

NEW ZEALAND PRIMARY AND AREA SCHOOL
TEACHERS' AND PRINCIPALS'
OCCUPATIONAL HAUORA / HEALTH AND
WELLBEING

SURVEY REPORT 2019

NZEI TE RIUROA
NEW ZEALAND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report focuses on the effects that workload, hours of work and other sources of stress had on school leaders' and teachers' health and wellbeing in 2019.

It is important to note that this research was conducted prior to the Covid-19 crisis. The survey was conducted from October to December 2019. It includes data for school leaders for the fourth year running and the first year of data for teachers. We continue to seek trends in school leader health and can now begin to distinguish patterns of difference and similarity across leader and teacher health and wellbeing.

The most significant finding of this research is that both teachers and school leaders report significant job strain and associated negative health impacts that far exceed the general population. Teachers reported increases in stress during their second year of teaching. The data indicates that the second year is the most stressful year of a teaching career, consistent with research across the globe. Teachers also scored slightly worse than school leaders in all health and wellbeing measures, with *burnout* and *stress* being the two most worrying. However, both groups are significantly worse off than the general population.

This is the first year since the survey commenced that the level of many stressors for school leaders have diminished. The two most significant decreases are those of '*sheer quantity of work*' and '*lack of time to focus on teaching and learning*'. This correlated with a positive trend for most of the health and wellbeing measures for school leaders, including *burnout*, *stress*, and *depressive symptoms*. However, respondents are still scoring significantly worse than the general population in these health and wellbeing measures.

School teachers reported similar rates of work demands as principals. School leaders experienced more *job satisfaction*, less *work-family conflict* and *family-work conflict* in the 2019 year. However, work-family conflict is still significantly higher for school leaders compared to the general population. Women report significantly higher scores than men. Teachers rated their *job satisfaction* lower than school leaders and felt that their work impacted more on their family life than it did for school leaders.

School leaders appeared to show a small improvement in 2019 with *work demands* seeming to ease off slightly. In comparison to 2018, *quantitative demands* decreased by the greatest amount (4%), followed by *work pace* (3%). However, these demands are still significantly higher than the general population. We need to see the trend continue for another two data collection waves to say with any certainty that this reduction in demands is genuine and not simply a "statistical blip".

While the numbers are significantly higher than for the general population, the 2019 data on threats of violence and incidents of physical violence towards school leaders has had a positive downward trend. School leaders were at significantly increased risk compared to teachers, with women at more risk than men, perhaps indicating that principals are putting themselves in harm's way to try to protect the teachers they work with.

A similar number of school leaders and teachers are working 41-60 hours per week. However, 27% of school leaders are working more than 60 hours compared with 13% of teachers. Only 1% of school leaders are working 40 hours or less compared with 12% of teachers.

REPORT ON SCHOOL LEADERS' AND TEACHERS' HEALTH AND WELLBEING - STRESS AND BURNOUT

This data is a subset of the results of the *New Zealand Primary School Principals' and Teachers' Occupational Health and Wellbeing Survey (2019)*, conducted on behalf of the New Zealand Educational Institute (NZEI) Te Riu Roa, by a team at the Deakin University's Strategic Research Centre for Educational Impact, led by Professor Philip Riley, a former school principal and a registered psychologist with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency.

This report focuses on the effects that workload, hours of work and other sources of stress have on school principals' and teachers' health and wellbeing.

Summary

The survey was conducted from October to December 2019. All members of NZEI Te Riu Roa in primary school leadership and teacher roles were invited via email to complete the online survey.

This data reinforces issues teachers and principals campaigned on during the *Kua tae te wā - It's time* Campaign in 2019. NZEI Te Riu Roa members were clear that teaching needs to be made an attractive and valued profession through improved resourcing and systemic support. The key issues of high workloads, lack of support for students with additional learning and behavioural needs and undervaluing of the profession were raised throughout the campaign.

Not all these issues were able to be delivered through collective agreement processes. The Accord was entered into to address these outstanding issues. Further work needs to be done to improve resourcing and access to support for schools, as set out in these recommendations. This research report identifies where the increase in resourcing is urgently needed.

The data gathered from these surveys provides clear evidence of the ongoing crisis the education sector is facing through persistent under-resourcing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Many of the following recommendations have been previously published. They were first raised in 2017 as recommendations resulting from the principal survey reports conducted in 2016. The recommendations have been expanded to address issues that have been highlighted from the inclusion of teachers in the 2019 survey. The longstanding nature of some recommendations indicates that the need for improved Government investment in education is now critical.

RECOMMENDATION 1: Improve school resourcing to support the work practices of principals and deputy/assistant principals considering the Job Demands - Resources Model of organisational health

Stress and psychological risk at work can be conceptualised through the balance of job demands (workload, time pressures, physical environment, emotional labour) and job resources (feedback, rewards, control, job security, support).

High job demands lead to exhaustion while low job resources lead to disengagement. Both are symptoms of burnout. However, high job resources buffer job demands, reducing the negative impact on individuals.

Principals and deputies/assistants report very high demands, out of balance with available resources to buffer the demands.

With 75% of New Zealand school leaders working more than 50 hours per week and 25% working more than 60 hours, too many participants are working too many hours. It is also taking a toll on their greatest support group, their families. When job demands are this high, they need to be balanced with significant resources to buffer the demands.

The resources that principals and teachers need include:

1. More teacher staffing provision to allow for work to be shared amongst more people. This would create greater flexibility in the arrangement of work of teachers and school leaders. More teacher staffing would allow for more equitable release times for teachers to support personalised learning and allow for smaller class sizes for students.
2. More resources for students with complex needs. More Learning Support practitioners and specialist teachers in schools to provide much needed hands on support, and increased provision to allow equitable access to Learning Support Coordinators.
3. Secure and sufficient resourcing to allow for the employment of support staff to support teaching and learning and to take on non-teaching administrative tasks.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Improving professional support

Professional support is a strong predictor of coping with stressors of being a school leader or teacher. There are also many benefits to receiving support. For example, improved student learning outcomes are more likely when teachers and leaders are well-supported.

Principals note virtually no support from their employer. Approximately 50% of teachers report feeling supported by their line manager. Those educators who do feel well supported largely find this support outside of their professional life.

Possible solutions:

1. Teachers and principals should have direct involvement in the design and implementation of system supports. This should include the design of the new Education Service Agencies (ESA). The ESA is part of the Government's response to feedback from the review of Tomorrow's Schools report and aims to deliver more responsive, accessible, and integrated local support to meet the needs of ākongā, whānau, educators and school leaders.
2. Provide opportunities for principals and deputy/assistant principals to engage in professional support networks on a regular basis.
3. Networks should be determined locally, contextually, and formally, with the ability to provide opportunities for informal support alongside more formal measures.
4. A provision of time (release) for principals and deputy/assistant principals to build and maintain professional support networks.
5. The provision of professional supervision (facilitated reflection and coaching) for teachers and leaders by professionals qualified in this area, not their line management or supervisor. This is mandated for other professions that work in the frontline services e.g. social workers.
6. Provide sufficient resources to allow time for collaboration between teachers and principals. More flexibility in the Kāhui Ako model, including extension of resourcing to other more organic forms of clusters to support effective collaboration could be considered.
7. Ensuring teachers and principals have access to curriculum expertise and that they have direct involvement in curriculum development.
8. An increase in the number of management units available to those working in the primary sector to support school leadership and to address the issue of inequitable resourcing of management units across the schooling sector

RECOMMENDATION 3: Professional development and support for building and maintaining effective professional relationships

Principals and deputy/assistant principals and teachers need access to targeted professional support, including time to build effective relationships. The data reveals a possible disconnection between principals, deputies, assistants, and teachers regarding professional relationships and support in schools. The most likely explanation for the inconsistency is a lack of time and effective communication between educators. Along with providing additional staffing resourcing to create time for relationship building there is a need for skill development in the emotional and relational aspects of the leadership role.

