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Identifying personal and environmental assets to enrich pre-school learning within a culture of poverty: An ethnographic study

by

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Thank you to the children and caretakers of Mangweni who made this study an unforgettable experience.

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DECLARATIONS

I, Annari de Wet, hereby declare that this dissertation titled: **Identifying personal and environmental assets to enrich pre-school learning within a culture of poverty: an ethnographic study**, is a product of my own initiative and work.

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SIGNED DATE

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I, Cornelius Jacobus Nöthling , hereby declare that I undertook the editing of the grammatical and language aspects of this dissertation.

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SIGNED DATE

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ABSTRACT

This research entails an ethnographic study of a community that has a culture of poverty. The aim of this research was to identify personal and environmental assets that could be used to enrich pre-school learning within a culture of poverty. These assets included anything that could be used for pre-school learning, observations, field notes, interviews, photographs and artefacts were used to study the community while participating as a member of the community. Numerous assets were identified. Seven main themes were derived from a collective summary of data. The main themes were: children, culture, man-made products, the natural environment, local institutions and citizens' associations, crafts and caretakers. The themes were expanded into categories and sub-categories. Each sub-category is discussed as an asset in the light of various activities the asset can be used for, the skills and the learning outcomes practiced by these activities. Using these assets as stated by the Revised National Curriculum, all the learning outcomes for the Foundation Phase were covered. Literature that relates to the theme of this research study is incorporated to verify the results from this study. The results of this research study suggest that this particular community is rich with potential, opportunities and material to enrich the pre-school learning of children.

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KEYWORDS

Asset-based approach
Culture of poverty
Environmental assets
Ethnographic study
Personal assets
Pre-school learning

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CHAPTER ONE
OVERVIEW AND RATIONALE: IDENTIFYING PERSONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS TO ENRICH PRE-SCHOOL LEARNING WITHIN A CULTURE OF POVERTY: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

In this research, I did an ethnographic study of a community that has a culture of poverty. The aim of my research was to identify personal and environmental assets that could be used to enrich the pre-school learning of the community's children. These assets included anything that could be used for pre-school learning, for example tires or pods and seeds. While participating as a member of the community, I used observations, field notes, interviews, photographs and artefacts to collect data. Numerous assets were identified. These assets and their value as material for pre-school learning are discussed in chapter three. Furthermore, I studied literature that relate to the theme of this research study and incorporated a literature control to verify the results from the study. The literature control is discussed in chapter four. "So what is the rationale for a study like this?"

Early childhood intervention attempts to help young children and their families to thrive (Shonkoff & Meisels 2000:3). Brain research has demonstrated with certainty the importance of early experience. Early experiences influence the growth and development of neural pathways in the individual (Kotulak in Shonkoff & Meisels 2000:XI). In the growing child there is a profusion of synapses connecting brain cells present. This means that during the years from three to 10, the brain is more densely "wired" than at any other time in the child's life (Shonkoff & Meisels 2000:XI). Therefore, the early years are a very sensitive time for that portion of the brain that controls complex functions such as language acquisition and logical thinking. As connections in the young child's brain are reinforced when they receive stimulation, and eliminated without stimulation, the quality of the young child's environment has a critical influence on his capacity to develop an adequate foundation for later learning and emotional regulation (Shonkoff & Meisels 2000:XI). Learning never takes place in isolation, but arises from interactions with others (Williams & Burden 1997:43). Karoly (In Kriek & Eloff 2004:134) says that early childhood intervention aims at sustaining or improving the quality of life for young children. Early intervention acknowledges the aspects of biology and culture and their dynamic influences on each other (Emde & Robinson 2000:160). Early intervention can be carried out in a formal or informal way (Kriek & Eloff 2004:134).

Smart (2000) in Eloff and Ebersöhn (2001:152) states that the 16,3 million children in South Africa constitute about half of the entire population. There are six million children under the age of six years of which 61% grow up in poverty. They can be defined as being at-risk regarding optimal early development. The effective support of children under the age of seven years is furthermore harmed by unemployment, illiteracy, urbanisation and HIV & AIDS (Kriek & Eloff 2004:133). Rossetti-Ferreira (In Eloff & Ebersöhn 2001:153) states that not doing early childhood intervention in a country such as South Africa, leads to social risk factors such as –

> *"…Higher child morbidity rate, later school enrolment, higher repetition rate, more school drop-outs, poor school performance, lower future income and taxes, mother work force that are tied up at home, older sisters taken out of school to take care of younger siblings and higher crime rates".*

Early childhood intervention can be considered as a powerful future investment (Eloff & Ebersöhn 2001:153). In South Africa the social context often necessitates an asset-based approach to early intervention that stresses capacity building and internal control (Eloff & Ebersöhn 2001:153).

One of the challenges facing children and families is poverty and its underlying causes. An increasing number of children are growing up in poverty and have no access to sufficient pre-school education. These children are faced with the stresses of hard-working, low-income families (Shonkoff & Meisels 2000:23). These families also find that a large portion of their income goes into basic childcare, which is often of a lower quality than can be obtained by families with greater income (Shonkoff & Meisels 2000:23). Poverty places infants and toddlers at heightened risk for several problems such as exposure to toxic substances in the uterus, malnutrition, chronic health problems and inattentive parental care (Halpern 2000:362). Starfield (In Farran 2000:511) states that poverty creates a high-risk environment that exerts an adverse effect on many aspects of development. Poverty in South Africa can be linked with high unemployment, hunger, malnutrition, lack of health care and basic services, disintegration of families, vulnerability, risk of homelessness, despair, deviant behaviour, lack of interest in formal education, little desire for self-improvement and a belief in external control of their lives. Disadvantage in particular social and educational contexts often results in a set of special needs (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana 1997:24).

Smit (1996:1) reports on a project which focused on the development of house crèches and parent involvement in pre-school education in disadvantaged communities in South

Africa. The primary target group were pre-school children left at home without proper care during the day. The secondary target group consisted of mothers who could be trained as crèche mothers to meet this need for pre-primary care. The needs of the community were addressed following the principles of action research. A series of workshops were presented to train and empower community members as child minders (Smit 1996:2). The aim was to establish house crèches so that as many children as possible would benefit from pre-school care and development programs. Community based planning was encouraged to make continuous, relevant adaptations and to keep group members actively involved in planning and problem solving.

After completion of the project, Smit (1996:8) lists the following findings:

- Poor contact between the communities and the primary schools rendered the beginnings of education more difficult.
- After completion of projects, there was the danger of lack of continuation because of insufficient support and coordination.
- There was little knowledge of the child's pre-school development.
- The trainees showed much enthusiasm and determination.
- Parents used child care services as a free food facility for hungry children.
- In the fulfillment of the higher needs, the basic problem emerged: The need for food.

From these studies it is evident that the needs-based approach, even though well intended, results in a long list of deficiencies and what is lacking in communities. References to potential assets are mostly elliptical. This can have a potentially debilitating effect on both the community and the researchers involved. The needs-based approach is regarded as inefficient in addressing her challenges of society in the South African context (Eloff & Ebersöhn 2001:150) because the approach is seldom associated with real change or development. This approach may create a perception that only external "experts will be able to solve the problems and contributes to a sense of hopelessness, because solutions are situated extrinsically" (Eloff & Ebersöhn 2001:150).

However, we have choices in terms of our approach in community development in general, and early childhood intervention specifically. The asset-based approach does not imply that the deficiencies in a community can be negated, but by focusing on strengthening the assets of a community, the deficiencies can be addressed (Eloff & Ebersöhn 2001:149). The asset-based approach is a bottom-up approach that shifts the emphasis from a services perspective to an empowerment perspective (Eloff & Ebersöhn

2001:150). The asset-based approach proposed in this research offers some possibilities in overcoming the disempowering effects of the needs-based approach. It has been described as an approach that regards "the glass as being half full, rather than half empty" (Kretzmann & McKnight 1993:13). It focuses on potential assets and capacities in the community that can be mobilised to ensure sustainability.

