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**Impediments to Effective Enactment of Early Childhood Education  
Curriculum and Pedagogy in Tanzania: Issues and Experiences of Teachers  
in Urban and Rural Pre-Schools**

A thesis

submitted in fulfilment

of the requirements for the degree

of

**Doctor of Philosophy in Education**

at

**The University of Waikato**

by

**Ignasia Renatus Mligo**



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
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*Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato*

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to investigate experiences, possibilities, and issues encountered by teachers in the enactment of early childhood education and care curriculum and pedagogy in the Tanzanian context. Worldwide, the concept of early childhood education and care does not refer to a single entity; rather, the term covers a variety of programmes for young children between birth and eight years. It is theorised in the literature that improving human development in the early years in good quality early education, is definitely a way to break out of poverty because early investment has a very high economic rate of return.

The government of Tanzania formalised pre-school education for children aged 5 and 6 years old under the Tanzania's Education and Training Policy in 1995 and placed it under the direction of the Ministry of Education. Having formalised pre-school education, the government in partnership with parents, community, and non-governmental organisations agreed to support this education. However, anecdotes suggested that all activities to implement the policy were left to parents, communities, and non-governmental organisations. Hence, it was suspected that there might be challenges, experiences, and possibilities arising when teachers enact the current pre-school education curriculum developed in 2005, and associated pedagogies in the classroom context.

This study within an interpretive paradigm took a case study approach to investigate participants' views on the enactment of the Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum and associated pedagogies. Views on the curriculum enactment were elicited from 28 participants; six from government educational officials (national level) and 22 from the local level (six teachers, four parents, and 12 pre-school children) in the one rural and the one urban pre-school. Multi-methods were used to generate data through individual interviews, focus group discussions, classroom observations, documentary review, informal conversations, and the researcher's reflective journal. Data were analysed thematically by NVivo 10 software developed by QSR International.

Ecological systems theory developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1917-2005), and sociocultural theories developed by Lev Semenovich Vygotsky (1896-1934) were used as lenses for framing the study, data analysis, interpretation of findings, and drawing conclusions.

The findings revealed that there was a mismatch between the intended pre-school education curriculum and the curriculum enacted by teachers in the field. The data analysis indicated that this ineffective enactment of the curriculum and associated pedagogies in the field was influenced by lack of clear policy guidelines as to how pre-school education would be funded and conducted (i.e. structural and quality aspects), limited human and physical resources, lack of involvement of the key users on curriculum development, lack of awareness of parents and community regarding the importance of early education investment, and detrimental cultural beliefs and traditions practiced in relation to young children. Hence, in public pre-school settings studied, parents and the community were not able to provide quality pre-school education. Quality pre-school education in the international literature indicates the importance of learner-centred pedagogy.

However, few studies conducted in the Tanzanian context have written on the importance of learner-centred pedagogy in teaching and learning. Moreover, those studies that have been carried out have not indicated how learner-centred pedagogy could be enacted in the Tanzanian context. So, this study has provided a number of suggestions to inform government policy makers of ways to implement learner-centred pedagogies for quality early childhood education and care.

To that end, the study concludes that for the better enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogical practice, there is a need for the government to prioritise in early education. It needs to involve parents and community to work with qualified teachers and local experts to develop child-centred pedagogy. Together with this, the study contributes to knowledge by developing an early childhood education and care model aiming at promoting capacity building for parents, community volunteers, teachers, and children for quality early education provision.

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## **Dedication**

To my parents, Renatus Palanga Kasmshahara Mligo and Triphonia Satu Mtalikodi Mligo, for their care, love, and wisdom to guide me to realise my full potential; their endless love and support and for guiding me about the value of education. Without their guidance, I would not have reached a dream.

## Table of contents

<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Acknowledgement .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>Dedication.....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>Table of contents .....</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>List of Figures... ..</b>	<b>xiv</b>
<b>List of Tables.....</b>	<b>xvi</b>
<b>List of Appendices.....</b>	<b>xvii</b>
<b>List Acronyms....</b>	<b>xix</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH STUDY .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Researcher’s Personal Contextual Information and Interest in this Study 1	
1.2 Background to the Research .....	4
1.3 Tanzania as a Country.....	5
1.3.1 The situation of early childhood education and care in Tanzania .....	7
1.3.1.1 Tanzania and corruption .....	9
1.3.1.2 ECEC investment in Tanzania and living standards of its people ....	11
1.3.1.3 The situation of families in rural and urban areas in Tanzania.....	13
1.4 Structure of the Education System in Tanzania.....	14
1.5 The Formalisation of Pre-school Education in Tanzania.....	16
1.6 Statement of the Problem.....	17
1.7 Definition of Terms.....	19
1.8 Significance of the Study .....	20
1.9 Organisation of the Thesis .....	21
<b>CHAPTER 2 EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE IN TANZANIA .....</b>	<b>25</b>
2.1 The Concept of Early Childhood Education and Care.....	25
2.1.1 Value of ECEC and rationale for government investment .....	27
2.1.1.1 Benefits of early investment .....	27
2.1.1.2 Child’s rights to education.....	29
2.1.1.3 Social changes.....	31
2.2 The Situation of ECEC in African Countries .....	32
2.2.1 The current situation of ECEC in Tanzania.....	34

2.3	The Concept of ECEC Curriculum .....	38
2.4	History and Context of the ECEC Curriculum in Tanzania .....	42
2.4.1	Tanzanian ECEC curriculum development in 2005 .....	48
2.4.1.1	The syllabus and teachers' guide documents .....	52
2.4.2	Critiques of the Tanzanian ECEC curriculum of 2005 .....	52
<b>CHAPTER 3 INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON ECEC</b>		
<b>CURRICULA AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT.. 55</b>		
3.1	Critical Consideration Aspects for ECEC Curriculum Development.....	55
3.1.1	Sociocultural contexts.....	56
3.1.2	Political contexts.....	57
3.1.3	Historical contexts .....	59
3.1.4	Economic contexts.....	61
3.1.5	Physical environmental contexts .....	61
3.2	Models/Approaches to Curriculum Framework .....	63
3.2.1	Te Whāriki New Zealand curriculum framework.....	65
3.3	Implementation of a Learner-Centred Curriculum .....	69
3.3.1	Learning in a play context .....	73
3.3.2	Learning through creative imitation and performance.....	75
3.3.3	Learning through storytelling, songs, proverbs, and trips .....	77
3.3.4	Learning through art and craft .....	78
3.4	ECEC Curriculum Enactment in a Global Perspective.....	80
3.5	Factors Impinging on the Enactment of the ECEC Curriculum .....	82
3.5.1	Teachers' qualifications, teacher education, and professional development .....	83
3.5.2	Teachers' pedagogical skills.....	88
3.5.3	The availability of curriculum materials.....	91
3.5.4	Teacher's attitudes and beliefs and classroom practices.....	92
3.5.5	Parent and community involvement in pre-school education.....	94
3.6	Quality in ECE Provision.....	96
3.7	Synthesis of Issues from Literature Review .....	100
<b>CHAPTER 4 THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK .....</b>		
<b>105</b>		
4.1	Introduction.....	105
4.2	Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model.....	106
4.2.1	The Microsystem .....	107
4.2.2	The Mesosystem .....	108
4.2.3	The Exosystem.....	109

4.2.4	The Macrosystem.....	110
4.3	The Sociocultural Theoretical Underpinnings .....	111
4.3.1	The sociocultural theory origins, learning, and development.....	112
4.3.1.1	Culture .....	113
4.3.1.2	Mediation.....	116
4.3.1.3	Social relationships .....	117
4.3.2	Early childhood curriculum in a sociocultural context.....	119
4.3.3	Using sociocultural theories of learning and development in ECEC settings .....	122
4.4	Use of Ecological Systems and Sociocultural Theories in this Study ..	125
4.5	Chapter Summary .....	127
<b>CHAPTER 5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....</b>		<b>129</b>
5.1	Introduction.....	129
5.2	Research Questions .....	129
5.3	Research Design of this Study .....	130
5.4	The Interpretive Paradigm as a Paradigm of Choice for this Study .....	130
5.5	A Research Methodology for this Study.....	133
5.6	Case Study Research Design .....	135
5.7	Participants.....	137
5.7.1	Accessing study participants.....	144
5.7.2	Demographic information.....	146
5.8	Multi-Methods for Data Generation and Instruments.....	149
5.8.1	Interview .....	149
5.8.2	Focus group interviews.....	153
5.8.3	Informal conversation.....	155
5.8.4	Classroom observations .....	156
5.8.5	Documentary review.....	159
5.9	Data Management and Analysis .....	160
5.9.1	Interview data and focus group discussion .....	161
5.9.2	Observational data .....	166
5.10	Ensuring Quality and Trustworthiness of the Study .....	167
5.10.1	Credibility.....	168
5.10.2	Transferability.....	169
5.10.3	Dependability.....	170
5.10.4	Confirmability.....	171
5.11	Ethical Considerations .....	172

5.11.1	Obtaining access .....	172
5.11.2	Informed consent .....	173
5.11.3	Confidentiality and anonymity .....	174
5.11.4	Privacy for research participants.....	175
5.11.5	Potential harm to participants .....	175
5.11.6	Right of withdrawal .....	175
5.11.7	Cultural and social considerations .....	176
5.12	Summary of the Chapter .....	176
<b>CHAPTER 6 FINDINGS FROM THE LOCAL LEVEL SITES.....</b>		<b>179</b>
6.1	Introduction.....	179
6.2	Study Sites, Research Participants, and Data Generated .....	180
6.3	Government Commitment to Pre-school Education .....	181
6.3.1	Teacher education and professional development .....	186
6.4	Parents and Community Involvement in Children’s Learning .....	190
6.4.1	Parents and community awareness of pre-school education.....	195
6.5	Teaching and Learning Resources and Materials .....	203
6.5.1	Quality in pre-school education.....	225
6.5.2	School Inspection.....	228
6.6	Pedagogy of Teachers .....	229
6.6.1	Teachers’ creativity .....	236
6.6.2	Children’s opportunities .....	239
6.7	Curriculum Development Process .....	240
6.7.1	Involvement of key players in curriculum preparations .....	241
6.7.2	Influential aspects for curriculum development .....	243
6.7.2.1	Sociocultural Influences.....	243
6.7.2.2	Political influences.....	244
6.7.2.3	Economic influences.....	245
6.8	Politics in Educational Issues.....	246
6.9	Chapter Summary .....	249
<b>CHAPTER 7 FINDINGS FROM GOVERNMENT EDUCATIONAL OFFICIALS (NATIONAL) GROUP.....</b>		<b>251</b>
7.1	Introduction.....	251
7.2	Government Commitment to Pre-school Education .....	251
7.2.1	The provision of funds from the government .....	253
7.2.2	Qualifications of teachers and professional development .....	254

7.2.3	Lack of independent division for pre-school education.....	260
7.3	Parents and Community Involvement in Pre-school Education .....	262
7.3.1	Parents /guardians awareness and low economic status .....	265
7.4	Teaching and Learning Resources, Materials, and Environments.....	268
7.4.1	Low quality of pre-school education .....	270
7.4.2	School inspection.....	272
7.5	Curriculum Development Process .....	275
7.5.1	Influential factors for curriculum development .....	275
7.5.1.1	Sociocultural context .....	276
7.5.1.2	Political context .....	278
7.5.1.3	Historical context.....	279
7.5.1.4	Economic context.....	281
7.5.2	Involvement of stakeholders in curriculum development.....	284
7.5.3	Politics in educational issues .....	288
7.6	Chapter Summary .....	290
<b>CHAPTER 8 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATIONS OF THE FINDINGS.....</b>		<b>293</b>
8.1	Introduction.....	293
8.2	Summary of the Key Findings .....	294
8.2.1	Overview of the key findings and theoretical underpinnings .....	295
8.3	Child’s Home Environments (Sphere One) .....	296
8.4	ECEC Settings and Learning Environments (Sphere Two).....	298
8.4.1	Lack of physical resources.....	299
8.4.1.1	Lack of a quality teaching and learning environment.....	302
8.4.2	Lack of qualified teachers.....	303
8.4.2.1	Teacher education programmes in ECEC.....	305
8.4.3	Pre-school education curriculum structure .....	308
8.4.4	ECEC curriculum enactment and pedagogy .....	312
8.4.4.1	Pedagogy of teachers .....	315
8.4.4.2	Quality of pre-school education.....	321
8.5	Management of the Pre-school Education (Sphere Three).....	327
8.5.1	Parents and community involvement in ECEC settings .....	328
8.5.2	Socio-economic status of parents .....	330
8.5.3	Independent directorate for pre-school education.....	332
8.6	International and National Policies (Sphere Four).....	335
8.6.1	Formalisation of pre-school education .....	335
8.6.2	Curriculum materials .....	340

8.6.3	Influential context for curriculum development .....	340
8.6.3.1	Sociocultural contexts .....	341
8.6.3.2	Economic contexts .....	342
8.6.3.3	Political contexts .....	343
8.6.3.4	Historical contexts .....	345
8.6.3.5	Physical environments .....	345
8.6.4	Involvement of key players in ECEC curriculum development .....	347
8.7	Ideologies, Attitudes and Cultural Beliefs (Sphere Five) .....	351
8.7.1	Childrearing systems .....	353
8.7.2	Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and to ECEC practices .....	355
8.7.3	Children's meals and witchcraft beliefs.....	357
8.8	Chapter Summary .....	358
<b>CHAPTER 9 CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND</b>		
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>		<b>361</b>
9.1	Introduction.....	361
9.2	Overview of the Research and Key Findings .....	361
9.3	Proposed Model for Developing ECEC in Tanzania.....	370
9.3.1	Teachers, parents, community elders and other volunteers .....	373
9.3.2	Educational supervisors in the region, district and ward level .....	374
9.3.3	Community local leaders, WEOs, Mtaa and VEOs.....	374
9.4	Implications of the Research Findings.....	375
9.4.1	Implications for government and its divisions.....	375
9.4.2	Implications for teacher education.....	377
9.4.3	Implications for teachers and children.....	378
9.4.4	Implications for parents and local communities .....	379
9.5	Limitations of the Study.....	380
9.6	Recommendations for Further Research.....	381
9.7	Conclusion .....	383
<b>References.....</b>		<b>387</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>		<b>413</b>

## List of Figures

Figure 1.1	The map of Tanzania showing study areas.....	7
Figure 1.2	The structure of education system in Tanzania .....	15
Figure 4.1	Ecological model of the relationship between a child and learning environments .....	107
Figure 4.2	The relationship between curriculum, practice and sociocultural context .....	126
Figure 5.1A	A framework for research design .....	130
Figure 6.1	Study sites and participants .....	180
Figure 6.2	Mothers attending community activities (school building) .....	197
Figure 6.3	Children on their way looking for child labour in the fields .....	199
Figure 6.4	Children fishing using a mosquito net to raise their income .....	200
Figure 6.5	Pre-school children in urban school writing by putting their exercise books on their laps.....	205
Figure 6.6	Handwriting of Alpher aged 6 years old at an urban school .....	206
Figure 6.7	Handwriting of Eliza aged 5 years old at an urban school .....	206
Figure 6.8	Counting numbers on the blackboard at the rural pre-school.....	209
Figure 6.9	Various pictures drawn on manila sheet and pasted on walls in the rural school .....	210
Figure 6.10	Various pictures drawn on manila sheet and pasted on walls at the urban school.....	211
Figure 6.11	Nembo ya wizara na cheti cha ithibati (Ministry of Education Logo and Certification).....	2111
Figure 6.12	Pre-school children in the class waiting for their teacher to come for a lesson .....	212
Figure 6.13	Pre-school children at the urban pre-school .....	213
Figure 6.14	Desks in structured rows at the urban pre-school setting .....	215
Figure 6.15	The floor where children sit inside the classroom in the urban school .....	216
Figure 6.16	Indicates various free hand pictures drawn by John, aged 6 year olds .....	221
Figure 6.17	Indicates various copied pictures drawn by Edina a 5 year old.....	221

Figure 6.18	Indicates various free hand pictures drawn by Anna, a 5 year old girl.....	222
Figure 6.19	Indicates various free hand pictures drawn by Bernard, aged 5 years old.....	222
Figure 6.20	Indicates various copied pictures drawn by Eliza, aged 5 years old.....	223
Figure 6.21	Indicates various free hand pictures drawn by Rachel, aged 6 years old.....	223
Figure 6.22	Pre-school children at the rural school listening to a teacher .....	230
Figure 6.23	Bottle tops for counting purposes collected by the urban pupils...	237
Figure 8.1	Early childhood education spheres and context in Tanzania.....	295
Figure 9.1	Proposed model for developing ECEC in Tanzanian context .....	372

## List of Tables

Table 2.1	Children’s Enrolment Country Wise and in the Study Regions in Year 2012 .....	36
Table 5.1	Number of Study Participants by Gender and Location .....	146
Table 5.2	Study Participants Pseudonyms and Codes .....	147
Table 5.3	Study Participants’ in Groupings by Educational Level and Profession .....	148
Table 5.4	Characteristics of Pre-school Children Participants by Location, Age, and Gender.....	149
Table 5.5	Grouping of Questions, Sessions, and Time for Interview per Session .....	152
Table 5.6	Documents for Analysis.....	160
Table 6.1	Data Generated from Research Participants by Location and Number of Participants .....	181
Table 6.2	Resources Available or not Available in the Urban Pre-schools .....	205

## **List of Appendices**

Appendix A: Research Clearance Letter from the University of Waikato .....	413
Appendix B: Invitation Letter for Tanzania Institute of Education (Curriculum Development and Evaluation) .....	414
Appendix C: Director Consent Form .....	416
Appendix D: Invitation Letter for Curriculum Developers .....	416
Appendix E: Curriculum Developers' Consent Form .....	418
Appendix F: Permission to Conduct Research from Tanzania Institute of Education (Curriculum Development) .....	419
Appendix G: Invitation Letter for Regional Education Officers .....	420
Appendix H: Regional Education Officer Consent Forms .....	421
Appendix I: Permission to Conduct Research from Regional Education Office- Mbeya .....	423
Appendix J: Permission to Conduct Research from Regional Education Office- Dodoma .....	424
Appendix K: Invitation Letter for Head Teacher .....	424
Appendix L: Head Teacher's Consent Form .....	426
Appendix M: Invitation Letter for Teachers .....	427
Appendix N: Teachers' Consent Forms .....	429
Appendix O: Invitation Letter for Parents/Guardians .....	430
Appendix P: Parents/Guardians Consent Form .....	431
Appendix Q: A "Swahili" Introductory Letter and Signed Consent Form .....	431
Appendix R: Ministry of Education Official's Guiding Questions for Interview .....	433
Appendix S: Curriculum Developers' Guiding Questions for Interview .....	435
Appendix T: Regional Officials Guiding Questions for Interview .....	436
Appendix U: Ward Education Coordinator's Guiding Questions Interview .....	436
Appendix V: Head Teachers' Guiding Questions for Interview Guide .....	437
Appendix W: Teachers' Guiding Questions for Interview .....	438
Appendix X: Parents/guardians' Guiding Questions for Interview .....	439
Appendix Y: Pupils' Guiding Questions for Focus Group Discussion .....	439

Appendix Z: Classroom Observation Checklist for Rural and an Urban Pre-school .....	440
Appendix AA: Schedule of the Classroom Observations.....	441
Appendix BB: A Holistic Curriculum Document.....	442
Appendix CC: A Chat of Detailed Syllabus for Pre-school Education .....	442
Appendix DD: A Sample of Pictures Drawn by Teachers for the Pupils to Copy .....	444
Appendix EE: Sample Pictures Drawn by Pupils of the Urban Pre-school.....	445
Appendix FF: Sample Pictures Drawn by Pupils of the Rural Pre-school .....	446

## **List Acronyms**

BoT:	Bank of Tanzania
BEd:	Bachelor of Education
DEO:	District Education Officer
DPP:	Director of Public Prosecutions
ECE:	Early Childhood Education
ECEC:	Early Childhood Education and Care
ECD:	Early Childhood Development
EFA:	Education For All
EMAC:	Educational Materials Approval Committee
EPPE:	Effective Provision of Pre-School Education
ESR:	Education for Self-Reliance
ETP:	Education and Training Policy
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
LCP:	Leaner-Centred Pedagogy
MCDG&C:	Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children
MDGs:	Millennium Development Goals
MoEC :	Ministry of Education and Culture
MoEVT:	Ministry of Education and Vocational Training
NECTA:	National Examination Council of Tanzania
NGOs:	Non-Governmental Organisations
OECD:	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PCCB:	Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau
PEDP:	Primary Education Development Programme
REO:	Regional Education Officer

REPOA:	Research on Poverty Alleviation
SCT:	Sociocultural Theory
SSA:	Sub-Saharan Africa
TAKUKURU:	Taasisi ya Kuzuia na Kupambana na Rushwa
TAMWA:	Tanzania Media Women Association
TCP:	Teacher Centred Pedagogy
TIE:	Tanzania Institute of Education
UNCRC:	United Nations Conventions of the Rights of the Child
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF:	United Nations International Children's Emergent Fund
UPE:	Universal Primary Education
URT:	United Republic of Tanzania
WEC:	Ward Education Coordinator
WEO:	Ward Executive Officer
ZPD:	Zone of Proximal Development

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH STUDY**

#### **1.1 Researcher's Personal Contextual Information and Interest in this Study**

Being a girl child, I (the researcher) had to take on all my mother's responsibilities at home, while my parents were in individual or community activities, and I never attended a pre-school setting. There is a Bena (my Tanzanian tribe) proverb which states that to know the road ahead, one must ask those coming back from it. Embedded in this proverb is a belief that the people who have walked along a road in which we want to pass have experience, knowledge, and opinions about it. Being a member of the Tanzanian cultural group and a mother of four children (Triphonia, Cletus, Roger, and Bernard), I share a point of identification with the Tanzanian participants in this research. I have taken the road that this study explored and I have had experiences, knowledge, and personal opinions about early childhood education and care (ECEC) in Tanzania, which may have influenced my data analysis and interpretations of the results. This view is supported by Miles and Huberman (1994) who reported that a basic factor for data confirmability is the degree to which the researcher admits his or her own predispositions. Therefore, as I present this report of my research journey, I feel that I should explain my own positioning. As I am a key instrument of data generation in this research, I may leave in the research some of my own voice.

My interest in matters related to ECEC is based on my personal desire to see children enjoying their childhood and leading a happy life. I am a second born in a family of seven children, whereby three are boys and four are girls. I am called *Adiya* as my native name; which means may God bless this creature to live long. During my early years as a girl child I used to take care of my young brothers and sisters and shared with them different local play and games together with neighbouring children. Boys imitated the activities which are performed by fathers while girls had roles like mothers. Boys and girls played different games such as the boys played hunting, building houses, and carpentry including

hammering and nailing, while cooking and nursing games were for girls. These play and games also had a role in responsibility training and general socialisation. In several games I, my brother and sisters, and other children rehearsed our future roles as adults, and showed that we were at least intending to live up to the expectations people had of us. These local and traditional play and games were thought to enable us as children to develop into healthy and strong adults.

Within our village there was an ECEC centre run by the Roman Catholic Church but my parents did not send me to the centre because it was a common habit for many people within the village to ignore such a service. Parents had no trust in sending their children into the care of somebody else, but rather the family looked after children when their parents were away for farm activities and other family responsibilities. Being a girl child, I had to take on my mother's responsibilities, when she was away on individual and community activities. I was very much interested in going to the ECEC centre to see what was going on but I never got the opportunity. It was this desire that made me take early childhood courses during my Bachelors and Master's Degree at the University of Dar es Salaam (Tanzania).

In addition, I have been teaching for about 12 years, eight years in secondary schools and four years at the University of Dodoma, Tanzania. Through this experience I found both secondary and tertiary students were reasonably capable in cognitive skills, but non-cognitive skills including social-emotional skills, persistence skills, motivational skills, and self-regulation skills were not well developed. This view is supported by Shizha (2014) who found that school systems in many regions of Africa do little to cater for psycho-social, cultural identity, and behavioural adjustment when pupils enter the schools. That means that from the early stages the school systems ignore non-cognitive skills and sociocultural values that pupils bring to schools and thus early educators fail to encourage a supportive home-school learning environment. As a result, at later stages teachers and other educational practitioners end up blaming students for their failure. Teachers at the secondary school level were trying to guide students in both aspects (cognitive and non-cognitive skills) but still students performed poorly in non-cognitive skills. I suspected that maybe the situation was that due to

a lack of guidance and foundations for students from the early stages of learning. That is, from the early stage the focus of teaching has been on academic learning which was taught in a structured way. Teachers from the early stages neglected to appreciate the importance of socio-emotional, behavioural development, and learning dispositions (Kweka, Binagi, & Kainamula, 2000; Mende, 1999). Teachers seemed to be just thinking that learning is composed only of academic aspects. This situation increased my interest in early childhood education. With reference to my experience about older students lacking non-cognitive skills, the view is supported by Heckman (2008) who argues that to overcome early disadvantages, it is much more effective to invest in early intervention, meanwhile most efforts to help adolescents to recover from disadvantage have been relatively ineffective. Heckman further asserts that non-cognitive skills such as socio-emotional/behavioural development, motivation, ability to work with others, have an ongoing importance in later life, and that they can be more easily learned in early childhood.

Furthermore, my unpublished Masters Dissertation entitled “The perception of educational stakeholders on the implementation of teaching methods only curriculum for teacher education in Tanzania” in 2008, also changed my thinking about curriculum issues. The study investigated how tutors perceived the implementation of the teacher education curriculum for secondary school teachers where student-teachers were being taught just the practices of teaching and not the subject content in a classroom context. It was argued that there was no need to repeat teaching student-teachers subject content because they had already learnt content in secondary schools. So this previous study changed my thinking and I started developing an interest in exploring more about curriculum issues such as its development and enactment. As a result the current study examined contexts for curriculum development, enactment, and associated pedagogies for ECEC.

In addition, at the University of Dodoma I have been teaching in the Bachelor of Education in Early Childhood Education (BEd. ECE) programme, on the early childhood courses. During student-teacher practicum assessment I went to pre-school settings for assessment of student-teachers enrolled in ECEC courses. The situation I used to see in classrooms during assessment motivated me to undertake

a study of this kind, that is, to investigate possibilities, experiences, and issues pre-school teachers encounter in curriculum enactment and pedagogy. Also, my interest was to understand the needs of children in these contemporary times and how teachers can support them in teaching and learning environments. I found that current approaches were not likely to be conducive to young children's learning. Also, being a part of the community where one part of this study was conducted, I always found parents and community having to provide funding, which was seen as burdensome to them.

Hence through experiences during my childhood, teaching in secondary schools, University teaching and assessing ECEC student-teachers and seeing parents and community doing school-based activities, and having to make donations of money, I developed an interest in knowing more about ECEC matters and the teachers' concerns about their teaching and learning in a classroom context. Therefore, I wanted to enrich my knowledge by undertaking research in this particular area so that I could understand the teachers' possibilities, experiences, and challenges encountered in pre-school teaching and curriculum enactment. Thereafter, it is hoped that my study could suggest a better way of teaching and curriculum enactment, as well as educating parents and the community. So it is my hope that this study will contribute new knowledge to identifying and addressing issues and challenges that might face ECEC in Tanzania.

## **1.2 Background to the Research**

This chapter presents the key foci of the research study, background information, and contextual information which guided how and why the study was conducted in Tanzania. This chapter began with a brief outline of the researcher's personal contextual information and interest in this study. The background and research context is outlined in the second section, followed by information about Tanzania as the country where the study was conducted in the third section. The structure of the education system is outlined in the fourth section and information given about the formalisation of pre-school education in Tanzania is outlined in the fifth section. The sixth section outlines the statement of the research problem, where the need and justification for taking this study is also discussed. A definition of

key terms used in this study is outlined in the seventh section. The significance of the study is discussed in the eighth section, and finally an organisation of the thesis is presented.

This study examined possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered when teachers enacted the pre-school education curriculum (2005) and associated pedagogies in the Tanzanian contexts. It aimed to find out how sociocultural theorising might suggest ways to address any challenges for policy and practice in enacting the pre-school education curriculum. The study explored the development of the pre-school education curriculum, how it is enacted, and the pedagogical practices used in Tanzanian contexts, and suggested ways to make progress. It is evident that children from birth through to eight years of age have developmental needs and capacities different from those in any subsequent time of their lives (AMANI ECCD, 2005; McCain & Mustard, 1999; Nsamenang, 2008; Young & Mustard, 2008). Therefore, the pre-school education curriculum is different in its approach from the curriculum for older children. In Tanzania, the pre-school education curriculum was put in place in 2005 after the formalisation of pre-school education in 1995 (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005). This pre-school education curriculum enactment and its associated pedagogies are the focus of this study.

### **1.3 Tanzania as a Country**

Tanzania is a United Republic which was formed out of the union of two sovereign states namely Tanganyika and Zanzibar on 26<sup>th</sup> April, 1964. Tanzania got her independence from colonial rule in 1961 and geographically is located in East Africa. It covers an area of 945,087 km<sup>2</sup>, the 12<sup>th</sup> largest of the 54 countries of Africa. It is surrounded by Mozambique, Malawi and Zambia to the South, the Indian Ocean on the East, Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi and Rwanda to the West, Kenya and Uganda to the North. According to the National census data in 2012 Tanzania had a population of 44.9 million (United Republic of Tanzania (URT), 2012b), but currently the population has increased up to 47.78 million (approximately) (UNICEF, 2013). The Tanzanian population comprises more than 120 different tribes speaking different vernacular languages, but united

by the language of Kiswahili as the Tanzania (lingua franca) medium of communication. A few Asian and European communities make up less than one per cent of the population (United Nations, 2008). The vernacular language is the first language that a child learns at home and its use remains at the family level because it is not an official language. Kiswahili is the medium of instruction in public pre-school and primary schools, and English is taught as a subject, while English is the medium of instruction for private pre-school and primary schools and Kiswahili is taught as a subject. Likewise, English is the medium of instruction for secondary schools and tertiary education. However, in rural areas people speak their native languages. This causes difficulties for children if they attend a pre-school and meet with teachers who do not speak that native language. Overall, promoting local languages in pre-schools and schools is a key to success. It is through local languages that the particular culture is learned and transmitted (Dei, 2014). Many writers argue that the recognition of local languages in educational policies is important because it would facilitate the introduction of such local languages/indigenous knowledge in settings to maintain social and cultural identities and create multiple knowledge (Dei, 2014; Owuor, 2007; Shizha, 2014). Figure 1.1 shows the country of Tanzania with the marked two regions where this study was conducted.



Figure 1.1 The map of Tanzania showing study areas

Source: <https://www.google.co.nz/search?q=Tanzania+map&newwindow>

Notes: A- Mbeya region (urban school) and B- Dodoma region (rural school)

### 1.3.1 The situation of early childhood education and care in Tanzania

The situation of ECEC in Tanzania is alarming. Tanzania is among the countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) which have failed to develop ECEC provision due to under resourcing and inadequate infrastructure (Garcia, Virata, & Dunkelberg, 2008; Gordon, Nandy, Pantazis, Pemberton, & Townsend, 2003; Nsamenang, 2008; Young & Mustard, 2008). A report by UNICEF (2010) documented that children in Tanzania lack access to education provision, public health services, including vaccinations, clean water, and sanitation.

Tanzania is one of the poorest countries in the world (UNDP, 2012). One of its main objectives is to control infectious diseases, such as malaria, typhoid, and AIDS/HIV. These diseases result in a large number of orphaned children who are sometimes simply left on the side of the streets to care for themselves. According

to the statistics from UNICEF (2013), in Tanzania approximately 11 out of 16 people (68%) of the population live below the international poverty line of US\$1.25 per day, 21% of all children are forced into child labour, approximately two out of every eight children and one child out of approximately 28 children is HIV/AIDS positive (1.7 million total) (UNDP, 2012; UNICEF, 2013). The maternal mortality rate in Tanzania is among the highest in the world, being 1 in 38 births. This situation leads to the high number of orphaned babies (UNICEF, 2008), who are rarely taken in by orphanages due to the high cost and effort required to raise a baby (in comparison to a young child or teen). Briefly, the situation in Tanzania is dire and unacceptable for the welfare of its people. Families live in poverty especially in rural areas and cannot manage to send their children to a pre-school class for which a large monetary contribution is required. Visible high youth unemployment and rising income disparities between the haves and the have-nots could upset further economic and social progress unless urgent action is taken to address them.

Tanzania is blessed with a variety of natural resources that include areas of land, mountains, forests, national parks/wildlife, rivers, lakes, coastal zone, fisheries, minerals, coal and natural gas. Some of the natural resources, such as fisheries and minerals are being commercially exploited, and contribute significantly to the country's economic growth (Tanzania Human Development Report (THDR), 2014). Despite the rich resources, Tanzania is still a poor country with unsustainable harvesting of natural resources.

Yet, effective management and good mobilisation of natural resources could benefit the nation at large and would enable people to send their children to pre-school and other levels of education. To bring about such change there is a need for an economic valuation of key natural resources to be conducted, and for appropriate strong guidelines to promote the prioritisation, and implementation of natural resources management regulations (Tanzania Human Development Report (THDR), 2014). This would produce an effective framework for environmental fiscal reform as a tool to increase public finances through natural resources management. In addition, there is a need for capacity building to raise awareness in civil society through training, advocacy, and formulation of appropriate policies,

plans, strategies, and programmes in selected sectors and at subnational levels. This could result in the enhanced capacity of government and non-government actors to influence national policies on natural resources management. Improving the socio-economic circumstances of Tanzania's large group of citizens must remain a top priority for policy makers. There is a need for equal distribution of the national resources from which currently few people benefit (Tanzania Human Development Report (THDR), 2014).

### ***1.3.1.1 Tanzania and corruption***

Corruption has been blamed for the failure of certain developing countries to develop, and various empirical research studies confirm a link between higher perceived corruption and lower investment and growth by Tanzanians (Warioba, 2011; Wogau, 2010; World Bank, 1998). Tanzania and many African governments are corrupt (Anders, 2001; Heilman & Ndumbaro, 2002; Wogau, 2010) and the fight against corruption remains a significant national and development challenge. An overall statement is that corruption is preventing government funds from going to intended destinations for spending on education and social services. Corruption is widespread, for instance, Tanzania is among the 14 most corrupt countries in the world, according to a report released on 27th May, 2014 (Citizen, 2014). The term corruption in a Tanzanian context is defined by a number of scholars as the misuse of public office for private gain (Heilman & Ndumbaro, 2002; Wogau, 2010; World Bank, 1998). Empirical evidence from recent research conducted by Warioba (2011), about "Legalizing corruption: The historic *Takrima* case, Tanzania corruption tracker system" in Tanzania, demonstrated that corruption is viewed as an unfair behaviour that "connotes bribery, extortion, misuse, favouritism, nepotism, and patronage" (p.34). Corruption is generally considered to be offensive as it disobeys rules of fairness and gives a few people advantages that others do not have (Anders, 2001; Warioba, 2011).

Tanzania is a blessed country with a lot of resources as was described previously, but due to corruption, the mobilisation, distribution, and management of resources is poor and leads to poverty (Warioba, 2011; Wogau, 2010). Corruption is mostly

visible in accessing social services including, education, public offices, media, and political elections. Corruption is high in government departments, which stops the allocated funds and resources arriving with the people who need them, the education sector included (Heilman & Ndumbaro, 2002; Warioba, 2011). Corruption in pre-schools and schools includes government officials asking for bribes in monetary form on pupils' registration, provision of resources, materials (procurements), and school contributions.

It is argued that the fight against corruption in Tanzania is difficult because it is associated with top officials in the system. In other words, the system itself is corrupt (Babeiya, 2011; Warioba, 2011). Community members have lost their confidence and trust and have found that in order to get services of any kind, they need to give out something they normally call *Kitu kidogo* (gift) to the government official making decisions (Babeiya, 2011; Heilman & Ndumbaro, 2002; Warioba, 2011). In societies with severe corruption, Tanzania included, corrupt practices are embodied in existing power relations and therefore need to be analysed in regard to their effect on the lives of people engaged in their daily fight for social, economic, and political existence. Tanzania's corruption is rooted in all aspects of the government (Babeiya, 2011; Warioba, 2011). Corruption is embedded in society and is institutionalized and becomes the norm rather than the exception (Citizen, 2014; Wogau, 2010). A report realised by Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB)/*Taasisi ya Kuzuia na Kupambana na Rushwa*, TAKUKURU (2013) points out that corruption in Tanzania has become part and parcel of daily life and is tolerated, accepted, and institutionalized to the extent that both people who give and receive bribes have internalised that behaviour. In Tanzania, it is commonly accepted amongst researchers that corruption is linked to the poverty of people.

Studies by Warioba (2011) and Babeiya (2011) suggest that there is a need to empower those groups that are forced to give money for bribes; the provision of awareness in knowing their rights in public services could be an important step toward reducing some aspects of corruption. Furthermore, it requires commitment on the part of top management/leadership and major practitioners in society, as well as a conscious effort to empower the general public to fight corruption

without fear. Although such steps will not transform the whole systems of embedded corruption into ideal rational-bureaucratic systems, it could reduce corruption to some extent. Donor countries continue to play a significant role in the financing of development activities, although there are signs of decreasing support to the national budget due to poor management and unclear annual financial reports (UNDP, 2012).

The high levels of corruption in Tanzania, and poor governance and management of resources have contributed to low socio-economic levels. Consequently, due to poverty parents do not send their children to pre-schools, let alone other levels of education. In schools parents need to financially support their children's needs and the running of the pre-school class as the government does not support this type of education.

### ***1.3.1.2 ECEC investment in Tanzania and living standards of its people***

Many governments in developing countries struggle to provide basic education for their citizens. They all consider that education is important, not only for economic growth, but also for social stability (Mbelle, 2008; UNESCO, 2003, 2005; Wedgwood, 2007). For a similar reason access to education for every child is advocated as basic human right. Globally, a number of initiatives have been undertaken to ensure universal access coupled with gender parity, and quality delivery. There have been inspired efforts to improve basic learning needs of various disadvantaged population groups such as the poor, street children, nomad families, rural and remote populations, refugees and other related groups, to try to ensure they do not suffer any discrimination in accessing learning opportunities (EFA Assessment, 2000; UNESCO, 2000, 2005). A study by Young and Mustard (2008) points out that “one-third of Africa’s children under 5 years suffer from malnutrition and more than 95 per cent of the continent’s 5 and 6 year olds do not have access to pre-schools, early stimulation, or good child development facilities”(p.73). For instance, the facts and statistics from the Tanzanian Ministry of Education indicate that in 2012 out of 2,472, 530 five and six year-olds, only 985,060 (39.8%) were enrolled in the pre-school settings (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT), 2012a), (see section 2.2.1, p.36 for details).

A study by Mbelle (2008) indicates that Tanzania is one of the most relevant examples of a country in Africa where earlier efforts to get all children into primary schools generated little apparent benefit in the long run. Tanzania left aside pre-school education and put more effort and investment into primary education. The intention was to educate more children in primary schools as a means of reducing poverty (Nyerere, 1967). After their completion of basic education it would be expected that they could apply such education in solving various issues. Tanzania is built and grown within the philosophy of Education for Self Reliance (ESR) advocated by the first president Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere (Nyerere, 1967), and its aim was to make sure that when more “pupils are well prepared in basic education then the social return and the labour productivity would be higher and would help to reduce poverty through the attained education” (Nyerere, 1967, p. 28).

However, despite concentrating investment on primary education to implement Universal Primary Education (UPE) strategies as a means of poverty reduction, the goals and objectives were not met (Mbelle, 2008). Although Tanzania managed to enrol many children in primary schools the system had not considered the issue of quality of education (Mbelle, 2008; Wedgwood, 2007). That means achieving quantity of access was at the expense of quality. Problems were found both within the education system and in the environment into which primary graduates entered. These included lack of capacity building within the education system in terms of pre-service teacher education, professional development, governance, and financial management support (Wedgwood, 2007). Likewise, institutional arrangements were not strengthened to support the planning and delivery of education. This view is supported by Mbelle (2008) in his study about the “Impact of Reforms on the Quality of Primary Education in Tanzania”. The findings of the study indicate that there was poor implementation of different foundation programmes. Inadequate attention was given to key issues that could improve performance, such as teaching and learning environments, physical and human resources (pre-service and in-service teacher education), availability of enough textbooks, teachers’ guide and reference books. He further recommended that in order to attain quality in education, a common foundation programme be

defined and implemented, with respect to the amount of input and cost. Tanzanian educational policies concentrate on increasing the number of pupils attending schools without considering quality (Mbelle, 2008; Omari, 1999).

Having this knowledge in mind, many parents in Tanzania would like to provide proper child care and education for their children but economic pressures (poverty, workload and lack of amenities) have meant less care for children while parents struggle to meet subsistence needs (Kweka et al., 2000). As a result “more children have high rates of malnutrition, there is a high prevalence of diarrhoea diseases, low feeding of balanced diet, and they live in unhygienic environments with a shortage of water” (Kweka et al., 2000, p. 54). Hence, few children have access to pre-school education settings.

#### ***1.3.1.3 The situation of families in rural and urban areas in Tanzania***

The living standards of families in rural areas are poorer than those in urban locations (UNDP, 2012; Wedgwood, 2007). According to the statistics from the UNICEF report of 2010 in Tanzania, approximately 48 percent of all children in rural Tanzania suffer three or more severe deprivations of basic needs, compared with 10 percent of children in urban areas. Deprivation of water (78 percent), shelter (63 percent), and food (68 percent) are the most common (UNICEF, 2010).

Children from rural areas tend to be more malnourished, have less access to education, healthcare services, and face higher mortality risks, than their urban and less poor counterparts (UNICEF, 2008, 2010). People in rural areas raise their income through agricultural activities, but due to weather changes (i.e drought and/or floods) and lack of agricultural experts to support farmers in higher productivity using modern means of production, there is low production (Mukyanuzi, 2003). People could use the surplus from their products and raise their income, which would enable them to enrol their children in ECEC settings. Unfortunately, the current situation is not supportive.

In Tanzania the situation of people living in urban areas compared with rural areas is a bit better. The differences could be attributed to the accessibility to social services such as health facilities, transport, and the standard of living (UNICEF,

2010) in urban areas which enables people to carry out a variety of small businesses and be privately employed. Thus, due to reasonable social services and the ethnic diversity in towns, people tend to move from villages to towns. As a result the social services are not sufficient when compared with the population increase (UNICEF, 2010) and people continue to suffer deprivation.

In summary, although in both rural and urban areas people are poor, the situation in rural areas is worse. In rural areas, current investment in education is unlikely to earn substantial returns unless there is concurrent development of infrastructure and services (Appleton, 2001; Mbelle, 2008; Mukyanuzi, 2003; Wedgwood, 2007). In ECEC, adequate attention was not given to key issues, such as physical and human resources that could improve performance and would enable parents to enrol their children in ECEC settings. In order to compare differences in pre-school education provision and practice, my research was carried out in pre-schools in a rural and urban community.

#### **1.4 Structure of the Education System in Tanzania**

Tanzania, as a former British protectorate, inherited an education system very similar to the English education system within the Commonwealth structure. The formal education system is hierarchical; it is composed of pre-school, primary, secondary, and tertiary education (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995). The only formalised system for children before school age is the pre-school education system for the 5 and 6 year olds which was formalised in 1995 under the Education and Training Policy (ETP), although in classrooms there are often children with 4 years old. Therefore, pre-school education was integrated within primary schools and included in the country's formal education structure. Whereas the initial education structure was in four levels i.e. 7-4-2-3+, the new structure became five levels, i.e. 2-7-4-2-3+; whereby, there are two years of pre-school education (Ages 4-5/6), seven years of primary education (Ages 7-13), four years of Ordinary Certificate of Secondary Level Education (CLSE) (Ages 14-17), two years of Advanced Certificate of Secondary Level Education (ACLSE) (Ages 18-19), and three and above years of tertiary or higher education (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995) (see Figure 1.2 for clarification).

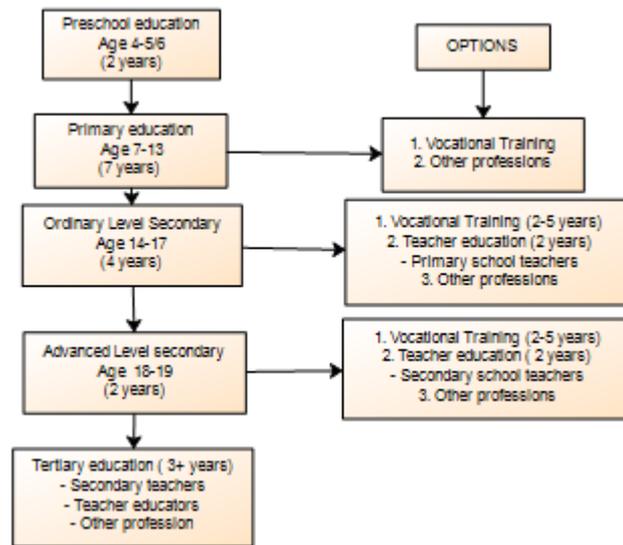


Figure 1.2 The structure of education system in Tanzania

After two years of pre-school education, children attend compulsory primary school education, which they complete at the age of 13 years old. At age 13 they do an examination. Those who pass go directly to ordinary level of secondary education, and those who do not pass have the options of vocational training, or going to other professions. Students who graduate from the ordinary level of secondary education have four major options to take based on their qualifications. For instance, vocational education that lasts from two to five years; teacher education for a two years certificate for primary school teachers; going straight to the advanced level of secondary education for two years; or choosing to go to other professions. When students graduate from the advanced level of secondary education, they can either directly join tertiary education, go to teacher education colleges for secondary school teachers to study for a Teachers' Diploma, opt for vocational training, or go to other professions. Some of the students, who graduate from higher institutions (universities) depending on their specialisations, go to teach in ordinary and advanced levels as secondary schools teachers, while others go and teach in teacher education colleges, and other students opt for other professions. Therefore, this study deals with the first level of education, i.e. pre-school education for children aged 4-5/6 years in the Tanzanian system of education, and their pre-school teachers who are expected to have had two years of initial teacher education after the completion of ordinary level of secondary

education. However, in reality teachers who teach pre-school education tend to be primary school teachers, and primary school leavers on a volunteer-basis.

### **1.5 The Formalisation of Pre-school Education in Tanzania**

The government of Tanzania formalised pre-school education for children aged 5 and 6 years under Tanzania's Education and Training Policy (ETP) in 1995 (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995), and placed it under the direction of the Ministry of Education. The recognition of pre-school education was a response to the international policy statements which emphasised the rights of education for all children (see section 2.1.1.2). The government of Tanzania agreed to conduct ECEC in partnerships with parents, community, and non-governmental organisations (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995).

Apart from obligations to international policy statements, changes in social and economic situations also raised the interest of society in pre-school education for their children before compulsory schooling. For instance, some important two changes are; firstly, the mixture of ethnic groups became more diverse especially in the urban areas where people from different cultures and experiences live in the urban centre, including those who are educated. They know the value of education for their children so they become role models for other parents to be motivated to enrol their children in ECEC settings. Secondly, the recognition of equal opportunities for men and women in the labour market which has increased the number of women entering into paid employment (see sections 2.1.1. and 2.1.1.3). These women in paid employment had no options as to where they could leave their children for care and early education, especially in the urban areas away from family. These two changes brought challenges to parents and society and gave rise to the need for ECEC provision. Recognition of equal opportunities between men and women was a worldwide concern (Melhuish & Petrogiannis, 2006; OECD, 2006).

However, although the government recognised pre-school education; it did not at the time make more effort to invest in young children. The distribution of the government budget since independence did not include ECEC, but rather it gave a heavy preference for primary, secondary, tertiary and higher education, leaving

pre-school education without a share (Mbelle, 2008). It was argued that the government found it too costly to invest in all children attending ECEC settings and funding a variety of playing materials, equipment, and facilities (Mbelle, 2008; Penn, 2011). Hence, since the 1990s, all activities regarding the running of pre-school education were left to parents and community.

Furthermore, having formalised pre-school education, the development of the pre-school education curriculum happened only slowly. It took 10 years from the formalisation of pre-school education in 1995 until 2005 when the curriculum was developed. Before the new curriculum was developed, curriculum guidance for teachers in the ECEC sector was founded on curriculum principles for primary schools and pedagogy was teacher-directed (Katunzi & Mhaiki, 2003). Teachers taught by using educational books and guidelines which were not prepared by ECEC experts but instead by educational officers who did not understand the learning and development of pre-school children (Katunzi & Mhaiki, 2003). This was a problem because most of the teachers were unqualified and based their teaching on their own experiences, which were not in early childhood areas (Katunzi & Mhaiki, 2003; Kweka et al., 2000). Even the concept of child development and care was not clearly understood because of the absence of child development and care expertise (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2001).

Having developed the Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum in 2005 which emphasised child-centred learning, still the government did not provide teacher education for pre-school teachers, and professional development for in-service teachers was limited (Mtahabwa, 2010). It was argued that teachers were likely to be struggling to enact the new curriculum and held attitudes, experiences, and beliefs which were likely to be in contrast with the curriculum concepts and principles (Charlesworth et al., 1993; Mtahabwa, 2010).

## **1.6 Statement of the Problem**

To-date, ECEC studies done in the Tanzanian context have tended to focus on curriculum development and ECEC policy and practice, and have not explored the challenges and experiences teachers may encounter when putting into practice the pre-school education curriculum. For example, a study conducted by Kweka et al.

(2000) about “The situation of early childhood education in Tanzania: the case of Temeke district”, observed that there were few centres for ECEC which had been attached to primary schools, as was directed by the Education and Training Policy of 1995. Most ECEC centres were not registered and not attached to primary schools. ECEC centres being attached to primary schools are important because it may facilitate the smooth transition of children to primary schools as they experience similar environments and the same teachers (in some areas the Grade one teacher also teaches an ECEC class in Tanzania). Overall, the study found poor education services were provided, such as there were no ECEC curriculum, qualified teachers, materials, and facilities. The study recommended the need for separate ECEC policy that could offer clear guidelines on how teacher preparation and ECEC could be conducted.

Similar findings to Kweka et al. were made in another study by Mtahabwa (2007) about “Pre-primary Educational Policy and Practice in Tanzania”. The study aimed to address ECEC policy and practice as “situated” in the context of Tanzania (p. 289). The study found that the country’s Education and Training Policy (ETP) where issues relating to ECEC are located did not contain sufficient information regarding ECEC provision, and there were no implementation guidelines. The major recommendation in Mtahabwa’s study was that the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) should focus on policy improvement for quality pre-primary provision and the need for clear guidelines on how ECEC provision should take place. However, up to the time the current study was conducted there was no separate ECEC policy to handle early childhood matters. Other studies conducted in Tanzania include the development of the national curriculum (Kissassi, 1994); primary versus pre-primary education (Mbise, 1996); and Montessori education systems (Mwinuka, 2001).

In a Tanzanian context no single study has been done to examine the possibilities, experiences, and issues facing pre-school teachers in day-to-day public classroom teaching and learning in pre-school education curriculum enactment and pedagogical practices. Nor what should be done for better education, how we can improve learning. As a result, there is a lack of knowledge of how the pre-school education curriculum should be enacted. More specifically, there is a scarcity of

knowledge on how pre-school teachers can facilitate child-centred learning within the constraints of under-resourced contexts and large class sizes, with a single teacher. Therefore, the researcher of the current study found it was imperative to conduct a study of this kind.

The researcher suspected that pre-school teachers were facing challenges and difficulties in pre-school education curriculum enactment and pedagogical practices, leading to unsatisfactory support for children in developing potential and possibilities for life. Curriculum goals and objectives need to be interpreted in the classroom context by qualified professional teachers enriched with pedagogical skills (Hegde & Cassidy, 2009; Korkeamäki & Dreher, 2012).

Specifically, this investigation sought to explore how teachers enact the pre-school curriculum and associated pedagogies and any challenges that may impact on their teaching and learning in classroom contexts. Therefore, this study expects to document and inform policy makers, curriculum developers, school inspectors, and ECEC educational experts about the likely challenges and difficulties which may impact on teachers and pupils in pre-school education curriculum enactment and pedagogical practices in the Tanzanian pre-school education system. Hopefully it will also provide alternatives about the way forward for future generations.

Terminologies can mean different things at different times and in different places. In order to have a clear and consistent understanding of terminologies, the subsequent section defines the key terms that have been used in the study.

### **1.7 Definition of Terms**

The meanings of the terms as used in this study are listed below:

*Pre-school education* refers to a formal early education recognised in Tanzania through the Education and Training Policy of 1995 for the education of children aged 5 and 6 year olds before primary school age.

*Pre-school education curriculum* refers to a holistic document which is comprised of planned outdoor and indoor activities and experiences conducted in the school context for children aged 5 and 6 years.

*Syllabus* refers to a formal and structured subject domain learning activities extracted from the holistic pre-school education curriculum and used as a guide in classroom teaching and learning environments in the Tanzanian context.

*Teachers' guide* refers to a structured document which directs teachers on the principles of teaching and learning. It guides teachers on how to prepare a scheme of work and lesson plans.

*Pedagogy* the term refers to the processes of teaching and learning that involves interactions between the teacher, learners, knowledge, and environment.

*Key players/users/implementers* refers to teachers, parents, and ECEC children who day-to-day interpret and enact the pre-school education curriculum in classroom environments.

*Early Childhood Education (ECE)* the term refers to varieties of programmes for young children between birth and eight years.

*Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)* refers to support for children's growth, development and learning; survival, including education, health, nutrition and hygiene and, social-emotional and physical; and development from birth to compulsory primary school entry in formal, informal and non-formal settings.

*Indigenous knowledge* refers to experiences gained through African indigenous cultural values, beliefs, practices, tradition and norms that focuses on the ways of knowing, seeing, and thinking that are passed down orally from generation to generation in African societies.

*Teacher educators/Tutors* are instructors in the Teacher Education programme.

## **1.8 Significance of the Study**

In the Tanzanian context little is known to date about pre-school education and its curriculum. There is a lack of knowledge on how a child-centred curriculum and

its associated pedagogy can be enacted in Tanzania. This research is needed to provide insights and understandings of curriculum enactment and associated pedagogy for pre-school education in Tanzania by eliciting views of possibilities, experiences, and challenges of pre-school teachers and their pupils, parents, ward and regional education officials, curriculum developers, and Ministry of Education officials, and suggesting ways for improvement.

In addition, it is expected the thesis will provide curriculum developers and Ministry of Education officials' feedback on the processes of curriculum policy development and the content of the 2005 pre-school education curriculum. New knowledge generated can help the Tanzanian government through the Ministry of Education and its operational arm such as curriculum development and evaluation, policy makers, the school inspection department, and educational stakeholders to address some of the issues which will be reported in this study. This study specifically, can suggest to the government, policy makers, curriculum developers, and ECEC practitioners, the need to engage with those ECEC current existing issues and to realise the huge impact they have on teachers' teaching and children's learning, and how they view the world. Engaging in research is the best way to explore the issues and contradictions facing ECEC provision.

### **1.9 Organisation of the Thesis**

This study is organised into eight chapters.

**Chapter One** has introduced the researcher's personal contextual information and interest in this study, as well as background information on the Tanzanian context.

**Chapters Two and Three** reviews literature related to the current study. The chapters outline the key arguments and issues relating to the situation of early childhood education in African countries, Tanzania included, as well as international perspectives on ECEC curricula development, enactment and associated pedagogies. The chapters discuss the needs and interests of children in these contemporary times and how these needs and interests could be supported. Discussion about the knowledge of ECEC practitioners, qualifications of teachers,

and employment is also presented. Chapter three also sets out the context influencing pre-school education curriculum development.

**Chapter Four** presents the two theoretical frameworks underpinning this study, that is, ecological systems theory developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1917-2005) and sociocultural theory developed by Lev Semenovich Vygotsky (1896-1934). The rationale for using these theories in the current study is also outlined.

**Chapter Five** presents the methodological approach and research design for the study. Methods and procedures of data generation, their related instruments, data management and analysis as well as issues of ensuring the quality and trustworthiness of the study are discussed.

**Chapters Six and Seven** presents the results. Chapter six presents results from local level participants (teachers, parents, and ECEC children) in the two public pre-schools (the rural and the urban schools), while chapter seven presents results from the government national level participants (educational officials). The two chapters outline the participants' views, opinions, and suggestions in relation to the possibilities, experiences, and issues teachers encounter during pre-school education curriculum enactment and pedagogical practices. The presentation is guided by the themes that emerged from data analysis and interpretations.

**Chapter Eight** discusses the results presented in Chapters 6 and 7, bringing all questions together as an integrated whole as in the main research question. The discussion and interpretations of the findings have been informed by the two theories underpinning this study. The relationship between the theories and findings of this study are illustrated in a diagrammatic form to offer greater clarity and understanding.

**Chapter Nine** concludes the study. It outlines the contribution of this research to the better enactment of pre-school education curriculum and associated pedagogies in the Tanzanian context. It addresses the guiding research questions for this study and re-states the answers to the main research question of the study. The chapter identifies the implications of the findings of the study for the government and its divisions, including policy makers, curriculum developers,

school inspectors, and teacher educators. Additionally, the chapter has identified implications for teachers and children as well as parents and local communities. It also identifies limitations of the research and recommendations for further research.

In summary, this chapter has discussed the researcher's personal contextual information and interest in this study, and the background and context to the research problem. Also, early childhood education and its situation in Tanzania has been outlined, followed by the statement of the research problem. Definitions of key terms used in the study and significance of the study have been presented. The final section of the chapter presented the overall organisation of the study.

The next chapter is a review of the relevant literature of key areas highlighted to inform this research.



## CHAPTER 2

### EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE IN TANZANIA

The previous chapter has given the background to the research study. This chapter reviews existing research studies in relation to this study. Research and writing about early childhood education and care (ECEC) and its curriculum have been conducted inside and outside of Tanzania and these have been used to inform this study. Specifically the first section reviews literature related to the concept of ECEC, its values, and the rationale for government investment in ECEC. The second section discusses the situation of ECEC in African countries, with specific consideration of ECEC in Tanzania. The concept of ECEC curriculum is examined in the third section. The history and development of the ECEC curriculum in Tanzania are discussed in the fourth section. In this study, the terms early childhood education and care and pre-school education are used interchangeably.

#### **2.1 The Concept of Early Childhood Education and Care**

Early education is the foundation level of all formal education worldwide. The concept of ECEC does not refer to a single entity; rather, the term covers a variety of programmes for young children between birth and 8 years (AMANI ECCD, 2005; Barnett, 1995; Berk & Winsler, 1995; Bredekamp, 1987; Heckman & Masterov, 2007; Hyson, 2003; Nsamenang, 2008). The term early childhood education and care is conceptualised as incorporating both education and care, which has sometimes been called *educare* (Biersteker, Ngaruiya, Sebatane, & Gudyanga, 2008; Melhuish & Petrogiannis, 2006). However, education and care has in many countries, including African countries such as Tanzania, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Zambia, and South Africa been institutionalised into separate administrative arrangements for care and education (Biersteker et al., 2008). Such separation of administrative arrangements runs counter to a holistic view of learning and development and that education and care should be integrated, with the child and family as the central focus. New Zealand was one of the first countries in the world to integrate all early childhood services under an

educational administration, reflecting that education and care cannot be separated and that quality services incorporate both (Smith, 1996b). Since then, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD (2006) reported that those countries with strong early childhood education and care systems have developed “a systematic and integrated approach to policy centring predominantly on children as a social group with rights” (p.12). Such integration and focus offer a basis for policies, services, families, and communities to support young children’s early development and learning.

Views of children as a distinct social group with rights have developed over time. Pence, Evans, and Garcia (2008) argue that for much of the 20th century and throughout most of the world, African countries included, ECEC was largely invisible as a state-policy concern. Young children, in the eyes of most states, were an appendage of their parents, or embedded in the larger family structure (Pence et al., 2008), and were treated as objects to be shaped and socialised, seen as just properties of their families, and as incomplete human beings (Smith, 2013). The child as an individual social entity was largely unrecognised (Bar-On, 2004; Nsamenang, 2008). This portrayal contrasts with an understanding that children are persons who, while thriving in conducive, warm and supportive environments, are “active participants in their social worlds and have a unique part to play in their own development” (Smith, 2013, p. 15).

In Africa, many countries recognised education for young children in the 1990’s after the World Conference on Education for All (EFA) in Jomtien, Thailand (Mtahabwa, 2010; Pence et al., 2008; Pence & Nsamenang, 2008). Amongst the goals of EFA the first one was for “expanding and improving early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children” (UNESCO, 2000, p. 8). The emphasis was for governments to formalise ECEC and formulate policies that would integrate early childhood care and education (Biersteker et al., 2008; Pence et al., 2008; Pence & Nsamenang, 2008).

Nevertheless, in the Tanzanian context the 1995 Education and Training Policy only formalised pre-school education for children aged 5 and 6 years old (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995), and located pre-school education

under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT). Other programmes, including nurseries, day care centres, and Montessori schools, cater for children under 5 years old (Mtahabwa, 2007). These programmes for children under 5 years are not formalised, there is no formal curriculum and they are administered under the supervision of the Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children (MCDGC). The current study is focused on formalised education for children aged 5 and 6 years old who are catered for under the formal curriculum. However, formalising education only for 5 and 6 year olds children in Tanzania could become a crash programme for children who are about to enter compulsory schooling, rather than being viewed as a gradual process of building a foundation by focusing on children's holistic learning and development.

### **2.1.1 Value of ECEC and rationale for government investment**

This section discusses three main arguments as to why ECEC is regarded as valuable and why governments should invest in it. The arguments are concerned with: the benefits of early investment for children's learning and development, society and the economy, a child's rights to education, and social changes.

#### ***2.1.1.1 Benefits of early investment***

Children's participation in good quality ECEC has benefits for the child's learning and development at the time of attendance and through later life (Smith, Grima, Gaffney, & Powell, 2000; Sylva, Sammons, & Siraj-Blatchford, 2003). There is a growing recognition that participation in ECEC from the two or three years before starting school, is beneficial for all children and particularly for children from low-income and disadvantaged groups (Mitchell, Wylie, & Carr, 2008; OECD, 2006; Smith et al., 2000; Sylva et al., 2003).

Achievement or breakdown at this early education stage lays the foundation for success or failure in school, which in turn leads to achievements or breakdown in post-school learning (Barnett, 1995; DeVries & Kamii, 2001; Heckman, 2000, 2004; Young, 2002). A study by Young and Mustard (2008) reports that the early years (ages 0-6) are the time for brain development; therefore quality ECEC

programmes are a key societal as well as personal imperative. Further, Young and Mustard (2008) emphasise that a child's environment and experiences start in *utero* and not only affect brain development, but also physical and mental health, learning and behaviour for a life time. McCain and Mustard (1999) also support the view that development of the brain in the early years of life, particularly the 0-3 year-olds, establishes the foundation of competence and coping skills for the later stages of life. This view is argued by Smith et al. (2000) who state that "there are links between early sensory stimulation and the activation of the arousal system, chaotic environments can produce abnormal reactions to later stress, while nurturing sensitive environments allow children to respond more adaptively" (p.28). Smith et al. (2000) further emphasise that "young children need to be protected from lack of stimulation, over stimulation or aversive stimulation in the early years" (p.28).

Nsamenang (2008) asserts that investment in children 0-8 years is important because it gives "a good start in life involving a nurturing, caring, and safe environment" (p.136) to children who are the future hope of any society and nation. Evidence suggests that providing quality ECEC services can also improve the economic well-being of countries (Barnett & Frede, 2010; Mitchell et al., 2008; Saracho, 2012b; Smith et al., 2000; Sylva, Melhuish, Sammons, Blatchford, & Taggart, 2004; Sylva et al., 2003; Yelland, 2010). It is theorised in the literature that children who benefit from early education, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, are more likely to succeed in primary schools (Sylva et al., 2004; Sylva et al., 2003; Taguma, Litjens, & Makowiecki, 2012). Longitudinal studies have also found that children who benefit from a good primary education are more likely to succeed in secondary schools and tertiary education (Sylva et al., 2003).

In support of early investment in young children, Young and Mustard (2008) report that participation in good quality early interventions leads to increased earnings in later life, and stimulates positive social relationships. Many researchers have noted that improving human development in the early years is definitely a way to break out of poverty because early investment has a very high economic rate of benefits (Barnett & Ackerman, 2006; Barr, 2012; Heckman,

2004, 2008; Heckman & Masterov, 2007; Hohmann & Weikart, 2002; Hyson, 2003; Mitchell et al., 2008; Sylva et al., 2004; Young & Mustard, 2008).

ECEC is an essential part of the education system worldwide (Bredekamp, 1987; National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), 1996, 2003, 2009; Nganga, 2009; Young, 2002). Many researchers assert that learning starts from birth, and continues until formal education begins, and continues all the way through life (Barnett & Ackerman, 2006; Bredekamp, 1987; Heckman, 2008; Heckman & Masterov, 2007). Early learning is the basis for future learning and early success results in later success, just as early failure can result in later failure (Heckman, 2000, 2004, 2008; Heckman & Masterov, 2007; Hyun & 2001). Therefore, investing in good quality ECEC provision from an early age can be seen as an effective means of attaining developmental targets, such as earnings in later life, cost savings, good life for children and families, and breaking cycles of disadvantage (Barnett & Ackerman, 2006; Hohmann & Weikart, 2002; Mitchell et al., 2008; Smith et al., 2000; Sylva et al., 2004). One aim of ECEC has been described as building a bridge from early years education to compulsory schooling (Barr, 2012; Formosinho & Araújo, 2011). ECEC is meant to support parents in the education of their children and also to address any apparent developmental delays.

In summary, current studies of good quality ECEC have shown notable success in promoting children's learning and development and indicate that the early years are important for early learning (Barnett & Ackerman, 2006; Heckman, 2004; Hohmann & Weikart, 2002; Hyson, 2003; Ritchie, 2010). International evidence shows that, investing in good quality ECEC can bring cost savings and benefits to governments and economies (Barnett & Ackerman, 2006; Hohmann & Weikart, 2002; Smith, 2012) as well as to children and families.

### ***2.1.1.2 Child's rights to education***

Another reason which drives government investment in ECEC is an increasing prominence given to a child's rights to education (EFA Assessment, 2000; UNESCO, 1990, 2000). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC) recognised the rights to education for every child worldwide

(Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2006). The Committee on the Rights of the Child has identified four principles that inform the analysis and an enactment of all other rights (UNICEF, 2001). These four principles (Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2006) are as follows:

- Firstly, all rights must apply to all children without discrimination of any kind. It can be argued that access to good quality ECEC is a right for all children, and children should not be discriminated against in having such opportunities (Mitchell et al., 2008; Smith, 2007);
- The second principle states that the best interests of the child should be a primary consideration in all actions regarding children. The Committee on the Rights of the Child emphasises that governments should direct the education of the child to the fullest development of the child's cognitive skills, socio-emotional, personality, and physical capabilities; the development of respect for human rights and essential freedoms; the development of respect for the child's parents and adults and his or her own cultural identity, values and language; development of friendship among all peoples; and respect for the natural environment united nations (Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2006);
- Another principle is that children have the right to life and to survival and development to the maximum degree possible (Article 6) (Smith, 2007). That means a child has rights to health, adequate nutrition, social security, an adequate standard of living, a healthy and safe environment, education and play (Smith, 2013); and
- The fourth principle identified by the Committee on the Rights of the Child is that of children have the right to express their views and opinions freely on all matters of concern to them and that those views should be taken seriously. The Committee on the Rights of the Child recognised that this right reinforces the status of the young child as an active participant. Young children need to be respected as participants in family, community and society, however, the Committee on the Rights of the Child argues that this right is frequently overlooked or rejected as inappropriate on the

grounds of age and immaturity (Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2006).

Furthermore, based on child's rights, Article No 29 is absolutely crucial to this study in relation to providing an ECEC curriculum that promotes the development of children's personality and potential and secondly in relation to the importance of incorporating cultural identity and language into ECEC programmes (see section 2.4, p. 46 for details about the objectives of ECEC in Tanzania). In full, Article 29 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states the following:

States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:

- (a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;
- (b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;
- (c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;
- (d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;
- (e) The development of respect for the natural environment.

### **2.1.1.3 Social changes**

A third main reason for ECEC provision is claimed to be in response to social changes. OECD (2006) advocates an increase in women's labour market involvement, the need to reconcile work and family duties on a more equitable basis and the need to address issues of child poverty and educational disadvantage. This is because economic prosperity depends on maintaining high employment levels including maternal employment, and this has been a key driver

of government interest in expanding ECEC (Mitchell et al., 2008; OECD, 2006; Smith et al., 2000).

In other words, ECEC enables mothers of young children to engage in the labour market with consequent positive impacts on the economy and on countries' policies (Kontopodis, Wulf, & Fichtner, 2011; Lokshin, Glinskaya, & Garcia, 2004; Melhuish & Petrogiannis, 2006; Mitchell et al., 2008; OECD, 2006; Penn, 2010, 2011; Saracho, 2012b; Sylva et al., 2004; Sylva et al., 2003; Yelland, 2010). However, Smith et al. (2000) argue that the availability of early education and child care on the one hand can encourage women to attend to paid jobs, but on the other hand can have some negative effects for the well-being of family members because mothers may have multiple roles, that is, work and child care responsibilities.

Furthermore, writers report that developed countries have achieved high levels of quality in ECEC services combined with high rates of maternal employment (Barnett & Frede, 2010; Mitchell et al., 2008; OECD, 2006), whereas developing countries, such as Tanzania, despite showing a significant increase in women's employment, have not shown much advance in ECEC services (Biersteker et al., 2008; Prochner & Kabiru, 2008). Hence ECEC services do not automatically develop when there is a clear need for them. Other factors such as the ideology and politics arising from a country's history and culture are also important (Nsamenang, 2008; Serpell & Nsamenang, 2014).

## **2.2 The Situation of ECEC in African Countries**

The situation of ECEC in many African countries is one of development due to various reasons. The level of training of staff is poor and many staffs have no training (Biersteker et al., 2008; Hamano & Sabaly, 2008). Access is limited. There are few institutions which care for children aged 0-6 years and most ECEC centres for 5 and 6 years old are found only in urban areas and are of poor quality (Bakuza, 2014; Serpell & Nsamenang, 2014). Similarly, the ECEC curricula are not helpful for young children, because of their poor consideration of children's needs and interests. Support, from international organisations is mainly used for

ECEC for children aged 3 years and above (Biersteker et al., 2008), so the 0-3 year provision is particularly neglected.

A large number of disadvantaged families have found it is difficult to get access to ECEC in African countries (Biersteker et al., 2008; Nsamenang, 2008). Further, it is argued that there are challenges in developing ECEC programmes in under-resourced countries in Africa (Biersteker et al., 2008; Nsamenang, 2008; Young & Mustard, 2008), Tanzania included (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2001). Young and Mustard (2008, p. 73) assert that “the situation for Africa’s children is alarming” showing examples of limited resources in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Zambia, and Senegal. It has been argued that many African countries are looking closely at what services might be developed, at what cost, and for what expected benefits for children immediately prior to their entry into primary school (Garcia et al., 2008).

In addition, numerous studies have been conducted in Africa such as by Mbise (1996), Kweka et al. (2000), Bakuza (2014), and Mtahabwa (2007) in Tanzania, Nganga (2009) in Kenya, Ejuu (2012) in Uganda, Biersteker et al. (2008), Nsamenang (2008), and Young and Mustard (2008) in four Sub-Saharan African countries namely South Africa, Kenya, Zimbabwe, and Lesotho. All these studies noted the importance and the benefits of ECEC but common findings reveal that ECEC has not been widely practised in these developing countries, due to a lack of resources, materials, and qualified personnel to staff the centres. African countries have given minimal or no support for ECEC services.

Nsamenang (2008) and Garcia et al. (2008) state that many African children are at risk of delay in developmental aspects, because of complex factors that include poverty, malnutrition, disease, poor health, poor nutrition, orphanage care, social conflict, and displacement. Potentially early childhood education, when combined with other services to assist families, could alleviate some of these risks, but access to ECEC is limited because governments do not invest in it.

Another consequence of poor investment in ECEC by government is that parents are required to pay for their children to be enrolled in ECEC. For instance, a study by Nganga (2009) in Kenya reported that pre-primary programmes in Kenya serve

children aged from 3–5 years, but the government of Kenya supports pre-primary schools only minimally. Parents are responsible for arranging, developing, and managing different early childhood programmes. Therefore, due to a lack of government support many children go directly to primary school without attending pre-school education (Biersteker et al., 2008; Nganga, 2009). In Uganda, ECEC is also minimally supported by government, but rather non-government organizations and parents take responsibility, as reported by Ejuu (2012).

To address this situation in developing countries, Africa and Tanzania included, many international agencies such as the World Bank, UNESCO, and UNICEF are currently putting more effort in investing in early childhood in poor countries by arguing that it will help to turn those countries around and enable them to become more competitive in a global market (Penn, 2010, 2011).

### **2.2.1 The current situation of ECEC in Tanzania**

Tanzania got its independence from being a British protectorate in 1961. After independence Tanzania had to reform its education system in order to match the education provision with the needs of its people. But the government found it too expensive to invest in ECEC due to the country's low and unstable economic status (Mbelle, 2008). So the government opened up doors to private institutions to run ECEC while it concentrated on investing in primary, secondary, and higher levels of Education (Kweka et al., 2000; Mbise, 1996; Mende, 1999).

Since independence, Tanzania has had a philosophy of Education for Self Reliance (ESR) (Nyerere, 1967). This made it essential to enrol children in basic education in order for them to become productive members of society by taking on manual work in the community for self-sufficiency after completion of their primary education. The government's intention was that after having stabilised basic education it would turn back to ECEC matters (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995, 2001). ECEC matters progressed slowly with untrained teachers who had no formalised curriculum. Teachers just taught using their own experiences which were not founded in the ECEC area and they had guidelines which also were not prepared by ECEC experts (Katunzi & Mhaiki, 2003). This

situation continued until the 1990s when the international policy statements about children's rights were declared (Mtahabwa, 2007, 2010).

As a response to international and national policies advocating the importance of education for young children as a right, the Tanzanian government also adopted this agenda. The government of Tanzania was one of the first in Africa to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC) 1989 in 1991, as well as the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (Organization of African Unity, 1999). The government also supports the Jomtien Declaration on Education for All (EFA) and the Dakar Framework for Action (EFA Assessment, 2000; UNESCO, 1990, 2000), both of which consider ECEC as a basic right as well as millennium development goals (MDGS) of the 2000s. The World Conference on Education for All held in Jomtien, Thailand, marked a new start in the global quest to universalize basic education and eradicate illiteracy (EFA Assessment, 2000; UNESCO, 1990). Through the Jomtien Declaration and the Framework for Action, commitments were made and directions set for a decade of large-scale and sustained efforts (EFA Assessment, 2000). The consensus reached at the 1990 World Summit by the countries present at this conference set a target for all children to be enrolled in primary education by the year 2015 (UNESCO, 2005). But this has yet to happen in Tanzania.

The situation of children in Tanzania is still not satisfactory, and children are disadvantaged due to the inadequacy of social services, such as schools, health facilities, and environmental services (Ministry of Community Development Gender and Children, 1996; Research on Poverty Alleviation (REPOA), 2009; UNESCO, 2000). In Tanzania 200,000 children under five years die each year and children with malnutrition number more than two million (Kweka et al., 2000; Research on Poverty Alleviation (REPOA), 2009; UNESCO, 2000), from a total current population is 47.8 million (UNICEF, 2013). Furthermore, a study by Kweka et al. (2000) reported that the few ECEC settings observed had limited resources. Children have no access to education due to high poverty, poor health services, and likewise, street children, pastoralist families (Maasai family) have no permanent settlement so it becomes difficult for them to get access to education (AMANI ECCD, 2005). These are just some of the many issues

hindering children from getting opportunities to participate in ECEC (AMANI ECCD, 2005; Ministry of Community Development Gender and Children, 1996).

For instance, while the statistics from the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) (2012a, p. 7) indicated the total population of children aged 5 and 6 years old expected to be enrolled in Tanzania by 2012 was 2,472,530, the actual number of enrolled children was only 985,060 (39.9%). Enrolment in the areas of the current study in the same year 2012 was as follows: In the Mbeya region where the urban school was selected, the expected enrolment for children aged 5 and 6 years old was 145,673 and the actual enrolment was 61,634 (42.3%) while in the Dodoma region where the rural school was selected, the expected enrolment was 126,264 and the actual enrolment was 57,509 (45.5%). Table 2.1 clarifies the situation.

Table 2.1

*Children's Enrolment Country Wise and in the Study Regions in Year 2012*

5 and 6 year olds in 2012	Gross enrolment	Net enrolment	(%)
Country wise	2472530	985060	39.8
Dodoma Region	126264	57509	45.5
Mbeya Region	145673	61634	42.3

**Source: Ministry of Education (2012, p.7)**

The low socio-economic status of parents, especially in rural areas, contributes to parents and/or guardians not sending their children to school (Mukyanuzi, 2003; Research on Poverty Alleviation (REPOA), 2009; Wedgwood, 2007). There is a lack of public awareness of the value of ECEC for children's learning and development and a lack of trust of strangers taking care of their children at ECEC settings (Kweka et al., 2000; Murungi, 2013). In rural areas incomes are lower compared with urban areas. People increase their incomes through farming, fishing, and keeping livestock but all these activities are done at low levels due to lack of extension agricultural officers (Mukyanuzi, 2003) and weather changes. The price of farming inputs such as fertiliser, seeds, medicines, and insecticides is high so they do not produce more and better and have no surplus to sell. Overall, the situation is horrible in rural areas; parents and/or guardians are struggling to

raise their standard of living through small scale farming and they cannot get a surplus to manage to send their children even to primary schools.

In urban areas to some extent the economic status of people is much better due to the availability of social services, transport and electricity and the mixture of people from different ethnic backgrounds who would share their experiences in regard to the importance of social services in running of various businesses in towns. The nature of the activities in town centres motivates people to struggle to raise their income by running businesses, or gaining employment with private companies and in the public services (Murungi, 2013; Wedgwood, 2007). Many people in town are able to contribute financially to pre-school education, although a few people still cannot manage to contribute financially for various reasons including poverty, lack of awareness, and ignorance about ECEC matters. In schools the services are poor, due to poor mobilisation and management of resources and poverty, teaching and learning resources and lack of availability of materials (Wedgwood, 2007).

In contrast to what currently exists in ECEC provision, quality formal pre-school education in Tanzania would need to be funded and staffed to ensure that high quality cognitive achievements, socio-emotional/behavioural developments, skills, and values are attained. A study by Mbelle (2008) about “The Impact of Reforms on the Quality of Primary Education in Tanzania” expresses a view that quality in education requires “adequacy of teaching and learning resources, effectiveness of teachers, relevance of curriculum, efficiency” (p.10), and the commitment of practitioners to enact the reforms. That means aspects of what makes quality ECEC need to be considered including teaching and learning conditions, resources and materials. Pre-school education in Tanzania does not have its own government budget and it is mainly funded by the parents and community through various donations and school-based activities, such as helping with building schools, maintenance, renovation, and participating in school and parents’ committees. The government normally allocates funds in a quarterly system from primary level to higher levels of education, and the system is called *Quota Budget Code* (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT), 2012a). The government has capitation grants with descriptive percentages on how to use the

funds, calculated according to the number of students in the particular school or college. For example, at the primary level, the government gives capitation grants with the distribution in percentages, on how the amount should be used, such as 40% for buying books, 20% for stationary, 10% for examinations, 20% for maintenance, and 10% for office use (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT), 2012a). The funding is allocated to primary education and the heads of the primary schools are told to budget the amount appropriately so that for any surplus can fund ECEC matters. Indeed, it goes without saying the amount even for primary education does not accomplish the requirements, therefore often there is no funding for the pre-school class.

Furthermore, pre-school education is not moving forward due to a number of reasons, including a lack of awareness from parents and community, poverty, accessibility, and traditional child-rearing norms (Kweka et al., 2000; Murungi, 2013). Based on the claim of the lack of funds to support pre-school education Mbelle (2008) points out that the provision of education services is, however, not only a function of financial provision, but that there are a number of other issues to address, such as governance and financial management, cultural issues. These issues need to receive adequate attention as they tend to reinforce each other in an overlapping way. Therefore, to attain quality provision of ECEC there is a need for partnership between government, parents, and community as well as capacity building and good mobilisation and allocation of resources.

### **2.3 The Concept of ECEC Curriculum**

The previous sections have discussed the concepts of early childhood education and the situation of children in Africa, Tanzania included. This section describes the concept of the ECEC curriculum. The concept of an ECEC curriculum has been defined differently by various educational stakeholders. Early childhood education curriculum is defined by the Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education (1996) as “the sum total of the experiences, activities, and events whether direct or indirect, which occur within an environment designed to foster children’s learning and development” (p.10). These experiences, activities, and

events may arise from planning and or may grow in response to a particular situation.

ECEC curriculum is also defined by Bredekamp, Knuth, Kunesh, and Shulman (1992) as an organized framework that defines the content, cognitive, socio-emotional and physical capabilities children are to learn. It is the process through which children achieve the identified curricula goals, what teachers do to help children achieve these goals, and the context in which teaching and learning occur. In addition, early childhood professionals believe that the curriculum should be based on the best knowledge of theory and research (Bredekamp, 1987; Han, 2009; Potter, 2007), about how children develop and learn, with attention given to individual children's needs and interests in a group in relation to program goals.

In the Tanzanian context, Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education (2005) defines the ECEC curriculum as “the sum total of experiences, skills, and knowledge whether direct or indirect, planned to achieve efficiently the objectives of learning activities in teaching and learning in the class at this level of education for a cycle of two years” (p.1). The Tanzania’s ECEC curriculum discusses learning in relation to children’s growth of stages and ages (Piagetian approach) (Bredekamp, 1987), and less in relation to the influence of the sociocultural context on child’s learning and development (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005). The curriculum stipulates aims which focus on developing a child’s academic abilities as well as socio-emotional, behavioural development, and physical capabilities. To enable this, teachers are required to have knowledge and understanding of child development. The ECEC curriculum describes the significance of a holistic curriculum, and contains the goals and aims of pre-school education in Tanzania, and what guidance should be given for children’s learning. A holistic curriculum is one which acknowledges the “cognitive, social, cultural, physical, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of human development that are integrally interwoven” (Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 41). The view is supported by AMANI ECCD (2005) who asserts that for young children to develop well all aspects of their cognitive, socio-emotional, behavioural, physical, and spiritual development must be supported concurrently from birth to age 8 years.

There are similarities in the international definitions of ECEC curriculum in their focus on development of a whole child and the importance given to sociocultural contexts. In contrast, in the Tanzania ECEC curriculum, less consideration is given to the sociocultural context, but rather more consideration is given to growth and stages of the child (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005). This view appears to be a weakness of the Tanzania's ECEC curriculum in that Piagetian stage-based approaches to understanding children's development are over-emphasised.

It is a well-known aspect of education that nowadays children are growing up in a diverse society, which means that society is growing and including diverse cultural heritages (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2001; Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005, 2008). So, curriculum planners need to understand the African culture and knowledge that needs to be incorporated into the curriculum during curriculum development, in relation to the sociocultural context. Therefore, it could be expected that the pre-school education curriculum would engage more with indigenous knowledge and sociocultural contexts (Owuor, 2007; Shizha, 2014). Tanzania has more than 120 tribes with diverse cultures and migrants from other African countries and worldwide such as America, Asia and Europe (United Nations, 2008). It is also clear that Africa is a large continent with so many people from different ethnic groups and diverse ways that family members interact with each other (Nwoye, 2006). These differences should not be overlooked in promoting African culture, and African societies should be located less in Western values. Therefore, the recognition of every child's culture helps children learn to use the cultural tools of the society in which they are growing up and develop their cognition in the process.

However, on the other hand, African writers argue that African people should not complain of Westernisation of our curriculum, if we, African practitioners, are not able to promote in the rest of the world what we practice in everyday life inspired by our cultural background (Nwoye, 2006). African people should know their cultural values and practices, and how these could become globalised. Hence, the design of ECEC curricula in Africa needs to focus on local strengths including

indigenous knowledge games, traditional dances and emphasize community-based provision (Okeke, 2010; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009; Shizha, 2014). It should incorporate participation of siblings in ECEC settings, and use local African languages and local funds of knowledge, and accord priority to inclusion of children with special needs.

A study by Turunen and Määttä (2012) reports that curricula are usually part of the cultural and political system of the particular society in which they are written. Therefore, early childhood services are urged to develop their own distinguishing pattern for planning, assessment and evaluation (Ejuu, 2012; Ministry of Education & Sports, 2007a; Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996). Spodek and Saracho (1999) point out that in developing the ECEC curriculum, there are elements that the teacher and the curriculum developer need to consider, such as cultural tools like languages, symbols, signs, places, and objects (artefacts) they wish to help children learn about. In reality, these cultural tools help children to explore their physical and cultural environment and help them achieve intellectual mastery over that environment (Han, 2009; Potter, 2007; Pound, 2009; Spodek & Saracho, 1999).

ECEC teachers can use their own cultural knowledge to select activities that build on children's daily experiences, and the information they gather through these experiences to create worthwhile activities (Nganga, 2009; Prince, 2010; Turunen & Määttä, 2012). In this way teachers can assist children to reconstruct their experiences and make sense of them. The selection of those experiences and activities should have the greatest meaning for the child and introduce children to the cultural tools they will need in an intellectually honest way (Spodek & Saracho, 1999), “making this knowledge meaningful to children requires that they be integrated as well” (p.14).

In summary, Tanzania pre-school education now has a curriculum which has tried to accommodate important facets of a child's learning. These include the child's cognitive development, socio-emotional, behavioural development, and physical capabilities (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005).

But it has yet to include indigenous knowledge and practices from the child's sociocultural contexts.

#### **2.4 History and Context of the ECEC Curriculum in Tanzania**

The current ECEC curriculum in Tanzania has a long history. A study by Mbise (1996) reports that in many areas in Africa, Tanzania included, during colonial rule, missionaries established *Bush schools* where they taught writing, reading, arithmetic (3Rs), and Biblical truth. Also, along the coast, the Arabs established *Madrassa* schools where they focused on teaching the Quran, reading, and writing of the Arabic script (Mbise, 1996; Oluniyi & Olajumoke, 2013). No written curriculum is reported to have existed at that time which considered the local peoples' benefits, but rather the written curriculum by that time for colonial government schools was to favour the colonies and not the citizens.

##### **The period of 1960s to 1981**

After independence in 1961 the Tanzania government invited a number of people to establish early childhood care centres (Mbise, 1996). A few organizations showed an interest in developing ECEC including the Aga Khan Foundation, the Hindu Parents' Communities, Tanzania Women Association, Roman Catholic Christian organization (Msimbazi centre), political parties (TANU) and various individuals (Kweka et al., 2000; Mbise, 2001; Mende, 1999). Only a few centres opened, as parents were not ready to send their children to ECEC centres due to the African child rearing system; mothers had no trust in any stranger caring for their children apart from themselves, siblings, babysitter, and relatives at home (Kweka et al., 2000; Mende, 1999). In addition, the provision of ECEC was difficult due to a lack of guidelines, or clear coordination and strategies for high-quality services (Katunzi & Mhaiki, 2003; Mbise, 2001). For the few private organizations which tried to develop ECEC at that time, more weight was placed on custodial care than on early educational stimulation (Kweka et al., 2000; Mbise, 1996; Mtahabwa, 2007; Mwinuka, 2001). For example, my peers who were enrolled in the Roman Catholic ECEC centre in my village when I was a child used to tell me that they were just provided with porridge and sang songs. No early education was conducted.

### **The period of 1982 to 1985**

In 1982, the Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC) formed the *Makweta Presidential Commission* which was given a task of evaluating the entire education system and proposing what needed to be achieved by 2000 (United Republic of Tanzania (URT), 1982). The Commission for the first time in the history of education in Tanzania stated that ECEC in Tanzania had to be treated seriously (Mtahabwa, 2007). However, there were neither policy statements nor aims and objectives for ECEC provision (Mbise, 1996; Mende, 1999; Mtahabwa, 2009; Mwinuka, 2001). The Commission's report recommended that the MoEC should start teacher education for ECEC teachers immediately to provide teaching in ECEC centres (United Republic of Tanzania (URT), 1982). A Department of Teacher Education for primary teachers and secondary teachers was given the responsibility of training ECEC teachers. But there was little coordination in the training of teachers among the providers nationwide (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2001), and more importantly, no national ECEC teacher preparation institutions were established in response to the Makweta Commission.

### **The period of 1986 to 1993**

In 1986 a tentative teachers' guide for teaching ECEC was produced (*Wizara ya Elimu na Utamaduni* (MoEC), 1986). A year thereafter, a book titled, *Malezi na Elimu ya Watoto* (Child Rearing and Education) was produced by the Institute of Curriculum Development (ICD) (*Taasisi ya Ukuzaji Mitaala* (Institute of Curriculum Development (ICD), 1987) as reported by (Mtahabwa, 2007). However, a study by Katunzi and Mhaiki (2003) reported that the draft teachers' guide had many weaknesses such as it only explored how a child could be helped to develop cognitive skills. It lacked guidance concerning preparing the child's learning dispositions and social competences as is shown in other curricula, for example, in *Te Whāriki* New Zealand's ECEC curriculum (Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996). In the Tanzanian teachers' guide, emphasis was placed on the attendance of children at ECEC centres and teachers making sure that they teach the children arithmetic, reading, and writing (3Rs) as preparation of children for primary school (Katunzi & Mhaiki, 2003). The concept

of child development and care was not clearly understood because the guide was not prepared by ECEC educators but instead by educational officers who did not understand the learning and development of young children (Katunzi & Mhaiki, 2003). Katunzi and Mhaiki elaborated that the teachers' guide was teacher-centred, and did not show specifically "what and how the children need to be prepared" (p.36). This was a problem because most of the teachers were unqualified and based their teaching on their own experiences, attitudes, and beliefs, which were not in the early childhood area.

