

**THE ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL
ORGANISATIONS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN GIYANI**

RESEARCH ESSAY

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to investigate the roles played by the Non-Governmental Organisations in Early Childhood Development in Giyani in the Northern Province. Based on the findings, the study shows that the NGO-ECD centres were established, not only for the purpose of providing employment to their creators but also to provide safe playing centres for the children, while their parents are either at work or undertaking errands.

The process of data categorising and patterning showed that the NGO-ECD centres largely contribute in the development of the physical, social and aesthetic aspects of the child. Similarly, the lack of adequate infrastructure, funds, learning materials, as well as suitably qualified teachers, impacts heavily on the quality of the education provided at these centres.

The main recommendations made are centred around the observation that all the NGO-ECD centres at Giyani need qualified teachers, effective and professionally-designed programmes and financial resources. It has also been strongly recommended that they should increase the level of parent and community involvement in the day to day running of their educational programmes.

SECTION ONE

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The new structure of education in South Africa is a departure from old paradigms. The changes and the research based on this transition, particularly in respect to Early Childhood Development (ECD), are still under debate. So far, there is no research that has been conducted to indicate how this new system will unfold. In this research I will discuss some of the expectations NGO-ECD centres are expected to fulfil. In South Africa, a Grade One child is introduced to three learning programmes, that is: literacy, numeracy and lifeskills. A pre-primary child is expected to be able to read, write and communicate. At this stage, the development of the child's mind can be easily influenced by the standards and norms of the society. The adult plays a major role in establishing these standards and norms.

The NGO-ECD teachers should know that there are certain activities that the child alone cannot accomplish without their help. This implies that in the modern way of thinking, the child should be actively involved in the community's activities and that the community's activities should form the basis of learning in these ECD centres.

This study is aimed at highlighting and analysing the significance of the role played by non-governmental organizations in early childhood development in the rural areas, with specific reference to Giyani. Giyani is a township situated in the former Gazankulu homeland, which also served as the capital town of that homeland.

Prior to 1994, the education of young black children was not given serious attention. The system did not make any provision for early schooling, and black children could only start schooling at the age of seven. The low socio-economy in black communities affected the life style and the standard of education. Parents had no urgency of sending their children to school earlier or assisting these children to receive good education that they could realise their potential, abilities and interests. These children had minimal opportunity to attend early childhood public schools as very few of these centres existed. Such schools were mainly available for the white communities and to those black parents who could afford to send their children to expensive private early childhood centres.

From 1980 to 1990 Giyani, like other regions in the Northern Province, experienced an increase of unemployment. Retrenchment influenced more mothers to create jobs for themselves, by establishing small businesses and employing themselves and their relatives. The demand for ECD centres encouraged the Non-governmental Organisations to establish day-care centres that were gradually extended to become pre-schools and pre-primary schools.

It is my view that since most of these centres are established by persons or individuals who are unemployed and untrained, their motive for establishing these centres was mainly to earn a living. To some of the centre founders, the effort to meet an educational need is a secondary concern. It is worrisome to notice that many educated parents are willing to send their children to such centres hoping that their children will have a good start to their formal schooling. It is questionable whether these educators acknowledge the fact that the child should be developed in totality so that he/she could become a fully developed adult who will be able to contribute to the socio-political and economic development of the country.

1. 2. The background of the study

As already stated, this study attempts to highlight the role played by the Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) in Early Childhood Development (ECD) in Giyani. The inquiry will take place at Tlharhani Play Group, Moses Cradle and Philadelphia centres - all NGO centres in Giyani Township in the Northern Province.

After the first democratic elections of 1994, the government of National Unity encouraged and empowered the people of South Africa to establish private centres of learning. Immediately thereafter, Giyani, like many other communities, saw a remarkable increase in the number of privately owned ECD centres. According to the information given by the ECD Officers at Giyani Education District Office, the Giyani region has five governmental ECD centres, seven NGO-ECD centres and many unknown centres operating in private rooms or garages. It is concluded that the purpose of the establishment of the NGO-ECD centres, is mainly to solve the problem of unemployment rather than educating the children. The present condition of the NGO-ECD centres in the rural areas puts the young children at risk of being misguided, as their facilitators are not competent enough to render such services.

The fact that most of these centres were established by mainly unemployed and semi-professionals renders the motive for the establishment of some of them as well as the quality of the education offered by them, suspect. This situation has serious implications for the educational development of their products, in this case, children who have to enter formal school. It is essential that people who have decided to work in the early childhood centres be thoroughly prepared in colleges and universities to acquire the required skills and knowledge in order to give the appropriate guidance needed in developing the child (Spodek 1985). There is enough evidence to suggest that most of the NGO-ECD centres started off as day-care centres, but because there was a lack of good private or public

ECD centres, the day-care centres were extended to become pre-schools and sometimes, even primary schools. This raises concerns on their capacity to deliver quality education.

1.3 Aims of the research

For the purpose of this research the following aims were identified to give direction to the study:

1. To record the views of the NGO-ECD facilitators and supervisors about the role they play in the centres as far as the development of the children is concerned.
2. To record the perceptions of the teachers of the neighbouring schools at Giyani on these ECD centres' products.
3. To establish and record the expectations of the parents on the contributions made by these centres in developing their children holistically.

1.4. Motivation for the study



The realization that a large number of children are receiving education under circumstances that have never been analysed and recorded at Giyani, encouraged me to conduct this research. It is also my wish to make recommendations that may assist in the design and planning for an effective and viable ECD programme for these centres.

1.5. Research questions

Based on the focus of the research, the following questions were designed to guide the research:

1. What are the views of the supervisors and the facilitators in the ECD centres on their contribution towards the development of the child?

2. What are the expectations of the parents whose children attend those ECD centres?
3. How do the teachers from neighbouring public schools view the role played by these centres?

1.6. The research plan

For the purpose of this research, I will use a qualitative research design. A qualitative design involves getting the views and experience of the people who are familiar with the research problem (Macmillan & Schumacher 1993:372). This implies that the researcher will identify the relevant participants that she will interact with in their natural settings, to conduct a valid inquiry. For the purpose of this research, I will interact with the following participants: NGO-ECD supervisors, NGO-ECD teachers, teachers at local public schools and parents of children attending these centres. I will also use key informants in the study. My informants will be the ECD officers at Giyani Education District office as well as the principal and the grade one teacher at Khanyisa Education Centre.

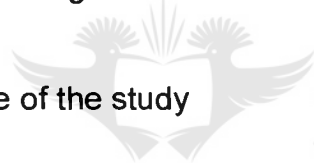
The research methods that this study will incorporate will be interviews, observations and document analysis. An interview as a research method involves the collection of data through verbal interaction. It allows the researcher to capture the other persons' views (Patton 1987:109). In this research, I shall use in-depth interviews. This implies that the researcher will have to prepare an interview guide to ensure that all relevant issues will be covered. A tape-recorder will be used to record the interviews.

The other method of collecting data that I will use, is the observation method. According to Marshal and Rossman (1989), observation has to do with observing, noting and recording the activities, situations, objects and behaviour patterns noticed from the participants. The observation method assists the researcher to have a better understanding about the setting. During the

observation sessions, a notebook will be used for recording notes on what was seen and considered important data for the inquiry.

After the data has been collected, the process of analysis will be embarked on. Patton (1987) defined data analysis as the process of bringing order to the data, organising the data into patterns and categories and the production of basic descriptive units. When the researcher analyses data, it is emphasised that he should have an understanding of the overall field of educational research. Understanding involves critical thinking about the research problem. Macmillan and Schumacher (1993) also explained data analysis as an inductive process of organising the data into categories and identifying patterns among the categories. They further explained that inductive analysis means that categories and patterns emerge from the data, rather than being imposed on the data. The researcher will have to analyse the data thoroughly in order to determine the units and categories from the data. Afterwards, patterns will be formed by putting the categories together.

1.7. The significance of the study



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It is hoped that this study will contribute to the planning and establishment of effective NGO-ECD centres in the Northern Province. The role that the NGO-ECD centres play in the development of the children in Giyani will be highlighted in order to influence future plans and their implementation. It will also attempt to focus the attention of the supervisors (principals) on the benefits to their centres from the usage of both the models of the core-plus and the culture of the school. This research will also make recommendations on the improvement of the roles of the NGO-ECD centres in the process of developing the child.

1.8. Definition of concepts

The following concepts are defined to give a better understanding of their usage in this research.

1.8.1. Non-governmental Organisations (NGO)

Non-governmental organisations refers to groups or individuals who have set themselves the task of running early childhood development centres that are not funded by the government.

1.8.2. Early Childhood Development (ECD)

It is a process by which children between birth and their ninth year are mentally, physically and spiritually educated in a formal context.

1.8.3. Early Childhood Education

Early Childhood Education refers to the academic activities and programmes designed and implemented prior to formal education with the expressed purpose of developing the child holistically.

1.8.4. Early Childhood Development Centre

An "Early Childhood Development Centre" as used in this essay is a formal centre established with a view to create a conducive learning environment in which the pre-scholar is deliberately exposed to venture into the world of knowledge in a systematic and planned manner.

1.9. Programme of the study

This study comprises of four sections:

Section One.

Section one is composed of the background, aims, motivation, research questions and research plan. Furthermore, it deals with the method, data analysis, the significance of the study and definition of concepts.

Section Two.

This section focuses on the review of existing literature on the research topic. It will present the interpretations of the views of other scholars. Relevant books will be consulted and conclusions will be made.

Section Three.

This section focuses on the design and the methodology used in collecting the data. The data will be analysed and some of the themes and categories will be presented.

Section Four.

This section will focus on the process of consolidating data through the interpretation of categories and the patterns. In this section the findings will be discussed, and recommendations and the conclusions will be made.

1.10. Conclusion

This section of the study gives an overview of what the researcher hopes to accomplish with the inquiry, viz. to highlight the role NGO's are playing in early

childhood development in Giyani. It also indicates the purpose and significance of the study. Furthermore it will also elaborate on how the research will be conducted.



