TE WHARE WĀNANGA O TE ŪPOKO O TE IKA A MĀUI

VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

WORKPLACE DYNAMICS

IN NEW ZEALAND PUBLIC SERVICES

A survey report prepared for the Public Service Association (PSA)

Te Pūkenga Here Tikanga Mahi

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and the School of Management
Victoria University of Wellington

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Foreword

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The PSA is pleased to have commissioned this third report1 in our ongoing research collaboration with Victoria University's Centre for Labour, Employment and Work. The report provides valuable evidence about what is and what is not working in public and community sector workplaces.

Those interested in effective public services should read this report, as should those interested in what it takes to create and maintain high-performing workplaces where people have a decent experience of work.

The survey shows that people working in public and community services have a high level of commitment to the work they do and are driven by the desire to make a difference. They work under an expectation that more will be done with less. Public and community sector organisations are under pressure to be more innovative and flexible while the expectations of ministers and the public rise and budgets shrink.

The PSA is of the view that both to more effectively deliver public and community services and to improve people's day to day experience at work there needs to be significant change to workplace culture and the way people are managed. This report provides evidence of the strengths of the workforce, some opportunities for effective change and the barriers that need to be overcome.

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1 Method

This survey invited members of the PSA to give their views on a diverse range of issues relating both to their working lives and the organisations in which they worked. Based on existing national and international survey work, the survey explored workers' experiences and views around the following topics:

- The psychological outcomes of workers' job experiences, such as satisfaction, motivation and job security. Bullying and sexual harassment are also covered.

- Job demands, such as flexibility of working arrangements around other life commitments and the difficulty involved in work tasks.

- Resources available to workers to do their jobs, including decision-making power, access to information, employee rewards and knowledge enhancement.

- Management and leadership quality, including the experience of being a leader and the support managers get. This includes whether managers are constructive, responsive and create a good working climate.

- Organisational performance and capabilities, such as change and innovation, learning culture, concern for social issues and intra-organisational collaboration. It also concerns the influence of external stakeholders.

The survey was developed by researchers from the School of Management's Centre for Labour, Employment and Work (CLEW) and hosted online by the PSA. Ethical approval for the survey was obtained from the Pipitea Human Ethics Committee at Victoria University of Wellington.

This is the third in a series of surveys conducted by CLEW for the PSA. The first concerned women's experience in the public service (Proctor-Thomson, Donnelly, & Plimmer, 2011). The second concerned the dynamics of public sector workplaces, with a strong focus on organisational capabilities (Plimmer, Wilson, Bryson, Blumenfeld, Donnelly, & Ryan, 2013).

Survey distribution

An email was sent to 57,315 PSA members inviting them to participate in this survey. Further invitations to participate were included in PSA newsletters and other union communications. Participation was voluntary. Members without email access were offered alternative ways to participate.

The online survey was open for three weeks, from 15 February–07 March 2016. A total of 14,125 usable responses were received, representing a response rate of 25%. Participants' anonymity was ensured by

the removal of identifying information from individual responses. Two follow-up reminders were sent to members with unique, coded URL links.

Participants worked in agencies covering the public sector, state sector, local governments, district health boards and community public service organisations. In differing ways, these people all *serve the public, and are public servants*.

Analysis

The data was analysed using the IBM SPSS Statistics Version 23 software package. All statements made about relationships between multiple variables are statistically significant at a minimum of $p < .05$.

Robustness tests were conducted. Seven-point, six-point, five-point and four-point Likert scales were used (e.g. seven-point scale, 1 = strongly disagree through to 7 = strongly agree). Most of the measures were reliable (see Appendix A for more information).

Rationale for the study

Public sectors globally are under pressure to do more with less. Although budgets are constrained, demands on public services continue to grow in terms of quantity, quality and complexity. Employees working in the public sector are going the extra mile, but there are risks in asking them to do more while running departments and agencies in a business-as-usual way.

Although there are central government initiatives to reconcile the pressures outlined above, it is not clear what form they will take, how comprehensively they will be implemented, or if organisations will default to established patterns that do not meet emerging needs and provide little voice for workers. This research also contributed to research projects in Victoria University's School of Government, School of Management, and Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori (Māori Language Commission).

2 Overview: The New Zealand public sector

In his recent book, A Constitution for Aotearoa New Zealand, former Prime Minister Sir Geoffrey Palmer says that "while the health and wellbeing of our public service and public sector goes to the very heart of our wellbeing as a nation", the public service is "neither as strong or resilient as it once was" (pp184,185, Palmer and Butler, 2016, Victoria University Press). He identifies structural and capacity issues, along with seemingly endless and adhoc restructures, as causing a lack of cooperation, coordination and communication between departments. He also highlights an absence of free and frank advice offered to ministers. In February 2014, he raised similar concerns in an article in a national newspaper and called for a royal commission into the public service.   This idea was quickly rejected by the Deputy Prime Minister and Treasurer, on the grounds that the reforms currently underway were adequate (McCulloch, 2014).

This paper reports on a major survey undertaken in 2016 to describe and analyse the status and dynamics of public sector workplaces in New Zealand. The research was conducted as part of the PSA's desire to transform members' workplaces to provide good jobs and better public and community services. The research also came from recognition that employer and manager behaviour might be harming public sector employees' wellbeing, satisfaction, and ability to serve the public.

Although there is some shift toward attempting to raise employee engagement, there are still tendencies to default to top-down controlling management, by managers who themselves are often not sufficiently supported. Staff pay and conditions are under strain. Employees are pressured to work uncompensated hours, often in environments that are stressful and in organisations that are not innovating, learning, or improving. Concurrent with these high and uncompensated demands on staff, executive salaries in the public sector are now very high.

Our findings are that, while the picture is not entirely bleak, there are several significant flaws in many of our important public organisations. This affects both the public and employees working in public services.

As with the 2013 survey, many participants gave mid-range ratings on a number of critical issues, revealing patterns of 'pervasive ambivalence' that raise more questions than answers. These participants chose a 'neither agree nor disagree', 'sometimes' or other midpoint rating out of the seven categories available. In our comments, we have identified some areas of particular concern, such as managers on average being rated as 'sometimes' displaying constructive leadership, when the bar for managerial skills should be higher. Mid-range ratings for issues such as organisational innovation, organisational performance, learning culture, and perceived organisational support are also matters of concern.

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3 Snapshot: What the survey results tells us

New Zealand public sector workers ...

... are a motivated and satisfied workforce, who wish to serve the public.

New Zealand public servants are mature, well-educated and often do clerical/administrative or professional work. They are motivated, resilient and satisfied with their jobs.

... have autonomy to do their jobs, but many work extra hours without compensation. They have moderate access to the information, rewards and knowledge to do their jobs. The careers of many, however, seem to have plateaued

Some public sector employees work extra, uncompensated hours. About half do not have access to flexible hours.

Most are secure in their jobs, have clarity about their roles and power to make decisions.

They do not, however, see themselves as well rewarded financially for good performance. Many workers have not been promoted in the last ten years. Career plateauing may be an issue.

They also do not perceive their employers as supporting them strongly.

... sometimes experience negative behaviours such as bullying, sexual harassment and verbal abuse. Such workers rate their organisations as less supportive than do others.

Some public servants are exposed to negative behaviour from people they work with, and sometimes the public.

Most bullying behaviour is covert. When such behaviours do happen, they are more likely to happen 'now and then' rather than monthly or more frequently.

Sexual harassment is much less common but still occurs.

Some public servants experience abuse from clients. Verbal abuse is more common than physical abuse, with call centre workers, inspection or regulation workers, machinery operators and drivers, managers, registered social professionals and unregistered service workers particularly at risk. Public servants who experience bullying, harassment or abuse by clients rate their organisations as less supportive and having weaker psychosocial safety climates than do other public servants.

… often work for line managers with limited leadership skills. Although some managers show constructive leadership, a minority fail to take action about problems when they should

Many immediate managers and team leaders demonstrate constructive behaviour that focuses on producing results, managing change and employee wellbeing. However, such behaviour is often inconsistent amongst public servants and many in responsible positions seem to lack leadership skills.

Some immediate managers show laissez-faire behaviour, such as failing to intervene until problems become serious.

… are ambivalent about their organisations' performance and ability to learn, innovate and change

Public servants think their organisations have clear goals. However, they do not rate their performance, their ability to improve, adapt and innovate, or their learning culture highly. They do rate equal opportunity and diversity in their organisations highly. Additional analysis showed that male managers were more likely to believe their organisation offers the same opportunities for women, and that their agency has a strong sense of diversity and inclusion.

… work for organisations which, to some extent, collaborate internally and with other organisations

Most public servants think that their organisations foster collaboration. This occurs within their work units, between work units, and to some extent with other organisations.

4 The participants

Participants were members of the PSA. They were asked, among other questions, about their age, gender, ethnicity, education, and sexual orientation. The following is a brief profile of a typical participant. More detailed information is in section 14.

Profile of participants

Average age of 49 years

72% female

70% New Zealand European Pākehā, 16% Māori

77% with at least post-secondary qualification, thus more highly educated than the national average

Participants and their work

- 44% of participants work for public service departments and 26% work with district health boards. Others work for local government, state sector agencies and community public service organisations.

- A quarter (25%) are in clerical and administrative work, with the remainder spread over a range of jobs.

- Although most are in non-management roles, about 13% are in team leader or management positions.

- The majority of workers (59%) earn between $40,000 and $70,000 per annum.

- More than one in three participants (38%) has been with their employer for 11 or more years.

- Almost all participants are permanent employees (96%)

- Close to half of the participants (48%) identify their jobs as part of the primary service provided by the organisation.

5 Motivation, job satisfaction and resilience

This section examines how participants feel about their jobs and pay, and if they are resilient. It also looks at whether they are motivated towards public service, and their work generally. These characteristics have been related to organisational outcomes such as performance (e.g. Wright & Pandey, 2008).

In this and the following sections, speedometers depict the mean for the different topics, while frequency tables depict the percentage of responses to each item. Together, these statistics provide robust overall readings, as well as information at the item level.

Key findings

- Service to the public is important to most participants. The overall mean for public service motivation is high.

- General workplace motivation is high, as is resilience and job satisfaction.

- Most of the participants are either not sure how they feel about their pay rate or are unsatisfied with it. The overall mean for pay satisfaction is moderate.

Public service motivation

Figure 5.1: Public service motivation
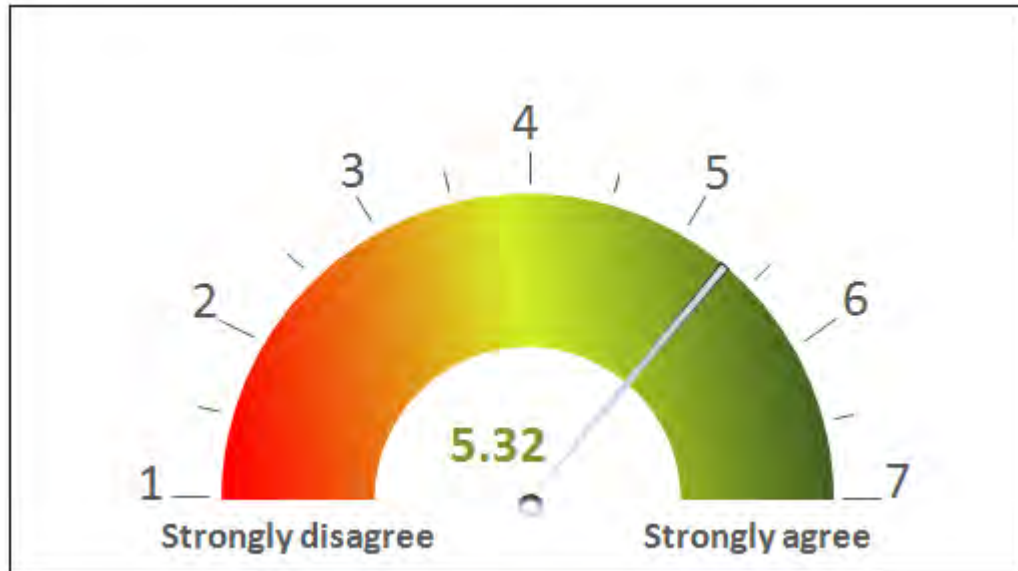
Public service motivation concerns the notion that working for the public can be more than performing a job. It involves altruism, and can be fulfilling, a calling or even a vocation (Wright & Pandey, 2008). Public service motivation is associated with higher performance and job satisfaction. Overall, participants were motivated towards working for the public or society (M = 5.32, SD = .90; see Figure 5.1). Participants are motivated to serve the public.

Table 5.1: Public service motivation items

Public service motivation items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Meaningful public service is very important to me.	.3	.8	.8	8.3	14.6	**42.7**	32.5
I am often reminded by daily events about how dependent we are on one another.	.7	2.5	3.0	16.2	23.8	**38.9**	15.0
Making a difference in society means more to me than personal achievements.	.6	2.6	4.3	17.3	23.8	**31.9**	19.6
I am prepared to make enormous sacrifices for the good of society.	2.2	7.9	10.7	27.2	**27.6**	17.0	7.5
I am not afraid to stand up for the rights of others, even if it means that I will be ridiculed.	.6	1.9	3.7	13.9	27.3	**32.6**	20.0

Workplace motivation

Figure 5.2: Workplace motivation
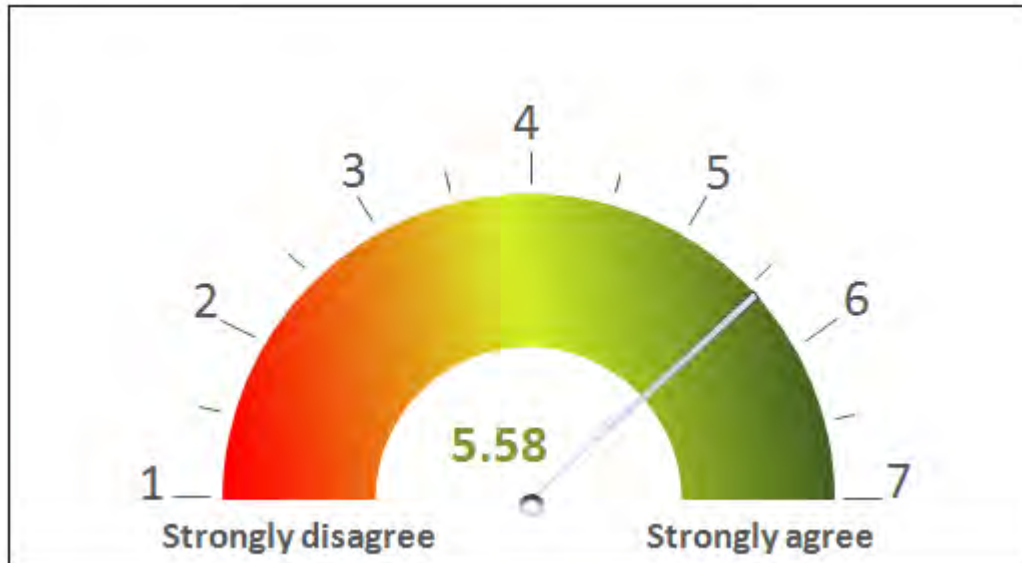
Like public service motivation, this variable is related to higher performance and job satisfaction (Bowling, 2014). Workplace motivation concerns the amount of involvement participants have in their work and their willingness to display work-related behaviour desired by the organisation (Wright, 2004).

Generally, participants were highly motivated (*M* = 5.58, *SD* = .83; see Figure 5.2).

Table 5.2: Workplace motivation items

Workplace motivation items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I put forth my best effort to get my job done regardless of any difficulties.	.2	.3	.8	1.7	9.0	**45.6**	42.5
I am willing to start work early or stay late to finish a job.	2.0	3.5	3.7	5.3	17.3	**38.7**	29.5
It has been hard for me to get very involved in my current job.	19.7	**36.5**	15.0	13.9	8.6	4.5	1.8
I probably do not work as hard as others who do the same type of work.	40.7	**34.6**	9.2	8.9	3.4	1.9	1.3
I do extra work for my job that isn't expected of me.	1.8	4.6	4.7	14.0	23.4	**32.2**	19.2
Time seems to drag while I am at work.	24.1	**31.3**	11.2	16.6	9.7	4.3	2.7

Employee resilience

Figure 5.3: Employee resilience
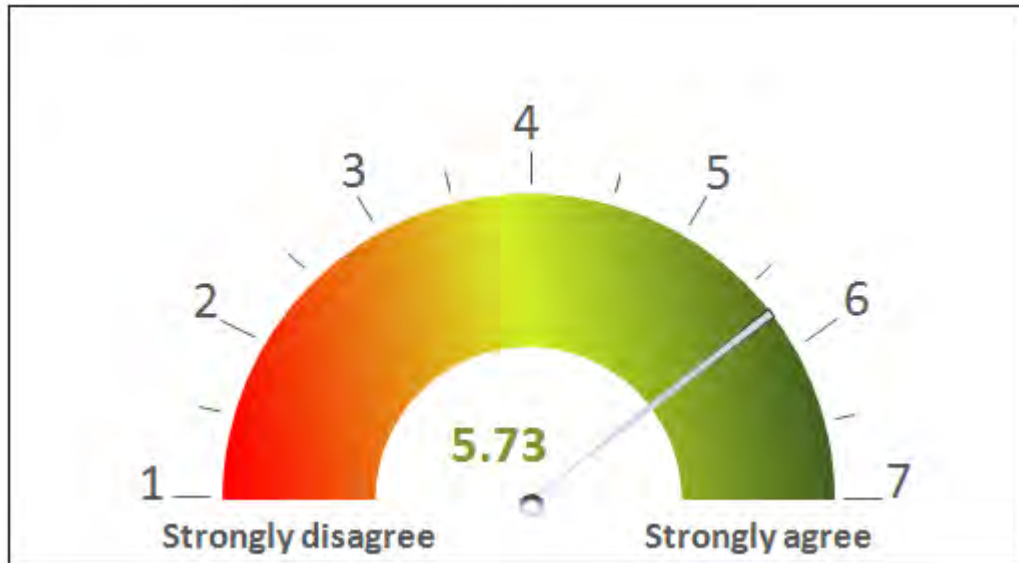
Employee resilience can be defined as "employee capability, facilitated and supported by the organisation, to utilise resources to continually adapt and flourish at work, even if/when faced with challenging circumstances" (Näswall, Kuntz, Hodliffe, & Malinen, 2013).

