

ERRATA

Ghana Statistical Service (GSS), Ghana Health Service (GHS), and ICF International. 2015. *Ghana Demographic and Health Survey 2014*. Rockville, Maryland, USA: GSS, GHS, and ICF International.

February 2016:

There was a refinement to the weight variable to be used when calculating early childhood learning and development statistics. Because early child education questions HHQ32–HHQ41 were asked of only one randomly selected child age 4-15 per household, a special weight is needed when calculating estimates from those questions. The weight variable has been adjusted, a new data file released, and affected tables re-run. Tables 10.12–10.16 and accompanying text have been corrected in the electronic version of the report on the website.

The corrected information is shown below; yellow highlighted strikethrough font indicates error, red font indicates correct text and data.

Chapter 10 CHILD HEALTH AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT

Page 125

Key Findings box

- Four percent of children under age 5 showed symptoms of acute respiratory infection in the two weeks before the survey; and about one half of these ~~newborns~~ children were taken to a health facility or provider for advice or treatment.
- ~~About~~ Half of children age 4-15 were engaged by an adult household member in more than four activities that support learning during the seven days preceding the survey; children living in the richest households were almost ~~twice~~ as likely as those living in the poorest households to engage in these activities.
- Nearly 6 in 10 ~~household respondents~~ parents/caretakers want ~~their~~ children age 4-15 to be taught in both English and a local language while, about 3 in 10 prefer their children to be taught in English only.
- The majority of children age 4-15 years who attended school in the 2014-2015 school year walked to school (~~82~~ 84 percent) and ~~nearly~~ one-third spend more than 20 minutes to get to school.

Pages 144 to 151

10.9.1 Support for Learning

Corrections begin in the fourth paragraph of page 144.

Thirty-five percent of the children engaged in one to three activities with an adult household members in the past week. ~~More than~~ Half of children age 4-15 (~~51~~ 50 percent) were engaged by an adult household member in four or more activities that support learning. Generally, children in urban areas (56 percent) are more likely than their rural counterparts (~~46~~ 45 percent) to engage in four or more learning activities with household members. ~~Significant~~ Substantial differentials by region and socio-economic status are also observed:

engagement of household members in four or more activities with children is highest in **Western**, Greater Accra, Eastern, **and** Central, **and Western regions** (**55-57** 54-57 percent) and lowest in **Upper East Northern region** (38 percent). While **67** 68 percent of children living in the richest households get engaged in four or more activities with household members, the proportion of those living in the poorest households is 36 percent. Engagement of household members in activities with children increases with parents'/caretakers' education and increasing wealth. Whereas the mean number of activities for children whose parents have a secondary or higher education is five, that of children whose parents have no education is three.

Some of the activities, such as helping with homework, talking to the child's teacher about progress, participating in parent-teacher and school management committee activities, and providing the child with a lantern, torch, or lamp, only apply to children currently in school. Data in Table 10.12 on activities that promote learning can be recalculated for only those children age 4-15 who attended school during the 2014-2015 school year. In that case, the proportion of children engaged by an adult household member in four or more activities to support learning increased from **51** 50 percent among all children to **58** 57 percent among children of the same age attending school (data not shown). However, the percentage of children engaged in one to three activities with an adult household member in the past week is almost the same for all children age 4-15 (35 percent) and for those children age 4-15 who attended school during the 2014-2015 school year (34 percent, data not shown). The mean number of activities that household adult members engage in with children is about four in both groups of children regardless of whether they attended school (data not shown).

Table 10.12 Activities that promote learning

Percentage of children age 4-15 with whom a household member engaged in activities that promote learning in the past **in** the seven days, by background characteristics, Ghana 2014

