An Interpretive Analysis of the Early Childhood Development Policy Trajectory in Post-apartheid South Africa
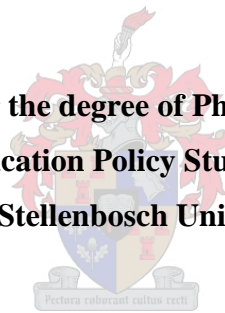
Dissertation presented for the degree of PhD in Education Policy Studies in the Department of Education Policy Studies, Faculty of Education, at Stellenbosch University

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Eric Atmore, hereby declare that "An Interpretive Analysis of the Early Childhood Development Policy Trajectory in Post-apartheid South Africa" is my own work and that the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references. I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted this dissertation for a degree.

Eric Atmore

Date: April 2019

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ABSTRACT

Early childhood development (ECD) is universally recognised for its concern with the most important foundation years of life, focussing on the holistic development of the young child's potential. It is during the first six years that much learning takes place and is developed.

The primary research question in this study was: What was the ECD policy trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa and how did it unfold? In answering this question, the study traced, described and interpreted the ECD policy trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa, and critically analysed the ECD policy-making processes, viewed through an interpretive lens.

My original contribution to knowledge is to provide an explanation of how the ECD policy trajectory shaped the evolution of ECD in post-apartheid South Africa during a period of unprecedented social, political, economic and education transformation. This study is significant since it contributes to knowledge building about ECD policy-making through the voice of ECD policy-makers and activists who had been central to ECD policy-making in South Africa. The study findings and recommendations could also have global relevance given the increased focus on ECD and ECD policy-making across the world.

The research comprised a policy trajectory study that used a qualitative research paradigm. Data was constructed from a comprehensive examination of ECD policy documents, including policy statements, government White Papers and government reports over the period 1990 to 2015 and from structured, face-to-face interviews with 19 key stakeholders who were centrally involved in ECD policy-making in South Africa over this period. During a pilot study, the interview schedule was tested for its appropriateness, relevance and ease of administration. Triangulation was used to enhance the validity and trustworthiness of the study.

In undertaking this research study, I had the benefit of having been involved in the ECD policy-making processes in South Africa from 1990 to 2015. During this period, I was on various ECD policy-making teams, firstly set up by the anti-apartheid structures and thereafter by the new democratic government, to assist with policy-making and policy implementation. I used my involvement and participation in ECD policy-making to locate myself within this study.

In analysing the findings of the study, I adopted an interpretive approach aiming to provide an understanding of the ECD policy trajectory. The data was analysed using a modified version of Tesch's (1990) stages of data analysis. The study found that the ECD policy-

making process in South Africa had been haphazard, contradictory, unplanned and confusing. Key findings in this study relate to how ECD policy was made in South Africa from 1990 to 2015, how the ECD policy trajectory unfolded, how ECD policy was implemented, how the ECD policy choices were communicated, enhancing ECD policy-making, and the challenges and constraints in ECD policy-making.

The dissertation concludes by reflecting on the state of ECD in South Africa at the time of this study, making recommendations for the future, discussing the implications of the study findings for ECD policy-making and for ECD in South Africa, and suggests areas for further research.

UITTREKSEL

Vroeëkindontwikkeling (VKO) word algemeen erken vir 'n gemoeidheid met die belangrikste grondslagjare gewy aan die holistiese ontwikkeling van die jong kind se potensiaal. Dit is gedurende die eerste ses jaar dat die grondslae vir toekomstige leer gelê word.

Die primêre navorsingsvraag in hierdie studie was: Wat was die VKO-beleidstrajek in Suid-Afrika ná apartheid en hoe het dit ontwikkel? By die beantwoording van hierdie vraag is die VKO-beleidstrajek in Suid-Afrika ná apartheid nagegaan, beskryf en geïnterpreteer, en die prosesse van VKO-beleidsbepaling op kritiese wyse ontleed, soos deur 'n interpretatiewe lens beskou.

My oorspronklike bydrae tot kennis is om 'n verduideliking te bied van hoe die VKO-beleidstrajek die evolusie van VKO in Suid-Afrika ná apartheid in 'n tydperk van ongekende maatskaplike, politieke, ekonomiese en onderwystransformasie gerig het. Hierdie studie is van betekenis aangesien dit bydra tot die uitbou van kennis rakende VKO-beleidsbepaling met behulp van die stemme van VKO-beleidsvormers en aktiviste wat met betrekking tot VKO-beleidsbepaling in Suid-Afrika sentraal gestaan het. Die navorsingsbevindinge en aanbevelings sou ook universele toepaslikheid kon hê gegewe die groter fokus op VKO en VKO-beleidsbepaling oor die wêreld heen.

Die navorsing het 'n beleidsrigtingstudie behels wat 'n kwalitatiewe navorsingsparadigma gebruik het. Data is versamel na aanleiding van 'n omvattende ondersoek van VKO-beleidsdokumente, met inbegrip van beleidsverklarings, Regeringswitskrifte en regeringsverslae oor die tydperk 1990 tot 2015 en met behulp van gestruktureerde, persoonlike onderhoude met 19 invloedryke belanghebbendes wat oor hierdie tydperk sentraal betrokke was by VKO-beleidsbepaling in Suid-Afrika. Die onderhoudskedule is met behulp van 'n loodsstudie getoets vir geskiktheid, toepaslikheid en gebruiksgerief. Triangulering is gebruik om die geldigheid en geloofwaardigheid van die navorsing te verhoog.

Tydens hierdie navorsingstudie het ek die voordeel gehad dat ek van 1990 tot 2015 by die VKO-beleidsbepalingsproses betrokke was. Gedurende hierdie tydperk was ek lid van verskeie spanne, eerstens dié byeengeroep deur die anti-apartheidstrukture en daarna deur die nuwe demokratiese regering om bystand te verleen met VKO-beleidsbepaling en -implementering. Ek het my betrokkenheid by en deelname aan VKO-beleidsbepaling gebruik om my plek in hierdie studie te bepaal.

By die ontleding van die navorsingsbevindinge het ek 'n interpretatiewe benadering gevolg wat daarop gemik was om 'n begrip van die VKO-beleidstrajek te bied. Die data is ontleed met behulp van 'n gewysigde weergawe van Tesch (1990) se fases van data-ontleding. Die studie het bevind dat die VKO-beleidsbepalingsproses in Suid-Afrika inkonsekwent, teenstrydig, onbeplan en verwarrend was. Sleutelbevindinge in hierdie studie hou verband met hoe VKO-beleid in Suid-Afrika van 1990 tot 2015 gemaak is, hoe die VKO-beleidstrajek ontplooi het, hoe VKO-beleid geïmplementeer is, hoe die VKO-beleidskeuses gekommunikeer is en so VKO-beleidsbepaling versterk het, asook die uitdagings en beperkinge in VKO-beleidsbepaling.

Die tesis sluit af met besinning oor die stand van VKO in Suid-Afrika ten tye van hierdie navorsing, aanbevelings vir die toekoms, 'n bespreking van die implikasies van die navorsingsbevindinge vir VKO-beleidsbepaling en vir VKO in Suid-Afrika, en voorstelle vir verdere navorsing.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

CHAPTER TWO – A POLICY TRAJECTORY ANALYSIS CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

CHAPTER THREE – RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER FOUR – THE POST-APARTHEID EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT POLICY TRAJECTORY 1990 - 2015

CHAPTER FIVE – PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

CHAPTER SIX – ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS ON ECD POLICY-MAKING TRAJECTORY IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

CHAPTER SEVEN – SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANAs	Annual National Assessments
ANC	African National Congress
CBO	Community-based organisation
CCECD	Coordinating Committee for Early Childhood Development
CEM	Council of Education Ministers
CEPD	Centre for Education Policy Development
CGECCD	Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development
CSDH	Committee on the Social Determinants of Health
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DoE	Department of Education
DoH	Department of Health
DPME	Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation
DSD	Department of Social Development
DWCPD	Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities
ECCE	Early childhood care and education
ECD	Early childhood development
EFA	Education for All
EPRI	Economic Policy Research Institute
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
ETDP-SETA	Education, Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
HEDCOM	Heads of Education Departments Committee
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MDM	Mass Democratic Movement
MEC	Member of the Executive Committee
MINMEC	Minister and Members of the Executive Councils Meeting
NAPTOSA	National Association of Professional Teachers of South Africa
NDP	National Development Plan
NECC	National Education Coordinating Committee

NEF	National Educare Forum
NELDS	National Early Learning Development Standards
NEPA	National Education Policy Act
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NEPI	National Education Policy Investigation
NGO	Non-government organisation
NIPECD	National Integrated Plan for Early Childhood Development
NIWC	National Interim Working Committee
NPA	National Programme of Action
NPC	National Planning Commission
NPO	Non-profit organisation
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OAU	Organisation of Africa Unity
PED	Provincial Education Department
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SACE	South African Council of Educators
SACECD	South African Congress for Early Childhood Development
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers Union
SASSA	South African Social Security Agency
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1   Background

Early childhood development (ECD) is universally recognised for its concern with the most important foundation years of life, focussing on the holistic development of the young child's potential. It is during the first six years that much learning takes place and is developed. Irwin, Siddiqi and Hertzman (2007: 5) write that the early years are crucial in influencing a range of health and social outcomes across the life course and that:

> Economists now argue on the basis of the available evidence that investment in early childhood is the most powerful investment a country can make, with returns over the lifetime many times the amount of the original investment.

ECD has become a key component of education provision globally. By providing quality ECD programmes, young children are provided with a head start that enables them to progress through formal schooling and to exit having completed school successfully. Despite this, Garcia, Pence and Evans (2008: 2) argue, "For much of the 20th century and throughout most of the world, early childhood (from birth through school entry) was largely invisible as a state-policy concern."

Globally, definitions of ECD differ. In South Africa, ECD covers the education, development and care of children prior to enrolment in Grade 1 in the formal school system. This usually means children aged from birth to six years, and covers the social, emotional, cognitive and physical development of children so that they can grow and develop to their full potential. A range of ECD programmes support young children's early growth and development. These programmes are diverse, and vary according to the age of the child, the focus of the programme, the target population and how the programme is delivered (Britto, Yoshikawa & Boller, 2011: 2).

In this chapter, I introduce the study by describing global ECD initiatives, setting out the problem statement, defining key terms and concepts, and describing ECD in both the apartheid and post-apartheid eras. I also record my primary and secondary research questions and the research ethics I had to consider.

1.2 International documents

The importance of ECD has been recognised in a number of international legal, education, social development and child rights documents including:

- the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 1989);
- the World Declaration on Education for All (UNESCO, 1990);
- the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (Organisation of African Unity [OAU], 1990);
- the Dakar Framework for Action (UNESCO, 2000);
- the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (United Nations, 2000);
- the United Nations 'A World Fit for Children' (UNICEF, 2002);
- the Report of the World Health Organisation Commission on Social Determinates of Health (Commission on Social Determinates of Health [CSDH], 2008); and
- the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (United Nations, 2015).

Shonkoff, Richter, Van der Gaag and Bhutta (2012: 465) assert, "As the science of ECD has received increasing recognition globally, the demand for greater attention to the needs of young children has been incorporated into several high-profile international documents."

1.2.1 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Articles 28 and 29 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (United Nations, 1989) recognise the right of children to education, and the development of personality, talents, mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential. The particular merit of ECD in the UNCRC is that it aims to meet the development needs of young children in such a way that they can be a meaningful part of the social, economic and cultural community. The South African government ratified the UNCRC on 16 June 1995.

1.2.2 Education for All

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)-led Education for All (EFA) movement aimed to meet the learning needs of children by 2015. Delegates to the 1990 World Conference on Education for All, held in Jomtien, Thailand, adopted the World Declaration on Education for All, which "… underscored the importance of ECD as a critical part of basic education with the words 'Learning begins at birth'"

(UNESCO, 1990, Section V, Point 1). Pence (2004: 6) comments on the EFA goal to expand and improve comprehensive ECD especially for vulnerable children, as follows:

> The first four words under Article 5 provided early childhood development with a place at the table: 'Learning begins at birth'. This calls for early childhood care and initial education. For many years early childhood development had been the 'invisible child', hidden behind the 'education family,' disconnected from the recognition its 'older siblings', like primary, secondary and tertiary education, had received as key components in international development. Through early childhood development recognition at Jomtien, the rapid ratification of the UNCRC [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child], and the World Summit for Children held in New York on September 28 and 29, 1990, the early years began to move 'out from the shadows' to a place of recognition in its own right on the international stage.

In 2000, the global community met again at the second EFA conference held in Dakar, Senegal to re-affirm the commitment to achieve Education for All by 2015 (UNESCO, 2000). At this conference, six key Education for All goals were adopted. The first was "Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children" (UNESCO, 2000, Point 7, Goal 1). Despite this being the first EFA goal, it remains the least implemented (Save the Children, 2012) and it is the only goal without a quantifiable indicator or specific target by which progress can be measured (Shonkoff, 2010: 365).

1.2.3   African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

On 7 January 2000, the South African government ratified the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (OAU, 1990), which obligates signatories to implement measures necessary to give effect to the provisions of the Charter. Article 4 states that in all actions concerning the child, the best interests of the child must be the primary consideration. Consistent with the UNCRC, Article 11 of the African Convention on the Rights and Welfare of the Child focuses on education, emphasising that every child has the right to education and to develop to their fullest potential (OAU, 1990: 1).

1.2.4   Millennium Development Goals

Following the United Nations Millennium Declaration in September 2000, the United Nations adopted the MDGs to reduce poverty by 2015 and to improve health and education for all. Five of the eight MDGs relate to the health, nutrition and education of young children,

with the focus being on child survival (Britto, Yoshikawa & Boller, 2011). MDG goal number two emphasises achieving universal primary education through completion of primary education (United Nations, 2000). This goal does not make provision for ECD opportunities prior to primary schooling. The specific targets and the dates for achieving those targets exclude children from birth to four years of age. This omission in the MDGs was noted by Engle, Black, Behrman, Cabral de Mello, Gerther, Kapiriri, Martorell and Young (2007: 229) who commented, "To achieve the Millennium Development Goals of reducing poverty and ensuring primary school completion for girls and boys, governments and civil society should consider expanding high quality, cost-effective ECD programmes."

1.2.5   Sustainable Development Goals after 2015

The Sustainable Development Goals after 2015 (SDGs) aim to build on the achievements of the MDGs to eradicate poverty. Member states of the United Nations were requested to ensure that ECD is an essential component of the new global development framework arguing, "Without the best start in life for all children, there is no foundation for sustainable societies. Young children have the right beyond survival to thrive and contribute to sustainable communities and the workforce" (Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development [CGECCD], 2014: 1). The SDGs provide a unique opportunity to build on the research evidence showing the lifelong benefits of quality early childhood policies and programmes for the development of young children, their families and communities.

Reflecting on how the SDGs would affect ECD, the CGECCD (2014: 4) developed a table indicating how ECD could be acted upon for each SDG. A summarised version is reproduced as Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1: ECD and the Open Working Group priority areas

Focus area	Early childhood development
Poverty eradication, building shared prosperity, promoting equality	Any goal on poverty reduction must consider its influence on children and their families. ECD policies and programmes are one of the most cost-effective ways to break the cycle of inter-generational poverty and inequality by giving all children, particularly the most vulnerable and marginalised, access to opportunities such as social protection, basic services and thus the best start in life and learning.
Sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition	Malnutrition in all its forms, notably stunting and wasting in children under the age of five, significantly affects a child's ability to fulfil his or her potential. Access to good quality, combined nutrition and child development programmes is key to ensuring the full physical and mental development of children.
Health population dynamics and water and sanitation	ECD includes action to tackle preventable infant and maternal deaths and also consideration of child and mother mental health, universal access to reproductive health care, good water and sanitation, and comprehensive treatment of HIV/AIDS. Mothers who are physical and mentally healthy are better able to care for their children.
Education and lifelong learning	Children's caregivers and their families need to be supported to create an environment in which children survive and thrive. Access to quality comprehensive early childhood care, early learning opportunities and pre-primary provision for all children is essential for preparing children for school, minimising school drop-out rates and maximising their future earnings and economic potential.
Gender equality and women's empowerment	Women's health and development are inextricably linked to the health and development of young children. Empowering women and educating girls is key to saving children's lives and providing access to early health and care interventions for all children also enables women to access the workplace.
Sustainable cities and human settlements	Creating safe and protective neighbourhoods to prevent child abuse and neglect and increasing access to areas for play for young children in cities and urban settlements are essential to the development of children.
Climate change	Promoting ECD programmes could help young children develop awareness about and build skills to protect and sustain the environment.
Peaceful and inclusive societies, rule of law and capable institutions	A focus on programmes to promote quality ECD and support for caregivers reduces violence against women and children and promotes positive approaches to managing children's behaviour.

Source: Summarised from CGECCD (2014: 4).

1.2.6   Other important initiatives in ECD

In May 2002, at its Special Session on Children, 180 countries of the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a Plan of Action that committed member states to "The development and implementation of national early childhood development policies and

programmes to ensure the enhancement of children's physical, social, emotional, spiritual and cognitive development" (United Nations, 2002: 29).

In 2003, the African Union published *The young face of NEPAD: Children and young people in the New Partnership for Africa's Development*. This document emphasised, "Early childhood care for survival, growth and development is … not just an obvious humanitarian action, but an action at the centre of the long-term development and evolution of society" (African Union, Economic Commission for Africa, NEPAD Secretariat & UNICEF, 2003: 14). The 2007 Education for All Global Monitoring Report *Strong foundations* focused on ECD and urged countries to develop a national early childhood policy to promote the holistic development of young children (UNESCO, 2007). In September 2010, UNESCO held a global early childhood care and education conference in Moscow and adopted the Moscow Framework of Action, which urged governments to develop legislation and policies to increase access to and improve the quality of ECD programmes and to increase funding and resources to make this happen (UNESCO, 2010). These documents and initiatives highlight increased global understanding of and support for quality ECD for young children.

1.3   Research evidence illustrating the benefits of ECD

The increase in global support for quality ECD programmes was driven by extensive and substantial research evidence that quality ECD for children is a highly effective way of improving the life chances of young children. The HighScope Educational Research Foundation's longitudinal Perry Preschool Study (Schweinhart, Montie, Xiang, Barnett, Belfield & Nores, 2005) found that disadvantaged children who had attended a good-quality preschool programme, when compared with a randomly assigned control group who did not attend a preschool programme, were significantly more likely to graduate from high school, enrol in tertiary education, and be employed. These children were less likely to need remedial education, commit crime, receive social welfare assistance, and girls were less likely to have children during their teenage years. Schweinhart et al. (2005: 3) quantified these benefits and calculated that each dollar spent on quality ECD produced a cost saving to society of $16.14.

A similar long-term ECD study, the Abecedarian Project (Campbell, Pungello, Burchinal, Kainza, Barbarin, Sparling & Ramey, 2012), provided cognitive stimulation, parent education and health care for children from the first few months after birth. Children born between 1972 and 1977 were randomly assigned to treatment and control groups, and their progress was monitored through studies conducted at ages 12, 15, 21 and 30. The programme reported

long-term benefits in intelligence, parenting practices and child attachment, higher educational attainment and more skilled employment among those in the treatment group. It also reported positive effects on lifelong health.

In a Jamaican ECD intervention study from 1986 to 1987 (Gertler, Heckman, Pinto, Zanolini, Vermeersch, Walker, Chang & Grantham-McGregor, 2014), psychosocial stimulation was provided to growth-stunted children. Community health workers made weekly home visits, supporting mothers doing activities with their children to promote cognitive, emotional and language development. Twenty years later, the researchers interviewed 105 of the original 127 child participants of the study, who were adults by then. They found that children randomised as a participant in the programme were earning 25% more than those in the control group (Gertler et al., 2014: 1001). The authors concluded that the intervention compensated for the economic consequences of early development delays and reduced later-life inequality.

Gertler et al. (2013: 3) found that "early childhood interventions can create a substantial impact on a child's future economic success in poor countries." For them, this was proof that early childhood stimulation and parent involvement benefitted young vulnerable children.

From the African continent, a study of 24 countries in sub-Saharan Africa found that –

> Increased preschool enrolment boosted primary completion rates and lowered dropout and repetition rates. In places where children had no access to preschool, grade repetition rates were twice as high as in places where half the children had access to preschool (12 per cent versus 25 per cent) and dropout rates were 2.5 times higher (20 per cent versus 50 per cent). The benefits of ECCD were greatest among children from the poorest families with the least educated parents (Mingat & Jaramillo, 2003: 18).

The Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University has published research (Shonkoff, 2014, Shonkoff, 2016) on the behavioural and neuroscientific aspects of ECD. Based on decades of research, they found that there are five key aspects of early brain development that present a compelling case for supporting ECD initiatives (DG Murray Trust, 2013: 4):

- early experiences establish either a sturdy or fragile foundation;
- genes and experience interact to shape the developing brain;
- the brain's capacity for change decreases with age;
- cognitive, emotional and social capacities are linked through a person's life; and

7

- toxic stress damages developing brain architecture, which could lead to lifelong problems in learning behaviour, and physical and mental health.

Shonkoff and Philips (2000: 6) argue that it is from birth to age five that –

> Children rapidly develop foundational capabilities on which subsequent development builds. During this early period of life, brain cell growth and 'wiring' of connections drive 'remarkable linguistic and cognitive gains' and development of 'emotional, social, regulatory and moral capacities.

In addition to the above, a rapidly expanding body of research by Heckman and Masterov (2007), Heckman (2006a), Heckman (2008), Shonkoff (2009) and the CGECCD (2013), reports that quality early interventions for young children and their families is a sound social, education and economic investment. The Jamaican study (Gertler et al., 2013) found a number of long-term social, education and economic benefits and cost savings attributed to –

- improved cognitive capacity;
- decreased grade repetition;
- lower welfare costs;
- increased productivity;
- increased tax revenues;
- reduced crime and lower juvenile justice costs.

This led Nobel Economics joint prize winner in 2000, Professor James Heckman, to illustrate as reflected in Figure 1.1 below, that the economic return from quality ECD interventions is high, and the return from later school interventions is lower (Heckman, 2008: 5). Heckman concludes (2006a: 1902), "Investing in disadvantaged young children is a rare public policy initiative that promotes fairness and social justice and at the same time promotes productivity in the economy and in society at large."
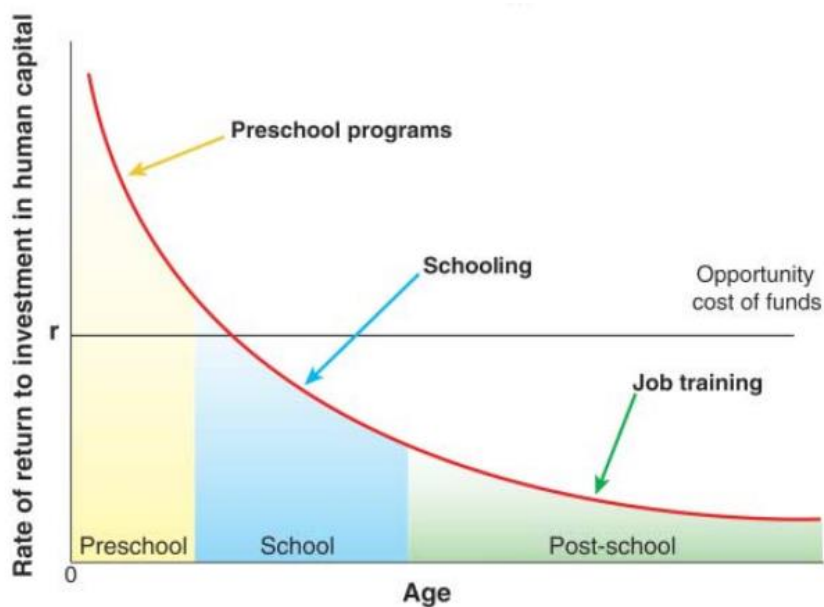
Figure 1.1: Heckman's rate of return of investment in human capital

Source: Heckman (2006a: 1901)

1.4   Problem statement

In South Africa, young children's access to quality ECD programmes is limited, the poorest children are not provided with early education opportunities (Harrison, 2012, Atmore, 2013; Davids, Samuels, September, Moeng, Richter, Mabogoane, Goldman, & Buthelezi, 2015; Ilifa Labantwana, 2016) and the majority of young children enter Grade 1 not having experienced a structured, quality early learning programme. A result of this neglect is the poor performance of South African children in the Annual National Assessments (ANAs), which measures how the education system affects literacy and numeracy in Grades 3, 6 and 9. Announcing the results of the ANAs in 2014, the Minister of Basic Education, Ms Angelina Motshekga described the results as a concern and called for "… immediate and radical intervention" (Motshekga, 2014: 2).

The period after the first democratic government led by President Nelson Mandela (1994 to 1999) was a time of education and social development policy-making, passing of legislation, appointing officials aligned to the new democratic government and setting up systems. The first education policy produced was the Education White Paper on Education and Training, Notice 196 of 1995 (Department of Education [DoE], 1995) published on 15 March 1995, which included a brief section on ECD. Notwithstanding the importance of ECD, the primary concern of the new democratic government at that time was formal schooling and higher

9

education. The South African government's first ECD policy position is reflected in Education White Paper 5 on ECD (DoE, 2001b), which aims to ensure that every child will receive at least one year of preschool reception year (Grade R) education prior to entering Grade 1. In this policy, there is no state provision, only state-assisted provision with partial financial support. While the ECD policy reflected in Education White Paper 5 (DoE, 2001b) has created Grade R and significantly increased access to Grade R, it has been less successful in improving quality. It also makes little provision for children aged birth to four years. Resources provided are minimal and implementation plans, where they exist, are severely flawed.

Over the period from 1994 to 2012, government ECD policy-making in South Africa was haphazard, contradictory, inadequate, unplanned and uncoordinated. ECD policy was developed with little political support and political leadership. Because of the haste to make policy for the new government, critical aspects of the ECD policy-making process were weak. It was only after a diagnostic review of ECD, carried out by the National Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) in the Presidency in 2012 (DPME, 2012) that ECD policy-making matured and a comprehensive and integrated ECD policy was made and adopted by government in December 2015.

In the light of the problem as stated, the purpose of this research study was:

- to trace, describe and interpret the ECD policy trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa over the period 1990 to 2015;
- to analyse and interpret the ECD policy-making processes followed critically; and
- to explain how the ECD policy trajectory shaped the evolution of ECD in post-apartheid South Africa.

As an ECD activist in the sector since 1979, I have been involved in the ECD policy-making processes of the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) and of the new government. I am thus familiar with the ECD policy-making processes over this 25-year period and equipped to undertake this study.

1.5 Key terms and concepts

Apartheid – the ideology of the South African government, mainly from 1948 onwards until 1994, driven by the belief that the category of people classified as white under the Population Registration Act, No. 30 of 1950 (Union of South Africa, 1950), was superior to other groups who were defined under the same Act as coloured, Asian and African. Whilst apartheid was

practiced long before 1948, it was implemented more harshly when the National Party gained power in the South African general election of 1948.

Early childhood development (ECD) – refers to "the processes by which children from birth to at least nine years grow and thrive, physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, morally and socially" (DoE, 1996a: 1). Its purpose is to protect the child's right to develop to his or her full social, emotional, cognitive and physical potential (DoE, 2001b: 8). The term was used for the first time in South Africa in 1994 (Padayachie, Atmore, King, Matube, Muthayan, Naidoo, Plaatjies & Evans, 1994: iii), and reflects a comprehensive and integrated approach to meeting the needs of young children.

Policy – as used in this study is a statement of intent reflecting a course of action approved by government and most often recorded in official written policy documents. In this study, 'policy' specifically focuses on those ECD texts approved by government and which govern the ECD sector in South Africa.

Policy-making – as used in this study is the process by which "governments translate their potential vision into programmes and actions to deliver outcomes … Thus policy-making is a fundamental function of any government" (Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, n.d.: 4).

Policy trajectory – refers to the "ways in which policies evolve, change and decay through time and space" (Ball, 2006: 51).

Policy trajectory study – as used in this study refers to tracing the evolution of ECD policy and policy-making in South Africa over the 25-year period, 1990 to 2015.

Post-apartheid South Africa – as used in this study refers to the time period since the removal of legislation in South Africa which discriminated against sections of the population based solely on skin colour, which followed the first democratic election in South Africa in April 1994.

Grade R – this is the year before entry into Grade 1 in South Africa. Most children in Grade R turn five years old before 30 June of the year prior to enrolling in Grade 1. The focus of the Grade R year is on literacy, numeracy and life skills.

1.6   Early childhood development in context

Having outlined the content of international documents that influence ECD policy and programmes globally, in this section I look at eight aspects of the ECD context relevant to

this study. This includes the global ECD context, childhood in the African context, constructions and positioning of young children in ECD policy, neo-liberal ECD policy and practice and exploring quality in ECD

1.6.1   A glance at the global ECD context

Pence (2004), writes that ECD has a long history of organised and structured programmes dating back to the 1820s. Since that time, the understanding of what ECD is and the recognition of the importance of ECD have changed substantially. Today, the research evidence (Heckman, 2006a; 2006b; 2008; Heckman & Masterov, 2007; Schweinhart et al., 2005; Shonkoff & Philips, 2000) clearly shows that ECD programmes provide social, education and economic outcomes which benefit young children and their families, and especially vulnerable and at-risk young children, their families and their communities. In 2011, The Lancet (2011, cited in Global Campaign for Education, 2012: 4), published new research evidence –

> [D]emonstrating that early childhood – which is generally understood to cover the period from birth to age of eight – is the period during which quality care and education programmes can do most to break the cycle of inequalities that has dominated the lives of millions of children and families.

UNICEF (2014) in their *Early Childhood Development Statistical Snapshot: Building better brains and sustainable outcomes for children* states that children under five years of age in low-and middle-income countries, face inequalities. Consequently, they do not reach their development potential and face increased risk especially poverty, poor health, malnutrition, infection with HIV and inadequate early stimulation. UNICEF (2014) suggests that ECD is a most effective investment that a country can make towards social and economic development.

Since the adoption of the UNCRC by the United Nations General Assembly on 20 November 1989 (United Nations, 1989) and international initiatives such as EFA, the MDGs and the SDGs, ECD has increasingly been accepted globally as being of critical importance to young children, families, communities and countries. This not only refers to an education and a child well-being perspective but also to the substantial social and economic benefits. Globally, politicians, government officials, policy-makers, teachers, activists and the public are embracing quality ECD. However, as Bachelet (2012: 1), reminds us, 200 million children under the age of five worldwide are not achieving their development potential

because of poverty, poor health and nutrition, and inadequate care. This provides evidence that notwithstanding the increased recognition of the importance of ECD, it is not the global priority it should be.

In response to increasing evidence around the world, governments have enacted ECD legislation and provided large-scale programmes, such as –

- Sure Start in the United Kingdom (National Evaluation of Sure Start Research Team, 2008);
- Kenya's community-based ECD model of Harambee Preschools (Prochner & Kabiru, 2008);
- Chile Crece Contigo ('Chile grows with you') in Chile (Bachelet, 2017); and
- Head Start in the United States of America (United States Department of Health and Human Services, 2010).

Whilst there was increasing support for ECD globally, many countries still do not have policies in place to provide ECD. Bachelet (2012: 4) found that few countries have national frameworks for the financing, coordination and provision of ECD programmes for young children. In agreement, Shonkoff (2010: 365) adds, "Few of the major international donors have identified early childhood as a specific component in their funding strategies and most allocate less than 2% of their development assistance for education at the pre-primary school level."

1.6.2   Childhood in the African context

Millions of young children in Africa live in impoverished conditions and there is a great and urgent need to improve education, nutrition, health, safety child protection conditions in nearly all African countries. The African continent has the highest rates of child poverty in the world, affecting more than half of young children (Garcia, Virata, and Dunkelberg, 2008: 26). It is for this reason that it has become necessary to provide ECD programmes and opportunities for young children.

According to Aidoo (2008: 30) in Africa, children are valued and placed at the centre of their family life and community activity. Indeed, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child states that "the child occupies a unique and privileged position in the African Society" (Organisation of African Unity 1990, Preamble, paragraph 4). Whilst this is

recorded in text, the reality is different with large numbers of children across Africa living in poverty and conflict.

Political commitment to meet the needs of young children through ECD centres and programmes was agreed in 1998 at the Seventh Conference of Ministers of Education of African Member States. However, this has not always translated into implementation and action. Prochner and Kabiru (2008) explain that in traditional African practice, young children are generally educated by the family, and are socialised into community traditions and structures. From birth children are taught to contribute to community life and acquire skills for survival, protection, food production and learning about aspects of culture and conduct. Prochner and Kabiru (2008: 124) write: "… children were taught the history and traditions of the family, clan and the whole community … through stories, conversations, song and games at the feet of their parents, siblings and grandparents."

With modernization and the influence of the neo-liberalism, the care and well-being of children in Africa have changed. ECD centres, preschools and a range of child care providers began emerging in the 1980s, influenced by the West, where models of ECD provision were imposed. Prochner and Kabiru (2008: 130) contend, "Programs developed elsewhere cannot ... meet the needs of African families." Ng'asike (2014: 43) is of the view that "Western conceptions of child development and the models of early education they engender predominantly shape services for young children in the first eight years of life all over Africa." He brings a 'reconceptualist' perspective to Kenya's failure to maintain local childrearing practices within the family and community and is of the view that ECD programmes elevate Western education practices over local ECD programmes and practices. He argues for a contextually and culturally relevant early childhood curriculum and pedagogy, concerned "… that the philosophy and vision of early childhood curriculum in Africa overly reflect Western ways of socializing and educating children" and makes the case for "...affirming … children's culture as the foundation for their education" (Ng'asike, 2014: 44). A major criticism of ECD policies and programmes in Africa is that these are based on Western ideologies and neo-liberal practices with little regard for African contexts. As a result, hegemonic Western-style ECD has become the foundation of African children's early education, with indigenous knowledge and early childhood traditions largely disregarded.

In the African context, young children hunt birds and squirrels, collect insects, milk goats and engage in livestock herding (Ng'asike, 2014). In contrast learning activities at ECD centres are limited, as the focus is predominantly on early literacy and early numeracy. In his view traditional and indigenous knowledge passed on through song, dance and stories is neglected and eventually disappears. Ng'asike (2014: 54) suggests: "Elders also teach children directly with stories, myths, and proverbs of rich narratives from their culture using a generative and unwritten curriculum… Elders create this generative curriculum as soon as the children begin to follow the ceremonies and everyday survival activities of their families as early as they start to crawl and walk."

1.6.3   Constructions of childhood in ECD policy-making

Understandings of childhood that have emerged from the start of the 21st century are based on Western thinking and "…supports the construction of a uniform 'global child' amenable to management and standardization found useful by globalization forces" (Pence & Hix-Small, 2009: 80). In this regard, Sorin (2005: 13) asserts, "The term 'childhood' is generally recognised as a socially constructed phenomenon" constructed by adult society. Sorin (2005: 12) continues: "...the image of the child as innocent has been a dominant construct in early childhood policy" in which children are viewed as "...incapable, powerless and in need of adult protection. Childhood is seen as a time of passivity, where children receive knowledge and experiences chosen and provided for them by their adult caregivers."

Mitchell (2010: 328) identifies three dominant constructions about childhood which influence ECD policy, the 'child as dependent within the family'; the 'child as learner within a community of learners'; and the 'child as citizen within a social community'." These constructions are derived from beliefs about the role of children in society. The first two constructions - 'child as dependent within the family'; and 'child as learner within a community of learners' - are linked to government direction and control of ECD in which government is centrally involved in ECD planning and programming, setting norms and standards for programme delivery and in training and support to teachers of young children. This links with the neo-liberal model of ECD where parents are seen as consumers of ECD programmes and which has been emerging since the 1980s. Mitchell (2010: 328) argues that "...a construction of the child as citizen within a social community is a new paradigm that places children's rights and agency to the forefront, and acknowledges the interdependence of care and education." Penn (2011a: 59), contends that "A child rights approach puts emphasis

on the lives of children as competent citizens, and sees the provision of ECEC services in that wider context of equitable services for all children." The Reconceptualist movement in ECD has played a significant role in challenging this hegemony, challenging a "public discourse that has historically and without shame used children to further political agendas" (Sorin, 2005: 12). With the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the United Nations in November 1989, there was a change in thinking, framing ECD policies with the belief that children are citizens with rights and responsibilities.

These constructions of childhood shape the ECD policies which are eventually adopted by governments around the world. A brief description of Mitchell's (2010) three constructions about childhood in ECD policy follows.

Child as dependent within the family

This construction sees the child as the responsibility of parents, caregivers and family. Government may support parents through a variety of ways. In this instance the main purpose of ECD provision is 'future-focused outcomes', and is intended to prepare children for academic success in formal schooling with the view to being a productive member of society. This construction is directly linked to the neo-liberal view that the market will provide ECD programmes where and when these are required. A criticism of this construction is that when ECD is left to the market it is unable to deliver ECD programmes to all children. (Mitchell, 2010: 333)

Child as learner in a community of learners

This construction focuses mainly on ECD programmes that offer learning opportunities and environments for children to learn. The quality in ECD provision is stressed using 'developmentally appropriate practice' and standards and regulations as a measure. Mitchell (2010: 335) writes: "A key theme with this construction was about how to strengthen ECE centres as communities of learners, focused on the child and incorporating family contributions in the interest of children's learning and well-being." A weakness of this construction is the focus on measuring quality through norms and standards and compliance.

Child as citizen within a social community

This construction focuses on the child, family and community in which children have agency and the right to participate in a social community. The child is viewed as an active and productive family and community member. The purpose of ECD programmes is seen to support the child and family and includes health care, nutrition, growth and development,

well-being, learning, diversity, equal opportunity, citizenship, inclusion, relationships, social protection, parent education, nation building and social cohesion. Outcomes are considered communally rather than individually. In this construction, childhood is valued in its own right as well as for future development and "…should be a time of discovery, excitement, fun, sociability, growing self-confidence and zest in learning" (Moss & Penn, 1996: 13).

The ECD policy-making trajectory in South Africa has shown that the construction of childhood on which ECD policy is based, has changed over the 25 year period from 1990 to 2015. Over the time frame that the Interim ECD Policy of 1996 and Education White Paper 5 of 2001 was produced, the 'child as dependent within the family' and the 'child as learner within a community of learners' constructs dominated. With the adoption of the National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy by the South African government in December 2015, the understanding of childhood shifted to a construction in which the child was seen as a citizen within a social community, placing child rights at the forefront of ECD policy.

1.6.4   Positioning of young children in ECD policy

According to Pence, Evans and Garcia (2008: 2), "For much of the 20th century and throughout most of the world, early childhood (from birth through school entry) was largely invisible as a state-policy concern." Children were seen as the responsibility of their parents and families. Since the Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 1989) was formally adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1989, this has gradually changed and the young child is increasingly seen as having rights especially with regard to optimal early development, education, nutrition, safety and health care.

Woodrow and Press (2007: 312) hold that "Typically a number of 'discourses' about childhood, the nature of children and how children should be treated, circulate at any given time. These discourses are both underpinned by beliefs and assumptions about the experience and purpose of childhood, and inform the social and economic policies that shape daily practices." One discourse views young children as vulnerable, at risk of neglect and in need of protection, guidance and support. This is consistent with Mitchell's (2010) description of the 'child as dependent within the family'. A second discourse sees the young child as 'becoming' rather than 'being' (Woodrow & Press, 2007). This is often expressed in the statement that 'The children are our future' which implies 'becoming'. Woodrow and Press (2007: 316) write "Australia used the slogan 'early childhood education preparation for

life'… Implicit in the notion of child as becoming are ideas of the child as 'not yet competent', life as something that occurs later and a denial of agency to children." Coupled with this was the linking of ECD programmes to women's employment in the labour market. Woodrow and Press (2007: 315) argue "Since that time much of the mainstream public discourse about childcare has positioned childcare as an appendage to women and the labour market." With this consideration, governments in the global North began to focus on early childhood development as a site for government policy intervention. Targeted ECD interventions were designed to improve early education opportunities and the well-being of children so as to enable women to participate in the labour market. Commenting on this, Giroux (2002, cited in Woodrow & Press, 2007: 315) raises concerns about "… the increasing dominance of market discourses in the context of global neoliberalism has repositioned private interests over public and, as a consequence, recast the citizen as consumer in the market." This is consistent with Mitchell's (2010) description of the 'child as learner in a community of learners'.

As neo-liberal ECD policies are implemented globally, so social justice, social inclusion, diversity and community are reduced and neo-liberal ideologies promoting individualism over community gain traction. However, ECD programmes as community initiatives and community action in which adults and children participate, have emerged in countries in the global South. This is what Mitchell (2010) calls the 'child as citizen within a social community'. These ECD programmes are initiated and implemented by local communities and the child's learning takes place in the community. Writing on the understanding of children as citizens in a community, Ang and Olivier (2015: 83) are of the view that:

> The role and positioning of young children across the policies are generally framed in two broad categories: firstly, a rights-based discourse as influenced by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989), and secondly, a framing of children as 'subjects of concern' who face particular vulnerabilities and are in need of special care and protection. This rights-based approach discourse is underpinned predominantly by the recognition of children as a minority, vulnerable group alongside other minority individuals such as women, displaced persons and those who are disabled and with special needs requiring special protection from exploitation and harm.

Globally, the discourse on child rights can increasingly be seen in ECD policies. However, what is not evident in ECD policies is the view that young children have agency in their early development.

1.6.5   Neo-liberalism and ECD policy and practice

The dominant discourse in ECD globally for the past three decades has centred around a neo-liberal orientation advanced by organisations such as the World Bank, the world's largest and most influential donor in the ECD field (Penn, 2008), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the European Union, UNESCO, UNICEF, the Consultative Group on ECD, the National Association for the Education of Young Children in the USA (NAEYC), and international grant-making donor organisations. When studying the ECD policies of many countries, including South Africa, the influence from these global and mostly American organisations can clearly be seen. This hegemonic position of neo-liberalism is seen as the way that the world functions.

Abendroth and Portfilio (2015: xii, cited in Sims, 2017: 2) define neo-liberalism as "… an anti-democratic force that gives the corporate elite of global capitalism power of nation states." This force is wealthy and powerful and uses this wealth and power to create an economic system that maintains their power and which undermines democracy, social justice and fairness (Chomsky, 2016). Sims (2017: 1) continues: "Neoliberalism has a devastating impact on the early childhood sector with its focus on standardisation, push-down curriculum and its positioning of children as investments for future economic productivity." Continuing with the neo-liberal theme, Rizvi and Lingard (2011: 12) contend that curriculum has been "increasingly vocationalised, and is now viewed in terms of human capital formations, rather than as a way of developing an informed citizenry." In light of this, Sims (2017) argues for resistance to neo-liberalism in ECD proposing instead that ECD focus on social justice, freedom and democracy.

Neo-liberalism plays out in the ECD sector through accreditation, standardisation, evidence requirements, regulation, control, measurement, compliance, meeting desired goals, accountability and quality standards through testing and ECD programme registration requirements. National norms and standards, adherence to government regulations and practices, curriculum statements, and specified learning outcomes are the main drivers of ECD programmes in South Africa focusing on quality, which is seldom defined, and on the

economic benefits of ECD provision, ignoring other aspects of child growth and development. This narrow understanding of ECD focuses on the young child's performance in meeting rigid developmental outcomes set by regulatory authorities. In doing so social justice, holistic development and equity are sacrificed. Moss (2017:19) refers to this as "…an instance of the dictatorship of no alternative, and is commensurate with any prospect of a democratic politics of education."

The neo-liberal focus of preparing young children in ECD programmes, for formal schooling, and then for employment and productivity in a capitalist economy, runs counter to child focussed, participatory early learning, active learning, learning thinking skills, diversity, freedom and social justice, and where children are valued as individuals and as citizens. Increasingly around the world, governments have resorted to the regulation and top-down governance of early childhood and are targeting younger and younger children focused on policy and regularity compliance, rather than on ECD programmes in the child's best interests and has resulted in the separation of the early education and care of young children into different government ministries and departments, each with its own policies, regulations, accreditations, compliances and ways of doing things (Cheeseman, Press & Sumsion, 2015). This dominant discourse is powerful, and increasingly hegemonic.

In South Africa, the three major ECD policy documents since 1994 started from the point of departure that ECD programmes can reduce poverty and mitigate other social problems, prepare young children for formal school and for later economic productivity as an adult. At the same time ECD in South Africa has become increasingly regulated through central control and a national system of norms and standards, and regulations. ECD centres are now legally required to comply with these norms and standards before registration is granted and subsidisation can be considered. These compliance norms and standards, and regulations include physical infrastructure, learning programmes content and administration.

Moss, (2014: 356) suggests the reason for this is that "To survive in a harsh environment of continuous and intensifying competition and creative destruction, the state must ensure that its citizens are continually equipped to meet the ever-changing demands of neoliberal capitalism, their human capital fully exploited and at the markets disposal…" Moss (2017: 11) is of the view that "…this is not the only discourse in early childhood education, there are alternatives that are varied, vibrant and vocal; not silenced but readily heard by those who

listen and forming a resistance movement." He refers to a network of activists who contest this dominant discourse "… resisting its truth claims and keeping spaces open for alternative thought and action" Moss (2017: 20). Leading this network is the Reconceptualising Early Childhood Education group that advocates alternative ECD policies, programmes and practices. These activists questioned neo-liberalism, the universal definition of quality and suggest that there are alternative ideas about practice (Bloch, 2013). Reconceptualist writers challenge the NAEYC Guidelines for Developmentally Appropriate Practice, which they feel "...ignored the range of life contexts and knowledge experienced by children from diverse cultural, ethnic, linguistic and value contexts" (Reconceptualizing Early Childhood Education, n.d.). In their view, developmentally appropriate practice reinforces patterns of power and privilege. This has been referred to as colonising early childhood education and development through universal prescriptions for quality (Dahlberg, Moss & Pence, 1999). They suggest that ECD practices can be transformed globally. This group is committed to re-building the values of cooperation, mutuality, democracy and sustainability (Moss, 2017). Soto (2000: 198) suggests "An early childhood dreamscape of social justice and equity" be considered. Notwithstanding this, these discourses have up until now had little impact on policy and ECD programmes. Moss (2017: 28) concludes: "Might not a story, such as democracy, experimentation and potentiality, once enacted as policy become every bit as much a dominant discourse in ECD as the story of quality and high returns?"

Moss (2009), further discusses two models for early childhood care and education (ECCE) provision: the market model which he indicates is spreading and receiving policy attention; and the model of democratic experimentalism, which has a low policy profile. He describes these two models as deriving from "… two views of the world that have very different rationalities, values, understandings and goals" (Moss, 2009: 3). Moss describes the 'market model' as "…factories for producing predetermined outcomes …." (Moss, 2009: viii). In the market model, ECD is provided through markets and parents and caregivers select the ECD programme that the family requires from suppliers in the market place. In South Africa the market model was in evidence in ECD policy texts especially over the years 1990 to 2015, before the release of the National Integrated ECD Policy in December 2015. For Moss (2009: 5) the market model is "…an expression of neoliberalism's deepest values, assumptions and beliefs" that "… has sought hegemonic globalisation." Moss (2009) relates this to Foucault's concepts of 'dominant discourses' or 'regimes of truth'. For Moss (2009:10) "… the market model is a product of neoliberal thinking and the growing influence of this type of

21

capitalism" in which parents and caregivers view ECD as a commodity to be purchased in a market place through a transactional relationship and where advocates of the market model claim that the market is better able to provide high quality and competitive ECD programmes that meet prescribed government norms and standards.

Moss (2009: vii) suggests that the ECD sector should consider a model that he calls 'democratic experimentalism', and he urges the ECD sector "…to resist the hegemonic tendency of the market model." Democratic experimentalism is "…about relationships and everyday practice", values, diversity, multiple perspectives, uncertainty, dialogue, creativity and social justice, which is embedded in social and community life. It represents "…a way of living and relating that is open-ended, open-minded and open-hearted" (Moss, 2009: viii). The democratic experimental model is based on participation, collaboration and trust. In this model ECD is a community responsibility and collaborative rather than compliance-driven, where diversity is valued and it is recognised that there exists other perspectives on ECD. For Moss (2009), there has not been systematic attention given to this model of ECD provision.

With Cabinet approval of the National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy in 2015, the South African government appears to have favoured a model encompassing elements of the market and of democratic experimentalism. The South African government does provide an ECD subsidy to ECD centres in low-income communities, but at the same time leaves the supply of ECD places in ECD centres and programmes, to the market. While the South African government subsidises Grade R provision in public primary schools, it leaves it to the market to provide as Grade R is not a compulsory school year. ECD centres in communities and Grade R programmes in public schools are required to meet specific norms and standards, set and monitored by government, which originate in the neoliberal approach to ECD.

1.6.6   A brief overview of the unfolding policy and education terrain in South Africa

Through the periods of colonialism and apartheid in South Africa, education has been a contested terrain. The political ideology which embraced apartheid influenced education policy and ECD policy to the disadvantage of millions of children who were not classified as white under the Population Registration Act, No. 30 of 1950. Education and ECD policy development must be understood in relation to the social and historical context referred to above. A major characteristic of colonial and apartheid education policies and programmes

was the unequal education opportunities provided for groups of people based solely on race. Prior to the National Policy coming to power in 1948, there existed an emerging racial pattern of schooling (Fataar, 1999). Post-1948 to the mid-1980s, education was provided strictly on the basis of apartheid segregation. Fataar, (1999: 83) is of the view that it was during the period 1954 to 1970 that "… the vast unequal legacy of apartheid education was developed and consolidated." During this period racial classification determined who could go to school, which school they could go to, what resources were allocated to schools, what curriculum content was to be covered, and from the mid-1970s, which language black African children would be taught in. For black African children formal schooling was neither free nor compulsory and the resources allocated to white education was many multiples more than for all other children. This resulted in slow growth in schooling for coloured, Indian and especially black African children. Hence Fataar's (1999: 88) view that "The early thinking around the aims of black education was saturated with racial paternalism and the need to secure sufficient and compliant workers for the economy." With the entrenchment of Christian National Education as of 1948 education policy sought to "…solidify among Afrikaaners a racially exclusive ethnic identify in which the appropriation of language, culture, symbols and history played an important constitutive role" (Fataar, 1999: 94).

A critical event in apartheid education in South Africa was reached in September 1953 when the Bantu Education Act, No. 47 of 1953, was passed. With the passing of this Act, the administration of education for black African children became the responsibility of the Department of Bantu Education. One effect of this Act was the further growth of an un-skilled black African labour force who would serve white commercial interests in South Africa. Another effect was that the education geared at black African children was mostly limited to primary schools in urban areas and was of low quality. In the rural areas of South Africa, 'homelands' were granted 'independence', by white South Africa and departments of Education were established in each, beginning with the Transkei, Ciskei, Venda and Bophuthatswana.

To summarize the education policy and practice trajectory to this point, black education was structured to exclude black Africans from participation in the social, political and economic aspects of South African life so that white South Africans could remain dominant, as citizens enjoying all the rights and privileges associated with advantage and racial superiority.

Based on the economic needs of the country, especially in mining, the expansion of secondary (high) schooling for black African children in urban areas grew. Between 1975 and 1985, enrolment at secondary schooling grew significantly and government expenditure on black education increased, however education quality for those classified as coloured, Indian and black Africa remained poor compared to white education. It was this inequality together with the requirement that black African school pupils be taught in Afrikaans, which led to the student protests from 1976 to the late 1980s. With the economy in recession and continuous political unrest, most often led by school pupils, education policy reform began. However, by this time school pupils, supported by their parents had rejected government-initiated reforms in formal education. Schools, both primary and secondary, became 'sites of struggle' with the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) providing leadership. Following two States of Emergency declared by then-president PW Botha in 1985 and again in 1986, government began thinking about education reform leading to an education White Paper in 1983 following the De Lange report on education in 1981. This report paved the way for education concessions which the South African government hoped would lead to a reduction in the social, political and education instability in South Africa. The South African government introduced limited education reform linked to economic growth. This was seen by the NECC and the MDM as the government's attempt to reform apartheid education and to quell the growing unrest in the country. In response, the NECC introduced "People's Education' in 1986 striving for education transformation and political and economic liberation. This led to the rallying call by black African school children for 'liberation before education' and to mobilizing the country against apartheid. In summarizing this period, Fataar (1999: 105) writes:

> By the end of the 1980s therefore, we see that two powerful contending discourses occupied the education policy terrain. The state's reformist vocational discourse played a visible role in attempting to construct education policy, while the idealistic People's Education discourse held out hope for the radical transformation of education and society after the fall of apartheid.

On 11 February 1990, Mr Nelson Mandela was released from prison after 27 years and negotiations towards a democratic South Africa began. An important aspect of this process was the discourse around transforming the education system which was a central part of the struggle for political power between the two main political parties, the ANC and the National Party. Jansen (2001b: 42) referred to this as a period of policy positioning with "All these

24

actors jostled for positions as they prepared to develop single policy positions for a democratic South Africa."

