

The Influence of Family Factors on Child Developmental Outcomes in the HK-CHILD Study

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Early childhood is a vital period for child development, with the family environment playing a pivotal role in shaping children's developmental trajectories across the physical, cognitive, and socioemotional domains. This study investigates the impact of various family factors on preschool children's developmental outcomes within the HK-CHILD cohort. Data were collected from over 2,000 families through comprehensive parent surveys and standardised assessments of children's developmental skills. The parent surveys captured information on family structure, caregiving arrangements, as well as the home learning environment and family relationships. Parents also completed the Early Human Capability Index (eHCI), which evaluates seven domains of child functioning: General Verbal Communication, Numeracy and Concepts, Reading, Writing, Perseverance, Physical Health, and Overall Health. In addition, children underwent direct assessments of their cognitive, literacy, numeracy, and motor skills using standardised psychological tools.

This analysis combines Wave 1 baseline parent questionnaire data ($N = 2,285$) with directly assessed child data ($N = 1,452$). Employing linear mixed models to account for clustering within kindergartens, the study explores how family structure, caregiving arrangements, and home environment influence both parent-perceived and objectively measured developmental outcomes. The findings aim to enhance understanding of how family dynamics impact early childhood development and provide insights to inform targeted interventions and support strategies to optimize preschoolers' developmental trajectories in Hong Kong.