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MANAGEMENT AND CURRICULUM STUDIES**

**TEACHERS' VIEWS ABOUT EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION (ECE) LEARNERS' PARTICIPATION IN
SPORTING ACTIVITIES IN GWERU URBAN PRIMARY
SCHOOLS.**

BY

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APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have read and recommended to the Midlands State University for acceptance; a project entitled “**Teachers’ Views About Early Childhood Education (Ece) Learners’ Participation In Sporting Activities In Gweru Urban Primary Schools**” submitted by **Cathrene Zireva R158050T** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor Of Education Degree In Early Childhood Education.

Supervisor

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my husband Alson Ncube, my two daughters, Shumirai and Caroline and my son Simbarashe who did not question my divided attention between them and my studies that culminated in the production of this work. I also dedicate this project to the year 2017, which is a year of my personal transformation.

ABSTRACT

The study sought to find out teachers' views about ECE learners' participation in sporting activities with reference to Gweru urban primary schools. This study emphasized the role of teachers in teaching sporting activities. Teachers, nationally, regionally and globally indicated that sporting activities reduces ECE learners' deviant behaviours. The same teachers indicated that sporting activities among ECE learners relieve stress, depression and anxiety. These teachers further indicated that a child who participates in sporting activities is more likely to be mentally sharp. In view of these teachers perceptions the researcher sought further prop teachers' views about ECE learners' participation in sporting activities from those of varying backgrounds. The literature that was explored covered views of teachers from national, regional and international perspectives. The literature pointed out that these teachers were of the view that sporting activities help ECE learners' physical growth and mental sharpness. They further noted that sporting activities was hampered by some of the ECE teachers who lack knowledge and skills. However other teachers were of the view that sporting activities pose risks of injury and diseases to ECE learners. Data was collected and analysed using the descriptive research design. The respondents' views were captured through the instrument of questionnaire. Data collected was presented in graphs, tables and charts. The information was analysed and discussed giving the full picture of the teachers' views on the subject area under study. In pursuit of this study the researcher found out that there was inadequate equipment and facilities for ECE sporting activities in Mambo Ascot cluster. The study found out that there were challenges arising from the critical shortage of funds to source for equipment and facilities for ECE sporting activities. The study further found out that strategies such as provision of adequate funding, uniform government policy for all primary schools and talent identification were to be put in place to invigorate the teaching of ECE Sporting activities so that this would match the teaching efforts put in teaching other disciplines. The study further found out that Gweru urban primary schools would be afforded funding for resourcing ECE Sporting activities. Teachers in these schools should undergo refresher courses so as to improve themselves in the teaching of this discipline. There is a need for these schools to forge a more realistic partnership with the communities to win their hearts so that they give them the necessary support in the teaching and upgrading of ECE sporting activities.

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I also want to express my gratitude to the personnel at the Midlands State University and all the respondents in this study.

DECLARATION

I, Cathen Zireva, hereby declare that this project is my original work and affirm that it has not been submitted to this or any other University in support of an application for a degree.

Signed.....Date.....2017

Supervisor.....Date.....2017

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CHAPTER ONE

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.0 Introduction

This chapter outlined the background of the study, the statement of the problem and the major research question and sub questions. It further presented the assumptions of the study, the significance of the study, delimitations as well as limitations of the study. The chapter further defined the key terms. Finally the chapter ended with a summary.

1.1 Background of the study

The role of teachers is to impart knowledge, skills and attitudes to learners. Teachers have a role to mentor learners in a number of disciplines that includes sporting activities. Barker et al (2007) says that Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers in Boston, (USA) indicated that participation in sport by ECE learners reduces deviant behaviour. Naturally ECE learners have an inclination towards mischief especially if they are not meaningfully occupied. If ECE learners remain confined to the classroom, they become bored and develop school phobia. The participation of ECE learners in sport gives them the opportunity to relax from the mental pressure of the classroom.

Galligan and White (2001), says teachers in England have revealed that learners who engage in sporting activities reduce the risks of obesity. The advent of the television, poor eating habits and lack of exercises have a negative effect on the health of learners. According to Allen (2011) teachers in Sydney, Australia indicate that an increase in chronic diseases namely Cardio-Vascular disease, cancer and respiratory disease can be prevented when

learners participate in sporting activities. This means that sporting activities for ECE learners cannot be side-stepped. Sporting activities are vital to all human beings including ECE learners. Bailey (2012) further states that teachers in New Dehli, India indicated that sporting activities among ECE learners relieve stress, depression and anxiety just like they do in adults. The engagement in sporting activities by learners cannot be overemphasized since it reduces stress and depression. Pangrazi (2011) observes that teachers in San Francisco noted that a fit child is more likely to be mentally sharp. Even moderate physical activity has been shown to improve a learner's skills in such disciplines as arithmetic, reading and memorization.

According to Ombonga (2013) teachers in Ndola, Zambia say that ECE learners who engage in sporting activities enjoy good health and often lose weight. The same teachers also said that highly active learners have their sugar levels significantly reduced. Kahn et al (2014) maintain that ECE teachers in rural South Africa lack a keen interest themselves about ECE learners participating in sporting activities. The same teachers maintain that developing countries often do not have the financial muscle to fund sporting activities, hence teachers often develop negative views about engaging learners in sporting activities.

Gatawa (1990) posits that most of the teachers in Zimbabwe regard ECE learners' participation in sporting activities as a drawback because the schools lack sporting facilities such as gymnasiums and sporting equipment. ECE learning and teaching being a relatively new discipline in Zimbabwe comes as no surprise that in most schools facilities are for junior grades disregarding ECE learners. Further, Mberengwa (2014) states that teachers' views in Zimbabwe about ECE pupils participating in sporting activities are linked to limited access to information as teachers lack interest to learn more about sporting activities. Teachers in Zimbabwe lack interest in sporting activities opting to teach examinable subjects because

their value and competence are measured by the quality of results they produce. Also, some teachers may have scanty knowledge of teaching sporting activities owing to lack of information.

The views of the teachers about ECE learners participating in sporting activities differ from the global, regional and local standpoint. At international level schools are generously funded by their governments which prompts schools in the developed world to have skilled personnel who teach sporting activities and adequate facilities are available in such schools whereas in developing countries and locally the governments are in dire financial constraints which negatively impact on the development of ECE learners' sporting activities.

It is against this background that the researcher embarked on the study that focused on the teachers' views about ECE learners' participation in sporting activities.

1.2 Statement of the problem

According to Ombonga (2013; 2), teachers revealed that learners who engage in sporting activities enjoy good health and lose weight. It is against this statement that the researcher wanted to find out teachers' views about ECE learners' participation in sporting activities.

1.3 Research Questions

The following was the major research question:

- How do teachers view ECE learners' participation in sporting activities?

