Leading, management and administration as a comprehensive process

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to provide a complete picture of how important is the performance of school directors in Albania, with reference to the "Performance standards and evaluation criteria for school directors Guidelines".[1]
The purpose of this document is to be used as a reference for school directors. The performance evaluation for all school directors should be in compliance with these standards. Also, this document links closely school director's performance evaluation with student's achievements and the quality of the educational process.
This study is based on a methodology that includes both qualitative and quantitative aspects. The quantitative aspect is covering a large number of teachers and school directors in several city/village schools in Tirana, through surveys and questionnaires, in around 100 Tirana district schools with a sample of about one thousand teachers and seventy directors.
The comparison method used for the collection and interpretation of results serves to understand that the Albanian school system, despite the changes and reforms undertaken in recent years, again faces a poor quality of school management at different levels of education. Referring to previous research in this area, our subject matter has been both compulsory and upper secondary management, starting with performance appraisal, curriculum programs, management skills, leadership and professional skills of teaching and to the interpretation of data.

Keywords: leading, management, school, teachers, directors, legislation.

Introduction

In Albania, after the years 1990-2018 there has been a significant change in high school education leadership that has impacted a substantial part of the teaching and learning process and methodology. These changes have been powerful innovations that have provided a new prospective to the learning-teaching process in both the curricular content plan and in the process of managing and administering the school. Recognizing the school's problems related to increasing the quality of its learning, as well as improving school's management and leadership, understanding, thinking, judging on this area of study, we think that school leadership and management is one of the key areas through which we can change the quality of teaching and learning process for students at school. We understand that this will require new parameters and standards.
For this purpose, different efforts have been made in the Albanian school practice and numerous reforms have been undertaken to improve the quality of learning process at different levels of education.

[1] Normative Provisions Chapter XI from Articles 54 to 65. Chapter IX of the Law on Pre-University Education Article 54.n 55.

Leadership has an important and irreplaceable role in the school to increase the effectiveness of teaching-learning process, regardless of the continuous change that is necessary to occur in this process. Accurate identification of leading and management issues of the educational institution leads us to the perfection the system, both in the external and internal evaluation of the school.

Often we face of the expression, "Leadership defines the school level". Indeed, the leader, and not only, should handle the school as a family, which has defined functions and tasks and their realization becomes complete when the climate in the school is inclusive.

The leader should compromise of what he should be in the context of today's world. Everyone can become a leader[2]. In order to create and perceive a more accurate definition on the leader (leadership) we need to consider leaders' (leadership) theories and styles highlighting the differences between leaders and managers. The difference between leadership and managers was clearly defined by Abraham Zaleznik Leaders[3]. He notes that leaders are visionaries inspiring people and dealing with content, while managers are planners and deal with the process. The differences between leader and manager are further explained by Warren Bennis (1989).

Leadership defines school performance success, and depends also from the director's assessment and standards. *The director promotes students to be successful, facilitating, developing, communicating, implementing and evaluating a common vision for the educational process that provides systematic improvement of student achievements and for the school itself. He guides the development and fulfillment of the vision for improving school education, monitors and evaluates programs that enhance the quality of the educational process and works with staff to increase school outcomes.* [4]

Naturally we ask the following questions: What is Leadership? Is it a process or an attribute? How many parties are involved? Who implements it? Whom it is implemented upon? What is the main purpose?

Leadership is a process through which a person influences others to achieve an objective and leads the organization in such a way that it becomes more coherent adapting to the human dynamics[5].

Leadership is art. The following example makes it clear that leadership is the art that leads all members of the group to consider themselves members of the team. "My leader told me that teamwork depends on the performance of each team member. For me it was difficult to understand, until my manager told me how the office writing machine worked when one of the keystrokes came out of function. All other keys worked very well, but only one damaged caused the whole machine to go out of operation. Now I understand that even though I'm a single person, I am needed to the team in order for it to work properly."[6]

[2] With the leader we will understand not only the righteous leader, but also the leader of a group, organization or institution.

[3] A. Zaleznik, "Managers and Leaders: Are They Different?", 1977.

[4] Gardner, Leading Minds, An Anatomy of Leadership, (2000). fq13 Leadership Handbook, LGP / UNPD, 2004

[5] Fullani. M "The New Meaning of Change in Education" 3rd Edition; Edualba 2001 pg. 261.

[6] Albanian Customs Service Training Management Training (I-Introduction to Management).

The skilled director plays a role in the teacher's group. He must be trustworthy and achieve to establish a professional partnership by sharing responsibilities and "power", by focusing on the important things to create the integration of the entire teaching process in the new vision of our education and to prepare a new generation capable for the market place.
Different international organizations have provided an extensive contribution and support to the education reforms undertaking many projects that have improved the school curriculum such as World Bank (2003-present), "Global Education" UNICEF (1994-present), Save the Children (2004-2013), USAID, PNUD etc. The support of these organizations has been provided mainly through the publications offered to Albanian education, giving education a new spirit in coherence with global developments.
In our study we have chosen to focus on: "Management and administration of the school". This has been the object of our study and research of this project.

Methodology
This study relies on a methodology that considers both qualitative and quantitative aspects. The quantitative aspects cover a large number of students, teachers and managers in some schools in Tirana. We have applied a set of tools like tests, measurements, surveys and questionnaires, through which we have received data about the schools performance and the leadership process in terms of quality of learning.
The study is extended to Tirana schools, including urban and rural areas. This extension has given us the opportunity to compare the results obtained. In this study we have used statistical methods that have allowed us achieving some conclusions about the leadership process. In the questionnaires we used, we included not only the behavior of the leaders but also the teachers' behavior, without leaving aside the relationship with the community, highlighting the interaction and the relationship between these different actors (director, teacher, student, community, etc.)
Therefore, if we want to assess the quality of a school, we need to evaluate issues such as school management and leadership, classroom teaching and management, student activity, learning difficulties, school and extracurricular activities, community relationships and plenty of other issues. Time demands new benchmarks and standards, where the role of all actors involved in the process is also appreciated.

Results
Many of the problems in schools today are partly as a result of unprepared leadership to face the complexity of today's reality. This is not simply an issue related to leader's inadequate training in compliance with global developments and changes, but also an issue related to their inability to understand reality and education policies and legislation. Additionally, their graduation is limited to a specific high school major (e.g., social studies, science) which limit their ability to face the different issues that exists in the education system today.
There are very few school leaders today that hold masters in Leadership and Management.
One key question we ask is: How would we assess the leadership skills of a school director?

