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## School leader pride and job satisfaction








School leaders were asked to indicate their satisfaction with various aspects of their job. They could respond with 'Never', 'Rarely', 'Sometimes', or 'Often'.

### School leader responses by proportion of students

Table SLT3.5 shows the number of students under the leadership of a school leader who is either 'Sometimes' or 'Often' experiencing satisfaction in these aspects of their role.

Table SLT3.5

#### Percentage of students who attended schools where leaders expressed satisfaction in their job

Statements	Students
I am content with my profession	 96 % (2.4)
I am content with my salary	 79 % (3.5)
I find my work full of meaning and purpose	 95 % (2.7)
I am enthusiastic about my job	 96 % (1.4)
My work inspires me	 95 % (2.1)
I am proud of the work that I do	 99 % (1.0)
I am going to continue teaching for as long as I can	 97 % (2.4)

Percentage of students who attended schools whose leaders expressed satisfaction in their job, Tonga, PILNA 2021

( ) Standard errors appear in parentheses.

What is immediately evident from these results is that, generally, the proportion of students with satisfied school leaders was high across all dimensions of satisfaction.

On average, over 90% of students have school leaders who indicated that they 'Often' or 'Sometimes' felt content with their profession as a school leader (96%), found meaning and purpose in their role as a school leader (95%), were enthusiastic and inspired by their job as a school leader (96%), and were proud of the work they do (99%). This demonstrates that school leaders have a strong sense of purpose and, with 97% of students having school leaders wanting to continue to serve in their role as long as possible, this sense of purpose is sustaining, in spite of the well-being issues reported in the previous section.

The lowest satisfaction rate (79%) is with school leaders' salaries. While this is a strong majority, indications are that a small but significant number of students are in schools where school leaders feel undervalued. If this issue is not addressed, it might seriously impact job satisfaction.

## School leader satisfaction and school leader qualities

From the responses to the seven statements about school leaders' satisfaction and pride in their work, a regional scale was formed for School leader job satisfaction. Higher scores on this scale mean higher levels of school leader job satisfaction.

*The PILNA scale for school leader job satisfaction 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 all seven questions that school leaders were asked about their job satisfaction.*

Each school leader's scores on this scale were compared with several demographic factors and other qualities to see if any differences existed. These factors were gender (male or female), age group (either 20–40 or over 40 years old), school leader experience (either less than 10 years' experience or more than 10 years' experience), and their highest qualification (either below degree level or degree level and higher).

No differences were found between school leaders with less than 10 years' school leader experience and more than 10 years' school leader experience, nor between school leaders in the older age group and those in the younger age group.

Differences were, however, found in the gender and qualification comparisons. Female school leaders had higher job satisfaction scores than male school leaders. School leaders with below degree level qualifications had higher job satisfaction scores than school leaders with a degree level qualification or higher.

## What does this mean?

High proportions of students had school leaders who were generally satisfied with and proud of their jobs. A smaller proportion of students had school leaders who were content with their salaries. This suggests that most school leaders are satisfied in their job, but many sometimes feel dissatisfied by their salaries. Salary is frequently a contributing factor in labour movements and other phenomena so should be understood further.

Some school leaders also had higher job satisfaction scores than others. Female school leaders had higher job satisfaction scores than male school leaders. Also, school leaders with below degree level qualifications had higher job satisfaction scores than school leaders with a degree level qualification or higher.