SECTION TWO

THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction

This section has as its focus the review of existing literature on the research subject. This means reading and interpreting the views of other scholars about the chosen research topic (Bell 1995). Relevant books will be consulted and conclusions and deductions will be made which will substantiate my argument. A critique will be made to show that the information obtained from the various resources have been understood and internalised.

In this section it will be argued that for the NGO-ECD centres to concentrate on the holistic development of the child, they will have to be staffed by competent, skilled and knowledgeable staff. These centres also require well-equipped and suitable infrastructure and well planned programmes that will form a strong foundation for formal schooling. The researcher will advance the view that the NGO-ECD centres, even though from a physical perspective, may provide a safe place for the child and should also treat the child as a whole being, who should be guided to grow into adulthood.

Very (1979:7) argues the point that the development of the child involves growing and learning. These are activities that cannot be separated from one another. They take place simultaneously. As the child grows he needs knowledge that will help him accomplish his expressed needs. The child's environmental bearing should form the base of his learning.

During the children's early schooling years, teachers should create opportunities that will allow them to have access to information by taking them to places where things are happening. Through observation they could mould their own

knowledge-mastering skills and have a better understanding of the country they are living in (Stacey 1991).

At Giyani, the NGO-ECD centres appear to be operating in isolation. It is important that their programmes should be designed with a view to bridge the gap that exists between home and school. It is therefore imperative for partnerships between the two institutions to be formed. This could happen through negotiations. The mutual relationship that should result will bring the parents and the teachers together in order to contribute to the development of the child (Wolfendale 1989).

The establishment of ECD centres within any needy community should be seen as a potential relief labour market for the unemployed. It should help in employing qualified but unemployed teachers and support staff who will service the children at the centre. The success of these NGO-ECD centres depends upon the quality and the competence of the people who will be engaged to work with the respective pre-scholars. These institutions could become community centres that serve the needs of the people. Furthermore, people should have access to the centre's property (Wolfendale 1989).

The issue of parent and community involvement depends on the mutual trust the teachers and the parents have in each other's capabilities. Those parents who are also qualified teachers may, for instance, share ideas on teaching and managing with ECD staff. For quite a long time, most black South African parents in the rural areas, had been desperately searching for a better educational foundation for their young children. This is shown by the increase in the number of children who are enrolled at the NGO-ECD centres. The majority of black parents have become aware of the need to send their children to early childhood centres rather than leave them with babysitters / maids or relatives who cannot provide the kind of academic support required for the mental development of the children (Leeper, Dales, Skipper and Witherspoon 1965).

The reality of the situation is that in a rural area such as Giyani, there are very few public ECD centres that serve the needs of the parents and the communities. Prior to conducting this research, I have discovered that due to the changes that are taking place since 1994 in South Africa, parents prefer institutions that will offer their curriculum in the medium of English. Contrary to this expressed need, the few public ECD centres that exist, offer their curricula in the mother tongue.

The ECD centres have a role to play in building an educational foundation that should provide a better future for the children. The ECD centres should be responsible for providing the skills that are in line with an Outcomes Based (OBE) approach that encourages the children to develop skills that are life-oriented. This will assist them to survive in an environment dominated by social evils such as health hazards, child and drug abuse, as well as a variety of challenges that are presently afflicting South Africa.

Morrison, (1984) states that young children enrolled at these centres are dependent on adults, the attitude of the ECD personnel, the condition of the ECD centre, the content of the learning materials, the nature and the scope of the programme and the guidance offered by the staff. This dependence can have a detrimental effect on the progress of developing the child, unless extreme care is taken in the selection and development of such staff. The competence of unfolding the child's potential depends on the skills attained by the teacher in her training. It therefore stands to reason that subjecting ECD teachers to a good training course will increase the capacity of these teachers.

Children need an integrated curriculum that will form a link between their pre-primary and their grade one education. It is therefore important that the NGO-ECD centres design programmes that will allow the children to acquire these skills and knowledge as early as possible.

2.2. Defining Early Childhood Development

Early Childhood Development refers to a process through which children from 0-9 years are assisted to grow and develop well towards adulthood as stated in the Department of Education (1996:11). In South Africa, the structure for Early Childhood Development (ECD from here onwards) includes the following levels:

- Crèches: zero to three months
- Pre-school: three to five years.
- Foundation phase: five to nine years.

Child development has to do with the changes that occur after birth. This involves the holistic development of the child's being (Papalia & Olds, 1979). The development of the child is invariably influenced by his home background, environment and the school's adequacy to provide in his needs.

The objective of this research is to highlight the contributions made by the NGO-ECD centres in the development of the children enrolled at these centres in Giyani. Children should be active participants in their development. By considering their pre-knowledge, interest, abilities, and the needs of both the community and the parents, the NGO-ECD centres should be able to design a programme that will teach the child skills that are related to real life situations (Department of Education, 1996).

Teachers, communities, parents and the state are responsible for the growth and the development of the children by providing strong support for their growth and learning. Due to the fact that most parents at Giyani do not have a reference model for good ECD centres, the NGO-ECD centres are taken at face value and viewed as compensating what was lacking in the home. The lack of formal ECD experience leaves many homes with poor guidance and support to the children. That makes the parents to resign the responsibility of child development to the NGO-ECD facilitators.

According to the Department of Education ECD Interim Policy document (1996), the current ECD centres will have to meet the expectations of both the parents and the government, by providing the children with intellectual activities that will allow the children to develop the required language skills, writing and problem-solving skills. This must be in line with the challenges of modern technology and science in South Africa. The future of the NGO-ECD centres lies entirely with the professionalism of the staff concerned and the programmes offered by them.

2.3. The ECD learning environment

The Compact English Dictionary defines the word environment as "surroundings in which, people live or work". However, in this essay, environment refers to more than the surroundings of the school. It also refers to the physical and human resources of the school as well as the population of the school.

When the child enters the school, he/she is moving into a new environment, which he/she may find strange, depending on his/her exposure. A struggle to adjust may ensue and in this he/she needs to be supported and assisted by his/her parents, and teachers. For effective learning, the NGO-ECD centres will have to empower the parents to be available to assist in the teaching and learning of their children. Parents need to know what is expected of their children and themselves. Some parents may wish not to work in the classrooms assisting teachers. They may prefer to allow the teachers to do the job without their interference, but some may be interested in sharing their experience and assisting in teaching.

There is evidence that parents do want to know about the education of their children in pre-school. The need of English competence in black societies makes the parents feel that their children should have early exposure to it. The NGO-ECD learning environment should be open and invite those parents who are

willing to assist in providing lessons, games, and other learning activities that could arouse the interest of the children.

A strong partnership should be established by the NGO-ECD centres, to ensure that all parents, who are interested in teaching and learning are available. The essence of partnerships could be established by involving the parents in many activities such as involving parents to come and assist in making the files for their children. Partnerships in the ECD learning environment could also be established by involving the parents in making teaching and learning materials such as puppets and pictures.

Children come from different home environments and move into a school environment with varying levels of cognition. It is expected that, at the ECD centre, the child's knowledge, personality, attitude and behaviour should be developed. If the ECD centre does not share common elements with the child's home background, the child may likely experience traumatic adjustment problems. The result may be a negative influence in his cognitive development (Feint & Stewart, 1973). The learning environment can succeed in developing the being of the child if it acknowledges that children learn effectively when they are involved in their learning activities. Learner involvement can only be manifested if the teachers have an understanding of who the child is and how he should develop.

Since young children grasp things very easily, there is a danger that if the teacher is not competent, children may assimilate unhealthy tendencies that may mar their future development. Children need an integrated curriculum that will provide them with situations that they experience in their daily life. They need to be taught about health care, safety, and develop skills through problem solving and creativity.

South Africa is currently taking pride of place in terms of crime. Young children have become the victims of violent crimes. ECD teachers should provide guidance to help develop measures of self-protection against these malpractices in the communities. Child and drug abuse may hamper the young children to develop and to be what they want to be (Very, 1979).

The buildings and facilities of most ECD centres differ from centre to centre. Some have swings, while others have sandpits and used tyres that provide for outdoor games. The indoor environment is supposed to be reflective of the quality of academic activities of the centre. Curtis (1998) argues that young children can no longer be kept seated in the classroom only, they should be free to perform various activities inside and outside the classroom. The NGO-ECD classroom should reflect the world of the young children. In other words, the classroom should have all the things that are needed by these young children. It should have facilities such as toys, learning and teaching games that will facilitate the effective teaching and learning. It does seem that the best way to encourage the children to maximize their learning is to teach them through playing. Children like playing and by so doing they develop their potential and their curiosity. They also learn to share and to develop their confidence to do things.

The learning environment should teach the learners about natural resources such as soil and water. These are valuable resources that they daily come into contact with. They need to know their importance as sources. The children should be given the opportunity to observe the planting and the growing of seeds, with the purpose of creating the spirit of care and personal health. Their ideal would be for the centre to have a large space to provide the children with the opportunity to learn about agricultural activities, and where they will have the opportunity to plant flowers and trees for their personal appreciation.

In conclusion, the planning and organisation of the learning programme should be based on the capability of the staff to prepare a programme that will provide the children with the knowledge that they require. For the child to have a good understanding of his learning environment, he needs both his teacher and the support of the parents.

In the next section, I will discuss the necessity of parental involvement in the learning and development of the child.

2.4. Parental involvement

Wolfendale (1989) explained that parental involvement is associated with the concern of parents to offer support to their children. Some parents have no insight in the teaching of children, but they do want to know how and what their children are being taught. From the data collected by the researcher, there is evidence that suggests that the NGO-ECD centres do not involve the parents in the education of their children, except where parents are invited to collect their children's progress reports(See Appendix I). The NGO-ECD centres cannot afford to work alone in the process of developing the children. They need the support of the parents in all the educational activities, such as planning the programme, decision-making, discipline and management.

It is a fact that Giyani parents, whose children attend any of the NGO-ECD centres investigated, have seldom been involved in the decisions relating to the educational issues of their children. Teachers and parents cannot undermine the needs of the children. As partners in the development of the children, they should be able to determine the interests and the needs of the children in order to draw up an effective programme that will also cater to the needs of the community (Wolfendale 1989).

