

https://dspace.org/

Implications of public funding for early learning in South Africa: a case of Ekurhuleni metropolitan municipality in Gauteng

Leshoele, Moorosi

2016

http://hdl.handle.net/10539/21769

Leshoele, Moorosi (2016) Implications of public funding for early learning in South Africa: a case of Ekurhuleni metropolitan municipality in Gauteng, University of the Witwatersrand, <http://wiredspace.wits.ac.za/handle/10539/21769>

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/



Implications of Public Funding for Early Learning in South Africa: A Case of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality in Gauteng

A Master's degree research report presented in partial fulfilment for the award of Master of Management in Public Policy

At

University of the Witwatersrand, Wits School of Governance

By: Moorosi Leshoele, Student No: 683710

Supervisor: Prof Vusi Gumede

Contents Page

List of Tables 4
Diagrams 4
Charts 4
Declaration 5
Dedication 6
Acknowledgements 7
Abstract 8
Acronyms 9
1. Chapter One – Introduction 11
1.1 Conceptualization and definition of key terms 11
1.2 Brief historical background 11
1.3 Research Problem 12
1.4 Rationale of the study 13
1.5 Primary Research Question 17
1.5.1 Secondary Research Questions 17
1.6 Overview of the Methodology 17
1.7 Synopsis of research findings 18
1.8 Limitations of the research report 18
1.9 Ethical considerations 19
1.10 Outline and organisation of the report 19
2. Chapter Two – Literature Review and Theoretical Framework 20
2.1 Introduction 20
2.2 Key global eras of ECD research 20
2.2.1 Implications of the amount of ECD funding 21
2.2.2 Evidence for significance of ECD programs 23
2.2.3 ECD 'Cost-Benefit analysis' discussion 26
2.2.4 Evolution of ECD – 1960s-1990s 29
2.3 The state of Early Childhood Development in Africa 30
2.4 South African research developments in the ECD sector since 1994 33
2.4.1 Brief historical narrative of ECD related policy documents (1995-2015) 33
2.4.2 Demography and the state of children in South Africa 35
2.4.3 National Norms and Standards for ECD funding (Grade R) 36
2.4.4 Funding Mechanisms and Alternatives 38
2.4.5 Teacher Training and Qualifications 41
2.4.6 Nutritional and healthcare funding for preschools 45
2.4.7 Institutional Capacity and ECD Infrastructure 45
2.4.8 Statistics on education expenditure in South Africa compared to global trends 46
2.4.9 Recent ECD developments by South African government 47
2.5 Theoretical Framework 47
2.5.1 Socio-cultural theory 48
2.5.2 Lattice theory 48
2.5.3 Rational Comprehensive theory 49
2.5.4 Justification for adopted theoretical framework 50
2.6 Conclusion 51
3. Chapter Three – Research Methods and Collection of Data 53
3.1 Introduction 53

3.2 Research design and data collection techniques 54
3.2.1 Data Collection Instruments 54
3.2.2 A case for the research design adopted 57
3.2.3 Data Sources 58
3.3 Interviews with preschool teachers and/or owners 58
3.4 Operational Approach in conducting interviews 60
3.5 Sampling Techniques 60
3.6 Data analysis and interpretation 62
3.6.1 Justification for the chosen analytical tools 64
3.7 Trustworthiness of Findings 65
3.8 Limitations of the study 66
3.9 Conclusion 67
4. Chapter Four – Findings, Analysis and Discussions 69
4.1 Introduction 69
4.2 Demographic profile of interviewees 69
4.2.1 Unregistered preschool practitioners: 70
4.2.2 Registered preschools practitioners: 71
4.2.3 Grade R practitioners 73
4.2.4 Policy makers' profile 74
4.3 Findings from interviews with policy makers 74
4.4 Findings from ECD practitioners 76
4.4.1 Lack of adequate infrastructure and learning materials 77
4.4.2 Affordability of fees dilemma (national policy and school policy conundrum) 78
4.4.3 Schools readiness and vast learning outcomes differences in foundation phase 80
4.4.4 Red tape in registration and application of funds process 82
4.4.5 Teacher training paralysis and qualifications uncertainty 86
4.4.6 Lack of specifications on practitioners' minimum salaries 88
4.4.7 Vague delineation of institutional roles (DSD, DBE, DoH) 90
4.4.8 'Othering'/Alienation of ECD sector by government 93
4.4.9 Poor management of financial records by preschools 95
4.4.10 Lack of a comprehensive overarching ECD policy 97
4.4.11 Need for mindset shift about the value of ECD on all levels 99
4.4.12 Monitoring and Evaluation problems in the ECD sector 100
4.5 Conclusion 101
5. Chapter Five – Conclusion and Recommendations 102
5.1 Introduction 102
5.2 Final conclusions and recommendations per theme 103
6. Reference List 107
7. Appendices 116

List of Tables

Table 1: Education components and shares in South Africa, 2010/11 – 2014/15.....15

Table 2: ECD enrolment rate and expenditure on ECD services (as percentage of GDP) 22

Table 3: South African ECD related policy documents (1995-2015).....34

Table 4: Proposed qualifications for different worker categories.....43

Table 5: Outline of main authors on RCM theory.....51

Table 6: Key themes extracted from interviews and analysed documents.....77

Table 7: Documents required when applying for Partial Care and ECD certificate.....85

Diagrams

Diagram 1: Stimulated and idle child brain imagery.....24

Diagram 2: ECD Practitioners qualifications 2013/2014.....42

Charts

Chart 1: Financial background of most children.....79

Chart 2: Registration of ECD.....83

Chart 3: Highest qualifications of practitioners.....86

Chart 4: Willingness to study further.....88

Chart 5: Awareness about ECD subsidy grants.....88

Chart 6: Knowledge of departments charged with funding preschools.....92

Chart 7: Capacity of these departments to fulfil their ECD mandate.....93

Chart 8: Difference between schools based on funding.....93

Chart 9: Financial management.....96

Chart 10: Availability of fundraising strategies.....97

Declaration

I, **Moorosi Leshoele,** declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management in the field of Public Policy (MMPP) at Wits School of Governance, the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at this or any other university.

Signed: …….. **Date: ……**

Dedication

Completion of this research report is dedicated to my late father, ntate Pule Leshoele. Your sacrifices and work ethic which you instilled in us, your offsprings are much appreciated and they surely culminated in me being able to complete this project, against all the odds. I know you are watching over us, wherever you are. To my Mom, Mme Malimpho Leshoele, I would not have persevered with my studies had it not been of your relentless prayers and sacrifices throughout the years, especially since my first year of university. *Kea leboha ha u ile wa tshwara thipa ka bohaleng jwalo ka Mme*.

I would also like to honour all the unsung heroes and heroines whose sacrifices often go unrecognised, and these are the preschool teachers who selflessly dedicate their lives to raising and introducing our babies to the world of education. These are the front 'soldiers' in the daunting task of teaching children how to hold a pencil for the first time and cleaning after them. This research project owes its entirety to your blood, sweat and tears. To my uncle, Kutlwisiso Leshoele, thank you for the fatherly role you played. Retselisitsoe Molapo, a colleague and friend, *kea leboha Msuwe*, it would not have been possible had it not been of your generosity and patience with me during data collection of this research report.

To Makaya Makaya, thank you for all the brotherly love and assistance as you know when times were challenging I would call you and you never turned your back on me. I dedicate this report to my siblings, Lanny Leshoele and Dimpho Leshoele, you are dearly loved and to the both of you I say *ke pele feela*. Mr Maroga Sir, thank you so much for the contribution you made to the successful completion of this project. I would not have done justice to myself if I did not mention my gratitude to Bhekinkosi Mchunu, my best friend and brother. It is through you that I got to understand that family is not one's biological family alone, it goes beyond the bloodline. *Ngiabonga mfo*. I say to you, keep those eyes on the mountain top, you and I both know that we are destined to win.

Acknowledgements

The first person and most deserving of my acknowledgement is my supervisor, Professor Vusi Gumede. Since our first module in 2014 when you lectured the MMPP class, I knew that it would be an honour for me to be supervised by you and I'm glad that my choice of a mentor was spot on. You went an extra mile in making sure that I complete my Masters degree when I was at my all-time low and demoralised because of the stumbling blocks that came my way. Indeed, you assured me (in practice), that 'problems are problems only if we see them as such'. Dr Kambidima Wotela, thank you for your scholarly mentorship and advice. You kept reminding me how important it was that I prioritise finishing my degree on time. To my other brother, Dr Lefu Leshoele, *kea leboha mora Leshoele ka di kgothatso tsa hao* and for all the advice in those long cold nights at Delheim Village. Pule Thulo and Lwazi Lushaba, your assistance is warmly noted and appreciated my leaders. Aluta Continua!

To God and all my ancestors, thank you for the spiritual nourishment, because man cannot live on bread alone. *Ase'!*

Abstract

Preschool education is arguably one of the most important phases of education throughout the entire education system. This research report was aimed at exploring broad implications of dissemination of public funds (or lack thereof) in the earliest years of learning, what is generally known as Early Childhood Development Education. It found that whilst current public funding modalities have played a tremendous role in helping ECD practitioners reach more children, the magnitude of these funds and overall investments on the sector have been very little. Of the three sub-categories of ECD centres (registered, unregistered, and Grade R) sampled in this study, the latter was found to have gained the most from the recent increases (albeit small) in funding of ECDs.

The study found that a large majority (80%) of preschool practitioners know about funding support offered by the state, however, they were not sure how it was allocated, and how they could access it. Central to the findings of this research report is the turbulent policy environment that the ECD sector has been facing due to uncoordinated interventions which only culminated into a single overarching draft national policy of 2015, which is still under scrutiny. Second to this, are the structural and operational challenges such as inadequate monitoring and evaluation of preschools by government, poor management of financial records by preschools, lack of adequate infrastructure and learning materials, and widespread red tape in registration and application of funds processes.

Acronyms

ADEA	Association of the Development of Education Africa
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa (regional bloc)
CoGTA	Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
CRC	Convention on the Rights of Children
CSG	Child Support Grant
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DDG	Deputy Director General
DoE	Department of Education
DoH	Department of Health
DSD	Department of Social Development
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECEC	Early Childhood Education and Care
EFA	Education for All
EMM	Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality
EPWP	Extended Public Works Programmes
FET	Further Education and Training
GDE	Gauteng Department of Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEMS	Government Employees Medical Scheme
HSIS	Head Start Impact Study
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
IPAECD	Integrated Programme of Action for ECD
NDA	National Development Agency
NGOs	Nongovernmental Organisations
NIPECD	National Integrated Plan for ECD 2005-2010
NPO	Non-Profit Organisation
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSC	National Senior Certificate
PETS	Public Expenditure Tracking Survey

PERSAL	Personnel Salary System in national and provincial government
RCM	Rational Comprehensive Model
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
SGB	School Governing Body
TVET	Technical Vocational Educational and Training
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

1. Chapter One – Introduction

'It's easier to raise strong children than to repair broken men' Frederick Douglass

Public funding of the earliest years of learning has been a contentious issue for many years in most countries. Central to these contentions relates to how to best allocate funds to preschools; that is, funding based on specific programs or based on the number of learners at each preschool or early learning centre. In South Africa, this debate is fairly recent especially considering that there was no overarching comprehensive national policy on early learning (until the recent National ECD Policy 2015 which is still in draft form). Hence the aim of this research report is to give a detailed analysis of the current public funding regimes of early learning centres in South Africa and how such funding could be related to quality learning outcomes of early learners.

1.1 Conceptualization and definition of key terms

The definition of Early Childhood Development (ECD), in this Research Report, is based on the conceptualization of the Department of Education (DoE). The Department of Education (DoE) (2001b: 3) defines ECD as 'an umbrella term that applies to the process by which children from birth to about nine years grow and thrive, physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, morally and socially'. However, a definition of ECD/preschool that will be used in this research report focuses solely on children from birth to Grade R (0-6 years). Public funding refers to financial support and other resources that are paid for through government funding to the ECD centres and their programmes. Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality is one of South Africa's metros situated in the East Rand of Gauteng province. This is where the field work (i.e. interviews) was conducted with preschool owners and practitioners. The terms preschool and ECD are used interchangeably in this Research Report as per the South African Draft National ECD Policy 2015.

1.2 Brief historical background

There is a lot of research in South Africa and globally that has focused on the relationship of education resources allocation and education outcomes in primary and secondary school level (Boateng, 2012). However, there are not many studies that have devoted their focus on preschools and the financial support that these schools get from government. Therefore, this mini-thesis seeks

to fill this knowledge gap by tracking public funds allocation for preschools so as to discern if they in fact reach preschools and learners they are meant for. Furthermore, this Research Report presents findings on whether preschool practitioners know about funding support offered by the state, how it is allocated, and how they can access it.

Van der Berg et al. (2010) found that most of the funding for preschool children (Grade R) who are at reception centres that are based in formal primary schools have benefited tremendously from government funding largely due to the structurally organised nature of Grade R centres unlike community based home care centres that are largely privately owned. This finding is justified by the fact that there has been a significant increase in Grade R budget from provincial Departments of Education since 2003-2008 period as budgets sharply increased from R377 million in the 2003/2004 financial year to R983 million in 2007/2008 (Van der Berg, 2010). However, there is still a long way to go for the largely unregulated community and home care centres for children between 0-4 years who are allocated per head subsidy of approximately R15 per day in registered preschools in 2006/7 (Van der Berg, 2010). The same amount of subsidy per child is still allocated to date. It is important to note that as preschool education is still largely unregulated and not entirely professionalised, reliable data is often not easy to find.

1.3 Research Problem

There is a disjuncture between improvements in National Senior Certificate (NSC) or Matric results in the last five years (2010-2014), and their credibility because they have been under sharp scrutiny. In spite of improvements in Matric pass rates, South Africa still performs poorly compared to other developing countries with inferior resources (Soudien, 2013). According to Budlender (2010) and Dlamini (2011), there were approximately 5.16 million children in South Africa in the 0-4 years age group, and only 15% of this group were enrolled in registered preschools and almost 30% of these children went to unregistered informal home care centres in 2010. Therefore, total enrolments in preschool education in South Africa calculated as a percentage of the total number of children in South Africa in the 0-4 age group was estimated to be 46% (Dlamini, 2011; Atmore, 2012). These are concerning statistics because it means that less than half of children who begin primary or 'formal' schooling do so without critical foundation laying ECD education (Douglas

George Murray Trust, 2012). What is unclear is the architecture of the public funding model for the ECD sector and if increase in these funds has effect on high quality early learning outcomes. The Research Report deals with these issues.

1.4 Rationale of the study

The aim of the study was to show that amount of resource allocation and its subsequent fiscal incidence matter in Early Childhood Development. The study also descriptively explored why this crucial early education phase may have been poorly financed in South Africa in comparison to other phases of education.

Statistics SA (2011: 10) report revealed that 'A breakdown of the population by age shows there are more children in the zero-to-four age group than in any other bracket'. This interesting statistic provides a basis and a case for why funding prospects of preschools was the focus of this study. Statistics SA's report, according to Hedley (2012: 2), further explains why this preschool going age is the largest in South Africa compared to other age groups;

> The largest age group is the under-fives, which Statistics South Africa's demographic analysis executive director, Diego Iturralde, said was due either to an over adjustment for the 5-14 age group in the 1996 and 2001 censuses, or to the HIV pandemic tapering off.

The rationale of this study was also to investigate the state of ECD education in South Africa and its funding and regulation models with the hope of filling the knowledge gap on fiscal incidence of public funds in preschools and their usage. More children are strongly encouraged to enrol to preschools in South Africa and indeed their numbers have increased sharply in the last decade (SAIPAECD-Moving Ahead, 2013). However, evidence globally on the effects of early education intervention on children is still inconclusive and minimal, more so in South Africa where research in this regard is at best minimal (Magnuson, Ruhm, and Waldfogel, 2007). Furthermore, Excell (2011) and Pence and Marfo (2008) concluded that research solely dedicated to ECD education and its role and effects to future learning is limited in South Africa, hence the attempt by this proposed study to bridge this knowledge gap and contribute to efforts of developing a national ECD policy framework.

Boateng (2012: 1) indicates that 'while occurrences of leakages are not strongly associated with

poor education outcomes, the study finds strong positive correlation between delays and Grade 1 repetition'. The leakages referred to here are misappropriation of public funds and 'delays' imply the lengthy period taken for funds to reach schools. Departing from this premise, the proposed study attempts to show that in as much as amount of resources do not seem to have a significant impact in improving quality of education in primary schools (Boateng, 2012; Heckman, 2011), the opposite may be true for preschools. That is, the amount of resources allocated and pertinent fiscal incidence matter profoundly in Early Childhood Development.

The research study is undertaken against the backdrop that South Africa is said to be one of the highest spenders of their national budget on education (Sayed, Kanjee, and Nkomo, 2013) while its education outcomes are amongst the worst in the world. For instance, South Africa spent 6.4% of its GDP on education in 2014/15 (see table 1 below), which is slightly more than what developed countries generally spend. This is about 20.3% of the national budget spent on education alone in 2014/15. Increasingly, more researchers are acknowledging that more educational spending does not always translate into better quality education at primary school level (Jansen, 2013). However, more resources are shown to have a strong positive correlation with educational outcomes for preschools (Atmore, 2012; Belfield, 2006; Heckman, 2011). The conceptual framework will revolve around the following gaps identified in provision (or lack thereof) of early childhood education in SA: public funding challenges (e.g. access to funds), teacher training, and institutional capacity (Excell, 2011: 7).

Table 1 below sheds more light on why public funding of ECD was chosen to be explored in greater detail, and also shows the extent of the problem in as far as how government prioritised and spreads its education budget across different spheres of education.

Table 1: Education components and shares in South Africa, 2010/11 – 2014/15

	2010/11	**2011/12**	**2012/13**	**2013/14**	**2014/15**
Education spending (billions) R	***170 743***	***197 763***	***212 634***	***226 873***	***242 694***
HE&T[1]	23 752	28 282	31 582	34 328	36 867
Basic Edu[2]	104 324	115 033	122 371	130 979	137 681
FETs[3]	3 727	4 689	4 947	2 532	2 734
ABET[4]	1 223	1 413	1 536	1 578	1 714
ECD[5]	1 959	2 076	2 236	2 658	3 448

Percentage share of total education expenditure[6] (below)

HE&T	13.9%	14.3%	4.9%	15.1%	15.2%
Basic Edu	61.1%	58.2%	57.5%	57.7%	56.7%
FETs	2.2%	2.4%	2.3%	1.1%	1.1%
ABET	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%
ECD	1.1%	1.0%	1.1%	1.2%	1.4%
GDP(R billion)	**2 750**	**2 982**	**3 198**	**3 465**	**3 790**
Edu total as % of GDP	6.2%	6.6%	6.6%	6.5%	6.4%
Total Edu expend[7] as share of total expend (percentage)[8]	**18.3%**	**19.4%**	**19.6%**	**20.2%**	**20.3%**

[1] Higher Education and Training
[2] Basic Education (primary and secondary education)
[3] Further Education and Training
[4] Adult Basic Education and Training
[5] Early Childhood Development
[6] This is a percentage representation of expenditure in education per different phases/categories of the education system
[7] Expenditure. This word is shortened so that the table is more presentable.
[8] My own calculation of percentage expenditure on education as share of the national budget from 2010 to 2015.

Adapted from: provincial budgets and expenditure review: 2010/11 – 2016/17

From the table 1 above, there are two key points to make. The first one is that when looking at the 'real' expenditures in billions in the first half of the table, it is clear that investments in ECD have been progressively increasing (albeit modestly) throughout the period in question. However, when one looks at the percentage representation of ECD expenditure (coloured in purple) over the same period, it is not easy to notice the increase in investment in this sector especially from 2010/11 to 2012/13 period. Therefore it is of utmost importance to not only base our judgements/observations on the percentage share only while studying funding dynamics in ECD.
It is also important to note that the share of ECD expenditure (as percentage share of total education expenditure) has not changed much as it has remained at an average of 1.16% from 2010 to 2015.

Secondly, there is a huge disjuncture and dichotomy between the expenditure patterns of Basic Education sector and FET sector. With respect to the former, there has been an exponential rapid increase in financial resources pumped into this segment from 2010/11 to 2014/15.[9] However, as it pertains to the latter, spending in this segment has been sluggish and disheartening to say the least. Between 2010/11 and 2012/13, investments in FETs were rather stable at around R4 billion, and then a massive disinvestments occurred immediately in the succeeding two years (2013/14 to 2014/15) where an average of R2,633 billion was spent. This vast under spending in FETs is in sharp contrast with the recent rhetoric by the minister of higher education who argues that the government is determined to revive the FET sector (now renamed TVET – Technical Vocational Education and Training).

Magnuson, Ruhm, and Waldfogel (2007) found that preschool attendance is strongly associated with improved reading and mathematics capabilities in children's early primary schools years. The same study also reveals that 'larger and longer lasting associations with academic gains are found for disadvantaged children' who acquired quality preschool education (Magnuson, Ruhm, and Waldfogel, 2007: 33). If this latter premise holds in South Africa as well, then more concerted

[9] See basic education figures in real terms (billions) in the first half of the table. There is an exponential increase in expenditure which is clearer in the first half of the table than it is in the second half (expressed in percentage form). It is also important to be cognisant of the fact that more than half (56.7%) of the overall education expenditure in 2014/15 went to basic education alone, and this has been the trend over the last decade.

investment efforts and unambiguous policy direction on ECD education may help improve the ailing education system in South Africa.

1.5 Primary Research Question

The primary research question is: does the amount of resources (financial and human) matter in preschool education and what are potential long-term effects of quality early learning education on the entire education system?

1.5.1 Secondary Research Questions

1.5.2 Does the South African education system prioritise ECD education (financially) compared to other phases of education as it relates to public funding models?

1.5.3 Do available public funds and resources reach their intended recipients (preschools) and if so, how are they used?

1.5.4 How do ECD centres receiving government subsidy compare with those that do not receive it?

1.5.5 Is the public funding criteria for registered preschools feasible and does it encourage more preschools to get registered or it retards this process?

1.6 Overview of the Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative research approach to analysing the data, with minimal use of quantitative research methods (i.e. mainly descriptive statistics) and some documentary data analysis. Non-probability purposive sampling was used in sourcing participants for interviewing, for both policy makers and ECD practitioners. Observation research also played a pivotal role in collecting raw data during interview sessions. Once all the interviews and relevant documents were secured, thematic content analysis was used to 'make sense' and distill emerging themes and patterns from the primary data. This thematic content analysis and interpretation was done back and forth with revisiting findings of leading scholars in ECD related research. Comparisons and contrasting of emerging themes from raw data and from the literature surveyed was continuously done.

1.7 Synopsis of research findings

My research findings are in line with the outcome of the Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS) that was completed in 2011. This survey was commissioned by UNICEF, DSD, DoE, and the National Treasury to assess fiscal incidence in the ECD sector across three provinces (UNICEF, 2011). The survey was 'looking at public expenditure and service quality in Grade R in public schools as well as registered and unregistered site-based ECD provision…' (Douglas George Murray Trust, 2012: 12). Within primary schools where Grade Rs are based, it was evident that Grade R teachers were 'alienated', undervalued and paid lower salaries compared to their Grade 1-3 counterparts. Registered independent/community based ECD centres were found to be relatively and sporadically content with the financial assistance and training they receive from the Department of Social Development (UNICEF, 2011).

Unregistered independent preschools were, on the contrary, generally not happy with what they regarded as the complex application processes for eligibility to qualify for government subsidy grants. Almost this entire cohort of preschools was unanimous in conceding that registering for an NPO (Non-Profit Organisation) certificate was not that difficult, but decried the fact that health certificate and certificate of acceptability application process was extremely difficult and also expensive. The overarching findings of my study are that 1) albeit the arguably small amount of financial assistance (approximately R15 per day per child) offered to qualifying preschools in Katlehong Township of Ekurhuleni, the subsidy grant makes a positive difference to the children and the staff employed in these preschools. 2) There was a vast policy void in the ECD sector (until the current draft of the national ECD policy 2015) and that most of the endemic challenges facing preschools could be related with the deficient public funding of the ECD sector. 3) Without sufficient funds, most owners of independent preschools said they would have difficulty sustaining and developing their schools because of the poor backgrounds that most of the children come from, making it difficult for parents to pay higher fees.

1.8 Limitations of the research report

Some of the limitations include that a small sample of 16 respondents was used, making generalisability of the findings inappropriate, and also making the reliability of the study to be lesser than it should ideally be – for a mini-thesis or a Research Report, this is hopefully acceptable.

Another shortfall is that because a non-probability sampling technique was used, this may have led to results of the research to be somewhat biased, even though qualitative findings are not intended to be generalisable to the entire population. Another limitation is the scope of this research study because focusing largely on public funding of ECD does not take into consideration the effect of private corporate funds on the ECD initiatives. Furthermore, the nutritional aspect in early learning which is important was not fully explored. These highlighted limitations could be integrated in future research which could widen the focus area to the entire metropolitan or even throughout Gauteng province as a whole so that more voices and diversity of stakeholders are incorporated.

1.9 Ethical considerations

The researcher took all precautionary means in ensuring that the ethical code of conduct was strictly followed as per the University of Witwatersrand stipulations and guidelines while conducting this research. Participants were informed that their participation in the research study was completely voluntary and that at their discretion they could withdraw from the interview. A consent form (which was signed by respondents) and a letter from the university authorising me to proceed with the interviews with the respondents were shown to the participants in line with the University's ethical code of conduct for researchers. See the consent form and authorisation letter (i.e. Appendix B and Appendix F) from the research committee attached respectively at the end of this mini-thesis.

1.10 Outline and organisation of the report

This research report is made up of five chapters. This first chapter has introduced the study by giving a brief historical account of the ECD sector in South Africa. It further explains what the underlying research problem is and why it is imperative for this problem to be researched. Chapter two follows through by giving a comprehensive overview of relevant literature that has been documented on the evolution of financing strategies and models of Early Childhood Development. Chapter two is subdivided into four main subsections; key global eras of ECD research, the state of ECD in Africa, South African research developments in the ECD sector since 1994, and lastly the theoretical framework. Detailed methodological approaches used in conducting this study are captured in Chapter three, which is followed by chapter four that covers the research findings, analysis and discussions of the findings. The last chapter (chapter 5) gives a summary of the entire

research report by highlighting and reiterating some of the key aspects and deductions of the report. It also has a subsection on recommendations that emanate from the overall findings of the study.

2. Chapter Two – Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

An overwhelming majority of literature on Early Childhood Development widely acknowledges, and converge on, one central point; the utmost importance of improving and widening access to early development and learning for pre-primary school children (Nores and Barnett, 2010; Luxomo, 2009; Barnett, 2008; UNICEF, 2010; Belfield, 2006). However, what remains a contentious issue is the form of intervention and programs that yield most outcomes and long lasting quality 'educare'[10] for children. Hence this research report's attempt to add to the epistemology of ECD public funding mechanisms and approaches in the context of South Africa.

The literature survey chapter is conceptually structured in this manner, comprising four main components; 1) Key global eras of ECD research, 2) The state of Early Childhood Development in Africa as a whole, 3) South African research developments in the ECD sector post 1994, and finally 4) a theoretical framework that was adopted by the study is explained.