Overall, participants scored highly in resilient behaviour (M = 5.73, SD = .67; see Figure 5.3). At least 78% of participants agreed with all items in the employee resilience scale (see Table 5.3).

Table 5.3: Employee resilience items

Employee resilience items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I effectively collaborate with others to handle unexpected challenges at work.	.6	.8	1.2	4.6	16.7	**53.0**	23.2
I successfully manage a high and intense workload for long periods of time.	.8	3.3	4.6	12.9	21.3	**36.0**	21.1
I resolve crises competently at work.	.3	.7	1.6	9.0	23.2	**47.6**	17.6
I effectively respond to changing conditions at work.	.2	.5	2.0	5.2	22.2	**50.9**	19.0
I continually evaluate my performance and improve the way I work.	.2	.7	2.1	9.4	24.8	**44.9**	17.8
I approach managers when I need their support.	1.1	1.9	3.0	4.9	17.3	**50.4**	21.4
I learn from mistakes at work and improve the way I do my job.	.1	.1	.2	1.8	12.6	**58.1**	27.0
I use change at work as an opportunity for growth.	.5	1.2	2.6	12.2	23.1	**43.1**	17.3
I seek assistance and resources when I need them at work.	.3	.6	1.2	3.8	16.8	**55.6**	21.8
I adapt to change and come out stronger.	.3	.8	2.1	10.6	24.5	**43.8**	18.0

Job satisfaction

Figure 5.4: Job satisfaction
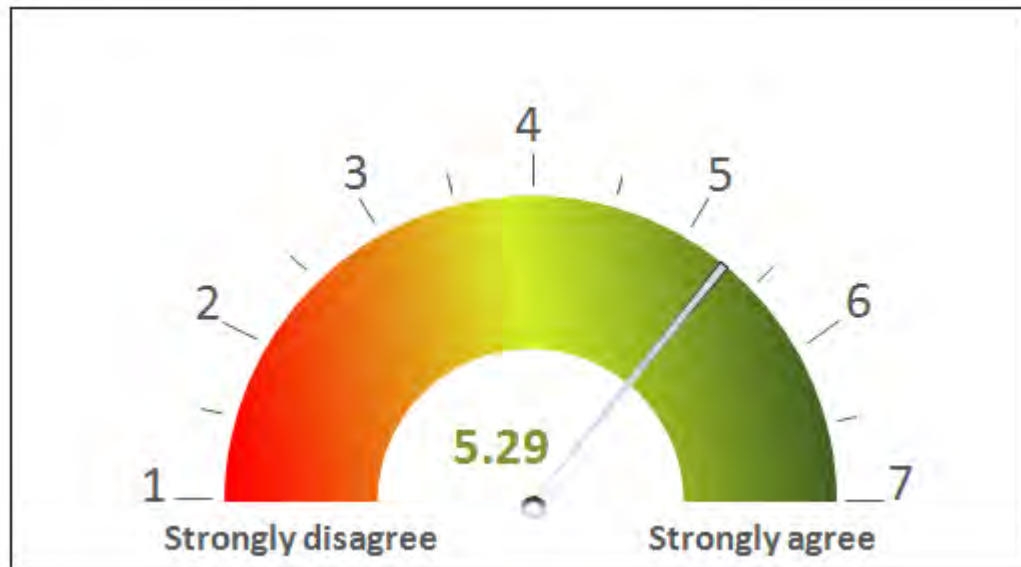
Job satisfaction is defined as 'how people feel about their jobs'. In general, participants were satisfied with their jobs (M = 5.29, SD = 1.25; see Figure 5.4). Lower levels of job satisfaction have been related to dysfunctional leadership styles (Leary *et al.*, 2013) and lower performance (Judge, Thoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001).

In this survey, in line with the literature, lower levels of job satisfaction were related to higher perceptions of laissez-faire leadership from managers and to lower organisational performance.

Table 5.4: Job satisfaction items

Job satisfaction items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment.	3.5	5.6	5.5	7.4	26.6	**36.1**	15.4
I like the kind of work I do.	1.0	2.0	2.7	5.2	18.4	**46.3**	24.4
I am satisfied with my job.	3.7	6.7	9.4	8.7	26.7	**32.9**	11.9

Pay satisfaction

Figure 5.5: Pay satisfaction
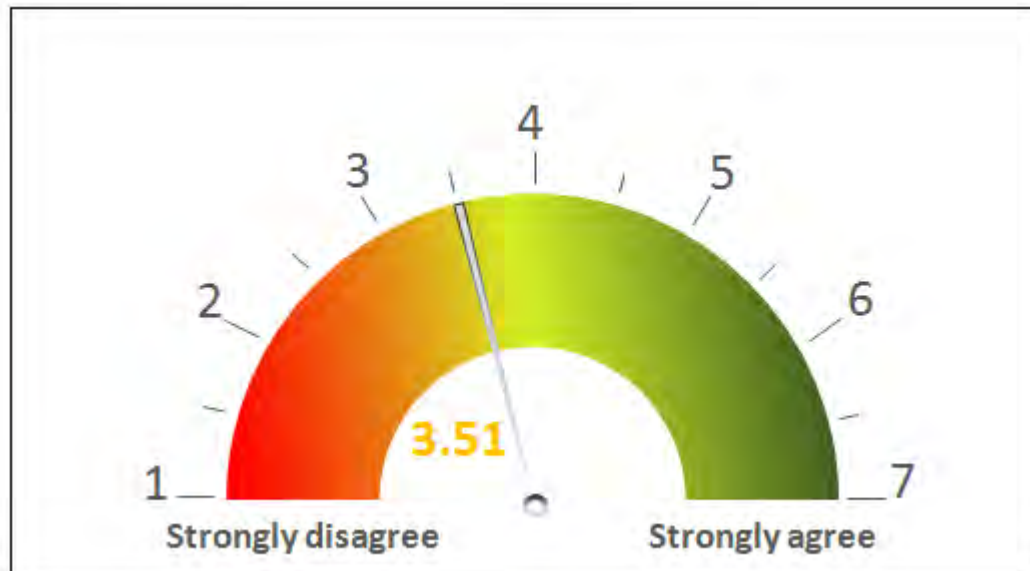
The pay satisfaction scale measured how fair participants perceived their pay to be compared to the pay for similar jobs in their organisation, other similar organisations and the wider labour market. Overall, participants were slightly dissatisfied with their pay (M = 3.51, SD = 1.63; see Figure 5.5).

Those more satisfied with their pay were also more satisfied with their jobs and reported higher organisational performance. Not surprisingly, those who worked extra hours and could not 'bank' these hours reported lower pay satisfaction.

Table 5.5: Pay satisfaction items

Pay satisfaction items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
The rate of pay for my job is fair when compared to the rate for other similar jobs in this organisation.	15.5	15.2	13.7	**18.4**	16.2	17.9	3.1
The rate of pay for my job is fair when compared to the rate for other similar jobs in other similar organisations.	17.0	17.1	14.3	**20.9**	13.5	14.6	2.6
The rate of pay for my job is fair when compared to the rate for other similar jobs in the wider labour market.	19.3	18.6	15.3	**20.8**	11.8	12.1	2.3

6 Job demands, flexibility and security

This section examines if public servants work overtime, if they are compensated by their organisation for doing so, if their work is flexible, and whether or not they have competing demands. It also concerns perceptions of job security.

Key findings

- Just under half of participants work overtime. Among these, most are not financially compensated, but just over half can 'bank' extra hours for use at a later date. 47% cannot 'bank' extra hours.

- Participants have only moderate access to flexible working arrangements. They have more access to, and demand for, flexible hours than for other flexible working arrangements.

- Many participants have to deal with different stakeholders, often with competing demands.

- Most participants feel secure in their jobs. However, 12% believe they may lose their job in the next six months.

Working overtime

Figure 6.1: Workers working overtime (percentage)
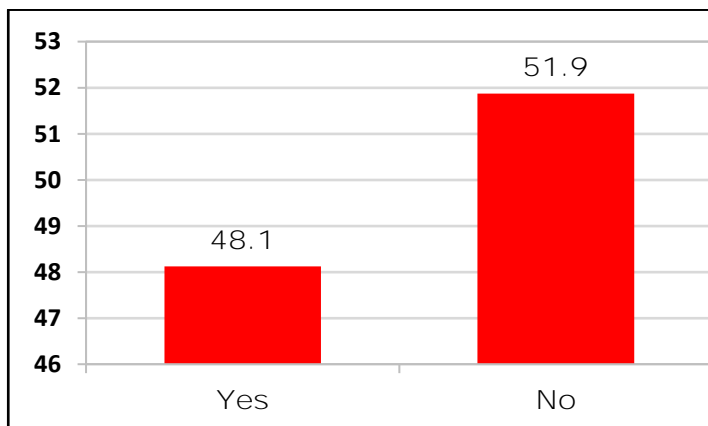
Just under 50% of the 2016 survey participants worked more than their contracted hours (see Figure 6.1), with an average of five additional hours per week (*SD* = 4.06). An analysis of responses by occupation revealed that managers worked significantly more extra hours than most other occupational groups. In this sense, managers seem to be particularly pressured to work overtime. Unregistered service workers and scientists also worked more uncontracted hours than other occupations.

Of the 6,611 workers in the current survey who reported working overtime, 79% said they were not financially compensated for their additional hours of work, and just under 50% said they could not 'bank' their extra hours for use at a later date (see Table 6.1). These findings are similar to the findings of the 2013 survey.

Table 6.1: Compensation for overtime work items

Compensation for overtime work items	Yes (%)	No (%)
Do you receive financial compensation for extra hours worked?	20.8	**79.2**
Can you 'bank' the extra hours worked with the possibility to take hours off at a later date?	**52.6**	47.4

Workplace flexibility

Workplace flexibility is a broad construct that includes a diverse set of flexible working arrangements (FWA). These arrangements enable workers to make choices about how to organise their work lives (Hill *et al.*, 2008). In the current survey, we evaluated access to flexible hours, and access to, and demand for, four different types of working arrangements.

Access to flexible work arrangements (FWAs)

Figure 6.2: Access to flexible hours
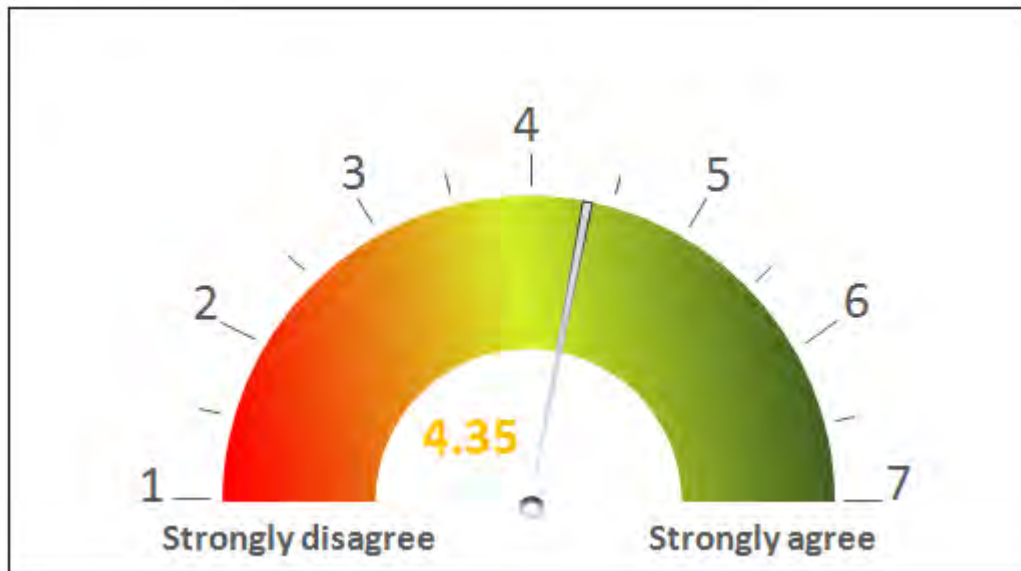
Overall, participants reported having some access to flexible hours at work (M = 4.35, SD = 1.60; see Figure 6.2).

In addition, a gender comparison revealed that men had significantly more access to flexible hours than women. They were also more likely to have access to parental leave and working from home arrangements.

Table 6.2: Access to flexible hours items

Flexible hours items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
My hours are fixed by the organisation with no possibility for change.	8.1	**21.9**	16.8	13.8	14.0	16.8	8.6
I can vary my working hours within certain limits (e.g. flexitime).	10.1	11.5	7.1	7.4	21.4	**30.2**	12.2

Many participants had some access to the FWAs presented in the survey (see Table 6.3).

Table 6.3: Current access to FWAs items

Current access to FWAs items	Yes (%)	No (%)
Parental leave	7.5	**92.5**
Working from home	10.3	**89.7**
Flexible hours	45.2	**54.8**
Move from full-time to reduced hours	10.6	**89.4**

Current demand for Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs)

Figure 6.3: Current demand for FWAs

Overall, participants had a moderate demand for FWAs (M = 3.62, SD = 1.61; see Figure 6.3). Women's demand for flexible hours and reduced hours was significantly higher than men's. Employees aged over 55 years had less demand for FWAs than younger employees.

Although there is a right to request flexible work under New Zealand law, the actual availability is still limited (Donnelly, Proctor-Thomson, & Plimmer, 2012). For instance, although 55% of the participants

have access to some flexible hours at work (Table 6.3), 71% of the participants think flexible hours are important in doing their work (Table 6.4).

Table 6.4: Current demand for FWAs items

Demand for FWAs items	Not at all (%)	To a very small extent	To a small extent	Somewhat	To some extent	To a large extent	To a very large extent
Parental leave	**56.4**	3.4	3.4	6.8	8.2	9.2	12.5
Working from home	**40.2**	8.1	8.9	11.0	16.2	8.2	7.5
Flexible hours	9.6	4.3	5.9	9.5	19.4	23.4	**27.8**
Move from full-time to reduced hours	**41.5**	6.4	6.3	11.6	12.9	9.9	11.3

Competing demands

Figure 6.4: Competing demands

The competing demands scale measured the extent to which participants had to deal with competing demands from clients, stakeholders and politicians in their jobs. Overall, participants reported a high level of competing demands (M = 5.25, SD = 1.30; see Figure 6.4). At least 71% agreed with both the competing demand items (see Table 6.5).

In the current survey, the occurrence of competing demands was related to lower perceived organisational performance. Not surprisingly, managers perceived significantly more competing demands than non-managers.

Table 6.5: Competing demands items

Competing demands items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
In my work, I often deal with competing demands from clients and other stakeholders.	2.0	5.9	5.1	14.1	21.7	**32.1**	19.1
Our organisation deals with many competing demands from stakeholders and politicians.	1.9	4.1	3.5	19.3	17.6	**30.4**	23.1

Job insecurity

Figure 6.5: Job insecurity
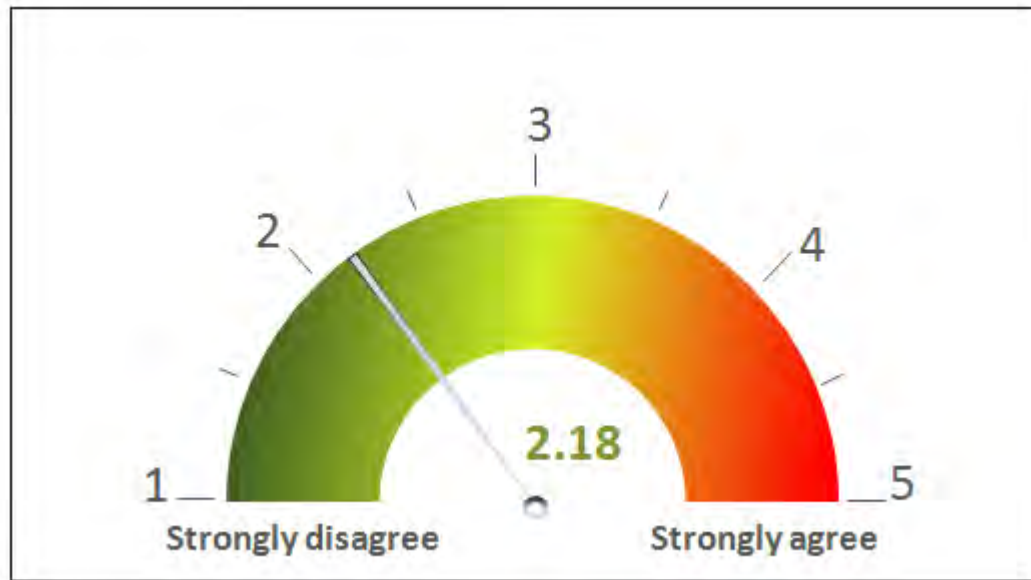
Job insecurity is linked to burnout, lower psychological wellbeing, and lower life satisfaction, among other things (De Witte, 2005). Job insecurity is a public health matter as well as a personal matter. Job insecurity was measured by the item, 'I might lose my job in the next six months'.

Overall, participants reported low job insecurity (M = 2.18, SD = 1.10; see Figure 6.5).