In this research the community as a whole was studied in a search for personal and environmental assets that can be used to enrich pre-school learning. Assets were looked for in the community because they were already part of the community and thus sustainable. The rationale for adopting this approach in this research is the fact that it has been used with great success in other contexts, but has been used very little for enriching learning during the early years in the South African context and no ethnographic studies have been done on this particular theme.

In the following paragraph I will discuss my motivation for choosing this specific research topic.

1.2 WHY DID I CHOOSE THIS RESEARCH?

For many years, I have been involved in projects concerning communities with a culture of poverty, ranging from hospitals to children's homes. In every community the needs and problems were evident. Often I felt overwhelmed by the deficits present and worried about the consequences of these deficits. Reading and hearing about community projects in other parts of South Africa and in the world (for example in South India) intensified my realisation of people – and especially young children's – needs within a culture of poverty. Comparing "resources available" with "resources needed" one quickly arrives at a negative amount of resources. The following Chinese word picture often crossed my mind: Giving a man a fish everyday to eat, supplies him of food, but makes him dependent on an external source. Giving a man a fishing rod and teaching him how to fish, supplies him with food and gives him independence.

My working experience of children ranges from babies of three months old up to Grade 11 and 12. These experiences showed me that everyday objects, for example old magasines or washing pins, could stimulate children. I believe that many of these everyday objects can be used with much success in stimulating pre-school learning. These objects are present in many communities, including those within a culture of poverty. Concerning the latter, I wondered about other objects in the community that could be used for this purpose. I was introduced to the asset-based approach as an approach for identifying

these objects (assets) in the community that can be used to enrich pre-school learning within a culture of poverty. Out of this approach, my research study developed.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION, STATEMENT OF INTENT AND OBJECTIVES

The research question of this research comprises asking:

> *What assets within children, caretakers and the community can be used to enrich the education and learning of pre-school learners within a culture of poverty?*

The main objective of this research is therefore to identify and establish the assets within children, caretakers and the community that can enrich the education and learning of pre-school learners within a culture of poverty.

Sub objectives of the study involve exploring the asset-based approach to learning development and understanding pre-school education and learning within a culture of poverty.

1.4 INTRODUCING THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY

The importance of early learning and formative experiences during the pre-school years have been established for decades (Shonkoff & Meisels 2000). The challenges of the social context in South Africa deepen the responsibilities of educationists to understand the multi-faceted nature of early learning within a culture of poverty. The “understandings” that have been established are characterised by a needs-based approach – which creates the significance of this research topic.

This research uses an asset-based approach to explore possibilities for enriching education and learning during the pre-school years within a culture of poverty. The adoption of this approach in this field creates opportunities to generate new knowledge and to augment existing theory.

Eloff and Ebersöhn (In Kriek & Eloff 2004:134) describe the asset-based approach as a “bottom-up” approach, which shifts the emphasis from providing services to empowering individuals and communities. Ammerman and Parks, Mokwena, Smith, Littlejohns and Thompson, Page-Adams and Sherradon (In Kriek & Eloff 2004:134) all contend that the asset-based approach should start with what is present in the community, the strengths, assets and capacity of the residents of a community. This approach has an internal focus

(Kriek & Eloff 2004:134). The asset-based approach departs from the assumption of a belief in the presence of assets, capabilities, internal creativity, control and power (Ebersöhn & Mbetse 2003:323). According to Eloff (Ebersöhn & Mbetse 2003:323), some of the advantages of this approach are the relevancy, practicality and immediacy of solutions to problems, solutions are flexible, individuals take responsibility and give support and a caring environment is created. Ammerman and Parks (In Eloff & Ebersöhn 2001:154) state that many assets must be identified and catalogued to conduct an asset-based intervention. This approach calls for a lot of interaction with multiple individuals, associations and institutions in the community.

By only looking at the needs of a community, people may become defeatist or fatalistic and they can easily start to think of themselves as poor and incapable. They may also start to see their country or area as poor and lacking in resources (Pickett & Hawthorne, 1994:10-23). Community developers then often introduce foreign resources that do not take the community's life style into consideration.

When, however, people in developing countries realise their potential and that of their community, they can become motivated to contribute to their own development. This involves the adequate assessment of their own personal talents, abilities and resources as well as the natural resources around them (Pickett & Hawthorne, 1994:10-23). This can bring release from the syndrome of, "We are a poor people in a poor country and we cannot improve".

The asset-based approach takes a community's life style into consideration. Development is often best coming from inside the community to ensure that intervention is accepted by the community, renewable and physically sustainable. Development is possible when we deal with an entire community that is still intact in its community setting (Dayton 1994:10-20).

People build their communities in different ways and they invariably believe in the superiority of their own ways (Hoke 1994:11-1). This attitude is called ethnocentrism. People may show some curiosity towards other ways of doing things, but they are generally not interested in learning about it. The community provides a patterned way of doing things. Community culture is the super glue that binds people together and gives them a sense of identity and continuity which is almost impenetrable. This identity is seen in the way things are done (Kwast 1994:11-13). People are often suspicious about other practices and customs, often believing them to be improper or inferior (Hoke 1994:11-19). Community groups also have social barriers that are not penetrated easily.

In the same way that care must be taken when introducing something new to a community, care should be taken when a trait is altered or eliminated. Most traits fill a need or perform an important function within the community that contributes to the community members' existence (Hoke 1994:11-23). Community traits are linked together. Changes in one trait can lead to unforeseen change in other areas of the community. Hoke (1994:11-22) gives an example of people in an African village who accepted Christ as Lord. They now no longer feared the evil spirits that they believed hid in refuse. They felt, therefore, that there was no longer any need to keep the village clean and it became dirty very soon.

Another tale is told by an unknown source, of missionaries who stayed in a remote village. The village's only source of water was from a river at the foot of the hill the village was built on. The women of the village's task were to collect water from the river and carry it up hill to the village. When the missionaries left the village, they built a pump and a dam, as a gift to the community. The women now no longer had to walk up and down the hill all day. Soon the women started showing anti-social behaviour that did not exist among them earlier. They now spent their days drinking, gossiping and doing no constructive work. One man was trained to operate the pump. Soon he became the absolute monarch of the town. Furthermore, the people now needed money to buy fuel and spare parts for the pump.

It is clear that any tools, food and new technology need to be studied carefully to ensure that they are appropriate, renewable and physically sustainable within a particular community (Pickett & Hawthorne 1994:10-24).

It is commonly stated that any development in a community should preferably be based upon a self-supporting system (Winter 1994:5-3). Development must be a partnership of strengths. Only when community members move together, change becomes healthy and constructive. Care must be taken to work with the community "givens" and changes must be proven to be desirable (Pickett & Hawthorne 1994:10-24).

1.5 PARADIGM FOR THE STUDY

In the previous section the theoretical framework for this research study has been explained. In this section constructivism and interpretivism will be discussed as the paradigms used for this research study.

Constructivism explains that the relationship between viable biological organisms and their environment provides a way for the subject to reformulate the relationship between his or her cognitive conceptual structures and his or her experiential world (Von Glasersfeld 1996:4). Knowledge is constructed by an agent's actions and his or her reflections on them (Von Glasersfeld 1996:4). An internal model of the world is constructed through our encounters with our world (Fox 1999:11). Humans adapt to their environments by building up knowledge (Fox 1999:11). Knowledge is an internal representation of the world and thus temporary, developmental, socially and culturally mediated (Brooks & Brooks 1993:VII). By actively exploring the world, one can change aspects of it and be changed by it (Fox 1999:12). People make sense of external influences in personal ways and act on their internal disposition and use their personal attributes (Williams & Burden 1997:120). People create concepts, models and schemes to make sense of experience. These constructions are tested and modified in the light of new experience and have a historical and socio-cultural dimension. Interpretations are construed against a backdrop of shared understandings, practices, language and so forth (Schwandt 2000:197). Turner and Pinkett (In Briedenhann 2003:43) state that constructivism is a useful framework to enhance the interests of a community. Constructivism implies that knowledge is created between the researcher and the participants. The researcher seeks the participants' points of views in order to understand their conceptions. The interaction between the researcher and the participants and the data and his or her reflections on these interactions, can change the way the researcher thinks about the data (Brooks & Brooks 1993:5).

