PERTINENT ASPECTS TO BE INCLUDED IN ECE PROGRAMMES FOR QUALITY PROVISION: AN INVESTIGATION OF TEACHERS' VIEWS

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to collect the views of early childhood education (ECE) providers on aspects that need to be included in ECE curriculum with the view to improve quality standards. 90 questionnaires from 50 ECE programs in the Southeast District were used. Data was analysed through principal component analysis (PCA) and further refined by factor analysis (FA). Both descriptive and inferential statistics (Chi-Square) were used to interpret the data. Results revealed two aspects that were classified as highest priority and second highest priority that teachers thought were crucial in improving quality ECE in Botswana. The paper argues for measures to be put in place to ensure provision of quality ECE in Botswana. The argument is made against the milieu of studies arguing against mediocre ECE. Quality ECE leads to significantly better performance.

Keywords: Early childhood education, curriculum, minimal accreditation model, principal component analysis, factor analysis, inferential statistics, Botswana

1.0 Introduction

ECE is a branch of education which deal with the formal and informal teaching of young children until the age of about eight. It is sometimes called Nursery Education (Henniger, 2017). In Botswana, ownership of ECE was initially the reserve of private institutions and individuals. But in 2012 the government made it an integral part of public education in Botswana. The Education Training Sector Strategic Plan (ETSSP) of 2015 identified "lack of access to early childhood development programs despite its importance on learner progression and pupil performance at schools as the early years prepare children for school readiness" (Government of Botswana, 2015, p. 23). The ETSSP underscored the fact that for a considerable period of time when pre-primary education was largely provided by the private sector, majority of children eligible for ECE did not have access to this kind of education due to lack of finances. To increase access, the National Development Plan 10 (NDP 10) set a target of 40% increase in enrolment using a scale of 18.4% of children who entered Primary School Standard 1 level in 2011 who had attended ECE at government run schools (Statistics Botswana, 2012, cited in ETSS (2015).

The first step by the Government of Botswana in increasing access in ECE or Pre-primary education was to introduce orientation programs for prospective Standard 1 pupils in 2012 and reception classes in public schools in 2013. The orientation program was for a period of six weeks and was introduced in all public primary schools. The program was to partly prepare children for learning and provide readiness activities, and also help children settle into

schools. A one-year reception program was introduced in 115 out of a total of 756 public schools in January 2014 (ETSSP, 2015).

The numerous long-term benefits associated with quality ECE include easy progression when learners start primary school. Henniger (2017), for example, contends that children who receive high quality ECE have fewer problems progressing in school than those who received low quality ECE; they score higher on tests that gauge cognitive and academic achievement, and they are less likely to engage in problem behaviours (fighting, arguing, being mean to others) (Barnett & Belfield, 2010). ECE also reduces costs on remedial education and care considerably, which in turn leads to higher earnings for parents, especially women who would be free to join the labour market (Henniger, 2017).

Furthermore, Vision 2016 reports that children enrolled in ECE programs are likely to learn valuable skills at a tender age that could instil peace, compassion as well as issues of democracy, unity, self-reliance and *botho,* which in the case of Botswana denotes a well-mannered, courteous, humane, and disciplined person who disapproves of anti-social, disgraceful, inhuman, and criminal behaviour, and encourages social justice for all (Government of Botswana, 1997). Investment in ECE also reduces social disparities and race and gender inequalities (Barnett & Belfield, 2010). These are some of the many benefits that make ECE a priority in many countries.

The early years are critical for the development of human beings, and the first eight 8 years are characterised by rapid, physical, intellectual, social, and moral development (Meier & Marais, 2012). This is, arguably, the best period for providing children with quality ECE for a holistic development.

2.0 Literature review
2.1 The need for quality early childhood education

A child's readiness for school depends on meeting his/her comprehensive needs, which include physical and motor development, language and literacy, social and emotional development, approaches to learning and cognitive development. If the child enters school with problems in these areas, it will be difficult for the child to learn. Half of failures in school is attributed to gaps in early care and development (Follari, 2015).

Several studies have indicated the long-term effects of high quality ECE. The Perry Pre-School Project involving Berrueta-Clement, Schweinhart. Barnet, Epstein, and Weikart (1984) has suggested that children exposed to quality ECE did significantly better on social responsibility (detained or arrested, teenage pregnancies, progression through school completion, attending college) and socio- economic success (employment, receiving welfare assistance). A similar view is held by Yiannouka, Whitebread & Kuvalja (2018), UNESCO, (2015), Britto, Yoshikawa & Boller, (2011).