At the start of the 1990s the whole world began to view education as a human right, starting at birth, not just at the age of starting primary education (UNESCO, 1990, 2000). But in Tanzania, in 1990 about 97% of all Tanzanian children aged 3-7 year olds did not have access to formal ECEC (UNESCO, 2000). Their care and education was given casually by their parents, babysitters, siblings, other relatives and the community. In many African areas ECEC centres benefited few children because in African societies, Tanzania included, mothers had a tendency not to trust anybody to take care of their young children preferring families, siblings, and care givers (Bar-On, 2004; Kweka et al., 2000; Lokshin et al., 2004; Marfo, Pence, LeVine, & LeVine, 2011; Nsamenang, 2008; Nwoye, 2006). Hence, few parents enrolled their children in ECEC settings. Even after independence there was no effort by the government to come out with an integrated national policy on early childhood education and care in Tanzania (Kweka et al., 2000; Mende, 1999), although ECEC had been receiving attention from the private sector, religious organizations, donor agencies, and communities (Mtahabwa, 2009; Mwinuka, 2001).

### **The period of 1993 to 1995**

In 1993, the Ministry of Community Development, Gender & Children (MCDG&C), as the sector responsible for coordinating all sectors related to children's issues called for integrated policies and approaches to support ECEC, highlighting that "*...no goal for children can be achieved by a single sector working on its own*" (Ministry of Community Development Gender and Children, 1993, p. 28). At this time, the Ministry of Community Development Gender and Children, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, the Ministry of

Labour and Youth Development through the Department of Social Welfare, and the Ministry of Health and Sanitation were involved.

According to the UNESCO report of 2000 the Ministry of Community Development, Gender & Children (MCDG&C) dealt mainly with national policies and co-ordination at national level of issues and activities related to ECEC for children under 5 years old (UNESCO, 2000). The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) was responsible for public pre-school education, issues, and activities for children aged 5 and 6 years old as well as the teacher education of public pre-school teachers, developing curricula and curriculum materials, coordination of public pre-schools and registration for private pre-schools (Kweka et al., 2000; UNESCO, 2000). The Ministry of Labour and Youth Development through the Department of Social Welfare was responsible for private pre-school issues, including following up on registration issues, training of day care attendants and private pre-school teachers, supervision of private pre-school institutions, developing materials and guide lines (Kweka et al., 2000; Mende, 1999; UNESCO, 2000). The Ministry of Health and Sanitation had also indicated that health is a multi-sectorial responsibility for partners in education, agriculture, water, and sanitation and community development. Therefore, the Ministry dealt with health issues related to early childhood care such as immunisation, reduction of mortality rate, material health for the betterment of young children (AMANI ECCD, 2005; Ministry of Community Development Gender and Children, 1993).

The integration of ministries was called for to ensure that children in difficult circumstances received their rights and basic services (AMANI ECCD, 2005; Mende, 1999; Ministry of Community Development Gender and Children, 1996).

However, a number of studies reported that critical issues for ECEC services had not been addressed as effectively as they could be (Kweka et al., 2000; Mende, 1999), due to the lack of coordination from the leading ministry (Kweka et al., 2000; Mende, 1999; Ministry of Community Development Gender and Children, 1996), and weak integrated collaboration and partnerships between the many sectors. The ministry responsible for coordination, the Ministry of Community Development, Gender & Children (MCDG&C), which collaborated with other

ministries and institutions in providing social services, was not effective. It was supposed to issue guidelines, rules and regulations and coordinate implementation of all programmes and measures to promote child development, but experience showed that very little had been done (Kweka et al., 2000; UNESCO, 2000). Various studies noted that there was a problem of lack of coordination of who does what in ECEC services across the different ministries (Kweka et al., 2000; Mende, 1999).

Coordination of approaches among concerned ministries is important in ECEC to combine care for families and young children through various services like health, social welfare and education. It would also help prepare young children for school (OECD, 2006).

### **The period of 1995 to present**

The period from 1995 to the present could be referred to as the period of the emergence of formal pre-school education in Tanzania. In 1995 pre-school education was formalised through the Tanzania Education and Training Policy (ETP) for children aged 5 and 6 year olds and it was declared to be a governmental responsibility. The ETP document sets out the aims and objectives of pre-school education and emphasises the general upbringing of the child (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995, p. 3): These aims are:

- i. To encourage and promote the overall personality development of the child, that is his or her physical, mental, moral and social characteristics;
- ii. To identify children with abnormal patterns of development, educational potentials and devise special programmes for them;
- iii. To mould the character of the child and enable him/her to acquire acceptable norms of social conduct and behaviour;
- iv. To help the child acquire, appreciate, respect and develop pride in the family, his or her moral values and traditions as well as cultural background, customs, ethics and identity;
- v. To provide the child with opportunities to acquire and develop communication, numerical, and manipulative skills; and
- vi. To prepare the child for primary school education.

The Education and Training Policy (ETP) of 1995 emphasised the value of children attending pre-school education before primary education. However, the policy put in place the objectives without also offering information to the parents and community about the costs and benefits of ECEC programmes and their effects on household behaviour. No policy implementation guidelines directed how pre-school education could be funded and conducted. It was suggested that public pre-school education in Tanzania should be funded by government and administered by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT). The main focus of pre-school education was seen as education, with a strong focus on cognitive, socio-emotional, behavioural, and physical development to prepare the child before she/he reaches school age. In addition, pre-school education was seen as including the identifying and taking suitable corrective measures for children with special learning difficulties (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995, 2001). This view is similar to that of Wamocho, Karugu, and Nwoye (2008) in Kenya who found that pupils with special needs may be living with a lot of regrets and negative attitudes, so their study reinforced the need for guidance and counselling programmes to be developed for pupils with special educational needs in Kenya.

The existing programmes in the mid-1990s differed in respect to hours, ages, and also qualifications of staff (Kweka et al., 2000; Mende, 1999). These programmes as asserted in the study about the Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) conducted in England, should have been based on educational and social development in complementary roles (Sylva et al., 2004), but the few studies carried out in Tanzania as was described earlier, have consistently shown that most of these programmes were only academically orientated.

The government stated in the ETP of 1995 that each primary school had to start a pre-school class to prepare children specifically for primary education (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995). This order however, was not preceded by sufficient arrangements to accommodate the teaching and learning demands of such classes (Mtahabwa, 2007). Because of limited commitment and priority given to pre-school facilities, they were under-resourced in terms of infrastructure, trained teachers, teaching and learning materials and playgrounds (Ministry of

Education and Culture, 2001). In addition, matters of quality, equity and hearing children's voices had not been considered, particularly as a result of the problems associated with the policy, such as the lack of clear action and implementation plans concerning pre-school classrooms (Mtahabwa, 2009, 2010).

Another challenge in Tanzania's ETP statement was that the main objective was to prepare the child for primary school education, rather than to support children's holistic development as early learners. This is a weakness of the Tanzanian ETP.

As was described in chapter one, the government having formalised pre-school education agreed to support this type of education in collaboration with parents, community, and non-governmental organisation (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995). Unfortunately, however, all activities regarding the running of pre-school education were left to parents, community and non-governmental organisations. This was a problem because not all parents managed to financially support their children at primary and secondary schools, let alone pre-school education. As a consequence, some children became involved in truancy, child labour, living on the street, crime and delinquency. Some parents hid and did not enrol their children in pre-school education, waiting until children reached the age to enrol in primary education. Overall, it was to be ten years from the formalisation of pre-school education in 1995 until 2000s when the curriculum was developed and 2005 when it was implemented. Pre-school education curriculum development and enactment from 2000 onwards is the focus of this study.

#### **2.4.1 Tanzanian ECEC curriculum development in 2005**

The previous section has discussed the history and trends of ECEC since independence in 1961 up to its formalisation in 1995. This section discusses the Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum developed in 2005.

Up to 1995, in the absence of an ECEC curriculum, teachers in Tanzania still continued to use the teachers' guide as it was before formalisation (Katunzi & Mhaiki, 2003) for teaching pre-school children and a book titled *Malezi na Elimu ya Watoto* (Child Rearing and Education). The teaching was supplemented by

various educational documents until 2004 when the nation reformed the curriculum for primary education (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005, 2008), and in 2005 the ECEC curriculum (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005).

The 2005 pre-school education curriculum was developed with links to the primary school curriculum, accompanied by a review of the 1986 Teachers' guide and syllabus (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005) which teachers had previously used.

The pre-school education curriculum in Tanzania contains five main areas (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005):

- *“Languages:* To enable a child to practice listening and speaking skills, to make sure that children gain the ability in communication with both languages such as *Kiswahili* (as a subject and medium of instruction for public schools) and English (as a subject and medium of instruction for private schools). The teacher should observe the principle, which a child starts to learn a language from listening, followed by speaking, reading, and finally writing.
- *Arithmetic:* To enable a child to gain the basic concepts of arithmetic in classroom situation as well as in their daily life such as distinguishing and comparing different things in his/her everyday life. Understanding number systems and counting purposes.
- *Science:* To enable a child to gain the basic concepts of Science and also to enable a child to develop the capacity of inquisitiveness, exploration, and discovery. Also to enable children to do simple experiments in relation to their environments.
- *Ethics and Moral values:* To enable a child to develop a sense of patience, love, and compassion with respect of other's cultural beliefs, religious, and spiritual, matters for proper growth.

- *Social Studies Education*: To enable a child to develop cooperation, love, tolerance, and friendship between children. To prepare environments that enhances a child desire to develop skills and talents and also observe safety in the teaching and learning environment” (p.7).

The above five areas are then detailed into six subject learning activities and indicated in the syllabus, and a teachers’ guide used in teaching and learning in the classroom context. The following are the six subject learning activities in pre-school classrooms and religious matters (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005) arising from the five areas mentioned above.

- “Kiswahili learning activities
- English learning activities
- Arithmetic learning activities
- Science learning activities
- Arts learning activities
- Ethics, Moral and Values, and Religious matters learning activities” (p.8).

The teaching of pre-school classes is different from that of primary schools because in pre-school classes a child is taught using subject learning activities rather than specific subjects as in school (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005, 2008). Subject learning activities are those activities that children are exposed to in order to build concepts in that particular subject. Learning through subject activities is said to enable a child to gain new knowledge and skills when he/she participates in different activities with other children as it makes the child use more than one of the sense organs (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005, 2008).

The curriculum document indicates indoors and outdoors learning activities and experiences to be performed in the pre-school context. The curriculum document begins by endorsing the “aims and objectives of education in Tanzania” followed by the “objectives of the pre-school education” with respect to the child (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005, pp. 5-6). Furthermore, the curriculum contains ten sections which describe curricular issues that need to

be implemented to achieve the desired educational objectives (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005). The sections include:

- “Policy statements (international and local policies),
- Social and economic needs,
- The Mission, vision and goals of the pre-school education,
- Structure of the pre-school education,
- Content of the pre-school education curriculum,
- Teaching and learning resources/materials (human and physical),
- Teaching strategies and methods,
- Assessment of child’s development and progress,
- Assessment and evaluation of the pre-school education curriculum, and
- Monitoring and control of the implementation of the pre-school education curriculum” (pp. iv-v).

The new curriculum of 2005 adopts a learner-centred pedagogy (LCP); it promotes interdisciplinary and experiential learning, the project approach and the principles of assessment (Birbili, 2013; Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005). The curriculum content and methodologies are explicitly child-centred, clearly recognising the importance of developing the full potential of each child. The focus is on the child as an active learner, with each subject area encouraging learning activities, which are to be enjoyable and fascinating (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005). The pre-school education curriculum envisages that the child will be cognitively, physically, socio-emotionally, and creatively engaged in the learning process, in order to internalize and gain ownership of what is learned (Murphy, 2004; Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005). It stresses the need to incorporate current educational thinking and the most innovative and effective pedagogical practice (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005). The Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum development was accompanied by other supporting curriculum materials such as the syllabus and the teachers’ guide. The next section will provide further details about each of these in turn, since these are the documents used by teachers.

#### ***2.4.1.1 The syllabus and teachers' guide documents***

The syllabus is a detailed and structured document extracted from the holistic pre-school education curriculum document and it is used daily by teachers, but it shows only indoor learning activities and experiences to be performed in the classroom context (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005). Surprisingly it is also subject specific as in the primary curriculum, and although it does interpret the subject learning activities identified in the curriculum in more detail, it contains structured and formal activities. The syllabus starts with preliminary information including “general objectives of education in Tanzania, objectives of the pre-school education and the organization of the syllabus” (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT), 2005, pp. iii-iv).

The teachers' guide is also an additional document to support the enactment of the pre-school education curriculum but it is derived from the syllabus not the curriculum. The document interprets the syllabus and provides teaching principles to be followed in the classroom environment (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2010). It directs teachers how to analyse the syllabus and put it into practice, to prepare a scheme of work and lesson plans, how to teach subject learning activities, assessment of children, and evaluation of their lessons. In summary, in the ECEC context there are three curriculum documents i.e. the broad holistic curriculum, the syllabus, and the teachers' guide. The holistic curriculum document is the main one as it maps out the philosophy and educational thinking underlying ECEC. The syllabus is intended to interpret in detail what should be done at the classroom level from the broad curriculum document with the support of the teachers' guide

#### **2.4.2 Critiques of the Tanzanian ECEC curriculum of 2005**

It is notable that Tanzania now has formal pre-school education (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995) and a pre-school education curriculum (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005) which have been developed only slowly. Importantly, the pre-school education curriculum advocates that a child grows as a whole in all aspects of cognitive, socio-

emotional, behavioural development, and physical capabilities. The curriculum also promotes the importance of child-centred learning and teaching. The need for teachers to support children in developing their potential for life is also emphasised. Tanzania as a nation has a philosophy of education for self-reliance (ESR) (Nyerere, 1967), so the ECEC curriculum aims to prepare a child in proper skills, knowledge, attitude which will enable her/him to build the foundational attitude of independence and confidence.

However, the actual situation of ECEC in Tanzania is alarming for several reasons. One of the critiques of the existing pre-school education curriculum (2005) in Tanzania is that, the ECEC curriculum development did not integrate child care and early education for infants, toddlers, and young children as developed countries do. For example, in many developed countries the early childhood curriculum is designed for children from the time of birth to school entry (Barnett & Frede, 2010; Lee, Carr, Soutar, & Mitchell, 2013; Melhuish & Petrogiannis, 2006; Mitchell et al., 2008; Saracho, 2012b; Yelland, 2010). In Tanzania, there is no curriculum for younger age groups and provisions come under a different government administration. The curriculum for early childhood needs to include both care and early education, positioning a child at the centre to be the initiator of the activities in learning environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Smith, 2013). In addition, government policy needs to set standards which provide equality of opportunities and ensures inclusion for every child. Children should not be disadvantaged because of ethnicity, family background, culture or religion, learning difficulties or disabilities, home language or gender (Melhuish & Petrogiannis, 2006; Saracho, 2012b; Yelland, 2010).

Another critique of the pre-school education curriculum is that it does not take into consideration the sociocultural contexts of the children's lives. The way the curriculum was written indicates that authors used ideas from the existing literature and Western views which are different from Tanzanian contexts. No mention is made of incorporation of indigenous knowledge and cultural aspects. The curriculum does not indicate the link between home environments and the ECEC settings and how these could be accommodated. The sociocultural context is significant in learning because the curriculum starting point is the learner, and

the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that the child brings to their experiences and prior knowledge (Gauvain, 2005). Learning starts at home, and early childhood programmes outside the child's own home play an important role in extending early learning and in laying the foundations for successful future learning (Barnett & Frede, 2010; Lee et al., 2013). The child's acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes is a result of his/her interpretation and processing of sociocultural practices as the person participates in such cultural practices (Cole & Gajdamaschko, 2007; Rogoff, 2003). When children interact with more experienced and more knowledgeable adults, they are able to engage in complex creativity (Rogoff, 2003; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1991; Wertsch, Rio, & Alvarez, 1995), and as a result they can independently carry out activities that they would have been unable to carry out if they had worked at their own.

Another critique of the pre-school education curriculum is that it is overcrowded with many subjects and detailed content like the primary curriculum. The syllabus and teachers' guide seem to promote structured learning which might focus on academic activities and less on non-cognitive skills such as socio-emotional, behavioural, and physical development which are important in ECEC. In summary, this chapter has discussed the concept of ECEC, its values and rationale for government investment as well as the situation of ECEC in Africa and specifically in Tanzanian contexts. The next chapter explores the international literature on ECEC curricula development and enactment.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON ECEC CURRICULA AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

The previous chapter discussed the situation of Tanzanian pre-school education. This chapter discusses international perspectives of ECEC curricula development and its enactment as possibilities for Tanzania to address concerns and issues that have been raised. A discussion about models/approaches for a curriculum framework and, factors impinging on ECEC curriculum enactment are also presented, followed by a discussion on quality of ECEC, whereby “structural quality” and “process quality” are presented. Finally a synthesis of issues raised from the literature review is presented. The next section discusses the critical consideration for ECEC curriculum development.

#### **3.1 Critical Consideration Aspects for ECEC Curriculum Development**

This section discusses critical considerations in developing curricula. Curriculum development is conceived as a consolidation of various processes employed in the pursuit of certain set goals in a school system (Kelly, 2004; Marsh & Willis, 2007; Posner, 1995). It covers the entire field of curriculum construction. This takes place from initial conceptualization and planning, to design and implementation, to evaluation and revision (Kelly, 2004; Lally, 1997; Marsh & Willis, 2007; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009; Osaki, 2000). A study by Otunga and Nyandusi (2008) indicates that curriculum development is both a technical and social process. This means that in order for the process of curriculum design to proceed effectively and efficiently, the context in which it is carried out must be considered.

A number of writers advocate that there are various contexts in which the curriculum can be designed; however, an appropriate context for one situation may be impractical in another situation (Asiachi & Okech, 1988; Hopkins, 2001; Mligo, 2008; Osaki, 2000). This is because the curriculum is a social construct and diverse societies do not hold universal perceptions (Hopkins, 2001). Nonetheless, Shizha (2014) argues that in African societies the presence of

curriculum frameworks are not culturally appropriate, and many curricula have been triggered by the Western framework that was inherited after getting independence. This view is also supported by Owuor (2007) who asserts that the prevailing African curriculum models do not reflect the realities of local peoples, with all their societal, cultural, economic, political, spiritual, moral, and aspirations. It is therefore imperative to consider context relevance when developing a curriculum. Context relevance is concerned with the fidelity of the curriculum to its stated goals and objectives (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009; Otunga & Nyandusi, 2008). On the other hand, context is the summation of the factors that influence the curriculum design process (Otunga & Nyandusi, 2008).

The subsequent sections discuss sociocultural, political, historical, economic, and physical environmental contexts (Marsh & Willis, 2007; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009; Owuor, 2007), to be taken into consideration in developing a curriculum that is reflective of the current needs of Tanzanian children aged 5 and 6 years old.

### **3.1.1 Sociocultural contexts**

Sociocultural contexts are important to consider in curriculum development. Society has its own expectations about the aims and objectives that should be reflected when designing the curriculum (Osaki, 2000; Otunga & Nyandusi, 2008). It is therefore important for curriculum developers to take into account these societal considerations. Studies report that if societal needs are not accommodated, the curriculum becomes irrelevant (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009; Osaki, 2000). The design of curricula materials and their presentation should accommodate the culture of the society, such as language, morals and values, tradition and customs, and religious beliefs that the curriculum is seeking to serve (Mligo, 2008; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009; Osaki, 2000).

The curriculum including the ECEC curriculum can be seen as an agent of society (Marsh & Willis, 2003, 2007). This social foundation has been a most important curriculum foundation; educators need to be in touch with the needs of society. From a careful study of society it could be determined that which is meaningful and most likely to last. Viewing society as a source would give educators indications of where to modify the curriculum. The schools are not separate from

the larger culture and local community in which they are located (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009; Otunga & Nyandusi, 2008). Schools are designed to serve the social interests of the society as well as the local community. During curriculum design curriculum developers cannot ignore the diversity of citizens, especially multiple cultures, ethnic groups, and social classes. Gender equity is another critical issue. The curriculum enables learners to gain an understanding of the common culture, as well as common agreed on competencies to enable them to engage productively in society. Society and curriculum are interdependent because the curriculum is based on the needs and interest of the society at large.

Otunga and Nyandusi (2008) also argue that curriculum development should reflect social change, needs, and future aspirations of the society. The development of African curricula tends to adapt foreign ideas and use them in teaching (Owuor, 2007; Prochner & Kabiru, 2008; Shizha, 2014). Some of these ideas become completely impracticable and are abandoned before they mature. This view is supported by Nsamenang (2009) who argues that African societies need to be careful when designing curriculum. Policy makers, curriculum developers, and administrators should think of the African sociocultural context for the ECEC level (Okeke, 2010; Owuor, 2007; Shizha, 2014), while international contexts become relevant at secondary and tertiary levels. A number of researchers have addressed this issue and have asserted that curriculum development is about selecting the most important aspects of sociocultural context for transmission to the next generation (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009; Osaki, 2000; Otunga & Nyandusi, 2008; Owuor, 2007; Shizha, 2014). For the ECEC curriculum in Tanzania these aspects are language, moral, values, cultural tools, places, local dances, games, traditions and norms. In society, there are a number of cultural aspects which need to be transmitted from one generation to another as mentioned above.

### **3.1.2 Political contexts**

Education and curriculum development are regarded as political activities (Commonwealth of Learning, 2000; Mligo, 2008; Okeke, 2010; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009; Osaki, 2000; Shizha, 2014). National ideology and philosophy

have a tremendous influence on the education system and curricular activities (Commonwealth of Learning, 2000) because:

- “Politics determine and define the learning goals, content, learning experiences and evaluation strategies in education;
- Curricula materials and their interpretation are usually heavily influenced by political considerations;
- Political considerations may play a part in the hiring of personnel;
- Funding of education is greatly influenced by politics; and
- Entry into educational institutions and the examination systems are heavily influenced by politics” (p.22).

Politicians sometimes make decisions on the curriculum based on their own interests and not community interests (Mligo, 2008; Osaki, 2000). Political leaders politicize the school curriculum when they impose some ideas which will favour themselves and /or funders. A study by Osaki (2000) describes that in Tanzania, as elsewhere, politics occupy a central place in the daily affairs of the nation. He further insists that the political class seeks to control and manipulate the community either explicitly or secretly. Politicians’ interests in curriculum development may be different from the interests of the beneficiaries, such as teachers, parents, and children. Shizha (2014) points out that the decision on the knowledge that is to be taught in school context and how it is taught is grounded on politics. Importantly, the politics of knowledge determines how knowledge is created, disseminated, and used. Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, and Tauban (1995) argue that the concept of ideology became fundamental in understanding curriculum as a political text. Curriculum design is appropriate if it is developed by political negotiation free from political force. That means people in a profession need conversation and agreement on the curriculum document. Curriculum needs to be designed in a friendly political environment, and should be culturally and nationally appropriate. However, in most cases in African regions, the decisions on curriculum content are made by people who are in positions of governmental power and control (Mligo, 2008; Osaki, 2000; Otunga & Nyandusi, 2008; Shizha, 2014).

### 3.1.3 Historical contexts

Another influential context for curriculum development is the historical context. Before the coming of colonial administrations around the 15th century, African societies had their own unique way of training not only the young ones, but also the adults (Oluniyi & Olajumoke, 2013). The most important aspect of it was that, the education provision was not an end in itself or for mere certification without the assurance of being employed (Nyerere, 1967; Oluniyi & Olajumoke, 2013). Educational enterprise was effective and goal oriented. The pre-colonial education system met the immediate needs of individuals and the society at large. After the arrival of the colonists this system of African training was dismantled and Western education was embraced in Africa (Mbise, 1996; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009; Otunga & Nyandusi, 2008; Owuor, 2007; Shizha, 2005, 2014). The African education system has been colonized for over a century. Many African writers advocate that the education system that was introduced by colonial governments and yet still continues to be offered in African schools is mainly dependent on imported systems, which are Eurocentric in nature (Nyerere, 1967; Oluniyi & Olajumoke, 2013; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009; Shizha, 2014).

As stated by Owuor (2007) in her study in Kenya, the “purpose of education during the colonial period was mainly for religious conversion, economic exploitation, and the assimilation of Africans into the Western cultures, values, and practices” (p.25). This situation eroded African ethnic communities’ indigenous learning structures, resulting in a condition that denied individuals their cultural identity, traditional norms and values. Hence, the colonial regime undermined African values, cultural practices and mode of production, and imposed Western culture in education systems (ECEC included), disrupting to a large extent the indigenous African way of life and production (Owuor, 2007; Shizha, 2005, 2014). According to Owuor (2007) the “formal Western oriented education system inherited after independence not only cultivated among the elites a sense of denial to their indigenous heritage but also impacted individuals’ sense of self-confidence in expressing and appreciating their native values and cultures” (p.25).

The aims and objectives of the education introduced by the missionaries influenced the type of curriculum that operated (Mbise, 1996; Oluniyi & Olajumoke, 2013; Owuor,

2007). The main intention of the missionaries was Evangelization and Christianization of the irreligious Africans with a view to converting all those who came within the four walls of the mission house. They recognised that, the proper evangelization of Africans will require them to acquire basic knowledge of how to read and write. This narrow conception informed the structure of the school and its curriculum. The “curriculum was predominantly Bible reading, Catechism, the story of Jesus, hymns, prayers, sewing for girls and farming for boys” (Oluniyi & Olajumoke, 2013, p. 75). However, basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic and of course religion formed the core of the curriculum. During the missionary era, the curriculum was purely under the control of missionaries. That kind of education did not meet the needs and interests of Africans in terms of intellectual development, vocational opportunity, and career enhancement (Nyerere, 1967), but rather it led to the evolution of white collar jobs, especially teachers and Catechists.

The Post-Colonial Era is the period when political independence manifested a change in the course of the education system and curriculum development in African societies (Oluniyi & Olajumoke, 2013). In the same way education became an avenue for obtaining greater influence, affluence, and access to political power in the African context. The emergent of African scholars gave a voice to curriculum reformation after independence (Nyerere, 1967; Oluniyi & Olajumoke, 2013). However, currently reforming African education curricula that accommodate the needs and interest of African pupils is still debatable, the reason is, most policy statements on indigenisation African education have been at most rhetorical and political (Okeke, 2010; Shizha, 2014). They have not been acted on or constituted (Okeke, 2010). Importantly, the effort in African curricula development “must take into account the role and value of indigenous knowledge, which has been a much neglected aspect of Africa’s educational reform” (Shizha, 2014, p. 113). An indigenised school curriculum is seen as enhancing success in cognitive, socio-emotional, behavioural and physical development and hence achievement for children. The current Tanzania’s ECEC curriculum developed in 2005 was developed in post-colonial times, and therefore its aims and goals expected to meet the needs and interests of Tanzanian children, to be independent, confident, and prepared for the life.

### **3.1.4 Economic contexts**

The economic context is a fourth context which is important in curriculum development. In all countries across the world education is financed by governments in order to improve national aspects, including the country's economy. Therefore, the national curriculum will in part be aligned with the requirements of the economy. For example, Marsh and Willis (2007) articulate that the children taught in the classrooms will need to be employed in the future, although not all children will be employed in industries. The skills needed by industry such as agriculture, tourism, art and crafts should be intertwined with the content and learning experiences of the children. Basic employers' requirements and the skills, attitudes, and knowledge base required by industry should be developed in the classroom (Kelly, 2004). Therefore, educational institutions are responding to government demands by orientating and working to meet these basic requirements academically and professionally. Industries are one stakeholder in the negotiation of a curriculum. In some cases, business interests may fit well with school curricula that have been designed with the goal of training students for employment in the occupations prevalent in society (Marsh and Willis, 2003).

Another aspect of the economic context is resourcing of schools. Obviously, teachers in the classrooms require various supplies such as textbooks, charts, equipment and chemicals for science experiments. Without these materials, learning is more difficult. A new curriculum may require new resources for schools to teach the curriculum as intended. It is therefore important that serious consideration be given to economic demands when designing the curriculum.

In current policies, however, there may be an imbalance between the demands of the country and economy and learning for its own sake and for the development of the individual's needs and interests.

### **3.1.5 Physical environmental contexts**

Another influential context in curriculum development is the physical environment which impacts on curriculum development. The concept of the

physical learning environment relates to spaces in classrooms, facilities, equipment, and tools within the pre-school settings (Kuuskorpi & González, 2011). The provision and design of classroom spaces influences what pedagogies and learning activities can be used in the classroom and vice versa. For example, school buildings influence what outdoors and indoors activities can be enacted and they in turn influence what can be included in the curriculum. Indoor activities in the classroom context need a supportive learning environment in terms of spaces in classrooms. Children need not be crowded indoors by structured teaching. Such a situation can develop severe negative health consequences for children, through restricted total body movement, reduced activity opportunities, and increased inactivity (Kuuskorpi & González, 2011). The curriculum influences the location of child-friendly neighbourhood spaces for indoor activities (play-based activity). And for outdoor activities, the curriculum influences the location of playgrounds, facilities, tours, parks, so that all children spend most of their recreational time outdoors, engaged in rich physical environments.

Therefore, the ECEC curriculum development has implications for the way the children's environment is managed and organised. When physical learning environments offer resources and possibilities that support teachers and children in new curriculum enactment, pre-schools are quicker to change their operational culture (Kuuskorpi & González, 2011).

In summary, the sociocultural contexts that are seen to influence the ECEC curriculum and its enactment are political, historical, economic and physical contexts. Likewise, in society there are a number of social groups that can bring their views to bear on curriculum design. Many groups, such as professional associations, official directives, cultural groups, and religious organisations, wish to have a say as to what is included in the curriculum. For a curriculum to hold value, it must result from the broad consultation and negotiation with a wide range of shareholders (Bell & Baker, 1997; Marsh & Willis, 2003, 2007).

Given the sociocultural contexts which contribute to the development of curriculum, the next section reviews models and approaches to curriculum enactment so that these contexts can be addressed.

### **3.2 Models/Approaches to Curriculum Framework**

For any curriculum to be enacted it needs to position itself to a certain model and/or approach in order to create a framework of action (Lunenburg, 2011). The term curriculum model may be defined as “a conceptual framework and organizational structure for decision making about educational priorities, administrative policies, instructional methods, and evaluation criteria” (Goffin, 2000, p. 2). Even if the founders of curriculum models and approaches vary in their underlying premises, curriculum models and approaches provide well-defined frameworks to guide program implementation and evaluation (Goffin, 2000; Lunenburg, 2011; National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), 2003). A valid curriculum model provides the theoretical framework needed to operate an effective pre-school education program (Bauman, 2012; Lunenburg, 2011; Miller, 2011), and to provide learning opportunities for children (Bauman, 2012). Variations among curriculum models reflect differences in values concerning what is more or less important for young children to learn, as well as in the process by which children are believed to learn and develop (Bauman, 2012; Lunenburg, 2011; Miller, 2011). These variations inform the role of the teachers, the curriculum’s focus, the classroom structure, and the ways in which children participate in learning.

Early childhood curriculum models and approaches also vary in terms of the freedom granted to teachers to interpret the implementation of the model’s framework (Lunenburg, 2011). Some curriculum models are highly structured and provide detailed scripts for teacher actions (Bauman, 2012; Goffin, 2000). Others emphasise guiding principles and expect teachers to determine how best to implement these principles (Lee et al., 2013; Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996). However, curriculum models, regardless of their goals and the degree of flexibility in their implementation (Lunenburg, 2011; Miller, 2011) are designed to promote consistent quality across early childhood programmes, through the use of a prepared curriculum, consistent instructional techniques, and predictable child outcomes (Lunenburg, 2011).

Numerous studies describe a wide range of early childhood curriculum models. Among the best known and most widely used early childhood curriculum approaches is *Te Whāriki*, the New Zealand ECEC curriculum approach developed in 1996 (Lee et al., 2013; Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996); the High Scope curriculum approach developed in the 1970 by David P. Weikart (1931-2003); the Reggio Emilia approach which was developed in 1970s by Loris Malaguzzi (Goffin, 2000; Lunenburg, 2011); the Montessori approach developed in 1897 by Maria Montessori (Isaacs, 2010); the Dodge Creative Curriculum approach developed by Diane Trister Dodge in 1979; the Kamii-DeVries constructivist approach developed by Constance Kamii and Rhetta DeVries in 1970's, and the Bank Street developmental-interaction approach developed by Lucy Sprague Mitchell in 1916 (Lunenburg, 2011). All these approaches are pointing out that the power to learn comes from within the child her/himself (DeVries & Kamii, 2001; Dodge, 2004; Goffin, 2000; Hohmann & Weikart, 2002; Lee et al., 2013; Lunenburg, 2011; Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996; Weikart, 2000). So for active learning practices, the adults' role is to support and guide young children through their experiences (Hohmann & Weikart, 2002).

The involvement of parents in educational activities is another key aspect as parents are key informants in alerting teachers to the interests and needs of children and families. The main focus is not just what children need to learn, but how they learn. However, among the many models and/or approaches, the current study has focused on *Te Whāriki*, the New Zealand's curriculum approach as a lens to a Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum development and enactment. This is because the approach has been structured in terms of principles and strands and each goal in each of the strands has learning outcomes (woven mat) that become a basis for every child's development. Hence, this is a unique structure and organisation compared to other curriculum approaches/models. Again the sociocultural context is highly considered and lively practised. The next section discusses the structure and organisation of *Te Whāriki*, the New Zealand's curriculum approach.

### 3.2.1 Te Whāriki New Zealand curriculum framework

This study uses *Te Whāriki* the New Zealand Curriculum Framework, developed in 1996, as a starting point for reviewing the Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum. The framework comprises four broad principles at the centre of the early childhood curriculum. According to the Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education (1996) the four principles are stipulated as follows:

- “Empowerment- The early childhood curriculum empowers the child to learn and grow;
- Holistic Development- The early childhood curriculum reflects the holistic way children learn and grow;
- Family and Community- The wider world of family and community is an integral part of the early childhood curriculum; and
- Relationships- Children learn through responsive and reciprocal relationships with people, places, and things” (p.14).

Strands and goals arise from the four principles. The principles and strands together create the framework for the curriculum. For each goal in each of the strands, learning outcomes have been formulated so that the ECEC curriculum *Te Whāriki* becomes an integrated basis for every child’s development (Lee et al., 2013; Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996). Strands, goals, and learning outcomes are stipulated as follows:

#### “Strand 1: Well-being

The health and well-being of the child are protected and nurtured.

Goals: Children experience an environment where:

- their health is promoted;
- their emotional well-being is nurtured; and
- they are kept safe from harm.

#### Strand 2: Belonging

Children and their families feel a sense of belonging.

Goals: Children and their families experience an environment where:

- connecting links with the family and the wider world are affirmed and extended;
- they know that they have a place;

- they feel comfortable with the routines, customs, and regular events; and
- they know the limits and boundaries of acceptable behaviour.

### Strand 3: Contribution

Opportunities for learning are equitable, and each child's contribution is valued.

Goals: Children experience an environment where:

- there are equitable opportunities for learning, irrespective of gender; ability, age, ethnicity, or background;
- they are affirmed as individuals; and
- they are encouraged to learn with and alongside others.

### Strand 4: Communication

The languages and symbols of their own and other cultures are promoted and protected.

Goals: Children experience an environment where:

- they develop non-verbal communication skills for a range of purposes;
- they develop verbal communication skills for a range of purposes;
- they experience the stories and symbols of their own and other cultures; and
- they discover and develop different ways to be creative and expressive.

### Strand 5: Exploration

The child learns through active exploration of the environment.

Goals: Children experience an environment where:

- their play is valued as meaningful learning and the importance of spontaneous play is recognised;
- they gain confidence in and control of their bodies;
- they learn strategies for active exploration, thinking, and reasoning; and
- they develop working theories for making sense of the natural, social, physical, and material worlds" (pp15-16).

The principles and strands collectively form the framework for the curriculum. The structure of the framework is impressive and it is considered good guidance not only for New Zealand children but also for all children worldwide. The formulation of principles and strands, of which each strand has its goal which determine the learning outcomes, helps the smooth planning, evaluation, and assessment of the curriculum enactment (Lee et al., 2013).

The uniqueness of *Te Whāriki* is observed both in its philosophical nature and in the grounding of its conceptual framework in the worldview of the indigenous people (Lee et al., 2013; Ritchie, 2010). The sociocultural stance of the curriculum document is boldly declared (Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996):

This curriculum emphasises the critical role of socially and culturally mediated learning and of reciprocal and responsive relationships for children with people, places, and things. Children learn through collaboration with adults and peers, through guided participation and observation of others, as well as through individual exploration and reflection (p.9).

This framework is opening-up ideas which could be a catalyst for the Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum analysis and enactment. The framework developed by New Zealand ECEC curriculum could give a big lesson to other countries ECEC curricula, Tanzanian included.

The Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education (1996) reports that the *Te Whāriki* approach is common to all early childhood services such as child care centres, play groups, home-based programmes, and kindergartens in New Zealand, although the ways in which it is put into practice, may differ from one setting to another. It also provides examples of the links between early childhood education and the school years. The way the curriculum is set up enables curriculum principles to be planned and evaluated in terms of the curriculum's strands and goals. This structure paved the way for the researcher of this study to get insight into how *Te Whāriki* could be used as a guide in reviewing a Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum. This curriculum approach integrates child care and early education and includes both specifically planned experiences and activities and interactions that arise unexpectedly (Hohmann & Weikart, 2002; Lee et al., 2013; Lunenburg, 2011; Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996). The New Zealand early childhood curriculum has been envisioned as “a Whāriki or mat, woven from the principles, strands, and goals” defined in the curriculum (Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 11).

The approach has also given great consideration to the care and education for children who have special needs who attend the diverse range of early childhood

services. The curriculum framework assumes that their care and education will be considered within the principles, strands, and goals set out for all children in early childhood settings (Lee et al., 2013; Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996). The framework shows how activities will be age appropriate and developmentally appropriate to enable children with special needs to be actively engaged in learning activities. The *Te Whāriki* framework is designed to be inclusive and appropriate for all children and anticipates that those with special needs will be recognised and handled as children learn together in various forms of early childhood education settings (Lee et al., 2013). The Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum has included consideration of children with special needs although the context of how these children will be managed was not clarified. So consideration of this New Zealand curriculum framework will help to raise discussion on how such a structure can be re-contextualised in the Tanzanian situation.

Moreover, *Te Whāriki* the New Zealand curriculum framework has included “adults’ responsibilities in management, organisation, and practice” (p.27). Adults are mainly taken as the central part of the curriculum for the early childhood years. The participation of adults in caring for children’s physical and emotional support and guidance is more intense in early childhood than in later years. Children’s well-being is dependent on the engagement with adults. Furthermore, adults who are working in ECEC need to be knowledgeable about children’s growth and the early childhood curriculum. They must be skilled at implementing curriculum, and be aware and consider what they do as role-models for learning (Bauman, 2012; DeVries & Kamii, 2001; Lunenburg, 2011). The Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum does not indicate the involvement of adults and parents in the curriculum enactment but rather it just shows that parents should help their children in making local teaching and learning materials, even though this currently does not happen. Therefore, learning from the *Te Whāriki* approach about the involvement of adults (including family members) could strengthen the Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum in its next review and implementation practice. The *Te Whāriki* framework also shows the need for management to ensure that staffing meets requirements and is adequate to ensure the safety of

children at all times and in all situations. Furthermore, the framework insists that the management should ensure that training is available, to enable the adults who work with children, to have the knowledge and skills necessary for the provision of children's learning and development and to implement the curriculum (Sylva et al., 2003).

Therefore, in the current study the *Te Whāriki* approach is used as a guide to review and suggest further development of the Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum framework. The way this approach describes principles, pedagogies, and early childhood practices (Lee et al., 2013) can be re-contextualised and become interesting and useful for discussion about early childhood practices in the Tanzanian context.

In addition, Pinar et al. (1995) contribute to the ideas and concepts of curriculum enactment. Pinar et al. do not propose a model or approach for curriculum enactment, but rather seek to provide different lenses (viewing curriculum as political, social, historical, and gender text) within which to interrogate the curriculum. For example, with a political lens, teachers are seen as undertaking teaching as a political practice which means that they address the discourses of power in schools, especially those of inequality and social injustice (Ableser, 2003; Bell, 2011; Pinar et al., 1995; Spodek & Saracho, 1999; Wilcox-Herzog, 2002). In the classroom situation teachers are able to make many choices and decisions in all stages of planning and teaching of the classroom curriculum. Teachers may consult and negotiate the curriculum with learners in the classroom by asking pupils to decide what they wish to learn and choose learning activities (Bell, 2011; Bell & Baker, 1997). Pupils are seen as having power to negotiate with the teacher what they will learn. Therefore, understanding the needs and interests of learners in curriculum practice is important and leads to a learner-centred curriculum. The next section will provide further details about enactment of a learner-centred curriculum.

### **3.3 Implementation of a Learner-Centred Curriculum**

Any future review of the Tanzanian ECEC curriculum would need to focus on the quality of educational experiences. Calls to improve education such as those made

at the Dakar framework of action conference on Education for All (EFA) now emphasise not only increased enrolment in education but also the need for increased quality. Hence, many governments and monetary donors recommend the introduction of learner-centred education as it is seen as leading to better quality of education (Croft, 2002; Mtika & Gates, 2010). However, various studies report that indicators and interpretations of learner-centred teaching, as a means for attaining quality education, may not be supported in many developing countries, particularly in rural areas (Bartlett & Mogusu, 2013; Croft, 2002; Mtika & Gates, 2010). The focus in learner-centred teaching is to enable an individual learner to construct knowledge for him or herself using the environment, including both the physical and social environments, and therefore require a flexible curriculum within the broad parameters of the socially constructed curriculum. To enable the practice of Learner Centred Pedagogies (LCP) various efforts were made by government's countries including promoting teacher education programmes looking at aspects of learner-centred education and short orientation courses for teachers (Croft, 2002; O'Sullivan, 2004). The programme stresses active-learning, improvisation, and learning-by-doing to make the curriculum content more meaningful. Nonetheless, Croft (2002) observes that although learners are active participants, it is the teacher who sets the lesson objectives in line with the national curriculum and detailed teachers' guides. So, although teaching meets the learners, as and where they are, in some ways, studies report that teachers are not free to let learners' interests lead the curriculum. It is not a case of anything goes.

Many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have begun to adopt LCP, with Tanzania joining this reform movement intensely in the early 2000s. This shift has generated interest among researchers and policymakers in how African teachers interpret and implement methods of teaching that differ significantly from the "talk and chalk" transmission model used across the continent (Bartlett & Mogusu, 2013, p. 61). Despite a decade or two of experience with LCP in some countries, the studies from Africa to date signify that "the idea of learner-centred learning has not taken root in the classrooms" (Mtika & Gates, 2010, p. 397). Thus, important questions remain concerning how teachers in Sub-Saharan Africa

conceptualize LCP and what difficulties they face in attempting to use it. Amongst the questions is; do teachers have enough knowledge and pedagogical skills on how to implement a learner-centred curriculum? For example, in Tanzania the pre-school education curriculum development which was put in place in 2005 was a reflection on changes to policy and curricula aimed at greater use of LCP. But it appears that the enactment of learner-centred pedagogy, did not eventuate, and this is the concern of the current study.

LCP is built upon the understanding that a person learns best when he/she is actively engaged in curricula relevant to his/her context and interests (Paris & Combs, 2006). The LCP approach assumes that learners are not simply receiving information but rather are constructing knowledge through processes of inquiry, creativity, and reflection. LCP is grounded in the principles of learning and knowledge generation known as “constructivism”, which asserts that knowledge is created through social interaction and is not “out there” to be discovered (duPlessis & Muzaffar, 2010, p. 34).

In the light of the philosophy of LCP, similar to a number of other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Tanzanian government has also begun to implement LCP in all levels of education, pre-school education included (Vavrus & Moshi, 2009). However, it is unclear if LCP happens in Tanzanian classroom contexts. The study conducted by Bartlett and Mogusu (2013) in Tanzanian schools (not pre-schools) reported that although LCP encourages more creativity in learners, the obstacles could be teachers’ inability to put the new approach into action. It was argued that a critical assessment in schools, noted that some teachers were not being “properly trained” in teacher education due to lack of qualified tutors (p.63). Moreover, their study noted that the conditions for teachers are a limiting factor in their performance; they are constrained by low wages and lack of professional development opportunities, poor housing conditions, and transport problems. Under those circumstances, the focus on pre-school education curriculum reform that intensified in 2005 was also to embrace the use of LCP. Teachers were “strongly advised to use only those participatory and learner-centred strategies in order to enhance the teaching and learning process” (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005, p. 11). The pre-school education

curriculum further stresses that, among others, the goal of pre-school education curriculum is to make “the teaching and learning process more interactive and learner-centred” (p.iii). However, the intention of the current study is to investigate what are the possibilities, experiences, and challenges and/or issues pre-school teachers encounter during pre-school education curriculum enactment and the associated pedagogies. There has been no research on whether the conditions facing school teachers are also occurring for pre-school teachers in the process of pre-school education curriculum enactment so the current study is imperative.

Furthermore, Vavrus and Moshi (2009) report that LCP is opposed to teacher-centred pedagogy (TCP) which comprises passive approaches to memorising information, provided by the teacher. The teacher acts as the giver of everything and the one who knows all materials. The TCP treats learners as empty vessels, *tabula rasa*. As a matter of fact, the intention of LCP is that a teacher becomes a guide for learners to explore their physical and social environments and thereby construct new knowledge. Children are not expected to do this themselves but within social interaction with others. With the LCP methods, learners need to be involved in the learning process with activity-based learning. In this way they are able to make discoveries, be inquisitive, take part in discussions, and disclose their competencies and abilities in a collaborative way as sociocultural theory emphasises.

Sociocultural theorising advocates that the prior knowledge and experiences of the learner are essential for participation in the cultural and social practices (Gauvain, 2005; Rogoff, 2003). Sociocultural views of learning include:

- Learning involves the use of the child’s own cultural tools, such as language, objects (artefacts), places, signs and symbols, and worldview (Cole & Gajdamaschko, 2007; Daniels, 2005);
- Children’s learning, like adults, is about children making links between the learning and their prior knowledge. Learning occurs due to active participation of learners in making sense of the social and physical world

as afforded by the social and cultural setting and prior knowledge (Gauvain, 2005; Potter, 2007; Rogoff, 2003; Sawyer, 2006);

- Prior knowledge is built from the child interacting with the social (people), places, and physical parts of their environments. It is the making sense of their experiences with their social and physical environments that builds up their prior knowledge. It is also the process used for learning in the ECEC context (Rogoff, 2003; Sawyer, 2006);
- Not only is the child's learning linked to the sociocultural contexts, the learning itself is a network of linked cognitive, socio-emotional, behavioural, and physical development (Pound, 2009; Rogoff, 2003); and
- Learning is viewed as situated, involving the active participation of the children and adults in a collaborative way (Daniels, 2005; Vygotsky, 1978), goal-oriented, dependent on learners' prior knowledge and experiences, and a transformative process for the individual and the social and cultural practices (Gauvain, 2005; Karen, 2009; Rogoff, 2003; Wertsch, 1991).

Therefore, learning takes place as children interact with the social and physical contexts with peers and adults. In other words, since learning takes place in a social context, it is influenced by sociocultural aspects, and meaningful learning depends on the learners' prior knowledge of the social context.

Pre-school teachers can enact a child-centred curriculum in various ways, which will now be discussed in turn as possibilities for the review and future development of the Tanzania ECEC curriculum.

### **3.3.1 Learning in a play context**

One way a child-centred curriculum can be enacted is through engagement in play. Children develop an ability to be creative and expressive through a variety of activities, such as plays, story-telling, singing songs of their own and experimenting with tunes and pitch patterns, drama and dancing (Holzman, 2009; Saracho, 2012b). Learning and development need to be integrated through tasks, activities, and contexts that have meaning and purpose for the child, including practices and activities which are not always structured (Mitchell, Bateman, &

Ouko, 2015). Engagement in play for children enables them to be active in the exploration of the environment (Holzman, 2009; Saracho, 2012b; Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996). Children participate and gain experiences in environments in which their play is valued as meaningful learning and the importance of spontaneous play is recognised (Holzman, 2009). The concept of play is informed by the writings of Lev Vygotsky who emphasised linking early childhood play to the formation of personality and a worldview, Vygotsky wrote that the pre-school child “can be somebody else just as easily as he can be himself” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 249). He further asserts that play activities transform a child when interacting within the sociocultural context and formulates his/her personality in later childhood.

A study by Holzman (2009) reports that through play children gain confidence in and control of their bodies; they learn strategies for active exploration, thinking, and reasoning. Through play children develop working theories for making sense of the natural, physical, social, and material worlds (Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996). For Vygotsky, human thought is fundamentally dependent on the sociocultural context. That means children’s social actions are maintained through interaction in a dynamic group of peers and adults, and social transformation may be achieved through exploration and collaborative activity (Holzman, 2009).

The work of the Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education (1996) indicates that the “early childhood curriculum builds on the child’s own experiences, knowledge, skills, attitudes, needs, interests, and views of the world within each particular setting” (p.40). It further asserts that children have the opportunity to create and act on their social world with the help of prior experiences gained from the community. So children would develop knowledge and skills in areas that interest them, and be able to make their own decisions and judgments. However, this view could be different from African societies, Tanzania included, where children can miss the opportunity to develop and act on their own ideas as Western children do. In her study Saracho (2012b) advocates that play provides a new way of thinking about how early childhood educational experiences can serve as a foundation for cultivating meaningful learning and lifelong creativity.

Through play children develop strategies and skills needed for initiating, maintaining, and enjoying relationships, such as taking turns, negotiating, taking another's point of view, supporting others, problem solving and understanding other people's attitudes and feelings (Lee et al., 2013; Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996).

### **3.3.2 Learning through creative imitation and performance**

Another learner-centred approach is learning through creative imitation and performance. The use of the imagination to create a pretend (simulation) situation is fostered and appreciated. Holzman (2009) advocates that creativity and imagination are vital and that they have an important function in early childhood and throughout life. Being creative enables children to make connections between one area of learning and another and to extend their understanding. When children are engaging in creative imitation they bring something new to their minds. Vygotsky put emphasis on learning through creative imitation and performance (Cole & Gajdamaschko, 2007; Daniels, 2005). In the process of learning Vygotsky locates the significance of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). That, the zone of proximal development has been defined as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). According to Vygotsky, "a full understanding of the concept of the zone of proximal development must result in a re-evaluation of the role of imitation in learning" (1978, p. 87). He discounted the mechanical view of imitation that was "rooted in traditional psychology, as well as in everyday consciousness" and the individualistically biased inferences drawn from it, for example, that "the child can imitate anything" and that "what I can do by imitating says nothing about my own mind" (1987, p. 209). To Vygotsky, imitation was an active, creative and fundamentally social process that was crucial to creating the ZPD. He points out that "children do not imitate anything and everything as a parrot does, but rather what is around them in their environment and relationships" (p.209).

Creatively imitating others in their daily interactions, such as playing games, doing role play in their classrooms focusing on home scenarios, picking up a pencil and “writing”, is relating to oneself as being related to by others, as performing as a speaker, a dancer, a writer, a learner, a human being (Holzman, 2009, p. 30). It is how children are capable of doing a lot in collective activity. Vygotsky points out that babies and toddlers do not learn or are taught language in the cognitive, acquisition and transmittal sense of typical institutionalized learning and teaching (Holzman, 2009). They develop as speakers, language makers, and language users through seeing and being involved in their family and community group. At the moment babies begin to babble, they are speaking, before they know how, by virtue of the speakers around them generating conversations with them. Family members and others neither tell babies that they are too young, correct them, and give them a grammar book and dictionary to study, nor remain silent around them. But, rather, they relate to infants and babies as capable of far more than they could possibly do alone (Holzman, 2009; Saracho, 2012a). Family members relate to babies as fellow speakers, feelers, thinkers and makers of meaning. As they grow, the level of creativity grows, and in schools teachers and adults should remain facilitators and scaffold their language. Scaffolding according to Smith (2013, p. 25) the term refers to “the guidance and interactional support given by a tutor in the Zonal of Proximal Development”, however the concept of *scaffolding* was originated by Wood et al in 1976. That means, the assistance that adult and more competent peers provide during learning experiences, i.e the child can do various learning activities by him/herself, while what he/she cannot do is filled in by adults (teachers/parents). Scaffolding is an important part of teaching at the ECEC level. The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) has been defined as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).

Hence, teachers and adults need to invite pretend play in ECEC settings so that children develop various skills and become inquisitive through creative imitation and imagination.

### **3.3.3 Learning through storytelling, songs, proverbs, and trips**

The third aspect of learning through learner-centred pedagogical approaches is through storytelling, songs, games, proverbs, and trips. It goes without saying children normally enjoy listening to stories, proverbs, songs or legends from elders. Grandparents tell stories and sing songs and convey the meanings of the community. A study by Serpell and Nsamenang (2014) reports that it is important that children are familiar with an appropriate selection of the stories, proverbs, literature, local dances and music which are valued by the cultures in their community. That means it is expected that words, and the tones used, can amuse, delight, comfort, illuminate, inform, and excite the audience. Children have an increasing ability to keep a steady beat through speech, tunes, music, dances, or movement to simple rhythmic patterns (Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996). In contrast, Croft (2002) describes that the local contexts in which children learn are of great significance, however, he observes that international donors have too often ignored these in developing countries. In some cases, traditions are declining, for example, formerly grandparents used to tell stories around the fire in the evening with an inherent orientation to learning, communication, and children's social roles.

In addition, when children get to the wider world outside of the family environment, children enjoy finding out about places and people of importance in the community from visitors, or by taking trips. There is a time for young children to talk about home to interested adults and to sharing a variety of news. The Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education (1996) suggests that ECEC settings need to arrange opportunities for children and families to meet each other for a morning tea, a trip, a shared lunch, or a barbecue. This view is closely related to the suggestion given by Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education (2005) that community elders and mentors should come along to the pre-school children's class and tell them stories, sing songs, play local music and tell proverbs. This was also supported by Serpell and Nsamenang (2014) who suggest that the design of ECEC services in Africa should focus on local strengths including indigenous games, dance and music, emphasize community-based provision, incorporate participation of youngsters, use local African languages

and local funds of knowledge, and accord priority to inclusion of children with special needs. The role of adults and teachers should be to explain the meaning of the stories and proverbs, and what message they carry, and their usefulness to the community.

Gradually children's complex social problem-solving skills are encouraged, for example, through games or dramatic play, gestures, and dances. Children are helped to understand other people's attitudes and feelings in a variety of contexts, for instance, in play, conversations, and storytelling. The learning design should encourage cooperative play by providing activities that are more fun and work better when performed cooperatively. Children's growing capacities for empathy are fostered by reading or telling stories about other people and, songs that have meaning and purpose for children. In their play children develop capacities and understanding about rules and social strategies that are fostered through routines, such as sharing and taking turns (Holzman, 2009; Saracho, 2012b). For example, *Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education* (2005) asserts that teachers should use charts of letters of the alphabet and guide children to pronounce and sing songs about the alphabet A-Z or numbers 0-20 (i.e. teaching through songs). However, Croft (2002) reports that in many places the function of songs in lessons is mainly to manage the class rather than to teach content, in contrast to the emphasis indicated in the official curricula. For instance, Croft argues that in Malawi, classrooms are large, so songs normally are used to control large classes and teachers' knowledge of how to teach content through songs is limited. Games are also important to learning by using number cards and remembering various arrangements of playing cards, jigsaw, and puzzles. Moreover, children's learning through activities can be done through art and craft, the focus in the next section.

### **3.3.4 Learning through art and craft**

Another method of learner-centred teaching used to enact a child-centred curriculum is art and craft. A child's thinking and learning could be enhanced by using art and craft to support creativity in combination with other ways of recording and developing his/her ideas. The Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education (1996) reports that children develop skills and confidence with the

processes of art and craft, such as cutting, drawing, print-making, painting, weaving, stitching, carving, and constructing. An increasing familiarity with a selection of art and craft activities that are valued by the cultures in the community should be appreciated. A study by Hope (2008) indicates that drawing, painting and printmaking in children's learning and development is very important. He further emphasises that school curricula need to indicate the importance of art and craft and orientate teachers to expand their thinking about how children's ideas could be generated and recorded through drawings. Art and craft are powerful and accessible yet frequently under-utilized. Art and craft work enables children to learn and understand the ideas of others and to effectively generate, develop, draft, express, expand and communicate their own wonderful ideas (Hope, 2008). Drawing comes from within, from an image held in the human mind. Even when children engaged in observational drawing of an object placed directly in front of their eyes, their minds act as a filter. Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education (2005) reports that drawing helps in the development of various skills including observational skills, hand-eye coordination, motor skills, knowledge and understanding of materials, tools and techniques, visual literacy, evaluative and critical skills, and higher-order analytical skills.

Various arts and crafts can be used to guide children to develop and record their thoughts and creative ideas, and to enable teachers and adults to encourage and enable children to do so. If teachers widen their knowledge and understanding of art and craft it could enable children to use drawings, painting, print-making as powerful learning, thinking and communication tools. Hope (2008) argues that drawing can be seen as a means of "objectifying an inner image, as part of the interaction between the inner world of our mind's eye and the outer reality of the environment" (p.10). Art and craft skills can be used for expressing a mood or a feeling or for representing information by using pencils, paint, coloured chalks, blocks, wood, musical instruments, and movement skills. Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education (2005) signifies the role of teachers to guide children how to formulate letters through drawing such as starting drawing a letter on the air, on the ground, and on a piece of paper.

Furthermore, children can learn through seeing various pictures relating to a certain activities such as cooking, farming, fishing, or pictures showing family members. Also, children can draw pictures relating to the things or animals, birds, insects which are found in the child's environments. Teachers could bring, for example, real objects or models and tools into the class and guide children to know their functions. School objects like tables, blackboard, chalk, chairs and home objects like baskets, knife, cups, cooking pan can be discussed. Through these objects children can build concepts more easily. Therefore, children's cultures need to be included in the programme through songs, language, storytelling, local music and dance, pictures and play materials. All these activities should bring meaning and purpose to the children's life and community at large. Given the discussion about learning through participatory approaches in curriculum enactment, the next section reviews ECEC curriculum enactment worldwide, Tanzania included.

### **3.4 ECEC Curriculum Enactment in a Global Perspective**

In reviewing the Tanzania ECEC curriculum and enactment, a global perspective is useful. The ECEC curriculum worldwide is enacted by ECEC teachers, administrators, parents, and ECEC experts in order to meet the ECEC goals and objectives; it also includes the pedagogies used to teach the curriculum and evaluation. Many studies about ECEC curriculum enactment have been undertaken in both developed and developing countries. The findings reveal that in many areas early childhood teachers' beliefs and what is practiced in the classroom situation are different (Dedeoğlu & Alat, 2012; Li, Wang, & Wong, 2011; Mtahabwa, 2007; Nganga, 2009; Tayler, 1991; Wood, 2004). Teachers have their thought processes in their mind gained through their own personal practical experiences which may differ from those in curriculum principles and concepts taught in education and child development courses (Ableser, 2003; Spodek & Saracho, 1999; Wen, Elicker, & McMullen, 2011). This argument is supported by the study of Wang, Elicker, McMullen, and Mao (2008) who compared Chinese and American pre-school teachers' curriculum beliefs about ECEC curriculum and the extent to which it was consistent with those observed in classroom practices. The findings show that, overall, teachers' curriculum beliefs

and observed classroom practices were weakly related. The findings suggested more observation to investigate teachers' actual classroom practices, as compared with their beliefs and the importance of professional development programmes for promoting teacher knowledge and teacher practice was recommended, as have other studies (Howe, Jacobs, Vukelich, & Recchia, 2012; Hyson, 2003; Hyun & 2001; Rice, 2003). In addition, studies carried by Dedeoğlu and Alat (2012) in Turkey, Nganga (2009) in Kenya, Ejuu (2012) in Uganda, Kweka et al. (2000) and Mtahabwa (2007) in Tanzania, Li et al. (2011) in China, Wood (2004) in England, Tayler (1991) in Australia, William and Charles (2008) in Caribbean, Wang et al. (2008) in China and America, recommended that concerned Ministries of Education should find out from curriculum developers, policy makers, and curriculum key players (ECEC teachers and parents) the key obstacles which hinder curriculum enactment for the intention of building the welfare of children in their school learning.

The ineffective enactment of ECEC curricula is reported in international studies to be related to lack of involvement of teachers in the writing of the new curriculum or in the key concepts in the framework (Burgess, Robertson, & Patterson, 2010). Also, teachers are not linking the ideas and skills in the ECEC curriculum to the primary curriculum (Dedeoğlu & Alat, 2012). Another reason for ineffective enactment of the ECEC curriculum is reported by Kilgallon, Maloney, and Lock (2008) who argue that a well-designed curriculum and resources are not sufficient for quality ECEC, and that teachers' qualifications and pedagogical skills are needed.

The few African studies on ineffective enactment of ECEC curricula have been reported by Ejuu (2012) in Uganda, Nganga (2009) in Kenya, Croft (2002) in Malawi, and O'Sullivan (2004) in Namibia. The findings indicate ineffective curriculum enactment, with teachers' curriculum beliefs and observed classroom practices weakly related. The studies recommend much research is needed to explore the reasons why teachers are not implementing the ideas and principles located in ECEC curricula. In the Tanzanian context there is no research on the enactment of ECEC curriculum (2005) and associated pedagogies in the classroom contexts, but a few studies available were conducted in relation to

national curriculum development, ECEC policy and practice, and the situation of ECEC in Tanzania (see section 1.6 for details).

Overall, the experiences from developed countries and developing countries indicate that pre-school teachers' beliefs about practice and what is observed in the classroom practices are frequently not correlated. Hence, the researcher of the current study had a thirst to understand what issues, experiences, and possibilities might face teachers in enactment of ECEC curriculum in the classroom context.

The success and prosperity of any curriculum enactment depends largely on the teachers in the schools (Mligo, 2008). Mligo emphasises that curriculum experts often select aims, goals, and objectives and plan the general methods and strategies for the curriculum enactment process. However, it is the task of the teachers at classroom level to apply knowledge and pedagogical skills in the implementation processes. The teacher is responsible for bringing about the desired changes. Bennars and Otiende (1994) argue that after the curriculum aims and content has been selected and organised, the next phase is to effect its implementation in schools, colleges, and other educational institutions. A study by Rogers (2003) asserts that enactment of the curriculum begins when an individual decides to put an initiative into use through the practical process of trialling it in the classroom. It is at this stage that the "trialability" and "observability" (Rogers, 2003, p. 1) characteristics of an initiative become critical to a teacher's continuing positive attitude and adoption. If a teacher is able to select and trial aspects of an initiative and that trial produces beneficial results for the learners or the teacher, then a positive attitude and further implementation is likely to occur (Walsh & Gardner, 2006). However, the implementation can be obstructed in one way or another by various factors; this is the focus of the next section.

### **3.5 Factors Impinging on the Enactment of the ECEC Curriculum**

It is evident that it is not only the content and structure of the curriculum that determines its effectiveness. Instead, there are other aspects of effectiveness such as teachers' qualifications, teacher education and professional development. And also, teachers' pedagogical skills, availability of the curriculum materials, teachers' attitude, experiences, and beliefs in classroom practices, parents and community

involvement in pre-school education, and the relationship between adults/teachers and children. These aspects have an influence on the implementation of the curriculum (Ableser, 2003; Darling-Hammond, 2000 a; Mitchell et al., 2008; Saracho, 2012a; Smith et al., 2000; Williston, Podojil, Meyerr, Loiselle, & Thacker, 2005). The next sections reviews further details about each of these aspects.

### **3.5.1 Teachers' qualifications, teacher education, and professional development**

A key factor influencing the enactment of curricula is that of teacher qualifications, teacher education, and professional development. In Tanzania the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) is responsible for initial teacher education (ITE) and professional development. As discussed earlier, after the government had formalised the pre-school education for children aged five and six year olds in 1995, it then directed each primary school to have an attached pre-school class in the compound. Eight teachers' colleges were selected by the government where some of the primary school Grade III 'A' teachers could go for initial teacher education for pre-school. Grade III 'A' refers to a completed lower secondary education and enrolment in two years certificate in teacher education for primary school teachers. The Teacher's colleges and their regions in brackets were as follows; Butimba (Mwanza), Tabora (Tabora), Mpwapwa (Dodoma), Kabanga (Kigoma), Kitangali (Mtwara) Singachini (Kilimanjaro), Mtwara (Mtwara), and Songea (Ruvuma) (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2001). The enrolment was for the teachers who had completed four years of Ordinary Level Secondary Education (OLSE) and had a teacher certificate with a two year course in primary education (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2001). It was a one year full residential course which aimed to qualify primary school teachers as pre-school teachers.

This one year residential course did not recruit student-teachers directly after completion of Ordinary Level Secondary Education, as it needed people who were already primary school teachers. It was a kind of in-service programme, however, this programme aimed to prepare teachers who could teach primary school and

pre-school classes. The tutors responsible for handling the initial teacher education of these primary school teachers required 8-days orientation organised by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2001). However, the Ministry of Education officials who were running the orientations were not experts in the area of early year education. Also, the educational materials and guidelines which were not even prepared by ECEC experts were used for orientation purposes (Katunzi & Mhaiki, 2003). This implies that the government did not have a serious commitment to early childhood education otherwise it could hire even ECEC experts from other countries which are good in the area of ECEC to run the course. Or else, it would have sent a few people to other countries to learn how ECEC goes, then disseminate the knowledge to others through seminars, workshops, and in-service teacher education.

Before these efforts to establish a one year residential course, a three months course in ECEC was available for Grade III 'A' teachers (Kweka et al., 2000; Ministry of Education and Culture, 2001). Nonetheless, attendance was low due to poor coordination and teachers had to pay the running fees, so many teachers failed to attend the programme which was under the Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children (MCDG&C) (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2001).

Hence, in Tanzania, some teachers have certificates from government education institutions but the majority have three to six months teacher education run by non-governmental organisations (Kweka et al., 2000; Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995, 2001). Tanzania's Education and Training Policy (ETP) insists that the qualification of teachers and their ability to perform well in the class is a key factor in improving the quality education. However, the ETP is silent about the qualifications of ECEC teachers and as a result the implementation of this policy remains in question (UNESCO, 2005).

Currently, the government has two public universities with ECEC initial teacher education in Tanzania (Dodoma University and Dar es Salaam University) and a single initial teacher education college initiated in 2012 in the Kilimanjaro region.

The critical problem facing ECEC in Tanzania up to the moment is the lack of seriousness from the government to prepare tutors responsible for initial teacher preparation. Since the formalisation of pre-school education in 1995, there has been no pre-school education curriculum until 2003 when the government decided to incorporate ECEC topics in teacher education curriculum for primary school teachers. The intention was after their completion of their GRADE III 'A' they could teach primary and pre-school classes. The initial teacher education for pre-school teachers was compulsory for all Grade III 'A' student-teachers and it covered a duration of two years full-time. While the former one year programme was on a voluntary basis and aimed entirely at pre-school education, the current two years programme is offering pre-school education as a module in addition to all primary school courses. Recruitment of the student-teacher trainees is made directly after completion of the four years of ordinary level secondary education and passed the national examination. However, the problem still exists because student-teacher trainees have developed specific philosophies related to primary education courses. A lot of effort and expertise was needed to transform them into pre-school teachers' topics. This necessitated a change from one philosophical position to another (paradigm shift) in teaching and learning process; and professional tutors were needed to make this objective realistic in the ECEC area.

In the developing world, most education systems expanded rapidly from the 1960s (Martin, 1997; Mligo, 2008). In some countries, the expansion created situations whereby teachers with low qualifications and mostly with no or little professional training were recruited (Darling-Hammond, 2000 b). Yet, there is much research evidence to show that the level of ECEC teacher qualification has a great influence on the children's learning (Williston et al., 2005). Although, one would like to understand what constitutes a well-qualified early childhood teacher. What should ECEC teachers need to accomplish? To answer these questions a study by Blank (2010) reports that ECEC is unique and requires special preparation for teachers, and that ECEC teacher education has a positive impact on teachers and teaching (Williston et al., 2005). However, Stipek and Byler (1997) reports that the particular kinds of experiences ECEC teachers should provide are not so generally agreed upon. Saracho and Spodek (2006) argue that "Early childhood

teachers with at least a Bachelor's degree and specialized training in early childhood education or child development are most effective and provide better quality of early childhood education programs" (p.427). Early childhood qualified teachers can provide children with intellectual skills as well as supporting their social, emotional, and behavioural development (Sylva et al., 2004). However, the preparation of effective ECEC teachers continues to be a critical issue in the world; "teacher education programmes prepare prospective ECEC teachers, with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to teach young children, which are based on research, theory, ethical considerations, and practice" (Saracho, 2012a, p. 1). But when these teachers are in the field they may not use their knowledge and skills learned from teacher education, due to either the environment which may not be supportive or other reasons.

In developed countries most ECEC teachers are encouraged and sometimes required to complete a programme of teacher education before being employed (Saracho, 2012a), and ECEC teacher preparation programmes continue to be established. In initial teacher education, teaching may be theorised as a sociocultural practice (Bell, 2010, 2011), with the intention to make teachers think and "recognise the essential relationships between mind and action, and their social, cultural and institutional contexts" (Bell, 2010, p. 12). Hence, qualifications and sound preparation of teachers are important. In contrast, policies in many developing countries and Tanzania in particular, do not specifically required education and qualifications for ECEC teachers.

Rice (2003) asserts that staff qualifications, initial teacher education, and professional development contribute to improving pedagogical quality, which is eventually associated with better child learning and development outcomes. For more understanding of the importance of the child-centred approach in the new curriculum, and which pedagogical choices are appropriate and best support that development, it is argued that teachers need well designed in-service teacher education (Spodek & Saracho, 1999). It is not the qualification *per se* that has an effect on child outcomes but the ability of better qualified staff members to generate a high-quality pedagogic environment (Taguma et al., 2012). Key aspects of high staff quality are the ways in which staff members involve children,

stimulate interaction with and between children, and apply diverse scaffolding strategies. To be a pre-school teacher needs more than following logical instructions to achieve a programme's goals, because the new generation of children nowadays can sometimes know more than teachers themselves (Stipek & Byler, 1997). A study by Vorkapić and Vujičić (2012) emphasises the relevance of the pre-school teacher as a professional, as a representative and as a key forecaster of the quality of educational experiences. Therefore, educational activities in early childhood settings need a knowledgeable approach based on a high level of professional responsibility. Effective outcomes for children depend on teachers' professional knowledge to interpret and implement the curriculum in their classrooms situation (Vorkapić & Vujičić, 2012).

For overall success of any educational program which involves students, staff development is a matter of necessity (Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005). Without adequate teacher education, communication and feedback, teachers involved in the enactment of the program will be limited in terms of knowledge, skills, competence and attitudes (Blank, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2000 a; Saracho, 2012a; Wilson, 2004). Without effective orientation or awareness concerning new ideas, teachers will end up enacting something different from what was intended. Introducing a new idea is a complex, non-linear, uncertain process that takes substantial time to actualize (Fenech, Waniganayake, & Fleet, 2009). Changes create anxieties, difficulties, and fears (Rogers, 2003). It is this tension and conflict that is essential for any successful growth process. Among others one of the critical components of creating successful change, ownership and empowerment in educational reform, is through professional learning and staff development (Darling-Hammond, 2000 a; Fullan, 1993; Wilson, 2004).

Vavrus and Moshi (2009) argue that professionalism requires teachers to keep seeking a balance between formulating their goals themselves and determining how to achieve those goals, as well as fitting in with procedures set by others. This stance requires balancing different interests. Quality education should be maintained from the early years. From this point of view, improving the quality of pre-school teaching is an economic imperative for developing nations in an era when knowledge is a vital form of capital (Vavrus & Moshi, 2009). Here,

‘quality’ means “constructivist approaches to teaching that privilege active, inquiry-based learning and student-centred teaching” (p.2).

In contrast to the approach used by Darling-Hammond, which associates teacher quality with specific qualifications, Rivkin et al. (2005) in their study identify teacher quality in terms of student performance outcomes. Their study identifies teacher quality as the most significant school-related factor influencing student achievement. Likewise, Sanders, Epstein, and Connors-Tadros (1999) argue that the most important factor affecting pupil achievement is teachers, and the effects of teachers on pupil achievement are both additive and cumulative. Further, Sanders et al. argue that lower achieving learners are the most likely to benefit from increases in teacher effectiveness. Taken together, these multiple sources of evidence, however different in nature, all conclude that quality teachers are a critical determinant of student attainment. The argument for teacher education is based on the premise that highly qualified teachers and teacher excellence is vital for improved learner’s achievement (Fenech et al., 2009).

Therefore, teachers’ qualifications, initial teacher education and professional development are essential aspects of effective pre-school education curriculum enactment. Through sound teacher preparation teachers acquire pedagogical skills needed for teaching and learning in classroom contexts with high pupil achievement. With inadequate teacher education, curriculum enactment will face challenges.

### **3.5.2 Teachers’ pedagogical skills**

A second influence on the enactment of curricula is that of teachers’ pedagogical skills and in particular LCP. A number of studies advocate that teaching and learning in the classroom environment would be more effective if teachers and students could be engaged in LCP rather than the traditional way of teaching and learning (Bartlett & Mogusu, 2013; Croft, 2002; O’Sullivan, 2004).

A number of studies suggest that teachers who are adaptive to students’ needs are those who possess adequate pedagogical content knowledge or pedagogical understanding (Cheng, Tang, & Cheng, 2014). They further report that “preparing student–teachers who are responsive to student needs or adaptive to the teaching

context is a challenge for teacher education programmes” (p.4). Teachers’ self-knowledge and sense of agency, together with the development of the required pedagogical content knowledge, are important in the preparation of teachers in addressing learners’ needs (Fairbanks et al., 2010). Regardless of a decade or two of experience with LCP in some countries, the research from Africa to date suggests that “the idea of learner-centred education has not taken root in the classrooms” (Mtika & Gates, 2010, p. 397). Teachers feel understandably challenged when expected to use teaching methods that they have hardly experienced or seen in practice and that may have limited utility under the current education system (Bartlett & Mogusu, 2013).

There is widespread agreement in the developmental literature that early relationships between children with adults play an important role in child development (Pianta & Kraft-Sayre, 1999; Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 2005). Although relationships with parents are most significant in shaping children’s development, a growing body of literature suggests that relationships between children and teachers shape children’s development in various aspects during the early school years (Maldonado-Carreño & Votruba-Drzal, 2011). A number of researchers have demonstrated that the quality of the teacher–child relationship affects the well-being of the child across a wide range of domains, including peer socialisation, emotional and behaviour problems, classroom adjustment and intellectual abilities (Mitchell et al., 2008; Smith et al., 2000; Sylva et al., 2003). Important developmental changes according to Pianta and Kraft-Sayre (1999) take place during middle childhood. Transformations in the structure of classrooms and the role of teachers as children move through pre-school and school necessitate an examination of the contribution of teacher–child relationships to children’s development all the way through elementary school. Howes et al. (2008) point out that teachers, especially in early childhood, are seen as alternative caregivers. Howes et al. further emphasise the need for understanding the nature of relationships between teachers and children, and their contribution to children’s development.

Relationships between children with teachers and/or adults are regarded as reciprocal interactions (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Lee et al., 2013; Mitchell et al.,

2008; Smith, 2012; Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996). Good relationships with teachers are determined by a combination of high levels of closeness and low levels of conflict (Howes et al., 2008). Closeness in teacher-child relationships is characterised by warmth, open communication, reciprocal, and positive interactions (Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 2005; Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2000). In contrast, conflict produces hostility, negativity and difficulty in managing children's behaviour (Pianta & Kraft-Sayre, 1999). It has been argued that high-quality teacher-child relationships can promote children's cognitive and socio-emotional/behavioural development by providing an environment of support and security in which children feel confident (Maldonado-Carreño & Votruba-Drzal, 2011). Under these circumstances, children are more able to organise and modify their emotions, effectively interact with others, competently explore classroom resources, engage in classroom activities, and focus on learning (Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 2005). Teacher qualifications in the ECEC area are expected to produce high productivity and fruitful outcomes for the children. In most cases quality teachers with friendly teaching and learning environments facilitate children's learning outcomes.

Relationships with teachers play a significant role in shaping children's social and cognitive development by enhancing children's motivation to learn (Pianta & Kraft-Sayre, 1999; Rogoff, 2003) and by formulating spaces of joint activity that facilitate children's understanding of complex concepts and social problems. Such teacher-child relationships may be difficult to attain in the Tanzanian situation due to lack of qualified pre-school teachers, with quality pedagogical skills.

In Tanzania, experiences from previous studies indicate that children are treated as if they are all the same, regardless of their specific needs (Kweka et al., 2000; Mende, 1999). This is particular true for children with special needs. A common view in Tanzania of people with disabilities as useless and unable to contribute to communal welfare (Kweka et al., 2000). And previously they were believed to be possessed by wizards; they were thought to be bothersome, a bad omen and a source of humiliation to their families and society at large (Wamocho et al., 2008). As a result of these attitudes, Wamocho et al. further reported that a number of

children with disabilities used to be hidden from public view. Some of them were abandoned in forests, where they were destroyed by wild animals.

In summary, this section has advanced an understanding of the importance of teachers' pedagogical skills in children's learning and development. Therefore, teachers' with pedagogical skills on how to form appropriate relationships with young children promote effective curriculum enactment, as they are able to create a warm learning environment and confidence in children. Good relationships between children and teachers/adults are also associated with fewer behaviour problems and higher pro-social behaviour during the early years of school. This implies that teachers without pedagogical skills on working with children can face challenges in ECEC curriculum enactment. Therefore, a lack of pedagogical skills can cause unfriendly teacher-child relationships which do not promote children's cognitive, socio-emotional, behavioural, and physical development (Maldonado-Carreño & Votruba-Drzal, 2011; Sylva et al., 2004).

Having seen how lack of pedagogical skills can hinder ECEC curriculum enactment, the availability of curriculum materials is another factor discussed in the next section.

### **3.5.3 The availability of curriculum materials**

The third aspect which can facilitate or hinder smooth ECEC curriculum enactment is the availability of curriculum materials, such as the holistic curriculum document, the syllabus, and teachers' guide. For any curriculum to be fairly enacted there is a need for key implementers to have access to curriculum materials. Experience from different studies indicates that teachers are not obtaining these curriculum materials thus making it difficult to enact innovations (Halbert & MacPhail, 2010; Kelly, 2004).

A study by Kelly (2004) states that attention needs to be given to the process of curriculum innovation; it is not enough to merely give details of the innovation to teachers but they need to be aware of how to put it into practice. It is evident in the literature that the most common problem in schools striving to accommodate curriculum developments through a syllabus is the lack of infrastructure to

support developments, lack of dissemination of information, limited involvement in the process of curriculum design, and lack of access to curriculum documentation in the schools (Kelly, 2004; Mohammed & Harlech-Jones, 2008; O'Sullivan, 2004). Teachers are agents of change and cannot be effective without the provision of resources and professional development support (Mohammed & Harlech-Jones, 2008; UNESCO, 2000; Wilson, 2004).

Furthermore, a study by O'Sullivan (2004) in Namibia indicates that teachers are the key players of curriculum in classroom contexts, but in most cases they had no access to the teaching and learning materials, the teachers' guide, or the actual curriculum document. As a result teachers just use their own knowledge, experiences, and beliefs to inform their practice in the classrooms.

Therefore, effective curriculum enactment necessitates there being a close relationships between the top administrators of educational matters and the key implementers in the classroom contexts, the teachers. Responsiveness and accountability by both parties is very important and this must include the dissemination of curriculum materials and involvement of key players in curriculum initiatives.

#### **3.5.4 Teacher's attitudes and beliefs and classroom practices**

Another aspect which can facilitate or hinder the smooth enactment of pre-school education curriculum is teachers' attitudes, beliefs and perceptions, and their effects on classroom practices. Wilcox-Herzog (2002) points out that there has been an increased interest in the relationship between teachers' beliefs and classroom practices. This interest represents a shift from an emphasis on the relationship between observable teacher behaviours and children's achievements, to a focus on the thinking and organization that may precede teacher action (Fang, 1996). Much of the work examining the beliefs and practices of early childhood teachers has focused on observing teachers' practices with young children (Wilcox-Herzog, 2002). Some writers ask what do teachers expect to do during classroom practice? It is argued that, they will be providing a child-interest-centred curriculum rather than teaching structured skills. They will be acting in the position of facilitators rather than directors, and focussing on individual rather

than age-normed development (Charlesworth, Hart, Butts, & Hemandez, 1991; Charlesworth et al., 1993). In contrast, many studies indicate that teachers are not implementing suggested curriculum principles and concepts as outlined in the professional literature and guidelines and taught in teacher education (Fang, 1996; Wilcox-Herzog, 2002). In the same way, the intention of this study is to understand the reasons and challenges teachers encounter which might lead them not to implement the suggested principles and concepts found in the curriculum guideline.

Furthermore, writers suggest that teachers, adults, and peers should support children's learning and allow the development of new knowledge and skills during curriculum enactment (Pound, 2011; Tracey & Morrow, 2012). Teachers and adults also need to provide children with the cultural tools that can help them make sense of their world and function well within their social context (Smith, 2013; Vygotsky, 1978). In view of this theory Bell (2011) argues that "teachers use their professional knowledge of teaching to theorise their practice as teachers" (p.1). In other words, when teachers perform their role of teaching, they are trying to explain and give an overview of a phenomenon by using a theory which has been seen as a basis for exploring ideas, concepts, and principles. Bell (2011) advocates that teaching is a sociocultural practice with it being the responsibility of teachers to have a main goal of making the relationship between "mind and action" (p.1), within the sociocultural context in which the teaching and learning is occurring.

Teachers' beliefs about how children learn and how teaching affects learning, contribute a great deal to their interactions with children (Wilcox-Herzog, 2002). From a professional development perspective, pre-service and in-service teacher education programmes spend significant efforts trying to shape teachers' curriculum beliefs based on the assumption that beliefs about teaching and learning will impact classroom practices (Wen et al., 2011). Teachers have their implicit theories, which may differ from the explicit theories (Saracho, 2012a; Spodek & Saracho, 1999).

According to Spodek and Saracho (1999) implicit theories are the ideas, principles and concepts about instruction that teachers develop from their own personal

experience based on their practical knowledge. While the explicit theories of the profession are ideas, principles, and concepts taught in education and child development courses and advocated by professional organizations and expressed in the professional literature (Charlesworth et al., 1993; Fang, 1996; Saracho & Spodek, 2006). Sociocultural theory is useful for teachers and educators to use when they reflect on their actions and practices in the classroom to explain what they do (Bell, 2011; Fang, 1996; Wilcox-Herzog, 2002). However, studies show that teachers in the classroom use more of their own personal beliefs and theorising than the concepts, ideas, and curriculum principles in the curriculum to inform their teaching practices (Charlesworth et al., 1991; Charlesworth et al., 1993; Fang, 1996; Wilcox-Herzog, 2002). Therefore, consideration of beliefs and practices of ECEC teachers has important implications for improving the quality of education offered by ECEC programmes.

Therefore, understanding what teachers need to do in the classroom context is essential for children to achieve cognitive skills and in other aspects including socio-emotional, behavioural development, and physical capabilities. These interventions are basics in shaping their future learning and development, in collaboration with parents and community. The focus in the next section is about the parents and community's involvement in the education of their children.

### **3.5.5 Parent and community involvement in pre-school education**

Parent and community involvement in children's educational experiences, plays a significant role in shaping children's social development, cultural values, and practices (Ghirotto & Mazzoni, 2013). The involvement of parents as partners in ECEC settings provides an ongoing system which can reinforce the effects of the programme while it is in process, and helps to sustain them after the programme ends. The involvement of the parents and community as active participants is critical to the success of an ECEC intervention programme (Ghirotto & Mazzoni, 2013; Ishihara-Brito, 2013). When parents collaborate with teachers in their children's learning they also become experts. Parental involvement is thus both a facilitator and a preserver, and the aim of intervention is neither for the parent nor the child on their own but the parent-child system (Ghirotto & Mazzoni, 2013;

Hornby, 2011). It is argued that when parents participate at school and actively support and encourage learning at home, their children are more successful at all levels of education regardless of the parents' educational background or social class (Frumkin, 2013; Ishihara-Brito, 2013).

Parental participation should be viewed as a continuous process from home environments up to pre-school programmes. Parents' communications with the early childhood centre have educational significance for the child and also for both parents and teachers (Qadiri & Manhas, 2009), who learn more about the child from different perspectives and contexts. A study by Ghirotto and Mazzoni (2013) reports that collaboration between teachers and parents offers the child security and acceptance, and helps the parents to understand more about the child's areas of development, psycho-physical abilities (Frumkin, 2013; Hornby, 2011), and where additional stimulation is needed on the part of the teachers or parents.

Furthermore, parents are also involved in school-based activities. For example, they participate in school meetings, school-committees, especially at community-managed schools (Hornby, 2011; Ishihara-Brito, 2013), they do manual labour on the school infrastructure, and help to prepare daily meals or snacks at school (Ghirotto & Mazzoni, 2013). Karwowska-Struczyk (1993) in Poland articulates that during parent meetings, it is common for the teacher to inform parents what children learn and do and what kind of curriculum activities the teacher proposes for the children. Then parents are free to ask what they would like their children to learn in the ECEC settings.

Parent engagement in children's education is progressively viewed as an essential support to children's early learning, care, and education programmes. Effective parent engagement during the period from pre-school through the early grades is a key contributor to children's positive intellectual, socio-emotional skills outcomes, and healthy development (Frumkin, 2013; Hornby, 2011; Karwowska-Struczyk, 1993). The involvement of parents in pre-schools takes various forms that can be broadly classified as, home-based parent involvement, for example parent-child reading and playing various games with children that offer learning

enrichment; or community activities, such as volunteer work in building classrooms or renovations, taking children to the library and/or to study tours. School-based parent involvement could be volunteering in a child care or early grades classroom or serving on school committees as well as parent meetings (Ghirotto & Mazzoni, 2013; Karwowska-Struczyk, 1993).

Parents' commitment in a variety of other home and community activities has also been connected to young children's learning. Also, in the home environment parents' engagement can include playing alphabet games, helping children with art activities and telling stories (Ghirotto & Mazzoni, 2013). A number of studies show that parent warmth and responsiveness to children's interests and needs are vital dimensions of parent engagement that promote children's learning (Ghirotto & Mazzoni, 2013; Qadiri & Manhas, 2009). Parents' responsiveness can be observed through home-based activities such as parent-child book reading and the use of praise and encouragement (Frumkin, 2013; Hornby, 2011). Therefore, one way that parent nurturance may promote learning is by helping children acquire self-regulation skills that enable them to manage their socio-emotions and behaviour. Given the importance of the involvement of parents and community in the education of their children the next section reviews quality pre-school education.

### **3.6 Quality in ECE Provision**

This section discusses the concept of quality for ECEC provision. Attaining quality in ECEC is challenging in a context that is poor in resources, particular in African countries. The provision of quality ECEC has remained firmly on government agendas in recent years. ECEC needs to be of high quality for benefits to be realised. The term quality itself is not a neutral word; it is a socially constructed concept, with very particular meanings depending on the sociocultural context, because educational quality is grounded in traditions, values, and cultures (Smith et al., 2000; Taguma et al., 2012). In New Zealand context the quality of early childhood education is defined by Smith et al. (2000) as "the essential components of early childhood environments which are valued in our society, and which support the well-being, development and rights of children, and support

effective family functioning” (48). Quality ECEC provision is further described by Smith et al. (2000) in terms of “process quality” and “structural quality” (p.53). The “process quality” lies in the nature of the interactions between young children and parents/adults, a support network for children, families, and the community. Hence, “process quality” refers to “reciprocal, responsive and warm relationships, adults who listen to and engage with children, adults who engage with children in shared thinking, adults who support children’s learning and encourage exploration” (p.53). Adults need to affirm children’s culture, language, and identity, and engage with their families (Mitchell et al., 2008). On the other hand “structural quality” includes teachers’ qualifications and teacher education, professional development, staff turnover, staff-child ratio, well-resourced environments, and processes associated with teaching and learning practices (Mitchell et al., 2008; Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2000; Sylva et al., 2003).

The qualifications of teachers, assistants, and professionals that work with these young children and their families, the pedagogical skills and the availability of teaching and learning resources and materials as well as learning environments are important (Barnett & Frede, 2010; Duncan, Ludwig, & Magnuson, 2007). In line with this argument the work of Sylva et al. (2004) in the “Effective Provision of Pre-School Education” (EPPE) study in England reported that early childhood qualified teachers should provide children with both curriculum knowledge that is academic as well as socio-emotional, behavioural, and physical development. Therefore, structural quality is essential in order to achieve process quality (Smith et al., 2000). Further, Mitchell (2012) argues that “positive outcomes for children and families participating in ECEC depends on the quality of staff-child interactions, the learning resources available, programmes that engage children and a supportive environment for children to work together” (p.27).

Furthermore, Taguma et al. (2012) articulates that definitions of quality education differ across countries and across different stakeholder groups depending on beliefs, values, a country or region’s socio-economic context, and the needs of the community of users. Many definitions of quality education found in the literature are context specific and many of them depend on who is defining quality

education (Rice, 2003; Wood, 2004). Hence, some writers define educational quality based on:

- the inputs such as teaching resources, materials and supplies, and processes associated with teaching and learning (Ishihara-Brito, 2013);
- effective structural conditions such as teacher education; standards, evaluation and assessment systems, and culturally contextualised design of methodologies (Wood, 2004); and
- technical conditions such as school management, pedagogical leadership, and professional teacher development with consideration of resources and support services including infrastructure, libraries, books, technology, and food provisioning at school (Rice, 2003; Wood, 2004).

