



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL STUDIES
CENTER FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND
EDUCATION

QUALITY OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN
OROMIA SPECIAL ZONE SURROUNDING ADDIS ABABA
(The case of selected private preschools of Sululta, Mulo and
Berek woredas)

BY: FEKADU GIZAW

August 2021

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

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ATHESIS SUMMITTED TO COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND
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DECLARATION

The researcher hereby declares that the thesis on the title; “Quality of Early Childhood Education in Oromia Special Zone Surrounding Addis Ababa (The Case of Selected Private Preschools of Sululta, Mulo and Berek woredas), is my thesis work and it is not presented by others. All materials which I used for this research is fully acknowledged.

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ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

ECC	Early Childhood Care
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD	Early Child Development
ECDVU	Early Childhood Development Virtual University
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ECEC	Early Childhood Education and Care
EFA	Education for all
ESDP	Education Sector Development Programme
HIV/AIDS	Human Immune deficiency Virus/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Act
ILO	International Labour Organization
MICS	Multi-indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS)
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoWA	Ministry of Women Affairs
NAEYC	the National Association of the Education of Young Children
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund

ABSTRACT

This research is aimed at studying the status of the quality of early childhood education in private preschools in Oromia special zone Surrounding Addis Ababa. In this study exploratory research and qualitative research approach was employed. The participants of the study included four preschool education expertise one from Oromia special zone education office and Others from Sululta, Mulo and Berek woredas education offices, teachers, parents and principals of 9 sample preschools were selected for the study by applying purposive sampling method. Data was collected by using observation, interview, focus group discussion, and document analysis. The results of the study shows that; there were curriculum implementation differences among preschools, lack of qualified teachers to implement the syllabus of preschools properly and lack of qualified caregivers; large class size, improper classroom buildings and shortage of service rooms, inappropriate teaching method, inappropriate and inadequate indoor and outdoor materials, unavailability of inputs for children with special needs, and lack of parent participation in preschool education, shortages of documents for Early Childhood Care and Education in preschools: like text books, teachers' guides, documents for children with special needs and other policy documents, were hazards to bring quality ECCE in the selected preschools. Thus, the regional, zonal and woreda education offices professionals and expertise were advised to be accountable their roles and duties in ensuring and promoting quality of ECCE to the standards. Oromia education offices, ECCE principals and supervisors ought to build strong partnership with the preschools facilitators, and children's families to fill the professional and parental involvement gabs within their pre- schools. The facilitators also advised to facilitate continuous clinical and collegial supervision practices among the facilitators and conducting action researches and taking actions (interventions) for enhancement quality provision of ECCE in the study area in particular and in the country in general.

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is an expansion of Early Childhood Education, with the care component added or it is the support for children's survival, growth, development and learning from birth to the time of entry into primary school. There is also Early Childhood Care (ECC) without the education component. Given the multifaceted nature of early childhood, the existence of several labels may be inevitable. The same term or name may be or can be interpreted in different social, cultural, and linguistic levels. Despite the differences in name, the fundamentals are the same i.e. the ultimate concern of any childhood program is the wellbeing and holistic development of the child. Regardless of the institutional setting, the program should involve a developmentally-appropriate practice, which attends to health, nutrition, security and learning of the children (Zemenu, 2019).

During Early Childhood period there are services given for children's. Many of these services are called 'Kindergarten Schools' 'Nursery Schools' 'Day Care Centers' '0' class, and child-to-child (UNESCO-IICBA, 2010). High-quality early childhood care and education programs include immunization, parenting education, home-based activities in kindergartens, or nurseries which provide health, nutrition, hygiene, stimulation and social interaction that support children's development.

During this time children receives emotional support; develop their sense of personal and physical security, and strengthen bonds with family and community. In addition they learn by manipulating objects and materials, exploring the world around them and experimenting, using trial and error. By age 8, all children around the world are expected to be in primary school (UNESCO, 2006).

Early childhood care and education (ECCE) refers to "group settings purposely intended to effect developmental changes in young children". Infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and children kindergarten to grade three and sometimes all elementary grades need professionals who shape

bonds between child's two worlds school (Gordon, Ann Miles and Browne, Kathryn Williams, 2013).

'Care' generally includes attention to health, hygiene and nutrition within a nurturing and safe environment that supports children's cognitive and socio-emotional well-being. Whereas 'Education' in the early childhood years is much wider than pre-schooling, taking learning through early stimulation, guidance and a range of developmental activities and opportunities. Good-quality provision for young children necessarily addresses both dimensions (UNESCO, 2006). Therefore; care and education are parts of a whole: both are desired to assist holistic growth, development and learning.

Effects are larger for children from disadvantaged backgrounds and for higher-quality programmes, whether formal or informal. Investments in ECCE have the potential to reduce inequalities perpetuated by poverty, poor nutrition and restricted learning opportunities. The largest and most consistent body of research evidence comes from center-based pre-primary programmes, but evidence also points to the potential of informal community-based programmes, including those with parent education strategies (Siraj-Blatchford, 2010).

All Children from different socio- economic background have a right to development and to education in their best interests. Quality early childhood care and education isn't only good for children's development and consistent with realizing their rights; it is an important proper strategy capable of increasing equity. And it can also be cost effective, with some well-designed programs calculating high rates of return from early investment in human capital, in some cases many times higher than initial financial investment in the program (Siraj-Blatchford, 2010).

Research has shown that working conditions can also improve the quality of ECCE services: better conditions will improve staff job satisfaction and retention. This will influence staff behavior, encouraging more stable, sensitive and stimulating interactions with children, and thus, lead to better child development. Research has pointed to certain conditions that can impact the quality of ECEC services: i) high staff-child ratio and low group size; ii) competitive wages and other benefits; iii) reasonable schedule/workload; iv) low staff turnover; v) a good physical environment; and vi) a competent and supportive Centre manager (Slovak Republic © Oecd, 2012).

Researchers are still debating the concept of “quality” in ECEC. Judgment of quality involves values. The effect of the education and training of teachers on the quality of ECEC depends on the definition of quality and the instrument that is used to measure this quality. Children’s developmental outcomes are often used as the most important dependent variable in assessing high-quality ECEC, but this leaves the debate open on which developmental outcomes should be studied (Slovak Republic © Oecd, 2012).

Hence, supporting Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is among the best long-term investments that countries can make. Children with supportive and stimulating environments early in their lives are more likely to complete school, have better health outcomes, and are less likely to develop ‘anti-social’ behavior later in life (Rahel, 2014).

Since all the evidence demonstrates that the quality of child-staff interaction is the most critical element in determining the quality of ECCE, nothing is more important than attracting and retaining sufficient numbers of trained and motivated staff.

In this respect; the work force found in ECCE programs and institutions as teachers, educators, nursery workers, guardians, day care staff, supplementary nurses, volunteer helpers, and service staff, such as janitor’s and cooks, guards play an important role in the organization. Also, parents (typically mothers) may also be included in the ECCE workforce. In addition, since parents are the first educators of their children, they actively assist in development, organization, management and fundraising for local ECCE programs (UNESCO, 2006). Therefore it was very important to upgrade the ECCE work force to improve their qualification and working conditions. In addition Quality standards are needed for all the different types of ECCE personnel. It is important to encourage them by improving their salaries and in providing appropriate training. Moreover, to be effective staff needs reasonable working conditions and the adequacy of materials (UNESCO, 2006).

Home environment has a major influence on child growth and development: the availability of reading materials, drawing and art supplies, and toys (especially home-made) is considered a good indicator of parental concern and sensitivity regarding play and development, and also of the quality of the home environment (UNESCO, 2010). For the youngest group of children the home is the main area of care. Although there is no a single model of ECCE provision, programs

that combine nutrition, health, care and education, but they are more effective in improving young children's current well-being and their future development than those confined to a single aspect. Traditional child care practices need to build an inclusive program that respect children's linguistic and cultural diversity, and mainstream children with special educational needs and disabilities (UNESCO, 2006).

1.2. Statement of the problem

Education is the key that will allow many other Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be achieved. When people are able to get quality education they can break from the cycle of poverty. Education therefore helps to reduce inequalities and to reach gender equality. It also empowers people everywhere to live healthier and sustainable lives. Education is also crucial to fostering tolerance between people and contributes to more peaceful societies.

Education International 2010, cited in Admassu Gebre Early childhood education is education from a broader point of view - wholesome education that encompasses children's holistic development and learning, where care forms an integral part of a child's development and education (Admasu, 2014).

Early childhood programs give very good opportunities for the growth of a child both mentally and socially. But the major challenges as regards the current quality ECCE education in Ethiopia were shortage of text books; improper physical environment; lack of early childhood care and education professionals; Shortage of adequate Spaces and playgrounds for children; Lack of preschool-community relations; inaccessibility of early childhood care and education centers; shortage of service rooms; shortage of school facilities and improper school buildings etc. they perform low academic and social skill achievement; the same is true in oromia special zone surrounding Addis Ababa ECCE centers. Have these challenges changed now? Is the starting point of this research?

