

BELIZEAN EMPLOYMENT SURVEY

DECEMBER 2021

Prepared for: Belizean Department of Education

Prepared by: The Organizational Effectiveness Research Group at Minnesota State University, Mankato, MN, USA

Report Team

Daniel Sachau, Ph.D.
Director | OERG Consulting
Minnesota State University, Mankato
Mankato, MN. USA
daniel.sachau@mnsu.edu
(507) 389-5829

Meg Finbraaten
Associate Consultant | OERG Consulting
Minnesota State University, Mankato
meg.finbraaten@mnsu.edu
(507) 438-0597

Brooke Hom
Associate Consultant | OERG Consulting
Minnesota State University
Mobile: 715.642.1888
brooke.hom@mnsu.edu

Dan Houlihan, Ph.D.
Director, Center for Excellence in Scholarship and Research
Professor of Clinical Psychology
Distinguished Faculty Research Scholar
Minnesota State University, Mankato
ML 88G
507-389-6278
daniel.houlihan@mnsu.edu

Prepared For

Collin Estrada
Principal
All Saints Primary School, Belize
collinestrada@gmail.com

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 3

METHOD 3
KEY FINDINGS 3

DEMOGRAPHICS 4

GENDER 4
BREADWINNER 5
AGE 6
TENURE 7
FULL TIME VS. PART TIME 8
EDUCATION VS. PUBLIC SERVICE 9
MINISTRY 10

PAY CUTS AND FINANCIAL CONCERNS 11

KEY FINDINGS 11
SECURITY 11
ABILITY TO PAY BILLS 12
OPTIMISM 13

PAY CUTS AND HEALTH-RELATED OUTCOMES 14

KEY FINDINGS 14
STRESS SCALE 14
PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS 16

PAY CUTS AND WORK-RELATED OUTCOMES 17

KEY FINDINGS 17
CONSIDERED QUITTING 17
ACTIVELY LOOKED FOR JOB 17
FEEL VALUED BY LEADERS 18
EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SCALE 19
LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT 20
SERVING CLIENTS 20
PERFORMANCE 20

TYING FINANCIAL INSECURITY TO STRESS AND WORK OUTCOMES 21

KEY FINDINGS 21

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarizes the results of a survey conducted in the summer of 2021 to assess the extent to which the tiered pay cuts of the Belizean education and public service employees affected employee satisfaction with work, organizational support, and overall well-being.

METHOD

The Organizational Effectiveness Research Group at Minnesota State University distributed a survey to Belizean employees working in public service and education departments. The survey included questions about employees' financial concerns, health concerns, and work engagement. The electronic survey was distributed via an online survey platform. Employees who wanted to complete the survey simply clicked on a link embedded in an email invitation. The link then directed them to the survey. Employees were able to skip any questions that caused confusion or discomfort.

Within the survey, participants completed questions about demographic variables, and then were asked to respond to various questions related to their well-being over the previous month. Employees were encouraged to be as candid as possible while identifying their concerns regarding the pay cuts.

KEY FINDINGS

- Belizean employees are experiencing substantial concern about their finances. 90.8% of employees reported they are worried about their financial security, and 86.4% reported they are worried about paying their bills.
- Many employees do not feel valued by their leadership. 55.5% report not feeling valued by their leaders.
- A considerable number of employees are considering quitting their current job. 44.7% of employees reported that they had considered quitting.
- The reported stress of Belizean employees was found to be higher than that of the national average. It was also found that 49% of Belizean employees are experiencing at a wide variety of stress-related health problems.
- Despite the stress and health problems, Belizean employees remain committed to personal development and serving their clients

DEMOGRAPHICS

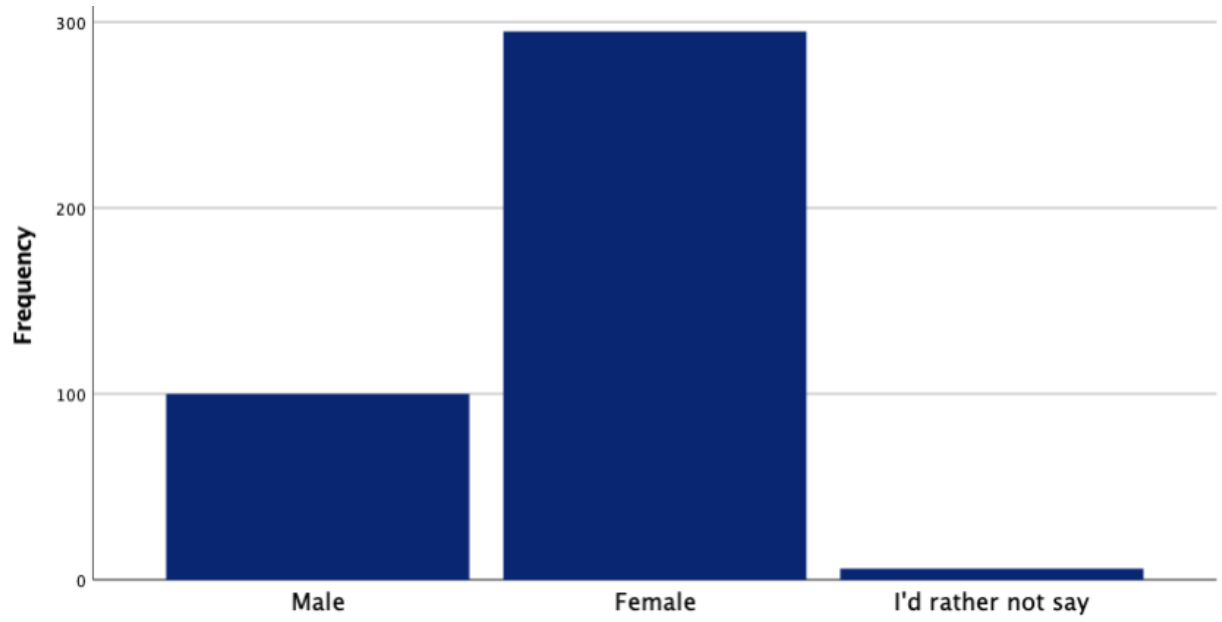
The participants in the study were a representative sample of Belizean teachers and public service employees.