Research has also indicated that children in their prime years, 0-6 are in their most receptive stage of learning hence it is important to provide them with high quality education to

make use of the receptive stage or the critical stage of development (Yiannouka, Whitebread & Kuvalja, 2018). It is at this stage that a holistic approach can be most effective in developing children. The holistic approach could help instil and enhance variety of skills such as linguistic, emotional, social, physical, and cognitive (Britto, Yoshikawa & Boller, 2011).

Kelton, Talan and Bloom (2013) and Aguilar and Tansini (2012) pointed out that high-quality early childhood programs for low-income families can have long lasting effects such as greater school success, higher graduation rates, lower juvenile crime, decreased need for special education services later and lower adolescent pregnancy rates. By comparison low quality care can have harmful effects on language, social development and school performance that are difficult to ameliorate, especially for schools with fewer resources (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2005)

3.0 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework adopted for the study is the Minimal Accreditation Model (MAM). In the MAM, agreed upon criteria are put in place to be used to assess and compare ECE provisions or practices. The model calls for enough budget to run the pre-schools and for infrastructure that can accommodate children and their need. It requires that the size and skill base of school and adequate coverage of the basic topics in the curriculum be established (van Damme, 2004). In short, the MAM wants providers to satisfy the basics, minimal core requirements. It is mainly used as an appropriate way to start an accrediting body, hence its suitability for Botswana.

The essential features of the MAM include having a formal authorizing power (Gola, 2003). Having accreditation standards implies the existence of an accreditation body which acts as an authorizing power and reviews, assesses, and gives permits to carry out ECE provisions. The Botswana Qualification Authority (BQA) is in place for issuance of accreditation and ECE minimal accreditation standards (MAS) may be developed by the authority in consultation with relevant stakeholders. The existence of BQA gives this study an impetus to propose the use of the MAM as a theoretical framework. BQA already deals with setting up minimal standards to be adhered to by institutions of learning.

Furthermore, the MAM uses quantitative indicators like required number of teaching staff, adequate size of the establishment, reasonable teaching load, spread of responsibilities, size of teaching rooms and laboratory facilities as well as the availability of a library and computers. Yet another aspect of this model is that assessment is done in numeric value. For example, a minimum number of children with corresponding number of staff can be set for ECE programs to start running or continue the provision.

The MAM determines basic characteristics of the school and program. This model is often numeric, and regulation based, focusing on basic questions such as: Does the school satisfy basic legal requirements? Does the school have enough budget, infrastructure, and reserves to conduct the program? Etc. The MAM ascertains that the fundamentals in a school setup are in place. In relation to accreditation standards for establishing quality in ECE, the

fundamentals may include a prescription for a minimal core provided by MAM. This model recommends adhering to the 'minimal' philosophy; thus, it can be an appropriate way to start the processes of accrediting the provision of ECE in Botswana. It can also factor in policies and documents already in place, such as the early childhood education policy (ECEP) of 2001, to ensure that it is comprehensive in assessment.

The MAM as a theoretical framework chosen for this study helped in the choice of appropriate research questions. Creswell (2013 p.50) states that, "the selection of a theory should depend on its appropriateness, ease of application, and explanatory power." Bell (1999) further advises that a theoretical framework should help the researcher to specify key variables that can highlight what the researcher is interested in examining about the phenomenon. While there may be a number of areas of foci in relation to accreditation standards that researchers may be interested in, the MAM theory used in this study permits the research to focus on minimal requirements for accreditation.

Thus, MAM supports and strengthens this study in different ways: a). It can help practices pertaining learners in terms of characteristics like family backgrounds: b). It can assess learning environments with regard to whether they are healthy, safe, protective and adequate: c). It can assess the relevance of content and other learning materials–for example, whether learners are provided with numeracy and skills for life: d). It can examine teaching approaches–whether they are child-centered and if skillful assessment is used: e) It can identify learning outcomes–whether they encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society.

The MAM framework helped the researcher to limit the scope of the relevant data by focusing on specific variables and defining the specific viewpoint that the researcher took in analysing and interpreting data (Bell, 1999).