Figure 6.6: Job insecurity (percentage)
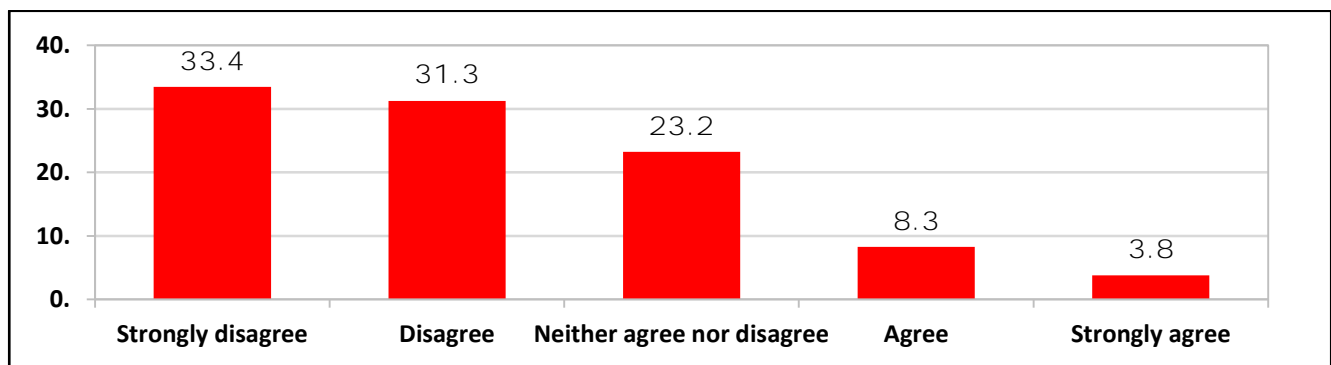
7 Bullying, sexual harassment and abuse

This section examines the frequency of bullying, sexual harassment, and abuse by clients in the public sector. These variables are connected to negative outcomes such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and lower wellbeing (Balducci, Fraccaroli, & Schaufeli, 2011; Nielsen , Bjørkelo, Notelaers, & Einarsen, 2010). Reduction of their occurrence is therefore important.

Key findings

- Most bullying behaviour is covert, such as withholding necessary information for one's job. Most behaviours occur now and then rather than more frequently.

- Although the overall mean for sexual harassment was low. The most common type of harassment was 'unwanted comments about your body, clothing, or way of living'.

- Verbal abuse is a problem for employees working in call centres and other jobs involving direct contact with clients.

Workplace bullying

Figure 7.1: Workplace bullying
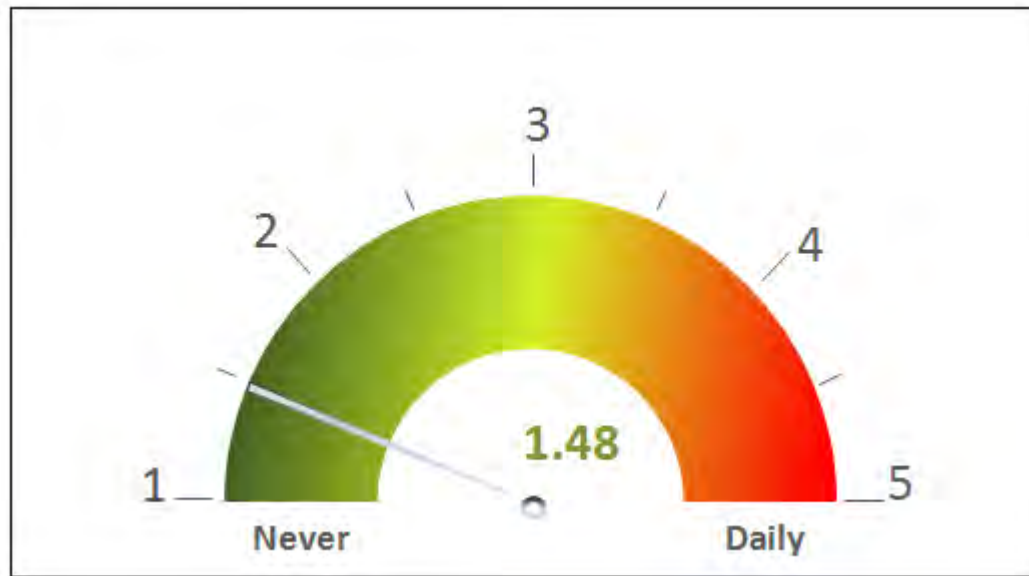
Workplace bullying is characterised as the frequent exposure to hostile behaviour at work (Balducci *et al.*, 2011). It includes a range of behaviours that include practical jokes, social exclusion and insults. Workplace bullying harms individuals and organisations.

In the current survey we measured bullying using nine items from the NAQ-R short-form scale (Notelaers & Einarsen, 2008) (M = 1.48, SD = .61; see Figure 7.1).

The least common type of bullying behaviour was practical jokes (11%). The most common was in covert forms such as 'someone withholding necessary information so that your work gets complicated', which 58% of participants had experienced to some degree (mostly "now and then") in the last six months.

In the 2013 Workplace Dynamics survey, which used only one item to measure bullying, 32% of participants reported having been bullied in the last six months. The change in measurement methods between the 2013 survey and this one makes it difficult to infer changes in the rate of bullying.

In the current survey, high levels of bullying were related to low levels of organisational support and a weak psychosocial safety climate.

Table 7.1: Bullying items

Bullying items	Never (%)	Now and then	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
Someone withholding necessary information so that your work gets complicated.	41.5	**43.6**	5.0	6.8	3.1
Gossip or rumours about you.	**53.1**	36.4	3.6	4.4	2.5
Social exclusion from co-workers or work group activities.	**65.6**	26.2	2.6	3.0	2.6
Repeated offensive remarks about you or your private life.	**81.8**	13.7	1.6	1.9	1.0
Insults.	**78.5**	16.6	1.6	2.0	1.2
Repeated reminders about your blunders or mistakes.	**67.1**	26.4	2.8	2.6	1.1
Silence or hostility as a response to your questions or attempts at conversations.	**65.0**	25.6	3.2	4.0	2.3
Devaluing of your work and efforts.	**60.7**	28.5	4.2	4.3	2.2
Practical jokes carried out by people you don't get on with.	**88.8**	9.2	.8	.7	.5

Sexual harassment

Figure 7.2: Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is defined here as a primarily psychological experience derived from "unwanted sex-related behaviours at work that are appraised by the recipient as offensive and that exceed one's coping resources or threaten one's wellbeing" (Nielsen *et al.*, 2010). In the current study we used the Bergen Sexual Harassment Scale to measure sexual harassment at the workplace and at work-related social events (BSHS; Einarsen & Sørum, 1996).

Overall, most participants pointed out that they did not experience any sexual harassment in the previous six months (*M* = 1.06, *SD* = .18; see Figure 7.2). However, at least one in 1,000 participants reported some sort of sexual harassment in the previous six months (see Table 7.2). Among these, the most common types were 'unwanted comments about your body, clothing, or way of living' and 'other unwanted comments with sexual content'.

There were no significant gender differences between females and males in the frequency of harassment in the previous six months. In the current survey, high levels of sexual harassment were related to low levels of perceived organisational support and a weak psychosocial safety climate.

Table 7.2: Sexual harassment items

Sexual harassment items	Never (%)	Once	2-5 times	More than 5 times
Unwanted comments about your body, clothing, or way of living.	**86.1**	7.0	5.2	1.7
Other unwanted verbal comments with sexual content.	**91.6**	4.1	3.1	1.2
Pictures or objects with sexual content, which you experienced as undesirable or unpleasant.	**97.3**	1.7	.8	.2
Being the object of rumours with sexual content.	**96.4**	2.1	1.1	.4
Sexually-charged staring or glances, which felt uncomfortable.	**95.2**	2.3	1.9	.7
Unwanted telephone calls or letters with sexual content.	**99.1**	.6	.3	.1
Unwanted physical contact with sexual suggestions.	**98.0**	1.3	.5	.2
Unwanted sexual approaches that you experienced as uncomfortable, but which did not contain promises of rewards or threats of punishments or sanctions.	**98.0**	1.3	.5	.1
Unwanted enquiries/demands of sexual services with promise of rewards.	**99.6**	.2	.1	.0
Unwanted enquiries/demands of sexual services with threats of punishments or sanctions.	**99.8**	.1	.1	.0
Sexual assaults, attempts at rape, or actual rape.	**99.9**	.1	.0	.0

Abuse by clients

Figure 7.3: Abuse by clients
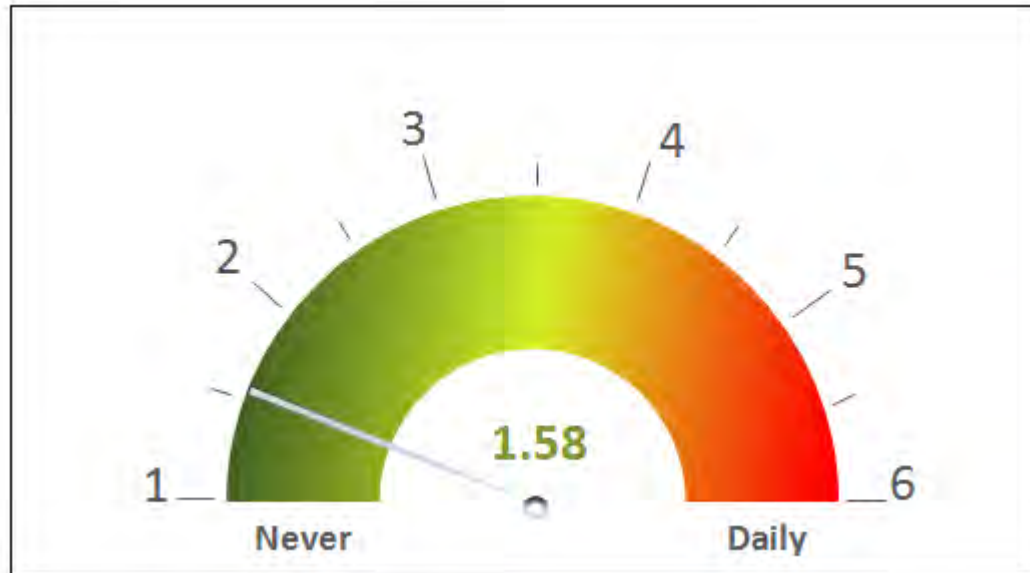
Abuse by clients was measured by two items which focused on physical and verbal abuse. Participants were asked how often they had experienced physical and verbal abuse in the previous 12 months. Although most participants had not experienced a great deal of abuse by clients (M = 1.58, SD = .89; see Figure 7.3), a significant number did report either physical or verbal abuse. Verbal abuse was more common than physical abuse (see Figure 7.4).

Contact or call centre workers, inspection or regulation workers, machinery operators and drivers, managers, registered social professionals and unregistered service workers were particularly at risk.

In the current survey, high levels of abuse by clients were related to low levels of organisational support and a weak psychosocial safety climate.

Figure 7.4: Reported physical and verbal abuse (percentage)
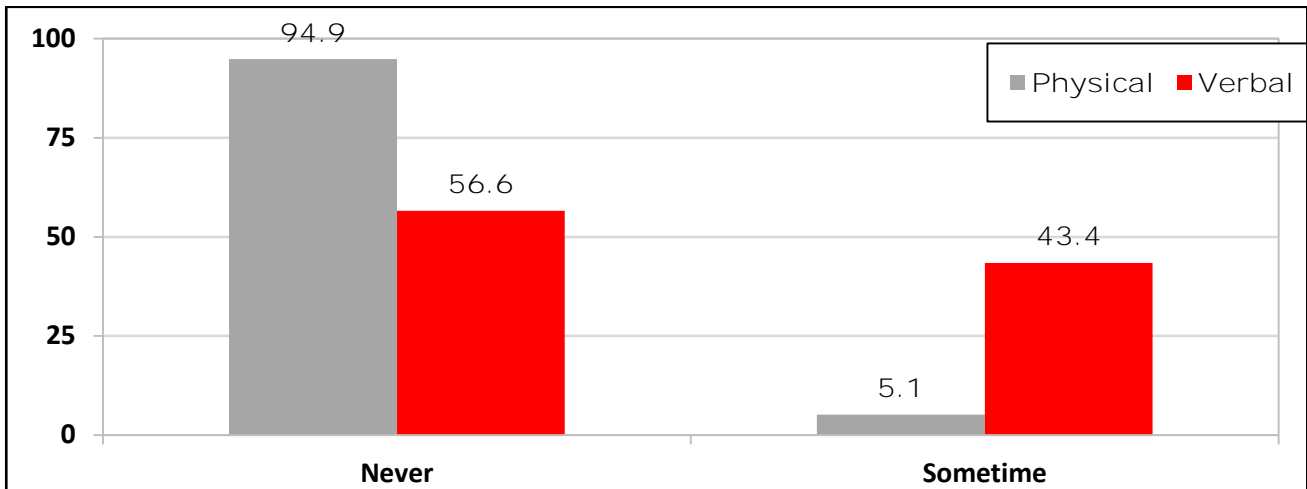
8 Team autonomy and task interdependence

This section examines the extent to which teams are autonomous and the interdependence of team members when they work on tasks.

Many employees now work in teams, and team autonomy and task interdependence have been connected to positive outcomes such as productivity, proactivity, job satisfaction and motivation (Campion, Medsker, & Higgs, 1993; Kirkman & Rosen, 1999). Depending on the job, organisations should generally support team autonomy and task interdependence in order to foster positive outcomes.

Key findings

- Teams are not very autonomous, but team members often depend on each other to accomplish tasks.

- The majority of participants only 'somewhat agree' with the items in the team autonomy measure and a low percentage 'strongly agree' with these items.

- Task interdependence is common in the public service. At least half of participants agreed with the items in the task interdependence measures.

Team empowerment (Autonomy)

Figure 8.1: Team empowerment (Autonomy)
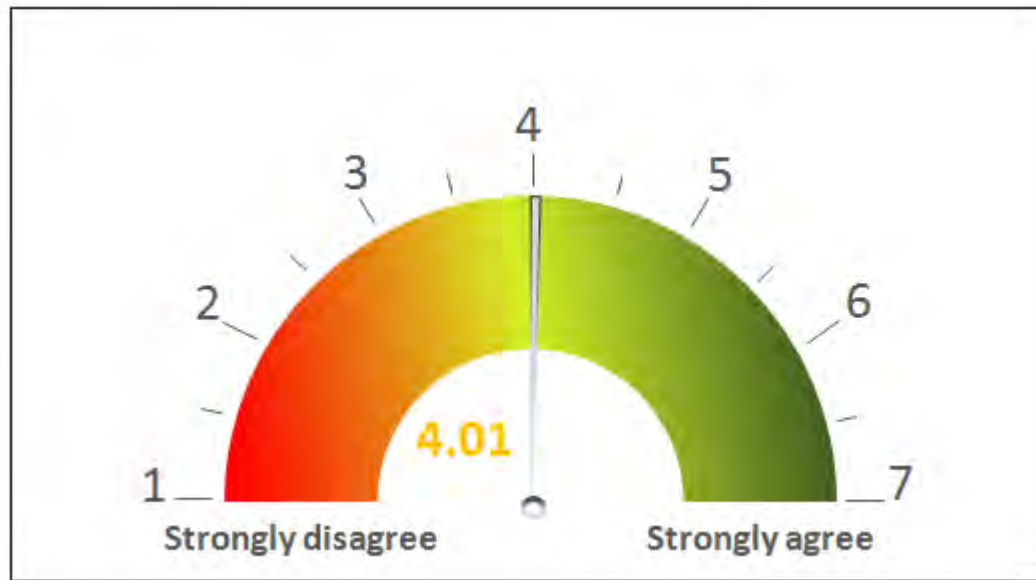
According to Kirkman, Rosen, Tesluk, & Gibson (2004), team empowerment includes four dimensions: (1) potency; (2) meaningfulness; (3) autonomy; and (4) impact. In the current survey we evaluated the autonomy dimension, which is defined as the degree to which members of a team think they can make decisions about their work as a team. Team empowerment has been related positively in the literature to team leader behaviour, team-based human resources policies, productivity, proactivity and job satisfaction, among other things (Kirkman & Rosen, 1999).

In some cases organisations could empower teams more which, in turn, could enhance productivity, proactivity and job satisfaction. Overall, participants thought their team had some level of autonomy. (M = 4.01, SD = 1.42; see Figure 8.1).

In the current survey, high levels of team empowerment were associated with higher job satisfaction and constructive leadership (focused on management of production, change, and employees' work experience).

Table 8.1: Team empowerment (autonomy) items

Team empowerment items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
My team can select different ways to do the team's work.	6.2	11.7	12.3	18.6	**25.8**	21.7	3.6
My team determines as a team how things are done in the team.	7.2	12.3	13.4	15.5	**27.5**	20.3	3.7
My team makes its own choices without being told by management.	11.0	18.7	18.6	17.5	**22.6**	9.9	1.6

Task interdependence

Figure 8.2: Task interdependence
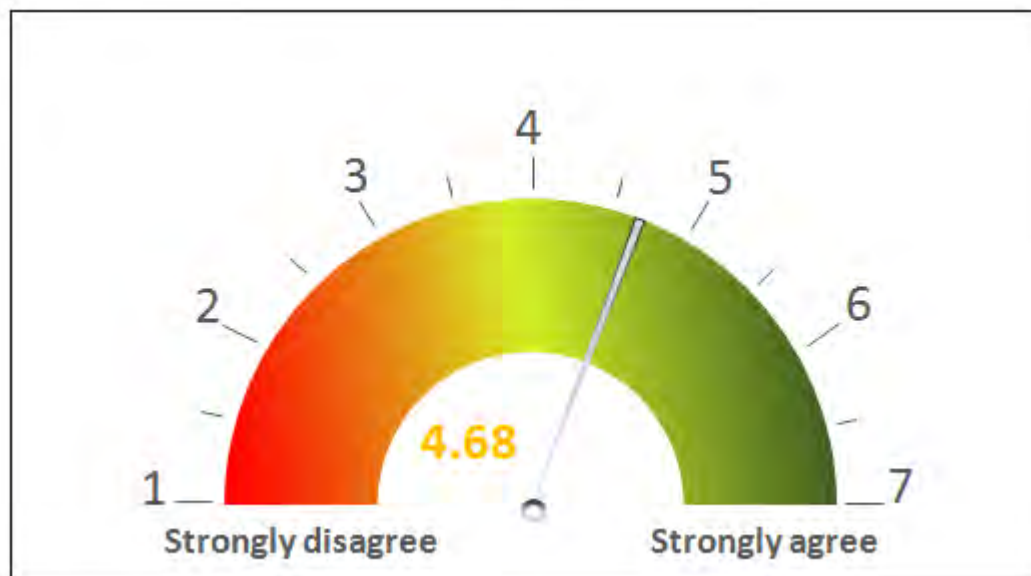
Task interdependence is defined as the extent to which "group members interact and depend on one another to accomplish their work" (Campion et al., 1993). Task interdependence has been related in the

literature to higher levels of motivation and group effectiveness. Overall, participants agreed that members of their teams were dependent on each other to accomplish their tasks (*M* = 4.68, *SD* = 1.20; see Figure 8.2).

