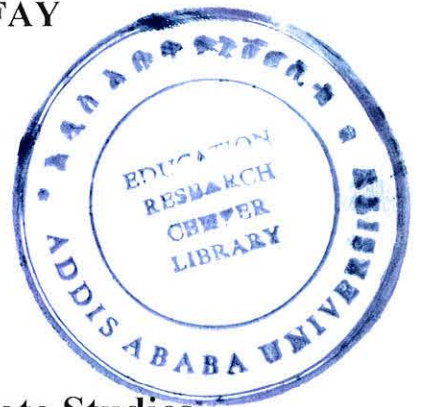


**PRACTICES AND CHALLENGES IN ACCESSING
PRESCHOOL EDUCATION IN TIGRAY REGIONAL
STATE OF ETHIOPIA: THE CASE OF MEKELLE ZONE**

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Abstract

The main purpose of the study was to investigate the current status and practice of preschool education in Mekelle. Moreover, it aimed at identifying the major bottle necks that hindered the promotion of preschool education and provide recommendations that could alleviate the problems. Mixed research designed was used in dealing with the research where the quantitative data gathered through questionnaire were triangulated with data gathered through in-depth interview with educational authorities in Tigray Education Bureau and Mekelle Zone Education office. To investigate the current status of preschool education documents from the TREB/EMIS were used and gross enrollment rate and net enrollment rate calculated. The results of the analysis showed that more than two third of the children in Mekelle did not have the opportunity to preschools in the city. Among the existing preschool institutions in the town 96.4% of them were owned by private investors, NGOs and religious organizations where they charge tuition fees which are not affordable for most of the parents in city. It was also found that the zonal education office is taking alternative strategies called "0-class" in the premises of the formal primary schools to age six children from the poor family to prepare them for the formal schooling. The main bottlenecks in promoting preschool education according to the result of the research were more of economic i.e. house hold poverty and family size., lack of awareness on the value of preschool education and child right, shortage of facilities, lack of coordination among the stakeholders, shortage of public investment contributed to the low participation rate of preschool education in Mekelle. To alleviate the problems and promote preschool education feasible suggestions are forwarded.

Acronyms

BPR	Business Plan Reengineering
CBO	Community Based Organization
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Educational Management Information System
ESDP	Education Sector Development program
ETB	Ethiopian Birr
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
GER	Gross Enrollment Ratio
GEQIP	General Education Quality Improvement Program
IFAL	Integrated Functional Adult Literacy
KG	Kindergarten
MNCDSA	Ministry of National Community Development and Social Affairs
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOFED	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
MOLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
NCC	National Children's Commission
NER	Net Enrollment Ratio
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
REB	Regional Education Bureau
TREB	Tigray Regional Education Bureau
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
ZED	Zonal Education Department

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Back Ground of the Study

In the human life cycle, early childhood is a critical period that requires due attention and a great deal of investment. Experts in the area agree that preschool age is the most impressionable age in one's life. The early years are critical in the development of intelligence, personality, and social behavior that there are long term effects associated with a variety of early intervention programs. In addition, the preschool year is the period of socialization, where children love to play with other children, which they may not get at home. During these years the peer group becomes increasingly important to them for their social development (MOE, 2009; Chowdury & Choudhury , 2002).

The home environment, where most mothers are illiterate, may not be satisfying and challenging for the optimum growth of the child. In this case at least preschool teachers need to be trained and experienced in guiding and providing better environment to the young children ones they are at school (Chow duly & Choudhury , 2002).

Moreover, the tremendous wastage that are seen in the lower primary schools can be reduced and avoided if the children who join the classes were prepared in advance for the formal education. It affects enrollment, progress and performance of children in schooling which in turn associated with important changes in skill and outlook affecting adult behavior. This is an economic issue for a nation in general and individual parent in particular. Because

providing preschool education and preparing the children for formal education enables to improve the efficiency of primary school education (UNESCO, 2008).

- ✓ The need of early education and care is emphasized globally. For example, Mustard in (Asmelash ,2007) stressed that emerging understanding of how social and physical environment in the early years of human development influence physical health problems as well as learning and behavior in adult life that has led to increased investment in mothers and children to reduce inequalities in development and health in adult life. This implies the need to invest in early preschool education in order to reduce the gaps of inequality among different social groups.

- ✗ For many of the UN agencies such as UNECO, UNICEF, UNHCR in (Asmelash, 2007), providing education for children is not a privilege but a right for the child, where Ethiopia is a signatory. In these sense all children irrespective of sex, ethnic group, race, religious, and social back ground and children with special needs have the right to equal access of quality preschool education.

Child Right Convention (CRC) in (Asmelash, 2007) further stated that education of the child shall be directed to the development of the child's personality, talent, mental and physical ability. It suggests that the right of the children to develop to their full potential is widely accepted. Investing in early childhood program is like putting the cornerstone for the future development of the child in particular and the nation in general. Pronouncing the relevance and the need of quality care and education of children at the early years Tirusew (2007),

compared it with a house construction by pointed out “as erecting a house without a foundation is not possible, efficient human resource development of a country heavily relies on early years of human development”(p.205-206). In a summit in Cairo, Africans also pronounced the need to invest in early childhood with the following expression: “Today’s investment in children is tomorrow’s peace, stability, security, democracy and sustainable development” [Africa Fit for Children, May 2001].

Another important provision is Education for All (EFA) introduced in 1990 at the World Conference on Education, held in Jomtien (Thailand). Ten years later the international community reaffirmed its commitment to achieving Education for All, at the 2000 World Education Forum held in Dakar (Senegal). These documents strongly urge the need for preschool education internationally.

Ethiopian constitution of 1995 (Art.9 (4)) also stipulated that all international documents ratified by the Ethiopian government are considered as part and parcel of the law of the country. The Ethiopian constitution article 36 also endorses the right of every child including special protection to disabilities and advancement to their welfare and education. The new Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia (ETP) further stipulated that preschool education to focus on the overall development of the child in order to prepare him/her for formal education.

The goals and objectives of the Policy Framework for early childhood education of Ethiopia also stated as “to promote early stimulation and the best start in life for all children from birth

to seven , and enhance the quality ,accessibility and equitable distribution of services of children through more efficient partnerships and capacity building programs” (MOE,2009,p.17).

For Robert (1990) providing a fair start to preschool education is crucial to modify distressing socio-economic and gender related inequalities. In an economic argument he further stated that investing in the early age can benefit the society through increased production and cost saving in the later ages.

In general preschool education is highly significant as well as a right of every child irrespective of its background. Failing to provide children at this stage of development with better nutrition, healthcare and education deprives them of their right to develop as productive citizens, enjoy quality of life and eventually contribute to the society’s growth. In addition, it hinders the effort to achieve the EFA global goals and the intended General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP) (Maekelch, 2007; UNESCO, 2000)

Although, Ethiopia is committed to promote preschool education in the different legal documents and some efforts being done its status is at low stage. Preschool education in Ethiopia with GER of 3.1% in 2006/7 was an indication of low attention to the program compared to the performance of sub-Saharan counties with an average GER of 15%(UNESCO, 2007; MOE, 2008). The GER increased to 4.2% in 2008/9; however, the number of children who had the access is in significant. Tigray Regional state performed below the national average in two of the academic years observed with a GER of 2.3% in

2006/7 and GER of 1% in 2008/9. Although, the MOE (2010) acknowledged that there were under reporting in some regions the achievement so far is not encouraging compared to many of the Sub Saharan countries.

Thus, the low status of Preschool Education in Ethiopia is one of the areas that call for thorough investigation to improve Access for preschool age children at a national as well as at a local level.

1.2.Statement of the Problem

Preschool Education is one of the most neglected areas in Ethiopia. The preschool education enrollment ratio in 2006/2007 was about 3.1% nationally, and 2.3% in Tigray (MOE, 2008). Recent reports further indicated that in the Tigray Regional State among the total 397,830 of preschool age population only 15,130 (GER of 3.8%) children were attending preschool education in the 2009/2010 academic year which is still a very insignificant number. Among those children only 750 of them were attending in a government supported preschool centers. The remaining were attending in privately owned kindergartens, Religious Organizations, NGOs, (TREB, 2010), which are unaffordable for many of the children from the lower economic background.

Coming to the capital ,although, about 40% of the preschool children in Tigray are found in Mekelle, where 56 kindergartens of all type are available, significant number of preschool age children do not have access for preschool education program.

Thus, the study aimed at investigating the practices and challenges of preschool education in Mekelle city. It also attempted to pin point those factors that hindered the enhancement of access for preschool education in the city. Moreover, the study aimed to examine the roles and reactions of administrative bodies and other stakeholders in promoting preschool education so that children will be equally ready for further formal education.

More specifically, the research aims to answer the following basic questions:

1. What is the Status of participation in preschool education in Mekelle?
2. What are the attitude and perception of stakeholder's towards the value of preschool education and rights of preschool age children?
3. What are the factors that hindered access to preschool education in the city?
4. What strategies can be used to improve the access to preschool education?

1.3. Objectives of the study

The major objectives of the study were to:

- examine the magnitude of preschool participation in the city
- examine the major factors that affect access of children to preschool education in Mekelle
- Analyze the attitude and perception of teachers, supervisors, education officers and other stakeholders on the right of preschool age children and
- Analyze the attitude and perception of teachers, principals,, supervisors ,parents representatives, education officers and social service workers on significance of preschool education.
- Suggest different strategies that enhance access to preschool education.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The study was expected to have the following significance:

- It will contribute to the understanding of the rate of participation of preschool education, identify the children with less access to preschool education and provide relevant information for intervention.
- It can provide a necessary basis for policy makers, planners, school principals, teachers, parents and other interested groups to realize the significance of preschool Education, the magnitude of the problem and attempt to solve it.
- The study may stimulate interest or serve as a stepping stone for those who have an intention for further study in the field.

1.5. Delimitation of the Study

The study was delimited to Mekelle City because of the time factor. Moreover, there are all type kindergartens (Governmental, Public, Private, NGOs and Religious Organizations) and it was representative of the different types of KGs.

1.6. Limitation of the Study

The limitations of the study were that it was not possible to apply higher level statistical tools to analyze the quantitative data because the number of the two groups of respondents was not equivalent. Furthermore, the supervisors and social service workers were not randomly selected. In general sampling did not satisfy the assumptions of application of inferential statistics.

There was a problem to obtain organized relevant data related to preschool program from the documents. Data obtained from the REB and MOE were contradictory to each other. Shortage of locally produced related literatures particularly about preschool program in the Tigray Regional State was almost nonexistent.

1.7 Operational Definition of Terms

Preschool Education: - in this paper preschool education is alternatively used with early childhood education and kindergarten education. This is an educational program provided in an organized form for children of age 4-6 years old.

“0- Class strategy”:-an alternative strategy designed by the Tigray Education Bureau for preschool children of age 6 to provide a preparatory program for formal schooling in the premises of the formal primary school.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Educators have pronounced the significance of preschool education. Moreover, UN organizations and governments ratified preschool education as a right of the child in their conventions and declarations. Following the conventions and declarations many countries recognized the need for preschool education and included it as one component of their education sector programs. Different researches and assessments were carried out to see the status of preschool education worldwide, at regional as well as national level, to pinpoint the critical factors that hampered the promotion of preschool education in different regions and nations, and to learn lessons on the strategies that countries employed to expand quality preschool education in their respective regions. Thus, this review addresses some of these issues in detail.

2.1 Rationale for Early Childhood Education

2.1.1 Scientific Argument

Research evidences demonstrate that early years of a child are critical in the development of intelligence, personality, language, social behavior, creativity etc. For this reason early childhood ages are considered as a foundation for the later lives of children. During the early years children want to know what their environment is, how it works, how it feels, and how they can be part of it (Chowduly & Choudhury , 2002; Burke & Johnson, 2004). Imitation of speech and actions of others are more pronounced during the early years than any other time in life span. i.e children are rapid to learn more words and actions of adults through

imitation. Moreover, children show more creativity in their play during the preschool ages than at any other times in their lives.

As the rate of growth and development of the child is fast, any stimulation along these lines will have its maximum effect during these years (Chowdury & Choudhury , 2002). Therefore, the child needs an understanding adult to help him/her to explore manually and verbally to learn the lessons of life from both people and objects. The more experience the child receives at this stage the richer will be the dividend. It is therefore, the duty of the adult (parent/guardian, and preschool teachers) to provide rich experiences to the child and help him/her develop good habits, proper attitudes and questioning mind.

Psychologists give different names for the preschool ages such as: foundation years, imitative age, period of plasticity, period of learning, exploratory ages (Chowdury & Choudhury , 2002). Besides, the child is considered as a little scientist, since he/she is active in exploring his environment, continuously ask questions to the existing adults. Similarly, Zanden in Habtamu (1996) emphasizes the importance of early childhood education. He ,for instance, argues that process of abstract thinking, reasoning, ability of inference and problem solving , sense of integrated self identity and autonomy begins development in preschool period. Hence, early stimulation (schooling, play, activities, intervention etc) promotes acquisition of language, expansion of cognitive ability, better social skills, stable personality development and better adjustment.

Zanden in Habtamu (1996) further stated that “children who have been to preprimary school show better progress at the primary stage and (the participation) helps to reduce wastage and stagnation. The pace of learning, however, will depend on whether and to what extent the child’s inclinations to learn encounter and engage supporting environments. The environment in which a child grows up has a powerful impact on how the child develops and what the child learns.

In recent decades, research in neuroscience and cognitive psychology also has offered undeniable evidence that positive stimuli during early childhood are critically important, for it is during this when approximately one billion of the child’s brain cells make intricate connections (synapses) (Burke & Johnson, 2004). According to many of the psychologists in the area of child development the brain operates on the “use it or lose it principle”. That means, brain cells which are stimulated earlier facilitate optimal brain development, and those wires which never been stimulated disappears. Zanden in Habtamu(1996) agrees on an abused or severely stressed child may have a brain which is approximately “one third” smaller than his peers. This implies that children at their early years highly demand a stimulating environment and supportive adults for the proper brain development.

Although genes determine a certain part of such connections, the stimuli that the child receives from the surrounding significantly influence his/her subsequent physical, psychological and cognitive development. UNESCO (2004) further explained the significance of positive stimuli as follows:

When these stimuli are negative, affected by violence, poverty, malnutrition, or lack of protection or affection the child runs higher risk of presenting developmental problems, poor school or work performance, psychological and mental problem and antisocial behavior. On the other hand positive stimuli, such as constant nurturing and affectionate interaction with child's parents as well as high quality early childhood education have significantly positive effect on later academic performance, employment opportunities and productivity which effectively compensate the disadvantaged socio economic situations in to which the child is born. (p.23)

Pronouncing the relevance and the need of quality care and education of children at the early years Tirusew (2007), compared with construction of a house by saying: "as erecting a house without a foundation is not possible, efficient human resource development of a country heavily relies on early years of human development"(p.2002-3). Thus, investment in the early years of children such as investing in preschool education is an effective investment. According to Demeke (2007) the preschool period is a period where society starts to instill cultural value to its young through storytelling, make believe play, and model learning methods. For the effectiveness of this objective locally developed instructional materials and the language and communication plays significant role. Educators in the area recommend the use of mother tongue to facilitate the effectiveness of the child's holistic development.

According to Habtamu (1996) many studies and experiences of many countries such as USA, UK, Canada, Sweden, Israel, Japan, Brazil, show that investment in ECE has great benefits to

the child, family, and the society at large. Early years of life are critical stage in the formation of personality, intellectual, social behavior, and transmission of social value.

Habtamu (1996) further indicated that children who went through preschool programs tend to be more successful in school programs (less dropout, and repetition), show better adjustment and have better overall maturity than those children who did not participate in ECE.

In general, early childhood is a time where a lot of efforts should be exerted to build the identity of the child. This formative period needs great care and appropriate settings such as classrooms situation, play materials, games, story books, paintings, arts that should reflect the child's own context. Moreover, it is a critical age that determines the future of the individual child, the community and the nation at large. Thus, it requires the attention of the family, the government and other partners, where, providing early childhood education is one of the efforts to the intended goals of the child, the family and the society in general.

2.1.2 The Educational Right Argument

Education has been formally recognized as a human right since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. It includes the entitlement to free and compulsory education. Article 26(2) of that declaration states: Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedom. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of

the United Nations for the maintenance of peace, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNHCR in (Asmelash, 2007). The Convention of the Right of the Child, 1959 also has laid a foundation in introducing the principle of “best interest of the child” to guide all those who would be involved in making decisions that would ultimately affect children (Maekelech, 2007).

Several other global human right treaties have also affirmed the same. These include the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966). All these international agreements, among other things, provide the Right to free and compulsory education for all children (Asmelash, 2007).

The Convention on the Rights of the Child is the first legally binding international instrument to incorporate the full range of human rights; civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. In 1989 world leaders decided that children needed a special convention just for them because people under 18 years old often need special care and protection that adults do not. The leaders also wanted to make sure that the world recognized that children have human rights too (Maekelech, 2007). Article 29 (a) of the CRC obliges the States that the education of the child should be directed to: The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential.

The African Charter On the Rights and Welfare of the Child entered into force on Nov. 29, 1999, not only has reaffirmed the rights of children to education provided by the 1989 UN Convention but also has added new elements from the perspective of African culture. Among others Article 11 of the Charter states that:

Every child shall have the right to education. The education of the child shall be directed to: (a) The promotion and development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential; (b) Fostering respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms with particular reference to those set out in the provisions of various African instruments on human and peoples' rights and international human rights declarations and conventions. (OAU, 1990, p.4)

Another important provision is Education for All (EFA) which was introduced in 1990 at the World Conference on Education held in Jomtien (Thailand). Ten years later the international community reaffirmed its commitment to achieving Education for All at the 2000 World Education Forum held in Dakar /Senegal/ (UNESCO,2000). The participants in that education forum adopted the Dakar Framework for Action and identified the six specific goals one of them directed to early childhood education i.e. “Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children” and committed themselves to their attainment (UNESCO, 2000).

The Education for All declarations was considered historic milestones in the field of ECCE by crystallizing two crucial ideas: first that human are born with learning needs and the right to satisfying them; second that young children’s developmental and learning needs are multifaceted and require comprehensive care and education (UNESCO, 2004). This declaration was also considered as historic significance by broadening the means and scope of basic education and recommended the role of family and community early childhood education in addition to institutional programs (Maekelch, 2007).

Generally, the right to education is high on the agenda of the international community and many countries in the world have broadening the awareness on the purpose and relevance of early childhood care and education and are being registering significant results in providing access to care and education to their children although there is variations in the progress among the countries.

