

“Imiti Ikula Empanga”

The Position of Early Childhood Care and Development in Central, Zambia

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DECLARATION

I, Salome Temba, hereby declare that this thesis is a product of my research in Makululu and that all references to other sources and authors have been duly noted.

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DEDICATION

To the loving memory of **Elizabeth Banda Temba**, my mother, my friend and my number one cheerleader in the game of life

she is a portion of the loveliness which once she made lovelier

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ABSTRACT

Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD), has received considerable attention in the world today. It makes reference to systems and mechanisms implemented for the improvement of children's lives from 0-8 years old. These provisions are made through pre-schools, nurseries and community schools among others. Advocates of ECCD argue that it will help prepare children for formal education and children in the poorest communities stand to benefit the most from this program.

The focus of this thesis is ECCD in Makululu which is an informal settlement area in Kabwe, Central Zambia. It draws from participant observation, dialogues, interviews, focus group discussions and drawings with children, parents/guardians, grandmothers and caregivers. The thesis is informed by the theoretical perspectives of the sociology of childhood which postulates that childhood is socially constructed; children are active thinkers and doers therefore social actors who are capable of making meaning of their lives and those around them. The rights perspective as provided by the UNCRC and ACWRC is also employed in this study as it postulates that children have a right to express their views in matters that concern them.

As a point of departure, the views of parents/guardians and caregivers and the District Planning Officer at the Ministry of Education are used to give the context of the ideas and values in which children are experiencing ECCD. This is consistent with the argument forwarded by Abebe & Kjørholt (2013). The objectives of the study include exploring how local knowledge is integrated into ECCD as well as exploring the meaning and interpretation of the proverb 'imiti ikula empanga which is a common Zambian proverb in one of the seven main languages. The views of children on childhood and the role of the family in ECCD will also be explored.

According to the findings, the aforementioned proverb is understood as meaning children are a sign of continuity and future leaders. The understanding of the proverb shows the value of children in the Zambian society. With regard to the views of children about childhood, my study shows that children view childhood in threefold. Childhood is a time of play, a time for learning chores for future responsibilities and a care receiving and care giving phase in life. The children also view the role of the family as primary decision makers in the education and as providers of material and social support for the children in ECCD. As indicated by the study, children are

capable of making meaning of their lives and understanding the different aspects of socio-cultural and socio-economic aspects of their lives.

With regard to the role of ECCD, my study shows that it is viewed by children as the beginning of education whereas adults view it as preparation for formal education which begins in grade one. ECCD is also seen as a platform for learning the official language which is English in Zambia. There are differing opinions with regard to the use of the official language in ECCD with some parents arguing that emphasis should be placed on it while others argue for a balance between the official and local language.

The integration of local knowledge in ECCD is an important discussion among service providers and policy makers today. In Africa, local knowledge is inclusive of oral tradition and customary practices that transmit ways of knowing in the everyday social and cultural lives of the people (Eder, 2010; Kresse & Marchand, 2009; Nyota & Mapara, 2008; cited in Jirata & Benti, 2013) . With regard to ECCD, note that one of the obstacles to the use of indigenous knowledge in early childhood policy making, programming and implementation in Africa is the lack of contemporary research and documentation of local childrearing practices, tradition, norms and beliefs(Schafer et al., 2004)

My findings indicate that local knowledge is valuable for ECCD and drawn from my research, it is integrated through socio-cultural practices, songs, folktales, stories and dances. The use of local toys and materials is also employed. In conclusion, the argument for appropriate and relevant ECCD services in Africa is timely and well meaning. Therefore a call is made to explore ECCD with the input of children, their families and communities to ensure that governments and partner organizations are well informed and equipped to develop relevant policy and program implementation.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACRWC	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
AFCON	Africa Cup of Nations Football Tournament
AIDS	Acquired Immune-deficiency syndrome
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DPO	District Planning Officer
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EFA	Education for All
EoF	Educating our Future
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FNDP	Fifth National Development Plan
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
HIV	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus
ILO	International Labor Organization
KDSEOR	Kabwe District State of Environment Outlook Report
KMC	Kabwe Municipal Council

LCMS	Living Conditions Monitoring Survey
MECCDF	Mulumbo Early Childhood Care and Development Foundation
MoE	Ministry of Education
MUMR	Makululu Upgrade Mapping Report
OVCSA	Orphaned and Vulnerable Children’s Situation Analysis
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programs
SNDP	Six National Development Plan
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
WHO	World Health Organization
ZANEC	Zambia National Education Coalition
ZPRS	Zambia Poverty Reduction Strategy

1 Introduction

The focus of my thesis is children in early childhood education in Makululu. The aim is to explore the understanding and views of children and their families on early childhood education. The thesis is based on participant observation, informal dialogues, individual interviews, focus group discussions and drawings. My informants are 10 children, four caregivers, the District Planning Officer for the Ministry of Education and groups of mothers, fathers and grandmothers. In this chapter, I will begin by giving an introduction to Early Childhood Care and development after which I will give a brief description of my research, objectives and research questions. Thereafter I will give an overview of early childhood care and development, the history of preschool education in Zambia and child related policies and programs.

1.1 Describing and Defining ECCD Programs

According to UNESCO and UNICEF 2012, early childhood is defined as the period between birth and 8 years of life. There is a diversity of terms that are used to define services provided for children during this period of early childhood (ILO, 2012). The International Labour Organization (ILO, 2012), UNICEF and UNESCO 2012 note that different countries and international organizations use different terms to define services which focus on the education, nutrition, healthcare and intellectual stimulation of children in early childhood. These include Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), Early Childhood Education (ECE), Early Childhood Development (ECD), and Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD). These terms refer to mechanisms that sustain and support development of children before the mandatory age of entrance into formal education which varies among countries.

Across the globe today, national education systems have experienced a rise in early childhood education due to the increase in demand for pre-primary school education (Paris, 2008). In 2009, the number of children enrolled in pre-primary schools worldwide was 157 million accounting for a gross enrolment of 46 per cent (ibid). Despite this progress, great variations exist at regional, sub-regional and national levels. The global gross enrolment in 2008 indicated an average of 80 per cent in North America and Western Europe while Sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab states were at 17 and 19 per cent respectively (ibid).

The concept of ECD which draws mainly from theories of child development is an umbrella term for a variety of interventions with young children and their carers and families which include health, nutrition, childcare, education and parent support. Among other things, ECD programs can refer to the following description as cited from Penn (2008, p.2);

- 1. School based nursery education, usually for children aged three to six years, delivered by trained teachers in school premises, with an agreed curriculum or program, either on a full time or part time basis. Nursery education is most likely to be publicly funded, with parents only paying peripheral costs such as uniforms or stationary. This provision meets agreed national standards and is regulated through an inspectorial system.*
- 2. Community based preschool or playgrounds, usually part time, often provided in a multipurpose church hall or other community facilities. Staff, who tends to be local women, often serves on a voluntary rota basis and provide relatively low key play activities. It may or may not be regulated. Fees are likely to be minimal, but there is some cost recovery.*
- 3. Centre-based childcare, usually for children aged between nought and three or nought and six, delivered by a variety of personnel, many of whom are likely to be untrained, in a variety of regulated or unregulated premises, to cover the working hours of mothers. Centre based childcare is usually delivered on a cost recovery basis, usually by profit or non-profit organisations, but ay attract some state subsidies. It may or may not be regulated.*

1.2 Adopting a Working Definition of ECCD for My Thesis

The Zambia National Development Plan for Education 2006-2010 defines ECCD as the level of education (informal, non-formal or formal) which a child between 0-6 years old undergoes before they attain the compulsory age (7 years in Zambia) of entry to primary school (Matafwali, 2007). For the purpose of my thesis and throughout this paper, I will use Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCD) as defined by the policy document of the Zambia Ministry of Education (MoE), 'Educating our Future 1996.' Zambia and Education (1996), asserts that ECCD refers to an organized form of educational provision for children between the ages of three to six made through pre-schools. The centre at which I conducted my research can best be described by the

second description cited earlier in Penn (2008, p.2). I base this description on my informed understanding through research at the centre and information provided by the organization's secretariat. The centre is a part time preschool established by an NGO but run as a community based school. The care givers are volunteers from the community. Parents and community members are actively involved in school programs through such activities as running the school garden, cleaning and providing material support. The Children attending this centre are required to pay a minimal fee and encouraged to use the school uniform.

1.3 Background to ECCD in Zambia

The Zambia National Education Coalition, ZANEC (2013) notes that the Zambian government endorses the importance of education through its commitment to enhance education for all. This commitment is reflected through policy documents, national development plans and sector strategic plans. Zambia's National policy on Education, 'Educating our Future 1996, p.2' states that "*education is a right for each individual and a means for enhancing the wellbeing and quality of life for the entire society* (Zambia & Education, 1996) .

According to Matafwali (2007), education of young children is not a new phenomenon in Zambia. In 1957, the Day Care and Nurseries Act(Chapter 313 of the Laws of Zambia), which provides for among other things, the registration and regulation of day nurseries was passed in recognition of the importance of education of Children(Ibid). The Lusaka Pre-school Association which later became the Zambia Pre-school Association was registered later in 1972. Matafwali (2007) argues that although these beginnings were important for Zambia, they were not adequate to address the educational needs of children.

Real advancement in early childhood education was seen in the 1990s following the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which Zambia signed in September 1990 and ratified on 6th December 1991(Matafwali, 2007). The Jomtien World Summit 'Education for All' held in 1990 was also important in the impetus for the development of early child education by urging countries 'to expand early childhood care and development activities including family and community interventions, especially for poor disadvantaged and disabled children' (Ibid). Thus, there was a turn to a 'rights based' provision of ECE whereas before it was based on a needs perspective which entailed identifying the needs of children and strategizing on how to meet these needs (Ibid).

1.4 ECCD Related Policies and Programs in Zambia

The Ministry of Education in Zambia acknowledges the important role that preschools play by stating that this significance lays in the importance of early experiences in the development of a child's social, physical, mental and emotional capacities. This importance also lies in the role that it can play in preparing children to adapt to the more formal atmosphere of basic education (ibid). Although Matafwali (2007) notes that education of young children is not a new phenomenon in Zambia, the concept of ECCD however, is still relatively new as noted by UNICEF.

According to UNICEF Zambia, urban provinces of Lusaka and Copperbelt have the highest rates (54.1 per cent) of new school entrants with prior ECCD. Statistics indicate that only 6 per cent of children aged between 36 and 59 months are enrolled in pre-school in Zambia and only 17.1 per cent of new entrants to grade one in 2007 had been through pre-school (Ibid). According to National Implementation Framework (2011-2015) of the Ministry of Education, this is partly due a lack of policy framework and Monitoring and Evaluation of ECCD in Zambia. In view of this, the MoE is committed to the establishment of programs that support all round early childhood development, particularly those intended for children living in rural and poor urban areas (Educating our Future, 1996).

Penn (2008) argues that, ECCD programmes are generally assumed to be beneficial to children. As a result, the World Bank, the World Health Organisation (WHO), UNICEF and UNESCO have all advocated for ECCD and stressed its importance in improving physical and psycho-social wellbeing and in promoting cognitive gains in young children therefore directly or indirectly combating poverty. Penn (2008), citing Van der Gaag and Tan(1998), argues that interventions in the form of ECCD programs are most likely to be beneficial for children who grow up in the poorest households.

According to Doyle, Harmon, Heckman, and Tremblay (2009), inequalities in health, cognitive development, and socio-emotional functioning emerge early in life and many subsequent social issues such as crime, teenage pregnancy, low education and unemployment can be traced to an adverse early years environment. In the same vein, Naudeau et al (2011, p.37) cited in ILO

(2012) argue that ECCD programs can not only benefit all children but also compensate for young children's negative experiences as a result of conflict, lack of stimulation or nutritional inputs. They note that more than 200 million children aged below 5 years in developing countries are exposed to these multiple risk factors that negatively affect their development (ibid).

As such, the Zambian government recognizes this benefit for the development of the child and as a useful preparatory stage for entry into basic school. However, it has and will not establish preschools as a condition for entry into grade one due to limitations of access (Ibid). Instead, MoE is committed to work with partner ministries, districts and urban councils, local communities, non-governmental organizations, religious groups, families and individuals to encourage and facilitate preschool programs. Thus, the policy guiding ECE states as follows;

1. *The Ministry of Education acknowledges the important role of early childhood education in the multi-dimensional development of young children*
2. *Within the constraints of available resources, the Ministry will encourage and facilitate the establishment of preschool programs that would reach out to all children, especially those living in rural and poor areas.*
3. *The provision and funding of early childhood and preschool education will be the responsibility of councils, local communities, non-governmental organizations, private individuals and families* (Educating our Future, 1996, p. 21).

In view of the above policies, the Zambia National Education Coalition ZANEC (2013) notes that ECCD has remained visible in the national planning documents and MoE strategic plans since 2004. This was after the government gazette of 2004, number 547 which formally transferred the responsibility of ECCD from the Local government to the Ministry of Education (MoE) as noted in the National Implementation framework (NIF) 2011-2015. In an effort to fulfil EFA goal, ECCD has been receiving increased attention and according to NIF 2011-2015, the program is supposed to be part of basic education (ibid). To this effect, basic schools are to host programmes in this sub-sector in order to increase access for many children in particular from rural and marginalised communities (ZANEC, 2013).

Zambia is noted as one of the countries that have adopted the approach of integrating ECCD into education since 2004 (Kaga, Bennett, & Moss, 2010). Until recently, education in Zambia as coordinated by MoE has been organized in a 7-5-4 system which entails 7 years of primary school, 5 years of secondary school and 4 years of Tertiary education (Zambia & Education, 1996). Recent developments in MoE indicate the evolvement of the structure of formal education in Zambia which divides the education system into four sub-sectors or units. These are; early childhood care, development and education; basic education; high school and Tertiary education (ZANEC, 2013).

Due to the consensus that the program is vital and worth supporting, the Education Act 2011 cites ECCD as one of the distinct units of the education system in Zambia (Ibid). To this end, the Six National Development Plan (SNDP, 2011-2015), outlines a number of strategies to improve the performance of the ECCD sub-sector among which the first objective is to increase access, efficiency and equity to quality ECCDE and Basic Education.

1.5 The Value of Local Knowledge in ECCD

Local knowledge is defined by Easton (2004) cited in Soudee (2009) as ‘a particular group’s understanding of the surrounding world, ways of sharing information or teaching, and ways of speaking and thinking that are passed down through generations. According to Shizha (2007), a look at many definitions of Local knowledge reveals that it is locally bound and indigenous to a specific area; culture and context specific; implied, intangible and non-formal knowledge. Over the last decade the area of development practices notes the value of local knowledge in the implementation of programs especially in the third world. Steiner & Oviedo (2004) in Knowledge (2004), argue that social, cultural and economic sectors can be improved by integrating local and global knowledge based on the following premises among others, ;

1. Understanding of the local context allows for better adaptation of global knowledge
2. Using local knowledge sources increases ownership and eventually produces better results on the ground with enhanced sustainability
3. Learning from and building on the knowledge systems embedded in local communities helps to empower these communities fostering a sense of equity in their interactions with governments and external development partners.

In light of this, my thesis aims to explore the value of local knowledge in the context of Zambia but specific to Makululu Township and in relation to ECCD as an intervention for children. According to Schafer et al. (2004), one of the obstacles to the use of indigenous knowledge in early childhood policy making, programming and implementation in Africa is the lack of contemporary research and documentation of local childrearing practices, tradition, norms and beliefs.

As noted by Easton (2004) local knowledge is typically tied to and incarnated in specific cultural and economic activities. Regarding education, he notes that much of the formal and/or organized education in African communities is largely decontextualized and involves learning things and learning in ways that show little relation with the social, cultural and economic habits of the host community. As a result, the alienating effects of schooling in Africa are a major theme in education as argued by Cole (2005) & Serpell (2005) cited in Marfo and Biersteker (2011). Regarding ECCD, Nsamenang (2008) cited in Marfo and Biersteker (2011) argues that western ECCD services initiate African children into an education process by which they gain unfamiliar knowledge leading to alienation and ignorance of their cultural circumstances. Thus, schooling is generally perceived to be dysfunctional because it fails to guarantee the cultural identity of Africa's Children, breaks intergenerational continuity in core values and traditions that identify the uniqueness of Africans. It is also seen to deny newer generations the competencies and values necessary to function productively in their own local contexts and realities (Marfo & Biersteker, 2011).

Shizha (2007), citing UNICEF (2004), notes that every child has a right to education and a system of education that values the child's culture, language and community consistent with the articulations of the UNCRC and the ACRWC. Therefore, I am of the view that the rights of children to education in cultural contexts familiar to them as argued by Shizha (2007) are an integral part of successful planning, implementation and sustainability of ECCD that is culturally relevant and sustainable.

1.6 Socio-Economic Issues and Childhood in Zambia

According to the Zambia Demographic Health Survey (ZDHS, 2007), Children in Zambia constitute 50 per cent of the population. The FNDP (2006-2011) reports that there are a number of issues affecting children and youths in Zambia as a result of the country's socio-economic

situation. Food security is an issue and as a result the country faces child nourishment problems resulting in 46.8 per cent of the Children being stunted and 28.1 being underweight. In rural areas, it is estimated that only 36 per cent of the population has access to portable water and 57 per cent has access to sanitation. Although access to education has improved over the years, quality is still questioned due to insufficient funding to the education sector which has led to lack of adequate infrastructure and materials in most schools

The situation is further exacerbated by the fact that most children in Zambia are not registered at birth, thereby making planning for children's programs difficult due to unreliable data. Additionally, the adverse social impact of restructuring and HIV/AIDS¹ pandemic which has 90,000 children infected and over one million children orphaned and disadvantaged. This is attributed to the link between HIV/AIDS and poverty which has led to 1-2 percent(20,000) of all households in the country being child headed homes and more children suffering severe deprivation, quitting school, failing to access training falling prey to abuse and exploitation and risking HIV infection themselves. It is reported that Zambia has recorded an improvement in health indicators evidenced by a reduction in HIV/AIDS prevalence, and reduced incidences of Malnutrition, Malaria and increased and improved access to health facilities and Immunization programs.

Although the prevalence of HIV/AIDS has reduced, the pandemic has left a number of children orphaned. The estimation is that by the age of 18, over one-third of children have lost either one or both parents. In 2001, it was reported that one-fifth of households were raising one or more orphans and orphans comprised 15 per cent of the population of children. As a result of the general economic challenges faced by households and families, orphans are considered as financial burdens and less likely to attend school and receive an education. The situation of children is further exacerbated by socio-cultural practices that can have an effect on the implementation of children's rights. According to the UNCRC Country report, the realization of children's rights in Zambia remains unattained due to such factors as the aforementioned among others.

¹ Human Immuno Virus (HIV- an incurable infectious virus which suppresses the immune system causing AIDS/Acquired Immuno deficiency syndrome- which is characterized by chronic illness often leading to death)

1.7 Statement of the Problem

There is a growing concern in the world today about the experiences of children in early childhood. Concerns for developing countries like Zambia, are primarily children's survival and development (UNESCO; 2008). To this end, policies and programs include how communities and families can be supported and empowered to ensure that children have access to nutrition, health and education in early childhood (Ibid). Britto, Yoshikawa, and Boller (2011), argue that young children all around the globe bear the greatest burden of poverty, disease, war, social marginalization and limited health, nutrition and education services. Hence the argument that investing in ECCD programs will assure the wellbeing of children and the future of communities as these programs are most likely to be beneficial for children who grow up in the poorest households van der Gaag & Tan (1998) cited in (Penn;2008).

According to the MoE, Strategic Plan for (2003-2007), the lack of preparation through pre-school is a contributory factor to under-achievement especially by rural children and the poor in basic school. As such, Advocates of ECCD argue that these programs will achieve one or more of several goals among which are preparing children for school and enabling mothers and other caregivers to rear children better than they would without such assistance. In view of this, UNESCO (2008) notes that one of the key issues in early childhood education is the adoption of traditional practices in order to create better conditions for sustainable development.

It is noted that traditional cultures are more attentive to the rhythm of the environment, more rooted in family networks and immediate communities which act as a source of mutual support. Therefore, UNESCO (2008) further argues that in order for early childhood education to be meaningful and have impact, it should not be dealt with from a general perspective but be rooted in the local reality of young children's lives. The implication of this is that implementation of ECCD programs take into consideration the varieties of childhoods that children in different contexts experience as argued by social constructionists.

Thus the argument forwarded by Abebe and Kjørholt (2013), that there is need to contextualize children's lives within family, community, institutional and geographical (rural and urban) settings holds true for ECCD. In order to achieve contextualization ,there is need to represent the perspectives of not just the children but the parents, grandparents and other community members by elaborating on how their perspectives explain and are explained by wider social ,cultural,

demographic, economic and political transformations Ennew & Plateau (2004) cited in (Abebe & Kjørholt,2013). Thus I would argue that context is more than the physical environment in which children experience their lives but also the ideologies, beliefs, values and attitudes of those with whom they experience their childhoods.

Studies have been conducted in an effort to assess and explore the subject of ECCD in Zambia (Matafwali, 2007; Kula, 2009; Thomas & Thomas, 2011; Kaneneka, 2013) among others. UNESCO (2008), notes that understanding of, and approaches to, early childhood vary according to changing local traditions, cultures, family structures and organization of primary schooling. As such there is need to explore the changing environment, values, beliefs and ideas of children, their families and caregivers about the role and importance of ECCD. This gives an understanding of the context in which these programs are implemented as well as an understanding of wider social-cultural and economic factors in which children and their families experience such interventions. My research is aimed at exploring Makululu as a context in which ECCD is implemented through which I hope to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on ECCD in Zambia.

1.8 Research Objectives;

1. Explore the local understanding of the concept of ‘imiti ikula empanga’ with regard to young children and childhood
2. Discuss Children’s Parents’, Grandmothers’ and Caregivers’ understanding and views of the role and importance of ECCD programs in early childhood
3. Explore children’s understanding of childhood and of the role of the family in ECCD
4. Explore how local knowledge is integrated into ECCD

1.9 Research Questions;

The main research question that my thesis aims to answer reads as follows;

How do children and their families in local communities’ understand, perceive and experience the role and importance of Early Childhood Care and development programs?

I will attempt to answer this question using the sub-questions listed below which have been formulated based on the objectives of my study.

1. What is the local understanding of the proverb ‘imiti ikula empanga?’
2. How do Children understand Childhood and the role of the family in ECCD?
3. How do Children, Parents, Grandmothers and Caregivers understand the role and importance of ECCD in child development?
4. How is local knowledge integrated into ECCD?

1.10 Structure of my Thesis:

This thesis is organized into nine Chapters with sub-sections. The following is the brief outline and description of each chapter of my thesis.

Chapter 1: This chapter provides an introduction to ECCD by focusing on the background, research objectives, and research questions, statement of the research problem and significance of the study. The outline of the chapter begins with the definition of term, background to ECCD after which I will then talk about ECCD policies in Zambia, the value of local knowledge and some socio-cultural issues affecting children. The latter part of the chapter gives the statement of the problem which gives a context of my research .after which I present my research objectives and the main research question before I finally present the sub-questions which have guided my research.

Chapter 2: This chapter provides the geographical, political and socio-economic profile of Zambia. It further looks at the profile of the Central province of Zambia and Kabwe Town (Provincial headquarters) where my research was conducted. Furthermore, in the latter part of the chapter, I endeavor to contextualize my research by giving a description of Makululu (Zambia’s largest low income informal settlement area) where I conducted my research.

Chapter 3: In this chapter I focus on the methodological approach and methods that I employed for my data collection. I will also discuss ethical considerations as employed during my field work as well as draw from some experiences from the field in by highlighting the limitations of the study, field experiences and data collection and storage issues. The aim of this chapter is

basically to explore how, why, when and what I did in the process of collecting the empirical data for this Thesis.

Chapter 4: In this chapter, my aim is to provide the theoretical anchor for my thesis by looking at the theories and concepts that have informed my work. I will achieve this by discussing theories and drawing from my empirical data to highlight the arguments as postulated by the socially constructed childhood, children as social actors, agency, and children's rights perspective. Through this chapter, I will also discuss some socio-cultural and socio-economic issues in Zambia to further highlight how childhood is a socially constructed phenomenon.

Chapter 5: This is the first of my analysis chapters which focuses on the concept of 'imiti ikula empanga' and the first research question. In this chapter, I will look at views and perspectives of the mothers, fathers, grandmothers and caregivers with regard to this concept. I will also turn to discuss the views and understanding of children about childhood. This chapter draws from the empirical data that I collected based on my research questions using Interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Drawings, Informal dialogues and participant observation.

The latter part of this chapter looks at the views of children regarding the role of the family in ECCD as primary decision makers and providers of material and social support.