GENDER

"What is your gender?"

Items	Frequency	Percent
Male	100	24. %
Female	295	73.6%
I'd rather not say	6	1.5%
Total	**400**	**100.0%**

Graph 1: **Gender Distribution**

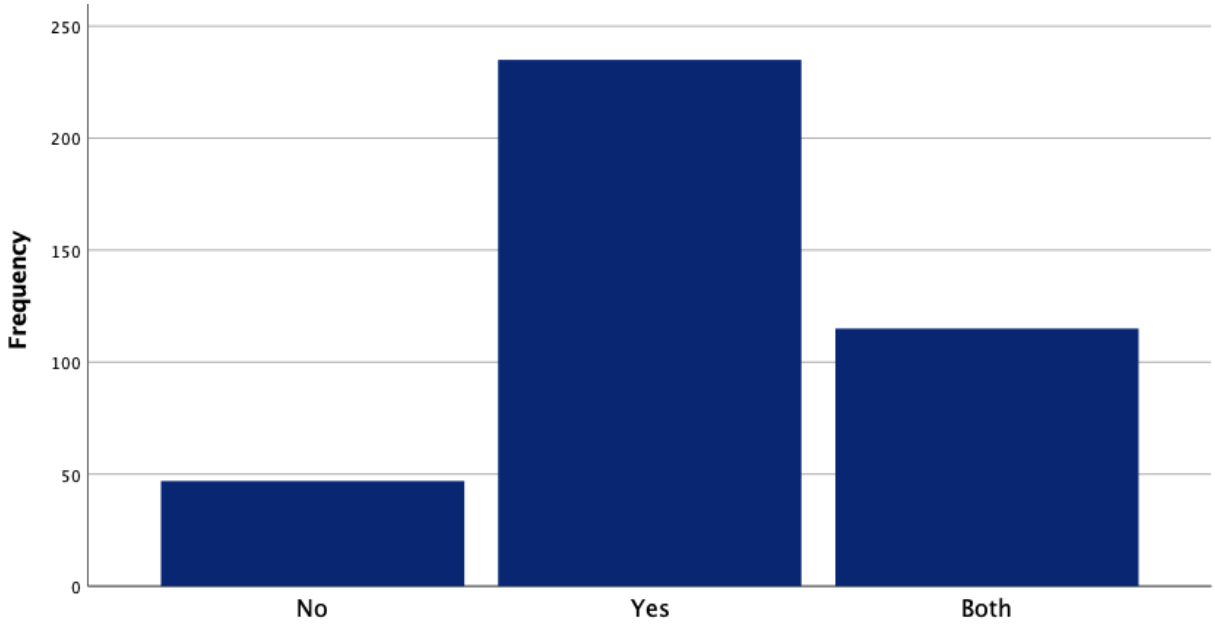


BREADWINNER

"Are you the primary source of income in your household?"

Items	Frequency	Percent
No	47	11.8%
Yes	235	59.2%
My spouse/partner and I are both the main sources of income for our house	115	29.0%
Total	**397**	**100.0%**

Graph 2: **Source of Income Distribution**

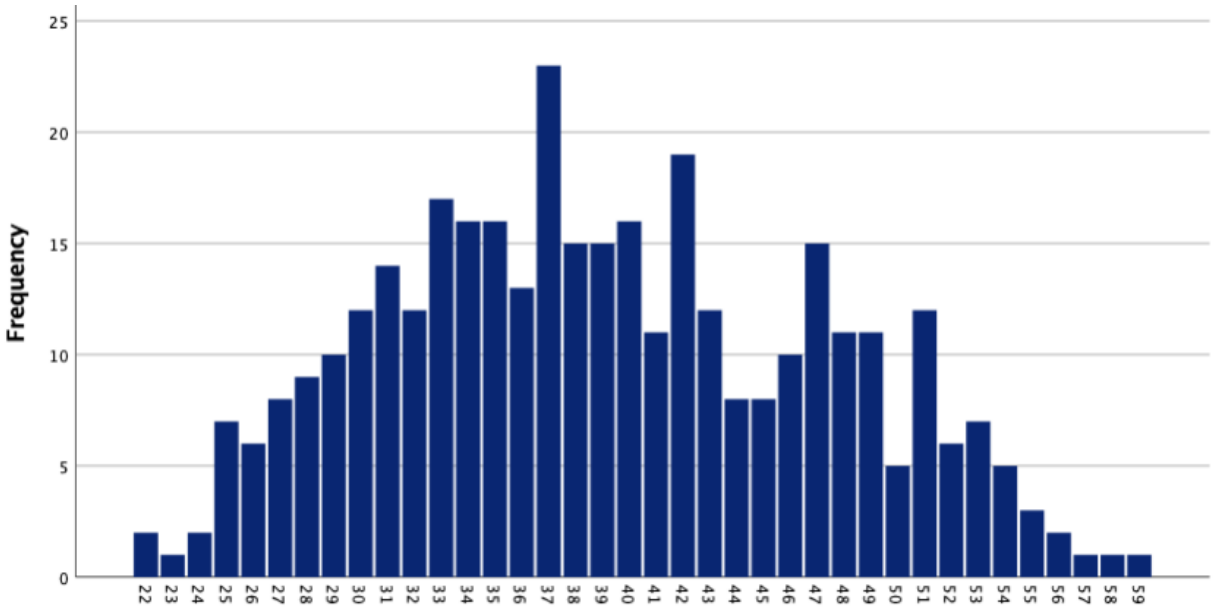


AGE

"What is your age in years?"