Smith (2012) argues that early education and care for young children are inseparable, and that quality ECEC settings must incorporate both so that children could have opportunities to developing their potential for life. In contrast, in African societies, such as Tanzania, less consideration has been located to integrate early education and care, and the notion of quality is just focused on the cognitive skills performed by a child such as writing, reading, and arithmetic (3Rs) (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995).

Pre-school teachers' knowledge of the particular curriculum area contributes to quality. A good comprehension of the appropriate curriculum ideas and concepts linked to strategies for promoting learning in relation to the required concepts and ideas in that area is a vital component of pedagogy and it is shown to be important in the early years and later stages of education (Sylva et al., 2003).

A knowledge of how young children learn also impacts of the provision of quality ECEC. There has been a long debate about the extent to which ECEC should be formal or informal, often summarised by the extent to which the curriculum is, or is not, play-based (Bartlett & Mogusu, 2013; Sylva et al., 2004). In their EPPE study Sylva et al. (2003) advocate that in the most effective centres, play environments are used to provide the basis for learner-centred pedagogy. Sylva et al. (2003) found that qualified pre-school teachers in the most effective settings provided children with more experience of curriculum-related activities and they

encouraged children to engage in activities with higher intellectual challenges. The study further asserts that the most highly qualified pre-school teachers also provide the most direct teaching; that, they were the most effective in their interactions with children, using the most sustained shared thinking. However, Sylva et al. further, found that less qualified teachers were significantly better as pedagogues when they worked with qualified teachers.

Many writers report that there are more intellectual gains for children in ECEC centres that encourage high levels of parental involvement (Ghirotto & Mazzoni, 2013; Ishihara-Brito, 2013). It is argued that children do better where the centre shared its educational aims with parents (Fenech et al., 2009). This shared knowledge enables parents to support children at home with strategies that complemented those activities being undertaken in the pre-school setting (Ghirotto & Mazzoni, 2013; Ishihara-Brito, 2013), and teachers to better understand children's experiences and interests from home.

In addition, the ability of teaching staff to provide high-quality care and education is influenced by their working conditions, such as salary and non-financial benefits. Working conditions have an impact on staff job satisfaction, such as their ability to carry out their tasks and responsibilities, and their ability to positively interact with children and stimulate early development. Teachers that are happy in their jobs provide better care and education than unsatisfied practitioners, and this also leads to lower staff turnover rates (Taguma et al., 2012).

Taguma et al. (2012) describes certain conditions that can impact the quality of ECEC provision such as:

- “High staff-child ratio and low group size;
- Competitive wages and other benefits;
- Reasonable schedule and workload;
- Low staff turnover;
- A good physical environment; and
- A competent and supportive centre manager” (p.21).

In summary, attention needs to be given to ECEC quality provision by improving “structural quality” and “process quality”. Having seen the discussion on international perspectives on ECEC curriculum development, frameworks, factors impinging curriculum enactment as well as quality in ECEC provision, the next section synthesises issues raised from chapters 2 and 3 and leads into the research questions.

### **3.7 Synthesis of Issues from Literature Review**

The previous chapters 2 and 3 have reviewed the relevant literature related to ECEC provision and its curriculum enactment worldwide and in Tanzania in particular. This section synthesises issues raised from the reviewed literature in both these chapters. The review has focused on the concept of ECEC, where the value of ECEC and rationale for government investment in early years has been documented. The situation of ECEC in African countries, such as Tanzania, curriculum development, framework, enactment, and pedagogical practices across countries, has been reviewed. Similarly, child-centred curriculum enactment is well documented and emphasised in the literature. From the review of literature, several issues can be highlighted. For excellent and /or quality ECEC attainment the literature indicates that the qualifications of teachers and professional development for learning about and using new approaches are essential. Teachers are the ones who interpret the goals and aims of ECEC curriculum in the classroom contexts. Hence, teachers’ pedagogical skill with availability of materials, facilities, and a conducive teaching and learning environment is highly recommended. The reviewed international studies indicate that there is potential in understanding the needs and interest of children and how these should be met.

Many studies put emphasis on identifying current issues facing ECEC services and focusing on ways to address the complex issues of quality provision for young children (Barnett & Frede, 2010; Yelland, 2010). Researchers and practitioners need to reconcile and negotiate education systems that will support young children to realise their potential in multiple cultural contexts (Penn, 2011; Saracho, 2012a, 2012b; Yelland, 2010). ECEC stakeholders need to think about creating new ideas and concepts in their curriculum framework rather than holding old outdated ideas (Yelland, 2010).

However, various studies report that indicators and interpretations of learner-centred teaching, as a means for attaining quality education, may not be supported in many developing countries, such as Tanzania, due to lack of structural and process quality aspects.

In reference to curriculum development, previous studies conducted in African contexts revealed how Western knowledge was valued and incorporated in ECEC curricula at the expense of indigenous knowledge (LeVine, 2004; Nsamenang, 2008; Okeke, 2010; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009; Prochner & Kabiru, 2008; Serpell, 2002; Serpell & Nsamenang, 2014; Shizha, 2014). It was argued that the African curriculum guidelines are likely following Western rules and values, not caring about local conditions, needs, and cultural values (Pence, 2011; Serpell, 2002; Serpell & Nsamenang, 2014). The local contexts in which children learn are of great significance; however, on the other hand experiences have shown that curriculum development is influenced the interests of donor funders (Croft, 2002; Shizha, 2010).

Amongst the studies conducted in Tanzania is that by Kweka et al. (2000) about “The situation of ECEC in Tanzania” conducted in one district (Temeke), which the study found poor ECEC services provision with only a few ECEC centres registered and attached to primary schools. There was no pre-school education curriculum, no qualified teachers and no teaching and learning materials. The study recommended that the government develop a separate ECEC policy that could offer clear guidelines on how ECEC could be conducted, the need for ECEC curriculum development, and teacher preparation.

The study suggested further research that could investigate policy and practice in Tanzania to scrutinize how ECEC and teacher preparation could be conducted, and find out existing problems in order to suggest ways of improving the quality of ECEC. Similar findings were obtained from another study conducted by Mtahabwa (2007) about “Pre-primary Educational Policy and Practice in Tanzania”. This study found challenges in the Tanzania’s Education and Training Policy in particular, lack of clarity or special consideration in relation to ECEC matters. The study recommended the need for developing a separate ECEC policy

that could focus in detail on issues relating to children. The study also recommended further research in Tanzania on ECEC policy and practice in relation to cultural activities, cultural artefacts, and cultural concepts and how these influence children's learning.

Tanzanian ECEC research still needs to be done in order to explore challenges teachers face when enacting the pre-school education curriculum in the classroom context. The current research is therefore worthwhile, timely, and needed.

Furthermore, only a few studies conducted in Tanzania have written about the importance of LCP in teaching and learning (Bakuza, 2014; Bartlett & Mogusu, 2013; Paris & Combs, 2006; Vavrus & Moshi, 2009). However, these studies did not indicate how to teach with a learner-centred approach in the context of large class sizes with a single teacher, under resourced, classrooms, structured seating plans and without qualified teachers and professional development. This was the main gap which the current study aims to address. An aim is to find ways that teachers, parents, and children could improve teaching and learning in classroom contexts. Do pre-school teachers enact the intended pre-school education curriculum in classroom environments? The extent, to which such theoretical ideas, principles, and concepts are understood and incorporated in teaching by Tanzanian pre-school teachers at the level of enactment in the classroom environment, remains unclear.

Having discussed relevant literature on ECEC and its curriculum enactment across developed and developing countries, African literature has contextualised my research and illustrated that ECEC in African countries and its curricula have mainly accommodated Western perspectives which cannot work in African contexts. In Tanzania ECEC research is still needed to explore challenges and experiences facing the area in these contemporary times; for example none of the research in Tanzania has investigated issues which may emanate when teachers enact the ECEC curriculum and associated pedagogies. Therefore, there is a knowledge gap on how a child-centred curriculum is enacted in the classroom context.

Hence, the researcher of the current study regards it as valuable to examine possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers when they put in practice a pre-school education curriculum that has emphasised the use of child-centred pedagogy in Tanzanian context. It is from this examination that curriculum enactment and pedagogical practices related to pre-school education can be understood.

To achieve the purpose of the study outlined above, it was guided by the main research question: *What are the possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers when enacting a pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy in Tanzanian context?*

The main research aim was addressed by the following questions:

1. What were the sociocultural, political, historical, and economic contexts in which the pre-school education curriculum in Tanzania was developed in 2005?
2. What are the views and experiences of pre-school teachers and their pupils, parents, ward and regional education officials, curriculum developers, and Ministry of Education officials about:
  - a) The current pre-school education curriculum initiated in 2005; and
  - b) The enactment and pedagogy of the pre-school education curriculum from 2005 onwards?
3. How could sociocultural theorising suggest ways to address any challenges for policy and practice in enacting the curriculum?

Research studies are guided by theoretical frameworks. This is the subject of the following chapter.



## CHAPTER 4

### THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

“If we are to understand children and childhood, we need theories to help us make sense of our observations of and interactions with children, and to help make the world a better place for them. Theories alone will not improve life for children, but they profoundly affect the attitudes and values on which our actions promoting or limiting their well-being are based. Whether or not we are aware of the theories that underlie our actions, they are present”. (Smith, 2013 p. 14).

#### 4.1 Introduction

Chapters 2 and 3 have reviewed the literature relevant to this study. This chapter outlines the underpinning theoretical concepts of this research, which mainly derive from sociocultural perspectives. In this chapter the works of the famous scholars, Lev Semenovich Vygotsky (1896-1934) and Urie Bronfenbrenner (1917-2005) will be examined. Ecological systems theory by Bronfenbrenner is used to examine the framing conditions within each level that impact on teachers’ capacity to enact the curriculum, and the connections among the levels, while sociocultural theory originating with Vygotsky is used as a lens to examine teaching practice (pedagogy), i.e. curriculum in action.

Vygotsky was a social constructivist. He devoted his interest to the social aspects of learning and cognition and his theory is known as *sociocultural theory* (Vygotsky, 1978). On the other hand, Bronfenbrenner takes his interest in human ecology and he developed a theory called *ecological systems theory* (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Ecological systems theory is not usually seen as a social constructivist theory but it relies heavily on sociocultural views (Pound, 2013; Tracey & Morrow, 2012). This current study makes a link between social constructivism and ecological systems theories and uses these theoretical frameworks to explore curriculum enactment and pedagogy in Tanzanian pre-schools. To make these links, the chapter begins with discussion of ecological systems theory in which Bronfenbrenner’s model ties together the contexts which facilitate the learning and development of a child. Thereafter, the sociocultural theoretical underpinnings of the study are explored. Both theories explain how children could develop their potential, competence, and abilities that guide their

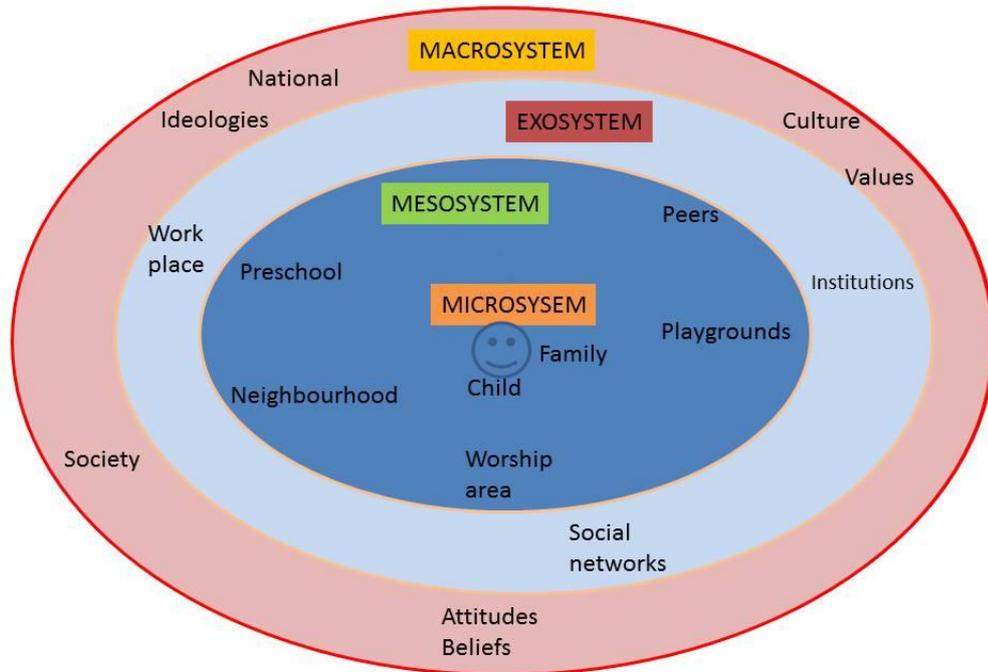
thinking and actions in their sociocultural contexts. Both, Vygotsky and Bronfenbrenner, locate their interests in the learning and development of the child within her/his sociocultural settings.

#### **4.2 Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model**

Urie Bronfenbrenner (1917- 2005) is the founder of “Ecological Systems Theory”, which is described in his book, “*The Ecology of Human Development an “interdisciplinary area of learning”* (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 1). His sociocultural and ecological perspectives on development arose due to his awareness of the way wider cultural and social settings shape children's development (Smith, 2013). Bronfenbrenner asserts that the most fundamental setting for learning is when a child engages with the immediate environment in a complex pattern of interaction. Bronfenbrenner's theoretical perspective locates the conception of the “developing person” (as Bronfenbrenner describes the child) and the immediate environment at the centre (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), and describes the powerful influence of the evolving interaction between the two (p.1). Bronfenbrenner urged that instead of locating all of our attention on the child, it is necessary also to look at wider aspects of the environments in which the child develops and the interactions between them (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Pound, 2013; Smith, 2013).

Bronfenbrenner emphasises that the development of a child is affected by contexts, both children's immediate contexts of home, ECEC settings or neighbourhood, and the contexts beyond them (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Smith et al., 2000), which in turn influence how their parents/families and teachers interact with children (Smith, 2013). Bronfenbrenner conceptualises the environment at several levels; and he developed a model with four series of concentric levels of human ecology to inform the relationship between a child (positioned in the centre) and his/her interacting environments (see Figure 4.1). He further suggested that these levels of influence can be imagined as “a set of nested structures, each inside the next, like a set of Russian dolls” (p.3). The four inner levels are the *microsystem*, *mesosystem*, *exosystem* and finally the outer level which is called the *macro system* (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Pound, 2013; Smith, 2013). This model is used to inform the present study which examines a child as positioned at the centre and

interacting with various learning environments which extend far beyond the immediate setting of the home or early childhood settings outside the home. Figure 4.1 clarifies.



*Figure 4.1* Ecological model of the relationship between a child and learning environments

**Source: Adopted and modified from Urie Bronfenbrenner's 1979**

#### **4.2.1 The Microsystem**

This is the innermost level. It represents the immediate setting containing the developing person.

The environment closest to the child, can be “the objects to which he responds or the home with people whom he interacts on a face-to-face basis” (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 7) or the learning environment in the pre-school setting. Tracey and Morrow (2012) describe the immediate environments of the child such as his/her home or classroom, as including the activities, roles and interpersonal relationships of the social settings with which the child has direct contact. As asserted by Smith (2013) when a child interacts with the environment there should

be a “balance of power, where one partner in the interaction does not dominate the relationship, in which the child is given more and more opportunity to control the situation” (p.28), where there is a friendly, loving, and reciprocal relationship, and where the associates in the interaction, such as a mother and a child harmonise their activities with each other. The child is engaged with the learning environment and acquiring knowledge of language and cultural tools through relationships with the immediate environments (Pound, 2009; Tracey & Morrow, 2012). Since the child can develop knowledge, skills, and values through the interaction with his /her immediate environment, the ECEC curriculum needs to be enacted within the child’s context. The very immediate setting opens up the minds of the learner and builds her/his cognitive, socio-emotional and behavioural development as well as physical capabilities. Apart from this, a child’s learning environment spreads out far beyond the immediate setting of the home (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Pound, 2013; Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996). Basically, one microsystem can interfere with another as, for example, when parents cannot or will not pay for children's food at pre-school and the children go without food all day. Other levels also have great influence on the child’s welfare and capacity to learn. The next section discusses the mesosystem level.

#### **4.2.2 The Mesosystem**

This level is an overlapping microsystem which indicates the services or settings beyond the child’s home, and the relationships between these environments (Smith, 2013; Tracey & Morrow, 2012). The Mesosystem is about the linkages between different microsystems in which the child participates: which might include the ECEC settings, neighbourhood, peers, playgrounds, extended family, place of worship, or aspects of the community (Pound, 2013; Smith, 2013). Such interconnection can be as significant for development as events taking place within a given context. Bronfenbrenner suggests that the mesosystem occurs when the same person participates in activities in more than one setting (Smith, 2013), for example, when a child spends time both at home and at the ECEC setting. A child’s ability to learn to read in the ECEC centre may depend no less on how

he/she is taught than on the existence and nature of ties between the school and the home (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Bronfenbrenner also emphasised that one setting such as home where the child spends time has links with other settings such as at ECEC centre and the nature of these links has a great influence on the child's development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Smith, 2013). Therefore, in this level Bronfenbrenner emphasises that one setting where the child spends time i.e. home has connection with other settings i.e. ECEC setting and the nature of these links has a main influence on the child's development. So, there is a need for a good responsive communication and warm relationships between parents/family and early childhood teachers for supportive transitions of the child to the setting, according to Bronfenbrenner (1979). The transitions that children make between settings have profound impacts on the course of their learning and development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Smith, 2013).

The third level is the exosystem which is the focus of the next section.

#### **4.2.3 The Exosystem**

The third level of the ecological environment is made up of people and places with which there is no direct contact with the child but which might nonetheless profoundly affect the child's immediate environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Pound, 2011, 2013; Smith, 2013; Tracey & Morrow, 2012). For example, it may be the place where the parents work or the class attended by a sibling. This level also influences the quality of children's experiences, encompasses the world of work, the neighbourhood, the mass media, and other related social networks. It also comprises the conditions that influence the well-being and support of the adults in children's lives such as the demands, the stresses, and the opportunities for development experienced by significant adults in a respective child's life (Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996). Again, the neighbourhood and the workplace can also be microsystems for the child (not just exosystem) as children have everyday interactions and experiences within the neighbourhood and within the workplace. For this study this level could include issues relating to professional development for teachers, socio-economic status of parents and families, and ECEC enrolment of children, knowledge of parents/families about

the importance of early investment and involvement of shareholders in curriculum preparation. All these in one way or another can impact a child's learning and development. The final level is called the Macrosystem.

#### **4.2.4 The Macrosystem**

Finally, the outer level contains cross-cultural and broader influences which have similarities and inter-societal differences (Pound, 2013). In relation to the three levels explained above Bronfenbrenner adds that within any culture or subculture, settings of a given kind, such as homes, streets, cafes, playgrounds or offices tend to be very much alike, whereas between cultures they are distinctly different (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). For example, Smith (2013) argues that the dominant consistencies in beliefs, values, and recognised practices within a culture or subculture, can determine what are appropriate activities in relation to gender and at different ages. For this study, the macrosystem applies to the large society/nation's ideologies, attitudes and beliefs about ECEC and about the rights and responsibilities of children. The child develops within the immediate settings which have connections with the larger society's/nation's culture. Bronfenbrenner's theoretical position argued that interpersonal relationships including even micro-processes in the parent-child relationship do not exist in a social vacuum but are rather embedded in the large social structures of community, society, politics, and economics (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Tracey & Morrow, 2012). Bronfenbrenner maintains that a person's development is the product of a collection of forces such as cultural, social, political, economic, and is not merely psychological (Pound, 2013; Smith, 2013; Tracey & Morrow, 2012).

In general, for this study all these four levels play a great role in the development of a child. For example, at the first level, the child's learning environments of home and pre-school are closely connected, and the curriculum need to apply to both, home and ECEC settings. A child learns through interacting or imitating what adults do, and adults guide children in ways which suit them. Furthermore, a child extends interaction with people out of his/her home such as ECEC settings, places of worship or playing grounds, and in all aspects of the community. Within pre-school settings, teachers guide children in varieties of learning reflecting what a

curriculum needs them to understand, and the larger societal culture, attitudes, values, and beliefs. Therefore, a child learns to explore in a sociocultural context where exploration is valued and possible (Pound, 2013; Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996).

The community has a great influence on children's learning and their environments, so the curriculum needs to accommodate the demands of the societies in which the children belong. The community of Tanzanians is gaining and developing knowledge, values, attitudes, and skills through the use of cultural tools such as national language, dance, music, national symbols, traditional parables, stories and tales. The community should be warm and loving, and that which allows children to be able to handle challenges and change the situation, the community which accommodates children's needs, interests, and rights. For this study examples of macrosystem factor would be the belief that teaching younger children is less prestigious than teaching older children. Another example of a macrosystem, cultural value is the practice of sibling caregiving, which impacts on (and sometimes conflicts with) attending pre-school.

Bronfenbrenner's model demonstrates the cultural factors which impact on a child's learning and development. The model suggests that children's learning and development are influenced by the four levels such as an individual child's interactions with home, schools, extended family/community, and organisations. Finally there are attitudes, culture and ideologies of the larger society which have an influence on a developing child.

### **4.3 The Sociocultural Theoretical Underpinnings**

This section outlines another theory underpinning this study namely, sociocultural theory (STC). Central to this theoretical framework is the view that an understanding of the ECEC curriculum process and enactment can be achieved by investigating how the children live and learn in their social and cultural contexts at a particular point in time (Nsamenang, 2008; Serpell, 2011; Thorne, 2005). Similar to Bronfenbrenner's model, the social and cultural context is interpreted here as a child's living environments including the surrounding family, relatives, caregivers

and the immediate situational events (Daniels, 2005; Han, 2009; Rogoff, 2003). The sociocultural theory informing the analysis of the current study is one of a family of perspectives on human development that interpret context as an incorporating system of social activities and cultural meanings (Daniels, 2005; Rogoff, 2003; Serpell, 2002, 2011). Underlying this investigation is an attempt to see how the teachers, children, and parents participate in children's learning in response to the ECEC curriculum put in place in 2005. The central focus of this study is the enactment of the pre-school education curriculum and the associated pedagogies in a Tanzanian context. The emphasis that sociocultural theory places on culture and social interactions as an integral part of human development and how these influences manifest within children's learning experiences are investigated in this study.

#### **4.3.1 The sociocultural theory origins, learning, and development**

Sociocultural theory states that “young children actively construct their own understanding and experiences during collaboration with adults or more knowledgeable peers within their social and cultural environments” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 81). Vygotsky held that children learn as a result of their social interactions with others (Tracey & Morrow, 2012). A sociocultural theory argues that children gradually come to understand the world through their own activities in interaction with peers and significant others (Smith, 2013), and that a frequent process of communication and learning generates development. This involves reciprocal partnership between a child and an adult in engaging with various activities, who jointly construct understanding and knowledge (Smith, 2013; Tracey & Morrow, 2012).

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of cognitive development integrated culture into the development of a child; Vygotsky saw development as originating in social and cultural interaction (Berk & Winsler, 1995; Han, 2009; Potter, 2007). Vygotsky (1978) believed that the mind is regularly changing as part of a “dialectical relationship” (p.79), in other words the environment is manipulating the individual and the individual is influencing the world.

Vygotsky was also a social constructivist who located his interests in the social aspects of learning and cognition (Vygotsky, 1978). He further, described social constructivism as individuals constructing learning for themselves within a social context (Pound, 2011, 2013). However, Vygotsky believed that learning takes place through experiences, meaning that knowledge is constructed by the learner and the process involved in learning is of greater importance than product (Pound, 2013). The focus is on how a child could arrive at a solution to a problem rather than on the answer the child gives. In this theoretical approach, children are viewed as powerful participants in the learning process. For Vygotsky peer interaction, collaboration, and participation with significant others serves to foster socialisation, problem solving, and understanding, as new and challenging ideas are met (Han, 2009; Potter, 2007; Rogoff, 2003).

Moreover, Vygotsky's work emphasises on culture and context, and the role of language in thinking (Pound, 2013). Vygotsky was interested in investigating children in their social settings in order to understand development. Vygotsky suggested that cognitive development depends on interactions with the people in the child's world through the cultural tools that provide and support thinking (Vygotsky, 1978, 1981).

Generally, in Vygotsky's view, all higher mental functions originate in social activity. Sociocultural perspectives suggest that the people with whom children relate in their social and cultural contexts contribute strongly to children's learning outcomes (Rogoff, 2003; Vygotsky, 1981). The theory can be used to explain teaching and learning in ECEC. Among others, the focus of Vygotsky's theory is on the role of culture, and the mediation of cultural values, norms, and practices through social interaction. In order to enact this theory, curriculum developers would need to prepare a curriculum which accommodates the social context of the learners.

#### ***4.3.1.1 Culture***

Vygotsky (1978) articulated the role of culture in a child's development as a central feature in Developmental Science. A number of research studies have

indicated that there is “considerable variation in children’s behaviours, emotions, and cognitions across cultural context” (Chen & Eisenberg, 2012, p. 2). For instance, children in traditional, subsistence-based societies, in which extended families live together such as in Tanzanian society, and where children are needed to assume family roles and responsibilities, tend to demonstrate high levels of prosocial-cooperative behaviour at least toward people they know and share with, different from those from complex societies and higher class structures (Chen & Eisenberg, 2012; Edwards & Cutter-Mackenzie, 2011).

In addition to this, another central feature of Vygotsky’s theory is his use of the ideas of cultural tools for learning. Culture is a crucial element of Vygotsky’s thinking. He views all cultures as having a set of tools which they use to support learning and thinking, such as dances, language, symbols, music, parables, stories, songs, and legends (Guo, 2009; Pound, 2009, 2013; Rogoff, 2003). The view is supported by Smith (2013) who argues that culture and the tools of culture (especially language), institutions, and history are acknowledged to have a great influence on children’s learning. Socialization practices apparently play a significant role in social, behavioural, and emotional development (Chen & Eisenberg, 2012). For example, Chen and Eisenberg found that parental effort to socialize self-control and responsibility in the early years is a major factor related to prosocial-cooperative behaviour in many cultures such as China, Indonesia and African countries, Tanzania included. Children’s learning and their participation in adopting existing cultures plays an active role in their development. Culture may also influence social processes by indicating the functional and structural characteristics of children’s peer relationships such as making friendships and group networks in which interaction occurs. Chen and Eisenberg (2012) argue that peer interaction provides opportunities for children to learn social and problem-solving skills from one another and to understand rules and standards for correct behaviours in different settings.

This study places theoretical importance on developing culturally sensitive approaches in early childhood curriculum through peer interactions. The African community, such as Tanzania, is raising its voice in support of the discourse on

developing culturally sensitive approaches (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009; Owuor, 2007; Prochner & Kabiru, 2008; Serpell, 2002, 2011; Shizha, 2014), to enable better provision of ECEC. That includes extending the dialogue and incorporating cultural conceptualisations of childhood, by introducing child development theories and practices that follow from African ways of performing in and understanding the world (Nsamenang, 2008; Pence, 2011; Serpell & Nsamenang, 2014). This African view allows children to enter into adult roles early and to manage their own learning and development within the peer culture. Socialization and education are organised to engage children with core cultural, that is, developmental tasks at various stages. Therefore, it is important to understand social ontogenesis (the development of an individual organism) to determine the ethnographic theories and pedagogic strategies beneath Africa's indigenous ECEC services (Nsamenang, 2008; Prochner & Kabiru, 2008). However, African culture is little appreciated by Western views, and it seems targeted for systematic replacement by Western values instead of enhancement (Nsamenang, 2008; Okeke, 2010; Owuor, 2007; Prochner & Kabiru, 2008; Shizha, 2014). It would be appropriate to blend ideas from both indigenous and imported Western ECEC services in Africa (Nganga, 2009; Owuor, 2007). Blending imported Western ideas with indigenous cultural parameters to form a locally appropriate and progressive path of educational reform in African governments could be economically realistic (Owuor, 2007; Serpell, 2002; Serpell & Jere-Folotiya, 2008; Shizha, 2014). An indigenous ECEC system developed within an African worldview would inspire the community to safeguard and uphold the cultural aspects imperative to the development of children (Garcia et al., 2008; Serpell & Nsamenang, 2014).

The gap between "African children's conditions and the theories that interveners apply to them persists because the field relies more on scripted new conceptualizations than on embedded contextual realities of childhood" (Nsamenang, 2008, p. 137). Culture determines the nature of many dimensions of children's developmental functions including daily practices and settings, parenting, and childrearing arrangements. And it needs to be incorporated into policy development and service provision in Africa. Among others, one

expectation is that ECEC experts and practitioners need to understand and endeavour to move children and their families forward from acceptance of their current circumstances. However, instead of drawing strength from the wisdom of African norms, customs and traditions (Serpell, 2011; Serpell & Nsamenang, 2014), which the people have preserved for centuries, a Eurocentric or Western frame of reference encourages a detachment from the indigenous worldview, values, and practices (Nsamenang, 2008; Okeke, 2010; Owuor, 2007; Shizha, 2014). Those identified as expert typically have different perceptions from the people in the African community for whom their work or support is intended (LeVine, 2004). It seems to discount the blunt realities and contexts of Africa's ECEC. This argument aligns with that made by Nsamenang (2008, p. 135) who supports "the need for changes in attitudes, approaches, methodologies, and service provision" in ECEC in African contexts.

A main argument of the sub-section is that cultural, learning, and developmental issues need to be discussed in contexts relevant to the lives of children in the contemporary world. For example, rapid social change due to urbanisation, cultural communication as a result of ethnic diversity and advances in Science and technology. There is a need to blend imported knowledge with local knowledge for more efficiency.

#### ***4.3.1.2 Mediation***

This section presents a concept of mediation through the use of cultural tools as a crucial aspect in a child's learning. Mediation is a central theme that turns throughout the thinking and writings of Vygotsky (Wertsch, 2007). In his view, a concern of human consciousness is stipulated through and associated with the use of tools, especially "psychological tools" or "signs" (p.178). This signifies that instead of acting in a direct, unmediated way in the social and physical world, our contact with the world is indirect or mediated by signs and tools (Tracey & Morrow, 2012; Vygotsky, 1978). Wertsch (1991) argues that the fundamental assumption of this approach is that "action is mediated by and cannot be separated from, the context in which it is carried out" (p.19). Another key idea in Vygotsky's work according to Tracey and Morrow (2012) is that "development

depends on *sign systems* with which the individuals grows up” (p.127). *Sign systems* include culture, language, writing, and counting systems (p.127). Vygotsky (1978) asserted that children’s learning is mainly affected by their mastery of language, as evidenced by their mastery of sign systems such as alphabets, speaking, listening, words, and writing. Vygotsky claimed that it is through the application and manipulation of these signs that children have the tools to think about and respond to the world (Tracey & Morrow, 2012; Wertsch, 1991, 2007). Vygotsky asserted that children successfully find out about language and the corresponding sign systems from the people around them with whom they interact (Smith, 1996a; Tracey & Morrow, 2012). The early childhood curriculum is implemented through various means including sign systems. When ECEC children communicate with peers and adults sign systems facilitate communication and clear understanding. For this study, mediation is a very useful concept to explain what teachers do in the classroom teaching and learning context, since teachers and children communicate through languages, signs, and symbols when making points clear.

#### ***4.3.1.3 Social relationships***

Social interaction serves to mediate the links between cultural values, norms, and individual development. The aim of a sociocultural approach is to illuminate the relationships between human action, on the one hand, and the cultural, historical, and institutional contexts, in which this action occurs, on the other (Wertsch et al., 1995). A study by Tracey and Morrow (2012) argues that during interaction, peers evaluate individual behaviours in ways that liaise with the norms, customs and values endorsed in the peer social world. According to Vygotsky, social relationships are the most vital mediator for learning (Daniels, 2005), and mediation occurs when people interact with others through cultural tools, including languages, places, objects, and symbols. A study by Guo (2010) suggests that when someone’s contact with the world is a mediated process, learning is the outcome of mediation between actions and meanings that individuals express through their actions. In particular, Vygotsky found that mediation stimulates a lively perspective on the relationship between meaning and

learning by recognising the influence of social and cultural contexts on people's learning and development (Vygotsky, 1978). The development of culturally mediated beliefs and practices through the use of cultural tools and social relationships underpins the process of learning and development (Daniels, 2005; Wertsch, 2007). *Te Whāriki*, New Zealand's early childhood curriculum emphasises the significant role of "socially and culturally mediated learning and of reciprocal and responsive relationships for children with people, places, and things" (Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 9). This current study will benefit from the accommodation of various ideas from different writers; the New Zealand's early childhood curriculum included, and uses these ideas as a lens to examine the ECEC curriculum in Tanzania. Many writers emphasise that children learn through collaboration with adults and peers, through guided participation and observation of others together with individual exploration and reflection (Lee et al., 2013; Rogoff, 2003; Smith, 2013; Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996). Social interaction plays a basic role in the development of cognition (Han, 2009; Potter, 2007; Wertsch, 1991), that learning is taking place from and through interaction of an individual with others and then the individualization of his/her learning. This study will examine whether and how teachers can create conducive environments for children to feel free when interacting with teachers, adults, and peers. Learning is meaningful when conducted in friendly environments in a collaborative way.

For the most part, Vygotsky's theory would seem to imply that providing guidance and support for children's learning and development is important from the early stages (Spodek & Saracho, 1999; Tracey & Morrow, 2012; Vygotsky, 1978). Teachers can help this movement by focusing their teaching just beyond the children's level of development, while providing the necessary supports to allow them to succeed. Support can be in the form of material help or can be social in nature. This support can take place through clues, reminders, encouragement, breaking down the problem into steps, or anything else that allows the child to grow as an independent learner and can be in material help or social in nature.

Vygotsky (1978) argues that learning is most effective when children engage in activities within a supportive environment, receiving appropriate guidance from competent others. One of the main principles of Vygotsky's theory (1978) is that people are products of their social and cultural worlds. And that to understand children, we must understand the social, cultural, and societal context in which they develop (Berk & Winsler, 1995; Han, 2009; Potter, 2007; Wertsch, 1991). The concern of sociocultural theories is to promote children's social and intellectual development in responsive social contexts (Smith, 1996a). Vygotsky argued that the situation where a child interacts with adults, knowledgeable peers in his/her cultural group needs to be a properly organised learning context (Smith, 2013; Vygotsky, 1978).

Consequently, it is argued that learning and development are socially and culturally constructed. Consistent with this argument, Wertsch (1991) points out that the key to sociocultural theory is the connections between human beings and their sociocultural contexts. Moreover, social relationships formulated through interaction are a major basis of feelings of security and belonging (Chen & Eisenberg, 2012), which are related to socio-emotional development in various domains. In the same way, peer interaction is likely to be shaped by cultural norms, customs, and values in the society or community.

#### **4.3.2 Early childhood curriculum in a sociocultural context**

A good curriculum is one which is drawn from society and embodied in the existing cultural norms, traditions and customs of the particular setting. In many countries it is even assumed that care is something that is important for children under 3 years of age or for children who are away from their parents for a full day (in day care centres) (Smith, 1996b). And that education is something for pre-school centres or schools for 4 to 7 year-olds to address. But it is important for both care and education to be incorporated in all early childhood settings, no matter how old the child, whether the context is a centre or a home, or how long the child is away from his/her parents. In African countries before the imposition of Western ideas, the expectations of families and communities and the values which were placed on children influenced how children were cared for and

educated (Prochner & Kabiru, 2008). Education of the child in the traditional society was governed by family and community traditions and by social systems. Nwoye (2006) reports that childhood socialisation in traditional Africa was geared to accomplishment of specific objectives, “children were brought up to fit well into the traditional social fabric, members of the extended family system, together with community elders, friends, and neighbours, participate in child upbringing” (p.5). For example, growing boys and girls were taught important responsibilities including manners and posture proper to their status in the community. The construction of African curricula, Tanzanian ECEC in particular, needs to promote traditional knowledge that can help to educate African children for their own traditional society.

Furthermore, each community had its own education system to socialize children into its culture, values, and traditions. Traditional society was very keen to provide the child’s education from birth and this was continued through various stages and ages (Prochner & Kabiru, 2008), with a system of education demarcated for every stage. The intentions were to prepare children to contribute to strengthening the community and for children to acquire skills essential for protection, food production, and mastery of the environment. This form of curriculum was guided and appropriate; children learned and were taught as they participated in the daily living activities in the home, through ceremonies, direct instructions, observation, and apprenticeship (Marfo et al., 2011). An African child grew in a supportive environments beginning in infancy. Children were taught through songs, games, storytelling mainly by their mothers, in a collaborative way with caregivers such as grandparents, aunts, and older siblings (Marfo et al., 2011; Nsamenang, 2008; Pence, 2011; Serpell & Nsamenang, 2014).

In the same way, curriculum design needs to promote education in caring, responsive social contexts where adult-child and child-child interactions and opportunities for play and exploration promote children’s intellectual, socio-emotional/behavioural development (Serpell, 2011; Serpell & Jere-Folotiya, 2008; Serpell & Nsamenang, 2014). According to Smith (1996b) education services for children are organised, supervised programmes with social and educational

objectives for children in the temporary absence of their parents. Locating such practices within their particular sociocultural and historical context provides some clues as to their effectiveness or ineffectiveness (Marfo et al., 2011; Nsamenang, 2008; Pence, 2011; Serpell & Nsamenang, 2014).

Sibling caregiving is a role which most African children have experienced from their childhood. This experience facilitates their transition from childhood into the parenting role. African parents focus on children's involvement in responsible and productive livelihood activities as the key principle in their development and learning (LeVine, 2004; Nsamenang, 2004; Serpell & Jere-Folotiya, 2008). However, this perspective differs from the dominant Western description, which constructs children as "reproducers, to be filled with knowledge and values and made "ready to learn" and "ready for school", or as liberating agents, who solve social and economic problems in society if subjected early enough to effective technical interventions (Moss & Petrie, 2002, p. 3).

African children normally progressively graduate from one activity setting to another, until they reach adulthood. In so doing, children are brought up more under the guidance and supervision of peer mentors than of parents, siblings or adult caregivers (Nsamenang, 2008, 2009). In their interactions children follow an unwritten curriculum, which they implicitly learn or teach by themselves at different stages that correspond to the developmental stages the culture is aware of and this socialisation is according to children's developing abilities (Nsamenang, 2004; Serpell, 2002; Serpell & Jere-Folotiya, 2008). Mentors and adults train children from an early age to participate in self-care, routine duties, and family maintenance chores. Usually, a developing African child is expected to complete his or her foundation training in the intellectual, social, moral, and physical capabilities in various sectors of economic and communal life by the end of adolescence (Garcia et al., 2008). The curriculum was prepared in relation to the surrounding traditional indigenous culture and norms.

Likewise, the early childhood curriculum needs to accommodate cultural contexts, so that children grow up with the indigenous knowledge which prevails within their surroundings. Sociocultural theory as a lens for this study emphasises the

role of peers, siblings, parents, caregivers in guiding and supervising the development of competence and abilities of children. The practical demonstration of acquired competencies and skills is the extent to which a given child notices and responds to the needs of peers, mentors or sibling charges. The infant or toddler matures into a child-participant in household chores and, thereafter, into an adolescent who graduates into higher order interactional systems and transactional roles (LeVine, 2004; Prochner & Kabiru, 2008).

An early childhood curriculum is pedagogically effective when the teacher is positioned as a facilitator and mediator of learning within the sociocultural context. The teaching philosophy recognises both the socially constructed nature of knowledge and the co-constructive process of teaching and learning (Bell, 2011; Spodek & Saracho, 1999).

However, Serpell and Jere-Folotiya (2008) express that, in many contemporary, rural African communities, the curriculum of public schooling is formulated to impart a set of competencies whose main practical applications depend on further schooling. Therefore, if the curriculum is not contextualised it will end up itself in the business of producing failures because the structure of educational opportunity and accessibility is such that only a tiny minority of children are able to proceed each year to more advanced levels.

### **4.3.3 Using sociocultural theories of learning and development in ECEC settings**

Vygotsky's theory advocates that learning and development occur through social interaction and guidance from skilled others within culturally rich settings (Berk & Winsler, 1995; Vygotsky, 1978). According to Vygotsky (1978), elementary biological processes are qualitatively transformed into higher psychological functioning by developmental processes. Vygotsky (1978) believed that to understand cognitive development, we must examine the social and cultural processes shaping children. The Vygotskian position views learning and development as neither separate nor identical processes (Berk & Winsler, 1995; Bredekamp, 1987). According to Vygotsky (1978, p. 86) an "educative

environment for children must utilize the *Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)*” as was described earlier. The theory emphasises that teachers and adults need to collaborate with children in joint cognitive activities to fit the child’s level of potential development. Vygotsky's concept of cognitive development suggests an active role for teachers in assisting development to occur, such as teachers organising learning experiences for children (Ritchie, 2010; Scribner, 1985; Spodek & Saracho, 1999), or a teacher exploring the task to be learned with the children in order to identify what is necessary for success. ECEC from a sociocultural perspective identifies the emphasis and the role of the teacher in *scaffolding* a particular child. Teachers need to be involved in a dynamic interactive relationship with children, not through instructive approaches, but through being sensitively adjusted to children’s abilities, interests, and strengths and being accessible enough to provide *scaffolding* which broadens them and builds bridges between the known and the unknown (Ritchie, 2010; Rogoff, 2003).

According to Berk and Winsler (1995), Vygotsky argued that as instruction leads to new knowledge and skills, it also permits children to move to a new level of understanding in which they become aware of and achieve control over their mental activities. Therefore, the sociocultural theory of Vygotsky is able to describe desirable teaching for children’s development. Hence, a child grows within a certain culture and interacts with his/her social environment which shapes his/her cognitive creativity. In line with this argument Spodek and Saracho (1999) and Turunen and Määttä (2012) assert that this becomes a significant challenge for early childhood teachers, who must assess what children are capable of doing and learning on their own and provide appropriate support to facilitate new learning. This idea is tied to the need to provide children with cultural tools and suggests an important role for curriculum development (Spodek & Saracho, 1999) and for ECEC teachers to make plans based on children’s evolving interests, needs and competencies (Berk & Winsler, 1995; Bredekamp, 1987).

Teachers and parents play a significant role in learning and development of a child. Rogoff (2003) emphasises guided participation and participatory appropriation as two processes by which children learn by working with others. These two

processes emphasise the cognitive structuring of individual and group activities by cultural artefacts through subject learning activities. Serpell (2002) states that cognition is developed through the social activities, experiences, prior-knowledge, and interactions in a certain environments. Hence, cognitive activities are socially distributed. Many writers articulate the need for contextual structure to which children become accustomed, such as physical and social settings, customs of child-rearing, and caregivers roles within the surrounding context (Marfo et al., 2011; Murungi, 2013; Nsamenang, 2008; Serpell, 2002; Serpell & Nsamenang, 2014). Furthermore, Murungi (2013) found that cultural practices, such as child-rearing norms, or literacy, can be analysed in terms of recurring activities. That means, activities are embedded in activity settings which, facing inward, define the planning of daily life while they constitute recognisable components of the social system. The role of teachers and parents in guided participation is to afford children the opportunity to appropriate the cultural beliefs (Rogoff, 2003) that inform the overarching practice in which children and their adult guides are collectively involved. In the situation of educational activities, the function of teaching, from this perspective, is to assist performance within the children's *Zone of Proximal Development* (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978). This is helpful for teachers for pedagogical purposes, one of which is "cognitive structuring" (Serpell, 2002, p. 2).

In addition, it is important not to give the impression that sociocultural theory is just about the child absorbing his/her surrounding culture. But rather, there is an important role for the child and the agency of the child, in adapting culture and reconstructing it to deal with contemporary contexts. Rogoff (1990), another sociocultural theorist, writes about the role of the child in sociocultural theory. She sees the child having an active and inventive role in their learning in the context of guidance and support from others. She emphasizes "the role of children as active participants in their own development. Children seek, structure and even demand the assistance of those around them in learning to solve problems of all kinds" (Rogoff, 1990, p. 16). She elaborates on how individuals have a creative role in the transformation of culture.

But while individual development and thinking are channelled by societal institutions and tools, individual appropriation of social practices occurs in a creative process. In this sense, information and skills are not transmitted but are transformed in the process of appropriation, (p. 197).

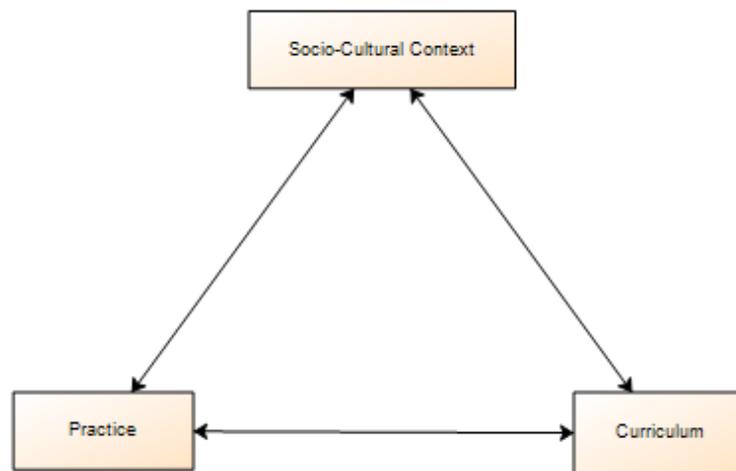
In summary, this section has discussed the use of sociocultural theories of learning and development in ECEC settings. The trend shows that, sociocultural theories give more emphasis to collaborative learning and development for a child. These theories emphasize that teachers and adults, need to collaborate with children in joint cognitive and socio-emotional/behavioural skills, to fit the child's level of potential development. The usefulness of ecological systems and sociocultural theories in this study is discussed in the next section.

#### **4.4 Use of Ecological Systems and Sociocultural Theories in this Study**

This study used ecological systems and sociocultural theories as lenses for framing the study, data analysis, interpretation of findings, and drawing conclusions. These two conceptual frameworks were found useful in this study for understanding children's learning and development in a sociocultural context. Ecological systems theory was used to understand the impact of the surrounding environment on the development of the child. Bronfenbrenner (1979) emphasised that children should be studied in more natural contexts, such as home, classroom or playground, with attention to the perceived meaning of the contexts to the significant people participating in them (Smith, 2013; Tracey & Morrow, 2012). Bronfenbrenner locates the way broader cultural and social settings shape children's learning and development in reciprocal and responsive interactions (Pound, 2009; Smith, 2013). The ecological systems theory in this study suggests that governments need to develop policies which are suitable for children's learning and development which incorporate the important needs of children and their contexts. Government policy planners and curriculum developers should understand the needs and interest of children and accommodate such requirement in policies and curriculum.

Sociocultural theory in this study explains the role of context in teaching and learning practices. This suggests that African ECEC curricula, such as in Tanzania,

need to incorporate indigenous knowledge for children to learn in ways that are culturally appropriate. Figure 4.2 indicates the relationship between curriculum, its practice, and the sociocultural context. There is a reciprocal relationship and arrows are going both ways, each influencing the other. That means curriculum planners should prepare the curriculum with the consideration of the sociocultural context for effective enactment. The ideal relationship between curriculum, practice, and the sociocultural context is represented in the Figure 4.2 below.



*Figure 4.2* The relationship between curriculum, practice and sociocultural context

Countries such as Tanzania need to develop supportive policies that could help teachers to easily enact the pre-school education curriculum. Government policies are needed that set requirements for, and support teachers in their work. Sociocultural theory acts as a guide to understand interactions between adults and children in teaching and learning. These shared social experiences through interaction with sensitive and responsive adults, help children to become social actors and contributors to society (Smith, 2013).

This study will use the ideas embedded in sociocultural and ecological perspectives on children's learning and teaching for curriculum enactment. The social and cultural context is interpreted here as a child's living environments including the surrounding family, relatives, peers, caregivers and the immediate situational events (Daniels, 2005; Han, 2009; Rogoff, 2003). Underlying this investigation was an attempt to see how cultures influence pre-school teachers and

children, and how these influences were manifested within their learning experiences. Sociocultural theoretical orientations are used in this study in analysing the guides offered to teachers, children, peers and adults in curriculum enactment.

A study by Wertsch (1991) takes the view that a fundamental to sociocultural theory is the relation between human beings and their sociocultural contexts. Sociocultural theory puts emphasis on collaborative learning, and the interaction of a child with the immediate social and physical environments. Therefore, the sociocultural theory explained in this study will be useful in analysing teaching and learning practices.

#### **4.5 Chapter Summary**

This study used ecological systems and sociocultural perspective as lenses for framing the study, data analysis, interpretation of findings, and drawing conclusions. Framing conditions which were proposed by Bronfenbrenner's theory inform the government policy planners and curriculum developers to locate favourable conditions for children's learning and development, and teachers to teach the curriculum beyond the children's level of development while providing them with necessary support.

Ecological systems and sociocultural theories are helpful in understanding children's learning and development and how these are supported by the surrounding environment, including parents, families, peers, adults and the society at large. These two theoretical perspectives put the child at the centre and orient how the surrounding social, cultural, and physical environments can play a role in his/her learning and development.

In order to understand various concepts on the nature of learning and knowing that have been stipulated in the theoretical framework, as well as to address the research questions, specific methodology and methods were employed. This is the focus of the next chapter.



## **CHAPTER 5**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the research methodology used in this study. It begins with the research questions in the second section, followed by a diagrammatically represented framework of the research design in the third section. Discussion on the interpretive paradigm as a paradigm of choice for this study is in the fourth section, followed by qualitative inquiry as a research methodology for this study in the fifth section. The concept of a case study research design is discussed in the sixth section, followed by discussion about participants in the seventh section. The multi-methods approach for data generation and instruments is discussed in the eighth section, while data management and analysis is discussed in the ninth section. Trustworthiness of the study is discussed in the tenth section and finally ethical considerations are presented.

#### **5.2 Research Questions**

The main research aim was to investigate the possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in their enactment of the pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy in a Tanzanian context.

The research aim was addressed by the following questions:

1. What were the sociocultural, political, historical, and economic contexts in which the pre-school education curriculum in Tanzania was developed in 2005?
2. What are the views and experiences of pre-school teachers and their pupils, parents, ward and regional education officials, curriculum developers, and Ministry of Education officials about:
  - a) The current pre-school education curriculum initiated in 2005; and
  - b) Enactment and pedagogy of the pre-school education curriculum from 2005 onwards?

3. How could sociocultural theorising suggest ways to address any challenges for policy and practice in enacting the curriculum?

### 5.3 Research Design of this Study

A research design is described as the logic or master plan of a research study that gives light on how the study is to be conducted. Many writers emphasise that the research design should show the interconnection of all the major elements of the research study, including philosophical views, research strategies (methodology), methods, and/or programmes, which work together in an attempt to address the research (Maxwell, 2005, 2008). Figure 5.1 below shows the research design for this study. It is a framework that shows the interaction of the three components that summarizes this interpretive research design. That is the interconnection of the philosophical worldview, strategies of inquiry, and research methods.

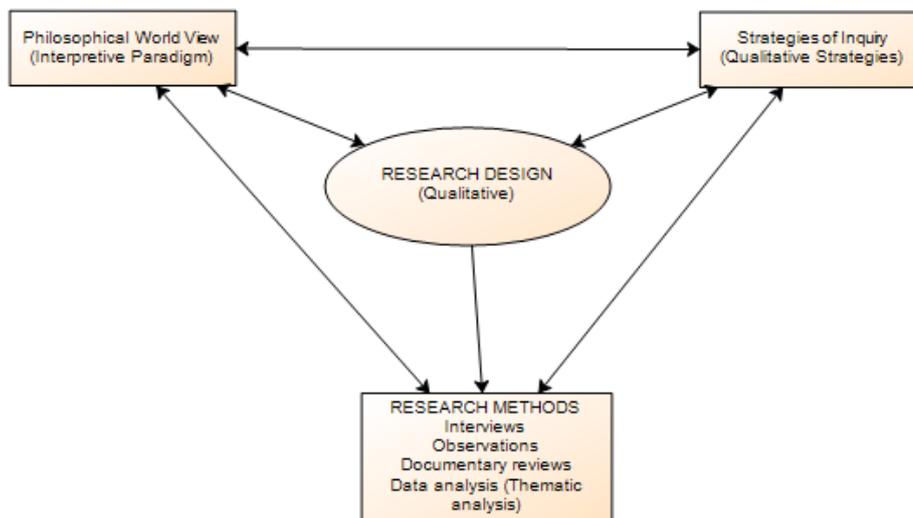


Figure 5.1 A framework for research design

Source: Adopted and modified from Creswell (2009 p. 25)

The next section discusses the interpretive paradigm which was the philosophical world view used in this research.

### 5.4 The Interpretive Paradigm as a Paradigm of Choice for this Study

A paradigm is defined by Sarantakos (2005) as a set of assumptions, beliefs, and propositions that explain how the world is perceived, it contains a worldview, a

way of breaking down the complexity of the real world, telling researchers and social scientists in general “what is important, what is legitimate, what is reasonable” (p.29). According to Maxwell (2008) paradigm “refers to a set of very general philosophical assumptions about the nature of the world (ontology) and how we can understand it (epistemology), assumptions that tend to be shared by researchers working in a specific field or tradition” (p.224). These philosophical assumptions typically include specific methodological strategies linked to these assumptions, and identify particular studies that are seen as demonstrating these assumptions and methods (Maxwell, 2008; Neuman, 2011; Sarantakos, 2005).

The interpretivist paradigm, like phenomenology, advocates the “need to consider human beings’ subjective interpretations of meaning, their perceptions of the social world as our starting point in understanding social phenomena” (Dash, 2005, p. 25). Therefore the interpretive paradigm postulates that there is a fundamental difference between the nature of the phenomena investigated by the natural sciences and those studied by historians, social scientists, and educational researchers (Avramidis & Smith, 1999; Babbie, 2010). The interpretation of meaning or giving meaning to the phenomena is shaped by the particular cultures in which people live, and this generates the actions and institutions in which they participate. The main view of interpretivists is that the study of phenomena can never be objectively observed from the outside, rather it must be observed from the inside through the direct experience of the people (Sarantakos, 2005).

Interpretivists argue that we cannot understand why people do what they do, or why particular institutions exist and operate the way they do without grasping how those involved interpret and make sense of their world: in other words, we have to understand the distinctive nature of their perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes (Mack, 2010; McGregor & Murnane, 2010). However, this requires openness on the part of the researcher in which their prior cultural assumptions, beliefs, and attitudes are interrogated, and willingness to learn the culture of the people being studied. As a result of this interpretivists usually adopt or recommend qualitative methods, such as phenomenology, ethnography, in-depth or unstructured

interviewing, or analysis of documents in the manner of the historian or the literary critic (Sarantakos, 2005; Schwandt, 1994).

Interpretivists believe that reality is multi-dimensional and complex (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000, 2007; McGregor & Murnane, 2010); that a single social phenomenon may have multiple interpretations or multiple realities. Within the interpretivist paradigm there is a place for the voice and role of the researcher and participants in the phenomena under study. Humans are seen as central to the phenomena under investigations, rather than isolated from it (McGregor & Murnane, 2010). The knower and the knowledge are not separate. Humans are not controlled and studied but are participants in the process, even prompting and benefitting from the research (Cohen et al., 2000, 2007; McGregor & Murnane, 2010; Sarantakos, 2005). Interpretivist research includes seeking patterns and commonalities, recognising underlying structures, enlightening beliefs, kinships and ways of living, and placing experiences into words and narratives (McGregor & Murnane, 2010).

Furthermore, the intent is to investigate for meanings and/or power in specific cultural and social contexts rather than for general laws applicable to everything and everyone as in the positivist paradigm (Creswell, 2003; Dash, 2005). For this reason, neither the researcher nor the respondents can remain neutral, as is expected in the positivistic paradigm (Dash, 2005; McGregor & Murnane, 2010). However, the nature of reality or the ontology of the interpretivists' paradigm is viewed differently by different interpretivists. Some interpretivists have a realist view of reality while others hold relativist one. For example, Wahyuni (2012) asserts that *realist interpretivists* believe that whilst there is a *real world out there*; people can only understand it through their constructions of it. The *relativist interpretivists* hold a view that reality, knowledge, and morality exist in relation to culture, society, or historical context, and are not absolute. Wahyuni further contends that interpretivists recognise individuals with their own varied backgrounds, assumptions, and experiences which contribute to the on-going creation of reality existing in their broader social context through social interaction. This means that these human perspectives and experiences are

subjective, social reality may change and can have multiple perspectives (Sarantakos, 2005; Silverman & Marvasti, 2008; Willig, 2013); the interpretive paradigm has a goal to understand and interpret the world in terms of its players' meanings and interpretations (Cohen et al., 2000, 2007). Therefore, interpretivists reject objectivism and a single truth as proposed in a positivist paradigm (Creswell, 2003, 2009). In order to comprehend the social world from the experiences and subjective meanings that people attach to it, interpretivist researchers need to interact and to have a conversation with participants, to understand how people construct their subjective meanings.

Hence, interpretivist research seeks to understand the participants' values, beliefs, and meanings of social phenomena, thereby obtaining a deep and sympathetic understanding of human daily activities and experiences from the actors' perspectives (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Sarantakos, 2005; Silverman & Marvasti, 2008; Willig, 2013).

This study was undertaken within an interpretive paradigm for investigating the views, perceptions, and opinions of pre-school teachers and their pupils, Ministry of Education officials, curriculum developers, education officers, and parents about their experiences, possibilities, and issues found during the enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy in Tanzania. The researcher in the present study decided to choose the interpretive paradigm to inform the study due to the nature of the study and types of data which she considered could answer the research questions. The interpretive paradigm was used in this study in order to explore meaning in the everyday world of classroom and pedagogy. It is argued that social reality is viewed and interpreted by the individual her/himself according to the ideological positions she/he holds (Best & Kahn, 2006; Neuman, 2007, 2011; Sarantakos, 2005; Schwandt, 1994).

### **5.5 A Research Methodology for this Study**

Qualitative inquiry, according to Saldaña (2011), is “an umbrella term for a wide variety of approaches to, and methods for, the study of natural social life” (p.13). The information or data generated and analysed is descriptive and may be in

words or numbers. It consists of textual materials such as interview transcripts, field notes, and documents, and/ or visual materials that document human experiences about others and/or one's self in social action and reflexive states. A research methodology is defined by Sarantakos (2005, p. 37) as a "research strategy that translates ontological and epistemological principles into guidelines that show how research is to be conducted". Maxwell (2005) discusses five research purposes for which qualitative studies within the interpretivist paradigm are particularly useful:

- "Understanding the meaning that participants in a study give to the events, situations, and actions that they are involved with; and of the accounts they give of their lives and experiences;
- Understanding the particular context within which the participants act, and the influence this context has on their actions;
- Identifying unanticipated phenomena and influences, and generating new, grounded theories about them;
- Understanding the process by which events and actions take place; and
- Developing causal explanations" (p. 66).

Qualitative methodology within the interpretivist paradigm tends to be concerned with meaning; that is, qualitative researchers tend to be interested in the meanings attributed to events by the research participants themselves (Willig, 2013). The researcher's interest is in how people make sense of the world and how they experience events. Qualitative researchers have a tendency to be concerned with the quality and texture of experience, rather than with the identification of cause-effect relationships (Sarantakos, 2005).

For the current study the researcher's interest was to see how teachers give explanations, clarify concepts, provide feedback to questions asked by children, and how children answer questions that are open-ended which need higher order thinking, and closed ended questions which need lower order thinking. Furthermore, she was interested in observations regarding the teacher-child and child-child interaction in sharing knowledge (meaning making) in the classroom

situation. Hence, the qualitative approach was selected due to the nature of the study and research questions to be answered (Neuman, 2011; Punch, 2005; Sarantakos, 2005) which require in-depth descriptive data concerning the problem under investigation. An approach generating qualitative data in the present study required the researcher to interact with the respondents to get their views, knowledge, and meanings of ECEC in Tanzania (Bernard, 2013; Sarantakos, 2005).

The present study has taken a case study approach to examine this phenomenon in its natural settings, to acquire an intimate awareness and deep understanding of how pre-school teachers and others make sense of their experiences in the curriculum practice and pedagogy within the classroom settings and within Tanzanian society at large.

## **5.6 Case Study Research Design**

This section discusses the concept of case study design, its features, and rationale in this study. Case study research refers to a form of interpretive research that is focused on providing a detailed description of one or more cases (Merriam, 2002; Stake, 2005). A case study is defined by Yin (2003, p. 23) as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used. A phenomenon is investigated in its natural setting, employing multiple methods of data generation to gather information from one or a few entities (people, groups or organizations (Yin, 2009). A study by Best and Kahn (2006) reports that a case study is a mode of organizing social data for the purpose of viewing social reality in a certain unit, the unit can be “a person, a family, a program, a social group, a social institution or a community”(p.259). A case study can also be explained as a “unit of human activity embedded in the real world; which can only be studied or understood in context; which exists in the here and now; that merges in with its context so that precise boundaries are difficult to draw” Gillham (2000, p. 1). Gillham further clarifies that a case can be an *individual*; it can be a *group* such as a family, or a class, or an office, or a hospital ward; it can be an *institution* such as a school or a

children's home, or a factory; it can be a large-scale *community*, a town, an industry, a profession. All of these are single cases; but you can also study *multiple* cases; a number of single parents; several schools; two different professions" (p.1).

Likewise, Yin (2009) classifies two types of case study designs: the 'single-case study design' and the 'multiple-case study design'. The single-case study design refers to the investigation of a single participant or individual case at a time, whereas, multiple-case study design refers to investigation of more than one participant or multiple events at one time (Merriam, 2002; Yin, 2003). Hence, this study investigated a single entity, i.e., a pre-school education curriculum among several curricula such as primary, secondary, and teacher education, and employed a group of participants with multiple methods at multiple sites.

According to Yin (2009, p. 2), a case study design should be considered when: (a) investigating a contemporary event where the researcher cannot manipulate the behaviour of the participants; (b) the focus of the study is to answer 'how' or 'why' research questions; and (c) the researcher has a little or no control over the contextual factors that are relevant to the study; and (d) there are no clear boundaries between the phenomenon and context. In addition, a case study is concerned with a rich and vivid description of events relevant to the case. It also focuses on individual actors or groups of actors, and seeks to understand their perceptions of events (Stake, 2005). Another feature of case study research is for the researcher to seek a range of different kinds of evidence by using multiple sources of evidence (triangulation) (Best & Kahn, 2006; Gillham, 2000; Merriam, 2002; Yin, 2003, 2009). Rather than working with a large representative sample, case study researchers work with relatively small numbers of participants. This is due to the time-consuming and labour-intensive nature of qualitative data generation and analysis.

A case may be chosen "deliberately" because of its unique features, thus presenting itself as a rich opportunity and ideal for focused study. At other times, a case may be chosen "strategically" because it is considered to represent the most typical of its kind. Yet at other times, a case may be chosen simply and

purposively for “convenience” (Saldaña, 2011, p. 18). However, within a single setting, there are different participants with diverse experiences and diverse perspectives. That means, the case doesn’t always refer to one person, and more than likely there is no single theme that perfectly captures how each individual within a group or organisation perceives and feels. Nevertheless, in some qualitative studies, multiple cases might be examined simultaneously or consecutively for comparison and contrast (Merriam, 2002; Saldaña, 2011).

This study adopted a case study design for the following reasons. Firstly, the case study design allows the researcher to investigate the complex real-life activities of Tanzanian ECEC in a holistic approach, and use multiple sources of data generation (Cohen et al., 2007; Stake, 2005; Yin, 2009), namely interviews, focus group discussions, observations, and documentary reviews. Secondly, the case study as used in the present research allows the researcher to provide a thick and detailed description of events, practices, and learning needs of pre-school children in Tanzania. Finally, the case study is best for investigating the research problem in a natural setting; in the present context ECEC centres in Tanzania. In addition, multiple cases and multi-sites were used to explore the phenomena being studied and multiple methods to generate and analyse the data.

## **5.7 Participants**

Purposive sampling was used to select cases that were rich in information according to the purpose of the study. The selection was for a non-probability sample which derives from the researcher “targeting a particular group, in the full knowledge that it does not represent the wider population; it simply represents itself” (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 113). Creswell (2009) proposes three key features to consider in selecting informants using the purposive sampling technique. First, the informants should be knowledgeable about the social problem under investigation and have experience of it. Second, they had willingness to provide the needed information; and third, they represented an aspect of the population.

The participants came from two contexts, non-school settings and school settings. The non-school context participants involved educational (government) officials,

such as those from the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) who oversees educational matters; those from the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE), the department which is responsible for curriculum development and evaluation; and regional and ward education officers who are the supervisors of education within a particular ward and region. Therefore, the non-school context is the area where the curriculum was developed under the MoEVT.

To access the non-school context area the researcher communicated with the Director of the Institute (TIE) requesting permission to access the ECEC Department for the study. The Director of TIE agreed to meet with the researcher and at the meeting the researcher presented the Director with a research clearance letter, the introductory letter, invitation letters, and the information sheet for participants and consent forms (see Appendix A, B, and C ). At the end of the meeting the Director promised to communicate with the Head of the Department dealing with ECEC curriculum development and to arrange a meeting with the pre-school education curriculum developers to explain the aim of the study and the rights of the participants.

The other area of study was of the school context, which involved two public pre-schools, one located in an urban (Mbeya Region) and another one located in a rural (Dodoma Region) area, both in Tanzania. The school context participants involved teachers, parents, and ECEC children. The school context is the place where the pre-school education curriculum is enacted. Teachers, ECEC children, and parents are the ones who interpret curriculum goals and aims in the classroom situation.

To access the respective schools the researcher approached the Regional Educational Officers (REO) in both regions and discussed the purpose of the study with them and requested permission to access the pre-schools for the study. At this meeting the researcher presented the regional education officers with a research clearance letter, the introductory letter, invitation letters, the information sheet for participants, and consent forms (see Appendix A, G and H). Thereafter, the purpose of the study, the rights of the participants and the benefits of the study to their institutions were described. Both regional education officers agreed to

cooperate with the researcher in accessing the pre-schools and signed the informed consents. These two schools were selected with the help of the REOs who had a list of all pre-schools in rural and urban areas.

The selection of pre-schools was based on the following criteria: the pre-schools should be attached to a primary school, the schools' accessibility to the researcher, the location of the schools, the type of teachers teaching the particular pre-school class, and the school staff willingness to participate. This was ascertained after conversations with the Heads through telephone calls and emails. Two different locations were selected (rural and urban schools) because participants were experiencing different settings, including different availability of resources and underpinning sociocultural contexts. This means that differences in access to resources, child rearing norms, and practices may be perceived to be behind any disparities in curriculum enactment. Briefly, the selection of the schools in the urban and rural contexts was guided by the availability and type of pre-school teachers in terms of their professional backgrounds. It was also guided by the location of the school and whether the school was expected to be open to participating in the study.

The REOs granted permission for the study to be taken to the accessed schools by introducing the researcher to the Heads of the particular schools and the Ward Educational Coordinator (WEC) of the particular location (see Appendix I and J). In the Mbeya region the researcher received an authorisation letter from the REO's office after four days while in the Dodoma region the researcher received an authorisation letter after two days. The authorization letters enabled her to gain access to the study participants in the pre-schools. The letters from the education officers required the researcher undertaking the study to get permission from the Head Teachers of the schools before undertaking her study with teachers and children.

The selection of these two different regions was also based on their differences in economic status. The Mbeya region (urban school) was high in socio-economic status compared to the Dodoma region (rural school). Parents/guardians in Mbeya have a higher rate of sending children to private schools compared to those in the

Dodoma Region. So, in Dodoma, parents and children in the region are entirely dependent on the services in the public pre-schools, regardless of the poor provisions.

Dodoma was among the poorest regions in Tanzania for a long time until 1973 when plans were made to move the capital city from Dar es salaam to Dodoma with the intention of leaving Dar-Salaam as a commercial capital (Rossant, 1986). Still the implementation of moving the capital city from Dar es Salaam to Dodoma has been slow. Dodoma was founded in 1907 by German colonists during construction of the Tanzanian central railway. When the government announced in 1973 that the capital would be moved to a more central location, to better serve the needs of the people, Dodoma was selected. It was an already established town at a major crossroad, with an agreeable climate, impressive landscape, and room for development (Pole & Morrison, 2003).

Dodoma Region is one of Tanzania's 30 administrative regions. Dodoma is found in the central part of Tanzania (see Figure 1.1 for details). To the East, it is bordered by the Tanga and Morogoro Regions; to the West, the Singida Region; to the North, the Arusha Region while to the South it is bordered by the Iringa Region. Dodoma Region covers an area of 41,311 square kilometres divided into seven Districts i.e Dodoma Municipal, Bahi, Kondoa, Mpwapwa, Kongwa, Chamwino, and Chemba. The region has a population of 2,083,588 (Population and Housing Census, 2012). Dodoma is populated by different ethnic groups because it is a growing government administrative centre, although the indigenous ethnic groups are the Gogo, Rangi, and Sandawe. There are also small Arab and Indian minorities (Rossant, 1986). The economic activities of the region include agriculture, beekeeping, mining, forestry, and industry. Dodoma features a semi-arid climate with relatively warm temperatures throughout the year. Dodoma averages 570 mm of precipitation per year, the bulk of which occurs during its wet season between November and April. The remainder of the year comprises the city's dry season.

For accessibility reasons, the Bahi District in Dodoma and the Uhelela Ward was chosen. In this Ward, a pre-school (Z) was selected after consultation with the

Regional Education Officer, who also communicated with the Ward Education Coordinator (WEC) when the researcher reported to his office to access the study area and participants in this Region. The District is located about 60 km from the Dodoma town centre and the chosen school was about 5 km from the Bahi District centre. Most of the buildings around the schools were in poor condition. Most of the children could be seen in the streets walking with bare feet.

School Z in Uhelela Ward was chosen because it was the only school where both teachers were volunteers who received a small honorarium from parents. This Ward has five primary schools, three of them with pre-school classes and the other two with no pre-school class. Other pre-schools within the Ward were taught by primary school teachers and volunteers, who used to rotate one week for Primary 1 pupils and another week for the pre-school class. The selected school had two pre-school teachers; one teacher aged 65 years old was a retired Grade III 'C' teacher (a standard seven leaver without secondary education but who attended a two year teacher education course). The other teacher was 32 years old and had one year child care training in a private institution with a Montessori Certificate. This teacher did not get an opportunity for secondary education. After her completion of Standard Seven primary school education she worked as a house keeper with one family in Dodoma town centre for almost five years before she answered an advertisement and applied for a one year child care training course. Therefore, the researcher's interest was to get experiences from a school taught by one un-trained pre-school teacher (a retired teacher aged 65 years old) and one with little training in child care (with a Montessori Certificate). The added advantage for selecting the 65 year old teacher was that she had been working for five years with her fellow younger teacher who had child care training so they could share experiences.

For the research in an urban setting, the Mbeya Region was selected due to its high socio-economic status compared to the Dodoma Region. So the researcher wanted to make a comparison between urban and rural pre-school teachers' enactment of the pre-school education curriculum. Underlying were assumptions that the availability of resources and services would not be a serious problem in

urban areas compared to rural areas. Administratively, the Municipality has 15 Wards. Mwasote Ward was chosen because it was in the heart of the city. In this Ward, pre-school (G) was selected. It was expected that the practice in the school would reflect an urban character. The school was also nearest to the Regional Headquarters where officials responsible for overseeing practice in pre-schools such as the Regional Education Officer worked. The Regional Headquarters also hosted the Inspectorate Department responsible for ensuring inspection of pre-schools. In addition, the strategic location of the school would offer insights into the availability of resources and follow-up made by educational officials to ensure quality practice.

Mbeya Region is one of Tanzania's 30 administrative regions. Mbeya is found in the South-West of Tanzania with international borders (see Figure 1.1 for details). To the South, it is bordered by the Malawi and Zambia countries; to the North, by the Tabora and Singida Regions; to the West, by the Rukwa Region and to the East is bordered by the Iringa Region. It is a multi-ethnic region covering 62,420 square kilometres with the population of 2,707,410 and it was divided into 10 Districts i.e Mbeya city, Chunya, Rungwe, Mbeya rural, Kyela, Ileje, Mbozi, Mbarali, Momba, and Tunduma, town statistics (Rossant, 1986). Mbeya is the first large urban settlement encountered when travelling overland from the neighbouring nation of Zambia. Mbeya is situated at an altitude of 1,700 meters (5,500 feet), and stretches through a narrow highland valley surrounded by a bowl of high mountains. The inhabitants of the region are Nyakyusa, Safwa, Nyiha, Mbungu, and Sangu who are indigenous and all agricultural peoples and small numbers of Chinese, Arabs, and Indians (Rossant, 1986). The main languages in Tanzania are the indigenous (a mother tongue) and Kiswahili (the national language). The English language is extensively taught in schools. Mbeya is a city which is growing very fast and has welcomed almost all cultural beliefs specific to ethnic groups in the country, while at the same time enjoying many people from other countries, which has also given rise to changes in behavioural patterns. There have been changes in clothing, food and eating styles, family structures, conceptions of how one should behave and even the value people assign to children. Young people in the city have become westernised especially in terms of

music, clothing, manner of speech, and general life styles. On the other hand, street children are found in the city due to a number of reasons such as conflicts among families, child abuse and/or neglect, being orphaned, and poverty. Apart from the street children problem, other children might work late into the night selling fried fish, chips, and peanuts or helping their parents in brewing local beer and they normally come to school the following day too tired to concentrate.

Moreover, Mbeya could be described as one of the regions that form the bread basket of Tanzania together with Iringa, Njombe, Rukwa, and Ruvuma located in the Southern Highlands as agricultural regions and which supply food to all regions in the country. It is the biggest agricultural, mining, industry, trade, banking city, and attracts many people to settle there. The Region has attracted the establishment of more education institutions. Mbeya City is now a growing metropolis and business centre for the southern regions and the neighbouring countries of Malawi, Zambia, and Congo. The City is well connected with an all-weather road that forms part of the *Great North Road* running from Cape Town (South Africa) to Alexandria (Egypt). Mbeya connects to the rest of Tanzania and nearby countries through Songwe International Airport which was opened in December 2012. It is one of the four international airports available in Tanzania.

Mbeya has a subtropical highland climate with humid summers and dry winters. The general range of temperature is between  $-6^{\circ}\text{C}$  in the highlands and  $30^{\circ}\text{C}$  on the lowlands. The weather from June until October is dry and cold. The heaviest rainfall occurs during the months December to March. The area around Mbeya town (especially at Tukuyu) enjoys abundant and reliable rainfall which stimulates abundant agriculture on the rich volcanic soils. Average rainfall per year is around 900mm. The rainy season is from March to May.

School (G) in Mbeya Municipal was chosen because the pre-school class was taught by two teachers. One teacher had limited teacher education in pre-school education in her Grade III 'A' (primary school teacher certificates) so in her course of study there were few topics concerning ECEC matters. The second teacher did not receive ECEC courses because during her time in Grade III 'A' teacher education, ECEC topics were not incorporated in their teacher education

primary school curriculum of study. However she has had experience in teaching for about 23 years, 18 in primary schools and five years in pre-school education. Moreover, both teachers taught primary school Grade one in addition to the pre-school class. Hence, the selection of the schools in the urban contexts was guided by the availability and type of teachers in terms of their professional backgrounds. It was also guided by the location of the school and whether the school was expected to be open to participating in the study.

### **5.7.1 Accessing study participants**

Having gained the informed consent of the Ministry officials to research in the two areas, the researcher then accessed study participants and obtained their express informed consent. The TIE Director communicated with the Head of the Department dealing with ECEC matters and called in all ECEC curriculum developers. There are three ECEC curriculum developers in the office but at the time of this study one was away overseas for a short course. Then the researcher explained the purpose of the study, the rights of the participants to participate or not, the right to withdraw, and the benefits of the study to the institute and participants. After their verbal consent had been given, they were given an information sheet for participants and consent forms. It was agreed to start the study on the following day. So the researcher left with them the informed consent form (see Appendix D and E) overnight to give them more time to reflect on the aim of the study individually.

The following day the two curriculum developers had signed the informed consent form and agreed to cooperate with the researcher closely in her study. Neither of the curriculum developers was coerced. The researcher then accessed participants in each school in both of the context areas. Both schools were visited and Head Teachers were given an introductory letter from the Regional Education Officers requesting them to allow the study to be conducted in their schools. The researcher introduced herself to the Head Teachers, and then presented them with the clearance letter, information sheet, and consent forms (see Appendix K and L). Thereafter the Heads communicated with their pre-school teachers and meetings in both areas were conducted. The researcher described the purpose of the study,

the benefits of the study to their schools and themselves, their rights to participate or not, and to withdraw during the study. Then the teachers were given the participants' information sheet and informed consent forms to have overnight for their personal consideration of whether they were willing to participate in the study or not. The following day the Head Teacher and the two teachers in each school came with their signed consent and they were interested in the study and agreed to cooperate with the researcher. None of the teachers was coerced.

The pre-school education curriculum was prepared for 5 and 6 year old children. Therefore, children aged 5 and 6 years old, along with their parents were invited to participate in the study. The children were chosen for an equal number of boys and girls and a range of ages. Another criterion was that the pre-school child who showed interest in working with the researcher was selected. A large number of parents were invited but on the day of the meeting only two parents in each school turned up. The Head Teacher of the schools introduced the researcher to them, and then invited the researcher to explain the purpose of the study, the benefits, and the rights of the participants. At the end of the meeting, all parents signed the consent forms for themselves and agreed to show cooperation with the study. Children agreed verbally to participate in the study having listened the purpose and benefits of the study to families and to the society at large. And for the parents who did not show up and their children were selected for the study the researcher had to go to their homes to seek their consent.

In conclusion, Best and Kahn (2006) argue that the selection of participants for a case study needs to be done carefully to ensure that they have rich and illuminative information needed for the study. The people involved should be able to answer the questions raised by the researcher. Bernard (2013), Neuman (2011), and Sarantakos (2005) point out that purposive sampling is used in situations where a researcher requires informed informants and not just responsive respondents, that is, "subjects whom you choose for a purpose not randomly" (Bernard, 2013, p. 162). For this study participants were chosen because they had rich information concerning the topic under study, such as the people who were

working with ECEC children, curriculum development and enactment, and pre-school children themselves.

### 5.7.2 Demographic information

The study therefore involved 28 participants in total; the national government (educational officials) group consisted of six participants, i.e. Ministry of education officials, curriculum developers, regional education officials, and Ward education coordinator. Also there were 22 local level participants. Six were teachers, four were parents, and 12 were ECEC children.

Table 5.1 below indicates the distribution of the study participants by gender and location. The Ministry and regional education officials were all male, yet classroom teachers were all female. This may suggest limited involvement and democracy that while policy decisions are being made by mainly men, teaching is a female occupation. However, worldwide the experience shows that more females are in the teaching occupation. It is argued that females have been found to be loving, warm, meticulous, patient, and demonstrate their motherhood to pupils.

Table 5.1

*Number of Study Participants by Gender and Location*

		National Level						Local Level						Total		
Participants	Gender	Ministry official		Curriculum developers		Regional and Ward education officials		School Heads		Teachers		Parents			Pupils	
		F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	
Total		-	1	1	1	-	3	1	1	4	-	3	1	6	6	28

Table 5.2 below indicates study participants' pseudonyms and codes. Each participant was given a pseudonym and code as set out in Table 5.2. These are used in the finding chapters.

Table 5.2

*Study Participants Pseudonyms and Codes*

LOCATION	PARTICIPANT	PSEUDONYM	GENDER	CODE
Educational officials (National level)	Ministry of Education official	Takio	M	GO1
	Curriculum developer	Makoti	M	GO2
		Jane	F	GO3
	Regional official	Jerry	M	GO4
		John	M	GO5
	Ward coordinator	Simfo	M	GO6
An urban pre-school-G	Head of school	Mtagimale	M	HS-G
	Pre-school teacher	Satu	F	T1-G
	Pre-school teacher	Karola	F	T2-G
	Parent	Belitho	M	P1-G
		Sela	F	P2-G
Rural pre-school-Z	Head of school	Adiya	F	HS-Z
	Pre-school teacher	Rebeca	F	T1-Z
	Pre-school teacher	Msimighutwa	F	T2-Z
	Parent	Tripho	F	P1-Z
		Aji	F	P2-Z

Details of participants' educational qualifications and their professions are presented on Table 5.3 below. All the national level participants held the highest level of qualification, a university degree, while none of the classroom teachers who are the interpreters of the pre-school education curriculum goals and objectives in the classroom situation, had a qualification at the degree level. This may contribute to inefficiency in teaching and learning contexts, since qualifications are a structural feature of quality.

Table 5.3

*Study Participants' in Groupings by Educational Level and Profession*

Code	Educational level							Profession
	Not attended	Primary education	Ordinary secondary	Advanced secondary	Certificate-Teacher education	Bachelor-Teacher education	Masters	
MoE							✓	Ministry of Education official
CD1							✓	Curriculum developer
CD2						✓		Curriculum developer
REO/1/G						✓		Regional official
REO/2/Z						✓		Regional official
WEC-Z						✓		Ward coordinator
HS-G						✓		Head Teacher
HS-Z					✓			Head Teacher
T1-G					✓			Teacher
T2-G					✓			Teacher
T1-Z		✓						Teacher
T2-Z		✓						Teacher
P1-G			✓					Farmer
P2-Z	✓							Farmer
P1-Z			✓					Farmer
P2-G				✓				Business woman

Children in the study were selected according to age, location and gender, and are evenly spread within these groups. Their characteristics and pseudonyms are given in Tale 5.4 below.

Table 5.4

*Characteristics of Pre-school Children Participants by Location, Age, and Gender*

S/N	PSEUDONYM	LOCATION		AGE-YEARS	GENDER	
		Urban	Rural		Male	Female
1	Alpher	✓		6	✓	
2	Bernard	✓		5	✓	
3	John	✓		5	✓	
4	Eliza	✓		5		✓
5	Rachel	✓		6		✓
6	Vanessa	✓		6		✓
7	John		✓	6	✓	
8	Joseph		✓	5	✓	
9	Roger		✓	6	✓	
10	Edina		✓	5		✓
11	Esther		✓	6		✓
12	Anna		✓	5		✓

## 5.8 Multi-Methods for Data Generation and Instruments

The present study used multiple data generation techniques. Multi-method interpretive research is defined by Wahyuni (2012, p. 73) as “using more than one data collection technique and applying multiple methods to analyse data using non-numerical (qualitative) procedures to answer the research question”. A multi-methods research approach involves generating qualitative data using multiple methods including interviews, observations, and documentary reviews in a single study or in a series of studies that investigate the same underlying phenomenon (Bernard, 2013; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006; Neuman, 2011).

The reasons for combining methods are to draw on the strengths of the methods and to compensate for weaknesses in each method (Bernard, 2013; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006; Morse, 2003; Neuman, 2011; Sarantakos, 2005). The present study used individual interviews, focus group interviews, classroom observations, and documentary review as techniques for data generation.

The next sections examine the variety of research techniques and tools utilised to gather information for this study.

### 5.8.1 Interview

The interview is defined by Kvale (1996) as “a stage upon which knowledge is constructed through the interaction of interviewer and interviewee” roles (p.127);

that two people interchange views about a theme of mutual interest. Kvale states that through dialogues people get to know each other, get to learn about their experiences, feelings, hopes, and the world they live in. However, interviews create a secondary social relationship between two strangers with the explicit purpose of one person obtaining specific information from the other. In addition, Best and Kahn (2006, p. 267) define an interview as “the process of gathering information regarding an individual’s experiences and knowledge about his/her opinions, beliefs, and feelings on a certain phenomenon”. The qualitative research interview attempts to understand the world from the participants’ points of view, to disclose the meaning people construct of their experiences, to uncover their lived world (Kvale, 1996; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

Before the main study, a pilot study was conducted with teachers from a rural school which was located outside the researcher’s study area. The aim was to trial the suitability of the research interview schedule before starting the main study so that any weakness could be identified. Therefore, the interview guide was piloted with three pre-school teachers over seven days; each interview was 55 minutes long. The pilot study was helpful because the researcher observed that there were too many interview questions and she could not complete them all in the 55 minutes allocated. Once the pilot study had been completed the researcher refined the interview questions. The data from the pilot study was not mixed with the data from the actual study because the aim of the pilot study was to oversee the suitability of the interview schedule with consideration of the length of the interview questions and time suggested for interview per teacher.

This study adopted semi-structured interviews to generate data from the participants. A semi-structured interview is defined by Kvale (1996) as an interview with some questions asked of all those being interviewed, with probe questions to follow up with if need be. The study used semi-structured interviews because the interview with everyone in each group was structured by the same questions, therefore, some comparison within each group could be possible (Neuman, 2007, 2011). Also there was a room for the interviewer to probe for the sake of getting detailed information if some information was found not to be clear

to the researcher (Bernard, 2013; Best & Kahn, 1986; Cohen et al., 2007; Punch, 2005). In this study semi-structured interviews were employed with the Ministry of Education official, curriculum developers, Regional educational officials, the ward educational coordinator, Heads of the pre-schools, pre-school teachers, and parents. Focus group interviews were employed with ECEC children. This method enabled generation of rich and deep information related to the pre-school education curriculum enactment and pedagogy (see Appendix R, S, T, U, V, W, and X for interview schedules). The researcher had not planned to interview the Ward education coordinator in the rural area; that is, the Uhelela ward in Bahi district (Dodoma region), but when the study was in progress the teachers and parents pointed to him to respond to some of the issues which were under investigation. So the researcher decided to interview him in order to get some clarification of the issues raised by other participants.

The data generation occurred from April 2013 to September 2013. However, the April month was mainly used for communication with study areas and building rapport before interviews. Each teacher had three interviews. The first interview concerned questions related to the curriculum development process, the second interview was about the curriculum enactment and associated pedagogy and the third interview was about policy issues. The regional educational officials had two interviews; one on the curriculum development process and the other one on curriculum enactment and policy issues. Other participants were interviewed once; those were the Ministry of Education official, curriculum developers, the ward education coordinator, and parents. A group of questions, sessions, and time schedule is outlined on Table 5.5.

Table 5.5

*Grouping of Questions, Sessions, and Time for Interview per Session*

Participants	Groups of questions/ Topics			Time per interview	Date
	Curriculum development	View on curriculum enactment and pedagogy	Politics and educational issues, and practices		
Teachers	1 <sup>st</sup> Interview	2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview	3 <sup>rd</sup> Interview	55-60 Minutes	May, July, August, and September, 2013
Regional officials	1 <sup>st</sup> interview	2 <sup>nd</sup> Interview		50-60 Minutes	June, 2013
Curriculum developers, Ministry and Ward official	Single interview			50-60 Minutes	June, 2013
Parents	Single interview			45-55 Minutes	August, 2013
ECEC children	Focus group interview, conducted in two sessions per setting			55-60 Minutes	July, 2013

The researcher conducted the first interview with each teacher before an observed teaching session and after the teaching session in order to get some clarifications of matters that might be noticed during the observations in the classroom session. The interview with national government officials (GO's) took place in June, 2013 when the schools were closed for holiday. In the last week of the sixth month the researcher presented a general overview to pre-school teachers and Head Teachers concerning the pre-school education curriculum enactment, and this was done when the researcher was giving thanks for their participation in the current study.

All interviews were recorded by voice recorder and transcribed verbatim to preserve the originality of information, increasing the trustworthiness of the data, and for data coding purposes (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), and each participant had the opportunity to amend his/her transcripts where necessary before the data analysis. However, few participants made amendments on transcripts and allowed the researcher to continue with the analysis.

In addition, the interview questions were translated into Kiswahili and the researcher conducted interviews in Kiswahili (national language) to enable the participants to provide detailed information because using English for interviews could affect the participants' ability to express their views accurately as English is not the participants' first language. The translation of these instruments was done by two members of the University of Dodoma academic staff in the Department of English and Foreign Languages, and one senior lecturer with experience in ECEC matters. Each translated the instruments individually and then later on we met as a group to produce a final draft of the translated Kiswahili version. These translated Kiswahili interview questions were used to conduct interviews and focus group interview with all participants.

### **5.8.2 Focus group interviews**

In order to generate data with the selected pre-school children, focus group interviews were used as they would enable the pre-school children to articulate their views about teaching and learning in a comfortable social situation (see Appendix Y). It is important to invite children's views, perceptions and opinions of their school life experiences to gain meanings for the research (Guo, 2010). A focus group interview is defined by McLachlan (2005) as a discussion, which is carried out in a group setting, moderated by a group leader, to generate descriptive information. It is a technique whereby multiple respondents are interviewed together (Bernard, 2013; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). Focus group interviews help the researcher to generate data about the key issues, ideas, and concerns from multiple respondents at once. Dockett and Perry (2007) assert that group discussions involving children can generate co-construction of meanings as children contribute different information and build upon the comments and interpretations from each other. Co-construction is promoted through continuing interactions and relationships

The focus group discussions were thought to be fruitful in the early childhood context for generating data on children's beliefs, views, and attitudes concerning their learning in schools as it is believed the children will be more at ease and interact with each other to reveal attitudes, experiences, and perceptions (Lane,

McKenna, Ryan, & Fleming, 2001; McLachlan, 2005). It was argued by Guo (2010) that it is essential to get meanings from the inner thoughts of the individuality of children's own voices and the researcher's commitment to looking for information from children's sociocultural contexts. Together with this, Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006) argue that focus group interviews generate rich data which cannot be "replicated and is not comparable to the sum total of individual interviews" (p.198). This is because during the shared conversation the participants query each other and explain themselves to each other. Such interaction offers valuable data on the extent of "consensus and diversity among participants" (p. 200). The tool was intended to be helpful in exploring the views of children about the extent of warmth, care, quality of the interaction, and extent of responsiveness to their individual needs from their teachers. These were found in the EPPE study to be features of quality ECEC environments (Sylva et al., 2004), as well as in the literature reviews conducted by Smith et al. (2000) and Mitchell et al. (2008) in New Zealand context. Some writers point out that the method involves discussions in which the researcher tables a theme for discussion to a group of a few respondents preferably six to twelve (6-12) members (Bernard, 2013; Kothari, 2007). For the current study the researcher posed an issue and kept on probing and hence kept the ball rolling, enabling her to elicit significant information from the children (Creswell, 2009). The researcher also used pictures, storytelling, art work, and songs (Einarsdottir, 2005; Palaiologou, 2012) for the group discussions to enable children to explore more ideas.