Possible solutions:

1. Principals and other leaders need to be involved in the design and implementation of the Leadership Centre to be hosted by the Teaching Council.
2. Principals and other leaders need to be involved in the development of any eligibility criteria for principal appointments.
3. Resourcing for the Leadership Centre should be covered by the Government, rather than relying on a significant increase in certification fees.
4. In-service professional learning and development for leaders on the emotional aspects of teaching and learning, organisational function and emotional labour.
5. Professional learning and development on dealing with difficulties and conflicts in the workplace and universal access to Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP).

RECOMMENDATION 4: More support for early career teachers

There is a significant need to provide more support for teachers in their second year of teaching. Teachers in their first year of service, where more support is in place, have higher wellbeing results than those teachers in their second year of teaching, where there is less support. This indicates structured support needs to be extended to at least the third year of service. This data is consistent with international literature and shows that lack of structured support may be contributing to teachers burning out early and leaving the profession.

Possible solutions:

1. Trained mentoring teachers and sufficient release provided to mentor teachers.
2. Extend induction release time to the third year of service.
3. Security of tenure for beginning teachers.

RECOMMENDATION 5: Addressing violence and offensive behaviours

There is an increasingly urgent need to address offensive behaviour occurring in schools. Behaviours identified as consistently occurring in schools are adult-adult bullying, threats of violence perpetrated by students and parents and actual violence perpetrated by students and parents.

Possible solutions:

1. Well-developed and resourced programmes and supports need to be developed with the sector to address the issues at a system level.
2. Professional learning and development and access to ongoing mentoring and support for schools and their communities.

The consequences of offensive behaviour in schools are likely to become costly for employers. This will be seen through time lost to ill health, Occupational Health and Safety claims against employers for not providing a safe working environment, and reduced functioning while at work as a result of offensive behaviour in the workplace.

RECOMMENDATION 6: Gender equity

This research and previous years' findings show there is a gender differentiation in terms of pay, size of school and level of stress and workload amongst school leaders. Both the gender pay gap and the significant difference in stress and wellbeing experienced by female school leaders needs further investigation and action.

TEACHERS' 2019 HAUORA / HEALTH AND WELLBEING **SURVEY RESULTS**

TEACHERS' 2019 HAUORA / HEALTH AND WELLBEING SURVEY RESULTS

This (2019) is the first year that teachers have been involved in this survey and 3917 teachers took part.

The average age of the teachers taking part was 46 years, ranging from 21–83 years of age.

TEACHER PARTICIPANT NUMBERS BY ROLE AND SEX

	2019
Fulltime	84%
.8 FTE	5%
.5 FTE	3%
<.5FTE	8%
SEX	
Female	89%
Male	10%
Gender Diverse	0.3%
Prefer not to say	0.3%

LOCATION

	2019
Urban	80.2%
Rural	19.4%
Isolated/Off-Shore	0.4%

WORKLOAD

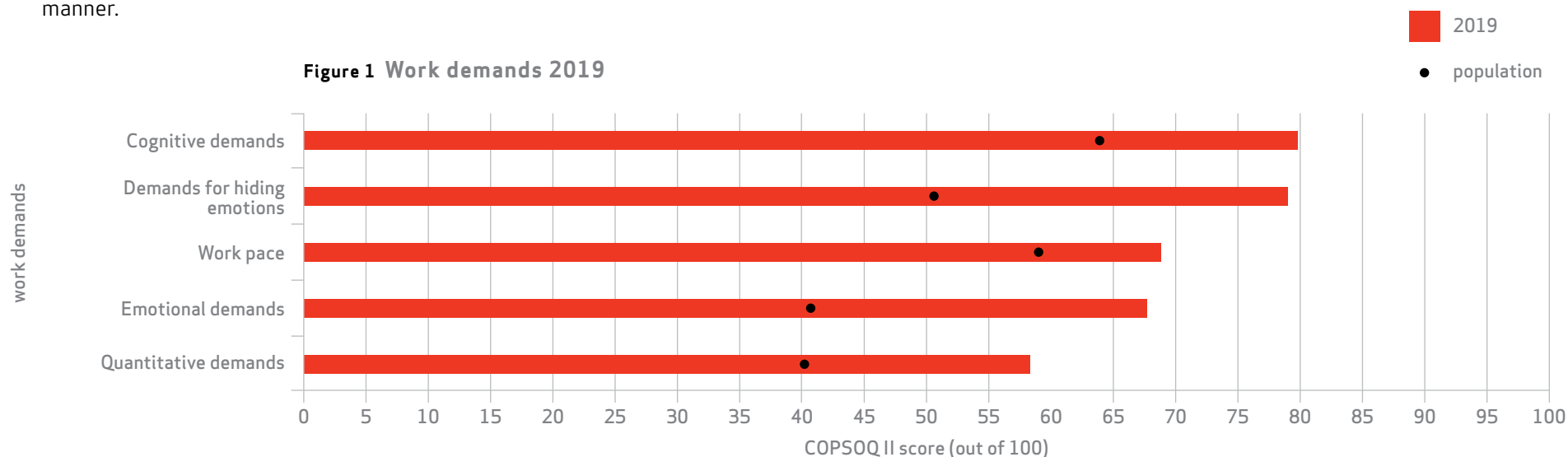
Fifty-one percent of teachers reported working upwards of 51 hours per week during term time, with 13% working upwards of 61 hours per week. During school holidays, 89% work upwards of 10 hours per week, and 53% worked more than 25 hours a week. This aligns with the Teaching and Learning International Study report 2018 findings.

Like principals, teachers experience high levels of emotional demands and emotional labour compared with the general population. The job demands together with the workload of teachers is cause for significant concern, as teachers reported higher levels of negative health outcomes than the general population.

Work demands

- **Quantitative demands** deal with how much one has to achieve in one's work. They can be assessed as an incongruity between the number of tasks and the time available to perform the tasks in a satisfactory manner.

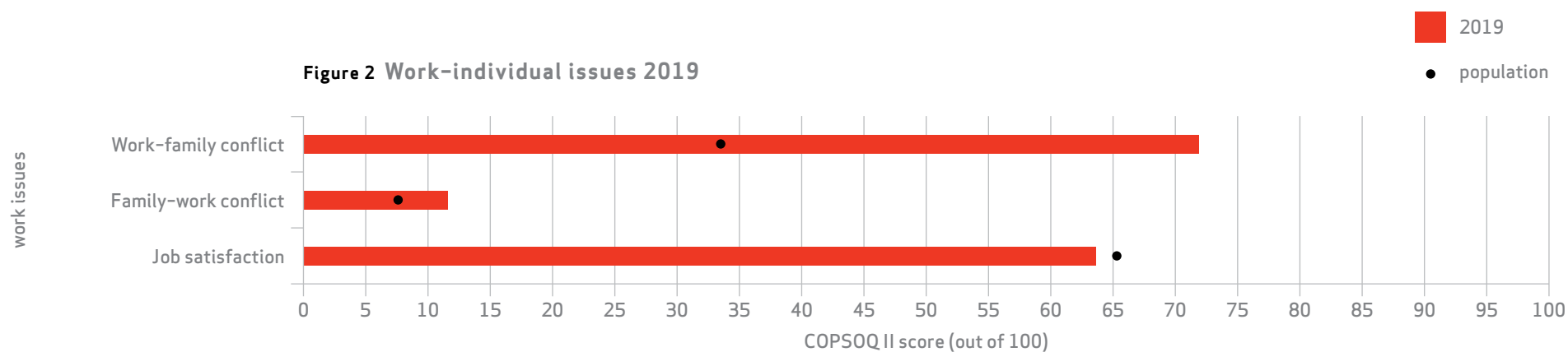
- **Work pace** deals with the speed at which tasks have to be performed. It is a measure of the intensity of work.
- **Cognitive demands** deal with demands involving the cognitive abilities of the worker. This is the only subscale of demands where higher scores are better.
- **Emotional demands** occur 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 workplace, e.g. parents and students, and people employed at the workplace, like colleagues, superiors or subordinates.
- **Demands for hiding emotions** occur when the worker has to conceal her or his own feelings at work from other people. Other people comprise both people not employed at the workplace, e.g. parents and students, and people employed at the workplace, 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.