The following were the sub-research questions:

- What are the teachers' views on the suitability of the available sporting activities for ECE learner?

- What are the teachers' views on the availability of suitable sporting equipment for ECE learners?
- What strategies can be put in place in order to uphold sporting activities for ECE learners?

1.4 Assumptions of the Study

- It is assumed that the economy of the nation would remain stable during the period of the study as the researcher would depend on the current budget.
- It is assumed that the researcher would not relocate from her current residence in the course of the study.
- It is assumed that government policy will remain the same during the course of the study.
- It is assumed that the sample would prefer truthful responses to the instruments

1.5 Significance of the study

The study should benefit the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education as it should help them to formulate policy on teaching and management of sporting activities for ECE learners

The study should benefit ECE learners as they should gain from teachers' views about their teaching sporting activities to these learners.

The study should benefit the teachers as they should be equipped with the views of their fellow teachers and be able to shape their own views on teaching sporting to ECE learners.

The study should benefit school administrators as they should be conscientized as to the priorities and needs of sporting facilities for ECE learners.

The study should benefit other researchers as it should be a knowledge bank for them in pursuit of their own studies.

The study should benefit the researcher as she should gain insight into the topic in as far as ECE learners' participation in sporting activities is concerned.

1.6 Delimitations of the study

The study has confined to Midlands Province, Gweru District particularly Gweru Urban. The study represented all the primary schools in Gweru Urban. The study included teachers drawn from a target population of 330 teachers.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The researcher faced time constraints since she is a full time teacher, married, a mother of three, a student and a researcher. These multiple roles sometimes lead to role conflict. Enough time was needed to travel to administer the instruments. To circumvent this limitation the researcher used her special leave days and weekends to undertake the study.

The respondents were skeptical in proffering information to the researcher as they felt that they were being investigated and that their shortcomings would be reported to the relevant authorities. As a mitigatory measure, the respondents were motivated to participate by being informed that the information would be used for study purposes only.

The researcher faced financial constraints owing to travelling expenses to regularly meet the supervisor, and for distributing and collecting instruments and accessing internet and

libraries. To counter this constraint, the researcher borrowed a short loan from a local micro-financier and also engaged in small businesses.

1.8 Definition of key terms

Early Childhood Education (ECE)

Early Childhood Education refers to learning experiences which children from zero to eight years get at learning centres (Morrison, 1997).

Sporting Activities

Sporting activities is a human activity involving physical skills governed by a set of rules undertaken competitively and capable of achieving results (Bates, 2006).

1.9 Summary

This introductory chapter provided the direction in terms of teachers' views about ECE learners' participation in sporting activities. The chapter laid down the background to the research, the statement of the problem, the main research questions and sub research questions. It highlighted the significance of the study, delimitations of the study and limitations of the study as well as the assumptions of the study. Further, definitions of terms were part of this chapter. The next chapter reviewed related literature to the study topic.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter focused on reviewing literature that has a bearing and relevance to the study. Leedy (1985) says that the role of literature review is to focus on the reports of what others would have done in the related area but may not necessarily be identical to one's own area of study. Secondary data which has a relationship to one's study area can be used. Kirby et al (2011) maintain that research begins and ends in a library. They highlighted that the researcher's chief task before carrying out the study is to read broadly around the subject. Literature review is a continuous process that cuts across all stages of the research process in a dynamic pattern, hence literature review helps to clarify, strengthen and direct each stage of the research.

In this chapter the researcher reviewed literature pertaining to the following:

- The concept of ECE sporting activities.
- Types of ECE sporting facilities.
- Teacher's views on benefits of suitable ECE sporting activities.
- Teacher's views on shortcomings of sporting activities for ECE learners.
- Teacher's views on strategies for upholding sporting activities for ECE learners.
- Teacher's views on the policy of ECE sporting activities.
- Teacher's views on perceptions of school administrators and parents in ECE sporting activities.

2.1 The Concept of ECE Sporting Activities

Bates (2006) says sporting activities are the academic and professional disciplines which focus on the art and science of human movement with emphasis being given to fitness and outdoor recreation of the learner. Sporting activities therefore enhance ECE learners' overall health. Further sporting activities refresh ECE learners as they freely exercise their bodies. Sporting activities most of the time are done outside the classroom and this promotes a learner's freedom and free movement. Bailey (2012) indicates that the teachers' views on sporting activities have often emphasized on helping learners' physical growth. They further argue that sporting activities' purpose is more focused on active living and healthy life styles. Hardman and Marshall (2002) indicate that European and American teachers called for sporting activities to be included in the curriculum as this would help ECE learners to identify with their own cultures and strengthen the development of healthy bodies. Self-confidence is also built when learners are engaged in martial arts and other physical activities.

2.2 Teachers' Perceptions about ECE Learners' participation in sporting activities.

Generally, teachers have varying perceptions regarding ECE learners' participation in sporting activities. Some teachers view sporting activities as a stepping stone to the livelihood of the learner while other teachers hold fears about an ECE learner participating in sporting activities. Boyle et al (2008) notes that teachers harbour perceptions to the effect that in the discharge of their duties in sporting activities there is a high probability of ECE learners facing risks some of which may even be fatal. In such cases teachers try to exonerate themselves from prosecution and civil suits by not engaging in ECE learners in sporting activities.

Overallly, teachers degrade non-core subjects. Therefore as Nziramasanga (1999) suggests teachers often prioritize academic subjects at the expense of sporting activities. However, the Nziramasanga Commission called for a level playing field in that they wanted a new curriculum that would put sporting activities at par with examinable subjects. In this respect the Commission intended to alter this negative perception by teachers on ECE sporting activities.

Kahn et al (2014) state that ECE teachers in rural South African often do not have the financial muscle to fund sporting activities hence teachers develop a negative attitude towards engaging learners in sporting activities. In the Southern African region the teaching staff faces difficulties in that they are mandated to engage in sporting activities where there are no facilities and even equipment for use, for instance, soccer is normally played by ECE learners barefooted and in bumpy and stony playing fields. Thus the teaching staff develops a negative attitude owing to the fears that learners who engage in sporting activities may sustain injuries and they would be held accountable.

2.3 Types of ECE sporting facilities and Teachers' views on required Sporting facilities

According to Galligan et al (2000) in his study concluded that sporting facilities refer to facilities that provide pupils with the basic activities designed to foster their physical development and enhance their sociability. These facilities are in the form of swimming pools, sporting pitches play and gymnasium centres. Galligan et al (2000) further indicate that teachers are of the view that ECE learners require such facilities to take part in their sporting activities that develop them physically and intellectually.

