

Stress Scale for adults who care for preschool and primary school children with emotional problems

FINAL REPORT

The state of the art

With the administration of Stress Scale for adults who care for preschool and primary school children with emotional problems, Polaris Ltd has measured the levels of stress experienced by them, taking into account positive and negative aspects of their role.

The scale is relatively short and was very easy administer it. For this reason, people questioned completed it in less than 10 minutes.

The Stress Scale's results describe feelings and perceptions about the experience of being for adults who care for preschool and primary school children with emotional problems, in terms of how their relationship with children typically is.

The results of questionnaire

The questionnaire has been administered to 214 persons from 5 different countries (RO-IT-ES-TK-SE) and 7 partners

- a) 50 males and 164 females.
- b1) 46 of participants are between 18-30 years old,
- b2) 128 participants are between 31-45 years old
- b3) 40 participants are more than 45 years old
- c1) 129 of respondents are parents,
- c2) 47 grandparents and
- c3) 39 are other relatives, such as sister, uncle/aunt, baby-sitter and so on (a person was both parent and grandparent).

People questioned indicated, in reference to last month, the degree of agree or disagree about specific items by placing the appropriate number in the space provided.

1) Regarding the item **“I am an adult who educate /care for children with emotional problems”**

- a) 5 respondents resulted strongly disagree (2,3%)
- b) 10 respondents resulted disagree (4,7%)
- c) 22 respondents resulted undecided (10,3%)
- d) 120 respondents resulted d agree (56,1%)
- e) 57 respondents resulted strongly agree (26,6%)

2) Regarding the item **“I felt that my skills were adequate to the situation I lived”**

- a) 0 respondents resulted strongly disagree (0%)
- b) 8 respondents resulted disagree (3,7%)
- c) 75 respondents resulted undecided (35,0%)
- d) 88 respondents resulted agree (41,1%)

e) 43 respondents resulted strongly agree (20,1%)

3) Regarding the item **“I found that I could manage my life in all its branches notwithstanding the situation”**

a) 10 respondents resulted strongly disagree (4,7%)

b) 16 respondent resulted disagree (7,5%)

c) 71 respondents resulted undecided (33,2%)

d) 76 respondents resulted agree (35,5%)

e) 41 respondents resulted strongly agree (19,2%)

4) Regarding the item **“I was able to control my emotions in my ordinary life”**

a) 4 respondents resulted strongly disagree (1,9%)

b) 11 respondents resulted disagree (5,1%)

c) 34 respondents resulted undecided (15,9%)

d) 132 respondents resulted agree (57,5%)

e) 33 respondents resulted strongly agree (15,4%)

5) Regarding the item **“I was seldom fighting with other adults who care for preschool and primary school child(ren) with emotional problems regarding what to do and what not to do”**

a) 15 respondents resulted strongly disagree (7,0%)

b) 16 respondents resulted disagree (7,5%)

c) 27 respondents resulted undecided (12,6%)

d) 123 respondents resulted agree (57,5%)

e) 33 respondents resulted strongly agree (15,4%)

6) Regarding the item **“I felt happy in my role every day”**

a) 4 respondents resulted strongly disagree (1,9%)

b) 10 respondents resulted disagree (4,7%)

c) 37 respondents resulted undecided (17,3%)

d) 118 respondents resulted agree (55,1%)

e) 45 respondents resulted strongly agree (21,0%)

7) Regarding the item **“I thought that social support for taking care for preschool and primary school child(ren) is satisfactory and even more than satisfactory”**

a) 18 respondents resulted strongly disagree (8,4%)

b) 25 respondents resulted disagree (11,7%)

c) 33 respondents resulted undecided (15,4%)

d) 45 respondents resulted agree (21,0%)

e) 93 respondents resulted strongly agree (43,5%)

8) Regarding the item **“I didn’t feel worried whether I was doing enough for child(ren)”**

- a) 12 respondent resulted strongly disagree (5,6%)
- b) 95 respondents resulted disagree (44,4%)
- c) 18 respondent resulted undecided (8,4%)
- d) 50 respondents resulted agree (23,4%)
- e) 40 respondents resulted strongly agree (18,7%)

9) Regarding the item **“I felt close to child(ren) with emotional problems”**

- a) 1 respondents resulted strongly disagree (0,5%)
- b) 2 respondents resulted disagree (0,9%)
- c) 25 respondents resulted undecided (11,7%)
- d) 56 respondents resulted agree (26,2%)
- e) 130 respondents resulted strongly agree (60,7%)

10) Regarding the item **“I thought that child(ren) was (were) an important source of affection for me”**

- a) 2 respondent resulted strongly disagree (0,9%)
- b) 0 respondents resulted disagree (0%)
- c) 4 respondents resulted undecided (1,9%)
- d) 52 respondents resulted agree (24,3%)
- e) 156 respondents resulted strongly agree (72,9%)

11) Regarding the item **“I thought that taking care about child(ren)’s with emotional problems education made me feel more sure and gave me an optimistic view for the the future”**

- a) 3 respondents resulted strongly disagree (1,4%)
- b) 9 respondents resulted disagree (4,2%)
- c) 21 respondents resulted undecided (9,8%)
- d) 71 respondents resulted agree (33,2%)
- e) 110 respondents resulted strongly agree (51,4%)

12) Regarding the item **“I felt that child(ren) perception matched my expectations”**

- a) 8 respondents resulted strongly disagree (3,7%)
- b) 11 respondents resulted disagree (5,1%)
- c) 60 respondents resulted undecided (28,0%)
- d) 96 respondents resulted agree (44,9%)
- e) 39 respondents resulted strongly agree (18,2%)

13) Regarding the item **“I felt that interactions with child(ren) with emotional problems was (were) rewarding at a satisfactory level”**

- a) 2 persons resulted strongly disagree (0,9%)
- b) 15 persons resulted disagree (7,0%)
- c) 49 persons resulted undecided (22,9%)

- d) 103 persons resulted agree (48,1%)
- e) 45 persons resulted strongly agree (21,0%)

14) Regarding the item **“I was able to face difficulties by my-self”**

- a) 8 respondents resulted strongly disagree (3,7%)
- b) 22 respondents resulted disagree (10,3%)
- c) 61 respondents resulted undecided (28,5%)
- d) 88 respondents resulted agree (41,1%)
- e) 35 respondents resulted strongly agree (16,4%)

15) Regarding the item **“I needed support to face difficulties”**

- a) 7 respondents resulted strongly disagree (3,3%)
- b) 26 respondents resulted disagree (12,1%)
- c) 34 respondents resulted undecided (15,9%)
- d) 113 respondents resulted agree (52,8%)
- e) 34 respondents resulted strongly agree (15,9%)

16) Regarding the item **“I thought that child(ren) was (were) a positive element in my life”**

- a) 1 respondent resulted strongly disagree (0,5%)
- b) 0 respondents resulted disagree (0%)
- c) 6 respondents resulted undecided (2,8%)
- d) 44 respondents resulted agree (20,6%)
- e) 163 respondent resulted strongly agree (76,2%)

17) Regarding the item **“I thought that it was not a problem to balance different responsibilities of education and care for preschool or primary school child(ren)’s with emotional problem”**

- a) 74 respondents resulted strongly disagree (34,6%)
- b) 23 respondents resulted disagree (10,7%)
- c) 28 respondents resulted undecided (13,1%)
- d) 69 respondents resulted agree (32,2%)
- e) 20 respondents resulted strongly agree (9,3%)