Work-individual issues

- **Job satisfaction** deals with respondents' 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.

Teachers have reported a much lower job satisfaction rate than principals and it is lower than the general population rate.



Sources of stress

The top three greatest sources of stress for teachers are the sheer quantity of work, closely followed by a lack of time to focus on teaching and learning. The third is student behaviour and learning issues and the lack of resources support when dealing with students' additional needs as a significant source of stress for teachers. These findings mirror those for principals and other school leaders.

Figure 3 Sources of stress 2019

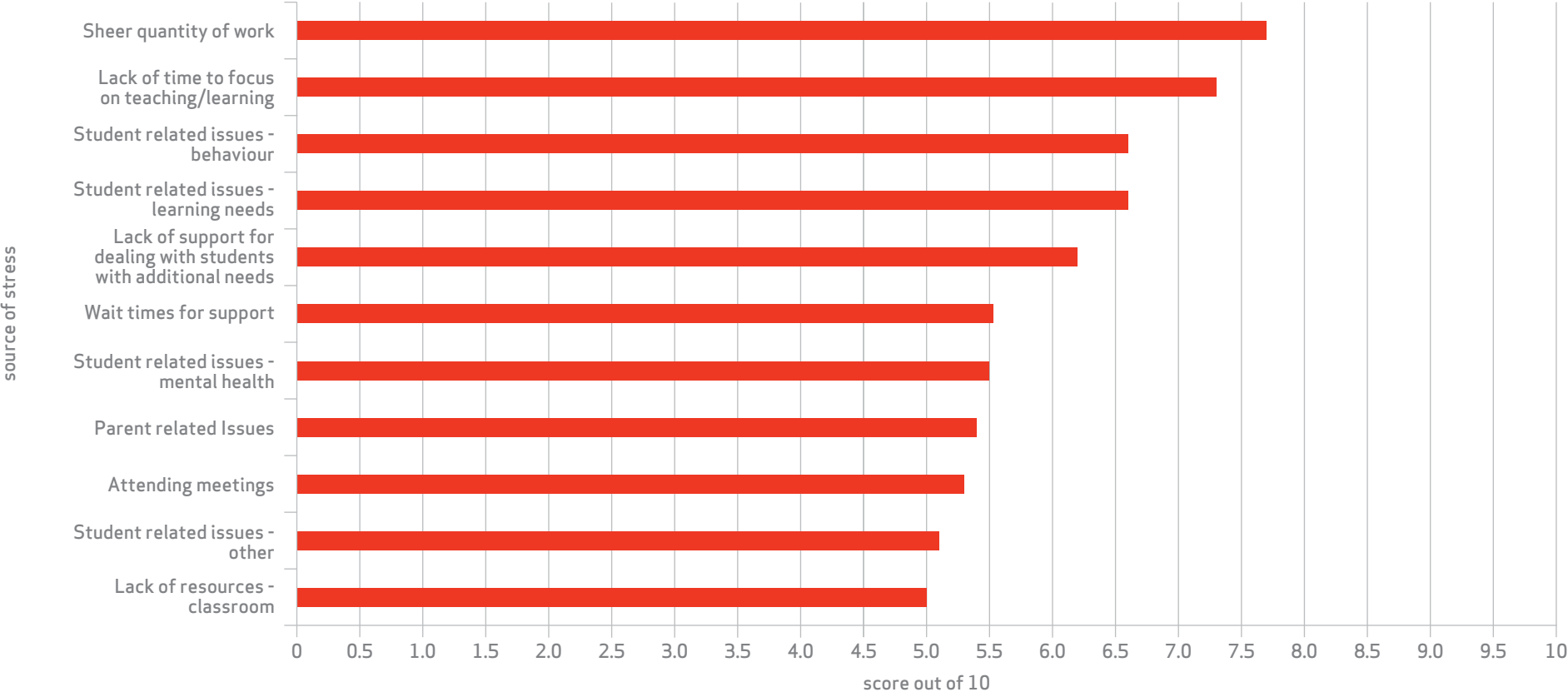
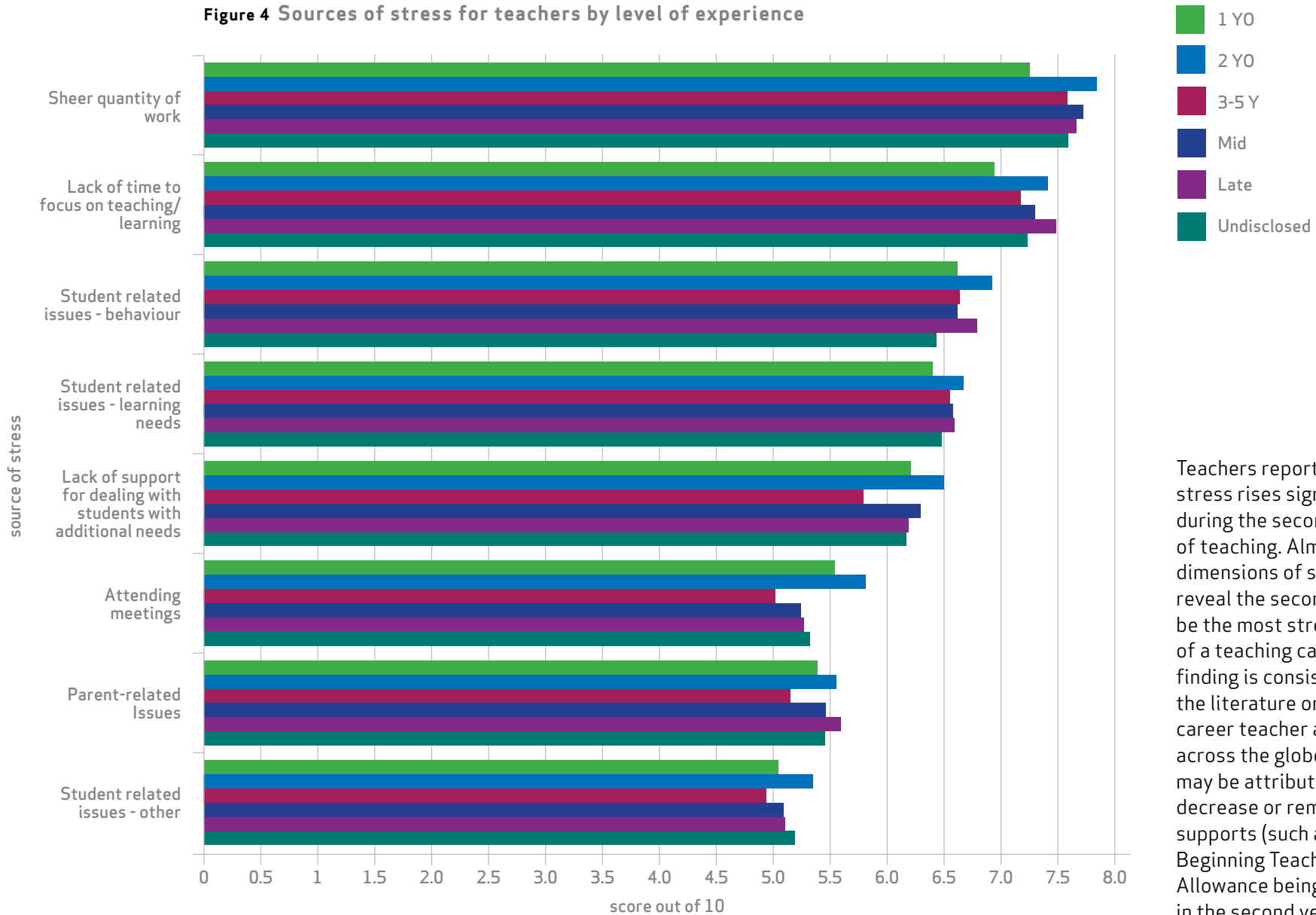


Figure 4 Sources of stress for teachers by level of experience



Teachers reported that stress rises significantly during the second year of teaching. Almost all dimensions of stress reveal the second year to be the most stressful year of a teaching career. This finding is consistent with the literature on early career teacher attrition across the globe. This may be attributed to the decrease or removal of supports (such as the Beginning Teacher Time Allowance being less) in the second year of teaching.