Chapter 6: The former section of this chapter discusses children's use of space in Makululu. This is done to give the context in which children experience their childhood in Makululu. I discuss the views of both children and adults concerning the use of space. Thereafter, I will turn to discuss the role of ECCD as the beginning of education and preparation for formal education and a platform for learning the official language.

Chapter 7: In this chapter, I discuss the integration of local knowledge into ECCD by drawing from my observations and empirical data. The chapter also draws from the views of the children and adults in my research. By analyzing the different sources of local knowledge which include the proverb 'imiti ikula empanga,' songs, stories and socio-cultural practices, this chapter brings to light the position of local knowledge in ECCD.

Chapter 8: In this chapter, I raise a discussion on the main findings in my study by presenting relevant literature as well as my views on the issues raised. I argue for the integration of local

knowledge in ECCD and the role of the position of the family in ECCD. I draw from arguments that have been forwarded in line with this and contrary to the advocacy for local knowledge in ECCD. I then turn to ECCD in the context of Zambia raising some current issues and arguments.

Chapter 9: This is the concluding chapter of my thesis which gives a summary of my research findings. I will then draw my concluding remarks based on my findings and give recommendations for future research.

2 Research Context

In this chapter, I will give a brief description of my research context by giving the geographical and physical description of Zambia, the political and economic history as well as the description of the Central Province which houses Kabwe as the provincial headquarters. Makululu settlement area where I conducted my research is located in Kabwe and is known as Zambia's biggest informal settlement area.

2.1 Brief Description of Zambia

Zambia is a landlocked country which lies between latitudes 80 and 180 south and longitudes 22 and 33 degrees east. It has a land mass of 752, 614 square kilometres (Akinware, 2004). It is located in Sub-Saharan Africa sharing its borders with eight countries namely, Zimbabwe, Angola, Mozambique, Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, Namibia, Tanzania and Botswana. The country is administratively divided into ten provinces namely, Central, Copperbelt, Eastern, Luapula, Northern, Lusaka (Capital City), Southern, Western, North Western and the recent Muchinga Province. Each province is further divided into several districts serving as administrative centres and housing government ministries.

In terms of demography, the 2010 Census of Population and Housing in Zambia captured the total population of the country as 13,092, 666 with 7,919,216 living in rural areas while 5,173, 450 living in urban areas (CSO, 2011). Zambia is noted as one of the highly urbanized countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

2.2 Brief Political and Economic History

Formerly known as Northern Rhodesia, Zambia is a former colony of Britain which gained its independence on the 24th of October 1964. At the time of independence, Zambia inherited a strong mining-based economy which deteriorated in the mid-1970s following a sharp decline in copper prices (World Bank, 2002). As a result, the country lived through decades of declining living standards which arose from poor management of the government owned copper mines, falling exports revenue, failure to diversify the economy away from mining and rising foreign debt among other factors (PRSP, 2002). Due to the aforementioned factors, Zambia's economic environment worsened resulting in increased foreign borrowing in an effort to minimise the decline in living standards (World Bank, 2002).

In the 1980s, the first phase of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs)² was implemented. However, it failed to change the economic structure and sufficiently address the poverty challenges which had become more evident as the structural changes took hold in the country (Ibid). Between 1980 and 1990, Zambia's economic growth was the second lowest (after Mozambique) in the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Over the period of 1990 and 1999, it had the least average economic growth in the SADC region at one per cent (Ibid). An analysis of poverty trends which covered income and non-income dimensions of poverty in the 1990s indicated that poverty increased to 73 per cent (PRSP, 2002)

In 2000, Zambia obtained foreign debt relief through the Enhanced Heavily indebted poor Country (HIPC)³ Initiative (PRST 2002-2004). The implication of this was that the country was able to reduce its debt servicing payments significantly between 2001 and 2003 which resulted in economic stability. According to the World Bank Country Report, though economic growth has been strong in the last decade, it has not resulted in poverty reduction with an estimated two-thirds of the population still living in poverty and 51 per cent in extreme poverty.

Zambia's socio-economic challenges are further exacerbated by the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS which is currently estimated at 14 per cent according to the Zambia Demographic Health Survey ZDHS (2007). The most affected demographic the productive age bracket of the population resulting in loss of man power for the economy and reduced income for families.

2.3 Kabwe and Makululu as Research Contexts

Kabwe is the provincial headquarters of the Central province of Zambia which has a landmass of 94, 394 square kilometres and shares borders with all the nine provinces (FNDP, 2006-2010). Most of Zambia's trunk roads and railway routes pass through the central province. The province is endowed with rich soils and has the potential of thriving economically as a result of being the country's major transit point and all its districts having access to national electricity grid (Ibid).

According to the FNDP, the socio-economic situation of the central province declined in the 1990s following the closure of the mining and manufacturing companies that were operating in

² SAPs are domestic economic reforms proposed by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank which involve privatization, devaluation of the currency, liberalization of the economy and reduction in public funding

³ Debt relief Initiative launched in 1996 by IMF & World Bank to ensure that poor countries have manageable debt burdens

the province. Kabwe was once a leading Lead and Zinc mining town which started in 1904 and ended in 1994(KDSEOR, 2010). Resulting from the closure of the mines was the loss of employment for over 1, 200 mine employees and 5, 000 jobs held by contractors supplying goods and services to the mines. The mine was the major employer for Kabwe residents and nearly all economic activities were mining related.

The FNDP (2006-2010), reports that as a result of the general decline in economic activity experienced during the 1990s and general stagnation recently, poverty levels have remained very high in the province. Citing the Living Conditions Monitoring Survey (2004), it reports that the incidence of poverty for the province was 69 per cent while the national average was at 67 per cent. The report further states that the social situation has remained unsatisfactory, citing that access to quality education has remained low mainly due to poor infrastructure, inadequate teaching staff and teaching materials.

Access to quality healthcare has similarly remained poor with people walking long distances to the nearest health facilities especially in rural communities which are also affected by poor access to safe and adequate water sources (ibid). Peri-Urban communities such as Makululu, in Kabwe, similarly experience poor access to safe and adequate water and good sanitation resulting in frequent break outs of water related diseases such as cholera (ibid).

By virtue of being an informal settlement area, Makululu has been invaded by squatters and unskilled builders. The lack of planning is evidenced by the housing structures, limited shared spaces and no proper sewer systems. It is noted by the Kabwe Municipal council that, Makululu is rapidly growing community in need of intervention by the local authority. Hence, the Makululu Upgrade Mapping Plan which is in progress.

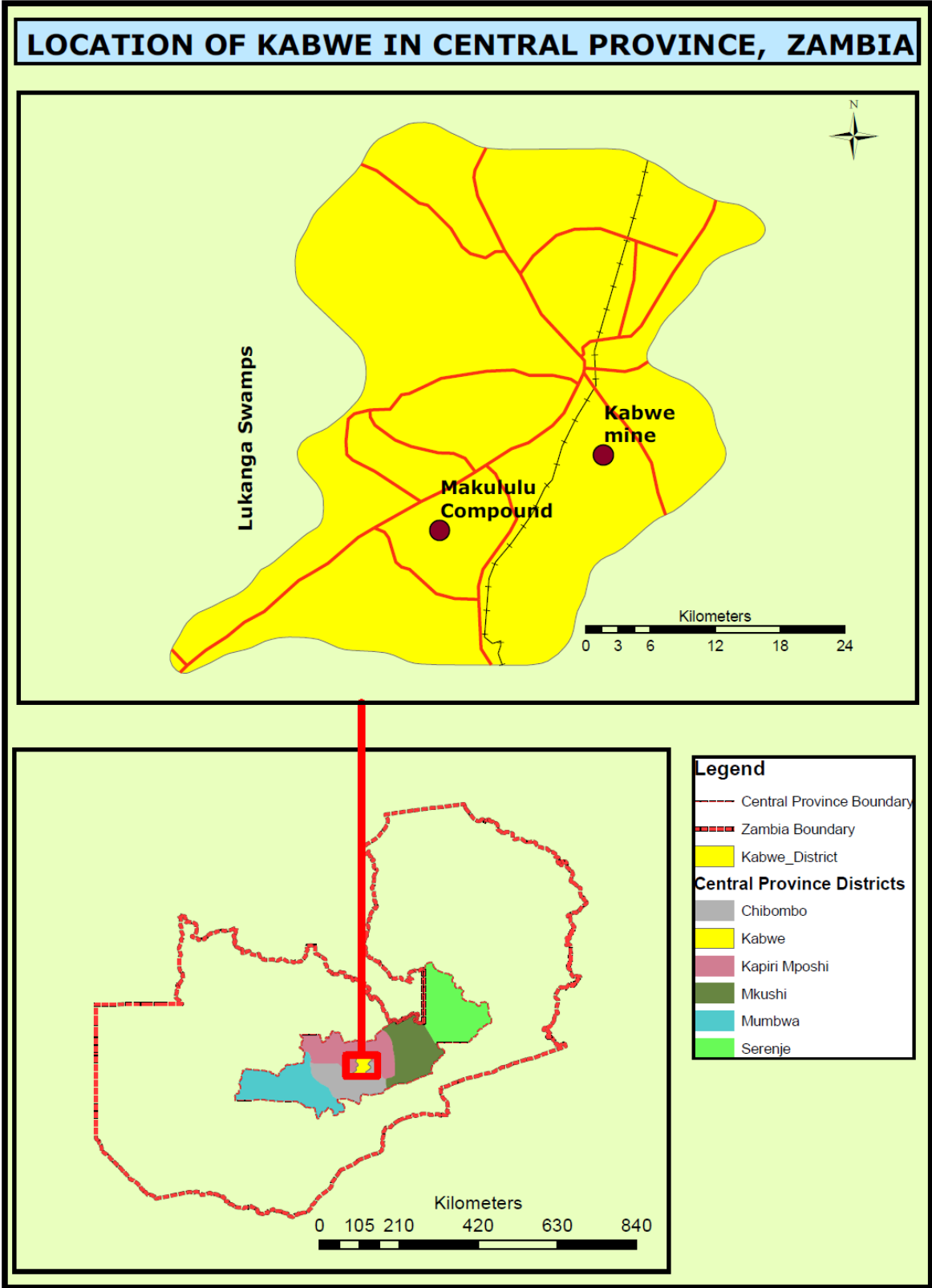


Figure 2.1 Location Map of Kabwe in Zambia

2.3.1 Brief Definition and Description of Makululu

For the purpose of my thesis, it is important for me to have started with the description of Kabwe town and a brief discussion of the socio-economic activities which were centred on mining. The neighbourhood focus of my study is an informal settlement area that served as a residential settlement for the miners. Makululu compound is located in Kabwe and is considered as Zambia's largest informal settlement area. In a traditional sense, Makululu was a farm belonging to the Mining Company which had decent housing for its workers but has since been invaded by squatters of low income and unemployed people.

There are several definitions given with regard to what can be referred to as an informal settlement. According to the Kabwe Municipal Council, Makululu can be defined as an area with inhabitable houses with poor natural lighting and poor air quality, inadequate water supply, bad drainage and poor sanitary conveniences, inadequate health facilities and inadequate social facilities. The Housing Committee of the People's Assembly cited in Makululu Upgrade Mapping Report (2013) defines an informal area as an "unplanned spontaneous high density area expanding around existing towns or villages." The National Council for Social Services and Development also cited in MUMR (2013) report defines informal settlement as 'traps of poverty and deprivation' or 'misery belt.'

Makululu has a rural structure in an urban setup characterised by lack of adequate social infrastructure such as water and sanitation facilities. Most of the houses in Makululu are constructed with low quality building materials and by unqualified builders and owners. The settlement area is demarcated into five main areas which are referred to as Zones. These are administratively run by Zone leaders and council men and women under Kabwe Municipal council. It is characterized by brick and Mud houses closely built to each other and are a poorly planned community with neighbours sharing pit latrines. The area has dust roads with the main roads characterized by 'makeshift shops' used for vending commonly referred to as 'Tuntamba'. The settlement also has no planned infrastructure for social entertainment for community members but is characterized by open spaces often used as play grounds for organized and random play.

2.3.2 Demographic Characteristics, Poverty and Unemployment in Makululu

Makululu is socially and economically heterogeneous and its inhabitants are a blend of middle income and poor people of which the majority belong to poor households and live below the International poverty datum line of US\$ 1.25 a day. The population of Makululu comprises of unemployed people, people of low levels of professional skills and low levels of education. According to the 2010 Census of population and Housing, Makululu is the most densely populated community in Kabwe with children making up more than 50 per cent of the population. Between 2000 and 2010, Makululu has experienced a significant increase in population owing to natural population increase and rural –urban migration.

2.3.3 Socio-economic and Socio-cultural characteristics of Makululu

Life and livelihoods in settlements such as Makululu which are often referred to as ‘shanty compounds’ are characterized by struggles as indicated by studies done by Jules-Rosette, 1979; Todd, 1980 cited Mtonga (1988). They are often affected by high levels of poverty, unemployment, school drop outs, early marriages, malnutrition and often water-borne diseases such as Cholera due to poor planning (ibid). In a site identification study of Makululu conducted by MECCDF (2002), it was found that Makululu is the most populated settlement in Kabwe with virtually no amenities for the community. Most community members are vulnerable with no stable sources of income and are involved in vending and fishing at the Lukanga swamps⁴ which is situated about 40 kilo metres from the community.

Vending was noted as the main economic activity and this involved the selling of vegetables, fish, charcoal and re-packs of mealie-meal. Most parents are unable to meet their children’s educational requirements since introduction of cost sharing (user fees) and this has generated relatively high illiteracy levels among children below the age of 16 years. To earn a living, most households are engaged in vending, and repairing equipment, while others resort to beer drinking, prostitution and streetism. Children and young adults have no amenities to keep their minds occupied and thus tend to look at lifestyles of parents and older children in the community as a way of life. Young mothers and fathers leave the children in the care of fellow siblings until in the evening when they return from vending.

⁴ The Lukanga Swamps is noted in the Fifth National Development Plan (2006-2010) as having the potential for a vibrant fishing industry capable of contributing to the growth and diversification of the economy in Central province.

Due to the lack of adequate resources, most families can only afford to have one meal a day and as such Malnutrition was found to be rampant among children aged five years and below. Children are usually left alone to be cared for by other children as indicated by a review of studies on childrearing practices done in Zambia, Mali, Malawi, Nigeria and Namibia which showed that older children play a significant role in providing care for younger children (Evans, 1994).

The sight of women and men involved in small scale businesses is a common site in the community with makeshift shops and shelters serving the purpose of housing these businesses. More often than not, young children are seen wandering in the community among adults and in business areas. Girls are seen carrying young siblings on the backs often in the company of their peers equally with younger siblings as women and mothers attend to other chores. The plight of children in Makululu is further exacerbated by the effect of HIV/AIDS on the community which has left a growing number of orphans and increased the burden of care and responsibility among extended family households. As such, the number of child headed homes and grandparents as primary caregivers of young children have increased.

The sight of trucks loaded with vegetables and other farm products is common especially in the early hours as farmers come to sale their produce to women in the community who resale at the market place, along the road or on their makeshift shops. Around midmorning, these trucks are seen heading back to the farms areas beyond Makululu with men and women boarding to search for 'piece work' in the farms. The pay for farm work is usually around US \$3 per day or depending on how much work is done. Makululu is said to be socially and economically heterogeneous and this is evidenced by the quality of materials used to build housing structures and the size and type of business that a family is involved in. The type of skills and employment of the breadwinner is also a determinant of the family's living situation and socio-economic condition. For example, carpenters and bricklayers often have better housing structures than those involved in vending. In (figure 2.2), I take note of the most common housing structures around the community and a makeshift shop or 'Kantemba' along the main road that goes through Makululu to the Lukanga Swamps. One photo shows a boy, 2 Kantembas, a blue & white cooler used to sell cold water or ice blocks and a group of fishermen sorting out fish.



Figure 2.2 Photos of some housing structures taken during my tours of Makululu

Source: Field Data in Kabwe, Zambia; between June–August 2013

2.3.3.1 Description of the Research Site

My research site is one of six centres established by Mulumbo Early Childhood Care and Development Foundation (MECCDF) which is a non-governmental, non-profit, non-partisan organization founded and registered under the Laws of Zambia. MECCDF was founded in 2001 out of the concern that the majority of Zambian children do not have access to early childhood care and education, and that those who do, do not get professional care and education that promotes children's development, wellbeing and independence. The organization is noted as one of the key implementers of ECCD in Zambia with the support of International and National organizations (Akinware, 2004)

The school is situated in Chililalila Ward of Makululu and located at an open area surrounded by houses on the south side, a community tap on the east, a local court building under construction on the north and a road on the west. About 100 metres from the school and along the road is a Tavern. Chililalila centre is run as a community school with organization secretariat at the centre of the school administration. The Centre Coordinator is responsible for the everyday running of the school ensuring that volunteer caregivers attend to the children and overseeing the activities that children engage in. There are 2 caregivers/teachers at the centre each handling a class.

The school has a uniform which every pupil is expected to wear but not penalised for not wearing. The school calendar is made up of three terms in a year and each pupil pays ZMK15 or USD3 for each term and ZMK45 or USD9 annually. To supplement this income, the school has a vegetable garden which is maintained by volunteers from the community. Parents/guardians and volunteers from the community provide

It was established in 2003 and was initially housed at the Catholic Church hall before they acquired land to build. At the time I reported for my research, the building was in progress with one classroom having been completed and in use. This meant that the baby class started their lessons at 08:00hrs – 10:00hrs while the other class started at about 10:15hrs to 11:30hrs. using the same room. The school comprises of one main building which houses two class rooms with store rooms and an office. On the other side is the Kitchen. There three Pit latrines and two water run toilets for the staff and children. It is situated in an open space with a communal water tap to the east, a road to the west, a recently constructed local court house to the north and houses

to the south. Plans are underway to build a wall fence around the school and other constructive works.

There are a total of 150 pupils at the school divided into two classes. These are the baby class for children aged between 3-5 years old and the upper class for children aged between 6-8 years old. During my field stay at the school, I witnessed the ongoing work on the school infrastructure. At the beginning of my field work, only one classroom was operational and being shared by both classes. By my second week of stay, construction of the second class was completed leading to a shift in the school schedule with both classes now commencing at 08:00hrs to 11:00hrs.

The children at the centre engage in writing, drawing, and storytelling activities usually within the classroom while the playground is used for games and soccer. Boys are usually seen running to get the ball so they can play soccer while girls would usually be in groups talking, drawing on the ground, playing or simply standing in the sun. Children are usually seen with peers from their classes who are around the same age. Interactions especially outdoor, are usually age and gender determined. Usually, when across the age or gender divide, interactions were among siblings or cousins and extended family.

Within the classroom, two children usually share a desk and notably, girls with others girls while boys sit with other boys. However, interactions within the classroom are more fluid between the genders and class work and activity will usually see both groups looking at each other's work and sharing pencils and crayons. The classroom is usually a busy environment needing the caregiver to call for silence and order every so often.

As is the case in most groups, there are some children who were more active than others and as such were easy to know and interact with. Social activities in the classroom are tailored to help both groups with some activities calling for the child to walk to the front of the class and point at a number, letter or painting on the black board. At the end of the day, the children usually prepare for the next school day by cleaning the classroom.



Figure 2.3 Photos of the research site (ECCD Centre) in Makululu

Source: Field Data in Kabwe, Zambia between June-August 2013

3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss the methodological approach and methods I used in my research and present the challenges that I faced as well as how I went about trying to counter these challenges. I will achieve this by discussing; research with children, qualitative research and research methods used in this research. I chose my methods because I believed they would help me explore the research questions and meet my objectives. My methodology and choice of methods was also informed by the theoretical views of children as active social actors and competent individuals with the right to express their views (James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998).

I considered a number of factors when choosing the method to use with each group according to what I thought would maximize my information gathering efforts. For Child participants, I used a multi-method approach Mason (2002) because of the personality differences, different competencies among my participants and the level of interaction between the child and myself. For example, some of the children were able to draw detailed pictures of their lives at school and at home but were shy when it came to one on one informal dialogues while others could not draw well but were able to explain through informal dialogues what their drawing represented. This made me aware of differences among participants and made me reflect more on how to proceed with each one and with them as a group.

3.2 Using Qualitative Research Methods

According to Mason (2002), qualitative research is important because it engages researchers with things that matter, in ways that matter. She argues that through qualitative research, we can explore a wide array of dimensions of the social world, including the texture and weave of everyday life, the understandings, experiences and imaginations of our participants (ibid).with the use of methodologies that celebrate richness, context, nuance and depth, she further argues that we can explore the ways that social processes, institutions, discourses or relationships work and the significance of the meanings that they generate (ibid).

Lewis (2004) notes that research with children is crucial because it can advance our understanding of how they develop and live their lives, can contribute to theoretical debates and its outcomes can be beneficial to those researched and others in similar situations. My research

methodology is informed by the view of children as active social actors who are capable of making meaning of their lives and those around them. This as its anchoring in the theoretical debates of the sociology of childhood and the rights perspective which posit children as competent (James et al., 1998)

3.3 Using Young Children as Participants in Makululu

The idea of children as competent and capable of expressing themselves is relatively new in Zambia and has been credited to the coming of the UNCRC, ACRWC and the work of NGOs in their campaign for children's right to be consulted in matters affecting them. As such, using young children in research as informants is often received with concern by parents/guardians and caregivers. The concern on the one hand arises from the need to protect children but on the other hand, this can work to impinge on the rights of children to participate in decision making and expressing themselves as noted by Powell and Smith (2009).

This was my experience in the field as I sought adult permission to interact with the children and involve them in my research as participants. The main concern expressed among parents was whether children would be able to 'give me the information I needed' for my research. They wondered whether children could competently express themselves and make a valuable 'contribution to the research' and asked if I could instead focus on the adults instead of the children. This led me to explain the different methods I would employ in my research to explore the views and understanding of children and I hope my research contributes to the changing perceptions of young children as research participants in a context like Zambia.

During the course of my research, I noted and experienced differences in the levels of participation among the children. My sample consisted of 10 children (five girls and 5 boys) and some of the differences include, the girls being more open and talking more than the boys while the boys were better at drawings than dialogue which had to be encouraged on my part. There were also differences in personality among the children with some children being more open, talking more while others were shy and needed more time before they were comfortable with me.

The argument forwarded by Mason (2002) is that with the use of methodologies that celebrate richness, context and depth, qualitative research allows us to explore ways in which social processes, institutions and how relationships work and the meaning they generate. In view of

this, my research with the children employed the use of different methods or multi-method approach to counter the challenges of the differences in personality and in levels of competence with the methods as well as explore the views and understandings of the children. The drawings, dialogues, FGDs with the children generated rich data with details about their families, relationships, responsibilities, future aspirations, household economic activities, cultural beliefs and values among other things. Most of the drawings were so detailed that I had to label each item in order to understand and remember the details, stories and context of each drawing. To illustrate this point, I will use the following drawing.



Figure 3.1 A drawing by Peter (M/6years old)

Source: Field Data in Kabwe, Zambia; between June-August 2013

Figure 3.1 is a drawing from Peter (M/6years old) who told me about living with both his parents and 2 siblings. By exploring this drawing with him, I learnt that his father works as a bus driver while his mother is sells vegetables at the market. He talked about the father making more money now that he is working as a Taxi driver. Before that, he was unemployed and the family depended on the mother's vegetable business for income. The family's income has improved since the father started working. He pointed to a figure in the above drawing which I could not identify and explained that it was an electricity pole.

He drew the pole with a line connected to the house explaining that the father had electricity connected to their house for the first time. The above drawing also shows, a bicycle which the father bought for the family, a chair which he bought to use while he is the 'insaka' (an open room built from mud with a thatched roof within the yard, a few metres from the main house and is usually used by men as they rest after a work day) Without the input of Peter, I would not have understood so many details of his drawing and the context of his information which gave me a lot of insight into his life. This shows the value of getting the input of children in when we use participatory methods with children as argued by James (2007). In the next section, I turn to discuss ethical considerations for my study.

3.4 Ethical Considerations for the Study

Ethics are simply concerned with respecting and protecting research participants by using provided standards (Alderson & Morrow, 2011) Among others, these standards include ensuring confidentiality, privacy, minimizing power relations and reciprocity as I will discuss in this section.

According to Ennew (2009) , ethical principles in research whether with adults or children are not optional but need to adhered to throughout the research. In my research, I was cautious to ensure that my research methodology and conduct in the field was ethical. As noted by Masson (2004), including child participants in research as respondents raises ethical and sometimes legal dilemmas about children's rights and my obligations as a researcher. During the research process, moral questions of power, honesty and respecting or abusing people arise (Alderson, 2004). As a novice researcher, I had anticipated the rise of moral questions during my interactions with my respondents and reflected on ways to counter challenges that I would face in this regard.