2.2 Key global eras of ECD research

Heckman's (2006; 2008; 2011) research on the economic impact of equitable investment in Early Childhood Care and Education found that inequality in preschool learning breeds inequality in educational achievement, health and adult success. Furthermore, Heckman discovered that improving cognitive skills and personality of kids leads to better long term educational outcomes. Heckman (2008: 32) also argues that 'adverse impacts of genetic, parental and environmental resources can be overturned through investment in early childhood education' and also discovered that investment in preschool education for disadvantaged children drastically 'reduces achievement gap, lowers crime rate and reduces overall social costs'. Heckman uses a multipronged

[10] A term used to refer to a combination of educational and care services in Early Childhood Development.

multidisciplinary approach to understanding the relationship between resource allocation in preschool education and its long term socioeconomic and academic achievements. This approach may be helpful in the South African ECD education context because of the intertwined nature of poverty, unemployment and inequality triple challenges that plague this country and their impact on education outcomes. Short-to-medium term effects of ECD education on cognitive and academic development of children from poor community backgrounds are widely documented and there is general consensus that head start in learning is beneficial and cost effective (Barnett, 2006).

2.2.1 Implications of the amount of ECD funding

Research on pre-primary education widely reverberate that high quality programs and services for early learning have far-reaching positive outcomes for children. What remains a contested issue is how to measure or evaluate 'quality' ECD programs. Belfield (2006) weighs in on this controversial issue. Belfield proposition is that quality of ECD programs can be correlated with amount of funding per child. For instance, more funding per child can be assumed to lead to higher quality of ECD programs that children will receive. This approach can mechanically be helpful (somewhat) to quantify and measure the output of preschool in relation to the inputs (investments). It is however too simplistic and devoid of the other variables that may render it null and void in practice. South African basic education is a classical case which could be used to counter this proposed funding 'amount – preschool' quality relationship because South Africa is one of the highest spenders on education globally, yet paradoxically its education quality is one of the worst globally (SA Info, 2011) as cited in Ashley-Cooper and Atmore (2013).

According to Belfield (2006: 4) 'inevitably governments face a trade-off between investing intensively per child in targeted programs versus investing extensively per age cohort in universal programs'. Belfield further goes on to argue that countries with universal coverage oriented investments may be investing a lot more that those employing the targeted coverage strategy (Belfield, 2006). In tandem with Belfield's findings, the draft national ECD policy of South Africa (2015) has proposed a move from the current funding strategy they have been using (targeted per child subsidy) to more universal coverage approach (per program funding model). It remains to be seen if this change in funding models will achieve the desired goals of efficiently improving access to ECD services and ultimately ensuring universal enrolment of pre-primary education for all children in South Africa.

Absolute amounts of total expenditures in ECD services can only be informative if compared (cautiously) with amount of primary school expenditures to discern the commitment that the state has to the ECD sector (Belfield, 2006). Diagnostic Review of ECD - DRECD (2012) in line with Belfield's assertion here, attempted to compare South Africa's education expenditure patterns across different phases. The review discovered that three times less is spent on ECD compared to primary education expenditure, and nine times less is spent on ECD compared to tertiary education expenditure. These vast disparities in the distribution of educational budget is concerning, but it must also be viewed in context, bearing in mind that these three phases are very different and cater for different students with different needs.

A comparative analysis of the total expenditure of governments which may have certain aspects of their socio-political and economic conditions comparable to that of South Africa is undertaken below. More focus was given to the BRICS regional bloc countries due to their closer ties and similarities with South Africa.

Table 2: ECD enrolment rate and expenditure on ECD services (as percentage of GDP)

Country	**Gross Enrolment Rate (pre-primary)[11]**	**% of GDP Expenditure for ECD[12]**
Brazil	57%	0.4% (2012)[13]
Russia	85%	0.72% (2010)
India	20%	0.58% (2014)
China	36%	0.1% (2008)
South Africa	41.5%	0.4% (2012)[14]

[11] This refers to the average percentage of children who have attended some form of ECD facility from birth to six years.
[12] Percentage of Gross Domestic Product spent by these countries depending on their internal income generation amount. This percentages seem small at face value because they represent specific money spent on ECD related matters only, not what these counties spent on different facets/levels of education as a whole.
[13] The years in parenthesis are put there to indicate the year in which these figures were published.
[14] No exact figure was found on SA in the literature, however OECD 2012 global survey on 'what share of national wealth is spent on education' places this figure at less than 0.2% in 2009. My own calculations indicate that this figure has since then increased to approximately 0.4% of the GDP.

Mexico	56%	0.6% (2008)
Kenya	51%	0.1% (2012)

Compiled from a wide range of literature cited in this paper[15]

Note the unreliable data on ECD enrolments and spending in SA: National Income Dynamics Study (2008) found the gross enrolment of pre-primary schooling to be 46%, while Belfield (2006) puts it at 32%. In 2006, findings by De Lannoy and Hall (2010) were estimated to be 42%. Most staggering of these statistics is the 10 percentage points difference in gross pre-primary enrolments in SA in the same year (2006), reported by different researchers. The main point here is that reliable ECD statistics is hard to find in South Africa and the fact that there was no comprehensive national ECD policy for close to two decades may be one piece of the puzzle. Furthermore, this may be a direct indictment on the value and commitment that was given (or not given) to this sector by the government, academics, and all stakeholders.

This remark by Belfield (2006: 16) on the complexities of funding of ECD programs is persuading: 'the motivation to fund (or not fund) ECCE has been described as 'political', but there is considerable economic evidence that public funding of ECCE yields high social returns and that – regardless of political persuasion – it is an efficient investment'. Political reasons inferred here may presumably include concern on whether investing more resources in ECD services will help the incumbent politicians or government be re-elected into power. This is an interesting dimension but it is beyond the scope of this research study.

2.2.2 Evidence for significance of ECD programs

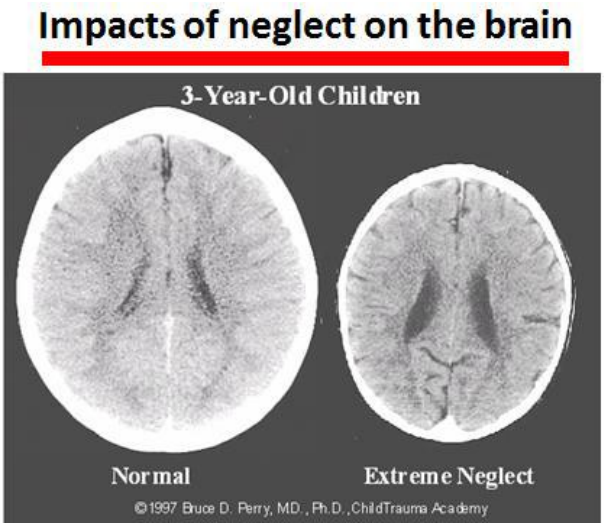
The discipline of neuropsychology provides strong evidence in support of the importance of early learning because in the infancy stage, the brain and its neurons connectivity are still developing and more receptive to new information (Shonkoff, Boyce and McEwen, 2009). These researchers discovered that the first 1000 days from birth (0-2years) are the most important years in a child's cognitive, psycho-social and physical development. The fact that South African government

[15] This table sought to give the reader an idea of how BRICS countries and Mexico and Kenya fare in terms of their preschool going children who actually go to ECD facilities and how much each respective country spends from their GDP on the ECD sector alone. This information was sourced from; UNICEF, DSD, and National Treasury (2011), World Bank (2012), Wu, Young and Cai (2012), Kimeria, (2012)

supports ECD centres servicing children in this 0-2 age bracket (beside Grade R) may be explained by such scientific research (HSRC, 2014), which is commendable, albeit the fact that children between 2 and 5 years of age do not receive enough state funding. More scientific evidence in this regard found that 'child development is sequential and cumulative' (HSRC, 2014: 15; Shonkoff, Boyce and McEwen, 2009). Put differently, learning is a process that builds on the previous stage and once the earlier steps are missed, then successful learning in adolescent and adulthood years becomes a great challenge and has adverse socio-economic results.

It is often said that 'a picture is worth a thousand words'. Diagram 1 below is a basic depiction of brain development in the first three years of a child. It compares a stimulated brain (preschool child) and an idle non-stimulated brain (child without exposure to preschool). This diagram corroborates with the findings of the scholars above, in making a case for the significance for early learning.

Diagram 1: Stimulated and idle child brain imagery



Source: UNICEF, 2014

Barnett (2008) gives a comprehensive recommendation to policymakers in support of extending and increasing resources for ECD services. Barnett (2008: 21) notes that "because an earlier start and longer duration does appear to produce better results, policies expanding access to children under 4 should prioritise disadvantaged children who are likely to benefit most. A rigorous longitudinal study which sought to quantitatively experiment if there were significant gains in

children who attended preschools from a very young age (4 months) is 'The Abecedarian Study'. This was a randomised study with a sample of 111 children, and tracked these children from 4 months to age 21. This study reported very low incidents of grade repetition and special education lessons amongst its experiment/treatment group[16] compared to their control group[17]. Completion of high schools studies and university/tertiary studies also showed significantly different results between the experiment and control groups. The results were 67% (treatment group), 51% (control group). This scientific evidence is crucial to note especially in developing countries like South Africa which are in the process of formulating and institutionalising their national ECD policy. It makes a potent case of very early (0-3 age group) access to ECD services, which is normally overlooked or completely ignored in most countries. This study's findings (The Abecedarian Study) indeed affirm the saying that 'learning begins at birth'.

Findings by Schweinhart and Fucher-Dawson (2006) indicate that listening and speaking precede reading and writing. This then explains why stimulation of children who are below 3 years is important. Scientific evidence in support of ECD is overwhelmingly unequivocal but for some reason all these evidence has not influenced policymakers at a faster pace as anticipated (UNICEF, 2010). Perhaps the phenomenon of 'politics-policy' versus 'policy-politics' may explain this dichotomy between empirical research evidence and slow incorporation of this findings in policy developments in the developing world. Whereby the former (politics-policy) dominates policy direction due to the dictates and influence of political agendas more than actual policy issues at hand, in this case dire need for more investments for ECD policy formulation and implementation.

Barnett (2008) analysed a number of groundbreaking and longitudinal studies that were conducted in the US such as the Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) and Early Childhood Longitudinal Study Kindergarten Cohort of 1998 (ECLS-K), and the Child Parent Centre Study of the late 1960s which tracked preschool children from age 3 until they were 21 years. He concluded from a convergence of these surveys that most notable results from these studies on the impact on ECD programs in development of children were largely seen on children from poor families. These children were unequivocally shown to reap long-term benefits from having attended preschool more than their counterparts from economically wealthier backgrounds. These findings therefore provide a strong

[16] Children who attended very early pre-primary schooling in this 111 sample.
[17] Children who did not attend any early pre-primary schooling in that 111 sample.

case for policymakers in Africa to create a policy environment that will ensure more rapid and universal provision of ECD services for their children, most of which come from economically poor backgrounds and communities.

2.2.3 ECD 'Cost-Benefit analysis' discussion

At the core of the debate about what form of ECD intervention is most appropriate lies two key issues. 1) The cost effectiveness of ECD investments and 2) provision of intervention – either educational, healthcare/nutritional, psychosocial programs or a combination of all of these in one holistic single program (UNESCO, 2006; Nores and Barnett, 2010). Policymakers and other bureaucrats often base their decision on whether to support ECD programs, by and large based on these two priority criteria, which is why it is crucial for them to be well informed through well researched empirical data about the most viable program option which will then inform their policy choices in this regard. Nores and Barnett (2010) found that across different countries globally, more targeted interventions (in terms of program design and services provided) which provide educational services or care are more effective and have longer lasting impact on children especially in improving their cognition, while wholesale straight-jacket programmes are not so effective. This finding begs another thorny issue of universal access to ECD programs versus incremental partial access to ECD programs debate, which will be explored in more detail in the coming sections.

UNESCO (2006) suggests that there is general agreement on the value of preschool education even though funding models and approaches differ from country to country. What is fiercely contested by policy makers is the kind of ECD programs that are cost-effective and whether governments should adopt interventions that are holistic (nutrition/healthcare, developmental care, cognitive capacitating etc.) or to solely focus on education (cognitive) related programs alone (UNESCO, 2006; Nores and Barnett, 2010). Another burning issue in the debate on the significance and models of improving preschool education globally, beside the widely acknowledged developmental benefits of early learning, is regarding cognitive longevity and persistence of early learning throughout the education cycle (Nores and Barnett, 2010).

Scholars who argue that there is evidence of long term gains on investing in preschool education base their assertions on the fact that children who are exposed to quality consistent early

education have better prospects of more academic achievement in school and in life generally (Barnett, 2008; Temple and Reynolds, 2007; Heckman and Masterov, 2007). Additionally, they argue that it is more cost-effective to channel more resources earlier (from birth to 6 years) on in life than to invest in taking remedial action after poor educational outcomes in primary and secondary school as this is more expensive and hard to correct (Belfield, 2006; Heckman, 2011).

Another school of thought, unlike the above-mentioned is of the view that there is no conclusive evidence suggesting that preschool education has long term effects on education outcomes. Furthermore, other scholars (Wildeman and Lefko-Everett, 2008) are very cautious of the straight-jacket assertions that increased financing of preschool education leads to better educational outcomes in later years of study. Luxomo (2009: 17) also paints a positive picture of skyrocketing investments in the ECD sector in South Africa and estimates that there has been a 44.2% increase from R932 million in 2007/08 toR3.2 billion in 2010/11 in the funding of preschools. However, Luxomo reservedly agrees that there are benefits to children who are exposed to preschool learning for at least two years irrespective of the nature/quality of that pre-primary education they received, but this author is also cautions that "preschool benefits are context specific" (Luxomo, 2009: 82).

Financing of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is a vital pillar in delivering of preschool education and this is especially a major concern for developing countries with meagre financial resources. Belfield (2006) paper which reviews international financing systems for ECCE in different countries is valuable in this regard. Funding sources, funding mechanisms, and amounts of funding are crucial variables in most funding models across the world (Belfield, 2006). These three aspects of preschool education funding will be delved into in detail in this mini-thesis in the context of South African public funding model for preschools and its manifestation in Johannesburg. Most countries finance ECCE through both public and private sources, where private funds are often from individual parents of children in a preschool as additional funds to those provided by the state (Belfield, 2006).

Cross-country comparisons of ECCE expenditure was embarked on very cautiously in this research report because of its complexities and different connotations in different countries. This is because such a comparison has to take into account that ECCE is defined differently (day care, preschool,

kindergarten, crèche, Grade-R etc.) and these definitions have direct implications on funding approaches because in some countries ECCE is wholly a private (parents) responsibility, while in others it is both state and private responsibility (Kamerman, 2005). These comparisons are important and relevant for the scope of this research report because they will help readers comprehend how South African ECD education fares with countries that have almost similar attributes in terms of funding sources, mechanisms, and socioeconomic qualities. BRICS countries ECD funding regimes, especially Brazil and India were compared with that of South Africa. According to Kamerman (2005) South Africa largely funds ECCE through private means in the form of privately owned home-based programs, nurseries, and crèches.

The overall pre-primary gross enrolment rate in SA was said to be '32%, whereas the rates for whites at ages 2, 3, and 4 are 31%, 46%, and 59%, the respective rates for black Africans are 11%, 18%, and 28%' Belfield (2006: 12). This staggering pre-primary enrolment differences on race still persist albeit in the form of achievement rate in primary, secondary and tertiary level and logic dictates that they can best be resolved if the preschool education playing field is levelled between black and white children. Recent statistics on the preschool enrolment rate in South Africa paints an optimistic view. According to Budlender (2010) and Dlamini (2011) there were 5.16 million children in South Africa in the 0-4 years age group, where only 15% of these group were enrolled in registered preschools and almost 30% of these children went to unregistered informal home care centres. The total average of enrolments in preschool education in South is therefore estimated to be 46% (National Income Dynamics Study, 2008) up by 4% compared to the 2006 findings by De Lannoy and Hall (2010).

Soudien (2013) emphasises the similar argument advanced by Jansen (2013) that the twin challenges (inequality and quality) in the education system are not entirely due to lack of resources. He argues that it is a matter of how resources are utilised and what modus-operandi, and framework is used to distribute these resources in such a way that there is adequate efficiency and transparency in their use. This observation was also briefly explored in the context of preschool education fiscal incidence.

If ECD education is not strengthened and enough resources committed to it, then any phase of education that comes thereafter is almost a fruitless exercise and self-defeating. It would be

synonymous to building a house with a weak foundation and expecting it to withstand turbulent weathers – it is expecting the impossible.

2.2.4 Evolution of ECD – 1960s-1990s

A detailed study by Kamerman (2006) which was commissioned by Education for All (EFA) is important to mention here as it maps and narrates an interesting story about key global junctures on the evolution of ECD. Kamerman explores the metamorphosis of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) since its 'takeoff' in the 1960s up until the 1990s when it was at its prime as signified by more attention that was given to this sector by prominent international institutions. Key amongst these developments that played a leading role in placing the ECD agenda on the table of decision makers and policy makers in the 1990s peak period are: The Jomtien Declaration of 1990, Dakar Framework of 1990, cooperative sponsorship by UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, World Bank of the World Conference on Education for All, World Summit for children, and the Convention on the Rights of Children (CRC) (Kamerman, 2006: 2).

One of the first attempts to gather research data on the state of early learning and care globally was undertaken by UNESCO in 1961 in a survey that managed to get 65 countries to participate, where South Africa incidentally happened to be one of the only two countries in Africa that took part (Kamerman, 2006). Some of the most important findings of this survey were that there was an overwhelming shortage of qualified ECD teachers worldwide, and that ECD centres and programs were very difficult to establish and run. These two challenges that were identified by this UNESCO survey almost 50 years ago still persist even today in Africa and South Africa. It is important to highlight these hallmarks in the development of ECD over the years because such an exercise gives an impetus and some indication of the successes and shortfalls of the educationists and policymakers in trying to ensure universal and quality ECD access by all children.

An indication of how the ECD sector has for a long time been side-lined on the international table of affairs is signified by the fact that only in 1971 did UNESCO include pre-primary education in their program budget (Kamerman, 2006). This may, in part, explain why very few countries have a comprehensive national ECD policy with a budget that can compete with other fields and sectors of the society. The overall findings of the EFA study were that main challenges facing pre-primary education on a global scale include 'unclear benefits, scarce government funds, lack of agreement

as to which government agency should have primary responsibility for policy, increasing regional and class inequities, and a scarcity of qualified teachers' (Kamerman, 2006: 6-7).

The researcher also concurs that poor government funding of ECD and unqualified teachers conundrum still persists even today because majority of crèches and other preschool programs in South Africa are still privately managed and financed by parents and other stakeholders (Mohamed, 2013; Phiri, 2008). However, a lot has changed for the better since this study was conducted 50 years ago, hence the findings that unclear benefits of pre-primary education has hampered this sector's development cannot be justifiable currently as there is general consensus that ECD is crucial and beneficial for our children. What is still largely debated is not the worth and significance of preschools, but rather the extent of their benefits and if these cognitive, physical, emotional and psychosocial benefits can persist for long periods throughout different senior phases of education.

In recent years, there has been a high demand and focus on improving access to Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in the developing world largely due to growing empirical evidence that indeed the benefits of ECD programs for children and the broader society, surpasses the costs of investing in such programs (Education For All Global Monitoring Report, 2005). This report contends that early learning lowers class repetition and dropout rates, and improves numeracy and literacy skills significantly. Despite this influx of research and 'consciousness' about the importance of early learning globally, most concerning is the fact that there is not enough home-grown research and empirical studies done in Africa to try and gain a better understanding of what policy interventions would be viable in the context of the socio-economic and political climate of this continent which is undoubtedly different to that of the Anglo-American countries. Therefore, the issue of ecological validity of most of the research done in other parts of the world needs to be carefully interrogated before we engage on the national ECD policy transfer from the developed world to Africa. The next section attempts to give a broad picture of the state of affairs of Early Childhood Development in the African continent beginning from the early years of decolonisation and liberation to the modern day epoch.

2.3 The state of Early Childhood Development in Africa

There is not enough research in Africa on the experiences of ECD programmes and on how to best

publicly fund pre-primary education. It is important to explore and find creative, sustainable and viable ways of funding this sector with governments help because the trend at the moment for most African countries is that a vast majority of funding for early learning is private (Kamerman, 2006). This makes access to preschools very expensive for most parents. According to ADEA Newsletter (2002) as cited in Kamerman (2006: 25), 'Africa has the youngest population in the world (half the population is children under 14, and 20 percent under 5)'. If this statistics are anything to go by, then the abundant young human resources that Africa is blessed with should ideally be its greatest asset coupled with its enormous mineral deposits. The paradox of this very 'rich' yet 'poor' continent is that the same Newsletter, ADEA (2002) reports that Africa has the highest infant mortality rate and highest chronic malnutrition. All these unfold in a continent with abundant land that, if well harnessed could feed the entire continent from agricultural products and also be in a position to be a net exporter of food to other continents. Hence the dire need to invest in the young, who make up the largest percentage of Africa's population.

Not all is gloom and doom in Africa concerning access to early learning programs. The situation varies greatly across the different regions. For instance, there is over 90 percent ECD enrolment rate in Mauritius, and about 1 percent enrolment rate in the Congo and Djibouti (Kamerman, 2006). The estimate average enrolment rate at any form of ECD centre in Africa in the mid-2000s was approximately 10 percent. These figures are helpful to the reader to have a general understanding of how ECD has been progressing over the years in Africa, but they should be used and interpreted contextually and with utmost caution as reliable data is still hard to find due to a lack of enough research in Africa and poor reporting by some governments.

One of the countries that played a leading role in Africa concerning delivery of pre-primary programs is Kenya. Pence (2004) indicates that Kenya earlier on, soon after its independence, took a road less travelled by many African countries by identifying early learning as one of the cornerstones to its developmental goals. This it implemented through its 'Harambee' preschools project which gained popularity in that country and region. As early as 1971, the Kenyan government in collaboration with an international donor organisation called Bernard van Leer Foundation 'launched the Preschool Education Project at the Kenya Institute of Education' (Kamerman, 2006: 26). This project was for many years believed (arguably) to be one of the best in the African continent that helped shape the ECD sector and set an important precedence for many

African countries (Kamerman, 2006). About two decades after this project was launched, Kenyan preschool enrolment for children in the 3-5 year age group was estimated to be in the range of 74 percent in 1990 (Kamerman. 2006). It is not surprising that Kenya had such a high ECD enrolment rate compared to other African countries, in light of the early intervention by government as alluded earlier.

As briefly mentioned, Mauritius is said to be by far one of the best practice countries in Africa that is at the forefront of delivering quality pre-primary care and education for its children. Only ten years after its independence (1968), Mauritius began the ground work and foundation laying for ECD by separating pre-primary children in two age groups; 0-3 year olds and 3-5 year olds who are in different ministries (Bennett, 2000). Since then, ECD enrolment rate has skyrocketed from 78 percent in 1993 to 93.5 percent in 1998 for the 3-4 years age group. Surely South Africa and other African countries struggling to improve quality of the overall education system can draw lessons from the Mauritian education system. The most interesting point about this case, is that 'almost all the children entering primary school had at least one year of preschool' (Kamerman, 2006: 29). Essentially Mauritius is very close to achieving universal ECD coverage for the 3-5 year age group, and this is nothing short of remarkable. The question however is whether the approach of the 'universal ECD approach' is of good quality and fiscally sustainable or not.

Another interesting case study is that of Senegal. Like Mauritius, Senegal also started making concerted government efforts in ensuring that ECD is high on the agenda of the government institutions as early as 1971 (Kamerman, 2006). Pre-primary children were also divided into different age groups that fell under different ministries. The Senegalese national ECD policy sought to create community based centres that would be multipronged and inter-sectoral in the sense that it fostered collaboration of 'health, education and nutrition in a holistic manner' (Kamerman, 2006).

The overall posture of the ECD sector in Africa is convincingly summarized by the study that was done by the Association of the Development of Education Africa (ADEA) in the late 1990s which, according to Torkington (2001) made these key findings: Most ECD programmes and projects in Africa are unregulated and poorly funded, many depended on NGO/private individuals support for their survival, and lastly that there is little government support and commitment for the ECD sector. This prognosis still plagues pre-primary care and education sector, so this leaves a lot to be desired

about political will (or lack thereof) by bureaucrats in advancing the ECD cause. Perhaps the fact that investments in very young children (0-6 years) yields returns in the long term when most of the incumbent political and business leaders are no longer in power, may give us an idea of why very slow progress has been made in ECD sector in many parts of Africa and the developing world. Investors want quicker returns on their investments, so the fact that most returns (economic output and professional labour) of investing in preschools take 20-30 years to fully mature, makes investing in ECD less attractive compared to, say giving bursaries to university students.

Kamerman's (2006) last remarks on the state of Early Childhood Care and Education in Africa are in tandem with some of my results (see the results section). Kamerman observed that in as much as public programmes in most African countries were idealized to be free, but in real terms parents and other stakeholders are often required to make some 'minimum' payment for the services. This analysis is in fact true in many countries. The following quote is very important as it gives a synopsis of the opportunities and challenges that Africa is faced with in its quest to increase coverage for ECD to its children:

> The tension and the debate continued with regard to the trade-off between increasing access and enhancing quality, with the former appearing to have priority. The debate also continues with regard to whether programs should be voluntary or compulsory ,whether given limited resources, the programs should be centre-based or home-based, whether there should be one program for children from birth to primary school entry or two programs divided by age, between the under 3s, in programs stressing care and a second for the 3-5 year olds in a program stressing education, what part of the curriculum should focus on formal school skills rather than enhancing child development, the need for research and the politics of developing, expanding and promoting ECEC (Kamerman,2006: 60).

2.4 South African research developments in the ECD sector since 1994

2.4.1 Brief historical narrative of ECD related policy documents (1995-2015)

An account of how Early Childhood Development sector has progressed over the past two decades since the first democratic dispensation in South Africa is important to be documented in chronological order. It is this mapping of ECD historiography in this manner that will go a long way in helping decision makers and policymakers to introspect and assess the developments of this

sector so as to determine whether more strides still need to be made in this regard. It is fitting at this juncture to map, in table form, key policy documents that have been passed thus far.

Table 3. South African ECD related policy documents (1995-2015)

No.	Policy document/Framework	Year Passed
1	White paper on education and training	1995
2	Interim policy for ECD (DoE)	1996
3	National programme of action for children in South Africa	1996
4	White paper on social welfare	1997
5	White paper on the transformation of the health system in South Africa	1997
6	White paper 5 on ECD	2001
7	White paper 6: Inclusive education	2001
8	National Integrated Plan for ECD 2005-2010 (NIPECD)	2005
9	Children's Act No. 38 of 2005 (effective in 2010)	2005
10	National Plan of Action for Children in South Africa 2012-2017	2012
11	The Buffalo City Declaration	2012
12	South African Integrated Programme of Action for ECD – Moving Ahead (2013-2018) (IPAECD)	2013
13	RSA Draft National ECD Policy 2015	n/a[18]

**consolidated based on the information from RSA draft national ECD policy 2015*

All these policy documents culminated into the current comprehensive draft national ECD policy which is currently being taken through all the policy process of checks and balances to-and-from parliament before it could be legislated into a binding, guiding, and institutionalised document. At surface value (from merely looking at this long list of policy documents), it seems as if early learning has received a fair share of attention and support from government. Should the current draft national ECD policy 2015 be approved in the next few months, it would have taken 20 years for South Africa to have a holistic, inter-sectoral and comprehensive binding policy document that will be used as an instrument of governance and regulation of pre-primary care and education. As much as that policy document would be much appreciated, it would have taken long to complete and this

[18] This policy document is still being finalised. It is going back and forth from parliament to DSD and from DSD to the public for comments and inputs in the draft policy. It is expected that this policy may be passed and approved very soon as it has been to parliament already and minor changes were proposed on it.

may be an indictment on the powers that be, about why it has taken that long to legislate such a crucial policy instrument.