4.0 Aim of the study
In the meagre literature that exist on ECE in Botswana, none has focused on aspects are in necessary for inclusion in ECE programs for improved service provision in the country. The aim for this study was to collect the views of ECE providers on aspects that need to be included ECE curriculum with the view to improve quality standards.

5.0 Methodology
5.1 Study design
The study adopted a mixed method approach to collect and analyse data. This approach combines the qualitative and quantitative approaches. Text information and numeric information were collected to investigate the research problem. The starting or foundational point is typically the qualitative aspects, and these are followed by the quantitative aspect. The advantage of using the mixed method approach is that the weaknesses of one approach are offset by the strengths of the other approach (Creswell, 2013).

5.2 Data collection and analysis

Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data. 13 interviews were conducted in pre-schools in Gaborone to collect qualitative data, and 89 questionnaires were also distributed in the schools. Qualitative data was collected to augment quantitative data.

Researchers are expected to 'bracket' their own opinions and experiences and state the experiences, opinions and perspectives and accurately as said by participants. In respecting 'an emic' approach, the researcher should put aside prior understandings and assumptions and 'let data speak' and allow themes to emerge from the voices of the participants. In this case the researcher allowed data to speak without interruption by using a questionnaire as well as taped interviews.

The study also used mathematical and computational techniques. The level of significance was tested using SPSS. Among other things SPSS generated a technique known as principal component analysis (PCA). This is a technique used to emphasize variation and bring out strong patterns in a dataset. PCA is a way of identifying patterns in data, expressing data in a way to highlight the similarities and differences because these may be difficult to highlight in data of high dimension (Treiman, 2009). One major advantage of PCA is that it has the potential to reduce the number of dimensions without much loss of information. Since the study had many variables, 50 questions and 89 questionnaires, it was important to find a technique that could reduce the number of variables according to the percentages that participants viewed the particular aspect.

The researcher was thus able to prioritise the aspects that would be highly recommended by participants in the accreditation model because of percentages the particular aspect accumulated. A technique known as Factor Analysis (FA) was adopted to analyse the variables. Factor Analysis is not designed to test a hypothesis, it is included in the SPSS package to reduce data (Pallant, 2001). This technique takes a large set of variables and looks at a way that the data may be reduced or summarised using a smaller set of factors or components. According the (Pallant, 2001) Factor Analysis (FA) encompasses a variety of different, although related techniques, one being PCA. PCA assisted the researcher by inferential statistics, which is basically the association between variables e.g. age and work or sex of participants and type of employment while the factor analysis distinguished between variables that stood out and those that were least considered important in the minimal accreditation standards. Variables such as safety, goals of the program and PTA were considered highly important whereas variables such as admission policy and strategies to retain teachers ranked low.

5.3 Study population and sampling techniques

The population of a study refers to all people who meet the criteria for inclusion in the study. In this investigation, the study population comprised eligible teachers, head teachers and teacher aides currently working in ECE programs in Botswana pre-schools.

Various sampling strategies were used. Purposive sampling was used to select pre-schools in Gaborone only. This type of sampling where specific elements or subjects are purposefully and consciously selected for inclusion in the research to ascertain that the elements have particular characteristics that are relevant to the study (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). Convenient strategy was used to choose participants and sites, where these sites, and therefore participants, were close to the researcher's place of residence and work (Creswell, 2013). Thus, only the sites (and participants) in Gaborone were convenient since they were near the researchers' workplace and residence.

Some participants were excluded from the study for various reasons. These included newly recruited ECE teachers with less than one year of experiences because of lack of experience in teaching and learning and their unfamiliarity with policies that govern ECE provision in Botswana. Unqualified teachers were also excluded regardless of years of experience since lack of qualification presupposed lack of information with regard to the problem of study. Those who had reservations and were uncomfortable to participate, and those who were unavailable at the time of data collection were also excluded.

6.0 Findings and discussion of findings
6.1 Priority aspects

Results revealed two aspects that were classified as highest priority and second highest priority that teachers thought were crucial in improving quality ECE in Botswana. They are discussed below starting with those which were highly rated. The theoretical framework for the study MAM wants providers to satisfy the basics, minimal core requirements in the provision of ECE services hence in this study teachers' prioritised aspects that were pertinent in the running of ECE programs as follows:

6.1.1 Aspects considered highest priority

The most preferred aspects with regards to participants' views were those in the .900 rankings and they were three in number. These were safety devices, mission and vision and establishing a strong PTA.