This discourse included proposals from progressive education initiatives such as the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) in early-1992 and the establishment of the National Education and Training Forum in 1993. One of the NEPI reports was on early childhood educare as it was termed at that time. The National Party government initiated and put forward the Education Renewal Strategy (ERS) in 1991 as a discussion document. This included a national training strategy and a curriculum model for South Africa. Fataar (1999: 109) describes these two processes as "The ERS presented a definitive set of policy recommendations based on the values of freedom of association, diversity and decentralisation. The NEPI advanced a number of policy options with redress, non-racism, non-sexism, democracy, and equality as its underpinning values."

What these two initiatives showed clearly was the different political and ideological frameworks of the South African government at the time and the ANC as the government-in-waiting and of the respective education policy positions.

The ANC won the first democratic election and Mr Nelson Mandela become president of South Africa on 10 May 1994. In the interest of reconciliation, rather than adopting a winner-takes-all position on political power, President Mandela initiated a Government of National Unity (GNU) by bringing other political parties into his Cabinet. Once in power, the new ANC-led government of national unity introduced a range of education policies designed to redress the inequalities of the past and transform the education system towards a single non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and equitable system. To this end, post-apartheid education policy reform focused mostly on deracialising education in South Africa, providing education opportunities for black South African children, establishing a culture of learning and teaching, curriculum development, infrastructure, teacher rationalisation and the resourcing of education. Nineteen racial and ethnic education departments were collapsed into a single national department of Education and nine provincial departments of Education. Jansen (2003) calls the period from 1994 to 1999 the period of policy pronouncements.

The first white paper, White Paper on Education and Training in 1995, set out government's intention and process towards achieving a single, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and equitable education system. Legislation was enacted to achieve this, including the National Education Policy Act No. 84 of 1996, and the Employment of Education Act, No. 76 of 1998.

Over the period 1999 to 2004, a further 16 acts were passed (Sayed and Kanjee, 2013: 9) as well as two white papers in 2001. One of these was Education White Paper 5 on Early Childhood Education: Meeting the challenge of Early Childhood Development in South Africa, which set out government policy on the provision of ECD. Over the period 2004 to 2009, under education minister, Ms Naledi Pandor, little legislation was passed and her focus was on policy delivery.

This brief summary illustrates the historical, political, economic and ideological contexts of the time which impacted on education policy-making and programmes.

1.6.7   Rationale for ECD policy and programmes

The literature sets out three main justifications for ECD, namely rights of children, social justice and economic investment. The right of the child to ECD provision is the foundation from which most ECD policy and programmes in recent times have been developed. The foundation document for this is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF, 1989) which argues that children have rights and calls on governments to ensure that children are respected and valued and to recognise their agency. Respecting children's rights has become a foundation for ECD policy-making. Woodhead (2009: 2 cited in Daries, 2017: 5) writes: "…securing such rights with and on behalf of young children is the responsibility of different stakeholders such as their families, caregivers, teachers, communities and governments." Penn (2011b) is of the view that the child rights approach emphasises participation of children, family and community and that it challenges the economic justification approach.

The social justice justification for ECD policy is relevant in South Africa given the legacy of poverty and inequality, and lack of ECD programmes for young children. For Daries (2017), "ECD has become one of the arenas for social justice. At the heart of social justice is equality." This is consistent with Silva, Melhuish, Sammons, Siraj-Blatchford & Taggart, 2004: 2, cited in Daries, 2017: 80) who maintain, "For many disadvantaged children, the quality of ECD has a significant and long-term influence on their educational performance

and life chances." In South Africa however, ECD has faced challenges with regard to social justice. In many communities the lack of ECD programmes perpetuates injustice and inequality. While advantaged children progress, poor and vulnerable children struggle to access ECD centres and programmes. These inequalities in access to ECD centres have immense and long-term consequences for young children. Although it is commonly acknowledged by government that supporting young children through ECD programmes is one strategy to achieve social and economic equity, this acknowledgment has not been translated into service delivery.

With the economic investment in ECD justification, Rolnick & Grunewald (2003:1) are of the view that "Economic investment into quality education of its youngest citizens is important because of the link between return on investment a child makes to society as an adult starts in the first few years of life." Without ECD interventions and the necessary support, vulnerable young children are at risk. In turn this impacts negatively on the family, the community and on a country's economy, productivity and prosperity. For Daries (2017: 12), "Economic arguments for investing in ECD include a potential increase in productivity over a lifetime, as well as a better standard of living when the child becomes an adult. This is possible if investment into human capital starts at an early age." According to Heckman (2011) an investment in ECD benefits economic growth and stability of a country. He argues that early intervention can correct the impact of disadvantaged contexts from which young children come and can result in a high economic return and his research "shows that the rate of economic return on pedagogic interventions as an investment during the earliest years of a child's life is more significant than in later years" (Heckman, 2011: 40). Based on this we see an increasing reliance on the economic argument informing ECD policy within a market-driven model.

1.6.8   Exploring quality in early childhood development

The descriptor 'quality' is used in this study and it is appropriate to record my view on this. Given that ECD centres and programme opportunities are being advocated for globally, and is considered appropriate to meet the developmental outcomes for young children, a consideration of what ECD programme quality is becomes important. In many of the 27 ECD policy documents produced in South Africa, the concept of ECD centre and programme quality and the requirements are specified. Quality, however, is a contested concept, meaning different things to different stakeholders and in different contexts.

According to the Society for Research in Child Development (2011: 1), "High-quality early childhood development programme are needed globally to ensure that all children reach their potential and thrive. Access to programs is not sufficient; a focus on quality is necessary." Quality and its measurement are viewed as a requirement of ECD programmes to meet ECD programme goals. This is especially true of ECD programmes that stress high economic returns on ECD investment and for which quality is indicated by a range of aspects including: building infrastructure, teacher qualifications, learning programme content, learning resources and materials available, and administration. In this case the understanding of ECD quality links very closely with the neo-liberal view of education and ECD discussed earlier.

In neo-liberal, Western countries ECD policy is heavily influenced by expert opinions, assumptions and values, and increasingly in majority world countries, under the influence of organisations such as the World Bank, UNESCO and international organisations including donors. That this neo-liberal perspective is hegemonic and increasingly globalized cannot be disputed and little evidence of contrasting views beyond a few authors exists (Moss & Dahlberg, 2008; Penn, 2011a; Penn, 2011b; Bloch, 2013; Moss, 2009; Moss, 2017; Sims, 2017). In this hegemony the position is taken that "…social and economic problems can be eliminated by early childhood services delivering predetermined outcomes through early intervention ..." (Moss & Dahlberg, 2008: 5). Missing from this perspective is the context in which ECD is provided, the purpose of ECD provision within communities, local cultural practices, community values, beliefs and wishes, and desired outcomes of parents for young children. As such quality is a contested construct. The idea of quality as objective and universal, regardless of community context, culture and local practices is challenged today.

Moss and Pence (1994: 172) see quality in early childhood services as "… a constructed concept, subjective in the nature and based on values, beliefs and interest, rather than an objective and universal reality." Dahlberg, Moss and Pence (2013) cited in Excel (2016: 1) point out that "… quality is not a neutral concept. Neither are understandings of what constitute quality uncontested. It is a complex and multifaceted concept with interpretations predominantly drawn from western perspectives." Moss and Dahlberg (2008: 3) suggest that "….quality has become reified, treated as if it was an essential attribute of services or products that gives them value, assumed to be natural and neutral." For these authors, there exists a problem with how quality is measured and assured.

For Moss and Dahlberg (2008: 3) ECD quality is an evaluation of the conformity of an ECD centre or programme in relation to assumptions and values based on this expert knowledge. They are of the view that in ECD, quality is generally understood as "…..an attribute of services for young children that ensures the efficient production of predefined, normative outcomes, typically developmental or simple learning goals. Presence of quality is usually evaluated vis-à-vis expert-derived criteria associated in research with achieving these outcomes." They go on to say that the problem with quality is that it does not take into account "...context and values, subjectively and plurality" and that it implies certain assumptions and values based on expert knowledge Moss and Dahlberg (2008:4).

Dahlberg, Moss and Pence (2007: ix) suggest a change in the approach to quality advocating that quality should be viewed as a "…. democratic process of interpretation, a process that involves making practice visible and thus subject to reflection, dialogue and argumentation, leading to a judgement of value, contextualised and provisional because it is always subject to contestation. Adherence to rigid, expert-driven Western ECD quality norms and standards, most often does not take into account context, diversity, environment and cultural practices."

Moss and Penn (1996) suggest that there is not one single definition of quality rather they see quality as a diverse and dynamic concept that changes over time.

As will be seen in this thesis, ECD policy-makers in South Africa accepted the quality hegemony and opted for compliance standards as advocated by the Western world and international ECD organisations and institutions. In South African ECD policy documents and guidelines, ECD quality is measured mainly by physical infrastructure, the number of toilets and hand wash-basis, the learning programme, group size, and teacher-child ratios, the presence of developmentally-appropriate education equipment, materials and resources, governance and financial management. However, given South Africa's diverse social, political, economic and cultural contexts and its transformation project, ECD quality should be viewed more innovatively.

1.7 Early childhood development in South Africa

This section provides a background to ECD in South Africa and covers four aspects: ECD in South Africa before 1994, ECD in South Africa after 1994, selected ECD statistics in South Africa since 1994, and the challenges facing the ECD sector after 1994.

1.7.1   ECD in South Africa before 1994

ECD in South Africa can be traced back to the 1930s with the establishment of the first 'nursery schools' as they were then called, for white children (Atmore, 1989). Ebrahim (2010: 119) writes that not only does the history of care and education in South Africa tell many stories, but it also tells the story about the construction of young children's lives along racial lines.

In a previous research study (Atmore, 1989), I wrote that with increasing industrialisation and urbanisation in the early 20th century, together with widespread poverty amongst white families and concern for the health of white children in city slums and to free mothers to work, the need for care away from home of young children in South Africa emerged (Atmore, 1989). The first efforts at preschool provision in South Africa started in the early 1930s (Webber, 1978) and were aimed at ensuring the health and protection of white children at risk (Atmore, 1989). At the 1934 National Conference on the Poor White Problem held at Kimberley, a resolution passed read:

> Provision should be made for a system of preschool education in the slum areas of our cities, where children are, during the most critical period of their lives, exposed to influences which have fatal effects on their moral development and their health (Webber, 1978: 14).

However, the Manifesto on Education in 1948 (Marcum, 1982: 224) made it clear that the government would not support programmes for young children before school entry taking the view that "The parents must not shuffle off on to others the duty of bringing up their own children" (Webber, 1978: 94).

On 26 May 1948, the National Party came to power winning the parliamentary election with a policy of racial segregation and the separate development of races. Education became an important means by which racial segregation was to be enforced. Political ideology, enforced through legislation at the time, prescribed the separation of children of different race groups. With overall growth in preschool provision being slow, the result was a clear difference in the development of ECD programmes for young children, based on race. The little growth there was, was skewed in favour of white children, with provision for black children being the least.

Malherbe (1977: 368) reports that the Minister of Education at the time, Jan Hendrik Hofmeyr, was opposed to supporting nursery schools for the privileged class because in his

opinion, this encouraged mothers to indulge in frivolous forms of recreation such as playing bridge, thereby neglecting their children.

In 1967, pre-primary education for white children became the responsibility of the four provincial administrations when the provinces were allowed to establish their own nursery schools where needed (Atmore, 1989). Malherbe (1977) clarifies that the Department of Education would however not accept responsibility for preschools, reasoning that this was the responsibility of the Department of Social Welfare. As will become evident in this study, this was a precursor to the split of ECD between the Department of Education (DoE) and the Department of Social Development (DSD). In 1969, change came about when the Minister of National Education decided that nursery school education for whites was to become the responsibility of the provincial education departments and all preschools had to be registered with a provincial department of education, which would be responsible for the control and financial support for preschools in the provinces (Atmore, 1989). By 1978, still no firm policy for coloured pre-primary education had been laid down, and pre-primary education was seen as a private enterprise supported by churches, welfare and other organisations. For black and Indian children, ECD policy only began to take shape during the 1980s (Atmore, 1989).

In 1980, the De Lange Commission (Human Sciences Research Council [HSRC] 1981) was established by the National Party government to make recommendations for reforming education. The Commission noted the importance of preschool education for children from disadvantaged backgrounds and recommended a bridging programme for preparing children for primary school, to be financed by government (HSRC, 1981: 107). Even though the policy in respect of the bridging year was in place, the years prior to the bridging year continued to be the responsibility of the family, welfare organisations, faith-based organisations, non-profit organisations (NPOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs). ECD policy was spelled out clearly in the White Paper on the Provision of Education in South Africa (Republic of South Africa [RSA], 1983b), which recorded the apartheid government position. The White Paper argued that it was not realistic to provide comprehensive provision of early childhood education facilities and programmes at state expense preferring that it came from welfare and religious organisations. Government preferred a voluntary bridging period aimed at promoting school readiness before basic education was started. In 1985, the government committed itself to the provision of bridging

classes attached to primary schools, mainly for black children. The reason for this was the extraordinarily high failure rate of black African children in Grade 1 (Taylor, 1989).

The Child Care Act, No. 74 of 1983 (RSA, 1983a), which fell under the Department of Social Welfare and Pensions, did make provision for ECD through the establishment of facilities described as 'a place of care'. Because of racial segregation, education and social welfare were legislated for and provided for by the racially exclusive and separate legislative authorities of the House of Assembly (white), House of Representatives (coloured) and House of Delegates (Indian). Legislation on education and social welfare for black Africans outside the national states was dealt with by Parliament as 'general affairs legislation' via the Department of Development Planning and Education and Training (Atmore, 1989).

By 1984, ECD programmes were still characterised by discriminatory provision based on race as well as geographic location, gender, ability and economic status (Atmore, 1989; National Education Coordinating Committee [NECC], 1992; Van den Berg & Vergnani, 1986). This led to Short's (1984: 7) assessment that in South Africa there was a lack of ECD facilities for young children in disadvantaged communities where poverty was most serious.

With the exception of the City of Cape Town, local authorities did not provide ECD centres or programmes. In the absence of state programmes and support of ECD, other than limited support to the white community, ECD programmes were provided by non-profit, faith, welfare and CBOs across South Africa. These organisations were responsible for most of the ECD provision which existed. In addition, these organisations provided for the construction of ECD centres, non-formal teacher training, governing body training, education equipment provision, parent programmes, playgroups, and home-based child-minding.

Van den Berg and Vergnani (1986: 119) summarised ECD centre provision at the time as follows:

> The South African state has not given tangible recognition to the importance of the early years of life, has not displayed a comprehensive understanding of or an integrated approach to the problem, and … has as yet revealed little evidence of a willingness to move towards the prioritisation of services on the basis of need. Rather … state provision for preschool education and care in South Africa can be characterised as totally inadequate, a situation exacerbated by the fact that what state provision there is, occurs inversely to need. State provision can further be characterised as segregated, fragmented, uncoordinated, and is lacking in both comprehensive vision and a commitment to democratic involvement.

By 1987, ECD policy was still formulated on the basis of the ruling government ideological preference for apartheid, although several progressive ECD centres in Cape Town began to enrol children of all race groups as early as 1983.

1.7.2   ECD in South Africa after 1994

Since April 1994, when the first democratic election was held in South Africa, a number of initiatives affecting the lives of young children have taken place. Most significant amongst these have been:

- The ratification by the South African government of the UNCRC (United Nations, 1989) in 1995.
- Free medical and health care for pregnant women and for children aged birth to six years (RSA, 2004: 18).
- The establishment of a Directorate for ECD and Lower Primary Education within the DoE in 1995 (RSA, 1994a: 20).
- The establishment of a Chief Directorate for ECD in the national DSD in February 2015 (Ilifa Labantwana, 2016: 5).
- The development and approval of Education White Paper 5 on ECD in 2001 (DoE, 2001b).
- The Department of Welfare White Paper of 1997 (Department of Welfare, 1997), with a section on ECD.
- The introduction of Grade R for children aged five turning six years, in 2001.
- The Expanded Public Works Programme [EPWP], which included ECD programmes in 2004 (DSD, DoE & DoH, 2004).
- A nationwide audit of ECD provisioning, completed in 2001.
- The nine provincial Departments of Social Development making ECD subsidies available for eligible ECD centres.
- The nine provincial Departments of Education making grants-in-aid for Grade R classes.
- The Children's Amendment Act, No. 41 of 2007 (RSA, 2007), with two chapters that deal with partial care facilities and ECD programmes, was passed by Parliament.
- Cabinet approval of the National Integrated ECD policy in December 2015.
- On 31 March 2017, 12 081 353 children were receiving social assistance through the Child Support Grant (South African Social Security Agency [SASSA], 2017: 26).

In addition to the above, various senior government politicians have made public statements in support of ECD programmes. At the January 8th statements of National Executive Committee on the occasion of the 96th anniversary of the ANC, newly elected ANC President, Jacob Zuma, said, "During the course of this year, we need to further enhance our efforts to improve the conditions of children and youth in poverty [and] the development of a comprehensive strategy on early childhood development …" (Zuma, 2008: para. 61). Then President Thabo Mbeki, in his State of the Nation address on 8 February 2008, announced that ECD provision would be expanded by the end of 2009 (Mbeki, 2008: para. 83) and then Minister of Finance Trevor Manuel, in his budget speech two weeks later on 20 February 2008, said that the budget "prioritises early childhood education" (Manuel, 2008: 11). He continued, "Social development programmes such as early childhood development, the expansion of Grade R enrolment … for which funds are allocated to provinces, are labour intensive and contribute strongly to social cohesion in poor communities" (Manuel, 2008:8). In the 2009 State of the Nation Address on 3 June 2009, newly elected President Jacob Zuma, stated, "The early childhood development programme will be stepped up, with the aim of ensuring universal access to Grade R and doubling of the number of 0-4-year old children by 2014" (Zuma, 2009: para. 9). One year later, in the 2010 State of the Nation address on 11 February 2010, President Jacob Zuma indicated that there would be "A further expansion of public employment programmes is also underway. This includes local infrastructure and tertiary projects and literacy projects, home-based care, school maintenance and early childhood development initiatives" (Zuma, 2010: para. 19).

On 30 March 2012, a government-organised South African ECD conference with the theme *'Building future leaders through ECD'*, in East London, was attended by 646 national delegates (Davids et al., 2015: 2), which included policy-makers, donors, government ministers, government officials, non-profit representatives and academics, and released the Buffalo City Declaration on ECD, which is reproduced in full in Annexure 1.

More recently, the South African Minister of Social Development, Ms Bathabile Dlamini, (Dlamini, 2012) and the Minister of Basic Education, Ms Angelina Motshekga (Motshekga, 2014), made public statements on ECD in relation to the National Development Plan 2030. While Minister Dlamini resolved to provide universal ECD programmes by 2014, Motshekga detailed plans to increase access to, as well as improving the quality of ECD provision, particularly for poor children.

1.7.3   Selected ECD statistics in South Africa since 1994

The National Integrated ECD Policy of the national Department of Social Development (RSA, 2015: 40) reports that in 2015 there were 8 207 723 children aged birth to six years (not yet turned 7 years) living in South Africa. Of these, 5 936 350 were aged birth to four years, 1 144 897 were five-year-olds and 1 126 475 were six-year-olds (RSA, 2015: 40). This represented 14,9% of the 2015 mid-year population estimate of 54,9 million South African citizens (calculated from Statistics South Africa [Stats SA], 2016: 1).

Determining the number of children enrolled in ECD centres and programmes across South Africa is extremely difficult. The National Integrated ECD Policy (RSA, 2015) does not provide this data. The South African Early Childhood Review (Hall, Sambu, Berry, Giese & Almeleh, 2017: 38) provides enrolment statistics based on the annual Stats SA General Household Survey of 2015 (Stats SA, 2016) as follows: 535 670 children ages birth to two years (17% of the age cohort) and 1 925 000 children ages three to five years (63% of age cohort). Although not stated in the Review, it is probable that this latter number includes children enrolled in Grade R in 2015. Explained another way, extrapolating from these numbers, I estimate that in 2015, 1 695 345 children were in ECD centres and 792 325 were enrolled in Grade R.

These statistics are to be treated with caution however. Hall, Sambu, Berry, Giese and Almeleh (2017) write that there is no accurate data on the number of registered ECD centres and programmes in South Africa or on the number of children enrolled at these ECD centres and programmes. Hall et al. (2017: 38) then warn, "… all data on ECD services are drawn from survey data which are not ideal nor sustainable for robust programme monitoring and planning." Gustafsson (2017: 3) corroborates this, suggesting that there are "… weaknesses of existing information systems relating to ECD, and discrepancies in the available statistics."

From the National Integrated ECD Policy situation analysis (RSA, 2015: 40–44) the following is evident:

- The majority of young children under the age of six (65%) continue to live in poverty;
- Poor children live mainly in the rural parts of South Africa, in Limpopo, the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal;
- Low levels of access to ECD programmes are strongly linked to high levels of poverty;
- In 2015, ECD centres received a government ECD subsidy for 685 511 children;

- In 2015, 33,8% of children aged birth to four years, were enrolled at an ECD centre, and in 2014, 16% of children were enrolled with childminders and day mothers;

- In 2016, 813 496 children were enrolled in Grade R; and

- An estimated 20% of children aged birth to four years in the poorest 40% of households had access to out-of-home care.

From the above, it is clear that the biggest challenge in providing ECD programmes since 1994 has been to increase access to an ECD programme and to improve the quality of these programmes, especially for children from poor households.

The ECD policy priority of the national Department of Basic Education (DBE), reflected in Education White Paper 5 on ECD is Grade R (DoE, 2001b). Using the most recently published education department statistics of 2017, Table 1.2 below shows the enrolment pattern for Grade R from 2002 to 2017. It indicates slow but steady progress towards the Education White Paper 5 policy target. By February 2017, 839 515 children were enrolled in a Grade R class (DBE, 2018: 2). Because of the method of data collection, being part of the national DBE annual schools statistical survey, this number was accurate.

Table 1.2: Grade R enrolment: 2002–2017

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Province																
Eastern Cape	23 562	46 371	75 571	105 231	96 384	112 889	133 249	154 514	164 803	157 184	158 363	151 831	154 602	138 233	136 232	136 745
Free State	17 220	16 323	16 482	18 449	20 072	22 429	23 699	23 767	27 209	28 627	30 639	32 170	35 067	36 595	37 540	40 001
Gauteng	28 189	31 666	34 690	41 073	47 314	49 931	54 979	64 935	76 460	86 240	95 374	104 508	111 925	114 325	119 547	127 339
KwaZulu-Natal	72 312	75 996	73 098	79 276	92 948	118 884	124 742	154 666	175 541	181 585	189 169	187 972	194 072	185 074	191 502	184 752
Limpopo	90 332	89 790	89 725	98 273	102 969	93 030	98 963	97 570	113 432	117 279	117 950	120 029	123 151	122 380	125 928	136 943
Mpumalanga	12 148	13 884	23 695	14 171	25 734	34 962	40 671	46 194	51 758	56 726	59 202	57 974	60 223	60 580	64 645	72 598
North West	3 142	4 325	5 625	9 737	15 311	16 143	22 294	30 174	42 010	42 937	44 489	47 744	50 645	50 736	51 426	54 191
Northern Cape	3 744	5 500	5 875	6 598	7 259	8 423	9 575	11 508	12 387	13 153	15 036	16 834	18 274	18 833	18 538	19 502
Western Cape	28 077	31 532	31 726	32 389	33 650	30 834	30 627	36 895	43 603	50 923	57 643	60 308	65 085	65 569	68 138	67 444
TOTAL	**278 726**	**315 387**	**356 487**	**405 197**	**441 641**	**487 525**	**543 799**	**620 223**	**707 203**	**734 654**	**767 865**	**779 370**	**813 044**	**792 325**	**813 496**	**839 515**

Footnote: The cumulative data in Table 1.2 has been compiled by the author from national Department of Basic Education publications: Education Statistics in South Africa at a glance from 2002 to 2004, and from School Realities from 2005 to 2017. The source publication for each of these years can be found in the references.

While public funding for ECD programmes has increased over time, there is no legal obligation for government to fund ECD programmes for children before Grade R as there is for government to fund children in formal schooling. Although subsidies for poor children attending registered non-profit ECD centres increased from approximately R122 million in 2007–2008 to R1,6 billion in 2013–2014, this does not adequately reach the poorest and youngest children who mostly do not access registered centres (Berry, Dawes & Biersteker, 2013: 38).

1.7.4 Challenges facing the ECD sector after 1994

Notwithstanding the progress made in ECD and in Grade R provision since 1994, children in South Africa still face significant challenges. In two peer-reviewed and published papers, colleagues and I recorded these as ECD infrastructure, learning programmes, teacher development, management and administrative capacity, nutrition and funding (Atmore, 2013; Atmore, Van Niekerk & Ashley-Cooper, 2012).

ECD infrastructure is a particular problem in the South African context. Many ECD facilities function without the basic essentials, such as running water, electricity and sanitation. The infrastructure in community-based facilities is poor DSD (DSD & EPRI, 2014: 229) with a significant number of buildings in a bad condition. Poor infrastructure at ECD facilities presents significant health and safety risks to children attending these facilities.

The ECD sector offers a range of programme options to meet the needs of young children, including the traditional centre-based model of provision, home-based programmes, playgroups, parent education and family outreach programmes. For effective early learning to be provided, quality teaching is essential. The DBE and DSD require that ECD teachers are appropriately trained (RSA, 2015: 108), however in a national study which included assessing the quality of ECD teachers, researchers found that a significant number of teachers do not have an appropriate qualification (DSD & EPRI, 2014: 102).

Regarding community-based ECD centres, the management and administrative capacities at registered ECD centres appear to be more sophisticated than those at unregistered ECD centres, and registered ECD centres also have more structured governance and financial reporting systems (DSD & EPRI, 2014: 62). For community-based ECD centres, proper management and administrative systems are lacking. For these centres to meet the minimum standards set by the DSD in terms of Children's Amendment Act, 41 of 2007 (RSA, 2007), specific structures and processes are required to be in place. However, the financial

management of many of the community-based ECD facilities is not satisfactory and these centres do not have many of the necessary administrative structures established (DSD & EPRI, 2014: 85).

For young children, hunger, malnutrition and food insecurity are significant challenges and the effects of inadequate nutrition are severe. In terms of learning, malnutrition and hunger have a profound effect on a child's ability to concentrate, focus attention, and perform complex tasks (Wildeman & Mbebetho 2005).

The largest contribution to ECD funding in South Africa is from parent fees (Atmore, 2013). Government funding for ECD comes mainly from the provincial DSD and DBE. The DSD in each province provides funding through a subsidy for registered ECD centres, presently calculated at R15 per child per day, but varying by province, for those children from birth to four years of age (DSD, 2015b: para. 10 & 11). Only those children whose parents or caregivers total income falls below a specific level, presently set at R 3 800 per month for a single parent and R7 600 per month if married (DSD, 2017: 2), qualify for the ECD subsidy, meaning that only those ECD centres that cater for the poorest of families benefit from this subsidy. The DBE provides funding for Grade R programmes in public schools and pays subsidies for registered community-based Grade R facilities.

1.8   Research questions

This study aimed to trace, describe and interpret the ECD policy trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa from 1990 to 2015. This is necessary to understand how ECD has evolved in South Africa and to examine how ECD policy was made. Ritchie and Lewis (2003: 48) explain that research questions need to meet a number of requirements, namely –

- the need to be clear, intelligible and unambiguous and focused;
- capable of being researched through data collection;
- the need to be relevant and useful, whether to policy, practice or the development of social theory;
- having the potential to make an original contribution or to fill a gap; and
- being feasible.

In formulating the research questions for this study, I have aimed to meet these requirements.

The main research question in this study was:

> What was the ECD policy trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa and how did
> it unfold?

In answering the research questions, the original contribution to knowledge of this study is tracing, describing, interpreting and providing an explanation of how the ECD policy trajectory shaped the evolution of ECD in post-apartheid South Africa during a period of unprecedented social, political, economic and education transformation over a relatively short time. This fills a gap in the literature as I could find no previous work done on this topic. In support of the main research question, there are four secondary questions:

- How did ECD policy shape the evolution of ECD in post-apartheid South Africa?
- Which factors enhanced the ECD policy-making process in South Africa?
- How was ECD policy implemented in South Africa?
- Which lessons can be learned from the ECD policy-making process in South Africa over the period 1990 to 2015?

To ensure that these research questions were relevant and appropriate I asked two highly competent colleagues to read drafts of the research questions as well as to read the interview schedule, and to comment on these in relation to the purpose of the study. The reason for doing this is described by Glesne (1999: 74) as follows:

> They [the colleagues] bring their logic, uninvested in your study, to the assessment of your questions, and give you the basis for returning to your work table to create still one more draft. Such facilitation tells you about grammar, clarity, and question-topic fit.

Each colleague commented critically and constructively, and changes were made to the research questions and the interview schedule.

1.9   Ethical considerations

Since this study made use of interviewees as sources of information, it was critical that the study strictly conformed to accepted research ethics. Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (2001, cited in Bell, 2005: 45) summarise their principles of research ethics as follows:

> Ethical research involves getting informed consent of those you are going to interview, question, observe or take materials from. It involves reaching agreements about the uses of this data, and how its analysis will be reported and disseminated. And it is about keeping to such agreements when they have been reached.

I obtained ethical clearance for the study from the Research Ethics Committee of the University of Stellenbosch (see Annexure 2) prior to the request to interviewees to participate in during the study, and the ethics guidelines of the Education Faculty at the University of Stellenbosch were strictly adhered to.

In this study, I worked with interviewees in what Margaret Mead (1969: 371, cited in Diener & Crandall, 1978: 72) calls "an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect." Purposefully selected individuals were invited to participate in the study (see Annexure 3), and all except one agreed to participate. One person whom I approached to participate explained to me that although she would like to be part of the study, she was chronically ill and not able to participate. O'Sullivan (2009: 89) writes, "Negotiating access involves more than informing potential respondents about the research and gaining their consent. Significantly, extending an invitation to participate and collaborate involves genuine dialogue and the retention of an open and transparent agenda." Before each interview, the interviewees were fully informed of the purpose of the study, the goals of the study, the research questions, and their rights as interviewees. They were informed that participation was entirely voluntary and that they were free to withdraw from the interview and the study at any time. Before an interview began, each interviewee was given the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

Providing this information enabled individuals to make an informed decision on participation in the study and to give written consent in order to be interviewed by me prior to the interviews taking place (see Annexure 4). Confidentiality was assured to all who participated in the study and to ensure this, the names of interviewees are not reported in this dissertation. Because the main actors in ECD policy-making during this period were relatively few, I decided not to disclose to the interviewees whom else I had interviewed, and no one asked whom else I had interviewed. After the interviews, a written transcript of the interview was returned to each participant for verification and to check the accuracy of the content. The audio and written transcripts were secured by me, and safely stored once all the interviewees had returned the signed, validated transcript release forms. Each participant was thanked in writing after each interview and also after verifying the accuracy of the transcript.

A critical ethical consideration is that I had known all the individuals whom I interviewed for many years. This could have presented an ethical dilemma for them and for me. However, all the individuals who participated in the study were confident and assertive professionals who did not feel obligated to me, nor were they made to feel coerced or manipulated in any way before or during the interviews. As each face-to-face interview was conducted in

conversation style, there was no risk of physical, emotional or psychological harm to participants, which might have resulted from participation in this study.

1.10   Structure of the dissertation

This dissertation consists of seven chapters. Chapter One introduces the study and covers the problem statement, key terms and concepts used in the study, the background to the study, the ECD context globally and in South Africa, and sets out the research questions.

Chapter Two conceptualises and defines policy, explains the public policy-making environment and the various approaches to policy-making, describes stakeholder involvement in policy-making, examines policy implementation, sets out the policy trajectory analysis conceptual framework used in this study, and introduces education and ECD policy-making in South Africa.

Chapter Three sets out the research problem, research design and methodology, and records the research questions, the research process, data construction methods, data analysis and interpretation.

Chapter Four traces the ECD policy trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa in chronological sequence and in detail. Starting in 1990, the chapter includes significant policy-making activity over the period up to and including December 2015:

- it starts with the National Education Policy Investigation (NECC, 1992) and the African National Congress [ANC] Policy Framework for Education and Training (ANC, 1994b);
- continues with the National Integrated Plan for ECD and Tshwaragano Ka Bana (RSA & UNICEF, 2005) and the Children's Amendment Act, No. 41 of 2007 (RSA, 2007); and
- ends with the most recent National Integrated ECD Policy (RSA, 2015), approved by the South African Cabinet on 9 December 2015.

Chapter Five presents the findings of the study. It sets out the key findings on how ECD policy was made from 1990 to 2015, focusing on the three main ECD policies that were adopted in 1996, 2001 and 2015. It identifies the key stakeholders in ECD policy-making in South Africa, and examines the experiences of stakeholders in ECD policy-making, including government officials, the ECD non-profit sector, and ECD experts. Lastly, it looks at factors that enhanced ECD policy-making.

Chapter Six presents an analysis and interpretation of the study findings viewed through an interpretive lens. It reports on the analysis of the ECD policy-making processes, identifies stakeholders central to ECD policy-making and reports on how ECD policy was communicated and implemented. This chapter also records the challenges and constraints faced in ECD policy-making.

Chapter Seven provides a summary of the main findings of the study and reflects on the current state of ECD in South Africa. It sets out the implications of the findings of the study for ECD policy-making and for the ECD sector in South Africa, and presents comments on the significance and value of this study. This chapter ends with a reflection on my research journey and sets out areas for further research inquiry.

1.11   Chapter summary

This chapter has introduced the purpose of the study and the research questions, defined key terms and concepts used in the study, and provided a broad indication of how I intended to conduct the study. As background to the study, I briefly described the present global context of ECD, and to put the study in context, I described the development of ECD in South Africa before and after 1994, with 1994 being a pivotal year in South African political history. Selected ECD statistics and data after 1994 were provided alongside the challenges presently facing the ECD sector in South Africa. This chapter also reflected the ethical considerations in this study. From the introductory narrative, it is evident that this is a significant study, that there was a need to carry out this research study, and that the timing was right. In Chapter Two, I present a review of the literature on policy and policy-making and present a policy-trajectory analysis conceptual framework that was used in this study. I also provide a brief overview of education policy-making in post-apartheid South Africa.

CHAPTER TWO – TOWARDS A POLICY TRAJECTORY ANALYSIS CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

In tracing and interpreting the ECD policy-making trajectory in South Africa, it was important to first understand policy and policy-making, and to make use of a conceptual framework for understanding the policy-making process and policy trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa. Through engaging with a wide range of prominent texts, I was able to develop an understanding of policy and policy-making as discussed in this chapter. In the first section of this chapter, I conceptualise and define policy and policy-making, participation in policy-making, the policy-making environment and policy implementation. Based on the work of Bowe, Ball & Gold, 1992; Ball, 1994; Vidovich (2007) and O'Sullivan (2009) I set out a policy trajectory analysis conceptual framework which I use in this study. My intention in doing so was to be able to analyse and interpret the ECD policy trajectory in South Africa from its first steps in 1990 to 2015, and to provide a summary in this chapter. The value of understanding the ECD policy-making trajectory is that it assists in understanding the complexity of policy-making over an extended period of time as was the case in this study. I also identify some assumptions from the literature that underpin policy trajectory studies. This chapter concludes with a brief overview of education policy-making in post-apartheid South Africa.

2.2   Defining and understanding policy

In considering the ECD policy trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa, it is important to explain and understand what is meant by the terms 'policy' and 'policy-making'. This section begins by defining policy and recording my understanding of policy and policy-making.

When asking the question 'What is policy?' Torjman (2005) is of the view that there is no simple answer to the question. Nudzor (2009) explains that the term is difficult to define due to the many different ways in which it is used, and Green (1994: 1) writes, "No single definition of 'policy' is likely to mirror the full range of ordinary usage." Ball (1994: 15) refers to the failure to define policy conceptually, which results in taking the meaning of policy for granted and "making it difficult to achieve a grounded conceptual understanding of the real meaning of the term." Broadly speaking, policy can be considered as the output of the policy-making process. Lynn (1980: 10) defines policy as "a specific set of government

actions that will, by design or otherwise, produce a particular class of effects." The author further indicates that policies are not usually the product of choice and co-operation but rather one of conflict among stakeholders based on differences in interest, objectives and perceptions. Similarly, Ozga (2000: 113) argues that policy involves negotiation, contestation or struggle between different groups who may lie outside the formal machinery of official policy-making. Dudley and Vidovich (1995: 15) define policy as follows:

> Policy may be regarded as collective social decision-making. It is collective and social because the decisions made concern the whole of society rather than individuals alone and second because participants in the decision making process are considered to be the legitimate decision makers for society.

Ball (1994: 16) sees policies "[not as] static things, they shift and change their meanings … [and] are represented differently by different actors and interest."

The overall aim of policy-making is to improve the well-being of individuals, families and communities, with the delivery of quality programmes and services considered to be in the best interest of citizens. On policy-making, Liasidou (2009: 110) makes two observations, "Policy is occasionally incoherent, fragmented and fraught with the incessant struggles over its constitution and definition" and political power and influence affects all phases of the policy-making process with the policy outcomes reflecting the political will of government. Geurts (2014: 6) states, "We define the process of public policy-making as the process of policy formulation and policy implementation … intrinsically connected to each other and integrated into a single, seamless flexible process."

Christie (2008: 117) lists several features of policy as:
- "It is a form of decision making that has goals and purposes.
- It is a values-driven activity, based on what people would like a society to look like.
- It often involves a vision of some ideal state of affairs.
- It usually involves attempts to 'make things better'…
- It typically involves allocating resources on the basis of interests.
- It may involve decisions not to act, as well as decisions to act.
- It often is the outcome of compromises between different interests and groups.
- Its results are not always predictable, and may take time to play out.
- It may be difficult to implement as intended."

45

From the above discussion, it becomes clear that because understandings of policy are multiple, and at times divergent, notions of policy-making are equally contestable. Following on this, and as is emphasised in this chapter, policy-making in relation to ECD in post-apartheid South Africa is a fraught process.

Policy regulates the provision of ECD centres, programmes, training, funding, curriculum and other aspects of practice. It determines who may and who may not provide ECD centres and programmes, the quality standards by which these programmes are to be provided, and which programmes and centres can access government funding.

Given that the literature speaks of the complexity of policy, for this study, it was important to indicate how I understand policy. To illustrate this, I compare the problem-solving definition of policy with the process definition of policy with the intention of providing a conceptual understanding of policy.

2.2.1   The problem-solving definition of policy

The problem-solving definition of policy refers to setting out solutions to problems (Nudzor, 2009). Consistent with this, Harman (1984: 13) defines policy as "The implicit or explicit specification of courses of purposive action being followed or to be followed in dealing with a recognised problem or matter of concern and directed towards the accomplishment of some intended or desired set of goals." Policy can thus be understood as a response to a problem and with specific outcomes in mind. Jennings (1977: 30) takes a similar position and describes policy as a guide for future actions and for making appropriate choices towards achieving an intended end. By stating that policy is a guide for taking future actions, Jennings (1977) implies that policy is a product of the decision-making process which results in a document of some sort. Viewed in this way, policy-making is described by Weiss (1982: 23) as:

> [A] group of authorized decision makers assemble at particular times and places, review a problem (or opportunity), consider a number of alternative courses of action with more or less explicit calculation of the advantages and disadvantages of each opinion, weigh the alternatives against their goals or preferences, and then select an alternative that seems well suited for achieving their purposes. The result is a decision.

In a critique of this view, Bowe et al. (1992) state that the arguments in support of these definitions are limited as they ignore the contestation over policy and they potentially separate policy-making from policy implementation.

2.2.2   The process definition of policy

Proponents of the process definition of policy have a different view from those who see policy as problem solving. Nudzor (2009: 88) contends that "policy is a dynamic process and […] the problem-solving agenda embedded in the traditional/rationalist approach to policy unduly limits our understanding of the dynamics of the entire policy process." Likewise, Ozga (2000) sees policy as a process, involving negotiations, contestations and struggle, rather than as a product. In line with this, Trowler (2003: 49) views policy as a dynamic process, which he believes comes from three main sources: Firstly, he argues there is usually conflict among those who make policy and those who put policy into practice about what the important issues for policy are and what the desired goals should be. Secondly, interpreting policy is an active process rather than a passive one, and thirdly, Trowler explains that the practice of policy-making is extremely complex. Rist (2000: 1002) notes that policy-making is a multi-dimensional and multifaceted process with:

> [T]he emphasis here on policy-making being a process is deliberate. It is a process that evolves through cycles, with each cycle more or less bounded, more or less constrained by time, funds, political support, and other events. It is also a process that circles back on itself, iterates the same decision issue time and again, and often does not come to closure.

In contrast to this view of decision-making as an event, Weiss (1982: 26) writes:

> Given the fragmentation of authority across multiple … departments, and legislative committees, and the disjointed stages by which actions coalesce into decisions, the traditional model of decision making is a highly stylised rendition of reality. … The complexity of governmental decision-making often defies neat compartmentalization.

Lingard (1993) describes the difference between the two definitions of policy, stating that the problem-solving definition of policy is theoretically driven whilst the process model is empirically driven.

2.2.3   Policy as text and as discourse

Arguably the most prolific and influential writer on policy and policy-making is Stephan Ball. For Ball (2006: 44), policy comprises both 'text' and 'discourse' and he emphasises that text and discourse are what he calls "implicit in each other." Ball answers the question, 'What is policy?' by describing policy as both process and outcome. Writing on policy as text, Ball (2006: 44) sees policy as "representations which are encoded in complex ways (via struggles, compromises, authoritative public interpretations and reinterpretations) and decoded in

complex ways (via actors interpretations and meanings in relation to their history, experiences, skills, resources and context)." The texts are the result of compromises between different interests and at various stages and are never complete. Ball (2006: 45) explains that texts are "typically the cannibalised products of multiple (but circumscribed) influences and agendas. … At all stages in the policy process we are confronted both with different interpretations of policy, and with what Rizvi and Kemmis (1987) call 'interpretations of interpretations'." Bowe et al. (1992: 15) write, "Texts carry with them both possibilities and constraints, contradictions and spaces. The reality of policy in practice depends upon the compromises and accommodations to these particular settings." Gale (1999: 395) defines policy as text in four interrelated ways, "As discernible through the senses; as having a sense or meaning that can be attributed to it; as being separately identifiable or 'self-contained' in one sense; and, in another, as reliant on other texts and discourses to ascribe sense to it."

Writing on policy-making, Bowe et al. (1992: 13) are of the view that policy as text is complemented by an understanding of policy as discourse, and they suggest that there is a tension between policy-making and policy implementation and that when policies are made, they are open to interpretation.

For Ball (2006: 44), policy is "about what can be said, and thought, but also about who can speak, when, where and with what authority." Ball (2006: 49) suggests that policy is also a power relation, in which power is exercised through the production of truth and knowledge and "policy as discourse may have the effect of redistributing voice."

In this study, the approach I took was to agree with Ball (1994: 10) when he emphasises, "Policy is both text and action, words and deeds, it is what is enacted as well as what is intended." My decision to adopt a composite approach to policy-making in this study was based on my view that the problem-solving and process models complement each other and together offer significant insights about the policy-making process. Like Nudzor (2009), it is my view that policy is not binary, that is either a problem-solving tool or a process, but is both.

2.3   The policy-making environment

The environment in which policy is made has a significant effect on policy-making. Policy-making is influenced by multiple environments since policy-making does not happen in a vacuum. Birkland (2005: 201) outlines four main environments that influence policy-making:

the structural environment, the social environment, the political environment, and the economic environment.

There are constitutional frameworks and legal structures that govern policy-making and implementation of policies. These are democratic values such as representation, legitimacy, responsiveness, accountability and transparency (Warwick, 2006). The structural arrangement also increases the opportunity for individuals and groups to influence policy. In South Africa, the Constitution specifically encourages participation in policy-making and the National Education Policy Act, No. 27 of 1996 (RSA, 1996b), requires public participation in education policy-making.

The social aspect of the policy environment comprises the composition of the population on variables such as gender, birth and death rates, age, life expectancy and other social indicators. Changes in these have significant implications for public policy, resource allocation, management and implementation, which affect the well-being of the population. With the diverse South African social, economic, ethnic, political, labour, civic and religious make-up, these factors together significantly influenced ECD policy-making in South Africa. With an increasing number of young children in the population, there is a popular demand for policies to meet the need of young children for survival, protection and development and to validate South Africa's ratification of the UNCRC.

The political environment refers to how a country is governed through its legislative, executive and judicial arrangements. Bullock, Anderson and Brady (1983: 11) assert, "Democracy is held, at a minimum, to require public participation in and control of government along with governmental responsiveness to recognised needs of the population." An important element of the political environment is what Kingdon (1995: 168) calls "the national mood", which he describes as how citizens feel about government and its effectiveness in addressing problems. The national mood and trust in government is important for public policy since "the legitimacy of democratic political systems depends in large part on the extent to which the electorate trusts the government to do what is right at least most of the time" (Erber & Lau, 1990: 236).

After the unbanning of the liberation movements and the release of political prisoners, including Mr Nelson Mandela in February 1990, the political mood in South Africa was one of celebration, optimism and hope for the future. Political parties began preparing for the political negotiations, and citizens began preparing for the first democratic election in the

history of South Africa. The majority of citizens trusted that a legitimate government would be elected and that fair, just and equitable social and economic policies would follow.

The economic system of a country is concerned with the production, distribution and exchange of goods and services. The economic environment comprises the rate of economic growth, the distribution of wealth, inflation and the cost of labour and raw materials (Bullock et al., 1983). Economic factors are important because the economy influences how a country prioritises and allocates resources. While policy choices are directly influenced by the economy, policy decisions also influence the economic environment. In South Africa, the challenge within the economic environment is to maximise the use of scarce resources for the well-being of its citizens.

In 1994, the newly elected government, led by President Nelson Mandela, inherited a bankrupt state with massive debt. Government also inherited widespread poverty, inequality and unemployment, which was strongly associated with the race classifications introduced through South Africa's history of colonialism and apartheid. Whilst these economic disparities affected all previously disenfranchised individuals, it severely affected young children who faced poor health care, inadequate nutrition, stunting and limited access to ECD programmes and opportunities. Young children and women were clearly amongst the most vulnerable citizens. The new democratic government was faced with the responsibility of formulating social and economic policies to overcome the poverty, inequality and unemployment that it had inherited from the apartheid government. Included in these policies to be made, were policies to enhance the well-being of young children, especially on education, health care and social welfare.

In addition to the four main environments described above, which affect policy-making, there are others of less significance for the policy-making process, such as the cultural, physical and technological environments. These are not discussed in this dissertation.

2.4   Towards a policy-making process

With the aforementioned understanding of policy and policy-making, in this section, I set out a policy-making process. In doing so, I draw from the works of a number of authors (Ball, 1993; Birkland, 2005; Christie, 2008; Fox, Bayat & Ferreira, 2006; Roux, 2002; Torjman, 2005).

A widely held view of the way in which policy is made is the rational approach, which considers that policy-making is a sequence that takes place in a linear manner. This approach

50

sees policy-making as a process, which is rational, balanced, objective and analytical (Sutton, 1999: 9). Christie (2008) describes the *rational approach* as a series of step to be followed:

- The starting point of a policy is an issue that requires attention, or a problem that needs to be addressed;
- Policy-makers decide how to deal with the issue by –
  - investigating different options, drawing on expert knowledge and taking into account the views of different interest groups;
  - deciding which option to take, and formulating policies accordingly;
  - allocating resources and drawing up regulations and procedures; and
  - implementing the policies, monitoring the results and adjusting the policies to ensure they meet their goals;
- Then the cycle begins again.

In comparison to the above, the *critical/integrative approach* considers that the policy process cannot be put into a neat sequence. Instead, it is messy, complex, complicated and evolutionary. Christie (2008: 124) states:

> [T]rying to impose a rational approach is likely to distort our understanding of what actually happens in the policy process. The world of policy is complex and messy and those in power decide what issues they will address in terms of their values and interests. Setting the policy agenda is more political than rational.

Colebatch (2002: 24) developed a framework that captures the best of each of these approaches and in which policy is understood as a mix of two intersecting dimensions: vertical and horizontal sets of activities. The vertical dimension covers the rational, top-down work of policy concerned with the transmission downwards of decisions in which government makes policy and transmits these to officials to implement. The horizontal dimension covers the activities of stakeholders, both inside government and in outside organisations, who are participants in the policy process. In Colebatch's (2002) model (see Figure 2.1 below), the policy process involves both dimensions simultaneously.
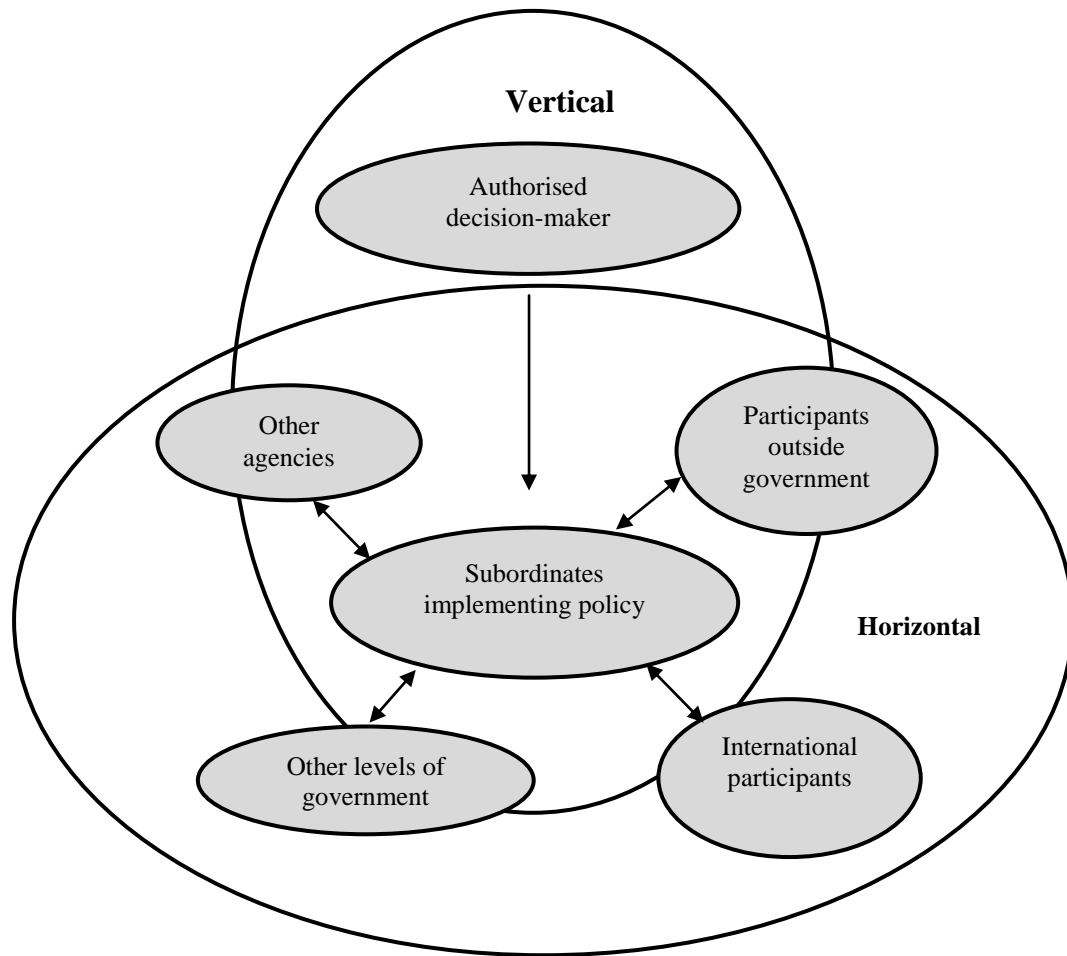
Figure 2.1: Vertical and horizontal dimensions of policy-making

Source: Colebatch (2002)

In Figure 2.2 below, I set out a diagram for understanding how policy is made. From my earlier discussion, it is clear that policy-making does not unfold linearly as set out in Figure 2.2, which is illustrated for ease of conceptual understanding only. I believe that the policy-making process is instead fluid, messy, incremental, complex and uncertain. Leppo, Ollila, Pena, Wismar and Cook (2013: 326) state:

> Common assumptions hold that there is a stepwise progression from analysis, through decision making to implementation. In fact, the reality is messier, affected by diverse political and social contexts; the interplay of various actors with differing values, interests, capacities, power and resources; and the need to respond to opportunities and obstacles as they arise.

In this process, reflected in the literature on policy-making, the policy process involves seven interconnected phases, which I found to be a helpful aid.