2.4 Teachers' views on the Benefits of Suitable Sporting Activities

Zenger (2001) posits that teachers in San Francisco indicate that sporting activities help pupils in developing their movement skills and develop interest in other physical activities. Further these teachers also maintain that sporting activities enhance learners' social, cognitive development and academic achievement. Sporting activities enhance co-ordination by team members. These teachers further argue that Sporting activities act as a unifying force amongst learners in as much as they sharpen the minds of the learners which greatly benefit the learners in examinable subjects.

Boyle et al (2008) state that ECE teachers in Lancashire (United Kingdom) are of the view that sporting activities enhance ECE learners' self-confidence, self-esteem and reduce the tendency of engaging in risk behaviors. The same teachers further note that sporting activities prepare learners to embrace competition and co-operation. Bailey (2012) in his study pointed out that learners who excel in sporting activities become models for other learners and feel proud of it. Furthermore Bailey (2000) indicated that on completion of school learners face real challenges as they try to outclass fellow sportspersons in order to gain victory. Learners who have worked as team tend to develop a sharp sense of competition.

Essa (2011) postulates that teachers in Sydney, Australia, indicated that sporting activities develops an understanding of the role of physical activities in promoting learners' health. Again they maintain that sporting activities relieve learners' tension, since they act as form of relaxation. The same teachers argue that sporting activities assist in building and maintaining ECE learners' healthy bones, muscles and control learners height and reduces fat. They further stated that since learners are engaged in sporting activities the learners enter a new world that is free of hassles and life's daily challenges and this puts the learner at ease.

According to Ombonga (2013), teachers in Ndola, Zambia stated that sporting activities may play a therapeutic role in addressing a number of learners' psychological disorders. The same teachers maintain that engaging ECE learners in sporting activities tends to reduce levels of depression in them and that sporting activities boost learners' self-esteem among ECE learners. Hunter and Petrie (2011) posit that teachers in rural South Africa say that sporting activities can make a substantial contribution to the well-being of the ECE learners in developing countries. The same teachers further state that sporting activities have long been used in the treatment and rehabilitation of communicable and non-communicable diseases. Mberengwa (2014) indicates that teachers in Harare are of the perspective that sporting activities contribute to one's personal enjoyment, personal growth, social and integration. The same Harare teachers said that sporting activities have an entertainment value; the learner is nurtured mentally and develops physically. These teachers say that such an individual learner fits in perfectly into the well-oiled machinery of the society and the learner's behaviour is modified positively and meaningfully; for example such an individual learner who participates in sporting activities may shun deviant behaviour.

2.5 The Teachers' views on Shortcomings of Sporting Activities for ECE Learners

According to Macmillan and Schumacher (1989), ECE teachers in California lack of understanding and skills in teaching physical education is a setback in the teaching of sporting activities. Mendy (2008) observes that ECE teachers in Leeds, UK indicate that teachers' perceived competence often do not match their confidence in the teaching of ECE sporting activities. It is unfortunate that the assumption that teachers are usually knowledgeable in all other subjects but fail to support sporting activities in as far as teaching of that subject is concerned.

Morrison (1997) says that teachers in Washington DC said that some teachers lack the skills to evaluate ECE learners' progress in sporting activities. This disadvantages the talented learners who end up being made to pursue, for instance, academic disciplines at the expense of their areas of interest.

Erwin (2008) writes that some teachers identified some of the major barriers of sporting activities for ECE learners. The barriers include inadequate physical facilities, unqualified and inadequately trained teachers, and that some schools which offer relevant sporting activities are only located in urban and affluent communities. In some instances ECE sporting activities become privy to only those learners from rich communities. However talent may also be found in poor communities if the learners are encouraged.

According to Pangrazi (2007) teachers in Pretoria indicated that ECE learners incur physical injuries when engaged in sporting activities. This breeds fear in teachers as they feel that they may be held accountable for neglecting to protect pupils involved in sporting activities. The probability of sustaining injuries on the part of learner is high and inevitable.

Bailey (2012) postulates that teachers in Cape Town say that some ECE learners exhibit unsportsmanlike behaviour. Some of the learners exhibit undesirable behaviour while they are engaged in sporting activities. A case in point is that some learners become violent when they are bumped into by learners from opposite teams.

Mutepfa et al (2007) argue that teachers in Mashonaland indicated that teachers said that sporting activities deprive learners of time for other activities. For example learners may have little time and also some may learn aggressiveness through sporting. These teachers felt the common practice of belittling sporting activities at the expense of examinable subjects makes parents shun sporting activities. They further maintain that the main problem bedeviling the

Zimbabwean culture is that it is only through excelling and mastering academic subjects that the learners can make it in life.

2.6 Teachers' views on Policies of Sporting Activities

Policies support any venture and ECE sporting activities needs establishment of such policies. Wood (2009) posits that teachers in Chicago argue that if physical education was designed as a core academic subject it would receive much needed policy attention that would enhance its overall quality. However, in most cases such policies do not exist. Fortunately in New York teachers observed that sporting activities should be supported by state statutes, laws and regulations mandating time requirements and monitoring compliance (Weston, 2002). Such state policies would take sporting activities to a higher level and match the priorities given to academic subjects. The same teachers further noted that the state policies should include decisions about what to teach, who to teach it and what level of resources should be provided. Such an approach would ensure total conformity resulting in teachers seriously providing the ECE sporting activities the importance it deserves.

Comparatively, Trost (2009) says that teachers in San Diego believe that the government is mandated to fund ECE sporting activities for the wellness of ECE learners. Funding would help ECE learners in acquiring the relevant equipment for sports. Funding is also key to acquiring necessary and suitable facilities. Hapanyengwi (2009) maintains that teachers indicated that exceptionally talented ECE learners should be identified at grassroots level and supported with sporting equipment all the way through if they are to blossom in their lives into fully fledged sportspersons.

Haysman (2013) states that teachers in Johannesburg are of the opinion that planning sporting activities should include a comprehensive set of policies, programs and initiatives designed to

increase physical activity in all the segments of the South African population. This strategy should go a long way in ensuring that all South African ECE learners should be physically active, and they should live, work and play in environments that encourage regular sporting activities.

2.7 Teachers' views on the form of support by School Administration and Parents in ECE Sporting Activities

For ECE sporting to thrive, administrators and parents should be active in supporting the learners. Siedentop (2004) postulates that teachers in Chicago are of the view that parents provide an accountability system over the ECE learners' school administrators and teachers thereby influencing school policies and practices. In the event that an ECE learner is injured during sporting activities, school administrators are answerable to that eventuality. Siedentop (2004) further states that teachers are of the view that administrators do not hold sporting activities as core to the ECE curriculum. They further say that school administrators tend to prioritize learners who would have excelled in ECE sporting activities in the provision of sporting equipment rather than for those whose who do not show talent. Also parents fail to prioritize their children's talents at grassroots level in the sporting discipline.

