The Australian Principal Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Survey

2015

Philip Riley
Acknowledgements

Projects on this scale do not happen without a number of dedicated people’s support. I would like to firstly thank the Teachers Health Fund who became the major sponsor of the research in 2014. Without the strong support of CEO Bradley Joyce, Chief Marketing Officer Kate Talty and National Industry Development Manager, Jane Stower these reports would not have been possible. I would also like to thank the National Principal Organisations and their affiliates for co-funding the project along with in-kind resources, and a determination to see the project run. They have also provided the essential function of facilitated access to the survey for the principals and deputy/assistant principals in their jurisdictions. Special thanks go to project manager, research assistant and PhD student, Aimee Maxwell who works tirelessly to tight deadlines time and again. For Web development and report construction thanks go to Jason Cleeland. A big thank you also goes to the members of the project consultative committee, who each contributed many hours of thought, travel for meetings and invaluable questions along with discussion. It is a much better product for their efforts. Finally, I am indebted to Australia’s school principals who give up their valuable time each year to participate in the survey. The research rests on their good will and generosity.

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Disclaimer: The recommendations in the report represent the opinion of the author alone and are not necessarily endorsed by the Consultative Committee.

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Executive Summary & Recommendations

Background
The survey has run nationally every year since 2011 in response to growing concern about principals’ occupational health, safety and wellbeing. Since the project began, approximately 40% of Australia’s 10,000 principals have taken part. Many have completed multiple surveys. The full background information is available in both short and long form at: www.principalhealth.org/au/reports.

Project Aims
The aim of this research project is to conduct a longitudinal study monitoring school principals and deputy/assistant principals’ health and wellbeing annually. Principals and deputy/assistant principals’ health and wellbeing in differing school types, levels and size will be monitored along with lifestyle choices such as exercise and diet and the professional and personal social support networks available to individuals. The turnover of principals and deputy/assistant principals within schools will allow investigations of moderator effects, such as years of experience prior to taking up the role. The longitudinal study will allow the mapping of health outcomes on each of these dimensions over time.

Participant Care
Each survey participant received a comprehensive, individual report from his/her own survey responses. The report is an interactive secure webpage allowing participants to compare their scores on 45 separate dimensions with the general population, other principals and themselves over time. The other form of feedback is a red flag indicator that has been programmed to be automatically triggered by the survey system if a participant reports either consideration of self-harm in the week preceding completing the survey, or if their combined answers to the quality of life questions add to a total score that falls two Standard Deviations below the mean score for principals. A ‘red flag’ email is then generated and sent to the participant outlining his or her individual result and includes a list of support services available in the local area. This is done anonymously so participants can choose what course of action to take.

Chief Investigator
Associate Professor Philip Riley, from Australian Catholic University, a registered psychologist with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, oversaw the project. He is a former school principal and is also the Chief Investigator for The Irish Principals and Deputy Principals Health and Wellbeing Survey. The Irish survey was conducted using the same protocols as the Australian survey, which has run annually in Australia since 2011. The reports for this survey are available at http://www.principalhealth.org/ie/reports.php.

The Survey
The survey captured three types of information drawn from existing robust and widely used instruments. First, comprehensive school demographic items drawn from the 
*Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study* (TIMSS) (Williams, et al., 2007), *Program for International Student Assessment* (PISA) (Thomson, et al., 2011), The MySchool Website (ACARA) and *International Confederation of Principals* surveys were used to capture differences in occupational health and safety (OH&S) associated with the diversity of school settings and types. Second, personal demographic and historical information was captured. Third, principals and deputy/assistant principals’ quality of life and psychosocial coping were investigated, by employing two widely used measures, the *Assessment of Quality of Life – 8D (AQoL-8D)*: Richardson, et al., 2009; Richardson,
Iezzi & Maxwell, 2014), The Copenhagen PsychoSocial Coping Scale-II (COPSOQ-II: Jan Hyld Pejtersen, et al., 2010). This year we also measured individual levels of passion (its presence, or absence, and harmonious vs obsessional) as it links to both job demands and resources (Trepanier, Ferret, Austin, Forest & Vallerand, 2014; Vallerand, 2015). Alcohol use was measured using The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT: Babour et al., 2001), developed for the World Health Organization. The combination of items from these instruments allows opportunities for comprehensive analysis of variation in both OH&S and wellbeing as a function of school type, sector differences and the personal attributes of the principals themselves.

Innovation

The principals and deputy/assistant principals who complete the survey receive interactive feedback through a dedicated secure website, affording them instant health and wellbeing checkups tailored to their specific work context. In future iterations of the survey it is hoped to incorporate feedback to individuals using like-group comparisons. The instant benefit to individuals has increased both participation rates and the veracity of the information they submit.

Research Questions

The specific research questions guiding the initial survey were:
Can recognizable occupational health, safety and wellbeing subgroups of principals and deputy/assistant principals be identified through the survey? These groups may be inferred from a number of criteria including: Sector; Location (Urban, Suburban, Large Town, Rural, Remote); Type (Primary, Secondary, Special, Early Childhood,); Background (Family of Origin, School Education); Person Factors (Gender, Family of Origin and Procreation, Social Support, Educational Level); Role Factors (Hours worked, number and type of teachers, students and parents, resources, professional support); Occupational Constraints.

- Do(es) any group(s) thrive in the role?
- Do(es) any group(s) only just survive in the role?
- Do(es) any group(s) show signs of adverse health, safety, and wellbeing outcomes.
- Do(es) any factors affect these group(s), and in what ways?
- Are changes to educational policy or policy implementation suggested by the results?

Impact

The impact of the research in the wider community is highlighted by the mainstream media coverage: >1,200 TV, Radio, Print and on-line reports appearing between July 2013 – December 2014, reaching an audience of ~10,000,000 people (~50% of the Australian population). The “real world impact” is evidenced by changes to political parties’ policies. Better support for school principals became Green Party policy in 2013, and was named first priority by incoming Victorian education minister Merlino in December 2014. The research has been debated in the Tasmanian parliament (28.5.2015) and the WA Parliament (23.10.2015), a significant real world impact.

Summary of impact

Year-on-year increase in participation (2011–2015) 2049–4386 participants. Individual feedback has been welcomed and prompted some to positive behavioural change (e.g., not letting work interfere so much with family life).

The increase in media coverage has been spectacular (2013: 160 unique insertions reaching ~2.1 million Australians, 2014: >1,200 insertions reaching >10 million), raising awareness of the issues and alerting politicians to the importance of the issues to the community. In 2014 there were over 50 minutes of prime time TV, and many hours of talk back radio focused on the report.
There is growing interest in replicating the research from a number of jurisdictions. Currently the survey has run for the second year in Ireland. There is particularly strong interest from the International Confederation of Principals in conducting the research in multiple countries. The Ontario Principals Council has applied for funding to conduct the research in Canada, and most recently the US Elementary and Secondary Principals’ Associations have requested the research extend to their 95,000 members. These studies will help enormously with the analysis phase for the Australian survey. We will be able to disentangle cultural and cross cultural issues from “the human condition” variables, and compare education policies and policy enactment in various settings to determine the best, evidence based approaches to address the issues that arise both from within and across contexts.

Perhaps the most important direct impact has been the reaction by the Teachers Health Fund. Since the release of the 2014 report they have reduced waiting time for new members wishing to access psychological services from 12 to 2 months and added rebates to tele-psychological services, making distance from capital cities less of a burden.

**Australia’s School Principals: A 5-year Longitudinal Snapshot**

- **Response Rate**
  a. Over the 5-years of the survey to date, responses have been collected from 4386 school leaders. This represents approximately ~40% of all principals in the country with ~20-25% completing the survey each year.
  b. It is impossible to calculate the number of assistants/deputies, as they are not in all schools, and many large schools have more than one deputy/assistant, so no divisor exists to make the calculation.
  c. However the raw numbers suggest a good proportion of those eligible to take part did.

- **Participants**
  a. 73% Principals; 27% Deputies/Assistants
  b. 57.1% Primary; 26.1% Secondary; 13.4% Kinder/Primary – Year12; 3.5% Early Childhood
  c. 56.8% Female; 43.2% Male
  d. Average age 56.1 years: Age range 24 – 79 years
  e. Sector
  f. 74.5% Government; 13.3% Catholic; 12.2% Independent

- **State**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
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<th>% of Sample</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
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- **Geolocation**

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<td>Remote</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

- **Experience**
  a. The average level of experience has dropped during the life of the survey as many principals reach retirement. Years in current role have dropped from 5.2 to 4.1. Years in teaching before taking up the leadership role have dropped from 12.5 to 11.7.

- **Average Working Hours**
  a. Average working hours have increased during the past 5 years during school terms, but decreased during the holidays.
  b. In 2011, 70% of principals worked upwards of 51-56 hours per week during term with ~24% working upwards of 61-65 hours per week.
  c. In 2015 this has increased to 76% and 25% respectively.
  d. During school holidays in 2011, ~55% worked upwards of 25 hours per week. In 2015 this dropped to 39%, hopefully showing a healthier work-life balance. However, this year included a lower number of working hours to choose from (the lowest choice previously was 0-25hrs, in 2015 the lowest choice was 0-11 hrs).

- **Salary**
  a. Annual salaries range from <$50,000 - >$160,000 per annum with a disproportionate number of women consistently in lower paid roles during the last 5 years.

- **Personal achievement and values**
  a. The importance of personal achievement has increased over the life of the survey from 3.95 – 4.33/5.
  b. The importance of personal relationships with family and friends has remained stable (4.7/5)
  c. ~83-88% of respondents rate their own happiness as very important or higher.
  d. Participants report significantly higher job satisfaction than the general population and the trend shows an increase over the survey period.