18) Regarding the item **“I thought that some behaviors of child(ren) with emotional problems were seldom embarrassing or stressful to me”**

- a) 82 respondents resulted strongly disagree (38,3%)
- b) 40 respondents resulted disagree (18,7%)
- c) 43 respondents resulted undecided (20,1%)
- d) 41 respondents resulted agree (19,2%)
- e) 8 respondents resulted strongly agree (3,7%)

19) Regarding the item **“I was able to intervene efficiently when my child(ren) has an emotional problem”**

- a) 3 respondents resulted strongly disagree (1,4%)
- b) 4 respondents resulted disagree (1,9%)
- c) 72 respondent resulted undecided (33,6%)
- d) 98 respondents resulted agree (45,8%)
- e) 37 respondents resulted strongly agree (17,3%)

20) Regarding the item **“I felt that the child(ren) with emotional problems accepted me and liked to stay with me”**

- a) 1 respondents resulted strongly disagree (0,5%)
- b) 2 respondent resulted disagree (0,9%)
- c) 18 respondents resulted undecided (8,4%)
- d) 71 respondents resulted agree (33,2%)
- e) 122 respondents resulted strongly agree (57,0%)

21) Regarding the item **“I thought that the expectations that the children had towards me were not too heavy”**

- a) 79 respondents resulted strongly disagree (36,9%)
- b) 21 respondent resulted disagree (9,8%)
- c) 30 respondents resulted undecided (14,0%)
- d) 53 respondents resulted agree (24,8%)
- e) 31 respondents resulted strongly agree (14,5%)

22) Regarding the item **“I thought the child(ren) willingly obeyed my requests if they were reasonable”**

- a) 5 respondents resulted strongly disagree (2,3%)
- b) 8 respondent resulted disagree (3,7%)
- c) 28 respondents resulted undecided (13,1%)
- d) 135 respondents resulted agree (63,1%)
- e) 38 respondents resulted strongly agree (17,8%)

23) Regarding the item **“I need counseling and support to care for my child(ren)”**

- a) 17 respondents resulted strongly disagree (7,9%)
- b) 31 respondent resulted disagree (14,5%)
- c) 37 respondents resulted undecided (17,3%)
- d) 36 respondents resulted agree (16,8%)
- e) 93 respondents resulted strongly agree (43,5%)

24) Regarding the item **“I felt satisfied as a parent/ adult who care for a preschool or a primary school children with emotional problems”**

- a) 4 respondents resulted strongly disagree (1,9%)
- b) 9 respondent resulted disagree (4,2%)
- c) 73 respondents resulted undecided (34,1%)
- d) 92 respondents resulted agree (43,0%)

e) 36 respondents resulted strongly agree (16,8%)

25) Regarding the item **“I thought that taking care for a preschool or a primary school child(ren) with emotional problems was enjoyable”**

a) 15 respondents resulted strongly disagree (7,0%)

b) 17 respondent resulted disagree (7,9%)

c) 82 respondents resulted undecided (38,3%)

d) 82 respondents resulted agree (38,3%)

e) 18 respondents resulted strongly agree (8,4%)

26) Regarding the item **“Have you thought that if you could turn back, you might decide to not take care of child(ren) with emotional problem?”**

a) 129 respondents resulted strongly disagree (60,3%)

b) 47 respondent resulted disagree (22,0%)

c) 19 respondents resulted undecided (8,9%)

d) 11 respondents resulted agree (5,1%)

e) 8 respondents resulted strongly agree (3,7%)

27) Regarding the item **“Have you thought that the major source of stress in your life is taking care of child(ren)’s education?”**

a) 48 respondents resulted strongly disagree (22,4%)

b) 56 respondent resulted disagree (26,2%)

c) 68 respondents resulted undecided (31,8%)

d) 38 respondents resulted agree (17,8%)

e) 4 respondents resulted strongly agree (1,9%)

28) Regarding the item **“Have you thought that taking care of child(ren)’s education leaves little time and flexibility in your life?”**

a) 34 respondents resulted strongly disagree (15,9%)

b) 45 respondent resulted disagree (21,0%)

c) 23 respondents resulted undecided (10,7%)

d) 80 respondents resulted agree (37,4%)

e) 32 respondents resulted strongly agree (15,0%)

29) Regarding the item **“Have you thought that taking care of child(ren)’s education has been a financial burden?”**

a) 63 respondents resulted strongly disagree (29,4%)

b) 44 respondent resulted disagree (20,6%)

c) 17 respondents resulted undecided (7,9%)

d) 11 respondents resulted agree (5,1%)

e) 79 respondents resulted strongly agree (36,9%)

30) Regarding the item “**Have you thought that having child(ren) has meant having too few choices and too little control over your life?**”

a) 58 respondents resulted strongly disagree (27,1%)

b) 38 respondent resulted disagree (17,8%)

c) 26 respondents resulted undecided (12,1%)

d) 63 respondents resulted agree (29,4%)

e) 29 respondents resulted strongly agree (13,6%)

