

**Early Childhood Education in South African Townships:
Academics Accepting the Challenge to Empower Early
Childhood Development Practitioners**

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ABSTRACT This paper presents a descriptive study of an Early Childhood Development (ECD) intervention project, grounded in a community-based research approach that resulted in a wide range of learning and development opportunities for children in townships in Gauteng, Vaal Triangle in South Africa. During the implementation phase, ECD student teachers and lecturers at the North-West University (NWU), Vaal Triangle campus participated. Data was gathered through questionnaires and interviews. The outcomes of this intervention varied. Reflection from practitioners, lecturers and students indicates that this intervention has started to address the learning needs of Grade R (the year before formal schooling starts) ECD practitioners and as a result, children in these townships. This article discusses an ECD intervention project that impacted on the quality of teaching and learning in township ECD centers in townships in the Vaal Triangle.