- **Personal supports and challenges**
  a. ~83% are in a partner relationship. However,
    i. The numbers of principals who report their partner as “their greatest source of support” has dropped form ~82% in 2011 to 71.3% in 2015. The number of partners who work in education has also dropped form 41.6% in 2011 to 37.6% in 2015.
  b. Approximately half the participants have children have children living at home (51-56%: See Figure 1 overleaf).
  c. The number of participants who have a family member with a long-term health condition has increased from ~25% in 2011 to 34.2% in 2015, with serious impact on the family also rising from 28-31%.
  d. ~41% volunteer their time for community support outside of their role, and a slightly higher number are active members of formal community or sporting associations.
  e. ~ Regular spiritual practice has also declined from 31.5% in 2011 to 26.4% in 2015
- **Personal background**
  a. Participants come from stable backgrounds ~85-88% were living with a mother and father at age 14.
  b. Just under a quarter ~23% of participants have a Masters degree or above, mostly in formal leadership courses. Of those, ~75% believe the course has helped them to better cope with the demands of the job.

- **Health**
  a. There are large differences in their self-reported maintenance of healthy levels of exercise, diet and weight control.
  b. 49% are taking prescription medication for a diagnosed condition.
  c. Most maintain a healthy alcohol intake, and do not use it to manage stress.
  d. Self-rated health, a single item in the survey, has been shown in numerous studies to accurately predict long term health outcomes, including mortality, cardiovascular diseases, hospitalizations, use of medicine, absence, and early retirement (Idler, & Benyamini, 1997). Participants’ self-ratings have fallen slightly during the survey period and remain at ~10% below the population average.
  e. Principals experience high levels of emotional demands and emotional labour when compared to the general population. This is correlated with higher levels of burnout and stress symptoms (difficulty sleeping, somatic symptoms and cognitive stress, and depressive symptoms) and poorer overall quality of life.
  f. The greatest source of stress for all principals and deputies/assistants in every state and every sector is the sheer quantity of work, closely followed by a lack of time to focus on teaching and learning.
  g. In 2015 ‘red flag’ responses (thoughts of self-harm and/or global quality of life scores >2 Standard Deviations below the mean score for principals) were double the rate of
previous years and also double the rate of the Irish participants who completed a similar survey in 2015 (www.principalhealth.org/ie/reports): 3% for self-harm and 8% for poor quality of life responses. This result is a serious concern for the profession as a whole.

- Offensive behaviour
  a. Principals and deputy/assistant principals experience far higher prevalence of offensive behaviour at work each year than the general population.
  b. The levels were extremely high in 2011 and have since increased during the survey period.
  c. Adult-adult bullying (increased from 4.1-4.3 times higher than the general population); threats of violence (increased from 4.9-5.3 times higher); and actual violence (increased from 7-8 times the rate of the general population).
  d. The prevalence rates vary from state to state with concerning upward trends reported for NSW, NT, Tasmania and the ACT (see Figures 2-5). Both South Australia and Queensland have gone against this trend, and seen a fall in offensive behaviour during the survey period.

- Wellbeing
  a. Despite having many predictive attributes for high scores on health and wellbeing (COPSOQ-II; Personal Wellbeing Index) and quality of life (Assessment of Quality of Life-8D) measures, collectively principals and deputy/assistant principals score below the general population average.
  b. All positive measures (self-rated health; happiness; mental health; coping; relationships; self-worth; personal wellbeing index) are lower than the population average.
  c. All negative measures are higher than the general population (burnout-1.6 times the population; stress-1.7 times; sleeping troubles-2.2 times; depressive symptoms-1.3 times; somatic stress symptoms-1.3 times; cognitive stress symptoms-1.6 times). The differences are detailed in the full report.
Figure 2. Participants’ experiences of offensive behaviour at the workplace

Figure 3. Threats of Violence Prevalence 2011-2015
Social Capital

Social capital is a constructed meta-scale from three COPSOQ-II scales: Trust in Management (also known as Vertical Trust), Social Community at Work (also known as Horizontal Trust) and Justice. Together they represent the level of Social Capital in each school as perceived by the principal or deputy. The results for this measure are both
positive and negative. There is significant variation in social capital around the country. The average score for all schools is reported for each year in Table 1.

a. Participants reporting high levels of social capital also report lower levels of job demands and increased levels of job resources. This is a significant finding consistent with research in other industries and points to how we can find solutions to the current decrements in principal health. However, it is concerning that the overall levels of social capital have diminished over the last five years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Social Capital Values 2011-2015</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alpha</td>
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<tr>
<td>-------</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
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b. The spread of results show that there are many schools doing well on this important measure of school health, with a principal who is confident, relatively autonomous and satisfied with the role. However there are also too many schools with very low levels of social capital.

c. Social capital is unrelated to the school ICSEA score\(^1\). This information needs much further investigation, which will be carried out in the near future and further explication of this aspect of social capital is likely to prove fruitful.

d. Social capital is correlated with increased perceptions of job satisfaction, general health, confidence, autonomy and harmonious passion.

e. Social capital is also correlated with decreased perceptions of quantitative and emotional demands, work-family conflict, stress, burnout, cognitive and somatic stress symptoms, sleeping difficulties and depressive symptoms.

- Passion
  a. The dualistic model of passion scale was added to the survey in 2015. Vallerand (2015) proposes two distinct types of passion:
    i. **Harmonious Passion** – a strong desire to freely engage in activity resulting from autonomous internalization of the passion into the person’s identity; willingly accepted as important.
    ii. **Obsessive Passion** (OP) – an uncontrollable urge to partake in the passion resulting from controlled internalization into one’s identity. This process originates from intrapersonal and/or interpersonal pressure because particular contingencies are attached to the passion, such as feelings of social acceptance, and can overwhelm other aspects of the person’s life.
  b. Most principals describe themselves as passionate educators, so it will be crucial to determine whether this represents risk or protection as related to school setting. Indeed, research in education settings in other countries (Trépanier, Fernet, Austin, Forest & Vallerand, 2014) has shown that increasing demands in the absence of sufficient resources leads to obsessive passion, which, in turn, leads to burnout and undermines work engagement. Conversely, resources in the absence of demands, facilitates harmonious passion, which, in turn, prevents burnout and facilitates work engagement. The results for this measure in 2015 are in line with previous studies and

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\(^1\) The Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) was created by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) specifically to enable fair comparisons of National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) test achievement by students in schools across Australia ([http://www.acara.edu.au/verve_resources/About_icsea_2014.pdf](http://www.acara.edu.au/verve_resources/About_icsea_2014.pdf)).
significantly correlated both positively and negatively with the Job Demands and Resources.

c. 91.5% of participants report being passionate ($M=5.46, SD=0.93$). Harmonious passion ($M=4.1, SD=1.16$) was more common than Obsessive passion ($M=2.72, SD=1.07$).

d. The combination of social capital and passion may provide significant new areas for combating the increasing demands of the role. Examples of the relationships between job demands, outcomes, social capital and the dualistic model of passion are represented in Figures 4-11 below.

Figure 6. Relationship between Harmonious Passion and Job Demands
Figure 7. Relationship between Obsessive Passion and Job Demands

Figure 8. The relationship between Harmonious Passion and Work-Family Conflict
Figure 9. The relationship between Obsessive Passion and Work-Family Conflict

Figure 10. The relationship between Harmonious Passion and Burnout
Figure 11. The relationship between Obsessive Passion and Burnout

Figure 12. Relationship between Harmonious Passion and Social Capital
Summary

Job Demands On average, Quantitative Demands, Work Pace, Emotional Demands, Having to Hide Emotions, Average Working Hours during Term, and Work-family Conflict have remained very high or increased slightly during the last 5 years. Sources of stress that remained stable during the period were: Sheer Quantity of Work; Not Enough Time for Teaching and Learning; and Expectations of the Employer. Sources of stress that increased were: Resourcing Needs, Student and Parent related issues, and Government Initiatives. The largest increases in stress were reported for Mental Health Issues of both staff and students. Stress diminished for Union/Industrial Disputes, Critical Incidents, Financial Management Issues, and Lack of Autonomy.

Job Resources such as formal leadership education, job satisfaction, degree to which individuals can influence their work, possibilities for development, variation of work tasks, meaning of work, commitment to the workplace and level of self-efficacy have all increased. These resources help individuals cope with increased demands. However, sources of support from all sources have decreased with a significant fall in support during 2015 for partner support. This measure in conjunction with the Work-Family Conflict measure indicates a significant threat to participant wellbeing if these trends continue.

Positive Trends Participants are reducing their working hours during holiday periods, which indicates a more appropriate balance between work and life.

Negative Trends Offensive behavior rates and decreasing social support are very concerning.

Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Self-rated health results, as mentioned earlier, is a very robust measure of future health, so the decline over time is of great concern.
Recommendations: Context

The recommendations are designed to help the many stakeholders who are responsible for the quality of education in Australia. And, there is much to be done if we are to achieve our potential as a nation. Therefore the recommendations for the 2015 report are framed in such a way that all stakeholders are provided with potential action items. These are clustered under headings of responsible bodies: Government, Employers, Community, Schools, Individuals and the Research community. If we improve the working conditions for principals and teachers we also improve the learning conditions for students, as the two are inseparable (Leithwood, 2006). The recommendations are addressed to each stakeholder group, because many of the issues identified during the last five years represent issues for the nation, not just schools. Therefore we must all be involved if we are to build on the positive factors and diminish the entrenched problems. There are particular challenges to the occupational health, safety and wellbeing of principals and deputies/assistants which result from contextual and geographical determinates, but most relate to more general occupational conditions found across the country in every state and school sector.