COPENHAGEN PSYCHOSOCIAL QUESTIONNAIRE II

This part of the report focuses on the data obtained through the use of the *Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire – II* (Pejtersen, Kristensen, Borg, & Bjorner, 2010) which was developed in response to the need for a validated and standardized instrument that would accurately measure a broad range of psychosocial factors across many occupations. It has seven scales, each containing between 4–8 subscales. In some cases, high scores are healthy, for example general health. In many cases, however, a high score is indicative of an undesirable state, and include amount of *work, work pace, emotional demands, hiding emotions, work-family conflict, family-work conflict, burnout, stress, sleeping problems, depressive symptoms, physical symptoms of stress, and cognitive stress*, among others. The scale for this measure is a score out of 100. The “population” score referred to as a comparator throughout is a standardised score taken from *Pejtersen et al. (2010)*

Health and wellbeing measures

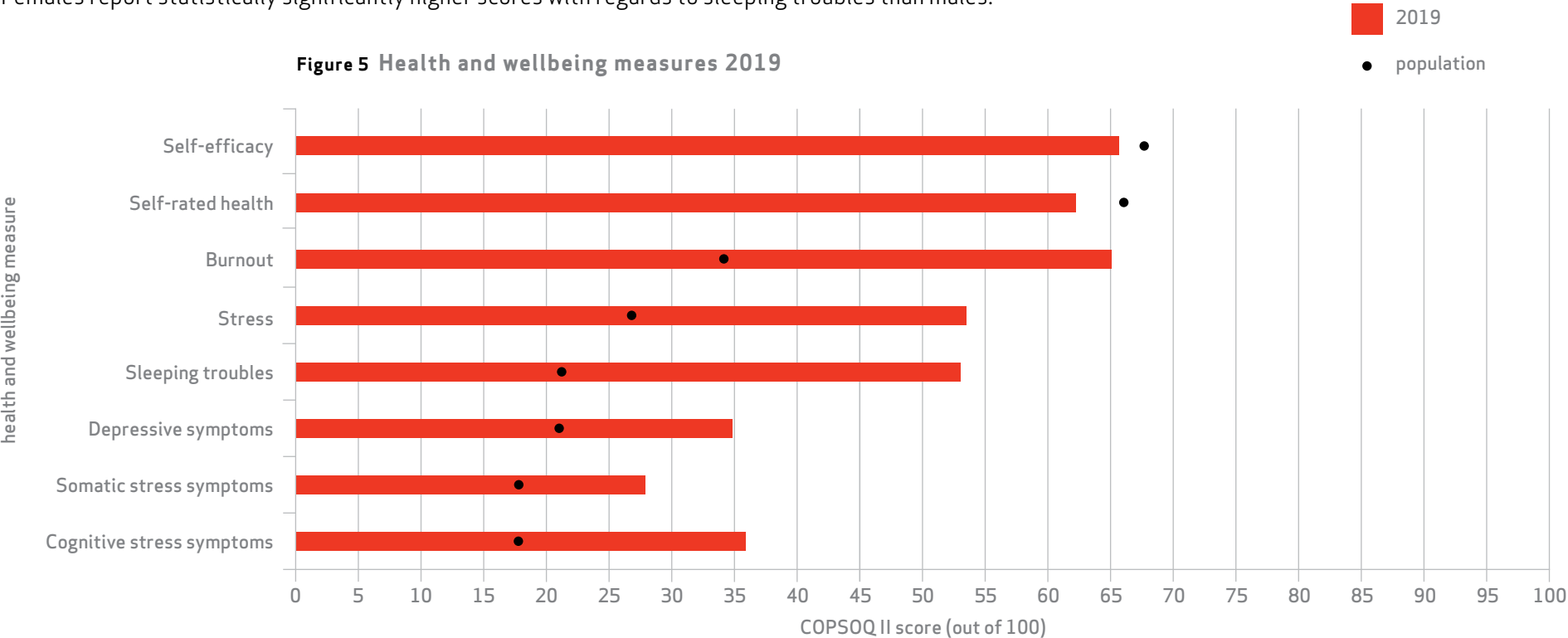
- **Self-rated health** is the person’s assessment of her or his own general health. It is one global item, which has been used in numerous questionnaires, and has been shown to predict many different endpoints including mortality, cardiovascular diseases, hospitalisations, use of medicine, absence, and early retirement (Idler & Benyamini, 1997).
- **Burnout** concerns the degree of physical and mental fatigue/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 quality of sleep.
- **Depressive symptoms** cover various aspects, which together indicate depression.
- **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.
- **Self-efficacy** is the extent of one’s belief in one’s own ability to complete tasks and reach goals.

See Appendix 1

Health and wellbeing outcomes for teachers

Teachers scored worse than school leaders and the general population in nearly all health and wellbeing measures. This is seen in the higher rates of burnout, sustained and elevated cognitive and physical health stress, depressive symptoms and trouble sleeping than the general population. Chronic sleep deprivation predicts several long-term health issues, including memory difficulties, obesity, and depression.

Females report statistically significantly higher scores with regards to sleeping troubles than males.



Teachers scored lower than principals and the general population with regards to self-efficacy. 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.

Threats and violence towards teachers

Coping with behaviours such as threats of violence, actual violence, bullying, and conflicts in their workplace contributes to the stress and burnout experienced by teachers. Furthermore, the data shows that students are the most common perpetrators of threats and actual violence towards teachers. Twenty percent of teachers experienced threats of violence from students and 30% experienced actual violence. The safety of teachers, leaders, and that of other educators, needs to be addressed urgently. More specialist learning support practitioners and specialist teachers to support teachers and leaders with children who have additional learning needs may help to decrease this trend.