2.4.1. Parents in decision-making

The term 'decision making' in this research means taking part in deciding the nature and content of the all ECD centre activities. The information contained in Appendix iii, clearly reveals that some parents have no idea of what should constitute a good ECD centre. Furthermore, they are not informed on curriculum issues. They therefore find it difficult to come up with useful inputs on designing a suitable curriculum. It is well known that during the years of Apartheid, the black parents were not involved in the decision-making or planning of their children's education. They had no right in participating in educational activities (Morgan 1994). When parents are left out in the teaching and learning of their children, children will not get enough guidance in terms of discipline. However, where parents are involved in the classroom, children tend to be motivated and they begin to realize the importance of their class work. During educational outings, for instance, parents are involved in the supervision of their children. When parents are involved, they share the educational responsibility with the teachers. They would also be able to gain knowledge of what teachers' responsibilities and duties are and could share in that burden.

2.4.2 Guidance and supervision

Guidance and supervision have to do with setting limits of what children should or should not do by both parents and teachers. Children would understand every situation in the centre provided that they are informed accordingly. For the child to be able to do well in the process of his development, the teacher should have knowledge of child's home background, so that what is done at school should be related to the child's home experience. Both parents and teachers have the responsibility of taking care of the physical needs of the child. It is necessary that teachers should be able to identify any physical problems that may interfere with the growth of the child. This emphasizes that the personnel in the NGO-ECD centres will have to be trained in areas such as

guidance and remedial programmes. The former has to do with guiding the children to be aware of the vision of the school. What the school plans and offers should be of assistance in the realization of the interests of the children by developing the child's intellectual capacity and by providing life-skills (Leeper, 974). Furthermore, these ECD centres should also ensure that children develop thinking skills by allowing them to choose the things they want to learn. They need to be encouraged to learn on their own by emphasizing the principle of self-discovery. The latter has to do with the availability of the correcting measures at the centre. Remedial programmes, should involve thorough observation during the learning and playing sessions. The teachers will, during that time, have to be close to the children, to identify the wrongs and cure them (Papalia & Olds, 1975).

Most children experience family problems that affect their behaviour in the classroom situations. It is the responsibility of the teacher to identify them and to work on solutions by consulting the relevant experts. Both parents and teachers should have the will to assist the child. Any wayward behaviour may have bad effects in the physical, intellectual and the psychological development of the child. This challenge can be addressed if the teachers concerned are capable and motivated to carry out their professional task.

2.4.3. Representation at the NGO-ECD centres

The present level of parent representation in NGO-ECD centres is different from that in the government schools. In the latter, parents are represented in the school governing bodies. A school governing body is a committee, selected by members of the different components of the school community. In general these components include the parents/guardians, the educators and in the case of high schools, the learners of that particular institution, Each school has its own governing body. The school governing bodies (SGBs) are involved in a variety of school matters among other things, the maintenance of discipline, fundraising

and the general welfare of the school. They are also involved in the selection and recommendation in the appointment of all educators. The SGB serves as a bridge between its component units.

In the case of all the NGO-ECD centres, parents are represented in the centre committees. In the main, each committee consists of the supervisor (principal), teachers and parents. There is evidence that in their meetings the committees would discuss issues such as the budget, salaries, cleanliness, the allocation of duties among the staff, enrolment and the acquisition and maintenance of centre equipment. The NGO-ECD managers need to have managerial skills that will enable them to understand the notion of managing the limited human resources at their disposal. It is assumed that within each and every community, there will always be experts of one kind or another, who could be invited to utilize their skills for the benefit of any centre of learning. In this research, the focus will be on the role played by the NGO-ECD centres in the development of the child; and it will be demonstrated that community and parental involvement have always been kept to a minimum. However, where the contribution of communities is recognised and invited, the committees could liaise with organisations such as child welfare societies and the departments of Health, Roads and Safety. The purpose is to involve them in the different areas that deal with the development of the child. For the NGO-ECD centre to be seen as effective, relevant and serving the community, it must be easily accessible to the community.

2.5. The Core Plus School

Townsend (1994) regards a Core Plus School as an effective school that achieves its set goals. All the students, irrespective of their background, are provided with equal opportunities to achieve their goals. The 'core' in this essay will refer to the formal curriculum of the NGO-ECD centres and the 'plus' will be the needs of the whole community. Townsend (1994) argues that a Core Plus School, in a wider sense, should serve as a learning centre for the community.

Even though ECD is mainly pre-formal schooling, it could also benefit from Townsend's model.

The ECD centre should be aware of the needs of the community, and also involve all the community stakeholders when designing its programmes. For this purpose, the centre committee should be the bond that binds the ECD centres to the community (Sergiovanni, 1994). Where the community is involved in designing the core-plus programme, there will be participation by all stakeholders in the activities rendered in the centre. This approach would turn the centre into a community institution rather than the personal property of a particular individual. When a centre accepts the core-plus model, it will have to be clear about the designed objective and culture of the school.

2.6. Culture of the school

The concept 'culture of the school' refers to the school's uniqueness based on such characteristics as the target population, vision, goals, and the policies of the school. These are the characteristics that separate one school from another and when they are actively implemented, they promote effective pursuit of the schools objective, i.e. learning and teaching. Similarly, NGO-ECD centres should have well defined visions if they are to achieve their objectives. This implies that they should have images of their centres and that they should know what they want to accomplish, as well as who they want to involve. Before an NGO-ECD centre is established, the organisers should visualize the objectives they intend to achieve. The purpose of the NGO-ECD centre must be clearly defined, as it will determine the goals (Townsend, 1994).

By "school population" is meant the school community. This includes the teachers, learners, parents, the personnel, as well as the community at large. The personnel consist of the officials who have knowledge of their respective jobs. Their ability to do the work is determined by their competencies and

responsibilities in their positions. The establishment of an effective NGO-ECD centre requires the involvement of the parents and the community in the whole process of planning the nature of the centre. The community must be empowered to decide on the type of the centre they want and also decide on the materials to be used in order to fulfil their vision (Sergiovanni, 1994).

Each school must have a vision for the future. A vision is a belief or a mission statement that explains the commitment of the institution. It indicates the plans that the institution intends following as well as what it aims at achieving. The vision statement also identifies the expectations and the needs of the institution, which should reflect the needs of the community and parents as well. NGO-ECD managers must serve as the spirit behind a vision statement. This means that the NGO-ECD managers should have managerial skills in order to deal with all kinds of negotiations in order to make all the stakeholders to understand the essence of the vision statement. Once the vision statement is clearly defined and understood, the ECD centre will have an unshakable focus.

Without a vision statement, the centre may lose the direction of its purpose. A vision will give a clear indication of how the centre should be, and that will, for instance, define whether or not the centre should be a day care or a pre-primary school. The vision statement will also give an indication of the quality of the learners the centre hopes to produce. Wherever the managers have evolved a vision statement, they have always stood a better chance of achieving their goals.

As used in this essay, school goals refer to the school's set objectives. They may also be referred to as school needs or targets that the school would want to achieve. The goals could be achieved by involving the parents and the community in overall decision-making. As they prioritize their needs, they will also be setting strategies and deciding on the materials required for the achievement of the set goals.

When parents are fully involved in planning, they may be available to address and tackle problems that may likely hinder the achievement of the goals. The NGO-ECD centres cannot be effective if they do not have defined goals as well as active community participation. They need to know what they want to achieve and have the strategy of attaining these goals. Although the goals are set by the managers, the teachers need to participate and contribute in designing the goals. The role that the teachers could play in the achievement of the centre's goals, will be determined by their competence and qualifications. The teachers, who are unqualified and less experienced, will have a negative effect on the centre and thus lower the standard of the centre. The NGO-ECD centres need teachers who should be able to interpret the needs of the community so that the centre reflects the kind of community it serves.

2.7. The School Policy

A school policy contains the rules and regulations that are intended to achieve the goals of the institution. Policy describe the value and the purpose of the strategies to be used in order to achieve both the vision and the goals of the institution. When a school operates under clearly defined guidelines, it tends to have discipline and order. The ECD centres cannot operate in a vacuum and still remain relevant. Well-considered policies and regulations increase the quality of all institutional products. Similarly, children will be developed fully and effectively if placed in a well-structured environment.

2.8. Conclusion

In this section, issues pertaining to the success of educational institutions such as NGO-ECD centres, have been discussed. Various sources have been consulted in order to get a good understanding of how the NGO-ECD centres in the rural areas, should function. NGO-ECD centres in Giyani, are community resources which are to improve the educational standard of the community by

supplying the primary schools with school-ready children; children who should be self-reliant (Sergiovanni, 1994). If the Giyani NGO-ECD centres could consider and implement the theories and the ideas postulated in most of the literature consulted by the researcher, they could become effective core-plus centres (Townsend, 1994).



SECTION THREE.

METHODS OF RESEARCH AND PRESENTATION OF DATA

3.1 Introduction

This section focuses on the design and the methodology used in collecting the data for this research study. There will be explanations of events, behaviour, situations and conditions that were observed during the interview sessions. Furthermore, the data will be analysed and some of the themes and categories will be presented.

3.2 The setting of the inquiry

In this research, by setting is meant the place and the environment in which the inquiry took place. The inquiry was conducted at Tiharihani Play Group, Moses Cradle and Philadelphia centres. These are all NGO-ECD centres in Giyani. They are all situated in Giyani Township. Philadelphia is about one kilometre from the other two centres, while the other two are less than a kilometre from each other. These centres were all established in the early 1990's. At that time, the whole area of Giyani had only five ECD centres that had been established in the early eighties.

All the centres started off as day-care centres. Over the years, the situation has changed perceptibly. At the time this research was conducted, the centres were admitting children of different ages. At the Tiharihani Playgroup, for example, children between the ages of zero to seven are accepted. At the Moses Cradle only children between zero to six were registered. At the Philadelphia Centre the entry age is three up to seven.

In order to verify some of the findings derived from the data collected, the researcher also interviewed a few parents whose children are schooling at some

of the neighbouring primary schools. Six teachers and four parents attached to Khanyisa, Meehleketso and Ndzalama Primary schools were interviewed (See Appendix ii, vii and viii).