In the current survey, higher task interdependence was related to higher levels of motivation and public service motivation.

Table 8.2: Task interdependence items

Task interdependence items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
My team cannot accomplish its tasks without information or materials from other members of the team.	2.7	10.7	12.6	22.5	**23.7**	21.4	6.5
Within my team, jobs performed by team members are all related to one another.	2.3	7.8	9.7	15.8	27.7	**29.0**	7.7
Members of my team depend on each other for information or materials needed to perform their tasks.	1.9	7.5	8.4	15.3	**29.9**	28.3	8.6

9 Leadership

This section evaluates perceptions of managers' leadership style and behaviours.

Key findings

- Although most participants believe their immediate managers show constructive behaviour 'sometimes' or more often, the mean rating is not high.

- The overall mean for laissez-faire leadership is low, but laissez-faire behaviour does occur. For instance, 61% of participants reported that their manager occasionally, or more often, failed to intervene until problems became serious.

- Most participants believe that their immediate managers are good at solving conflicts and communicating with staff. The overall mean for these variables is moderate.

- Formal leadership development is weak. Most team leader and manager participants indicated that they had received little or no training in leadership and how to manage employees. 'Informal' support on workplace issues, however, is stronger.

- In general, team leaders and managers feel accountable.

Managers' leadership style

The way leaders treat employees affects employees' overall work experience and the work environment (Bentley et al., 2012; Kristensen, Hannerz, Høgh, & Borg, 2005).

Constructive leadership

Figure 9.1: Constructive leadership

Constructive leadership is defined as the ability to foster change and production, and enhance employees' work experience (Erkvall & Arvonen, 1991). High levels of constructive leadership among supervisors have been connected to low levels of bullying in New Zealand (Bentley *et al.*, 2012). This finding shows how important constructive leadership behaviour can be in decreasing negative outcomes from workplace interaction. Overall, participants perceived their immediate manager sometimes or frequently displayed constructive leadership. (M = 4.42, SD = 1.50; see Figure 9.1).

Table 9.1: Constructive leadership items

Constructive leadership items	Never (%)	Rarely	Occasionally	Sometimes	Frequently	Usually	Always
Encourages thinking along new lines.	5.0	11.5	12.2	**24.0**	21.0	14.9	11.5
Gives recognition for good work.	4.7	12.3	12.6	**22.4**	16.7	15.8	15.5
Pushes for growth and improvement.	4.8	11.0	11.4	**20.9**	20.0	15.7	16.1
Sets clear goals for work.	5.0	10.9	12.0	**22.0**	19.2	18.0	12.9
Defines and explains work requirements clearly to subordinates.	4.5	11.1	12.6	**22.5**	19.1	18.4	11.7
Is flexible and ready to rethink his/her point of view.	6.6	12.8	12.0	**22.7**	15.7	18.3	11.9

Laissez-faire leadership

Figure 9.2 : Laissez-faire leadership

Laissez-faire leadership is characterized by avoidance of decision-making, lack of feedback to employees, and failure to recognise or intervene in delicate situations (Bass & Avolio, 1990; Hauge, Skogstad, & Einarsen, 2007). This leadership style often has the opposite effect to constructive leadership. High levels of laissez-faire leadership have been associated with higher levels of bullying (Bentley *et al.*, 2012).

The overall mean for laissez-faire leadership is low (M = 2.93; SD = 1.32), but such behaviour does occur. For instance, 61.7% of participants reported that their manager occasionally, or more often, failed to intervene until problems became serious.

Table 9.2: Laissez-faire leadership items

Laissez-faire leadership items	Never (%)	Rarely	Occasionally	Sometimes	Frequently	Usually	Always
Fails to interfere until problems become serious.	11.0	**27.3**	14.7	20.4	10.2	10.8	5.6
Avoids getting involved when important issues arise.	22.6	**33.5**	11.5	15.6	7.1	6.3	3.4
Is absent when needed.	15.9	**33.2**	16.6	18.5	8.1	4.9	2.7
Waits for things to go wrong before taking action.	23.2	**33.7**	12.4	14.9	6.4	5.8	3.6
Shows that he/she is a firm believer in "If it ain't broke, don't fix it".	14.6	**24.4**	16.9	23.2	8.9	8.3	3.8
Demonstrates that problems must become chronic before taking action.	25.5	**32.6**	11.2	14.9	6.1	5.8	3.8
Avoids making decisions.	29.0	**31.6**	12.1	13.9	5.7	4.7	3.0
Delays responding to urgent questions.	26.2	**31.7**	13.3	13.9	6.5	4.8	3.7

Leadership capability

Figure 9.3: Leadership quality

Participants answered questions about their managers' ability to solve conflicts and communicate with staff as general measures of basic leadership capability (Kristensen *et al.*, 2005). Higher leadership quality has been connected to higher role clarity (i.e. clarity about one's work) and higher predictability (i.e. the extent to which information channels work well in the organisation).

Participants were moderately positive about the quality of leadership they experienced ($M = 4.65$, $SD = 1.66$; see Figure 9.3).

Table 9.3: Leadership capability items

To what extent is your immediate manager good at...	Not at all (%)	To a very small extent	To a small extent	Somewhat	To some extent	To a large extent	To a very large extent
solving conflicts at work?	8.0	9.1	10.5	15.1	21.2	**26.4**	9.6
communicating with staff?	5.5	8.2	8.8	14.1	18.7	**30.1**	14.4

Leadership development (team leader and manager responses)

We asked team leaders and managers who work in the core public service about their access to mentoring and job rotation programmes, training, and informal support on workplace issues. These factors are known to facilitate leadership development.

Job rotation and mentoring

Job rotation is related to innovative behaviour in organisations (Ortega, 2001). Mentoring, described as the development of junior colleagues' leadership skills by more experienced members of an organisation, is related to more capable leaders and stronger organisational culture (Wilson & Elman, 1990).

Both job rotation and mentoring help develop leadership skills and can improve organisational performance. However, most team leaders and managers in the current survey did not have access to job rotation and mentoring initiatives (see Table 9.4).

Table 9.4: Job rotation and mentoring items

Job rotation and mentoring items	Yes (%)	No (%)
I have participated in a formal job rotation programme.	16.0	**84.0**
At some point, I worked across a range of very different jobs in a relatively short time in order to broaden my experience and skill sets.	38.2	**61.8**
I have worked in at least three different departments/agencies.	34.5	**65.5**
I have participated in a formal mentoring programme.	26.4	**73.6**

Training

Figure 9.4: Training
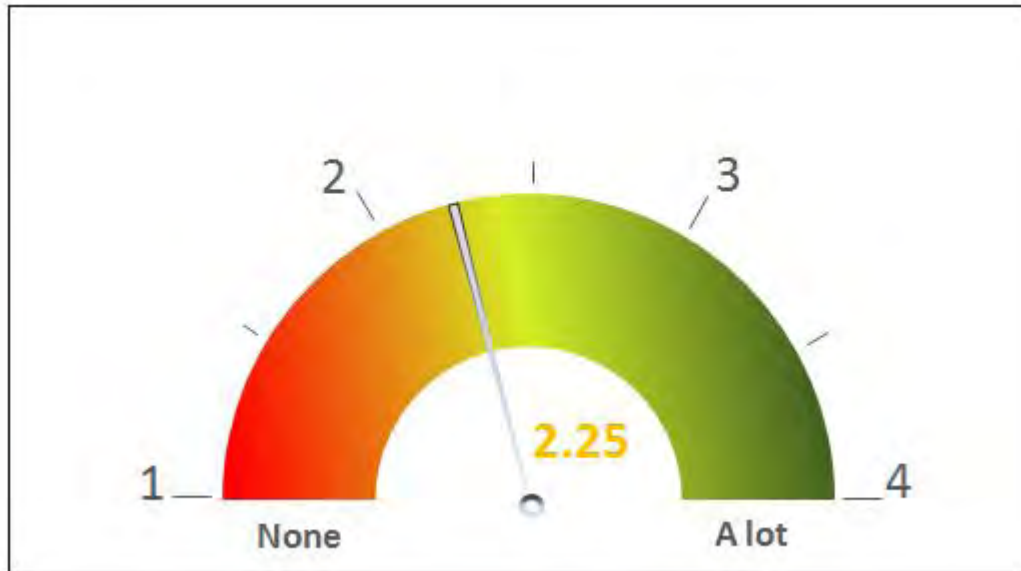
Overall, team leaders and managers had received little or no training in management and leadership skills (*M* = 2.25, *SD* = .81; see figure 9.4). More specifically, 55% of team leaders and managers reported having 'a little' or no training on 'how to manage employees and teams'.

Table 9.5: Training items

Useful training in…	None	A little	Quite a bit	A lot
How to manage employees and teams.	19.6	**35.8**	33.0	11.5
How to deal with citizens and stakeholders.	34.0	**40.4**	19.8	5.9
How to be an effective leader.	18.8	**34.9**	32.0	14.4

Informal support on workplace issues

Figure 9.5: Informal support on workplaces issues

Informal support on workplace issues also plays a role in leadership development. While most team leader and manager participants indicated that they had not participated in formal leadership development within their workplace, they were more likely to agree that they had 'informal' support on workplace issues, particularly for mentoring and advice. These strategies are mostly sought out by individuals rather than formalised in organisations, but organisations can shape an environment in which informal support occurs.

Overall, team leaders and managers reported access to informal support on workplace issues (M = 4.53, SD = 1.30; see Figure 9.5). Most agreed with the items in this measure.

Table 9.6: Informal support on workplace issues items

Support on workplace issues items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I have a person, outside my immediate workplace who I turn to for trusted advice.	7.1	13.9	4.6	7.5	14.6	**34.0**	18.4
I consider one of my former bosses to have been a great mentor.	8.3	12.1	5.1	11.1	13.7	**30.1**	19.6
I have a large network of peers in other agencies.	7.5	14.8	9.1	14.2	22.3	**24.4**	7.7
I am well-connected with key external stakeholders for our programmes.	6.2	13.1	8.2	17.5	**24.3**	22.9	7.9
I have a network of people outside my immediate workplace who can help with the work we need to do.	7.8	15.4	9.1	14.1	**23.2**	22.9	7.5

Leadership experience (team leader and manager responses)

Team leaders and managers were asked about their experience in managing teams: how they evaluate their leadership role, to what extent they can access the budget they need to perform their work, and to what extent they are held accountable for their performance.

Self-evaluation of leadership

Figure 9.6: Self-evaluation of leadership items
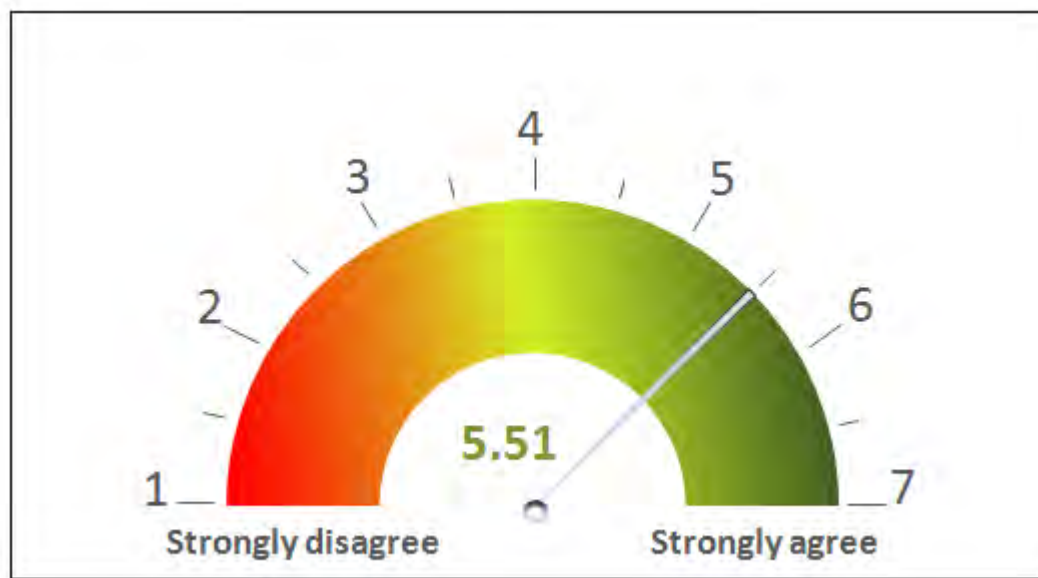
Overall, team leaders and managers perceived themselves and their teams in a positive light (M = 5.51, SD = .92; see Figure 9.6). Most participants agreed with the items in the self-leadership evaluation measure (see Table 9.7).

Table 9.7: Self-evaluation of leadership items

Self-leadership evaluation items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I lead an effective team.	.7	1.1	2.0	8.6	22.9	**48.8**	16.0
My team's work is recognised for its quality.	1.3	4.6	4.6	12.0	23.6	**39.8**	14.1
I have a clear idea of who I want to be as a leader.	.5	1.1	2.8	9.8	21.7	**45.9**	18.2

Access to budget

Figure 9.7: Access to budget
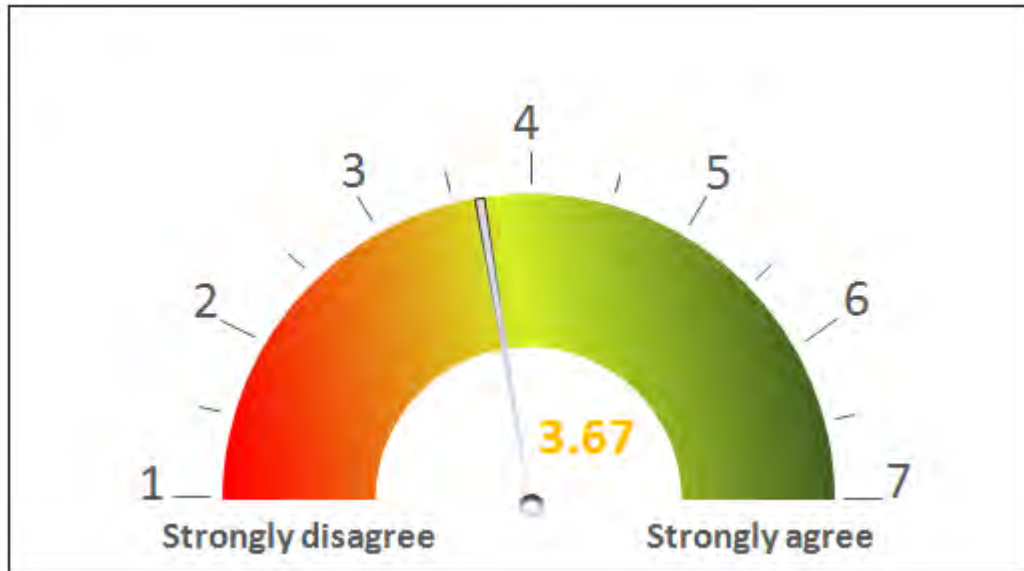
Overall, team leaders and managers have restrained access to the budget needed to perform their work (M = 3.67, SD = 1.17; see Figure 9.7). Around 78% of participants agreed they always had a tight budget, while 48% agreed they had the resources to deal with unexpected events (see Table 9.8).

Budget constraint is linked mostly to negative outcomes such as lack of organisational innovation and increases in ineffective behaviours in organisations (Marginson & Ogden, 2005).

In the current survey, the availability of the budget to perform one's work was associated with increased job satisfaction and perceived innovation and change in organisations.

Table 9.8: Access to budget items

Budget items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Our budget seems always very tight.	1.1	3.1	5.1	13.1	17.1	28.1	**32.5**
We have resources for dealing with unexpected events.	8.7	14.8	14.1	14.6	**27.9**	17.4	2.6
We have the authority to quickly respond to events.	4.7	9.4	9.9	14.8	**28.7**	26.8	5.7

Accountability

Figure 9.8: Accountability

Overall, team leaders and managers reported high organisational accountability for performance (M = 5.21, SD = 1.03; see Figure 9.8). More than half of these participants agreed that their organisations have

multiple demands for accountability and that stakeholders demand transparency from them (see Table 9.9). There was less agreement across the group that elected officials tell them what they expect.

In other research, organisational accountability has been related to positive outcomes such as less biased judgement and prosocial behaviour in managers (Ford, Gambino, Lee, Mayo, & Ferguson, 2004; Ossege, 2012). However, greater accountability has also been connected to negative outcomes such as political behaviour in terms of self-protection and self-promotion (Ossege, 2012). In the current survey, greater perceived levels of accountability by team leaders and managers were associated with higher organisational goal clarity, collaboration across work units and with other organisations, and leadership development.

