

**FACTORS AFFECTING THE PROVISION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION IN GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOLS. A CASE OF
SELECTED SCHOOLS IN KABOMPO DISTRICT OF NORTH
WESTERN PROVINCE OF ZAMBIA**

BY

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**A Dissertation submitted to the University of Zambia in partial
fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of
Education in Primary Education.**

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Lusaka

2014

DECLARATION

I, SHIKWESHA RICHARD ANDREW, do solemnly declare that this Dissertation is my own work which has not been submitted for any degree at this or another university.

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This Dissertation of SHIKWESHA RICHARD ANDREW has been approved as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Education in Primary Education at the University of Zambia.

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ABSTRACT

The study set out to examine *factors affecting the provision of Early Childhood Education in government primary schools*. The Case Study Design was used, applying both qualitative and quantitative methods. A sample of 70 respondents was selected from three (3) Early Childhood Education Centres in Kabompo district, with geographic locations of urban, peri-urban and rural/remote primary schools.

Data was collected using questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, observation schedules and ECE class check-lists. Qualitative data was analysed using themes by coding and grouping similar ideas and quantitative data was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to generate graphs, charts and frequency tables.

Findings of the study revealed that there were gaps between the government policy on Early Childhood Education provision and implementation. The study established that there were no guidelines on how to institute ECE in government primary schools. ECE centres did not have documents indicating teaching time, teaching was done without curriculum, there were no trained teachers in ECE centres at the commencement of implementation but any primary teacher could volunteer to provide pre-schooling. The study also found that ECE provision was being done in inappropriate infrastructure which were designed for children above the age of six; in dilapidated classrooms, with toilets and play grounds located far from the ECE centres. Implementation of ECE began without supply of relevant teaching and learning materials; instead it was more of academic than play. Further, the study revealed that there was a challenge of long distances between schools and villages/ homes, resulting in minimal enrolment and rampant absenteeism in rural and remote centres. However, township centres experienced high enrolment rates, resulting in overcrowding in classrooms due to proximity to the ECE centres and also the 'Free Education Policy' which allowed enrolment of children without paying fees of any kind and attending school without uniforms.

In view of the research findings, it was recommended that appropriate infrastructure, teaching/learning materials and relevant equipment for play be provided in ECE Centres. Further, the government should establish more ECE centres closer to communities so that there is not only dependency on existing primary schools which are far apart. The government should highly fund ECE centres for better operations of the program; pre-schools, unlike conventional education, require a lot of things to use, and most of them involve monies to acquire them.

To my late mother, *Monica* and my late daughter, *Milika*. I still feel their spiritual presence furthers my academic journeys to this far. May their Souls Rest In Eternal Peace.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	x
LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF PLATES	x
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Overview	1
1.2 Background to the study	1
1.3 Statement of the Problem	7
1.4 Purpose of the Study	7
1.5 Main research objective	7
1.6 Objectives of the study	7
1.7 Main Research Question	7
<i>1.7.1 Sub-Research Questions</i>	8
1.8 Significance of the Study	8
1.9 Delimitations	8
1.10 Limitations of the study	8
1.11 Conceptual Framework	9
1.14 Operational Definition of terms	12
1.15 Organization of the study	12
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	14
2.1 Overview	14
2.2 The origins of Early Childhood Education	14
2.4 Relevance of ECE to development	17
<i>2.4.1 Children have a right to live and develop</i>	17
<i>2.4.2 Transmission of societal values</i>	17
<i>2.4.3 Economic benefits</i>	18
<i>2.4.5 It helps to reduce inequalities</i>	19
2.5 Early Childhood Education – Global View	19
2.5.1 Japan	19
2.5.2 China	21

2.5.3 Australia	21
2.5.4 Canada	22
2.5.5 Zambia	24
2.6 The components of good Early Childhood Education	26
2.7 Effective Early Childhood Education provision	27
2.7.1 Environment	27
2.7.2 Curriculum for ECE	28
2.7.3 Assessment in Pre-school	29
2.7.4 Materials and Equipment	30
2.7.5 Comprehensive ECE Services	31
2.7.6 Professional Development	31
2.7.7 Staff Qualifications	32
2.7.8 Leadership and Administrative Supervision	32
2.8 Policy on ECE	32
2.9 Conclusion	34
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	35
3.1 Overview	35
3.2 Research Design	35
3.3 Target Population	36
3.4 Sample Size	36
3.4.1 Characteristics of the sample	36
3.5 Sampling Procedure	40
3.6 Instruments for Data Collection	41
3.7 Procedure for Data Collection	41
3.8 Data Analysis	41
3.9 Pilot Study	41
3.10 Ethical Consideration	42
3.11 Conclusion	43
CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS	44
4.1 Overview	44
4.2 Research Findings	44

4.3 Summary of the Findings	65
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	67
5.1 Overview	67
5.2 Introduction	67
5.3 Conceptualisation of Early Childhood Education	67
5.4 Benefits of Early Childhood Education	69
5.5 The role of parents in ECE provision	70
5.6 Infrastructure for ECE provision	71
5.8 The type of Teaching and Learning Materials for Pre-schoolers	72
5.9 Monitoring by the DEBS and Quality ECE provision	73
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	74
6.1 Overview	74
6.2 Conclusions	74
6.3 Recommendations	75
REFERENCES	77
APPENDICES	83
APPENDIX I: LETTER SEEKING AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH	83
APPENDIX II: INFORMED CONSENT FORM	84
APPENDIX III: PATRIOTIC FRONT 2011 - 2016 MANIFESTO	86
APPENDIX IV: ECE POLICY ISSUES	87
APPENDIX V: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE DEBS	88
APPENDIX VI: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SCHOOL MANAGERS AND TEACHERS	89
APPENDIX VII: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARENTS OF THE PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS	93
APPENDIX VIII: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE ECE CLASS TEACHERS	94
APPENDIX IX: CHECK-LISTS FOR ECE CENTRES	95
APPENDIX X: SOME INFRASTRUCTURE IN GRZ PRIMARY SCHOOLS	96
.....	96

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Bar graph: Substantive positions	38
Figure 2: Bar graph: Academic qualifications.....	40
Figure 3: Pie Chart: Sources of information on ECE provision in GRZ schools.....	45
Figure 4: Line Graph: Views on ECE provision in government schools.....	48

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Statistics of Grade One entrants with pre-school experience (2004-2010).....	25
Table 2: Geographic location.....	36
Table 3: Sex of respondents.....	37
Table 4: Age range of respondents.....	37
Table 5: Marital Status.....	38
Table 6: Years of service in current positions.....	39
Table 7: Awareness of ECE provision in government schools.....	44
Table 8: Teachers' knowledge of pre-school teaching/learning materials.....	46
Table 9: Head teachers' knowledge of specific teaching/learning materials.....	47
Table 10: Role played by parents in school.....	48
Table 11: Challenges of implementing ECE in GRZ schools.....	50
Table 12: Materials suitable for Pre-schoolers.....	55
Table 13: Definitions of ECE.....	56
Table 14: Benefits of pre-schooling.....	57
Table 15: Urban School ECE Centre Check-list.....	63
Table 16: Peri-Urban School ECE Centre Check-list	64
Table 17: Rural/Remote School ECE Centre Check-list	65

LIST OF PLATES

Plate 1: Map of the Study area.....	35
Plate 2: Inappropriate Infrastructure in an ECE Centre.....	51
Plate 3: Overcrowding in urban ECE Centre.....	52
Plate 4: Low enrolment in Peri-urban ECE Centre.....	54

ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
CBO	Community Based Organization
CDC	Curriculum Development Centre
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSEN	Children with Special Educational Needs
DEBS	District Education Board Secretary
DESO	District Education Standards Officer
ECCDE	Early Childhood Care Development and Education
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD	Early Child Development
ECDC	Early Childhood Development Care
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ECEC	Early Childhood Education and Care
EFA	Education for All
ESO	Education Standards Officer
FBO	Faith Based Organization
FBO	Faith Based Organizations
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HIV	Human Immuno Virus
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
MoE	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
OECD	Organization of Early Childhood and Care Development
OVC	Orphan and Vulnerable Children
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Scientists
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
ZPA	Zambia Pre-School Association

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

The chapter presents the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, study questions, significance of the study, delimitation, limitations and operational definitions.

1.2 Background to the study

Education has always been high on the agenda of the government in Zambia, and several studies have been conducted on the provision of Early Childhood Education in private institutions. This study, however, emanates from the government's introduction of Early Childhood Education (ECE) in the mainstream education system.

Many terms have been used in policies, frameworks, strategies, researches and reports to refer to services for children's early years. For example UNICEF (2001) uses Early Childhood development (ECD), World Bank uses Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), World Vision International (2002) uses 'Early Childhood Care for Development (ECCD)' while UNESCO (2004) uses 'Early Childhood Development Care (ECDC)'. The Government of the Republic of Zambia is using Early Childhood Education (ECE). Much as they appear to differ in certain aspects, all of them are focusing on the same thing, the early years of a child to ensure proper growth and development. While these terms may be used interchangeably, it would be important for these organizations and researchers to come up with an agreed terminology for easy understanding.

Although the requirements of mothers and children from pregnancy to age eight include "early education and care" as well as parent education, home visits on nutrition, health and infant stimulation, community-based services, and a plethora of health, nutrition, sanitation and protective services, the author has opted to use the term "ECE". As commented by Baron (2005: 13), "Early Childhood Education is widely employed, embraces all sub-fields related to young children and permits the use of an integrated approach for achieving holistic child development." As such it covers all areas of child growth and development within his/her setting.

Previous studies suggest early years of child development to be critical in the formation of intelligence, personality and social behaviour, Baron (2005). As a result, investment in ECE provides greater returns through increased enrolment, retention, achievement, and completion of primary school level. To a larger extent this contributes to achievements of Millennium Development Goals 2 and 3 as well as Education for All (EFA).

Jenkins (2005:6) alluded that “critical brain development in one’s life occurs in the first five years of life.” He further indicates that studies in brain development have shown that most childhood vulnerabilities in the first three years are preventable. Using both formal and non-formal approaches, ECE must take into account the needs of the poor, the most disadvantaged, remote rural dwellers and nomads, ethnic and linguistic minorities, children, young people and adults affected by conflict, HIV/AIDS, hunger and poor health; and those with special learning needs (UNESCO, 2000).

Learning, according to Osakwe (2006) is a natural process of pursuing meaningful goals, discovering and constructing meaning from information and experience filtered through the learners’ unique perceptions, thoughts and feelings. Hence, when a child is born into the world learning commences immediately to enable him/her get adapted to the new system. The child learns to feed, hear, see and respond to stimuli, before learning to sit, walk, talk and behave like people around him.

It is worth mentioning that the best environment for learning is the home and surroundings that are in sympathy with the values of the child’s family and culture. According to the MoE (1992), pre-school education, for children aged 3-7, can be a valuable adjunct to home-based education and can foster the social, physical, mental and psychological development of the child. Furthermore, Early Childhood Education experiences, according to Barnard (2001), positively affect later home and school involvement in education. Therefore, a child who fails to acquire early education may suffer emotionally, socially, intellectually and even physically if he/she is trusted into primary school without a sustainable early childhood education experience that will give him/her a solid foundation in the primary school.

Early Childhood Education (ECE) has emerged as a theme in the African dialogue on education in recent years. Although much research has been done, concerns and issues in early childhood education exist throughout the world. Most importantly, the quality of these early childhood education programs needs to be examined. While the development and expansion of early childhood programs has greatly increased (Barnett, 1995), there have been only a limited number of instruments to monitor their implementation and measure their overall quality (NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, 2000).

Education is, therefore, perceived as a vehicle for tapping each individual's talents, potentiality, and develops their personalities so that they can improve their lives and transform their societies (Jomtien 1990). Furthermore, it is "an organized and sustained communication designed to bring about learning" (UNESCO, 1976). Pre-school education is called pre-primary education in the ISCED (International Standard Classification of Education, designed by UNESCO) and classified as "level 0" (OECD2012). On the contrary, primary and secondary educations are classified respectively as levels 1 and 2. This means that pre-school education is counted as a preparatory stage of organized schooling. The ISCED definition of pre-primary education is, "centre- or school-based programs designed to meet the educational and developmental needs of children at least 3 years of age, with staff adequately trained or qualified to provide educational programs for the children."

Children who participate in pre-school are more likely to enrol and remain in primary school, and achieve better results than those who cannot access comprehensive early childhood care (UNICEF, 2009). Further, early gains in school readiness due to early childhood education have been shown to have enormous positive economic and social impacts lasting well into adulthood, from higher educational attainment and less chance of involvement in criminal activity, to higher status employment and higher earnings (Schweinhart, 2007).

Pre-school should be included within the mainstream education system because not only does it serve the purpose of giving the child daily care while the parents are at work, it also

contributes towards the child's social and intellectual development. One solution to keeping track of differences among pre-primary programmes is to distinguish between 'all pre-primary programmes' and 'pre-primary programmes with special staff qualification requirements'. The first area covers all forms of organized and sustained activity taking place in schools or other institutional settings (as opposed to services provided in households or family settings). The second refers to programmes where at least one adult has a qualification characterized by training covering psychological and pedagogical subject matter.

The MOE (1996:8) refers to Early Childhood Education as "an organized form of education provision for children between the ages of three and six." Such provision is made in the form of pre-schools. Early Childhood Education makes a positive contribution to children's long term development and learning by facilitating an enabling and stimulating environment in these foundation stages of lifelong learning. The program, at the early childhood stage, helps to ensure opportunities for holistic learning and growth. The ECE programme needs to be determined by children's developmental and contextual needs, providing for more need based inputs and an enabling environment.

Early Childhood Education (ECE) is not a new phenomenon in Zambia; it started in the colonial era. Historically, the Zambian government's participation in Early Childhood Education has been minimal. The Day Nurseries Act of 1957 was the first innovative step towards recognition of the importance of Early Childhood Education (ECE) by the colonial government. This Act is still in effect and provides legal backing for anyone capable of offering Early Childhood Education. Despite gaining independence in 1964, Zambia did not include Early Childhood Education in the mainstream education system; it was operated at the discretion of social welfare departments by local authorities, local communities, non-governmental organizations, private individuals and families (MOE, 1996). The declaration of the achievement of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) by 2015, as alluded to by the Education for All goals, required that nations provide Early Childhood Education. At the 2000 World Education Forum in Dakar, governments were called on to develop and implement policies to achieve the six EFA goals (UNESCO, 2007). Hence it has become a

fundamental requirement for Zambia and other nations of the world (UNESCO, 2010) to provide Early Childhood Education.

In 1972 the Zambia Pre-school Association (ZPA) was created as an umbrella organization to look into issues of Early Childhood Education by taking charge of the nursery and pre-school matters in the country (ZPA, 1975). Since then, the ZPA has broadened its mandate to include training of teachers for Early Childhood Education. It is worth noting that in the past and for many years, no single organization was mandated with the responsibility of running the activities of Early Childhood Education. The local authorities merely maintained registers of all Childhood Centres within their localities without monitoring and evaluating their performance. The Education Reform (1977) indicated that pre-school education would not be available to every child for a long time to come but its development, through provision of more facilities to cater for more children, both in rural and urban areas, would be encouraged.

All the activities of Early Childhood Education have been placed under the authority of the Ministry of Education, as outlined in the National Education Policy “Educating Our Future” (1996).