		Frequency
N	Valid	47
	Missing	235
Mean		39.0497
Median		38.0000
Std. Deviation		8.06571

Graph 3: **Age Distribution**

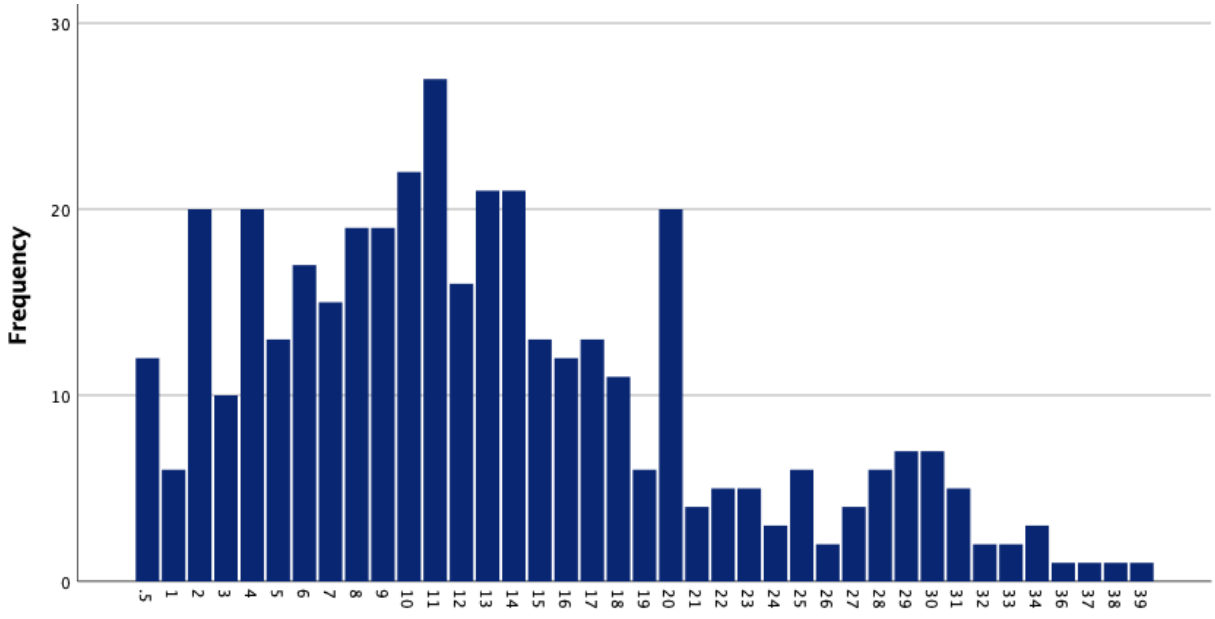


TENURE

"How many years have you been employed at your current organization?"

		Frequency
N	398	47
	5	235
Mean		12.96
Median		11.00
Std. Deviation		8.47

Graph 4: **Years Employed Distribution**

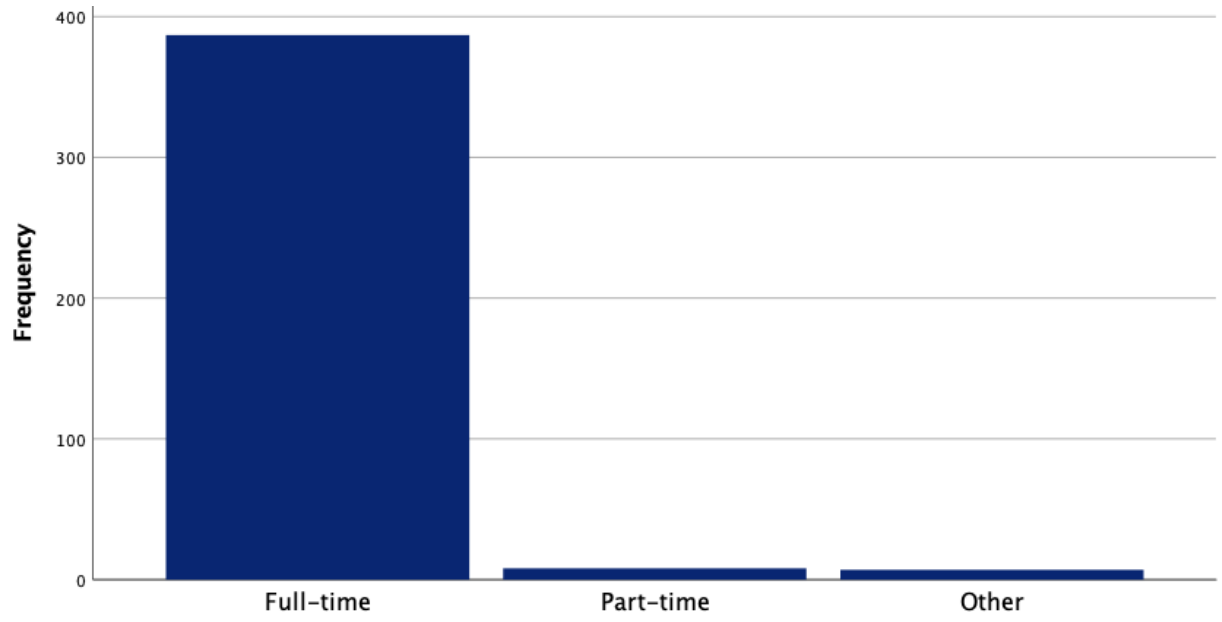


FULL TIME VS. PART TIME

"Do you work full time or part time?"

