



**PROMOTING LIFE-LONG LEARNING THROUGH EARLY
CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT**

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DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENT WORK

I, Mpho Ignatius Mokhomo, student number _____, hereby declare that this research project:

PROMOTING LIFE-LONG LEARNING THROUGH EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

submitted to the Central University of Technology for the Degree MASTER IN EDUCATION, is my own independent work and complies with the Code of Academic Integrity, as well as other relevant policies, procedures, rules and regulations of the Central University of Technology and has not been submitted before to any institution by myself or any other person in fulfilment of the requirements for the attainment of any qualification.

Signature:



...

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DEDICATIONS

I would like to dedicate this study to my late father, Matheatsie Mokhomo, who did not go very far with his studies, but taught me from a very tender age that education is a key factor in life.

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May their beautiful souls rest in eternal peace.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate how funding in the public and private Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres promote or retard quality of opportunities and if the current investment would result in the success of this country's educational future. Education is key to the development of the world, but ECD is ranked one of the most marginalised and fragmented sectors in education in many countries (Kamerman 2000; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation [UNESCO] 2007) and this points out that South Africa is not one of them (Education, Training and Development Practitioners [ETDP] – Sector Education and Training Authority [SETA] 2001). Evidently, the South African education system had undergone a drastic shift since 1994 and that transformation process has begun to see ECD moving slightly from the margins of education to the mainstream. Five purposefully selected ECD centres in Motheo district, Bloemfontein were sampled. The purposeful selection consisted of five (5) centres ranging from school-, community- and home-based ECD centres, where three (3) centre matrons and two (2) educators/caregivers, under the instruction of the matrons, formed the sample. The study used a narrative paradigm. The instruments used to collect data were interviews, both one-on-one and focus group. Both deductive and inductive data analysis was used. The themes in data analysis were derived inductively from the raw data using Cartesian and Kantian reasoning respectively. Some themes were predetermined by the researcher when engaging with the literature and the practice as a teacher. The study shows that there is no uniformity in terms of what the learners are taught, neither is there in the level of education of educators/ECD practitioners. This calls for early childhood development to structure the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) of its personnel. The results also show that the more affluent the location of the school the better chances of educators/practitioners who are qualified to teach. The responses of some participants who do not have any training after matric or ECD training show limited knowledge of content and pedagogical knowledge. Some have content knowledge, but lack pedagogical knowledge. Some have content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge, but have no background of theories grounding their way of teaching.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CAA	Children's Amendment Act
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CBO	Community Based Organisation
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DOE	Department of Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DOH	Department of Health
DPME	Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation in the Presidency
DSD	Department of Social Development
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ELC	Early Learning Centres
EPRI	Economic Policy Research Institute
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
ETDP	Education, Training and Development Practitioners
FET	Further Education and Training
GET	General Education and Training
GETC	General Education and Training Certificate
GPS	Global Positioning System
GIS	Geographical Information System
HET	Higher Education and Training

HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HOD	Head of Department
LiEP	Language in Education Policy
LOLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
LTSM	Learner and Teacher Support Material
MEC	Member of the Executive Council
NELDS	National Early Learning Development Standards
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NDA	National Development Agency
NEPI	National Education Policy Investigation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIP	National Integrated Plan
NIPECD	National Integrated Plan for Early Childhood Development
NPC	National Planning Commission
NPO	Non-Profit Organisation
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
PCK	Pedagogical Content Knowledge
PK	Pedagogical Knowledge
RTOS	Resource and Training Organisations
SACE	South African Counsel of Educators
SAPS	South African Police Services
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SASA	South African School Act
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SGB	School Governing Body
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

UNESCO	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund (formerly United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund)
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

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CHAPTER 1

AN OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the general overview of the study. It describes the background to the study and states the purpose as well as the objectives of the study. It also outlines the research questions and suggests the possible significance of the study for policy and practice. The research designs and methods are introduced as well as the ethical issues in data collection.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Education is key to the development of the world, but Early Childhood Development (ECD) is ranked one of the most marginalised and fragmented sectors in education in many countries (Kamerman, 2000; The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 2006) and this points out that South Africa is not one of them (Education, Training and Development Practitioners (ETDP); Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) 2001). Evidently, the South African education system had undergone a drastic shift since 1994 and that transformation process has begun to see ECD moving slightly from the margins of education to the mainstream. This became a widely talked about phenomenon by the introduction of National Qualifications Framework (NQF) with its bands, emphatically confirming the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) in 1992 showing the importance of ECD when it was first proposed (Department of Education (DOE) 1995).

In brief, the bands of the NQF describe the different levels of education and training in South Africa. There are three bands within this framework which is developed to coherently link to one another in accordance with cognitive development. The first band is the General Education and Training (GET), covering level 1 and below. This band is compulsory, comprising of compulsory schooling and Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) (SA Bill of Rights 1996). The former has the Foundation phase, where the exit of phase is Grade 3. Level 1 proceeds to another stage within GET which is primary education and can be awarded a General Education and Training Certificate (GETC) when successfully gone through the junior secondary education, where the exit point is Grade 9. There are three certification levels for Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) – 1, 2 and 3 – which lead to the GETC (ABET 4) at Level 1 on the NQF (Isaacs 2000).

ECD is a recognized and fundamental boulder and a firm pillar for South African education. It is recognised as a lifelong endeavour due to the national policy processes. The introduction of White Paper 5 on ECD solidified and consolidated the policy, by announcing the gradual phasing in of the Reception Year (Grade R) (DOE 2001). The importance of ECD is further emphasised in White Paper 5 on ECD of 2010 and the Integrated Programme of Action for ECD – Moving Ahead 2013-2018, where the emphasis is on developing curriculum and stimulating materials for children from zero to four. However, the Report on Nationwide Audit of ECD Provisioning (2001) articulated overwhelming inadequate trained ECD teachers and that breathes a steamy concern on curriculum and pedagogical practice.

The universal understanding and definition of ECD is vastly distinctive. However, ECD around the globe is a pre-primary programme that has two components: Grade R, preceding Grade 1, which caters for children of 5 years. Pre-Grade R programmes, which caters for children between 0 and 4.

On the same note, South Africa has an inclusive concept for the education of children from birth to 9 years of age. It includes learners who are in pre-Grade R programmes, Grade R programmes and Foundation Phase (Grades 1–3). In this research, the definition of early childhood will be in line with the definition provided by Asmal in the National Department of Education (2001:7): defined, policies and programmes for children from birth to nine years of age with active participation of practitioners, their parents and other caregivers. The definition is important, because there is inconsistency in South Africa referring to ECD. The Department of Social Development and Health says it consists of policies and programmes for children from birth to five years of age.

1.3 ECD POLICY ESTABLISHMENT AND INTERVENTION

International as well as South African research suggest that the first and early years of child development is critical to their growth. These early years see them through the acquisition of language, perceptual motor skills required for learning to read and write, basic numeracy concepts and skills, problem-solving skills, a love of learning and the establishment and maintenance of relationships (Vargas-Baron 2009: 14). There is a consensus on early childhood interventions having developmental benefits in early childhood. Anderson, Shinn, Fullilove, Scrimshaw, Fielding, Normand & Carande-Kulis (2003: 24, 32–46) argue vividly the need

of review and improvement to ECD. “Early childhood development is influenced by characteristics of the child, the family, and the broader social environment. Physical health, cognition, language, and social and emotional developments underpin school readiness.”

The Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) and Children’s Amendment Act of 2007 (Evans 1999; Giese, Zide, Koch & Hall, 2009) have brought about cognition to every stakeholder the importance of every South African child, putting every governmental department on their toes. ECD is not only the government’s priority, but has covered ground to bring on board Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs) and Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs). Even the communities are brought to the forth in ensuring that children’s needs are well looked into and catered for. ECD remains dominated by the private/home/community sector. NGOs such as training organisations, community and faith-based organisations play a critical role in the sector. Additionally, the government receives support from some donors to address imbalances in ECD provisioning (Education White Paper on Early Childhood Education 2001). Across types of ECD provision there are school-, community- and home-based. The ECD centres are classified with quintiles of public schools closest to them. Quintile 1 public schools translate to ECD centres closest to them, where Quintile 1 will be the poorest community demographically and Quintile 5 will be the less poor community in which the school and ECD centre are situated.

Provision of ECD in South Africa has since been part of the ongoing discussion dating back to the apartheid regime. With the 1994 first free elections looming, a study on the status of children and ECD was conducted by the team of the then ECD practitioners. The impetus for that study was the high rates of repetition and dropout in education for a large percentage of the population. Therefore, the new South African government needed to consider how to ensure that all children were ready to enter the first year of primary school. Recommendations made by the team after its findings were that support for the development, expansion, management and funding of early childhood provision is the joint responsibility of the state, provincial and local governments, the private sector, the community and parents.

Since 1994, the new South African political dispensation, ECD has been recognised and identified as a critical nodal point for the country’s social and economic transformation and development. Government departments, together with non-government organisations, have forged partnerships at different stages of ECD development in the country to create policies

and programmes that have enabled ECD services to improve as said by Hindle (DOE 2009: 3). There are documented curricula on ECD, one of which is the National Early Learning Development Standards (NELDS) of 2009, which deals specifically with curriculum and pedagogical practices of the birth to age four cohort. This is a flashed curriculum-related policy document initiative focusing primarily on the early learning needs from birth to four years (DOE 2009: 3).

Some countries have benefited a great deal from ECD. It has also proven to be a long term remedy to educational problems. Anderson et al. (2003: 24, 32–46) posit that systematic reviews of the scientific literature demonstrate effectiveness of these programs in preventing developmental delay, as assessed by reductions in retention in grade and placement in special education.

During the Foundation Phase Conference held on 30 September 2008, the then South African Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor, emphasised the critical importance of the early years (Wessel 2011). She acknowledged the fact that quality teaching in the Foundation Phase will provide a solid foundation for learning. In Grade R-3, basic literacy, numeracy and life skills are developed and they provide the building blocks for future learning. To ensure quality education in grade R, the South African Government planned to incorporate grade R classes, currently at Early Learning Centres (ELC), with primary schools in 2011 (Department of Basic Education 2005). However, this goal was postponed to 2014.

With early childhood clearly recognised for its importance in establishing foundations of development, this awareness has shown an impact on the South African government. The three key government departments that play an integral role in ECD, care and education are the Departments of Social Development, Health, and Education, with each department acknowledging the ECD sector to various degrees in a number of their policies and position statements. The National Department of Education (DOE) is seen as the key role-player in driving ECD policy, though ECD services are acknowledged as a provincial responsibility shared between Education, Health and Social Development (Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) 2004: 13). However, the lack of policy delivery in the ECD sector was highlighted in a study on the situation of young children in South Africa, which indicated that policy does not acknowledge the importance of the first three years of child development or

the needs of working parents (Palmi 2007). An audit into the provision of ECD services in South Africa (DOE 2001c) indicated the 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.

Many different types of ECD services are available. There are two main categories of ECD institution-based provision: public and independent. Public ECD institutions are funded by provincial departments of education and consist of pre-primary schools that provide ECD services and programmes for children aged 3-5. A much greater variety of ECD services exists in the category of independent ECD institutions. These institutions are funded through parents' fees, community fundraising and/or donations of materials, with little or without financial support from the government. Independent ECD provision currently includes: Grade R at independent schools; Grade R attached to public schools, but managed by the school governing body and operated by a private individual or the community; Independent pre-primary schools for children of 3-5 years of age; Privately operated or community run crèches or nursery schools for children under 5 years of age; Home-based provision for children under 5 years of age (Education White Paper on Early Childhood Education 2001).

However, this study was set out to investigate extensively how life-long learning can be promoted through ECD, focusing on accessibility of the attributes of quality learning and teaching in the ECD phase. The interventions by the government, as it has policies on ECD, which clearly have gaps, still have to be filled when it comes to ECD nationally.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

South African Bill of Rights in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) identifies equality as one of the corner stones of a democratic society. Equality cuts across demographic demarcations, race and every distinction in human kind. South Africa, where the effects of apartheid geography are still being felt twenty years into freedom and democracy, is also a country where income is often equivalent to geographic situation. Spatial location, race and income also determine access to centres. In 2010, enrolment of children under five was the highest in the more affluent urban provinces of Gauteng and the Western Cape, the lowest in KwaZulu-Natal and the Northern Cape. White children have the greatest access to ECD centres for ages 0-2, and for ages 3-4 as compared to African children (Biersteker 2011). Biersteker

also qualifies that only a low percentage of children in the poorest quintile attends a centre compared with a higher percentage of children in the richest quintile.

As much as resources on their own do not guarantee quality education, it is imperative that resourcing should play a pivotal role in promoting life-long learning. ECD is a vehicle of delivery and a stepping stone into a bright future which is not only beneficial to the learners, but to their parents, communities and the country at large. Given the situation of South Africa's ECD provision, the inequality is evident in terms of quintiles in the government funded ECD centres and the community-based together with the home-based centres. Children from affluent families can afford to get to schools where specialized qualified educators are available. The same cannot be said about children from the poorer communities and families.

In terms of resourcing, the age of learners that is being catered for need a very conducive environment for learning and teaching. However, the quintiles do not provide an infrastructure that enables quality teaching and learning both indoors and outdoors. EDC centres that depend solely on the parents/community/non-profit organisations do not have well-equipped areas. This is worrisome in that in such centres, even feeding becomes a problem. Under these conditions, ECD fails to promote life-long learning as the foundation does not become strong enough to provide long lasting impressions and understanding.

The DOE is clear on provision of ECD services, but this study investigates how government funding together with other stakeholders' funding provide enough resources to ensure quality learning and teaching to build up to the coming years of the learners' educational life. This is to strike a balance between the public funded ECD centres, community-based and home-based ECD centres in terms of resources. The researcher also would look into the problems brought about by funding in terms of admission of children considering zoning as a policy. Funding comes with terms and conditions. The researcher would look into the extent to which funding limits access to ECD services. A journey of a thousand miles begins but with one step. The purpose of this study is therefore to establish the mastery of that very step to encourage the learner to move forward with ease.

1.5 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to investigate how funding in the public and private ECD centres promote or retard quality of opportunities and if the current investment would result in the success of this country's educational future.

1.5.1 Research questions

The following research questions from the statement of the problem guided the inquiry:

- i. To what extent does funding promote access to education and consequently to life-long learning in ECD?
- ii. How does scarcity of resources impact ECD and later on impact learning?
- iii. To what extent does funding limit access to education in terms of zoning as a policy?
- iv. How does funding promote life-long learning through resources in public ECD centres and private-, community- or home-based ECD centres?

1.5.2 Objectives

The objectives were:

- (i) To examine funding promoting more access to young children irrespective of their demographic background.
- (ii) To demonstrate funding giving a basis to education to all children that will sustain them throughout their learning path.
- (iii) To examine the extent to which funding limits or denies children access to ECD centres through zoning policy.
- (iv) To demonstrate how funding can improve quality in life-long learning of children through resources.

1.5.3 Propositions

A proposition is a statement of truth that cannot be falsified. These were the propositions drawn in line with the statement of the problem:

- (i) Funding ECD promotes access to education and consequently to life-long learning.
- (ii) Scarcity of resources impacts ECD and later on impacts learning.
- (iii) Funding limits access to education in terms of zoning as a policy.

- (iv) Funding promotes life-long learning through resources in public ECD centres and private-, community- or home-based ECD centres.

1.5.4 Theoretical framework

This study draws from the work of Vygotsky and shaped by social constructivist theoretical framework. Vygotsky (1962: 162), a developmental psychologist in Russia, who was inspired by Piaget's theories of human development, once posted that children learn through hands-on experience, as Piaget suggested. Learning itself is a natural response to coming across something. As part of growth, children come across something new all the time and Piaget's theory of cognitive development indicates that a child has to assimilate the new knowledge into what he already knows so that it can help him make sense of the new knowledge. Assimilation develops with the assistance of people around the child. The child can understand what was assimilated better and then is able to accommodate a different explanation of the same object. The study therefore adapted this theory, because a child will use accommodation to interpret new concepts and ideas throughout their learning (Block 1982; Berger, Kathleen & Stassen 2008).

However, unlike Piaget, Vygotsky claimed that timely and sensitive intervention by adults when a child is on the edge of learning a new task (called the zone of proximal development) could help children learn new tasks better. This technique was modified and is called scaffolding, because it builds upon knowledge children already have with new knowledge that adults can help the child learn. The term constructivism most probably is derived from Piaget's reference to his views as constructivist (Gruber & Voneche 1977). Constructivism epistemology as a branch of the philosophy of science, offers an explanation of how human beings construct knowledge from information generated by previous experiences (heuristic knowledge).

Constructivism is an epistemological view of knowledge acquisition emphasising knowledge construction rather than knowledge transmission and the recording of information conveyed by others. Constructivism proposes that learner conceptions of knowledge are derived from a meaning-making search in which learners engage in a process of constructing individual interpretations of their experiences (Piaget, Vygotsky & Jerome Bruner). Moshman (1982) identified three types of constructivism: exogenous, endogenous and dialectical.

