

Students well-being

The PILNA student questionnaire collected information about children's physical health, mental health, relationships, and material circumstances. The intention was to collect a holistic picture of the well-being of the students who participated in PILNA.

Students were given a list of circumstances, as set out in Table STT1.8, and were asked to indicate how often they experienced them. They could respond with 'Never', 'Sometimes', 'Most of the time', or 'Always'. For reporting the results, 'Most of the time' and 'Always' were combined, as they were considered to be materially similar in terms of student experience.

Well-being experiences

Table STT1.8 shows the proportions of grade five and grade seven students who reported experiencing the associated condition at least most of the time.

In Marshall Islands, 54% of grade five students and 62% of grade seven students reported that they had a good day 'Most of the time' or 'Always'. Forty-nine per cent of grade five students and 61% of grade seven students reported they looked forward to the next day 'Most of the time' or 'Always'.

For frequent negative experiences, more than one out of five students reported feeling hungry, upset, or not having enough friends either 'Most of the time' or 'Always'. These proportions were found across grade five and grade seven students. Feeling tired 'Most of the time' or 'Always' was reported by 30% of grade five students, and 38% (nearly four out of ten) of grade seven students.

Table STT1.8

Percentage of students that frequently experience issues related to well-being

Issue	Grade 5	Grade 7
Negative experiences		
Hungry	23% (2.4)	19% (2.2)
Tired	30% (2.7)	38% (3.1)
Sick	21% (1.6)	20% (1.6)
Don't have enough clean clothes/shoes	16% (1.8)	11% (1.9)
Don't get enough pocket money	21% (2.2)	15% (1.7)
Could not sleep because worried	16% (1.5)	11% (0.8)
Don't have enough friends	22% (2.5)	13% (1.9)
Could not eat because worried	16% (2.1)	12% (1.5)
Upset, sad/unhappy	23% (1.7)	20% (2.3)
Positive experiences		
Had a good day	54% (2.8)	62% (1.7)
Cheerful	56% (2.9)	70% (1.9)
Calm and relaxed	44% (2.5)	59% (2.8)
Looking forward to the next day	49% (2.4)	61% (1.8)

Percentage of students who frequently experienced issues related to well-being, RMI, PILNA 2021

() Standard errors appear in parentheses.

These findings can be compared to the findings from a similar set of items that teachers responded to (*Student difficulties reported by the teacher*). Not all the same items were given to teachers but there are interesting comparisons that can be made for the items about hunger and tiredness.

Well-being and student performance

A regional scale for student well-being was established, based on the first nine items from Table STT1.8. These items are related to negative well-being experiences, rather than positive well-being experiences. Higher scores on this scale indicate higher, more positive, levels of well-being.

The PILNA scale for student well-being has an average of 200 and a standard deviation of 40. Most scores are expected to be within 40 points of 200 (160–240). The scale was formed from statistical analysis of answers to nine out of thirteen questions about students' well-being experiences.

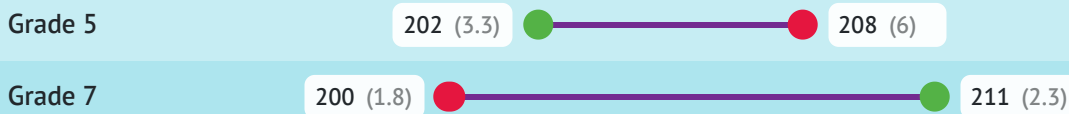
These well-being scale scores were compared with student performance in numeracy and reading. Student performance was grouped into two categories: students who performed at or above the expected level of performance and students who performed below the expected level of performance. There were no comparisons with the writing domain, as the writing proficiency scale is yet to be developed. Figure STF1.6 shows the average well-being scale scores by year level and student performance. Figure STF1.6 shows the average well-being scale scores by year level and student performance.

Figure STF1.6: PILNA Well-being scale

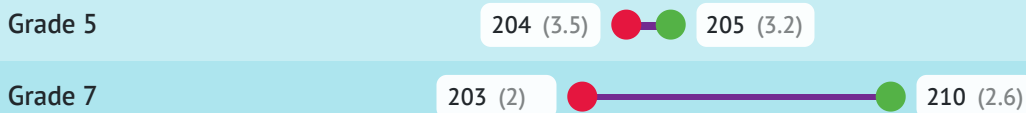
Average scores of students on well-being scale by year level and proficiency, RMI, PILNA 2021

The PILNA scale for student well-being has an average of 200 and a standard deviation of 40. Most scores are expected to be within 40 points of 200 (160–240). The scale was formed from statistical analysis of answers to nine out of thirteen questions about students' well-being experiences.

Numeracy



Reading



- Scale score for students below expected proficiency level
- Scale score for students at or above expected proficiency level
- Statistically significant correlation ($p < 0.05$)
- () Standard errors appear in parentheses

In both numeracy and literacy, grade seven students who performed at or above the expected level of performance had higher well-being scores on average than grade seven students who did not meet the expected levels of performance. This means that grade seven students who met the expected levels of performance in numeracy and literacy had greater levels of

well-being, based on this PILNA student well-being scale. With grade five students, no differences were observed between the proficiency level of students and their student well-being scores.

What does this mean?

Only half the students in Marshall Islands, at least most of the time, are cheerful, have good days, and look forward to the next day. Many students in Marshall Islands are regularly experiencing positive well-being but a substantial proportion are not. Also, about one out of five students across the region are frequently experiencing challenges to well-being, such as feeling hungry, upset, or not having enough friends, and more than three out of ten reported frequently feeling tired.

For grade five students, there was no clear trajectory regarding the differences in well-being scores against student performance. For grade seven students, however, those who met the expected performance level had slightly higher average well-being scores.

Regardless of whether well-being is associated with student performance in any way, the identified well-being challenges need to be addressed by stakeholders.