However, if the moderator (the researcher) of the group interview does not properly facilitate the interview a few children can dominate the group and quiet students do not contribute. Group dynamics can influence individual behaviour, attitudes, and opinions. For the current study the researcher was a moderator herself and she was very keen in moderating the groups to ensure smooth and sound discussion.

This study used two weeks for two focus group discussions in each school, with each discussion lasting for 50-60 minutes per session. The focus group interview was conducted in two sessions; the first session was a discussion concerning the

questions on the interview guide. And the second session was used for children to make various drawings and pictures and give explanations concerning their pictures. Children were asked to draw anything they liked, tell any story and its meanings as well as sing songs. Both sessions were very lively, and the children seemed happy with the discussion, drawings, storytelling, and songs. It was observed that the children might be missing such opportunity with their teachers during their everyday sessions. The researcher was very keen to facilitate the group well. The focus group discussion was conducted in Kiswahili (national language) to enable the participants to provide detailed information because English is not the first language of the participants. The discussion sessions were recorded to retain their originality and to make available to the participants an opportunity to listen and add comments where necessary during data analysis. Before ending her fieldwork the researcher provided an opportunity for children to listen to their interviews on the voice recorder; however they did not make amendments.

### **5.8.3 Informal conversation**

Informal conversation is the spoken exchange of thoughts, opinions, and feelings not having official authority or sanction. Maxwell (2005) argues that in any plan of research methods, researchers should think to include whatever feasible informal data-generation strategies including “hanging out, “casual conversations, and incidental observations” (p.79). Children’s conversations especially during informal social gatherings such as tea break and lunch breaks produce rich data. Children and teachers tend to talk about various stories concerning learning and the like. These informal conversations are useful as they touched on areas which children may fail to express in the formal interview, due to fear that they would be reported for disclosing some information which may lead them to be in trouble. After having any informal conversations with the children and teachers in private, the researcher wrote down the descriptions of those conversations in her reflective note book because their descriptions were found useful data in analysing curriculum enactment.

#### 5.8.4 Classroom observations

Observation is defined by Efron and Ravid (2013) as “looking at a setting purposely” (p. 86). They further emphasize that the act of observation brings a powerful insight into the realistic life of schools and classrooms. That is, an observer can systematically observe activities, people and physical aspects of the entire educational setting.

This study used classroom observation because it provides a way to view the school, classroom or specific individuals in those settings and to see things that may unconsciously be missed in the normal chaotic dynamics of teaching. Unlike interviews, in which the participants’ voices guide the researchers’ understanding, observation allows the researcher to be aware of non-verbal behaviours, gestures and bodily language (Efron & Ravid, 2013). Cohen et al. (2007) emphasise the value of observational data in offering the opportunity for the researcher to gather data in the natural setting. Furthermore, Robson (2002) suggests three types of observational data generation, i.e. the *participant observation* method, which is normally used by qualitative researchers; the *structured observation* method, which is normally used by quantitative researchers; and the *unobtrusive observation* method, which is non-participant as well as non-reactive to the observed (Yin, 2011) and falls between the two methods mentioned above. The participant observation method is defined by Yin (2011) as a “data collection technique that requires the researcher to be present at, involved in, and recording the routine daily tasks with people in the field context” (p.75). The researcher becomes involved in the research situation as a genuine member of the group. The participants may be unaware of being investigated or observed by the researcher. Whereas an unobtrusive (non-participant), observation requires the researcher to be present but not to participate in group actions.

In the classroom settings the observational approaches are very diverse depending on the purposes of the observer (Yin, 2011). Depending on the purposes, a researcher might make detailed notes in her/his reflective journal; take photographs and record the whole process on video. Another might write little down, but rather reflect on what could be discussed with the teacher later after the

lesson as was suggested by many writers (Cohen et al., 2007; Sarantakos, 2005). One caution is that teachers and indeed pupils might attempt to provide what they think the researcher expects, and this can vary according to the impression or stereotype they form of the observer concerned. The observant might also be irritated or excited by a visitor and behave differently from her or his normal behaviour, hence the need for observers, to study a series of lessons rather than a single one. Furthermore, Yin (2011) argues that; “descriptions of programme implementation are very imperative because there is usually a mismatch between educational programs as they are stated in a policy manual and the actual implementation of the programs” (p.21).

A study by Wragg (1999) highlights the importance of a reflexive notebook, in which a written record is made as soon after the event as possible to help teachers and observers to recall what happened in the lesson and discuss important aspects of classroom interaction. Observers are interested in what is going on in classrooms, where so much important teaching and learning takes place, even though children may learn from a variety of other sources (Babbie, 2010; Bernard, 2013; Best & Kahn, 2006; Bryman, 1989). A study by Best and Kahn (2006) further emphasises that in the classroom teachers ask children questions, and children ask teachers questions, new concepts are explained, pupils talk to each other, some of those who misbehave are reprimanded, and others are ignored. In this study the researcher watched lessons and interviewed teachers to get some clarification after a lesson has been taught. Observations included interactions between teachers and pupils, the use of resources, and the effect of the surroundings on the occupants.

The current study employed a non-participant method and conducted observations in two different forms. Firstly, the researcher prepared a checklist which had a list of things to be observed in the classroom such as the physical settings and its organization, human settings and social interactions, groupings or individuals being observed (Best & Kahn, 2006; Cohen et al., 2007; Sarantakos, 2005), see Appendix Z. Also, the researcher observed the availability of resources and their distribution in teaching and noting also the number of children in the class.

Secondly, the researcher requested a teacher's lesson plan, teachers' guides, and scheme of work for the intention of noting down the relationship found between what was in the documents and the teaching practices. The focus was on the teachers' and children's activities. However, only urban teachers were found to have prepared lesson plans and a scheme of work before a lesson. Teacher participants in the rural area prepared a lesson when they were in the class. The researcher just relied on the syllabus and teachers' guide. Each observation took place in a separate session. The classroom observations took 30-40 minutes per session and took almost a month per location because sometimes the lesson was not conducted at all due to the use of much time for making a class attentive due to being overcrowded. All observed activities were recorded in the field note book.

The researcher observed the application of pedagogical skills: questioning style and responses in relation to gender, classroom management, and the use of teaching materials in the general pre-school education curriculum enactment (see Appendix Z (i), (ii), and Appendix AA for observation schedules. In addition, the researcher sat behind the class and recorded everything of interest in a field notebook. Using a guideline of the events to be recorded which was prepared by the researcher; she recorded different events that happened in a classroom, including the amount and nature of teacher and student talk, the extent of unsociable behaviour among students, conversations among children and with the teacher, the amount of group collaborative work (teacher-child interactions and child-child interactions). The researcher also recorded questioning style and feedback given to children. In summary, detailed field notes were taken during the classroom observation of each lesson, and focused on teacher-child/children, child-child interactions and the nature of the classroom environment.

Furthermore, the classroom observations in rural areas presented many challenges. There were two streams 'A' and 'B' with 98 children in stream 'A' and 97 children in stream 'B'. Both streams used the same classroom and they were arranged to look in opposite directions, stream 'A' facing one way and stream 'B' the other. So the teaching activity itself was challenging because when a teacher of the stream 'A' teaches, the children in stream 'B' (who were not being taught )

turned around to see what was going on. The teachers had agreed that when the teacher of stream 'A' is teaching, the teacher of stream 'B' should do marking and vice versa. This plan was not helpful, because it caused many disturbances which resulted in the teachers using much of their time managing the class instead of teaching. Due to such challenges the researcher used two weeks for classroom observation to make sure that she captured what she intended, so sometimes the researcher joined with teachers to manage the classes. The researcher noticed the difficulties of doing observations in such an overcrowded classroom (see Figures 6.12 and 6.22) with two streams so she tried to spend more time and effort to make the exercise successful. The lessons in both schools dealt with reading, writing, and arithmetic (3Rs) activities with a little bit of science activities observed in the urban school. In the rural areas teachers prepared lessons when they were in the classroom and no previous preparations were found in their lesson plans. It was suspected that, they might have been preparing lesson plans during the researcher's presence. By contrast, teachers in the urban area had their lesson plans prepared before lesson time. In addition, in both schools almost all of what the teachers explained during the interview session was not matched to what was observed in the classrooms. In the researcher's experiences, and as was noted by teachers themselves during the interview sessions, during their normal teaching in the absence of the researcher, the teachers used more time for singing with the children as means of managing the classroom noise.

Additionally, a pilot study of the observation schedule and individual interviews were conducted before starting data generation for this current study. All observed shortcomings were modified during the actual study. For example, the observation from the pilot study indicated that more time was needed for classroom observations due to the situation of the classrooms such as overcrowding, lack of teaching and learning resources, and sharing classrooms with older pupils.

### **5.8.5 Documentary review**

A documentary review was conducted to supplement data in this study. Best and Kahn (2006) state that a documentary review in corroboration with other sources serves a useful purpose in adding knowledge to the field of inquiry. Documentary

data supplemented the interview and observational data in the current study. This technique was used by the researcher to get information that already existed in curriculum documents, policy statements, and regulatory guidelines for pre-school classes, periodicals, reports and official statistics. Table 5.6 outlines the analysed documents.

Table 5.6  
*Documents for Analysis*

Document	Source	Information
Policy documents	Ministry of Education	Key policy statements on pre-school education
Educational facts and figures	Ministry of Education	Educational statistics, pre-school children enrolment
Pre-school education curriculum document	Curriculum Department-TIE	Key pre-school education curriculum statement to be enacted
Syllabus document	Curriculum Department-TIE	Guiding teaching and learning in classroom contexts
Teacher' guide document	Curriculum Department-TIE	Principles of teaching and learning
Lesson plans	Teachers	Pedagogical approach related to children's participation
Children's notebooks	Children	Content written, organisation and handwriting
Regulatory guidelines for pre-school classes.	Curriculum Department-TIE	Service standards for pre-schools
Educational circulars	Head of schools	Implementations of educational matters

These sources were consulted to enrich the data generated by other techniques. Apart from that, the researcher reviewed and analysed documents related to classroom practices, particularly teachers' guides, syllabi, and children's learning activities. The teachers' lesson plans and schemes of work were not reviewed in the rural area because teachers did not prepare a lesson in advance. Only the urban teachers' lesson plan and scheme of work were reviewed. For the analysis of the non-public documents the researcher got the informed consent from the people who wrote these materials.

## 5.9 Data Management and Analysis

Qualitative data management and analysis is described as "a systematic search for meaning" (Hatch, 2002, p. 148). Hatch further emphasises that analysis means

“organizing and interrogating data in ways that allows researchers to see patterns, identify themes, discover relationships, develop explanations, make interpretations, mount critiques, or generate theories” (p.148). It usually involves synthesis, evaluation, interpretation, categorization, hypothesizing, comparison, and pattern finding (Bernard, 2013; Cohen et al., 2007; Creswell, 2009; Hatch, 2002; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). It always involves what Wolcott calls “mind work” (Wolcott, 1994, p. 233). Researchers usually engage their intellectual capacities to make sense of qualitative data. Apart from the presence of computer programmes such as NVivo which are used to assist in the mechanics of sorting data, “only the intelligence, creativity, and reflexivity of the human mind can bring meaning to that data” (Hatch, 2002, p. 148). Therefore, the analysis and reporting of the findings is to create textual representations that are true to the data and structured in ways that communicate clearly.

### **5.9.1 Interview data and focus group discussion**

Once the researcher had completed her interview data generation for this study, the exercise of transcription started. The translation from the Kiswahili to English was done by the same people who translated the interview questions, i.e. two members of University of Dodoma academic staff in the Department of English and Foreign Languages, and one senior lecturer with experience in ECEC matters. As with the translation of interview questions, also the translation of the Kiswahili to English transcripts were each translated individually, and then later on we met as group to produce a final draft of the translated English version for each interview for all participants. Thereafter, different files were used for each participant category of teachers, parents, ECEC children, and educational officials. In these files, the data set from each individual participant was kept. Labels were used to differentiate one participant from another for ease of communication of the findings (see Table 5.2 for participants’ labels).

Consequently, the English version transcriptions were read verbatim and subjected to thematic analysis framework with the help of the NVivo 10 (Richards, 1999) software developed by QSR International in analysis. Themes related to the research questions were identified and coded, and the initial analysis continued

with the researcher thinking about the meaning of identified themes in relation to the research questions. As asserted by Taylor-Powell and Renner (2003), only the human mind can bring meaning to those data through reflexivity and creativity.

According to Cohen et al. (2007) there is no single or best way to analyse or present qualitative data, the choice of qualitative data analysis depends on “fitness of purpose” (p. 537) in relation to the research questions. The analysis in the current study was located in the *thematic data analysis framework* developed by Braun and Clarke (2006). Thematic analysis is a form of qualitative analysis.

A thematic analysis approach is a “method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 6). In the thematic analysis approach, the researcher creates the themes (codes) for the intention of encoding qualitative information according to research questions from the data. The thematic analysis approach is widely used in analysing qualitative data generated from interviews, field notes, documentary analysis, photographs, video recording and through observing participants (Boyatzis, 1998; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Joffe & Yardley, 2004; Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003). According to Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006) coding is the analysis strategy which helps many researchers to locate key themes, patterns, ideas, and concepts that exist within their data.

A theme is a specific pattern conveying the similar meaning found in the data and is of potential interest to the researcher (Best & Kahn, 2006; Creswell, 2003; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006; Joffe & Yardley, 2004). A theme or coding category relies on deductive coding (meaning it is drawn from existing theoretical ideas that the researcher brings to the data), and inductive coding (meaning it arises from the raw information itself) (Joffe & Yardley, 2004). The present study used both inductive and deductive coding approaches and semantic level themes analysis categories. Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) argue that the use of both inductive and deductive coding approaches complements the research questions by allowing the pre-existing researcher’s beliefs to contribute to the process of deductive thematic analysis while also allowing themes to emerge directly from the data using the inductive coding approach. For this case NVivo software helped

in data sorting, organising, and locating the main ideas and patterns to the particular node and sub-nodes.

The thematic data analysis framework approach has 6 major steps outlined: *familiarizing of the researcher with the data collected, the generation of initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing and refining the themes, defining and naming themes* and finally *report writing and interpretation of the findings*.

Therefore, the data from the current study were analysed as follows: the first step involved the *familiarizing of the researcher with the data collected*. Braun and Clarke (2006) emphasis that it is vital that the researcher immerse her/himself in the data to the extent that she/he becomes familiar with the depth and breadth of the content. Immersion normally involves repeated reading of the data several times, and reading the data in an active way, searching for meanings, patterns and constructs. Identification of possible patterns and constructs will be shaped as the reading goes on through the entire data set. For the current study, reading and re-reading of the transcripts took place several times until the researcher was familiar with her data. Then through reading and re-reading the transcripts, the categories and themes were identified. That means reading carefully a sample of the transcripts developed fundamental and general topic codes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Taylor-Powell and Renner (2003) argue that worthy qualitative data analysis depends on how the researcher understands her/his data. Knowing the data is essential to the researcher.

The second step involved *the generation of initial codes*, Wragg (1999) asserts that “coding method is a procedure for organizing the text of the transcripts, and discovering patterns within that organizational structure” (p.31). The coding method is based on the premise that no one is able to read a series of transcripts and immediately see the patterns within them. So by using a coding method the researcher was able to construct patterns that were not seen directly in the massive amount of text that were found when she began to analyse her transcripts. The main idea of coding is to move from raw text to research concerns in small steps, each step building on the previous one (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Taylor-Powell &

Renner, 2003; Wragg, 1999). That means the connection between the raw text and the research concerns are not immediately seen.

After a thorough reading and re-reading of the transcribed interviews the researcher produced the initial codes from the data. The codes identified “the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that could be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon” (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 63). In this stage the NVivo 10 software was helpful, with the use of NVivo software the identified main ideas and patterns from the data were allocated to nodes and sub-nodes. A Node is the container in NVivo for categories and coding (Richards, 1999). Nodes can represent any categories, concepts, abstract, people, ideas, places and any other things that matter to a particular project. Richards (1999) argues that in any project in NVivo, the researcher can create and explore documents and nodes, as data is browsed, linked, and coded. A huge amount of data can be managed and stored in nodes and sub-nodes and simplify the search for patterns and trends. For this study NVivo was helpful because the researcher used it for coding processes and was able to browse and retrieve all the data coded there, rethink, re-code, and ask questions about the category in the searches.

The coding started with the interviews from the group from non-school contexts such as the Ministry of Education official, curriculum developers, Regional, and Ward Educational Officers, and then moved to the larger group in the school context which contained school teachers, their pupils, and parents. Taylor-Powell and Renner (2003) argue that coding, segmenting, sorting, and sifting data is a productive and useful strategy. Taylor-Powell and Renner suggest that the first alternative could be to start by intensively examining a small amount of data, rather than intensively coding data. For this study a researcher also started intensive analysis with a small bit of data from non-teaching participants, thereafter continued with a larger group consisting of school teachers. The focus was to group all *repeated ideas* and *relevant texts* that were located to the particular theme. Theme coding process is an iterative practice that results in a number of changes to earlier themes to match the research questions and purpose

of the study (Cohen et al., 2000, 2007; Creswell, 2007, 2009; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006; Sarantakos, 2005; Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003; Wragg, 1999).

The third step involved *searching for themes*, Braun and Clarke (2006) observe that searching for the themes begins when all data have been initially coded and collated, and the researcher has a long list of the different codes that she/he has identified across the data set. At this stage the current study focused the analysis at the broader level of themes, rather than codes, it involved sorting of the different codes into potential themes, and organising all the relevant coded data extracts within the identified themes. The study identified relationships between codes, between themes, and between different levels of themes.

The fourth step in the thematic analysis approach was *reviewing and refining the themes* (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For the current study the researcher read and re-read all the collated extracts for each theme and considered whether they appeared to form a coherent pattern or not. Furthermore, the researcher looked at the validity of the themes in relation to the research questions. During this stage the overarching themes were re-evaluated, whereby some themes were dropped due to the lack of enough data to support them, and others were collapsed into each other to form new themes. In the present study the researcher reviewed the coded themes then summarized the themes that were supported by enough evidence from the data.

The fifth step involved *defining and naming themes*. According to Braun and Clarke (2006) this step begins when researchers have a satisfactory thematic map of their data for the final refinements. Braun and Clarke (2006) elaborate the meaning of “define and refine” as identifying the “essence” of what each theme is about (as well as the themes overall), and determining what feature of the data each theme captures (p.17). For this study the researcher identified and refined the themes which were presented for analysis, and the analysis took place within the identified themes. The identified themes for analysis were concise, punchy, and immediately enabled the reader get a sense of what the theme is about. The process of naming, defining, and refining the themes was very helpful for this study to select clear and concise titles to use in report writing.

The sixth and the final step is about the *report writing and interpretation of the findings* (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003). It is important that the analysis (the write-up of it, including data extracts) delivers a concise, logical, non-repetitive and interesting account of the story the data articulate within and across themes. For the current study the final report provides sufficient evidence of the themes within the data, that is, enough data extracts to demonstrate the prevalence of the theme. The elaboration of concepts is accompanied by vivid examples, or extracts which capture the essence of the point demonstrated, without unnecessary complexity (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In addition, the informal conversations data were used to supplement and clarify the interview and focus group discussion data.

### **5.9.2 Observational data**

In the current study the data recorded in the classroom situation were transcribed then translated into *English* as was done for the interview and focus group data. The researcher analysed the observational data in association with the teacher interviews since they were generated in tandem, with interviews clarifying what the researcher observed.

In addition, the documentary data and informal conversations were used to corroborate and clarify the interview and observational data.

In summary, data generation and analysis procedures has been discussed in detail. The multi-methods approach was used to generate data from various sources. Data from non-school contexts (curriculum developers, Ministry of Education officials, Regional and Ward Educational Officers) were generated by interviews and documentary reviews while data from the school context (teachers, ECEC children, and parents) were generated by interviews, focus group discussion, classroom observations, and documentary analysis. The multi-methods were used for data generation due to the fact that the approach strengthens the study because different methods complement features of each other. In addition the interview data generated in this study were analysed by the *thematic data analysis framework* developed by (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and with the help of computer

software known as NVivo 10 developed by QSR International. The subsequent section discusses the trustworthiness of this study.

### **5.10 Ensuring Quality and Trustworthiness of the Study**

Quality research is one which uses varieties of methods in data generation with authentic voices from the participants and that ensures the conduct of the research has a rich and accurate recording of the data to ensure high validity and trustworthiness. To ensure the trustworthiness of data, triangulation was employed. Triangulation means that the researcher; “seeks to cross-validate data sources, data generation strategies, time periods, and theoretical schemes” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006, p. 374). Triangulation emphasises the importance of generating data in different ways. The researcher used this style (triangulation) because it allowed the opportunity for a validity check as to the meanings of the participants’ views and whether participants did what they said in the interviews. This study used interviews, focus group interviews, classroom observations, informal conversations, and documentary analysis. Cohen et al. (2007) argue that exclusive reliance on one method may bias or distort the researcher’s picture of the fact under investigation. The research can be trusted in the community of researchers if it was conducted following the agreed principles in which people can also trust the quality of the new knowledge created by the research.

Holloway and Wheeler (2002) argue that trustworthiness is assessed on the grounds of methodological aspects, i.e. research design, data gathering, data analysis, accuracy, and adequacy of the qualitative research. Many researchers have indicated how qualitative studies can incorporate measures that deal with these issues of trustworthiness (Guba, 1981; Guba & Lincoln, 1985). They point out four important criteria which establish trustworthiness of qualitative studies i.e., credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The trustworthiness in this study is informed by these criteria which are discussed in detail in the next sections.

### 5.10.1 Credibility

Credibility is defined as the confidence in the accuracy of the findings of a particular inquiry for the respondents with which, and the context in which, the inquiry was taken place (Guba, 1981). Credibility is an evaluation of whether or not the research findings represent credible information drawn from the respondents' original data and correctly interpreted as per respondents' original views (Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Harrison & MacGibbon, 2001; Krefting, 1991; Shenton, 2004). Credibility seeks to show that the explanation of a particular event, issue or set of data which a research study provides can actually be sustained by the data (Cohen et al., 2007), and the findings obtained must describe accurately the phenomena being researched. Credibility is stated by Krefting (1991) as the "accuracy of representation and authority of the writer" (p.215). Credibility emphasises whether the researcher has established confidence in the accuracy of the findings for the participants and the context in which the study was undertaken (Cohen et al., 2007; Guba & Lincoln, 1985). Credibility establishes how confident the researcher is with the accuracy of the findings based on the research design, participants, and context. Guba and Lincoln (1985) argue that ensuring credibility is one of most important factors in establishing trustworthiness.

To promote confidence, strong credibility, and to ensure that the data were accurately recorded on the phenomena under investigation, the researcher used triangulation, prolonged field engagement, persistent observation, and debriefing sessions (Guba, 1981; Guba & Lincoln, 1985). Yin (2003) identifies the importance of the use of triangulation, that may involve the use of different methods, such as focus groups, individual interviews, and observation, which form the major data generation strategies for much qualitative research. Thus, specific procedures were employed such as questioning through interviews and focus groups. For instance, for more information seeking, the current study invited participants to reflect on situations where the researcher needed help or did not understand something. Secondly, to increase credibility this study prolonged field engagement between the researcher and the participants in order to gain an

adequate understanding of various cultural aspects of the institution under investigation. Also the prolonged field engagement was aimed at building the trust of research participants. A number of researchers emphasise the importance of developing rapport and early familiarity with the culture of participating units before the first data generation dialogues take place (Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Harrison & MacGibbon, 2001; Krefting, 1991). Third, to increase credibility the study undertook persistent observation, where the purpose was to learn and identify features and elements that were most imperative in understanding the context of the problem and gaining detailed information. Fourth, to increase credibility the study performed frequent debriefing sessions between the researcher and supervisors of the research and her peers through discussion. The understanding of the researcher widened as others brought their experiences and perceptions to strengthen the understandings and meanings in the study. The discussions also provided a sounding board for the researcher to test her developing ideas and interpretations, and probing from others helped the researcher to recognize her own biases and preferences. Fifth, to ensure credibility from informants when contributing data, the researcher made sure that each person who was approached had been given opportunities to refuse to participate in the research so as to ensure that the data generation sessions involved only those who were genuinely eager to take part and prepared to offer data freely.

### **5.10.2 Transferability**

Another aspect of the quality and trustworthiness of qualitative data is transferability. According to Krefting (1991) transferability refers to the degree to which the findings can be applied to another contexts and settings or with other groups. Shenton (2004) reports that to allow transferability researchers should explore sufficient information about the context of the fieldwork for a reader to be able to decide whether the prevailing situation is similar to another situation with which he or she is familiar and whether the findings can reasonably be applied to the other settings. A study by Bassey (1981) proposes that if practitioners believe their situations to be similar to that described in the study, they may relate the findings to their own positions. Guba and Lincoln (1985) and Firestone (1993) are

amongst researchers who present a similar argument, and suggest that it is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that sufficient contextual information about the fieldwork sites is provided to enable the reader to make such a transfer. For this particular study, the researcher provided a thorough description of the context of the case study, she asked participants to examine field notes and early analysis, and got feedback, which enriched the generated data as the participants had engaged in member checks as a means of ensuring trustworthiness.

### **5.10.3 Dependability**

The third aspect of quality and trustworthiness of qualitative data is dependability. According to Krefting (1991, p. 216) dependability is the criterion concerned with the consistency of the data, that is, whether the findings would be consistent if the inquiry were replicated with the same participants or in a similar context, “the stability of findings over time”. Shenton (2004) argues that the “dependability criterion is difficult in qualitative work” (p.63), as any repeat of the data generation may not be an exact replication. The act of talking about a phenomenon may modify the participants’ viewpoints. The repetition of the study is increased if the researcher gives detail of the data generation and analysis in the reporting of the research. Dependability may involve participants’ evaluation of the findings, interpretation, and recommendations of the study to see if they are supported by the data as received from informants of the study (Cohen et al., 2007; Harrison & MacGibbon, 2001). They further add that, extended longitudinal observation of study phenomena over time and explanation of social change usually helps to establish dependability of the study.

To address the issue of dependability, the current study tried to make sure that the process within the study was reported in detail to enable a future researcher to repeat the work, even if not necessarily to gain the same results. This was achieved through the use of triangulation methods such as interviews, observations, and documents. Such in-depth coverage also will allow the reader to assess the extent to which proper research practices have been followed and to develop a thorough understanding of the methods used and their effectiveness.

#### **5.10.4 Confirmability**

Another aspect of quality and trustworthiness of qualitative data is confirmability. Confirmability refers to the degree to which the findings are a function merely of the co-construction of participants and environments of the research and not of other biases, motivations, and perspectives of the researcher (Guba, 1981; Guba & Lincoln, 1985). Harrison and MacGibbon (2001) state that, confirmability refers to the freedom from bias in the research procedures and results. Confirmability “is concerned with establishing that data and interpretations of the findings are not creations of the inquirer’s imagination, but are clearly derived from the data” (Guba & Lincoln, 1985, p. 319).

The concern here is about steps which should be taken to help in confirming as far as possible that the work’s findings are the result of the experiences and ideas of the participants, rather than the characteristics and opinions of the researcher (Harrison & MacGibbon, 2001; Krefting, 1991; Shenton, 2004). In addition to that Shenton (2004) notes that triangulation in promoting such confirmability should again be emphasised in this context, to reduce the effect of the researcher’s bias. Miles and Huberman (1994) consider that a basic factor for confirmability is the degree to which the researcher admits his or her own predispositions.

For the sake of the confirmability, the current study included important aspects of audit tracks (Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Shenton, 2004); such as the study used triangulation of data generation methods, kept the records of raw data, and also the researcher used a reflexive journal (Harrison & MacGibbon, 2001; Krefting, 1991). The researcher kept electronic records (tape voice records) and non-electronic (field notes, documents) materials for the whole process of investigation until the end of the research. These kept records helped to cross-check the trustworthiness of the data and final report of the study. The researcher also disclosed her own interests, experiences, and views with respect the study as documented in chapter 1.

## **5.11 Ethical Considerations**

Ethics in research involving people is based on respect shown by the researcher to the participants. Qualitative studies are commonly conducted in settings involving the participation of people in their natural environments. Therefore, any research that includes people needs an awareness of the ethical issues that may be derived from such interactions. As asserted by Wilkinson (2001), ethics in research involving people pertains to showing respect and avoiding harm. Harm can be prevented or reduced through the use of appropriate ethical principles. Therefore, the protection of human subjects or participants in any research, including educational study is imperative (Farrell, 2005; Oliver, 2003). Qualitative studies focus their research on examining, exploring, and describing people and their natural environments. Embedded in qualitative studies are the concepts of relationships and power between researchers and participants (Sarantakos, 2005). The willingness to participate in a research study depends upon a participant's desire to share his or her experience.

Ethics in education research includes appropriateness of the research design, the methodological strategies, as well as behaviours in reporting data (Wilkinson, 2001). On the other hand, research can be a burden to the participants or to the researchers themselves if not handled properly. It can harm them physically, emotionally, psychologically or invade their privacy as well as insulting them (Oliver, 2003; Wilkinson, 2001). Issues surrounding these ethical concerns are discussed in brief in the next sections. Therefore, issues surrounding ethical concerns need to be handled accordingly, for example, obtaining access, informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, privacy for research participants, protection from harm, right to withdraw and cultural and social considerations. The next sections discuss further details about each of these.

### **5.11.1 Obtaining access**

To access the institution or organisation where the research is to be conducted, acceptance by those, whose permission one needs before embarking on the task, is essential. Cohen et al. (2007) and Creswell (2009) insist that obtaining access and

acceptance is important because it offers the best opportunity for researchers to present their credentials as thoughtful investigators and establish their own ethical position with respect to their proposed study. For the present study the researcher personally accessed key people as described in section 5.7.

Attaining goodwill and cooperation is particularly important where the proposed research extends over a period of time (Bernard, 2013; Bryman, 1989; Oliver, 2003).

### **5.11.2 Informed consent**

Informed consent is defined as “the procedures in which individuals choose whether [or not] to participate in an investigation after being informed of facts that would be likely to influence their decisions” (Diener and Crandall (1978, p.34). Diener and Crandal further emphasise that there is a need of voluntary agreement of the individual to participate in the study. Wilkinson (2001) and Munford and Sanders (2001) argue that the concept of informed consent only applies to competent people, where competence requires, among other things, that they are capable of understanding the nature of the benefits and burdens of the proposed research and the possibilities of their occurring. In this study, informed consent for the children was obtained from their parents and or/guardians and pre-school children themselves. None of the participants was coerced or forced; each participant except children was given a consent form to sign to show his/her free willingness to participate in the study. The participants were given an information sheet explaining the purpose of the study and the rights of the participants.

Informed consent for this study was gained and was detailed in section 5.7. In addition, prior to giving the informed consent forms, the researcher was orally explained to the research participants the purpose of the study and their rights. Furthermore, for research participants who were not able to comprehend the forms in English, a translated copy of the informed consent form was used. A sample is indicated in Appendix Q. The current study was conducted in accordance with the University of Waikato Human Research Ethics Regulation 2008 and the New Zealand Association for Research in Education. Also, the researcher sought a

research permit from the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE) and the Regional Education Officers in Tanzania and submitted the permit personally to the curriculum developers, Head Teachers, and teachers in the schools contexts (see Appendices F, I and J). Therefore, informed consent was seen as an important principle in this research. It is this principle that will form the basis of an implicit contractual relationship between the researcher and the phenomenon and serves as a foundation on which subsequent ethical considerations can be structured (Cohen et al., 2007; Farrell, 2005; Wilkinson, 2001).

### **5.11.3 Confidentiality and anonymity**

The confidentiality of every participant in the study is of utmost importance to build up trust (Cohen et al., 2007; Wilkinson, 2001). To ensure confidentiality the researcher of this study has kept the raw data and coding in a securely locked cupboard (hard copies) and on password protected computer files (softcopies). No one can access the documents except the researcher herself. All information regarding schools and participants was kept confidential and any reporting of research findings was done through the use of *pseudonyms*. Pseudonyms were used to preserve anonymity. *Anonymity* refers to the fact that no outsiders can identify the participants except a researcher herself. For the current study schools and participants were not identified by names in any of the ensuing reporting that is associated with the study (see Table 5.2 for details). Participants were informed in the beginning of the study that they would be given a copy of all the activities they undertook during the research period. Therefore after the data transcription participants were given copies and after their perusal some amendments were made and they allowed the researcher to continue to the analysis. The researcher collected their address, phone number, email to interact with participants regarding data analysis or return of data (Bryman, 1989; Diener & Crandall, 1978). The researcher is expected to store the data securely in a locked cupboard or on password protected computer files for 5 years and then all tapes and video records will be destroyed.

#### **5.11.4 Privacy for research participants**

Privacy is a concept in research ethics which states that a person in human subject research has a right to privacy when participating in research (Wilkinson, 2001). In social research, researchers are normally using interviews where the research participant is a respondent. Therefore, in the process of data generation privacy of her/his information delivering and identity is needed. People decide to participate in research for any number of different reasons, such as a personal interest, a desire to promote research which benefits their community, or for other reasons. For this study the researcher protected the identities of participants as was described in details in section 5.9.1. The researcher did not situate any possibility which any one could connect the identities of study participants with their input into the study.

#### **5.11.5 Potential harm to participants**

Harm to research participants can take several forms. It can be physical and psychological, and can involve hurting or inflicting pain, forcing participants to participate on the study, inducing stress in study participants, and lack of trust between the researcher and participants (Cohen et al., 2007; Wilkinson, 2001). Any study that causes harm to its participants is considered unethical and undesirable.

In this study no potential harm was observed whether physical or psychological upset. Participants were treated with respect and without being coerced. The researcher of the current study avoided potential harm to the status of the pre-schools involved by exercising care with information accessed, conversations held and suggestions made. Participants had been given assurances regarding the disposal of the data and the confidentiality of the research process. The researcher conducted interviews during lunch times.

#### **5.11.6 Right of withdrawal**

Cohen et al. (2007) articulate that the person is free to withdraw consent and to discontinue participation in the study at any time without prejudice to the

participant. Being a participant is voluntary and is not linked to appraisal or grading. So, participants have the right to withdraw their data any time up until they had approved their interview transcripts. For this study all participants participated from the beginning of the study up to the time they read and approved their interview transcripts and early analysis.

### **5.11.7 Cultural and social considerations**

The data generation for this study took place in the researcher's own country, Tanzania. Research participants used Kiswahili Language (the national language) to explain the information related to the research (see section 5.9.1 for details). The social and cultural practices that were associated with the participants were very familiar to the researcher, for example, when the researcher visited parents at their home for interviews and needed to speak with a father of the house; she had first to request a go ahead from a wife. It is a culture of most African societies, Tanzanian in particular, for a woman or man not to speak with someone's husband or wife in home without seeking a go ahead from a wife/husband. So, during the data generation of the research, the researcher kept this in mind. The researcher created an environment that was supportive to all of the participants. In addition, there were no cultural harm occurred as the researcher shares the same culture as participants.

### **5.12 Summary of the Chapter**

This chapter focused on the methodological practices for this study. The study was positioned in the interpretive paradigm and involved the generation of qualitative data. The research design was indicated in a diagrammatic form whereby the main components that summarizes the research design were indicated. That is, the interconnection of philosophical worldviews, strategies of inquiry, and research methods. The case study design was used to explore the research questions. Participants were selected using the purposive sampling technique. Moreover, the data was generated using interviews, focus group discussion, observation, informal conversations, and documentary review. Trustworthiness

for qualitative research criteria was discussed and ethical considerations employed by the study were also presented in detail.

The results are presented in the next two chapters (local level findings and national level findings) according to the themes developed and related to the research questions.

The next chapter presents the findings obtained from the local level, i.e., teachers, parents and ECEC children.



## **CHAPTER 6**

### **FINDINGS FROM THE LOCAL LEVEL SITES**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings obtained from the local level participants. Primarily, the data generated were used for the purpose of revealing the big picture about how teachers enacted the pre-school education curriculum and the associated pedagogies. The study took place in three sites; targeting the government educational officials (national level), and two sites at the local level; one rural public pre-school and one urban public pre-school. The findings have been organised into two chapters. This chapter presents findings from the local level participants (teachers, ECEC children, and parents), while Chapter 7 presents findings from the government educational officials (national level) participants. The details of the study sites and participants are presented in Figure 6.1 and Table 6.1 below. The findings were organised into themes based on the main research question which investigated possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in the enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy in Tanzania. To achieve comparable information, the interview themes are overlapping and similar for both groups of study participants at the two levels. Representative quotations and examples have been used to illustrate arguments made.

This chapter is divided into nine sections. The first section introduces the key ideas and the outline of this chapter. The second section describes the study sites and research participants; the data generated and research participants by location. The third section reports findings related to government commitment for pre-school education, followed by the fourth section which presents results from parents and community involvement in children's learning. The fifth section reports results related to teaching and learning resources, materials, and teaching and learning environments. The sixth section presents findings related to the pedagogy of teachers followed by the seventh section which reports findings

related to curriculum development processes. The final section outlines results related to politics in educational matters.

This chapter uses data derived from individual and group interviews, classroom observations, and documentary review from the local level group related to pre-school education curriculum enactment and pedagogical practices. Also, information regarding views, opinions, and perceptions of issues, possibilities, and experiences in curriculum enactment will be presented. Differences between the curriculum enactment in the two locations (public urban and rural pre-school settings) will be presented within the chapter.

## 6.2 Study Sites, Research Participants, and Data Generated

Possibilities, experiences, and issues that might emanate when teachers enact the Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum and the associated pedagogies were studied within three locations. The following diagram presents the study sites and research participants at the three locations.

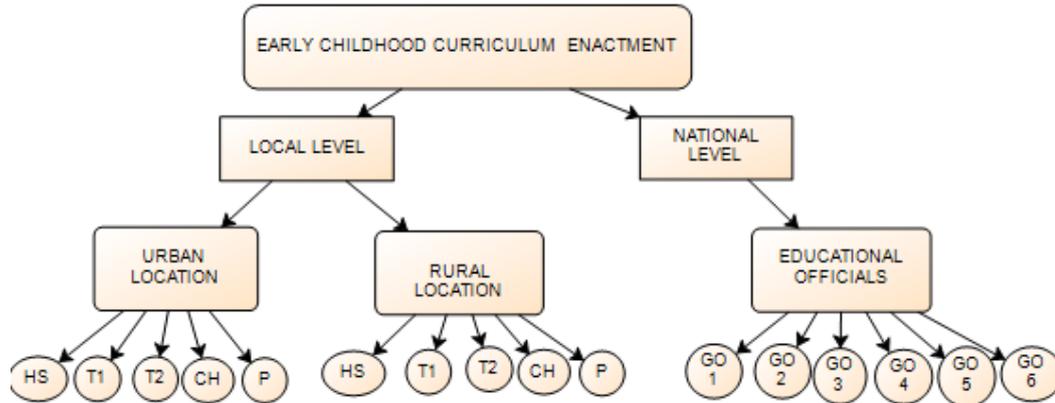


Figure 6.1 Study sites and participants

**Notes:** HS- Head of school; T1-Teacher one; T2 –Teacher two; CH- ECEC Children; P- Parents; GO’s- Educational (government) officials

A summary of data generated from the research participants by location is presented in the Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1

*Data Generated from Research Participants by Location and Number of Participants*

Data generated	Research participants	Locations			Total
		Educational officials	Urban school	Rural school	
Interviews, documentary review	MoEVT, TIE, REO's, and WEC	6			6
Interviews, observations, and documentary review	Teachers and ECEC children		9	9	18
Interviews	Parents		2	2	4
<b>Total</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>28</b>

**Notes:** MoEVT- Ministry of Education and Vocational Training; TIE-Tanzania Institute of Education (curriculum developers); REO-Regional Education Officials; WEC-Ward Education Coordinator; ECEC- Early Childhood Education.

The next sections present the findings according to the themes reflected in the research questions.

### **6.3 Government Commitment to Pre-school Education**

The government's commitment and funding to pre-school education was explained by the local level participants. Both Head Teachers from rural and urban areas pointed out that the government through the Ministry of Education promised to supply *Quota Budget Code* to pre-school education. *Quota Budget Code* refers to the system of supplying grants to schools, teacher education, and higher institutions in a quarterly basis. However, at the time this study was conducted the allocation of funds for the pre-school education through *Quota Budget Code* was not yet implemented.

The two Head Teachers explained the quarterly grants they normally get for running primary schools (*Quota Budget Code*). The government told Head Teachers to support a pre-school class if there was any surplus, but the Head Teachers reported that the amount even for primary education was not sufficient to meet primary students' needs and was not coming in on time. The pre-school does not have its own budget. Pre-school education is therefore funded through

the parents and community donations organised by local committees. The following quotes illustrate these points:

Yeah....! Actually the pre-school class has no budget and there is no surplus remaining from the primary school budget because even in primary school the amount is not enough. The amount of money is calculated based on the number of pupils in a particular school but I normally receive low amounts compared to the number of pupils. The government says each pupil should receive Tanzanian shillings 25,000/= per quota per pupil but the amount coming is less than what was said. When I ask for clarification from the Ministry of Education officials, the response is, the government is supplying according to the amount available [Mtagimale/HS-G/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

Mtagimale and Adiya, the Head Teachers of pre-schools G and Z commented that, in the primary school, the government provides capitation grants along with the required distribution in percentages of how the amount should be used. The official distribution includes 40% for buying books, 20% for stationary, 10% for examinations, 20% for maintenance, and 10% for office use. However, Head Teachers reported that the school management sometimes adjusts the distribution according to their own needs. For example, the amount located for January to March 2012 in the urban school (G) was adjusted to 30% stationery, 30% maintenances, 20% examinations and 20% office use, leaving no funding for buying books.

All study participants in the local level blamed the government for placing no priority on pre-school education. They mentioned that priorities are located in primary school, secondary school, teacher education, and higher levels. For example, *Msimighutwa*, a teacher at Pre-school Z reported:

Of course...Yeah!!.....The government is not thinking about putting effort into pre-school because if it had been serious it would have shown some effort. As I have told you previously, I have been in a teaching post for almost 35 years, 25 years teaching primary education and 10 years teaching pre-schools on a contract basis because I am a retired teacher. So I know apart from the shortage in its budget the government is ignoring investment in pre-school education [Msimighutwa/T2-Z/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

*Rebeca*, a teacher from Pre-school Z in rural location narrated a similar story with great feelings. She argued for the local community to take a stronger advocacy role and criticised government officials for the quality of their advice on pre-school education. The following quotes illustrate this view:

It seems that the government does not remember whether it formalised pre-school education. To me, I see the local community is not serious; it could force the government to support pre-school education. The parents and community members are always busy with school-based activities. Therefore, the community members through their local community leaders could question the role of the government in the provision of education. In my view the government has a lot of money, but there is too much corruption. And [government officials] are not providing good advice to the government during the annual budget round. Government officials are politicians so they just favour their own interests and the Ministry of Education professionals do not remind the government to provide funds for pre-school education [Rebeca/ T1-Z/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

She went on to report the low priority the government shows for ECEC and that parents are not comfortable with donations:

Yes!.....You know! This is the lowest level of education and the government does not regard it as a priority. The government sees investment in these young children as a waste of money and many people are tired of donations and say enrolling children in ECEC is a waste of money because children are just making songs, plays, and taking porridge then going home [Rebeca/ T1-Z/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

Referring to Rebeca's quote the present study revealed that there was ignorance from the government and the community at large concerning the concept of early childhood education and care. As a result they did not see the importance of investing in young children.

In addition, all local level participants complained that lack of funds was a source of failure to support children's learning with the resources available. The local level participants emphasised that everything needs money, so parents and the community are responsible for contribution. However, not all parents were able to pay money and as a result pre-school classes remain under resourced. The view was supported by data from the literature which indicated that many people were

living in dire situations, with high rates of poverty, child labour, and incidences of HIV/AIDS as detailed in Section 1.3.1.2.

The lack of government commitment to supporting pre-school education has given rise to much concern for parents and community and a loss of faith in their government. For example, *Belitho* a parent from Pre-school G commented:

The government is making it burdensome for parents by requiring them to make a lot of contributions to run pre-school education. The school management says that there is no budget for pre-school education, so I fail to understand why the government does not support pre-school education [Belitho/ P1-G/Interview].

He argued that government funding could pay for basic costs:

Look here.....! The government could help parents by providing funds to run pre-school classes and also money for porridge and food and paying attendants for preparing meals. "*Kukithiri kwa wingi wa michango tunayodaiwa shuleni, umekuwa mzungu mkubwa kwa wazazi ndo maana wazazi wengine wanawaficha watoto wao wasiende shule*" [Translation]. There are a lot of contributions required for pre-school education which are burdensome to many parents; instead other parents hide their children until the time of primary school age [Belitho/ P1-G/ Interview].

Another parent from the same school as *Belitho* had a view that the government has sufficient money to support pre-school education but has not taken on the responsibility. The following extracts illustrate this view:

Oh!!...I am sure the government has a lot of money, because farmers and livestock keepers pay high taxes for their livestock every month and when selling our crops in the market the government collects tax every day, so where does the money go? Apart from that all people doing business are usually charged tax every month so the government collects a lot of money from various sources and all the cars you see moving on the roads pay tax. We are tired of making lots of contributions to support this education. It would be wise if the government could provide free pre-school education. But here only parents with children are responsible for everything concerning pre-school classes. We thought the government should be responsible for buying books and facilities; in contrast everything is done by ourselves. Often my child comes back home with the contribution reminder note.....!! [Sela/ P2-G/ Interview].

The views from parents indicated that they were uncomfortable regarding the contributions, and sometimes some parents failed to contribute due to their low socio-economic status. As a result their children do not get services like porridge and this frustrates children. When the focus group discussion was rolling, the following statement was made by *Bernard* a pupil at Pre-school G:

I like taking porridge and food because I stay at school for so many hours without taking anything for my stomach. Teacher *Satu* said my parents refused to donate for porridge and food so when my friends take porridge I remain aside [Bernard/ Pupil- G/ Focus group Interview].

The explanations from Bernard's quote indicates the possibility of creating poor relationships between Bernard and his parents, as he thinks that his parents have no concern to provide a contribution of money for his meal at pre-school. And this may build a long lasting hate by Bernard for his parents which can cause psychological harm.

Similarly, all four parents in both locations (urban and rural) had many criticisms concerning the government for not supporting pre-school education. For example, *Tripho* a parent from the Pre-school Z located in the rural area had this to say:

The government is placing a burden on parents; there are lots of contributions, we pay teachers, a security guard, buy books and incur other expenses. Every parent with a child in a pre-school class is contributing Tanzanian shillings 1500/=per month. *Basically the state of our income is low, we survive on farming activities and the price of inputs is very large, so we are not producing sufficient good products, so there is no surplus and every year we are left without money, and at school they want donations. Now where will we get money"? Some parents do not send their children to school due to such a burden in terms of contributions [Tripho/ P1-Z/Interview]. (The italic phrase above was narrated with very great feelings).*

Furthermore, parents complained of paying a lot of money to support pre-school education and reported that teachers were not serious because they train children in songs instead of teaching lessons. The following extract illustrates the views of pre-school teaching:

.....of course we pay a lot of money and children much of the time are just singing and not learning. We need our children to know reading, writing, and counting and to be honest, when we, parents fail to pay school contributions children get harassed by teachers and as a result they run away to cities and become street children and child labour [Belitho/ P1-G/ Interview].

The above quote from Belitho, a parent, indicates many complaints regarding teachers that they used too much time in singing with children instead of teaching lessons. This view implies that parents lack knowledge of the importance of expressive and creative arts for children. To them teaching means just academic issues, i.e. cognitive skills. Together with this, parents reported the failure of contribution leads to children dropping out and becoming street children and being used for child labour. So this view also gives signals about why few children attend the pre-school settings.

In summary, the above section indicated that the government seemed not to be committed to investing in pre-school education and just left the education to be funded by parents and community. This created huge burdens for families whose socio-economic status was low especially in rural areas. All the local level participants blamed the government for not prioritising ECEC matters. The cost of pre-school was a reason why parents did not enrol their children. In addition, a number of participants did not see value in the teaching through songs that they saw happening in pre-schools.

### **6.3.1 Teacher education and professional development**

Another sub-theme which emerged from the local level group was the qualifications of teachers and professional development. Six teachers out of the ten members in the local schools described that in 2003 the government incorporated ECEC topics in the teacher education curriculum which prepares primary school teachers. One teacher explained that she had received few topics concerning ECEC in the primary school teachers' programme during her teacher education. She reported that, ECEC courses are taught as a subject and not as a programme in the Grade III 'A' certificate (primary school teacher) and there was no ongoing professional development after qualifying as a teacher. The following

quotes illustrate this point:

I am a Grade III 'A' primary teacher; I have a certificate in teaching primary school education. I have been in a teaching post since 2008 when I completed my Grade III 'A' teacher education. I started teaching in primary schools but since 2010, I teach Primary school Grade one and pre-school classes due to the shortage of teachers. In my Grade III 'A' course we had been taught few topics concerning ECEC matters. However, although tutors guided us partially in ECEC the concentration was on primary education courses. In addition, since my employment I have never attended any workshop, seminar or in-service teacher education [Satu/ T1-G/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

She went on to report the importance of specialised skills for ECEC teachers:

Yeah.....I teach using my primary school experiences and a little knowledge I got from early childhood topics in the college. During my teacher education I concentrated on primary school courses because tutors themselves concentrated on teaching primary school courses. I did not expect to teach this class. I know pre-school children need special care compared to older children but in this school there are no specialised pre-school teachers. However, through my teaching and from parents' reports and other children's peers I manage to identify children with special needs and I try to help them accordingly [Satu/ T1-G/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

*Rebeca* a teacher from Z Pre-school located in rural area received some childcare education through a private institution, but the course focused on childcare rather than early education stimulation and she had had no professional development since taking up teaching in pre-school. She reported:

I completed primary education in 1998 and I did not get an opportunity for secondary education. Then I decided to be a house keeper to a certain family for three years in a town. Thereafter I left the job and joined a certain lady in saloon activities in town. In 2006 I saw an advertisement concerning a one year training course for child care. So I decided to apply and attended the one year course in child care conducted in a private institute called Mitumba in the Morogoro region. The college deals mainly with child care for children under 5 years old. So I have a Montessori certificate from a one year course in child care. However, since I joined teaching this pre-school I have not attended any professional course, in-service teacher education, seminar or workshops in relation to pre-school education. My course was more about childcare but here I teach children writing, reading, and arithmetic,

we say 3Rs. I need more knowledge in teaching pre-school but the government is silent on this issue [Rebeca/ T1-Z/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

The qualification of teachers and professional development was a critical issue. Three teachers acknowledged that they had inadequate knowledge for teaching pre-school because they were not prepared during their teacher education. The two teachers from the urban area were trained to teach primary schools so did not have early childhood specific teacher education. In the rural area one was a retired teacher holding a Grade III 'C' certificate in primary school education and the other one had just completed her primary education and had attended a one year Montessori training course in child care in a private institute. This course is more about caring for children less than five years old rather than early education. The documentary review indicated that "child care" suggests custodial physical caregiving, nurturing, and supervision whereas "education" suggests early education stimulation to enhance children's learning. In addition, Grade III 'C' refers to a completion of only primary school education and then enrolment in a two year certificate in teacher education for primary school teaching. This programme has not been in place since the 1980s. The following extract illustrates the points made above as reported by *Adiya*, the Head of the Pre-school Z:

In my school there are two pre-school teachers; both are volunteers, one is a retired teacher holding a GRADE III 'C' certificate in primary school education and another one completed just primary education and attended a one year course in child care in a private institute. So she has a Montessori certificate. Therefore both are working under contract basis and are paid a small honorarium by parents. However, since they came here they have not attended any seminar, workshop, and in-service teacher education because there is no arrangement from the government under Ministry of Education concerning professional development even for primary school teachers [Adiya/HS-Z/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

Furthermore, during the interviews and classroom observation the researcher noted that the pre-school teachers in rural areas seemed to be just passing their time. For example, when the researcher tried to tell them of the importance of professional development they did not seem very willing to know details, especially an older woman, a retired teacher. The following response illustrates her views:

.....Hahahaaaaa.....!!(Laughing).....! My daughter, you do not make me laugh! My age is 65 year olds I am not interested in in-service teacher education, seminars or whatever, let me continue with chatting, singing and playing with these little children as the days go. These children are like my grandchildren they like very much stories and songs, so sometimes I narrate them various stories when they wait for their parents to pick them up or in classroom as a means of keeping the class quiet...(Researcher).....Are the children making stories and songs during teaching sessions?) (Teacher): No, they could but due to lack of time in the classroom, they just listen to me!.....(Researcher): Why do you not use stories during class session? (Teacher): Oh!.... my daughter time is limited.....they have to read, write and do mathematics....Hahahaaaaa....! (Laughing).....![Msimighutwa/ T2-Z/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

This conversation between the researcher and teacher is of very much interest. It seemed that telling stories and singing in classroom teaching time was not valued. The researcher thought that, making stories and songs could be done in the classroom during teaching and learning practices. Teaching through children's participation in plays, songs and stories seemed not to count as educational in the minds of teachers who rather focused on teacher-centred learning.

Teaching through songs and storytelling is valuable because it helps to develop communication skills, and understanding in language practice and literacy. It builds children's abilities in oral language skills that develop over time through interactions with parents/adults, teachers, and peers. Learning experiences in these domains can help to build the skills, knowledge, and attitudes.

The issue of little or no ECEC teacher qualifications and limited opportunities for professional development was raised by *Karola* a teacher from G Pre-school. She commented:

I am a GRADE III 'A' teacher with a certificate in primary education I have experience in teaching since 1990, in different primary schools for 18 years and pre-schools for 5 years. I and my fellow teacher, we teach Grade one and pre-school streams due to the shortage of teachers. Basically, I have no training in ECEC courses because during our time there were no ECEC topics in our curriculum or in a syllabus. The ECEC topics were incorporated in the teacher education curriculum for primary school teachers in 2003; before that it was just an optional course for in-service

primary teachers for a short period of time for anyone who liked it. The course was offered by people from the Social Welfare Department under the Ministry of Community Development, Women and Gender...now it is called Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children [Karola/T2-G/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

In the previous section the main concern was about untrained teachers teaching pre-school classes. Teachers talked about the fact that the teacher education curriculum incorporated few topics concerning ECEC matters in the primary school teachers' programme. ECEC topics were additional to primary school courses and not delivered as an ECEC programme. Teacher participants mentioned the lack of expert tutors in ECEC topics, and that there was no ongoing professional development after qualifying as a teacher. For example, in the urban area one teacher taught using experiences she got during her teacher education of Grade III 'A' certificate in primary school with ECEC courses in her program. While the other one had no experience with ECEC matters, as during her teacher education of Grade III 'A' certificate in primary school, there were no ECEC courses in the programme. The next section presents findings concerning parents' and community involvement in their children's learning.

#### **6.4 Parents and Community Involvement in Children's Learning**

Another theme that emerged in the data from the local level group was that of parents' and community involvement in pre-school education curriculum enactment. All four parents in the local level groups mentioned their involvement and participation in various community activities such as school-based manual activities and events, parents' meetings, and contributions in monetary form. The following quotes illustrate this point:

Yes...! Parents play a great role in pre-school education! We are involved in various school-based activities such as attending parents' meetings, school events, volunteer works such as building and/or renovations and maintenance of classrooms, making desks and tables as well as monetary contributions in order to develop our school. School boards and parent committees have the role of working out how to run the school development including making the budget for school requirements such as buying text books, paying the school security guard, and all other needs related to school development [Belito/ P1-G/ Interview].

On the other hand in relation to parents' and community involvement in pre-school education *Belito* commented on the roles performed by the local committees in conducting pre-schools. However, he reported the difficulties the committees face in collection of money from the community, and especially for parents who have no children at the pre-school settings. As a result parents with children at pre-school settings found it was compulsory for them to contribute. The local communities are important in the development of pre-school education so proper logistics are needed to make sure that all community members contribute. For example, *Belitho* reported that only some parents contribute financially and through volunteer support.

As I have said previously parents do a lot, the government has left the parents to run the pre-school class, it was agreed in the public meeting that the whole community was responsible for contributions, but in contrast many people who have not children in pre-school class are not paying contributions. Some parents with no children in the pre-school class just attend school-based manual activities. But for me I have to contribute Tanzania shillings 5000/=per month as well as attending the school manual activities. The Tanzania shillings 5000/= per month was for every family within the community but some members do not contribute. As a result only parents and guardians who have children in pre-school classes donate the funds. There are many and various activities here but many parents do not attend to the volunteer activities. Instead they go to various informal labour and business activities in order to raise their family income and make money for school needs [*Belitho/ P1-G/ Interview*].

Similar views were made by *Aji* a parent from Z school located in rural areas about the lack of government responsibility for pre-school. Parents are struggling to raise incomes for their families and still they have to support education for their children. Parents insisted on the need for the government to support pre-school education including paying salaries for teachers. The following extracts illustrate their views:

Yeah! Here in rural areas the situation is bad, our economic status is low and we mainly depend on farming activities and always our community leaders and teachers talk about school contributions. Surprisingly, every parent with a child in pre-school class pays teachers' salaries amounting to Tanzania shillings 1500/=per month as an honorarium. This amount is very little for teachers, so

where is our government? Furthermore, I get home tired from attending school-based manual activities as well as personal chores. Teachers are telling us to support children in learning at home, checking their home works and exercises. I think the urban parents can manage this, I doubt if my fellow parents here in rural areas can do it .....hahahaaa.....! (Laughing). So many parents and community at large are not conversant with this situation because we think running education is the duty of our government. And people always complain in the parents and public meetings but there are no responses from the government. As a result some people do not contribute money; rather they attend the school-based manual activities [Aji/P2-Z/Interview].

She went on to report the difficulties rural people face in raising their income as they depend much more on farm activities at the local level and the weather is not predictable for sustaining their crops, drought and floods occur:

Look here.....! I have four children and *John* aged 6 year olds is my last born studying in pre-school class. Our life is very difficult because we depend only on farm activities to get money for our daily use and other expenses for our children at school. Actually the contribution in terms of money is frustrating me but I am okay with human activities (volunteer works). Getting money in the village is very difficult because of drought or floods depending on weather changes. The weather condition here is not predictable due to the semi-arid zone. *“In reality here in the village there is famine, the sun rises and crops get dry. So where can I get money for donations for school? Government is obliged to provide school services”* [Aji/P2-Z/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview]. (The italic phrase above was narrated two times with great feelings.

Furthermore, parents from the rural area reported various discriminatory and detrimental cultural aspects which hinder a girl child from attending a pre-school. For example, *Tripho*, a rural parent showed she was keen for her children to get to schools. She reported to be against the discrimination she experienced from her parents of favouring boys going to schools more than girls as well as detrimental cultural beliefs which hinder a girl child from attending the pre-schools. She reported:

Hi!.....Yeah!....My intention is to make sure that my children go further educational wise. You know, my parents did not send me to school because I am a woman but my brothers attended schools. My father said that girls are not supposed to go to schools. Schools were for boys, girls after their maturity or even before should get

married and the family will increase income through the bride price. And it was a tendency of some parents to receive the bride price when the child is still small, so she grows up knowing that she will be married by somebody. In rural areas such culture still exists. [Tripho/ P1-Z/Interview].

The interview with parents from the urban areas concerning their involvement in community activities brought some interesting ideas that were different from what was found in interviews in the rural areas. *Sela* a form six leaver (an advanced level of secondary education) a, mother of *Alpher* aged 6 year olds from Pre-school G in an urban area, described the reluctance of government to support pre-school education and her view that government receives much funding and is corrupt in not passing this on. This was portrayed as a reason why she would not volunteer. She commented:

Yeah....! The government has lots of money collected through various taxes. For me I will never attend to school-based manual activities because this government is very corrupt.... hahahaaa!! (Laughing).....Yeah!..... Look here all shops, markets, transport and other businesses pay taxes, all government servants and private servants pay taxes through their salaries. So the government through the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) collects a lot of money plus gets money from external sources. We are blessed with a lot of natural resources such as natural gas, national parks, mountains, minerals, forests and so many others. So, where does the money go? Personally I thank very much the multi-party system because the opposition parties are trying to educate us about how the government misuses funds. The government is responsible for giving education to its people from pre-school to higher levels. I contribute Tanzanian shillings.5000/= per month for school development I will never attend the volunteers' school activities such as making bricks, buildings classrooms or renovations and maintenance [Sela/ P2-G/ Interview].

Basically, the researcher found that parents held many burdens, for the reason that all the community members were responsible for running school development but if the community members do not turn up, parents who have children in the particular class were held responsible. All parents and teachers in the group had the view that the situation was not fair because it was harming parents who have pre-school children at school. As a result some parents did not send their children to school due to the frequencies of demand for contributions in monetary form

coupled with their own levels of poverty. For example, *Tripho* a parent from Pre-school Z located in a rural area gave out her views regarding parents' participation on school activities. The following quotes illustrate this point:

Basically I am in stress; I have five children, one is studying in secondary school, two in primary school, *Anna* aged 5 years old is in a pre-school class and the last born is not yet started. My husband is doing carpentry activities and I am doing farm activities in a communal form with my friends in order to raise our income. *"I used to grow sunflowers in previous years and harvest very little because sunflowers in our area are very vulnerable to disease and poor farming methods. Last year I changed and grew maize but due to weather changes this year (drought) all crops have dried out. So what can I donate? I think my child will not continue with the school"* [Tripho/ P2-Z/Interview]. (The italic phrase was narrated two times with great feelings and emphasis).

The parents in this section showed how much they were tired of continuous demands for donations for running pre-school education. On the one hand, this is the strength of the system for the involvement of community. But it seems too much is asked of it in terms of funding education. It would be sounder if their involvement could be in partnership with their government. Also one participant seemed to be saying the government has money but is not taking on ECEC matters. She suggested that the government is corrupt and its allocation of resources and materials is poor.

In addition, the two Head of schools from the rural and urban areas viewed the difficulties in running schools as dependant on the funds received from parents. A lot of pre-school matters need money and not all parents manage to contribute. They also reported that in other areas children are taught by primary school teachers but in other places even primary schools teachers for primary classes are not enough so the school boards and local committees find volunteers to teach, and parents and guardians are responsible for payments.

There were differences between the situations and views of participants in rural and urban areas. Teacher and parent participants from the rural area reported that people did not have money in the village because they depended on the field to raise their income. And the weather conditions were not predictable, sometimes

floods or drought occurred and as a result only parents with children at school were required to contribute. This was regarded as unfair.

In contrast, parent participants in the urban area reported that many people in the urban areas preferred to contribute money instead of undertaking school-based activities. They said manual work utilised much of their time instead of volunteering to raise income for school needs and households. In both locations where the study was conducted, parents reported not helping their children's learning, including homework. The parent participants reported that it was good for them to participate in their children's learning but they used much effort to raise their income in their fields and worked in small businesses to get money for their children and households. So they did not have time to help. The next section presents results concerning parents, guardians, and community awareness of pre-school education.

#### **6.4.1 Parents and community awareness of pre-school education**

One theme in the data from the local level group was that of parents, guardians, and community awareness of the value of sending their children to pre-school class. Participants reported that the awareness of parents and/or guardians concerning pre-school education differed between the rural and the urban areas. Three teacher participants from the urban area reported that a large number of parents were active in sending their children to pre-school class. They said some parents were paying school donations, communicating with teachers concerning the development of their own children and supporting their children by giving them the basic school requirements including school uniforms, exercise books, and pencils. In addition, some parents were active and motivated in making the contribution of Tanzanian shillings amounting to 5000/= in the urban area. As was reported by Mtagimale, a Head Teacher in the urban area:

Basically,.... Here in an urban area a large number of parents and guardians have no problem with contributions in a monetary form. A few parents and guardians are not contributing, not because of poverty but they just ignore contributions and say the government

should provide education for its people including the pre-school services. ....Of course yes, others fail to donate due to poverty but others not! [Mtagimale/ H-G/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

In contrast, parents in the rural area showed low awareness and blamed the government for not supporting pre-school education. Regarding the parents, guardians, and community awareness of pre-school education matters, *Sela* from G Pre-school described how much she participates in the growth and development of her child. She commented:

Yes, I am a business woman, after getting home from my business (Shop) actually I become tired and I could not manage to check what my child has learnt at school. My support to my child is through buying school uniforms, exercise books and pencils. Very rarely on Sunday I teach my children our local language because when we go to our village [the children] fail to communicate with grandparents in their mother tongue [Sela/ P2-G/ Interview].

A similar comment was shared by *Aji*, a parent from Z Pre-school located in the rural area. She says some parents would like their children to learn but financial status is a challenge to them. She commented:

Even if my parents did not send me to school I like school, so I make sure that all my children go to school up to higher levels. We expect our children in future will help us if they succeed through education [Aji/ P2-Z/ Interview].

All teachers recognised that some parents and guardians were not enrolling their children because of their low socio-economic status and that they had to pay school contributions in monetary form. Teacher participants also reported that some parents were not aware of the importance of sending their children to pre-schools. In addition, teachers thought the government is not raising public awareness about the value of pre-school.

Moreover, the researcher was interested to hear from the Head Teachers of the schools in both areas (urban and rural) concerning the level of awareness of parents and guardians about sending their children to school. *Adiya*, the Head Teacher from Pre-school Z located in a rural area described the low rates of enrolment in pre-school education. She commented:

There are so many children in this ward location, but approximately, about 42% of children attend pre-school class, 33% of children go direct to primary school and 25% are not in schooling. In rural areas, parents and guardians are not motivated to send their children to pre-school; their poverty leads them to send their children to do small business in order to raise their family income. Also, parents have the tradition of childrearing; that is leaving small children with children who are also small or pre-adolescents when they go to the school-based manual activities, individual farms, and community activities in order to take care of their young brothers and sisters when parents are away. If in the household there are no other small or older children or families, mothers hold their children, and they do not trust anybody who is a stranger [Adiya/HS-Z/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

Based on the African childrearing system parents do not have trust in strangers for taking care of their children. If there are no family members at home, mothers hold their children with them as depicted in Figure 6.2 which shows parents going to work with their children.



*Figure 6.2* Mothers attending community activities (school building)

**Sources: Researcher in the field (photo was taken by the researcher)**

Having seen the situation in rural areas the researcher had an interview with *Mtagimale*, the Head of Pre-school G located in an urban area. The data indicated that the rate of awareness of parents and guardians about sending their children to pre-school class in an urban area was a bit higher than in the rural area and these

families were better able to afford contributions. The following responses illustrate this view:

Here in the urban area a large number of parents and guardians send their children to pre-school class but a few parents are problematic. They claim that sending children to the pre-school class is a waste of money because children stay in classrooms without learning instead just playing and singing, and this happens because teachers are also teaching in Grade one. So sometimes the pre-school class can stay even a whole week without learning especially during examinations for older pupils as their teachers supervise the examinations.....! Yes...! Their attendance is a bit fine because about 65% of the children with 5 to 6 year olds are registered for the pre-school here, 15% went direct to primary school because their ages were more than 6 years old and about 20% do not attend schools [Mtagimale/ H-G/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

Referring to lack of awareness from parents and guardians about sending their children to pre-school setting, *Adiya* reported the contexts which hinder children from attending pre-schools including living with aged people (grandparents), and inferiority complexes of children themselves due to their dire situation compared to their fellow children who are a bit more well-off. The following extracts illustrate the views:

You know, some children are living with grandparents either after the loss of their parents, early pregnancies or just loving to stay with grandparents for various help due to their age, so you find these grandparents are not motivated to send these children to school. Some parents are discouraged from sending their children to pre-school due to various costs as I told you previously. Also, some children become truants because they feel inferior when they find other children wearing shoes and school uniforms while they have none. Some parents delay sending their children to pre-school and when they are older they send them direct to primary education.....You know! Some pupils come here and are more than 7 years old so they just start with primary education. Some parents bring their children at older ages like 6 years or 6 1/2 years just for the purpose of learning for a short period of time in order to register them for primary school [*Adiya*/ HS-Z/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

The view from *Adiya*'s quotes of parents sending children direct to primary school was also supported by *Karola* and *Satu*, teachers from an urban school. The following quote illustrate the point:

Of course...! Yeah...some parents escape enrolling their children in a pre-school class, and as a consequence when pupils go direct to the primary class they cannot cope with their fellow children because they missed basic foundations such as reading, writing, and arithmetic [Satu/ T1-G/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

Based on lack of awareness and poverty children do not attend schools and look for child labour. The Head Teacher in a rural area showed a sample picture as evidence for children who left a pre-school and were looking for cheap labour in the fields, as seen in Figure 6.3 and 6.4.



*Figure 6.3* Children on their way looking for child labour in the fields

**Source: Head Teacher's office (rural school)**



*Figure 6.4* Children fishing using a mosquito net to raise their income

**Source:** Head Teacher's office (rural school)

The socio-economic status of families in the rural area was not good as people depended much on farming and the weather condition was not predictable. Dodoma region is located in a semi-arid zone, so people try to produce resistant crops but still do not harvest much crops. The researcher found people and children in class and in the streets walking in bare feet. People who were found to be in critical poverty and were helpless to overcome it, so to them when you talk about contributing Tanzanian shillings amounting to 1500/=per month, it sounds like punishment to them.

Furthermore, in regard to the lack of awareness of parents and community in pre-school education matters, parents especially in rural areas engaged with detrimental cultural and traditional beliefs. All members in the local level group except children mentioned the detrimental customs and traditional beliefs which contribute to some parents not sending their children to pre-schools. They mentioned Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) being a terrible culture in the rural areas; it is a culture of cutting the clitoris of a girl child who then cannot attend schools. It was said that after mutilation girls have to remain home waiting for marriage and sometimes they marry before they are matured. It was argued that the practice was taking place due to poverty, sexuality and as a traditional norm.

For girls who are virgin and mutilated the parents get a higher bride price during marriage and are respected compared to parents who do not mutilate their girls. Adiya the Head Teacher of rural school Z reported on this practice and the discrimination that occur for girls in pre-school:

Basically, due to lack of awareness people still follow the detrimental cultural traditions. There is a detrimental cultural belief especially here in rural areas, in which a girl child has to attend Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), so small girls and youngsters are forced to attend and thereafter girls are waiting for marriages. They believe that if a girl child does not attend female genital cutting, she will not be accepted for marriage and that she will be disliked by men and stigmatized. Also, when some small girls are mutilated and may be others are not and attend pre-schools and primary schools, it causes discrimination among them. So, sometimes a non-governmental organisation such as Tanzania Media Women's Association (TAMWA) provides seminars to educate people to stop such cultural beliefs). Another frustrating thing is, due to poverty parents have a tendency to find a man who is a bit well-off and start taking money and other gifts while a child girl is still young for the promise that a man will marry the girl even before maturity....you know...! There are many cases in the court concerning early pregnancies and marriages [Adiya/ H-Z/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

The findings indicate that it was the requirement that girls must be virgins to be considered eligible for marriage and as a consequence this custom contributes to a continuation of the FGM practices. The tradition is sustained by the fear that if a girl is not mutilated she will not be accepted for marriage, and will be disliked by men. This can have serious social consequences and further stigmatisation, and if she happens to get married her children may die during delivery.

Data regarding FGM was also supported by the literature review. The report prepared by the Tanzania Media Women Association (TAMWA) aimed to fight against such detrimental cultural beliefs including FGM. The report indicated that the problem was serious especially in rural areas, and highlighted that poverty is a main source of FGM (TAMWA, 2013).

Together with the mentioned harmful cultural beliefs, another cultural belief raised by teacher and parent participants in the rural area was about witchcraft. Participants reported that parents especially in rural areas are not donating money for porridge not only due to their poverty but also due to traditional beliefs that

they do not trust anybody to prepare porridge and food for their children. They hold a belief that if teachers and parents are not on good terms, teachers can put harmful things in the porridge or foods in order to witch children. In this case the researcher's view is that such prejudices and discrimination commonly stick in children's minds from the early years and if not handled properly can end up with a bad impact. In the same way, in rural areas it was argued that if someone has children who perform well in the class academically the parents use witchcraft to make their children bright in the class. And this would cause negative relationships among parents and their children as well as teachers.

However, such beliefs and customs were viewed negatively by some community members who would not like to believe in witchcraft. For example, rural participants reported that religious leaders normally try to educate people not to believe in detrimental traditions and beliefs which would affect children's growth and learning because of fear followed by discriminatory practices. However, some people continue to hold on to such traditional beliefs. In rural areas people believe more in witchcraft than in arguing things scientifically. For example, *Msimighutwa* a teacher from Pre-school Z located in a rural area narrated:

Yeah!..... Dear guest we love you, so take care ..... in rural areas people are embedded with witchcraft issues they can witch you researcher! Hahahaa..... (Laughing).... Be very aware people are not all good..... Look here.... "*Changamoto iliyopo hapa ni wanafunzi kuchoka haraka kwa sababu ya njaa kwani hawapati uji wala chakula kutokana na wazazi kukataa kuchangia huduma ya chakula. Na wazazi wanadanganyana kutokana na imani potofu ya ushirikina kwamba watoto wanaweza kuwekewa dawa ya kuwaloga kama mwalimu na mzazi hawapatani*". [Translation].... *The big challenge here is, children stay in school for so many hours without taking porridge or food for their stomach and they lose concentration in lessons in the late hours, because their parents refused to donate for porridge and food. Some parents have some misconception that teachers can put poison in the porridge or food if parents and teachers are not on good terms.....* Too much trusting in witchcraft issues in the villages [*Msimighutwa/ T2-Z/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview*] (The Italic phrase above was spoken with much great feeling).

## 6.5 Teaching and Learning Resources and Materials

Another theme which emerged in the data from the local level group was that of lack of teaching and learning resources, materials, and poor teaching and learning environments. The results from interviews, classroom observations, and focus group discussions with teachers and children showed that there were poor teaching and learning resources and materials in rural areas and although in urban areas resources were found, these were not enough for all children. All teachers in the group commented on the lack of curriculum materials. Firstly, all teachers mentioned the lack of copies of the holistic curriculum document and other curriculum materials such as the syllabus, and teachers' guide. They reported these documents to be the key for curriculum enactment but these curriculum materials often did not reach teachers in the field. As well, teachers argued that the holistic curriculum document was not as readily available in the bookshops as were the syllabus and teachers' guide. The same participants reported on poor dissemination of the ECEC curriculum materials including the holistic curriculum document, syllabus (subject domain), teachers' guide (principles of teaching and learning practice), and text books. They planned their teaching through the syllabus and teachers' guide only. It was unclear whether this syllabus was implemented as intended or whether it was available to all teachers, especially in the rural areas.

For example, *Mtagimale* the Head Teacher of Pre-school G located in an urban area confirmed:

Basically, we have no pre-school education curriculum document here and I have never seen it since I got this position about 8 years ago as Head Teacher of this school and I tried to follow up at the Regional education office. The Regional education officials said that the office was following up [to get] the curriculum document, syllabus, and teachers' guide from the Ministry of Education. The Regional education officer promised me that it will not take time to get the curriculum materials but up to this time we have not yet got the documents, and it is 3 years now since I was promised them. Teachers use a syllabus and a teachers' guide as their guidance for curriculum enactment [Mtagimale/ HS-G/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

A similar claim was made by *Satu*, a teacher from Pre-school G who reported:

.....I have never seen a pre-school education curriculum; I have seen the syllabus and teachers' guide which I use in teaching. The curriculum document is not available in the pre-school, we implement [curriculum] through the use of the syllabus and teachers' guide so it would be better if we had the holistic curriculum document then we would be in a good position during implementation. To be aware of what we are supposed to implement rather than enacting the pre-school education curriculum by using the syllabus and teachers' guide alone. We are not aware of what is in the curriculum document.....! Look here this syllabus is a photocopy I made it from my fellow teacher who bought it at the bookshop [Satu/T1-G/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

The researcher saw the photocopied syllabus and teachers' guide which were very detailed, formal, and structured. She asked teachers if they enact the curriculum accordingly apart from missing the holistic curriculum document. The following responses illustrate the view:

Of course....! There are many challenges in enacting the pre-school education curriculum. You know... as you see the syllabus is very detailed with many subject learning activities to do, there are six subject learning activities, (look here.....) and the class is big as you have seen. My stream has 75 children with a single teacher and I also teach in primary school Grade one. So we just teach them writing, reading, and arithmetic. And there are no teaching and learning resources and materials. We try to make locally materials but they are not in good condition [Satu/ T1-G/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

Basically, the government was responsible for the supply of teaching and learning materials and facilities, but these supplies did not turn up. It was argued by teacher participants that government officials, who are also politicians, tended to promise the supply but not deliver. Apart from this, the researcher found few locally made materials and these were not of a good quality. Teachers said they missed the supporting materials which they had to buy from shops but did not have the money for.

Furthermore, all teachers in the group mentioned the lack of teaching and learning resources and materials, including text books, desks, tools, models, tables, chairs, equipment, playing grounds, facilities, and poor buildings. For instance, the researcher saw that all 195 children in a rural area sat on the dust floor and had no

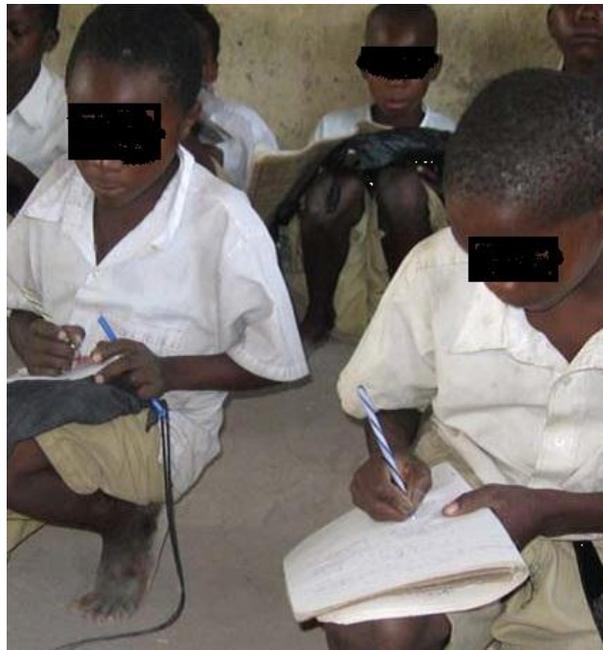
text books and 40 children out of 150 in urban area also sat on the floor and they faced difficulties in writing and had had poor hand writing. A detail of resources at the urban pre-school is outlined on Table 6.2 below. It was a pre-school class with a total number of 150 children, 110 desks, and 30 text books.

Table 6.2

*Resources Available or not Available in the Urban Pre-schools*

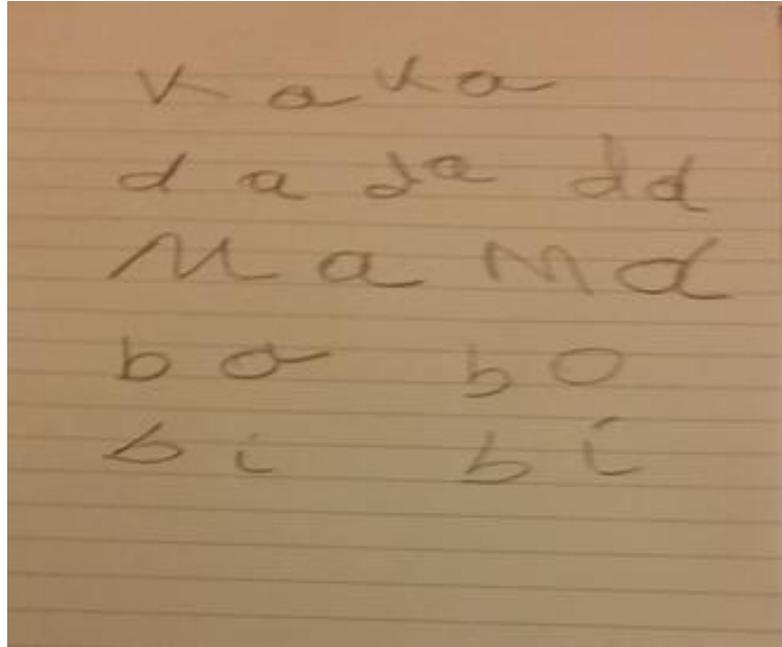
Resources	Available to all children	Available to some children	Not available	Number of children in class
Books	X	30	120	150
Desks	X	110	40	150
Chairs	X	X	X	
Bottle tops, strings of sticks, groupings of small stones	V	X	X	

Figure 6.5 below shows some urban pre-school children who have no desks so they write by putting their notebooks on their laps.



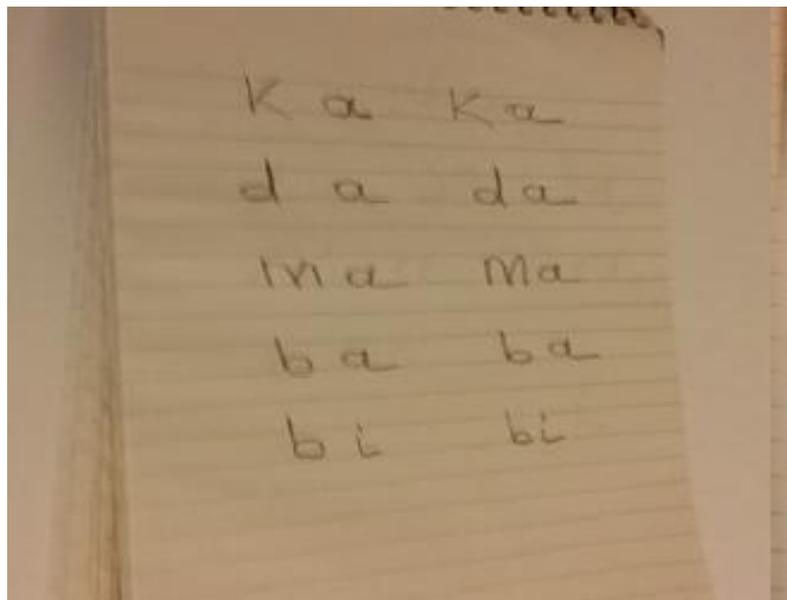
*Figure 6.5* Pre-school children in urban school writing by putting their exercise books on their laps

Figure 6.6 below shows the handwriting of Alpher, a pupil who lacked a desk in an urban school and wrote by putting his exercise book on his lap.



*Figure 6.6* Handwriting of Alpher aged 6 years old at an urban school

Figure 6.7 below shows the handwriting of Eliza who sat at the desk in the urban pre-school.



*Figure 6.7* Handwriting of Eliza aged 5 years old at an urban school

In short the handwriting of the one who sat at a desk was good compared to the one without a desk, and this situation frustrated children without desks when they saw the handwritings of the counterparts.

Referring to the lack of resources and materials, and lack of teachers' pedagogical skill to handle young children the researcher found teacher-centred instruction dominated the learning process. For example, during classroom observations in Z Pre-school located in the rural area in the class (stream 'B') conducted by teacher *Msimighutwa*, the researcher evidenced the following in *Kiswahili* reading activities:

**Teacher:** All children say, "Mama"- Translation- Mother

**Children:** "Mama"- Mother

**Teacher:** All children say, "Baba"- Translation-Father

**Children:** "Baba"- Father

The researcher noted that not all children uttered the guided words, some children were not even looking at their teacher; they were busy with their own businesses. And due to the overcrowded classroom the teacher did not see what all the children were doing. The observation recorded below shows how difficult it was for a sole teacher to manage a class with the result that children did not follow the lesson. This indicates that the teaching and learning environment was not suitable and it was not possible for a sole teacher to manage what each child was doing. See below an informal conversation among children:

**One pupil says:** *Twiyandile* listen to me, tomorrow my father will take me for hunting..... Okay!.... even me I will go with my brother to fishing at "Nyololo" river..... Oh! *Ezekiel* .....please give me my rubber please, no it is not yours it belongs to *Dorah*... **One pupil shouts....**Teacher, teacher, teacher *Msimighutwa* look here *Mwangupile* is beating me...! [Children/ Pre-school- Z/ Informal conversation while a lesson was going on].

Furthermore, an observation was conducted with another stream (stream 'A') in the same room. The lesson was conducted by teacher *Rebeca* in the same school Z in the rural area:

**Teacher:** All children stand up!

**Children:** We are standing up!

**Teacher:** Count one up to twenty!

**Children:** One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, *fifteen, eighteen, sixteen, fourteen, seventeen.*

The researcher observed children started counting correctly up to thirteen: from fourteen they were just following the child who starts to vocalise a certain number whether correct or not and it was not correct sequence of numbering. Then the teacher *Rebeca* ordered them to follow her counting from one up to twenty in a chorus form. Having seen the situation and not being satisfied with such learning, the researcher was interested to know if pupils were aware of the figures for the numbers they were uttering. Therefore, just for interest she communicated in a friendly way with the teacher for further analysis. Thereafter, teacher *Rebeca* called four children randomly and said:

**Teacher:** Jesca, Hamphrey, Neema and Michael come in front with your exercise books.

**Children:** Yes, Madam Rebeca.

**Teacher:** Please, write in your exercise books in figures the following numbers; eight, nine, ten and eleven.

**Jesca:** I don't know, give me your book teacher so that I can copy the figures.....!

**Hampfrey:** I don't know.

**Neema:** ..... (*Silence*)

**Michael:** I will ask my brother *Nicholaus* to help in home.

Through observations children seemed not to be aware of the numerical figures which the teacher had just guided them to sound. It seemed like a common song and children were not aware of the content. Figure 6.8 below shows counting numbers up to 10 which teacher *Rebeca* wrote for children to copy in their exercise books.



Figure 6.8 Counting numbers on the blackboard at the rural pre-school

The situation was a bit different with teachers in the urban area. For example, during classroom observations in Pre-school G in the classroom with teacher *Satu*, the researcher evidenced the following in an *arithmetic* lesson:

**Teacher:** Good morning pupils

**Children:** Good morning madam Satu

**Teacher:** Are you Okay?

**Children:** Yes madam Satu we are all Okay

**Nemes (a pupil):** Excuse me madam, Janet today is sick her mum gave me a note to give you, it is here.....

**Teacher:** Okay, you are a good boy for keeping a note properly, thank you, all seats down

Thereafter greetings the teacher started a lesson as follows:

**Teacher:** Yesterday we learnt about counting numbers up to 10, now I am writing few numbers on the black board and you will tell me what the numbers are. That are; 1, 3, 6, 5, 4,.....9.

The teacher used a pointer to point to a certain number and children raised their hands and got the number right.

**Teacher:** Thank you children, today we continue from number 10 to 20. Then she wrote 11, 12, 13,.....20 on the blackboard.

Then she started uttering the numbers 11, 12, 13, 14....20 and showed the number with her pointer and children followed her attentively. Thereafter, she asked them

for a number randomly and they answered well. This shows that urban school teachers were a bit more knowledgeable in teaching compared to the rural teachers, although their experiences of teaching Grade one pupil made them teach young pre-school children as if they were Grade one pupils. Children seemed attentive to follow up the lesson.

*Satu* a teacher in Pre-school G claimed that since the government did not supply teaching and learning resources, and parents could not afford these, she used resources collected by children and made this herself:

Basically, for these diagrams and pictures you see pasted on the walls I used my own money to buy manila sheets, glue and marker pens. The government does not supply teaching and learning resources and materials; it has left all these things to the parents and community to supply. And parents do not have enough money. So I normally direct children to collect bottle tops, small stones and sticks for counting purposes. Sometime I request manila sheets from the Head for making counting cards, alphabets, doing drawings and other uses but the Head says there is no money available to buy manila sheets and other teaching and learning materials [Satu/T1-G/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

Figure 6.9 below shows various pictures drawn and pasted on walls for children to copy at the rural school.

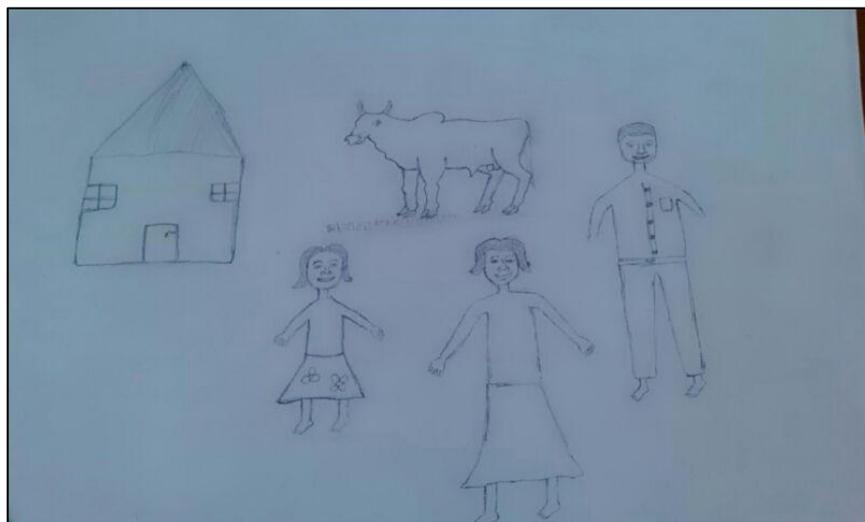


Figure 6.9 *Various pictures drawn on manila sheet and pasted on walls in the rural school*

Figure 6.10 below shows various pictures drawn and pasted on walls for English learning activities at the urban school.



Figure 6.10 Various pictures drawn on manila sheet and pasted on walls at the urban school

The Figure 6.11 shows a certified book for public pre-schools which has the Ministry of Education Logo and Certification “*Nembo ya Wizara na Cheti cha Ithibati*”. Parents were supposed to buy certified books for their children; however, certified books were not available.



