

**INFLUENCE OF FATHERS AS ROLE MODELS ON ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE OF CHILDREN IN EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION IN GATANGA SUB-COUNTY,
MURANG'A COUNTY, KENYA**

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ABSTRACT

Academic performance of preschool children of absent fathers has been poor. Thus, the main objective of the study was to evaluate the influence of fathers as role models on academic performance of children in early childhood education in Gatanga Sub-county in Murang'a County. The literature for this study was based on influence of fathers as academic role models, school visit, availability and involvement in children's homework. The study adopted a mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches of methodology since it involved collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data. Questionnaires, interviews and observation checklist were used to collect data from preschool managers, teachers, parents and preschool children. The study applied a concurrent triangulation research design which enabled the researcher to use the quantitative and qualitative methods during the same timeframe and with equal weight. Gatanga Sub-county has 35 preschools and therefore, the study targeted the 35 preschools in Gatanga Sub-county with a total target population of 130 fathers, 35 preschool teachers, 35 preschool managers and 1153 preschool children all totaling to 1400. The researcher applied The Central Limit Theorem to select a sample of 10 preschools, that is, 28.57% of the targeted 35 preschools in Gatanga Sub-county. Based on the same theorem, the researcher sampled 300 respondents, that is, 21.43% of 1400. The researcher then applied stratified sampling to create 4 strata based on the number of zones each consisting of at least 8 preschools. From each stratum 3 preschool managers and 5 preschool teachers were selected using purposive sampling. 60 preschool children were selected using simple random sampling. This sampling procedure enabled the researcher to realize a sample of 10 preschool managers, 20 preschool teachers, 30 fathers and 240 preschool children. The collected data was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively and then merged into one overall interpretation in which the researcher related the quantitative results to the qualitative findings. The 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. The collected data was analyzed qualitatively along the study objectives and the basic quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics in Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS). The findings of the study were presented using percentages and tables. The study has established that fathers' involvement contributes to the holistic development and academic performance of children in early childhood settings. The study thus recommends that a policy should be formulated to enforce adherence to Partnership Policy which spells out the roles of the fathers or parents in the education sector amongst children in early childhood settings.