Items	Frequency	Percent
Full-time	387	96.3%
Part-time	8	2.0%
Other	7	1.7%
Total	**402**	**100.0%**

Graph 5: **Job Status Distribution**

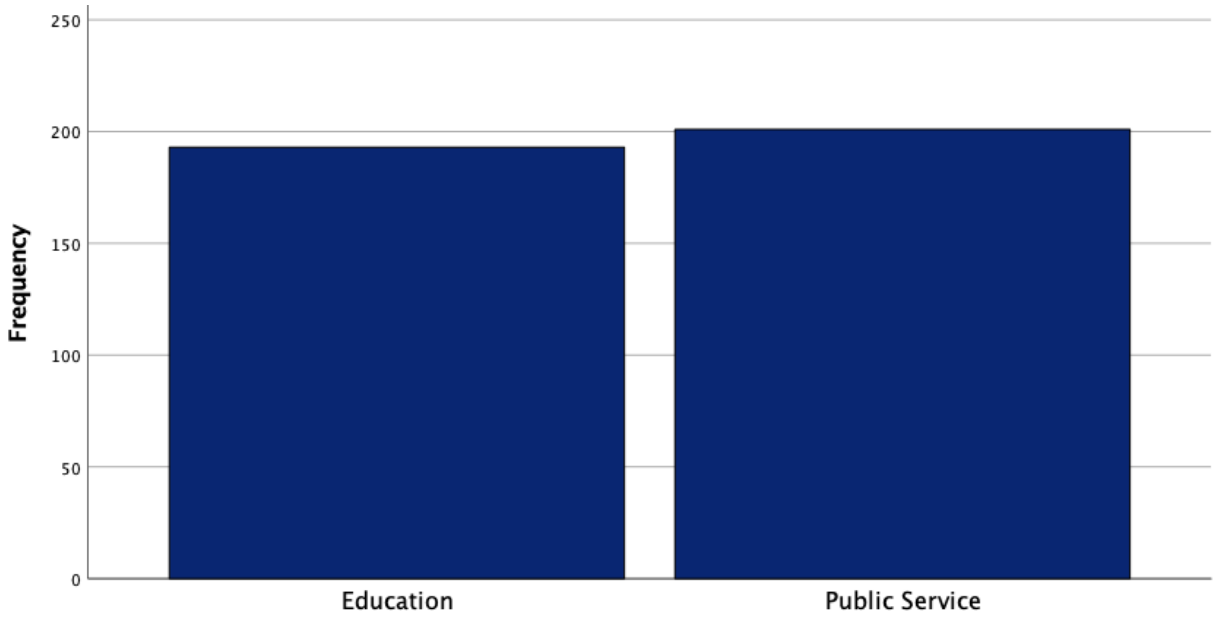


EDUCATION VS. PUBLIC SERVICE

"Do you work in education or public service?"

Items	Frequency	Percent
Education	193	49.0%
Public Service	201	51.0%
Total	**394**	**100.0%**

Graph 5: **Job Industry Distribution**



MINISTRY

"Within what ministry do you work?"

Items	Frequency	Percent
Agriculture	3	1.7%
Attorney General	5	2.8%
Auditor General	2	1.1%
Culture, Youth, and Sports	4	2.3%
Economic Development, and Petroleum	1	.6%
Education, Science, and Technology	19	10.7%
Finance	21	11.9%
Fisheries, Forestry, The Environment, and Sustainable Development	7	4.0%
Foreign Affairs	1	.6%
Health	55	31.1%
Housing and Urban Development	1	.6%
Human Development, Social Transformation, and Poverty Alleviation	11	6.2%
Immigration	6	3.4%
Judiciary	3	1.7%
Labour, Local Government, and Rural Development	3	1.7%
National Security	6	3.4%
Natural Resources	1	.6%
Police	1	.6%
Public Service, Elections and Boundaries, Energy, and Public Utilities	3	1.7%
Tourism and Civil Aviation	6	3.4%
Transport and National Emergency Management	13	7.3%
Works	2	1.1%
Other	3	1.7%

PAY CUTS AND FINANCIAL CONCERNS

In this section, we examine employee perceptions of their financial security.

KEY FINDINGS

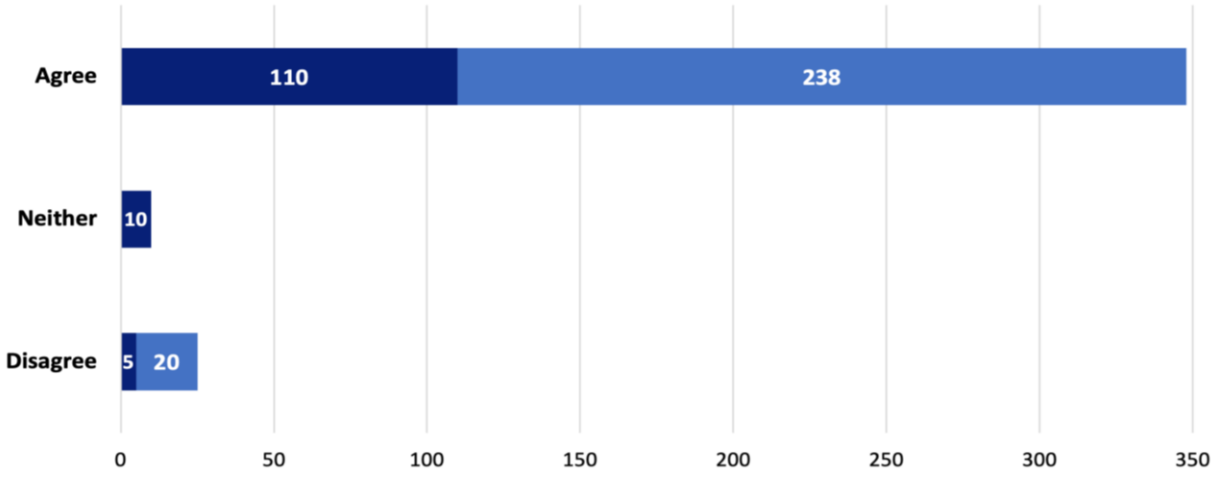
- 90.8% of respondents are concerned about their financial security
- 96.2% of respondents are worried about paying their bills because of Covid and the cuts
- Only 34.9% of employees are feeling optimistic

SECURITY

"I am concerned about my financial security."

