



LearnersMot

**How to Trigger Primary Motivation for Learning
in Low Educated Adults Using ICT Tools**

project number: 2017-1-ES01-KA204-038414

The State of Art of Education for Low Educated and Low Skilled Adults in Spain

English



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The state of art of education for low educated and low skilled adults in Spain

Introduction

In the framework of the Erasmus+ project “**LearnersMot: How to Trigger Primary Motivation for Learning in Low Educated Adults Using ICT Tools**”, which is meant to empower adult educators to motivate low educated and low skilled adult learners to continue learning, we have done a survey to know the opinion of adult educators about this topic.

The survey is based on a questionnaire with 67 questions distributed in 5 main sections that has been answered by educators from 5 different educational centres from Slovenia, Italy, Cyprus, and Spain.

In this report, we explain the results obtained in Spain. In Spain the survey has been held the area of Reus, Tarragona province. A total of 11 adult educators, working in different public and private institutions, answered the survey, specially prepared for this purpose.

1. What is the current status of adult education in your country?

The European Commission has repeatedly stressed the importance of lifelong learning as a key mechanism for fostering economic growth in the European Union. Lifelong learning was incorporated into the objectives of the Lisbon Agenda (2010) and was also set among the strategic objectives for the year 2020. In particular, by then, all member countries must reach a participation rate of adults in education and training of 15%. The rate of participation in adult education in Spain is still about five percentage points of target of the EU agenda.

As in other OECD countries, the percentage of adults with basic education has increased in Spain. However, there are still significant differences between Spain and other countries in terms of the number of adults with secondary education. While in Spain only 22.5% have a second stage degree in Secondary Education, the OECD average reaches 44.2%

The results of the survey confirm this point, as the majority of the responders think that there is a relevant group of low educated and low skilled people that don't

participate in adult education. These adults should be encouraged and motivated to continue participating in the educational processes, however, they usually show a very low level of interest and motivation for learning activities. This highlights the need to take measures to make education more affordable and more attractive for this target group.

2. What is functional illiteracy (usually the state of low educated and low skilled adults) and what are the characteristics of low educated and low skilled adults?

Functional illiteracy refers to the level of reading, writing, understanding and numeracy that is not sufficient for functioning in today's society.

Not everyone who is classified as functionally illiterate perceives that they have a problem with reading, writing, numeracy or accessing information, and the majority of people who are classified as functionally illiterate participate in the labour market. However, according to the Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC), people who are functionally illiterate are more often unemployed, are less often socially active, have a lower level of income and more often have health problems.

The requirement for higher levels of qualifications from employers, digitalization and automation mean that people who are functionally illiterate are at greater risk of long-term unemployment and exclusion from the labour market.

But literacy is not only important for the labour market, it is important for personal or social aspects of a person's life. According to survey respondents, functional illiteracy has other consequences, such as lack of confidence and a feeling of shame or guilt. For that reason, it is important to motivate functional illiterate adults to stay in education to and acquire the necessary knowledge to improve their life.

3. How to motivate adults to enroll and stay in educational/training programmes?

One of the challenges that adult educators face when trying to develop programmes to teach low skilled and low qualified adults is the fact that their needs are very diverse and often not expressed. One of the biggest challenges is to convince low skilled and low qualified adults that to acquire certain knowledge will be beneficial for them. That's why motivation is so important when teaching functional illiterate adults.

Adults, unlike other students, have a lot of things on their minds and learning is probably the last of them. In addition, adult learners don't see the rewards of their efforts as soon as they would expect and they may also lack studying habits. For this reason, when teaching low-educated and low-skilled adults it is very important to provide an encouraging atmosphere to make them feel confident, to teach them practical things that they can apply in their everyday life and to give them constant support.

4. How to design/organize low educated students' learning process?

When developing a course for low educated students, educators should implement an initial analysis of the students' personal, working, social and educational needs and the program should be designed taking into consideration each individual's needs as well as the common needs of the group.

It is also very important to decide the goals in a participatory process. Adults want educators to listen to their problems and needs and, if they feel heard and valued, they will be more involved in the learning process.

5. Which methods should be used while educating low educated and low skilled students?

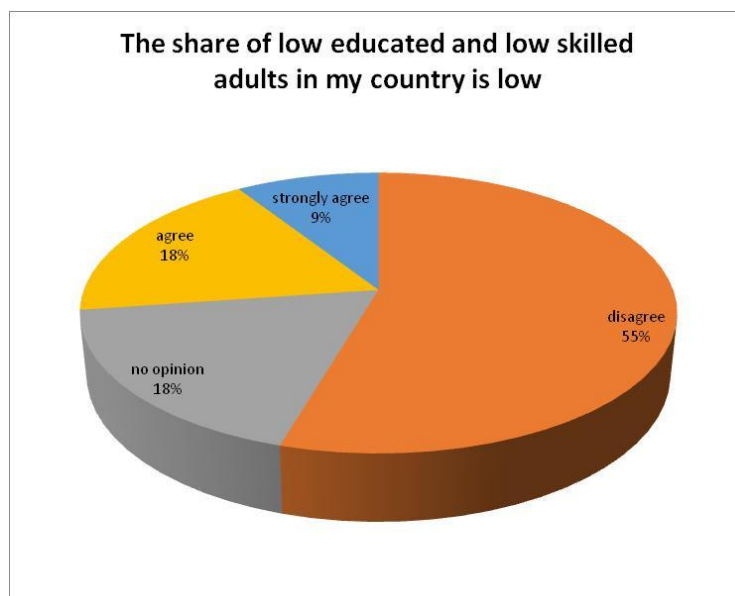
Methods should be basically chosen in accordance with the objectives and contents and the characteristics of the learning group. The approach should be mainly student-centered.

Group exercises and pair work are not recommended at the beginning, they can be introduced later on the course. Educators think that adult students would probably not feel confident when working in groups or pairs. This might be the reason why the majority of the educators think that stimulating group dynamics and creating a learning community would be advisable. The majority of the educators also agree that educational games are beneficial.

The activities that educators think are more appropriate to teach low skilled and low educated adults are learning by doing and, as low skilled and low qualified adults need constant support, face-to-face sessions. It should also be advisable to devote some sessions to "learning how to learn".

