

Influence of Occupation on Direct and Indirect Involvement in Children's Early Literacy Development in Thika Municipality, Kenya

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Abstract

Education is fundamental to development of human resource capacities for sustainable economic growth and development. Imparting skills and knowledge in the early years ensures expansion of future human capabilities ensures increased labour productivity and enhances participation and sustainability in nation building. Education is a vital tool in achieving greater autonomy, industry, and empowerment of children. Such values can only be instilled in early childhood (Years 1-8). These years forms the foundation of future learning and achievements in education. According to literature, the first teacher of the child is the parent. However, most of the studies show that the extent of mothers and other female caregivers' involvement in emerging literacy has been investigated over the years in both developed and developing countries. Research on fathers' contribution to the child's early literacy development in developing countries has not been adequately investigated and documented. Available literature about Kenyan fathers has documented the traditional view of father as not being directly involved in young children. But the changes in the family structure cannot go unnoticed. This study focused on fathers as respondents in their role in early literacy. The study endeavored to examine the challenges that could be influencing current father's involvement in early child literacy development.

Key words: *occupation, involvement, literacy*

Introduction

Early literacy development begins at home. Parental stimulation in literacy is a very crucial starting point in children's literacy development. Koech, 2010; Wanjohi (1982), & Wambiri, (2007). Researchers worldwide have indicated that reading is a developmental process that begins at infancy and that it is never too early for the parents to read or share literacy materials with a child. That's why low literacy performance at adolescence is related to the few experiences children have had in their early childhood, meaning that literacy learning begins at home (McMahon, 1996).

One of the predictors of children reading achievements in pre-schools is the number of hours children spend reading as pre-scholars (Wells, 1986). Furthermore, children gain experience with literacy from the way caregivers use reading and writing materials in the presence of the children. Fathers' involvement in children's education was

found to be significantly related to children's performance in school. Meaning, children are likely to do better in school when their fathers are involved in their education. Parental involvement is in three dimensions. (Lamb, 1986; Pleck & Levine, 1987). These include; engagement. This can be defined as time spent in actual one to one interaction with the child (Lamb, 1997). Direct contacts involve reading or playing a game with the child. Responsibility includes scheduling activities and being accountable for the child's welfare for example, arranging for school meetings, childcare and buying learning material. The last one is accessibility.

Despite extensive research on parental contribution to early literacy development, more focus has been on mother's direct interaction that enhances literacy development (National

Academy of Sciences, 1982; Ninio, 1993). According to Lloyd (2003), fathers' contribution to children's early literacy experiences and outcomes have not been explored in details, and less is known about the roles of fathers across different ethnic and cultural settings in relation to literacy of young children. The economic contribution of fathers is widely acknowledged, but fathers' direct and indirect involvement in infants and young children's lives, beyond their economic contribution have not been consistent (Amato, 1994).

Traditional education functions were not elaborated, and instead life skills were taught according to gender. Fathers concentrated on passing the economic life skills of the family to the male child, while the mother was responsible for educating the girl on her expected roles and skills as a female. This means that education was geared along gender lines and education was more lived than thought.

However, available literature suggests that mother's low perception of fathers as caregivers, keeps fathers away. Mothers act as strong gatekeepers supporting or discouraging father's involvement in childcare (Marsiglio, 1991; Lamb, 2000; Radin, 1981). In a study on mothers' caregiving in United States, Ross Parke & Asley (1995) posit that fathers are less likely to be involved if the mother is critical of the quality of her husbands' care-giving ability and if the mother believes that women are intimately more capable of nurturing. Other

1.1 Emergent Literacy and Home Environment

This refers to the reading and writing behaviour that precedes and develops into conventional literacy (Sulzby, 1989). It is concerned with the earliest phases of literacy development, between birth and the time children learn how to read and write conventionally. Emergent literacy signals the starting process of becoming literate. Literacy development begins before children start formal instructions in school (Teale & Sulzby, 1987). At three years, many children can identify signs, labels and logos in their

home environment. Early child literacy development involves listening, speaking, reading and writing abilities, copied from the significant people around the child. Children listen and internalize what they have heard which they retain and produce at the appropriate time. In other words, children apply what they have heard and seen or observed from the adults within their environment.