2.4.2 Demography and the state of children in South Africa

Nelson Mandela once said that a nation should be judged by the way it treats its children (paraphrased). His statement is in tandem with the old adage that 'it takes a village to raise a child'. South Africa like the rest of the continent has a very young population. In SA, there are approximately 5.6 million children below 4 years, 4.8 million children between 5-9 years, and lastly 4.6 million children between 10-14 years (Stats SA, 2013). This brings a total number of children below 15 years at 15 million children. In terms of percentiles there about 58.5% of the people classified as youth in SA (age less than 34).It goes without saying that it is this population group that needs to be nurtured with utmost care and integrity for the developmental goals of the country to be realised. It is further estimated that in the year 2012 there were 5.3 million children below 5 years in South Africa (Stats SA, 2013).

Taking this figure (5.3 million) as our approximate 'population' size (scientifically speaking – descriptive statistics), an important question arises; what sample of this 'population' have access to ECD services in South Africa? According to Hall (2010), 73% of children in the 3-6 years age group attended some form of ECD facility nationwide. It is important to note that this percentage is only for much older children (and inclusive of 6 year olds) and it should not be taken to mean that 73% of the 5.3 million mentioned earlier have access to ECD services. It may give a wrong impression especially because the under three year olds are not included in that figure, leaving a significant portion of children who in fact do not receive any form of ECD services as a norm in South Africa (especially the 0-2 years group). This point is eloquently addressed by Richter et al. (2012: 25) iterating that 'there is currently no meaningful funding, regulation, training or quality management and improvement plan to ensure that early childhood care is provided to children in the age group 0-2 years'.

Of the 5.3 million children under 5 years contemplated here, 545 347 children under 5 years received government subsidy at their registered ECD centres across the country (DSD, 2013). In other words only 10.3% of children under the age of 5 had access to public funding for their ECD services and programs in 2013. Somewhat encouraging projections are that a further 16% of

children in the same age group (0-5 years) would have access to this subsidy in the financial year 20113/2014 (Barberton, 2013).

Department of Social Development (DSD), Department of Education (DoE), and Department of Health (DoH) (2004) integrated approach to crafting a blueprint National Policy on Early Childhood Development submit that 59.2% of children or 3.8 million children (age group 0-6) live in abject poverty in South Africa. In a report to the National Development Agency on how ECD can best be improved in South Africa, Atmore (2012) is adamant that due to the poverty scourge this country is facing, improving public funding accessibility and quality of ECD programmes can go a long way in solving this problem. Atmore (2012) further argues that providing a well-structured and holistic ECD services to children like cognitive stimulation, healthcare and nutrition results in many socio-economic benefits for a country. Chief among these benefits are improved school performance, reduced dropout rates and class repetition, and a more socially productive youth.

It is widely accepted that South Africa's massive investment in education has not seemed to have a positive return on this crucial investment (DoE, 2010; HSRC, 2014) and one possible explanation to this paradox is that the government is not investing enough in early learning and the ECD sector at large. The fact that at least 50% of children repeat a grade in their first 3 years in school and that 50% of all children who begin formal school matriculate (HSRC, 2014, Modisaotsile, 2012) shows the significance of early learning and its potential effects on future learning.

2.4.3 National Norms and Standards for ECD funding (Grade R)

In August 2005, the then Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor endorsed a proposed policy amendment for resourcing of publicly funded Grade R in accordance with White paper 5. This proposed change would then culminate into the National Norms and Standards for Funding of Grade R (DoE, 2005). The contents of that funding criteria and strategies are discussed in detail below.

In 2001, White Paper 5 crafted a road map on how the government would roll out universal coverage of Grade R in all public primary schools in South Africa, funded by the state. This universal coverage target was earmarked to be achieved in 2010, but 14 years later, universal enrolment of

Grade R has not been realised (DoE, 2005). Qualifying 'targeted' primary school in quintile 1[19] schools, according to the norms and standards for Grade R funding are allocated R3600 per child per annum. In quintile 3 schools, this amount is slightly lower at R3000 per child per annum. This quintile 3 schools allocation per child equates to the often quoted R15 per child per day amount. Primary school classified as quintiles 4 and 5 only receive funding after the other three quintiles have been allocated funding, and their funding is lesser than R3000. Some of the quintile 1-3 primary schools that I interviewed charged fees (it was not compulsory for parents who could not afford) even though they are not supposed to, according to this funding policy (See results and discussion section).

Public funding for preschools/Grade R in independent pre-primary centres is based on the discretion of the education ministry on very strict criteria. Such independent preschools must 1) be registered with DoE, 2) their services cannot be offered in the nearby public primary school, 3) if the DoE is convinced that such an independent preschool offers its programs in a unique and innovative way that warrants public funding. These stringent funding criteria for independent preschools offering Grade R programs may have retarded universal access and coverage of ECD public funds to many children who are enrolled in private ECD centres. Again, the fact that only a few primary schools had Grade R (in the mid 2000s) means that poor children who could not afford to pay fees at independent preschools were denied the opportunity to access ECD services. Adding salt to the wound is the fact that even now not all primary schools have Grade R classes.

White Paper 5 (2001) estimated that spending on Grade R funding at public schools should be lower than that of Grade 1 children so that there are more funds spared by education departments in provinces to be able to roll out Grade R classes to more primary schools. Grade R expenditure is approximated to be 70% of Grade 1 expenditure (DoE, 2005). This difference in expenditure between an ECD program (Grade R) and Grade 1 programs may shed some light in attempts to answer the research questions of this study. Additionally, this funding approach by South African government feeds into global debates on 'universal access versus targeted provision' funding models, each with its own merits and demerits. Another interesting yet controversial issue concerning Grade R funding is whether it should (as espoused by White Paper 5) just be made

[19] Quintile 1 schools are the poorest public schools in South Africa. The least poor schools are quintile 5 schools which are normally ex-model C private schools.

universally accessible to all age appropriate children, or it should be both universal and compulsory for all age appropriate children. Currently, attempts are made to make it universal, albeit the fact that it is proving to be a major challenge, but it is not legislatively mandatory, unlike Grade 1-9 which are mandatory.

2.4.4 Funding Mechanisms and Alternatives

Like most developing countries, South African Early Childhood Development sector is predominantly funded by private funding, be it in the form of parents fees, through NGOs, and other entities like private companies. The South African draft national ECD policy 2015 conceded from the onset that the government has not been heavily investing in pre-primary education and the solution therein is twofold; 1) There must be an increase in the amount of investment through public funding, 2) there must be a development of the national ECD funding policy that will guide the state how to efficiently fund this sector. This national draft policy is cognisant of the fact that the norm in South Africa has been under spending for early learning and if this is to change, there must be a substantially higher expenditure for this sector to ensure universal coverage and equitable access to ECD services, especially by vulnerable children. It goes on to emphatically state that 'the long term development returns and robust benefit-to-cost ratios not only justify but oblige this investment' (RSA national ECD policy, 2015). This unambiguous acknowledgement of the dire need for more investments and focus to this crucial sector is encouraging.

According to DoE, DSD, and UNICEF (2010) South African government initiated a Public Expenditure and Tracking Survey (PETS) which found that there has been a sustained increase in public funding of Grade R which saw an increase from R983 million in 2007/8 to an estimated 1.25 billion in 2009/2010. In spite of this positive and encouraging strides by the government to play a leading role in improving access and quality of ECD services, it is disappointing that only 2% (in 2012/13 financial year) of total government expenditure provided by DSD and DoE, on education goes to ECD programmes and services for children under 5 years (Children Now, 2011; Giese, Budlender, Berry, Motlatla and Zide, 2011). This is despite the fact that South Africa's education investment is one of the highest in the world according to SA Info (2011) as cited in Ashley-Cooper and Atmore (2013). This underinvestment in the ECD sector leaves a lot to be desired, hence recent government efforts to find solutions for ECD challenges, resulting in approval of the South African

Integrated Programme of Action for Early Child Development – Moving Ahead (2013-2018) by Cabinet in 2013, 18 September.

Other recent developments in the ECD sector spearheaded by the three departments mentioned above with the aim of culminating into a clear policy document for National ECD Policy and Programme are the 'Diagnostic Review of Early Childhood Development in 2012, the National ECD Conference in 2012, and the review of the ECD National Integrated Plan 2005-2010' (HSRC, 2014: 19). Again, bear in mind that this Diagnostic Review found that close to three times less is spent on ECD compared to primary education expenditure and that nine times less is spent on ECD compared to tertiary education expenditure (DRECD, 2012). These findings point to the scope of public funding challenges that the ECD sector is facing in South Africa.

It is prudent to also mention that despite the rather gloomy picture that has thus far emerged about minimal public investments in the preschools, especially for the 0-3 year age group, the government has done a lot in other aspects of ECD. The following aspects of the ECD services are already publicly funded: free healthcare for infants, pregnant women (through DoH); social grants for children living in poverty and with disability (through DSD), and free birth registration for all children (RSA draft national ECD policy, 2015). From this list of publicly funded ECD programmes/services, it is clear that the social, health and nutritional aspects of ECD have received substantial and commendable support from the state. However, the educational (cognitive) development aspect of the ECD needs of children have been lagging far behind, hence a national public funding policy for ECD would be a critical step in improving the educational needs of preschoolers in SA.

Currently, public funds made available for registered ECD facilities is based on a 'per-child subsidy' of R15 per child, designed to target children living in poor communities (DPME, 2012). The draft policy outlines a handful of deficiencies with the current public funding model. Key amongst them are:

- Minimum funding, in the form of per child subsidy that is currently paid by the government has no legal bearing whatsoever as it is discretionary as stipulated by the children's Act of no. 38 of 2005.
- This model does not efficiently cater for home-based ECD centres, thereby excluding many

children in the 0-3 year age group.

- The application process and criteria used for public funding of preschools is engulfed by red tape and complex hard to meet requirements. A means-tested subsidy is based on the applicant meeting the certain stringent infrastructural obligations which most centres cannot meet due to poor environments they are in. Furthermore, unregistered preschools are automatically excluded, which is a huge blow to many ECD practitioners and their children.
- NPO certificate and health certificate applications are also embroiled by extremely onerous process. According to Van den Berg et al (2010) 75% of ECD centres find it difficult to apply for funding, increasing to 79% in poor communities.
- Local governments are not able to discharge their constitutional obligation to assist with infrastructural needs of preschools due to insufficient funds.

The national ECD policy makes elaborate funding model proposals which if approved and implemented would go a long way in remedying some of the funding problems of preschools contemplated here. This funding model is envisioned to cover post provisioning costs (staff), programme support costs, supervision and management costs, infrastructure development funding, and the National ECD Agency's[20] operational and implementation costs (RSA draft national ECD policy, 2015). Where this funding model seems to be silent in as far as disbursing funding for improvement of the ECD sector is with regards to how it will determine remuneration of ECD practitioners as they are currently poorly paid in comparison to their primary school counterparts. Secondly, it does not indicate how it will guard against conspicuous spending on ECD which may lead to unintended consequences of mismanagement of funds.

This draft policy makes the following funding approach (following the categorised model, under 2 years and 2-5 year categories) alternative to preschools, in an attempt to move away from the current per child subsidy model; 0-2 years cohort will be fully funded in qualifying facilities. This cohort is placed under the auspices of DoH. For the 2-5 years cohort '(as well as children aged 0-2 years in early learning centres), posts are funded and a per capita programme support amount

[20] This is an agency that was envisioned be established as per the guidelines of this draft policy to oversee the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this draft policy at all levels. However, following recent (at the time of submission of this report) revisions to this draft policy, the idea of establishing such an agency has been sidelined.

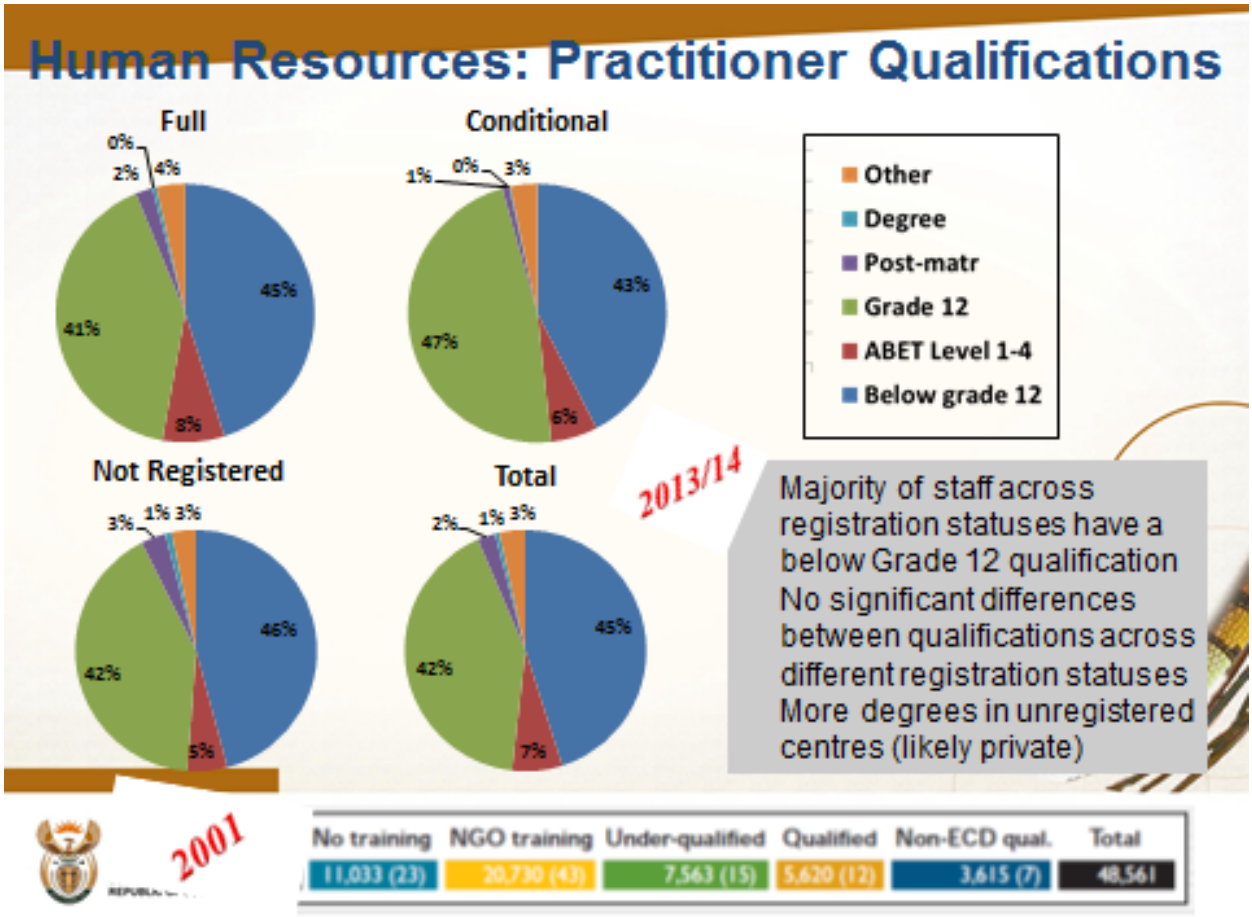
sufficient to provide 20 hours a week of services for no fee/for free to eligible children' (RSA draft national ECD policy, 2015: 106). This programme funding, opposed to per child subsidy is said to be designed to ensure equitable financing of eligible ECD centres. The researcher's assessment of the differences between these two funding models is that little differences exist because this proposed model may simply be semantically different to its predecessor, thereby not solving the initially highlighted problems of per child subsidy approach.

Arguably the most progressive intervention of this proposed policy is that funding allocation will be based on the assumption or premise that the government should make a concrete commitment to subsidising at least 65% of children aged 0-5 years. Furthermore, ECD practitioners will be paid based on the ratio of 1:12 for children aged 1-3 years and 1:20 for children aged 3-4.5 years. Another attempt, contemplated by this draft policy speaks to the challenge of getting ECD facilities registered. To this end, it is proposed that a conditional registration of eligible ECD centres should be speedily implemented so as to fast-track their funding applications and ultimate access to the much needed public funds for their programmes. This conditional registration is in accordance with Children's Act no. 38 of 2005. This provision has not been efficiently used hence it is proposed that its use should be prioritised.

2.4.5 Teacher Training and Qualifications

Atmore (2012: 11) reports that 'Of the 54,503 educators/practitioners working with children in early childhood development sites, 12% are qualified, 88% require additional training of some kind and 23% have no training at all'. These figures show that even if universal access to preschool education were to be realised soon, there would still be quality problems due to the sheer scale of ECD teachers who do not have appropriate skills to nurture and cognitively stimulate pre-school children. Another loophole in the provision of preschool education in South Africa is that there is no comprehensive government strategy on ECD practitioners training and no clear policy on minimum qualifications required for these teachers (Fourie, 2013). Diagram 2 below shows qualifications level of ECD practitioners in fully registered preschools, partially registered preschools and those that are not registered at all.

Diagram 2: ECD Practitioners qualifications 2013/2014



Source: UNICEF 2014.

In terms of the qualifications of ECD practitioners, this diagram paints a bleak picture because majority of practitioners (45%) do not have matric certificates, which is generally used as a baseline for acceptable literacy levels in the education sector and even in private industries. This is disheartening and begs for the dire need for regulation of the ECD sector, because it implies that children are taught by mostly unqualified people. These numbers get even worse when the blue and green sections (below matric and Grade 12) of this pie charts are combined, this then means that 87% of all ECD practitioners (excluding Grade R) in South Africa only have a matric certificate or below qualifications.

South African draft national ECD policy Gazetted on 31 March 2015 acknowledges that there is a backlog of unqualified preschool practitioners who are in dire need of ECD training. Its prognosis for

why there is this backlog is that there is lack of capacity of FET colleges, accredited NPOs to provide such training, and inadequate private trainers for ECD. The researcher is of the view that under-qualified teachers problem in South Africa (including preschool practitioners) may be undermined and in fact may, concurrently with poor ECD coverage and public funding, be pivotal missing links that if urgently addressed could solve most of our education crisis.[21] I however acknowledge that there is no silver bullet for solving our educational challenges. Table 4 below gives a detailed summary of the proposed qualifications for ECD practitioners as envisioned by the draft national ECD policy of 2015. This proposed guideline would go a long way in the efforts to professionalise ECD sector in South Africa, if the draft policy is ultimately approved and adopted.

Table 4. Proposed qualifications for different worker categories

Service	**Staff Required**	**Training**
ECD Practitioners	Group facilitators (non-centre based)	Short term 20-day course (4x5 modules). Medium to long term NQF 4
	Centre-based practitioners	Short-term: ECD basic skills (if untrained). Medium to long term NQF 4 and 5
	Principals	Short-term NQF 4 Medium to long term: L5 and management elective
	Cooks for full-day programmes which supply food	Short-term: Short course Medium to long term: there are a range of unit standards that have been used under EPWP for training cooks

[21] The state of South Africa's basic education system is highly contested and whether it is in a crisis state or not, it surely has taken a knock in the last few years despite the fact that Matric pass rates have been increasing.

ECD supervisors/coordinators	To support child minders, parent group and playgroup facilitators, ECD centres	Short-term NQF 4 and 5 Short-term: NQF 4 Medium term: NQF (including evaluation elective/& barriers to learning). Long term: higher qualifications
Toy Libraries (serving parents, playgroups/ECCE centres)	Librarian	Short-term: Toy library training (e.g. COLSA). Medium to long term: Level 5 and specialised play material courses including support for children with barriers to learning.

Source: Gazetted RSA national ECD policy 2015

In a paper entitled 'better teachers, better preschools' Barnett (2003) points out that quality of children at school is often determined and even predicted by the qualifications of teachers and if they are paid well. The of lack of professionalisation of the ECD sector is by far one of the main stumbling blocks in improving its access and prestige in the eyes of the public. The researcher also came across this theme many times during his interview sessions with ECD practitioners, as testimony that this subject matter of qualification (or lack thereof) is a huge problem for this early learning phase. More on these sentiments by my respondents is discussed in detail in the results and interpretation section of this research report.

Barnett (2003) poignantly drives this point home when he asks why it is that professional qualifications such as degrees are required for teachers who teach 5 year olds in the US, but such stringent criteria is not used when recruiting for teachers of smaller children under 5 years. The same questions can be asked in the context of South Africa because fully accredited education diplomas and degrees as required for Grade 1 teachers (read primary teachers), whereas such qualifications are not necessarily required for preschool teachers. This inconsistency in qualifications and salaries of teachers of these not-so different age groups of children in the ECD sector warrants a serious re-evaluation of the funding and qualifications policy in South Africa.

Hence the importance of this study in trying to comprehend how public funding of ECD in South Africa can be improved so as to address these loopholes.

Teacher training and qualifications is extremely important because research shows that more qualified and well compensated teachers across board (not just preschool teachers) are more prone to have 'more positive, sensitive and responsive interactions with children, and provide richer language and cognitive experiences' Barnett (2003: 4).

2.4.6 Nutritional and healthcare funding for preschools

As the saying goes 'healthy mind, healthy body'. Perhaps the converse is true pertaining to the nutrition of pre-schoolers. That is, if the body is well fed and healthy, then by default the mind and psychosocial, cognitive aspects of children will function better. Yamauchi (2008) contends that good nutrition and health in the early years of all children are very important in that they are preconditions and precursors for a holistic child development. Furthermore, research in this regard confirms that well-nourished children are better positioned to start school earlier and their class repetition rate is much lower compared to malnourished children (Yamauchi, 2008).

2.4.7 Institutional Capacity and ECD Infrastructure

The '*letsema*' concept may be helpful in better understanding the multi-sectoral nature of early learning in preschools and why it is crucial. 'Letsema' is a Sesotho word used to refer to collective and shared roles that members of villages would use when ploughing their land and during harvest periods or any other major 'projects' done in their community. The integrated approach to provision of funding and policy direction in the ECD sector shared by DSD, DoH and DoH is important but can only function viably if these three institutions have the capacity and delineated roles for accountability purposes. Because education is a cumulative process, these institutions should make sure that their orientation is mostly dedicated to early learning because remedial actions at a later stage are more expensive and difficult to correct (Atmore, van Niekerk, and Ashley-Cooper, 2012).

Literature in South Africa points to the fact that most ECD practitioners lack adequate managerial skills, human resource capabilities, financial management, and knowledge on how to access provincial government subsidy funding (Ashley-Cooper and Atmore, 2013). Infrastructure costs for

building of ECD centres that meet requirements of DSD, DoE and DoH is not funded or even subsidised by government, making it difficult for preschools in poor environments to access public funds or even build new much needed ECD centres (Atmore, van Niekerk, and Ashley-Cooper, 2012).

Part of the lacking institutional capacity that has plagued the three departments tasked with ensuring universal and equitable access to ECD services by children is poor or lack of a strong well-coordinated and funded communication campaign for parents and all stakeholders in the provision of ECD services. Thankfully the draft national ECD policy 2015 makes reference to this issue and suggests ways of improving ECD communication strategy at institutional level.

2.4.8 Statistics on education expenditure in South Africa compared to global trends

South Africa's expenditure on education alone is one of the highest in the world, at R233 billion, which is approximately 21% of the national budget for the 2013/2014 financial year (Gordhan, 2013) yet only a fraction of this funds are channeled to preschool education (as alluded above). This figure now stands at R246 billion for the 2014/15 financial year (see table 1). According to the United Nations (2011) statistical study of various countries variables, South Africa Spent 6% of its GDP on education from 2005-2011. This is a relatively significant expenditure compared to superpowers such as US (5.5%), Canada (4.8%), China (1.9%), Japan (3.8%) education expenditure of their GDP respectively.

As lamented earlier, more funds does not by default necessarily equate to improved quality of rendered services. Which is why Wildeman and Lefko-Everett (2008) also argue that increase in budgetary allocation should be viewed with extreme caution as they do not imply that quality of Grade R will also improve. This interplay and relationship between financial resources and quality of ECD services is at the heart of this research study as mooted by the primary research question above. Luxumo (2009: 18) makes a poignant point that 'children growing up without early cognitive stimulation may have cumulative cognitive deficits polarising educational attainment'. Indeed prevention is better than cure.

Uganda and World Bank study of 1996 used the PETS – Public Expenditure Tracking Survey to research if increased government expenditure in education did reach the schools, or there were

some misappropriation of funds along the way. This study is important as reference for my research in tracking the flow and use of public funds in preschool education in South Africa. That is why the concept of Fiscal Incidence is crucial for the study. It may potentially help SA government and other stakeholders to replicate this study done by Uganda, but at a much bigger scale so as to monitor and evaluate its funding model efficacy. A staggering 78% of nonwage funds were found to have been misappropriated and did not reach schools in Uganda (Reinikka, 2004). Boateng (2012) contends that 'poor outcomes at the secondary level could also be a reflection of inadequate preparation at the primary level' and this research report concurs, and further makes a case that the same premise could be argued for preschool education. That is, poor outcomes in primary level may also be a direct/implicit result of inadequate preparation (due to underinvestment in the ECD sector).

South Africa has its own longitudinal ECD study which is important to be mentioned. This study is called Bt20 (Birth to 20). This study found that investments in preschool learning reduces grade repetition significantly from 38.8% among children who did not have access to ECD services to 31.6% among those that attended any form of ECD program (Luxumo, 2009).

2.4.9 Recent ECD developments by South African government

In her 2015 budget speech vote 17 speech, delivered in parliament on the 12 May, Minister of the Department of Social Development, Bathabile Dlamini, devoted some time addressing Early Childhood Development challenges and how they plan to tackle them. She amongst others, revealed that cabinet has approved an establishment of an Inter-Ministerial Committee on ECD which would be used as a vehicle to support and help coordinate government work in matters relating to the ECD sector. This development is commendable as it shows that something is being done to try and holistically improve the overall wellbeing of our children. She also mentioned in that speech that the National Development Agency (NDA) has made strides with their 'Adopt-an-ECD' campaign. Through this campaign, she indicated that NDA has thus far supported over 164 ECD centres in an attempt to help them apply and secure public funding by assisting them to comply with the National Norms and Standards for Funding of Schools.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework, for the purposes of this mini-thesis, is conceptualised as an explanatory

mechanism which has been used in interpreting and making sense of the literature, documents to be analysed and interviews. This research report explored three contending conceptual frameworks which would ground the collection of data and its subsequent analysis. It then adopted one of them. These theories are; socio-cultural theory (Vygotskian framework), lattice theory, and rational comprehensive model theory.

