

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

QUESTIONS TO ECD EDUCATORS AND PRINCIPALS

Background

JTS45 Soweto – Principal, 28 yrs old, mother owner of centre, DSD registered, no subsidy, currently completing Level 4 at Matthew Goniwe.

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.

Q1: *But firstly, tell me about how you became involved in/started working in Early Childhood Care and Education?*

JTS45: At first, I wasn't interested, but my mother ran the centre from out home. I decided that I like the young kids, so I wanted to train. I applied for the Level 4 certificate in ECD at Matthew Goniwe. I am still busy with it. When I go into my own training at Matthew Goniwe I really liked it. My mother was the principal, but she said she was getting too old to manage it and I became the principal.

Q2: *In the questionnaire you indicated a number of reasons for wanting to do this higher education qualification and gave indication of what you consider a professional ECD practitioner is. I would like you to tell me a little more about why you selected these response categories.*

R: *You indicated that you wanted to become a better practitioner. Why did you select that particular response?*

JTS45: I need to become a better practitioner for the sake of the kids. So, when we send kids to Gr R they are ready, because the teachers say the kids don't know what they should know. I will have something new to offer. Level 4 offered a lot, but going further will give more knowledge.

R: You also indicated that you want to do the Dip ECCE to earn status and respect for the work you do and to earn a better salary. *Do you think having a professional qualification will change anything for you in terms of your career, salary, and status?*

- JTS45:** Status-wise it will change and even salary-wise. I will be able to offer better services, get more kids and get more exposure. Everyone has the same Level 4 and we do the same things, but if I can do more and different things, I can get more kids. If the parents know that I have a diploma, they will know that my centre can prepare their kids better for Gr R.
- R:** *Why do you think a qualification in Higher Education will give more status to the profession?*
- JTS45:** Because it will be the same as teachers. If the ECD moves to DBE - I have heard about that, but it has not happened - Then we will be closer to the Gr R teachers and we can know what they want in Gr R, but it will not be fair if we can't be paid the same as teachers.
- R:** *How do you think the community sees the work of people who take care of the early learning and care of children? Do they appreciate and respect the work you do?*
- JTS45:** They do respect the work we do. When they see the things we teach children - It is something the parent wasn't exposed to and they see how the 3 yr old can do things that their 6 yr old couldn't do when he was that age.
- 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 indicated that a professional ECD educator is someone who continually improves their knowledge and understanding of their work by undergoing training. Why do you consider this as important?*
- JTS45:** One has to keep studying. Each qualification has something new to offer. I will know more and be better equipped.
- R:** *I was interested to note that you consider the number of years of experience of working with young children as an indication of a professional. Could you please explain what you mean by that.*
- JTS45:** If you are a professional it means you are qualified in the ECD [sector], you are professional. But some knowledge is not from school. There are people with no ECD qualification but they are doing things naturally. Experience is also important because you get to learn things with experience. It is a combination of things, but not only a professional qualification.
- R:** *So, you consider yourself a professional because you have an ECD qualification and you want to keep studying. Is there anything else that you could add to what makes a professional ECD practitioner?*
- JTS45:** How they treat parents and children and colleagues shows if they are professional.
- Q4:** *I see that your centre is registered with the DSD. What are the advantages of being registered?*
- JTS45:** They know that we exist and it's a requirement.
- R:** *Why are you not able to get a subsidy? Have you ever applied?*

- JTS45:** No, we haven't applied. No one told us that we can get the subsidy.
- R:** *You can apply for a subsidy for children who are from low income or no-income families.*
- JTS45:** I will speak to my mother [owner of the centre] because this is not a very developed area and parents struggle to pay fees. I understand where they come from because I grew up in this area, so we can't blame them. Every month some parents can't pay or they pay just a little.
- R:** *The subsidy is currently R17 per child per day and it will be a big help.*
- JTS45:** There are many children that we can't take now because we can't afford it, but if we can get that money, we can take them.
- Q5:** **I have just 2 more questions to ask about what you think about the MRQECDE policy developed by the Government. Firstly, what changes do you think the MRQECDE policy is bringing to the ECD sector?**
- JTS45:** Definitely, it will be better for the industry. We will get recognition in the country, because if we have better qualifications, we get better recognition. Look at now with the ECD centres re-opening, they are not recognising us. Maybe they think we are not important. They have not helped us to survive.
- Q6:** ***Secondly, I am interested to know why you think the MRQECDE policy was developed?***
- JTS45:** I think the government saw a gap because children are not getting what they should be getting. The ECDs don't develop kids in the way that the government wants kids to be equipped. They want them to know 1,2,3 when they go to grade R. It is the quality of ECD that is not good and they want to improve that.
- Q7:** ***And lastly, how do you think the Government can further support the ECD education sector?***
- JTS45:** They can build centres and help with equipment and fix broken things. We can't buy all the things we need for the children, like in those areas where parents can pay those high fees.
- R:** That sounds like something ECCE educators should pursue through their ECD organisations and forums.
- Q8:** Thank you for participating in the interview and for your time, ***Would you like to ask anything - any concerns about registering for the BEd ECCE, perhaps?***
- JTS45:** If finances are not a problem, I don't have a concern. The other practitioners at my centre don't have qualifications. They are 3. It is very difficult for them because it is costly. You can pay R19 000. You pay for every module. I was lucky because it is free at Matthew Goniwe. I think I did well in the assessment because I was selected.
- R:** Do you think they would like to become qualified?
- JTS45:** They would like to and I would like them to do qualifications too, but it is too expensive. They say how must they pay when they get so little money?