

OPINIONS OF THE IRISH PUBLIC ON THE AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOOLS

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In a survey of a representative sample of the Irish adult population (aged 15+ years) (n=1,511), respondents categorized by gender, age, socioeconomic level, school-leaving standard, and whether or not they had children in the education system, were asked in interview their views about the adequacy of information that schools provide to parents about how well their children are doing and about the school's performance in general. They were then asked if they agreed with a series of statements relating to making information about schools available in the following forms: an annual report on a school's performance, inspectors' evaluation reports, rates of absenteeism, dropout rates, literacy and numeracy achievements of students (primary schools), public examination results (secondary schools), number of students who go to third-level education (secondary schools), and students' improvement in achievement while in school (secondary schools). All categories of respondent exhibited differences in the percentage agreeing with some statements. The greatest variation in views was associated with the socioeconomic status of respondents, due mainly to the deviation of respondents categorized as farmers, both in their satisfaction with the current situation and in their agreement with the need to provide more information. Respondents who were still in the education system (and respondents in the youngest age category) indicated the greatest satisfaction with the information currently available and were less likely to agree that there was need for a greater amount of information.

It is widely accepted in Western society that making information about the performance of public bodies freely available is an overwhelming social good. Differences exist, however, in views about the precise areas of performance about which information should be available. In the case of education, information has traditionally been provided about inputs (e.g., pupil-teacher ratio, courses offered, laboratory facilities), but recent years have witnessed a shift to the need to provide information on outcomes, in particular student achievement. There also has been a shift in some

jurisdictions to provide information on outcomes for individual schools (and even teachers) as well as for the education system as a whole (see Kellaghan & Madaus, 2000). In Ireland, schools are required by the Department of Education (1991) to provide parents with as much information as possible about their children's education.

The study described in this paper focuses on information, much of it relating to outcomes, that individual schools do, or should, provide. Data for the study are the views of a representative sample of the Irish adult (aged 15+ years) population obtained in a survey commissioned by the Department of Education and Science in 2004. Respondents were asked in interview about ten key aspects of education: the goals of education; conditions in schools; information available about schools; teachers and teaching; curricula and examinations; education and the community; school management; improving education; funding of education; and the adequacy of educational provision. The results of analyses of aggregated data (national level) for all questions asked in the survey have been published (Kellaghan, McGee, Millar, & Perkins, 2004).

The study described in this paper is concerned only with that part of the interview that elicited views about the availability of information provided by schools that would allow the public (and, in particular, parents) to evaluate the work of the school. It sought to identify the extent to which respondents agreed that sufficient information about schools is available as well as the types of information respondents were in favour of making publicly available. On the basis that individuals categorized by class or gender are likely to differ in their beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes (see, e.g., Hurley, 1989; Lewis, 1999; Pettit, 1993), the analyses presented in this paper go beyond those presented in the report of the 2004 survey (Kellaghan et al., 2004) by reporting views separately for respondents categorized by gender, age, socioeconomic level, school-leaving standard, and whether or not respondents had children in the education system. The analyses are similar to those already published for the opinions of the Irish public on the goals of primary education (Kellaghan & Daly, 2005).

METHOD

Interview Schedule

An interview schedule designed to elicit views on educational issues was prepared by the Educational Research Centre and administered by Millward

Brown IMS. The topics in the schedule for which results are reported in this paper are:

- (i) *Information provided by schools to parents.* Respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they considered that schools provide parents with enough information in relation to how well their children are doing and the school's performance (at both primary and secondary levels).
- (ii) *The availability of evaluation information about schools.* Respondents were asked to indicate if they thought that various types of evaluation information should be made available to the public:
 - (a) *for primary schools:* an annual report on performance, an evaluation report by inspectors, rates of absenteeism, the literacy and numeracy achievements of students, and the number of students who drop out.
 - (b) *for secondary schools:* an annual report on performance, an evaluation report by inspectors, Junior and Leaving Certificate Examination results, the number of students who go on to third level, the number of students who drop out before the Leaving Certificate Examination, improvement in student achievement during their time in the school, and rates of absenteeism.
- (iii) *Comparisons between schools.* Respondents were asked if they agreed that when comparing schools, account should be taken of (a) students' ability levels, (b) the financial circumstances of students, and (c) the resources available to schools.

Response categories were 'agreement', 'non-agreement', or 'don't know/not sure'.

Procedure

A sample of 1,511 individuals aged 15+ years was selected on a quota sampling basis to represent the general public in the Republic of Ireland (Table 1). Quota controls were set for gender, age, and region, based on the Central Statistics Office population estimate of April 2003, and for socioeconomic status, using AIMRO-agreed guidelines (based on the 2002-2003 Joint National Readership Survey) (see Kellaghan et al., 2004).

The interview schedule was administered in June and July 2004.

Table 1
Numbers (and Percentages) of Respondents in Sample, by Gender, Age, Socioeconomic Status, and Region

	N	%
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	724	48
Female	787	52
<i>Age</i>		
15-24	321	21
25-34	319	21
35-49	412	27
50-64	284	19
65+	175	12
<i>Socioeconomic Status</i>		
Professional/managerial	182	12
White-Collar	398	26
Skilled	389	26
Unskilled	397	26
Farmers*	145	10
<i>Region</i>		
Dublin	433	29
Rest of Leinster	379	25
Munster	419	28
Connaught/Ulster	280	18

*In analyses, farmers were divided into those with 50+ acres and those with less than 50 acres.

Analysis

The percentage (and associated standard error to indicate variability due to sampling error) of respondents endorsing each response category was calculated for the total sample and for the following groups:¹

gender: male, female

socioeconomic level: professional/managerial; white collar; skilled; unskilled; farmer with 50+ acres (n=104); farmer with less than 50 acres (n=41)

¹ Numbers in categories for gender, age, and socioeconomic status are given in Table 1.

school leaving standard: primary school only/some post-primary but no examination (n=284); Group/Intermediate/Junior Cert (n=272); Leaving Cert (n=423); further education (n=338); still in education system (n=194)
children: respondent has no children (n=626); has children not yet in education system (n=147); has children in education system (n=512); has children who have completed their education (n=335).

RESULTS

National (Aggregated) Data

National (aggregated) statistics are provided in the first row of Tables 2 to 19. These indicate that only half of respondents thought that schools currently provide enough information to parents about how well their children are doing (Table 2), and even fewer considered the information provided by schools about their 'performance' to be adequate (Tables 3 and 4).

When asked if a number of types of information that would allow the public to evaluate schools should be made available, there was extensive support (three-quarters or more of respondents) for providing information about secondary schools in inspectors' reports (Table 11) and the number of students going on to third-level education (Table 13). Smaller majorities (two-thirds or more) thought that the evaluation reports of inspectors (Table 6) and information on the literacy and numeracy achievements of students (Table 8) should be available for primary schools; information on public examination results (Table 12) for secondary schools; and information on absenteeism (Tables 7, 16) and drop-out (Tables 9, 14) for both primary and secondary schools.

If comparisons are made between schools, a large majority (almost 9 out of 10) thought that the resources available to schools should be taken into account (Table 19). Smaller majorities thought that differences in student ability (Table 17) and in the financial circumstances of students' families (Table 18) should be a consideration.

Gender

Female respondents were somewhat more likely than male respondents to indicate non-agreement with the view that schools provide enough information to parents about how well their children are doing (Table 2) or about a school's overall performance at both primary (Table

3) and secondary (Table 4) levels. Males expressed greater uncertainty than females about these issues.