Items	Frequency	Percent
1 Strongly disagree	20	5.2%
2 Disagree	5	1.3%
3 Neither agree nor disagree	10	2.6%
4 Agree	110	28.7%
5 Strongly agree	238	62.1%
Total	**383**	**100.0%**

Graph 6: **Financial Security Concerns**

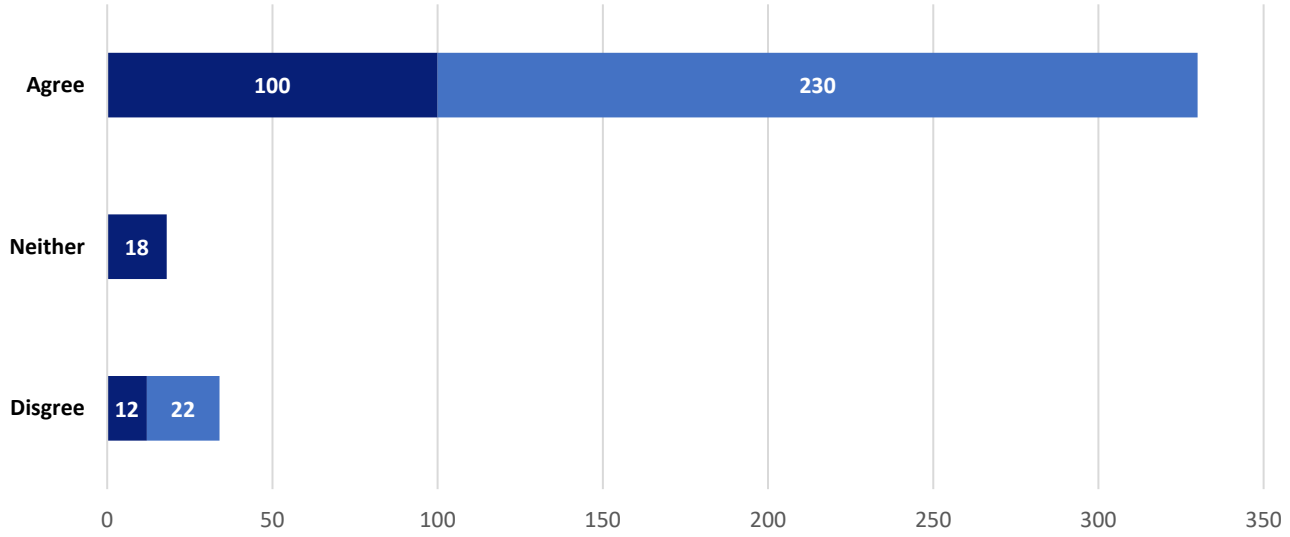


ABILITY TO PAY BILLS

"I am worried about being able to pay all my bills because of the planned salary cuts."

Items	Frequency	Percent
1 Strongly disagree	22	5.8%
2 Disagree	12	3.1%
3 Neither agree nor disagree	18	4.7%
4 Agree	100	26.2%
5 Strongly agree	230	60.2%
Total	**382**	**100.0%**

Graph 6: **Paying Bills Concerns**

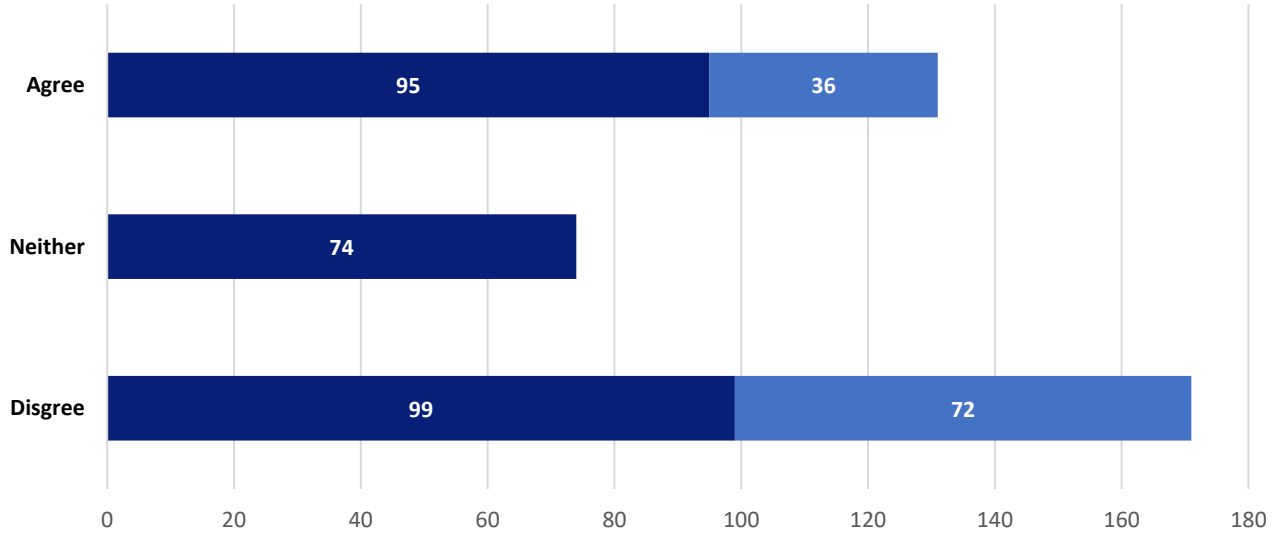


OPTIMISM

"I feel optimistic about the future."