Generally, different studies conducted at different times focused on the challenges of the policy and practice of Quality of Early Childhood Care and Education, but still there was a gap in presenting textbook for children, using qualified ECCE facilitators, the methodology of teaching and parent participation in ECCE centers. To fill the gap, the current paper aimed to include the current status, how ECCE centers implement the curriculum, the qualification of ECCE

facilitators, the methodology of teaching, parent participation as well as facilities found in ECCE centers.

It is also estimated that the curriculum was adopted and practiced to implement the five areas of learning and development (MoE, 2011). But all areas of learning were not assessed for the performance of children. Practically lots of kindergarten in Oromia special zone surrounding Addis Ababa has a problem in implementing the ECCE curriculum as intended. Despite this fact the quality of ECCE remains to be an issue.

Therefore, to examine the Quality of ECCE and to bring improvement in the program, the researcher was motivated to conduct this research. Taking this situation in to account, this study attempted to answer the following basic research questions.

1.3. Research Questions

1. Do facilitators strictly implement the curriculum for teaching the preschool children?
2. Do the facilitators have the standard qualification of teaching in preschools?
3. Do preschools have adequate indoor and outdoor facilities and playgrounds?
4. What are the methods of teaching used by facilitators in teaching young children?
5. How preschools Communicate with the community?

1.4. General Objective of the Study

- To examining the quality of ECCE in selected private preschools of Sululta, Mulo and Berek woreda.

1.4.1. Specific Objectives of the Study

- To measure the extent to which facilitators use the curriculum as a guide for teaching young children.
- To examine the qualification of facilitators teaching in preschools.
- To identify whether preschools had adequate facilities and playground for indoor and outdoor children's learning.
- To identify methods of teaching used by preschool teachers.
- To examine parent- preschool relationship for promotion of ECCE.

1.5. Significance

The study has the following significance:

- To understand the current status of Early Childhood Care and Education in oromia special zone surrounding Addis Ababa.
- It isolates the problems that make difficulties in bringing the quality of ECCE and the implementation of ECCE Curriculum.
- It helps the Oromia education expertise, preschools principals, supervisors and administrators to provide support and monitor for enhancement of quality education of ECCE.
- It will also be an input for the families of the children to play their own role for their children's care, learning as well as their developments.
- It will also be an input for the families of the children to play their own role for their children's care and learning.
- It helps for other educators as a starting point for additional investigation in the same field of study.

1.6. Delimitation of the study

It was better if the study includes all preschools found in oromia special zone surrounding Addis Ababa. But it focuses only in some selected private preschools of Sululta, Mulo and Berek woreda. This is because of the highest demand of ECCE centers in these woredas and it was delimited to examining quality of Early Childhood Care and Education by 2021.

1.7. Operational Definitions of Key Terms

Early Childhood: The time from birth to eight years.

Early Childhood Care and Education: Provision of care and offering structured and purposeful set of learning for children

Quality: Reflects components of the environment that are related to positive child outcomes in the academic and social domains.

Quality of education: Relevant, demand driven knowledge and skills on outcomes of academic programs.

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. The Essence of ECCE

Child development refers to the ordered emergence of interdependent skills of sensory-motor, cognitive-language skills and social-emotional functioning (Engel, 2011). Research in Neuroscience offers compelling evidence of the significance of the early years of a child's development, especially from the pre-natal stage to around two years of age, during which the human brain grows most rapidly. Within the first six months, the brain reaches 50 percent of its mature weight, and 90 percent by the age of eight (Shonkoff, J.P., & Phillips, D.A, 2000). The first 1000 days also witness the most rapid period of synapse formation, or growth in the density of the network of neurons in the brain, a process that reduces gradually from two to 16 years of age (Shonkoff, J.P., & Phillips, D.A, 2000). Research has shown that the window of opportunity for addressing a child's nutritional needs, not only for short-term growth, but also for the generation of healthy and productive adults in the long term, lies between conception to the age of two (Cobb, Nancy J, 2001). Dimensions of under nutrition and its cumulative impact are reflected in stunting (low height for age), wasting (low weight for height), undernourishment and micronutrient deficiencies of iron, Vitamin A, zinc and iodine, which adversely affect growth, cognitive development, increase chances of diseases and infections, and in the worst cases, even lead to death. Moreover, since each sensitive period is associated with specific areas of neurological circuitry, and each stage builds on the previous development in a sequential manner, the consequences of under nutrition have a long-lasting, often irreversible, impact on all domains of future development (UNICEF, 2008).

Several such critical and sensitive periods for cognitive, physical, emotional and psychosocial development are located up to the ages of six to eight and not receiving adequate stimuli during this period reduces the chances of the brain reaching its full potential, often irreversibly (MoE, MoH, & MoWA, 2010). Aside from the genetics of an individual child which determine the neural circuitry of the brain, these processes are also highly influenced by one's experiences. Mutual responsiveness or 'serve and return' interaction with adults during childhood, play a role in this process (UNESCO, 2015). A safe, secure and caring environment thus also contributes to

positive development outcomes. Several decades of research on psychosocial risks of children growing up in poverty, without adequate parental care or brought up in disadvantaged institutional settings also provide evidence of developmental delays and emotional disturbance (Shonkoff, J.P., & Phillips, D.A, 2000). The educational component of early childhood care, on the other hand, aims to tap into the early crucial formative years of a child's learning capacity for psychosocial development and school-readiness (UNICEF website, nod). The brain, moreover, is a highly integrated organ with multiple functions, so cognitive, emotional and social competencies are all interdependent and together form the foundation for life-long development (UNESCO, 2015). These processes emerge in a sequential and hierarchical manner, with increasingly complex neural circuits being formed over simpler ones, and allowing for more complex skills to be inherited over time. Compromising on the simpler circuits during sensitive periods of brain development, makes adaptability at higher levels more difficult by reducing its capability for re-organisation and re-structuring, thus affecting a person's skill acquisition and behavioural adaptation throughout their lives (UNESCO, 2015).

School readiness has traditionally been viewed from maturations' perspective, involving chronological milestones according to a child's age, which led to the emergence of readiness testing at various stages (UNICEF, 2012). On the other hand, the empiricist view attempts to determine empirically various sets of skills which are tangible and measurable, and relatively universal (UNICEF, 2012). The social constructivist and interactionism views further complicate these measures by bringing in the sociocultural context and the range of factors within the child's environment respectively, emphasizing the role that these interactions play in the trajectory of the child's learning. The Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2007 suggests that school readiness should encompass five interrelated domains - the cognitive, physical and motor development, language skills, socio-emotional development and general knowledge (UNICEF, 2012).

2.2. What is Quality Education

Researchers are still debating the concept of "quality" in ECCE. Judgement of quality involves values. The effect of the education and training of teachers on the quality of ECCE depends on the definition of quality and the instrument that is used to measure this quality. Children's developmental outcomes are often used as the most important dependent variable in assessing

high-quality ECCE, but this leaves the debate open on which developmental outcomes should be studied and Content of training and education of ECCE staff. The debate around the concept of quality” in ECCE also means that the content of the training and education of ECCE staff remains a point of discussion. Some early childhood specialists voice concerns about the suitability for young children of the emphasis on i) standards and testing (performance rather than meaning making), ii).the teaching of predefined knowledge rather than play, discovery, personal choice and the responsibility of the child the traditional tools of early childhood learning, and iii) They neglect in ECCE curricula of developmental readiness, Effectiveness of the level of education and different in-service training strategies. Even though correlations have been found between the level of education and pedagogical quality, the exact relationship between the two is still unclear. Also, little is known about the effectiveness of different training strategies to help ECCE practitioners stay updated. More research is needed on how to engage staff in learning about and implementing evidence based practices (Miho Taguma, Ineke Litjens and Kelly Makowiecki , 2012).

Knowledge, leadership and competences of managerial staff Focus has been on the individual qualifications of staff. Knowledge, leadership and competences of the manager have also been found to be important. Research is needed that shows how important this is and why; what kind of qualifications and training would be most relevant for managers; what would be the most effective delivery of such training; etc. (Rossiter, 2016)

Ethnic diversity in training and education: the effectiveness of teacher training (both initial and in-service) in which special attention is devoted to social and ethnic diversity has hardly been evaluated. This is a growing issue of importance because of the greater ethnic diversity of the population many countries are facing.

What are “working conditions”? Working conditions in ECEC settings are often referred to as structural quality indicators (e.g., wages, staff-child ratio, maximum group size, working hours, etc.) and other characteristics (e.g., non-financial benefits, team-work, manager’s leadership, workload, etc.) that can influence the ability of professionals to do their work well and their satisfaction with the workplace, work tasks and nature of the job (Rossiter, 2016).