I chose constructivism as part of the paradigm for this research study, because I endeavoured to understand the participants' points of views. I actively explored my field of research and construed knowledge through my encounter with this field and my reflections on the data. My understandings of pre-school learning and the asset-based approach acted as a backdrop for new interpretations of these concepts.

Interpretivism seeks to understand reality on the basis of the meanings that people attach to it in a specific environment. To gain a thorough understanding of a concept, like a child's development, it is necessary to understand the child in relation to the immediate and larger socio-cultural environment (Coll & Magnusen 2000:95). An interpretivist views human action as meaningful (Schwandt 2000:193). In order to say that one has an understanding of a particular action, one must grasp the situation in which the action takes place (Outhwaite in Schwandt 2000:193). One must also grasp the meaning of an action to understand the action. To understand the inter-subjective meanings of human action, the researcher must participate in the life worlds of the participants (Schwandt 2000:193).

Acquiring an inside understanding of the participants' actions, is a powerful central concept for understanding the purpose of qualitative inquiry (Schwandt 2000:192).

I used interpretivism as a paradigm for this research study because the environment and situation of participants' actions were important, as were the meaning of actions. As a researcher, I needed an inside understanding of the participants' actions within a specific community.

1.6 CONCEPTUALISATION

For the purpose of this research, the following concepts are defined as follows.

- **Assets**

The talents, abilities, skills and personal resources of people as well as the activities of people, which can be used to enrich pre-school, learning, are seen as assets. Likewise resources in the natural environment and in the community that can be used to enrich pre-school learning can also be seen as assets.

- **Asset-based approach**

An asset-based approach is an approach studying the assets of a community. It searches for the community's strengths instead of focusing primarily on the needs of a community and looking for the community's weaknesses. It thus has a capacity-oriented emphasis.

- **Pre-school learning**

Pre-school learning comprises the education, stimulation and learning that take place from birth up to age six or seven, depending on when the child is ready for formal school. This learning refers to physical, intellectual, emotional, normative and social development of the child. The pre-school child's development is influenced by his immediate surroundings, social influences and culture (Louw 1994:243).

- **Culture of poverty**

A lack of economical security, places the family at risk (Pretorius 1988:53). The culture of poverty in South Africa can be linked to high unemployment, hunger, malnutrition, lack of health care and basic services, disintegration of families, vulnerability, risk of homelessness, despair, deviant behaviour, lack of interest in formal education, little desire for self-improvement and a belief in external control of their lives (Donald *et al*. 1997:24).

- **Ethnographic observations**

Ethnographic observations in this study refers to the prolonged observation of the activities of caretakers, physical environments and community activities, to identify useful resources within the community and to identify existing structures in the community that can enrich pre-school learning in a culture of poverty.

- **Ethnographic interviews**

Ethnographic interviews refer to interviews that are conducted while the researcher is immersed in the day-to-day lives of the members of the group. These interviews are one-on-one conversations that are unstructured or semi-structured to allow mostly for a free conversation flow (Moore, Lemmer & Van Wyk 2004:20).

- **Identifying**

Identifying is the association of concepts with certain preconceived criteria. In this research study the criteria for identifying an asset was the serviceable aspect of the concept as an instrument to enrich pre-school learning.

- **Learners**

Learners are pre-school children that live in the community.

- **Caretakers**

Caretakers are the adults and older siblings which are responsible for the welfare and care of the pre-school children.

- **Personal assets**

Personal assets are characteristics and habits of the members of the community that can be used to enrich pre-school learning within the community.

- **Environmental assets**

Environmental assets are objects, activities and physical spaces in the environment that are safe to use for the enriching of pre-school learning in the community.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Ethnography will shortly be discussed as the research design for this research. Then the methodology of the research will be discussed, looking at data sources, selection of cases, measurement, data collection methods and analysis and interpretation.

Figure 1.1 gives a graphic representation of the research design and methodology used in this research.