Figure 6.11 Nembo ya wizara na cheti cha ithibati (Ministry of Education Logo and Certification)

Referring to the lack of teaching and learning resources, teacher *Msimighutwa*; from the rural school commented on the government focus on enrolment without due consideration for teaching and learning resources, space, class size and ratios:

The government does not supply teaching and learning resources and materials; the buildings as you see are very poor without furniture. The government just insists on increasing the rate of enrolment without thinking about how these children can learn. The teaching and learning here is problematic, I have no more words but everything here is in a poor situation. Let us go to the class you will see yourself the situation, we have 195 children with two streams 'A' and 'B' but both use the same classroom looking in opposite directions. Stream 'A' has 98 while stream 'B' has 97 children. There are no texts books, no desks, tables and chairs, poor teaching and learning environments, children are sitting on the dust floor. And sometimes we miss chalk boards so I take children out of the class and guide them to write on the sand, thereafter children write in their exercise books [*Msimighutwa/ T2-Z/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview*].

Figure 6.12 shows the congested children in the rural classroom waiting for their teacher to come.



*Figure 6.12* Pre-school children in the class waiting for their teacher to come for a lesson

Figure 6.13 below shows children in the urban area school waiting for their parents to pick them up for home.



*Figure 6.13* Pre-school children at the urban pre-school

In general, data from classroom observations and participant interviews indicated the dire situation in pre-school education in terms of buildings, resources, materials, large class sizes with a single teacher. Children were found to be not comfortable and happy especially in the rural school whose physical conditions were worse. Teachers used much of their time in making a classroom quiet and attentive.

Apart from this, Head of schools mentioned the services they were expected to get from the local community for enriching knowledge of pre-school children, such as the provision of some specialised knowledge and skills from expertise in the community, for instance, family life skills, environmental conservation, and health issues. For instance, *Adiya* the Head of the Pre-school Z located in a rural area commented:

Basically, we get no teaching assistance from the community; even these volunteer teachers face a lot of problems due to the delay in payment while they wait for parents' donations. So it is difficult even to find other experts from the community who would provide other knowledge and skills for our children due to lack of funds for payment. And it is true that some areas need experts like health issues, environments, family life, and the like. The government does not put a priority on pre-school education, and there is no budget to run pre-school education [*Adiya/ HS-Z/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview*].

She went on to comment on the dire situation of the classroom due to the lack of renovations and maintenance, a situation which causes children not to attend learning during the rainy season:

Look here.....! It is terrible I am sure that you have never seen such a situation before! This pre-school building was built with the help from an international organisation agency called “World Vision” in 2004. This organisation is helping in various rural development activities. Therefore, “World Vision” provided money for construction and the government was responsible for the finishing and furnishing process such as plaster, furniture and others related matters. Up to now the building has no plaster, no windows, a dust floor and no desks, tables and chairs. In addition, this pre-school building is not used during the rainy season because the water penetrates from the roof and the floor become full of water, so children and their teachers are not coming to school during the rainy season. And due to lack of renovation and maintenances the building is written-off as you can see [Adiya/HS/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

Parents in the rural area were resentful about the lack of teaching and learning resources and material. *Aji* a parent from a rural area Pre-school Z argued:

.....Sure!! I am telling you! To send your kid nowadays to school you increase the rate of stress. Look here I have 6 children in various levels of education. John aged 6 year olds is studying in the pre-school class and frequently comes here with a note from the Head of school demanding contributions for desks, books and the security guard. Actually the contribution in terms of money frustrates me but I am okay with human activities (volunteer activities) such as fetching water for making school building bricks....! It is bad enough that we pay lots of money and children just go [to preschool] and teachers guide them by singing instead of teaching...! Many parents here do not enrol their children in a pre-school class. To get money in the village is very difficult because of drought and the price of farming inputs is very high. Our plants got dry so there is no other way to get money because we raise our income through selling our crops [Aji/P2-Z/Interview].

The data indicated that all teacher and parent participants complained about the lack of teaching and learning resources and required parents’ donations. The argument was evidenced by the researcher during the classroom observations in both schools. For, instance, in the urban school G the researcher noted that; the

amount and quality of resources and materials in the classroom were not sufficient (see Table 6.2). In the class there were 150 children with two streams and each stream accommodated 75 children and each class had 55 desks and children sat in structured rows (see Figure 6.14). Desks were made by parents and the community. About 40 children did not have desks (20 children in each stream) and were found sitting on the floor (see the floor in Figure 6.15 for details). There were 30 text books for 75 children who were found sharing the text books. One text book was shared by 5 to 6 children. However, the recommended ratio in the Tanzanian Education and Training Policy of 1995 is one book to be shared with three children, that is, 1:3 (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995), and in 2012 it was recommended to be one book for one child, that is 1:1 (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT), 2012a). The researcher observed that the desks were too big for the age of children. It would be better if children could be provided with mats spread on the floor for children to sit comfortably. It is not necessary for children to use desks, they could enjoy sitting on the floor but with mats on it for their spontaneous learning.

Figure 6.14 shows children's desks which were not proportionate with their age.



*Figure 6.14* Desks in structured rows at the urban pre-school setting

Figure 6.15 below shows the floor where children sit in the urban classroom



Figure 6.15 The floor where children sit inside the classroom in the urban school

*Mtagimale* the Head of Pre-school G located in urban area commented on the insufficient number of desks:

The process of making desks is a continuous process depending on the money available from parents' contributions. Furthermore, the number of children is too big compared to the number of desks, and a single teacher in her stream has 75 children, so it is very difficult to have control. Also some children are facing difficulties in writing because they put their exercise books on their laps or on the floor, children become tired easily and sometimes they start crying. There are about 20 children in each class who have no desks; we have not managed to make enough desks due to the shortage of funds from the parent and community contributions [Mtagimale/ HS-G/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

Likewise, *Mtagimale* a Head Teacher from an urban school commented about the lack of qualified teachers to handle young children:

To be honest.....There are no specialised pre-school teachers here. One teacher took some courses in her Grade III 'A' Teacher Education course and another one just taught using her long experience in teaching primary schools..... "*Utekelezaji fanisi wa mitaala unategemea upatikanaji wa walimu bora, nyenzo, vifaa na zana nyingine stahiki za kufundishia na kujifunzia. Kumekuwa na upungufu wa nyenzo, vifaa na zana bora za kufundishia na kujifunzia na baadhi ya vilivyopo vimepitwa na wakati ama kutokuendana na mahitaji ya sayansi na teknolojia ya sasa*".....

[Translation]...In my experience as a bachelor degree holder in education, I think... *“Good implementation of any curriculum depends on the availability of qualified teachers, teaching and learning resources, and materials. The lack of good teaching and learning resources and materials means teachers cannot cope with the advances in Science and Technology* [Mtagimale/H-G/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview]. (The italicised phrase above was spoken with great feelings and more emphasis).

Furthermore, the researcher made general observations concerning the school surroundings and environments in totality. For instance, at the Pre-school G in the urban area, she found that health services were not good. There were only eight pit hole toilets for 823 people, who were 660 pupils from Primary Grade one to seven; 150 pre-school children and 13 teachers. There was a poor supply of water which was very dangerous for the health of the users, especially for those small children. There were no special toilets for small children and special needs children; there were shared toilets with the whole school community. While in the rural area there were no toilets, pupils were getting toilet services in the bush around the school surroundings. The researcher did this observation because in documentary reviews she saw the speech delivered by the Minister of Education when he submitted the Ministry of Education annual budget report on August, 2012 for 2012/2013 (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT), 2012b). Among other key issues which the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) was directed to enact from the government were ECEC issues; *“Ibara ya 85(a) (ii) Kujenga vyoo kwa ajili ya watoto wa Elimu ya Awali ili wasiingiliane na wale wa shule za msingi.....”* (Translation...) Act 85 (a) (ii) .....*The local community should build special pit holes toilets for pre-school children to avoid sharing toilets with older pupils from Grade one to seven* (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT), 2012b).

Moreover, the discussion with children in both locations in the focus group on the issues of resources, materials, and facilities, was very interesting. Some children posed many complaints to the parents and others complained about the government. In the rural school everyone was complaining about the lack of desks and sitting on the dust floor as they saw older pupils in primary schools sitting at the desks. Children in the rural area did not complain about the lack of textbooks.

The text books did not seem to be their interest because teachers were not assigning them tasks which involved the use of text books. The situation was contrary to the experiences of children in urban areas who were fighting for books during the time of drawing and doing exercises. The differences in views between rural and urban children will be discussed in the next paragraphs. Below are the dialogues between the researcher and children during the focus group discussion at the Pre-school Z in rural school area.

**Researcher:** Hi all children, Good morning!

**Children:** Good morning guest and welcome to our school!

**Researcher:** Thank you lovely and good children! ..... let us discuss and share some few things concerning your learning. Be free and do not be afraid to give out your argument. Are you okay?

**Children:** Thank you Guest! We are!

**Researcher:** What things do you like or not in your pre-school education?

**Roger 6 year olds (pupil):** Good morning, Guest!

**Researcher:** Good morning Roger, how are you doing Roger?

**Roger:** I am good!

To me I like drawing, singing and playing soccer but here we are not allowed to play outside and there is no playground, equipment, and facilities for us small children. Things which I do not like are sitting on the floor, no desks so my hand writing is bad and this is because our parents have not contributed money for buying desks and other requirements for school.....*“Hii hali ya kusoma huku tumekaa chini Mwalimu Msimighutwa alitwambia inachangiwa na wazazi wetu kwa kutoshiriki kuchangia maendeleo ya Elimu.....mtoto mwingine akapinga kwa kusema hapana hali hii inachangiwa na serikali kwa kushindwa kufuatilia maendeleo ya shule zake”.....!* (Translation)....*This situation of sitting on the floor teacher Msimighutwa said is because our parents did not contribute money for school development...one child objected and said it is because the government does not provide for school development [Roger/ Pupil-Z/Focus group Interview]. (Italic phrase was spoken with great feeling and emphasis).*

Before Roger finishes his story one pupil named **Esther** raised her hand and interrupted. She had this to say:

**Esther 6 year olds (pupil):** Hello guest, Roger is a liar!! We sit on the floor because the government does not buy desks and chairs for us. But for the porridge parents refused to donate money.

**Researcher:** Thank you Esther, but how do you know that the government does not follow-up on stuff for your education, such as desks?

**Esther replied:**

Yeah! My brother told me, he knows because he is a primary school teacher! Guest! Please we request you to tell the government ... *“Tukipata madawati tutaepuka magonjwa mfano mafua na hata kifua kikuu, pia itatusaidia kuandika vizuri tofauti na sasa tunaandikia kwenye magoti. Hapa hatunywi uji wala chakula kwa sababu wazazi wamekataa kuchangia fedha.* (Translation....) *If the government provides us with desks and benches, this will help us to escape dirtiness and disease through exposure to dust and flu* [Esther/ Pupil-Z/ Focus group Interview]. (Italic phrase was spoken with great feeling and emphasis).

**Anna aged 5 year olds reported:**

Yeah! I like school but, we small children are not sitting at the desks while older children in primary school are sitting at their desks. My school uniform becomes dirty and when I write I put my exercise book on my lap and other children are pushing me. So I cannot write properly and teacher *Msimighutwa* says why you do not write like *Juma*. Me I like going to primary school in order to sit at the desk. I will tell my mum to buy a book for me [Esther/ Pupil-Z/ Focus group Interview].

During the Focus group interview children were very free and happy to express their views about schools. They were interested in expressing various areas of their interest for learning and shared their views and they liked very much to hear from the researcher whom they frequently called “guest”. They demonstrated happiness and socialisation which it seems they missed in their classrooms. Interestingly, before session in an urban school children started by singing a lovely and beautiful song (see herein).

Sisi watoto wa Elimu ya awali kutoka hapa Gombile shuleni:

- Twajua kuchoraaa, twajua kuimbaaa, twajua hadithi...x2
- Tunapendaaaa kusomaaaa, kuandikaaaa, kuhesabuuuu...x2
- Tunawaheshimu wazazi, walimu na wakubwa wenginee...x2
- Eyayayayaaaa, eyaayyaaaa, eyayyaaaa, eyaaaaaaa.....x4

[Translation.....]

We children from Gombile pre-school setting:

- We like drawings, we like singing, we like storytelling....x2
- We like reading, writing and counting....x2
- We respect parents, teachers and other adults....x2
- Eyayayayaaaa, eyaayyaaaa, eyayyaaaa, eyaaaaaaa...x4

The researcher noted how children sang happily and when she asked them how frequently they sang in classrooms, the response was; *“Heeeeheeee nani akuruhusu kuimba!!....unataka kuchapwa??* [Translation] *Heheheeeee.....who can allow us to sing in the classroom!! ....We will be beaten, that we are making noises* [ECEC Children/Focus group discussion/School G]. Some times their teachers came over along the group discussion, and for example, teacher Msimighutwa commented: *“Watoto kukaa kwao chini wanapofundishwa darasani kunapunguza ari ya kupenda shule”*. (Translation....). *Sitting on the dust floor makes children uncomfortable in the learning process* [Msimighutwa/T2-Z/].

Another interesting observation was, when children were told to make drawings, children in rural areas were requesting the books where they could see varieties of pictures to draw. *Edina* with 5 year olds from Pre-school Z located in rural area had this to say; *“Guest! I need more papers, I like to draw a house, cooking pan, a cow, a father and mother so would you please lend me a book”*. The researcher and their teacher encouraged them to draw any picture they would like without copying from anywhere; the intention was to encourage their creativity and potential. Figure 6.16 below indicates a drawing by John 6 year old from a rural pre-school who drew a father, a mother, a girl, a house, and flowers.





Figure 6.20 below was a picture copied by Eliza, a girl of 5 years, from pictures drawn by their teacher and pasted on the wall at the urban pre-school. She reported before other children that she drew a television, thermos, bottles, dining table and tools.

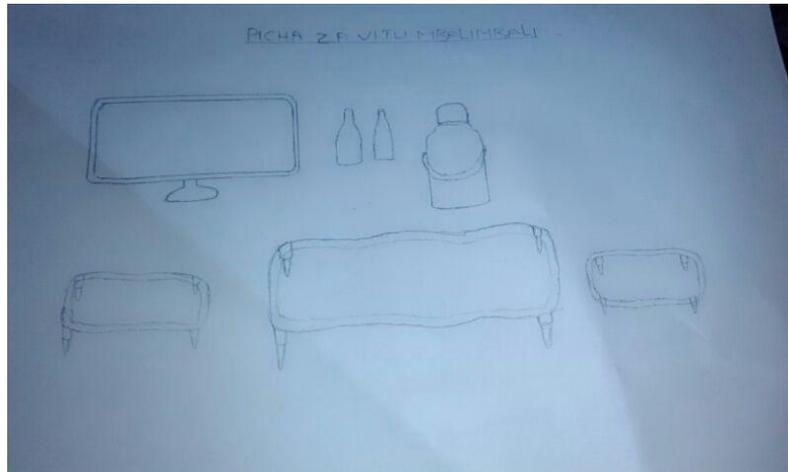


Figure 6.20 Indicates various copied pictures drawn by Eliza, aged 5 years old

Figure 6.21 below indicates a drawing by Rachel, a 6 year old from the urban pre-school who reported before other children that she drew a table, water tap, television, and transport facilities.

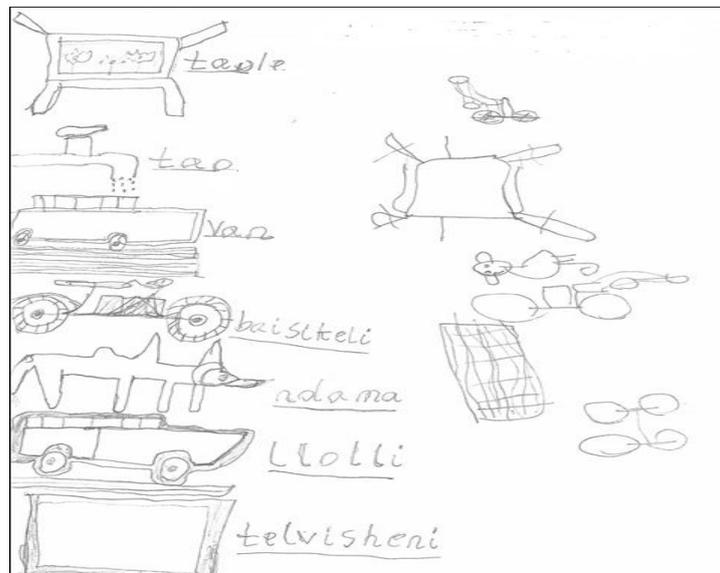


Figure 6.21 Indicates various free hand pictures drawn by Rachel, aged 6 years old.

In comparing drawing experiences from these two locations, the rural and the urban schools, it was found that children in the rural area had more complaints compared with the children in the urban area. In the rural location their complaints were based more on resources and poor teaching and learning environments, for example, sitting on the dust floor, bad hand writing, pushing each other due to the overcrowding in the room, no books, lack of porridge, and staying longer without taking anything for their stomach. By comparison, in the urban area children complained about the sharing of textbooks with many children, that when they do the exercises and drawings, they fight about having a few books. And this was supported by their teacher: she commented "*the books are getting damaged due to every one pulling a book near to him or her during the use*". Children demanded that everyone have their own copy of the textbook rather than sharing a single textbook with 5-6 children. Also, they mentioned fighting for desks when they enter the classroom, which resulted in some children falling down and getting injuries as there were not enough desks for all children. Furthermore, in urban areas children seemed active and to a certain extent were found to be knowledgeable about current issues through television and radio compared with the rural children. Also in the urban area, apart from taking porridge at school during break time several people come with varieties of their stuff to sell around the school compound so children could buy some bites for their stomach. In contrast, at the rural areas nothing was found to be sold around the school compound and children were found to be tired, hungry, overcrowded, and spent a long time sitting on the dust floor as described earlier. Also they were inactive and not aware of various current affairs.

Furthermore, referring to children's drawings, free drawings on the one hand increase the creativity of children to think and draw what kind of a thing they wanted to draw and how it would look. However, the researcher noted that the free drawings of children in the urban area were better pictures than those of the rural area children (see Figure 6.16 and 6.18 for rural children and 6.19 and 6.21 for urban children). This may imply that the urban children were more creative than the rural children, or that the differences in their free drawings were because of greater opportunities for urban children to access drawing materials and to

draw. Urban children were also found to be very active compared to children in rural areas. In the rural area children were often fearful, distressed and inactive. In both areas, children's free drawings involved things which were known to them. It has been theorised in various literature that free drawings are important in children's learning and creativity. Therefore, free drawings need to be encouraged and children motivated in order to support creativity and inquisitiveness. However, the data indicated that children seemed not to get many opportunities to draw freely but instead were encouraged to copy.

Hence, the teacher participants revealed a lack of knowledge and understanding of the required classroom practices for a pre-school class. It was evident from comments that teachers were constrained by lack of resources, poor learning environments, and having teacher education only for primary school education. So they could not engage children in activity-based learning, but rather concentrated on cognitive skills including writing, reading and arithmetic (3Rs) and less on socio-emotional, behavioural, and physical development. Because of these problems, to attain quality ECEC could be difficult in the Tanzanian context.

### **6.5.1 Quality in pre-school education**

Another sub-theme emerging in data from the local level's group was the low levels of quality in pre-school education. All six teachers out of ten members in the group, excluding ECEC children reported that the attainment of quality in pre-school education could be difficult. Firstly, they mentioned the lack of specialised teachers for pre-school class, large numbers of children in the class, under-resourced environments. Ratios of children to teachers were large making it difficult for teachers to manage. For such situations they said, the teacher cannot manage to do good assessments and evaluations because it is impossible to visit each child to check her/his progress. They said, although there are six subject learning activities, teachers cannot manage to teach all subject learning activities. They just concentrate on reading, writing, and arithmetic (3Rs). The following extracts illustrate this view:

Yeah, here there are two streams, each has 75 children for the ratio of 1:75 instead of 1:25 or 30 written in the government policy document, so it becomes difficult to manage the class properly and to pay attention to what each child is doing. As a result some children go to primary school without knowing how to read and write. In addition, we have two kinds of books for Kiswahili and Mathematics “*Kiswahili na Hisabati*”. So in my class there are 30 books for Kiswahili Subject and 30 books for Mathematics (Arithmetic) for 75 children which they share with each other. The implementation of the pre-school education curriculum is problematic because I have never seen the curriculum document but I use the syllabus and teachers’ guide in teaching reading, writing and arithmetic) [Satu/ T1-G/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

Secondly, teachers mentioned the lack of or insufficient teaching and learning resources and materials. For example, *Adiya* the Head of the Pre-school Z located in the rural area reported:

Of course.....It is difficult to attain quality pre-school education, because we lack funds to buy teaching and learning resources and materials, all children are sitting on the dust floor and it is congested. Poor teaching and learning environments, all these and other related matters deteriorate the attainment of quality pre-school education [Adiya/ H-Z/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

Thirdly, all six teachers out of ten members in the local level’s group mentioned the issue of untrained teachers with limited professional development to teach the pre-school class. They said that children are missing important things which they could get from a teacher specialised in early childhood education. They reported having knowledge and experience of teaching older pupils only.

Based on teaching using primary school experiences, *Msimighutwa*, a teacher from Pre-school Z located in rural area commented:

I have experience in teaching for 35 years; since pre-school education was formalised in 1995 the government has not initiated any teacher education for pre-school teachers, rather it incorporated a few topics in the curriculum for primary teachers. From my long experiences these pre-school classes are taught by either primary school teachers or volunteers like us. So, I teach by using my own experiences which is not in the area of early childhood education. In such overcrowded classes, without teaching and learning resources and materials what do you expect? Children are guided only into the basic concepts which are writing, reading and

arithmetic (3Rs) and national values through the national anthem which we sing for special occasion [Msimighutwa/ T2-Z/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

A similar concern was narrated by *Rebeca* from Pre-school Z in rural area; that the attainment of quality pre-school education is difficult if the government continues to remain silent on the ECEC matters. She commented:

Yeah! I cannot manage to mark all exercise books and to make corrections for each child where he/she did wrong. Bear in mind that two teachers are using the same class at the same time, so children lose concentration by turning back to see what their fellows do [Rebeca/ T1-Z/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

On the other hand all four parents in the local level's group described how much they would really like their children to get success in their future through education. For example, *Belitho*, a parent from Pre-school G commented:

Hello....! Of course I want to see my child knowing how to write, read, and count also to develop good behaviour with the help of teachers. On my part I ended with standard seven because my parents did not manage to send me to secondary education due to lack of money for school fees. So I want my child to study from pre-school up to higher levels. I am just a little farmer, and I normally sell my crops after harvest and I keep my money for my children at school. And I insist that they listen carefully to what the teacher teaches at schools. The teacher communicates with me about the progress of my child, and sometimes the school management calls us for a parents' meeting concerning the education of our children, for example, contributions for buying books, desks, class maintenance and money to pay the security guard [Belitho/ P1-G/ Interview].

*Tripho* a parent from Pre-school Z had similar ideas to that of *Belitho* regarding her expectations and aspirations for her child at school.

Referring to the quotes from teachers and parents, the researcher noted that teachers and parents seemed to think learning was only to know reading, writing, and arithmetic (cognitive skills) and not non-cognitive skills, which they talked about less. That perception indicated that they were not aware of the importance of all aspects of children's learning and development.

Moreover, all teachers in the group commented that the low quality in pre-school

education could also be attributed to the poor coordination of pre-school education because it is under the primary education directorate (division). Therefore greater priorities are placed on primary education, and no funds are allocated for pre-school education. The following quotes illustrate this point:

The primary education and pre-school education are coordinated in one directorate called the Primary Education Directorate and the Head of the primary school is also heading the pre-school. As a result more concentration is on the primary education [Rebeca/ T1-Z/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

Based on various participants' views the attainment of quality ECEC seemed to be questionable. The next section presents the concern about school inspection.

### **6.5.2 School Inspection**

Another sub-theme emerging from the local level's group was the lack of school inspection to oversee, monitor and control the standard of education. All members in the local level group mentioned the lack of school inspection; teachers claimed that the Ministry of Education officials were not serious about pre-school education. They reported that the school inspection is seen as very essential in academic arenas but for a long time no school inspection has been conducted in pre-schools or schools. School inspection helps teachers to be smart with their teaching and learning but teachers said; nowadays every teacher is practising according to her/his interests. No one is controlling and monitoring our performances, ethics have deteriorated and you could find teachers dating with pupils, drunkardness and too much alcohol. For example, Adiya, the Head of Pre-school Z reported:

Look here! I am a Head Teacher of this school, I try my best to control my school but other things become difficult to handle. I carry out my role but for greater accurate school inspectors are highly necessary. So things are not very good; there are no inspectors to control and monitor the schools. Although I try my best, it cannot be the same as it would be if the schools were overseen by school inspectors. Teachers have a lot of issues: no motivation, delay in receiving salaries and other related issues and I expected the school inspectors would visit the schools and hear our issues because they are the educational overseers. The school inspectorate does not supervise the regulations and standards which

guide the operation of pre-school settings [Adiya/ H-Z/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

## 6.6 Pedagogy of Teachers

Another theme that emerged in the data was that of the pedagogical skills of pre-school teachers. During classroom observation the researcher found teachers guided children with a teacher-centred approach (see Figure 6.22 for details). All teachers in the group mentioned the difficulties in using learner-centred methods due to an overcrowded class, lack of resources and materials, sharing one room for two streams due to lack of classrooms and also they confirmed themselves that they were not specialised in teaching pre-school classes. For example, *Satu* a teacher from Pre-school G located in an urban area reported:

The syllabus has a lot of things to do with children but I cannot manage to teach all of these due to the poor teaching and learning environment and only a single teacher. In teaching, sometimes I mix participatory and non-participatory methods such as small group discussion, questions and answers, storytelling, and songs. However, due to the large number of children I use more non-participatory approaches that mean the whole class teaching method. I write alphabets, words and numbers on the blackboard and I guide them in reading as a whole class, thereafter I pick one by one to read individually. My class has 75 children and I am also teaching Grade one in primary school [Satu/T1-G/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

She went on to report the challenges they face in enacting the child-centred curriculum:

Sometimes I teach through songs and storytelling. The paradigm-shift from a teacher-centred to a learner-centred approach was good but for a large class like this one, implementation is challenging. To succeed in this method the number of children should be low with specific teachers trained in pre-school education. These children need close supervision but it becomes difficult to fulfil the priorities, needs and interests of children due to their large number and shortage of teachers. ....of course we are not using play activities we have no time for play. Songs are highly used in order to keep the class quiet. In addition, when children began school we face difficulties because some children cannot speak the national language (Kiswahili), they speak their mother tongue. But we try to communicate with their parents and with our efforts until they cope. So children are united by the national language that is Kiswahili in all communications at school. Mbeya is a big city so

there are many ethnic groups but the dominant tribe is *Nyakyusa* although in schools there are mixtures of many different tribes [Satu/T1-G/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

The quotes made by Teacher *Satu*, from the urban area concerning the challenges of pre-school curriculum enactment indicated difficulties in learning through a play context because they had no time for play activities.

*Rebeca* a teacher from Pre-school Z located in the rural area reported the teaching methods she uses in teaching and challenges that emanated:

I try to use both teacher-centred and learner-centred approaches, but mainly I use a whole class teaching method due to the large number of children in the class. The situation is very bad in the class so most of the time we use songs in teaching numbers and alphabets and songs are used for classroom management. The common way of teaching is whole class teaching, demonstration, songs, storytelling, and questions and answers. Play activities are not used here because teachers have no time to supervise and they are a waste of time. Children need to keep quiet in the classroom when I prepare a lesson and/or mark their work [Rebeca/ T1-Z/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

Figure 6.22 below shows the lesson in progress and with teacher-centred learning approach.



Figure 6.22 Pre-school children at the rural school listening to a teacher

Referring to teaching approaches all teacher participants reported that they mixed participatory and non-participatory approaches, although they agreed teacher-centred approaches to be dominant in large class sizes.

They reported the difficulties in giving children opportunity to be initiators of learning due to overcrowding in the class and no learning materials. They said, usually they use whole class teaching methods with chorus answers and they usually use songs for counting and alphabets and sometimes they use stories. Interestingly, all teachers had negative views of learning through play activities which they said is a waste of time. Additionally, all teachers suggested the need for specialised pre-school teachers to handle pre-school classes. They highlighted the lack of seminars, workshops, and in-service teacher education to improve their teaching and learning. So they taught according to their personal experiences, attitudes, and beliefs. Furthermore, the teaching language of Kiswahili was not a very great problem in the urban area compared with the rural school. For example, two teacher participants from rural areas raised an important issue concerning the language used as the means of instruction. They reported difficulties emanate from the use of the national language (Kiswahili) in teaching in rural areas because of the dominance of one ethnic group with small minorities. For example, *Rebeca* commented:

Look here....! Children are coming from different back grounds in terms of their cultures, customs, norms and traditions. And here there are mainly four tribes, Gogo, Nyamwezi, Rangi and Sukuma. But Gogo is the dominant tribe, so many children are Gogos. So, it is difficult to teach them by using the national language (Kiswahili) because all the time they speak their local languages, mother tongue. So we use much of the time in training them in the Kiswahili language and they cope slowly. Luckily enough both of our teachers are Gogo in tribe, so we teach them in the Gogo language then we translate into the national language. For the few children with different tribes we concentrate on the national language. Again, children have their tribal names. When we call them their school names they do not respond but we keep on reminding them. So we also teach them greetings, how to introduce themselves, respect and good behaviour in order to make them cope with accepted national values [*Rebeca/ T1-Z/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview*].

*Msimighutwa* from the same school in the rural area added:

As you have seen from my fellow teacher, these children are using the same room and looking in opposite directions. So the teaching itself is difficult, the syllabus is directing us to apply different methods and strategies in guiding children to perform activities

related to the subject content of their level, but the situation is not conducive [Msimighutwa/ T2-Z/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

Moreover, the researcher noted some inconsistencies in all teachers in the rural and urban areas. Some of their explanations during interviews before classroom observations were different to what were observed in the classroom teaching. For example, Msimighutwa a teacher in Pre-school Z explained that the classroom management for her was not a problem even if the class size was big. Again teacher-child interaction, she said was not a problem to her class. She said, it was easy for her to handle but when the researcher went for classroom observations she found things were different. The teacher used much time for classroom management. Another contradictory issue was, before classroom observation all teachers described using both teacher-centred and learner-centred but when the researcher went for classroom observation only whole class teaching methods were used. All the time during classroom observations teachers used teacher-centred approaches.

The data indicated that in the rural area school there were 195 children with two teachers. In one stream there were 98 children and the other one with 97 children. So the ratio was 1:98 while the recommended ratio is 1:25 (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995; Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT), 2012a). The large number of children in one class contributes to the teacher not being able to make a follow up for each child. It would be difficult to apply learner-centred methods in an overcrowded class like that. For more evidence see the following conversation between teacher and children in a classroom lesson. The teaching process of a teacher at school Z located in a rural area; it was a lesson of 45 minutes and she started the lesson at 10.15 am.

**Teacher (Msimighutwa):** Good Morning children

**Children:** Good Morning madam Msimighutwa

**Teacher (Msimighutwa):** Do you remember what I taught to you yesterday?

**Children:** Nooooo...! Yes .....! Noooooo!... ..yes.....,Me I did come teacher, I was sick....

**Teacher (Msimighutwa):** Okay, listen to me please! Stop shouting, listen children..... Efrem, Atanas, Nestory, Judith, Ernest, stop shouting please.....! Come here to the front, kneel down, you are always trouble-makers, promise before the others that you will change your bad behaviour accordingly. Okay, today we are going to learn alphabets starting from A, B, C, D....up to Z, I will begin by mentioning a letter then all children follow me to mention the same. Okay.....!

**Children:** Yes teacher; (some children shouted), teacher, teacher look Lydia and Anifa are going outside, (another child), teacher, teacher.....look here.....James is beating me.....teacher, teacher look these two boys are pushing me.....!

**Teacher (Msimighutwa):** You children sit down, Lydia and Anifa why are you going out without my permission? Come back, I beat you.....James stand up.....!

To this class the teacher faced difficulties in management and she just taught for twenty minutes instead of 45 minutes. Twenty five minutes was lost to classroom management and she said that it is difficult to handle a class of 98 children alone. Taking in mind that during the interview before going for classroom observations this teacher said handling of the class was not a problem for her.

The researcher during her documentary review noticed that a syllabus and a teachers' guide contained a lot of things to be done, and the documents were very structured and formal. The syllabus document was detailed and in such a teaching and learning environment it seemed difficult to implement all the things. With such doubts the researcher decided to share with a teacher during the interview sessions in order to get some clarifications. *Karola* a teacher from Pre-school G reported:

Yeah.....! I have never seen the curriculum document; it might have more material compared with the syllabus, might it not?...The syllabus as you have seen has six subject learning activities, but we just teach basic concepts, reading, writing and arithmetic (3Rs). But all in all the situation, our teaching and learning environments are not conducive to enabling children to get what they are supposed to get. The purpose of subject learning activities was to make sure that children understand concepts in the particular subject before joining primary education. But in reality things are different, look here myself and my fellow teacher we also teach Grade one in primary school and pre-school class with a

large number of children in both classes - what do you expect.....!! [Karola/ T2-G/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

She went on to report the way she tries to help children with special needs and challenges she faces when enacting the pre-school curriculum:

In my class there are children with learning difficulties and special needs but sometimes I fail to work closely with them. I normally identify them when the lesson is going on and I find them not responding to my directives which I give. I try to help them by paying very much attention to them and also I communicate with their parents about medication and if the problem is found to be critical the school management advises the particular parent to transfer a child to the special needs schools. The syllabus directs that each child is supposed to do a certain activity in a particular subject but due to the large number of children in the class it is difficult for each child to perform the activities individually so they do them as a whole class [Karola/ T2-G/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

Another observation in the documentary review was; teachers in the urban area had the lesson plans and scheme of work prepared before the lesson. While teachers in the rural area were preparing lessons when they were in the class and no previous preparations for previous lessons were found. The researcher suspected that, maybe they started preparing during her presence. However, the rural teachers, when asked why they did not prepare their lessons in advance, they responded that they were not preparing lessons all the time because sometimes they plan what to do but when they go to the classroom the situation does not allow them to accomplish what they planned.

All teachers in the group blamed the poor teaching and learning environment. However, the rural school teachers had more complaints compared to urban school area teachers in terms of teaching and learning environments, resources and materials and experiences of teachers. It was also pointed out to the researcher that awareness of parents in sending children to school was low and cultural diversity in the rural area was dominated by mainly one ethnic group (Gogo tribe) who comprised about 85% of with minority cultural groups about 15% (Rangi, Nyamwezi and Sukuma) while in urban areas there were various mixtures of ethnic groups. These had no impact on the classroom teaching and learning because the children and teachers speak the national language (Kiswahili).

The descriptions from teachers from different locations (urban and rural) were also supported by children during the Focus group discussion. For example, **Alpher (6 year old)** from an urban pre-school G described how the teacher oriented them in modelling letters and guidance of the repetitive songs for letters catch up. He commented:

Teacher *Satu* writes letters, A, E, I, O, U on the blackboard and then she teaches us to say a letter. Thereafter she guides us through songs in order to help us remember them well. Also she teaches us to sing other letters in alphabetical order like A, B, C, D, E, F., G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z also counting, 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,9, and 10. So we start by reading, singing then writing; the teacher teaches us how to formulate letters and numbers [Alpher/School-G/ Focus group Interview].

He continued to say:

Sometimes Teacher *Satu* reads a book then tells us what to do. For example in *Kiswahili*, she directs us in how to greet people, introduce ourselves, listening and speaking skills. Thereafter she leaves us to do ourselves. I like drawings, playing football and other plays like running, playing soccer, driving models of cars which we make by using boxes with my friends but here in our school there are no play grounds for children. Teacher *Satu* told us not to go to the older pupils' play grounds; you know older pupils can hurt us [Alpher/ School- G/ Focus group Interview].

Another pupil namely, **Eliza (5 year old)** from Pre-school G in an urban area, described how their teacher guided them in cleanliness during Science activities. The teacher also emphasised naming flowers and categorising insects. She reported:

I like Science activities, although we rarely do Science as a subject, because in Science the teacher shows us how to brush our teeth, wash our hands before taking food. We go to the primary school garden and she asks us questions about varieties of flowers, and asks us to give names to the flowers. Thereafter the teacher leaves us to clean ourselves. Also she directs us to prepare tins and put different insects like flies, butterflies, small fishes, and grasshoppers in the tins [Eliza/School- G/ Focus group Interview].

**Joseph aged 5 year old** from Pre-school Z in rural area explained areas of his interest, for example, singing and drawing, however he complained of bad hand writing due to lack of desks and he did not like corporal punishment.

I like reading and counting, writing is difficult because there are no desks, so when I put my exercise on the floor in order to write it became dirty. Teacher *Rebeca* teaches us different songs to memorize A, E, I, O, U and other letters. I like singing and drawing a car, house, fruit but my father has not bought colours for me. Teacher *Rebeca* reprimands us if we make noises and some children used to quarrel in the class. Me I don't like corporal punishment; sometimes our teacher beats us if we make a noise or quarrel [Joseph/ School- Z/ Focus group Interview].

**Bernard aged 5 years** from Pre-school G in an urban area described how their teacher guided them in various learning areas. And he expressed his areas of interests, for example, playing with his friends, drawings, sports and games. He reported:

Teacher *Karola* teaches us writing, reading, and arithmetic but I like drawing, sports and games and playing with my friends. The teacher is guiding us on how to greet people at different times of the day and thereafter we need to practice appropriately. Me I like counting because my mother has a shop, so I can help her to sell items in her shop. And I like making friends so I can visit them during the weekend. During writing we become tired because we put our exercise books on our thighs or on the floor so my hand writing is bad. There are not enough desks here for all children, so if I am delayed outside I miss sitting at a desk [Bernard/Pupil/School-G/ Focus group interview].

The above findings indicate children were limited in demonstrating their abilities through activity-based play.

### 6.6.1 Teachers' creativity

Another sub-theme which emerged in the data from the local level's group was the teachers' creativity in the use of local environments (improvisation). All teachers in the group commented that the government is not providing teaching and learning resources and materials. So they were trying their best to make use of local resources although they were not in good condition because they missed the supporting materials which they have to buy from shops and they did not have money. For example, *Satu*, a teacher from Pre-school G commented:

Yeah! Look here, I think you have seen children with bundles of bottle tops around their necks and small sticks hanging together. I normally assign children to collect bottle tops everywhere then I show them how to make bundles. They use these materials in

arithmetic for purposes like counting, addition and subtraction and whenever manila sheet are available I cut them into small pieces and write numbers, alphabets, words, diagrams and pictures and paste on the walls. For the children to learn these numbers and words I normally formulate a song so that they sing and memorise through singing [Satu/ T1-G/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

A similar concern was shared by *Rebeca*, a teacher from Z pre-school.

Figure 6.23 shows bottle tops for counting purposes collected by pupils in an urban school.



*Figure 6.23* Bottle tops for counting purposes collected by the urban pupils

Parents who were interviewed complained that sometimes children come home and request money, that teachers told them are for buying supporting materials for formulating local teaching aids such as glue and marker pens. However, on the other hand parents appreciated the efforts of teachers for their creativity but sometimes failed to give out money due to other responsibilities which need money as well. *Belitho*, a parent from pre-school G had this to report:

You know! Teachers are people with high intellectual capacity, you know what.... I don't believe if my kid knows counting up to 20 and reading some words like *mama, baba, kaka.....!*(mother, father, and brother). And I found everyday she comes home with some changes, so I appreciate the efforts of their teachers. And she told me that they were told to be good children when they greet people [Belitho/ P1-G/ Interview].

On the other hand children in the Focus group discussion explained how they participate in collecting materials for teaching aids. They were happy because they were formulating teaching aids with their teachers. They were getting exposure to some various creativities and were found to be enjoying this, although they said that they very rarely did it.

In like manner, some children were interested in showing to the researcher what their desires were. For example, John aged 6 and Rachel narrated their stories as follows:

**John- Aged 6 year old:** Hello! Guest, I want to show you how to make a house by using a box!

**Researcher:** Okay, how do you make it?? Oh, John a good boy please take your fingers out of your mouth, do not put your fingers in your mouth all the time, okay, eheeee... tell me John!!

**John:** Okay guest! I do! Yeah! Listen to me, first you go to the shop and request a box, and then you cut it into several pieces and formulate a house or animals. And if you become tired with house formulating or animals you cut small pieces again and you write numbers or letters.

**Researcher:** Oh!! Well done!! Your teacher is good because she guides you good things so keep it up! And try to formulate many figures, diagrams as many as you can, okay!!

**Rachel (6 years)** from the Pre-school G described various areas of her interests such as talking with friends, drawing and modelling. She said:

Guest! You know! I can decide to pick flowers in the garden and draw its pictures. I like using clay to mould pictures of girls, cooking pots and the like. Also I like playing with toys which I make by using small pieces of clothes; my sister Dorah taught me how to make these. I like playing with my friends called Sofia, Neema, Lulu, and Fide. And also I cannot decide to go to the toilet without asking permission from the teacher [Rachel/ School-G/ Focus group Interview].

This indicated various interests from children and is very important in their learning; however, they missed opportunities to demonstrate these skills in their everyday learning in classrooms as teaching focused more on cognitive skills.

The next sub-section presents findings concerning children's opportunities and gains through ECEC services.

### **6.6.2 Children's opportunities**

Another sub-theme which emerged from the local level's group was that of children's opportunities, care, and development. Parents during the interview expressed their expectations for their children in the future. They mentioned their desire to see their children knowing how to read, write, and do arithmetic as a basis for better development of elementary skills in primary school subjects. Data from parents indicated they liked their children to achieve although they thought only teachers could help them do this. For instance, *Tripho* a parent from Pre-school Z commented:

Yeah! I want my child to learn and understand what is going on within the community and the nation and if he succeeds in the future he will help us because we are getting old. My parents managed to send me up to form four; they were not able to send me for further studies due to poverty. So to me my focus is to work hard in farm activities and sell crops for my child to learn more and go up to the university level [Tripho/ P1-Z/Interview].

In addition, all four teachers in the group described some children as having learning difficulties but they tried to handle them according to need. For example, *Karola* a teacher in Pre-school G reported:

Yeah! Look here .....There are three children with special needs who sit in front of the class near to the teacher's table. These children wear labels; their parents put labels on them for easy identification and care. One boy has Autism, one girl has a sight problem and another one has a hearing impairment [Karola/ T2-G/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

*Satu* a teacher from Pre-school G made a similar comment to that of *Karola* on helping special needs children through sitting them close to the teacher's table and communicating through different means such as sign language.

Children also acknowledged the work of their teachers in teaching them how to formulate letters, numbers, and read and how to respect people as was evidenced by Edina. She commented:

Yeah! Teacher *Rebeca* teaches us greetings, good manners, and good interactions with other people. I like reading loudly and singing but my friends are saying they like playing with ropes outside. The teacher is helping us to know reading and writing but our friends on the other side know counting up to 20. The teacher insists we sing numbers and letters so that we would not forget [Edina/School-G/ Focus group Interview].

In summary, for the most part, the dominant teaching approach in both locations was a teacher-centred method. Parents from the urban area were shown to be more aware of the value of enrolling their children compared to the rural parents. Also, children from the urban area seemed to be active and inquisitive compared to the rural children. On reflection the researcher revealed that the urban children were more advantaged due to a mixture of people in the town centre with different cultural, knowledge, and skills compared to the rural area.

## **6.7 Curriculum Development Process**

Another theme which emerged from the local level's group was that of the curriculum development process. The researcher wanted to gain insights from the local level group about how they perceived and viewed the process for development of the 2005 curriculum. All members in the group mentioned the role of teachers in the curriculum process. They said teachers should be key players in curriculum development. They blamed the government through the Ministry of Education officials and the Tanzania Institute of Education (for curriculum development and evaluation) for not recognising the importance of teachers during the curriculum development. They said teachers are knowledgeable about the teaching and learning classroom contexts but they were not recognised in curriculum development.

### 6.7.1 Involvement of key players in curriculum preparations

All teacher participants mentioned that they received information regarding curriculum reforms from higher educational officials, so the decisions were made through a top-down approach. In addition, it was reported by teachers that it became difficult for them to implement something not within their hands. Teachers reported using a syllabus and a teachers' guide in teaching because the curriculum was not available to them. This is due to the fact that even the dissemination of the syllabus and teachers' guide takes too long and as a result teachers buy them from the bookshop using their own money, as stated earlier in this section. *Mtagimale*, the Head Teacher from the Pre-school G located in urban area claimed:

.....you know this country and its practitioners are just moving as if they have no mission and visions. The Ministry of Education under its arm Tanzania Institute of Education developed the pre-school education curriculum education in 2005 without teachers' and parents' participation. Teachers and parents are the key players in children's learning; they have lots of experiences of what is happening in the classrooms in terms of the content, workload, pedagogical skills and the like. So it becomes difficult to implement something which you are not aware of. And up to the moment my teachers use only a syllabus and a teachers' guide as their guides on teaching pre-school class [Mtagimale/ HS-G/ 1<sup>st</sup> Interview].

A similar concern was shared by *Adiya* the Head Teacher from Pre-school Z located in the rural areas that; *"Teachers were not involved in the preparation of a curriculum document that took place in 2005. No involvement from key players (teachers and parents) during curriculum development"*. This view had two aspects according to the researcher's observations. Firstly, teachers themselves were not confident and not sure if they were supposed to participate in the curriculum development as noted by *Karola*, a teacher at G Pre-school who commented:

Hahahaha!!.....(laughing) You know I am laughing because I never thought about whether teachers can participate in writing the curriculum. I normally think there are special officials who write curricula.....! Do we qualify to prepare the curriculum? Let

those Ministry of Education officials prepare the curriculum and bring us changes. What should I say if I am called to take part in the process of curriculum development...? [Karola/T2-G/1<sup>st</sup> Interview].

Secondly, the curriculum developers did not prioritise the contribution of teachers in the development, but instead relied on views of inspectors and literature. This was evidenced by *Jane* a curriculum developer who reported:

It was not possible to include all educational stakeholders during the curriculum development due to the shortage in the budget; teachers were represented by school inspectors and for issues concerning the content and pedagogy we visited the existing literatures [Jane/ CD2/Interview].

However, *Satu* from the Pre-school G showed great concern, as she put it:

I would like to participate in curriculum development .to send my inputs and my experiences to the panel about what I find in the classroom situation such as the breadth and depth of the content and the suggested pedagogy. .... To me I think the curriculum has lots of weaknesses because they did not even collect our ideas before writing the draft of the curriculum. And I am sure they are afraid to disseminate the curriculum document because they know it may have contained weaknesses and they are not ready to be challenged by the community [Satu/ T1-G/1<sup>st</sup> Interview].

All teachers articulated that they have been complaining to their Regional educational officers about not being involved in curriculum development; their comments showed that for the whole country teachers were not involved. For example, *Mtagimale* a Head of the Pre-school G commented:

You know! After getting a note about the new curriculum for pre-school education, I had to ask the Regional educational officer why we were not involved in the curriculum process. The Regional educational officer replied that; I quote, “*The government through the Ministry of Education officials says that we were represented by school inspectors*”. Unfortunately the school inspection department for a long time has not visited schools due to financial problems so how can we get directives. It could be better if we could be represented by Regional/District Educational officers because these are our supervisors in educational matters [Mtagimale/HS-G/ 1<sup>st</sup> Interview].

For better enactment of the pre-school curriculum, involvement of key users would be valuable. What is required is for those involved at the local level to advise the government on how to improve the teaching and learning environment and training for teachers for effective curriculum enactment in classroom contexts. At the present time teachers teach pre-school children like children from primary schools. Government leaders are politicians and the supervision of educational policies is not effective. There are promises that the government will change the situation but the promises have not been enacted.

### **6.7.2 Influential aspects for curriculum development**

Another theme which emerged from the local level's group was that of the influential contexts for curriculum development. Teacher and parent participants reported the influential contexts to have either driven or hindered the development of pre-school education curriculum in 2005. A number of aspects that influence curriculum development are discussed here including sociocultural, political, economic, and historical influences pertaining to the pre-school education curriculum in Tanzania.

#### **6.7.2.1 Sociocultural Influences**

All teacher and parent participants reported the need to have pre-school education and due to social changes in the wider society and worldwide. They all had similar ideas, for example, the following quotes illustrate this point:

Of course.....! The social and economic changes motivated some parents to recognise the need for pre-school settings when they attend a paid job. A few women are now aware of equal opportunities; they fight for employment so they find it better to send their children to school while they are at work or attending community activities [*Satu-T1-G/1<sup>st</sup>-Interview*].

Adiya, a rural Head Teacher appreciated the initiation of pre-school settings as it would help children, especially girls to attend ECEC centres rather than engaging in early marriages. She reported:

Yeah! It was good for the government to initiate pre-school education and to emphasise all children should attend the centres

because many parents/guardians were entertaining early marriages for girls in order to increase their income through a bride price. Only boys were given priority for attending schools not girls [Adiya/HS-Z/1<sup>st</sup> Interview].

The local level participants also commented on the need to have a useful curriculum which suits children and the society at large. They said, to determine usefulness therefore, the nature of the external world or the society in which the children exist must be taken into account. Mtagimale the head of Pre-school G commented on the need for a curriculum which is friendly to a society at large:

You know.....The curriculum must familiarise children with knowledge and skills that are derived at least in part from the surrounding society and that can be applied practically within that society to help obtain material necessities of life [Mtagimale/HS-G/1<sup>st</sup> Interview].

*Sela*, a parent from an urban area insisted on the need for preparation for future school and life success:

Of course we wanted our children to have a preparatory class before compulsory schooling so children could get basic foundations. The society at large had needs which they wanted to be included in the curriculum for children to gain important knowledge, skills, attitudes and values which could help them in future [*Sela*- P2/G /Interview].

#### **6.7.2.2 Political influences**

Another theme which emerged in the data from the local level group was that of political influences on the pre-school education curriculum development. The following responses illustrate their views:

You know, these politicians make political decisions which are not professionally accepted. And they normally obstruct academic issues due to their own interests; they just think about getting votes from the people and put forward many impractical promises.....they make poor decisions about academic issues. [*Satu*-T1/G- 1<sup>st</sup> Interview].

Other teachers commented on the power of political influences that seem to overwhelm professional advice on educational matters. The following quotes illustrate the views:

Our higher educational leaders are polluted by politics because they are not doing things professionally. The problem is the Minister and Deputy Minister of Education are both politicians so they run educational matters as politics. Politicians have power. They decide things for their own benefit and not for national benefits. Politicians are killing education!!! [Karola- T2/G- 1<sup>st</sup> Interview].

Politics in education is not a bad thing if it could be handled well, because education is a political practice but the way things are going affects education. Politicians make decisions about everything in this country and when they visit the community they promise to do things which at the end of the day do not happen...! The decision about curriculum development was a top-down approach. There were no consultations and negotiations among educational stakeholders [Adiya-HS/Z-1<sup>st</sup> Interview].

Yeah.....! Hahahaha (laughing)!!.....You know, the development of curriculum was politically oriented; politicians made decisions about the development of the pre-school education curriculum without looking at other aspects which go together such as funding, training of pre-school teachers, learning resources and materials [Mtagimale/ HS-G/ 1<sup>st</sup> Interview].

### **6.7.2.3 Economic influences**

Another theme which emerged in the data from the local level participants was that of economic influences on pre-school education curriculum development. All local level participants reported the financial crisis and instability of the nation economically which has repercussions for the financial support of pre-school education. The following quotes illustrate this point:

Of course yes....!The pre-school education curriculum development took a long time after independence in the 1960's up to 2005 due to economic instability. And after its development still the situation in pre-school education is terrible, the government always complains of a budget crisis and it does not fund pre-school education. You will see the real situation during your observation in classrooms, I do not like to speak more [Mtagimale/HS-G/ 1<sup>st</sup> Interview].

You know.....! Large class sizes are a consequence of the financial severities we operate under. At my school there are 195 children in two streams. One stream with 98 and another one with 97 children and both share the same room. The building as you see

is written off and during rainy season, there are no lessons. The poor teaching and learning environments and the lack of teaching and learning resources show that our government is running a shortage in its main budget at the expense of ECEC matters. So teachers and children become discouraged and lose motivation to attend school and finally some children become truants [*Adiya-HS/Z-1<sup>st</sup> Interview*].

In summary, the data indicated that there was poor preparation of the pre-school education curriculum; it seems the process just involved the top educational officials in the development process and insufficient funding was provided for its implementation. The context in which the curriculum is going to be enacted was not considered. This situation may cause the enactment of the curriculum to be ineffective.

## **6.8 Politics in Educational Issues**

The final theme which emerged in the data concerning the issues, challenges and experiences in the pre-school education curriculum enactment were politics in educational matters. All members in the local level's group mentioned the existence of politics in educational matters. Basically, politics are helpful in making things visible in society especially for marginalised groups such as women, disabled people, children and pastoral families. In making their voices heard different knowledge emerges about various aspects including educational matters. There needs to be democratic politics in making educational policy, in which consultations and negotiations are held with educational stakeholders. In educational matters politicians and educational professionals need to negotiate in order to make sound decisions.

However, there were a lot of unkept promises made by the government on how pre-school education could work hand in hand with the communities in the improvement of the schools' welfare. *Adiya* a Head of school Z located in a rural area reported:

You know! The Ward educational coordinator and the Heads of schools got the directives from Regional Education office that they have to encourage the school and parents' committees to motivate community members in the building of the classrooms and the finishing process will be done by the government. Heads and school committees tried their best to motivate the community in building the classes but at the end of the day the buildings

remained neither finished nor furnished [Adiya/HS-Z/3<sup>rd</sup> Interview].

*Adiya* also claimed the lack of sufficient classrooms was a big challenge to her school which the politicians had promised to address but failed to do so.

The deputy Minister of Education sometimes came here and made a lot of promises but up to the moment nothing has been implemented. This is the problem with political leaders [Adiya/HS-Z/ 3<sup>rd</sup> Interview].

*Mtagimale*, a Head of the Pre-school G had similar views; he reported that the government officials who are also politicians just promise to support pre-school education during vote time. Then after getting votes they do not turn up:

Look here....., In 2010 I got the government note that I should organize meetings with the school board and parents' committee and that the community members should be motivated to take part in the school-based manual activities. Government would support their efforts by bringing roofing, plaster materials, desks and books. So people through communal effort worked hard and built the two buildings with 8 rooms (look there outside.....) but up to the moment you see what is happening to the buildings? The buildings have cracks and are nearly about to fall down due to heavy rainfall and because they were not roofed. The Minister of Education and his deputy both are political leaders so they normally make decisions which favour their own interests like other political leaders do. Politicians are thinking about how they will get votes and as a result they make a lot of false promises to the voters [Mtagimale/ HS-G/ 3<sup>rd</sup> Interview].

Furthermore, all teachers mentioned the starting age for pre-school education. They said the Educational and Training Policy was clear concerning the starting age and the necessity for children to attend pre-school before primary education. Sometimes there is disagreement between Heads of schools and regional or district educational officers when heads insist all children should attend pre-school education, and are not allowed to go direct to primary education. Regional educational officers (REO) get an order from the top authority that they should motivate parents to bring children to school even if they are above the age of the pre-school class. The government officials are seeking an increase in the enrolment rate, so educational officers insist on making sure that those who are above the age of pre-school education are enrolled into primary education even if

they did not attend pre-school.

Regarding the registration of the pre-school class *Mtagimale*, the Head went on to report that not all parents send their children to a pre-school class:

The policy states that children should attend the pre-school before joining the primary school but there is poor implementation in the field because some children are joining primary school without pre-school education. Parents and guardians hide their children and when they are 6 or 7 years old they bring them for the pre-school class. As a head of the school I refuse to register them in primary education because they did not attend the pre-school class but within a minute you get a call from the Regional education office that you should enrol them. As a result when they go to primary education they fail to cope with other children who attended pre-school education. Politicians make decisions which are not professionally accepted [Mtagimale/ HS-G/ 3<sup>rd</sup> Interview].

*Satu* a teacher in the Pre-school G commented on the power of politicians in which the advice of professionals is not heard:

Basically all things including educational matters are under the control of politicians and we teachers are professionals but we find things are not going well professionally. Even our educational leaders are polluted by politics because they are not doing things professionally. Look here, the government is insisting on higher enrolment but does not think about improving the teaching and learning environments, teaching and learning resources and materials, professional development, teacher motivation and alike. So I can say; *Politics are killing professions* [Satu/T1-Z/3<sup>rd</sup> Interview].

*Karola* the experienced teacher from the same school had a similar concern and commented:

You know the education sector nowadays is not performing well compared to our time; those days everyone was serious with what she/he was supposed to do. But nowadays things are just proceeding as if there are no professionals from the area of education. The problem is the higher educational officials are politicians so they run educational matters as politics. Politicians have power; they decide things for their own benefit and not for national benefits. If our higher educational leaders could be serious about education you would find recognition of the pre-school education. But for the time being no one raises voice about ECEC matters and things are not good [Karola/ T2-G/3<sup>rd</sup> Interview].

Parents also described how politicians contribute to the poor development of schools and such a thing discourages parents from volunteering for school-based manual activities. Belitho reported on the poor mobilisation and allocation of funds to the needy:

Sometimes we become discouraged from attending school-based activities you know why, the leaders in the opposition party are telling us that the government is responsible for building schools, plastering and furniture. So politics are playing a big game here and I believe the government has a lot of money. The problem I think is the poor mobilisation and allocation of funds to various services as one political leader told us in a meeting. And personally, I concur with the point because we are rich in natural resources so where does the money go? [Belitho/ P1-G/Interview].

## **6.9 Chapter Summary**

The chapter presented the main themes and sub-themes from four parents, six teachers and their pupils through individual and group interviews, classroom observation, and documentary review. Six main themes were drawn from the analysis of the local level group responses to questions which investigated the issues and experiences teachers encounter in the enactment of the 2005 pre-school education curriculum and the associated pedagogies. In addition, the differences between curriculum enactment in the two locations (urban and rural school) have been discussed within the chapter.

The presentation of the main themes and sub-themes had two aspects. There are things which were found to be working well in the implementation of the ECEC curriculum. For example, currently, the government has initiated initial teacher education programmes in the two public universities and one initial teacher education college at Singachini in the Kilimanjaro region. All these programmes prepare pre-school teachers. However, the picture generally seems to suggest that not very much was working well. The local level's group expressed the combination of factors which hinder the smooth implementation of the curriculum. Firstly, there are national level issues: formalisation of ECEC and lack of funding or support from the government to run it places a big burden and responsibility on the parents and community for running the pre-schools. Teachers' lack of

opportunities to gain ECEC qualifications and limited professional development, lack access to the pre-school education curriculum, key players are not involved in the preparation of the curriculum. These issues are largely outside the control of local participants. The inadequacy of teaching and learning resources and materials, poor teaching and learning environments, limited parent and community involvement in learning of their children and poor pedagogical skills and teaching approaches, were classified as local level aspects.

The next chapter presents findings from the government educational officials (national level) participants, concerning the possibilities, experiences, and issues, revealed from the fieldwork.

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **FINDINGS FROM GOVERNMENT EDUCATIONAL OFFICIALS (NATIONAL) GROUP**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings from the participants who were educational officials (national level), who comprised one Ministry of Education official; two curriculum developers, two regional education officials, and one ward education coordinator. The findings are organised into themes based on the research questions. Representative quotations and examples have been used to illustrate the arguments made.

The educational officials' group (national level) findings were guided by the main research question which investigated possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in the enactment of pre-school curriculum and pedagogy, in a Tanzanian context. This chapter is divided into five sections. This first section introduces information about the educational officials and describes the structure of this chapter. The second section presents results related to government commitment to pre-school education. The third section reports results about parents and community involvement in pre-school education. Section four reports results related to teaching and learning resources, materials and learning environments. The final section presents results related to the curriculum development process, followed by a chapter summary.

In this chapter the researcher drew on interviews and documentary review from educational officials involved in curriculum development and enactment. It examines their views and opinions of issues, experiences, and possibilities in curriculum enactment and pedagogical practices.

#### **7.2 Government Commitment to Pre-school Education**

The findings from the national level's participants is analysed in this section to examine the commitment of the government towards pre-school education.

Interviews and analysis of policy documents indicated that the government showed some efforts to financially support pre-school education and improve lives of pre-school children. The government has provided money for curriculum development, incorporating early childhood education and care (ECEC) modules into the teacher education curriculum for primary school teachers, and running ECEC programmes in two public universities. In December, 2012, the government opened a teacher education college for pre-school teachers at *Singachini* in the *Kilimanjaro* region. And the government has an ongoing plan for the *Quarterly Budget Code* to support pre-school education. The *Quarterly Budget Code* refers to the grants which the government normally send to schools, teacher education, and higher learning each quarter to run the institutions.

The documentary review indicated that the government is making some efforts to improve issues related to children. In February, 2012, the government of Tanzania, in collaboration with other stakeholders, organised discussion called the *First Biennial National Forum on Early Childhood Development (ECD)* (United Republic of Tanzania (URT), 2012a). The forum aimed to integrate ECD into other policies, strategies, and programmes and five ministers from five key ministries responsible for young children's issues attended the meeting. The ministries were the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT), the Ministry of Community Development Gender and Children (MCDG&C), the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MHSW), the Prime Minister's Office Regional Administration and Local Government (PMORA&LG), and the Ministry of Finance (MF) (United Republic of Tanzania (URT), 2012a). A report of their discussion, noted the agreement to finalise the integrated ECD policy which seemed to be taking too long. The process of developing the integrated development policy began in 2008 and, once completed, it is expected to promote greatly increased numbers of community-owned child care and pre-school programmes (United Republic of Tanzania (URT), 2012a). It is also expected to strengthen the participatory and local community ownership of ECD programmes for sustainability, enable smooth transition from early childhood programmes to primary education, and to put in place improved monitoring, control, and evaluation of ECD interventions (United Republic of Tanzania (URT), 2012a).

Together with this, the Education and Training Policy (ETP) of 1995 at the time this study was conducted was also under review as reported by a Ministry of Education official. The data from the documentary review was supported by the government education official. The following quote illustrates the efforts that the government is making to improve ECEC provision:

.....of course the government is struggling to handle the childhood issues but it has a lot to do and a financial crisis. Currently, five ministries had a forum to integrate early childhood development policies and programmes. And the Education and Training Policy is under review, and among other things is proposing combining child care and early education, and the starting age for pre-school class is proposed to be age 3 to 6 year olds instead of the current age which is 5 and 6 year olds [Takio/GO1/Interview].

### **7.2.1 The provision of funds from the government**

Three education officials out of six participants commented on the provision of money from the government for pre-school curriculum development. A Ministry of Education official and the curriculum developer participants reported that the funds from various sources, whether internal or external sources are collected in one container, thereafter the amount is allocated to various sectors according to the requirement and the availability of funds. Firstly, these same participants commented on the commitment showed by the government for the provision of funds to facilitate the development of the pre-school curriculum. One government official explained the internal and external sources of funding and their allocation to various ministries, including the Ministry of Education for the running of education:

Actually, the government after its financial budget usually allocates the funds to various ministries to support various projects and other different purposes according to the requirements and the availability of funds. The government normally gets funds from internal and external sources for various uses. Externally sources are like international agencies such as the World Bank, UNESCO, and UNICEF. All funds, whether internal or external, are collected in one container and thereafter distributed to various sectors. Therefore the Ministry of Education also got funds from the government to run educational matters. For example in 2005 the

Ministry of Education provided funds to the Tanzania Institute of Education for the pre-school curriculum development. However, the Ministry of Education did not receive funds for operating pre-school education matters [*Takio/ GO1/ Interview*].

The two Regional and one Ward education participants had similar views to that of *Takio* regarding the provision of funds from the government. They said the government supplied funds for special use i.e. for curriculum development and not for running pre-school education. For example, one of the government officials reported:

Yes! ....There is a dire situation in pre-school education.....My duties are to supervise all schools within my Ward and I have 5 primary schools here....! Three primary schools with attached pre-school classes and the other two have no pre-school class. Look here, my efforts as a supervisor of these schools is to make sure that I supervise the implementation of the policy which emphasises each primary school is to have an attached pre-school class. [However, the implementation of this policy is difficult, because] the government is not providing funds for running pre-schools, for example, there are no qualified teachers in pre-schools, no buildings for pre-school classes, and a lack of teaching and learning resources and materials. Actually, we have local committees with members from parents and school boards for planning and organizing how to run pre-schools through donations from parents and other community members.....Yeah....! Pre-school education is funded by parents and the surrounding community. Even if the government said that the community should put their efforts into building classes and the government would support the finishing and furnishing processes, in reality nothing is going on, those are just politics [*Simfo/ GO6/ Interview*].

The two Regional education participants made similar comments to those of *Simfo*.

### **7.2.2 Qualifications of teachers and professional development**

The Ministry of Education official participant mentioned the efforts from the government regarding professional development and teacher education for pre-school teachers. He commented that for a long time the government did not make any effort to support pre-school education. In some areas children are taught by retired teachers and volunteers on contractual bases and in other areas they are taught by primary school teachers. But in both circumstances no professional

development was taking place in order to improve the teaching and learning situation. Regarding teachers' qualifications and professional development, the following response illustrates the limited availability of teacher education opportunities despite government intentions to expand these, and the difficulty in recruiting student teachers:

.....Look here!! Last year in 2012 the government through its officials saw the need to support pre-school education. The government showed its intention and there is a team dealing with this issue in order to allocate the pre-schools with their own budget, *Quota Budget Code*. In addition, the government is in the process of making arrangements for initiating more pre-school teacher education. We expect the teacher education programme will enrol trainees who have completed an ordinary level of secondary education to study for the same qualifications as those who study for GRADE III "A" teacher education (primary school teachers). The teacher education for pre-school teachers will take 2 years and after their completion they will be employed in public pre-school classes and be paid by the government. The government earmarked nine teacher education colleges but for the initial stage one teacher education college for pre-school teachers was located at *Singachini* in Kilimanjaro region. However, for this year (2013) the student-teachers are very few due to lack of awareness and understanding about what kind of training will be taking place in that particular college and its difference from the normal teacher education. And there is a problem of a shortage of tutors in the ECEC area [*Takio/GO1/Interview*].

However, at the time that this study was conducted, the allocation of funds to pre-school education through *Quota Budget Code* had not been implemented.

Furthermore, the intention for the one teacher education college at *Singachini* in the Kilimanjaro region on December, 2012, as was reported by *Takio's* quote above, was to prepare pre-school teachers who would teach children from 3-6 year olds. More teachers were needed to meet the demands of the teacher-child ratio which was proposed to be 1: 25 in the Tanzanian Education and Training Policy but currently is 1:124. However, it was reported that there was a tendency for government to allocate lower school performers to pre-school teacher education while higher performers are selected to join the advanced level of secondary education. In addition, *Takio* reported that few student-teachers enrolled because the community was not aware of the objectives of the teacher college which they

thought may be different from primary and secondary teacher education. No information was provided to the community about the essence of pre-school teacher education. Moreover, the Ministry of Education official continued to outline the efforts from the government to rescue the situation of pre-school education by devolving responsibility to local government and district councils for professional support, oversight and monitoring of pre-school education. He reported:

.....In addition, the Ministry of Education has a plan to provide guide lines regarding professional development which will be school-based. The central government has decentralised power to the local government, the district councils through the District Executive Directors (DED) and Regional Education Officers (REO) to coordinate various programmes of workshops, seminars, and in-service teacher education. For that matter, the DED's and REO's will be responsible for handling all matters concerning pre-school education such as control and monitoring. The government is planning to provide training to district educational coordinators, educational guidance counsellors and heads of the schools on how the exercise of professional development will take place. At the moment two public universities already have ECEC programmes to train tutors who after their completion will go to teacher education colleges for pre-school teachers and others will be employed in the pre-school classes. The public Universities which run the programmes are the University of Dodoma (UDOM) and the university of Dar-es-Salaam (UDSM) [*Takio/GO1/Interview*].

The findings indicated that in the two public universities in Tanzania (Dodoma University and Dar es Salaam University) which run ECEC programmes, the problem was that when these pre-school teachers complete their studies the government is locating them in primary schools and secondary schools due to the shortage of teachers in particular areas. And some graduates do not like to be posted into pre-school due to a belief that because they are graduates they cannot teach low levels since low levels are inferior.

All six educational officials from the national level participants revealed that primary school teachers in their teacher education are offered modules/topics concerning early childhood education and care. So, they argued that the kind of knowledge gained through such topics would be useful when they taught pre-school classes. However, they reported that the preparation in the ECEC pre-

school courses is ineffective because there are no expert tutors for ECEC matters. So, more concentration is placed on the primary courses and not pre-school topics. Regarding the qualifications and teacher education of pre-school teachers, *Jane*, one of the government officials commented:

Yeah!..... Our main duty here in the curriculum department is to prepare various curriculum documents and the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training is responsible for orientation and training of teachers for the implementation of the curriculum at school levels. Therefore, for all issues concerning professional development the Ministry of Education is responsible and if there are seminars or workshop we collaborate with the Ministry of Education for planning and organising. Curriculum developers normally are invited by the Ministry of Education if need be for seminars and workshops on some issues relating to curriculum and mostly we do this for primary and secondary school teachers and tutors. Primary school teachers are also teaching pre-school classes. The Ministry of Education arranged the orientation for teachers after the development of the pre-school curriculum in 2005. A few teachers and Zonal educational coordinators attended a one day seminar while regional and district educational officers and school inspectors attended a two weeks seminar [*Jane*/GO3/Interview].

The findings from all six educational officials indicated that educational officers and school inspectors attended a two weeks orientation seminar after the development of the pre-school curriculum. And thereafter they disseminated knowledge of curriculum enactment to all teachers in the school environments. In regard to the two weeks seminar, one of the government education officers in the rural area commented that the short training was inadequate to do justice to the complex concepts of a competence based curriculum and the officers were not able to explain to teachers how the curriculum would be enacted:

Basically, the competence based curriculum is a theoretical concept; during the curriculum development teachers were not involved. So the Ministry of Education arranged a two weeks seminar for regional, district education officers, and school inspectors and one day seminar for teachers and Zonal education coordinators. So education officers went for two weeks and after coming back they disseminated the knowledge to teachers which took only one day. Unfortunately the two weeks orientation was not enough because when they came back they failed to orient teachers effectively and it was a one day seminar for teachers. It was found that educational officers did not understand the concept

of the competence based curriculum and what should be done. By then, 2005 I was a Head Teacher in a certain school, and I attended the one day seminar but all participants left the room with a lot of queries. Because the explanation from educational officers and curriculum developers left a lot of questions and they failed to describe how the curriculum could be implemented. For example, they were asked by teachers who prepared the curriculum? And who will implement the curriculum? You know.... they were no pre-school teachers in the field. It was a great challenge to the government, Ministry of Education officials, and curriculum developers [*John/GO5-Z/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview*].

On the other hand all members in the educational officials' group commented on the lack of trained teachers and the limited opportunities for professional development. Takio, the Ministry of Education official, described the programme which was conducted in the 1980s as a short course for pre-service primary school teachers who could teach a pre-school class. It took a three month to one year programme to prepare pre-school teachers and it was under the Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children. However, he commented that costs payable by trainees and poor coordination were among the reasons why there was low take-up of ECEC modules:

Yes, there is a serious problem concerning the qualification of pre-school teachers. Basically in Tanzania there are about 8% of pre-school teachers who got a little teacher education of two years in ECEC during their GRADE III 'A' (primary school teacher education) course of study which takes two years. Before 2003 in-service primary school teachers had an option to attend the short courses concerning ECEC matters. The course missed recruiting trainees due to the poor implementation plan because trainees had to pay the costs of the course by themselves. From 2003 to date the Ministry of Education located a few ECEC modules in the teacher education curriculum for primary school teachers. Therefore, trainees in primary school courses (GRADE III 'A') take ECEC as a course and not as a programme [*Takio/GO1/ Interview*].

One regional educational officer in the urban area mentioned another issue/problem concerning the teacher education of ECEC teachers. He mentioned the lack of tutors qualified to provide teacher education. The following extracts illustrate this view:

The government contributed to the lack of qualifications of pre-school teachers. The government did not prepare tutors who could teach trainees in teacher education specifically for pre-school education. Tutors taught student-teachers for primary school teachers, so preparation for pre-school teachers did not take place due to lack of experts in the area of ECEC [*Jerry/ GO4-G/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview*].

However, *Takio*, one of the government officials had a different view pinpointing the low valuing of teaching pre-school children and suggesting that in practice it is regarded as acceptable to have no specific teacher education for this teaching.

Furthermore, the data from educational policy documents found that the qualifications required for one to become a pre-school teacher were not clear, the policy was silent. The qualifications were clearly about the other levels like primary and secondary school teachers (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995). But the situation is disappointing because in colleges the trainees are trained as primary school teachers and just take a few modules for ECEC matters. The following quote illustrates the lack of qualified teachers in ECEC:

You know, I am tired of problematic policies in this country! .....Let me tell you! The problem of pre-school teachers is serious; because primary teachers are the ones teaching pre-school classes, retired teachers and primary school leavers are teaching the pre-school classes as volunteers and are paid a small honorarium by parents. Others just complete the ordinary level of secondary school and attend short courses. Look here..... The policy insisted that the government has formalised pre-school education so efficient delivery of this education will require qualified and competent teachers to ensure quality but surprisingly no priorities are given to the training of pre-school teachers [*Simfo/ GO6/ Interview*].

Members in the educational officials' group also commented that apart from the lack of trained teachers in pre-schools, even some of the primary school teachers who are expected to teach pre-school classes, had very low level qualifications for joining teacher education. One educational officer in urban areas and three others in the education officials group confirmed:

The government often takes students who received lower scores in their ordinary level of secondary school for teacher education; it would be fair to send students with higher scores for teacher

education in order to be suitable and effective in teaching. Students with lower passes are going for teacher education at certificate level (primary schools teachers). What do we expect in their teaching? Government should take students, who got higher passes in their secondary education national examination for teacher education. Currently students with higher scores are selected to join for advanced secondary education and lower scores for teacher education [*Jerry/ GO4-G/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview*].

*Simfo*, the government education officer had a similar concern and emphasised the ways pre-school children learn which he thought is different from older children, a reason for specialised teacher education. He commented:

Yeah! Basically teacher education for pre-school teachers is very important because these children need special care from a specialised person not anybody else. There is a special psychology on how to handle these children. Primary school teachers were prepared to teach primary schools though in their course there are a few topics concerning ECEC matters. The amount is not enough because I think young children have their own way of learning that is different from older pupils. Moreover, no professional development to pre-school teachers is offered such as seminars, workshops and in-service teacher education [*Simfo/ GO6-Z/ Interview*].

### **7.2.3 Lack of independent division for pre-school education**

Another sub-theme which emerged in the data from the educational officials' participants was the lack of an independent division for pre-school education. All six educational official participants interviewed for this study complained of difficulties in the enactment of the pre-school curriculum which in one way or another was contributed by the lack of an independent division. In this situation, primary education takes priority. For example, *Simfo* commented:

Basically, pre-school education has no separate directorate/division; it is under the directorate of primary education. Therefore more attention is focused on primary education and not on pre-school education; pre-school education is not properly handled. For instance, one Head Teacher coordinates both primary and pre-school so he/she is overloaded and as a result there is no concentration on pre-school education bearing in mind that there are no capitation grants for pre-school education [*Simfo/ GO6-Z/ Interview*].

*John* the government educational officer had a similar comment and emphasised the need to locate pre-school education as a separate directorate:

To me I think the best way is to separate pre-school education from the directorate of primary education because sometimes the government through the Ministry of Education is directing the capitation grants by thinking that the heads of schools can manage to handle primary school and pre-school class issues. But in reality it is not easy because the government allocates money with a requirement about how heads should use it and with already calculated percentages for each item. So where can heads of school get extra to support the pre-school class? The government is trying to escape its responsibilities. To me I insist that pre-school education should have its own division/directorate and get a separate budget for ECEC matters including funds for initial teacher education [*John/ GO5-Z/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview*].

And the other four educational participants made similar comments regarding the need for pre-school education to have its own separate division.

Referring to the lack of commitment from the government for handling pre-school education, *Jerry* the government educational officer considered that African countries that do put priority on pre-school appreciate the importance of the early years for children's cognitive and non-cognitive development and the linkage to later academic success. He reported:

Yeah! Look here, the government is ignoring investing in early years without knowing that investing in early childhood education is very important because children built their capacity in various domains from the early years such as cognitive and non-cognitive skills. The growth of education starts from early years, and those countries which put more priorities on early childhood education and care are in a good position academically in all levels.....you know....take examples in Africa, countries like Nigeria, South Africa, Botswana, and Ghana have invested a lot in early childhood education and their education is of a high quality from early education to higher levels. These countries are leading academically in Africa. Apart from that, these countries have also great development due to the efforts which they put into education at various levels especially in the early years. If children are well prepared in the early years they will continue to perform well in other levels [*Jerry/ GO4-G/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview*].

Five educational officials out of six made similar comments about the government ignoring investment in the early years, except the Ministry of Education official who reported that when the government is good economically, it will invest.

In addition, the two Regional and one Ward educational officers commented that the government did not invest in teachers and needed to recognise its role as crucial in education. *John* the government educational officer picked out features of class size, training, resources, rates of pay and good employment conditions:

You know! The government does not make efforts in finding money and even if it got money from various sources whether internal or external it does not think about pre-school education. Teachers have a lot of basic claims and the government does not solve the issues such as low pay, no motivation and incentives (especially for teachers who work in difficult environments), lack of teachers' houses, lack of teaching and learning resources/materials, lack of training, no promotion (working in the same rank for almost 10 years), large numbers of children in the class with a single teacher, and all other related matters. So the government should put more effort into fulfilling such basic claims because teachers are key agents in the provision of education for our children. Putting aside such claims results in the dropping of education quality because teachers who are the key players lose interest, morale and commitment to the profession [*John/ GO5-Z/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview*].

However, the Ministry of Education official was of the view that things will be better in the near future. *Takio* the government educational official commented on the need of the local community to support ECEC provision:

You know, I always wonder!! Many people make claims on the government but they forget that the government has a lot to do so the local community should help to run pre-school education. Basically, I agree that the lack of funds contributes to poor preparation of pre-school children but the government through the Ministry of Education is sending money to primary schools and we normally advice the heads to see if they can assist the pre-school class from the amount we supply quarterly [*Takio/ GO1/Interview*].

### **7.3 Parents and Community Involvement in Pre-school Education**

One theme was that of parents' and community involvement in supporting pre-school education. Members in the educational group described the involvement of

parents and community in a number of things such as monetary contributions, school-based manual volunteer activities, and attending local committees to run pre-school education. The educational officers commented on the lack of awareness of parents/guardians and the community concerning pre-school education. They commented that the government supported the interest of society in starting the preparatory class and that the government requested the community to support this education. Due to the shortage in the government's budget, the government requested the community to support the pre-school education cost sharing.

The educational officials said that during school board meetings the local community members and the school management brought issues/problems and various experiences for discussion and sought means to rectify the situations. For the issues which need money the committees make arrangements for how to collect money from the community members. The involvement of the community in the matters related to pre-school education was evidenced by *Simfo* the government education officer. He had this to say:

Yeah! We do! Parents and the community are involved through school committees. The representatives from parents and the community are following up on basic needs in education provision such as buying books, making desks, tables, chairs, and general school maintenance. Again they follow up on the availability of classrooms, teaching and learning resources and materials, presence of teachers, teachers' houses and offices and attendance of children at school and creating a good environment for teachers as well as quality of education provided in our schools. So the involvement of parents and community in education is through their contributions in money to buy teaching and learning resources and materials, and manual work [*Simfo/ GO6-Z/Interview*].

A similar concern was shared by *Takio*, who commented on the need for the local community to work in partnership with the central government:

Yeah! The government cannot do everything; the surrounding community is responsible for the development of schools in the particular area. There is a partnership between the government and the community in developing education. The community builds classes and the government does finishing processes and furnishing [Local] committees have representation from parents and other

community members. When there are educational matters which need discussion the school management usually calls the school committee for discussion [*Takio*/GO1/Interview].

The educational officials group showed that the surrounding community had to contribute money and volunteer school-based manual work in the development of schools. And the idea from the government was to conduct the activities in a partnership. That is the community should build the classes and the government should support the finishing processes and furnishing. However, in practice, all but one participant revealed that all activities were left to the parents and community to run pre-school education. Regarding the parents and community involvement in pre-school education, *Jerry* outlined low socio-economic status as the main reason for some parents not to contribute money for ECEC:

Actually, the parents and community do a lot to run the pre-school education, they are involved in school-based manual activities and in contributing monetary. The amount is used to buy desks, books, materials, facilities, pay a security guard and other related things although not all community members manage to contribute due to poverty, so they fail to meet the donations as a result the situation in the pre-school classes is not conducive for children' learning [*Jerry*/GO4-G/ 1<sup>st</sup> Interview].

The education officers said that not all community members were active in their involvement. Other members and parents had poor participation in the monetary contributions and school-based volunteer work such as making mud bricks, building classes, renovation and maintenance. Some members were not cooperative. All educational officers complained about the poor participation of some members in pre-school education development. For example, *Takio* commented:

Yes, to my knowledge the government insists the community participate in all matters socially, economically, and educationally but the response is not very great due to a number of factors. Among them are low economic status, politics, and lack of awareness by the community members in recognising the value of their participation [*Takio*/GO1/ Interview].

A similar concern was mentioned by *Simfo* the government educational officer. He had this to say:

Yeah! I have a hard time here in this Ward! The awareness of the community about the issues relating to the development of education is limited. Community leaders use a lot of effort to make several announcements to the people regarding their turn up to pre-school activities. And sometimes they penalise those who do not turn up but still the response is poor. I asked people through their local committees to contribute money for buying desks, building toilets, offices for teachers, teachers' houses but only a few people contributed money and the amount was not enough [*Simfo/ GO6-Z/Interview*].

*John* the government education officer in rural area also had a similar comment.

### **7.3.1 Parents /guardians awareness and low economic status**

Members in the educational officials group said that not all parents and guardians were aware of the importance of sending their children to the pre-school setting. Four government educational officials out of six participants mentioned the lack of awareness and low economic status of the parents and guardians which meant the family has priorities other than ECEC for spending. Female children are particularly vulnerable to exploitation. For example, *John* commented:

Of course..... some parents liked to send their children to school but due to low economic status they do not manage this. The situation of children who stay with grandparents is vulnerable because many grandparents are not aware of the importance of education. In addition, low socio-economic status contributes to thinking about how parents can raise their family income; education for some parents and guardians is not their priority. A large number of parents/guardians are coming from a low socio-economic status especially in rural areas. Some parents arrange forced marriage for their girls while they are still young in order to raise their income. Girls have limited opportunities for schooling. When parents fail to support their children due to poverty children become truants and engage in child labour, crimes and become street children. Girls are more vulnerable to early pregnancies because men cheat them, misuse them and because of their poverty they have no objections [*John/ GO5-Z/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview*].

*Simfo* the education officer reinforced the finding that poverty is a reason for families not to send their children to pre-school, and also spoke of traditional childrearing practices of older children caring for younger children as a reason:

.....of course for so many years there were no emphases from the government to the community to send their children to pre-school education. It was just personal interest to send children to pre-school centres until recent years when pre-school education was formalised. However, many parents in my ward have a low income so they fail to send their children to school due to poverty because there are lots of monetary donations required for the development of the school and children need school uniforms, exercise books, pencils and the like. On the other hand parents and guardians do not enrol their children due to the traditional childrearing system; when parents undertake daily activities which are either personal or community they leave small children with older children who are supposed to go to school. Some children go to take care of domestic animals; others become street children when their parents fail to meet their school needs [*Simfo/ GO6-Z/Interview*].

*Takio* the government education official explained the situation by comparing the situation in present years with that of past years. He was bringing in an idea that education nowadays is not valued in ways it used to be. He was of the view that there must be something that has gone wrong in present years. He claimed:

Yeah!! Let me remind you! During “*Mwalimu Nyerere era in the 1970s*” success resulted from the country which had a vision and identity. The students and teachers recognized their duties, even though teachers had little education they worked very hard. Even the poor rural parents valued education and participated very actively and encouraged their children to study hard. Teachers, parents, and students were self-conscious, committed and determined, and they built morale and were encouraged to work and hold patriotic views and they succeeded. *Ask yourself what happens today?.....Tell me during your time how educational matters got priorities!!!.....* Unlike today where parents can register their children in pre-school but do not follow up on how their children learn, they do not bother even to go through their exercise books [*Takio/GO1/Interview*]. Italic phrase was narrated three times with a great emphasis.

He went on to report:

You know! The education and training policy states that every child should attend two years of pre-school education before joining the primary school level but the implementation is weak. Parents are not active in sending their children to pre-school education; they hide their children until they reach the age of compulsory schooling [*Takio/GO1/Interview*].

*Jerry* the government educational officer from the urban area had a view that not

only were parents not aware of the value of pre-school education but also the community in general do not know what children need to do in the pre-school class. He commented:

The critical problem I can see in Tanzania is; up to the moment no one is aware of what kind of knowledge these children need in pre-school education. On 25th March, 2013 I was invited to attend a seminar concerning the challenges facing Ward schools in Tanzania. During discussion the chairperson asked about the importance of pre-school education in connection to the other levels of education. Surprisingly, I found everyone just looking at each other .....*the importance and the need for pre-school education, the majority just said the pre-school children just go to schools for plays, singing and taking porridge and familiarisation with other children and environments to prepare themselves to go to primary education.* I was shocked!! Funnily enough we had also a facilitator from Tanzania Institute of Education (Curriculum Development); he failed to explain clearly what children need to do in a pre-school class. So if a curriculum developer fails to explain what the children need to do in a pre-school class what about pre-school teachers who always complain that they are being neither involved in curriculum development nor in attending workshops, seminars and in-service teacher education [Jerry/GO4-G/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview]. (The italic phrase above was narrated with very great feelings).

Educational officials mentioned the detrimental cultural beliefs which hinder children from attending schools such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). They reported the practice to be associated with traditional norms and sexuality. They blamed the lack of awareness among parents, especially in rural areas, where they continue to practise such harmful traditional cultural aspects, as when a girl child before and after being cut is not allowed attending schools. So girls are much more affected and do not attend schools and the practice takes place with small girls. Parents with mutilated girls get high bride prices (many cows) during marriages and respect, and this culture is continuing due to poverty. For example, *John* commented:

You know.... It is very sad and shy to tell.....! That, the external female genitals are removed completely or partly which causes much pain to girls during the exercise. Women are the main supervisors of the practice because they cheat little girls by saying that it is a requirement that girls must be virgins to be considered

eligible for marriage. As a consequence such habit contributes to a continuation of the FGM practices. They create fear in girls and if this is not done it causes stigmatisation among the girl's friends. This culture limits girls from attending school from early years to other levels of education [*John/ GO5-Z/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview*].

#### **7.4 Teaching and Learning Resources, Materials, and Environments**

Another issue raised by the educational officials' group, was about teaching and learning resources, materials and learning environments. The data indicated the seriousness of the problem. They mentioned both insufficient human and physical resources. Firstly, all six members in the group mentioned the lack of resources, teaching materials, facilities, and qualified teachers. For example, *Jerry* the government education officer in an urban area commented:

.....you know parents were advised to buy books for their children from bookshops and some books were found that were not recommended by the Ministry of Education. It was difficult for an individual to get the recommended books because the Ministry of Education is responsible to supply the books and it does not supply them. The recommended books must have the Ministry of Education logo and certification from the responsible arm which is dealing with the Auditing; the arm is called EMAC (Educational Materials Approval Committee). Also, the teaching and learning environments are very poor [*Jerry/ GO4-Z/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview*].

Referring to the above quote by *Jerry*, concerning the Ministry of Education logo and certification, please refer to Figure 6.11 in section 6.5, p. 211 for clarification.

Secondly, two Regional and one Ward educational official participants mentioned the lack of copies of the curriculum document and other curriculum materials. The Regional and Ward educational officers claimed that they struggled a lot to follow up in order to get the curriculum document, syllabus, and teachers' guide from the Ministry of Education when they were informed about the new curriculum for pre-school education. But their struggle ended with uncooperative responses. In regard to the lack of curriculum document and other curriculum materials, *John* the government education officer in rural areas, had this to say:

Hello!.... The situation is dire here!.....The Ministry of Education is not disseminating curriculum materials and resources. As a result we are talking about curriculum enactment but many schools do

not have the curriculum document, syllabus, and teachers' guide. This is due to the bureaucracy from the Ministry of Education. Sometimes I went to the Ministry of Education and demanded teaching and learning resources and materials for my schools in the region, but they said they are still working out some logistics for supplying the resources. Later on they distributed a memo that the local government (District councils) are responsible for buying teaching and learning resources and materials for schools. Then I reminded them about the curriculum document, syllabus, and teachers' guide the Ministry of Education officials promised to bring up, but up to the moment no curriculum materials have arrived. Teachers have to buy the syllabus and teachers' guide from the bookshops or make photocopies from their fellow teachers [John/ GO5-Z/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

*Jerry* the government education officer in urban areas had similar comments to those made by *John*. He also reported the lack of teaching and learning resources and irresponsible of some of the government officials.

In addition, the Ward educational coordinator also made similar comments as the two regional education officials.