Figure 6 Teachers’ experience of threatened and actual violence 2019

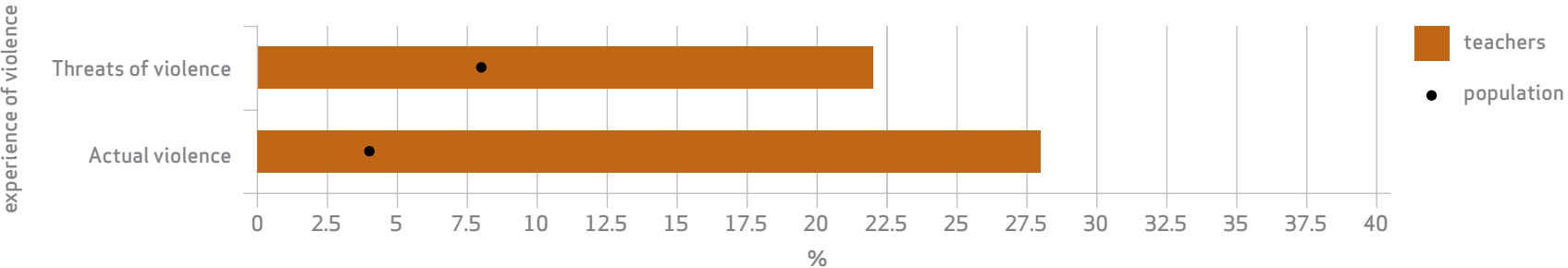
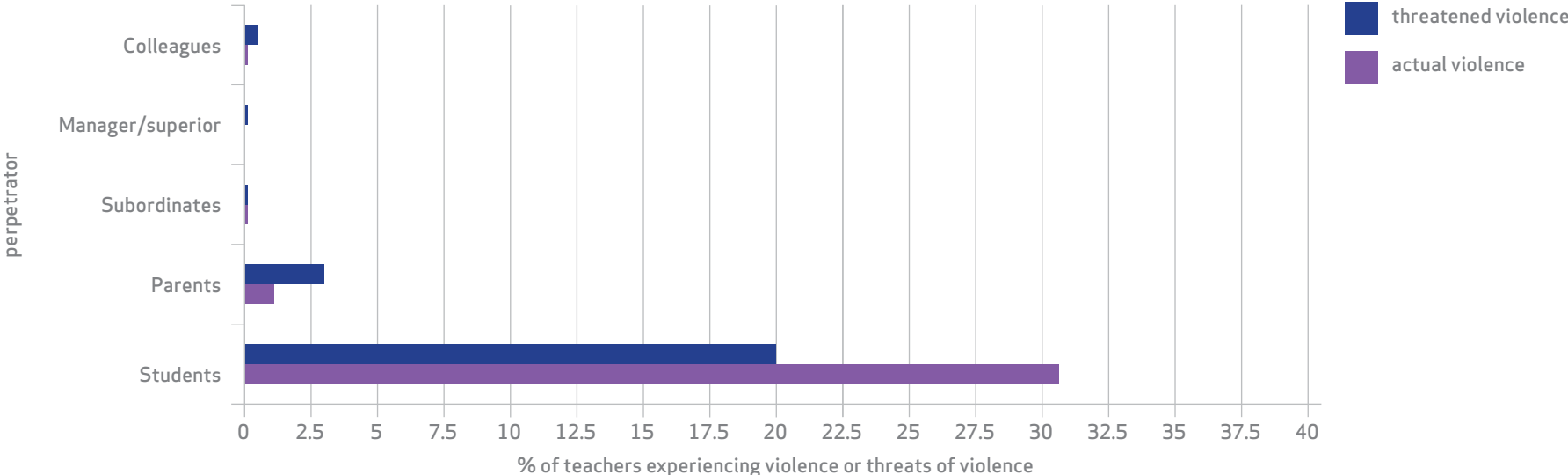


Figure 7 Rates of threatened and actual violence by perpetrator 2019



Offensive behaviour

Teachers reported experiencing bullying in the workplace more prevalently than principals and the general population. Bullying is defined in the report as being exposed repeatedly over a longer period to unpleasant or degrading treatment, and not being able to defend oneself against this treatment.

Women in the sector are significantly more likely to experience all forms of offensive behaviour than men. This needs to be addressed systemically.

PRINCIPALS' 2019 HAUORA / HEALTH AND WELLBEING **SURVEY RESULTS**

PRINCIPALS' 2019 HAUORA / HEALTH AND WELLBEING SURVEY RESULTS

This is the fourth annual survey that principals have completed. Therefore, the data that is presented provides a longitudinal insight into principal workload and stress and burnout.

The average age of the principals participating is 52 years, ranging from 31 - 72 years. A total of 1919 school leaders took part in the 2019 survey.

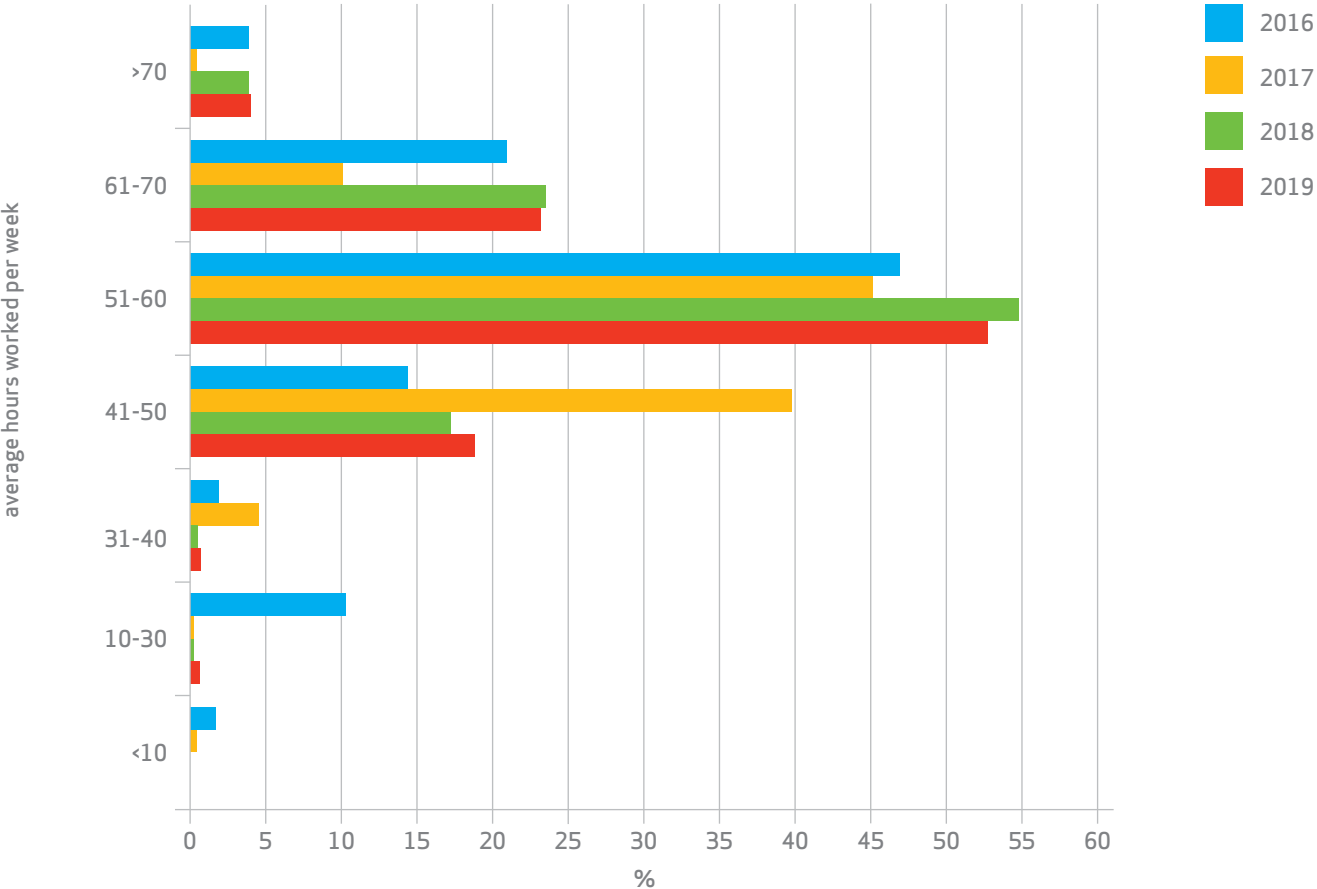
PARTICIPANT NUMBERS BY ROLE AND SEX				
	2016	2017	2018	2019
Principal	69.3%	70.8%	73.3%	83.2%
Deputy Principal	25.3%	22.9%	21.1%	12.8%
Assistant Principal	5.4%	6.3%	5.7%	4.0%
Total				
Male	30.1%	36.7%	36.6%	34.4%
Female	69.9%	79.8%	79.5%	65.6%

SCHOOL TYPE				
	2016	2017	2018	2019
Full Primary	42.9%	44.3%	51.4%	53.4%
Contributing Primary	44.3%	42.1%	37.0%	35.5%
Composite/Area School	2.1%	0.7%	2.0%	2.0%
Intermediate/Middle School	2.9%	2.1%	2.1%	1.3%
Special School	7.8%	2.8%	6.0%	7.6%
Did not specify	0.0%	8.0%	1.5%	0.2%

LOCATION				
	2016	2017	2018	2019
Urban	66.6%	71.0%	68.5%	66.9%
Rural	31.4%	25.9%	28.8%	29.9%
Isolated/Off-Shore	2.0%	3.1%	2.7%	3.2%

WORKLOAD

Figure 8 Average hours worked per week during school terms (% school leader respondents)



Workload, in addition to the emotional impacts and demands of the job, are all contributing factors to the decrease of wellbeing in the schooling workforce.