Table 9.9: Accountability items

Accountability items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
We experience multiple demands for accountability.	.8	2.1	4.2	16.0	22.0	**36.7**	18.0
Stakeholders demand that we are transparent.	.8	2.0	2.2	16.8	16.9	**40.6**	20.8
Elected officials often tell us what they expect.	3.9	7.0	5.1	**29.3**	18.8	24.2	11.6

10 Organisational processes and human resource management experiences

This section examines organisational processes and human resource management experiences that could enhance organisational performance and employee wellbeing (e.g. Hall, Dollard, & Coward, 2010; Vandenberg, Richardson, & Eastman, 1999). Specifically, the section concerns individual role clarity, the PIRK (Power, Rewards, Information, Knowledge) scale, access to promotions, psychosocial safety climate and perceived organisational support.

Key findings

- Most participants think their role requirements are clear. The mean for individual role clarity is high.

- A high percentage of participants believe they have authority and freedom to do their jobs. However, participants have ineffective access to top managers or to rewards for good performance, including a pay raise. The means for the overall PIRK scale and the Information, Rewards and Knowledge subscales are weak.

- The means for psychosocial safety climate and perceived organisational support are also weak.

Individual role clarity

Figure 10.1: Individual role clarity
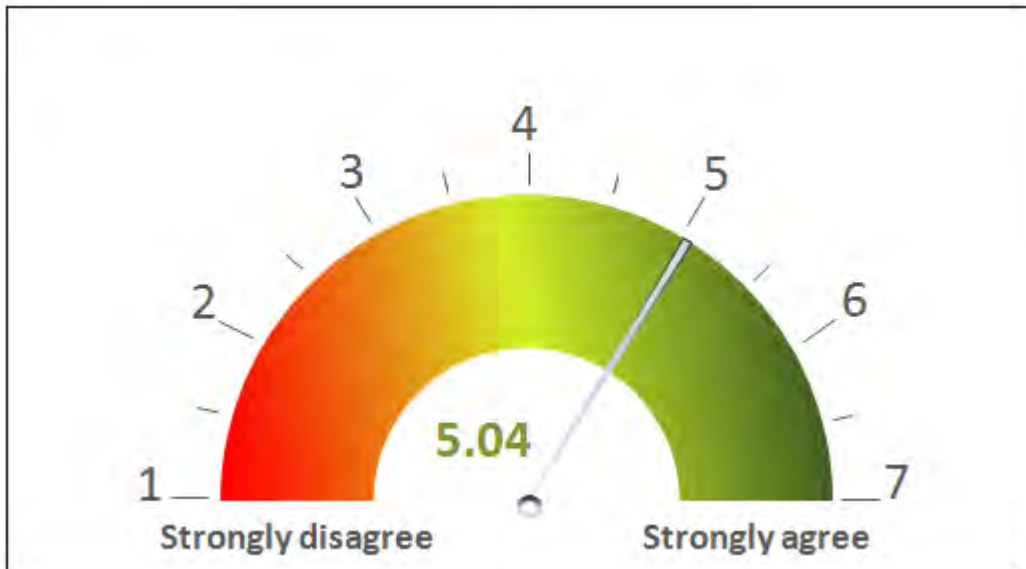
Individual role clarity is defined as the extent to which information is available about one's job and tasks in a given organisation (Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman, 1970). This availability is enormously affected by the organisational information flow and information systems in place. High individual role clarity is related to less general fatigue and discomfort, fewer violations of chain of command, and more autonomy, among other things. Having clearly defined roles can impact on the wellbeing of employees, workplace interaction, and ultimately even organisational outcomes.

Overall, participants thought that their tasks were clear (*M*= 5.04, *SD* =1.28; see Figure 10.1). Most agreed with the items in the individual role clarity measure (see Table 10.1).

Table 10.1: Individual role clarity items

Individual role clarity items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
My job has clear, planned goals and objectives	3.5	6.3	8.7	10.4	24.1	**36.8**	10.2
I feel certain about how much authority I have.	2.7	5.8	9.4	13.2	23.8	**36.8**	8.3
I know exactly what is expected of me.	2.1	4.8	8.1	7.2	23.1	**41.3**	13.4

Power, Information, Rewards and Knowledge (PIRK)

Figure 10.2: Summary of PIRK

The PIRK scale includes four dimensions: Power, Information, Rewards and Knowledge. It measures high-involvement organisational processes that connect practices inside organisations to outcomes (Boxall & Macky, 2009). High scores in the PIRK scale are related to greater organisational effectiveness (Vandenberg *et al.*, 1999). Overall, participants reported moderate levels of PIRK processes in their organisations (*M*= 4.11, *SD* =1.18; see Figure 10.2).

Power

Figure 10.3: Power

Power, or job autonomy, concerns the extent to which workers have the authority to do their jobs. Overall, most participants agreed they had the authority and freedom to do their jobs (M = 4.96, SD = 1.38; see Figure 10.3).

Table 10.2: Power (job autonomy items)

Power items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I have enough freedom over how I do my job.	3.6	7.2	9.2	8.1	25.7	**35.2**	11.1
I have enough authority to make decisions necessary to do my job.	2.9	6.8	9.0	8.6	28.2	**36.4**	8.1
I am given enough authority to act and make decisions about my work.	2.7	6.4	8.7	8.7	27.7	**37.2**	8.6

Information

Figure 10.4: Information
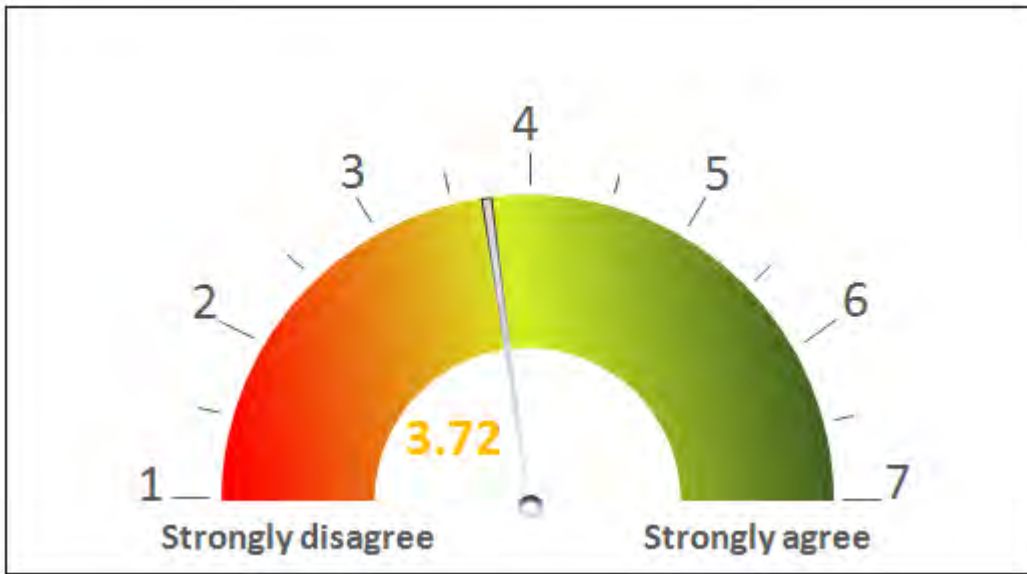
Information is defined here as the extent to which workers are informed of goals, policies and procedures, and the reasons behind decisions. It also includes the extent to which managers are informed of issues, opinions, needs and feelings among workers. Overall, participants did not perceive that information channels were strong (M = 3.72, SD = 1.51; see Figure 10.4).

Items concerning upward flows of information (from subordinates to managers) were rated more poorly than downward flows of information (see Table 10.3).

Table 10.3: Information items

Information items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Management gives sufficient notice to employees prior to making changes in policies and procedures.	10.0	16.3	15.9	13.6	**22.8**	18.2	3.2
Management takes time to explain to employees the reasoning behind critical decisions that are made.	11.5	16.4	16.4	11.6	**23.1**	17.4	3.5
The channels of communication from employees to top management are effective.	16.9	**19.6**	17.2	14.9	18.4	11.0	2.0
The channels of communication from employees to other levels of management are effective.	11.0	16.3	17.6	17.5	**22.4**	13.2	2.1

Rewards

Figure 10.5: Rewards
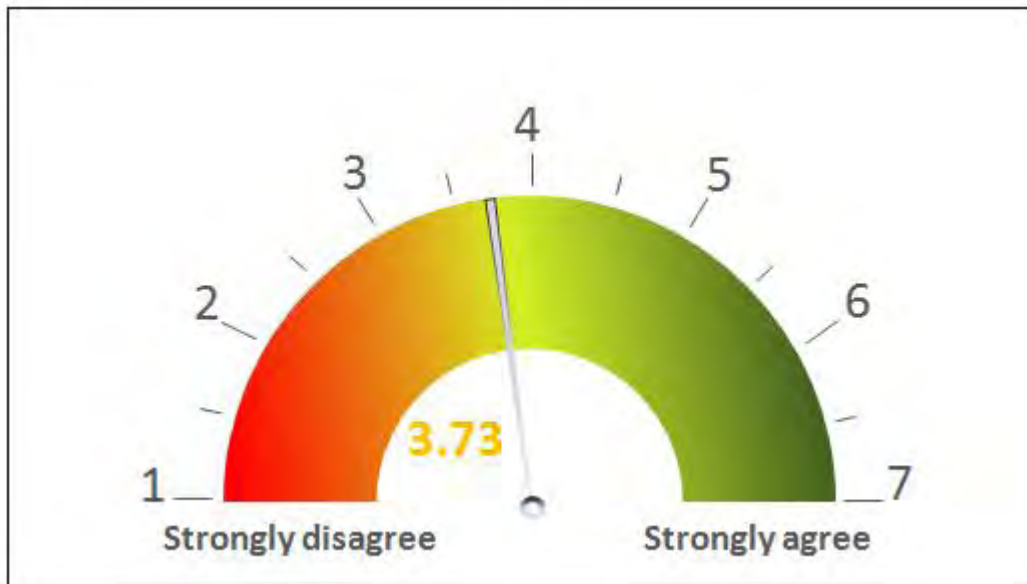
Rewards concern how well performance is linked to rewards and recognition. Overall, this link was weak (M = 3.73; SD = 1.66; see Figure 10.5). Recognition for good performance seems a more likely than extra pay.

Table 10.4: Reward items

Rewards items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
There is a strong link between how well I perform my job and the likelihood of receiving recognition and praise.	12.2	14.7	12.1	13.7	19.2	**21.2**	6.9
There is a strong link between how well I perform my job and the likelihood of receiving a raise in pay/salary.	**26.9**	20.7	12.7	11.7	11.8	11.1	5.1
There is a strong link between how well I perform my job and the likelihood of receiving high performance appraisal ratings.	13.4	14.1	11.3	15.1	18.9	**20.1**	7.1

Knowledge: training and development

Figure 10.6: Knowledge
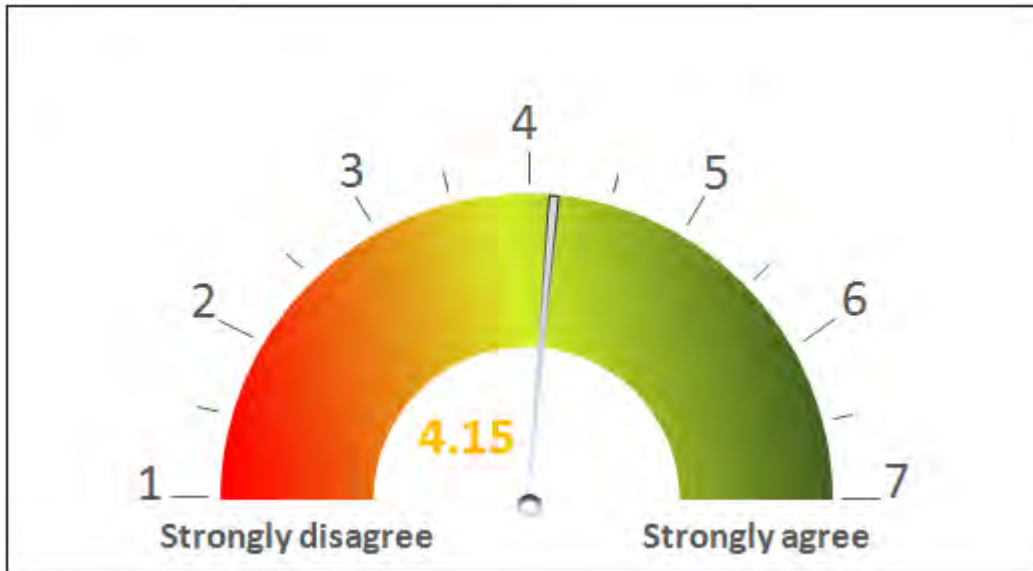
Knowledge is defined here as satisfaction with training and development. Overall, participants were moderately satisfied with the training and development available to them (M = 4.15, SD = 1.70; see Figure 10.6).

Table 10.5: Knowledge (training and development) items

Knowledge items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I am satisfied with the number of training and development programmes available to me.	9.2	13.1	14.4	14.0	20.1	**24.4**	4.8
Overall, I am satisfied with my training opportunities.	9.2	13.6	14.1	13.9	19.5	**24.9**	4.8
I am satisfied with the quality of training and development programmes available to me.	9.2	13.0	13.1	15.8	19.8	**24.6**	4.5

Promotions

Figure 10.7: Promotions in previous ten years (percentage)
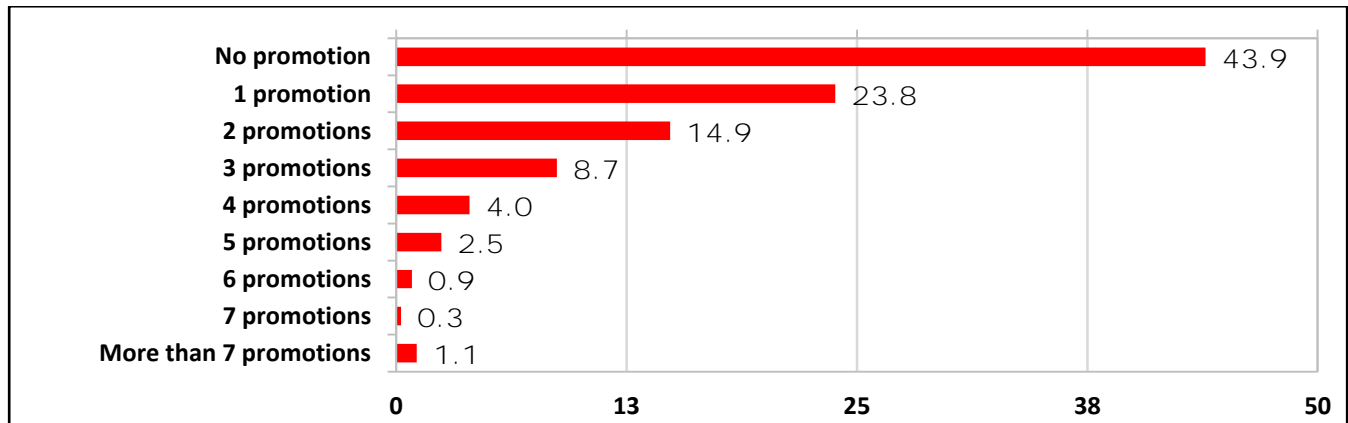
Participants were also asked about the number of promotions (i.e. any increases in level and/or any significant increases in job responsibilities or job scope) they had received in the previous ten years. Overall, 44% of participants reported not receiving any promotions (see Figure 10.7). This suggests that the careers of a large proportion of participants have plateaued.

Plateaued workers, defined here as those not promoted in the previous ten years, were less satisfied with their jobs and motivated than employees who had been promoted at least once. In addition, 26.3% of participants thought they had been overlooked for promotions in their current work role (see Figure 10.8).

Figure 10.8: Overlooked for promotion (percentage)
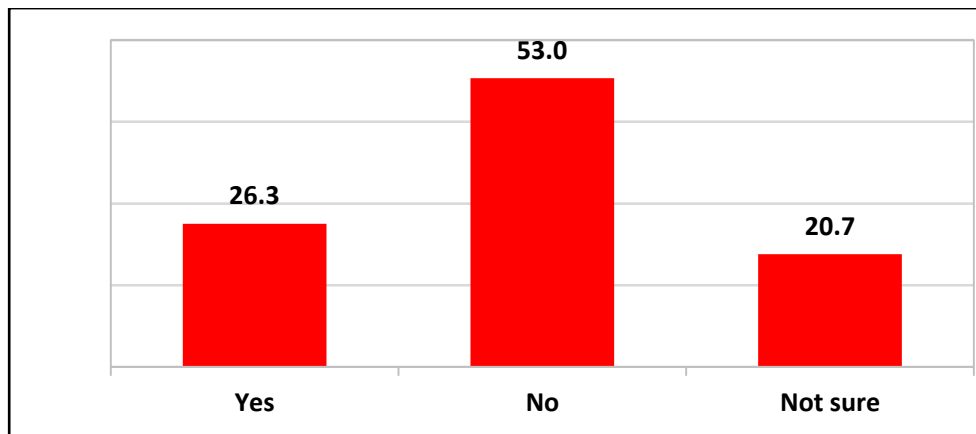
Psychosocial safety climate

Figure 10.9: Psychosocial safety climate
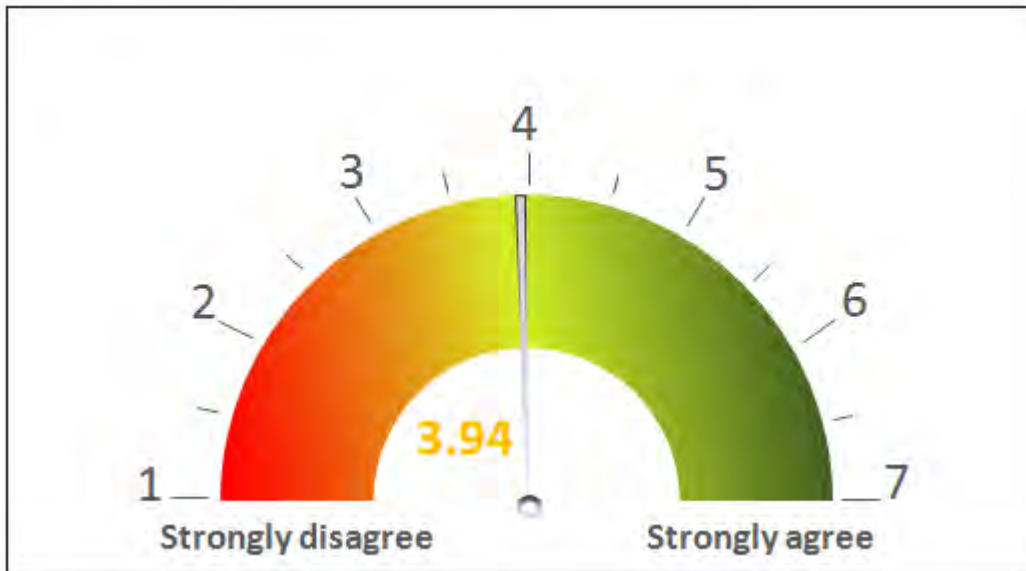
Psychosocial safety climate can be defined as the extent to which senior managers' value initiatives around employees' psychosocial wellbeing (Hall *et al.*, 2010). High levels are related to high levels of supervisor support and job satisfaction, and to low levels of psychological job demands and depression. Participants did not rate this area highly (*M* = 3.94, *SD* = 1.40; see Figure 10.9).