However, the curriculum developers during the interviews had different views. Both curriculum developers in the ECEC department commented that if teachers have the syllabus and teachers' guide, they can manage to know in what ways children need to be oriented. In their views the holistic curriculum document seems not necessary for teachers to have so long as they have a syllabus and teachers' guide. This suggests a view that it is not worthwhile for teachers have a holistic curriculum and that the focus should be on knowledge and skills. For example; *Makoti* the government official put it this way:

.....*“Akizungumzia umuhimu wa walimu kupatiwa mtaala, mkurugenzi mkuu wa ukuzaji wa mitaala anasema, si lazima kwa mwalimu kuwa na mtaala kwani mtaala ni nyaraka yenye kujumuisha mambo mengi ambayo kimsingi mengi hayahitajiki na walimu na kwamba nyenzo muhimu kwa walimu ni muhtasari ambao huainisha maudhui, ujuzi, mada kuu na mada ndogo zitakazofundishwa kwa kila somo darasani. Hivyo mwalimu kutokuwa na Mtaala kamwe hakuwezi kuathiri kazi yake kwa kuwa muhtasari ndio nyenzo yake kuu inayojitoshleza. Mambo muhimu yaliyomo katika mtaala ambayo ni lazima mwalimu ayafahamu huandikwa katika kurasa za awali za muhtasari”*

[Translation....]

Yeah! Sure!!!.....They can teach without a holistic curriculum document because they have a syllabus and teachers' guide. Look here! Referring to the importance of teachers being supplied with a curriculum, it is not necessary for the teacher to adapt the curriculum because the curriculum is a holistic document consisting of many things, a lot of which is scarcely needed by teachers, and the necessary tools for teachers are a syllabus and teachers' guide that define the content, skills, main topics and sub-topics to be covered in each subject class. So not having a curriculum does not affect the teachers' job because all things from the holistic curriculum have already been summarised in the syllabus. All important concepts of the contents of the curriculum that must be known by the teacher are highlighted in the initial summary pages of the syllabus [Makoti/ GO2/Interview].

The “*Swahili*” quote sounded very surprising because the curriculum developer is a professional person who could be expected to know the importance of a holistic curriculum for teachers. The researcher was surprised when the curriculum developer ignored the importance of the curriculum document for classroom teachers. It was not expected that the researcher would hear such a phrase coming from a curriculum developer and an educated person! Referring to the above quote the researcher revealed that the curriculum developer promoted only cognitive skills and not non-cognitive skills, because the syllabus and teachers' guide are very structured and formal with Subjects like in primary schools.

#### **7.4.1 Low quality of pre-school education**

Four government educational officers out of six commented on the low quality of pre-school education due to various reasons. Firstly, they attributed low quality in pre-school education to the lack of initial teacher education and teaching materials and facilities. *Takio* the Ministry of Education official repeated his earlier comment about the lack of trained teachers to teach pre-school education and added:

Teachers in pre-school classes teach writing, reading and arithmetic (3Rs) although the syllabus has six subject learning activities. This occurs due to lack of enough teachers and large class sizes with a single teacher. For a sole teacher it becomes

difficult to follow up for each child what he/she is doing in a class. You know....! [*Takio*/GO1/ Interview].

Secondly, they commented on the various factors which hinder the attainment of quality pre-school education. They conveyed that the factors are interrelated and in combination make it hard to offer good quality pre-school education. For example, *Jerry*, the government education officer in an urban area made comment about teacher education and his views about the lack of a conducive teaching and learning environment and resources for quality ECEC provision:

Of course.....! It is difficult to attain the quality of pre-school class due to various factors including lack of trained pre-school teachers, lack of teaching and learning resources and materials, poor teaching and learning environments, lack of professional development including, seminars, workshops, and in-service training. Lack of motivation and morale for teachers, poor salaries, and poor coordination as one Head Teacher handles both primary and pre-school education as well as lack of capitation grants to run pre-school education [*Jerry*/ GO4-G/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

The government educational officials also revealed the dire situation of teachers. That is, if teachers have poor working conditions it is hard to attain quality education. It would be hard to have a close relationship with children due to an overcrowded class size with a sole teacher.

The Ministry of Education official commented about some efforts which have been shown by the government in the current period, that there are two public universities in Tanzania offering ECEC programmes but these ECEC graduates are not willing to go and teach pre-school classes thinking that they do not deserve to teach such lower levels. Graduates are struggling to be employed in secondary schools and teacher education colleges. Moreover, teachers were not motivated to teach because of their long-term demands and work under difficult conditions as was confirmed by *John* the government education officer in rural areas:

*Walimu wanaofundisha katika madarasa haya ya Elimu ya awali wengi ni wa kujitolea na hawana mafunzo ya taaluma ya Elimu ya awali na wengine hawana taaluma ya ualimu. Baadhi yao wana Elimu ya darasa la saba na wengine kidato cha nne na hawajahudhuria mafunzo ya Elimu ya awali kwa hiyo ni ndoto watoto wetu kupata Elimu bora* [*John*/ GO5-Z/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

[Translation.....]

A large number of people teaching in the pre-school class are volunteers especially here in rural areas and have no professional training and others are not teachers by profession. Some of them have just completed standard seven or the ordinary level of secondary education and did not attend any course related to ECEC matters. Therefore, it is a miracle for our children to attain quality education [*John/ GO5-Z/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview*].

The descriptions from *John* were also supported by *Jerry* the government education officer from an urban area. The following quotes illustrate this point:

The country education and training policy did not put clear guidelines for funding and running pre-school education. Basically, there are no priorities from the government regarding this education. This education is a foundation for success for the upper levels. If we fail to build a strong foundation from the low levels we will not make wonders in higher levels [*Jerry/ GO4-G/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview*].

Another government education official, *Simfo* also reported the dire situation in ECEC classrooms and lack of toilets:

In fact the situation of pre-school classes around my Ward is so bad. The pre-school classes lack qualified teachers to teach these children, no teaching and learning resources and materials, no desks, no teachers' houses, no special buildings for these children. They share classes with older pupils which make it difficult for the teachers to put diagrams and pictures. A large number of children in the class sit on the dust floor, windows have no glasses and there are no toilets; children just go around the bush for toileting which places them in great danger from wild animals like snakes and other harmful animals. Teachers are teaching in very difficult environments; due to lack of classrooms you find children in two streams use the same class looking in opposite directions. One stream of children turns behind and another stream looks in front. It is terrible for teachers to teach in such a situation [*Simfo/ GO6-Z/ Interview*].

#### **7.4.2 School inspection**

All six educational officials (national level) mentioned the lack of school inspection. Firstly, they mentioned the lack of funds and secondly, they mentioned the consequences when there was no school inspection. They explained that in

previous years, school inspectors visited schools but the situation has changed in recent years. For example, *John*, the government education officer commented on the lack of supervision of monitoring and control of the regulations that exist for standards for pre-school registration:

Yes, look here.....! In recent years the school inspection is not taking place, no proper control and monitoring is taking place on how the curriculum enactment should take place. No proper supervision in checking the regulations that exist for standards for pre-school registration. No close supervision for monitoring and controlling the quality of schools after their establishment. The Tanzania Institute of Education (curriculum development and evaluation department) and school inspectors are responsible for controlling and monitoring educational matters. The School Inspection Department nowadays is not working effectively compared to the previous days although it was not inspecting pre-school education. But monitoring and controlling of the other levels helped teachers to abide by professional ethics and the code of conduct because in many areas primary teachers also teach pre-schools. However, heads of school do the inspections but it cannot be similar to those done by specialized school inspectors [*John/GO5/ Interview*].

Referring to the argument related to school inspection, *Takio*, the government education official reported on the crisis of the government's main budget:

The government failed to allocate a budget for school inspection but it is still struggling to find funds in various sources to enable the exercise to continue as it used to in previous times. We are aware that if schools are not inspected there are lots of impacts which can lessen the quality of education. For instance teachers might not go to school due to drunkardness, and laziness; ineffective teaching such as teaching without lesson preparations or teaching without following directives from the curriculum; school inspectors are there to follow up on whether curriculum changes are accommodated .....[*Takio/ GO1/ Interview*].

He went on to report the impacts which may occur if schools are not inspected:

.....Of course, if the school inspectors do not make follow ups, teachers can do anything in improper ways at schools, and this can contribute a lot to lessen the quality of education so inspection is very important in order to avoid such bad behaviours. Some teachers are not committed. They work if somebody is supervising them. Without supervision, such teachers are not working properly. School inspection is a lens to schools, so without a lens it becomes

difficult to oversee the challenges facing the education system. So it is our role to push the government to make sure that inspection is taking place as it was taking place previously in schools [*Takio/GO1/Interview*].

The educational officials said that inspection helps to control and monitor badly behaved teachers and poor school environments; many schools are dropping academically due to lack of inspection. There were no follow ups from school inspectors in regard to monitoring and controlling pre-schools after registration (establishment), no adherence to teachers' ethics or code of conduct, resources, and poor quality of teachers. The following extract illustrates the view:

It is difficulty to attain quality in pre-school education and other levels in Tanzania. Some teachers due to lack of school inspection do not abide by teaching ethics and the code of conduct, they engage in drunkenness, drug abuse, ineffective teaching, making love with students and other bad behaviours. Previously when the Department of school inspectorate was active these bad behaviours were not found in teachers. So it is high time for the government to find money from various sources in order to rectify the situation. The quality of education is deteriorating as days go on.....! [*Jane/GO3/Interview*].

Furthermore, curriculum developer participants mentioned visiting the pre-schools once a week to check out the progress of pre-school education. In line with the argument *Makoti* commented:

It is true that we have to visit all schools including the pre-school classes. When this happens we normally observe the following specifically in the rural pre-school classes; poor teaching and learning environments, children are sitting on the dust floor, no desks. Also, a lack of qualified pre-school teachers. Most of the teachers are teaching on a voluntary basis and are paid by parents' contributions. They have no professional training for pre-school teachers. There are no seminars, workshops and in-service training for these teachers to improve their teaching and learning, as a result the curriculum is implemented poorly. The Ministry of Education is responsible for training pre-school teachers but the priority is only for primary school teachers and not for pre-school teachers. Apart from that the government does not allocate funds for pre-school education. As a result all matters relating to pre-school education are not [running well] [*Makoti/GO2/Interview*].

## **7.5 Curriculum Development Process**

Another theme was that of the pre-school curriculum development process. This section reports the findings concerning the processes during pre-school curriculum development. Curriculum developers prepared three curriculum documents, i.e., a holistic curriculum, a syllabus, and a teachers' guide. By the way of explanation, the curriculum is a broad document which shows indoor and outdoor activities to be performed in school, and the syllabus is a structured and formal document extracted from the holistic curriculum which interprets in detail what should be done in a particular subject in the classroom context (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT), 2005), and is a subject domain document. A teachers' guide is a document which guides teachers on the principles of teaching and learning practice. A teachers' guide clarifies and interprets things indicated in a syllabus detailing how they can be enacted in the classroom context including how to write a scheme of work and lesson plans (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2008, 2010).

Again, the decision to develop a pre-school curriculum happened after research conducted to review primary education in 2004. Having seen the weaknesses of the primary education the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE) in collaboration with the responsible Ministry of Education had to initiate the pre-school curriculum.

Furthermore, the interviews with participants revealed influential factors for curriculum development including the involvement of educational stakeholders, and the role of politics in educational matters.

### **7.5.1 Influential factors for curriculum development**

A number of factors reported to influence curriculum development are discussed here. All six national level participants reported on the sociocultural, political, economic, and historical influences pertaining to the pre-school curriculum in Tanzania.

### 7.5.1.1 *Sociocultural context*

All six educational official participants reported that the need for initiating pre-school education was motivated by international policy statements about children's rights, and the declaration which highlighted the importance of education for all (EFA) in 1990. Also they reported that the development of the pre-school curriculum was a reaction from the perceived needs of the wider society which recognised the importance of sending children to pre-school before starting primary education. It was felt that the choices of curriculum content should be made in response to the expectations and beliefs of society at large and not just from the expectations and beliefs of educators. For example, the following extract illustrates this view:

Yeah! Some parents and community liked their children to go to pre-school education before compulsory schooling and the government was not then prepared to run pre-school education. So through the demand from society and the review from the primary education curriculum in 2004, the government had to write the curriculum for pre-school education in 2005. Children joining primary school are coming from pre-school class. Together with this, the need for initiating pre-school education was motivated by the international child rights policy statements declaration which highlighted the importance of education for all (EFA) [Takio/GO1/Interview].

*Makoti* commented that apart from the need for society to send their children to preparatory class before compulsory schooling, a review of the primary school curriculum in 2004 was another reason for pre-school curriculum development. Further, he reported how the process happened. The following quote illustrates the view:

Of course yes....before writing it, we conducted the needs assessments in order to identify the societal needs. So, we visited various educational stakeholders such as policy makers, school inspectors, teachers/tutors/lecturers, parents, professional associations, politicians, governmental institutions, non-governmental institutions and religious institutions in order to seek their opinions. Furthermore, the demand for pre-school classes rose from societal needs which required their children to attend some sort of preparatory class before joining the primary education. [Makoti /GO1/Interview].

Referring to the sociocultural context, *Jane* commented that a needs assessment is important before curricula development in order to collect views and opinions for effective development. She reported society to be a main stakeholder of the curricula:

.....*Dhana za maboresho na mabadiliko ya mitaala ni suala ambalo jamii inapaswa kuwa inafahamishwa na kuelimishwa kwa kina kila inapotokea. Hii ni kutokana na ukweli kuwa mitaala ni mali ya jamii na hivyo kila mwanajamii ni mdau na ana haki ya kuelewa mustakabali wa mtaala na stadi zinazolengwa katika utekelezaji wa mtaala* [Translation].....The concept of curriculum development and revision is regarded as in the hands of the society/community, so the society needs to know what is going on in the curriculum development and its reviews. The society is viewed as a key stakeholder of the curriculum development; hence, before writing the curricula we had several visits to seek their views. Some people insisted on including religious matters in the pre-school curriculum [Jane/GO3/Interview].

In addition, the educational official participants highlighted that if the development of curriculum ignores the needs of society, the curriculum would be useless. For, example, *Jerry*, reported the importance of including information and communication technologies due to changes occurring globally in various sectors:

Yeah! It was important for the government to put in place the curriculum for children because of the various changes in the world socially, economically and academically. Pre-school curriculum is essential due to the changes in Science and Technology globally. So children could be growing by widening their knowledge in various aspects, because the government is planning to disseminate knowledge in pre-schools such as *Tekinolojia ya Habari na Mawasiliano* (TEHAMA)–Information and Communication Technologies, *Haiba na Michezo na Kifaransa* (personalities, sport and games, and French) and others like Family life skills, HIV/AIDS education and environmental education as in primary school [Jerry/GO4-G/1<sup>st</sup> Interview].

Similar data to that of the national level participants were obtained from documentary review, that the curriculum needed to accommodate the needs of the society within the country and the world at large (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2008, 2010).

### 7.5.1.2 *Political context*

The national level participants reported political influences emerged during pre-school curriculum development. All six participants mentioned the power showed by politicians in various decision-making situations, including the curriculum reforms. They commented that politicians normally fight to locate material in the curriculum which favours their own interests and not those of the majority. The following quote illustrates that government leaders who are also politicians located their interests, and maybe funders' interests, in curriculum development rather than the interest of the society at large:

.....You know! Government officials who are also politicians have power in decision making based on their own interest and not society's interests. We, curriculum developers are professional academics so when we defend issues professionally we are rarely heard. For example, we advised the number of subjects to be few in the pre-school curriculum but they denied this and located six subjects all of which are difficult to teach because of lack of human and physical resources. When writing various curricula including the pre-school curriculum we normally get interrupted by politicians including things which are not benefiting the majority. You know.....Government leaders are politicians, for example, the minister and its deputy in the Ministry of Education are politicians and have power in decision making and are the ones controlling monetary allocations in various sectors. We thought maybe they do so to suit the interests of funders [*Jane/GO3/Interview*].

*Makoti* had similar views to those reported by Jane. Another education official named *John* reinforced the finding that many decision-making processes in various committees are not fair as they favour the will of the ruling party that leads the government, and committee members are selected in a biased way. He commented:

The influence of politics in educational matters including curriculum development in Tanzania is best seen through the formation of various education commissions, committees, and working parties. Moreover, the findings and recommendations of most of these commissions are implemented at the will of the ruling party [*John/ GO5-Z/ 1<sup>st</sup> Interview*].

*Simfo* had similar comments to those described by *John* and *Jane* and he reported that the Ministry of Education officials are not responsible for reminding the government to locate funds for pre-school education. He reported the dire situation in pre-school teaching and learning environments:

Basically, the government leaders are politicians and during the national budget approval the Ministry of Education also got funds but I think the allocation of funds is determined politically. The Ministry of Education leaders could raise their voices concerning the situation in pre-school education in order to rescue the critical situation over there. But they seem not to be aware that children and teachers at school are facing hard time. Schools have untrained teachers, no teaching and learning resources and materials, poor teaching and learning environments and, no buildings for pre-school children, [*Simfo/GO6-Z/Interview*].

The data indicated the politicians have power in decision-making which favours a minority and not a nation at large; five participants out of six blamed the government for poor administration and management. They also blamed the Ministry of Education officials for not being responsive to educational matters. Only the Ministry of Education official participant in most of his explanations talked about things politically and seemed to favour the government. This is likely because he indicated he is among government leaders who are politicians.

### **7.5.1.3 Historical context**

Another theme was that of the historical influences on pre-school curriculum development. All six national level participants reported the pre-school education and its curriculum had a long history in its development. They explained the situation of early childhood since independence to date. The interview data were also supported by data from the policy documents which indicates the government was not ready to support ECEC as it needs a lot of money for resources and facilities compared to other levels of education:

.....After independence in 1961 the government had to structure the primary education and other higher levels. The government had no money to invest in early childhood education as it needs a lot of money for facilities and equipment and other expenses, so it

opened up doors for individuals and private institutions to run it....  
[MoEC Report, 2001, URT, 1982].

The Ministry of Education official reported the challenges faced by the few private institutions which initiated the ECEC centres, including low responses from parents in enrolling their children:

.....Of course it was a challenge because in those few private institutions parents also were not sending their children to centres, they had no trust to anyone to take care of their children other than siblings, relatives and mothers themselves. For the few centres which tried to start pre-school education, more weight was placed on custodial care than on early educational stimulation [*Takio/GO1/Interview*].

*Makoti* also reported the long-time taken for the development of the pre-school curriculum, before which teachers taught according to their views, attitudes, and beliefs, rather than a curriculum:

Yeah.....! There was no curriculum since independence 1961 up to 2005 when the first pre-school curriculum was developed. Teachers taught according to their own knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and a guiding book titled “*Malezi na Elimu ya Watoto*” (Child Rearing and Education) [*Makoti/GO2/Interview*].

Furthermore, the educational official participants mentioned the misconception and poor image of pre-school education. They reported that over the years, the misconception of pre-school education was huge so that many parents were discouraged from sending their children to an ECEC centre. The following quotes illustrate how parents and community at large were disappointed to see their children only doing singing and taking porridge at the ECEC centre, rather than working on academic issues:

.....Of course it was assumed that pre-school education was a place where children can go for singing and taking porridge. This concept was not clear to parents and they had to pay money, so they were thinking they are wasting a lot of money for children to make songs, plays, and porridge instead of academic learning. Pre-school teachers were also ignorant about what they were supposed to do with children. The impression given by the general public was that pre-school education is meant just to be a place to pass on the road to primary education [*Simfo/GO6-Z/Interview*].

The researcher revealed that society at large was not aware of the importance of spontaneous learning through play, songs and storytelling. Their views were focused just on cognitive skills and structured learning. Furthermore, data indicated that potential graduates in ECEC programmes were not being attracted into teaching pre-school education. The graduates preferred teaching higher levels and not lower levels.

In summary, referring to the quotes in this section, the researcher has the view that the teacher educators, pre-school teachers, and society at large did not have sound knowledge regarding ECEC. The community at large seemed to have negative attitudes towards the value of play for children in pre-school settings. And this was due to lack of experts in the ECEC area. The lack of knowledge about ECEC made people think that they wasted time and money in sending their children to ECEC centres. Furthermore, the data revealed that after independence the nation opened up doors for anyone to run ECEC services but the response was very poor due to various reasons such as lack of guidelines on how ECEC could be conducted, lack of experts in the ECEC area, lack of awareness from parents and community, poverty, and the traditional, customary way of parents not trusting a stranger to take care of their children. So, even the few centres that started to run ECEC while performing teaching without a formal curriculum ended up getting few children.

#### ***7.5.1.4 Economic context***

The findings from the national level participants showed that funding and financing were a major factor facing the Tanzanian nation. Four educational official participants out of six reported that financial support, and budgetary plans are needed for any curriculum to be enacted. The following extracts illustrate that pre-school education is capital intensive in terms of resources and facilities, which made for difficulties for the Tanzanian government in investing in ECEC:

Pre-school education, unlike other levels of education is more capital intensive in terms of provision of resources and materials, facilities and equipment, instructors and teachers and the like. For so many years since independence the investment in ECEC and its curriculum was difficult and the hindrance factor among others

was the lack of funds. In recent times, the pre-school curriculum was founded from the reformation which occurred in primary education curriculum [Takio/GO1/Interview].

Makoti had similar comments in regard to the financial crisis and he commented that lack of money was the main reason for delay in implementing the pre-school curriculum as was recommended by the “Makweta Commission in 1982”.

Yeah!.....Financial crisis hindered the development of the curriculum such as; the formulation of the team representatives in writing the curriculum, preparation of curriculum materials, new teaching materials and resources were required, teachers were needed to be provided with orientations, in-service training and equipped with new teaching materials, textbooks were to be revised to fulfil the changing needs of the society. Supportive personnel were required to assist the teachers in effective implementation of the new curriculum .....*Utekelezaji wa mapendekezo yaliyotolewa na Tume ya Makweta mwaka 1982 na utafiti wa TET ulichukua muda mrefu kutokana na mdororo wa kiuchumi wa dunia, ukata ambao pia uliathiri Tanzania.*[Translation]...The implementation of the *Makweta Commission of 1982* and various research reviews which suggested locating priorities in ECEC and its curriculum took a long time to be implemented due to the economic crisis which took place worldwide and Tanzania also was affected by that crisis in the 1980s [Makoti/GO2/ Interview].

*Jerry* also reinforced the finding that funds were needed for ECEC provision and its curriculum:

Of course all processes in curriculum development need funds and when you initiate a new idea you have to prepare new materials and resources, staff and training for those who will implement the changes. Clearly.....! There are powerful budgetary forces that influence the decisions [*Jerry- GO4/G-Interview*].

*Jane* further highlighted the financial pressures the Tanzania Institute of Education (for curriculum development and evaluation) incurred when required to collect views from society before writing the curriculum:

Of course.....! We were facing financial pressures; team-oriented project members were arguably one of the most important parts in collecting views from the society before writing the curriculum, the process of writing and then the provision of training particularly for those who are to work in the new curriculum with resources

and materials, equipment, facilities and the like [*Jane/GO3/-Interview*].

Moreover, *Takio* the Ministry of Education official commented on the difficulties they experience due to the two different ministries handling children's matters such as the Ministry of Community Development, Children and Gender (for children under five years) and the Ministry of Education (for children aged 5 and 6 years old). The following quotes illustrate the difficulties of dividing funding for children's services which sometimes is obtained from international agencies:

.....You know ...! Handling early childhood matters in two Ministries is a big problem and brings financial pressure, for example, we have children under 5 years old, and these are under the Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children. Again, we have children with 4/5-6 year olds these are under the Ministry of Education. So when funds come, for, instance from international agencies for children these two Ministries need to discuss the distribution and sometimes end up without good agreement. So the government is reviewing the education and training policy in order to merge these two groups and locate them in the Ministry of Education for supervision. Therefore, it was proposed that pre-school education start from age 3 and go to age 6. So it will be a three-year programme before compulsory schooling, instead of a two year programme as is currently taking place. Most of us believe that the three-year programmes will provide higher-quality education although they will cost more and the government for the initial stage have already started one teacher training college for such purpose. So we expect to supervise a program in which student-teacher can specialise only for ECEC matters and after their completion of the course will teach pre-school classes [*Takio/GO1/Interview*].

As well as this, the findings from the documentary review indicated the decisions reached to initiate a pre-school curriculum. The documents showed that before pre-school curriculum development, teachers taught using educational materials which were not prepared by ECEC experts:

Before pre-school curriculum development in 2005, educational guidelines, and a book entitled *Malezi na Elimu ya Watoto* (Child Rearing and Education), supplemented by various educational documents prepared by the Ministry of Education were used to guide children. The decision to develop a pre-school curriculum arrived after various research which was conducted to review primary education in 2004. The research came up with various

recommendations for the improvement of primary education, which was moving from content teaching to competence teaching (paradigm shift). These changes reflected the system of teaching in pre-school education of which at the previous time there was no curriculum for pre-school education [Documentary review/TIE-Reports, 2004, 2005 and 2008].

The idea of putting in place the ECEC curriculum seemed to be reasonable, though it required proper preparation on how to handle the process for effective development and enactment. Moreover, the findings from the national level participants indicated that it is expensive to run pre-school education because it is very costly in terms of structure and resources, materials, and facilities. Therefore with such a limited budget the situation of pre-school education can still be in dire unless more efforts to look for funds from external sources and good management occur.

In summary, findings from educational officials show the great influence of various factors which impact on curriculum development. Financial problems seem to play a great role and hindered the smooth development of the curriculum in terms of teaching and learning resources and materials, and lack of professionals in the ECEC area. If the country had been good at mobilising and allocation of resources it would have opened many ECEC teacher education programmes rather than the present single college with a small number of student-teachers.

### **7.5.2 Involvement of stakeholders in curriculum development**

Another concern raised by the educational officials' group was the involvement of stakeholders in curriculum development. Two curriculum developers and one Ministry of Education official out of six members in the group described the involvement of various educational stakeholders in curriculum development. *Makoti* highlighted the role of the Ministry of Education as providing funds to support the process of curriculum development and claimed that there was involvement of key educational stakeholders in curriculum development.

Basically, all curricula are designed by the Tanzania Institute of Education by involving various educational stakeholders including

representatives from the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training. The role of the Ministry of Education is to provide funds to support the process of curriculum development. Therefore on 2005 we got funds from the government through the Ministry of Education and invited various educational stakeholders in pre-school curriculum development as was described earlier. The development of curriculum involved various educational stakeholders such as policy makers, professional clubs, educational officials, teachers, school inspectors, Ministry of Education representatives; National examination council of Tanzania and non-governmental organizations. There were no influences from Western countries which took place during the development of the curriculum. The various literature helped during the development of the curriculum in order to enrich knowledge of curriculum from local sources [*Makoti/ GO2/ Interview*].

Referring to the development of the pre-school curriculum, *Jane* reported not involving all key stakeholders due to a financial crisis. For example, she said teachers and subject professional clubs were represented by the school inspectors:

Okay!! Let me tell you...the development of the young children's curriculum was a long process because since the formalisation of pre-schools in 1995 there was no curriculum until 2005. There were many factors for the delay including economic issues. Basically, we did a needs assessment and evaluation before writing the curriculum, but this was for the few areas in school contexts. In most cases we went through various reports, guidelines, and the existing literature. The exercise required involving all educational stakeholders' representatives but the funds from government were not enough to invite all educational stakeholders, so a few people represented the majority. For instance teachers and subject professional clubs were represented by school inspectors who normally disseminate changes in schools during their school visits. The role of school inspectors and curriculum developers is to monitor and control standard of education. However, in the process we worked hand in hand with the Ministry of Education officials for more advice [*Jane/ GO3/ Interview*].

Referring to the explanation from the curriculum developers the researcher noted the contradictions, because *Makoti's* quotes indicated that teachers and subject professional clubs were involved in the curriculum development while *Jane's* quotes indicated that teachers and subject professional clubs were represented by school inspectors. This situation prompted the researcher to find more sources of information including teachers and regional education officials who confirmed

that they were neither involved in the needs assessment nor in writing the curriculum (see section 6.8.1 for details). However, curriculum development needs consultation and negotiation among shareholders and especially people who work in the ECEC profession and are familiar with the needs and interests of children. Together with this, the curriculum developers and the Ministry of Education official explained that before writing the final draft of the curriculum document it has to undergo a trial to check out its suitability. *Takio* the Ministry of Education official mentioned the districts in which the trial of the curriculum took place and changes which emanated:

Yeah.....!. Having developed the first draft of the pre-school curriculum, we made a trial in 9 districts among 133 districts in Tanzania. The piloted districts were *Bagamoyo, Hai, Monduli, Siha, Makete, Temeke, Magu, Mtwara vijijini* (rural) and *Kibaha vijijini* (rural). So the curriculum document with various guidelines was in trial in these districts then the few changes emanated during the trial were accommodated and thereafter the Ministry of Education received the document for printing and dissemination [*Takio/ GO1/ Interview*].

However, another issue emerging from the two Regional and one Ward educational officers was the lack of participation of key players in the classroom context for curriculum preparation. They had different explanations regarding involvement in curriculum development. They criticised the exercise of curriculum development from the initial stage of needs assessment and the curriculum development exercise. The following responses illustrate the limited involvement of key users of the curriculum in the classroom context such as teachers and parents. Instead they were represented by school inspectors who were reported not to be working well due to a financial crisis:

I regret to say; it is difficult to attain quality education in this country due to a few chaotic people. Teachers and parents are the key implementers of the pre-school curriculum in the classroom contexts but curriculum developers neither involved teachers nor subject professional clubs and parents during the preparations of the pre-school curriculum. They involved school inspectors; unfortunately the inspectorate department nowadays is not active, they are not visiting schools so even the dissemination of changes concerning pre-school curriculum did not reach schools. You know!.....Teachers are the key players in any education curriculum

because all the time they are in the implementation contexts. Teachers are aware of the challenges and experiences which they face in the enactment processes, so they were the important people to be involved. It becomes impossible to implement something you are not aware of; it was not fair at all [*Jerry / GO4-G/ 1<sup>st</sup> Interview*].

*John*, the regional education officer had a similar concern and emphasised the challenges teachers face in enacting the pre-school curriculum. He commented that teachers were key persons to be involved in the curriculum development as they know the real situation at the field:

The current curriculum is impracticable because the curriculum was written without considering the real situation of the field. It would be a good curriculum if it would have considered the teaching and learning environments in the field. In the field there are no buildings for pre-school class; in other places they share classrooms with older pupils. Children in some schools are overcrowded in a shared small room which has no resources and materials. Teachers know the teaching and learning in the classroom context better than anybody else. Therefore, if they had involved teachers from the early stages of needs assessment they would have given out the real situation at the field. And it would be helpful to write a curriculum according to the real situation at the field [*John/ GO5-Z/ 1<sup>st</sup> Interview*].

He went on to report the weaknesses of the Education and Training Policy of 1995 for not considering preparation of teachers, facilities, and teaching materials before formalising the education:

The government through policy makers prepared an Education and Training Policy in 1995 which directed that each primary school should start the pre-school education class. The curriculum department and evaluation prepared the pre-school curriculum in 2005, but the Ministry of Education did not send student- teachers for pre-school education training or supply resources. The enactment of the pre-school curriculum is difficult because in the field there is a lack of trained teachers for pre-school education and the education and training policy did not specify how teachers and teaching and learning resources and materials can be found. For example.....the curriculum was prepared but in the field there were no pre-school teachers. [*John / GO5-Z / 1<sup>st</sup> Interview*].

Referring to the findings from educational officials the researcher viewed the curriculum development process as not being participatory. The exercise lacked

sufficient consultation and negotiation from the key shareholders such as teachers, parents, and subject professionals.

### 7.5.3 Politics in educational issues

Another theme in the data from the educational officials' group was that of politics in educational matters. Educational practice is a political issue; there is a close relationship between politics and education. However, the relationship is interpreted by many people in Tanzania in a negative way and this seems to be caused by politicians themselves in how they handle educational matters. For example, educational officials blamed the politicians for interfering on academic issues. They reported that usually politicians go to the community and promise to build classes, buy books, desks, resources, materials, and facilities but after getting votes they do not turn up. Again the educational officials group said that politicians promised to assist community-based activities, and they said that education should be conducted through cost sharing, between the community, parent/guardians and the government. *John* the Regional education officer in rural area made a *quote* from the one big official from the Ministry of Education who promised to supply building materials and furniture:

*The community leaders with the help of Ward Executive Officers (WEO) should organise community members to prepare bricks and cement then to make buildings thereafter the government will do the finishing process.* Having said that, the community struggled to build classes and waited for the finishing processes and furniture from the government. As a result no assistance went to the schools and buildings have worn out and others fallen down due to the heavy rainfall [*John/ GO5-Z/2<sup>nd</sup> Interview*]. (The italic phrase above *John* quoted the words from one of the officials, a government minister).

He went on to report the words from the one government official who once visited his region and emphasised the need for cost sharing:

*Elimu kwa sasa ni lazima iendeshwe kwa ushirikiano "cost sharing" kati ya jamii na serikali. Jamii ijenge majengo halafu serikali iyakarabati na kununua vifaa vya kufundishia na kujifunzia* [...Translation] The education now days should be conducted through cost sharing, that is, community, parent/guardians and the government. The parents and community just build the schools and

the government will supply all necessary teaching and learning resources and materials. At the end nothing was done, the community tried their best to build classes but they failed to do finishing and furnishing [John/ GO5- Z/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

In addition, all six educational officials commented on the impact of politics in the education arena. They mentioned the power of politicians in decision making; for example, *Makoti* reported the contradiction which sometimes happens between curriculum development and the Ministry of Education when enacting various educational matters:

You know! The minister and his deputy in the Ministry of Education both are politicians. And this institute (TIE) is the arm under the Ministry of Education and it is dealing with curriculum development and evaluation but sometimes you find curriculum issues are dealt with by the Ministry of Education officials contrary to the Education and Training Policy of 1995 statement. Academic matters are handled politically, as a result things are not going well, TIE is responsible for curriculum issues and the Ministry of Education deals with publishing the educational guide lines and curriculum translation [*Makoti*/ GO2/ Interview].

They commented about the conflict between policy makers and curriculum developers. They mentioned poor communication among the Ministry of Education, policy makers, and curriculum developers. The following quotes illustrate this argument:

Yeah!...Look here....The Education and Training Policy of 1995 insisted the attachment of the pre-school classes in every primary school, but in primary schools there were no buildings for pre-school children, no pre-school teachers, no curriculum document, syllabus, teachers' guides, teaching and learning materials for children, and all other important resources and materials. They developed the pre-school curriculum without proper preparation in the field. In 2005 the curriculum developers prepared the pre-school curriculum but still there were no teachers to teach pre-school children. It could be better after getting the idea regarding the need for pre-school education, for the Ministry of Education to start by preparing pre-school teachers, then curriculum materials, resources and materials [*Jerry* / GO4-G/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

Moreover, *Jerry*, the regional education official continued to outline the way politicians become uncomfortable when someone makes a follow-up which touches their interests. He commented that the best way to improve educational

matters, ECEC included, is to make provision for negotiation and consultation between politicians and professionals:

Look here....! About five years ago, I fought with the Ministry of Education officials concerning teachers' motivation, incentives, training and teaching and learning resources and materials. As a result politicians due to their interests were not happy with my follow up, they discovered that I inhibited their interests and I found myself getting a warning letter from the one big government official. *“Bila kukomesha tabia ya wanasisia kuingilia uamuzi wa wataalam matatizo kwenye Elimu hayataisha. Mambo yote ya nchi yanaamuliwa na wanasisia, matokeo yake wengi huamua kwa kuongozwa na interest zao na siyo zenye maslahi kwa Taifa. Fedha zinapitishwa bungeni lakini hazifiki kwenye maeneo lengwa mfano sekta ya elimu matokeo yake ni uduni wa huduma na kukosekana kwa vifaa vya kufundishia na kujifunzia. Mashuleni hakuna vitabu, madawati wala kiongozi cha mwalimu”*. [Translation...]. If we cannot be serious about putting in place a mutual agreement between political issues and educational matters, things will end up in an improper situation. Politicians have great power in decision making and they locate their interests in educational matters rather than the majority's interests. Every year in parliament they approve the national budget but funnily enough we do not know where the money goes!..... [Jerry/ GO4-G/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview].

A similar argument to that of Jerry's was made by *John* the regional education officer in the rural areas.

## 7.6 Chapter Summary

The chapter presented the themes that emerged from six educational officials through interviews and documentary review. Five themes were drawn from analysis of educational officials' responses to the question about enactment of the 2005 pre-school curriculum. Their views and perceptions of issues and challenges in curriculum enactment were examined. The presentation of the themes took two faces: it means that there are things which were found to be working well in the curriculum enactment, and on the other hand there were things which were found to be not working well, as have been shown in the findings sections. This analysis extended existing knowledge about the ECEC curriculum enactment and the associated pedagogies in a Tanzanian context. To that end, possibilities, experiences, views and, issues raised in this chapter will be interpreted and

discussed in the next chapter and suggestions will be made for better ECEC provision and its curriculum enactment.

Research findings become more meaningful when discussed and interpreted in context. The following chapter discusses these findings. The findings are organised and discussed according to the themes developed in the research questions and integrated as a whole and in relation to the theoretical underpinnings.



## **CHAPTER 8**

### **DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATIONS OF THE FINDINGS**

#### **8.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in the enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy, in the Tanzanian context. It aimed to find out how sociocultural theorising might suggest ways to address any challenges for policy and practice in enacting the pre-school education curriculum. This chapter draws together the key findings elicited from two groups of participants: the teachers, ECEC children, and parents in one rural and one urban school (local level) and government education officials (national level) to examine challenges for pre-school education policy and practice in Tanzania. It draws on Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, specifically, the idea of the ecological environment as the context for child's development, to examine key findings from this study. It explains about the contexts of home and ECEC settings and the relationships between them, and the indirect influence of other spheres or contexts on the home environments. ECEC and community settings, management of pre-school education; international and national policies and requirements; and ideologies, attitudes, cultural beliefs and values were also part of the ecology of ECEC.

The discussion is undertaken by drawing experiences and examples from other developing and developed countries to gain greater understanding of how they conduct early childhood education and care i.e. curriculum enactment and pedagogical practices. These experiences from other countries provide an opportunity to think critically and differently about ECEC in Tanzania and how challenges might be addressed.

The following sections discuss and interpret the findings obtained from the three study questions as an integrated whole to formulate answers to the main research question.

## 8.2 Summary of the Key Findings

This section presents the summary of the key findings in relation to the research questions. When both local and national level participants were interviewed for this study, their comments were categorised into two aspects of curriculum enactment. The first aspect was that of local level curriculum enactment, while the second aspect was that of the national level curriculum enactment. The local level aspects were those that were found to be within the reach of key users of the curriculum; teachers, parents, and ECEC children. These included preparation of locally made materials using available natural resources for children's learning, administration and management of pre-school education, parents' and community involvement in pre-school activities and children's learning, teaching and learning environments, and local cultural beliefs, practices and traditional norms. The national level aspects were those that were outside of the control of the key users (players) at the local level and were handled by the government and its divisions. These included initial teacher education and professional development, formalisation of pre-school education, curriculum development and its structure, dissemination of curriculum materials, policy to guide curriculum enactment and pedagogical practices, and social and economic policies (policies that affect the socio-economic status of Tanzanians).

Analysis showed that different factors within each of the two observed groups at the local and national level, on the one hand facilitated pre-school education curriculum enactment, but on the other hand hindered its effective enactment. The factors could be labelled as knowledge, attitude, and behaviour of the implementers. Knowledge factors were those in which the key users (players) either have or do not have enough knowledge to work on it. Attitudes were those aspects which key players just enacted according to their views or beliefs which might be similar or not to what was intended. Also, another aspect was labelled as behavioural, that were those which were enacted habitually, as a part of normal routine. In the behavioural aspect, whether the curriculum was enacted successfully or not, people seemed not to have a concern.

### 8.2.1 Overview of the key findings and theoretical underpinnings

The discussion and interpretation of the findings in this study for the most part, are positioned within ecological systems theory developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1917-2005) and sociocultural theory developed by Lev Semenovich Vygotsky (1896-1934). The relationships between the theories and findings of this study have been illustrated in a diagrammatic form and in spheres for greater clarity and understanding. Each of these spheres interacts with and impact on other spheres. Figure 8.1 below clarifies the spheres of influence that were of significant influence in this Tanzanian study.

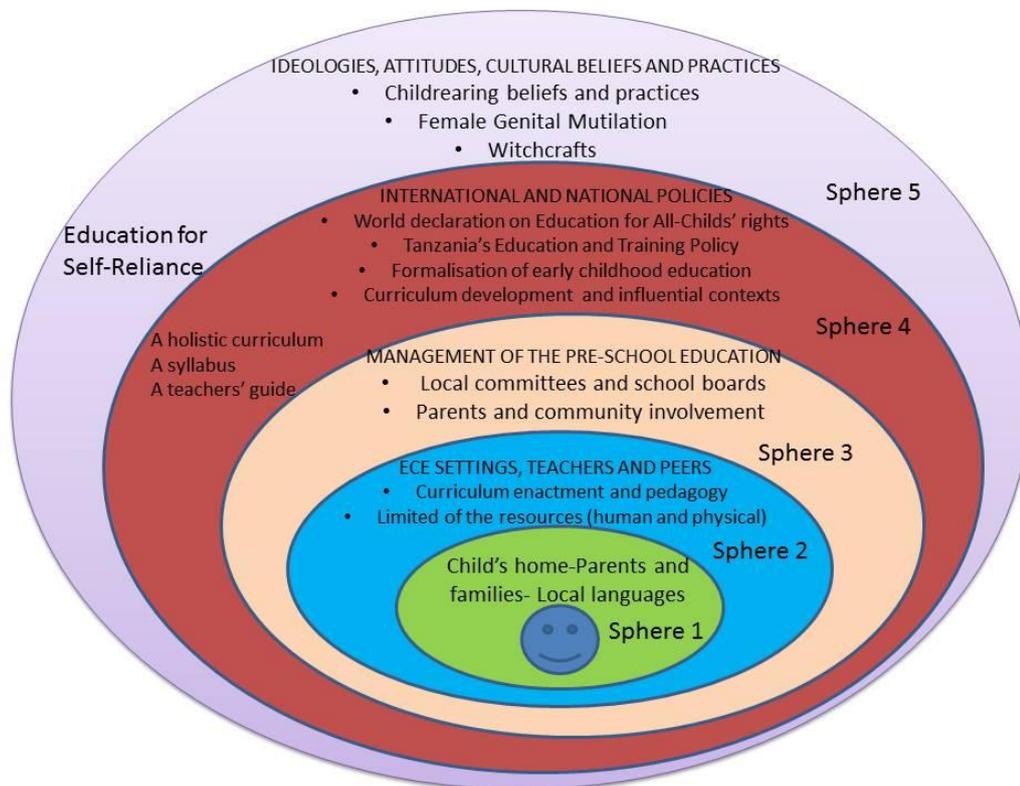


Figure 8.1 Early childhood education spheres and context in Tanzania

This study uses ecological systems theory developed by Bronfenbrenner (1979) and sociocultural perspectives which was developed by Vygotsky (1978). Sociocultural theory examines the interaction between a child and his/her partner such as parents, teachers, peers, and significant others in curriculum enactment. Sociocultural theory argues that children gradually come to know and understand

the world through their own activities and interaction with others (Smith, 2013; Tracey & Morrow, 2012; Vygotsky, 1978). In both, curriculum enactment and pedagogical practice this study locates a child at the centre, within the immediate environment at home with families (parents, siblings, and caregivers). Bronfenbrenner (1979) advocates that levels of environment which do not actually contain the child, influence learning and development.

A main thesis argument is that in Tanzania, like other African countries, family environments have a powerful influence on the child's learning and development. The childrearing system within the home is often valued at the expense of enrolling children in formal ECEC setting. Therefore, within an ecological frame, the 2005 pre-school education curriculum and its enactment would be expected to make connections with the home environment so that children could make their transition to formal ECEC settings smoothly (Sink, Edwards, & Weir, 2007). It would be expected that the close relationship between parents, families, and ECEC teachers would facilitate warmth and an enjoyable learning environment for children (Mitchell et al., 2008; Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2000) and that pre-school education curriculum development, enactment and associated pedagogies would take place through interaction between the local level including teachers, parents, and ECEC children, and the national level including government and its operational arm. However, this appears not to have been the case. So this area needs to be addressed.

Figure 8.1 indicates the relationship between a child (positioned at the centre-sphere one) and his/her interaction with other spheres in learning and development. Each sphere with key findings in the diagram will now be discussed in turn.

### **8.3 Child's Home Environments (Sphere One)**

The findings have shown that in sphere one parents demonstrated their roles with their children at home through interaction, children sharing a family bed with the loved parent or a relative, and doing simple tasks together, i.e children were trying to imitate what their parents did. This was evident when the researcher visited

their homes for parents' individual interviews. From an ecological systems perspectives, in sphere one, a child is located at the centre interacting with the immediate environment at home with parents and families (siblings and caregivers). Such a context becomes a source of identity and a process of learning. Here the child is acquiring knowledge of language, cultural tools, artefacts, and places through interaction with his/her immediate environments (Pound, 2009; Smith, 2013; Tracey & Morrow, 2012; Wertsch et al., 1995). Having this knowledge in mind, there is a profound relationship between sphere one and sphere five, because the interaction and cultural aspects which are taking place in home environments, reflects the wider ideology and cultural aspects of the society at large.

Drawing from the ecological system's model, (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) children can be seen as having an immediate need for learning activities which contribute to their growth and development (Barnett & Frede, 2010; Pence, 2011; Penn, 2005, 2011; Yelland, 2010). A main argument is that in home environments, African children, Tanzanian in particular, children express love for their admired parents, siblings and care givers in many ways; such as seeking their company by sitting near, eating together or demanding to be fed, sharing local languages, stories, and cultural tools, (Nwoye, 2006). In addition, children like to engage with their parents/families in helping in simple tasks, showing obedience, and sharing in their sorrows and joys. Therefore, from a sociocultural perspective, the study findings extend our understanding that children would feel better when they experience the same responsive and reciprocal love when they move into ECEC settings. However, despite expectations, this appears not to happen in Tanzanian ECEC settings.

Moreover, these findings extend our understanding that a quality immediate environment is essential to shape the development of the child for future interaction with the outside environment away from home. Thereafter, a child extends interactions with various learning environments which extend far beyond the immediate setting of the home to early childhood settings outside the home, that is, in ECEC setting (sphere two). So with reference to Bronfenbrenner's

model, sphere one profoundly impacts on sphere two of a child's development, the focus of the next section.

#### **8.4 ECEC Settings and Learning Environments (Sphere Two)**

In Sphere Two, the child is viewed as interacting with the environment outside the home including ECEC settings, teachers, and peers. Sphere two is the environment where formal curriculum enactment and associated pedagogies are taking place in the ECEC settings. The findings have revealed that, on the one hand children enjoy being in ECEC settings where they are able to make new friends, interact with peers, tell stories, and sing songs. On the other hand the findings indicated the ineffective enactment of the ECEC curriculum and the associated pedagogies, limitations of resources and cultural beliefs and practices included. For example, the findings have further revealed that in the rural areas many people speak their local languages, so when their children go to ECEC settings it became difficult for them to adapt to the national medium of instruction i.e Kiswahili. As a consequence teachers faced difficulties with how to guide them in a language which was strange to the children and government policy did not recognise the native language as a medium of instruction. This was evident in their embodied responses and descriptions of their practices.

Importantly, guiding children in their local language is significant for clear understanding and for maintaining their culture. Apart from the efforts showed by the parents and the local community to support the availability of teaching and learning resources, all participants interviewed mentioned the limited resources, both physical and human. The interviews were supported by the classroom observations and documentary reviews. Resources from the government/national policies were not flowing to ECEC settings. Participants linked the under-resourcing with the ineffective enactment of the pre-school education curriculum and pedagogical practices. These findings inform us of the profound relationship between sphere two and sphere four, that deals with the policies that would expect to provide an implementation plan in the ECEC settings (sphere two), and the provision of resources. However, the findings have shown that this appears not to happen. The government has failed to locate a favourable policy for local

languages and resources for children's learning and development. This area needs to be addressed.

#### **8.4.1 Lack of physical resources**

In this section the study discusses the finding concerning the lack of physical resources. All participants interviewed reported that the lack of teaching and learning materials in the classroom situation was the main challenge they faced in teaching and learning practices. The classroom observations also provided evidence of limited teaching and learning materials such as curriculum materials, text books, desks, equipment, and playing grounds. A lack of physical resources was more critical in the rural schools where there were no facilities, desks, and text books, and children were found overcrowded into two streams using a single classroom. In the urban school books and desks were found, but not enough for all the children.

The finding concerning the availability of physical resources is significant, because for effective learning, teaching materials and facilities should be available for children to access. As demonstrated earlier the government is responsible for supplying teaching and learning materials and facilities, but this has not happened in the ECEC settings. A main thesis argument is that the lack of teaching materials and facilities limited children in developing their creativity, problem solving, inquisitiveness, and widening their thinking skills for life. For such crowded and limited facilities, it was not possible for teachers to provide responsive and reciprocal relationships (Lee et al., 2013; Mitchell et al., 2008; Smith, 2011, 2012), because the group size was too large and with a sole teacher, and there were no trained volunteer adults who could collaborate with teachers to work with children. Then again, although the situation in the classrooms was critical, this study argues that for young children it was not necessary to use desks in their learning. Teachers, parents, and community could spread mats on the floor for children to perform their spontaneous learning and the children would be comfortable sitting on them. In addition, the researcher suggests that to reduce dust and create comfortable and healthy learning environments, the teachers, parents, and community could also put sulphate bags or curtains on the windows.

However, it was apparent to the researcher that the teachers did not really take advantage of the surrounding rich natural resources that could have been used to stimulate the children's learning. For instance, with the use of local carpenters and for little cost, they could have improvised simple teaching aids with materials from the surrounding environments. Local carpenters could be used to make play materials such as wooden blocks, bamboo pieces, and chopsticks. It seemed possible for teachers, in collaboration with parents and community, to utilise the natural resources available to make a variety of teaching and learning materials. Nevertheless, government support is necessary to support parent and community efforts to provide the necessary learning materials, facilities, and equipment to ensure that children achieve their developmental goals and meet their potential. This view is supported by the Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum which highlights the need for the involvement of parents and community in making local materials for learning (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005). However, this was not done in Tanzanian society because parents and the community were not aware that they were responsible to work with teachers for children's learning. This was evident in their embodied explanations.

Equally important, experiences from other developing countries show that local resources can be effectively produced locally with little or no cost. This is evident in the experience of the ChildFund project conducted in Timor Leste, a developing country which faced a similar situation concerning the lack of teaching and learning resources, materials and large classes (Mitchell & Kelly, 2013). In the ChildFund early childhood development (ECD) programme, Mitchell and Kelly (2013) from Waikato University carried out a project which recommended collaboration with parents and community to provide the classroom context with plentiful resources. Following a pilot project in one region, aimed at supporting such an approach, children were provided with a variety of play materials including bottle tops, coconut shells, wooden offcuts, play dough, bamboo pieces, blocks, and chopsticks. A well-resourced teaching and learning environment offers stimulating materials for children to become actively involved in learning activities.

Therefore, these findings inform us of the benefits of utilising natural resources for children's development to help them meet expected learning outcomes. From a sociocultural perspective, learning takes place through collaboration between teachers, parents/adults, peers, and children in a conducive environment (Smith, 2013; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1991; Wertsch et al., 1995). For Vygotsky, peer interaction, collaboration, and participation of more significant others are seen to foster the child's cognitive development as new and challenging ideas are met (Han, 2009; Potter, 2007; Rogoff, 2003; Smith, 2011).

Teaching and learning have been theorised in research literature as a sociocultural practice (Bell, 2011), with the main goal being to create human thinking and action that identifies the "essential relationships between mind and action" (p.1) and their sociocultural and institutional settings (Wertsch, 1991; Wertsch et al., 1995). In other words, to understand the thinking, and practices of teachers and pupils in teaching and learning in the classroom context, "we need to take into account the sociocultural contexts in which the teaching and learning are taking place and the relationships between mind and action" (Bell, 2011, p. 1).

Furthermore, from a sociocultural perspective, involvement of parents and community in ECEC settings is significant for children to build confidence in learning. However, in the Tanzanian context of this study the interaction of parents and teachers in the teaching and learning of their children was limited. Parents were not involved in the classroom context; their interaction with teachers was concerned with administrative matters such as payment of fees, donation for children's meals, school uniforms, attending parents' meetings, and membership of school boards. Parents seemed to be unaware of the need to participate in classroom teaching and learning, and teachers also did not encourage this. This issue needs to be addressed. Parent and teacher interaction over educational aims has been theorised in the research literature as a key factor in supporting children's learning (Ghirotto & Mazzoni, 2013; Mitchell et al., 2008; Smith et al., 2000). It is argued by many researchers that when parents participate at school and actively support and encourage learning at home, their children are more successful at all levels of education regardless of the parents' educational

background or social class (Ghirotto & Mazzoni, 2013; Ishihara-Brito, 2013). A study by Ghirotto and Mazzoni (2013) reports that the collaboration of the teachers and parents offers the child security and acceptance and helps to generate greater understanding about the child's development, including where additional stimulation by the teachers or parents would be useful. Support and sensitivity towards parents, clear communication and information sharing are therefore important as they lead to trusting relationships between early childhood teachers, parents, and community at large (Smith et al., 2000).

This study challenges the way the Tanzanian government views pre-school education, as it treats it as if it has no value. Having this knowledge in mind, intervention measures can be taken to help address some of the issues that may limit children from exploration and problem solving through using a variety of materials. The findings suggest that the Tanzanian government needs to invest and put more resources into pre-school education to facilitate better teaching and learning practices. Tanzanian children need to learn in a context that provides opportunities for building warm relationships through interacting socially with adults, peers, learning through sharing, negotiation, communicating, and playing together.

#### ***8.4.1.1 Lack of a quality teaching and learning environment***

The finding of the lack of a quality teaching and learning environment is significant, because for effective learning children need enough space and friendly facilities according to their needs and with consideration of special needs children. The Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum indicates that a friendly classroom should be with a space of "6.0 x 8.0 metres with corners for doing Subject learning activities (an average of 1.9 metres per child)" (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005, p. 10). However, it was not found practised in the field, but rather overcrowded class sizes were observed. The researcher had the view that learning taking place in such an environment would be impossible, because children are psychologically unsafe and would not concentrate on the lessons. From a pedagogical point of view, the researcher believes that it would be possible for teachers in collaboration with parents and

community volunteers to formulate small groups being set up in rural and urban communities, even in the open air, with perhaps a visiting qualified teacher and/or a local expert who could travel around with equipment and demonstrate to parents how to interact and play with children. Moreover, the local community, in collaboration with the central government and parents, could build standard classrooms with quality plastering and roofing materials.

#### **8.4.2 Lack of qualified teachers**

Lack of qualified teachers was another aspect, which was seen to hinder smooth curriculum enactment and pedagogical practices. The findings indicated that teachers in both urban and rural areas were not qualified to teach pre-school classes and the problem seemed critical. For example, in the rural area two untrained teachers worked on a volunteer basis and were paid a small honorarium by parents. Whereas, at the urban areas, the pre-school children were taught by teachers who also taught primary school Grade one in which they had a heavy workload which reduced their efficiency.

The finding of poor human resources is important, because qualified teachers with pedagogical skills to work with young children are reflected in positive learning outcomes. The government is responsible for locating qualified teachers as well as professional development; however, this appears not to be happening. A main thesis argument is that having primary teachers in the pre-school resulted in inappropriate teaching styles; they lacked the pedagogical skills for teaching young children, as they were not trained to teach young children, and a theoretical understanding of play-based learning was lacking. Together with this, the findings have shown that none of the teachers in this study had attended any professional development since they started teaching a pre-school class. As stated by Williston et al. (2005), ECEC is a unique area and requires special preparation for ECEC teachers, and ECEC teacher education has a positive impact on teachers and teaching. Early childhood teacher education is envisaged as addressing both present issues and aspirations (Blank, 2010; Hedges, 2011; Rice, 2003; Saracho, 2012a; Saracho & Spodek, 2006). Therefore, in both locations, quality pre-school teachers with the required qualifications were not available (as already described

in chapter 6 and 7). For instance, with reference to the current case, all the national level participants held highest degree while none of the classroom teachers who are the interpreters of the pre-school education curriculum goals and objectives in the classroom situation, had a qualification at the degree level (see Table 5.3 for details).

International literature shows that qualified teachers rich in pedagogical skills to work with young children can demonstrate social interactions, relationships and activities that promote learning and development (Barnett & Frede, 2010; Penn, 2011; Smith et al., 2000; Sylva et al., 2003; Yelland, 2010). Hence, spontaneous and reciprocal interactions within the context of caring relationships are vital components of ECEC (Lee et al., 2013; Mitchell et al., 2008; Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2000). Enabling environments provide “conditions for the kind of teaching and learning that lead to quality outcomes for children, especially qualified staff, low child: adult ratios, small group size, and staff professional development opportunities” (Mitchell et al., 2008, p. 18). Qualified teachers are expected to draw on their knowledge and experience of working with young children and pedagogy to offer the kinds of cognitive and non-cognitive skills that are linked with gains for children. All these appear not to happen in the context of this study and need to be addressed.

The findings suggest that the supply of qualified ECEC teachers is grossly inadequate. The government needs to support more teacher education in ECEC and the school inspectorate to supervise the standards and regulations of pre-school education. There is also a need for the government to monitor and control pre-school education curriculum enactment and pedagogy, including initial teacher education, qualifications, and certification. The lack of initial teacher education and professional development for pre-school teachers in Tanzania, results in children who are not well guided due to the teachers’ lack of pedagogical skills.

#### **8.4.2.1 *Teacher education programmes in ECEC***

The findings indicated that in 2003 the government incorporated ECEC topics in the teacher education curriculum for primary school. The teacher participants reported that even if teacher education had incorporated ECEC topics, the focus was on primary courses and no expert tutors were available for ECEC courses. This study challenges the act of incorporating ECEC topics into the teacher education curriculum for primary school teachers, without expert tutors in ECEC area. This action may be seen to not address the issue of the shortage of pre-school teachers but rather increase the problem. It appears that the government policy makers have limited understanding on how critical the lack of pre-school teachers is. A main thesis argument is that the nature of the primary teacher education programme is not suitable for pre-school learning, because its focus is to prepare primary teachers and not pre-school teachers. In other words, rather than incorporating ECEC matters into the teacher education curriculum for primary teachers, the government could train ECEC tutors who could run ECEC programmes in teacher education to address the shortage of pre-school teachers.

Discussing the importance of ECEC teacher education programmes in her study Saracho (2012a) reports that in teacher education programmes, student-teachers learn the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they need to inform young children. She further highlights that “knowledge of the field of early childhood education develops from an integration of theory, research, and practice” (p.2). That means student-teachers need to understand the knowledge and skills to apply when working with pre-school children. Together with this, a study by Rice (2003) asserts that staff qualifications, initial education, and professional development contribute to improving pedagogical quality, which is eventually associated with better child learning outcomes. Unfortunately it appears these did not eventuate in Tanzania’s teacher education programmes due to lack of a separate ECEC programmes and experts in the area.

With this in mind, the findings have shown some measures demonstrated by the government to address the shortage of pre-school teachers. The government had initiated ECEC programmes in the two public universities such as Dodoma

University and Dar es Salaam University in Tanzania. Likewise, a two year pre-school teacher education college was initiated at Singachini in the Kilimanjaro region on December, 2012. However, the findings indicated that the graduates in ECEC from the above named public universities are being appointed by the government to work in secondary schools due to a shortage of secondary teachers. As a result the problem of teachers in ECEC settings continues to exist. The findings suggest the need for changes in the way teacher education programmes for ECEC teachers are conducted. This researcher argues that the government needs to locate graduate teachers in teacher education colleges and programmes to handle the issue of preparing pre-school teachers. Initiating one pre-school teacher education college for the whole country is not sufficient. More effort is needed from the government in collaboration with non-governmental organisations to initiate additional teacher education colleges and programmes to handle the lack of pre-school teachers and ensure graduates go on to teach in ECEC.

It has been theorised in the literature that children make more progress in pre-school centres where staff have higher qualifications, with plenty of materials and facilities, and pleasant conducive teaching and learning environments (Barnett & Frede, 2010; Lee et al., 2013; Mitchell et al., 2008; Saracho, 2012b; Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2000; Sylva et al., 2004; Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996; Yelland, 2010). As stated by Sylva et al. (2003) in their Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) project in England, quality teachers make a difference to children's development. Sylva et al. further commented that there is a significant relationship between the quality of a pre-school setting and the qualifications of teachers, who are associated with improved child outcomes. Qualified teachers are important because they have knowledge of children, and teaching and learning that they can draw on in their interactions with children. Therefore, the current researcher challenges the practice evidenced in the field whereby pre-school education seemed to be treated similarly to that of primary education. Her argument is that an ECEC setting is a place concerned with spontaneous learning by exploring ideas, making discoveries, problem solving, and being creative with the guidance of parents, families, and teachers.

In general, the findings from the present study suggest a need for change in ECEC in the Tanzanian context with respect to physical and human resources. The focus should be on prioritising ECEC by dedicating a separate department in schools and the Ministry of Education, with its own budget for funding ECEC for resources and materials, teacher education, paying volunteer teacher salaries, and professional development. Currently, the government is not locating funds for pre-schools but rather for primary schools on a quarterly basis with already calculated percentages on how to use the funds. In addition, findings from many studies suggest that for any curriculum to be fairly enacted, the availability of teaching and learning resources, both human and physical, to facilitate the teaching and learning practices is crucial (Bartlett & Mogusu, 2013; Blank, 2010; Croft, 2002; Lee et al., 2013; Mtika & Gates, 2010; Paris & Combs, 2006; Rice, 2003; Saracho, 2012a; Saracho & Spodek, 2006; Wilson, 2004). These ideas need to be reflected in Tanzanian ECEC policy for better enactment of the curriculum and provision of opportunities to children to developing their potential for life.

In summary when a child extends experiences beyond home to ECEC settings outside the home, (i.e into sphere two), one would expect to find conducive learning environments. Likewise, high-quality practices in ECEC in both human and physical resources to support children's learning needed to be available and sufficient. However, the enactment of this part of the curriculum is extremely limited, and it impacts on children's learning. Parents and community said they struggled to provide through donations under the supervision of the local committees and school boards located in sphere three, and many said they had not managed to fulfil their donations. The government is responsible to offer such resources through policy makers located in sphere four, but in vain. Hence, the interactions among spheres have a profound impact on the child's learning and development. It is a role of Tanzanian government to locate policies which suit the needs and interests of children's learning and development for future benefits. Hence, our understanding of the importance of human resources and teacher education programmes for ECEC teachers is significant in the teaching and learning process.

### 8.4.3 Pre-school education curriculum structure

Our understanding of pre-school education curriculum structure is significant in the teaching and learning process. The findings indicated that the enacted classroom curriculum was too formal, structured, and detailed with many subject learning activities. This was evident in teacher participants' embodied reactions of discomfort, and their explanations of practices in the ECEC settings. The finding about the pre-school curriculum structure is significant, because for effective curriculum enactment, implementers need to understand what the curriculum contains and how to go about enacting it. Curriculum speaks to the selection and engagement of texts, it indicates the mode of instruction and pedagogies that are used to convey the meanings of texts, and shows how experiences of children and teachers become central to knowledge production. From a pedagogical point of view, the use of relevant curriculum documents was important. However, the main thesis argument is that in classroom contexts teachers were not using the holistic curriculum which included information about practices most suitable for an early childhood setting. The Ministry of Education and curriculum developer did not supply the curriculum to the ECEC settings. When the researcher reviewed the holistic curriculum document (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005), the findings indicated that the curriculum focused on all domains of learning, not just cognitive learning. The pre-school education curriculum indicates the need for developing a "child in all aspects as an independent person including cognitive, socio-emotional, behavioural, and physical development" Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education (2005, p. 1). Though, these ideas remain in writing only.

Furthermore, an examination of the pre-school curriculum extends the researcher's understanding that the curriculum is linked to the main national ideology of Education for Self-Reliance (ESR). This ideology equips a child to build confidence and independence, since Tanzania is a country growing in the philosophy of Education for Self-Reliance (Nyerere, 1967) advocated by the first president of the United Republic of Tanzania, Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere (1922-1999). Therefore, ideas incorporated from ESR into the pre-school

education curriculum aimed to equip a child in knowledge, skills, attitude, and confidence to enable a child to build the foundational attitude of independence. The underpinning philosophy was to develop children who were in control of their emotions, and had social skills, good behaviour, and physical abilities (Nyerere, 1967). However, this philosophy was not enacted in classroom practice, because as already noted, teachers did not have access to the holistic curriculum document and lacked pedagogical skills to work with young children. This area needs to be addressed.

In addition, in reviewing the holistic pre-school education curriculum document the researcher made two observations: first, the wording of the holistic curriculum document was appropriate, but the big challenge was that, teachers did not have access to the holistic curriculum as they were enacting a pre-school education curriculum through the syllabus and the teachers' guide. However, these documents also had challenges, the wording of the syllabus and the teachers' guide documents promote a structured curriculum, based around the subjects found in primary school. The second observation the researcher made from the pre-school education curriculum analysis was that, apart from incorporating the ideas from ESR advocated by Mwalimu Nyerere in 1967, the pre-school education curriculum seemed to be copied from existing international curriculum documents without consideration of the Tanzanian context. Although the curriculum indicates the importance of societal and cultural views, in reality these were not incorporated. It is probable that during the writing of the pre-school education curriculum there was no comprehensive assessment of the social and cultural contexts in which the curriculum would be enacted. This view indicates that curriculum developers may need to take into consideration the sociocultural context when reviewing ECEC curriculum for children's development.

In particular, the successful enactment of the curriculum needed conducive teaching and learning environments, qualified pre-school teachers, and available teaching and learning resources; all these were in question in the Tanzanian context. However, Okeke (2010) asserts that curriculum developers may develop a good curriculum but the problem arises with the policy guiding the

implementation stage. From this point of view Shizha (2014) argues that reforming African education curricula to reflect the concept of “indigenisation” seems to be problematic (p.113). He further reported that most policy statements on indigenising education curriculum “have been at most rhetorical and political, they have not been acted on or legislated” (p.113). So there is a need for shared views among the society, curriculum developers, ECEC practitioners, and policy makers for effective development, and enactment. Indigenous education is defined by Dei (2014) as “the knowledge of local African peoples rooted in their rich histories, cultures, and traditions through time” (p.166). Embedded in such knowledge is an understanding of society, nature, and culture, as well as experiencing of the social and natural world (Dei, 2014; Shizha, 2014), and the particular responsibilities required of African peoples in maintaining and sustaining their local environments.

In addition, the findings from the documentary review (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005, p. 5) indicated that the Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum puts more emphasis on learning in relation to children’s growth stages and ages; the Piagetian approach (Bredenkamp, 1987). Less importance is placed on the influence of the sociocultural context on the child’s learning and development, the Vygotskian approach (Vygotsky, 1978). This is reflected in section 3.4 of the Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005, p. 5), which describes the general skills and knowledge required for pre-school children, where no mention is made of the impact of the sociocultural context upon the child’s learning and development (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005). This low consideration of sociocultural contexts has been problematic in curriculum enactment as was described in this thesis. This research argues that more consideration needs to be given to sociocultural views of learning, with the learning by the children being linked to their sociocultural contexts. However, this study is not ignoring the Piagetian approach as it also has importance in understanding children’s development, but exploring contexts where the curriculum could be impacted by sociocultural contexts is important too.

The findings extend our understanding that integration of local knowledge for children's meaningful learning is significant. It would be expected that the ECEC curriculum could document traditional knowledge and integrate it into classroom teaching for children, such as cultural taboos, rituals, proverbs, riddles, story forms, cultural songs and stories, myths, resources and their meanings and usage, the history and traditions, social relations, traditional handicrafts such as pot making, basket weaving, woodworking, hunting, painting, and children's games that offer important knowledge around culture. Giving the meanings of proverbs, riddles, and particularly riddles, such knowledge has the potential to educate children about some of the complex challenges facing local communities' today. However, this appears not to happen. Dei (2014) argues that the body of an African epistemology embraced in such cultural sayings and knowing is that they allow the learner to grow mentally, spiritually, and morally into adulthood. Dei further states that such experiences relate to the concept of self and the community, responsibility, respect for oneself, peers, and authority, and mutual interdependence and community-building. Therefore, introducing such indigenous knowledge in the ECEC curriculum will not only bring in local languages in the education of young children, but will also convey teachings about the learners' social responsibility, respect for elders and authority, the significance of developing strong moral character, self-discipline and collective accountability (Dei, 2014; Owuor, 2007; Shizha, 2014).

Furthermore, another aspect observed in the analysis of the ECEC curriculum structure was the way it was written. It seemed to contain imported Western ideas which may not be practicable in Tanzanian context. This is in contrast with many curricula writers who emphasise the significant of the sociocultural context in children's learning. For example, Te Whāriki, the New Zealand early childhood curriculum which is one lens for this study, advocates that children enjoy their learning when it is in a meaningful social context, when they are interested, and when their learning has meaningful for them (Lee et al., 2013; Mitchell et al., 2015; Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996). Educational provisioning emphasises children acquiring abilities that can enrich their

livelihood and cognitive, socio-emotional, and physical competencies from their cultures (Mitchell et al., 2008; Pence, 2011; Prochner & Kabiru, 2008).

For the most part, the experiences this study draws from *Te Whāriki*, the New Zealand's ECEC curriculum, would be useful to review and reframe the pre-school education curriculum in Tanzania. The way the New Zealand ECEC curriculum is framed can be re-contextualised in the Tanzanian situation (see section 3.2.1 for details). The Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum needs to be indigenised and put into practice in order to enhance success in all aspects of child's learning, such as cognitive skills and non-cognitive skills including socio-emotional, behavioural, and physical development.

Indigenising pre-school education curriculum is significant, as was reported by Shizha (2014), "indigenous knowledge or traditional ecological knowledge" (p.114) is essential to be incorporated during curricula design so that the child is learning in familiar and meaningful contexts. Indigenous knowledge that reflect the experiences of learners and their communities encourage learners to think reflectively and to be proactive learners (Dei, 2014; Okeke, 2010; Shizha, 2010, 2014). This view was also supported by Ornstein and Hunkins (2009) who argue that "contextualisation of curriculum is a key ingredient in the indigenisation process; without contextualisation, indigenisation of any type will suffer" (p.36). In other words indigenous knowledge takes the learner to history, cultural identities, values, and traditional norms and creates social and academic excellence (Dei, 2014; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009). In rethinking Tanzanian ECEC today and specifically, indigenising the curriculum the question of how these children can be assisted in using local knowledge to solve everyday problems is important.

Therefore, for better enactment of the ECEC curriculum, Tanzania's ECEC curriculum needs to be linked with particular sociocultural contexts.

#### **8.4.4 ECEC curriculum enactment and pedagogy**

Another key finding observed in the ECEC settings was that the enactment of the pre-school education curriculum and pedagogical practice was different for the

two types of schools involved in this research. The researcher observed that the rural pre-school setting had less favourable conditions compared to the urban pre-school. The variations were in terms of the availability of teaching and learning resources and an appropriate teaching and learning environment. There were also differences in the availability of social services, and in the sociocultural backgrounds of the families, childrearing norms and practices, local cultural beliefs and practices, language use, and socio-economic status. These factors all affected the enrolment of children in pre-school classes. Also, as demonstrated earlier, there was also a lack of supervision on regulations and standards of pre-school education and the monitoring and control of pre-school education curriculum enactment from the national level officials in both pre-schools. The findings extend our knowledge and understanding the way the ECEC curriculum was enacted in the rural and the urban areas.

Having this knowledge in mind, the study participants appreciated having an ECEC curriculum; however, they reported its enactment in the classroom situation was problematic. The main reason was that curriculum materials did not reach teachers in the field. The bookshops held the syllabus and teachers' guide, but the holistic curriculum was not sold. Moreover, the findings from the documentary review indicated that the Ministry of Education and Tanzania Institute of Education (curriculum development and evaluation), under the supervision of the school inspectorate department were responsible for the dissemination of curriculum materials (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005). Lacking the holistic curriculum document, teachers enacted the curriculum through the syllabus and a teachers' guide only, which they bought themselves in the bookshops. A main thesis argument is that in most areas of this study pre-school curriculum enactment was not improved with the obtaining of the documents, as teachers did not understand these documents, because they were not involved in their development nor supported by in-service professional development to understand them.

Likewise, not all teachers managed to buy curriculum materials in the bookshops using their own pocket money. The researcher evidenced a photocopied syllabus

and teachers' guide being shared by teachers in a rural area. The observed ECEC teaching and learning was not what the curriculum intended but rather was based on teachers' existing beliefs and attitudes which were different from those the pre-school education curriculum suggested (see details of classroom observation on section 6.7). This view is consistent with that of Halbert and MacPhail (2010) in Ireland, who reported that when reformation is made in teaching approaches, it is important for implementers to be familiar with the content of the curriculum before it is activated in classroom contexts.

The finding about the development and distribution of the curriculum materials was also reported in a study by Oluniyi and Olajumoke (2013) in Nigeria, who articulated that in many cases curricula materials hardly ever reached rural areas in the absence of efficient dissemination systems. In the light of these challenges the findings suggest that changes need to be made to the way the curriculum is enacted. This research argues that the government needs to supply all necessary curriculum materials including the holistic curriculum document so that teachers can explore a broader overview. Using a syllabus and a teachers' guide alone does not appear to enable children to develop their potential and possibilities for life. Curriculum enactment in the classroom environment needs to be based on all important curriculum materials and not just a few. Ministry of Education officials, curriculum developers, and school inspectors are the main supervisors in monitoring and control of curriculum enactment but at present they tend to be non-responsive.

The lack of accountability of the government departments was also confirmed by some education official participants, who claimed that they had tried to address the problem without success. It was a surprise to find that the Ministry of Education official and curriculum developer participants thought it was not necessary for teachers to use a holistic curriculum, but rather a syllabus and a teachers' guide. This finding is supported by the documentary review. In his speech on March, 2010 the Director of Curriculum Development and Evaluation advised teachers to use a syllabus and teachers' guide if they could not find a holistic pre-school education curriculum, because all important information is in

the preliminary pages of the syllabus (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2013). This argument which was made by the director of curriculum development and evaluation surprised the researcher, as it was expected that he as a learned person would understand the importance of the holistic curriculum document in children's learning, and encourage its dissemination.

This study suggests that the government, through the Ministry of Education and its operational divisions, needs to be responsible for monitoring and control of pre-school services by ensuring the availability and dissemination of curriculum material to the all areas, so that teachers can access and utilise the materials accordingly.

#### ***8.4.4.1 Pedagogy of teachers***

The findings of the classroom observations indicated that the teachers used a teacher-centred pedagogy, with teachers always directing what the children did as in primary education. Teaching and learning activities, and seating plans were very structured and formal (see Figure 6.14 for details). From a pedagogical point of view, a study by Isaacs (2010) asserts that education should no longer consist of imparting knowledge; it must instead take a new track seeking the development of children's potentialities. With teacher dominated and directed pedagogies, the pre-school children had no opportunity to disclose their abilities and interests, to explore, to be creative, to problem solve, or to develop skills through activities, as recommended in the curriculum document (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005). By the same token, children need to be valued as active learners who choose, plan, perform and challenge (Smith, 2013). The teacher-centred learning environment is in direct opposition to a child-centred one, where emphasis is on learning through play and with a reasonable teacher-child ratio, i.e. 1:25 (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005, p. 9). The Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum indicates the need for enough space for freedom of movement within the classroom, an arrangement that facilitates movement and activity, beauty and harmony as well as cleanliness of environment. This view is supported by Isaacs (2010) who reports that the

function of the free environment is to help and allow the child to develop independence in all areas according to his or her inner psychological directives. Children like to work as well as play; children have a natural drive to work in order to develop. Teacher and parents/adults can mediate the great work that is being done by children. When children have interactions about their learning journeys with parents/adults whose ideas they trust, they become aware of the ways in which their intelligence is flexible (Carr, 2011).

The findings suggest that creativity, problem solving, and inquisitiveness in children, among other things, can be promoted when children are involved actively in interaction with teachers/adults and with peers. This view is supported by the focus group data, where children were involved in various activities including drawings, storytelling and making songs where they clarified the meanings of the stories and songs for the community. Given these interactions, the findings suggest that most of the children were willing to get different views from peers and they learned from them. This view is supported by sociocultural theory, that, human cognition is a result of the interaction of the individual with others within a social setting where cultural mediating tools help to promote the interaction and enrich learning (Cole & Gajdamaschko, 2007; Gauvain, 2005; Tracey & Morrow, 2012).

It is theorised in the literature that “education is not what the teacher gives; education is a natural process spontaneously carried out by the human individual, and is acquired not by listening to words, but by experiences upon the environment” (Isaacs, 2010, p. 26). However, while the Tanzanian ECEC curriculum indicates the importance of the space in the classroom contexts in order to allow free movement during subject learning activities, in contrast, it just remained in writing; in the field, the situation is not supportive for movement and activities.

Furthermore, activity-based learning is emphasised in international studies (Lee et al., 2013; Murphy, 2004; Saracho, 2012b; Sylva et al., 2004; Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996). It appears that the play teaching approach and the corresponding activity-based practice as directed in the pre-school

education curriculum (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005) has failed to permeate pre-school classroom practice to the degree envisaged. The Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum emphasises learner-centred approaches which encourage children to demonstrate their creativity and talents through subject learning activities (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005). On reflection, this study argues that the lack of pedagogical skills for pre-school teachers who are untrained might contribute to the lack of support given to children in developing their potential and possibilities for future life.

Remarkably, the arguments from parents of this study indicated that some parents did not like to send their children to pre-school settings because they thought that it was a waste of money and time. They had the view that, children were just playing, singing, and or just eating porridge and there was no serious learning in classrooms. Parents did not like to see their children engaged in play in the pre-school setting and they expressed this concern with great feelings (see quotes in section 6.5 for details). Parents' intentions and aspirations were to see their children understand reading, writing, and arithmetic and they were not interested in non-cognitive skills including socio-emotional/behavioural development, and physical capabilities. This was evident in their embodied reactions of distress and their descriptions about what they liked their children to learn. Learning-through-play activities were also viewed negatively by many of the study participants; it was viewed as a waste of time. The researcher noted that this ignorance was due to a lack of ECEC experts to disseminate knowledge about pedagogy and ECEC provision to parents and the community. In both pre-schools in this study, play activity was used as a time-filler rather than being seen as an integral part of the children's learning. The researcher found that pre-school teachers took no part in the playtime of their pupils, rather considering the time as an opportunity for a breather during which they could prepare homework or class work for pre-school children and Grade One, as they taught both classes in the case of the urban teachers.

For the most part, when teachers were marking work, children were required to play in silence and to keep the sound down and so did not derive many of the social and language benefits of the play experience. With reference to play contexts Smith (2013) stresses that play is important in the development of consciousness, because it enables a child to develop rules based on ideas and meanings and not on objects themselves. The child is able to separate meanings from the real actual situations in which they are generally embedded, and this increases creativity in children. This appears to be not the case for Tanzanian children. It needs measures to rectify the situation.

The findings indicated the impracticality of implementing any other form of play activity-based approach in the context of classes with an average teacher-ratio of 1:98 in the rural and 1:75 in the urban pre-schools. It would not be possible to control such large class sizes in a situation where all pupils would be simultaneously engaged in different activities. The findings extend our understanding that measures can be taken to help address this situation which limits children's play. To address the problem of a sole teacher to supervise children's play, the researcher thought that this problem could be addressed by putting fences around the school and the surrounding land to enable children to play safely. Fencing the parameters could be done by the local community with locally produced resources.

The issue of teachers neglecting non-cognitive skills such as playing is also supported by researchers from Tanzania who report that from the early stage teachers neglect to appreciate the importance of socio-emotional, behavioural development, and physical abilities (Kweka et al., 2000; Mende, 1999). Non-cognitive gains are reported by intervention studies to mainly benefit high-risk children (OECD, 2006; Sylva et al., 2003), although the experience shows that similar intervention can help all children to develop socio-emotional and behavioural competencies (Mitchell et al., 2008; Smith et al., 2000). The issue of large class size with limited resources, and with a sole teacher, is reported by many writers as some of the major difficulties of curriculum enactment experienced by teachers (Barnett & Frede, 2010; Penn, 2011; Smith, 2012).

The researcher also observed that the children's learning practices were not those appropriate for their ages as in other countries, for example, see (Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996). The teachers did not have the knowledge of pre-school pedagogical skills on how to help young children learn or have an understanding of the holistic needs of pre-school children (Cheng et al., 2014; O'Sullivan, 2004; Saracho, 2012b). The main argument of the thesis is that changes need to be made from structured teaching and learning activities and structured seating arrangements to those that are non-structured and suitable for early years education. For example, spontaneous learning through play could be better for children's gains in motors skills. Learning in a play context could help children socialise with each other, to build relationships and prevent anti-social behaviour. Child-centred learning is viewed as better for these learning outcomes (Barnett & Frede, 2010; Bartlett & Mogusu, 2013; Croft, 2002; Holzman, 2009; Lee et al., 2013; Mitchell & Kelly, 2013; Mtika & Gates, 2010; O'Sullivan, 2004; Paris & Combs, 2006; Saracho, 2012b; Sylva et al., 2004; Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005, 2008, 2010; Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996; Yelland, 2010).

A critical problem existing in African societies, Tanzania included, concerns the sociocultural norms which limit children engaging in problem solving, creativity, and exploration through play activities. Most communities in African society value children's obedience and interdependence, rather than creativity and exploration (Bar-On, 2004; Edwards & Cutter-Mackenzie, 2011; Marfo et al., 2011; Nsamenang, 2008). It is common to find many African parents, the researcher of this study included, inhibiting creativity and exploration by their children with punishment (Bar-On, 2004; Nsamenang, 2008). The view is supported by Prochner and Kabiru (2008) who assert that an African child grows up with an emphasis placed on obedience, respect for elders, and religious observance. Hence, there is no encouragement of creativity, exploration, and inquisitiveness to support children's development.

The findings suggest that changes need to be made to raise the awareness of parents and teachers of the importance of play in children's learning. Parents

could come along to the settings and see how their children learn through various play materials and acquire motor skills when they are guided by qualified teachers who have a range of resources and play materials available. There is a need to promote the use of child-centred teaching approaches similar to those of other countries (Barnett & Frede, 2010; Burgess et al., 2010; Dalli, 2011; Lee et al., 2013; Mitchell & Kelly, 2013; Saracho, 2012b; Te Whāriki New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996). As demonstrated earlier, the focus group discussion with children indicated that they wanted an opportunity to learn through activities such as drawing, painting, playing with clay and soil as well as singing. The learning advantages of drawing by pre-school children have been shown as have the sample pictures drawn by rural and urban pre-school children, as well as storytelling and songs. The importance of drawings for children's learning and creativity has been theorised in various literature (Holzman, 2009; Hope, 2008; Lee et al., 2013). Therefore, drawings need to be encouraged for children in order to increase their creativity and inquisitiveness.

Further, children in the research expressed freely what they like and did not like in schools; for example, they liked playing with friends, moulding various figures with clay, drawing, and playing soccer, and they mentioned not liking corporal punishment, and sitting on the dust floor. The findings extend our understanding that learning tasks need to be planned according to children's needs, interests, and priorities and not teachers' priorities; so that curiosity is likely to be promoted. Overall, more emphasis needs to be on child-centred learning in a play context with available learning materials and ECEC qualified teachers. This type of teaching environment could be created by removing the structured seating rows and placing children in groups with teachers and parents moving around to help children in their learning and exploration. Children's choice of activity from within a range of options would act spontaneously for optimal development.

As mentioned previously, using the experiences from other countries, the researcher suggests the need to involve parents and community volunteers in collaboration with teachers and local experts to support children's learning. Local experts need to train parents/families, and community volunteers on how to work

with children, and this will be the major role of the researcher of this study (see Figure 9.1 for details of her future planned project in Tanzania). Such learning experiences and activities would also help children build social competence and perhaps address any anti-social behaviour before school age entry. Changes in pedagogy will be the key to better enactment of the pre-school education curriculum. However, the Tanzanian government needs to support ECEC so that children can get these interventions before their entry into primary school. The contexts in sphere four need to be profoundly supportive of ECEC settings (sphere two) for the benefits of a child's development.

The researcher of this study believes that in teaching and learning teachers need to develop conceptual knowledge about subject matter areas, with content and activities that are related specifically to children's life contexts. Teachers would also be expected to use locally made materials to facilitate the teaching and learning process. These local materials could include bottle tops, wood blocks, small stones, animal skins, tree barks, clay soil, mat-making materials, and various local music instruments such as drums and violins. The Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum describes the involvement of parents and/or community in preparing these local materials, so it needs education for them, and their involvement in these activities would be highly valuable (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005), as currently it does not eventuate. All these activities are meant to ensure that the sociocultural contexts between the school and children's homes are compatible. Hence, child-centred learning is argued as the best way for children to develop their potential for life.

#### ***8.4.4.2 Quality of pre-school education***

Another important finding regarding the enacted curriculum and pedagogy is the failure of the Ministry of Education and its outreach arm to supervise, monitor, and control the standard of pre-school education through the school inspectorates. The Ministry of Education through curriculum developers and school inspectors is intended to be the main supervisor, controller, and monitor of curriculum enactment in Tanzania (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005). It was reported by teacher and regional education official

participants that the inspectors had not been auditing, or visiting schools. As a result the quality in pre-school education, curriculum enactment, and its associated pedagogy were not adequate. The school inspection department of the Ministry of Education and the Tanzania Institute of Education (responsible for curriculum development) need to work hand in hand to ensure the effective enactment of the pre-school education curriculum and the monitoring of quality in pre-school education.

The finding regarding quality in pre-school education was significant, because there is evidence that educational policies sometimes concentrate on increasing the number of children attending ECEC settings (participation), without considering quality (Penn, 2011; Smith, 2013). Undeniably, there is evidence that participation in low quality ECEC may be destructive for children, and that the risks of harm from low quality are greater for children who are also exposed to other risks such as distress, poverty, orphanage care or chronic illness (Barnett & Frede, 2010; Smith, 2012; Sylva et al., 2004). Research indicates that the benefits of quality are greater for children from disadvantaged families than that of better off families (Mitchell et al., 2008; Smith et al., 2000; Sylva et al., 2003).

As was discussed earlier in section 2.11 many previous studies report that quality in ECEC programmes is often evaluated based on improvements in “process quality” and “structural quality” (Smith et al., 2000, p. 53). Process quality means the warmth and responsive relationship between adults/teachers and children while structural quality consists of that which is relatively easily observed and measured, such as qualification of teachers, adult-child ratio, size of the class, resources, materials and facilities, staff wages and working conditions (Mitchell et al., 2008; OECD, 2006; Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2000; Sylva et al., 2004; Sylva et al., 2003; Taguma et al., 2012). However, the findings indicate that the Tanzanian ECEC children did not get such quality.

Also a view of quality in pre-school is based on the learning and development outcomes of children who have completed pre-school education programmes (Lokshin et al., 2004). The children who complete a programme are expected to show achievements particularly in cognitive ability, socio-emotional, behavioural

development, and physical capabilities (Bar-On, 2004; Nsamenang, 2008; Prochner & Kabiru, 2008; Serpell, 2002). Such achievements indicate that the programme has good quality and offers meaningful learning. A study by Sylva et al. (2004) reports that settings which have staff with higher qualifications, especially with a good proportion of trained teachers, with available resources and materials show higher quality and their children make more progress. A well-educated and qualified teacher is better able to create a more effective work environment and increase the efficiency of other ECEC staff members. Nevertheless, in the Tanzanian context of this study there were no qualified teachers to teach pre-school classes.

A critique of the Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum is that insufficient regard was paid to the sociocultural context prevailing in Tanzania as described earlier, resulting in poor quality ECEC and outcomes. This view is supported by many African writers who argue that African education curriculum guidelines are likely to be based on Western sociocultural contexts where the ways of thinking and contexts are different from those of the indigenous African (Dei, 2014; Owuor, 2007; Pence, 2011; Pence & Nsamenang, 2008; Serpell, 2002; Serpell & Nsamenang, 2014; Shizha, 2014). The planning and delivery of ECEC services in most African societies have been critiqued as being constrained by the legacy of Western perspectives (Nsamenang, 2008; Prochner & Kabiru, 2008), low prevalence of literacy and limited institutionalisation of systematic research on early childhood development and other areas (Serpell, 2002; Serpell & Nsamenang, 2014). Thus, ECEC has been construed as part of a broader modernisation agenda through the progressive appropriation of Western culture in opposition to African traditions which are incorrectly seen as deficient and outdated (Serpell & Nsamenang, 2014) and leading to low quality ECEC. Indigenous African knowledge has for so long been negated, ignored, and/or devalued in the academic institutions (Dei, 2014; Owuor, 2007).

In this study, the main argument is to advocate a different perspective, arguing that African societies have their own valid conceptions of child development and strategies for supporting it, and a rich store of often neglected resources which

should be incorporated into ECEC services rather than viewing Western knowledge as superior to African indigenous knowledge. Not all Western knowledge will be useful in African contexts, so a starting point of local knowledge, values, and attitudes to the ECEC curriculum based on the local sociocultural contexts is advisable if quality ECEC is to be provided. Importantly, decolonising education curriculum should be about “developing a critical consciousness of one self, place, history, identity, culture and politics, not about mainstreaming educational practices” (Dei, 2014, p. 170). Indigenous knowledge is a multifaceted body of knowledge and practices, which belongs to peoples from specific places with common cultural identities, social ties, economic, and political practices (Okeke, 2010; Owuor, 2007; Shizha, 2010, 2014), so the knowledge is maintained and developed by peoples with common histories of close interaction with the local natural environment (Ejuu, 2012; Prochner & Kabiru, 2008; Serpell & Nsamenang, 2014).