3.3. Research plan and data collection

This unit of the research aims at giving a detailed description of the research design, methods, sampling and data analysis applied in this research.

3.3.1. Research design

As stated in Section One, p.5, the design of this research is qualitative. The qualitative approach to research encourages social interaction as it involves inquiring and attempting to find solutions to social problems. It gives the researcher the opportunity to be in close contact with the participants, to observe behaviour, investigate the situation, and to consider matters and events that are expressed by the participants in their natural settings. This exercise enables the researcher to make meaning and draw valid conclusions from the data.

3.3.2. Data collection

For the purpose of this study, I have used two methods, namely interviews and participant observation to collect data. According to Dane (1990), an interview is a deliberate conversation between the researcher and the participants where the researcher records all the responses without interfering with the participants' way of presentation. The purpose of conducting interviews is to get first hand information from people who are actively involved in the issues being researched. This means that they make things to happen. They therefore have knowledge and an understanding of the issues the researcher wants to investigate. Furthermore, interviews provide the researcher with an opportunity to

observe and note things that are not easily recorded, such as emotions, feelings and behaviour (Patton, 1987).

In this research, I have used the in-depth interview method, which Seidman (1998:9) explains as "qualitative research that gives the participants an opportunity to express their perspectives and experience upon the topic of the research." In-depth interviews can be conducted in various ways, namely, semi-structured, unstructured and structured. In this research, I have used the semi-structured and unstructured methods. The structured approach involves using an interview guide wherein a list of leading questions is used. In this inquiry I have used open-ended questions. These questions allow the participants to express their experience without interference. Follow-up questions were asked when responses were not clear enough and where necessary, in order to urge the participants to give more information. The strength of the interview method lies in the fact that it gives the researcher an opportunity to gain a better understanding about the chosen field of research in order to make informed and meaningful conclusions about the subject under investigation.

Bell (1993) identified two main types of observations: participant and non-participant. In this study, only non-participant observation was used. In terms of this method, the researcher observed the practical classroom set-up and activities such as the way the children are grouped and are taken through their learning activities. This enabled the researcher to get a deeper sense of the whole teaching and learning situation. The flow of activities also shows the influence of the immediate environment such as the institution's infrastructure. An understanding of all this enabled the researcher to evaluate the effectiveness of these centres and to make informed recommendations that will impact on future planning and policy formulation. This method requires that accurate field notes be kept from the beginning to the end.

Becker (1998:67) defined sampling as a process of selecting a small part of a population that the researcher wants to study, and regard it as representative of the whole. In this study, the theoretical population consists of all the NGO-ECD centres in Giyani, thought the sample consisted of the three NGO-ECD centres, namely Tlharihani Playgroup, Moses Cradle and Philadelphia centres. Snowball sampling was used. Snowball sampling has to do with the identification of individuals who will be regarded as key informants and will recommend people who may be consulted to provide the required information. They may also suggest other informants. The more the informants, the better the understanding of the issues to be researched (Patton 1987). In this research, the informants have been listed in Section One, namely: the ECD officers at Giyani Education District Office, the principal and the grade one teacher at Khanyisa Education centre.

In this Section, I also intend to outline how the data was accumulated, and how it has been processed. Data analysis suggests that the data gathered through the interview and observation processes is interrogated and broken down into units so as to get qualitative understanding of the subject that was investigated. It therefore follows that qualitative data analysis is defined as a process through which all the data has been organised with a view to make sense out of it. This involves the process of unitization, categorisation and the development of patterns (McMillan & Schumacher 1993:479). Data organisation implies the bringing together of all the data collected in the interviews, field notes and observation, into an integrated piece of information. It also means a review of the quality of such data. This requires that the researcher subject the data to a rigorous analysis process. Unitisation, on the other hand, means determination of units of information. According to Patton (1987) organised units give rise to categories. A unit could be a sentence, a statement or even a paragraph that can stand on its own and still convey a rational meaning. Strauss & Corbin (1990:65) stated that "categorising data involves coming up with dozens of conceptual labels" and that once we have identified particular phenomena in the

data, then the concepts can be grouped around these labels. A pattern is a relationship among categories. They emerge once the categories with which data is organised, is established (McMillan & Schumacher 1993).

3.4 Observations

In this research, the observations were mainly focused on the situations, conditions and behaviour of the teachers of the centres visited. The visits and observations started on the 13th April 1999 and continued up to the 15th of May 1999. The key informants, i.e. the ECD officers at Giyani Education District office, and the researcher identified the three centres that would serve as the sample population of this study. The purpose of these visits was to negotiate with the centre authorities for permission to be allowed to conduct this research at their centres. It was also to gain their permission to serve as participants. After intensive discussion with the affected parties, permission was granted.

From the observations made during these visits, the following profiles of the centres emerged: Tlharihani Play Group centre is located in a building that used to serve as an alcoholic rehabilitation centre for the defunct Gazankulu Bantustan government. The surrounding was decorated with colourful motor tyres. About 10-15 metres from the entrance of the building, I noticed a sandpit. There was no other equipment for outdoor activities. At the centre's only building, 6 classes were utilized to house 215 children. The rooms on average accommodated 36 children and were all overcrowded. I observed that it was difficult to move around in these rooms. I noted that the rooms were standard bedroom-sized rooms. It was also observed that the supervisor-cum-owner, was also responsible for transporting all the children from their homes to the centre and back.

The Moses Cradle Centre is housed in a church building. There are 115 children registered at this centre. The surroundings are dull and not suggestive of any

ECD presence. There is nothing that suggests that the centre does indulge in outdoor activities. Inside the church there are no partitions. The children are grouped at the four corners of the church. The only partition between the groups that separated them from each other are a few rows of plastic chairs.

The Philadelphia Centre is accommodated in a small hall attached to a church. There is absolutely no playing space. There was no evidence of outdoor equipment. There are 30 children enrolled at this centre. When individual tasks are performed, makeshift cubicles are used.

3.5. Interviews

The interviews were conducted in the centres from 14th to 15th of May 1999. All the interviews were conducted through the medium of Xitsonga, after which they were translated and transcribed into English (See Appendixes i-viii). Eighteen participants were individually interviewed. For each centre supervisor the interview lasted for about an hour, and for the rest of the participants, the interviews were about half an hour long. The following abbreviations were used in the interview transcriptions:

Q = Question

A = Answer

NGO-ECT = Non-governmental Organisation Early Childhood Teacher

S = Supervisor

S.A = Tlharhani Play Group

S.B = Moses Cradle

S.C = Philadelphia

T = Teachers

T1 = Grade 1 teacher at Meehleketi and Ndzalama Primary Schools

T2 = Grade 2 teachers at Meehleketi and Ndzalama Primary Schools

P = Parents

P1 = Parent of Grade 2 learner (Ndzalama Primary School)

P2= Parent of Grade R learner (Tlharihani Play Group Centre)

P3= Parent of Grade 1 learner (Kremetart Pre-school)

P4= Parent of Pre-Reception Class learner (Tlharihani Play Group Centre)

3.6. Data Analysis

This section focuses on the process of unitizing, categorising and pattern coding of the transcribed interviewed data. In this Section the data that was generated from the supervisors and the teachers on the roles of the NGO-ECD centres, will be presented. Only two teachers per centre were interviewed, except at Tlharihani where only one teacher agreed to be interviewed.

The supervisors and teachers' perceptions on the role of the NGO-ECD centres.

Table1: Supervisors and teachers perception of ECD centres.

Units	Categories
<input type="checkbox"/> Being trained for two weeks is not enough. <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers need to attend workshops.	<input type="checkbox"/> Teachers have no idea about the OBE approach. <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers need thorough training.
<input type="checkbox"/> Both participating groups felt that they do not have equipment due to lack of funds. <input type="checkbox"/> The buildings used as centres are not conducive for this kind of work. There is a need for better buildings. The children in the centres are over-crowded. <input type="checkbox"/> Church halls are not suitable.	<input type="checkbox"/> Both participating parties felt that they lack infrastructure.
<input type="checkbox"/> The children are taught to read and write numbers and we teach them to listen and to pay attention	<input type="checkbox"/> Both participating parties felt that they prepare the children for formal schooling.
<input type="checkbox"/> They learn to draw and cut out pictures. <input type="checkbox"/> They are taught music and art.	<input type="checkbox"/> Developing the aesthetic aspect.
<input type="checkbox"/> They are taught to play, to share and to learn through playing.	<input type="checkbox"/> Children are physically developed.
<input type="checkbox"/> Parents are only invited to the meeting to inform them about issues concerning fees and educational tours, and not for decision making.	<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of parental involvement.

<input type="checkbox"/> The churches provide funds. <input type="checkbox"/> On fun-days parents assist in painting the poles.	<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of community involvement
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As these children will be absorbed by the formal school system, it was important to also record the views of the primary teachers who taught some of the learners who are the products of some of these NGO-ECD centres. In this case, 6 teachers from Meehleketso and Ndzalama schools were interviewed. All these teachers are serving in government primary schools. It was also essential to record the views of the parents on the significance of these centres in the development of their children. Four parents, whose children are attending these centres, were interviewed.

Table 2: Primary teachers and Parent's perceptions on the role of the NGO-ECD

Units	Categories
<input type="checkbox"/> Expose the children to early learning. <input type="checkbox"/> Children should be given a good start of schooling. <input type="checkbox"/> Build a good foundation for the children.	<input type="checkbox"/> Parents wanted their children to receive early education.
<input type="checkbox"/> NGO-ECD centres provide a safe, playing place for the children. <input type="checkbox"/> Parents have less time with their children.	<input type="checkbox"/> Both participating groups felt that ECD centres should be for day care purposes only.
<input type="checkbox"/> Children are taught to be friendly. <input type="checkbox"/> Children are taught to play. <input type="checkbox"/> Children are taught to share things. <input type="checkbox"/> They are also taught to be self-reliant.	<input type="checkbox"/> Both participants felt that the children's social lives are developed.
<input type="checkbox"/> They have an academic programme <input type="checkbox"/> The programme must be designed and followed in a way that will allow the children to carry the primary workload. <input type="checkbox"/> Children must be taught to write.	<input type="checkbox"/> Both teachers and parents felt that the NGO-ECD must have an effective programme.
<input type="checkbox"/> Teachers need to be trained. <input type="checkbox"/> NGO-ECD centres must not offer academic programmes. <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers must be trained for OBE, <input type="checkbox"/> Grades One and Two must not be offered in NGO-ECD centres.	<input type="checkbox"/> Teachers felt that NGO-ECD centres are not effective.