Generally, answers to the items on this scale were spread across the categories. A high percentage of participants reported that they 'neither agree nor disagree' with the items (see Table 10.6). These findings suggest that participants might be unaware of psychosocial wellbeing policies, or that the meaning of the items was unclear. They might also imply that employees have little contact with senior managers and their psychosocial safety climate concerns.

Table 10.6: Psychosocial safety climate items

Psychosocial safety climate items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
In my workplace senior management acts quickly to correct problems/issues that affect employees' psychological health.	8.5	13.3	13.0	**22.1**	19.3	18.7	5.1
Senior management acts decisively when a concern of an employee's psychological status is raised.	7.3	11.4	11.8	**27.8**	18.2	18.7	4.8
Senior management shows support for stress prevention through involvement and commitment.	9.3	13.3	14.7	**21.3**	20.1	16.9	4.4
Psychological wellbeing of staff is a priority for this organisation.	10.5	13.8	14.4	**21.8**	18.6	15.8	5.2
Senior management clearly considers the psychological health of employees to be of great importance.	10.3	13.9	14.5	**23.2**	17.5	15.9	4.7
Senior management considers employee psychological health to be as important as productivity.	11.7	15.5	14.9	**24.5**	15.6	13.9	3.9

There is good communication here about psychological safety issues which affect me.	10.3	16.5	15.9	**26.1**	15.3	12.8	3.3
Information about workplace psychological wellbeing is always brought to my attention by my manager/supervisor.	11.2	19.0	15.8	**24.8**	15.1	11.4	2.7
My contributions to resolving occupational health and safety concerns in the organisation are heard.	5.1	8.1	9.6	**31.6**	21.9	19.7	3.9
Participation and consultation in psychological health and safety occurs with employees, unions and health and safety representatives in my workplace.	6.8	11.5	10.8	**30.5**	18.7	17.9	3.8
Employees are encouraged to become involved in psychological safety and health matters.	7.9	13.1	12.6	**28.1**	19.3	15.4	3.5
In my organisation, the prevention of stress involves all levels of the organisation.	12.8	15.6	12.7	**24.4**	14.7	14.5	5.3

Perceived organisational support

Figure 10.10: Perceived organisational support

Perceived organisational support (POS) concerns the extent to which employees think their employer "values their contributions and cares about their wellbeing" (Hutchison & Sowa, 1986; p. 500). POS is related to increased affective commitment, job involvement and performance (O'Driscoll & Randall, 1999; Richard, Plimmer, Fam, & Campbell 2015).

Overall, participants thought their organisation valued and supported them to a moderate extent, (M = 4.30, SD = 1.31; see Figure 10.10).

Table 10.7: Perceived organisational support items

Perceived oreganisational support items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
The organisation values my contribution to its success.	5.2	9.9	9.4	19.2	**27.1**	24.0	5.3
The organisation strongly considers my goals and values.	6.9	13.5	13.7	**24.9**	22.6	15.1	3.1
The organisation really cares about my wellbeing.	7.9	11.5	12.7	17.6	**24.9**	19.8	5.7
The organisation is willing to help me when I need a special favour.	5.7	9.7	9.1	**26.1**	25.5	18.9	5.0
The organisation shows very little concern for me.	10.2	**24.6**	17.5	20.8	13.9	8.5	4.4
The organisation takes pride in my accomplishments at work.	5.7	10.2	10.3	**28.5**	22.7	18.4	4.2

11 Organisational goal clarity, performance, innovation and improvement

This section evaluates participants' perceptions of organisational-capability. Specifically, it looks at organisational goal clarity, organisational performance, workplace innovation, learning culture and some behaviours related to issues of particular interest to the PSA such as gender equality. While the first four behaviours were evaluated by all participants who answered the survey, behaviours towards issues like gender equality were evaluated only by team leaders and managers.

Key findings

- The majority of participants agree that the goals and mission of their organisations are clear. The mean for organisational goal clarity is positive.

- Participants do not rate organisational performance highly.

- Participants do not rate their organisations as innovative, or having strong learning cultures.

- At least half of participants agreed that their organisation fosters gender equality, diversity, strategic planning, participation and programme improvement. On the other hand, at least a quarter 'neither agrees nor disagrees' with items describing green policies, capability development and programme awareness. In general, the means for these issues are moderate.

Organisational goal clarity

Figure 11.1: Organisational goal clarity
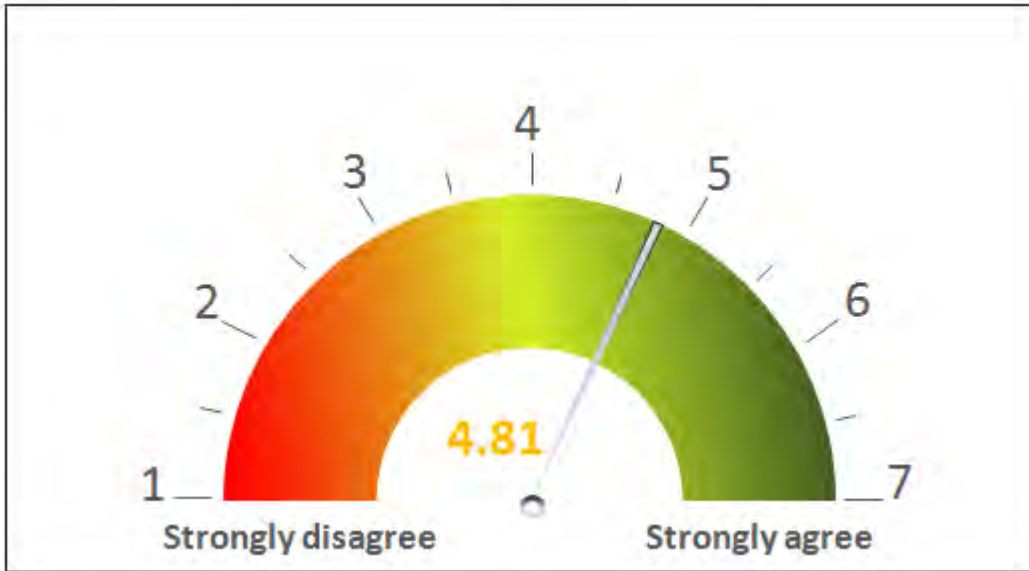
Organisational goal clarity is defined here as the extent to which a given organisation has clear goals and a clear mission. This variable has been connected in the literature to lower levels of turnover intention (Jung, 2012). Overall, participants rated their organisation positively for organisational goal clarity (M = 4.81, SD = 1.40; see Figure 11.1) and 60% or more agreed with all the items (see Table 11.1).

Table 11.1: Organisational goal clarity items

Organisational goal clarity items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
This organisation's mission is clear to almost everyone who works here.	3.7	7.1	9.4	14.1	24.6	**31.7**	9.4
This organisation has clearly defined goals.	3.0	5.2	7.3	12.7	26.4	**34.7**	10.7
It is easy to explain the goals of this organisation to outsiders.	4.2	8.1	11.4	16.2	25.6	**27.1**	7.5

Organisational performance

Figure 11.2: Organisational performance
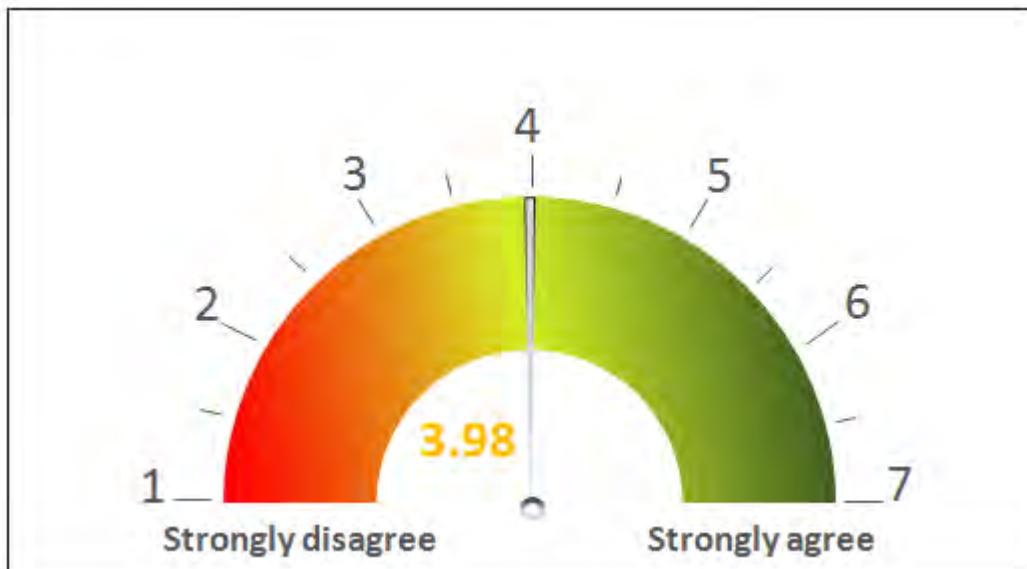
Overall, participants did not rate their organisations' performance highly ($M = 3.98$, $SD = 1.33$; see Figure 11.2).

Table 11.2: Organisational performance items

Organisational performance items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
This organisation is achieving its full potential.	9.2	18.2	18.3	17.5	**24.0**	11.3	1.4
People at my level are satisfied with this organisation's performance.	10.8	20.4	20.5	17.0	**20.9**	9.3	1.0
This organisation does a good job of satisfying its customers.	3.6	8.9	12.8	17.4	**30.8**	22.9	3.7
This organisation gives me the opportunity and encouragement to do the best work I am capable of.	6.5	11.1	13.6	15.6	**26.7**	21.9	4.7

Workplace innovation

Figure 11.3: Workplace innovation
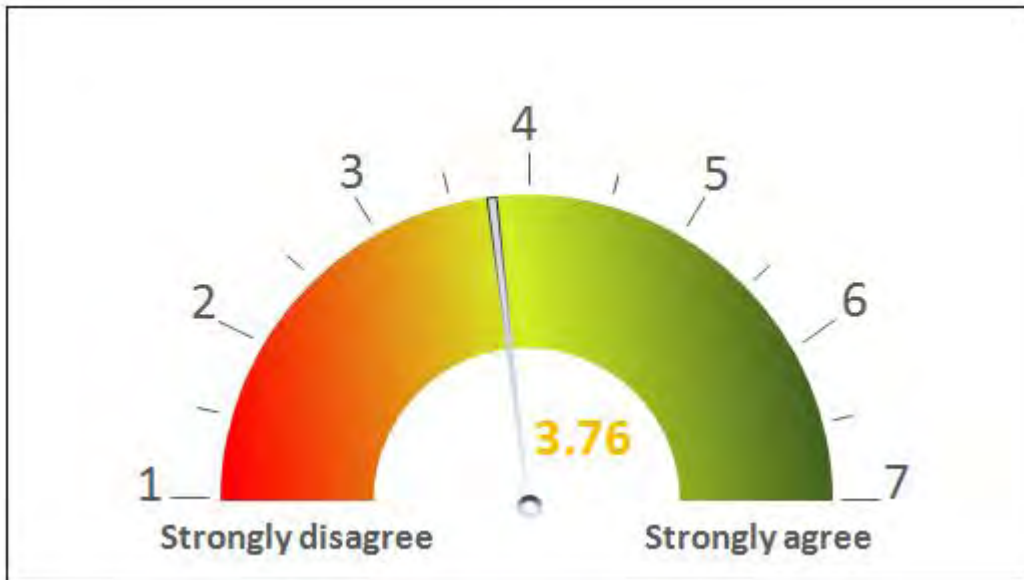
Participants rated workplace innovation in their organisation as limited (M = 3.76, SD = 1.41; see Figure 11.3). 50%of participants also disagreed to some extent that change is handled well in their organisation. In addition, there was a high variability of answers among participants.

Table 11.3: Workplace innovation items

Workplace innovation items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Change is handled well in this organisation.	13.3	16.9	**20.2**	17.9	19.7	10.2	1.8
The way this organisation is run has improved over the last year.	12.9	13.5	12.6	**26.9**	17.4	13.1	3.6
This organisation is innovative.	7.8	11.3	13.0	**24.9**	23.0	16.2	3.8
This organisation is good at learning from its mistakes and successes.	11.9	14.4	17.0	**22.6**	19.2	12.4	2.5

Learning culture

Figure 11.4: Learning culture
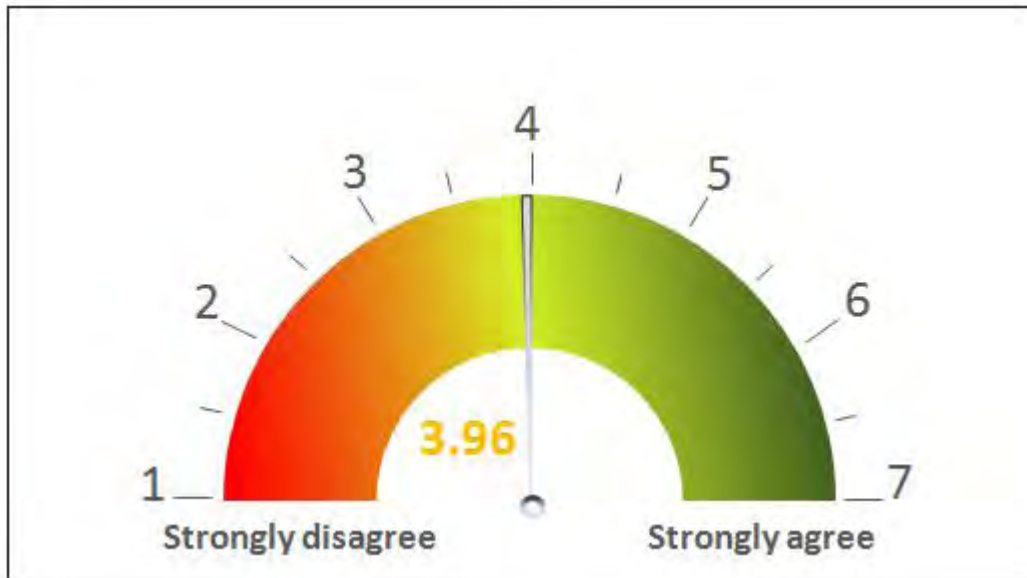
Learning culture is defined here as the extent to which organisations foster learning and function as a learning environment. Overall, participants perceived their organisation to promote learning to a limited extent (*M* = 3.96, *SD* =1.27; see Figure 11.4).

Table 11.4: Learning culture items

Learning culture items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
In my organisation, people openly discuss mistakes in order to learn from them.	8.3	13.4	16.1	20.2	**24.5**	15.0	2.6
In my organisation, people give open and honest feedback to each other.	7.4	12.6	16.9	19.6	**26.5**	14.5	2.5
In my organisation, people view problems in their work as an opportunity to learn.	5.8	11.1	15.6	25.7	**26.2**	13.6	2.0
In my organisation, people are rewarded for exploring new ways of working.	8.9	14.4	16.8	**26.3**	21.2	10.6	1.8
My organisation enables people to get needed information at any time quickly and easily.	6.2	11.0	15.2	22.5	**26.8**	15.8	2.5

Equity and forward thinking

These items share themes of equity and inclusion, and medium rather than short-term thinking. Overall, participants agreed with the items (see Table 11.5 for means and standard deviations; values could vary from *1* to *7*). To manage the length of the survey for most participants, only team leaders and managers were asked these questions.

Table 11.5: Equity and forward thinking: means and standard deviations

Issues	Mean	Standard Deviation
Women in this organisation have the same opportunities for advancement as men.	5.07	1.60
Our agency has a strong sense of diversity and inclusion among its staff.	4.98	1.42
Senior managers have a clear strategic vision for all of our programmes.	4.47	1.57
We have a long-term plan for capability development.	4.24	1.59
We support green (pro-environmental) policies in our operations.	4.31	1.50
We listen well to different segments of the population and client needs.	4.60	1.40
We are empowered to improve our programmes and policies.	4.42	1.48
We know our programme performance and impact in quite some detail.	4.50	1.42

At least one in two participants agreed that the organisation fosters gender equality, diversity, strategic planning, participation and programme improvement (see Table 11.6).

Additional analysis showed that male managers were more likely to believe their organisation offers the same opportunities for women, and that their agency has a strong sense of diversity and inclusion.