6.1.1.1 Safety Devices .932

The issue of safety devices was rated high as an integral aspect of an ECE programme. Consequently, it attracted a highest value (932). Safety devices were valued as highest priority because the lives of pupils and teachers depend on the safety of the environment. Safety devices incorporate gadgets that could be used during an emergency, such as in the case of a fire outbreak. These gadgets may include among others fire extinguishers, alarms, and sand to be used for putting out fire. These gadgets are usually placed in strategic places where they could be retrieved easily and quickly when the need arises.

The participants' very high ranking of safety as an important aspect of the provision of ECE program is supported by literature. According to Hearron & Hildebrand (2015), safety is the primary concern for an early childhood development (ECD) program. Gordon and Browne (2017) recommend that ECE programs should among other things consider it their

responsibility to provide safety by adequately supervising children at all times, organising safe procedures for parking and having records of names of people authorised to pick up children with complete photos for identification. To these, Gordon and Browne (2017) add secure carpeting, scald proof spouts, covered electrical outlets and gates on stairways, and argue that these should be made standard in all ECE facilities.

6.1.1.2 Mission and Vision .931

The second factor that was highly prioritised was Mission and Vision at .931.The mission and vision of the program basically refers to the philosophy or the guiding principle. On the one hand, mission statements define the organization's purpose and primary objectives (Follari, 2015). Vision statements, on the other hand, define the purpose for the school, focusing on goals and aspirations. Mission and vision statements are designed to be uplifting and inspiring (Henniger, 2017). Teachers and management should be attuned to the aspirations of the mission and vision of the school and what they intend to achieve for the learners at the end of the program (Gordon & Browne, 2017). Programs must have mission and vision to provide a sense of direction and purpose. This makes it inevitable that mission and vision to be included in ECE programmes (Jackman, 2012).

6.1.1.3 Establishing a strong Parents Teachers Association .909

The third aspect that was highly recommended to be made a part an ECE programme was the establishment of a very strong parents teachers association (PTA) which scored .909. The involvement/participation of parents in the education of their children is very crucial because it is through such links that educators can narrow the gap between the home and the school. Such a link is necessary because it creates a platform whereby pertinent issues such as curriculum, fund raising activities, building of strong relationships and partnerships with families and parental education can all be discussed (Follari, 2015). Parents could be urged to be of assistance with regards to issues such as homework and personal hygiene of their children. Parents who are PTA committee members could also assist teachers in liaising with other parents who are not members of PTA on matters relating to their children's education, areas of interest and health issues (Henniger, 2017).

The proverb that says '*it takes a whole village to educate a child*' is highly applicable in the Botswana context, especially in Botswana ECE. That the participants prioritized this aspect shows that they wish to establish partnership with and involvement of parents in the education of their children. There could be various reasons for this. Firstly, involvement will assist not only the teachers but also the children as what they learnt in school will be enhanced at home in a contextual manner. Learning that is in a vacuum, that is, the acquisition of knowledge and skills without context is not effective for young children. Young children need to learn in context, and the inclusion of the parents using PTA could help make this possible (Follari, 2015). Secondly, PTA can bring the home closer to the school and the school closer to the home. When such partnerships are created children receive the best from these setups, the school, and the home. As stated by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1917-2005) the child's environment affects how a child grows and develops (Hearron & Hildebrand, 2015).

6.1.2 Aspects considered second highest priority

The findings of the study established 8 factors that were considered second most preferred and considered necessary to constitute part of an ECE programs in Botswana. These were ranked from .898-.850.

6.1.2.1 Quality of teacher training .898

The quality of teacher training (.898) was considered a very important aspect in the running of an ECE programme. In a paper entitled '*Encouraging Quality in Early Childhood Education and Care'* by Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (2015) the authors point out that it is important for education systems to invest in rigorous teacher education and training if teachers are to deliver high quality outcomes. Despite this, there is often reluctance by governments to raise staff qualifications as this may impact the wage demands (OECD, 2015). This study suggest that not only should the Government of Botswana aim to hire quality teachers but private owners of ECE programs should also do the same. Hiring staff who do not have the right qualifications is costly in that it impacts negatively on the quality of education that young learners receive (OECD, 2015). OECD (2015) further points out that although teachers are expected to have specific knowledge, skills, and competencies, they are however not provided with sufficient education and training to acquire those skills and competencies. The authors argue that well trained teachers are key in the provision of high quality ECE that can produce most favourable cognitive and social outcomes (OECD, 2015). Litjens and Taguma (2010) also state that enriched stimulating environments and high-quality pedagogy are fostered by better qualified staff; and better-quality pedagogy leads to better learning outcomes. It is therefore worth noting that the qualifications, education, and training of ECE staff is an important matter in the education of young children and should be made an integral part of an ECE program.