The Ethiopian Government was the signatory of all the regional and global proclamations and approaches to provide basic education for all. It was the signatory of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations in 1948 which stated that “everyone has a right to education”. Hence, it has accepted the international commitments made to the provision of education. It has endorsed and ratified the United Nations Declaration on the Right of the Child of November 20, 1959 and the Convention on the Right of the Child of December 9, 1991.

The constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) Article 9(4) states that all international agreements ratified by Ethiopia are an integral part of the law of the land. Following this Article 13 elaborates that all legislative, executive and judicial organs have the responsibility to respect and enforce what is embodied under that section which should be done in conformity with human rights consideration (FDRE, 1995; Maekelech, 2007; Tirusew, 2005).

In addition, it has included the Rights of Children in its constitution. Article 41 of the constitution which states the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights ensures that “Every

Ethiopian national has the right to equal access to publicly funded social services” and that “The State has the obligation to allocate an ever increasing resource to provide to the public health, education and other social services”. Article 36, section 1 to 5 particularly deals with the care and education of Children (FDRE, 1994; Maekelech, 2007)

The Government also formulated a New Education and Training Policy in 1994. Regarding preschool education the document states that, “Preschool education will focus on all rounded development of the child in preparation for formal Schooling” (FDRE, 1994, p.14). In order to implement the 1994 Education and Training Policy the government has developed a twenty year education sector indicative plan divided into a series of five year development programs. Although, preschool education as a subsector is included in the ETP it did not get adequate attention in the ESDPs. The subsector is left to private investors, religious organizations, NGOs and the community which is not feasible to accommodate the majority of children in the rural areas and the urban disadvantaged group.

The Developmental Social Welfare Policy (1996) of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the FDRE also states that “All efforts shall be made to implement all international and regional conventions and legal instruments concerning the right of children, which Ethiopia has already accepted to” (Tirusew, 2005). Dealing with specific area the policy (Article 5) declares that protecting and ensuring the healthy development of children deserves special attention. It further elaborates that “appropriate and comprehensive care and services shall be extended to children so as to ensure their all rounded and harmonious development” (Article 5.1.1) (MOLSA, 1996).

To sum up, it can be said that the right to education is closely connected with all other human rights and is crucial to all rounded development and well being of an individual and society. Ethiopia has committed to promote the right of the child. The Child Right issues are included in FDRE constitution, Social Welfare Policy, Education and Training Policy, Health Policy and the Sustainable and Poverty Reduction Program of the country. In spite of these Conventions, Declarations and Policy statements preschool education did not get adequate attention in the actual practices of ESDP planning and allocating finance to promote the program thus, the program remained neglected.

2.1.3 Economic Argument for Early Childhood Education

Many researchers and economist argue that investing in preschool education is a cost effective investment in many ways. One way in which investment in early childhood care and education can bring economic return is by reducing work losses of mothers and guardians and by cutting the later need for social welfare programs. Improving the efficiency of educational system through reduction in dropout, repetition and remedial programs in primary and secondary schools has also an economic impact of investing in preschool education. That means if children arrive at primary schools better prepared they can make better use of the school and teachers are also stimulated more, facilities and materials are used better and children learn from each other which can affect the quality and efficiency of the education system (UNESCO, 1990). The proper nurturing of young will increase the return to primary and secondary investment, eventually raising productivity and income level with in the society.

Early childhood programs have the potential to improve both physical and mental capacity of children (Burke & Johnson, 2004; Robert, 1990). In turn it is associated with important changes in skill and outlooks affecting adult behavior and it can be related to increase productivity in the different economic sectors later in the life time of the children.

The MOE also acknowledged that preschool education has an economic implication in its ESDP III while it stated the objectives as “Expanding pre-school program will serve two purposes: enhancing the quality of education and improving the internal efficiency of primary schools (MOE, ESDP III, 2005, p.40)”. Improving internal efficiency implies reducing cost of education wasted for grade repeaters and school dropouts.

Burke and Johnson (2004) further indicated that children with proper nurturing do not engage in violence activities during their adolescence. On the other hand the improper nurturing of young children will result not only in a more violence but also in more stress related diseases impacting negative on productivity and health care costs and affecting the economic prospect of citizens and the nation in general.

2.1.4 A Social Equity Argument

The other justifications for promoting early childhood care and education is that it is a means to address inequalities rooted in poverty and discrimination (social, religious and gender) by giving children from the disadvantaged background a faire start.

Poverty and discrimination produces stressful conditions and unequal treatment that can inhibit healthy and comprehensive development of the child in the early years. Robert (1990) for instance indicates that children from the poor families often fall quickly behind their more advantaged peers in their readiness for school and the gap continues. He further argued that unless special effort is made to assist the disadvantaged to moderate the social differences, early childhood education can be discriminatory favoring the upper class; who can afford it. Studies carried out in different countries of the world revealed that preschool education programs are being favoring the rich, urban children than the poor, rural, and children from social disadvantaged families (UNESCO, 2010).

Research conducted in Ethiopia similarly indicated that almost all existing preschools in different regions are concentrated in the towns. The rural areas where the majority of the people live are under served (Demeke, 2007; Habtamu, 1996; MOE, 2006; Tirusew, 2005). According to these studies the disparity can be reflected in the provision of education at primary, secondary and higher education level as well.

Within the urban areas those who send their children to preschool institution are parents who can afford to pay for it. Those facts show that the preschool cater for children from the

privileged families, thus, widening the gap between the haves and have-nots, which at the end militates against sustainable development (Demeke, 2007; Habtamu, 1996; MOE, 2006). Disparities observed in the early years have lasting effects in the life span of children. Children from families with few resources often fall quickly and progressively behind their more advantaged peers in their mental development and in their readiness for school and life. And that gap never closes unless it is resolved on time.

Early childhood programs can also reduce gender inequality. In some cases the impact of participation on education has been found to be higher for boys than for girls even in the preschool level. Girls who participate in early childhood programs are much more likely to begin school at the appropriate age and complete primary school than girls who do not. UNESCO (2010) also stated that preschool education is a means to offset social, economic, and language based disadvantages especially for vulnerable and disadvantaged children. According to the Educational Statistics Annual Abstract of 2008/09 gender inequality is not a problem in the preschool program in Ethiopia; rather the problem is low enrollment of both sexes with equal GER of 4.2% in that academic year (MOE, 2010).

In general, provision of preschool education is means to narrow the gaps of social inequality. The imbalance needs to be addressed if governments are to implement policies of sound development and egalitarian principle. Otherwise, if the existing trend for example is maintained in Ethiopia the urban rural disparity, the disparity between the haves and have-nots will continue.

2.1.5 Changing Social and Demographic Circumstances

The change in social and demographic circumstance paved the way for the demand for early childhood care and education. The increasing survival of vulnerable children, changing family structure, country to city migration, the demand of women in labour force and other changes require increased attention to early childhood care and education and leads for a need to better development of and large investment in early childhood education (Habtamu ,1996; Robert,1990).

The existence of vulnerable children such as children with disabilities, orphan children, street children and others also are social and psychological factors that call for establishment and expansion of preschool care and education (Tirusew, 2005).

2.2 Status of Preschool Education

2.2.1 Global Perspective

Pre-primary (preschool education) is an umbrella term covering a wide range of provisions and programs mostly for children aged 3 and 6⁺. Countries differ enormously in the mix of public and private provision and in financing arrangements and governance UNICEF in (UNESCO, 2010).

Participation in pre-primary education has been steadily increasing. Some 140 million children were enrolled in pre-school programs worldwide in 2007, up from 113 million in 1999. The gross enrolment ratio (GER) climbed from 33% to 41% over the same period

(UNESCO, 2010). However, there is a wide gap between the developed and developing countries; particularly the sub-Saharan countries lagged behind the other countries.

In the Sub Saharan African enrollment increased from 5 million in 1999 to 10 million in 2007, where the gross enrollment ratio is 10% in 1999 and 15% in 2007. Looking beyond the regional data reveals a diverse array of country experiences. Among the countries for which data are available seventeen states in sub-Saharan Africa have coverage a rate of less than 10%, Ethiopia is among the countries (UNESCO, 2010).

Of the factors that hinder the promotion of early childhood education research results carried out in the developed as well as developing countries identify household poverty and low levels of parental education as two of the most pronounced problems (UNESCO, 2010)

2.2.2 Preschool Education in the Ethiopian Context

Two major traditions characterized for the development of education in Ethiopia; the traditional and western systems. The traditional approach has characterized Ethiopian education throughout the history of this nation. This traditional education system is deeply rooted in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and is recognized as one of the oldest education system in the world. For centuries Orthodox churches, monasteries and convents were the only centers for formal school from preschool through the university level as Pankhurst cited in (Hoot, Szente & Belete, 2004).

Although, it was scant and exclusive for males preschools were available during the traditional medieval periods in Ethiopia. Pankhurst cited in (MOE, 2007) for example indicated the following:

Early historical data on children in Ethiopia is so scant that it is almost as though they were neither seen nor heard. We can however, catch occasional glimpses of the medieval education system which must have existed for centuries. (p.3)

During the medieval period male children began attending church services at around age 4. The curriculum for children of this age consisted primarily of drill and practices of alphabets. Mastery of the alphabet was followed by reading and recitation of religious texts that began with the Psalms of David (Hoot, Szente & Belete, 2004).

Western educational ideas, however, have flourished since the early twentieth century. Studies carried out by MOE and UNICEF (2007) revealed that modern practices of preschool education was started in 1900 where the first modern preschool was established eight years prior to the establishment of the first modern primary school in Ethiopia, in Drie Dawa /a town in the eastern part of the country/ for children of French consultants working in the railway construction. Then a number of private preschools attached to the existing educational institutions such as English School, German school, Lycee Gebremariam and the like were started giving preschool services for the children of the rich parents in Addis Ababa (Demeke, 2007).

Preschool as general community service, however, began around 1971 with a few pilot projects in the major towns of the country under the Ministry of National Community Development and Social Affairs (MNCDSA), Swedish and American Peace Corp volunteers were responsible to run the centers. When the volunteers left the country the program was taken over by Women village level workers who were not specifically trained for preschool, MNCDSA in (Demeke, ,2007). Up to the downfall of the imperial regime there were 77 kindergartens with an enrolment of 7,573 age 4 to 6 years old children in the country, National Children's Commission in (Demeke, 2007).

Studies further indicated that preschool education remained exclusively an urban practice; the largest portion of rural child-population, children with disabilities and children from economically deprived families have been deprived from preschool education opportunities and were run by missionaries, private organizations and MNCDSA (Demeke, 2007; Wondimu,1996; Tirusew,2005). The MOE did not pay much attention to preschool education during that time period because the Imperial government's rationale was to quickly develop literate adults who could operate in the emerging modern state.

The 1974 socialist revolution was considered as a turning point in the history of early childhood education in Ethiopia. In 1981 an independent commission called the National Children's Commission (NCC) was established with the task of caring and educating Ethiopian children. Among other things a manual for kindergarten was produced in 1982 by the commission. Preschool education became part of the national education policy, a national curriculum developed and preschool teacher training established in Addis Ababa. Three

separate departments established within the MOE to support training of teachers, curriculum and text book development, supervision and evaluation of preschool program NCC in (Demeke, 2007).

Two important factors that contributed for the development of preschool education in the period were the political motto of the time, “revolution cannot be successful without the active participation of women” and the established farm cooperatives. Since women were required to participate in the cooperatives and political activities it necessitated for the rapid emerging of child care centers/Kindergarten programs in the urban as well as rural areas of the country. Unlike the Imperial regime the major changes in the preschool program were not only the rapid increase of preschool institutions but also the location of the preschools. Preschools were established in the rural areas also.

As a result the number of preschools increased and preschool children enrolled in these programs rapidly expanded. From 1975- 1990 preschools grew from 77 to 912 and preschool enrollment grew from 7,573 to 102, 000 NCC in Demeke (2007).

With the change in government in 1991 most programs initiated by the previous regime were discontinued. The established Kindergartens in towns however have continued with the name “Mewale- Hitsanat” which means kindergarten (Demeke ,2007).

In 1994 the government of Ethiopia adopted a new education and training policy. The government prepared series of ESDPs to implement the policy. Although, the policy

recognized the tremendous importance of preschool education the ESDPs developed to translate the policy document did not give much attention to the program. The first ESDP indicated that preschool Education is not a priority of the time due to the economic status of the country. As a result the program was left to be run by private investors, NGOs, public and religious organizations and for children whose parents can afford to send them to the existed preschools (Demeke, 2007; MOE, 2002). In the second and the third ESDPs as well preschool education did not get proper attention and there was no significant progress in terms of enrollment ratio. Although, the ESDP III targeted to increase enrolment from 3% to 20% in 2010/11 the country's GER remained around 4.2% (MOE, 2005).

Comparing to other countries assessments carried out by EFA global monitoring report (UNSECO, 2007; UNESCO, 2010) and data collected in the Annual Educational abstracts by the MOE indicated that Ethiopia is lagging behind many of the developing countries in the area of preschool education; unlike its rapid progress in enrollment in primary education.

According to the EFA monitoring report issued in 2010, Ethiopia is among the list of countries in sub-Saharan Africa with the Gross Enrolment Rate of preschool education below 10%. Compared to many of the African countries Ethiopia is almost at the bottom in terms of GER in preschool education. For instance, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania have a GER of 68%,48%, 15%, 51% and 35% respectively in the academic year of 2007 and the average GER for sub Saharan countries was 15% in the same year(UNESCO, 2010).

The Education Annual Abstract 2008/09 revealed that only 4.2 % of the preschool age children in Ethiopia were attending the program. Data in the same annual abstract indicated that the number of Kindergartens and enrollment rate has increased by 17.9% and 17.5% from that of the academic year of 2004/05 respectively. Although, some improvements have registered compared to the previous years the participation still remained at a low level (MOE, 2010).The figure indicates that there is an improvement in the subsector along the five years but the number of eligible children who got access for preschool education is insignificant.

A study conducted by (Demeke, 2007; MOE& UNESCO, 2006; MOE& UNICEF, 2007; Tirusew, 2005) shows that most of the preschools were privately owned followed by NGOs and religious organizations. Government run preschools were very few in the country. Inevitably, only small percentage of parents or care givers can afford to pay for these programs.

Recently the MOE has acknowledged the very low preschool enrollment ratio and felt the need to assess the general status of early childhood care and education in Ethiopia and design mechanisms to enable the country meet the millennium development goals of UPE by 2015. As a result the ministry has undertaken a national survey on the status of early childhood education in Ethiopia in early 2007 and developed a National Policy Frame Work (Demeke, 2007; MOE, 2007).Thus, a National Policy Framework and Guideline developed. Developing the National Framework and Guideline by itself however is not an achievement but an important step for the promotion of preschool program in the country.

2.2.3 Preschool Education in Tigray

The first preschool in Tigray regional state was established in Mekelle, Kebele 16 in 1963-1966 E.C. The medium of instruction was English. Then, SOS was opened to provide service for orphaned children in 1969 E.C. During the era of the previous regime preschools were established under the municipalities and Kebele administrations and NGOs until 1981E.C. All efforts done were focused in the urban areas (TREB, 1996 E.C).

Starting 1985 E.C efforts were done to expand the preschool education service by private investors, Relief Society of Tigray (REST), NGOs, and Religious Organizations and the number of preschools reached 100 in 1996 E.C, however, the achievement in the area remained insignificant (TREB, 1996 E.C).Moreover, there was no centrally developed standard for the preschools to abide by and services delivered were determined by the institutions.

The Regional Education Statistics Annual Abstract for the academic year 2008/9 indicates that there were 132 kindergartens with an enrollment of 8810 children in the academic year 2007/8(TREB, 2008).The MOE statistical annual abstract of 2008/9 ,however, presented a contradictory figure on the enrolment and number of preschools in the region. According to the MOE Statistical Annual Abstract, only 3767 (1%) of eligible children in the region were attending preschool education in 36 kindergartens in 2008/09. Compared to the other regions in Ethiopia Tigray is second from the last in Gross Enrollment Ratio in preschool education;

next to Afar and Somali Regions with same GER of 0.6% (MOE, 2010). From the two figures one can revealed that enrollment of preschool in the region decreased by 5043 and number of preschools decreased by 96 within a year, which is not feasible.

The MOE Statistical Annual Abstract for the academic year of 2006/7 on the other hand indicated that in Tigray there were 139 KGs, with an enrolment of 9357 and GER of 2.3%. The contradictions of the data in the Regional Statistical Annual Abstract and National MOE is due to inconsistency in reporting or lack of proper monitoring and evaluation of the program. In addition this is a sign of low attention given to the area of preschool program both at the regional and national level. Unless the EMIS groups at both the regional and national level produce the same data the reliability of the Statistical Annual Abstract is questionable.

2.3 Ownership of Preschools

International experience indicates that preschools are owned and operated by different organizations and individuals. Government, NGOs, private, community, and public preschools are widely prevalent, although, the name varies from country to country.

Private organizations and individuals open preschools for profit as any business they might tend to have money as their motives. In addition, communities and governments also operate preschool education to provide service for the preschool age children considering the short and long term benefits of the program (UNESCO, 2006).

In Ethiopia the three Education Sector Development Programs developed by the MOE indicated that private investors, public, religious and other organizations were expected to run preschool programs; since it was not the priority of the government due to the economic status of the country (Demeke ,2007; MOE, 2005). Thus, the role of the Government on preschool program was limited to setting of policy, curriculum, teacher training, providing supervisory and guidance services.

Whoever is the owner of the preschool centers, educators in the area suggested that they should be encouraged to make preschool education accessible to early school age children. They should be encouraged to expand preschools to accommodate more children and to have better qualified teachers. Those who give free scholarship for children who do not afford for preschool education should be rewarded with subsidy (UNESCO, 2006).

2.4 The Role of Partners in Promoting Preschool Education Program

Managing and enhancing preschool education is not a task to be left to a single organization or body. It is a program that calls for an integrated effort of different governmental and non-governmental organizations, local community, parents and religious organizations backed by comprehensive policy frame work.

Ramsay and Johnson (2004) particularly emphasized the cooperation work of the school and parents to promote the holistic development of the child. According to them, the two most significant environments for the child are the home and the school. Although, these two environments impact the child separately the experience in one environment also affects the

other. Thus, administrators and teachers have to create strong alliance with partners particularly parents.

Early Childhood Education highly requires the participation and education of parents and families in their children's care and education particularly for three reasons: First the articulation between family and the formal ECE institutions has been to positive results in the child's development and learning. Second parents are increasingly recognized and empowered as principal educators of their children and active participation in and responsibilities for their children's socialization and education are encouraged. Third the family (and the community) has been identified as an important setting for a child's development and learning as well as a strategy to expand early childhood services coverage. For these reasons the importance of family participation has been presented since the origin of early childhood care and education and was reaffirmed in the Jometien Declaration /Article V/ (UNESCO, 2004).