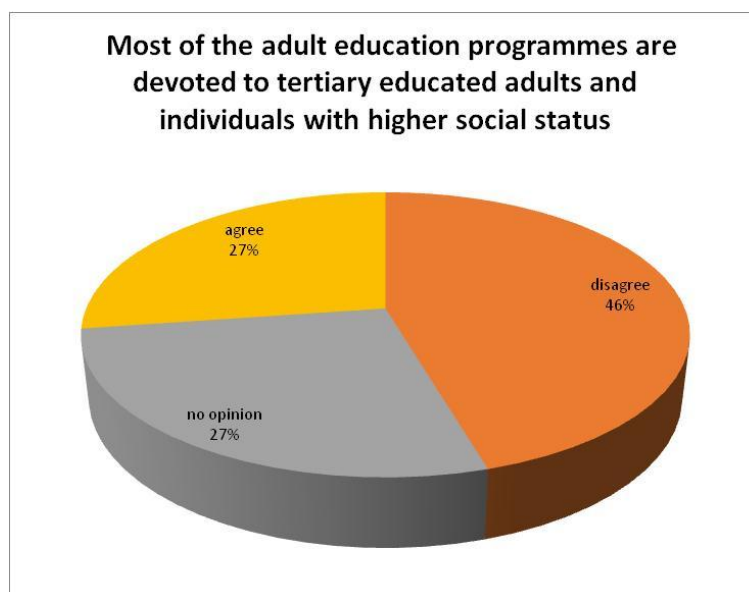
GRAPHS' DESCRIPTION

1. What is the current status of adult education in your country?

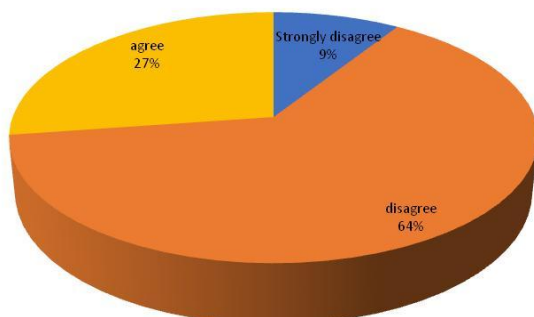


More than half of the educators (55%) who answered the questionnaire disagree with the statement and 9% strongly disagree. This means that educators think that in Spain there is a large group of low- educated and low -skilled adults.

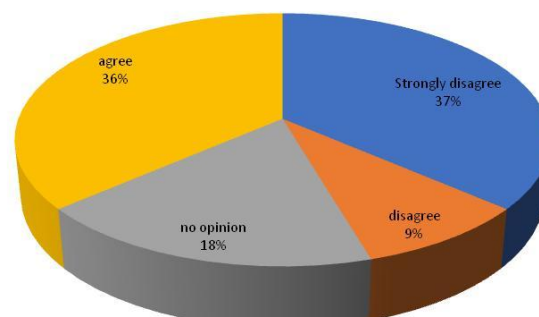
Target group



Educational programmes in this country are mostly for vulnerable target groups



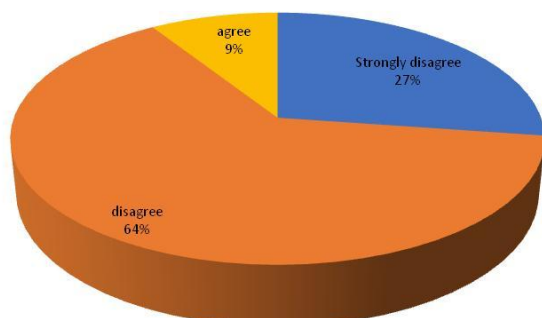
Educational programmes can be the same for everybody



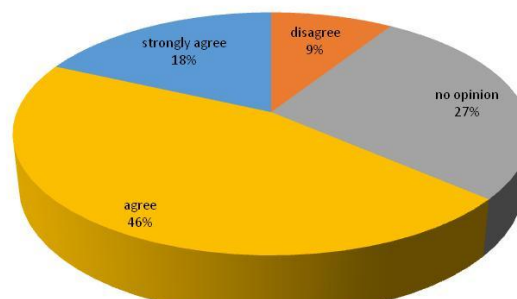
When we talk about the target group of adult education, it is not clear whom these courses are normally addressed to. Only 27% of the responders think that the programs are devoted to tertiary educated adults, compared with the 45% that disagree with this statement. At the same time, most of the people disagree with the statement that the educational programs are for vulnerable target groups. The opinion is also divided, when it comes to decide whether the programmes should or should not be the same for everybody. There are slightly more educators that disagree or strongly disagree with this statement.

The paper of companies in adult education

Companies generally invest money in continuous education of all their workers

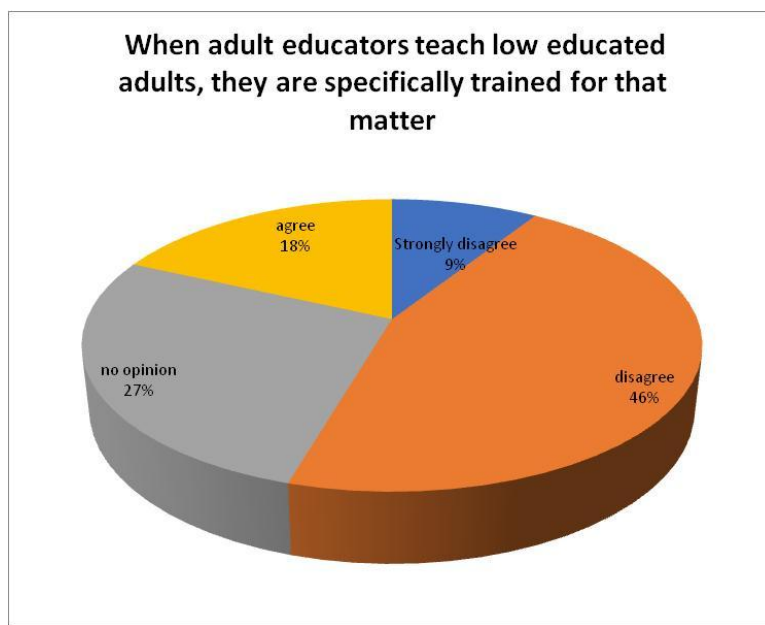


Educational programs are mostly designed to meet company's expectations, but they don't meet adults' personal or social needs



The vast majority of respondents (90%) think that companies don't invest money in the continuous education of their workers, and when they do, the programs are designed to meet their company's expectations, not the personal or social needs of the workers.

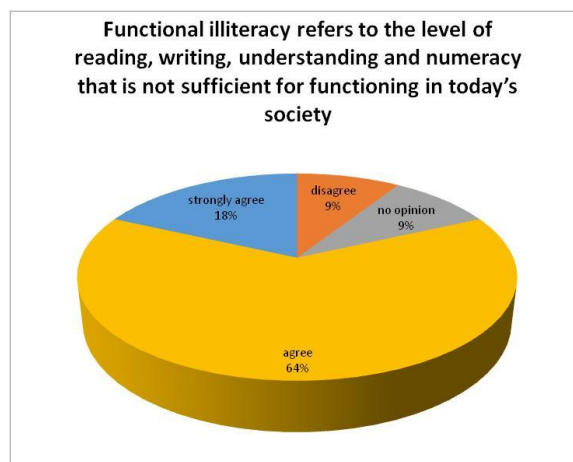
Training of adult educators



Most of the respondents think that adult educators are not specially trained for that matter.

2. What is functional illiteracy (usually the state of low educated and low skilled adults) and what are the characteristics of low educated and low skilled adults?