Policy environment

| Structural | Social | Political | Economic |

Policy stakeholders

| Issue emerges, unmet need/problem identified, policy agenda set and policy-making process begins | → | Analyse existing situation, set up team to develop policy | → | Consult stakeholders, generate policy options and ways to achieve policy goals, cost policy | → | Make policy decision and communicate it | → | Allocate resources, develop policy regulations and procedures | → | Policy implementation | → | Monitor and review policy |

The policy process

Figure 2.2: A policy-making process

53

2.4.1   Issue emerges, unmet need/problem identified, policy agenda set and policy-making process begins

The public policy-making process begins as an issue emerges, one that government is required to address. These public issues and problems normally affect a large number of citizens. Government then places the issue on the policy agenda and initiates the policy-making process. Birkland (2005: 108) describes agenda as a collection of problems that come to the attention of government officials, and he defines 'agenda setting' as "The process by which problems and alternative solutions gain or lose public and elite attention." Hogwood and Gunn (1984) state that the reason an item reaches the policy agenda depends on the influence and activities of organised interests, officials and advisers and activists. Having identified an issue or problem on which they have to act, stakeholders recognise the need to consider a possible government solution to the identified problem. Birkland (2005: 133) suggests:

> The likelihood that an issue will rise on the agenda is a function of the issue itself, the actors that get involved, institutional relationships, and, often, random social and political factors that can be explained but cannot be replicated or predicted.

Cloete and Wissink (2000: 100–102) list various factors that influence the chances of an issue reaching the policy agenda, such as:

- the problem must reach crisis proportions;
- the problem must be particular;
- policy problems should have an emotive aspect that attracts attention; and
- issues must have a wide influence.

Additional factors, which contribute towards placing an issue on the policy agenda are political pressure, new research evidence, lobbying and advocacy, and compliance with international conventions.

2.4.2   Analyse existing situation, set up team to develop policy

In this phase, government sets up and identifies members of the policy-making team and provides a policy brief, or terms of reference, usually from priorities set at political level (Torjman, 2005). Included in this phase could be a situation analysis of the policy matter being dealt with. A situation analysis examines, analyses and interprets the environment around an issue at a point in time, usually in advance of or during policy formulation. The

situation analysis comprises quantitative and qualitative components and identifies gaps in the issue under study.

2.4.3   Consult stakeholders, generate policy options and ways to achieve policy goals, cost policy

This phase involves stakeholder consultation and participation, investigation and fact-finding, including empirical research, collection of data and gathering of evidence. Following from this, policy options are generated, which could meet the need or overcome the problem. Each policy option will have its basic requirements, likely effect, and funding resources required to implement the policy and likely support for the policy options considered. Consultation and interrogation by the policy-making team precedes the selection of the preferred policy option. A Green Paper, prepared as a discussion document and setting out government's ideas, may be issued during this phase. If a Green Paper or Government Gazette has been published for comment, government would generally consider the public response before it finalises its policy position.

2.4.4   Make policy decision and communicate it

In this phase, the policy document (text) with policy vision, mission, goals and targets is decided on and can be communicated to the public through a White Paper, Government Gazette, government circular, and/or in ministerial speeches and statements. The publication of policy is usually done in accordance with a communications plan. Green (1994) writes that a policy decision is not so much an activity or process as it is a momentary end point in the continuing conduct of government. This is the policy decision and the policy process continues.

2.4.5   Allocate resources, develop policy regulations and procedures

Once policy has been decided decisions are made about how programmes and services linked to the policy will be constructed and which regulations and procedures are necessary. An important question at this phase is what the level of resource provision should be. Having been calculated in an earlier phase, the resources to cover policy implementation are allocated. The question of cost and affordability is a key element of the policy process. Torjman (2005: 16) writes, "Sometimes the obvious choice from a policy point of view is not the best option when cost and financing considerations are taken into account."

2.4.6   Policy implementation

Ideally, once a policy has been adopted and financial resources allocated, policy implementation begins. Implementation includes programme planning, financing, staffing, communicating the policy, ensuring compliance, and monitoring implementation. Key determinants for successful policy implementation are:

- a high level of political support;
- involvement of relevant government officials;
- sufficient resource allocation;
- interest group support;
- sound operational planning;
- administrative capacity in government departments; and
- monitoring and review of systems in place.

Unless a pilot project has previously been done, policy is tested here for the first time. Fox et al. (2006: 58) write, "The plan of action should include procedures, programmes and budgets for the various aspects of the policy, for no public policy is a straightforward, uncomplicated matter." Quality policy implementation is critical for achieving the goals of a policy.

2.4.7   Monitor and review policy

Monitoring and review to determine how policy implementation is progressing is important. Monitoring involves tracking policy implementation progress to ensure that implementation is consistent with the policy intention and goals. Amongst other things, review examines effect in terms of set goals. Review may lead to changes to the policy or further policy-making. It is important to note that monitoring and review processes do not always precede a change in policy, especially under circumstances where there are particular policy pressure points. This was for instance the case with the implementation of outcomes-based education (OBE) in South Africa in 1994 (Mokhaba, 2004), where the introduction of a new curriculum was considered an emergency requirement to counter the devastating effect of apartheid education.

This policy-making conceptual framework, presented earlier as section 2.4, represents a sequence of activities common in most policy-making initiatives, bearing in mind, however, that the policy-making process is complex, dynamic, messy, flexible and not linear as set out in this section for illustrative purposes.

2.5 Stakeholder participation in policy-making

Stakeholders are critical role players in policy-making and implementation since policy is influenced and shaped by a variety of stakeholders who participate in policy-making. In this section, I consider the stakeholders involved in policy-making. Birkland (2005) lists two categories of stakeholders in policy-making: official and unofficial actors. Official actors are involved in policy-making because they are given responsibilities by law and they have the power to make and enforce policies. Unofficial actors are those who play a role in policy-making without legal authority and who are involved because they have interests to promote. Together, these stakeholders affect each stage of the policy-making process.
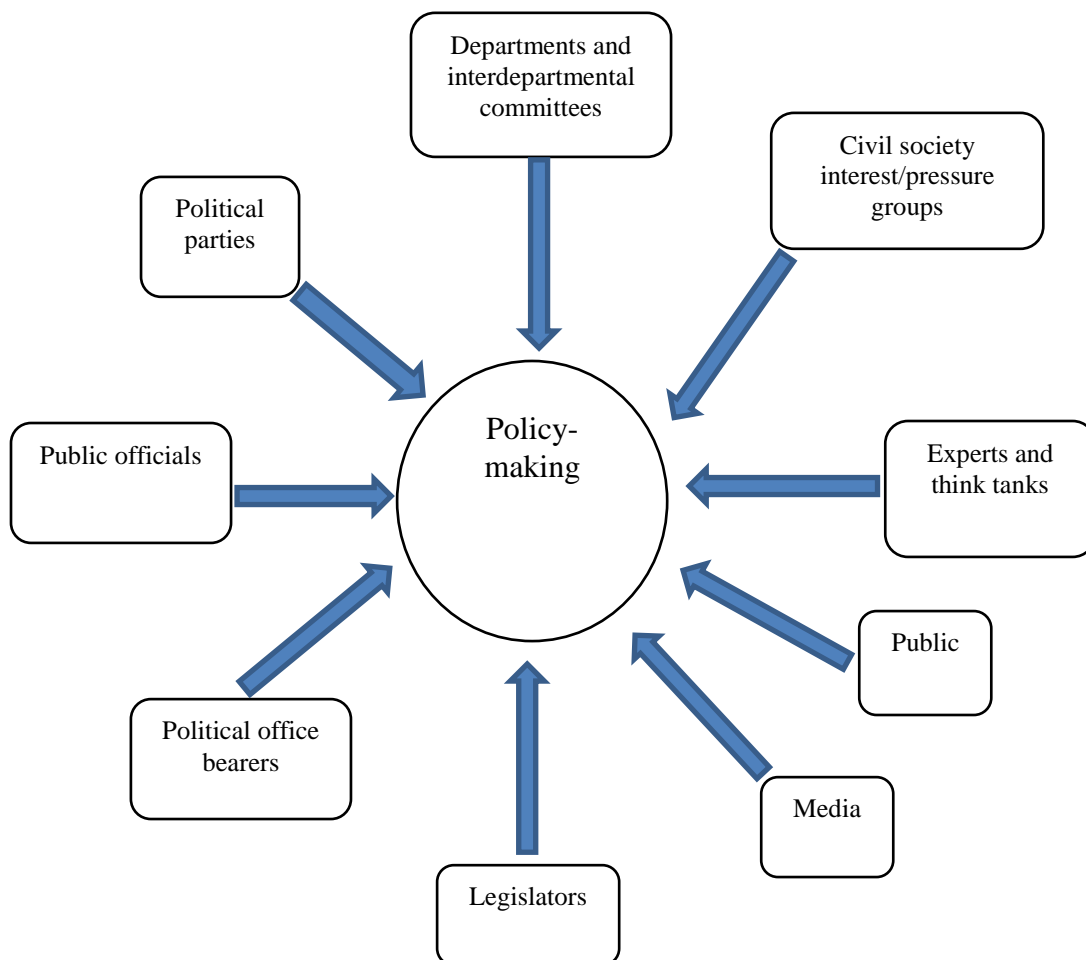
Figure 2.3: Stakeholder participation in the policy-making process in a democracy

As can be seen in Figure 2.3 above, a range of stakeholders can participate in policy-making during any one policy-making activity.

- *Legislators* are the lawmakers in democratic countries, with the legal authority and responsibility to make policy, most often in line with the constitution of such country. In South Africa, the legislative authority at national level of government is Parliament. Schedule 4 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, No. 108 of 1996, confers on the national legislature the responsibility to make policies for education and ECD.

- Elected *political office bearers* influence, develop and shape public policies and are often the initiators of policy. Political leaders use political campaigns and speeches to initiate and gain support for policy and they could also be in the legislature when policy matters are decided. In 1994, the new democratic government identified ECD as requiring policy attention and set about making ECD policy by mandating the Minister of Education (now called 'Basic Education') and the Minister of Social Welfare (now called 'Social Development') to put ECD on the policy agenda.

- *Public officials* play an important role in policy-making and are involved in deciding what goes on the public policy agenda. Fox et al. (2006: 42) state, "various criteria, such as urgency, nature, level of agenda, budgetary conditions, strategic priorities, internal capacity, courts of law and interest groups, are used in assessing the status of policy problems." Booysen (2001: 15) maintains –

  > [P]olicy bureaucrats, in their capacity as advisers, consultants, researchers and senior officials […] interpret the policy agenda, design and implement the processes of consultation with stakeholders, design implementation strategies to give effect to the legislative framework, and participate in policy implementation monitoring and revision.

  Public officials are thus a direct link between political office bearers and the public, and the involvement of said officials with the public guides them in determining which policies need to be placed on the policy agenda.

- Based on mandates from political party policy conferences, *political parties* instruct elected representatives to initiate and make policy. Cloete and Thornhill (2012) are of the view that political parties are the foremost role players in policy-making where elected representatives in the legislature have opportunities to set the policy agenda and to influence policy-making through political campaigns and action. When a political

party comes to power, as was the case in South Africa following the first democratic election of April 1994, such political party will introduce policy changes.

– *Government departments and interdepartmental committees* can be established by ministers and senior public officials to prepare policy for government consideration. Interdepartmental committees are recommended when policy is made which requires implementation by different departments. Department and interdepartmental committees usually consist of officials who have expert knowledge on the relevant policy issue. In formulating ECD policy over the period 1994 to 2015, the South African government set up various interdepartmental committees, consisting of a number of government departments, which were concerned with young children, to make ECD policy.

– *Civil society interest/pressure groups*, such as NPOs, CBOs, research and academic institutions, interest groups, professional bodies and trade unions, are important in the policy-making process and can exert significant influence on policy-making. An interest group usually emerges when individuals or organisations come together around an issue or matter of importance to them. These groups can influence policy because of their size, strength, expert knowledge and prestige. Howlett and Ramesh (1995) note that an important resource of interest groups is expert knowledge and information. Legislators and public officials use this expertise to help make policy. The South African government has a legal requirement to consult with interest groups in education policy-making. Section 5 of the National Education Policy Act, No 27 of 1996 (RSA, 1996b) provides that the Minister of Basic Education must determine national education policy after consultation with appropriate consultative bodies and with national organisations and other national stakeholders that the minister may recognise.

– *Experts and think tanks* have a significant influence on policy-making given their knowledge on specific issues. The complexity of public policy issues facing governments has seen the emergence of think tanks. Birkland (2005: 88) defines a think tank as an "independent research organisation, sometimes ideologically neutral but often identified with a particular political perspective." Think tanks are usually linked to universities, research institutions, NPOs, international organisations, amongst others, and employ academics, scholars and technical experts to provide guidance to policy-makers so that policies can be developed.

– Policies formulated without *public* consultation could lead to rejection of policy by citizens at the implementation stage. Cloete (1991) suggests ways, besides voting in an election, in which individuals may be involved in policy-making. Citizens often join with others to increase influence and to participate in policy-making.

– The *media*, in the form of newspapers, journals, radio, television and social media, are also actors in the policy-making process and participate in policy-making by informing citizens about issues. Interest and pressure groups can use and influence the media to support a particular public policy issue by drawing attention to issues, and these groups could also educate the public on policy matters. A contrary view is expressed by Kingdon (1995), who found that relatively few key policy decision-makers cited the media as an important source of information and ideas. Howlett and Ramesh (1995) say that ideas do not necessarily come from the media but interest and pressure groups still recognise the value of the media in helping these groups to make their case.

In light of the above, it is clear that a number of stakeholder groups can be involved in the policy-making process.

2.6   A hybrid policy trajectory analysis conceptual framework

Having located this study within the domain of policy making and policy trajectory analysis, and having described how policy is understood in this study, in this section I set out a hybrid policy trajectory analysis conceptual framework that I apply in this study to analyse and interpret the ECD policy trajectory in South Africa during the period 1990 to 2015. The framework is used as a conceptual platform to examine the ECD policy trajectory and focuses on the three main ECD policies over this period: the Interim Policy for ECD of 1996, Education White Paper 5 on ECD of 2001, and the National Integrated ECD Policy of 2015 and reflects the different levels and contexts of policy-making and enables analysis of the macro, intermediate and micro levels of policy-making. I use this framework to identify trends and patterns in the ECD policy processes and to understand the trajectory of ECD policy-making. The ECD policy trajectory is defined as the path that ECD policy followed over time.

Vidovich (2007) and Yorke and Vidovich (2016: 69) set out a hybrid theoretical framework drawing on critical theory and poststructuralism in a policy trajectory approach. Given the 'messy terrain' of policy-making processes, Yorke and Vidovich (2016: 72) suggest that "...poststructuralism is able to make a contribution" and that "Poststructural approaches view

power as decentralised, circulating across all levels...” stressing local level understanding, contexts and agency. In this manner, poststructural approaches avoid singular understanding and interpretation of the policy-making process and policy outcomes. In relation to this study, this means that there is the potential of a number of interpretations of policy especially at the micro level of the ECD policy process. Yorke and Vidovich (2016: 76) summarize this as follows: “Contemporary policy study must therefore engage with the enduring power of structure in dynamic and contested policy spaces, but it must also recognise highly complex power relationships and ‘messy’ networks of policy actors and processes.”

In developing this conceptual framework Vidovich (2007) draws on the work of Bowe, Ball and Gold (1992) and Ball (1994). The result is a hybrid policy trajectory analysis conceptual framework in which policy-making is seen as a cycle rather than as a linear process. Within this cycle, Bowe, Ball and Gold (1992), are of the view that the policy cycle has three main contexts for policy analysis: the context of influence, the context of policy text production, and the context of practice. In the context of influence, policy-making is initiated and policy discourse begins and focuses on the influences on policy-making; in the context of policy text production, text is created which represents the policy and which could result in legislation, White Papers and policy documents. In the context of practice, policy is received, interpreted and implemented and then ‘recreated’ (Bowe, Ball & Gold, 1992: 22). Mainardes (2007: 5) commenting on these contexts writes:

> Each of these contexts has different arenas, sites and interest groups and each involve struggles. The context of influence is where public policy is normally initiated and where key policy concepts acquire legitimacy and provide a discourse for initiation. The second context is the context of text production, where texts represent the policy. The third context is the context of practice, where policy is subject to interpretation and recreation, and the policy produces effects and consequences which may represent significant transformation from the original policy intent.

Ball (1994) added two more contexts to the original framework, a context of outcomes where policies are analysed in terms of their impact on inequality and injustice; and a context of political strategy concerned with identifying social and political activities to tackle inequality and injustice (Yorke & Vidovich, 2016). Ball (1994: 26) explains that, “These contexts are ‘loosely coupled’ and there is no simple direction of flow of information between them.” In developing these contexts, Bowe, Ball and Gold (1992) and Ball (1994) expand our

understanding of the policy cycle, policy-making and policy analysis, away from the power of the state to control policy-making and policy text, and more towards the policy discourse including the contexts set out above.

Ball (1994: 17) deals with a further aspect of the conceptualisation of policy and the design of policy research by suggesting "... the opposition is between those studies which are located at a single level of analysis ... and those which attempt to capture the dynamics of policy across and between levels." He calls this a 'policy trajectory approach' and describes it as a means by which to capture the dynamics of policy across and between levels and which "… provides a mechanism for linking and tracing the discursive origins and possibilities of policy, as well as the intentions embedded in, and responses to, the effects of policy" (Ball, 2006: 51). Here policy is traced from its inception, through implementation to its practice.

The hybrid policy trajectory analysis conceptual framework used in this study is described by O'Sullivan (2009: 25) as "… presents an alternative to top-down single level policy processes by conceptualising the policy process as multi-layered with policy evolving and being constructed and [re]constructed across different levels or contexts". This approach recognises that struggles over the intentions and meanings of policy occur in a variety of interrelated contexts (Bowe, Ball & Gold, 1992) and enabled me as researcher to describe, analyse and interpret the ECD policy trajectory.

Vidovich (2007) builds on the five contexts of the policy cycle of Bowe, Ball and Gold (1992) and Ball (1994), by adding levels and contexts to the policy cycle and suggests that there are many contexts and influences to be considered throughout the policy process. Vidovich (2007: 290 - 292), explains the conceptual framework in Figure 2.4 as follows: The influences are enclosed within the shaded box and frame the entire policy process. The left-hand side of the box separates the macro, intermediate and micro levels of a policy trajectory. Influences feed into the policy text production at each level, represented by the horizontal arrows moving from left to right within the box. Macro-level influences include the influence of globalisation on the policy process and analysis of micro-level influences involves examining local contexts within and between different types of institutions. Connections between the different levels of policy text production are illustrated by arrows pointing in two directions with the size and thickness of the arrows indicating the relative strength of top-down and bottom-up policy processes. The oblique arrow connecting micro influences and micro effects indicates that the local context of individual institutions can directly influence

the nature of practices at that site. The policy effects emerging from the bottom of the box are produced by the interactions of the 'influences' and 'text production' at different levels. The practice effects are multiple, with some becoming influence factors again at the three different levels of the trajectory. In this conceptual framework there are multiple contexts to be considered simultaneously throughout a policy process. The arrows are not the only ones possible, but they are likely to represent major relationships in a policy process.

Influences
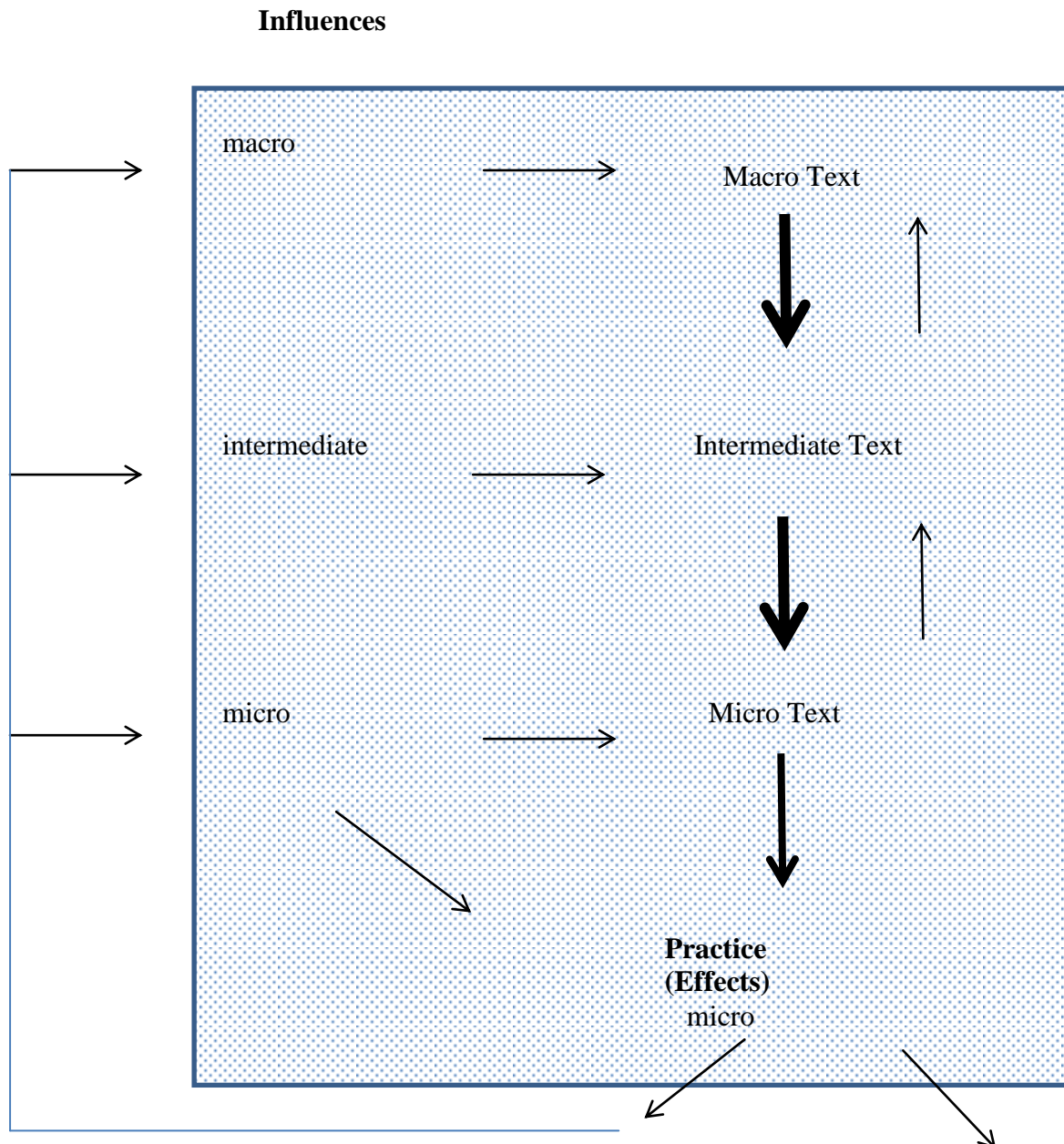
Figure 2.4: Vidovich (2007) hybrid policy trajectory analysis conceptual framework

Vidovich (2007: 285) argues for policy analysis "... which explicitly links the 'bigger picture' of global and national policy contexts to the 'smaller pictures' of policies and practices..." and viewed this as offering "... a more 'complete picture' to capture the increasingly complex global-national-local dynamics of education policy in new times." In this study I use this hybrid conceptual framework to link the macro, intermediate and micro levels of policy-making. This is appropriate given the global influences on ECD policy-making, the role of the state in ECD policy-making and the contribution of institutions, advocacy groups, think-tanks and individuals to contribute towards ECD policy-making in South Africa.

Linking these levels, Vidovich (2007) describes the levels. The *macro level* focuses on the broad policy making context including the global environmental context and factors. It includes the historical, geo-political and socio-economic contexts which influence and shape discourses and policies. In this study the broad global context in which ECD policy in South Africa has been shaped is analysed given that the global influence in ECD has been especially visible since the mid-1990s and has shaped ECD policy and programming at the other two structural levels. Globalisation as an influence on ECD policy-making and practice in South Africa is clearly evident. In Chapter Six my analysis reflects how globalisation has influenced ECD policy production in South Africa.

 The *intermediate level* addresses what Ball (1990) labelled the "messy realities" of policy-making. At this structural level, policy discourse is initiated, constructed, framed and contested. What emerges at this level is the intention and meaning driving policy. Government is an important and influential driver of the policy-making process and plays a central and critical role. In the case of ECD, a dominant discourse is that by providing Grade R, the South African education system will deliver more efficient and effective education outcomes in formal schooling. However, as this study demonstrates, the policy process for achieving these outcomes is far from straightforward. Policy choices occur within limits set by larger social, political and economic forces and discourse. This suggests that the state both shapes and is shaped by education struggle and power relations. Struggles over ECD policy in South Africa over this period took place in a context framed by rapid political transformation and inequality.

 Since 1994, the South African government has sought to incorporate education provision, especially for formal schooling and higher education, as a significant component of economic policy and as a way of producing a highly skilled and productive workforce. In doing this, a key role for government was to formulate policy and prescribe outcomes in education and

ECD. With this comes increased centralisation and government intervention with government being selective in promoting some education interests over others. At this level agenda-building is an important part of the policy process. As will be seen in this study, pressure was placed on the ANC as the government-in-waiting, in the early 1990s, to place ECD on the education policy agenda. This agenda-building was initiated outside of government and was put on to the public education agenda where ECD activists sought to mobilise interest, action and support. ECD was placed on the government policy agenda through activists focusing on the significant problems of extraordinarily high primary and secondary school failure rates and how providing ECD opportunities for young children could remedy this.

The *micro level* addresses the local community context of policy-making. At this level local stakeholders are part of the policy-making process and their contribution to policy-making is constructed here. However, the way in which the discourse is presented determines the manner in which the discourse takes shape at the local level. At this level the power relations play out and stakeholders "*... agency and resistance as a way of engaging in policy construction and reconstruction, are central issues. At this level attention is also directed toward how policy choices are made and the implications in terms of power relations throughout the process*" (O'Sullivan, 2009: 26).

In summary, education policy analysis has been dominated by paradigms that study policy as a linear progression from development to implementation. Policy-making is not linear, neatly packaged and sequenced but is an interactive process with different contexts and levels shaping each other. Policy generated at the macro level impacts on the intermediate and micro levels. While structural foundations set the stage for policy making, through the policy-making cycle, a range of stakeholders are involved making and remaking policy.

2.7 Tracing the ECD policy trajectory

In this study, I sought to look at how the various ECD policies are linked and connected in content (text) and at how the policies were made. Having located this study within the field of ECD policy-making, and having described how policy is understood in this study, I now turn to understanding the ECD policy trajectory, which was a focus of this study. In this dissertation, I use the term 'ECD policy trajectory' to describe the path that ECD policy has followed over time, specifically its evolution and sequencing over the period 1990 to 2015, that is, the post-apartheid period. In tracing the ECD policy trajectory, Maguire and Ball

(1994: 26) explain that policy trajectory studies "employ a cross-sectional approach by tracing policies from formation through to implementation stages."

O'Sullivan (2009: 24) recognises the layered nature of the policy process and records some of the assumptions which underpin policy trajectory studies. She suggests that:

- Policy-making is located within broad economic, social, cultural and historical contexts and favours the social, political or economic interests of certain groups.
- Policies as text contain moments that provide possibilities for change and resistance by identifying the tensions, conflicts, inequalities and internal contradictions of policies.
- Policies exercise power by legitimating some voices and silencing others.

This policy trajectory description provides an approach through which I trace, describe and analyse how ECD policy in South Africa was made between 1990 and 2015. I set this ECD policy trajectory out in chronological sequence and detail in Chapter Three. This trajectory was also used in this study to analyse how the various stakeholders, i.e. the DBE and DSD nationally and provincially, NPOs, activists, experts, researchers and civil society groups were involved in ECD policy-making.

2.8   A brief overview of education policy-making in post-apartheid South Africa

This section presents a brief overview, which describes education policy-making in post-apartheid South Africa. South Africa has undergone significant political and economic transformation. After nearly five decades of legislated racial segregation, known by the Afrikaans language word 'apartheid' meaning separateness, political change came to South Africa when the ANC took power as the new government after the first democratic election in April 1994. The mandate given to the new government by the electorate was to transform South Africa radically into a non-racial democracy, to build the nation, to ensure social cohesion, and to promote social development and economic growth. Roux (2002: 419) writes:

> Constitutional reform of such a magnitude inevitably leads to change and transformation in almost all spheres of government and administration. There is hardly a functional area of government not touched by the new generation of policy-and decision makers in South Africa.

The vision for education transformation in the new South African political dispensation was evident in the South African Constitution of 1996, which declared that everyone has the right to basic education, which the state must progressively make available and accessible.

Education policy-making became a priority for the new government, and significant changes in education policy, legislation, structure, systems, financing, curriculum content, and school enrolment quickly followed. Christie (2008: 128) suggests new policies were needed to establish non-racial laws and practices and a new vision for education was urgently required.

When the ANC and other political organisations were unbanned in 1990, education policy preparation for the coming democratic government began, and policy discourse became the order of the day (Christie, 2008). Central to this was the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI), a large-scale education policy initiative, set up as a project of the National Education Co-ordinating Committee (NECC). Prior to the 1994 election, there was consensus that the new democratic government would be confronted by an education system that was racist, fragmented, unequal and lacking democratic values (Van den Berg & Vergnani, 1986). To correct this, ANC pre-election policy proposals argued strongly for a single national system of education with a strong focus on redress and equity and the provision of ten years of free and compulsory, high-quality general education for all (Ota, 1997). Proposals for transforming South Africa's system of public education included, for the first time, the provision of significantly expanded, high-quality ECD. These policy proposals were developed on the basis of extensive research prior to and after the April 1994 election including NEPI in 1992 (NECC, 1992) and the ANC Policy Framework for Education and Training (ANC, 1994b). Both the ANC Policy Framework for Education and Training and the later Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) committed the state to ten years of free and compulsory education (RSA, 1994b).

When the new government was formed in May 1994, the first Minister of Education and his DoE officials faced the task of dismantling the 19 apartheid education departments and restructuring these into one national and nine provincial departments of education. At the same time, government had to fulfil the education promises made to the electorate in the pre-election period. To remedy the education inequalities, the new government introduced a number of education policies, which provided for significant expansion of access to quality education for millions of children who had been denied access to education previously. Amongst the many new policies introduced, the main ones were:

- The Education White Paper on Education and Training in 1995 (DoE, 1995);
- The South African Qualifications Authority Act, No. 58 of 1995 (RSA, 1995);
- Education White Paper 2 on the Organisation, Governance and Funding of Schools in 1996 (DoE, 1996b);

- The National Education Policy Act, No. 27 of 1996 (RSA, 1996b), which set out national and provincial powers in education;

- The South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996 (RSA, 1996d), which covered how formal schooling would be provided;

- Education White Paper 3: A programme for the transformation of higher education in 1997 (DoE, 1997);

- The National Norms and Standards for School Funding in 1998 (DoE, 1998b);

- Education White Paper 4 on Further Education and Training in 1998 (DoE, 1998a);

- Education White Paper 5 on ECD in 2001 (DoE, 2001b);

- Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education in 2001 (DoE, 2001c);

- The National Whole School Evaluation Policy in 2001 (DoE, 2001d); and

- Education White Paper 7 on e-Education: Transforming Learning and Teaching through Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in 2004 (DoE, 2004a).

To illustrate the proliferation of education policies, over the period 1994 to 2007, seven White Papers, three Green Papers, 26 Bills, 35 Acts and 52 Government Notices were produced (Sayed & Kanjee, 2013: 7) with only one policy document, Education White Paper 5 (DoE, 2001b), focusing exclusively on ECD. Christie (2008) regards these texts as "a particular policy architecture", which was developed in the first period of the new democratic government. She describes these policy documents as "state of the art" and of the highest quality (Christie, 2008: 132).

From 1994 to 2015, South Africa has had four Ministers of Education. This section briefly describes policy-making under each of these ministers to provide a context for the ECD policy trajectory over this period.

From 1994 to 1999, the first Minister of Education of the democratic government was Professor Sibusiso Bengu. This was a significant post-apartheid period, since its primary goal was to develop policy and legislation to redress the apartheid legacy and transform the education system (Sayed & Kanjee, 2013). Under Minister Bengu, the first Education White Paper, on Education and Training, which covered the transformation of education and reflected a commitment to free and compulsory basic education in South Africa, was produced in 1995 (DoE, 1995). This policy outlined the need for redress, equity and democratic governance in education and provided for the creation of a single national Education Department and nine provincial Departments of Education. As a result of this, new

public officials, representative of the diversity of the country, were employed in the national and provincial Departments of Education. During this period, major education legislation was passed and education policies were made for the new education system. An important piece of legislation passed was the National Education Policy Act, No. 27 of 1996 (RSA, 1996b), which gave the Minister of Education authority to determine national education policy and responsibility for planning, provision, financing, staffing, governance and monitoring of the education system.

The Education White Paper on Education and Training (DoE, 1995) laid the foundation for major curriculum changes, which replaced the racist apartheid curriculum with a new curriculum, based on democratic values, which was appropriate for a non-racial South Africa. This White Paper also focused on teachers and teaching, emphasising that competent teachers were key to teaching practice and this required a redesign of tertiary-level teacher training programmes in line with the values and principles of the Constitution of South Africa.

The second Education White Paper, on Organisation, Governance and Funding of Schools, in 1996 (DoE, 1996b), proposed a new funding system for public schools, which would be funded partly by a government subsidy, and would be supplemented by charging school fees for parents who could afford it. Poor parents would be exempt from paying school fees and no child would be denied an education because parents cannot afford to pay the school fees. The National Education Policy Act, No. 27 of 1996 (RSA, 1996b), which provided for new policy on teacher salaries and conditions of employment, was also passed. Two years later, in 1998, school resourcing policies were set out in the National Norms and Standards for School Funding (DoE, 1998b), which required all schools to be ranked according to five quintiles. Government funding would be provided to schools, with the highest funding amount being allocated to the poorest schools. These norms and standards took effect on 1 April 1999 during Professor Bengu's tenure.

Of significance to the ECD sector, the Interim Policy for ECD was approved in September 1996. This was the first ECD policy made by the democratic government. Alongside the policy was the three-year, National ECD Pilot Project (DoE, 2001e), which was implemented to test the Interim Policy for ECD.

Given the many significant education challenges it had to face, the new government decided to focus on these other aspects of education redress, such as formal schooling and higher education, rather than ECD. The reason was that formal education from Grade 1 to Grade 12

had a high political and public profile and fixing the education system was a major election issue, driven by the ANC. ECD, on the other hand, did not have a political or public profile and was not considered a substantial issue during the 1994 and 1999 democratic elections.

From 1999 to 2004, the second Minister of Education was Professor Kader Asmal. During this period, policy-making continued and changes were made to policies initiated during the first five-year period. It was under Professor Asmal that Education White Paper 5 on ECD (DoE, 2001b) was released on 28 May 2001 followed by Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education, in July 2001 (DoE, 2001c), which aimed at building an inclusive education and training system to meet the needs of children with special learning needs. With these two White Papers, education matters not previously tackled were brought into prominence for the first time.

This ten-year period 1994 to 2004 was a period of intense policy-making in South African education, with the major goal being the transformation of education policy from a racist and poor-quality education system to one where all children had access to quality education. In weighing up the achievements of the first ten years, Christie (2008) indicates that there were four main successes:

- the new education policies, which replaced the apartheid education system and reshaped education;

- a more equal distribution of government resources for schools as was evident by the new quintile funding system which financially favoured poorer schools; and the adoption of the policy on no-fee schools (Christie, 2008: 145);

- significantly more children were enrolled into school as can be seen by the rapid increase in school enrolment figures (Christie, 2008: 146); and

- "in terms of quality, policies brought mixed results" since the less resourced schools continued to display poor performance by children in these schools (Christie, 2008: 146).

Sayed and Kanjee, (2013: 28) challenge this by writing, "One of the biggest failures was that policy did not address the apartheid inequalities which continued in the post-apartheid period." They emphasise that the implementation of policy was weak and what was needed was to tackle the education inequalities which still existed.

The third Minister of Education, from 2004 to 2009, was Minister Naledi Pandor. By 2004, education policy-making had slowed considerably as new education policies and

accompanying legislation were now in place. Her primary focus was on monitoring the implementation of policies made by her predecessors. Only one Education White Paper, number 7 on e-Education (DoE, 2004a), was released during her time in office. Minister Pandor guided the Education Laws Amendment Act, No. 24 of 2005 (RSA, 2005b) through Parliament. Implemented in 2006, this Amendment Act made provision for exempting certain schools from charging school fees. These schools targeted the poorest communities and families, and became known as "no-fee" schools (RSA, 2005b: 2). The Act also established norms and standards for public school infrastructure. During the five-year tenure of Minister Pandor, policy on Norms and Standards for Grade R funding and for National Early Learning and Development Standards (NELDS) for children from birth to four years old was developed. There was little ECD policy or programme implementation during this time with the exception of the implementation of Grade R where enrolment increased from 356 487 children in 2004 (DoE, 2005b: 2) to 620 233 children in 2009 (DoE, 2009: 2), an increase of 73,9% over five years.

President Jacob Zuma appointed the fourth Minister of Education, Ms Angie Motshekga, in 2009, and she was the incumbent Minister of Basic Education at the time of undertaking this study. She is the only Minister of Basic Education thus far to serve more than one five-year term. In 2009, the national DoE was split into two separate departments: the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). With this separation, the DBE became responsible for schooling up to Grade 12, including Grade R, and also for the curriculum and learning programme components for children aged birth to four years. The separation had little effect on ECD and ECD remained a sector that was neglected in terms of political will and support, programme implementation, funding and resource allocation from the National Treasury. The new DBE did not take any additional responsibility for ECD than had been the case from the first major ECD policy in 1996. All other aspects of ECD for children aged birth to four years remained the responsibility of the DSD, and the new DHET became responsible for tertiary education institutions and for Further Education and Training, now called Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges.

2.9   Chapter summary

In this chapter I have sought to set out a policy trajectory analysis conceptual framework that provides a platform for my analysis and interpretation in Chapter Six. I began the chapter by defining policy and policy-making I discussed policy as text and as discourse, set out the structural, social, economic and political environments in which policy-making takes place, and described a conceptual framework for the policy-making process. It has reported on agenda setting, participation in policy-making, the stakeholders involved and policy implementation. The second part of the chapter described a policy trajectory analysis conceptual framework suggested by Vidovich (2007) which was used in this study. This conceptual framework enabled me to ask critical questions in interpreting the ECD policy trajectory and policy-making in South Africa over the 25-year period, 1990 to 2015. The third section provides a brief overview of the education policy-making process in post-apartheid South Africa. Selected new education policies which emerged were listed followed by a chronological record of the policy-making efforts of the four post-apartheid Ministers of Education over the period 1994 to 2015. What is evident here is that the first five-year period after 1994 was a period of intense education policy-making during which the first ECD policy of the new democratic government, the Interim Policy for ECD of 1996, was made. Later Ministers of Education were more concerned with policy implementation, policy evaluation and systemic challenges in education. Chapter Three, which follows, describes the research design and methodology, the interview schedule, data validity and trustworthiness, and data analysis and interpretation.

CHAPTER THREE – RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1   Introduction

This chapter describes the research design and methodology used in this study and comprises a number of sections. The first section locates the research within the qualitative research paradigm. The second section identifies the design of the study as a policy trajectory study and discusses the value of applying a policy trajectory study design to studying ECD policy-making in post-apartheid South Africa. The third section details the research methodology, including the sampling method used in the study. The fourth section identifies data construction methods, the study of documents, the interview process and comments on triangulation, and the fifth details the data analysis and interpretation, data validity and trustworthiness of the primary and secondary data.

3.2   Using a qualitative research paradigm

This research is located within a qualitative research paradigm. O'Sullivan (2009: 57) writes that a qualitative approach assists in understanding how experiences acquire meaning. Grinnell (1985: 268) writes that qualitative research methods are "planful, systematic and empirical. By empirical … we refer to a reliance on practical experience and observation as a source of knowledge verification." Grinnell (1985) further says qualitative methods are most suitable when there has been a relatively low level of previous conceptualisation, theory building, and research findings in a given area of inquiry. In this study, qualitative methods were used to explore the understanding and experiences of individuals who were centrally involved in ECD policy-making in post-apartheid South Africa. In this empirical study, multiple methods were used to obtain information and construct data, namely a substantial literature review and document study together with structured interviews and responses of key informants.

3.3   An interpretive research design

Research design refers to the structure of an enquiry (De Vaus, 2001) and is described as "a plan or blue print of how one intends to conduct the research" (Mouton, 2001: 55). De Vaus (2001: 9) writes, "The function of a research design is to ensure that the evidence obtained enables us to answer the initial question as unambiguously as possible." Based on the research questions and the information and data that I planned to obtain, an interpretive

research design was chosen for this study. The ECD policy-making trajectory was examined through an interpretive lens. An interpretive research design is appropriate for this study given that I planned to understand the ECD policy documents (texts), make sense of the ECD policy-making trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa and analyse, interpret and give meaning to the process in the hermeneutic tradition, hermeneutics being "…the science of text interpretation" (Babbie & Mouton, 2006: 31).

The design of this study involved an analysis and interpretation of the ECD policy-making trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa, through the examination of primary sources, ECD policy documents and through 19 in-depth interviews with key ECD policy activists who were involved in South Africa ECD policy-making over the period 1990 to 2015. The research design and research questions determined the way in which data was constructed. Grinnell (1985: 12) maintains, "such an approach is often needed in order to strengthen our profession's knowledge base and effectiveness."

3.4　　　Research methodology

Research methodology relates to the research process and the "kinds of tools and procedures to be used" (Mouton, 2001: 56), which in the case of this study, was three-fold. Firstly, a comprehensive examination of ECD policy documents, including policy statements, government White Papers, government reports and research studies for the period 1990 to 2015 was undertaken. Secondly, structured interviews were done with 19 key informants who had participated in ECD policy-making over the study period. Thirdly, an auto-ethnographic interview was done. As an activist in the ECD field since 1979, I was directly involved in the formulation of most of the ECD policies from 1990 to 2015, and I was also involved in discussions with the key ECD policy-makers of that period. As such, I considered it important to include my own story and locate this story in relation to the research that was conducted.

The empirical data constructed in this study was gathered from interviews with a number of sources: four senior government DBE and DSD officials at national and provincial level; one Education ministry official, four ECD experts; four ECD non-profit and civil society activists; five academics and researchers who are ECD experts; and one professional ECD association official.

3.4.1   Sampling

In selecting the study participants, the intention was to interview a wide range of key informants to obtain a diversity of inputs and to obtain as much information as possible. In this study, I decided that purposive sampling with structured interviews would be most appropriate for this study. As this study was about the ECD policy trajectory over the period 1990 to 2015, I compiled a comprehensive list of individuals who had been involved in ECD policy-making over this period. I then purposively selected 19 ECD key informants who had been the most significantly involved, from this list to interview (see Table 3.1). Patton (1990: 169) writes, "The logic and power of purposive sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research."

Table 3.1: Brief description of interviewees in this study

Interviewee	Primary role	Policy-making involvement
Education ministry official 1	Advisor: to Minister of Education	Advised Minister of Education 1999–2004 on education policy matters
Government official 1	Director: Presidency	Policy expert on children's matters, ECD and children's issues researcher
Government official 2	Director ECD: National DBE	Involved in Interim Policy for ECD, Education White Paper 5 (2001), National Integrated ECD Policy (2015), director of ECD National DBE from 2000 onwards
Government official 3	ECD manager: National DSD	Involved in national ECD policy-making, on National Integrated ECD Policy steering committee, extensive ECD experience
Government official 4	Director of ECD: Provincial DSD	On ECD policy team in Western Cape, extensive ECD managerial experience
Professional ECD association 1	Chairperson: Provincial Teacher Association	On policy team Interim Policy for ECD (1996), curriculum expert Grade R and Foundation Phase
International NPO activist 1	Social policy manager: International Children's Organisation	Involved in Education White Paper 5 (2001), National Integrated ECD Policy (2015), development of children's legislation in South Africa, extensive policy-making experience
NPO activist 1	Director: National ECD organisation	On Interim Policy for ECD team, extensive ECD experience
NPO activist 2	CEO: National ECD organisation	On Interim Policy for ECD provincial team, contributed to National Integrated ECD Policy, extensive ECD management experience
NPO activist 3	Director: ECD NPO	Extensive experience as head of ECD NPO, involved in National Integrated ECD Policy development (2015).

ECD researcher 1	Consultant: Education and Development	Led monitoring and evaluation of the National ECD Pilot Project, contributed to Education White Paper 5 on ECD, extensive policy analysis experience
ECD researcher 2	Academic: University institute	On National Integrated ECD Policy team, extensive children's issues expertise and experience
Academic 1	Professor: University Education Faculty	On various education policy teams (1994 onwards), education activist, works internationally
Academic 2	Professor: University Development and Management Centre	Involved in NEPI, South African study on ECD, and ANC education policy development
Academic 3	Professor and Deputy Dean: University Education Faculty	On various education policy teams (1994 onwards), education activist
ECD expert 1	Consultant: ECD	On Interim Policy for ECD team, curriculum expert, provincial education department ECD manager
ECD expert 2	Consultant: Children and advocacy	Researcher, on National Integrated ECD Policy team, legal expertise, children's rights activist
ECD expert 3	Consultant: ECD	Consulted on Interim Policy for ECD, on National Integrated ECD Policy team, prolific ECD researcher and author, 40 years ECD activist experience
ECD expert 4	Consultant: Education	On Interim Policy for ECD team, wrote ECD curriculum for National Pilot Project 1997–1999 and for Education White Paper 5 (2001).

In deciding on criteria for selection, participants had to have been part of ECD policy-making at some time between 1990 and 2015, and had to have knowledge of the process and the ability to reflect critically on ECD policy-making from that period. They also had to be willing to participate in the research study. As it worked out, the final list reflected a diverse range of individuals from different ECD stakeholder groups.

3.4.2 Data construction

Glesne (1999: 31) writes, "Qualitative researchers depend on a variety of methods for gathering data. The use of multiple data-collection methods contributes to the trustworthiness of the data." To answer the research questions in this study entailed using two different data construction methods to gather information: from primary sources and from secondary sources. Primary sources in this study covered a critical reading and study of official ECD policy documents and data obtained by way of structured, face-to-face interviews with key informants from government and ECD stakeholders. I used secondary sources in undertaking a systematic review of the ECD literature globally and from South Africa.

3.4.2.1   The interview schedule

The research instrument used was a structured interview schedule, which was administered during in-depth, individual face-to-face interviews (See Annexure 5). I decided to use structured interviews since these gave structure to the interview while allowing me to explore and discuss the responses of the interviewees as these arose (Denscombe, 1998). To obtain the desired information and data relevant to the research study, a comprehensive set of interview questions was developed based on the research questions, reading of the literature, the study of the ECD policy documents, and my experience as part of the ECD policy-making process over the past 25 years. The interview schedule was designed to provide the information and data to answer the research questions.

3.4.2.2   Piloting the interview schedule

The first two interviews – considered the pilot study – were used to test the appropriateness, relevance and administration of the interview schedule (Glesne, 1999). I considered this "a useful way in which to proceed in terms of shaping my approach within the interviews to follow" (Bailey, 2011: 53). For the first two interviews, I selected two knowledgeable, capable and experienced individuals. Immediately following these interviews, I spoke with the interviewee about the questions to determine:

- how clear the questions were;
- how relevant they were;
- the appropriateness of the questions;
- the interview process; and
- the length of the interview.

I asked them to be critical and to reflect on the interview questions and the interview process. The pilot study was also an opportunity for me to consider additional interview questions. Their comments indicated to me that the interview questions were appropriate and relevant and that no changes were needed. Glesne (1999: 75) writes:

> Since formal pilot studies are not always feasible, you might design a period of piloting that encompasses the early days of interviews with your actual respondents, rather than a set-aside period with specially designated pilot respondents. Such a period, if conducted in the right frame of mind – the deep commitment to revise – should suffice for pilot-testing purposes.

Given that there were a limited number of key stakeholders who had been part of ECD policy-making over the period 1990 to 2015, I considered this to be appropriate.

3.4.2.3   Studying policy documents

In the context of this research, the study of 27 ECD policy and policy-related documents was used to collect data. Patton (2002:306) writes: "By using a combination of procedures, such as document study…and interviewing, the researcher can much more easily validate and cross-check findings. Each data source has its strengths and weaknesses, and by using triangulation the strengths of one procedure can compensate for the weaknesses of another approach."

Ritchie and Lewis (2003: 35) write: "Documentary analysis involves the study of existing documents, either to understand their substantive content or to illuminate deeper meanings… This is particularly useful where the history of events or experiences has relevance and where events cannot be studied by direct observation…" This was the case in this study. All primary ECD policy and policy-related documents from 1990 to 2015 were publically available, were obtained by me and were studied in depth as part of the qualitative and interpretivist tradition in which De Vos et al, (2011: 381) say the emphasis is on "… interpreting the meaning the document may have." In doing this it was necessary to critically read the ECD policy documents. This required the interpretation of the content of texts through a process of identifying themes. Patton, (2002: 453) refers to this as "any qualitative data reduction and sense-making that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings". In this study qualitative text analysis involved me looking for themes in the ECD policy documents and allowed me to "… understand social reality in a subjective but scientific manner." (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009: 1)

Studying ECD policy documents involved reading and re-reading these documents, which fell into several categories. The first set of documents related to ECD policy-making before 1994, and reflected mainly ECD policy options developed by the MDM and the ECD non-profit sector. These were not official government documents as the new government was only installed on 10 May 1994. The second set of documents comprised those written after this date, when the first official education and social development policies emerged. The third set of documents consisted of those produced by NPOs, international organisations, academics and experts, and also privately authored documents produced by individuals and independent researchers.

In analysing the documents I aimed to keep a balance between description and interpretation. Patton (2002: 503), writes: "Qualitative research is fundamentally interpretive, and interpretation represents your personal and theoretical understanding of the phenomenon under study. An interesting and readable report provides sufficient description to allow the reader to understand the basis for an interpretation, and sufficient interpretation to allow the reader to understand the description."

As this study aimed to do, Zhang and Wildemuth (2009: 11) write: "The goal is to identify important themes or categories within a body of content, and to provide a rich description of the social reality created by those themes/categories as they are lived out in a particular setting. Through careful data preparation, coding, and interpretation, the results of qualitative content analysis can support the development of new theories and models, as well as validating existing theories and providing thick descriptions of particular settings or phenomena."

The full list of policies is documented in chronological order in Chapter Four (see section 4.3).

3.4.2.4   Interviewing key informants

Interviewing key informants is one of the main methods of data construction used in qualitative research. Moss and Kalton (1971: 271, cited in Bell, 2005: 157) describe the interview as "a conversation between the interviewer and the respondent with the purpose of eliciting certain information from the respondent." Given that this study was done through an interpretive lens I decided to do in-depth, structured interviews with the 19 key informants and which were digitally recorded and then transcribed. Seidman (1991: 4) writes that interviewing "is also important when the researcher's goal is to understand the meaning that people involved in education make of their experience." Through the interviews in this study, I explored each individual's understanding and experience of ECD policy-making in post-apartheid South Africa.

The interview schedule used in this study was structured and compiled to guide me through the interviews. In some interviews, I omitted some questions in relation to the interviewees' specific participation in ECD policy-making during the period under study. For example, where an individual only became involved in ECD policy-making after the year 2000, the

earlier period of ECD policy-making was not focussed on. This approach allowed interviewees to express themselves comprehensively within a framework determined by the study, which kept them focused. During the interviews, the interviewees responded to the requested information verbally in an interactive, face-to-face situation. I used the interview as a data construction tool for reasons as set out by De Waal (2004: 19–20):

> The interview is highly flexible and is applicable to different types of problems; it is flexible in the sense that the interviewer may change the mode of the question if the occasion demands. It allows the researcher to rephrase his/her questions in order to obtain clear answers, which are free from ambiguity. In terms of the respondent, he/she can ask for clarification or further information concerning the question.

I have been in the ECD field without interruption from December 1979. During this time, I have been substantially involved in ECD policy study and policy-making and I got to know the key individuals in government, the ECD non-profit sector, the academic and research institutions, and also those individuals who were ECD consultants. Compiling a list of key informants was thus not difficult and neither was gaining access to these individuals. Whilst some had moved on, most who had been involved in ECD policy-making in the period 1990 to 2015 were still involved in education, social development or ECD. With one exception, due to chronic illness, the individuals that I asked to be interviewed all agreed to my request and were open and forthcoming in sharing information during the interviews, providing candid and complete responses to my questions.

Interviews were held with the 19 individuals over a six-month period from 6 November 2014 to 22 May 2015. Interviews were planned to be one hour long and the choice of interview venue was made by each interviewee. Most of the interviews were held at the place of work of the interviewee. In setting up the interviews, I contacted each individual directly and personally by e-mail. In the e-mail, I explained the purpose of the study and requested her or him to participate in the research study. In the e-mail (see Annexure 3), I explained as fully as possible –

- what the research study was about;
- why I wanted to interview the individual;
- what would be involved; and
- what I would do with the information obtained.

A time to meet, which suited both the individual and me, was agreed.

The questions allowed me to probe interviewee responses, thoughts and contribution resulting in a 'conversation-type' interview. Seldom was I required to elaborate on or explain questions. I digitally recorded each interview after first obtaining the interviewee's consent. All the interviewees agreed to recording of the interview. This allowed me to focus my full attention on the interviewee and to listen carefully and fully to what was said and to note what he or she was saying. During each interview, I made brief written notes, again, after first obtaining each interviewee's permission.

