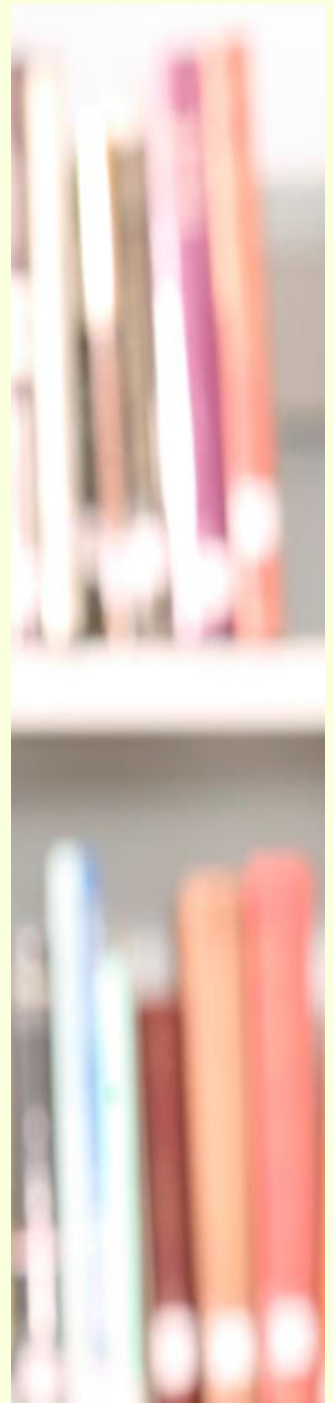




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**Education and Skills Development Research
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This month's blog...

In this month's blog, [Lisa Wiebesiek](#) provides insights into [rural education](#) in South Africa, based on her extensive fieldwork experience in the Eastern Cape and Kwazulu-Natal provinces. These reflections paint a picture of the life of learners in rural communities and the importance of context specific educational interventions.

[Does it matter if students enjoy learning science?](#)

How students experience science education at school plays an important role in shaping their attitudes towards school science, and in influencing their views about science-related topics as an adult. It is therefore important to shape positive attitudes towards science from the school level. A recent [HSRC policy brief](#) examined learner attitudes in relation to a number of factors, based on the TIMSS 2011 data.

[New to the fold: Introducing TIMSS Numeracy](#)

In addition to TIMSS- Grade 9, TIMSS Numeracy was conducted for the first time in South Africa in 2014. The TIMSS Numeracy assessment concentrates on measuring children's numeracy learning outcomes, including fundamental mathematical knowledge, procedures, and problem-solving strategies at the end of the primary school cycle. South African schools participated at the Grade 5 level countrywide. Read more about TIMSS Numeracy [here](#).

[What do teachers need to teach well?](#)

Teachers have an enormous impact on the understanding and achievement of their learners. An [HSRC review piece](#) by [Fabian Arends](#) looks at the characteristics of teachers that are more likely to impact on, or be associated with learner achievement. This was done through an analysis of the 2011 TIMSS results related to what teachers said about themselves and the performance of their learners.

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