Unable to include in our study 1990 school leaders of all high school in Albania (according to MAS statistics), we have focused our study to a number of schools, used as prototypes to assess the leadership skills in Tirana.
The survey aims to highlight the leaders and teachers vision in order to establish trust in progressing school to achieve European standards and make the students feel proud of their school as it will provide them the opportunity of developing their social and academic level. Assessors and directors should discuss performance indicators to clarify what of each standard means.
Estimates are made at the performance standard level, not at the level of the performance indicator. Meanwhile, it is important to document the director's work for each standard with evidence stemming from multiple performance indicators, but not necessarily by all performance indicators.
To elaborate more the above idea we conducted a modest research and we are presenting some indicator performance samples for some standards.
The interview was conducted with 100 school directors of Tirana (city and surrounding). The methodology used is field research, and the results are presented on tables and graphs. Additionally, our analysis based on facts and evidence collected indicates the following:
The following information conveys concrete information. *Analyzing the charts and graphs of the first questionnaire (See Annex)* it turns out that teachers say that school directors in their work are more focused on disciplinary problems of students, their attendance at school time, the discipline of teachers during the work, organizational problems and on the school assistant service such as school workers and guards.
From the questionnaire analysis we conclude that teachers do not see leaders focused on improving teaching. Furthermore, they do not see them as well prepared to help them in teaching or in their professional development and in promoting them in search-based good teaching practices.
Teachers say that leaders need to do more for their professional preparation, offering training and qualifications inside the school. Teachers expect their leaders to have a vision and a pure spirit both professionally and morally. The director should be a protector of the teacher's figure and not denigrate the teacher's figure before his parents, despite the fact that the teacher may make mistakes in his work. A good director knows how to manage and change the image of his staff.
Unfortunately, from the analysis of the questionnaires we found that the teachers do not see their directors as good leaders, emphasizing that in most cases the directors are arrogant and use the power of their position. Teachers expect their leaders to be: impartial, tolerant, correct, humane and social with the teachers. A peculiarity of the Albanian reality is related to the influence of politics, which is apparently a factor once again dominant. Teachers raise the need to be depoliticized at work, as it really should be. We are bringing the opinions of some teachers as below..
Teacher M.C says: "... the director, as soon as he looks at me, he starts yelling at me and tells me that I do not work .... I feel very demoralized, if he would motivate me once, I would do my best. I try but ..."
Teacher K.G "... she is unable to lead, does not know the laws and because of this she makes scientific mistakes. She does not know how to lead and activate subject teams; she creates a lot of clashes between colleagues and parents... "

In another school, teacher G.G says' *She went through the idea in order to force them to get involved into work. It may seem nice, but becomes strict while presenting, never loses concentration. She knows what she wants and is good in accomplishing it. Maybe she does not always succeed, but she knows how to learn. "*

Teacher N.K says *"The director is aware of the fact that her work is monitored by others, so she always tries to demonstrate her educational philosophy through practical activities. This is manifested in many ways such as forming working groups and leadings them by distributing responsibilities. The way she operates encourages the community in the educational-teaching process. People appreciate the way she communicates and how she always finds time to listen. Analyzing the tables and graphs of the second questionnaire. (See Annex).*

Leaders of educational institutions should have work experience in education for at least more than five years. Statistics shows that executives are very young (80%) and have not previously exercised the task of the director. From the analysis of the documentation of the directors and especially from the examination of school development plans, it is evident that the problems being followed are standard in most of the schools.

70% of them do not know their teachers staff. Institution directors did not go to school for leadership and management, but merely they completed the higher education of their study major, where they got the diploma of the teacher. (See in the annex tables and charts)

Analyzing the tables and graphs of questionnaire 3. (See Annex).

From the third questionnaire data analysis, 78% of teachers are not familiar with legislation in high school education, although 82% of them are regular participants in trainings for their professional development. Teachers are the most energetic and motivating part of the job, 85% of them feel proud of the work of the students. They work with the desire to prepare the students scientifically, but have problems in managing the conflict without being familiar with the social problems of their students. They constantly (42% of them intentionally and 38% of them unintentionally) negatively label their students, using punishment as a method of keeping the class or students under control. They are a little acquainted with human rights and the children convention. Teachers, in parenting meetings do not use individual communication with parents who have children with disciplinary problems but make general statements and apply group punishments, reducing this way the personality of parents and students.

Through data analysis from Tables 1, 2 and 3, it is clear that school management is the process of working with staff to achieve the goals planned for a successful school. On the other hand, good management of human resources and their motivation leads to unquestionable success. In order to be a successful leader, you should know the legislation, respect human rights and establish democratic relations in school by respecting everyone at the school with fairness. Certainly, work experience would be another key to good school leadership. From the answers given and conversations with the teachers, it is clear that they want to have leaders with a high professional and moral spirit figure, with clear vision and be unbiased in their work etc.

If we were to make a summary of all of the data presented above, it is important to have a quality school management that must recognize the complexities of educational phenomena, the forces that act, the priorities that lead to education

towards enhancing the quality of teaching and learning.
According to Fullani, "The school administrator is the educational leader who promotes the success of all students, facilitates the development, expression, implementation, and care of a vision of learning that is common to the entire school community. It promotes success by acting with integrity, justice and in ethical way, responding and influencing the broader political, social, economic, legal and cultural context"[7]

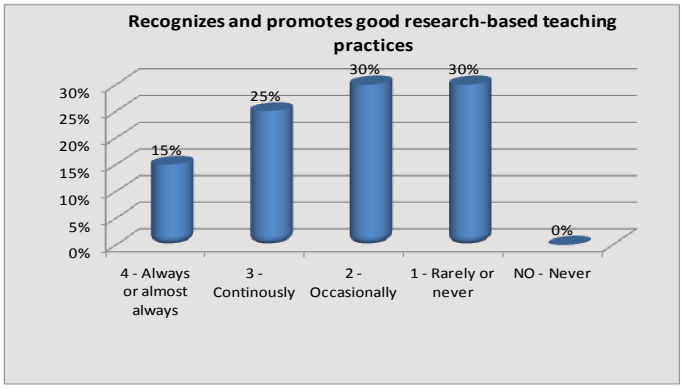
Annex

Table 1. Charts of table 1

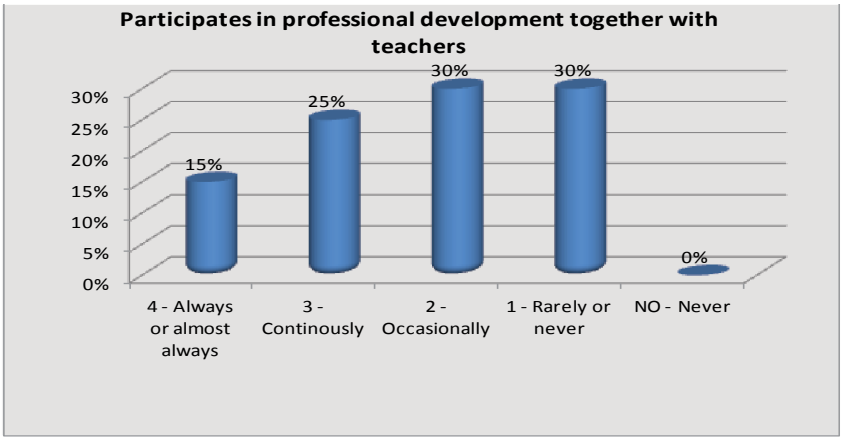
Table 1 - Survey Form for Teachers by School Directors