Children use strategies to construct meaning as they share books with parents and other caregivers. They use these strategies to understand and construct meanings from stories read aloud or told to them. They label, ask questions and connect their lives to the story (Snow & Ninio, 1993). This interaction creates joy and closeness with caregivers and special support that makes them free to seek assurance and clarification from their parents. This enables them to gain experience and understanding of stories and discussions held between them and parents at home. Children's first experiences with literacy activities are passed on to the child through the way parents and caregivers use reading and writing materials in their lives. This means that, language and cognition emerge almost at the same time (Teale & Sulzby, 1987).

The concept of guided participation explains how learning occurs between parents and children through every day events (Rogoff, 1990). This concept suggests that during routine activity, parents guide children's participation in relevant events and this helps them adopt their understanding of new situations and assist them in assuming responsibilities for managing and problem-solving skills. From their active involvement, children are thought to assimilate an understanding that may carry them on to the future occasions and new situations that resemble those in which they have participated.

Literacy engagement is not limited to reading and writing only. It includes a

range of cognitive and social learning. Children acquire literacy through observing and modeling. Foldaway's (1979) indicates that learning is as a result of interaction between children and parents. The number of literacy events in the home, willingness and ability of parents to include their children in these activities are related to the amount of knowledge children have about literacy. In reference to pre-reading, children whose homes include frequent literacy events, like parents reading magazines, books and letter writing, know more about how reading and writing materials are used (Purcell-Gates, 1994).

A study by Scarborough, Dobrich and Hager (1991) examined the relationship between pre-school development and level of literacy activities while at home and children reading achievements. Results showed that exposure to print materials gave children a better start in school compared to their counterparts. This shows the importance of a rich learning home environment for the development of emergent literacy. A home with a rich learning environment coupled with involvement with print materials is very important in influencing early literacy. It gives the child a strategy for completing tasks, encourages turn taking, provides elaborate feedback and respond to children's initiative (Neuman & Roskas, 1993). Literacy is enhanced through parents and children's interaction as they read environmental print.

1.2 Role and Strategies of Caregivers in Early Literacy Development

Literature on the role of caregivers and strategies in early literacy development brings out the importance of parents and other caregivers in guiding the child in early literacy development. The presence of print alone without positive parent-child interaction cannot enhance children's early literacy. This means that the environment has to be responsive. Neufield (1997) reports that parents play a significant role in children's literacy development by providing opportunities for interacting with print.

Hughes (1993) explores literacy related home experiences with pre-school children and correlates the experiences with literacy skills as they joined school. Children with earlier exposure to books have better reading and writing skills when they join pre-school while those who lack this exposure are disadvantaged (Scarborough, Dobrich & Hager, 1991).

Parents influence children to develop positive attitudes towards school, education and lifelong-learning, which should be a continuous process from what takes place at home and in school. Learning is enhanced by active engagement in experiences in real life settings. Early literacy relies on a range of environmental stimuli provided by caregivers participating at home in early literacy education. However, successful interaction and strategies are related to the caregivers' self-efficacy and availability and caregivers' understanding of their roles in their children's education and development enhances involvement. Confident parents are more involved in their children's education (Moreno & Lopez, 1999).

In the traditional Kenyan societies, important information was passed on through proverbs and sayings by fathers and other caregivers. Language development was the responsibility of the mother before weaning. After weaning, other caretakers took over as they interacted with the children using stories, riddles, songs and lullabies. All these provided clues on the way the child was perceived. In addition, education of the child was communal and more lived than thought about. Children learnt through deduction from the adults, as there was nothing written or formal. Today, there is deductive learning from parents plus academic and print materials and the media from which children can learn from, and fathers can

use these to influence early literacy (Wanjohi, 1981).

It is never too early to read to a child (McMahon, 1996). When they are engaged early enough in reading, and allowed to observe those around them engage in reading activities, parents help foster a life-long passion for reading that benefits the child in all areas of development, as the child grows older. The role of caregivers is to invite young children to participate in literacy activities like reading storybooks aloud and also story telling. It has also been observed that children who interacted more with their parents as they read aloud have wider vocabularies and better story understanding at five years (Dickinson & Tabors 1991).

Early interaction between adults and children in literacy activities is important (ENZ, 1995). An informal survey conducted with 400 high school students found that 70% of the remedial readers had not been read to by their parents as children, while 96% of the advanced students reported that their parents had read to them regularly, hence the difference in performance which can be directly attributed to caregivers' interaction through engagement and availability for their children's literacy needs. Retrieved in October, (2006) from (<http://pecrp.uiuc.edu/index.htm>).