The emphasis on provision of Early Childhood Care, Development and Education in Zambia strengthened after the resolve of the Jomtien Conference on Education for All(1990) and the Dakar Framework of 2000 in Senegal. The Dakar Framework on Education for All (EFA) reaffirmed the Jomtien recommendations and committed national governments to provide comprehensive ECE policies and to address challenges of child development.

Children have a right, as expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to receive education (UNICEF, 1990), and Early Childhood Education must be considered part of that right. Early Childhood Education provides a sound basis for learning and helps to develop skills, knowledge, personal competence and confidence and a sense of social responsibility. Therefore, every child,

including children from deprived socio-economic backgrounds and other disadvantaged groups, should have access to Early Childhood Education services of good quality.

According to Teguma, M et.al (2012: p.12), “Common challenges which developed countries face in enhancing the quality of ECE include:1) improving staff qualifications, education and competences; 2) recruitment; 3) professional development; 4) staff evaluation and monitoring; and 5) working conditions and retention.” Developing nations may have other challenges in addition to the list, such as lack of appropriate infrastructure, inadequate learning and teaching materials, long distances between schools and homes, illiteracy among parents, poor health conditions, among others.

Studies in developing countries, however, show that Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs lead to higher levels of primary school enrolment and educational performance, which in turn positively affect employment opportunities later in life. On the contrary, children who start school late and lack the necessary skills to be able to learn constructively are more likely to fall behind or drop out of school completely, often perpetuating a cycle of poverty. Teguma et.al (2012: p.16) argues that “ECE lays the foundation for subsequent stages in life, such as better student performance, less poverty, more equitable outcomes, less dropouts and greater labour market success.”

The role of the Ministry of Education (MOE) is to encourage and facilitate the establishment of pre-school programs especially in rural areas, train teachers, develop curriculum materials and monitor standards in the provision of Early Childhood Education.

Using the concept ‘Annexing’, the Government of the Republic of Zambia has introduced ECE centres in the mainstream government primary schools. A number of primary schools have begun implementing the provision of Early Childhood Education in Zambia. This study sets out to investigate factors affecting the provision of ECE in Kabompo District of North-western Province of Zambia.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Following the directive by the MoE to introduce Early Childhood Education Centres in Primary Schools, some government schools have begun the implementation of ECE in Zambia. However, it appears there is a dearth of information on how Early Childhood Education is being provided in the mainstream primary school system. For this reason, this study sought to investigate factors affecting the provision of ECE in selected government primary schools of Kabompo District in North Western Zambia.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate factors affecting the provision of Early Childhood Education in selected Government Primary Schools of Kabompo District in North Western Zambia.

1.5 Main research objective

To investigate factors affecting the provision of Early Childhood Education in government primary school system in Kabompo.

1.6 Objectives of the study

The study was guided by the following objectives:-

1. To explore the perspectives of primary teachers and head teachers on the provision of Early Childhood Education in Kabompo district,
2. To establish the role of the District Education Board towards the effective Provision of ECE in Kabompo,
3. To ascertain the challenges faced by Early Childhood Education centres in Kabompo district,
4. To collect views from parents and other stakeholders on the provision of ECE in government primary schools.

1.7 Main Research Question

What factors affect the provision of Early Childhood Education in the mainstream government primary schools?

1.7.1 Sub-Research Questions

In order to obtain a complete picture of factors affecting the provision of Early Childhood Education in government primary schools in Kabompo District, the following research questions were investigated:-

1. What are the perspectives of primary teachers and head teachers on the provision of ECE in Kabompo district?
2. What role does the District Education Board play in ensuring effective implementation of the ECE policy in Kabompo?
3. What are the challenges in the implementation of ECE in Kabompo District?
4. How do parents and other stakeholders view the provision of ECE in government primary schools?

1.8 Significance of the Study

The study might provide valuable information on factors affecting the provision of Early Childhood Education in selected government primary schools of Kabompo District. The findings of the study might be useful to educational practitioners, policy makers and other stakeholders. The study might also contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the provision of Early Childhood Education in Zambia.

1.9 Delimitations

The study was conducted in the North Western Province of Zambia, particularly in Kabompo district. Other parts of the country were not included.

1.10 Limitations of the study

The study was conducted in Kabompo district of North Western Province of Zambia. To ensure equal chances of participation in the study, the study targeted all the government primary schools which annexed ECE centres to their institutions.

Some respondents were not very willing to participate in the study, especially when they learnt that there was no monetary gain. Others, though willing, did not provide detailed

information: Some left blank spaces in questionnaires thus limiting information necessary to the study.

Further, respondents such as head teachers and the DEBS were not willing to release information that might expose their failure to implement Early Childhood Education in their schools and the district respectively.

Most importantly, being a case study with a limited number of respondents, generalization of the findings may not be feasible; it was carried out in a small area, so the findings may not be generalized to the whole country but can serve as a basis for understanding how ECE is being provided in the mainstream government primary school system.

1.11 Conceptual Framework

This study was guided by the Early Childhood Education perspectives of Rudolf Steiner, Maria Montessori and Froebel's Kindergarten.

Rudolf Steiner founded the first Waldorf schools in Stuttgart, Germany, in 1919 (Ashley, 2008). The major goal of Waldorf schools was to help young children to adjust to both physical and spiritual facts of their existence and use them in the best way. In Waldorf schools, a teacher was seen as a gardener of the child's soul and cultivator of environment (Ogletree, 1996).

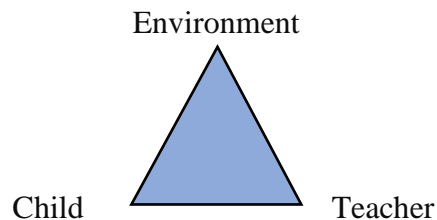
According to Rudolf Steiner, human beings were composed of three-fold being which were spirit, soul and body. The capacities of these three mechanisms unfold in early childhood, middle childhood and adulthood. In the early childhood years, which were considered as from birth to age of seven, the educational focus of Waldorf model was on play, bodily intelligence and oral language (Schmitt-Stegmann, 1997). In this process, imitation was the crucial aspect of life which help to identify the self with the environment by the help of active will. On the other hand, children's three dimensional paradigms help adults to recognize emotional, physical, cognitive development of young children. Because of this reason Waldorf teachers used to assess the development of young children in many ways to understand their balanced whole development. Consequently, portfolio method (teachers

observe, describe and characterize a child's school performance) was found to be more appropriate for Waldorf curriculum's assessment (Petrash, 2002).

Montessori ascertained that when offered the freedom to follow their own interests, children were inspired to learn. Children needed a prepared environment, a classroom complete with beautiful materials to stimulate their senses. They must be allowed to follow their own interests, at their own pace. In 1907, she opened her first 'Children's House', to international acclaim, in Rome. Pioneering a new form of education, centred specifically on the child, her principles and method spread throughout the world, producing a global vision for education that persists to this day. Maria Montessori died in the Netherlands in 1952.

In the Montessori approach to education and child development, the teacher, the child, and the environment created a learning triangle. The classroom was prepared by the teacher to encourage independence, freedom within limits, and a sense of order. The child, through individual choice, made use of what the environment offers to develop himself or herself, interacting with the teacher when support and/or guidance was needed.

An illustration below shows the hallmarks of the Montessori Method:-



The Montessori approach offered a broad vision of education as an aid to life. It was designed to help children with their task of inner construction as they grew from childhood to maturity. It succeeded because it drew its principles from the natural development of the child. Its flexibility provided a matrix within which each individual child's inner directives freely guided the child toward wholesome growth.

Froebel's Kindergarten was the first organized early-childhood educational method. As a keen observer of nature and humanity, Froebel approached human education from both a biological and a spiritual perspective. Froebel discovered that brain development was most

dramatic between birth and the age of three (3). Hence, he recognized the importance of beginning education earlier than was then practiced. The number of innovations that Froebel pioneered included play-based, child-centred, holistic education, parent involvement and training, educational paper folding, use of music, games, and movement activities for education.

Before Froebel, young children were not usually educated in a formal setting and playing was considered a waste of time. In fact, play was extremely important in the Kindergarten method; Froebel believed that children could become more aware of themselves and of their place in the universe if they were allowed to express themselves and be creative through play. To this end, he established the first "kindergarten, or child's garden," called the 'Play and Activity Institute' in 1837. Taneja (1990: p.127) asserts, "While in infancy, Froebel emphasizes the sensory development, in childhood, his emphasis is on play." Children at his school developed physical motor skills by cutting, stringing beads, sewing on cardboard and playing with clay. They sang songs, listened to stories, and developed social skills by playing with one another. In this manner, education was not a preparation for future life, but life around the child. Hence, early childhood education has to link school and home.

In Froebel's approach to education, children are nurtured by Kindergartners. The Kindergartners (teachers) guide the children through modelling, respect, conversation and experience, all while following the children's lead. According to Froebel (1909), "Children are like tiny flowers; they are varied and need care, but each is beautiful alone and glorious when seen in the community of peers."

Taneja (1990: p.135) declared that "Kindergarten method was the most original attractive and philosophical form of infant development the world had yet seen, and it had spread in all progressive lands."

From the above perspectives, there is need for an authentic policy to guide the ECE provision in Zambia. According to a UNESCO Policy Brief on Early Childhood Curriculum (2004), Early Childhood Education poses a dilemma for curriculum designers. The UNESCO Policy Brief states that, on one hand, there is need to guide the personnel in early

childhood centres, especially when they have low certification and little training because a curriculum helps to ensure that staff covers important learning areas, adopt a common pedagogical approach and reach for a certain level of quality across age groups and regions of a country. More so, it is noted that a curriculum can be a focus for further training. On the other hand, it is widely recognized that the aims of the ECE curriculum must be broad, and contribute to the child's overall development as well as to later success in school. This problem seems to be prevalent at present in Zambia.

1.14 Operational Definition of terms

Child Care	Education for children from birth to 2 years old.
Early Childhood Education	is an organized form of educational provision for children between the ages of three and six.
ECE Annexing	Attachment of Early Childhood Education centres to Government primary schools.
Illiteracy	Not being able to read and write.
Peri-urban school	A school at the out-skirts of a township.
Pre-school	Organized education for children below the age of seven.
Rural/Remote School	A school very far from the central part of a district.
Urban School	A school within township.

1.15 Organization of the study

The study consists of six chapters. The first chapter comprises the introduction, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, conceptual framework and operational definition of terms. The second chapter consists of a review of the literature, while the third chapter comprises the methodology.

The research findings are presented in chapter four and a discussion of these findings in chapter five. Lastly, chapter six presents the conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

The chapter presents a review of relevant literature on Early Childhood Education. The literature surveyed is presented under the following headings: Origins of Early Childhood Education, Education and Development, Relevance of Early Childhood education, a global view, components of a good ECE, effective ECE provision and Policy concerns on ECE.

2.2 The origins of Early Childhood Education

According to Houson (1980, p.3), “Early Childhood Education, as a distinct form of education, was non-existent prior to the 1800s. It was during the 1800s that people began to think of children as anything more than ‘small adults’ and to recognize that they needed to thrive upon special attention and consideration.” The concept of Early Childhood Education was brought into focus, as the nineteenth century began, by Johann Pestalozzi. Working with young children in Switzerland for thirty years and through his theorizing, writing and teaching, Pestalozzi became one of the famous and influential champions of Early Childhood Education in Europe. His first concern was that of care and education of the poor; most of his students were poor. He felt that education was the key to improving lives of the less privileged in society.

The emerging field of early childhood education was profoundly changed by Friedrich Wilhelm Froebel in 1837, when he opened the first Kindergarten in Germany (Houson, 1980). Froebel was deeply concerned about children. He rejected the idea that children were merely small adults to be treated as adults. He believed that children needed care and protection, in addition to instruction. He was very concerned with their moral development.

Froebel’s thinking concerning the education of young children was extremely progressive. For instance, he believed that a child’s early experiences have a profound effect upon the development of an adult personality. He further stipulated that childhood has value in itself, and is not just something people pass through on the way to adulthood. According to Froebel, children deserve the same rights and respect as adults and must be treated as individuals passing through a unique phase of life; parents and teachers must be patient and understanding. Froebel understood, as did Pestalozzi, that the emotional quality of a child’s

life is important, and that the child's emotional life is heavily affected by the quality of parental love. He realized that individual differences in interests and capabilities should be considered in devising a curriculum, and that any educational curriculum had to be related to the child's own experience. Froebel proposed 'play' as the most important activity for the optimum development of a child. All these ideas still permeate early childhood education thought globally.

By the end of nineteenth century, the Froebelian-type of Kindergartens were wide-spread. "The first American Kindergarten was opened in 1855 in Watertown by Mrs. Carl Schurz, who had studied in Germany under Froebel himself" (Houson 1980, p.9).

In the twentieth century, Early Childhood Education was further pursued by a female Italian physician, Maria Montessori, who was born in 1870. Her medical practices permitted her an interest in observing how children learn and in what capacities. Montessori ascertained that when offered freedom to follow their own interests, children are inspired to pursue education. Children need a prepared environment, a classroom complete with beautiful materials to entice their senses. They must be allowed to follow their own interests at their own pace. In 1907, she opened her first 'Children's House', to international acclaim, in Rome. Pioneering a new form of education, centred specifically on the child, her principles and method spread throughout the world, producing a global vision for education that persists to this day.

Montessori programs are now to be found over the entire globe. They have been adapted to many different languages and cultures. While some adhere to Montessori's original program, others have modified and expanded her techniques and materials.

Psychologists have also contributed greatly to the advent of Early Childhood Education. Houson, J.P. (1980, p.14) says, "Sigmund Freud's work, although basically psychological and not educational is often taken as important within the field of early childhood education." Sigmund, founder of the psychoanalytic approach, emphasized the importance of the child's early years in the development of a full-blown, adult personality.

It is disheartening to note here that early childhood education began long ago, yet not gained great importance in most of the Sub-Saharan African countries. It seems education is not solving problems that have faced mankind throughout history. In other words, the problems of the past continue to grow. Even so, Africa should wake up to implement early education for the betterment of generations to come.

2.3 Education and development

According to Cornwell (2000:159), “the contribution and relevance of education was officially recognized in 1948 when the United Nations listed it as one of the basic human rights in the Convention of the declaration of Human Rights. Since then it has been declared across the globe that “Education is a fundamental human right.” Its contribution was later reaffirmed by the World Declaration on Education for All (Jomtien 1990). It was further supported by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNICEF, 1990) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF 1990). Thus all children, young people and adults have the right to benefit from an education that will meet their basic learning needs in the best and fullest sense of the term.

The Jomtien Conference on Education for All (1990) reaffirmed that Education is a vehicle for tapping each individual’s talents and potential, and develops their personalities, so that they can improve their lives and transform their societies. It is also perceived as a key not only to sustainable development but also to peace and stability within and among countries. This is because it provides indispensable means for effective participation in the societies and economies of Third World countries, which are being affected by rapid globalization (UNESCO 2000). Increased levels of quality education have over the years enabled men and women to make more informed choices about family size, career and ways of participating in and transforming their communities. It is therefore important to nurture young children in safe and caring environments that allow them to become healthy, alert, and secure and be able to learn so that they can develop into responsible and productive citizens.

According to Cornwell (2000:160), education is “a powerful tool that can work against the negative effects of underdevelopment and poverty in Zambia and other Third World

countries.” This is why government leaders of developing countries are tirelessly working at ensuring that education occupies a central place in all development efforts. As such it is important to ensure that the learning and development needs of all young people and children are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programs. Education for All (EFA) must encompass not only primary education, but more importantly ECE programs which provide a foundation for all the other EFA goals.

