

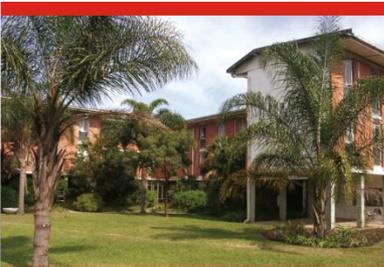


UNIVERSITY OF <sup>TM</sup>  
KWAZULU-NATAL  
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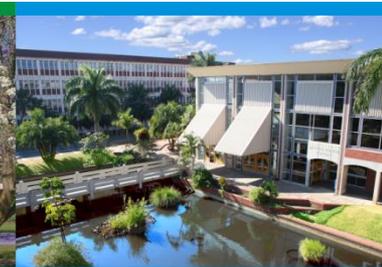
HOWARD COLLEGE CAMPUS



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INSPIRING GREATNESS

# TITLE

Early Childhood Development centre managers'  
roles in developing teachers' professional identity  
and self-esteem

# **PRESENTATION OUTLINE**

- ❖ **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**
- ❖ **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**
- ❖ **PURPOSE, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**
- ❖ **LITERATURE REVIEW**
- ❖ **THEORETICAL FRAMING**
- ❖ **RESEARCH METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN**
- ❖ **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**
- ❖ **IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY**

# BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

- This research study is conceptualised under the Project for Early Childhood Policy Analysis (PECPA).
- Although the project has been closed out, its significance was quite evident in the ECD sector. (2016-2021)
- PECPA was a working group that was under the umbrella of Teacher Education for Early Childhood Education Project (TEECEP) based in South Africa.
- PECPA's focus was on analysing the global Early Childhood Care and Education policies, hence the invention of its name.
- The project was funded by the Department of Higher Education (DHET) and European Union (EU).
- Different universities from different provinces were members of PECPA.
- These universities were UNISA (GP), UKZN (KZN), UFH (EC), UNIZULU (KZN), WSU (EC) & UP (GP).
- This presentation is based on the study that was conducted by the University of KwaZulu-Natal under my leadership.

# STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

- In South Africa and other developing countries, the professional identity of early childhood care and education (ECCE) teachers is disregarded.
- Basically, ECCE teachers are those teachers who teach young children from birth to four years.
- Some ECCE teachers in contextually-diverse ECD centres are unqualified or underqualified.
- The ECD centre managers are tasked with the role of managing the centres including offering pastoral care to ECCE teachers.
- This includes developing their professional identity and self-esteem and ensuring that they engage themselves in lifelong learning activities through registering for professional teacher development programmes.
- There is an increasing concern that there is no systemic professionalisation that regulates ECD practice which ultimately results in the decline of ECCE teachers' self-esteem.

# **PURPOSE, RESEARCH QUESTIONS & RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

## **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this paper is to explore Early Childhood Development (ECD) centre managers' roles in developing teachers' professional identity and self-esteem

## **Research Question**

- What are ECD centre managers' roles in developing teachers' professional identity and self-esteem?
- How do ECD centre managers develop teachers' professional identity and self-esteem?

## **Research Objectives**

- To determine the roles that ECD centre managers have to play to develop teachers' professional identity and self-esteem.
- To understand how ECD centre managers develop teachers' professional identity and self-esteem.

# LITERATURE REVIEW

- Teacher identities could be described as “the way they feel about themselves professionally, emotionally, and politically”(Jansen, 2001:242). Furthermore, it is “the way we make sense of ourselves, and the image of ourselves that we present to others” (Day, 2011:48).
- ECD practitioners are not exceptionally excluded in this description.
- Langford (2007): There is a concern that there is no systemic professionalisation that regulates ECD in most developing countries.
- Despite ECD teachers’ low income, low social status, and low entry as compared to the rest of the teachers within the country, they are not babysitters (Zhang & Yu, 2017; Bipath, 2021).
- Modise (2021) states that ECD centre managers have a role of creating opportunities for teachers to continue with their professional development programmes to improve their practices and remain relevant and useful.
- The crux of the matter is that ECCE teachers’ self-esteem is low and adversely impacts their professionalism meaning-making (Harwood et al., 2013).