Background characteristic	Percentage of children age 4-15 with whom household members engaged in:				Mean number of activities that promote learning that household members engaged in with children age 4-15 in the past seven days		Number of children age 4-15	
	1-3 activities that promote learning in the past seven days		4+ activities that promote learning in the past seven days					
Age in years								
4-6	34.2	33.5	46.3	45.9	3.5	3.4	1,637	1,589
7-9	32.9	33.7	55.6	53.4	4.1	4.0	1,618	1,733
10-12	36.5	36.8	52.8	51.7	3.9		1,461	1,568
13-15	36.7	36.0	49.0	48.9	3.7		1,487	1,619
Sex								
Male	34.9	35.2	50.8	49.3	3.8	3.7	3,061	3,242
Female	35.1	34.8	51.1	50.8	3.8		3,143	3,267
Residence								
Urban	34.2	33.9	56.4	56.3	4.2	4.1	3,067	3,003
Rural	35.8	35.9	45.6	44.7	3.5	3.4	3,137	3,506
Region								
Western	27.7	27.2	56.5	57.4	4.3		633	623
Central	31.9	32.3	55.4	55.9	4.3		638	664
Greater Accra	34.6	35.6	55.6	54.2	3.8	3.7	1,105	1,064
Volta	31.3	30.8	52.8	52.3	3.8		532	564
Eastern	31.1	31.8	56.4	55.2	4.1	4.0	644	638
Ashanti	41.0	40.9	48.9	47.8	4.1		1,161	1,225
Brong Ahafo	34.2	32.2	46.6	47.4	3.3	3.4	548	571
Northern	37.4	35.5	38.5	38.1	2.8	2.7	516	671
Upper East	41.7	41.9	38.3	38.6	3.1	3.2	256	290
Upper West	46.2	46.6	41.2	40.1	3.2	3.1	173	198
Mother's/father's/ caretaker's education								
No education	39.6	38.8	37.2	36.6	2.9		1,749	2,057
Primary	37.6	37.0	45.6	46.6	3.5	3.6	1,063	1,152
Middle/JSS/JHS	34.7	34.2	56.0	56.1	4.2		2,450	2,440
Secondary+	24.5	25.2	69.3	69.5	4.8	4.9	941	859
Wealth quintile								
Lowest	37.4	37.0	36.1	36.0	2.8		1,154	1,477
Second	36.7	36.5	44.7	44.9	3.4		1,297	1,413
Middle	37.8	38.2	51.2	51.5	4.0		1,324	1,338
Fourth	35.1	34.7	55.8	55.9	4.2	4.3	1,270	1,216
Highest	27.3	26.5	67.0	67.8	4.6		1,159	1,064
Total	35.0	35.0	50.9	50.0	3.8		6,204	6,509

Note: Total includes one child for whom information on mother's/father's/caretaker's education is missing.

¹ Activities include helping with homework, buying or borrowing books to read, taking child to library, taking child to a reading event, talking to child's teacher about child's learning progress, participating in parent teacher association, participating in a school management committee, regularly reading to the child, encouraging the child to read, communicating high expectations to the child, providing the child with a lantern/torch/lamp, relieving the child of some household chores, or other similar activities.

10.9.2 Reading, Book Ownership, and Textbook and Reading Materials

The importance of being able to read is widely accepted. The ability to read is associated with improved quality of life, not only for the individual, but in the case of adults, also for their families and communities. Students who learn to read within the first few years of school have a greater chance of succeeding in and completing primary school.

There is evidence that children benefit most from regular reading that includes sensitive, responsive and language-rich interactional routines (Dickinson et al. 2012). As parents read with children, they have the opportunity for frequent, sensitively tuned, language-rich interactions that draw children into conversations about books, the world, language, and concepts. Allocating time to practice reading is an important way that

parents and other community members can assist with building a child's reading skills. It is important to note that the most fundamental issue ~~relating~~ related to the impact of reading on children is reading frequency.

Table 10.13 provides information about the frequency that household members read to children age 4-15 years in the household. Overall, about one-fifth (~~22~~ 21 percent) of children age 4-15 are living in households where a member reads to them a few times a week. ~~About 17~~ Sixteen percent of children are read by a household member once a week. ~~Fifty-six~~ Fifty-eight percent of the children had no member of the household read to them.

The proportion of urban children who got a member of the household read to them a few times a week is higher than their rural counterparts (~~29 percent and 17 percent, respectively~~) (28 percent and 16 percent, respectively). Regional differences are observed in the proportion of children who live in households where someone reads to them a few times a week, ranging from ~~31~~ 29 percent in Greater Accra to ~~44~~ 10 percent in Upper West. This percentage increases substantially with parents'/caretakers' education and household wealth.

Table 10.13 also presents information about the availability of children's books and reading materials in the household. Overall, ~~62~~ 61 percent of the children age 4-15 years live in households that had between 1 and 10 children's books and reading materials in the house, 11 percent have 11 to 20 books, and 5 percent had 21 or more books.

However, about one-fifth of children lived in households without any children's books and reading materials. The percentage of children age 4-15 living in households without any children's books and reading materials is highest in Upper West (45 percent) and lowest in ~~Upper East, Central, and Ashanti~~ (14, 15, and 16 percent, respectively).