2.4 Relevance of ECE to development

World over, there is now an increasing recognition of the importance of ECE, as this sets the basis for learning, behaviour and health through the school years and into adult life. The short and long-term benefits of ECE programs for children are enormous and cannot be over emphasized. As alluded by Young (2002), the benefits have been noted across the board by educators, socialists, behavioural scientists, economists, neuroscientists, biologists and even politicians. Young and Enrique (2009) observed that by providing basic health care, adequate nutrition, nurturing and stimulation in a caring environment, it helps to ensure children's progress in primary school, continuation through secondary school, and successful entry into the work force.

Myers (1999) examines various reasons why societies and governments should invest in ECE and most of which have greater impact in the country's development.

2.4.1 Children have a right to live and develop

From the human rights perspective he argues that children have a right to live and develop to their full potential. This is in support to the EFA goal on education (UNESCO 2000) that indicates that education is a fundamental human right that has to be supported by all people. Every individual should be accorded an opportunity to get education as much as possible. As such, denying children a chance to participate in ECD is in essence denying them an opportunity to get the best education for their lives.

2.4.2 Transmission of societal values

From the moral and social values argument, he says that, through children humanity transmits its values beginning in infancy. That is to say that quality investment in children has a lasting impact on continuation and passing on of societal values and development

agenda. ECE provision is a viable means of passing on the future development potential of any country (Young & Mustard 2008).

2.4.3 Economic benefits

Myers (1999) adds on to say that society benefits economically from improved early development through greater productivity in later life. This is possibly because quality and early development in individuals results in quality leaders and citizens who economically contribute to their societal development. According to Young & Enrique (2002:8), “early interventions help children to escape the web of poverty.” Amongst the world’s 6 billion people, 1.2 billion live on less than US\$1 a day (Government of Malawi 2002) As such ECE helps to not only attack the worst effects of poverty on children but it also effectively helps to break the vicious cycle of poverty transmitted across generations (Myers 1999). This is then a key factor if countries are to move towards attaining the MDG on education, health, gender as well as on poverty reduction. Van der Gaag (2002), from his research, also noted that investment in ECE helps to build social capital and equity which are crucial for prosperity and reduction of poverty across the globe.

Myers (1999) further indicates that investments in ECE are preventive and can reduce the need for costly social welfare or remedial programs in schools, health costs as well as judicial and criminal systems costs. Inadequate care and attention in the early years of life results in adults, who are in conflict with the law, break societal values or drop out of school. Thus countries in Africa would save increased wealth by investing proportionately in the early years of children’s lives.

In his economic theory on ECE, Heckman, J. (2010) supported government intervention in early childhood programs to reduce achievement gaps. He also suggested that governments engage the private sector, for resources: According to Heckman, despite strained government budgets, it would be possible to fund effective new programs if they replaced the numerous ineffective programs that currently receive government support. Few public programs of any sort would meet the standard set by the high rates of return earned by early childhood programs. Implementing high-quality early childhood programs would ease the budgetary burden of remediation. Engaging the private sector—including philanthropic,

community, and religious organizations—would bolster the resource base supporting early childhood. “Bringing in diverse partners would encourage experimentation with new approaches that build on the success of templates” (Heckman 2011, 83). This theory clearly maintains that private individuals, families and non-governmental organizations should continue with the operations of ECE centres in Zambia because it would help to provide some resources in fewer ECE centres in government primary schools.

2.4.5 It helps to reduce inequalities

According to social equity guru’s perspectives, ECE services help to modify distressing socioeconomic beliefs, practices and gender related inequalities (Myers 1999). As it has also been argued elsewhere (World Vision 2002, UNICEF 2000), ECE programs are valuable platforms for child participation in development programs. ECE focuses on learning through play, social interaction, sharing, exploring, questioning and problem solving. It helps to develop the capacity of young children to explore and learn about their social-economic and political environment hence making informed contributions to the society. Children who have gone through proper ECE become responsible adults as they grow up while shaped to make meaningful contributions to the development of their community.

2.5 Early Childhood Education – Global View

According To UNESCO (2009), “Recently, national governments have begun to recognize the power of ECE to develop equitable educational provision for all children. Ghana, Gambia and Kenya plan to develop ECE for poor, remote and disadvantaged children. Cambodia has gone a step further by including ECE in its National Plan for achieving universal basic education by 2015.”

2.5.1 Japan

Teguma, et.al (2012: p.11) indicates that “ECE is a topic of increased policy interest in Japan, where improving quality in the ECE sector is a subject of growing importance The OECD has identified five effective policy levers to encourage quality in the sector: 1) quality goals and regulations; 2) curriculum and guidelines; 3) workforce; 4) family and community engagement; and 5) data, research and monitoring.” Of the five aspects, Japan considers improving quality in the workforce as a priority; it considers well-educated, well-

trained professionals the key factor in providing high-quality ECEC with the most favourable cognitive and social outcomes for children.

According to Teguma, et.al (2012), Japanese preschool education has been influenced more or less by foreign educational philosophies and methods, such as the Frobelian Method, since the latter half of the 19th century; child-centred education from America and Europe since the 1920's, including that of Dewey and Montessori; nursing theory from the Soviet Union from the 1930's to the 1950's; and the Reggio Emilia approach from Italy since the 1990's. In any case, they have been digested and adapted to conform to the Japanese climate and context, and are in the process of changing.

Zhang Yan (1998), visited Japanese ECE settings in 1996 as a researcher from China, and described the characteristics of Japanese pre-school education and care as follows:-

1. Free playtime is much longer than that of Chinese ECE institutions, and teachers tend to play with children just like their peers, playing the hidden role of activating children's play. This approach is quite different from that used by Chinese ECE teachers.
2. Japanese ECE does not overprotect young children, letting them wear less clothes with the feet often bare, experience small and slight injuries, etc. On the other hand, teachers keep contact with parents about children's daily health, behaviour, and learning, using notebooks for two-way communication.
3. On the playground there are slopes, small hills, some tall trees, various places where children can play with sand, water, and small animals and plants, and where children can enjoy trying and erring. Outdoor activities as well as indoor activities are very well facilitated.
4. Educational content is greatly related to seasonal events or things. Some traditional festivals, which were transported from China a long time ago but have already vanished, are still alive in Japanese kindergartens and day nurseries.

5. Kindergarten pupil's lunch boxes made by their mothers are beautiful like fine art. Many daily personal items used in kindergarten are mothers' handmade.

2.5.2 China

In China, Preschool education is vital and begins at age of three (3). According to Emily and Albert (2007), pre-school education was one of the targets in the 1985 education reform. This reform articulated that pre-school facilities were to be established in buildings made available by public enterprises, production teams, municipal authorities, local groups, and families. The government announced that it depended on individual organizations to sponsor their own preschool education and that preschool education was to become a part of the welfare services of various government organizations, institutes and collectively operated enterprises. Costs for pre-school education varied according to services rendered. Officials also called for more preschool teachers with more appropriate training.

Although the Ministry of Education is officially responsible for promoting ECE in China, only a small number of ECE institutions are run by government departments and few of them are located in rural China. With only low levels of support from local governments, most ECE institutions in rural China suffer from unqualified teachers, poorly developed curricula and inadequate and poorly maintained facilities. Studies exist that describe the nature of China's ECE in both urban areas and rural areas (World Bank, 1999; Yu, 2005; Zeng, Zhu, & Chen, 2007) (Accessed 15/07/2013).

2.5.3 Australia

According to the Commonwealth of Australia (2011), the Australian Government's agenda for early childhood education and child care focuses on providing Australian families with high-quality, accessible and affordable integrated early childhood education and child care. The agenda has a strong emphasis on connecting with schools to ensure all Australian children are fully prepared for learning and life. Investing in the health, education, development and care of our children benefits children and their families.

Historically, policy and funding responsibility for Early Childhood Education and the licensing of education and care providers has resided with state and territory governments, Commonwealth of Australia (2011). They have continued to make substantial investment in the early childhood sector, including in providing or funding preschools/kindergartens, early childhood intervention services, child and maternal health services and family support services.

The Commonwealth Government first became financially involved in child care upon institution of the Child Care Act of 1972. Over the years, it also has invested substantially in the early childhood sector. This has included a national system of subsidies for families using long day care services, and supports to and an accreditation system for these services; health (e.g. nutrition programs); and family support (e.g. Family Tax Benefit, and more recently Paid Parental Leave, parenting programs and community development initiatives).

2.5.4 Canada

Compulsory schooling in Canada may start as early as age 5 but usually starts at age 6. Every province/territory provides publicly funded kindergarten (which is compulsory in three provinces) for children who are age 5. While it tends not to be a legislated entitlement, in practice, kindergarten is available to virtually all 5-year-olds whose parents wish to use it.

Like elsewhere, Early Childhood Education prepares children for elementary school. Doherty (2003) mentions that readiness for Grade 1 is identified as a primary goal for kindergarten in all provinces/territories and school readiness is often identified as a goal for child care. In Canada, the term “school readiness” is usually understood to mean more than the development of pre-academic skills. It includes the need for good physical and emotional health, a positive self-concept, a willingness to try new things, and the communication, social and cognitive skills to take advantage of the learning opportunities that the formal school setting provides.

The main ECE services are kindergarten and child care. Other services within the parameters of this report include Aboriginal Head Start and nursery schools/preschools in those

provinces/territories where such programs are regulated under child care legislation, Doherty (2003). Young children and their families are also supported by the publicly funded health care system, public education, by various government income transfers such as the National Child Benefit (NCB), maternity and parental leave benefits, and child and family services such as family resource programs.

Child care in Canada was first established as a service to enable women to engage in paid employment; this remains the primary goal for child care for governments in many provinces/territories, Doherty (2003). In contrast, nursery schools/preschools and kindergartens were established to provide educational experiences for children. This dichotomy between care to support female labour force participation and education for children continues and is central to Canadian ECEC. A third goal for child care that sometimes emerges is that of providing a developmental program for children deemed to be at risk.

The primary purpose of child care is the provision of care for children in the parents' absence, generally so that parents can be employed or engaged in training/education, Doherty (2003). However, by setting standards and by requiring or encouraging training in ECD, most provinces/territories indicate an expectation that the services will also support and enhance children's development. While, with the exception of Quebec, provinces/territories do not have defined curricula for child care, it seems that generally programs focus on play-based activities. Six provinces/territories provide part-day programs called nursery schools or preschools under the child care legislation for children aged approximately 2 to 5. The intent of nursery schools/preschools is more related to the provision of educational or developmental experiences for children than to support parental employment or education.

The extent to which an ECEC program is accessible for a child depends upon several factors. First, there has to be an available space and then, if there are eligibility criteria, the child or family has to be able to meet them. In addition, if there is a fee, the parent has to be able to afford it. Finally, the program must be appropriate (i.e. able to meet both the child's and the family's needs).

2.5.5 Zambia

The Jomtien World Declaration on Education For All of 1990, the Dakar Conference of 2000 and the 2000 Millennium Conference emphasized the need to provide Education For All by the year 2015 (UNESCO Report, 2003/2004). Since this was an important milestone in the history of education, Early Childhood Education fraternity was not an exception in many, if not all African countries. Zambia was among the African countries that acknowledged the ECE inclusion in the main education system.

The Zambian government has considered Early Childhood Education as of great importance to the nation's Ministry of Education (MoE). Currently, under the MoE, educational provision is guided by the national education policy document, *Educating Our Future*, which focuses on equitable access to quality education at all levels (MoE, 1996). The Fifth National Development Plan 2006-2010, a policy paper outlining educational provision by the MoE, defines Early Childhood Care, Development and Education as the level of education, both informal and formal, which a child from birth to age six undergoes prior to reaching the compulsory age (seven years) of entry to a primary or basic school (MoE, 2006). This policy paper outlines critical strategies to develop a national Early Childhood Care, Development and Education curriculum framework and to produce and distribute teaching materials for early learners. Additionally, it states the need to develop monitoring and evaluation instruments for this level of education. Regarding the development of ECE, it further notes major challenges in this sub-sector in past years: fragmented curriculum; lack of standards, monitoring and supervision; and the confinement of ECE to pre-schooling instead of offering a more comprehensive learning experience (Kamerman, 2006).

The MoE states, in its Strategic Plan 2003-2007, that Early Childhood Care and Education is an integral part of basic education, especially in the rural areas. Pre-schools are operated by local authorities, Faith Based Organization, local communities, NGOs and private individuals (UNESCO, 2006). However, because education at this level is in the hands of private providers, financing of early childhood care and education has remained unclear. Home-based pre-schools in urban areas have mushroomed, albeit at the expense of quality education. It has been documented that much of the curricula of private pre-schools are

outdated and inadequate for this age group and the home environments are not conducive to learning (UNESCO, 2006).

The Curriculum for Early Childhood Education in Zambia does not aim at teaching children so that they are able to do certain things, but to achieve and acquire life skills that would be useful in their later life. Therefore Early Childhood Education is not only necessary but also vital for total development of the child. The curriculum includes social studies, Environmental Science, Literacy and Languages, Mathematics and Expressive Arts as the learning areas at this level of education. The syllabi are divided into two sections. Section one provides syllabi for ages 3 to 4 years where as section two is syllabi for children aged 5 to 6 years. Children learn through play. Teachers and caregivers should provide adequate play opportunities for children to explore the environment (Government of the Republic Zambia, 2013). A well designed curriculum can enable preschool children to attain primary education with less difficulties.

Table 1: Statistics for grade one entrants with pre-school experience 2004-2010 as stated by Matafwali and Munsaka (2011).

NATIONAL/YEAR	2004	2005	2007	2008	2009	2010
Male	50.40%	48.60%	48.30%	49.00%	47.60%	48.40%
Female	49.60%	51.40%	51.70%	51.00%	52.40%	51.60%
Total	15.90%	20.30%	17.10%	16.10%	17.20%	17.30%
PROVINCIAL/YEAR	2004	2005	2007	2008	2009	2010
Central	12.70%	20.40%	21.20%	21.20%	18.50%	21.20%
Copper belt	37.90%	35.80%	29.30%	30.20%	32.30%	35.50%
Eastern	5.90%	9.90%	9.10%	8.10%	7.30%	7.60%
Luapula	5.70%	10.60%	8.70%	6.80%	7.10%	8.00%
Lusaka	34.10%	48.50%	39.20%	44.30%	42.80%	45.80%
N/Western	6.00%	10.10%	6.60%	7.30%	6.10%	8.00%
Northern	5.90%	11.00%	6.20%	3.30%	4.50%	5.10%
Southern	17.70%	19.20%	18.70%	16.40%	18.60%	18.50%
Western	4.40%	5.80%	5.00%	2.80%	4.00%	4.20%

The table above shows inconsistencies in the provision of Early Childhood Education in the country by private organisations in Zambia for the period 2004 to 2010. This is contrary to the indication in the major policy documents, Educational Reforms (1977), Focus on Learning (1992), Educating Our Future (1996), and even the Education Act (2011), which state that the education system would start with pre-schooling. The picture reveals that the rural provinces of Zambia are still lagging behind in the provision of the program. But what gives hope is the annexing of ECE centres to the mainstream education system, meaning the government is taking full responsibility in the provision of ECE in Zambia.