What is at stake? Attracting, training and retaining suitably qualified ECEC staff is a challenge. Good working conditions are strong incentives for qualified staff to enter the profession. Structural quality indicators have received ample attention because they can usually be regulated or guided at the national level. For staff quality, it is also crucial that practitioners are motivated and supported in applying what they have learned. The European Commission's Early Matters symposium (European Commission, 2009 cited in Miho Taguma, Ineke Litjens and Kelly Makowiecki , 2012 cited in Jack Rossiter, 2016) concluded that many research findings indicate that, in addition to training and education of staff, staff working conditions are important in providing safe, healthy and good learning environments for children. In spite of these findings, the ECEC sector is usually associated with relatively poor working conditions and poor compensation leading to high turnover rates. ECEC Centre often experience turnover rates exceeding 40% annually, undermining the quality of care (Rossiter, 2016).

2.3. Features of effective ECCE

There are different characteristics of effective ECCE, as expressed in the international literature but there is consensus in some of the following features of effective ECCE system (UNCEF, 2000)

2.3.1. Equitable and inclusive access

As leaders of community engagement, involvement of implementers (e.g. woreda education officers and other school leaders) can strengthen the planning process at the regional level.

An expansion plan can include provision for targeting the most disadvantaged students and areas. For example, in South Africa, it is recommended to reach out to the poorest 65% of children first as they are the most vulnerable as well as the group who will benefit most from ECCE services. Population-based planning and provisioning can be used to improve targeting and the allocation of scarce resources, including administrative time and capacity. Potential resources for scaling up ECCE services can be set against a background of numbers of children and levels of poverty at the district (woreda) level, to enable government to prioritise very poor and under-served areas for immediate (Rossiter, 2016).

Early rounds of Young Lives data indicate that, prior to recent expansion; a main barrier to accessing ECCE in Ethiopia has been lack of infrastructure. Surveyed in 2006, many Young

Lives caregivers did not send their children to pre-primary education because there was no service close by (Orkin, 2012).

2.3.2. Curriculum, teaching and learning materials

Centre-based programmes, including pre-schools, for children from age 3 to school entry age require pedagogies and curricula that take into account the specificity of children's developmental capacities, ways of learning, and the social, language and cultural contexts within which they live (Rossiter, 2016).

One specific risk for ECCE is that it is delivered as a downward extension of formal primary classroom organization, curriculum and pedagogies to ever younger children, without the necessary adjustments for children's developmental capacities and ways of learning. While locating a pre-primary year in the primary schooling system has administrative and infrastructural advantages, this location can add pressure for a more formal primary-like approach (Garcia, M. and Rajkumar, A.S. , 2008). These risks can be mitigated through, for example, preparation of age and developmentally appropriate learning and teaching methods combined with age-specific professional training and supervision. At the same time the synergies between health, well-being and learning can be exploited to maximize benefits for children (Berry et al. 2013 cited in Jack Rossiter, 2016).

An effective pre-primary programme is also built around a comprehensive plan for each stage of education. Planning for continuity and progression is a key in easing the transition from pre-primary to primary school (Wood head, 2009). An integrated curriculum for pre-primary and primary school, with learning cycles organised around the development cycles of the child has been used successfully in France, Guyana, Jamaica, Pakistan and Sweden (UNESCO, 2007). Some of these models make an intentional connection between – or overlap of – pedagogical strategies, teaching and learning styles and materials between the pre-primary and primary levels (Britto and van Ravens 2009 cited in Jack Rossiter, 2016). Integrated curricula that link pre-primary with early grades can: (a) support continuity, (b) enhance capacity for organisation of services, (c) promote preferred instructional practices and (d) encourage family support behaviour and school-family partnerships (MoE, MoH, &MoWA, 2010). An integrated

curriculum should, however, remain accessible to students starting from Grade 1, who have not been able to attend an ECCE programme.

Evidence from Bolivia, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and Niger shows that parents are more likely to communicate with teachers and participate in their children's learning when local languages are used (UNESCO, 2007).

Guided learning is as important as children's free play, although both are necessary for optimal development (Siraj-Blatchford, 2003). An interactive child development curriculum, in which both children and teachers have a hand in designing children's learning activities, appears optimal. This takes account of all aspects of children's development: physical, cognitive, language, social, emotional, cultural, motivational and artistic (Siraj-Blatchford and Woodhead 2009 cited in Jack Rossiter, 2016). While monitoring individual children's needs and progress is a feature of quality pedagogy, formal assessment can be detrimental at this stage, especially if it influences progression to Grade 1, as it will often lead to pressure for a less developmental and more academic curriculum model (Garcia et al. 2008 cited in Jack Rossiter, 2016).

Curriculum content can also enhance equity and social inclusion and promote children's positive identity (NAEYC and NAECS/SDE, 2003). Even where equal access exists, early childhood programmes often promote gender-specific expectations, a process that also occurs in homes and communities (UNESCO 2007). Well-designed early childhood programmes can be informed by social and cultural roles and relationships and at the same time can challenge gender stereotypes. Reducing such disparities in roles emphasised in curricula can contribute to closing the gender gap in pre-primary – as targeted by a gender parity index increase from 0.95 to 1.00 in Ethiopia's ESDP V – and in education in general (MoE, 2015). A large-scale longitudinal study of children in the United Kingdom found that the most important influence on children's success in learning to read in primary school was the extent of their direct experience with printed materials during their pre-school years, provided these printed materials were age-appropriate, for example well-illustrated story books shared with parents as well as teachers. Exposure to a variety of teaching and learning materials, to compensate for a lack of home-based resources, has also been shown as a basis for greater equity (UNESCO 2007 cited in Jack Rossiter, 2016).

2.3.3. Teachers and preschool Leaders

There are different early childhood professionals working in different ECCE centres depending on their qualification and type of services they give. They are: Preschool teachers, Assistance teachers, care givers etc. Preschool teachers should have diploma in Early Childhood Care and Education and assistant teachers should have certificate after completing their secondary school. Caregivers also need to have certificate after completing their secondary school and it is better, if they have certificate with food preparation. All teachers should have got on job-training to refresh their profession; a short and long term training opportunity should be given for teachers to improve their profession. The preschool also need to have trained teacher with special needs and there should be documents that guide the teachers to help individual child with special needs. The training and education of school leaders also has an influence on ECCE quality. They give additional support to ECCE centres. They should have the skill to manage, supervise and support preschools (MoE, 2002).

2.3.3.1. Financing and Providers

Financing for teacher training is best planned as part of the expansion strategy. In the short term, for rapid expansion purposes, money for training might be found from other sources outside the education administration (Garcia, M. and Rajkumar, A.S, 2008). Alternatively, NGOs and private providers can be accredited to deliver ECCE teacher training. All training need not happen through colleges of teacher education if speed is critical, but the risk of over-supply in urban areas and under-supply elsewhere can be balanced by targeted resource allocation to training centres (Biersteker 2008 cited in Jack Rossiter, 2016).

2.3.3.2. Remuneration, status and on-going training

There are major resource implications for the number of ECCE staff that are required to reach stated enrolment targets in Ethiopia. Teacher status and remuneration will affect rates of attrition and the quality of candidates that apply to teach ECCE. If wages offered to ECCE teachers are lower than for primary teachers, status will be lower compared to their peers in the primary grades, and there will likely be higher attrition and lower confidence that candidates capable of learning skills will join the training programme (Biersteker, 2010 cited in Jack Rossiter, 2016).

A career structure that proposes development pathways for all teachers, irrespective of their route of entry to the profession, can help to transfer status (Garcia, M. and Rajkumar, A.S, 2008). By

incorporating the career tracks of staff that traverse between ECCE and early grades of primary schooling, such a structure can improve coherence and standardization in employment status and versatility of teachers. For locally recruited teachers (recruited for example by the school community), wage sustainability and integration into the school environment and teaching profession more generally need to be considered and a link to a formal career structure can assist this. On-going support includes receiving curriculum-based supervision and continuing professional development (Siraj-Blatchford, 2010 and Woodhead 2009). In-service training can be an important route to delivering continuous improvements in service quality. Evidence suggests that specialized training for at least 20 hours per year is enough to produce improvements in the way teachers look after children in their class (Munton et al. 2002 cited in Jack Rossiter, 2016). Such in-service training is particularly important for locally recruited teachers in the short- and medium- term, before they obtain formal qualification.

2.3.4. Parental and community support and engagement

To create a sense of ownership and to promote ECCE, there should be considerable communications between government bodies, parents, communities and other stakeholders. This can also be used to encourage for the expansion of ECCE, to gain additional support from NGOs, private sector, and religious groups (UNESCO, 2010). In Ethiopia Regional advocacy and campaign were made by mobilizing the community through kebele, and woreda officials.

ECCE Programme can be developed by including parents, communities and other stake holders as a partner as significant integration of child care provisions. The communication of different stakeholders, parents and teachers about children education, development and how they learn their children in their home should be effective (Maccoby, 2000). In some national contexts, parents and community leaders have played an even stronger role in actual delivery of ECCE services.