Adult talk is an important part of helping children in scaffolding the tasks. Scaffolding talk gives advice, directs children's attention, alerts them to the sequence of activities, and provides information for completing the tasks successfully. Gradually, children internalize this talk and use it to direct their own attention, plan and control their activities (Sulzby & Teale, 1987). Oral language enhances reading and writing achievement. Research findings indicate that certain kinds of oral language patterns are related to the kind of language used in literacy instructions in schools and at home. Such include parents who ask their preschoolers questions to recount or retell their daily activities. This is the same way teachers ask children to retell events from stories read or told by others (Heath, 1984; Snow, 1993).

Parental techniques play a significant role in children's literacy development. A study conducted by Anbar (1994), on pre-school children who learnt to read without former systematic instructions but with parental assistance found that parental help was spontaneous, intuitive and unplanned, but used a variety of techniques to teach and facilitate reading development. Many children learn about literacy early and naturally as they sit on their parent's laps or on those of other caregivers or as they share storybooks or other literacy activities (Clark, 1984; Cochran-Smith, 1986).

Other strategies of reading enhancement are making literacy learning sessions enjoyable. Baker, Scher and Mackle (1997) emphasize on parental reading for children as an entertainment rather than a skill. This helps children develop a positive attitude towards reading. Lancy et al. (1992) argue that parents who are poor readers hold the reading sessions with a lot of seriousness and expect children to master. This result to anxiety and frustration in children who fail to accomplish the task. Therefore, when reading is not made enjoyable, it discourages children as an activity. According to Lancy and Boyce's (1992) findings, children who are fluent and positive about books come from parents who make reading fun, encourage and ask questions and create humour while they read to and with their children. Such children have a tendency of being with books often and hence developing reading skills faster than the frustrated children.

1.3 Fathers' Involvement in Early Child Literacy Development

Early literacy is a significant art of preparing children to achieve academically (Amato, 1994). This is one area fathers can be engaged in but studies in this area are scarce. Studies on the importance of fatherhood in children's lives beyond fathers'

economic contribution and discipline have not been consistent (Amato, 1994). Outstanding school performance is linked with fathers' consistent reading with their children. Fathers, who read to their children often, tend to raise children who are superior readers and consequently perform better in school (Gasden, Brooks & Jackson, 1997). Educators contend that reading and storytelling stimulates imagination, enhances vocabularies, introduces them to the content of the story, like identifying the characters, actions, and provides them with information about the world around them. Reading with children allows for warm and positive interaction between parents and children. A study on parental role in literacy development concludes that fathers who are involved in care-giving have infants with greater cognitive development at one year of age than children of fathers who are less or not involved. (U.S Department of Education, 1999).

Historically, mother's education has been the primary predictor of children's achievement. Closeness to mothers can be attributed to absence of fathers in care-giving activities. Studies show that fathers are conspicuously absent in terms of spending time with children. In a cross cultural study conducted by Olmsted & Weikert (1995), examining the lives of four years old children in eleven countries, found that children spent five working hours with their mothers, and less than one hour under the supervision of their fathers. In U.S., children spend eleven hours per day with the mothers, one hour with both parents, and forty-two minutes in their fathers' care. Shared function fathers are impressed by their children's achievement as they help them in their assignments, though they still believe that preschool related activities are the responsibility of their spouses and can only be involved if mothers are busy with important tasks. This implies that fathers' involvement is conditional and not a responsibility. This explains why they are mostly absent in the lives of children (Kutsche, 1983; Zavella, 1987; Martinez, 1988). Shared- function fathers view literacy

as an activity that brings the family together. Fathers participated in literacy practices for religious, academic and recreational purposes (Martinez, 1988). Shared function fathers associated family reading to short and long-term goals, with children viewed as contributors and recipients of literacy activities. Time spent together created bondage, which is an incentive to learning. Some fathers reported that they engaged in reading with their children because they understood the importance of education while research on shared function fathers' involvement in children's literacy have revealed that 37% of fathers reported that both partners read to their children equally, 40% of fathers agreed that their partners were more active in reading to their children (Millard & Hunter, 2001).

Despite children's closeness with mothers, researchers are in general agreement that fathers and mothers interact with their children differently. Fathers spend more time with rough and tumble play while mothers spend time in caretaking activities. Fathers are tactile and physical while mothers are verbal and didactic and toy related in their play. Children who are close to mothers have better language development as compared to those close to fathers (Parke, 1995).