After the data was categorised, a process of pattern formation was embarked upon. This implies that all the categories that are related, are grouped together for the purpose of analysis and interpretation. The following two tables are examples of patterning.

Table 3: Patterns of NGO-ECD centres.

Categories	Patterns
<input type="checkbox"/> Teachers need more skills through training. <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers and supervisors need more information on OBE.	<input type="checkbox"/> Both supervisors and teachers require knowledge and training on Curriculum 2005.
<input type="checkbox"/> Both participating felt that they prepare children for formal schooling. <input type="checkbox"/> Children are physically developed. <input type="checkbox"/> Centre for day care.	<input type="checkbox"/> An effective programme is needed.
<input type="checkbox"/> Both the participating groups felt that they lack infrastructure.	<input type="checkbox"/> There is a need for funds to develop the infrastructure of the centres.
<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of parental involvement.	<input type="checkbox"/> There is a need for knowledge of working with parents and the community.

Table 4: Patterns from interview data on parents and teachers from public schools.

Categories	Patterns
<input type="checkbox"/> Parents wanted their children to have early learning. <input type="checkbox"/> Both participating groups felt that the centres were established for day care purposes. <input type="checkbox"/> Both groups felt that the children developed their social aspect of their lives.	<input type="checkbox"/> NGO-ECD centres must have and implement their programmes.
<input type="checkbox"/> Both groups and teachers felt that the NGO-ECD centres must have effective programmes.	<input type="checkbox"/> They must not just keep the children but they must follow their programmes.
<input type="checkbox"/> Teachers' felt that the NGO-ECD centres were not competent.	<input type="checkbox"/> Proper training and workshops.

In the process of categorising and pattern analysis, the roles played by the NGO-ECD centres at Giyani have emerged. The following table reflects these roles:

Table 5: The role played by NGO-ECD centres in Giyani.

Categories	Patterns
<input type="checkbox"/> NGO-ECD centres provide a safe playing place for the	

children. <input type="checkbox"/> The children are taught to play and to learn through playing.	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical development of the child.
<input type="checkbox"/> Parents and the NGO-ECD felt that the children are taught to play and to share their toys.	<input type="checkbox"/> Development of the social aspect of the child's life.
<input type="checkbox"/> [NGO-ECD teachers] They teach the children to draw, to cut out pictures and to sing.	<input type="checkbox"/> Development of the aesthetic aspect.
<input type="checkbox"/> Although NGO-ECD centres are aware of the need for training and the lack of equipment, both parents and the NGO-ECD felt that they should teach the children to count numbers, listening and story telling.	<input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual development

A process of patterning was done to produce interpretations of the findings that emerged from the categories and the patterns that were matched.

Table 6: Interpretations of the findings from the categories.

Categories	Patterns
<input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual development.	<input type="checkbox"/> Committed in developing the intelligence of the child.
<input type="checkbox"/> Development of the aesthetic aspect.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Physical development.	<input type="checkbox"/> Committed in developing the sense of creativity.
<input type="checkbox"/> Moulding of the social aspect.	

3.7. Data Configuration

In data configuration the researcher has taken a decision about the data that was relevant to the identifying of patterns that form a summary of the findings. It implies that the researcher has analysed, sorted, and organised the data to reach a conclusion (Miles & Hurberman, 1994).

In this research the following categories have been identified.

- Teachers need thorough training and continuous in-service.
- NGO-ECD centres provide a safe place for children.
- Children are prepared for schooling.
- Children are physically developed.

- Children are socially developed.
- Public school teachers maintain that there is no effective teaching or learning.
- Very few parents are involved in the activities of these centres.
- The community is involved.

The first category emerged from the analysis process in that both supervisors and teachers felt that they need thorough training in order to provide a better service. This was amply illustrated by the supervisor of Tlharihani Play Group when she explained that in 1991 when the centre started, she had difficulties in running the centre since she had to do everything by herself: planning, supervising, and giving directions to the teachers (See appendix i). All participants indicated that they have no knowledge about Curriculum 2005.

The second category indicated that both the primary school teachers and the parents indicated that the NGO-ECD centres provide a safe area for the children to learn as they play. The formal setting of these ECD centres are regarded as better than the residential houses within which the children would otherwise be engaged for days on end whilst they wait for the right age to gain admission into the few public ECD centres. This idea was supported by almost all the interviewees and informants.

The third category shows that both the supervisors and the ECD centre teachers felt that these centres are doing a good job in the preparation of the children for formal schooling, particularly because of the academic programmes offered. Tlharihani Play Group, for example, offers formal schooling.

The fourth and the fifth categories show that the NGO-ECD centres develop the physical and social aspects of the children despite the impoverished infra-structural features of these centres. It is also so that these centres do provide a relatively safe environment for the socialisation and physical development of the

children. The sixth and seventh categories indicate that parents and the community are partially involved, but that they are not involved in all issues.

3.8. Consolidation of data from the interviews and the observations

The interviews from Tlharihani Play Group, Moses Cradle and Philadelphia centres that were recorded and transcribed, show that all the teachers and supervisors feel that they need to be trained. At Philadelphia Centre a teacher stated that although she is qualified to teach, she feels continuous in-service training is necessary in view of the fact that the courses she took were inadequate. At Moses Cradle Centre the untrained teacher said that she is able to teach the children by imitating what the other teachers do. She naively thinks that teaching children is not as difficult as teaching high school children. All the same, she felt she needed training in order to have a qualification. Those who said they have inadequate training, said that they need more training and that they had to be workshopped on OBE. It is emphasised by the key informants at Khanyisa Primary School that the teachers from the neighbouring schools need to be thoroughly trained. The observational and interview data in the NGO-ECD centres highlighted that the NGO-ECD centres lack infrastructure. It shows that the conditions of the NGO-ECD centres could only be suitable for day-care services. This opinion was supported by the observational data when it was noted that the children were brought to school by the principal alone in her own vehicle. The last load would be brought to the centre at between 9:30 and 10:00 and at 14:00 she would transport them back home. She hardly had time to prepare and to teach due to the myriad of other activities waiting for her attention. This kind of individual involvement also determines the value and the quality of the work that is done at the centre.

The development of the child as described in category Three and Four, shows that the lack of teaching and learning material has a negative impact on the physical and social development of the children. The data from the interviews

with the teachers from public primary schools, places doubts on the roles played by NGO-ECD centres in the development of the children.

3.9. Conclusion

This section of the research provided an overview of the data collection and analysis and procedures applied in data processing. The interviews and the observations revealed and produced highly similar and complementary information, which increased the validity of the findings. This section also embraced examples of categories and patterns of data clustering.



SECTION FOUR

INTERPRETATION AND EVALUATION OF DATA

4.1. Introduction

This section will focus on the issues that will address the research questions which were outlined in Section One, they are:

1. What are the views of the supervisors and the teachers in the NGO-ECD centres in respect of their contribution towards the development of the children?
2. What are the expectations of the parents whose children attend those ECD centres?
3. How do the teachers from neighbouring public schools view the role played by these centres?

The data collected were consolidated into categories and patterns. In this Section, the researcher will discuss the findings of the research against the conceptual and theoretical framework developed in Section Two.

4.2. Research findings

Based on the context of this study, the data collected through interviews and observation, led the researcher to arrive at the following major findings:

- The NGO-ECD centres provide a relatively safe place for the children to play while their parents are at work.
- NGO-ECD centre teachers need adequate training to be more effective.
- The NGO-ECD centres believe that they are effective in preparing the children for formal schooling.
- Children are being physically and socially developed at these centres.

- These centres do not have an infrastructure conducive to educational interaction.
- Teachers of local public schools maintain that learners who come from these ECD centres do not cope with the work of their entry grades.
- The parents and the community are not involved enough in the activities of these centres.

The data obtained from all the NGO-ECD teachers and supervisors show that they are not adequately trained, except for the supervisor of Tlharhani Play Group who maintained that she had a professional qualification, and that she did not need any further training. The teachers interviewed stated that the two weeks of training they were given were not enough. Only one teacher from Moses Cradle, stated that she had been trained for one and a half years. It is quite clear that the teachers recognised that the short courses which were organised for them were not enough to give them the required knowledge and skills. Both the teachers and the supervisors indicated that they had no knowledge of Outcomes Based Education (OBE), which is popularly known in South Africa as Curriculum 2005. They all maintain that they need to be thoroughly workshopped on OBE. Although OBE has already been introduced in the first two grades of schooling in all public schools, the NGO-ECD teachers and supervisors have not started implementing it yet. This will obviously have a detrimental effect on the children who enter formal schooling soon. It is the researcher's view that the knowledge, skills and abilities of the teacher always determines the quality and the standard of a particular institution and its products. The employment of unqualified teachers in any learning centre could lead to poor service, and therefore poor morale and productivity. All these factors could impact very negatively on the growth and development of young children at these centres.

from this investigation, it was realised that the information gathered from the supervisors at Tlharhani Play Group and Moses Cradle, emphasised that the purpose of establishing the NGO-ECD centres was to offer a safe playing place for the children whose parents are working. Only the supervisor of Philadelphia

Centre argued that their mission was to offer a better education for the children. It is clear that the NGO-ECD centres were established to serve the needs of the supervisor and the parents. The supervisor makes a living out of the proceeds of the centres while the parents are relieved of their responsibility to look after their children during work hours.