The Dakar framework for action, moreover, makes explicit reference the need for partnership between governments, NGOs, communities and families to ensure the provision of good care and education for children especially for those most disadvantaged through activities centered on the child, focused on the family, based within the community and supported by national, multi sector policies and adequate resources (UNESCO, 2000). Below are some details of the role of parents, the school and the government in the promotion of early childhood education:

2.4.1 The Role of Parents/Care givers

The development of the child as a whole person is important to the child, the family and the society at large. Families, kindergartens /preschool institutions/ and the community must participate in the provision of quality services to children.

Parents and other care givers are significant persons in the life of the child. They provide primarily security and protection. Their role is to socialize and inculcate life principles and spiritual and moral values of his/her character development. They also provide an enabling environment for the child's growth and development and early stimulating for his/her future development. Research suggests that parent participation in a child's preschool program is positively associated with social adjustment and school performance (Ramsay & Johnson, 2004).

Parents are the nurturers, passing on values to their children, impacting on the teachers' effort to teach. Parents also can serve important resource people for teachers. Their special talent and interests are useful to any program involving the development of young children. Teachers' objectives for the children under their care are best achieved if they and the parents agree on the learning objectives and the best way of achieving them, Ramsay and Johnson (2004). On the other hand if parents and teachers have a dysfunctional relationship the learning of the children will be compromised.

Thus, the director/principal/ of the preschool program needs to work closely with parents and often serves as an advisory, create common goals, mobilize resources, and expand ECE to the preschool age children.

2.4.2 The Role of the Government in Promoting Preschool Education

The role of the government in the provision of preschool education considerably varies from country to country. Some countries intensively invest to universalize preschool education through public fund, others invest for targeted children and others left the program to private investors. For example in Ethiopia, although, the government is aware of the importance of pre-school education in both urban and rural areas the sector is left to be carried out by private investors, NGOs, religious organizations and other community based organizations (Demeke,2007 ;MOE, 2002; MOE,2005;Yisak, Workneh & Asham, 2009). However, the development of private preschools in Ethiopia is a recent phenomenon, so they could not easily expand pre-schools throughout the country. In addition, since the private organizations are generally profit-seeking institutions it is difficult to induce them to open pre-schools in very poor rural communities as well as to provide affordable services for the urban poor.

The role of the government particularly in the developing nations was exclusively focused mainly on setting strategies such as: training of teachers, production of teaching materials, provision of guidance and supervision, setting standards, assisting private investors to get land for construction of preschool institutions, ensuring standards, controlling and evaluation the program (Chowdury & Choudhury , 2002; MOE,2005)

MOE (2005) in its ESDP III has also clearly identified its role with regard to the preschool education program. Accordingly, the roles of the government were:

- Encourage the private sector, NGOs and the communities to organize and provide early childhood education
- Review and revise curriculum and the standard of the facilities
- Provide technical assistance in supervision, teacher training and other related program area
- Undertake close monitoring to improve the quality of preprimary education
- Undertake a base line survey on the preprimary experience in the country
- Prepare general strategic document to establish pre-primary education in all primary schools
- Facilitate technical assistance to train personnel and other implementations the effort of REBs.
- Increase enrollment from 3% to 20% during five years of time
- Establish a regular experience sharing experience. (p.36)

In the Ethiopian Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction document the position of the government is further indicated as follows:

Financing of pre-primary education remains exclusively outside the responsibility of the government. The private sector, NGOs and the communities will continue to invest in the development of pre-primary school facilities. Parents support their children through payment of tuition fees and provision of educational materials. The Government plays the crucial role in policy development and standard

setting. It develops the curriculum, provides supervision, sets standards for facilities, and issues licenses for the institutions. The Government also promotes the sub-sector through appropriate policies on investment in pre-primary programs by the private sector, NGOs and the communities (MOFED: 2002, p. 92).

In general, many of the researches conducted in Ethiopia in the preschool education program and the ESDPs revealed that government's financial support to run the program was not available (insignificant). However, UNESCO (2008) advises governments to allocate public fund for the poor, use alternative strategies to expand preschool education and non public services to be used for the wealthier children. Currently, however, the government after having conducted a national survey seems recognized the low status of preschool education nationally and started to react by developing alternative strategies, ECCE policy frame work and prioritizing the program in the 4th ESDP. The alternative strategies developed demand the involvement of the government to invest in preprimary education.

2.4.3 The Role of Schools in Promoting Preschool Education

Useful strategy for implementing National ECD policies and meeting policy goals is to develop public private partnership for designing and implementing priority programs. Partnership at both local and national level is all important. The cultural context of developing partnership at the national level may be quite different from cultural context in the provincial or community setting. Therefore, it may be essential to carry out quite different partnership strategies in various parts of the world. School based organizations; Parent Teacher Association (PTA) in our case, are responsible to create a functional partnership and

develop strategies to promote the expansion of ECD programs in the community .Among other things the school based organization is responsible for:

- Setting vision and direction regarding ECD
- Design ,implement , manage , monitor and evaluate ECD services and ensure close collaboration between sectoral services
- Identify , nominate and support local field staff capable of providing an array of services
- Ensure accountability to the public for the performance of community's schools
- Provide community leadership as advocates for children , the school district and the public school
- Work with community development organizations to ensure service reach intended participants (Vargas-Baron, 2005).

The school PTA also play critical role in local efforts to increase the supply and quality of preschool program. School leaders and staff with experience in implementing preschool programs stress repeatedly the need to reach out to all parts of the local community to develop and strengthen relationship. One suggested approach is to focus on the many assets within the school district and community rather than dwelling on what may not currently exist (Vargas-Baron, 2005).

The relationship between preschools and elementary schools has also a paramount importance. Benefits of positive relationship include greater alignment of curriculum, better use of limited resources and smoother transition for children and parents (Vargas-

Baron,2005).Therefore, preschools have to establish strong relationship with the neighboring primary schools in order to perform their activities effectively and efficiently.

Another important role which the preschools have to carry out is to strengthen the linkage between school and parents/care givers since the two important environments for the child's learning are the school and the home. Schools have to recognize that parents are teachers of their children. Teachers have to appreciate that parents are important resource people for them. Their special talent and interest are useful to any program involving the development of young children. Therefore, the roles of the schools according to (Ramsay & Johnson, 2004) for example are;

- Let parents , including fathers , know that you value their opinion
- Create a family center philosophy in the school by creating learning support groups- communities of supports
- Show issues of accountabilities
- Create training that focuses on the fundamental principles of parenting
- Communicate effectively with parents , giving them reasons for wanting to become involved in their child's education
- Document and share experience
- Treat parents as teachers of the child (p.19)

Schools –parent bond is very significant for the overall performance of the schools. Thus, Parent- school communication, which includes parent teacher conference, phone conversation with school staff, information sent home with children and informal conversation while dropping off and picking up children; Volunteering in the classroom or

for special activities such as field trip and involvement in decision making, which entails participation in parent teacher organizations are common activities recommended by educators (Ramsay & Johnson, 2004).

2.5 Determinants to Expansion of Preschool Education

Expanding preschool education is not an easy task. When early childhood education is made a priority the financial support is forthcoming, even in situations of relative poverty.

For some educators in the area of preschool education financing for preschool program, however, is not the basic problem. The problem is to recognize the value of such programs and build the personal and political resolve necessary to carry them out (Robert, 1990).

Researches carried out by Ethiopians also indicated that there are problems of lack of awareness of the implication of policy, attitude and prevalence of unfriendly child traditional practices (Demeke, 2007; MOE, 2006). The studies further noted that the problem of underinvestment is not at the root the problem. Instead it is primarily a matter of approach of acquiring new ways of thinking, of taking advantage of existing knowledge about what to do and of mobilizing the political and social will to do it within the limits of available resources.

These researches do not deny that shortage of finance is a bottle neck for expansion of preschool education but it is the approach and lack of awareness, attitudes greatly hamper the expansion of the program within the limited resources.

The other important factor that hampered to improve the low participation rate of preschool education is fast increase of the child population and poverty. The urban poor are the other group that has no chance of having their children attends preschools. The main problem is economic. Tuition fee of privately running preschools is quite high for the majority of the population to afford (MOE, 2006).

Tirusew (2007) indicated that community Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCEs) which flourished in the mid eighties and were accessible and affordable for the low income families were dwindling rapidly because of financial setbacks resulting in a very low salary rate for teachers and scarcity of resources. The preschool facilities are in inverse proportion to the demand and population size which is common to many of the developing countries.

Woldehanna et al. cited in Yisak ,Workneh and Asham (2009) pointed out being unable to pay fees was the main reason for urban parents/care givers for not sending their children to preschools in Ethiopia. Family size and birth order are also significant factors, such that, households with more children were less likely to enroll their children in preschool and later born children were also less likely to be enrolled than first born children.

Habtamu (1996) also noted that kindergartens in Ethiopia are urban and “well to do family” phenomenon where most of them were located in Addis Ababa and other major cities. The main problems were not only the issue of distribution and size of the participation but includes lack of understanding on the purpose of preschool education , lack of qualified

teachers , inadequacy of educational facilities and teaching materials, minimum support by the government and lack of community participation.

The other problems in the ECE program in Ethiopia are lack of advocacy on child rights, lack of locally produced educational and play materials (particularly in the public preschools), lack of networking among the different stakeholders, shortage (unavailability) of local materials and story books and not monitoring the ECE programs. Most of the preschool programs seem to run short of the quality indicators for early childhood education, such as developmentally appropriateness, culturally responsiveness in terms of relevant materials, activities and trained personnel. Furthermore, lack of space for play ground as well as inadequate play ground facilities are noticeable in most preschools in Ethiopia (Tirusew, 2007).

For UNESCO (2008) the prevalence of private provision of preschool education is a factor for disparity. “When private provision spreads so do disparities.” That means the overriding cause for disparity is the lack of public investment services or public support. When available government investment can remedy the problem but disparities necessarily arise when government support and investment are withdrawn. In practice, however, preschool programs remain neglected in many countries around the world suffering from public underinvestment. Preprimary education is not given a priority in the public spending in education. Globally the median share of preprimary education on the total public spending on education was only 4.4% in 2008. In several low income countries such as Comoros, Uganda etc the share was nil.

2.6 Strategies to Enhance Early Childhood Education: Lessons from Different Countries and suggestions of educators in the area

Different countries apply different strategies to promote preschool education for their citizens. Some countries focus on universalizing of early childhood care and education where as others focus on targeted children. Below are experiences of Vietnam's and Gambia's ECCE policies that could be lessons for developing nations like ours:

Vietnam's ECCE policy is called pro poor policy because it is mainly targeted on expanding access in the most disadvantaged areas. The program is led by a director of the department of early childhood education in the Ministry of Education and Training and is the lead sector for the program. It develops policies and monitors progress (UNESCO, 2005).

In Vietnam the program of early childhood education are categorized into State, Semi state, people founded and private services. Government mainly invests in the poor community mainly in the state services (no fee is charged from the parents). All the cost for teaching staff and management are borne by the Government. The semi state services are for children from relatively poor family and it is a cost sharing system. The government covers the salary of the management staff and subsidizes the running cost and parents pay the salary of the teaching staff.

For the people founded and private service, which are considered as non public services, the government set standards for them to follow with regard to buildings and infrastructure, staffing, pedagogy and carryout monitoring and evaluation of the services delivered. More

importantly the state has strong commitment to invest in early childhood education and its Gross Enrollment Ratio in 2001 was around 43% (UNESCO, 2005).

Gambia announced a plan to create ECD centers for children of age 3-6 years old in the premises of primary schools in the most disadvantaged areas. This enabled to optimize the use of existing infrastructures and teachers. The country further introduced a polyvalent teacher training framework, under which primary school teachers are certified by the government to teach early childhood as well. Once the plan is approved and implemented the school principal of the primary school is responsible to assign one of the polyvalent trained teachers to teach in the early childhood center. Teachers welcome it because they believe that it would certainly boost enrollment in primary education and help increase internal efficiency (UNESCO, 2006). For the fee paying nonpublic services government provides training of teachers to ensure quality of the services.

Critics of delivering preprimary education within the framework of primary education, however, warn “schoolification” of ECE as a major risk i.e., the program providers might focus to the formal teaching learning process and deemphasize the role of social development due to the influence of the school environment. But the option has clear financial advantages that many developing countries cannot afford to ignore. It saves setup, training and operation costs while enabling government with few resources to provide at least some early childhood experiences for poor children or some minimum opportunity for children to experience an organized learning environment before they start schooling (UNESCO, 2008).

The outlook to increase public investment in preprimary education is not promising in many of developing countries, though the effort deserves continuing effort. External aid cannot be expected to fill the gap. UNESCO (2008) recommends for developing countries that alternative strategy for preprimary education is to reserve government resources exclusively for the poor while encouraging non public services for the wealthier children .In such context ECCE could piggyback on primary education using primary school premises and using primary school teachers.

UNESCO (2004) also recommended eight policy strategies for promoting access to early childhood services provision. These were:

- Systematic approach to policy development and integration
- A strong and equal partnership with the education system
- A universal approach to access with particular attention to children in need of special support
- Substantial public investment in services and infrastructure
- Participatory approach to quality improvement and assurance
- Appropriate training and working conditions for staff in all forms of provision
- Attention to evaluation, monitoring and data collection and
- A framework and long-term agenda for research and evaluation (p.24).

Tirusew (2005) also recommended for the promotion of preschool in Ethiopia. Among the recommendations were that the MOE has to encourage both governmental and nongovernmental primary schools in the country to open preprimary education programs and

run under their program, upgrade traditional early childhood establishments through providing the necessary in-service training and basic infrastructure, encourage the private sector , the community and other organizations to open and run early childhood educational programs, organize and run pre-service and in-service early childhood educational programs.

CHAPTER THREE

THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Design and Methodology of the Study

The intended design for this investigation was mixed (the QUAN- Qual) model. This model also known as the explanatory mixed method design enabled the researcher to explain or elaborate the findings and interpretations of quantitative data analysis with the data gathered qualitatively (Creswel, 2009). Mixed method has the advantage to enrich the researchers' ability to draw conclusions about the problem under study (Mertens,2005).Mores in Martens (2005) further described that combining and increasing the number of research strategies used within a particular project enable to broaden the dimension and hence the scope of our project. i.e using more than one method within a research study enables to obtain a more complete picture of human behavior and experiences. Thus, we are better to hasten our understanding and achieve our research goals more quickly.

3.2 Sample Population and Sampling Technique

In Mekelle there were 56 Kindergartens of all types (governmental, private, public, NGOs, and religious) with a total enrollment of 5307 children attending preschool education from KG1-KG3 in the academic year 2008/2009 (TREB, 2009). In the Preschools there were 285 teachers among them 2 were males and the remaining females. Forty seven of the KGs were privately owned, 1 public, 1 government, and the remaining seven operated by NGOs and Religious organizations.

The city was divided into seven sub city administrations. A supervisor was assigned for each sub city to provide supervisory support for all primary and preprimary schools in the respective sub city. In addition, there were seven social service workers working in the seven sub city administrations.

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For the purpose of this research one public and one government preschools were included purposefully because they were limited in number. In addition, among the seven KGs owned by NGOs or religious organizations 6(85%) of them were included in the sample with the intention to include the views and practices of the different religious groups and NGOs; the remaining one used for pilot testing. 11(23%) randomly selected privately owned KGs were also part of the sample. Thus, total of 19 KGs were included in the research. Nineteen school principals of the sample preschools, 63 randomly selected teachers (three teachers each from 13 KGs with a teaching staff of less or equal to five and four teachers each from 6 KGs with a teaching staff of greater than five) from the sample KGs; 20 PTA members from 10 KGs (two parents' representative from each sample preschool) filled the questionnaires. Many of the privately owned preschools did not have functional parents' representative in their structure. Thus, 20 parents' representatives from 10 KGs participated in filling the school based questionnaire. In addition, five of the supervisors, working at the Zonal Education Department, five of the sub city cluster supervisors and six experts working for the social service of the sub city administration were part of the study.

To collect qualitative data in-depth interview was conducted with two Education Experts currently working at a Regional Education Bureau; a representative of the developmental

planning work process and a process owner for the curriculum preparation and implementation work process, with the intention that these experts were resourceful persons in the area of preschool education.

An in-depth interview was also conducted with the city education office curriculum preparation and implementation process owner to secure city based data regarding the issue of preschool education. A primary school principal was also interviewed to triangulate the necessary data.

The following were the list of preschools included in the sample:

Table 1. List of sample schools

Location of the preschool (Sub city/Kebele)	S.N	Name of preschool	Ownership
Hadinet	1	Aba- gebremicheal	Religious
	2	Adventist	Religious
	3	L-shaday	NGO
Adi-haki	4	Dagim-Amsal	Private
	5	Kaleb	Private
	6	Kidus Yosef	Religious
Hawelti	7	Axum	Private
	8	Honor	Private
	9	Nazrawi	Private
	10	Nicolas	Private
Semien	11	Social Affairs	Government
	12	SOS	NGO
Aider	13	Jentli	Private
	14	Romanat	Private
K.Weyane	15	Kidist Mariam	Religious
Quha	16	Friends	Private
	17	Meseret	Private
	18	Segen	Private
	19	Werkineh	Public

3.3 Instruments and Sources of Data Collection

Data from the participants were collected through questionnaire and unstructured interview. Questionnaires were used to gather information from school principals, teachers, PTA members, Zonal Education Supervisors, Sub city Education Supervisors and experts working for the social service of the sub city administrations. Three assistants supported the researcher in collecting questionnaires, after obtaining short training on how to handle the process.

Questionnaires prepared had three sections. The first part enabled to obtain relevant background information about the participants. The second part (which was the core of the study) was intended to secure information regarding the current practices and challenges of preschool Education in Mekelle. This part of the questionnaire consisted of items that were constructed in five point scale ranging from “5= very high” to “1= very low”. The third section of the questionnaire had an open-ended question to gather the respondents’ opinions and suggestions on how to mitigate the problems related to access in preschool education and improve performances of the centers.

The researcher developed a pool of question items for the instruments based on intensive reading of literatures. Questionnaires distributed to school based respondents were originally prepared in English and translated into the local language (Tigrigna) for the ease of communication. Zonal supervisors, cluster supervisors and sub city social service workers filled the questionnaire prepared in English language

Interview questions were prepared for Regional Education experts, a zonal expert and a primary school principal in an unstructured form. Those questions used to gather opinions of the experts on the current practices and challenges of preschool Education, policy issues and future intentions of the bureau to enhance preschool programs in Mekelle in particular and Tigray region in general. In conducting the interview a tape recorder was used after getting consent from the respondents.

Moreover, documents from the Regional Educational Bureau were observed to analyze the status of preschool participation at Mekelle Zone. It was compared with projected preschool age children based on the recent census.