In other related studies in U.S Department of education (1997) on fathers, a father with a child in pre-school wants his child to learn a lot from reading. He believes that by reading with the daughter, she would not get bored when she joins formal school. To him, early literacy activities were a way of encouraging children to habituate reading (Park, 1995). Studies by Clarke-Stewart (1978) observed both parents with three years old children at home in unstructured and semi-structured environment. She observed that the intellectual skills of those

children were significantly related to the fathers' engagement with unstructured play, fathers' positive rating of children, and extent of father's interaction with children and fathers' aspiration for children.

In other related studies conducted in United States, 26 fathers were interviewed in relation to literacy involvement. Results showed that the majority of fathers engaged in weekly literacy practices. Two thirds read with their children for recreational purposes, while others read as a way of maintaining relationship with their children. They viewed having home library and being seen reading as important to their children (Lloyd, 2003). Social Learning Theory emphasizes on adults acting as role models and those children will model what they enjoy and like from the adult (Bandura, 1997).

A significant impact of fathers' experience with the child is on the father himself. The more the father cares for the child, the more he becomes involved with the child. A father with exclusive responsibility for a child, at some point in time develops care-giving skills and gains confidence. This research leads to a strong argument on increasing fathers' roles in parenting as involvement results in positive outcomes (Engle & Breause, 1994). The factors that emerge as significant are the levels of involvement and the type of involvement the father has with his child, rather than the amount of time that the father spends interacting with the child. Engle and Breaux (1994).

More research from leading scholars reviews the important role of fathers in children's lives (Marsiglio, Amato & Lamb, 2000; Parke, 1996). Children who grow up in warm nurturing and actively involved fathers as opposed to uninvolved fathers, reap tremendous benefits which include: better school performance, increased self-esteem, healthier relationships with peers and healthier sex roles, development and access to greater financial resources (Lamb, 1997; Pruett, 2000). In an issue of Parents Magazine, of February 1982 an article entitled, "The New Fatherhood" by

Muenchow (2006), a clinical psychologist, discussed recent research findings from various universities regarding fathers' ability to respond to children's needs. The findings suggest that fathers can be as responsible as mothers and the only difference is that mothers' breastfeed. The idea that mothers can meet their children's needs better, makes mothers feel more responsible while fathers feel insignificant and excluded. Exclusion means their involvement is minimal; hence their role as fathers is underrated and ignored in children's lives (Muenchow, 2006).

Fathers' Involvement in Children's Literacy in Kenya

Childcare is a challenging task for the increasing number of working women with young children. A national survey of women in the reproductive years (15-49) shows that 52% of the employed women have a child under age 6. 42% of the employed said they take care of their young ones while at work, 17% said they have relatives other than their husbands who look after their children. 15% of the cases said older siblings mostly girls mind the young children. Women with more education are employed and living in urban areas use hired workers. (CBS, 1999)

Recent studies by Mwoma (2009) revealed that fathers' involvement in their children's education was significantly related to children's performance in school. Children are likely to do better in school when their fathers are involved in their education than when they are not. Fathers in Gusia district were found to be involved in the purchase of uniforms, Books, paying school fees and buying presents for their children when they do well at school. The same study highlighted fathers' involvement to be influenced by their level of education, occupation, beliefs on their role in relation to their children's

education. According to Koech. (2009) study on partnership, fathers' level of education, role definition were found to be significantly related to partnership between parents and teachers. This means that quality time must be accompanied by other qualities if the father is to be effective in early literacy development.

Studies on parents' involvement in children show that parents are more likely to use physical punishment. Fathers usually did the beating to discipline though in polygamous household mothers were more involved in physical discipline of their children. Kayongo Male & Onyango (1982,p.22) A research study by Mburugu & Adams (2001,p.24) show that wives spend twice as much time caring for children as the husbands do. In related studies by Obondo (1984) on parents' involvement in their standard one, children's reading ability in three different schools in Nairobi revealed that 90% of those interviewed considered reading with children as important but admitted not being involved. They had delegated the responsibility to other caregivers.

Fathers' Nature of Work

This refers to the occupation of the father. Social interaction and attachment between fathers and children has been associated with the nature of work parents are engaged in (Bernett and Hyde, 2001). Work schedules, distance and job responsibilities place demands on parents that must be accommodated by the family (Bernett and Hyde, 2001). Literature on work and family conflict suggests two elements: work interference with family (W.I.F) and family interference with work (F.I.W) (Frone, Yardley & Markel, 1970). Investigations into men's work and effects on father-child interactions revealed that work obligations is one of the most frequent reason given by fathers for low levels of paternal involvement (Haas, 1992).