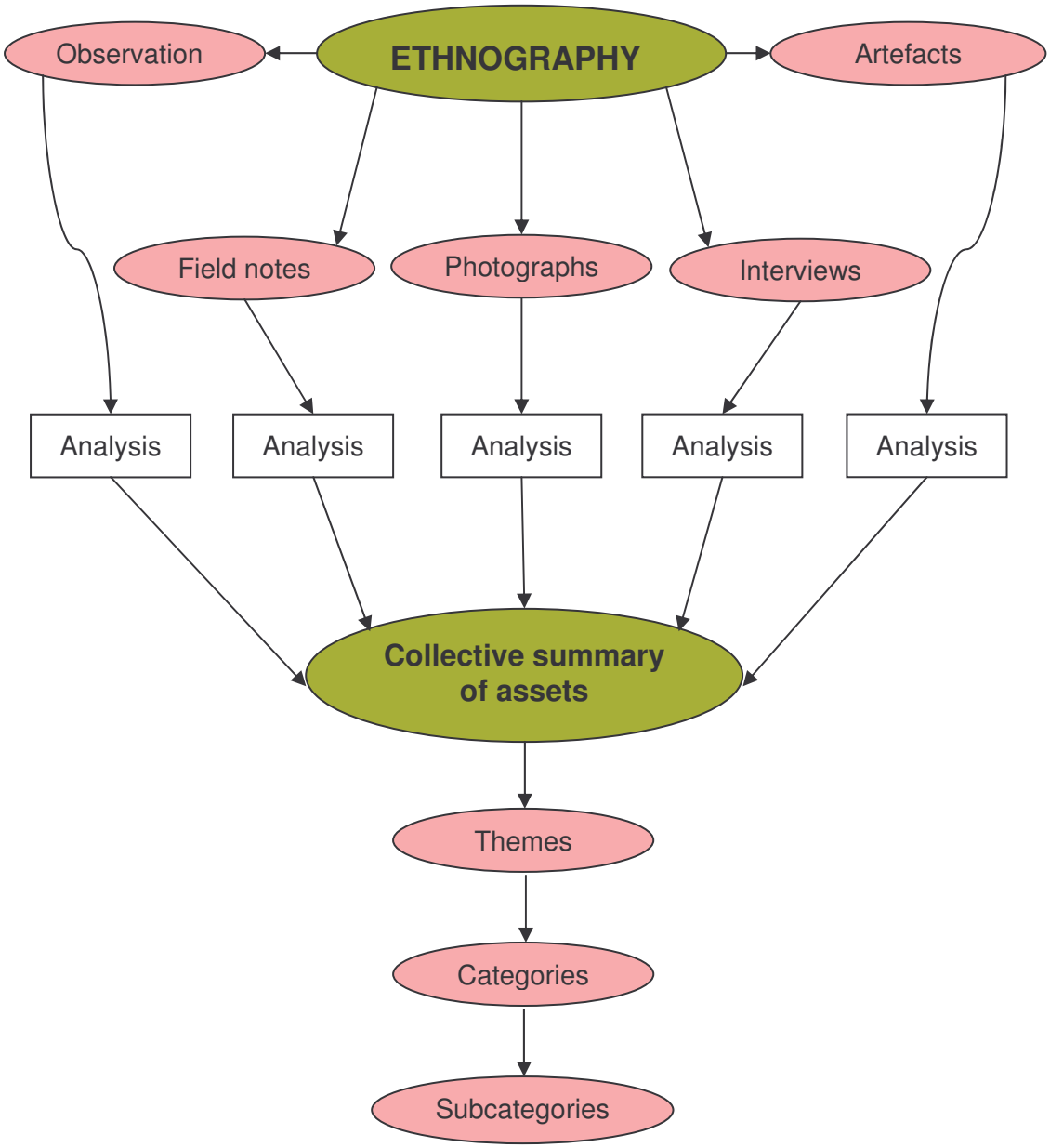

FIGURE 1.1: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

1.7.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Ethnographic research was used to identify assets to enrich pre-school learning within a culture of poverty. In comparison to other social scientific qualitative approaches, ethnography generates a rich methodological literature (McLeod 2001:64). Ethnography can be defined as the study and art of describing the way of life of a culture. Ethnographers are interested in all aspects of human behaviour: Roles, rituals, language, religion, food, history and physical environment (McLeod 2001:64). The primary method of ethnographic research is participant observation in fieldwork. This procedure consists of spending time with people, taking part in their daily routines, listening to them and asking questions. Ethnographic research is capable of capturing quality and characteristics within a social context (McLeod 2001:68). The key research strategy in ethnography is the willingness of the researcher to spend long periods of time in the field. The openness of the researcher to learn from this period of cultural immersion is the main criterion for success (McLeod 2001:65).

During this research I was involved as a guest of the community. I lived with people in their houses and interacted as part of families. Through interaction with members of the community I conducted the research since the principal method of ethnographic research is after all participant observation (McLeod 2001:64).

1.7.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For ethnographic research, the researcher has to spend long periods of time in the field. During this research I spent seven periods of one week each over a period of three years in the community. During this time I conducted interviews and observations and took photographs and field notes and also collected artefacts. Throughout, an asset-based approach was used as the theoretical framework for the study. Resources and structures within the existing community were studied to identify elements that can be used to enrich pre-school education and to stimulate learning. This research was mainly utilising inductive logical reasoning.

1.7.2.1 Selection of data sources

A Swazi settlement has been purposefully selected for this research. Mangweni is a town near the border of Swaziland. The town is in South Africa, approximately where South Africa, Mozambique and Swaziland meet. The town houses a few thousand people. Geographically the town is divided in two by a single tar road that runs through the middle

of the town. The rest of the town has only dirt roads. A few traditional Zulu huts can still be seen, but most of the people live in houses built from sandstone. The dominant mother tongue in the community is Swazi and some community members speak Zulu. Many of the teenagers and young people who go to high school, can speak some English.

There are many churches in Mangweni. There are a few primary schools and two high schools. There is also a clinic in the town – it delivers services to pregnant woman, infants and young children.

Mangweni is situated in a tropical area. Many fruit trees can be found all year long. It is a very hot area with Malaria in summer. Most of the houses have electricity. Approximately every second house has a tap in the yard with running water during specific hours in the day – usually early in the morning. Due to the scarceness of water, very little grass can be seen. People usually keep chickens on their yards for eggs and meat. Cattle and goats are also kept.

Families mostly consist of a mother and many children, ranging from teenagers to babies. Fathers are often absent due to work opportunities far away or separation between the parents. Many teenage girls have their own babies that are financially supported by the grandmother. There are a lot of children in Mangweni and many mothers work in Malelane. Often mothers are away at work all-day and only come home after dark. However, many mothers are without work and spend the day looking for work or food.

1.7.2.2 Selection of cases (sampling)

Sampling was an ongoing process throughout the research. To the ethnographer a single site is important. A site was chosen where children and caretakers could be located. Because the focus of this study is mainly on pre-school children and caretakers, the presence of children was a criterion for the selection of interviewees. I also made use of opportunistic sampling when advantage was taken of opportunities, for example when I noticed a mother or other caretaker with siblings I approached the mother and requested an interview.

1.7.2.3 Measurement

During this research observations and interviews were done with some questions in mind (discussed in paragraph 2.3.4.4). These questions were about the activities of children and caretakers as well as about the toys they play with. Observations were also done

asking what in the environment can be used as toys. Field notes and photographs were taken of anything that might be an asset to pre-school learning.

1.7.2.4 Data collection

Data was collected through observations, field notes, interviews, photographs and artefacts. These collecting methods were aimed at drawing rich material from the research site:

- Through observation the natural surroundings were studied to identify assets which can be used for pre-school education and learning.
- Ethnographic observations and interviews were used to identify the caretakers.
- Ethnographic observations and interviews were used to learn about the activities of the caretakers and their responsibilities.
- Observations and interviews were used to learn about the caretakers' interaction with the children.
- Interviews were used to estimate the potential of the clinic as resource for pre-school learning.
- Interviews and observations were used to identify any kind of pre-school stimulation that already existed. .
- Observations were used to identify toys that children play with.
- Observations and interviews were used to identify the activities of children during the day.

Observations were done over a three-year period for seven periods of one week each. Mostly children and their caretakers were observed. The environment, surroundings, institutions and the culture were noted.

Field notes were only written during the last week of the research to minimise the distancing effect that overt note taking might have. Notes were then written on all observations done during the last week of research. Notes were also written as reflections on assets that were identified. Field notes were written in a notebook that was analysed after returning from the field.

Twenty-five interviews were conducted with caretakers. With the consent of participants, interviews were taped with an audiocassette player. After returning from the field, further notes were also written about the interviews.

With the consent of participants, 67 coloured photographs were taken during the last week of research. Photographs were taken of children playing and doing chores as well as of surroundings. Photographs were also taken of the clinic.

Artefacts were collected during the last week of research. They mostly consisted of crafts made by caretakers and children. Many artefacts I received as gifts from participants, some I bought at the market and some I collected in the natural surroundings.

1.7.2.5 Data analysis and interpretation

To analyse the data, each one of the data sets was analysed on its own. After assets were identified in each set of data, the four sets of assets were compared to eliminate duplication of assets. A collective summary of assets was derived from these. The assets were studied and themes were formed. Assets were compared and contrasted until all assets were grouped as themes. Seven themes emerged. Themes were expanded into categories and categories into subcategories.

These assets can be used to enrich pre-school learning in a culture of poverty. The assets can be used in activities or practicing skills needed for learning. Furthermore, the learning outcomes for the foundation phase, as stated by the Revised National Curriculum Statement (2002:15-16), are met by using these assets. The final phase of data analysis involved linking the identified assets for pre-school learning with activities it can be used for, the pre-school learning skills that can be practiced and the potential learning outcomes.

1.7.3 ETHICAL STRATEGIES

During this research, ethical strategies were applied. Participants were informed of the purpose of the research. All participation was voluntarily. Informed consent was obtained from all participants. Responses of participants remained confidential and anonymous. No participant was subject to humiliation. Recognition is given to sources consulted throughout the research report. Participants provided signed permission for me to make observations and to conduct interviews. Permission to take photographs was given verbally. Participants were assured of anonymity of participation. The ethical strategies that I used in my research study are further discussed in paragraph 2.3.1.

1.7.4 TRUSTWORTHINESS

To enhance credibility, these trustworthiness strategies were applied :

- Prolonged and persistent fieldwork – my study was conducted over seven periods of one week each.
- Accounts of interviews – interviews were recorded on audiotape. The recordings were used as accounts of interviews.
- Low-inference descriptions – precise descriptions of observations were used for identifying themes in the data.
- Mechanically recorded data – a tape recorder was used during interviews and photographs were taken during observations.
- Member checking – observations and participants' meanings were confirmed through casual conversations. During interviews topics were rephrased to obtain more complete information.
- Triangulation – I used interviews, observations, artefacts and photographs and compared information from these sources to one another.
- Relevant instruments – questions that were used during the interviews were relevant to the specific community and their situation.