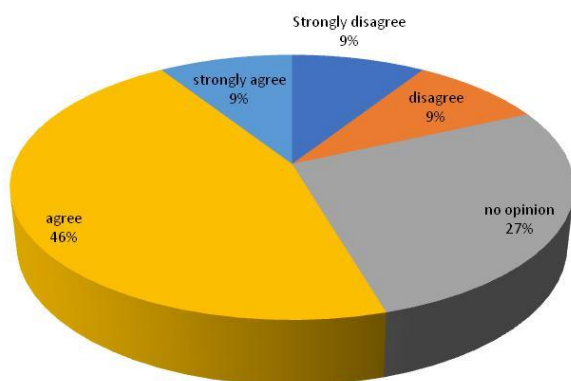
The concept of functional illiteracy



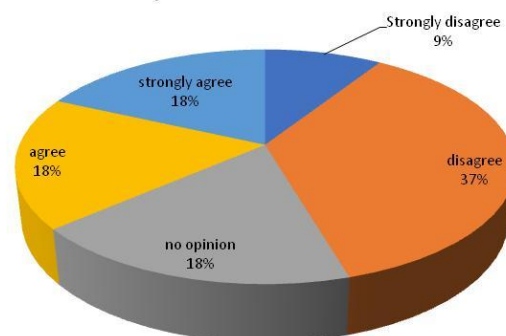
A large majority of respondents (82%) agree that functional illiteracy refers to an insufficient level of reading, writing, understanding, and numeracy skill that does not allow illiterate people to fully participate in today's society.

Causes of functional illiteracy

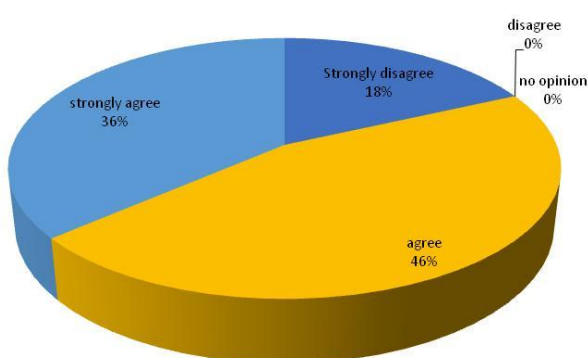
Functional illiteracy can be a result of non-recognized and non-addressed dyslexia



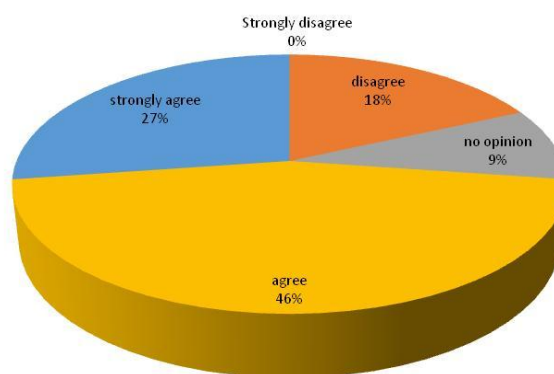
Adults have become low educated and low skilled as a result of the gap between what they could learn in their families and what they could learn at school



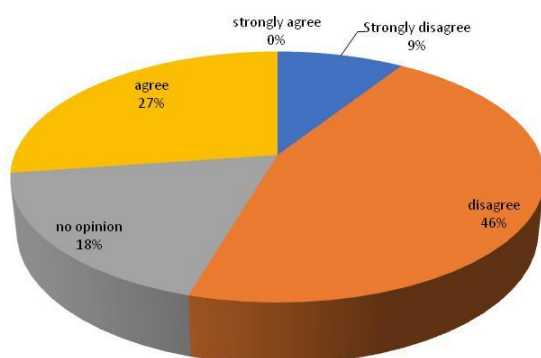
Functional illiteracy is the result of social and cultural inequalities



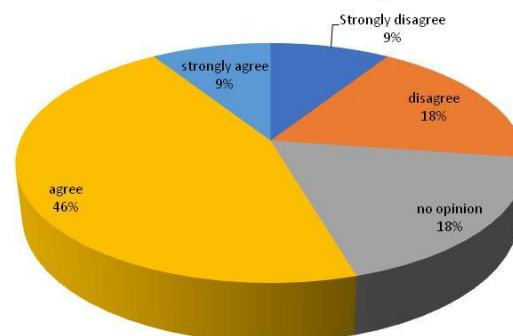
Functional illiteracy can be produced by bad schooling



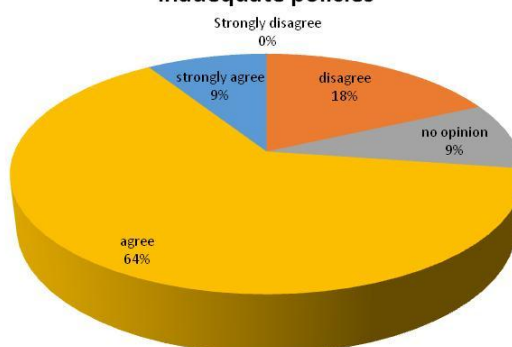
Low educated and low skilled adults had bad experience with formal education in the past



Low educated and low skilled adults who have not used their skills for a long time can lose them and become functionally illiterate



Functional illiteracy of the low educated and low skilled adults can be caused by inadequate policies



As we can infer from these graphs, the causes of functional illiteracy are mainly bad schooling (73%), inadequate policies (73%), social and cultural inequalities (82%), and non recognized and non-addressed disorders that involve difficulty in learning, such as dyslexia (55%).

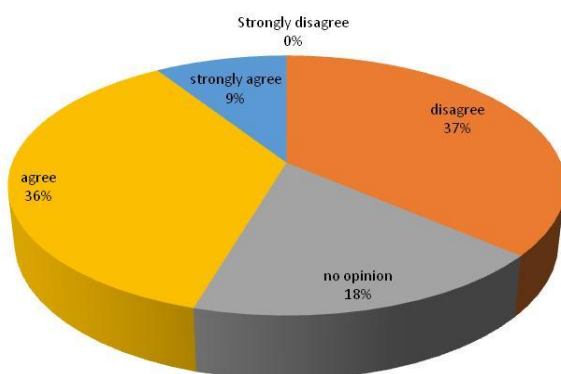
The opinion is divided when we refer to the gap between what can be learnt at school and what can be learnt in the family (38% of the respondents agree and 46% disagree).

Most of the respondents disagree (57%) with the statement that functional illiteracy is due to a bad experience in formal education in the past.

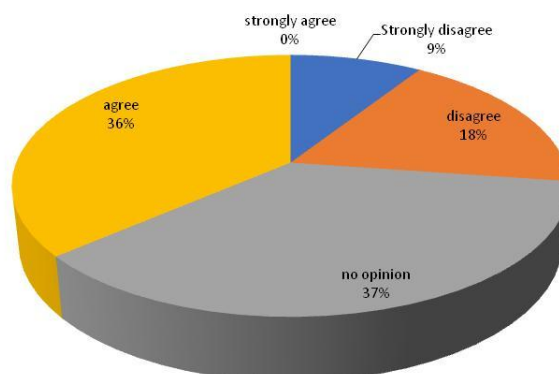
55% of the respondents think that one of the causes of functional illiteracy is that adults don't have used the acquired skills for a long time, so they have lost them.