According to Hunter and Petrie (2011), the Asian teachers are of some perception that administrators and parents do not support ECE learners' sporting activities believing that they are too young to engage in such activities. The same teachers further argue that the disadvantage in this approach is that sporting activities on which a lot of school funds are spent and only implemented at junior level and not at ECE level. In the end all the school gets is a poor quality of play by junior learners in sporting activities since they would not have been groomed at ECE level. Mashiri (2006) says that teachers in Mashonaland are of the

view that teachers and administrators have biases towards core subjects at the expense of non-core discipline subjects especially at ECE level.

2.8 Teachers' views on the Strategies for upholding Sporting Activities

Gulligen and White (2001) state that teachers in London are of the view that new strategies to strengthen sport from young learners are through community sport in a bid to create a more active nation. The same teachers further suggest that sporting activities should be availed to ECE learners for them to gain skills, improve their physical and mental health and to promote their social inclusion. Sporting activities enable the learners to develop group concepts of sharing and becoming part of society. According to Barker et al (2007) teachers in Boston, United States maintain that upholding the integrity of sporting activities of ECE learners is an important strategy to guard against corruption in sporting activities later on in learners' lives. Such integrity in sport helps to identify genuine and real talent in the learners beginning at ECE level.

2.9 Summary

The preceding chapter concentrated on literature review to provide insights into the study that focused on **teachers' views about Early Childhood Learners' participation in sporting activities**. The chapter also highlighted strategies that were employed to uphold sporting activities for ECE learners. The next chapter dwelt on the research methodology adopted for this study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlined the research design used in the study. It focused on an overview of the composition of the population from which a sample was drawn. This chapter also described the instruments which were used to collect data for analysis. The data collection plan on how data was analyzed and how information was presented were also outlined. This chapter ended with a summary.

3.1 Research Design

According to Zenger (2001), a research design is outlining procedures that would be used to collect and analyse the data relevant to the study. He further argues that it is in the research plan, the researcher was requires to implement all steps of the study in the most effective way. The research design provides the details of how the research would be conducted. In this study the researcher used the descriptive research design. Leedy (1985) says that descriptive research design is carried out with specific objectives resulting in definite conclusions. He further states that, it gives an insight into the subject matter so that conclusions are made to address the research questions.

Creswell (2009) posits that descriptive survey research design seeks to establish a method of conducting the research. The descriptive survey research design is capable of collecting the participants' attitudes, values, beliefs and motives. This design is credited for its cost effectiveness. Descriptive survey research design enables the researcher to better describe quantitative data from the questionnaires. The researcher was motivated to use this design

owing to its framework of analysis which could be broken down into observable variables. Further, the data collected allows for gathering in-depth information that may be quantitative or qualitative. This allows for a multifaceted approach to data collection and analysis. In addition the use of descriptive survey research design may be a precursor to future research because it can be helpful in identifying variables that can be tested. Also the descriptive survey research design is able to collect data in large amounts and participants are observed in a completely natural environment. However participants may not be truthful or may not behave naturally when they are being observed.

3.2 Population and Sample

Booth (2011) says that a population is an entire group under study as defined by the researcher's objectives. He further notes that the population is the aggregate of cases about which the researcher would like to make generalizations. It is a list of all units from which a sample is chosen. The population in this cluster stood at sixty ECE teachers. In this case the population was for all ECE teachers from four schools in Ascot cluster. The population represented the entire group of teachers under study.

Booth (2011) defines a sample as a section of the population that is intended to represent the whole population. Sample members have the characteristics of the whole population in order for it to be true representative. Chiromo (2009), argues that a good sample fairly represent a population in that it should display all the characteristics of a population to effect that individuals are representative of a larger group from which they are nominated. Sampling enables the researcher to spend less time, effort and finances to obtain the requisite information from only some of the participants rather than all. In this study the researcher sampled two primary schools from the four schools of Ascot cluster.

The researcher used stratified random sampling. Davison (2008) defines stratified random sampling as a method that accepts the variability of the population hence it was a tool that tries to reduce potential non representativeness through stratifying the population before a sample was taken. The group of elements would be arranged into similar sub groups in view of picking the final sample. A simple random sampling procedure would be used after having stratified the population. In this study simple random sampling was used to select the sample of ECE teachers from the two (2) schools.

3.3 Instrumentation

Creswell (2009) defines research instruments as a fact finding strategy and tool for data collection. In this study a questionnaire was used in the collection of data. Questionnaires are the data collection techniques specially designed by the researcher for the purpose of collecting data from the field. The questionnaires were administered to a sample of twelve (12) teachers.

3.4 The Questionnaire

Yin (2011) posits that a questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions for the purpose of gathering information from the respondents. Davison (2008) adds that questionnaires provide systematic information. He further notes that a questionnaire translate research objectives and answers the research to provide data for analysis. The questions on the questionnaire motivated the respondents so that the necessary information was obtained. The questionnaire contained only closed ended items that are easy to analyse. Questionnaires produce responses from the respondents that easy to interpret and analyse. The mood, personal appearance and conduct of the investigator do not influence the respondents.

The identity of the respondents was unknown hence the respondents have the liberty to freely respond to questions. Also questionnaires can be administered to a very large sample therefore they ensure a lot of information is obtained. However questionnaires do not provide the chance to observe non- verbal cues such as voice and body language. There was no assurance that the respondents would have understood the questions and that they do not provide a chance of clarifying certain points. The questionnaire is not ideal for illiterate population. However in this study all the respondents were literate.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

According to Zenger (2001) data collection procedures entails how primary and secondary data were collected. It involves preparing to administer and collection of data using questionnaires as has been alluded in this chapter. Kotler (2000), argues that data collection procedure includes the sequential steps taken in the collection of data. The following were steps taken by the researcher in administering questionnaires and collection of data from the respondents: The researcher obtained an introductory letters from the Chairperson of the Faculty of Education at Midlands State University. She sought permission from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to carry out a study in the sampled schools. Permission was granted to carry out the study. Thereafter, the researcher also sought for permission from the school heads two (2) days before the actual distribution of questionnaires. The questionnaires were self-administered to respondents and collected soon after they were completed to ensure a one hundred percent (100%) response rate.

3.6 Data Analysis Plan

Macmillan and Schumacher (1989), state that data analysis is the process in which the researcher summarizes and analyses data that has been collected. The researcher organized

the collected data according to the research questions. She collected data by the use of questionnaires. The kind of analysis utilized depended on the research design, the method of sampling and method by which data was collected and measured. Data analysis involved the ordering and structuring of information obtained during data gathering. The researcher in analyzing data drew inferences about the problem. The categorized data were analyzed in relation to each objective of the study in order to establish how well the data achieved researcher's objectives.

3.7 Data Presentation

Data were collected from schools through questionnaires. It was presented in the form of percentages and illustrated in tables, pie charts and bar graphs.