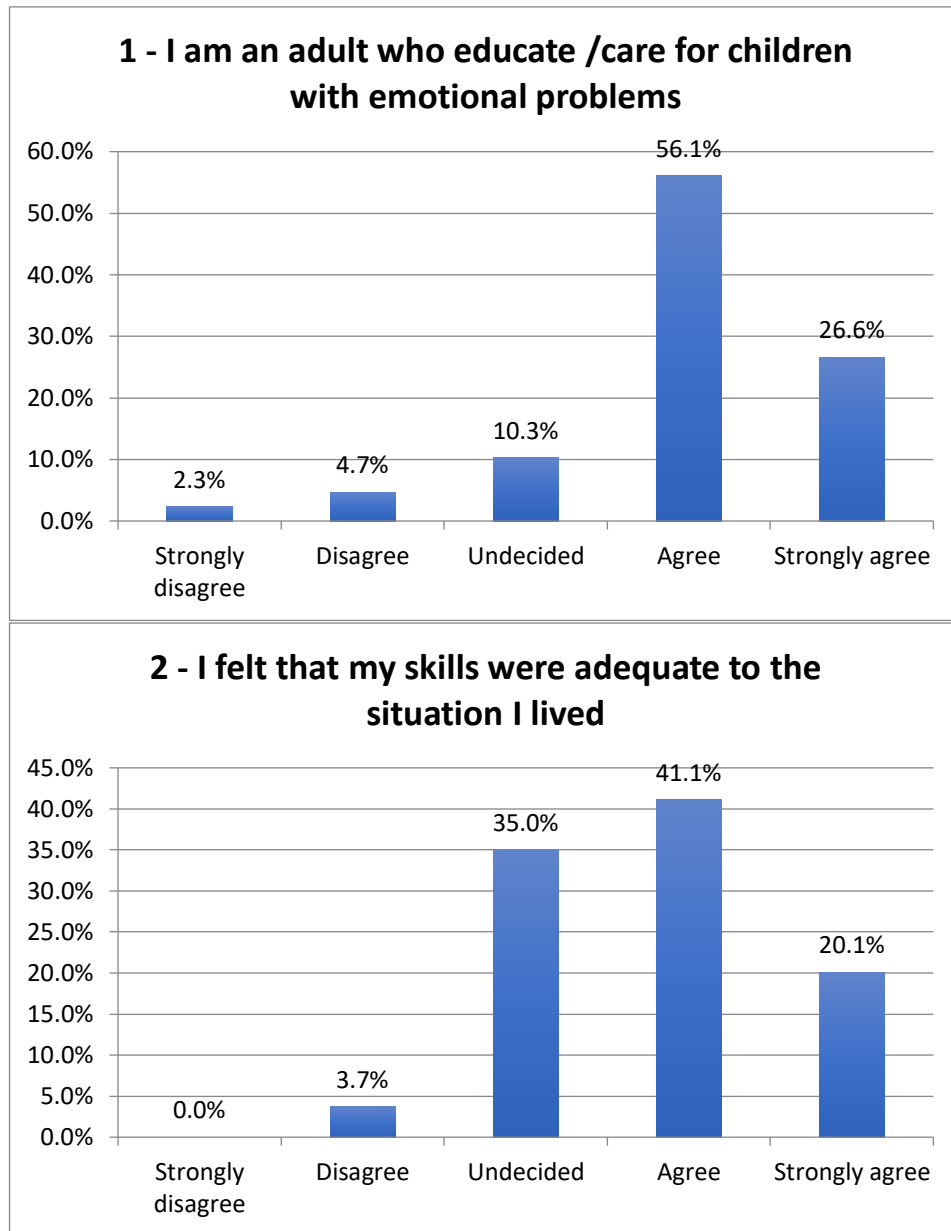
Our results in percentages

	1. I am an adult who educate /care for children with emotional problems	2. I felt that my skills were adequate to the situation I lived	3. I found that I could manage my life in all its branches notwithstanding the situation	4. I was able to control my emotions in my ordinary life	5. I was seldom fighting with other adults who care for preschool and primary school child(ren) with emotional problems regarding what to do and what not to do	6. I felt happy in my role every day	7. I thought that social support for taking care for preschool and primary school child(ren) is satisfactory and even more than satisfactory	8. I didn't feel worried whether I was doing enough for child(ren)	9. I felt close to child(ren) with emotional problems	10. I thought that child(ren) was (were) an important source of affection for me
Strongly disagree	2,3%	0,0%	4,7%	1,9%	7,0%	1,9%	8,4%	5,6%	0,5%	0,9%
Disagree	4,7%	3,7%	7,5%	5,1%	7,5%	4,7%	11,7%	44,4%	0,9%	0,0%
Undecided	10,3%	35,0%	33,2%	15,9%	12,6%	17,3%	15,4%	8,4%	11,7%	1,9%
Agree	56,1%	41,1%	35,5%	57,5%	57,5%	55,1%	21,0%	23,4%	26,2%	24,3%
Strongly agree	26,6%	20,1%	19,2%	15,4%	15,4%	21,0%	43,5%	18,7%	60,7%	72,9%

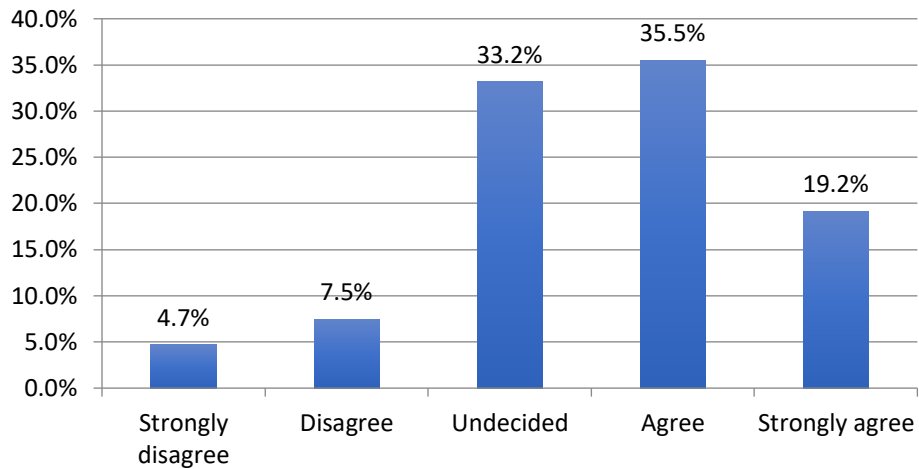
	11. I thought that taking care about child(ren)'s with emotional problems education made me feel more sure and gave me an optimistic view for the future	12. I felt that child(ren) perception matched my expectations	13. I felt that interactions with child(ren) with emotional problems was (were) rewarding at a satisfactory level	14. I was able to face difficulties by myself	15. I needed support to face difficulties	16. I thought that child(ren) was (were) a positive element in my life	17. I thought that it was not a problem to balance different responsibilities of education and care for preschool or primary school child(ren)'s with emotional problem	18. I thought that some behaviors of child(ren) with emotional problems were seldom embarrassing or stressful to me	19. I was able to intervene efficiently when my child(ren) has an emotional problem	20. I felt that the child(ren) with emotional problems accepted me and liked to stay with me
Strongly disagree	1,4%	3,7%	0,9%	3,7%	3,3%	0,5%	34,6%	38,3%	1,4%	0,5%
Disagree	4,2%	5,1%	7,0%	10,3%	12,1%	0,0%	10,7%	18,7%	1,9%	0,9%
Undecided	9,8%	28,0%	22,9%	28,5%	15,9%	2,8%	13,1%	20,1%	33,6%	8,4%
Agree	33,2%	44,9%	48,1%	41,1%	52,8%	20,6%	32,2%	19,2%	45,8%	33,2%
Strongly agree	51,4%	18,2%	21,0%	16,4%	15,9%	76,2%	9,3%	3,7%	17,3%	57,0%

	21. I thought that the expectations that the children had towards me were not too heavy	22. I thought the child(ren) willingly obeyed my requests if they were reasonable	23. I need counseling and support to care for my child(ren)	24. I felt satisfied as a parent/adult who care for a preschool or a primary school children with emotional problems	25. I thought that taking care for a preschool or a primary school child(ren) with emotional problems was enjoyable	26. Have you thought that if you could turn back, you might decide to not take care of child(ren) with emotional problem?	27. Have you thought that the major source of stress in your life is taking care of child(ren)'s education?	28. Have you thought that taking care of child(ren)'s education leaves little time and flexibility in your life?	29. Have you thought that taking care of child(ren)'s education has been a financial burden?	30. Have you thought that having child(ren) has meant having too few choices and too little control over your life?
Strongly disagree	36,9%	2,3%	7,9%	1,9%	7,0%	60,3%	22,4%	15,9%	29,4%	27,1%
Disagree	9,8%	3,7%	14,5%	4,2%	7,9%	22,0%	26,2%	21,0%	20,6%	17,8%
Undecided	14,0%	13,1%	17,3%	34,1%	38,3%	8,9%	31,8%	10,7%	7,9%	12,1%
Agree	24,8%	63,1%	16,8%	43,0%	38,3%	5,1%	17,8%	37,4%	5,1%	29,4%
Strongly agree	14,5%	17,8%	43,5%	16,8%	8,4%	3,7%	1,9%	15,0%	36,9%	13,6%