1.8 CONCLUSION

McLeod (2001:65) notes that there are many issues associated with the practice of participant observation. It is no easy matter to join a social group from a different culture, particularly in the role of researcher. Difficulties I faced was making contact, getting introduced, earning the trust of the participants, gaining access to private matters and making contact with a translator. Furthermore there was the danger of over-identifying with the research group and being unable to detach myself sufficiently to be able to write a research report. The quality of the research might have been influenced by the participants' view of me – members of the community might have acted differently than usually and might not have been willing to participate in interviews. The possible effects were minimised by the fact that I have been in the community over an extended period of time and I was able to establish and sustain relationships of trust with participants. The effect of the culture (culture shock) on me was also minimalised due to background knowledge of the community and my continued presence in the community.

1.9 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

CHAPTER 2:

RESEARCH DESIGN: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY IDENTIFYING PERSONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS TO ENRICH PRE-SCHOOL LEARING WITHIN A CULTURE OF POVERTY

In this chapter the objectives of this study is discussed. The research design is explained according to the ethical strategies, the trustworthiness strategies, the asset-based approach, data collection, ethnography, sampling, researcher as instrument, method and data analysis and interpretation.

CHAPTER 3:

RESEARCH RESULTS: PERSONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS TO ENRICH PRE-SCHOOL LEARNING

Chapter three discusses the data collection and analysis of this research study. Themes are derived from the analysis and presented in the form of asset-maps. Themes are discussed together with their categories and sub-categories in the form of tables. These tables give examples of activities that assets can be used for, with skills and learning outcomes practiced.

CHAPTER 4:

RELATING RESEARCH RESULTS TO BROADER LITERATURE

This chapter is also presented in the form of tables. These tables discuss the asset themes together with related literature.

CHAPTER 5:

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter conclusions are drawn and recommendations are discussed.

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CHAPTER TWO
RESEARCH DESIGN AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY IDENTIFYING PERSONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS TO ENRICH PRE-SCHOOL LEARNING WITHIN A CULTURE OF POVERTY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The importance of early learning and formative experience during the pre-school years have been established for decades. The challenges of the social context in South Africa deepens the responsibilities of educationists to understand the multi-faceted nature of early learning within a culture of poverty. It is important not only to be aware of the needs of a community but also to be fully aware of its assets. This study is an ethnographic study which focuses on identifying assets within learners, caretakers and the community to enrich pre-school learning. The adoption of a new approach in this field creates opportunities to generate new knowledge. For the purpose of this study, ethnographic techniques have been implemented.

2.2 OBJECTIVES

2.2.1 MAIN OBJECTIVE

To identify and establish the assets within children, caretakers and the community that can be used to enrich the education and learning of pre-school learners within a culture of poverty.

2.2.2 SUB OBJECTIVES

The sub objectives of this research study consist of:

- Exploring the asset-based approach to learning development.
- Understanding pre-school education and learning within a culture of poverty.

2.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

2.3.1 ETHICAL STRATEGIES

During this study, the following ethical strategies were applied:

Informed consent was obtained from participants prior to the conducting of interviews or the taking of photographs. Research participants were informed about the nature and the purpose of the study (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:194) as well as the nature of their participation. The institution represented was clearly stated (Mouton 2001:244). Participants had the opportunity of choosing whether to participate or not and to withdraw from the study at any time. All participation was voluntary. Participants understood data collecting techniques (photographs and tape recordings) and were free to reject them (Mouton 2001:243). All new participants were informed of the purpose of the study. Responses of participants remained confidential and anonymous (Leedy & Ormrod 2001:107). There was opportunity for participants to ask questions before and during the investigation (Strydom 1998:25-26). Participants were deemed to be legally and psychologically competent to give consent and did so in writing.

My presence was made known (Creswell 1998:60) to avoid any deception about the purpose of the study. No form of deception has been inflicted on any of the participants (Strydom 1998:27). During the study care was also taken not to subject participants to humiliation (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:420), unusual stress, embarrassment, loss of self-esteem (Leedy & Ormrod 2001:107) or any other form of harm.

Participants' privacy was respected during the study. Participants had the right to decide when, where and to what extent they wish to respond. Participants had the right to refuse to be interviewed or to answer any questions (Mouton 2001:243). In the dissertation, no data was presented in a way that revealed an individual's response (Leedy & Ormrod 2001:108). Data was collected anonymously to ensure confidentiality. No data can be linked to individual participants (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:195).

I spent six weeks in the field to be researched before I proceeded to formal data collection strategies such as field notes, photographs and recorded interviews. During this time an awareness of the values, norms and climate in the community was obtained. Cultural customs were respected and I attempted not to impress my own on participants (Strydom 1998:30).

Another ethical strategy that was employed is recognition given to sources consulted throughout the research report. Care was also taken to avoid any misinterpretations of data. Results were communicated in a manner that misunderstandings were minimised (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:195).

2.3.2 TRUSTWORTHINESS STRATEGIES

To enhance the trustworthiness and credibility of the research, the following strategies were applied (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:405 – 408):

Prolonged and persistent fieldwork – ethnography requires extended time in the field. This lengthy data collection period consists of participant observation and in-depth interviews that are conducted in natural settings to reflect the reality of life experience more accurately. This provides opportunity for corroboration of data. My study was conducted over seven periods of one week each, during which I lived with six different local families in the community. During this time I ate what they ate, bathed like they bathed and tried to learn words of their language. I respected their culture and tried to obey certain rules in the community like wearing only long dresses. I was in the community in a full-time capacity and spent most of the time with the children and caretakers.

Accounts of interviews – accounts of interviews and conversations reflect participants' responses as well as their meanings and attitudes. Twenty-two interviews were conducted in this study. Interviews were semi-structured around twelve questions concerning activities of children and caretakers. With the consent of participants, interviews were recorded on audiotape. The recordings were used as accounts of interviews. Furthermore, I wrote extensive field notes about every interview after it took place. These captured my observations, my intuitive thoughts and awareness about the interviews, thus serving as a further account of the interview.

Low-inference descriptions – precise descriptions of observations were used for identifying themes in the data. Behaviour was explained from the participant's point of view (observations were contextualised). Recordings were made continually and systematically (Creswell 1998:212). In this study observations were done over a three-year period for seven periods of one week each. During the last week field notes were written daily in a notebook. In these field notes I did not attempt to make inferences about my observations. I wrote my field notes in a richly descriptive way, but did not link aspects of the descriptions with each other or the broader social context.

Mechanically recorded data – tape recorders used during interviews and photographs taken during observations provide an accurate record of data. I used a tape recorder to record all interviews, and 67 coloured photographs were taken during the last week of this research.

Member checking – ethnographers confirm observations and participants' meanings with individuals through casual conversations. During interviews topics are rephrased to obtain more complete information. Care is taken to assure that the researcher and the participant agree on descriptions and meanings. I did member checking by spending a lot of time in this community and with the participants. I had many conversations with the children, mothers, caretakers and teachers. Whenever I did not understand an event or interaction, my interpreter explained it to me. During the final week of my stay in the community I also checked with participants who were interviewed, whether my interpretations of what they were saying, were correct. My interpretations of my non-verbal data collection strategies were checked with my interpreter.

Triangulation – one source of information is tested against another source. I used interviews, observations, artefacts and photographs and compared information from these sources to one another (Creswell 1998:211).

Relevant instruments – questions used during interviews are relevant to the specific community and their situation (Mouton 2001:102). I generated the questions that were used in the interviews from a cycle of reflection. The questions were only developed after spending the first six weeks in the community and it integrated my knowledge about the specific community, the asset-based approach and pre-school learning.

2.3.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY: THE ASSET-BASED APPROACH

As stated earlier, I will use the asset-based approach as the theoretical framework for this study. Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) introduce the asset-based approach to community building. This approach will form the main part of the theory explaining this research. Primarily, this means that the study has a capacity-orientated emphasis.

