**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 1959**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 16/09/2016**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 28/2016**

**1959. Ms H S Boshoff (DA) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

(1) How many female learners dropped out of schools due to falling pregnant in the (a) 2013, (b) 2014 and (c) 2015 academic years in each district in each province;

(2) how many of the specified pregnancies were (a) reported by the respective principals to the relevant provincial departments of education, (b) referred to the SA Council for Educators and (c) classified as statutory rape cases in each district and province in the specified academic years? NW2270E

**RESPONSE:**

(1)The question of learner pregnancy must be reviewed in light of overall learner drop-out as pregnancy is one of the various self-reported reasons for learner drop-out.

(1a-c) The Annual School Survey administered by the DBE collects information on learner pregnancy by asking the school principal for: the number of learners that they are aware of who fell pregnant during the academic year. The data is disaggregated by grade and province but not by district.

**Note: This data is preliminary and should be treated with caution (i) the figure may be under-reported as principals may not be made aware of all learners that leave the schooling system due to pregnancy; (ii) it does not account for learners that return to schools after pregnancy.**

**Table 1: Number of learners who fell pregnant, by grade and province, between 2013 and 2015**



*Source: 2013-2015 Annual School Survey*

*Note 1: The ASS question on learner pregnancy asks the school principal for: “the number of learners (That they are aware of) who got pregnant the previous academic year”.*

*Note 2: The data, as received from the provinces, are preliminary and must be treated with caution, since it has not been published in this format.*

Based on the caveats in interpreting the ASS data, the General Household Survey (GHS) 2002-2015 conducted by Statistics South Africa, may be a better source of data on the specific question of learner pregnancy in relation to learner drop-out. The table below provides the GHS response for 2013-2015 on the number of learners that indicated pregnancy as the reasons for not attending an educational institution. The information collected is disaggregated by province but not by district.

**Note: the number in the bracket ( ) is the number of observation in the sample while the other value is the weighted estimate. The weighted estimates from the sampled households are constructed so that the responses could be properly expanded to represent the entire civilian population of South Africa.**

**Please also note that the table below provides information on learners between 7-18 years, noting that the compulsory schooling age is 7-15 years.**

**Number of 7 -18 year old who self-reported not attending educational institutions because of pregnancy**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Province | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
| Western Cape | 1 837 | 0 | 1 039 |
| (4) | (0) | (1) |
| Eastern Cape | 3 382 | 3 931 | 5 212 |
| (5) | (7) | (7) |
| Northern Cape | 471 | 1 057 | 1 696 |
| (3) | (4) | (4) |
| Free State | 1 666 | 1 489 | 0 |
| (5) | (4) | (0) |
| KwaZulu-Natal | 9 009 | 2 389 | 4 645 |
| (15) | (4) | (7) |
| North West | 2 148 | 0 | 2 709 |
| (3) | (0) | (4) |
| Gauteng | 1 442 | 1 473 | 1 005 |
| (2) | (1) | (2) |
| Mpumalanga | 1 234 | 1 662 | 2 270 |
| (4) | (4) | (4) |
| Limpopo | 675 | 1 736 | 842 |
| (1) | (3) | (1) |
| South Africa | 21 864 | 13 737 | 19 418 |
| **(42)** | **(27)** | **(30)** |

***Source: Statistics South Africa, General Household Survey, 2013 – 2015, DBE own calculations***

Compiler Question 1

(2) (a) See response on (1) (c) above.

**(b)** The DBE has not referred any learner pregnancy cases to the South African Council of Educators.

**(c)** The DBE has not undertaken classification of learner pregnancy cases. Currently, the DBE is developing a protocol for the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy, which intends to guide all stakeholders and custodians with this classification exercise and the course of action.