3.4 Try out of the Instruments

The items were evaluated by colleagues working at the TREB and USAID/BESO II who were expected to have depth understanding due to their educational back ground and long working experience in the area of preschool education. Based on the feedbacks necessary corrections were made on the question items. For instance they suggested to include school based facilities like sleeping, dining rooms in the questionnaire and to split double questions into independent ones.

Furthermore, the questionnaires were pilot tested in two Kindergartens; private and religious KGs in Mekelle and Cronbach's Alpha calculated for each item category. The alpha result for the total scale was 0.824 and the coefficients of alpha for the subgroups (A-F) were

0.631, 0.681, 0.718, 0.699, 0.0.777, and 0.898 respectively. Thus, the results indicated there was an internal consistency among the respondents.

3.5 Data Analysis and Presentation

Data gathered from the respondents and the documents were analyzed quantitatively supplemented with qualitative descriptions. In analyzing the quantitative data frequencies, percentages and averages, were employed. The five scale questionnaire collected from the respondents for tables (4-7) were analyzed using three scale alternatives very high and high joined together, low and very low together for ease of understanding. Moreover, data gathered through interview were analyzed qualitatively.

3.6 Organization of the Study

The paper was organized in five chapters. The first chapter dealt with the background of the study, statement of the problem, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitation of the study, and definition of key terms. The second chapter presented the review of related literature. The third chapter presented the methodology and procedures employed to collect and analyze the data, sample and sampling techniques. The fourth chapter was about the presentation, analysis of data and interpretation of the findings. Summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations were presented in the fifth chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

This part of the paper deals with the presentation and analysis of the data gathered through questionnaire from preschool teachers, principals, parents' representatives, zonal supervisors, cluster supervisors and sub city social service workers. Of the total questionnaire distributed for preschool teachers 63(100%), principals 19(100%) were returned and used for the analysis. From the 19 sample preschools only 10 of them had formally established parents' representatives. Thus, 20 questionnaires were distributed to those preschools and 100% of them returned and used in the analysis. Moreover, of the 19 questionnaires distributed to zonal supervisors, cluster supervisors and sub city social service workers 16(84%) were returned. Two cluster supervisors and a social service worker in one of the sub city administration did not return the questionnaires. The qualitative data obtained through interview from two TREB experts, Zonal education office process owner for the work process of curriculum preparation and implementation and a primary school principal were included in the analysis of the study. Information and statistical figures from documents of the TREB, EMIS were also used in the analysis.

4.1 Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1.Characteristics of Respondents

		In school participants				Out of school participants				G.total
		KG teachers	Principals	Parents' representatives	Total	ZED supervisors	Cluster supervisors	Social service workers	Total	
Sex	M	0	1	14	15	5	5	6	16	31
	F	63	18	6	87	0	0	0	0	87
	T	63	19	20	102	5	5	6	16	118
Educational back ground	Degree	0	2	6	8	5	5	6	16	24
	Diploma	15	11	9	35	0	0	0	0	35
	Certificate	47	5	1	53	0	0	0	0	53
	others	1	1	4	6	0	0	0	0	6
	Total	63	19	20	102	5	5	6	16	118
Specialization	KG teacher	48	0	0	48	0	0	0	0	48
	Primary S. Teaching	10	12	4	26	5	5	5	15	41
	Non teaching	2	7	16	25	-	-	1	1	26
	NA*	3	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	3
	Total	63	19	20	102	5	5	6	16	118

NA* =No Answer

The above table is about the characteristics of the research participants who filled the questionnaire. The participants were categorized into two main groups; preschool teachers, principals and parents representatives were considered as in school participants and zonal supervisors, cluster supervisors and social service workers group under the second category called out school participants.

All preschool teachers included were females, eighteen from the nineteen school principals were also females. Of the 20 parents representatives fourteen were males and the remaining

six females. The second group considered as out school participants were all males because there was no female supervisor in Mekelle at a zonal education office as well as at a cluster level. Besides, all sub city social service experts in the town were males.

Looking at the level of the qualification of teachers fifteen teachers were diploma graduates and the majority i.e. forty seven certificate and one below certificate. The qualification of the preschool principals varied from first degree to below certificate. Specifically two of them were first degree graduates, eleven diploma graduates, five certificates and one below certificate level. The parent representatives' were six first degree graduates, nine diplomas, one certificate and the remaining four below certificate. All members of the second group that is zonal supervisors, cluster supervisor and social service workers were first degree graduates.

The other important point was to verify whether the educational background directly relates to what the preschool program needs. Regarding to the teaching staff, forty eight of the preschool teachers were trained to teach in preschool program, ten of them trained to teach in primary schools, two with no training in teaching and three did not mention their specialization. From the nineteen school principals twelve of them were trained in teaching and the remaining seven with no teaching background. Some of the preschool principals did not have teaching background; for instance some of them were trained in secretary and office management, computer science, construction etc.

From the characteristics of the respondents one can infer that many of the respondents have the required educational back ground and field of study, however, significant number of the preschool principals have joined the field without any relevant educational background because preschool program is considered as any firm established for business purpose. Some of the teachers were also engaged in teaching because they have completed a general education without any relevant training in the preschool program. Thus, the practice directly or indirectly hampers the expansion of preschool education in the city.

4.2 Status and Practices of Preschool Education in Mekelle

According to the 2007 census of Ethiopia there were 14079 preschool age (4-6) children in Mekelle town for the academic year of 2008/09. The age and sex of the children was indicated in the table below:

Table 2. Preschool Age Population by age and sex in Mekelle Zone for the Academic year 2008/09

	Age 4	Age 5	Age 6	Total (Age 4-6)
Male	2306	2367	2428	7101
Female	2209	2325	2444	6978
Total	4515	4692	4872	14079

Source: TREB/EMIS/, 2009

From the above indicated preschool age children(14079) in Mekelle, only 4728(33.58%) children were attending preschool education in 2008/09. The remaining children were denied access to preschool education during that academic year for different reasons. The table below revealed the number of children attending preschool education in the town based on their sex, age and level.

Table 3. Preschool Enrollment by sex, age and level in Mekelle in the Academic Year 2008/09

Age	Stage 1		Stage 2		Stage 3		Total		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
<4	284	253	1	5	-	-	285	258	543
4	443	457	379	308	-	-	822	765	1587
5	29	29	659	585	227	212	915	826	1741
6	1	2	10	1	725	661	736	664	1400
>6	-	-	1	-	22	13	23	13	36
Total	757	741	1050	899	974	886	2781	2526	5307

Source: TREB/EMIS/, 2009

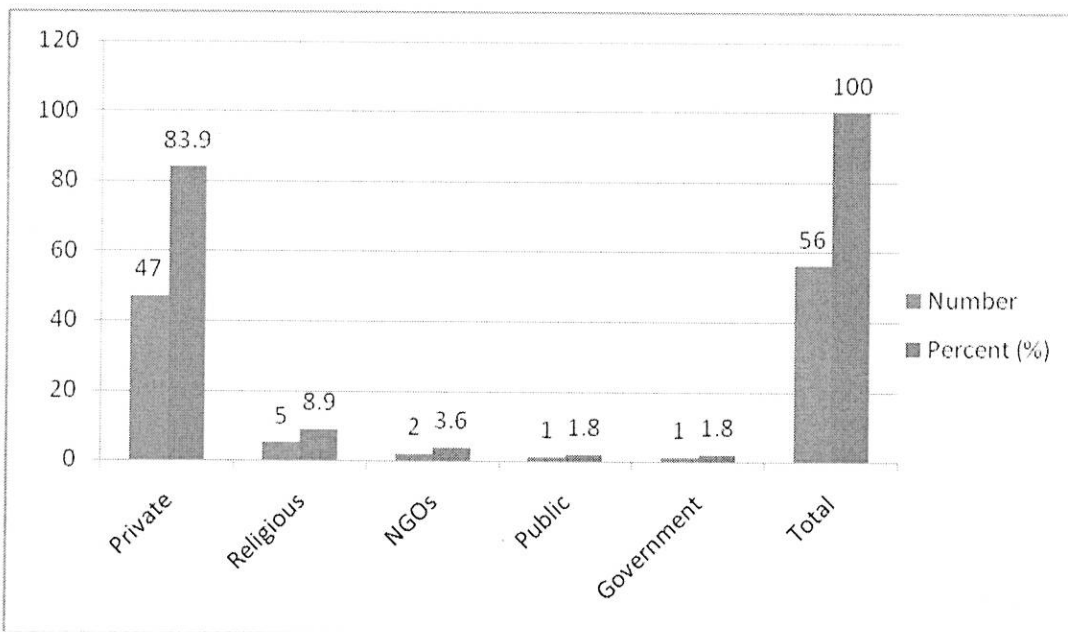
Based on the above tables Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) and Net Enrollment Ratio (NER) of preschool Education in Mekelle was calculated. Accordingly, the GER was 39.16% for males, 36.19% for females and 37.69% total. Moreover, the NER was 34.82% for males, 32.32% for females and 33.58% total. The GER is greater than the NER because the GER has included children above and below the preschool age stipulated by the MOE policy framework for preschool education.

From the data one can infer that majority (66.42%) of the preschool age children were denied access to schooling which is believed the critical age for the overall development of the child by many educators and psychologist. Moreover, the figure depicted that there were more boys than girls in the preschools in the city, although, gender parity is not a major problem in the preschools in the Ethiopian context.

Compared to the national GER (4.2%) Mekelle's GER (37.69%) progress is in a better position. However, when we compare the GER with that of Addis Ababa GER of 73.6% Mekelle needs great effort to reach to that of Addis Ababa. The concern of this paper however, is not comparing regions and towns, but to investigate how many of the children in the town have access for preschool program and how many denied access to the program.

Regarding the number of preschools that were providing service in the academic year of 2008/09, there were 56 preschools institutions in Mekelle run by private investors, NGOs, religious organizations, government and the public. The ownership of the preschools was indicated in the graph below:

Figure 1. Number of preschools by ownership in Mekelle in 2008/2009



Source: TREB/EMIS/, 2009

The above graph shows 47(83.9%) and 5(8.9%) of the preschools were operated by private investors and religious organization respectively and NGOs contributed 3.6% of the total. On

the other hand public and government's contribution in preschool program was insignificant. Only 1 preschool was run by the Social Affairs Bureau (governmental) and one operated by the public in Quha, UNESCO (2008) on the other hand advises governments to allocate public fund for preschool program and use alternative strategies to increase access for the poor.

The tuition fees varied among the preschools and ownership of the preschools. For instance the monthly fee for a child in Kaleb and Axum (private preschools) is 180 and 140 Ethiopian Birr (ETB) respectively; SOS (NGO) is 100 ETB per month per child. The tuition fee did not include transport cost. In the public and government preschools parents are charged 30 ETB per month.

Regarding the tuition fees it can be concluded that private preschools charge more than the NGOs, the public, and government preschools. The public and government preschools, although they are only two in number in the town the tuition fee charged is relatively affordable for parents in the low economic category.

In general preschools available in Mekelle are exclusively for children whose parents can afford to pay tuition fees where as children from the lower economic category have limited opportunity to join the preschool institution where they were mainly established for profit making.

The number of the private preschools in the town is increasing from time to time. However, the size of the compounds varies from very compacted; 175m² residential houses to compounds with ample free space that allows easy movement of the children to play in. However, Burke-Ramsay and Johnson (2004) strongly argues that play has great role in holistic development of children such as communication skill, creativity, physical development etc.

4.3 Preschool Policy and Policy Documents

Preschool policy plays in guiding the direction and objectives of the program to move towards achieving the vision and mission of the program. With respect to the issue respondents at all level were asked if there are policies, strategies and guidelines to enhance preschool education at the respective educational hierarchies. The following tables depicted the results of data collected from the participants:

Table 4. Preschool Policy Related Items

S/ N	Items	Response	In school participants						Out school respondents					
			Teachers		Principals		Parents, representative		Zonal Supervisors		Cluster supervisors		Social Service workers	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	The zone/city & preschools have clear vision and mission statement about preschool education.	AG	59	93.7	18	94.7	17	85	4	60	5	100	4	66.7
		UD	2	3.2	0	0	1	5	1	20	0	0	0	0
		DA	2	3.2	1	5.3	2	10	1	20	0	0	2	33.3
2	Have a master list of all preschool children whether enrolled or not	AG	21	33.3	5	26.3	6	30	3	60	1	20	1	16.7
		UD	24	38.1	5	26.3	7	35	2	40	2	40	3	50
		DA	18	28.6	9	27.4	7	35	0	0	2	40	2	33.3
3	The zone/preschools conduct regular campaigns to encourage parents to enroll their children in the preschools	AG	45	71.4	14	73.7	13	65	1	20	2	40	4	66.7
		UD	11	17.5	1	5.3	3	15	3	60	2	40	0	0
		DA	7	11.1	4	21.1	4	20	1	20	1	20	2	33.3
4	Monitoring mechanisms exist to identify and enroll preschool age children in the preschools	AG	58	92.1	17	89.5	15	75	1	20	1	20	3	50
		UD	1	1.6	1	5.26	4	20	2	40	3	60	0	0
		DA	4	6.4	1	5.26	1	5	2	40	1	20	3	50
5	has copies of policy and guideline documents that address preschool education	AG	49	77.8	15	78.9	16	80	4	80	3	60	4	66.7
		UD	9	14.3	2	10.5	3	15	1	20	1	20	0	0
		DA	5	7.9	2	10.5	1	5	0	0	1	20	2	33.3
6	The tuition fees charged by the preschool institutions is affordable for majority of the parents in community	AG	61	96.8	19	100	17	85	2	40	2	40	1	16.7
		UD	0	0	0	0	1	5	2	40	2	40	1	16.7
		DA	2	3.2	0	0	2	10	1	20	1	20	4	66.7

AG=Agree UD= Undecided DA= Disagree

In item 1 of table 4 most of the respondents agreed in the availability of clear mission and vision statements in the zonal education office as well as in the preschool institutions. However, 20% of the supervisors working at the zonal education office disagreed on the availability of clear vision and mission statements and another 20% of the supervisors did not able to decide. Similarly one third of sub city social service workers disagreed on the issue.

From the response one can infer that there are people at the offices who do not have knowledge about mission and vision of preschool education but are responsible to implement preschool education program.

Providing preschool service primarily requires identifying those preschool age children who are in the community. Item 2 of the table describes the effort of the zonal education office and preschool institutions in identifying clearly the preschool age children in the community and having a master list of the children to facilitate for easy access. Majority of respondents indicated that the zonal education office as well as the preschool did not have master list of preschool age children in the respective community. 40% of zonal and cluster supervisors 50% of social service workers, 38% of preschool teachers, 26.32% principals and 35% of parents' representatives were unable to decide respectively.

Regarding the issue an interview was conducted with the zonal education office process owner for the work process of curriculum preparation and implementation and he stated the following:

Actually, we did not have a master list of preschool age children. Now the TREB has offered us the projected number of preschool age children in Mekelle. Thus, it is the number that we have and not the list of the children. For the "0-class" designed the sub city social service workers , cluster supervisors and primary school principals are working in identifying children of age six who did not get the access for preschool education based on the projection of TREB.

“0-class” is a preparatory program designed for age 6 children to be underway in the compounds of the regular primary schools aimed at preparing the children for formal schooling.

From the response it can be inferred that identifying the potential user of a preschool program service ahead of time is not a common practice in the town which implies there is no clear information about who are the children who get the access and those who are denied to attend the program. However, identifying the children with detail background information is highly significant for intervention purpose.

The third point of concern was whether the zonal education office and the preschools as a policy conduct regular campaigns to encourage parents to send their children to the existing preschools. Accordingly, six out of the 16 participants in the zonal and cluster level agreed that there were campaigns. Most of school based respondents believed that regular campaigns were conducted to encourage parents to send their children to the available preschool institutions. Sixty percent of zonal supervisor and 40% of cluster supervisors’ undecided on the issue and around 25% respondents from supervisors and social service workers disagreed.

Interview conducted with the process owner of curriculum preparation and implementation work process of the Regional Education Bureau coincided with response of the supervisors. According to the interviewee, preschool education was remained as the task of private investors for decades and did not get the attention of the bureau. Thus, there were no regular

campaigns as a policy in the bureau unlike the intensive campaigns carried out in the area of primary education.

From the above responses one can conclude that the response of teachers and school principals can be taken for granted because many of the preschools in Mekelle are private schools established for profit making, therefore, they conduct regular campaigns to increase the number of preschool learners in order to maximize their profit. However, government officials' effort was limited in conducting campaigns to expand preschool education program. Although, government preschool institutions are very limited in number advocating on the program enhances awareness of parents and that lead to promote access to preschool through parents investment on their children.

Respondents were also requested to express their agreement in the availability of clear monitoring mechanisms in identifying and enrolling preschool age children to the program. As can be inferred from item 4 of the table majority of the teachers, school principals, and PTA members believed that the institutions have clear monitoring mechanisms to increase the enrollment of preschool children. Conversely many of the zonal and cluster supervisors undecided and others disagreed.

Interview conducted with a project coordinator of the Tigray Education Bureau supports the response of the supervisors and described the issue as follows:

There was no strongly organized monitoring mechanism regarding preschool education in the region because it was given little attention for many years. The

limited urban based activities were also run by private and non government organizations. Many woreda education offices even used not to send reports regarding the limited preschool activities in their respective woredas to the regional education bureau. There was no specific responsible body to follow-up the program. That is why figures in the bureau are inconsistent and our enrollment stagnated. Currently, however, the trend seems changed since preschool education has come as a priority of the government in the 4th ESDP. Therefore, the bureau has developed monitoring instruments to look after the progress of preschool program. Every woreda education office now has the responsibility to follow up the program and send the progresses at a monthly and semester basis. (Monitoring format is attached in Appendix)

The response of the government officials indicated that there were no clearly stipulated targets to be achieved and there was no well organized and clear monitoring and evaluation strategies to oversee the progress registered in the subsector. Thus, one can generalize that preschool education as one component of the education sector was given little attention in the town. Even although, ESDP III targeted to increase the participation rate from 3% to 20% in the five years time at a national level the actual practice at the grass root level remained insignificant.

Preschool policy, strategies and guidelines play significant role in facilitating the enhancement of preschool education program at a national as well as local level. They have to be available at all levels of educational institutions. Majority of the respondents in the

investigation also confirmed the availability of policy and guidelines at their respective area i.e. at a zonal, cluster and school level. But significant number of respondents at all echelons did not know the availability of those policies documents and said that there were no policy documents at their institutions. Interviewee from the REB further described as follows:

Our problem was not shortage of documents. Different documents were developed and distributed earlier. One of them for example was a preschool standard developed in 2005. The document included contents like the value of preschool education, method of teaching, standard of preschool facilities, etc. The problem was the attention given to the area at all levels.