The 2015 recommendations have been developed in response to trends identified over the five waves of data collection and build on the 2014 recommendations. These are available from the 2014 report (www.principalhealth.org/au/reports). Some of the 2014 recommendations are beginning to be implemented in various jurisdictions. For example, the Tasmanian government wrote to all principals on June 28th 2015 committing to join with the Australian Education Union and the Tasmanian Principals’ Association to implement all the 2014 recommendations, following a debate about the research in the parliament. This is a significant step toward increased collaboration across the system. The findings were also debated in the Western Australian parliament on the 23rd of October, but as yet no formal announcement has appeared. These are very positive outcomes and auger well for the future. In light of these developments, the 2015 recommendations extend to the aspirational. They are provocative, and some, perhaps many experts would say unachievable. However, I am daring to dream that we have reached or are close to reaching a tipping point in Australian education where a growing appetite for change by most if not all stakeholders can be leveraged for rapid improvement in the system.

The recommendations are based on the best available evidence from both Australia and internationally. As recommendations they will not be easily adopted, and will need coordinated and staged implementation. However, the hope in presenting them this way is that they will begin a full and frank national conversation about what we want for our future as a nation. Today’s children are tomorrow’s nation builders. We owe it to them and ourselves to give them the best opportunities we can. Countless studies show the transformative nature of education. Indeed our new Prime Minister has singled out his own formal educational experience as transformative. If we, as a nation, are serious about the key role of education in the growth and development of this country, then as custodians of the future we ignore the powerful evidence contained in this report and many others at our peril. The results of this project demonstrate that the educational milieu has shifted over recent times and we now need to reassess the foundations upon which we build our education systems for maximum national benefit.

We can learn a great deal from how Finland, a country now admired for its educational outcomes, coped with a similar cross-roads moment in their history. At a time of economic difficulty ~40 years ago, they took a powerful and radical decision to invest in their people: the most important resource any country has. The major policy shift Finland collectively decided upon was to depoliticize education. Since then they have had 20 changes of government, but education was not a political issue and did not feature much in election rhetoric. Then, steadily, Finland became one of the best education systems in the world. It took a long time. It will take time in Australia too. Education systems are simply too complex for quick fixes.

Since Finland ascended to the top of the PISA table at the turn of this century, researchers from many other countries have been trying to find the ‘secret’ of their success. Local academics, who
know Finland from the inside as well as education systems worldwide, such as Pasi Sahlberg, suggest that Finland’s educational success, along with most other countries at the top of the table, is due in large part to forces outside education directly: equity, collaboration, creativity, trust-based responsibility, professionalism and equity. This was confirmed by large studies carried out by the OECD. The “highest performing education systems are those that combine excellence with equity” (OECD, 2013). Sahlberg (2015) has also identified the forces that impede school system improvement: competition, standardization, test-based accountability, de-professionalization and school choice. These forces are all on the increase in Australia, and in many other countries (Sellar & Lingard, 2014), in the absence of evidence of long-term positive effect.

Sahlberg’s (2015) “Finnish Lessons … portrays an alternate universe, one that respects educators and enables them to do their best work, one that recognizes that society has an obligation to ensure the health and well-being of children. Sahlberg knew that the Finnish story stood in sharp contrast with what was happening in the United States and other countries” Diane Ravich (2015, Foreword, para 8).

If Australia were to adopt a similarly courageous decision to the one Finland took five decades ago, and use the best minds in the country to develop, elaborate and evaluate effective, context-derived, educational policy in a cycle of continuous improvement we could expect to achieve similar national gains. However, Australia’s mix of 3- and 4-year political cycles that intersect across states, territories and nationally does not lend itself to the development of long-term solutions or long-term evaluation and promulgation of best practice, so we must start with the fundamentals. If we do not we are simply deluding ourselves that we can effect significant change.

Short-term political cycles coupled with heavily politicized educational standpoints from major parties, has led to slogans rather than policy and short-term interventions open to further politicization and polemic. This is no surprise. Politicians are experts in politics not education. For Australian education to progress, we need the healthy clash of ideas in a complex discussion where experts and communities share the common goal of making schools the best places for our children; giving them the best opportunities in life. This would also provide the nation with sustainable, social and therefore economic benefit. Depoliticizing education would allow conversations aimed at building cases for change with highest quality evidence drawn from many sources and not driven by short-term political advantage. As the Finns realized, education is far too important for that.

The evidence from this report and many other studies carried out by the research community demonstrate that the successful ingredients to a continuously improving system that are abundant in Finland are generally diminishing in Australia, not growing. However, the good news from this project is that this is not universally true. The social capital data in particular show that many Australian schools, from all sectors, states and territories, right around the country have been able to thrive despite the issues outlined in the main report. We need to learn from these schools and rapidly mobilize the knowledge so that the others can adopt and adapt their schools with the new knowledge. It appears we are currently enclosed in a system that nobody wants. Equally important is that no one group is to blame for getting us in this situation. However, we are all responsible for the continuation of this system because we are co-creating it every day. In light of the evidence reported in this year’s summary and taking previous years’ evidence into account, Australia would do well to have a national conversation about the best way forward. The recommendations are offered in the spirit of seeding that debate.

**Recommendations: Six Foundations**

In light of the comments above, and offered in the spirit of a national conversation starter, the following recommendations are offered in the form of what can be done, and who can do it. The recommendations rest on six foundations:
1. No single stakeholder group is responsible for the state of education in Australia, nor do they hold the power to effect much change to the system on their own.
2. Many issues impacting negatively on the education system are entrenched in the wider Australian culture.
3. Taking a long-term, rather than short-term focus is essential for significant improvement in the system.
4. Taking a holistic inquiry approach to both the successes and failures in the Australian education system is also essential. We can learn a great deal from both if we do not limit our gaze, or look for quick fixes.
5. De-politicising education at the macro- and micro-political levels will promote equity, continuity and transparency. For example the politicisation of the Gonski report, universally agreed by educators to provide a sensible and equitable way forward in education, should have set the conditions for a decade of educational development. Instead, it is suffering the fate of many educationally sensible reforms in Australia and its potential is being diminished. This becomes demotivating to educators. It is an example of the ‘moral harassment’ suffered by educators (Burens, 2015).
6. Australian education needs a change of mindset: moving beyond sectorised thinking. The problems and the solutions are very similar in all sectors so the differences between the sectors are more superficial than substantive. The variation in social capital inside schools demonstrates that simple resourcing, while important, is not going to fix intractable issues. A change of mindset is also needed.

This change of fundamentals in Australian education systems might be difficult, particularly point 5, but together they hold the greatest chance of long-term success, and there is strong international evidence to support it.

**Recommendation 1. What Governments can do**

1. *Adopt a whole of government approach to education.* This would mean the federal government, states and territories combining to oversee a single education budget in a managerial way. All school funding should be transparent so that anyone, at any level of the system can confidently know how much money they will have at their disposal so budgeting can be long term. The role of government should be to fairly set the global amount, not specify the detail of how it is to be spent. That should be the role of specialist education bureaucrats working collaboratively across jurisdictions. The current mixed jurisdiction model is antiquated, complex, obscure and difficult to traverse. Australia needs bipartisan and cross-jurisdictional agreement regarding school funding and a transparent mechanism that is simple to understand. This may be seen as a naïve recommendation, but the demolition of the Gonski funding model also had a significant symbolic as well as financial impact on schools. When everyone knows things will change significantly whenever governments do, it is demotivating for the educators. We need highly motivated educators, if we are to have the best school system possible.
2. *Stop looking for short-term quick fixes* and concentrate on getting a better grip of the fundamentals (collaboration, creativity, trust-based responsibility, professionalism and equity). These conditions underpin the whole of society not simply schools.

**Recommendation 2. What employers can do**

3. *Take the moral choice* of reducing job demands, or increase resources to cope with increased demands. Better still, do both. This will help to increase the level of social capital in schools.
4. *Trust rather than rule educators.* Leave the mechanisms for producing the best educators to the educators. This will also increase social capital. Long term increases in social capital helped Finland become the world leader.
Recommendation 3. What the Professional Associations and Unions can do

5. **Collaborate and speak with one voice.** Peak bodies and stakeholder groups can discuss their differences in camera and then speak with one voice publically about the standing of the profession to Government and the community. The sheer weight of numbers they collectively represent would mean they would be carefully listened to. Currently the system is atomised into Primary and SecondaryAssociations x 3 sectors x 9 states and territories + 2 unions. While each of these bodies has important functions and close connections with their membership, which is essential for the building and maintenance of social capital, their united voice on the big picture issues that are common to all principals while we live in a politicized education system is diminished. In Finland there is one union, which advocates for everyone.

Recommendation 4. What the community can do

6. **Support your local school.** Even if your child does not attend the local school it is an important part of your community. So support it whenever and however you can. Schools and communities thrive when they work together. The high variance in social capital across the country is powerful evidence of both its benefit and the risks associated with its absence. So the recommendation to the community is if you value your school and want it to be the best it can be for children, offer to help make it happen.

7. **Stop the offensive behaviour.** This is beyond debate. It simply must stop. The real issue is how to achieve this outcome. The steadily increasing levels of offensive behaviour across the country in schools of all types should give us pause. But this is not just occurring in schools, with increases noted in all frontline professions and domestic violence rates that we should be nationally ashamed about. Australia needs to have an adult conversation about the root causes of this and set about addressing them at every level of society.

Recommendation 5. What schools can do

8. **Increase internal social capital.** This is best achieved by studying those schools that have achieved high levels already in spite of the current conditions. Rapid dissemination of how they have achieved this will contribute to significant improvement in schools with low levels of social capital. But each school needs to do this in relation to their resources and particular contexts. This also intersects with Recommendation 7.

Recommendation 6. What individual educators can do

9. **Increase personal capital (social, human and decisional).** At the individual level this means increasing possibilities for development and exerting influence over the work based on sound values and moral judgements.

10. **Respectfully speak back** when faced with “moral harassment”, which is an occupational threat.

11. **Ensure your passions are harmonious.** This means to be in control of them. For example, love your work but do not let it dominate your life (become obsessive about it). A way to determine if passion is harmonious rather than obsessive is to monitor energy levels. Harmonious passion energises, so you feel better after engaging in your passion than when you began. Harmonious passion “… leads to a pervasive level of self-growth”, while obsessive passion has “corrosive effects” (Vallerand, 2015, p.334).