2.5.1 Socio-cultural theory

Socio-cultural theory was first conceptualised and pioneered by Lev Vygotsky between 1920 to 1930. Vygotsky was a Russian psychologist, whose attempt was to show that early learning is a 'shared process rather than an individual one' (John-Steiner and Mahn, 1996: 191). At the crux of this theory is the notion that children learn more and faster among their peers and in an environmental context that enhances and builds on their social and historical context. Furthermore, this theory sought to make a case for involving kids at a very young age with cognitively stimulating activities in their preschools or home-based care centres. The theory argues that 'make-believe play' plays s crucial role in ensuring that early learning is not just about the orthodox conceptions where children are fed and sleep, without engaging in educationally and cognitively stimulating playgrounds (Bodrova, 2008: 357).

2.5.2 Lattice theory

Lattice theory is premised on the need to professionalise early childhood development so that it can be viewed in par with other professions. This theory makes a distinction between conceptualising ECD as a field, versus seeing it as a profession. 'The *field* includes anyone engaged in the provision of early childhood services; the *profession* denotes those who have acquired some professional knowledge and are on a professional path' (National Association for the Education of Young Children: 1993: 5). The word 'lattice' is used as a symbol to describe this theory because of its multiple interconnected layers that form one whole. Therefore, in the context of early learning, lattice theory argues that early learning must have professional practitioners of all walks of life from different education backgrounds so that they can best contribute in designing quality programs for the kids. Lattice theory 'is intended as a working tool designed to promote a coordinated, articulated system of high-quality early childhood professional preparation and development' (National Association for the Education of Young Children: 1993: 11).

2.5.3 Rational Comprehensive theory

Rational Comprehensive model was pioneered by Meyerson and Banfield (1955) and it is premised on how policy makers and decision-makers at large, 'rationally' explore all possibilities and choose the best alternative from a wide range of options that they think will yield more returns and ensure better service deliver and distribution of resources. This model is designed in a highly organized sequential step-by-step approach to policy problem solving. Strengths of this model are that; 1) it is well organised and relatively easy to follow because of the phases and processes that are interconnected. 2) It exhausts all possibilities in making a decision and appreciates the complicated political environment that engulfs policy making (Altshuler, 1965). Lindblom (1959: 80-81) is a leading critique of this model. He argues that this model has a "disconnect between values and goals set and amount of information available to make accurate decisions". Other critics of rational model assert that it is too idealistic and removed from the reality of policy making and implementation because there are always time and resource constraints to exhaust all the stages (Dror, 1964).

Incrementalism is another key policy making and analysis model of note. Incremental model as founded by Lindblom (1959) is simply encapsulated by the notion that policy making and evaluation must be done in such a way that there is a gradual modification of existing policies, because overhaul of existing policies is not a favorable option to politicians. This latter model is not appropriate for this mini-thesis because there is no comprehensive National ECD policy as yet in South Africa to be 'incrementally' modified. Secondly, even if there was, the urgency of ECD sector challenges requires immediate adoption and roll out of the much needed unequivocal overarching national policy/legislation on ECD. This research report has adopted Morse and Struyk's (2006) six-step approach to policy analysis using the rational model theory, in analyzing ECD funding polices in Johannesburg (Gauteng Province). The steps are; Establish problem, Set evaluation criteria, Identify alternative policies, Evaluate competing policies, Select best policy, Monitor and evaluate chosen policy. Rational model's cost-benefit analysis compared to the other two theories/models (above), far outweighs these competing theories in spite of its detail orientation and complexity. This is the theoretical framework that the research study adopted amongst all three theories explored. It was opted for because unlike the other two theories, it assisted the researcher to analyse the entire ECD sector and eventually narrow the scope to the focus of this report, which is public funding

regimes of early learning in South Africa (see 2.51 below for more details).

Lastly, this theoretical framework is relevant and appropriate in answering the research questions because of the inter-sectoral nature of preschool education as it considers the value of each stakeholder institution in ensuring successful policy making and implementation strategy. In this case, a comprehensive National ECD Policy that addresses public funding challenges in ECD. Furthermore, in the midst of current numerous reports and reviews of ECD sector in SA, this model helped the researcher to best navigate his way through such documents because it exhausts all possibilities in making a decision and explores the best policy alternative amongst many options.

2.5.4 Justification for adopted theoretical framework

There are generally two approaches to public policy making and analysis, and those are Rational Choice and Garbage-can approaches (Gumede, 2011). As mentioned earlier, the former basis its approach on the premise that policies and policy issues must be addressed in a linear well defined sequential stages, while the latter presupposes that policy making and analysis in not linear because of the complexity of societal challenges. One can advance an argument that as things are in the ECD policy domain in South Africa, policy frameworks in this sector may be seen to have formulated haphazardly in a non-linear fashion, thereby fitting the criteria of 'garbage-can' model of policy making.

Perhaps this may partly explain why there have been many attempts at formulating many policy frameworks since 2001 but they were never consolidated into a comprehensive single policy that would be regarded as the piece of legislation that could govern the entire sector in a coherent manner. These challenges therefore precipitated in the choice of rational model as the alternative conceptual framework that would in a coherent sequential manner, sieve through different policy and programmes documents with the aim of finding the most relevant documents and literature that would best inform the ECD policy and governance paralysis that has plagued this sector for over a decade. Garbage-can model is said to characterized by 'trial and error' tactics while its arch rival, rational model is characterized by spending extensive time in understanding the problem, then evaluates different approaches to solving it, monitors and carefully plans the implementation of proposed solutions (Dunn, 1994; Cloete, Wissink, and de Coning, 2006).

Table 5 demonstrates how this theoretical framework was mapped in an attempt to gain a better understanding of how it has been perceived and used by different scholars over time since it was pioneered.

Table 5: Outline of main authors on RCM theory

Pioneer: Meyerson, M. and Banfield EC. (1955) pg. 15
Time line: 1955-2013

Protagonists	**Antagonists**
1955-1960	**1955-1960**
Altshuler, A. (1965) pg. 186	Dror, Y. (1964) pg. 155
Allisson, GT. (1971) pg. 12	Lindblom, C.E. (1959) pg. 81
1980-1985	**1980-1985**
Hall, P. (1983) pg. 42	Hudson, B.M., Golloway, TD.,& Kaufman, JL. (1979)pg389, 396
Judith, E. I. (1996) pg. 461	Rosenhead, J. (1980) pg 210
2008-2013	**2008-2013**
Bowen, SA. (2005) pg. 194	Marcus, B. L. (2005) pg. 289
Goll, I. & Rashid, A. (2005) pg.1004	Mueller, GC, Mone, MA., & Barker, VL. (2007)Pg.872

2.6 Conclusion

The reviewed literature has on a whole been complementing each other on one central denominator, which is that Early Childhood Development has far reaching benefits for children themselves, their parents and the broader community as a whole. The most prominent point of

diversion and contention among leading scholars in this area is on the most viable and strategic approach to financing and supporting ECD facilities. That is , funding models and 'formulae' are the subjects of much debate, even though there is a general acknowledgement that more investments in early learning is of utmost importance for all societies and contexts. Furthermore, another point of convergence is that spending a bit more on poorer communities has proven to be more beneficial to those communities and children than their wealthier counterparts. At a global level, especially among the BRICS countries and other emerging economies, there are mixed outcomes in the relationship between GDP expenditure in ECD and enrolment rates of preschoolers. As shown by table 2, Russia seems to be the only country where there may be a direct correlation between both these variables.

Torkington (2001) made these key findings about the state of ECD in Africa as a whole: Most ECD programmes and projects in Africa are unregulated and poorly funded, many depended on NGO/private individuals support for their survival, and lastly that there is little government support and commitment for the ECD sector. It was also emphatically mentioned that the notion of 'politics policy' versus 'policy politics' hampers a lot of progress in Africa. Politics Policy refers to governance approach where policy makers let their myopic political subjectivities get in the way of solving pertinent policy issues. Policy Politics is a governance structure that prioritises policy issues over partisan political ends. This is because of political expediency and the fact that ECD investments take a lot longer to yield returns for incumbent politicians, who then decide to invest in other sectors that may help them stay in power.

In the South African context, the state of ECD sector is twofold. On the one hand, there are many policy documents and programmes since 1996 which did not impact much in improving quality and prioritization of early learning in SA. On the other hand, there has been steady increase in the amount of funding from government into this sector, despite the fact that it is still substantially little in comparison to investments made in other senior phases of education. Again, private financing of ECDs in community centres by parents is still prevalent. ECD teachers' qualifications and salaries remain low especially in independent centres. The 2015 draft national ECD policy brings much hope to this sector that has for a long time remained unregulated/under-regulated and poorly supported finically and otherwise.

3. Chapter Three – Research Methods and Collection of Data

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the processes followed and methodologies used in conducting the study. It spells out how the research paradigms underlying the study and how data was collected and collated. The research methods and data collection techniques used for this mini-thesis were chosen because they were considered more suited to answer the research questions and research problem on the implications of public funding on early learning in South Africa. In the main, this chapter reports on the field work process, the challenges faced, how respondents were sourced, and makes an argument that acquiring data from independent none registered preschools is not as hard as one may initially presume. It further gives clarity on the research instruments used and a case is made on why they were selected. A detailed process of how the analysis was done is also explained. Limitations of this and the overall study are also explored and disclosed.

The methodology was guided by the following relationships and duties of different government departments that are directly involved in the provision of ECD services as a whole. Vanessa Mentor (2014) in UNICEF (2014: 55) puts it aptly:

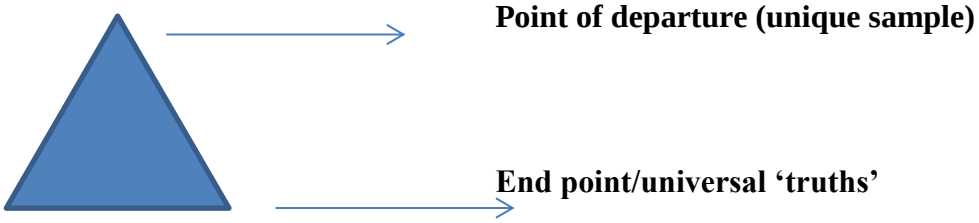
> For Grade R the role players include the Gauteng Department of Education, responsible for provision of access, infrastructure, curriculum, learning and teaching support materials and training of Grade R practitioners. With regard to birth to 4 year olds and pre-Grade R, Ms Mentor pointed out that the Gauteng Department of Education is responsible for the development and provision of the birth to 4 curriculum, as well as the training and provision of learning and teaching support materials. The Gauteng Department of Social Development is responsible for the registration of all ECD sites, ECD programmes and the per capita subsidy of R15 per day per eligible child (parents' means test); maintaining a provincial database of registered and unregistered ECD sites and the monitoring and evaluation of facilities and programmes. The Gauteng Department of Health focuses on child health and well-being, while local government (municipalities) deals with by-laws and environmental health certificates.

The first section introduces the chapter, the second section explains how the study was designed and data collected, the third section lists key documents consulted for documentary analysis

purposes. The interview process with ECD practitioners is described in section four, sampling of participants and documentation is encapsulated in the fifth section, which is immediately followed by section six on how I captured data, decoded, analyzed and interpreted it. Sections seven and eight cover trustworthiness and ethical considerations respectively. The last two sections are a reflection on the methodology limitations and limitations of the whole study, and then the concluding remarks section.

3.2 Research design and data collection techniques

The research design employed a qualitative research method. This method is described as a 'mainly inductive rather than deductive analytical process (i.e. broadly, developing findings from research data, rather than testing existing theories)' (Bryman, 2001: 45). Its significance for this mini-thesis is that it will help the researcher to acquire an in-depth understanding of funding models in the ECD sector both locally and abroad. Its weakness is that its findings are not generalisable.



Inductive research essentially departs from one central focal point or theory (the tip of the pyramid above) and expands it to different universal 'truths' (symbolised by the base of the above pyramid). This is what I would term downward/Egyptian pyramid approach.

3.2.1 Data Collection Instruments

The following research instruments were used during data collection:

- Questionnaires (two types)
  - One for ECD practitioners in preschools and Grade Rs
  - One for Policy makers from Department of Social Development
- Dictaphone/Audio recorder
- Observation during interview sessions at preschools
- Microsoft Excel Dataset from Gauteng DSD of all registered ECD centres in Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality

- Laptop for transcription of recordings and safekeeping of audio records.

Individual semi-structured interview schedule for ECD practitioners (see appendix A) was designed to illicit a wide array of responses and experiences of teachers who are in the frontline of implementation of ECD policy or lack thereof. More importantly, this interview guide was geared towards answering the primary research question of this study. Many questions probe the practitioners to reflect and share their experiences on the perceived value and relationship between public funds and their effect on their children's learning outcomes throughout the foundation phase (preschool to Grade 3). This interview schedule was divided into three subsections: funding related questions, institutional capacity related questions, teacher training and qualifications related questions.

Interview schedule for DSD policy makers/government officials (see appendix B) was designed to help me gain a more nuanced understanding of the policy environment and frameworks put in place in regulating the ECD sector, specifically on how funding is approved and monitored for qualifying preschools. Furthermore, this interview guide sought to address some key research questions of this study, specifically the first and last secondary research questions highlighted in the introductory chapter. The interview schedule is divided into four subsections, namely; funding related questions, institutional capacity related questions, policy related questions, and administration of applications related questions.

Document Analysis and in-depth semi-structured, open-ended, and probing (but not leading) interviews with ECD practitioners, specifically pre-school teachers/supervisors was embarked on. Document Analysis is defined by Bowen (2009: 27) as 'a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents – both printed and electronic material' and it draws data from archival sources and records such as statistics documents, personal documents,organizational, and mass media reports etc. (Silverman, 2000). Altheide (1996: 2) defines Document Analysis as 'an integrated and conceptually informed method, procedure and technique for locating, identifying, retrieving and analysing documents for their relevance, significance and meaning'. The type of document analysis used in conducting this research is content analysis of data from primary documents such as National ECD Policy of Republic South Africa 2015 and Children's Act No. 38 of 2005.

More specifically, the type of document analysis used in conducting this research is thematic content analysis of data from primary documents such as the Draft National ECD Policy, National ECD Programme, and data from interviews transcripts (see the next section). According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005: 1278) thematic content analysis is defined as 'a subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns'.

This methodology is important for this study because of its efficiency and relevance for teasing out the overall direction pursued by ECD authorities in South Africa because of the unclear policy direction and funding models in the preschool sector at the moment. For instance, it will help the researcher understand if learning quality at preschools receiving public funding is improved compared to learning outcomes of preschools without such funds. Document analysis entails 'data selection' opposed to 'data collection', and it is cost-effective. Furthermore, data selection in document analysis is controllable (this improves reliability of study) and can be done relatively quicker and cost-effectively than other research methods (Merriam, 1988; Bowen, 2009: 31). Another significance of using document analysis for this study is that it helped me 'triangulate' efficiently the content of reports and policy documents analyzed while investigating how government funds are allocated in preschools and how ECD practitioners perceive this entire process.

Triangulation means comparing and contrasting different types of data seeking to address related research question (Government Social Unit, 2007). However, this approach is not without flaws. Some of its inherent shortcomings are that relevant documents are not always easy to access, what Yin (1994) calls 'low retrievability' of documents. Furthermore, 'biased selectivity' is another disadvantage of document analysis (Yin, 1994). Be it as it may, advantages of this approach far outweigh its limitations, hence its use in this research report. This research strategy was non-experimental with the purpose of being exploratory and descriptive (about ECD funding processes and their potential effects on early learning) using the above mentioned theoretical and conceptual model.

3.2.2 A case for the research design adopted

A combination of different research tactics was used, for example:

- Face-to-face Interviews
- observation research
- Snowball technique (minimally used for registered preschools receiving public funding)
- Documentary analysis (documents purposively selected)

All these different but interlinked approaches to data collection form part of the overarching qualitative research method which is able to give a more nuanced understanding of other people's lived experiences and views, unlike a quantitative approach. Face-to-face interviews were conducted and prioritised in this study because of their ability to give me the opportunity to see the respondents' body language, thereby enabling me to make follow up questions or probe further. Furthermore, they afford the interviewer the privilege of drawing certain deductions from the interviewees unspoken body language as they answer the questions posed to them.

Observation research is almost inherently embedded in most qualitative research designs that collect raw primary data, because it is used implicitly and subconsciously when most qualitative research is undertaken. For instance, before conducting my interviews with ECD practitioners I would spend a few minutes walking in the premises of independent preschools (registered and unregistered) so that I get a sense of the type of infrastructure and learning aids that each preschool has. This helped me to factor some relevant questions in, during interview sessions that I would have otherwise not been able to include in my interview schedule.

Snowball sampling technique/chain referral sampling refers to a non-probability sampling approach where hard-to-reach potential participants in a research study are sourced through a referral by one or two acquaintances of the researcher/initial contact person (Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981). They further go on to say that 'the method yields a study sample through referrals made among people who share or know of others of possess some characteristics that are of research interest' (Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981: 141). This approach to getting limited and hard to find participants within my sample was important to factor in because during the field work, I was confronted with the unforeseen challenge of sourcing enough preschools which were not only registered with DSD,

but also received the subsidy grant.

Therefore I had to resolve to the network chain (i.e. referrals) of asking the few practitioners who met the criteria mentioned, to introduce/assist me in sourcing other schools which they knew that they were registered and receiving public funds from government institutions. This approach was of much value in helping the researcher gain access to this cohort of preschools. Documentary analysis was valuable for this study because it enabled the researcher to know in greater detail the work that has been done already in a specific area of interest of the discipline that one is researching about. It also helped the researcher to sharpen both the literature review and theoretical underpinnings of this research.

3.2.3 Data Sources

3.2.3.1 Primary documents

South African ECD related documents and reports used include;

i. Integrated Programme of Action for Early Child Development – Moving Ahead (2013-2018).
ii. Diagnostic Review of Early Childhood Development 2012.
iii. National ECD Conference 2012.
iv. The review of the ECD National Integrated Plan 2005-2010.
v. National Norms and Standards for School Funding.
vi. National and Provincial (Gauteng) Treasury reports.
vii. National ECD Policy 2015
viii. Children's Act No. 38 of 2005

3.3 Interviews with preschool teachers and/or owners

A total number of 15 ECD practitioners were interviewed in Katlehong Township, located in Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality in the East Rand of Gauteng Province. One policymaker was also interviewed from DSD head office in Pretoria. The interviewed practitioners were divided into three groups of 5. The first group comprised of registered preschools, those registered with the Department of Social Development and received some form of subsidy/grant from government. A list of all registered preschools in this metropolitan area was requested and received by the researcher from the Gauteng department of education. This list was used to sample, purposively

the five preschools that met the criteria. The criteria was based on ensuring that these preschools were not only registered with DSD but also received public funding in the form of subsidy grants for food and other administrative costs such as paying of employees/assistants at the ECD centres.

The second group was made up of non-registered preschools. The rationale here was to draw some similarities and differences between the group of registered preschools (receiving public funding) and those that are not registered (not getting public funding). The researcher employed observation research techniques to some degree while conducting the individual interviews with the practitioners, which were all principals/owners of the preschools (excluding Grade R practitioners). Through such observations of the infrastructure and learning aids at these centres, it was hoped that some light would be shed about the effect of public funds in early learning. There were glaring differences in most preschools and sporadic similarities in some. See more on this in the results section below.

The third group of ECD practitioners interviewed comprised of Grade R teachers in public primary schools. This cohort was vastly different with the other two groups mainly because of where they are institutionally based, which is in formal primary school setting where the infrastructure (classrooms, toilets, play areas, kitchens etc.), school policies and curriculum are more structured and somewhat harmonised amongst all the Grade R centres visited. Accessing and finding the appropriate time for interviews with Grade R practitioners was more difficult because all protocol had to be observed and permission granted by either the principal of the primary school or the head of department of foundation phase in the concerned schools.

The justification for including Grade R was so that the issue of public funding would be viewed from as many angles and lenses as possible with the aim of getting a myriad of 'voices' and inputs from all relevant stakeholders. But more importantly, inclusion of Grade R centres provided a great narrative of better resourced and governed ECD sector opposed to the largely unregulated and unfunded 'independent' preschools that are privately owned. Furthermore, it was also important to understand the dynamics at play when children transition from independent preschools (at younger age, that is birth-5 years) to Grade R (at much older age, 5-6 years).

3.4 Operational Approach in conducting interviews

Before the interview processes with the first two groups (registered and unregistered preschools) began, the researcher conducted a desktop research on 'how to start and register an ECD centre in Ekurhuleni'. Much of the information was acquired from the metro's (EMM) website: www.ekurhuleni.gov.za. Then it was discovered that there is a four step process of how one can go about establishing an ECD centre in Ekurhuleni. The four steps are;

1. Apply with EMM department of city planning.
2. Apply for health certificate and certificate of acceptability.
3. Apply for a registration certificate (NPO certificate) with the Department of Social Development.
4. Then register your staff for clearance certificate. (This ensures that ECD practitioners do not have criminal records against children).

This exercise was done so that I would have an idea while interviewing practitioners, of whether they knew these processes, so that deductions would be made about the relationships and the extent of information dissemination done my EMM with ECD practitioners and other stakeholders in this sector.

Some of the questions in the interview schedule probed this kind of issues from Grade R practitioners and explored perceptions of teachers in Grade 1, 2 and 3 of children who never attended any preschool, those who went to independent preschools and on those who just went to Grade R for a year or two. Interesting accounts were made by Grade R teachers as mentioned in detail in the results section. See attached interview schedule (Appendix A) for detailed understanding on the questions that were posed to respondents in an attempt to answer research questions of this mini-thesis.

3.5 Sampling Techniques

Non-probability sampling in the form of purposive sampling of preschool teachers in Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality (EMM) and documentary analysis were undertaken. This is because a variety of preschools were visited and assessed based on the researcher's discretion and criteria which was informed by whether they receive public funding or some form of government subsidy or not. Formally registered preschools and those that are not registered were sampled. This

technique (non-probability sampling) means that 'cases are chosen deliberately to represent characteristics known or suspected of key relevance to the research questions' Arber as cited in (UK Government Social Research Unit, 2007: 194).

All 15 respondents (plus one policymaker) were African (black) females above 30 years of age. The fact that there was not a single male preschool teacher that I came to interview or merely see is a problem in itself because it may signal that there is a huge gender imbalance in the ECD sector. A Masters' research report by Mackay (2012) which sought to deepen our understanding of the underrepresentation of men in Early Childhood Care and Education sector also concluded that this phenomenon is widespread and problematic.

Five of each category (5 registered centres receiving public funds, 5 home-based care/independent none registered centres, and 5 Grade R centres placed within primary schools) were equally sampled. Therefore, there was a total sample size of 15 ECD centres. This sampling technique is appropriate for my research because there is no data collected and readily available on the list and number of independent preschools that are not registered with DSD, the only available data is that of registered preschools inclusive of Grade Rs. Therefore if I were to do a random non-probability sampling, it would not be methodologically sound as there won't be data for non-registered preschools. With regards to the documentary analysis, I did a thorough content analysis on documents with a specific orientation on ECD funding models currently in place and those that are being proposed.

The approach followed in collecting raw data was multidimensional. In relation to registered preschools, I used the list of ECD centres acquired from Gauteng DSD to telephonically call owners of initially randomly selected preschools to enquire about the registration status of the centre and if it was getting financial assistance from government. This was done to establish whether the centre met the criteria for inclusion in the interview process. Once these details were confirmed with the owner, I requested a meeting with the owner for the interview session after briefing them about what my research was about. Upon arrival at these registered preschools for the interview sessions, I requested to see the registration certificate (NPO certificate), and a certificate from Department of Health which is a prerequisite for preschools which applied for and receive subsidy grants from DSD. Once both these documents were observed, the interview process began.

With regards to non-registered ECD centres, the approach implemented to collect data from such preschools was different. As indicated above, because of lack of data on the scale and location of these preschools, I had to use my own discretion in walking around Katlehong Township to source potential centres that I suspected may not be registered. This suspicion was premised on many factors like how long the centre had been operational, how the premises where the preschools were built looked (poorly maintained, parameter fence not secure enough etc.).This process was not so daunting as initially anticipated, in fact most owners of these preschools were quite excited that someone was there to hear their frustrations and challenges in the ECD sector.

Most primary schools now have one or two Grade R classes within their premises, so sourcing Grade Rs was not a challenge. What was rather challenging was the long process of getting permission from all relevant authorities in those primary schools to give me a go ahead with interviewing the Grade R teachers. Therefore the approach followed in sourcing Grade Rs was straight forward. I looked for primary schools in 5 different sections of this township which were far from each other as possible with the aim of trying to avoid similar responses from schools due to their close proximity with each other.

3.6 Data analysis and interpretation

Data (primary and secondary) was analysed and interpreted on two levels. One level was the interpretation in relation to the available literature which was systematically mined and sieved through for the most relevant information. Some of the key phrases that were a 'litmus test' to determine relevance of information used in extracting relevant data were; 'ECD public funding', 'financing early learning', 'investing in ECD sector', and 'financial resources role in improving ECD'. A litmus test here means a guiding/gauging mechanism or a yard stick used to source required information. In the second level I used transcriptions of raw data from the interview sessions and observation research technique notes to decode recurring themes and patterns from all the 15 interviews. Thereafter I compared and contrasted these raw data with findings of other prominent scholars in the same field. Observation of sampled preschools environments and infrastructure played a crucial role in distinguishing how physically public funds have an impact on the infrastructure and physical wellbeing of children in different preschools.

According to Neuman (2011) open coding of raw data is when concepts and recurring themes are put into categories where words or phrases which contain somewhat similar meanings are grouped together. Data analysis can best be understood as 'examining, sorting, categorising, evaluating, comparing, synthesizing, and contemplating the coded data as well as reviewing raw and recorded data' (Neuman, 2011: 517).

Recurring themes were then identified and meanings drawn from them. Barbara and Holland, cited in Wagner, Kalawulich and Garner (2012) call this a thematic analysis of data which centres on analysing themes or patterns from qualitative data. This data analysis approach was relevant for this research because data from interview sessions was accordingly coded and analysed for recurring themes as it relates to opinions and records of ECD teachers on public funding for their sector. The following process, better described by Burnard et al. (2008: 430) was followed to the latter in analysing the content of the raw interview data.

> Thematic content analysis involves discovering themes in the interview transcripts and attempting to verify, confirm and qualify them by searching through the data and repeating the process to identify further themes and categories.

The simplest way to describe how this process was done is bearing in mind that at the crux of this long and sometimes tedious process, is to sum up in one or two words what was said by the respondent. As Neuman (2011) noted above, this initial phase is generally known as open coding.
Another data analysis strategy that was used in analysing raw data and documents' content is a Consistency Matrix (see Appendix C). This matrix is designed in such a way that it enables the researcher to correlate research questions and research problem with the data sources so as to match the questions with the documents or interview questions that helped the researcher answer the research question and/or problem.

The second stage involves collecting all the categories and words from the rest of the interviews and 'trimming' similar themes. Neuman (2011) and Burnard et al. (2008) call this second stage 'axial coding'. Third and final stage is what Neuman call 'selective coding', and this is stage five under Burnard (1991) stages of interview transcripts analysis. This stage entails revisiting the whole dataset and deliberately selecting the final themes or categories that will then be used in reporting the findings of the research.