In particular, the study is guided by dialectical or social constructivism. It is the origin of knowledge construction as being the social intersection of people, interactions that involve sharing, comparing and debating (Brown, Collins, & Duguid 1989; Rogoff 1990). Knowledge is acquired through a highly interactive process where the social milieu of learning is accorded centre stage. In this way knowledge is mutually built. This view is a direct reflection of Vygotsky's (1978) socio-cultural theory of learning, which accentuates the supportive guidance to achieve successively more complex skills, understanding, and ultimately independent competence. To address this, Vygotsky's Cultural-historical Activity Theory (CHAT) was used. This theory incorporates that the individual child learns through looking at how people do things in the environment around them and the process of mediation and the development of consciousness (Edwards 2007).

Children's cognitive development differs from child to child depending on a variety of factors. Amongst these factors, socio-cultural backgrounds play a major role in children's learning. Because of these factors, also taking into account the fact that South Africa is a diverse nation, Bourdieu's theory of Cultural Capital was also used. In almost all economically advanced countries, schools play a crucial and growing role in transmission of advantage across generations (Lareau & Weininger 2003).

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design is arranged into paradigms, methodology and approaches, sampling and instrumentation.

1.6.1 Paradigms

This study is situated within an interpretivist paradigm. Patton (1990) defines a paradigm as a world view, a general perspective, and a way of breaking down the complexity of the real world. Paradigm is an interpretative framework, which is guided by a set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied (Guba 1990). Denzin and Lincoln (2001) list three categories of those beliefs: Ontology: What kind of being is the human being? Ontology deals with the question of what is real. Epistemology: What is the relationship between the inquirer and the known? "Epistemology is the branch of philosophy that studies the nature of knowledge and the process by which knowledge is acquired and validated" (Gall, Borg & Gall 1996). Methodology: How do we know the world or gain knowledge of it? In

essence, this research paradigm is concerned with the uniqueness of a particular situation, contributing to the underlying pursuit of contextual depth (Myers 1997). To retain the integrity of the phenomena investigated, the researcher made efforts to get inside the participants' framework of thinking to understand from within as to resist the imposition of external form and structure, because the researcher wanted to reflect the viewpoint of the actor directly involved as against that of the observer (Cohen & Manion 2011: 17).

A multiple case study design was employed to investigate the phenomenon of ECD and the importance of funding as teachers lay founding blocks of life-long learning (Schlager 1999: 257). Since this study explored individual cases of funding from different schools, case study design was ideal. Cohen and Manion (2011: 189) argue that a case study is a specific instance that is frequently designed to illustrate a more general principle. In the same breath (Nisbet & Watt 1984: 72) add that it is the study of an instance in action. Creswell (1994: 12) defines it as a single instance of bounded systems, such as a child, a class or a school. According to Cohen and Manion (201: 129) case study can portray, analyse and interpret the uniqueness of real individuals and situations through accessible accounts. Since intrinsic reasons leading to the weak foundation of life-long learning were being researched, case studies helped to respond to the "how and to what extent" questions of the study while concentrating on individual cases.

The study used focus groups, because of the nature of the sampling technique employed. The respondents were purposefully selected and share similar characteristics – all in ECD. According to Cohen and Manion (2011: 436-7), focus groups are a form of group interview, though not in the sense of backwards and forwards between interviewer and group. The reliance is on the interaction within the group who discusses a topic supplied by the researcher. This helps the participants to interact so that views can emerge. In this case the participants' agenda can be predominant rather than the researcher's agenda. This design was handy in that groups were in contrived settings, bringing together a specifically chosen sector of population previously known to each other, to discuss how their individual schools benefit from funding, but also the disadvantages of funding in their schools (Hyden & Bulow 2003).

1.6.2 Methodology and approaches

Methodology is the systematic, theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of study, or the theoretical analysis of the body of methods and principles associated with a branch of

knowledge. It typically, encompasses concepts such as paradigm, theoretical model, phases and quantitative or qualitative techniques (Irny & Rose 2005).

This was aimed at collection of qualitative type of data using focus groups and individual semi-structured interviews. Qualitative study is interactive by nature and the study of this nature has to be conducted through interaction with people who are directly involved in ECD (Cohen & Marion 2011: 224). It is a multiple case study approach. A qualitative methodology was ideal, because interaction with participants to gather information took place. It is multi-method and flexible with various combinations of participant observation, in depth interview and artefact collection (McMillan & Schumacher 1993: 374).

1.6.3 Sampling

A sample, according to Babbie (2010: 52) is a subject of the population or a small group that is observed. The purpose of sampling is to enable the researcher to obtain the required information in a reliable way, without involving the whole population (McMillan 2001: 378). For this study, a purposive sampling technique was used. This sampling used is purposeful sampling where the researcher uses subjective methods to decide which elements are included in a sample (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim 2016). The researcher aimed to collect data specifically from the ECD centres within the Motheo district. The sample enabled the researcher to arrive at appropriate responses to the research question. Therefore, five purposefully selected ECD centres in Motheo district, Bloemfontein were sampled. The purposeful selection consisted of the school-, community- and home-based ECD centres, where ECD practitioners/foundation phase educators constituted the sample.

1.6.4 Instrumentation

For this study, data was collected through the use of interviews and document analysis.

1.6.4.1 Interview

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007: 261-262) argue that a research is a two-way conversation initiated by the researcher to search for relevant information. The interview helped the researcher to identify patterns and relationships. Using the interview, the researcher used both closed and opened questions alternatively. A brief interview focussing on those aspects of the questionnaire which were not fully addressed, were able to go deeper into the motivation for participants and their reasons to responding as they did, and followed up unexpected results.

Qualitative research prefers the use of interviews in data collection, because of ethnography. Since ethnography entails an extended period of participant observation, which is very disruptive for researchers, because of the sustained absence(s) required from work and/or family life, research based more or less exclusively on interviews, was a highly attractive alternative for the collection of qualitative data. There are many types of interviews, but qualitative research employs unstructured and semi-structured interviews, because of their flexible nature. To protect the researcher and participants, ethical issues such as informed consent, confidentiality and consequences for the interviewee were taken into account. Research subjects were informed about the purpose of the investigation and the main features of the design (Kvale 2008).

1.6.4.2 Document analysis

Journals and books formed part of the primary sources of data to enrich the researcher with the necessary literature to carry the study. Documents are defined as any written or recorded material, but not prepared to be provided to the inquirer (Westat, Frierson, Hood & Hughes 2002). These documents provided the researcher with the different types of ECD centres and the education levels of educators in the sector as it has always been marginalised.

1.7 DATA REDUCTION AND ANALYSIS

According to Cohen and Manion (2011: 537) qualitative data analysis involves organising, accounting for and explaining the data, that is, making sense of the data in terms of the participants' definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities. There are frequently multiple interpretations to be made of qualitative data. Gibbs (2007: 3) quoted in Cohen and Manion (2011: 537) says, qualitative data analysis is distinguished by its merging of data collection with data analysis in an iterative, back-and-forth process. The analysis was yielded by research instruments such as interviews and document analysis that presented rich data on ECD.

1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

To safeguard all stakeholders in the during the study, the following ethical issues were considered.

1.8.1 Ethical clearance

Ethical clearance from the DOE of the Central University of Technology research was granted before the collection data commenced. This clearance enabled the researcher to go to the DOE to get permission to go to schools to do research. The DOE then contacted the principals of the schools sampled to inform them that a researcher will be conducting a research in their schools. The DOE also furnished a letter that was proof to the principals that had been cleared so that the research could be conducted in their schools.

1.8.2 Informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from the participants (a) explaining the purpose of the study, (b) that participation is voluntary and (c) that the participant could withdraw at any time should they chose to do so. Any potential risk to participants was avoided by ensuring that methods were free of any form of deceit, duress, unfair inducement or manipulation (Berg 2001: 56). Participants were requested to sign the consent even before collection of data from them commenced.

1.8.3 Privacy, Confidentiality and Anonymity

The ECD sector is over-shadowed by the inequality controversy due to the historical division. In ensuring that the study is not jeopardised, participants were approached with great sensitivity and awareness. Pseudonyms were used when reporting the data, participants' real names and their settings were cautiously discussed (Berg 2001: 58). Privacy and confidentiality of the participants were upheld in order to protect them from any harm. They remain anonymous (Denzin & Lincoln 2000: 139).

1.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study investigates the role played by funding of life-long learning to promote education through ECD. With proper settings and resources put in place and qualified personnel to deliver, it will ensure that proper foundation to life-long learning is rock solid then education in South African will be a force to be reckoned with.

1.10 CHAPTER LAYOUT

- Chapter 1: Provides an overview of the study.
- Chapter 2: Discusses the literature and identifies the gaps in the existing literature.
- Chapter 3: Describes the research design section and describes all elements of the proposal.
- Chapter 4: Presents results of the study.
- Chapter 5: Provides the discussion and conclusion of the study.

1.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided an overview of the entire study, outlining the background for conducting it. An account of the problem which led to the study being conducted was also given. Other elements of the study discussed included the problem statement, purpose and objectives, research questions, research design, and significance, ethical considerations, chapter layout and definition of terms used. The next chapter deals with literature review and theoretical framework.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the literature on ECD focussing on its provision in South Africa and identifies the gaps in the existing literature, trying to bridge the gap between the existing literature and the actual ground work on ECD. It also explores the theoretical framework that guides the study. Literature review is an assessment of bodies of literature that pertains to a specific question (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun 2012). In light of this explanation, the question that remains is “Does early childhood development in South Africa, despite the proclaimed pedagogical knowledge in this sphere, promote life-long learning?” It is therefore imperative for the researcher to explore international literature on ECD and life-long learning and to narrow it down to the South African perspective set against the actual provision, touching on aspects of funding, infrastructure, family, community support systems, government policies in child socialisation, personnel and equipment, but not limited to them.

2.2 ECD POLICIES AND BACKGROUND IN SOUTH AFRICA

Education is key to the development of the world, but ECD is ranked as one of the most marginalised and fragmented sectors in education in many countries (Kamerma 2005, UNESCO 2006) and points out that South Africa is not one of them (ETDP, Sector Education and Training Authority [SETA] 2001). After 1994 the South African education system had undergone a drastic shift and that transformation process began to see ECD moving slightly from the margins of education to the mainstream. This was made clearer by the introduction of NQF by the DOE (1995) with its bands, emphatically confirming the NEPI (1992) importance of NQF of ECD when it was first proposed.

ECD is a recognized fundamental boulder and a firm pillar for South African education. To ensure it is a lifelong endeavour in the country’s development, national policies on ECD were put in place. The introduction of the White Paper 5 on ECD (DOE 2001) solidified and consolidated the policy, by announcing the gradual phasing in of Grade R. The importance of ECD is further reiterated by the White Paper 5 on ECD of 2010 and the Integrated Programme of Action for ECD – Moving Ahead (2013-2018) where the emphasis is on developing curriculum and stimulating materials for children between the ages of zero and four. However,

the Report on Nationwide Audit of ECD Provisioning (2001) articulated overwhelming inadequate trained ECD teachers and that breathes a steamy concern on curriculum and pedagogical practice.

The universal understanding of ECD is a pre-primary programme that has two components: Grade R, preceding Grade 1, which caters for 5-year-old children. Pre-Grade R programmes, which caters for children between 0 and 4 years of age.

South Africa has an inclusive concept of the education of children from birth to 9 years of age. It includes learners who are in pre-Grade R programmes, Grade R programmes and Foundation Phase (Grades 1–3). In this research, the definition of early childhood will be in line with the definition provided by the National Department of Education articulated by Asmal 2001, which defines policies and programmes for children from birth to nine years of age with active participation of practitioners, their parents and other caregivers. The definition is important, because there is inconsistency in South Africa referring to ECD. The Department of Social Development and Health declares it regards policies and programmes for children from birth to five years of age.

South African research concurs with international research which suggests that the early years of their growth are critical to child development. These early years of their lives see them through the acquisition of language, perceptual motor skills required for learning to read and write, basic numeracy concepts and skills, problem-solving skills, a love of learning and the establishment and maintenance of relationships (Vargas-Baron 2009, p. 14). However, the question still remains: What can be done to turn learning around? Despite all, it is still a challenge starting in early childhood moving through other phases. There is a consensus on early childhood interventions having developmental benefits in early childhood. Anderson et al. (2003: 24, 32–46) posit vividly the need of review and improvement to ECD, “Early childhood development is influenced by characteristics of the child, the family, and the broader social environment. Physical health, cognition, language, and social and emotional developments underpin school readiness”.

Provision of ECD in South Africa has since been part of the ongoing discussion dating back to the apartheid regime. With the 1994 first free elections looming, a study on the status of children and early childhood and care development was conducted. The impetus for the study was the high rates of repetition and dropout in education for a large percentage of the

population. It was recognized by previous studies that once the new government came into power, there would be political demands to level the playing field. Therefore, the new South African government would need to consider how to ensure that all children were ready to enter the first year of primary school. Recommendations made by the team (ECD researchers) after the findings were that support for the development, expansion, management and funding of early childhood provision is the joint responsibility of the state, provincial and local governments, the private sector, the community and parents.

Since 1994 the new South African political dispensation has recognised ECD and identified it as a critical nodal point for the country's social and economic transformation and development. Government departments, together with non-government organisations, have forged partnerships in the country to create policies and programmes that have enabled ECD services to improve (DOE 2009: 3). There are documented curricula on ECD, one of which is The National Early Learning Development Standards (NELDS) of 2009, which deals specifically with curriculum and pedagogical practices for the birth to age four age group. This is a flashed curriculum-related policy document initiative focusing primarily on the early learning needs from birth to four years (DOE 2009: 3).

Some countries have benefited a great deal from ECD. It has also proven to be a long term remedy to educational problems. (Anderson, Shinn, Fullilove, Scrimshaw, Fielding, Normand, & Carande-Kulis 2003: 24, 32–46) posit that systematic reviews of the scientific literature demonstrate effectiveness of these programs in preventing developmental delay, as assessed by reductions in retention in grade and placement in special education.

Wessel (2011) argues that during the Foundation Phase Conference (30 September 2008), the former South African Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor, emphasised the critical importance of the early years. She acknowledged the fact that quality teaching in the Foundation Phase will provide a solid foundation for learning (DOE 2008). In Grade R-3, basic literacy, numeracy and life skills are developed and they provide the building blocks for future learning. To ensure quality education in grade R, the Department of Basic Education (DoBE) of the South African Government (2005) planned to incorporate grade R classes, currently at Early Learning Centres (ELC), with primary schools in 2011. However, this goal was postponed to 2014.

With early childhood clearly recognised for its importance in establishing foundations of development, this awareness has shown an impact on the South African government. The three

key government departments that play an integral role in ECD, care and education are the Departments of Social Development, Health, and Education, with each department acknowledging the ECD sector to various degrees in a number of their policies and position statements. The National DOE is seen as the key role-player in driving ECD policy, though ECD services are acknowledged as a provincial responsibility shared amongst Health, Social Development and Education (Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) 2004: 13). However, the lack of policy delivery in the ECD sector was highlighted in a study on the situation of young children in South Africa, which indicated that policy does not acknowledge the importance of the first three years of child development or the needs of working parents (Palmi 2007). An audit into the provision of ECD services in South Africa (DOE 2001c) indicated the 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.

The Bill of Rights in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) and the Children's Amendment Act 2007 (Evans 1999, Giese, Zide, Koch & Hall 2009) have brought about cognition of the importance of every South African child to every stakeholder, putting every governmental department on their toes. ECD is not only governmental priority, but has covered ground to bring on board non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and non-profit organisations (NPOs) together with communities to ensure that children's needs are looked into and catered for with great care. ECD remains dominated by the private/home/community sector. NGOs such as training organisations, community- and faith-based organisations play a critical role in the sector. Additionally, the government receives support from some donors to address imbalances in ECD provisioning (Education White Paper on Early Childhood Education 2001). Across types of ECD provision there are school-, community- and home-based. The ECD centres are classified with quintiles of public schools closest to them. Quintile 1 public schools translate to ECD centres closest to them, where Quintile 1 will be the poorest community demographically and Quintile 5 will be the less poor community in which the school and ECD centre are situated.

Many different types of ECD services are available. There are two main categories of ECD institution-based provision: public and independent. Public ECD institutions are funded by provincial departments of education and consist of pre-primary schools that provide ECD services and programmes for children aged 3-5. A much greater variety of ECD services exists in the category of independent ECD institutions. These institutions are funded through parents'

fees, community fundraising and/or donations of materials, with little or without financial support from the government. Independent ECD provision currently includes: Grade R at independent schools; Grade R attached to public schools, but managed by the school governing body and operated by a private individual or the community; Independent pre-primary schools for children of 3-5 years of age; Privately operated or community run crèches or nursery schools for children under 5 years of age; Home-based provision for children under 5 years of age (Education White Paper on Early Childhood Education 2001).

2.3 SOLID FOUNDATION AND SCAFFOLDING

In the following sub-sections, factors are explored that contribute to ECD in general. The focus is on the involvement of the community as a whole and identifies factors that influence and promote or retard life-long learning.

2.3.1 Family factors in socialisation

The critical importance of the first years of life is well acknowledged. Three broad domains of ECD contribute to health, and have a role to play in health equity across their life course: physical, social or emotional, and language or cognitive. ECD is influenced by early life factors and experiences that are underlying social determinants of health. At the most intimate level the ‘within family’ environmental attributes of stimulation, support, and nurturance influence all three key domains of ECD (Maggi, Irwin, Siddiqi, Poureslami, Hertzman & Hertzman 2005). ECD comes in to nullify what Maggi et al. (2005: 4) say would be an avoidance of ghettoization of poor and marginalized families.

