

**AN EVALUATION OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF PARENTS' SOCIO-ECONOMIC
STATUS ON PRESCHOOL CHILDREN'S ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN
SELECTED SLUMS IN KIAMBU COUNTY**

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ABSTRACT

Academic performance of preschool children from poor socio-economic backgrounds has registered low academic grades. Thus, the study intended to evaluate the contributions of parents' socio-economic status to academic performance of preschool children in selected slums in Kiambu County. The objectives of the study included; parents' level of education, parental income, home environment and parental attitude in relation to academic performance of preschool children. The study was guided by the Cultural Capital Theory. The study adopted mixed methods approach since it involved collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data. The study applied concurrent triangulation design which enabled the researcher to use the quantitative and qualitative methods during the same timeframe and with equal weight. The target population for this study comprised of 40 preschool managers, 40 preschool teachers, 30 parents' representatives and 1290 preschool children all totaling to 1400. The researcher applied The Central Limit Theorem to select a sample of 12 slums, that is, 30% of the targeted 40 slums in Kiambu County, which translate into 12 preschools in these selected slums. Based on the same theorem, the researcher sampled 300 respondents, that is, 21.43% of 1400. The study then applied stratified sampling to create 4 different strata based on the number of slums. The researcher applied purposive sampling to select preschool managers and teachers. The preschool children and parents were selected using simple random sampling. Questionnaires, interviews and observation checklist were used to collect data from preschool managers, teachers, parents and preschool children respectively. Piloting of research instruments was conducted to establish validity, reliability, credibility and dependability. Reliability coefficient was obtained using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Method and a reliability coefficient of $r = 0.65$ was obtained indicating high internal consistency. Data analysis began by identifying common themes. Relevant information was broken into phrases or sentences, which reflected a single, specific thought. The responses were assigned codes and labels. Frequency counts of the responses were then obtained to generate information about the respondents and to illustrate the general trend of findings on the various variables that were under investigation. Qualitative data was analyzed based on the research objectives whereas quantitative data was analyzed using ANOVA in Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS Version 21). The findings of the study were presented using tables. The study has established that parents' socio-economic status contributes immensely towards academic performance of preschool children. The study thus recommends that parents should be advised to pursue academic seminars and adult education programmes to make them aware of their roles in improving the academic performance of their children in preschools. Parents should invest their incomes towards sending their children to school by providing the pre-requisite resources for learning. The government and other education stakeholders should organize workshops where parents from different home environment can be advised to mind the academic welfare of their children by sending them to schools despite family challenges. Parents should develop positive attitude towards their children's education which should then act as a motivator to their children to attend schools.