Consequences of functional illiteracy

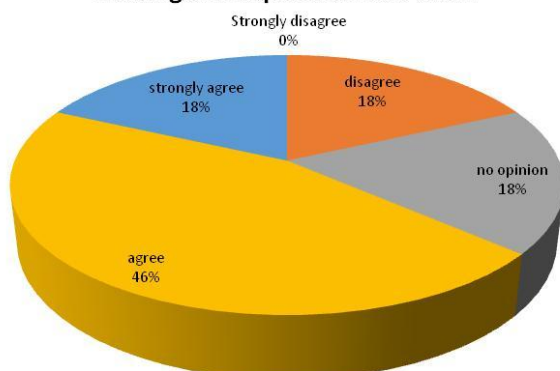
Low educated and low skilled adults use all sorts of strategies to hide their state.



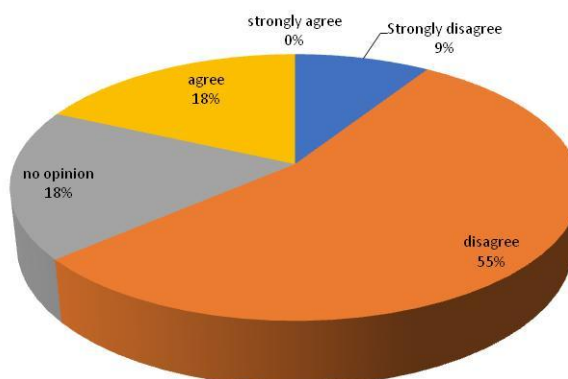
Low educated and low skilled adults have a tendency to obey their boss



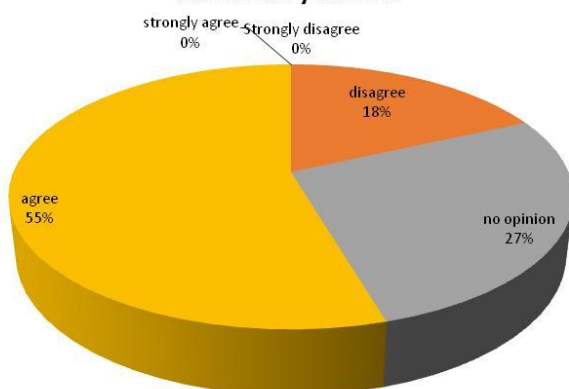
Low educated and low skilled adults get nervous if taking initiatives and decision making are expected from them



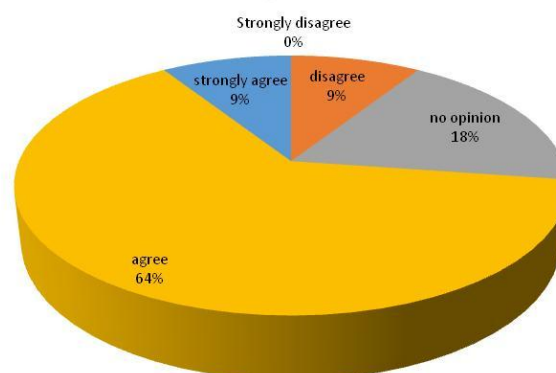
Low educated and low skilled adults do not develop together with their company



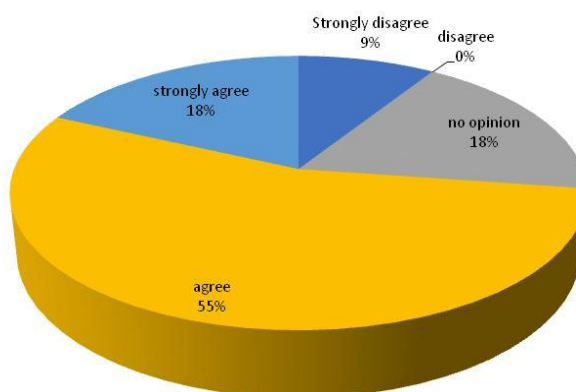
Low educated and low skilled adults do not have the knowledge students normally get in elementary school



[Low educated and low skilled adults manage/deal with what it is useful for them to survive/ they need to survive]



[Low educated and low skilled adults have difficulties writing notes in everyday li



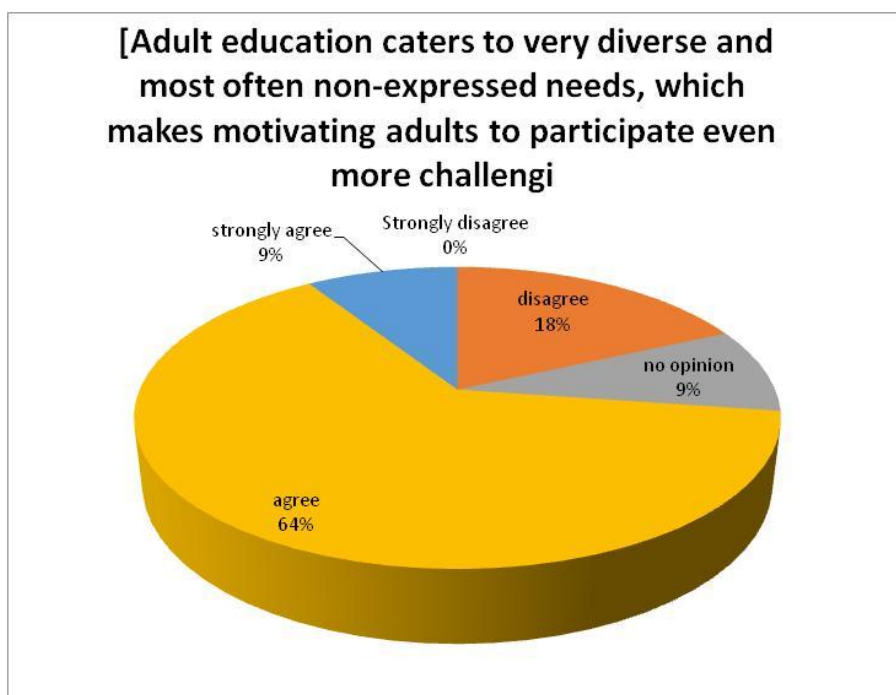
According to the opinion of the survey respondents, functional illiteracy has following consequences in functional illiterate adult's lives: they feel not confident if they have to take initiatives and decisions (64%), they have difficulties in writing notes in everyday's life (73%), but they try to deal with these circumstances managing with what is useful for them to survive (73%). 55% of the respondents think that low educated and low skilled people do not have the knowledge students normally get in elementary school.

The opinion whether they try to hide their status or not is divided (45% agree, 37% disagree). The same happens with the question whether they try to obey their boss or not: 36% agree, 27% disagree and 37% have no opinion about this topic.

Most of the respondents disagree (64%) with the statement that low educated and low skilled adult do not develop together with their company.

3 ¿How to motivate adults to enroll and stay in educational/ training programmes?