The term indigenous knowledge, therefore, means that the knowledge is typical and belongs to peoples from specific location with common cultural aspects and social ties (Owuor, 2007; Shizha, 2014). As asserted by Shizha (2010) indigenous knowledge is “a process of learning and sharing social life, histories, identities, economic, and political practices unique to each cultural group” (p.115), so these aspects need to be incorporated in African curriculum, Tanzania included to provide quality ECEC provision. The argument about the importance of indigenous knowledge is closely related to that of Ejuu (2012) in Uganda who suggested that there is a need to systematically interweave indigenous knowledge and Western ECEC to get a hybrid that is unique to both perspectives. This is because indigenous childrearing practices and beliefs are important for ECEC services (Serpell & Nsamenang, 2014). This view was supported by Owuor (2007) of Kenya who argued that the objective of curricula reformation in many African countries, Tanzania included, has been to explore alternative solutions by utilising local resources as a way towards addressing socio-economic, cultural, and political problems.

Hence, the importance of curriculum reconstruction and teacher education policies aimed at integrating indigenous knowledge and Western knowledge into the education system, and invention in teaching that would incorporate indigenous knowledge and methods into the curriculum (Okeke, 2010; Owuor, 2007). However, policy makers and curriculum developers have not acted or legislated for this to happen (Okeke, 2010; Oluniyi & Olajumoke, 2013; Osaki, 2000; Owuor, 2007). A study by Prochner and Kabiru (2008) similarly identifies that ECEC interventions in Africa are more successful when built on local knowledge. And this can inform future research on how African communities could build indigenous knowledge into curricula for young children (Nsamenang, 2008). Nsamenang further argues that close attention needs to be paid to the unique sociocultural conditions of African societies, Tanzania included, especially in rural areas. This should include the strengths and limitations of local childrearing knowledge, attitudes, and practices. Serpell and Nsamenang (2014) considered that for effective communication with their caregiving families, culturally sensitive learning methods are essential for unprejudiced assessment of young African children, especially those with limited access to Western cultural materials and practices.

Integration of indigenous knowledge and practices in the Tanzanian ECEC curriculum is significant in order to reflect the diverse indigenous ways of knowing, culturally appropriate, and promoting social change and the empowerment of Tanzanian children. Reclaiming cultural identities rooted within the authentication of indigenous traditions has been viewed as a way forward to decolonising Western dominated school curricula systems (Owuor, 2007; Shizha, 2014), hence, making early education more relevant and practical in addressing the needs of Tanzanian children. Okeke (2010) argues that positively integrated education reforms in Sub-Saharan Africa, Tanzania included, should entail a reflection in education curricula that includes the history, principles, and concepts of practices, from within the country and from other African countries.

Importantly, in African societies such as Tanzania, education for young children needs to be based on the indigenous social and cultural context. African

indigenous approaches to child socialisation should include emphasis on social responsibility and widespread involvement of siblings who care for younger children (see Figures 4.1, 8.1, and Sphere One), as part of the ecological system model (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) drawn by this study. Even if it is recommended by international policy statements that young children need to be oriented to both a local and international worldview, this study suggests that for more meaningful learning, early education and childcare could be more successful if young children learn within their context with locally produced play materials and using the local languages and values. Western knowledge can be incorporated without losing indigenous knowledge, practices, values, and traditions.

A study by Serpell and Nsamenang (2014) reported that the design of ECEC services in Africa at large should “focus on local strengths including indigenous games and music, emphasise community-based provision, incorporate participation by pre-adolescent children; use indigenous African languages and local funds of knowledge; and accord priority to inclusion of children with special needs” (p.5). Developing young children’s creative processes should be an important objective, because research indicates that the early years are very crucial to the development of children’s creative potential (Garcia et al., 2008). Children need a curriculum which develops a whole child. Qualified teachers need to support children to develop to their potentials and to give them many possibilities in their lives using rich resources and reasonable class sizes. The ecological systems and sociocultural patterns that underpin children’s lives need to be taken into consideration for them to develop an understanding of their world and surroundings through collaborations with teachers, adults, and peers (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Vygotsky, 1978). These changes are seen as a way of increasing the quality of ECEC in Tanzania.

On reflection, it would seem that at present many children are not receiving a quality education in formal pre-school settings in Tanzania. It would be desirable for ECEC researchers in collaboration with curriculum developers, educational practitioners in ECEC, pre-school teachers, and parents to work hand in hand through comprehensive research to inform government and policy makers on how

to create better pre-school education services. It is essential to involve parents, community elders and caregivers in pre-school settings where they can orient children using indigenous languages and local funds of knowledge through storytelling, passing on traditional legends and proverbs, and teaching local songs and dances. Hence, to evaluate the quality of ECEC in Tanzania, new criteria need to be developed in line with a learner-centred curriculum reflecting relevant social cultural contexts.

### **8.5 Management of the Pre-school Education (Sphere Three)**

Returning to the diagram on page 295, I will now look at Sphere Three, which includes the management of pre-school education, involving the local committees and school boards. The findings indicated that the local administration has a direct influence on the provision of facilities for children's learning. It was argued that these facilities were supposed to be provided by the government through the national policy guidelines (sphere four) on how ECEC could be funded and conducted. However, this was not the case. Drawing from ecological systems theory, here the child is interacting with sphere three through the services she/he gets from the community through the local committees. In the Tanzanian situation, ECEC settings are within the hands of the local administration, that is, Parents' Committees and School Boards. It was argued that the role of these two organisations is to ensure quality learning for children by maintaining buildings and grounds, providing plenty of quality learning resources, materials, and an emotionally safe teaching and learning environment with qualified teachers. The intention is to enable the child to enjoy a conducive teaching and learning environment. However, in the Tanzanian pre-schools in this study, building facilities were poor and not completed and the local community seemed unable to manage the provision of quality teaching and learning resources, let alone donation in monetary form. Therefore, the government policy makers need to set clear policies regarding how ECEC could be funded and conducted.

### **8.5.1 Parents and community involvement in ECEC settings**

This section discusses the involvement of parents and community in ECEC settings, such as their support in the provision of education, and in the teaching and learning activities in early years education. The findings of this study indicated that funding of pre-school education was managed by parents and local committees. Drawing from ecological systems perspectives, the government is located at sphere four in diagram 8.1 and is responsible for the provision of education. However, it appears that the provision is not happening. Findings have shown that, parents and community members were not happy about the required contribution in monetary form. Further the findings did indicate that rural parent participants were comfortable with assisting in school-based manual activities and events, including making mud bricks, maintenance, renovations, building classrooms, and also attending school meetings and events. When it came to their involvement in the actual teaching and learning activities, they reported not being aware that they were responsible for supporting their children's learning in the classrooms in collaboration with teachers. The few studies available in Tanzania, indicate that parents, family, and community involvement in ECEC in the classroom context was non-existent or unsuccessful (Kweka et al., 2000; Mende, 1999; Mtahabwa, 2009; Mwinuka, 2001). A study by Mtahabwa (2009) on early child development and care in Tanzania indicates that parents' participation in ECEC was mainly through social matters. Parents' participation at the classroom level such as storytelling, singing songs or collection of local materials for use by children was not evidenced. The researcher argues that involvement of parents and community in children's learning builds a strong connection with teachers and children, and this could help to identify learning difficulties and developmental delays in children, if any, and find joint efforts in addressing the problem.

This study suggests that changes need to be made by raising the awareness of parents about their power and roles in children's learning. Scaffolding, which supports children to move from their original way of knowing to greater development of their thoughts, is one example. This technique refers to the

guidance and interactional support given by an adult, teacher or knowledgeable peers in children's learning (Berk & Winsler, 1995; Ritchie, 2010; Rogoff, 2003; Smith, 2013; Vygotsky, 1978). From sociocultural perspectives scaffolding permits children to do as much as they can by themselves while what they cannot do is filled in by teachers, parents and others who are significant in children's activities, so that they utilize their *Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)* (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) "is the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).

The finding about parents and community involvement in children's learning is supported by Ghirrotto and Mazzoni (2013) who suggest that parent and guardian's involvement in children's education is as an essential support to children's learning in ECEC programmes and throughout the school years. The participation of parents and families in their children's learning has been successful in developing the potential of children in developed countries (Kontopodis et al., 2011; Mitchell et al., 2008; Penn, 2005, 2011; Rawlings, 2008; Saracho, 2012b; Smith et al., 2000; Yelland, 2010; Yelland & Kilderry, 2005), whereby other developing countries could learn from this. The experience from other countries regarding the role of parents and communities in their children's learning needs to be reflected on and applied in developing countries, Tanzania included. A study by Hornby (2011) reports that partnerships between schools and families are important in providing the best education for children. Therefore, there is a need for the government to develop comprehensive policies with relevant skills and knowledge of parents to enable parents to work effectively in children learning in collaboration with teachers in pre-schools.

The growth and development of schools depend on the community playing a great role in supporting schools (Hornby, 2011; Ishihara-Brito, 2013). Support can be in various forms; assisting children's learning, volunteering in school based activities, or support in a monetary form. Parents would have a great role to play in their children's learning. Some examples are providing services such as

cleaning the environment and preparing food for children in schools as well as supporting their children learning. However, the researcher has the view that although parents and communities in general play significant roles, history and previous studies have shown that their participation could be largely determined by the degree of their awareness of the issue at hand (Hornby, 2011; Ishihara-Brito, 2013). Therefore, changes need to be made in educating parents and the community to recognise their roles and power in their children's learning for future success in their life.

### **8.5.2 Socio-economic status of parents**

While the topic of funding pre-school education by parents has been discussed in the previous section, in this section, the sociocultural consequences of the lack of government funding is discussed. Parent and teacher participants in the study reported that many parents were not enrolling their children in pre-schools. Among other reasons for this was their low socio-economic status and lack of financial support from the government. Furthermore, it was argued that the government departments were corrupt and failed to send money to the needy areas, ECEC included (Babeiya, 2011; Heilman & Ndumbaro, 2002; Warioba, 2011). This finding is supported by Anders (2001) in his study of corruption in Malawi where he observes that, the fight against corruption in many governments is problematic because the system itself is corrupt.

Furthermore, the findings indicated that not all parents could afford the continuous demand of school contributions and as a consequence, their children may become involved in child labour, truancy, street children, crimes and delinquency (see Figure 6.3 and 6.4 for details). The same participants reported that due to poverty some parents find someone in the community, who seems to be in a good position and requests him to support the family on the promise that he be able to marry their girl child after she has reached a certain age. But that marriage can take place even before her maturity. In the same way, other parents hide their children until they reach school age due to lack of money to pay for pre-school class. Early marriage is also critiqued by LeVine (2004) in Kenya, who found that some small girls get married at or before adolescence and begin

bearing children as soon as they can. In addition, this study found that due to poverty the priority for education was for boys and not a girl child, girls having to remain at home waiting to get married even at a young age. This finding is supported by Lokshin et al. (2004) who found that maternal wage rates and costs of ECEC centres affect children's enrolment in various settings; an increase in mothers' wages raises school participation of boys, but lowers that of girls, indicating that girls might substitute for mothers in housework and caring for small children.

Given the low socio-economic status of many citizens of Tanzania, the findings suggest that changes need to be made in order to raise the standard of living of the people. The government could locate agricultural extension officers in rural areas to give advice on farming inputs and the kind of crops to grow in relation to the weather. The finding that the interviewees reported about low socio-economic status is supported by Mukyanuzi (2003) who reports that low increases in rural sector productivity are mainly due to inadequate infrastructure investment. The finding is also closely related to that of Wedgwood (2007) who reports that in rural areas people live in poverty, they cannot access good social services such as education, clean water, health services, and nutrition.

Children are more disadvantaged and are deprived of all necessary services and end up suffering extensively with higher rates of malnutrition, stunted growth, and chronic hunger, even though urban-rural disparities have narrowed as regards both stunting and underweight (UNICEF, 2008, 2013). Children from families with low socio-economic status and low income backgrounds are less likely to participate in ECEC service. The dire situation of people especially in rural area and their failure to enrol their children in ECEC centres has also been found by various writers in other developing countries. For example, Agrawal (2014) and Sriprakash (2012) found that in rural India, a large number of the households are involved in agricultural and associated activities, and their children are likely to take up this occupation at an early age with or without schooling.

In discussion on gender discrimination due to low socio-economic status, it was pointed out to the researcher that some parents had cases in the court concerning early marriages having been arranged for their daughters. This view of gender

discrimination is supported by Agrawal (2014) who carried out his study in India and reported the marked disparity in educational attainment that exists between rural and urban locations, between males and females, and among social groups, and religions. Given such gender discrimination the provision of ECEC and curriculum enactment cannot succeed.

Therefore, the findings of this study suggest that for ECEC to improve, the Tanzanian government needs to provide free ECEC and develop policies that will improve the socio-economic status of its people as the country gears up for higher growth. At the same time, parents need to be sensitised to realise the importance of pre-school education and its significant role in children's lives and to remove gender discrimination and enrol both boys and girls. Having discussed the issues of socio-economic status and children's enrolment, the next section discusses the need for a separate ECEC independent directorate for efficiency in ECEC curriculum enactment.

### **8.5.3 Independent directorate for pre-school education**

With respect to the third sphere in diagram 8.1, another key finding was that all teacher participants reported that primary education and pre-school education are at present coordinated in one directorate named the Primary Education Directorate. Hence, the Head Teacher of the primary school is also the Head of the pre-school and as a result there is more concentration on primary education at the expense of ECEC. Therefore, the main argument is that there is a need for an independent directorate for pre-school education that receives funds direct from the government. This would address the problem of Head Teachers concentrating resources on primary school education. These findings suggest that for more efficiency it would be better if pre-school education had a separate Directorate from the primary Directorate so that it can get its budget directly from the central government and would then be able to manage and administer its funds and provide quality pre-schools. Also, with a separate administration it could simplify access of children to services rather than this being under the control of the Primary Education.

In addition, the data from the documentary reviews indicated that the government through its Education and Training Policy 1995 assigned each primary school to have an attached class for pre-school children (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995). In the light of an attached pre-school class at primary school, this study is arguing that the idea of locating pre-schools within primary school compounds was a positive idea as it did facilitate the smooth transition of children to primary schools. This finding is supported by Sink et al. (2007) who found that if a pre-school child moved to Primary 1 and finds a positive response such as warm relationships with teachers/adults and peers; he/she will likely enjoy learning, understanding, and meeting the expectations of schooling. Children would be familiar with the social climate as well as the physical environment. Research suggests that a more unified approach to learning should be adopted in both the ECEC settings and the primary school systems (OECD, 2006), and that attention should be given to transition challenges that may face young children as they enter compulsory schools.

However, on the other hand children could be disadvantaged because of competing for physical and human resources. The current study showed the use of primary school teachers to teach both primary school Grade one and the pre-school class in the urban area, because of the shortage in pre-school teachers. As a result teachers were found to have heavy workloads which reduced their effectiveness, and children did not meet their learning goals. This is also supported by Mtahabwa (2007) who found that when competing for the resources, “pre-primary education would most likely be more disadvantaged as it holds a low position in the whole education system” (p.71).

The researcher’s view is that the introduction of pre-school classes being attached to primary schooling is an existing and crucial commitment toward the development of ECEC provision; but can only work properly if the government provides all necessary requirements in a separate administration from primary schools. Locating the policy of an attachment without clear guidelines is problematic. In addition, this study noted that there was limited democracy in policy decision-making, as mainly males were in decision-making (national level)

compared to females at the implementation stage (local level), and many are female teachers in the teaching profession. Table 5.1 clarifies the situation.

Tanzania could make changes in her pre-school provision by learning from other countries about how they administer and manage ECEC specifically in terms of funding, resources, teacher education, and professional development. Findings from other countries would help when addressing challenges and deciding what should be suitable in the Tanzanian sociocultural context. For instance, in some developed countries children attend various programmes at age 0-5 years old before compulsory schooling including day care, nurseries, kindergarten and pre-schools and have combined childcare and early education (Barnett & Frede, 2010; Melhuish & Petrogiannis, 2006; Penn, 2005, 2011; Saracho, 2012b; Yelland, 2010). Developed countries make an early investment in ECEC as a basic foundation for future success. Some programmes are holistic and designed to enhance the development of the whole child by providing a comprehensive set of educational, health, nutritional, and social services (Magnuson & Shager, 2010; Sylva et al., 2004).

Therefore, Tanzania can also learn from the experiences of developed countries in terms of ECEC service, as well as challenges in policy and practice for pre-school education curriculum enactment. These developed countries have put more focus on ECEC in which they integrated curriculum and combined childcare and early education. In these countries, policy-makers had more detailed information to enhance good child development and education policy which is determined by the country's ideology, politics, and the history of ECEC provision (Barnett & Frede, 2010; Melhuish & Petrogiannis, 2006; Yelland & Kilderry, 2005). The focus in ECEC is to enhance children's development and potential from an early age, and guiding children in early education in a way that is different from older pupils in primary schools.

Furthermore, Melhuish and Petrogiannis (2006) argue that even developing countries can make changes with good policy advice. For example, India and China are changing at a dramatic pace, and ECEC services are increasingly seen as important for economic development. A study by Kapoor (2006) reports that

India now has the “world’s largest integrated early childhood programme providing non-formal pre-school education to over 23 million children aged three to six years and aiming to improve the health and development of children” (p.4). Similarly, China has the world’s fastest growing economy and rate of social change. It was argued that part of the change in China is the development of kindergartens, a form of ECEC seen as essential to the country’s long-term ambitions (Shenglan, 2006).

## **8.6 International and National Policies (Sphere Four)**

Sphere Four of the diagram Figure 8.1: Early childhood education spheres and context in Tanzania, includes the national government and international policy statements that impact on the community’s response to children’s educational needs. This sphere has a direct influence on the well-being and support of the adults in the children’s lives such as the situation of parents and the provision of facilities for their children. Drawing from ecological systems theory the international and national policies located in sphere four have no direct influence on children’s development, but rather impact through policies. With reference to national policies, UNESCO (2000) report on Tanzania indicates that social policies (such as early intervention) and economic policies (such as families’ income and support) affect the status of Tanzania’s enrolment of children at schools. It also affects rural or urban living conditions, and the organisation of early childhood settings. This research argues that, for the most part, Tanzania’s national policies are not clear in regard to children’s services, ECEC included. Here the local community located in sphere three is responding to the national and the international conventions (sphere four) on children’s educational rights which profoundly affect the child’s immediate environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Pound, 2013; Smith, 2013; Tracey & Morrow, 2012).

### **8.6.1 Formalisation of pre-school education**

Within sphere four, this section discusses another key finding concerning the formalisation of pre-school education and related policy issues. The findings indicated that international and national policies and requirements should

emphasise the need for formalising ECEC and its curriculum development. In response to policy statements and international conventions on children's educational rights, the Tanzanian government formalised pre-school education under the national Education and Training Policy (ETP) of 1995.

The international policy statements were the Jomtien Declaration on Education for All (EFA) and the Dakar Framework for Action (EFA Assessment, 2000; UNESCO, 1990), and the 2000 Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) which consider education as a basic child's right. Referring to child's rights adopted from UNCRC in 1989, Tanzania was one of the first countries in Africa to ratify the convention in 1991 (Organization of African Unity, 1999) by confirming that children are citizens and that they deserve all rights as human beings in relation to their cultural values, morals, traditional customs and norms for building children's personalities in relation to contexts. The convention challenged the way children were treated, therefore a new image of children's rights and interests was formulated (Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2006; Smith, 2013). Hence, the UNCRC provides an internationally recognised standard of basic human rights for children (Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2006; Smith, 2007, 2013). As reported by Smith (2013) that the 54 Articles in the convention are divided into three main types which apply to all children wherever they live. They are:

- “participation rights, which assert that children should be viewed and treated as citizens who are an important part of society;
- protection rights, which assert that children should not be subjected to discrimination, humiliation, or ill-treatment; and
- provisions rights, which are concerned with children's access to services and resources, such as parental care, education, health and a reasonable standard of living” (p.15).

The current Tanzanian ECEC curriculum has mentioned children's rights generally but in practice these seem not to be practiced as many children have no access to ECEC. For instance, the Tanzanian ECEC curriculum indicates the “child's rights to services and social needs including education, good nutrition, health facilities, protection, family relationships, playing grounds and facilities”

(Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005, p. 1). The researcher believes that although the government had made a commitment to education through ratifying the international convention it did not prioritise ECEC. This view was supported by comments made by study participants who mentioned that the Tanzanian government seemed unprepared to formalise pre-school education. But due to international pressure from international policy statements, they ratified the international convention on children's rights. This study suggests that the Tanzanian government through curriculum planners need to accommodate these children's rights in reviews of ECEC curriculum and in relation to social contexts and follow-up its enactment.

Many countries worldwide implemented formalised childcare and early education in the 1990's, when previously ECEC was viewed as a private and family matter (Melhuish & Petrogiannis, 2006). Accordingly, Tanzania needs to give priority to quality ECEC which helps children to be aware of their ability to dictate their future, develop their potential, and have their confidence ignited, when they realise that they are enjoying success (Barnett & Frede, 2010; Penn, 2011; Pound, 2009; Saracho, 2012b; Tracey & Morrow, 2012). Children need to develop abilities, skills, understandings, knowledge, and attitudes through various domains and learning experiences that prepare them for future academic success.

Furthermore, the findings from the documentary review indicate that child care and early education are separate, with children aged 5 and 6 years under the care of the Ministry of Education while children below 5 were located in the Ministry of Community Development, Children and Gender (MCDC&G). Childcare is not formalised and has no formal curriculum (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995). This finding is supported by Penn (2010) who reported that it is common for many developing countries to separate childcare and early education systems with each controlled by different government departments. Penn claims that this division has consequences for the nature of early childhood education and care provision including services offered to parents and children, finance, regulation, and the training of staff. At the time this study was conducted the Ministry of Education official participant reported that the Education and Training Policy of

1995 was under review and the proposal is to combine child care and early education into the care of one Ministry, the Ministry of Education. The age for pre-school education has been proposed to be from 3 to 6 year olds. To make this happen, there is some indication that the government is putting efforts into this change as evidenced by data from the documentary review indicating that in early 2012 there was a meeting report called, *the First Biennial National Forum on Early Childhood Development Declaration* (United Republic of Tanzania (URT), 2012a). Five ministers from five ministries relating to childhood issues met to discuss an integration of early childhood development (ECD) policy and programmes (see section 7.2 for details).

Moreover, in the policy documents, the government of Tanzania recognises “all children of all ages have the right to quality basic services for their survival, development and protection” (United Republic of Tanzania (URT), 2012a, p. 1) and that, “infants and young children from 0-8 years require more attention, care and nurturing for their survival and development” (p.1). Again, many government documents indicate the importance of child care and early education, for instance, (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995, 2001; Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT), 2012a; United Republic of Tanzania (URT), 1982, 2009, 2010, 2012a), but the government does not implement the policies to address issues relating to ECEC provision.

The researcher considers that once ECEC is understood as an essential key in children’s development, rather than as a step in the educational ladder, government priorities and parents’ involvement in early education can be increased. Then, ECEC could be seen as more than a voluntary sector service but as a professional service that promotes meaningful curricula and pedagogies to take into account children’s age and not just as a step or preparation for primary education.

In addition, the findings have shown that committees in rural areas were responsible for finding volunteer-teachers. Further, it was argued that in rural areas teachers appointed for employment were not staying in their stations because of poor social services such as lack of transport services, medical services,

electricity, and clean and safe water. The findings suggest that the government needs to improve such social services especially in rural areas so that when primary teachers are located in rural areas they remain in their stations rather than moving on to work in urban areas where social services are good compared to rural areas. The primary school teachers in rural areas would also teach a pre-school class as in the urban areas, and be paid salaries by the government. This research argues that the government should pay the salaries of teachers. In addition, school boards and parents committees need to find out the best way of raising funds from the whole community for pre-school education rather than depending on the contribution of parents' with children at school. The central government also needs to support the efforts of parents and the community under the current Local Governments Reforms with the building of classrooms and running the schools under school boards and parents committees.

The findings suggest that there is a need for mutual agreement among the central government, local government, parents, and community at large on how to support pre-school education. It appears that the government is ignoring the childhood education issues or it has a little knowledge regarding the importance of early investment. The government should put more focus on pre-schools because it is the education foundation level. Referring to the importance of early education the researcher takes the view that the government of Tanzania in all its efforts to invest in education did not put priority on pre-school education but rather on primary education. Therefore, now pre-school education investment should be the priority as it is the foundation in building the child's competence in all his/her aspects. It is expected that these learning experiences will help children to be confident and be able to meet daily challenges on their way to primary education. Early interventions in young children develop potential and possibilities and bring it to life for future success. Pre-school education provision is considered as the lowest level of education needed to equip children with skills required in life from the early stage (Kweka et al., 2000). Being a low level of education, many developing countries did not invest in pre-school education but rather to other levels. In many countries including Tanzania, education has been singled out as an important tool in the fight against poverty (Appleton, 2001; Mbelle, 2008;

Wedgwood, 2007), the reason being that attainment of ECEC, primary, secondary and higher education help in the success of other poverty reduction targets, such as health services, sanitary conditions, raising incomes and awareness of the containment of HIV/AIDS and other infections (Mbelle, 2008; UNESCO, 2000).

Many studies in ECEC area highlight the importance of investing in the early years because it is the foundation of all levels of education. Studies report that learning begins in infancy long before formal education starts and continues throughout life (Heckman, 2004, 2008). Heckman further emphasises that early learning begets later learning and early success breeds later success, which means success or failure in the early years lays the foundation for success or failure in school, which in turn leads to success or failure at higher levels of school learning.

### **8.6.2 Curriculum materials**

Having formalised the pre-school education, thereafter, the government through the Ministry of Education and its outreach arm prepared curriculum materials such as a holistic pre-school education curriculum, and a more prescriptive syllabus, and teachers' guide for use in the classroom environment. The findings relating to curriculum materials were significant, because preparing these materials were intended to guide teachers in curriculum enactment and pedagogy. However, the holistic pre-school education curriculum has not reached teachers in the field, only the prescriptive syllabus and teachers' guide, which are structured and formal. And teachers did not have enough knowledge on how to use them; government support for teacher education of pre-school teachers is extremely limited and restricted to a few ECEC topics included in teacher education for primary teachers. In some areas, some of these primary trained teachers teach pre-school classes, but this is rare.

### **8.6.3 Influential context for curriculum development**

Another key finding was that curriculum development was viewed in different aspects, including sociocultural, historical, political, economic, and physical environment contexts. Context relevance is concerned with the fidelity of the curriculum to its stated goals and objectives (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009; Otunga

& Nyandusi, 2008). Stated goals and objectives are a true reflection of what society expects from the school systems. On the other hand, context is the summation of the factors that influence the curriculum design process (Otunga & Nyandusi, 2008). Further details about each of influential aspect will now be discussed in turn.

### **8.6.3.1 Sociocultural contexts**

The findings indicate that the influence of sociocultural contexts included a wish by society to have pre-school education for children before school age. The Ministry of Education official, the curriculum developer, and the regional education official participants reported that there were perceived needs of the wider society, which showed interest in seeing their children attend early education before compulsory schooling. For instance, the findings indicated that the community wanted their children to know reading, writing, and arithmetic skills that would help them when they go to primary schools. Furthermore, the urban teacher and parent participants mentioned that social and economic changes and equal opportunities between women and men motivated parents to see the need for pre-school education so that they could attend paid employment. This argument is supported by Bakuza (2014) who reports that the social changes taking place in Tanzania and lifestyle patterns and family practices influenced the country's government when putting in place programmes and policies that could address early childhood issues. It was argued that due to social changes, parents now work, so children need facilities that provide them with opportunities to nurture their social and cultural development. It would be expected that the pre-school education curriculum would reflect the needs of the society, but parental involvement in curriculum development was not valued.

Studies by Bell (2011) and Bell and Baker (1997) highlight that the choices of curriculum content need to be made in response to the expectations and beliefs of society at large, as well as from expectations and beliefs of educators (Marsh & Willis, 2007). Marsh and Willis emphasis that in choosing the subject matter to be included in the curriculum, it is important to know the needs of the society, the nature of the external world, and the society in which the learner exists. Studies

report that if societal needs are not accommodated, the curriculum becomes irrelevant (Asiachi & Okech, 1988; Osaki, 2000). The design of curricula materials and their presentation should accommodate the culture of the society, such as language, morals and values, tradition and customs, and religious beliefs that the curriculum is seeking to serve (Mligo, 2008; Osaki, 2000). Children's learning is believed to emerge from societal and cultural goals, with the guidance of community practice and expertise.

However, the Ministry of Education official and curriculum developer participants reported that together with the pressure from the society/community concerning early learning, the review of the primary education curriculum in 2004 resulted in the pre-school education curriculum materialising in difficult economic circumstances. However, the findings indicated that parents put more emphasis on their children learning cognitive skills and less on other skills such as socio-emotional, behavioural, physical development, attitudes, and values that are also important to help them succeed at other levels of education. Generally it showed that the needs assessment during the process of curriculum development was not explored with the larger society. The findings suggest the government should give more consideration to the needs and interest of the larger society about what is suitable for children to learn in the early years for their future success in their sociocultural context. This could happen if the larger community are involved in curriculum development initiatives.

#### **8.6.3.2 *Economic contexts***

The findings indicated that the Ministry of Education official and curriculum developer participants reported that it was good to have a pre-school education curriculum. However, they acknowledged that it was difficult for the government to invest in ECEC services because they were costly compared to other levels of education. For example, they said, ECEC would be available to all children, whereas secondary and tertiary are not, and also ECEC would need a range of play materials, equipment, and facilities compared to other levels. The Ministry of Education official and the curriculum developers reported that economic factors also contributed to the delay of curriculum development as everything needed

money to be accomplished. The finding on the effect of economic contexts on pre-school education and curriculum development is significant, because investing in ECEC and writing of its curriculum involves cost. This view is supported by a study conducted by Penn (2010) who found that a developing country government's annual expenditure on pre-school programmes can exceed the expenditure for one year of primary school education.

Penn further highlighted that in many instances policy makers may not analyse the economic aspects sufficiently and governments are not given the true picture of the investment in pre-school education. This poor analysis may happen due to either lack of knowledge (ignorance) or non-responsive policy makers. This may lead to many governments being unable to fully fund new initiatives like that of the 2005 Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum. Insufficient analysis may have contributed to the Tanzanian government not being able to give full financial support to pre-school education. The Ministry of Education official and curriculum developer participants reported that it is expensive to invest in ECEC services. This study suggests that policy makers need to have more information about the costs and benefits of investments in pre-school education, rather than taking it for granted that it is costly.

#### **8.6.3.3 *Political contexts***

Another influence on pre-school education curriculum development is the power of politicians to influence the content of the curriculum to accommodate their own interests and perhaps not the interests of the parents and local community. The government education official participants revealed that sometimes politicians made decisions that favour the interests of donors who provided funds and not the local community. Hence, the content of education in African societies, such as Tanzania, continues to imitate former colonial values, beliefs, practices, and socio-political structures and institutions (Okeke, 2010; Osaki, 2000; Owuor, 2007; Shizha, 2010, 2014). It was also mentioned by participants that politicians who are also government officials did not take advice from professionals. For instance, it was found that politicians rejected professional advice relating to putting fewer subject learning activities in pre-school classes. Instead, politicians

decided to put many subject learning activities (six subjects) and as a consequence they are not all taught; only two subjects (Languages and Arithmetic-3Rs) are taught in the classroom.

A main thesis argument is that curriculum development is contestable: decisions are made by people who are familiar with the pre-school education provision. Importantly, curriculum development can be theorised as a political process (Bell, 2011; Pinar et al., 1995), because people, who are well informed, participate with negotiation in writing the curriculum document. Curriculum development and enactment consists of consultation, negotiation, and involvement of all educational stakeholders for initiatives to be successful (Bell, 2011; Bell & Baker, 1997; Marsh & Willis, 2007). When other shareholders are not invited to participate in the writing of the curriculum documents, the enactment may be unsuccessful. Therefore, there is a need for politicians and professionals to have a mutual consensus and negotiation in writing various curricula in order to be attainable in the implementation stage.

There is a view that politicians sometimes made decisions that favoured the interests of donors who provided funds and not the local community. This view is supported by Shizha (2005) of Zimbabwe who argues that while curriculum reformation was considered necessary to refocus knowledge and pedagogy on African perspectives, research indicates that most curriculum renovation were promoted by outsiders, mainly Western governments and donors. Shizha gives an example from Tanzania where its government emphasises implementing an indigenised curriculum dubbed Education for Self-reliance (ESR) in all levels of education, advocated by Mwalimu Nyerere, the Tanzanian first president, but the content of the science curriculum for primary schools education was borrowed from the USA and Britain (Osaki, 2007; Shizha, 2010). Again, Shizha reported that in Francophone Africa, curriculum changes were borrowed from France and implemented with little or no local knowledge input (Shizha, 2010, 2014). Hence, the local government countries have to obey imported ideas and knowledge inputs from outsiders and not African inputs. Therefore, African governments, such as Tanzania need to have a strong say on their curricula development which reflect

indigenous knowledge rather than imported Western values which in practice are not compatible.

#### **8.6.3.4 *Historical contexts***

The historical context is another factor which influenced the pre-school education curriculum development. The Ministry of Education official and curriculum developers reported that the pre-school education curriculum had been developed very slowly, because since Independence in the 1960s, then its formalisation in 1995, there had been no pre-school education curriculum until 2005. It was argued that after Independence, the government opened its doors to private institutions to run ECEC because the government itself was not stable economically. The argument is even if the government opened up doors for private institutes to run ECEC, it did not provide guidelines and as a consequence each institution developed its own curriculum without the input of ECEC experts (Katunzi & Mhaiki, 2003; Kissassi, 1994; Mbise, 1996; Mwinuka, 2001). This finding is supported by the Tanzanian Education and Training Policy which stresses that it is important to have “central coordination and control in content selection, organisation, implementation, and monitoring of the pre-school education curriculum” in a decentralised education system (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995, p. 54). In 1995 the government formalised ECEC as already noted earlier but the pre-school education curriculum was only developed 10 years later in 2005.

#### **8.6.3.5 *Physical environments***

Another influential aspect of curriculum development is the physical environment. The findings from all participants, supplemented by documentary review, indicated that in the Tanzanian ECEC curriculum, not enough information is given on the importance of the physical environment of children’s learning. There is a different physical environment for children’s learning between rural and in the urban areas; the situation in rural areas is dire compared to the urban areas. Different resources and facilities are available in urban and not in rural settings. In rural areas there are plenty of natural resources which the local community could

utilise to allow favourable learning physical environment for children with low costs. How parents and the local community could participate in improving physical environments is not yet clear.

In order for a Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum to develop into a motivating physical learning environment, with the availability of resources, materials, and facilities, there needs to be a behavioural change in relation to planning and producing reasonable solutions. Changes in innovation cannot occur without input from teachers, pupils, and parents, the key users and implementers in the classroom context (Kuuskorpi & González, 2011; Rogers, 2003). Curriculum developers need to share with teachers, parents, and community information about good physical environments for children's learning. Teachers, parents, and community would like pre-school settings that provide a quality environment for pupils. Quality physical environments facilitate the acquisition of knowledge and skills that are important for society (Kuuskorpi & González, 2011; Lee et al., 2013). The curriculum needs to locate how outdoor and indoor activities could be conducted, rather than just mentioning the need for activities without clear guidelines how they could be accommodated. It is through for outdoor and indoor activities that a child can socialise with peers, teachers, and significant others.

In summary, the findings suggest that for effective curriculum development in teaching and learning there is a need for consideration of the sociocultural, political, historical, economic, and physical environment contexts. Curriculum development in African pre-schools, Tanzania included, should take into consideration the cultural identities and experiences of African society (Shizha, 2005, 2014). This view is supported by Oluniyi and Olajumoke (2013) who argue that the continued use of knowledge and curricular that were reformed before Independence is a disservice to our own African identities. The significance of knowledge for African school curricula should be of great concern to African educationists, academics, researchers, and curriculum developers (Oluniyi & Olajumoke, 2013; Otunga & Nyandusi, 2008). The Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum needs to be built from indigenous perspectives and with the

involvement of all educational stakeholders. It is evident that in the development of the pre-school education curriculum in Tanzania, the Ministry of Education and curriculum development and evaluation department have not involved key players (users) such as teachers, ECEC children, and parents. This is the focus of the following section.

#### **8.6.4 Involvement of key players in ECEC curriculum development**

The findings indicated that the key players (users) of the curriculum in classroom contexts, that is, teachers, ECEC children, and parents, had not been involved in pre-school curriculum development processes, despite some contradictory claims from curriculum developers related to involvement of teachers (see quotes in section 7.5.2 for details). The non-involvement of key users in curriculum development was significant because, the points of views of teachers and parents and the people who are familiar with pre-school children would have been valuable. It was evident that their lack involvement in curriculum development resulted in challenges for pre-school education curriculum enactment; these included a lot of subject learning activities without appropriate teaching and learning resources and untrained teachers without professional development. The main argument is that consequently, teaching approaches were teacher dominated and not child friendly. Further, decisions regarding pre-school education curriculum development were not favourable to children's needs and interests and resulted in challenges in their enactment. Ornstein and Hunkins (2009) argue that curriculum development encompasses how a "curriculum is planned, implemented, and evaluated, as well as what people, processes, and procedures that are involved (p.15)". The argument is close to that by Osaki (2000) who argue that curriculum design needs to reflect what is needed in the field because teaching curriculum in the classroom context is one of the most powerful concepts in curriculum theory. The argument here is that in the classroom context curriculum in action focuses on school day-to-day life and teaching knowledge that is based on the experiences of children and with the support from knowledgeable teachers in the interpretation of curriculum goals and objectives.

The findings suggest that the Tanzanian government needs to involve all educational stakeholders in curriculum development. For example, teachers are key players as they deal with the everyday teaching and learning in classroom situations. This study argues that teachers and parents know the children and are in a good position to build on the children's experiences and challenges in the classroom situation, and make changes if necessary. Also, they know what facilities are available and what is needed and possible for day-to-day classroom teaching. The lack of participation of teachers and parents in curriculum development might have paved a way for political interests and the powerful to favour their own interests. As a consequence the pre-school education curriculum is not attainable.

Hence, it was apparently noted that research to identify factors that impact on teachers' classroom context was not carried out before writing the pre-school education curriculum, thus teachers views were not accommodated in its writing and dissemination. Working with opinions and views from people in the profession (ECEC) could enrich pre-school curriculum. A study by Halbert and MacPhail (2010) stresses that in any curriculum development and enactment, a collaborative scheme between all interested parties is needed for success.

In addressing this issue it is useful to draw from the experiences of the involvement of key stakeholders in other countries. For instance, studies from developed countries indicate the importance of consultation and negotiation among educational stakeholders in national curriculum developments, for example, Bell and Baker (1997) and Bell (2011) in New Zealand, Bennett (2005) and Burgess et al. (2010) in Europe and Australia as well as Barnett and Ackerman (2006) and Barnett and Frede (2010) in USA. The researcher of this study argues that the lack of consultation and negotiation among educational stakeholders in many developing countries may result in ineffective enactment in ECEC centres. If stakeholders are not consulted then the early childhood environment and curriculum will not reflect sociocultural, historical, political, and economic contexts.

Findings from developed countries report the significant role of ECEC professionals in doing research in collaboration with ECEC practitioners, research that informs government policy makers and other ECEC practitioners about quality ECEC learning. Such research indicates that young children need adults, teachers, caregivers, and environments to provide them with rich resources, challenges, and support for their widening capacities, interests and problem-solving (Lee et al., 2013; Penn, 2005, 2011; Rawlings, 2008; Saracho, 2012b; Yelland & Kilderry, 2005).

For the most part, young children need a child-friendly curriculum in which they are the initiators of their spontaneous learning. Hence, the curriculum needs to be built from indigenous perspectives such as ideology, historical, and sociocultural contexts (Marfo et al., 2011; Nsamenang, 2008; Pence, 2011; Serpell & Jere-Folotiya, 2008; Serpell & Nsamenang, 2014). An indigenised curriculum provides an educational system that acknowledge all sources of experience (Shizha, 2005, 2014), and offers a true learning environment that is historical, social, and dynamic (Okeke, 2010; Otunga & Nyandusi, 2008; Prochner & Kabiru, 2008; Serpell, 2002). These findings from developed countries have implications for the Tanzanian situation in preparing a curriculum which is child-friendly in its view of learning and development. The findings of this study suggest that, there is a need for collaboration among educational stakeholders in curriculum development and comprehensive research to inform policy makers and government at large.

In summary, interviews with all study participants provided insights into the inefficient and ineffective pre-school education curriculum development in 2005. The study has provided valuable insights into what should be done by the government to encourage the involvement of key players in pre-school education curriculum development and enactment. A main argument is that curriculum development is a political text that means it is contestable; it needs negotiation and consultation among stakeholders. Also, it needs to involve professionals who work with ECEC matters and are familiar with the challenges and strengths that prevail in the profession. This study has revealed that the most common problem observed in striving to accommodate curriculum development and enactment is

the infrastructure to support developments, such as dissemination of resources and materials, involvement with the initiatives long before the documentation arrives in the school, teacher education in ECEC, and professional development). Therefore, it is the role of the government to support and ensure a conducive environment for curriculum development and writing initiatives, as well as quality in ECEC provision.

This sphere four of diagram 8.1 has discussed international and national policies that influence a child's environment. With this in mind, this research has observed that, apart from the government formalisation of pre-school education in 1995 and curriculum development in 2005; it has not shown any effort to invest in young children and support curriculum enactment. A main thesis argument is that children are not exposed to the early learning opportunities and stimulation that could allow them to be inquisitive learners and critical thinkers that our country needs to realize its economic and social development goals. This research argues that while it was good to have formal pre-school education, all activities in relation to ECEC services were left to parents and communities. Parents and community had to take all responsibility for funding the pre-school settings as demonstrated earlier. Parents and the community found it too burdensome to handle all pre-school activities without subsidies from the government. This was evident in their embodied reactions of distress and their descriptions of practices. The main argument is that funding for pre-schools in Tanzania was managed by parents and community representatives on school boards, or parent committees, and they received no government funding even though there are high levels of poverty, so families have no spare money. Both participants at the local and the national level reported that they were not satisfied with current pre-school education provision but had no answers on how to improve the situation. They wanted to see children receiving quality pre-school services in all domains with better teaching and learning environments, rich resources, qualified teachers with rich pedagogical skills and reasonable teacher-child ratios. Unfortunately, this does not eventuate in Tanzania.

The findings suggest that changes need to be made on the way pre-school education is administered; the government is responsible to fund this education as it does at other levels rather than leaving everything to be done by parents alone. Pre-school education is in a dire situation, particularly in rural areas where children experience more problems compared to their urban counterparts (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2001). The dire situation of pre-school education in Tanzania is also supported by Bakuza (2014) who reports that families, who need it most, are struggling to raise their children as poverty weakens their ability to enrol their children in high-quality pre-school settings.

### **8.7 Ideologies, Attitudes and Cultural Beliefs (Sphere Five)**

Sphere five of diagram 8.1 overviews the broader Tanzanian ideologies, attitudes, and cultural beliefs and practices pertaining to curriculum development, enactment, and responsibilities of children in the Tanzanian contexts. This sphere five demonstrates a profound connection to all spheres regarding a child's development, as all activities performed from home environments, ECEC settings, local community, and at the national level are guided by broader ideology, attitudes, and cultural beliefs and practices. Drawing from an ecological systems approach this sphere views the way broader cultural and social settings shape children's development. The findings indicated various cultural beliefs and practices of which some are acceptable for transmission from one generation to another, such as local languages and values, telling children stories, songs, legend, proverbs and what meaning they carry to the larger community. However, they were not present and being practiced in ECEC settings. Likewise, the findings indicated childrearing beliefs and practice in which on the one hand, they seemed good for parents to be responsible and care for their children for themselves, while on the other hand hindered children from attending pre-school settings.

Furthermore, with reference to cultural aspects, the findings from the focus group discussion indicated that boys seemed active in responding to questions compared to girls. This information could in one way or another help to give some clues on gender relationships. Culture is the best teacher in children's learning and creativity. Cultural practices greatly influence how, what, when and why people

may act the way they do. However, on the other hand, culture can also be the worst teacher as it can inhibit the promotion of some creativities and learning dispositions. For example, the tendencies that had been shown by boys during discussion of being over-confident in what they believed and tending to neglect girls' views is a reflection of some of the cultural practices. For example, in African societies, Tanzania in particular, over the years, most men have tended to take dominant roles (Bar-On, 2004; Nsamenang, 2009; Serpell & Jere-Folotiya, 2008). Since these young boys are growing up in such a cultural context, they are likely to have picked up such cultural practices. That is why the dominant tendencies were also reflected in some of the young boys. This area needs to be addressed so that the role of culture is to shape and transmit acceptable cultural aspects, which in turn may shape the sociocultural practices in a given cultural setting for future generations.

Again, this study found detrimental cultural beliefs which were not friendly to children such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and witchcraft. These cultures also hindered children for attending in ECEC settings.

In the light of cultural beliefs and practice, it is timely to return to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of cognitive development, integrating cultural aspects into the development of a child (Pound, 2009; Rogoff, 2003; Smith, 2013). As theorised in the literature a good curriculum is one drawn from society and embodied in the existing cultural norms, traditions, and customs of the particular setting (Prochner & Kabiru, 2008; Serpell & Nsamenang, 2014). A study by Prochner and Kabiru (2008) in the African context indicates that many societies are keen to provide the child's education from birth and continue through various stages in a system of education demarcated for every stage.

Importantly, African societies need to integrate indigenous knowledge such as cultural beliefs, ideologies, attitudes, values, and traditions into the curriculum framework in order to socialise children in their context (Okeke, 2010; Oluniyi & Olajumoke, 2013; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009; Owuor, 2007; Shizha, 2014). However, in Tanzania, acceptable cultural beliefs, values, and traditional norms were neither incorporated in the ECEC curriculum nor practiced in the settings.

For this case it would be difficult for children to cope with cultural aspects and values pertaining in the society at large. This was contrary to the underpinnings of the main Tanzania's ideology, i.e Education for Self-reliance which emphasises a curriculum which values indigenous knowledge, cultural values and aspirations embedded in it. Education for Self-reliance promotes confidence, independence, and values for a child to grow with it. The researcher of this study suggests that it would be good to orient children in various cultural aspects using indigenous languages and local funds of knowledge through storytelling, passing on traditional legends and proverbs, and teaching local songs and dances.

The next sections in turn discuss various cultural beliefs and practices which hindered young children from attending early childhood education, including childrearing systems, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and witchcraft beliefs.

### **8.7.1 Childrearing systems**

The findings indicated a culture and traditional norms for many African mothers not to send their children to pre-school settings. They gave reasons including security reasons, and that, mothers and families were responsible for day-to-day caring for young children. The argument is that parents do not trust strangers to take care of their children but rather only family members. Parent and teacher participants reported that it is the widely practised custom for younger girls and older children to care for smaller children and that obstructs their attendance in ECEC settings. It was reported that it was common for children who were also young to take care of the smaller ones when the parents were in the fields or engaged in community activities. This culture and tradition was not new to the researcher as she is part of the African society and the culture which also affected the researcher when she was young. She did not attend pre-school education due to taking care of her young brother and sisters.

The finding of children caring for younger children was also mentioned by LeVine (2004) who argues that when siblings who are themselves children are taking care of infants and toddlers in the African context, the conditions are very different from those presumed in Western contexts. African siblings prove

themselves to be capable of assuming the responsibilities including the domestic work of the household directed by their mother while she is away for a few hours but not the entire day. Research to date has shown no sign of increased risks to child survival or psychological development from sibling care in Africa (LeVine, 2004; Lokshin et al., 2004). African children are treasured for their help in the home chores and support while parents are away for extra miles to provide for their comfort such as in farms, businesses or in paid jobs (Nwoye, 2006).

In addition, this study found that children in rural areas and those in poor urban families are less likely to attend ECEC than other urban children. Even in Kenya the rate of parents enrolling their children in ECEC settings was low in rural areas compared to urban areas (Ejuu, 2012; Murungi, 2013). However, the findings indicated that in the household where there were no siblings and relatives, mothers kept their children with them all the time whether they are in home or in community activities (see Figure 6.2 for details). It is argued in the literature that traditionally, the child in Tanzania and other African and Asian countries is considered to grow naturally and there is little effort to consciously provide or structure the learning environment (Kapoor, 2006; Prochner & Kabiru, 2008; Sriprakash, 2012).

Accordingly, the ECEC system in African countries such as Tanzania, is characterised by the minimal involvement of very young children in childcare, reflecting an ideology that children's socialisation is the parents and families' responsibility and with traditionally little appreciation of the role of ECEC in child development, for example, (Bar-On, 2004; Kapoor, 2006; Marfo et al., 2011; Nsamenang, 2004, 2008; Serpell & Nsamenang, 2014; Sriprakash, 2012). Family care is seen as best for the child even when a mother goes out to work individually or to community activities. In one way or another, this practice could be one of the factors influencing the government in not supporting early childhood centres.

Furthermore, this study observed many ECEC settings are located in urban areas and are of low quality, and there are few in rural areas. The findings suggest that there is a need for public awareness so that people can understand the importance of early investment. On the other hand pre-school centres could devise some

measures that would help the children not enrolled to get early education. Also, involving parents in pre-school settings would help to reduce their fear of not trusting strangers taking care of their young children.

### **8.7.2 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and to ECEC practices**

A second finding relates to cultural belief and practice was a Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). The findings indicate this cultural belief as a barrier in children's learning especially for a girl child. Female Genital Mutilation is a "collective term for the variety of procedures in which the external female genitals are removed completely or partly, or other lasting damage is inflicted" (UNICEF, 2013, p. 5). The practice is mainly carried out by a so-called excisor (one who performs female genital cutting) or circumciser without medical qualifications and professional training. The same participants reported that FGM was mainly practiced in rural areas from young children to teenage girls and was not common in the urban areas. Teacher and parent participants located in rural area commented that, women were the main supervisors of the practice. The main argument is that the practice had a very great impact because children (girls) had to stay home without attending pre-schools and schools before and after mutilation, that, schools were seen as being for boys. Girls were supposed to remain home waiting to get married. This finding is similar to that reported by UNICEF (2013) which indicated that the practice of FGM in Asian and African countries was associated with factors such as religion, tradition, and sexuality which were used to justify the practice of genital mutilation. For example, it was argued that the community believe that if the clitoris is removed, the girl will feel no sexual arousal and therefore not be tempted to have sexual relationships with men other than her husband. It is about male control of female bodies and lives, which seems like harassments and abuse to the rights of females over their bodies.

A study by the Tanzania Media Women's Association TAMWA (2013) reported that the FGM was continued because of poverty. Parents with virgin and circumcised girls can demand a higher bride price such as many cows and much respect from the community. It was argued that girls without the female genital

mutilation cut do not get married and are discriminated against, and their parents are not respected by the community.

Generally, it is common to abide by important cultural beliefs and traditions which have been practiced for so many years. However, Almroth (2005) reports that some cultural beliefs and traditions have been addressed and their eradication encouraged, albeit these have come about only at a very slow pace (Almroth, 2005; UNICEF, 2013). It was reported that FGM practices are common in many developing countries including Asian and African communities (Almroth, 2005; UNICEF, 2013). For instance in Africa almost all countries practice FGM and the situation is critical in the Western, Northern and Southern part of Africa. In countries such as Somalia, Northern Sudan, Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia and Burkina Faso, more than 90 percent of girls are subjected to the most severe form (UNICEF, 2013).

FGM practices can be seen as a barrier to a girl child in her rights to education contrary to the emphasis in international policy statements which highlight the importance of education to all children (EFA Assessment, 2000; UNESCO, 1990, 2000). When this study interviewed the ward educational coordinator and the regional educational officers, it was reported that for a long time the government announced to local communities that it would conduct seminars and workshops building awareness of the negative impacts of FGM. However, teachers from the rural area reported that the rate of FGM was increasing and that the government seemed not to be serious with efforts to abandon it. A main thesis argument is that provision of education to the whole community is essential as the FGM impacts not only in education access but also in children's physical health and psychological torture. Government, with help from non-governmental organisation agencies such as TAMWA, should raise public awareness to promote its abandonment and therefore remove gender discriminations in enrolment in ECEC.

### 8.7.3 Children's meals and witchcraft beliefs

Another cultural aspect of Sphere five of diagram 8.1 was children's meals and witchcraft beliefs. The findings indicated that rural parent and teacher participants in this study reported that children in rural areas were not taking meals (porridge) at the settings due to beliefs in witchcraft. They reported that school boards and parents' committees had decided to raise funds from parents and the community for children's meals at ECEC setting, because children stay longer if they are well fed. However, some parents refused to contribute because of their belief in witchcraft, and having no trust in teachers. Sometimes when parents and teachers are not on good terms because of the continuous demand for money, it is said that teachers can put something bad in the children's meals. As a consequence, children particularly in rural areas ended up without meals and seemed tired and lacked concentration. Many complaints from the children during the focus group discussion were directed to their parents because they said that teachers told them that their parents refused to contribute to the costs of meals. It is the view of the researcher that when teachers tell children that their parents have refused to contribute, negative attitudes towards their parents could result. Likewise, in the urban area only children whose parents had contributed money for meals were given meals. The researcher feels that discriminating against children whose parents did not contribute for meals gave a negative impression which could harm children psychologically. An instance of this was when Bernard a pupil at Pre-school G described his feelings in the focus group discussion (see quote section 6.4 for details). In that case the poor resources and equipment were causing tensions between teachers and parents. Parents were blamed for not providing money and in turn were negative about teachers and this impacted on their relationship.

The finding is supported by Tadam (2014) who reported that children can become aware of traditions and customs from an early age and may also develop negative attitudes and prejudices like adults. These negative beliefs learnt from parents and the community impact on children and can develop into an enmity towards their teachers. This study showed that many people in rural areas believe in witchcraft.

The researcher was told that she had to be careful because people in the villages can “bewitch” her (see quotations in chapter 6, section 6.5.1). There are also witchcraft beliefs which relate to excess weight and which ignore a child’s food request and may result in starvation.

However, the researcher views the main reason for all witchcraft stories being poverty as parents tried to find excuses for not contributing to meals. The finding in relation to the importance of children’s meals at school is supported by Peters, Parletta, Campbell, and Lynch (2013) who found that there is a need to promote culturally tailored programmes to combat specific cultural differences such as attitudes, perceptions and concerns which are barriers to providing healthy foods and challenges faced by lower income families. Provision of nutritious food for children shapes a child’s behaviour and active mind. The view is closely related to that of Young and Mustard (2008) who found that brain development is the function of environment and experiences which are connected with physical and mental health from early stages of life. Hence, the government needs to raise awareness in the community of the need to abandon such negative attitudes and beliefs in witchcraft and arrange proper feeding schemes for all children in pre-school settings for their health and active minds.

It is known that long-term social, cultural, and economic have future benefits in children. Early years therefore, is now considered a key period for investing in human capital development and in reducing inequalities. Every child is entitled to human rights including participation rights, protection rights, and provision rights, access to quality education included.

## **8.8 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has interpreted and discussed findings located in various spheres in relation to theoretical underpinnings as in diagram 8.1. ECEC in Tanzania is influenced by the five spheres of early childhood education development and learning in Tanzanian contexts.

The findings have revealed the mismatch of an intended curriculum with the attained curriculum in the field. Teachers have been hindered in their efforts to

enact the pre-school education curriculum and thus have been unable to support children in achieving their full potential. The ineffective enactment of the pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy has led to pre-school children receiving a less than satisfactory ECEC which arguably will make them unable to cope with the rapidly changing world. Pre-school teachers encountered various challenges, including a lack of both human and physical resources. The government did not support the supply of teaching and learning materials, facilities, teacher education, and professional development. Teachers only taught by using the syllabus and the teachers' guide which were very structured and had no access to a holistic curriculum. Teaching and learning environments were not conducive and teachers lacked pedagogical skills for teaching a pre-school class as they were trained as primary school teachers. Another key finding was that social-cultural, political, historical, and economic contexts (sphere 4) impacted on teachers' ability to plan programmes and enact the pre-school education curriculum. The lack of involvement of key players in curriculum development was another finding. Teachers, parents, and subject professionals were not consulted and just received decisions from the Ministry of Education on new initiatives and their enactment. The poor management and administration of pre-school education and policy issues was another finding, whereby parents and community through school boards and committees funded pre-school education and were only involved in school-based manual activities and events. The low socio-economic status of many parents resulted in an inability to pay fees and other school necessary and as a consequence children engaged in child labour, became street children, or were involved in crime and delinquency. In addition, the findings with respect to sphere 5, revealed some cultural and traditional beliefs such as African childrearing systems, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and children's meals and witchcraft beliefs were singled out by participants as a barrier to children's attendance at pre-schools especially in rural areas.

Given the key findings revealed by this research, the study suggests areas that need changes are:

*Policy issues and practice:* There is a need for a separate ECEC policy which could put clear guidelines on how ECEC could be funded and conducted.

*Political will:* There is a need for government to commit and prioritise ECEC provision, ensure supervision of regulation and standards of pre-school education, and control and monitoring of curriculum enactment and pedagogy. Also, the government needs to raise awareness in parents so that they understand the importance of children's learning through play.

*Power imbalances:* Changes need to be made to bring equality in decision making so that all stakeholders are involved. For instance, government officials who are also politicians seem to have had powerful influences on pre-school education curriculum development, and key players (teachers and parents) who are involved in day-to-day teaching in classroom contexts were not involved.

*African cultural and traditional beliefs in relation to ECEC:* There is a need for raising awareness in the community in order to abandon cultural and traditional beliefs which hinder children's attendance in pre-school settings. The government needs to support the efforts made by non-governmental organisation such as that of Tanzania Media Women Association (TAMWA) which fights for women's rights and the prevention of gender-based violence.

The next chapter concludes the study and discusses the practical and theoretical contribution of the study. It also discusses the limitations of the study and recommends areas for further research.

## **CHAPTER 9**

### **CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **9.1 Introduction**

Chapter 8 has discussed and interpreted the findings presented in chapters 6 and 7. This chapter concludes the study by bringing together the purpose of this research and the contribution it makes to knowledge about a better enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogical practices in Tanzania. The chapter is divided into seven sections. Specifically, this first section introduces the organisation of this chapter. The second section discusses an overview of the research and key findings and the contribution to new knowledge. The third section proposes a model for developing the enacted curriculum and associated pedagogies in ECEC for Tanzania. The implications of the research findings are discussed in the fourth section while the fifth section discusses the limitations of the study. Recommendations for further research are discussed in the sixth section, followed by concluding remarks in the seventh section.

#### **9.2 Overview of the Research and Key Findings**

This study adopted an interpretive perspective. It took a case study approach to investigate participants' views on the enactment of the Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum. Views on curriculum enactment were elicited from three groups of participants: the teachers, ECEC children, and parents in one rural and one urban school (local level) and government education officials (national level). Generally speaking, for the most part, the Ministry of Education official viewed the situation of ECEC curriculum enactment differently from other participants. He took the position of defending the government by placing hope that the situation of the pre-school education will be better in the near future. Given this point one could say this official is part of the government administration so he did not want to criticise the government even if things were not going well.

The overall aims of the study were to investigate possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in the enactment of the pre-school education

curriculum and their pedagogy in a Tanzanian context. It aimed to find out how sociocultural theorising might suggest ways to address any challenges for policy and practice in enacting the pre-school education curriculum. This study was significant, because it has provided valuable insights, understandings, and suggestions about what changes need to be taken for ECEC improvement, as well as recommended better pre-school curriculum enactment and the associated pedagogies among ECEC practitioners. A case study approach enabled an in-depth investigation into the views of the three groups of participants on curriculum enactment in natural settings. Although, the findings of the case studies cannot be generalised, writers report the possibility of transferability to other similar settings if the context is well explored (Guba, 1981; Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Krefting, 1991). Such tentative generalisation about improving pre-school education curriculum enactment in Tanzania can be made because this interpretive inquiry has taken into careful consideration criteria, including the confirmability, transferability, dependability, and credibility of the findings to enhance the trustworthiness of the study (Cohen et al., 2007; Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Harrison & MacGibbon, 2001; Krefting, 1991).

The inquiry used in this study was prolonged, including three interviews for teachers over four months and multi-methods for data generation (triangulation). All these methods were used to enhance the credibility of the inquiry (Cohen et al., 2007; Harrison & MacGibbon, 2001; Shenton, 2004). In the same way, to enhance the transferability of the findings to other contexts, the participants were purposively selected, and the inquiry procedures and context described thoroughly (Cohen et al., 2007; Neuman, 2011; Saldaña, 2011). In addition, the data transcripts were audited by the participants, and the researcher kept a reflexive journal (field notes) to enhance the confirmability and dependability of the inquiry (Cohen et al., 2007; Guba, 1981; Guba & Lincoln, 1985).

This study was conducted at the local level with participants from two public pre-schools, one in a rural and another one in an urban area, while at the national level participants were from the Ministry of Education, the Tanzania Institute of Education-TIE (for curriculum development and evaluation), and regional, and ward educational officials. The findings indicated that there was a mismatch

between the intended pre-school education curriculum and the attained curriculum in the field. The data analysis indicated that ineffective enactment of the pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy in the field was influenced by several factors, as follows:

*Firstly, policy issues were perceived to influence the curriculum enactment and associated pedagogies:* The findings indicated that pre-school education was formalised in 1995, but, there was no separate ECEC policy. Instead, matters related to ECEC came under the Tanzanian Education and Training Policy (ETP), which directed each primary school to have an attached pre-school class. However, the national Education and Training Policy did not stipulate the source of funds for pre-school classes, requirements for qualifications and initial teacher education of teachers, professional development, teaching and learning resources nor materials for pre-school education.

Participants described problems arising from this lack of implementation guidelines on ECEC. One problem is that few primary schools implemented the policy of an attached pre-school class. As a consequence, some children are not able to attend pre-school, and these children face difficulties in coping with their primary education studies. Another problem for those few primary schools which have an attached pre-school class is that there is no separate budget for pre-school matters. It was found that funds were not allocated to the pre-school class, but instead used entirely for the primary school classes. As a result, parents and community had to fund pre-schools which was burdensome for them. Again, lack of recruitment for pre-school teachers was another problem. For example, teachers in the urban school taught both Grade one and the pre-school class because no teachers were able to be recruited for the pre-school class. A study by Biersteker et al. (2008) argues that adding a pre-school class to the existing primary schools is less of a burden on the education sector's capacity, because a network of pre-schools and some administrative and physical infrastructure are often in place that could enable sharing. However, the situation was different in Tanzania because the resources were insufficient.

The findings suggest the need for government to develop a separate ECEC policy to handle ECEC matters and offer clear implementation guidelines on how ECEC provision would be funded and conducted. A separate ECEC policy needs to explicitly state how to handle structural factors such as funding, resources and materials, qualifications and initial teacher education of ECEC teachers and professional development, teacher-child ratio, size of the class, and available spaces for children. In addition, the government needs to complete the integrated early childhood development policy which was started in 2008 but is not yet finished. An integrated children's policy involves five ministries which are responsible for the welfare of children's learning and development.

*Secondly, a power imbalance between local and national levels was perceived to influence curriculum enactment:* The findings indicated that there was an inequality in decision making during curriculum development. Teachers, ward, and regional participants reported that the curriculum was developed at a national level without sufficient account taken of the contexts for teachers, parents, and families and with no input from them. The study revealed a lack of thorough needs assessment before and during the writing of the pre-school education curriculum. Key players in the classroom contexts (i.e. teachers and parents) were not involved in the curriculum development, whereby they could express the real situation in the field, and what should be accommodated in the pre-school education curriculum as they deal with day-to-day classroom teaching and learning environments. As a result things suggested in the pre-school education curriculum were found to be difficult to put into practice, for example, a large number of subject learning activities (six subjects) and activity-based teaching. Teacher participants complained about the number of subjects, and coped by just teaching the basic concepts of reading, writing, and arithmetic (the 3Rs). If teachers had been asked to give their advice in relation to the situation they experience in the field, practical implications might have been better understood and more readily addressed.

Furthermore, the way the pre-school education curriculum was written gave insufficient regard to the sociocultural contexts prevailing in Tanzanian. The curriculum needs to be built within the country's particular sociocultural contexts

and indigenous perspectives (Okeke, 2010; Otunga & Nyandusi, 2008; Owuor, 2007; Shizha, 2014). Curriculum development is a contestable construct; decisions should be based on people who are familiar with that particular education provision. Curriculum development is theorised in the literature as a political text (Pinar et al., 1995). Effective curriculum development and enactment needs consultation, negotiation, and involvement of all educational shareholders for initiatives to be successful (Bell, 2011; Bell & Baker, 1997; Kelly, 2004; Marsh & Willis, 2007; Pinar et al., 1995; Posner, 1995). When main stakeholders do not participate, the enactment could be unsuccessful, as it is evident in the enactment of the Tanzanian pre-school education curriculum, where key users of curriculum in the classroom contexts were not involved during its development.

*Thirdly, political will was perceived to influence the curriculum enactment and associated pedagogies.* The government was perceived to have made no commitment to prioritise ECEC matters and made no provision for the supervision of regulation and standards for pre-school education, as well as of control and monitoring of pre-school education curriculum enactment and pedagogy. The findings indicated a lack of evaluation and assessment of the pre-school education curriculum. The Tanzania Institute of Education (curriculum development and evaluation department) and the school inspection directorate are responsible for regular evaluations of pre-school education curriculum enactment in order to understand if the curriculum is attainable or not (Taasisi ya Elimu Tanzania: Tanzania Institute of Education, 2005), and for the supervision, monitoring, and control of practice. However, the findings indicated that there was no evaluation or follow-up concerning the enactment of the 2005 pre-school education curriculum and pedagogical practices. This lack of evaluation and assessment of the pre-school education curriculum is problematic, because the study found teachers taught based on their attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions which seemed to be different from what was suggested in the curriculum and ECEC professional literature. Teaching and learning was formal and structured (teacher-centred pedagogy), it did not provide opportunities for children to demonstrate their creativity, exploration, and problem solving so that they could develop their potential and possibilities for life. From this line of argument, Isaacs

(2010) argued that education should no longer consist of imparting knowledge; it must instead take a new track seeking the release of children's potentialities, creativity, and problem solving. The view about the lack of evaluation and assessment is supported by Education For All, EFA Assessment (2000) and UNESCO (2000) reports which indicate that often authentic quality assurance mechanisms do not exist in practice, especially in developing countries, with a resulting poor quality in pre-school education.

The government through the Ministry of Education did not provide requirements or opportunities for initial teacher education and professional development for teachers of pre-school children. It was reported that in many rural pre-school classrooms, the children were taught by volunteers and there were no funds for salaries. Instead parents paid a small honorarium to volunteer teachers. In the two schools visited in the study, there were no qualified pre-school teachers and no professional development. Without in-service education, the teachers lacked the pedagogical skills as indicated in the curriculum document, for guiding children and instead resorted to structured teaching (teacher-centred) approaches. The teachers in the study taught the early childhood children as if they were primary school pupils, with structured rows in the classrooms, without adequate teaching and learning resources and materials, and with large class sizes for a single teacher. The findings indicate the unwillingness of the government to take effective actions to implement the ECEC curriculum and associated pedagogies.

Tanzania is a country rich in natural resources. Yet, this study revealed poor allocation, management, and mobilisation of the resources for pre-school education. Corruption appears to be high in government departments which stops the allocated funds arriving with the people who need them (Heilman & Ndumbaro, 2002; Warioba, 2011), ECEC included. Rather these funds are allocated to projects which favour a minority group of government officials who are also politicians. As a result many people are living in poverty and cannot afford to enrol their children in pre-schools because they have to pay costs at the ECEC settings and they claim to have no money and no support from the government. Therefore, the government needs to come up with a holistic policy that will state immediate actions and recommendations for improving the socio-

economic status of its people as the country gears up for higher growth. Awareness of the community about the importance of ECEC needs to be raised. In the same way, research about the benefits of early investment in quality ECEC is needed to help our government and planners move the country forward.

This study found that effective ECEC services do not automatically develop even when there is a clear need for them. Whether a country's ECEC curriculum and pedagogy enhances or impedes good child development is as much determined by countries' ideology, politics, culture, and the history of ECEC provision as by the international research literature on quality ECEC. In addition, the social change globally towards equal opportunities between men and women has led to an increase in women's participation in the labour market. Hence there is a need for quality ECEC settings to provide education and care for children and for country policies to allocate funding to this type of education (Lokshin et al., 2004). In Tanzania, the findings suggest that changes need to be made for greater government commitment and for prioritising of ECEC provision because investing in early years education has many benefits for children and families, enhances socialisation and dispositions for learning, and contributes to later stages of development and education.

*Fourthly, African cultural and traditional beliefs in relation to ECEC were perceived to influence curriculum enactment and associated pedagogies.* This study revealed a number of cultural beliefs and practices which hindered children attending ECEC classes, including for example, childrearing systems, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and Witchcraft beliefs. Starting with *African childrearing systems*, many societies, including Tanzania, do not trust strangers to take care of their young children, but rather parents and families. Parents interviewed for this study reported security as a main reason for not enrolling their child in ECEC. For the most part, older children are taking care of small children. Moreover, even if parents have a paid job, the priority is to enrol a boy child and not a girl child in ECEC. Girls are supposed to remain home substituting for mother's roles while mothers are away for paid jobs or for family responsibilities, as was experienced by the researcher of this study during her early age. Hence, parents need to be sensitised to the importance of pre-school education for both

genders and its significant role in children's lives. Involving parents and families in pre-school settings for their children's learning is essential.

*Another aspect of cultural and traditional beliefs is that of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):* The findings documented the views of some participants that young and older girls are forced to undergo FGM, thereafter remaining at home waiting to be married in their early years and not attending ECEC settings and schools. Therefore, the study suggests the need for the government to support the efforts showed by the Tanzania Media Women Association (TAMWA) in educating the community to abandon such detrimental cultural beliefs by informing its impact not just in body injury but also psychologically.

*Witchcraft belief* is also an aspect which was perceived to influence whether children attend ECEC classes, especially in rural areas. Parents were reported to refuse to donate money for porridge and meals as they did not trust anybody to prepare meals for their children. This was because of poor relationships between parents and teachers, as parents were not happy with the continuous demand for donations of money required for pre-school education. So, they thought that teachers were misusing their money, especially in rural areas. Children in the rural area were not taking porridge and meals at the ECEC setting, and going for long periods without food because of insufficient funding for food and no feeding schemes being provided by the government. As a consequence some children do not attend ECEC settings and instead engage in child labour, crimes, delinquency, and become street children. In the urban area ECEC centre food was provided through parents' donations. There is a need for the government to raise the awareness of the community so as to abandon such detrimental cultural beliefs and to understand their role in supporting their children's welfare for nutritious food and health for their brain development from the early years. This argument is in line with that of Young and Mustard (2008) who reported that brain development is a function of environment and experiences which are connected with physical and mental health from early stages of life.

Together with this, another key finding was that teachers, and parents interviewed seemed not to value children's learning through play contexts. They thought that learning through activity-based play is a waste of time and as a consequence

parents were not enrolling their children in pre-school settings. The expectations and inspirations of parents and community were to see their children perform well in cognitive skills (i.e. writing, reading, and arithmetic) and they showed less interest in non-cognitive skills (i.e. socio-emotional, behavioural, and physical development). However, international research has shown that play-based learning activities are most effective for child-development (Barnett & Frede, 2010; Dalli, 2011; Galindo & Sheldon, 2012; Lee et al., 2013; Murphy, 2004; Penn, 2011; Saracho, 2012b; Yelland, 2010). The support of teachers, parents, and families in providing opportunities for children to develop their potential and possibilities through activity-based play is important. This is significant because teaching and learning through engaging in activity-based play, enables children to be creative in relation to the surrounding environments. When parents and families are involved in their children's learning at pre-school settings through various playing materials which are not found at their home, they will be motivated to send their children to pre-school settings.

So drawing from international experiences regarding the importance of activity-based learning, this study contributes an understanding to Tanzanian educators and curriculum developers about the need to communicate to parents and community as to the value of activity-based play and learning as shown in the international research literature. It is hoped that findings obtained from this study will inform government policy about corrective measures to take in order to achieve the intended quality education through effective pre-school education curriculum enactment and pedagogy by emphasising on learning through activity-based play contexts. Changes need to be made from structured classrooms to more child-centred learning (i.e. non-structured sitting and spontaneous learning). Children could enjoy sitting on the mat in small groups in the open air or in classrooms rather than at structured rows of desks, and participating in learning activities with teachers, parents, community, and local experts in a collaborative way. There could be value in utilising local experts to share their skills and knowledge together with empowering parents and community so that they understand the importance of their involvement in pre-school settings and the learning of their children.

In summary, using data generated from this study through interviews, focus group discussion, classroom observations, and documentary review, participants have provided valuable insights about what is happening in the ECEC field in Tanzania and what changes need to be taken for ECEC improvement. This study provides valuable understandings of the pre-school education needs and interests in these times, type of teachers, pedagogical practices, and how these needs and interests could be met in order to improve ECEC provision in classroom contexts.

### **9.3 Proposed Model for Developing ECEC in Tanzania**

In this section, the key findings of the study are translated into a proposed ECEC Model formulated by the researcher for changing the situation of young children's learning in the Tanzanian context. The purpose of the model is to address the issues with teacher-centred approaches, resources and large class sizes. With the help of a local expert, teachers, parents, and community, children will be expected to learn through activity-based play with opportunities to develop their potential and possibilities for life. Importantly, children need to learn through practicing tasks rather than through listening and having to memorise (Isaacs, 2010). This study proposes an ECEC Model that could facilitate a change from dissatisfaction with the pre-school education curriculum enactment and associated pedagogies in Tanzania to satisfaction with the ECEC curriculum and pedagogies being enacted as intended. The project expects to start on a small scale (i.e. the two visited schools for this study). Using local expertise the ECEC model aims to provide capacity-building for parents, community, and teachers through seminars and workshops, developing teaching practices away from the traditional way of teaching towards more child-centred learning through activity-based play and spontaneous learning.

The model is informed by experiences and readings gained while the researcher was studying in New Zealand, for example, New Zealand's childcare and early education settings, such as playgroup and education and care centres where the enactment of *Te Whāriki*, the New Zealand early childhood curriculum, is seen to be alive (Dalli, 2011; Lee et al., 2013; Mitchell et al., 2008; Smith, 2011). Another relevant study is an evaluation of ChildFund Early Childhood

Development (ECD) programme, conducted in Timor Leste (Mitchell & Kelly, 2013). The researcher of the current study gained impetus and motivation on how she could utilise such experiences in addressing challenges and difficulties facing ECEC in the Tanzanian context. These learning experiences observed from various centres in New Zealand could be a good lens for reformation of Tanzanian ECEC policy and practice for better ECEC provision. Furthermore, apart from the experiences gained from New Zealand ECEC centres, the model is also informed by other international studies. To mention but a few, such as Smith et al. (2000), (Smith, 1996a, 1996b, 2007, 2011, 2012, 2013), in New Zealand, Barnett and Frede (2010) and Saracho (2012b) in United States, Yelland (2010) in Australia, Sylva et al. (2003), Sylva et al. (2004), Melhuish and Petrogiannis (2006), and Penn (2011) in England, and Murphy (2004) in Ireland.

Therefore, Figure 9.1 below is a diagram indicating the nature of collaborations and communications amongst key partners in ECEC provision in Tanzania. A local expert is located at the centre, whose role would be raising public awareness and building an understanding with all groups about the need for changing the way ECEC is conducted for the better. The local expert would be in *much more communication* with the rural and urban centres with teachers, children, volunteer community members and elders located at the top-left and right-bottom. Also, the local expert would be in *intermittent communication* with educational supervisors including Regional Education Officers (REO's), District Education Officers (DEO's), Ward Educational Coordinators (WEC's) located at the top-right and community leaders located bottom-left. Finally, there would be communication among groups, for instance, Education supervisors would have *regular communication* with the two ECEC centres. Also, the local community and urban leaders would have a *light communication* with the two ECEC centres. In addition, urban leaders are called *Viongozi wa MTAA* to mean an area of jurisdiction and local community leaders are called Village Executive Officers (VEO's) and Ward Executive Officers (WEO's) located at bottom-left in the diagram.

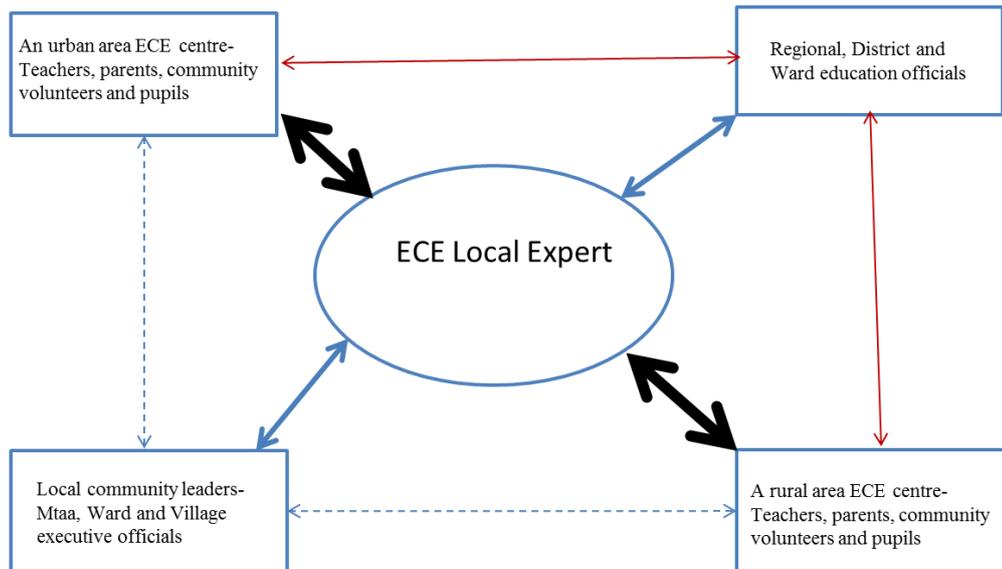


Figure 9.1 Proposed model for developing ECEC in Tanzanian context



Indicates **Much more communication and interaction** between the local expert and the ECEC centres



Indicates **Intermittent communication and interaction** between a local expert and educational supervisors and Local leaders.



Indicates **Regular communication and interaction** between educational supervisors and ECEC centres



Indicates **Light communication and interaction** between local leaders and ECEC centres

Communication has a key role in the enactment of the model.

Placed at a centre as a local expert, a researcher of this study, her duties generally will be to facilitate training in the form of workshops and seminars in changing the way ECEC is conducted and the need for involving parents/adults and community volunteers in ECEC centres. The intention is to focus on addressing teacher-centred learning, large class sizes, and limited availability of resources and materials. This project has cost implications, so the researcher expects to request funds from Tanzania central government through the Ministry of Education and research funds from the university where she is employed if funds are available. Apart from this, the researcher will be writing funding proposals to various international funds agencies which deal with children's affairs and development. Overall, the researcher expects to seek more advice from her

supervisors on how to go on with the new proposed project and funding at large, using their long experiences in conducting various projects.

Specifically, in each group the local expert's roles must have something to offer to the following:

### **9.3.1 Teachers, parents, community elders and other volunteers**

The local expert expects to offer capacity-building to teachers, parents, community elders, and anybody with an interest, through seminars and workshops concerning ECEC provision within their locations. The local expert will introduce to the group various teaching approaches, which suit younger children and which are different from teaching primary children, such as learning in a context of play for discussion in small groups, songs, games, role play, drawings, painting, projects, and other active learning opportunities. Also the expert will advise on the value and use of various locally made materials with local carpenters such as wood blocks, bamboo chop sticks, coconut shells, tree barks, bottle tops, small stones, animal skins, play-dough, clay soil, weaving, mat-making materials. Adults/parents, community volunteers, and teachers should not instruct children about what to do but rather understand their role is just to scaffold and intervene/mediate when need be. Children need to learn by exploring and manipulating materials themselves. Also, the researcher is of the view African, especially Tanzanian local/indigenous knowledge, may call for bringing, community elders, cultural custodians, parents, and indigenous thinkers/advisors into the ECEC settings, to acknowledge and disseminate the knowledge to ECEC children for their life. As asserted by Dei (2014) that African ways of knowing, systems of thought, concepts and/or life systems are transmitted in the form of local parables, legends, folktales, proverbs, songs, cultural stories, myths, sayings, and cultural expressions.

International literature indicates the importance of involving parents/families and community in their children's learning, that is, the ECEC settings which utilise a parent education component and in a partnership between early childhood program providers and families demonstrate positive outcomes (OECD, 2006;

Smith et al., 2000). These ideas will be utilised in the Tanzanian ECEC context for engaging parents and families in their children's learning.

### **9.3.2 Educational supervisors in the region, district and ward level**

Another group in the proposed model will be *Educational supervisors in the region, district, and ward levels*, (i.e. REOs/DEOs officers and WECs) to discuss with them developing the current ECEC enacted curriculum and associated pedagogies. These stakeholders have a direct link with the government through the Ministry of Education in educational matters, so discussing policy issues guiding education with them and particularly ECEC provision could be fruitful.

### **9.3.3 Community local leaders, WEOs, Mtaa and VEOs**

In addition, there will be a need for the local expert to communicate with *local community and urban leaders* to explain her intention of the project. And also to encourage them to mobilise people for renovations and maintenance of ECEC centres, for instance, child-friendly buildings, classrooms with facilities and enough space for children to perform their activities (learning corners) and playgrounds. Furthermore, local leaders may be able to help mobilise people to utilise natural resources, such as wood from the forests for local carpenters to make local resource materials. In addition, undertaking communication with these local leaders is important in relation to building on local cultural aspects which are essential for their children to learn, for example local values, religious matters, local dances, local stories and other things of interest locally. Local leaders will then be encouraged to visit the centres to know what is going on.

Furthermore, parents and community members may like to know what their children learn, so in collaboration with a local expert, teachers, parents and community volunteers, children will be guided in growing as independent persons in all domains including cognitive and non-cognitive skills such as socio-emotional, behavioural and physical developments, thinking capacity, managing their emotions, building socialisation and removing anti-social behaviour. Learning in many domains also includes abilities and understanding of oral

language practices that develop over time through interactions with parents, teachers, adults and peers, as well as writing and arithmetic. Children need to be equipped with abilities on how to work with other people including teachers, parents, adults and peers such as attention skills, growing in acceptable norms, culture, values, attitude and all others accepted in Tanzanian settings. Learning experiences in these domains can help to build the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that prepare young children for future academic success. However, overall consideration of child's rights needs to be focused such as protection rights including non-discrimination and humiliation, participation rights and provision rights, i.e access to services and social needs including education, care, good nutrition, health facilities, life skills, family relationships, playing grounds and facilities for building children's personalities in relation to context.

In addition, it is wise to know also from children what they would like to learn, because children are the initiators of the received curriculum and are eager to understand and explore more about the world. Children actively strive to build knowledge and to develop language to communicate about what they are learning. Children learn to solve problems; and they normally ask questions in a constant quest for information. And, when provided with supportive and stimulating environments, they eagerly engage in language learning, literacy practices, mathematics play, games, jigsaws and science exploration. Therefore, finding out the interests and needs of children needs to be highlighted in the teaching and learning processes.

#### **9.4 Implications of the Research Findings**

This section discusses the key findings with respect to the implications for groups and people involved in ECEC in Tanzania.

##### **9.4.1 Implications for government and its divisions**

This study's findings have implications for the national government's Ministry of Education and its divisions such as educational policy makers, curriculum developers, and school inspectors. The study has implications for the enactment of

the curriculum and associated pedagogies. The government through the Ministry of Education needs to ensure that:

*Firstly, policy makers:*

- need to do a thorough needs analysis on how the pre-school education curriculum could be funded and conducted. For example, there is a need to publish a separate ECEC policy which indicates explicit guidelines for pre-school education. The focus should be on quality processes such as building responsive relationships between adults and children and structural factors such as funding pre-schools, availability of good resources and materials, qualification and initial teacher education of teachers, professional development, class size, teacher-child ratio, and curriculum issues to ensure that they are, valid, appropriate and support children's learning.

*Secondly, curriculum developers:*

- need to make a thorough needs assessment before writing a pre-school education curriculum and sufficient regard needs to be paid to the sociocultural context, indigenous knowledge, and values prevailing in Tanzania.
- need to consult and negotiate with all key educational shareholders for curriculum development as well as effective dissemination of curriculum materials.

*Thirdly, curriculum developers and school inspectors:*

- need to supervise regulation and standards of pre-school education and follow up through monitoring and controlling of pre-school education curriculum enactment and pedagogical practices.
- need to do evaluation and assessment of the pre-school education curriculum to ensure quality practices, as well as to gain understanding of whether the curriculum is attainable or not.

### 9.4.2 Implications for teacher education

The findings of this study indicated that the government did not prioritise the initial teacher education of pre-school teachers. The implication of this is that the government needs to:

- collaborate with non-governmental organisation to initiate specific ECEC teacher education in universities and colleges with qualified lecturers/tutors for student-teachers, with available teaching and learning resources and appropriate content.
- locate the graduates in pre-school classes where they can use their knowledge and skills gained from teacher education.
- provide opportunities for qualified secondary students to join ECEC teacher education where they can articulate ECEC matters and integrate their pedagogical understandings, as well as negotiate how to accomplish their learning and teaching targets in pre-school class. Higher qualifications, teacher education and professional development are needed to change teaching and learning approaches.

From this point of view a study by Saracho (2012a) emphasises teacher education programmes to prepare prospective student-teachers with the “knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to teach young children”, which are “based on research, theory, ethical considerations, and practice” (p.2). Many writers assume that well-qualified teachers have an enormous influence on the children’s learning (Darling-Hammond, 2000 b; Saracho, 2012a; Williston et al., 2005). Teachers with a better preparation for teaching are theorised in the literature to be more confident and successful with students (Darling-Hammond, 2000 b). In addition, studies indicate that the early childhood teacher’s professional preparation has an impact on the quality of ECEC programmes (Darling-Hammond, 2000 b; Saracho, 2012a; Wai-Yum, 2003; Williston et al., 2005), which influences children’s learning and developmental outcomes. Therefore, the teachers’ educational background and quality of their teacher education preparation relate to young children’s learning.

### 9.4.3 Implications for teachers and children

The findings have implications for teachers and children. The findings indicated that teachers dominated the class by instructing children what to do, the teaching was structured and no room found for children to demonstrate their creativity through activity-based learning. The focus was on cognitive activities at the expense of non-cognitive skills (i.e. socio-emotional, behavioural, and physical development). Children were not given opportunities in learning through play to demonstrate their creativity, problem solving, and explore their social world. They were limited in developing their potential and possibilities through activity-based learning. When teachers were teaching Grade one or marking exercise books children were told to remain in classrooms silently. This researcher has the view that ECEC in Tanzania could be enriched by changing the pedagogy of pre-school education. There is a need to change the teaching approaches from teacher-centred to child-centred learning approaches and for teachers, parents, and community to scaffold children's spontaneous learning.

The government needs to provide more opportunities for teachers to undertake in-service teacher education in child-centred pedagogy and concomitant theories of knowledge (Bartlett & Mogusu, 2013; Paris & Combs, 2006). Teachers could be encouraged to embrace a continuum approach to pedagogy in which they tailor their teaching to the children's needs and to the learning task. There needs to be more opportunity for engagement with and enactment of different theories of knowledge, attitudes and teaching methods associated with them, so that teachers become more skilful at putting them into practice. Teaching being a value-forming act, teachers are likely to influence the values of children they teach. Teachers need to understand and integrate their pedagogical practices as well as negotiate how to accomplish children's learning and teaching, despite the congestion in classrooms. Teachers need to provide opportunities for children to be able to articulate their learning and understanding.

The findings suggest changes need to be made to the pedagogical practices so that teaching is through activity-based play and through spontaneous learning. This could be done by the government requiring more teacher education colleges to

influence teachers' pedagogical skills and knowledge through interacting with young children. Also teachers need to be creative by utilising available natural resources for making local materials that could be used to stimulate the children's learning. Children need to be the initiator of the curriculum; they enjoy being exposed to spontaneous learning with plenty of resources.

Furthermore, as was discussed previously in chapter 2 in regard to child's rights, Article No 29 is absolutely crucial to this study in relation to providing an ECEC curriculum that promotes the development of children's personality and potential and secondly in relation to the importance of incorporating cultural identity and language into ECEC programmes (refer objectives of ECEC on p.46-47). Article No 29 asserts that education should be participatory and empowering to children, providing them with practical opportunities to exercise their rights and responsibilities in ways adapted to their interests, concerns and evolving capacities (Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2006). Human rights education of young children should be anchored in everyday issues at home, in childcare centres, in early education programmes, and other community settings with which young children can identify. Hence, children have rights to access quality early childhood education, that is, without discrimination, that their best interests be catered for and that their voices should be heard (Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2006; Smith, 2007).

#### **9.4.4 Implications for parents and local communities**

The findings have implications for parents and local communities. The findings indicated that parents and community were not aware that they could engage with teachers in their children's learning in the classroom context. It is suggested that parents and local communities be involved in ECEC by doing story-telling, songs, playing games or preparing locally made materials through local resources for use by children. Parents in collaboration with teachers and children can carry out activities in pre-school similar to those at home. For example, they can prepare food such as peeling potatoes, grating carrots, cutting bananas, cracking nuts, or squeezing oranges with children. Also, they can do carpentry such as hammering,

nailing, and sawing as well as weaving activities. They can guide children to learn to tie shoes, work a zipper, use snaps and buttons.

The findings suggest that changes need to be made by raising the awareness of parents and community so that they understand their power and role in children's learning and the importance of learning through activity-based play. Empowering parents and the community would recognise their roles in developing various abilities of their children; teachers can learn from parents and parents can learn from teachers. It could be one teacher collaborating with parents and local experts in helping children's learning. Collaboration could help solve the challenges of large class sizes operating with a single teacher as well as structured teaching styles. And parents could gain experience from teachers and local experts so that in time they would be able to run the ECEC centre for themselves.