Fathers' involvement in their children's education is influenced by the kind of job

they do. Mwoma's study on paternal involvement review that teachers were more involved with their children's education than fathers in other occupations. This implies that fathers in the teaching fraternity knew that involved fathers enhance children's performance. Mwoma (2009). Excessive work for long hours results in job stress especially with young fathers when career goals are not met. This means that needs for career investment compete with family responsibilities, job demands and overworking resulting in reduced time and energy for father interaction with children, which in turn leads to family conflict. Studies reveal fathers' job stress as being related to behaviour problems with their children. British Market Research Bureau has shown that only 12% of fathers get involved in their children's education, with two third blaming the pressure of work. Fathers use their spouse's unemployment status as a reason for not engaging in children's care-giving activities. They argue that the unemployed spouses have all the time for children's chores unlike them. Fathers argue that they work more, while their spouses stay at home and therefore, they are busy people to be engaged with children. This shows that they are not aware of the importance of their contribution to the child's early literacy development. It shows that work responsibilities take more time at the expense of their interaction with their children in literacy related activities.

Working away from home also keeps fathers away from their families for weeks, months or even years depending on the distance, money earned to facilitate frequent movement and job responsibilities. Such fathers are rarely available for their children. For example, men from Bangladesh and Indonesia work in Malaysia, Indians and Pakistanis work in Arabia. Botswana

men work in South Africa and there are Turkish guest workers in Germany (Engle & Breause, 1994). Migration in search of greener pastures has characterized the labour force in Kenya. Though not documented, many men are working outside Kenya, in Botswana, Somalia, Rwanda, Arabia, Dubai, Sudan, U.S.A. and Britain among other developed and developing countries. The distance and the working conditions in some countries do not allow fathers to carry their families with them. for example, Southern Sudan and Somaliland and Dubai among others.

The very busy lives parents are leading today, with an intention of improving the economic status of the family and the ever-growing numbers of dual career families only serve to worsen fathers' involvement in children's literacy. When children need parents for some reason, they need their help at that very time, and not at the convenience of the parents. That is, the zone of proximal

development has to be considered (Vygotsky, 1978). Help not given at the appropriate time is denial of an opportunity in development. Therefore, parents have to balance work and children's needs for unity in the family, where each member will be aware of and respond to the needs and feelings of the other (Ulune, 1984).

Category of Occupations

This section wanted to establish the occupation of fathers which could be related to their availability for literacy related activities for further conclusion in relation fathers' involvement in children's literacy. The questionnaire required the respondents to indicate their occupation. The occupations were categorized according to how they are related. Table 1 below indicates grouped categories of father's occupations.

Table 1: Proportion of Fathers by Occupation

Occupation	Frequency	Percent
Business	18	46.1
Employed	10	25.6
Security	4	10.3
Teaching	3	7.7
Farming	2	5.1
Pastor/ Preaching	1	2.6
Lab Technician	1	2.6
Total	39	100

Results based on the table indicate that respondents were involved in a variety of activities to earn a living. Categorized occupations of fathers indicate that 46.1% of the respondents were business men but they did not specify the type of businesses they were involved in. Those who said they were employed did not specify the type of work or form of employment and formed 25.6%. They could not be categorized with those who were specific in type of work they were

involved in. teachers were 7.7%, farmers formed 5.1%, security men formed 10.3%, there was 1 pastor making 2.6% and one technician 2.6%. This category of technician was not specific nor was the business men clear on what type of business they were involved in. These findings indicate that majority of the fathers in the area of study were business men. However, the types of businesses could have been in

small scale as indicated earlier by their level of income where 76.2% were earning less than Ksh 14,000. The second category of fathers was employed forming 25.6%. The type of employment was questionable in that some were casual workers; and others employed in company but did not indicate their positions or their professions. The technician did not specify their positions either. Given the amount of income given earlier, one can conclude that most of the fathers are small scale business people and are in unskilled jobs. This can also be related to their level of education which was low. Given these type of jobs, it means that fathers are in and out of employment which means most of the time they are busy looking for employment.