3.8 Summary

The chapter highlighted the research design used in the study. It also examined the population and a sample was drawn out through the stratified random sampling procedure resulting in the actual sample numbers picked using the simple random sampling. The chapter further examined the instrument for data collection which was the questionnaire. The chapter also explored data collection analysis and presentation. The chapter ended with the summary. The following chapter focused on data presentation analysis and presentation.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter focused on the presentation, analysis and interpretation of data that were collected by the researcher on ECE teachers' views about ECE learners' participation in sporting activities. The chapter sought to establish whether the data answered the research questions. Data were presented qualitatively through the use of numbers, percentages and illustrated the data with tables, graphs and charts. The analysis of data was done quantitatively and these numerical presentations gave a detailed description of research findings which were supported by the related literature. The data were presented in three parts with the first sections focusing on respondents' demographic data for ECE respondents. The second and third sections focused on data as it were related to the research questions of the study.

4.1 Presentation and Analysis of Findings

The following section presented the respondents' profile information on gender distribution, age distribution, academic qualifications, professional qualifications and lastly teaching experience.

4.1.1 Response Rate

The researcher distributed thirty-two (32) questionnaires to the participants from the four (4) schools under Mambo-Ascot cluster. The response rate was thirty-two (32) out of the expected thirty (32) producing a 100% return response. The 100% return response was attributed to the secrecy of the instrument which was used. Response rate table pertaining to

questionnaire administered to respondents and collected by the researcher is shown below. A breakdown of the response rate by participants is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 4.1: Response rate by the participants

Category of participants	Number of distributed questionnaires	Number returned	Response rate
ECD 'A'	04	04	100%
ECD 'B'	04	04	100%
Grade 1	09	09	100%
Grade 2	07	07	100%
Grade 3	08	08	100%
Total	32	32	100%

Table 4.1 shows a high response rate on the whole as all teachers in the sample fully responded and returned their questionnaires. It therefore means that the desired outcomes of the study were met and the set research questions were answered. This is supported by Zenger (2001) who maintains that once the response rate of the respondents is overwhelming, it becomes a true reflection of the overall picture of the general feelings of individuals in the chosen demographic area.

4.2 Demographic Data

Academic and professional qualifications of ECE participants have an impact on these respondents' views on the learners' participation in sporting activities

4.2 Participants' Profile

Table 4.2.1: Participants' Gender

Demographic Data	Frequency	Percentages
Male	4	13%
Female	28	87%
Total	32	100%

Twenty eight (87%) of the respondents in the sample are female whilst a paltry 4 (13%) are males. The female environment crowds out the male environment.

4.2.2 Respondents' Age Distribution

Demographic Data	Frequency	Percentages
26 – 30	3	9%
31 – 35	9	28%
36 – 40	18	56%
41 +	2	7%
Total	32	100%

The respondents in the age group of twenty-six to thirty years (26-30) represented ten percent (10%) of the sample. This group constituted a very low number of respondents in this age group who participated in this study. The low figures in terms of this particular study means very few young teachers participated in this study.

The respondents in the age group of thirty-one to thirty-five years (31-35) represented twenty-eight percent (28%) of the sample. The respondents in the age group of thirty-six to forty (36-40) represented fifty-six percent (56%) of the sample. They formed the majority of respondents in the sample.

The forty-one (41) and above age group for the respondents represented only a seven percent (7%) of the sampled number. Sporting activities discipline needs active ECE teachers to demonstrate to learners the skills of varying types of sporting activities. The low numbers in this age group is attributed to the respondents who are quite aged.

4.2.3 Respondents' Academic Qualifications

Demographic Data	Frequency	Percentages
Ordinary Level	26	81%
Advanced Level	6	19%
Total	32	100%

Eighty-one percent (81%) of the respondents in the selected schools have Ordinary Level qualifications whilst the remaining nineteen percent (19%) have Advanced Level qualifications. This means that the majority of the respondents hold O level qualifications.

4.2.4 Respondents' Professional Qualifications

Demographic Data	Frequency	Percentages
Diploma in Education	18	56%
Bachelor of Education Degree	10	31%
Master of Education	4	13%
Total	32	100%

Fifty-six percent (56%) of the respondents in the sample have diplomas in Education. This is the basic professional qualification for an ECE teacher to be able to teach to ECE learners. The respondents who were selected showed that thirty-one percent (31%) have a Bachelor in Education Degrees whilst thirteen percent of the respondents in this sample have a master of education Degree. In this study the majority of the participants held a basic academic qualification. The significance of a teacher’s professional qualification was cited by Bates (2006) when he said that professional disciplines focus on the art and science of human movement with emphasis being given to fitness and outdoor recreation of the learner.

Table 4.2.5 Respondents’ Teaching Experience

Demographic Data	Frequency	Percentages
5 – 10 years	12	38%
11 – 20 years	6	18%
21 – 30 years	6	18%
31 – 40 years	4	13%
41 years +	4	13%
Total	32	100%

The five to ten years experience for respondents in this cluster constituted thirty-eight percent (38%). The eleven to twenty years experience group were eighteen percent of the respondents. This is evident of respondents who have the necessary experience to teach ECE learners. The twenty-one to thirty years experience group was represented by eighteen percent. This group showed that they had accumulated the greatest number of years of teaching experience. The results show that respondents with the thirty-one to forty years (31-40) experience were represented by thirteen percent of the sample. Respondents in the forty-

one years of experience were also represented by a thirteen percent sample. The adverse consequences of lack of experience were observed by Erwin (2008) who stated that some of the barriers of sporting activities included unqualified and inadequately trained teachers.

4.3 Respondents' views about engagement of ECE learners' in sporting activities

Category	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage	Total
ECD 'A'	03	9%	01	3%	12%
ECD 'B'	02	6%	02	6%	12%
Grade 1	06	19%	03	9%	28%
Grade 2	05	16%	02	6%	22%
Grade 3	04	13%	04	13%	25%
Total	20	63%	12	37%	100%

Source: Questionnaire / Primary Data 2017

The findings reviewed that 63% of the participants agreed that ECE learners engage in sporting activities whilst 37% disagreed. The concept of teachers prioritizing academic subjects was espoused by Nziramasanga (1999) who suggested that teachers often prioritize academic subjects at the expense of sporting activities.

Table 4.4: Teachers' views on the suitability of sporting activities equipment for ECE learners

Category	Suitable	Percentage	Unsuitable	Percentage	Totals
ECD 'A'	03	9%	05	15%	8(25%)
ECD 'B'	01	3%	07	22%	8(25%)
Grade 1	02	6%	04	13%	6(19%)
Grade 2	01	3%	04	13%	5(16%)
Grade 3	00	-	05	15%	5(15%)
					32(100%)

Source: Questionnaire / Primary Data 2017

The majority of respondents as shown in Table 4.8 which constituted 22% were of the view that available equipment of sporting activities was unsuitable. Fifteen percent of the participants were also of the view that the available equipment of sporting activities was unsuitable. The last 13% of the respondents were also of the view that the available sporting equipment was also unsuitable. It was imperative that modern sporting activities equipment be sourced if the discipline is to be seriously undertaken by ECE learners. In concurrence with this view are MacMillan and Schumacher (1989) who in their studies pointed out that ECE learners must have a broad range of suitable sporting equipment if they are to perform at their best.