Based on my training and extensive experience in interviewing and on my long-standing and good working relationship with all participants, a good rapport was established at the start of each interview and maintained throughout the interview. This generated a climate of respect and trust. Potential difficulties in the interview situation were thus kept to a minimum and none arose. In only one instance, the interview with a senior ECD official in the Western Cape DSD, was a formal written request required for permission to interview the individual. The reason was that it is protocol of this department that their Research Ethics Committee must consider all requests for an interview with any staff of the department. After completing the provincial DSD ethics clearance form and submitting my interview schedule, I was granted permission to interview the individual.

When the interviews were all completed, I sent each person whom I had interviewed a letter (see Annexure 6) and the typed transcript of his or her interview for them to read and confirm it as an accurate record of our interview. All interviewees were requested to respond in writing that the transcript was a correct reflection of their comments during the interview (see Annexure 7). Interviewees that had not responded within two weeks were sent a follow-up transcript release form (Annexure 8).

3.4.2.5   Using Skype in data construction

One interviewee had agreed to be interviewed face-to-face in Johannesburg and then was called to do urgent work in another province and could not make the scheduled interview. He suggested that we do a Skype interview and this was done. Skype is a Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technology, which enabled me to interview him following his agreeing to be part of the study and his changed availability. As both he and I had the technical ability to use the technology, he indicated that he was comfortable with a Skype interview and using video mode. A reason for using video mode in the interview was to overcome the criticism associated with losing the visual and interpersonal aspects of a face-to-face interview. Using

Skype with video mode ensured that the interaction between the interviewee and me was not lost. Berg (2007) suggests that videoconferencing is similar to a face-to-face interview, and Sullivan (2012: 59) calls Skype "a viable method of data collection" and writes that Skype interviews present an opportunity to reach people anywhere around the world, at minimal cost.

Prior to the interview, I e-mailed the consent form to him, which he signed, giving his consent, and returned the form to me prior to the interview commencing. I also explained that the visual part of the interview would not be available to or be shared with anyone, to ensure confidentiality. The same interview protocol was therefore followed as with the face-to-face interviews.

3.4.2.6   An auto-ethnographic interview

Given that I had been part of the ECD policy-making processes from 1990 to 2015, it was appropriate that an auto-ethnographic interview was done. Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2011: 1), describe auto-ethnography as "an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (graphy) personal experiences (auto) in order to understand cultural experience." It uses the researcher as a source of data and as such, "[it] expands and opens up a wider lens on the world, eschewing rigid definitions of what constitutes meaningful and useful research" (Ellis et al., 2011: 2). Roth (2009: 1) writes "Auto/Ethnography has emerged as an important method in the social sciences for contributing to the project of understanding human actions and concerns." In doing so I was also able to "produce aesthetic and evocative thick descriptions of personal and interpersonal experience" (Ellis et al., 2011: 4) and I was able to incorporate my experiences into the study. In support of this Duncan (2004: 38) writes, "… there is a place in scholarship for shining the light of research where one stands. …As qualitative researchers, willing to confess that reality is based on perception, why should we not examine more fully what constitutes our perceptions?"

A concern with auto-ethnography is that the researcher's narrative becomes the only view. In this study, the interviews with 19 individuals directly involved in the ECD policy-making process from 1990 to 2015 and my study of the many ECD policy documents, removes this concern. The method I used was to be interviewed by a trusted, professionally qualified colleague with excellent interviewing skills. She was given the structured interview schedule in advance, studied it and then did the interview, which was digitally recorded.

Chang (2008: 54) warns of the pitfalls of using auto-ethnography in a study and suggests three main behaviours to avoid: excessive focus on self, exclusive reliance on personal memory, and negligence of ethical standards regarding others in self-narratives. As multiple sources were used in this study along with my personal account, including national and provincial government ECD policy-making officials, non-profit activists, experts, academics and trade unionists, these pitfalls were avoided in this interview.

3.4.3 Triangulation

In this study, I used multiple methods and sources to construct the data. Triangulation was done to ensure the validity and trustworthiness of the data and the integrity of the research study (Denzin, 1989). A number of authors have written on this. Rembe (2005: 102) remarks:

> The use of several methods of data collection or triangulation enables the researcher to explain more fully the richness and complexity of the policy process by examining it from more than one standpoint and, in so doing, achieve a measure of validity and reliability.

Jick (1983: 145) discusses the advantage of using triangulation in qualitative research as allowing researchers to be confident of their results. Cohen and Manion (1980: 208) outline the advantages of triangulation as "Exclusive reliance on one method, therefore, may bias or distort the researcher's picture of the particular slice of reality he is investigating … the more the methods contrast with each other, the greater the researcher's confidence." For Berg (1995: 5, cited in Glesne, 1999: 31) triangulation is not "the simple combination of different kinds of data, but the attempt to relate them so as to counteract the threats to validity identified in each." Having used triangulation, I believe that quality data has been constructed, which enhances the presentation of findings in Chapter Five and the analysis of findings and discussion in Chapter Six.

3.5 Data validity and trustworthiness

For the integrity of this study it was critical that the data constructed was valid and trustworthy. To this end, I followed Creswell's (2009: 191-192) description of verification procedures often used in qualitative research. This included:

- prolonged engagement and extended time in the field;
- triangulation;

- reflection upon any bias I may have brought to the study and monitoring this is my research;

- sharing interview transcripts with participants to determine accuracy; and

- use of a trusted external auditor to examine the research process and product through auditing my interview and field notes, research journal, and analytic framework.

To establish the validity and trustworthiness of the data, I ensured that the above was attended to in this study. In addition, transcripts of individual interviews were sent to interviewees for checking accuracy and correctness, and all interviewees responded that this was so.

3.6   Data analysis and interpretation

Data analysis and interpretation were central to this study. Mouton (2001: 108) writes:

> Ultimately, all fieldwork culminates in the analysis and interpretation of some set of data … Analysis involves breaking up the data into manageable themes, patterns, trends and relationships. The aim of analysis is to understand the various constitutive elements of one's data through an inspection of the relationships between concepts, constructs or variables, and to see whether there are any patterns or trends that can be identified or isolated, or to establish themes in the data.

Mouton (2001: 109) also writes:

> Interpretation involves the synthesis of one's data into larger coherent wholes. One interprets (and explains) observations or data by formulating hypotheses or theories that account for observed patterns and trends in the data … Interpretation also means taking into account rival explanations or interpretations of one's data and showing what levels of support the data provide for the preferred interpretation.

De Vos (1998) is of the view that data analysis in qualitative research is eclectic and that there is no correct or incorrect way to analyse data.

Robson and Foster (1989: 85) differentiate between analysis and interpretation. They define analysis as "the sorting of information/what people said" and interpretation as "the meaning or understanding of what is said." They describe the differences between analysis and interpretation as follows: "analysis being a meticulous sorting of information (by whichever method the researcher prefers) and interpretation being the 'Eureka' moments when suddenly the researcher gains insight into the meaning implicit within the data gained."

In this study, there were four stages to the analysis and interpretation process of the 19 interviews: digital recording, transcription, analysis, and interpretation. In doing the data analysis and interpretation, I carefully worked through each of the 19 interviews, extracted themes and then sought to explain each theme in relation to the main research question and sub-questions and to the literature. In writing up my findings, where appropriate, I used the interviewee's voice to illustrate the finding I was making.

Firstly, the interviews were recorded, with the permission of each interviewee, using a digital voice recorder. Secondly, complete written transcriptions were made of all interviews immediately after I had listened to it. After listening to all the interviews, a clear picture of the ECD policy trajectory and policy-making processes emerged. Listening to the interviews again and reading the transcripts many times, enabled me to structure my thinking and to understand the responses prior to starting the interpretation of the data. Thirdly, in analysing the information and data I adopted an 'interpretive' approach (Elliot & Timulak, 2005), which provided me with an understanding of the ECD policy-making trajectory. It is important to note that the analysis and interpretation did not occur as a separate process during the research (Robson & Foster, 1989), but that they occurred throughout the data construction phase and also when writing up the study. In this study, the analysis and interpretation involved processing, synthesising and understanding layers of information, developing themes for discussion, and making connections between the resultant themes. With the written transcripts reflecting each participant's response to the research questions and my reflective notes at hand, I decided to use Tesch's (1990: 154) approach to data analysis and modified it, adding an additional stage. This was completed as described in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2: Summary of data analysis process (modified Tesch, 1990)

Step	Activity or action
Step 1: Transcription of interviews to text	Each of the digitally recorded interviews was transcribed to text and printed to obtain paper copies.
Step 2: Reading transcriptions	I read through all the written transcripts to get a sense of each interview and to become familiar with the data. During this phase, I wrote down ideas as they emerged.
Step 3: Understanding interview content	I selected the first written transcript, read it to understand the interview content in relation to the research questions. I identified and marked text that I considered important and the first themes emerged.
Step 4: Developing themes	After I had completed this for all the transcripts, I made a list of probable themes and grouped these together, again bearing the research objectives in mind.
Step 5: Developing framework for themes	I then developed a framework for the themes, which had emerged.
Step 6: Connecting themes and showing relationships between themes	I described each theme and grouped together those that related to each other, connecting the themes to show relationships relevant to the research objectives.
Step 7: Decision on themes	I then made a final decision on the themes to use in this study.
Step 8: Early analysis of data	With the themes decided on, I wrote appropriate interviewee comments under each theme and began to analyse the data.
Step 9: Reviewing data	At this point, I had to decide whether it was necessary to review any data, which I then did as required.

My reason for using Tesch's approach was to bring order, coherence and understanding to the data from the interviews. I particularly looked for themes in the data and I linked the information and data to the research questions, which the study was attempting to answer, ensuring that all the questions were adequately covered.

In adapting Tesch's (1990) stages, I intended to produce a systematic account of the study findings and ensure that the discussion and interpretation were based on the interview-generated findings (De Vos, 1998).

3.7 An interpretive lens

This study sought to interpret how ECD policy was made in South Africa during the 25-year period 1990 to 2015. This interpretation took place following a thorough reading and examination of the relevant ECD policy documents for the period 1990 to 2015 and through

in-depth interviews with key informants in the ECD policy-making processes over that same period. According to Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006: 7):

> The interpretive paradigm involves taking people's subjective experiences seriously as the essence of what is real for them (ontology), making sense of people's experiences by interacting with them and listening carefully to what they tell us (epistemology), and making use of qualitative research techniques to collect and analyse information (methodology).

Maimon, Peritz and Yancey (2011: 184) claim that in an interpretive analysis "you take your readers with you on an intellectual journey. You are saying, in effect, 'Come, think this through with me.' Consequently, your stance should be thoughtful, inquisitive, and open-minded. You are exploring the possible meaning of something."

The decision to use an interpretive lens was taken due to the nature of the study, the research questions and the historical period which this study covered. In this study, 'interpretive analysis' means to break the ECD policy trajectory into parts, examine these and then offer a meaning about each (Jewell, 2013). To interpret the research topic effectively, Maimon et al. (2011: 185) write:

> No matter what framework you use, analysis often entails taking something apart and then putting it back together by figuring out how the parts make up a cohesive whole. Because the goal of analysis is to create a meaningful interpretation, the writer needs to treat the whole as more than the sum of its parts and recognize that determining meaning is a complex problem with multiple solutions.

Having sought out themes in the ECD policy documents studied I then went further to emphasize the context within which the policy documents were generated. Because of my involvement in ECD policy-making over this period, this study has an element of ethnography in it. I took as a theme, categories and commonalities that were expressed by the interviewees and which were identified by me as relevant to the focus of the study and which I was of the view was important and which would make a contribution to our understanding of the ECD policy-making trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa. As such, I went beyond describing and summarising the data, to analysing it interpreting it, and explaining it in the presentation and analysis of the findings.

In studying, analysing and interpreting the ECD policy texts, I was aware of Gadamer's belief "...that it is the researcher's own research tradition and a clearly formulated theoretical fundamental order that shape the researcher's attitude towards texts and create the starting

point that guides all reading, uncovering and interpretation." (Koskinen & Lindstrom, 2013: 757). As I was a participant in the ECD policy-making process over the period 1990 to 2015 I was aware that I came with my own subjectivity. When reading and interpreting the policy texts and writing up this thesis, I have tried to ensure that my subjective viewpoint did not dominate. Based on Gadamer's comment above, I was open to new understandings and interpretations of the texts. My subjective reading and interpretation, of course, cannot be removed. However, I moderated this through interviews with 19 critical stakeholders in the ECD policy-making process over the 25 year period.

In this study, I critically read 27 ECD policy documents produced over the period 1990 to 2015, interviewed 19 key informants, and then constructed findings based on five main themes, which emerged. Having completed this, I then interpreted these themes and drew conclusions about the way in which we could be thinking about the research questions. In Chapter Three I have summarised the main elements of each of the 27 documents in the trajectory. Having completed this, the first documented record of the ECD policy trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa is reflected. Together with the interviews held, this formed the basis for the study findings reported in Chapter Five and the analysis of findings and discussion reported in Chapter Six.

3.8   Chapter summary

This chapter has set out the research problem, the research design and the research methodology. The study adopted a qualitative approach seeking to examine the ECD policy trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa. Various methods were used to obtain data including a substantial ECD literature review and ECD policy document study together with structured, face-to-face interviews, which produced the responses of key informants. The documents studied comprised 27 education, social development and ECD policy documents, and also policy statements, government White Papers, government reports and research studies.

I purposively selected 19 ECD key informants from across South Africa, from government, ECD NPOs, academic and research institutions and expert individuals to interview. Participants were fully informed of the rationale and goals of the study, and written consent agreeing to participate in the study was obtained from all participants. Confidentiality was assured to all individuals interviewed. Information obtained from documentary sources enabled me to trace the ECD policy trajectory and ECD policy-making processes, and to respond to the research questions in the study. This formed the basis of the study and was

enhanced by the information obtained through the interviews. The documents fell into several categories. The first set of documents related to the ECD policy-making period before 1994, and consisted mainly of documents developed by the ECD non-profit sector. These were not official government documents as government was only installed on 10 May 1994 but were documents developed in preparation for government ECD policy-making.

The second set of documents comprised those written after the new government had come to power. Official ECD policy documents are those produced by the South African government. The third set of documents consisted of those produced by NPOs, international development agencies, academics, civil society and also private and unofficial documents produced by individuals and independent researchers. The data was analysed using a modification of Tesch's (1990) eight stages, as discussed in section 3.6 of this chapter. Chapter Four which follows, focuses on ECD policies and provides a detailed description and commentary on the post-apartheid ECD policy trajectory and on the 27 ECD policy documents written from 1990 to 2015.

CHAPTER FOUR – THE POST-APARTHEID EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT POLICY TRAJECTORY 1990 – 2015

4.1   Introduction

This chapter sets out the ECD policy trajectory in South Africa, and traces and describes the evolution of ECD policy from 1990 to 2015. This is necessary to be able to answer the main research question which was:

> What was the ECD policy trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa and how did it unfold?

In deciding on this main research question, it was felt that no objective description of the ECD policy trajectory could be made given my participation in the unfolding ECD policy trajectory. In setting out this trajectory I am aware of my description, analysis and interpretation of the policy texts and the subjectivity involved. In support of the main research question, there are four secondary questions:

- How did ECD policy shape the evolution of ECD in post-apartheid South Africa?
- Which factors enhanced the ECD policy-making process in South Africa?
- How was ECD policy implemented in South Africa?
- Which lessons can be learned from the ECD policy-making process in South Africa over the period 1990 to 2015?

From 27 to 29 April 1994, South Africans went to the polls to vote in the first ever, universal franchise, democratic election. Millions of South Africans who had previously been denied the vote, voted for the first time, including Mr Nelson Mandela at the age of 75 years. The ANC achieved 62.6% of the vote, which entitled the party to 252 of the 400 seats in Parliament (Alvarez-Rivera, 2014: 1). On 10 May 1994, Mr Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as the President of South Africa and thereafter announced his Cabinet with Professor Sibusiso Bengu as the first Minister of Education and Mr Abe Williams from the official opposition as the Minister of Social Welfare.

Prior to the ANC coming to power in South Africa, it had prepared for governing by commissioning a number of education policy initiatives, including for the ECD sector. The reason for this was that the ANC did not want to begin to make education and ECD policy, which would take many years, only after it had become the government after the first democratic election. The ANC wished to begin governing with the preparatory policy work

for education and ECD completed. When the ANC government came to power, it used these early policy frameworks, reports and studies to inform its education policy-making.

Between 1990 and 2015, 27 ECD policy and policy-related documents were produced by the departments of Education, Social Development and Performance Monitoring and Evaluation. During this time, I served as part of various ECD policy-making teams for many of these policies. I validated the content through a thorough review of all 27 ECD policy documents and corroborated this through lengthy interviews with 19 significant participants involved in ECD policy-making over this period. These participants were national and provincial DoE and DSD officials, NPO leaders, academics and researchers, consultants and expert individuals, all of whom were substantially involved in ECD policy-making from 1990 onwards.

Over this period, the ECD policy trajectory in South Africa evolved through four distinct, sequential phases. The first phase was a four-year period prior to the first democratic election of April 1994, and phases two to four took place during the new democratic era, under the ANC government. This period was characterised by social, political and economic transformation in South Africa and intense public policy-making, including education policy. The education policy priority was to build an education system based on non-racialism, non-sexism and equity with priority given to enabling those children previously denied a quality education to have their education needs met as outlined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA, 1996a). During this time, ECD policy development has been wide-ranging and a number of important ECD policies were introduced. In the early phases, the focus of ECD was on a Reception Year for five-year-olds as part of ten years of compulsory basic education for each child. After 2012, this began to change to embrace a more comprehensive understanding of ECD in line with global definitions. By December 2015 a comprehensive ECD policy, which included prenatal care and infant nutrition, a focus on the first 1 000 days, health care, and community-provided ECD centres, through to Grade R in the formal school system, was approved by the South African Cabinet (RSA, 2015). During this period, government responsibility for ECD was moved from the DBE to the DSD, with responsibility for Grade R remaining with the DBE. Over the same period, government expenditure on ECD, particularly Grade R, also increased.

This chapter provides a brief description of the 27 ECD policies. Due to the nature of this study, the text in this chapter draws heavily on the published policy documents. I comment on how policy was made but I do not analyse any of the ECD policies as this was not a policy analysis study. Chapter Five reveals the findings of the study and Chapter Six provides an analysis and interpretation of important themes which emerged.

4.2   ECD policy and policy-related documents

During the period 1990 to 2015, 27 ECD policy and policy-related documents were produced. These took various forms: early pre-democracy studies to inform ECD policy, education White Papers and ECD policy documents, political party policy frameworks, government plans and programmes affecting linked to ECD policy, research studies in support of ECD policy-making and legislation. These were produced by advocacy groups, government departments, the ANC as a political party, international development organisations such as UNICEF, and other ECD stakeholders. The 27 ECD policy and policy-related texts studied are reflected in six categories in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 ECD policy and policy-related documents

Category	Policy document title
Early pre-democracy studies to inform ECD policy	- National Education Policy Initiative (NEPI) 1992 - South African Study on Early Childhood Development 1994
Education White Papers and ECD policy documents	- Education White Paper on Education and Training 1995 - National Education Policy Act 1996 - Interim Policy for ECD 1996 - White Paper for Social Welfare 1997 - Education White Paper 5 on ECD 2001 - National Norms and Standard for Grade R Funding 2008 - National Early Learning and Development Standards 2009 - Universal Access to Grade R Policy Framework 2011 - National Integrated ECD Policy 2015

Political party policy frameworks	• ANC Policy Framework for Education and Training 1994 • ANC National Social Welfare and Development Planning Framework 1994
Government plans and programmes linked to ECD policy	• National Programme of Action for Children in South Africa 1996 • Department of Social Development Position Paper on ECD 2005 • Expanded Public Works Programme 2004/5 – 2008/9 • National Integrated Plan for ECD 2005 – 2010 • Guidelines for ECD Services 2006 • National Plan of Action for Children in South Africa 2012 – 2017 • National Development Plan 2012
Research studies in support of ECD policy	• National ECD Pilot Report 2001 • Nationwide ECD Audit 2001 • Diagnostic Review of ECD 2012
Legislation	• South African Schools Act 1996 • Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996 • Children's Act 2005 • Children's Amendment Act 2007

4.3 The ECD policy timeline in South Africa 1990 to 2015

The ECD policy-making timeline for the period 1990 to 2015 is listed below.

1992

National Education Policy Investigation (NECC, 1992)

1994

ANC Policy Framework for Education and Training (ANC, 1994b)

South African study on ECD (Padayachie et al., 1994)

ANC National Social Welfare and Development Planning Framework (ANC, 1994a)

1995

Education White Paper on Education and Training (DoE, 1995)

1996

The National Education Policy Act, No.27 of 1996 (RSA, 1996b)

National Programme of Action for Children in South Africa: Framework (RSA, 1996c)

Interim Policy for ECD (DoE, 1996a)

South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996 (RSA, 1996d)

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, No. 108 of 1996 (RSA, 1996a)

1997

White Paper for Social Welfare (Department of Welfare, 1997)

2001

National ECD Pilot Report 1997 to 2000 (DoE, 2001e)

Nationwide audit of ECD provisioning in South Africa (DoE, 2001f)

Education White Paper 5 on ECD (DoE, 2001b)

2003

Expanded Public Works Programme 2004/5–2008/9 (DSD, DoE & DoH, 2004)

2005

Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005 (RSA, 2005a)

National Integrated Plan for ECD (RSA & UNICEF, 2005)

Position paper on early childhood care and development (DSD, 2005)

2006

Guidelines for ECD Services (DSD, 2006)

2007

Children's Amendment Act, No. 41 of 2007 (RSA, 2007)

2008

National Norms and Standards for Grade R Funding (DoE, 2008a)

2009

National Early Learning and Development Standards (DBE, 2009)

2011

Universal Access to Grade R Policy Framework (DBE, 2011a)

2012

Diagnostic Review of ECD (DPME, 2012)

National Development Plan 2030: Our future – make it work (NPC, 2012)

2013

National Plan of Action for Children in South Africa 2012–2017 (DWCPD & UNICEF, 2012)

2015

National Integrated ECD Policy (RSA, 2015)

4.4   The ECD policy trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa

Following the first non-racial, democratic election in April 1994, South Africa had a democratically elected government, which took control of the administration in May 1994. In 1990, in anticipation of the coming democracy, the consideration of policy options began after the unbanning of the ANC and other liberation movements. This enabled the ANC, as the most likely governing political party after the first democratic election, to formally consider education policy options at all levels. Some of the documents included in the ECD policy trajectory were formal policies of government, while other documents in the trajectory were developed by government to support ECD policy-making. For example, while the South African Constitution is not an ECD policy document, it has a critical section, which provides for the basic right to education to which all young children are entitled. These policy documents were published as national policy documents, either as legislation, a White Paper, in a Government Gazette or as a government department publication. On examining the ECD policy-making timeline above I have identified four distinct and chronological phases in ECD policy-making in South Africa. I have called these:

1990 to 1994	Preparing to govern: developing ECD policy options
1994 to 2001	A democratic government: A proliferation of ECD policy-making
2001 to 2012	Policy implementation and system consolidation
2012 to 2015	A new direction: towards comprehensive and integrated ECD.

In some cases, the exact date of publication is available, in other cases, only the month and year are available. The reason for writing it up chronologically was so that I could trace and describe the content, themes and thread, which run through the various policies. What follows

in this chapter is a brief description of each of the four ECD policy-making phases with detail of each policy document.

4.4.1   1990 to 1994: Preparing to govern: developing ECD policy options

This phase occurred before the new democratic government was elected in April 1994 and involved four policy-making activities:

- the National Education Policy Investigation (NECC, 1992);
- a South African study on ECD (Padayachie et al., 1994);
- the ANC Policy Framework for Education and Training (ANC, 1994b); and
- the ANC National Social Welfare and Development Planning Framework (ANC, 1994a).

These policy options were produced in anticipation of the ANC governing after the April 1994 election. The first and second of these documents focused solely on ECD, and were developed by appointed teams which were strongly linked to the ANC and to the broad MDM. The ANC draft policy documents on Education and Training and on Social Welfare and Development Planning were formulated by the internal structures of the ANC. In each of these four documents, ECD is suggested as one measure, amongst many, to combat the social and education sector problems, which would be inherited by the ANC from the apartheid government and which warranted policy attention.

Throughout this phase, there was a high degree of ECD non-profit and civil society participation in developing the ECD policy options. Badat (2008: 7) writes, "This [participation] was congruent with the high levels of political mobilisation of mass movements and civil society in the context of political and constitutional negotiations." Three main ECD policy proposals can be identified in this phase:

- a universal reception year for all five-year-olds;
- increased access to community-based ECD centres; and
- government financial support via a per capita ECD subsidy targeted at the poor.

During this phase, ECD policy thinking was located within the education sector given that struggle politics had a large membership of education organisations (Biersteker, 2010: 55).

4.4.1.1   National Education Policy Investigation (August 1992)

By 1990, in anticipation of a democratic government, discussions on education policies and programmes in a democratic South Africa had begun within the broad MDM and the ANC. Activists in the ECD sector, including myself, realised that ECD was not on the political or education agenda of the MDM and it was noticed that ECD was also not on the policy agenda for a future ANC government. This was taken forward when ECD was put on the National Education Coordinating Committee (NECC) agenda at a workshop in October 1990. The NECC had been formed in December 1985 to lead the fight against the racist education system, and its major policy initiative was the National Education Policy Initiative (NEPI), which drafted policy options for education in a democratic South Africa. NEPI had constituted a commission to investigate early childhood educare (as it was then named) policy options for children aged birth until school-going age. I was a member of the NEPI early childhood educare research group. The NEPI Educare Report was the first in South Africa to make policy proposals for ECD. The policy options produced were based on the understanding that the state had a responsibility to assist parents in the education and care of young children, and to provide opportunities for young children to redress the inequalities of the past and to bring about social justice. It was believed that it was important to intervene educationally in the years before children enter school and that investment in the early years of a child's life would yield significant social, education and economic returns. The intention was that meeting the needs of young disadvantaged and vulnerable children would improve their education, health and nutrition (NECC, 1993: 59).

The NEPI policy option recommendations focused on ECD provision, governance, finance, curriculum development and training (NECC, 1992: 39). The proposal was that a one-year preschool programme for five-year-olds prior to formal school entry be instituted. NEPI recognised however, that "it was not a sufficient educational intervention to redress historical imbalances and does not address the developmental needs of children under the age of five or the need for care for children of working mothers" (NECC, 1992: 39). State subsidisation of a range of ECD programme options was also proposed with priority for children of working and work-seeking mothers. The division of responsibility between education, welfare and health was considered a problem. The proposal to remedy this was to locate government responsibility for educare in one ministry or to have different ministries with responsibility for aspects of educare, with a coordinating structure to ensure a comprehensive service.

Although educare was considered a social good, it was recommended that parents and employers should be responsible for fees with the possibility that the one year for five-year-olds within the formal education system would be subsidised. There was agreement that the state should subsidise community-run educare programmes for children under five years old through a per capita child subsidy and that this was a more viable option. The expansion of formal and non-formal teacher training, in a coordinated and integrated system under one government ministry with a government system of course accreditation, was recommended.

These early childhood educare policy options produced through NEPI in 1992, were the first of a series of policy proposals made from 1990 onwards. While not comprehensive, the ECD policy options formed the basis for policy-making, which was to follow when a legitimate and democratic government was elected in April 1994.

4.4.1.2   ANC Policy Framework for Education and Training (January 1994)

In 1994, the ANC Education Department published a policy framework for education and training, which became commonly known as the 'Yellow Book' (ANC, 1994b). This was a document, which the ANC viewed as providing "a vision for a reconstructed and democratic system, capable of delivering quality lifelong learning to all citizens … realistic and attainable" (ANC, 1994b: 5). The policy was made on the basis that the apartheid education system would need to be fundamentally transformed to meet the need for a non-racial, non-sexist, single education system, and which would advance the socio-economic rights of citizens.

Critical in advancing ECD at the time, was ensuring its acceptance as part of the ANC Policy Framework for Education and Training. This was achieved partly based on the earlier work done on NEPI and because of the strong links the NEPI ECD team had with the ANC. To a substantial degree, the NEPI recommendations were reflected in the ANC Policy Framework for Education and Training (ANC, 1994b: 91). Part 6 of the framework sets out in detail ANC policy on educare (as ECD was called at the time), referring to programmes for the care and education of children from birth until entry to school. At the time, ECD in South Africa could be described as inadequate, fragmented, uncoordinated, unequal and generally lacking in educational value (Van den Berg & Vergnani, 1986). The ANC draft policy framework for education and training set out to provide basic health care, nutrition and early education programmes aimed at the well-being of young children and to enable women "in poor

families to break out of the cycle of illiteracy, over-reproduction, and economic dependence" (ANC, 1994b: 93).

The ANC policy for ECD was based on overarching principles:

- parents and families are responsible for the care and upbringing of the young child;
- the state has a constitutional duty to protect the rights of young children to basic nutrition, basic health care and basic education;
- ECD programmes require an integrated approach to meeting children's needs;
- collaboration between government departments, NGOs, unions, employers, donor agencies and parents is necessary;
- expenditure on ECD is an investment in social and economic reconstruction; and
- the educational component of development must be planned in a continuous developmental sequence from birth to the end of junior primary education and beyond (ANC, 1994b: 93)

The policy proposals made in the framework document saw ECD as part of a comprehensive, national development strategy linking social and economic development in which the first year of schooling would be a reception year for five-year-olds. Funding for ECD would come from national, provincial and local government revenues and from the private sector, organised labour, community organisations, parents and donor agencies. These proposals were drawn from the NEPI recommendation of a reception year for five-year-olds.

4.4.1.3   South African study on ECD (August 1994)

In 1992, the Centre for Education Policy Development (CEPD), at the request of the ANC education desk, and supported by the World Bank, set up a South African study on ECD to inform ECD policy-making. The motivation for the study was that government would need to find ways to ensure that children, especially those previously denied opportunities and who were vulnerable, would be ready to enter the first year of formal school (Padayachie et al., 1994). A nine-person team appointed by the ANC education desk, comprised eight South Africans (which included myself) and an American consultant to the World Bank, Dr Judith Evans, who facilitated the research process. Building on NEPI (NECC, 1992) and the ANC Policy Framework for Education and Training (ANC, 1994b), the study investigated a reception year for five-year-olds as part of the formal school system to address early drop-out and repetition. The research team changed the term 'educare' to 'early childhood development' and argued strongly for a broader mandate, to include ECD policy and

programmes for birth to five-year-olds, but this was not agreed to by the ANC education desk.

Following wide-spread consultations across South Africa, the *Report of the South African Study on ECD: Recommendations for action in support of young children* (Padayachie, et al., 1994) was published in August 1994, four months after the ANC had come to power. The overarching recommendation in the report was "a comprehensive strategy for reversing South Africa's historic neglect of early childhood development – neglect which has been aggravated by the experience of South African communities under apartheid" (Padayachie et al., 1994: Foreword, para. 1). The report proposed that a comprehensive national ECD programme for vulnerable young children should support national reconstruction and development (Padayachie et al., 1994). The report recommended that the South African government invest in the provision of ECD programmes for children from birth to four years of age, with the provision of a universal reception year programme for five-year-olds as part of the early primary school phase. The study report contained other policy recommendations namely:

- the establishment of a Department of Early Childhood Development within the Ministry of Education and Training;
- the expansion of ECD programmes through a partnership of government, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the private sector and the community;
- an early childhood curriculum responsive to the needs of young children;
- resource and training centres in each province to provide training and support to ECD programmes;
- the state providing funding to NGOs which would be responsible for curriculum and material development and training (Padayachie et al., 1994: 5).

The main recommendation of a reception year for five-year-olds, linked to the lower primary phase of education (now called the Foundation phase), which would be provided by the state, was taken up in the Education White Paper on Education and Training (see 3.3.2.1).

4.4.1.4   ANC National Social Welfare and Development Planning Framework (1994)

The ANC National Social Welfare and Development Planning Framework (ANC, 1994a) was the outcome of a broad consultation of the ANC and covered young children and their well-being but did not mention ECD specifically. The Framework defined social welfare within a

developmental approach as "a comprehensive, integrated system of social services and benefits, acting as a redistributive mechanism, to bring about a progressive change in the social, economic, political, cultural and physical conditions of people, especially the poorest" (ANC, 1994a: 3), with social welfare including the basic right to education and well-being. Children were a priority of the Framework with the right "to be protected and measures taken to ensure that the survival, growth and development of all children, but especially, those who are experiencing the effects of the violence of apartheid development" (ANC, 1994a: 46). These measures included the long-term reconstruction of family and community life, the development of a national programme of action to address the conditions of children and prioritise those at risk, and developing a policy framework and enabling legislation to promote and secure the protection and well-being of children. Some 11 years and two administrations later, this would eventually be realised in the Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005 (RSA, 2005a) and the Children's Amendment Act, No. 41 of 2007 (RSA, 2007).

4.4.2   1994 to 2001: A democratic government: a proliferation of ECD policy-making

Following the first democratic election in April 1994, the ANC came to power as the first democratically elected government in South Africa and began to overhaul education policy and legislation, and the education system which resulted in a proliferation of education policy-making activity. Government needed to effect significant education transformation; hence the passing of legislation and making of policy during this phase. The new government also commenced with dismantling the apartheid education structures, creating a single national education department and putting in place an equitable system for financing education. ECD was no exception, and over the next seven years, ten policy documents regarding ECD were completed, including a White Paper on education and training (DoE, 1995) and Education White Paper 5 specifically on ECD (DoE, 2001b).

After a protracted period of constitutional development, the first democratic, non-racial Constitution of the Republic of South Africa was finalised during this phase and came into effect on 4 February 1997. The NEPA, No. 27 of 1996 (RSA, 1996b), was passed and outlined the basic principles of education provision under the new ANC government and also a commitment to democracy, equity, redress and transparency (Sayed, 2001: 189). Of special significance for the ECD sector during this phase were –

- the Interim Policy for ECD in 1996 (DoE, 1996a);

- the National ECD Pilot Project from 1997 to 1999 (DoE, 2001e); and

- the nationwide ECD audit in 2001 (DoE, 2001f), which led to the first ever Education White Paper on ECD (DoE, 2001b), announced on 28 May 2001.

During this phase, the South African government ratified the UNCRC on 16 June 1995. This was the catalyst for the first National Programme of Action for Children in South Africa: Framework (RSA, 1996c), which pulled together all the major children's programme initiatives provided by government and civil society, including ECD, and was an overarching policy in the interests of children which took ECD from the periphery of education policy-making and placed it on the national education and social welfare agenda.

Early in this phase in 1996, the RDP was replaced by the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) policy. This had a major influence on the resourcing of ECD, and whilst there were policies were in support of ECD, the financial resources to implement these policies were minimal and seriously affected ECD policy and programme implementation. During this phase, ECD was still seen as a DoE responsibility with the DSD playing a lesser role. Six main developments emerged between 1994 and 2001:

1. an Education White Paper on Education and Training (Notice 196 of 1995) (DoE, 1995), the first document which outlined education policy in democratic South Africa, was released;

2. an Interim Policy for ECD (DoE, 1996a) was developed and tested over a three-year period (1997–1999) and was monitored and evaluated by an independent organisation;

3. central government coordination of ECD programmes began through the National Programme of Action for Children in South Africa: Framework (RSA, 1996c);

4. the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa entitled every child to basic education, health care and nutrition, amongst other services;

5. a nationwide ECD audit was completed (DoE, 2001f), providing qualitative and quantitative data for government ECD policy-making;

6. a preschool reception year (which later officially became known as 'Grade R') was the main policy choice in Education White Paper 5 on ECD (DoE, 2001b).

Towards the end of this phase, the national DoE was under pressure to produce an ECD policy. When making this policy, the DoE reneged on the legal requirement for stakeholder consultation when making policy as was required by the NEPA, No. 27 of 1996 (RSA, 1996b), and appointed a foreign education economist consultant to write Education White

Paper 5 on ECD. At that stage, the participatory and transparent process of ECD policy-making made way for an external consultant to produce the policy text behind closed doors and without stakeholder consultation or participation. The DoE was of the view that consultation with stakeholders had taken place during the National ECD Pilot Project (DoE, 2001e) and was sufficient and complete. This was rejected by the major ECD stakeholder organisations and non-profit ECD providers.

At systemic and operational level, the Directorate for ECD and Lower Primary Education was formed, and a Director was appointed in August 1995. In 1998, the Directorate was split into two, and ECD became a Directorate on its own. A new Director, who up to that time had been a significant role player in the ECD policy-making processes, was appointed in January 2000.

In 1999, after consultation with education stakeholders, the Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, outlined his Call to Action plan named 'Tirisano' – a Sotho word meaning 'working together' (Asmal, 1999). Tirisano listed nine priorities but excluded Grade R and ECD. A further weakness during this phase was that government did not monitor ECD policy implementation with the result that much ECD policy during this phase was symbolic, which Sayed (2001: 189) describes as "signalling and providing images of desired education outcomes and focus on frameworks rather than the specific content of education policies."

4.4.2.1   Education White Paper on Education and Training, 1995

On 15 March 1995, after the new democratic government had been in power for 10 months, a White Paper on Education and Training was published by the new national Department of Education (DoE, 1995). This document was the first policy document on education and training produced by the first democratically elected government, and "provided the first basic policy framework within which subsequent education policy-making was to be understood" (Jansen, 2001b: 44). It included a commitment to ECD provision acknowledging the importance of ECD as a foundation for lifelong learning. The White Paper took its lead from the ANC Policy Framework for Education and Training (ANC, 1994b) and subsequently fed into the Interim Policy for ECD of 1996 (DoE, 1996a), Education White Paper 5 on ECD in 2001 (DoE, 2001b), as well as the National Integrated Plan for ECD (NIPECD) in 2005 (RSA & UNICEF, 2005). In his message accompanying the White Paper, Minister of Education, Professor Bengu said that the policy document will "bring into being a

system serving all our people, our new democracy, and our Reconstruction and Development Programme" (DoE, 1995: 1). Chapter Five of the White Paper defines ECD as:

> An umbrella term which applies to the processes by which children from birth to nine years, grow and thrive, physically, mentally, emotionally, morally and socially. Early childhood development programmes include a variety of strategies and a wide range of services directed at helping families and communities to meet the needs of children in this age group. The care and development of young children must be the foundation of social relations and the starting point of human resource development strategies from community to national levels (DoE, 1995: 25).

This was the first official definition of ECD in South Africa.

The White Paper viewed ECD as being crucial in enabling poor families to meet the development needs of their children, to improve the life chances of young children, and to enable families and communities to care for them. To enable this to happen, the national and provincial Departments of Education, Health, and Welfare and Population Development (as it was then called) were required to establish interdepartmental committees on ECD whose role would be to develop a comprehensive approach to the well-being of young children from birth to nine years of age (DoE, 1995: 25). The DoE had responsibility for the education component of ECD provision. Momentum for this was gained when the national DoE established a Directorate for ECD and Lower Primary education. In this policy, the national DoE was required to develop national policy for the education of young children, determine financial norms and standards, and establish ECD curricula and training standards. Provincial departments would implement policy in conjunction with accredited NGO providers. As part of the policy proposals, the DoE would establish a statutory consultative body, representative of the ECD field (DoE, 1995: 26).

The Education White Paper on Education and Training (DoE, 1995) was the first official policy indication of the South African government's intention to include a reception year as part of ten years of basic education. The school system would comprise ten years free and compulsory education (a reception year and nine school years from Grades 1–9) and this came into effect on 1 January 1995 with the enrolment of six-year-olds in Grade 1. The reception year was going to be state-supported, phased in over a number of years. It would not be compulsory in the first phase and priority would be given to under-resourced communities and vulnerable young children in the communities.

4.4.2.2   The National Education Policy Act, No. 27 of 1996

Within the provisions of the NEPA, No. 27 of 1996 (RSA, 1996b), the Minister of Education could make education policy in line with the Constitution. The Act emphasises that every person has the right to basic education, and policies must contribute towards achieving equitable education opportunities, and must redress past inequality in education provision, including the promotion of gender equality and the advancement of the status of women. One of the important commitments of the Act is that the Minister of Education must consult with appropriate consultative bodies that have been set up for that purpose and with stakeholders to determine national education policy and legislation. The Minister must also consult with the Minister of Finance if it involves expenditure from the State Revenue Fund. The Act established the Council of Education Ministers (CEM) to promote national education policy and the Heads of Education Departments Committee (HEDCOM) to facilitate the development of a national education system. As the Act is an enabling Act, it does not mention ECD specifically, but it does affect ECD.

4.4.2.3   National Programme of Action for Children in South Africa: Framework (1996)

At the 1990 World Summit for Children held at the United Nations, countries pledged to ensure the survival, protection and development of children (United Nations, 1990). The South African government adopted these goals, and on 16 June 1995, ratified the UNCRC, which provided the basis for the National Programme of Action (NPA) for Children in South Africa. The NPA for Children (RSA, 1996c), was first mentioned in the 1994 White Paper on the RDP (RSA, 1994b). In April 1996, the Cabinet approved the NPA framework and its implementation by the relevant ministries and departments. The NPA framework was not a separate plan for children but an integration of all the policies and plans developed by government departments to promote the well-being of children and it set out the actions that South Africa will take to meet its commitment to children, especially vulnerable children. Seven policy priorities were adopted in the NPA, which included the expansion of ECD activities and a focus on appropriate low-cost family and community-based interventions and universal access to basic education.

Part of the strategy was the development of ECD policies and standards for curriculum, training, facilities, materials, subsidies and training to be led by the departments of Education and of Welfare and Population Development, as it was called then.

At national government level, an Inter-Ministerial Core Group was appointed by the Cabinet to oversee the implementation of the NPA for Children. A National Steering Committee comprising the director-general of each appointed ministry, the National Committee for the Rights of Children, and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) was established to oversee coordination, implementation and monitoring of the NPA and to ensure that it focused on the commitments made when South Africa ratified the Convention.

4.4.2.4   Interim Policy for ECD (1996)

On 18 September 1995, the DoE established the ad hoc Coordinating Committee for Early Childhood Development (CCECD), consisting of the DoE, other government departments, representatives from national ECD stakeholder organisations and ECD specialists. I was a member of this committee as a representative of the South African Congress for Early Childhood Development (SACECD) of which I was a founding member. Working with the CCECD, the DoE developed an Interim Policy for ECD in September 1996, which provided a vision for ECD and which recognised the importance of ECD as the basis for lifelong learning. As with the Education White Paper on Education and Training (DoE, 1995), the Interim Policy for ECD made provision for a reception year as part of 10 years of compulsory schooling.

In the Interim Policy for ECD, ECD included a wide range of programmes aimed at supporting families and communities to meet the needs of children aged birth to six years old. The priority issues were:

- correcting past imbalances;
- the need to provide equal opportunities;
- issues of scale;
- affordability and increasing public awareness; and
- advocacy (DoE, 1996a).

Similar to earlier policy documents, the interim policy recognised two categories of provision: the first for children over 5 years of age in the school system, and the second for children under five years old who were at risk (DoE, 1996a). A comprehensive range of ECD programmes including play groups, childminding and family-based programmes would be provided alongside centre-based provision located in public primary schools, ECD centres, community centres and residential homes. All programmes would have to be registered with

the DoE and would have to meet national curriculum guidelines. The provisioning of ECD would be phased in over five years due to funding constraints. Providers of the reception year programme would qualify for a government subsidy provided that the programme complied with the requirements of the National ECD Pilot Project (DoE, 1996a).

The interim policy recognised that improving the quality of ECD provision depended on improving the quality of ECD teachers and of the curriculum. Teachers would be accredited for the interim period on the basis of knowledge, skills and abilities, and formally and non-formally trained teachers would be recognised and employed. Public funding of a national ECD programme was justified on the understanding that it helped to –

> [R]edress past discrimination against young children, protect the rights of children and women, promote human resource development, help prevent costly social pathologies, secure more efficient performance by children in school and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the schooling system (DoE, 1996a: 21).

Additional funding would be obtained from national, provincial and local governmental sources and through the payment of fees by parents (DoE, 1996a: 21).

As part of the Interim Policy for ECD, provision was made for a three-year National ECD Pilot Project, which would test the reception year model and curriculum, and also for an information campaign, which would inform stakeholders and the public about the policy. These were put out on open tender and were awarded to Khulisa Management Services and to the South African Congress for ECD, respectively. The intention of the National ECD Pilot Project was that "a new policy framework for ECD is likely to emerge that will provide a permanent framework for longer-term ECD" (DoE, 1996a: 25).

By that time, the GEAR economic programme (Department of Finance, 1996) had replaced the RDP as the economic policy of the South African government, and because of the macro-economic choices of GEAR, large-scale funding for the reception year and other ECD programmes was not provided.

4.4.2.5   South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996

The South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996 (RSA, 1996d) was the first major formal schooling legislation to be enacted after 1994, and provided the legal framework for the provision of schooling and for the organisation, governance and funding of schools. Politically, the country required a new national system for schools. The Schools Act strived to:

[P]rovide an education of progressively high quality for all learners and in so doing lay a strong foundation for the development of all our people's talents and capabilities, advance the democratic transformation of society, combat racism and sexism and all other forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance, contribute to the eradication of poverty and the economic well-being of society (RSA, 1996d: 1).

While the Act required that every parent must enrol a child to attend school from the first school day of the year in which the child reaches the age of seven years, the Act made no direct reference to children in Grade R. By inserting into the legislation the ages seven to fifteen and having the ninth grade as the earliest grade after which a child could leave school, it was implied that children were entitled to nine years of compulsory, formal education, *excluding* Grade R. This contradicted earlier policy in the Education White Paper on Education and Training (DoE, 1995), which indicated that children were entitled to ten years of compulsory education starting with Grade R.

4.4.2.6   Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, No. 108 of 1996

Following the democratic election in April 1994, a new Constitution was drafted, which then-President, Nelson Mandela, signed into law at Sharpeville on 10 December 1996, and which came into effect on 4th February 1997. Chapter Two of the Constitution is the Bill of Rights (RSA, 1996a), which records under section 28 that every child has the right –

- to a name and a nationality from birth;
- to family and parental care, or to appropriate alternative care when removed from the family environment;
- to basic nutrition, shelter, basic health care and social services; and
- that a child's best interests are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child.

Section 29(1) of the Bill of Rights recorded that everyone has the right to a basic education, which the Constitution does not define, which is broad and for which no age group is specified. The Constitution is significant in ECD policy-making, since it is the supreme law of South Africa, and all legislation from Parliament is required to be consistent with the Constitution. This required the government of the day to meet the social, health and education needs of young children (RSA, 1996a).

4.4.2.7   White Paper for Social Welfare (1997)

The White Paper for Social Welfare (Department of Welfare, 1997) set out the principles, guidelines and programmes for developmental social welfare in South Africa, and is described as "a negotiated policy framework and strategy, and it charts a new path for social welfare in the promotion of national social development" (Department of Welfare, 1997: i). I was part of the team which wrote the White Paper. With regard to ECD, the White Paper on Social Welfare (1997) states that the well-being of children "… depends on the ability of families to function effectively. Because children are vulnerable they need to grow up in a nurturing and secure family that can ensure their survival, development, protection and participation in family and social life" (Department of Welfare, 1997: 39). The White Paper (Department of Welfare, 1997: 42) recognised that children from birth to nine years of age have social, emotional, cognitive, physical and moral needs, which must be met, and makes provision for a national ECD strategy and programmes that would be developed in collaboration with other government departments, civil society and the private sector. Disadvantaged and vulnerable children under five years of age would be the primary target for a range of ECD programmes (Department of Welfare, 1997: 43).

4.4.2.8   National ECD Pilot Project, 1997 to 1999 (28 May 2001)

Following the Interim Policy for ECD in 1996, the National ECD Pilot Project was designed to test the policy on curriculum, accreditation, training, employment of teachers and funding of ECD centres. It was implemented by the national DoE between 1997 and 1999. Provincial departments of education were provided with R125 million to support subsidies at community-based sites, contract ECD training organisations to provide training, and for provincial monitoring costs. Altogether 2 730 sites and teachers were selected by the provinces to participate, reaching approximately 66 000 children (DoE, 2001e: 22). This was the first step towards implementing Grade R (previously called 'the reception year') as part of the formal education system throughout South Africa. As part of the pilot, the Minister of Education appointed a team of ECD experts to draft ECD teacher qualifications and interim unit standards for an emerging accreditation system. In terms of the pilot project, government worked closely with non-profit ECD organisations, appointed through public tender in all nine provinces, to test the Interim Policy for ECD. Khulisa Management Services was contracted to research the appropriateness of the norms and standards, assess the adequacy of

the subsidies, and examine the effectiveness of the accreditation system. The research team was also required to indicate the policy implications for the Minister of Education. The pilot project monitoring report (DoE, 2001e) made six main findings:

1. The majority of community-based sites were not providing high-quality early education.

2. Provision of Grade R at community-based sites was substantially cheaper for the DoE than providing Grade R at schools.

3. The norms and standards used were appropriate for teachers.

4. The ECD subsidy contributed to poverty alleviation; however, the R2 per learner per day over 200 days was not adequate.

5. Provincial human, financial and infrastructural support to ECD was variable and inadequate in instances.

6. The teacher accreditation process should evolve into a permanent structure.

The policy implications of the findings of the three-year pilot project (DoE, 2001e) were that:

- Grade R would become part of the formal school system phased in over a five-year period;

- Grade R classes should be offered at primary schools, independent schools and community-based sites;

- Grade R teachers should register with the South African Council for Educators (SACE) and be supported through training and provision of education equipment; and

- government must fund Grade R through a subsidy by the DoE.

There were criticisms of the National ECD Pilot Project with Vally (2001: 10) writing that it was evident that the pilot project was limited in its design to answer key questions. Alternative models to the reception year were not considered, and the pilot was designed only to consider a Grade R year for five-year-olds with minimal government financial support for the policy option. Notwithstanding these criticisms, the findings of the National ECD Pilot Project informed government on ECD policy, which was eventually released as Education White Paper 5 on ECD (DoE, 2001b).

4.4.2.9   Nationwide Audit of ECD Provisioning in South Africa (28 May 2001)

In December 1999, the National DoE appointed the Centre for Early Childhood Development, an NPO based in Cape Town of which I am the founder and current director, to

undertake a nationwide audit study of ECD in South Africa. Given the lack of quantitative information regarding ECD provisioning, the aim of the audit, conducted between 8 May 2000 and 30 June 2000, was to provide accurate information on the nature and extent of ECD provisioning and resources across South Africa to inform policy and planning in the ECD sector. The DoE (2001f: 21) described the study as:

> [N]oteworthy not only for its scale and depth but also for generating, for the first time, empirically grounded and rigorous information and insights with respect to the state of ECD provisioning in South Africa. The audit has yielded previously unavailable and invaluable data concerning a range of aspects of ECD provisioning, including profiles of sites, learners, educators and programmes. An additional outcome of the audit is an excellent data base of ECD sites. For the first time within the sector, rigorous and verified data is now available on which to base the formation of policy and the implementation of provisioning priorities.

The audit was funded by the European Union, and the outcome was a reliable data base and statistical picture of ECD in South Africa from which government could make ECD policy. A total of 23 482 ECD sites were located, visited and audited, in which 1 030 473 children were enrolled with 54 503 educators (DoE 2001f: 1). Almost 40% of the identifiable ECD centres were situated in rural areas, with the remainder in urban formal and informal areas (DoE 2001f: 1). Approximately half of all ECD sites were based in community settings, a third were home-based and less than one fifth were based in schools. Few children with disabilities were provided for at ECD centres (DoE, 2001f: 39).

A number of key issues emerged from the findings, which subsequently guided ECD policy-making. Three types of ECD facility were evident: those attached to schools, those based in communities, and those offering programmes from residential homes (DoE, 2001f: 163). Most of the learners under the age of five years were at home-based sites, while the five- to seven-year-olds tended to be in community-based and school-based sites. The provisioning needs for the five- to six-year cohort were significantly in excess of available resources. Quality varied with some ECD centres being of high quality and others of poor quality. Across four indices (support, infrastructure, programme and educator), ECD centres providing mainly for black African children rated the lowest, whereas ECD centres providing mainly for white children rated highest indicating racial inequalities in which the vast majority of black African children were disadvantaged (DoE, 2001f: 164). While quality ECD educators are essential for quality ECD programmes, the audit found that 23% of educators had not received any training and 58% held qualifications, which were not

recognised by the DoE (DoE, 2001f: 41). The findings established that the sector was poorly funded and that the ECD sector required increased financial support to overcome its marginalised status.

The audit report concluded optimistically, "As ECD moves from the periphery to the core, it is best positioned to play a crucial role in assisting South Africa's children to fully realise their inherent capacities and to enhance the future of the nation" (DoE, 2001f: 168).