12. **Take responsibility for your personal work-life balance.** Only you can know what is reasonable for your long-term health and wellbeing. It is therefore incumbent on all of us to find and maintain a healthy balance. This cannot be done for you from outside and is too important to be left in other’s control.
Recommendation 7. What the research community can do

13. There is a need to provide better longitudinal evidence of the differential impact of all the forces that come to bear on education. Researchers need to be careful that they are not contributing to the problem by conducting short-term research without appropriate follow up studies that have been carefully designed to tease out the long-term implications of short-term interventions. An example of the deficiencies of short-term research relates to dieting. Many diets are successful in the short-term. However, the long-term outcome is often weight gain. Educational interventions that work in the short term but lead to worse outcomes long-term are not picked up with short-term cross-sectional research. The process and true benefit of education is longitudinal. Students are in the system for over a decade, and the benefits are life-long. Therefore we need well-designed longitudinal research, well translated for principals and teachers so that the most efficacious policies, processes and procedures are most widely adopted. This takes time and the considered and coordinated efforts of a number of people in the field working together toward better long-term outcomes.

14. Adopt the EMU methodology (Ryan, 2015) to rapidly identify Exemplars of best practice, accurately and fully Measure the determinants of success, and Utilize the knowledge in the most efficacious way. This may involve determining thresholds to identify school communities that will require more resources than they currently have available to arrest the diminishing returns and reset back to a positive trajectory. This would allow the targeted use of resources, and create the greatest return on investment for employers and government.

15. Look for thresholds that may be the key to administering limited resources. The variance in social capital suggests that while there are many examples of best practice from which we can and should learn, the paucity in a small percentage of schools suggests that there may be thresholds below which a school does not have the internal resources to rapidly utilize new knowledge about best practice and would benefit from outside support. If researchers can identify robust thresholds, this would enable the concentration of resources around those who needed them most, and not waste them on diffuse, but unnecessary distribution.

Summary

Principals, deputy/assistant principals and teachers are Australia’s nation builders. They need to be well resourced, not just logistically, but also symbolically, emotionally, and intellectually. The Finnish experience suggests that if we too can make courageous decisions about our national future we will then make it happen. It is time we began the conversation in earnest.
Technical Report 2015 Data

The following pages report the 2015 data in detail. The report is broken up by section. Section 1 covers the dimensions of the Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire and uses the population figures from the original work (Pejtersen, Kristensen, Borg, & Björner, 2010). Section 2 covers Sources of Stress. Section 3 covers Sources of Support. Section 4 covers Quality of Life and uses population figures from the original work in Australia (Richardson, Khan, Iezzi, & Maxwell, 2013). Sections 5 (Social Capital) and Section 6 (Dualistic Model of Passion) reports preliminary findings on the relationships between these two new important additions to the survey and different aspects of Job Demands and Resources theory on which the survey is largely built (Bakker, & Demerouti, 2014).

For each dimension the scores are presented as trends over time first. Then the 2015 data is reported in a table to facilitate easy comparisons on one page and then each subscale is represented graphically by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role, and in comparison with population norms.

The data reported here are descriptive in nature. More detailed statistical analyses will follow in 2016 and further reports will become available as the work progresses.
1. Copenhagen PsychoSocial Questionnaire – II

Demands at work

Trend data 2011 – 2015
2015 Data in Detail

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*Mean ± .5SD

- **Quantitative demands** deal with how much one has to achieve in one’s work. They can be assessed as an incongruity between the amount of tasks and the time available to perform the tasks in a satisfactory manner.
- **Work pace** deals with the speed at which tasks have to be performed. It is a measure of the intensity of work.
- **Cognitive demands** deal with demands involving the cognitive abilities of the worker. This is the only subscale of Demands where higher scores are better.
- **Emotional demands** occur when the worker has to deal with or is confronted with other people’s feelings at work. Other people comprise both people not employed at the work place, e.g. parents and students, and people employed at the work place, like colleagues, superiors or subordinates.
- **Demands for hiding emotions** occur when principals have to conceal her or his own feelings at work from other people. Other people comprise both people not employed at the work place, e.g. parents and students, and people employed at the work place, like colleagues, superiors or subordinates. The scale shows the amount of time individuals spend in surface acting (pretending an emotion that is not felt) or down-regulating (hiding) felt emotions.

**Results**

- **Trends** All demands have remained relatively constant for the previous five years at rates well above the general population, with emotional demands and demands for hiding emotions approaching double the population rate. All are above the critical high score.
- **Quantitative demands** No significant differences were reported for any of the comparison groups except South Australia.
- **Work pace** Only Catholic primary school leaders’ scores were below the critical high value for this scale. All other scores exceeded this cut off.
- **Cognitive demands** All groups exceeded the critical high score indicating that the role provides significantly higher levels of cognitive demands than the general population. This is a positive finding.
- **Emotional demands** All groups exceeded the critical high score by at least half a standard deviation, confirming the role is highly emotionally charged in all states, sectors and school types.
- **Demands for hiding emotions** All groups exceeded the critical high score by at least half a standard deviation, confirming the role requires a great deal of skill in dealing with one’s own and others emotions in all states, sectors and school types.
Quantitative Demands disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

Quantitative demands

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Quantitative Demands

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Quantitative demands

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Quantitative demands

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30
Work Pace disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

**Work pace**

- NT
- NSW
- Vic
- Qld
- SA
- WA
- Tas
- ACT

**Work Pace**

- Urban
- Suburban
- Large Town
- Rural
- Remote

**Work pace**

- Prim
- Sec
- Prim
- Sec
- Prim
- Sec

**Work pace**

- Govt
- Catholic
- Independent

**Work pace**

- Population
- Principal
- Deputy
Cognitive Demands disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

Cognitive demands

Cognitive Demands

Cognitive demands
Emotional Demands disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

**Emotional demands**

- NT
- NSW
- Vic
- Qld
- SA
- WA
- Tas
- ACT

**Emotional Demands**

- Urban
- Suburban
- Large Town
- Rural
- Remote

**Emotional demands**

- Prim
- Sec
- Prim
- Sec
- Prim
- Sec

- Govt
- Catholic
- Independent

**Emotional demands**

- Population
- Principal
- Deputy
Demands for Hiding Emotions disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

Demands for hiding emotions

Demands for Hiding Emotions

Demands for hiding emotions

Demands for hiding emotions
Work Organisation and Job Contents

Trend data 2011 – 2015

Work Organisation & Job Contents

COPSOQ-II Scale Mean

Influence
Possibilities for development
Variation
Meaning of work
Commitment to the workplace

2011
2012
2013
2014
2015
Population
### 2015 Data in detail

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<tr>
<td>Commitment to the workplace</td>
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</table>

*Mean ± 5SD

- **Influence at work** deals with the degree to which the employee can influence aspects of work itself, ranging from planning of work to the order of tasks.
- **Possibilities for Development** assesses if the tasks are challenging for the employee and if the tasks provide opportunities for learning and thus opportunities for development not only in the job but also at the personal level. Lack of development can create apathy, helplessness and passivity.
- **Variation** of work deals with the degree to which work (tasks, work process) is varied, that is if tasks are or are not repetitive.
- **Meaning of Work** concerns both the meaning of the aim of work tasks and the meaning of the context of work tasks. The aim is “vertical”: that the work is related to a more general purpose, such as providing students with a good education. Context is “horizontal”: that one can see how ones’ own work contributes to the overall product of the organisation.
- **Commitment to the Workplace** deals with the degree to which one experiences being committed to ones’ workplace. It is not the work by itself or the work group that is the focus here, but the organization in which one is employed.

### Results

- **Trends** Work organisation and job contents have remained relatively constant for the previous five years.
- **Influence at work** Catholic and Independent school principals and deputies average scores were just above the critical high score indicating noticeably more influence than the general population.
- **Possibilities for Development** All groups’ average scores are above the critical high score indicating they have noticeably more possibilities for developing than the general population.
- **Variation** All groups were within half of one standard deviation of the general population suggesting their work is not noticeably more or less varied than the general population.
- **Meaning of Work** All groups report high average scores on this dimension. They therefore get noticeably more meaning from their work than the general population.
- **Commitment to the Workplace** Deputy principals were the only group not to exceed the critical high score. However they fell short by <1 point suggesting that all participants are noticeably more committed to their workplaces than the general population.
Influence disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population
Possibilities for Development disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

Possibilities for development

Possibilities for Development

Possibilities for development

Possibilities for development

Possibilities for Development

Possibilities for Development
Variation disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

**Variation by State**
- NT
- NSW
- Vic
- Qld
- SA
- WA
- Tas
- ACT

**Variation by Geolocation**
- Urban
- Suburban
- Large Town
- Rural
- Remote

**Variation by Sector**
- Prim
- Sec
- Govt
- Catholic
- Independent

**Variation by Level**
- Population
- Principal
- Deputy
Meaning of Work disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

Meaning of work

Meaning of Work

Meaning of work

Meaning of work

Meaning of work

Meaning of work

Meaning of work
Commitment to the Workplace disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