Studies indicate that when parents and families actively participate in classroom support, it also encourages children's learning at home (Galindo & Sheldon, 2012; Ghirotto & Mazzoni, 2013; Ishihara-Brito, 2013). Children may become more successful at all levels of education regardless of the parents' educational background or social class. Also, when parents and community join with teachers in pre-school settings and see their children playing with materials which are not found in their home they could develop interest by enrolling their children and understanding the importance of learning in play contexts. Parents and the community need to understand the importance of early investment in ECEC which has great benefits for the future success of children, families, and society at large.

## **9.5 Limitations of the Study**

This study has limitations which this section discusses.

The current study is confined to formalised public pre-school education curriculum enactment and not to private pre-schools. Public pre-school in Tanzania is the place where many parents can manage to send their children compared to private schools which have high costs. Hence, the study may not give

a complete picture about curriculum enactment in all pre-schools (public and private) in Tanzania.

Due to limited resources, financial constraints, transport, and time constraints, the study was confined in a small sample of participants from two public pre-schools, one located in a very rural area and another one in an urban area. These two schools may not reflect the situation teachers face in pre-school education curriculum enactment to all public pre-schools in Tanzania. It could be possible, for this reason, to find strikingly different findings for a large number of public pre-schools especially those located in the very rural areas. However, the in-depth information, rich contextual, and practice descriptions presented in this study provide the reader with sufficient information to decide the extent to which the findings could be transferable to other areas.

Although, the researcher remained sensitive to her beliefs and attitudes by making the most of participants' interpretations, it would not be surprising to find some influence of the researcher's interpretive effects. However, to counter the limitations, the trustworthiness of the study has been enhanced by the use of multi-methods in data generation (triangulation) gathered from multiple sources.

Finally, this study is also focused on the parents and/or guardians with children enrolled in public pre-school, and not parents and guardians who have not enrolled their children in pre-school, because these parents are directly involved with the education of their children. They would be expected to have more experience in the learning of their children than parents and guardians who had not enrolled their children, therefore would provide valuable insights into the probable developmental effects of the classroom experience.

## **9.6 Recommendations for Further Research**

Based on the above considerations, the following recommendations for further research are made:

Further research is recommended which will use a larger sample of pre-schools to include both public and private pre-schools, since this study was conducted with only public pre-school education and with a small sample. This could provide

more comprehensive insights into the status of pre-school education and learning needs of children from a greater area of the country. This would inform policy makers in collaboration with ECEC practitioners, towards planning based on the needs and interest of children, pedagogies, teachers, and resources.

There is a need for an intervention study to evaluate and research the ECEC model developed by the researcher (Figure 9.1), and in particular the model's success in bringing about a change for promoting spontaneous learning in a non-structured way, and enacting a child-centred curriculum in a play context with a variety of playing materials made by local teachers, parents, and community. The model could also be evaluated as to its impact on different methods of teaching and learning in a friendly environment in collaboration with teachers, parents, and community elders for sharing indigenous knowledge and values. Teaching methods could include drawings, simulation, role play, storytelling, songs, local dances, games, and cultural aspects. The intention would be to develop children's critical thinking after intervention.

Another study is also recommended to explore the importance of involving key players (teachers, parents, and children) in curriculum development and evaluation; the intention would be to gain an understanding of how their involvement in curriculum development would impact on teachers' pedagogical practices.

Finally, the findings indicated that the pre-school education curriculum was based on existing literature and a Western view of child development, where the ways of thinking and contexts are different from indigenous African ways of thinking and contexts. Therefore, a further inquiry is recommended to examine how African communities could build indigenous knowledge, values, and attitude into curricula for young children. African societies have their own conceptions of child development and strategies for supporting it, and a rich store of often neglected resources and play materials could be incorporated into early childhood education, rather than viewing Western knowledge as superior to African indigenous knowledge.

## 9.7 Conclusion

This study investigated possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in the enactment of the pre-school education curriculum and associated pedagogical practices in the Tanzanian context. It aimed to find out how sociocultural theorising might suggest ways to address any challenges for policy and practice in enacting the ECEC curriculum. This research is significant, because it has provided new insights and understandings of curriculum enactment and associated pedagogy for pre-school education. In addition, it has documented evidence and informed policy makers, curriculum developers, school inspectors, ECEC educational experts, teachers, ECEC children, and community about how quality ECEC could be provided, i.e. funded and conducted, to improve children's learning in present and future generations.

The study specifically explored the views, opinions, experiences, and perceptions of government educational officials at the national level (i.e. Ministry of Education official, curriculum developers, regional, and ward education officials), and local level (i.e. teachers, parents, and ECEC children in rural and urban public pre-schools) of the pre-school education curriculum enactment from 2005. This study was positioned within the interpretive research paradigm, taking a case study approach for generating data in natural settings through individual and group interviews, classroom observations, and documentary analysis. In addition, this study used two theoretical frameworks, including Ecological systems theory developed by Bronfenbrenner (1917-2005) and sociocultural theory developed by Vygotsky (1896-1934), for data analysis, discussion, and interpretations. The emphasis these theories advocate which this current study, found imperative to use, was their influence in sociocultural perspectives. Ecological systems theory has been used to examine the framing conditions within each circle of environmental influence that impact on teachers' capacity to enact the curriculum, and the connections among the circles, while sociocultural theory by Vygotsky is used as a lens to examine teaching practice (pedagogy), i.e. curriculum in action.

The conclusions that follow are drawn based on the findings that were subjected to interpretation by the researcher. Even though the researcher demonstrated transparency, coherence of the study, trustworthiness, and respect for the insider

perspectives as well as use of the multi-methods technique to reduce subjectivity, the study cannot claim to be objective (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003).

The participants in the study voiced their views on many concerns about ECEC in Tanzania including, policy influences and structural aspects, political will, power imbalances, and traditional cultural beliefs that impacted on teachers' pre-school education curriculum enactment and associated pedagogical practices. For example, structural aspects including resources and materials, teacher-child ratio, size of the class, available spaces for children, and availability of curriculum materials, impacted on the teachers' pedagogies. Other aspects mentioned include funding in ECEC, pre-school regulation and standards, quality assurance processes, mechanisms to ensure pre-school education curriculum enactment, teacher education and professional development, teachers' payment, mixed-age classes (4/5 and 6 year olds in one class), enrolment patterns, meals and health services, parents, and community involvement. These structural aspects were reported to influence the quality of all teachers' pedagogical practices and lead to poor pre-school education if not well planned. Process quality such as responsive and warm relationships between teachers and children, was difficult due to large class sizes with a sole teacher.

The research findings and the international literature have been used to develop a model for improving ECEC in the Tanzanian context. The model emphasises the communication between a local expert and ECEC centres with teachers, parents and community as well as educational officials and local community leaders. The aim is to provide capacity-building through seminars and workshops that could promote changes in curriculum enactment for better ECEC. High quality ECEC settings engage parents and families in the education programme, building on social and cultural aspects and interests so that there are connections between the home and ECEC settings (Mitchell, 2012; Mitchell et al., 2008; Smith et al., 2000). The international literature indicates that quality ECEC could be achieved when a pre-school education curriculum is well enacted within the social-cultural context of the child. This implies that, learning in activity-based contexts with varieties of playing materials, facilities and resources, qualified teachers in ECEC matters in

collaboration with parents, and conducive teaching and learning environments, are important aspects of changing the situation of ECEC in the Tanzanian context.

Therefore, local communities need to be involved in pre-school education provision in classroom contexts and preparation of locally made play materials and facilities for children use. Local community's experts need to provide education to children such as life skills, health services, family relationships, environmental conservation, and cultural traditions, and values for building children's personalities in relation to context. What is required now is the government to respond to the study findings and the model, by making early childhood education investment a priority, by better formulation of ECEC policy with explicit guidelines for curriculum enactment and associated pedagogies, and for the curriculum developer to abide by principles and regulation pertaining to curriculum development and evaluation.

Also, the government needs to empower parents and community to recognise their roles in supporting the development various abilities in their children; teachers can learn from parents and parents can learn from teachers. Again, the government through local experts and teacher educators, need to raise the awareness of parents, the community, and teachers about the importance of activity-based play learning for children. A limitation of children engaging in activity-based play is the negative view of play and lack of awareness of which was observed by this study. Learning in play contexts was viewed as a waste of time due to the belief that learning only involves cognitive skills.

Additionally, the researcher has highlighted the prevalent teacher-centred approach, based on the dominant sociocultural practices pervading Tanzanian society. Most African societies value children's obedience and interdependence, so the African child is growing up with a general emphasis placed on obedience, respect for elders and religious observance. Cultural beliefs reflected in teachers' pedagogical practices and cultural orientations tend to position teachers as dominant and having the final say in the teaching and learning processes, which may limit children's exploration, creativity, and problem-solving.

Hence, drawing from international experiences this study has made a significant contribution to our understanding of the better enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy through the use of activity-based play, child-centred approaches, qualified teachers with available resources that could provide opportunities for children to developing their potential and possibilities for life. This study has provided a number of suggestions that would inform government, Ministry of Education, ECEC practitioners, curriculum developers, school inspectors, and educational policy makers, when reviewing policies and pre-school education curriculum and initiatives for quality education. It is evident that to attain better ECEC goals and objectives, research needs to be conducted in partnership with ECEC practitioners, visiting ECEC class settings, meeting with teachers, observing children and their activities, and writing reports on effective early education practices. Understanding the real situation of pre-school settings in the field and what is needed for improvement needs to be given high consideration by the government.

Overall, this thesis has explored the main reasons for the need to invest in quality ECEC in Tanzanian context, based on experiences worldwide. Importantly, access to education is one of the child's rights, so every child needs to get access to it without any obstacles. Hence, the reformulation and enactment of pre-school education curriculum in Tanzania could be considered the most critical contemporary issue for curriculum developers, policy makers, and key users in classroom contexts.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Research Clearance Letter from the University of Waikato

<p><b>Dean's Office</b> Faculty of Education Te Kura Toi Tongaitia The University of Waikato Private Bag 3105 Hamilton, New Zealand</p>	<p>Phone +64 7 838 4500 <a href="http://www.waikato.ac.nz">www.waikato.ac.nz</a></p>	 <p>THE UNIVERSITY OF <b>WAIKATO</b> <i>Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato</i></p>
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**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Ignasia Renatus Mligo

**cc:** Associate Professor Linda Mitchell  
Dr Nicola Daly

**From:** Associate Professor Garry Falloon  
Chairperson (Acting), Research Ethics Committee

**Date:** 7 March 2013

**Subject:** Supervised Postgraduate Research – Application for Ethical Approval (EDU008/13)

---

Thank you for submitting the amendments to your application for ethical approval for the research project:

**Early Childhood Curriculum Education in Tanzania: Experiences and issues in its practice**

I am pleased to advise that your application has received ethical approval.

Please note that researchers are asked to consult with the Faculty's Research Ethics Committee in the first instance if any changes to the approved research design are proposed.

The Committee wishes you all the best with your research.



**Associate Professor Garry Falloon**  
Chairperson (Acting)  
Research Ethics Committee

**Appendix B: Invitation Letter for Tanzania Institute of Education (Curriculum Development and Evaluation)**

May, 2013

The Director (TIE)  
Curriculum Development and Evaluation,  
Tanzania.

Dear Director \_\_\_\_\_

I am Ignasia Renatus Mligo pursuing a PhD about early childhood curriculum education at the University of Waikato- New Zealand. I request your kind permission to conduct my research study at your Institution using it for a case study. I also wish to inquire of your willingness to participate in my doctoral research study. It will involve consenting to be part of interviews where, along with your peers, you will be allowed to give your views on experiences and issues related to the practice of the ECEC in Tanzania.

My topic is: Investigating possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy. In accordance with the University of Waikato Research Ethics requirements, I would like to inform you of my details and give you an outline of my proposed research.

Name: Ignasia Renatus Mligo

Qualifications:

Teachers' Diploma, Korogwe Teachers' College, Tanzania

Bachelor of Education in Arts, (Upper Second Honours), the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Master of Arts, Education (Upper Second), the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Professional experience:

I have been employed with the Ministry of Education for the past twelve years (12) having taught at secondary schools for 8 years and 4 years at the University (Dodoma University-Tanzania). In secondary schools I taught Mathematics and Geography in ordinary and advanced levels and I was academic coordinator at Tukuyu secondary school-Tanzania. At the university (Dodoma University) where I have been working for past four (4) years, I had been teaching curriculum and early childhood education courses and I was a Head of the Department, Social and Business Studies Education (SBSE).

Proposed dates of data collection:

Start in April, 2013- End in September, 2013

What is the purpose of my research?

The study aims to do the following:

- Critically investigate the process of developing the 2005 early childhood curriculum (ECEC) and explore the influence of political, societal, cultural, economic, and historical context that prevailed during the development of the ECEC. The study also intends to gain insight about whether the curriculum has adopted ideas and views from Western influences.
- Investigate the views, perceptions and opinions of pre-primary school teachers, children, school administrators and curriculum developers concerning the current curriculum, to gain insights about the existing curriculum and its implementation.
- Identify teachers' and children's activities in the classroom situation, the application of pedagogical skills (participatory approaches), questioning styles and responses in relation to gender, and the use of teaching materials/resources in the general implementation of the ECEC in the classroom settings.
- Explore difficulties/challenges which face implementers and propose possible suggestions for improvement and to make the curriculum more accessible and friendly to all key players.
- Explore ideas and concepts from sociocultural theory which will be useful in addressing challenges that are found.
- The study also aims to come up with findings which government might utilize when making reviews and its decisions on the process of developing early childhood curriculum education (ECEC) in the future.

What format will the research take?

This study will adopt a qualitative approach to explore the research problem in two pre-primary schools in Tanzania. The study will investigate the views, perceptions and opinions of pre-primary

teachers and their pupils, curriculum developers, and parents concerning the current curriculum and its implementation. This approach was selected so that in-depth information could be gained concerning the problem under investigation.

What data will be collected in the research?

- Interviews with curriculum developers, pre-primary school teachers and parents.
- Classroom observations with pre-primary school teachers.
- Focus group interviews and informal conversations with pre-primary school children.
- Perusal of curriculum documents, regulatory guidelines for pre-primary classes, school records, scheme of work, lesson plans and other related documents.

What are the potential benefits for the curriculum developers and the Institute?

It is hoped the curriculum developers will benefit from sharing professional practice and participating in enriching knowledge with the researcher. They will be given a voice to make contributions about experiences and issues concerning the current curriculum and its implementation. The Institute of Education (Curriculum Department) may use the findings to revisit its history, vision, mission and the current practices in ECEC. This could help in bringing about positive changes in the practice of ECEC.

What will the research involve?

The research will involve semi-structured face to face interviews, classroom observations and focus group interviews. . The researcher will be required to be present in the two selected schools at intervals to observe pertinent practices and take notes. The Tanzania Institute of Education (Curriculum Department) and schools will also be asked to assist with gathering documents and records to provide background information about the curriculum development.

Confidentiality

The identity of all participants will remain confidential. The data will be reported anonymously with pseudonyms being used in the published materials. Participants will be provided with a summary of their comments to review, amend, and validate after each interview.

Declaration

If you take part in this study, you have the right to:

- Desist from answering questions that you are uncomfortable with and or withdraw from the study at any time.
- Ask me further questions about the study during the time of your school's participation.

I can be contacted on +255 754 635 646 or irm2@waikato.ac.nz. For any unresolved disputes you can contact the local mentor Dr. Lyabwene Mtahabwa via dqaudom@udom.ac.tz or lyabwene@gmail.com; +255 026 2310302. In case the disputes are not resolved by the local mentor, you can contact the chief supervisor, Associate Professor Linda Mitchell. She may be contacted at +64 7 838 4466 Ext 7734 or lindamit@waikato.ac.nz

- Be given access to a summary of the findings from the study when it is concluded. Findings will also be reported through published papers and conference presentations. Any work collected for data from teachers or children will not be used in any other way than for the purposes of the project.

- Withdraw from the study at any time and have my data withdrawn up until I have approved a transcript of my interview.

Dissemination of research findings

The data generated from this study will be used only for the purpose of writing the thesis, academic publications and conference presentations.

If you agree to take part in this study, please complete the attached consent form and I will collect it on my next visit.

Thank you for your consideration and assistance.

Yours Sincerely,

Ignasia Renatus Mligo

Ph.D. Candidate

Faculty of Education

Department of Professional Studies

University of Waikato.

NEW ZEALAND

### Appendix C: Director Consent Form

Please complete both copies, retaining one for your records, and returning the other for our records  
 Research Title: Investigating possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy.

Director: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

- I have had the opportunity to discuss this research project and understand any data collected i.e. audiotapes of the interview and examples of documents, will uphold my anonymity and that of the institution.
- I understand that I will have the opportunity to review notes or a transcript of the interview and to request changes to anything I said.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and I can withdraw from this project at any time up until the transcript has been reviewed by me.
- I understand that ethical approval for this research has been received from the University of Waikato School of Education Research Ethics Committee.
- I understand that if I have any concerns regarding this project I can contact Ignasia Mligo e-mail: irm2@waikato.ac.nz. Phone +255 754 635 646. If I want to talk about concerns to someone else I can contact the local mentor Dr. Lyabwene Mtahabwa via dqaudom@uodom.ac.tz or [lyabwene@gmail.com](mailto:lyabwene@gmail.com); +255 026 2310302. In case the concerns are not resolved by the local mentor, I can contact the chief supervisor, Associate Professor Linda Mitchell, e-mail: [lindamit@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:lindamit@waikato.ac.nz) Phone +64 7 838 4466 Extn 7734
- I understand my role and responsibilities in this research, and thus give my informed consent to participate.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Yours Sincerely,

Ignasia Renatus Mligo

Ph.D. Candidate

Faculty of Education

Department of Professional Studies

University of Waikato.

### Appendix D: Invitation Letter for Curriculum Developers

May, 2013

Curriculum Development and Evaluation,  
 Tanzania.

Dear curriculum developer \_\_\_\_\_

I am Ignasia Renatus Mligo pursuing a PhD about early childhood curriculum education at the University of Waikato- New Zealand. I wish to inquire of your willingness to participate in my doctoral research study. It will involve consenting to be part of interviews where, along with your peers, you will be asked to give your views on experiences and issues related to the practice of the ECEC in Tanzania.

In accordance with the University of Waikato Research Ethics requirements, I would like to inform you of my details and give you an outline of my proposed research.

My topic: Investigating possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy.

Name: Ignasia Renatus Mligo

Qualifications:

Teachers' Diploma, Korogwe Teachers' College, Tanzania

Bachelor of Education in Arts, (Upper Second Honours), the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Master of Arts, Education (Upper Second), the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Professional experience:

I have been employed with the Ministry of Education for the past twelve years (12) having taught at secondary schools for 8 years and 4 years at the University (Dodoma University-Tanzania). In secondary schools I taught Mathematics and Geography in ordinary and advanced levels and I was academic coordinator at Tukuyu secondary school in Tanzania. At the university (Dodoma University- Tanzania) where I have been working for past four (4) years, I had been teaching curriculum and early childhood education courses and I was a Head of the Department, Social and Business Studies Education (SBSE).

Proposed dates of data collection:

Start in April, 2013- End in September, 2013

What is the purpose of my research?

The study aims to do the following:

- Critically investigate the process of developing the 2005 early childhood curriculum (ECEC) and explore the influence of political, societal, cultural, economic, and historical context that prevailed during the development of the early childhood curriculum. The study also intends to gain insight about whether the curriculum has adopted ideas and views from Western influences.
- Investigate the views, perceptions and opinions of pre-primary school teachers, children, school administrators and curriculum developers concerning the current curriculum, to gain insights about the existing curriculum and its implementation.
- Identify teachers' and children's activities in the classroom situation, the application of pedagogical skills (participatory approaches), questioning styles and responses in relation to gender, and the use of teaching materials/resources in the general implementation of the ECEC in the classroom settings.
- Explore difficulties/challenges which face implementers and propose possible suggestions for improvement and to make the curriculum more accessible and friendly to all key players.
- Explore ideas and concepts from sociocultural theory which will be useful in addressing challenges that are found.
- The study also aims to come up with findings which government might utilize when making reviews and its decisions on the process of developing early childhood curriculum education (ECEC) in the future.

What format will the research take?

This study will adopt a qualitative approach to explore the research problem in two pre-primary schools in Tanzania. The study will investigate the views, perceptions and opinions of pre-primary teachers and their pupils, curriculum developers, and parents concerning the current curriculum and its implementation. This approach was selected so that in-depth information could be gained concerning the problem under investigation.

What data will be collected in the research?

- Interviews with curriculum developers, pre-primary school teachers and parents.
- Classroom observations with pre-primary school teachers.
- Focus group interviews and informal conversations with pre-primary school children.
- Perusal of curriculum documents, regulatory guidelines for pre-primary classes, school records, scheme of work, lesson plans and other related documents.

What are the potential benefits for the curriculum developers and the Institute?

It is hoped the curriculum developers will benefit from sharing professional practice and participating in enriching knowledge with the researcher. They will be given a voice to make contributions on experiences and issues concerning the current curriculum and its implementation. The Institute of Education (Curriculum Department) may use the findings to revisit its history, vision, mission and the current practices in ECEC. This could help in bringing about positive changes in the practice of ECEC.

What will the research involve?

The research will involve semi structured face to face interviews, classroom observations and focus group interviews. The researcher will be present in the two selected schools at intervals to observe pertinent practices and take notes. The Tanzania Institute of Education (Curriculum

Department) and schools will also be asked to assist with gathering documents and records to provide background information about the curriculum development.

#### Confidentiality

The identity of all participants will remain confidential. Pseudonyms will be used in any written reports. Participants will be provided with a summary of their comments to review, amend, and validate after each interviews and focus group session.

#### Declaration

If you take part in this study, you have the right to:

- Desist from answering questions that you are uncomfortable with and or withdraw from the study at any time
- Ask me further questions about the study during the time of your school's participation. I can be contacted on +255 754 635 646 or [irm2@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:irm2@waikato.ac.nz). For any unresolved disputes you can contact the local mentor Dr. Lyabwene Mtahabwa via [dqaudom@udom.ac.tz](mailto:dqaudom@udom.ac.tz) or [lyabwene@gmail.com](mailto:lyabwene@gmail.com); +255 026 2310302. In case the disputes are not resolved by the local mentor, you can contact the chief supervisor, Professor Linda Mitchell. She may be contacted at +64 7 838 7734 or [lindamit@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:lindamit@waikato.ac.nz)
- Be given access to a summary of the findings from the study when it is concluded. Findings will also be reported through published papers and conference presentations. Any work collected for data from teachers or children will not be used in any other way than for the purposes of the project.
- Withdraw from the study at any time and have my data withdrawn up until I have approved a transcript of my interview.

#### Dissemination of research findings

The data generated from this study will be used only for the purpose of writing the thesis, academic publications and conference presentations.

If you agree to take part in this study, please complete the attached consent form and I will collect it on my next visit.

Thank you for your consideration and assistance.

Yours Sincerely,

Ignasia Renatus Mligo

Ph.D Candidate

Faculty of Education

Department of Professional Studies

University of Waikato.

NEW ZEALAND.

## Appendix E: Curriculum Developers' Consent Form

Please complete both copies, retaining one for your records, and returning the other for our records.

Research Title:

Investigating possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy.

Director: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

- I have had the opportunity to discuss this research project and understand any data collected i.e. audiotapes of the interview and/or examples of documents, will uphold my anonymity and that of the institution.
- I understand that I will have the opportunity to review notes or a transcript of the interview and to request changes to anything I said.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and I can withdraw from this project at any time up until the transcript has been reviewed by me.
- I understand that ethical approval for this research has been received from the University of Waikato School of Education Research Ethics Committee.
- I understand that if I have any concerns regarding this project I can contact Ignasia Mligo e-mail: [irm2@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:irm2@waikato.ac.nz). Phone +255 754 635 646. If I want to talk about concerns to someone else I can contact the local mentor Dr. Lyabwene Mtahabwa via

dquadom@uodom.ac.tz or [lyabwene@gmail.com](mailto:lyabwene@gmail.com); +255 026 2310302. In case the concerns are not resolved by the local mentor, I can contact the chief supervisor, Associate Professor Linda Mitchell, e-mail: [lindamit@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:lindamit@waikato.ac.nz) Phone +64 7 838 4466 Extn 7734

- I understand my role and responsibilities in this research, and thus give my informed consent to participate.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Yours Sincerely,  
Ignasia Renatus Mlilo  
Ph.D. Candidate  
Faculty of Education  
Department of Professional Studies  
University of Waikato.

#### Appendix F: Permission to Conduct Research from Tanzania Institute of Education (Curriculum Development)

**T AASISI YA ELIJU TANZANIA (TET)**  
Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE)

Telephone: +255-22- 7773005  
Fax: -255-22- 2774420  
Telex  
E-Mail: [office@tie.gov.tz](mailto:office@tie.gov.tz)  
Ref. No TIE/OR/P/7311/07



P.O. Box 35094  
GAR ESSALAAM  
TANZANIA

8<sup>th</sup> May 2013

Ignasia R. Mlilo,  
6 Morris road,  
Hillcrest,  
Hamilton, 3216,  
New Zealand.

**RE: DATA COLLECTION AT TANZANIA INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION**

Reference is made to your application to collect data at the Institute for your research on "Early Childhood Curriculum Education in Tanzania: Experiences and Issues in its Practice".

You are informed that the Institute has granted you a permission to undertake your research within the Institute under the guidance of the Head of, Research and Consultancy Section, who has been properly directed by the Management.

I wish you all the best in your study and stay at TIE.

Yours sincerely,

  
 Makoye J. B. Wangeleja  
**DIRECTOR: RESEARCH, INFORMATION AND PUBLICATIONS**  
**TANZANIA INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION**

## Appendix G: Invitation Letter for Regional Education Officers

May, 2013

The Regional Education Officer (REO),  
Dodoma/Mbeya Regions.

Tanzania.

Dear REO \_\_\_\_\_

I am Ignasia Renatus Mligo pursuing a PhD about early childhood curriculum education at the University of Waikato- New Zealand. I request your kind permission to conduct my research study at your two pre-primary schools using it for a case study. My topic is: *Investigating possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy*. In accordance with the University of Waikato Research Ethics requirements, I would like to inform you of my details and give you an outline of my proposed research.

Name: Ignasia Renatus Mligo

Qualifications:

Teachers' Diploma, Korogwe Teachers' College, Tanzania

Bachelor of Education in Arts, (Upper Second Honours), the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Master of Arts, Education (Upper Second), the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Professional experience:

I have been employed with the Ministry of Education for the past twelve years (12) having taught at secondary schools for 8 years and 4 years at the University (Dodoma University-Tanzania). In secondary schools I taught Mathematics and Geography in ordinary and advanced levels and I was academic coordinator at Tukuyu secondary school. At the university (Dodoma University) where I have been working for past four (4) years, I had been teaching curriculum and early childhood education courses and I was a Head of the Department, Social and Business Studies Education (SBSE).

Research Title:

Investigating possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy.

Proposed dates of data collection:

Start in April, 2013- End in September, 2013

What is the purpose of my research?

The study aims to do the following:

- Critically investigate the process of developing the 2005 early childhood curriculum (ECEC) and explore the influence of political, societal, cultural, economic, and historical context that prevailed during the development of the early childhood curriculum. The study also intends to gain insight about whether the curriculum has adopted ideas and views from Western influences.
- Investigate the views, perceptions and opinions of pre-primary school teachers, children, school administrators and curriculum developers concerning the current curriculum, to gain insights about the existing curriculum and its implementation.
- Identify teachers' and children's activities in the classroom situation, the application of pedagogical skills (participatory approaches), questioning styles and responses in relation to gender, and the use of teaching materials/resources in the general implementation of the ECEC in the classroom settings.
- Explore difficulties/challenges which face implementers and propose possible suggestions for improvement and to make the curriculum more accessible and friendly to all key players.
- Explore ideas and concepts from sociocultural theory which will be useful in addressing challenges that are found.
- The study also aims to come up with findings which government might utilize when making reviews and its decisions on the process of developing early childhood curriculum education (ECEC) in the future.

What format will the research take?

This study will adopt a qualitative approach to explore the research problem in two pre-schools in Tanzania. The study will investigate the views, perceptions and opinions of pre-school teachers and their pupils, curriculum developers, and parents concerning the current curriculum and its

implementation. This approach was selected so that in-depth information could be gained concerning the problem under investigation.

What data will be collected in the research?

- Interviews with curriculum developers, pre-primary school teachers and parents.
- Classroom observations with pre-primary school teachers.
- Focus group interviews and informal conversations with pre-primary school children.
- Perusal of curriculum documents, regulatory guidelines for pre-primary classes, school records, scheme of work, lesson plans and other related documents.

What are the potential benefits for the teachers and the school?

It is hoped the teachers will benefit from sharing professional practice and participating in enriching knowledge with the researcher. They will be given a voice to make contributions on experiences and issues concerning the current curriculum and its implementation. The school may use the findings to revisit its history, vision, mission and the current practices in ECEC. This could help in bringing about positive changes in the practice of ECEC.

What will the research involve?

The research will involve semi structured face to face interviews, classroom observations and focus group interviews. The researcher will be present in the two selected schools at intervals to observe pertinent practices and take notes. The Tanzania Institute of Education (Curriculum Department) and schools will also be asked to assist with gathering documents and records to provide background information about the curriculum development.

Confidentiality

The identity of the schools and all participants will remain confidential. Pseudonyms will be used in any written reports. Participants will be provided with a summary of their comments to review, amend, and validate after each interviews and focus group session.

Declaration

If you take part in this study, you have the right to:

- Desist from answering questions that you are uncomfortable with and or withdraw from the study at any time.
- Ask me further questions about the study during the time of your school's participation. I can be contacted on +255 754 635 646 or [irm2@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:irm2@waikato.ac.nz). For any unresolved disputes you can contact the local mentor Dr. Lyabwene Mtahabwa via [dqaudom@udom.ac.tz](mailto:dqaudom@udom.ac.tz) or [lyabwene@gmail.com](mailto:lyabwene@gmail.com); +255 026 2310302. In case the disputes are not resolved by the local mentor, you can contact the chief supervisor, Professor Linda Mitchell. She may be contacted at +64 7 838 4466 Extn 7734 or [lindamit@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:lindamit@waikato.ac.nz).
- Be given access to a summary of the findings from the study when it is concluded. Findings will also be reported through published papers and conference presentations. Any work collected for data from teachers or children will not be used in any other way than for the purposes of the project.
- Withdraw from the study at any time and have my data withdrawn up until I have approved a transcript of my interview.

Dissemination of research findings

The data generated from this study will be used only for the purpose of writing the thesis, academic publications and conference presentations.

If you agree to take part in this study, please complete the attached consent form. Thank you for your consideration and assistance.

Yours faithfully,

Ignasia Renatus Mligo

Ph.D Candidate

Faculty of Education

Department of Professional Studies

University of Waikato.

## Appendix H: Regional Education Officer Consent Forms

Please complete both copies, retaining one for your records, and returning the other for our records.

Research Title: Investigating possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy.

Regional education officer's name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 REGION: \_\_\_\_\_

- I have had the opportunity to discuss this research project and understand any data collected i.e. audiotapes of the interview and examples of documents, will uphold my anonymity and that of the institution.
- I understand that I will have the opportunity to review notes or a transcript of the interview and to request changes to anything I said.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and I can withdraw from this project at any time up until the transcript has been reviewed by me.
- I understand that ethical approval for this research has been received from the University of Waikato School of Education Research Ethics Committee.
- I understand that if I have any concerns regarding this project I can contact Ignasia Mligo e-mail: [irm2@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:irm2@waikato.ac.nz) . Phone +255 754 635 646. If I want to talk about concerns to someone else I can contact the local mentor Dr. Lyabwene Mtahabwa via [dqaudom@uodom.ac.tz](mailto:dqaudom@uodom.ac.tz) or [lyabwene@gmail.com](mailto:lyabwene@gmail.com); +255 026 2310302. In case the concerns are not resolved by the local mentor, I can contact the chief supervisor, Associate Professor Linda Mitchell, e-mail: [lindamit@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:lindamit@waikato.ac.nz) Phone +64 7 838 4466 Extn 7734
- I understand my role and responsibilities in this research, and thus give my informed consent to participate.
- I understand my role and responsibilities in this research, and thus give my informed consent to participate.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated:

Contact phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Sincerely,

Ignasia Renatus Mligo

PhD Candidate

Faculty of Education

Department of Professional Studies

University of Waikato

**Appendix I: Permission to Conduct Research from Regional Education Office-Mbeya**

**THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA**

**MBEYA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL**

*(All correspondence to be directed to Municipal Director)*

MBEYA REGION  
Tel: +255-252504050  
Fax: +255-352504268  
In reply please quote:



Ref: No. MMC/F.30/28/160

10<sup>th</sup> May 2013

OFFICE OF MUNICIPAL  
DIRECTOR, P.O.BOX 758  
MBEYA  
Email: mbeyamunicipality@go.tz

TO WHOM IT  
MAY CONCERN  
Mbeya Municipal  
Council.

**RE: INTRODUCING MS IGNASIA R. MLIGO**

Reference is made to your application to collect data in Mbeya Municipal Council for your research on "Early Childhood Curriculum Education in Tanzania: Experiences and Issues in its Practice".

You are informed that the office of Municipal Director has granted you a permission to undertake your research within the Municipal Council to the Primary schools which has attached with a Pre-school class.

*NB: Ward Education Coordinators and Head Teachers please kindly accord her to undertake data collection as part of her Doctoral research program.*

I wish you all the best in your study and stay in Mbeya region.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrew W. Francis'.

Andrew W. Francis  
For MUNICIPAL DIRECTOR MBEYA  
Copy to: Ignasia R. Mligo



**Qualifications:**

Teachers' Diploma, Korogwe Teachers' College, Tanzania

Bachelor of Education in Arts, (Upper Second Honours), the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Master of Arts, Education (Upper Second), the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

**Professional experience:**

I have been employed with the Ministry of Education for the past twelve years (12) having taught at secondary schools for 8 years and 4 years at the University (Dodoma University-Tanzania). In secondary schools I taught Mathematics and Geography in ordinary and advanced levels and I was academic coordinator at Tukuyu secondary school. At the university (Dodoma University) where I have been working for past four (4) years, I had been teaching curriculum and early childhood education courses and I was a Head of the department, Social and Business Studies Education (SBSE).

Research Title: Investigating possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy.

**Proposed dates of data collection:**

Start in April, 2013- End in September, 2013.

**What is the purpose of my research?**

The study aims to do the following:

- Critically investigate the decision reached when developing the 2005 early childhood curriculum (ECEC) and explore the influence of political, societal, cultural, economic, and historical context that prevailed during the development of the early childhood curriculum. The study also intends to gain insight about whether the curriculum has adopted ideas and views from Western influences.
- Investigate the views, perceptions and opinions of pre-primary school teachers, children, school administrators and curriculum developers concerning the current curriculum, to gain insights about the existing curriculum and its implementation.
- Identify teachers' and children's activities in the classroom situation, the application of pedagogical skills (participatory approaches), questioning styles and responses in relation to gender, and the use of teaching materials/resources in the general implementation of the ECEC in the classroom settings.
- Explore difficulties/challenges which face implementers and propose possible suggestions for improvement and to make the curriculum more accessible and friendly to all key players.
- Explore ideas and concepts from sociocultural theory which will be useful in addressing challenges that are found.
- The study also aims to come up with findings which government might utilize when making reviews and its decisions on the process of developing early childhood curriculum education (ECEC) in the future.

**What format will the research take?**

This study will adopt a qualitative approach to explore the research problem in two pre-primary schools in Tanzania. The study will investigate the views, perceptions and opinions of pre-primary teachers and their pupils, curriculum developers, and parents concerning the current curriculum and its implementation. This approach was selected so that in-depth information could be gained concerning the problem under investigation.

**What data will be collected in the research?**

- Interviews with curriculum developers, pre-primary school teachers and parents.
- Classroom observations with pre-primary school teachers.
- Focus group interviews and informal conversations with pre-primary school children.
- Perusal of curriculum documents, regulatory guidelines for pre-primary classes, school records, scheme of work, lesson plans and other related documents.

**What are the potential benefits for the teachers and the school?**

It is hoped the teachers will benefit from sharing professional practice and participating in enriching knowledge with the researcher. They will be given a voice to make contributions on experiences and issues concerning the current curriculum and its implementation. The school may use the findings to revisit its history, vision, mission and the current practices in ECEC. This could

help in bringing about positive changes in the practice of ECEC.

What will the research involve?

The research will involve semi structured face to face interviews, classroom observations and focus group interactions in the data collection process. For the two schools that are selected the researcher will be required to be present in the school at intervals to observe pertinent practices and take notes. The Tanzania Institute of Education (Curriculum Department) and schools will also be asked to assist with gathering documents and records to provide background information about the curriculum development.

Confidentiality

The identity of the schools and all participants will remain confidential. Pseudonyms will be used in any written reports. Participants will be provided with a summary of their comments to review, amend, and validate after each interviews and focus group session.

Declaration

If you take part in this study, you have the right to:

- Desist from answering questions that you are uncomfortable with and or withdraw from the study at any time
- Ask me further questions about the study during the time of your school's participation. I can be contacted on +255 754 635 646 or [irm2@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:irm2@waikato.ac.nz). For any unresolved disputes you can contact the local mentor Dr. Lyabwene Mtahabwa via [dqaudom@uodom.ac.tz](mailto:dqaudom@uodom.ac.tz) or [lyabwene@gmail.com](mailto:lyabwene@gmail.com); +255 026 2310302. In case the disputes are not resolved by the local mentor, you can contact the chief supervisor, Professor Linda Mitchell. She may be contacted at +64 7 838 4466 Extn 7734 or [lindamit@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:lindamit@waikato.ac.nz)
- Be given access to a summary of the findings from the study when it is concluded. Findings will also be reported through published papers and conference presentations. Any work collected for data from teachers or children will not be used in any other way than for the purposes of the project.
- Withdraw from the study at any time and my data withdrawn up until I have approved my section of the transcript.

Dissemination of research findings

The data generated from this study will be used only for the purpose of writing the thesis, academic publications and conference presentations.

If you agree to take part in this study, please complete the attached consent form. Thank you for your consideration and assistance.

Yours faithfully,

Ignasia Renatus Mligo

PhD Candidate

Faculty of Education

Department of Professional Studies

University of Waikato.

## Appendix L: Head Teacher's Consent Form

Please complete both copies, retaining one for your records, and returning the other for our records.

Research Title: Investigating possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy.

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

- I have had the opportunity to discuss this research project and understand any data collected i.e. audiotapes of the interview and/or examples of documents, will uphold my anonymity and that of the institution.
- I understand that I will have the opportunity to review notes or a transcript of the interview and to request changes to anything I said.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and I can withdraw from this project at any time up until the transcript has been reviewed by me.
- I understand that ethical approval for this research has been received from the University of Waikato School of Education Research Ethics Committee.

- I understand that if I have any concerns regarding this project I can contact Ignasia Mligo e-mail: [irm2@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:irm2@waikato.ac.nz). Phone +255 754 635 646. If I want to talk about concerns to someone else I can contact the local mentor Dr. Lyabwene Mtahabwa via [dqaudom@udom.ac.tz](mailto:dqaudom@udom.ac.tz) or [lyabwene@gmail.com](mailto:lyabwene@gmail.com); +255 026 2310302. In case the concerns are not resolved by the local mentor, I can contact the chief supervisor, Associate Professor Linda Mitchell, e-mail: [lindamit@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:lindamit@waikato.ac.nz) Phone +64 7 838 4466 Extn 7734
- I understand my role and responsibilities in this research, and thus give my informed consent to participate.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Sincerely,

Ignasia Renatus Mligo

Ph.D Candidate

Faculty of Education

Department of Professional Studies

University of Waikato

### Appendix M: Invitation Letter for Teachers

May, 2013

Pre-school teacher's name.....

Pre-school.....

Dodoma/Mbeya.

Tanzania.

Dear Pre-school Teacher.....

I am Ignasia Renatus Mligo pursuing a PhD about early childhood curriculum education at the University of Waikato- New Zealand. I wish to inquire of your willingness to participate in my doctoral research study. It will involve consenting to be part of interviews where, along with your peers, you will be allowed to give your views on experiences and issues related to the practice of the ECEC in Tanzania. My topic is: *Investigating possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy*. In accordance with the University of Waikato Research Ethics requirements, I would like to inform you of my details and give you an outline of my proposed research.

Name: Ignasia Renatus Mligo

Qualifications:

Teachers' Diploma, Korogwe Teachers' College, Tanzania

Bachelor of Education in Arts, (Upper Second Honours), the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Master of Arts, Education (Upper Second), the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Professional experience:

I have been employed with the Ministry of Education for the past twelve years (12) having taught at secondary schools for 8 years and 4 years at the University (Dodoma University-Tanzania). In secondary schools I taught Mathematics and Geography in ordinary and advanced levels and I was academic coordinator at Tukuyu secondary school. At the university (Dodoma University) where I have been working for past four (4) years, I had been teaching curriculum and early childhood education courses and I was a Head of the department, Social and Business Studies Education (SBSE).

Research Title: *Investigating possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy*.

Proposed dates of data collection:

Start in April, 2013- End in September, 2013.

What is the purpose of my research?

The study aims to do the following:

- Critically investigate the decision reached when developing the 2005 early childhood curriculum (ECEC) and explore the influence of political, societal, cultural, economic,

and historical context that prevailed during the development of the early childhood curriculum. The study also intends to gain insight about whether the curriculum has adopted ideas and views from Western influences.

- Investigate the views, perceptions and opinions of pre-primary school teachers, children, school administrators and curriculum developers concerning the current curriculum, to gain insights about the existing curriculum and its implementation.
- Identify teachers' and children's activities in the classroom situation, the application of pedagogical skills (participatory approaches), questioning styles and responses in relation to gender, and the use of teaching materials/resources in the general implementation of the ECEC in the classroom settings.
- Explore difficulties/challenges which face implementers and propose possible suggestions for improvement and to make the curriculum more accessible and friendly to all key players.
- Explore ideas and concepts from sociocultural theory which will be useful in addressing challenges that are found.
- The study also aims to come up with findings which government might utilize when making reviews and its decisions on the process of developing early childhood curriculum education (ECEC) in the future.

What format will the research take?

This study will adopt a qualitative approach to explore the research problem in two pre-primary schools in Tanzania. The study will investigate the views, perceptions and opinions of pre-primary teachers and their pupils, curriculum developers, and parents concerning the current curriculum and its implementation. This approach was selected so that in-depth information could be gained concerning the problem under investigation.

What data will be collected in the research?

- Interviews with curriculum developers, pre-primary school teachers and parents.
- Classroom observations with pre-primary school teachers.
- Focus group interviews and informal conversations with pre-primary school children.
- Perusal of curriculum documents, regulatory guidelines for pre-primary classes, school records, scheme of work, lesson plans and other related documents.

What are the potential benefits for the teachers and the school?

It is hoped the teachers will benefit from sharing professional practice and participating in enriching knowledge with the researcher. They will be given a voice to make contributions on experiences and issues concerning the current curriculum and its implementation. Teachers will be required to revisit their scheme of work, lesson plans and notes in relation to curriculum practice and give out their suggestions and recommendations for more improvement in current practices of ECEC. This could help in bringing about changes in the practice of ECEC.

What will the research involve?

The research will involve semi structured face to face interviews, classroom observations and focus group interactions in the data collection process. For the two schools that are selected the researcher will be required to be present in the school at intervals to observe pertinent practices and take notes. The Tanzania Institute of Education (Curriculum Department) and schools will also be asked to assist with gathering documents and records to provide background information about the curriculum development.

Confidentiality

The identity of the schools and all participants will remain confidential. Pseudonyms will be used in any written reports. Participants will be provided with a summary of their comments to review, amend, and validate after each interviews and focus group session.

Declaration

If you take part in this study, you have the right to:

- Desist from answering questions that you are uncomfortable with and or withdraw from the study at any time.
  - Ask me further questions about the study during the time of your school's participation.
- I can be contacted on +255 754 635 646 or [irm2@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:irm2@waikato.ac.nz). For any unresolved disputes you can contact the local mentor Dr. Lyabwene Mtahabwa via [dqaudom@uodom.ac.tz](mailto:dqaudom@uodom.ac.tz) or [lyabwene@gmail.com](mailto:lyabwene@gmail.com); +255 026 2310302. In case the disputes are not resolved by the local mentor, you can contact the chief supervisor, Professor Linda Mitchell. She may be contacted at +64 7 838 4466 Extn 7734 or [lindamit@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:lindamit@waikato.ac.nz)

- Be given access to a summary of the findings from the study when it is concluded. Findings will also be reported through published papers and conference presentations. Any work collected for data from teachers or children will not be used in any other way than for the purposes of the project.
- Withdraw from the study at any time and have my data withdrawn up until I have approved a transcript of my interview.

Dissemination of research findings

The data generated from this study will be used only for the purpose of writing the thesis, academic publications and conference presentations.

If you agree to take part in this study, please complete the attached consent form. Thank you for your consideration and assistance.

Yours faithfully,

Ignasia Renatus Mligo

PhD Candidate

Faculty of Education

Department of Professional Studies

University of Waikato.

## Appendix N: Teachers' Consent Forms

Please complete both copies, retaining one for your records, and returning the other for our records.

Research Title: Investigating possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy.

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

- I have had the opportunity to discuss this research project and understand any data collected i.e. audiotapes of the interview and examples of documents, will uphold my anonymity and that of the institution.
- I understand that I will have the opportunity to review notes or a transcript of the interview and to request changes to anything I said.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and I can withdraw from this project at any time up until the transcript has been reviewed by me.
- I understand that ethical approval for this research has been received from the University of Waikato School of Education Research Ethics Committee.
- I understand that if I have any concerns regarding this project I can contact Ignasia Mligo e-mail: [irm2@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:irm2@waikato.ac.nz). Phone +255 754 635 646. If I want to talk about concerns to someone else I can contact the local mentor Dr. Lyabwene Mtahabwa via [dquadom@uodom.ac.tz](mailto:dquadom@uodom.ac.tz) or [lyabwene@gmail.com](mailto:lyabwene@gmail.com); +255 026 2310302. In case the concerns are not resolved by the local mentor, I can contact the chief supervisor, Associate Professor Linda Mitchell, e-mail: [lindamit@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:lindamit@waikato.ac.nz) Phone +64 7 838 4466 Extn 7734
- I understand my role and responsibilities in this research, and thus give my informed consent to participate.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Sincerely,

Ignasia Renatus Mligo

Ph.D Candidate

Faculty of Education

Department of Professional Studies

University of Waikato

## Appendix O: Invitation Letter for Parents/Guardians

May, 2013

Dear Parent/Guardian.....

My name is Ignasia Renatus Mligo. I am currently pursuing a Doctorate at the University of Waikato, New Zealand. I write to seek permission for your child to be involved in my research work, which will be undertaken at his / her school.

Research Title: Investigating possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy.

What is involved in the research?

The research will involve semi structured face to face interviews, classroom observations and focus group interactions in the data collection process. The researcher will be present in the two selected school at intervals to observe pertinent practices and take notes. The Tanzania Institute of Education (Curriculum Department) and schools will also be asked to assist with gathering documents and records to provide background information about the curriculum development.

The research will involve critically exploring views on experiences and issues emanating during early childhood curriculum implementation in Tanzania. Also to gain insight about teaching and learning process of the children in the classroom situation. In addition to that the study aims to receive suggestions and recommendations from participants on how to improve the curriculum implementation for the benefit of all young people. As such, several persons including children will be asked to respond to simple questions as part of the data collection process.

When will the research start and end?

The data collection phase in which your child will be required to be part of will commence in April, 2013 and end in September, 2013.

What is in it for your child?

Your child will benefit by being able to raise his/her voice concerning any issues that concern them regarding teaching and learning processes at school. He /she will also have an opportunity to exchange views and share ideas with peers.

What will your child be asked to do?

Your child will be asked to be part of a group interview where he / she will be allowed to give free and frank views on a number of issues related to his/ her learning in the pre-primary class. He/she will be free to express views about the activities which are taking place in school and at home as part of her/his intellectual and socio-emotional/behavioural development. The assistance given by your child will be done on a voluntary basis.

What will the information be used for?

The data collected will be used in my thesis. I may also use the information gathered to present at conferences and to write academic papers.

How will your child's identity be protected?

I will ensure that your child's identity is protected by referring to him or her in my thesis, academic papers, and or conferences by the use of a pseudonym. If your child prefers to be called by his / her true name, and you are in agreement with this, I will refer to him or her by the first name only. The data gathered will be stored securely by me during the project in a locked filing cabinet or password-protected file on my laptop. After the research is completed, data will be stored securely for five years by the University and then destroyed.

How will you receive information about the research?

The researcher will give each participating school and Early Childhood Curriculum Department information on how to access the final thesis.

Dissemination of research findings

The data generated from this study will be used only for the purpose of writing the thesis, academic publications and conference presentations.

Other matters

If you have any question about the research, please contact me at +255 754 635 646 or [irm2@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:irm2@waikato.ac.nz). For any unresolved disputes you can contact the local mentor Dr. Lyabwene Mtahabwa via [dqaudom@uodom.ac.tz](mailto:dqaudom@uodom.ac.tz) or [lyabwene@gmail.com](mailto:lyabwene@gmail.com); +255 026 2310302. In case the disputes are not resolved by the local mentor, you can contact the chief supervisor, Professor Linda Mitchell. She may be contacted at +64 7 838 4466 Extn 7734 or [lindamit@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:lindamit@waikato.ac.nz)

Please tick (✓) the box below to indicate consent for your child's participation in this research and return the signed form to me via the school's pre-primary school teacher. Thank you for your consideration and assistance.

Yours faithfully  
 Ignasia Renatus Mligo  
 PhD Candidate  
 Faculty of Education  
 Department of Professional Studies.  
 University of Waikato.

### Appendix P: Parents/Guardians Consent Form

I have read and understood the information provided on the proposed research, *Investigating possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy*. I have had the opportunity to discuss this research project and understand any data collected i.e. audiotapes of the group interview will uphold my child's anonymity and that of the institution.

- I understand that her/ his participation is voluntary and she/ he can withdraw from this project at any time.
- I understand that if I have any concerns regarding this project I can contact Ignasia Mligo e-mail: irm2@waikato.ac.nz. Phone +255 754 635 646. If I want to talk about concerns to someone else I can contact the local mentor Dr. Lyabwene Mtahabwa via dqaudom@udom.ac.tz or [lyabwene@gmail.com](mailto:lyabwene@gmail.com); +255 026 2310302. In case the concerns are not resolved by the local mentor, I can contact the chief supervisor, Associate Professor Linda Mitchell, e-mail: [lindamit@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:lindamit@waikato.ac.nz) Phone +64 7 838 4466 Extn 7734
- I understand my child's role and responsibilities in this research, and thus give my informed consent to her/he to participate.

Please put a tick in the box if you agree to your child's participation.

I consent to my child's participation in the research.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to child: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you very much for your kind assistance

Yours sincerely,

Ignasia Renatus Mligo.

Ph.D. Candidate,

Faculty of Education,

Department of Professional Studies.

University of Waikato.

### Appendix Q: A "Swahili" Introductory Letter and Signed Consent Form

May, 2013

Mshiriki wa Utafiti

Ndugu Mshiriki wa Utafiti \_\_\_\_\_

Mimi, Ignasia Renatus Mligo mwanafunzi wa Uzamivu katika Chuo Kikuu cha Waikato, nchini New Zealand, nafanya utafiti juu ya utekelezaji wa mtaala wa elimu ya awali. Ninaomba ruhusa ya kufanya utafiti katika taasisi yako. Vile vile naomba ushiriki wako katika utafiti huu. Utafiti huu utahusisha ushiriki wako katika dodoso na majadiliano katika kikundi kidogo ambapo utaombwa kutoa maoni na uzoefu wako kuhusu utekelezaji wa mtaala wa elimu ya awali hapa nchini Tanzania.

Mada ya utafiti huu ni *Uzoefu na Changamoto katika Utekelezaji wa Elimu ya Awali Tanzania*. Kutokana na kanuni za Maadili ya Kamati ya Utafiti ya Chuo Kikuu cha Waikato, nchini New Zealand, napenda kuwapa taarifa zangu na utaratibu wa uendeshaji wa utafiti huu.

Jina: Ignasia Renatus Mligo

Elimu yangu

Stashahada ya Elimu, Chuo cha Ualimu Korogwe, Tanzania

Shahada ya Elimu katika Sanaa (ufaulu ni shahada ya heshima, ngazi ya juu ya pili), Chuo Kikuu cha Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Shahada ya Uzamili wa Sanaa katika Elimu (ufaulu ni shahada ya heshima, ngazi ya juu ya pili), Chuo Kikuu cha Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Uzoefu wa kitaaluma

Nimekuwa mwajiriwa katika Wizara ya Elimu na Mafunzo ya Ufundi kwa jumla ya miaka 12, nikiwa mwalimu wa shule za sekondari kwa miaka 8 na elimu ya juu (Chuo Kikuu cha Dodoma), Tanzania kwa miaka 4 ambako ndiko nafanya kazi hadi hivi sasa. Katika shule za sekondari nimekuwa nikifundisha Hisabati na Jiografia na nimewahi kuwa mratibu wa taaluma katika shule ya Sekondari Tukuyu, Tanzania. Katika Chuo Kikuu cha Dodoma ambako nafanya kazi sasa nafundisha kozi zinazohusiana na mitaala ya elimu na kozi za elimu ya awali. Vile vile nimekuwa mkuu idara ya Elimu ya Jamii na Biashara.

Muda wa Kukusanya Taarifa za Utafiti

Kuanza: Aprili 2013 – Septemba 2013

Malengo ya Utafiti

Utafiti huu utafanya mambo yafuatayo:

- Kuchunguza changamoto zinazowakabili watekelezaji na kupendekeza namna ya kuboresha changamoto hizo.
- Kudadavua mchakato wa uanzishwaji wa mtaala wa elimu ya awali wa 2005 na kuchunguza kama kulikuwa na ushawishi wa kisiasa, kijamii, kiutamaduni, kiuchumi, na kihistoria. Vile vile utafiti huu unalenga kupata ufahamu kama mtaala ulioanzishwa una mlengo wa mataifa ya magharibi.
- Kuchunguza maoni na mitazamo ya wadau wa elimu (walimu, watawala, watunga mitaala, wazazi na wanafunzi) kuhusiana na mtaala ulipo na utekelezaji wake.
- Kubaini shughuli zinazofanywa darasani, na matumizi ya mbinu za kujifunzia na kufundishia pamoja na vifaa vinavyotumika.
- Kuchunguza mawazo na mitazamo ili kutatua changamoto hizo kwa kutumia mlengo wa Nadharia ya Kijamii na Kiutamaduni.
- Vile utafiti huu unatarajia kupendekeza mabadiliko yanayoweza kutumiwa na serikali ili kuleta mabadiliko katika harakati za uundwaji wa mitaala kwa siku zijazo.

Muundo wa Utafiti

Utafiti huu utafuata mlengo wa kupata maoni na mitazamo ya wadau wa elimu katika shule mbili za elimu ya awali. Mlengo huu umechaguliwa ili kuweza kupata taarifa za utafiti kwa undani zaidi juu.

Aina ya Taarifa na Wahusika Wake

- Mahojiano yatahusishwa watunga mitaala, wakuu wa shule, walimu wa elimu ya awali na wazazi.
- Uchunguzi darasani utahusu walimu wa elimu ya awali.
- Majadiliano katika vikundi na mawasiliano yasiyo rasmi na wanafunzi wa elimu ya awali.
- Mapitio ya nyaraka na ripoti mbalimbali zinazohusiana na elimu ya awali.

Manufaa ya Utafiti kwa Wadau wa Elimu na Taasisi

Utafiti utawasaidia wadau kubadilishana mawazo na mtafiti ili kujiongezea ujuzi na maarifa.

Taasisi ya Elimu na Mitaala inaweza kutumia utafiti huu katika kupata dira ya utekelezaji wa mitaala ili kuleta mabadiliko.

Vitu Vitakavyohusika katika Utafiti

Utafiti huu utahusisha mahojiano ya uso kwa uso, uchunguzi madarasani na mahojiano katika vikundi. Mtafiti atakuwepo katika shule zilizochaguliwa akichunguza utekelezaji wa mitaala na kuandika dondoo mbalimbali. Taasisi ya Elimu na shule husika zitaombwa kutoa ushirikiano mbalimbali ili kupata taarifa mbalimbali zinazohusu ukuzaji wa mitaala.

Mambo ya Usiri katika Utafiti

Utambulisho wa washiriki wa utafiti utakuwa wa siri. Taarifa zitakazowasilishwa zitatumia majina bandia ili kuficha utambulishi wa washiriki wa utafiti. Wahusika wa utafiti watapewa nafasi ya kuangalia na kuzihakiki taarifa zao mbalimbali walizozitoa katika mahojiano baada ya kunakilisha.

Azimio

Ukihusika na utafiti huu utakuwa na haki zifuatazo:

- Kutojibu maswali ambayo hutakuwa tayari kuyajibu au kujiondoa katika utafiti wakati wo wote.

- Kuniuliza mimi juu ya utafiti muda ambapo utafiti utafanyika kwa kupita simu +255 754 635 646 au barua pepe [irm2@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:irm2@waikato.ac.nz) Kama kutakuwa na changamoto ambazo sitaweza kuzitatua unaweza kuwasiliana na mshauri wa utafiti huu hapa Tanzania, Dr. Lyabwene Mtahabwa kwa kutumia simu +255 026 2310302 au barua pepe [dqaudom@udom.ac.tz](mailto:dqaudom@udom.ac.tz) au [lyabwene@gmail.com](mailto:lyabwene@gmail.com) Kama changamoto yako itakuwa haijatatuliwa na mshauri wa utafiti huu, wasiliana na Msimamizi Mkuu wa Utafiti huu kwa simu +64 7 838 4466 Ext 7734 au barua pepe [lindamit@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:lindamit@waikato.ac.nz)
- Kupewa muhtasari wa utafiti baada ya utafiti kuisha.
- Matokeo ya utafiti huu yatawasilishwa katika majalada mbalimbali ya utafiti na katika makongamano mbalimbali. Taarifa zote kutoka kwa washiriki wa utafiti zitatumika kwa ajili ya utafiti huu tu.
- Kujitua katika utafiti muda wowote na pia kuondoa taarifa au sehemu ya taarifa zako baada ya kuzinakilisha.

Uwasilishaji wa Matokeo ya Utafiti

Taarifa zitakazopatikana zitatumika kwa ajili ya kuandika ripoti ya shahada ya uzamivu, majalada ya kitaaluma ya kitafiti na makongamano mbalimbali.

Kama unakubali kushiriki katika utafiti huu, tafadhari jaza fomu ya makubaliano ambayo nitaichukua wakati nikija mara ya pili/nyingine.

Asante sana kwa kushiriki kwako.

Wako mtiifu,

Mwanafunzi wa Shahada ya Uzamivu

Kitivo cha Elimu

Idara ya Mafunzo ya Taaluma

Chuo Kikuu cha Waikato.

NEW ZEALAND.

Fomu ya Makubaliano

Tafadhali jaza nakala mbili za fomu hii, fomu mojawapo ni kwa ajili ya kumbukumbu zako, na nyingine mpelekee mtafiti kwa ajili ya kumbukumbuku zake.

Mada ya Utafiti: Uzoefu na changamoto katika utekelezaji wa elimu ya awali Tanzania

Mimi .....

Idara .....

- Nimepewa fursa ya kujadili na ninaelewa kuwa taarifa zitakazotolewa katika utafiti huu kama sauti zilizorekodiwa wakati wa majadiliano, na nyaraka mbalimbali hazitakuwa na utambulisho wangu na wa taasisi yangu.
- Ninajua kuwa nitapewa fursa ya kuzipitia taarifa zangu zitakapokuwa zimenakilishwa na nitakuwa na haki ya kuzibadili ikibidi.
- Najua kuwa utafiti huu umepata kibali cha Kamati ya Maadili ya Utafiti ya Chuo Kikuu cha Waikato
- Najua kwamba kama nitakuwa na wasiwasi wowote kuhusu utafiti huu naweza kuwasiliana na Ignasia Renatus Mligo kwa kupita simu +255 754 635 646 au barua pepe [irm2@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:irm2@waikato.ac.nz) . Kama kutakuwa na changamoto ambazo sitaweza kuzitatua unaweza kuwasiliana na mshauri wa utafiti huu hapa Tanzania, Dr. Lyabwene Mtahabwa kwa kutumia simu +255 026 2310302 au barua pepe [dqaudom@udom.ac.tz](mailto:dqaudom@udom.ac.tz) au [lyabwene@gmail.com](mailto:lyabwene@gmail.com) Kama changamoto yangu itakuwa haijatatuliwa na mshauri wa utafiti huu, nitasiliana na Msimamizi Mkuu wa Utafiti huu kwa simu +64 7 838 4466 Ext 7734 au barua pepe [lindamit@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:lindamit@waikato.ac.nz)
- Naelewa wajibu wangu katika utafiti huu, kwa hiyo nakubali kushiriki katika utafiti huu.

Sahihi: .....

Tarehe: .....

Namba ya simu: .....

## Appendix R: Ministry of Education Official's Guiding Questions for

### Interview

You are warmly invited to participate in the interview session about, *Investigating possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy*. The goal of this interview is to collect information related to curriculum that will

help in the analysis of the issues that influence practice in the pre-primary schools. The information will be used to inform curriculum development and evaluation. The ultimate purpose of the study is to initiate curriculum debate that would lead to improvement in the policy which in turn would improve teacher preparation and classroom practice in pre-primary schools. The information given will be treated as *strictly confidential* and your identity kept *anonymous*.

A: Background Information

1. Name (optional)
2. Gender (male or female)
3. Professional qualifications e.g. Postgraduate Diploma in Early Childhood Education

B: Questions:

1. It is clearly stated in the policy that the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE) is responsible for the development of pre-primary school curriculum. As a Ministry of Education official, how do you ensure that the curriculum guidelines are developed and disseminated equitably?
2. Questions about pre-school teachers' qualifications and training:
  - What is the required qualification for one to become a pre-school teacher? About what percentage of teachers holds that qualification? Can you please describe any issues in teachers becoming qualified?
  - What kinds of initial teacher preparation programmes exist? How long does it take to train as a teacher? What do you think of the quality of these programmes?
  - Are there any specific arrangements for teacher professional development? If any, kindly outline them including the sources of funds. In your opinion, are there any issues around the quality of professional development or who is able to access it?
  - What measures had been taken by the Tanzania Institute of Education (curriculum development and evaluation) to orient pre-primary school teachers after the development of the new early childhood curriculum? Is there anything more that could be done?
3. Questions about early childhood curriculum implementation:
  - Can you tell me about the participation and involvement of parents and community in curriculum in pre-school education? The current curriculum shows that pre-school owners are responsible for the supply of resources in their respective pre-schools. How do you ensure that resources are available in the public pre-schools?
  - Quality pre-school education has been stressed in the current curriculum. Which regulations exist to encourage quality in the establishment of pre-schools? How do you ensure that quality is monitored and controlled after the pre-schools have been established or registered?
  - Why do you think some children do not attend pre-school? Who are these children (e.g. rural, low socioeconomic)?
4. Questions concerning the development of the early childhood curriculum:
  - How was the decision to develop pre-school curriculum arrived at? What kind of data/information was your decision based on? Who collected the data?
  - What were the societal, cultural, political and historical contexts in the development of pre-school in 2005?
  - How was the process of development of the 2005 pre-school curriculum facilitated? In what ways, if any did the developed/Western countries have an influence on the process? What about on curriculum knowledge?
5. Questions concerning participant's views and suggestions on curriculum implementation:
  - What are your views, perceptions and opinions about the implementation of the pre-school curriculum?
  - Can you describe any successes or strengths in the implementation of the pre-school curriculum?
  - What are the main challenges/problems that inhibit the successful implementation of the pre-school? What measures do you take to address these

problems? What suggestions would you make to improve the pre-school curriculum?

6. How Education and Training Policy (ETP) of 1995 facilitate or hinder the pre-school curriculum implementation?
  - What are the main challenges/problems that inhibit the successful implementation of the pre-school? What measures do you take to address these problems? What suggestions would you make to improve the pre-school curriculum?

*Thank you for your willingness to participate in this interview session*

### **Appendix S: Curriculum Developers' Guiding Questions for Interview**

You are warmly invited to participate in the interview session about *Investigating possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy*. The goal of this interview is to collect information related to curriculum that will help in the analysis of the issues that influence practice in the pre-primary schools. The information will be used to inform curriculum development and evaluation. The ultimate purpose of the study is to initiate curriculum debate that would lead to improvement in the policy which in turn would improve teacher preparation and classroom practice in pre-primary schools. The information given will be treated as *strictly confidential* and your identity kept *anonymous*.

A: Background Information

4. Name (optional)
5. Gender (male or female)
6. Professional qualifications e.g. Diploma in Early Childhood Education

B: Questions:

7. It is clearly stated in the policy that the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE) is responsible for the development of pre-primary school curriculum. How do you ensure that the curriculum guidelines are developed and disseminated equitably?
8. Questions about pre-primary school teachers' qualifications and training:
  - What is the required qualification for one to become a pre-primary school teacher? About what percentage of teachers holds that qualification? Can you please describe any issues in teachers becoming qualified?.
  - What kinds of initial teacher preparation programmes exist? How long does it take to train as a teacher? What do you think of the quality of these programmes?
  - Are there any specific arrangements for teacher professional development? If any, kindly outline them including the sources of funds. In your opinion, are there any issues around the quality of professional development or who is able to access it?
  - What measures had been taken by the Tanzania Institute of Education (curriculum development and evaluation) to orient pre-primary school teachers after the development of the new early childhood curriculum? Is there anything more that could be done?
9. Questions about early childhood curriculum implementation:
  - Can you tell me about the participation and involvement of parents and community in curriculum in pre-primary education? The current curriculum shows that pre-primary school owners are responsible for the supply of resources in their respective pre-primary schools. How do you ensure that resources are available in the public pre-primary schools?
  - Quality pre-primary education has been stressed in the current curriculum. Which regulations exist to encourage quality in the establishment of pre-primary schools? How do you ensure that quality is monitored and controlled after the pre-primary schools have been established or registered?
  - Why do you think some children do not attend pre-primary? Who are these children (e.g. rural, low socioeconomic)?
10. Questions concerning the development of the early childhood curriculum:
  - How was the decision to develop ECEC arrived at? What kind of data/information was your decision based on? Who collected the data?

- What were the societal, cultural, political and historical contexts in the development of ECEC in 2005?
- How was the process of development of the 2005 ECEC facilitated? In what ways, if any did the developed/Western countries have an influence on the process? What about on curriculum knowledge?

11. Questions concerning participant's views and suggestions on curriculum implementation:

- What are your views, perceptions and opinions about the implementation of the ECEC?
- Can you describe any successes or strengths in the implementation of the ECEC?
- What are the main challenges/problems that inhibit the successful implementation of the ECEC? What measures do you take to address these problems? What suggestions would you make to improve the ECEC?

*Thank you for your willingness to participate in this interview session*

### **Appendix T: Regional Officials Guiding Questions for Interview**

Interview Schedule for Regional Educational Officers (REO's)

You are warmly invited to participate in the interview session about Investigating possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy. The goal of this interview is to collect information related to curriculum that will help in the analysis of the issues that influence practice in pre-primary schools. The information will be used to inform the government and curriculum development and evaluation. The ultimate purpose of the study is to initiate curriculum debate that would lead to improvement in the policy which in turn would improve teacher preparation and classroom practice in pre-primary schools. The information given will be treated as strictly confidential and your identity kept anonymous.

A: Background Information

1. Name (optional)
  2. Gender (male or female)
  3. Professional qualifications e.g. Diploma in Early Childhood Education
- "Answers are chronological following the Interview Guide's Schedule"*

1. Can you tell me your views and opinions concerning pre-school curriculum in Tanzania developed in 2005 and its enactment?
2. What were the roles of key players in curriculum development?
3. What do you think are challenges face pre-school teachers in enactment of the 2005 curriculum classroom environments?
4. Are there any cultural beliefs and traditions which hinder children's in their right to education?
5. What are your views and suggestions concerning the implementation of pre-primary education curriculum?
6. Tell me your general overview about school inspection? What do you suggest for any weakness?
7. What do you think are the policy challenges which impact the ECEC implementation?

*Thank you for your willingness to participate in this interview session*

### **Appendix U: Ward Education Coordinator's Guiding Questions Interview**

Name: .....

Gender: Male

Education level: Form IV

Professional qualification: GRADE"A" –Certificate in Primary School Education

Occupation: Ward Executive officer (WEC)

1. Tell me your roles in making sure that your ward is progressing well socially and academically.
2. Can you tell me about the participation and involvement of parents and community in the education of their children?
3. Do parents in your ward motivated to send their children to the pre-primary school?
4. What are the challenges/issues facing the development of pre-primary education in your ward?
5. What measures/efforts do you take to address challenges/issues facing the education progress in

your ward particular the pre-primary education issues?

6. What are your views, perceptions and opinions concerning the pre-primary education in Tanzania?

7. What do you suggest or what are your recommendations for the pre-primary education situation?

*Thank you for your willingness to participate in this interview session*

## **Appendix V: Head Teachers' Guiding Questions for Interview Guide**

You are warmly invited to participate in the interview session about *Investigating possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy*. The focus in this interview session is to collect information at the pre-primary school level that can help in the analysis of the issues that influence teaching practices. The information will be used to inform curriculum development and evaluation. The ultimate purpose of the study is to initiate curriculum debate that would lead to improvement in the policy which in turn would improve teacher preparation and classroom practice in pre-primary schools. The information given will be treated as *strictly confidential* and your identity kept *anonymous*.

A: Background Information

1. Name (optional).
2. Gender (male or female).
3. Education levels e.g. form four.
4. Professional qualifications e.g. certificate in early childhood education.

B: Questions:

1. Questions about pre-primary school teachers expertise:
  - Please would you describe the number of pre-primary school teachers and child care staff in your pre-primary school by the qualifications they hold
  - Of the teachers you have mentioned in question one, how many had in-service training/professional development in the last 2 years? Do you currently have any specific arrangements for teacher professional development? If any, please briefly outline them.
2. Questions about early childhood curriculum implementation:
  - In what ways, if any, do you ensure that parents and community members are involved in the education of their young children? At home and within the pre-primary school?
  - Do you get teaching assistance from people within the community with specialized skills in some particular areas where teachers do not have sufficient knowledge as is suggested in the curriculum document? If yes, please describe
  - How would you describe the amount and quality of resources in your pre-primary school? What ways do you use to find and gather resources for your pre-primary school?
  - In what way, if any does the community contribute to the delivery of equipment, tools and various materials for teaching and learning as is suggested by the curriculum document?
  - What is the maximum and minimum number of children for each class in your pre-primary school? What is the average teacher-child ratio in the classroom? Do you have any comment on the number of children in a class and the impact on teachers who teach such classes?
  - Do you have a hard copy of the curriculum guidelines in your pre-primary school? For each teacher?
  - How would you describe "quality" education in pre-primary school? [Prompts: pedagogy, planning and preparation, use of teaching and learning resources] How do you ensure that children receive high-quality education in your pre-primary school?
  - About what percentage of 5 and 6 year olds in your school's community attend your pre-primary school? Why do some children not attend?
3. Questions concerning participant's views and suggestions on curriculum implementation:
  - What are your views, perceptions and opinions towards the implementation of

- the ECEC?
- Please would you describe any successes or strengths in the implementation of the ECEC?
  - What do you think are the main problems or challenges encountered by pre-primary school teachers when implementing ECEC in their classroom environment?
  - What, if any, are the main challenges/problems that inhibit the successful implementation of the ECEC? What measures do you take to address these problems? What suggestions would you make to improve the ECEC?

*Thank you for your willingness to participate in this interview session*

### **Appendix W: Teachers' Guiding Questions for Interview**

You are warmly invited to participate in the interview session about *Investigating possibilities, experiences, and issues encountered by teachers in enactment of pre-school education curriculum and pedagogy*. The focus in this interview session is to collect information at the pre-primary school level that can help in the analysis of the issues that influence teaching practices. The information will be used to inform the curriculum development and evaluation. The ultimate purpose of the study is to initiate curriculum debate that would lead to improvement in the policy which in turn would improve teacher preparation and classroom practice in pre-primary schools. The information given will be treated as *strictly confidential* and your identity kept *anonymous*.

#### A: Background Information

1. Name (optional)
2. Gender (male or female)
3. Education level e.g. form four
4. Professional qualifications e.g. certificate in early childhood education

#### B: Questions:

1. Questions about pre-primary school teachers expertise:
  - Since the development of the ECEC, have you attended any in-service course or workshops? If yes, please describe what it/they were about and how long they took.
  - What do you know about the pre-primary curriculum education in Tanzania? Please describe.
  - In your view, what does the current pre-primary curriculum intend to achieve in terms of classroom teaching?
2. Questions about early childhood curriculum implementation:
  - In your opinion, how and in what specific ways does the current pre-primary curriculum education affect your classroom teaching?
  - Two types of teaching and learning processes (participatory and non-participatory methods) are commonly used in Tanzania. Which kind of teaching methods do you use more? Why?
  - How do you implement any changes posed by the shift from non-participatory to participatory teaching and learning methods that the curriculum encourages?
  - In what ways do you ensure the children's physical, mental, moral and spiritual (socio-emotional/behavioural) development in relation to ECEC implementation?
  - Children are coming from different backgrounds in terms of their cultures, customs, norms and traditions. How do you accommodate these different backgrounds and also help them learn accepted national values?
  - What are the major purposes in subject learning activities described in the curriculum? In what ways do you ensure that children understand the particular subject learning activities?
  - How do you identify vulnerable children and those with special needs? Which strategies do you use to help them grow in all learning aspects?
3. Questions about teaching and learning resources/materials:
  - What teaching and learning resources and materials are available to support the children in building knowledge and skills in their particular subject activities? How adequate are these?

- Where do you get teaching and learning equipment, tools, models and other materials from? What do you do if these are delayed or not supplied accordingly?
  - Do you always get all instructional materials and equipment you need for teaching? If not what do you do?
4. Questions concerning participant's views and suggestions on curriculum implementation:
- What are your views, perceptions and opinions towards the implementation of the ECEC?
  - Are there any challenges/problems that inhibit the successful implementation of the ECEC
  - What practical problems, if any, have you encountered in the course of using the ECEC in the classroom situation??
  - What measures do you take to address these problems? (if any)
  - Based on your understanding of the current pre-primary curriculum education and your teaching experience, please give your recommendations on how the pre-primary curriculum would be improved for improvement in teaching.

*Thank you for your willingness to participate in this interview session*

### **Appendix X: Parents/guardians' Guiding Questions for Interview**

#### **A: Background Information**

1. Name (optional)
2. Gender (male or female)
3. Education level e.g. form four
4. Occupation e.g. businessman/woman, farmer and other please indicate

#### **B: Questions**

1. What are your expectations and aspirations for your child's learning and development?
2. How do you help your child to learn and develop?
3. In what ways does the pre-primary school help your child to learn and develop?
4. In what ways does the pre-primary school involve you in the education of your child/children?
5. What are your views, perceptions and opinions about your child's pre-primary school?
6. What do you think are the strengths of the pre-primary school? And what suggestions do you have to improve the pre-primary school?

*Thank you for your willingness to participate in this interview session*

### **Appendix Y: Pupils' Guiding Questions for Focus Group Discussion**

This interview is about teaching and learning in pre-primary classrooms like your classroom. I want to find out what schools are like for teachers and children so that the Head Teachers and teachers and people in the government can make the schools even better. I am going to write about my study in a book. I would like to ask you what you think about being at pre-primary school and how it helps you to learn. I will not tell anyone what you say and I won't use your real names when I write about my study. If there is something confidential which you wish to discuss, please speak to me individually after the focus group discussion.

#### **A: Background Information**

1. Name (optional)
2. Gender (male or female)
3. Education level e.g. pre-primary

#### **B: Questions:**

1. Questions relating to child's drawings:  
Plain papers will be given to each child to draw a picture or a series of pictures of anything he/she likes doing most at the pre-primary school. Thereafter each child will be given the opportunity to describe their pictures. [Probe]
2. Questions about children's learning:
  - What do you do in subject learning activities [name subject areas and go through each in turn – Mathematics, English (writing and reading), Kiswahili (writing and reading), science and social studies]. Which subject learning activities do you like best? Why?

- What does the teacher do to help you learn?
- What kind of things can you decide for yourself at [name pre-primary school?]  
What kind of things you cannot decide for yourself?
- Are there things you don't like about this [name pre-primary school]? [Probes]  
Can you tell me about some of those things? Why don't you like them?
- What makes you happy at this [name pre-primary school]? Or what do you like  
best about being here?

*Thank you for your willingness to participate in this interview session*

## **Appendix Z: Classroom Observation Checklist for Rural and an Urban Pre-school**

This instrument guided the researcher for classroom observation. Both pre-schools 'G' located in the urban and "Z" in the rural area were observed under the following guide line.

Name of the school.....Region.....

District.....Ward.....

Teaching subject activities.....Number of children in the class.....

Time for observations in the class 40 minutes

Observation (i)

Tick appropriately the aspects observed;

(a) The availability of teaching aids:

- |                  |     |                 |             |
|------------------|-----|-----------------|-------------|
| Computers        | ( ) | Text books      | ( )         |
| Wall maps/charts | ( ) | Reference books | ( )         |
| Picture          | ( ) | Diagrams        | on wall ( ) |
| Video tapes      | ( ) | Photographs     | ( )         |
| Black board      | ( ) | Audio cassette  | ( )         |
| Photocopier      | ( ) |                 |             |

(b) Tick the methods/techniques which observed used mostly by pre-school teachers in classroom teaching and learning process:

- |                        |     |               |     |
|------------------------|-----|---------------|-----|
| Whole class teaching   | ( ) | Story telling | ( ) |
| Small group discussion | ( ) | Role play     | ( ) |
| Questions and Answers  | ( ) | Songs         | ( ) |
| Demonstration          | ( ) | Simulation    | ( ) |

© Tick the Resources available or not available to children:

Resources	Available to all children	Available to some children (specify how many)	Not available	Number of children in class
-----------	---------------------------	---	---------------	-----------------------------

Books  
Desks  
Chairs  
Locally developed resources  
List these)  
Modern resources  
(List these)

Observation (ii): Observation Guide in the classroom-Journal

During the classroom observation the researcher used field notes to write down the whole process of teaching and learning in the classroom. Attention was paid to capturing the following aspects:

1. Teacher's questioning to children (e.g. use of open ended questioning that encourage children to think for themselves, closed questions)
2. Teacher's feedback to children's questions
3. Classroom management
4. Accommodation of individual differences
5. Teacher-child and child-child interactions

6. The use of teaching materials/resources
7. And other events of interest

*Thank you for the work done*

### **Appendix AA: Schedule of the Classroom Observations**

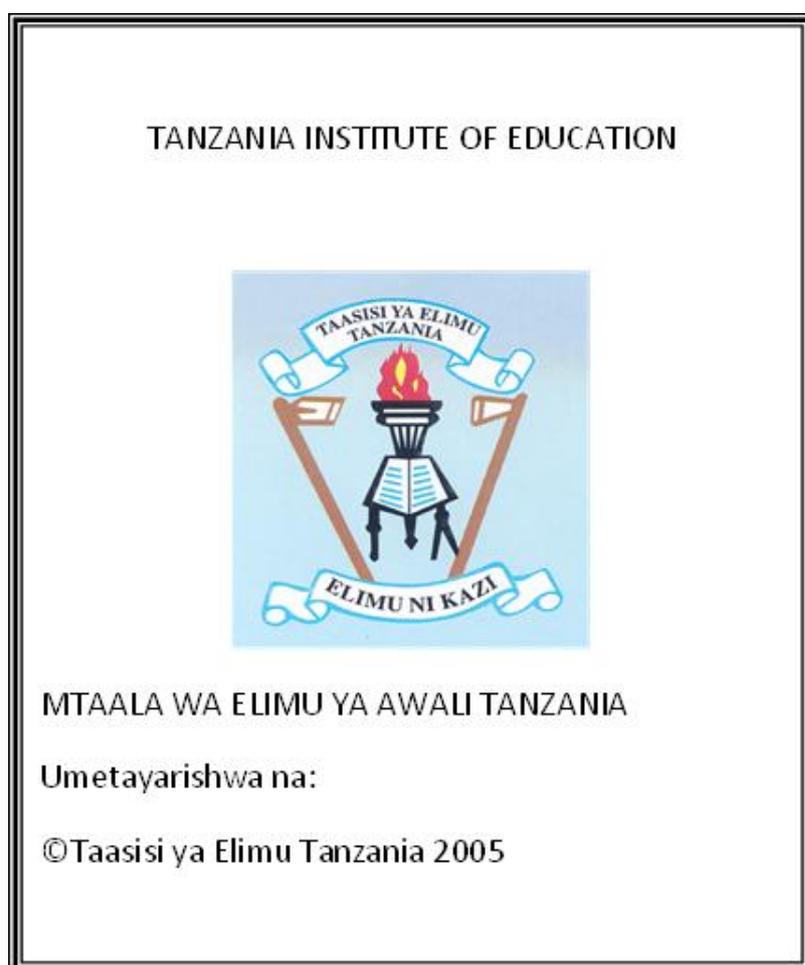
**Notes: G:** Urban pre-school-Mbeya: **G1, G2:** Streams

**Z:** Rural pre-school- Dodoma: **Z1, Z2:=** Streams

Date	School	Observer	Subject	Duration in minutes	Lesson structure	Teaching methods
13-05-13	G1	Researcher	Arithmetic	30	Tell pupils what the lesson is about count, sing and prescribed tasks, write assignment and marking	Question and answer - (whole class & individual, all from teacher to pupils);singing numbers
14/05/13	G2	Researcher	Arithmetic	45	Tell pupils what the lesson is about, counting, write assignment and marking	Whole class questions to pupils all from teacher to pupils
21/05/13	G1	Researcher	Kiswahili Language Reading	45	Reading and writings , write assignment and marking	Whole class teaching
23/05/13	G2	Researcher	Kiswahili Language- Reading Activities	30	Sing letters, write assignment and marking	Whole class teaching and Songs.
15/07/13	G1	Researcher	Kiswahili Language – Reading Activities	35	Reading and writing, write assignment and marking	Whole class teaching and questions to individuals all from teacher to pupils
18/07/13	G2	Researcher	Science Activities	48	Telling importance of teeth brush and wash face	Whole class teaching
05/08/13	Z1	Researcher	Arithmetic	30	Counting numbers writing	Whole class teaching
09/08/13	Z2	Researcher	Arithmetic	45	Counting numbers	Whole class teaching
16/08/13	Z1	Researcher	Readings Letters Activities	30	Tell pupils what the lesson is, chorus reading of letters	Whole class teaching
20/08/13	Z2	Researcher	Kiswahili	40	Flashback was	Question and

			Language-Writing Activities		taught at the previous lesson, illustrate, write assignment and marking	answer (whole class– all from teacher to pupils);
05/09/13	Z1	Researcher	Kiswahili Language-Reading Activities	30	Say what the lesson is, singing letters	Whole class teaching, songs.
11/09/13	Z2	Researcher	Kiswahili Language-Writing Activities	45	Sing alphabets, write assignment and marking	Whole class teaching, songs

### Appendix BB: A Holistic Curriculum Document



### Appendix CC: A Chat of Detailed Syllabus for Pre-school Education

The syllabus is organized into seven major parts including; competence, Topic and sub-topic, Specific objectives, Teaching and learning strategies, Teaching and learning resources and materials, Assessment of children's progress, and Time/ number of periods.

**Competence:** These are changes in behaviour and acquisition of skills, expected to be gained by a child after learning a topic.

**Topic/subtopic:** The content of the appropriate learning activities to be conducted in the learning environments.

**Specific objectives:** Knowledge, skills and attitude which are expected to be acquired after learning a certain topic/subtopic.

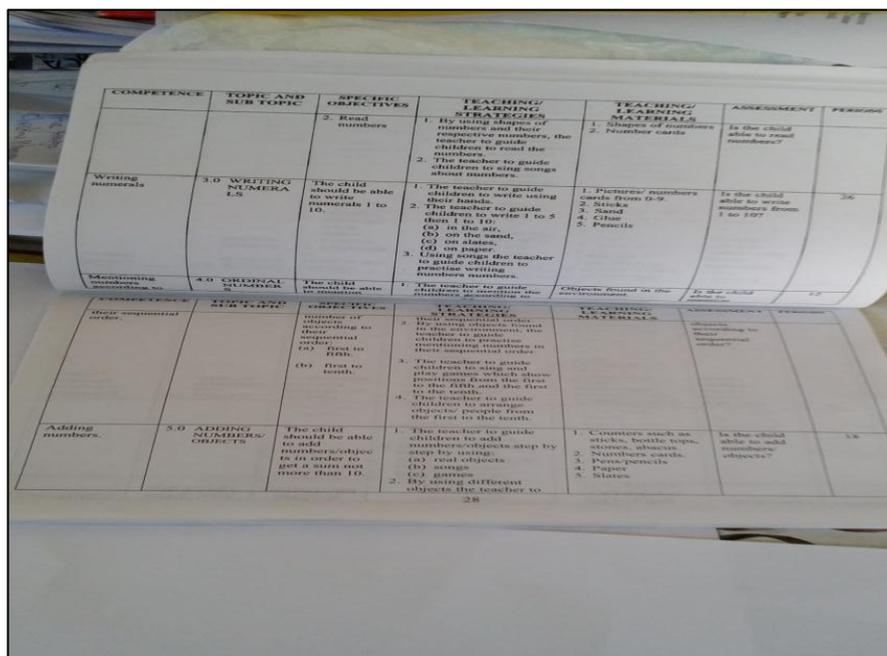
**Teaching and learning strategies:** It's all about pedagogical skills depending on the actual situation of learning environments.

**Teaching and learning resources/materials:** Equipment, tools, text books, models, teachers' guides and others related.

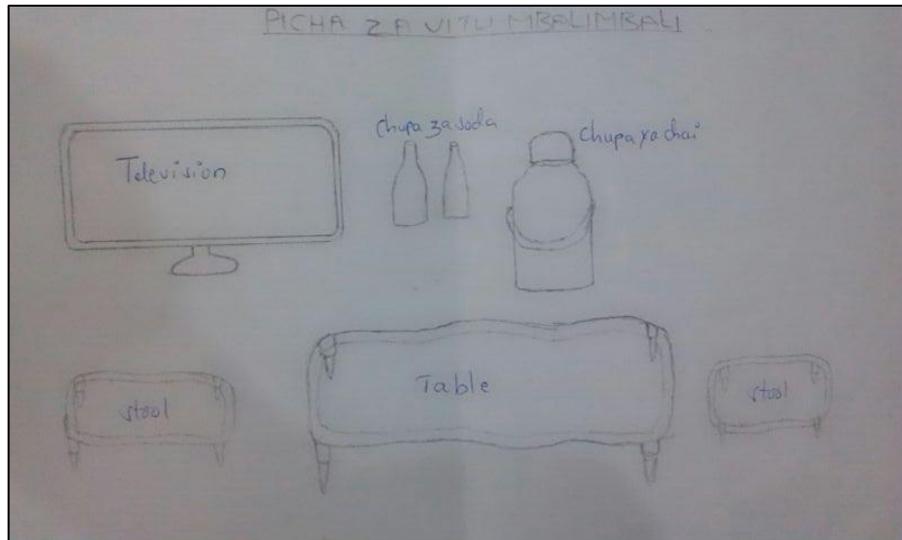
**Assessment of children's progress:** Examining if the changes of behaviour has been taken place after teaching and learning.

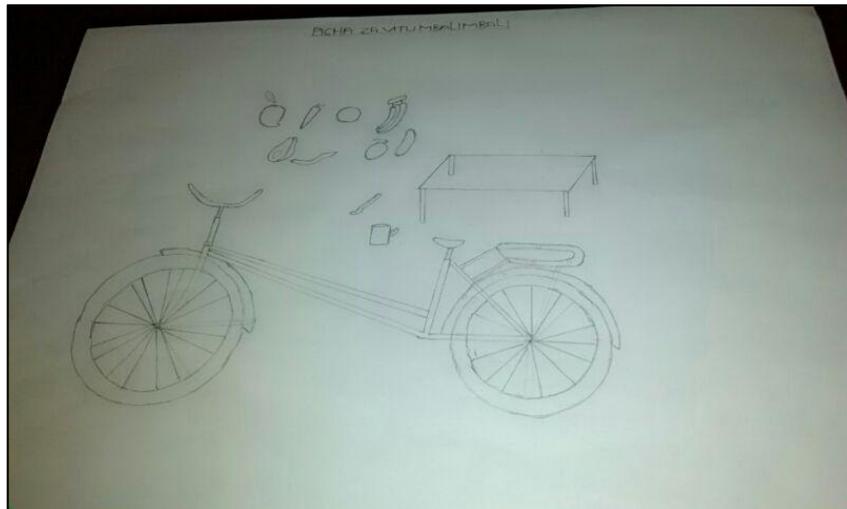
**Time and number of periods:** Time to be used for each topic

Competence	Topic/subtopic	Specific objectives	Teaching Strategies	Teaching materials	Assessment of children	Periods
Identifying sounds and making beats	Elementary skills in music Subtopic: Simple music	The child should be able to perform simple musical rhythms	The teacher to guide children in groups to practice performance	Whistles, recorders and videos	Is the child able to perform music?	12



**Appendix DD: A Sample of Pictures Drawn by Teachers for the Pupils to Copy**





**Appendix EE: Sample Pictures Drawn by Pupils of the Urban Pre-school**