The following steps to analysing the content of interviews (in conjunction with Neuman (2011) and Burnard et al (2008) three stage approach) was adopted as prescribed by Kaid (1989), cited in Hsieh and Shannon (2005: 1278):

1. Formulate research questions to be answered
2. Select the sample to be analysed
3. Define categories to be applied
4. Outline the coding process and the coder training
5. Implement the coding process
6. Determine trustworthiness
7. Analyse the results of the coding process

Audio recordings of all participants which consented to be recorded were transcribed verbatim. These transcriptions were then coded 'respondent 1-15 and then each number assigned a pseudonym'. All interview questions which were closed-ended were assigned codes '0' for (no answers) or '1' for (yes answers). This was done so that such responses could be captured in excel spreadsheet for manipulation into charts which would visually give the reader a better understanding of the patterns of responses gathered.

3.6.1 Justification for the chosen analytical tools

Broadly, five tools of analysis were employed in trying to interpret the data.

1) Audio recorder – Interviews can often be fast paced making it difficult for researchers to fully capture all that was said in a note pad. Recording of the interview also helps the interviewee to open up and speak naturally without the continuous reminder that they are in fact being interviewed. A few minutes into the interview, participants are often conscious and weary of the recording devise, but this lapses quickly, unlike when one keeps writing note throughout the entire session. Therefore recording was important for this research authenticity and validity as no important details were left out.

2) Transcripts – a case for transcription of audio records is that data is easily manipulated and analysed when it can be visualised and either on a computer screen or as a printout.

3) Consistency matrix – This is a table that matches research questions with relevant documents that were extracted in gathering more information on the research topic. This matrix 'forced' me to source and use relevant information that ultimately provided clues in answering the key research questions of the study, therefore the consistency matrix played a crucial role and was necessary in this regard.

4) Microsoft excel spread sheet – Excel was used, even though the study is not necessarily a quantitative study. It was helpful in making visual (through pie charts and bar charts) comparisons between responses on certain themes which had a lot of variation in the way the interview questions were answered. An excel spread sheet was used mostly for closed ended questions.

5) Thematic content analysis – coding of similar and dissimilar responses from the transcripts is at the heart of analysing data in qualitative research methods, especially where interviews were conducted. It is through this manipulation and constant revisiting of the interview records that deeper and often concealed or implicit meanings can be unearthed and captured for reporting. Smith (2000) in Reist and Judd (2000: 320) also concurs with the researcher that 'the coding system is also the primary basis for the objectivity of the method. It makes distinctions explicit and public, so that other researchers can use the same procedure'.

3.7 Trustworthiness of Findings

Validity refers to the measures that I, as the researcher put in place in order to ensure that the results of the study are as 'truthful' as possible. There are two types of validity; internal and external validity. According to Shenton (2004), internal validity narrative speaks to the question of credibility of the research and its findings. Put differently, it seeks to ensure that the study actually measures or explores what it said it would measure. External validity on the contrary refers to the 'transferability' or generalisability of research results in different contexts (Merriam, 1998).

Internal validity in the collection of raw data for this research was ensured by conducting two trial interviews with two owners of ECD centres in Katlehong Township where all ECD practitioners interviews were conducted. This trial and error exercise was important to do because it helped me 'model' the interview process and modify the interview schedule as some questions were not

clearly framed and some were double barrelled and ambiguous. Because of the limited scope and small sample size (limited to one province and metropolitan) of this research, external validity may have been somewhat compromised.

Arguably one of the most important trustworthiness strategies is reliability, defined as 'a technique that shows that if the work were repeated in the same context, with the same methods and with the same participants, similar results will be found' (Shenton, 2004: 71). The research design of this research plays a crucial role in explaining in detail all the procedural processes that the researcher followed in conducting the field work, sourcing secondary data, and the methods used in synthesising data collected.

Reflexibility is also critical – Conducting any kind of research, be it qualitative or quantitative involves human subjects (researchers) who are inertly subjective beings. Therefore all research is not devoid of the researchers own personal bias and approach in conducting the study. Therefore there is no research that can genuinely be wholly objective, however there are ways to minimise researchers' bias. Reflexivity is therefore a conscious effort taken by the researcher to interrogate and reflect on their own subjective, often unconscious influence on the entire research process, so as to mitigate it and strike a balance between the facts and the interpretations from the researcher (Guillemin and Gillam, 2004). Mason (1996: 6) aptly conceptualises reflexivity as 'a researcher constantly taking stock of their actions and their role in the research process and subjecting these to the same critical scrutiny as the rest of their data'.

For reflexivity to be observed and implemented in the research process, the researcher has to observe and abide by all ethical considerations, which is what I did in conducting my research. For instance, after transcribing the verbatim from respondents, I asked colleagues in the same discipline to interpret a few responses from respondents and then compared meanings they drew from those responses with my own interpretations.

3.8 Limitations of the study

Chief among this research's shortcomings are the following:

- Language barriers between the researcher and some of interviewees. Almost all of the interviews were conducted in Sesotho (researcher's first language) and a bit of IsiZulu and

English. The challenge was that some teachers would either insist on using English and/or Sesotho which they were not so fluent in, instead of using their first language. This was despite my emphatic explanation that they were welcome to use their home language if they were more conversant and comfortable with it. Translation from either IsiZulu or Sesotho could have also impacted on some of the content of answers.

- Difficulties in accessing senior officials and policy makers in different government departments. Few first hand inputs and perspectives by policy makers on public funding of ECDs and their subsequent policy ambiguities was another limitation of the study, because only one policymaker was accessed and successfully interviewed.
- Inability to access and study financial records of preschools and Grade Rs. The plan to request and study financial records was aborted because during the pilot phase of the research, all interviewees were very uncomfortable the minute I asked to assess their financial books. Ultimately they did not disclose them at all and even contemplated pulling out of the interview process as they suspected that I might be a government official and they may end up in trouble for not accounting adequately on how their subsidy grants were used. Furthermore, some independent preschool owners were very suspicious and cautious not to divulge all the details about their finances because they said that they had been fraudulently tricked into giving thugs money while they were in the process of registering their preschools and applying for public funding.
- Most of the interviews were conducted during school hours and this meant that practitioners only had a limited amount of time to talk to me (some gave me 30-40 minutes only). I was often obliged to pause the interview one or two times because the children were either making too much noise and the teacher had to calm them down, or teachers would be called to the office to do some administrative duties. These may have impacted negatively on my interviews because it meant that the flow of our conversation was compromised and some details may have been left out or forgotten when the teachers came back after the disturbances.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter gave a detailed explanation and description of how and why qualitative research method was opted for over quantitative approach. The adopted research design, qualitative research, was justified. Research instruments used were also explained and likewise, a case made

on why they were chosen. This study used a non-probabilistic purposive sampling technique and also used some elements of snowball/chain referral technique in sourcing participants which were hard to find. It also further explained how data (especially primary raw data) was extracted and analysed. Reliability issues were also taken into account and reported on in this chapter. Two main approaches in writing and presenting findings of this study were explored, evaluated and one chosen for this research. The chosen approach to writing up the findings is the one that reports key findings based on the themes extracted from the verbatim quotes and incorporating the discussions around that theme from the literature. More details on this are captured in the next chapter.

4. Chapter Four – Findings, Analysis and Discussions

4.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the results of in-depth semi-structured interviews conducted with 15 ECD practitioners across different facets of the ECD sector; registered, non-registered ECD practitioners, and Grade R practitioners in Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality. Only some of their key verbatim is mentioned and briefly analysed in this chapter. Three public officials were envisioned to be interviewed, however only one was successfully interviewed. The interviewed policymaker is from DSD national office in Pretoria, who is a deputy director general (DDG) in the department. I could not access officials from DSD provincial office and from local government office (Ekurhuleni Metropolitan) because of their time schedules after I finally found direct access to them after a long time. The response rate of this study was 88.89% because out of the purposively sampled 18 prospective participants, 16 were interviewed and 2 could not be reached. All 15 ECD practitioners were successfully interviewed, whereas only 1 out of 3 policy makers was successfully interviewed. The two policy makers that were not reached were one at DSD Gauteng province office and one at local office (Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality).

The findings of all interview sessions, together with findings from analysis of the said documents above, are reported and interrogated in this chapter in the following order. The first section in this chapter chronicles the demographic profile of all the people interviewed, the second section reports policymakers findings. The third section then gives an account on findings of unregistered community based preschools, registered community based preschools, and Grade R findings combined. Juxtaposing of these three cohorts that make up Early Childhood Development education sector in South Africa is delved into in the section that precedes the conclusion section of this chapter.

Pseudonyms are used in this chapter to protect participants and their views, also as an ethical prerequisite so as to abide by confidentiality agreements made with participants during interviews.

4.2 Demographic profile of interviewees

4.2.1 Unregistered preschool practitioners:

1. **Makhumalo**'s preschool is fairly new. She opened it in 2012 because she realised that there was a high demand for home based care centres where parents could leave their children when they go to work in the morning. She then decided to take the children in as she was unemployed and she wanted to at least keep busy. However, after about six months of simply taking care of the children, she realised that she could make a living out of it, and that's when she began seeking more information about how to register her preschool. Makhumalo, is a black female in the 40-50 age group. Her preschool is in a secluded poor-middle class section of Katlehong Township in Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality. She has a Grade 12 certificate, 12 children enrolled at her school between 1-5 age group. She had recently applied for an NPO certificate with DSD.
2. **Connie** is a black female aged between 40-45. Her first crèche was established in 2001. It was however initially registered in 2008 but subsequently de-registered for non-compliance with some of the EMM by-laws. Connie has another crèche in another section in Katlehong where she employs one teaching assistant. At the crèche where the interview took place she also employs one lady who teaches and cooks for the children. Her crèche has 18 children aged 6 months-5years. Children are housed in a garage, the yard at her home (where the crèche is) is well fenced with a brick wall. There is no running water toilet for the kids, they use buckets. Connie has ECD level 1 certificate together with one of her helpers, the other one does not have a matric certificate.
3. **Nwabisa** is a mother of two children who is aged between 50-55 years. She has been in the ECD sector since 2008. Her preschool has 43 children from 6 months to 6 years of age. Nwabisa's preschool is in a middle class section of Katlehong and the infrastructure of her school also resembles the area in which it is based. There are three class rooms, one turned into a kitchen. Toilets and hand-washing basins are properly installed. She employs three people, two assistant teachers and one cook. The irony is that Connie only studied until Grade eleven, while her employees have Grade 12 certificates.
4. **Kgahliso** is also an old black female practitioner and owner of a preschool in a rather impoverished part of Katlehong. She is between 60-70 years old. She established her preschool in 1992 soon after she was retrenched from her workplace as a clerk in a retail shop. Her school has 30 kids from 3 months to 6 years of age. Granny Kgahliso confidently

and delightfully told me that '*I am educated my child, I have a day care certificate, health certificate, and I also completed my JC – Junior Certificate*' (interview in Katlehong, 23 April 2015). Her children are housed in a double garage, fitted with running water for hand-wash basins. The yard is well secured with a brick wall fence, she employs one lady who also helps her with cooking meals for the children.

5. **Mmathabo** is a black female owner of a preschool based at the heart of Katlehong near a busy intersection with many shopping outlets. Her age is between 30-35 years and has an ECD level 4 certificate which she began in 2013 and acquired in 2014 through Matthew Goniwe institute, an organisation contracted by the Gauteng Department of Education to capacitate its teachers with short courses and training workshops. Mmathabo began working as a preschool teacher employed in 2005 and in 2008 she founded her own crèche. She tried on numerous accounts to get her school registered but was confronted with many challenges because she had to relocate her school, and her previous NPO certificate was nullified. She employs two people who help teach 25 children at her school. Like most preschools in Katlehong, her crèche is also housed in a double garage in her homestead.

4.2.2 Registered preschools practitioners:

6. **Moleboheng** is a black mother of three children who established her preschool in 2006 and six months later the same year her school was fully registered with DSD. Her preschool is in a more 'affluent' neighbourhood in Katlehong and perhaps her remarks in this report may be instructing. She told me that '*I have both middle class and poor children. But now you can't assess a child by merely looking at them and concluding about their family's background*' (interview in Katlehong, 30 April 2015). Moleboheng employs five people, three teachers, one cook and one garden cleaner. She has ECD level 4 certificate, and all three of her teachers have ECD level 1 certificates. She has 64 children in her school, divided into two age groups (0-3 years and 4-6 years). Her premises are spacious and there are three class rooms, with many running water toilets. The school has plenty of playing materials and toys.
7. **Puleng** is another black single female who also registered her preschool early on after its conception in 2002. Her age is between 50-60 years. The school has 60 children even though it is allowed to take up to 63. Majority of her children are from middle class families. Puleng

together with her three teaching assistants have ECD level 4 qualifications. This is a well established school with most basic resources and infrastructure needed at preschools. They have an office with two new computers and furniture. Puleng has been applying for more funding from Gauteng Department of Education so that she can formally also provide Grade R services to older children.

8. **Tshepiso** has a long history in this sector (26 years experience) as her preschool was established in 1989 but only registered in 2005. She has since then been helping other mothers to register and open their own crèches. She is between 55 and 65 years old and has 40 preschool children. She has a high demand of children who want to go to her school but because her yard is small, her health certificate restricts her to 40 children, as a result she has had to turn down many parents who wanted space for their children. She employs two teachers, who both have ECD level 4, which she holds as well. Her school has ample playground resources and enough toilets. The yard is fairly small but well secured as the gate is always locked.
9. **Boitumelo** is a female black caretaker at her preschool based in Makula section in Katlehong. This preschool is the oldest amongst all the crèches I visited, as it was first built in 1960 during apartheid era. It was re-registered in the new democratic government in 1994 and has since then not served less than 80 children every year. Boitumelo is between 40 and 50 years old and she has a matric certificate and ECD level 4. This school has a very large yard and playground. It has all basic amenities needed in a preschool. It has stood the test of time and continues to serve with diligence the Katlehong community.
10. **Dimpho** is one of the oldest ECD owners that I got to interview, she is in the age group of 65-75 yet still very energetic and passionate about teaching preschoolers. She is by profession a nurse and she had to give up nursing in the early 1990s to take care her ailing husband. It was at this time that she decided to open a preschool in 1994 and only registered it in 2004. Her school employs three ladies who teach and cook for the 34 children enrolled at her school. Majority of her children are from middle class families, and she was very vocal about her experiences over the two decades in the sector. 'Gogo' Dimpho is very 'learnered', she holds a nursing qualification and an ECD level 5 certificate. Her three teachers have matric, ECD level 1, and ECD level 2 certificates respectively. She also modified her garage into two class rooms for the crèche.

4.2.3 Grade R practitioners

11. **Nokthula** is a female black teacher at Phumelela primary school in Makula section, Katlehong. She has 18 years experience of teaching in various preschools and Grade R. Her age is between 40-45 years. They have one Grade R class at this school which can take up to 30 chidren, but they had 25 at the time of the interview. Nokthula has ECD level 5 certificate which she attained in 2013 through a government subsidised program she attended for a year.
12. **Buhle** teaches Grade R children at Thulisa primary school in Skhosana section of Katlehong. She is aged between 30-40 years and she has very strong views about how she feels the ECD sector can be improved and how pedagogy can be designed and delivered. More of her views will be covered in the next sections of this chapter. She has 12 years experience teaching kids in preschools. Buhle has ECD level 5 certificate and she is studying to acquire level 6 soon.
13. **Thandi** works at Sekgutlong primary school situated in Motloung section. She is also a black female who is in her mid forties. She teaches Grade R and is also the HOD (Head of Department) for foundation phase at Sekgutlong primary. This school has three Grade R classes, divided into isiZulu and Sesotho languages. There is one Sesotho class with 27 children, two isiZulu classes with 33 and 34 children respectively. The schools language policy was one hotly debated issue in the Grade R interviews and it will be reported in detail in the coming section of this chapter. Amongst many of her qualifications, Mrs Thandi has an honours degree in education. Her three colleagues who teach Grade R have ECD level 3,4 and 5 each.
14. **Nkule** is an ECD practitioner at Dukathole primary school based in Monaheng section. She is in her late 40s and has 13 years teaching experience in the ECD sector. They have one Grade R class with an average of 27 children. She has ECD level 5 qualification and studying to complete her level 6 soon through Matthew Goniwe institute.
15. **Thando** teaches Grade R at Ntuthuko primary school in Twala section of Katlehong. She is one of the youngest female teachers I interviewed as she is between 25-35 years of age. She was very vibrant and excited about the interview and ended up inviting her two colleagues who teach Grade R with her. The school has three Grade R classes with an average number of 33 children per class. Thando loves her job and hopes to open her own preschool at some

stage in her life. She has an N6 Educare certificate, which could be equated somewhat to ECD level 6, her colleagues have matric and ECD level 4 certificates respectively. Thando refused to be recorded during the interview so some of what she said may have slightly slipped through the cracks, as I had to jot down here entire responses.

4.2.4 Policy makers' profile

The government official interviewed is a social work policy manager that is located within the chief directorate of ECD office. This office is based in the national Department of Social Development, Pretoria. This official will hereafter be referred to as 'The policy-maker'. She has served in this position since March 2008 working with Early Childhood Development services in its entirety. Before her appointment in this role she had performed different roles in the DSD regional office in Johannesburg where she was first employed in 1996. She worked as a community development officer where part of her job was to facilitate registration of NGOs, their funding, registering of ECD centres and assessing their business plans (for those that had applied for funding). In 2004 she moved to Gauteng provincial DSD office where she solely focused on ECD services as a whole. At this provincial office her new role was to develop guidelines, programmes, policies and norms and standards for the ECD sector in Gauteng.

The policy-maker played an instrumental role in the development of the draft national ECD policy 2015. Part of her daily duties currently include overseeing all ECD related matters within the department, from bringing together all stakeholders involved in the delivery of holistic ECD services. She also liaises with the Department of Education and Department of Health in ensuring that all their (DSD) efforts are well communicated with the other two departments as ECD sector operates in a multi-sectoral manner due to the wide array of needs of young children.

4.3 Findings from interviews with policy makers

The policy-maker (who was the only available policy maker out of the sampled three), explained that their national office is the only one that has the powers and mandate to develop policy within the ECD sector, that all the provinces must implement. She further pointed out that no province is allowed to spend less that the stipulated R15/learner/day subsidy. However, they can spend more

than this if they feel their provincial budget and strategic goals permit them to do so. This remark was in response to the researcher's question on why Free State government was spending less (R14 per learner per day), she also indicated that it had come to their attention that the province had been under spending on learners but the matter was since resolved and they reverted back to the standard amount. She further disclosed that Kwa-Zulu Natal is the only province that spends a bit more per learner (it spends R16 per learner per day), which is permissible.

Contrary to what has been documented in the literature thus far on the breakdown of subsidy grants for ECD centres, this interview discovered that DSD is now moving away from subsidy grant funding that is based on per child per day model/formula of allocation of subsidy. The policy-maker indicated that the new approach to funding of ECDs would now be based on program funding (based on total number of children in a centre, not on age) where preschools would be given 'X' amount per learner for 264 days, in state of per day. This model will be adopted to reduce red tape and the confusion that came along with the previous model. The breakdown of how these public funds are to be used would still follow the '50-30-20' formula. That is, 50% of the allocated funding at centres should be used for nutrition (food), 30% for staff at the centre as a stipend that could be combined with other school's funds to pay salaries, and lastly 20% of the funds should go to learning and study/support material necessities of the centre.

Commenting on the implications of planned funding increase and its fiscal incidence for improvement of ECD education outcomes, the policy-maker argued that she personally thinks that delivery of quality ECD education is not necessarily solely dependent on increase in public funds. She was of the opinion that at the core of most of the challenges facing the sector is governance issues and potential maladministration and use (or rather mis-use) of allocated funds. Therefore, the gist of her response in this case was that more monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and institutions must be well established and put in place to support the planned increase in investments in the sector.

Therefore, monitoring strategies like the Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS) should be regularly enforced to guard against abuse of funds by all stakeholders. A case in point is a fairly recent PETS that was done in South Africa in conjunction with DBE, DSD, UNICEF which in line with The policy-maker's sentiments, found that governance and financial reporting at ECD centres was

quite poor (DSD, DBE, and UNICEF, 2011). It also found that most centres spent 51% of their funding on salaries, which according to the model mentioned above, should be 30% on 'salaries' or stipends for staff.

With regards to the widely debated and contested paradoxical issue of why South Africa spends so much on education yet the returns on this investment are very poor, The policy-maker makes a captivating point;

> *Look I know this debate has been going on for a long time, but if we can get the foundation right. And really if you look at what we spend on the foundation, its obvious. You can see that we are not putting much effort on the foundation so as we move along, we can't expect that through the winds and the rains this wall will withstand that. And I think that's what we are trying to put out there with the ECD policy (Interview conducted in Pretoria, DSD national headquarters, 24 August 2015).*

These sentiments are encouraging because they show that at the highest level of policy development for ECD, some of our key officials are frank of the challenges facing the sector and are willing to pursue the painstaking process of paradigm shift of perceptions of the society on the value of early learning.

4.4 Findings from ECD practitioners

After rigorous thematic content analysis of both interview transcripts and archived documents in this field (ECD), a lot of recurring ideas, opinions and arguments were categorised. A short listing of the most relevant and most prevalent categories were noted and a final list of the undisputedly common and strategic themes were selected for reporting as the findings of this research study.
All 15 interviews with ECD practitioners took place in Katlehong Township of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality between 23 April 2015 to 07 May 2015.

Table 6 below (in the next page) lists, in no particular order, the most recurring themes that were gathered from both sources (interviews and documentary analysis).

Table 6: Key themes extracted from interviews and analysed documents

No.	Recurring Themes	Research Question(s) Answered
4.4.1	Lack of adequate infrastructure and learning materials	Primary Question (1.5), 1.5.3
4.4.2	Affordability of fees dilemma (national policy and school policy conundrum)	1.5.2
4.4.3	Schools readiness and vast learning outcomes differences in foundation phase	Primary Question (1.5), 1.5.3
4.4.4	Red tape in registration and application of funds process	1.5.4
4.4.5	Teacher training paralysis and qualifications uncertainty	Primary Question (1.5), 1.5.1
4.4.6	No specifications on practitioner minimum salaries	1.5.1
4.4.7	Vague delineation of roles institutionally (DSD, DBE, DoH)	1.5.4
4.4.8	'Othering'/Alienation of ECD sector by government	Primary Question (1.5), 1.5.1
4.4.9	Poor management of financial records by preschools	1.5.2 and 1.5.3
4.4.10	Lack of comprehensive overarching ECD policy	1.5.1
4.4.11	Need for mindset shift about the value of ECD on all levels	Primary Question (1.5)
4.4.12	Monitoring and Evaluation problems in the ECD sector	Primary Question (1.5), 1.5.2, 1.5.3

4.4.1 Lack of adequate infrastructure and learning materials

Arguably one of the most important basic needs of early childhood development education is the infrastructure and learning aids for the children. Operational definition of infrastructure in this study is; adequate shelter for classes, quality parameter fencing, conducive and safe playing grounds, toys and other amenities such as sanitation, running water, energy sources etc. Toys, stationery and other play facilities all constitute learning material as children learn more through playing and interacting with their peers (UNICEF, 2011; Taiwo and Tyolo, 2002). This study found that there are significant disparities in terms of infrastructure between registered and unregistered schools. In the latter, most practitioners complained that the fact that their buildings and yard must fit a specific criteria required by DSD and department of health, makes their lives hard as they do not have the capital to invest in upgrading their homes so as to transform them into acceptable preschools.

This sentiment was shared by Makhumalo, one of the unregistered preschool owners, after the researcher probed her about the significance of getting money opposed to getting material necessities of the school. Her response was unequivocal;

'if they could help with the resources more than money'.

Connie also weighed in on the desperate issue of poor infrastructure for most preschools;

Researcher: '*what are your thoughts on the value given to ECD sector by the government compared to other senior phases of education?'*

Connie: '*The government must also support crèches. They build schools for primary schools but they don't build schools for ECD centres. Again, teachers in our sector are mostly not paid by government whereas teachers in primary schools are paid by government. ECD teachers would have more appreciation for their jobs that way because most of us pay them little salaries.'*

One observed common denominator in almost all unregistered preschools (as well as registered) is that classrooms of these crèches are by and large garages turned into classes. Two reasons may explain this widespread phenomenon. The first being that these preschools are community based and premised in the owners private home where often times there is literally no additional space to erect another building. The second potential reason is that no assistance whatsoever is given to these centres by the state in ensuring that safe and spacious classrooms are build or rehabilitated for preschools (both registered and unregistered).

4.4.2 Affordability of fees dilemma (national policy and school policy conundrum)

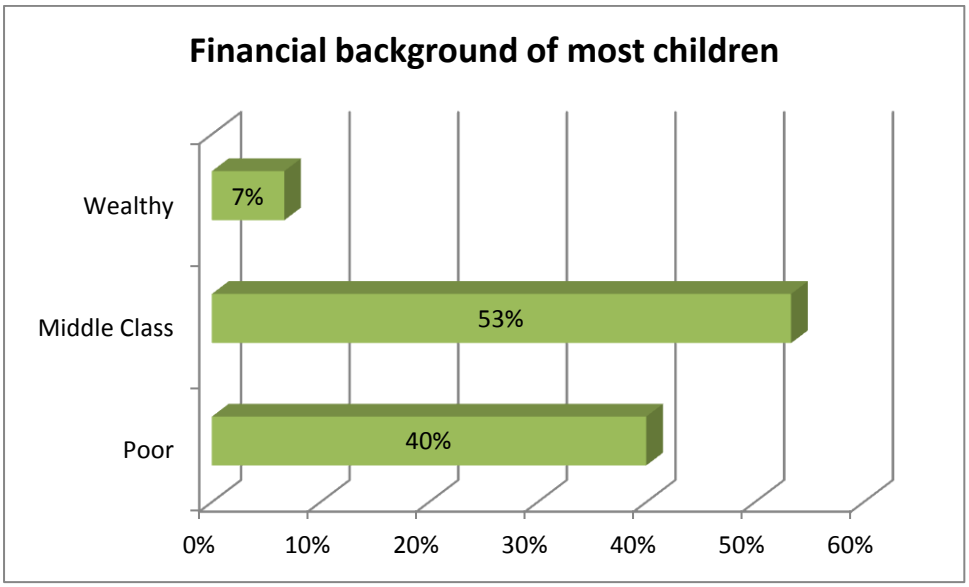
All unregistered preschools charge a substantial fee for children in their school. For most of them this is their only main source of income and it is understandable that their school fees might be a little more than that of registered preschools which receive subsidy grants. The irony is that in fact a handful of preschools which receive public funding from DSD charge even higher school fees (than unregistered schools), when one would assume that their fees would be smaller as their income stream is ideally more. This point was emotively emphasised by one of the practitioners, Mrs Mathabo who also alluded that due to lack of clear policy governing ECDs, everyone can just wake up and open a crèche next to her preschool without any repercussions as the sector has been turned into a quick cash business. On expensive preschool fees, Mrs Mathabo had this to say;

> *…Yes because it's a business. In fact, those who actually receive public funds charge higher school fees. Some of these crèches even chase away needy children who can't afford their*

expensive fees, in state we take some of those children, I have many needy children in my school.