Commitment to the workplace

Commitment to the Workplace

Commitment to the workplace

Commitment to the workplace
2015 Data in Detail

Subscales               Population  Critical Value*  Gender  Role  Govt  Catholic  Independent
                          M      SD          Low    High   All  Gov  Cat  Ind  F      M      Prin  Dep  Prim  Sec  Prim  Sec
Predictability          57.70  20.90  47.25  68.15  60.03  58.13  64.24  69.01  59.47  60.84  58.72  64.78  59.33  60.63  60.00  73.40  73.08
Recognition (Reward)    66.20  19.90  56.25  76.15  64.13  67.71  75.60  65.93  65.52  62.82  74.96  60.86  69.47  66.41  70.83  79.34  73.72
Role clarity            73.50  16.40  65.30  81.70  80.14  80.24  80.46  78.89  80.95  78.98  81.82  75.80  81.07  81.59  79.90  80.00  81.56  78.85
Role conflicts          42.00  16.60  33.70  50.30  49.36  50.31  50.40  49.36  51.39  63.89  51.27  51.49  53.13  54.78  55.94  40.69  38.94
Quality of leadership   55.30  21.10  44.75  65.85  54.59  54.34  53.74  57.86  54.82  54.27  51.39  63.89  51.27  51.49  53.13  61.64  56.41
Social support: colleagues Inside school  57.30  19.70  47.45  67.15  60.15  60.63  58.72  56.40  61.33  58.46  59.86  60.95  56.49  61.74  57.41  60.42  60.99  64.74
Social support: colleagues Outside school  57.30  19.70  47.45  67.15  51.53  51.75  53.47  47.05  53.89  48.18  53.85  44.64  54.47  57.83  56.66  52.08  54.79  59.62
Social support from supervisor  61.60  22.40  50.40  72.80  48.21  47.12  50.62  53.44  48.64  47.60  44.87  58.09  43.71  53.72  50.31  46.06  58.43  57.37
Social community at work  78.70  18.90  69.25  88.15  78.74  78.87  76.78  80.50  80.05  76.87  79.02  77.59  77.33  76.64  76.44  76.67  85.46  86.54

*Mean ± .5SD

- **Predictability** deals with the means to avoid uncertainty and insecurity. This is achieved if employees receive the relevant information at the right time.
- **Recognition (Reward)** deals with the recognition by the management of your effort at work.
- **Role Clarity** deals with the employee's understanding of her or his role at work, e.g., content of tasks, expectations to be met and her or his responsibilities.
- **Role Conflicts** stem from two sources. The first source is about possible inherent conflicting demands within a specific task. The second source is about possible conflicts when prioritising different tasks.
- **Quality of Leadership** deals with the next higher managers’ leadership in different contexts and domains. For many principals this is a regional leader, but may be interpreted by some as school board chairperson, particularly in the independent sector.
- **Social support from colleagues inside and outside the school** deals with principals’ impressions of the possibility to obtain support from colleagues if one should need it.
- **Social community at work** concerns whether there is a feeling of being part of the group of employees at the workplace, e.g. if employees relations are good and if they work well together.

**Results**

- **Trends** Predictability and Recognition (Reward) has been trending down over the last 5 years, as has Social Support from Supervisors and Quality of Leadership. However, Social Support from Colleagues Inside School has trended up on average. All other scales have remained steady over time.
- **Predictability** Only Independent principals and deputies reported average scores above the critical high score suggesting noticeably higher levels of work predictability than the general population.
- **Recognition (Reward)** Only Independent principals and deputies reported average scores above the critical high score suggesting noticeably higher levels of recognition than the general population.
- **Role Clarity** All groups were within half of one standard deviation of the general population suggesting that their role is not noticeably clearer than the general population.
• **Role Conflicts** The groups who report on average noticeably higher levels of role conflict than the general population are: Males but not Females; Principals but not Deputies; and, Independent Primary and Secondary school leaders.

• **Quality of Leadership** No group reported the quality of leadership (that they report to) as being noticeably different from the general population. However, there were some significant differences within groups. Victoria and Western Australia report lower perceived quality of leadership than the other states and principals report much lower perceived quality of their leaders than their deputies do, suggesting that on average the quality of principal leadership throughout the country exceeds that of their up-line managers.

• Social support from colleagues inside and outside the school is reported at levels very close to the general population.

• **Social community at work** is also reported at levels very close to the general population.
Predictability disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

Predictability

Predictability

Predictability

Predictability
Recognition (Reward) disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

Recognition (Reward) by State:
- NT
- NSW
- Vic
- Qld
- SA
- WA
- Tas
- ACT

Recognition (Reward) by Geolocation:
- Urban
- Suburban
- Large Town
- Rural
- Remote

Recognition (Reward) by Level:
- Prim
- Sec
- Prim
- Sec
- Prim
- Sec
- Govt
- Catholic
- Independent

Recognition (Reward) by Role:
- Population
- Principal
- Deputy
Role Clarity disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

Role clarity disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population.
Role Conflicts disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

Role conflicts

Role conflicts

Role conflicts

Role conflicts

Role conflicts
Quality of Leadership disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

Quality of leadership

Quality of leadership

Quality of leadership

Quality of leadership
Social Support, Colleagues Inside School disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

Social support from colleagues: Inside school

Social support from colleagues: Inside school

Social support from colleagues: Inside school

Social support from colleagues: Inside school
Social Support, Colleagues Outside School disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

Social support from colleagues:
Outside school

Social support from colleagues:
Outside school

Social support from colleagues:
Outside school

Social support from colleagues:
Outside school
Social Support from Supervisor disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population
Social Community at Work disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

Social community at work

Social community at work

Social community at work

Social community at work
Work-individual Interface

Trend data 2011 – 2015

Work - Individual Interface

Job satisfaction
Work-family conflict
Family-work conflict

COPSOQ-H Scale Mean

Population

2011
2012
2013
2014
2015

54
2015 Data in Detail

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscales</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Critical Value*</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Govt</th>
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</table>

*Mean ± .5SD

- **Job satisfaction** deals with principals’ experience of satisfaction with various aspects of work.
- **Work-family conflict** deals with the possible consequences of work on family/personal life. The focus is on two areas, namely conflict regarding energy (mental and physical energy) and conflict regarding time.
- **Family-work conflict** deals with the possible consequences of family/personal life on work. The focus is on two areas, namely conflict regarding energy (mental and physical energy) and conflict regarding time.

**Results**

- **Trends** Job satisfaction has been trending up slightly over the survey period. Work family conflict has been trending down slightly over the same period.
- **Job satisfaction** Generally speaking secondary school principals are noticeably more satisfied with their job than their primary colleagues and the general population, with Independent primary school leaders the exception, reporting the highest average levels of Job Satisfaction.
- **Work-family conflict** while the trend is down the levels are still very high, at 2.2 times the rate of the general population. Every group score is well above one standard deviation higher than the general population rate. This result has serious implications for the long-term future of school leaders as their work is creating significant family stress. This finding along with the diminishing levels of support (Section 2 below) should be cause considerable concern for policy makers, as it related directly to the Quantitative Demands of the role.
- **Family-work conflict** School leaders average scores are at the general population levels.
Job Satisfaction disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population
Work-Family Conflict disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

**Work–family conflict**

- NT, NSW, Vic, Qld, SA, WA, Tas, ACT

**Work–family conflict**

- Urban, Suburban, Large Town, Rural, Remote

**Work–family conflict**

- Prim, Sec, Prim, Sec, Prim, Sec
  - Govt, Catholic, Independent

**Work–family conflict**

- Population, Principal, Deputy
Family-Work Conflict disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

Family–work conflict

Family–work conflict

Family–work conflict

Family–work conflict
Values at the Workplace

Trend data 2011 – 2015

Values at the Workplace

COPSOQ-II Scale Mean

- Trust regarding management
- Mutual trust between employees
- Justice
- Social inclusiveness

Population
### 2015 Data in Detail

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscales</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Critical Value*</th>
<th>Gender</th>
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<td>80.92</td>
<td>82.93</td>
<td>73.55</td>
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*Mean ± .5SD

- **Trust regarding management (Vertical Trust)** deals with whether the employees can trust the management and vice versa. Vertical trust can be observed in the communication between the management and the employees.
- **Mutual Trust between Employees (Horizontal trust)** deals with whether the employees can trust each other in daily work or not. Trust can be observed in the communication in the workplace; e.g. if one freely can express attitudes and feelings without fear of negative reactions.
- **Justice** deals with whether workers are treated fairly. Four aspects are considered: First the distribution of tasks and recognition, second the process of sharing, third the handling of conflicts and fourth the handling of suggestions from the employees.
- **Social Inclusiveness** deals with another aspect of organizational justice: how fairly people are treated in the workplace in relation to their gender, race, age and ability.

### Results

- **Trends** Trust Regarding Management and Justice are trending down over the life of the survey while social inclusiveness is trending up.
- **Trust regarding management (Vertical Trust)** Independent school leaders have, on average, noticeably higher trust in their management than the other groups, albeit Catholic secondary school leaders are close to the cut off score. Tasmanian school leaders have noticeably less trust in leaders than all other states.
- **Mutual Trust between Employees (Horizontal trust)** Independent school principals scores exceed the cut off score so demonstrate, on average higher levels of horizontal trust than the general population.
- **Justice** All groups report noticeably higher levels of trust than the general population. However, Tasmanian leaders report noticeably lower levels of Justice than all other states.
- **Social Inclusiveness** All groups report noticeably higher levels of Social Inclusiveness than the general population. This implies that on average schools remain noticeably more welcoming of differences than the norm.
Trust regarding management disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

---

**Trust regarding management**

- NT
- NSW
- Vic
- Qld
- SA
- WA
- Tas
- ACT

**Trust regarding management**

- Urban
- Suburban
- Large Town
- Rural
- Remote

**Trust regarding management**

- Prim
- Sec
- Prim
- Sec
- Prim
- Sec

- Govt
- Catholic
- Independent

**Trust regarding management**

- Population
- Principal
- Deputy
Mutual Trust between Employees disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

**Mutual trust between employees**

- NT
- NSW
- Vic
- Qld
- SA
- WA
- Tas
- ACT

**Mutual trust between employees**

- Urban
- Suburban
- Large Town
- Rural
- Remote

**Mutual trust between employees**

- Prim
- Sec
- Govt
- Catholic
- Sec
- Independent

**Mutual trust between employees**

- Population
- Principal
- Deputy
Justice disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

