

## Factors that Affect the Implementation of Early Childhood Development Programmes in Zimbabwe

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**ABSTRACT** This study investigates the factors that affect the implementation of Early Childhood Development Programmes (ECD). The random sample consisted of 12 primary school heads and 12 Early Childhood Development teachers in the Chiwundura Circuit. The research used a descriptive survey design. Random sampling was used to select respondents. Data was collected through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Frequency tables and descriptive statistics were used to present, analyse and interpret data. The results of the study indicated that the qualifications of teachers affected their ability to deliver effective lessons. Large classes reduced teacher-pupil interaction. The study also revealed that teachers and parents had positive attitudes towards Early Childhood Development programmes. This benefited learners when they received support from teachers and parents. Furthermore, the study revealed that lack of resources affected teaching and learning processes. Lack of qualified teachers affected professional conduct of Early Childhood Development programmes. The children were vulnerable to deprivation of appropriate experiences because ECD centres were not well equipped. Major recommendations were that para-professionals engaged in ECD programmes should have 5 "O" level passes. Furthermore para professionals should be paid salaries similar to those of temporary teachers.

### INTRODUCTION

Early childhood development programmes have the potential to benefit individuals as well as society. Bernard Van Leer Foundation (1994) observed that educationists and scientists worldwide drew attention to the importance and the advantages of pre-school programmes for the holistic development of the child. Nziramasanga Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training (1999: 262) brings to the fore that "Prior to independence some children mainly those from the privileged societies in urban areas had access to organized and development programmes. The rural communities were not provided for. Zanu P.F election manifesto (1995: 21) states that "The government has established pre-schools in the communal areas so as to provide educational facilities for the children in those areas." The provision for Early Childhood Development Programmes in rural areas was realized after Zimbabwe attained its independence in 1980.

Chirozva (1998) on Early Childhood Care and Education in Africa observed that less than one percent of children in sub-Saharan Africa currently attend formal care and education programmes. The studies seem to suggest that

there were problems in implementing ECD programmes. In support Nziramasanga Commission of inquiry into Education and Training (1999: 264) argues "Since 1980 there has been great interest in expanding the provision of early childhood education and care but policies and strategies to access provision and providers have been limited." Chirozva (1998) observed that the Early Childhood and Care Classroom built by Nyoka community in Chiwundura circuit was abandoned. This suggests that there were undiscovered factors that affect (effective) implementation of Early Childhood Development programmes. In addition the Early Childhood Development programmes in rural areas were launched in 1980 but at the time the study was conducted it was not yet policy that pupils who enrolled for grade one should have attended ECD programmes. It was not yet mandatory for parents to enrol their children in ECD programmes.

Regional Director Midlands (1998: 1) at a Community Education workshop stated one of the objectives of Early Childhood and Care programmes as "To conscientise the community on the importance of the ECEC programmes." This implied that rural communities were not fully aware of the value of Early Childhood Development programmes. The government of Zimbabwe changed the name of the programme Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) to Early Childhood Development (ECD).

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Director's circular number 12 of 2005 brought the changes. This meant that Early Childhood Development programmes were to be fully incorporated into formal primary school system with effect from year 2006. The decision by government to change the name of the programmes and also to bring ECD programmes into formal school system seemed to suggest that prior state of affairs were in-effective. Nziramanga Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training (1999: 267) observed, "There were centres that looked drab and neglected signalling (a) lack of initiative or even absence of a teacher." Implementation of Early Childhood Development programmes was not likely to be realized under conditions stated above. It is against this background that the researchers were motivated to find out the factors affecting the implementation of Early Childhood Development programmes for Chiwundura circuit.

## METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey design was used in this study. This method was the most appropriate in eliciting information on ECD programmes. Descriptive survey is a social scientific investigation that studies large and small populations by selecting and studying samples chosen from the population to discover relative incidence distribution and inter relations of sociological variables chosen from the population. The population comprised of sixteen primary school heads and twenty-three ECD teachers. The representative group from the population served as respondents. The study adopted stratified random sampling to come up with the respondents. The population sample comprised of twelve heads and twelve teachers. Data was collected through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Frequency tables and descriptive statistics were used to present, analyse and interpret data.

### Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

This section focuses on presentation, analysis and interpretation of data gathered. Data from questionnaires was presented first then complemented by findings from interviews. Qualitative data from interviews was used to augment the questionnaire.

Table 1 shows that 100% of teachers were female, 66.7% of heads were male and 33.3% of heads were female. Statistics indicate that all ECD teachers were female. Observations made during interviews also reflected that ECD programmes had female teachers only. The state of affairs contradicted literature. According to Read (1999), day care centres and nursery schools need man to meet the need for boys to learn male attitudes and also girls need man for them to develop their femininity hence the need for male teachers.

**Table 1: Bio data: Teachers and heads**

Gender	Teachers' responses N = 9		Head's responses N = 9	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Male	0	0	6	66.7
Female	9	100.0	3	33.3
Total	9	100.0	9	100.0

Statistics in Table 2 indicate that 33.3% of teachers had primary education, while 44.4% had less than 5 "O" Level passes and only 22.2% had full "O" Level certificate. Statistics of heads indicate that 88.9% had "O" level and 11.1% had "A" level. Results from interviews seemed to support the findings as all interviewed teachers did not have 5 "O" level passes. Heads attributed engagement of ECD teachers with less than 5 "O" Level passes to poor remuneration of teachers which made the profession unattractive. The academic qualifications of ECD teachers might affect their ability to deliver quality service.

**Table 2: Academic qualifications**

Qualification	Teachers' responses N=9		Heads' responses N = 9	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Primary education	3	33.3		
Less than 5 "O" Level	4	44.4		
O Level	2	23.2	8	88.9
A Level	0		1	11.1
Total	9	100.0	9	100.0

One decimal place 100.0

Table 3 indicates that 77.8% of the teachers had certificate of attendance and 22.2% were not trained. In the same vein, 11.1% of the heads had certificate in Education while 44.4% had diploma in Education and 44.4% had Univer-

sity degree(s). The results therefore seemed to suggest that the majority of ECD teachers did not have proper qualifications. Poor qualifications might adversely affect effectiveness of ECD teachers.

**Table 3: Professional qualifications**

Qualification	Teachers' responses N=9		Heads' responses N = 9	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Certificate of attendance	7	77.8	0	0.0
Certificate in Education	0	0.0	1	11.1
Diploma in Education	0	0.0	4	44.4
University degree (s)	0	0.0	4	44.4
Not trained	2	22.2	0	0.0
Totals	9	100.0	9	100.0

Decimal places

Table 4 indicates that 55.6% of the teachers' experience range from 0 to 5 years while 22.2% had experience ranging from 6 to 10 years and 22.2% had experience above 11 years. It appears that 44.4% of the heads had experience ranging 0 to 5 years while 11.1% had experience between 6 to 10 years and 44.4% had experience above 11 years. From the results it would appear that the majority of heads were experienced and majority of teachers were inexperienced. Hence teacher's inexperience might negatively impact on ECD programme implementation.

**Table 4: Professional experience**

Duration	Teachers' responses N=9		Heads' responses N = 9	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
0 to 5 years	5	55.6	4	44.4
6 to 10 years	2	22.2	1	11.1
11 + years	2	22.2	4	44.4
Total	9	100.0	9	100.0

**Table 5: Effects of teacher qualification**

Statement	Teachers' responses N=9				Heads' responses N = 9			
	A	SA	DA	SDA	A	SA	DA	SDA
Teacher qualification has an effect in the implementation of ECD programmes	33.3%	67.7%	0%	0%	44.4%	44.4%	11.1%	0%
Frequency	3	6	0	0	4	4	1	0

Statistics from Table 5 reflect that 33.3% of the teachers agreed and 67.7% strongly agreed. Statistics from heads indicate that 44.4% agreed, 44.4% strongly agreed while 11.1% disagreed. Results seemed to suggest that teacher qualifications had an effect in the implementation of ECD programmes. Results from interviews gave effects of teacher qualifications as follows: Unqualified teachers lacked skills and knowledge to conduct effective lessons and also lacked techniques in problem solving. Qualified teachers possessed knowledge in child study hence can be in a better position to help children develop. Interview results also confirmed that unqualified ECD teachers faced problems in interpreting ECD syllabus hence majority resorted to formal teaching instead of pre school child development activities. The approach to ECD is that children learn through play.

