size=3152)



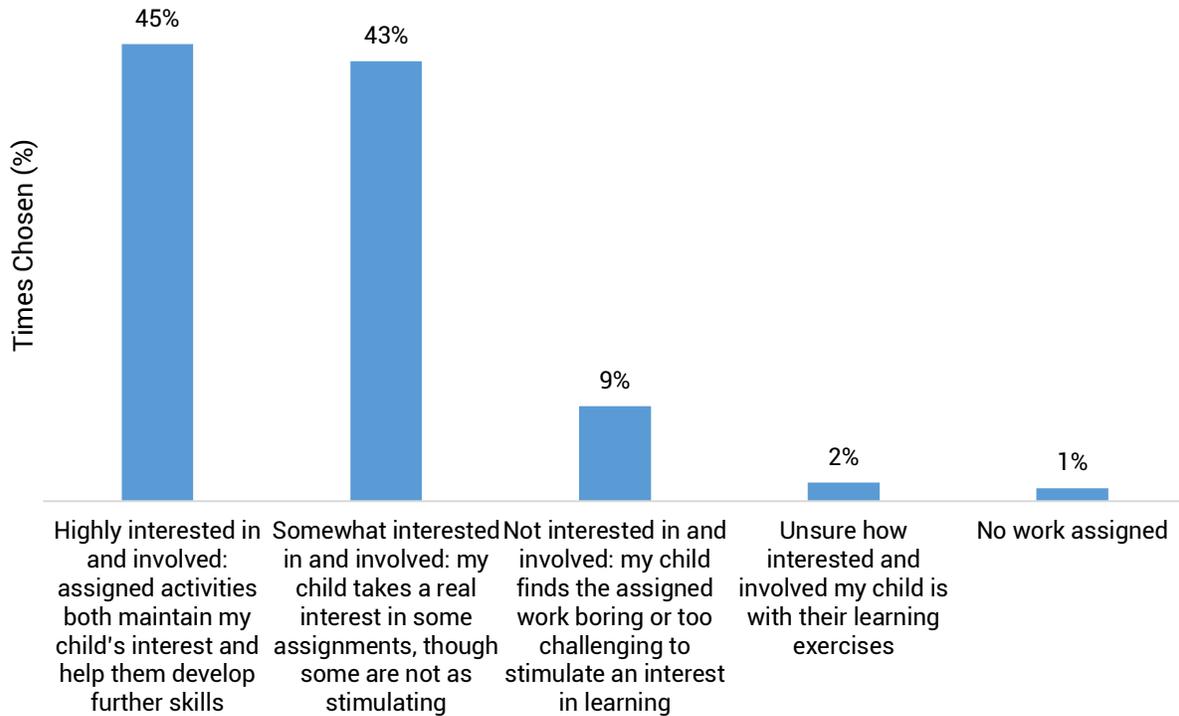
**When you think about the different ways in which your child is or was learning during their school closure, which are you satisfied with?  
(sample size=3012)**



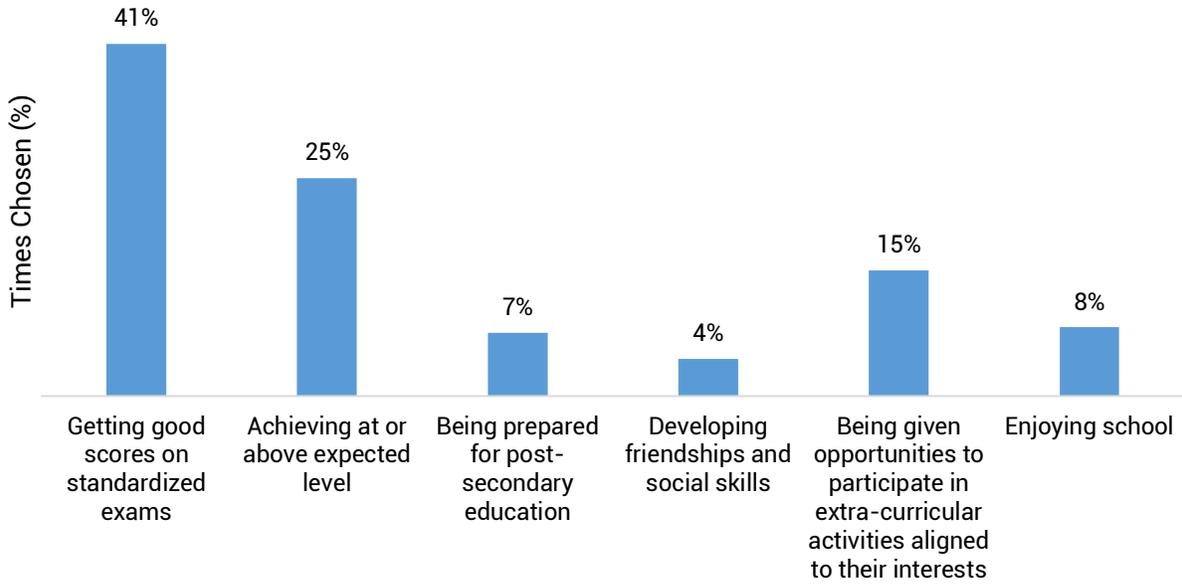
**When you think about the different ways in which your child is or was learning during their school closure, which are you not satisfied with?  
(sample size=3012)**