More females than males agreed that an annual report for primary schools on their performance (Table 5) and on rates of absenteeism (Table 7) should be made public. In the case of the former, males again endorsed the 'don't know/not sure' response to a greater extent than females (Table 5). For secondary schools, a larger proportion of females than of males indicated support for making publicly available information on how much students' achievement had improved during their time in the school (Table 15). Females were also more likely than males to agree that comparisons between schools should take account of available resources (Table 19).

Age Group

Some substantial differences were found between age groups in their appraisal of the adequacy of the information provided to parents by schools. A larger percentage in the 15-24 age group than in any other group agreed that schools provide enough information to parents on the school's performance at both primary (Table 3) and secondary (Table 4) levels. The 50+ age group was the group most likely to select the 'don't know/not sure' response to statements relating to the adequacy of the information provided to parents about how well their children are doing (Table 2) and about the level of information provided to parents on a school's performance at both primary (Table 3) and secondary (Table 4) levels.

In the case of all five types of evaluation information about primary schools, respondents in the 15-24 age group demonstrated the lowest level of agreement that the information should be made publicly available (Tables 5 to 9). Respondents in the 50+ age group displayed the highest level of agreement with four of five statements proposing that evaluation information about primary schools should be made publicly available: an annual report (Table 5), rates of absenteeism (Table 7), literacy and numeracy achievements (Table 8), and the number of students who drop out (Table 9).

Respondents aged 15 to 24 years were least in agreement with six of seven statements that evaluation information about secondary schools should be made publicly available: an annual report (Table 10), evaluation reports by inspectors (Table 11), Junior and Leaving

Certificate results (Table 12), number of students who go on to third level (Table 13), number of students who drop out (Table 14), and rates of absenteeism (Table 16). Respondents in the 50+ category, on the other hand, were most in agreement with all statements relating to making evaluation information about secondary schools publicly available.

A smaller proportion of the 50+ age group than of other age groups agreed that, when comparing schools, differences in students' ability (Table 17) and in resources available to schools (Table 19) should be taken into account.

Socioeconomic Level

Agreement that schools provide enough information to parents about how well their children are doing was greatest for the two categories of farmer (Table 2). Professional/managerial workers recorded a level of agreement that was less than that of farmers, but greater than that of other occupational categories. Similarly, a higher proportion of farmers than of any other socioeconomic group were satisfied that schools provide enough information to parents on their performance at primary and secondary levels (Table 4). Professional/managerial respondents expressed a lower level of agreement on this topic than farmers in regard to both primary and secondary schools, but a higher level of agreement than other socioeconomic groups.

Differences between socioeconomic groups were less pronounced in relation to statements concerned with making information about school performance publicly available. In the case of four of the five statements relating to primary schools, farmers with less than 50 acres were more in agreement than other socioeconomic groups in making publicly available an annual report (Table 5), evaluation reports by inspectors (Table 6), rates of absenteeism (Table 7), and number of students who drop out (Table 9). Farmers in this category were also most in agreement in the case of three of these statements in relation to secondary schools: evaluation reports by inspectors (Table 11), number of students who drop out (Table 14), and rates of absenteeism (Table 16).

Skilled workers were most in favour of taking into account differences in students' ability levels (Table 17), the financial circumstances of students' families (Table 18), and the resources available to schools (Table 19) when comparing schools.

School Leaving Standard

Respondents who were still in the education system were most in agreement with the statement that schools provide enough information to parents about how well their children are doing (Table 2) and on the school's performance at both primary (Table 3) and secondary (Table 4) levels. Respondents with only primary or some second level education expressed the least agreement with two statements (how well their children are doing, school's performance at primary level); (Tables 2, 3). A higher proportion of respondents with the lowest level of education than of respondents with other school leaving standards endorsed the 'don't know/not sure' response regarding the adequacy of the level of information schools provide to parents about how well their children are doing (Table 2), a primary school's performance (Table 3), and a secondary school's performance (Table 4).

For statements that expressed the need to make evaluation information about primary schools publicly available, a contrast is in evidence between respondents still in education and those with further education on the one hand and respondents with other school leaving standards on the other. Respondents in the former group were more likely to express their non-agreement with all five statements: an annual report on the performance of each primary school (Table 5); evaluation reports by inspectors (Table 6); rates of absenteeism (Table 7); information on literacy and numeracy achievements (Table 8), and the number of students who drop out (Table 12).

Respondents still in the education system or with further education also differed from respondents with other levels of education in their responses to a number of other items. A greater proportion did not agree that evaluation information about secondary schools should be made publicly available through such media as an annual report on the performance of schools (Table 10), evaluation reports by inspectors (Table 11), Junior and Leaving Certificate Examination results (Table 12), the number of students who go on to third-level education (Table 13), the number of students who drop out before the Leaving Certificate Examination (Table 14), or rates of absenteeism (Table 16). Respondents who had only primary education expressed the lowest level of non-agreement on all these issues.

Respondents still in education were less likely than respondents with other levels of education to agree that the financial circumstances of

students' families should be taken into account when comparing schools, while those with primary education only or some second-level education were most likely to agree (Table 18). A substantially greater proportion of respondents with further education than of respondents with other school leaving standards agreed that differences in students' ability should be taken into account when comparing schools (Table 17). They were also most likely to agree that the resources available to schools should be taken into account (Table 19).

Respondents With and Without Children

Respondents with children in the education system expressed the greatest level of agreement with the view that primary schools provide enough information to parents about their performance (Table 3). They were less positive regarding secondary schools (Table 4). Respondents with children in the education system were most likely to offer an opinion regarding the information provided by schools to parents, while other categories were more likely to select the 'don't know/not sure' response.

Respondents whose children had completed their education or were still in the education system were more likely than respondents who had no children, or whose children had not yet started their education, to agree that four of five types of evaluation information about primary schools should be made publicly available: an annual report (Table 5), rates of absenteeism (Table 7), literacy and numeracy achievements (Table 8), and number of students who drop out (Table 9). The greatest contrast in views was in relation to making an annual report on the performance of primary schools publicly available.

Respondents whose children had completed their education were most likely, and those with no children least likely, to agree that evaluation information about secondary schools should be made publicly available through an annual report (Table 10), evaluation reports by inspectors (Table 11), Junior and Leaving Certificate Examination results (Table 12), the number of students who drop out before the Leaving Certificate Examination (Table 14), or information on improvement in student achievement during their period in a school (Table 15). Respondents with no children also expressed least agreement with the view that, in comparing schools, differences in students' ability levels (Table 17), the financial circumstances of students' families (Table 18), or the resources available to schools (Table 19) should be taken into account.

Table 2
Percentages of Respondents Indicating Agreement/Non-Agreement with Statement that Schools Provide Enough Information to Parents about how Well their Children are Doing