School Director	4	3	2	1
Facilitates collaborative decision making	0%	20%	10%	70%
Recognizes and promotes good research-based teaching practices	15%	25%	30%	30%
Participates in professional development together with teachers	15%	25%	30%	30%
Focuses teachers on student development and achievements	10%	62%	18%	10%
Treats all teachers fairly	10%	10%	56%	24%
Responds to teachers' requirements for materials and equipment needed	10%	10%	60%	30%
Helps and trusts teachers	15%	60%	20%	5%
Works for school and teaching improvements	20%	66%	14%	0%
Brings energy and enthusiasm to work	50%	50%	0%	0%
Stays aware of changes and new educational trends	0%	48%	52%	0%
Criticize teachers privately and contructively	0%	0%	42%	58%
Listens to the parents and citizens views and implements recommendations	20%	20%	40%	20%
Deals with the discipline and attendance of students at school	60%	20%	10%	10%

Key	4 - Always or almost always	3 - Continously	2 - Occasionally	1 - Rarely or never



7 Fullani. M. "The new understanding of change in education" 3rd Edition; Edualba 2001 p. 390.


Participates in professional development together with teachers
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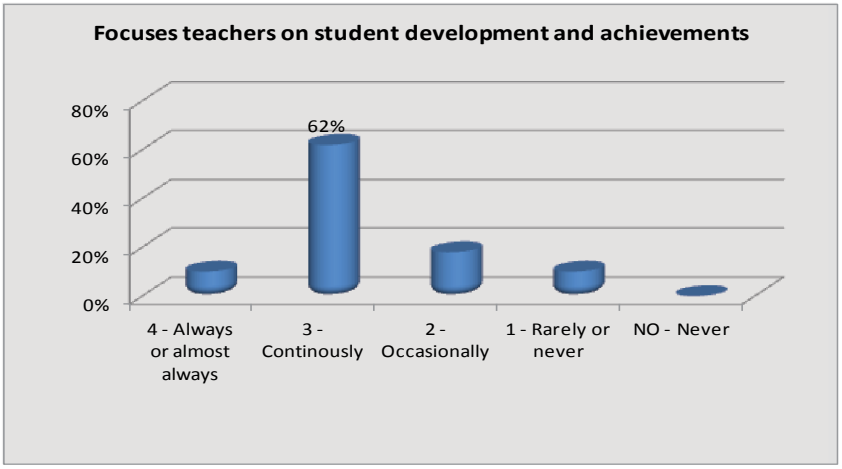
4 - Always or almost always
3 - Continously
2 - Occasionally
1 - Rarely or never
NO - Never


Focuses teachers on student development and achievements
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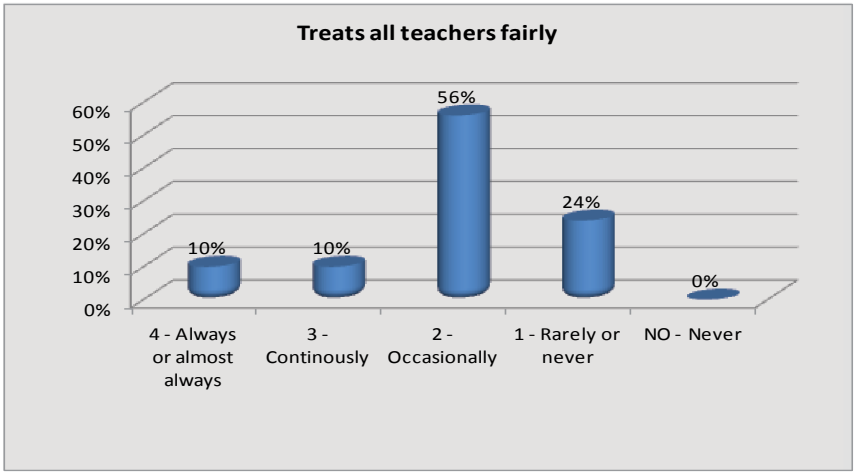
3 - Continously
2 - Occasionally
1 - Rarely or never
NO - Never