**How interested in and involved is your child with the activities their teacher has assigned?  
(sample size=2990)**

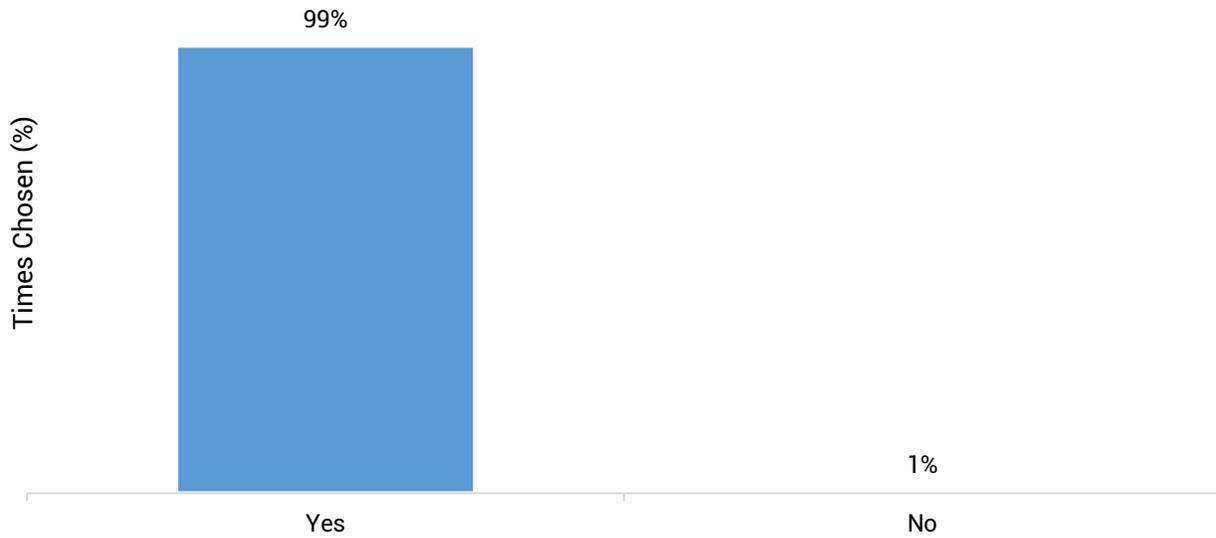


**I believe that my child's educators are MOST satisfied with their students' education when their students are:  
(sample size=2933)**