Table 6 indicates that 44.4% of teachers agreed, 33.3% strongly agreed while 22.2% disagreed. Statistics in table 6 also reflect that 11.1% of heads agreed and 88.9% strongly agreed. Statistics therefore indicate that there was teacher shortage. Results from interviews also confirmed the shortage of ECD teachers. Reasons given were that Teachers' Colleges had just introduced ECD teacher training. Van Schalkwyk (1999:84) maintains that "Educative teaching by means of instruction and learning demands will qualified and competent teachers." Therefore lack of qualified teaches might lead to inefficient implementation of ECD programmes.

Table 7 reflects that 22.2% of teachers indicated non availability of ECD classrooms and 11.1% of heads show the same. Statistics of teachers indicate that 55.6% show existence of one classroom and 22.2% show the existence of two classrooms. Statistics of heads show that 55.6% show existence of two classrooms and 33.35% show existence of one classroom. Majority of heads and teachers showed that ECD classrooms were available. Site visits during interviews also reflected availability of class-

**Table 6: Teacher shortage**

	<i>Teachers' responses N=9</i>				<i>Heads' responses N = 9</i>			
	<i>A</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>DA</i>	<i>SDA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>DA</i>	<i>SDA</i>
There is shortage of suitably qualified ECD teachers	44.4%	33.3%	22.2%	0.0%	11.1%	88.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Frequency	4	3	2	0	1	8	0	0

rooms. Interviews revealed that ECD children were accommodated in classrooms which were no longer used by primary classes. However others used church buildings in the school premises. Results seem to suggest that classrooms were available to accommodate ECD pupils. However, some of the buildings used as ECD classrooms were church buildings. These indicated shortage of proper classrooms.

**Table 7: Availability of classrooms**

<i>Number</i>	<i>Teachers' responses N = 9</i>		<i>Heads' responses N = 9</i>	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
0	2	22.2	1	11.1
1	5	55.6	3	33.3
2	2	22.2	5	55.6
Total	9	100.0	9	100.0

Statistics of teachers in Table 8 indicate class size of 1 to 10 had 11.1%, class of 11 to 12 had 23.2% class of 21 to 30 had 22.2% and above 30 had 44.4%. Greater percentage indicates big classes. Statistics of heads indicate class size of 1 to 10 had 11.1%, 11 to 20 had 22.2%. Classes of 21 to 30 had 44.4% and above 30 had 33.3%. Findings seemed to suggest existence of big ECD classes. Results from interviews concurred that the majority of the teachers had teacher / pupil ratios above 20. Reasons given for high teacher pupil ratio included, to accommodate all the pupils in the range of 3 to 5 years in order to raise enough levies for ECD teacher allowances and some centres had one ECD teacher to handle all pupils of different age groups. Policy circular number 12 of 2005 says classes are expected to operate on a teacher to pupil ratio of 1:20. Robinson and Wittebols (1986) concluded that small student teacher ratio was vital to quality programmes. In support Chicago Public school (1985) found that children performed better in class size of 16:1 than in 28:1. Therefore the statistics indicate that classes were too large hence might adversely

impact on teaching and learning process. Interview results further confirmed that large classes reduced teacher's ability to attend to individual needs of all children. Heads and ECD teachers' interviews revealed that formal academic teaching was practised because classes were too large for organized play activities. However early childhood specialists consider formal academic teaching, developmentally inappropriate for under six year olds.