Treats all teachers fairly
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4 - Always or almost always
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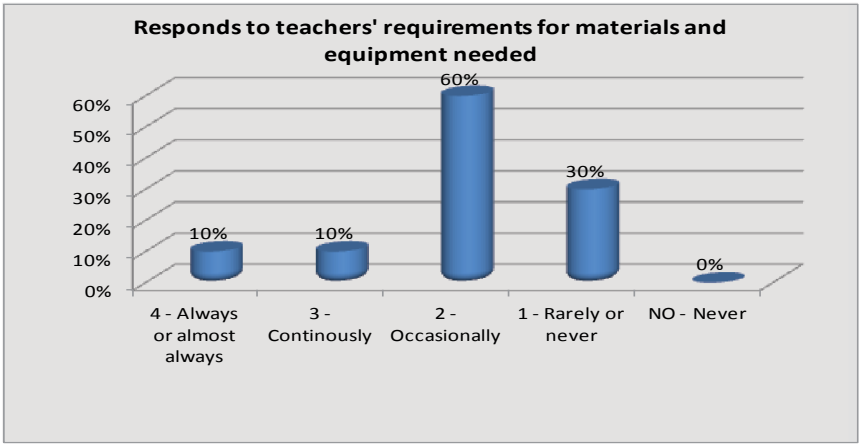
Responds to teachers' requirements for materials and equipment needed
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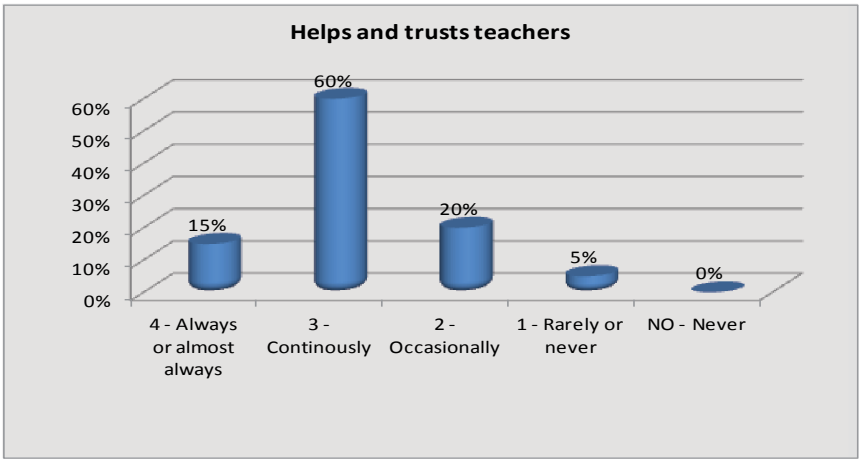
Helps and trusts teachers
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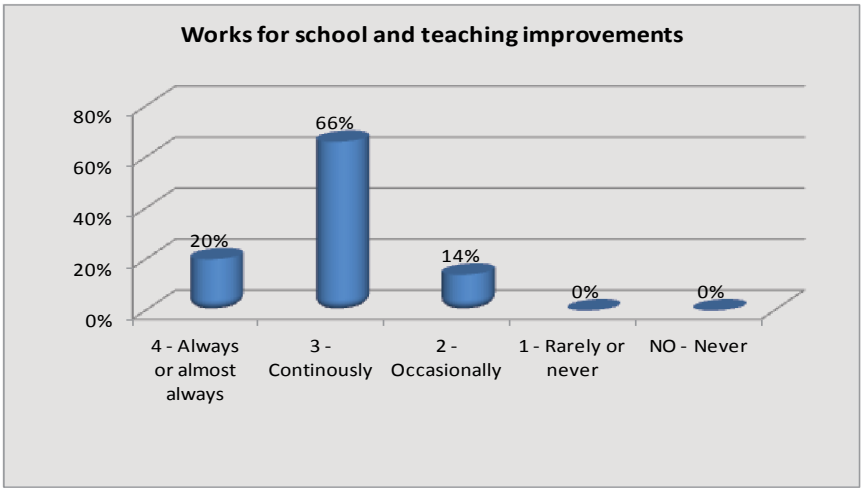
Works for school and teaching improvements
80%
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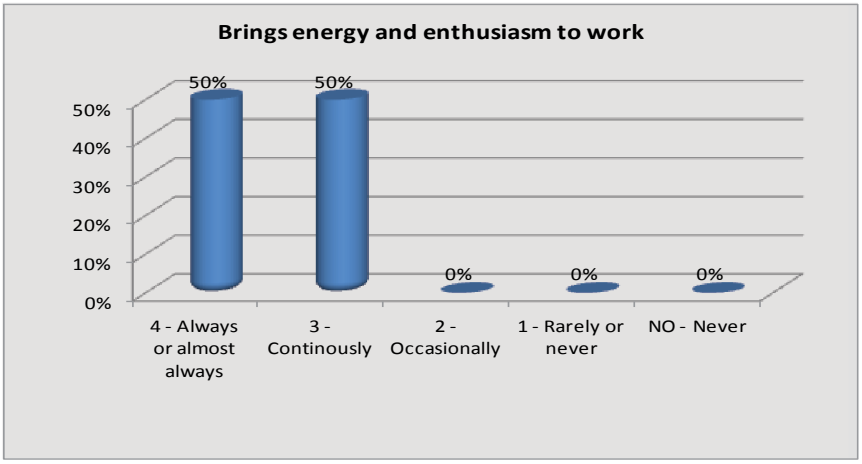
Brings energy and enthusiasm to work
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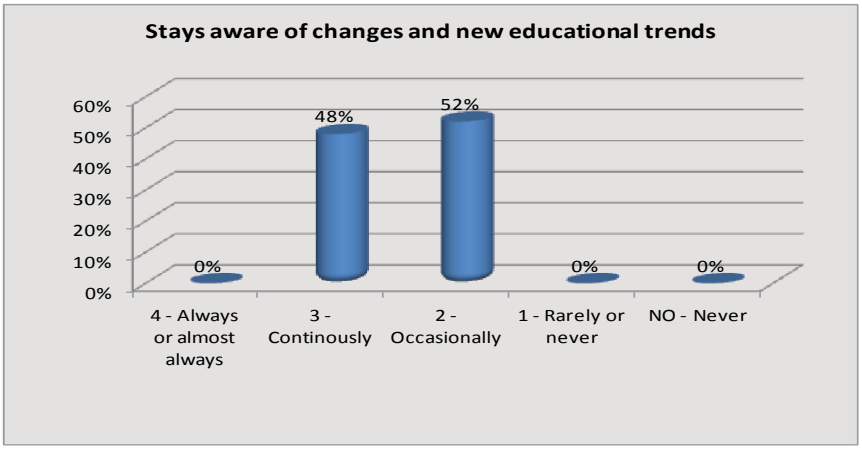
Stays aware of changes and new educational trends
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20%
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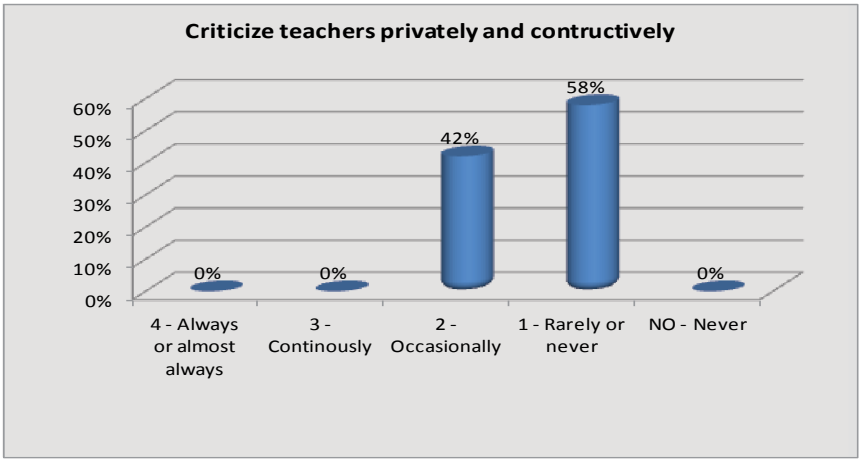
Criticize teachers privately and contructively
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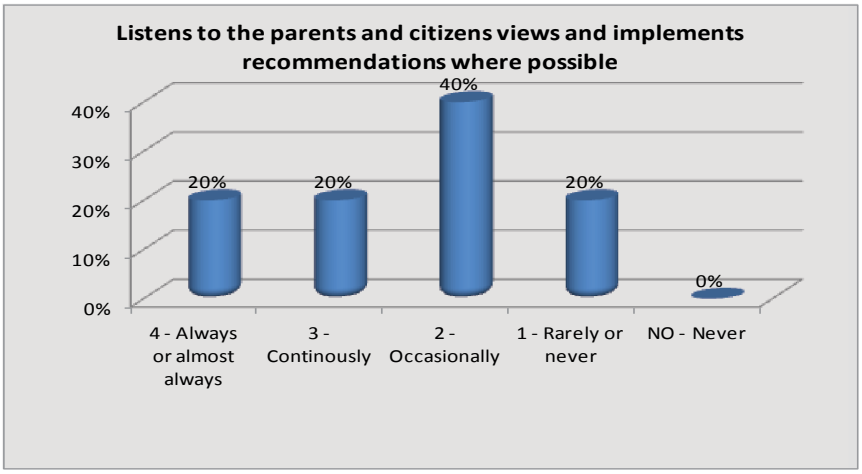