3.4.1 Access to the Field

Before I reported to the field, I was in touch with a school in Kabwe which I was made to believe was an ECCD community centre. Upon reporting to the school, I learnt that it was a Christian run community school with grades 1 to 9. Realizing that this is not what I was looking for, I had to politely explain to the principle of the school after she had given me a warm welcome and allowed me to conduct my research at his school when I sought permission during my preparations. This incident proved to be a challenge because I was working in a new town and was not familiar with the schools in the district. To counter this challenge, I had to go through the District office of the Ministry of Education to explain what my research was about and where I would want to do it. Through the district office, I was able to access a list of all schools in the district both government and privately owned. I was also informed that the government through the MoE had pilot sites for ECCD in some primary schools in the district and was given permission to see the sites and do my research at any of them if I chose to.

I visited the Chililalila ECCD centre run by MECCDF and presented my papers and explained what my research was about. I was warmly received and allowed to carry out my research there but was informed that formal permission could only be obtained from the Secretariat in Lusaka.

After making contact with the secretariat on phone, I was asked to present my research proposal and introduction letter to their office as a formality but permission to carry out my research was given by phone and later followed by a formal letter of approval.

On my second day at the school, a meeting with parents was scheduled which was attended by about 35 parents and guardians and I was introduced as a student that would be at the school for some weeks. I was given an opportunity to introduce myself and my intentions at the school and through this opportunity, I was able to explain who I was and why I was there and that I would be learning from the children, caregivers, parents and grandmothers about ECCD. I also used this opportunity to talk about participation in my research being voluntary and that I would seek parental/guardian consent before talking to the children. This opportunity proved to be an effective door opener in accessing participants as it raised curiosity about my study and those eager to take part wanted to register their names the same day. I had to explain that I was around for weeks and would inform them when the time for the discussions had come.

3.4.2 Power Relations and My Role as a Researcher

One of the features of the Zambian society is age-based social hierarchies where one is expected to keep the company of his or her own age mates (Smørholm, 2007). Interactions between age groups are acceptable especially when one's duty requires it. For example, a teacher is expected to spend time with children at school and outside school if the activity is school related. Otherwise, a clear divide exists between the adult world and that of children. In view of this, I reflected on what role I would take in the field during my preparations for field work. As I reported and observed the environment for the first time, I continued to reflect on this.

I started by explaining to the Coordinator at the centre what my research was about and what I would like to do at the centre. I further explained what role I would take and asked that I would not be treated or referred to as a member of staff (caregiver or Teacher) but rather as a pupil. My aim was to identify myself more with the children and have the children identify me not as a teacher but as 'one of them'. I sought to take on the role of an 'atypical adult' as argued by Corsaro (1996) cited in (Tatek Abebe, 2009). I sat with the children on their desks in class and observed, interacted and participated in class activities such as writing, drawing, colouring and singing. I observed the curiosity of the children about me and realized that they did not 'believe' that I could be a pupil even when I was introduced as one. When asked questions by the

caregiver, I would sometimes deliberately give a wrong answer to 'authenticate' my position as a new learner among them and also to empathise with the children that were laughed at for giving wrong answers.

However, I did not feel comfortable assuming this role and trying too hard to fit in with the children as one of them. I felt as though I was being deceitful to the children and upon reflection, I decided to assume the 'least adult role' as argued by Mandall (1991) cited in (Tatek Abebe, 2009). This role entails that I no longer tried as hard to authenticate my position but rather explained that I was a student from another school who was visiting to learn from them. I found myself being allowed into the children's daily lives despite the differences by abandoning what felt like an 'unnatural role' and instead acknowledging the differences and being receptive to their terms regarding the nature of our relationship(Christensen and James 2008). For example, when they asked questions, I answered and when I was asked to join in an activity, I did so without hesitation. Despite the differences, I sought out to establish trusting and friendly relationships with the children by not exerting authority over them.

In the Zambian society, technonyms are used to refer to parents and adults rather than identifying them by their given names as this is considered disrespectful (Smørholm, 2007). Only children are identified using given names and generally, using 'ba' before a given name is a sign of respect accorded to one. For example, though I played with the children and acted like a different adult, the children still called me 'ba Salome' to show respect and recognition of my 'adulthood' compared to them. As noted by Alderson (1995) cited in Christensen and James (2008), inherent power relations between the researcher and children as the researched must be seen as reinforced by cultural notions about existing power relations between adults and children. As such, though I took on the role of a different adult and interacted primarily with the children, I still stood out among them not only because of the apparent difference in body size but cultural requirements regarding dress code (chitenge wearing) and the use of the technonym 'ba' before my name as a sign of respect by the children. Mayall (1991) argues that power relations between adults and children cannot be ignored but rather researchers need to work with them.

Aside from considerations about the role that I would take with children, I had to consider what role I would take and how I would conduct myself during my time in the field as well as during my data collection with parents and grandparents. This was part of my efforts to ensure cultural

sensitivity through appropriate dress code, language and general behaviour and formed part of my 'behavioural protocol' as argued by (Ennew, 2009). As noted by Smørholm (2007), being defined as an adult in Zambian society is not purely based on chronological age but dependent on one's reproductive role. One is not considered as a full adult if they are not married and do not have children. Being a parent is of particular importance as it entails full membership in the adult world (ibid). Evans (1994) notes that the importance of children in Zambia is seen by the fact that parents are known as the father or mother of a given child and do not use their given names. Technonyms loosely translated as 'father of' and 'mother of' are used to identify parents and show respect to their status in society.

Similarly marital status is an important indicator of status in society as married adults are considered more respectable than single ones and in the same vein technonyms translated as 'wife of' or 'husband of' are used to identify this group. This implies that interaction between individuals and groups is guided by such conventions. As I noted during my fieldwork, the most common questions I was asked were whether I was married or had any children. This information was important to the people I interacted with in the field as it would help them decide on how to interact with me. As a single adult with no child, the accepted reference to me as 'ba Salome' was sufficient for my status but wives and mothers including those who participated in my research, though younger than me, are given more respect and addressed accordingly by myself and those around them.

Thus, during my field work, I endeavoured to uphold these societal practices and culture. I wore a wrapper or 'chitenge' around my waist and spoke 'Bemba' the local language commonly used in Makululu so that I could not be distinguished from community members. I carried myself in the most normal way I could. In one incident where I sat in the school office chatting casually with one caregiver, I ordered for water instead of having a drink (Coca-Cola) like everyone. While I was having my bottled water, it was mentioned casually how that drinking bottled water is considered by the community in general as something 'people with money would do'.

From this experience, I learnt the need to have more insight into the culture of Makululu and how to use this insight to my advantage by altering my behaviour such as not buying bottled water until I was out of the community at the end of my field day. I consulted the school coordinator on most issues that needed input, regarding what to do or not to do. When I spoke to

grandmothers and mothers, I knelt before them as I helped them sign consent forms and as I served snacks during the focus group discussions respecting cultural norms that regulate age interactions. My discussion and interaction with fathers required me to be conscious of not only age interactions but also gender interactions in our society. I adhered to practices such as kneeling, addressing them correctly and keeping my distance from them unless I was approached to help with the consent forms.

3.4.3 Privacy and Finding Places for Research

According to Christensen and James (2008), fundamental to the shaping of the nature and outcome of the research, are the relations and contexts within which communication takes place. In research ethics, privacy is concerned with ensuring that participants and the researcher have all research related conversations between them. As such, it is important that the researcher takes into consideration how and where the communication during the research process will occur. After identifying participants and setting everything in motion for the research, I had to find places suitable for the children and parents. My initial plan was to take the children out of class and make the research as informal and not school related as possible but to ensure privacy for the participants and due to the challenge of limited space and options; I had to use the classrooms.

All drawing activities with the children and Focus group discussions with Children, parents and grandparents were conducted in the classroom on different days. I also carried out individual semi-structured interviews with the caregivers in the classroom. On some days the music from the Tavern was loud enough to cause distractions and on several occasions, I had to pause and wait for the noise to die down. Though secluded from outside activities, being in class did not always seem to be an appropriate place for research on some days as the environment was affected by noise or music from the Tavern. Abebe(2009) notes that finding appropriate places for research can prove to be difficult in the global south due to limited shared physical spaces.

As regards confidentiality, the concern is with ensuring that all research information is kept between the participant and the researcher and only accessible to the right audiences as discussed during the informed consent process. As such, the researcher needs to protect the identity of the informants and the information which they are privy to. As part of ensuring confidentiality in my research, I kept all recordings and transcripts in password protected forms and employed the use of pseudo-names to further conceal the identity of my participants. During the Focus Group

Discussions, each participant picked a number which they used throughout as they responded and participated. The pictures that I use for illustrations have also endeavoured to hide the identity of my participants and other children in the community. I did however; obtain consent from parents/guardians and the school authorities to take these photos.

3.4.4 Building Rapport

Building rapport refers to efforts to develop cordial relationships with research participants. During my field work, I spent the first few weeks trying to get to know the children and allowing them to get to know me. I wanted to distinguish myself from the caregivers and other adults that they encountered. This entailed being actively involved in their activities both in class and out of class. These activities included moulding, writing, drawing, singing, playing soccer and other games. The activities helped foster friendships with the children and aided my interactions as noted by Abebe (2009).



Figure 3.2 Interacting and getting to know the children through dialogues, walks and play

Source: Field Data in Kabwe, Zambia; between June–August 2013

After identifying my research participants, I spent more time getting to know them by walking them home after school and having informal dialogues with them as they took me around the community. I was also able to engage them in an activity that helped minimize power differentials between the children and myself. This activity involved moulding and drawing

where I would be with 5 children and we would take turns instructing the group on what to draw or mould. The essence of this activity was to help foster a comfortable environment with my research participants and to ensure that power differentials are minimized as they saw me take instructions and participate in the activity with everyone.

3.4.5 Reciprocity

Reciprocity is a contested topic in research as it concerns rewarding participants or compensating them for the time spent on research related activities. In resource limited societies like Makululu, the issue of reciprocity cannot be ignored. As a result of exposure to development projects carried out local and international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), people have come to expect rewards usually monetary from participation in research and other community based projects. This was my experience as I was asked by adult participants what they stood to benefit by participating in my research. I explained that I was a student and had no monetary resources to award them. To this, they often responded by noting that I was studying in Europe so it was not possible that I did not have money. This was referred to several times during my field work and as such I needed to explain my position as a Zambian student in Norway for clarification.

However, during all my FGDs, I ensured all participants were provided with snacks and refreshments. I also bought snacks for the children who participated in my research especially when they stayed behind for FGDs and other research related activities. At the end of my field work, I asked the Centre Coordinator what I could do as a 'thank you' to the children and everyone. I suggested that we could have a meal together and I was advised that preparing Nshima is considered a respectful gesture within the community. I was happy to oblige and this provided an opportunity to experience how the feeding program was managed at the time the centre had funding for it. On my last day in the field, I bought Mealie Meal, Chickens and vegetables and joined a group of four women volunteers in preparing the meal which we ate together.



Figure 3.3 Cooking Nshima on the last field day

Source: Field Data in Kabwe, Zambia; August 2013

3.5 Research Sample and Sampling Techniques

After weeks of participant observation mainly in the upper class with the 6-8 year olds, I was able to identify children that would be participants in my research. During breaks and playground activities, I took time to play and get to know children from the lower class and identified some that would participate in the research. From time to time, I decided to move between the two classes so that I could maintain open lines of communication and strengthen the rapport I had built with the would be participants. I tried not to give them special attention but to keep my presence constant even though I had to be between the two classes. The children in the lower class were more reserved in class but active during playground activities.

Upon identification of would be participants, I began to approach them individually to ask if they were willing to teach me about their school and their families. I assured the children that participation was voluntary and that choosing not to take part had no consequence for them. From the 15 Children that I had I identified, 3 were not willing to join the research and as such I proceeded to prepare only 12 parental/guardian consent forms in Bemba, the local language. To

obtain written consent from parents and guardians or other ‘gatekeepers’, I asked the children if I could walk home with them and present the forms to the parents and guardians (Abebe, 2009).

The children were excited to take me through the community but after unsuccessful visits to several homes; I decided to change the approach. Instead I opted for the strategy used by the school where forms are given to the children and parents are asked to read and sign or come to school for clarification in case they did not understand the request. Initially, I was not comfortable with this approach and sent out a meeting request for the parents so I could seek permission from them as a group but only 2 mothers turned up.

Masson (2004) notes that the nature of children’s lives in schools and institutions means that they are rarely free to decide for themselves on whether to participate in research. The researcher’s access to children and children’s opportunities to express their views is often controlled by adults who act as ‘gatekeepers.’ She further notes that gatekeepers have an important function in ensuring that children are protected from potential harm and as such, the researcher is obliged to explain to the gatekeepers why children’s views are important in research. This was important to my research especially that I was working with younger children who are viewed as vulnerable, in need of protection in Zambia and unable to express their views and opinions. I set out to obtain written consent for every child participant and though presented by a number of challenges, I was eventually able to obtain written consent for every child respondent in my research.

Due to the livelihood activities that some parents/guardians engage in such as fishing, selling of fish and trading at the market, I realised that I would not be able to meet most parents in person because they left their homes very early in the morning and returned late in the evening. As Abebe (2009) notes that obtaining consent from parents/guardians for some children is not always easy. I had to employ the approach of sending the informed consent forms through the children requesting for parents to allow me to talk their children and explaining my intentions of having discussions with groups of mothers, fathers and grandmothers. The forms were in local language and provided details of my research, methods to be used and my contact details. I used a note of introduction about myself which came from and was signed by the school coordinator as part of my informed consent form. This was in order to show that the school was aware of and had approved my research.

3.5.1 Adult Participants' Profile

I first encountered some of my adult informants on my second day at the school at a parents/guardians meeting hosted by the school and attended by 35 or more parents. I was introduced as a student from Norway who was at the school for research. I was then even an opportunity to introduce myself, greet the parents and briefly talk about my reason for being at the school. I used this opportunity to describe my research project briefly and ask for support from the parents and guardians. I was also able to talk about some ethical issues regarding research and place emphasis on participation being voluntary for both children and adults. Some parents expressed interest in my research and asked questions which I was able to address. This meeting helped me establish initial contact with my adult informants and afterwards, those interested in participating approached me to register their names.

I chose to talk to primary caregivers of the children in three categories. These are mothers, fathers and grandmothers. I chose to include grandmothers because in Zambia, they are an important resource in the raising of children especially in early childhood. In communities like Makululu where people have lived and settled for about three generations as observed from my research sample, grandparents spend a considerable amount of time with their grandchildren as parents work away to earn money for the family or sometimes as primary caregivers in the case of orphans. I chose to include grandmothers because I observed at the school meeting that there were a number of grandmothers compared to one grandfather present for this meeting.

The prerequisite for participation in the research for these three categories was that they had to be primary caregivers of a child attending the school. In addition to this, my adult informants included 4 caregivers (two men and two women) and 1 District Planning Officer at the District office for the Ministry of Education. My aim in choosing this sample was to contextualize the lives of the children by looking into the perspectives and understanding of their primary caregivers at home and volunteer caregivers at the school with regard to ECCD. I also wanted to explore or get an overall picture of ECCD programs in Kabwe and Makululu from the MoE through the District Planning Officer. This will help discuss what to discuss what children, families and caregivers view as the role and importance of ECCD and how this program is being implemented in Kabwe.

A total of 41 participants took part in this research. The number of child participants was 10 of which five were girls aged six and seven years and five were boys aged between six and eight years old. Of the 10 child participants, five live with both parents while three live with their grandmothers and two with single mothers. All of my child participants were born in Makululu and have lived there since.

Apart from the four caregivers and District Planning Officer, the sample of adult informants included 10 mothers, seven fathers and nine grandmothers most of whom had lived most of their lives in Makululu. With regard to education, the mothers and grandmothers ranged from zero or no education to grade nine (junior secondary school) and grade seven (primary school completion) respectively. The fathers ranged from grade six (primary school) to grade 10 (first year of high school).

As a result of not having completed formal education, most of the fathers worked in the informal sector as public bus drivers or were self-employed as fishermen or small scale business men with shops at the market or makeshift shops along the main road also known as ‘Kantemba’. The mothers and grandmothers were also involved in some income generating activities either working for ‘richer families’ as house maids or doing their own businesses such as selling fish or vegetables at market places.

Table 3.1 Summary of the demographic profiles of the mothers, fathers and grandmothers

Sample	Number of Participants	Age Range	Level of Education attained	Number of years lived in Makululu	Number of people in the Household
Mothers	10	20-41 years old	Grades 0-9	6-32 years	4-9 people
Fathers	7	30-68 years	Grades 6-10	10-42 years	5-9 people
Grandmothers	9	44-68 years	Grades 0-7	12-43 years	3-9 people

3.6 Research Methods used for my study

Scott (2000), argues that research methods with children have to take into account a wide range of cognitive and social development that depends primarily on age but also on the gender, socio-economic background and ethnicity of the child. She further argues that standard questionnaires are not appropriate for pre-scholars because very young children find it difficult to distinguish between what is said and what is meant (ibid). This means that less structured methods are more appropriate hence the need to consider different methods for different age groups and this is consistent with what Ennew (2009) refers to as ‘the right to be properly researched’.

Researchers have recommended visual stimuli for children under the age of 11 as being useful in the questioning process because pictures make the issue to be discussed more concrete than verbal representation (Scott, 2000). According to Punch (2002), using appropriate methods is a central concern in any research and more so in research with children where there seems to be a greater desire to develop fun, child friendly methods. These methods are usually drawn from familiar sources or children's particular interests. The implication of this in practice is that as a researcher one should ensure that they take note of each child respondent's interest and competence in the chosen research methods.

O'Kane (2000), argues that, a range of factors influence the selection of research methods including availability of time, access, resources, as well as researcher's training, goals and perception of children. The choice of my research methods was influenced by my view of children as social actors as well as informed by experience at the school through observations and participating. I will now turn to discuss each method I used in detail through the following paragraphs.

3.6.1 Participant Observation

According to Ennew (2009), observation is the basis for all research and is important in understanding the context of data, writing an interesting and believable research report. During my field work, I spent 5 weeks at the school during which I interacted with the children and caregivers in both classroom and playground activities. In the classroom, I shared a desk with a different child every day so I could get to know as many children as possible. The upper class (where I spent most class time) had over 30 boys and girls aged between 6 and 8 years old. I reported to the school every week day from 8 am to 11 am. The day was made up of class

activities from 8 -9 am and then a 25 minute break which was followed by other activities for the last 30 minutes of the day such as storytelling, singing, dancing or sports on the school ground.

I joined the children to play soccer and other games and took part in all class and outdoor activities. I stayed more with the children and not the caregivers so that the children could not identify me as another authority figure and because of this, I noticed the children become close to me. They wanted me to play games with them and when I ran or took part in a sport, it made them laugh because ‘the fat girl could not run as fast’. I heard some girls refer to me as ‘madumbo’ or ‘fat person’ especially during play activities that involved running. This became ‘our teasing game’ and I ran around whenever I could to make them laugh.

Participant observation allowed me to become close to the children as I was able to build rapport and identify my potential research participants. I was also able to note the dynamics of the interactions among the children, in groups and among the groups and used some of my observations to explore children’s views during focus group discussion. According to Kjørholt (2005), in early childhood centres, observing and participating in children’s daily life is a valuable tool to get insight into the ‘unspoken words’.

During my field work, I was also privileged to be invited to observe a 4 day workshop for parents, guardians and caregivers hosted by MECCDF. The workshop was aimed at disseminating information about the importance of childcare from pre-natal, postnatal and early childhood in healthcare, nutrition, education, emotional and social support. A total of 60 parents and caregivers attended the workshop from Chililalila and Nakoli ECCD centres. I took part in the workshop as a participant observer, noting group activities, ideas and responses from participants.

3.6.2 Drawings

I employed this method as the first research tool with the children because it is a useful participatory method of research with young children. Citing Rinaldi (2005), Clark, Moss, and Kjørholt (2005) argue that listening to young children in early childhood centres also implies stimulating children to be creative in expressing their experiences and exploring their ideas. Drawing as a participatory method of research with younger children offers the advantage of being creative, fun and can encourage children to be actively involved in the research (Punch,

2002). This method was useful for my research because it stimulated the children to explore and explain their experiences at home and at the school without me being intrusive. It also helped minimize the power relations between myself as the researcher and the children as argued by

The 10 participants were split into three groups as follows; three, three and four. In each group, I explained to the children what I wanted to learn from them about their lives and school experiences and sought consent from each child before I administered the tool or task. I used the classroom for this activity ensuring that the children were comfortable on their desks which placed them far apart from each other. This was to ensure that I could have dialogues with each of them 'out of earshot' of the others. I gave each child drawing papers and pencils and also sat on a desk with drawing paper and pencil. I kept myself busy drawing at the same time as they were, to make the activity different from one issued by a caregiver who in this case would be moving around the classroom looking at what the children were drawing.

This was in an effort to minimize power relations and maintain my research role as a different adult. After the children had finished drawing, I went to the first participant and showed the child a drawing of my family. From my observation, the drawings differed from child to child and according to the child's ability to draw. I used this as an avenue to ask the children to explain what they had drawn through informal dialogues in order to uphold my obligation to listen to the children (Ennew, 2009). Using this method, I was able get detailed information about family structure and lived experiences of children at home and at school. Some drawing were so filled with details that I had to write what the children were saying on the drawing so as to ensure that I did not miss out on anything.

The main challenge I faced with the drawing activity is the likelihood of being linked to a class activity. I used the classroom with the children sitting on their desks usual so this could have seemed like another class activity. I did however; endeavour to differentiate it from class work as much as possible. The other challenge was the differing competencies in drawing among the children. Some drawings were detailed and visible while others were not and so I spent more time exploring other methods as such as dialogues with the children who could not draw. I also had to reassure the children that the drawings would not be marked but simply used for our interaction purposes. I used the drawing of my family to talk about my life at home, my family,

my friends and other activities I engage in. Through this, I observed ease into the dialogue even without the drawings

3.6.3 Semi-structured interviews

I employed this method which is also described by Ennew (2009) as ‘conversation with a purpose’ during my research with the caregivers and the District Planning Officer (DPO) at MoE. It was useful in ensuring that I was consistent in the questions I asked the caregivers and at the same time flexible enough to follow the line of discussion that each individual took. The semi-structured interview was administered on one on one basis with each individual participant as I was seeking personal thoughts, reflections and experiences. According to Ennew (2009), this method is usually used with individuals and key informants or experienced observers of the local conditions who are willing to share their views and knowledge.

For the DPO, I had specific areas that I wanted to explore but at the same time wanted to get as much information as I could about the government’s position on ECCD. I used a list of open ended questions and explored the themes that I was interested in as argued by Ennew (2009). This method was effective in that it allowed me to exhaust the areas of interest at the same time allowing me to be flexible enough to explore the topic and get more information. I used a tape recorder and written notes to capture all the interviews

3.6.4 Focus Group Discussions

In an effort to include the voices of parents and grandmothers in my study, I used focus group discussions (FGDs) because the method best suited my participant’s time schedule. Most parents were self-employed as fishermen, selling fish and owning small businesses in market places such as selling vegetables. As such, Individual interviews would have proven to be more difficult to carry out especially in terms of accessing the parents. To deal with this challenge, I sent out requests with the advice of the school coordinator to a number of mothers, fathers and grandmothers. I set dates and times for the focus group discussion and for each discussion, I ensured that the group was made up of participants with the same characteristic (Ennew, 2009). One discussion was held with a group of mothers only, another with a group of fathers and the last with grandmothers.

I started the discussions as the facilitator by shedding light on the topic and the objective of the discussion. I then sought consent by highlighting that participation in the discussion was voluntary and anonymity of participants would be maintained. I informed the participants that pseudo-names or numbers would be used during the discussion and in my report so as to protect the identity of my participants. I also informed the participants that opting not to take part in the research would have no effect on them or the child attending the school. After obtaining consent and attending to all the questions and concerns, the discussions took off with participants using numbers to identify themselves and I took on the role of facilitating the discussions.

Ennew (2009) argues that FGDs are useful in identifying the knowledge, ideas, values, beliefs and attitudes of a group. This method was effective in getting public opinion on ECCD and exploring my research questions and meeting my objective for including the voices of the parents and guardians. I sought written consent and where one could not write; I used an ink pad to get a thumb print in place of a signature and wrote the name of the participant on the form on their behalf. I used one of the classrooms for the discussions and I arranged chairs in a circle so that the participants and I were seated in a circle. I also used a tape recorder which was placed at the centre of the group to capture the discussion, taking notes only where necessary.