Chart 1 below gives a clear visual representation of the sentiments expressed by Mrs Mathabo. It shows that 53 per cent of children who attend preschools visited, are according to their teachers, children from middle class families, and 40 per cent of them could be classified as coming from struggling poor families, most of which are recipients of child support grants.

Chart 1.



These problems are endemic throughout Katlehong Township, and as Mrs Mathabo subsequently adds that, government should enforce strict laws on the distance between one preschool and the other, and be clear on maximum fees that preschool receiving public funds can charge. It seems to me that at the crux of these problems is the issue of unclear or even silent legislative framework governing early leaning centres. Hence each individual school can easily make its own fees policy because there is no national policy that they must abide by before they make their school policies. The only policy document that came close to addressing these fees challenges is the National Norms and Standards for Grade R Funding (2005) which briefly touches on these issues, albeit focusing only on Grade R. With regards to funding of independent community based centres, this policy framework is also unfortunately still ambiguous, however it makes interesting concessions; 'funding of community based sites appears to have taken place in a policy vacuum, and partly because it is difficult to tell at this stage what the best practice is' (National Norms and Standards for Grade R Funding, 2005: 39).

4.4.3 Schools readiness and vast learning outcomes differences in foundation phase

As widely covered in chapter 2, there is a lot of literature which concluded that children who get a head-start in learning by attending some form of early childhood education facility, fare much better than their counterparts who begin Grade 1 without any previous exposure to preschools environment (Taiwo and Tyolo, 2002; Adams and Sandfort, 1992; Myers, 1992; Smith and James, 1975). All ECD practitioners interviewed unequivocally disclosed that there are overwhelming differences between children who leave community based preschools (mostly younger than 5 years) for Grader R or Grade 1 in primary schools and those who begin their Grade R/1 without prior attendance of crèche. Even though direct contact with Grade 1 to 3 teachers was beyond the scope of this study, remarks from all interviewed ECD practitioners, especially those in Grade R, indicate that children who attended preschools far outperform those who did not, in all aspects when they get to Grade 1 throughout to Grade 3, and potentially even beyond.

Makhumalo also supported the evidence from the literature on school readiness of these two groups of children (those who went to preschools and those who did not). She contends that;

> *Children who did not attend preschools are a headache because they still cry, missing home and their parents, whereas those who went to preschools adapt easily to new environments in primary. Again, the latter learn easily as they already know some basics*.

Moleboheng also concurs with Makhumalo and goes a step further in explaining some of the nuances she has observed between these two groups of children. She remarked that;

> *Yes there is a difference in terms of performance of the child and development of the physical, mental and spiritual being of children. Performance and development of a child who went to ECD centres is far more than that of a child who did not have that exposure*.

Researcher: *what sort of feedback do you get from primary school teachers, say those teaching Grade 1?*
Moleboheng: *They often tell me how bright my children are at school*.

Because of their proximity to senior 'formal'/foundation phase school years (Grade 1-3), Grade R practitioners insights on this matter were even more enriching and informative. Nokthula, a Grade R teacher who is also a HOD for foundation phase (Grade 1-3) at her school had this to say about differences of recipients of early education versus those who do not undergo early education;

Yes a lot, because in ECD education, kids learn a lot. Those who did not receive it struggle a lot when they get to primary as they are not used to such environments. When they get here me must teach them everything like sharing with other kids.

Researcher: *what sort of commends or feedback do you normally get from Grade 1 teachers about children who attended preschools compared to those who did not?*

Nokthula: *It becomes difficult for those who did not attend preschools, because they leave home and register for Grade 1 as blank as they are. To the extent that Grade 1 teachers come to us to ask for some of our lessons so that they can integrate those kids without ECD education.*

Researcher: *So as these cohort of kids progress into senior grades (1, 2, 3) do you think the kids who did not attend any ECD centre catch up with their counterparts who went to preschools and how are the failure rates of these two groups of kids?*

Nokthula: *They catch up but not that much, again some of them often have a lingering question in their heads asking themselves how it comes that they never attended Grade R. I have had Grade 2 learners come to me asking why they began doing Grade 1 not Grade R. I then tell them that their parents never brought them. This does not seat well with them. They then play in my class in an attempt to compensate for the 'lost' time.*

The preamble to section 8 of the Draft National ECD Policy 2015 of South Africa wastes no time in diagnosing the problem of ECD sector in South Africa, and it further gives a clear solution:

> *Policies and programmes are effective only if funding is available. However, across the world, governments have not invested enough in ECD programmes to ensure universal availability, equitable access and adequate quality, all of which are necessary to realise potential developmental returns (Draft National ECD Policy 2015: 101).*
>
> *The solution lies in increased investment of public funds and the development of a national ECD funding policy in terms of which government takes the lead and responsibility for the mobilisation and allocation of sufficient human, financial and other resources to implement the national ECD policy and programme (Draft National ECD Policy 2015: 101).*

One of the concerns relating to learning outcomes specifically with regard to Grade R children, was that practitioners' hands are often tied because they are obligated to 'pass' some of the children who they feel are not yet ready to proceed to the next class (be it Grade 1 or 2) because of the age sensitive regulations in basic education. For instance, the fact that by law (South African Schools Act, 1996), children aged between 7 and 15 are obliged to attend a learning facility, this then puts pressure on Grade R practitioners who often have children who are aged around 6 years. Therefore even if a Grade R practitioner feels a child who is 6 would need an extra year before beginning grade 1, they are, in terms of this law, forced to let them proceed to grade one because if they remained behind, they would only begin their grade 1 when they are 8 years old in state of 7. Again, Grade R is not seen as a formal school going grade.

Nokthula had powerful inputs in this matter, which covers most aspects on the age debate, here are her remarks;

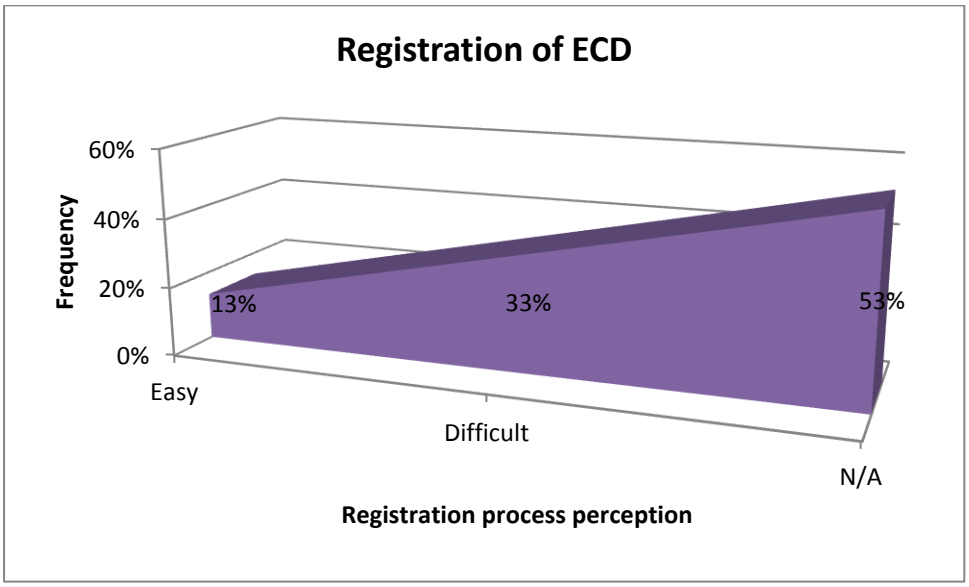
> *Jah this thing of age is a problem, because parents and learners alike take advantage of the age policy. It makes our work difficult. If they could make Grade R compulsory without first making it conditional on age of children, this would help a great deal. It could also help decrease these many failure rates in the senior classes. This age policy even compels teachers in the senior Grades to pass learners who fail because of the age restrictions. Grade R must just be compulsory without restrictions of the age policy. And if you look closely, majority of kids who do Grade 1 are the ones who did not attend any ECD centre before registering for Grade 1. It's not fair! Even in High Schools learners are just pushed to upper classes just because of this age thing. This makes the learners relax because they know that their age will rescue them from repeating classes*.

4.4.4 Red tape in registration and application of funds process

Application process for funding from DSD is perceived as very complex by majority of practitioners. Chart 2 below clearly shows that 33% of respondents found the application process to be difficult. This percentage may seem small at surface value, however it actually is not because one third of respondents (Grade R practitioners) did not answer this question as their preschools are within primary schools which are already accredited. Only 13% of practitioners found the application process for both NPO certificate and registration process of the school in line with the Children's Act no. 38 of 2005 to be easy. It is important to note that the 'N/A' (not applicable) response has a high response rate/percentage in this chart mainly because not only was this question irrelevant for

Grade R practitioners, but also for some unregistered preschools which had not even embarked on the first leg of the registration process.

Chart 2



Furthermore, it is equally important to bear in mind that successfully registering and acquiring an NPO certificate does not mean that a preschool is fully registered. To be fully registered, each school must register again with DSD in line with the Children's Act no. 38 of 2005. Simply put, NPO registration is done with respect to NPO Act, whereas full recognition (ECD certificate) registration with DSD is done with respect to Children Act no. 38 of 2005. Therefore a preschool can only be eligible to apply for public funding when the latter is acquired together with possession of a health certificate. This grey area in terms of what it means to be fully registered with DSD was found to be extremely confusing to most preschool teachers during field work. Perhaps this is an indictment on the need for all relevant stakeholders, particularly DSD, to tighten their communication strategy with the society and practitioners so that they know exactly what is required of them for compliance with government regulations.

As depicted above in chart 2, application processes in general are found to be tedious and infested with lots of red tape. However most practitioners found application for health certificate to be the most difficult of all other application processes. One potential reason for this, which was also mooted by one practitioner was the issue of by laws that they must abide by, because this health certificate is applied for at Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality, not at DSD offices. In answering the question on how she found the registration process, Tshepiso's facial expression and tone of

her voice were evident enough that it was an unpleasant and difficult process. There are her exact words; '*Joh, it was difficult, they want many things*'.

Researcher: *What documents did they want when you were registering for NPO certificate and health certificate?*

Tshepiso: *Constitution, health certificate, building plan, floor plan, business plan.*

These findings are in tandem with those of Van den Berg et al (2010) who almost five years ago found that 75% of ECD centres find it difficult to apply for funding, and that this figure increases to 79% in rural communities. As it relates to application of public funding, the draft national ECD policy (2015) and Diagnostic Review of ECD (2012) asserted that there are two key problems plaguing access to this much needed funds. They identify these problems as 1) minimum funding that is based on per child subsidy, because the sector has been operating on a 'shoe string' budget for a long time, 2) 'A means-tested subsidy is based on the applicant meeting the certain stringent infrastructural obligations which most centres cannot meet due to poor environments they are in' (draft national ECD policy, 2015: 106).

Table 7 below will hopefully help the reader get a better sense of the registration requirements and procedures for obtaining a partial care certificate and health certificate of ECD centres, which are of utmost importance as they are prerequisites to applying for DSD funding. This table is important because as highlighted above, there seems to be a lot of grey area and confusion amongst most ECD practitioners on what implications for having an NPO certificate are. And whether it suffices for a school be recognized as duly registered with DSD as an ECD programmes offering centre (see Children's Act no. 38 of 2005, pp 21-34) . Or whether one still needs to apply for an ECD certificate and/or partial care certificate.

Table 7: Documents required when applying for Partial Care[22] and ECD certificate

No.	Partial Care Certificate Documents	Details of required documents
1.	Form 13 (obtainable form DSD)	It guides the applicant on what they must complete, what supporting documents are required, and where they must be submitted.
2.	Business plan	Business hours, fee structure, day care plan, staff composition, disciplinary policy.
3.	Constitution	Name of partial care facility, category of to be catered for, management structure, procedure for amending constitution.
4.	Original copy of approved building plan	This helps officials who will consider the application to know how big the facility is and how many children it could potentially accommodate.
5.	An emergency plan	In case of emergency like fire, there must be a clear indication of the procedures to be followed and contingencies thereof.
6.	Clearance certificate	Both employees and owner of the partial care facility should not have committed sex crimes before. That is, their names should not appear on part B of the Register or the National Register for Sex Offenders established by Chapter 6 of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act, 2007 (Act No. 32 of 2007)
No	**ECD Certificate documents**	**Details of required documents**
1.	Form 18	All particulars of applicant, contact details and physical addresses.

[22] Partial Care refers to children care centres (in their different forms, that do not meet the strict criteria of a fully-fledged organisation that can provide all the necessary services of its sector/constituency, so to give them the opportunity to cater for services which they can temporarily offer, they are given a partial care certificate).

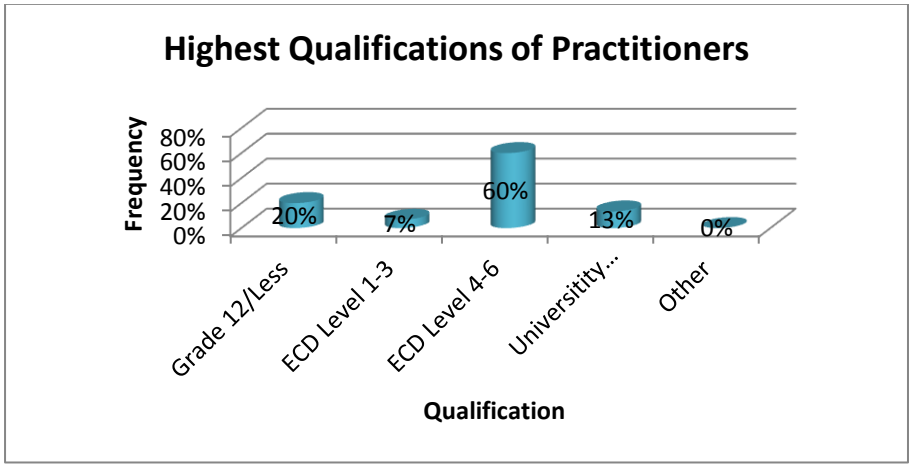
		Particulars of ECD programme applied for
		Implementation plan for the ECD programme
		Staff composition
2.	Financial statements	For the partial care facility or child and youth care centre including an exposition of the funds available for providing the programme as applied for
3.	Clearance certificate	[same as above]

Consolidated from the Children's Act no. 38 of 2005[23]

4.4.5 Teacher training paralysis and qualifications uncertainty

Teacher training (or lack thereof) and under-qualification of ECD practitioners remains yet another thorny yet delicate issue in South Africa. At play are two contesting viewpoints which, depending on one's lenses and point of analysis, are both justifiable. The first and most significant variable for me is the fact that at this young age (first 1000 days), children's brains are still malleable and receptive of everything they are exposed to, therefore decoding that into their own reality which is reinforced over time if continuously exposed to it (Nelson, Fox and Zeanah,2013). With this said, if untrained teachers (some without a matric certificate) are not capacitated to better handle and stimulate children's brains, then we will be setting ourselves up for failure and effectively entrenching the vicious circle of poor quality education system even if more funding were to be made available for the sector.

Chart 3.



[23] It is important to note that this Act was developed and recognized from 2005, but only officially promulgated in 2010.

The bar graph above (chart 3) paints a rather promising picture as it shows that from the practitioners I interviewed, just over half of them (60 per cent) had ECD level 4,5 or 6 certificates which is within the minimum requirements (NQF 4)[24] of ECD practitioners as required by Children's Act no. 38 of 2005 and as proposed by the draft national ECD policy of 2015. My findings pertaining to qualifications of ECD practitioners are in sharp contrast with those in the literature as indicated in the literature review. A lot of research has thus far found that ECD teachers only have a grade 12 qualification or less (Atmore, 2012; Fourie, 2013; UNICEF, 2014). Diagram 2 in the literature review also reports that majority of the 250 000 ECD practitioners in South Africa are in fact under-qualified (do not have NQF 4 or equivalent). One possible explanation for why my results show that 60 per cent of them are in fact qualified is that my sample was quite small (15), purposively selected, and with only one third (5 out of 10 participants) being practitioners from preschools which are not registered. The fact that majority of preschools in South Africa are not registered (UNICEF, 2011), then implies that my sample was not representative of the demographic figures of the ECD landscape in South Africa, hence the much higher than reported qualification rate in my results.

All interviewed ECD practitioners were unanimous in their responses to what their thoughts were about the importance of teacher training in preschools. They all signalled their agreement that teacher training is needed in their sector. Here is an excerpt of a brief dialogue that ensued between Connie and the researcher on this issue;

Connie: *Yes its important. It can help teachers to have more knowledge.*

Researcher: *What challenges would you say you have faced the most so far in terms of teacher training? For instance, with the many teachers you worked with from 2001, if you compare a teacher without Grade 12 and one with ECD level 2, have you seen any difference in the way they teach and take care of the children?*

Connie: *Teachers with 'level' qualification performs a lot better than one without them because they have been taught how to take care of children.*

[24] Note that ECD Level 4 and NQF 4 are equivalent and used interchangeable in this research report.

Chart 4.

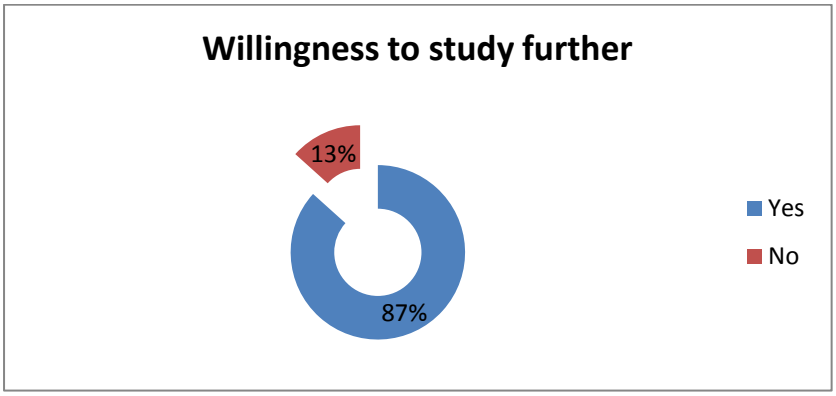
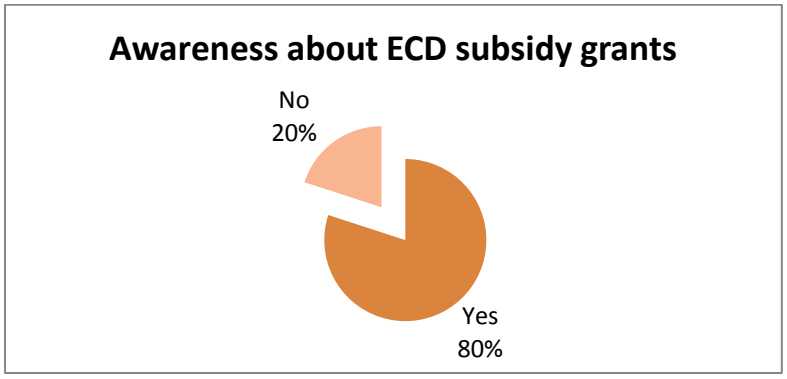


Chart 4 (above) also shows that a very large majority (87%) of respondents were eager to improve their qualifications so that they could impart more quality knowledge in the minds of our young.

Most of the practitioners told me that they got their ECD Level 4 qualifications from an institute called Matthew Goniwe school of leadership and governance. This school was established as a 'semi-autonomous' organization that would assist the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) to capacitate practitioners by improving their teaching skills and equipping them with necessary tools to deliver quality ECD services. Most practitioners were excited and appreciated the opportunity they got to improve their qualifications with this school, even though a few of them were concerned that older teachers and owners of preschools faced some challenges in class as most classes were delivered in English which they could not fully grasp. This is a commendable initiative by GDE and the hope is that they will extend this training opportunity to more practitioners, especially those in unregistered centres.

Chart 5.



4.4.6 Lack of specifications on practitioners' minimum salaries

One of the outcries was on the subject of compensation of ECD practitioners. From the onset, it

was quite clear during the first few interview sessions I conducted, that there were glaring differences on salaries of practitioners. There was a small marginal difference between registered and unregistered community based preschools, which was not entirely unexpected considering the financial challenges faced by the latter as discussed in paper. The largest salary gap was between Grade R practitioners and community based preschools as a whole. Part of the reason is that a significant number of Grade R practitioners are on the government employees pay roll (PERSAL), but those who are not are paid from SGB (School Governing Body) funds of the primary school their Grade R is placed in.

The interesting but worrying part is that even though Grade R practitioners generally fare better than their counter parts in community based centres, they too claim that they are paid a lot less than other foundation phase teachers (Grade R-3). This creates a problem because one could sense a feeling of discontentment and marginalisation from the Grade R teachers who often exclaimed that they do exactly the same (if not more) amount of work as Grade 1 teachers but they felt they were underpaid and not fully recognised as government employees. This meant that they do not have access to benefits like GEMS (Government Employees Medical Scheme), they don't have unions which could represent them etc. Policy frameworks and programmes have thus far been silent on this issue, which meant that assistant teachers in preschools, especially in community based centres, are easily exploitable by their employers.

Chapter 10, subsection 10.6 of the 2015 draft national ECD policy touches very briefly on remuneration and conditions of services of different categories of ECD workers. This proposed national policy seeks to standardise salaries of ECD workers based on categories of work done, level of experience and qualifications (Draft National ECD Policy 2015). It goes on to say that all workers in this sector should be paid according to this baseline stipulations irrespective of who the direct employer is, be it the government itself or private entities. This first step in attempting to address the plight of ECD workers (teachers, cooks, cleaners/gardeners etc) is a step in the right direction provided it will be followed through and fully enforced by all concerned.

A contrasting view by one of the Grade R practitioners interviewed shows that at the moment, standardisation of remuneration of ECD practitioners is still a far-fetched dream for many. In a response to a question posed to her about what the minimum requirement was for one to be

eligible to teach in ECD centres (community based and Grade Rs), Buhle responded as follows;

> *Ei me I don't know, because when we got here they required Grade 12 plus level 4, so now there are many teachers without Matric, and some with level 4 without Matric too but teaching Grade R [….] When it comes to payment, it does not matter how advanced ones qualifications are or the experience that one has, we all get the same salary. We don't have unions to also fight for our rights as ECD practitioners so a lot still needs to be done to formalize and regulate this sector*

The salary gap conversation that ensued between the researcher and Buhle is worth noting as it again begs the 'differential' treatment that Grade R teachers get in primary schools which they are absorbed in.

Researcher: *In terms of the incentives you are talking about, how do you feel you (Grade R teachers) compare with other teachers in the 'formal' primary system (Grade 1 +)?*

Buhle*: For us shame….there is a big gap, first thing we don't have 13th cheque yet other teachers have it. There is nothing they do that we don't do. We do the same paper work but when it comes to increment we don't get anything. We are not fully absorbed into the education sector and government payroll. For instance, we don't have medical aid or housing allowance*.

4.4.7 Vague delineation of institutional roles (DSD, DBE, DoH)

Early Childhood Development sector as mentioned before is an inter-sectoral educational phase where responsibilities for it to function optimally are based on collaboration of three departments which are by no means the only ones involved due to the nature of this sector. The three departments are Social Development, Basic Education, and Health. Each of them has its specific responsibilities which are however intrinsically intertwined with those of the other two departments. The other important stakeholders in this sector are CoGTA (Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs) and local municipalities even though they do not play a predominant role as the trio above.

When asked about if they knew which government departments are charged with regulating and coordinating ECD related matters including funding, curriculum development, nutrition and health services, most practitioners only knew at least one department which they previously worked with for their individual constituency within the ECD sector. For instance, community based centres

practitioners reported knowing DSD while Grade R practitioners by and large mentioned Gauteng Department of Education. It would seem that there is a disjuncture and poor collaboration between community based centres and formal school based centres (Grade Rs), which in itself presents a myriad of challenges which could easily be overcome by more concerted efforts in building bridges between these two facets of ECD sector. This finding was supported and observed by Buhle, a Grade R practitioner:

> *Another thing is that engagements between me as a Grade R teacher, nearby home based care centres (feeders), and Grade 1 teachers are important in planning for our lessons, that will give us a better idea of the kinds of children we teach. For instance, most home based care centres do things in English, but my school here the language policy is isiZulu, so this difference in the medium of communication tends to confuse children and parents if there is poor/no communication and cooperation with nearby crèches.*

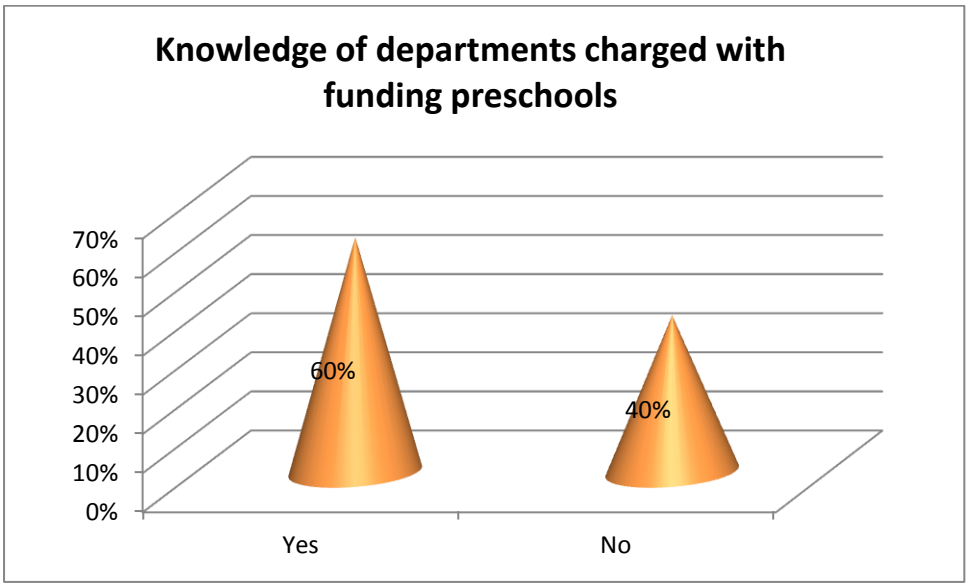
The notion of language policy in schools in general and in epistemology is critical and Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1981) is the expert in use of vernacular language in African literature and how it can be used to improve our education in Africa and reclaim our identity. His work would be of utmost importance in navigating language policy in the ECD sector as the current draft national ECD policy is unfortunately silent on this crucial matter.

Buhle went on still on this poor communication and cooperation between home based preschools and Grade Rs to show that these deficiencies lead to poor transition from lower preschools to Grade R all the way to Grade 1. She further explained:

> *I have taken an initiative to set up a meeting with one of our nearby preschools here with the aim of trying to align our teaching programs. Some of the learning material that we have here which is a surplus could be useful for that crèche, if only there was more cooperation and talks between us and home based care centres. This would help in the continuity of our teaching efforts.*

Chart 6 below also demonstrates that an overwhelming 40 per cent of practitioners did not know the departments responsible for servicing and governing their sector, which is of great concern because this has direct implication of strained access to these institutions. It also is a serious indictment on the communication strategy of the concerned departments in making sure that they disseminate as much information as possible to these centres and by extend to the broader community.

Chart 6.