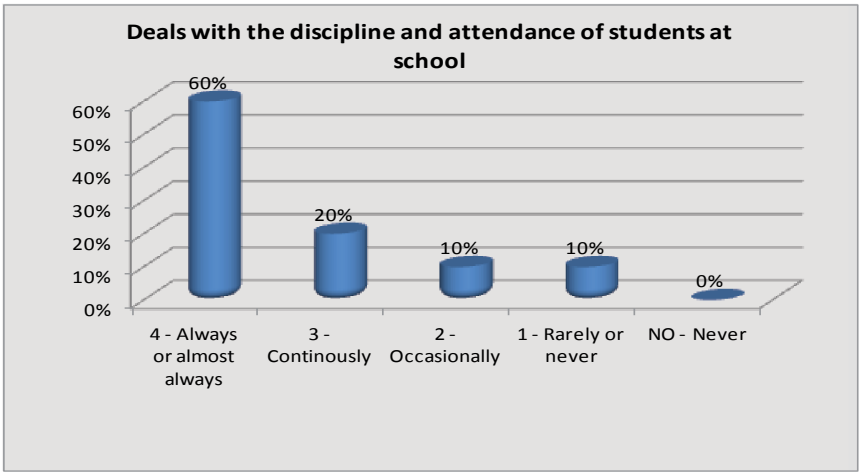
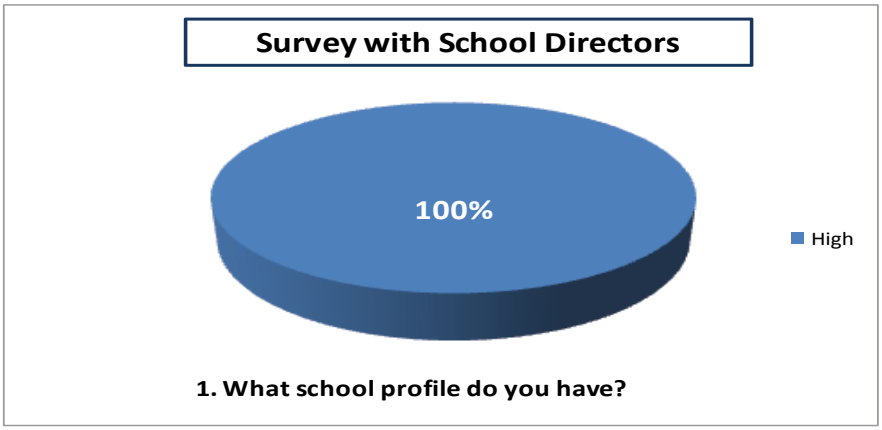


Table 2. Charts of table 2

Table 2 - Survey with School Directors

Question	High	Yes	No	5 Years	10 Years	15 Years	20 Years
1. What school profile do you have?	100%	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Do you have a second College Degree?	-	10%	90%	-	-	-	-
3. Have you done a leadership course or a master in management?	-	20%	80%	-	-	-	-
4. How many years of work do you have in education?	-	-	-	45%	30%	20%	5%
5. How many years of work do you have in managment?	-	-	-	80%	12%	8%	0%



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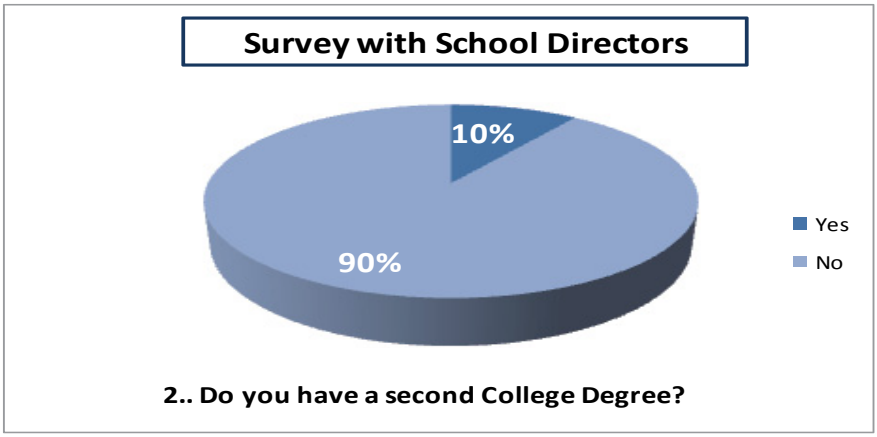
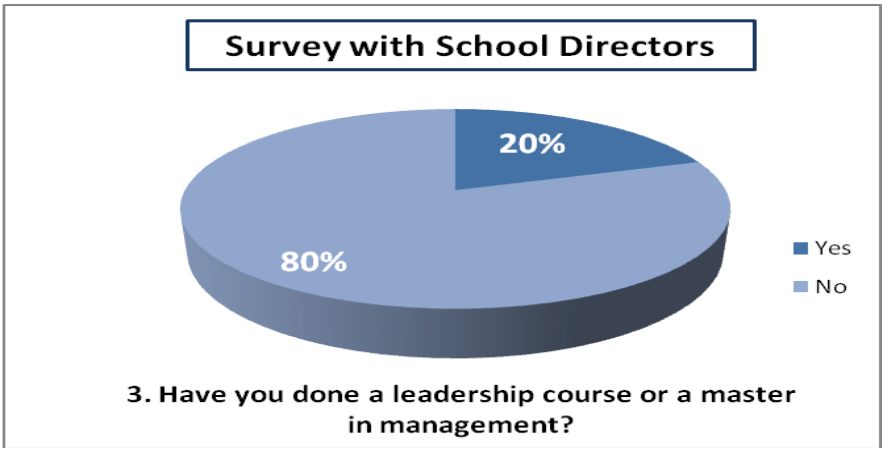
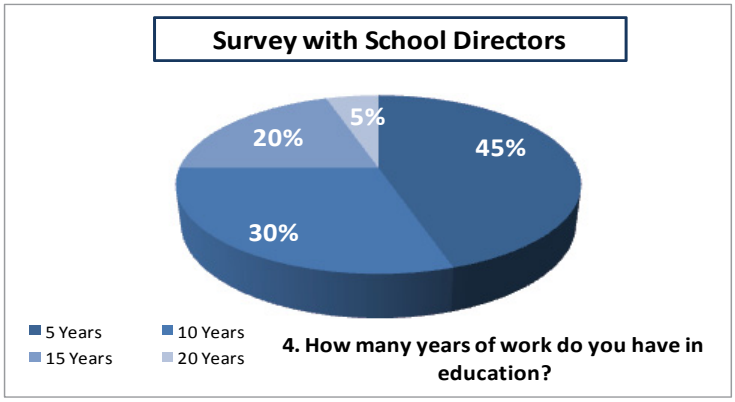


2.. Do you have a second College Degree?



3. Have you done a leadership course or a master in management?



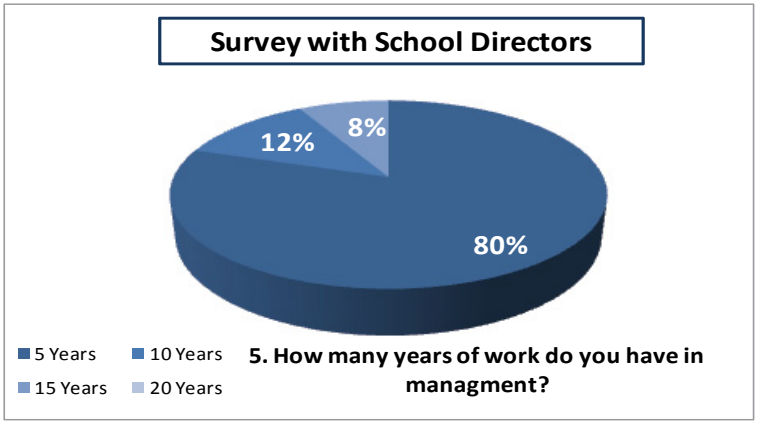
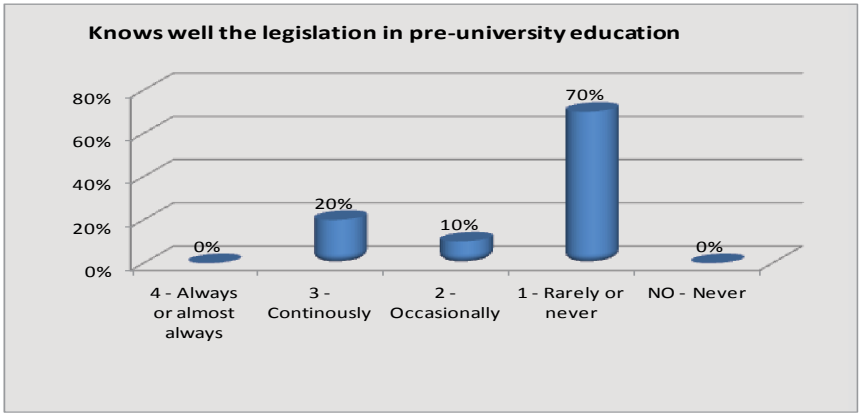


