

Teacher confidence in teaching

Teachers were asked two sets of questions about their confidence in teaching: one set for literacy topics and the other for numeracy topics. The questions were phrased as: 'How do you find teaching the following aspects of literacy/numeracy?'. Their response options were limited to a four-point scale: 'Very difficult', 'Difficult', 'Easy', and 'Very easy'.

Confidence in teaching literacy

For reporting purposes, teachers who responded with 'Easy' or 'Very easy' were considered to demonstrate confidence in teaching a particular topic.

Table TT2.7 shows the percentage of students in Solomon Islands whose teachers expressed confidence in teaching literacy topics.

Overall, more than half the students in both year levels had teachers who were confident in teaching literacy topics. In both year levels, the proportions of students with such teachers ranged from 52% to 91%.

Across both year levels, aspects of literacy where more students had teachers who expressed less confidence in teaching were 'Organisation and structure' and 'Phonemic awareness'.

Areas where more students had confident teachers appear to be rules-based subjects or those with more established teaching criteria, such as spelling, punctuation, and vocabulary. Areas where fewer students had confident teachers appear to be in areas with more subjective, or more complex, teaching and assessment criteria, such as 'Quality of ideas' and 'Organisation and structure' in writing.

A greater proportion of students had teachers confident in teaching most aspects of literacy compared with PILNA 2018. Compared to the regional averages, however, teachers in Solomon Islands were, overall, less confident in teaching literacy.

Table TT2.7

Percentage of students whose teachers express confidence in teaching literacy in 2018 and 2021

Subject	2018	Difference	2021
Year 4			
Vocabulary	 84% (4.4)		 85% (3.6)
Grammar and syntax	 71% (5.7)		 82% (3.6)
Spelling and punctuation	 82% (4.7)		 87% (3.6)
Quality of ideas (writing)	 57% (6.6)		 60% (5.2)
Organisation and structure (writing)	 50% (6.3)		 52% (5.3)
Phonemic awareness	 55% (6.2)		 54% (5.1)
Letter sound correspondence	 69% (4.9)		 69% (5.2)
Reading comprehension	 84% (4.0)		 85% (3.5)
Oral language (speaking and listening)	 76% (5.3)		 78% (3.9)
Year 6			
Vocabulary	 84% (4.4)		 82% (4.8)
Grammar and syntax	 79% (5.0)		 72% (4.6)
Spelling and punctuation	 79% (5.0)		 86% (4.0)
Quality of ideas (writing)	 51% (6.5)		 70% (5.0)
Organisation and structure (writing)	 49% (6.5)		 68% (5.1)
Phonemic awareness	 40% (5.8)		 62% (5.0)
Letter sound correspondence	 62% (6.5)		 75% (4.8)
Reading comprehension	 74% (6.1)		 91% (3.5)
Oral language (speaking and listening)	 64% (5.8)		 80% (4.8)

Percentage of students whose teachers expressed confidence in teaching literacy in 2018 and 2021, Solomon Islands, PILNA 2018, 2021

() Standard errors appear in parentheses.

Confidence in teaching literacy and teacher qualities

A regional scale focused on measuring teachers' confidence in teaching literacy based on teachers' responses was established. Higher scores on this scale indicate higher levels of confidence in teaching literacy. The literacy teaching confidence scores were analysed against teacher demographics (gender, age, teaching experience, and qualification level). No significant differences were found between literacy teaching confidence and the various teacher qualities.

The PILNA scale for teachers' confidence in teaching literacy has an average of 200 and a standard deviation of 40. Most scores are expected to be within 40 points of 200 (160–240). Using statistical analysis, the scale was formed from the answers to all nine questions about teachers' confidence in teaching this area.

Confidence in teaching numeracy

Table TT2.8 shows the percentage of students whose teachers expressed confidence in teaching numeracy topics.











































Most students in both year levels had teachers who were confident in teaching numeracy topics. In both year levels, the proportion of students with confident teachers in the numeracy topics ranged between 78% and 99%, a slightly higher range than for literacy topics.

Across both year levels, aspects of numeracy where more students had teachers who expressed less confidence in teaching were 'Numbers and patterns' and 'Place value'.

A greater proportion of students had teachers confident in teaching most aspects of numeracy compared with PILNA 2018.

Table TT2.8

Percentage of students whose teachers express confidence in teaching numeracy in 2018 and 2021

Subject	2018	Difference	2021
Year 4			
Number and patterns	 93% (3.1)		 99% (0.6)
Place value	 97% (1.9)		 96% (1.9)
Fractions and percentage	 81% (4.6)		 88% (3.2)
Operations	 90% (2.8)		 87% (3.0)
Measurement	 87% (4.0)		 93% (2.6)
Geometry	 70% (5.0)		 79% (4.1)
Data and chance	 71% (5.1)		 81% (3.8)
Year 6			
Number and patterns	 92% (3.0)		 94% (2.3)
Place value	 95% (2.6)		 99% (0.8)
Fractions and percentage	 83% (5.1)		 92% (2.7)
Operations	 91% (4.0)		 94% (2.3)
Measurement	 87% (4.1)		 92% (2.5)
Geometry	 78% (5.3)		 80% (3.7)
Data and chance	 68% (5.8)		 78% (4.3)

Percentage of students whose teachers expressed confidence in teaching numeracy in 2018 and 2021, Solomon Islands, PILNA 2018, 2021

() Standard errors appear in parentheses.

Confidence in teaching numeracy and teacher characteristics

A regional scale with nine items focused on measuring teachers' confidence in teaching numeracy based on teachers' responses was established. Higher scores on this scale indicate higher levels of confidence in teaching numeracy. As with literacy, the numeracy teaching confidence scores were compared to teachers' demographic groups (gender, age, teaching experience, highest qualification). Only one association was found: male teachers were more confident in teaching mathematics than female teachers.

The PILNA scale for teachers' confidence in teaching numeracy has an average of 200 and a standard deviation of 40. Most scores are expected to be within 40 points of 200 (160–240). Using statistical analysis, the scale was formed from the answers to six out of seven questions about teachers' confidence in teaching this area.

What does this mean?

A high proportion of students in Solomon Islands have teachers who are confident in teaching literacy and numeracy. The proportion of students who have confident teachers was generally higher across the numeracy domain than across the literacy domain.

In literacy, more students have confident teachers in areas that are structured or rule based, such as spelling, punctuation and vocabulary. Fewer students have confident teachers in areas that require more subjective or complex teaching and assessment, such as quality of ideas and organisation and structure in writing.

No associations were found between the various teacher qualities and literacy teaching confidence. One association was found for numeracy teaching confidence: male teachers were more confident in teaching mathematics than were female teachers.