Social environment is a fundamental determinant of ECD and, in turn, ECD is a determinant of health, well-being and learning skills across the balance of the life course. South Africa is not immune to the world hazards of single parenthood and divorces. This does not only bring growing instability to children in and around their home, but also adversely affects the children’s schooling. A major challenge is the children who have no financial muscle to pull through into the system due to a diversified range of factors: children in child-headed households, children affected by HIV and AIDS and children from poor households and communities (Pasensie 2012: 2).

Family environment is vitally important in children’s early development as the first socialising agent. It provides exposure to both beneficial and adverse circumstances over the life course of a child which will vary and will constitute a unique individual life exposure trajectory, which

will manifest as different expressions of health and well-being (Maggi et al. 2005, p. 9). Family becomes central to ECD discussions in that the very family has to provide for children's well-being, but the challenges faced with the modern family retard the children's development in most cases.

A direct and fundamental link between family and ECD is brought to the fore by three separate processes that influence children's development in and around family. These three processes, as highlighted by different studies within ECD, are latency, pathways and cumulative processes and are thought to operate in complex and interrelated manners (Hertzman 2000).

2.3.2 Governmental intervention

For many years Government has been worried and the education department ultimately set out to investigate extensively how life-long learning can be promoted through ECD. It started as focusing on accessibility, pedagogical knowledge of teachers in ECD, teaching and learning in the ECD phase, how it can intervene as it has policies on ECD which to some extent have gaps still to be filled when it comes to ECD nationally. Is the government's funding in ECD enough to sustain a learner's life-long education? Do the government policies on ECD respond to the child's need to trigger learning even after the ECD phase?

The South African government understands the notion that a child learns through interaction, thus, the DOE is not only liable for the education of children, but also their growth. It therefore, through different departments, established policies that set out to curb a lack of fundamental upraising of children. In South Africa, ECD is recognised as a crucial area for development and various government departments have begun focusing on the specific needs of this age group. However, there is no common understanding of family needs, with a subsequent lack of a coordinated effort to meet these needs within the diverse South African context. In addition, the lack of mandated policy for provision of ECD services contributes to the fact that intervention within the ECD sector is not yet formally recognised as a profession in South Africa (Storbeck & Moodley 2010).

The National Integrated Policy for ECD (NIPECD) is one such policy. With all these interventions, how does the policy ensure children learn after they have gone through the ECD phase? The main aims of the NIPECD (2005-2010) are to provide access to all young children to a range of services and programmes to support their development and to provide extra support to especially vulnerable children such as orphans, children with disabilities, children

in child-headed households, children affected by HIV and AIDS, and children from poor households and communities. The NIPECD recognises a variety of sites of care – at home level, at community level and in formal settings (Pasensie 2012: 2). However, has the government gone to the extent of tracking and following up on the learners that go past the ECD phase and see how far they go with their learning? For the improvement of the country, money should not just be injected into the system for spending, but a longitudinal study should inform the government on the status of the DOE as it is meant to shoulder the economy of the country. Although a high rate of drop-out in the other phases of learning exists, one tends to question whether a solid foundation was laid to stand challenges in learning. Learner retention is the complement of dropout. It is an indicator of the efficiency or quality of the schooling education system (DOE 2008).

Similarly, the study is embedded in a social constructivist theoretical framework and it will only be proper for one to adhere to the findings of the DOE concerning ECD and retention of learners beyond the phase. Research by Strassburg, Meny-Gibert & Russel (2010) and Fleisch, Shindler & Perry (2010) as indicated by the DBE (2011) has found that dropping out of schools is not a single event, but is usually the result of a combination of inter-related factors that lead up to a child eventually dropping out of school. Fleisch et al (2010: 7) noted that poverty alone does not explain why children are not in school and identified other factors: disability, family structure (not living with biological parents or grandparents, orphanhood), being eligible for, but not accessing social welfare and living in isolated communities. This combined with poverty, make children more vulnerable to drop out of school. Strassburg et al. (2010: 40-41) found that financial pressures and complex social processes, such as teenage pregnancy and substance abuse, combined with in-school factors, such as lack of stimulation and support, result in youth disengaging from their education and eventually dropping out of school.

Piaget and Vygotsky correctly point out that children learn from the environment that surrounds them. For example, if a child is a victim of teenage pregnancy; the mother consistently becomes a victim of social violence, ranging from substance abuse to financial pressures. The young mind that needs to construct knowledge that will see them through their development and growth, is exposed to factors that retard the mind from developing. This is where the government through the integrated policy ventures in, the social development departments places a child into a place of safety, but the questions are: Are there measures put in place to ensure learning in the ECD centres that promote life-long learning? Will these advise the child

not to become a victim of dropping out due to social constraints as they are not immune to social destruction?

2.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is shaped by social constructivist cultural capital theoretical frameworks. Vygotsky, (1962: 162) a developmental psychologist in Russia, who was inspired by Piaget's theories of human development, once posted that children learn through hands-on experience, as Piaget suggested. The term constructivism most probably is derived from Piaget's reference to his views as constructivist (Gruber & Voneche 1977). Constructivism epistemology as a branch of the philosophy of science, offers an explanation of how human beings construct knowledge from information generated by previous experiences (heuristic knowledge). It is consequential that children are not pushed into learning, but the experience with the environment they are exposed to should become their driving force if the atmosphere is conducive to prompt learning.

Constructivism is an epistemological view of knowledge acquisition emphasising knowledge construction rather than knowledge transmission and the recording of information conveyed by others (Vygotsky and Piaget). This indicates the importance of how everyone has to conduct themselves around children regardless of their age. Piaget concedes that from a very early age a child can adapt through assimilation and accommodation. Other constructivism scholars like Siegler & Ellis (1996) advocate Piaget's idea of adaption by saying that for individuals to survive in an environment, they must adapt to physical and mental stimuli. Assimilation and accommodation are both part of the adaptation process. Piaget believed that human beings possess mental structures that assimilate external events and convert them to fit their mental structures. Moreover, mental structures accommodate themselves to new, unusual and constantly changing aspects of the external environment. Constructivism proposes that learner conceptions of knowledge are derived from a meaning-making search in which learners engage in a process of constructing individual interpretations of their experiences (Piaget, Vygotsky and Jerome Bruner). However, it remains very much a question of whether the young inquisitive minds, in the current situation of the political turmoil, where media exposes the very knowledge-constructing minds, are not destructed.

Adding to what Piaget originally depicted, Moshman (1982) has identified three types of constructivism: exogenous, endogenous and dialectical. Promoting learning is very crucial to a child's mental development through challenging the learner to find things for themselves.

The challenge at times should be beyond a child's cognitive level to help the learner gauge themselves in what Moshman (1982) terms endogenous constructivism. It is evident that when learners discover things on their own they want to discover more hence learning is promoted. The little knowledge that learners have is very essential to helping them solve new problems. One cannot deny the importance of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). It is highly notable that what one discovers goes a long way in valuing. With time a learner would like to modify what he discovered and in the process, through social constructivism touch other learners to envy learning more.

Since the study is guided by dialectical or social constructivism, it is worthy to emphasise that dialectical constructivism is the origin of knowledge construction as being the social intersection of people, interactions that involve sharing, comparing and debating, (Brown, Collins & Duguid 1989; Rogoff 1990). The dialectical constructivist theory believes that teaching should offer learners conducive and specific practices so that they can structure their own questions and build their own models and problem-solving strategies (Harris & Graham 1994). In addition to the theorist sentiments, educators are not left out of the equation when discussing an environment conducive to learning. Young as the learners in ECD may be, they emulate their immediate care-givers. Thus, it is imperative that the educators, who interact most of the time with the learners, should be life-long learners themselves. Social constructivism places emphasis on the social context since it lies on the premise that the focus of knowledge lies within the individual, hence knowledge is prompted and supported by social interaction with peers and adults (Eggen & Kauchak 2010).

Knowledge is acquired through a highly interactive process where the social milieu of learning is accorded centre stage. In this way knowledge is mutually built. This view is a direct reflection of Vygotsky's (1978) socio-cultural theory of learning, which accentuates the supportive guidance to achieve successively more complex skills, understanding and ultimately independent competence.

However, unlike Piaget, he claimed that timely and sensitive intervention by adults when a child is on the edge of learning a new task is called Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). This could help children learn new tasks. ZPD according to Vygotsky (1978: 86) is the difference between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers.

Figure 2.1 Zone of Proximal Development

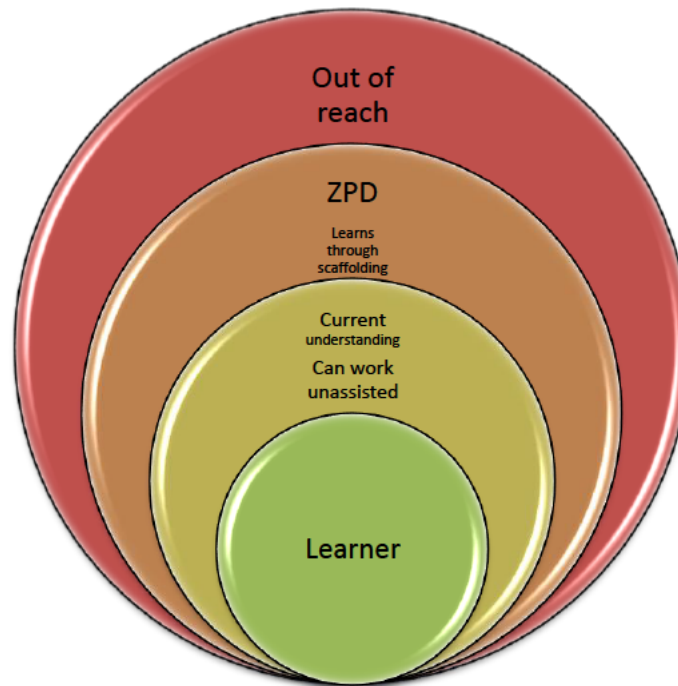


Figure 2.1 demonstrates the role adults play to assist a child in learning a new task. An adult monitors the child as the child does with ease the task within their capability and where the child gets stuck, the timely intervention assists the child to pull through.

Supporting the child as they grow and develop skills while at the same time perfecting the skills they already know is another technique called scaffolding, because it builds upon knowledge children already have with new knowledge where adults can help a child to learn. Scaffolding, however, is not different from ZPD as Wells referred to it as “a way of operationalising the ZPD concept” (1999: 127). Bruner, as a behaviourist, recommends a positive interaction to assist learners at this crucial stage of their lives. He adds that these three modes of presentation during teaching should be considered to ensure positive interaction: actions, images and language. Scaffolding is preferred, because much as there are frameworks that deal with learner assistance, it enables learners to accomplish a task which they would not have been able to achieve on their own and later be able to do so without any assistance (Wells 1999: 221).

Figure 2.2 Children learn through scaffolding

Adult (:

Figure 2.2 illustrates what and how ECD children can learn through scaffolding and create meaningful understanding so that they can develop skills, knowledge and values they learnt through interaction with and support of the adult (teacher).

In addition, Vygotsky merges the ZPD with an equally strong concept: Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT). As children learn with the help of an adult or a more experienced peer, some of the things they learn are influenced by the cultural and historical practices. Some historic knowledge is transmitted from generation to generation. There are different kinds of tools a child needs to learn as they learn by doing (Foot 2014). The study also employed CHAT, because it offers a multi-dimensional and systemic approach that includes the always present dynamics of power, money, culture and history in teaching and learning (Foot 2014). Learning is not an individualistic matter, it is collaborative in nature and involves activities. As explained by Gretschel, Ramugondo & Galvaan (2015). The acronym CHAT is extended as follows: *Cultural* positions humans, the subject of activity theory, as beings shaped by their cultural views and resources. *Historical* highlights the inseparable influence of our histories on our actions and how this history shapes how we think. *Activity* refers to the doing of people, together, that is modified by history and culture and situated in context. *Theory* refers to the conceptual framework that activity theory offers for describing and understanding human activity. Since the study is promoting life-long learning through ECD, CHAT is useful, because it centres on these three core ideas: 1) humans act collectively, learn by doing and communicate in and via their actions; 2) humans make, employ and adapt tools of all kinds to communicate; and 3) community is central to the process of making and interpreting meaning – and thus to all forms of learning, communicating and acting (Vygotsky 1978).

Figure 2.3 The CHAT Activity system (adapted from Engestrom 1987)

Figure 2.3 is a demonstration of Engestrom's Activity Systems Analysis and CHAT.

This is a modified version of Vygotsky's mediated action triangle which covered only the top part of the triangle which he used as a model of human activity that accounts for socio-political situations (Cole 1996). In this study, collective learning is represented by the *subject* which is the teachers, parents and children together; in the top triangle who is driven by a purpose *object* – which is meaningful life-long learners and are mediated by *tools*. Tools here represent the resources that assist the subject to achieve the goal/object (Gretschel et al. 2015). This is where funding comes into play to ensure that all necessary resources needed for holistic child development are available. The lower part of the triangle paints a picture of collective activity and cultural and social factors that include *rules* or conventions of the *community* with all stakeholders. *Division of labour* in a child's education assist to develop a child who can later learn on their own and become life-long learners.

A direct link can therefore be drawn from Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory of learning to Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital. Cultural capital can be defined as the ideas and knowledge that people acquire as they participate in social life. Cultural capital is high cultural knowledge that ultimately points to the owner's financial and social advantage (Bourdieu 1979: 10). Just like socio-cultural theory supports children to grow advance levels of understanding, skills and competence, cultural capital is everything from rules of etiquette to being able to

speak and write effectively from the immediate society and makes one a better person going into school and work.

2.4.1 Rationale for adopting Piaget, Vygotsky and Bourdieu's theories

Vygotsky (1978) is relevant to the current study, because the theory addresses learning as a life-long developmental process, which centres on the resourcefulness of society. For a child to learn, the environment should be at their disposal. The ZPD is not only seen through the assistance a child gets from a teacher, but from the society at large. To promote life-long learning, Vygotsky advocates an environment conducive to learning. The interaction with other learners at school, the community around them that is not only limited to the family, but the global village that they live in, shapes the child and moulds the child into a person they would like to be. The constructivism theory of scaffolding is central throughout the study. CHAT is also important as it advocates the involvement of the community in shaping the child and the importance socio-cultural factors have in the learning of a child. The framework is directly in line with Bourdieu's Cultural Capital which shows that what a child has from home is an added advantage over others at school.

Similarly, coming before Vygotsky was Piaget with the key concept of adaptation. This concept encompasses assimilation and accommodation which are keenly relevant to the study, because the concept directly indicates the importance of environment to assist in the learning of children. Children use their existing knowledge to learn and solve problems. They build onto their prior knowledge to construct new knowledge.

2.5 CONCLUSION

The chapter provided the development of ECD in South Africa tracing it from the apartheid era and how it came under scrutiny in the post 1994 educational system.

It highlighted the major move to integrate ECD in the Health, Social Development and Education departments to ensure a well-rounded child development. It also denoted factors that affect children's social and educational development and ways that the government used to restrain the appalling situation the children find themselves in from an early stage of their lives. The literature reviewed also pointed out that life-long learning, to some extent, is retard by lack of funding or financial turmoil in the families as children get exposed to unhealthy environments.

The reviewed literature also provided the conceptual framework on the theories relevant to learning. Since the study is about learning that needs society to assist throughout, social constructivism theory postulates an interaction and Vygotsky, Bourdieu and Piaget in this context came to the front with their ZPD, scaffolding, CHAT, Cultural Capital and adaption concepts respectively.

The next chapter describes the research design of the study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the research design and covers the selected paradigm and the methods of data collection. The chapter also covers the sample selection and describes the procedures used in designing the instruments including data analysis, recording procedures, ethical clearances, strategies for validating findings and the role of the researcher.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The researcher employed a multiple case study design to elucidate the phenomenon of ECD and the importance of funding as teachers lay founding blocks of life-long learning (Schlager 1999: 257). The study looked into real-life events that show numerous sources of evidence through replication rather than sampling logic (Yin 1994), hence the use of multiple case study design. Since this study explored individual cases, multiple case study design was ideal to avoid generalisation from one case even though every case has to be approached as an individual case based on its background, demographic situation and the type of centre within the entire case (Motheo district in this case), the contexts of cases differ. This is to enable the researcher to compare and analyse each case to establish an overview of the funding in the district as a whole and not to generalise from a single case which would give a false outlook of the study as suggested by Yin (2009). Cohen and Manion (2011: 189) says that a case study is a specific instance that is frequently designed to illustrate a more general principle. (Nisbet & Watt 1984: 72) say it is the study of an instance in action. Creswell (1994: 12) defines it as a single instance of bounded systems, such as a child, a class or a school. Each school approached gave its account, which to some extent, was unique to its setting and demographic needs. According to Cohen and Manion (2011: 129) case study can portray, analyse and interpret the uniqueness of real individuals and situations through accessible accounts. Since the intrinsic reasons leading to the weak foundation of life-long learning were being looked at, case studies helped to respond to the “how and to what extent” questions of the study basing it on individual cases.