Table 3. Charts of table 3

Table 3 - Survey Form for Teachers by School Directors

Teacher	4	3	2	1	NO
Knows well the legislation in pre-university education	5%	15%	78%	2%	0%
Participates in professional and scientific development	82%	14%	2%	2%	0%
Brings energy and enthusiasm to work	74%	16%	6%	4%	0%
Avoids formulating negative reviews	15%	17%	48%	20%	0%
Makes students feel confident in their abilities	4%	52%	34%	10%	0%
Encourages students to help each other	6%	82%	10%	2%	0%
Feels proud of the students' work	10%	85%	3%	2%	0%
Encorages motivation	10%	5%	80%	5%	0%
The teacher admits that he is not perfect	2%	20%	48%	30%	0%
Distributes responsibilities to all students	2%	20%	48%	30%	0%
The teacher labels the student lazy, slow, sluggish	8%	42%	38%	12%	0%
The teacher loses his/her temper during conflicts	5%	15%	12%	68%	0%
The teacher stays calm during conflicts	68%	12%	15%	5%	0%
Establish rules during the lesson and include parents in teaching	2%	6%	22%	70%	0%

Key	4 - Always or almost always	3 - Continously	2 - Occasionally	1 - Rarely or never	NO - Never


Knows well the legislation in pre-university education
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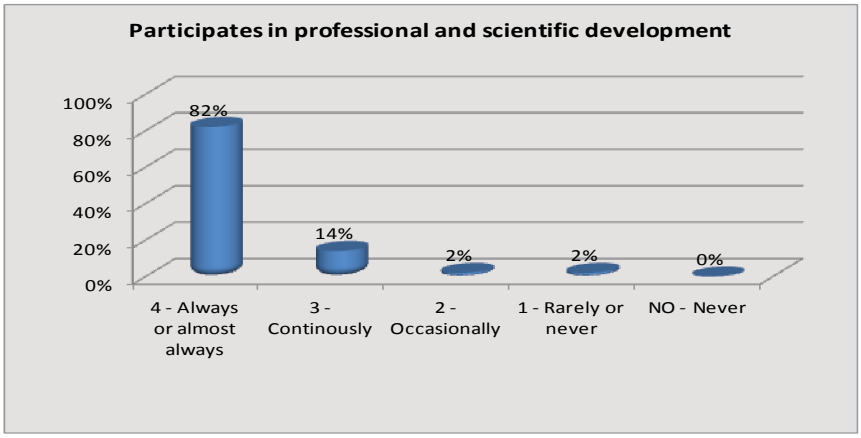
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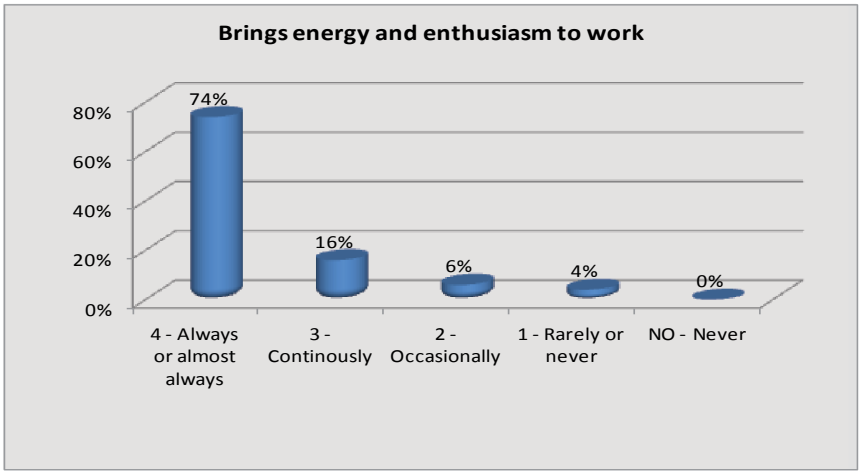
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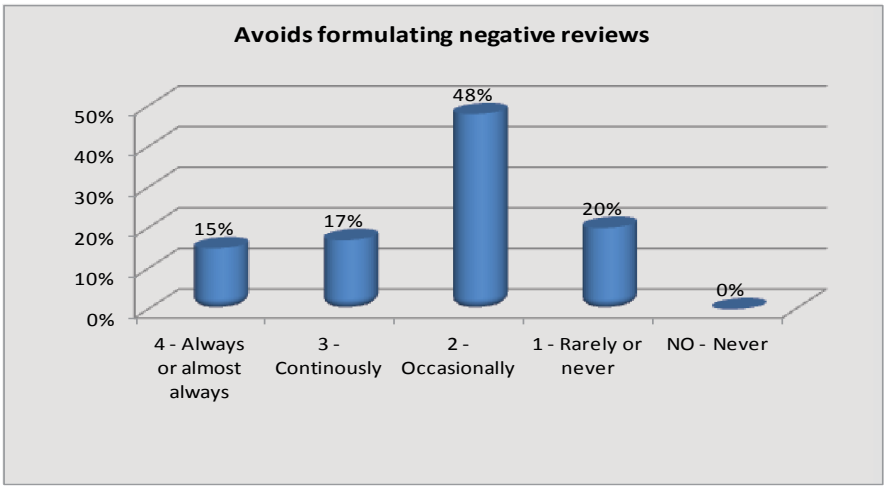
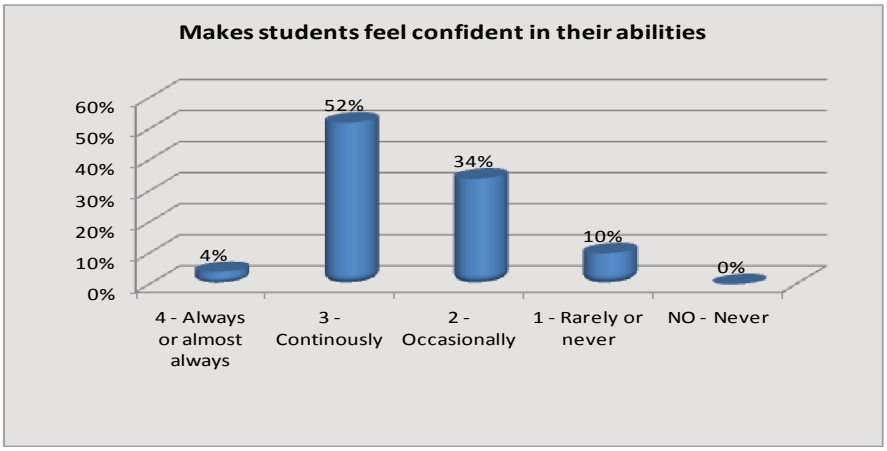
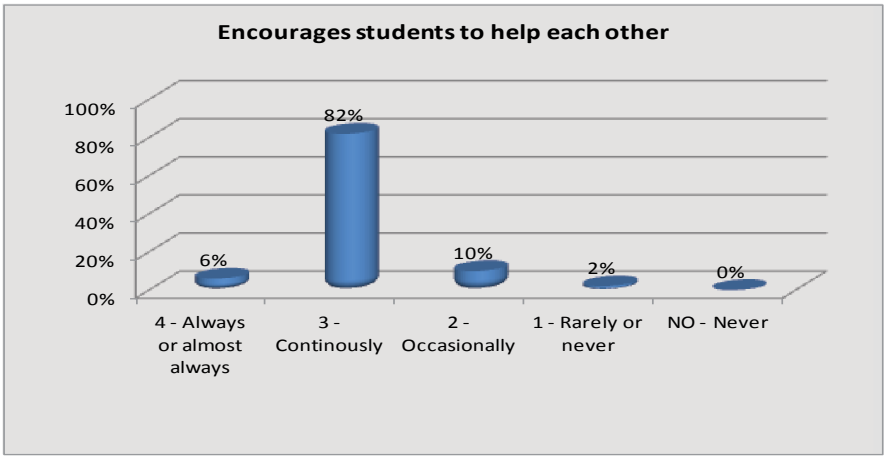
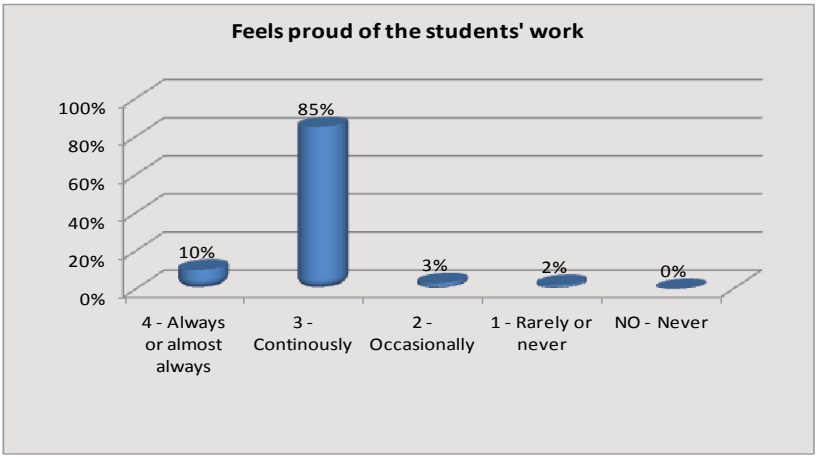
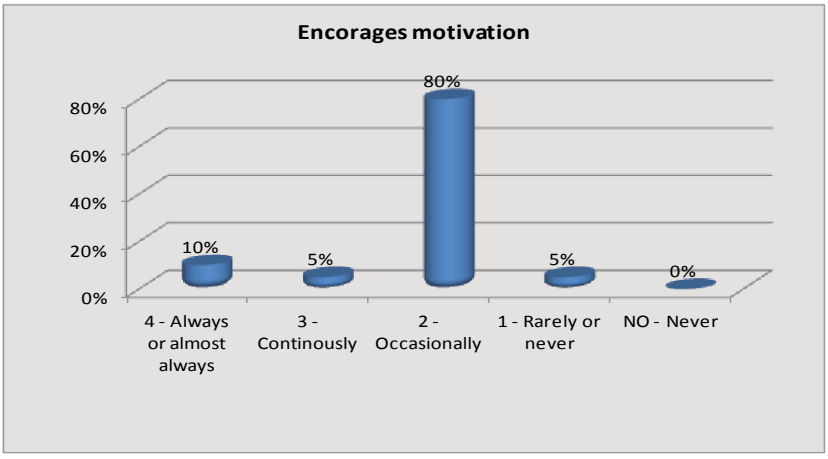
1 - Rarely or never
NO - Never