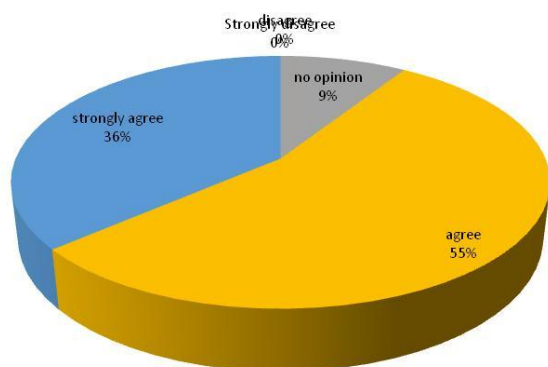
Challenges and difficulties



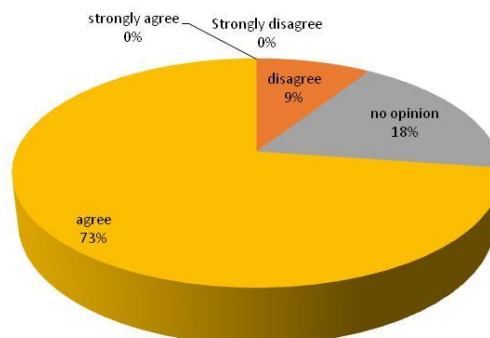
One of the challenges that adult educators face when trying to develop programs to teach low skilled and low qualified adults is the fact that their needs are very diverse and often not expressed.

Strategies to follow

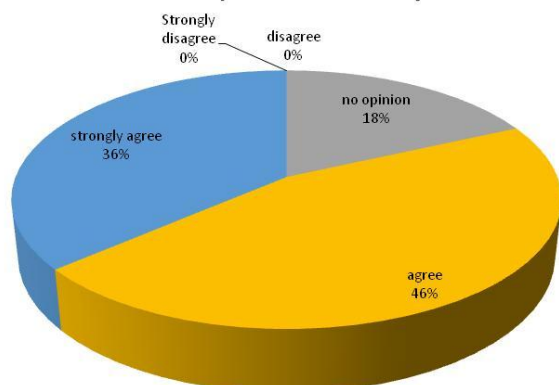
[Courses for low educated adults require that an encouraging atmosphere will be created before the course star



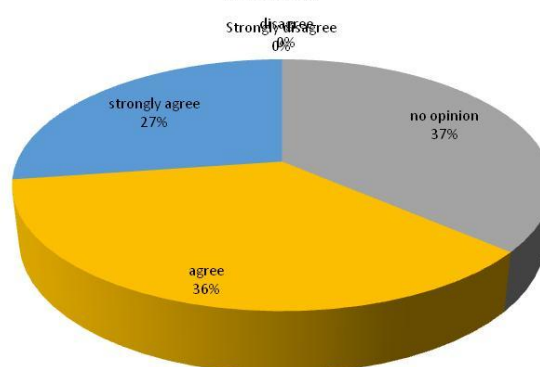
[Motivating functional illiterates for learning starts by motivating Human Resources Departments, employers and/or the wider social environme



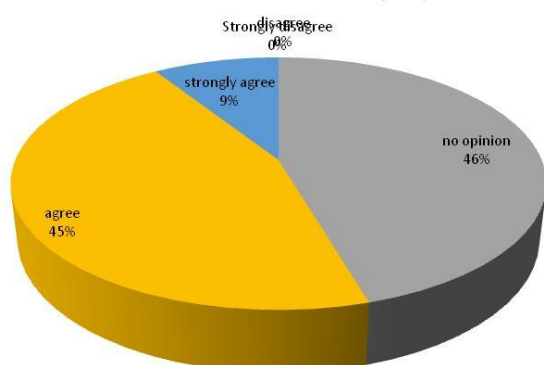
[Low educated and low skilled adults have to feel accepted for who they a



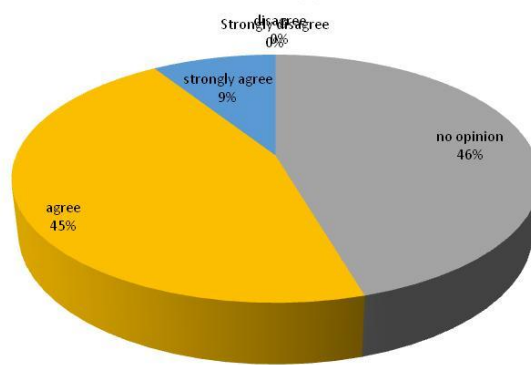
[Personal interviews with potential students are motivating and fruitful for programming the cour



[Low educated and low skilled adults should be given learning opportunities which are interwoven with their everyday life



[During the course, low educated and low skilled often lose confidence and need constant suppo



When teaching low educated and low skilled adults, educators think that following issues should be taken into consideration: the vast majority of the respondents (91%) think that courses require an encouraging atmosphere, that low skilled adults have to be accepted for who they are (82%), and that potential students should be interviewed for programming the courses (63%).

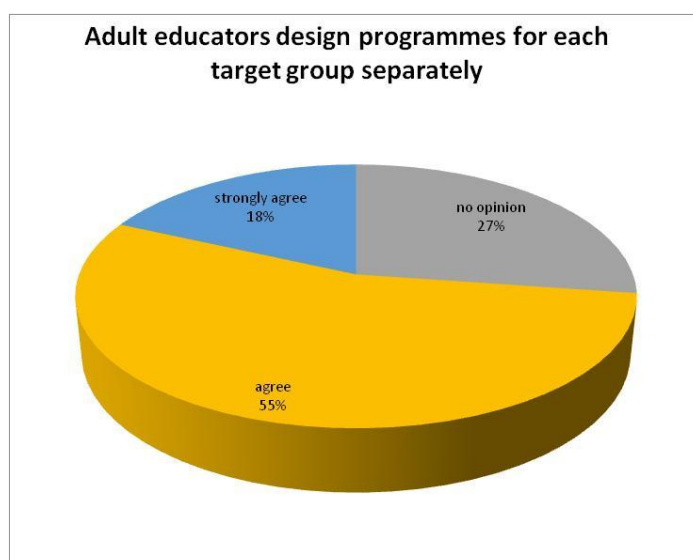
73% of the survey responders also think that it is important to motivate Human Resources Departments, employers and a wider social environment.

Opinions are more divided when we talk whether the learning opportunities given to the functional illiterate adults should or not be related with their everyday life and whether their need or not constant support during the course. A total of 54% of the respondents agree and 46% have no opinion about this topic.

4. How to design/organize low educated students' learning process?

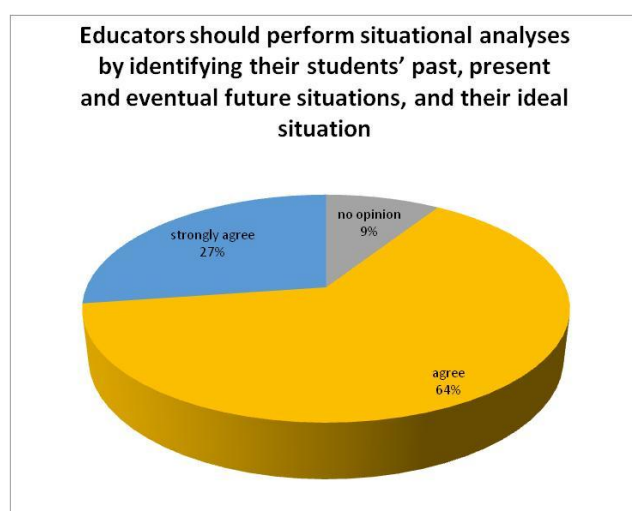
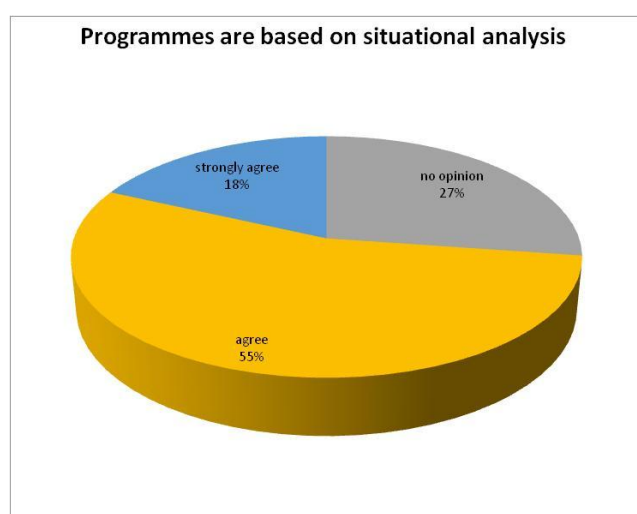
Target group