Justice

Justice

Justice

Justice
Social Inclusiveness disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

Social inclusiveness

Social inclusiveness

Social inclusiveness

Social inclusiveness
Health and Wellbeing

Trend data 2011 – 2015

Health & Wellbeing

COPSOQ-33 Scale Mean

- Self-rated health
- Burnout
- Stress
- Sleeping troubles
- Depressive symptoms
- Somatic stress symptoms
- Cognitive stress symptoms
- Self-efficacy

[Graph showing trend data for each category from 2011 to 2015]
### 2015 Data in Detail

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscales</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Critical Value*</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Govt</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>28.06</td>
<td>24.38</td>
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<td>28.06</td>
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<td>74.65</td>
<td>72.27</td>
<td>74.56</td>
<td>74.31</td>
<td>74.65</td>
<td>72.27</td>
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</table>

*Mean ± 5SD

- **General health** is the person’s assessment of her or his own general health. It is one global item, which has been used in numerous questionnaires, and has been shown to predict many different endpoints including mortality, cardiovascular diseases, hospitalizations, use of medicine, absence, and early retirement (Idler & Benyamini, 1997).
- **Burnout** concerns the degree of physical and mental fatigues/exhaustion of the employee.
- **Stress** is defined as a reaction of the individual, a combination of tension and unwillingness. As elevated stress levels over a longer period are detrimental to health, it is necessary to determine long-term, or chronic stress.
- **Sleeping troubles** deal with sleep length, determined by e.g. sleeping in, waking up, interruptions and of quality of sleep.
- **Somatic stress** is defined as a physical health indicator of a sustained stress reaction of the individual.
- **Cognitive stress** deals with cognitive indicators of a sustained stress reaction of the individual.
- **Depressive symptoms** cover various aspects, which together indicate depression.
- **Self-efficacy** is the extent of one’s belief in one’s own ability to complete tasks and reach goals. Here self-efficacy is understood as global self-efficacy not distinguishing between specific domains of life.

### Results

- **Trends** Self-rated health remains ~10% below the general population. This is despite the fact that school leaders have all the attributes of a work group that should exceed the average. On average, they come from stable families, are in stable families, are well educated and well paid relative to the general population. Yet this is not reflected in their scores. Levels of Sleeping Troubles are trending up, which is very concerning. They remain at double the rate of sleeping difficulties experienced by the general population. Self-Efficacy is also trending up over the survey period.
- **General health** is discussed above. It is 0.9 times the rate of the general population.
- **Burnout** school leaders report 1.6 times the rate of burnout compared to the general population. It is noticeably higher in New South Wales and South Australia than the other states.
- **Stress** is reported at 1.7 times the general population rate. All groups report levels above the critical cut off score.
• **Sleeping troubles** is reported at 2.2 times the general population rate. Chronic sleep deprivation predicts a number of long-term health issues, including memory difficulties, obesity and depression.

• **Somatic stress** is reported at 1.3 times the general population rate. Only Independent secondary leaders reported levels below the critical high cut off score.

• **Cognitive stress** school leaders report 1.6 times the rate of Cognitive Stress compared to the general population. It appears to predominate in primary school leaders regardless of state and sector, and is noticeably higher in New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria.

• **Depressive symptoms** are reported for school leaders at 1.3 times the rate of the general population. Symptoms appear to increase along with distance from a capital city. All leaders except those in Independent schools were above the critical high score.

• **Self-efficacy** Government and Independent primary school leaders along with Catholic secondary school leaders report, on average, noticeably higher scores on this scale than the school leader colleagues and the general population.
General Health disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

Self-rated health

<table>
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<tr>
<th>NT</th>
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<th>Qld</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>WA</th>
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Self-rated health

<table>
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<td>70</td>
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Self-rated health

<table>
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Self-rated health

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>50</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Burnout disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

- Burnout by State:
  - NT, NSW, Vic, Qld, SA, WA, Tas, ACT

- Burnout by Sector:
  - Govt, Catholic, Independent

- Burnout by Level:
  - Prim, Sec, Prim, Sec, Prim, Sec

- Burnout by Geolocation:
  - Urban, Suburban, Large Town, Rural, Remote

- Burnout by Role:
  - Population, Principal, Deputy
Stress disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

Stress by State:
- NT
- NSW
- Vic
- Qld
- SA
- WA
- Tas
- ACT

Stress by Sector:
- Govt
- Catholic
- Independent

Stress by Geolocation:
- Urban
- Suburban
- Large Town
- Rural
- Remote

Stress by Role:
- Population
- Principal
- Deputy
Sleeping Troubles disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

**Sleeping troubles**

- NT
- NSW
- Vic
- Qld
- SA
- WA
- Tas
- ACT

**Sleeping troubles**

- Urban
- Suburban
- Large Town
- Rural
- Remote

**Sleeping troubles**

- Prim
- Sec
- Prim
- Sec
- Prim
- Sec

**Sleeping troubles**

- Govt
- Catholic
- Independent

**Sleeping troubles**

- Population
- Principal
- Deputy
Depressive Symptoms disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population ation
Somatic Stress disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

Somatic stress symptoms

Somatic stress symptoms

Somatic stress symptoms

Somatic stress symptoms
Cognitive Stress disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

**Cognitive stress symptoms**

- NT, NSW, Vic, Qld, SA, WA, Tas, ACT

**Cognitive stress symptoms**

- Urban, Suburban, Large Town, Rural, Remote

**Cognitive stress symptoms**

- Prim, Sec, Prim, Sec, Prim, Sec
  - Govt, Catholic, Independent

**Cognitive stress symptoms**

- Population, Principal, Deputy
Self-Efficacy disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

**Self-efficacy**

- NT
- NSW
- Vic
- Qld
- SA
- WA
- Tas
- ACT

**Self-efficacy**

- Urban
- Suburban
- Large Town
- Rural
- Remote

**Self-efficacy**

- Prim
- Sec
- Prim
- Sec
- Prim
- Sec

- Govt
- Catholic
- Independent

**Self-efficacy**

- Population
- Principal
- Deputy
Principals' Experiences of Offensive Behaviour

Trend data 2011 – 2015

Offensive Behaviour

Percentage who experienced the behaviour

- Sexual Harrassment
- Threats of Violence
- Physical Violence
- Bullying
- Unpleasant Teasing
- Conflicts & Quarrels
- Gossip & Slander

Population

- 2011
- 2012
- 2013
- 2014
- 2015
2015 Data in Detail

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<th>Cath</th>
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<td>47%</td>
<td>29%</td>
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<td>42%</td>
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<td>45%</td>
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<td>61%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>69%</td>
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<td>48%</td>
<td>44%</td>
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<td>48%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>65%</td>
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Offensive behaviours cover on the one hand being subjected to negative acts such as bullying and threats of violence at the workplace and on the other hand conflicts between people at the workplace.

- **Sexual harassment** is if one has been subjected to this at the workplace.
- **Threats of violence** is if one has been subjected to this at the workplace.
- **Physical violence** is if one has been subjected to this act at the workplace.
- **Bullying** is if one has been subjected to this act at the workplace. Bullying is defined as being exposed repeatedly over a longer period to unpleasant or degrading treatment, and not being able to defend oneself against this treatment.
- **Unpleasant teasing** is if one has been subjected to this at the workplace.
- **Conflicts and quarrels** are if one has been involved in such occurrences at the workplace.
- **Gossip and slander** is if one has been subjected to this at the workplace.

Results

- **Trends** The levels of offensive behaviour are growing in many parts of the country, but it is not uniform. In New South Wales, the Northern Territory and Tasmania the trend is extremely worrying. In Tasmania the rates for Threats of Violence have doubled in the past five years. Trend increases disaggregated by state are represented graphically on pages 79-81. On average, women experience 4% more threats of violence than men, and 10% more actual violence and bullying in the workplace. Men experience 10% more gossip and slander than their female colleagues. There are significant differences in prevalence related to Geolocation with Large Towns reporting the highest rates of all offensive behaviours.
- **Sexual harassment** remains low relative to the general population, but there is no acceptable prevalence for this behaviour.
- **Threats of violence** have increased from 4.9 to 5.3 times the general population prevalence.
- **Physical violence** has increased from 7 to 8 times the general population prevalence.
- **Bullying** is a little more difficult to analyse. Rates have moved up and down by relatively large amounts over the life of the survey, and increased slightly overall from 4.1 to 4.3 times the general population prevalence. It is significantly lower in Independent primary schools but is still double the population rate.
- **Unpleasant teasing** has remained low, in line with the general population rate.
- **Conflicts and quarrels** are reducing over the life of the survey and currently sit at 10% higher than the general population prevalence rate. They appear to be more common in Catholic schools. It is also noticeably higher in New South Wales Western Australia and Tasmania.
- **Gossip and slander** while not reducing over time the prevalence is 1.3 times that of the general population and is more common among Catholic schools.