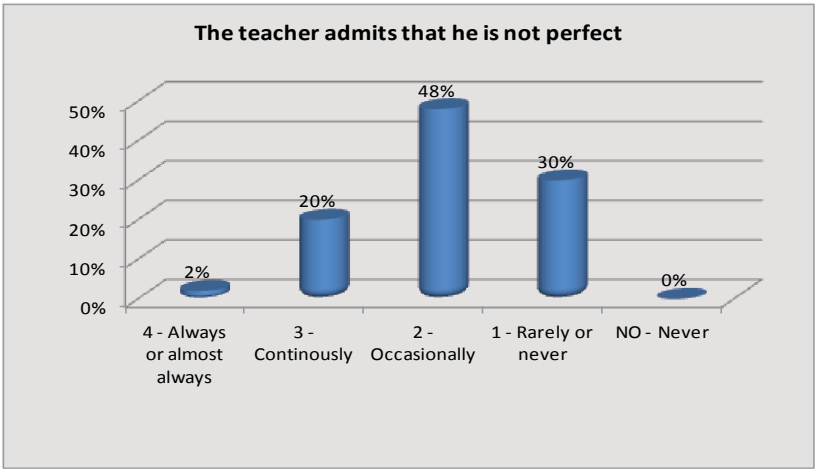

Avoids formulating negative reviews
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
15%
17%
48%
20%
0%
4 - Always or almost always
3 - Continously
2 - Occasionally
1 - Rarely or never
NO - Never

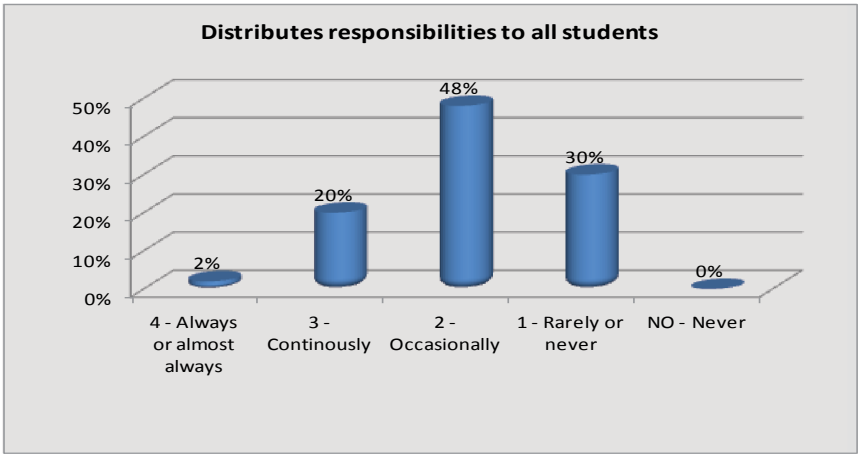

Makes students feel confident in their abilities
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
4%
52%
34%
10%
0%
4 - Always or almost always
3 - Continously
2 - Occasionally
1 - Rarely or never
NO - Never