**Table 8: Class size**

<i>Class size</i>	<i>Teachers' responses N = 9</i>		<i>Heads' responses N = 9</i>	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
1 to 20	1	11.0	1	11.1
11 to 20	2	22.2	1	22.2
21 to 29	2	22.2	4	44.4
Above 30	4	44.4	3	33.3
Total	9	100.0	9	100.0

Statistics of teachers in Table 9 show that 66.7% agreed, 22.2% strongly agreed, 11.1% disagreed that many parents send their children to attend ECD classes. Statistics of heads show that 66.7% agreed, 22.2% strongly agreed, 11.1% disagreed. Majority agreed that many parents sent their children to attend ECD classes. Minority 11.1% disagreed. Statistics therefore confirmed that greater percentage of parents support ECD programmes. Results seem to indicate positive attitudes of parents towards ECD programmes. Findings from interviews confirmed that parents had positive attitudes towards ECD programmes. This was indicated by the following behaviour of parents, high enrolment of children in ECD classes, willingness to pay school levies as well as accompanying children to school.

Statistics from teachers in Table 10 indicated that 66.7% agreed, 22.2% strongly agreed and 11.1% disagreed. Statistics for heads also indicate that 66.7% agreed, 11.1% strongly agreed and 22.2% disagreed. Results seem to suggest that the majority agreed on teacher engagement.

**Table 9: Parents attitudes towards ECD programmes**

	<i>Teachers' responses N=9</i>				<i>Heads' responses N = 9</i>			
	<i>A</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>DA</i>	<i>SDA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>DA</i>	<i>SDA</i>
Many parents send their children to attend ECD classes	16.7%	22.2%	11.1%	0.0%	66.7%	22.2%	11.1%	0.0%
Frequency	6	2	1	0	6	2	1	0

Minority disputed teacher engagement. Mixed feelings prevailed from results as teacher engagement was rejected. Findings from interviews reflected a different scenario. Statistics indicate that teachers were fully engaged in their work. Reasons given were that, teachers made toys for use in teaching. Many teachers attended to their classes five working days per week. Therefore results confirmed that behaviour of teachers indicated positive attitudes towards ECD programmes. Literature concurred that teachers encourage learning by being genuinely interested in what the children are doing as brought to the fore by Ministry of Education Sport and Culture and UNICEF, ECEC Teacher Training Manual (1999).

Statistics of teachers in Table 11 show that 44.4% agreed, 44.4% strongly agreed and 11.1% disagree that centres experienced shortages of resources. Statistics of heads show that 22.2% agreed, 77.8% strongly agreed. Results con-

firmed that ECD centres lacked resources. The disagreement reflected by teachers could be an indication that ECD centres were differently resourced hence difference in resource base. Findings from interviews confirmed that centres lacked stationery, picture books, see-saw and toys. Interview findings further confirmed that peasant parents did not have money to sustain, viable ECD programmes as they failed to pay child levies. Zvobgo (1986) concurred that some peasant parents simply do not have resources to establish pre-schools. Therefore implementation of ECD programmes might fail to progress well.

Statistics of teachers in Table 12 indicate that 33.3% agreed and 66.7% strongly agreed. Statistics of heads reflect that 22.2% agreed and 77.8% strongly agreed. Results confirmed that insufficient resources affect teaching and learning therefore negatively impacting on the implementation of the ECD programmes.

**Table 10: Teacher attitudes towards ECD programmes**

	<i>Teachers' responses N=9</i>				<i>Heads' responses N = 9</i>			
	<i>A</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>DA</i>	<i>SDA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>DA</i>	<i>SDA</i>
ECD teachers are seriously engaged in ECD programmes	66.7%	22.2%	11.1%	0.0%	66.7%	11.1%	22.2%	0.0%
Frequency	6	2	1	0	6	1	2	0