In general, what it implies is that when parents attend school functions and other school related activities, they have the opportunity to meet other parents and develop relationships; such parents' network may help to exchange ideas about their children learning and promote ECCE provision.

2.3.5. Standards, Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring is one features of effective ECCE system that strengthen quality linked standards (OECD, 2012). The system of monitoring is able to assess whether a child is achieving all essential competences, how competences are delivered, how the system is practiced, and what result is gained, assigned and paid. Monitoring and evaluation systems should be strong and internal and external monitoring techniques are essential for programme evaluation. It includes how children got all the necessary services, how these services are given for them, and how much budget is allocated for the whole process (OECD, 2013).

Standards include the work environment; the knowledge and experience of staff; the nature and organization of the educational process; organization, management and administration; physical environment; attention to health and protection; relationships with family and community (MoE, 2006). An essential, costed, package of ECCE provision can be devised based on these standards (Biersteker 2010, Berry et al.2013 cited in Jack Rossiter, 2016).

Questions like accountability and reporting the programme i.e. what are the monitoring standards, when the supervision doestakes place, and who will be accountable for monitoring and supervision activities; are questions that will be taken to strengthen the ECCE systems (Dengia, 2009).

At the end learning through evidence is the other constraint in conducting of research and innovation. The role of Monitoring related to ECCE is that supporting and providing relevant information to its programming and planning. The advantage of providing relevant information is used to inform a good policy reviews and, if made available to the public down to the school level can be used to make local arrangement and also improved innovations (Barnet, 2006).

2.3.6. Management system and Leadership

To bring quality preschool education governments should allocate the necessary budget for the attainment of universal primary education. But many countries allocate below 10% of their annual budget for primary education. There are countries that have a legal policy frame work to facilitate rapid implementation of ECCE services. In Ethiopia the government gives priority for primary education as compared to the implementation of ECCE policy for many years until the

National policy frame work of ECCE was declared in the year 2010 (Slovak Republic © Oecd, 2012). Ratification of the new Global Goals for Sustainable Development provides a new boost to policy and resourcing for ECCE notably Goal 4.2: written in Jack Rossiter, 2016) as follows:

“All children have access to quality ECCE and primary education by 2030”

In Ethiopia, ESDP V provides the framework for progress towards this goal, provided governance systems and resources are put in place to achieve scale-up. The supply of resources against stated standards, for all pre-primary services, depends on a sustainable resource.

Based on this, skills development exercises, pilot tests and demonstration sites can be established under varying conditions, to explore options for delivery (Richter 2013; Tinajero 2011 cited in Jack Rossiter, 2016). Increasing numbers of international Masters Programmes are now available to help build leadership skills and strengthen ECCE skills networks, e.g. via the Early Childhood Development Virtual University (ECDVU).

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

In this chapter the design and the methodology of the research, would be presented

3.1. Research Design

The Objective of this research was to investigate the quality of ECCE in selected private preschools of Oromia Special zone. The method used to achieve the objective of the study was by exploring participants' views that are involved in the research (Maxwell, 2005). Qualitative research method was used to study the quality of ECCE in Oromia special zone surrounding Addis Ababa.

Exploratory research method was employed as it was mainly used to gather several data used for the research. Exploratory research; Flexible design (design must provide opportunity for considering different aspects of the problem)

3.2. Population

In the study area there are 6 woredas and 1 city administration. There are 71 ECCE centers and 231 facilitators found in the zone. There was also one coordinator at zonal level and there is one coordinator in each of the three woreda education offices. There were 64 facilitators and 45 PTA representatives, 29 ECCE centers were found in the selected three woredas of Sululta, Mulo and Berek.

3.3. Sampling Techniques

In this research exploratory research method was used and purposive sampling technique was applied to select the sample preschools and the population of the study. The Sample participants were selected deliberately by the researcher to know or study the essential phenomenon. The criteria used for choosing preschools and respondents were assumed to be people or preschool who are "rich in information" for the objective of the study (Patton, 1990). In qualitative study, you may choose to study one or more individuals or study sites. Purposive sampling thus applies to both individuals and sites.

In purposive sampling the sample size is often determined on the basis of theoretical saturation. Therefore from those population found in the zone the researcher selected three woredas, one zone coordinator, three woreda coordinators, 9 ECCE centers, 45 facilitators, 27 PTA representatives and 4 education experts were taken as a sample by using purposive sampling technique.

Table-1 Sample and sampling technique

No	Samples	Total	Sample	%	Sampling technique
1	Facilitators	64	45	70	Purposive
2	Woreda	6	3	50	Purposive
3	Centers	29	9	31	Purposive
4	PTA representatives	45	27	60	Purposive
5	Woreda Coordinator	3	3	100	Purposive
6	Zone coordinator	1	1	100	Purposive
	Total	148	88	59.4	

3.4. Data Collection Instrument and Procedure

Different types of instruments were made and used by the researcher to collect data from respondents such as; Interview, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), observation checklist and document analysis were some of the instruments used to get information from the participants. The instruments were also prepared according to the above literature review.

3.4.1. Interview

An interview is a purposeful interaction in which one person obtains information from another. It makes researchers to have important ideas which cannot be acquired from other instruments. Interview was conducted with Parents, Teachers, school directors and education office experts to get information concerning the problems that hinder in bringing quality education and care in preschools. The selection of the participants were depends on their job description and participation in bringing quality early childhood care and education. After the instruments were made, interviews were conducted with all participants. The contents of these interviewees

include: Implementation of preschool curriculum, teaching learning process, preschool physical environment, teacher's qualification and parent participation on children's education.

Interview was conducted based on the time adjusted for each preschool at different time and place; it was prepared based on literature review and conducted by the researcher. The time given for each part of the discussion was about 30 to 40 minutes.

3.4.2. Focus Group Discussion

Focus group discussions include several individuals who can contribute to understand research problem. A focus group is like a group interview where you are trying to "collect shared understanding from several individuals as well as to get views from specific people" (Creswell, 2012).

In this study, FGD was applied to get information about the physical environment of preschools; parent-preschool relation; teacher's/facilitators/ qualifications and implementation of preschool curriculum.

The participants were 36, teachers, 27, parent representatives (PTA), 9, preschool directors and 3, woreda education experts. Totally seventy six (76) Participants were involved in to five groups.

3.4.3. Observation

In addition to interview and FGD Observation checklist was applied on this research to observe the sampled preschools. The emphasis during observation was on the quality of care and Education of children based on the research question. The selected nine preschools were observed.

3.4.4. Document Analysis

The other essential data collecting tool in this study was document analysis. The presence of Different documents like, i) the education and training policy ii) ECCE framework, guidelines iii) Preschool standard which is set by ministry of education iv) preschool syllabus and different documents that are found in preschools such as annual lesson plans, assessment check list, students portfolio and documents for special need students, etc. were used to validate the information gathered by Observation and interview.

3.5. Validity and Reliability

In qualitative research, validity is the degree to which qualitative data accurately gauge what we are trying to measure. However validity and reliability comes from quantitative research design; these elements also considered in qualitative research design for the validation and reliability of the study. The three approaches to protect the validity of qualitative researches are: i) to understand the worker's interest ii) to check the data gathering and iii) to show an inclusive research design (Gall, 2007).

To understand the worker's Confidentiality, the researcher used "honesty, writing and recording style" which can help to gather information as accurate as possible from the respondents by describing their answers. In this research, for example the researcher clarifies the data directly presented from respondents' views.

To check the data gathering and to avoid prejudice the researcher used "triangulation" method to cross-check the "truthfulness" of the information gathered from participants (Maxwell, 2005). For example, interview, focus group discussions, observations and document analysis were used throughout this study. In addition to confirm the validity and reliability of the research, those respondents who participated in individual interview were also selected for focus group discussions to check the information gathered during interview sessions.

Furthermore, to approve the validity and reliability of the instruments, the researcher discusses many ideas with his friends and his advisor.

3.6. Method of Data Analysis

First, the demographic features of participants were explained by using table and percentage. Secondly, the data collected by different instruments were coded, organized in to theme, analysed and written in the form of description/narration.

3.7. Ethical Issues

First, the researcher went to the study area with the letter of entry received from Addis Ababa University. He also clarifies the purpose of the research to all participants and concerned bodies. Then, the study was carried out after getting permission from the participants. Consent from prospective respondents was sought before being held the research. The findings were stored securely and used for academic purpose.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this chapter the information gathered from different participants at different levels of discussion on the major issues under basic research questions would be discussed. It can be classified in to three.

In the first part, the demographic feature of participants based on sex, age, Level of education and years of experience services would be presented. While the second part presented the results concerning the quality of pre-school education in selected private Preschools and finally the discussion part was presented. In the first part, the demographic feature of participants based on sex, age Level of education and years of experience would be presented.

4.1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Under this section, the demographic characteristics of respondents are presented. Sex, age, academic qualification and years of experience were the four demographic categories analysed. The participants of the study include education office experts, preschool teachers, principals and parent representatives of sample preschools. The demographic characteristics of respondents were organized in table 2 below.