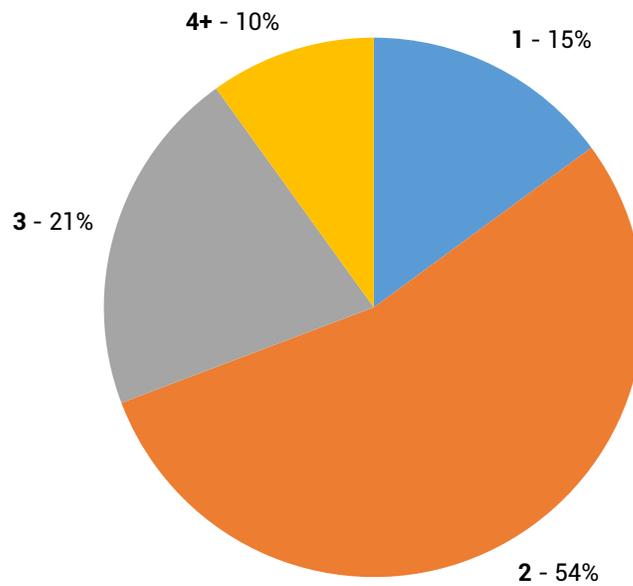


## Demographics of survey respondents from Maharashtra

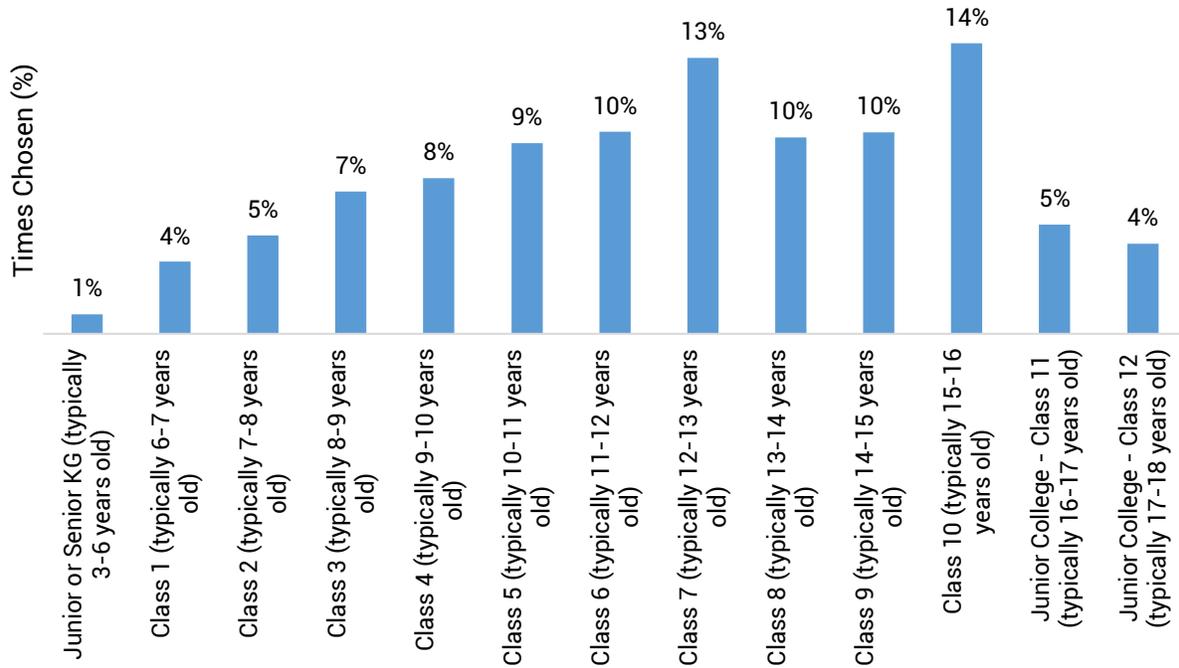
**Are you your child's primary caregiver?  
(sample size=3012)**