2.6 The components of good Early Childhood Education

While parental and family care is an important component of ECE development, a good quality ECE program should be a multi-dimensional educational program with a focus on the holistic development of children in the early stages of their childhood. One of ECE's goals is to enable children to be "more ready" for primary school education. It has been shown that ECE can be a major input into a child's formal education. A number of studies link ECE to increase in school readiness for primary school, and it has been shown that school readiness is an important predictor of early school achievement (Forget 2007). There are various elements which make a desirable Early Childhood Education or programme. According to Bowman, B., M Donovan and M. Burns (2001, p.7), a good ECE program should have the following characteristics:

- i. it should begin at an appropriate starting age,
- ii. it should be provided in a physical space that is safe and one that has certain specialized facilities,
- iii. it should be given by professional care givers, attentive to the individualized needs and progress of the child,
- iv. it should include the involvement of parents.
- v. it should be built around a good learning environment with an effective, well-thought out curriculum; While no single curriculum or pedagogical approach can be identified as best, (Bowman, p.8) asserts that children who attend well-planned, high-quality ECE programs in

which the curriculum aims are specified and integrated across domains tend to learn more and are better prepared to master the complex demands of formal schooling.

In Zambia, ECE is beginning at the age of three (3). The Zambian government has begun providing ECE in the already existing infrastructure that includes facilities which were designed for children above the age of six (6). Most of the ECE centres do not have care givers who can be attentive to the needs of children. Notably, also, parents of ECE children seem not to be very much involved in the education of their children. It is vital, therefore, that the government considers such important requisites in every ECE centre.

2.7 Effective Early Childhood Education provision

The following are some quality-elements in ECE provision which must be exhibited by every successful pre-school education programme:-

2.7.1 Environment

Environments for young children must be physically safe, socially enhancing, emotionally nurturing, and intellectually stimulating. Classrooms are well equipped, with sufficient appropriate materials and toys. This carefully designed setting promotes self-selection by children from a wide array of age appropriate materials. Both the classroom and the playground invite children to engage in active learning whereby they construct their own knowledge through interaction with adults, other children and materials. The equipment and materials that support this learning are easily adapted to the diverse interests, needs and abilities of children. Children and adults with special needs have easy access to the indoor and outdoor spaces and materials. Within this setting, the teaching team creates a climate of acceptance and they are attentive and responsive to individual children, that is, their interests, strengths, capabilities, culture, race and gender.

One of the ECE proponents, Maria Montessori, emphasized the need for an appropriate educational environment. Montessori's education method called for free activity within a "prepared environment", meaning, an educational environment tailored to basic human characteristics, to the specific characteristics of children at different ages, and to the individual personalities of each child, Paula Polk Lillard (2011). The function of the environment is to allow the child to develop independence in all areas according to his or

her inner psychological directives. In addition to offering access to the Montessori materials appropriate to the age of the children, Standing (1957) explains that the environment should exhibit the following characteristics:-

- a. Construction in proportion to the child and his/her needs,
- b. Beauty and harmony, cleanliness of environment,
- c. Order,
- d. An arrangement that facilitates movement and activity,
- e. Limitation of materials, so that only material that supports the child's development is included.

Therefore, the ECE annexed centres should exhibit some of these characteristics for a desirable provision of Early Childhood Education in government primary schools.

2.7.2 Curriculum for ECE

The pre-school curriculum enables children to reach a deeper understanding of a subject when they can make meaningful connections across several disciplines. These connections are achieved through the implementation of inquiry-based projects or themes. Curriculum content is based on the observations of children's interests and questions children ask or shared experiences within the natural environment. While resource books and curriculum guides can be helpful, one need to bear in mind is that authentic early childhood curriculum comes from children themselves, Jayne (2006). Opportunities for art, music/movement, science, mathematics, block play, social studies, sand, water, dramatic play and outdoor play are provided daily. Pre-kindergarten learning experiences are integrated across content areas and are augmented with a variety of multicultural and non-sexist activities and materials that are adapted to meet the special needs of individual children, English language learners and children with disabilities. The teaching approach is well planned and intentional to help children cumulatively master more complex skills and knowledge. Communication occurs throughout the day, with mutual listening, talking/responding and encouragement to use reasoning and problem-solving skills. The primary focus of the curriculum is to emphasize the importance of developing the whole child, in the learning domains, of social, emotional,

physical, creative expression/aesthetic and cognitive development that includes language/literacy development, mathematical and scientific thinking.

The Curriculum for ECE in Zambia emphasises, “hands-on experiences through manipulation of objects and models, interaction with nature through observation of living and non-living things in their environment” (MoE: 2013). The learning areas are in line with those offered at primary education to promote and support the linkage between the Early Childhood and primary education. It is, therefore, hoped that this curriculum will make learning in ECE centres more meaningful and enjoyable as it is highly activity oriented.

2.7.3 Assessment in Pre-school

Assessment is the systematic process of gathering relevant information so that legal and instructional decisions are arrived at (Sternberg, 1998). Child assessment is an attempt to find out what a child can do and how he/she does it, and also to realize the effectiveness of the teacher. After all, teaching and learning are reciprocal processes that influence each other and only through assessment can it be determined how well the teacher is teaching and how well the student or child is learning (Kellough & Kellough, 1999). Information on assessment helps in planning a curriculum to meet the child’s individual needs. Assessment occurs within the context of everyday experiences; beginning with the information and observations shared by family members. As the child moves from home to the pre-school, assessment continues as teachers and other staff members observe and record behaviours throughout the day. These systematically collected observations inform instructional practices about how to support children’s strengths and abilities and provide the foundation for meaningful parent-teacher conferences about a child’s progress. An assessment tool with a clear protocol that measures children’s progress in all learning domains is critical.

In Montessori schools, assessment is done through teacher observations, anecdotal records, and parent-teacher conference forms. The results of Roemer’s study (as cited in Dunn, 2000) indicated that besides those methods, 90% of Montessori schools used some form of standardized tests. In ‘Montessori House’, early childhood education settings, anecdotal records, informal conferences with students, observation of students, one-to-one interviews with students, checklists of lessons, demonstration of skill mastery and standardized

achievement tests are used to assess each child's development areas independently (Dunn, 2000).

In early childhood years, development is so rapid that it is very difficult to assess development of young children appropriately (Gober, 2002), and because of this reason assessment in early childhood education is different from the concepts of education in older ages. Finding out appropriate ways to assess development of young children might be very difficult for both teachers and researchers. There is, however, need for the MoE to provide guidelines on assessment of pre-school children in the ECE centres annexed to government primary schools.

2.7.4 Materials and Equipment

In early childhood stage, a child learns through interacting with the immediate environment, hence environment should be stimulating and should have a variety of materials to arouse and sustain the child's curiosity, interest and promote his learning. According to the Ministry Of Women and Child Development, Government of India (Curriculum Framework, 2012, p 14-15), an effective Early Childhood Education program should exhibit some essential play and learning materials that include:-

- i. adequate supply of developmentally appropriate play materials to foster all round development,
- ii. materials and equipment which are safe, clean and in good conditions,
- iii. sufficient quantity of materials to enable learners work in small groups and should easily be accessible by the child,
- iv. materials which promote gross and fine motor development and help the child to discover and explore including constructing and reconstructing.
- v. It should promote sensory exploration and social interaction along with creative expressions through arts, painting, etc.

Adequate space is required when setting up classroom teaching/learning centres. Three basic settings are needed: a place for the whole class to work together, a place for students to work independently, and a place for teacher-directed small group work. It is helpful to use a map

of the classroom with scale cut-outs of furniture and equipment to try different arrangements. There is need to arrange the room in a way to better accommodate children's needs; this should be characteristic of the annexed ECE centres in the government primary schools in Zambia.

2.7.5 Comprehensive ECE Services

Comprehensive services are an integral part of an effective early childhood program. They include health services, physical examinations, disease prevention, vision and hearing screening, nutrition services, social services and counselling. These services are designed to build upon the strengths and alleviate the needs of young children and their families. Comprehensive services in the child's home language must be provided for children who come from homes where the predominant language spoken is other than English. There is need for such services in the annexed ECE centres in the main primary school system for safety and health of pre-schoolers.

2.7.6 Professional Development

Professional development services, specifically geared towards early childhood education are an essential component of high-quality developmentally appropriate practices. These services must be rigorous, content relevant, organized, strategic, as well as sustained throughout the year to ensure the effective implementation of standards-based developmentally appropriate early education instruction. Reflecting best available research and practice in teaching, learning and leadership, professional development activities are focused on areas related to process quality, such as teacher-child interactions, child assessment, early literacy, mathematical and scientific learning, English language learners, students with disabilities, music/movement, the arts, family involvement, physical education, social studies, social and emotional development, the Speaking and Listening Standards. Professional development is supposed to be provided by the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the district standards officers, to ensure that the teaching staff and administrators are provided with information to strengthen overall program implementation in terms of instruction, assessment, family involvement, support services, transition and continuity. A minimum of four (4) professional development days for staff

must be provided each year in the ECE centres to improve on quality provision of the program.

2.7.7 Staff Qualifications

The critical relationship between staff experience, high quality training, commensurate compensation and the effectiveness of a program is well documented. Staff, teachers, social workers, and administrators, must have in-depth knowledge of child development and how young children learn. All teachers providing instruction in pre-school must have a certification valid for service in the early childhood grades. A special education certification or license is required where instruction is provided to students who are classified as Children with Special Educational Needs (CSEN). The government should adequately deploy ECE teachers with valid qualifications in all the ECE centres, with a minimum of Diploma.

2.7.8 Leadership and Administrative Supervision

The school leadership should articulate the pre-school philosophy to parents, staff and the community, and it also serves as a source of support for staff and families by facilitating ongoing opportunities for learning and development. Alongside these responsibilities, the supervisor continually assesses program quality, institutes measures of accountability to strengthen the instructional practices and promotes curriculum implementation. Therefore, there is need for head teachers of ECE centres to undergo training in Early Childhood Education for proper implementation of the program.

2.8 Policy on ECE

The right to education imposes an obligation upon countries to ensure that all citizens have opportunities to meet their basic learning needs. As such governments have a task of ensuring that each human being has the opportunity to attain some basic education. Such opportunities can best be attained when proper policies are formulated and supported by both politicians and the government.

A policy is typically described as a deliberate plan of action to guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes (Althaus, Bridgman & Glyn, 2007). It is developed to guide actions toward those that are most likely to achieve a desired outcome. The term may apply to government, private sector organizations, groups, and individuals. Policies can be

understood as management, administrative mechanisms, political and financial obligations arranged to reach explicit goals. If Education ForAll (EFA) goals are to be achieved then Educational policies on ECE are critical for the country's development.

In some developing nations of the Middle East, Latin America, and Asia, official policies for children's services began to be adopted in the late 1960s and 1970s. According to Arango (1990), "In the developing world, the first national-level agency to promote integrated national ECE programmes and policies appears to be the Colombian Institute for Family Welfare that was established in 1968." Governments, through relevant ministries, have the primary responsibility of formulating ECE and education policies within the context of national EFA goals, and Zambia is no exception. ECE Policy implementation is then supposed to have clearly stated guidelines if children are to develop in a proper environment. As alluded by Baron (2005: 3), "Child growth and development can be improved through implementing policies that help institutions and communities to identify and meet essential developmental needs of children and parents."

According to the MoE Strategic Plan 2003-2007, the EFA Framework of Action (2004) and as reflected in the National Development Plan for Education 2006-2010, "Early Childhood Care, Education and Development (ECCED) is the level of education (informal, non-formal or formal) which a child (0-6 years) undergoes before he/she attains the compulsory age (7 years in Zambia) of entry to a primary/basic school." The existing National Policy of the Ministry of Education (MoE, 1996) focuses on children 3-6 years old, and not on the age group 0-2 years.

In line with the 2004 GRZ Gazette, the Ministry's concern has been the establishment of Early Childhood programmes for children living in rural areas and poor urban areas. According to the GRZ Gazette, the Ministry of Education resolved to work with partner ministries, district and urban councils, local communities, NGOs, religious groups, families and individuals in order to increase access at this level.

To ensure that the rural and less privileged access ECE, the government announced that preschool education be provided in the mainstream primary schools, and in line with the 'Free Education Policy.' According to the Patriotic Front Manifesto (2011-2016), the government would provide and facilitate early childhood education centres and deploy teachers in all local government wards in Zambia.

2.9 Conclusion

In order for children to move smoothly from home to preschool and through the early elementary grades, there must be similarities in goals, philosophy and expectations for children, families, and staff. Any special needs of children should be provided within the early childhood setting to reduce the fragmentation of services and to facilitate inclusion. Families are to be encouraged to participate in all aspects of preschool. Furthermore, it is critical that all pre-school providers ensure curriculum continuity through the implementation of a strategic plan that promotes articulation with their participating collaborators.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

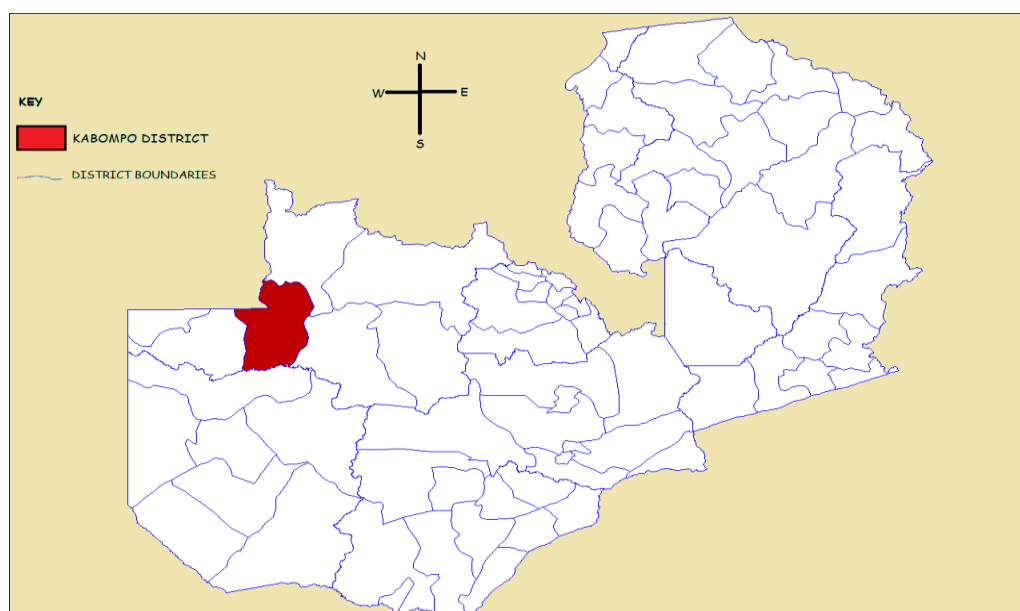
This chapter presents methodology which was used in carrying out the study. It includes research design, target population, sample size, sampling procedure, research instruments, data collection procedure, data analysis and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

Yin (1994:19) describes a Research Design as “an action plan for getting from here to there.” He further defines a research design as a “blueprint” of the research, which deals with four problems: (1) what question to study, (2) what data is relevant, (3) what data to collect, and (4) how to analyse the results. The relevance of a research is, therefore, to avoid collecting data that is not relevant to the research question (Banda, 2002).

The study employed a case study design, in which both qualitative and quantitative techniques were used. The concept of mixing methods is based on the recognition that the mixed methodology rests on the premises that the weakness in each single method will be compensated by the counter-balancing strengths of another; which is very powerful for gaining insights and results, and assisting in making inferences and drawing conclusions (Blackwell, 1994).