Table-2 Background profile of teachers, principals, education office experts and PTAs

1. Sex	Pre-school Teachers		Pre-school directors		Education office expert		PTA representatives	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Male	8	22.2	3	33.3	4	100	20	74
Female	28	77.8	6	66.7			7	26
Total	36	100	9	100	4	100	27	100
2. Qualification								
below grade 10	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	29.6
Grade 10	6	16.7	0	0	0	0	3	11.1
Grade 12	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	18.5
Certificate	4	11.1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Diploma	14	38.9	2	22.2	0	0	4	14.8
Degree	12	33.3	7	77.8	0	0	7	26
Total	36	100	9	100	0	0	27	100.0
3. years of Experience								
Below 2yrs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Between 2 and 4yrs	5	13.9	0	0	0	0	9	33.3
Between 4 and 6 yrs.	13	36.1	0	0	3	75	5	18.5
7 yrs. and above.	18	50	9	100	1	25	13	48.1
Total	36	100	9	100	4	100	27	99.9

As table-2 shows, from the participants of teachers in the sampled preschool based on sex 28(77.8%) were females and 8(22.2%) were males, however in the principal category 3(33.3%) of the principals were male and 6(66.7%) were females. From this we can conclude that the number of female teachers is greater than the number of male teachers in the sampled preschools.

With respect to the status of qualification 6(16.7%) of Facilitators were grade 10 Completed, 4(11.1%) were certificate holder, 14(38.9%) were diploma holder and 12(33.3%) were degree holder. But (MoE 2010) standard for preschool suggests kindergarten teacher should have at least diploma holders in pre-primary education.

In the principal category, 2(22.2%) were diploma graduates from teacher training college and 7(77.8%) were first degree graduates.

Several evidences indicate that the quality of a certain educational service especially ECCE are highly influenced by the qualification, which in turn its own influence on students, principals and teachers.

When we look at the experience of teachers respondents, in Table-2, in the sampled preschool 5(13.9%) teachers have services between 2 and 4 years,13(36.1%) served between 4 and 6 years' time and the rest 18(50%) worked for more than 7 years. Here the data show that there were less experienced or beginner teachers as well as experienced teachers in the sampled preschools. The existence of experienced teachers in the sampled preschool might be good opportunity for those beginners or less experienced teachers (Facilitators) in sharing knowledge and experience with each other.

Regarding the experience of principals shown from table-2 above, all principals that worked in the sampled preschool had greater than 7 years' experience.

Even though most of the principals were experienced as kindergarten principal they lack short of training in pre-school education which eventually may create problems in managing and leading the kindergartens to meet the proposed objective of the programme.

The qualification profile of interviewees from oromia special zone education office has MA in EDPM and the other three education office respondents has BA degree in EDPM, Afan Oromo and English language respectively. Concerning their experiences; the zone education office has an experience between 4-6 years and three of the woreda education office experts have an experience more than seven years. Hence, these profiles of interviewees might have helped the researcher in getting the valuable and reliable information to enrich and substantiate the study.

Concerning Parent teachers Association (PTA): 8(29.6%) of the respondents were below grade ten, 3(11.1%) of the respondents was grade 10 complete, 5(18.5%) of them were grade 12 complete 4(14.8%) has a diploma in different field of education and they teach nearby primary schools and 7(26%) has degree in different fields other than education. Concerning their experiences 9(33.3%) of PTA members has an experience between 2-4 years, 5(18.5%) of them has an experience between 4-6 years and the rest 13(48.1%) has an experience above seven years.

Table-3 Teachers/Facilitators and School directors participants with respect to their Age profile

Age Group of participants	Teachers		School directors	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Between 20 years and 25 years	3	8.3	0	0
Between 25 years and 35 years	15	41.7	0	0
Between 35 years and 45 years	11	30.6	4	44.4
Above 45 years	7	19.4	5	55.6
Total	36	100	9	100

As table-3 shows, participants from the teachers 3(8.3%) of the teachers belong to the age group between 20 and 25 years. 15(41.7%) of the sampled teachers were between 25 and 35 years. 11(30.6%) of teachers are between 35 and 45 years and 7(19.4%) of teachers were above 45 years. Similarly; 4(44.4%) of school principals were belongs to the age group between 35 to 45 and 5(55.6%) of them were above 45 years. It is possible to say all of the teachers in the sampled kindergarten 36(100%) belong to the youngest working age group and active adults that could be taken as a good opportunity to the children to express their ideas and feelings without any frustration. Moreover, in principal's category, it is possible to conclude that the majority of principals were also belonging to the working groups in the society. This shows there was no exaggerated age gap between the majority of teachers and principals.

4.2. Findings

This section of the study presents the analysis of the interviews, focus group discussions, observations using checklists, and document analysis from participants at different levels of discussion under basic research questions.

4.2.1. Curriculum Implementation in Preschools

The Researcher raised the following question for all participants (To what extent teachers/facilitators use ECCE curriculum as a guide for teaching young children?)

The findings indicated that; in most of the observed sampled preschools Teachers were given much attention to the development of numeric and literacy as well as English language with little or no attention to social and emotional development of the child.

During interview, the majority of teachers and principals mentioned that the preschool syllabus was too difficult to implement properly, as it needs many inputs which did not exist in the centers.

In some of the sampled preschools, the researcher also observed that there was shortage of papers to prepare daily lesson plans. A preschool teacher has to plan five different daily lesson plans for five contents in the syllabus that children supposed to be taught daily. But because of shortage of paper they prepare weekly lesson which were difficult to implement the syllabus properly. Teachers and principals indicated that it gave more focus on paper work. Moreover the teaching method requires many teaching materials which need many inputs to prepare them. Because of these reasons, it is possible to say there were challenges to implement the syllabus properly in all the sampled preschool. In addition most sampled preschools used text books prepared by them. During interview the Oromia special zone Education office expert indicated that preschools do not have the authority to prepare the text books for students and as far as there is one education policy in the country, all preschools should implement the Ethiopian preschool syllabus (2001 E.C)..

FGDs, participants also explained that curriculum includes every aspect of the child's development, such as knowing their environment, discovering their senses and cognitive growth. Teachers during FGD said that; we had to teach most of the content with practical exercise. For example hand-washing practice, this is very practical and we have to show them step by step on how they do it. Therefore, curriculum is a very important document used as a guide in teaching young children. High quality infant/toddler curriculum intentionally develops language, focusing on the building of the home language; promotes security and social competence; and encourages understanding of essential concepts about the world.

When the teachers were asked how consistently they use curriculum as a guide to teach young children; some of them said; they sometimes use the curriculum as a guide and some said they do not use curriculum as a guide because there is no text book for children in the school. Concerning the standard format for the daily lesson plan teachers and principals said; there is a standardized format for monthly, weekly and daily lesson plan in the sampled preschools.

In general, during the FGD participants agreed that, the curriculum allows creativity in the teaching learning process both for teachers and students. FGD Participants also said since children get bored so easily they were obliged to create new way of teaching a certain content. Teacher's participants agreed that the curriculum also encourages teachers to use whatever material available in the environment to create new and wonderful teaching materials. They also said that being creative helps to be engaged in so many ways to the children and hence help the children to gain knowledge in an interesting way.

All participants have agreed they found the curriculum as a useful guide; therefore, teachers should follow instructions strictly. However, some participants said that sometimes, teacher go out of the curriculum to please parents. A few other participants also said it is impossible to talk about curriculum because they do not know what curriculum is. Because they teach children from text books prepared by individuals.

4.2.2. Qualification and Competency of Employee

The Researcher raised the following question for teachers and principals. (What is the qualification status of ECCE teachers? Do you think that they have the required qualification?) As the findings shown that the training and education background of some of the sampled preschool teachers were not appropriate to implement the preschool curriculum. In addition during interview the majority of teachers and principals in preschools explained that they have had little opportunities for having short term training on policy issues of ECCE to implement it efficiently and effectively, and also there were teacher's skill gap to implement the preschool syllabus in the sampled preschools. The preschools need to have trained teacher with special needs and there should be documents that guide the teachers to help individual child with special needs. Children with special needs require ECCE facilities that are friendly to the special needs child and curriculum that suits the needs of the special needs child (MoE, 2010). Researches indicate that well-trained child care professionals may provide high-quality care and education to young children.

When principals were asked the reason why preschools do not accommodate special need students: the entire sample preschool principals indicated that there was no suitable environment for children with special needs, thus there were a lot of problems to serve them in the preschools.

In addition absence of trained teachers and supporting materials for them made the problem worse. In general, it is possible to say that the inclusive practice of the programme was extremely ignored.

Regarding teacher's qualification, during interview; the zone education office Expert said, mostly Teachers with low education background are admitted to this program. In addition, some teachers graduate from colleges without mastering the required skills. Even some of the graduates didn't even properly write and read some words.