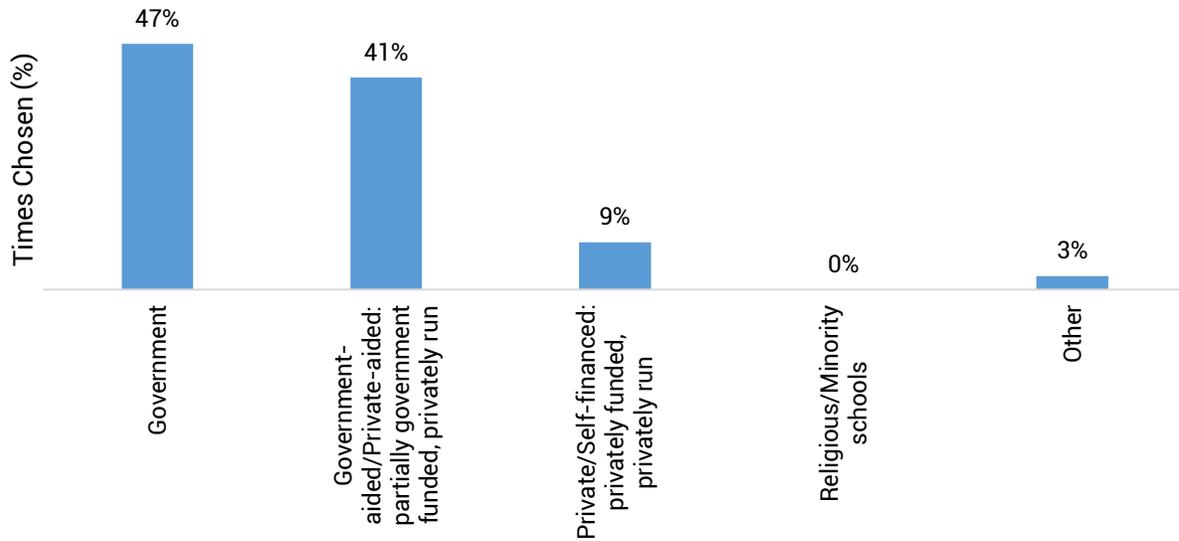
**How many children do you have who are currently in junior  
KG through Class 12 and live at home with you?  
(sample size=3010)**



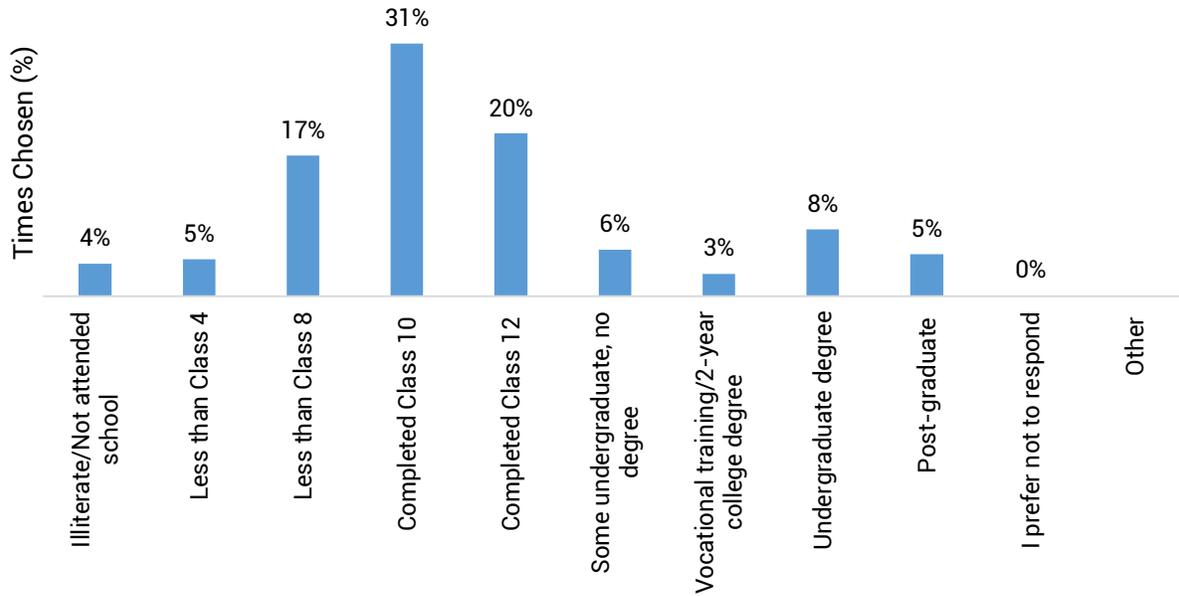
**In which year is your oldest child who is enrolled in school?  
(sample size=3011)**