With the children, FGDs were used in addition to drawings and informal dialogues. I split the children into two groups of five and had the FGDs on different days. I arranged their desks in semi-circle and sat on the floor to complete the circle and so that my head was at the same level with them. Mayall (1991) argues that it is possible to minimise physical differences when participating with children so that they are 'inconsequential in the interaction'. I took this position so that I could see all of them and give them my full attention while they talked and also to give them an upper hand in the discussion and show that I was there to learn from them.

The tape recorder was placed at the centre to capture the discussion and during my FGDs with the children, I had to ensure that the discussion went on at their pace and that everyone was active and involved (Ennew, 2009). At times, it meant that we had to put a pause on the discussion and sing a few nursery rhymes when I noticed that the levels of concentration were going down and also to ensure that the discussion was not too strenuous on the children. I also made sure that the FGDs with the children were kept simple and short with few guiding questions.



Figure 3.4 Conducting Focus Group Discussion with Children

Source: Field Data in Kabwe, Zambia; June-August, 2013

3.6.5 Informal Dialogues

The most effective way to research children is to combine traditional methods of participant observation and interviews with techniques considered to be more suitable for children (Punch, 2005). According to Clark (2010), visual methods open many different avenues for communicating but interviewing children can help to reinforce understanding and present opportunities to discuss issues that are not clear.

For my study, I used informal dialogues with the children to explore the stories of their lives, learn about their families and get to know my participants better. This method was partly used after the drawing activity where I talked to each child individually about their drawing and learnt more about them and their families as the dialogue went on. I also used this method as I walked the children home after classes were over and as they took me round the community showing me places and talking about their lives.

It was a useful method because of its informal nature, flexibility and relaxed way of allowing me to collect data from the children. During our walks, the children and I ate popcorns while we walked and talked and the informal dialogue's seemingly playful and non-intrusive nature was

beneficial to my research as I ensured that I listened to the children at all times. This involves being open and sensitive to listen with your emotions and all your senses as a researcher as argued by Rinaldi (2005) cited in Kjørholt, Moss, and Clark (2005).

3.6.6 Field Notes

Taking notes in the field was a challenge because when I was in class seated among the children, they were curiously looking over my shoulder to see what I was writing. I also overheard one child commenting to the friend on how big my notebook was compared to their books and that I was using a pen. It made me realise that this was a distraction from their class work so I decided to engage in whatever class activity was going on such as writing, drawing and singing. I replaced my notebook to a book similar to the ones used by the children and got a pen that looked like a pencil for my notes.

Instead of taking notes in class or during playground activities, I wrote my field notes at the end of the day. During playground activities, the children would pull me to play soccer or other games with them. Sometimes I felt that writing notes at the end of the day was not effective because I found myself not writing as much and I felt that I could be missing out on some important observation. To compensate for this, I note of what I thought was important while moving between the classes or sat at the back of the class to take notes without distracting the children.

3.6.7 Activity Logs

Upon realizing that I would not be using life form interviews with my participants and their families, I altered the form to an activity log for the caregivers. I asked the caregivers to log in both classroom based and outdoor activities that the children were engaged in at the end of each day. This task was done for a week and primarily by the two caregivers in charge of the two classes. The essence of this was to give me a picture of how the children spend their time at the school and what they spent their time doing either in groups or as individuals. This activity also presented me the opportunity to compare what and how the children in the two classes spent their time.

Table 3.2 Summary of Research Sample and Methods

Sample	Number of Participants	Research Method	Justification for Method
Children	10	Drawing, Informal Dialogue and Focus Group Discussion (FGDs)	A multi-method approach was useful in exploring in lives and ideas of the children
Children and Caregivers		Participant Observation	This method was effective in allowing me to be a part of the everyday activities in the school and to get information through participation and experience
Caregivers	4	Semi-structured Interviews Activity logs	I this method to get private thoughts and experiences
Kabwe District Planning Officer for Ministry of Education	1	Semi-structured Interview	Effective method for obtaining information on government policies and exploring the topic
Mothers	10	FGD	I chose this method because I was seeking a public opinion on the topic and needed to counter the limitations of time and access because parents were busy most of the time
Fathers	7	FGD	Effective method for obtaining public opinion and countering limitations of access and time
Grandmothers	10	FGD	Effective method for obtaining public opinion and countering limitations of access and time

3.7 Data Storage

The data I collected from the field is stored in both soft and hard copies in the form of recordings, transcriptions, scanned copies and physical drawings from the children. I transcribed all FGDs and interviews from Bemba to English endeavouring to keep them in the exact verbatim of the participants. The empirical data in the form of interview and FGD transcriptions, drawings and field notes will be analysed thematically and interpreted after which I will draw my discussion based on the findings. To ensure privacy and confidentiality, all data is stored using pseudo-names in password protected devices after which, I will destroy the raw material to protect the privacy of the participants.

3.8 Experiences and Challenges in the Field

Among my expectation of the field experience was an anticipated level of ‘violence’, theft or insecurity within the community. This came from the observation that such communities are usually prone to petty crime but to my pleasant surprise, my entire field stay in Makululu was quite contrary. I was welcomed everywhere I went and received warmly. The people were very friendly whether or not they were aware of the purpose of my visit. The true testament to my ability to ‘fit in’ was indicated by the number of times men asked me which section of the community I lived in and whether I was married. Walking to the school in the morning, I was greeted by men working on the construction of the Lukanga road portraying themselves as my potential suitors.

My field experience was enlightening as a Zambian and as a lay researcher. My natural curiosity and academic curiosity drove me to want to experience as much of the community as I could. I made arrangements to visit the Lukanga Swamps because I realised that it is an important resource for families and the community. I went to the market places, the clinic, community taps and play grounds to observe the activities of the people in the community. I ate food from the community and enjoyed my stay in the field.

Another important experience was using Bemba every day. I speak the Bemba language comfortably but it is not the first language. This opportunity presented itself as a platform for me to improve and learn more Bemba. The participants in my study were happy to hear me ask to

learn more Bemba proverbs, songs, folktales and stories. At the beginning of every FGD, I explained that my pronunciations of some Bemba words would not be correct and I would be happy to learn. At the end of every FGD, I thanked them for helping me improve my Bemba and so I grew more confident in each day.

I had a challenge with some words in particular when discussing the role and importance of ECCD. When translated into Bemba 'role' (ulubali) and 'importance' (ubukankala) speak of different things but during my discussions, the responses were similar or the same. This experience indicates a challenge not rare for researchers in my position who coin their research questions in English and later translate to local language. Words have different meanings in different contexts and languages and some languages have words that carry more than one meaning or two words meaning the same thing. My 'thinking in English' led me to expect totally different responses regarding 'role' and 'importance' but as I learnt in my study, this was not the case with my participants. It became clear to me that when expressed in Bemba, the informants understood the two terms to be intertwined and hence a response regarding the role that ECCD plays expresses its importance.

3.9 Conclusion

My study employed the use of multiple methods for purposes of exploring the lives of my participants and maximizing the different abilities and strengths among them. I employed the use of methods with consideration of time and sample so as to fulfil my research objectives. A multi-method approach was used with the children with one method compensating for the weakness of another. This helped my endeavors and I was thus able to fulfil my goals within the set time. In this section, I highlighted my experiences with each method and my choice of methods and samples as well as how my decisions in the field were informed and executed.

4 Theoretical Perspectives

4.1 Introduction:

In this chapter, I will discuss the theories that have informed my research which is derived from the sociology of childhood and children's rights perspective. I will begin by giving a brief background to the sociology of childhood after which I will present theoretical perspectives relevant to my thesis. This will include socially constructed childhood which includes a discussion on how childhood is socially constructed in Sub-Saharan Africa. I will then turn to discuss children as social actors capable of making meaning of their lives and the lives of those around them. Finally, this chapter will discuss the rights perspective or approach to research with children and how it has informed my work. I will conclude that chapter with a brief summary of the discussed theories and how they are linked to my data.

4.2 The Sociology of Childhood

According to Keenan (2002), a theory is defined as an interconnected, logical system of concepts that provides framework for organizing and understanding observations. The function of theories is to allow for understanding of some aspect of the world and in this case the theoretical anchor of my thesis provides an understanding of the lives of children in ECCD in Makululu.

My research has been informed by theories that are embedded in the sociology of childhood. The sociology of childhood saw its rise as a critique to the dominant discourses about childhood that were rooted in psychology and sociology (Prout and James, 1990). Citing Jenks (1982), they note that the developmental approach to childhood that psychology provides is based on the idea of natural growth with childhood representing the period of apprenticeship. Childhood is seen as a biologically determined stage on the path to full human status. Embedded in this view of children is the idea of their naturalness and therefore universality of childhood.

According to Corsaro (2005), sociology's thinking relegates the child to a passive role leading to children being marginalized in sociology whereas the sociology of childhood is a critique to such arguments which render the child as passive. Instead the argument is that the child is active in its everyday life as a 'thinker' and a 'doer'. I will now turn to discuss the view of the child and childhood as argued by the sociology of childhood.

4.2.1 Socially Constructed childhood:

The assertion of socially constructed childhood is that rather than being facts of nature, children and childhood are social constructs (Woodhead and Montgomery, 2003). The implication of this is that children and childhood are viewed, understood, interpreted and experienced differently in different societies and are a product of human meaning-making (ibid). This view is one of the anchors of the sociology of childhood as postulated by James et al. (1998) who argue that childhood does not exist in a finite and identifiable form and consistent with the argument forwarded by Qvortrup (1994:3) that childhood is the life-space which our culture or society limits it to be.

To note that a particular culture or society defines childhood is to argue for a variety of childhoods as opposed to a universal childhood. Children in every society have unique experiences and as such can speak of having different childhoods. This view is important in abandoning the view of children as 'natural' and moving towards viewing the natural as cultural (Gullestad 1989, cited in Nilsen; 2008). Every society or context has what is taken for granted and perceived as the norm or natural but the perspective that is offered by social constructionism allows for the taken for granted to be re-constructed culturally and thematized thus understanding the specific context (Ibid). Hence, James et al. (1998), argue that childhoods are variable and intentional and refute that there is no 'universal child' with which to engage.

In this study, I use this approach because it ascribes to the idea of a variety of childhoods. As I mentioned earlier, children in Zambia are affected by a number of factors due to the country's socio-economic position among other issues. Echoing the argument forwarded by Qvortrup (2002) that childhood is what a particular culture constrains it to be, Evans and Myers, 1994 argue that children grow up in a wide variety of different physical, social and cultural circumstances. They further argue that within cultures, there is diversity and those practices patterns and beliefs define childhood in that particular society. A review of studies on childrearing practices in Namibia, Zambia, Malawi, Nigeria and Mali found similarities in beliefs and practices across all studies which indicated that parental and community goals for children are centered around social and human values of respect, self-reliance, being helpful, cooperative and obedient (Evans, 1994)

As I mentioned earlier, Zambia is multiethnic and multicultural society (Kelly, et al, 1998). In Zambia, children are seen as members of a collective rather than individuals and belong to the family. Emphasis is placed on family relationships and kinship ties. Obedience, respect and hard work is expected for the Zambian child who is trained through chores how to grow into a responsible and respectful adult and work for the collective good. The CRC State Party Report notes that in Zambia, respect for children's views may be one of the difficult principles to comply with and though children are heard in different forums, their views may not receive the degree of seriousness they deserve. The report further notes that Zambia is still a society in which adults are perceived as being always wise and children as immature. As such, the cultural practice is such that obedience and responsibility are emphasized in the raising of children.

Aside from cultural values of obedience and respect, religion plays an important role in Zambian childhood. Children are raised according to the faith and religious beliefs of the parent and family with Christianity being the dominant religion. Religion is an integral part of the society and as such children are expected to adhere to Christian values.

The idea of socially constructed childhood is mirrored in my research as it ascribes to the view of children and childhood as social constructs. Children and childhood are understood differently in different contexts and at different times. By noting the ideas and views of children and adults about childhood, my study explores how childhood is conceptualized in Makululu. Childhood is also affected by other socio-cultural and economic aspects of Makululu as a particular context which I will discuss and explore in my analysis chapters.

4.2.2 Children as social actors:

Through the course of history and intellectual discourses, children's activities are viewed as purposeless and when viewed as purposeful, they are seen as preparation for adulthood (Qvortrup, 2002). However in the shift in theorizing children that came with the sociology of childhood, children are seen as active in the construction of their lives. Wartofsky (1981) cited in Qvortrup (2002) notes that children are active in their own right and their actions are not imitations. This is consistent with the following argument;

Children are and must be seen as active in the construction of their own lives, the lives of those around them and the societies in which they live. Children are not just the passive subjects of social structures and processes James and Prout, (1990) cited in James (2008 p.40)

As a social actor, the child is seen as capable of making meaning of their life, the lives of those around them and the society in which they live rather than being seen as a passive subject of social structures and processes James and Prout (1990) cited in (Qvortrup Corsaro & Honig 2009). In view of the above, childhood studies is concerned with doing research *with* children rather than *on* children. The view that the child is active in the construction of their life entails that we seek their active participation in research because children lead lives worthy of study (Qvortrup, Corsaro, & Honig, 2009). As noted by James (2007) citing Children's Rights International (2005, p.27) children must be approached as knowing subjects and there is need to ensure that the voices of children are prominent in explorations about what is going on in their lives.

Rooted in this idea of children as social actors is the concept of 'agency' which Robson, Bell, and Klocker (2007) define as an individual's own capacities, competencies and activities through which they navigate the contexts and positions of their life worlds. Through this, the individual is able to fulfil many economic, social, and cultural expectations while at the same time charting individual and collective choices and possibilities for their daily and future lives (ibid). When we conceptualize children as agents, we view them as '*doers*' and '*thinkers*.'

According to Robson et al. (2007), agency can take many forms including creative and reactive agency. Children demonstrate creative agency by making things happen while reactive agency is demonstrated by resisting expectation and by bargaining. Thus, James (2009) argues that on the one hand studying children as social actors entails seeing them as 'active' in the construction of their lives and leading lives worthy of study. Looking at children as 'agents' regards them as having a part to play in the lives of others in the society in which they are living. My study subscribes to this view of children by presenting their views on what childhood is where they recognize and value their contribution within the family collective.

This is consistent to what Abebe (2013) argues as interdependent agency when he notes that in most non-western societies, the rights and individual capacity of children tie in with familial, social and economic transformations in which their lives unfold. This view of children is important in this study as it identifies children conceptually as part of the family collective and hence recognizes the role they play in the family.

4.3 Children's Rights perspective:

According to James (2007), after the UNCRC in 1989, listening to the voices of children has become a powerful mantra among activists and policy makers worldwide. The child is no longer viewed as part of a whole or a developing human being but rather as an individual with rights as noted by ILO (2012) that in the twentieth century, children have come to be viewed as holders of rights as a broader concept of the right to childhood. Following the League of Nations declaration of 1924 that 'mankind owes the child the best it has to give', the impetus has been towards 'upgrading' the status of the child from being a property of the family to an individual (ILO, 2012,p. 7).

Howe and Covell (2005), argue that children have attained the official status of persons with inherent rights recently in human history as a result of the signing and ratification of the UNCRC. This document was a response to the need to recognize children as a unique group in societies with particular needs to be addressed. It also came as a recognition to 'upgrade the status of children in society' through the major themes of Protection, Provision and Participation identified in the document.

Clearly, these themes represent the idea that children are a special group that have for long been neglected in different aspects among which are participation in research. Thus in providing for the legal framework through which society should view and treat their children, a call to improving their legal status is made through the UNCRC of 1989 which is the most widely ratified human rights treaty in the world (ILO, 2012). Kjörholt (2013), notes that the CRC represents particular images of the children that are claimed to be universal

According to Howe and Covell (2005) the concept of children as individual and independent persons with rights of their own has been embraced by adults and countries throughout the world with the coming of the UNCRC. Further, they argue that before this, the status of children was low and they were often regarded as the property of their parents (ibid). In view of this, the new approach of research in the study of childhood and children's everyday lives has opened up a theoretical and conceptual space which allows children to speak about their experiences in the world as participant observers (James, 2007). Although James (2007) argues that this is not in and of itself sufficient to ensure that the voices and views of children are heard, the implication of this in childhood research is that, researchers position children not as objects but rather

subjects of research who are social actors. She further argues that giving voices to children is not simply allowing children to speak but rather exploring the unique contribution to our understanding of and theorizing the social world that children's perspective can provide (ibid).

According to James (2007), despite the commitment to children's participation indicated in the UNCRC, children still continue to have their voices suppressed, or ignored, and their views may not be asked in everyday lives. Thus in childhood research, our aim is a move towards understanding the social world of children as experienced by the children themselves which my research aims to achieve

Alanen (2001) notes that, the sociology of childhood argues for the value of studying children in their own right and from their own perspective which is consistent with UNCRC and the AC. Building on the UNCRC, the ACRWC provides a contextual perspective on childhood in Africa and recognises the value of the child in this society. The UNCRC provides that every child should be accorded opportunities to voice themselves in all matters that concern them. This provision is made through articles 12 and 13 which state respectively that; the child who is capable of forming his or her own view should have the right to do so and that the child has the freedom of expression which includes seeking, receiving and imparting information through any media of the child's choice.

In the ACRWC, this provision is made through article 7 which states that the child capable of communicating shall be assured the right to do so freely in all matters that concerns them. As a point of departure, the ACRWC in its preamble notes that the implementation and reflection on the concept of rights and welfare of the child in Africa should take into consideration their cultural heritage, historical background and values of African civilization. It is noted by Kjørholt (2013) that rights in the African Charter are linked to interdependency and reciprocity between children and their families and as such the construction of children as individual rights claimers contradicts local livelihood practices. Furthermore, indications from intervention practices studies done by NGOs in Tanzania and Ethiopia note that notions of individual rights are not easily applicable in a local sub-Saharan setting (ibid).

Thus, against the background of being an invisible and silent part of a whole, the African child is identified as an active and competent individual holder of rights and entitlements through the

UNCRC and ACRWC. The result of this has been that through the ethnographic and participatory methods of research in childhood studies and within social sciences, children's views, opinions and experiences are documented and availed as valid and authentic in their own right.

4.4 Conceptualizing Local Knowledge

By definition, local knowledge refers to a particular people's way understanding of the surrounding world, ways of sharing information or teaching, and ways of speaking and thinking that are passed down through generations (Soudee, 2009). The idea of local knowledge or indigenous knowledge is that it is non- formal, locally bound, culture and context specific (Shizha, 2007). More often than not, local knowledge is seen as traditional, backward and retrogressive. However, my research shows the concept of local as referring to a particular people's way of living, knowing, surviving and evolving within their context. This makes reference to the socio-cultural practices, childrearing practices, ideas and views about children and childhood as expressed by the children and adults.

To illustrate this, I explore the views of children about what childhood is as well as provide the understanding of adults about children. By exploring the interpretation and meaning of the proverb, I wish to bring to light the concept of local knowledge as meaning the values, attitudes and ideas of childhood as well as how people in this context view and understand childhood. I also draw from my observations of the children within the ECCD Centre to explore how these 'ways of knowing' are integrated into the everyday activities of the Centre. The idea of local knowledge as I use it in my research includes the use of local language, local toys and materials for play and learning, integration of traditional stories, songs, dances and values such as sharing and learning household chores among others.

Recent discussion in education have advocated for a move towards relevant education for the African context noting that western education has brought alienation from people's context (Abebe & Kjørholt, 2009; 2013; Kjørholt, 2013; Nsamenang 2007, Serpell & Nsamenang 2014; Marfo & Biersteker, 2011; Marfo, 2011) Hence the call for education and in particular ECCD to adjust to Africa's realities and take a more Afrocentric orientation.

I use the concept of local knowledge as in essence being Africa's reality in which ECCD is being implemented. The everyday practices, ideas, attitudes and values attached to children and childhood are the reality in which children that attend ECCD are living. Therefore, a discussion on the integration of local knowledge should bring to light the everyday lives and context in which communities live and in which ECCD services are implemented. As noted by Nsamenang (2007), all societies have specific approaches to raising and educating young children. He further

notes that all societies, some with difficulty, make contextual provisions to meet children's basic needs such as initial learning from early age, physical survival and the development of intelligences and competencies that are required to actively participate as citizens within their culture.

In discussing and conceptualizing local knowledge, I will discuss 'contextual provisions for the raising of children and among other, these provisions include socio-cultural practices, values, attitudes and children's everyday experiences in the communities. Nsamenang (2007) argues that children who stand to benefit the most from ECCD lack access to these services and this lack occurs not only because coverage remains low but also because of unaddressed connections especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. Further, he argues that western conceptions of ECCD have devalued local cultures and traditions so that they are seen as being anti-progressive and outdated. There is need now more than ever, to challenge these conceptions of local culture as being anti-progressive and outdated as my research will show.

By exploring the integration of local knowledge within the ECCD Centre and highlighting children's everyday socio-cultural practices and experiences within the family and community, my study shows the need to appreciate Africa's distinctive culture. Thus instead of replacement, ECCD should be tailored towards the enhancement of this distinctive culture (Ellis 1978 p.1) cited in (Nsamenang, 2007)

The majority of the world's population are in great difficulty simply because ours has become a world wherein a handful of conceptualists in powerful interest groups collude with the United Nations agencies to theorize and craft into policy and programs in unfamiliar terms, circumstances that diverge widely from the stark realities of people's life paths and that instantly place their natural trajectories into informality or extinction (Nsamenang, 2007 p.48)

A discussion on the concept of local knowledge in ECCD draws attention to the place of the individual rights holder within a collective culture. In my view, over 20 years after the implementation the UNCRC and the ACRWC, this still presents a dilemma in our discussion. To argue for the value of the child as an individual with rights in the context of an interdependent culture need not be binary positions. The above argument is an important reflection as we discuss children as rights holders in the face of ACRWC which notes the need to uphold the African

culture. Nsamenang (2007) gives a profound example of Africa's response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic as showing resilience in the cultural practices such as sibling caretaking that can be partly credited for dealing with the devastation. Sibling caretaking is positively valued in African culture shows the transition of children into adult roles and family service from an early age to deal with the death parents and caregivers. Hence, my research will contribute to reflections on the argument for the need to enhance local culture and knowledge in the implementation of relevant ECCD programs in Africa.

4.5 The Concept of Children's Places

The concept of place as defined in human geography presents complex qualities as it can mean 'one's position in society or spatial location.' (Olwig & Gulløv, 2003). According to Olwig and Gulløv (2003), from an anthropological view, the concept of place points to the existence of a close interrelationship between the physical, social and cultural conditions of life. With regard to children, the concept may refer both to established places allocated to children by others and to subversive places created by children as they engage in various kinds of intra- and inter-generational relationships (ibid)

For the purpose of my study, I use the concept of place to mean the subversive places created by children in a community with little or no social amenities or designated 'child-friendly places'. Olwig and Gulløv (2003) note that a number of studies have shown that children tend to be set aside in places separated from the rest of the society such as homes, institutions and schools where they are supervised by adults. However, my study shows that this is not the reality of children in communities such as Makululu with limited shared spatial places. It is noted that in most societies, there are places for children and places where children will be rarely seen and social implications of being or not being at a given location can reveal the range of relationships that is within reach of children (ibid).

I will also use the concept of place to explore where children are allowed to be or not be in Makululu and the meaning that both children and adults attach these places. By so doing, I hope to better understand how children and childhood are conceptualized in this society (Olwig & Gulløv, 2003). As argued by Olwig and Gulløv (2003), ideas and practices about dangerous areas and bad influence relate to social division, separations and demarcations that children come to learn as they grow up in particular social and moral environments. Hence, by exploring

children's use of places in Makululu, my study will bring to light opportunities for social interactions for children in the community as well show the varying forms of agency such creative and reactive as I earlier discussed.

In his study of Street Children in Ethiopia, Abebe (2009) citing Ennew (2002 p.389) notes that modern childhood constructs the place of children as inside the home, the school and inside families where they can be protected by adults. This idea of childhood is mirrored in my study and I argue that universal campaigns such as Universal Primary Education (UPE), ECCD, UNCRC and the ACRWC among others can be credited for the changing concepts of childhood in communities such as Makululu.

5 Children, Childhood & the Family in ECCD

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, my focus is to present a narrative of the understanding and views of the children participants on childhood which will be followed by the understanding of the adults regarding the proverb in discussion. This chapter focuses mainly on sub-questions 1 and 2 in order to achieve the first two objectives of my research. Through this chapter, I aim to highlight the local ideas and understanding of children and childhood as viewed by the children as well as provide a context of ideas, beliefs and values attached to children in Zambia through the proverb. .

I will begin this chapter with a discussion of the meaning and interpretation of the proverb ‘imiti ikula empanga’ as discussed by the adult participants in my study. I will then present my findings regarding children’s understanding of childhood as derived from my observations, dialogues and drawing activities with the children. . Through this chapter, I wish to explore the adult participants’ understanding of the proverb in an effort to explore local knowledge regarding children as part of providing the context in which children experience and interpret the meaning of childhood. I will then turn to discuss the role of the family in ECCD as understood and experienced by the children in my research.