An interviewee in the zonal education office on the other hand disclosed it is only the preschool standard that he knows as a zonal official and did know the policy and strategies.

From the respondents' point of view it is possible to infer that, although, majority have the awareness of the availability of those policy issues significant number of the implementers did not have knowledge on the policy and availability of policy documents and guidelines. Therefore, there is a need to communicate those policy documents to everyone who is supposed to implement those policy objectives. The arrival and proper utilization of these documents to the ultimate users, preschools, woredas, and clusters needs strong follow up of the supervisors.

Item 6 of table 4 shows whether tuition and registration fee charged by the preschools in Mekelle is affordable for majority of the parents or not? The answer of the two group respondents' i.e. respondents from the school and respondents out of the school rested almost

into two different perspectives. Teachers, principals and Parents' representatives indicated that the tuition fees and registration fees charged by the preschools in the town are affordable for majority of parents at the community. Similarly four out of the ten supervisors participated in the research believed the fees charged by the preschools were affordable for majority parents in Mekelle. Another, equal number of supervisors responded undecided regarding the issue. Sixty seven percent of the social service workers on the other hand responded the tuition fee charged was not affordable for majority parents.

Data gathered from the documents of the TREB, EMIS, indicated more than 66% of age 4-6 children were unable to get access for preschool education. Although, enrolment depends upon multiple factors researches carried out in Ethiopia depicted economic factor played significant role in the low enrolment of preschool in the towns (Habtamu, 1996) .Moreover, the interview conducted with the three officials also justified that one of the major constraints that hampered the expansion of preschool education in the town was un-affordability of tuition fees of the preschools to children from the low income group. The process owner of curriculum preparation and implementation of the Tigray Education Bureau described the following regarding the issue:

The expansion of preschool education is relatively better in the towns particularly in Mekelle, because there are many private, NGO, and religious kindergartens. However, those preschools are not affordable for many of the children from the lower income group that is why majority of the preschool age children are not in the preschool institutions. Having recognized the problem the REB has designed an alternative strategy, "0-class", to bring children from the lower economic category to

a preparatory program that is being carried out in the compounds of the formal primary schools in both urban and rural areas of the region; where Mekelle is one of them.

From the results of the above presented data it is possible to deduce that about two third of the preschool age children in Mekelle town are denied their right to preschool education. One among the many factors is the tuition fees charged by many of the preschools in the town .They are not affordable for parents with low economic capacity. The “0-class” strategy supposed to solve the problem also has its own limitations in including age 4-5 children; it is designed to prepare age 6 children for the formal schooling. Thus, solving the problem of preschool education demands intensive and comprehensive planning, strategies and guidelines and has to be well communicated to all stakeholders particularly to those at the grass root level.

4.4 Parents/community Partnership in Preschool Education in Mekelle

Preschool education is a task that could not be left to particular group. It is a task that demands an organized partnership among stakeholders, where the partnership of parents in particular and the community in general comes to the front. The following table depicts data on the partnership of preschools and parent/community in Mekelle.

Table 5. Parent/Community Partnership in Preschool Education in Mekelle

S / N	Items	Response	In school participants						Out school respondents					
			Teachers		Principals		Parents' Representatives		Zonal Supervisors		Cluster supervisors		Social Service workers	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	The preschools have strong link with parents /the community	AG	57	90.5	17	89.5	17	89.5	3	60	3	60	4	66.7
		UD	5	7.9	2	10.5	2	10.5	0	0	2	40	0	0
		DA	1	1.6	0	0	0	0	2	40	0	0	2	33.3
2	The preschools value the opinion of parents/guardian	AG	57	90.5	57	90.5	19	95	3	60	4	80	4	66.7
		UD	5	7.9	5	7.9	1	5	1	20	1	20	0	0
		DA	1	1.6	1	1.6	0	0	1	20	0	0	2	33.3
3	Parents participate in school planning	AG	53	84.1	13	68.4	16	80	0	0	0	0	4	66.7
		UD	5	7.9	4	21.1	3	15	1	20	2	40	0	0
		DA	5	7.9	2	10.5	1	5	4	80	3	60	2	33.3
4	Schools create sensitizing programs on fundamental principles parenting and the value of preschool education	AG	25	39.7	10	52.6	9	45	1	20	2	40	1	16.7
		UD	16	25.4	4	21.1	3	15	0	0	2	40	2	33.3
		DA	22	34.9	5	26.3	8	40	4	80	1	20	3	50
5	The community helps the preschools reach out all children in the community	AG	37	58.7	14	73.7	10	50	1	20	4	80	0	50
		UD	12	19.1	2	10.5	6	30	1	20	1	20	2	16.7
		DA	14	22.2	3	15.8	4	20	2	40	0	0	4	33.3
6	Community resources are used to strengthen students learning	AG	50	79.4	15	78.9	16	80	1	20	3	60	2	33.3
		UD	7	11.1	2	10.5	3	15	2	40	1	20	2	33.3
		DA	6	9.5	2	10.5	1	5	2	40	1	20	2	33.3
7	The preschools conduct conferences with parents	AG	60	95.2	17	89.5	18	90	3	60	4	80	3	50
		UD	0	0	0	0	2	10	0	0	0	0	1	16.7
		DA	3	4.8	2	10.5	0	0	2	40	1	20	2	33.3

Items in table 5 are concerned with parents/community involvement in the preschool education program of Mekelle city. Accordingly, the first question was “do preschool institutions have strong links with parents?” School based respondent’s teachers, principals and parents representatives’ strongly believed that the kindergartens in Mekelle have strong links with the community/parents. Moreover, 60% of zonal supervisors, 40% of the cluster

supervisors and 66.67% of the social service workers supported the view of the school based respondents. Majority of these respondents also indicated that preschool institutions value the opinion of parents / guardians. On the other hand, 40% of zonal supervisors and one third of the social service workers indicated that the bond between the preschool institutions and parents is not strong and preschool institutions give little value to the opinion of parents/guardians.

One of the major activities carried out by preschools and parents that have strong linkage is planning together for common objectives. Regarding the issue (item 3) about 84% of teachers, 73 % of principals, and 80% of parents representative believe that parents involved in planning school activities. Similarly, 66.7% of social service workers agreed on the participation of parents in planning and school based policy development. Around 8% of the teachers, 21% of principals, 15% of the parents' representative, 20% of zonal supervisors, and 40 % of cluster supervisors did not decide on the issue. Conversely, 80% of the zonal supervisors and 60% cluster supervisors believed that parents did not participate in planning of preschools activities; where the plan affects the future of their children.

One of activities that enhance positive partnership between the preschool and parents is conducting conferences. Almost all school based respondents and greater part the supervisors pointed out that preschools prepare conference sessions to exchange ideas regarding the teaching learning process during the parent days.

The investigator during his visit to the preschools ,however, confirmed that many of the private preschool institutions in the town did not have formally established parents' representatives in the management of the preschools whereas management function demands collaborative effort in preparing long term and short term plans to achieve the vision of the preschools.

Building a healthy generation is joint responsibility of schools, parents and the public in general. Schools are considered institutions with better awareness in healthy and holistic child development. A question was forwarded to the respondents if the preschool institutions are in a position of providing small scale trainings to parents/guardians regarding the principles of child development and the value of preschool education so that parents improve their knowledge and skills in their parenting styles and send their children to existing preschools on time. Accordingly, around 39 % of the teachers and 52% principals agreed that the preschools provide short trainings on the above mentioned issues. Among the teachers 25% of them and 21% of the school principals responded undecided on the issue. 39% of the teachers and 26% of school principals, however, indicated no short trainings were given regarding child development and the value of preschool education. Majority of the zonal supervisors and social service workers also indicated that providing such trainings in the preschools were not common practice in the preschool institutions.

From the response it can be concluded that majority of the respondents are skeptical to give a clear position. Thus, supervisors particularly those working at the cluster level have to initiate such training in order to enhance the alliance among the preschools and parents and

boost preschool program in the town. Moreover, a formally established school- parent forum is not observed in many of the private preschools where government requires intensive community participation in managing the educational institutions.

Enhancing preschool education further demands the support of the community to bring children who have less access to the program. As shown in Item 5 of the table 58.7% of teachers, 73.7% principals and 50% of parents' representatives pointed out that there is a community support to provide preschool education to children with less access. 20% of zonal supervisors, 80% cluster supervisors and 50% of social service workers similarly recognized the support of the community towards preschool education programs. Nevertheless, 19% of teachers , 10.5% of school principals, 30% of parents' representatives, 20% zonal supervisors, 20% cluster supervisors and 16.7% social service workers did not able to give their decision on the issue. The remaining 22% of teachers, 15.7% of principals, 20% parents, 40% zonal supervisors and 33.3% socials service workers indicated the absence of community support to enhance preschool program.

From the data it can be inferred that there is a community participation in providing access to children from the lower economic category but it is still at an infant stage compared to the achievements gained in the area of preschool education in the city. Therefore, it calls for further intensive work of the officials to strengthen the bond among preschools, the community and officials to utilize available community resources to maximize progress in preschool education.

4.5 Preschool Facilities of Mekelle

Table 6. Status of Preschool Facilities in the KGs in Mekelle

S/ N	Items	Response	In school participants						Out school respondents					
			Teachers		Principals		Parents' Representatives		Zonal Supervisors		Cluster supervisors		Social Service workers	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Preschools are physically accessible to all preschool age children in the community	High	55	87.3	18	94.7	17	85	1	20	2	40	0	0
		Mod	2	3.2	1	5.3	2	10	1	20	2	40	2	33.3
		Low	6	9.5	0	0	1	5	3	60	1	20	4	66.7
2	The preschools have adequate supply of safe clean water	High	55	87.3	17	89.5	19	95	1	20	2	40	4	66.7
		Mod	7	11.1	2	10.5	1	5	1	20	2	40	0	0
		Low	1	1.6	0	0	0	0	3	60	1	20	2	33.3
3	The preschools have adequate supply of outdoor play materials	High	54	85.7	17	89.5	17	85	1	20	1	20	1	16.7
		Mod	8	12.7	2	10.5	1	5	1	20	2	40	2	33.3
		Low	1	1.6	0	0	2	10	3	60	2	40	3	50

Mod= Moderate

for further information refer appendix -F

Items in table 6 investigated the availability of personnel, indoor and outdoor facilities of the preschools in Mekelle. Because, abundance availability and quality of those facilities play significant role not only in improving quality of education but also the expansion of access for children to the program. The first item was whether the institutions themselves are physically accessible to all school age children or not. Most of the respondents i.e. 87.3% teachers, 94.7% principals and 85% of the parents' representatives believed that the kindergartens are within the easy access of the children or they are very close to the users. To majority of the zonal and cluster officials preschools were located from moderately close to low accessible to the preschool age children.

The response of the two group respondents seems contradictory, thus, there is a need to set clearly standard to measure easy accessibility of the preschool institutions in terms of preschool age children and have common understanding what easy accessible preschool mean for stakeholders.

The accessibility of clean and safe drinking water in the preschools also affects the participation rate of preschool enrollment. According to the school based respondents almost all schools have adequate clean and safe drinking water. Sixty seven percent of social service workers and 40% of cluster supervisors supported the view of the school based respondents. More than half of the supervisors at the zonal education office and 33% of the social service workers, however, responded that the accessibility of clean and safe water is low.

This implies that although most of the preschools in the city have the access to safe drinking water there are also preschools that did not have adequate access. The preschool standard set by the regional education bureau also requires preschool owners to supply safe drinking water before they request for license, thus, ensuring the supply of safe and clean water in preschools is the responsibility of the zonal education office before issuing a license to open for a preschool.

The third item of table 6 was aimed at identifying the extent of availability of outdoor play materials in the preschools. Accordingly 86% of teachers, 89% of school principals and 85% of the parents' representatives indicated that the preschools have adequate outdoor play

materials. Zonal and cluster supervisors, nevertheless, pointed out that the preschools have shortage of outdoor play materials.

The process owner of curriculum preparation and implementation work process of Mekelle Zone Education Office stated that many preschools are in short of outdoor play materials and described as follows:

Although there are many preschools in Mekelle some of them are below the standard set by the Regional Education Bureau, because many of the preschools were opened after the owners having got license from the trade and industry office of Mekelle zone irrespective of the standards set by the REB. Many preschools were also in residential houses where it limited them to provide outdoor play facilities due to the shortage of space they have.

Many preschools were opened in residential houses where the compounds are compacted and hamper the easy movement of children to play freely. Many experts in the area of early child education, however, emphasize the role of play in the holistic development of the children. Pronouncing the role of play Burke-Ramsay and Johnson (2004) for instance stated that play is exploratory, communicative, enjoyable, sociable, educational and creative. For them play is a most useful way for children to accumulate a vast amount of information about the world around the children, the kind of information that will be needed for later learning in languages, the arts , social studies and science. The child's higher level intellectual development and creativity can be enhanced through play experiences. The researcher's observation, however, confirmed that there were private preschool institutions

that have shortage of play grounds and the teaching learning process predominantly focused on the formal and traditional type teaching learning process. That is students sit in rows and the teacher standing in front of them teaches alphabets and numbers.

The other point that needs to be noted from the results of the interview is who should provide license for preschool education. In areas that need technical knowledge the trade and industry office of the town should work together with experts from the zonal education office before issuing license to private investors to ensure that the preschools established are to the standard.

Indoor play materials also play significant role in attracting children to the school and stay longer in the preschool institution. Locally produced instructional materials such as story books and teachers guides are also very vital in developing understanding of children's environment. Regarding the issue more than 80% respondents from schools believed that the preschools are equipped with sufficient indoor play materials, locally produced instructional materials, qualified teachers and supportive staff, but, majority of participants from the zonal education office, cluster supervisors and social service workers responded that the preschools did not have adequate indoor play facilities, locally produced teaching materials and have shortage of qualified personnel.

According to an interview with the regional education bureau experts there is shortage of locally produced instructional materials in the book shops in the town. Therefore, it is logical for the preschools to use what is available in the market and what are in the market are Indian

produced teaching materials which have little relationship to the Ethiopian context. He further explained that the preschools give more emphasis to the English language because they know parents appreciate their children if he/she able to speak English than the local language.

Although it is important to speak in English, local languages play significant role for a child to associate what he/she is learning in the institution with environment and the family and contributes to speed up its holistic development.

Respondents were also asked if the preschools have adequate classrooms, dining room, and sleeping rooms for children to take rest. Accordingly, majority of cluster supervisors, teachers, principals and parents representatives have similarly rated on the adequate availability of these facilities. According to majority of social service workers and zonal supervisors, on the other hand, the facilities vary from moderately adequate to very low.

Observation of the researcher also confirmed that, although, many of the preschools have adequate facilities, there were some preschools where a single room was used for learning, dinning and sleeping. These types of preschools for instance negatively affect the access of preschool enrollment because children need a healthy and attractive school environment for the target of preschool education to be achieved and for children to stay in the preschools. Parents may not be willing to send their children to such type of preschools for safety reasons.

In general it can be inferred that shortage of preschool facilities in the existing preschools is not critical problem, although, there are preschools that need to improve their internal and external facilities particularly those who run the program in the residential houses needs to respect the standard set by the education bureau. Among the standards is that preschool institutions should be established in 500 m² plot of land in order to establish the necessary play facilities.

4.6 Role of Government in the Promotion of Preschool Education

According to some government policy documents the role of the government in preschool education is limited to setting and providing policy issues like preparation and distribution of standards, providing support to the institutions, encouraging private investors to engage in the area etc. Items indicated in table 7 below were designed to solicit data from the participants. The results are indicated in the table below.

Table 7. The Role of Mekelle Education Office in Expanding Preschool Program

S/N	Items	Response	In school participants						Out school respondents					
			Teachers		Principals		Parents' Representatives		Zonal Supervisors		Cluster supervisors		Social Service workers	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Supply standard for preschool educational facilities.	High	38	60.3	11	57.9	8	40	1	20	1	20	2	33.3
		mod	6	9.5	3	15.8	5	25	1	20	3	60	1	16.7
		Low	19	30.2	5	26.3	7	35	3	60	1	20	3	50
2	Supervise and provide guidance for all type of preschools	High	36	57.1	9	47.4	12	60	1	20	2	40	2	33.3
		mod	16	25.4	6	31.6	4	20	2	40	2	40	1	16.7
		Low	11	17.5	4	21.1	4	20	2	40	1	20	3	50
3	Mobilize available resources to promote preschool education.	High	42	66.7	7	36.9	10	50	0	0	3	60	0	0
		mod	2	3.2	6	31.6	7	35	2	40	1	20	3	50
		Low	19	30.2	6	31.6	3	15	3	60	1	20	3	50
4	Develop strategies to provide preschool services for economically disadvantaged groups of the community	high	33	52.4	6	31.6	7	35	0	0	3	60	2	33.3
		mod	5	7.9	6	31.6	7	35	1	20	2	40	1	16.7
		low	25	39.7	7	36.6	6	30	4	80	0	0	3	50
5	Established forum with all stakeholders at city level.	high	27	42.9	8	42.6	9	45	1	20	1	20	0	0
		mod	18	28.6	6	31.6	4	20	1	20	1	20	2	33.3
		low	18	28.6	5	26.3	7	35	3	60	3	60	4	66.7

For further information refer appendix -G

The above table describes to what extent the Zone Education Office is reacting to its roles and responsibilities in enhancing preschool education in the town. The first item of the table shows that around 60% teachers and 58% of school principals believed that the preschools got high support in providing standards from the education office. Sixty percent of zonal supervisor, half of the social service workers and significant number of teachers on the other hand depicted that the support of the office in setting standards was low.

Interview conducted with the zonal education officer also indicated that preschools particularly newly established ones used to collect the standard set by the education bureau in

soft copies and then apply request for pre accreditation after they fulfill the requirements according to the standards. He further indicated that there are preschools operating below the required standard because the trade and industry office used to give license for many years, alike other business firms, irrespective of the standards set by the education bureau. To bring those preschools to the standard corrective measures are being taken by the Zonal Education Office.

With respect to supervisory support provided to the preschools about 66% of the teachers, 57% of principals and 60% of parents' representatives stated that the preschool institutions are highly supported by the respective cluster supervisors. Significant number of teachers and majority of the supervisors, however, noted the support provided was not adequate; particularly the social service workers believed the support provided to preschools meant to be insignificant.

Regarding the support and guidance provided to the preschools the process owner of curriculum preparation and implementation work process of the Zonal Education Office stated the following:

Until the current academic year our office did not provide supervisory support to preschools. Particularly we did not give concern to the private preschools. Now we have started to give equal support to all governmental and nongovernmental preschools. To extend support to all available formal primary schools and preschool institutions the office has assigned additional supervisors. Thus, cluster supervisors

are responsible to provide guidance and support to the preschool institutions and they have started providing support to all the preschools.

