

# Household wealth

Household wealth is frequently seen as an enabler of education. Conceptually, it enables support, materials, spare time, and other factors that might influence a student's learning. The PILNA programme collected information from students to estimate their level of household wealth. It was unlikely that students would know the monetary value of their household wealth. A list of home possessions and facilities was provided, and students were asked to indicate which of these they had in their home. They could respond with either 'Yes' or 'No'. The list included telephones, TVs, and cars, as well as home facilities, such as electricity, a flushing toilet and tap water.

From this list, a new scale was created for household wealth. Student's responses to these questions resulted in a score that estimated their level of household wealth. Higher scores on this scale indicated that the student came from a wealthier household. Lower scores on this scale indicated that the student came from a less wealthy household.

*The PILNA scale for household wealth 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 ten out of thirteen questions about students' household wealth.*


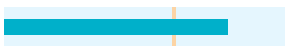






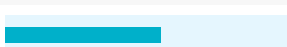
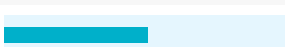


The scale was also developed separately for each country participating in PILNA, and scores on this scale were benchmarked against each country's average wealth. This was done to make comparisons between students from households with above average wealth in a country and students from households with below average wealth. Varying levels of average household wealth across countries in the region meant that a standardised approach to assessing wealth would not be appropriate for regional comparisons.

## Household wealth and student performance

Table STT1.5 shows the average student performance in numeracy, reading and writing at year four and year six levels for students from households at or above their country's average level of wealth and for students from households below their country's average level of wealth.


Table STT1.5

### Average achievement of students by household wealth and year level

Household	Year 4	Year 6
<b>Numeracy</b>		
Below average country wealth	 494 (2.1)	 557 (2.4)
At or above average country wealth	 491 (3.6)	 562 (3.9)
<b>Reading</b>		
Below average country wealth	 456 (2.1)	 442 (4.1)
At or above average country wealth	 459 (4.2)	 470 (10.5)
<b>Writing</b>		
Below average country wealth	 489 (1.7)	 474 (2.6)
At or above average country wealth	 493 (2.6)	 488 (5.4)

#### Average achievement of students by household wealth and year level, Tonga, PILNA 2021

( ) Standard errors appear in parentheses.

 Expected minimum proficiency score.

Year six students from wealthier households tended to have higher performance in all PILNA domains – numeracy, reading and writing – compared with year six students from less wealthy households.

Year four students from wealthier households had higher performance in writing than year four students from less wealthy households, but no differences were found for numeracy or reading performance.

## What does this mean?

Year six students from wealthier households tended to have higher levels of achievement in all areas. Year four students from wealthier households tended to have higher performance in writing. These possible associations between wealth and achievement were found relative to Tonga’s average household wealth. They are unsurprising, given the worldwide phenomenon of inequality and educational outcomes – students with access to greater resources or socio-economic advantages tend to perform better in education (ACER & UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2022).