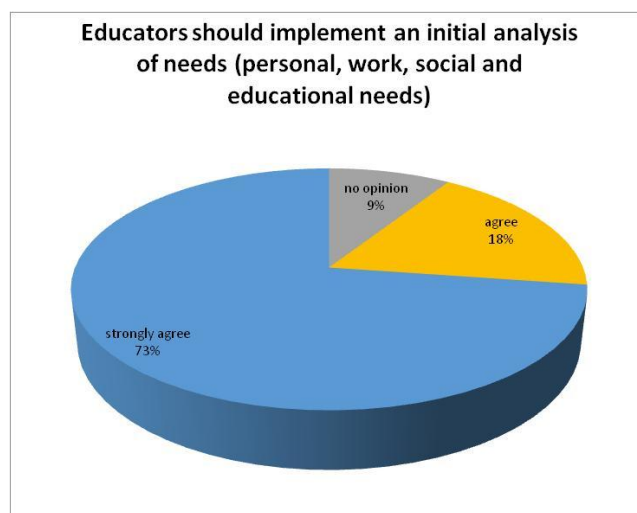
How should the programmes be designed?



According to the majority of the respondents (73%), adult educators design programs for each target group separately.

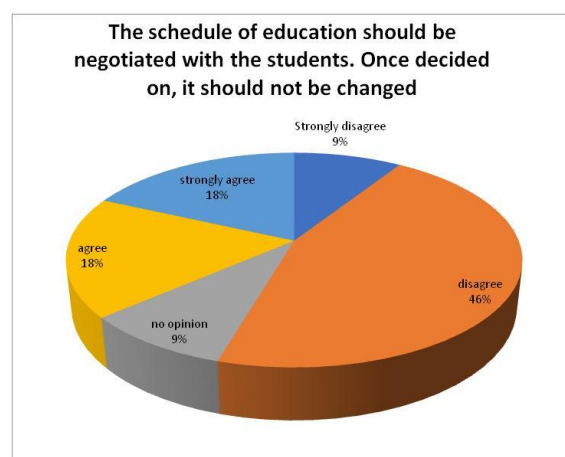
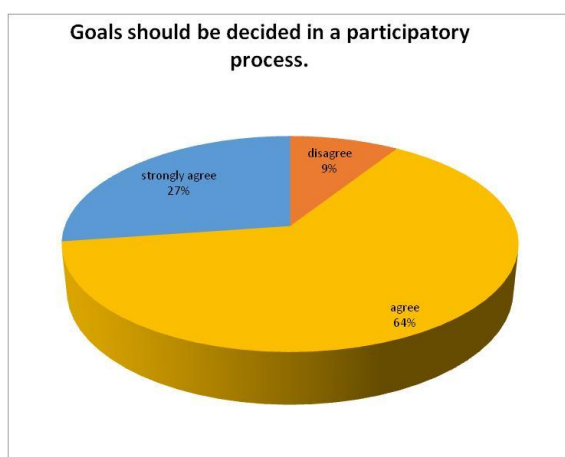
How to design the courses





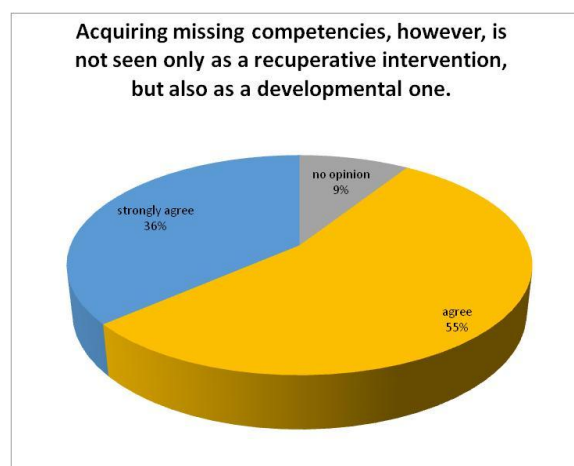
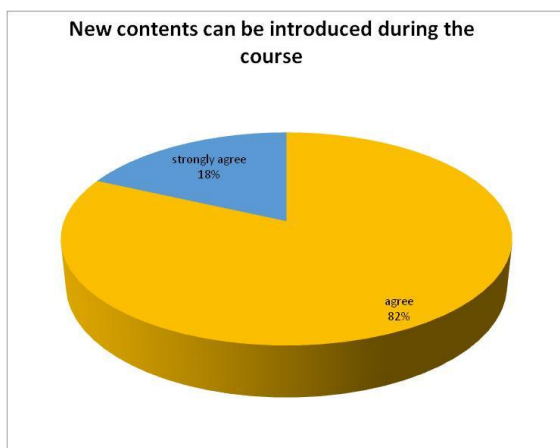
The design of the courses should be designed based on situational analysis (73%). According to the survey respondents, educators should identify their students' past, present and eventual future situations and their ideal situation (91%) when designing or organizing a course for low skilled and low qualified adult learners and educators should implement an initial analysis of personal, work, social, and educational needs ((91%).

How to negotiate the schedule



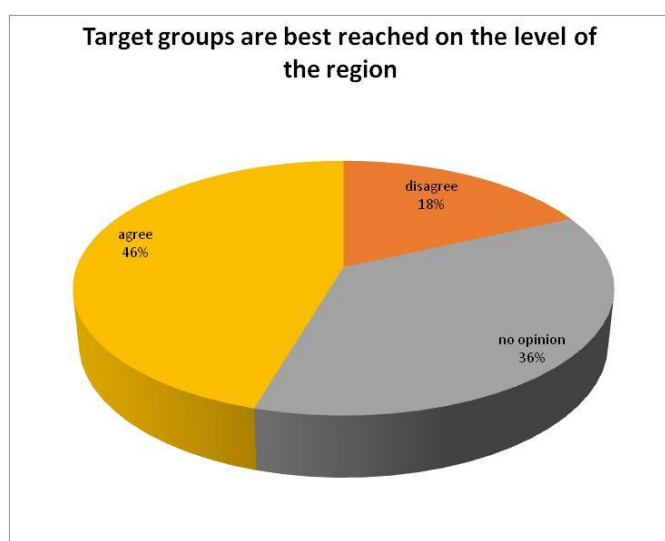
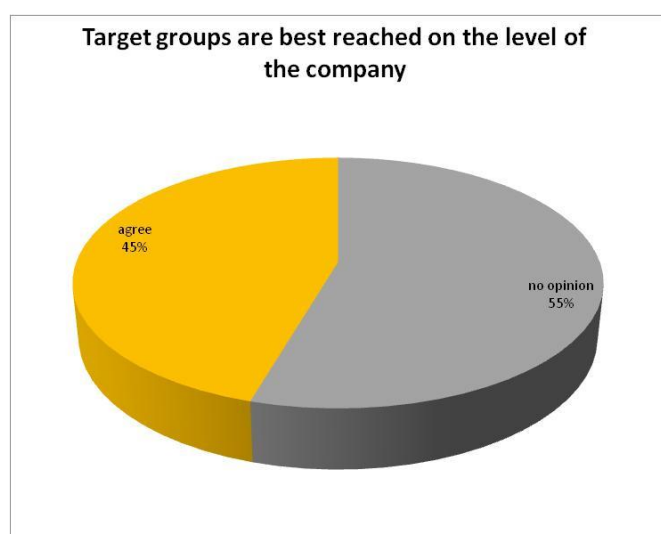
A slight majority of the educators consulted believe that the goals should be decided in a participatory process (64%) but the opinions are divided whether the contents could be changed once decided (54% disagree, 38% disagree).