Pre-school leader and preschool teacher should have diploma in Early Childhood Care and Education and assistant teachers were also hold certificate after completing their secondary school. Caregivers also need to have certificate after completing their secondary school and it is better, if they have certificate with food preparation. Some Teachers and Preschool leaders have different field of education other than ECCE. This may affect the ability of teachers to bring quality Care and Education and to apply the policy of ECCE properly. It also affects the holistic development of children in the sampled preschools. The demographic characteristics of participants also indicated that there were teachers and principals that were trained in other education fields and need to be trained in early childhood care and education.

4.2.3 Teaching and learning

4.2.3.1 Teaching Method

The method of teaching in preschools should be based on teaching by playing and it should be child centred. The researcher raised the following question for all Teachers participants (Do teachers use 'play' as a method of teaching?) All participant teachers said "They sometimes use 'play' as a method of teaching according to the topic discussed but most of the time we focus on chalk-talk method in the classroom". This is because parents measure their children's capacity in reading and writing letters. Therefore we are busy on the development of numeric and literacy of the child. They also prepare their lesson plan similar to primary school system.

During observation the researcher also understood that teachers didn't use a variety of method of teaching and instructional experiences, they mostly used chalk-talk method in the classroom. Teachers have made maximum effort to make their classroom environment stimulating, but there were no objects that children can work with.

The researcher also asked that Why preschools focus on English language to teach children rather than their local language? All principal and teachers mentioned that the school gave much attention to English language because the preschool wanted to satisfy customer needs.

4.2.3.2 Assessment

Assessment methods include observation, documentation of children's work, checklists and rating scales, and portfolios, as well as norm-referenced tests. The two purposes of early childhood assessment are: (1) assessment to support learning and instruction and (2) assessment to identify children who may need additional services (NAEYC and NAECS/SDE, 2003: 10).

In this respect, in all observed preschools continuous assessment was given to students in a regular manner but the assessment was used to rank the children and there were no individual assessment which helps to create individual setting to overall development of each child.

During interview for teachers; most of the teachers said they gave continuous assessment for their students in a regular manner and they think of assessment as formal testing only.

4.3.3. Physical settings of the Pre School

4.3.3.1. Physical Environment

Regarding the condition of the physical environment, principals and Teachers in their response said that, since there is no enough playing equipment, they are forced to allow children to play one class at a time. Because of this teachers prepare different schedule for each class.

Participants from the FGD said that the physical environments of their respective preschools are not suitable. Most of them said that since there are many children, the playing equipment, the toilets, hand-washing facilities, sleeping area, classroom and playing ground are not safe, functional, adequate as well as clean. Recently more children are coming to ECCE centers as much as possible the school doesn't send back children even if classrooms are full. This has created a lot of problem and stress, for the child, the other children in the classroom and the teacher. FGD Participants explained that the quality and sanitation of sleeping area and the toilets need more attention as it has become a place for diseases. Participants stressed the problem of having dedicated sleeping area for the children and they are taking naps on their desk.

In addition all members of the FGD agreed that all sample preschools have no adequate place to play. It could be realized that the availability of space to play is the problem of all sampled preschools, because in the sampled preschools buildings were initially built for residence not for school purpose, so they do not have space to play and they do not have space to accommodate instruments for play.

During interview; the zone and woreda education office experts explains; Even though the expansion and opening of preschools needs to be encouraged, the quality issue is something that needs improvement. In other words, what the standard document recommends and what is on the ground is very different- quality is very low. They said: most private preschools in our zone were not purposely built for preschools. Most of them are rented from individuals this brings a big problem in children's education.

4.3.3.2. Classroom Building

The quality of classroom buildings should be standardized and attractive. There should be also adequate instructional materials, textbooks and working conditions for students and teachers. During observation; the researcher observed that, Most of the preschools were rented from individuals and the class rooms were not purposely built for teaching children, they have no enough space for children and teachers to move freely in the class rooms. FGD participants also agreed that the available classrooms in the sample preschools were not well ventilated; were not appropriate for all children.

The principals were asked during the interview about what were the causes of the problem of building standardized class rooms? They all said, since they rented from individuals it is impossible for them to improve the buildings of the preschools because the owner of the house was not allowed for them.

The available interest corners, teaching materials and equipment, tables, chairs and shelves were not adequate in number. The researcher also observed that in one of the sample preschool there was large number of students in small classrooms. The woreda education experts mentioned that they had to enrolled large number of students to cover the cost.

In addition the principals explained that there were high demand to enrolled children in preschools, peoples are aware of teaching their children in preschools; this brings crowdedness in the class rooms. In preschools, the teacher to child ratio for three-to five years children is 1:30 and for five-to-six years are 1:40 (MoE, 2010). But in the sampled preschools all principals agreed that there was no availability of 1 to 40 teacher student ratio class sizes in their centres. In all of the sampled preschool teacher-child ratio is greater than 40.

4.2.4. Equipment and Materials

For pre-school education program equipment and materials were very crucial for children and gives first-hand experience for them. To facilitate for children holistic development (Physical, social, emotional, and Cognitive development) it is important to provide the necessary equipment and materials for the children for variety of activities. In all the Observed Preschools equipment and playing materials were almost similar. In all the Observed preschool there were Swing, marry-go-round, slide and seesaw. Also three preschool has balls, but the available equipment was inadequate in number; and the size of playing materials were not suitable for children in some preschools.

During interview; teachers and principals agreed that there is no first aid room, pedagogy centre, separate feeding room, separate toilet for teachers and administrative staffs in all sample preschools. The rest available service rooms were not adequate in number and were not appropriate in almost all sample preschools.

The current preschool standard mentioned that all of service rooms mentioned above should be available in the preschools.

4.2.5. Parent- Preschool Communication

The finding shows that there is inadequacy of parent involvement in all sampled preschools. The interview with the principals indicated that mostly all preschools used face to face communication with parents. There were communication exercise books or checklists in the preschools. The researcher also observed parent-teachers' communication checklists that indicated about the children's over all development in the sampled preschool was encouraging.

In addition they said, during interview; teachers explained that if the parents couldn't come to the school, they send the check list through children to communicate with them. Thus it is possible to conclude that the teachers' effort to identify the performance of individual students and the effort to communicate with parents which was helpful to overall development of the students was encouraging.

4.2.6. The Preschools Working With the Health Office

Children's health, safety, and ability to learn are inseparably linked. Integrated health and safety activities throughout the day support children's perception. The Ministry of Health is involved in all the pre-schools to do regular health check-ups, including de-worming and vaccinations (MoE, 2010:28). Poor health makes learning more difficult. Teachers/Facilitators should reflect healthy and safe experiences and encourage healthy lifestyles for children.

During observation; the researcher asked the school principals (Do you communicate with the health office near to the school?) all principals said they communicate with the health office. The health office supports them when problems were created on the children's health. In addition the health office was working with the preschools by giving vaccines to the children. But the health Office didn't give any training on sanitation for the teachers and principals.

The researcher also asked school principals and teachers (Is there First aid kit in the school?) all participants agreed that there is no first aid kit in their school but there are alcohol and GV for some problems created in the school.

4.2.7. Early childhood Care and Education Policy Documents

The result of the observation, interview and document analysis indicated that, there were shortage of curriculum and policy documents in all sample preschools, and also documents for special need students were not found in all sample pre-school.

4.3. Discussion

In this section, the major findings were discussed based on the basic research questions of the study. The general objective of this research was to investigate and explain the problems that hinder the quality of early childhood care and education given in preschools.

In the preschool program the five developmental early year's settings were physical development, social and emotional development, language development and cognitive development and general knowledge. These areas of learning and development are significant and interrelated.

Generally in this study teachers do not strictly follow the curriculum, but they prepare their monthly, weekly and daily lesson plans. In order for performing the lesson plans, teachers use play, teaching aids, songs, puzzles etc. as appropriate. Most teachers in the study said they create teaching aids and arrange classrooms regularly. Here, the key issue is how do we know if it is up to the standard or not and also how safe it is for the children.

Continuous assessment was regularly conducted in the schools. The children were assessed regularly and their assessment was recorded. Another concern was the number of child per class. As per the standard 40 student per class is allowed, however in most of the schools this standard is met and in some of them it is above the standard. However, teachers feel that to teach 40 students is challenging especially with the limited material and time required (OECD 2013) study showed that lower child-staff ratio leads to better performance in children. During the visits in the selected preschools, in most of them the classrooms were mostly crowded. There was no ample space for sitting and also the play corners. In some of them, wall shelves and racks are used to keep the playing materials so as to accommodate the sitting space for the children.

Relating to teachers and assistant teachers, in this study it was found that there are no called Assistant teachers. The study showed, the majority of the teachers were qualified in different fields of education and some facilitators do not have certificate, In spite of their different fields of education teachers stressed the need for continuous training in ECCE.

Furthermore, teachers said that teaching in preschools is very demanding and requires full energy and full day job. They said that they should be given due attention and must be encouraged with higher salary and incentives.