4.4.2.10   Education White Paper 5 on ECD (28 May 2001)

Following the completion of the Interim Policy for ECD, and informed by the National ECD Pilot Project and the results of the nationwide ECD audit, Education White Paper 5, the first ever White Paper on ECD in South Africa, was released on 28 May 2001 (DoE, 2001b). The policy document was mostly written by an American education consultant with no consultation with ECD representative organisations and stakeholders as was required by the NEPA of 1996 (RSA, 1996b). In response to this being challenged at the time by ECD activists in the sector, the most senior DoE ECD official (who was interviewee Government Official 2 in this study) indicated that the national DoE viewed the stakeholder consultations prior to 2001 as sufficient. The consultation and partnership with the ECD non-profit sector and civil society, which were evident, transparent and productive in the making of the Interim Policy for ECD document in 1996, was absent in formulating Education White Paper 5, which was perceived by the ECD sector as being imposed on it. Notwithstanding this, the release of Education White Paper 5 was a pivotal event in ECD in South Africa (DoE, 2001b). A strong argument in getting the White Paper approved was that ECD provision was based on human capital needs as expressed in the GEAR macro-economic policy of the South African government in 1996. In his preface to Education White Paper 5, Education Minister Kader Asmal (DoE, 2001b: 1) wrote:

> While its main thrust is to close the gap in our programmes for five-year olds, thus giving effect to our Constitution and the Education White Paper on Education and Training, it also addresses itself to the early childhood development challenge facing us in respect of children younger than four years.

The rationale for the policy choice in Education White Paper 5 was that approximately 40% of young children in South Africa grow up in conditions of poverty and neglect and were at risk of poor adjustment to school, increased grade repetition and school dropout (DoE,

2001b: 11). Because of this, the DoE decided to put in place a policy to meet the needs of children, especially those living in poverty (DoE, 2001b: 3). Education White Paper 5 (DoE, 2001b: 3) revealed key areas requiring attention:

- the extent of ECD provision;
- the level of inequality;
- unequal access to and quality of ECD provision; and
- the incomplete and fragmented ECD legislative and policy framework resulting in poor service delivery.

The main ECD policy priority was the establishment of a preschool reception year (Grade R) for children aged five years in a phased, poverty-targeted approach. In establishing this, the DoE was of the view that the primary responsibility for the care and upbringing of young children was with parents and families. However, because ECD was considered a public good, the department saw it as the responsibility of the state to subsidise and quality assure ECD programmes. This was the first time that ECD was seen and recorded by government as a public good, which would be provided for progressively by 2010, when all children attending Grade 1 would have participated in a Grade R programme. The intention of the policy was that all public primary schools would become sites for the provision of a Grade R programme. School governing bodies of primary schools would be provided with a grant-in-aid by provincial departments of education to establish Grade R programmes. These grants would be poverty-targeted and the aim was that the children of the poorest 40% of families would receive the highest per capita level of grants-in-aid. The medium-term goal was for approximately 810 000 five-year-olds to be enrolled in a primary school-based Grade R programme and for 135 000 five-year-olds to be enrolled in community-based Grade R classes, by 2010 (DoE, 2001b: 30). Community-based sites and independent pre-primary schools would be part of the public system of provision where a public primary school option was not available for children.

With regard to children five years old and younger, Education White Paper 5 stated little, only proposing expanding provision of targeted inter-sectoral programmes for children from birth to five years, but with little detail. The conclusion which I draw from this is that government did not have the political will and capacity to accommodate this age group in its major ECD policy document. Disappointing too was the fact that seven years after democracy in South Africa, ECD was still placed on the periphery of the education system despite the rhetoric of successive Ministers of Education, DoE officials and education department

documents. National Treasury, the Minister of Education and education department officials, however, supported an institutional model for ECD provisioning, which was not supported by the ECD sector. According to Chisholm (2004: 22), "[e]merging policy towards the end of the millennium has prioritised the institutional Reception Year as the preferred model but under-investment raises questions about the feasibility of this model." Similarly, Vally (2001: 13) maintained that Education White Paper 5 ignored the recommendations of the National ECD Pilot Project. Instead, he argues that the pilot project results suggested a more integrated inter-sectoral and community-based approach. The National Professional Teacher's Association of South Africa (NAPTOSA, 2001: 1) expressed concerns about terminology, definitions, funding, quality and implementation, which they considered unclear in the policy text. Their view was that a considerable amount of work still needed to be completed before the White Paper could become policy (NAPTOSA, 2001: 8).

4.4.3   2001 to 2012:   Policy implementation and system consolidation

With ECD policy now recorded in Education White Paper 5 for Education (DoE, 2001b), and in the White Paper for Social Welfare (Department of Welfare, 1997), the focus of government shifted to implementation, delivery and mobilising financial resources for ECD programmes. Government adopted a cautious, incremental approach to the implementation of Grade R and programmes for children aged birth to four years. Midway through this phase, two major pieces of legislation were passed. The apartheid-era Child Care Act, No. 74 of 1983 (RSA, 1983a) was replaced by a new Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005 (RSA, 2005a), and by the Children's Amendment Act, No. 41 of 2007 (RSA, 2007), with the latter providing operational details on partial care facilities and on ECD. The Children's Amendment Act took effect on 1 April 2010. Implementation details for universal access to Grade R and for Grade R funding were also published as Government Gazettes (DoE, 2008a, DBE, 2011a). The DSD published a position paper on ECD (DSD, 2005) as well as Guidelines for ECD Services (DSD, 2006), of which I was the primary author. Also developed during this phase was the five-year NIPECD (RSA & UNICEF, 2005). This plan was detailed, and set out how ECD was to be provided until the year 2010. The main policy developments during this phase was the most comprehensive children's legislation in the history of South Africa, a five-year NIPECD and a framework for universal access to and funding of Grade R. During this phase, there was general concern that the systemic and implementation challenges of the various policies were not taken seriously by government.

4.4.3.1 Expanded Public Works Programme 2004/5–2008/9

The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) is a government programme to train and create work opportunities for unemployed individuals enabling them to earn an income (DSD, DoE & DoH, 2004: 6). President Thabo Mbeki formally announced the EPWP in his State of the Nation Address in February 2003 (Mbeki, 2003: para. 88), and Cabinet adopted it in November 2003 (DSD, DoE & DoH, 2004: 6). Part of the EPWP Social Sector Plan (DSD, DoE and DoH, 2004) was focused on ECD programmes for children aged under five years with a target of 19 800 new job opportunities in ECD, and providing quality ECD programmes to 400 000 children (DSD, DoE & DoH, 2004: 12). This would be achieved through 6 500 NQF level 1 and 8 800 NQF level 4 training learnerships (DSD, DoE & DoH, 2004: 12). In addition, 4 500 Grade R teachers under the DoE would be trained enabling these adults to be formally employed (DSD, DoE & DoH, 2004: 12). The targeted individuals in the EPWP were unemployed and underemployed parents and caregivers. All the work opportunities would be provided in ECD centres managed by NPOs, CBOs, faith-based organisations and similar organisations. The three government departments would facilitate opportunities in partnership with the Education, Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority (ETDP-SETA) and a stipend would be paid to participants each month for 18 months, and training providers would be paid a per capita training fee.

This programme came under severe criticism from the ECD sector for the poor quality of training by ECD training organisations which were not accredited and by ECD trainers who were not qualified or competent. In some instances, ECD training that should have taken 18 months to complete, took only ten days and in others, there was no practical component to the training as was required by the ETDP-SETA. The programme was never monitored or evaluated for its outcomes and the reported of numbers of individuals trained should be treated with caution.

4.4.3.2 National Integrated Plan for ECD in South Africa 2005 to 2010

In May 2004, the Cabinet instructed the Social Sector Cluster, which included the DSD, DoE and the Department of Health (DoH), to develop an ECD plan for 2005–2010 and to present it to Cabinet for consideration (RSA & UNICEF, 2005). The specific focus of the NIPECD was children aged birth to four years. The aim of the plan was "to bring greater synergy, coordination and collaboration to government programmes undertaken by various departments in the area of early childhood development" (RSA & UNICEF, 2005: 1). The

NIPECD aimed to bring together ECD programmes and resources in an integrated manner to deliver a quality ECD service to communities. The vision of the NIPECD (RSA & UNICEF, 2005: 10) was to:

> [C]reate an environment and opportunities where all children have access to a range of safe, accessible and high quality early childhood development programmes that include a developmentally appropriate curriculum, knowledgeable and well-trained programme staff and educators and comprehensive services that support their health, nutrition, and social well-being in an environment that respects and supports diversity.

The plan aimed at "giving children of our country the best start in life by building a solid foundation of physical, emotional, psychosocial, cognitive, and healthy development" (RSA & UNICEF, 2005: 1).

The NIPECD identified five approaches to developing young children based on the work of Young (1996: 14) covering –

- implementation of a range of ECD programmes to children addressing their development needs;
- improving parent and caregiver knowledge and skills;
- promoting the development of women who are the main providers of ECD programmes in communities;
- strengthening institutional capacity by providing infrastructure and teaching support materials and training for those involved in ECD; and
- building public awareness about the benefits of ECD (RSA & UNICEF, 2005: 2).

As with earlier ECD policy initiatives, the plan adopted a phased and targeted approach prioritising access for the most vulnerable children. To achieve these goals, the NIPECD was guided by principles of excellence, access, equity, diversity, accountability and community-driven provision (RSA & UNICEF, 2005: 11). The primary components of the plan were integrated management of childhood illnesses, immunisation, nutrition, referral services for health and social security grants, early learning stimulation, and development and implementation of psychosocial programmes (RSA & UNICEF, 2005: 12).

At national level, an inter-department structure for early childhood care and development would be established under the leadership of the DoE, with the DSD, DoH, and the Office on the Rights of the Child in the Presidency as partners. This structure would coordinate the implementation of ECD programmes and would be replicated at provincial and municipal

level. NGOs would have a role to play as partners at these three levels and would be consulted on aspects of the implementation process and would provide programmes such as training.

The programme component of the NIPECD was called Tshwaragano Ka Bana (RSA & UNICEF, 2005), a Sotho phrase meaning 'working together for children', and would provide a comprehensive programme, comprising integrated management of childhood diseases, immunisation, nutrition, birth registration, parent support, quality care, hygiene, water provision, referral services for social security grants, early learning opportunities, and psychosocial programmes. As such, it expanded on the earlier narrow definition of ECD as centre-based provision and set the tone for later ECD policies.

The plan was developed in anticipation that –

- 50% of young children's ECD access would be at household level through the intervention of parents, family members and other caregivers;
- 30% would access ECD interventions at community level through play groups and community centres; and
- 20% of young children would enrol at formal ECD centres (RSA & UNICEF, 2005: 23).

4.4.3.3 Department of Social Development position paper on early childhood care and development

The DSD position paper on early childhood care and development was published in December 2005 emphasising that every child had the right to the best possible start in life and that early childhood represents "the most critical phase in the life cycle of human beings that will result in many positive benefits for the future of a child, families and society as a whole" (DSD, 2005: 2). Consistent with previous ECD policies, the position paper adopted the view that the care, protection and development of young children is the responsibility of parents and that the well-being of children depends on the ability of families to function effectively. It emphasised the importance of ensuring good health, proper nutrition, quality early learning, basic sanitation and protection from violence, abuse, exploitation and discrimination for children (DSD, 2005: 2). Also consistent with earlier ECD policies, the position paper sets out the role and responsibility of the national DSD as –

- making national policy, legislation and standards for the implementation of ECD programmes;

- setting national priorities for ECD programmes;

- providing support, guidance and capacity development opportunities to provincial departments; and

- appropriating a national budget for ECD programmes through the annual budget vote in Parliament (DSD, 2005: 10).

It further sets out the role and responsibility of the provincial Departments of Social Development as –

- promoting the importance of ECD;

- collaborating with provincial Departments of Education and Health and NGOs to provide ECD to young children and their families;

- developing a provincial integrated plan and providing support and guidance for ECD programmes and registering ECD centres; and

- funding ECD centres in the province (DSD, 2005: 12)

4.4.3.4   Guidelines for ECD Services

The Guidelines for ECD Services (DSD, 2006) was the product of a long and intensive consultation process, which I facilitated. It was developed to meet the mandate of the DSD in respect of ECD in South Africa. The Guidelines focused on three aspects: policy, legislative provisions and service delivery, and set out roles and responsibilities for national and provincial departments of Social Development. In the guidelines, the national DSD (DSD, 2006: 23) is responsible for:

- developing national policies, priorities and legislation;

- national minimum standards for ECD programmes;

- providing support, guidance and capacity development opportunities to provincial departments on ECD;

- monitoring provincial departments of Social Development as they implement national policies, norms and standards; and

- appropriating a national budget for ECD programmes through the annual budget vote in Parliament.

The provincial ECD authorities are required to:

- promote the importance of ECD;

- develop a provincial integrated plan; support, guide and monitor ECD in the province;

- ensure that national policies, legislation, strategies and priorities are implemented;

- register ECD centres;

- determine the ECD subsidy payable to facilities in the province; and

- appropriate a provincial budget for ECD programmes through the annual budget vote in the provincial legislature (DSD, 2006: 24).

4.4.3.5   The Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005

After a lengthy and protracted process, the Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005 (RSA, 2005a) replaced the previous Child Care Act, No. 74 of 1983 (RSA, 1983a). The Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005 clearly draws on provisions of the UNCRC (United Nations, 1989) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (OAU, 1990). The purpose of the Act is to give effect to the constitutional rights of children, and this legislation was a major advance in the protection, development and safety of children in South Africa (RSA, 2005a). While ECD is not referred to in any detail in the main part of the Act, the Children's Amendment Act (see 3.3.3.7) covers ECD programmes to be provided, in two chapters. The Amendment Act was approved by Parliament as the Children's Amendment Act, No. 41 of 2007. The two Acts have subsequently been combined into one Act called the Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005 (as amended by Act 41 of 2007).

4.4.3.6   National Norms and Standards for Grade R Funding

The Minister of Education published National Norms and Standards for Grade R Funding in February 2008, detailing public funding for Grade R in public schools. It stated that, in line with Education White Paper 5, the state would introduce publicly funded Grade R classes which would be pro-poor. The reason for this was that "it costs more to educate learners from disadvantaged backgrounds", since more affluent communities are able pay for the programmes they receive (DoE, 2008a: 6). In the policy, provincial education departments (PEDs) are required to budget for Grade R in public schools and to formulate a plan for public school Grade R with the target being universal Grade R by 2010. PEDs were also required to determine the cost per learner for Grade R, which should be approximately 70% of the total cost per learner for Grade 1 and which would cover the full cost of a Grade R teacher, learner support materials, utilities such as electricity and water, and administrative support (DoE, 2008a: 8). Given government's pro-poor focus, the level of Grade R funding was required to be higher in schools serving poorer communities than in more affluent communities. PEDs were also allowed to establish Grade R teacher posts to support publicly

funded Grade R in public schools. The National Norms and Standards for Grade R Funding brought Grade R further into the formal schooling system.

4.4.3.7   Children's Amendment Act, No. 41 of 2007

The Children's Amendment Act, No. 41 of 2007, is the major legislation detailing ECD, and supplements the Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005. The Amendment Act provides for ECD in relation to Partial Care (Chapter Five of the Act) and ECD (Chapter Six of the Act). Chapter Five of the Amendment Act describes Partial Care as being provided when a person –

> [T]akes care of more than six children on behalf of their parents or care-givers during specific hours of the day or night, or for a temporary period, by agreement between the parents or care-givers and the provider of the service (RSA, 2007: 14).

The funding of partial care facilities is prioritised in communities where families are not able to provide for their children. Section 92 of the Children's Amendment Act, No. 41 of 2007, requires that the Minister of Social Development develop a national ECD strategy and determine national norms and standards for partial care. This national ECD strategy was however only completed in December 2015, five years after the implementation of the Children's Amendment Act, No. 41 of 2007 in 2010. The national Minister of Social Development was also required to determine national norms and standards for ECD programmes and may make regulations for these ECD programmes (RSA, 2007).

Chapter Six of the Amendment Act covers ECD, which is defined as "… the process of emotional, cognitive, sensory, spiritual, moral, physical, social and communication development of children from birth to school-going age" (RSA, 2007: 28). The Member of the Executive Committee (MEC) for Social Development in each province may fund ECD programmes for that province. Funding of ECD programmes must be prioritised in communities where families are not able to provide for their children, and ECD programmes must be available to children with disabilities. In terms of the Act, ECD programmes must be registered with the provincial head of social development of the province where that programme is provided. Providers of ECD programmes qualify for funding if they comply with the national norms and standards.

4.4.3.8   National Early Learning and Development Standards (2009)

In 2009, the national DBE with the support of UNICEF produced a curriculum-related policy focusing on the early learning needs of children birth to four years of age (DBE, 2009). This need was first documented in Education White Paper 5, eight years previously (DoE, 2001b). The National Early Learning and Development Standards (NELDS) was designed to provide children with the best start in life by establishing standards of learning achievements and activities for young children across appropriate age ranges (DBE, 2009: 8). Teachers, caregivers and parents would be provided with information and support on how to ensure that children's early experiences were developmentally appropriate.

4.4.3.9   Universal access to Grade R policy framework

The purpose of this policy framework was to provide for the implementation of universal access to Grade R by 2014, and to identify gaps in policy and make proposals (DBE, 2011a: 3). The major challenge identified in the framework was a lack of legislation to govern the provision of Grade R and Grade R positioning in relation to the Foundation Phase. In 2001, Education White Paper 5 on ECD (DoE, 2001b) had set the year 2010 as the target for universal access to Grade R. However, in 2009, the President extended the target date to 2014 (DBE, 2011a: 4). The target was later changed in the DBE Action Plan to 2014: Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2025 (DBE, 2012a) to 80% of children having access to formal Grade R programmes by 2014 and 100% by 2019 (DBE, 2011a: 4). As such, this framework reneged on the prior commitment made in Education White Paper 5 to universalise Grade R provision by 2010 (DoE, 2001b: 29). A further goal of this policy framework was to have all primary schools with Grade 1 classes offering Grade R by 2014 and to amend legislation for schooling to make Grade R compulsory by 2019 (DBE, 2011a: 4).

4.4.4   2012 to 2015: A new direction: towards comprehensive and integrated ECD

In 2012, responsibility for the Cabinet's social cluster, which included ECD, passed from the Minister of Basic Education to the Minister of Social Development. With this came a new energy and –

- the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation in the Presidency commissioned a Diagnostic Review of ECD in South Africa (DPME, 2012);
- the National Development Plan (National Planning Commission [NPC], 2012) was produced; and

- new international research evidence on the importance of ECD and especially the first 1 000 days of life and brain development (USAID, 2014: UNICEF, WHO & World Bank Group, 2015) was released.

These events converged to bring about a new phase of strategic and critical ECD thinking and policy-making in South Africa. The major shift in approach was to see ECD as comprehensive and integrated in line with the many earlier definitions of ECD advocated by the ECD non-profit sector and civil society as far back as 1992, instead of the narrow definition of ECD as Grade R, which government had adopted in the Interim Policy for ECD in 1996 and in Education White Paper 5 in 2001.

The national DSD organised a national ECD conference in East London, from 27 March to 30 March 2012, which produced the Buffalo City Declaration on ECD and which was another pivotal event in ECD in South Africa (see Annexure 1). This eventually culminated in Cabinet approving the DSD National Integrated ECD policy on 9 December 2015. The main developments in this phase were:

- a major Diagnostic Review of ECD in South Africa done by the DPME in the Presidency;
- defining ECD more comprehensively and in line with international trends;
- locating ECD within the South African National Development Plan; and
- Cabinet approval of the comprehensive National Integrated ECD Policy.

4.4.4.1   Diagnostic Review of ECD (30 May 2012)

Prior to the review of the five-year NIPECD, the DPME commissioned a HSRC team in October 2011, to undertake a Diagnostic Review of ECD and to evaluate the South African ECD policy at the time, including the role of the state, and the implementation of ECD programmes (DPME, 2012). The intention of the Diagnostic Review of ECD was "to use information to drive policy in strategic areas" (Davids et al., 2015: 1). The Diagnostic Review (DPME, 2012: 1) produced six key findings:

1. the need for a broader definition of ECD;
2. gaps were found in ECD provision, especially support for parents and families, nutritional support to women and children, and ECD programmes for very young children;

3. strategies should deliver comprehensive services to young children through home- and community-based programmes, food security and nutrition for the youngest children, and parent support programmes;

4. no shared vision, goals and accountability in ECD;

5. a well-resourced central agency is needed to lead strategies for ECD provision; and

6. achieving these goals depends on a funding model that is focused on poor children and families.

The Diagnostic Review of ECD (DPME, 2012: 6) main recommendation was that it is the responsibility of the state to protect and promote the development of young children, both as a human right and as a public good. This would require policy and legislation to ensure that ECD programmes are adequately resourced and provided. Other recommendations included that the following was needed:

- a Cabinet resolution making ECD a national priority;

- a revised National Integrated Plan providing for ECD programmes; and

- resourcing of provincial and local government to ensure equitable provision of a comprehensive ECD programme.

The Diagnostic Review of ECD also indicated the need for a basic ECD package of services to reach vulnerable children that would be tracked against targets. These services should include:

- family planning;

- healthy pregnancies and post-natal care;

- nutrition support for pregnant and breastfeeding women and young children;

- birth registration;

- social security and subsidised housing for the poorest families; and

- support for parenting and quality learning for young children (DPME, 2012: 36).

Significantly, the review recommended a paradigm shift towards a rights-based approach to ECD and a funding model that would enable the state to provide ECD programmes, especially for children in poor families, in rural areas and informal urban areas, and for children with disabilities, and professionalising the ECD sector.

4.4.4.2   National Development Plan 2030: Our Future – Make it Work

The National Planning Commission (NPC), located in the Presidency, was set up by the South African government in 2009, to develop a vision and strategic plan for long-term socio-economic development in South Africa (NPC, 2012). In 2012, the NPC produced the National Development Plan (NDP) with a section, which set out the benefits of providing ECD programmes, namely:

- "better school enrolment rates, retention and academic performance;
- higher rates of high school completion;
- lower levels of antisocial behaviour;
- higher earnings; and
- better adult health and longevity" (NPC: 2012: 297).

The NDP indicated that quality ECD programmes across South Africa were unevenly distributed and did not reach the most vulnerable children, suggesting that ECD programmes, with government support, needed to expand to reach all vulnerable children (NPC, 2012: 299).

The NDP projected that by 2030, there would be about 4 million children in South Africa under three years old, nearly two million in the age group four to five years old and just fewer than one million six-year-olds with the majority of these children living in urban areas (NPC, 2012: 300). It suggested that interventions should be different for children of different age groups with the youngest (birth to three years), being supported through home and community-based programmes that focus on working with families and four- to five-year-old children benefitting from structured learning in group programmes. The NDP also found that, at the time, Grade R was the strongest element of early learning, and recommended that Grade R should be extended by another year to include four- and five-year-olds (NPC, 2012: 300). Universal access to quality ECD for children aged birth to three years should be made available and should have a strong health, nutrition and education focus. Although ECD centres would continue to be provided through the private and non-profit sectors, a stronger role for government was essential. The NPC found the central challenges to include –

- "funding for infrastructure and staff;
- training for teachers;
- provision of learner support materials and equipment;
- strengthening of support agencies;

- reaching the most vulnerable children and families; and

- ensuring that departments responsible for different aspects of ECD work together" (NPC, 2012: 300).

A number of specific proposals for ECD were made in the NDP, the most important being:

- make ECD a priority for children from an early age;

- make two years of quality preschool enrolment for four- and five-year-olds compulsory before Grade 1;

- strengthen collaboration between the different sectors and departments responsible for ECD as well as with business and the non-profit sector;

- standardise guidelines, norms and standards for ECD programmes;

- improve state funding for ECD; and

- government support is needed for ECD provider organisations to support community-based ECD programmes (NPC, 2012: 300).

In essence, the NPC was of the view that government must be responsible for ensuring that vulnerable families receive comprehensive and integrated ECD programmes with the DBE taking primary responsibility for the provision and monitoring of ECD, and other departments providing services in a supportive capacity.

4.4.4.3   National Plan of Action for Children in South Africa 2012 to 2017

The National Plan of Action for Children in South Africa indicates that the ECD legislation, frameworks, policies and programmes should be given serious consideration to ensure that children in South Africa benefit (DWCPD & UNICEF, 2012: 19). The plan had two goals for the period 2012 to 2017:

- to ensure universal access to quality ECD interventions for children from birth to school-going age; and

- to ensure universal access to quality Grade R provisioning for all children by 2015 (DWCPD & UNICEF, 2012: 37).

Specific objectives included:

- implementing policy and legislative provisions for ECD programmes;

- ensuring that a range of community-based quality ECD programmes are registered and implemented; and

- ensuring that sufficient resources are allocated to ECD programmes across government departments (DWCPD & UNICEF, 2012: 37).

According to the plan, the objectives would be achieved through establishing a national coordinating structure for ECD, improving access to ECD centres, parent programmes, and facilitating a national training strategy for ECD teachers. The lead department responsible for this was the DSD with support from the DBE, DWCPD, DoH and the DPME.

4.4.4.4   National Integrated ECD Policy 2015

At the 52nd ANC conference held in Polokwane in Limpopo in December 2007, one of the resolutions passed was to develop a comprehensive strategy for ECD (ANC, 2007). Although this resolution was passed in 2007, it took eight years to be implemented and eventually, on 9 December 2015, the Cabinet approved the National Integrated ECD Policy (RSA, 2015). The policy provides for a comprehensive and integrated package of ECD programmes that would be universally available to children. In this policy, ECD is recognised as a universal right of children, a national priority and a public good to which all young children are equally entitled. The vision of the National Integrated ECD Policy (RSA, 2015: 48) is that "[a]ll infants and young children and their families in South Africa live in environments conducive to their optimal development." The policy introduces a national integrated and comprehensive ECD system to ensure universally available access to quality ECD from conception until the year before children enter formal school, and documents the responsibilities of the South African government. In the provisioning of ECD, government would ensure that high-quality, appropriate ECD programmes and resources necessary for the optimal survival, growth, development and protection of young children would be available.

The policy has three goals to be achieved within different time lines.
- By 2017, the legal framework, structures, institution arrangements, planning and financing mechanisms to ensure universal and equitable access to ECD programmes would be put in place.
- By 2024, essential components of the comprehensive package of ECD programmes would be accessible to all young children and their caregivers.
- By 2030, a full comprehensive package of ECD programmes would be accessible to all young children and their caregivers (RSA, 2015: 49).

The policy also has a number of objectives including to ensure a nationally coherent ECD system and to ensure effective leadership, planning, funding, implementation and monitoring

of ECD policy implementation focusing on equitable access to ECD programmes for young children's early development (RSA, 2015: 49). The policy commits to a comprehensive package of ECD programmes covering:

- free birth certification for all children born in South Africa;

- basic health care and nutrition for pregnant women and young children;

- support for parents, including income support through the Child Support Grant, nutritional support, psychosocial support and support for the early education and learning opportunities of children from birth; and

- inclusion and support for children with disabilities within all ECD programmes (RSA, 2015: 55).

These would be delivered through eight ECD programmes as set out in the Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2: National Integrated ECD Policy programmes, 2015

Programme	Goal	Target date
Health care and nutrition programmes	Provide services to improve the mental and physical health, nutrition status, development and safety of infants and young children from conception until the year before they enter school.	2024
Social protection programmes	Provide services to ensure that all young children and their caregivers have early access to birth certificates and identity documents, and income support necessary to secure the development of young children to their full potential.	2024
Parent support programmes	Provide support necessary to improve parent knowledge and practices towards young children's development.	2024
Opportunities for learning	Provide a universally available package of quality opportunities for learning for all children from birth until they enter school.	2030
National public ECD communications	Ensure the development and implementation of public awareness to promote the goals of the National Integrated ECD Policy.	2024
Housing, water, sanitation, refuse removal and energy sources	Ensure that all young children live in safe and adequate housing, which has basic services, namely safe drinking water, sanitation, refuse removal and affordable and safe energy.	2030
Food security	Ensure that all young children enjoy healthy physical growth, are well nourished and enjoy access to nutritious food.	2030
Play facilities, sport and culture	Ensure that all young children have access to play and facilities that are safe, inclusive and age- and developmental stage-appropriate.	2030

Source: Summary compiled from National Integrated ECD Policy (RSA, 2015: 56–61)

Under the policy –

- the national DSD is responsible for ensuring the availability, quality and access to learning opportunities for young children;
- the nine provinces are responsible for implementation and funding of health and social services and basic education;
- local municipalities are responsible for –
  - coordination of ECD programmes and for ensuring that ECD centres and programmes meet health and safety standards;
  - registering child-minding programmes; and
  - development of new ECD infrastructure.
- SASSA is responsible for paying out social grants to eligible children and their caregivers;
- the DoH is responsible for:
  - provision of health and nutrition programmes for pregnant women and children;
  - parenting support programmes; and
  - opportunities for learning and play for children from birth to two years;
- the DBE is responsible for –
  - development of the early learning curriculum for children aged birth to four years; and
  - procurement and funding of training for ECD teachers;
- the Department of Home Affairs is responsible for the registration and provision of identity documents for children;
- the Presidency is required to ensure co-operation between the three spheres of government and coherence in planning, programme implementation, and monitoring and evaluation (RSA, 2015: 75-80).

According to the policy, NPOs provide ECD programmes in line with government's policy intentions.

To lead and direct policy implementation, government intended to establish a national Inter-Ministerial Committee on ECD supported by a national Inter-Departmental Committee for ECD which is required to –

- provide political leadership and technical support;

128

- monitor the quality of ECD programmes;

- develop and implement a national ECD communication campaign;

- 7ensure that ECD is inclusive for all children; and

- lead the process to universalise a comprehensive package of ECD programmes for all young children (RSA, 2015: 85-86).

Core members of the national Inter-Ministerial Committee on ECD are the national departments of Social Development, Health, Basic Education and the National Treasury. In addition to the above, the Minister of Social Development would establish the South African Inter-Sectoral Forum for ECD to serve as a national platform. On this platform government and the NGO sector involved in ECD would engage on ECD programmes in South Africa. The Presidency would be required to support the national Inter-Ministerial Committee on ECD. At provincial level, premiers would similarly be responsible and at municipal level, mayors would be responsible.

Government will provide sufficient funds to ensure universal access to the comprehensive package of quality ECD programmes, with priority to the essential components, especially for low-income families (RSA, 2015: 95). The funding model to support the implementation of the policy aimed to expand access and improve the quality of ECD programmes, and would cover the costs of post-provisioning, programme support, public ECD infrastructure in underserved areas, and training of teachers. Priority would be given to specific target populations, such as children living in poverty and children living with disabilities (RSA, 2015: 95).

Public infrastructure to support ECD would be funded through the Municipal Infrastructure Grant, the Urban Development Settlement Grant and the Integrated City Development Grant (RSA, 2015: 98). The DBE would fund ECD training and the DSD and DHET, as well as municipalities are required to fund the training of child-minders and playgroup facilitators. Government would provide physical infrastructure and equipment for ECD programmes. Government would also ensure sufficient qualified ECD teachers and supervisors, and child-minders to ensure the universal availability of quality ECD programmes. Professional development, post-provisioning, adequate conditions of service and a healthy working environment are critical elements of the ECD human resources section of the policy (RSA, 2015: 98).

Government would develop and implement a monitoring framework, which will measure progress towards achievement of the national policy vision and goals objectives, especially tracking access to and quality of ECD programmes (RSA, 2015: 114).

4.5   Chapter summary

This chapter has set out the ECD policy trajectory in South Africa from 1990 to 2015. It focused on 27 ECD policies and policy documents produced over this period, and illustrated how policy progressed from ECD being seen as Grade R only in the early 1990s, to a more comprehensive, integrated and coherent package of ECD programmes in 2015. The policies fit into four phases described as –

- Preparing to govern: developing ECD policy options;
- A democratic government: a proliferation of ECD policy-making;
- Policy implementation and system consolidation; and
- A new direction: towards comprehensive and integrated ECD.

In line with these four phases, the documents were listed in chronological sequence (see section 4.3), from NEPI in 1992 to the National Integrated ECD Policy approved in December 2015. These were detailed in section 4.4 to enable the reader to trace the ECD policy trajectory, the ECD discourse, the themes and nuances in the various policies and policy documents. A brief description of each ECD policy provided the context for understanding how ECD policy was made in South Africa. The three most significant ECD policies made between 1996 and 2015 were the Integrated ECD Policy in 1996, Education White Paper 5 in 2001, and the National Integrated ECD Policy in 2015. These are the main policies made over this period, and they were informed by various other policy initiatives and policy texts over the years.

This chapter traced and described the ECD policy trajectory from 1990 to 2015, setting out the background and context for the study. Chapter Five, which follows, introduces the findings of the study based on interviews with 19 key stakeholders who were active in ECD policy-making over the study period, and a reading of the 27 ECD policy and policy-related documents described in Chapter Four. A critical reading of these policy texts reveals several common themes in the texts. Analysis of these common themes and deviations of policy content is expanded on in Chapter Five in more detail. Thereafter in Chapter Six, I analyse, discuss and interpret these research findings.

CHAPTER FIVE – PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1   Introduction

This study traced, described and interpreted the ECD policy trajectory in South Africa from 1990 to 2015 during a period of rapid political, social, economic and education transformation. The original contribution to knowledge of this study is a description, understanding, analysis and interpretation of the ECD policy trajectory in South Africa since this has not been studied before, leaving a substantial gap in knowledge on ECD policy-making. The first four chapters of this study provided an introduction to the study, a review of the literature on ECD, a review of the literature on policy and policy-making, a conceptual framework for the study, and the research design and methodology used in this study. A qualitative study, with data constructed from in-depth interviews with 19 key informants who were central to ECD policy-making during the period 1990 to 2015, and from a comprehensive study of 27 ECD policy documents from this period, was undertaken. In this chapter, I have ensured that interviewee identities remain anonymous and private. In terms of ethical compliance, all participants have been assured of confidentiality. All direct quotes from participants are reproduced verbatim and unedited.

Having outlined in detail the ECD policy trajectory and policy content in post-apartheid South Africa in Chapter Four, this chapter presents the findings of this study. These findings are presented in five themes to answer the study research questions. In presenting the findings of this study, I have focused on the three major ECD policies of the period 1990 to 2015: the Interim Policy for ECD in 1996 (DoE, 1996a), Education White Paper 5 in 2001 (DoE, 2001b), and the National Integrated ECD Policy in 2015(RSA, 2015). Five key themes have emerged: the ECD policy-making process and policy trajectory in South Africa from 1990 to 2015, stakeholder consultation and participation in ECD policy-making during this period, government structures in support of ECD, ECD policy implementation, and the dual responsibility between the DBE and the DSD for ECD policy-making and implementation. For each of the themes have that emerged, the findings are explained with research participant comments to deepen understanding.

5.2 A framework for the presentation of research findings

I developed a framework for presenting the study findings, following my analysis of the research data obtained through the interviews and literature review. This is presented in Table 5.1 below. Themes and categories were expanded on in the text, which follows the table.

Table 5.1: Framework for presentation of research findings

Themes	Categories
The ECD policy-making process in South Africa from 1990 to 2015	- Setting the agenda - Policy vision and goals - Piloting ECD policy - Stakeholder expectations of the ECD policy-making process - Deciding on ECD policy - Using conventions, documents and research evidence in ECD policy-making - Disagreement, tension and conflict in ECD policy-making - Communicating the ECD policy choices - Policy monitoring and review - From ECD policy-making to ECD legislation
Stakeholder consultation and participation in the ECD policy-making process	- The national and provincial Departments of Education, Social Development and Health - Government officials (national, provincial and local) - National Treasury - The ECD non-profit sector - Experts, consultants, think tanks and individuals - Public participation - Stakeholder response to the ECD policy-making process - Levels of agreement, consensus and trust amongst stakeholders
Government structures in support of ECD policy-making and policy implementation	- Establishing the National Directorate for ECD and Lower Primary Education - The ad hoc Coordinating Committee for ECD - The National Inter-Ministerial Committee on ECD
ECD policy implementation	
Dual responsibility between the DBE and the DSD for ECD policy-making and implementation	

5.3 Findings in relation to the ECD policy-making process in South Africa from 1990 to 2015

The first efforts at ECD policy-making during the period 1990 to 2015 began during the political transition in South Africa, with NEPI from 1990 to 1992. For the purposes of this study, these efforts ended in December 2015 when the South African Cabinet approved the current National Integrated ECD Policy. During this period, 27 ECD policy and policy-related documents were produced. These were described in Chapter Three.

During the period 1990 to 1997, a small group of ECD activists was involved in developing ECD policy with some stakeholder consultation and participation. For Education White Paper 5 on ECD, with its Grade R focus, a foreign education economist consultant was employed by the DoE to write the policy. There were significant concerns from ECD stakeholders regarding the absence of stakeholder consultation and absence of participation in the development of Education White Paper 5 on ECD (DoE, 2001b). The manner in which ECD policy was made changed significantly after 2012, with the National Integrated ECD Policy which was developed by an expert team awarded a tender to develop the policy for the DSD, and which was approved by the South African Cabinet on 9 December 2015.

During the 25-year period, a clear change can be seen in the manner in which ECD policy was made. The first policy options were drafted in the period before the historic 1994 democratic election in South Africa. In the early phase a group of ECD activists, aligned to the MDM and the ANC, were the drivers and creators of ECD policy options for the ANC as the government-in-waiting. The outputs of this early phase were the NEPI report which provided ECD policy options and the South African study on ECD in 1994, which are described in 3.3.1.1 and 3.3.1.3. After NEPI in 1992, the World Bank funded four education studies in South Africa following a request from Mr Nelson Mandela. ECD was one of the areas for policy study (Padayachie et al., 1994). The study team consisted of eight South Africans, seven of whom were either ANC activists or sympathetic to the ANC, and one policy team member who was not ANC aligned. A World Bank-appointed consultant, Dr Judith Evans, coordinated the study. This team produced its report in August 1994. Following this, the national DoE set up a Directorate for ECD and Lower Primary Education, and appointed the first Director of ECD and Lower Primary Education, Ms Salama Hendricks.

There are two significant factors worth noting about this early phase of ECD policy-making. On the one hand, national DoE officials had limited understanding of policy, and limited capacity and experience of ECD policy-making. On the other hand, although the DoE relied on ECD NPO sector individuals and other ECD experts, the DoE also had limited policy-making skills and experience. Consequently, much of the early ECD policy work was based on desk-top studies and ECD programme experience. Commenting on this, NPO activist 1 said, "[t]he process of ECD policy development was driven in the main by your community-based, civil society organisations … they were leading policy-making."

In 1995, the Director of ECD and Lower Primary Education set up the ad hoc CCECD. One of its first tasks was to develop an Interim Policy for ECD for the country and to test the

policy through a three-year implementation programme that would be strictly monitored and evaluated. I was appointed to the CCECD. Through this process, the Interim Policy for ECD developed organically and grew incrementally. Education Ministry Official 1 described the period of 1990 to 1995 as follows, "[t]he Minister of Education focused on formal school so I do not think that ECD got the type of attention it needed." Similar sentiments were expressed by ECD Consultant 4, who said, "[i]n the early policy-making period we were working from absolute scratch … and much of the time in the dark." NPO activist 1 said:

> My sense is that maybe we were a bit romantic, in the sense that we have policy here, and it was the same thing that happened in 1994. So in 1994 we said, okay, we trust government, government go ahead.

Following the National ECD Pilot Project of 1997 to 1999, Education White Paper 5 on ECD was released in May 2001. At this point the link between what the ECD non-profit sector wanted and what the Interim Policy for ECD recommended, with the resultant Education White Paper 5, was broken. ECD Consultant 3 described these years as "a time when policy was beginning to wane and fatigue was setting in." ECD Consultant 1 described it as "shutting up all the previous processes." This was because Education White Paper 5 did not follow a planned policy-making process with stakeholder consultation and participation. Much of the emerging ECD policy that had been developed during the years 1994 to 2001, was ignored with the result that Education White Paper 5 focused almost exclusively on Grade R, contrary to emerging global and South African thinking on ECD, which by this time had taken on a comprehensive and integrated focus. Government official 1 indicated that prior to this, "[i]n the period 1994 to 1998, there was a very narrow conception of ECD which was premised on centre-based delivery."

When Education White Paper 5 was released it focused on a reception year (later called Grade R) as the first year of ten years of formal, compulsory schooling with little attention paid to ECD programmes for younger children. Section 5 of Education White Paper 5 covered "Expanding provision and building coherent and targeted inter-sectoral programmes for children aged from birth to 5 years" (DoE, 2001b: 43–45). ECD Consultant 1 commented, "[g]overnment did not take ECD seriously, it was not given the same impetus as schooling which was much more visible to the public." Following the release of Education White Paper 5, International NPO activist 1 said:

> Now, I think the sector went quiet during the period 2001 to 2004 because DSD dwindled down their commitment to ECD, for whatever reason, and then also Education started to

focus very hard on Grade R. We saw the uptake on Grade R. I think the big, big, big policy
thing that happened also at that time, was the Children's Act. The Children's Act was a major
policy development, and it actually started much earlier.

In the ECD policy-making years 1990 to 2005, the DoE was the lead department for policy-
making. With the passing of the Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005, the national DSD took legal
responsibility for ECD for children under the age of five years. ECD Consultant 3 explained
that the decision to shift the responsibility for ECD policy-making to the DSD was a sudden
one and coincided with new research evidence on the importance of the first thousand days of
life for children, child rights and brain development, and began to shift the focus away from
the narrow interpretation of ECD as being Grade R.

Interim Policy for ECD 1996

The first major ECD policy document to be developed after the 1994 democratic election was
the Interim Policy for ECD in September 1996, developed by ECD specialists on the CCECD
for the national DoE. Because there had been no prior ECD polices in place, there was no
precedent and no guidelines for ECD policy-making in the new democratic dispensation in
South Africa. Moreover, at the time there was no data on the number of children in ECD
programmes, and no situation analysis of ECD in South Africa had been completed. The
Interim Policy for ECD built on the policy options presented in the NEPI study (NECC,
1992) and also on the policy recommendations of the South African study on ECD, funded by
the World Bank (Padayachie et al., 1994). These two initiatives had been led by ANC-aligned
individuals employed by ECD NPOs. For the Interim Policy for ECD, the DoE appointed
individuals who were contracted to develop the policy since government had little experience
in ECD policy-making. ECD Consultant 1 said, "[b]ecause of no government involvement we
were almost left to prescribe policy to government."

The Interim Policy for ECD focused on Grade R in line with the political promise, made by
the ANC, of 10 years of compulsory education for every child. On completion of the making
of the Interim Policy for ECD, which NPO activist 2 described as "basically a desk-top
study", it was supported by the CCECD, by the Director for ECD in the national DoE and by
the General Education and Training Directorate of the DoE. The Interim Policy for ECD thus
carried national DoE approval. Although it had significant support from government, civil
society and NPOs, ECD researcher 1 felt, "[t]here was never real buy-in from the Department

of Education." An important part of the Interim Policy for ECD was that it was to be piloted through a National ECD Pilot Project. Government official 2 commented, "[t]he Interim Policy for ECD was really designed to frame the National ECD Pilot Project" and "[t]he Interim policy for ECD culminated in Education White Paper 5 which followed." Regarding the Interim Policy for ECD, and Education White Paper 5 on ECD, ECD Consultant 4, said:

> And they [provincial DoE officials] were somehow completely out of the picture and in fact, I sense that they were regarded as an irritant and that they were rather low key and rather non-productive and just ignore them and I think that was a policy mistake as well, on our part.

The Interim Policy for ECD had a policy vision and policy principles, but no policy goals. NPO activist 1 said, "[t]he vision was in a sense an emergent vision." The intention was simply to develop an Interim Policy for ECD for the national DoE. However, there was good convergence of ideas between government and the ECD NPOs. According to ECD Consultant 1, there was "a high level of consensus, a high level of agreement" on the Interim Policy for ECD. The support of key ECD non-profit stakeholders gave legitimacy to the Interim Policy for ECD. Constituencies were in agreement with the policy that emerged. This was not unexpected, since individuals employed by the ECD NPOs largely led the process and had a voice. NPO activist 1 said:

> The intellectual capital was actually embedded in your NGOs within civil society organisations, you know, and that was the voice and experience. There was a very strong intellectual capacity with political analysis. There was a key interest in the child. The strategic intention was the promotion of the child, and particularly what we would call the disadvantaged child.

Following the release of the Interim Policy for ECD there was no intention by government to develop and publish a White Paper. The ECD sector was led to believe by the DoE that the Interim Policy for ECD would become policy after the pilot phase. ECD Consultant 1 said, "[t]his was not discussed by the Department of Education or in the CCECD." It later transpired that the Interim Policy for ECD was seen by the DoE as a draft White Paper to be piloted over three years. ECD Consultant 1 went on to say, "[a]mongst the stakeholders across the country there was huge disappointment when it was not signed off as the policy." The Interim Policy for ECD focused mostly on Grade R, leading ECD Consultant 4 to comment, "[t]o talk about a comprehensive ECD policy, I do not think that was on the agenda at all at that time." The resulting Interim Policy for ECD was taken forward and implemented through the National Educare Forum (NEF), SACECD and ECD NPOs nation-wide.

From the above, it was clear that the dominant ECD discourse when formulating the Interim Policy for ECD was Grade R as a compulsory year before formal schooling, which began in Grade One, and not comprehensive and integrated ECD as originally envisaged.

Education White Paper 5 on ECD 2001

Following the release of the Interim Policy for ECD in 1996, the implementation of the three-year National ECD Pilot Project and the three-year monitoring and evaluation programme by Khulisa Management Services, Education White Paper 5 on ECD (DoE, 2001b) was developed. An American education consultant working in South Africa at that time was appointed to work with DoE officials to draft Education White Paper 5. This was done with no consultation and participation by ECD stakeholders who had acquired some ECD policy-making expertise during the period 1990 to 2001. The national DoE saw the Interim Policy for ECD and the National ECD Pilot Project as the consultation phase for Education White Paper 5. ECD Consultant 1 commented, "[t]here was no participation, no input. We had been left with the impression that the Interim Policy for ECD would be the policy." According to Government official 2, "Education White Paper 5 was developed to provide a policy framework, because government was deploying state funds."

Prior to the release of Education White Paper 5, a nationwide ECD audit of ECD centres, which I led, was undertaken. This audit identified 23 482 ECD centres (DoE, 2001f: 28) across South Africa (see 3.3.2.9) and was used as a situation analysis to guide the writing of Education White Paper 5.

The ECD vision set out in Education White Paper 5 on ECD was limited, and covered only Grade R within the compulsory ten years of education, as part of the national DoE General Education and Training obligations. To ECD Consultant 1, "White Paper 5 was more to cover the gap that government had now left, to kind of cover their promise." He continued, "White Paper 5 was a sell-out on our actual ECD policy and was done without our knowledge, behind our backs and quite dishonestly." ECD Consultant 1 was supported by ECD Consultant 2, who made the point that "Education White Paper 5 was an education policy not an ECD policy."

A criticism of the policy-making process by ECD stakeholders was that there was no stakeholder consultation or participation in writing Education White Paper 5, nor was there an implementation plan. Government Official 4 said, "[t]he weakness with Education White

Paper 5 is that it did not even have an implementation framework." In defending the process, Government Official 2 stated:

> The whole basis of the White Paper was saying, this is how we are going to implement. So, it was our intention, but it did not say, for example, in year one, we are going to do this, and in year two we will do that.

She elaborated, "[t]here was an ECD White Paper 5 discussion document which went to internal structures and to the CCECD."

The National Treasury played a role in formulating the content of the White Paper and had to approve Education White Paper 5. Government Official 2 said, "[w]e used the economic argument to get it approved and supported by Treasury." For approval, Education White Paper 5 went from the ECD Directorate to other branches in the DoE, to the HEDCOM and then to the Council of Education Ministers and also to the Parliamentary Education portfolio committee. Once the provincial MECs and the Minister had agreed with the policy proposal, the Education Minister at the time, Professor Kader Asmal, launched Education White Paper 5 on ECD on 28 May 2001.

National Integrated ECD Policy 2015

From May 2001, after Education White Paper 5 had been launched, to 2012, there was little ECD policy-making activity. By 2012 the global ECD policy discourse had changed towards comprehensive and integrated ECD programmes as the preferred policy focus. Several activities converged which led to the National Integrated ECD Policy being designed and approved by the South African Cabinet on 9 December 2015. These activities included two major pieces of legislation affecting children, the Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005, and the Children's Amendment Act, No. 41 of 2007, which were passed by Parliament and which set the way for the National Integrated ECD policy of 2015. Other activities were the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) Diagnostic Review of ECD in 2012, the leadership of the South African Cabinet Social Sector Cluster moving to the DSD, the National Development Plan, the ANC Polokwane and Mangaung policy conference resolutions on ECD, and the Buffalo City Declaration on ECD in 2012.

In October 2011, the DPME commissioned a diagnostic review of the ECD sector. The purpose was to "evaluate the current South African ECD paradigm and policy including the role of the State and the implementation of ECD services and programmes" (DPME, 2012: 3). For Government Official 1, "[t]he Diagnostic Review was a pivotal activity which

resulted in the start of the Department of Social Development ECD policy-making process." Following the Diagnostic Review (see 3.3.4.1) UNICEF, together with the DSD, put out a tender for the drafting of a new ECD policy.

An ECD conference with 646 nationally representative delegates (according to Interviewee Government Official 3) which I attended and where I was a speaker was held in East London from 27–30 March 2012. The outcome of the conference was the Buffalo City Declaration on ECD (see Annexure 1) which recommended that a comprehensive ECD policy be formulated. This policy-making process began one year later, in March 2013, when a call for technical support to develop an ECD policy went out through public tender. The tender was awarded to a HSRC-led team which ECD Consultant 2 described as "pretty much with same team that did the Diagnostic Review of ECD." The HSRC team did not represent stakeholders or a constituency, but was an expert technical team, which, given government's little experience of and capacity for drafting comprehensive and integrated ECD policy, was a good decision. Government Official 4 said, "[w]e, as government, do not write the policy. We are in the habit of outsourcing the technical side to experts to do the background work in developing policy." With political pressure for an ECD policy mounting, the ANC conference in Mangaung had eight months earlier called for ECD to be prioritised by government. The HSRC team was given a limited time frame with a target date to undertake a significant amount of work and was given a clear set of deliverables and set about their task. ECD researcher 2 reflected on this when she stated:

> What we were mandated to do was to address the gaps in the current framework and in terms of current ECD delivery. One of the main gaps for us was the fact that ECD wasn't being recognised as a universal right for all the children, and so it was … the challenge for us was how to make … how to embed that in a policy that would be … you know, that would be felt on the ground. We wanted to make it real. And so the kind of legal framework was absolutely fundamental and we built that in right from the beginning. If you look at the wording of the document you'll see strong reflection of the kind of child rights language.

A multi-disciplinary Steering Committee to guide, support and direct the ECD policy-making process, was put together by the Director General of the DSD, and the policy-making team took instruction from this Steering Committee, which included representatives from the DSD, the DPME in the Presidency, the national DoH and DBE, and reported to the Director General of the DSD. ECD Consultant 2 said:

> We had a series of consultations, national and provincial, with all sorts of stakeholders before we drafted the policy and programme documents. So, before putting our mast to any particular position we took on board what was coming from those workshops, to really shape the ultimate position that was adopted.

The team then put forward proposals to the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee, according to ECD Consultant 2, "was unsettled by some proposals that were put forward because they were politically problematic." ECD Consultant 2 continued, "[t]hen we got some instructions on how they wanted revision to happen. We were told to actually make sure that whatever was referenced in the ANC Manifesto had to be in the policy."

In formulating the National Integrated ECD Policy, ECD Consultant 2 said, "[w]e had very sound evidence in terms of what is necessary, but then we brought in a very developmental argument, very much around … the economic argument for it." The National Integrated ECD Policy was framed by the UNCRC and the South African Constitution, including the Bill of Rights, which was a marked change from earlier ECD policies. ECD researcher 2 said, "[t]hat was a strength to have that strong legal framework in which to develop policy" and "[i]nternational documents played a large role in developing the policy, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the African Children's Charter, the South African Constitution and the Bill of Rights."

During the ECD policy-making process there was contestation on some of the ideas between the HSRC technical team and the national DSD, mainly around what to focus on and in how much depth. Notwithstanding this, following the consultations, the level of agreement, consensus, and support for the draft ECD policy (DSD, 2015a) was high. ECD researcher 2 said, "[w]e went through a process of revising the policy based on those inputs and the guidance of the Steering Committee." Notwithstanding the level of agreement and consensus, ECD researcher 2 said of the DSD:

> There was no sense of urgency to get policy and plans in place so that young children's needs could be met as per the South African Constitution and international instruments. We did not get the sense that the Steering Committee was on board in terms of urgency.

The approach taken by the HSRC-led policy-making team was to phase in ECD programmes incrementally, as funding from the National Treasury became available. ECD Consultant 2 said:

> One of the strengths of the policy is that it was built on the Diagnostic Review. So the diagnostic really unpacked this in detail as to where the critical issues were from a systems perspective, you know, and then really built on strengthening those issues.

The team held nine provincial NPO consultations (according to Interviewee Government Official 3) after which it wrote the first draft policy text and presented it to the Steering Committee. Immediately thereafter, a national consultation was held from 4–5 March 2014, for government departments and NPOs, where, according to Government Official 3, "people could comment then in that meeting." The DSD held a final close-out meeting with the team on 30 April 2014 and received the final draft ECD policy (DSD, 2015a) on 19 May 2014. ECD Consultant 2 indicated, "[t]he report was quite well received, there was nothing hugely problematic."