5.2 The meaning and interpretation of ‘Imiti Ikula Empanga’

According to Orwenjo (2009), proverbs are regarded as a noble genre of African oral tradition that enjoys special prestige of being the custodian of a people’s collective wisdom, philosophy of life, experience, fears and aspirations. Malunga & James (2004) argue that in Africa, proverbs are an integral part of the culture and have the advantage of being appreciated by the most educated as well as understood where literacy is low. They further argue that proverbs are guidelines for individual, family, village and community behavior which are based on repeated life experiences and observation over a long period of time (ibid).

As such, Proverbs play different roles in the African society among which are; giving identity and dignity to a culture and explaining complex issues by simple statements with the use of metaphors or descriptive terms. Identity is given to a culture through proverbs by expressing the

collective wisdom of the people, reflecting their thinking, values and behaviors while by being metaphorical, strong mental pictures are created (ibid).

The Zambian proverb 'imiti ikula empanga' when translated into English literally says 'growing trees make a forest' (Sumbwa, 1993). It uses metaphors familiar to the Zambian traditional society that people encounter in everyday lives or have experienced. By creating this mental picture, the proverb is understood by the people and thus serves its purpose in an oral society such as Zambia. According to Sumbwa (1993), this proverb is used in twofold. On the one hand, it is used when someone is being reproached for mistreating a young person while on the other; it is used when acknowledging a young person's lack of experience.

The implication of this proverb in everyday life is that it teaches people to take care of the young as well as the need for the young to work hard in order to acquire the skills and knowledge employed in adult life (ibid). It is argued by Pence and Shafer (2006) that considerable knowledge exists about local cultural child-rearing, education and socialization practices from different sources which include storytelling, proverbs, songs and dances. This next section discusses the proverb as a source of information about local knowledge regarding children and childhood in Zambia.

5.2.1 Children as the future and a sign of continuity

The aforementioned proverb is understood to mean that children are the future of the community and the nation. According to my informants, the presence of children in a family, community and country is a sign of continuity and represents the future of that community. Therefore a community with no children is seen as one with no future because adults are in the process of aging and eventually dying thereby leaving the world to younger generations. As such children are viewed with pride by families and communities because the 'bloodline' or family lineage continues through these children for generations to come. Smørholm (2007) in her Master's Thesis notes that contrary to western theories on childhood (James et.al, 1998; Prout, & James, A, 1997; Jans, 2004), Children in Zambia are perceived as part of a wider social whole with responsibilities and rights. My conversation with Leo (volunteer caregiver) about the aforementioned proverb, expresses this perception in the following;

These children are the people who will be there, because we are already grown and are waiting to go(die) but these children that are growing up now are the ones who will be the people and the community (Leo, M/44- Caregiver)

This view was also expressed by one of the fathers during a FGD;

This proverb means that children are the future, the children today will be adults tomorrow and whether they will be educated or not, whether doctors, nurses or bus drivers, children are our future. That man whose livelihood is through street vending or one in an office was once a child (Maluba M/42 years old)

The understanding of the proverb from most of the adult participants indicates that in traditional Zambian society, children are seen as a sign of continuity of the society. According to my participants, the view of children rooted in this proverb is that they are a symbol or sign that the society will go on beyond the generation of adults. Garcia, Pence, and Evans (2008), note that African societies value children and place them at the center of their life and communities. Citing the ACRWC preamble, they note that the African child is perceived as occupying a unique and privileged position in the society.

According to my participants, their understanding from the aforementioned proverb is that the metaphorical trees (children) who grow into a forest (family, community or nation) occupy a special place in society. The implication of the proverb as understood by the adult participants in my research is that, children should be cared for and ‘nurtured properly’ in order to ensure that the next generation produces a healthy society. As part of this proper ‘nurturing’, my informants share the view that in today’s society, children need to have good nutrition, education and be taught how to respect adults

5.2.2 Children as leaders

The proverb in discussion is also understood to mean that in every child is the potential for leadership as all leaders of today were once children. Every child is born with ‘potential’ for leadership in different fields and as such, children are to be viewed as future leaders. Although the future of a particular child is unknown to their family, it is generally believed that there is a potential for leadership in every child. This view is expressed by Maapo, a caregiver at the school.

The saying ‘imiti ikula empanga’ the way I understand , it means that the children we have today are the future leaders of our community and country (Maapo- M/Caregiver)

The implied leadership according to the understanding of the proverb is often attached to accomplishments that can be reached as a result of one being educated. Though the proverb is not related to education, the understanding of it according to the participants is that leadership as implied in the proverb is only attainable through education. Education is viewed as a necessity for one to rise to a position of leadership in today's society and as such parents/guardians aspire to have educated children who will occupy prestigious jobs and offices. This view is expressed by one of the Mothers during a FGD in the following;

I think that proverb meanslike here in our country Zambia; young children are the future leaders. Like the way we have our President Sata, he is not going to be President forever. In future, these children that are growing up are the ones who are going to be the presidents and Members of Parliament (Betty F/36 years old)

According to most of the participants, the demand on children and parents in today's society is different. Noting the changes in economic activities such as mining and employment opportunities, they stated that to be a leader or 'someone' in any field, you have to be educated. As noted by Kjörholt (2013), there is an increasing emphasis on education and schooling for children globally, as a key to promote individual welfare, success and 'a good life as future adults'.

This view is expressed by one grandmother;

During our day, one could be a nurse if they went up to grade 9 but these days , for one to be a leader like a ward counselor or church group leader, one has to be at least educated. For every position now, they want someone who can speak English and at least able to read and write. So these children now have a lot of pressure if they want to be leaders in future (Elizabeth, F /66years)

The views of the participants in my research demonstrate the far reaching impact of global discourses on childhood and how they influence local contexts in which children are growing up. I am of the view that the local values, beliefs and discourses about children are adapting to the changing global environment in which children are growing up. This is illustrated by the impact on local practices, attitudes and values towards children emanating from global campaigns such as Education for All (EFA), Universal Primary Education (UPE) and children's rights. According to my understanding, this illustrates what Kjörholt (2013:245) refers to as the "blurred

boundaries between local and global” when she discusses the varying impact that particular images of what it means to be a child as well as global notions of education and learning will have on children’s everyday lives, well-being and learning.

5.3 Children’s understanding of Childhood

During my FGDs and informal dialogues with the children they narrated stories about their lives at home with family members and friends that they spent time with. Through informal dialogues and drawing, children noted what they considered important in their lives as food, clothes, family, friends and school. Most of their ideas about parental care and support were about the provision of basic needs of which food was the most mentioned. Every drawing had food featured and when asked about the food, the children noted that food was important for them to ‘grow properly’ and they liked food. This prompted to explore their understanding of childhood from their everyday lives and perspectives as Qvortrup (2002) argues that when we study children’s life conditions, we need to use children as units of observation and as mediators of information.

5.3.1 Childhood as a time of play;

According to the children, play takes up a big portion of their lives as they are encouraged at home and at school to engage in play activities. They narrated how their play activities were centred on activities that involved friends and materials around them. The understanding of the children regarding play and childhood is that play is an activity that they enjoy, spend a lot of time on and like to engage in. They also view play as activities that are encouraged by their families and Teachers.

When I get off from school, I get home to eat and change into play clothes. After that I spend most of the time playing with my friends either at home or away from home. Sometimes I do not feel like going anywhere but my grandmother will tell me to go and play with my friends and come back home before dark
(Mpikwa; M/7 years old)

They noted play activities that included traditional and modern games that they learnt by interacting with other children in the community and games that they were taught. According to the children, childhood as a time of play is an important aspect of their lives and does not conflict with the expectations of their families. In the following interview, Dalitso demonstrates

his understanding of why play is important and how it is unseparated from the lives of children as they are expected to play.

M: how does your family feel about play?

Dalitso: they tell me to take my young brother and go and play with him. Sometimes when my mother is at home washing, she will ask me to play with him away from home.

M: so what do you usually play with?

Dalitso: We usually make toys with plastic, and papers that we pick. We make a ball and start kicking it or get an old tyre and drive it around

M: why do you think your parents encourage you to play?

Dalitso: because I am a child, children are supposed to play.

In Zambia, the sight of children playing in the community is common and clearly, children are not only expected to take part in play activities but also view play as an important part of childhood. Therefore, children regard play as part of their childhood and as an important activity. Play is done in groups and as individuals and children engage in different play activities within the community. This was part of my observations as I walked through Makululu.

5.3.2 Childhood as a time for preparation for the future responsibilities

According to the children, their understanding of childhood is that it is a period in which they are supposed to learn household chores in preparation for future responsibilities. This view was unanimously agreed on by the children and when I inquired whether this was how they felt or what they were taught by others, the children were quick to say that this was what they knew to be true. *'all children are supposed to learn how do things so that they can help at home'* The children then narrated the chores that they did at home as sweeping, washing, cleaning the plates and fetching water from the public taps. According to the children, these activities were important for future use when they would take on more responsibilities within the household as one girl narrates in the following excerpt.

I usually play away from home with my friends but I have to go home before it dark so I can put water on the brazier for the Nshima (Staple food prepared from maize meal). Although I do not know how to cook Nshima yet, I watch my mother prepare it and one day when I am older, I will start doing it.

In the following dialogue another girl narrates the activities that she participates in at home and how

M: so what kind of work do you do?

Mpikwa: I like to sweep the house, the yard and to clean the dishes and washing my clothes. I like it when my mother asks me to wash my clothes because I like washing

M: why do you think it is important for you to do the activities you engage in at home?

Mpikwa: because I need to help my mother at home and I need to learn so that when I am older I will not have a problem with work at home and at school.

M: so you work at school as well?

Mpikwa: yes, even at school. We are supposed to clean our classroom and learn how to work. The Teacher tells us to sweep the classroom after school and sometimes we go around the school picking up plastics and papers.

Clearly, the views of the children with regard to learning chores or participating in household reflect that, it is considered as 'a normal part of everyday life'. As such, most of the children note that their participation in household chores is important for them and the family. More so, children view childhood as an opportunity to learn skills and chores that adults engage in every day. They note that these skills serve to help them when they are with their families and when they visit extended for holidays where they are expected to participate in household chores. The children also note that learning household chores helps them in the school environments as well because they are expected to participate in keeping their school clean.

5.3.3 Childhood as a care receiving and Care giving stage

According to Morrow (2013) citing Morrow (1996) & Such & Walker (2005), in the English society, dominant ideas about children tend to construct childhood as a period of dependency which signifies children's lack of responsibility. These ideas are prominent in the western world where children are perceived as in need of care, play and study (Punch, 2003). However, the experience of the majority of the world's children who grow up in different material and cultural realities disputes these notions of childhood as a care receiving stage which has an implied passiveness on the part of children (ibid).

According to Punch (2003), children's lives vary according to a range of factors which include birth order, culture, class, gender, age among others. Citing Kefyalew (1996,p.209), she further notes that in the majority world, children work from early childhood but they are depicted by popular and media discourses as being burdened with adult-like duties and responsibilities. Against this background, I will now turn to discuss the views of the children in my study with regard to childhood being a care receiving and care giving stage.

To the children's understanding, childhood is the stage where care is received from adults and others around them. The ideas of care and love included parental actions and demonstrations of provision of basic needs. As I mentioned earlier, the provision of food for the children at home and for the period that they are at school is an important indicator of care and love. The children attach value to the actions that adults and others around them demonstrate in their everyday lives. For example, during one of my dialogues with a participant, she was quick to point me to an older boy seated under a tree in the school grounds that had come to pick up the young brother who was in baby class. She then narrated that the older boy went to a primary school within the community and attended class in the afternoon so every morning he would take the young brother to school and pick him up after school because he had recently started school and was too young to walk home alone. When I enquired as to why she thought the brother did this, the girl responded by saying "*it's because the boy is very young and the brother loves him*"

Throughout my research, the children told stories of everyday activities that their families engaged in that demonstrated care for them. The activities ranged from the provision of school materials, food, soap to wash their uniforms and soaks to help with school work, homework, and school projects like molding activities among others. The feeling of appreciation was attached to such actions as a parent warming left over food for them to carry to school, or buying popcorns and juice for the school break. Due to the high levels of poverty in the community, the children expressed gratitude for basic needs when their carers were able to meet them and this was viewed as something of value to them and an indication of care.

However, much as value was attached to the care they received from adults and those around them, the children also expressed pride and attached value to their contributions in the lives of the families and those around them. They noted activities and responsibilities they took on around the household as being 'helpful' to the parents and guardians. They commonly expressed

this as “*I help out at home*” citing examples of babysitting younger siblings to free their parents for other responsibilities. The following is from a dialogue with Marie 7 year old girl illustrates this point;

Marie: My mother usually goes to town very early in the morning to buy fruits and vegetables that she sells at the market. She leaves around 5 am while we are still sleeping and comes back before I go to school at 7:30 am. Before I leave for school, I feed my young brother porridge when he wakes up and then I wash my face and eat porridge. My mother gets back when it’s time for me to go to school.

M: do you help out in any other way when you come back from school?

Marie: yes, I do. When I get home, I take off my uniform and go to the market to take care of my young brother while my mother is repackaging the vegetables on the vegetable stand.

According to the children, the concept of care was mutual between them and the parents, guardians and other family members. It was demonstrated in their everyday lives and activities through the provision of material and nutritional support as well as through their ability to ‘help out’ with house chores or the care of younger siblings. The children’s understanding of care giving on their part is rooted in the responsibilities they undertake at home and for the family. Morrow (2013), argues that children are rarely credited with the positive capacity to take responsibility over others and describes an aspect of children’s activities outside the school as carers of younger siblings and babysitting within their neighborhoods.

Of particular interest to me was the value which the young children in my research attached to the ‘help’ they rendered their families. Their views demonstrate that they perceive their contribution as ‘visible’ and ‘valuable’ for the family as well as an integral part of the mutual relationships within the family network where adults are providers of material and social support while children are providers of social support. Children’s view of childhood as a care receiving and care giving stage shows what Abebe (2013) argues as interdependent agency in Ethiopia where children are not autonomous individuals but their lives are intertwined with and inseparable from the family collective. The children in my study view themselves as being part of the family collective with important contributions to make in the everyday life of the family.

I often noted the sight of children playing in the community during my tours of Makululu and noteworthy was the age differences among the children. It was common to see groups of children

of the same and gender engaging in one play activity while younger children watched or played on their own. This was common in the open fields that are used as Football or Netball fields and illustrates how work and play do not exist as binary positions mapped onto the adult/child dichotomy James et. al (1998, p. 90) cited in (Punch, 2003). I observed that usually at the end of play time, the older children who had younger siblings among the younger group would take them from the group and walk home with them.

Tatek Abebe (2007) argues that in the majority world, work and play are often intertwined as illustrated in the following.

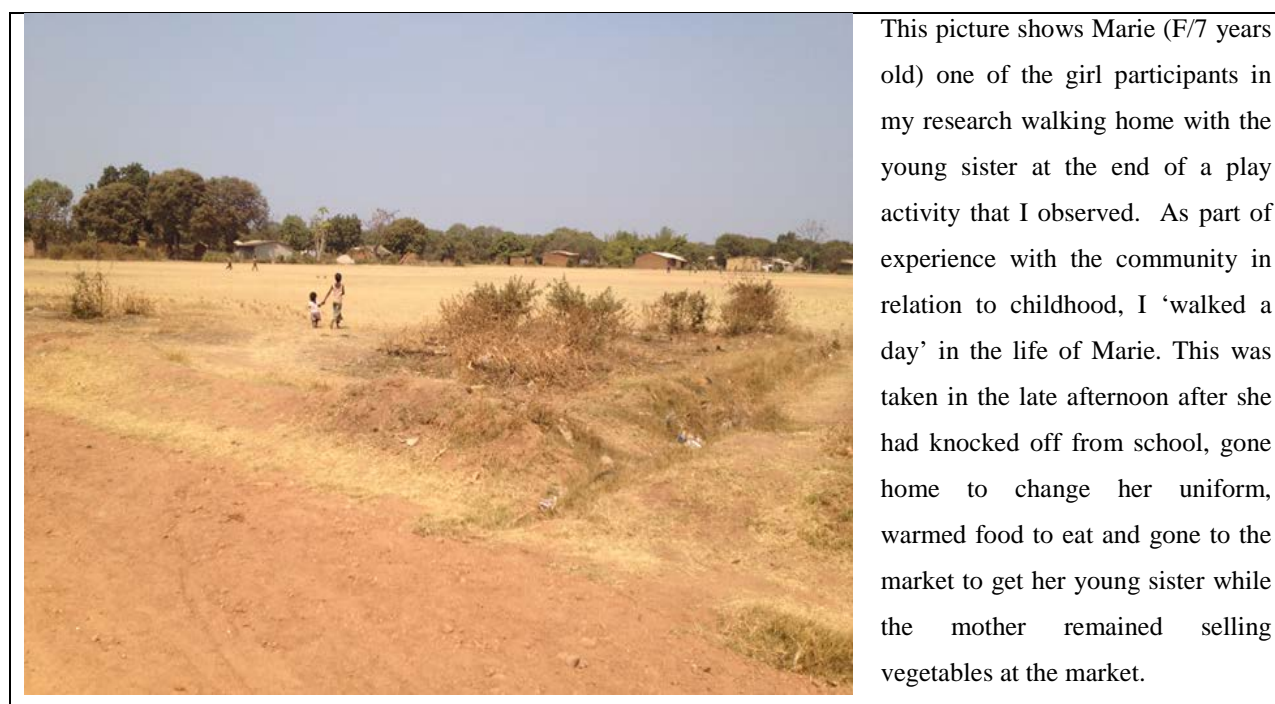


Figure 5.1 Marie and her sister walking home after a play activity

Source: Field Data in Kabwe, Zambia; between June–August 2013

5.4 Children’s understanding on the role of the family in ECCD

I will now turn to present the views and stories of children regarding the role played by the family in their education. These stories were told with the aide of drawings and to ensure that I understood and did not forget the details of the drawings, I labelled each detail as explained by the children

ILO (2012) notes that learning begins before a child first walks into the classroom and according to Matafwali (2007) the home is the primary context for child care. Citing Osanyin (2002), she

notes that the responsibility of nurturing children into happy, healthy and secure adults should be taken by parents and families. In Zambia, like most African countries, the family, nuclear and extended is an important resource in the care and support of children. In his study of ECCD programs run by PLAN International in Chibombo district which is also in the Central Province of Zambia.

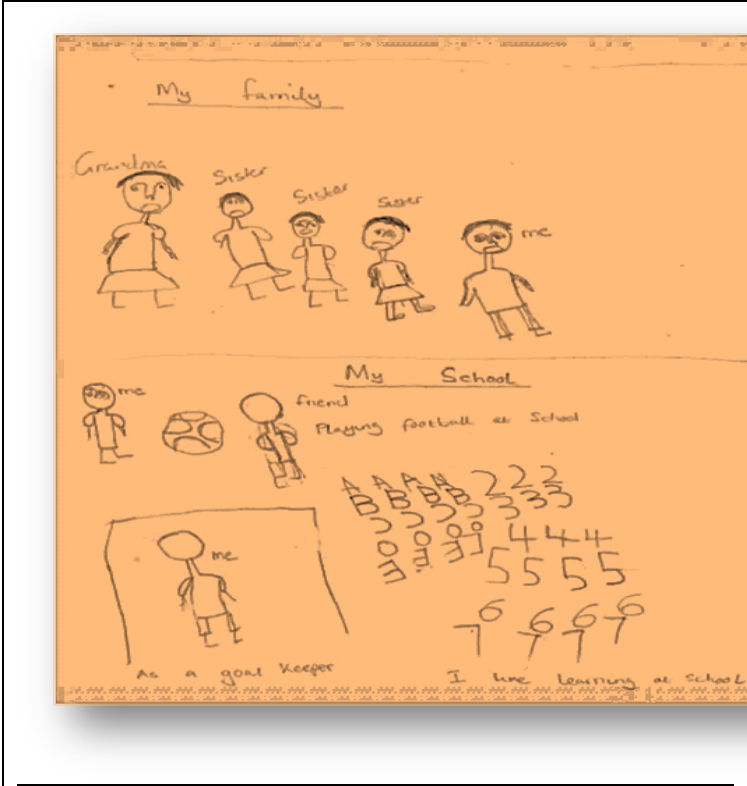
Kula (2011) notes that in order to ensure that children develop optimally; ECCD programs should involve and support parents in their parenting roles. He further notes that the decision on whether a child will attend school or not at any age is usually made by the child's family and reinforced by factors affecting the family such as socio-economic status and parental/guardian's level of education. This view is expressed in my interview with the District Planning Officer at the Ministry of Education in Kabwe in the following;

The family comes in when it comes to supporting the children, making them come to school in the first place. The family is helping by allowing the children to come to school, packing food for them. We are supposed to provide proper materials for these children but some parents are even providing those materials. They buy crayons for them and coloring books.... So they are really helpful but of course we need more sensitization (DPO)

According to the narrations of the children through the dialogues, drawings and FGDs, the role of the family in ECCD is seen as twofold; the family as 'primary decision makers, providers of material and social support. In this section I will discuss these aspects as derived from empirical data which showing excerpts from dialogues and drawing.

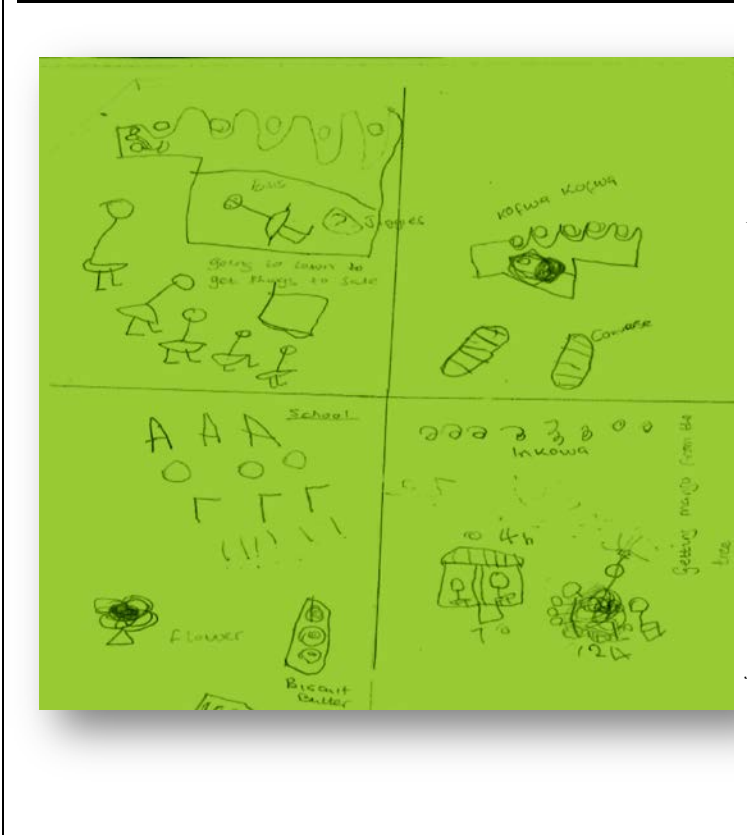
5.4.1 The Family as primary decision makers

According to Kula (2011), the decision on whether a child will go to school or not at any age is made by the family and reinforced by factors such as socio-economic situation and education level of the guardians. This is consistent with the views of most of the children in my study who narrated that their guardians and parents made the decision for them to start going to the ECCD Centre at the time they did.



Chisomo(M/ 7 years old)

I was born here in Makululu and I live with my grandmother and 3 sisters. One is my young sister and the other 2 were born from my mother’s sister. My father died and then my mother moved to Lusaka to find a job. My grandmother sells vegetables and Tomatoes at the market. I was just at home before she decided to bring me to this school so that I could learn how to read and write. My grandmother says I will go to David Ramusho (government primary school) next year to start grade one.



Chimwemwe (F/ 6 years old)

I started coming to this school when I was a small girl. My mother brought me. She bought me a bag, books and pencils. She packs food for me to carry to school and when there is nothing to carry; my father gives me K5 to buy something. I want to be a Teacher when I grow up. I don’t want to sell at the market because my mother wakes up very early in the morning to go ‘kumaoda* in town’ Sometimes at home, my father teaches me how to write and read so I can be very good and pass at school. My mother doesn’t teach me because she did not go to school but she always buys me what I need for school and wakes me up in the morning.