A question forwarded for the interviewee was, “do these supervisors have special trainings on how to support preschool institutions unlike primary schools?” These supervisors according to the process owner did not have special training on how to support the preschools. They are providing support based on the general educational back ground they have. Most of them were high school teachers before they join to the supervisory position.

From the response of the respondents we can understand that the Zonal Education Office has started to react to some of the roles and responsibilities of the government officials that are indicated in the preschool policy frame work. Among the started reactions were identifying those standard preschools from those working below the standard and providing supervisory and guidance support to all types of preschools without discrimination. However, the supervisors did not have special training on supporting preschool education.

Mobilizing available resource to enhance preschool education participation in the town is one of the tasks of the education sector. The third item in the table was to what extent did the zonal education office reacted to the issue. Accordingly, greater part of teachers and parents’ representative indicated there is high effort. All zonal supervisors and all social workers on the other hand disclosed the government’s effort ranging from moderate to very low; around 30% of the teachers, 63% of school principals have similar perception with the supervisors and social workers. From the response it possible to infer that the expected actors themselves

/officers/ believed that they reacted below the expectation in mobilizing available resources to promote preschool education.

Item 4 was concerned with the effort of zonal education office in developing alternative strategies of preschool education program to children whose parents could not afford to pay in the existing private preschools. Around 52% of the teachers and 60% of cluster supervisors agreed that the effort of the zonal education office is high. For significant number of principals, parents' representative and cluster supervisors there is moderate effort. For majority of the zonal supervisors and social workers and 39% of the teachers the effort exerted to provide access to the children from the lower economic group is insignificant.

All interviewees share common understanding on the strategies developed by the Regional Education Bureau that are supposed to be implemented in all woredas of the region. These are "0-class", and "child –to – child" strategies. '0-class" is mainly designed for all urban and rural children of age 6 to attend a preparatory program in the premises of the existing preschools. According to the respondents the formal primary school teachers are responsible to run the program for the time being. In the future grade ten completed females will be trained to handle the program if the regional council approves a budget request proposed by the REB. The Zonal Education Office process owner for the work process of curriculum preparation and implementation, however, disclosed that the education office has discussed with the community on the strategy and the community agreed to contribute 20-30 Ethiopian Birr to hire qualified teacher to run the "0-class" strategy. In case the zone faces shortage of

qualified teachers in the area the officials decided to utilize the existing formal primary school teachers from the respective primary schools.

The researcher also interviewed one of the primary school principals from Adihaki complete primary school. According to the school principal, there is a commitment by the teachers. They believe that providing preparatory program for the children can improve learning interest and quality of education in the upper classes. Accordingly, the school was inviting parents to send their age 6 children to the school via notice and registered 38 children. But the school did not have extra classrooms and a syllabus to run the program. What they planned was to use the tree shades as class rooms and teach some songs that could help the children to improve their social skill.

The “child-to-child” program is designed for rural children of age 4-5 where grade five and above children from the community provide some organized lessons supported by the respective primary school teachers and principals. The program was initiated by UNICEF and pilot tested in selected rural Woredas .The REB got it effective and decided to expand the program to all rural Woredas of the region.

From the quantitative and qualitative data presented above it is possible to infer that the education office, although, has the commitment to implement the alternative strategy developed by the Regional Education Bureau, the preparations made are insignificant. Many of the primary schools were inviting parents to send their age 6 children to the schools to join

the preparatory program but no classrooms, indoor and outdoor playing materials and other instructional materials were available for the children.

Preschool education program deserves stakeholders to work jointly and mobilize the available resources to enhance the access of the program to all children. For the stakeholders to exert their effort the education office should take the initiative to establish forum so that partners can communicate each other and contribute their share. In the above table item 5 most of respondents at supervisory level stated there was no formally established forum among stakeholders in the town.

Regarding the aforementioned issue the Regional Education Bureau process owner for the work process of curriculum preparation and implementation noted the following:

We know there are a lot of partners and stakeholders for the program such as UNICEF, WFP, Religious organizations, private investors, bureaus like women's affairs, health, and social affairs. Yet we did not have formally established forum in the area of preschool education; although, they are contributing their share individually. Now we are planning to establish a forum and enhance joint effort in the area.

The zonal education process owner for the work process of curriculum preparation and implementation further confirmed that there is no formally established forum in the area of preschool education. Therefore, it is possible to infer that unless the education sector takes the initiative to organize efforts of the different organizations and individuals the support to the program is minimal and affects the effectiveness of the program.

Assigning an independent section that is responsible for the overall activities of preschool education plays vital role in enhancing progress in the area. A question was asked if a responsible and separate section is available in the zonal education office of Mekelle town. 61.9% of teachers 52% of principals, and 60% of parents' representatives indicated that there is a separate section that is responsible for activities of preschool education. 40% of zonal supervisors, 80% of cluster supervisors and 50% of social service workers also pointed out the presence of a separate section that is responsible for preschool program in the zonal education office. On the contrary, 26% teachers, 31% principals, 60% zonal supervisors and 50% of social service workers did not agree on the presence of separate section in the zonal education office. Interview results similarly show that there is no separate section in the zonal education department.

According to the interviewee from the regional education bureau the current BPR calls for generalist that can handle bundle of activities together not specialists in each area. Thus, the primary school supervisors carryout the preschool activities as part of their day to day routines. Not only in the structure of the zonal education bureau but also in the REB's structure there is no independent section that oversees the preschool programs. It is the curriculum preparation and implementation work process that takes the responsibility to administer the program. And the REB quality assurance work process takes the responsibility to prepare the standards of preschool institutions. This work process is also responsible to carryout quality audits to ensure whether preschool institutions are operating according to the standard or not.

From the response it is clear that there is no independent section or department in the zonal education office that takes the responsibility to follow-up and supports the activities of preschool education, because the current BPR does not require for an independent section. But, the support can be extended if the departments give equal weight as the other educational activities in the formal education sector.

Chowdury and Choudhury (2002) indicated that government officials have responsibility to support private investors in acquiring land for the construction of preschool institutions. With regard to this issue (in item 8) 41% of teachers, 36% of school principals, 60% of parents' representatives' responded that the zonal education office provides support. 40% of the zonal supervisors and 66.7 % of the social service workers share similar response. According to 26% of principals, 20% of zonal supervisors and 40% cluster supervisor there is a moderate support to the investors in the area of preschool education. Significant number i.e. 47% of the teachers, 40% of zonal and cluster supervisors on the other hand responded that there was no support provided for the investors.

The Regional Education Bureau curriculum preparation and implementation process owner in an interview noted that "It is the investment bureau responsible in providing support to investors in acquiring land. Based on requests and having fulfilled requirements the investment bureau issue support letter and the municipality provide land with a lower price i.e. 0.75 birr per m²; it was a trend in Mekelle". Education offices are responsible to ensure standards when the investors start providing preschool services.

This reveals the zonal education office is not responsible to provide support in acquiring land for construction of preschool institutions. It is also possible to understand that people in the office did not have clear understanding in their roles and responsibilities regarding preschool education because preschool education was remained neglected. It is recently that education offices started to give attention to the preschool program since the national MOE has prioritized the sector in its 4th ESDP.

The other question raised was does the zonal education office allocate finance to the government preschools and provide financial support to nongovernment preschools that provide free scholarship for children who did not afford to pay. Majority of all categories of respondents indicated that the office's support is insignificant. Particularly all social service workers responded that there is no support.

The next issue in table 7 that needs clarification was the zonal education office encouragement to the existing preschool institution to provide free scholarship for children who could not afford to pay. According to the School based respondents the zonal education office highly encourages the preschools to provide free scholarship for children from the lower economic group. Conversely, zonal supervisors, clusters supervisors and social service workers responded the encouragement done as very low. The contradictory response of the two groups implied that there is a gap between the preschool institutions and the education office that needs to be bridged soon to promote the program in the town.

In general the investigation revealed that although preschool came to the agenda of the education sector there is no separate section or trained supervisors to take the responsibility. The effort of the potential stakeholders is not organized and there is no formally established forum to mobilize and utilize the available resources and the education office hardly encourages the preschools to provide quality service to children from the lower economic category. Moreover, the zonal education office does not allocate budget to promote the preschool education program in the city.

4.7 Perceptions and Understandings on the Right of Preschool Child and the Value of Preschool Education

Many educationalist such as Robert (1990) and Demeke (2007) agreed that perception or understanding on the value of preschool education plays important role in the expansion of preschool education. The table below is about participants' perception to the value of preschool education.

Table 8. Participants' Understanding on the Value of Preschool Education

Items	Participants	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
The preschool ages of the child are critical ages for the holistic development of the child	in school participants	102	4.79	.551	.055
	out school participant	16	2.38	.885	.221
preschool ages have lasting effects in the life of the child	in school participants	102	4.79	.680	.067
	out school participant	16	4.13	1.204	.301
Preschool educations increase primary school completion rate	in school participants	102	4.76	.734	.073
	out school participant	16	4.00	.966	.242
Preschool education increase internal efficiency in primary and secondary education	in school participants	102	4.79	.722	.072
	out school participant	16	4.63	.719	.180
Preschool educations increase academic performance of children in upper grades	in school participants	102	4.73	.834	.083
	out school participant	16	4.63	.719	.180

For further information refer appendix -H

Items in the above table were meant to investigate the level of awareness of the preschool actors on the value of preschool education. In all items except item 1 the two group of respondents ranked above 4 i.e. high up to very high. The perception of the two groups varied in the first item which stated that the “preschool ages are critical ages for the holistic development of the child.” Accordingly, participants from the school highly supported the issue; however, it is low for the supervisors and social service workers considered as out of school participants. The response of the in school participants is in line with the findings of psychologists in the area of child development such as Chowdury and Choudhury(2002) , Burke & Johnson (2004).

Both the two groups highly believed that preschool ages have lasting effects. Preschool education increases primary completion rate, internal efficiency, students' performance in

upper classes, teachers' motivation to teach in the upper classes, future job opportunity of the children and economic development at a national as well as local level. Moreover, the respondents indicated that preschool education decreases juvenile delinquency and narrows down social inequalities such as inequalities among the poor and the rich, rural –urban, and gender.

Thus, it is possible to conclude that perception on the value of preschool education is not a critical problem to many of the preschool actors, or program implementers. Both participants seem to have clear understanding on most of the values of preschool education. The problem, therefore, is internalizing the value of preschool education and working intensively to promote the program.

4.8 Factors that Hindered Access to Preschool Education

Table 9. Factors that Hindered Access to Preschool Education in Mekelle

	Items	N	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	House hold poverty	118	472	4.00	1.261
2	Parents' Lack of awareness on the value of preschool education	118	457	3.87	1.278
3	The size of a family	118	431	3.65	1.367
4	Poor school facilities (internal and external) of the available preschool institutions	118	404	3.42	1.349
5	Lack of clear policy and guidelines on preschool education	118	390	3.31	1.63

For further information refer appendix -I

Participants were asked to indicate the level of influence of the above factors on the provision of preschool education in Mekelle from very high (5) to very low (1). Accordingly the value given by individual respondent was added and mean of each variable calculated. The Variable with the highest mean is supposed to have the highest impact in the promotion of preschool education in Mekelle.

As can be inferred from table 9 house hold poverty with mean value of 4.00 is highly affecting access for preschool. That means the richer the family at a household level, there is a possibility to send their children to the existing preschool educations because they have the power to pay for the tuition fee and vice versa. The second variable that affected access for preschool education is lack of awareness of parents (mean value of 3.87) on the value of preschool education. The third variable that had great impact on the provision of access to preschool education is family size. This also has an economic implication for a family i.e. the larger the family size it is difficult to afford the tuition fees for all children from the family. Woldehanna et al. cited in Yisak ,Workneh and Asham (2009) also indicated in this type of cases the elder children are more beneficiary or get the chance to go to the preschools than the younger ones. Unfortunately, this research did not confirm which children go to the preschools in the case of a large family size in the town.

Although the degree varies the poor access of preschool education in Mekelle is the result of multiple variables such as the poor preschool facilities, lack of clear policy and strategies, lack of advocacy on the program by concerned bodies, lack of coordination among the stakeholders, shortage of government investment etc.

Woldehanna et al cited in Yisak ,Workneh,Asham (2009) indicated being unable to pay fees was the main reason for urban parents/care givers for not sending their children to preschools in Ethiopia. Family size and birth order are also significant factors, such that household with more children were less likely to enroll their children in preschool and later born children were also less likely to be enrolled than first born children. That means parents with more children were unable to cover the tuition fees charged by the preschools. The findings of this research also corresponded with earlier results. Moreover, Habtamu (1996) noted that although preschools in Ethiopia are urban based, the urban poor were unable to join the preschools due to economic factors.

Lack of awareness of parents on the value of preschool education and child right was also considered as a determinant factor for the promotion of preschool education in the research carried out by Demeke (2007). Similarly the present finding indicated that there were problems in awareness and attitude to the program. The inverse relation between child population and preschool facilities are still problems in the earlier research results carried out in Ethiopia by Tirusew (2005) as well as the current finding. Interviewees on the other hand indicated, although, they did not deny the influence of the other factors the low participation in the preschool program was due to the low attention given to the sector by the government for many years. In general the findings of this research on the factors that affect the expansion of preschool education are similar to the earlier investigations in Ethiopia.

4.9 Possible Solutions to Promote Preschool Education in Mekelle: Suggestions of Participants

The participants have proposed the following suggestions to promote preschool education in the town:

- By Mobilizing community, the government should open preschools in all kebeles of the city
- There should be clear policy and guidelines
- Government should provide free land for investors and other organization for construction of preschools
- Give awareness raising programs on the value of preschool education to stakeholders
- strengthening a bond among the different stakeholders
- Strengthening /expand public preschool
- Produce trained teachers and supply play materials
- Provide continuous supervision and guidance to all preschools.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This part of the paper deals with summary of the main findings, conclusions drawn based on the research findings and the recommendation for warded based on the conclusions.

The topic of the investigation was “Practices and challenges for access to preschool education in Mekelle.” The investigation was designed with the following objectives:

- To examine the magnitude of preschool participation in the city
- To examine the major factors that affect the access of children to preschool education in Mekelle
- To assess the attitude and perception of teachers, principals, parents’ representatives, supervisors, education officers and social service workers on the right of preschool age children and significance of preschool education.
- To analyze different strategies that enhance access to preschool education

Based on the objectives the following four basic questions were developed:

1. What is the Status of participation in preschool education in Mekelle?
2. What are the attitude and perception of stakeholder’s towards the value of preschool education and rights of preschool age child?
3. What are the factors that hinder access to preschool education in the city?
4. What strategies can be used to improve access to preschool education?

To conduct the investigation a mixed research approach was used where quantitative research mainly dominated and supplemented by qualitative Method.

Data were collected from preschool teachers, school principals, and parents' representatives of randomly selected preschools. Moreover, zonal education office supervisors, cluster supervisors and sub city social service workers filled the questionnaire prepared in closed ended form. The second group was included purposively with the assumption that they are responsible in supporting implementers of government education policies and was facilitators. In-depth qualitative data were collected from four interviewees; two from the regional education bureau, one from zonal education office and one primary school principal. Documents from the EMIS of the Tigray Education Bureau were also utilized to analyze the status of preschool participation in the city, the trends of participation, and preschool institutions type by ownership. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequencies and percentages and supported with explanation of the qualitative analysis. The main points of the analysis were presented in the summaries below.

5.1 Summaries of the Findings

1. Preschool education participation in Mekelle was found low. From the preschool age children in the town about one third of them have the chance to attend preschool programs. Those who had the chance to join were children from the well to do family or those whose parents can afford to pay the required tuition fee charged by the preschools. Because almost all the available preschools in the town were owned by private investors, NGOs, and religious organizations where all of them require tuition fees for a child to get service in the institutions. Government and public contribution in the

subsector was almost nonexistent; there were only two preschools owned by the government and the public.

2. Regarding the tuition fees charged by the preschools, although, the school based respondents believed that it was affordable for majority of the community in Mekelle, education officials did not agree on the idea and described as it was unaffordable for majority of parents in the community. It was also identified house hold poverty as number one determinant factor for the low participation rate in the program.
3. From the research carried out it was found that many of the teachers in the preschools have preschool teaching back ground and majority of the preschool principals were diploma graduates in teaching for primary education. However, significant number of the school principals did not have relevant educational background. For instance there were secretaries, computer science graduates and construction back ground engaged in the principal ship of the preschools. Moreover, majority of the cluster supervisors responsible to provide support did not have training on how to support the preschools.
4. Although majority of the participants confirmed the existence of vision and mission statements and policy documents regarding preschool education at zonal and school level, significant number of the participants did not have the awareness of those vision and mission statements and the policy and guideline documents.
5. It was also found that the zonal education office did not have a master list of the preschool age children in the city and hardly conduct campaigns to increase enrolment of preschool education. But the preschools carry out regular campaigns every year to increase the number of enrollment with the purpose of maximizing their profit.

6. Parents /community participation plays significant role in the expansion of preschool education. In this regard, although, many of the preschools have strong bond with the parents significant number of them did not have a formally established parent committee in the management of the preschools.
7. Although multiple factors have contributed to the pressing challenges in promotion of preschool education in Mekelle the major factors according the quantitative data were:
 - Household poverty; that is, the inability of parents to pay the monthly tuition fees charged by the existing preschools.
 - Lack of awareness of parents on the value of preschool education
 - Family size and
 - Poor indoor and outdoor facilities.

Officials participated in the interview however indicated that the major problem was the low attention given by the government for decades.

8. The Mekelle city education office alike the other Wordas in Tigray has designed an alternative strategy for children of age 6 to prepare them for formal education. The formal schools were inviting parents to send their children to the formal schools to attend the program. However, the schools did not have extra classrooms and preschool facilities to serve the children. In addition, the alternative strategy did not accommodate age 4-5 children.
9. In the research it was found that the zonal education office did not have formally established forum with stakeholders to mobilize available resource to promote the preschool sector.

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the finding of the study the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Preschool education has been started in Mekelle since the 1960th. However, the development of the program is in its infancy stage. Among preschool age children in the town about two third of them have denied access for the program. Children who join to the formal primary programs are therefore with different background in skills that can negatively affect the GEQIP, targeted by the government.
2. Almost all preschools in the town are owned by private investors, religious organizations, and NGOs that charge tuition fees for children to join the program. Thus, unless government intervenes by establishing preschools for the poor the disparity in access in the program will continue and has transferable effect to the upper class.
3. One of the Millennium development goals where Ethiopia has committed is achieving UPE in 2015. Universalizing preschool education, moreover, plays significant role in improving internal efficiency in the primary schools. If the trend of enrollment in preschool in the town continues as it is, it is a threat for the achievement of UPE in the intended time.
4. Although, the “0- class” strategy designed as an alternative strategy for children from the lower economic level in the urban areas is feasible, hasty implementation has also its own limitations. Preschool age children more than at any age level require fertile environment for the overall development of the children. If children are forced to come to a hostile environment the intended objective i.e. boosting children’s learning interest and preparation for the formal education could be negatively affected.