After the report was completed it was handed to the DSD Steering Committee which consulted within the DSD, with the national Interdepartmental ECD Committee, and with other government departments. By 28 May 2014, there was agreement on the policy position at a meeting of the Steering Committee of the DSD. It then followed the political route, via the Minister of Social Development to MINMEC, the Forum of Directors-General, the Ministerial Implementation Forum, the Cabinet Committee on Social Protection, Community and Human Development (previously called the Social Sector Cluster). The report went to the South African Cabinet on 18 February 2015, which approved it for publication as a draft ECD policy in Government Gazette, Number 38558, vol. 597 (DSD, 2015a). This was then published on 15 March 2015. After a period of time for stakeholder and public comment, it came back with submissions for the DSD to consider. The ECD policy was finally approved by the Cabinet on 9 December 2015. In September 2016, it was put into the public domain electronically, and also distributed to stakeholders. At the same time as the DSD ECD policy-making process began, the national DSD had also commissioned, via public tender, a national audit of registered ECD centres. However, by the time this ECD audit was completed on 31 July 2014, the HSRC-led policy-making team had already handed in their report and government had already approved the draft ECD policy for publication in a Government Gazette.

In developing this ECD policy, ECD Consultant 3 said that the main driver was "developing human capital and the child rights rhetoric was not nearly as compelling." ECD researcher 2 said:

> What was missing for me was a real sense of, this is urgent, we need to put these plans in place immediately if we are wanting to see, you know, results in terms of young children … we're wanting to meet the needs of young children now. We need to put these plans in place … I really didn't get the sense that the Steering Committee was on board in terms of the urgency of needing to resolve these particular issues.

ECD Consultant 2 corroborated this by saying, "[t]here was political commitment, there is not full financial commitment to this, and National Treasury still has reservations."

In summary, from the ECD policy position after 2015, it was clear that the ECD policy environment in South Africa was complex with different government departments, mainly DBE and DSD, still focused on and being responsible for different aspects of ECD.

5.3.1   Setting the agenda

Before 1990, ECD was not on the government education or social development agenda of the apartheid National Party. When NEPI study began in 1990, early childhood educare (as it was called in 1990) surfaced, driven by ECD activists in the non-profit sector. It was put on the political agenda and shaped by the MDM, civil society activists and ECD NPOs, especially the National Interim Working Committee (NIWC) which in March 1994 became the SACECD. After the first democratic election in April 1994, the government took over the responsibility for setting the ECD policy agenda after receiving instruction from ANC policy conferences which are held every five years. Based on ANC policy conference decisions, government set out to implement the resolutions by establishing and briefing ECD policy-making teams. As a result of this activism the Interim Policy for ECD of 1996 and Education White Paper 5 on ECD in 2001 were initiated by the DoE and the National Integrated ECD Policy was initiated in 2012, led by the national DSD.

The ECD policy-making process after 1994 was led by government. In addition to this leadership, public statements regarding ECD were made by various Ministers of Finance as well as by President Thabo Mbeki on 8 February 2008, during the State of the Nation Address in Parliament. President Mbeki announced ECD as Apex Priority Project 11 of the South African government, and said that government would "ratchet up implementation of the ECD programme" (RSA, 2008: 3). This would require government to "massively speed up implementation of [the] ECD programme: expand the number of trained staff and double [the] number of ECD sites and child beneficiaries by mid-2009" (Mbeki, 2008: 3). This

would be the responsibility of the Social Sector Cluster in government. In 2011, the National Development Plan was released and ECD formed part of this plan to 2030 (see 3.3.4.2).

Significantly, two ANC policy conferences took place which set the agenda for national ECD policy. The first was the 52nd ANC policy conference in December 2007 in Polokwane in Limpopo, at which a resolution to develop an ECD strategy was passed. At the next ANC policy conference in Mangaung, Free State, in December 2012, the ANC passed a resolution to develop ECD so as to meet the needs of young children. The reason for these resolutions was the growing belief within the ANC that ECD was key to developing the skills for successful learning and government acted on these ANC policy resolutions.

The 2014 ANC general election manifesto, *A better life for all,* advocated expanded education by making Grade R compulsory and making ECD a priority through early learning stimulation programmes and home visiting. It also stated that it would strengthen ECD coordination between government departments, the NPOs and the private sector (ANC, 2014:35).

5.3.2 Policy vision and goals

In the early period of developing ECD policy options (1990 to 1994), ECD policy documents reflected a broad vision for children and children's rights. The Integrated ECD Policy had a clearly articulated policy vision and principles, but no goals or set of values. The values that drove the ECD policy processes were the general values which government was advancing at the time and covered equity, redress, non-racialism, non-discrimination and non-sexism. Education White Paper 5 on ECD had a policy focus, but no policy vision or goals. In contrast to the above, the National Integrated ECD Policy has a clearly articulated vision, mission and goals reflecting the comprehensive and integrated approach to ECD in South Africa from 2012 onwards and is more comprehensive, covering the first thousand days, pregnancy, nutrition, and early learning in a range of programme options.

The ECD policy-making team in 2013 was given a brief from the national DSD to develop a comprehensive policy for ECD that had a universal approach and that ensured equitable implementation of programmes to meet young children's early development needs. A vision based on the reality of the position that many children find themselves in – little access and poor quality – was delivered including a focus on child well-being, early learning, health and nutrition. There was a strong degree of agreement on the vision within the policy-making technical team. ECD researcher 2 said:

> The national Department of Social Development wanted us to develop a comprehensive policy for young children, that had a universal approach and that ensured equitable delivery of services and that also ensured that there was a differentiation of service packages that was able to address children's developmental needs.

On the eventual ECD policy, NPO activist 3 commented on the vision, in contrast to ECD researcher 2, and said:

> I don't think it is a vision that is shared by the different government departments responsible for ECD. So, no one has taken their starting point as the child and said, what does the child need for his or her holistic development from the point of conception through to early schooling?

Comparing the vision and goals of the three main ECD policies focused on in this chapter, it can be seen how the definition of ECD in South Africa broadened as the global approach to and understanding of ECD changed from being primarily education focused, to being more comprehensive and integrated, incorporating child health, early learning, nutrition and child well-being.

5.3.3   Piloting ECD policy

Piloting policy is one way of testing a policy before it is finalised. Of the ECD policies developed over the period 1990 to 2015, only the Interim Policy for ECD was piloted through the National ECD Pilot Project, with a full monitoring and evaluation study carried out. It was piloted in eight of the nine South African provinces. The reason for this was that ECD officials in Gauteng had implemented their own interpretation of the Interim Policy for ECD, through the Impilo project. 'Impilo' means health or life in the isiZulu language.

The goal of the National ECD Pilot Project was to test the Interim Policy for ECD implementation and obtain evidence of what works for ECD in order to finalise ECD policy. Khulisa Management Services conceptualised the National ECD Pilot Project and led the evaluation. The monitoring and evaluation report on the National ECD Pilot Project, including the main lessons from the pilot, were described in Chapter Three (see 3.3.2.8). ECD researcher 1 said, "[t]he pilot was the first example in ECD of proper evidence-based work" and felt that the National ECD Pilot Project strongly influenced Education White Paper 5 on ECD. However, several individuals interviewed as part of this research study felt that given the time and expense of the National ECD Pilot Project, the findings were only marginally taken into account in developing Education White Paper 5, with the pilot findings

being largely ignored. ECD Consultant 1 shared:

> The pilot was more focused on the education system, preparing the ground for unit standards, base qualifications, preparing the ground for the standards generating bodies and those bodies which emerged to develop qualifications, rather than on tracking ECD policy implementation.

He went on to say that the influence of the National ECD Pilot Project on Education White Paper 5 was small. ECD Consultant 3 said:

> It seems to me that Education White Paper 5 was not that well informed by the results of the National ECD Pilot Project. The National ECD Pilot Project influenced Education WP 5 only insofar as government wanted a cheap option.

ECD Consultant 3 quoted Vally (2001) and Porteous (2004) who had strong criticisms of the National ECD Pilot Project saying they were "very critical of how the pilot did not seem to suggest that Education White Paper 5 should go in the direction that it did at all." Neither Education White Paper 5 on ECD nor the National Integrated ECD Policy was piloted or tested prior to implementation.

5.3.4 Stakeholder expectations of the ECD policy-making process

In the early years of ECD policy-making, stakeholder expectation was that ECD policy-making would be relatively easy and that ECD policy would be made, fully funded and fully implemented by the South African government. However, over time it became evident that it was naïve to think that whatever the MDM and the non-profit ECD sector had struggled for, government would agree to and adopt. This expectation existed since a new democratic government, supportive of reconstruction and development, was in place and the expectation had been raised in the various political speeches and documents of the ANC leadership.

Since coming to power in 1994, the ANC government had numerous competing policy goals, not only within education, but in other aspects of government programmes as well. In terms of education alone, government was under pressure to formulate, fund and implement policies for higher education, secondary schooling, primary schooling, adult education and teacher training. ECD was not a priority. Clearly the priority was formal schooling and to get every child into school in an equitable manner. ECD Consultant 2 who was on the DSD ECD policy team said:

> There were a number of stakeholder expectations of the team. Their expectation of the team was to guide the process. Because we do not have a legacy of ECD policy development in this country, so nobody knew what ECD policy development was all about.

5.3.5   Deciding on ECD policy

For the Interim Policy for ECD the decision-making process was simple. An appointed team of ECD experts presented ideas, options, suggestions and proposals to the DOE, and policy was formulated from this. The ECD Directorate in the national DoE took policy proposals to the CCECD which supported it and then it went to the DoE through the Director-General. According to NPO activist 1, a member of that team, "[t]he policy team had no decision-making power; that was government's responsibility." The political responsibility for deciding on policy lay with the Minister of Education in line with the political wishes of the ANC as the government. The Interim Policy for ECD did not go to the Cabinet. For Education White Paper 5 on ECD the process was quite different, although also relatively straight forward. The ECD Director in the national DoE contracted a consultant to write the White Paper, with no stakeholder consultation or participation. The process that led to this is largely unknown as it was not transparent. What we do know is that Education White Paper 5 did not go to the South African Cabinet. Whilst the Director of ECD and the CCECD were committed to developing ECD policy, the process to write Education White Paper 5 on ECD was delayed because the DoE was focusing on formal schooling and other education priorities, such as the South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996 (RSA, 1996d), the National Education Policy Act, No. 27 of 1996 (RSA, 1996b), and the first four Education White Papers (DoE, 1995; DoE, 1996b; DoE 1997; DoE 1998a), which received priority over ECD.

The National Integrated ECD Policy went through a more substantial stakeholder consultation and participation process than did Education White Paper 5 on ECD. On completion of the draft policy, it was taken by the Minister of Social Development to the South African Cabinet which made the final decision and approved the ECD policy on 9 December 2015. It was subsequently published by the DSD and distributed online in September 2016.

5.3.6   Using conventions, documents and research evidence in ECD policy-making

In the early ECD policy-making period, ECD research and ECD documents played a small role in policy-making. ECD policy-makers before 1996, for example, did not sit with the UNCRC or with the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and systematically go through it to ensure that the provisions therein were reflected in the ECD policy options or policy choices. In the ECD policy-making teams of that time, individuals may have had an awareness and understanding of these important documents, but linking the

ECD policy being made to these documents was not an explicit activity. While these documents may have played a role in ECD policy-making, they were not used as a benchmark against which to write the ECD policy. The early policy-making teams were aware of the ECD research evidence from Head Start (United States Department of Health and Human Services, 2010), the High Scope Educational Research Foundation (Schweinhart et al., 2005) and South African studies such as those from the Early Learning Resource Unit (Short, 1984). They knew that the research evidence was there and it was often referred to in the ECD background papers, but the research evidence was not expressly used or referred to in making ECD policy.

For the Interim Policy for ECD, the team drew on the NEPI study policy options and on the South African study on ECD recommendations, with little reference made to international conventions, documents and research evidence. ECD Consultant 4 said:

> I don't think that we did enough work looking internationally, looking at other countries; we somehow worked from what we had here as the constructs for ECD and we worked from those programmes. And I think, had we gone into other scientific evidence, into the research part of it, had we looked at what was happening in the other countries, I think we could have come up with a far stronger Interim Policy, which would have been far better for children.

Education White Paper 5 on ECD also made little reference to the UNCRC or other scientific research, but was based mostly on the Interim Policy for ECD and on the Khulisa Management Services monitoring and evaluation report on the National ECD Pilot Project.

For the National Integrated ECD Policy, international ECD documents, especially regarding legal frameworks, played a significant role in informing this policy. Working with a strong legal framework that emphasised that ECD is a universal right for children resulted in acceptance of the policy by government, and this right was embedded in the policy which emerged. The ECD policy-making team considered it important to use child rights language especially since earlier policies from 1990 to 2012, had little legal framework and therefore the ECD policies made were not taken seriously by government. To support their work, the National Integrated ECD Policy team commissioned a series of ECD papers, used 120 existing written ECD documents and used the UNCRC, the South African Constitution and the Children's Amendment Act, No.41 of 2007, to develop the ECD policy. The research evidence available to the HSRC-led policy-making team was used extensively to inform the policy which was produced. By 2015, there was substantial global ECD scientific evidence, including work by Heckman and Masterov (2007), Heckman (2008), Shonkoff (2009), and

Gertler et al. (2013) and this played a significant role in developing the current ECD policy in South Africa. Scientific evidence was embedded in the thinking of the ECD policy-making team, especially the new evidence on brain development and the importance of the first thousand days of life, especially the period before birth. ECD Consultant 2 said, "[i]t was the bedrock of developing the ECD policy. This is how we recognised where the gaps were." Little of this scientific evidence was available for ECD policy-making prior to 2005. This point was illustrated when Government Official 4 said, "[n]ew evidence has brought a new kind of vigour to the importance people attach to ECD. It has changed in the sense that ECD has become much more important than it was before." In confirming this, ECD Consultant 2 said that over the last decade "we have had this mountain of fantastic, credible evidence which has shifted the thinking."

5.3.7   Disagreement, tension and conflict in ECD policy-making

In designing the three main ECD policies since 1994, there was little disagreement amongst the policy-making teams. It was only between 1996 and 1999 that Gauteng provincial DoE officials although supporting the ECD policy-making process, implemented the ECD policy and developed programmes as part of the provincial 'Impilo' ECD project which was different to the other eight provinces. The Gauteng official's interpretation of the ECD policy was more comprehensive and integrated than the other eight provinces. This created some tension between the Gauteng provincial DoE and the national DoE about the province's commitment to the ECD policy.

With Education White Paper 5, many ECD sector stakeholders were not part of the policy-making process and there was no consultation and participation other than that of DoE officials and the consultant who drafted the policy. Given that stakeholders only received the Education White Paper 5 policy document on the day that it was released by the Education Minister on 28 May 2001, there was no opportunity for disagreement, tension or conflict in writing Education White Paper 5.

Speaking about the making of the National Integrated ECD Policy, Government Official 4 said, "[s]o there was never really any major disagreement about the policy." Disagreement would have been resolved within the ECD policy-making team prior to handing over the draft policy to the DSD. After the draft ECD policy had been handed to the national DSD, disagreement emerged on one policy recommendation when government said 'no' to the recommendation of a national ECD Agency to manage ECD nation-wide, as proposed by the

HSRC policy-making team. In contrast to what government official 4 said, for ECD researcher 2, "[t]here was a lot of support … but there was also very diverse feelings and mixed feelings about the draft that we put on the table." She went on to explain this as follows:

> So there was a feeling … there was a strong group of nutrition experts, especially at the national meeting, who felt that we didn't have a large enough focus. They wanted us to say more and to have more of a kind of … defined plan in terms of nutrition. And I think what was difficult for us, was maintaining the balance of seeing this as an ECD policy and not a nutrition policy.

5.3.8   Communicating the ECD policy choices

When the early ECD policies were developed from 1996 to 2005, there was minimal communication about the policy outside of the ECD sector. For the Interim Policy for ECD, government relied heavily on the NEF and the SACECD to hold community gatherings and to write and distribute booklets explaining the policy. NPO activist 1 reported:

> We had to account so we communicated through our structures on the ground. There was no national communication campaign; it was more constituency-based, internal process, which now I think about it, that was very weak, you know, because you stay within a particular framework and not the broader public.

The national DoE published the Interim Policy for ECD as a booklet for distribution. A R1 million communication tender, awarded to the SACECD, was the only communication effort to publicise the Interim Policy for ECD. This tender produced little other than a few posters and radio advertisements with little coverage and impact. ECD researcher 2 said, "[c]ommunicating the Interim Policy for ECD was a complete failure." For Education White Paper 5 on ECD, the national DoE hosted a launch event for 150 delegates on 28 May 2001, where the Minister of Education announced the new ECD policy. For the Interim Policy for ECD and Education White Paper 5, the little communication of these policies that there was occurred mostly through the non-profit ECD sector and civil society structures nationally, provincially, in districts and communities and was constituency-based rather than a substantial and planned communications campaign by government. The result was that ECD policy was communicated mostly to those directly interested in the ECD policies. Government had expected that the various ECD structures would communicate the policies to people on the ground. With most of the ECD policy documents, the public was poorly

informed with few people hearing about it. Those people who heard about it were mainly in the ECD sector. NPO activist 3 commented, "[t]here has been little or no attempt by government to make policy documents user-friendly and understandable to people who are not used to dealing in that sort of language."

For Education White Paper 5 on ECD, government published and printed the policy in a limited edition of 300 copies for distribution and also placed it on the national DoE website, many years later. There were no community meetings or information provided through public events and gatherings.

Communicating ECD policy changed as ECD policy-making practices in South Africa matured. As new ECD policy was made after 2012, communication started happening during the consultation stages, when the policies were in draft form and when it was final, approved text. For the National Integrated ECD Policy, the policy drafts were communicated during a number of stakeholder engagements in all nine provinces prior to being approved by the Cabinet. For the national and provincial consultations, department officials invited ECD stakeholders to attend the consultations. The policy-making team also suggested who should be invited, cognisant of the expertise in the children's and ECD sectors. NPO activist 2 commented:

> I think the whole area of advocacy, sometimes is not used to its fullest extent. I think advocacy is broken up into different points of action. I think it is important to have a document, but also to have popular versions and to have social media interactions. Create a common point, like a web page, or something like that, because people differ, some will only read, some will go to the web, some will interact with it. So you first need your document, your tool. I think secondly, one needs to establish platforms, how do we actually get it out. And I think coming from where we are … it should be a platform through which we can educate people.

Government official 3 said, "[t]he wider public is part of the gazetting process because they can now, through this, communicate and give comments and we opened it so that [it was] not only for organisations" For the National Integrated ECD Policy, the DSD also used radio advertisements and a *New Age*-sponsored breakfast television programme featuring the Minister of Social Development, to communicate the new policy to the public. It was also placed on the DSD website. After the National Integrated ECD Policy was approved by the Cabinet, a series of two-day provincial policy information sessions was held in each province

over a period of eight months during 2016. The National Integrated ECD Policy was the first ECD policy document to indicate the need for a planned public communication campaign.

As each of the three major ECD policies from 1996 to 2015 was released by government, it became apparent that the government did not consider communicating the ECD policy was important. The reason for this was that government was not serious about implementing the ECD policies which it had adopted and thus saw no need for extensive and sustained communication of the ECD policies to ECD stakeholders and the public, as the government had done with earlier government policies on formal schooling and higher education. A further implication of this approach was that government was less likely to be held accountable for not delivering on the ECD policy.

5.3.9   Policy monitoring and review

Policy monitoring and review is an essential part of the policy-making process. The Interim Policy for ECD was implemented and then monitored and reviewed through a tender awarded to Khulisa Management Services. Khulisa undertook a three-year monitoring and evaluation study of the pilot project intervention and produced a report answering a number of critical questions (see 3.3.2.8). This review report guided the DoE in developing Education White Paper 5. The policy recorded in Education White Paper 5, was implemented by the ECD Directorate in the DoE without any formal internal or external policy monitoring and review process in place.

The National Integrated ECD Policy is too recent to report any monitoring or review activities. Chapter Eleven of the policy does however set out the policy monitoring goal as being to track access to ECD programmes, assessing the quality of ECD programme provision, and planning for resourcing to meet the targets and quality of ECD programmes. It also records how the policy will be monitored, evaluated, quality controlled and improved (RSA, 2015: 115). For this policy, government intends to implement a centralised national integrated ECD monitoring, evaluation and research framework to measure progress in achieving the policy vision, goals and objectives. Government will assess ECD programmes so as to improve planning and implementation and set norms and standards for providing quality early-learning opportunities (RSA, 2015: 114). The government departments responsible for delivery of the various ECD programmes will be responsible for monitoring and quality control, practices and interventions.

5.3.10   From ECD policy-making to ECD legislation

One question consistently asked by ECD activists over the years has been: Why is there no ECD specific legislation? Government, through the national DoE, has not had ECD legislation in its plans. Of the various ECD policies not one has been turned into legislation, and in South Africa, in April 2018, there was still no ECD legislation. However, two pieces of legislation which fall within the mandate of the DSD have been passed which provided the basis for ECD policy and provision. The Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005 (RSA, 2005a), and the Children's Amendment Act, No. 41 of 2007 (RSA, 2007) framed successive ECD policies emanating from the DSD since April 2010. There appears to be two reasons for ECD not being legislated through the national DoE. First, if ECD had been legislated for, government would have had to provide it. If government then failed to provide, government would place itself at risk of litigation. Government Official 2 said, "Education White Paper 5 was never turned into legislation because we did not want litigation. We steered away from legalising it [Grade R] in the full sense, so that we could test different models." Government Official 3 said there was "no plan for specific ECD policy to become legislation. All the policy changes will go into the third amendment of the Children's Act." This decision not to legislate for ECD and Grade R is a reflection of the low political priority and support that ECD and Grade R enjoyed from government. In contrast, formal schooling and higher education had legislation passed soon after the new government had been elected in 1994.

5.4   Findings in relation to stakeholder consultation and participation in the ECD policy-making process

A number of stakeholders have been involved in ECD policy-making since 1994 with the South African government being the primary stakeholder. Notwithstanding this, government officials during this time were not active participants in ECD policy-making. Instead, national government led and directed the ECD policy-making process. With the exception of Education White Paper 5, NPOs and ECD activists, consultants and researchers were involved throughout the 25 years of ECD policy-making, as the technical expertise and policy activism lay with these individuals. Various technical experts were appointed for their specific knowledge of child rights, curriculum, financing and infrastructure, and were central to ECD policy-making. Education unions were also involved through the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU), the Transvaal Teachers Union and NAPTOSA.

With the exception of Education White Paper 5 on ECD in 2001, SACECD participated in all ECD policy-making from 1994 to 2015, as a national stakeholder representative organisation, and from 2005 to 2015 the National Early Childhood Development Alliance, which I had founded in 2005, participated as a stakeholder in the National Integrated ECD Policy process. Stakeholders were identified by the MDM for NEPI (NECC, 1992), the South African study on ECD (Padayachie et al., 1994), by government for the Interim Policy for ECD (DoE, 1996a) and for the National Integrated ECD Policy (RSA, 2015). No significant stakeholders were omitted and representation was not contested. NPO activist 1 said, "[y]our key stakeholders drove the pace, the policy process in terms of legitimacy so that it was accepted."

Notably, Education White Paper 5 on ECD was developed with no ECD stakeholder consultation or participation. The DoE saw the National ECD Pilot Project and the earlier policy work which resulted in the Interim ECD White Paper as consultation. Stakeholders generally had positive experiences of the ECD policy-making process and there was a high level of agreement, consensus and trust amongst stakeholders involved in ECD policy-making. With the exception of Education White Paper 5, stakeholders responded well to each of the ECD policy texts produced. NPO activist 3 commented about the challenges of stakeholder participation:

> I think that the challenges are quite complex. One being, I believe, there's a significant challenge around leadership in the sector, the lack of capacity to engage at this level, the lack of understanding and knowledge around what's going on.

NPO activist 3 continued:

> So civil society has itself to blame that it was not organised or coordinated to put itself in a position to build the capacity of its members to contribute and make input where they clearly had the expertise and experience to do this. And so their voice is not heard there, to a large degree and nobody is holding Government to account. And then I think that because civil society organisations and non-profits in the main, have been so focused on the struggle for survival in the last 10 odd years, they haven't had energy for the activism that kept the ECD sector alive in the 1990s to 2000 period, where it was a strong vocal sector.

The main reason is that between 1997 and 2012, a number of significant ECD leaders left the ECD sector, in some instances to join government. Another reason may be that stakeholders trusted government and with the new democratic government in place, did not want to challenge government. If we examine the first Education White Paper on Education and

Training, the Interim Policy for ECD and the National ECD Pilot Project, these processes were consultative and participatory and had significant stakeholder support. However, Education White Paper 5 had no ECD NPO input and did not go to stakeholders for consultation.

For the ECD policy-making process for the National Integrated ECD Policy, there were provincial stakeholder consultations which drew significant NPO attendance and participation. Government Official 3 reported organisation attendance of 274 NPOs across the nine South African provinces. ECD Consultant 2, commenting on stakeholder consultation for the National Integrated ECD Policy draft (DSD, 2015a), said:

> The people were invited but it was up to us to try and make sure that it was a representative group and so I did the Eastern Cape and the Northern Cape and Western Cape and we asked departmental people, we asked people that were not traditional ECD specialists. So all sorts of … like in the Eastern Cape we had all sorts of departments that don't normally come and local government people were invited. So it was quite broad, but it was really quite quick. And then they had a national consultation of national stakeholders and departments … Then there was a final meeting where just key departmental people, mostly from those three departments, and I think we still had the Ministry of Women, Gender and Children then. And then it went to Government stakeholders in the provinces. So, none of us were involved after that.

Stakeholders provided intellectual and technical input and the ECD policy thinking did not come from government as the policy-making expertise lay outside of government. When an ECD policy team was set up, it was invariably civil society, through the non-profits, that took the lead since individuals in the ECD NPO sector had the expertise and competence to be part of policy teams, and not government officials. Commenting on academic input into the various policies, NPO activist 3 said, "[t]here was precious little involvement of universities and academia." Whilst NPO activist 3 is correct about policy-making before 2014, the HSRC team which drafted the National Integrated ECD Policy had a number of academics on the team.

When ECD stakeholders were significantly consulted on and participated in ECD policy-making, these stakeholders became advocates for the policy and implementers of the policy. Experience with the three main ECD policies made in South Africa from 1990 to 2015, shows evidence of this.

5.4.1 The national and provincial departments of Education, Social Development and Health

With a legitimate government in place following the April 1994 election, the national government and nine provincial governments became more involved in ECD policy-making processes. Government, mainly through the DoE and the DSD, indicated that they were serious about ECD policy-making and wanted an effective ECD provision system. During the period 1994 to 2001, the DoE led the ECD policy-making process. By 1995 there was a Directorate for ECD and Lower Primary Education with its own director. The DoE led ECD policy-making at two levels: at a national level through the national department, and also in the provinces because education is a concurrent function of government, meaning that both national and provincial governments have ECD implementation responsibility. The national DoE made policy, regulations, guidelines and set goals and the provinces implemented programmes and set provincial budgets. However, on this ECD researcher 2 commented, "I don't think they were prepared, ready to make the changes that are required for a system to actually be working effectively."

The DSD was present and active in the ECD policy-making processes but the DoH showed little interest in ECD policy-making. This continued through most of the 25-year period of this study and it was only in 2012 that the DSD took the lead role when responsibility for the Cabinet Social Sector Cluster passed from the DBE to the DSD. Government Official 4 said, "[t]he fact that the Social Development Minister, regardless of who the individual is, is now head of the Cabinet Social Sector Cluster, it has been a very positive thing." The outcome of this Cabinet arrangement was that the Interim Policy for ECD and Education White Paper 5 on ECD were DoE policies, and the National Integrated ECD Policy is a DSD policy.

Given that health care and nutrition are critical components of comprehensive and integrated ECD, it is unfortunate that the national and provincial departments of health were not significantly involved in ECD policy-making and implementation. This absence meant that an essential component of ECD, as understood globally, was not optimally integrated into government ECD delivery.

5.4.2 Government officials (national, provincial and local)

Government officials throughout the ECD policy-making processes from 1990 to 2015 had minimal input into policy-making, which was mostly developed by ECD experts, contracted policy-making teams and NPOs. Where government officials were involved, it was DoE

officials before 2001 and DSD officials from 2012 to 2015, where they played mainly a support role to the actual ECD policy-making teams. They did, however, lead and control the policy-making processes, and also made the final decisions on the policies that were approved.

From 1994 up to and including the Interim Policy for ECD document in 1996, the provincial departments of education were involved, albeit with the ECD non-profit sector and ECD consultants providing the ECD policy content. Provincial education departments participated in the CCECD, with each of the nine provincial education departments having a representative on the CCECD. The provincial department representative's role was to report to their provinces on what the ECD policy-making team had produced and to gain support for this in the provinces.

On the limited involvement of government officials in ECD policy-making, ECD Consultant 1 said, "[t]hey were not making any input, but they brought the provincial endorsement." Provincial government officials did little other than endorse the Interim Policy for ECD and Education White Paper 5, except for the Gauteng DoE which wanted a more comprehensive policy in both instances. The main reason for not being directly involved in writing policy was that government officials had little experience and expertise in policy-making. Local government was not involved at all in any of the three main ECD policies developed since 1994.

With the National Integrated ECD Policy, there were consultations with provincial departments, but few provincial government officials were directly and substantially involved in policy-making since an appointed HSRC technical team of experts developed the ECD policy content. ECD Consultant 3 said this about the National Integrated ECD Policy:

> You know, there was no government representation in the HSRC team … Actually it is quite interesting because there was national government where we had to put a set of suggestions to government, who ruled upon them. But in terms of provinces, the national department went on a provincial road show to work with government.

ECD Consultant 3 said further:

> So, the thing to interrogate is how much clout did provinces have in this round of negotiations. Because, look they were all invited to the provincial consultations and there were a lot of government department people who came in from all of the provinces.

On the participation of provinces in ECD policy-making, Government Official 4, a senior official in the Western Cape DSD said, "[a]nd how much provincial departments were allowed to input is a very interesting question, particularly if you're in a province which isn't kind of part of the country, like the Western Cape", and continued, "[s]o, to a very large extent we would take what has been happening at a national level and kind of make it our own."

After 2012, with the Social Sector Cluster of government being led by the DSD, and after the Children's Amendment Act, No. 41 of 2007 (RSA, 2007), had come into effect on 1 April 2010, the Presidency became involved in ECD.

One problem was that at policy meetings different government officials from the national and provincial DSD and from the national and provincial DoH would attend each time. This hampered the policy-making process significantly. ECD researcher 1 confirmed this, saying "And so it seemed like, at every single meeting, we were starting fresh. A different person from Social Development, a different person from the Department of Health, a different person from whoever …"

For ECD policy to be implemented requires skilled, committed and dedicated public officials at all spheres of government. Such individuals are found within the DBE and DSD. However, these officials are required to work within a political environment and climate where ECD has not been a political priority, thereby limiting their effectiveness. This results in poor implementation of policy purpose, goals and programmes.

5.4.3   National Treasury

The National Treasury is critical in providing funds for ECD policy implementation and programme delivery. ECD policies before 2001, made no mention at all of the National Treasury, which played no role in ECD policy-making up to that time. ECD researcher 1 said, "[t]he Treasury role, other than providing the subsidies for the National ECD Pilot Project and then later a conditional grant, was almost none." The National Treasury was not part of the Interim Policy for ECD process. NPO activist 1 said, "National Treasury was not involved in the Interim Policy for ECD at all." The National Treasury did, however, play a role in writing Education White Paper 5, requiring that the DoE could not make policy proposals without first clearing the financial aspect of it with the National Treasury. Regarding Education White Paper 5 on ECD, ECD Consultant 1 said, "I think they played a

massive role." Education White Paper 5 was written with strong economic and financial affordability considerations. Government Official 2 said:

> For the first set of policies, we did not worry about budget. We said this is what we are going to do. When we came to Education White Paper 5 on ECD, at that point, Treasury started saying, you cannot issue a policy without clearing the financial aspect of it.

For the National Integrated ECD Policy, the National Treasury was part of the DSD Steering Committee and the ECD policy-making team consulted with them on the costs of implementing the policy, after the National Treasury was instructed by the Cabinet to assist with the costing model. ECD researcher 2 commented on the role of the National Treasury during the development of the DSD National Integrated ECD Policy as:

> At the national consultation, they were present and they raised some important questions about the financing structure that we had been working with and had asked us to then go back and revise the way we had initially thought about the costing. There wasn't a real sense that they were trying to block what we were proposing. But I think what they'd asked us to do was to work out a kind of long-term, staged process of implementation.

ECD Consultant 3 was of the view that after 2012, "Treasury seems to play quite a major role in ECD" and Academic 3 said, "National Treasury is fundamental to it all. It informs every single debate." Education Ministry Official 1 said, "[t]he role of Treasury is to determine can this be funded? Often if it has massive financial implications, policy will go to the National Treasury before it got to Cabinet." Government Official 3 confirmed this reporting, "[t]he Cabinet instructed the Treasury to assist with the costing model." Government Official 4 said, "sometimes we say it is good if there is policy, because if you have policy, then money must flow. But it does not necessarily happen that way." ECD Consultant 2 confirmed this:

> And something was completely out of sync with creating a national public ECD system. It just didn't make sense. So, it's not just the money, it's the conceptualisation of how the accountability and the funding flows work. So National Treasury was a huge blockage. I mean I sat there and I was just aghast. They were part of the Steering Committee but they didn't attend the Steering Committee meetings. We had then done our second to last revision, we in fact had presented at the close out meeting and at that stage they wanted to start engagements.

ECD Consultant 2 concluded, "of course, the big thing is that National Treasury is one of the big gatekeepers."

5.4.4 The ECD non-profit sector

In the early part of ECD policy-making, especially from 1990 to 1996, the ECD non-profit sector was active and influential, being the driving force behind ECD policy-making with the technical expertise and intellectual capital, and upon whom the national DoE relied. The ECD non-profit sector was represented by two main organisations, the SACECD, of which I was one of the founders, and the NEF, a NPO that provided ECD programmes nationally. I was one of the activists on this national forum.

No ECD NPO was represented on the policy-making teams as an individual organisation. Instead, they were represented by these two large organisations which led the way. Most of the policy direction came from the ECD non-profit sector, which played a substantial and significant role in ECD policy-making. Subsequently, after 2000, the ECD non-profit sector was minimally involved in ECD policy-making, including Education White Paper 5, with the government DoE and DSD preferring to use ECD consultants and expert teams to develop ECD policy. For example, the National Integrated ECD Policy was developed by an expert team put together by the HSRC and there was a positive response from the ECD NPOs to the various policy proposals and drafts which the HSRC team made.

The ECD non-profit sector had effectively been marginalised from 1997 onwards. This situation was exacerbated when many ECD NPOs closed after 2001. With government playing a more prominent role in ECD, it became apparent that the influence of the ECD non-profit sector had significantly diminished after 2001. Presently, in April 2018, the ECD non-profit sector has little influence on ECD policy and policy implementation.

5.4.5 Experts, consultants, think tanks and individuals

In making ECD policy, it adds value to use a diverse range of experts and individuals who have experience and knowledge of the ECD sector, as is an understanding of how government and government systems and procedures work. Technical experts and consultants appointed for their expertise played a significant role in the ECD policy-making process during the period 1990 to 2015. In developing ECD policy, there were tasks for which technical expertise was required. The individuals appointed for NEPI, the South African study on ECD and the Interim Policy for ECD were appointed for their expertise and came from the MDM and the ECD non-profit sector. As an example, ECD Consultant 4 said, "I was appointed by the Director-General of the Department of Education as an ECD specialist." From 1990 to 2001, these experts were mostly from the education sector and

hence the ECD policies up to the year 2001 were largely education focused. For Education White Paper 5 on ECD, the DoE used an American consultant to write the policy. The task for the development of the National Integrated ECD Policy went out to tender and was awarded to an expert group from the parastatal, HSRC. This team was diverse with membership drawn from the fields of health, education, law, social development and grant making. The team was put together based on a diverse set of knowledge and skills required. For most of the ECD input of the various policy documents, from the 1990 NEPI policy options to the National Integrated ECD Policy, skilled individuals from the non-profit sector, consultants and experts were used.

What is noteworthy and interesting is that ECD teachers, working directly with young children, played little role in ECD policy-making. In the early phase, 1994 to 1998, the teacher representative associations were involved and made a contribution to ECD policy-making. Through the national representative ECD associations, SACECD and NEF, many thousands of ECD teachers had a representative voice, but were not directly involved. After the Interim Policy for ECD, teacher association representation decreased significantly and there was minimal ECD teacher influence up to and including the National Integrated ECD Policy.

5.4.6   Public participation

In all the policy processes from 1990 to 2015, there were few opportunities for communities and the public to participate in ECD policy-making. Only the National Integrated ECD Policy provided an opportunity for community and public participation through an invitation in a Government Gazette. However, few people have access to the Government Gazette, so this was extremely limited. Academic 1 said, "All they have to do is just legally Gazette it, they don't have to put it up on the website, they are not obligated to tell you it is there."

From the public there has been little public pressure or enthusiasm for involvement in ECD policy-making. Part of the reason for low public participation in ECD policy-making from 1994 to 2001, was that this period was part of the 'honeymoon period' after 1994, during which South Africa had a new government led by President Nelson Mandela, and the public left the responsibility for policy-making to the new government. By 2001, there was still little public participation in the ECD policy-making process which resulted in Education White Paper 5. The academic sector was also not as involved in ECD policy-making as it was in other education sectors.

Even though the draft of the National Integrated ECD Policy was published in a Government Gazette (DSD, 2015a), the public did not actively respond to the policy proposal. This provides clear evidence that the general public was not involved in or connected to ECD policy-making.

5.4.7 Stakeholder response to the ECD policy-making process

For the period 1990 to 1994, the ECD non-profit sector was involved in ECD policy option development, led by ECD activists who had been in the anti-apartheid movement and in the MDM and who were highly qualified and had significant ECD experience. The stakeholder response from ECD NPOs, donors and government officials was accepting of the ECD policies that were produced. For the Interim Policy for ECD and Education White Paper 5 on ECD, there was little contestation or dissent. ECD Consultant 3 said, "[t]here was not much contestation around the Interim Policy for ECD. You know, people generally went with it." NPO activist 3 said the reason for the lack of contestation of the policies was:

> So, my sense is that, when you say, what was civil society's response to it, civil society, the non-profit sector in ECD is minute, and even in that minute sector, there is an even smaller number of people, who either have the capacity or the willingness to respond on policy issues, and it was never made easy by government. There was never a process of either informing or engaging civil society and asking for their response.

Except for Vally (2001) and Porteous (2004), there was little criticism of Education White Paper 5 on ECD. Vally (2001) is of the view that "While the White Paper 5 claims to emerge from a rational national pilot project, combined and reinforced by international research, the proposed policy itself does not flow from these lessons" (Vally, 2001: 13). Vally argues that the National ECD Pilot Project recommended an integrated and inter-sectoral approach to ECD and not one focusing only on a preschool reception year for five-year old children. In support of this, Phiri (2008: 50) comments:

> It can be concluded that White Paper 5 was not informed by the preceding policy processes. There was a pre-determined position in government to expand ECD services through a reception year targeting five-year-olds while neglecting the 0–4-year age cohort. This is the case even when outcomes of the nationwide audit recommended a more integrated approach as a model of provision. While it can appreciated that the reception year provision is a step further in expanding ECD services, the challenge is to expand ECD services to the 0–4-year age group.

The teacher union NAPTOSA compiled a written critique suggesting that government cannot implement a policy if no benchmarks were set and if there was no implementation plan (NAPTOSA, 2001). As democracy in South Africa matured beyond 1994 and as ECD in South Africa evolved, a more rigorous examination and interrogation of ECD policy began to take place. Stakeholder criticism of the National Integrated ECD Policy was far more thorough than that of any of the earlier ECD policies.

5.4.8   Level of agreement, consensus and trust amongst stakeholders

Through all of the ECD policy-making processes from 1990 onwards, the level of trust amongst stakeholders was high. Individuals on ECD policy-making teams came from diverse backgrounds, with the majority aligned to the ANC. When the DoE appointed people to these policy-making teams they appointed individuals who would generally be supportive of their point of view. One of the reasons for the widespread agreement was that the period 1994 to 2001, reflected the euphoria of liberation, transformation and a new democracy. Most people were in agreement with the compromises made towards a single acceptable ECD policy. Because of this, the level of agreement, consensus and trust regarding these ECD policy-making processes was high. NPO activist 1 said, "[t]here was not much contestation." Commenting on the National Integrated ECD Policy, ECD researcher 2 said, "I think that there was a general feel that, you know, the majority of what had been included in the policy, is what people wanted to see there." ECD Consultant 2 confirmed this by saying:

> I think at a policy level, we were at one, to a large extent. There were moments when there was disagreement, in terms of what was the most strategic way forward. And that's when I think the whole question of what would fly politically, as opposed to what would fly technically. There were, you know, people were sort of coming at it from particular positions. So sometimes we'd have that clash of politics and technical merits.

With the National Integrated ECD Policy, the policy-making team had worked together on the Diagnostic Review of ECD and were familiar with each other, and as a result there was little disagreement amongst the team when the policy was approved by the Cabinet.

5.5   Findings in relation to government structures in support of ECD policy-making and policy implementation

To make and implement ECD policy, appropriate government structures are required. From the Interim Policy for ECD to the National Integrated ECD Policy, three main government structures were established to support ECD policy-making and policy implementation. These

structures were established for differing reasons and at different times. The first two structures were established by the DoE in 1995 and the most recent was established as a national Inter-Ministerial structure under the leadership of the DSD in 2015. What makes this third structure unique in the South African ECD context is that it is Inter-Ministerial. Each of these structures is described below.

5.5.1   Establishing the National Directorate for ECD and Lower Primary Education

The preparatory work for ECD policy and provision in South African was undertaken during the period 1990 to 1994, through initiatives such as NEPI (NECC, 1992), the South African study on ECD (Padayachie et al., 1994) and the various ANC education policy discussion documents. These initiatives led the way for making ECD policy and providing ECD programmes by the new democratic government. Common through all these early documents and discussions was the proposed establishment of an ECD Directorate or Unit within the national DoE which would be replicated at provincial level (NECC, 1992; Padayachie et al., 1994). A vision for the Directorate was articulated in the South African study on ECD which stated:

> [T]hat a Department of Early Childhood Development be created within the Ministry of Education and Training. The Department would be responsible for the structuring and establishment of early childhood provision, issuing the White Paper on ECD policy and for developing principles and guidelines in the areas of curriculum and training. It would address issues of inter-sectoral coordination and finance mobilization and establish guidelines for setting standards to be used in registering programmes. The Department would also ensure that ECD is integrated into the strategy that emerges for national reconstruction and development and is consistent with the priorities and objectives for national development (Padayachie et al., 1994: 32).

After the new government was elected in April 1994, the first Minister of Education inherited 19 different racial and provincial departments of Education. In line with the vision of the new government, he was required to collapse these and constitute one national DoE and nine new provincial departments of Education. He also had to set up different directorates within the national department.

In the South African study on ECD (Padayachie et al., 1994), the team emphasised the need for an ECD Directorate. In response, government created a Directorate for ECD and Lower

Primary Education. This Directorate in the national DoE was responsible for teacher training, curriculum development, provision and standards, finance, inter-sectoral coordination, policy-making, research, development, planning and administration. In August 1995, the first Director of this new Directorate was appointed and she then staffed the Directorate with a team of five people. One of the first tasks of this new Directorate was to develop and implement ECD policy for the new government. In 1998, the national DoE was restructured and a Directorate for ECD, omitting the Lower Primary education component, was established which was responsible for ECD policy-making, planning, programming and implementation, mobilising resources in support of ECD, norms and standards, and curriculum development. The Directorate was the link between the national DoE and the nine provincial education departments and reported to senior officials in the national DoE. Through my own meetings with the first three Ministers of Education, it was clear that the Minister of Education had little interaction with the ECD Directorate and with ECD policy-making.

Seleti (2006: 97) reports that the formation of the Directorate was a positive indication that government and the new political dispensation were taking ECD seriously. However, Biersteker (2010: 31) writes that, in establishing the ECD Directorate, "[w]hat was not anticipated was that the government's role would extensively reduce the role of the NGOs in particular, with the government itself becoming one of the main service agents in the field."

The establishment of the national ECD Directorate was a significant achievement in establishing ECD as a component of basic education in the education system. However, restructuring brought challenges to the ECD non-profit sector including that government had wholly taken responsibility for ECD policy-making, regulations, norms and standards, curriculum and programming, and ECD stakeholders only realised the implication of this later. This had not been anticipated by the non-profit ECD sector, which was side-lined and no longer at the forefront of the struggle for ECD provision. The national ECD membership organisation, SACECD, which had been formed in March 1994, just prior to the first democratic election in South Africa, was especially impacted on, given the purpose for which it had been founded.

5.5.2   The ad hoc Co-ordinating Committee for ECD (CCECD)

The first Education White Paper on Education and Training in 1995, proposed the establishment of interdepartmental committees within the DoE. For the ECD component of

the ECD and Lower Primary Education Directorate, the CCECD was established by the DoE as part of the decision-making structures of the national DoE. It first met on 18 September 1995 (Interviewee Government Official 2) and included representation from the national departments of Education, Health, Social Development and Labour, training institutions, SACECD, NEF, universities, ECD NPOs, and teacher representative associations. Each of the nine provincial education departments was also represented on the committee. I was appointed to this committee in 1996. The role of the committee was to assist the national ECD Directorate in developing ECD policy, to advise the national DoE on ECD matters, to monitor the progress of the technical teams that had been set up, to advise on ECD teacher training and curriculum content, the accreditation of training institutions; and to monitor the National ECD Pilot Project. One of its first tasks was to support the national DoE in developing the Interim Policy for ECD in 1996. Seleti (2006: 145) describes the process of producing the Interim Policy for ECD as "a collaborative effort between government and the early childhood development stakeholders."

The CCECD, as a stakeholder, was central to the implementation of the National ECD Pilot Project that tested the Interim Policy for ECD which eventually established Grade R. It also provided inputs on the development of ECD norms and standards, and regulations. A value of the CCECD was that the Director of ECD could go to her Chief Director and to the DoE Director-General, and report that the CCECD supported a particular ECD policy or position.

From 1995 to 2001, the CCECD met regularly and in 2007, was replaced by a HEDCOM sub-committee on ECD with the main purpose being to monitor implementation of the national and provincial operational plans. Unlike the CCECD which had ECD stakeholder representation, the HEDCOM consisted only of DBE officials from the national and provincial departments of Education.

5.5.3   The national Inter-Ministerial Committee on ECD

In the National Integrated ECD Policy (RSA, 2015: 84), government recognised –

> [E]arly childhood development services do not fall neatly into any one government department, sphere of government or sector, as the needs and rights of infants and young children span across the areas of health, nutrition, safe environment, and psychosocial and cognitive development.

Government further recognised that coordination of ECD provision was necessary. Government therefore established a national Inter-Ministerial Committee on ECD and a

national Inter-Departmental Committee for ECD, which would have responsibility for coordinating, monitoring and overseeing the implementation of the policy. The national Inter-Ministerial Committee on ECD is intended to provide political leadership for ECD policy and is led by the Minister of Social Development. Several government Ministers are on this committee including the Ministers of Social Development, Basic Education, Health, Finance, Higher Education and Training, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Women.

It is set out in the policy that the provincial governments and district municipalities would establish similar structures to give effect to the policy. Under this policy, the Minister of Social Development is required to establish the South African Inter-sectoral Forum for ECD to engage with the non-government ECD sector. Membership of this Inter-Sectoral Forum would comprise national ECD provider organisations, international partners, ECD training institutions, national research institutions (excluding universities), and private foundations and donors to the ECD sector. To date, these structures are in the early stages of formation, are not yet operational and hence have achieved very little for young children.

5.6   Findings on ECD policy implementation

With the Interim Policy for ECD and Education White Paper 5, there was a gap between what these policies aimed to provide and what government was able to implement. Implementation of these first two major ECD policies was modest and all the interviewees in this study indicated that government did not have the capacity to substantially implement these policies.

Of the three main ECD policy documents produced during the period 1990 to 2015, none included an implementation plan. In the Interim Policy for ECD, there was a programme element only, and Education White Paper 5 on ECD had universal coverage target dates, and a target number of children to be reached, but no implementation framework or plan. International NPO activist 1 said, "[s]hortly thereafter in Education White Paper 5, we all called for the same thing … it never got off the ground because nobody ever implemented it." Only the National Integrated ECD Policy has an implementation guideline with dates and a time frame. However, it has no budget or specific targets yet. NPO activist 3 said:

> Our enormous challenge is our policies don't become reality. Nobody can translate them into action. Because we haven't got people who've got sufficient capacity in planning and managing and understanding how to unpack a policy and make it become a reality. … with this enormous gap between paper document that says one thing and what actually happens in practice, which is either nothing, or not very much, or not very well done.

NPO activist 1 said, "[d]elivery was not necessarily embedded in policy", and ECD researcher 1 said, "[p]eople had a very poor concept of implementation." NPO activist 3 said:

> I just don't think anybody has the capacity to make this happen. I seriously don't. I don't think we have people who have sufficient strategic vision, planning ability and the ability to manage and to set an implementation plan and actually really think through the nuts and bolts of what needs to happen to make that happen. So, you've got people who are willing in government and who are really committed and who really do want to make a difference. But if I'm to be absolutely blunt, I don't think they have a clue what to do, to make it a reality.

Of the National Integrated ECD policy, ECD Consultant 2 said, "[t]here is an implementation guideline, but probably not at the level of detail that would happen when you are ready to operationalise it." One argument is that you need an implementation framework rather than a rigid implementation plan since circumstances change and it is not wise or feasible to change a policy each time to take into account a new context. The argument is that in South Africa we need an ECD policy implementation framework as part of policy and not a plan, as circumstances and the environment constantly change and because of the diversity of provinces and communities nationwide. Because of the South African constitutional make-up, the national sphere of government makes policy and the provinces make their own plans based on the policy and implement these plans. Academic 1 said:

> I think what they could have had was a framework implementation plan, not necessarily the nuts and bolts right. Because the nuts and bolts require a lot more specification and I think a lot more specification would also demobilise the public, you know. I'd rather read a White Paper which is general and states principles, or even read a Bill that gives the broad outlines, but I think the other part of the story is correct. I think in producing the earlier policy documents from 1994 until even 2001 under Kader Asmal, the bureaucracy weren't producing implementation plans they were making it up as they went along.

Of the three major ECD policies since 1994, the Interim Policy for ECD had no target numbers and Education White Paper 5 on ECD set a target of universal provision of Grade R for 935 000 children who are five years old, by 2010 (DoE, 2001b: 30). This was not achieved and that target date was subsequently changed by the DoE to 2014, and then when this was not achieved, to 2019. The National Integrated ECD Policy sets no target numbers except for a vague comment about universal access and time frames of 2017, 2024 and 2030, by which time certain broad activities would be provided.

Government funding is essential if ECD policies are to be implemented. Without government funding, ECD policies cannot be implemented optimally. For the Interim Policy for ECD, the implementation of the policy was not costed. While Education White Paper 5 was also not costed, there was a policy requirement which stated that the Grade R unit cost would be set at a maximum of 70% of Grade 1 costs (DoE, 2008a: 8). The National Integrated ECD Policy was the first to be costed, since the terms of reference of the assignment required that a costing be done. It was necessary to cost the policy proposal in order to obtain National Treasury support for the policy and future funding to implement the policy. Without a proper costing, the National Treasury would not have supported the policy proposals. The costing, however, does not appear in the policy document, but is in an accompanying research paper.

In the National Integrated ECD Policy, one of the goals is to reach low-income families by the year 2024 through a universally available essential package of services. The policy does not offer a detailed implementation plan for this. The national ECD programme report (Richter, Berry, Biersteker, Harrison, Desmond, Martin, Naicker, Saloojee & Slemming, 2014) which accompanied the policy document, provides a vague indication of the financial cost of implementing the policy with many assumptions and disclaimers for the essential package of services (see 3.3.4.4). It records:

> At this stage of the development of the national ECD Programme and the roll out of the Essential Package, it is more useful to give an indication of funding needed and range of potential costs, by units, rather than detailed implementation budgets (Richter et al., 2014: 167).

The report provides what the team calls "the closest approximation for government of the budget implications of implementation" (Richter et al., 2014: 168), with the acknowledgment that services to children with developmental difficulties and disabilities are excluded in the costing.

The Interim Policy for ECD had a limited three-year time frame of 1997 to 1999 as it prepared the way for Education White Paper 5 on ECD which set a time frame of ten years to 2010, at which point full universal provision of Grade R would have been reached. As described earlier, this target was not achieved, and by April 2018 has still not been achieved. The National Integrated ECD Policy sets three implementation time frames by which time activities and actions would be implemented: the short-term by 2017, a medium-term by 2024, and a long-term by 2030. ECD researcher 2 said:

So, part of what we developed for the package of policy documents, is an implementation plan which outlines a time period for implementation of particular objectives. It also identifies who the role player should be that is responsible for ensuring that those objectives come into place. I mean, it's not a very detailed implementation plan, but there is something there which the department can work with.