Fathers' Involvement and Nature of Work

Father's nature of work was categorized into various groups according to how their occupations were related. This helped to analyze the information related to occupations in relation to extent of involvement. To test for indirect involvement in children's literacy, fathers were presented with questions that required them to say whether their nature of work interfered with their direct involvement in their children's early literacy by responding yes or no. Table 2 below depicts the relationship between fathers' nature of work and their direct involvement in literacy activities.

Table 2: Fathers' Frequency of Interaction In Relation to Nat

Occupation	Responses to Literacy Activities		Total
	Yes	No	%
Employed	38.0%	62.0%	100
Business	44.1%	55.9%	100
Security	46.4%	53.6%	100
Teaching	48.5%	51.5%	100
Farming	45.8%	54.2%	100
Preaching	45.3%	54.7%	100
Technician	45.9%	54.1%	100
Average %	44.2%	55.1%	100

Results based on the table above 62% of the employed fathers who had not specified their types of jobs were very responsive to children's literacy activities. Those who were employed as teachers had the best positive response to children's literacy activities with 50.7%. The rest of the occupations had almost the same range of positive involvement in early literacy activities with their children. However, business men had negative response towards early literacy activities with 54.5%. All the other occupations had almost the same range of negative response towards children's literacy.

The positive and the negative response towards children's literacy compared show a negative response overshadowed the positive response. This shows that fathers' nature of work could be influencing their level of involvement in literacy activities. These responses were further computed on their involvement on a weekly basis.

Ho₁ There was no significant relationship between fathers' direct involvement in children's early literacy development and work.

Table 3: Fathers' Direct Involvement in Children's Early Literacy Development and Nature of Work

Frequency of Direct Involvement		Employment		Sub Totals & % of Total
		Yes	No	
None	Count	360	456	816
	%	18.6%	20.0%	19.3%
Once a week	Count	326	377	703
	%	16.8%	16.5%	16.7%
Twice a week	Count	398	422	820
	%	20.5%	18.5%	19.4%
Thrice a week	Count	210	249	459
	%	10.8%	10.9%	10.9%
Every day	Count	644	779	1,423
	%	33.2%	34.1%	33.7%
Total	Count	1,938	2,283	4,221
	%	45.9%	54.1%	100%

	r-value	p-value
Pearson's Chi square	-0.002	0.893

It was observed that there was no significant relationship ($r = -.002$, $p = 0.893$) between fathers' direct involvement in their children's early literacy development and their work. H_{06} was retained and the alternative hypothesis rejected. This means that father's direct involvement in early literacy was as a result of one's initiative and may be their perception towards their role in early literacy other than their nature of work. This contradicts studies by Burnett & Hyde (2001) that stated that less social interaction and attachment of fathers to their children as being associated to the nature of work parents are engaged in, work schedules and work responsibilities as factors that placed demand on parents that must be accommodated by the family. But the fact that only 42 fathers of the 281 returned the questionnaires, this could be a biased sample. These findings were also inconsistent with research findings from Gucha District where occupation of fathers influenced involvement in children's education. This could be the influence of the area of study and the respondents.

Haas (1992), studies on investigation into men's work and its effect on father child interactions revealed work obligations as one of the frequent reasons given for low levels of

involvement in children's literacy. This is accompanied by fathers' job stress as being related to behaviour problems with children. This study could not be unique compared to earlier studies done in that most of the fathers were engaged with small business or jobs that were not stressing nor were their jobs demanding as such. Employed fathers were working as supermarket attendants, working in the laboratory as a technician and others in the factory. British Market Research Bureau shows that only 12% of fathers get involved in their children's education with two thirds blaming the pressure of work.

However, findings from this study reveal that work was not a factor in direct involvement of fathers with children's literacy. This can be attributed to the type of work done by fathers included in the study and the fact that all the respondents were staying with their families and not working away from home. These two characteristics could have contributed to the availability of fathers to their children.

Table 4: Father's Nature of Work and their Reported Frequencies of Indirect Involvement in Children's Early Literacy Development

Father's Responses to Literacy Activities			
Occupation	Yes	No	Total
Employed	38%	62%	100
Business	45.5%	54.5%	100
Security	42%	58%	100
Teaching	49.3%	50.7%	100
Farming	39.8%	60.2%	100
Preaching	48.6%	51.4%	100
Technician	45.6%	54.4%	100

Fathers' indirect involvement responses were very similar to those of direct involvement. Those fathers who did not perceive work as a limitation to their level of indirect involvement in children's early literacy were constantly high percentages. Fathers disagreed with statements that tended to show work as a limitation to their level of involvement. The percentages on negative response were highest with fathers who were farmers with 60.2% negative response from farmers. Fathers who agreed that work could be a hindrance to their involvement in literacy activities had relatively low percentages compared to the

negative responses. One may then conclude that nature of work does not determine the level of indirect involvement in early literacy related activities. The researcher wanted to establish the significance of the relationship between the indirect involvement and the frequency of involvement.