5. The Government of Ethiopia has started to give attention to the preschool program. It has developed a preschool policy frame work and implementation strategy and preschool program prioritized in the 4th ESDP. That is a good start for the expansion of the program. However, the documents were not well communicated up to the local level. Thus, it can be concluded that people at different levels have different understanding regarding the program that in turn has a negative impact in the effectiveness of the program.
6. Although, there are efforts to promote preschool education in the city the efforts of the different parties are not well organized. Moreover, the commitments of the different administrative bodies to expand preschool education are not supported with budget allocation and supply of facilities. Therefore, the effectiveness of the program is questionable.

5.3 Recommendations

To promote preschool education:

1. Government particularly local administrators should prioritize ECE in its policy making, planning, and budgeting, with a view to increase access of ECE services for the young children.
2. Teachers' unions should collaborate with government, civil society organizations, parents and other stakeholders to promote ECE and organize more conferences on the value of preschool education and child right issues.
3. There is an urgent need to professionalize the ECE sector and the teaching force, by ensuring that all teachers receive pre-service and in-service trainings, as well as continuous professional development. In this case the existing Teacher Training

Colleges in the region should provide preschool related courses for all pre services trainees. In addition the existing and newly recruited supervisors should get in-service trainings to enhance their capacity in the area of preschool education.

4. Strong alliance among the stakeholders should be created to mobilize the available resources and boost the expansion of preschool education in the town. In this case Mekelle education office should take the initiative to identify the stakeholders and organize a forum.
5. Public investment is a means to cater social inequalities in social services like preschool education. Therefore, cost effective public preschool institutions should be established in each Kebele in order to provide access for children from the lower economic group. For this to be effective the zonal education office should organize forums and festivals to mobilize resources from the community as well as other donors. Moreover, the zonal education office should strongly work with sub city administrations and the municipality to secure budget for the expansion of preschool institutions in the local community.
6. Continuous advocacy programs are needed to increase the awareness of parents and other stakeholders in the value of preschool education and the right of children for the program. In addition, Public authorities should engage in further research and come up with documents, evidences and reports that can be used for advocacy purposes and to share information and experience with others. In the advocacy program the public mass Medias in the town can play significant role.
7. Before implementing the newly designed “0-class” strategy at least minimum efforts should be exerted to create a child friendly environment i.e. preparing class rooms and

playing materials. Thus, the city education office with the collaboration of the primary schools and local administrators should furnish the necessary facilities.

8. Private preschools should be encouraged to provide free scholarship to children from lower economic category. The education office with collaboration of the municipality has to encourage the preschools and design means of subsidizing the preschools that provide free scholarship.
9. The zonal education office should have to encourage and support the indigenous preschool activities provided by the religious organizations, for instance those organized in the Orthodox Church schools and mosques.

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ቢ.ሮ ትምህርተ፣ ክልል ትግራይ /1996 ዓ.ም/ ደረጃ ብቕዳት መዐቀኒ ኣዕደ ህፃናት መቐለ

/በይተሐተመ/

Appendixes

Appendix- A

Addis Ababa University School of Graduate Studies

Institute of Educational Research

Questionnaire I

To be filled by Zonal Education Department *Supervisor head, Supervisors and Social workers working at the sub city level.*

Dear Respondents

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect first hand information for the study "*the practices and challenges of preschool education in Mekelle*". The information collected through this questionnaire will be used by the investigator for academic purpose. You are kindly requested to complete the questionnaire carefully and honestly.

Please read the instructions and each item in the questionnaire carefully before you give your response. If you want to change any of your response please make sure that you have canceled the unwanted ones. Your cooperation in filling the questionnaire contributes to make the study more objective, informative and useful. Thus, please take a few minutes to fill the questionnaire and be frank and complete in your answers.

Individual response will be treated confidentially and the results of the survey will only be presented collectively.

You do not need to write your name in the questionnaire

Thank you for your cooperation

Section I – General Information

1. Place of work: _____ Woreda/sub city/ _____
2. Sex A. Male B. Female
3. Qualification: A. Certificate B. Diploma C. First degree D. second Degree E. Others
4. Specialization _____
5. Career position _____
6. Years of service
 - a. at your present position _____ years
 - b. total years of service _____ years

Section II. Main body of the questionnaire

Instruction: Please put a tick mark (√) in the space provided for the statements set in scale form and give only one answer to each item unless you required doing otherwise. Give short and honest answers for question items that require your opinion.

5= strongly agree 4= agree 3= undecided 2=disagree 1= strongly disagree

<i>A. Policy Issues</i>						
	<i>A. To what extent do you agree with the following statement?</i>	5	4	3	2	1
A1	The zone/city has a mission and a vision statement about preschool education					
A2	The zone/city has a master list of all preschool age children in the community whether enrolled or not					
A3	The zone/city conduct regular campaigns to encourage parents to enroll their children in the existing preschools					
A4	Monitoring mechanisms exist to identify and enroll preschool age boys and girls in the preschools.					
A5	The zone/city has copies of policy and guideline documents that address preschool education					
A6	The tuition fees and registration fees charged by the preschool institutions is affordable for majority of the parents in community					

B. School Parents/Community participation

	<i>To what extent do you agree with the following statement of school – parent/community participation in preschool education?</i>	5	4	3	2	1
B1	The preschools have strong links with the community.					
B2	The schools values the opinion of parents/guardians .					
B3	The parents/community participates in school planning and policy making.					
B4	Schools create sensitizing programs that emphasize the fundamental					

	principles of parenting and the value of preschool education.					
B5	Communication between home and the preschools is regular and continuous.					
B6	Communication between home and the preschools is two-way.					
B7	The community helps the preschools reach out to all children who have been excluded from school.					
B8	Community resources are used to strengthen students' learning.					
B9	The preschools conduct conferences with parents.					
B10	The schools have link with existing health authorities who provide health examination for children.					

C. Availability of preschool facilities and human resources

5=very high 4=high 3=moderate 2=low 1=very low

	<i>To what extent do the following facilities available in the preschool institutions in Mekelle?</i>	5	4	3	2	1
C1	The preschools and their facilities are physically accessible to all preschool age children.					
C2	The preschools have adequate supply of clean safe drinking water.					
C3	The preschools have adequate outdoor play facilities.					
C4	The preschools have adequate indoor play facilities.					
C5	The preschools have enough instructional materials /teaching aids, storey books, text books, teachers guides/ .					
C6	The schools have adequate qualified teachers					
C7	The schools have adequate supportive staff.					
C8	Supply of classrooms					
C9	Dining rooms					
C10	Rooms to sleep (take rest)					

D. Role of the Government /REB, ZED/

	<i>To what extend does the REB/ZED react to the following responsibilities?</i>	5	4	3	2	1
D1	Supply standard for preschool educational facilities .					
D 2	Supervise and provide guidance for all type of preschools/Private, governmental, NGOs, Public and Religious /.					
D 3	Mobilize available resources to promote preschool education.					
D 4	Develop strategies to provide preschool services for economically disadvantaged groups of the community.					
D 5	Established forum with all stakeholders at city level.					

D 6	Develop indicators to monitor and evaluate access and progress in preschool education					
D 7	There is a department/section/ at the zonal level who is responsible for preschool education programs.					
D 8	Encourage and assist private investors and other organizations in acquiring land for construction of preschool institutions.					
D 9	The ZED allocates finance to government and public preschools.					
D 10	The ZED subsidizes to preschools who provide free scholarship for poor children					
D 11	The zone/city clearly knows key stakeholders that offer resources for preschool education					
D 12	The zone encourages the preschools to provide free scholarship to children who cannot afford to pay					

5= strongly agree 4= agree 3= undecided 2=disagree 1= strongly disagree

E. Understanding on the effect of Preschool Education

	<i>To what extent do you agree with the following <u>effects</u> of preschool education?</i>	5	4	3	2	1
E1	The preschool ages of the child are critical ages for the holistic development of the child.					
E 2	Preschool ages have lasting effects in the life of the child.					
E 3	Preschool educations increase primary school completion rate.					
E 4	Preschool education increase internal efficiency in primary and secondary education.					
E 5	Preschool educations increase academic performance of children in upper grades.					
E 6	It increases teachers' stimulation to teaching effectively in the primary schools.					
E 7	Increase future job opportunity of the children.					
E8	Increase productivity at a community as well as at a nation level.					
E 9	Preschool education decreases juvenile delinquency.					
E 10	Narrow down gaps in social inequalities (among the rich and the poor, rural –urban etc) .					

5=very high 4=high 3=moderate 2=low 1=very low

F. Constraints to access preschool education

	<i>According to your opinion to what extent do the following factors affect the promotion of access to preschool education in Mekelle?</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>
F1	House hold poverty					
F2	Lack of awareness on the value of preschool education					
F3	Low government's priority on the need to preschool education					
F4	Lack of clear policy and guidelines on preschool education					
F5	Shortage of public investment					
F6	Poor school facilities (internal and external) of the available preschool institutions					
F7	Shortage of trained personnel (teachers and principals) to run programs					
F8	Lack of coordination among the different stakeholders					
F9	Lack of advocacy on the program					
F10	Preschool education is considered as the responsibility of mothers that can be handled out at home.					
F11	Parents' low educational level					
F12	The size of a family					

IV. According to your opinion what should be done to enhance access to preschool education in the town?

Thank you

Appendix- B

የኒቨርሲቲ አዲስ አበባ
መርሃ ግብረ ድህረ ምረቃ
ኢንስቲትዩት መፅናዕትን ምርምርን ትምህርቲ

ብመምህራን ፣ ርእሰመምህራንን ተወክልቲ ወለዲን አፀደህፃናት ዝምላእ መሕትት
ዕላማ ዚመሕትትዙይ "ህሉዊ ምንቅስቃስን ብድሆታትን (Challenges) ምስፍሕፋሕ ቅድመ
ትምህርቲ (አፀደ ህፃናት) ከተማ መቐለ" ኣብ ዝብል መፅናዕታዊ ዕሉፍ ዘድሊ መረዳእታ
ንምእካብ እዩ። ካብ ተሳተፍቲ ዝርከብ መረዳእታ ንትምህርታዊ ረብሓ ጥራሕ ዝውዕል
ይኸውን። ተሳተፍቲ ነዞም ዝቐረቡ ሕቶታት ብጥንቃቄን ብቕንዕናን ንክትመልእዎም
ብትሕትና እሓትት።

ቅድሚ መልሲ ምሃብኩም ነቲ መምርሕን ሕድ ሕድ ዝቐረቡ ሕቶታትን ብጥንቃቄ ብምንባብ
መልሲ ምሃብን መልሲ ንምቕያር እንተደሊኹም ድማ ናይ መጀመርያ መልስኹም ምስራዝ
የድሊ። ብትገብርዎ ምትሕብባር እዚ መፅናዕቲ ፍትሓዊ፤ ሙሉእ ሓበሬታ ዘለዎን ጠቓሚን
ይኸውን። ስለዚ ተሳተፍቲ ካብ ዘለኩም ክቡር ጊዜ ተጠቂምኩም ነዚ መሕትት ብቕንዕ ልቦና
ክትመልኡለይ እላቦ። ኣብዚ ምሕትት ሽም ምፅሓፍ ኣየድልን።

ብውልቀ ዝሃብኩምዎ መልሲ ብጥሙር ዝትንተንን ሚስጥራውነቱ ሕልው ምኅኑን
ከረጋግፀልኩም እፈቱ።

ንምትሕብባርኩም የመስግን።

ክፍሊ ሓደ:- ሓፈሻዊ

ዝሓረኻ(ኸ)ዮ መልሲ ዝሓዘ ፊደል ኣኸብብ(ቢ)፤ ክፍቲ ቦታ ምላእ ኣብዘድልዮ ድማ ክፍቲ ቦታ ምላእ(ኢ)።

1. ዋንነት ሀ.ውልቀ ለ. ሃይማኖታዊ ሐ. መንግስታዊ መ.ዘይመንግስታዊ (NGO) ረ. ናይ ህዝቢ
2. ኣድራሻ :- ጣብያ _____
3. ስራሕን ሓላፍነቶምን ሀ. መምህር ለ. ርእሰ መምህር ሐ. ተወካሊ ወመሕ
4. ምሥጢር ሀ. ተባዕታይ ለ. ኣነስታይ
5. ደረጃ ትምህርቲ ሀ. ሰርተፊኬት ለ. ዲፕሎማ ሐ. ቀዳማይ ዲግሪ መ. ካልኣይ ዲግሪ ረ. ካሊእ እንተኾይኑ ይገለፅ _____
6. ዝሰልጠነሉ ዓይነት ትምህርቲ _____
7. ግልጋሎት ስራሕ ሀ. ህዚ ኣብለወዎ(ዎኦ) ስራሕ መደብ _____ ዓመት ለ.ድምርግልጋሎት ዘመን _____ ዓመት

ክፍሊ ክልተ

መምርሒ. ብመልክዕ ሊከርት ስኬል ንዝተዳለወ ሕቶታት ኣብ ዝተውሃበ ክፍቲ ቦታ ናይ (X) ምልክት ብምቕማጥ መልሲ ሃብ(ቢ)። ንሓደ ሓሳብ ሓደ መልሲ ጥራሕ ኣቐምጥ(ጠ)። ሓሳብካ ምግላፅ ኣብዘድሊ መሕትት ሕፅር ዝበለ መልሲ ፀሓፍ(ፊ)።

ሀ. ፖሊሲ ተንክፍ ሕቶታት

5=ኣዝዮ እስማማዕ 4=እስማማዕ 3= ንምውሳኔ እፅግም 2= ኣይስማማዕን 1=ኣዝዮ ኣይስማማዕን

ተ.ቁ	ኣብዞም ዝሰዕቡ ሓሳባት ክንደይ ዝእክል ትስማማዕ?	5	4	3	2	1
A1	ቤት ትምህርትና ቅድመ ስራይ ትምህርቲ ዝምልከት ንፁር ራእይን ልኡኸን ኣለዎ።					
A2	ቤት ትምህርትና ኣብ ከባቢ ዝርከቡ ኣብ ክለ ዕድመ ኣፀደ ህፃናት ዘለዉ ኩሎም(ዝተመዝገቡን ዘይተመዝገቡን) ህፃናት ዝርዝር መረዳእታ መዝገብ ኣለዎ።					
A3	ቤት ትምህርትና ኣብዚ ከባቢ ዝርከቡ ህፃናት ኣብ ትምህርቲ ኣፀደ ህፃናት ክሳተፉ ወፍርታት ተካይድ።					
A4	ኣብ ክለ ዕድመ ኣፀደ ህፃናት ዘለዉ ህፃናት ንምፍላይ መመዝገቢን መክታተሊ ማላታትን ኣለና።					
A5	ትምህርቲ ኣፀደ ህፃናት ዝምልከት ፖሊሲ ስትራተጂን መምርሒታትን ኣለና።					
A6	ወርሓዊ ክፍሊትን መመዝገቢ ክፍሊትን ቤት ትምህርትና ንኣብዝሓ ሕብረተሰብ ዝምጥን እዩ።					

ለ. ርክብ ቤት ትምህርትን ወለዲን/ሕብረተሰብን

ተ.ቁ	አብዛም ዝሰዕቡ ርክብ ቤት ትምህርትን/ወለዲን ዝምልከቱ ሓሰባት ክንደይ ዝእክል ትስማማዕ(ዲ)?	5	4	3	2	1
B1	ቤት ርምህርትና ምስ ወለዲ/ሕብረተሰብ ስጦም ርክብ ኣለዎ።					
B2	ቤት ትምህርትና ንሪኢቶ ወለዲ ግቡእ ዋጋ ትህብ።					
B3	ወለዲ ኣብ ብድላው ፖሊሲ ቤት-ትምህርትን ትልምን ይሳተፉ።					
B4	ቤት ትምህርትና መሰረታዊ መትከላት ኣተዓባብያ ህፃናትን ረብሓ ትምህርቲ ኣፀደ ህፃናትን ዘድሃበ ሓፀርቲ ስልጠናታት ንወለዲ ተዳሉ።					
B5	ርክብ ቤት ትምህርትን ወለዲን ዘይተበታተኹን ተኸታታሊን እዩ።					
B6	ሕብረተሰብ ናብ መእዲ ትምህርቲ ኣፀደ ህፃናት ዘይመዕኡ ህፃናት ኣብቲ ፕሮግራም ክሳተፉ ሓገዝ ትገብር።					
B7	ሃፍቲ ሕብረተሰብ ንምጥንኻር ትምህርቲ ኣፀደ ህፃናት ንክውዕል እናተገበረ እዩ።					
B8	ቤት ትምህርትና ምስ ወለዲ ዘተ ተካይድ።					
B9	ቤት ትምህርትና ምስ ኣብ ከባቢ ዝርከብ ናይ ጥዕና ትካል ስጦም ርክብ ኣለዎ።					

ሐ. ናውትን ሓይሊ ሰብን

5=ኣዝዩ ዝተማልአ 4=ዝተማልአ 3= ማእኸላይ 2= ትሑት 1=ኣዝዩ ትሑት

ተ.ቁ	ኣብ ቤት-ትምህርትኹም እዞም ዝሰዕቡ ናውትን ሓይሊ ሰብን ክንደይ ዝእክል ዝተማልኡ እዮም?	5	4	3	2	1
C 1	እዚ ቤት ትምህርቲ ኣብ ከባቢ ዝርከቡ ኣብ ዕድመ ኣፀደ ህፃናት ዝበዕሉ ህፃናት ብቀሊሉ ክበዕሉ ይኸእሉ።					
C 2	እኹልን ዕድይን ቀረብ ዝስተ ማይ ኣለዎ።					
C 3	እኹል ግዳማዊ መፃውዒ ናውቲ ህፃናት ኣለዎ።					
C 4	ንይ ውሽጢ ናውቲ ።					
C 5	እኹል ናውቲ ትምህርቲ (መምህሪ ሓገዝ መፃሕፍ ተምሃሮ መምርሒ ንመምህር መፃሕፍቲ ዕውዕዎይ ወዘተ) ኣለዉ።					
C 6	እኹል ዝሰልጠኑ መምህራንን።					
C 7	ድጋፍ ወሃብቲ ኣካላትን።					
C 8	መምህሪ ክፍልታት ።					
C 9	መመገቢ ክፍልታት።					
C 10	መደቀሲ ክፍልታት።					

