

Student difficulties

The PILNA 2021 student questionnaire collected information about difficulties students experienced beyond well-being. Specifically, the questionnaire asked students to respond to statements about their ability to learn, manage themselves, and navigate their environment. Their responses highlight the learning support needs in the region.

Students were provided with a list of situations and were asked to indicate whether they had any difficulty with them. The situations were framed around physical, cognitive, and behavioural challenges, such as seeing, hearing, managing behaviour and walking. The responses they could give were 'No difficulty', 'A little difficulty', 'A lot of difficulty', or 'I cannot do it at all'.

Proportions of students experiencing challenges

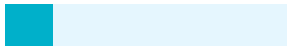
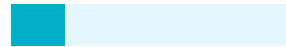
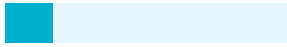
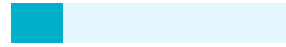
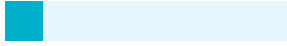
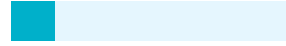
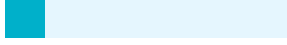
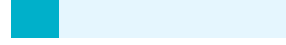
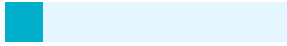
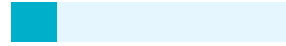
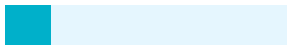
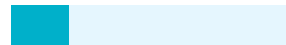
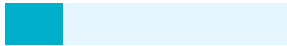
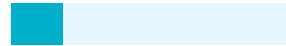
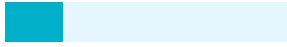
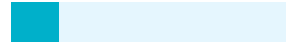
Table STT1.9 lists the challenges to student learning measured by the questionnaire. This table also shows the proportions of year four and year six students who reported these as either 'A lot of difficulty' or 'I cannot do this at all'. This allows us to identify the proportion of students on whom these factors posed a severe burden.

Overall, the distribution of students reporting at least 'A lot of difficulty' across the eight items was relatively concentrated. For both year four students and year six students, the proportions of students reporting at least 'A lot of difficulty' across the items was between 13% and 20%.

The two most common difficulties reported by year four students were controlling their behaviour and concentrating and focusing their attention. Year six students reported learning and remembering things and difficulty seeing as a common issue.

Table STT1.9

Percentage of students with difficulties

Difficulty	Year 4	Year 6
Seeing, even if wearing glasses	 17% (1.8)	 19% (2.3)
Hearing, even if wearing a hearing aid	 17% (1.8)	 18% (2.2)
Walking or climbing steps	 13% (1.6)	 15% (2.1)
Being understood by other people when I speak	 14% (1.3)	 17% (1.8)
Self-care, such as feeding or dressing yourself	 13% (1.5)	 16% (2.0)
Learning or remembering things	 16% (1.6)	 20% (2.4)
Controlling your behaviour	 20% (2.3)	 18% (1.8)
Concentrating and focusing your attention	 20% (2.1)	 17% (1.8)

Percentage of students with difficulties, Solomon Islands, PILNA 2021

() Standard errors appear in parentheses.

These findings can be compared with teachers' responses to a similar set of items (Student difficulties reported by the teacher). Not all the items were the same but there are interesting comparisons that can be made for the items about controlling their behaviour, concentrating and focusing their attention.

What does this mean?

A substantial proportion of students in Solomon Islands are experiencing difficulties that may affect their learning. Behavioural and cognitive challenges appear to be most common, but sensory and physical challenges were also reported in slightly lower, yet substantial, proportions.