Plate 1: Study Area - Kabompo District



The study was conducted in Kabompo district of North Western province. It is among the districts that have already responded to the call by the government to start implementing ECE in the mainstream primary school system. Further, the district was appropriate in the study because it enriched the study by providing information for urban, peri-urban and rural/remote settings.

3.3 Target Population

The study targeted teachers from the five primary schools that have begun implementing Early Childhood Education, the ECE class teachers, school managers, the Ministry of Education authorities, parents and other stakeholders in Kabompo District, forming a total population of 612.

3.4 Sample Size

A sample is a small proportion of the selected population for observation and analysis. By observing the characteristics of a sample which is diverse, representative, accessible and knowledgeable in a study area, findings can be generalized (Kombo and Tromp, 2006).

A sample of 70 participants was drawn from three schools, comprising 37 primary class teachers, 3 head teachers, 3 ECE teachers, 2 District Education authorities and 23 parents and other stakeholders.

3.4.1 Characteristics of the sample

Table 2: Respondents by Geographic Location

Location	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Urban	28	40
Peri-urban	24	34.3
Rural/Remote	18	25.7
Total	70	100

The table above shows the distribution of respondents by geographic location. The majority, 28 (40%) were drawn from the urban ECE centre; the number includes even the district

education management officials. The Peri-urban involved 24 (34.3%) while the rural/remote had 18 (25.7%); low staffing levels in remote schools could also account for the minimal number of respondents. Actually, the majority of respondents in the remote ECE centre were parents and other stakeholders.

Table 3: Respondents by sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	38	54.3
Female	32	45.7
Total	70	100

As can be seen from the table above, most of the respondents, 38 (54.3%), were male while 32 (45.7%) were female. This implies that there are more male teachers in urban schools as compared to rural and remote schools; a common characteristic of the workforce in the Ministry of Education.

Table 4: Age Range of Respondents

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
20-30	08	20
31-40	23	57.5
41-50	06	15
51 and above	03	7.5
Total	40	100

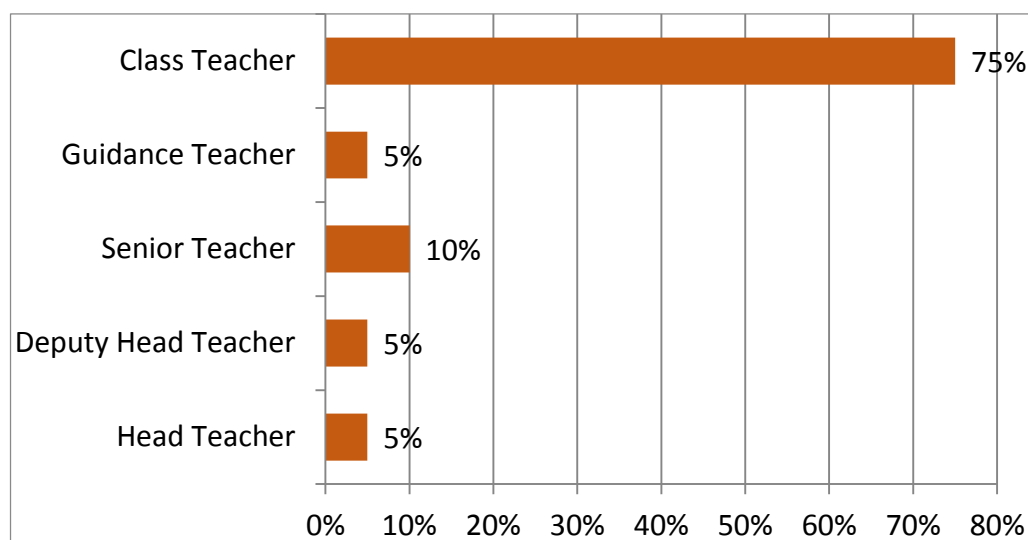
Respondents were asked to indicate their ages. It is clear from the table above that most of the respondents, 23 (57.5%), were in the age range of 31 to 40 years, implying that they were mature and experienced enough in the Ministry of Education, therefore, they were capable and suitable enough to provide information on matters of Early Childhood Education provision in government primary schools of Kabompo District, 8 (20%) were in the age range 20-30, 6 (15%) of respondents indicated that they were in the age range of between 41 –50 years old while 3 (7.5%) were 51 and above.

Table 5: Marital status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Married	33	82.5
Single	06	15
Divorced	01	2.5
Separated	00	00
Widowed	00	00
Total	40	100

From the table above, it is clear that the majority, 33 (82.5%), of the respondents were married, suggesting that some could have even enrolled their children in ECE centres annexed to Government Primary Schools. Hence such parents could be reliable in providing authentic information on the topic for this research, while 6 (15%) were single and 1 (2.5%) were divorced.

Figure 1: Substantive positions



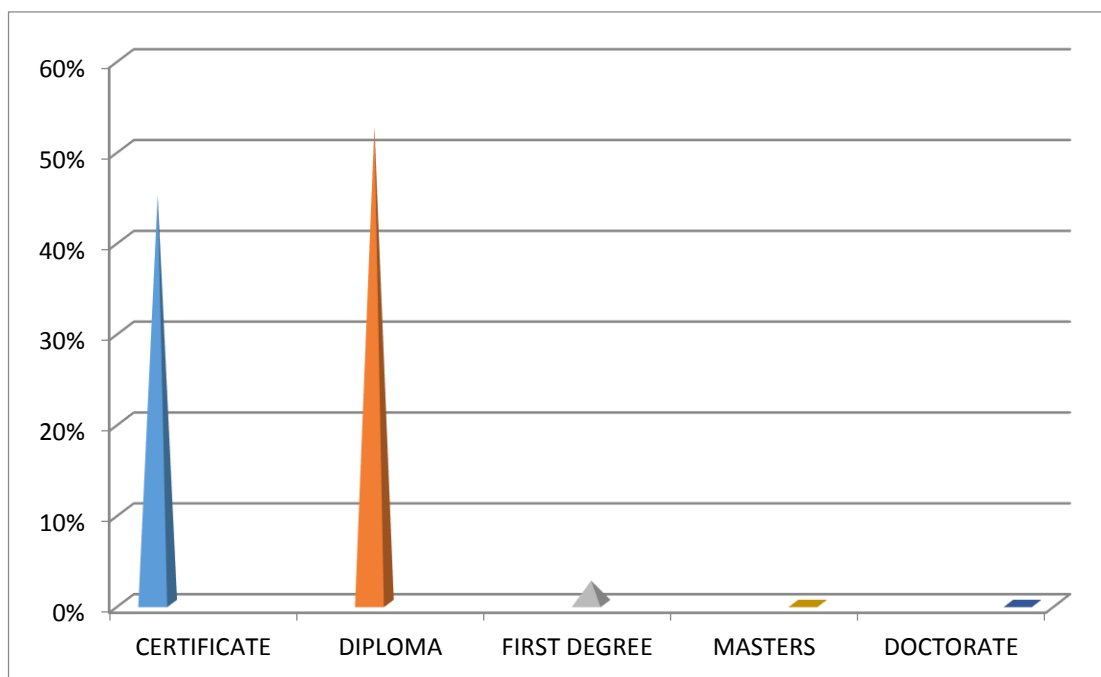
Respondents indicated various positions which they held at their places of work. As can be seen from the graph above, out of 40 respondents, 30 (75%) were class teachers, 4 (10%) were senior teachers, 2 (5%) were head teachers, 2 (5%) were deputy head teachers and 2 (5%) were guidance teachers.

Table 6: Number of Years served in current position

Period of Service	Frequency	Percentage (%)
0-10	27	67.5
11-20	09	22.5
21-30	04	10
31 and above	00	00
TOTAL	40	100

As can be noted from the table above, most of the respondents, 27 (67.5%) served between 0 and 10 years, 9 (22.5%) indicated that the number of years they had served in their current position was in the range 11 -20 years while 4 (10%) served in between 21 – 30 years. This entails that the majority of the respondents 27 (67.5%) had served for a relatively shorter period in their current positions. However, they witnessed the inception of Early Childhood Education in the mainstream government primary schools. Therefore, they were in a better position to provide information about factors affecting the provision of ECE in Kabompo district.

Figure 2: Academic qualifications



Respondents were further asked to indicate their highest academic qualifications. As can be seen from the graph above, 21 (52.5%) of the respondents indicated that they were Diploma holders while 18 (45%) were Certificate holders. Only 1 (2.5%) was a degree holder and there were no respondents with postgraduate qualifications.

It is worth mentioning that qualification of the teaching staff is key to fostering promotion and better attainment of quality at every level of education, including the high quality provision of Early Childhood Education.

3.5 Sampling Procedure

Sampling procedure refers to the part of the study that indicates how respondents were selected to be part of the sample. Purposive sampling and simple random sampling were used in this study.

Purposive sampling was used to select key informants such as Head teachers, ECE class teachers, the DEBS and parents of pre-school children. According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), purposive sampling targets only the people believed to be reliable for the study. Newbold (2007) asserts that when the desired population for the study is rare or very

difficult to locate and recruit for a study, purposive sampling may be the only option. He further argues that purposive sampling can be very useful for situations where you need to reach a targeted sample quickly and where a sampling for proportionate is not a primary concern.

Simple random sampling was used to select primary school teachers and parents of pre-school children. White (2002) states that random sampling includes any technique that provides each population element an equal probability of being included in the sample.

3.6 Instruments for Data Collection

Data was collected using questionnaires from primary school teachers and managers, observation schedules and check-lists were used to collect information from ECE class teachers while interview guides were utilised to gather information from parents and the District Education Management officers.

3.7 Procedure for Data Collection

Questionnaires were distributed to all respondents. Respondents who were visually impaired were assisted by reading out the questions to them. Questionnaires were then collected from respondents by the researcher for data analysis. Class observations were conducted in ECE centres to get the in-depth situation. Interviews were recorded using a digital camera.

3.8 Data Analysis

The qualitative data which was collected from the informants using open ended questions was analysed using content or thematic analysis. The analysis involved going through the contents of the in-depth explanations given by the key informants and presenting them in a narrative form. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, tables and charts were generated by SPSS for quantitative data.

3.9 Pilot Study

Prior to the collection of data, a pilot study was conducted in order to test the validity and reliability of the research instruments which were used during field work. Pretesting research instruments is vital for the success of any project. According to Fouche, (1998: 158), cited in White (2002), "It is essential that newly constructed questionnaires, in their

semi-final form, be thoroughly pilot-tested before being used in the main investigation. This ensures that errors of whatever nature can be rectified immediately at little cost...only after the necessary modifications have been made following the pilot test, should the questionnaire be presented to the full sample.”

The pilot study was undertaken to ensure that items included in the questionnaire were well understood and interpreted by the respondents and to establish the most reliable and suitable way to administer the study instruments to ensure maximum return. On the basis of the responses from the pilot study, the items in the questionnaire were rated if they could be easily understood by the respondents.

This instrument trial was conducted in two schools of Kabompo District. After the pilot study, the researcher made some amendments to the research instruments based on the field observations.

3.10 Ethical Consideration

This study considered the following ethical issues, among others: permission was sought from all participants/respondents before they were interviewed or had a questionnaire administered to them. This ensured freedom of expression, and that nothing was said or written other than what they knew and believed in.

At the sites where permission was granted, the expected respondents were briefed about the procedures to be used, and the value of the research. To maintain confidentiality, participants were assured that no names would be used on the interview schedules and questionnaires; serial numbers would be used instead. In this manner, all participants' details were treated anonymously. They were also assured that data to be collected would not be disclosed to other persons, and that the data would only be used for academic purpose.

To ensure that school programs were not interrupted, interview schedules and questionnaires were administered outside class learning hours.

Finally, the researcher was to bare any of the anticipated consequences regarding the research process.

3.11 Conclusion

The Case Study was conducted using both qualitative and quantitative research techniques and methods. These involved the use interview guides, observation schedules, questionnaires and class check-lists. They also included Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with parents of pre-school children from the sampled ECE centres. At the same time the study made use of primary and secondary techniques of gathering information. While primary techniques involved interviews with participants secondary techniques made use of available literature.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Overview

The chapter presents findings on factors affecting the provision of Early Childhood Education in government primary schools in Kabompo District. The findings are presented according to the following objectives:-

1. To explore the perspectives of teachers and head teachers on Early Childhood Education provision in Kabompo district.
2. To establish the role of the District Education Board towards the effective provision of ECE in Kabompo
3. To ascertain the challenges faced by Early Childhood Education centres in Kabompo district.
4. To collect views from parents and other stakeholders on the provision of ECE in government primary schools.

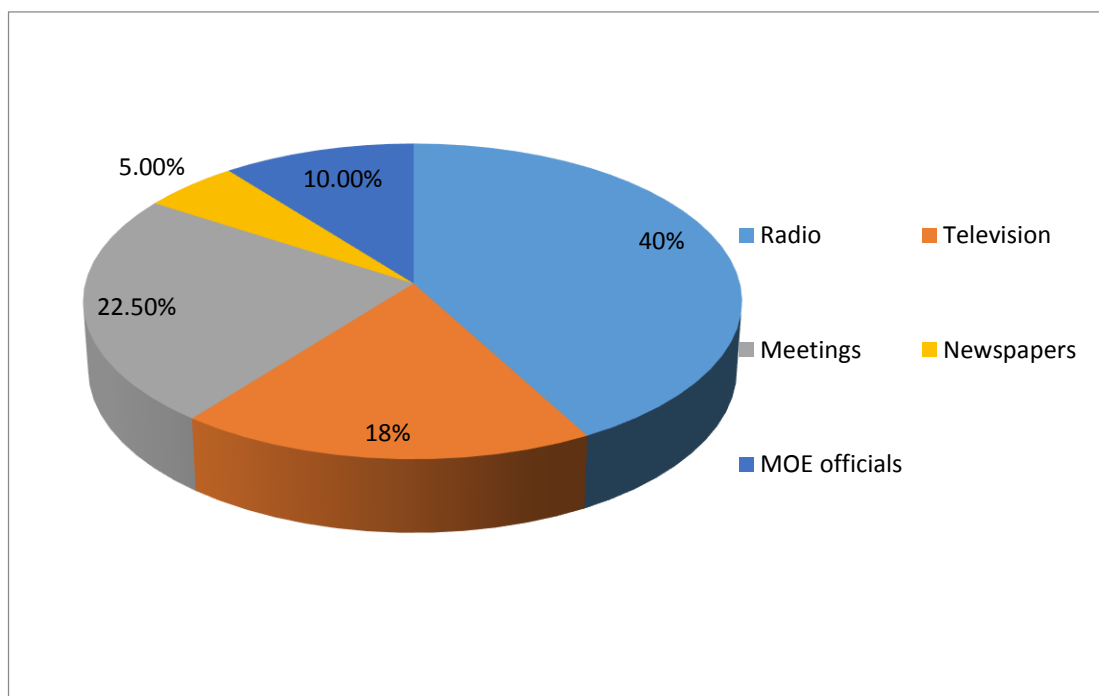
4.2 Research Findings

Table 7: Awareness of ECE provision in government Schools

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	40	100
No	00	00
Total	40	100

From the table above, it is clear that all the respondents, 40 (100%) were aware that ECE was being provided in some government primary schools. Hence, they were all well positioned to provide adequate information on how ECE was being provided in the mainstream education system in Kabompo.