Despite the limitations of these centres as outlined above, it is also indisputable that, to a limited extent, these NGO-ECD centres have developed the children physically and socially and prepared them for schooling. These views were expressed by both the supervisors and the teachers interviewed. However, both groups also indicated the damaging effects of lack of funds and poor infrastructure. This supports the researcher's observations of the lack of outdoor equipment and learning support material in almost all the centres. At Moses Cradle Centre, for example, one teacher emphasised that they do not offer any effective teaching because the church hall is not partitioned. She indicated that it is difficult for them to teach effectively because the uncontrollable acoustics coming from the different groups under one roof makes teaching nearly impossible. She also felt that the children are confused by the setup within the church hall. The three different groups sitting in a poorly partitioned hall find it hard to follow the programme.

For the NGO-ECD centres to have an effective teaching environment, they need to have a comfortable learning environment, which will stimulate the children to learn. There should be enough space for sitting and playing without stifling any intended objective. There should be enough space to allow for the grouping of the children according to their age levels and the requirements of the programmes meant for the different age groups. The present state of affairs of the learning environment raises doubts about the quality and standard of learning that is taking place at these centres.

There is clear evidence that parents and the community are not fully involved in NGO-ECD centre activities. In these NGO-ECD centres, parents are not involved in decision-making at all. The view of the researcher is that if parents were involved in the running of these NGO-ECD centres, they would effectively help to satisfy the centres' objectives. It would also meet the expectations of those parents who chose to pay more money for their children to attend some of these private institutions, instead of sending them to the existing, but cheaper public ECD centres. It is assumed that most parents do so with the hope that in these private institutions, their children stand a better chance of mastering the English language at a tender age. This expectation emanates from the fact that most centres introduce English as a medium of instruction from their second age year upward. Looking at the lack of professional qualifications of the teachers and the implementation of the programme, this wish appears to be a tall order. It should feature high in the debates of education authorities on quality control and regulations.

The NGO-ECD centre managers only involve both parents and the community in trivial roles such as during educational tours and in financial matters. At Tlharihani Play Group, the community is invited to fun-days where they are expected to help in simple practical manual labour such as the painting of tyres and poles used in the playing field and for decoration. However, the participation levels are determined by the school, and not by the community. It is the researcher's view that the managers do not have adequate appreciation of parental involvement in early childhood development. Limited parental and community involvement means that the children's needs and interests are not effectively addressed. According to Sergiovanni's theory (Sergiovanni, 1994), where the community is involved, all the activities rendered will benefit the community and the centre will be the community's property and responsibility.

4.3 The strength and weakness of the inquiry

It is hoped that this study will contribute ideas towards the improvement of NGO-ECD centres in the development of the children of Giyani. The role that the NGO-ECD centres can play in developing the child will be highlighted. The study will draw attention to the existence of a fertile research area that should attract the attention of educational researchers and theorists.

The fact that it is a pilot study, and that this is a research essay, implies that it has limits. The researcher is aware that the sample of NGO-ECD centres selected, is not enough to form a strong base for earth-shaking generalisations and recommendations. The inquiry was only confined within the Giyani area in the Northern Province. Better results would have been yielded if more centres could have been included.

The population size, which consisted of the three principals, five teachers' from NGO-ECD centres, seven teachers from public primary schools and four parents, do not constitute an adequate sample. However, it is believed that the qualitative method used has compensated for much of the shortfall in the study. If researchers can be stimulated by this essay to conduct indepth investigations on any of the aspects touched upon, then the researcher shall have realised part of her objective.

4.4. Implications of the research

As already stated, the findings of this research can be summed up as follows:

There is a dire need to provide thorough training for all the NGO-ECD teachers and supervisors observed. For the teachers to render an effective service, they need to have enough knowledge about the process of child development. It is quite clear that the short courses offered to ECD teachers are not sufficient. It is also clear that the fact that the majority of the teachers are not qualified

professionally causes doubts about the quality of the contributions rendered by the NGO-ECD teachers and their supervisors in the development of the child.

Both teachers and supervisors need extensive training in Outcomes Based Education and Training (OBET). In South Africa the educational system is in the process of being transformed, making it of paramount importance that NGO-ECD centres adhere to the national norms and standards of the educational system. It should be borne in mind by the NGO-ECD managers that although they may operate as private institutions in terms of governance, funding and resource allocation, they are obliged to implement the OBE approach lest their products suffer the consequences.

There is a need for the provision of the required infrastructure for the NGO-ECD centres to operate efficiently. No ECD centre can operate effectively in small rooms or non-partitioned church halls. Overcrowded classrooms, where very young children are not well divided according to their age levels, makes effective teaching difficult. The church halls do not provide a comfortable learning environment. The present conditions of the halls and classes used predetermines the quality of the programmes and methods used. The lack of funds in the NGO-ECD centres contributes to the insufficient learning material. Children need to have indoor and outdoor equipment; without which child development can not be effective. Children want to learn things by touching, smelling and observing. Without the necessary materials, the learning environment serves no purpose in developing the child.

Another issue that has also emerged is the realisation that despite their poor educational environment, these NGO-ECD centres have had some measure of success in the development of the social and physical aspects of the children.

There is a need to involve parents and the community in the planning and management of these centres. Presently the NGO-ECD authorities do not seem

to appreciate the role and significance of parental and community involvement in ECD activities. Parents are seldom involved in the programmes designed for their children. They need to be informed about the way their children are being educated. Parental consultation is a proven and powerful method to bring the parents to the learning situation of their children. Some parents possess specialised skills such as management, planning and fund-raising which may be put into good effect in the centres.

4.5. Recommendations

Out of the data collected during this research, a number of issues have been highlighted. All the interviews conducted, expressed the view that for an NGO-ECD centre to function well, it needs to have professionally qualified teachers. The primary phase teachers and the key informants referred to above, strongly maintained that the NGO-ECD teachers and managers need to draw up their own programmes and implement them, instead of copying raw programmes from elsewhere without some form of adaptation. The programmes should be based on the purpose of the centre, activities to be rendered, parent as well as community needs and with the consideration of the availability of funds and viable infrastructure.

The nursery section in these centres should have noise-proof fittings in order to reduce the level of noise, which might interrupt the learning processes of the other groups. Alternatively, this section should be located at a venue that will allow teaching and learning to take place without hindrance.

The government should set up standards and norms within which ECD should take place. The implementation of these standards and norms, should be subjected to continuous quality assurance strategies such as effective evaluation and assessment by experts. Enough qualified and committed ECD government

advisers should be appointed to constitute a resource unit which will always be available to advise ECD tutors.

On their own, NGO-ECD centres should be encouraged to form forums that could, amongst others, be tasked to monitor the establishment and management of all centres. These forums would also serve as a link between the government and the NGO management. In this way, it would be easier for these institutions to organize meaningful OBET workshops where knowledge, experience and skills about ECD could be shared.

The establishment of an ECD community board would go a long way to promote ECD activities at Giyani. The independent nature of the existing institutions seems to contain a gem of their own demise. Each institution seems to hold the view that it is in isolation that its prosperity lies. Their programmes are so different that a stranger might think they are serving different communities. For ECD activities to prosper, some co-ordinated approach is an urgent necessity. This need is clearly emphasized by the recent decision of the Northern Province, Department of Education, to stop providing formal ECD programmes within its educational programmes with effect from the year 2 000. This decision will throw thousands of young children into the hands of unprepared and unco-ordinated NGO-ECD centres, without any meaningful programme. This community ECD board could be constituted by parents, community representatives and selected members of staff. Besides presiding over the educational needs of their children, this board would also co-ordinate feeding schemes and health services. It would also conduct fund-raising campaigns, control sponsorship and distribute it acquitably.

4.6. Conclusion

In this study, an attempt has been made to highlight the significance and role which NGO-ECD centres can play in the growth and development of children in

general, and at Giyani in particular. The methods of data collection included interviews with serving NGO-ECD centre teachers, centre supervisors, parents, teachers attached to neighbouring primary schools and key informants from the Khanyisa Primary Education Centre in Giyani.

The findings of this research project starkly revealed that the motive that led to the establishment of the majority of such centres was more financial rather than the quest to provide quality education. The majority of these centres has been established by unemployed persons without enough capital and appropriate professional qualifications. The result of this state of affairs is that the majority of these centres has been established in either small dark rooms or big unadaptable church halls, under the tutelage of ill-qualified personnel.

The absence of parental and community involvement, clearly suggests that the needs of the children and the community, can hardly be satisfied. The need for appropriate facilities and good infrastructure is a prerequisite for effective learning and overall child development in any learning environment. Now that the Northern Province, Department of Education will leave all ECD activities for the monopoly of the private sector, NGO's must rise to the occasion and occupy the vacuum that will be created. This calls for high levels of planning, preparation and expertise.

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APPENDIX i

Responses from supervisors

Q.1 Who initiated the idea of establishing the centre?

S.A This idea was initiated by some parents around Giyani whose children were attending public ECD schools at Giyani College of Education. They complained that the pre-school, releases their children at half past twelve before they return from work. This was a problem to most of them because they did not have baby-minders.

S.B The suggestion of establishing the ECD centre was proposed by a church member and this idea was discussed by the church committee and then, an agreement was made with the Pastor that the church could establish such a centre.

S.C There was a talk show in our church where my children showed that they were eloquent in English to an extent that the Pastor decided that we should establish a school that will give our children quality education.

Q.2 When was your ECD centre established?

S.A: 1991

S.B: 1994

S.C: 1996

Q.3 How many children were enrolled during the first year?

S.A: We had fifty children

S.B: We registered sixty children

S.C: Seven pre-school children between four and five years old

Q.4 What was the motive for the establishment of this centre?

S.A: Most parents are working, and they have no safe place to leave their children during the day, since most leave their homes as early as half past six and knock off at seventeen o'clock.

S.B: The purpose was to look after the children whose parents were working and did not have baby-minders.

S.C: Our intention was to establish a school that will offer a better education for our children.



Q5 How many children are registered this year?

S.A: This year we have registered 215 children.

Why are the numbers growing like this?

I'm not very sure. Maybe it is because our low fees (she laughed). I'm not sure I'm just guessing

S.B: We have registered 115 children.

What caused the increase?