	Level of Agreement		
	Agreement % (SE)	Non- agreement % (SE)	Don't know/ Not sure % (SE)
<i>National Total</i>	50.7 (1.3)	38.0 (1.2)	11.3 (0.8)
<i>Gender of respondent</i>			
Male	49.7 (1.9)	35.5 (1.8)	14.8 (1.3)
Female	51.6 (1.8)	40.3 (1.7)	8.1 (1.3)
<i>Age group</i>			
15-24	51.4 (2.8)	43.0 (2.8)	5.6 (1.8)
25-49	51.0 (1.8)	39.5 (1.8)	9.4 (1.1)
50+	49.7 (2.3)	32.0 (2.2)	18.3 (1.8)
<i>Socioeconomic level</i>			
Professional/Managerial	54.4 (3.7)	35.7 (3.6)	9.9 (2.2)
White collar	48.7 (2.5)	41.5 (2.5)	9.8 (1.5)
Skilled	48.3 (2.5)	41.4 (2.5)	10.3 (1.5)
Unskilled	48.4 (2.5)	36.3 (2.4)	15.4 (1.8)
Farmer (50 acres+)	63.5 (4.7)	27.9 (4.4)	8.7 (2.8)
Farmer (50 acres-)	65.9 (7.4)	24.4 (6.7)	9.8 (4.6)
<i>Respondent's school leaving standard</i>			
Primary school only/some second level but no exam	48.9 (3.0)	29.9 (2.7)	21.1 (2.4)
Group Cert/ Intermediate Cert/ Junior Cert	52.2 (3.0)	34.9 (2.9)	12.9 (2.0)
Leaving Cert	50.4 (2.4)	39.5 (2.4)	10.2 (1.5)
Further education	49.1 (2.7)	42.9 (2.7)	8.0 (1.5)
Still in education system	54.6 (3.6)	42.3 (3.5)	3.1 (1.2)
<i>Children</i>			
Respondent has no children	50.8 (2.0)	35.9 (1.9)	13.3 (1.4)
Respondent has children not yet in education system	40.8 (4.1)	45.6 (4.1)	13.6 (2.8)
Respondent has children in education system	53.9 (2.2)	41.6 (2.2)	4.5 (1.0)
Respondent has children who have completed their education	48.1 (2.7)	36.7 (2.6)	15.2 (2.0)

Table 3
Percentages of Respondents Indicating Agreement/Non-Agreement with Statement that Primary Schools Provide Enough Information to Parents on the School's Performance

	Level of Agreement		
	Agreement % (SE)	Non- agreement % (SE)	Don't know/ Not sure % (SE)
<i>National Total</i>	48.1 (1.3)	37.7 (1.2)	14.1 (0.9)
<i>Gender of respondent</i>			
Male	45.6 (1.9)	35.9 (1.8)	18.5 (1.4)
Female	50.5 (1.8)	39.4 (1.7)	10.1 (1.1)
<i>Age group</i>			
15-24	51.1 (2.8)	36.4 (2.7)	12.5 (1.8)
25-49	48.1 (1.8)	40.1 (1.8)	11.8 (1.2)
50+	46.2 (2.3)	34.9 (2.2)	19.0 (1.8)
<i>Socioeconomic level</i>			
Professional/Managerial	53.3 (3.7)	36.8 (3.6)	9.9 (2.2)
White collar	43.6 (2.5)	41.8 (2.5)	14.6 (1.5)
Skilled	48.1 (2.5)	40.6 (2.5)	11.3 (1.5)
Unskilled	47.6 (2.5)	35.0 (2.4)	17.4 (1.8)
Farmer (50 acres+)	55.8 (4.7)	26.9 (4.4)	17.3 (2.8)
Farmer (50 acres-)	56.1 (7.4)	29.3 (6.7)	14.6 (4.6)
<i>Respondent's school leaving standard</i>			
Primary school only/some second level but no exam	43.3 (2.9)	33.8 (2.8)	22.9 (2.5)
Group Cert/ Intermediate Cert/ Junior Cert	47.4 (3.0)	37.5 (2.9)	15.1 (2.2)
Leaving Cert	47.4 (2.4)	40.3 (2.4)	12.3 (1.6)
Further education	50.6 (2.8)	39.9 (2.7)	9.5 (1.6)
Still in education system	53.6 (3.6)	34.5 (3.4)	11.9 (2.3)
<i>Children</i>			
Respondent has no children	48.9 (2.0)	32.6 (1.9)	18.5 (1.6)
Respondent has children not yet in education system	46.9 (4.1)	40.1 (4.1)	12.9 (2.8)
Respondent has children in education system	49.1 (2.2)	44.1 (2.2)	6.5 (1.1)
Respondent has children who have completed their education	43.3 (2.7)	39.7 (2.7)	17.0 (2.1)

Table 4
Percentages of Respondents Indicating Agreement/Non-Agreement with Statement that Secondary Schools Provide Enough Information to Parents on the School's Performance

	Level of Agreement		
	Agreement % (SE)	Non- agreement % (SE)	Don't know/ Not sure % (SE)
<i>National Total</i>	46.7 (1.3)	39.3 (1.3)	14.0 (0.9)
<i>Gender of respondent</i>			
Male	47.6 (1.9)	37.2 (1.8)	15.3 (1.3)
Female	45.9 (1.8)	41.2 (1.8)	12.8 (1.2)
<i>Age group</i>			
15-24	54.1 (2.8)	40.9 (2.7)	5.0 (1.2)
25-49	44.4 (1.8)	40.6 (1.8)	15.0 (1.3)
50+	45.2 (2.3)	36.0 (2.2)	18.8 (1.8)
<i>Socioeconomic level</i>			
Professional/Managerial	48.1 (3.7)	42.5 (3.7)	9.4 (2.2)
White collar	43.1 (2.5)	42.1 (2.5)	14.9 (1.8)
Skilled	44.5 (2.5)	41.6 (2.5)	13.9 (1.8)
Unskilled	45.2 (2.5)	36.9 (2.4)	17.9 (1.9)
Farmer (50 acres+)	67.0 (4.6)	28.2 (4.4)	4.9 (2.1)
Farmer (50 acres-)	61.0 (7.6)	26.8 (6.9)	12.2 (5.1)
<i>Respondent's school leaving standard</i>			
Primary school only/some second level but no exam	48.1 (3.0)	28.6 (2.7)	23.3 (2.5)
Group Cert/ Intermediate Cert/ Junior Cert	44.3 (3.0)	38.4 (2.9)	17.3 (2.3)
Leaving Cert	43.5 (2.4)	43.7 (2.4)	12.8 (1.6)
Further education	46.2 (2.7)	42.9 (2.7)	10.9 (1.7)
Still in education system	56.3 (3.6)	40.1 (3.5)	3.6 (1.3)
<i>Children</i>			
Respondent has no children	50.9 (2.0)	35.0 (1.9)	14.1 (1.4)
Respondent has children not yet in education system	37.0 (4.0)	44.5 (4.1)	18.5 (3.2)
Respondent has children in education system	41.9 (2.2)	45.8 (2.2)	12.3 (1.5)
Respondent has children who have completed their education	45.4 (2.7)	40.0 (2.7)	14.6 (1.9)

Table 5
Percentages of Respondents Indicating Agreement/Non-Agreement with Statement that an Annual Report on the Performance of Each Primary School Should be Publicly Available

	Level of Agreement		
	Agreement % (SE)	Non- agreement % (SE)	Don't know/ Not sure % (SE)
<i>National Total</i>	75.7 (1.1)	17.7 (1.0)	6.6 (0.6)
<i>Gender of respondent</i>			
Male	73.3 (1.6)	17.7 (1.4)	9.0 (1.1)
Female	77.9 (1.5)	17.7 (1.4)	4.4 (0.7)
<i>Age group</i>			
15-24	71.7 (2.5)	18.7 (2.2)	9.3 (1.6)
25-49	75.6 (1.6)	18.3 (1.4)	6.0 (0.9)
50+	78.4 (1.9)	15.9 (1.7)	5.7 (1.1)
<i>Socioeconomic level</i>			
Professional/Managerial	73.6 (3.3)	21.4 (3.0)	4.9 (1.6)
White collar	73.6 (2.2)	20.9 (2.0)	5.5 (1.1)
Skilled	75.6 (2.2)	15.4 (1.8)	9.0 (1.5)
Unskilled	78.3 (2.1)	15.2 (1.8)	6.6 (1.2)
Farmer (50 acres+)	76.0 (4.2)	17.3 (3.7)	6.7 (2.5)
Farmer (50 acres-)	80.5 (6.2)	17.1 (5.9)	2.4 (2.4)
<i>Respondent's school leaving standard</i>			
Primary school only/some second level but no exam	79.9 (2.4)	13.4 (2.0)	6.7 (1.5)
Group Cert/ Intermediate Cert/ Junior Cert	76.5 (2.6)	15.4 (2.2)	8.1 (1.7)
Leaving Cert	78.3 (2.0)	15.8 (1.8)	5.9 (1.1)
Further education	71.6 (2.5)	24.0 (2.3)	4.4 (1.1)
Still in education system	69.9 (3.3)	20.2 (2.9)	9.8 (2.1)
<i>Children</i>			
Respondent has no children	71.9 (1.8)	19.5 (1.6)	8.5 (1.1)
Respondent has children not yet in education system	73.5 (3.6)	19.7 (3.3)	6.8 (2.1)
Respondent has children in education system	79.3 (1.8)	15.8 (1.6)	4.9 (1.0)
Respondent has children who have completed their education	79.1 (2.2)	15.2 (2.0)	5.7 (1.3)