Items	Frequency	Percent
1 Strongly disagree	72	19.1%
2 Disagree	99	26.3%
3 Neither agree nor disagree	74	19.7%
4 Agree	95	25.3%
5 Strongly agree	36	9.6%
Total	**376**	**100.0%**

Graph 6: **Optimism about Future**



PAY CUTS AND HEALTH-RELATED OUTCOMES

In this section, we examine how pay cuts affect a variety of measures of stress and health.

KEY FINDINGS

- Scores on a standardized measure of stress were higher than international norm

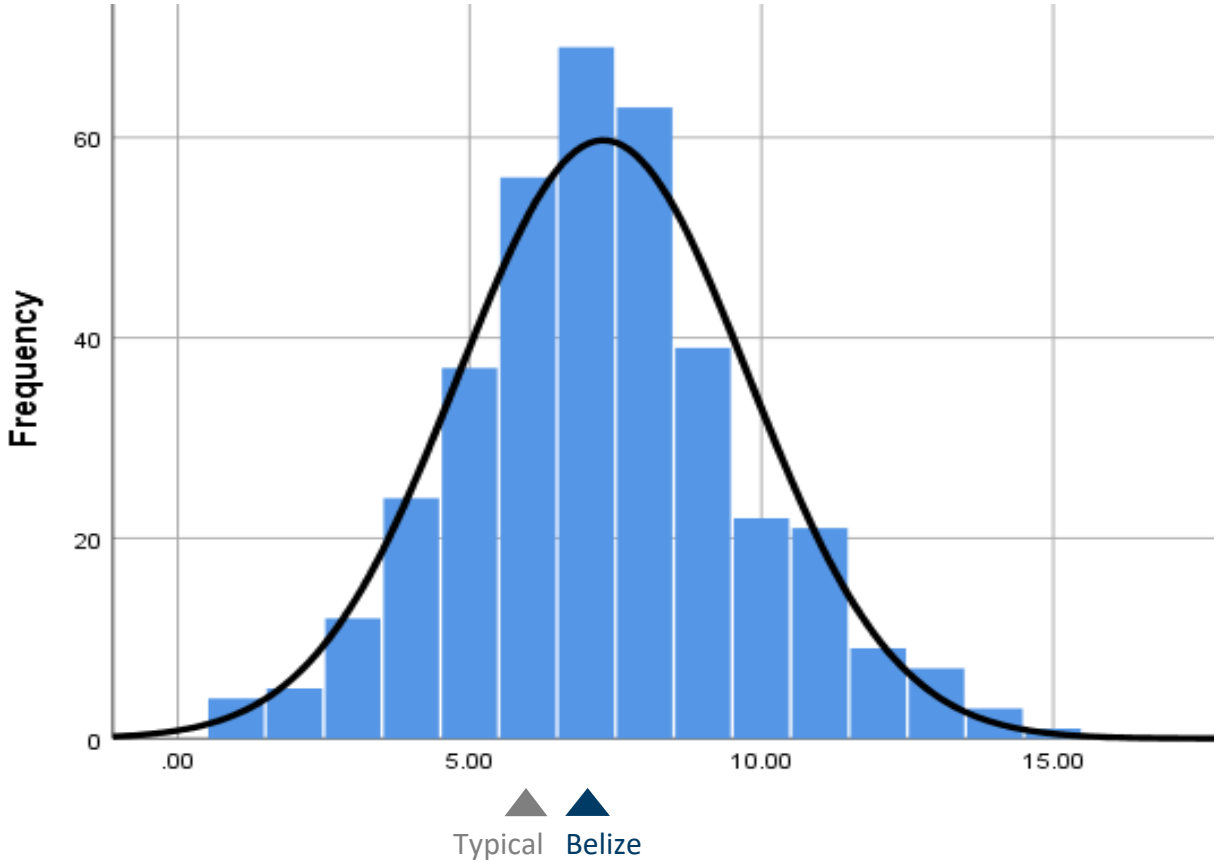
STRESS SCALE

Cohen Stress Scale

The following questions are about your stress levels over the last month.
(0 = never, 1= almost never, 2= sometimes, 3 = fairly often, 4 = very often)

1. How often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?
2. How often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems? (Reverse Coded)
3. How often have you felt that things were going your way? (Reverse Coded)
4. How often have you felt difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them?

High scores indicate greater levels of stress. Scores could range from 0 to 16.



Belizean Scores: The Mean = 7.3, Median = 7.0, SD = 2.5

Typical Scores: International studies found the average to be 5.7 for males and 6.0 for females.

PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

Participants were asked, "In the last month, which of the following have you experienced?"

1. Exhaustion
2. Trouble sleeping
3. Stomach or digestive problems
4. Headaches, dizziness, or shaking
5. Aches or pains
6. Chest pains or racing heart
7. Irritability
8. Sadness or depression
9. Worrying
10. Forgetfulness
11. Minor cold or cough
12. Interpersonal problems with family or friends
13. Interpersonal problems with coworkers

The number of symptoms was totaled for each participant.

Belizean Scores: The mean number of symptoms = 7, median = 7, and the SD = 3.24

How many symptoms had participants experienced?

Number of Symptoms	Frequency	Percent
0	4	1.0%
1	12	3.1%
2	20	5.2%
3	23	6.0%
4	36	9.4%
5	35	9.2%
6	40	10.5%
7	36	9.4%
8	38	9.9%
9	37	9.7%
10	41	10.7%
11	24	6.3%
12	21	5.5%
13	15	3.9%
Total	**382**	**100.0%**

PAY CUTS AND WORK-RELATED OUTCOMES

In this section, we examine questions about feeling valued, turnover, growth, serving clients and engagement.

