

Perceptions of Up-scaling Community-based Sites to Provide Reception Classes in South Africa

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KEYWORDS Early Childhood Development. Early Education Provisioning. Community-based Centres. ECD Policy Framework. Places of Care. Early Childhood Education

ABSTRACT The present paper reports on the perceptions of Community-based Early Childhood Development service providers regarding progress and challenges in the provision of reception classes. It discusses data generated by means of narratives and in-depth interviews using a qualitative research design. Practitioners and managers from Community-based Sites with reception classes together with district officials in different districts participated in this study. The Community-based Sites that are registered safe guard the continuity of education programmes from these sites to schools thus, addressing the issues of segregation. Barriers identified as impacting negatively on the up-scaling of Community-based Sites included the slow progress made in registering centres and an assertion regarding stipend revealing an on-going conflict between the two parties. However, practitioners and managers with matriculation as their lowest qualification seemed to understand the prospects of up-scaling Community-based Sites as they were starting to shape their careers in an attempt to embrace the concept of up-scaling. They extended their studies, registering their centres and in turn empowered by the departments. In addition, having retired teachers presented an interesting dynamic in this research, introducing a viable group of Community-based managers. These retirees can be a cornerstone of early learning education reform.