The content of the courses



100% of the survey respondents agree that new contents can be introduced during the course and 91% of the consulted educators see the courses as a developmental intervention, not only a recuperative one.

The best way to reach the target group

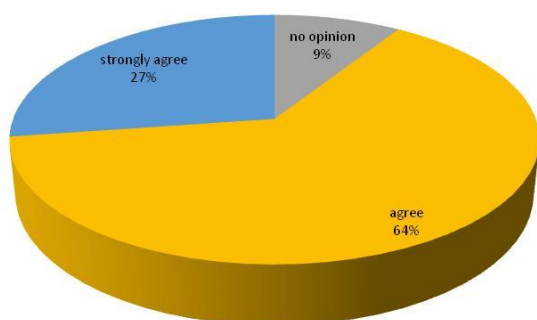


The results to the question what is the best way to reach the target groups is not clear. The company level and the regional level seem to be the right method for 45% of the respondents and a large percentage have no opinion.

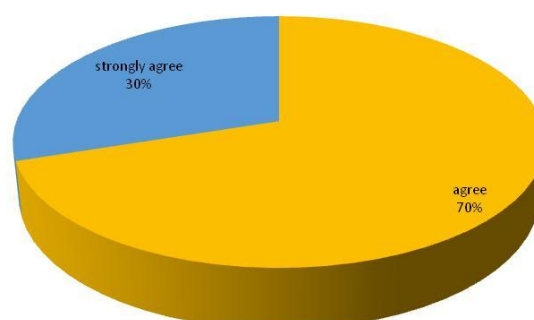
5. Which methods should be used while educating low educated and low skilled students?

The most suitable methods

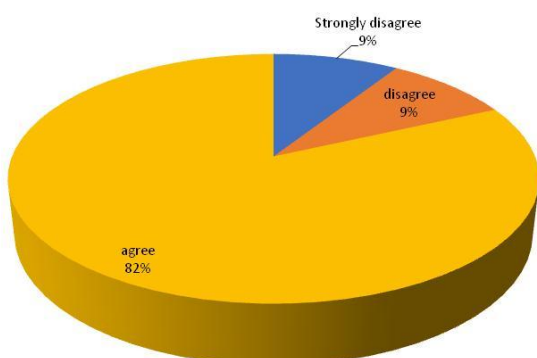
Methods are primarily chosen according to objectives and contents



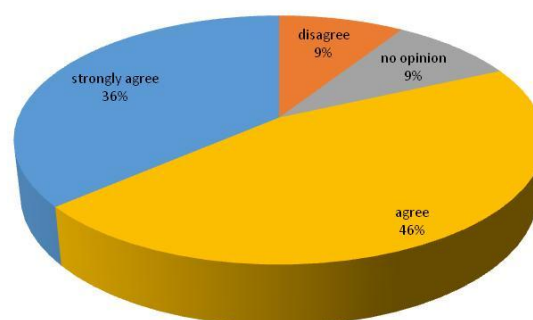
Methods are primarily chosen according to the characteristics of the learning group



Methods are primarily chosen according to adult educators' beliefs about teaching/learning



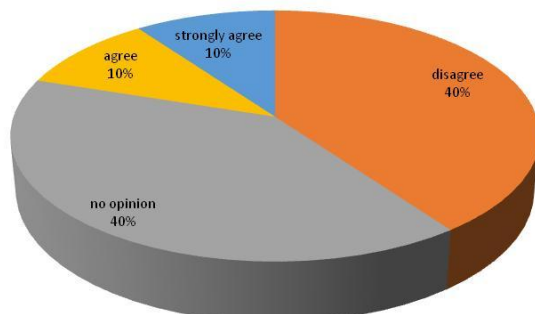
[When addressing low educated students, learner centered approach should be mainly use



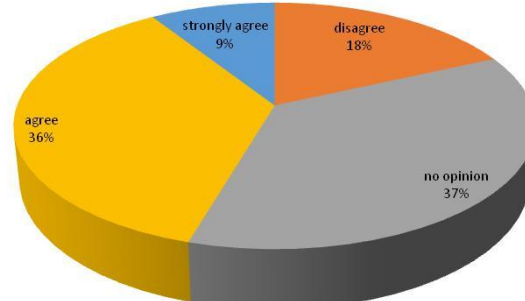
According to 91% of the respondents, methods should be chosen in accordance with the objectives and contents and 100% believe that they should be chosen according to the characteristics of the learning group. 82% think that the methods should be chosen according to adult educators' beliefs about teaching and learning and 82% think that the approach should be mainly a student centered approach.

The most suitable learning activities

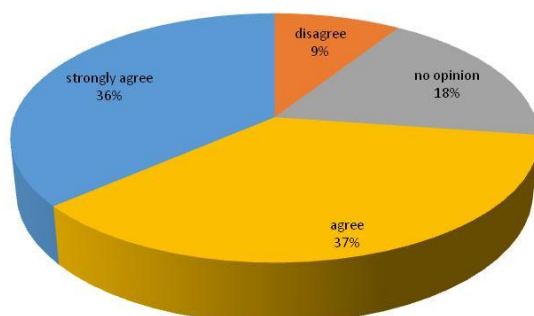
Most exercises should be group exercise



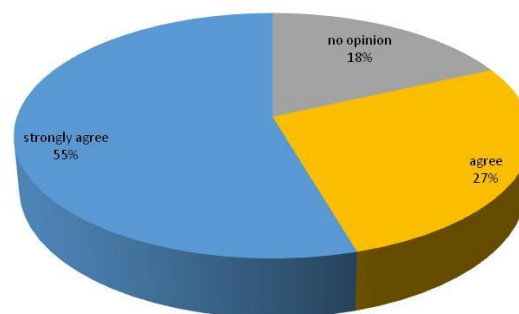
Working in pairs and small groups is to be used later on in the course