Each of the three major ECD policies between 1990 and 2105 had different implementing partners. The Interim Policy for ECD had a limited number of partners, being the national DoE and national DSD, the nine provincial education departments and the ECD non-profit training organisations. For implementation of the National ECD Pilot Project various non-profit consortia were appointed by the national DoE to implement the programme aspects of the policy. For Education White Paper 5 on ECD, the partners were the national DoE, national DSD, national DoH and the nine provincial education departments, with the ECD NPOs largely excluded. With the more comprehensive and integrated National Integrated ECD Policy it is intended that a range of implementation partners will be involved in providing ECD programmes across South Africa. These include: national DoE, national DSD, Home Affairs, Health, the Presidency, donors and the ECD non-profit sector.

A common criticism of ECD policy implementation in South Africa is that the government does not have the capacity to implement policy which is made. For the Interim Policy for ECD and for Education White Paper 5 on ECD, government did not have the managerial and administrative experience, skill and capacity to implement these ECD policies. A major reason was that the financial resources allocated to the national and provincial government departments responsible for implementing ECD policy was insufficient. By the time that the National Integrated ECD Policy was approved by the Cabinet, government had acquired more skills and capacity to implement ECD policy. Now that it is more than two years since the policy was approved, it is evident that little implementation appears to have taken place to date.

5.7 Finding on the dual responsibility between the DBE and DSD for ECD policy-making and implementation

In South Africa, ECD falls under the control of both the DBE (previously called the DoE) and the DSD, albeit for different age groups, functions and responsibilities. The DSD is responsible for children from birth to four years of age, and the DBE is responsible for children aged five and six years who are in Grade R, and for the curriculum for children from birth to age four years. The definition of ECD, however, covers children birth to nine years of

age, and this is stated in the Education White Paper 5 definition of ECD. Throughout most of the ECD policy-making processes there was a tension between the DBE and the DSD. This dual responsibility for ECD policy-making and implementation caused significant confusion and problems amongst ECD policy-makers, government officials and ECD providers that offered ECD and Grade R programmes. The main criticism was that the two government departments worked in silos separate from each other, and with minimal inter-sectoral collaboration rather than together. Each of these departments has its own ECD policy with little communication with each other as government departments, and this affected ECD policy-making, resulting in no common ECD policy vision and goals. As ECD researcher 1 said about the Interim Policy for ECD, "And so it seemed like, at every single meeting, we were starting fresh, a different person from Social Development, a different person from the Department of Health, a different person from … you know." Government Official 4 said, "[t]his duality produced tensions between these two departments and confusion as well." NPO activist 3 referred to this as "fractured responsibility."

Lack of cohesion and cooperation between the departments of Basic Education and Social Development meant that South Africa did not have a coherent, integrated and comprehensive ECD policy until December 2015. One of the difficulties of this situation was, as Government Official 3 said, "[w]aiting for the other department to complete its work." Government official 1 said, "[t]here has been a challenge of leadership in this area and then there has been a challenge of coordination across different departments. Now … no one gets coordination completely right." International NPO activist 1 said this duality "[s]ometimes caused an artificial divide and might cause, policy-wise, that some children fall through the gap."

This dual responsibility has also resulted in a lack of clarity regarding which government department is responsible for which aspects of ECD. Under the DBE, ECD is limited to Grade R. Under the DSD and with the Minister of Social Development chairing the government Social Sector Cluster from 2012 onwards, South Africa has seen a new and broader focus on ECD. The fact that the Minister of Social Development is now the political head of the government Social Sector Cluster has been positive for the ECD sector.

Dual responsibility produces confusion and tension between the government departments of Basic Education and Social Development. In an attempt to overcome this, government in the National Integrated ECD Policy has established a national Inter-Ministerial Committee on ECD and a national Inter-departmental Committee for ECD, to bring about a degree of coherence to this.

5.8 Chapter summary

In this chapter, I have described the key findings of this research study based on the data constructed from interviews with 19 key informants and an in-depth study of 27 ECD policy and policy-related documents from 1990 to 2015. A framework for presenting the study findings was developed from which five themes emerged; the ECD policy-making process in South Africa from 1990 to 2015, stakeholder consultation and participation in the ECD policy-making process, government structures in support of ECD, ECD policy implementation, and the dual responsibility between the DBE and the DSD for ECD policy-making and implementation.

In this chapter, I have focused on the three main ECD policies during the period 1990 to 2015: the Interim Policy for ECD of 1996, Education White Paper 5 on ECD of 2001, and the National Integrated ECD Policy of 2015. During this 25-year period, a clear distinction can be seen in the manner in which ECD policy was made. In the early phase, teams of ECD activists, aligned to the MDM and the ANC, were the drivers and creators of ECD policy options for the ANC as the government-in-waiting. During this time ECD policy-makers had little experience of policy-making. By 2012, the ECD policy-making skills in South Africa had matured and the ECD policy discourse had changed substantially, highlighting a comprehensive and integrated range of ECD programmes as the preferred policy approach.

In trying to describe the ECD policy-making trajectory from 1990 to 2015, four distinct phases were identified: preparing to govern, developing ECD policy options; a democratic government, a proliferation of ECD policy-making; policy implementation and system consolidation; and a new direction towards comprehensive and integrated ECD.

This chapter has also described the confusion and problems amongst ECD policy-makers, government officials and providers that offer ECD as a result of the dual responsibility for ECD between the national DoE and DSD.

Lastly, the findings also illustrated that in ECD policy-making there has been a significant gap between the policy text that has been adopted by government, and policy implementation, with implementation of ECD policies since 1994 being weak. A common criticism during my interviews was that the South African government does not have the political will or capacity to implement the ECD policy that it makes. These findings prepare the way for Chapter Six which is an analysis and interpretation of the main research findings on ECD policy-making in post-apartheid South Africa.

CHAPTER SIX – ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS ON ECD POLICY-MAKING IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

6.1   Introduction

Having examined the literature on ECD policy-making in South Africa, a major gap in knowledge on ECD policy-making and ECD policy implementation in South Africa is evident. The literature reveals a dearth of studies on the ECD policy-making process, ECD policy implementation, communicating ECD policy, enhancing ECD policy-making, and on the challenges and constraints in ECD policy-making. This study fills that gap. In this chapter, I drawn on the conceptual framework set out in Chapter Two, specifically section 2.6. I analyse and interpret the main research findings from its global context to localised contexts regarding the ECD policy trajectory in South Africa under these headings:

- Analysing the ECD policy-making trajectory;
- Globalisation as an influence on ECD policy-making in South Africa;
- Shifts in ECD policy related to the RDP and GEAR;
- The ECD policy-making processes in post-apartheid South Africa, focusing on the three main ECD policies made during this period;
- ECD policy implementation;
- Communicating ECD policy;
- Enhancing ECD policy-making; and
- The challenges and constraints facing ECD policy-making in South Africa.

In Chapters One, Three and Five, I have illustrated that ECD had been placed on the public policy agenda as a public good by the ANC government which came into power in 1994. As the global evidence on the social, education and economic benefits of quality ECD programmes for young children and families increased, so ECD in South Africa took on increasing importance, culminating in the comprehensive National Integrated ECD Policy, which was approved by the Cabinet on 9 December 2015. In tracing and describing the ECD policy trajectory for this study, it became clear that there were four distinct and chronological policy-making phases. In this chapter, I analyse, interpret and reflect on ECD policy-making during these four phases. The ensuing analysis and interpretation was based on the study of ECD policy and policy-related texts and on interview data.

6.2   Analysing the ECD policy-making trajectory

This section forms part of my analysis of the ECD policy-making trajectory in South Africa from 1990 to 2015 from its macro, global context to the micro, localized contexts. Whilst I am of the view that the policy cycle is not linear, is messy and is continuous, in this section I analyse the ECD policy-making trajectory using the hybrid policy trajectory analysis conceptual framework described in Chapter Two, section 2.6. I have set out the different levels and contexts of the policy trajectory. In this framework each of the contexts can occur anywhere in the policy trajectory from macro to micro levels. The macro, intermediate and micro levels are woven into the contexts of influence, policy text production and practice. In my analysis, the contexts of 'outcomes' and 'political strategies' (Ball, 1994), are not set out separately and are integrated into the bigger picture (Vidovich, 2007), discussed in this chapter. I use Vidovich's (2007) policy cycle levels and contexts in this analysis with the macro level related to the global context; the intermediate level focuses on the national government departments of education and social development; and the micro level on ECD programme providers working in communities across South Africa. and to "... highlight explicitly the interlinkages between different levels and contexts, by examining how they continually relate to each other throughout the policy process" (Vidovich, 1999: 2).

In this analysis the focus is on the three main ECD policies made in South Africa since 1994: the Interim ECD Policy of 1996, Education White Paper 5 on ECD in 2001, and the National Integrated ECD Policy of 2015. The ensuing analysis of the ECD policy-making trajectory is based on my extensive reading of the ECD policy and policy-related texts set out in Table 4.1 and on the data obtained from interviews with 19 key stakeholders who were significantly involved in ECD policy-making in South Africa from 1990 to 2015.

To remind ourselves, the contexts focused on are the context of influence where policy discourses are constructed; the context of policy text production where texts represent policy and the context of practice where policy is interpreted and recreated (Bowe, Ball & Gold 1992; Ball 1994). For presentation purposes the three contexts are set out separately.

Context of influence

Global ECD forces and thinking provided a significant influence on ECD policy-making in South Africa. Several influences are evident, the most significant being the research evidence on the economic benefits of quality ECD programmes. These originate from HighScope, the World Bank education section and UNICEF. HighScope has been in South Africa since 1990

and the World Bank was part of the ECD policy team that produced the South African Study on ECD in 1994, which in turn was an influence on the Interim Policy for ECD of 1996 and Education White Paper 5 on ECD. The lead consultant on the South African Study on ECD was a United States of America-based ECD expert appointed by the World Bank and approved by the Centre for Education Policy Development (CEPD), which developed education policy prior to the first democratic election on behalf of the ANC. Education White Paper 5 on ECD was developed by a United States of America-based economist/education consultant together with the ECD Directorate in the national department of Education.

Another significant and more recent influence was the research evidence produced by Prof James Heckman, a United States of America economist who was awarded the Nobel economics prize in 2000. His influence on ECD globally has been significant. More recently, the research evidence on early brain development and on the first 1,000 days of life, mostly produced by Dr Jack Shonkoff at the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, influenced the development of the National Integrated ECD Policy of 2015. Most of the global influence on ECD policy in South Africa has come from the United States of America. UNICEF has long been an advocate of the research findings from these ECD studies and also of others. As the United Nations authority on children, the UNICEF influence on ECD policy is substantial. These influences have operated mostly through the widespread dissemination of research findings and through visits to South Africa by key UNICEF personnel to work with the South African government. The South African government departments of education and of social development have embraced UNICEF. Indeed, UNICEF has an office in Pretoria, South Africa.

Government drew extensively from these forces for the Interim Policy on ECD in 1996, for Education White Paper 5 on ECD in 2001, and for the National Integrated ECD Policy in 2015. Influences from within South Africa came mainly from the policy options generated by the NEPI process and from activist national ECD organisations within the ECD non-profit sector.

Context of policy text production

The three main ECD policy texts were produced following extensive lobbying and advocacy work with the South African government, by civil society, ECD activists, ECD associations, and think-tanks. The Interim Policy for ECD of 1996 was produced when civil society ECD stakeholders, mainly the South African Congress for ECD and the National Educare Forum, lobbied the new government when it came to power in April 1994. The groundwork for ECD policy had been laid as part of the Mass Democratic Movement activities from the mid-1980's to the early 1990's and Education White Paper 5 on ECD followed seven years after democracy. The writing of Education White Paper 5 on ECD had no civil society or ECD stakeholder participation. However, it followed from the Interim Policy for ECD produced in 1996 and from the National ECD Pilot project of 1997-1999 which in turn was the result of the sustained lobbying, advocacy and activism of ECD activists in the non-profit sector who had strong ANC links. Indeed, seven of the eight members of the team which produced the 1994 South African Study on ECD, were active ANC members. The policy text for the National Integrated ECD Policy of 2015 was the result of processes which began at the national department of Social Development ECD consultation in East London in March 2012. At this consultation the Buffalo City Declaration on Early Childhood Development was accepted which made provision for the development of a new integrated and comprehensive ECD policy.

Various stakeholders have been involved in the making of these three ECD policy documents. These include government officials, ECD activists, think-tanks, academics and ECD experts. The various stakeholder groups worked well together, collaboratively and there was little disagreement or conflict between stakeholders and as a consequence compromise was seldom necessary. Excluded from these interest groups were individuals, overwhelming woman, who worked directly with children in ECD centres across South Africa.

The process of constructing the ECD policy texts for the Interim Policy for ECD of 1996 and for the National Integrated ECD Policy of 2015 was similar. In each case an ECD expert group was established, appointed and paid for by national government. For the Interim Policy for ECD this was the national department of Education and for the National Integrated ECD policy it was the national department of Social Development. For Education White Paper 5 on ECD, the policy text was produced by a United States of America consultant contracted to the national department of Education. The ECD Directorate in the national department of

Education was of the view that the Interim Policy for ECD of 1996 and the National ECD Pilot Project was the 'consultative phase' leading to the White Paper on ECD.

The intention and focus of all three ECD policy texts is to meet South African constitutional commitment to the well-being of the child with a focus on redressing the inequalities of the past to bring about equity. Linked to this is the values of non-racism, non-sexism, redress and equity which are reflected in each of the three main ECD policy texts. Each ECD policy text clearly sets out the purpose of the text, the values, principles and the activities of the policy. From a thorough reading of each text there are few inconsistencies or contradictions in the texts. The Interim Policy for ECD of 1996 and Education White Paper 5 on ECD on 2001 however had a focus on education, whilst the National Integrated ECD Policy of 2015 is more comprehensive, providing for an integrated range of ECD programmes for young children. The intended audience for these policy texts covers a range of stakeholders: government officials in all three spheres of government, the non-profit ECD providers, donors, unions and ECD teachers and governing bodies.

The manner in which all three ECD policy texts were written makes these accessible for an English first language audience. Unfortunately the policy texts were not translated into any of the other ten official languages of South Africa, which the overwhelming majority of South Africans are conversant in. A major weakness is that these policy texts do not enable the majority of stakeholders, especially those in the poorer rural areas, to read the policy. With the National Integrated ECD Policy however, the national department of Social Development did provide policy information workshops in all nine provinces and in most of the official languages.

In the Interim Policy for ECD of 1996 and in Education White Paper 5 on ECD there is no implementation plan, only numerical targets. In the National Integrated ECD Policy of 2015, there are target dates by which certain activities would be implemented but no target numbers. For neither of the Interim Policy for ECD of 1996 nor Education White Paper 5 on ECD in 2001 is there any provision for an evaluation of the policy. For the National Integrated ECD Policy of 2015 there is provision for a government structure which will evaluate progress towards policy implementation.

Context of practice

The Interim Policy for ECD of 1996 was replaced by Education White Paper 5 on ECD in May 2001, and is not covered in this section. Both Education White Paper 5 on ECD and the National Integrated ECD Policy of 2015 are national policies, implemented across the whole of South Africa. Because of the constitutional provision in South Africa in which policy is made nationally and implemented provincially, these policies are put into practice by the nine provinces and by local municipalities, for certain functions. Provincial variations in official capacity and in resourcing has resulted in uneven implementation of the policies, with the Western Cape and Gauteng provinces having more capacity to implement and the remaining seven provinces lagging substantially behind. Within districts in provinces there is also considerable variation in policy implementation. The two current ECD policies, covering Grade R (Education White Paper 5 on ECD) and the years before formal school (the National Integrated ECD Policy of 2015), are accessed more easily by urban communities for a number of reasons including affordability, distance, cost of travel and infrastructure. The impact of these two ECD policies has seen a significant and rapid increase in Grade R enrolment from 278,723 children in 2001 to 839,515 children in 2017, as reflected in Table 1.2. This increase has been across all nine provinces and in both urban and rural areas. The impact of the National Integrated ECD Policy has been less visible with little evidence of an increase on pre-Grade R programmes. A major inhibitor of expansion of pre-Grade R programmes is the absence of national and provincial funding for these programmes. There is a serious disjuncture between the original policy intent, from the macro level to implementation at the micro level. This is for two main reasons, first provincial governments do not have the capacity to deliver on the National Integrated ECD Policy of 2015, and second, because funding to implement the policy has not been forthcoming from the National Treasury.

In implementing these two policies, it is open to interpretation by provincial government officials and ECD stakeholders. Different understandings of the policy texts based on language and contextual experiences, results in uneven policy and programme implementation. The policy texts have been well received especially the comprehensive National Integrated ECD Policy of 2015 which went through a national consultation process and across South Africa there has been little resistance to the policies and implementation. The ECD non-profit organisations have supported and adhered to the policy texts and

requirements. One consequence of the National Integrated ECD Policy and of chapters 5 and 6 of the Children's Amendment Act, No. 41 of 2007, is that thousands of ECD centres across South Africa are not able to meet the minimum compliance standards, and are under threat of closure. Because of non-compliance these ECD centres are also not able to access the provincial ECD subsidy which would contribute to their financial sustainability.

6.3   Globalisation as an influence on ECD policy-making in South Africa

One macro level consideration that needs to be understood when undertaking policy analysis is the role of globalisation as a dominant influence in education and ECD policy-making. Fataar (1999: 11) maintains that, "The impact of globalisation on education policy is at the centre of educational reform in the south." Organisations such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) exert influence over governments, especially when governments are indebted to these institutions. This influence is strongly felt in the economy and in the education sector. Monkman and Baird (2002: 498) comment that "...globalisation curtails the powers of the nation state over the definition of educational priorities."

Fataar (1999: 51) sees globalisation as having "... an all-pervasive influence on education" affecting education policy-making and systems especially in the south, integrating countries into the global economy.

Globalisation has clearly influenced ECD policy in South Africa. The three main ECD policies made in South Africa between 1996 and 2015 reflects this influence, as will be shown in this study. The influence of globalisation is associated with the increase in neoliberal policies across the world. Fataar (1999: 53) writes: "Neo-liberalism emerged as part of an overall attempt by capitalists to secure the reproduction of new social relations in a rapidly reconstituting global economy."

While globalisation impacts on the political and economic activities of states world-wide, in South Africa it has been felt in terms of education and ECD reform and policy-making. It is in the three main ECD policy texts since 1994 that the neo-liberal argument about the purpose and programme aspects of ECD has been most strongly felt with the global hegemony of the neo-liberal approach to ECD being an important driver of ECD policy and practice in South Africa.

What has emerged in the first two decades of the 21st century is a global model of ECD provision notwithstanding the contexts at a national level. The influence of globalisation can

be seen in country ECD policies especially in African, Asian and South American countries. Reinforced by research documented in this chapter, many countries around the world, including South Africa, have adopted neo-liberal ECD policies. The result is similar ECD policies being adopted by countries globally. Indeed, one of the early ECD studies in South Africa, the South African Study on ECD in 1994, which recommended Grade R as a provision option, was funded by the World Bank and a World Bank-appointed consultant was part of the team which drafted this as a policy option for the African National Congress. This report was produced collaboratively with the ANC-aligned, Centre for Education Policy Development. Fataar (1999) suggest that this was a political strategy by the World Bank to establish legitimacy inn South Africa.

Further to this, for Education While Paper 5 on ECD in 2001, an international consultant to the national DoE wrote the White Paper together with staff in the ECD Directorate of the national DoE. This was done cognisant of government's macro-economic GEAR policy. From this description of the influence of globalisation on ECD policy in South Africa, it is clear that there was significant policy-making collaboration between global ECD organisations and government officials in the national DoE.

6.4   ECD policy in relation to the RDP and GEAR

At this point in my analysis it is important to comment on the South African government's macro-economic policy as it impacted on ECD policy and provision. A major challenge to the new South African government post-1994 was to eradicate the inequalities brought about through apartheid. Government action on this was the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) initiated in 1994 and set out in the White Paper on Reconstruction and Development (RSA, 1994b) published in November 1994. The RDP adopted a developmental approach, with meeting basic needs such as education, housing, water, sanitation, health care and electricity; and human resource development as key drivers of economic reconstruction to reduce inequalities and to bring about equity. The RDP also provided for employment opportunities for the unemployed. In the RDP significant resources would be allocated to education as a means to bring about equality. This had little opportunity to filter through to ECD policy and provision however since the ECD Directorate in the national education department was only established in August 1995, and the RDP office closed seven months later in March 1996. The RDP was replaced by government's Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) programme in June 1996. The department of Finance announced GEAR as the macro-economic and fiscal policy framework (Department

of Finance, 1996) with a focus on the market and a reduced role of government in development. Fataar (1999: 163) contends, "The choice of GEAR as macroeconomic framework entrenched a growth-led development path with the aim of turning South Africa into a globally competitive economic player." This led Weber (2002: 274) to comment that with GEAR "... social equity and justice are by and large ignored."

GEAR emphasised "... containing budget deficits within predefined limits …" (Ota, 1997: 487) by reducing public expenditure which it was intended would result in increased economic activity, investment and job creation that in turn would increase government revenue. The GEAR policy had to select funding priorities. This impacted on the Interim Policy for ECD of 1996 and the National ECD Pilot Project (1997-1999), which were implemented at the time when GEAR had just been implemented. With the fiscal constraints in place, the result was that the National ECD Pilot Project was not funded by central government and funding had to be obtained from the European Union which pushed a neo-liberal policy agenda. It is generally agreed that GEAR affected the financial outlook for transforming South African education and training (Ota, 1997: 487) and this impacted negatively on ECD policy and provision.

While the RDP mentioned ECD only insofar as recording that there was insufficient resource allocation to early child care and education (RSA, 1994), the reduction in government expenditure on social, education and health programmes following GEAR, did not enable significant implementation of quality ECD programmes.

6.5 The ECD policy-making processes in post-apartheid South Africa

This section provides a discussion of the ECD policy-making processes in South Africa from 1990 to 2015 and focuses on eight specific aspects. For the first five-year term of the new government in South Africa (1994 to 1999), the education policy-making focus was on transforming the education system. In 1994, after four decades of apartheid education, the new government was required to develop a new vision, collapse the 19 race-based education departments, and establish a single, national education department with nine provincial education departments. This was done in line with the political directive it received from the newly elected ruling political party, the ANC. The DoE (2001a: 4) writes, "[i]n these ways, the Ministry sought to create a quality, efficient, accountable and effective public service."

For ECD, policy crept in slowly as activists advocated for and lobbied to get government to advance ECD, and as politicians took up ECD as a public good, to be provided as part of the

development and transformation agenda of the government. The first national Minister of Education, Professor Sibusiso Bengu, taking guidance from ANC policy thinking, initiated the ECD policy-making process in 1995, instructing the DoE to develop the first ECD policy. Technical experts and government officials were appointed to the policy-making team to create the Interim Policy for ECD. This technical team drafted the policy with significant consultation and participation from ECD stakeholders, which included individuals from the ECD non-profit sector, the national ECD representative organisations, the teacher representative associations and experts who were able to shape the policy. The ANC, as the majority political party in Parliament and the government of the day, through its structures articulated a policy position on ECD. The Interim Policy for ECD was to be tested through the National ECD Pilot Project. Following completion of the National ECD Pilot Project however, there was a significant change in how Education White Paper 5 on ECD was developed. Stakeholder consultation and participation in ECD policy-making was halted and stakeholders did not participate in developing Education White Paper 5. Instead, the DoE appointed an international education economist to write the White Paper together with officials in the ECD Directorate of the national DoE. Significantly, at this time after 2000, the ECD NPO sector was less organised, less active and had less 'voice' than was the case from 1990 to 2000. This resulted in the ECD non-profit sector being marginalised from the year 2000 onwards. There were two reasons for this. First, this was largely due to a number of leading ECD activists leaving the ECD sector to take up positions in government. Secondly, the ECD policy-making process had changed following the successful political transition with policy-making clearly a national government responsibility by this time.

In 2012, when the Minister of Social Development took over government leadership of ECD, she initiated a process leading to the development of the National Integrated ECD Policy. For the National Integrated ECD Policy, a government tender was advertised and awarded to a HSRC-led team. The appointed policy-making team was more diverse and capable in terms of expertise, skills and experience than for earlier policies, with the outcome that the ECD policy, which was eventually approved by government, reflected a change in thinking. The new policy was rights-based and more comprehensive and integrated than any of the previous policies. For the first time South Africa had an ECD policy, which had a clearly stated vision, mission and short-, medium- and long-term goals. Since the National Integrated ECD Policy cut across multiple government departments, it was discussed by the various departments and at inter-Ministerial meetings. From there it went to the Cabinet Social Cluster for

consideration and thereafter it went to the Cabinet which approved it on 9 December 2015. Cabinet consideration and approval of an ECD policy was unprecedented in South Africa.

The policy-making process and time frames for the Interim Policy for ECD and the National Integrated ECD Policy were much lengthier than for Education White Paper 5 on ECD. The Interim Policy for ECD took two years, 1995 and 1996, to complete, and the National Integrated ECD Policy took three years, from 2012 to 2015. Education White Paper 5 on ECD, by contrast, was written in haste over a few weeks and did not follow a policy-making process as described in Chapter Two.

From the above, a clear change in the ECD policy-making processes over the period 1990 to 2015 can be seen. As government and ECD stakeholder policy-making capacity and skills matured, so policy was made in a more structured and planned manner. The result was an improved, comprehensive and integrated ECD policy comparable to the best globally and which potentially meets the needs of young children. Christie (2008: 123) suggests that policies are made in one of two ways. The first is in a rational manner, which is sequential and is made "in a linear progression or in cycles." In contrast to this, Christie also writes that the critical approach assumes that policy is messy, complex, evolutionary, and "cannot be put into a neat sequence" (Christie, 2008: 124). Colebatch's (2002: 24) policy-making framework presented as Figure 2.1 in Chapter Two illustrates that policy is a mix of vertical and horizontal sets of activities as proved to be the case with the National Integrated ECD Policy.

For the rest of this section I discuss selected ECD policy-making activities in South Africa between 1990 and 2015. It is important to note that these activities are set out linearly only for purposes of understanding and discussion. In reality, policy-making is fluid, incremental and uncertain.

6.5.1   Agenda setting

Getting ECD onto the government policy agenda and getting political support is critical to advance ECD and is an important precursor for ECD policy-making, implementation and for obtaining budget allocations from government. If ECD is not viewed by government as a public good, it will not be placed on the government policy agenda and will not receive the necessary government support. In considering how ECD became part of the policy agenda in South Africa, an important question to ask is: where did ECD policy thinking begin?

Before 1990, the apartheid government had minimal interest in ECD. With the liberation struggle, which peaked from 1976 to 1989, it was through the MDM in the late 1980s and early 1990s that ECD first surfaced on the education policy agenda. Activists in the ECD non-profit sector lobbied and advocated intensely at a political level for ECD to be on the education policy agenda of the government. Consequently, agenda setting for ECD in South Africa formally began with the National Education Policy Investigation in 1990, following activism, advocacy and lobbying by a number of ECD activists, including myself. With the unbanning of the liberation movements and the release of Mr Nelson Mandela on 10 February 1990, these activists ensured that ECD was on the policy agenda of the ANC. By 1994, the momentum for ECD had further increased with the founding of the NEF in 1990, and SACECD in March 1994, two major national ECD stakeholder organisations. I was active in both organisations. Alongside the above, the NEPI Educare Study report (NECC, 1992), and the South African Study on ECD report (Padayachie et al., 1994), both of which I was a part, further advanced ECD. It is these above-mentioned initiatives, which put ECD on the agenda of the new government. The implication of getting onto the education agenda of the government was that government had to seriously consider its position on ECD. This resulted in the creation of a Directorate for ECD and Lower Primary Education within the national DoE in 1995.

After the first democratic election of April 1994 and the election of the first democratic government, the new government signed and adopted a number of international instruments, including the UNCRC in 1995, and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child in 1999. With ECD on the national policy agenda, this directly resulted in the Interim Policy for ECD of 1996, the National ECD Pilot Project from 1997 to 1999, and the publication of Education White Paper 5 on ECD in 2001. Later, at two historic ANC conferences, in Polokwane in December 2007, and in Mangaung in December 2012, resolutions were passed on the need for a comprehensive and integrated ECD policy, which ensured that ECD was firmly on the government policy agenda as a public good. The Polokwane policy conference produced two resolutions: to "Strengthen childhood development centres and urge communities to understand and deal seriously with the rights of children" and to "develop a comprehensive strategy on ECD" (ANC, 2007: resolution 28 & resolution 29). The Mangaung policy conference produced three resolutions with regard to ECD. The first was to "accelerate the implementation of a comprehensive early childhood development programme." The second was "to provide universal access for at least four (4)

years of early childhood development" (ANC, 2013: 13). The third resolution was that "[a] national policy for Grade R must be finalised in order to make Grade R compulsory" (ANC, 2013: 73).

The national DSD ECD conference in East London in March 2012, further embedded ECD on the political agenda of the ANC government by means of the Buffalo City Declaration on ECD. Successfully getting ECD onto the government policy agenda meant that ECD enjoyed more serious attention and action by the South African government than was previously the case. In its election manifesto titled "A better life for all" (ANC, 2014) for the 2014 general election in South Africa, the ANC advocated making Grade R compulsory and expanding ECD substantially.

Cobb, Keith-Ross and Ross (1976: 132, cited in O'Sullivan, 2009: 46) suggest three approaches to explain how policy gets put on the agenda. The first is the *inside initiative* where an issue is initiated by government. The second is *the outside initiative* in which activists and lobbying groups push for the issue to be put on the policy agenda, and the third is *the mobilisation approach,* which is the process of government putting an issue on the policy agenda and is expanded to include other policy advocates in the public interest. The Interim Policy for ECD was clearly an outside initiative while Education White Paper 5 was an inside initiative, and the National Integrated ECD Policy, a mobilisation approach.

6.5.2   ECD policy vision and goals

In making policy, a vision and goals are important. Without a clear vision and explicit goals, a policy is less likely to be well formulated and implemented. One of the reasons for writing a policy vision and developing policy goals for ECD policy is so that government can measure progress towards meeting policy goals. In the ECD context, the vision statement is a short statement setting out what policy-makers want for young children. There was no vision or goals in the Interim Policy for ECD, which reflected the lack of ECD policy-making skills and acumen in 1996. For Education White Paper 5 on ECD there was a vision linked to Grade R only, and a single policy goal to "progressively realise the constitutional obligation to provide all learners with … one year of early childhood development called the Reception Year." (DoE, 2001b: 8). There are two main reasons for this. First, government was uncertain about what it was prepared to provide for young children. Secondly, there was a lack of policy-making skills within the DoE at the time and hence, Education White Paper 5 on ECD was outsourced to a consultant. As policy-making skills and knowledge increased, so ECD

184

policy became more comprehensive and integrated. When ECD policy was made by a DSD-appointed, skilled ECD policy-making team in 2015, the National Integrated ECD Policy had a vision which was comprehensive, rights-based and equity-driven. This vision included short-term (by 2017), medium-term (by 2024) and long-term (by 2030) goals which reflected the comprehensive and integrated thinking on ECD by government and the ECD sector as a whole, which began to emerge after 2012.

6.5.3   Situation analysis setting out the existing ECD position

A competently completed situation analysis can enhance the understanding of the ECD situation and needs of a country, can be an impetus for getting ECD onto the education agenda, and inform ECD policy-making. However, even where a situation analysis has been completed and good data and information is available to policy-makers as it was when formulating Education White Paper 5 on ECD, government can still produce policy which does not reflect the needs that the situation analysis indicates. The implication of no situation analysis is that an ECD policy may not meet the needs of young children and families.

No situation analysis of the existing ECD position was done in developing the Interim Policy for ECD and there was little accurate data and information regarding ECD in South Africa available at that time. Such data and information could have guided the policy-making team. No audit or survey regarding ECD was completed prior to writing the Interim Policy for ECD. Given the education policy-making pressures that the DoE was under at the time to get a policy for ECD into the public domain, there was no time to undertake an extensive situation analysis. For Education White Paper 5 on ECD, the comprehensive nation-wide ECD audit of 2001, and the outcome of the National ECD Pilot Project provided extensive and valuable data and information on ECD centre-based provision from which to develop policy. The DoE chose largely to ignore the nation-wide ECD audit findings when making the policy choice that it did in Education White Paper 5. ECD activists at the time, who were interviewed by me (ECD consultant 1, ECD consultant 3, NPO activist 1 and academic 2) were of the view that the data and information from the ECD audit could have been better utilised when the foreign DoE consultant wrote Education White Paper 5.

The National Integrated ECD Policy was preceded by a comprehensive Diagnostic Review of ECD, carried out by the DPME in 2012. The National Integrated ECD Policy went significantly beyond ECD centre-based provision only, and was comprehensive and integrated, taking into account an essential package of ECD programmes for vulnerable

young children. This was a result of the policy-making team for the National Integrated ECD Policy taking into account the large amount of scientific evidence, research papers and expert contributions available, to make a wide-ranging, comprehensive and integrated ECD policy, which provides for a range of ECD programmes for vulnerable young children and their families.

6.5.4   Evidence-based ECD policy-making

The global scientific evidence available to ECD policy-makers had a significant influence on ECD policy-making in South Africa, because it provided the scientific evidence that was necessary for gaining a degree of political support for ECD. It is clear that since the evidence of the period 1970 to the mid-1990s was on the benefits of ECD centres, so the ECD policy followed the evidence and the dominant form of ECD programmes in South Africa was centre-based ECD provision. When new ECD evidence-based research emerged after 2005, the focus of ECD policy globally changed from ECD centres to comprehensive and integrated ECD policy and programming. The research evidence regarding ECD enabled new thinking about the long-term social, education and economic benefits of providing comprehensive and integrated ECD for young children. This enabled the DSD and the National Treasury to support the National Integrated ECD Policy.

The three main ECD policies made in South Africa since 1996 have been influenced by scientific research evidence, starting with the HighScope Educational Research Foundation Perry Preschool Studies published in 1993 and 2005, and the Head Start research in the 1980s in the USA, which set out the benefits of quality ECD centre programmes for young children. More recently the research evidence regarding the importance of the first 1 000 days of life, from conception to the end of year two (Black & Dewey, 2014; Wodon, 2016) has changed global thinking regarding ECD policy and programmes. As new research evidence was produced in the first decade of the 21st century on the importance of the first 1 000 days of life, ECD activists, lobbyists and advocates were able to generate support from politicians and government officials to adopt a new approach to ECD policy and programme provision. As a result, ECD programmes globally and in South Africa became more comprehensive and integrated, and ECD policy-makers recognised this evidence. ECD policy shifted significantly based on this evidence.

The findings in this study indicate clearly that as more scientific evidence regarding ECD became available, so the South African government was more open to confirming ECD as a

public good than previously. Indeed, the ANC ECD resolutions taken in Polokwane in 2007, and Mangaung in 2012, were the catalyst for the National Integrated ECD Policy of 2015. Until these ANC policy conference decisions were taken, ECD was largely seen as centre-based and Grade R and ECD policy mirrored this. These two policy conferences of the ANC and subsequent government implementation of these ECD policy positions changed the way ECD was defined in South Africa, influencing the formulation of the National Integrated ECD Policy and giving the proposed comprehensive and integrated ECD policy greater legitimacy and therefore more acceptance from the Presidency, the DSD, the DoE and the National Treasury than before. At the same time the national government and the National Treasury had been provided with significant research evidence of the benefits of high-quality ECD programmes, particularly for vulnerable young children (Schweinhart al., 2005; UNESCO, 2010 and Campbell et al., 2012). It was also clear that as policy-making skills and ability matured, more use was made of scientific research evidence.

6.5.5   Leading the ECD policy-making process and making policy decisions

In all three major ECD policies since 1996, leadership of the ECD policy-making process has come from the national government. The ECD policy-making process which resulted in the Interim Policy for ECD was led by the Director of ECD and Lower Primary Education in the ECD Directorate of the national DoE working with the CCECD. For the policy-making process which resulted in Education White Paper 5 on ECD, the process was led by the national Director of ECD in the national DoE working with an external consultant. The ECD policy-making process which resulted in the National Integrated ECD Policy of 2015, was led by a Steering Committee of the national DSD which reported to the top official at the Department, the Director-General, and to the Minister of Social Development and ultimately to the South African Cabinet. The effect of this is that because of the authority that the government carries, the policies were more likely to become ECD policy.

Through my interviews, it became clear that notwithstanding who drafted the ECD policy for the three major ECD policies since 1994, the relevant national government department decided on which aspects of the policy proposal to accept and which aspects not to accept. In each policy-making instance, the ECD policy team's task was to develop ECD policy recommendations for government which government could consider and decide on. The final decision on what was approved was not made by the policy-making team but by senior government officials (the Interim Policy for ECD of 1996), the Minister of Education (for

Education White Paper 5 on ECD in 2001) and by the South African Cabinet for the National Integrated ECD Policy of 2015. The implication of the above is that government may reject aspects of policy recommended by expert policy-making teams, or government may also reject the policy proposals entirely. For example, in the National Integrated ECD Policy a major recommendation of the policy-making team was the establishment of a national agency to oversee ECD in South Africa. This recommendation was not accepted by government. This is a good example of how government has the prerogative and responsibility to decide on the final policy and taking it through the political decision-making process.

Although government may go the route of appointing expert policy-making teams, it is still the government department which leads the policy-making process. In the three of the major ECD policies made since 1996, the appointed team, or individual in the case of Education White Paper 5 on ECD, wrote the policy draft which was then considered and changed as required by the relevant national government department to meet its requirements, which then obtained political approval to officially adopt the policy.

6.5.6   Piloting ECD policy

Following the approval of the Interim Policy for ECD, a three-year, National ECD Pilot Project was undertaken ostensibly to inform the writing of Education White Paper 5 on ECD. In South Africa only the Interim Policy for ECD was piloted through an external monitoring and review process, established and funded by government. ECD researcher 1, who led the National ECD Pilot Project monitoring and evaluation task, said that the pilot extensively influenced Education White Paper 5. However, from other interviews, ECD activists involved at the time (ECD consultants 1 and 3) indicated that it was not the case. The truth lies somewhere in the middle since Education White Paper 5 accepted some of the National ECD Pilot Project monitoring and review recommendations, as they related to Grade R, but ignored many other recommendations. For the National Integrated ECD Policy no pilot was planned or undertaken and the Cabinet-adopted policy does not indicate that there will be a pilot project or test phase. In my view, this was because of the political pressure on the DSD, coming from consecutive ANC policy conferences in 2007 and 2012, for an urgent, comprehensive and integrated ECD policy.

6.5.7   Stakeholder consultation and participation in ECD policy-making

Involving stakeholders in ECD policy-making gives the policy-making process legitimacy and reduces the likelihood of a policy being rejected due to lack of stakeholder consultation and participation. As such, stakeholder involvement in ECD policy-making, including government department officials, the ECD non-profit sector and ECD experts, specialists and consultants nationwide, is critical in ensuring that ECD policies are accepted and implemented.

In this study, 'consultation' is defined as the discourse with ECD stakeholders in which government policy-makers seek advice, guidance and support. 'Participation' refers to being involved in the ECD policy-making process and decision-making. My experience of ECD policy-making in South Africa since 1990 is that ECD policy has been made with varying degrees of stakeholder consultation and participation. The stakeholders who were consulted and who participated in ECD policy-making have mostly been ECD experts and representatives of national ECD stakeholder organisations, which had an interest in ECD policy-making. The non-participation of the general public in ECD policy-making was disappointing given that public participation in policy-making is entrenched in the South African Constitution and is also emphasised in the National Education Policy Act, No. 27 of 1996 (RSA, 1996b).

With the Interim Policy for ECD and the National Integrated ECD Policy, there was significant consultation with and participation by ECD stakeholders in the policy-making process. Stakeholders were representative of the ECD sector through the three national ECD membership organisations, SACECD, NEF, and the National ECD Alliance and were also representative of the expertise in the ECD sector. Many of the individuals who were centrally involved in these two ECD policy-making processes, were interviewed for this study. Contrasted with the above, for Education White Paper 5, stakeholders were not involved as the White Paper was developed by a consultant and DoE officials. In the process of making Education White Paper 5 on ECD in 2001, the DoE gave the impression that this was the outcome of a widespread and substantial nationwide consultation and participation process, which it was not. Phiri (2008: 84) concurs with this stating that the DoE

> [F]ormulated the final ECD policy, White Paper 5, without the involvement of other stakeholders. As a result of this, White Paper 5 left out most of the recommendations of the Audit. It could be for the reason that the Department of Education wanted to bring an end to the long process of policy consultation.

Barnes (2006: 2) writes,

> [W]hat is often termed consultation between the Ministry of Education and those leaders increasingly involved three major factors: deadlines were extremely short, talks generally were scheduled only after major decisions had been taken, and real agendas were not publically disclosed.

This is an accurate account of how Education White Paper 5 on ECD was made in 2001. As a result, there were significant concerns from ECD stakeholders that they had not been consulted or participated in the development of the White Paper. The effect of this lack of consultation and participation of ECD sector stakeholders was that the ECD policy, as reflected in Education White Paper 5, was one-dimensional, focusing on a formal Grade R year only and omitting any significant ECD programming for children younger than five years old. The focus on a single Grade R year was in contrast with an emerging global understanding of comprehensive and integrated ECD policy and programming for children from birth to six years of age (Shonkoff & Philips 2000; UN, 2002).

The manner in which ECD policy was made after 2012 changed significantly, culminating in the National Integrated ECD Policy, which was developed by an expert team awarded a tender to develop the policy for the DSD. The outcome was that the National Integrated ECD Policy had more widespread stakeholder support than any previous ECD policy in South Africa.

Non-profit ECD organisation expertise played a significant role in shaping the policies of the ECD sector by exerting influence and pressure on the policy-making teams appointed by government. Because of their expert knowledge, these organisations were influential in advocating for ECD policies and programmes.

ECD teachers are an important stakeholder group in ECD policy-making as they work directly with young children; yet, they were not involved when ECD policy was made. Seleti (2006: 115) confirms this, indicating "the treatment of practitioners and caregivers in the policy process was unsatisfactory in that no proper mechanisms were put in place to ensure that most practitioners were directly involved in the policy process." In her study, Seleti found that "From interviews with practitioners from some of the most prominent ECD organisations in the country it emerged that some of them had never even seen the White Paper but had only heard of it" (Seleti, 2006: 113). Seleti (2006: 115) comments, "[t]he

practitioners expressed concern about the language of policy documents and the fact that they were not involved in any policy information gathering or dissemination processes."

The public has played a limited role in ECD policy-making mainly because of the specialist nature of ECD policy-making. In the period 1997 to 2001, leading up to the release of Education White Paper 5 on ECD, stakeholders were not consulted on the ECD policy and did not participate in the drafting of the White Paper. The ECD policy-making team drafting the National Integrated ECD Policy was more diverse, having government officials, donors and experts from health, education, legal or social development backgrounds on the team. As a result of the lack of stakeholder participation in designing Education White Paper 5 on ECD, the implementation of Grade R was slow, as can be seen in Table 1.2, which illustrates Grade R enrolment from 2002 to 2017. Not being involved in the ECD policy-making process leading to Education White Paper 5 resulted in ECD stakeholders leaving policy implementation to the national and provincial education departments and officials, and resulted in the slow implementation of Grade R in all nine provinces.

6.5.8 Costing and funding of ECD policy choices

If an ECD policy is to be implemented in line with its vision and goals, it should be correctly costed and sufficiently funded by the National Treasury. If funding is not allocated, then the policy is what Sayed (2004: 252) calls "symbolic gestures", and not intended to be implemented to any significant degree. Whilst the three main South African ECD policy documents (i.e. the Interim Policy for ECD in 1996, Education White Paper 5 on ECD in 2001 and the National Integrated ECD Policy of 2015) recorded what the policies aimed to achieve, the Interim Policy for ECD and Education White Paper 5 were not costed. For the National Integrated ECD Policy, the accompanying ECD programmes document (Richter et al., 2014), indicated the likely costs associated with implementing the policy. Only the Interim Policy for ECD had the implementation costs funded by government. In testing the Interim Policy for ECD through the National ECD Pilot Project, it was financed from a conditional grant allocation of R125 million from the National Treasury to the National DoE. This allocation was to implement the National ECD Pilot Project at 2 730 ECD centres, with about 66 000 reception year children participating countrywide over the three-year pilot (DoE, 2001e: 18).

Education White Paper 5 on ECD contains a funding formula that Grade R provision would conform to, and the nine provinces were responsible to fund Grade R provision from their

provincial equitable share of the national budget from national government. For the National Integrated ECD Policy, the nine provinces are required to fund policy implementation. According to my interviews with government officials 2 and 3, this was not an oversight but was a considered position from the DoE and DSD officials. Senior government officials (Government officials 2 and 3) told me this was a strategic decision to get government to support the policy. Their view and experience had informed them that government would not have supported the ECD policy if National Treasury had found the ECD policy to be not affordable by government.

There was a strong belief by some interviewees (NPO activists 1, 2 and 3 and ECD consultant 1) that Education White Paper 5 was not costed because government did not intend to implement the policy on any significant scale. Based on the information obtained, I am not suggesting that the policy text must include a costing of the policy, but such policy costing could be calculated and published in an accompanying document. It must however be comprehensive and detailed and make cost projections for the medium term of five to ten years. This will enable government to consider the financial implications of the policy and to make the necessary budget provisions. If the ECD policy is to be funded by the provinces, this costing will inform the provinces on requesting funds from national government and will give the provinces an idea of the degree to which they can implement policy goals. As Neuman and Devercelli (2012: 31) argue, "[i]ndeed in some countries there may even be a hesitance to develop costed implementation plans because they so clearly spell out the needs and mechanisms for government action."

6.6   ECD policy implementation

For a policy to be effective, it should be implemented comprehensively, in line with the policy vision and goals. If a policy is not implemented, the result is that citizens, in this case young children, do not receive the ECD programmes to which they are constitutionally entitled, and the policy could be seen as 'symbolic'. In implementing policy, structures are set up and staffed, procedures and budgets are developed, and programmes in line with policy are implemented. Haddad (1995: 35) writes, "[o]nce policy has been chosen, planning for policy implementation should begin immediately." Directly linked to this, policy will not be implemented optimally without adequate financial resources for implementation. Policy implementation also ensures that citizens, in the case of ECD young children and their families, receive the ECD programmes and services, which the policy sets out to provide.

The experience in South Africa from 1994 to 2012 was that, despite the production of two major ECD policy texts, the political will and budget allocations did not support policy implementation, which has been lacking. The Interim Policy for ECD was implemented on a limited scale and for Education White Paper 5, the implementation targets have still not been achieved 17 years after the policy had been approved. For the National Integrated ECD Policy it is too early to comment on implementation since the policy targets were only planned to be met in 2017, 2024 and 2030 respectively. Jansen (2001a: 275), following a study of policy-making and policy implementation, comments, "[i]n most cases, however, implementation was never on the policy agenda at all."

Schwella (2015: 329) claims, "policies and their implementation fail as they are centralised, determined by government, and inflexible, rather than decentralised and determined by the market." I disagree with this because it is government which carries the mandate of the people and the constitutional responsibility for implementing public policy and which has the financial resources to implement policy. To meet the principle of ECD being a public good, it cannot be left to market forces alone to achieve this.

The value of a policy is largely determined by the capacity of government to implement policy provisions. Because the implementation of ECD policy in South Africa is a provincial responsibility, policy is implemented in different contexts and the result of this is not always as intended by national government. For ECD policy in South Africa to be implemented successfully, the respective spheres of government have to play a significant role in implementation. One difficulty in policy implementation in South Africa is that the Constitution provides for national government to make policy and for provincial and local government to implement policy. If there is a breakdown or dislocation between these spheres of government, then policy implementation is not optimal. In this regard, Haddad (1995: 84) writes, "[i]t is during implementation that the formulation of policy is put to the test."

In terms of the first of the three main ECD policies of post-apartheid South Africa, implementation of the Interim Policy for ECD has been 'top-down', driven by the national DoE. For the two other main ECD policies, Education White Paper 5 and the National Integrated ECD policy, the setting of policy goals, strategies and programmes were done at national level, and policy implementation adopted a 'bottom-up' approach in line with the Constitutional requirement that policy implementation is a concurrent function of

government, the joint responsibility of the national departments and the nine provincial departments.

As Birkland (2005: 183) points out, the 'top-down' approach is based on the assumption that there is a single, authoritative statement of policy contained in a document and that there exists a commitment to implement this throughout the system. While this approach has been adopted by the national government in South Africa, from my experience and from the interviews I held, it is clear that provincial departments do not necessarily adhere to national ECD policy and implementation requirements. Often, competing education and social development needs in the provinces, especially in the less-resourced provinces, do not enable provincial departments to implement ECD policy as set out in policy documents.

The 'bottom-up' approach to policy implementation described by Birkland (2005) has not happened because of shortcomings in the ability of stakeholders on the ground to implement ECD policy, mainly because of the power relations between national government and local communities, and the tendency for local community groups to see policy-making and policy implementation as a government responsibility. Having been marginalised and ignored for decades under apartheid, communities across South Africa have left the responsibility of ECD policy implementation to government at national, provincial and local government spheres.

One issue, which emerged in this study, was the question of whether a policy should include an implementation plan or an implementation framework. I use the term 'implementation plan' to mean providing a purposeful and detailed schedule of activities required to achieve policy goals. With the term 'implementation framework', I mean providing the guidance, support and intent, with minimal detail, to deliver activities required to achieve policy goals. As such, a policy implementation framework provides scope for policy interpretation taking into account provincial and local variations in context. The argument is that in South Africa we need an ECD policy implementation framework as part of policy, and not a plan, as circumstances and the environment change constantly and because of the diversity of provinces and communities. Because of the South African constitutional make-up, the national sphere of government makes policy, while the provinces make their own plans based on the policy, and implement these plans.

An implementation plan is not necessarily part of a policy and written into the policy document. My view is that an implementation framework should be part of the policy

document rather than a rigid implementation plan, which is set in stone. The ECD policy should clearly indicate what government wants to happen, why it should happen, and how it should happen. The actual details of when and where it will happen, who will make it happen and with which resources, should be in a separate policy implementation plan, because the provincial and local contexts and circumstances may vary considerably and the national government cannot change a policy each time because of provincial contextual changes.

Examining the ECD policy trajectory in South Africa from the Interim Policy for ECD of 1996 (DoE, 1996a) to the National Integrated ECD Policy of 2015 (RSA, 2015), it is evident that a top-down approach has been used. This is consistent with the South African Constitution, which provides for national departments to make policy and for the provinces to implement policy.

As a result of the separation of policy-making from policy implementation in practice, the comment often expressed in the South African ECD sector is that 'policy is good but implementation is poor'. This means that most often ECD policies and plans are well intentioned, but that the political will to implement and fund resources needed for implementation are not provided by government, with the result that policies are either poorly implemented or not implemented at all. The Diagnostic Review of ECD (DPME, 2012: 4) identified the gap between policy and implementation on a major problem.

6.6.1 Institutional arrangements for ECD policy implementation

At the national sphere of government, the lead national department is responsible for making and overseeing ECD policy, establishing guidelines for implementation, planning and coordination and collaboration, and monitoring performance in the nine provinces. At the provincial sphere, the provincial departments of Social Development, Education and Health interpret ECD policy, produce implementation plans in line with the provincial context and then provide ECD programmes. The provinces are also responsible for provincial coordination and collaboration, the provision of human resources, financing and working with non-profit ECD providers. At the local government sphere, municipalities are responsible for ECD activities in line with the South African Constitution and delegated to it by national government. Such activities include environmental health monitoring, land use and safety, as these relate to children. The non-profit sector and CBOs are largely responsible for ECD centres and programmes in the absence of state provision for ECD.

One consideration in ECD policy implementation is whether the national, provincial and local spheres of government and the non-profit sector have the structures in place and the expertise, experience and capacity to implement ECD policy. From experience and from the interviews held during this study, it was clear that the government structures in South Africa tasked with ECD policy implementation do not have the leadership and management capacity or the ECD expertise to implement national ECD policy. The Interim Policy for ECD was made within the DoE and the systems, structures, norms and standards of the DoE were followed with the result that the implementation of the Interim Policy for ECD was effective. It was also provided with ring-fenced, guaranteed funding. The result was that the Interim Policy on ECD was actively implemented and monitored.

For Education White Paper 5, the national ECD Director was reliant on the systems, structures, norms and standards of the nine provincial departments of Education. As the provinces did not have the structures, systems, finances or people capacity in place to fully implement the White Paper requirements, this resulted in ineffective policy implementation and the national DoE did not meet its 2010 target date for universal Grade R or its 2014 target, and this led to the target date for full implementation being moved by the national DoE to 2019 (DBE, 2011a: 4). For Education White Paper 5, the ECD Directorate of the national DoE also had to contend with a Minister of Education who was not committed to ECD or to Grade R. The result of this is that ECD policy was not implemented optimally.

For the National Integrated ECD Policy, the national DSD has a Chief Directorate for ECD and systems, structures and norms and standards in the provinces, albeit at widely differing capacities, with the Gauteng and the Western Cape provinces being better organised and funded than the other seven provinces. Since the policy was approved in December 2015, the signs of policy and programme implementation have not been encouraging, with little having been done in more than two years since December 2015.