Traditional strategies for community improvement have so often failed (Kretzmann & McKnight 1993:1). To look at the needs of a community, only part of the truth about the community is conveyed. To see the whole truth of a community, the community's capacities and assets also need to be identified and sometimes even discovered. A community can not be built on what is absent, but it can be built on what is present

(Kretzmann & McKnight 1993:14). Effective community development is based upon the community's assets, capacities and abilities. This approach sees even the poorest neighbourhood as a place where the community represents resources upon which to build. This approach looks at the community's possibilities and not its problems. To look at the needs of a community, a perception is conveyed that only outside experts can provide real help (Kretzmann & McKnight 1993:4). Historic evidence indicates that community development is effective and significant when the local people in the community are committed to invest in their own capacities, skills and gifts in the process. Recognising and mobilising a community's assets incorporate the people of the community into the community building process. This moves the individual to the highest level of personal interest in the well being of the community (Weaver in McKnight 1997:122).

Each community has a unique set of assets. These assets are present in the members of the community, the associations and organisations, the institutions and the physical environment. Assets in members of the community refer to people's specific skills, talents, interests and experiences – whether they are obtained through careers, volunteer work or life experiences. Many people have skills valuable to citizens. Associations identified as assets include formal and informal groups of community members coming together like sports groups or church groups. Local institutions refer to more formal structures like schools, police departments or clinics. Physical assets in a community include the land, buildings, infrastructure and vegetation (Kretzmann & McKnight 1993:8).

Asset-based community development affirms and builds on work already going on in communities (Kretzmann & McKnight 1993:9). To focus on the capacities of a community, Kretzmann and McKnight (1993:14) suggest using a capacity inventory. An inventory comprises the mapping the community's assets, capacities and abilities. Identifying the community's assets on different levels (residents, associations, institutions and environment) allows for facilitation of matches between these levels.

Care must be taken to work with the cultural givens of the community. If one should intervene, changes must be proven to be desirable. The survival patterns of many communities are so fragile that unforeseen side effects of improvements can prove disastrous. Any intervention must be carefully studied to ensure that it is culturally acceptable, renewable and physically sustainable – another reason why development is best coming from inside the community (Pickett & Hawthorne 1994:10 - 24).

In figure 2.1 Kretzmann and McKnight (1993:7) give an example of a map of the assets in a community. These assets are already part of the community, acceptable and physically sustainable.

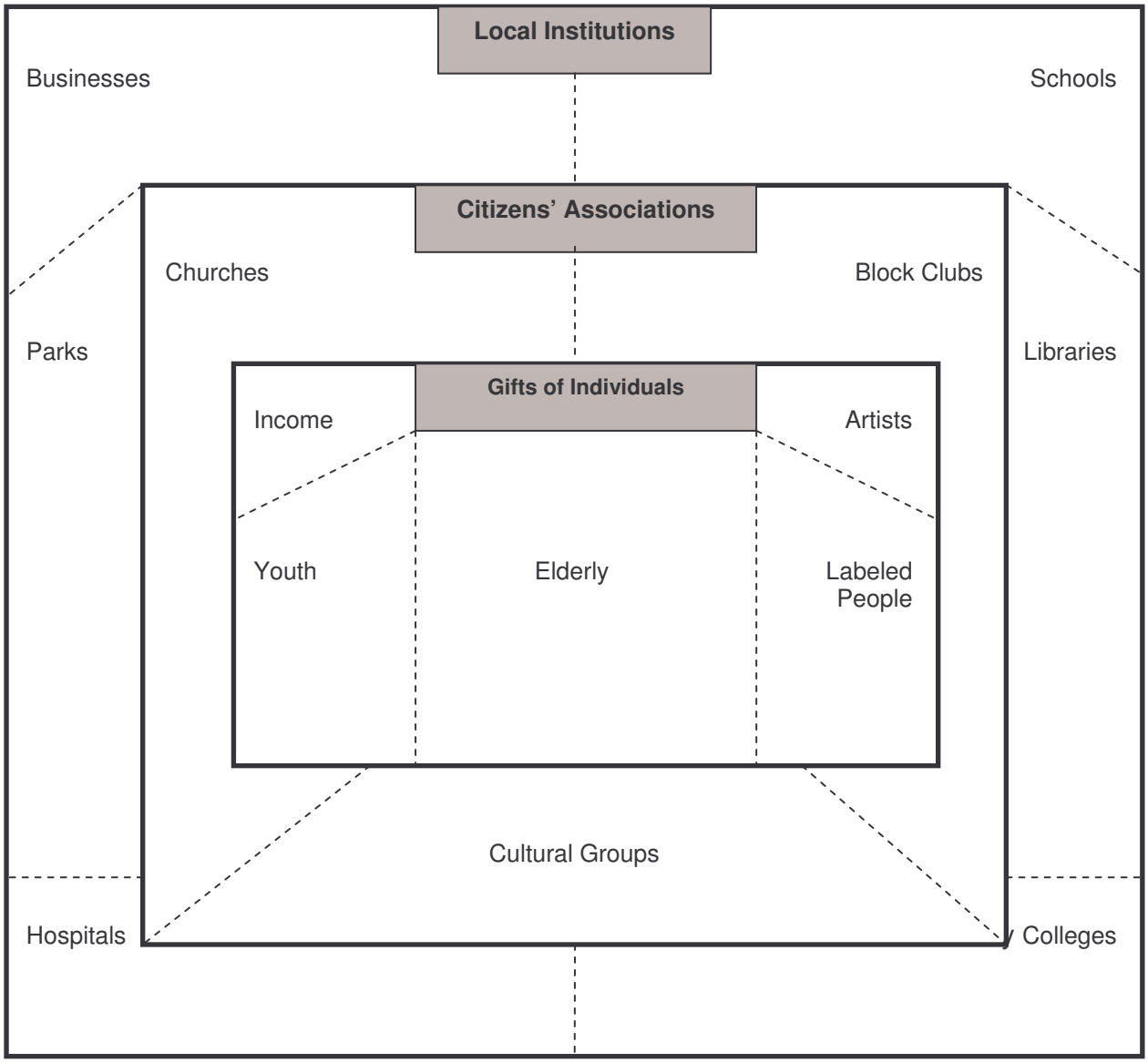

FIGURE 2.1: COMMUNITY ASSETS MAP

2.3.4 DATA COLLECTION

2.3.4.1 Ethnography

This research study was conducted as an ethnographic study. I chose ethnography because it is a research design that is strong in terms of ecological validity. I also liked the fact that it allows me to use direct observation, instead of having to rely on second-hand

data. It has also been shown to be an effective research tool as a means for developing theory – which I am implicitly doing in conducting this study.

2.3.4.2 Selection of cases (sampling)

An ethnographic study begins with planning the general research questions and the kind of site and participants to be studied (McMillan & Schumacher 1994:40), thus, within-culture sampling (Creswell 1998:120). For the purpose of identifying assets in learners, caretakers and the community in a culture of poverty, a Swazi settlement near the border of Swaziland was chosen. To the ethnographer a single site is important. A site was selected where children and their caretakers could be located. This site included homes and premises of learners and caretakers, homes and premises of neighbours and the streets between premises. Data required for this study, needed to be rich in description of people, places and activities. Purposive sampling methods were used to identify settings where participants could be reached more easily (Schurink & Schurink 1998:253). This method of sampling comprises what is called the “big net approach” (Creswell 1998:120). At first I mingled with everyone. According to the research questions, I identified key participants who could provide information and insights and facilitate contacts with other helpful individuals. Key participants were chosen because they seemed knowledgeable and informative about the research phenomena. Purposeful sampling increases the utility of information obtained. A few cases studied in depth may lead to insights about the topic (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:397). The interpreter who was helpful during the research study was a key informant as he explained many phenomena observed. He also facilitated contact with other participants who were rich sources of information. Interviews were conducted at premises where families lived with children.