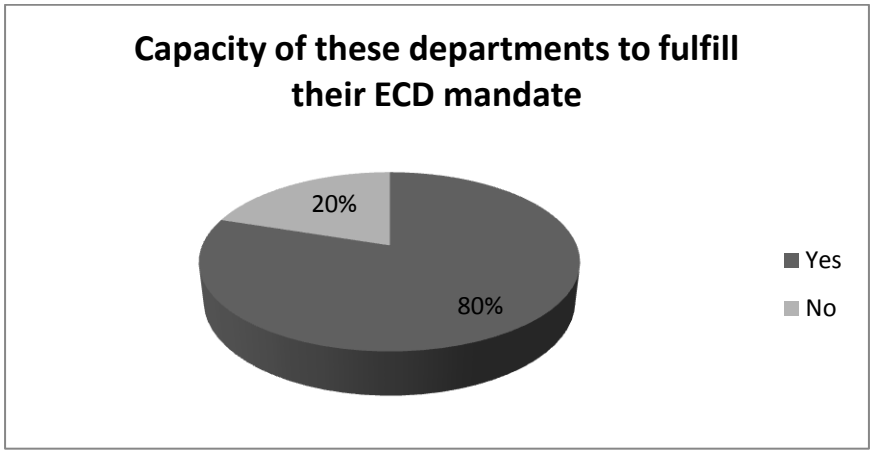


Responsibilities of these three leading departments in the delivery of holistic ECD services, as mooted by Vanessa Mentor (2015), the director of ECD Institute at GDE, in chapter 2, and by the policymaker, the ECD manager at DSD national office can be summed up as follows:

1. Department of Social Development – It is charged with the most responsibilities amongst the three concerned departments. Its key mandates are to ensure that from conception to four years, parents who are eligible for child support grant (CSG) register their children even before they are born or immediately after birth so that funds and psychosocial and parenting support can be given to them early on in the child's life. Secondly, they administer registration of all ECD centres and provide funding for centres that applied and meet financial support criteria through program funding. It also develops and keeps database of all registered ECD centres in South Africa and monitors and evaluates them thorough its inspectors and research initiatives.
2. Department of Basic Education – It is responsible for curriculum design and training of the entire ECD sector (birth-6 years) practitioners. It also provides funding for school based centres (Grade R), ensures that infrastructure and learning support material is available for Grade Rs in every school across the country.
3. Department of Health – This department is tasked with all health related matters in the sector, from ensuring that children have birth certificates, immunisation of children, ensuring that all ECD centres meet health and safety standards by issuing health certificates through local municipalities, proving health professionals for therapeutic services to the

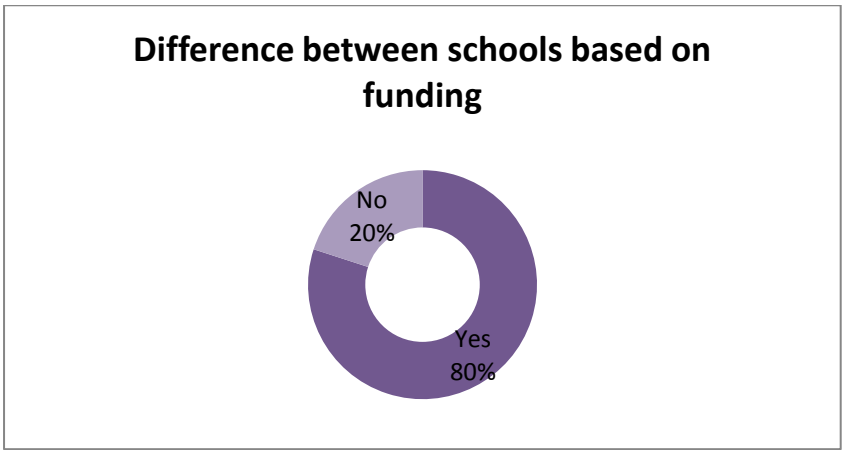
children etc.

Chart 7.



Most practitioners indicated that they believed in the departments involved and that they thought they were well capacitated to discharge their said mandate, albeit the challenges they as teachers are faced with in the sector. The pie chart (7) above shows that an overwhelming majority (80 per cent) of ECD practitioners were of the view that DSD, DBE, and DoH had the capacity to fulfil their duties. It is however, important to mention that these departments were rated somewhat differently, with DSD seen to be the better functioning department, followed by DBE. And perhaps this is because practitioners interact more with these two departments on a regular basis, more than they do with health department.

Chart 8.



4.4.8 'Othering'/Alienation of ECD sector by government

On the whole, there was a persistent and deep seated feeling among most interviewed ECD practitioners, suggesting that they feel as a sector that their plight is undermined and that they are

generally sidelined in most things by the education fraternity and by the government machinery. This assertion is not necessarily unfounded as it was shown in the preceding section on practitioners salaries, that most of them are under paid and that there is a vast salary gap between Grade R teachers salary and that of Grade 1 teachers for instance, even though their jobs are essentially the same. Furthermore, the government, through DSD and DBE have acknowledged many times before that the ECD has for a long time not been supported the way it should have been, especially concerning the share of the allocated budget for this sector.

It was demonstrated in the first chapter of this study (see table 1) that out of the R242,694 billion education budget for the 2014/2015 financial year, a miniscule R3,448 billion (1.4%) was allocated for the ECD sector. While basic education (primary and secondary) alone was given a staggering R137,681 billion which equates to 56.7% of the overall education budget. If numbers are anything to go by, these figures are self explanatory and say volumes about the value given to each phase of education in South Africa. Therefore there is a strong case to make that indeed ECD has and still is undervalued in SA, due to the glaring under-investments in this sector.

Verbatim below expresses practitioners' thoughts on how they feel their ECD sector is perceived by the powers that be in the education department and by government officials as a whole:

Researcher: *What are your thoughts on the value given to ECD sector by the government compared to other phases of education?*
Puleng: *No we don't get enough attention from government because I think if you look, they give more support to Grade Rs because they are within primary schools. We have tried numerous times to register this school with GDE so that they could make us part of their Grade R classes in primary schools, but we have not been assisted and no response has been made yet.*
Researcher*: why would you want to register under GDE and be co-opted into the primary school system?*
Puleng: *Because that would make our lives a lot easier in a sense that we would get the same perks as Grade R teachers, we would also have access to more teaching resources unlike currently when we are on our own as independent crèches.*

Not all is gloom and doom in the ECD sector. There are a handful of practitioners who have

expressed positive opinions and who genuinely think that there have been commendable strides on the part of the government to try and undo the neglect of ECD in the past. Grade R (which is part of the ECD sector) has in the past decade seen dramatic improvements. The fact that Grade R classes are placed within primary schools has helped them to gain a degree of regulation and structure which lack in independent community based preschools. Infrastructural challenges that are crippling most community based preschools are have been averted by Grade Rs again due to their comparative advantage as they use the resources and infrastructure of the already well established primary schools. Grade R practitioners are also paid much better salaries and most of them are paid directly by the government, implying that they may soon be fully integrated into government pay roll and reap the same benefits that all public school teachers get as government employees.

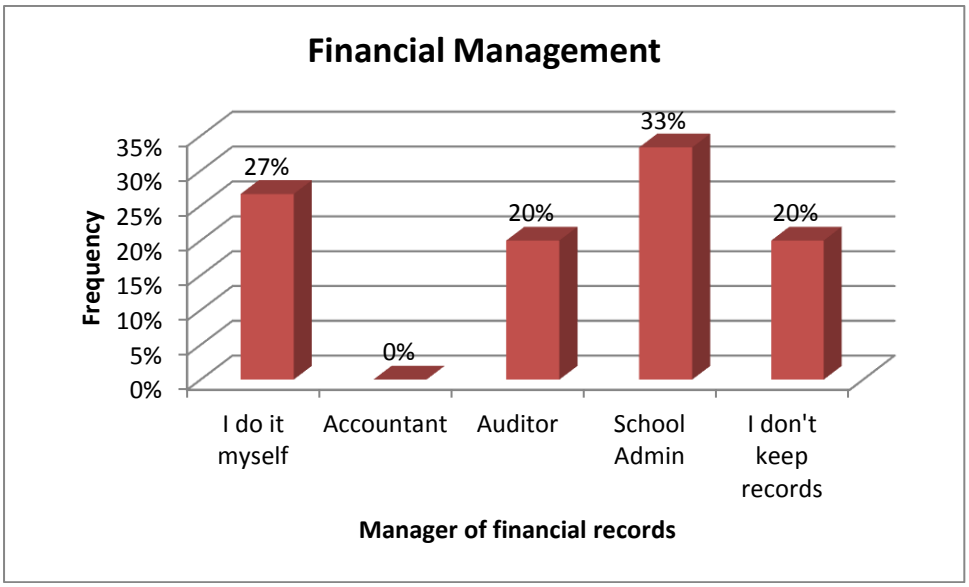
Dimpho, a practitioner from one of the registered preschools in Katlehong was more content and appreciative of the support they get from government. Her response was more positive:

> *Primary teachers think we have a more advanced way of teaching these children more than them. Yes we are getting enough support from government especially concerning food. The money they give us for food helps fight poverty a lot so that even children from very poor families at least have meals at school and avoid sleeping with an empty stomach. Now we are teaching healthy children.*

4.4.9 Poor management of financial records by preschools

Due to inadequate training and low qualifications of most ECD practitioners, it is not entirely surprising that that financial management of school funds is not appropriately done, even by registered preschools which are required to present a full account of how their subsidy grants were used. This however should not be seen as an excuse for failing to account on how public funds are used by preschools as it may set a bad precedent where 'leakage' of funds may become a norm, which would defeat the whole purpose of the call to increase financial support for the ECD sector. Chart 9 below depicts the scope of the problem with accountability in preschools concerning keeping sound and updated records of how their funds are managed. Most (33 per cent) preschools reported that their financial records are administered by the school (primary) administration officers, while 27 percent of them mentioned that they prepared and kept records of their schools. The most worrying finding is that 20 per cent of practitioners do not keep records at all, and majority of these practitioners are from non-registered ECD centres.

Chart 9.



These findings are supportive of results of the PETS study conducted by UNICEF, DSD, and DBE in 2011 which also found that out of the 318 registered community based preschools they visited, 221 of them kept annual financial statements of their schools. This translates to 69.5% reporting rate of financial records. This study was conducted in three provinces only, so it may have generalisability shortfalls. However, considering their large sample (300 registered ECD facilities), there is a significant probability that their findings on management of financial records may in fact reflect general trends on the situation in South Africa as a whole. In short, the findings in this research report indicate that 20% of interviewed preschools do not keep financial records. The findings from the PETS study by UNICEF, DSD and DBE (2011) found that approximately 30% of registered preschools receiving public funding did not keep their financial records. Therefore there is a correlation in both these studies albeit a small difference in percentages, methodologies and sample sizes.

Responses from participants in this research had this to say concerning management of their schools financial records:

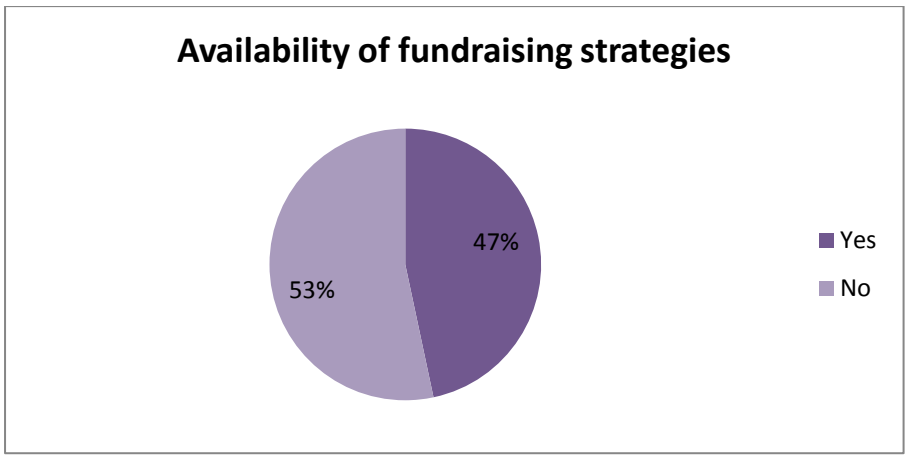
Buhle: *About transparency, it depends who is in charge of the ECD affairs at school. When it comes to auditing, it is done for the funds of the school as a whole.*

Researcher: *Do you get the opportunity to be given the results of the audit and see financial statements of the school?*

Buhle: *It depends how the principal feels that year. Two/three years can pass without us seeing financial records of the school.*

Buhle's statement may be interpreted as disclosing the working relations between Grade R teachers and other teachers within the primary setting, where Grade Rs are seen to be mere 'renters' and are thus just subsumed and assimilated without having to account to them about matters relating to ECD children. Chart 10 below may give some indication of initiatives taken by preschools in efforts to, on their part, raise funds for their schools so as to overcome some of the many challenges facing the sector like lacking infrastructure and qualifications shortages. Only 47% of respondents had embarked in some form of fundraising initiative.

Chart 10.



4.4.10 Lack of a comprehensive overarching ECD policy

Until early this year (March 2015), there had been no single commanding comprehensive policy that was geared at governing the whole ECD space in a harmonious fashion. Prior to this time, there were many efforts, at least in the last decade, to formulate programs and plans on how best to regulate and support the then (and arguably now) 'forgotten' Early Childhood Development sector. Table 3 in the literature review gives the reader a sense of the early learning policy space in South Africa since 1995 to date. Since the formulation of Interim policy for ECD in 1996, there have been many efforts, to develop cogent policy on ECD but nothing concrete came out until this year with the gazetting of the draft national ECD policy 2012, which admittedly is a bald and promising step in the right direction. This latter policy is progressive in many respects and if finally legislated, and accordingly implemented, it will have a positive impact on early learning in South Africa, and

potentially for the entire education system because a solid foundation would have been prototyped.

One of the explanations on why it has taken this long for South Africa to develop a national policy that would govern the ECD space, was given by The policy-maker interviewed from DSD. She alluded to the fact that during the past decade when ECD became a topical issue and its rehabilitation was gaining momentum in government, Children's Act no. 38 of 2005 was also a big policy issue that was strongly emphasised and lots of resources and discussions were devoted to it. This Act also in a sense was a relevant milestone and building block for ECD as it delved into norms and standards on the ECD sector and addressed many aspects relating to children's rights as a whole.

Department of Education (2001c), Storbeck and Moodley (2011) have all concluded that fragmented policies between these three key departments (DSD, DBE, and DoH) has played a role in delaying improvements in early learning . "Poor funding of this sector, the lack of uniformity in implementation of policy by the different provinces and a lack of children with disabilities (under the age of 7 years) being serviced at ECD sites has stalled progress in ECD" Department of Education (2001c) cited in Storbeck and Moodley (2011: 2). Sentiments echoed in this quotation boil down to the single most far reaching challenge that has plagued ECD sector, which is fragmented documents and policy positions on ECD without a comprehensive interdepartmental national policy that regulates the sector.

The policy-maker from DSD revealed that before this new draft national ECD policy (2015), there was never a policy document of framework that had factored in the issue of the radius that would be used as a baseline to guide their officials in regional and provincial office, and the practitioners so that they knew the space they had to keep between one preschool from the other. This was one policy gaps that is hoped to be filled once final approval is made by parliament on the draft national ECD policy 2015. She further pointed out that as per their current norms and standards, ECD centres that receive funding from DSD should not charge fees in their schools as that would disenfranchise children from poor families who cannot afford the fees but would like their children to attend preschool. However, she further mentioned that they are aware that most, if not all such preschools still charge fees. She went on to say that they have not intervened on this

'transgression' because they too are cognisant of the fact that their subsidy grants that they give to these centres are insufficient.

4.4.11 Need for mindset shift about the value of ECD on all levels

To some, Early Childhood Development or what is better known in some quarters as crèche or preschool, still implies home based care centres where children are merely looked after and fed until their parents or guardians are back from their workplaces. Some people in our communities think that in these centres, all that children do is eat, play, sleep and repeat the same circle the whole day. This unfortunately, (or fortunately) is not the case, as even in the so-called home based care centres, there is some form of learning and stimulation going on because children learn more by doing and interacting with their peers. Therefore, even in the play grounds, there is a lot of learning and socialisation taking place, which would not happen if a child was to be left at home with a child minder the whole day. More needs to be done by the three departments concerned in making sure that these misconceptions are dispelled and parents are helped to fully understand the significance of exposing their children to early learning and stimulation.

Buhle also weighed in on the perceptions that not only the general public has, even some teachers have the same mentally towards ECDs. She recounts her experiences on this matter:

> *Ahh they neglect us, honestly speaking. And that neglect has filtered through even to their principals in schools. Some principals hardly know what is going on in Grade R, in a sense that they think our learners just eat and sleep in class. I think they don't take us seriously at all. What happens is, when there is a new official in office (GDE in charge of ECD affairs) they seem to be working hard to improve the ECD sector but after some time that fades away, and that circle continues. They look down upon us, the principals just sign off papers just so we can get what we ask for, without showing much interest in Grade R.*

These are the lived experiences of some of Grade R practitioners and they give a vivid idea of how some even in the education sector still think of preschools.

Perhaps the underinvestment and the 'sidelining' of this sector even at governmental level, as mentioned in the preceding sections, may have been somewhat influenced by some of these cognitive schemas (preconceived ideas). A paradigm shift is required especially by policy makers

and political leaders so that their conception of ECD may be more positive. Quite a number of interviewed practitioners felt strongly about these perceptions and voiced their opinions on this issue. Granny Dimpho (one of the oldest practitioners I interviewed) was passionate on this subject matter and I think I would not have done justice to her insights and wisdom if I don't relate our brief conversation on perception of society on the value of ECD. This conversation ensued between me and her:

Granny Dimpho: *We have a huge problem, why do our people take their children to town schools? Why? This means our education in the townships is not good. What baffles me again is how come parents in the township claim they can't afford fees in public school and our crèches, but turn around and take the same kids to town schools which are tenfold expensive. What is that?*

Researcher: *I think it's a psychological impediment on our part, we don't admire our own things as black people. Again, you find that the very same teachers in public schools take their children to town schools (model C schools), they don't want to teach their own children.*

Granny Dimpho: *Our government tries by all means, they spent billions of Rands for these kids to have a meal, but our people do not appreciate that. My daughter teaches in one of the public schools here and she tells me that her colleagues take learners' food to their homes in big proportion. That is greed to the highest degree, what is that? It will take us donkey years before we are ok. Now when we must take educational trips they say they don't have money, how long will these kids stay in this garage? But they readily have money for white schools.*

4.4.12 Monitoring and Evaluation problems in the ECD sector

Arguably one of the most important pillars is M&E as it would either make or break provision of quality ECD services and that would ensure that there is value for money in the early learning sector even if more resources are made available, so that they don't go to waste. Some of the respondents (of registered and unregistered schools) in this study said inspectors had not been to their centres for over a year or so, yet they are supposed to monitor these preschools at least once every quarter, as disclosed by The policy-maker. This is concerning because if this persists and perhaps more preschools are also not monitored, then it may set a bad precedent to the point that even when more funds are made available for the sector, there won't be accountability on how those funds are used and if there is fiscal incidence. More stringent measures surely need to be put

in place with regard to strengthening monitoring capacity of the three departments in question.

The verbatim that follows also makes a strong case for deficiencies of the monitoring machinery at the moment in Gauteng Department of Education. This response was in relation to the questioned posed to the respondent to solicit her thoughts about potential implications of increase in public funds on learning outcomes for the ECD sector and in the long term.

Buhle: *ai so far me I don't see a need for the increase of funds for Grade Rs. That money is for maintenance purposes for the class and for buying of additional resources for the learners. But even if we got that grant, government continues to give us more teaching aids throughout the year, so I think its waste of money because that money which is spent on buying the same thing many times (you see these boxes here, the same toys were bought many times) could be used to improve our salaries. That will motivate us as teachers to love our jobs. Month end my heart becomes sore, yet they (government) provide for the learners.*

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter sought to give a broad report on the findings of the fieldwork (interviews) and from the data collected through analysis of relevant policy documents and from the literature survey. These two primary data collection techniques culminated into this chapter which covered twelve themes that formed the backbone of the results of the study. Chief among the findings are that there has been a huge policy void in the ECD sector even though there were many attempts to gather as much information as possible which would inform policy makers on the next step to take in strengthening early learning. These ECD related policy briefs, programmes, conferences and workshops were not in vain as they were instrumental in the developing the underway draft national ECD policy 2015. Lack of funding, red tape in application for funding, deep rooted infrastructure challenges, and lacking teacher training are some of the main challenges discussed in this chapter.

5. Chapter Five – Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This study was in part prompted by what some may call basic education outcomes crisis and a paradox that exists in South African education system that is characterised by massive education spending on the one hand, and poor quality education comes on the other. This dichotomy has been widely investigated and much debated in South Africa especially considering that most African countries only spend a fraction of what South Africa spends on education, yet countries like Zimbabwe, even in its economical turbulences, far outperform South Africa on education quality. However, even in the midst of a lot of research on this issue, there was one piece of the puzzle which the author felt had not been extensively researched on, and this is the role that could potentially be played by Early Childhood Development in laying a strong foundation for our children before beginning formal school. This knowledge gap was sought to be filled by this study in the context of exploring the current public funding modalities for ECDs (inclusive of Grade R) in Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality, Katlehong Township.

This was a qualitative research study which employed two key data collection techniques – interviews and documentary analysis. Thematic content analysis was the tool used to analyse data collected. The main finding of the research report is that there was a vast policy void in the ECD sector (until the current draft national ECD policy 2015) and that most of the endemic challenges facing preschools could be correlated with the deficient public funding of the sector. It should be borne in mind that the draft national ECD policy of 2015 which was first gazetted in March 2015 will soon be taken to parliament for final reviewing and approval. Therefore, interpretations, arguments and recommendations made in reference to this draft policy should be understood in this context.

ECD education is not claimed to be a panacea for all educational challenges facing SA, but it plays a major role in its rehabilitation and 'take-off' to improved quality outcomes that are cost effective and far-reaching across the entire education spectrum. This research report urges and recommends that education Policy makers, political leaders, teachers, DoE, DSD, DoH and all relevant stakeholders should strongly consider rehabilitating Early Childhood Education. This could be done both vertically (with a comprehensive National ECD Policy that is binding) and horizontally (by

involving parents, teachers and civic society at large), in an effort to consciously and deliberately prioritise preschool education. More concerted efforts from the government and political will to improve funding challenges of the ECD sector will go a long way in also effecting positive changes to our ailing education system at large.

Five most important themes of the twelve themes discussed in the findings chapter will be reflected on in this chapter and recommendations emanating from the findings of these five themes will be made immediately after remarks on the specified theme. The themes to be concluded on are; Red tape in registration and application of funds process, lack of adequate infrastructure and learning materials, lack of comprehensive overarching ECD policy, Poor management of financial records by preschools, and monitoring and evaluation problems in the ECD sector.

5.2 Final conclusions and recommendations per theme

Red tape in registration and application of funds process

Coupled with inadequate finances in the DSD coffers for ECD, there is also a grey area and lots of confusion among ECD practitioners on what they need to do to successfully apply for the same scarce public funding. Overall, most practitioners for both registered and unregistered preschool expressed their frustrations at the complex and tedious application processes for different certifications at different institutions. In short, there was confusion primarily about what it means to be fully registered and eligible for public funding. Most practitioners thought that successful application of an NPO certificate meant that they were fully registered with DSD and eligible to apply for funding, which is not the case as explained in chapter 4.

Recommendations

- Department of Social Development and Department of Health should embark on a massive communication campaign using all available media outlets and site visits to education ECD centre owners and aspiring owners of what they need to do to register their centres and to apply for funding if needed.
- Both these departments should streamline their respective application processes and share data on applicants so that red tape can be reduced and applications processed faster.

Lack of adequate infrastructure and learning materials

Diagnostic Review of ECD (2011) and the Draft National ECD Policy 2015 both emphasised the desperate need for improvement of ECD infrastructure because currently, buildings used to accommodate children are not conducive for learning and pose real health hazards for the children. An overwhelming number of centres I visited during interview sessions were garages turned into classrooms and the sanitation and kitchen spaces were not adequate. Learning materials were lacking in unregistered centres while the Grade Rs had an excess of these materials. Therefore this showed that there is no efficient coordination and communication between DSD and DoE/GDE.

Recommendations

- The three key departments must lobby Department of Public Works and SALGA (South African Local Government Association) to help the sector with revamping its infrastructure needs. Building completely new centres in designated places would be extremely expensive for the government, so perhaps they should rather invest in improving the current community based centres so that they meet the health and standards required before a health certificate is issued.

Lack of comprehensive overarching ECD policy

Public policies are designed and developed to resolve policy issues at the societal level and they are tools through which resources are distributed to society. In the same light ECD policies are also meant to ensure that this sector's challenges are resolved sustainably and resources are made available to improve conditions faced by practitioners and children alike. ECD policy 'drought' in South Africa has been identified as one of the foremost impediments that has compounded the mentioned challenges facing the sector. Despite many efforts in the past ten years to develop strategies of improving early learning services, there has not been much transformation in township centres in terms of their infrastructure and learning materials, even though ECD budget has certainly been modestly increased over the years.

Recommendations

- The currently underway process of getting final approval from parliament on legislation of the draft national ECD policy 2015 should be speedily concluded and proposed funding for the implementation of this draft policy be made available.

- The three concerned departments should work more closely and make a conscious decision of making Grade R compulsory for all children before they can begin their Grade 1.

Poor management of financial records by preschools

This study found that at least 20% of interviewed preschools do not keep their financial records at all. The findings from the PETS study by UNICEF, DSD and DBE (2011) found that approximately 30% of registered preschools receiving public funding did not keep their financial records. These are concerning revelations of financial mismanagement challenges in the ECD sector. If this trend is not contained early and repercussions served on those who do not comply to the DSD requirements that require public funding recipients to audit their finances, then a bad precedent would be set and maladministration and squandering of public funds will engulf the sector and cripple it. Hence the utmost importance of the next theme.

Recommendations

- As part of their training, all ECD centres (registered and unregistered) practitioners should be taught how to keep their financial books so that when auditors are send to assess their books all required documentation is available.
- Preschools that receive funding from DSD should not be funded further if they have maintained a bad track record of mismanagement of funds even after attempts to assist them with financial recording practices.

Monitoring and Evaluation of the ECD sector

As mentioned in the preceding chapter, ability to track progress and challenges of any project or organisation is extremely important and failure to do so implies that resources and efforts put into such an intervention risk being in vain. This study found that a handful of ECD centres (excluding Grade Rs) had not been inspected in over a year and this poses a serious challenge on how quality ECD services would be provided if centres are not monitored. This is a big indictment on whether the new draft policy would be enforced and checks and balances put in place to ensure compliance by centres, once passed.

Recommendations

- Department of Social Development and Health should work closely with Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation Department so that enough measures are put in place on how the sector can better be monitored and regulated so as to improve compliance.
- An audit of all registered and unregistered ECD centres must be generated and updated so that better planning can be made for the sector.

Future research could be useful if a more inclusive and larger sample of ECD centres across the whole metropolitan of Ekurhuleni could be embarked on. Mixed methods research would also add some value in such a research study so as to balance the weaknesses of qualitative studies while used alone. In the main, as Frantz Fanon (1968) observed, each generation must out of relative obscurity, discover its mission, fulfill it or betray it. Therefore, it is imperative that we discover our early education mission and acknowledge that ECD must be prioritised. This mission, we must fulfill at all costs for the sake of future generations.