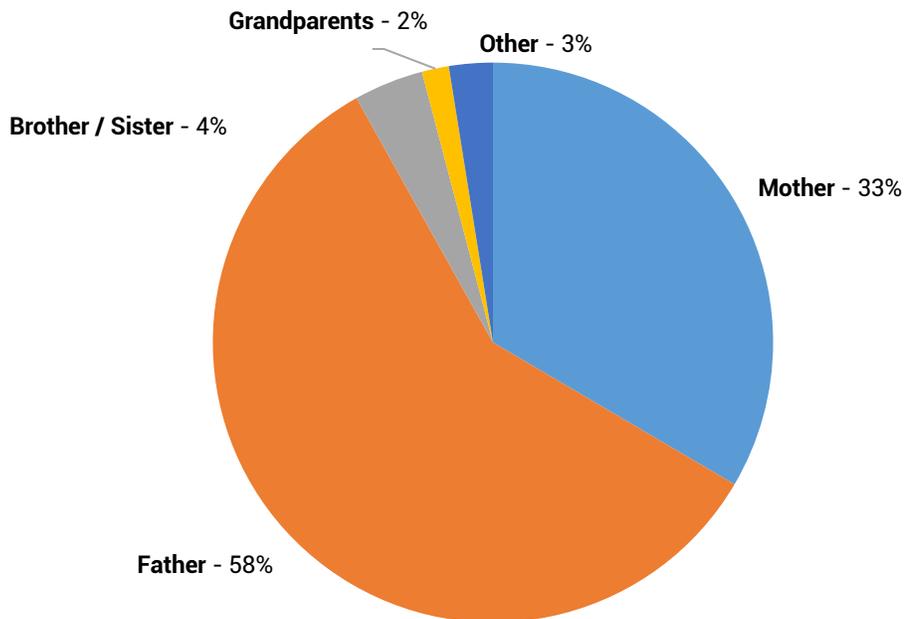
**What is the child's school category?  
(sample size=2960)**



