

Early childhood education

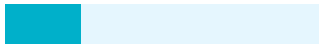
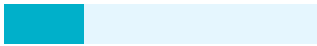


Early childhood education (ECE) is often seen as an opportunity to get a head start in schooling. Information gathered from the PILNA System Questionnaire shows that, although each country has policies regarding ECE, the structure and compulsory nature varies across participating countries. As part of PILNA, students were asked to indicate their ECE history using the following categories: 'Yes, for 1 year', 'Yes, for 2 years', 'Yes for 3 years of more', or 'No'.

ECE attendance

In Federated States of Micronesia, approximately 75% of students from PILNA 2021 had attended at least one year of ECE. This was similar, on average, for boys (74%) and for girls (77%). There are differences, however, in the amount of time that students spent at ECE prior to their schooling. Figure STT1.1 shows these ECE differences by grade five students and grade seven students in Federated States of Micronesia in PILNA 2021.

Table STT1.1

Percentage of students who attended ECE

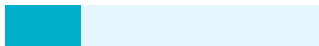
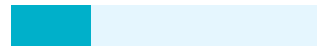


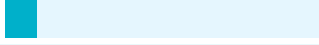
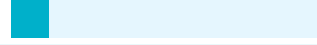
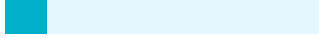
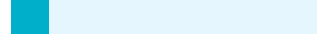
ECE Attendance	Grade 5	Grade 7
Did not attend ECE	 24%	 25%
Attended ECE	 76%	 75%

Students who attended at least one year of ECE vs those who did not attend

() Standard errors appear in parentheses.

Table STT1.2

ECE Attendance by year level

ECE Attendance	Grade 5	Grade 7
Did not attend	 24%	 25%
1 year	 53%	 51%
2 years	 10%	 12%
3 years	 13%	 12%

() Standard errors appear in parentheses.

Similar proportions of grade five students (76%) and grade seven students (75%) attended at least one year of ECE. For the majority of students, about half, this involved having attended one year of ECE. Just over one out of 10 students attended two years of ECE, and a similar proportion attended three or more years of ECE. Approximately 25%, or one in four, students in both year levels reported they did not attend any ECE at all (Figure STT1.2).

ECE attendance and student performance

Statistical testing was done to learn whether there was a difference in student performance between students who had attended at least one year of ECE and students who had not attended any ECE. This was done at both the grade five and grade seven levels. At both levels a significant positive association was noted between ECE attendance and reading achievement. Students who participated in ECE had higher levels of achievement in reading than students who did not.

What does this mean?

Most students (75%) who participated in PILNA 2021 attended ECE for at least one year. Similar proportions were observed across grade five and grade seven students, showing ECE attendance rates were stable over time.

Student performance in reading and writing tended to be higher for grade seven students who attended ECE than for those who did not. For grade five students, performance tended to be higher in reading for those who attended ECE than for those who did not. The regional findings also indicate that students with ECE performance tended to perform better in school than those who had not attended, but only for students in their later years of schooling (comparable to grade seven). It is not known why differences were found for grade seven students in writing and not grade five students, but the findings suggest the possibility that ECE has a positive effect on performance, but that this may only become noticeable in later years of schooling. Given the diversity of ECE throughout the region, these results should be looked at in local contexts.