Figure 3: Sources of information (Media) on ECE provision in GRZ Schools



The pie chart above shows clearly that the majority of respondents, 16 (40%), got the information through radio broadcasts. This was followed by 9 (22.5%) representing respondents who got the information from meetings, 7 (17.5%) learnt about ECE provision in GRZ schools from Television, 4 (10%) were made aware by MoE officials and 4 (10%) got the information from newspapers.

Table 8: Teachers' Knowledge of specific pre-school teaching and Learning Materials (A comparison of urban, peri-urban and rural/remote settings)

Response	Locality	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	Urban	16	43.3
	Peri-Urban	6	16.2
	Rural/Remote	2	5.4
Total		24	64.9
No	Urban	3	8.1
	Per-Urban	2	5.4
	Rural/Remote	8	21.6
Total		13	35.1
Overall Total		37	100

Teachers were asked about the specific teaching and learning materials for pre-schoolers; 24 (64.9%) agreed that there were specific teaching/learning materials; Results show that there were more respondents, 16 (43.3%) who were aware of teaching/learning materials in the urban ECE centre, and a few in the peri-urban (16.2%) and 5.4% for remote/rural school. 13 (35.1%) indicated that they did not know the type of teaching and learning materials for Early Education, with 8 (21.6%) responses from rural/remote centres.

**Table 9: Head teachers' awareness of specific Teaching/Learning Materials
For ECE (A comparison of urban, peri-urban and rural/remote schools)**

Response	Locality	Frequency
Yes	Urban	1
	Peri-Urban	-
	Rural/Remote	-
Total		1
No	Urban	-
	Peri-Urban	1
	Rural/Remote	1
Total		2
Overall Total		3

On whether there were specific teaching/learning materials for pre-school children, the head teacher in the urban ECE centre agreed while the other 2, in the peri-urban and rural/remote, denied availability of specific teaching and learning materials for Early Childhood Education. This meant that they used any material they came across to teach children at this lowest level of the education system.

Figure 4: Views on the Implementation of ECE in government Primary Schools



The graph above shows that views of the majority 26 (65%) indicated that provision of ECE in government primary schools was an excellent move by the government. 8 (20%) said it was a good change, 6 (15%) said it was satisfactory, while none 00 (00%) indicated unsatisfactory or not being sure.

Table 10: The role played by parents of pre-school children

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Got involved in PTA projects	16	42.1
Attend school meetings	8	21.1
Attend school open days	1	2.6
Contributed finances to school	6	15.8
Encouraged children to go to school	4	10.5
Helped children to do home work	2	5.3
Observed their children learn in classrooms	1	2.6
Total	38	100

Parents were asked to state various roles they played in schools. The majority 16 (42.1%) stated that they got involved in school projects, followed by 8 (21.1%) who revealed that they attended school meetings regularly. The least parental involvements were attending

school open days, 1(2.6%) and observing their children learn in classrooms, 1 (2.6%); may be these activities did not even take place in the schools under investigation.

Due to some gaps between government policy and implementation, many parents were less involved in the implementation of Early Childhood Education in Kabompo. One of the interviewed parents said,

I am very much aware that ECE is being provided in government schools since my child attends such classes as well. As a parent, I find it very difficult to provide all the requirements for my child such as school bag, shoes, clothes and the most demanding is providing packed-food every day. The readily available foods at our homes are cassava chips, groundnuts, pumpkins, maize cobs, sweet potatoes etc., but the child needs rice, macaroni, spaghetti, scorns and other expensive foods and drinks which are difficult to source. I feel it is better for my children to wait for grade 1 entry where there are less demands on school requirements.

However, some parents indicated that pre-school children were very young and that they needed to be fed regularly at home and at school. It is also prudent to inform the parents that there are no mandatory requirements for participation in pre-schooling. This would in turn would help in the improvement on enrolments in ECE centres.

Barriers to parent involvement in pre-schooling of children

Parents disclosed that the major barrier which made them not to fully participate in the education of their children was illiteracy. Many of them said they did not know what their children were learning, and so could not help them at home even when they were given home work by teachers. Illiteracy has also made some parents have inferiority complex, so they cannot frequent schools or ECE centres where their children learn.

Table 11: Challenges of Implementing ECE in GRZ Primary Schools

. Challenges faced by government	
Transport to reach remote schools	
Deployment of qualified ECE teachers	
Finances to construct suitable ECE centres	
Provision of appropriate teaching and learning materials	
Welfare of care givers is not being addressed	
Sensitization of communities about ECE provision in GRZ schools	
Challenges faced by Schools	Challenges faced by parents/guardians
Low participation by parents	Daily provision of food
Lack of teaching and learning materials	Unavailability of medical support at the clinic.
Distances to clinics	Poverty in some homes
Irregular attendance by some children	Long distances from homes/villages to ECE centres
Abrupt absenteeism of care givers which creates vacuum	Illiteracy among some parents and guardians of pre-schoolers
Illnesses of some children	Lack of sufficient information on ECE

All the Parents, teachers and education authorities indicated some challenges faced in implementing ECE in the already existing government primary schools; Parents indicated that they faced several challenges, among them were long distances from homes or villages to schools (the furthest homes were estimated at 1.5 kilometres from an urban ECE centre, 3 kilometre from a peri-urban centre and 4 kilometres from a remote school). Parents escort kids to ECE centres and pick them after school; these parents do not have means of transport, and so they just walk. This results in some parents not going for farming, as one parent lamented:-

We shall not be producing enough food because of escorting children to schools every day; we rarely go to our fields. The government should provide transport so that children are collected from a nearby station and be brought back after school.

Forcing children to pursue education is another challenge; some children are not ready to go to school especially during winter. Such children keep crying from home up to school. Even though they remain with teachers, there is much doubt whether they learn properly or not at all.

Providing better clothes poses as a challenge especially to the poor parents. Small children need a variety of clothes like those of the rich; in fact they learn together. One parent said, *“Our children admire clothes for others, and so they want us to buy them new ones as well even when we cannot afford.”*

Teachers, on the other hand, indicated that lack of modification of existing infrastructure contributed greatly to challenges in teaching. The researcher also confirmed this assertion when observing a lesson where a teacher could lift children to make them write some letter-sounds on the chalkboard, as indicated below:

Plate 2: Inappropriate infrastructure in an ECE centre



Source: Field Data, 2014.

It was also observed that the windows of the ECE centre were high-placed and could not enable children to view the outside environment. Additionally, the door handles were high placed as well, and could not be reached by the pre-schoolers; they always needed an elderly person to open or close the classroom door.

Over enrolment is one of the challenges faced by teachers in the urban ECE centres, as shown the plate below:

Plate 3: Overcrowding in an urban ECE class



Source: Field Data, 2014.

One of the teachers explained that the school administrators kept enrolling children instead of limiting the number, resulting in overcrowded classrooms; she complained:

“It is not easy to attend to every child because of the big number in the classroom (41 children); some children end up just playing instead of concentrating on learning. Overcrowding also results in shortages of furniture, teaching and learning materials such as crayons, colour pencils, and play objects like puppets and other toys which are in short supply at school.”

When asked why the enrolment was overwhelming, the teacher clarified that it was due to the “Free Education Policy”, whereby parents were not required to pay school fees and children school without school uniforms.

Teachers also mentioned that inappropriate school infrastructure affected their work, citing dilapidated classrooms and the location of toilets far from the ECE centre. The ECE teacher at a peri-urban centre said,

“Time is consumed as children are taken to toilets which are very far from the class and some children mess up themselves on the way to toilets.”

The other teacher added:

“Classrooms have not been designed for nursery children but for primary kids; hence, pre-school children face several difficulties, such as reaching classroom door handles which are high placed, the chalk board which is above their heights, windows are placed high such that children cannot see what is happening outside, some parts of the school have no ramps but high stare cases which make it difficult for kids to reach the classroom.

Unlike in the urban centre, the peri-urban and rural/remote centres had minimal enrolment. When asked for reasons, the ECE class teacher said it was due to long distances between homes or villages and school. The other reason was that there seemed to be insufficient information in the community about the benefits of ECE. Furthermore, poverty could also be a contributing factor for some parents not sending their children to ECE centres; such parents could not afford to buy new clothes for their children and some could not manage to provide packed foods every school-day.

Plate 4: Low enrolment in a peri-urban ECE centre



Source: Field Data, 2014.

Types of activities in ECE provision

Participants indicated varying activities being done in their centres. Some of the activities were: - sports, Playing, storytelling, feeding, singing, dancing, writing and praying. It is clear indication that ECE centres engage in a variety of activities to support children's growth and development.

Table 12: Materials suitable for pre-schoolers

Nursery (3-4 years)	Reception (5-6 years)
Crayons	Crayons
Toys	Balls
Drums	Pencils
Balls	Word cards
Letter cards	Story books
Building blocks	Numeral number cards
Colour charts	Counting pads
The Alphabet cards	The alphabet cards
Shape charts	Puzzles
Games	Jigsaws
Dolls	Games
Colouring books	Water Colours
Colouring books	Music Instruments

Source: Field Data (2014)

The table above indicates some suitable materials for use in pre-schools. All the teachers and head teacher 40 (100%) listed some materials which they felt were essential in a successful ECE centre. They, however, complained that the absence of such vital material made their ECE centres not to perform to expectation.

Table 13: Definitions of ECE by teachers and head teachers

1	Education provided to young children aged 3-6 years which prepares them for formal schooling
2	Education given to infants between the ages 0 and 6
3	Education that forms the foundation of the whole education process. It is offered to children between the ages of three and six
4	It is an effort to train children below the age of six to prepare them for primary education so that by the time they enter Grade 1 they have basic information such as pencil holding, colour identification, counting and writing numbers, mentioning and identifying letters of the alphabet etc.
5	Education given to children who have not reached the school going age of seven
6	Enrolling children as early as 2-6 years before they go to Grade one
7	Education given to children from 4-6 years old before they are enrolled in grade 1.
8	Enrolment of children who are three (3) years to six (6) years before they are enrolled in grade 1.
9	Giving guidance education to little ones at early stages
10	This is the formal initial education that a child between 0 5 years comes into contact within his/her life.
11	It is education of play introduced to children under 7 years before entering Grade 1.
12	Education given to children who have not reached the age of starting grade one.

The definitions above are a clear indication that participants were aware of the pre-school level of education; education for children below the age of seven.

Table 14: Benefits of Pre-schooling

Benefits	Frequency	%
Children get an organized type of education at a tender age	8	20
Grade 1 teachers have little difficulties teaching such children	7	17.5
Children develop early social, physical, mental and emotional capacities	6	15
Children develop spoken and written language early	6	15
Children develop aesthetic or appreciation of beauty at an early age	1	2.5
ECE exposes children to the school environment at an early age.	6	15
Children can easily breakthrough in reading at primary grades	6	15
TOTAL	40	100

From the list above, it was evident that ECE is beneficial. The majority of respondents 8 (20%) indicated that children get an organised type of education at a tender age. This was followed by 7 (17.5) who supported the idea that grade 1 teachers have little difficulties teaching children with preschool background. The least 1 (2.5) indicated that children develop aesthetic or appreciation of beauty at an early age.

Appreciation letter by Kayombo Primary School Community

KAYOMBO PRIMARY SCHOOL,
P.O. BOX 140097,
KABOMPO.
16TH JANUARY, 2014.

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION,
MoE HEADQUARTERS, LUSAKA.

RE: APPRECIATION FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ECE CENTRE AT
KAYOMBO PRIMARY SCHOOL

As Kayombo Primary School Community, we would like to thank the government of the day for opening an Early Childhood Education Centre at our school, which is very remote (96 kilometres from Kabompo Boma).

The Centre opened in March 2013 with 25 children but without teaching and learning materials except for a few toys that were sourced from a local Christian Mission Station.

Parents sustained the class though the enrolment dropped due to failure by some parents to support the volunteer care-givers. In October 2013, the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education sent a teacher to our Centre. Right now, our ECE Centre is one of the first five (5) in the district that have been supplied with appropriate furniture and a few learning materials to improve the teaching and learning environment; these include forty (40) small-size chairs, ten (10) tables, building blocks and some letter and number cards. This development has motivated all the local stakeholders and there is a promising increase in enrolment in both the nursery (3-4 years) and the reception (5-6 years) classes.

However, challenges of paying the child care-giver monthly by community members, inappropriate infrastructure, lack of indoor/outdoor play objects, lack of books with pictures and lack of funds still remain, among others.

Kanyembo Patson,
Head Teacher/ PTA Secretary
CC. The DEBS - Kabompo

Source: Field Data, 2014.

The letter above explains how ECE began at a remote government primary school (96 Kilometres from the administrative centre), and how ECE is being provided. Such an appreciation to the government is a clear indication that citizens have been longing for the provision of Early Childhood Education in rural and remote communities of Zambia.

Parent Perspectives on the ECE provision in GRZ Schools

Parents were happy and appreciated the services given to their children in ECE Centres in government primary schools. Government ECE centres follow the Free Education Policy, and so many parents were able to send their children to pre-schools. Education in pre-schools enabled children to socialize with their peers and teachers unlike other children who did not pass through the centres.

ECE enabled parents to do farm work, gardening, selling merchandise at roadside and did house work freely. One parent said:

“I can do work at home such as washing clothes, sweeping and general cleaning of the home without being followed by my child. Children reduce our performance at homes such that we do not even prepare food for our husbands on time.”

The other parent added:

“Sometimes children play a lot at home and in some instances even get injured within or outside home because there is no close monitoring of their play as it is done at school.”

Children had a strong and firm foundation in education. They said children who passed through ECE centres would reduce dropout rates, repetition rates and would increase progression rates in primary and secondary schools.

A parent with a child at a remote ECE said:

Our children appear clean every school day because we bath them as they go to school, unlike children who are just kept home. This can improve their hygiene since we even brush their teeth, remove long finger nails and regularly wash their clothes.

The trend of older children remaining taking care of the young ones at home had been done away with because of the introduction of pre-school in government schools. This reduced absenteeism and increased education for older children, especially the girl child.

They all acknowledged that it was beneficial to send children to ECCDE centres. They wished the government could introduce this kind of service in all primary schools in Zambia. One parent said:

This country can develop if all the children began schooling from pre-school because they can know how to read and write early in life; this could in turn help to improve on performance in examinations in primary, secondary and even colleges or universities.

The role of parents in ECE provision

The findings from in-depth interviews with parents showed that some school committee members were not aware of their responsibility to oversee the day-to-day ECE centre activities. Instead they were aware of their responsibility in the construction and rehabilitation of the school buildings. In two of the schools visited, the parents worked with the head teacher and other teachers to prepare a plan for the school. The interviews with parents revealed that they were not aware that the school committees were accountable to the school funds. They mentioned the head teacher as the accounting person. However, in one of the schools, the parents admitted that the school committee was responsible for school accounts. There was evidence that the parents depended very much on the head teacher for all the properties bought during ECE implementation. The parents confirmed that preparation and submission of accurate progress and financial reports was done by the head teacher. Parents indicated that their main role was their physical and financial contribution to the school development.

The role of Teachers in ECE provision

School improvement starts with teachers. The understanding of the teachers on their roles in implementing the ECE was crucial. Teachers were aware of their role to teach and work with the head teacher to oversee the day-to-day affairs of the school. One teacher summarized the role of the teachers by saying, “Our role in ECE implementation is mainly teaching the children brought to us”. The focus group interviews with the teachers revealed that the teachers were concerned with their professional roles including communicating educational information to parents and pupils. According to the teachers the non-professional roles were carried out by the head teacher and the school committee.