**Table 11: Availability of resources**

	<i>Teachers' responses N=9</i>				<i>Heads' responses N = 9</i>			
	<i>A</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>DA</i>	<i>SDA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>DA</i>	<i>SDA</i>
Shortage of the resources is experienced at ECD centres.	44.4%	44.4%	11.1%	0.0%	22.27%	77.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Frequency	4	4	1	0	2	7	0	0

**Table 12: Insufficient resources**

<i>Statement</i>	<i>Teachers' responses N=9</i>				<i>Heads' responses N = 9</i>			
	<i>A</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>DA</i>	<i>SDA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>DA</i>	<i>SDA</i>
Insufficient resources affect ECD programmes	33.3%	66.7%	0%	0%	22.2%	77.8%	0%	0%
Frequency	3	6	0	0	2	7	0	0

Statistics of teachers in Table 13 indicate that 88.9% cited that insufficient resources affect teaching process while 77.8% statistics of heads cited the same reason. In the same vein, 11.1% of teachers indicated that insufficient resources affected ECD policy implementation and 22.2% of heads supported the same reason. Therefore statistics confirmed that insufficient resources affected teaching process as well as ECD programmes can only take place when adequate resources are provided. Heads and teachers interviewed stressed that ECD classes needed a lot of resources in order to meet development needs of children.

**Table 13: Effects of resources**

Reasons	Teachers' responses N = 9		Heads' responses N = 9	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Insufficient resources affect teaching process	8	88.9	7	77.8
Insufficient resources affect ECD policy implementation	1	11.1	2	22.2
Total	9	100.0	9	100.0

Statistics in Table 14 indicate that 77.8% of the teachers agreed and 22.2% strongly agreed.

**Table 14: Parental involvement**

	Teachers' responses N=9				Heads' responses N = 9			
	A	SA	DA	SDA	A	SA	DA	SDA
Parents are involved in ECD programmes implementation	77.8%	22.2%	0.0%	0.0%	66.7%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Frequency	7	2	0	0	6	3	0	0

**Table 15: Government ECD policy**

Question	Teachers' responses N=9				Heads' responses N = 9			
	A	SA	DA	SDA	A	SA	DA	SDA
Do you clearly understand ECD policy?	44.4%	22.2%	0.0%	33.3%	22.2%	66.7%	11.1%	0.0%
Frequency	4	2	0	3	2	6	1	0

**Table 16: Government involvement**

Statement	Teachers' responses N=9				Heads' responses N = 9			
	A	SA	DA	SDA	A	SA	DA	SDA
Government should have a role in ECD implementation	22.2%	77.8%	0%	0%	11.1%	88.9%	0%	0%
Frequency	2	7	0	0	1	8	0	0

Statistics from heads show that 66.7% agreed and 33.3% strongly agreed. Statistics seem to suggest that parents were involved in the implementation of ECD programmes hence likelihood of programmes' success. However interview findings cited low parental involvement as parents failed to develop the ECD play areas and provide children's toys. Low parental involvement was attributed to limited knowledge on importance of ECD programmes.

Statistics of teachers in Table 15 indicate that 44.4% agreed 22.2% strongly agreed and 33.3% disagreed mastery of ECD policy. Statistics of heads indicate that 22.2% agreed, 66.6% strongly agreed and 11.1% disagreed. Statistics seem to suggest ECD policy was not well understood by all teachers and heads. Greater percentage seemed to understand it. This then seems to suggest that ECD programmes implementation was likely to be negatively affected by lack of understanding by the implementers. Therefore mastery of policy on part of implementers could enhance implementation.

Statistics of teachers in Table 16 indicate that 22.2% agreed and 77.8% strongly agreed. Statistics of heads show 11.1% agreed and 88.9% strongly agreed. Findings seem to suggest that the government should be involved in the implementation of ECD programmes.

Statistics of teachers in Table 17 indicate that 11.1% said that government should support

ECD policy implementation and 88.9% indicated that government should provide ECD financial assistance. Statistics of heads show that 22.2% wanted government to support ECD policy implementation and 77.8% indicate that government should provide financial assistance for the ECD programmes. Results from interviews indicated that the government involvement was at policy formulation stage and issue of policy circulars. However implementation was largely left to communities. Findings seem to suggest that government involvement was minimal.

