

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

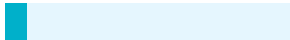
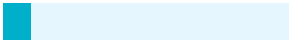
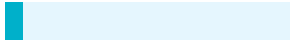
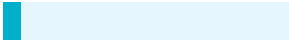
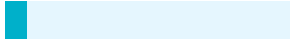
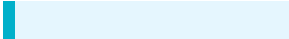
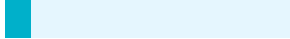
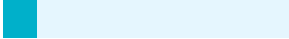
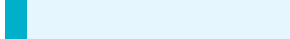
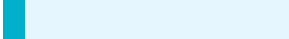
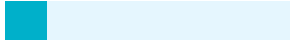
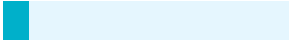
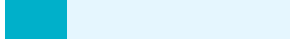
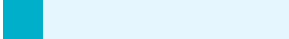
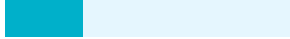
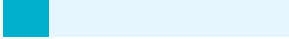
Table STT1.9 lists the challenges to student learning measured by the questionnaire. This table also shows the proportions of year four and year six students who reported these as either 'A lot of difficulty' or 'I cannot do this at all'. This allows us to identify the proportion of students on whom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

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 6% and 27%.

Common difficulties across both year levels were 'Controlling your behaviour' (year four, 22%; year six, 14%) and 'Concentrating and focusing your attention' (year four, 27%; year six, 16%).

Table STT1.9

Percentage of students with difficulties

category	Year 4	Year 6
Seeing, even if wearing glasses	 8% (2.5)	 10% (3.1)
Hearing, even if wearing a hearing aid	 6% (3.3)	 6% (1.1)
Walking or climbing steps	 8% (3.7)	 4% (2.5)
Being understood by other people when I speak	 9% (5.2)	 12% (2.4)
Self-care, such as feeding or dressing yourself	 8% (2.6)	 8% (1.3)
Learning or remembering things	 15% (5.1)	 9% (2.7)
Controlling your behaviour	 22% (2.5)	 14% (5.9)
Concentrating and focusing your attention	 27% (7.5)	 16% (3.9)

Percentage of students with difficulties, Tuvalu, PILNA 2021

() Standard errors appear in parentheses.

What does this mean?

A substantial minority of students in Tuvalu are experiencing behavioural and cognitive challenges related to learning and school environments in general. Nearly one out of five students across both year four and six are finding it difficult to concentrate and, relatedly, finding it difficult to control their behaviour. Smaller proportions of students are experiencing difficulties with sensory or physical tasks. These findings can inform learning support activities in Tuvalu.