KEY FINDINGS

- 55% of employees do not feel valued by their leadership
- 45% of employees have thought about quitting
- 23% actually looked for a new job
- Engagement levels were somewhat lower than engagement levels for international samples of teachers and government employees
- Although employees are somewhat discouraged, around 50% remained committed to their clients and to developing their own skills.

CONSIDERED QUITTING

"Have you thought about quitting your job within the last month?"

Items	Frequency	Percent
No	178	55.3%
Yes	144	44.7%
Total	**322**	**100.0%**

ACTIVELY LOOKED FOR JOB

"Are you actively looking for a new job?"

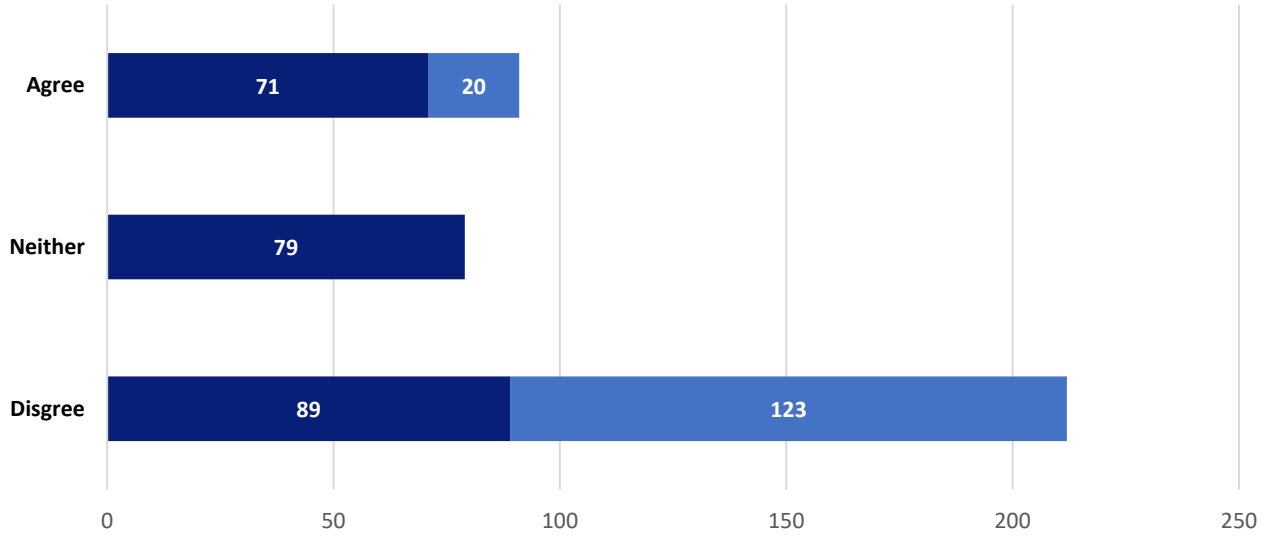
Items	Frequency	Percent
No	249	77.3%
Yes	73	22.7%
Total	**322**	**100.0%**

FEEL VALUED BY LEADERS

"I feel valued by organization's leaders."

Items	Frequency	Percent
1 Strongly disagree	123	32.2%
2 Disagree	89	23.3%
3 Neither agree nor disagree	79	20.7%
4 Agree	71	18.6%
5 Strongly agree	20	5.2%
Total	**382**	**100.0%**

Graph 7: **Feeling Valued by Leaders**



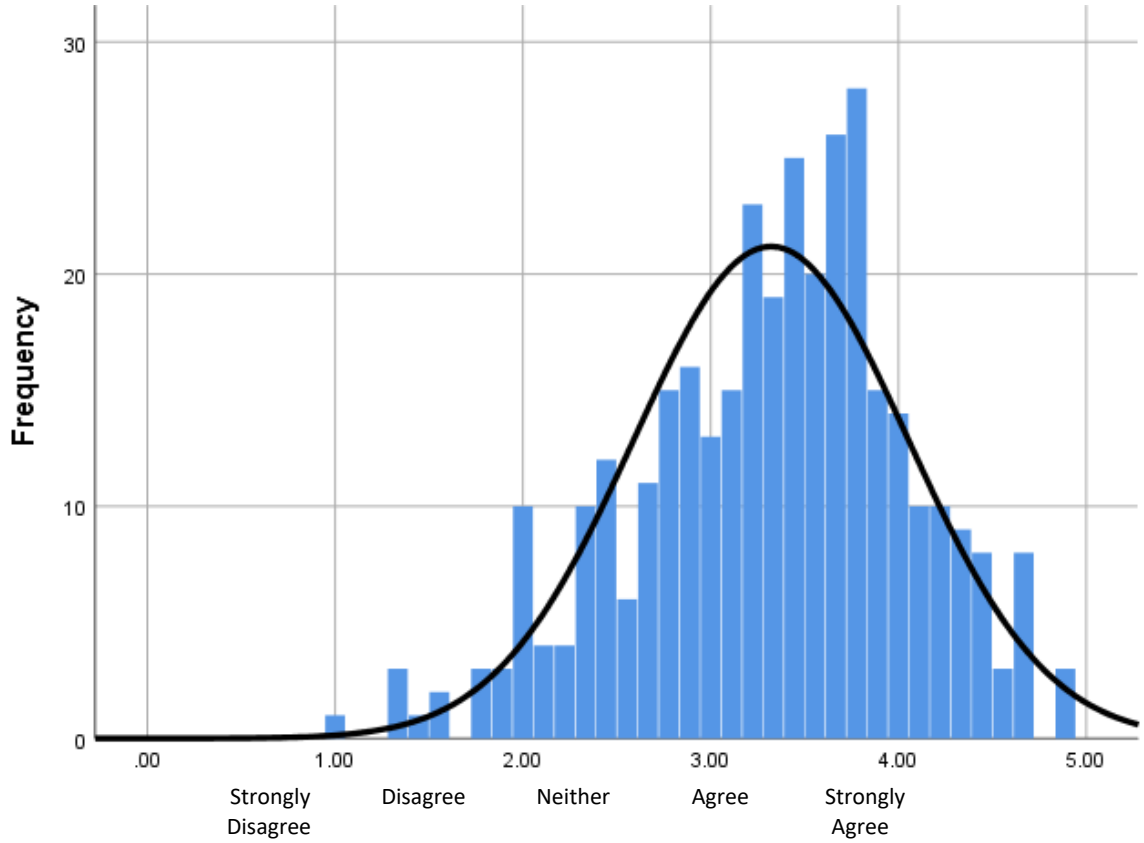
EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SCALE