6.7   Communicating ECD policy

If a policy is to be optimally implemented by government, such policy needs to be communicated, especially the policy vision, purpose, goals and programme details. A communication plan should ensure that ECD stakeholders, including government and the public, are fully informed of the ECD policy. The responsibility for communicating policy lies with government as the custodian of policy. From 1990 to 2015, there were varied forms and degrees of communicating ECD policies in South Africa. The communication for each

policy was minimal and lasted only for a brief period. The non-profit ECD organisations, government officials, the academic community and the public were also poorly informed about the ECD policies. This significantly reduced the understanding of the policy content and the monitoring of policy implementation by stakeholders. It appeared that the DoE did not consider communicating these policies to be important. It was left to the national ECD representative organisations and to the NPO sector to communicate these ECD policies within their capacity to do so. Of particular importance, given that the South African Constitution and the Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005, mandate the provinces to be responsible for ECD programme implementation, is that the different spheres of government need to understand the national ECD policy and the implementation framework as well as their roles and responsibilities. During the period 1996 to 2012, the institutional arrangement for communicating ECD policy was not evident, resulting in poor implementation at the national, provincial and local spheres of government. As with the costing and funding of ECD, it appears to be that ECD policies were only intended to be 'symbolic'. Had there been political support for ECD policies, they could have been communicated more widely and more effectively. A good example of political support for a policy or programme is the manner in which the NDP had been communicated and driven at political level. This did not happen with ECD.

Communicating ECD policy changed as the ECD policy-making practices matured and as ECD gained recognition and traction as a sector that benefits vulnerable children in their formative years. While the new National Integrated ECD Policy was being formulated, communication happened during the consultation stage, when the policy was in draft form and after it had been approved. Of the three main ECD policies from 1996 onwards, only the National Integrated ECD Policy had a communication plan written into the policy (RSA, 2015). This was unique, and was in line with the maturing policy-making skills in government departments and in the ECD sector.

6.8   Enhancing ECD policy-making

In this study, a number of factors, which could enhance an ECD policy-making process were found, the most important of which are discussed here. The primary enhancing factor is an enabling policy-making environment created by government. This means government providing strong leadership, political will and support for ECD policy-making, and the policy-making process being driven by an ECD political champion at senior level within

government, which gives the ECD policy-making process its legitimacy. A degree of political will and leadership from the Minister of Social Development and from the DSD officials throughout the process contributed to formulating the National Integrated ECD Policy. The ECD policy-making process should be prioritised from the top. This requires that the political principal should understand the need for ECD policy and drive it strongly with a clear and unambiguous mandate. Public officials from the relevant government departments should be involved throughout the policy-making process. Part of creating this enabling environment is for the department commissioning the policy-making to establish a formal policy-making process, which is clear and understood by the policy-making team.

There needs to be the presence of 'framing documents', such as the South African Constitution (RSA, 1996a), the NDP (NPC, 2012) and international instruments such as the UNCRC (United Nations, 1989) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (OAU, 1990). Working within a strong legal framework grounds ECD as a basic right for children embedded in the ECD policy that emerges. Early ECD policies from 1994 to 2001 were not framed in relation to these overarching documents and as a result they were not taken seriously by government, especially National Treasury.

An ECD policy-making team consisting of knowledgeable individuals, including government officials, who have the technical competence, expertise and skills for policy making is critical. The team should have the expertise, talent and skills as well as the multi-disciplinary experience relating to ECD and young children. These individuals involved should be credible and trusted individuals who understand the context of ECD and who have experience in ECD policy-making. Experience of working with government and government systems and procedures is also important. The technical team needs diversity of thought and ideas with commitment by team members.

Government as the initiator of the ECD policy-making process should make resources available for policy-making to take place, and to sustain the policy-making process. In addition, administrative infrastructure and support should be provided.

The ECD policy-making team should be able to link ECD policy to the political economy and to the macro social development, education and economic policies of a country. In South Africa, this means policy-making should be linked to the Constitution and the NDP. ECD policy-makers should locate the policy-making process within a government macro-

development plan, if such exists, as this makes it easier to obtain government political will and support.

An ECD policy-making team requires time to develop an agreed vision of what they propose for young children and their families, to establish ECD policy goals, to consult with ECD stakeholders, to get the technical experts involved and to benchmark the proposed ECD policy against international conventions.

Collaboration and cohesion between and within government departments and with a broad range of ECD stakeholders and working together enhance policy-making. There should be a good understanding of what the contribution of each stakeholder is. Furthermore, active consultation, participation and engagement with a diverse range of ECD stakeholders is required. Consultative and participatory processes with ECD stakeholders should be in place with trust between stakeholders and participants.

Quality scientific evidence should be used as a basis from which to develop ECD policy and to overcome resistance from politicians and government officials. In South Africa, this enabled National Treasury to understand the economic benefit of ECD provision for the country.

ECD policy-makers should have data and information on the situation in the country with regard to ECD. This can be achieved through a diagnostic review or a situation analysis. The ECD policy-making team benefits from having an up-to-date diagnostic review or situation analysis available when considering and deciding on the ECD policy.

Reinforcing some of these factors, Patel (2014) argues that the critical factors which enhance policy-making include credibility of leadership, diversity of expertise amongst those making policy, a robust evidence-based approach to policy-making and strong administrative capacity.

6.9   Challenges and constraints in developing ECD policy in South Africa

In presenting and interpreting the main research findings of this study, the main challenges and constraints in ECD policy-making in South Africa became evident. I base my discussion in this section on having participated in the ECD policy-making processes over the 25-year period from 1990 to 2015, and also draw on information provided by 19 interviewees in this study. The study highlighted seven main challenges and constraints in ECD policy-making

between 1990 and 2015. Many of these challenges and constraints are common to ECD policy-making globally.

First, the South African government had what Pugh (1990: 4) calls "an uncoordinated and haphazard" approach to programmes for children younger than six years old. Rather than recognising the importance of ECD, government did little about it, choosing instead to prioritise transforming the formal school system and higher education (RSA, 1996d, DoE, 1997). When South Africa was going through a major political transition and transformation from apartheid to democracy, numerous policies for which government was responsible, including for other aspects of education and social development, were being formulated and given priority. This influenced and limited the urgency of ECD policy-making by government. The result was that ECD policy-making only started during the second wave of education policy-making after 1996. Making ECD policy has to be enhanced by significant political, technical, administrative and financial support from government.

The second challenge is that ECD policies should embrace a clear vision, principles and specific goals. Without a clear ECD policy vision, principles and specific goals, policy will not be made optimally.

Furthermore, the ECD sector had a misplaced belief that with new ECD policies, the National Treasury would provide funds for policy implementation. ECD policy and provision had historically not been, and was by April 2018, still not adequately funded by government. The result is that the majority of young children still do not have access to quality ECD programmes and opportunities. Ironically, it is those children who would benefit most from quality ECD provision who are denied access through inadequate and inequitable provision and funding of ECD programmes. This is corroborated by Bridgraj (2002) who states that budgets and implementation plans do not match the rhetoric of investment in young children.

A major constraint is the lack of ECD policy and programme cohesion between different government departments responsible for ECD. Historically, responsibility for ECD policy-making was split between two government departments: Education and Social Development. Between 1994 and 2012, leadership of the ECD policy-making process was with the DoE. It was only when the national DSD became the lead department in the social cluster within the South African Cabinet in 2012, that comprehensive and integrated ECD policy-making began.

A further challenge concerns the consultation and participation of stakeholders during ECD policy-making. Whilst expert technical teams, constituted by government officials, drafted ECD policy, consultation with and participation by civil society and ECD NPOs was limited. Whilst policy-makers cannot be expected to consult with everyone in formulating ECD policy, wide consultation and participation within the ECD sector are essential. Publishing a draft ECD policy only in a Government Gazette limits the number of stakeholders and individuals who are able to contribute to ECD policy-making. For the National Integrated ECD Policy, there were opportunities for ECD stakeholders to comment on the policy. Provincial consultation and participation were, however, limited to one Government Gazette, the nine provincial ECD consultations held by the DSD, and the ECD policy-making team. There could have been wider consultation with and participation by stakeholders in the making of the Interim Policy for ECD, Education White Paper 5 on ECD, and the National Integrated ECD Policy.

A next challenge was the degree to which government took responsibility for ECD policy-making and provision. The South African government, through the various ECD policies of 1996, 2001 and 2015, decided that it was responsible for birth registration and health care for children under the age of six years, and that it would provide limited support to ECD programmes and would not directly provide infrastructure or ECD programmes on any significant scale (DoE, 1996a, DoE, 2001b, RSA, 2015). In April 2018, there are clearly still constraints on what government was willing to do with regard to ECD provision.

A challenge in making ECD policy is to ensure policy implementation. The challenge with ECD policies from 1994 to 2015 was to implement quality ECD programmes and opportunities for young children. These programmes and opportunities should cover five main areas:

- an age-appropriate curriculum;
- meeting the needs of individual children;
- ensuring that young children in ECD programmes enjoy the best possible learning programmes and opportunities;
- sufficient funding by government to support ECD programmes; and
- ways to implement ECD programmes in communities to meet the early development needs of poor and vulnerable children.

Given the historical inequalities in South Africa brought on by many decades of apartheid racial segregation, the overall goal today is to provide an enabling environment for the establishment of ECD centres and programmes in vulnerable communities to ensure young children's early learning, healthy development and safety.

To conclude this section, I quote Pugh (1990: 12):

> In looking at the challenges and constraints inherent in developing a policy on early child care and education, I have tried to suggest that the needs of children and their families will only be met if we are able to develop a framework for services based on principles of equality of access, integration of services and quality of provision … this requires a commitment to devising a coherent policy and the resources to support its implementation.

6.10   Chapter summary

This chapter provides an analysis of ECD policy-making in South Africa and examined the macro, intermediate and micro structural influences on ECD policy as well as the contexts of influence, policy text production and practice which impacted on ECD policy in South Africa during the period 1996 to 2015. The analysis also comments on the political and economic transformation that South Africa was undergoing during this period.

The ECD policy-making trajectory in South Africa went through four distinct phases, from developing ECD policy options before 1994 to a new ECD policy direction after 2012 and changed markedly over the 25-year focus of this study. Since 1994, South Africa has produced and implemented three main ECD policies: the Interim Policy for ECD of 1996, Education White Paper of 2001, and the National Integrated ECD Policy of 2015. As a result, there has been an expansion of ECD provision, especially in terms of Grade R, as well as increases in the number of registered ECD centres, in the amount of the ECD per capita subsidy, in the number of children attending ECD centres and programmes, and in the number of ECD teachers trained. ECD activists, the ECD NPOs and two ANC conferences, at Polokwane in 2007 and at Mangaung in 2012, were instrumental in getting the country to this point. In considering ECD policy-making, the Global Campaign for Education (2012: 3) states, "[g]overnments should have a single, integrated early childhood policy, developed in the context of a national vision for young children. These plans should cover all relevant ministries and agencies, but with clear responsibility from a lead agency." This was not the

case in the ECD policies made in 1996 and 2001. However, a marked change in the ECD policy-making approach and in ECD thinking emerged from 2012 onwards, which resulted in the rights-based, comprehensive and integrated ECD policy reflected in the South African Cabinet-approved National Integrated ECD Policy (RSA, 2015).

Ten main factors, which enhance successful ECD policy-making and seven main challenges and constraints of ECD policy-making, were identified in this chapter. The presentation of the research findings in Chapter Five along with the analysis and interpretation of the research findings in this chapter, answered the research questions in this study. In analysing ECD policy-making I also had to illustrate how the RDP and GEAR impacted on policy produced. The adoption of GEAR as policy in 1996 resulted in government releasing a very limited ECD policy focusing on one year of Grade R as the main government ECD programme.

Chapter Seven presents a summary of the study findings, reflects on the current state of ECD in South Africa, makes ECD policy recommendations for the future, and draws this dissertation to a close.

CHAPTER SEVEN – SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

7.1   Introduction

The purpose of this study was to trace, describe and interpret the ECD policy-making trajectory in South Africa from 1990 to 2015. Through this study, I wanted to explain the ECD policy trajectory in South Africa and how it shaped the evolution of ECD in post-apartheid South Africa, during a time of rapid political transition and unprecedented social and education transformation. Understanding the ECD policy trajectory and policy-making processes could guide and influence future ECD policy-making in South Africa to the benefit of young children and their families. As an activist in the ECD field, I had the opportunity to be involved as a participant in the ECD policy-making processes over the 25-year period. In this descriptive-interpretive study (Elliot & Timulak, 2005: 147), I constructed data through an extensive review of the ECD literature by studying 27 ECD policy texts, and through face-to-face interviews with 19 informants who were centrally involved in ECD policy-making over this period. I also located myself in the study through an auto-ethnographic interview.

In this concluding chapter, I summarise the key findings of the study, reflect on the state of ECD in South Africa, discuss the implications of the findings for ECD policy-making and for ECD in South Africa, make recommendations for the future, and record the significance of the study. Lastly, I suggest areas for further research and end with a reflexive section and a concluding statement.

The main research question in this study was:

> What was the ECD policy trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa and how did
> it unfold?

To my knowledge, no previous work has been done on this question. In support of the main research question, the four secondary research questions were:

- How did ECD policy shape the evolution of ECD in post-apartheid South Africa?
- Which factors enhanced the ECD policy-making process in South Africa?
- How was ECD policy implemented in South Africa?
- Which lessons can be learned from the ECD policy-making process in South Africa over the period 1990 to 2015?

This study was necessary since early learning opportunities, health care, nutrition, safety and well-being are critical to the development of young children, especially vulnerable young

children, and is a basic human and constitutional right for all South African children. Whilst global research evidence informs us that ECD plays a critical role in achieving this, little research has been done on the evolution of ECD policy in South Africa and indeed on the African continent. In answering the research questions in this study, I chose to view the study through an interpretive lens. The decision to use an interpretive lens was taken based on the nature of the study and especially the research questions, which lent themselves to this approach. As I developed my analysis and interpretation, I quoted and drew on insights and contributions from key stakeholder responses. The intention here is to indicate that the interpretation "is sensible, both at each step of the way and in the overall view" (Jewell, 2013: 2). Based on the research, I constructed five main themes which emerged, and then discussed these themes and drew conclusions about the way in which the ECD policy trajectory evolved in post-apartheid South Africa.

Whilst the various ECD policy documents are lengthy and at times repetitive, in this dissertation I have captured the main elements of each of the 27 documents, which make up the ECD policy trajectory. Consequently, this research report constitutes the first documented record of the ECD policy trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa.

7.2   A reflection on the current state of ECD in South Africa – April 2018

Over the period 1990 to 2015, there has been significant ECD policy-making in South Africa. From the apartheid years, during which only white children were beneficiaries of government-supported ECD programmes, the democratic era since 1994 has seen all children eligible to benefit from education and social development legislation, and from ECD policies adopted. As in many other countries, the initial focus of ECD policy in South Africa was the introduction of a single, preschool year called Grade R (DoE, 2001b). An ECD policy change after 2012 resulted in a more comprehensive range of integrated ECD programmes covering education, health, nutrition, social protection and child well-being, being put in place. While this has benefitted young children, the majority of children, especially those who are poor, vulnerable and who live in rural communities and in urban, informal housing settlements, still do not have opportunities in line with their needs and their constitutional rights. ECD programmes, which Van den Berg and Vergnani (1986: 52-55) over three decades ago described as fragmented, inadequate and unequal, are still largely so. Whilst racial discrimination has disappeared from South African legislation, inequality in ECD provision still exists. Children who would previously have been classified as 'non-white' are still the

least provided for and with inferior quality services. Limited 'racial' integration has occurred at ECD centres and on ECD programmes across South Africa.

The ECD workforce has improved with regard to qualifications. However, the ECD workforce remains divided between a well-trained minority of teachers working in private ECD centres in middle-class and affluent communities, and masses of under-qualified and unqualified teachers who are poorly paid and who are not protected beyond what is provided for through the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, No. 75 of 1997 (RSA, 1997).

Notwithstanding efforts at inter-sectoral collaboration and integration, the division of government ECD responsibility between basic education and social development remains "conceptually and linguistically" (Moss, 2014: 354). In April 2018, South Africa still had two main government departments responsible for ECD provisioning. While comprehensive and integrated ECD has been advocated and extensively lobbied for by ECD activists over many years, and is now evident in the National Integrated ECD Policy, this has not yet been implemented to any significant degree. Education, health and social development programmes for children are still offered in silos, and the systemic and institutional coordination mechanisms put in place by government have not worked.

ECD terminology is still confusing because the definition of ECD in South Africa varies among the different ECD policy texts. Comparing the three main ECD policies focused on in this study, it was clear how the definition of ECD in South Africa was broadened as the global approach to ECD changed from being primarily ECD centre-focused, to being more comprehensive and integrated, incorporating early learning, health care, nutrition, safety and child well-being. Also confusing are the terms "universal" provision and "compulsory" provision, which are used interchangeably in various ECD policy documents. Government ECD policy documents refer to "universal" provision (DoE, 2001b: 29, DoE, 2008a: 7, DoE, 2008a: 8, DoE, 2008a: 11, DoE, 2008a: 12), meaning that the ECD programme is available to families and children in sufficient quantities, but the same documents also refer to "compulsory" (DoE, 2001b: 26, DoE, 2008a: 7), meaning that children are obligated to attend because it is legislated for. This confusion mostly relates to Grade R programmes. There is uncertainty about whether Grade R is part of the formal education system and therefore compulsory, or not. This is exacerbated by the DBE including Grade R in the formal Foundation Phase of compulsory education, whilst attendance in Grade R is not compulsory.

The national government has tightened its control over ECD regulations, norms and standards, monitoring and funding. Provincial government delivery of ECD has been varied with the wealthier provinces, the Western Cape and Gauteng in particular, offering a better range and quality of ECD programmes than the poorer, mostly rural provinces.

While there has been legislation and many ECD policy texts and national plans, and two large-scale monitoring and evaluation studies (the National ECD Pilot Project evaluation report in 2001 and the Diagnostic Review of ECD in 2012) little has changed in communities where young children are still largely ignored and not able to access quality ECD programmes.

Despite some advances and much rhetoric, ECD policy-making since 1994 has been disappointing. For most of the period 1990 to 2015, policy did not "shift beyond the symbolic and imaging level" (Sayed, 2001: 196). The opportunity to transform ECD substantially was not taken until the national DSD took leadership of the social sector in Cabinet in 2012, and produced a comprehensive, integrated and coherent ECD policy. Until this point, the impression gained by the ECD sector was that ECD was viewed by government as not important and having little political support. In looking back on the ECD policy trajectory, it is clear that there was a steady creep mode of transformation in ECD policy (Sayed, 2001: 192), rather than substantial changes which could have been made. Having been guided by the World Bank to implement a reception year (later called Grade R) for five-year-olds, the new democratic government, after coming to power in 1994, missed the opportunity to make ECD policy which was comprehensive and integrated, and which would meet the needs of vulnerable children and their families. This became a reality only in December 2015 with the approval of the National Integrated ECD Policy by the Cabinet (RSA, 2015). Moss calls this "the story of evolution rather than transformative change" (Moss, 2014: 357) and describes this very well, saying that new policy decisions are shaped and limited by the effects of previous decisions, leading to more of the same. He writes, "new governments, anxious to implement change, understandably are drawn to working with what already exists, rather than disrupting the status quo by taking a radically new course" (Moss, 2014: 356).

The potential weakness of the current ECD policy is that, like previous ECD policies, implementation is not likely to happen when measured against the clearly articulated policy goals and time frames. Four main challenges to the National Integrated ECD Policy of 2015 are evident:

- The major challenge is to garner the political will of the South African government to implement the policy. If ECD is not a political priority, it will not be adequately funded and thus implemented in South Africa.

- A second challenge is to ensure the funding for ECD centre-based and out-of-centre ECD programmes.

- A third challenge is to remedy the lack of leadership and management expertise and skills within implementing government departments. Limited leadership and management capacity exists in the DSD and DBE.

- The fourth challenge is the lack of ECD NPO capacity and resources to provide ECD programmes under this policy and to significantly increase the number of children who benefit from comprehensive and integrated ECD programmes. Sayed (2001: 196) encapsulates this reflection when he writes, "a consistent feature of educational policy is that symbolic commitments to overcome the legacy of apartheid inequities are not always realised in the crucible of practice."

7.3   A summary of the key findings of this research study

This study examined ECD policy-making in South Africa and covered the transition from apartheid to democracy, and the transformation of the education and social development sectors. Twenty-two years after the Interim Policy for ECD was made in 1996, the global approach to ECD programmes for young children has changed significantly, from a strong focus on centre-based ECD programmes, to a more comprehensive, integrated and coherent approach, which takes into account the early learning, health care, nutrition, safety and well-being of young children. In the first decade of democracy, the education focus of the South African government was on formal schooling and correcting the inequalities of the past in formal education, from Grade 1 to tertiary education. As a result, the development of ECD policy was cautious, slow and lacked political support. It took the new government seven years to produce an Education White Paper on ECD in 2001. As a result, ECD provision for young children advanced slowly, both in terms of access and quality. This study makes nine main findings in relation to ECD policy-making over this period, namely:

- Over the period 1990 to early 1994, ECD policy was put onto the political agenda and shaped by civil society and non-profit ECD organisation activists. After April 1994, government took responsibility for setting the ECD policy agenda. The process by which ECD policy was made changed after 1996 when the Interim Policy for ECD

was developed. Education White Paper 5 on ECD was developed by a foreign consultant working within the DoE, with little consultation with ECD stakeholders and under substantial political pressure. After 2012, the manner in which ECD policy was made again changed significantly, with national consultation with stakeholders, resulting in the National Integrated ECD Policy.

- While ECD policy-making skills and ability in South Africa have matured over this period, there is still a significant need for ECD policy-making, policy implementation and policy analysis skills in South Africa.

- The understanding of what ECD is in South Africa has broadened as the global approach to ECD changed from being primarily education- and centre-based-focused, to being more comprehensive and integrated, and incorporating the first thousand days of life, early learning, health care, safety, nutrition, and child well-being as components of a comprehensive and integrated range of ECD programme options.

- Early ECD policy documents reflected a broad vision for children, but no goals. With the National Integrated ECD Policy, this changed with a clearly articulated vision, mission and goals reflecting the new comprehensive and integrated understanding of ECD.

- While formulating ECD policy options prior to the election in 1994 was led by ECD activists, the South African government subsequently took responsibility for all ECD policy-making processes, initially through the national DoE and from 2012 onwards, through DSD.

- There has been minimal communication about ECD policy to the ECD sector and wider public with little effort by government to make ECD policy documents user-friendly and understandable to citizens. Especially noteworthy is that ECD policy-making became less consultative and participatory over the 25-year ECD policy-making trajectory of this study. Since the Interim Policy for ECD was made in 1996, there were few opportunities for communities and the wider public to participate in ECD policy-making. The academic sector was also not as involved in ECD policy-making as it was in other education sectors, and ECD teachers working directly with young children played a small role in ECD policy-making.

- Throughout the ECD policy-making period from 1994 to 2015, there existed and still exists, a tension between the DBE and DSD with these two government departments

working in silos with little coordination, collaboration and coherence. Each department currently has its own ECD policy, resulting in fractured responsibility, lack of cohesion and cooperation and an inability to implement a coherent, integrated and comprehensive ECD policy.

- There have been significant gaps between what the policy texts state and what government has implemented. Government did not have the leadership, managerial and administrative experience, skill and capacity to implement approved ECD policy adequately. By the time the National Integrated ECD Policy was approved by Cabinet in December 2015, government had acquired more capacity to implement ECD policy. Given that it is now more than two years since this approval, it is important to note that little appears to have taken place to date.

- No costing of the two main ECD policies in 1996 and 2001 was done. Government funding to finance these policies was also not forthcoming. With the National Integrated ECD Policy, there was a vague policy costing published as a support document to the policy. As with the two earlier ECD policies, minimal government funding to finance the current ECD policy has been made available.

To conclude this section, the findings of this study contribute insights into the ECD policy trajectory from 1990 to 2015. This is especially important when we consider the implications of the findings for ECD policy-making in South Africa.

7.4 Implications of findings for ECD policy-making and the ECD sector in South Africa

In this section, I discuss the implications of the main findings of this study for ECD policy-makers, ECD policy implementation and the ECD sector in South Africa.

7.4.1 ECD policy-makers

When ECD policy is made, the optimal manner of ECD policy-making can be summarised briefly as setting the policy agenda, appointing a policy-making technical team, consulting with ECD stakeholders, making a policy choice, costing the policy choice, allocating resources for the policy choice, policy implementation and policy monitoring and review, as the policy is implemented. This is the generally accepted manner for ECD policy-making. Whilst this does not happen linearly as written here, a policy-making framework is necessary to guide the process. To this end, there are various implications:

- ECD should be positioned on the political agenda so that each child's right to quality ECD programmes, as set out in various ECD policies, is assured.

- Government as the custodian of ECD policy should create an enabling environment and conditions for policy to be made and implemented to achieve the goals set out in the policy.

- Government should lead the ECD policy-making and implementation process given that it has the political mandate and institutional infrastructure, and could provide the necessary funding to achieve the policy goals.

- When ECD policy is made, significant stakeholder consultation and participation, which could result in enriched policy thinking and increased acceptance of ECD policy by stakeholders, is required.

- With the National Integrated ECD Policy now in place, citizens and the ECD sector need to be made aware of the provisions of the policy. A sustained, informative and widespread ECD policy communication initiative to inform people regarding ECD policy and implementation is needed. This would improve the likelihood of the policy being implemented successfully.

- Training and programmes to enhance government and NPO ECD policy-making skills are needed.

7.4.2   ECD policy implementation

Now that the South African government has determined ECD policy for young children in South Africa (RSA, 2015), it has the responsibility of ensuring funding for ECD policy implementation to meet the goals of the policy. To implement a coherent, integrated and comprehensive ECD policy and accompanying ECD programmes optimally, the following should be taken into account:

- There should be governmental political will, support, structures and mechanisms in place to coordinate and ensure policy implementation.

- Implementing ECD policy requires government to enhance the skills and capacity of government officials to a level where they can implement the National Integrated ECD Policy effectively.

- For ECD policy to be effective, sufficient funding is needed for policy implementation to ensure that ECD programmes as envisaged in the policy are universally available to young children who need it. Through the National Treasury,

government must, make sufficient funding allocations to meet the commitments of the National Integrated ECD Policy. Anything less will render the policy symbolic, and not intended to be implemented.

7.4.3   The ECD sector

The ECD sector provides ECD programmes, most often undertaken by NPOs. Below are the implications of the findings of this study.

- The ECD sector needs to develop and provide innovative ECD programmes to meet the requirements of the National Integrated ECD Policy. This includes ECD teacher training, early learning curricula focusing on early literacy, early numeracy and life skills, infrastructure, education equipment provision, and health care and nutrition. To meet the need for ECD policy expertise, the ECD sector needs to build ECD policy-making and implementation capacity for the future.

- To realise ECD transformation and equity in the ECD sector in South Africa, the leadership skills and capacity of ECD non-profit staff need to be developed and enhanced to support communities to provide quality ECD programmes for young children.

- To maximise ECD impact, ECD NPOs across South Africa should collaborate and partner, share knowledge, skills and resources. This is likely to result in cost savings, increased provision and improved quality.

- ECD non-profit and civil society sector should monitor ECD policy implementation to ensure that government meets the commitments made in the National Integrated ECD Policy.

These implications of the study findings for ECD policy-making, for implementing ECD policy and for the ECD sector are important for the future of ECD in South Africa in order to make and implement ECD policy optimally in the interests of young children and their families.

7.5   ECD policy recommendations for the future

Having highlighted the main findings that emerged from this study and the implications of these findings for ECD policy-making and for the ECD sector, I now make recommendations for doing ECD policy-making differently, which could contribute towards enhancing ECD policy-making in the future. The main recommendations which emerged from this study are:

- Significant governmental political will and support of ECD policy is essential. For ECD policy to work, it should be driven at the highest political level and should be part of the strategic focus of relevant government department. Government should take the lead in ECD policy-making through the relevant Cabinet Minister who should lead policy-making as a 'political champion'. If there is no significant political will at the highest level, the policy is unlikely to be a success. Supporting the political champion should be committed and competent government officials shaping ECD policy implementation.

- ECD policy should be framed within the constitutional and legal framework of the country, providing a frame of reference for the ECD policy-making team. For example, if ECD is framed by a Bill of Rights, then the policy should include text indicating those rights to which every child is entitled.

- In the approved ECD policy there should be a clear vision, principles and strategic goals, which embrace what government wants and intends for young children and an accompanying policy implementation framework, with ECD programme provision targets and activities.

- The ECD policy-making process requires ECD expertise and knowledge. A technical team of credible and trusted experts, who can do the work, consult with stakeholders and communicate their findings, should be put in place. Since ECD has globally become more comprehensive and integrated, policy-making teams should include – at a minimum – expertise in early education, health care, nutrition, child well-being and safety.

- Policy-makers should consult widely with recognised ECD experts, stakeholders, thought leaders and the public for input into ECD policy-making. Involving stakeholders in the ECD policy-making process contributes toward support of the resultant ECD policy.

- When an ECD policy is formulated, it requires that knowledge, data and information on ECD be available. An ECD situation analysis or diagnostic review should be done prior to or simultaneously with ECD policy-making. This means collecting data and information on a range of issues affecting ECD, reflecting data such as the number of children in the country, their ages, where they live, whether in urban or rural communities, their health status, access to nutrition, and programmes currently

available to young children, amongst others. An accurate, empirically validated description of the situation of young children in a country is crucial to making appropriate and effective ECD policy.

- When the ECD policy is made, the policy team should also cost the policy since the likely cost of implementing the ECD policy is central in getting the policy approved. Costing a policy informs decision-makers of the feasibility of implementing a proposed ECD policy and enables them to make an informed policy decision.

- For an ECD policy to be implemented, sufficient financial and other resources should be provided by government to ensure that the ECD policy is implemented. In a country such as South Africa, equity can be an issue, and disparities in resource allocation can be a problem. These resources should be provided equitably so that all children throughout the country can benefit. Funding mechanisms to support the ECD policy and implementation should be put in place.

- With comprehensive and integrated ECD policy and programmes for young children, which include education programmes, health care, safety, nutrition, immunisation and other child-centred services to provide for the holistic development of the young child, it is important that structures for coordination and collaboration of services across government departments exist. Where coordination and collaboration are fragmented, policy implementation is reduced and gaps in service and programme delivery may appear.

- Sufficient time should be set aside for the ECD policy-making process since policy-making can be complex, 'messy' and time-consuming. Time is necessary for planning the policy-making process, to consult with stakeholders, to consider ECD policy options, to make decisions and to build support for the policy.

These ten recommendations from the study could contribute positively to ECD policy-making in South Africa, on the African continent and also globally.

7.6　Limitations of the study

In undertaking this research study, I limited my study to focusing on the ECD policy trajectory and ECD policy-making. I have not focused on deep analysis of the policies made.

In conducting this study, I planned to interview the most significant individuals who had been involved in ECD policy-making during the study period and I am very confident that I have

been able to do this with two exceptions. One significant activist in ECD policy-making, who later became a Cabinet member in the administration, Mr Roy Padayachie, died in 2012, before this study began. I could also not interview the first director for ECD in the new democratic government, Ms Salama Hendricks, because as she respectfully informed me, she recognised the value of such a study and wished me well in undertaking it, but due to chronic illness she was not available to be interviewed. Understandably, some interviewees had difficulty in recalling in exact detail policy-making activities and events, which took place over two and a half decades. To compensate for this I triangulated information from the interviews, first with other interviewees, without breeching confidentiality, and secondly, with the policy documents studied. I am confident that this has strengthened the integrity and trustworthiness of this study.

A limitation introduced by the research approach used in this study is that the conclusions drawn from qualitative research are often regarded as suggestive rather than as definitive and generalisable (Babbie, 1992: 306). Given the nature of this study, an interpretive analysis of the ECD policy trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa, generalisation was not a goal. I believe that definitive findings and conclusions have emerged.

7.7 Significance and contribution of this study

My motivation for undertaking this research study has been to track the ECD policy trajectory in South Africa since 1990 onwards, and to understand how this trajectory has affected the evolution of ECD in South Africa. This study was intended to make sense of ECD policy that was made in South Africa, how it was made, and to inform ECD stakeholders, including government and the ECD NPO sector, of this.

This study makes an original and significant contribution to the field of ECD policy-making and policy trajectory studies in a number of ways. First, this study contributes to knowledge building by tracing, describing and interpreting successive ECD policies in South Africa, a country, which went through unprecedented transformation, reconstruction and development over a relatively short period of time. The study goes beyond description of the ECD policy trajectory, and also analysed the historical ECD trajectory and provided evidence-based findings on ECD policy-making. The study findings could support and guide ECD policy-making through offering recommendations, which could enhance effective and efficient ECD policy-making practices.

Policy trajectory studies are relatively new and there is limited research that documents policy trajectory studies internationally, both in ECD and in education. After an extensive literature review, only one South African study (Seleti, 2006) and few international studies (Liasidou, 2009; O'Sullivan, 2009; Vidovich, 1998; 2003) were found. I am not aware of any studies that have been undertaken which have tracked an ECD policy trajectory over any significant length of time. This study thus also built the field of policy trajectory studies and in so doing, offers a guide to ECD policy researchers who may wish to track, describe and understand the ECD policy trajectory in other countries. In addressing this gap in the literature, this study could make a significant contribution to the fields of ECD and policy trajectory studies.

Finally, this study contributes to knowledge building about ECD policy-making through the voices of activists and ECD policy-makers who have been central to ECD policy-making in South Africa. The study findings and recommendations could also have global relevance given the increased focus on ECD and ECD policy-making across the world.

7.8   Suggestions for further research

Having completed this research study, I have identified a number of significant gaps in ECD knowledge, which could be addressed in further studies. This study highlighted areas for further research.

- Implementing policy can be challenging, and research is needed on how to implement the National Integrated ECD Policy optimally and how to overcome the challenges faced during implementation. This is essential if we are to achieve the goals of the National Integrated ECD Policy.
- A major challenge in the ECD sector in South Africa is how to increase access to ECD provision to give effect to the National Integrated ECD Policy goals. ECD in South Africa mostly reaches children in urban communities where parents can pay the ECD centre fees. However, young children in South Africa who live in poverty do not have access to an ECD programme with the consequent effects on their early development. Comprehensive research is needed to explore how to reach these poorest of the poor children who are excluded from ECD provision.
- Because of the manner in which the South African government has structured its departments, ECD is an inter-sectoral programme with both the national DBE and DSD having ECD policies and being responsible separately for policy

implementation. Another structural dimension alongside this is that the Constitution stipulates that the national government makes policy and establishes national norms and standards, and the nine provincial governments provide, manage and fund ECD programmes in the provinces. Given the difficulties experienced with inter-sectoral ECD coordination, collaboration and coherence, research is needed on how to make interdepartmental ECD provision more integrated, comprehensive, collaborative, coherent and successful. South African authorities also need to find ways to enhance collaboration and coordination between the national, provincial and local spheres of government.

- In the National Integrated ECD Policy, provision and programming for children with disabilities have been included "but with no indication of how policy will be implemented, nor how the young child with disabilities in particular will be served" (Storbeck & Moodley, 2011: 1). To remedy this oversight, further research is required.

- Research needs to be undertaken into the meaning of quality ECD, since the various ECD policies emphasise quality, but do not indicate what this means nor what constitutes a quality ECD programme.

- Given the lack of effective communication with ECD stakeholders and the general public regarding ECD policies and the benefits of ECD programmes for young children, families and communities, research on the optimal way to overcome this challenge is needed.

If these suggested research studies can be carried out it might make a significant contribution to ECD in South Africa.

7.9   Reflection on my research journey

Mason (1996: 6) contends that researchers "cannot be neutral, or objective, or detached from the knowledge and evidence they are generating." In undertaking this research study, I had the benefit of having been involved as an active participant in the ECD policy-making process during the years 1990 to 2015. During this time, I was appointed to a number of ECD policy-making teams set up by the anti-apartheid structures and later by the new democratic government, to assist with policy development and implementation. Having played this role, gave me significant insight into the ECD policy trajectory and ECD policy-making from 1990 onwards and also access to key actors who were interviewed as part of this study.

During this study, I was aware that I was researching a topic in which I had long-time involvement and a focused interest, and about which I held strong views. I continually questioned my research methodology, actions and behaviour during the interviews, when reading the policy texts, when considering my role in the research process and during my interpretation of the data. As Mason (1996: 6) recommends, I "subjected these to the same critical scrutiny as the rest of the data."

One of my strengths was that I knew what the potential pitfalls in this study were, and as Bell (2005: 167) advises, I was "… constantly on the lookout for signs of bias and … placed great emphasis on reflection on practice and on triangulation" and I followed Bell's (2005: 167) advice, "So, we must be wise and vigilant, critical of our interpretation of the data, regularly question our practice and wherever possible triangulate."

One of the areas of which I had to be especially aware, was the interviews. From my involvement in ECD policy-making, I knew all 19 interviewees prior to my interviews. This required me to listen attentively and respectfully and to respond appropriately in the interview situation and not to dominate the interview, not to analyse the interview as it proceeded, and not to hasten the interviewees. Ritchie and Lewis (2003: 144) refer to this danger as follows:

> It is deleterious to be thinking about analytical constructs, or considering how what is being said within analytical themes, during the interview since this means that the researcher will not be giving their full attention to what the participant is saying.

During the interviews, I was especially vigilant not to comment on and interrupt the interviewees, thereby halting the flow of a response and possibly contaminating what was being said.

To ensure the quality and integrity of the study, I discussed the seven chapters with trusted and competent ECD colleagues, reflecting all the time on what I was thinking and writing. Throughout the study, my supervisor provided substantial and valuable advice and guidance regarding my approach to the study, content, voice and writing. On the advice of my supervisor, I kept a research journal, recording our discussions and decisions over time. This journal proved to be invaluable throughout the process and on my journey.

The research journey on which I have been through this study has been fascinating for me. The manner in which the 19 interviewees, without exception, responded to my request for an interview and the respect and courtesy shown in speaking with me, were heartening. I have

enjoyed doing this research study and have learned many lessons, and feel that I am able to make a contribution to the ECD sector through this study.

7.10   Concluding statement

There is global evidence and agreement that quality ECD programmes bring significant and substantial social, education and economic benefits to young children, their families and communities. This study has traced, described and interpreted the ECD policy-making trajectory South Africa between the years 1990 and 2015. The strength of the study is that the findings and interpretation of how ECD policy evolved in post-apartheid South Africa has contributed towards answering the main research question and the secondary questions, and highlighted how ECD policy-making could be undertaken in the future. The implications of the findings in this study for the ECD sector, including the South African government, are clear: if we do not get ECD policy and programming right, then the lives of millions of young children across South Africa will be adversely affected before they begin formal schooling, whilst they are in formal schooling and into adulthood. The recommendations made in this study offer a guide to ECD policy-makers to ensure that families and their young children have their basic right to education, health care, nutrition, well-being, social assistance and safety met, as is set out in the South African Constitution.

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ANNEXURE 1

BUFFALO CITY DECLARATION ON EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

"Acknowledging that Early Childhood Development (ECD) services are an investment in the overall well-being of children and intrinsically related to the promotion of child rights, poverty eradication, sustainable human resource development, basic education and health for all as enshrined in the South African Constitution;

Noting the crucial role of parents/caregivers to the well-being of a child;

Recognising the first 1 000 days of a child's life as critical to its holistic development;

Noting the lack of access to ECD services for most children including children with special needs, the urban bias in ECD provisioning and the inequitable distribution of services impeding the fulfilment of children's rights as enshrined in the Constitution and International Conventions;

Affirming the role of civil society in the provision of quality ECD services by government;

Recognising the need to improve qualifications of and conditions of service for ECD practitioners;

Acknowledging the need for the development of an ECD Curriculum for children between the ages of birth to four years;

Taking cognisance that ECD services are not adequately resourced;

WE COMMIT OURSELVES TO AN ACCELERATED ACTION TO ENSURE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THIS CONFERENCE, FOCUSING ON:

1. A comprehensive review and harmonisation of policy and legislation within the ECD sector moving towards universal access.

2. A multi-sectoral, integrated, coordinated approach to ensure the effective provisioning of ECD services by Government, non- governmental organisations, civil society and business.

241

3. Strengthening the role of parents/ caregivers, families and communities in the provisioning of ECD services.

4. The inclusion of children with special needs and deliberately extending ECD services to children in rural areas.

5. Adequate resourcing of ECD services, including infrastructure provisioning.

6. Working towards professionalization, accreditation, improving training and promoting the Basic Conditions of Employment Act in the ECD services sector.

7. Streamlining of registration processes and the standardisation of ECD services to improve the quality thereof.

8. The development of a Programme of Action, in collaboration with civil society partners, with clear targets and outcomes for each of the identified focus areas by 30 June 2012."

ANNEXURE 2

UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH ETHICS APPROVAL

UNIVERSITEIT·STELLENBOSCH·UNIVERSITY
jou kennisvennoot · your knowledge partner

Approved with Stipulations
New Application

05-Aug-2014
Atmore, Eric E

Proposal #: DESC/Atmore/July2014/60
Title:　　　**An interpretive analysis of the early childhood development policy trajectory in post-Apartheid South Africa.**

Dear Prof Eric Atmore,

Your **New Application** received on **10-Jul-2014**, was reviewed
Please note the following information about your approved research proposal:

Proposal Approval Period: **28-Jul-2014 -27-Jul-2015**

The following stipulations are relevant to the approval of your project and must be adhered to:
It is recommended that the informed consent form is proofread and edited as there are quite a few errors in the document e.g. "The researcher will strive to remain subjective..."

Please submit the revised informed consent form to the DESC and REC as soon as the recommended changes have been made.

Please provide a letter of response to all the points raised IN ADDITION to HIGHLIGHTING or using the TRACK CHANGES function to indicate ALL the corrections/amendments of ALL DOCUMENTS clearly in order to allow rapid scrutiny and appraisal.

Please take note of the general Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter. You may commence with your research after complying fully with these guidelines.

Please remember to use your **proposal number** (**DESC/Atmore/July2014/60**) on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your research proposal.

Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

Also note that a progress report should be submitted to the Committee before the approval period has expired if a continuation is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary).

This committee abides by the ethical norms and principles for research, established by the Declaration of Helsinki and the Guidelines for Ethical Research: Principles Structures and Processes 2004 (Department of Health). Annually a number of projects may be selected randomly for an external audit.

National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) registration number REC-050411-032.

We wish you the best as you conduct your research.

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at 0218089183.

Sincerely,

Clarissa Graham
REC Coordinator
Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)

ANNEXURE 3

Request to Participate in Research Study

15 Dunluce Avenue
Claremont 7708
Ph 021 683 2420

date

Dear ………………….

Re: An interpretive analysis of the early childhood development policy trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa

I am writing to you as a PhD student at the Department of Education Policy Studies, University of Stellenbosch doing a PhD research study on the early childhood development policy-making trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa.

The purpose of the study is to understand how key stakeholders in the policy-making process understood and experienced early childhood development policy-making from 1990 to 2015 and also to understand early childhood development policy-making.

My research is being supervised by Dr Nuraan Davids, Department of Education Policy Studies, University of Stellenbosch.

My request is for approximately one hour of your time to interview you on the topic. The interview will be informal and will provide you with the opportunity to respond to issues that I present to you. I am interviewing some 20 individuals and will then collate the data.

I would like to digitally audio-record our discussion and seek your permission for this. Once the text has been transcribed you will be provided with a copy of your transcript and you will be asked to amend the content as you see fit.

Participation in this research study is voluntary and you can decide to withdraw your consent without pressure or prejudice at any time. Any information that you provide will be strictly confidential and you will not be identified in either the research process or any publications which may result from the research. Should you wish for feedback on the study it will be provided to you after completion of the study.

If you have any questions regarding this study please contact me on 021 683 4173 or atmore@iafrica.com

I will telephone you during the coming week to discuss the possibility of meeting with you and to arrange a time and location that is convenient to you.

Thank you for considering my request.

Yours faithfully

Eric Atmore
PhD Research Student
Department of Education Policy Studies
University of Stellenbosch

ANNEXURE 4

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

UNIVERSITEIT·STELLENBOSCH·UNIVERSITY
jou kennisvennoot · your knowledge partner

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

An Interpretive Analysis of the early childhood development policy trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Adjunct Associate Professor Eric Atmore (M Soc Sc) from the Department of Education Policy Studies at Stellenbosch University. The results of the research will contribute to the fulfilment of a PhD Research Thesis.

You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you were involved in the development of early childhood development policy in South Africa during the period 1990 – 2015.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to gain an understanding of the early childhood development policy-making trajectory in South Africa from 1990 – 2015 and to develop a conceptual framework for early childhood development policy-making.

2. PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, we would ask you to participate in an individual interview with the researcher at a venue convenient to yourself.

The interview schedule containing the interview questions will be made available to you beforehand. The duration of the interview will be between 1.5 and 2 hours.

Due to the requirements of the study this interview will be recorded with a voice recorder but only with your permission.

3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

There is no physical threat by volunteering to participate in this study. Participants will be responding to the interview questions in a professional capacity, therefore there is no risk for discomfort. All experiences shared during the interview will be gathered with respect for the participant's dignity. The researcher will strive to remain as subjective as possible during the data construction.

4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

The respondent could gain professional insight and reflection into the early childhood development policy-making trajectory in South Africa over the period 1990 – 2015. Findings and feedback can be made available to the participants should they require this information.

The study is significant to society as it aims to development a conceptual framework for early childhood development policy-making. The findings and recommendations made as a result of this study is significant to the early childhood development sector globally because it will provide a conceptual framework for early childhood development policy-making.

5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

Involvement in this study comes without remuneration as the participants will participate voluntarily.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be linked to you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of removal of identifying details wherever required. The data collected during the interview will be safeguarded in a research file. The data will remain in a secure file and will only be seen and used by the researcher and the research supervisor.

The interview recording and identifying details will not appear anywhere in the research report. The participant has the right to request to view the transcripts of the recordings.

7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to respond to any questions you don't want to respond to and still remain in the study. The researcher may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

8. IDENTIFICATION OF RESEARCHER

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please contact; Principal Investigator: Eric Atmore (021 6832420 or 0825680200) or on atmore@iafrica.com

9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

Research Supervisor: Dr Nuraan Davids (021 808-2877) nur@sun.ac.za

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SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

The information above was described to [*me/the subject/the participant*] by [*name of relevant person*] in [*Afrikaans/English/Xhosa/other*] and [*I am/the subject is/the participant is*] in command of this language or it was satisfactorily translated to [*me/him/her*]. [*I/the participant/the subject*] was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to *[my/his/her]* satisfaction.

[I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study/I hereby consent that the subject/participant may participate in this study.] I have been given a copy of this form.

_____

Name of Subject/Participant

_____

Name of Legal Representative (if applicable)

_____   _____

Signature of Subject/Participant or Legal Representative   Date

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to _____ [*name of the subject/participant]* and/or [his/her] representative _____ [*name of the representative]. [He*/she] was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in [*Afrikaans/*English/*Xhosa/*Other*] and [*no translator was used/this conversation was translated into* _____ by _____].

_____   _____

Signature of Investigator   Date

ANNEXURE 5

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

<u>The policy-making process</u>

1. What was the early childhood development policy-making process / pathway / steps / phases over the period 1990 to 2015 or the period you were involved?

2. What was the vision, values and goals set for the early childhood development policy-making process?

3. What were the expectations of the early childhood development policy-making process?

4. Which government departments were involved in early childhood development policy-making?

5. What was the stakeholder response to the policy-making process and the eventual early childhood development policy? Did stakeholders support the eventual early childhood development policy position? How was support for the policy measured?

6. What role did the early childhood development national pilot project play in early childhood development policy-making?

7. What role did international and national documents (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, African Children's Charter, Constitution, Bill of Rights) play in early childhood development policy-making?

8. Did early childhood development policy-makers draw on scientific evidence and research and research findings (such as Head Start, High Scope)?

<u>The stakeholders/role players</u>

9. Who were the stakeholders involved in the early childhood development policy-making process?

10. How did stakeholders participate in early childhood development policy-making?

11. What was the level of agreement/consensus/trust among stakeholders involved in early childhood development policy-making?

12.   What role did the non-profit sector play in early childhood development policy-making?

13.   What role did individuals/consultants/experts play in the early childhood development policy-making process?

14.   Are there any role players who were excluded? Who are they and why were they excluded?

15.   What role did National Treasury play in early childhood development policy-making?

Early Childhood Development Directorate

16.   How did the early childhood development Directorate come about, when and why?

17.   What was the role of the national department's early childhood development directorate in policy-making?

Co-ordinating Committee on Early Childhood Development

18.   Why and how was the CCECD established?

19.   What role did the CCECD play in early childhood development policy-making?

Decision making

20.   What was the decision-making process in early childhood development policy-making, who made decisions, who approved the early childhood development policy?

21.   Why the decision to develop an early childhood development White Paper?

22.   Did Education White Paper 5 go to Cabinet – what was the decision?

Implementation

23.   Why was there no implementation plan as part of Education White Paper 5 on early childhood development?

24.   Should an implementation plan be a part of the early childhood development policy-making process?

Legislation

25.   Why has there been no early childhood development legislation after the release of Education White Paper 5 until the Children's Amendment Act of 2007?

Communicating the policy

26.   How was policy communicated and to who?

Political-economic environment at time of policy-making

27.   What influence did politics and economics play in early childhood development policy choice?

28.   Did you get a sense that the early childhood development policy-making process was considered important by government, a priority?

29.   Where did the departments of Education and Social Development take political guidance on early childhood development policy-making from?

The Provinces

30.   How did provincial departments and officials participate in the early childhood development policy-making process?

31.   Education White Paper 5 is about Grade R mainly, why not about early childhood development which is more comprehensive?

Factors impacting on process

32.   Looking back, which factors enhanced the early childhood development policy-making process?

33.   Looking back, which factors inhibited the early childhood development policy-making process?

Challenges

34.   What challenges did you encounter in the early childhood development policy-making process and how were challenges resolved?

35.   Was there dissent or disagreement in making early childhood development policy? If yes, how was this resolved?

36.   Comment on the Education/Social Development duality of policy-making

Towards guidelines for early childhood development policy-making

37.   From your perspective what do you think are the most important lessons learnt from the South African early childhood development policy-making process that could inform future early childhood development policy-making?

38. What process/guidelines would you suggest for early childhood development policy-making?

39. Who should lead early childhood development policy-making?

<u>Last question</u>

40. Is there anything which you would like to add?

ANNEXURE 6

Transcript Release Cover Letter

<div align="right">

15 Dunluce Avenue
Claremont 7708
Ph. 021 683 4173

</div>

Dear ……………….

Re: An interpretive analysis of the early childhood development policy-making trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa

Thank you for our interview for my PhD thesis on the early childhood development policy-making trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa and for your contribution.

A transcript of our discussion is attached for you. Please read through the transcript and make any changes that you wish to make.

Also, please make any additional comments that you consider relevant.

Upon its return I will make corrections to the transcript and a final copy sent to you for your records.

I have also enclosed with this letter a Transcript Release Form. I would appreciate it if you would also return a completed form within 14 days of receiving your transcript.

I look forward to receiving your confirmation of the transcript and thank you again for your assistance.

Yours faithfully,

Eric Atmore
PhD Research Student
Department of Education Policy Studies
University of Stellenbosch

ANNEXURE 7

Transcript Release Form

Research study: An interpretive analysis of the early childhood development policy-making trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa

Following my review of the transcript of our discussion regarding the early childhood development policy-making trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa I confirm that:

- The transcript is accurate and reflects our discussion.

- I give my approval for the transcript to be used in your research.

- My amended text more accurately reflects the accuracy of our interview. I

  understand that these changes will be made by you, to the original and that a revised transcript will be forwarded to me.

- I give my approval for the content of the transcript, and the amendments, to be incorporated in your research project.

Signature of Respondent   ………………………………

Name of Respondent   ……………………………….

Date………../………../………

ANNEXURE 8

Follow-up Transcript Release Letter

<div align="right">

15 Dunluce Avenue
Claremont 7708
Ph 021 683 4173

</div>

Dear …………………

Re: Transcript of Interview: An interpretive analysis of the early childhood development policy-making trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa

Thank you for contributing towards my PhD research into the early childhood development policy-making trajectory in post-apartheid South Africa.

Some weeks ago I sent you a copy of the transcript of our interview for you to consider whether it represented a fair and accurate account of what we discussed. I also enclosed a Transcript Release Form for you to complete so that you could indicate whether you require any changes to be made to the transcript and for you to indicate ongoing consent for your participation in the study. If you have any queries please phone me on 021 683 4173 to discuss any aspect of the transcript or the research.

If I do not hear from you within the next two weeks I will assume that 'no response' or a 'non-return' of the Transcript Release Form is an indication that you are agreeable for information from your transcript to be included in the thesis.

Thank you again for participating in this study.

Yours sincerely,

Eric Atmore
PhD Research Student
Department of Education Policy Studies
University of Stellenbosch