In 2019, 98.7% of principals worked upwards of 40 hours per week during term time, up from 86% in 2016. In addition, 27% reported working upwards of 60 hours per week, up from 25% in 2016. In every year since the survey began over half of all school leaders surveyed reported working more than 50 hours a week.

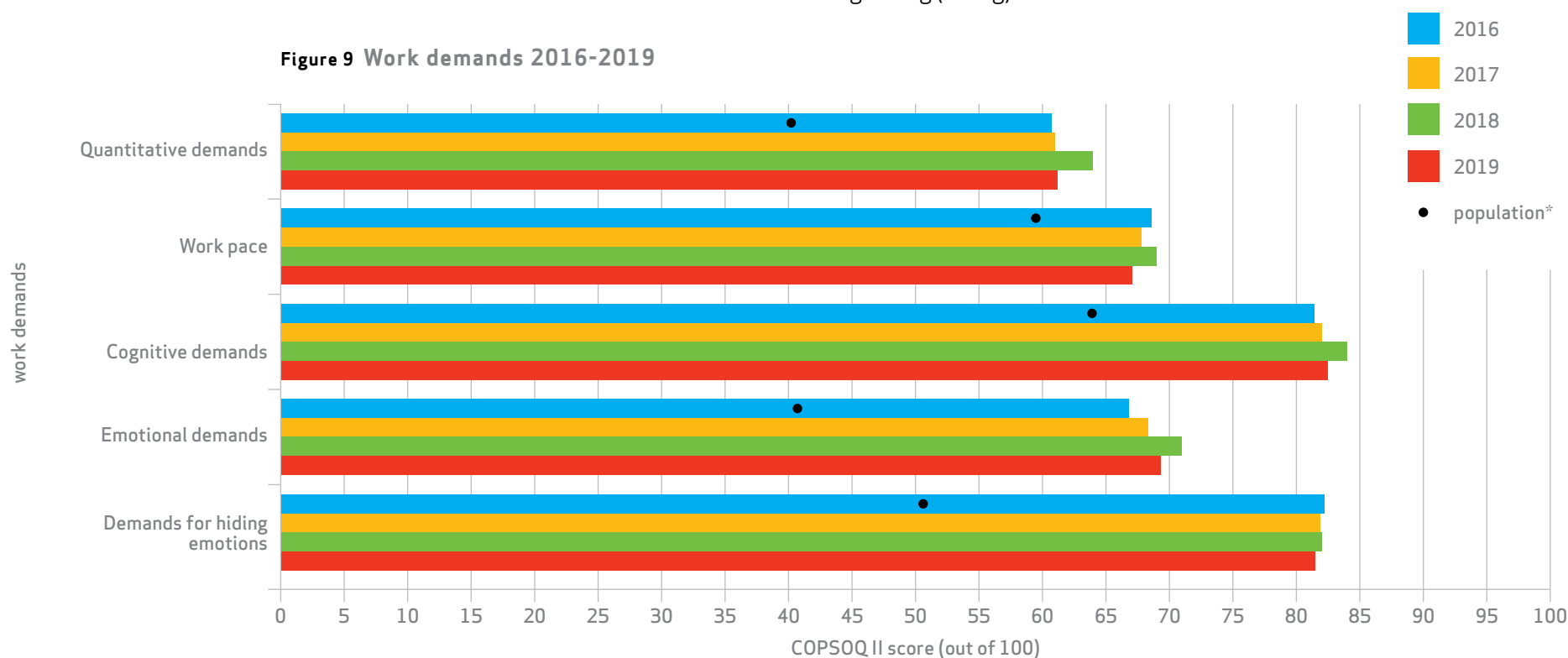
Work demands

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Figure 9 Work demands 2016-2019



*Population benchmark data is for 2019

School leaders scores are lower in 2019 for every measure, an opposite trend to previous years. While this is generally a positive move, when school leaders' results are compared with the general population, it indicates that there is still significant room for improvement. The only measure on this scale where a lower score is a worse result is *cognitive demands* which has also decreased this year.

Work-individual issues

- **Job satisfaction** deals with respondents' 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. School leaders reported general positivity about their job and have a high job satisfaction rate compared with teachers.

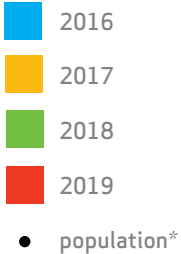
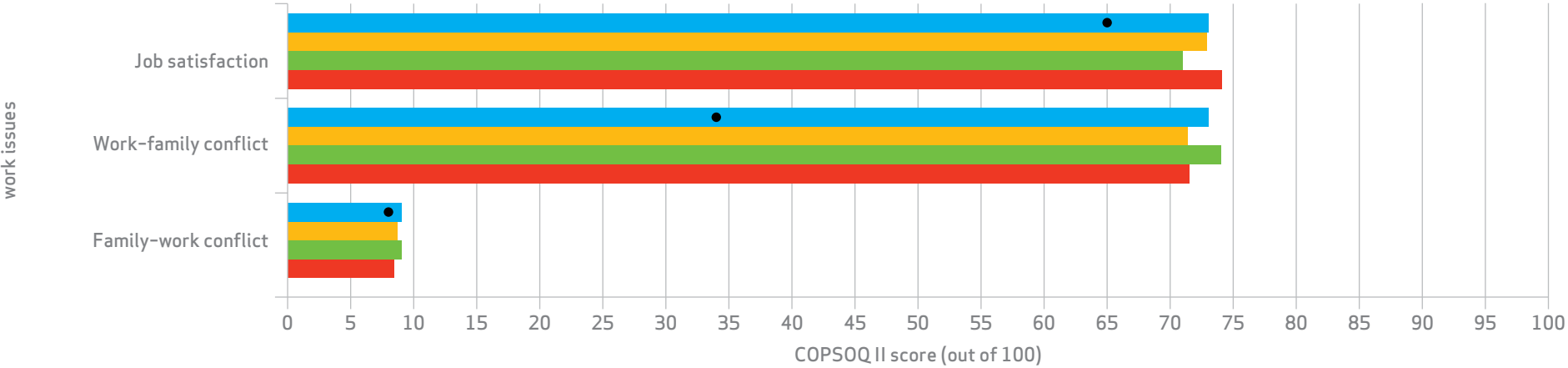


