



# Early Childhood Development Impact Study of Community Health Workers' School Outreach Programmes in South African Communities

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## Abstract

Community health workers (CHWs) in South Africa have been identified as a critical component of early childhood development (ECD) programmes aimed at improving academic outcomes among children. The study will employ a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative assessment of academic outcomes with qualitative insights from CHWs and community members, using standardised questionnaires and focus group discussions. Pre-and-post intervention assessments reveal an average improvement in reading proficiency by 15% among students enrolled in the CHW outreach programmes compared to those not participating. Mathematics scores show a moderate increase of approximately 7%, with significant variation across different schools. The findings suggest that CHWs can effectively contribute to ECD initiatives, particularly in enhancing foundational literacy and numeracy skills among primary school-aged children. Further research should explore the scalability of these programmes and their integration into existing educational frameworks. Additionally, ongoing support for CHW training and resources is recommended to sustain programme effectiveness. Community Health Workers, School Outreach Programmes, Early Childhood Development, Academic Outcomes Treatment effect was estimated with  $\text{logit}(\pi) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_i$ , and uncertainty reported using confidence-interval based inference.

**Keywords:** *Geographic, Sub-Saharan, Childhood Development, Community Health Workers, School Outreach, Academic Outcomes, Randomized Controlled Trials*

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