

Parental qualifications

Students were asked to indicate their parents' highest level of education against a list of nationally appropriate educational levels to ensure local relevance. Each of these levels was also mapped to International Standard Classification Levels (ISCED 2011) so that consistent comparisons across countries could be made.

Highest levels of parental education

As seen in Table STT1.3, 69% of students reported at least one of their parents' highest levels of education was above secondary education and 44% of students had at least one parent with a university education.

Table STT1.3

Percentage of students with the highest parental education level

Highest parental qualification	Students
Below primary education	1% (0.3)
Primary education	5% (0.5)
Secondary education	24% (1.5)
Post-secondary non-tertiary or short cycle tertiary education	25% (1.0)
Bachelor Master Doctorate	44% (1.6)

Percentage of students with the highest parental education level, Tonga, PILNA 2021


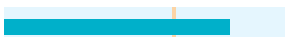





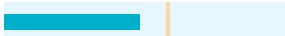




() Standard errors appear in parentheses.

University-level parental education and student performance

This information was compared with student achievement in the PILNA assessments. To simplify the analysis, parents' highest level of education was grouped into two categories: below university level and university level. Table STT1.4 shows student performance in the PILNA domains by their parents' highest level of education.


Table STT1.4

Average achievement of students by parental highest education in year level

Education level	Year 4	Year 6
Numeracy		
Below University level	 497 (2.1)	 561 (2.8)
University level	 486 (4.4)	 556 (3.4)
Reading		
Below University level	 460 (2.4)	 453 (5.7)
University level	 452 (4.2)	 459 (9.2)
Writing		
Below University level	 493 (1.9)	 480 (3.2)
University level	 488 (2.4)	 482 (5.0)

Average achievement of students by parental highest education and year level, Tonga, PILNA 2021

() Standard errors appear in parentheses.

 Expected minimum proficiency score.

From Table STT1.4 we see that students in both year four and year six who had at least one university educated parent tended to perform better in the numeracy domain than those who did not.

In the reading domain, no association was found for year six students but an association was found for year four students. Year four students who had at least one university educated parent tended to perform better in the reading domain than those who did not.

For the writing domain, no association was found for year six students, but an association was found for year four students. Year four students who had at least one university educated parent tended to perform better in the writing domain than those who did not.

What does this mean?

Most students in Tonga had a parent with a qualification above secondary education and nearly half had at least one university educated parent.

Having a university educated parent was associated with higher performance in the numeracy domain at both year four and year six. Having a university educated parent was associated with higher literacy performance (reading and writing) at the year four level only. This suggests that higher levels of parental education are associated with numeracy performance and



literacy performance at the year four level. This also suggests that students belonging to families with less education may be at a disadvantage compared to their peers.