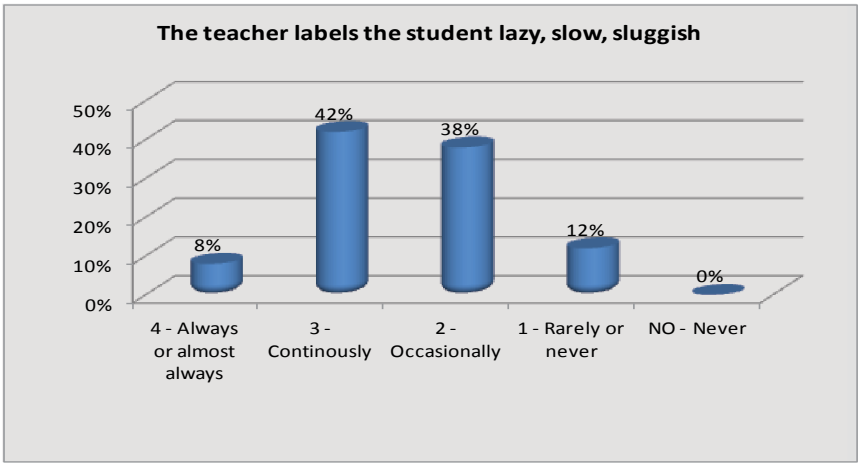

Encourages students to help each other
100%
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
6%
82%
10%
2%
0%
4 - Always or almost always
3 - Continously
2 - Occasionally
1 - Rarely or never
NO - Never

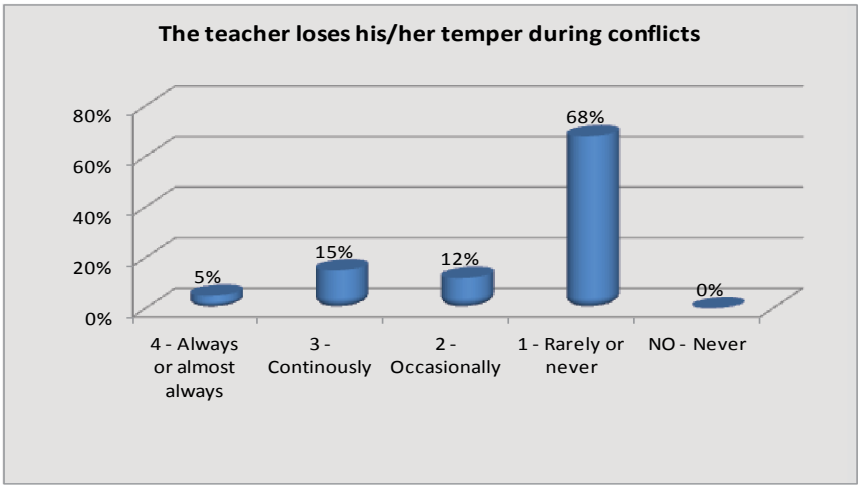

Feels proud of the students' work
100%
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
10%
85%
3%
2%
0%
4 - Always or almost always
3 - Continously
2 - Occasionally
1 - Rarely or never
NO - Never

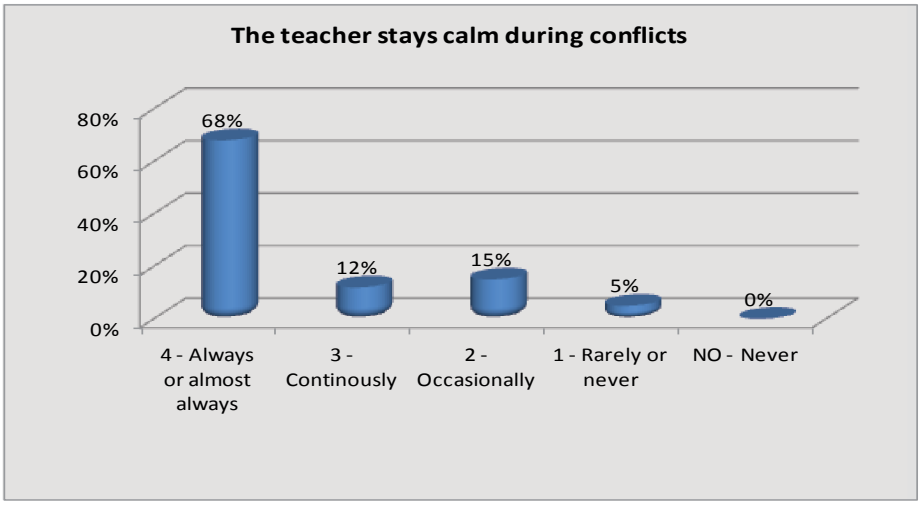

Encorages motivation
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
10%
5%
80%
5%
0%
4 - Always or almost always
3 - Continously
2 - Occasionally
1 - Rarely or never
NO - Never

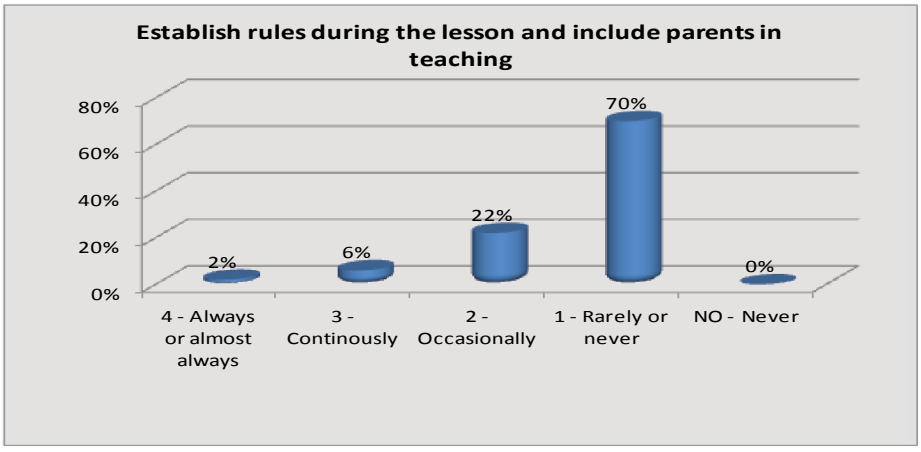

The teacher admits that he is not perfect
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
2%
20%
48%
30%
0%
4 - Always or almost always
3 - Continously
2 - Occasionally
1 - Rarely or never
NO - Never


Distributes responsibilities to all students
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
2%
20%
48%
30%
0%
4 - Always or almost always
3 - Continously
2 - Occasionally
1 - Rarely or never
NO - Never


The teacher labels the student lazy, slow, sluggish
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
8%
42%
38%
12%
0%
4 - Always or almost always
3 - Continously
2 - Occasionally
1 - Rarely or never
NO - Never


The teacher loses his/her temper during conflicts
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
5%
15%
12%
68%
0%
4 - Always or almost always
3 - Continously
2 - Occasionally
1 - Rarely or never
NO - Never





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