The study sought to find out participants' views on the suitability of sporting activities which are being taught at these selected schools. The results were presented in Figure 1 below.

Figure 4.1: Teachers' views on the suitability of sporting activities carried out with ECE learners.

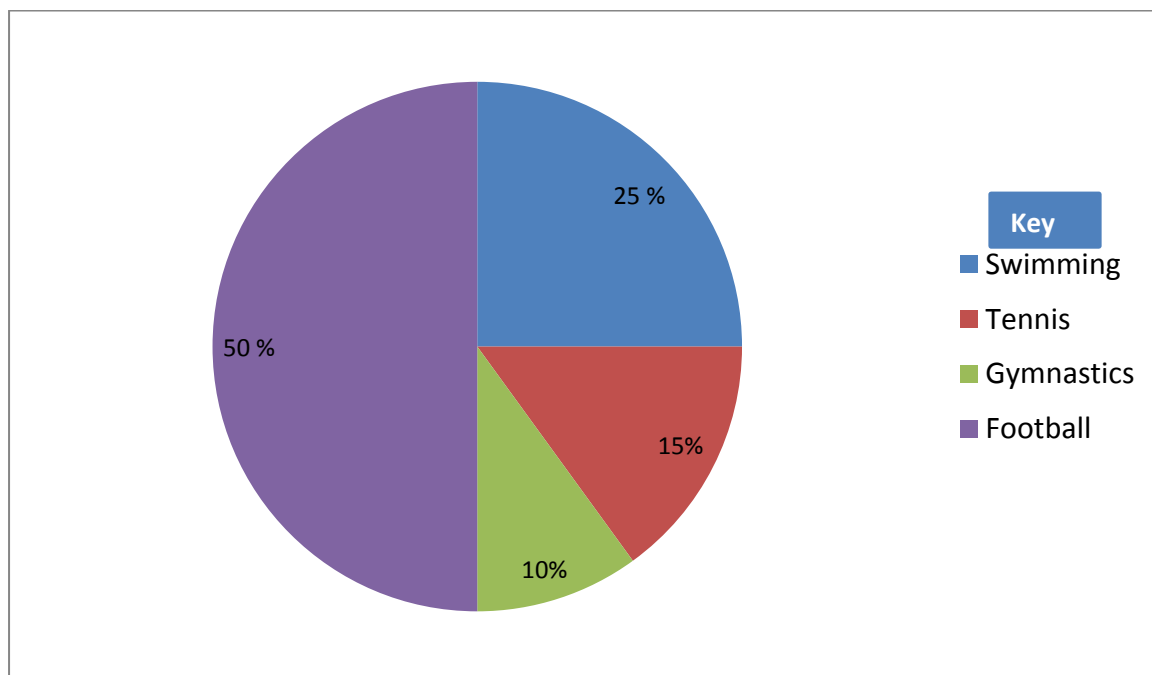


Figure 4.1 Source: Questionnaire / Primary Data 2017.

The respondents revealed that 50% of the sporting activities that are done are football. The remaining 50% are swimming which is taking a bigger chunk of 25%, tennis 15% and lastly gymnastics 10%. This showed that the teaching of football as a sporting activity was given the most attention at the mercy of the others. Lack of knowledge on the part of teachers was noted by Castell and Rink (2003) who observed that teachers' perceived competence does not match their confidence in teaching of ECE sporting activities.

4.6 Strategies to uphold Sporting Activities

The study sought to investigate participants' views on the strategies to be put in place to uphold ECE sporting activities. The participants suggested the strategies as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 4.2: Participants' views on Strategies to uphold Sporting Activities

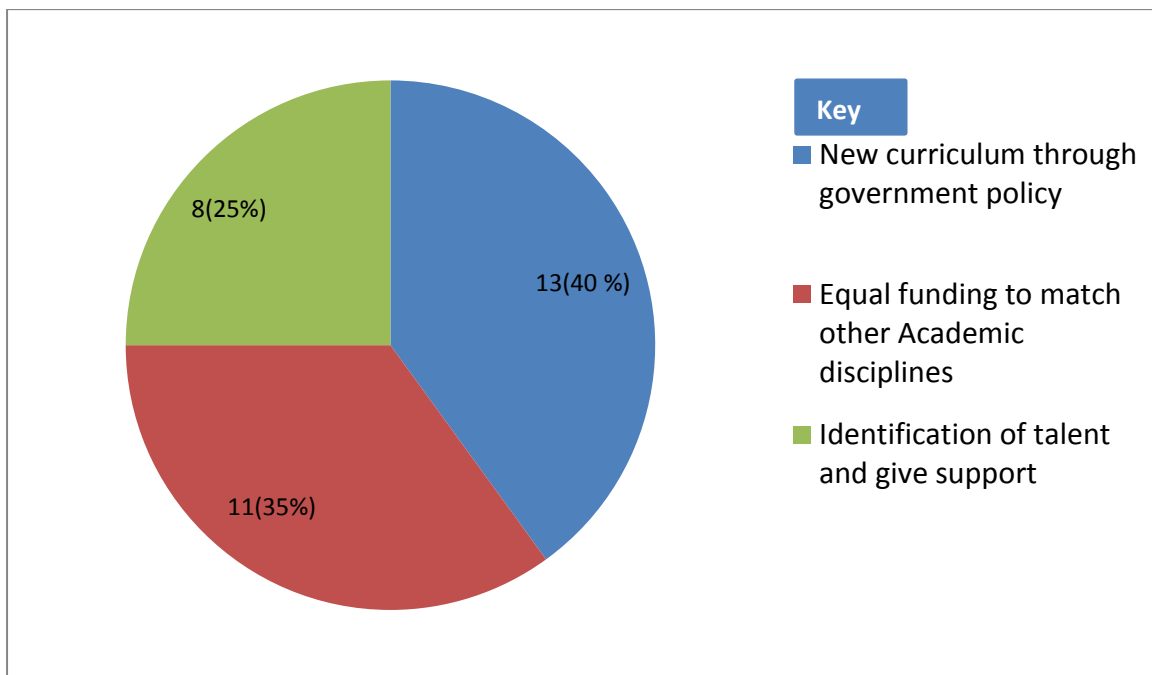


Figure 4.2: Source: Questionnaire / Primary Data 2017.