Table 6
Percentages of Respondents Indicating Agreement/Non-Agreement with Statement that Evaluation Reports by Inspectors of Primary Schools Should be Publicly Available

	Level of Agreement		
	Agreement % (SE)	Non- agreement % (SE)	Don't know/ Not sure % (SE)
<i>National Total</i>	73.5 (1.1)	18.8 (1.0)	7.7 (0.7)
<i>Gender of respondent</i>			
Male	74.2 (1.6)	17.6 (1.4)	8.2 (1.0)
Female	72.8 (1.6)	19.9 (1.4)	7.3 (0.9)
<i>Age group</i>			
15-24	68.6 (2.6)	22.0 (2.3)	9.4 (1.6)
25-49	76.4 (1.6)	17.6 (1.4)	6.0 (0.9)
50+	72.3 (2.1)	18.6 (1.8)	9.2 (1.3)
<i>Socioeconomic level</i>			
Professional/Managerial	75.3 (3.2)	20.3 (3.0)	4.4 (1.5)
White collar	71.6 (2.3)	23.4 (2.1)	5.1 (1.1)
Skilled	72.8 (2.3)	16.2 (1.9)	11.1 (1.6)
Unskilled	74.4 (2.2)	16.7 (1.9)	8.9 (1.4)
Farmer (50 acres+)	75.0 (4.2)	17.3 (3.7)	7.7 (2.6)
Farmer (50 acres-)	78.0 (6.5)	17.1 (5.9)	4.9 (3.4)
<i>Respondent's school leaving standard</i>			
Primary school only/some second level but no exam	72.1 (2.7)	16.6 (2.2)	11.3 (1.9)
Group Cert/ Intermediate Cert/ Junior Cert	75.4 (2.6)	15.4 (2.2)	9.2 (1.8)
Leaving Cert	77.0 (2.1)	16.6 (1.8)	6.4 (1.2)
Further education	71.2 (2.5)	24.6 (2.3)	4.2 (1.1)
Still in education system	69.1 (3.3)	21.5 (3.0)	9.4 (2.1)
<i>Children</i>			
Respondent has no children	70.5 (1.8)	20.7 (1.6)	8.8 (1.1)
Respondent has children not yet in education system	75.5 (3.5)	17.7 (3.1)	6.8 (2.1)
Respondent has children in education system	77.5 (1.9)	16.7 (1.6)	5.9 (1.0)
Respondent has children who have completed their education	72.5 (2.4)	18.9 (2.1)	8.7 (1.5)

Table 7
Percentages of Respondents Indicating Agreement/Non-Agreement with Statement that Rates of Absenteeism of Individual Primary Schools Should be Publicly Available

	Level of Agreement		
	Agreement % (SE)	Non- agreement % (SE)	Don't know/ Not sure % (SE)
<i>National Total</i>	68.0 (1.2)	23.0 (1.1)	9.0 (0.7)
<i>Gender of respondent</i>			
Male	65.5 (1.8)	25.3 (1.6)	9.2 (1.1)
Female	70.2 (1.6)	20.9 (1.4)	8.8 (1.0)
<i>Age group</i>			
15-24	63.0 (2.7)	27.2 (2.5)	9.8 (1.7)
25-49	68.9 (1.7)	22.0 (1.5)	9.1 (1.1)
50+	69.9 (2.1)	21.8 (1.9)	8.3 (1.3)
<i>Socioeconomic level</i>			
Professional/Managerial	70.3 (3.4)	21.4 (3.0)	8.2 (2.0)
White collar	66.4 (2.4)	26.3 (2.2)	7.3 (1.3)
Skilled	66.0 (2.4)	22.4 (2.1)	11.6 (1.6)
Unskilled	68.4 (2.3)	22.9 (2.1)	8.7 (1.4)
Farmer (50 acres+)	70.6 (4.5)	19.6 (3.9)	9.8 (2.9)
Farmer (50 acres-)	80.5 (6.2)	14.6 (5.5)	4.9 (3.4)
<i>Respondent's school leaving standard</i>			
Primary school only/some second level but no exam	71.6 (2.7)	18.8 (2.3)	9.6 (1.8)
Group Cert/ Intermediate Cert/ Junior Cert	65.2 (2.9)	23.7 (2.6)	11.1 (1.9)
Leaving Cert	71.1 (2.2)	21.3 (2.0)	7.6 (1.3)
Further education	65.9 (2.6)	25.8 (2.4)	8.3 (1.5)
Still in education system	63.4 (3.5)	27.2 (3.2)	9.4 (2.1)
<i>Children</i>			
Respondent has no children	64.1 (1.9)	26.4 (1.8)	9.5 (1.2)
Respondent has children not yet in education system	65.1 (3.9)	26.0 (3.6)	8.9 (2.3)
Respondent has children in education system	72.0 (2.0)	19.1 (1.7)	8.9 (1.3)
Respondent has children who have completed their education	71.0 (2.5)	20.3 (2.2)	8.7 (1.5)

Table 8
Percentages of Respondents Indicating Agreement/Non-Agreement with Statement that Information on the Literacy and Numeracy Achievements of Primary School Students Should be Publicly Available

	Level of Agreement		
	Agreement % (SE)	Non- agreement % (SE)	Don't know/ Not sure % (SE)
<i>National Total</i>	66.5 (1.1)	25.0 (1.0)	8.5 (0.6)
<i>Gender of respondent</i>			
Male	65.1 (1.8)	25.9 (1.6)	9.0 (1.1)
Female	67.7 (1.7)	24.1 (1.5)	8.1 (1.0)
<i>Age group</i>			
15-24	61.9 (2.7)	28.1 (2.5)	10.0 (1.7)
25-49	66.9 (1.7)	24.9 (1.6)	8.2 (1.0)
50+	69.1 (2.2)	22.9 (2.0)	8.1 (1.3)
<i>Socioeconomic level</i>			
Professional/Managerial	67.0 (3.5)	26.4 (3.3)	6.6 (1.8)
White collar	66.1 (2.4)	27.9 (2.2)	6.0 (1.2)
Skilled	67.1 (2.4)	22.1 (2.1)	10.8 (1.6)
Unskilled	67.7 (2.4)	22.2 (2.1)	10.1 (1.5)
Farmer (50 acres+)	60.6 (4.8)	31.7 (4.6)	7.7 (2.6)
Farmer (50 acres-)	65.9 (7.4)	26.8 (6.9)	7.3 (4.1)
<i>Respondent's school leaving standard</i>			
Primary school only/some second level but no exam	68.0 (2.8)	22.2 (2.5)	9.9 (1.8)
Group Cert/ Intermediate Cert/ Junior Cert	69.9 (2.8)	21.3 (2.5)	8.8 (1.7)
Leaving Cert	68.1 (2.3)	23.6 (2.1)	8.3 (1.3)
Further education	63.6 (2.6)	29.9 (2.5)	6.5 (1.3)
Still in education system	61.1 (3.5)	28.5 (3.2)	10.4 (2.2)
<i>Children</i>			
Respondent has no children	62.9 (1.9)	27.2 (1.8)	9.9 (1.2)
Respondent has children not yet in education system	67.3 (3.9)	26.5 (3.6)	6.1 (2.0)
Respondent has children in education system	69.5 (2.0)	23.0 (1.9)	7.4 (1.2)
Respondent has children who have completed their education	69.9 (2.5)	22.7 (2.3)	7.5 (1.4)

