Well-being of South African educators

The well-being of educators is key to ensuring quality education. Well-being is influenced by factors such as mental and physical health, as well as elements of the school environment. Using data from the Health of Educators in Public Schools Study and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study, we examine the physical and mental well-being of educators in South Africa.

The Health of Educators in Public Schools in South Africa Study was conducted in 2015 across the nine provinces involving 21 495 Grade R to 12 educators. This study investigated the health and well-being of educators.

Overall HIV prevalence among educators

- 15%

Approximately 58 000 educators living with HIV

Percentage of educators diagnosed with a disease in the previous 5 years

- High blood pressure: 22%
- Stomach ulcer: 9%
- Diabetes: 9%
- Arthritis: 7%
- Asthma: 6%
- Lung or breathing problems: 4%

Job satisfaction index for educators

- Low: 52%
- Medium: 23%
- High: 25%

Main reasons for considering a career change

- Poor salaries: 32%
- Too many demands: 20%
- Class size: 11%
- Feeling depressed: 10%

The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) was conducted in 2015. Questionnaires, which included questions related to well-being, were completed by 963 Grade 5 and 9 educators in 589 schools.

Percentage of educators that reported being hospitalised or unwell in the year prior to the study

- Hospitalised: 12%
- Unwell for 1-7 days: 23%

Percentage of educators that reported very often feeling the following

- I am content with my profession as a teacher: 51%
- I find my work full of meaning and purpose: 53%
- I am enthusiastic about my job: 60%
- I am proud of the work I do: 64%

The Health of Educators in Public Schools in South Africa Study (2016)
3 TIMSS (2015)
4 TIMSS data for educators are not nationally representative, but indicative of those sampled in the study.