To what extent do you agree with the statement. **In the last month I was:**

1 = strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 Neither, 4 = Agree , 5 = Strongly Agree

1 — At work, I was bursting with energy.
2 — Time flew when I was working.
3 — My job inspired me.
4 — When I woke up in the morning, I felt like going to work.
5 — I was proud of the work that I did.
6 — I was immersed in my work.
7 — To me, my job was challenging.
8 — It was difficult to detach myself from my job.
9 — At work, I always persevered even when things did not go well.

Across all items, the mean score was 3.32, SD = .73, Median = 3.44. Means for most international samples = 4.0



Engagement Scale Score
UWES – 9

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

"I was able to find time to expand my knowledge and/or skillset within my field."

Items	Frequency	Percent
1 Strongly disagree	52	13.3%
2 Disagree	83	21.2%
3 Neither agree nor disagree	90	23.0%
4 Agree	129	32.9%
5 Strongly agree	38	9.7%
Total	**392**	**100.0%**

SERVING CLIENTS

"I was able to find time to identify better ways to serve my 'clients' (students, constituents, customers, citizens, etc.)."

Items	Frequency	Percent
1 Strongly disagree	40	10.5%
2 Disagree	71	18.6%
3 Neither agree nor disagree	82	21.5%
4 Agree	153	40.1%
5 Strongly agree	36	9.4%
Total	**382**	**100.0%**

PERFORMANCE

"I was able to perform the same as or better than my usual level of performance."

Items	Frequency	Percent
1 Strongly disagree	32	8.3%
2 Disagree	99	25.8%
3 Neither agree nor disagree	100	26.0%
4 Agree	122	31.8%
5 Strongly agree	31	8.1%
Total	**384**	**100.0%**

TYING FINANCIAL INSECURITY TO STRESS AND WORK OUTCOMES

In this section, we examine the relationship between two measures of financial insecurity and two measures of stress as well as a variety of work-related outcomes.

KEY FINDINGS

- Financial concerns in general, and worrying about paying bills in particular, were both related to stress and physical symptoms. The greater the insecurity the greater the stress and the more common the health problems.
- Financial concerns in general, and worrying about paying bills in particular, were both related to thinking about quitting and looking for a new job. The greater the insecurity the more likely employees were to think about quitting and look for new job.
- Financial concerns and worry about paying bills were not related to employee learning, service, or engagement.

The first question examined was, are financial concern related to scores on the stress scale and the number of symptoms employees are experiencing? The answer is yes. The greater the concerns about finances, the higher the score on the stress scale ($r = .19$, $p < .01$) and the greater the number of symptoms ($r = .14$, $p < .02$).

Next, we examined whether worry about paying bills was related to scores on the stress scale and number of symptoms. Again, the answer was yes. The greater the worry about not being able to pay the bills, the greater the stress ($r = .21$, $p < .01$) and the greater the number of symptoms ($r = .15$, $p < .01$).

Neither the item that assessed financial concern nor the item that assessed worry about paying bills were strongly correlated to engagement, thoughts about quitting, looking for a job, or growth and serving clients. However, there was considerable restriction in range for financial concern and bill worry. The vast majority of employees were concerned and worried (they scored 4s or 5s for these items). A restriction in range can mask an underlying relationship between any two variables. One way to address this statistical problem is to compare the stress and work-related outcomes for employees who are most concerned (5 on the scale) to those who scored less than 5. This produces roughly equal number of participants in the groups. As can be seen in the next two tables, financial concern was related to stress, symptoms, thinking about quitting and looking for work but was not related to learning on the job, serving clients, or engagement. The same was true for the item that assessed the specific question about paying bills.

Table 1: **Financial Security Concerns**

Outcome	Employees With Highest Score on Financial Concern	Employees Scoring Less than the Highest Score on Financial Concern	Significant Difference?
Stress Scale	7.7	6.6	Yes, $p < .001$
Symptoms	7.9	6.2	Yes, $p < .001$
Considering quitting	52%	33%	Yes, $p < .001$
Looking for Work	28%	15%	Yes, $p < .01$
Able to Expand My Knowledge	2.9	3.1	No
Find Better Ways to Serve Clients	3.1	3.3	No
Engagement	29.8	30.1	No

Table 2: **Paying Bills Concerns**

Outcome	Employees With Highest Score on Financial Concern	Employees Scoring Less than the Highest Score on Financial Concern	Significant Difference?
Stress Scale	7.9	6.4	Yes, $p < .001$
Symptoms	7.8	6.3	Yes, $p < .001$
Considering quitting	49%	37%	Yes, $p < .04$
Looking for Work	26%	17%	Yes, $p < .07$
Able to Expand My Knowledge	3.04	3.04	No
Find Better Ways to Serve Clients	3.2	2.3	No
Engagement	30.0	29.7	No