Our fees are low. Many parents cannot afford the high fees at Khanyisa. Furthermore, parents like our service because we are always available to take care of the children.

S.C: This year we have registered 30 children.

Why has the number increased?

It has increased because the parents appreciate our work.

Q6: How many teachers are employed in this centre?

S.A: We are five.

S.B: We are five

Q7: What are their professional qualifications?

S.A: Two of them have only passed matric. The third one attended training courses at Khanyisa. She used to attend once a week for a year. The fourth is a student teacher and has not yet completed her training. I am the fifth and I'm qualified as an ECD teacher. I don't think I need any more training.

S.B: Two of us have attended training courses and there is only one who has received a one-year course training.

S.C: Two are qualified.

Q8: What is your opinion about employing trained teachers?

A: It is a good idea, but the problem at the moment is that it is not easy to get well-trained teachers because they are expensive. They prefer to work in the government schools. But in the future, I think I will be able to employ well-qualified teachers.

Q8.1 What is it that will make you employ adequately qualified teachers?

A: Our enrolment will gradually increase so that I will be able to pay the teachers from the fees so collected.

S.B: I think it is a good thing. We need to have well trained and certificated teachers. The short courses that we have attended are not good enough.

S.C: It is important that the teachers be trained so that they could be able to handle the children accordingly.

Q9. What is your view about your infrastructure?

S.A: I'm not happy about it. It is not suitable for the work we are doing. We need a better building.

S.B: The building is not meant for this kind of schooling. It is difficult for us to conduct our lessons in the church hall. The hall is not partitioned, hence we have to work in such a way that we do not disturb each other, which is not possible.

S.C: The building is not conducive for this kind of teaching. I think we need a better building.

Q10: Why do you need a better building?

S.A: This one has small rooms and the children are overcrowded as you have realized. Another thing is that it is just an ordinary house so the design is not suitable for this centre's activities.

S.B: As you can see, the hall is not partitioned. It is not easy for us to work effectively.

S.C: The hall is not suitable, we need formal classes where our children will be well-grouped.

Q11: Who funds the centre?

S.A: We depend on the fees paid by parents.

Q: How much does each child pay?

A: (She laughed) Sixty rands.

S.B: None except for the fees that are paid by parents.

Q: How much does each child pay?

A: Fifty rands.

S.C: The centre gets its funds from the children's fees.

Q12: Does the centre receive donations?

S.A: No

S.B: No

S.C: No

Q13: How is the condition of the facilities in the centre?

S.A: We have water, electricity and toilets. We do not have enough learning material because we have many children and inadequate funding.

S.B: We do not have enough because we do not have enough funds to buy all the things that we need.

S.C: We do not have enough facilities because we do not have enough money. There was a time when I had to use my salary to pay the workers.

Q: Why was it so?

A: Because parents had not paid their children's fees.

Q14: Which age levels of children has the centre registered?

S.A: We have children from zero to seven years.

S.B: We have children from zero to six years.

S.C: We have children from three to seven years.

Q15: Which medium of instruction is used?

S.A: Xitsonga and English.

S.B: Xitsonga and English.

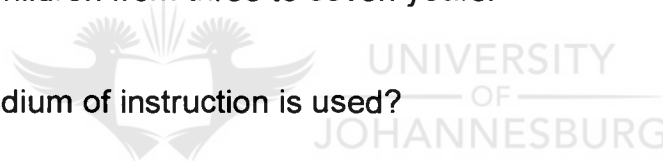
S.C: English.

Q16: Do you follow the OBE approach?

S.A: I have no knowledge about it. We are using our own approach.

S.B: No, but we use principles that are similar to OBE.

Q: Which principle are you referring to?



A: We do our best not to shout at the children?

S.C: We have story telling lessons where they are taught in groups. We allow each child to tell his/her own story.

Q17: What role do parents play in the centre?

S.A: We invite them for the meetings and we also invite them to accompany their children when they have educational tours. We also encourage them to come and collect their children's progress reports.

S.B: Parents are only invited to meetings.

S.C: We invite them for meetings once per quarter.

Q18: How does the community contribute in the affairs of the centre?

S.A: On fun-days we invite parents to the centre, and they are encouraged to bring along brushes to help us in painting the tyres for decoration and for brightening their children's learning environment.

S.B: The church makes some contributions whenever we run out of funds.

S.C: The community assisted us in identifying the site where we plan to build the school.

Q19: Which problems do you experience in the centre?

S.A: The major problem that I have encountered is that we lack funds. Secondly our building is not suitable for this kind of schooling. Thirdly some of the parents do not pay their fees on time and we find it difficult to get the workers paid.

S.B: Our major problem is that we do not have a good building. Secondly we do not have enough funds to keep the centre functioning.

S.C: Our big problem is the lack of sufficient funds. Secondly we need a better building. Thirdly we do not have learning equipment. We want to introduce computer science at pre-school level, but we find it impossible at this stage because we do not have the means.

Q20: What are your future plans?

S.A: We plan to have a big school like Khanyisa. For a start, we will have eight classrooms.

S.B: We plan to have a secondary school like Khanyisa.

S.C: We would like to have a bigger school where we would guide our learners according to their choice of career.

Q21: What is the strength of the centre?

S.A: We provide a safe place for the children. We provide formal schooling up to Grade One. We teach the children to play, sing, recite, count numbers, and to write. The grade one learners are taught mathematics, environmental studies, English and health education.

S.B: We help the community by keeping the children while they are away from home. We teach the children to relate stories, to listen, cut pictures, to draw, sing, and colouring. They are taught a lot of Bible stories.

S.C: We teach them to draw, colour and cut pictures. They are taught to listen

to stories. We encourage them to play together and to share toys. We provide a safe place for the children.

S.C: Most parents have realized that we are offering the best education for their children.



APPENDIX ii

Interview data collected from the key informants at Khanyisa Education Centre.

The interviews were conducted in English.

Participant 1.

Q1: Which criteria do you use when you admit learners from the NGO-ECD centres?

A: The main criterion used for admission, is the age of the child. The year which the children turn seven, they qualify for admission in Grade One. If they have a working knowledge of English, it is an advantage to them. If they don't understand English at all, we put them through basic English courses to enable them to benefit from our lessons since they are all conducted through the medium of English.

Q2: Do you ever admit learners without the basics of English?

A: Yes. We have many such learners in our school. These children really battle to get to the required competence level in English.

Q3: Do you mean that the children from NGO-ECD centres are not competent in English?

A: Yes, a lot of them.

Q4: What could be the problem?

A: It is the result of the medium of instruction used in a particular NGO-ECD centre.

Q5: What can the ECD teachers do in order to improve the level of English of those children who need it most?

A: If they could work on the conception development of the learners so that they find out the correct co-ordination and class motor co-ordination suitable to their age.

Q6: What is your view about the teachers?

A: The teachers should have a good understanding of the development of the children.

Q7: What is your perception about the role of the NGO-ECD centres?

A: It is necessary that the more children are exposed to the early childhood development programmes, the better will they be successful.

Q8: Do you find the NGO-ECD centres useful?

A: It is an advantage for a child who has been exposed to an ECD programme than for a child who has not been exposed to such a programme.

Q9: What do you think is the purpose of the NGO-ECD centres?

A: They are more of a source of financial income to the owners than centres for educational excellence, developing the child to be ready for school. Some operate at very cheap rates, and they do not expose the children to the work that would increase their ability when they ultimately go to school.

Q10: Do you think parents are aware of that state of affairs?

A: I don't think so.

Q11: Do you think they are catering for the needs of the community?

A: Most of the centres do not provide for the needs that the children really require. Most of them are established for the purpose of keeping the children while their parents are at work. These centres therefore, play the role baby-minders.

Q12: What would you suggest for the NGO-ECD schools?

A: They should follow the programme of the pre-school.

Participant 2

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Q1: Which age group do you have in your class?

A: Reception, that is grade zero, a year before admission, they should be five to six years old.

Q2: Which curriculum do they follow?

A: They learn a lot. They are taught to cut and paint. We do not have formal writing, but they have work sheets that have specific things that the teacher wants them to do. These include songs and stories. We have a proper programme.

Q3: What is your view about the NGO-ECD centres?

A: The children who come from them cannot speak a word in English to start with, and most of them cannot hold pencils; and they have no idea what to do with a pair of scissors.

Q4: What could be the cause?

A: It could be the lack of equipment. Maybe, it is because they are just keeping the children whilst their parents are away at work, and they see no need of teaching them.

Q5: What is your opinion about the training of NGO-ECD teachers.

A: The teachers should know that their learners who are admitted in most of our local schools, are not ready to do grade one. They need intensive training. They really need to be competent. Unqualified teachers may cause harm to children from some of the NGO-ECD centres.

Q7: Are the parents aware that their children are not ready to do grade one?

A: I don't think the parents are aware of what their children should do to be ready for formal schooling, and they are not aware of the importance of the pre-school. They send them to these pre-schools, but I think they send them for care-centre activities.

Q8: If you call them day-care centres, would you say that they are serving the needs of both the parents and the children?

A: They are serving the needs of the parents because most of the parents

work and they need a place for their children. Most parents do not seem to require anything more than what the centres are able to supply.

Q9: What would you recommend for the NGO-ECD centres in order to improve their effectiveness?

A: I recommend that the training programmes of their teachers should be improved. The teachers should be trained in Curriculum 2005 because their children would later join schools that are on it.



APPENDIX iii

Interview data collected from the four parents

Parent 1.

Q1: What was the reason for sending your child to an NGO-ECD centre?

A1:

P1: I wanted to expose my child to early learning and that he should be taught to read and write.

P2: I wanted my daughter to be taught how to hold a pencil and to communicate in English before she goes to a formal school.

P3: Teachers at private schools show a lot of commitment in the work. I also wanted my child to be taught to communicate in English.

Q2: What difference have you noticed in your child ever since he joined the public school?

P1: When he was still schooling at the NGO-ECD centre, we were not aware that he had a problem, until when his problem was identified at Ndzalama Primary School. He was unable to read and write. Then we realized that at the centre, most of the time was used for playing, singing and reciting. He was unable to hold a pen and could not write. Furthermore, we realized that centres claim to teach in English whereas they don't.