Figure 5.2 Drawings & Narrations by some children in the study

Source: Field Data, Kabwe Zambia; June-August 2013

5.4.2 The Family as providers of Material and Social Support

The provision of material support for children in ECCD is noted as an important factor contributing to community ownership of such programs. The community and more importantly the family that sends the child to the Centre bears the responsibility of supporting that child through the program and this commitment by families is illustrated through material and social support. According to the children in my study, the family is the primary provider of material and social support for the child with regard to education related needs. The children narrated the different forms that this support takes such as provision of food, books, pencils, uniforms, bags, shoes and often times soap to wash the school uniform and stockings. Notably these are basic human needs and in the view of the children, the family bears the greater responsibility of meeting these needs.

Beyond material support, the children noted everyday activities and ways in which family members demonstrate their support to them. The cited examples of helping them prepare for school, preparing food for them, helping them with school homework and giving them money to buy snacks for school among other things. The support received from the family is noted as an important motivation for school by children. They note how having personal books and a pencil makes them happy to go to school and how it sets them apart from other siblings and friends who do not go to school. One girl states as follows;

I have a bag and books because I go to school and my young brother doesn't have because he has not started going to school yet. My mother will buy him one when he starts school next year.

In the following narrations, a boy and girl tell how their families support them

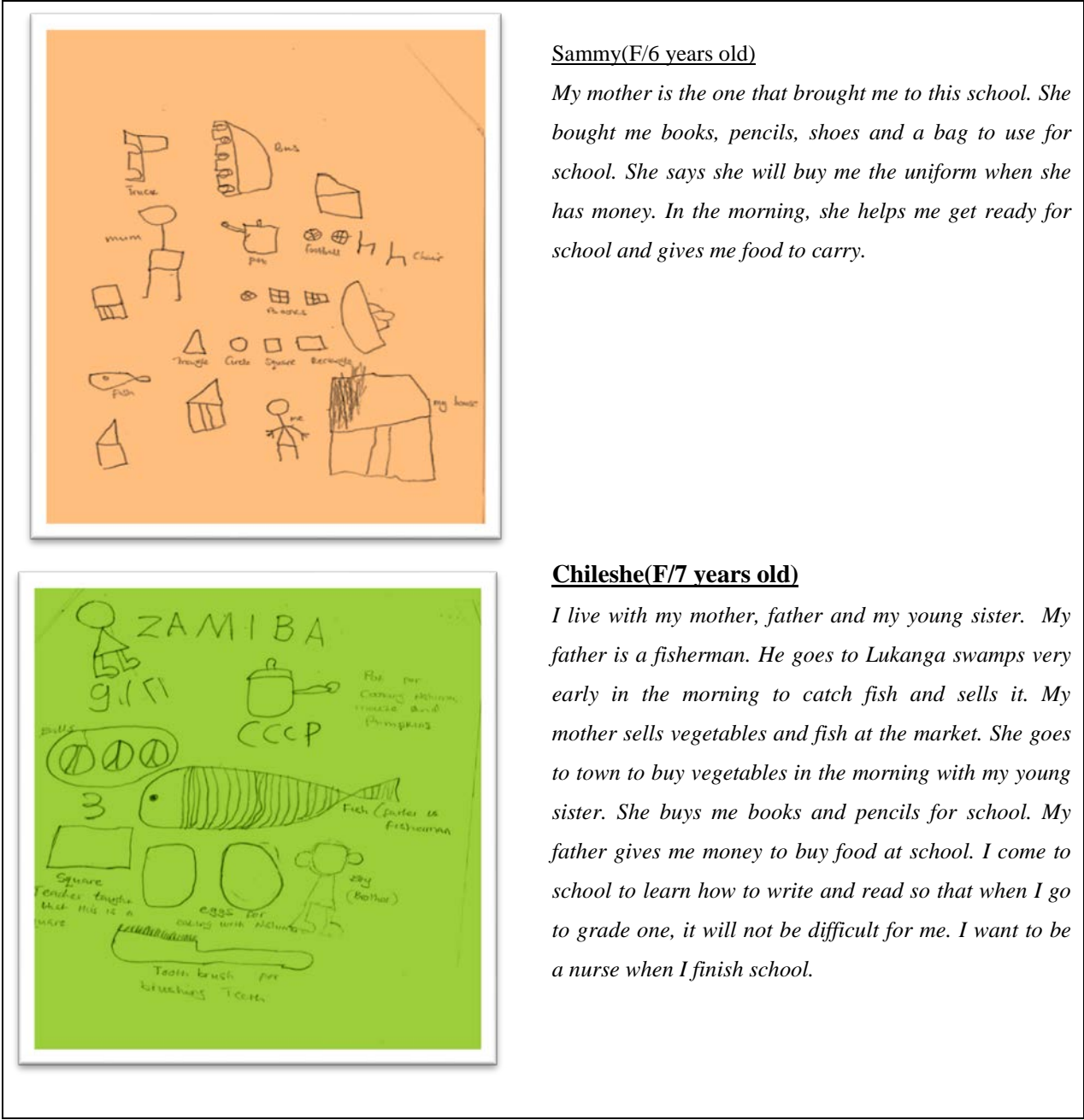


Figure 5.3 Drawings & Narrations by Children in the study

Source: Field Data, Kabwe, Zambia; June-August 2013

This view was expressed by Chiluba a 6 year old girl during a drawing and interview activity. In this interview, she talked about how her mother woke her up every morning so she could prepare for school; the following is an excerpt from my interview with Chiluba.

Me: so Chiluba, who brought you to this school?

C: I first came to this school with my mother. When she told me that I was going to start school, I was happy because I want to learn how to write

Me: who helps you prepare for school in the morning?

C: My mother wakes me up and tells me to wash my face and brush my teeth. Then I put on my uniform and shoes. When we have food, she packs for me but if there is no food in the house, she gives me K5, buy popcorns or jiggies on my way to school

Me: who buys you the things you need to use at school

C: my mother buys me books for writing in and she also got me a bag from 'salaula' (a general term describing imported second hand clothes, bags and shoes)

My research shows children as social actors in that they are able to understand and interpret the different aspects of their lives as individuals and as families. Notable among these aspects is the changing socio-economic position of the family and how it affects their lives and their education. A case in point is reference to the primary schools that the children will attend after leaving the ECCD Centre, most of them chose schools for their proximity to the home and when I inquired about this, they noted that if they went to schools outside Makululu, they would have to walk long distances as their parents could not always afford to give them transport money.

Apart from the changing economic position affecting their choice of primary schools, the children also narrated how their education future was dependent on it. One boy notes as follows;

If my father will have money, I will go to Mine School in grade six because it's a good school. Then I can pass and go to secondary school. One boy at the next house stopped school because his father stopped working and doesn't have money. He now sells at the market.

According to most of the children in my research, the family's socio-economic position is important in enabling their education aspirations. They told stories of people in the community who had to stop school because parents died and there was no one to provide for them or because parents lost jobs or simply did not have money and resources to support them through school

5.5 Conclusion

This section has highlighted the views of the adults in my research regarding the proverb as meaning children are the future and future leaders. It has also shown the views of children regarding childhood and the role of the family in ECCD which includes being primary decision makers and providers of material and social support. The indication of this section also shows children's interdependent agency through their understanding and value of the role they play in this family. Clearly, children place value on not only the role of their families but also their role in the family.

6 Children's Places & the Role of ECCD in Makululu

6.1 Introduction

The aim of this section is to describe children's places in Makululu as a community. This is based on observations, dialogues and FGDs with the children and adults. This discussion is important for the purposes of exploring the lives of children within the community, how children view and experience the community and as well as how they use places within the community for different activities. My analysis is also illustrated with the aid of pictures taken during my walks and tours through the community. The views of the parents/guardians regarding the community as a context in which children are growing up will also be discussed to give a context of ideas about the community. Therefore, this section will also provide the context of children's lives in Makululu thereby contributing significantly to the proceeding discussion on the role and importance of ECCD in Makululu.

6.2 "We are used"

During a guided tour of the community, I observed a group of children aged about 5 – 8 years old run excitedly to a building that had loud music playing. I decided to follow the children to see what the excitement was about. I soon learnt that the children were excited about a particular song that was playing at the Tavern. At the time, this song was popular in Zambia as it was a celebratory song dedicated to the National Football Team after they won the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) Trophy in 2012.

I personally liked this song and would have danced along but I felt a certain discomfort about being at this particular Tavern being an outsider to the community and not knowing what to expect in such a space. The Tavern was a single building in an open space with people seated in and around the building, drinking local beer known as 'chibuku'. There were a number of drunken men, talking loudly and dancing along to the music while other men and women at the Tavern watched and laughed.

The children danced excitedly in a circle as we all watched. I was taken aback to observe that no one at the Tavern or passing by seemed to be concerned about the presence of children in this

adult space. This experience opened my eyes to what I thought was ‘lack of boundaries’ between adult and child spaces as an ‘outsider’ and due to having been brought up in different setting that seemed to have obvious demarcations between the adult and children’s worlds. This experience was also important because it raised a curiosity in me to explore this notion of safety in Makululu from the children’s perspectives and experiences.

According to the children, Makululu as a community is perceived as a ‘good place to live’ as it is a place where they are surrounded by the people they love and a lot of places to play. Noting the different activities they engage in with the friends that include playing in open fields away from the home and within the neighborhood, the children perceive Makululu as having lots of variety of activities and places to visit. They talked of ‘playing house’ (ukubuta) in houses that they made within the hedge(plant fence) of the surrounding homes with plates and pots made from clay, making balls from plastics that they picked up within the community and toys made from old wires. Other activities included walking around the community to the market, church, school, movie house (small shop usually at the market place where children pay to watch movies on DVD) and friends’ places. Mpikwa notes as follows;

We have grown up here so we know how we play, where we play and we enjoy ourselves. We are used.

The children are of the view that they are safe in the different places that they use within the community. This is an illustration of agency expressed by the children through the creation of play spaces within the community which has no designated ‘child places’ like play parks. As noted by Robson, Bell & Klocker (2007) in their study of rural children in Bolivia, the children were able to engage in the creation of safe places in which they could act which included the creation play spaces, making tree houses and dens.

However, the children noted that they were not allowed by their parents and guardians to go to some places like the Tavern. When asked whether they understood why they were not allowed, children were of the view that their parents did not want them to see adults drinking alcohol and dancing in the Taverns because this was not good for them. The children are of the view that parents/guardians do not want to be exposed to the bad activities that take place in such places such as insulting and fighting which shows moral boundaries that adults set within the society. Much as the community faces a challenge of limited shared places, adults expect children to

follow the social and moral boundaries that are set for them and require them to stay away from places designated for adults.

When asked whether they honored the wishes of the guardians about not going to Taverns, the children smiled and looked at each other during a FGD. Before I could follow up with another question, one girl responded as follows;

I still go near the Taverns though I make sure that I do not get too close. My friends and I like listening to the music that plays there and sometimes we go to buy popcorns at the popcorn machine which is at the Tavern.

Another girl responded to this by saying;

I do not go there because my grandmother says such places will take me away from the ways of God. She says such places will only teach me satanic things

The excerpts above demonstrate what Robson et al (2007) identify as other forms of agency expressed on the one hand by conforming to adult expectations such as not going to Taverns and on the other resisting adult expectations through ‘reactive agency’ by choosing to play around ‘forbidden places’. When asked, the Children who spent time at the Tavern said they felt safe in such places because they were there with their friends and enjoyed playing around such areas as there was music playing.

The children indicated that they was no need to be concerned with issues of safety as they were surrounded by adults and other people at the Tavern. To the children, the Taverns were just an extension of their play areas because they have ‘created it as a safe place’ within which they can act which is also a demonstration of their creative agency (Robson et al, 2007). This is illustrated in the following caption (figure 6.1) where I observed one girl aged about 12 years old and 3 younger children not older than 5 years at a Tavern with a big loud speaker playing loud music and a man with a container of ‘*chibuku*’ or local beer, walking out of the Tavern



Figure 6.1 Observing Children's use of places in Makululu

Source: Field Data in Kabwe, Zambia; June-August 2013

During our walks through the community after school hours, I often asked the group of children I was walking with whether they could show me places in the community that they did not consider safe for children or where they did not feel safe walking alone. Most of the children were of the view that places such as market areas and dark quiet roads were not good if one was alone because “*you could be kidnapped by Satanists who kill and sale your heart.*” The stories that the children told of danger and safety were passed on from adult parents and guardians as caution of the possible danger within the community but not their experience of the community. When asked whether they knew of friends or people that had experienced such things within the community, the children talked of incidences of theft and robbery that adults experienced while walking through the community after dark.

To this the children responded that during the day, Makululu was safe for them to go anywhere and play but as soon it started getting dark, they went back home and played within the yard which required them to adapt their play activities to suit the spaces available. For example, instead of playing football which needed more space to kick the ball and run, the children would ‘play house’ (ukubuta) or hide and seek. To the children the question of safety or boundaries

within the community was not a matter of physical places but rather the issue of *time*. As one girl notes;

I usually walk to school and back every day with my friends. We even go the market most of the time because during the day, there are people everywhere. My parents don't allow me to walk alone but I am not afraid to walk alone unless it is dark. At night, we don't walk around the community, we usually stay close to home because there are a lot of drunken people moving around and thieves move at night (Marie F/ 7 years old)

The above excerpt is consistent with my observations during the field work. The sight of children walking around the community in groups or alone is common. In groups, the children are usually found along the main road, within the community, at the market places, open grounds, Taverns and shops. I noted in my field notes that as soon as evening came, there were fewer children in sight. Walking around in the community, I noticed fewer children along the roads and market places but instead noticed more children within the yards of their homes playing with siblings and other children within the neighborhood.

This is yet another demonstration of creative active agency within the constraints and contexts that the children are living. Most houses in Makululu are made of mud, are small and do not have electricity. As a result, the cooking is done outside and to serve on candles, most parents will stay outside with the children as they prepare the evening meal. To compensate for this lack of space and lighting, the children will play within sight of adults and alter the type of games they play to suit the nighttime.

Conclusion

This section has shown how children view and experience living in Makululu in the context of parents/guardians views the community not being a good environment for children. Despite limited social amenities and limited shared spaces in the community, children employ their agency to create social spaces for themselves and alter play activities depending on the time of the day. Children also employ the use of reactive agency through their everyday lives by occupying adult spaces and using them as play spaces.

6.3 The Role and Importance of ECCD

6.3.1 Introduction

In the following section of my Thesis, I turn to discuss the role and importance of ECCD as understood and viewed by the participants in my Research. I will begin with a discussion of the themes in my empirical data with regard to the role and importance of ECCD which are; Education, Provision of Children's Spaces and Learning and expression of cultural values. To achieve this, I will begin with briefly discussing each theme after which I will present the views of the children as regards the theme, followed by the views of the adult participants and the MoE District Planning officer in order to provide a context in which ECCD is both implemented and experienced.

According to advocates of ECCD argue that it will achieve one of several goals among which is preparing children for school and enable them to get better results at school. In today's Zambian society, education is viewed as an important instrument for one to secure a good future. This view is shared by my participants who view education as the only way to get out of poverty and get a 'good job'.

6.3.2 Children's perspectives on Education

The details of children's drawings have been labelled to aide me in remembering the stories. Most of the children's drawings were very details describing their family structure, parents/guardian's jobs, food most consumed at home and their lives at school. According to the drawings and informal dialogues, the school was perceived as a place for learning. They associated the school with mostly, writing, counting and reading activities that were done so as to prepare for their future education.

During the FGDs, the children narrated how easy grade one would be for them because they would have learnt how to write the alphabet and count by the time they enrolled. Noting the classroom activities they engage in, the children narrated stories of how they were able to count and write and unanimously responded "no!" when asked whether adjusting to a new school and to grade one. It was interesting to note the confidence in their voices and radiance on their faces as they responded that they would be well prepared for grade one. In the case of one girl aged 6

years, she narrated how her ability to count has helped her engage in the family business as the mother is impressed with her performance in maths.

I have now started helping my mother to sell fritters along the road as I can now count properly. My mother has taught me how to count money and because of that, nothing will be difficult for me when I start grade one (Mary F/6years old)

According to the children, ECCD is viewed as the beginning of their education journey. They narrated how they would move on from the centre to other schools for the continuation of their education. Each participant had an idea of which school they would be enrolled at after leaving the centre giving examples of government schools within Makululu such as Zambia Open Community School (ZOCS) and David Ramusho School.

Clearly, being enrolled at an ECCD centre for children meant that one was ready to start with their education journey and the time had come for the family to consider one for education. They narrated stories of other siblings and friends who had started with the ECCD centre and moved on to other schools that they were currently attending. The children expressed how they are motivated by their peers' stories and view this possibility for themselves. Their understanding is that ECCD is the beginning, the starting point to education leading to primary school and higher levels with formal jobs as doctors, Teachers, Nurses and so forth, as the end product of this journey.

6.3.3 Parents' and Guardians' perspectives on Education

During my FGDs with parents and grandmothers, they narrated how their childhood was different from the one being experienced by young children now. Noting comparisons between rural and urban childhoods, they asserted that children are 'lucky these days' because they have access to learning facilities that can teach them the basics of reading and writing before they start grade one. Some mothers and fathers narrated having attended "olofeya" a local term that was given to community pre-schools run by the local councils as part of social welfare in urban areas targeting poor communities and housed in community halls in the 1970s and 1980s (Nalwimba, 2009) one father noted as follows;

I grew up here in Makululu and we didn't have 'olofeya' within Makululu so my friends and I used to walk to school near town where we would attend pre-school. That's why our children are lucky because nowadays, pre-schools are everywhere and one just has to choose one that they can afford. The reason for

taking the child to a nursery school before you take him/her to a government one is to make the child become intelligent [knowledgeable] at a tender age (Mr. Popali M/37)

According to the participants, the main reason why parents/guardians send their children for ECCD is to ensure that they learn how to write, count and read before they start grade one. This will help them in future as they will be familiar with what they will be learning in grade one and will be able to easily settle into formal education. The views of the parents are of ECCD as a forum for preparing children for formal education which begins in grade one. This is illustrated in the following taken from an interview with a caregiver;

The minds of Children are opened up to the idea of learning in a classroom and interacting with their peers. ECCD will open up the mind of the child; they should start school early so that even where they are going, things will not be difficult for them. For example, since we opened this centre in 2002, our children whom we have sent to government schools are doing very well. Even if I can call one, you see the books, they are good children, what they are doing, their performance, even teachers are happy with them (Mr. Chuulu M/46 years old- caregiver)

A grandmother noted as follows;

From what I know, the importance of ECCD is to teach the children so that when they go to grade one, they don't struggle with writing or participating in class. When they start grade one, or primary school, there is a difference between a child who has been through ECCD and one who has not because the one who was under ECCD has school on their mind and doesn't need to be forced to go to school compared to one who has not gone through ECCD. When they know it's a school day, they just get up on their own and go to school. Like my granddaughter, sometimes she wakes me up very early in the morning at 6am exclaiming that she is late for school. She will go and wash her face and put on her uniform on her own while I find food for her to eat (Mrs. Mutima F/52 years old, Grandmother)

The view that the role that ECCD plays in the lives of young children in Makululu is providing a platform for preparation for formal education was shared among the parents/guardians and grandmothers in my study. Their understanding is that through this opportunity to attend an ECCD centre, children are able to learn basic elements which enable them to prepare for grade one. The adult participants in my research view this as the importance of ECCD in the lives of children and for the community. This view was also shared by the District planning officer expressing this view from the MoE's perspective for encouraging ECCD in the following;

I think the government has seen the gap between learning how to read and write. You know when you take a child for Early Childhood Education, by the time they reach grade one, at least communication skills will be there and it makes learning easy and the child easily adapts to education activities. When you start from grade one, it is like grade one is an introduction of everything, everything is new. The government also realised that it is not everyone that can take their children to privately owned pre-schools, not everyone can afford to. It was realised that there was a big gap between Early Childhood Education and grade one. I think that is why the government has started with Early Childhood Education (DPO)

According to the participants, the most important role that ECCD plays is to ‘open the minds of children’ to learning. This view was shared among parents and guardians. One of the caregivers at the school notes as follows;

It is for the purpose of preparing children for what they will be in future, because that period that’s when they, ...if you train them during that period the child will fit in properly when they get into formal education like primary education, the child will be very good as they go on....let me say, that’s when the child grows up properly and fits in very well so that they don’t lag behind (Leo- M/44 Caregiver)

This is consistent with the following view expressed during my interview with the DPO at the Ministry of Education in this quote;

I am happy the government has decided to bring Early Childhood Education (ECE) in the education system because it has really cushioned the gap in terms of performance. Even if a child doesn’t know the initial steps or the first introductions of communication, gestures and writing, ECE will help to cushion that gap before they go to grade one (DPO).

Clearly, the idea of young children accessing pre-primary services has gained ground within Makululu and Kabwe. Parents have responded to affordable government ECCD centre within the pilot sites in the province and as such, the number of children accessing the services has increased.

6.4 Learning the Official Language (English)

6.4.1 Introduction:

As part of education, ECCD is viewed by the adult participants in my research as the platform for children to be exposed to the National official language which is English. In a community like Makululu with high illiteracy levels, school dropout rates and poverty, children are not exposed to the English language within families and the community. Therefore, the ECCD Centre provides such a platform. This view is consistent with the observation noted by Mazrui (2002) that English in Africa has the strongest demographic among white collar families.

6.4.2 Children's perspectives on learning how to speak English

According to the children in my research, learning how to speak English is one of the results and expectations of their families from attending an ECCD Centre. During the FGDs, they narrated how learning how to speak English makes them 'feel good' because it makes their parents happy and proud of them.' When asked why they feel good about it, the children talked about being able to understand what they read and watched on Television and how being able to explain it to their friends and siblings makes them a source of envy. The children also noted how learning how to speak English will help them in future as expressed by a 7 year old girl during a conversation.

The reasons I really want to learn how to speak English is so that I will be able to understand what I will be learning in grade one. I also want to be able to speak English when I grow up and get a job (Audrey F/6 years old)

Most children were of the view that speaking English was not emphasized or mandatory in the school environment and as such they were able to communicate with their peers and understand the Teacher. Noting their limited understanding of the language, the children expressed a desire to learn more because they viewed the language as necessary for future encounters. When I inquired whether learning the English language served any purpose for the children, the responses indicated a 'futuristic' approach to the use of the language. In the following exempt;

We do not speak English at home but here at school, we speak Bemba but the Teacher teaches us in English and Bemba which is good because we can understand what she is saying. We will learn more English in future as we go to primary school and finish school (Marie F/7 years old)

The children indicated through their responses that it would help them in future (kuntashi). Though they expressed an interest in learning the language and noted how it made their parents feel proud when they used some English words, the children were of the view that the language was beneficial for their future education endeavors and related the use of the language to their career aspirations. It was perceived by the children that fluency in English came with progression in education and as such served a greater purpose as one advanced through the education system.

When I become a Teacher, I will be teaching and writing in English so I need to learn how to speak English so I can also teach my pupils (Lungu M/5 years old)

6.4.3 Adults' views on learning the Official Language

Learning to speak English was an important theme within my discussion with parents and guardians. They felt that the success of learning and teaching was indicated by a child's ability to use the English language. They note that this is one of the main distinctions between a child who attends an ECCD Centre and one who does not. During a FGD, one grandmother noted that the child's ability to speak the English language is a source of pride to her. Making a comparison between her grandchildren in Makululu and those in Lusaka, she states that her 5 year old grandchild resident in Lusaka speaks better English than her and anyone in her household in Makululu. She attributed this to the quality of the ECCD Centre that the grandchild in Lusaka attends.

The same sentiments were also expressed by mothers and fathers during the FGDs. They note that a child's ability to express themselves in English or speak some English words is a source of pride for the family and sign of 'good investment' for the parents. One mother also notes that the ability for children to speak English does not only serve to benefit the children alone but is important for the whole family because, parents and siblings learn and improve their English from their school going children and siblings. Parents note that children speak Bemba or the local language at home and in the community therefore the school environment should be

distinguishable from the children's other environments by being an avenue through which children learn how to speak English.

One father argued as follows;

School is English (*Isukulu chisungu*)

Narrating that his inability to speak English was the reason he turned to fishing after the closing of the mines, this father argues that the purpose of education is to equip children with the necessary 'tools for today's society' of which English is among the most important as noted below.

After I lost my job with the Mine, I was moving from one office to another looking for a job so I could feed my family but I couldn't get a job. I would enter an office and once spoken to, I could not respond beyond the greeting...I am fine....after that I would be stuck. That's why they couldn't employ me because as a driver or guard, I would be required to speak English sometimes. That's why I want my children to learn and be able to speak because the world has changed now (Mr. Bob M/50 years old)

This raised a debate among the fathers with most arguing that children should learn both English and the local language because they should not be 'alienated from their culture.' This view is consistent with the argument forwarded by Mazrui (2002) that the choice of English as a medium of instruction in Anglophone African schools has had profound cultural consequences for the societies they serve. Most of the grandmothers and parents argued for a good balance between local language and English within the school environment noting that children cannot escape Makululu or the immediate environment in which they are growing up as argued in the following exempt from a FGD with fathers.

