



Faculty of Education

Fakulteit Opvoedkunde
Lefapha la Thuto

QUESTIONNAIRE

Professionalising the Early Childhood Development Educator (birth to 4) Workforce through a policy-driven initiative.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study. Kindly complete the questionnaire by answering the questions as fully as possible. The completed questionnaire can be returned to Adendorff.z@dhet.gov.za

Participant:

H 2

A. Implementation of the Policy on Minimum Requirements for Programmes Leading to Qualifications in Higher Education for Early Childhood Development Educators.

The ¹MRQECDE policy, aimed at producing a graduate birth to 4 years educator workforce has far reaching consequences for the ECD sector. In light of this, please provide your considered responses to the questions below:

1. What role does your organisation/institution/department play in relation to early childhood development?

¹ Minimum Requirements for Programmes leading to Qualifications in Higher Education for Early Childhood Development Educators

Answer deleted for protection of privacy

2. In your opinion, does the MRQECDE policy have any implication for your work? Why or why not?

Yes, it does. It guides the design of ECCE qualifications.

3. Do you think that your organisation/institution/department may have a role to play in contributing to the successful implementation of the MRQECDE policy either at present, or in the future? If so, what, in your opinion, would this entail?

Offering Qualifications in ECCE

4. Do you see the implementation of the MRQECDE policy as a necessary initiative for the ECD sector? Why, or why not?

Yes. SA Education is in crisis and one of the contributing factors is the neglect of the foundations of education - pre grade R. South Africa is embarking on a journey to re-imagine ECD. The MRQECDE policy is therefore a necessary initiative contributing to the reimagining of ECD. Moreover, for a very long time there has been no well thought plans on the career path of ECD Practitioners and I believe the policy is a very necessary initiative.

5. What do you see as the constraining factors that may hinder or prevent the successful implementation of this policy?

The ECD function shift which has not been finalised – no systems in place for its implementation.

The readiness of Provinces in implementing the policy. For example, issues of infrastructure (where will the students practice), employment and remuneration of graduates need to be resolved.

6. What do you see as the enabling factors which could contribute to the successful implementation of this policy?

Planning for implementation by the different sectors involved in the implementation of the policy.

Piloting of policy implementation and build in a monitoring and evaluation framework. For example, in the EC offer ECCE Diploma's first targeting practising ECD practitioners. Each HEI to work with a limited number of practitioners. For example, if the first take in is in 2022, the second should be in 2024 giving space for policy revisions and improvement of systems and provision of resources needed for effective implementation. Bursaries for prospective students.

7. Are there any aspects of the policy which you would recommend to be changed?

Evaluation of the 'Piloting of policy implementation' will point out aspects that need to be revised.

B. Views on the professionalisation of the Early Childhood Development Educator (birth to 4) workforce.

1. What in your view does the term "the professionalisation of the ECD educator (birth to 4) workforce" mean?

Experience alone is not enough for one to be an Early Childhood Development Practitioner. Every person who works with children should have specialised knowledge and skills on child development. These could be acquired through standardised programmes.

2. Do you think that qualifications in higher education should be a requirement for becoming an ECD educator for babies, toddlers and young children from birth to 4 year old? Why, or why not?

No. Certificate courses at NQF level 4 could be offered by NGOs. The certificates could be offered to ECD Educator Assistants.

3. Do you think that the higher education qualifications provided for in the MRQECDE policy should be a requirement for being a principal/centre manager of an ECD centre? Why, or why not?

Yes. Centre managers need to have an understanding of pedagogical leadership.

4. Do you think that the higher education qualifications provided for in the MRQECDE policy should be a requirement for being an ²ECD supervisor? Why, or why not?

Yes. ECD Supervisors should be leaders in the field and therefore need to have advanced knowledge in ECD.

5. How do you think the MRQECDE policy will affect ECD practitioners currently involved in the care and education of babies, toddlers and young children from birth to 4 yrs old?

Please explain.

Most practitioners are in ECD because of their love for children and never planned to take ECD as a profession. They want to take care of children. If then they are all required to have a HE qualification that will be an exclusionary practice. This will create unemployment.

6. Do you agree that the ECD educator workforce should be professionalised and if so, what are your recommendations for enabling and/or promoting the MRQECDE policy implementation, and for professionalising the ECCE workforce?

Work on models of professionalization of the existing ECD educators. Create a data base. Identify ECD centres that have quality infrastructure.
Build ECD centres that are conducive for practice.
Engage with the private ECD centres on how the sector can be re-imagined and be inclusive.

7. What do you see as the constraining factors in professionalising the ECD educator workforce in South Africa?

Data Management Systems: Currently there is no reliable data base on practising practitioners and their qualifications, or on registered centres.
Budget for salaries
The absence of a spatial framework that includes an ECD centre in each community.

² "ECD supervisor" refers to provincial supervisors employed by the DSD or DBE or supervisors/mentors employed by NGOs

8. Please add any comments or other insights related to the topic of professionalising the ECD educator workforce or the professionalisation agenda of the policy on MRQECDE, should you wish to do so.

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