**Table 17: Reasons for governmental involvement**

Reasons	Teachers' responses N = 9		Heads' responses N = 9	
	Fre- que- ncy	%	Fre- que- ncy	%
To support ECD policy	1	11.1	2	22.2
To provide financial assistance	8	88.9	7	77.8

Statistics of teachers in Table 18 indicate that 11.1% agreed and 88.9% strongly agreed. It also emerged that 100 % of the heads strongly agreed that government should pay ECD teachers. Statistics confirmed that government should provide salaries for ECD teachers. Literature supported findings when it maintained that it is the responsibility of the state for example to initiate compulsory and differentiated education and to ensure that it is efficiently administered, controlled and organized Van Schalkwyk (1999). Results seem to suggest that remuneration of teachers should be provided by central government. Heads and teachers interviewed revealed that ECD teachers' allowances paid by government were paid at erratic intervals. Allowances were very low as six hundred dollars per term. This resulted in potential teachers shunning ECD programmes.

Statistics of Table 19 reflect that 77.8% of the teachers cited poor remuneration of teachers as a factor that affect ECD implementation.

**Table 18: Payment of ECD teachers**

Statement	Teachers' responses N=9				Heads' responses N = 9			
	A	SA	DA	SDA	A	SA	DA	SDA
Government should have a role in ECD implementation	11.1%	88.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%	0.0%	0.0%
Frequency	1	8	0	0	0	9	0	0

Statistics from heads indicate that 55% cited the same factor. Statistics of teachers reflect that 22.2% cited ignorance on importance of ECD programmes on part of stakeholders as a factor that hindered implementation of ECD programmes. Statistics of heads indicate 44.4% confirmed ignorance on importance of ECD programmes on part of stakeholders as a factor that affect implementation. Findings from interviews also cited poor remuneration of teachers. From the findings ECD teachers were paid allowances not salaries. Teachers' salary was a useful indicator of centre quality (Anning 2004). Poor remuneration of teachers could therefore be linked to poor programme quality. Findings from interviews also cited other factors affecting effective implementation of ECD programmes as ignorance on importance of ECD programmes on part of stakeholders and lack of political will on part of politicians. Therefore results seemed to suggest that many factors hindered implementation of ECD programmes hence results seem to suggest that programmes were not implemented effectively.

**Table 19: Other factors that affect implementation of ECD programmes**

Factors	Teachers' responses N = 9		Heads' responses N = 9	
	Fre- que- ncy	%	Fre- que- ncy	%
Poor remuneration of teachers	7	77.8	5	55.6
Ignorance on importance of ECD programmes on part of parents	2	22.2	4	44.4
Total	9	100.0	9	100.0

## DISCUSSION

### Effects of Teacher Qualification on ECD Programmes

Findings acknowledged effects of teacher qualification on the implementation of effective

ECD programmes. Most of the ECD teachers were unqualified. Interviews also confirmed that unqualified teachers lacked knowledge and skills in implementing ECD programmes hence hindered the implementation of the programmes. Unqualified ECD teachers lacked basic skills in ECD syllabus interpretation hence they resorted to formal teaching which literature discouraged. Smith et al. (2000) maintained that further education results in higher quality interactional patterns. Therefore unqualified teachers engaged in ECD programmes might hinder programmes implementation. Results cited that unqualified teachers resorted to formal academic teaching methods.

### **Class Size**

The findings indicated that ECD programmes operated with teacher / pupil ratios which were very high. High teacher pupil ratio could be a result of lack of human and financial resources. In some situations children of 3 to 5 years old learnt in one class under the supervision of one ECD teacher. Large classes impacted negatively on teaching and learning activities as revealed by the findings. Findings of general class size research by Robinson and Wittebols (1986) indicated that smaller class size benefits children by allowing for more individual attention and making possible teaching practise which are not feasible in larger groups. Therefore large ECD classes impacted negatively on ECD programmes. Findings suggested that implementation of ECD programmes was reduced to child – minding rather than child development because classes were too big to be handled by one ECD teacher.