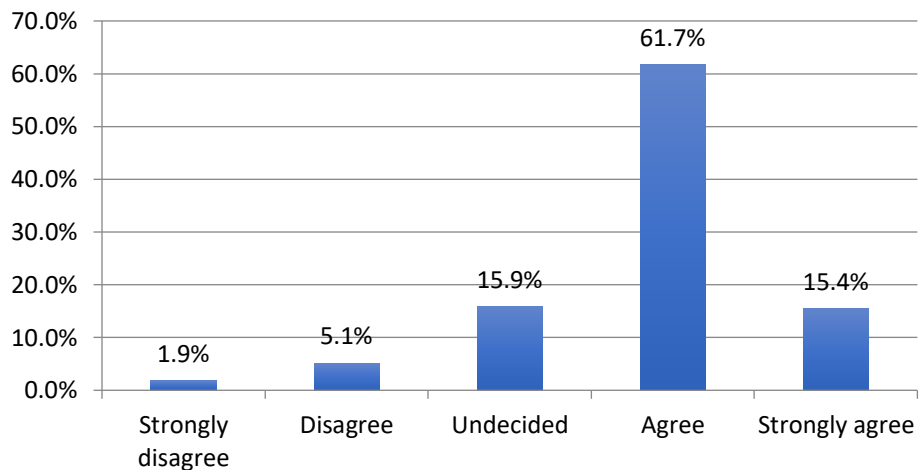
Our results in their diagram version



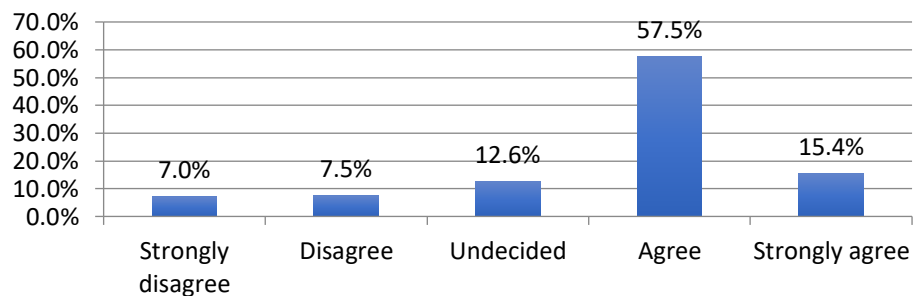
3 - I found that I could manage my life in all its branches notwithstanding the situation



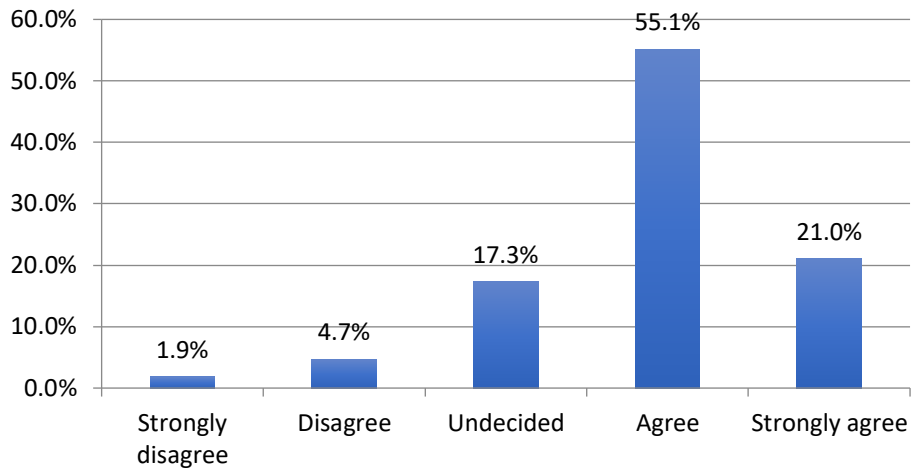
4 - I was able to control my emotions in my ordinary life



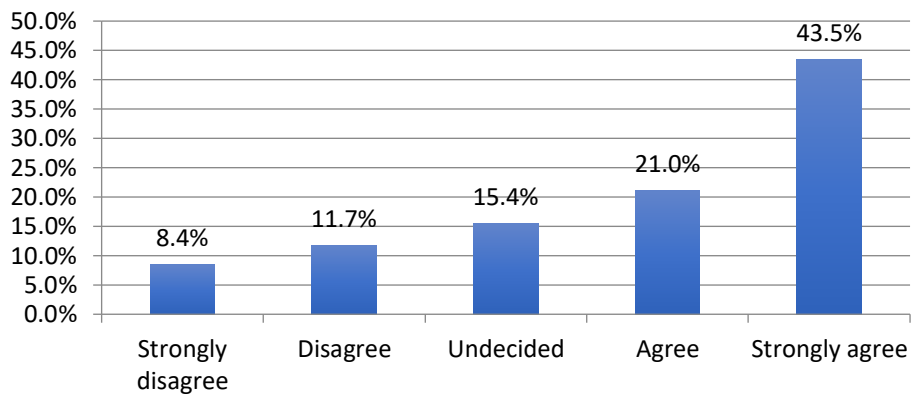
5 - I was seldom fighting with other adults who care for preschool and primary school child(ren) with emotional problems regarding what to do and what not to do



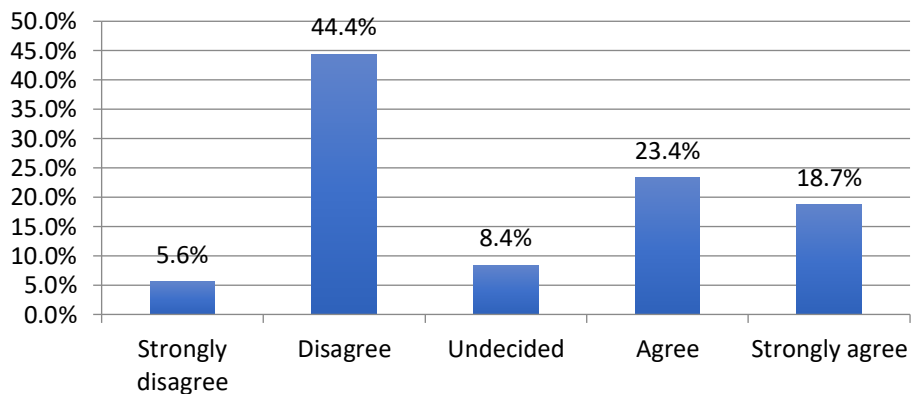
6 - I felt happy in my role every day



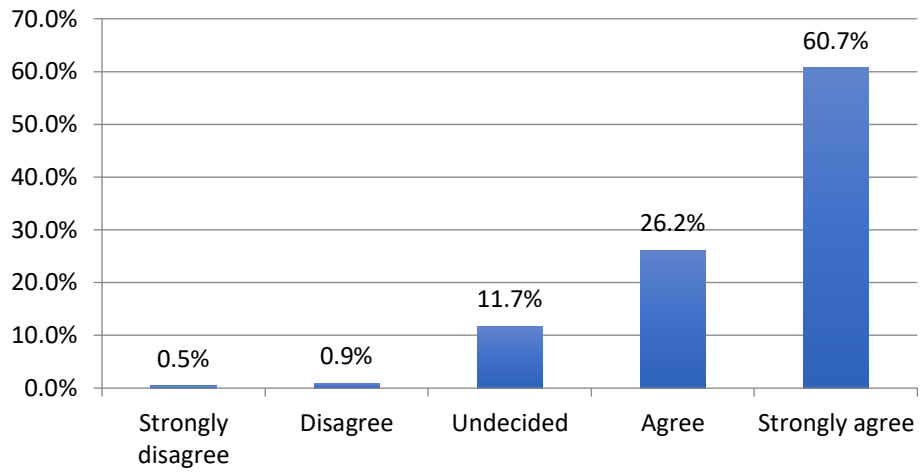
7 - I thought that social support for taking care for preschool and primary school child(ren) is satisfactory and even more than satisfactory