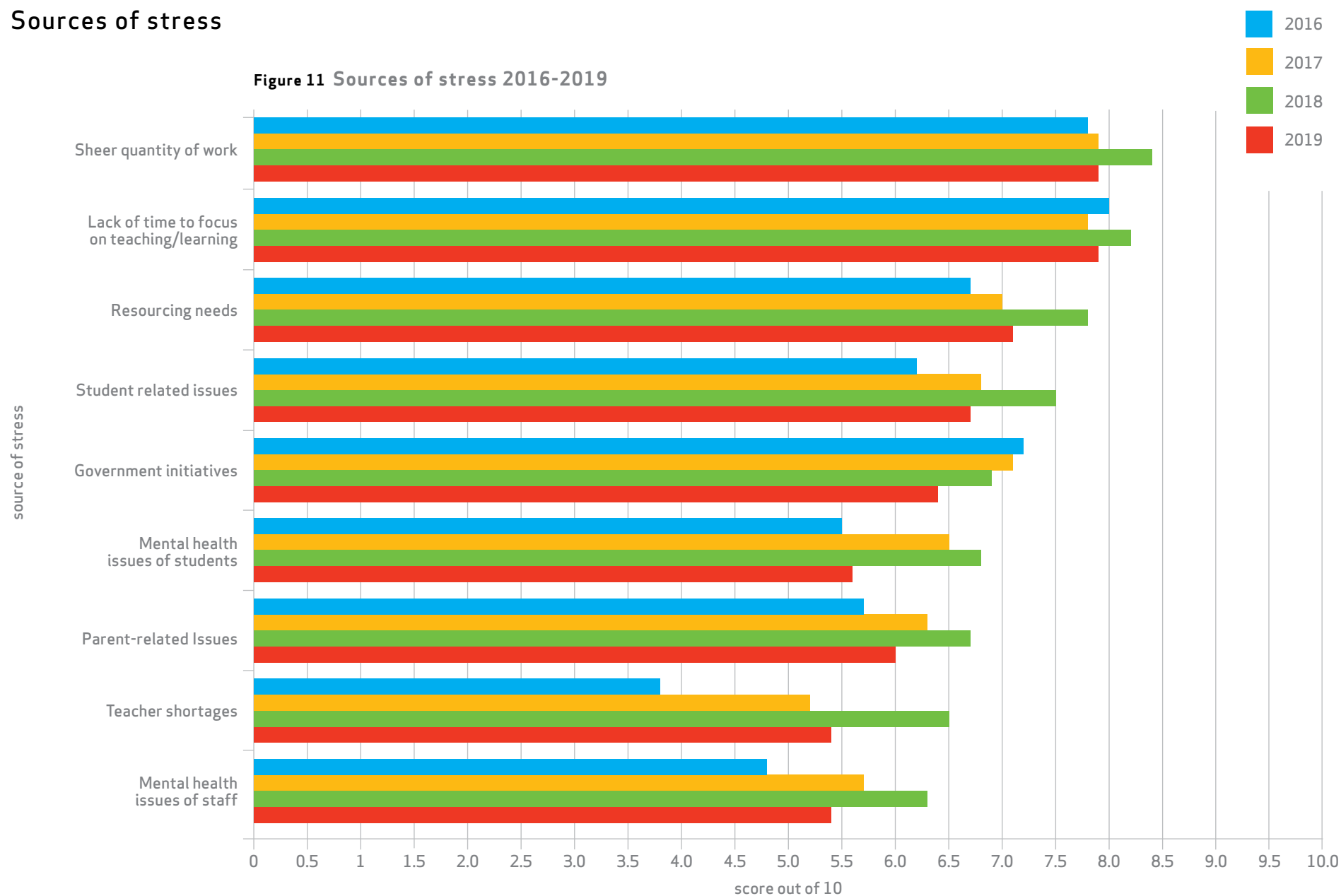
Figure 10 Work-individual issues 2016-2019



*Population benchmark data is for 2019

Sources of stress

Figure 11 Sources of stress 2016-2019



The greatest source of stress for all principals and deputies/assistants is the sheer quantity of work, closely followed by a lack of time to focus on teaching and learning. Principals reported that resourcing needs, student-related issues and government initiatives were significant sources of stress. These sources of stress appear to be interlinked with the teachers' survey findings, even though they are experienced differently by both occupational groups.

COPENHAGEN PSYCHOSOCIAL QUESTIONNAIRE II

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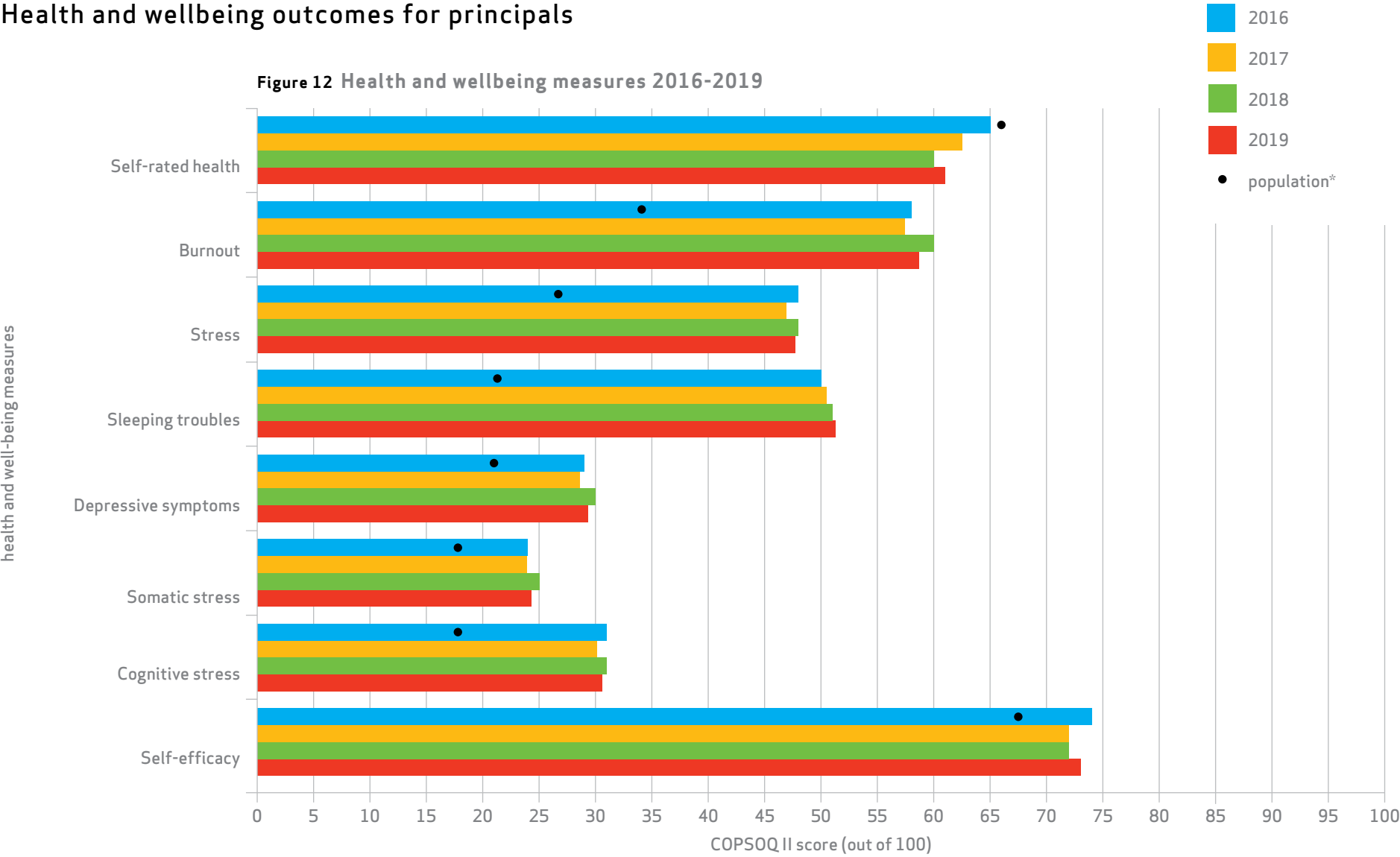
Health and wellbeing measures

- **Self-rated 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, hospitalisations, use of medicine, absence, and early retirement (Idler & Benyamini, 1997).
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- **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 quality of sleep.
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- **Cognitive stress** deals with cognitive indicators of a sustained stress reaction of the individual.
- **Self-efficacy** is the extent of one’s belief in one’s own ability to complete tasks and reach goals.

See Appendix 1

Health and wellbeing outcomes for principals

Figure 12 Health and wellbeing measures 2016-2019



*Population benchmark data is for 2019

Specialist school leaders scores for self-efficacy are significantly higher than all others.

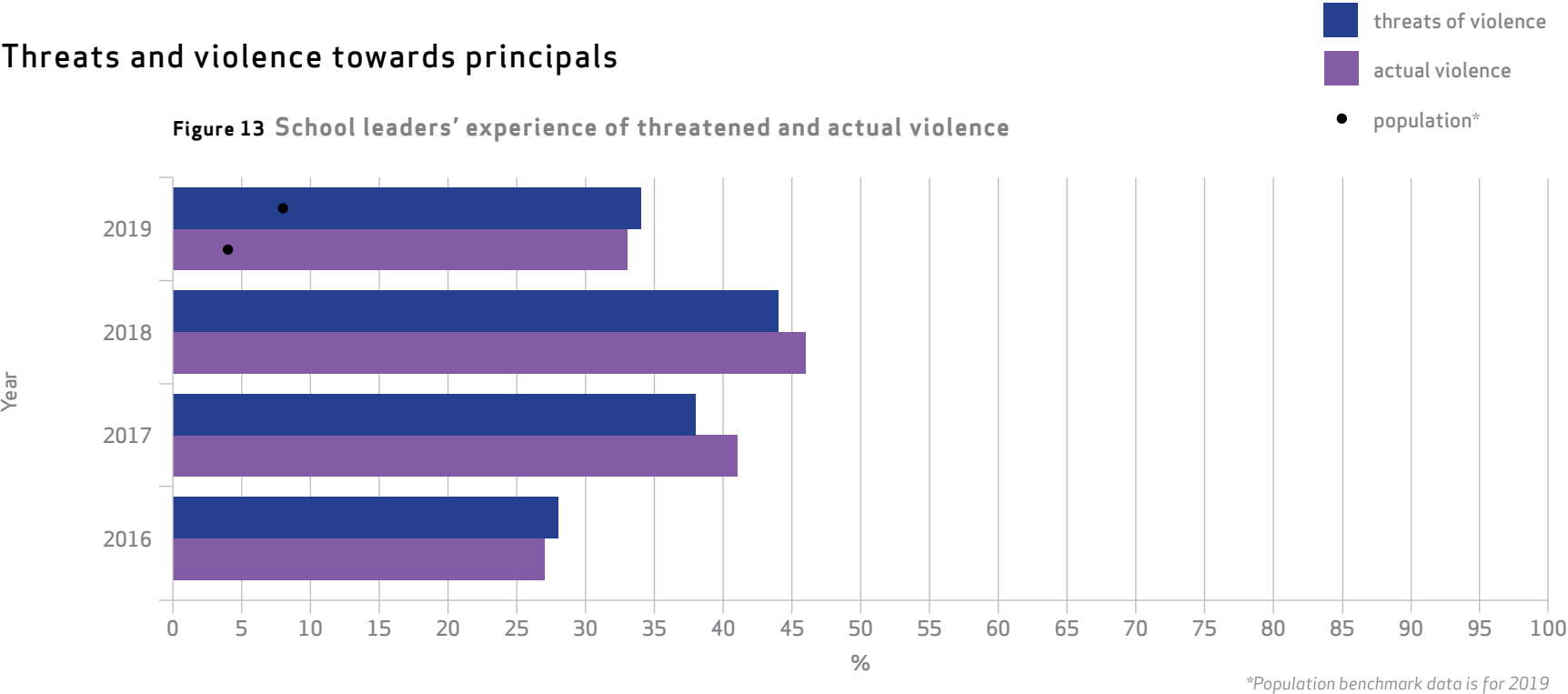
The most worrying finding for principals is about general health. This is a participant’s assessment of his or her general health. The school leaders who completed the surveys in 2016 and 2018 showed a significant decline in general health. This translates to a 7% decline in general health in just three years and is now well below the population average. This trend needs to be urgently addressed.

Urban leaders reported a lower burn out rate than their offshore/isolated colleagues.

Female leaders reported significantly higher scores of burn out than their male counterparts.

Threats and violence towards principals

Figure 13 School leaders’ experience of threatened and actual violence



threats of violence

males

females

actual violence

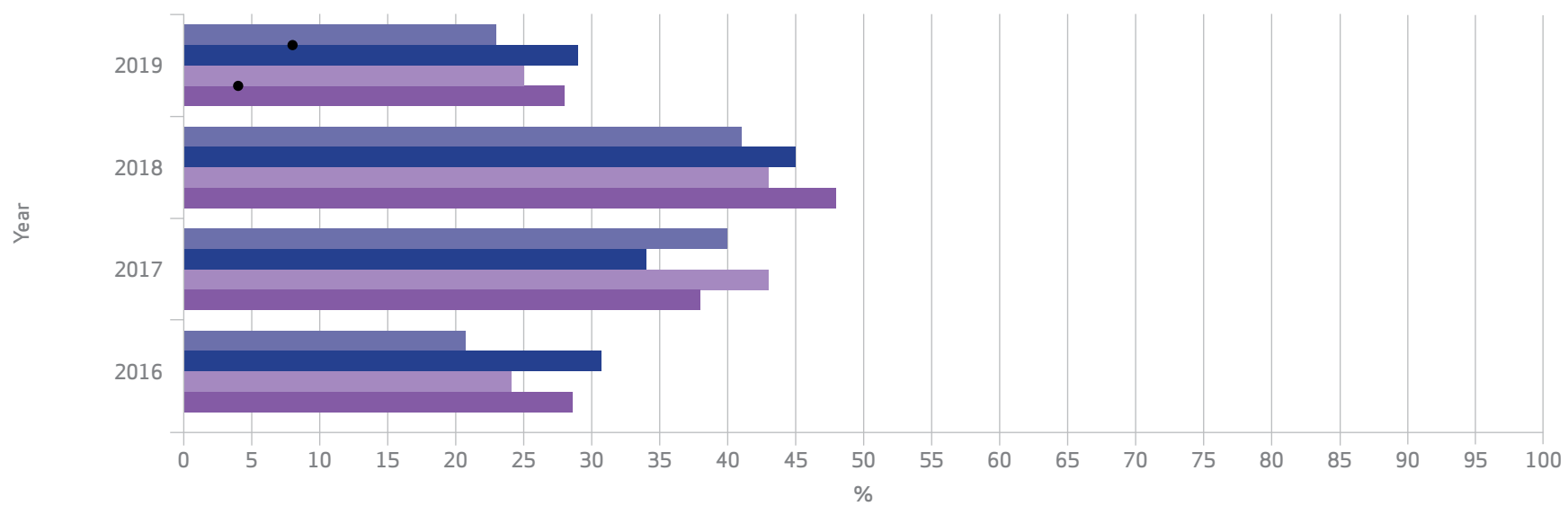
males

females

population *



Figure 14 Rates of threatened and actual violence by sex of respondent 2016-2019



*Population benchmark data is for 2019

RATES OF THREATENED AND ACTUAL VIOLENCE BY PERPETRATOR 2016-2019								
	2016		2017		2018		2019	
	Threats of violence	Actual violence	Threats of violence	Actual violence	Threats of violence	Actual violence	Threats of violence	Actual violence
Colleagues	0.2%	0.1%	0.5%	0.1%	0.3%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%
Manager/superior	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.0%	0.4%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Subordinates	0.5%	0.1%	0.3%	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%
Parents	15.5%	4.0%	15.1%	3.7%	14.5%	3.7%	20.0%	5.2%
Students	18.9%	25.8%	19.7%	27.6%	21.9%	27.2%	23.4%	30.3%

Physical violence and threats of violence perpetrated by students went up significantly in 2019 compared to the 2016–2018 data. This data is consistent with the teachers’ data.

Offensive behaviour

The data on offensive behaviour is deeply concerning. These behaviours that principals and teachers experience at work are well above what the general population experiences in the workplace.

In particular, the findings showed that principals experience a lot more slander and gossip as well as offensive behaviours via social media than teachers and the general population do.

DISCRIMINATION

Data from this and previous principal hauora surveys have highlighted principals' and teachers' experiences of racial discrimination. Unfortunately, low response rates to these questions mean the sample has been too small to run sound statistical analysis.

Either way, discrimination is clearly an issue in education and one which needs to be grappled with systemically.

NZEI Te Riu Roa will continue working with Te Akatea and NZPF to address issues of discrimination, while looking at qualitative methods that could be used to explore the issue in further depth.

Appendix 1

Figure 15 COPSQO-II Mean Score Comparisons