# LITERATURE REVIEW (Contd)

Thus, what are the ECD managers' roles in developing teachers' professional identity and uplifting their self-esteem?

- Literature reveals that there is limited data on how the centre managers can assist to mitigate ECCE teachers' self-concepts of their roles and sense of professionalism.
- Remarkably, ECD centre managers are considered differently from mainstream school principals.
- Despite all that, Bipath (2021) advises that "nurturing of the ECD teachers' identity alone is not sufficient; it is through mentoring that desired change in the ECD teachers' professional identity will be accomplished" (p. 138)
- The DSD (2015) in its NIECD policy also alludes to the significance of ECD centre managers' ability to mentor teachers in order to reach a comprehensive state of an ECD centre where teachers' qualities, skills, behaviours, and values are sharpened.
- It is the ECD managers' role to encourage teachers to equip themselves and become innovative teachers (Modise, 2021).
- In order to develop teachers' professional identity and self-esteem, Rouse and Spradbury (2016) assert that "they have to maintain awareness of teachers' concerns and how they define the pedagogical predicaments and choices they regularly encounter" (p. 499)

# THEORETICAL FRAMING

- Rosenberg's (1965) self-esteem theory underpinned this study.
- Rosenberg (1965) states that self-esteem reflects one's overall evaluation of value and worth.
- Literature reveals that when teachers are unable to verify their identities, the self-esteem produced by previous successful efforts at self-verification protects them from the distress associated with a lack of self-verification thereby preserving threatened structural arrangements (Alessandri et al., 2015; Cooper, Smith & Russell, 2017).

$$\text{Self-esteem} = \frac{\text{Success}}{\text{Pretensions}}$$

- If ECD centre managers develop teachers' self-esteem, ultimately success in their professional identity within the ECD sector will be achieved **AND** most importantly pretensions (feeling good about themselves) will be attained.

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

## Research Methodology

- This was an interpretivists qualitative multi-case research study that stems from PECPA research project that took place over a period of 5 years, i.e. 2016-2021.

## Location of the Study

- The study utilised readily available and safely stored data that were collected by PECPA fieldworkers in different community ECD centres located in rural and peri-urban contexts of KwaZulu-Natal province.

## Data Analysis

Due to data overload, only data that were deemed relevant for this research study were categorised into themes and content data analysis was adopted.

Cohen et al., (2018) maintain that content data analysis assists the researcher to only use relevant data and avoid ambiguity.

# FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

- There is no systemic professionalisation that regulates ECD practice.
- Most ECD centre managers from underprivileged contexts are inappropriately qualified.
- Some ECD centre managers' leadership skills are questionable and are coupled with underperformance,
- Some ECD managers have a sense of uncertainty as well as a lack of leadership efficacy which adversely impacts their ECCE teachers' identity as well as theirs.
- ECCE teachers who have low self-esteem underperform, develop a sense of uncertainty and inferiority as well as lack teacher efficacy which adversely impacts their teacher identity.
- Some ECD centre managers are unable to assist teachers to verify their identities with the profession: who are they within the societies they serve? what are the expectations of the sector?— culturally, economically, professionally, and otherwise.

# IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Successful development of early childhood educators' self-concepts of their roles and sense of professionalism.
- ECD centre managers' creation of opportunities for professional development engagements.
- The management of any ECD centre be treasured by the whole community in order to develop efficient teachers for their children.
- Since the ECD sector in South Africa is now managed by the Department of Basic Education, transformations for the betterment of the sector be speedily effected.
- Mentorship opportunities be created for ECD teachers as also suggested by Bipath (2021) in order to develop ECD teachers' positive professional identity.
- ECD centre managers to religiously consult government policies (e.g. NIECDP, 2015; NCF (2015); Teachers' Norms and Standards (DBE, 2000) and others, that will assist them in managing their centres effectively.

**THANK YOU !!!!!!**  
**NGIYABONGA!!!!!!**