P2: I don't think she was taught anything when she was at the centre. When she would play alone, she would say certain things that she had picked up when they played; but these would be unintelligible. I don't think that for children of that age, the centres have a programme that they follow.

P3: He communicates well. He is able to play with other children. Before he went for schooling, every time I left him with the helper, he would cry a lot. But now, he is better.

P4: What I have realized is that since she started schooling there, she likes playing.

Q3: Do you find the NGO ECD centres useful?

P1: They are just good for keeping the children but not for teaching academic programme.

P2: They are helpful for working parents because they take care of the children. So far, I wouldn't say they are good for performing academic activities.

P3: They teach our children to be self-reliant.

P4: Hmm, I think they should just concentrate only on the day-care services because it looks like they have problems. I don't know what kind of problem but they just don't teach the children.

Q4: What is your view about the role of the NGO-ECD centres?

P1: They are day-care centres, because they ignore the academic programme.

P2: They teach the children to play together. The fear of going to school is removed. They are taught to share things.

P3: The centres are good because we send our children to school early.

P4: I think they need to have programmes and teach the children academic content.

Q5: What do you think is the main purpose of the NGO-ECD centres?

P1: I think when the centres started, their intention was to establish day-care centres. They were encouraged by the increasing number of children to extend the centres to pre-schools.

P2: They remove the fear of schooling.

P3: The centre takes care of the children and as such, we spend less time with them. They also teach them how to draw and cut.

P4: I think they take care of the children but they need to teach them so that they should not have problems when they go to school.

Q6: What would be your recommendations in order to improve these centres?

P1: I suggest that they should teach the children to read and write because the teachers in primary schools such as Ndzalama, are concerned about the type of work they do with the children. The principals must supervise the teachers and make sure that justice is done to the centre's programme. The principals must employ qualified teachers who will do a better job. They must follow the programme used at Ndzalama because at grade one, children are introduced to English.

P2: The teachers should have a programme for their three year old learners.

P3: The NGO-ECD centres should be private centres and they should not be changed to government schools.

P4: The NGO-ECD centres should have qualified teachers and they must follow formal programmes.



APPENDIX iv

Interview data for teachers collected at Tlharihani Play Group
One teacher was interviewed

Q1: Were you employed in any NGO-ECD centre before?

A: No. I was never employed.

Q2: Are you professionally qualified?

A: Yes

Q3: How long was your training?

A: I took short courses at Khanyisa, where I attended once a week for a year.

Q4: What is your opinion about this centre?

A: It is a useful centre. We assist working parents by keeping their children while they are away.

Q5: Which subjects are being offered?

A: At the age of five and six they are taught to write numbers. We teach them stories and they learn to listen.

Q6: Do you have any idea about the new teaching approach?

A: No, I have no idea. Khanyisa does not use the OBE approach.

Q7: Do you attend workshops with the governmental ECD teachers?

A: So far we have not yet done so.

Q8: Do you think you need more training?

A: Yes. I need it because the courses I attended, were not enough.

Q9: How should the parents be involved in helping the children to learn?

A: Parents should come to the meetings whenever they are invited. They should collect their children's progress reports and they should visit our centres.

Q10: Do you think the centre serves the needs of the community?

A: Yes. We provide a safe place for the children and we teach them good manners.



Q11: What problems do you encounter in this centre?

A: We do not have enough equipment. The building is not good enough for this kind of school.

Q12: Would you say that the problem of accommodation affects your teaching?

A: Yes

Q13: In which way?

A: The children are over crowded in the classrooms and it is difficult for us to teach effectively.



APPENDIX v

Interview data for NGO-ECD teachers collected at Moses Cradle.
Two teachers were interviewed.

Q1: Were you employed in any NGO-ECD centre before?

A:

T1: Yes I worked at Tiharihani Play Group for nine months.

T2: I was not employed.

Q2: Are you professionally qualified?

A:

T1: Yes

T2: No, I have only passed standard 10.

Q3: How long was your training?

A:

T1: I trained for 18 months.

T2: I have not been trained.

Q4: What is your opinion about this centre?

A:

T1: It is a good centre because we look after the children. We feed them and we teach them to understand themselves. They are taught about toileting and we teach them health services.

T2: We try to make the children feel as comfortable as when they are cared for by their mothers.



Q5: Which subjects are being offered?

T1: All the children from five to six years are taught to write numbers and to draw pictures. The children below five years are prepared to be school ready.

T2: We also teach them colouring.

Q6: Do you have any idea about the new teaching approach?

A:

T1: No, I have no idea.

T2: No, I don't know what you are talking about.

Q7: Do you attend workshops with public ECD teachers?

A:

T1: No

T2: No



Q8: Do you think you need more training?

A:

T1: Yes, I think so, particularly in OBE.

T2: I need to be trained because at the moment I just imitate what the other teachers are doing.

Q9: How should the parents be involved?

A:

T1: Parents should attend the meetings. They should visit our centre and see how we play and feed their children.

T2: I think they must attend the meetings.

Q10: Do you think the centre serves the needs of the community?

A:

T1: Yes, I think we provide a safe place for the children.

T2: I think the centre teaches the children the Christian principle of sharing things.

Q11: What problems do you encounter in this centre?

A:

T1: The main problem is that we do not have a good building. The hall that we are using is not conducive for this kind of schooling.

T2: The building that we use now is not really meant for a ECD centre.

Q12: Would you say that the problem of accommodation affects your teaching?

A:

T1: Yes

T2: Yes

Q13: In which way?

A:T1: The hall is not divided as such there cannot be effective teaching. The children are confused and they do not understand what is going on.

T2: We find it difficult to display our pictures because the church is used daily by the community.



APPENDIX vi

Interview data for teachers collected at Philadelphia

Q1: Were you employed in any NGO-ECD centre before?

A:

T1: No, I was not.

T2: I was not.

Q2: Are you qualified?

A:

T1: Yes, I have been trained.

T2: I'm still at training school. I have not yet completed.

Q3: How long was your training?

A:

T1: I was trained for two weeks at School of Tomorrow.

Q4: Where is the school situated?

A: T2 It is located in Venda at Shayandima.

Q5: When do you hope to complete?

A: At the end of this year.



Q6: What is your opinion about this centre?

A:

T1: It is a good centre because we teach the children Christian principles.

T2: I think it is a good centre because children are taught a lot of things such as stories.

Q7: Which subjects are being offered?

A:

T1: We offered English, mathematics, science, social studies and word building.

T2: They are also taught morals and good behaviour.

Q8: Do you have any idea about the new teaching approach?

A:

T1: No, I have no idea.

T2: No



Q9: Do you attend workshops with public ECD teachers?

A:

T1: No

T2: No

Q10: Do you think you need more training?

A:

T1: Yes, I would be happy if I could have that chance. The short courses we received, were not enough. The problem is that we had to pay a lot of money. For further training, I need to have about four thousand rands, and that is a lot of money.

T2: I think I will need to be trained for the new teaching approach that you asked me about.

Q11: How should the parents be involved?

A:

T1: They must attend the parents' meetings.

T2: They must come and see what their children are doing.

Q12: Are you saying that they must come and listen to you when you teach?

T1: Not necessarily when we are busy teaching, because that may disturb the children. I mean any time during breaks or when we are not too busy.

Q13: Do you think the centre serves the needs of the community?

A:

T1: Yes, because some parents want their children to know about God.

T2: It does because the community needs children with good morals.

Q14: What problems do you encounter in this centre?

A:

T1: The main problem is that we do not have enough accommodation.

T2: We need to have equipment and enough teaching and learning materials.

Q15: Would you say that the problems of accommodation affect your teaching?

A:

T1: Not that much.

T2: Yes.

Q16: In which way?

A:

T1: The children are not properly grouped; and so we have two groups in one under one roof, viz. the three year group and the group between five and six years.

T2: The improper grouping does not allow us to employ the appropriate methods of teaching. The three year-old group is supposed to have its own class.



APPENDIX vii

Interview data collected from teachers at Meehleketso Primary School.

Q1: Do you have children who came from NGO-ECD centres in your school?

A:

T1: Yes

T2: Yes

Q2: How do they cope with the work?

A:

T1: It looks like they do not have a good foundation.

T2: It depends on an individual child. Some are ready for schooling but others are not performing well.

Q3: What are your expectations from the learners who come from NGO-ECD centres?

A:

T1: I expect them to be able to write simple words like "manana"(mother) and "tatana"(father).

T2: They should know the shapes, colours and some simple words in English.

Q4: What is important about the NGO-ECD?

A:

T1: They prepare the children for schooling.

T2: They teach the children to be ready.

Q5: What are your recommendations to the NGO-ECD centres?

A:

T1: The NGO-ECD teachers must teach the children to write and to read.

T2: The NGO-ECD teachers should have a programme. They must not teach the children academic subjects, because the teachers are not qualified.



APPENDIX viii

Interview data collected from teachers at Ndzalama School

Q1: Do you have learners who are coming from some of the local NGO-ECD centres in your school?

A:

T1: Yes.

T2: Yes.

Q2: Do they cope with the work?

A:

T1: Some are ready, but others do not cope.

T2: They do not cope like those who come from government schools.

Q3: What is your view about the NGO-ECD centres?

A:

T1: They are only good for day-care services.

T2: They are good for day-care serves. In my view, they should not teach academic subjects because their teachers are not qualified.

Q4: What are your expectations from the children who come from NGO-ECD centres?

A:

T1: I expect them to know how to write and to read simple words.

T2: I expect the children to be able to identify different shapes, colours and that they should be able to count.

Q5: What is important about the NGO-ECD centres?

A:

T1: They are good for day-care purposes and they do prepare the children for schooling.

T2: They prepare the children for formal schooling because the children who go through their ECD programmes are able to receive formal instructions.

Q6: What are your recommendations to NGO-ECD centres?

A:

T1: They are not good enough to teach children academic subjects.
Furthermore qualified staff should be employed.

T2: I think they must have trained teachers. They should also follow a formal programme. They must not offer academic lessons because the teachers are not well-trained.