Data from the District Education Secretary (DEBS) on some policy concerns

The DEBS (Female) served in her position for two years. She witnessed the launch of ECE by the ministry of Education, hence she was well placed to provide relevant information to the study.

The DEBS informed the researcher that her three major roles were *management*, *administration* and *counselling*.

Parents were oriented about introduction of ECE in zonal meetings. Also circular from the ministry of education was sent to all the schools.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) meetings with ECE class teachers were not conducted since the ECE centres begun operating.

Among some challenges of implementation ECE were lack of infrastructure, in adequate teaching /learn materials, low staffing levels for ECE trained teachers (12 trained pre-school teachers in the district against 40 primary schools and 9 community schools)

Education Standards officers (ESOs) visit ECE Centres quarterly for monitoring purposes.

Other factors affecting the provision of ECE are:

1. Free education policy - many children enrol resulting in overcrowding in some Centres
2. Inadequate funding (funds for infrastructure development, paying the care- givers, purchasing of teaching/learning materials.
3. No appropriate play grounds / parks

Gaps between policy and implementation

The DEBS further indicated what she felt were gaps between the policy on ECE provision and implementation, as shown below:-

1. Inadequate preparations made before implementation; implementation began abruptly, upon pronouncements of ECE provision by the MOE,
2. No specification on the number of children in each ECE class,
3. No guidelines on the type of infrastructure appropriate for pre-schoolers.
4. Teachers not deployed at the beginning of implementation.

Check-lists for ECE centres

The check-lists below were used to ascertain the availability of teaching and learning materials/concerns regarding the ECE provision in urban, peri-urban and rural centres respectively.

Table 15: Urban ECE Centre Check-list

Material/ Equipment/ concerns	Very good	Good	Unsatisfactory	Not available
Play park (with fence and equipment)				√
Playground/grounds			√	
Furniture	√			
Indoor games		√		
Outdoor games			√	
Play objects		√		
Art and Design materials			√	
Mathematics materials			√	
Science equipment				√
Literacy and communication materials			√	
Music equipment			√	
Library	√			
ICT equipment			√	
Home Economics equipment				√

The table above indicates that most of the materials/equipment necessary in the urban ECE centre were either unsatisfactory or not available, suggesting that there is no desirable provision in the urban ECE centre. However, the school has a vibrant library with even books for Early Childhood Education, and appropriate furniture for pre-schoolers was noted at the centre.

Table 16: Peri-urban ECE Centre Check-list

Material/ Equipment/ concerns	Very good	Good	Unsatisfactory	Not available
Play park (with fence and equipment)				√
Playground/grounds			√	
Furniture	√			
Indoor games (Equipment)		√		
Outdoor games (Equipment)				√
Play objects		√		
Art and Design materials				√
Mathematics materials			√	
Science equipment				√
Literacy and communication materials			√	
Music equipment			√	
Library				√
ICT equipment				√
Home Economics equipment				√

The table above shows material and equipment availability in the peri-urban ECE centre. Most of the required materials/equipment were not available, suggesting that the provision of ECE in the peri-urban primary school is not pleasing at all.

Table 17: Rural/Remote ECE Centre Check-list

Material/ Equipment/ concerns	Very good	Good	Unsatisfactory	Not available
Play park (with fence and equipment)				√
Play grounds		√		
Furniture	√			
Indoor games (Equipment)			√	
Outdoor games (Equipment)				√
Play objects			√	
Art and Design material				√
Mathematics material				√
Science equipment				√
Literacy and communications material				√
Music equipment				√
Library				√
ICT equipment			√	
Home Economics material				√

The table above shows material and equipment availability in the rural/remote ECE centre. Most of the required equipment were non-available at the time of this study, signifying that the provision of ECE in the rural primary school was not conforming to the set standards.

4.3 Summary of the Findings

The study revealed that the ECE centres in primary schools did not have adequate teaching and learning materials. There were no indoor and outdoor play equipment, and play parks were non-existent in all the ECE centres. In-depth interviews with parents revealed that many parents were not involved in the learning of their children because of illiteracy. Infrastructure being used in ECE centres was not suitable for children below the age of seven; with high stare cases, high-placed door handles and chalkboards, high-

fitted windows and toilets located far from ECE classrooms, among others. The study also established that there was irregular attendance by pre-schoolers due to long distances between schools and homes/villages; many children could not be in attendance for all the five school days. Only one ECE centre had a copy of the draft curriculum from Curriculum Development Centre (CDC); other centres could only teach whatever they felt was necessary. Furthermore, there was no feeding programme in all the ECE centres under study; some children could not have food during feeding time cry for foods carried by friends. Head teachers indicated that ECE centres were not being funded by the government for effective operations, and that the wages for the ECE care-givers were from community contributions. Interviews with the District Education officials clearly showed that there was no guideline for monitoring activities in the ECE annexed centres. However, the study shows that the government is deploying trained teachers in ECE centres, which is a positive move to desirable implementation of the program.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Overview

This chapter discusses the findings regarding the factors affecting the provision of Early Childhood Education in government primary schools. The findings were based on three primary schools which are currently implementing ECE in Kabompo District. For the sake of confidentiality, pseudonyms were given to these schools: -Pokola Primary (urban), Chikata Primary (Peri-urban) and kayombo Primary (Rural/Remote).

5.2 Introduction

The chapter relates the findings to the existing literature and theories on Early Childhood Education and practice. Discussions of qualitative data have involved subjectivity while quantitative data encompasses objectivity.

Discussions are presented with reference to the objectives of the study, that is, to explore the perspectives of teachers on the provision Early Childhood Education in government schools in Kabompo district, to establish the role of the District Education Board towards the effective provision of ECE in Kabompo, to ascertain the challenges faced by Early Childhood Education Centres in Kabompo district, to collect views from parents and other stakeholders on the provision of ECE in government primary schools.

5.3 Conceptualisation of Early Childhood Education

Teachers and head teachers, in all the ECE centres under study, gave several definitions of “Early Childhood Education”. There were a lot of similarities and likeness in all the definitions. However, there is no agreed single definition of ECE in the world. Various researchers, individuals and governments have attempted to define it in different ways based on their perspectives, understanding, motivation and schools of thought. UNICEF (2001) defines ECE as a comprehensive approach to policies and programs for children from birth to eight years of age, their parents and caregivers. The Government of Zambia (1996) refers to Early Childhood Education as an organized form of education provision for children between the ages of three and six. Such provision is made in the form of pre-schools. This definition does not include education for children from birth to the age of two, yet education takes place from birth to death. According to Interior Health (2005:4) ECE is considered as:

“the growth that takes place from pre-conception until age six”. This definition goes a step further to include the pre-conception period which also has an impact on child development and education. In agreement with Interior Health, (http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/early_childhood/index.htm 16June 2014) defines ECE as: “the growth and development that takes place from pre- conception until age six” The Government of Malawi (2009: 8) looks at ECE as “a comprehensive approach to policies and programs for children from conception to 8 years which encompasses their health, education, nutrition and sanitation as well as social development.” This definition reduces the number of years to 8 and views it as “a comprehensive approach”. On the other hand the description agrees with the definition by UNICEF that ECE is an approach that addresses the needs of a child in totality. It also agrees with the definition by interior health that the approach starts at conception. Republic of Ghana (2004:4) brings yet another element as it defines ECE as: “The timely provision of a range of services that promote the survival, growth, development and protection of the young child.” This definition does not give the timing for ECE as it just looks at a life of a young child and provision of a range of services. Evans, Myers and Lifeld (2000) in World Vision International (2002:3) brings yet another dimension in the definition by indicating that ECE “includes all the supports necessary for every child to realize his/her right to survival to protection, and to care that will ensure optimal development from birth to age 8.”The definition describes ECE in terms of the necessary support accorded to children. It is therefore concluded that various countries, organizations and bodies across the world defines ECE in their own ways.

An analysis of all these definitions shows some common elements with the clear one being that they are all supporting the early years of a child’s life. However, this confusion is not healthy as it gives people room to embrace it and support it from their own perspectives based on the organization they are affiliated with as well as their interests. Worth noting is that the early years are the most critical for neurological development, as the most significant brain growth occurs in the first six years of life (Ramey & Ramey 1998). The quality of care received, including nutrition, health care, and stimulation, during the first few years can have a long-lasting effect on brain development. The experiences of early childhood have a profound impact on the overall health and wellbeing of individuals

throughout their lifetime. This study embraces the definition by UNICEF and government of Malawi because these are looking at ECE as comprehensive approach to policies and programmes. These definitions are more encompassing as opposed to the other definitions as they have some loop holes that also need to be improved.

5.4 Benefits of Early Childhood Education

The provision of Early Childhood Education gives several gains to children, communities and the nation. Research findings give us information that wherever a child could be and if the service is provided, it would give an advantage to children's achievement in their future prospects such as improving language and upgrading social skills among the children, hence contributing positively to the development of the nation.

Klaus and Gray (1972) investigated the benefits of early childhood education and their results indicated that children who attended early childhood education were ready for reading, language and personality characteristics. This was also noticed by Baruth and Duff (1980) who wrote that recipients of early education indicated greater interest for the alphabet, vocabulary, and number-work, and were ready to interact with books. The second finding was that they scored higher in reading skills and learned faster. From the above research findings, it can be deduced that pre-school, kindergarten or early childhood care development and education experience help and promote school performance even if the children are from the low socio- economic stratum. This is supposed to be encouraged and provided to all citizens.

Additionally, children get organized at a tender age; parents and teachers have less difficulties dealing with such children with regard to right time for meals, toilet issues and other activities that go with desirable child growth. It becomes easy to teach such children when they enter Grade 1 as the culture of school would have been embedded in them at pre-school. This assertion has also been observed by Bowman (2001), who contends that,

"While no single curriculum or pedagogical approach can be identified as best, children who attend well-planned, high-quality ECE programs in which the curriculum aims are specified and integrated across domains tend to learn more and are better prepared to master the complex demands of formal schooling."

ECE exposes children to the school environment at an early age, where they develop social, physical, mental, aesthetic and emotional capacities. Children also develop spoken and written language early and hence can breakthrough in reading at primary school easily. This assertion conforms with the study by Cohen and Bagshaw (1973), who carried out a study in Britain and found that the attendance of two and a half hours a day at a British nursery school appeared to result in children attaining greater improvement in language proficiency and concept formation than those of a similar social economic background who had not attended nursery school.

The benefit of exposing children to school environment need to be emphasized. Familiarity with school at an early age gives confidence in learners as they socialize freely with fellow children and teachers. Such foundations can be laid through early childhood programs which serve as a supplement to children's home environments. Such programs create an awareness about school institutions and procedures which have a positive impact on formal schooling later on.

Attending ECE also reduces dropout rates which have been rampant in both primary and secondary schools. Children who undergo ECE remain in school and learn confidently; such children do not leave school at all, unless in special cases such as illness or disabilities.

5.5 The role of parents in ECE provision

The in-depth interviews revealed that in all the three (3) ECE centres visited, the school managements held meetings with parents and school staff. Activities they were involved in included building classrooms and contributions towards school project materials.

There is a notable consensus across education policy statements and practice guidelines in many countries that parents are children's first and most enduring educators (OECD, 2012). Parents play a critical role in supporting growth and development of their children. When parents are involved in their child's early education and form strong partnerships with their teachers and child-care providers, it makes a significant positive impact on the child's growth and development.

In early childhood programs, parents are encouraged to be involved in all aspects of the program, such as planning, implementation, and evaluation. Parent involvement can be a major component of school improvement and planning (Capper, 1993). Parent involvement activities include, attending meetings, classroom participation, training sessions, parent-teacher conferences, weekly communication with other families and informal gatherings. Parents are encouraged to share their ideas, interests and concerns to support their child's development and to enhance early childhood services.

To promote and maintain meaningful parent involvement experiences, some materials should be written in the primary languages of the families, and translators, where ever possible, are provided for family members who speak languages other than English. The study findings show that illiteracy was at a higher magnitude especially in rural and remote areas. In one of the focused group discussions, one parent said;

“I do not get involved in the education of my children because of not knowing what they learn at school”

Most importantly, parental involvement in the form of ‘at-home good parenting’ has a significant positive effect on children's achievement and adjustment. Furthermore, in the primary school age range the impact caused by different levels of parent involvement is much bigger than differences associated with variations in the quality of schools.

Therefore, when parents are involved, schools get a lot of support from families and teacher morale is also seen to improve. Even schools where children fail, improve dramatically when parents are enabled to become effective partners in their child's education (Henderson and Berla, 1994)

Therefore, ECE is not just about working with children, it is also about working with and supporting families, and ultimately about how societies function.

5.6 Infrastructure for ECE provision

In addition to offering access to the Montessori materials appropriate to the age of the children, infrastructure of every kind is supposed to be suitable to the Kids at pre-school.

Standing (1957) explains that the environment should exhibit Construction in proportion to the child and his/her needs.

The majority of respondents indicated that there was a need by government to provide appropriate infrastructure such as classrooms and toilets at every ECE Centre. They said most of the existing primary schools had very old buildings; with structures characterized by broken glass panes, cracked dirty walls, with little light inside, very dirty and with high stare cases or without ramps, making pre-schoolers crawl to reach classrooms every school day. Educating our Future (MOE, 1996) clearly states that provision of desirable education involves prescribing specifications for furniture, equipment, aids and infrastructure. If not quickly checked, the undesirable infrastructure may hinder access and full participation by children below the age of seven in the already existing government primary schools.

5.8 The type of Teaching and Learning Materials for Pre-schoolers

Pre-school children have specific learning and teaching materials. According to the Ministry Of Women and Child Development, Government of India (Curriculum Framework, 2012), an effective Early Childhood Education program should exhibit some essential play and learning materials that include adequate supply of developmentally appropriate materials for play, materials and equipment which are safe, clean and in good conditions, sufficient quantity of materials to enable learners work in small groups and should be easily accessible to the child, materials which promote gross and fine motor development and help the child to discover and explore including constructing and reconstructing. It should promote sensory exploration and social interaction along with creative expressions through arts, painting, etc.

Both teachers and parent respondents indicated that they were not sure of specific learning and teaching materials, let alone materials of play, in the pre-schools. The study discovered that there was no outdoor play equipment in all the schools under study. One of the head teachers said:

“You are mentioning play-park! Play-park! What things should be in a play-park?”

This was clear indication that some school managers did not have sufficient information about the requirements of an Early Childhood Education Centre. It is worth noting that play is more important than academic endeavors at pre-school; no wonder the 2013 Zambia

Curriculum Framework for ECE indicates that play should have 60% and academic 40% at pre-school.

5.9 Monitoring by the DEBS and Quality ECE provision

Quality control and monitoring is another important component of quality early childhood education provision against which effectiveness can be measured. The study by Matafwali & Munsaka (2011), however, revealed that there were no standard norms of practice for ECCD in Zambia, and that quality control and monitoring was non-existent. This was exacerbated by lack of policy and curriculum framework to guide implementation of Early Childhood Education in Zambia. The Ministry of Education, with the help of UNICEF, had been working on the Early Childhood Education policy since 2006, but results could not easily come forth.

This important level of education has been, for a long time, at the mercy of private service providers and some who may not possess adequate knowledge and expertise in Early Childhood Education provision.