By urban-rural residence, children in urban areas are more likely than those in rural areas to own books and reading materials and to own more of them. Substantial differences are observed by parent's/caretaker's education, wealth and ownership of books. ~~Nearly one-third~~ of children whose parents have no education (31 percent) have no children's books and reading material at the house compared with 7 percent of children whose parents have a secondary or higher education. A similar pattern is observed by household wealth.

students' emerging literacy skills. The more opportunities children have to read stories and other teaching and learning materials, the quicker they will learn to read.

Table 10.14 provides information about how often children bring their textbooks and other reading materials home from school. The data show that 18 percent of children age 4-15 who were attending school always brought reading materials home, 17 percent of the children brought reading materials home often and 36 percent sometimes. Almost 3 in 10 children (29 percent) never brought any reading material home from school.

Irrespective of frequency, younger children (age 4-6) are less likely than the older children (13-15 years) to always bring reading materials home. Urban and female children are more likely to bring reading materials home from school frequently than rural and male children. Regional disparities exist with respect to the frequency with which children bring home reading materials. Children in Greater Accra region (31 percent) (29 percent) are the most likely to always bring home reading materials, whereas children in Upper West are the least likely to do so (4 percent). Children whose parents have a secondary or higher education and those who live in the wealthiest households are generally more likely than other subgroups to bring home reading materials frequently.

Table 10.14 Textbooks and reading materials

Among children age 4-15 who attended school during the 2014-2015 school year, percent distribution of the frequency of bringing home textbooks and other reading materials from school, according to background characteristics, Ghana 2014

Background characteristic	Frequency of bringing home textbooks and other reading materials from school										Number of children age 4-15 who attended school during the 2014-2015 school year		
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never	Don't know/Missing	Total							
Age in years													
4-6	16.1	16.0	13.1	27.8	42.2	0.8	0.9	100.0	1,284	1,223			
7-9	17.0	16.5	17.4	16.3	35.4	30.2	30.1	100.0	1,363	1,429			
10-12	19.6	18.7	17.8	17.4	37.3	38.5	24.9	100.0	1,215	1,293			
13-15	19.6	18.4	21.3	20.9	39.3	41.4	18.9	18.5	0.9	0.8	100.0	1,127	1,207
Sex													
Male	16.2	15.3	16.9	16.6	34.8	36.6	31.4	30.9	0.7	0.6	100.0	2,465	2,555
Female	19.7	19.4	17.4	17.2	34.9	35.8	27.5	27.1	0.5		100.0	2,524	2,596
Residence													
Urban	24.0	23.6	20.1	20.7	30.3	30.5	24.9	24.4	0.7	0.8	100.0	2,492	2,425
Rural	11.9	11.8	14.3	13.5	39.3	41.3	34.0	33.1	0.5	0.4	100.0	2,497	2,727
Region													
Western	20.4	21.1	26.9	27.6	21.2	20.6	30.6	30.1	0.8	0.6	100.0	574	560
Central	15.7	16.3	19.2	17.5	46.3	48.0	18.7	18.2	0.0		100.0	346	353
Greater Accra	30.6	29.2	19.5	21.5	26.5	26.2	22.8	22.2	0.6	0.8	100.0	867	824
Volta	15.3	15.5	11.1	10.5	40.1	39.9	33.3	33.9	0.2		100.0	473	488
Eastern	20.7	20.8	16.4	15.3	35.2	37.5	26.7	25.5	1.0	0.8	100.0	526	515
Ashanti	19.0	18.9	21.1	20.9	35.3	35.6	24.3	24.3	0.4	0.3	100.0	973	1,009
Brong Ahafo	10.2	10.5	13.8	13.3	35.2	36.4	40.1	39.0	0.7	0.8	100.0	464	485
Northern	4.5	4.8	7.2	6.9	49.4	52.7	38.0	34.9	0.9	0.7	100.0	412	522
Upper East	10.3	9.6	10.3	10.0	40.9	43.4	37.3	35.5	1.2	1.5	100.0	210	232
Upper West	4.3	4.2	5.9	6.9	37.1	38.3	51.9	50.1	0.8	0.5	100.0	144	163
Mother's/father's/caretaker's education													
No education	8.8	8.5	12.7	12.1	41.8	43.5	35.8	35.2	0.9	0.7	100.0	1,293	1,502
Primary	13.1	12.7	14.8	14.3	41.5	43.6	29.8	28.4	0.7	1.0	100.0	833	888
Middle/JSS/JHS	19.9	20.2	19.2	19.8	33.5	32.9	27.2	26.8	0.3	0.2	100.0	2,046	2,026
Secondary+	32.7	33.2	21.5	21.8	20.2	21.3	24.6	22.8	0.9	0.8	100.0	815	735
Wealth quintile													
Lowest	6.5	6.3	8.9	8.5	45.2	46.7	38.7	37.8	0.7	0.6	100.0	879	1,103
Second	9.2	9.7	13.2	13.6	42.0	42.8	35.0	33.6	0.6	0.3	100.0	985	1,052
Middle	15.7	15.3	16.8	16.4	35.1	37.3	31.9	30.4	0.5	0.6	100.0	1,088	1,098
Fourth	21.5	22.4	23.2	23.2	30.7	30.6	24.0	22.9	0.6	0.9	100.0	1,055	1,004
Highest	35.7	37.0	22.7	24.6	22.3	20.3	18.6	17.6	0.7	0.5	100.0	982	894
Total	18.0	17.4	17.2	16.9	34.8	36.2	29.4	29.0	0.6		100.0	4,989	5,152

