

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

QUESTIONS TO ECD EDUCATORS AND PRINCIPALS

Background

ES5: Practitioner, 37, Ekurhuleni, Germiston Suburb, receives subsidy according to the questionnaire, but in the interview, she said they do not. Day care centre.

In the questionnaire which you completed, you indicated that you want to do a Diploma in ECCE. I would like to ask you some further questions about your responses in the questionnaire to gain a better understanding of your work situation, challenges and aspirations as an ECD practitioner.

Q 1: *Why did you decide to become and ECD practitioner?*

ES5: I worked as a cashier and I saw an advertisement for a practitioner at a centre. I went there so I applied.

R: *How old were you when you started?*

ES5: I was 25.

R: *And did you receive any training?*

ES5: I started doing workshops at a school in Randburg, at a school called Thandulazi, birth to 4 years. It was Junior Play SA [and] it was [offered by] Cotlands. I wanted [to] gain more knowledge. I wanted level 4, so now I am doing that with Mathhew Goniwe, but my facilitator has advised me to go further.

R: *So, are you still busy with the level 4 qualification?*

ES5: Yes, I started last year, but with Covid I am now waiting to finish.

Q 2: *You indicated a number of reasons for wanting to do the Diploma in ECCE. I would like to ask you to tell me a little more about why you selected these response categories.*

R: *You selected the response category: "Use the opportunity to build a career in ECCE." Could you please clarify why you selected this response?*

ES5: I want to open my own centre and I would like to open an after care.

R: *When you say you want to have aftercare do you mean like, for older children?*

- ES5:** Yes, I want to have children that I can help them with homework.
- R:** *Is there a need for that in your community?*
- ES5:** Yes, because parents they work and the kids have nobody at home when school is finished.
- R:** *How do you think the Diploma in ECCE will help you to achieve your ambition? What are you hoping it will do for you?*
- ES5:** It will open more opportunities.
- R:** *Opportunities. Like what for example, anything specific?*
- ES5:** I want to go further to learn to work better with the young children and yah, (Indistinct) ...we have to do presentations at Matthew Goniwe. I am a shy person and didn't know how to do a presentation but now from there I can do it, but if I study more I will be more confident to talk to parents and colleagues. And, I can say I have learnt a lot, like I had a challenge with the planning, the daily planning. I didn't know about it when I started at Matthew Goniwe. Now I am learning about it at Mathew Goniwe and sometimes when I come back from Matthew Goniwe, she doesn't want it like that, she wants it like this.
- R:** *So, you have a bit of a challenge because now that you are at Matthew Goniwe you are learning how to do things, but you can't implement it in your work situation because the principal doesn't approve.*
- ES5:** The principal does not agree with changing things at the centre. I can't do the things I learn at Mathew Goniwe because she doesn't want to try them.
- R:** *So, the benefit of doing a Diploma in ECCE is that you will gain more knowledge and maybe make you feel more comfortable and capable of opening your own centre where you can implement what you have learnt?*
- ES5:** Yes, [laughing] and get a better salary.
- R:** *I notice this was one of the responses that you ticked. How do you think having a Diploma in ECCE will improve your salary?*
- ES5:** Us practitioners, we don't get paid much. My salary is only R2000.00. If I can have my own centre, I can get more money because I will also register my centre and get that subsidy and have the aftercare. I will try for that, but the money from the government is too little and they don't support us to open centres.
- R:** *Do you know that because these qualifications will be offered by universities, you will be able to apply for NSFAS bursary? You will be eligible for a bursary.*
- ES5:** No, I didn't know, so that is good news.
- Q 3:** *You selected a number of indicators for what makes an ECD educator a professional. I would like to ask you to tell me a little more about why you selected these response categories.*
- R:** *You have indicated that you consider yourself a professional. What does that mean to you?*

- ES5:** Parents now and again say they appreciate what I do for their children. You can be professional because of the way you speak to the parents. I am professional because [of] how I work with the children. I am getting there.
- R:** *So, you are professional in the way that you work with the children and interact with the parents?*
- ES5:** Yes.
- R:** *In some communities people don't really value and respect the work that early childhood educator do, especially in birth to four. Do you find that?*
- ES5:** Yes, that's true, but parents do respect us now. During parent meetings we address that... and we give them a workshop and we show them what we are doing.
- R:** *Why do you think teachers in schools have greater status than ECD practitioners?*
- ES5:** They work with older children and have higher qualifications and work in schools, not in... like in backyards. Ja, they don't struggle like we do.
- R:** *Do you think having one of the higher education qualifications will make a difference to how people view ECD practitioners.*
- ES5:** Yes. And the way you present yourself.
- R:** *You have also indicated in the questionnaire that continually improving knowledge and understanding of your work by undergoing training is what makes a practitioner as professional. I can see that you have been doing that and want to continue doing so. So, would you say that some of the lower-level qualifications, like level 2 is not enough to be a professional practitioner?*
- ES5:** Even a level 2 practitioner can be professional - the way they behave, but the knowledge they have is too little.
- R:** *The other response that you ticked and that I am interested in is the one about abiding by an agreed-on code of conduct. What does that mean to you and why is it important in terms of being a professional?*
- ES5:** You have to be an example in your centre and in your community if you are in this job.
In what way do you set an example if you have a code of conduct?
Your behaviour must be good and you must show that you are a responsible person to take care of children, so people can respect you.
- R:** *Right, now I understand why you also indicated that have care, kindness, love and compassion for children is important and also dedication and commitment to the work you do, including putting the children's interests above your own.*
- ES5:** Ja, you have to be professional and show love for the children too.
- R:** *So, do you think it will be a good thing if there is a professional body that can register practitioners and if they do not behave professionally, that body can de-register them so that*

they can't practice anymore? That is what happens with teachers who have to register with SACE.

ES5: Ja, I know about registering with SACE, but the government doesn't pay us, we don't work for the DBE. So, I don't think they can do that. It is the parents, the community who will decide.

Q 4: *Does the Day care centre get a subsidy from the DSD?*

ES5: Yes, they do get a subsidy.

Q 5: *What is the main source of income for the centre/who pays your salary?*

ES5: It is from the parent fees and the subsidy money from the department.

R: *Do most of the parents have work and can they all pay the fees?*

ES5: Some parents have got work and others get grants. Not all can pay every month.

Q 6: *What changes do you think the MRQECDE policy is bringing to the ECD sector?*

ES5: It is giving us those higher qualifications.

Q 7: *How do you think the Government can further support the ECD education sector?*

ES5: They can build the ECD centres. We have to use the garage or a room in a house now. I have been here from 2015 and we are using the garage and a room all this time, and it is not big enough.

R: *How many children are attending there?*

ES5: In my class I have 45 and the other class has 25.

R: *And how many practitioners work there.*

ES5: We are two and one cook.

Q 8: *Thank you for taking the time to talk to me and answer my questions. I enjoyed our conversation. Is there anything you would like to ask?*

ES5: No, there is nothing now.