Table 9
Percentages of Respondents Indicating Agreement/Non-Agreement with Statement that Information on the Number of Students who Drop out During Primary School Should be Publicly Available

	Level of Agreement		
	Agreement % (SE)	Non- agreement % (SE)	Don't know/ Not sure % (SE)
<i>National Total</i>	68.6 (1.2)	22.7 (1.1)	8.7 (0.7)
<i>Gender of respondent</i>			
Male	67.6 (1.7)	23.2 (1.6)	9.1 (1.1)
Female	69.5 (1.6)	22.2 (1.5)	8.3 (1.0)
<i>Age group</i>			
15-24	62.5 (2.7)	28.8 (2.5)	8.8 (1.6)
25-49	68.9 (1.7)	22.3 (1.5)	8.8 (1.0)
50+	72.3 (2.1)	19.2 (1.8)	8.5 (1.3)
<i>Socioeconomic level</i>			
Professional/Managerial	68.7 (3.4)	24.7 (3.2)	6.6 (1.8)
White collar	68.3 (2.3)	25.1 (2.2)	6.5 (1.2)
Skilled	66.6 (2.4)	21.3 (2.1)	12.1 (1.7)
Unskilled	70.7 (2.3)	19.9 (2.0)	9.3 (1.5)
Farmer (50 acres+)	67.3 (4.6)	26.0 (4.3)	6.7 (2.5)
Farmer (50 acres-)	73.2 (6.9)	22.0 (6.5)	4.9 (3.4)
<i>Respondent's school leaving standard</i>			
Primary school only/some second level but no exam	72.5 (2.6)	16.9 (2.2)	10.6 (1.8)
Group Cert/ Intermediate Cert/ Junior Cert	66.5 (2.9)	22.4 (2.5)	11.0 (1.9)
Leaving Cert	72.3 (2.2)	20.3 (2.0)	7.3 (1.3)
Further education	67.5 (2.5)	26.6 (2.4)	5.9 (1.3)
Still in education system	59.6 (3.5)	30.1 (3.3)	10.4 (2.2)
<i>Children</i>			
Respondent has no children	65.6 (1.9)	25.9 (1.8)	8.5 (1.1)
Respondent has children not yet in education system	66.0 (3.9)	23.1 (3.5)	10.9 (2.6)
Respondent has children in education system	72.5 (2.0)	19.1 (1.7)	8.4 (1.2)
Respondent has children who have completed their education	70.4 (2.5)	22.1 (2.3)	7.5 (1.4)

Table 10
Percentages of Respondents Indicating Agreement/Non-Agreement with Statement that Secondary School's Annual Report on Performance Should be Publicly Available

	Level of Agreement		
	Agreement % (SE)	Non- agreement % (SE)	Don't know/ Not sure % (SE)
<i>National Total</i>	80.7 (1.0)	15.5 (0.9)	3.8 (0.5)
<i>Gender of respondent</i>			
Male	79.6 (1.5)	16.7 (1.4)	3.7 (0.7)
Female	81.7 (1.4)	14.4 (1.2)	3.9 (0.7)
<i>Age group</i>			
15-24	78.2 (2.3)	19.0 (2.2)	2.8 (0.9)
25-49	80.7 (1.5)	14.6 (1.3)	4.7 (0.8)
50+	82.4 (1.8)	14.4 (1.6)	3.3 (0.8)
<i>Socioeconomic level</i>			
Professional/Managerial	78.0 (3.1)	18.1 (2.9)	3.8 (1.4)
White collar	79.6 (2.0)	17.6 (1.9)	2.8 (0.8)
Skilled	80.7 (2.0)	13.9 (1.8)	5.4 (1.1)
Unskilled	81.1 (2.0)	14.1 (1.7)	4.8 (1.1)
Farmer (50 acres+)	85.6 (3.4)	14.1 (3.4)	0.0 (0.0)
Farmer (50 acres-)	85.4 (5.5)	14.6 (5.5)	0.0 (0.0)
<i>Respondent's school leaving standard</i>			
Primary school only/some second level but no exam	82.0 (2.3)	13.0 (2.0)	4.9 (1.3)
Group Cert/ Intermediate Cert/ Junior Cert	80.9 (2.4)	14.0 (2.1)	5.1 (1.3)
Leaving Cert	82.0 (1.9)	13.7 (1.7)	4.3 (0.7)
Further education	80.2 (2.2)	17.2 (2.1)	2.7 (0.9)
Still in education system	76.3 (3.1)	22.2 (3.0)	1.5 (0.9)
<i>Children</i>			
Respondent has no children	77.6 (1.7)	18.4 (1.5)	4.0 (0.8)
Respondent has children not yet in education system	81.6 (3.2)	13.6 (2.8)	4.8 (1.8)
Respondent has children in education system	82.6 (1.7)	12.9 (1.5)	4.5 (1.0)
Respondent has children who have completed their education	83.6 (2.0)	14.0 (1.9)	2.4 (0.8)

Table 11
Percentages of Respondents Indicating Agreement/Non-Agreement with Statement that Evaluation Reports by Inspectors of Secondary Schools Should be Publicly Available

	Level of Agreement		
	Agreement % (SE)	Non- agreement % (SE)	Don't know/ Not sure % (SE)
<i>National Total</i>	78.9 (1.1)	16.1 (0.9)	5.0 (0.6)
<i>Gender of respondent</i>			
Male	78.7 (1.5)	17.0 (1.4)	4.3 (0.8)
Female	79.0 (1.5)	15.2 (1.3)	5.7 (0.8)
<i>Age group</i>			
15-24	77.2 (2.4)	18.8 (2.2)	4.1 (1.1)
25-49	78.2 (1.5)	15.6 (1.3)	6.2 (0.9)
50+	81.0 (1.8)	15.0 (1.7)	3.9 (1.0)
<i>Socioeconomic level</i>			
Professional/Managerial	75.1 (3.2)	19.9 (3.0)	5.0 (1.6)
White collar	77.6 (2.1)	18.1 (1.9)	4.3 (1.0)
Skilled	80.2 (2.0)	14.7 (1.8)	5.1 (1.1)
Unskilled	80.6 (2.0)	12.6 (1.7)	6.8 (0.7)
Farmer (50 acres+)	76.0 (4.2)	22.1 (4.1)	1.9 (1.3)
Farmer (50 acres-)	85.4 (5.5)	12.2 (5.1)	2.4 (2.4)
<i>Respondent's school leaving standard</i>			
Primary school only/some second level but no exam	81.7 (2.3)	11.6 (1.9)	6.7 (1.5)
Group Cert/ Intermediate Cert/ Junior Cert	79.0 (2.5)	14.7 (2.1)	6.3 (1.5)
Leaving Cert	82.7 (1.8)	11.6 (1.6)	5.7 (1.1)
Further education	73.4 (2.4)	23.4 (2.3)	3.3 (1.0)
Still in education system	75.6 (3.1)	21.8 (3.0)	2.6 (1.1)
<i>Children</i>			
Respondent has no children	76.2 (1.7)	18.7 (1.6)	5.1 (0.9)
Respondent has children not yet in education system	78.9 (3.4)	13.6 (2.8)	7.5 (2.2)
Respondent has children in education system	80.1 (1.8)	13.7 (1.5)	6.3 (1.1)
Respondent has children who have completed their education	81.5 (2.1)	15.8 (2.0)	2.7 (0.9)