Table 11.6: Equity and forward thinking items

Items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Women in this organisation have the same opportunities for advancement as men.	3.8	6.0	7.2	14.0	16.4	**37.3**	15.3
Our agency has a strong sense of diversity and inclusion among its staff.	2.1	5.3	7.1	17.0	25.6	**32.2**	10.7
Senior managers have a clear strategic vision for all of our programmes.	5.0	9.4	10.5	19.7	**25.6**	24.1	5.7
We have a long-term plan for capability development.	6.6	10.9	10.8	**25.1**	21.5	20.5	4.5
We support green (pro-environmental) policies in our operations.	4.8	9.6	9.9	**28.8**	23.7	18.0	5.2
We listen well to different segments of the population and client needs.	2.9	6.9	9.8	22.3	**28.9**	24.5	4.6
We are empowered to improve our programmes and policies.	4.2	8.4	12.3	22.0	**27.2**	21.5	4.5
We know our programme performance and impact in quite some detail.	3.4	7.2	10.5	**26.3**	25.5	22.6	4.6

12 The influence of different stakeholders, and collaboration within and between agencies

This section looks at policy input from stakeholders, and stakeholder influence on agencies and departments in the Public Service. It also examines how organisations in the Public Service collaborate and the extent to which organisations and work units in the public sector as a whole collaborate. These questions were part of a larger project in the Victoria University School of Government.

Key findings

- About one in two team leaders or managers who work in the core Public Service believe that the minister who provides oversight of their activities gives significant policy input and feedback, and is the major source of concern when something 'goes wrong'.

- The mean for collaboration is moderate.

Policy input

Team leaders and managers who work in the core Public Service were asked to select one, two or three stakeholders who provide significant policy input to major proposals in their organisations or government departments. Overall, almost one in two participants reported that the minister who provides oversight of their activities provides significant policy input, almost one in three participants reported that ministers to whom the agency reports provide significant policy input, and almost one in four participants reported that Parliament provides significant input (see Table 12.1). Each of the other options was chosen by less than 14% of participants, although more than one in four participants were not sure about who provided policy input to the agency/government department.

Table 12.1: Policy input from stakeholders

Stakeholders	N	%
The Minister who provides oversight of our activities	**345**	**45.6**
The Ministry closest aligned in our area	104	13.8
Other Ministries with which we have involvement	81	10.7
Other Crown Entities	33	4.4
Ministers (to whom this agency reports)	**231**	**30.6**
Our board	75	9.9
Parliament	**165**	**21.8**
Local Communities	48	6.3
Members of the public who use our services	82	10.8
Certain Community Organisations and/or their leaders	41	5.4
Partnering Organisations	62	8.2
Professional network or organisations	52	6.9
Citizens/general public	43	5.7
Regulatory oversight bodies	59	7.8
International/transnational organisations and networks	15	2.0
Sister/similar agencies in overseas jurisdictions	19	2.5
Not sure	200	26.5

Stakeholder influence 'when things go wrong'

Team leaders and managers who worked in the core Public Service were asked to select one, two or three stakeholders with whom their agency or government department is concerned when something 'goes wrong'. Slightly more than half the participants reported concern with the minister who provides oversight of their activities, a little less than half reported concern with the media, and about one in four participants reported concern with ministers to whom the organisation reports (see Table 12.2). Each of the other options was chosen by less than 16% of participants, although 21% were not sure.

These results suggest that Ministers hold agencies and government departments accountable for their actions. The results also show the powerful role of the media in holding agencies and government departments to account by publicising their actions.

Table 12.2: Influential stakeholders of concern when 'things go wrong'

Stakeholders	N	%
The Minister who provides oversight of our activities	**390**	**51.6**
The Ministry closest aligned in our area	66	8.7
Other Ministries with which we have involvement	44	5.8
Other Crown Entities	16	2.1
Ministers (to whom this agency reports)	**200**	**26.5**
Our Board	52	6.9
Parliament	114	15.1
Media	**330**	**43.7**
Local Communities	110	14.6
Certain Community Organisations and/or their leaders	30	4.0
Partnering Organisations	49	6.5
Professional networks or organisations	30	4.0
International/transnational organisations and networks	13	1.7
Sister/similar agencies in overseas jurisdictions	2	.3
Not sure	162	21.4

Collaboration

Figure 12.1: Collaboration
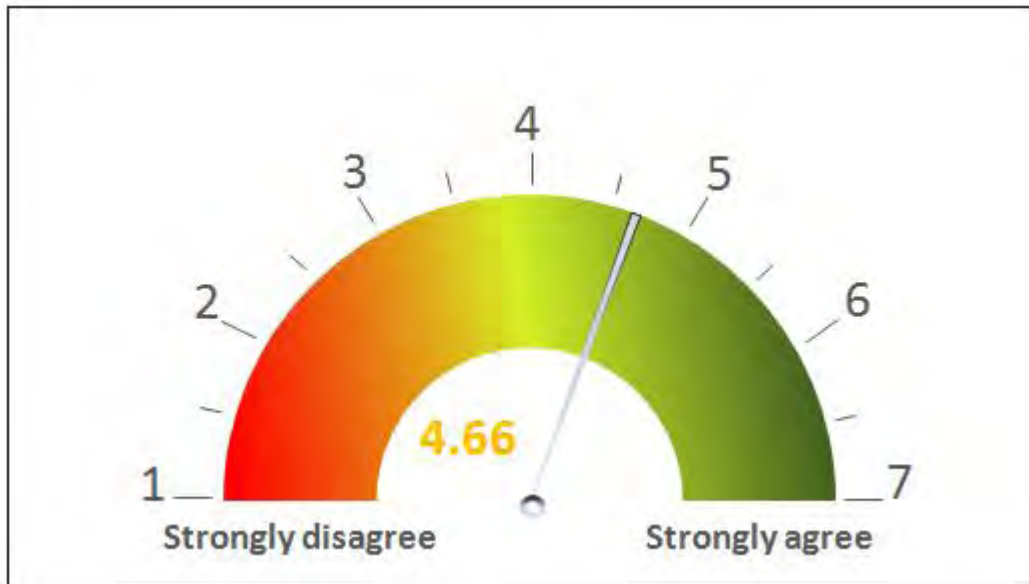
Participants were asked if their work units and organisations collaborated with others. Overall, participants perceived a moderate level of collaboration (M = 4.66, SD = 1.29; see Figure 12.1).

Additional analysis comparing managers and non-managers showed that non-managers reported more answers under 'neither agree nor disagree' than managers. This might suggest that employees without managerial positions are less aware of collaboration practices inside organisations.

Table 12.3: Collaboration items

Collaboration items	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Our organisation collaborates with other agencies to accomplish work objectives.	3.0	5.0	6.4	21.8	**30.6**	27.6	5.7
Our organisation collaborates across work units to accomplish work objectives.	3.8	6.3	9.1	21.5	**30.7**	24.0	4.6
Managers support collaboration across work units and with other organisations.	4.0	6.4	8.4	22.9	**27.9**	24.9	5.4

13 'Te Reo Māori' in the workplace

This section, supported by Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori - Māori Language Commission, explored the use of, and support for Te Reo Māori in government organisations.

Figure 13.1: Ability to use Te Reo Māori (percentage)
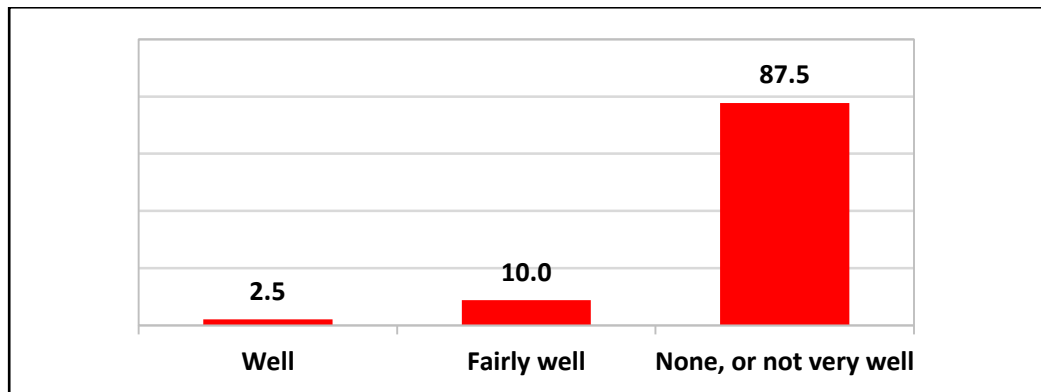
The majority of participants neither spoke Te Reo Māori (see Figure 13.1) nor were interested in speaking the language in their workplace (see Figure 13.2), although the proportion who spoke Te Reo Māori (13%) was significantly higher than in the general population (4%); Statistics NZ, 2014).

Figure 13.2: Interest in using Te Reo Māori in the workplace (percentage)
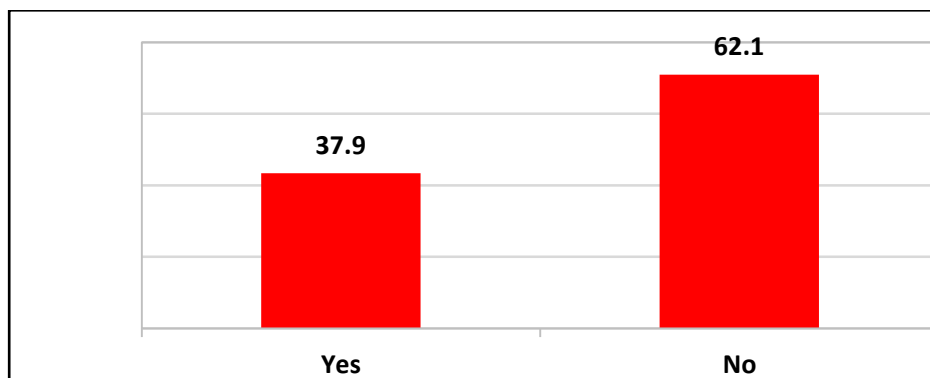
Among those who spoke, or were interested in speaking, Te Reo Māori in the workplace, the majority said they had support to learn and use this language in the workplace (see Table 13.1).

Table 13.1: Support to learn and use Te Reo Māori in the workplace (percentage)

Support in the workplace...	Yes	No
To learn Te Reo Māori.	57.8	42.2
To use Te Reo Māori.	77.3	22.7

The majority of this group also reported that Te Reo Māori was not mentioned in their job description (see Figure 13.3) and that they were not aware of any Māori language strategies in their organisation (see Figure 13.4).

Figure 13.3: Mention of Te Reo Māori in job description

Figure 13.4: Mention of Māori language strategies in organisations (percentage)
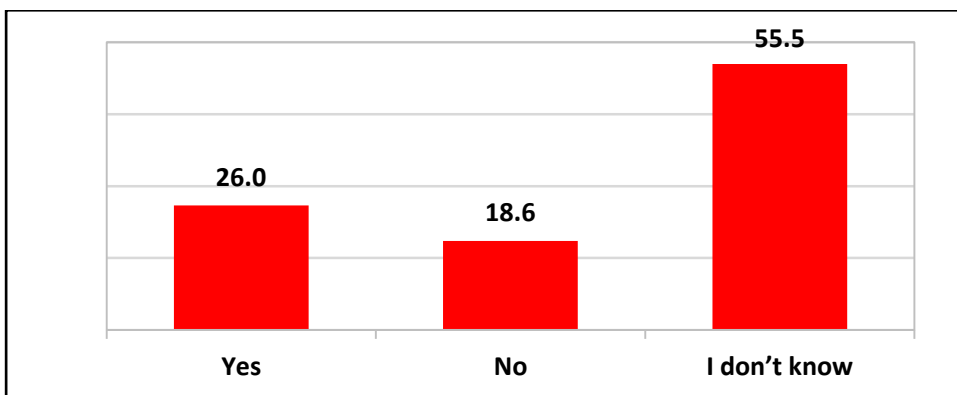
14 Participants and their organisations

This section details the nature of participants and the organisation they work for.

Age

The largest group of participants was aged 55–64 years with an average age of 49 years, well above the average working age of 43 years for all New Zealanders (Statistics NZ, 2015c). The age-range of the largest group in this survey was higher than in the 2013 Workplace Dynamics survey which was 45-54 years. This reflects an aging workforce.

The mean age of participants working for the core public service was 48 years old, also above the average working age of 45 years for public service employees in particular (State Services Commission [SSC], 2015).

According to Statistics NZ National Labour Force projection (2015c), the labour force will age and the proportion of the labour force aged 65 or more will increase from 6% in 2015 to 9-13% in 2038. In our sample, the high proportion of participants 65 years or over is already noteworthy (when compared to the proportion in the whole labour force). Additional analysis per sector showed that employees working in the Public Service were significantly younger than employees working in district health boards, local government bodies, state sector agencies, and community public service organisations.

Table 14.1: Age distribution of participants

Age groups	N	%
18-24	184	1.5
25-34	1,623	12.8
35-44	2,404	19.0
45-54	3,766	29.7
55-64	3,771	29.8
65+	912	7.2
Total	**12,660**	**100.0**

Gender

Figure 14.1: Gender distribution of participants
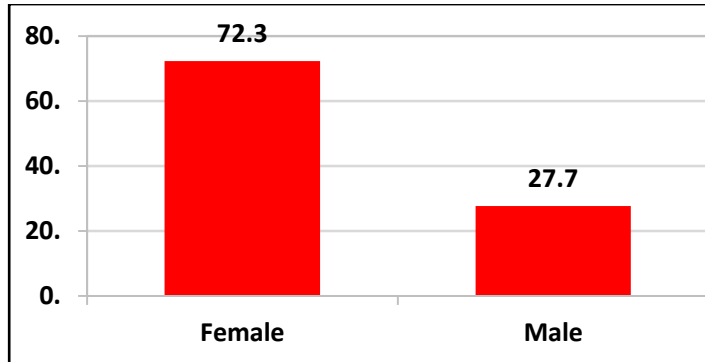
Almost three-quarters of participants in this survey were female (see Figure 14.1). This might be explained by the types of jobs common in the Public Service, such as social workers, case workers, clerical and administrative workers (SSC, 2015). The difference in the proportion of females and males has increased since the 2013 Workplace Dynamics survey. The proportion of women in our sample was similar to the proportion of female members in the PSA at the time of data collection (71%).

Ethnicity

Figure 14.2: Ethnicity distribution of participants[1]

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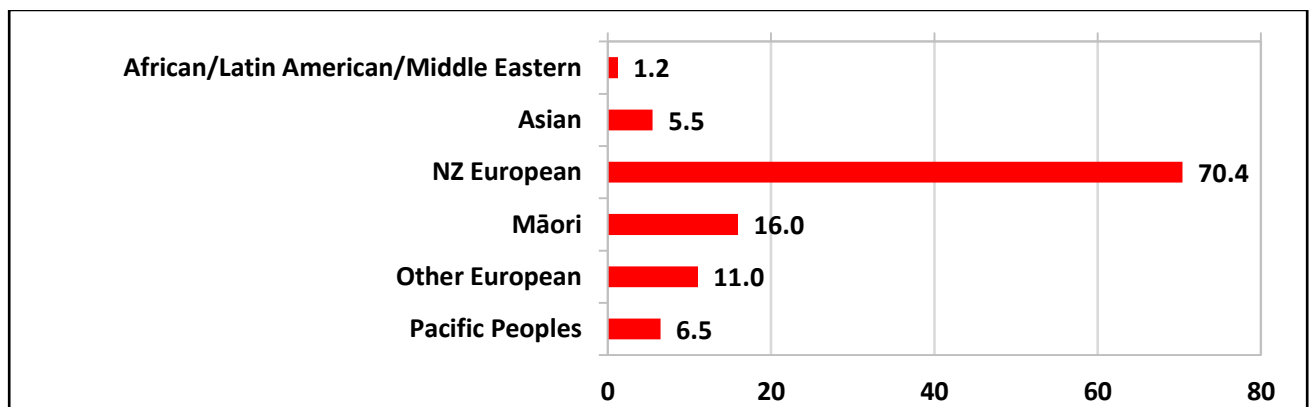
[1] Note that the ethnic categories presented in Figure 1.2 are not mutually exclusive, therefore the total exceeds 100%.

The majority of participants identified themselves as New Zealand European Pākehā, but over 40% also identified themselves with at least one other ethnic group. The ethnic composition of survey participants broadly matched that of the New Zealand population with some slight differences. For example, 6% of participants identified as Asian, representing a smaller proportion than in the New Zealand population at large (12%; Statistics NZ, 2015b). Also, a larger percentage (81%) of participants identified as NZ European or Other European than the national average (74%). Note that the ethnic categories presented in Figure 14.2 are not mutually exclusive, therefore the total exceeds 100%.

Education

Figure 14.3: Education and qualifications of participants (percentage)

Category	Percentage
No qualifications	3.7
Secondary/high school	19.2
Post-secondary	28.6
University degree	24.5
Post-graduate	24.0
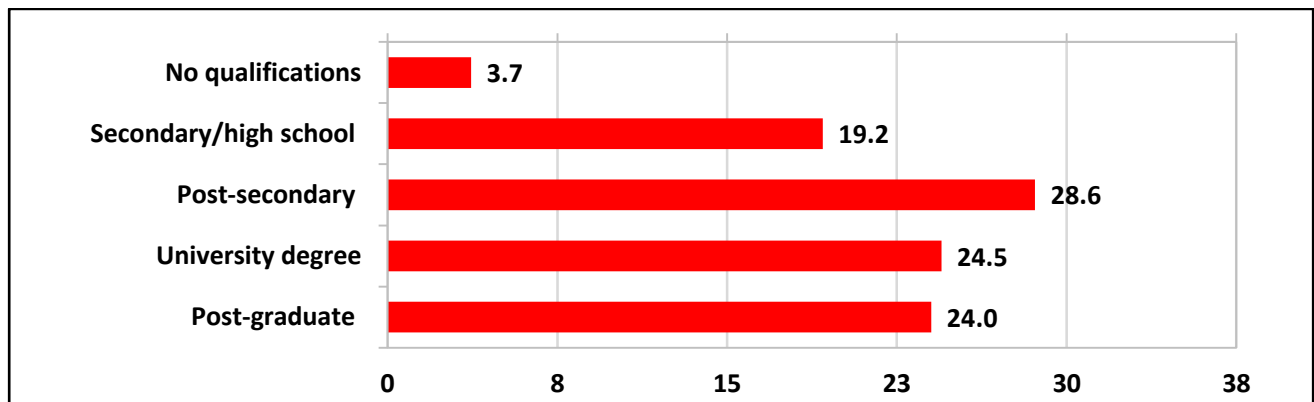
Participants had a higher than average educational level. More than 75% had a post-high school certificate or higher, and 48% had a bachelor's degree or higher, more than twice the figure for the New Zealand working population as a whole in 2013 (20%; Statistics NZ, 2015a).