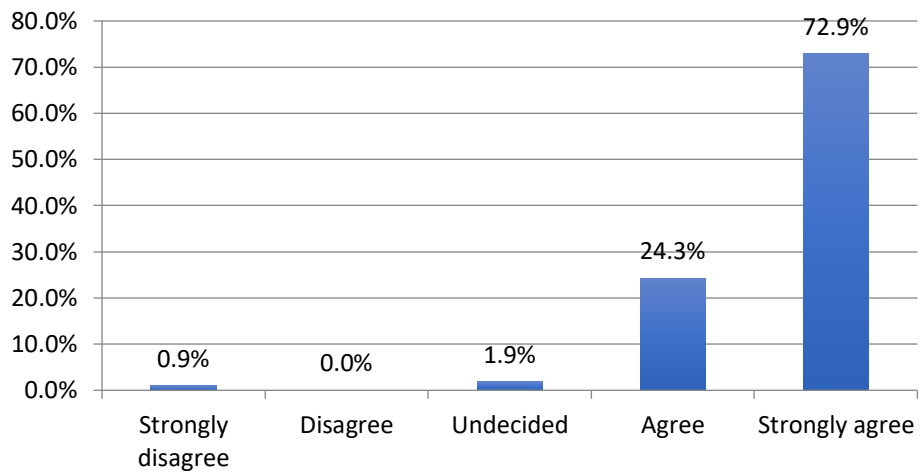
8 - I didn't feel worried whether I was doing enough for child(ren)



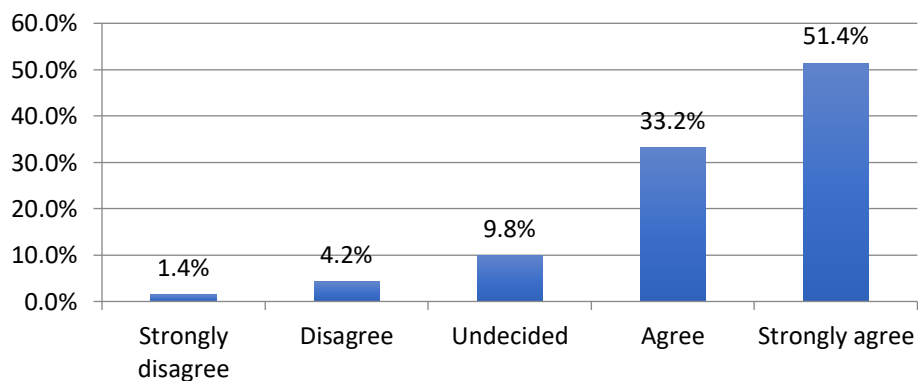
9 - I felt close to child(ren) with emotional problems



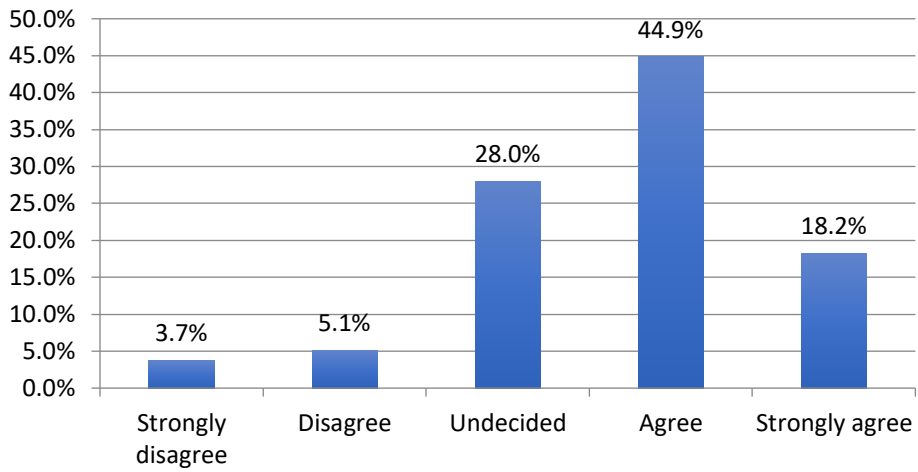
10 . I thought that child(ren) was (were) an important source of affection for me



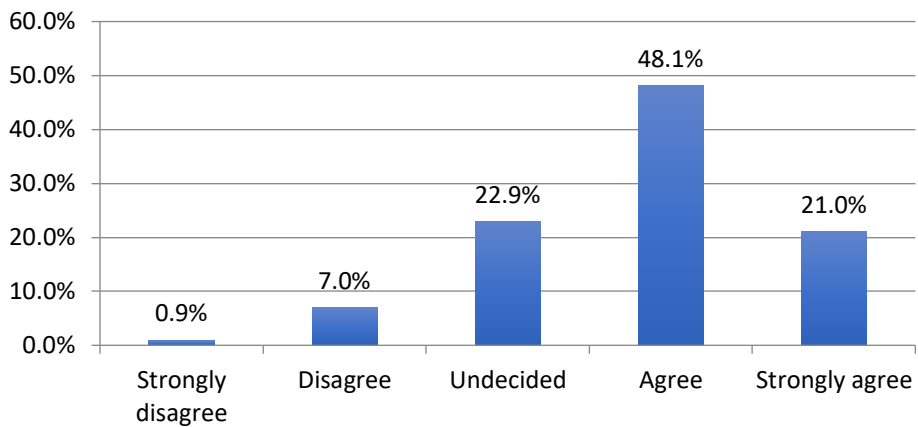
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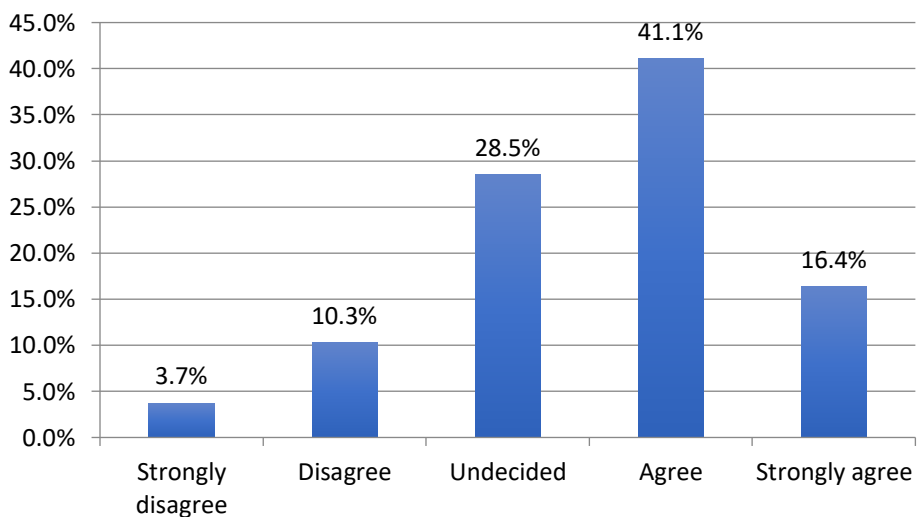
12 - I felt that child(ren) perception matched my expectations