Due to the sensitivity and controversy surrounding ECD, focus groups design was also featured to allow freedom. According to Cohen and Manion (2011: 436-7), focus groups are a form of group interview, though not in the sense of backwards and forwards between interviewer and

group. The reliance is on the interaction within the group who discusses a topic supplied by the researcher. This helps the participants to interact amongst themselves so that views can emerge. In this case the participants' agenda can be predominant rather than the researcher's agenda. This design was handy as groups were in contrived settings, bringing together a specifically chosen sector of population, previously known to each other to discuss how their individual schools benefit from funding, but also experiences the disadvantages of funding in their schools, (Hyden & Bulow 2003). This happened in the five purposefully selected ECD centres in Motheo district, Bloemfontein. The purposeful selection consisted of the school-, community- and home-based ECD centres.

3.2.1 Paradigm

For a study to have direction, it has to be guided by a paradigm. Patton (1990) defines a paradigm as a world view, a general perspective, a way of breaking down the complexity of the real world. This study is therefore, situated within an interpretivist paradigm. Paradigm is an interpretative framework, which is guided by a set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied (Guba 1990). Denzin and Lincoln (2001) indicate three categories of those beliefs, put them in questions and provide an extensive explanation of them. Ontology: What kind of being is the human being? Ontology deals with the question of what is real. Epistemology: What is the relationship between the inquirer and the known? "Epistemology is the branch of philosophy that studies the nature of knowledge and the process by which knowledge is acquired and validated" (Gall; Borg & Gall 1996). Methodology: How do we know the world, or gain knowledge of it? In essence, this research paradigm is concerned with the uniqueness of a particular situation, contributing to the underlying pursuit of contextual depth (Myers 1997). To retain the integrity of the phenomena investigated, the researcher made efforts to get inside the participants' frame of mind to understand how they resist the imposition of external form and structure. The researcher wanted to reflect the practitioners' viewpoint directly involved against his own as the observer (Cohen and Manion: 2011: 17).

This study could have still been shaped by a normative paradigm, but the researcher was not concerned about the figures or numbers as Patton (1997) posits that a normative paradigm is quantitative and works towards the precision by focussing on things that can be counted. This would deprive the researcher of the opportunity to interact with participants and be considerate of elements such as human behaviour which cannot be separated from the meanings given to

it by humans, unlike that of physical objects (Guba & Lincoln 1994). In the same light, Patton (1997) disapproves the gathering of information where people are concerned, because items are categorised into predetermined groups that can be handled as mere interval data to be used for statistical purposes. This disassociated the human variables that if included would definitely have an influence on the study for every context is unique and if contextual variables are considered the outcome of the study would be different from when they are excluded.

3.2.2 Methodology and approaches

Methodology is the systematic, theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of study, or the theoretical analysis of the body of methods and principles associated with a branch of knowledge. It typically encompasses concepts such as paradigm, theoretical model, phases and quantitative or qualitative techniques, (Irny & Rose 2005).

This is a qualitative study using focus groups and individual semi-structured interviews. Qualitative study is interactive by nature and the study of this nature has to be conducted through interaction with people who are directly involved in ECD (Cohen et al. 2011: 224). It is a multiple case study approach. It is multi-method and flexible with various combinations of participant observation, in depth interview and artefact collection (McMillan & Schumacher 1993: 374).

3.2.3 Sampling

According to Babbie (2010: 52) a sample is a subject of the population or a small group that is observed. Typical case sampling selects units that are considered typical of the phenomenon to be studied (McMillan 2001: 378). The purpose of sampling is to enable the researcher to obtain the required information in a reliable way, without involving the whole population. Purposeful sampling method was used based on the assumption that the researcher wants to discover, understand and gain insight and therefore had to select a sample from which the most could be learned. The sample enabled the researcher to arrive at appropriate responses to the research question. Therefore, five purposeful selected ECD centres in Motheo district, Bloemfontein were sampled. The purposeful selection consisted of five (5) centres ranging from school-, community- and home-based ECD centres, where 3 centre matrons and 2 educators/caregivers, under the instruction of the matrons formed the sample.

The rationale for sampling in this manner was that the locations of the centres provide different elements. Every case had its contextual variables in terms of geographic location, cultural and

socio-economic factors even though they are found in one district. The pre-democratic demarcations seem to still have an impact two decades into democracy. The previously disadvantaged communities (townships) still feel the gap between the previously advantaged communities (towns).

3.3 PROPOSITIONS

A proposition is a statement of truth that cannot be falsified. These were the propositions drawn in line with the statement of the problem:

- (i) Funding in ECD promotes access to education and consequently to life-long learning.
- (ii) Scarcity of resources impacts ECD and later on impacts learning.
- (iii) Funding limits access to education in terms of zoning as a policy.
- (iv) Funding promotes life-long learning through resources in public ECD centres and private-, community- or home-based ECD centres.

3.4 INSTRUMENTATION

For this study, data was collected through the use of interviews, focus groups and document analysis.

3.4.1 Pilot study

Before the main study was conducted, a pilot study was undertaken. A pilot study is a mini-version of a full-scale study or a trial run done in preparation of the complete study. It can also be a pre-testing of research instruments, including questionnaires or interview schedules (Polit, Beck & Hungler 2001; Van Teijlingen & Hundley 2001). In this study the pilot study took place during the winter school holidays. The researcher conducted the interview protocol in the Setsoto district, north of Free State with two centres and one in the Motheo district. This was when the researcher was home (Ficksburg) and the two centres were purposefully selected on the basis of convenience, access and geographic proximity of the researcher at the time (Yin 2009 and 2014).

The pilot project was conducted in two districts to compare the outcomes as the two districts are different contexts in terms of geographic location. The pilot study was conducted to test

whether the questions were clear enough to the participants so that the requested data for the study could be provided.

It became evident from this study that some questions were not clear and some participants did not give relevant data with regards to the main questions of the study and therefore it needed some refining. This was the case in both districts. In the quest to verify the protocol, the researcher also tested the instrument with a lecturer at the Central University of Technology who has conducted some study in ECD. In analysing the results, the researcher found out that some questions were not clear and had to be refined. The protocol was revised and the instrument sharpened to provide only needed data for the research questions. These are the original questions as stated in chapter 1: i) To what extent does funding promote access to education and consequently to life-long learning in ECD? ii) How does scarcity of resources impact ECD and later on impact learning? iii) To what extent does funding limit access to education in terms of zoning as a policy? iv) How does funding promote life-long learning through resources in public ECD centres and private-, community- or home-based ECD centres? The respondents were not detailed in responding to these questions in their original form and the researcher had to add sub-questions which guided the respondents to provide detailed responses. The additional and modified protocol spoke to the respondents' needs directly in provision and teaching and learning in ECD. A question like: "The South African Constitution stipulates that education is a basic need. Do you find this right being honoured by the Ministry of Education in terms of funding education more especially ECD?" prompted views from ECD practitioners/teachers drawing much from their experiences. Protocols before and after are provided as appendices (Appendix G and Appendix H).

Furthermore, the foreword of the schedule had indicated as well that participants were to take 30 minutes of their time to take part in completing the schedule, but the researcher realised during the pilot study, that no matter how much he tried, he had to change the time to say 'an hour of the respondents' time so that the respondent should not feel aggrieved should the interview take longer than the time they agreed upon. This pilot study also assisted the researcher to improve on their questioning techniques and work on finding information from interviewees who were shallow in responding to questions. A lot of probing questions were developed to modify the schedule. Probing questions like: What does life-long learning mean to you? Do you see ECD promoting life-long learning? Does your centre have resources that enable you as a practitioner to perform to the best of your abilities? It also alerted the researcher

to some non-verbal responses from the interviewees and a way to find more from their facial expressions and body language responses.

3.4.2 Focus group

According to Cohen and Manion (2011: 436-7), focus groups are a form of group interview, though not in the sense of backwards and forwards between interviewer and group. The reliance is on the interaction within the group who discusses a topic supplied by the researcher. This helps the participants to interact within themselves so that views can emerge. In this case the participants' agenda can be predominant rather than that of the researcher's agenda. This design was handy in that groups were in contrived settings, bringing together a specifically chosen sector of population, previously known to each other to discuss how their individual schools benefit from funding, but also experiences the disadvantages of funding in their schools, (Hyden & Bulow 2003). This happened in the five purposefully selected ECD centres in the Motheo district, Bloemfontein. Factored in the decision to use focus groups, was the element of active participation of the hands-on participants in the sector. These participants are engaged to meet their own needs and interest yet they do not have the initiative to challenge the structures. Kemmis, McTaggart & Nixon (2014) posits that participatory action research intends to challenge structured power relations such as those based on social class, race, gender sexual orientation or religion. The purposeful selection consisted of the school-, community- and home-based ECD centres.

The researcher went in person to the centres' management with the letter from the institution authority, the study supervisor to be precise, requesting on behalf of the researcher to conduct an investigation in their centres. The letter stated clearly the purpose of the interview and assured the centres' management of the confidentiality of the findings and that they will be used solely for the study purposes. Some centre authorities did not allow the researcher to undertake an investigation in their centres, but some agreed and also agreed on suitable dates for both the researcher and the centres' staff who would be part of the focus group. The researcher requested from the management that the focus group should consist of people who will be comfortable to discuss and give information on the questions. The researcher then left the schedule with the management to familiarise themselves with the requested information and prepare as much information as possible for the discussion.

As a follow up on the appointment, the researcher then telephonically spoke to the management to confirm the agreed dates and times. In some instances, the management would apologise and had to postpone the either the date, time or both. On the set dates the researcher visited the centres and a classroom in some centres where it was less disruptive and conducive to discussion had been used, while in some the office was preferred. The researcher brought with him to the discussions an audio recorder to enable him to actively take part in the discussions. The questions were open-ended to allow participants to elaborate, but the schedule was semi-structured to manage the discussion. As much information as possible was required for the study. If the schedule were unstructured, it would have created havoc as the participants would have always strayed off the questions. Even in the semi-structured schedule it was always difficult for some participants to stick to the requested information and would bring in some information that was not asked, but some of the information became useful in the long run.

3.4.3 Interview

Cohen et al. (2007: 261-262) says the research is a two-way conversation initiated by the researcher to search for relevant information. In this study, the interview helped the researcher to identify patterns and relationships between the geographic setting of the centre and the funding. Using the interview, the researcher used both closed and opened questions alternatively. A brief interview was given, focussing on those aspects of the questionnaire which were not fully addressed. It was possible to go deeper into the motivation for participants and their reasons to responding as they did and followed up unexpected results. Qualitative research prefers the use of interviews in data collection, because of ethnography. Since ethnography entails an extended period of participant observation, which is very disruptive for researchers, because of the sustained absence(s) required from work and/or family life, research-based more or less exclusively on interviews was a highly attractive alternative for the collection of qualitative data. There are many types of interviews. Qualitative research can employ a range of different interviews from completely unstructured to highly structured interviews. Even though there are different types of interviews, this study preferably adopted the semi-structured interviews.

The rationale behind the imploring semi-structured interviews over the other types is the disadvantage brought forth by the likes of unstructured interviews which are highly informal and the subject is allowed to talk freely about whatever they wish to help the researcher to formulate questions for later interviews (Merriam & Tisdell 2016). Structured interviews

would also limit the researcher gathering useful information, because of the predetermined wording of the questions which in most cases sort to obtain demographic data like age, gender, ethnicity and education level to name but a few. The questions in this type of interview are phrased in such a way that a limited range of responses is elicited; closed questions where the possible answers are defined in advance so that the respondent is limited to one of the pre-coded responses (Mathers, Bernard, Iburg, Inoue, Ma Fat, Shibuya, Stein, Tomijima & Xu 2003). On the other hand, semi-structured interviews employ more or less structured interview questions, but they are flexibly used. The interviewer approaches the interview with the aim of discussing a limited number of topics, but in detail (Mathers et al. 2003; Merriam & Tisdell 2016, Creswell 2013).

However, due to the sensitivity of the subject matter, the researcher resorted to face-to-face interviews. This type of interview was designed to obtain the individual's perceptions on the funding in their day-to-day experience in dealing directly with children from different backgrounds in their own words and what they attribute to their daily experiences about the events (Gubrium, Holstein, Marvasti & McKinney 2012, Taylor & Bogdan 1998 cited in Berg 2001). As articulated before, the data collected is qualitative in nature and open-ended questions helped the researcher as participants gave a narrative description without any pre-determined categories which would restrict them to a one-word response (Barbour 2014, Patton 1997). The semi-structured nature of the questioning also came in handy as the set of questions that were written to guide the researcher were flexible in ordering and allowed the respondents to respond in the order preferred by the them (Barbour 2014).

The face-to-face interviews were scheduled to follow after the focus groups. Thus, the arrangement to have these interviews were confirmed together with the focus group, but the matrons would indicate whether they would be the ones participating or their preferred staff member as it was the case in two centres. In the case where the matrons participated in the study, as the rest of the group left after the focus group, the setting in the office would be rearranged to allow the interviewer to sit on the other side of the desk facing the participant. The tape recorder would be set in place to record the discussion as it unfolded. The interviewer did not take for granted that the participant had already signed a consent form, but would start all over again to introduce the purpose of the study. The researcher further explained to the participants that their identity would be protected, the confidentiality code and anonymity would be observed, reassuring them that their identity will not be revealed in the aggregated findings and that the participants were free to withdraw should they feel uneasy to continue

with the interview. The researcher would then request the participants to sign the consent form before proceeding to the actual interview (Kvale 2008). The interviews then proceeded with the researcher asking questions and jotting some notes as the participants provided valuable data. The notes jotted helped the researcher to probe and clarify questions where the participants provided information that was not very relevant to the study. The researcher would here and there follow up on cues or leads provided by the participants (Mather, et al. 2003).

To sum up, the sample served amply the data collection purpose in terms of varied information based on the context of the centres. The Botshabelo context provided a different dimension of data from the centres or schools in Bloemfontein. To be precise, one government ECD centre in Botshabelo was visited where a focus group and interview were conducted. The focus group at this particular centre consisted of four educators who all have a different age group of children they are specifically assigned to. The matron and one educator were interviewed thereafter. In the Bloemfontein area a farm was visited. In the same manner, a focus group was arranged which also consisted of five educators including the matron and afterwards the matron was interviewed to get the overall picture of funding on the farm.

No matter how many times one has conducted interviews, it is not a given that there will always be smooth sailing in every interview. This is even more complex for a novice researcher. To ensure that data collected would be of relevance following the experience of the researcher from the pilot study, the researcher found it eminent that he sought some coaching from the experts. Apart from the seminars that the supervisor organised and conducted himself, some research managers at CUT were approached by the researcher and this came in handy as the coaching included: how to ask questions, that is, paraphrasing and using paralinguistics (voice, tone and pitch, stress on particular words or phrases) to influence potential responses (Mathers, et al. 2003).

3.4.4 Document analysis

Merriam & Tisdell (2016: 106) define documents as printed and other materials relevant to a study, including public records, personal documents, popular culture and popular media, visual documents and physical artefacts. This is to echo the predecessors in the same phenomenon who briefly defined document as any written or recorded material, but not prepared to be provided to the inquirer (Westat, Frierson, Hood & Hughes 2002). Many reports have been documented on funding ECD, but the focal point was from the post-apartheid South Africa. These documents were from the past two decades. The very documents were useful in

providing unique characteristics of the different ECD centres and also provide the sector's policy across all stakeholders' policies. Documents analysed include the agreements amongst departments as to how they take part in ensuring that ECD is funded like the mainstream schools. The departments in questions include Social Development, the DOE and some NGOs. For this study, document analysis was not limited to funding, but to provision of ECD as a whole. With these documents, the researcher was able to corroborate the documented policies with what the researcher discovered in the interviews from the participants who are hands-on, daily implementing the policies. What information did you derive from document analysis relating to your study, e.g. did the information give you some information, raised issues in your research questions?

3.5 SOURCES OF DATA

Journals and books were primary sources of data to enrich the researcher with necessary literature to carry the study. Pivotal to the study, educators who are directly involved with the delivering of services in this regard provided first hand data to the shortcomings of the funding and how their pedagogical practices are impacted directly and indirectly by the funding. Teachers and caregivers provided their experiences as they deal with children on a daily basis and could attest to the situations that the researcher witnessed when he got to schools as he was also allowed to take photos of the surroundings as evidence of what he found on his visits to the sites. Other caregivers who were not part of the sample became very handy in providing useful data on ECD and the funding in their areas and some were international through a social media group of ECD practitioners across the globe sharing their best practices.

3.6 DATA REDUCTION AND ANALYSIS

After the fieldwork was completed, data was analysed and dealt with in the following manner:

3.6.1 Data reduction and analysis

According to Cohen and Manion (2011: 537) a qualitative data analysis involves organising, accounting for and explaining the data, that is, making sense of the data in terms of the participants' definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities. There are frequently multiple interpretations to be made of qualitative data. (Gibbs 2007: 3, quoted in Cohen and Manion 2011: 537) says, qualitative data analysis is distinguished by its

merging of data collection with data analysis in an interactive, back-and-forth process. Research instruments such as interviews and document analysis presented rich data.