Note: Total includes one child for whom information on mother's/father's/caretaker's education is missing.

10.9.3 Language for Education

The opportunity for children to use their local language has implications for their educational and cognitive development. It is argued that the use of a language other than the child's local language in education threatens their academic development and deprives them of many social advantages. However, formulating and implementing language policies of education in Ghana especially at the lower primary level has been a contentious issue at social and political levels. Parents have expressed different opinions regarding the language of instruction to be used in primary schools in the country. One school of thought suggests the use of English only as the language of instruction, while others have proposed the use of the local languages and yet some think a combination of both the English and local languages will suffice.

In Ghana, the language of instruction at lower primary school level is English combined with the local language, while that of the upper primary is English. For those who propose the use of local languages, using the mother tongue in early education will lead to a better understanding of the curriculum content and to a more positive attitude towards school. However, opponents to this idea think that it will be very costly and also be impossible to draw up a uniform code of instruction as there are more than 40 local languages in the country.

Table 10.15 shows that for ~~58~~ 56 percent of children age 4-15, ~~household respondents~~ parents/caretakers want their children to be taught in both English and a local language, for ~~35~~ 36 percent of children ~~household respondents~~ parents/caretakers want them to be taught in English only, and for only 6 percent ~~household respondents~~ parents/caretakers want children to be taught in a local language only.

The percentage of children living in households where ~~household respondents~~ parents/caretakers want them to be taught in both English and a local language is ~~slightly higher~~ almost the same in urban ~~than~~ and in rural areas (~~59~~ 57 percent and ~~57~~ 56 percent, respectively). ~~Household respondents'~~ Parents'/caretakers' preference for teaching children in English and a local language is highest among children living in Upper West and Volta regions (~~70~~ 66-68 percent), children whose parents have ~~a secondary or higher~~ primary or more education (~~60~~ 57-58 percent), and those living in the wealthiest households (~~62~~ 60 percent).

Table 10.15 Language for education

Percent distribution of children age 4-15 by the language in which the household respondent parent/caretaker wants the their child to be taught in, according to background characteristics, Ghana 2014