During the in-depth interview with the education authorities, the researcher noted that it was difficult for the DEBS officials to reach rural/remote ECE centres due to lack of transport and roads are impassable during rainy season. Hence, monitoring of ECE centres is not being done to ECE centres far from the district administrative centre. Deployment of ECE trained teachers was another challenge faced by the education authorities. The DEBS mentioned that there were very few colleges offering training to Pre-school teachers in the country, and so very few were sent to the district. The DEBS admitted that the current primary school infrastructure was not suitable for the provision of ECE; and informed the researcher that the government had not yet started funding ECE centres for construction of appropriate infrastructure and supply of necessary teaching and learning materials.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Overview

This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations of the study based on findings and discussions in the previous chapters.

6.2 Conclusions

In view of findings of the study and what has been discussed so far, it is clear that the provision of Early Childhood Education in government primary schools has a number of dynamics. While the importance of introducing ECE in the mainstream school system cannot be overemphasized, it is clear from literature and the findings that the programme may not be performed to produce expected results if some negative factors are not checked or addressed.

This study has revealed that there are some gaps between policy on ECE provision and implementation, resulting in many discrepancies in how ECE is being provided. Currently, the provision of ECE is at the discretion of the DEBS or head teachers of some schools; the five schools with ECE centres operating in Kabompo were chosen by the DEBS. Other schools still wait for instructions to commence ECE provision, yet the government pronounced that ECE provision was compulsory and be provided in all primary schools country wide beginning January 2013.

Results of the study show that teachers were not certain of their role or practice in the provision ECE; this was evidenced by the absence of a curriculum, time tables, teachers' guides and pupils' books in the ECE centres at the beginning of implementation. Some head teachers and teachers were not aware of the specific teaching and learning materials for pre-school children. No wonder ECE centres did not have specific indoor and outdoor play objects, play parks/ grounds.

School managers were not modifying infrastructure to suit early childhood education requirements; schools have high stare cases without ramps, classroom have little light, floors have potholes and even the school grounds have objects that can harm small kids as they

play around. Favourable learning environment can enhance children's learning. One of the great psychologists, Piaget (1956) spoke on the different effects of the environment on the growth of mental structures of the child which facilitates learning, he was of the view that:

“Environment stimulates learning and the development of the cognitive domain that the early years hold the key to learning. There is therefore the need for special attention to be given to the sensitive nature of early learning by affording the child the right environment where he will develop the potentials and skills for later life experience and education.”

Therefore, there are various factors affecting the provision of ECE in the mainstream school education system such as lack of finances, irregular attendance due to long distances between villages/homes and school in rural and remote schools, inadequate or inappropriate infrastructure to favour pre-schoolers, lack of ECE-specific teaching/learning materials, lack of both indoor and outdoor play equipment, over enrolment due to free education policy, among others. However, it is maintained by the government that ECE continues being provided regardless of such dynamics.

Therefore, the overall conclusion of the study is that the inadequacies in the provision of ECE in the mainstream primary school system are due to some gaps between policy and implementation.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:-

1. The MOE should employ Education Standards Officers (ESOs) specifically for Early Education in all the districts for effective monitoring of the programme.
2. The government should construct appropriate Infrastructure for better ECE practices, instead of using infrastructure which were designed for children above the age of six.
3. ECE class-sizes and child-teacher ratios must be considered when enrolling children for quality education provision so as to produce desirable results.
4. There is need for ECE centres to have active partnerships with parents and accommodate their needs, including their needs for child-care, good health and wellbeing.

5. Resources should be focused primarily on disadvantaged children, recognizing that income is not the only risk factor for poor achievement. Hence, the government should highly finance the ECE centres, especially in rural and remote areas for easy acquisition of pre-school necessities.
6. The government should adequately articulate the ECE policy to stakeholders to enhance desirable practices and better results in the programme. There is need for community sensitisation on the importance of ECE.
7. The government should deploy highly qualified teachers in ECE centres, with specialized training in Early Childhood Education.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: LETTER SEEKING AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

The University of Zambia,
Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies,
P.O. Box 32379,
LUSAKA.

The District Education Board Secretary,
Kabompo District,
KABOMPO.

U.F.S The Provincial Education Officer,
North Western Region,
SOLWEZI.

TO: The Head teacher
.....Primary School

RE: FIELD WORK FOR MASTERS' STUDENT: SHIKWESHA RICHARD A.

The bearer of this letter, **Shikwasha Richard A (Mr)** computer number **512801321**, is a duly registered student at the University of Zambia, School of Education.

He is taking a Master of Education in Primary Education. The programme has a fieldwork component which he has to complete. He is seeking your authority to allow him carry out an educational research in the Schools within Kabompo District of North Western Province.

Yours faithfully,

Dr. P.C. Manchishi

ACTING DIRECTOR

APPENDIX II: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Dear Respondent,

This serves to give you an understanding of the purpose of this research and procedures that will be followed. Further implications for your participation are explained below. Finally, you are being asked to sign this form to indicate that you have agreed to participate in this exercise.

Thank you in advance.

1. Description

This exercise is an educational research; the researcher is a student at the University of Zambia pursuing a Master of Education in Primary Education. This research is a major requirement for the researcher to complete his programme. Therefore, this exercise is purely academic.

2. Purpose

The study seeks to find out how Early Childhood Education is being provided in the mainstream government Primary Schools. The researcher is interested in teachers' perspectives about ECE provision in government primary schools, the role of the district education board, challenges faced by ECE centres and views from parents and other stakeholders about ECE provision. The researcher is also interested in the teaching, learning and play materials available inside and outside the classrooms which support ECE provision.

3. Consent

Participation in this exercise is voluntary. You are free to decline to participate in this exercise.

4. Confidentiality

All data collected from this research is treated with utmost confidentiality. Participants are assured that they will remain anonymous and untraceable in this research.

5. Rights of Respondents

All effort will be taken to ensure that the rights of participants are protected and respected. Participants are assured that they shall suffer no harm as a result of participating in this exercise. Participants are free to ask for clarification at any point of the exercise and to inform the researcher if they feel uncomfortable about any procedure in the research.

6. Declaration of Consent

I have read and fully understood this document. I therefore agree to participate in this exercise.

.....

Signature

.....

Date

APPENDIX III: PATRIOTIC FRONT 2011 - 2016 MANIFESTO

(an Extract) **Core Programmes:-**

1. EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT

(a) Early Childhood Education

In order to increase access to and improve the quality of early childhood education, the PF government shall:

- streamline the operations of the early childhood education sector;
- provide and facilitate early childhood education centres and teachers in all local government wards in Zambia;
- Provide teacher training at diploma and degree levels in early childhood education to promote professionalism in the sector.

Source: Patriotic Front 2011 - 2016 Manifesto (page 7) Office of the Secretary General.

APPENDIX IV: ECE POLICY ISSUES

Policy

1. The Ministry of Education acknowledges the important role of early childhood education in the multi-dimensional development of young children.
2. Within the constraints of available resources the Ministry will encourage and facilitate the establishment of pre-school programmes that would reach out to all children, especially to those living in rural and poor urban areas.

Strategies

1. The Ministry will provide professional services to pre-school education by:
 - training teachers for pre-schools,
 - developing curriculum materials for use in pre-schools, and
 - monitoring standards at pre-schools.

Source: (An extract from Education Our Future, 1996, 8)

APPENDIX V:INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE DEBS

1. Sex:.....
2. How long have you been in the position of DEBS?:.....
3. What is your highest academic qualification?.....
4. How do you adapt yourself to change?.....
5. In brief, what do you know about Early Childhood Education provision?
.....
6. How many primary schools are implementing the ECE policy in your district?.....
7. What appropriate requirements have you put in place for the provision of ECE?
8. What criterion is used to allocate teachers to ECE centres?.....
10. What role do you play in the provision of ECE in this district?.....
11. Did you orient teachers and parents prior to the implementation of the Early Childhood Education?

12. If yes, in what kind of forum?
13. How often do you conduct CPD meetings with ECE teachers in the district?
14. What could be some of the challenges faced by your office in implementing the ECE policy?.....
15. How often do you visit ECE centres for monitoring purposes?.....
16. In your view, what other factors affect the provision of ECE in government primary schools?
17. What do you consider to be some gap/s between the ECE Policy and the implementation?
18. What do you think are some benefits of ECE in Zambia?.....
19. How do you rate Early Childhood Education provision? Very good/good/bad /very bad

APPENDIX VI: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SCHOOL MANAGERS AND TEACHERS

Dear Sir/Madam,

You are one of the few members of staff at your school who have been randomly/purposively selected to participate in this study, entitled 'Early Childhood Education Provision in Government Primary Schools'. The information you will provide is in confidence. For anonymity's sake, you are not required to indicate your name on the questionnaire.

This study is being conducted under the supervision of The University of Zambia, School of Education.

Your cooperation and truthful responses to this questionnaire will be highly appreciated.

Instructions

You are required to tick [☐] the responses that are in agreement with your opinion in the brackets given. In some cases you have to write your responses in the spaces provided.

Please answer ALL the questions.

NB: Where the space provided is inadequate, you may write your answer/s on an extra paper and attach to this questionnaire.

SCHOOL:.....

NO.....

SECTION A:

1. Sex Male [☐] Female [☐]
2. Age range? 20-30 [☐] 31-40 [☐] 41-50 [☐] 51 and above [☐]
3. Marital status? Married [☐] Single [☐] Divorced [☐] Separated [☐] Widowed [☐]
4. How many years have you served in the teaching service?
0-10 [☐] 11-20 [☐] 21-30 [☐] 31 and above [☐]

5. What is your substantive position?

Head Teacher [] Deputy Head [] Senior Teacher [] Guidance Teacher []
Class Teacher [] Other specify.....

6. What is your highest academic qualification?

Certificate [] Diploma [] Degree [] Masters [] PhD []

SECTION B

7. What do you understand by 'Early Childhood Education'?

.....
.....
.....

8. Are you aware that Early Childhood Education is being provided in government primary schools? Yes [] No []

9. If Yes to question 8, which was the leading source of information about ECE?

Radio [] Television [] Newspaper [] School meeting []
Political meeting [] MOE officials []

10. If No to question 8, which is the leading agency in providing ECE in Kabompo?

Churches [] the District Council [] Families []

Other NGOs (Specify)..... []

11. Are you aware that there are specific teaching/learning materials for ECE provision?

12. If yes, which materials are for the:-

a) 3-4 year old children

.....
.....

b) 5-6 year old children

.....

.....

13. If No, what available materials does your ECE centre use to teach the:-

a) 3-4 year old children

.....

.....

b) 5-6 year old children

.....

.....

14. Do you support the provision of pre-school education in the mainstream primary
school system? Yes [] No []

15. If yes to question 14, how?.....

16. If no to question 14, give your reason/s.....

17. What is your view on the implementation of Early Childhood Education in the
government primary schools? Very good [] Good [] bad [] not sure []

18. Were you oriented prior to the implementation of Early Childhood Education in
government schools? Yes [] No []

19. Does your institution have trained staff in Early Childhood Education provision?
Yes [] No []

20. If yes to question 19, what is their professional qualification?
21. If no to question 19, how is ECE being provided?.....
22. Have you attended any CPD on Early Childhood Education provision?
- Yes [☐] No [☐]
23. In your view, how do you rate the provision of ECE in government primary schools?
- Excellent [☐] Good [☐] Satisfactory [☐] Unsatisfactory [☐] not sure [☐]
24. Is there parental involvement regarding what their children should learn or do at ECE centres? Yes [☐] No [☐]
25. If Yes to the above question, in which ways are parents involved in the provision of ECE in Kabompo?.....
26. If No to the above question, what do you think is the role of parents in the ECE provision?
27. What could be some challenges of implementing Early Childhood Education in government primary schools?.....
28. What are some benefits of ECE?.....
29. In your view, what other factors affect the provision of Early Childhood Education in the mainstream government education system?.....

Great Thanks!

APPENDIX VII: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARENTS OF THE PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

1. What role do you play, as a parent/guardian, in the development of this school?
 2. Does the school often call you to discuss your children's progress?
 3. Do you find it easy to go to your children's school anytime you feel like?
 4. What barriers prevent some parents from getting involved in their children's education?
 5. What do you understand by 'Early Childhood Education'?
-
1. Are you aware that ECE is being provided in the mainstream government primary schools?
YesNo.....
 2. If yes, in what type of meeting/forum did you get the information about this educational change?
-
3. If No, what kind of institutions provide ECE in Kabompo?
 4. What do you think are the benefits of ECE?
 5. What are some challenges faced by parents of pre-school children in Kabompo?
 6. In your view, what other factors affect the provision of ECE in government primary schools?
 7. Make some suggestions on the better ways of providing ECE.
 8. Explain ways of how you are involved in your child's pre-school education
 9. What methods/ways can the school use to encourage more parents to be involved in Early Childhood Education?
 10. What suggestions do you have to improve parental involvement in their children's education?

APPENDIX VIII: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE ECE CLASS TEACHERS

1. Sex
2. What is the enrolment of your class? Boys..... Girls..... Total.....
3. Are you trained in ECE teaching? Yes/ No
4. If yes to question 2, what is your qualification? Certificate/Diploma/Degree
5. Period of Service
6. Are you on government pay-roll? Yes/ No
7. If no to question 6, how are you enumerated?
.....
8. How favourable/prepared is your classroom environment? Very good [] Good []
bad []
9. How do you rate ECE provision? Very good [] Good [] bad [] not sure []
10. Have you attended any CPD on Early Childhood Education? Yes [] No []
11. How do you rate the primary school infrastructure where ECE is being provided?
Very good [] Good [] bad [] not sure []
12. What materials do your nursery or, and pre-school use to teach?
3-4 years.....
.....
5-6 years.....
.....
13. In which ways are parents involvement in the provision of
ECE?.....
14. What are some of the major challenges you are facing in your day to day running of your
pre-school?.....
15. In your view, what other factors affect the provision of ECE in government primary
schools?

APPENDIX IX: CHECK-LISTS FOR ECE CENTRES

Tick in the appropriate box on availability/concern regarding the ECE provision:-

Material/ Equipment/ concerns	Very good	Good	Bad/Not available
Play park (with fence and equipment)			
Play grounds			
Furniture (small tables /chairs/sofa etc)			
Indoor games (Toy cars, airplanes, etc)			
Outdoor games (Balls, Ropes, Balloons etc)			
Play equipment (including dolls/puppets etc.)			
Art and Design material (Aprons/ paints/ brushes/ paper etc.)			
Mathematics material (Numeracy games, Numeral Cards/charts)			
Science equipment (Lab coats/ binoculars etc.)			
Literacy and communications material (word cards/Language games etc)			
Music equipment (DVD/music players/guitars/drums etc)			
Library (Various books/ pictures)			
ICT (Computers/ printers/ overhead projector etc.)			
Home Economics material (Pots, plates, spoons, folks, model cooker etc)			
Other Concerns			
ECE Teacher training			
Parent Involvement			
Pupil attendance			
School Management attitude (Provision of ECE pre-requisites)			
DEBS' attitude (Regular visits/ advice/CPD for ECE teachers)			
Community Contributions (attending meetings/visiting the ECE centre)			

APPENDIX X:SOME INFRASTRUCTURE IN GRZ PRIMARY SCHOOLS



High stare cases in some of the existing GRZ primary schools do not support ECE provision (Source: Field data, 2014)



Classrooms with little light are not fit for ECE provision (Source: Field data, 2014)