Sexual orientation

Figure 14.4: Sexual orientation of participants (percentage)

Category	Percentage
Heterosexual	93.1
Bisexual	4.0
Lesbian	1.5
Gay	1.6
Takatāpui	0.2
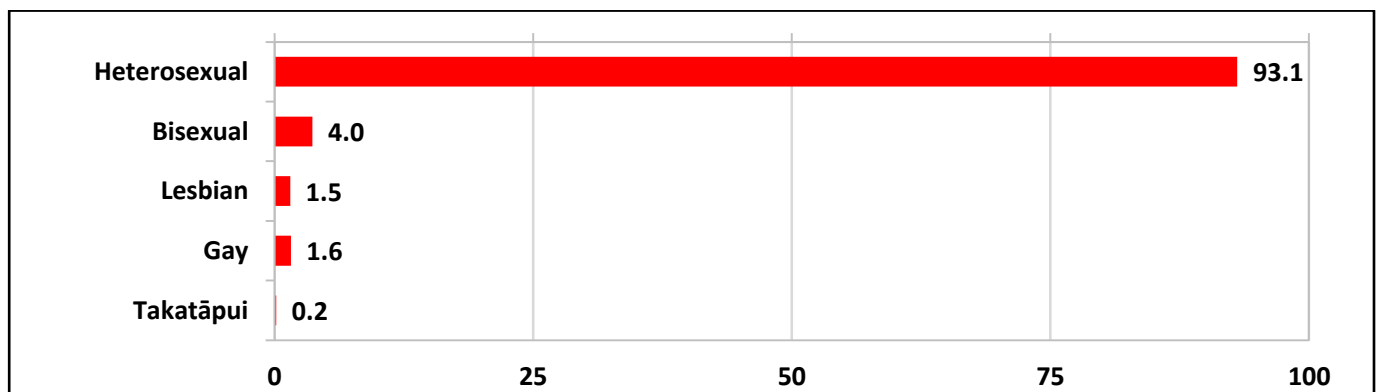
Sexual orientation of participants in this survey is shown in Figure 14.4.

The next subsection describes aspects of participants' employment. It includes employer, occupation, managerial level, annual earnings, length of time participants have worked for their employers, employment status, proximity of their job to the core work conducted by the organisation, and use of Te Reo Māori in the workplace.

Employment sectors

Participants worked for over 279 organisations represented by the PSA. Their workplaces included government departments, the health sector, crown agencies, local government, state-owned enterprises and community and government-funded agencies. The breakdown of participants per sector was as follows:

- 44% of participants worked with public service departments (N = 6,163)
- 26% of employees worked with district health boards (N = 3,640)
- 13% of participants worked with local government bodies (N = 1,776)
- 12% of participants worked with state sector agencies (N = 1,628)
- 6% of employees worked with a variety of community public service organisations (N = 880)

Workplace size

Figure 14.5: Distribution of participants across size of workplace (percentage)
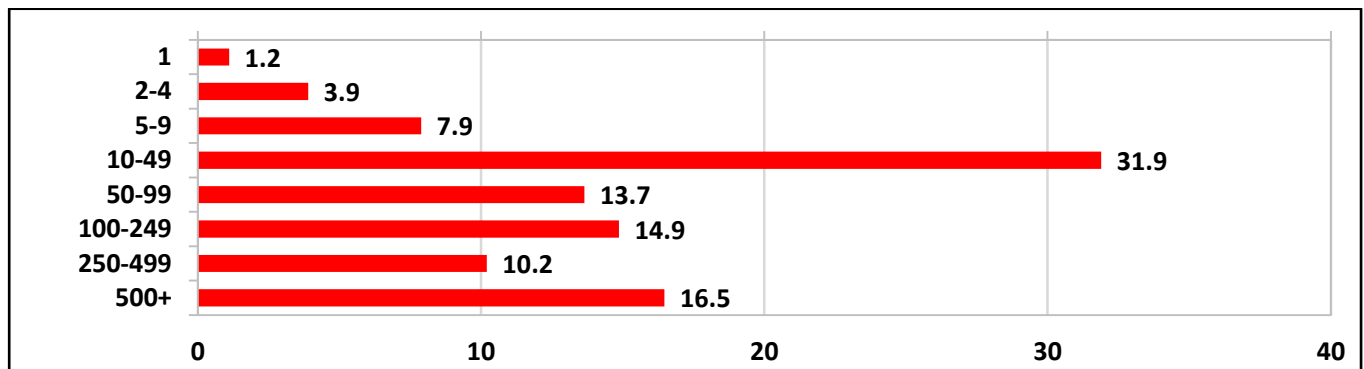
Occupational categories

Figure 14.6: Occupational categories of PSA survey participants[2] (percentage)

Category	Percentage
Clerical/Administration workers	24.9
Contact/Call centre workers	5.0
Inspection/Regulation workers	5.6
Labourers	0.6
Machinery operators/Drivers	0.2
Managers	6.5
Professionals	18.7
Registered social professionals	16.7
Sales workers	0.3
Scientists	3.3
Technicians/Trade workers	3.7
Unregistered service workers	14.4

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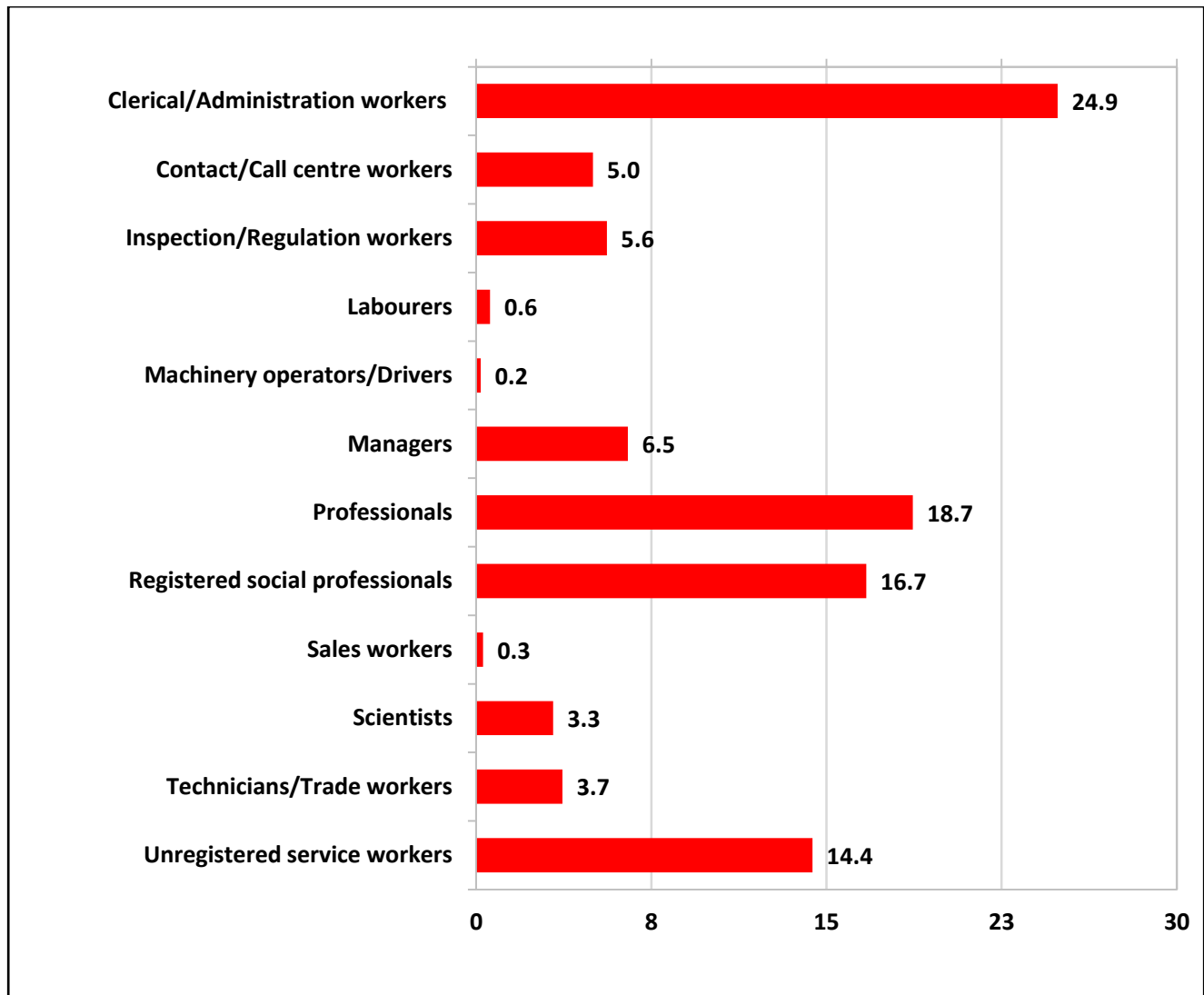
[2] Clerical or administration workers include receptionists and programme administrators; contact or call centre workers include customer service representatives; inspection or regulation workers include customs and immigration officers; machinery operators or drivers include plant operators; managers include team leaders; professionals include legal, finance, IT and policy professionals; registered social professionals include nurses and social workers; sales workers include sales support workers; scientists include agriculture and forestry consultants; technicians or trades workers include ICT technicians and telecommunication trades workers; unregistered service workers include case managers and parole officers.

The biggest group was clerical and administrative workers (see Figure 14.6). More than one in three participants worked in a professional capacity.

Managerial level

Figure 14.7: Managerial level of PSA survey participants (percentage)
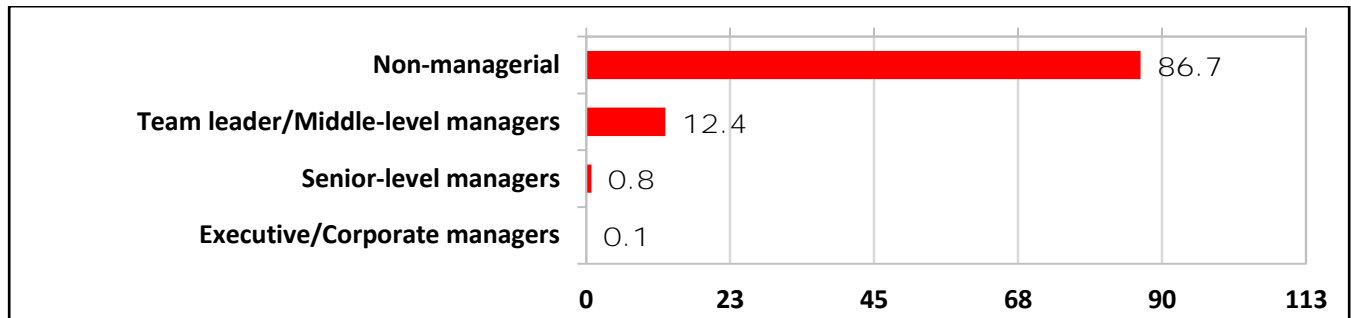
The majority of participants defined their jobs as non-managerial (see Figure 14.7). Only 116 of the 14,125 participants identified themselves as senior managers and only 15 as executive/corporate managers.

Earnings

Figure 14.8: Gross annual salaries of PSA survey participants (percentage)
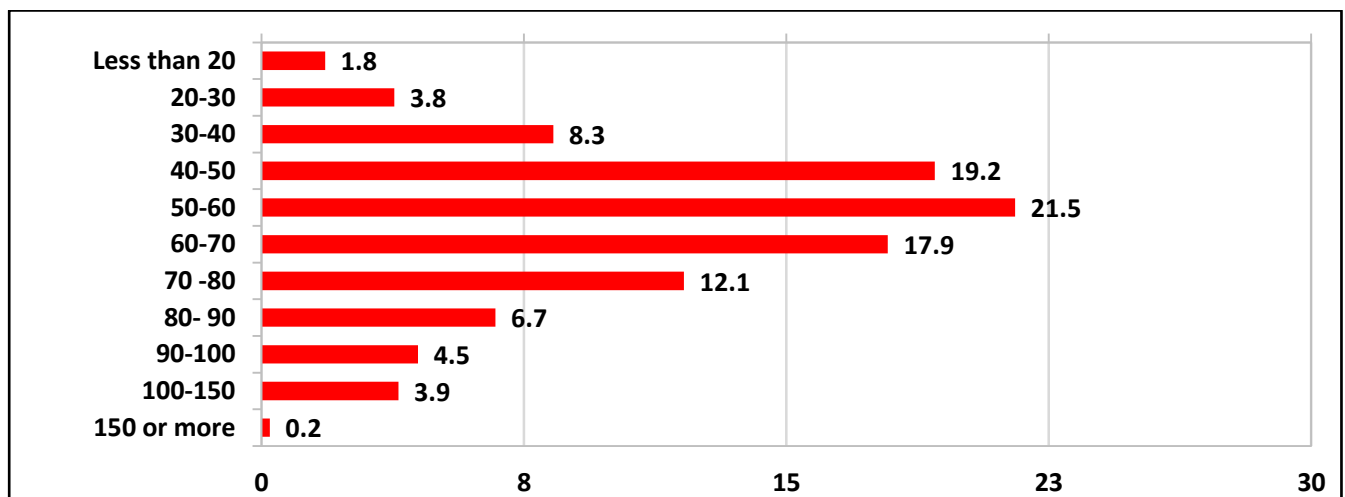
Over half the participants earned a gross annual salary of between $40,000 and $70,000 (see Figure 14.8).

Employment length

Over one in three participants had been working in their organisation for 11 years or more (see Table 14.2). This data mirrored the data in the 2013 Workplace Dynamics survey. Similar findings were observed for participants working in the core public service. The length of employment of these participants, however, was slightly higher than the one presented in the SSC survey (2015), in which the average length of service for public service employees was 9 years.

Table 14.2: Employment length

Length of time	N	%
Less than 1 year	945	6.7
1 to 5 years	3,985	28.4
5 to 10 years	3,788	27.0
11 years or more	5,318	37.9
Total	**14,036**	**100.0**

Type of employment arrangements

The large majority of participants were employed in permanent work, with only 4% working under other employment arrangements (see Table 14.3).

Table 14.3: Employment arrangements

Type of employment arrangements	N	%
Permanent employee	13,256	95.7
Casual, fixed-term employee	243	1.8
Contractors	346	2.5
Invoice the workplace	5	.0
Hired through an agency	8	.1
Total	**13,858**	**100.0**

Proximity to core work

Almost half the participants saw their jobs as part of the primary service provided by the organisation (see Table 14.4). Additional analysis found that those who rated their jobs as part of the primary service were significantly less satisfied with their pay, compared to those in support roles.

Table 14.4: Proximity to core work

Proximity to core work	N	%
It is the primary service	6,618	48.3
It very closely supports the primary service	4,092	29.8
It supports the organisation generally	2,999	21.9
Total	**13,709**	**100.0**

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16 Appendix A: Additional information about the measures

Table A: Descriptive statistics and Cronbach's Alpha for each of the measures

Measures	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	α
Abuse by clients	1.58	.89	1.90	3.92	.37
Access to budget	3.67	1.17	-.30	-.28	.62
Access to flexible hours	4.35	1.60	-.37	-.69	.63
Accountability	5.21	1.03	-.59	.74	.63
Collaboration	4.66	1.29	-.69	.33	.91
Competing demands	5.25	1.30	-.79	.44	.69
Constructive leadership	4.42	1.50	-.15	-.73	.94
Current demand for FWAs	3.62	1.61	.23	-.79	.70
Employee resilience	5.73	.67	-.58	1.48	.85
Individual role clarity	5.04	1.28	-.91	.43	.83
Informal support on workplace issues	4.53	1.30	-.48	-.24	.76
Job satisfaction	5.29	1.25	-1.04	.96	.84
Laissez-faire leadership	2.93	1.32	.84	.26	.92
Leadership capability	4.65	1.66	-.59	-.60	.90
Learning culture	3.96	1.27	-.27	-.30	.89
Organisational goal clarity	4.81	1.40	-.74	.08	.90
Organisational performance	3.98	1.33	-.21	-.67	.88
Pay satisfaction	3.51	1.63	.10	-.96	.92
Perceived organisational support	4.30	1.31	-.34	-.39	.91
PIRK Total	4.11	1.18	-.27	-.48	.91
PIRK Power	4.96	1.38	-.91	.24	.91

PIRK Information	3.72	1.51	-.04	-.91	.91
PIRK Reward	3.73	1.66	.04	-.95	.85
PIRK Knowledge	4.15	1.70	-.31	-1.02	.96
Psychological safety climate	3.94	1.40	-.11	-.62	.97
Public service motivation	5.32	.90	-.44	.39	.78
Self-evaluation of leadership	5.51	.92	-.94	1.99	.68
Sexual harassment	1.06	.18	5.75	47.15	.75
Task interdependence	4.68	1.20	-.47	.03	.74
Team empowerment (Autonomy)	4.01	1.42	-.35	-.62	.86
Training	2.25	.81	.22	-.69	.85
Workplace bullying	1.48	.61	2.28	6.44	.89
Workplace innovation	3.76	1.41	-.10	-.64	.89
Workplace motivation	5.58	.83	-.55	.38	.64

Note. M = Mean; *SD* = Standard Deviation; α = Cronbach's alpha.