During FGD and observations, the physical infrastructure and facilities, in almost all schools don't fulfil the required minimum standard. In some, the classrooms are in fragile condition, even to the extent of where they are about to collapse any time. In some preschools, classrooms are too crowded, not clean and not well ventilated. Some of the classrooms are near to the toilets

and teachers close the doors and windows to prevent the coming smell. This makes it very difficult for the children to get fresh air.

Inside the classrooms, children are forced to sit in a crowded space. In some schools, the tables provided are too high and children are always standing to use the table for writing. In addition graphic teaching materials are also posted on the walls of each classroom. However, the dedicated areas/corners are not present in all schools. This was mostly because of space and material shortage.

Even though, there are water facilities in some centres, there are centres that didn't get water regularly. Therefore, the problem of water in their respective school should be solved unless children are put in problem. All schools do not have a dedicated sleeping area and children take naps on their desk. Those that have sleeping rooms were very unclean, the sleeping materials are also not clean and the sleeping rooms are not well ventilated and hence they have no good smell.

During observation, the outdoor playing equipment functionality varies from school to school. It can be said that in all preschools the minimum standard is not fulfilled. However, in those schools where there is outdoor playing equipment not all are functioning, either some of them are broken or out of use. As a result, it is important to understand how the physical environment influences pre-schoolers.

The extent of parent involvement in children's education was limited in the sampled preschools. In general, Parents are given the reports about the performance of their children. However, almost all sampled preschools have PTA committee but their involvement in the management was very low. ECCE Policy documents are very important for ECCE centres. But in all sampled preschools there were no any policy documents in the centre.

Finally, this research has limitations. The study was primarily limited by its small sample size. The sample size could have been extended by adding more ECCE centres. Early starting in data collection would have increased the time needed to study more participants. Moreover, Additional contact between the researcher and the sample may have increased participation.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This part of the study concerned with conclusion arrived, the recommendations and the way forward of the research.

5.1. Conclusions

The study was intended to examine the quality of early childhood care and education in Oromia special zone surrounding Addis Ababa. It specifically tried to examine the quality of preschool education and care and the way to improve quality education and care. Moreover, it tried to examine the role of parents in assuring preschool quality education of the study area. Therefore, the conclusion of the research was depends on the data analysed and its results as shown below.

Since the early childhood period is so complicated, it needs to work jointly with parents, preschools, government bodies, and non-government bodies to realize the holistic development of children. But there were limitations in working collaboratively with parents and other stake holders in the majority of sampled preschools

The curriculum was adopted and practiced to implement the five areas of learning and development; Physical Development, Social and Emotional Development, Language Development and Cognitive Development and literacy, mathematics and understanding the world(MoE, 2011). But Teachers/ Facilitators focuses only in one area of learning i.e. recitation of alphabet and counting numbers, all areas of learning were not assessed for the performance of children. The qualification of teachers and other staff members; School Physical environment, equipment and materials found in preschools; interaction with parents; the method of teaching and assessment practices etc. these all had got challenges in the implementation of preschool curriculum. Children's reference books, rest rooms, feeding rooms, interest corners, separate toilets for children were not adequate. In addition in some of the sampled preschools materials and equipment for children with special needs were not found in the preschools. Most sampled preschools were not purposely built for teaching preschool children. They are rented from individuals. Government bodies should understand these problems and should give the solutions for the problem.

The researcher also observed that there were no children with special need in the sampled preschools. When they asked the reason, the sampled preschool principals explained that there was no appropriate environment for children with special needs, thus there were a lot of challenges to serve them in the preschools. In addition absence of trained teachers and supporting materials for them made the problem worse. In general, it is possible to say that the inclusive practice of the programme was extremely ignored.

In summary, good-quality ECCE should be achieved primarily when the needs and interest of children became fully achieved and when they became fully comfortable in their Classroom. In addition preschools prepare themselves to accept children by fulfilling the necessary requirements needed for children's needs and interest. This study clearly showed the presence of challenges to meet the desired quality in ECCE centre. The major components that comprise quality in ECCE were: The implementation of ECCE curriculum, the status of education and training of the staff, the methodology, the physical environment of pre-schools and school facilities were extremely examined. However, the benefits of ECCE for the children are abundant and have the potential to produce high rates of return in the long term.

5.2. Recommendations

This study attempted to examine the quality of early childhood care and education in Oromia special zone surrounding Addis Ababa town. To improve the quality of ECCE in the study area concerned body were recommended. As per the major findings and the conclusions of this research, the following recommendations were forwarded for intervention.

- Education offices found in Oromia special Zone Surrounding Addis Ababa ought to provide seminars, short, and long term training for preschool teachers to build their capacity as well as create an opportunity to upgrade their education level.
- The preschools of the study area were advised to work collaboratively with the stakeholders and families of the children to equip necessary material those supports for quality of early childhood care and education.
- Teachers of preschools were advised to update their skill of teaching in child-centered learning methods and use appropriate teaching aids to acquire students with necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to make them critical thinker and problem solver.

- The Oromia Special zone woreda education office administration were recommended to: provide necessary place for preschool setting, facilitate conditions for children with disability, hold up continuous follow up; supervision and monitoring for preschools to implement the curriculum properly for enhancement of quality ECCE in the study area.
- The Oromia education bureau were expected to supplement context based curriculum, syllabus, text book and teacher guides for kindergarten schools (preschools).
- Finally, the researcher would like to recommend the Oromia special Zone Education Office and other educational professionals in the study area to conduct research work on quality of early childhood care and education for the better solutions of the uncovered problems in this study.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix I

Observation checklist for preschools

Name of the researcher-----

Name of Kindergarten -----

Date of supervision -----to-----

No	Materials/things to be observed	Accessibility		Amount		Standard		Remark
		Accessible	Not Accessible	Enough	Not Enough	Good	Not Good	
1	Standardized classrooms							
2	Chairs/Desk							
3	Doors and Windows							
4	Separate Toilet for children							
5	Books for references							
6	Text book for children							
7	First aid kit							
8	Instructional and policy documents							
9	Sleeping rooms							
10	Dining rooms							
11	Pipe water							
12	Pictures, real objects and locally made teaching materials							
13	Teachers guide, syllabus							
14	Student portfolio, communication books and other documents in the class							
15	equipment and furniture							
16	Interest corners							
17	Outdoor playing materials							
18	Balls							
19	enough space for children to play							
20	Teaching aids							
21	Time schedule							

Appendix II

Interview questions for education office experts

The focus of this interview question is to examine the quality of education in preschools in Oromia Special zone Surrounding Addis Ababa. Thus, I request your co-operation by helping to answer the interview questions as per the instructions. You are requested to be as frank as possible when answering this interview questions. Your responses will be highly respected and accorded the highest possible confidentiality.

With regards

A. PERSONAL INFORMATION

DIRECTION: - Please give your personal information for the questions has given below.

1. Code No. of Participants _____
2. Sex _____
3. Age: _____
4. How long are you trained in ECCE a) Less than three month b) Three to six month training c) 1 year training d) 2years and above e) Not Trained?
5. Grade level 1) Grade 8 2) Grade10 3) Grade 12
6. Level of Education: 1) Certificate 2) Diploma 3) Degree 4) MA
7. Experience: In teaching _____ other _____ Total _____

II. Interview questions

1. How do pre-schools implement ECCE Curriculum?
 - B. Are there different policy documents in the office like (Education and Training Policy, National policy framework for ECCE, Convention on the Rights of the Child, preschool syllabus /curriculum etc.?
 - C. Are there textbooks for children in the preschools? Who developed the text books? How they are developed?
1. To what extent preschools are using trained manpower in their center?

- A. Do you think that teachers/Facilitators in preschools have the required qualification?
Why? How can you support them?
- B. Do preschools have adequate teachers and administrative staffs? Why?
- C. Do preschools have trained caregivers?
2. What do you say about the construction and placements of preschools in the town?
 - A. Are they easily identifiable, far from pollution and in good sanitation area?
 - B. Are the compounds of preschools fenced well?
 - C. Are there adequate classrooms and other service rooms for children?
 - D. Are the preschools having enough space for children to play in the school? Are there enough indoor and outdoor play materials in the school?
 - E. Do preschools have enough and pure pipe water in the compound
3. How parents participate in children education in preschools?
4. Do you think that teachers use the curriculum as a guide in teaching young children?
5. Do preschools use local languages as a medium of instruction to teach young children?
6. To what extent the school is open to special need students? Do they get appropriate service?
7. Do Teachers and preschool directors got on job training? Who gives the training?
8. Is there any other issue you want to tell me?

Appendix III

Interview questions for Teachers and preschool directors

The focus of this interview question is to examine the quality of education in preschools in Oromia Special zone Surrounding Addis Ababa. Thus, I request your co-operation by helping to answer the interview questions as per the instructions. You are requested to be as frank as possible when answering this interview questions. Your responses will be highly respected and accorded the highest possible confidentiality.