Data was collected from the field through different instruments; focus groups, face-to-face interviews and document analysis; with the help of interview schedules, tape recordings were transcribed, selected, sorted into themes, groups and issues. Thick descriptions of the teachers'/ECD practitioners' contexts and their experiences in teaching and learning ECD were used and systematically analysis of the data in terms of how they say funding and resourcing shape their teaching and learning and how it contributes to life-long learning of the learners in each context were noted. Taylor and Littleton (2006) explain this as an approach taken in the narrative discussion to make a strange phenomenon familiar or a familiar one strange through the sorting and shifting to uncover some characteristics of the data that was not obvious when initially reading or listening. To give meaning, data from all data collection instruments were compared and started developing themes, patterns and issues leading to analysis and interpretation. This procedure enabled the researcher to arrive at the broad categories with their sub-categories outlined below and will be explained in depth under results and findings in the next chapter.

- Funding is key to access education
- Solid foundation through ECD promotes life-long learning
- Resources are an integral part of teaching and learning and the scarcity thereof impacts ECD negatively
- Zoning widened the gap in the livelihood in South Africa
- Capacity building of ECD personnel and vouching for physical and tangible resources will ensure life-long learning

3.6.2 Validity and reliability

Different people describe validity differently, but still give similar meanings. Winter (2000) describes it as a demonstration that a particular instrument measures what it purports to measure, or that an account accurately represents 'those features that it is intended to describe, explain or theorise'. He also adds that in qualitative data, validity might be addressed through the honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data achieved, the participants approached, the extent of triangulation and disinterestedness or objectivity of the researcher. However, Richie and Lewis (2003) refer to validity as the precision of research findings. It also must be noted

that quantitative data validity is described differently from qualitative data validity. It is described in terms of its careful sampling, appropriate instrumentation and statistical treatments of the data (Winter 2000).

To enhance validity and reliability, the questions asked during the interviews were related to issues pertaining provision, teaching and learning in ECD. The study intensively used interviews and the participants were asked the same questions though some questions were designed for different stratum (principals and ECD educators/practitioners). The interviewees were assured anonymity of their responses in all the cases. Although the stratum was different, the answers from participants were similar and displayed some consistency in their content, but still reflecting their own views of ECD provision. To ensure the validity, the researcher visited the centres in person to acquaint himself with the natural setting and left the interview schedules with the participants to familiarise themselves with the content of the interview. The responses then showed a deeper and broader understanding of what is happening in teaching and learning in ECD. With the detailed descriptions (see next chapter), the study enables others to understand similar situations elsewhere and use the replicate in findings (McMillan & Schumacher 1993) henceforth the possibility of transferability of the findings of the study.

The use of document analysis, face-to-face interviews and focus groups helped to triangulate and find corroboration of data. Denzin (1978) and Patton (1999) argue that triangulation helps checking out the consistence of findings generated by different data collection methods; elucidate complementary aspects of the same phenomenon.

The measures above, along with the availability of audio recordings and all original interview transcripts and field notes, show the trustworthiness of the investigation.

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Ethical clearance from the Central University of Technology DOE research committee were granted before collection of data commenced. This clearance enabled the researcher to go to the DOE to get permission to go to schools to do research. The DOE then contacted the principals of the schools sampled to inform them that a researcher will be conducting research in their schools. The DOE also furnished the researcher with a letter that was prove to the principals that the researcher had been cleared to conduct research in their schools.

3.7.1 Informed consent

Informed consent was received from the participants (a) explaining the purpose of the study, (b) that participation is voluntary and (c) that the participant can withdraw at any time they chose to do so. Potential risk to participants were avoided by ensuring that the methods were free of any form of deceit, duress, unfair inducement or manipulation (Berg 2001: 56). Participants were requested to sign the consent form even before collection of data from them commenced.

3.7.2 Privacy, Confidentiality and Anonymity

The ECD sector is over-shadowed by the inequality controversy due to the historical division. To not jeopardise the study, participants were approached with great sensitivity and awareness. Pseudonyms were used when reporting the data and participants' real names were never used. Their settings were cautiously discussed (Berg 2001: 58). Privacy and confidentiality of the participants were never jeopardised in order to protect them from any harm. They remain anonymous (Denzin and Lincoln 2000: 139).

3.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter summed up the research process, that is, the data collection process, instrumentation and the analysis. It is in this chapter where reasons for selecting the particular methodologies and paradigms are given with the aid of the most popular theories and founders of the theories in some cases. The chapter is short, because details on all the aspects of the chapter were left out (see chapter 4 for details as it deals with results and findings).

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the results and explains explicitly the methods used in the analysis of data. It also presents the findings from the conducted focus group interviews, individual interviews and the document analysis respectively.

4.2 DATA ANALYSIS METHODS AND PRESENTATION OF DATA

Data analysis involves organising the data, conducting a preliminary read-through of the database, coding and organising themes, accounting for and explaining the data, making sense of it in terms of the participants' definitions of the situation, which includes observing and identifying patterns, themes, categories and regularities (Cohen et al. 2007, Creswell 2013). This study used multiple case studies. Therefore, the two stages of analysis were involved – the within-case analysis and the cross-case analysis. Yin (2014) as cited by Merriam & Tisdell (2016) explains that the within case-analysis entails that each case is treated as a comprehensive case in and of itself. Data is collected so that the researcher can learn as much as possible about the contextual variables that might have a bearing on the case. Once the analysis of each case is completed, cross-case analysis begins. In cross-case analysis, the researcher builds the qualitative and inductive abstractions across cases. Although the particular details of specific cases may vary, the researcher attempts to build a general explanation that fits all the individual cases.

Descriptive data analysis was used to identify patterns in the data from focus group interviews, individual interviews and documents designed for ECD in South Africa.

4.3 FINDINGS

The findings are presented by way of responding to individual questions and categorising responses into themes that are deduced from the data collected through literature review, the use of interviews, focus groups and document analysis. For triangulation purposes, data from these different sources were thoroughly examined to compare, contrast and try to match with the existing data.

4.3.1 Focus groups and face-to-face interviews

The researcher used both deductive and inductive data analysis. The themes in data analysis are derived inductively from the raw data using Cartesian and Kantian reasoning respectively. Some themes were predetermined by the researcher when engaging with the literature and the practice as a teacher. However, some themes emerged as the data were coded (Miles & Huberman 1994). To give the participants a voice in the research, the researcher used in Vivo Coding. This is where the codes, terms and phrases used by the participants themselves are presented *verbatim*. Some themes and patterns came out as the researcher engaged and interpreted the data hence the constructed coding was also featured.

The questions posed to participants in face-to-face interviews were intended to beseech solidified responses to the focus group.

4.3.1.1 Research question 1

To what extent does funding promote access to education and consequently to life-long learning in ECD?

This question aimed to inquire to what extent funding is important in promoting access to education, as enshrined in the constitution of the country (Bill of Rights 1996, p. 29 (1) a) which emphasises provision of basic education to every child. It was also aimed at finding out how funding assists to develop learners into becoming life-long learners through ECD.

➤ **Interviews (One-on-one and Focus groups)**

Theme 1: Funding is a key factor to access education

All participants indicated that funding is a key factor to access education from the earliest age and that early education inspires interest in most learners to make them want to be life-long learners. The participants believe life-long learning is a result of the love of learning that learners developed at an early age. There were mixed feelings in response to the first part of the question: “To what extent does funding promote access to education?” Some of the participants gave reasons why learners like to go to school and why some would not like to go to school. These reasons ranged from the physical status of the schools and what is found in and at the schools (material and resources), depending on the individual context of the school.

Some of the responses from the participants reflected through *focus group interviews A*. One respondent said:

We were promised free education, but to date education is not free. In response to the question, funding promotes access to education to a very large extent. I want to take you to the school setting and say this out strongly, without funding we would not have this school and children from this area would struggle immensely to access education. They would have to travel kilometres from this area to the neighbouring section where there is an ECD or would still be staying at home looked after by the grandparents.

Sharing the same view, another respondent (*Respondent C*) on the same question said:

As staff *re hloka ho patalwa hore re dire mosebetsi. Re hloka ho patalwa hore re tsebe ho tla mosebetsing...*

(Translation: ... *we need to be paid so that we can do the job. We need to be paid so that we can come to work ...*)

In the same breath, other participants emphasised the importance of funding to promote access to education from a poverty point of view of parents and high unemployment rate in South Africa and (*Respondent B*) said:

South Africans are living below the poverty line. Most parents are not employed and children have their meals at our schools, because parents cannot afford decent meals for their families.

Adding to that another participant (*Respondent J*) said:

Some families depend on the social grants that are given to the grandparents of the children, because *kennete, bana ba setse le bonkgono ... batswadi ba hlokahetse* or they are out there somewhere not taking care of their children. It becomes a burden to the schools to ensure that kids have food so that they can learn effectively and participate in all activities. The other income is also a grant – child support grant – that, in my opinion, is equivalent to nothing, because that amount only buys clothes and the granny is left with nothing.

(Translation: ...*it is a fact that children are left with their grandmothers ... parents have passed on...*)

Out of the many participants, there were just a few responses that said funding promotes access to education to a very minimal extent. Responses in this regard were:

(Respondent E): I personally think funding promotes access to education to just some, because even the poorest of the poor in our townships go to school where they can afford at least full meals.

In the same view another participant added:

(Respondent D): In my opinion, not to a very big extent. If parents can just cook decent meals at home and send their kids to school with lunch boxes, education will still be accessible regardless of funding.

➤ **Documents analysis**

In response to research question 1, the Provincial Budgets and Expenditure Review: 2010/11-2016/17 document provides with demonstrations how funding is essential to promoting access to education. A range of factors determines access to education. These factors range from social, cultural, historical to economic. It is, therefore, of paramount importance to immediately present the economic (funding) as a determinant in all factors to access education and consequently leading to life-long learning. Funding education has multiple facets. The first is the role played by the country on its education system to maintain the standard of education as against the global counterparts. The second is the role assumed by the parents or guardians of the kids to take them to school.

According to the Audit of ECD Centres (2014), just like schools, ECD centres are categorised into public and private organisations. According to regulation, privately owned ECD centres are subjected to less regulation hence likely to be more expensive and serving affluent communities. It is noted, however, that there are still some that operate as non-profit organisations amidst the privately owned centres. As the case is with public schools, public centres are subject to strict regulations, but also enjoy a larger chunk of subsidy thus serving lower income communities (ECD Centres Audit 2014).

South African Child Gauge (2010) emphasises the funding issue as extremely vital to access education. It is also contributing immensely to children dropping out early from their education, jeopardising their life-long learning in the process, if there is no funding. It states: “Further research indicates that children who are less likely to enrol in school, and more likely to drop out early, are those from disadvantaged backgrounds with limited economic resources, parents with lower levels of education and who have lost one or both parents.”

According to a comprehensive research report on ECD to the National Development Agency (NDA) on challenges facing the ECD sector in South Africa (2012), a significant number of enrolment of five-year-olds into Grade R was recorded in 2011. It was a staggering 67% which marked a great progress towards the government’s revised goal of universal access to Grade R by 2014.

➤ **Interviews (One-on-one and Focus groups)**

Theme 2: Solid foundation through ECD promotes life-long learning

Responding to the second part of the question: To what extent does funding promote access to education and consequently to life-long learning in ECD? Almost all participants believe that ECD promotes life-long learning. The issues raised by participants relate to individual contexts they were in and some were positively indicating how, through the funding from the government and the fundraising, they initiated as centres/schools are helping in promoting life-long learning. Responses were:

(Respondent D): I have been in the school for more than 20 years and have seen some of the students who started their schooling here as small kids and are now at universities and some are at Motheo College. According to me, life-long learning is learning that continues even outside classroom and beyond schooling age.

Adding to this, another participant said:

(Respondent B): It is from the early age when we ask children what they want to be when they grow up that we get different answers. The kids start developing their careers from ECD, because they already know what they want so even after matric they still want to follow the dreams they had here.

Another participant gave an example of a staff member who is a former student at their centre and said:

(Respondent D): *Ka hara rona ka mona re na le ditichere tse pedi tse ntseng di ntshetsa dithuto tsa bona pele hore ba thole mangolo a bona. O mong wa bona o qadile mona and since a batla ho ba moruta-bana. O kena night school teng Lesedi ECD o etsa communication. O mong o kena Motheo TVET/FET College for her qualification. O kena di weekends, one week a month.*

(Translation: Amongst us we have two teachers who are continuing with their studies so that they can get their qualifications. One of them started her schooling here with us and ever since childhood, she always wanted to be a teacher. She attends classes at Lesedi ECD doing communication currently. The other one is studying with Motheo TVET/FET College for her qualification. She attends weekends, once a month.)

Still emphasising that ECD promotes life-long learning, another participant brought in the issue of foundation and said:

(Respondent H): Life-long learning is learning which is not limited to classrooms and we cannot have it when children do not have a good foundation. The foundation that will make sure that one becomes a life-long learner is found in here (at ECD centres). But we as care-givers should have qualifications that will help us develop those kids.

Another participant said:

(Respondent A): We believe that a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. That step should be in the right direction from the start and you will find your destination with ease. We ensure that we lay a foundation that even after years will still stand strong. It is difficult to say ECD promotes life-long learning, because kids at that age do not really know what they are here for, but our teaching encourages wanting to learn more.

Another also said:

(Respondent C): When I see a group of students graduating from our school every year I get excited, because I know we have contributed to the future. The mark we made will live with them for a lifetime. We believe that kids are the future of every country and

we see a potential scientist or pilot or even a doctor from every kid that comes through our centre. We inspire life-long learning through our creative teaching as we do not just teach them to read and write, but help them to be creative.

In addition to that another participant stated:

(Respondent A): To me life-long learning means kids get to learn things that will help them all throughout life, no matter what age, and yes, I believe X school promotes it to the fullest as the kids learn basic life-skills sets. We use Montessori theory to make sure we develop future learners and leaders.

4.3.1.2 Research question 2

How does scarcity of resources impact ECD and later on impact learning?

This question inquires what the implications of scarcity of resources on learning and teaching in ECD are and how those implications further impact children later on when learning.

➤ **Interviews (One-on-one and Focus groups)**

Theme 3: Resources are an integral part of teaching and learning and the scarcity thereof impacts ECD negatively

Most participants indicated that resources are an integral part of teaching and learning in the early years of learning. They believe with scarce resources it becomes practically tough to give the intended skills and instil in learners what is expected from schools. Resources referred to range from skilled human resources, playing fields, furniture and other learning materials. Some participants brought to the researcher's attention that kids in the ECD stage learn better with things they see; things they touch and feel; and things they do (practice) as Piaget indicates in his four stages of cognitive development namely: sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational and formal operational depending on a particular stage of their age. Without resources kids are just subjected to listening to the teachers and as soon as they are done with the lesson they forget, but when they engage, they understand and that becomes part of their lives. Responses were as follow:

(Respondent E): The question of scarcity of resources takes me back to the funding question. Like I said earlier, we have kids who stay here full time (boarding). Some

have to commute from the phases to this place. They need transport, because the place is far and on the farms. We have teachers who are not trained professionals, but would still like to further their studies to be qualified for the job. They struggle with the kind of kids we have as there are not enough resources.

Adding to the resources issue another participant said:

(Respondent A): Before moving to Bloemfontein, I volunteered at one school after my matric. They were a well-resourced school which made teaching effective and enjoyable. When I got here I had to struggle to adjust as there are no resources to use to show children what you are talking about. Some of the material you see over there are bought from my own money.

Figure 4.1: Mini board for learners



Figure 4.1 is a mini board that a teacher indicated she bought from her own money due to the lack of resources that enable effective teaching.

In responding to the same question another participant posted a question and continued:

(Respondent J): Due to not having the correct or enough resources, how are you meant to teach anything without visual stimulation or examples? This hinders the learning of kids. Children at this age do not learn by just listening. In our case they are told of things, but do not even have a chance to see or touch the material. It becomes difficult for them to understand what we are talking about, but when you show them the item it lasts and they remember it even when they are grown-ups. Since we do not have the resources, but have to teach, we are forced to think out of the box. We draw pictures or even download some pictures of the things we teach them from the internet. As you can see, our walls are full of visual aids.

Figure 4.2: Creativity to aid teaching and learning



Figure 4.2 is an aid to teaching and learning displayed in a classroom that was visited.

When we teach them of flying creatures they have to see what we are talking about so that they can relate them to what they see in their daily lives. This happens when we talk of a butterfly without showing them a butterfly. When we teach them of birds we can also take them outside and they will immediately tell you that they have seen a bird fly by.

In the same breath another participant added:

(Respondent D): The scarcity of resources impacts badly on our teaching. We only talk, but have nothing to show the kids and this affect their learning. Most of the learners do not perform well when they go on with their studies, because they were not exposed to a lot of things. We have a lot of children from different ages, but we do not have enough space to start with. Space is a challenge – tables are shared and we deal with fights almost every day. We have a policy that every child should bring his own chair from home.

Another participant quoted John Locke (1922) to drive home a point on space shortage and resources for physical education and said:

(Respondent H): I am sorry I can't remember who said these words... "A sound mind in a sound body is a short, but full description of a happy state in this world". We cannot keep the kids in the classroom the whole day. We believe kids learn better when they play and interact with one another. However, we send them out there to play, but we

are short resourced. For our physical education, we really have nothing – only those tyres you see outside. You can see, not all of them are painted, it's because we struggle. The field is not big enough, but they can run around and play some games.