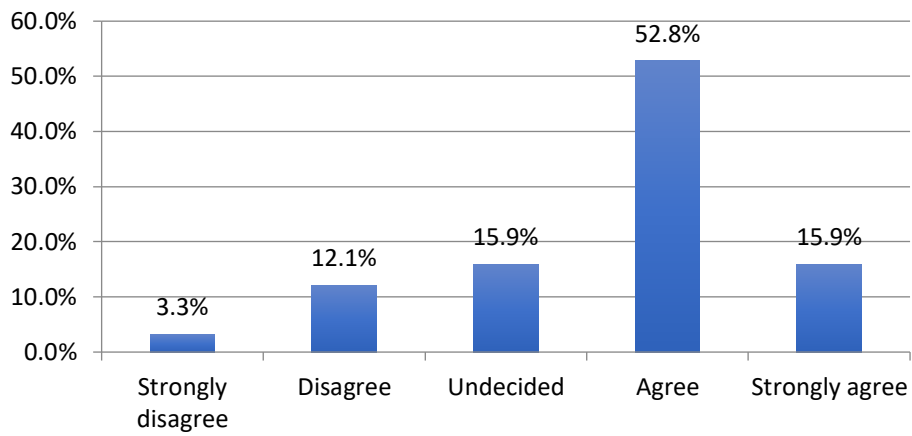
13 - I felt that interactions with child(ren) with emotional problems was (were) rewarding at a satisfactory level



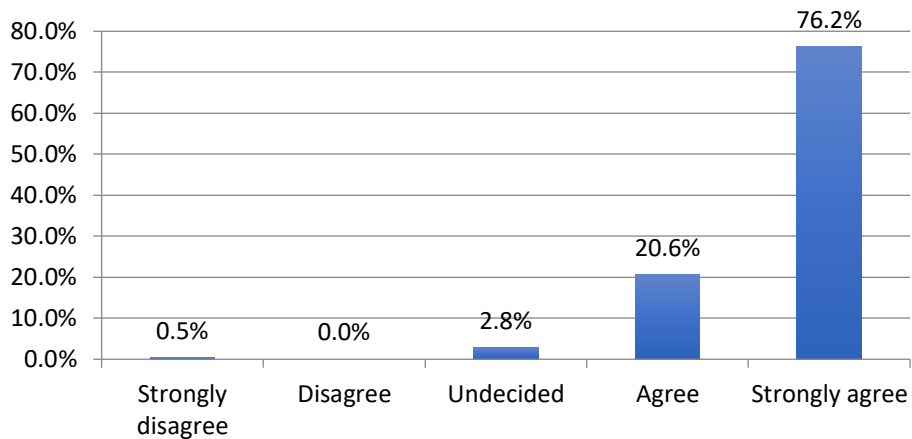
14 - I was able to face difficulties by my-self



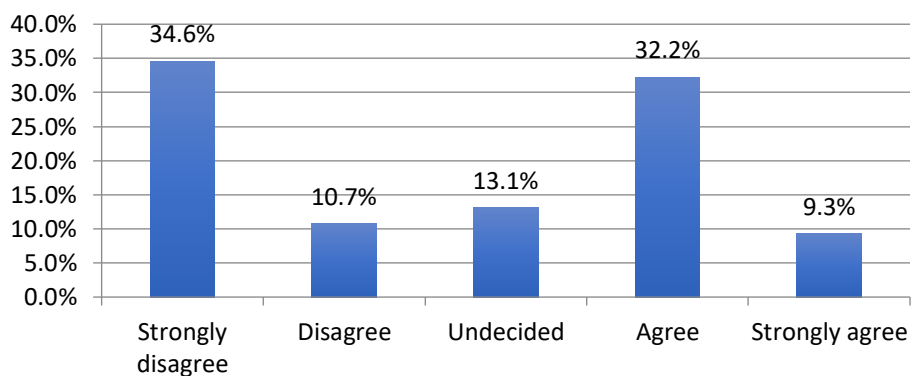
15 - I needed support to face difficulties



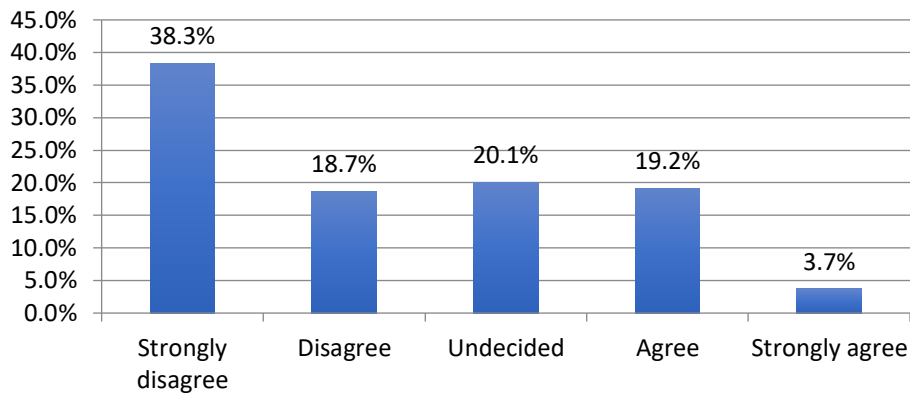
16 - I thought that child(ren) was (were) a positive element in my life



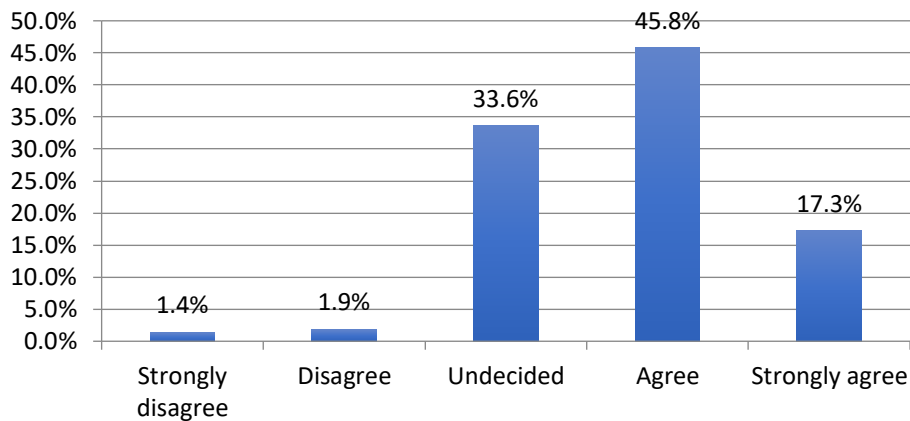
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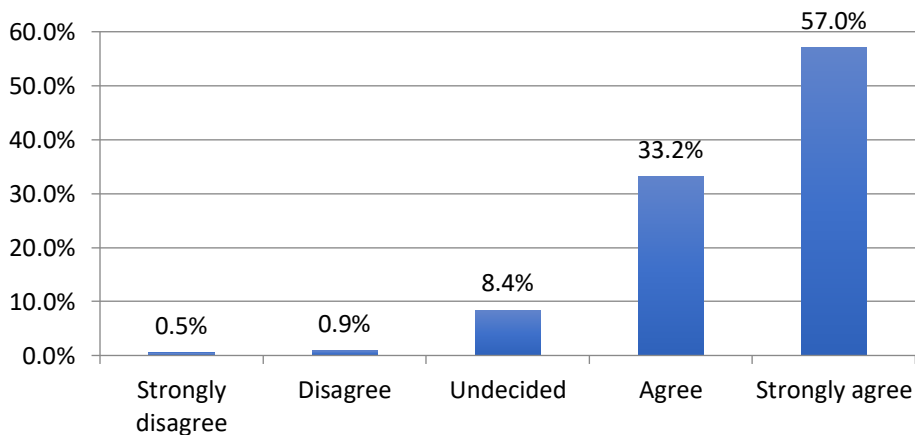
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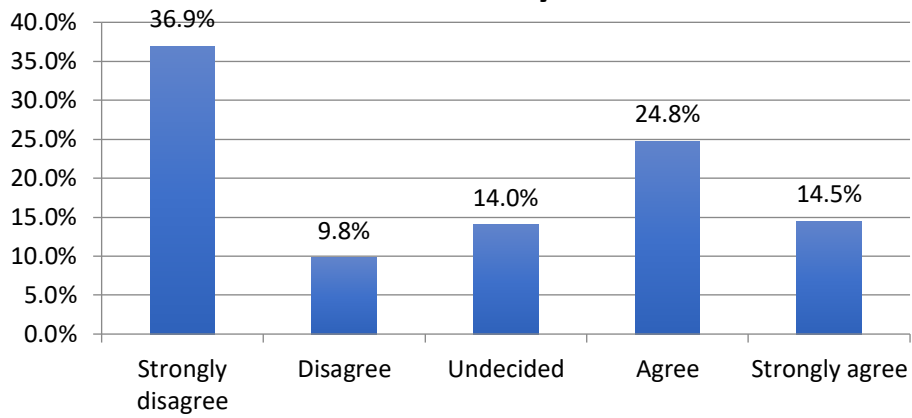
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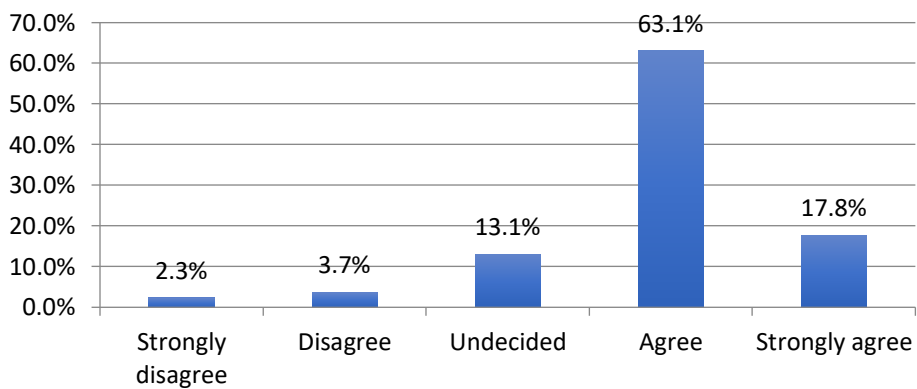
20 - I felt that the child(ren) with emotional problems accepted me and liked to stay with me