With regards

I. PERSONAL INFORMATION

DIRECTION: - Please give your personal information for the questions given below.

1. Code No. of Participants _____
2. Sex _____
3. Age: _____
4. How long are you trained in ECCE a) Less than three month b) Three to six month training c) 1 year training d) 2years and above e) Not Trained?
5. Grade level 1) Grade 8 2) Grade10 3) Grade 12
6. Level of Education: 1) Certificate 2) Diploma 3) Degree 4) MA
7. Preschool Teaching Experience: _____

II. Interview questions

1. How do pre-schools implement ECCE Curriculum?
 - A. Are there different policy documents in the office like (Education and Training Policy, National policy framework for ECCE, Convention on the Rights of the Child, preschool syllabus /curriculum etc.?
 - B. Are there textbooks for children in the preschools? Who developed the text books? How they are developed?
2. To what extent preschools are using trained manpower in their centre?
 - A. Do you think that teachers/Facilitators in preschools have the required qualification? Why? How can you support them?
 - B. Do the preschool have adequate teachers and administrative staffs? Why?

- C. Do the preschool have trained caregivers?
 - D. Have you got on-job training? If yes who gives the training? Is the training related with your profession?
3. What do you say about the construction and placements of the preschool?
- A. Are they easily identifiable, far from pollution and in good sanitation area?
 - B. Are the compounds of preschools fenced well?
 - C. Are there adequate classrooms and other service rooms for children?
 - D. Do the preschool have enough space for children to play in the school? Are there enough indoor and outdoor play materials in the school?
 - E. Do preschools have enough and pure pipe water in the compound
4. Teaching learning
- B. Do you think that teachers use the curriculum as a guide in teaching young children?
 - C. To what extent the school is open to special need students? Do they get appropriate service?
 - D. Do preschools use local languages as a medium of instruction to teach young children?
 - E. Do the preschool have enough and pure pipe water in the compound?
 - F. How do teachers assess children performance?
 - G. Do you have reference books for the children? Are they appropriate?
5. Is there any other issue you want to tell me?

Appendix IV

Interview questions for PTA representatives

The focus of this interview question is to examine the quality of education in preschools in Oromia Special zone Surrounding Addis Ababa. Thus, I request your co-operation by helping to answer the interview questions as per the instructions. You are requested to be as frank as possible when answering this interview questions. Your responses will be highly respected and accorded the highest possible confidentiality.

With regards

I. PERSONAL INFORMATION

DIRECTION: - Please give your personal information for the questions given below.

1. Code No. of Participants _____
2. Sex _____
3. Age: _____
4. How long are you trained in ECCE a) Less than three month b) Three to six month training c) 1 year training d) 2years and above e) Not Trained?
5. Grade level 1) Grade 8 2) Grade10 3) Grade 12
6. Level of Education: 1) Certificate 2) Diploma 3) Degree 4) MA
7. Your position in PTA _____
8. Do you have a child in the school? yes_____ No_____

II. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PARENT REPRESENTATIVES (PTA'S)

1. Do you participate in your children education? In what way you participate in the preschool? How frequent you interact with the teachers?
2. What do you observe about the physical environment of the preschool? Is it suitable for children? How? Why?
3. To what extent the curriculum of preschool education gets implemented in the preschools?
4. Do you think that teachers/Facilitators in the preschool have the required qualification? How can you support them?
5. How much equipped the school with indoor and outdoor playing equipment?
6. In general what are the factors that affect the quality of young children education?

Appendix-V

Part III-Focus group discussion

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) points

1. Do you think that the placements of the preschools in the town are easily identifiable, far from pollution and in good sanitation area?
2. What do you observe about the physical environment of early childhood education centre? Is it suitable for children or not? How? Why?
3. To what extent the curriculum of preschool education gets implemented in preschools?
4. Do you think that teachers/Facilitators in preschools have the required qualification?
5. What do you think about parent-Teacher relation in preschools? Do parents communicate with preschool? How?

ANNEX II: INTERVIEW GUIDING ITEMS

Translated to Afan Oromo

Guiding interview Questions for Preschool principals, teachers and education offices

PART I- interview questions/Gaaffilee afaanii/

I. Curriculum implementation in preschools/sir nabarnootaa hojjiirra olchuu/

1. Dokumeentiin poolisii garaagaraa kan akka (poolisii barnootaa fi leenjii, Dokumeentii waa'ee mirga daa'immanii, silaabasii barnootaa fi kkf) Olmaa daa'immanii keessatti argamaa?
2. Manni barumsicha sirni barnootaa olmaa daa'immanii haangam hojjiirra olchaa jira? Kitaabni barataa ni jiraa? Essaa argame?
3. Waligalasir nabarnootaahojjiirratiolchuufrakkoonjirumaali?

II. Qualification /level of education/sadarkaa barnoota hojjattootaa/

1. Hojjattotni fi barsiisotni mana barumsichaa sadarkaan barnoota isaanii hojii hojjachaa jiraniif gahaadhaa jettanii yaaddu? Akkamitti foyyeeffachu danda'an jettanii yaaddu?
2. Leenjii hojii irraa argattanii beektu? Eenyutu isinii kenne? Hojii keessan waliin walqabataa?
3. Hojjattotaa fi barsiisota gahaa qabduu?
4. Hojjattuu fayyaa leenjitee/caregivers/ mana barumsaa keessatti ni jirtii/raa?

III. Physical environment of preschools/Naannoo manneen barnootaa Olmaa'daa'immanii/

1. Waa'ee mana barumsaa ijoollee kessanii maalhubattan? Iddoon itti ijaarame, qulqullina qabaa? Balfa fi gataa adda addaa irraa bilisaa? Dallaan isaa sirritti hojjatamee jiraa?
2. Kutaan barnootaa gahaadha? Kutaawwan tajaajilaa kan biro hoo? Ijaarsi mana barumsichaa maal fakkaataa?
3. Iddoon ijoolleen itti taphatan gahaadha? Meeshaaleen taphaa gahaadha?
4. Manni barumsaa bishaan qulqulluu kan ujummoo qabaa?

IV. Teaching-learning/baruu-barsiisuu/

1. Barsiisotni sirna barnootaa biyyatti akka qajeeltoo tokkootti fudhatanii daa'imman ittiin barsiisaa jiru?
2. Manni barumsaa ijoollee feedhii addaa qaban ni keessumeessaa?
3. Manni barumsaa afaan naannootti fayyadamuun ijoollee barsiisaa jiraa?
4. Ijoollee olmaa daa'immanii barsiisuuf mala baruu- barsiisuu akkamii fayyadamtu?

5. Manni barumsaa, maatii barattootaa, ogeessa fayyaa fi ummata waliin akkamitti walqunnama? Mana barumsaa keessatti ga'ee qabu?
 6. Barsiisotni ga'umsa ijoollee akkamitti qoratu/beeku?
- V. Yaada biro qabduu?

Part II: A. Interview Questions for Parent representatives (PTA's)

1. Waa'ee barumsa ijoollee kessan irratti ni hirmaattu? Akkamitti mana barumsaa waliin hojjattu? Yeroo hunda barsiisota waliin ni mari'attu?
2. Waa'ee mana barumsaa ijoollee kessanii maal hubattan? (Ijaarsaisaa, tessoowwan fi minjaalaa, meeshaalee taphaa ijoollee, mana fincaanii, mana nyaataa fi kkf) Ijolleedhaaf mijataadha?
3. Manni barumsicha sirni barnootaa olmaa daa'immanii haangam hojii irra olchaa jira?
4. Hojjattotni fi barsiisotni mana barumsichaa sadarkaan barnoota isaanii hojii hojjachaa jiraniif gahaadhaa jettanii yaaddu? Akkamitti barsiisota gargaaraa jirtu?
5. Manni barumsichaa haangam meeshaalee tapha ijoolleetiin guutameera?
6. Waliigala rakkoo qulqullina barnootaa ijoollee irratti wantoota rakkoo fiduu danda'an maalfa'a?

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) points

Translated to Afanoromo

1. Iddoon Olmaa daa'immanii itti argaman qulqullina qabaa? Balfa fi gataa adda addaa irraa bilisaa?
2. Waa'ee mana barumsaa ijoollee kessanii maal hubattan? (Ijaarsa isaa, tessoowwan fi minjaalaa, meeshaalee taphaa ijoollee, mana fincaanii, mana nyaataa fi kkf) Ijolleedhaaf mijataadha? Akkamitti? Maaliif?
3. Manni barumsicha sirni barnootaa olmaa daa'immanii haangam hojii irra olchaa jira?
4. Hojjattotni fi barsiisootni mana barumsichaa sadarkaan barnoota isaanii hojii hojjachaa jiraniif gahaadhaa? Akkamitti barsiisota gargaaraa jirtu?
5. Waa'ee walitti dhufeenya barsiisota fi maatii barattootaa maal jechuu dandeenyaa? Sirritti walitti dhufuu?