**What is your highest level of education attained?  
(sample size=2970)**

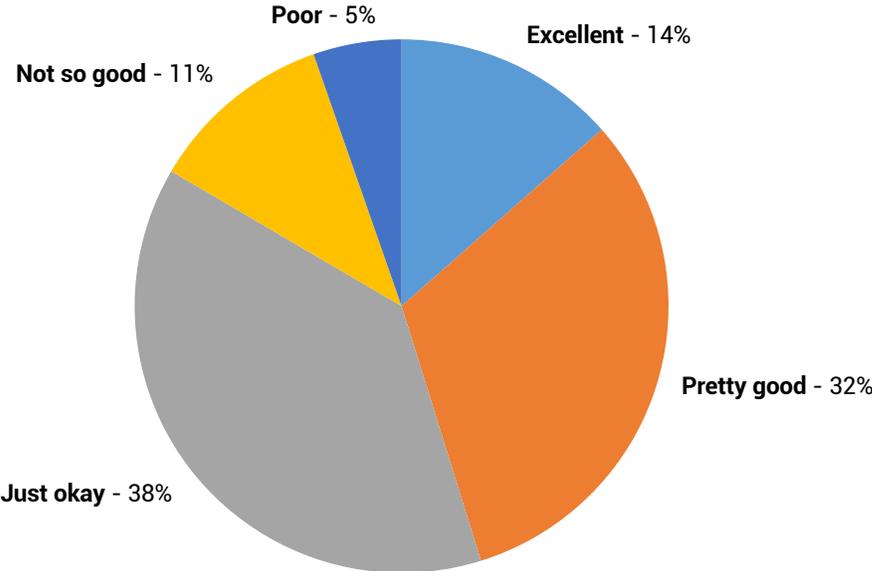


**What is your relationship with the child that you answered about in this survey?  
(sample size=3010)**

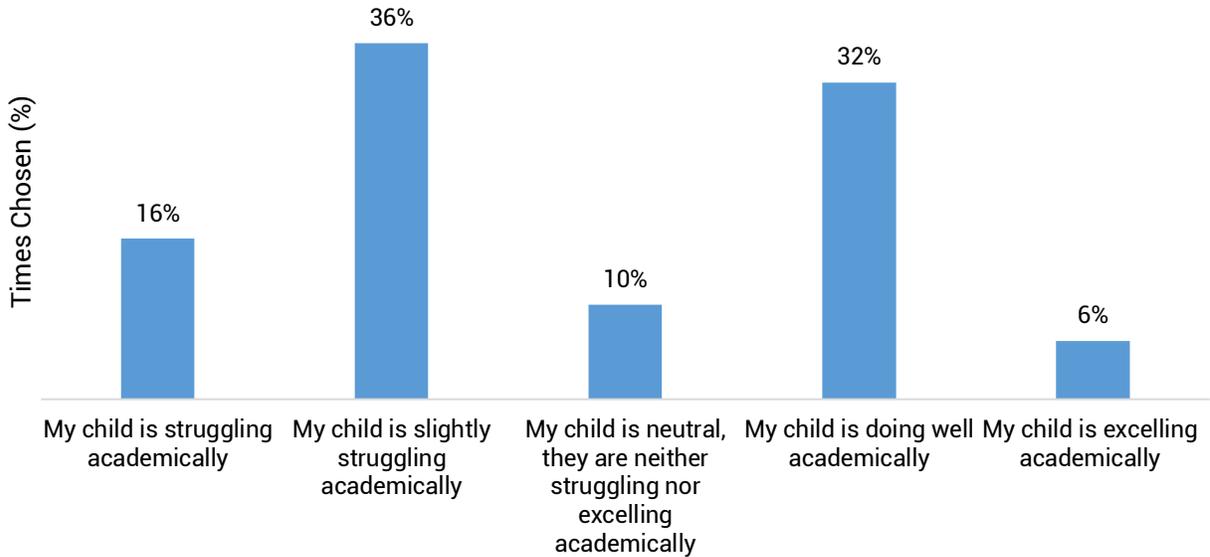


**Parents' satisfaction with their children's education**

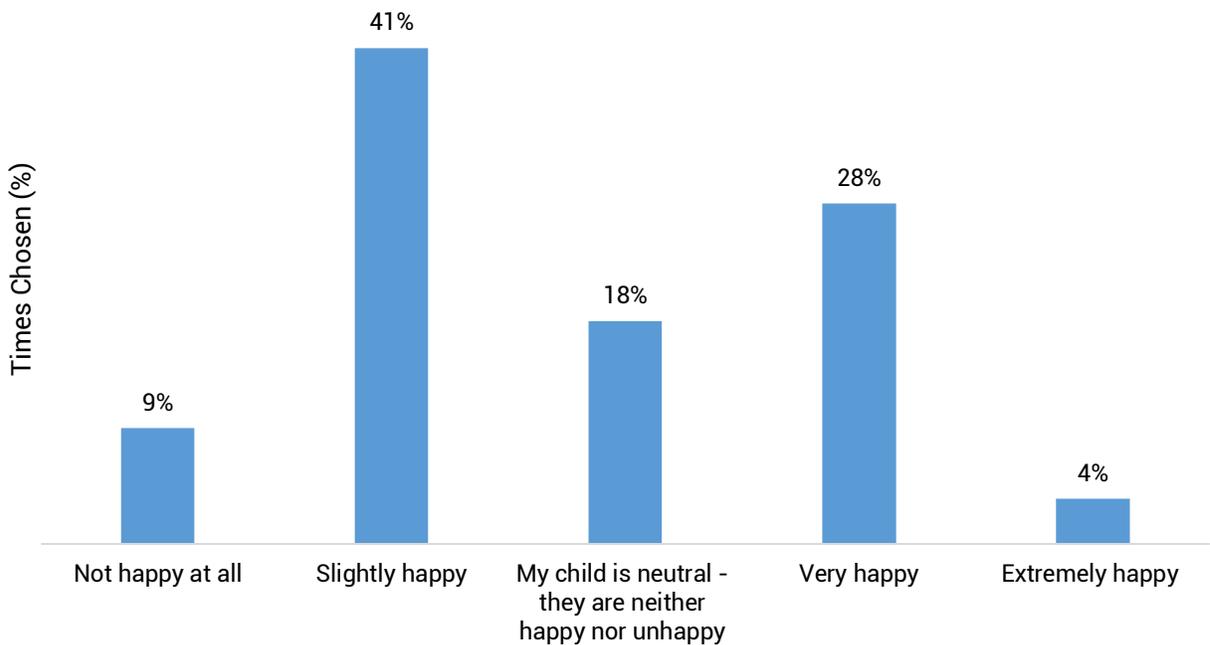
**How would you rate the education that your child is getting from their school right now?  
(sample size=2994)**



**How well do you believe your child is doing academically right now?**  
(sample size=2987)



**At the time of this survey, how happy is your child with their education?**  
(sample size=2967)



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