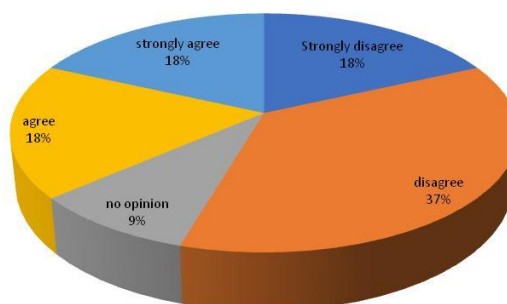
Methods stimulating group dynamics and creating learning community are welcome



Educational games are beneficial



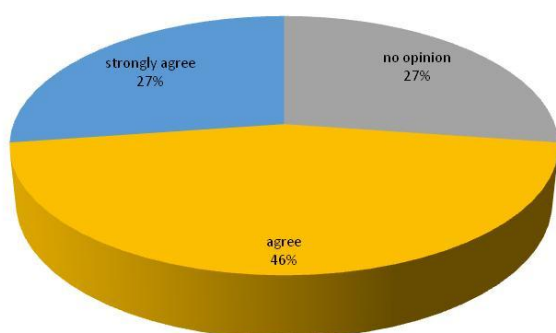
Discussion is not a method of choice when working with low educated adults



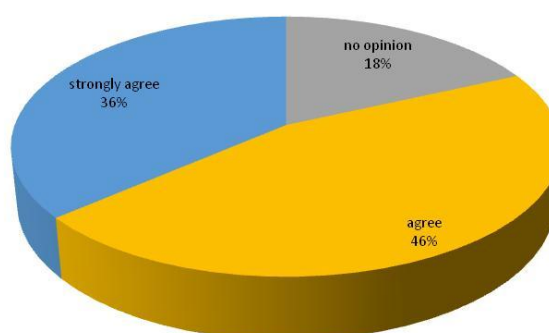
50% of the respondents think that group exercises are not appropriate to teach low skilled and low educated adults. (40% have no opinion) and a slight majority believe that pairs or small group activities should be introduced later on the course, they should not be used from the beginning. Educators think that adult students would probably not feel confident when working in groups or pairs. This might be the reason why the majority of the educators (73%) think that stimulating group dynamics and creating a learning community would be very interesting. The majority of the educators (82%) also agree that educational games are beneficial.

The opinions are divided when it comes to whether discussion is a method of choice or not when working with low educated adults.

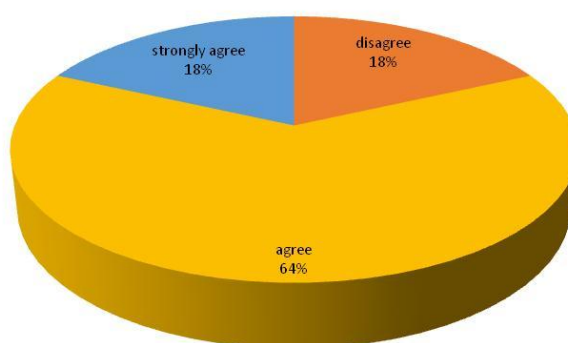
Low educated students prefer learning by doing



Low educated and low skilled students prefer face-to-face sessions

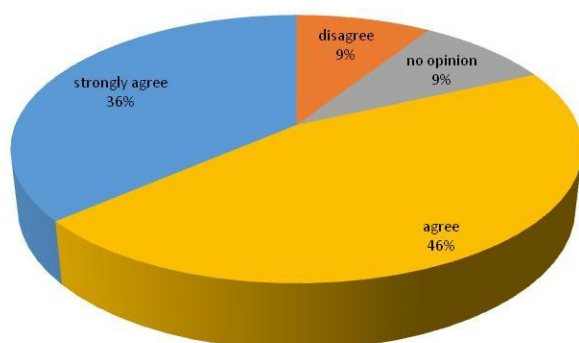


Different learning approaches and methods should be combined while educating low educated adults

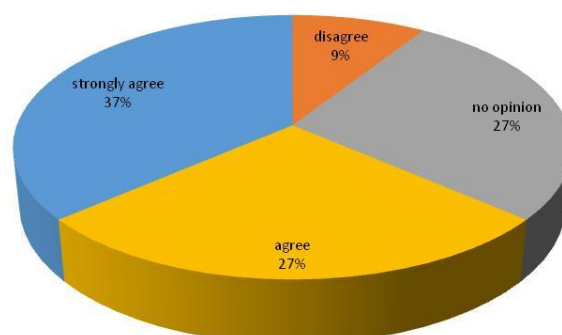


The activities that educators think are more appropriate to teach low skilled and low educated adults are learning by doing (73%), face-to-face sessions ((82%). 82% of the educators also think that different learning approaches and methods should be combined while educating low skilled adults.

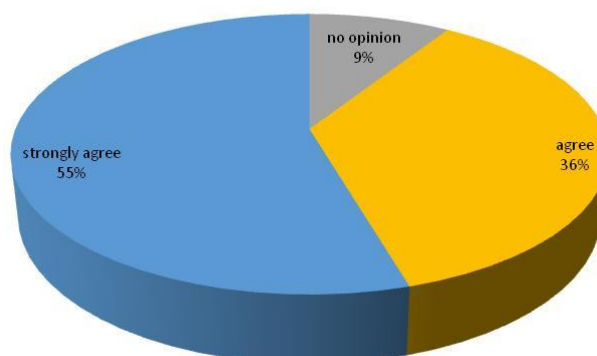
When abstract concepts are introduced, examples about family, community and, finally, the general concepts should be given



Educators should carefully choose their examples as to reflect their students' lives.



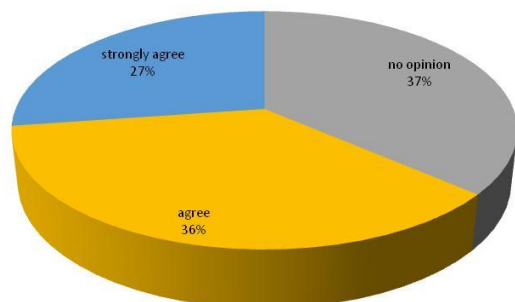
Educators should protect their students and give them opportunities to be proud of themselves



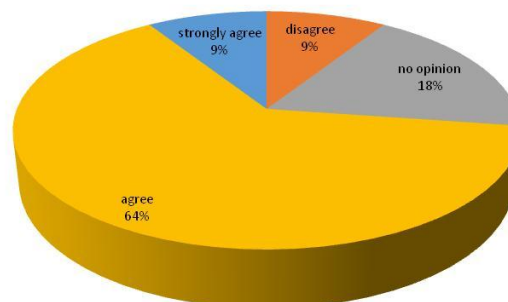
When educating examples that reflect their students' lives should be carefully chosen (64%) and, before introducing abstract concepts, more familiar concepts as family, community should be given (82%).

Educators also think that they should protect their students and give them the opportunity to be proud of themselves (91%).

**Sessions devoted to “learning how to learn”
are required when educating low educated
adults**



**Learning instructions should be short, clear,
simple, repetitive, illustrated, and orally
explained**



According to the survey respondents, it should be advisable to devote some session to “learning how to learn” when educating low educated people (63%) and 73% of the educators think that learning instructions should be short, clear, simple, repetitive, illustrated and orally explained.

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