Forty percent (40%) of the respondents indicated that the government should come up with a new uniform policy to revamp the curriculum. The results revealed that 11(35%) of the

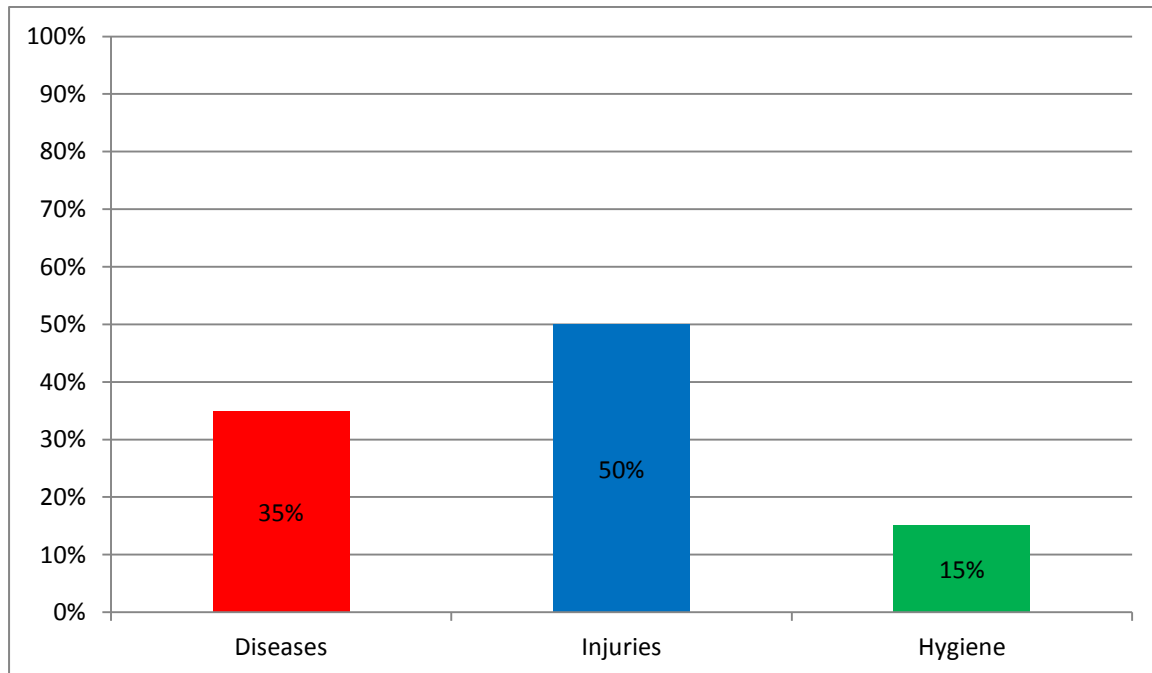
respondents indicated that there must be equal funding of sporting activities to match academic disciplines. The other 8(25%) of the participants indicated that talent must be identified and the necessary support given to kids to peruse the sporting activity discipline to a high level. Strategies to uphold sporting activities were cited by Haysman (2013) who said that the discipline requires a comprehensive set of policies, program and initiatives designed to increase physical activity. He further observed that sporting activities require finance for running events and competitions, promotion and development, sports facilities, everyday running costs, training facilities, sports scholarships, salaries and can raise money from fund-raising activities but most will require financial help from outside sources.

4.7 Risks associated with ECE Sporting Activities

The study sought to find out teachers views on the risks ECE learners encountered when doing sporting activities. The risks ranged from injuries, diseases and lack of hygiene. The results are presented in Figure 4.

4.8 Participants' views about Learners' risks associated with ECE Sporting Activities

Figure 4.3: Respondents' views on learners' risk associated with ECE sporting activities



Respondents in this study revealed that ECE learners faced risks of different kinds of diseases, injuries and hygienic conditions. McCallum (2016) indicated that ECE learners incur physical injuries when engaged in sporting activities. Fifty percent of the participants had the view that the majority of ECE learners incur injuries when engaged in sporting activities. Thirty five percent of the participants indicated that some ECE learners with chronic diseases may have their condition deteriorate due to the nature of the sporting activities undertaken. Lastly fifteen percent of the respondents said that ECE learners may encounter the risk of lack of hygiene. For instance they may do their sporting activities in dry places but may opt to do some of the sporting activities in wet places, if not properly supervised. They may play in pools thereby compromising their hygiene.

4.5 Teachers' views on the benefits of ECE sporting activities

The study sought to find out on the benefits associated with ECE Sporting Activities. The results are presented in Table 4.5 below.

Benefit	Teachers' Perception				Total Response Rate
	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage	
Physical Development	32	100%	0	0%	32(100%)
Cognitive Development	22	70%	10	30%	32(100%)
Social Development	26	82%	6	18%	32(100%)
Emotional Development	14	43%	18	57%	32(100%)

One hundred percent of the participants from the cluster were of the view that sporting activities proffer physical development to ECE learners. Seventy percent of the respondents were of the view that sporting activities is beneficial to cognitive development. Eight two percent of the respondents have the perception that sporting activities benefits an ECE learners' social development. The ECE learners' benefits from engaging in sporting activities were pointed out by Ball and Cohen (2009) who said that sporting activities helped pupils in developing their movement skills and develop interest in physical activities. Boyle et al (2008) also stated that ECE learners enhance self-confidence, self-esteem and reduce tendency of risk behaviours when participating in sporting activities. However, 57% of the respondents from this cluster were of the opinion that sporting activities is of no benefit to emotional development.

4.10 Discussion

4.10.1 Do teachers engage ECE learners in sporting activities?

The findings of this research revealed that the majority of respondents who participated in the research engage ECE learners in sporting activities. Sixty-four percent (64%) of the participants in the sample agreed that ECE learners participate in sporting activities. This is supported by Ombonga (2013) who argues that ECE learners who engage in sporting activities enjoy good health and often lose weight. Pangarazi (2011) also observed that sporting activities has been shown to improve a learner's skills in such disciplines as arithmetic, reading and memorisation.

Contrastingly, thirty-six percent (36%) of the participants do not engage ECE learners in sporting activities. They attributed this to lack of sporting equipment and the culture of prioritising academic subjects at the expense of sporting activities. Gatawa (1990) observe that ECE learners' participation in sporting activities is a drawback because schools lack sporting facilities such as sporting equipment and gymnasium. Mberengwa (2014) further alluded that ECE pupils participating in sporting activities have limited access to information as teachers lack interest to learn more about sporting activities. He further notes that teachers in Zimbabwe lack interest in sporting activities opting to teach examinable subjects because their value and competence are measured by the quality of results they produce.