Table 12
Percentages of Respondents Indicating Agreement/Non-Agreement with Statement that Junior and Leaving Certificate Results of Secondary Schools Should be Publicly Available

	Level of Agreement		
	Agreement % (SE)	Non- agreement % (SE)	Don't know/ Not sure % (SE)
<i>National Total</i>	71.5 (1.1)	23.6 (1.1)	4.9 (0.6)
<i>Gender of respondent</i>			
Male	71.9 (1.7)	22.9 (1.6)	5.3 (0.8)
Female	71.1 (1.6)	24.3 (1.5)	4.6 (0.7)
<i>Age group</i>			
15-24	69.8 (2.6)	26.5 (2.5)	3.7 (1.1)
25-49	70.5 (1.7)	24.4 (1.6)	5.1 (0.8)
50+	74.2 (2.0)	20.3 (1.9)	5.5 (1.1)
<i>Socioeconomic level</i>			
Professional/Managerial	75.3 (3.2)	19.8 (2.9)	4.9 (1.6)
White collar	69.8 (2.3)	27.5 (2.2)	2.8 (0.8)
Skilled	73.9 (2.2)	20.7 (2.0)	5.4 (1.1)
Unskilled	70.3 (2.3)	23.2 (2.1)	6.5 (1.2)
Farmer (50 acres+)	66.3 (4.6)	28.8 (4.4)	4.8 (2.1)
Farmer (50 acres-)	73.2 (6.9)	22.0 (6.5)	4.9 (3.4)
<i>Respondent's school leaving standard</i>			
Primary school only/some second level but no exam	72.9 (2.6)	19.7 (2.4)	7.4 (1.6)
Group Cert/ Intermediate Cert/ Junior Cert	69.9 (2.8)	23.5 (2.6)	6.6 (1.5)
Leaving Cert	74.0 (2.1)	21.7 (2.0)	4.3 (1.0)
Further education	69.2 (2.5)	26.9 (2.4)	3.8 (1.0)
Still in education system	70.1 (3.3)	27.8 (3.2)	2.1 (1.0)
<i>Children</i>			
Respondent has no children	69.6 (2.7)	25.6 (2.7)	4.8 (1.9)
Respondent has children not yet in education system	72.1 (3.7)	23.1 (3.5)	4.8 (1.8)
Respondent has children in education system	71.1 (2.0)	23.4 (1.9)	5.5 (1.0)
Respondent has children who have completed their education	73.4 (2.4)	21.6 (2.2)	5.1 (1.2)

Table 13
Percentages of Respondents Indicating Agreement/Non-Agreement with Statement that the Number of Students from Individual Secondary Schools who go to Third Level Should be Publicly Available

	Level of Agreement		
	Agreement % (SE)	Non- agreement % (SE)	Don't know/ Not sure % (SE)
<i>National Total</i>	75.9 (1.1)	18.4 (1.1)	5.6 (0.6)
<i>Gender of respondent</i>			
Male	76.2 (1.7)	18.0 (1.6)	5.8 (0.8)
Female	75.7 (1.6)	18.8 (1.5)	5.5 (0.7)
<i>Age group</i>			
15-24	74.4 (2.4)	21.3 (2.3)	4.4 (1.1)
25-49	76.2 (1.6)	18.1 (1.4)	5.8 (0.9)
50+	76.7 (2.0)	17.0 (1.8)	6.3 (1.1)
<i>Socioeconomic level</i>			
Professional/Managerial	73.1 (3.2)	20.3 (3.0)	6.6 (1.8)
White collar	75.1 (2.2)	21.2 (2.0)	3.8 (1.0)
Skilled	76.3 (2.2)	17.5 (1.9)	6.2 (1.2)
Unskilled	77.8 (2.1)	15.4 (1.8)	6.8 (1.3)
Farmer (50 acres+)	76.0 (4.2)	20.2 (3.9)	3.8 (1.9)
Farmer (50 acres-)	75.6 (6.7)	17.1 (5.9)	7.3 (4.1)
<i>Respondent's school leaving standard</i>			
Primary school only/some second level but no exam	77.1 (2.5)	13.7 (2.0)	9.2 (1.7)
Group Cert/ Intermediate Cert/ Junior Cert	77.2 (2.5)	16.2 (2.2)	6.6 (1.5)
Leaving Cert	76.3 (2.1)	18.7 (1.9)	5.0 (1.1)
Further education	74.9 (2.4)	20.7 (2.2)	4.4 (1.1)
Still in education system	73.6 (3.2)	23.8 (3.1)	2.6 (1.1)
<i>Children</i>			
Respondent has no children	74.7 (1.7)	20.0 (1.6)	5.3 (0.9)
Respondent has children not yet in education system	72.1 (3.7)	23.8 (3.5)	4.1 (1.6)
Respondent has children in education system	77.0 (1.9)	17.2 (1.7)	5.9 (1.0)
Respondent has children who have completed their education	75.8 (2.4)	17.3 (2.1)	6.9 (1.4)

Table 14
Percentages of Respondents Indicating Agreement/Non-Agreement with Statement that the Number of Students from Individual Secondary Schools who Drop out Before Leaving Certificate Should be Publicly Available

	Level of Agreement		
	Agreement % (SE)	Non- agreement % (SE)	Don't know/ Not sure % (SE)
<i>National Total</i>	70.1 (1.2)	23.8 (1.1)	6.2 (0.6)
<i>Gender of respondent</i>			
Male	69.9 (1.7)	24.2 (1.6)	5.9 (0.9)
Female	70.3 (1.6)	23.4 (1.5)	6.4 (0.9)
<i>Age group</i>			
15-24	64.5 (2.7)	30.8 (2.6)	4.7 (1.2)
25-49	70.7 (1.7)	22.7 (1.5)	6.6 (0.9)
50+	73.0 (2.0)	20.5 (1.9)	6.5 (1.2)
<i>Socioeconomic level</i>			
Professional/Managerial	72.0 (3.3)	21.4 (3.0)	6.6 (1.8)
White collar	68.3 (2.3)	27.1 (2.2)	4.5 (1.0)
Skilled	69.4 (2.2)	23.1 (1.9)	7.5 (1.2)
Unskilled	71.3 (2.3)	21.4 (2.1)	7.3 (1.3)
Farmer (50 acres+)	69.2 (4.5)	26.9 (4.3)	3.8 (1.9)
Farmer (50 acres-)	75.6 (6.7)	22.0 (6.5)	2.4 (2.5)
<i>Respondent's school leaving standard</i>			
Primary school only/some second level but no exam	72.5 (2.6)	18.0 (2.3)	9.5 (1.7)
Group Cert/ Intermediate Cert/ Junior Cert	71.3 (2.7)	22.4 (2.5)	6.3 (1.5)
Leaving Cert	71.6 (2.2)	23.6 (2.1)	4.7 (1.0)
Further education	67.8 (2.5)	25.7 (2.4)	6.5 (1.3)
Still in education system	65.5 (3.4)	30.9 (3.3)	3.6 (1.3)
<i>Children</i>			
Respondent has no children	67.1 (1.7)	26.8 (1.6)	6.1 (0.9)
Respondent has children not yet in education system	71.4 (3.7)	22.4 (3.4)	6.1 (2.0)
Respondent has children in education system	71.5 (2.0)	21.1 (1.8)	7.4 (1.2)
Respondent has children who have completed their education	72.5 (1.9)	22.7 (1.8)	4.8 (1.0)