However, another participant, much as she indicated the bad impact of scarcity of resources, had a good story to share from their school. She deliberated on the well-resourced centres and said the society expects all kids to be in some favourable careers like doctors, but not everyone can be a doctor. She said:

(Respondent B): All kids are expected to become doctors or lawyers when they grow up. My question has always been: Who will the doctors practice on when we are all doctors? And if we are all lawyers, who will we be representing? If only people understood the importance of physical education, they would ensure that all our schools have facilities like those (pointing at a mini swimming pool). We can boldly share with you that from our own centre, we developed two notable swimmers and a sport analyst. The lady started her school here and liked swimming. She went on to swim even at high school. She studied Sports Management and is now a television presenter (Sport Analyst). We are not well resourced, but we hire what we do not have. We organise sports during the weekends and host swimming clinics.

Most participants said that scarcity of resources impacts ECD negatively. Some said their training as teachers for children at that level taught them to use everything at their disposal to foster teaching and learning. They indicated that they (teachers) are resources and should be resourceful to inspire learning in children. They reiterated what some participants said that they can download material from the internet and make use of waste material to recycle as resources for teaching and learning. This in itself makes children who think out of the box. Even in future, it creates children who are creative and can be entrepreneurs. Some responses were:

(Respondent C): Yes, and no to the question. At this school we do not have all the equipment required, but as a Montessorian, we have been trained to make the best of what you have, so my kids still learn everything they should with a little extra input from me.

Figure 4.3: How scarcity assists teachers in teaching and learning

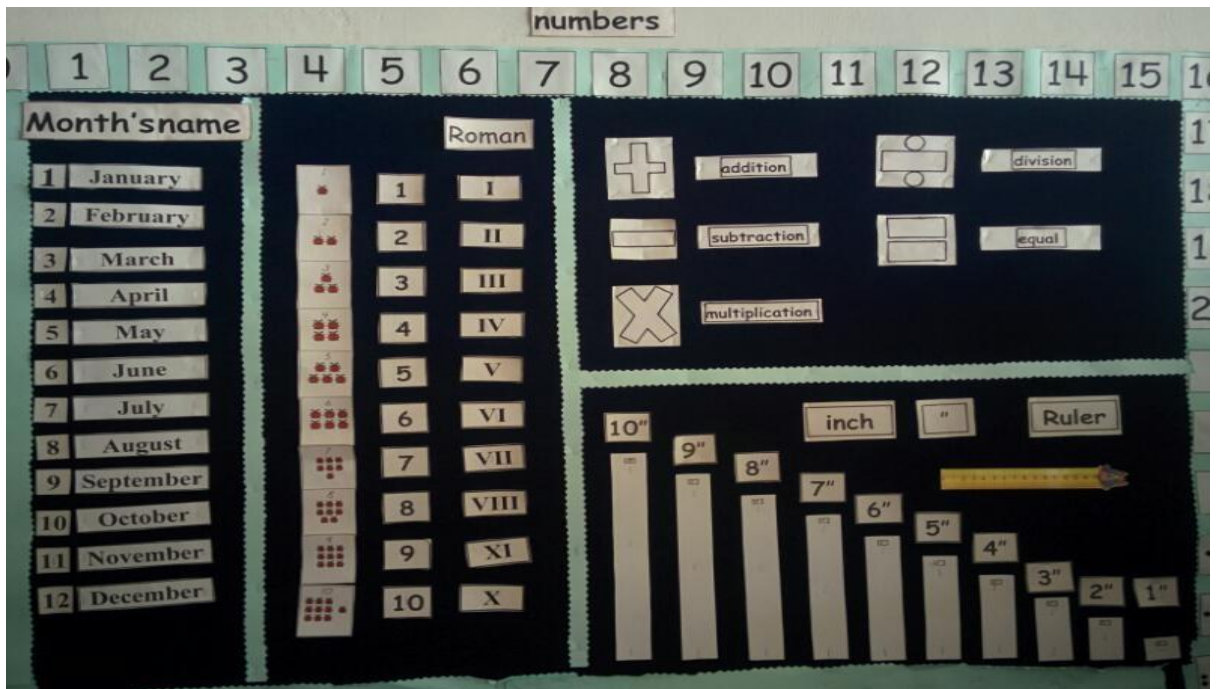


Figure 4.3 is a table that the teacher indicated she downloaded from the internet as an aid to teaching children how to count.

The teacher indicated that the table that she downloaded from the internet as an aid to teaching children how to count, uses some units (inches for centimetres) that are not used in the children’s daily use, but they will come across as they study further. This is where life-long learning is inspired.

Another participant said:

(Respondent F): The scarcity of resources becomes a motivation for most children when they look back and see where they come from, that encourages them to study further and develop the very environment they come from. One of our teachers here always relates to us the story about the kind of school she first went to. How they used the milk boxes to make cars and other waste material. From the very story, she is able to create some artefacts we use to teach our kids here.

Figure 4.4 Teachers recycle to stand up to the challenge of scarcity



Figure 4.4 shows an artefact that is made of the cones of the toilet rolls and some paper to develop as scarcity faces the centres. It is to show how scarcity of resources inspires a creative mind and results in recycling waste material as teaching and learning aids.

➤ Documents analysis

A lot of spade work has been done to improve access and quality of early learning programmes in ECD facilities, according to the Department of Basic Education, Department of Social Development & UNICEF (2010), however, a huge challenge that relates much to resources is yet to be addressed. The document posits that obstacles facing ECD facilities include: absence of learning material and resources, especially within the classroom setting; minimal funding; lack of qualified teachers; inadequate security for children whilst at the ECD facility; and poor toilet amenities (DBE, DSD & UNICEF 2010).

In the same breath, the Report for the National Planning Commission (2011) indicates that all South African children should have access to ECD facilities that are closely monitored and well supported ensuring a high quality to give children a better foundation for learning upon entering primary school. There are books that support learning in ECD. “Foundations for Learning” is a lesson plan book that is meant to guide ECD teachers, especially Grade R and 1. It outlines clearly how much time should be allocated for what and how the specific topic has to be delivered or taught to learners. With these guidelines, however, it remains a challenge to centres when it comes to other resources. The document shows the numeracy challenge that South Africa faces as students’ progress through their studies emanates from the lack of resources found at their ECD. Some centres do not have the luxury of buying sophisticated tools that assist learning with something as simple as basic counting. Teachers have to

improvise and collect everything that can assist them, but still taking into consideration the safety of the learners (Foundations for Learning).

4.3.1.3 **Research question 3**

To what extent does funding limit access to education in terms of zoning as a policy?

With this question the aim was to find out the extent to which funding limits access to schools or ECD centres, because of the zoning policy.

➤ **Interviews (One-on-one and Focus groups)**

Theme 4: Zoning widened the gap in the livelihood in South Africa

Most participants believe funding still limits access to education in terms of the zoning policy. They defied zoning as a major factor that has widened the gap in livelihood in the country. They say regulated geographic division gave rise to the inequality and schools in certain areas are more accessible than other areas, because of socio-economic imbalances. They also brought about the issue of quintiles, that most of the schools in the urban areas are quintiles four and five while those in the townships and farms remain quintiles one to three at most. They attribute this to zoning which some say was brought about to subject the poor to their populated areas with little benefits. Some responses were:

(Respondent B): I must admit that zoning is a global concept, but in South Africa it was worsened by the apartheid regime. The less privileged were dumped in the outskirts of city where they would live alone and suffer by themselves. The schools as well were divided into former model C schools where only the well-off kids enjoyed quality education leaving the black children saturated in the townships and farms. It is still the situation even two decades into democracy. Our centres here in the townships are still subjected to the quintiles of the schools close by. In our case the closest school is quintile two and we are rated as such.

Airing the same sentiments, another participant added:

(Respondent E): Honestly, children in the suburbs have a better education than our children here. Most of the parents here are not working and prefer looking after their children or grandchildren. Children fall pregnant whilst they are still at school and have

to drop out of school to look for jobs, some depend on the children social grant and with no qualifications. They have to do domestic work around here carrying their kids on their backs, because they cannot even afford nannies. I personally blame the government for still allowing the whites to live there alone and the rest of us are still stuck out here with these situations.

➤ **Documents analysis**

Zoning, in general, has both negative and positive sides to the policy, it was devised to address the socio-economic issue. According to the Admission Policy for Ordinary Public Schools (1998), school zoning is administered in order to control the learner numbers of schools and coordinate parental preferences. Section 34 (b) of the Admission Policy for Ordinary Public Schools indicates that a learner who lives outside the feeder zone is not precluded from seeking admission at whichever school he or she chooses, but access to a chosen school cannot be guaranteed. This does not, however, address the widening gap in livelihood of South Africans, because the chosen school has financial implications to the parent – in terms of transportation. The closer the school, the easier the access. In the case where the next school of preference is in a different feeder zone, it becomes problematic for parents to take their children there.

➤ **Interviews (One-on-one and Focus groups)**

Theme 5: Zoning improves the standard of education even though it promotes inequality

Contrastingly, some participants applauded zoning as a policy. They indicated that funding does not limit access to education, but improves the standard of education. They said, with funding comes benefits that can only be enjoyed by a certain group of people. Meaning, with funding, as they indicated, in township schools, it is not required of parents to pay much as children are clustered in classes. The Bill of Rights of the South African Constitution (1996, 29 (1) a) states clearly that every child has a right to basic education, including adult basic education. However, the inequalities of the past have made it impossible to access the same quality of education. In towns or suburbs, children are afforded all the attention so that a child would progress better than a child in the clustered township schools. Some responses were:

(Respondent E): Much as we can debate it out, zoning to us is bad, but looking at it with a teacher's eye, you will see that it allows people a choice to take their children to a centre that will focus on the child's needs other than here with us where we have, in

that age group alone 33 kids that are the responsibility of two teachers. If we had enough funding, we would have more teachers so that we could offload some kids too. We cannot let parents turn back when they bring their kids to our centre, because we will be defying the constitution of the country.

On the same issue of numbers another respondent said:

(Respondent C): We have a strict rule when it comes to teacher-kids ratio. We cannot take more than what our policy stipulates. Because of this, we explain to parents that our fees will understandably be higher as compared to the fees where there are a lot of kids. This is to afford every kid an opportunity to receive attention and each kid is monitored regarding their progress. We do not discriminate, but we are concerned about the quality of learning, not numbers and money (*just to clarify the money issue*).

4.3.1.4 Research question 4

How does funding promote life-long learning through resources in public ECD centres and private-, community- or home-based ECD centres?

This question was to inquire how funding in itself assists in developing children into being life-long learners through access to resources in both public and private (community- or home-based ECDC centres).

➤ **Interviews (One-on-one and Focus groups)**

Theme 6: Capacity building of ECD personnel and vouching for physical- and tangible resources will ensure life-long learning.

Most respondents really dug very deep in explaining exactly what their understanding of resources is. Their understanding of resources, which is holistic, included human resources which they indicated as the driving force behind innovation, development and success of every project. They demonstrated their thorough understanding of what they are dealing with: a child. To them a child is a project put in their hands to shape, develop and manage to inspire potential for the future.

However, a different factor was brought in by a respondent in the focus group interview about developing human resources before even thinking of the rest of the resources you need for children.

(Respondent A): I believe we can have the best infrastructure and the best resources money can buy, but if human resources are not developed to think of what to do with the resources, the resources would be as good as non-existent. Well trained and perpetual training of teachers ensures life-long learning, because they keep up with the latest developments that we have in this ever changing world.

Moving to physical and tangible resources, respondents indicated that technology is ever changing and children as young as three years can use gadgets like computers and phones. Some can just play games on computers and phones. This on its own challenges the mind and assists the child's mental development. The love of technology develops from that early age and if nurtured properly at school learners grow up to be technicians in future. To ensure that early childhood centres play this role, some have computer labs and have computer lessons.

➤ **Documents analysis**

Data collected through documents corroborates the data acquired in the interviews on the need of capacity building and expansion of infrastructure. A comprehensive research report on ECD to the National Development Agency (NDA) on challenges facing the ECD sector in South Africa (2012) indicates that the latest national audit on ECD centres in South Africa was done in 2012 and revealed that by March 2012, 836 000 children were in 19 500 registered ECD centres nation-wide. Provincial departments of Social Development subsidised 488 000 ECD children. This document also reveals that working on ECD sites were 54 503 educators/practitioners of which only 6 540, which is a mere 12%, had a qualification. Of the remaining 48 463 educators/practitioners, 42 999, which makes a staggering 88%, required additional training of some sort and 9 889 of them had no training at all for ECD.

4.4 CONCLUSION

The chapter presented the findings of the study. Firstly, methods of data analysis used in the study were described. Secondly, findings of the study from interviews, both one-on-one and focus groups and document analysis, were presented. Thirdly, the views and opinions of the participants in the study were represented verbatim. Document analysis focussed on the

policies relating to ECD, Children Act, DSD and DBE. Interviews focused on the four research questions re-stated at through this chapter.

The following chapter discusses the findings of the study, draws conclusions and makes recommendations based on the results.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the results of the study and provides conclusions. It sets off by stating the purpose of the study and re-stating the research questions. It also gives a summary of how the study was conducted and presents findings in order to answer the research questions. It further integrates the themes and issues that came up in the literature and theoretical framework, drawing conclusions on the study. It also highlights the limitations of the study and presents recommendations thereof for further research.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

5.2.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to investigate how funding in the public and private ECD centres promote or retard quality of opportunities and if the current investment would result in the success of this country's educational future.

5.2.2 Re-statement of research questions and prepositions

The researcher posed the following research questions from the statement to guide the inquiry:

- (i) To what extent does funding promote access to education and consequently to life-long learning in ECD?
- (ii) How does scarcity of resources impact ECD and later on impact learning?
- (iii) To what extent does funding limit access to education in terms of zoning as a policy?
- (iv) How does funding promote life-long learning through resources in public ECD centres and private-, community- or home-based ECD centres?

Also, in line with the statement of the problem, these propositions were drawn:

- (i) Funding in ECD promotes access to education and consequently to life-long learning.
- (ii) Scarcity of resources impacts ECD and later on impacts learning.
- (iii) Funding limits access to education in terms of zoning as a policy.

- (iv) Funding promotes life-long learning in through resources in public ECD centres and private-, community- or home-based ECD centres.

5.2.3 Research methodology

To collect the qualitative data used, the study employed a narrative discursive methodology from participants in five purposefully selected ECD centres in the Motheo district. The interpretivist paradigm was deemed appropriate, because it allowed the researcher to find individual contexts with their unique contextual differences which set them apart from each other, but still maintaining the commonalities of the broader context (ECD). Both one-on-one interviews and focus group interviews were used to collect data from ECD practitioners. Documents were further used as primary and secondary sources of information on ECD. Data was corroborated using triangulation by the use of the mentioned sources, reduced and was then analysed to give meaningful results through both Cartesian and Kantian reasoning.

5.2.4 Limitations of the study

Even though generalising was never the intention, the study ensured trustworthiness by use of triangulation. However, the results of this study cannot be generalised, because of the small sample that was selected from the large population of ECD centres in the Motheo district alone. Data was only collected from five centres/schools and interpretations were made on personal experiences of participants from very different, but unique contexts.

Another challenge was the language problem. Taking into consideration the qualifications of practitioners/teachers in most of the interviewed centres/schools, which mostly indicated they did not have any post-high school training, their expression in English was a challenge. Some were intimidated by the recordings and struggled to focus hence providing shallow responses. Some actually opted to respond in their mother-tongue, Sesotho in most cases, because of lack of proper wording of their experiences. Some of the participants did not want to be recorded with audio-visual devices and preferred only audio recordings. This was also a limitation, because the interviewer had to capture some of the resources as evidences when the participants referred to them in their responses. For some participants who continued with English in the interview even when they had a challenge in presenting their responses in the way they had them in mind, it became very challenging for the interviewer to make sense of some of the responses provided. Some participants had to code-switch as they could not stick to English

and they found it comfortable to use whichever language saw them out of the interview at that point in time. There was lack of fluency in most of the participants.

Apart from the mentioned limitations, time inconvenience on the part of the interviewer was another challenge. The researcher went to some centres/schools and booked an appointment and all arrangements were put in place, the date and time were set. On the day of the interview, the participants would have other unforeseen commitments and had to reschedule while in one case the appointment had to be cancelled altogether. The cancellation in this one case was after the teacher had consulted with the matron of the centre having agreed at first, but cited that the matron would not allow them disclosing information if it was not for potential student application purposes.

In addition to time cost, these cancellations of appointments were economically costly. The researcher had to drive back to the same place more than twice even after making telephonic confirmations of the appointments only to be postponed for focus groups as they had an unplanned activity.

The other limitation was of practitioners who were new at the centres and had no idea of what they were asked. In most cases only senior practitioners/teachers had substantial responses while the new teachers could only respond to few questions, but not any question that needed their understanding of policy and acquisition of resources they use. In some cases, the participants would just refer the interviewer to a senior practitioner, because they could not provide information.

Lastly, the researcher realised both during data collection and during data analysis that he could also have employed self-efficacy theory as a social cognitive theory. This was reflected by the responses of some participants that they were not confident within themselves with dealing with children. As Albert Bandura (1977, 2004) clearly defines it as a belief in one's ability to succeed in a specific situation or accomplish a task. This theory indicates how confidence in oneself can play a major role in how one approaches a task at hand. In this study, it would refer to how confidently ECD practitioners/teachers appeared to be, more especially when they revealed their level of education – that they do not have a proper tertiary or after high school education in relation to handling children – especially fragile minds like ECD children. The theory would also have indicated the propelling factor for children to study further as a result of master experience and verbal persuasions based on the prior successes of some centres as the findings revealed.