Ho₂ There was no significant relationship between fathers' indirect involvement in children's early literacy and their work.

Table 5: Fathers' Indirect Involvement in Children's Early Literacy Development and their Nature of Work

Frequency of Indirect Involvement		Employment		Sub Total & % of Total
		Yes	No	
None	Count	235	281	516
		43.9%	44.1%	44.0%
Once a week	Count	73	101	174
		13.6%	15.9%	14.8%
Twice a week	Count	67	69	136
		12.5%	10.8%	11.6%
Thrice a week	Count	37	56	93
		6.9%	8.8%	7.9%
Every day	Count	123	130	253
		23.0%	20.4%	21.6%
Total	Count	535	637	1,172
		45.6%	54.4%	100%
		r-value	p-value	
Pearson's Chi square		-0.018	0.553	

Test reveals that there was no significant relationship ($r = -0.018$, $p = 0.553$) between fathers' indirect involvement in children's early literacy development and their nature of work. H_0 7 was retained and the alternative hypothesis rejected. It was concluded that there was no correlation between fathers' indirect involvement in their children's early literacy development and their nature of work, meaning their extent of indirect involvement was not related to their nature of work.

Like in direct involvement, indirect involvement was not related to their nature of work. Studies by British Market Research Bureau revealed that fathers use their spouses' unemployment status as a reason for not engaging in children's care giving activities. They argued that the unemployed spouses' have all the time for children's chores. Fathers also argued that they work more while their spouses stay at home. It is not clear whether fathers' arguments are based on the fact that they are not aware of their contribution to their children's early literacy or because nurturance is the responsibility of women who are less engaged.

Research studies were conducted in an urban setting where most of the nuclear family lived together. The question of the fathers living away from the family could not arise. Fathers felt that their wives could do as well as they could since they had all the time with children. This means that fathers' indirect involvement in literacy activities of their children cannot be attributed to their nature of work but there could be other factors related to nature of work that need to be investigated.

There was lack of significant relationship between fathers' nature of work, role definition and gender bias and their direct and indirect involvement in children's literacy. This suggests that the three factors are not related to literacy development in the area of study. Findings of this study were found to be inconsistent with reviewed literature which stated that fathers' involvement in early literacy was influenced by fathers' work, fathers' (role) perception and gender bias.

This inconsistency could be attributed to cultural differences depicting the area of study, the fathers' who participated and the concept being tested. Most studies were based on parents' involvement in children's education and performance in school while the current study dealt with children's early literacy in preparation for preschool education and formal education. The study focused on one aspect of growth; literacy development, whereas fathers could be involved in other developmental areas.

Fathers' nature of work was found to have no significant relationship with fathers' direct or indirect involvement in children's early literacy development. This implies that the type of work fathers' were involved in does not interfere with extent of involvement in literacy in this area of study. Work cannot be an excuse for not attending to your child's needs. Instead, one can always create time for the Child's literacy needs if they are aware of their role in children's education or their role in child rearing.

Lack of significant relationship in either direct or indirect involvement means that fathers could be having other issues that hinder their involvement or they do not know they have a responsibility of educating their young children. Head teachers should hold regular meetings with fathers in their schools to sensitize them on their roles in early literacy as the first teachers of their children. They should engage them more in preschool activities and the day today running of the preschools.

Conclusion

The study revealed that father's direct involvement in early literacy and children's education is as a result of one's initiative and perception towards their role in early literacy other than the nature of work. However it was hard to generalize the findings due to the small percentage of the sample of the cosmopolitan population.

Recommendations

Further research in factors that might be influencing fathers' direct and indirect involvement in literacy in the same area and other cosmopolitan areas using the same factors for comparison of results and further conclusions was necessary. The transformation of society can't be complete if the ECDE sector appears to be forgotten. The worrying reality however is the constant low

levels of the government and community involvement in the implementation of the policies that concern children's education. ECDE being a bedrock to the foundation of learning, requires serious considerations from all stakeholders and practice at home and in school if the child is going to benefit.

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