### Threats of Violence Trend Prevalence disaggregated by State

#### Threats of Violence Prevalence

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
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Threats of Violence Trend Prevalence disaggregated by Frequency and Perpetrator Group

![Threats of Violence Chart]

- Frequency:
  - A few times
  - Monthly
  - Weekly
  - Daily

- Perpetrator:
  - Colleagues
  - Manager/Superior
  - Subordinates
  - Parents
  - Students

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<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>Daily</th>
<th>Colleagues</th>
<th>Manager/Superior</th>
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Physical Violence Trend Prevalence disaggregated by State

Physical Violence Prevalence

- NT
- NSW
- Vic
- Qld
- SA
- WA
- Tas
- ACT

State

Percent

2011
2012
2013
2014
2015

0 10 20 30 40 50 60

0 10 20 30 40 50 60

0 10 20 30 40 50 60

0 10 20 30 40 50 60

0 10 20 30 40 50 60

0 10 20 30 40 50 60

0 10 20 30 40 50 60

0 10 20 30 40 50 60
Physical Violence Trend Prevalence disaggregated by Frequency and Perpetrator Group

Physical Violence

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Physical Violence Trend Prevalence disaggregated by Frequency and Perpetrator Group

Bullying

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Sexual Harassment disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

Sexual Harassment

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Sexual Harassment

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Sexual Harassment

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Threats of Violence disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population
Physical Violence disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population
Bullying disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

Bullying

- NT
- NSW
- Vic
- Qld
- SA
- WA
- Tas
- ACT

Bullying

- Urban
- Suburban
- Large Town
- Rural
- Remote

Bullying

- Prim
- Sec
- Prim
- Sec
- Prim
- Sec

Bullying

- Govt
- Catholic
- Independent

Bullying

- Population
- Principal
- Deputy
Unpleasant Teasing disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

### Unpleasant Teasing

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### Unpleasant Teasing

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### Unpleasant Teasing

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### Unpleasant Teasing

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Conflicts and Quarrels disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

Conflicts and Quarrels

Conflicts and Quarrels

Conflicts and Quarrels

Conflicts and Quarrels
Gossip and Slander disaggregated by State, Sector, Level, Geolocation, Role and compared with the General Population

- NT
- NSW
- Vic
- Qld
- SA
- WA
- Tas
- ACT

- Urban
- Suburban
- Large Town
- Rural
- Remote

- Prim
- Sec
- Govt
- Catholic
- Independent

- Population
- Principal
- Deputy
2. Sources of Stress

Introduction

The following pages report on specific stressors (questions were taken from the 2004 International Confederation of School Principals Irish school survey). Items are reported for Gender, Sector and Level, Geolocation, Role. Some caution must be applied to interpreting results for independent secondary schools, as they are not uniformly distributed across geolocations, or states. There were virtually no state differences once Geolocation was accounted for. Therefore, it is very likely that geolocation rather than state is a stronger indicator of some of the school contextual issues across the country.

Trend data 2011 - 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of Stress</th>
<th>2011 (N=2049)</th>
<th>2012 (N=2084)</th>
<th>2013 (N=2010)</th>
<th>2014 (N=2467)</th>
<th>2015 (N=2574)</th>
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<td>4.54</td>
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Sources of Stress 2011 - 2015

Sources of Stress: 2011 - 2015

Level of Stress /10

Lack of time to focus on teaching & learning
Resourcing needs
Student related issues
Government initiatives
Poorly performing staff
Parent related issues
Mental health issues of students
Teacher shortages
Mental health issues of staff
Lack of autonomy/authority
Financial management issues
Critical incidents
Declining enrolments
Union/Industrial disputes
Complaints management
Interpersonal conflicts
Results

- **Sources of stress.** Principals were asked to rate the level of stress they felt in relation to their job tasks listed above.

- **Trends** Most stressors have remained relatively stable. Sheer Quantity of Work and Lack of Time to Focus on Teaching and Learning have consistently been the highest rated by all groups. There are significant increases in the stress caused by Mental Health issues of both students and staff over the 5-year survey period. This is a worrying trend that goes well beyond the school gate, and confirms similar findings in various studies of mental health. The costs associated with this trend were recently estimated to be $10.9 Billion annually (PwC, 2014). As the education workforce is very large, a significant proportion of these costs could be saved. PwC reported a 2.3 return on investment when organisations addressed the issues directly. So it appears foolhardy not to do so in the education sector. Declines are noted in Union/Industrial Disputes for the same period.

- **Gender** No significant differences exist for individual stressors except interpersonal conflicts, which are experienced as more stressful by men. Both groups report the same ranking of each stressor.

- **Sector and Type** The pattern here is similar to gender. While the differences are larger between these groups than gender differences most are less than 1-point and the rankings are identical except for independent secondary school principals who rate mental health issues of students as the most stressful item. The similarities rather than differences are the major finding here. The only exception to this is that Government school principals...
report more stress resulting from expectations of their employers. The one significant difference between school type was the difference for teacher shortages impacting more on secondary principals.

- **Geolocation** The differences that emerge between these groups are in some ways predictable but in others surprising. The stress levels for principals in large towns is higher than any other location for 10/19 stressors albeit all differences are <1 point. The most significant differences in stress induction were reported for the Inability to Get Away from the Community and Teacher Shortages that appear to stem directly from the distance the school is situated from a capital city.
Sources of Stress disaggregated by Gender

Sources of Stress 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stress Item</th>
<th>Female</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Student Related Issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government Initiatives</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poorly Performing Staff</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>Parent Related Issues</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>Mental Health Issues</td>
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<td>Teacher Shortages</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>Mental Health Issues of Staff</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Financial Management Issues</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>Critical Incidents</td>
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<td>Declining Enrolments</td>
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<td>Complaints Management</td>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Conflicts</td>
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Stress Rating /10
Sources of Stress disaggregated by Sector and School Type

Sources of Stress 2015

Stress Item

- Sheer quantity of work
- Lack of time to focus on teaching & Learning
- Resourcing, Needs
- Expectations of the employer
- Student Related Issues
- Government initiatives
- Poorly Performing Staff
- Parent Related Issues
- Mental Health Issues of Students
- Teacher Shortages
- Mental Health Issues of Staff
- Lack of autonomy/authority
- Financial Management Issues
- Critical Incidents
- Declining Enrolments
- Union/Industrial disputes
- Complaints Management
- Interpersonal Conflicts

Stress Rating /10

Govt Primary
Catholic Primary
Independent Primary
Govt Secondary
Catholic Secondary
Independent Secondary
Sources of Stress disaggregated by Role

Sources of Stress 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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<tr>
<td>Resourcing Needs</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectations of the employer</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Related Issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government Initiatives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poorly Performing Staff</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Related Issues</td>
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<td>Mental Health Issues of Students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Shortages</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mental Health Issues of Staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of autonomy/authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>Financial Management Issues</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inability to get away from school/ community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Incidents</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Declining Enrolments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union/Industrial Disputes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complaints Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Conflicts</td>
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</table>

Principal
Deputy

97
Sources of Stress disaggregated by Geolocation

Sources of Stress 2015

- Urban
- Suburban
- Large Town
- Rural
- Remote

Stress Item:
- Sheer quantity of work
- Lack of time to focus on teaching & learning
- Resourcing Needs
- Expectations of the employer
- Student Related Issues
- Government Initiatives
- Poorly Performing Staff
- Parent Related Issues
- Mental Health Issues of Students
- Teacher Shortages
- Mental Health Issues of Staff
- Lack of autonomy/authority
- Financial Management Issues
- Critical Incidents
- Declining Enrolments
- Union/Industrial disputes
- Interpersonal Conflicts
- Inability to get away from school/community
## 3. Sources of Support

### Introduction
Participants were asked to indicate the sources of support they received from each of the people listed on a 1-10 scale. Answers were converted to 10-100.

### Trend data 2011 - 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of Support</th>
<th>2011 (N=2049)</th>
<th>2012 (N=2084)</th>
<th>2013 (N=2010)</th>
<th>2014 (N=2467)</th>
<th>2015 (N=2863)</th>
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<td>82 38</td>
<td>83 37.8</td>
<td>82 38.5</td>
<td>71 45.2</td>
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<td>66 47.4</td>
<td>59 49.2</td>
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<td>50 50</td>
<td>45 49.7</td>
<td>39 48.9</td>
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<td>Colleague in your workplace</td>
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<td>68 46.8</td>
<td>70 45.6</td>
<td>68 46.6</td>
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<td>61 48.8</td>
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<tr>
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<td>49 50</td>
<td>47 49.9</td>
<td>42 49.3</td>
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<td>Supervisor/Line manager</td>
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<td>26 43.7</td>
<td>26 43.7</td>
<td>24 42.9</td>
<td>23 41.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department/Employer</td>
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<td>8 27.6</td>
<td>6 24.5</td>
<td>6 23.8</td>
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<td>Medical Practitioner</td>
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<td>19 38.9</td>
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<td>1 7.8</td>
<td>1 9.1</td>
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</table>
Sources of Support 2011 - 2015

Sources of Support

- Partner
- Friend
- Family member
- Colleague in your workplace
- School leader/colleague
- School leader/colleague also a friend
- Supervisor/Line manager
- Department/Employer
- Professional Association
- Medical Practitioner
- Psychologist/Counsellor
- I do not have any sources of support
2015 in Detail

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<th>Ind</th>
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<th>Role</th>
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</table>

* • Sources of Support. Principals were asked to indicate the sources of support from 11 options.

**Results**

* • Trends show that every type of support is diminishing. The greatest declines are from the strongest supporters – Family. This is likely to be linked to the increasing job demands, which are related to high levels of work family conflict. These results suggest that there is a high level of structural problems in the system as a whole. There are differences between various groups depending on the support type, but they are more statistical than substantive. The pattern of responses across the system is remarkably similar. All principals face essentially the same difficulties and call on the same people to support them. The most worrying finding is that over time employers rate at <1 on a 1-10 scale for all 5 years of the survey. There is much work to be done by this important stakeholder group if adequate levels of trust are to be returned to the system. Social Capital is built on trust and schools rely on social capital to fully function (see Section 3 for detailed Social Capital findings).

* • Gender Significant differences exist for individual sources of support. While family provides the largest source of support, the differences between males and females are very different. Both Males and Females report that their strongest support is from partners. However females also perceive support coming from friends and other family members in much greater amounts than males. Women also experience higher levels of support from colleagues, which is an important aspect of social capital.

* • Sector and Type The differences are strongest for Independent Secondary leaders, so should be read with the cautions outlined at the beginning of the technical report. There are no substantive differences between groups.