Table 15
Percentages of Respondents Indicating Agreement/Non-Agreement with Statement that the Improvement in Student Achievement during their Period in Individual Secondary Schools Should be Publicly Available

	Level of Agreement		
	Agreement % (SE)	Non- agreement % (SE)	Don't know/ Not sure % (SE)
<i>National Total</i>	74.6 (1.1)	19.5 (1.0)	5.9 (0.6)
<i>Gender of respondent</i>			
Male	72.2 (1.7)	21.5 (1.5)	6.2 (0.9)
Female	76.7 (1.5)	17.7 (1.4)	5.6 (0.8)
<i>Age group</i>			
15-24	74.1 (2.4)	21.2 (2.3)	4.7 (1.2)
25-49	74.0 (1.6)	18.7 (1.4)	7.3 (1.0)
50+	75.8 (2.0)	19.6 (1.9)	4.6 (1.0)
<i>Socioeconomic level</i>			
Professional/Managerial	76.4 (3.1)	18.1 (2.9)	5.5 (1.7)
White collar	73.9 (2.2)	21.9 (2.1)	4.3 (1.0)
Skilled	74.6 (2.2)	18.8 (2.0)	6.7 (1.3)
Unskilled	74.3 (2.2)	18.9 (2.0)	6.8 (1.3)
Farmer (50 acres+)	76.0 (4.2)	18.3 (3.8)	5.8 (2.3)
Farmer (50 acres-)	73.2 (6.9)	19.5 (6.2)	7.3 (4.1)
<i>Respondent's school leaving standard</i>			
Primary school only/some second level but no exam	71.5 (2.7)	20.1 (2.4)	8.5 (1.7)
Group Cert/ Intermediate Cert/ Junior Cert	77.9 (2.5)	15.8 (2.2)	6.3 (1.5)
Leaving Cert	74.9 (2.1)	19.4 (1.9)	5.7 (1.1)
Further education	71.9 (2.4)	22.5 (2.3)	5.6 (1.3)
Still in education system	78.4 (3.0)	19.1 (2.8)	2.6 (1.1)
<i>Children</i>			
Respondent has no children	71.7 (1.8)	21.9 (1.7)	6.4 (1.0)
Respondent has children not yet in education system	76.2 (3.5)	15.6 (3.0)	8.2 (2.3)
Respondent has children in education system	76.0 (1.9)	17.8 (1.7)	6.3 (1.1)
Respondent has children who have completed their education	78.8 (2.2)	17.3 (2.1)	3.9 (1.1)

Table 16
Percentages of Respondents Indicating Agreement/Non-Agreement with Statement that Rates of Absenteeism in Individual Secondary Schools Should be Publicly Available

	Level of Agreement		
	Agreement % (SE)	Non- agreement % (SE)	Don't know/ Not sure % (SE)
<i>National Total</i>	70.7 (1.2)	22.2 (1.1)	7.2 (0.7)
<i>Gender of respondent</i>			
Male	70.3 (1.7)	23.1 (1.6)	6.6 (0.9)
Female	71.0 (1.6)	21.3 (1.5)	7.6 (1.0)
<i>Age group</i>			
15-24	67.3 (2.6)	27.4 (2.5)	5.3 (1.2)
25-49	70.6 (1.7)	21.1 (1.5)	8.3 (1.0)
50+	73.1 (2.1)	20.3 (1.9)	6.6 (1.1)
<i>Socioeconomic level</i>			
Professional/Managerial	69.6 (3.4)	23.8 (3.1)	6.6 (1.8)
White collar	70.9 (2.3)	24.4 (2.2)	4.8 (1.1)
Skilled	71.2 (2.3)	20.3 (2.0)	8.5 (1.4)
Unskilled	70.5 (2.3)	21.7 (2.1)	7.8 (1.3)
Farmer (50 acres+)	68.3 (4.6)	20.2 (3.9)	11.5 (3.1)
Farmer (50 acres-)	75.6 (6.7)	22.0 (6.5)	2.4 (2.5)
<i>Respondent's school leaving standard</i>			
Primary school only/some second level but no exam	73.5 (2.6)	17.0 (2.2)	9.5 (1.7)
Group Cert/ Intermediate Cert/ Junior Cert	72.1 (2.7)	20.2 (2.4)	7.7 (1.6)
Leaving Cert	70.0 (2.2)	22.5 (2.0)	7.6 (1.3)
Further education	68.3 (2.5)	24.9 (2.4)	6.8 (1.4)
Still in education system	70.1 (3.3)	27.3 (3.2)	2.6 (1.1)
<i>Children</i>			
Respondent has no children	69.8 (1.8)	24.3 (1.7)	5.9 (1.0)
Respondent has children not yet in education system	68.7 (3.8)	22.4 (3.4)	8.8 (2.3)
Respondent has children in education system	71.8 (2.0)	19.4 (1.7)	8.8 (1.3)
Respondent has children who have completed their education	71.3 (1.8)	21.2 (1.7)	7.5 (0.9)

Table 17
Percentages of Respondents Indicating Agreement/Non-Agreement with Statement that Differences in Students' Ability Levels Should be Taken into Account when Comparing Schools

	Level of Agreement		
	Agreement % (SE)	Non- agreement % (SE)	Don't know/ Not sure % (SE)
<i>National Total</i>	74.4 (1.1)	18.5 (1.0)	7.2 (0.7)
<i>Gender of respondent</i>			
Male	73.4 (1.6)	19.8 (1.5)	6.8 (0.9)
Female	75.2 (1.5)	17.3 (1.3)	7.5 (0.9)
<i>Age group</i>			
15-24	76.3 (2.4)	18.1 (2.1)	5.6 (1.3)
25-49	74.7 (1.6)	17.9 (1.4)	7.4 (1.0)
50+	72.5 (2.1)	19.7 (1.9)	7.9 (1.3)
<i>Socioeconomic level</i>			
Professional/Managerial	76.4 (3.1)	15.9 (2.7)	7.7 (2.0)
White collar	73.6 (2.2)	19.4 (2.0)	7.1 (1.3)
Skilled	77.9 (2.1)	15.7 (1.8)	6.4 (1.2)
Unskilled	72.8 (2.2)	19.1 (2.0)	8.1 (1.4)
Farmer (50 acres+)	66.3 (4.6)	26.0 (4.3)	7.7 (2.6)
Farmer (50 acres-)	75.0 (6.8)	22.5 (6.6)	2.5 (2.5)
<i>Respondent's school leaving standard</i>			
Primary school only/some second level but no exam	73.9 (2.6)	17.7 (2.3)	8.5 (1.7)
Group Cert/ Intermediate Cert/ Junior Cert	74.3 (2.7)	18.0 (2.3)	7.7 (1.6)
Leaving Cert	70.4 (2.2)	21.3 (2.0)	8.3 (1.3)
Further education	80.8 (2.1)	13.3 (1.8)	5.9 (1.3)
Still in education system	72.7 (3.2)	23.2 (3.0)	4.1 (1.4)
<i>Children</i>			
Respondent has no children	72.4 (1.8)	20.4 (1.6)	7.2 (1.0)
Respondent has children not yet in education system	77.6 (3.4)	14.3 (2.9)	8.2 (2.3)
Respondent has children in education system	76.1 (2.4)	17.4 (2.0)	6.5 (1.5)
Respondent has children who have completed their education	75.1 (2.4)	16.8 (2.0)	8.1 (1.5)

Table 18
Percentages of Respondents Indicating Agreement/Non-Agreement with Statement that Financial Circumstances of Students' Families Should be Taken into Account when Comparing Schools