We are not white people neither are we rich people (*Tatuli basungu elo tatuli bachinondo*)

This father argues that in poor communities like Makululu, most people do not know how to speak English and it would be pointless to teach children in English only. This is consistent with what Mazrui (2002) notes that English in Africa has the strongest demographic among children of white color families. Although the ability to use English is considered to have social prestige, most parents still give precedence to a balance between the official and local language. Serpell

and Nsamenang (2014) note that great prestige is attached to official languages and many parents want their children to acquire greater competence than they have achieved. This was the view of most of the adults in my study. Their views were that their children should learn English and acquire competence in the language more than they did but not at the expense of the local language.

Arguments to this effect, noted that using English as the only medium of instruction and communication for children in ECCD centres is denying the reality in which these children are experiencing their childhood because the first language they learn in Makululu is Bemba. As such while some parents argued for emphasis to be placed on learning the official language, most argued that children should be equipped to be relevant to their families and the community. Furthermore, a sense of pride in one's roots is an indicator of good education noting that language is one the main ways in which one stays in touch with who they are. Therefore a balance of Bemba and English will ensure that learning for young children is more effective.

Conclusion

This section has highlighted the role of ECCD as indicated by the children and adults in my research. ECCD is seen as an important part of the lives of children as it signifies the beginning of education and the preparation for formal education. In the context of Makululu, ECCD is also important for providing formal learning environment where children can interact with each other. As indicated in this section, children are active in the construction of their lives and make meaning of their environment.

7 The Integration of local Knowledge in ECCD

7.1 Introduction

This section of my Thesis will discuss the views of children with regard to cultural values that they learn within the family and at the ECCD centre. The ACRWC Article 11 states that every child has a right to education and among other things; ‘this education shall be directed towards the preservation and strengthening of positive African morals, traditional values and cultures’. The concept of culture, tradition, values and beliefs have been encouraged in the promotion and implementation of children’s rights within the African context as noted in the preamble of the ACRWC. As I mentioned earlier, discourses about education in Africa raise concern for the irrelevance of western education in the African context which has led to alienation from local cultural practices and values (Marfo & Biersteker, 2011).

7.2 Children’s understanding of Local Knowledge and ECCD

According to Pence and Shafer (2006) there are several arguments favouring the use of local knowledge in development practices. On the one hand, philosophical and ethical arguments see the intrinsic value of cultural diversity and promote the tolerance or celebration of different worldviews. On the other hand, pragmatic arguments value local knowledge and perceive it as having helped people survive and evolve in their specific context (ibid). Further, they argue for the integration of local knowledge into higher education in ECCD to help promote appropriate cross-cultural curriculum content which can result in more effective ECCD policies and programs. In this section, I will discuss socio-cultural practices as a source of local knowledge in ECCD.

7.2.1 “That’s how people are supposed to live”

One of the most common phrases I encountered from the children when we discussed what they understood by living together and what they considered important in living together was “*that’s how we live*” (efyo twikala). This phrase was their understanding of such practices as ‘sharing food’, respecting adults, being obedient and helping out with household chores. The narrations of the children concerning the cultural values that they were taught in school indicated a consistency in the values that were emphasized by the families and the community. The children

talked about being aware of the expectations of the family and school regarding how to live with other people and how to behave towards each other and towards adults.

According to the children, ideas and values of living together were seen as part of their lives at home and at school. Noting the values of respecting adults, sharing what you have with others, helping with household chores, the children understood them as ‘the normal way that people live’.

That’s how people are supposed to live (efyo abanthu bafwile baikala). That’s what my grandmother has taught me and that’s what Teacher says. When I come with food, I am supposed to share with my friends because when I do not have food, my friends share with me. It is not good not to share what you have with other people (Nora f/6 year old)

The idea of living together as reflected in the narrations, drawings and observations during my field work indicates what Abebe (2013) refers to as interdependent agency in the lives of children within the family context and within the ECCD centre. As I sat in one class, I observed a boy walk to another boy who was seated on a desk behind me during a writing activity. I noticed him hand over his pencil to the other boy asking him if he could sharpen it for him. The boy put down his pencil, grabbed a razor blade from his bag and started sharpening the pencil as though it was the most natural thing to do. I watched as the two boys chatted as he sharpened the pencil after which he handed it over and continued writing. I took note of 3 girls and 2 other boys walking to this boy to have their pencils sharpened and watched him interrupt his writing and help each one on different occasions.

On another occasion where the caregiver had given instruction for the class to copy some words from the black board, I observed a girl walk over to the desk I shared with one of the girls in class and hand over a very short pencil to her. The girl grabbed the pencil and started writing after which she handed over the pencil to the owner. I soon learnt that the girls were sisters traditionally or cousins in English (their mothers were sisters which makes them sisters traditionally). They came from the same household and their parent had not bought them pencils at the time. They used the same pencil to write and usually the one considered as ‘the faster writer’ would do the class work first and hand over the pencil to the sister. This opened my eyes to notice that most of the movements I observed in the classroom during writing or drawing activities were as a result of this constant sharing of pencils and crayons. Although the school

provides crayons and pencils, which would usually be placed on the caregiver's table, a number of children shared their own pencils among themselves when they noticed that all the pencils on caregiver's table were taken. On some occasions, I observed boys breaking pencils into half, sharpening them and sharing them with others.

The practice of sharing is not limited to the classroom but extends to other activities as well, including the sharing of food. During my observations of break time interactions among the children, I noted children in small groups of girls and boys sharing food. In one group, one girl had a packet of popcorns which she shared with three other girls by filling the pockets of their uniform dresses and putting some popcorn on another girl's jersey. She then started eating the remaining popcorns in the packet while the others girls ate from their pockets and jersey. In another group, a group of three boys from the baby class sat and shared juice from one bottle, passing the bottle from one to the other. In yet another group, four boys washed their hands and shared a bowl of rice. The act of sharing food whether one had or not, was a common sight during all break time activities although a few children would sit alone here and there.

Another seemingly 'natural activity' I observed among the children was that at the end of each school day, a number of girls would run to the store room and grab brooms to sweep the classroom before they left (figure 7.1). This was an everyday activity and was mostly done by the girls reinforcing socio-cultural gender roles where girls usually participate in chores such as sweeping and cleaning the house. Some girls would be helping by moving desks as the others swept after which they would all place the desks back in order in readiness for the next school day.

The following pictures highlight some of the aforementioned observations;



Figure 7.1 observing children's break time and after class activities

Source: Field data in Kabwe, Zambia; June-August 2013

7.3 Other sources of information on local knowledge at the ECCD Centre

According to Pence & Shafer (2006), storytelling is one of the most valuable sources of information about local knowledge and is used as a vehicle for incorporating culturally relevant information into early childhood development programs. It encouraged at this particular centre with children volunteering telling folk tales in front of the class. The activity is usually done in such a way that three children volunteer to take part after which the caregiver also tells a story. The stories are traditional stories emphasizing such values as sharing, obedience, respect, hard work and cultural notions of community living. The child would usually tell the class who told them the story, whether a grandparent or parent after which they tell the story and give the lesson or moral of the story at the end of it.

Other activities such as songs, dances, games and play based on local knowledge are usually done in groups and coordinated by the caregiver or a volunteer from the community who gives a dance or song from a particular culture or part of the country and explains the meaning to the children. I observed this activity once with a volunteer from the community. Most organized games and play activities were traditional with a few exceptions of some western games. This practice as I found out from the caregivers is intentional and part of a locally oriented school program. According to Woodhead & Moss (2007), children's transitions can be eased by sharing information and developing ways of involving parents that take into account their preferences, values, and respect ethnic, cultural, linguistic, religious and other forms of diversity.

The children are also encouraged to come to the Centre with local toys that they play with in the community or engage in molding activities using clay as they normally do in the community. Mtonga (1988), notes that people of every society, have their own concepts of toys and playthings and Zambia is no exception. He further notes that an average urban Zambian child is likely to possess a wire model of a car, a motor-cycle or a bicycle. With varying degrees of sophistication, children use readily available materials such as papers, plastics, wires, sticks and clay among others to make toys and playthings (ibid). A case in point is one boy who came to the Centre with an old Car tyre which boys usually push either with their hands while running or using two sticks placed inside the tyre. This was after the caregiver gave instructions for the children to come with the toys and playthings they use in the community.

Others came with balls made from paper and plastic while others came with clay molded dolls and animals as shown in the following pictures.



Figure 7.2 photos of clay molded toys, an old car tyre and a storytelling activity in class

Source: Field Data in Kabwe, Zambia; June -August 2013

7.4 Children's views of the school and local knowledge

The use of local materials during class activities is also encouraged. For pre-mathematics lessons, children pick stones and sticks from outside and use them for counting and other numeracy lessons. In my view, this is an important way of teaching children how they can engage with everyday materials to learn and thus bridging the gap between the classroom and the community. During my observations, I saw a number of children engage in counting activities during break time with the use of stones and sticks in the playground. This illustrates the bridging of the gap between the classroom and the outside as children were able to continue their class lessons in the playground.

With regard to local knowledge and the way of life, the children view the school as teaching the same values that they are taught in the community. They note that the values of respecting adults, sharing, living together is consistent with what their parents and guardians teach them. In my view this is what Woodhead and Moss (2007) refer to this as a home-to-school continuity. However, my research shows that children employ their agency and interpret the meaning of these values in their everyday activities. As a case in point, I note one child who says that though he is encouraged to share his food with friends at school, he chooses who to share with and usually it is *“those who also share their food with me”*. This shows that rather than passively receiving cultural values at home and school, children make meaning of the values they are taught and interpret them in their everyday lives.

Clearly, the children in my study view the school as a more formal environment than the community but also note that the values are the same as what they are taught at home with a few exceptions. As a result of the formality of the school environment, the children expressed learning ‘good manners’ as part of some new values they learn. One participant gave an example of learning to excuse oneself or seek permission before leaving the classroom as one of the good manners they had learnt in school which was not taught at home.

At school, when you want to go to the toilet, we have to tell the Teacher. We say; ‘please Teacher may I leave the room’ [laughing] before I started coming to school, I didn’t know how to say that. When I say it now, my father says, “good girl!”

Apart from encouraging the values taught at home, the children note that the school also teaches what they refer to as ‘good manners.’

M: so what are good manners?

C2: not insulting, not fighting, sharing, respect,

M: are you taught about good manners at home?

Unanimously: yes we are....

C3: my grandmother teaches me all the time. She tells me, "don't insult, and don't fight" she is always telling me and my sister.

C4: me too. My parents, especially my mother tells me not to insult and to share what I have with my friends and my sister

C5: but you used to be stingy when you started school until Teacher told you to start sharing your food with your friends

C4: I was only stingy because some people don't share their food here at school but my mother always tells me to share my food with everyone

The above excerpt shows how children understand the values that the schools instil as a continuation of the values of the family and how they are expected to uphold them in school and at home. Interestingly, the excerpt also shows how children express their agency by negotiating how and when to express these values. The children note that the school environment accords them the opportunity to express these 'good manners' that they are taught but rather than simply model the expected behaviour, the children use the agency to interpret when and how to express these values. Another indication from the views of the children with regard to values is that children are able to make meaning of the expectations of others especially adults. As such they make note of 'places' or 'occasions' when they have the freedom to behave contrary to the expectations of adults as indicated in the following;

M: in what way do you think you have changed since you started coming to school

C1: I used to like playing too much and fighting with my friends before I started coming to school. But here the Teachers does not allow us to fight

C2: In do not like fighting

C1: you don't fight but you used to be very dirty when you first started coming to school [gesturing], you would come with dirty clothes and wouldn't even wash your face when coming to school

C2: yes but now I don't. I wash my face and apply Vaseline before I come to school. [Pointing at C1] you used to fight and insult all the time but now you have stopped

M: so why do you think you have changed?

C3: because Teacher says its 'bad manners' to behave in that way

M: what about your parents, how do they feel when you behave in that way?

C4: they don't feel good; they don't allow us to do it. We only fight when we are playing and our parents are not watching. My mother beats me when she catches me fighting or insulting so I don't do it anymore.

C3: Me too, my grandmother beats me when my friends tell on her that I was fighting so I stopped fighting and doing bad manners like my friends at home. My grandmother even stops me from playing with the kids who don't go to school because she says they will teach me bad manners.

This indicates children's ability to interpret expectations of those around them as well as their awareness of the expectations of adults, the family, the community and the school. This awareness enables the children to interpret these values and what they mean to them in different everyday situations of their lives. Woodhead and Moss (2007), note that the role that children play as a source of continuity has been relatively neglected. They further note that children's siblings, friends and their wider peer group can be significant as sources of shared experience and social support by collectively bridging the familiar and the unfamiliar. In this case, bridging cultural values and 'good manners', stories, games, toys, songs and play in school, home and community.

7.5 Adults' views on ECCD and Local Knowledge

Learning in the school environment should be within the cultural context of the community in that cultural values should be emphasised. The school is also important as it supplements values that are considered as important for children and their families in a changing context of children's lives. Global discourses about childhood such as best interest of the child principle of the UNCRC and ACRWC make way into communities and families often times through the school and school going children. In the same way, the school is used as a platform to educate and inform the community on ways improving children and their families' nutrition, health and wellbeing. In my view, young children are important agents of both continuity and change in the community as noted in the following;

The benefits of ECCD are that children develop good manners in ways that for example if that child is not taught about cleanliness at home, when they come here, they learn about cleanliness. Children learn to wash their hands after using the toilet and soon their siblings and friends learn from them. Sometimes [laughs] when I come from the toilet and I start doing something, my grandchild will ask me “grandma did you wash your hands.” (Mrs Moko-grandmother)

During the workshop organized for parents and guardians, a group of mothers, fathers and grandparents noted change in the behaviour of the child and child becoming more disciplined and learning about hygiene as some of the benefits of investing in ECCD among others. Children learning ‘good manners’ and values that are in line with their cultural values is a general expectation from ECCD. In addition to this, parents note that children learn practical ways of improving their wellbeing and that of the family through the school. As such the school is seen as important in improving the lives of children and their families by the participants in my study. The following picture captions these benefits as discussed by this particular group.

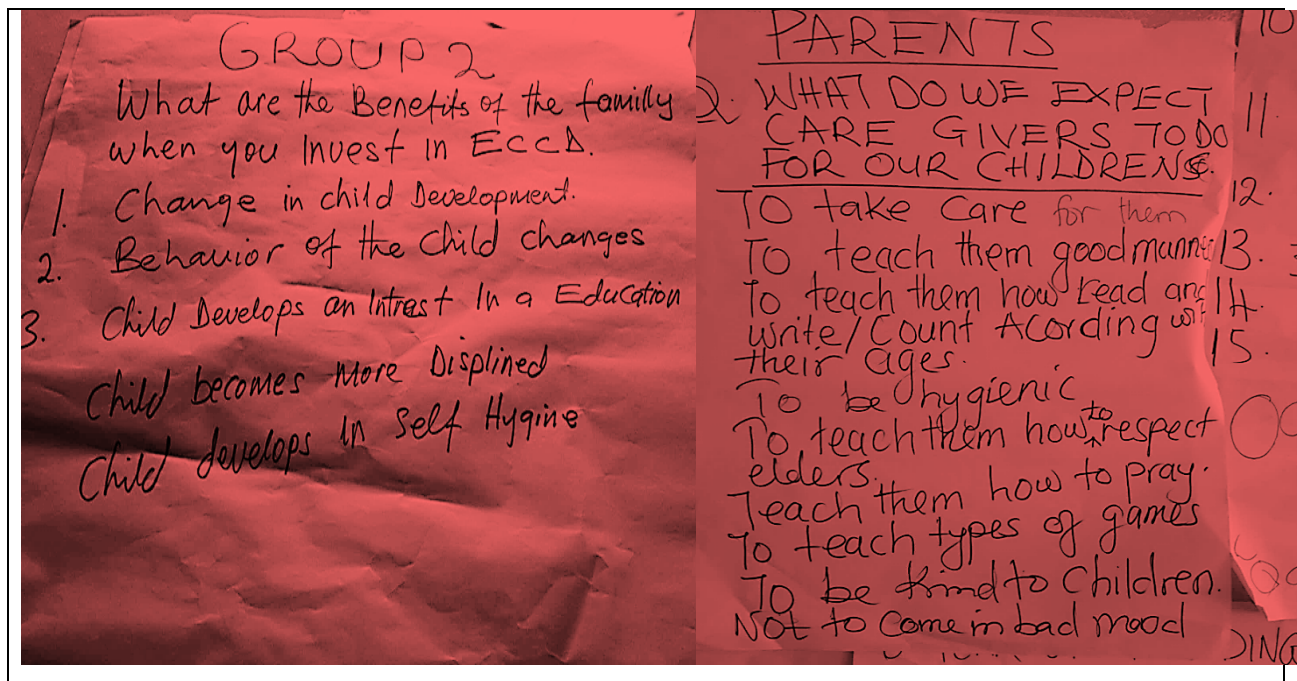


Figure 7.3 Responses from groups during the workshop conducted by MECCDF in Kabwe.

Source: Field data collected in Kabwe, Zambia; June -August 2013

7.6 Conclusion

This section of my thesis has highlighted how local knowledge is integrated into ECCD through the use of local toys, games, play, songs and stories among other things. Cultural values of the community are also an important source of learning and keeping the continuity between the family, community and school. However, children in my study have shown that they are not passive in the learning process by interpreting and making meaning of the values they are taught in their everyday lives. Parents also note the importance of continuity between the home and school in teaching using local materials and teaching cultural values but also highlight the need for children to learn other important values of personal care and hygiene.

8 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter, my aim is to present a discussion of the findings of my research in Makululu. I will achieve this by drawing from literature on ECCD and other research that has been carried out in this field in the context of my research findings. The chapter discusses the key themes in my analysis raising current issues and presenting my views. I will begin with a discussion on Local knowledge and ECCD,

8.2 Local Knowledge and ECCD

The argument for the inclusion of local knowledge in ECCD has been forwarded for reasons that it is relevant to the context of Africa and will ensure the growth and sustainability of such programs. As noted by Serpell and Nsamenang (2014), designing appropriate and effective ECCD services for African societies requires close attention to the prevailing sociocultural conditions including the strengths and limitations of local childrearing knowledge, attitudes and practices. They note that among others, looking at African ways of knowing by analysing traditional African proverbs is one complementary approach to knowledge generation about child development.

According to the findings through my analysis of the proverb ‘imiti ikula empanga’, rooted in the values, beliefs and culture of the Zambian society is the understanding that children represent continuity and thus are a valuable asset. The view of children in this context as the future and continuity does not necessarily mean that they are not valued for who they are in the present. However, Children are seen as a source of pride and are regarded as an important resource for families and the community. The importance of children in my view is not limited to the contribution they make to the family but also indicative of the indigenous philosophical idea of children and childhood that guides the society. Hence, it is of tremendous value to explore these ways of knowing in order to implement relevant and appropriate programs in Africa.

I agree with Nsamenang (2007) when he argues that every culture invests in children not as an end state but in recognition that variation among today’s adults is an outcome of diversity of experiences in their childhood. This is the understanding of the adults in my study who note that change in the socio-economic environment of Zambia requires different priorities in childhood

today. Therefore, exploring the traditional understanding of childhood and taking note of the changes in society is instrumental to ECCD.

For the children, the understanding demonstrated is that through education society they can shape the outcome of their lives. Most of the children in my study have a parent or guardian engaged in fishing at the Lukanga swamps (40 Kilometers from the community) as a source of livelihood. The children note that education will lead to a different outcome for them with regard to livelihood activities or sources of income. This is an indication of their understanding and the meaning that they attach to education as a requirement to participate in ‘white collar jobs’.

To view children as ‘a sign of continuity’ and future leaders in a traditional sense is to postulate that without children, that society ceases to exist. As noted from my research, there is a growing awareness among children and parents about the dynamic nature of society and changing needs of children living in today’s society. As I mentioned earlier citing Kjørholt (2013), global discourses about childhood have found a way into the local context thereby affecting and sometimes challenging the ideas, beliefs, values and practices of people in different contexts. To an extent this is viewed as progress in terms of the world becoming a global platform for such policies and interventions but to what degree this progress is effective is a question worth discussing.

8.2.1 Involving Parents and the Community in ECCD

As part of upholding children’s cultural rights in ECCD, a call to involve parents and the community has been made. For instance in an effort to consider UNESCO’s policy of promoting that there is need to promote programs that respond to the holistic and integrated ideals of ECCE while taking i notes that there is need to promote programs that respond to the holistic and integrated ideals of ECCE while taking into account local traditions. Evidence from this comparative study suggests similarities in ways to include indigenous knowledge and practice that includes community participation particularly by grandmothers, mothers and local volunteers and the use of local language in ECCD (ibid). This is consistent with my findings which show what Pence and Shafer (2006) identify as reciprocal and redistributive culture rooted in indigenous knowledge which provides an alternative to dominant economic and moral systems of the west.

My research has shown that young children understand the context in which they are living and the needs of the families with whom they live thereby positioning them as social actors. Young children attach value not only to what they receive from others but what they contribute as well. The understandings of mutual dependence expressed through values of sharing, respect and works among other things, provide insight into the value of cultural diversity and uphold the rights of the child to cultural identity as postulated by ACRWC and UNCRC. My research has also shown the agency of children in both creative and reactive ways in economically deprived neighborhoods with limited social amenities for children. As such I am of the view that best known practices regarding children today should be attached to positive socio-cultural practices in the local context of the child in order to be relevant. Pence and Shafer (2006) citing Evans & Myers (1994, pp. 2-3) note that there is value in indigenous knowledge as it responds to diversity, respects cultural values and provides continuity in a time of rapid change.

I stand among those who argue that within formal and non-formal education, traditional knowledge and practices can be woven together with other pedagogical practices (Soudee, 2009). I am of the view that the particularity of a context should be explored in the implementation of interventions such as ECCD if one is to find positive aspects to use for the benefit of such programs. There is need to move away from what Callaghan (1998 p. 31) as cited in Nsamenang (2007) refers to as “a blindness and inability to see and value Africans in the African context.” Considering the local understanding of the proverb ‘imiti ikula empanga’, it is possible to use it to cultivate a new culture of prioritizing relevant education curricula in Zambia by adapting to the changing needs of the country and its people. Jalongo et al. (2004) argue that when a nation claims that children are its future, that nation needs to be fully aware of the social obligations implicit in such a statement. Arguably, the cultural idea of children as the future in Zambia can be integrated into the changing views about childhood and be of value in the improvement of children’s lives

8.2.2 The use of local language in ECCD

The use of local language in schools is a contested topic in Zambia. With the recent government gazette to introduce local language use in the first four grades of primary school, the debate has arisen again. According to Woodhead and Moss (2007), one of the factors affecting schools’ readiness for children among others is the mismatch between the language and culture of the

home versus school and more general the lack of respect for children's cultural competencies and prior learning. They note that 'linguistic continuity for children' is promoted by instruction in their mother tongue and by bilingual programmes arguing that children who learn in their mother tongue for the first six to eight years of their lives perform better in terms of test scores and self-esteem Thomas & Collier (2002) cited in Woodhead & Moss (2007).

According to the findings in my research, children value the use of local language in ECCD *'because they understand what is taught and find it easy to express themselves in school.'* The Children note that the use of local language in school enables them to participate in school activities such as storytelling, numeracy and literacy lessons as well as other school activities such as games and play that are in local language and familiar to them. It was also noted by the children, that learning the official language in this case 'English' is significant to parents and guardians as it signifies successful teaching and learning.

Contrary to the views of the children which place value on the use of local language or bilingual approach to learning, most parents and guardians place value on learning the use of 'English.' This is seen as a 'mark of education' and is important to parents and guardians as it signifies good investment, source of pride and opportunity for the family to learn and improve their English. According to Woodhead and Moss (2007) schools are often under pressure to introduce the dominant language because parents are often strong supporters of early teaching of the dominant language. As noted by Serpell & Nsamenang (2014), social prestige is attached to the use of official languages in Africa. Zambia is no exception and as such, parents view the quality of education by how well their school going children are able to speak the English language. This is consistent with the views of some parents in my study while others argue for the need to maintain continuity in culture and language.

Studies have indicated the educational benefits of linguistic continuity arguing that it is important for the promotion of gender equality and social inclusion (Woodhead & Moss, 2007). Citing Alidou et.al (2005), they note that in classroom observations across 12 countries in Africa, researchers found that the use of unfamiliar languages forced primary teachers to use ineffective and teacher-centred methods which undermine students' learning. Additionally, 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. Arguably, local language use is an important aspect of a holistic approach to ECCD which respects children's culture, integrates their families and maximizes learning.