Background characteristic	Language in which the household respondent parent/caretaker wants the their child to be taught in								Total	Number of children age 4-15	
	Home language other than English	English	Both languages	Don't know/Missing							
Age in years											
4-6	5.2	5.4	35.2	36.4	57.9	56.4	1.6	1.8	100.0	1,637	1,589
7-9	5.6	5.8	34.9	34.5	58.7	58.4	0.9	1.3	100.0	1,618	1,733
10-12	6.7		34.5	36.7	57.9	55.6	1.0		100.0	1,461	1,568
13-15	6.5	6.9	34.9	36.6	57.4	55.2	1.1	1.3	100.0	1,487	1,619
Sex											
Male	6.1	6.3	34.4	35.4	58.4	56.9	1.1	1.3	100.0	3,061	3,242
Female	5.8	6.1	35.4	36.6	57.6	56.0	1.2	1.4	100.0	3,143	3,267
Residence											
Urban	8.3	9.1	31.6	33.0	59.4	57.2	0.7		100.0	3,067	3,003
Rural	3.7		38.1	38.6	56.6	55.8	1.6	1.9	100.0	3,137	3,506
Region											
Western	3.6		44.1	44.6	51.3	50.8	1.0	1.0	100.0	633	623
Central	9.8	8.9	29.2	30.8	60.4	59.8	0.6	0.5	100.0	638	664
Greater Accra	4.6	4.8	31.4	33.5	63.0	60.8	1.0	0.8	100.0	1,105	1,064
Volta	2.2	2.0	27.2	29.3	69.9	68.0	0.8	0.7	100.0	532	564
Eastern	2.8	2.7	31.8	31.5	64.2	64.3	1.2	1.5	100.0	644	638
Ashanti	12.8	14.2	33.7	34.8	53.3	50.7	0.3		100.0	1,161	1,225
Brong Ahafo	8.7	10.2	53.1	53.9	37.6	34.9	0.6	0.9	100.0	548	571
Northern	0.9	0.6	35.0	36.6	60.2	57.7	4.0	5.0	100.0	516	671
Upper East	1.5	1.4	36.0	34.9	60.3	61.9	2.3	1.8	100.0	256	290
Upper West	0.8	0.7	28.4	28.9	66.8	66.1	4.1	4.3	100.0	173	198
Mother's/father's/caretaker's education											
No education	5.8	6.0	35.3	37.5	56.4	53.6	2.5	2.9	100.0	1,749	2,057
Primary	5.2	6.0	36.8	35.8	56.7	56.9	1.3	1.3	100.0	1,063	1,152
Middle/JSS/JHS	6.2	6.1	34.3	35.2	59.0	58.1	0.5		100.0	2,450	2,440
Secondary+	6.6	7.1	33.3	34.9	59.9	57.8	0.2		100.0	941	859
Wealth quintile											
Lowest	2.9		37.5	38.6	56.2	54.8	3.4	3.7	100.0	1,154	1,477
Second	4.6	4.2	38.8	39.6	55.9	55.4	0.8		100.0	1,297	1,413
Middle	5.9	7.1	35.4	35.3	57.9	56.6	0.8	1.0	100.0	1,324	1,338
Fourth	8.5	9.7	33.2	34.0	58.1	56.1	0.3	0.2	100.0	1,270	1,216
Highest	8.0	8.2	29.2	30.8	62.1	60.4	0.7	0.6	100.0	1,159	1,064
Total	6.0	6.2	34.9	36.0	58.0	56.4	1.2	1.4	100.0	6,204	6,509

Note: Total includes 1 child for whom information on mother's/father's/caretaker's education is missing.

10.9.4 Travel to School

Being able to move from home to school with ease is important for the child. Each day during the school term pupils and their parents travel from home to school in the morning and make the return trip later in the day. Many pupils living close to school walk, with those living farther away travelling mainly by bus or car.

Table 10.16 shows that the majority of children age 4-15 years who attended school in the 2014-2015 school year (82-84 percent) walked to school, 15-13 percent of the children commuted to school by bus or car, and 2 percent went to school on bicycle. As expected, younger children age 4-6 years are slightly less likely to walk to school than older children (78-81 percent compared with 83-84-85-86 percent), and more likely to go to school by bus or car (17 percent of children age 4-6 versus 12-13 percent of older children). Similarly, older children age 13-15 are slightly more likely than younger children age 4-6 to go to school by bicycle (3 percent and 1 percent, respectively). To the contrary, younger children age 4-6 are more likely than older children age 13-15 to go to school by bus or car (19 percent versus 13 percent).

In terms of residence, ~~nearly 9 in 10~~ 90 percent of children in rural areas and ~~more than 7 in 10~~ 77 percent of children in urban areas went to school on foot. Children in Upper West and Northern regions (94-95 percent) are the most likely to walk to school and those in Ashanti and Greater Accra (~~73~~ 75-76 percent) are the least likely to do so.

Table 10.16 also shows that children whose parents/caretakers have no education are more likely than those whose parents/caretakers have a secondary or higher education to walk to school (~~93 and 63~~ 94 and 62 percent, respectively). Similarly, the percentage who walk to school is highest among children from the poorest households (95 percent) and lowest among those living in the wealthiest households (~~58~~ 59 percent).

The distance between home and school, and the ease with which pupils can access transport to school, often affects a child's ability to attend school regularly. A child who is already tired before beginning classroom activities will find it difficult to comprehend the learning activities. Data show that 68 percent of school children age 4-15 travel for less than 20 minutes to get to school. About one-third spend more than 20 minutes to get to school: 24 percent spend 21-40 minutes, and 8 percent spend more than 40 minutes.

Generally, older children spend a longer time to get to school than younger children. Three-quarters of school children in Brong Ahafo (~~75~~ 77 percent) traveled to school for less than 20 minutes compared with about half (54 percent) of children in Upper West.