6.1.2.2 Evaluation and monitoring teachers' performance .895

The evaluation and monitoring of teachers' performance (.895) was also considered important. Monitoring is a type of evaluation that is performed while a project is being implemented. This is done with the aim of improving the project and functioning while in action. Gordon and Browne (2017, p. 230) define evaluation as "as process that determines if the goals of a centre are being met." This allows programs to improve on what they think might not have at certain standards. It is important to monitor ECE teachers to ensure that they are on the right track regarding the mission and vision of the school. If a particular teacher is not on track, it is the responsibility of management to assist the particular teacher to align with the mission and vision of the school.

6.1.2.3 Trained teachers .891

The outcome of teacher training leads to efficiently trained teachers who are able to produce desired outcomes with regards to the teaching of young children. Basically, it is important to have solid teacher training program commonly referred to as pre-service training, for all teachers in ECE and once teachers are employed, it should be necessary to update them regularly through training, which is commonly known as in-service training. This will equip teachers with current trends, skills, contemporary pedagogy about issues in ECE which may

not have been necessary or even available while they were on training (Hearron & Hildebrand, 2014). OECD (2015, p. 2) states that while it is important to have qualified teachers, it must be known that 'it is not the qualification of teachers *per se* that has an impact on child learning outcomes, but the ability of better qualified staff to create a high-quality pedagogic environment that makes the difference".

The same OECD authors state that key elements of staff quality include the way staff involves children and makes stimulating interactions with them using scaffolding strategies such as guiding, modelling, and questioning (OECD, 2015). In short, well-trained staff can foster healthy and educative interactions that can lead to better self-esteem and self-concept that which can boost a child's ego and perseverance to rich higher levels of learning. It is therefore crucial that ECE teachers are adequately trained.

6.1.2.4 Admission policy .881

Admission policy (.881) was another aspect that the participants felt strongly about. Admission policy is a document that details exactly which children can be registered looking at the age requirements, fees requirements, academic readiness maturity, diversity or gender balance and code of conduct (Follari, 2015). It should be mentioned that admission policy is an important document because it allows the school to screen pupils who could be admitted into the program (Heckman, 2011). It is a tool that would determine the child's developmental level as well as their maturity, thus enabling the school to make proper/appropriate placement. The admission policy therefore is a crucial aspect on an ECE program.

6.1.2.5 Indicators of progress towards achieving the desired goals .871

It is important for an ECE program to have stipulated guidelines to assist in the realization of the mission and vision. It is further important for a program to know the main areas that it wants to focus on with regards to the progress of the centre. There should be clear guidelines or indicators that detail the program's objectives as well as the roles and responsibilities of the members (Gordon & Browne, 2017). The program should also have aspects such as mission and vision. If, for example, the mission and vision of the program covers the five domains of development being the moral, intellectual, physical, social, and aesthetic, then the school should be able to develop/adopt an approach that would be appropriate and effective in developing children holistically in all these domains (Henniger, 2017).

6.1.2.6 Pupils .870

Another aspect that was highly prioritised as an important aspect was the pupils enrolled in an ECE program. Pupils are the consumers of the services provided by the school. Without them it would be impossible to run a program. Through their parents and caregivers, pupils pay fees to enable the program to run. The school then purchases equipment and hires the labour force, teachers included. Therefore, every ECE program needs pupils to enrol in their program. Pupils are thus an essential aspect in the running of an ECE program (Follari, 2015).

6.1.2.7 Pre-school facility .859

Pre-school facility (.859) is one of the most important aspects of an ECE program because children spend most of the time there. The school facility consists not only the physical structure; there are a variety of building systems such as mechanical, plumbing, electrical and power, telecommunications, security, and fire suppression systems as well. Facilities also include furnishings, materials and supplies, equipment and information technology and various aspects of building grounds namely: athletic fields, playgrounds, areas for outdoor learning, and parking (Gordon & Browne, 2017).