5.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

To guide the study, four closely related theories were used: i) ZPD and scaffolding; ii) cultural capital; iii) CHAT; and iv) assimilation and accommodation.

5.3.1.1. Zone of Proximal Development

As a social constructivist, Vygotsky argues that one must learn by the masters in order to end up developing their full capacity. Vygotsky (1968) therefore developed the ZPD, which denotes the difference between what children can do without assistance and what they can do with assistance of some sort. The results of the study reveal that children need parents to model the way and then they will follow the example and eventually develop the ability to do the task on their own. This is the reason resources should be put in place as the findings suggest. Like some respondents indicated that they have not been visited by either their principals nor any departmental official to see whether they are doing what is expected of them, before they can master the art of helping students, they too need to be guided. It is in the findings where it is revealed that most ECD practitioners/teachers do not have any formal ECD training or any tertiary education. It is therefore, imperative that they have a zone where as practitioners/teachers can do without any help, but when it comes to pedagogical knowledge they need assistance until they can be firm on their own. This impact negatively to the confidence of educators, in the process hindering their delivery.

Similarly, when the practitioners/teachers can master the art of modelling, they can assume the role of providing children with suitable experiences which are in their zone of proximal development. It is only when children have the necessary support that they will be encouraged to continue to learn more and on their own.

5.3.1.2. Scaffolding

In the same breath, Vygotsky's ZPD theory was modified into scaffolding and the term was first used in the educational field by Bruner. Other social constructivists who came after Vygotsky modified his ZPD and just like in the former, the latter also manifests itself in a social setting. In this case it is not only the practitioner/teacher who offers help, but even a more experienced or more competent peer gives the necessary assistance. In the same manner, depending on the social and cultural context, some of the children in ECD develop faster than others both cognitively and physically and therefore others in their zone of proximity develop along with them. However, scaffolding is not effective when there is no positive interaction

between the guided children and the scaffold. The findings revealed the importance of knowledgeable personnel to deal with children, because what they do to children at this early stage is an imprint that lasts a life time with the child. This is clarified by Vygotsky's theory of More Knowledgeable Other (MKO) because the personnel has the knowledge and the learner leans onto the person who can help when they get to a task more difficult for them to do on their own. Therefore, practitioners/teachers should know how to lay the founding blocks to withstand any future trouble in the children's future learning. ECD is not in the mainstream structure of education, it acts as a temporary support structure that the builders (practitioners/teachers) will remove as the building (children) can stand on their own and venture into another zone of the unknown and will find yet another support to meet their quests and demands as they enter the intermediate phase.

5.3.2 Cultural Capital

In order to promote social mobility in a society arranged into strata, there are some social assets that individuals possess, referred to as cultural capital. These assets can be both physical and abstract, like the socio-economic advantage over others. This, in brief, refers to what children bring to school that other children, because of their unique family contexts, do not possess. Cultural capital as well as a social constructivism theory in this study brings in a societal inequality issue factored by the zoning policy which is revealed by the findings to still be widening the gap in the livelihood of South Africans. Findings reveal that children from more affluent locations already possess an intellectual advantage over the other children who come from poor families whose parents are not educated and cannot afford to take them to well-resourced ECD centres, when they first go to school. The manner in which children from suburbs speak is different from those from townships. The findings reveal the language issue is a result of children being exposed to different medium of learning at home, like televisions, story books and the night story books they are read to every night. It is because of their inherited societal status that they have power over other students and continue to have an upper hand over the others. With the confidence, comes higher level of performance and academic achievement. Children who graduate from well-resourced ECD centres and already have a social status that afford them power to achieve academically have the edge to learn further, because they want to exert their dominance over the less fortunate.

5.3.3 Cultural Historical Activity Theory

The study also used Cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT) as a framework which assists to comprehend with analysis the relationship between the human mind, that is to say, what people think and feel as well as activity, which simply relates to what people do. Culture is what human beings create and it becomes hereditary. To inherit something, one has to learn it and practice it over time. That is, CHAT as a framework manifests itself in the study as the study is about developing minds of children. Linked closely to this framework is yet another theory by the same Russian theorist (Vygotsky) that is discussed earlier. The results of the study reveal that children learn better by doing – through action.

Furthermore, CHAT being an activity based theory bridges a gap between subject and object. The former (subject), is the children who are developing through the accessibility of resources and outcomes (object). Through its three generations, though CHAT focuses on activity, the importance of mediation is a key factor. In every activity to develop the children, there is a mediator who is the ECD practitioner/teacher to assist with the artefacts (tools). With the aid of objects as the results present, the subject develops both externally and internally. As the results indicate, in the well-resourced centres, there is a culture of good results in going on with their studies. That is, one centre with good facilities indicated that they produced a sports analyst who happened to be good in sports from her early years (ECD). There is, however, no conclusive evidence from the less-resourced centres that their children did not become life-long learners, but with evidence from the results, good practice (activity) yields good results. The theory corroborates the finding as it articulates the coordination of action and psychological development and a developed interest in learning as children become attached to what they do and love. It is also revealed in the findings that all stakeholders should be hands on deck to enhance life-long learning. The involvement of the community and the authorities (government) will yield the desired outcomes. The government is therefore expected to inject funds to capacitate personnel and develop infrastructure.

5.3.4 Assimilation and Accommodation

Lastly, as the study is about life-long learning that is promoted through ECD, assimilation and accommodation were also used. Social constructivism believes in knowledge being acquired and developed in a social context hence the little knowledge that children have can be enhanced by the environment. These two are basic components of cognitive development theory. It is important to discuss these components as children's intellectual growth is a result of adaptation.

The findings of the study resonate with Bourdieu's objectified cultural capital that physical resources in the ECD centres are an integral part of children's mental and physical development. With the social background, children have already learned something from their family, friends and society at large that they are born into. This is a point of departure in addressing assimilation as a theory. Children assimilate in new knowledge into what they already know when they get to ECD. They already have an idea of a lot of things, but which they learned on their own when coming to a structured form of learning, henceforth they make more sense of their pre-existing knowledge. In well-resourced centres children have a better chance of interacting with a lot of things than in the less resourced thereby adaptation becomes better and promotes a better learning opportunity.

Likewise, life-long learning is a process that needs one to also alter the pre-existing knowledge to fit new knowledge. Social constructivists refer to this process as accommodation. Knowledge evolves with a person's cognitive development. If the founding blocks are solid, the gained knowledge becomes a driving force for children to develop an interest for learning even further as they adapt in every stage of their growth. As revealed by the findings, ECD practitioners/teachers should be equipped with the necessary pedagogical skills that will enable them to inspire learning throughout children's lives.

5.3.5 Theoretical concessions

Although the theories entwined here are suitable in addressing the problem statement in the study, they still have contextual flaws of their own. To mention but a few, Piaget's theory was developed through the experimentation of his own kids' growth and development in Switzerland. This is an economically balanced environment – which is a different context from the South African context where there are townships and suburbs where a gap between the rich and the poor is inevitable. It is, however, clear that children will grow and develop differently in their contexts and even those growing in one context still develop differently. The theories of assimilation and accommodation will apply to any given context, because knowledge is constructed and build onto at different stages of children's development. Being from well-resourced centres, children will always have an advantage over those who are from the less-resourced centres.

Similarly, as Piaget emphasises on knowledge acquisition in relation to environmental interaction, Vygotsky also denotes history, culture and social interaction in his ZPD, scaffolding and CHAT. In his general genetic law of cultural development, Vygotsky (1981)

states that a psychological function appears twice: the social plane and psychological plane. Even though in the past the theory was viewed by some scholars as predominantly individualised, this study has proven that the theories can be contextualised to any social setting as a child's background and prior knowledge manifest themselves to be an integral part of their personality and learning through interaction with adults, peers and objects.

Finally, the same can be uttered about Pierre Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital which was concerned with the French educational system and academic performances. The South African context is not much different in terms of levels of academic performances which is determined, mostly by the type of school a child is attending. The embodied tendencies and social position of parents advantage their children by placing them in well-resourced ECD centres and where they will have the best teachers/practitioners money can buy and best resources that will trigger their children's learning.

In conclusion, in social constructivism there is some relativism hence the use of a broad range of theories. What is knowledge in one context might not be knowledge elsewhere. Cultural capital has its contextual relativism. Finally, the study is also approached from a cognitive development perspective as Piaget is a social cognitivist. A child's cognitive development is ignited by the environment and as cultural capital is situated within social realism, none of these frameworks on their own could sufficiently assist the researcher address the propositions.

5.4 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

From the research questions of this study, the following themes were identified: i) Funding is key to access education; ii) Solid foundation through ECD promotes life-long learning; iii) Resources are an integral part of teaching and learning and the scarcity thereof impacts ECD negatively; iv) Zoning widened the gap in the livelihood in South Africa; v) Zoning improves the standard of education even though it promotes inequality; and vi) Capacity building of ECD personnel and vouching for physical and tangible resources will ensure life-long learning.

5.4.1 Theme 1: Funding is a key factor to access education

The literature presented in chapter 2 indicates the need for funding in order for education to be accessible. Even though the study was not to investigate the importance of funding ECD, the findings – both from the literature (documents) and interviews – prove that access to education cannot be detached from availability of funding. However, participants were asked to what extent funding promotes access to education in their view as teachers/ECD practitioners.

All participants emphasised the importance of funding from their different perspectives. It can therefore be argued that funding is pivotal to accessing education. Funding is multi-faceted in nature. Before even discussing who should fund education, it is essential to discuss why it should be funded. First, as revealed in the findings by some participants, the physical structures that are built to house children for their learning, need funding. Children are fragile to stand the harsh climate – extreme hot summers and extreme cold winters. This only proves the need for an erection of a structure that will shelter learners to help facilitate learning in an environment conducive to learning. Even in home-based centres, the owner had to build a shelter from either their pocket or with assistance from loans. This takes forever to pay in order to house children. Literature also indicates that some centres are erected with the help of NGOs after seeing a need for a community to have a centre. These are communities where parents had to walk distances to find centres for their children. If the funding was not necessary, it would mean anyone and everyone would just erect a centre and start offering education.

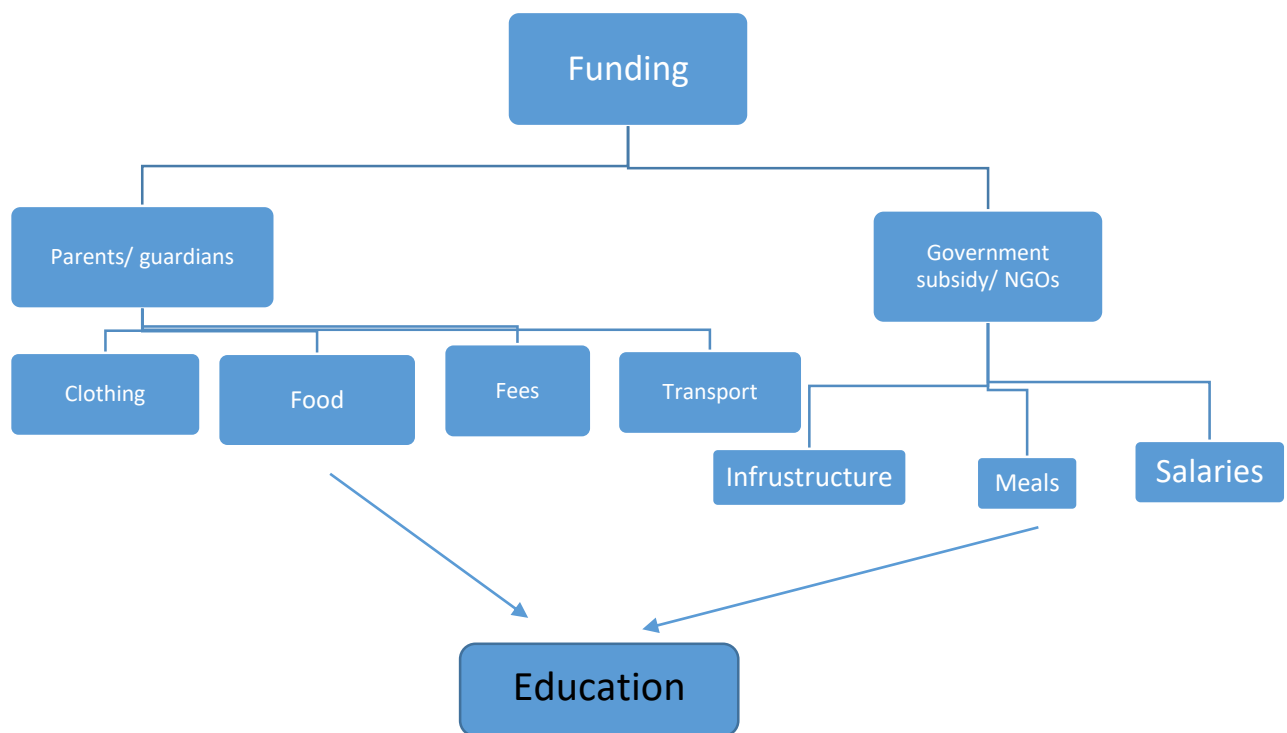
Secondly, staff remuneration is a core problem. Just like in any other sector, work force has to be remunerated for the work performed. The findings indicate participants emphasising the need for them as staff to be paid as the remuneration is not just a motivation to do their job, but a need to pay their transport fares to work. Teaching is a calling, but an incentive goes a long way to act as a carrot to lure one to do one's utmost best to be productive. Cost of living is high to not only unemployed parents, but even to the educators, who have families to care for before they can stand in front of the children who do not have a decent livelihood from their unemployed parents and guardians.

Furthermore, findings suggest that socio-economic factors are detrimental to access education. This is corroborated by the literature that children who are less likely to enrol in school, and more likely to drop out early, are those from disadvantaged backgrounds with limited economic resources, parents with lower levels of education and who have lost one or both parents (South Africa Child Guage 2010). In addition to what the literature reveals, the findings indicate that due to the high mortality rate, children have become a burden to grandparents. Their educational demands are catered for through social grants which are not enough to cover all their basic needs. Children who stay far from centres face the challenge of transportation to school as the child-support grant given to the grandparents is very little. Thus, funding is central to access education. Also revealed by the findings is the starvation that children face. The R15 per day per child for the poor children seem not to be enough to earn children decent meals every day. Some children only have a meal when they are at school. This means that children

need to have breakfast when they get to school and also have lunch during the day. With the cost of living that skyrocketed and the amount they receive not being reviewed with inflation calculated, this makes access to education more difficult, especially in ECD centres.

However, the findings reveal different opinions from participants. Few participants do not see funding as an integral part of access to education. Their arguments are based on individual funding for their children. One participant indicated that funding promotes access to education just to some, because even the poorest of the poor in the townships go to school where they afford full meals. It is ironic, because to afford the meals is a result of subsidy that the centres get from the government. Another participant indicated that parents can just cook decent meals at home and send their children to school with lunch boxes which refers back to funding. If parents cannot afford the meals for their children, it funnels down to no accessibility to education.

Figure 5.1 Funding is a key factor to access education



5.4.2 Theme 2: Solid foundation through ECD promotes life-long learning

It is on this second theme where literature suggests that solid foundation through ECD promotes life-long learning. Cohen (1975) argues that learning is a continuous, permanent, lifelong pursuit that commensurate with birth and only terminates at death. This is to emphasise

the need to start strong in building this never-ending continuum. As much as learning, in most cases, is recognised only once children are in a school setting, much has already been done by the parents at home, peers at the playing grounds and community institutions.

The findings from interviews – both one-to-one and focus groups – also confirm what the literature suggested. It is every child's joy to join other children at school once exposed to a school. It also becomes every child's dream to make it to the next phase at school. Literature indicates that children who do well at school enjoy school. Doing well is a process that includes a lot of factors. Love from both ECD practitioners/teachers and motivation from all stakeholders, that is parents/guardians, friends and the very people who teach them every day. Moreover, the tallest and strongest skyscrapers are built on the strongest foundations to stand the test of weather conditions. The beginning of learning does not only concern the curriculum and its prescribed content, but sound and profound learning is built on values and attitudes. Once values are instilled into children at ECD, they become part of daily lives and they acquire discipline and character to develop them holistically. A participant in this study indicated that they use Montessori theory and central to it is teaching children basic life-skills which prepare life-long learners and future leaders. It is of paramount importance to note that learning is not something that develops overnight, but a threshed and nurtured attribute.

However, some children reach their prime at a very late stage of their education. This can also be traced back to the foundation they had. Being it that they become life-long learners from an early age and just develop with age or some find their footing after a gap-to-work stage, but if the foundation was well laid, they will quickly find their passion and rhythm into learning further. It is also not a given that every child who had a solid foundation will become a life-long learner, because along the way there are some challenges which inhibits one from reaching one's set goals. These are socio-economic factors that lead many into dropping out and sort a different dimension altogether for their lives. Dreams do not die, but simply faint. The solid foundation that was laid through ECD becomes a driving force behind all learners to reach greater heights.