I asked myself new questions as the research proceeded. Questions like: “How can I enrich my understanding?” “Which data sources may confirm or challenge the current data?” These questions determined the sampling process (Schurink & Schurink 1998:254). Sampling was thus an ongoing process throughout the research. I also made use of opportunistic sampling (Creswell 1998:120) where advantage was taken of opportunities: Mothers sitting outside with their children were easily observed and interviewed. Children playing with wire cars were eager to explain how they made their cars and the function of it. Criterion sampling was also used to select participants. As the focus of this research is mainly on pre-school children and caretakers, the presence of children was a criterion for the selection of interviewees.

2.3.4.3 Researcher as instrument

My name is Annari de Wet. I am 28 years old and female. I studied B.Prim.Ed Junior Primary and B.Ed Special Educational Needs. My working experience ranges from taking care of three-month-old babies to teaching teenagers. Currently I am a Grade Two teacher at a primary school. I believe that everyday objects can be used to stimulate children's learning. Within the community that this study was conducted in, there are many assets to enrich pre-school learning. Identifying and mobilising these assets can empower this community and enhance pre-school learning. In this way this community can contribute to its own development. I believe that this approach strengthens the community and has long-term positive effects.

I gained access to the group through gatekeepers – individuals who introduced me to the families where I lived (Creswell 1998:60). During the final week a lady who I met on previous visits to the field introduced me to her family-in-law with whom I stayed during my data collection. Once I was in the field, key informants were identified who could provide useful information and insights about the community. High school girls living in the house where I stayed accompanied me while I was exploring the field. They also introduced me to a young man who acted as an interpreter. I established relations with individuals at the research site (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:434). Throughout the data collection period I tried to gain and maintain the trust of the participants and establish rapport with them. When entering the field, I was honest about the reason for my presence in the community (Leedy & Ormrod 2001:151). At all times I aimed to have an interested, respectful and nonjudgmental position. I chose a research role appropriate for the purpose of data collection (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:435). Ethnography requires an interactive research role and the establishment of social relationships. I was a careful observer, interviewer and listener. Most of the time I took the role of participant-observer. This role was created for the sole purpose of data collection. As I built relationships in the field, I became more involved and part of the daily life of the people (Leedy & Ormrod 2001:151). At first I had the role of an outsider mainly, only observing, but as the research proceeded, I became more of as insider, participating in daily activities and interacting as part of the family. Finally I acted as interviewer, conducting interviews with participants during the final week of the fieldwork.

2.3.4.4 Method

Before the formalised data collection started, I spent a total of six weeks in the community. During this time, many insights in lives of community members were gained. Many social

relationships were established and cultural rules of the community were learned. During active data collection, I engaged in fieldwork for a period of one week, gathering information through observations and photographs taken of activities and assets, interviews and the collection of artefacts. I observed what the community members did, what they made and used on a daily basis. I observed the physical surroundings of the community, and I listened to what participants said.

For observations, sites were chosen where children were present. Often caretakers were also present. During observations children's interaction with their peers and caretakers in ordinary settings were studied. I observed the games they played and toys they played with. Observations were mostly unstructured and recordings were done through field notes and descriptions. The children were studied in their culture, in their home environment. Observations ranged from participant to non-participant, from playing with the children to only watching as they play. Observations were done during daytime, in the mornings and afternoons. To identify assets in the children, the caretakers and the community which could be used for enriching pre-school learning, I observed with the following questions in mind:

- Who are the caretakers?
- What are the responsibilities of the caretakers?
- What activities are the caretakers and other adults involved with? Can the children be involved in any of these activities that will benefit their learning?
- What is the involvement of the caretakers with the children?
- Do the children have any chores that they are responsible for?
- What activities are the children involved in and for how long and with whom?
- What toys do the children play with?
- What games do they play?
- What artefacts in the physical environment can be used to make educational toys?
- What artefacts in the environment are already used for pre-school learning?

Photographs were taken of children involved in activities and the physical environment. These were studied afterwards to identify and confirm assets.

During the data collection, 22 interviews were conducted with caretakers. In identifying the caretakers, my interpreter was very informative. Participants were mainly selected through purposeful sampling. The interviews were done during the mornings and afternoons. All interviews were held at the participants' homes. Interviews were recorded on

audiocassette and analysed afterwards. The interviews were semi-structured. All participants were asked the same questions, but opportunity for expansion was given. Before conducting the interview informed consent was obtained from participants. Interviews were conducted to obtain information about activities of children and caretakers. The following questions were asked during the interview:

- How many children do you have?
- How old are your children?
- Are you working? How often? What hours?
- Who looks after the children?
- What does the caretaker do with the children?
- What are the responsibilities of the caretaker?
- What kind of games do the children play?
- Does the caretaker play with them, or do they play alone?
- What kind of toys do the children have and play with?
- What kind of things do the children make (art)?
- What chores do the children have?
- What do the children do in the evenings?

I spent a morning at the local clinic in the community where I interviewed the personnel of the clinic. The purpose of my visit to the clinic was to determine to what degree the clinic can be used or was already used as an asset to enrich pre-school learning. Questions I asked during my interview with the clinic staff were the following:

- How many mothers come to the clinic?
- When do the mothers come to the clinic? Which days and what time of the day?
- Why do the mothers come to the clinic?
- What happens at the clinic?
- How much time do the mothers spend at the clinic?
- Who works at the clinic?
- How many staff members are employed by the clinic?

During the fieldwork of my research, I collected some artefacts. Collection of the artefacts was rather non-interactive. These artefacts were mainly collected for their potential as assets for enriching pre-school learning. Some of the artefacts were collected at the market. These were creative art products like brooms and mats. Some other artefacts were collected in gardens. These were e.g. seeds of fruits and trees.

2.3.5 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Data was derived from interviews, observations, field notes, photographs and artefacts. Analysis started with organising the data of each data collecting method. This organised data was then studied to identify assets in the children, caretakers and community that can be used to enrich pre-school learning. A list of assets for each data set collected was drawn up. Four lists of assets existed, namely:

- Assets derived from field notes.
- Assets derived from photographs.
- Assets derived from artefacts.
- Assets derived from interviews.

These four sets of assets were compared to eliminate duplications of assets. A summarised list of assets was drawn up. Data were categorised according to themes derived from the data itself. All identified assets were grouped under these themes. Main themes were further expanded into categories and where necessary, into sub-categories. To represent assets, graphic representations were drawn up of identified and categorised assets.

The data (assets) was interpreted further by giving examples of activities caretakers can do with the children to stimulate and practice skills for learning. Through these activities the learning outcomes for the foundation phase (as stated by the Revised National Curriculum) are also incorporated. These interpretations are presented in a table contained in chapter three.

2.4 CONCLUSIONS, SHORTCOMINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In an ethnographic study, the researcher can easily become very much involved with the participants and the community, especially if it is a prolonged study. There are many issues associated with the subjectivity of the researcher as participating observer. To limit researcher bias, I made extensive field notes about personal experiences during the research on which I continuously reflected. Collaboration with other community workers in the same kind of community can also be recommended. Furthermore this study could have been extended to incorporate preschools and special schools in the community.

2.5 SUMMARY

In this chapter the research design used for this study, has been described. The ethical strategies in accordance to this ethnographic study were presented. Trustworthiness strategies that apply were described. The asset-based approach was discussed as the theoretical framework for this research study. Ethnography was described as the chosen research design. Sampling for the selection of participants was discussed. Comments were made on the role of the researcher in this study. Participant-observations, interviews, photographs and the collection of artefacts were described as the data-collecting methods that have been used. Finally, the method for data analysis and interpretation was discussed.

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CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH RESULTS: PERSONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS TO ENRICH PRE-SCHOOL LEARNING

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter assets in the community are identified. The data for identifying the assets was derived from field notes, observations, photographs, artefacts and interviews. The data collection methods are explained by using a description of how I went about to collect the data. The data analysis process that was followed is explained. The assets that were identified out of each data collection method are identified. The assets were compared and summarised. From the collective summary of assets, themes were formed. The themes are then mapped with identified categories within the themes. Categories are further divided into subcategories. Themes, categories and subcategories are graphically represented. The value of the identified assets is explained in the last part of this chapter. This explanation comprises a table showing each asset with examples of activities the assets can be used for. Skills that are developed through these assets and activities, as well as learning outcomes that are practiced, are suggested. The learning outcomes are formulated in annexure A.