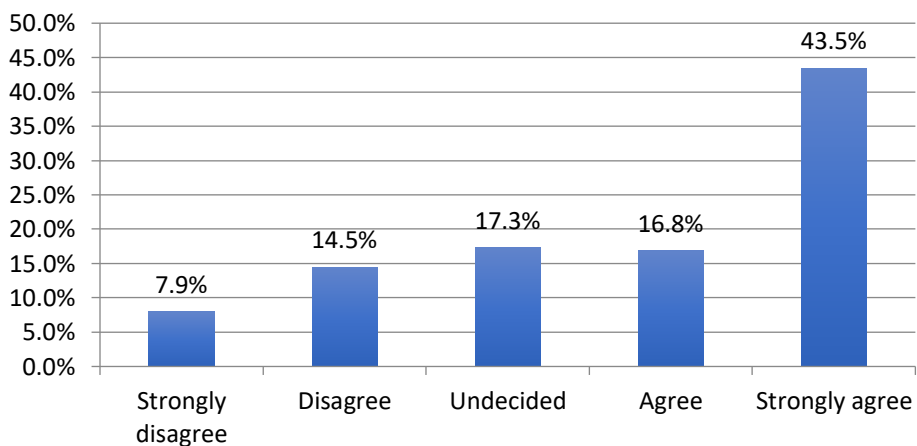
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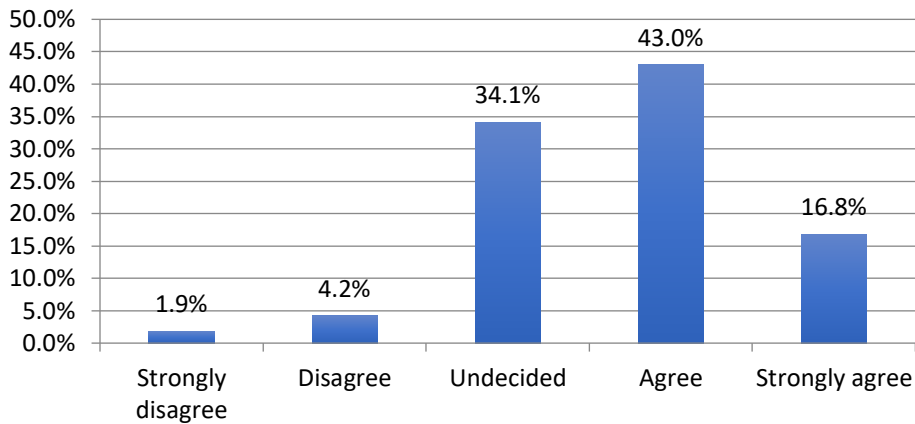
22 - I thought the child(ren) willingly obeyed my requests if they were reasonable



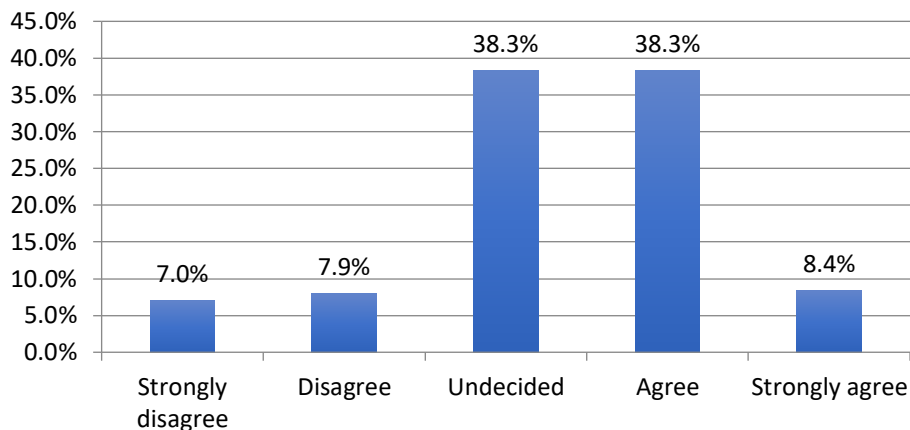
23 - I need counseling and support to care for my child(ren)



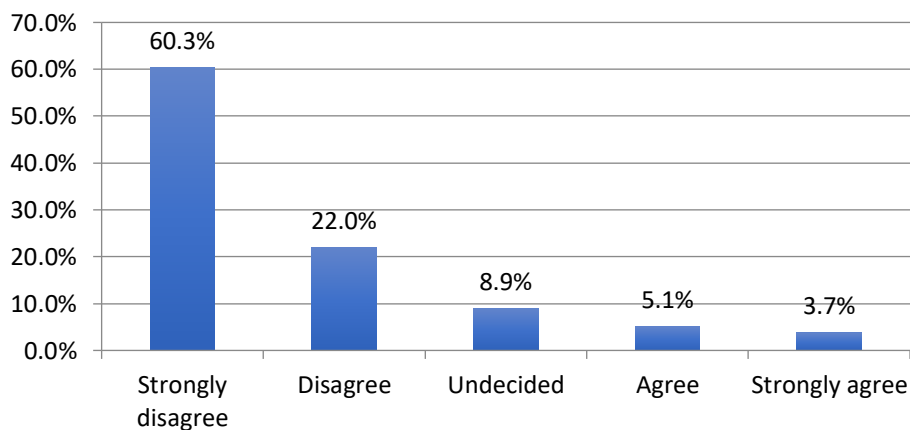
24 - I felt satisfied as a parent/ adult who care for a preschool or a primary school children with emotional problems