6. Reference List

Adams, G. & Sandfort, J. (1992). State investments in childcare and early childhood education. *Young Children,* 47 (6), 33–35.

Altheide, D.L. (1996). *Qualitative media analysis*. London: Sage.

Altshuler, A. (1965). Goals of comprehensive planning. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners,* 31(3), 37-41.

Ashley-Cooper, M. & Atmore, E. (2013). Early Childhood Development as a strategy to eradicate poverty and reduce inequality. *The Thinker*, 53, 8-11.

Atmore, E. (2012). Challenges facing early childhood development sector in South Africa. A report for the National Development Agency.

Atmore, E., van Niekerk, L., and Ashley-Cooper, M. (2012). Early Childhood Education: The difference between policy and reality. Opinion Article.

Bagchi, K.A.(2000). The past and the future of the developmental state. *Journal of World Systems Research,* XI(2), 398-442.

Barberton, C. (2013). Government funding of centre and community based early childhood programmes prior to Grade R. In Berry L. Biersteker, L. Dawes, A. Lake, L. & Smith, C. (Eds). *South African Child Gauge 2013.* Cape Town: Children's Institute, University of Cape Town.

Barnett, W.S. (2003). Better Teachers, Better Preschools: Student Achievement Linked to Teacher Qualifications. *Preschool Policy Matters,* 2, 2-14.

Barnett, W. S. (2006). What is the value of early childhood education for our society: Maximizing returns from prekindergarten education? In J. J. van Kuyk (Ed.), *The Quality of Early Childhood Education* (pp. 57–72). The Netherlands: Centraal Instituut voor Toetsontwikkeling.

Barnett, W.S. (2008). *Preschool education and its lasting effects: Research and policy implications.* Boulder: Education and Public Interest Center & Education Policy Research Unit.

Belfield, C.R. (2006). *Financing Early Childhood Care and Education: An International Review*. Paper for 2007 Global Monitoring Report on Education for All.

Bennett, J. (2000). Early Childhood Care and Development Program in Mauritius. UNICEF.

Biernacki, P. & Waldorf, D. (1981). Snowballing Sampling: Problems and Techniques of Chain Referral Sampling. *Sociological Methods and Research,* 10(2), 141-163.

Boateng, N.A. (2012). Public Expenditure Management and Education Outcomes. PhD thesis

submitted at Witwatersrand University.

Bodrova, E. (2008). Make-believe play versus academic skills: a Vygotskian approach to today's dilemma of early childhood education. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 16(3), 357-369.

Bowen, G.A. (2009). Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method. *Qualitative Research Journal,* 9(2), 27-40.

Bryman, R. (2001). Social Research Methods. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Budlender, D. (2010). Development of subsidy model for home- and community-based early childhood development services for children 0-5. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.

Burnard, P. (1991). A method of analysing interview transcripts in qualitative research. *Nurse Education Today*, 11, 461-466.

Burnard, P., Gill, P., Stewart, K., Treasure, E. & Chadwick, B. (2008). Analysing and Presenting Qualitative Data. *British Dental Journal,* 204(8), 429-432.

Children Now (2011).*The First Five Years Determine a Lifetime: Children's early years are absolutely critical*. Retrieved online, 18 May 2015 from http://www.childrennow

Children's Act No. 38 2005. Government Gazette No. 28944.

Cloete, F., Wissink, H., & de Coning, C. (2006). *Improving public policy: From theory to practice* (2nd Ed). Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

De Lannoy, A. & Hall, K. (2010). Education – Children Attending an Education Institution. Retrieved online, 15 September 2014 from: http://www.childrencount.ci.org.za/uploads/factsheet_15.pdf

Department of Basic Education, Department of Social Development, & UNICEF (2010). Tracking Public Expenditure and Assessing Service Quality in Early Childhood Development in South Africa.

Department of Basic Education, Department of Social Development, & UNICEF (2012). Tracking Public Expenditure and Assessing Service Quality In Early Childhood Development in South Africa.

Department of Education (2001b). *White Paper 5 – Early Childhood Development.* Pretoria: DoE.

Department of Education (2001c). The Nationwide Audit of ECD Provisioning in South Africa. Pretoria, South Africa.

Department of Education (2010). *Education for all: 2009 Country Report South*

Africa. Pretoria, South Africa.

Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) (2012). Diagnostic review of Early Childhood Development.

Development Bank of Southern Africa (2009). *Education roadmap: Focus on schooling system*. Midrand: Development Bank of Southern Africa.

Diagnostic Review of Early Childhood Development - DRECD (2012).

Dlamini, B. (2011). Cluster briefing by the chairperson of the social protection and community development cluster in the national assembly. Retrieved online, 25 June 2014 from: http://www.polity.org.za/article/sadlaminiclusterbriefing.pdf

Douglas and George Murray Trust (2012). Locating Early Childhood Development in South Africa: Key Environmental Factors. Retrieved online, 12 October 2014 from: http://www.dgmt.co.za/wp-content/themes/dgmt/docs/ECD-background-paper.pdf

Draft National ECD Policy for the Republic of South Africa 2015. Department of Social Development, Pretoria.

Dror, Y. (1964). Muddling Through - "Science" or Inertia? *Public Administration Review,* 24(3), 153-157.

Dunn, W.N. (1994). *Public policy analysis: An introduction*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Education for All Global Monitoring Report (2005). UNESCO.

Excell, L.A. (2011). Grade R teachers' perceptions of early childhood development and how these impact on classroom practice. PhD thesis submitted to Witwatersrand University.

Fanon, F. (1968). The Wretched of the Earth. New York: Grove Press.

Fourie, J.R. (2013). Early Childhood Education in South African Townships: Academics Accepting the Challenge to Empower Early Childhood Development Practitioners. *J SocSci,* 38(1), 59-68.

Giese, S., Budlender, D., Berry, L., Motlatla, S., & Zide, H. (2011). *Government Funding for Early Childhood Development: Can Those Who Need it Get it?* South Africa: IlifaLabantwana

Guillemin, M. & Gillam, L. (2004). Ethics, Reflexivity, and "Ethically Important Moments" in Research. *Qualitative Inquiry,* 10(2), 261-280.

Gumede, V. (2011). Public policy making in South Africa. In Venter, A. and Landsberg, C. (eds). *Government and politics in South Africa*. Fourth Edition, Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Gordhan, P. (2013). *Budget Speech*. Retrieved online, 18 February 2014: http://www.treasury.gov.za/documents/national%20budget/2013/speech/speech.pdf

Government Social Unit (2007).*The Magenta Book: guidance notes*

for policy evaluation and analysis. Retrieved online, 11 September 2014: http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2011/09/the_complete_magenta_book_2007_edition2.pdf

Hall, K. (2010). *Analysis of General Household survey 2011.* Children's Institute, University of Cape Town.

Hammersley, M. & Atkinson, P. (1995). *Ethnography: Principles and Practice*. London: Routledge.

Heckman, J. (2006). Skill formation and the economics of investing in disadvantaged children. *Science,* 312(5782), 1900-1902.

Heckman, J. J., & Masterov, D. V. (2007). *The Productivity Argument for Investing in Young Children.* Massachusetts: National Bureau of Economic Research Cambridge.

Heckman, J. (2008). *Schools, Skills, and Synapses*. Discussion paper No. 3515.

Heckman, J. (2011). The Economics of inequality: The value of early childhood education. *American Educator*, 3 5(1), 31-35.

Hedley, N. (2012). Online news paper, BDlive. *Prominent trends emerge from the 2011 census*. Retrieved online, 09 July 2015: http://www.bdlive.co.za/economy/2012/10/30/census-sas-population-of-51.8m-is-still-young

Hsieh, H. & Shannon, S.E. (2005). Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis. *Qualitative Health Research,* 15(9), 1277-1288.

HSRC (2014). Early Childhood Development National ECD Programme report.

Jansen, J. (2013). Personal reflections of on policy and school quality in South Africa: When the politics of distrust meet the politics of disgust. In Y. Sayed, A. Kanjee and M. Nkomo. *The Search for Quality Education in Post-Apartheid South Africa.* Pp . 103-120. Cape Town: HSRC Press.

John-Steiner, V. & Mahn, H. (1996). Socio-cultural approaches to learning and development: A Vygotskian framework. *Educational Psychologist,* 31(3/4), 191-206.

Kalawuchi & Holland (2012). Qualitative Data Analysis. In Wagner, C., Kawulich, B. and Garner, M. (2012). *Doing Social Research: A Global Context*. pp. 228-245. London: McGraw-Hill Higher Education.

Kamerman, S. 2005. Early childhood education and care: An overview of the developments in OECD countries. *International Journal of Education Research*, 33, 7-30.

Kimeria, K. (2012). *Catch them young: Why early childhood development matters.* London: Palgrave.

Lindblom, C.E. (1959). The Science of "Muddling Through". *Public Administration Review,* 19(2), 79-

88.

Luxomo, G. (2009). *Preschool year and improved school attainment: Study of birth-to-twenty cohort*. Research report submitted to the School of Education, Faculty of the Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand.

Mackay, N. (2012). *Male educators in early childhood care and education in Johannesburg: Lived experiences and policy issues*. Masters research report at University of the Witwatersrand.

Magnuson, K.A., Ruhm, C. & Waldfogel, J. (2007). Does prekindergarten improve school preparation and performance? *Economics of Education Review,* 26, 33-51.

Martinez-Vazquez, J. (2004). *The impact of fiscal policy on the poor: Fiscal incidence Analysis*. Working paper series 1-10.

Mason, J. (1996). *Qualitative researching*. London: Sage.

Mason, J. (2002). *Qualitative Researching*. London: Sage.

Mentor, V. (2014). Three goals, nine steps: A Gauteng provincial government's experience to integrate holistic ECD services. In *Early Childhood Development Knowledge Building Seminar 2014: ECD@20*. UNICEF, Pretoria.

Merriam, S.B. (1988). *Case study research in education: A qualitative approach*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Merriam, S.B. (1988). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Meyerson, M. & Banfield, E.C. (1955).*Politics, Planning and the Public Interest: the case of public housing in Chicago.* New York: The Free Press.

Modisaotsile, B. (2012). *The failing standard of education in South Africa*. Policy Brief 72. Pretoria: Africa Institute of South Africa.

Mohamed, Z. (2013). Grade R government school educators' perceptions of school readiness. Doctoral thesis submitted at Wits University, Johannesburg.

Moloi, M. & Strauss, J. (2005). *The SACMEQ II project in South Africa: A study of the conditions of schooling and the quality of education – South Africa working report*. SACMEQ. Retrieved online, 17 September 2014 from http://www.sacmeq.org/education-south-africa.htm

Morse, K. & Struyk, J. (2006). *Policy Analysis for Effective Development.* Colorado: Lynne Reinner Publishers.

Motshekga, A. (2013). *Announcement of the 2013 NSC Grade 12 Examination Results.* Retrieved online, 6 April 2014 from

http://www.education.gov.za/Newsroom/Speeches/tabid/298/ctl/Details/mid/2907/ItemID/3871/Default.aspx

Myers, R., 1992. *The Twelve who Survive: Strengthening Programmes of Early Childhood Development in the Third World*. London: Routledge.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (1993). *A Conceptual Framework for Early Childhood Professional Development.* A position statement of NAEYC.

National Income Dynamics Study (2008).

National Norms and Standards for Grade R Funding (2005). Proposed policy amendments for the resourcing of publicly funded Grade R in accordance with White Paper 5. Pretoria.

Nelson, C.A., Fox, N.A., & Zeanah, C.H. (2013). Anguish of the abandoned child: The plight of orphaned Romanian children reveals the psychic and physical scars from first years spent without a loving, responsive caregiver. *Scientific American*, 62-67.

Neuman, W.L. (2011). *Social research methods: qualitative and quantitative approaches* (7th Ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Nores, M. & Barnett, W.S. (2010). Benefits of early childhood interventions across the world: (Under) Investing in the very young. *Economics of Education Review,* 29, 271-282.

OECD (2012), "What share of national wealth is spent on education?". In *Education at a Glance: Highlights*, OECD Publishing.

Patton, M. Q. (2002*). Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*. 3rd edition. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Pence, A. (2004). ECD policy development and implementation in Africa. UNESCO, Early Childhood and Family Policy Series No. 09.

Pence, A. R. & Marfo, K. (2008). Early Childhood Development in Africa: Interrogating constraints of prevailing knowledge bases. *International Journal of Psychology,* 1-10. Retrieved on 12 September, 2015 from http://www.cyc.uvic.ca/uccr/documents/Pence_Marfo_ECD_Africa_Constraints.pdf

Phiri, B.J. (2008). Early Childhood Education in post apartheid South Africa: Stakeholder involvement, policy initiatives and implementation. Masters degree thesis submitted at Wits University, Johannesburg.

Provincial budgets and expenditure review: 2010/11 – 2016/17.

Reinikka, R. (2004). *Measurement Matters: The Use of PETS and QSDS*. Retrieved from: http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/pe/PEAMCourse04/ReinikkaPresent.ppt

Richter, L., Biersteker, L., Burns, J., Desmond, C., Feza, N., Harrison, D., Martin, P., Saloojee, H., & Slemming W. (2012). *Diagnostic Review of Early Childhood Development.* Pretoria: DPME & Inter-Departmental Steering Committee on ECD.

Ritchie, J. & Lewis, J. (2003). (Eds). *Qualitative Research Practice.* London: Sage.

Rosenthal, R. & Jacobson, L. (1968).*Pygmalion in the Classroom: Teacher Expectation and Pupils' Intellectual Development.* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston publishers.

SAInfo (2012). *South Africa Fast Facts*. Retrieved online, 02 November 2014 from http://www.southafrica.info/about/facts.htm#education

SAIPAECD-Moving Ahead (2013/14-2016/17), (2013). Policy document by South African Department of Social Development.

Sayed, Y., Kanjee, A. & Nkomo, M. (2013). *The Search for Quality Education in Post-Apartheid South Africa.* Cape Town: HSRC Press.

Schwartz, P. (1991). *The Art of the Long View: Planning for the Future in an Uncertain World*. New York: Doubleday.

Schweinhart, L.J. & Fulcher-Dawson, R. (2006). Investing in Michigan's Future: Meeting the Early Childhood Challenge. The Education Policy Center at Michigan's State University.

Shenton, A.K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information,* 22, 63-75.

Shonkoff, J., Boyce, T., & McEwen, B. (2009). Neuroscience, molecular biology, and the childhood roots of the health disparities: Building a new framework for health promotion and disease prevention. *Journal of American Medical Association,* 301. 2252-2259.

Silverman, D. (2000). *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook*. London: Sage.

Smith, C.P. (2000). Content analysis and narrative analysis. In T. Reis and C. Judd. *Handbook of research methods in social and personality psychology*. Pp 313-335. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Smith, G., & James, T. (1975). The effects of pre-school education: Some American and British evidence. *Oxford Review of Education*, 1 (3), 223–240.

Soudien, C. (2013). The change balance sheet in South African education: A post-apartheid assessment. In Y. Sayed, A. Kanjee and M. Nkomo. *The Search for Quality Education in Post-Apartheid South Africa.* Pp . 103-120. Cape Town: HSRC Press.

South African Integrated Programme of Action for Early Child Development – Moving Ahead (2013-2018).

South African Schools Act (1996). *National Norms and Standards and for School Funding*. Retrieved online, 10 April 2014 from http://www.education.gov.za/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=KaOWgo8oYyg%3d&tabid=390&mid=1128

Statistics SA (2013). South Africa's young children: their family and home environment, 2012. Pretoria. Stats SA.

Storbeck, C. & Moodley, S. (2011). ECD policies in South Africa – What about children with disabilities? *Journal of African Studies and Development*, 3(1), 1-8.

Taiwo, A.A., & Tyolo, J.B. (2002). The effect of pre-school education on academic performance in primary school: a case study of grade one pupils in Botswana. *International Journal of Educational Development,* 22, 169–180.

Temple, J. A., & Reynolds, A. J. (2007). Benefits and costs of investments in preschool education: evidence from the Child Parent Centers and related programs. *Economics of Education Review*, 26(1), 126–244.

The World Bank (2014). Data: Gini Index. Retrieved online, 16 September 2014 from http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI

Torkington, K. (2001). WGECD Policy Report: A Synthesis Report.

UK Government Social Research Unit (2007). *The Magenta book: Guidance notes for policy evaluation and analysis.* London: GSR.

UNESCO, (2006). *EFA global monitoring report. Strong foundations: Early childhood care and education.* Paris: UNESCO.

UNICEF (2010). Report on global consultation: Closing the gap on early childhood in developing countries. UNICEF, New York.

UNICEF (2011). Early Childhood Development programme with focus on government of Netherlands funding (2008-2010): Global synthesis report.

UNICEF (2014). *Early Childhood Development Knowledge Building Seminar 2014: ECD@20*. UNICEF, Pretoria

United Nations (2011). *World Statistics Pocketbook*. Retrieved online, 18 February 2014 from http://www.un.org/ru/publications/pdfs/world%20statistics%20pocketbook%202011_en.pdf

Van der Berg, S., Williams, B., van Wyk, C., Burger, R., Gustafsson, M., Yu, D. & Coetzee, M. (2010). Tracking public expenditure and assessing service quality In Early Childhood Development: Insights from a survey of three provinces.

Wa Thiong'o, N. (1981). *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature.* London: James Currey.

Wagner, C., Kawulich, B. & Garner, M. (2012). *Doing Social Research: A Global Context*. London: McGraw-Hill Higher Education.

White Paper 5 on Early Childhood Development Education (2005).

Wildeman, R. & Lefko-Everett, K. (2008). Reviewing Provincial Education Budgets, 2004 to 2010. Research Paper: Economic Governance Programme, *idasa.*

World Bank (2012). *The Education System in the Russian Federation: Education Brief 2012, New York.*

Wu, K.W., Young, M.E. & Cai, J. (2012). *Early Childhood Development in China: Breaking the cycle of poverty and improving future competitiveness.* New York: World Bank Publications.

Yemauchi, F. (2008). Early Childhood Nutrition, Schooling, and Sibling Inequality in a Dynamic Context: Evidence from South Africa. *Economic Development and Cultural Change,* 55(3), 657-682.

Yin, R.K. (1994). *Case study research: Design and methods* (2nd edition). California: Sage.

7. Appendices

APPENDIX A

Interview Schedule

For ECD practitioners (teachers)

Research Topic: Implications of public funding for early learning in South Africa: A case of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality in Gauteng.

1. Funding Related Questions
    a) Do you know that there is funding available for registered preschools from provincial government?
    b) Does your school receive any funding from the provincial government? If yes, go to (c), if no go to (d).
    c) How much do you receive per year, and does this money make a difference for your learners children?
    d) Where does you school get financial resources to meet it needs?
    e) What do you think about the effects of increased public funding for the ECD sector on both quality of preschool education and formal school education?
    f) In your experience, is there a difference between children who received early childhood education and those who did not, in primary school academic performance?
    g) What are your thoughts on the value given to ECD sector by the government compared to other senior phases of education?
    h) Do children's parents in your school pay fees, if so can they afford the payments?
    i) Do you think more resources (financial and human) can increase quality of ECD education for your school?
    j) Do you think the government make should make laws that will make it its responsibility to financially support the ECD sector?
    k) Is there a difference between your school and those that receive/do not receive public funding?
2. Institutional Capacity Related Questions

a) Do you know which department(s) is/are currently tasked with supporting registered ECD centres with subsidies?

b) Do you think these departments have the capacity to fulfil their ECD mandate?

C) Does your school have the capacity to fundraise and manage financial records of the school?

3. Teacher Training and Qualifications Related Questions
   a) What is the highest academic qualification do you hold?
   b) What is the minimum qualification needed for ECD teachers in South Africa?
   c) Do you think ECD teacher training is required for your school and the broader ECD sector?
   d) Would you be willing to study to acquire necessary qualifications/upgrade the ones you have if there was such an opportunity?
   e) Would you afford to pay for your training or you would need help from the state?

APPENDIX B:

Interview Schedule

Research Topic: Implications of public funding for early learning in South Africa: A case of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality in Gauteng.

For: DSD Government officials

Funding related questions:

1. (a) Please explain to me how DSD plans to fund different categories of pre-primary children as outlined by the draft national ECD policy 2015, i.e., Age group – 0-3, Age group 3-5, and Age group 5-6?

   (b) What influenced your decision (through national ECD policy) to propose a 'pre-Grade R' class?

   (c) Why does the draft national ECD policy 2015 plan to fund ECD centres based on the type of program, and based on a strict number of hours, e.g. funds equivalent to 4 hours program for 0-3 age group.

   (d) Do you think that the increment in the amount of funding for registered ECD centres and Grade Rs will improve the quality of education delivered to the children?

   (e) How does DSD plan on making access to ECD 'universal' on the one hand, and making sure that there are enough resources on the other hand?

   (f) How does DSD plan on avoiding the 'education resource curse' in the ECD sector if more investments are made into the sector? (*Researcher to explain 'education resource curse'*).

   (g) Does the current subsidy given to registered independent ECD centres reach the intended users (children)? Are these monies used accordingly by principals and relevant stakeholders?

Institutional capacity related questions:

2. (a)Would agree or disagree that Grade R children have been prioritized and supported by DSD and DBE more than home-based/independent ECD centres? And Why?

   (b) Does your department have the bureaucratic capacity to roll out and implement this draft national ECD policy 2015?

   (c) How often do your inspectors and social workers visit home-based ECD centres (both registered and non-registered) to monitor and evaluate their work?

(d) Do you have enough social workers and/or psychologists to cater for the psychosocial needs of all children in ECD centres in SA?

Policy Related questions:

3. (a) Why is attendance of Grade R not compulsory for all children before enrolling for Grade 1?

   (b) How would you respond to ECD practitioners grievances that DSD and DBE put much emphasis on the age of children more than on their school readiness level when they get to Grade 1?

   (c) Why has it taken so long (about 10 years) since the interim national ECD policy 2005 was conceptualized and now that it is finally finalized into a draft national policy 2015?

   (d)Please explain why DSD decided to adopt a 'program/child' subsidy over 'subsidy/child' funding model as proposed by the national ECD policy 2015?

   (e) What long term effects does this national ECD policy 2015 anticipate that, increase in public funds will have on the overall quality of education in SA?

   (f) The draft national ECD policy seems to be silent on language policy for Grade Rs. Why is that? (*Researcher to explain in detail the driving force and context of the question*).

Admin of Applications related Qs:

4. (a) Please explain the application process for ECD centres seeking public funds assistance.

   (b) Is the public funding criteria for registered preschools feasible and does it encourage more preschools to get registered or it retards this process?

   (c) How long does the entire application process normally take before final approval is made, and how long should it ideally take?

   (d) What are some of the major challenges you face from ECD practitioners who apply for funding from your department?

   (e) How does DSD plan on integrating mostly old principals/owners of independent ECD centres into the proposed qualification standards set by the draft national policy 2015?

APPENDIX C

Consent Form:

Research Topic: Implications of public funding for early learning in South Africa: A case of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality in Gauteng.

This form serves to give the Researcher …… Permission to interview me on ECD related matters. I am aware that I can withdraw from the interview process at any stage should I feel I am no longer comfortable with proceeding with it. My participation in this interview is voluntary and I have been briefed that my personal details will be kept confidential throughout the course of the research process. No payment or financial incentive will be received by me (interviewee) due to my participation in this study.

First Name of participant: ……

Surname of participant: ……

Name of organisation representing: ……..

Participant's Signature: …… Date: ……..

Researcher's name(s): ……

Researcher's signature: …… Date: ……..

Contact details of Researcher: Moorosi Leshoele moorosileshoele@gmail.com

Contact details of Supervisor: Prof Vusi Gumede gumede.vusi@gmail.com

APPENDIX D:

Participant Information Sheet (PIS)

Title of Research Proposal: Practical Implications of Public Funding of Early Learning in South Africa: A Case of Ekurhuleni

Good day,

My name is Moorosi Leshoele and I am currently completing my Masters in Public Policy Management at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

My current research is entitled "Practical Implications of Public Funding of Early Learning in South Africa: A Case of Ekurhuleni". Through my research, I aim to explore if the amount of resource allocation and its subsequent fiscal incidence does profoundly matter in Early Childhood Development and Education.

I am inviting you to be a participant in my current research study. Your selection into this research was based on the fact that you are a practitioner (teacher), expert, or officer in government in matters relating to the Early Learning.

By being a participant in this research study I would request an interview session to be conducted telephonically/at your preschool. With your permission, I ask that this interview be recorded through the use of an audio-recorder (if applicable). This will allow for accurate results and analysis to be done. This interview session will be approximately 1 hour in length.

Your participation in this research is voluntary and I can guarantee that your personal details will remain anonymous throughout this research study as well as in the final research dissertation. You as the participant may refuse to answer any questions which you feel uncomfortable with and may also feel free to withdraw from this study at any time. By being a participant in this research you will not receive payment of any form and the information you disclose will be used in the research report.

I would like to audio record the interview, but if you feel that you would not like to be audio recorded, then please feel free to say so.

This research will be written into a Masters Research Report and will be available through the University's website. Should you require a summary of the research, I can make this available to you.

Should you have any further questions or queries you are welcome to contact myself or my Supervisor, Prof Vusi Gumede at any time at contact details provided below.

Researcher

Mr. Moorosi Leshoele

moorosileshoele@gmail.com

Supervisor

Prof. Vusi Gumede

gumede.vusi@gmail.com

APPENDIX E:

Consistency Matrix

Document	**Interview Question**	**Research Question/Problem Answered**
1. Integrated Programme of Action for Early Child Development – Moving Ahead (2013-2018).	Question 1 (e), (f) and (i)	-Primary Research Question Shortened name: (Primary RQ)
2. Diagnostic Review of Early Childhood Development 2012.	Question 1 (g)	-Does South African education system prioritize ECD education compared to other phases of education as it relates to public funding models? -(Primary RQ)
3. a) National ECD Conference 2012. b) The review of the ECD National Integrated Plan 2005-2010.	Question 1 (a), (b) Question 2 (b), (c)	-Do available public funds and resources reach their intended recipients (preschools) and if so, how are they utilised? -(Primary RQ)
4. National Norms and Standards for School Funding.	Question 1 (c), (k)	-How do ECD centres receiving government subsidy compare with those that do not receive it? -(Primary RQ)
5. a) National Norms and Standards for School Funding. b) Gauteng Province treasury reports.	Question 2 (d)	- Is the public funding criteria for registered preschools feasible and does it encourages more preschools to get registered or it retards this process? -(Primary RQ)

APPENDIX F:

Ethics Clearance Certificate

Research Office

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)
R14/49 Leshoele

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: H15/02/05**
PROJECT TITLE	Practical implications of public funding of early learning in RSA; the case of Ekurhuleni
INVESTIGATOR(S)	Mr M Leshoele
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	Wits Business School
DATE CONSIDERED	20 February 2015
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved You are reminded that prior permission from the pre-schools involved will be required
EXPIRY DATE	17 March 2017
DATE 18 March 2015	**CHAIRPERSON** (Professor T Milani)

cc: Supervisor : Professor V Gumede

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Secretary at Room 10005, 10th Floor, Senate House, University.

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee. **I agree to completion of a yearly progress report.**

_____ _____/_____/_____
Signature **Date**

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES