



Promoting Teachers' Wellbeing: An International Review of the Literature

Ruth Baruj-Kovarsky Dalia Ben Rabi

Editor (Hebrew): Anat Feldman

English translation (Abstract): Ami Asher

Graphic design: Anat Perko Toledano

Myers JDC Brookdale Institute

P.O.B. 3886, Jerusalem 9103702, Israel

Tel: 02-6557400

brookdale.jdc.org.il/en | brook@jdc.org

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Abstract

Introduction

This review focuses on teachers' wellbeing, that is, occupational wellbeing that refers to the unique experience of the teaching profession and the teachers' workplace satisfaction and performance.

Objective

The review was commissioned by the Office of the Chief Scientist at the Ministry of Education in order to construct a knowledge base about the concept of teacher wellbeing and examine best practices for promoting it.

Method

This document is based mainly on systematic reviews of the literature, including meta-analyses, grey literature and policy papers. It is informed by the following questions: How is teacher wellbeing defined? What factors affect teacher wellbeing? What interventions have been initiated in order to enhance teacher wellbeing or minimize factors that reduce it?

Findings

Teacher wellbeing affects the teachers themselves as well as the students and class and the entire education system, and is therefore seen as a significant element in the performance of education systems and as a motivator of school development. While it is widely agreed that wellbeing is a multidimensional concept, the literature does not provide an agreed upon definition of teacher wellbeing. The OECD has chosen to define teacher wellbeing as the teachers' response to the cognitive, emotional, health and social conditions relevant to their work in the teaching profession. In light of this definition, the study team used the teachers' working conditions and the characteristics of their work environment as key indicators of the many factors that promote or detract from teacher wellbeing.

Interventions to promote teacher wellbeing proceed in two channels. One is interventions or the delivery of specific resources, usually on the individual or group level, with emphasis on promoting and providing tools for promoting individual wellbeing, or for dealing with elements that detract from the individual's wellbeing. The other channel is comprehensive strategies designed to generate organizational change, whether on the level of

the local authority, the region, or the nation, that will support teacher wellbeing on an ongoing basis, minimize factors that detract from it, and promote an organizational culture supporting its enhancement.

Conclusion and Action Items

The main emphasis in the studies and policy papers about strategies for promoting teacher wellbeing is that enhancing wellbeing requires a multifocal response, that addresses the entire school, its environment and context. Moreover, this response must address the relations between all stakeholders, as well as organizational conditions, rather than just the individual level, and be provided on a long-term basis. Strategies for promoting teacher wellbeing should be aligned with the school's local needs and organizational culture, its physical environment, and the working conditions of its teachers. The recommendations in these studies are directed both at the educational settings and at those responsible for educational policymaking as well as those who provide the resources required for the action strategies.

Based on the interventions and strategies reviewed in the document, several actions are recommended:

- Integrating self-care practices into the teachers' routine
- Professional development and teacher training
- Including teachers in decision-making processes
- Support for developing interpersonal relations at school
- Encouraging teacher cooperation
- Implementing a system for gathering data to evaluate teacher wellbeing
- Ensuring proper pay and occupational security
- Providing an employment horizon
- Implementing a judicious policy of teacher distribution and allocation