* • Geolocation The differences that emerge between these groups are predictable. The availability of support networks diminishes with distance from capital cities and population densities. However as with sectoral differences they appear statistical rather than substantive.
Sources of Support disaggregated by Gender

Sources of Support 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Support Rating /10</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Partner</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family member</td>
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<td>Colleague in your workplace</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>School leader/colleague</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School leader/colleague – professional relationship</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor/Line manager</td>
<td>3</td>
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Female

Male
Sources of Support disaggregated by Sector and School Type

Sources of Support 2015

- Partner
- Friend
- Family member
- Colleague in your workplace
- School leader/colleague - professional
- School leader/colleague also a friend
- Supervisor/Line manager
- Department/Employer
- Professional Association
- Medical Practitioner
- Psychologist/Counsellor

Support Rating /10

Government Primary
Catholic Primary
Independent Primary
Government Secondary
Catholic Secondary
Independent Secondary
Sources of Support disaggregated by Role

Sources of Support 2015

Support Rating /10

Source

Partner 7
Friend 6
Family member 4
Colleague in your workplace 5
School leader/colleague - professional... 4
School leader/colleague also a friend 3
Supervisor/Line manager 4
Department/Employer 2
Professional Association 2
Medical Practitioner 2
Psychologist/Counsellor 1
Sources of Support disaggregated by Geolocation

Sources of Support 2015

- Partner
- Friend
- Family member
- Colleague in your workplace
- School leader/colleague – professional
- School leader/colleague also a friend
- Supervisor/Line manager
- Department/Employer
- Professional Association
- Medical Practitioner
- Psychologist/Counsellor

Support Rating /10

Urban
Suburban
Large Town
Rural
Remote
4. Quality of Life

Introduction

The following pages report on the Assessment of Quality of Life – 8D (Richardson, Khan, Iezzi & Maxwell 2013). Items are reported for Gender, Sector and Level, Geolocation, Role. Some caution must be applied to interpreting results for independent secondary schools, as they are not uniformly distributed across geolocations, or states. There were virtually no state differences once Geolocation was accounted for. Therefore, it is very likely that geolocation rather than state is a stronger indicator of some of the school contextual issues across the country.

The assessment covers eight dimensions of quality of life clustered under two super dimensions: physical life quality and psychosocial life quality (hence the 8D suffix). The subscales are self-explanatory.

<table>
<thead>
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Assessment of Quality of Life: AQoL-8D

Psychometric Scoring

- 2011
- 2012
- 2013
- 2014
- 2015
- Population

Subscales
- Independent Living
- Happiness
- Mental Health
- Coping
- Relationships
- Self Worth
- Pain
- Senses
- Physical
- PsychoSocial

Super Dimensions

Assessment of Quality of Life 8–D 2011 - 2015
## 2015 Data in Detail

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<td>78.91</td>
<td>77.31</td>
<td>79.72</td>
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</table>

### Results

- **Trends** The significant finding is that school leaders do not reach the Australian average for Quality of Life despite having many attributes that would predict above average scores: e.g., in comparison to the general population school leaders are more likely to have grown up, and are currently in stable families, they have relatively secure and well-paid employment. They are also well educated. Taken together these attributes predict higher quality of life. While the average numbers for all groups do not fall into the critically low category, the numbers of leaders who report very low quality of life is also very concerning. Averages can be misleading. The high levels of red flag individuals this year (See Executive Summary, Health, point g), suggest very high levels of distress that is across all states and territories, all sectors and school types.

- **Gender** No significant differences on average.

- **Sector and Type** No significant differences on average.

- **Geolocation** No significant differences on average.
Quality of Life disaggregated by Gender compared with the General Population

- Independent Living
- Happiness
- Mental Health
- Coping
- Relationships
- Self Worth
- Pain
- Senses
- Psychosocial
- Physical
- Total score

AQoL-8D 2015

Population: Male, Female
Assessment of Quality of Life disaggregated by Sector and School Type

Assessment of Quality of Life - 8D

[Bar chart showing the assessment of quality of life by different sectors and school types.]

- Independent Living
- Happiness
- Mental Health
- Coping
- Relationships
- Self Worth
- Pain
- Senses
- Psychosocial Super dimension
- Physical Super dimension
- Total

[Legend for different sectors and school types: Govt Prim, Catholic Prim, Independent Prim, Govt Sec, Catholic Sec, Independent Sec]
Assessment of Quality of Life disaggregated by Role

AQoL-8D 2015

Subscales

Super Dimensions

Total score

Principal

Deputy
Assessment of Quality of Life disaggregated by Geolocation

AQoL-8D

Subscales

Super Dimensions

Total

Urban
Suburban
Large Town
Rural
Remote
5. Social Capital

Introduction

The following pages report on the construction of the metascale Social Capital. This has been constructed from the COPSOQ-II scales Trust in Management (also known as Vertical Trust), Social Community at Work (also known as Horizontal Trust) and Justice. Together they represent the level of Social Capital in each school. The Cronbach alpha reported for the whole scale is .88 suggesting the scale is robust. Results for this metascale are reported in the same way as the previous scales. And, once again, some caution must be applied to interpreting results for independent secondary schools, as they are not uniformly distributed across geolocations, or states.

2015 Data in Detail

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<th>Scale</th>
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<th>Cat</th>
<th>Ind</th>
<th>Gender</th>
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<td>80.22</td>
<td>79.66</td>
<td>73.78</td>
<td>73.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Gender** No significant differences exist.
- **Sector and Type** The pattern here is similar to gender; while the differences are slightly larger between the three groups, most are less than a 1-point difference. The similarities rather than differences are the major finding here.
- **Geolocation** The similarities rather than differences are also the major finding here.

The most interesting findings here relate to the spread of results across schools and the correlations with both positive and negative aspects of worklife.

There virtually no relationship between ICSEA scores and Social Capital, which demonstrates that it relies more on human resourcing than financial resourcing. It is also not related to proximity to capital cities as a number of other results are. This is good news, because there are no obvious restrictions on the potential of Social Capital tied to things that are difficult to change: level of funding and geolocation.

The spread of results show that there are many schools that are doing well, with a principal who is satisfied, confident, relatively autonomous and satisfied with the role. This information needs much further investigation, which will be carried out in the near future and further explication of this aspect of social capital is likely to prove fruitful.

Social capital is correlated with increased perceptions job satisfaction, general health, confidence, autonomy and harmonious passion.

Social capital is also correlated with decreased perceptions of quantitative and emotional demands, work-family conflict, stress, burnout, cognitive and somatic stress symptoms, sleeping difficulties and depressive symptoms.

The social capital results are consistent with a great deal of literature from both inside and outside the education sector. The clear message from these results is for investment in people at all levels of the system. Building social capital will enhance all school functioning and produce a healthier, and happier workforce.
Social Capital disaggregated by Gender, Role and Sector

Social Capital

<table>
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<td>Male</td>
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Social Capital disaggregated by Geolocation

Social Capital

Urban
Suburban
Large Town
Rural
Remote
Correlations between Social Capital and ICSEA*, Quantitative and Emotional Demands, Work-Family Conflict, Burnout and Stress

*The 2013 ICSEA scores for all schools are supplied by ACARA.
Correlations between Social Capital and Cognitive Stress, Somatic Stress, Depressive Symptoms, Trouble Sleeping, General Health and Job Satisfaction
Correlations between Social Capital and Obsessive & Harmonious Passion, Decisional Capital (Confidence and Autonomy)
6. Passion

**Introduction**

The following pages report on the additional survey scale added in 2015, *The Dualistic Model of Passion* (Vallerand, 2015). Vallerand proposes two distinct types of passion:

- *Harmonious Passion* – a strong desire to freely engage in activity resulting from autonomous internalization of the passion into the person’s identity; willingly accepted as important.
- *Obsessive Passion* (OP) – an uncontrollable urge to partake in the passion resulting from controlled internalization into one’s identity. This process originates from intrapersonal and/or interpersonal pressure because particular contingencies are attached to the passion, such as feelings of social acceptance, and can overwhelm other aspects of the person’s life.
- The instrument captures the presence of passion, and the two types as separate scores.

Most principals describe themselves as passionate educators, so it will be crucial to determine firstly whether this is accurate, and second whether this represents risk or protection as related to school setting. Indeed, research in education settings in other countries (Trépanier, Fernet, Austin, Forest & Vallerand, 2014) has shown that increasing demands in the absence of sufficient resources leads to obsessive passion, which, in turn, leads to burnout and undermines work engagement. Conversely, resources in the absence of demands, facilitates harmonious passion, which, in turn, prevents burnout and facilitates work engagement. The results for this measure in 2015 are in line with previous studies and significantly correlated both positively and negatively with the Job Demands and Resources. In 2015, 91.5% of participants report being passionate (*M*=5.46, *SD*=0.93). Harmonious passion (*M*=4.1, *SD*=1.16) was more common than Obsessive passion (*M*=2.72, *SD*=1.07). The combination of social capital and passion may provide significant new areas for combating the increasing demands of the role. Examples of the relationships between job demands, outcomes, social capital and the dualistic model of passion are represented below.

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<th>Max</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
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</table>

- **Gender** No significant differences exist.
- **Sector and Type** No significant differences exist.
- **Geolocation** No significant differences exist.
- The most interesting findings here relate to the spread of results across schools and the correlations with both positive and negative aspects of worklife, which are represented graphically in the following pages

These early results suggest that the combination of passion and social capital, both of which appear unrelated to resourcing offer enticing possibilities for fundamental improvement of the school system.
Passion disaggregated by Type, Gender, Role and Sector

### Passion 2015

#### Presence

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#### Harmonious

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### Passion 2015

#### Presence

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#### Obsessive

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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
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#### Harmonious

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<tr>
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Correlations between Passion Presence and Cognitive & Somatic Stress, Depressive Symptoms, Trouble Sleeping, Commitment to the Workplace and Job Satisfaction

![Correlation diagrams showing relationships between Passion Presence and various outcomes.](image-url)
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Referencias