### **Teacher and Parents Attitude towards ECD Programmes**

Teachers' attitudes were indicated by genuine interest in their work. Parents' attitudes were shown by enrolment of their children in ECD classes. Both teachers' and parents' attitudes contributed parent / teacher attitudes could contribute to cognitive and non cognitive gains to the children (Bronfenbrenner 1994). The evidence that all sampled schools had ECD classes could be cited as positive attitudes of parents and teachers towards implementation of the programmes.

### **Effects of Resources in Implementation of ECD Programmes**

Early Childhood Development centres lacked essential resources for use. Both school heads and teachers acknowledged shortage of basic resources at their respective ECD centres. Lack of resources was attributed to poor economic status of peasant parents as well as lack of government support. ECD centres lacked adequate qualified teachers to man ECD classes. This reduced teacher effectiveness as one teacher had to attend too many children. Chivore (1995) maintained that no school can function without financial resources to back up its programmes. Therefore if ECD centres lacked basic resources proper implementation of ECD programmes could not be realized.

### **Parental Involvement**

Findings indicated that parents were involved in ECD programmes. Parents supported ECD programmes. However different levels of involvement had caused slow development of ECD centres. Very little progress was made in terms of developing Early Childhood Development play areas. This affected play which is very important to children's development at the early stages of their growth. Cotton and Green's (1988) research revealed powerful effects of parental involvement on children's learning and learning of very young children in particular. However parental involvement was found to be minimal in this study. The situation therefore would hinder implementation of ECD programmes as lack of full involvement of parents might retard development of ECD outdoor and indoor play areas. Perhaps low parental involvement could be attributed to parents' lack of knowledge on ECD programmes.

### **Government Involvement**

The findings revealed that there was government policy on ECD. However teachers and heads could not interpret ECD policy. Payment of ECD teachers' allowances was erratic. Allowances for teachers from government were very low for this reason ECD programmes attracted only para - professionals who did not have full "O" Level certificate. Government involvement in implementation of ECD pro-



grammes was very low hence adversely impacted on the implementation of the programmes. ECD programmes were designed to be community based. However the findings indicated that government should be more involved as it should support the ECD policy it had put in place. Van Schalkwyk (1999) maintained that, it is the responsibility of the state to initiate differential education and to ensure that it is efficiently administered, controlled and organized. Therefore government should take a leading role in ECD implementation.

### CONCLUSION

In the study it was found out that all ECD centres sampled operated with unqualified teachers. This was so because primary teachers colleges produced few graduates teachers could not meet high demand for Early Childhood Development teachers. In addition para-professionals engaged did not qualify to train at teachers' colleges as majority of them did not have proper college entry qualifications. The study also confirmed acute shortage of resources at ECD centres. This implied that implementation of ECD programmes would be hindered. In the study it was found out that most ECD centres had very high teacher / pupil ratios. This was because implementers did not comply with recommended ratios in the ECD policy. Therefore effectiveness of ECD programmes would be reduced. The study further confirmed positive attitudes of teachers and parents towards the ECD programmes. This implied that they supported ECD programmes. Further the study established that parental involvement in implementation of ECD programmes yielded cognitive and non-cognitive benefits to the children. In addition, it was also found that the government provided ECD programmes were designed to be community based. Some communities therefore failed to sustain the programmes. Government was called upon to provide financial allocation for ECD programmes.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the above conclusion, it is recommended that properly qualified teachers should man ECD classes. Engagement of para-professionals should consider candidates with 5 'O'

level passes. In addition it is recommended that para-professionals should be paid proper salaries similar to temporary teachers engaged in the formal school system. In order to mobilize adequate resources it is recommended that all stakeholders should be involved in implementation of ECD programmes. These include government, local councils, traditional leaders, political leaders, private sector as well as parents.

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