	Level of Agreement		
	Agreement % (SE)	Non- agreement % (SE)	Don't know/ Not sure % (SE)
<i>National Total</i>	59.3 (1.3)	33.0 (1.2)	7.7 (0.7)
<i>Gender of respondent</i>			
Male	59.2 (1.8)	33.2 (1.7)	7.6 (1.0)
Female	59.5 (1.8)	32.8 (1.7)	7.8 (1.0)
<i>Age group</i>			
15-24	58.3 (2.8)	34.9 (2.7)	6.9 (1.4)
25-49	59.5 (1.8)	33.0 (1.7)	7.5 (1.0)
50+	59.9 (2.3)	31.6 (2.2)	8.5 (1.3)
<i>Socioeconomic level</i>			
Professional/Managerial	54.4 (3.7)	35.7 (3.6)	9.9 (2.2)
White collar	55.5 (2.5)	36.7 (2.4)	7.8 (1.3)
Skilled	63.0 (2.4)	28.8 (2.3)	8.2 (1.4)
Unskilled	61.7 (2.4)	31.0 (2.3)	7.3 (1.3)
Farmer (50 acres+)	61.5 (4.8)	33.7 (4.6)	4.8 (2.1)
Farmer (50 acres-)	55.0 (7.8)	42.5 (7.7)	2.5 (2.4)
<i>Respondent's school leaving standard</i>			
Primary school only/some second level but no exam	64.8 (3.7)	26.8 (3.6)	8.5 (2.2)
Group Cert/ Intermediate Cert/ Junior Cert	59.2 (2.5)	31.6 (2.3)	9.2 (1.4)
Leaving Cert	57.1 (2.4)	37.0 (2.3)	5.9 (1.3)
Further education	61.5 (4.8)	30.5 (4.6)	8.0 (2.1)
Still in education system	52.6 (7.8)	39.7 (7.7)	7.7 (2.5)
<i>Children</i>			
Respondent has no children	55.4 (2.0)	35.6 (1.9)	8.9 (1.1)
Respondent has children not yet in education system	65.3 (3.9)	27.2 (3.7)	7.5 (2.2)
Respondent has children in education system	59.3 (2.2)	33.9 (2.1)	6.8 (1.1)
Respondent has children who have completed their education	65.1 (2.6)	27.5 (2.4)	7.5 (1.4)

Table 19
Percentages of Respondents Indicating Agreement/Non-Agreement with Statement that the Resources Available to Schools Should be Taken into Account when Comparing Schools

	Level of Agreement		
	Agreement % (SE)	Non- agreement % (SE)	Don't know/ Not sure % (SE)
<i>National Total</i>	86.8 (0.9)	8.7 (0.7)	4.5 (0.5)
<i>Gender of respondent</i>			
Male	84.2 (1.4)	10.4 (1.1)	5.4 (0.8)
Female	89.1 (1.1)	7.2 (0.9)	3.7 (0.7)
<i>Age group</i>			
15-24	88.2 (1.8)	8.4 (1.5)	3.4 (1.0)
25-49	88.1 (1.2)	8.4 (1.0)	3.6 (0.7)
50+	83.7 (1.7)	9.6 (1.4)	6.8 (1.2)
<i>Socioeconomic level</i>			
Professional/Managerial	84.1 (2.7)	8.8 (2.1)	7.1 (1.9)
White collar	87.4 (1.7)	9.3 (1.5)	3.3 (0.9)
Skilled	88.9 (1.6)	8.2 (1.4)	2.8 (0.8)
Unskilled	85.1 (1.8)	8.1 (1.4)	6.8 (1.3)
Farmer (50 acres+)	88.5 (3.1)	8.7 (2.8)	2.9 (1.6)
Farmer (50 acres-)	82.5 (6.0)	15.0 (5.6)	2.5 (2.5)
<i>Respondent's school leaving standard</i>			
Primary school only/some second level but no exam	85.2 (2.1)	9.2 (1.7)	5.6 (1.4)
Group Cert/ Intermediate Cert/ Junior Cert	85.7 (2.1)	8.8 (1.7)	5.5 (1.4)
Leaving Cert	87.4 (1.6)	9.5 (1.4)	3.1 (0.8)
Further education	88.5 (1.7)	6.8 (1.4)	4.7 (1.2)
Still in education system	86.1 (2.5)	9.8 (2.1)	4.1 (1.4)
<i>Children</i>			
Respondent has no children	85.0 (1.4)	9.6 (1.2)	5.4 (1.0)
Respondent has children not yet in education system	85.7 (2.9)	10.9 (2.6)	3.4 (1.5)
Respondent has children in education system	89.4 (1.4)	7.2 (1.1)	3.3 (0.8)
Respondent has children who have completed their education	88.1 (1.8)	7.5 (1.4)	4.5 (1.1)

CONCLUSION

The fact that only half the respondents in our survey agreed that schools currently provide enough information to parents suggests that there are several areas for which more information would be welcome. The areas endorsed by the largest majorities were a school's annual report on performance and inspectors' reports. The publication of these, and of other information, could, of course, allow comparisons to be made between schools. If this were to happen, majorities of respondents were of the view that the resources available to schools, differences in students' ability, and the financial circumstances of students' families should be taken into account. This position is in keeping with that of many commentators who have identified the need to contextualize information in making comparisons between schools (e.g., Goldstein & Myers, 1996; Rowe, 2000; Wilson, 2004).

Our study revealed considerable variation between subgroups of respondents categorized on the basis of their background characteristics in their perceptions of the adequacy of information currently available about schools and of the types of information that should be made available. The high percentage of respondents who selected the 'don't know/not sure' option, in particular for statements relating to the current situation (schools provide enough information to parents about how their children are doing; schools provide enough information about their performance) is worthy of note. Furthermore, choice of this option was less frequent for statements that contained recommendations about the provision of information. For both types of statement, the 'don't know/not sure' option was chosen more frequently by respondents with the lowest amount of formal education.

Differences between females and males in their responses to several items were not great. More females than males, however, expressed dissatisfaction with the current situation and favoured making more information available about schools.

The most striking finding relating to age was associated with the responses of the youngest category (15- to 24-year olds), many of whom would still have been in the education system. This group had the greatest proportion of respondents who were not in favour of making more information about schools available (e.g., rates of absenteeism, dropout).

The greatest variation in views was associated with the socioeconomic status of respondents. This was due for the most part to the views of respondents categorized as farmers, who deviated more than any other group from the aggregated percentage in their support of the statement that schools provide enough information to parents about how well their children are doing, as well as about the overall performance of schools. In light of this position, it seems rather anomalous that greater percentages of farmers than of other categories of respondents should agree that a range of types of information, including inspectors' reports, rates of absenteeism, and dropout, should be made public.

There were large differences between the views of respondents who varied in their school-leaving standards. Respondents still in the education system (who, of course, would also tend to be in the youngest age category) were most likely to agree that schools provide enough information to parents, and least likely, together with respondents with further education, to agree that inspectors' reports should be publicly available. A greater proportion of respondents with only primary education were less sure than respondents in other groups that schools provide enough information to parents. A greater proportion of respondents with further education agreed that, in making comparisons between schools, the resources available to schools and differences in students' ability should be taken into account.

Differences between groups categorized in terms of whether or not they had children, and, if they had, whether or not the children were currently in the education system, are difficult to interpret. This is, at least in part, due to the relatively large proportions of respondents who did not have children in the system who chose the 'don't know/not sure' option when asked if schools currently provide enough information to parents. Respondents with a child in the education system tended to be more critical of the information provided than respondents with no children. The latter were less likely to agree that evaluation information about schools should be publicly available, or that information about student ability, the financial circumstances of students' families, or the resources available to schools should be taken into account when comparing schools.

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