5.4.3 Theme 3: Resources are an integral part of teaching and learning and the scarcity thereof impacts early childhood development negatively

Learning takes place differently from person to person. It is of importance that schools/ECD centres are well-resourced to meet the needs of individuals and different learning styles or knowledge acquisition. The study being embedded in social constructivism, all theories used

advocate environmental interaction. That is, children learn better with learning aids. Previous studies have shown that some children are audible learners – that is to say, they need to just listen to what they are told and acquire knowledge. However, children in ECD centres, though they differ in terms of age, are mostly audible and visual learners, but above all, they are tactile learners.

It is worth pointing out that resources are an integral part of teaching and learning to advance a well-founded growth of learners. The literature indicated that resources is a broad term and multi-faceted. Firstly, human resources ensure quality teaching and learning at this critical stage of growth and need to be well taken care of so that that they can fully focus on developing young minds to promote continued learning. This point echoes that which was raised in theme 1. Findings also reiterate the importance of solid structures like personnel administration and procurement sections. This is to ensure that personnel are well taken care of in terms of food – for themselves, that they are medically covered, have transportation to and fro school/centres – before they worry about the children who come to school on empty stomachs. This includes, but does not limit it to harmonising their public relations and also have legal benefits. With security, human resources can deliver without holding back, hence promoting life-long learners through ECD.

Secondly, and closely related to the funding and access, is transportation as a pivotal resource. Literature barely separates transportation and communication. Data was collected from individual and unique cases to reveal their contextual uniqueness. One of the case-studies was of a farm school situated in the outskirts of the township. The findings revealed a different scenario from the rest of the cases. Because of the infrastructure, roads and transport accessibility, some children stay at school full time (boarding). This in itself would work to the advantage of the school if the school had facilities that would nurture children's study growth. The findings revealed that the very school has no library or other playing facilities to develop children not only mentally, but even physically as well. The situation is exacerbated by a shortage in trained professionals for the job. Young as they are, if they would be introduced to the reading culture, life-long learning would be strongly promoted through ECD.

Contrary to promoting life-long learning, scarcity of resources impacts ECD negatively. Children, depending on their age, learn more effectively with the assistance of teaching aids. Some learn better when they do things; like playing board games. These are some of the resources that some centres do not have and learners are disadvantaged. Findings confirm what

the literature indicated. Locke (1992) who addressed the resource predicament, indicated that a sound mind in a sound body, is a short but full description of a happy state in the world. In the light of the literature, the findings show that, because of shortage of resources, the ZPD and scaffolding by peers, which has proven to be a proficient way of knowledge acquisition, is hampered. Moreover, literature revealed gamification as an approach to learning at an early age. This is a behaviourists approach to encourage, increase motivation and engagement in learning (Huang & Soman 2013). Resources are at the core of this approach, because video games design and game elements where learning environments capture young minds' interests of learning to maximise their enjoyment and engagement which also inspire them to continue learning. A participant in the study actually attested to this by mentioning that the lasting lessons are learnt during peer interactions and play.

5.4.4 Theme 4: Zoning widened the gap in the livelihood in South Africa

Being a democratic and sovereign state, South African proclaims oneness of the nation and thus enshrined in the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996, 29 (2) (a) and (c)) is that everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions where education is reasonably practicable. The language policy in the constitution speaks against children discrimination to ensure effective access considering equity, which is seldom mistaken for equality. The policy further redresses the results of the past racial discriminatory laws and practices like zoning.

Zoning as a policy and practice, as findings of the study reveal, widens the gap in the livelihood in South Africa. Regulated geographic divisions create inequality when considering socio-economic imbalances, because it does not bridge the gap and narrow it, but rather widen it. ECD centres being graded in accordance with the closest quintile school find themselves affected by zoning policy dismally. In most poor populated areas centres are subjected to quintiles one or two at most. These centres do not attract qualified personnel hence the remuneration too will match the social context. On the other hand, urban centres boost qualified personnel and are better remunerated. Comparing the livelihood in both social aspects, the poor remain poor and even poorer whilst the rich become richer. This situation is presented better by Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital – objectified state where material objects indicate social class to give their children a social status over the children from poor backgrounds. The findings reveal that the legacy left behind by the apartheid regime of former model C schools as opposed to the saturated schools in townships is still eminent and thus former model C

schools, rated quintiles four and five thrive, because the centres around them produce quality education, but the farm and townships are still subjected to the appalling situation. It therefore goes without saying that there is need for standardisation of ECD and centralisation of ECD curricula developers who will focus on the ECD curricula not for a region, but for the whole country.

5.4.5 Theme 5: Zoning improves the standard of education even though it promotes inequality

Although the South African Constitution is vocal on access to education (Bill of Rights 1996, 29 (1) a), it clearly stipulates that every child has a right to basic education, it is silent on the quality of education, but focuses more on quantity. South African schools, more especially township- and farm schools, are faced with an unprecedented challenge in Africa: massification. This challenge is not rife in urban schools, because as the findings of this study reveal, they have a very strict rule with teacher-children ratio. Zoning improves the educational standard, but imbalances are also exacerbated. Farms and townships do not have a lot of ECD centres and are over-populated. Due to over-population, children in these centres are not given enough individual attention, which hinders proper foundation. However, urban- and suburb centres enjoy the benefits of being well staffed, having enough space to accommodate the quota they set forth and stick to their teacher-child ration.

Furthermore, reaching each learner has implications on knowledge acquisition, teaching and learning. Every intermediate school with well-founded feeder ECD centres from their feeder zone and vicinity goes on to produce quality education.

5.4.6 Theme 6: Capacity building of early childhood development personnel and vouching for physical and tangible resources will ensure life-long learning

Every institution or system thrives when the personnel are given the possibility to deal with the ever changing societal needs. In line with the used methodology, the interviews were useful, because the individual respondents gave their individual experiences within their unique contexts. First, in promoting life-long learning, some respondents were very articulate on personnel capacitation. This was a concern in most of the cases. Most of the practitioners/educators in ECD are elderly females who (mostly) do not have any formal tertiary training in ECD. These ECD practitioners/educators do not just teach, but have to reach the children holistically. The ECD practitioners/educators do not have to be social workers or

psychologists, but they need training to arrest and address the immediate concerns of children whilst awaiting referrals to real social workers when they encounter serious behavioural challenges at school.

Capacity building does not necessarily require them to leave work for a four-year degree or diploma, but even short courses with accredited bodies can boost their confidence and equip them with the necessary skills to stay abreast. Capacitating ECD practitioners/educators is of vital importance, because they are the founders of a long journey of learning. With the right tools and skills, these practitioners/educators can nurture the raw and untapped talents and shape the future educationists. Instilling the right interest from early age helps in fulfilling the dreams that children would like to follow and pursue.

Figure 5.2 Well-capacitated educators could shape a child to fulfil their dreams



Training capacitates the practitioners/educators to find the root cause of the problems the children have at school. A child that is consistently fighting may be trying to voice a big problem he or she has at home, but cannot do anything about it. Training assists practitioners/educators to pick these seemingly minor issues and address the cause. However, this does not mean that they personally confront the parents if they find the social problem, but come up with punitive measures to help the child.

Furthermore, the world is transiting into the fourth industrial revolution and everyone has to touch base with it and keep pace. That is to say, children are technologically advanced and learn better with technological tools. From a very young age children use smart phones at home, some are even luckier to have computers and laptops at home at their disposal. It therefore means that ECD practitioners/educators have to be advanced to explore as their teaching tools to make learning interesting and fun. It will also assist in gamification as a theory of learning.

5.5 CONCLUSION

Although this was not a comparative study, the uniqueness of contexts demonstrated both comparable and contrasting elements due to the location and the social environment of schools. There is no uniformity in terms of what the learners are taught and the level of education of educators/ECD practitioners. This calls for ECD to structure the NQF of its personnel. The results showed that the more affluent the location of the school, the better chances of educators/practitioners who are qualified to teach. This on its own promotes the inequalities that education is aimed at bridging. The poor communities remain in the periphery whilst the more affluent communities progress in terms of life-long learning.

Similarly, in line with the main questions of the study, it is evident from the responses that funding promotes access to education and consequently to life-long learning in ECD. With funding, centres can employ qualified educators/practitioners who are specialists in ECD. The right and qualified personnel is trained to deal specifically with the children of a particular age and is able to reach their needs and nurture their potential. The responses of some participants who do not have any training after matric or ECD training have limited knowledge of content and pedagogical knowledge. Some have content knowledge, but lack pedagogical knowledge. Some have content knowledge and pedagogical skills, but have no background on theories grounding their way of teaching. The current situation in ECD, training provision for the early childhood development workforce predominantly includes the early childhood development resource and training organisations (RTOs), TVET colleagues, private for-profit providers and universities.

Furthermore, funding limits the problem of scarcity of resources as the latter impacts ECD negatively if there is no funding. The study showed that schools which are not well resourced limit the learning of learners. Well-resourced schools open opportunities for students and help each student reach their potential in terms of their abilities and capabilities.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Enquiries: Phori JR

Reference: Mokhomo/Approval 2015

Tel: 051404 923B

Fax: 086 3040 971

E-mail: phorij@edu.fs.gov.za



**OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR:
STRATEGIC PLANNING, POLICY & RESEARCH**

01 August 2015


Mr. Mokhomo IM

RE: APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE FREE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION:

1. This letter serves as an acknowledgement for receipt of your research request in the Free State Department of Education.
2. Research topic: PROMOTING LIFE-LONG LEARNING THROUGH EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT
3. Approval is granted for you to conduct research in the Free State Department of Education.
4. This approval is subject to the following conditions: -
 - 4.1 The names of participants involved remain confidential.
 - 4.2 The structured questionnaires are completed and the interviews are conducted outside normal tuition time or during free periods,
 - 4.3 This letter is shown to participating persons.
 - 4.4 A bound copy of the research document and a soft copy on a computer disc should be submitted to the Free State Department of Education (Strategic Planning, Policy Development & Research).
 - 4.5 You will be expected, on completion of your research study, to make a presentation to the relevant stakeholders in the Department.
 - 4.6 The attached ethics document must be adhered to in the discourse of your study in our department.
5. The costs relating to the conditions mentioned above are your own responsibility.
6. You are requested to confirm acceptance of the above conditions in writing, within seven days after receipt of this letter. Your acceptance letter should be directed to:

DIRECTOR: STRATEGIC PLANNING, POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH,
Old CNA building, Maitland Street OR Private Bag BLOEMFONTEIN, 9301

Thank you for choosing to research with us. We wish you every success with your study.

Yours faithfully,

Phori JR – Director: Strategic Planning, Policy & Research

Phori JR – Director: Strategic Planning, Policy & Research.

Directorate: Strategic Planning, Policy Development & Research - Private Bag X20565, Bloemfontein 9300- Room 302, Old CNR building,
Charlotte- Makexe Bloemfontein 9300 - Tel: OSI 404 9283/ Fax: 086 6678 678 E-mail: research@edu.fs.gov.za



APPENDIX B

11 Oranjehof Paul Kruger Street
Bloemfontein
9301

26 September 2015

Dear Participant,

You are kindly invited to take part in a study which aims to investigate how funding in the public and private Early Childhood Development Centres promote or retard quality of opportunities, access with success for the country's educational future.

If you participate in this study, you will be asked a few questions. This will not take more than 20 minutes of your time. Be assured that your personal details will be treated with strict confidence. Furthermore, the information we collect will only be used for this study and no information will be given to any other person.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary, however you are free to stop participating at any time and that will not have any negative effect on you whatsoever. Participating in this study will not cost you any money; therefore, no compensation will be given for participating in this study. No feedback will be given to participants after the study is completed, however participants are welcome to attend the presentation of results at the end of the study.

If you have any question, please feel free to contact me:

Cell: 0784166624

Email: soai09@yahoo.com

If you are willing to participate, please sign below.

Participant's signature:

Date:

Interviewer's signature: _____

Thank you for your participation and time.



APPENDIX C

Informed consent:

I, _____ (Name and Surname), hereby give my permission to Mpho Mokhomo, a Master's Degree student, to interview me and quote my responses in a scholarly research paper. I understand that this research paper will be submitted to a professor at The Central University of Technology, Free State. I understand that I waive any claim to copyright of this material should the student ever publish it in a scholarly journal or in electronic format online. I understand that the author will maintain my anonymity as a part of this interview. I hereby give my permission in the form of my signature below.

Signature

Date



APPENDIX D

14 April 2015

To whom it may concern

Dear Sir/Madam

Application to conduct research in the Motheo District Department of Education

M.I. Mokhomo, student number 211148881 is registered for a Master's degree in Education in the Faculty of Humanities, Central University of Technology. His research topic is:

PROMOTING LIFE-LONG LEARNING THROUGH EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT.

As his supervisor I request that you grant him permission to conduct research in the district as a fulfillment of the requirement of his studies.

Kind regards

I.M. Ntshoe

Supervisor



APPENDIX E

11 Oranjehof
Paul Kruger Street
Bloemfontein
9301

6 August 2015

Director
Strategic Planning, Policy Development and Research,
Old CNA Building, Maitland Street
BLOEMFONTEIN, 9301

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Approval to conduct research in the Free State Department of Education

Thank you for granting me permission to conduct research in the Free State Department of Education.

This letter serves as a confirmation of my commitment to adhere to the conditions stipulated in your approval letter dated 1 August 2015.

Yours sincerely,

Mokhomo 1M
Student



APPENDIX F

11 Oranjehof
Paul Kruger Street
Bloemfontein 9301

23 September 2015

The Principal/Matron
Motheo District
BLOEMFONTEIN, 9301

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Application for permission to conduct research

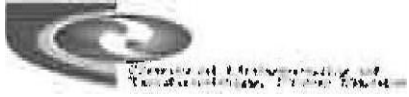
I wish to apply for permission to conduct a study at your school/Centre for a Master's degree that I am currently enrolled for in the Faculty of Humanities, Central University of Technology (CUT), at the Bloemfontein campus.

My research topic is: ***PROMOTING LIFE-LONG LEARNING THROUGH EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT***. The aim is to investigate how funding in the public and private ECD centres promote or retard quality of opportunities, access with success for the country's educational future.

Your assistance will be highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Mokhomo M.I.
Student



APPENDIX G

Interview Schedule (Pilot)

Date:

Research question
1. To what extent does funding promote access to education and consequently to life-long learning in ECD?
2. How does scarcity of resources impact ECD and later impact learning?
3. To what extent does funding limit access to education in terms of zoning as a policy?
4. How does funding promote life-long learning through resources in public ECD centres and private-, community- or home-based ECD centres?

APPENDIX H

M.I. Mokhomo

Student no.: 211148881

Research Topic: **PROMOTING LIFE-LONG LEARNING THROUGH EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT**

Interview schedule (Final)

Research question	Interview questions
<p>1. To what extent does funding promote access to education and consequently to life-long learning in ECD?</p>	<p>The South African Constitution stipulates that education is a basic need. Do you find this right being honoured by the Ministry of Education in terms of funding education especially ECD?</p> <p>To what extent does funding promote access to education and consequently to life-long learning in ECD?</p> <p>What does life-long learning mean to you?</p> <p>Do you see ECD promoting life-long learning?</p>
<p>2. How does scarcity of resources impact ECD and later on impact learning?</p>	<p>How does scarcity of resources impact ECD and later on impact learning?</p>
	<p>Does your centre/school have resources that enable you as a practitioner/teacher to perform to the best of your abilities?</p>

<p>3. To what extent does funding limit access to education in terms of zoning as a policy?</p>	<p>To what extent does funding limit access to education in terms of zoning as a policy?</p>
<p>4. How does funding promote lifelong learning through resources in public ECD centres and private-, community- or home-based ECD centres?</p>	<p>How does funding promote life-long learning through resources in public ECD centres and private-, community- or home-based ECD centres? (In your context.) How would you like to be assisted, in all aspects, to promote life-long learning through ECD?</p>

APPENDIX I

5/14/2018

SafeAssign Originality Report



ROOT - MPHO IGNATIUS MOKHOMO

Mpho Ignatius Mokhomo

on Mon, May 14 2018, 10:55 AM

8% match

Submission ID: 193956766

Attachments (1)

Dissertation Mpho.docx 8%

Word Count: 31 ,558 Attachment ID: 214788714

Dissertation Mpho.docx

PROMOTING LIFE-LONG LEARNING THROUGH EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

MPHO IGNATIUS MOKHOMO

1 DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

MASTER IN EDUCATION:

In the Faculty of Humanities At

2 THE CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, FREE STATE

Supervisor: Professor I. M. Ntshoe

BLOEMFONTEIN, 2018

1 DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENT WORK

I, Mpho Ignatius Mokhomo, student number 211148881, do hereby declare that this research project:

<https://ethut02.cut.ac.za/webapps/mdb-sa->

LEARN/originalityReportPrint?course_id=_10999_1&paperId=214788714&&attemptId=&course_id= 10999

APPENDIX J



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Translation, Editing, Interpreting

24 May 2018

To whom it may concern:

I herewith declare that the dissertation of Mr. **MPHO IGNATIUS MOKHOMO**
titled:

**PROMOTING LIFE-LONG LEARNING THROUGH EARLY CHILDHOOD
DEVELOPMENT**

was edited by Mrs. Theresa Bender, a qualified language practitioner.

Mrs. Theresa Bender
General Manager