The facility or the environment should also be a developmentally appropriate environment (DAE) (Hearron & Hildebrand, 2014). A DAE is an environment that provides learning that is age appropriate, individually appropriate as well as culturally appropriate. Children need space in which they could interact with other children, listen to music, explore role play, dramatize, sleep, and have what is called '*alone time*' (Mc Geeney, 2014). It is, therefore, important for a facility to have indoor and outdoor play material. The indoor play material can be those that can develop learners in fine motor skills such as painting, drawing, sewing, threading, and beading, while the gross motor skills could be activities like dancing, swimming, catching, kicking, sliding, climbing, jumping, pushing, and pulling. All these can be done in the outdoor play area (Gordon & Browne, 2017).

The outdoor play area should also have different terrains or landscapes to allow for the different activities. Children should not get injured because they fell on a hard surface when they needed a soft terrain that is cushioned. Children need a grassy area where they could play football, or a soft-landing zone placed under a slide to allow for a comfortable landing. Further, as already indicated that children need alone time there is need for the program to provide a quiet zone; this area is important as it permits children to have personal space, intimate interaction with an adult when the child is read to, or during solitary play, or when reading a book, or just relaxing. There should be a cosy carpet, comfortable sofas, pillows, bookshelves, and stuffed toys in this area (Hearron & Hildebrand, 2014).

The facility should also have different zones such as dramatic zone, where they can engage in make-believe activities, that is where they pretend to be someone else e.g., a nurse, a wife, a doctor, a policeman, or a fire-fighter, etc. In this zone there could be a home centre furnished with kitchen utensil, furniture and so on (Mc Geeney, 2014). The facility should also have the arts and craft zone; here the children can experiment with sand, paint, paste and other messy materials. In this zone there would be need to have a tap for warm running water for learners to wash their hands as the need arises.

The pre-school facility could also have a multi-purpose room. This room is for napping, eating or large group activities. This space can be used for various activities such as meetings, conferences, parental fund-raising activities and any activity that involves a large number of people. In the pre-school facility there is need to have teachers' workplace. It is here that the teachers could have tea, snack, and telephone conversation or just to relax or to prepare for activities. Hearron and Hildebrand (2014) recommend that this space should be furnished with

appropriate outlets, computers, photocopying machines, file cabinets, a professional library, refrigerator, and a television. An ECE facility would not be complete without an administrative area.

Mc Geeney (2014) recommends that the administration should be directly facing the school entry for effective monitoring of all individuals entering or leaving the premises. This space should be able to accommodate the secretarial as well as the administrative personnel. The space should also have equipment such as computers, faxes, phones, copy machines and filling cabinets. In addition, the space also needs to have toilets for parents and personnel working there.

Trained leadership (.850) was prioritised as an important aspect of an ECE programme. Hearron and Hildebrand (2014, p. 347) define leadership as a "process of social influence in which one person can enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task". The authors argue that being a leader in an ECE program is challenging and needs someone who can plan, organize, and delegate. Among these the ECE leader must also be intelligent, have vision, be initiative, mature, be decisive and have self-assurance (Hearron & Hildebrand, 2014).

Leadership is an important aspect in an ECE program because it is through good leadership that a spirit of working together, sharing ideas as well as establishing warm cordial relationships with the parents, children, teachers, and other stakeholders can be created in order to provide quality education. In most cases, in various organizations where a leader is not capable and does not possess the skills outlined above there could be hostility, lack of cooperation, lack of consultation and lack of team sprit or togetherness. This can render the organization, in this case an ECE program, dysfunctional, thus leading to poor quality of service. This is thus a very important aspect of an ECE program as realized by the teachers.

7.0 Conclusion

The study has shown that ECE providers have a clear knowledge of what aspects should be considered to improve quality standards. This indicates the importance of incorporating various aspects considered with highest priority and those considered as second highest priority. The prioritization of these aspects does not disqualify any aspect from being included in the running of ECE programs. If these aspects could be used in ECE program in Botswana the quality of the education given to young children could improve significantly. The factors chosen by ECE teachers are important in the running of an ECE facility as literature has supported their value in promoting quality standards; hence they need to be included in the effective running of ECE programs in Botswana.

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