4.10.2 Do you have suitable equipment for ECE Sporting activities?

Participants in this study indicated that schools do not have suitable equipment for use in sporting activities. This was evidenced by seventy-eight percent (78%) of the respondents who concurred that there is critical lack of ECE sporting equipment. Lack of equipment is as a result of poor funding by the government and the school institutions themselves. Mazloum

(2000) noted that teachers in developing countries often do not have the financial muscle to fund sporting activities hence teachers develop negative views about engaging learners in sporting activities.

This research on other hand revealed that twenty-two percent (22%) of the participants agreed that schools have suitable equipment for ECE sporting activities. This is supported by Galligon and White (2001) who pointed out that at international level schools are generally funded by their governments which prompts schools in the developed world to have advanced equipment for ECE sporting equipment. In the case of Zimbabwean schools there is lack of funding from the government as the economy is not sound hence it has no financial capability to fully fund schools to acquire state of the art equipment for sporting activities.

4.10.3 Do you carryout suitable sporting activities for ECE learners?

These findings of this research study showed that fifty percent (50%) of all the sporting activities done at these sample schools is football. The prevalence of football at the expense of other forms of sporting activities was attributed to available facilities. According to Ball and Cohen (2009) sporting activities enhance learners' social cognitive development and coordination by team members. This type of sporting activity in essence calls for team spirit if they are to succeed. The study further revealed that the other three (3) sporting activities namely tennis; fifteen percent (15%), gymnastics ten percent (10%) and swimming twenty-four percent (24%) which gave a total of fifty percent (50%) reflecting the same percentage as football alone. There is less attention given to these other sporting activities owing to lack of facilities and teachers' skills and knowledge. Boyle et al (2008) observed that sporting activities enhance ECE learners' self confidence; self esteem and reduce the tendency of

engaging in risky behaviour. This therefore indicated that all forms of sporting activities are equally important and beneficial to the learner.

The analysis of the research revealed that other sporting activities such as cricket, basketball, golf and many others are not taught at all the sampled. The respondents pointed out that this was as a result of lack of knowledge on the part of ECE teachers.

4.10.4 Do you have any strategies for upholding ECE sporting activities?

The findings of this study showed that forty percent (40%) of the strategies pertain to the advent of the government's new curriculum on education. The policy emphasised on giving equal attention to sporting activities to match other academic subjects. The policy directed that more time slots, be availed to this discipline.

The research study further showed that a thirty-five percent (35%) of the strategies emphasised on government and school institutions funding sporting activities if it is to flourish. A further twenty-five percent (25%) of the strategies was on identifying talented learners so as to give them the necessary support to pursue the discipline. This is observed by Barker et al (2007) who argue that upholding the integrity of sporting activities of ECE learners is an important strategy to guard against corruption in sporting activities later on in learners' lives. Sporting activities shape the lives of ECE learners in their future if they are to be taken seriously.

4.11 Summary

In this chapter the collected data was presented, analysed, interpreted and discussed. The next chapter presented the summary conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presented the findings on the study that focused on teachers' views about ECE Learners' participation in sporting activities. Conclusions and recommendations of what should be done to enhance teaching of the discipline of sporting activities were also made.

5.1 Summary

The study focused on teachers' views about ECE learners' participation in sporting activities in Mambo-Ascot Cluster in Gweru Urban. The chapter laid down background to the research, the statement of the problem, the main research questions and sub-research questions. It highlighted the significance of the study, delimitations and limitations of the study as well as the assumptions of the study.

The study concentrated on the literature review to provide insights into the study that focused on teacher's views about ECE learners participation on sporting activities. This chapter also highlighted the strategies that were employed to uphold sporting activities for ECE learners.

The researcher used the descriptive research design as the method of collecting data. It also examined the population and a sample which was drawn out through the stratified random sampling procedure resulting in the actual sample picked using simple random sampling. The study further examined the instruments for data collection which was the questionnaire. The study also explored data collection analysis and presentation.

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the research findings, the researcher made the following conclusions. The study concluded that only such forms of sporting activities as football and to a lesser extent swimming, tennis and gymnastics were the only ones being taught. This was attributed to some teachers who lack knowledge and skills in teaching of ECE learners' sporting activities. The study further concluded that schools lacked equipment and facilities for ECE sporting activities making it difficult to teach ECE sporting activities in the same way as they teach academic subjects. This is attributed to lack of funding to procure ECE sporting equipment and facilities. Teachers fear the risks that are associated with ECE learners engaging in sporting activities. ECE learners are prone to injuries and diseases owing to their participation in sporting activities.

5.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations were drawn from the findings of the study.

- There is a need to formulate uniform policies on ECE sporting activities.
- Schools should seek for donations from the Non-Government Organizations (NGO) and other stakeholders in order to source for required resources.
- Teachers should acquire requisite training on ECE sporting activities.
- Talented ECE learners should be identified and be given enough support mould them into competent sports persons in future.
- Parents should be encouraged to provide support to ECE learners in sporting activities.
- Heads of school should mount workshops to be held at schools, clusters and districts level to train teachers on how to teach sporting activities to ECE learners.
- Enhance supervision of ECE sporting activities by both teachers and administrators to encourage participation by ECE learners.

- ECE sporting activities should be given enough time on the school's time table.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRES FOR ECE TEACHERS

My name is Zireva Cathren. I am a Bachelor of Early Childhood Education student at Midlands State University. I am conducting the study on the teachers' views about early childhood education learners' participation in sporting activities. The success of my study depends on your sincere opinions on the issues asked. Please do not respond to questions as you think other people would like you to respond to them. I am interested in your own views and not the views of others. The information gathered is for academic purposes only and your responses will be treated with confidentiality. To enhance and ensure confidentiality I kindly ask you not to place your name on this questionnaire.

Thank you.

SECTION A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

Indicate your desired responses by placing a tick



in the appropriate box

1. Indicate your sex

Male

Female

2. Indicate your age group

26 – 30

31-35

36-40

41+

3. Indicate your academic qualifications

Ordinary Level

Advanced Level

4. Indicate your professional qualifications

Diploma in Education

Bachelor of Education Degree

Masters in Education



5. Indicate your teaching experience
- 5-10
- 11-20
- 21-30
- 31-40
- 41+

SECTION B

QUESTIONS	YES	NO
1. Do you engage your learners in early childhood education sporting activities?		
2. Do you have the suitable equipment for early childhood sporting activities?		
3. Do you carryout suitable sporting activities for ECE learners?		
4. Do you have time for ECE sporting activities?		
5. Are you trained to uphold the ECE sporting activities?		
6. Do you see the benefits of ECE sporting activities?		
7. Do you encounter any risks in doing ECE sporting activities?		
8. Do you carry out any workshops to enhance ECE sporting activities?		
9. Do you have any strategies for upholding ECE sporting activities?		
10. Do you have qualified supervisors in ECE sporting activities?		
11. Do you have resource persons in ECE sporting activities?		
12. Do you think the teacher-pupil ratio is suitable for teaching ECE sporting activities?		