መ. ስራሕን ሓላፍነትን መንግስታዊ ኣካላት

5=ኣዝዩ ዝለዓለ 4=ዝለዓለ 3= ማእኸላይ 2= ትሑት 1=ኣዝዩ ትሑት

ተ.ቁ	አብዛም ዝሰዕቡ ተግባራት ክፍሊ ትምህርተ ዞባ መቐለ ክንደይ ዝእክል ኣብ ምፍፃም ይርከብ?	5	4	3	2	1
D1	ንኣፀደ ህፃናት ዘድልዩ ናውቲ ስታንዳርድ የቕርብ።					
D2	ግልጋሎት ሱፐርቪዥንን ደገፍን ይህብ ።					

D3	ዘሎ ሃፍቲ ንምስፍሕፋሕ ትምህርቲ ኣፀደ ህፃናት ንክውዕል የለዓዕል።					
D4	ኣብ ትሑት ኢኮኖሚያዊ መነባበሮ ዝርከቡ ህፃናት ትምህርቲ ኣፀደ ህፃናት ዝረኽቡሉ ሚላታት/ስትራተጂታት ይሕንዕዕ።					
D5	ምስ ኩሎም ተሻረኽቲ ኣካላት ሓባራዊ ፎረም መስሪቲ ይንቀሳቅስ።					
D6	ቀረብን ምዕባለን ትምህርቲ ኣፀደ ህፃናት ንምክትታልን ምግምጋምን ዘኽእሉ መለክዕታት (Indicators) የዳሉ።					
D7	ፕሮግራም ትምህርቲ ኣፀደ ህፃናት ዝክታተል ባዕሉ ዝኸኣለ በዓል ሞያ (ክፍሊ) ብብርኪ ዞባ ወዲቡ ይንቐሳቅስ።					
D8	ኣብ ፕሮግራም ኣፀደ ህፃናት ዝሳተፉ ውልቀ ኢንቨስተራትን ትካላትን ብቐሊሉ መሬት ንክረኽቡ ደገፍ ይገብር።					
D9	ቤት ዕሕፊት ትምህርቲ ዞባ መቐለ ንመንግስታዊን ናይ ህዝቢን ኣፀደ ህፃናትን ፋይናንስ ይምድብ።					
D10	ቤት ዕሕፊት ትምህርቲ ዞባ መቐለ ነፃ ዕድል ትምህርቲ ንዝህባ ትካላት ኣፀደ ህፃናት ደገፍ ፋይናንስ ይገብር።					
D11	ቤት ዕሕፊት ትምህርቲ ዞባ መቐለ ንፕሮግራም ኣፀደ ህፃናት ደገፍ ዝገብሩ ኣካላትን ትካላትን ኣነፂሩ ይፈልጦም።					
D 12	ትካላት ኣፀደ ህፃናት ከፊሎም ምምሃር ንዘይኸእሉ ህፃናት ነፃ ዕድል ትምህርቲ ክህቡ የተባብዕ።					

ረ. ግንዛብ ረብሓ ትምህርቲ ኣፀደ ህፃናት
 5=ኣዝዩ ዝለዓለ 4=ዝለዓለ 3= ማእኸላይ 2= ትሑት 1=ኣዝዩ ትሑት

ተ.ቁ	ኣብዞም ዝስዕቡ ረብሓ ትምህርት ኣፀደ ህፃናት ዘለካ(ኪ) ግንዛብ እንታይ ይመስል ?	5	4	3	2	1
E1	ክሊ ዕድመ ቅድመ ትምህርቲ ኣብ ኩለመዳያዊ ዕብየት ህፃናት ዝለዓለ ተራ ኣለዎ።					
E2	ክሊ ዕድመ ትምህርቲ ኣብ ቀፃሊ ህይወት ህፃናት ዝለዓለ ተራ ኣለዎ።					
E3	ፕሮግራም ትምህርት ኣፀደ ህፃናት ውሽጣዊ ብቕዓት ቀዳማይን ካልኣይን ብርኪ ክውስኽ ይገብር።					
E4	ፕሮግራም ትምህርቲ ኣፀደ ህፃናት ኣብ ላዕለዎት ክፍሊታት ውዕኢት ተምሃሮ ክመሓየሽ ይሕግዝ።					
E5	መምህራን ቀዳማይ ብርኪ ተጊሆም ከምህሩ ይሕግዝ።					
E6	ኣብ ላዕለዎት ክፍሊታት ዕሬት ትምህርቲ ክመሓየሽ ይሕግዝ።					
E7	መፃኢ ዕድል ስራሕ ሕፃናት ክሰፍሕ ይገብር።					
E 8	ኣብ ብርኪ ማሕበረሰብ ከምኡ ውን ብሃገር ደረጃ ፍርያት ክውስኽ ይሕግዝ።					
E 9	ኣብ እዋን መንእሰይነት ስርዓት ኣልቦነት ክቕንስ ይሕግዝ።					
E10	ፕሮግራም ኣፀደ ህፃናት ማሕበራዊ ኣፈላላይ የዕብብ (ኣብ መንጎ ድኻታትን ሃፍታማትን ኣብ መንጎ ገጠርን ከተማን ወዘተ)።					

ሰ. ንምስፍሕፋሕ ትምህርት አፀደ ህፃናት ዕንቅፋት ዝኸኑ ምኽያታት
 5=አዝዩ ዝለዓለ 4=ዝለዓለ 3= ማእኸላይ 2= ትሑት 1=አዝዩ ትሑት

ተ.ቁ	አብዘም ዝስዕቡ ምኽንያት(factors) አብ ብስፍሕፋሕ ትምህርቲ አፀደ ህፃናት ከተማ መቐለ ክንደይ ዝአክል ፅዕንቶ የሕድሩ ኢልካ ትአምን ?	5	4	3	2	1
F1	ድኽነት አብ ብርኪ ስድራ ምህላው።					
F2	ትሑት ግንዛብ ረብሓ ትምህርቲ አፀደ ህፃናት።					
F3	መንግስቲ ንፕሮግራም ትምህርቲ አፀደ ህፃናት ዝህቦ ቆላሕታ ምትሓቲ።					
F4	ትምህርቲ አፀደ ህፃናት ዝምልከት ንፁር ፖሊሲን መምርሕታትን ዘይምህላው።					
F5	መንግስቲ አብ ፕሮግራም ትምህርቲ አፀደ ህፃናት ዝገብሮ ኢንቨስትመንት ዘይምህላው።					
F6	ሕፅረት ውሽጣውን ግዳማዊን ናውቲ ትምህርቲ።					
F7	ፕሮግራም አፀደ ህፃናት ዝመርሕ ዝሰልጠነ ሓይሊሰብ ዘይምህላው።					
F8	አብ መንጎ ተሻረኽቲ አካላት ዘሎ ምትሕብባር ድኽ-ም ምኃኑ።					
F9	ፕሮግራም ትምህርቲ አፀደ ህፃናት ንምስፍሕፋሕ ዝግበር ምልዕዳል ስለዘየለ ።					
F10	ቅድመ ትምህርቲ አብ ገዛ ዝወሃብ ናይ ወለዲ ሓላፍነት ገይርካ ስለዝውሰድ።					
F11	ትሑት ብርኪ ትምህርቲ ወለዲ።					
F12	ምብዛሕ መጠን ስድራ።					

ክፍሊ ሰለስተ:-

ብናትካ(ኪ) አመለካኸታ ትምህርቲ አፀደ ህፃናት አብ መቐለ ንክስፍሕፋሕ እንታይ ክግበር አለዎ ትብል(ሊ)?

የመስገን

Appendix - C

Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies
Institute of Educational Research

Interview guide carried out with *Education Experts working at a Regional Education Bureau and Zonal Education Office.*

Questions

1. What is the level of preschool participation in the region in general and Mekelle in particular?
2. What is the REB doing to enhance the provision of preschool education for those children who could not afford to pay?
3. What policy issues and child right documents are available in your office? And how do you evaluate the practical implementation of the policy and child right issues?
4. What is the REB planning to carry out in the 4th ESDP regarding preschool education? What strategies are developed for the implementation?
5. Who should be involved in providing preschool education to all preschool age children? Who should take the lead? How?
6. Are all preschools running their program according to the government set standards? What monitoring and evaluation mechanisms do you have?

Appendix- D

Addis Ababa University School of Graduate Studies Institute of Educational Research

Tables to collect secondary data from documents

1. Number of Preschool age children for the academic year 2008/2009 in Mekelle according to the census of _____

Age	Male	Female	Total
Age 4			
Age 5			
Age 6			
Total			

2. Number of preschools/Kindergartens/ in Mekelle 2008/2009 academic year

Type	Number	Remark
Private		
Governmental		
NGOs		
Religious		
Community		
Total		

3. Number of children enrolled in preschool /Kindergartens/ education 2008/2009

Age	Stage 1		Stage 2		Stage 3		Total		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
<4									
4									
5									
6									
>6									
Total									

4. Gross Enrollment Rate(GER) 2008/09

male	Female	Total

5. Net Enrollment Rate in 2008/09

male	Female	Total

Appendix E

Summary of reliability pilot test

Group	Number of Items	Number of participants		Cronbach Alpha	
		Pilot	Actual	Pilot	Actual
A1-A6	6	7	118	0.631	0.787
B1-B9	9	7	118	0.681	0.814
C1-C10	10	7	118	0.718	0.891
D1-D12	12	7	118	0.699	0.894
E1-E10	10	7	118	0.777	0.871
F1-F12	10	7	118	0.898	0.872
Total	59	7	118	0.824	0.927

Appendix -F

Table 6. Status of Preschool Facilities in the KGs in Mekelle

S/ N	Items	Response	In school participants						Out school respondents					
			Teacher s		Princip als		Parents' Represe ntatives		Zonal Supervi sors		Cluster supervis ors		Social Service workers	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Preschools are physically accessible to all preschool age children in the community	High	55	87.3	18	94.7	17	85	1	20	2	40	0	0
		Mod	2	3.2	1	5.3	2	10	1	20	2	40	2	33.3
		Low	6	9.5	0	0	1	5	3	60	1	20	4	66.7
2	The preschools have adequate supply of safe clean water	High	55	87.3	17	89.5	19	95	1	20	2	40	4	66.7
		Mod	7	11.1	2	10.5	1	5	1	20	2	40	0	0
		Low	1	1.6	0	0	0	0	3	60	1	20	2	33.3
3	The preschools have adequate supply of outdoor play materials	High	54	85.7	17	89.5	17	85	1	20	1	20	1	16.7
		Mod	8	12.7	2	10.5	1	5	1	20	2	40	2	33.3
		Low	1	1.6	0	0	2	10	3	60	2	40	3	50
4	The preschools have adequate supply of indoor play materials	High	52	82.5	16	84.2	17	85	1	20	3	60	0	0
		Mod	1	1.6	1	5.3	1	5	1	20	1	20	3	50
		Low	10	15.9	2	10.5	2	10	3	60	1	20	3	50
5	The preschools have adequate supply of locally produced instructional materials	High	54	85.7	18	94.7	17	85	0	0	2	40	0	0
		Mod	2	3.2	1	5.3	1	5	1	20	2	40	2	33.3
		Low	7	11.1	0	0	2	10	4	80	1	20	4	66.7
6	The preschools have adequate supply qualified teaching staff	High	59	93.7	18	94.7	16	80	3	60	2	40	2	33.3
		Mod	0	0	0	0	1	5	0	0	2	40	1	16.7
		Low	4	6.4	1	5.3	3	15	2	40	1	20	3	50
7	The preschools have adequate supply supporting staff	High	35	55.6	15	78.9	15	75	0	0	1	20	1	16.7
		Mod	10	15.9	2	10.5	1	5	3	60	3	60	1	16.7
		Low	18	28.6	2	10.5	4	20	2	40	1	20	4	66.7

8	The preschools have adequate supply of class rooms	High	59	93.7	18	94.7	17	85	0	0	3	60	2	33.3
		Mod	2	3.2	0	0	2	10	2	40	0	0	3	50
		Low	2	3.2	1	5.3	1	5	3	60	2	40	1	16.7
9	The preschools have adequate supply of dining rooms	High	39	61.9	13	68.4	15	75	0	0	3	60	1	16.7
		Mod	13	20.6	5	26.3	1	5	1	20	0	0	2	33.3
		Low	11	17.5	1	5.3	4	20	4	80	2	40	3	50
10	The preschools have adequate sleeping rooms	High	47	74.6	15	79.0	14	70	1	20	3	60	1	16.7
		Mod	9	14.3	3	15.8	2	10	0	0	1	20	1	16.7
		Low	7	11.1	1	5.3	4	20	4	80	1	20	4	66.7

Appendix -G

Table 7. The Role of Mekelle Education Office in Expanding Preschool Program

N	Items	Response	In school participants						Out school respondents					
			Teachers		Principals		Representatives		Supervisors		Supervisors		Social Service workers	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Supply standard for preschool educational facilities.	High	38	60.3	11	57.9	8	40	1	20	1	20	2	33.3
		mod	6	9.5	3	15.8	5	25	1	20	3	60	1	16.7
		Low	19	30.2	5	26.3	7	35	3	60	1	20	3	50
2	Supervise and provide guidance for all type of preschools	High	36	57.1	9	47.4	12	60	1	20	2	40	2	33.3
		mod	16	25.4	6	31.6	4	20	2	40	2	40	1	16.7
		Low	11	17.5	4	21.1	4	20	2	40	1	20	3	50
3	Mobilize available resources to promote preschool education.	High	42	66.7	7	36.9	10	50	0	0	3	60	0	0
		mod	2	3.2	6	31.6	7	35	2	40	1	20	3	50
		Low	19	30.2	6	31.6	3	15	3	60	1	20	3	50
4	Develop strategies to provide preschool services for economically disadvantaged groups of the community	high	33	52.4	6	31.6	7	35	0	0	3	60	2	33.3
		mod	5	7.9	6	31.6	7	35	1	20	2	40	1	16.7
		low	25	39.7	7	36.6	6	30	4	80	0	0	3	50
5	Established forum with all stakeholders at city level.	high	27	42.9	8	42.6	9	45	1	20	1	20	0	0
		mod	18	28.6	6	31.6	4	20	1	20	1	20	2	33.3
		low	18	28.6	5	26.3	7	35	3	60	3	60	4	66.7
6	Develop indicators to monitor and evaluate access and progress in preschool education	high	33	52.4	8	42.1	10	50	0	0	2	40	2	40
		mod	16	25.4	4	21.1	4	20	2	40	1	20	1	20
		low	14	22.2	7	36.8	6	30	3	60	2	40	2	40
7	There is a department/section/ at the zonal level who is responsible for preschool education programs.	high	39	61.9	10	52.6	12	60	2	40	4	80	3	50
		mod	5	7.9	3	15.8	2	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
		low	17	27.0	6	31.6	6	30	3	60	1	20	3	50

Encourage and assist private investors and other organizations in acquiring land for construction of preschool institutions.	high	26	41.3	5	26.3	12	60	2	40	1	20	4	66.7
	mod	7	11.1	5	26.3	3	15	1	20	2	40	1	16.7
	low	30	47.6	9	47.4	5	25	2	40	2	40	1	16.7
The ZED allocates finance to government and public preschools.	high	27	42.9	3	15.8	4	20	0	0	0	0	0	0
	mod	3	4.8	5	26.3	5	25	0	0	2	40	0	0
	low	33	52.4	11	57.9	11	55	5	100	3	60	6	100
The ZED subsidizes to preschools who provide free scholarship for poor children	high	24	38.1	5	26.3	4	20	0	0	1	20	0	0
	mod	8	12.7	1	5.3	5	25	2	40	1	20	0	0
	low	31	49.2	13	68.4	11	55	3	60	3	60	6	100
The zone encourages the preschools to provide free scholarship to children who cannot afford to pay	high	48	76.2	10	52.6	9	45	0	0	1	20	0	0
	mod	5	7.9	2	10.5	6	30	2	40	2	40	3	50
	low	11	17.5	7	36.8	5	25	3	60	2	40	3	50

Appendix- H

Table 8. Participants' Understanding the Value of Preschool Education

Items	Participants	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
The preschool ages of the child are critical ages for the holistic development of the child	in school participants	102	4.79	.551	.055
	out school participant	16	2.38	.885	.221
preschool ages have lasting effects in the life of the child	in school participants	102	4.79	.680	.067
	out school participant	16	4.13	1.204	.301
Preschool educations increase primary school completion rate	in school participants	102	4.76	.734	.073
	out school participant	16	4.00	.966	.242
Preschool education increase internal efficiency in primary and secondary education	in school participants	102	4.79	.722	.072
	out school participant	16	4.63	.719	.180
Preschool educations increase academic performance of children in upper grades	in school participants	102	4.73	.834	.083
	out school participant	16	4.63	.719	.180
It increases teachers stimulation to teaching effectively in the primary schools	in school participants	102	4.81	.558	.055
	out school participant	16	4.56	.814	.203
Increase future job opportunity of the children	in school participants	102	4.65	.897	.089
	out school participant	16	4.38	.719	.180
Increase productivity at a community as well as at a nation level	in school participants	102	4.67	.749	.074
	out school participant	16	4.13	1.025	.256
Preschool education decreases juvenile delinquency	in school participants	102	4.62	.944	.094
	out school participant	16	4.50	.816	.204
Narrow down gaps in social inequalities (among the rich and the poor, rural –urban etc)	in school participants	102	4.31	1.090	.108
	out school participant	16	4.19	1.047	.262

Appendix - I

Table 9. Factors that Hindered Access to Preschool Education in Mekelle

	Items	N	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	House hold poverty	118	472	4.00	1.261
2	Parents' Lack of awareness on the value of preschool education	118	457	3.87	1.278
3	The size of a family	118	431	3.65	1.367
4	Poor school facilities (internal and external) of the available preschool institutions	118	404	3.42	1.349
5	Lack of clear policy and guidelines on preschool education	118	390	3.31	1.63
6	Lack of advocacy on the program	118	387	3.28	1.449
7	Preschool education is considered as the responsibility of mothers that can be handled out at home	118	379	3.21	1.332
8	Lack of coordination among the different stakeholders	118	377	3.19	1.526
9	Shortage of public investment	118	375	3.18	1.556
10	Parents' low educational level	118	374	3.17	1.41
11	Low government's priority on the need to preschool education	118	355	3.01	1.459
12	Shortage of trained personnel (teachers and principals) to run programs	118	327	2.77	1.499
	Valid N (list wise)	118			

Declaration


I hereby declared that this thesis is my original work, and has not been presented for a degree to any university and that all relevant sources used are acknowledged.


Name Zenay Glanerio

Signature: 

Date of Submission:- 25/2/2011

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as a university advisor.

Name: 

Signature: 

Date: Feb, 23 / 2011