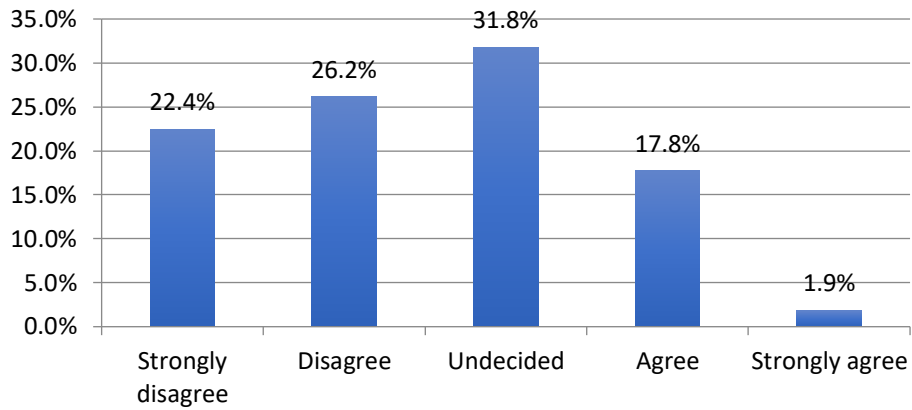
25 - I thought that taking care for a preschool or a primary school child(ren) with emotional problems was enjoyable



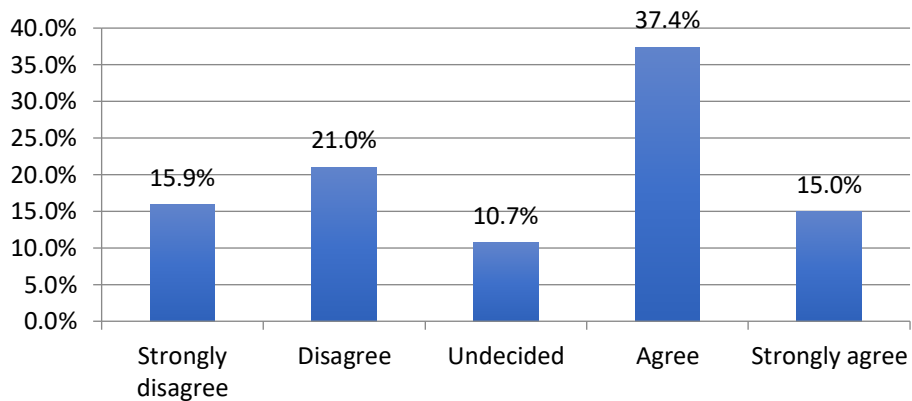
26 - Have you thought that if you could turn back, you might decide to not take care of child(ren) with emotional problem?



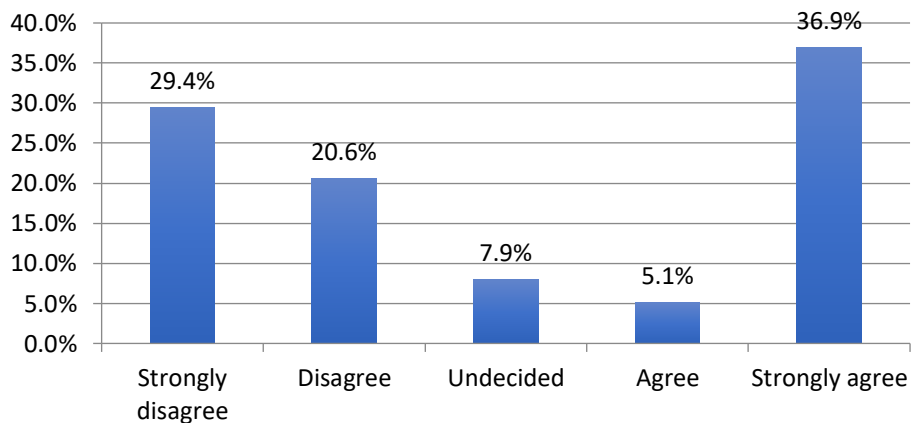
27 - Have you thought that the major source of stress in your life is taking care of child(ren)'s education?

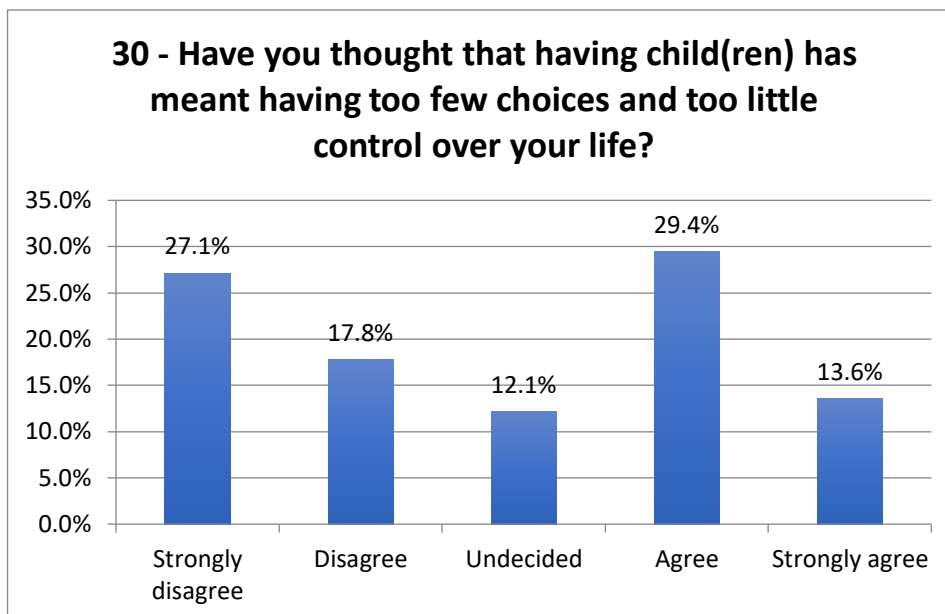


28 - Have you thought that taking care of child(ren)'s education leaves little time and flexibility in your life?



29 - Have you thought that taking care of child(ren)'s education has been a financial burden?





Final considerations

Thanks to the administration of Stress Scale we can observe that the quality of life and the psychological state of the adults who care for preschool and primary school children with emotional problems is reassuring.

In fact, it can be seen that there is quite a good level of satisfaction in children caregivers due to their activity and many of them find it also enjoyable.

Support from social services is the weak point because many are not totally satisfied with it and also many interviewed were looking for support, even if it is not specified if they have found it or not and who gave them this support; for instance, even a financial support seems to be asked by the 40% of the interviewed (question 29).

Almost all the interviewed are happy with their children and their caregiver activity, as more than 80% would not go back.

For this reason we think that could be adopted particular measures of support for adults who care for preschool and primary school children with emotional problems, such as:

- a) the creation of mutual-self-help groups
- b) the involvement of experts in socio-psycho-pedagogical assessment and intervention
- c) session of counselling for parents, as Parenting Center.

It would be possible, also, with the opening of Parenting Center to provide a comprehensive support, education and guidance designed to help parents, grandparents and other caregivers keep their children safe and happy: with a specific training, will hear a better management of their children and their care situations.

In this way, they will learn better coping skills and their life quality will improve.