8.3 Children's Use of Places in Makululu

Young children in such contexts such as Makululu that have a high incidence of poverty are usually depicted in popular media as victims of such environments. Most often than not, Television and Print documentaries will show children in market places, by the roadside or in other public areas. According to Jenks (2005), all people in society are subject to geographical or spatial prohibitions but childhood is that status of personhood which is defined often in the wrong place. This idea is rooted in western ideals of childhood where children are obliged to spend a considerable amount of time in schools and organized play activities (ibid).

Contrary to such depictions of children as victims of poor environments, my study shows the agency that they apply in their everyday lives to create places for themselves in the community. This is consistent with the argument forwarded by Abebe & Kjörholt (2009) that the competency of children on the one hand and their vulnerability and dependence on the other are not irreconcilable attributes but interdependent and fluid characteristics. I argue that we cannot deny the vulnerability of children living in poverty neither can we ignore their competency and agency in negotiating the limitations of the economic, social and physical environment in which they live. Abebe & Kjörholt (2009), note that we need to construct children as human subjects who not only move between social positions but also negotiate vulnerability, dependence, autonomy and agency. This is indicated in my study as regards children's use of social places in Makululu which I now turn to discuss.

8.3.1 Children and Places in Makululu

Karsten (2005) argues that space matters particularly in children's daily lives and that neighborhoods differ in the way they accommodate children's lives especially regarding possibilities for outdoor play. According to my findings, most parents/guardians are concerned about the negative influence that 'spending too much time in the community' has on young children. Noting negative neighborhood characteristics, they expressed concern over risk factors that they feel powerless to protect their children from. In communities like Makululu, parents feel unable to 'shelter' their children from negative vices because of both the physical (limited

shared spaces and no designated play areas), moral and social environment. As noted by Olwig and Gulløv (2003), contestations over what kind of places are proper for children are about power to assert particular views on social life and safeguarding children's wellbeing and safety in a particular society.

My findings with regard to children's use of places in Makululu indicate that according to parents and guardians, the lack of 'child friendly places' has led children to occupy adult places which have negative influence on children. James et al. (1998) note that Aries(1962), was right to observe that the most important feature of conceiving childhood in modern age is that it merits separation from the world of adults. The MECCDF feasibility report indicates that in the year 2000, Makululu as a community though Zambia's largest informal settlement area did not have any schools within the community. Seemingly, with the building of school infrastructure for both ECCD and Primary school since 2002, there is a growing idea of 'proper places for children' in the community. As Jenks (2005) argues that children either occupy designated spaces (nurseries and schools) or are visible by their inappropriate invasion of adult space. And thus as regards places children are sited, insulated and distanced because physical, conceptual and moral boundaries circumscribe the extent of children's wanderings (ibid).

In neighborhoods such as Makululu with no or limited social amenities for children, young children demonstrate their agency in everyday lives. As a result of the community being a rapidly growing informal settlement area, there are limited shared spaces. The physical characteristics of most houses in the community as noted by the MUMR (2013) are unprofessionally built houses with no electricity and usually not more than three rooms. Due to what Karsten (2005) refers to as limited home space and ill-considered social environment, the nature of children's play in Makululu is mostly improvised outdoor activities. My research has shown children's agency in this context as both creative and reactive (Robson et al., 2007). Young children find places within this environment and their use of places is sometimes against the expectation of adults around them as earlier mentioned in the analysis of my empirical data where children use Taverns as play places.

Children demonstrate their agency through changing play activities depending on the time of day and place. In open fields in Makululu, children are often seen playing football or netball in groups while within the housing space, they 'play house' in the hedges and other more controlled

games within the limited place. In the evening, children understand the need to play near their homes due to some crime activities in the community and as such use the limited lighting in the community to 'play hide and seek' in the proximity of their homes.

8.4 The Family and Children in ECCD

According to Pence (1998) while there is need to study and consider minority world approaches to ECCD, they should not be understood as 'the best' or the only way to implement these programs. Rather he argues that they should be considered as approaches to ECCD with particular roots and context in the west. My understanding of this argument is that contextualization of programs is important to achieve if success and sustainability is to be reached in interventions such as ECCD. Therefore, programs that serve young children throughout the world should have clearly articulated goals that value children, families, cultures and communities (Jalongo et al., 2004)

As indicated in my study, parents are aware of the challenges of raising children in conditions of poverty and deprivation and note their failure to cope with increasing social and economic demands. Noting the high poverty levels in Makululu due to unemployment, they cite their inability to provide adequate resources for their children and families as the main challenge they face every day.

My findings indicate that young children growing up in this context of high poverty rates are aware of the socio-economic challenges that their families face. I note through the empirical data that, children understand the particular challenges of their households in comparison to others around them as illustrated in the following;

I live with both my parents. My father is a fisherman and spends most of his time away from home. My mother sells vegetables at the market but they both don't make a lot of money. In the morning before I come to school, my mother warms left over food for me to eat and carry to school. I cannot bring biscuits and crisps to school because my parents don't have money. [Pointing at another girl] we are not like them. They are rich (*Niba chinondo*). They have a shop at their house where they sell different stuff that's why she can bring biscuits and juice to school (Mpatwa F/6 years old)

My research shows young children as social actors. Young children are 'doers' and 'thinkers' who take action in their everyday lives. They are vulnerable but not victims of the circumstances in their context but rather they make meaning of the world in which they live. According to the

children in my study, the family is viewed as the primary decision maker with regard to when and where one begins their education. In light of the economic challenges, with some families surviving on one meal a day, the decision to take a child to school is a matter of consideration for most families. Amidst changing views of childhood and children's rights, EFA and UPE, families in contexts like Makululu face challenges of reconciling the reality of their lives and the demands of today's society. Vargas-Barón (2005), notes that research shows that children who live in poverty are far less ready for school than others from middle class and upper income homes whose mothers have more formal education hence the need for parent education and support.

8.4.1 Families as 'enablers' of continued education

According to the children, ECCD is viewed as the beginning of their education journey and how far they go is often in light of the changing economic situation of the family. Makululu is noted as having a high rate of school dropouts due mainly to the fact that some families cannot afford school fees and school materials for children. This situation is exacerbated by high levels of unemployment, poverty, limited economic prospects and an increase in the number of orphans and change in family structure due to HIV/AIDS. The views of the children and their understanding of the context in which they are growing up reveal a mutually dependent society in which adults and children, children and siblings, neighbors are interdependent. Kjørholt (2013), cautions that there is a danger that global rights will detach the individual from the social cultural group they belong to, risking the particular subsistence and livelihood strategies that are developed in the particular local cultural context.

In a cultural and economic context such as Makululu, I agree with Jalongo et al. (2004) when they say that the responsibility to strengthen the family-child bond, keeping families informed about programs and inviting families to participate in a variety of ways that improve children's lives falls on the nation. Preschool programs need to be aware of the realities faced by parents, families and communities who are working long hours and struggling to meet the basic needs of the children (ibid). The American Bureau of Census, American Community survey (2004-2007), notes that children in low income communities are more likely to attend schools that lack resources, less likely to be enrolled in pre-school and have fewer opportunities for extracurricular

activities. In my interview with the District Planning Officer, she notes the following with regard to community response to the integration of ECCD into government primary schools;

They are happy. Others have even withdrawn their children from private pre-schools to government because of the lower fees. They consider private pre-schools to be on the expensive side so looking at the economic status, they would rather take their children to a government early childhood education centre. They have welcomed it actually, because a lot of children were playing around in the neighbourhood until they are 7 years old but now they can start going to school before that (DPO)

In view of the above, governments should implement programs in such contexts with this in consideration. The children in my study identify the family and its changing socio-economic situation as an enabler and determinant of their education journey. Suffice it to say that a country is only as strong as its families and as successful as its citizens. The onus therefore falls on the government of Zambia and partner organizations to make interventions such as ECCD available and accessible to its citizens.

8.5 ECCD as the beginning of the education journey

Advocates of ECCD argue that it is of great value to all children and should be equally available and accessible to all (Education International, 2010).). According to ILO (2012), the positive impact of ECCD as regards readiness for school and continuation are well documented and as such, ECCD should be considered as a public good. They note that Evidence from evaluations that have been done in both developing and developed countries indicate that ECCD can improve school readiness, make enrolment in the first grade more likely, reduce delayed enrolment, grade repetition, drop out and increase completion and achievement(Myanmar, Nepal, Turkey and United Kingdom as examples).

UNESCO (2007, p.112) cited in ILO (2012) note that controlling for Gross Domestic Product(GDP), studies done in Africa indicate that the higher a country's ECCD enrolment ratio, the higher its primary school completion rate and the lower its primary school repetition rate. Arguably the impact of ECCD is stronger for children from poor families in terms of lower drop-out and repetition rates than for children in advantaged families (ibid). As such ECCD acts as an equalizing factor for children from vulnerable groups (Education International, 2010).

On the one hand, Children view ECCD as the beginning of their education journey with future prospects of moving on to higher levels. Noting the primary schools they would proceed to in

grade one, it is clear that for children education begins at the ECCD Centre moving on to primary school. This is a demonstration of children as social actors as they are able to make meaning of their attendance of ECCD as a starting point in their education life.

Parents and guardians on the other hand view ECCD as preparation for formal education which begins in grade one. They note comparable differences between children from their households and community that have attended ECCD and those that have not citing that those with ECCD settle into formal education much easier compared to those without. Further, Parents note that the level of motivation for school and education is higher among those children that went through ECCD compared to those who did not and this is noted by the rate of absenteeism from school. This is indicative of the changing environment in which children in Zambia are living.

I argue that the impetus that has come with global policies such as EFA, UPE and ECCD has led to a growing awareness among children, parents and guardians about the need for education. Woodhead and Moss (2007), note that where education was seen as a privilege of a minority, it is now recognized as a universal entitlement with every child's right to education reaffirmed by the UNCRC. In part this can be seen as a result of social investment thinking but also as rooted in reciprocal relationship in traditional societies. In his study of ECCD in Accra, Ghana, Adjei (2012) notes that children serve as future insurance for their parents as they believe that when a child gets a good foundation through ECCD, s/he will pay back their parents' investment in them.

In my view, formal education is replacing traditional education while white collar jobs are replacing manual work leading to a change in 'ways of sustaining reciprocal networks'. Where children took care of parents in old age by tending their gardens or fields and ensuring their food security in traditional society, children now demonstrate this by providing material and financial resources for parents in old age. Such changes have come with socio-economic and socio-cultural progress that traditional societies have experienced. As a result of this, advocacy for promotion of education continues in academia by local scholars in Zambia as noted in the following excerpt;

Parents should give priority to the education of their children and to their wellbeing, as opposed to their being a mere source of revenue. Parents should look at education as an investment for them and for the country. (Matoka, 2007, p.3)

While such calls for parents and the government of Zambia to invest in children's education are well meaning and timely, Thomas and Thomas (2009) argue that educational and contextual factors must be considered before the government implements national educational reform. They note that the Zambian education sector is financially and materially overwhelmed indicating that the creation and continued development of ECCE programming maybe premature and potentially damaging to an already weak education system (ibid). They further note that public funded ECCE programming is a relatively new concept calling for a necessity to understand the primary schooling situation in Zambia.

The Ministry of Education still faces many challenges inhibiting the delivery of educational provision to primary school education such as limited resources and budget allocation (ibid). Therefore Thomas and Thomas (2009) argue that while ECCE has an important role to play in the fabric of Zambian educational policy, it should not become an integral part of the system until primary and basic schools in the country develop and sustain an adequate learner-friendly environment.

In the light of my findings which indicate that children view ECCD as the beginning of their education journey while parents view it as preparation for formal education, I would like to briefly discuss the implication of this for government as argued by Thomas and Thomas (2009). As mentioned earlier, advocates of ECCD speak of its benefits one of which includes getting children ready for school. School readiness or school preparedness is often discussed and seen as the condition of the child (Woodhead & Moss, 2007).

However, readiness should be looked at as a multifaceted construct referring to the match between the child and institutions that service the child as noted by Scott-Little et. al (2006) cited in (Woodhead & Moss, 2007). I agree with the argument that ready schools must exist as part of ready communities where funding for programs is adequate , work-force policies are family-friendly and community commitment to the early years is manifest through health initiatives, social services and family life (ibid).The extent to which progress is made in the establishment and improvement of such services for children is important in meeting young children's rights to equitable and excellent services as argued by Woodhead (2006) cited in (Woodhead & Moss, 2007).

Notably, in resource poor countries like Zambia, children who might benefit the most from quality education, are least likely to have access to good programs at either pre-primary or primary levels. Therefore, taking a balanced view recognizes that school systems are part of the problem as much as they are a solution to that problem (Woodhead & Moss, 2007). There is need for the government to ensure that the education system is ready in theory and practice for the implication of having readily available public funded ECCD services. In the same way that commitment has been shown through policy documents, there is need for progress in the implementation of integrated ECCD programs for children in Zambia.

This can be achieved by ensuring that primary schools are equally ready to accommodate the number of children who access ECCD. As noted earlier, the majority of Zambia's citizenry lives in poverty and as such cannot afford private pre-primary services for children. Hence the timely need for integrated ECCD services for young children living in conditions of poverty. As argued by Jalongo et al. (2004) that any nation or citizenry that truly believes attention to children's care and education during the early years is of inestimable value to society would make every reasonable value to invest in preschool education. But I argue that in the light of the changing environment in Zambia, the commitment to invest in children should reflect in the government's investment in the education sector as a whole.

8.6 Conclusion

In the light of my findings, the need to consider context in the implementation of ECCD cannot be reiterated enough. Most African countries are presented with challenges that are not peculiar to the third world but its socio-cultural heritage has enabled its people to evolve and survive through the years. It is therefore important for modern interventions and programs to consider the place of local culture, tradition, practice and knowledge that has sustained this society. With regard to ECCD and as indicated in my study, it stands to benefit from contemporary research into the local ways of knowing about children and childhood. In the same vein, the society's orientation towards the collective, its practices and co-dependency could prove to be instrumental in the effective implementation and sustenance of ECCD.

9 Summary, conclusion and Recommendations

9.1 Introduction

In this chapter, my aim is to give a summary of my thesis by drawing on the objectives of the research, my findings and discussion. I will then proceed to give my concluding remarks which will be followed by my recommendations for future research on ECCD in Zambia as well as recommendations for policy development and program implementation.

9.2 Summary of Findings

9.2.1 Local Knowledge and ECCD

Through this thesis, I sought to explore how local knowledge is integrated into ECCD through the activities at the school as well as exploring the local proverb ‘imiti ikula empanga.’ As indicated in my study, connectivity between the home and school is important for children in ECCD. This connectivity is achieved through the use of local language, local materials for learning and play as well as socio-cultural practices which are beneficial to children in the context in which they are living. According to Vargas-Barón (2005), a culturally appropriate programme for transition from home to school is essential hence the argument for the integration of local knowledge in ECCD.

As part of the integration of local knowledge, it is important to explore a particular culture’s views and understanding of children and the value of childhood in that context. This can be achieved by exploring sources of local knowledge such as proverbs, songs and dances among other things. As indicated by my study, there is value in local knowledge and local knowledge can be used to derive ideas of how to implement culturally appropriate programmes in particular contexts.

9.2.2 The Family and ECCD

The family is an important resource in the life of children as primary caregivers. One of my research objectives was to seek the views and understanding of the children regarding the role of the family in their education. My research has shown that young children in Makululu view the family as the primary decision makers regarding when and where they start school and as providers of material and social support. This view reflects the interdependent nature of family relations in this context and echoes the argument forwarded by Vargas-Barón (2005) that parents

living in poverty usually require parent education and support to help their children achieve their full potential in school.

9.2.3 ECCD as the beginning of Education

Education, according to the children in my research begins when they enroll at the ECCD Centre. The Centre is the first step to the milestone that lies ahead of their education journey. As such, it is important that the government, service providers and implementers are made aware of this view held by most children accessing ECCD. In contexts of poverty and deprivation, the role of ECCD is indicated as preparation for formal education and providing learning facilities for communities.

9.2.4 Childhood and the use of Places in Makululu

For the purpose of contextualizing the lives of the children in my research, I analyzed the children's use of places in Makululu. Global discourses about children such as UPE and local campaigns for children's education have led to a growing concern among community members about 'proper places for children'. The school is considered as an important resource in the lives of young children in Makululu with Parents/guardians indicating that it is important for the preparation of children for formal education as well as sheltering young children from negative influences in the community.

My research has indicated that children use creative and reactive agency to explore their community and create places for themselves. Children living in spatially limited communities use varying forms of agency in their everyday lives. It is also indicated in my research that children understand their context, their lives and those of people around them.

9.3 Concluding Remarks

The field of ECCD has received considerable attention for the value it is said to add to the experiences of young children especially those living in poverty. In resource limited countries like Zambia, children are the most affected by poverty. Children are the largest consumers of health, education and social welfare services and as such there is need to ensure that they gain access to quality services. The call for integrated ECCD services has arisen out of concern that the majority of children especially in rural and poor urban communities does not have access to these services and as such are ill prepared for learning when they enter formal education.

Integrated ECCD services will therefore help narrow the gap between children in rural and poor urban communities and their counterparts. The Ministry of Education has shown commitment to meeting the needs of young children living in poverty through its policy documents and recent integration of ECCD into the education structure. There is however, need for the development of infrastructure and facilities within the school structure that will cater for the needs of young learners. This calls for commitment in resource allocation and training of skilled man power for young learners in government schools.

The integration of ECCD will serve to improve the lives of young children in poverty but there is need to ensure that these services are relevant to the context in which they are implemented. As such, there is need to uphold the cultural integrity of the context by integrating local knowledge into such services. Local knowledge as indicated in my study is valuable for the effective implementation of ECCD and can serve to improve the lives of children in the local context. Hence the need to, combine best known practices and local knowledge in ECCD which is consistent with the plea of the ACRWC. As I earlier mentioned, the ACRWC notes that the implementation of children's rights in Africa should take into consideration the particular cultural context in which children live. In view of the above, I make the following recommendations;

9.4 Recommendations

Investment in ECCD is essential in order to ensure a nation 's children develop well(Vargas-Barón, 2005). It is with this argument in mind and based on the findings in my study that I make the following recommendations.

- **Government Involvement in ECCD:** The role of the government in ensuring that young children have access to services that aim to improve their lives and enable optimum development cannot be reiterated enough. There is need to ensure that ECCD as a subsector of the education system in Zambia receives enough material and financial support from the Ministry of Education and Partner organizations. My recommendation therefore is for an efficient and effective monitoring and evaluation system at national, provincial and district levels to ensure that as many children as possible benefit from the government initiative of integrating ECCD into the education sector.

- Integrating Local knowledge: The integration of local knowledge into ECCD is a growing area of interest in research in Africa. As such, there is need to devote resources and efforts to further research in this regard. I therefore urge the government, partner organizations and academia to show commitment to exploring the value of local knowledge in ECCD in order to have current, well informed and relevant policy and programming in Zambia.
- Including Young Children in ECCD Research: The views of children are integral and of great value to the development and implementation of ECCD in Zambia. As such, I recommend that research and researchers take this into this consideration when studying ECCD programs in both urban and rural areas of Zambia.
- Local Adaption of Children's Rights: There is need to ensure that the UNCRC and ACRWC are translated into local languages to make them accessible to parents/guardians and local communities so as to help improve the lives of children within their context. Adaption of the ACRWC should be rooted in local cultural practices and beliefs and applicable to the context of the children and family. Parents should be educated on the rights of children regarding every aspect in their everyday lives such as work, play and education.

10 References

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11 Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview Guides

Interview Guide for Children

- a. Would you draw/tell me about yourself and your family?
- b. Who brought you to start school here?
- c. Would you draw/tell me about the activities you do at school and at home?
- d. Why do you come to school?
- e. What do you like about school?


Interview guide for FGDs with Parents and Grandmothers

- a. Can you tell me about your childhood from 0-7 years old?
- b. Is it different from that of your child/grandchild and if so, in what way?
- c. What comes to mind when you hear the proverb ‘imiti ikula empanga?’
- d. What do you consider important for children between 0-7 years old?
- e. Why do you send your child/grandchild to the ECCD centre?
- f. How has attending the school helped your child and family?



Interview guide for District Planning Officer

- a. What is the history of ECCD in Kabwe?
- b. How many centres do you have in the district?
- c. How is the community response to the program?
- d. How is the education district office involved in ECCD in Kabwe?
- e. How is local knowledge integrated into ECCD?
- f. What challenges has the program faced in the district?

Appendix 2: Access Letter

			 <p>NORSK SENTER FOR BARNEFORSKNING THE NORWEGIAN CENTRE FOR CHILD RESEARCH</p>
To whom it may concern			
			Our consultant: Line Hellem Higher Executive Officer Telephone no.: +4773596357 E-mail: line.hellem@svt.ntnu.no
Dated: 2013-05-28	Our ref.:	Your letter dated:	Your ref.:
LETTER OF INTRODUCTION			
We hereby confirm that Salome Temba, born 14 July 1983, is a student in the programme <i>Master of Philosophy in Childhood Studies</i> at Norwegian Centre for Child Research, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway. She will undertake her fieldwork and data collection from 15 June to 20 August 2013, in Kabwe, Zambia, on the topic:			
<i>" Imiti Ikula Empanga "</i> <i>An Assessment of the effect of Early Childhood Care and Development Programs on Children, Families and Communities in Kabwe, Zambia.</i>			
We would be grateful for any assistance given to her during this process. This includes granting interviews, assisting her in making appointments, handing out materials and making information accessible to her. We ensure that the information collected is treated confidentially, and that the fieldwork bears no costs on the institutions and persons visited.			
Yours sincerely,			
			
Anne Trine Kjørholt Supervisor/Professor Director of Norwegian Centre for Child Research			
 <p>NORWEGIAN CENTRE FOR CHILD RESEARCH NTNU, N-7030 TRONDHEIM, NORWAY</p>			
 Line Hellem Higher Executive Officer			
NOSEB is organized as a department at The Faculty of Social Sciences and Technology Management, Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)			
Postal Address: NO-7491 Trondheim Norway	Locational Address: University Centre at Dragvoll Pavilion C, Loholt allé 87	Tel. +47 73 59 62 40 Fax +47 73 59 62 39 Org. no. NO 974 767 880 (NTNU)	Page 1 of 1

Appendix 3: Permission Letter from MECCDF

<p>P.O. Box 35040 Lusaka Zambia Cell: +260-0977758079 /0977874222 Email: mulumbo@iconnect.zm</p>		<p>Plot No. 8557/88 First Floor, Office No. 12 Total Filling Station Cairo Road, North End Lusaka</p>
<p>15th July 2013</p>		
<p>Salome Temba Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norwegian Centre for Child Research, 7194 Trondheim, Norway.</p>		
<p>Ref: <u>Request for Permission to Conduct Research at Chililalila ECCD Centre.</u></p>		
<p>Reference is made to your request seeking permission to do a research in Makululu at our Chililalila center.</p>		
<p>We have received your research entitled "imiti ikula empanga" discussing the role and importance of ECCD with children, families and caregivers in Makululu. We are glad to inform you that permission is granted for you to conduct this research at our center and we will be glad to help facilitate contact with the community and children.</p>		
<p>We wish you all the best with your work and hope that you will find our organization and staff helpful.</p>		
<p>Yours faithfully,</p>		
		
<p>Catherine M Musonda Finance and Administrative Officer</p>		
<p>Mulumbo Early Childhood Care and Development Foundation</p>		

Appendix 4: Permission for Use of Organization's Name

P.O. Box 35040
Lusaka
Zambia

Cell: +260-0977758079 / 0977874222
Email: mulumbo@iconnect.zm



Plot No. 8557/88
First Floor, Office No. 12
Total Filling Station
Cairo Road, North End
Lusaka

21st May 2014

Salome Temba
Norwegian University of Science and Technology,
Norwegian Centre for Child Research,
7194 Trondheim, Norway.

**REF: PERMISSION TO USE THE NAME OF OUR ORGANIZATION IN THE RESEARCH
CONDUCTED AT CHILILALILA ECCD CENTRE.**

We write in reference to your request to mention the name of our organization in your thesis on the research which you did at one of our centers in Makululu, Kabwe, entitled "imiti ikula empanga" discussing the role and importance of ECCD with children, families and caregivers in Makululu.

Permission to use the name Mulumbo ECCDF In your thesis is hereby granted. We wish you all the best with your work and hope that whatever information you gathered from our center has been of help to you and your studies.

Yours faithfully,

Catherine M Musonda
Finance and Administrative Officer



Mulumbo Early Childhood Care and Development Foundation