3.2 DATA COLLECTION

As stated, data was collected through observations, field notes, interviews, photographs and artefacts. This section will provide a brief description of each data collection method used in this research.

3.2.1 OBSERVATIONS

Observations were done over a three-year period for seven periods of one week each. Observations were done in a traditional settlement of mostly Swazi and Zulu speaking people. This is a community with a culture of poverty, often lacking electricity, food, clothes and proper housing. Mostly children between 18 months and 12 years of age were observed in their natural surroundings. The activities of children and caretakers were observed. Other people like family members involved in the children's lives were also observed. Houses, household items, surroundings, institutions, the environment and the culture were observed. Notes on observation were written down. The next extract is an example of my observations.

Sunday 8 April 2001

Wooden benches

Wooden benches are present in church and also at houses. Children can play balancing activities on it. They can climb over it and crawl under it. They can use it for fantasy play, for example as a shop, a boat or a car. Muscle tone, integration, coordination, spatial orientation, fantasy play, balance and gross-motor skills can be practiced.

Steps

Steps at houses. Jump on and off steps. Change feet when jumping. Coordination, gross-motor skills, muscle tone and integration can be practiced.

Straw decorations

Decorations are made from plastic straws. The same decorations are made from thin reeds. A string is threaded through plastic straws that are cut into smaller pieces. Decorations are made that are also used as curtains. Fine-motor skills, creativity, coordination and integration are practiced. Small children help to make these.

Box-stars covered with fabric

Small pieces of leftover material are used to cover a box that is folded in the shape of a star. These boxes are used as decoration. Entrepreneurship is practiced.

Mats made from plastic bags

A maize meal bag is used as basis. Plastic bags are cut into thin strips. These strips are weaved into the maize meal bag with a needle. Eventually a mat develops.

Crocheted hats

Thin and long strips of plastic bags are used to crochet a hat.

Husks of maize

Husks of maize can be braided to make home-made dolls' hair and practice fine-motor skills. They can also be used to make clothes for small dolls or a sail for a small toy sailboat. Fantasy play is developed.

3.2.2 FIELD NOTES

Field notes were written during the last week of the research. Notes were written on observations as well as on reflections on assets. Notes were done in a notebook at the end of each day. Data in the notebook was analysed after returning from the field, to

identify assets that could enrich pre-school learning within a culture of poverty. The next extract is an example of my field notes:

Tuesday 10 April 2001

Supervision

Children are very independent regarding supervision. Primary school children and even toddlers would walk far distances without supervision. Often it is only the older siblings that accompany them (also primary school aged children). Children would play for extended periods at friends' houses and have their meals there as well. Caretakers would feed all the children that are present at the house. Children play for long periods of time with friends without the supervision of an adult – at their own houses, the house of a friend or in the street. They are very independent.

Group play

Children play games, but very little toys are observed. From the age that they can walk and run, they play in groups. Very young children play on their own, but toddlers and older children mostly play in groups.

Importance of children

It seems to me as if children are very important in this community. Although they have little status in the community, they are very important to the older people. Children are never told to go and play away from the adults. Children are allowed to play between adults and in adult company, but they are never told to be quiet or to sit still. Even when people are watching television, the children are allowed to talk, sing or make noises. It seems to me as if children are never seen as a burden, but always as an asset.

3.2.3 INTERVIEWS

During the last week 22 interviews were conducted with caretakers. An interpreter was used and interviews were done in English and Swazi or Zulu. Participants were all female and varied from teenagers to elderly woman. Participants were selected through purposeful sampling. With the consent of participants all interviews were recorded with an audio cassette player. Interviews were semi-structured around 12 questions (paragraph 2.3.4.4) and the length of interviews varied from 10 to 20 minutes. The next extract is an example of an interview that I conducted.

Interview number 1

How many children do you have?
I have two children.

How old are your children?
They are four years old and one year old.

Are you working? How often? What hours?
I only work here at home.

Who looks after the children?
I, their mother, look after them.

What do you do with your children?
We play ball.

What are the responsibilities of the caretaker?
I have to clean and cook.

What kind of games do the children play?
They play ball games.

Do you play with them, or do they play alone?
Most of the time they play alone.

What kind of toys do the children have and play with?
A ball.

What kind of things do the children make?
They make mud figures.

What chores do the children have?
Nothing.

What do the children do in the evenings?
Nothing.

3.2.4 PHOTOGRAPHS

With the consent of the participants, 67 coloured photographs were taken during the last week of research. Photographs were taken of children playing, doing chores and their surroundings. Some photographs were also taken at the clinic and the market. Finally

photographs were also taken of caretakers busy with their chores, and caretakers teaching children various crafts. Examples of photographs are included in this paragraph. Photos are numbered according to the film number (the first number) and the photo number on the particular film (the second number). For example, the first photo that can be seen in this paragraph was on the first film used during data collection and the photo number on the film was 00.

1,00 Children with mealie cobs

11,0 A child making a decoration by weaving plastic bags into a maize meal bag

1,7 Writing in the sand with fingers

1,8 Mats, brooms and decorations

1,11 A wire car

1,21 Children dancing

2,18 A woman sorting beans

2,24 A woman peeling peanuts

2,20 Playing at steps

2,22 Children making coals

2,19 Playing on a wooden bench

3,4 A family collecting and sorting cotton

3.2.5 ARTEFACTS

Artefacts consisted mostly of crafts made by caretakers and children. Many of these artefacts were given to me as gifts from participants, while some were bought by me at the market, and some were collected in the natural surroundings. Examples of artefacts are grass mats, grass brooms, mats made from plastic bags, straw decorations and a cardboard star covered with fabric.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

3.3.1 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Data was derived from field notes, photographs, artefacts, observations and interviews.

FIGURE 3.1: DATA COLLECTION METHODS

3.3.2 DATA ANALYSIS

To analyse the data, each of the data sets was analysed on its own.

Observations were done daily and continuously. Notes were written in the field whenever an asset was identified. Field notes were also written daily on activities and surroundings and behaviour. These notes were studied while in the field, and after returning from the field. All assets identified in these notes were written down and summarised in table 3.1.

Photographs were taken with the consent of participants during the last week of the research. Children, caretakers, toys, games, activities, hobbies, surroundings, chores and houses were all captured on photographs. The photographs were studied individually and assets that could be seen on the photographs were identified. These assets are summarised in table 3.2.

Most of the artefacts that were collected were gifts from participants. Others were bought at the market or collected by myself, like seeds and pods. The location of the artefacts is of importance. These artefacts need to be within the reach of children to be identified as an asset to enrich their preschool learning. Artefacts that were received as gifts, like grass mats, were made by the caretakers and/or children themselves. Artefacts bought at the market were general household items, like straw decorations. Artefacts collected by myself, were present in many of the participants gardens. The artefacts and the making thereof, in the case of crafts, were identified as assets and are summarised in table 3.3.

The interviews that were recorded on audiotape were listened to carefully and detailed notes were written on each interview. The interviews were semi-structured because a set number of questions were asked to participants. The interviews were not transcribed word for word, because of the involvement of a translator. When listening to the interviews after returning from the field, notes were written for each question number. A synthesis was then written for each question number, using all the interviews' answers for that specific question. The synthesis of each question was then studied to identify assets to enrich preschool learning within a culture of poverty. These assets are summarised in table 3.4.

After the assets were identified in each set of data, the four sets of assets were compared to eliminate any duplication of assets. A new list of assets derived from this. This collective summary of assets is listed in table 3.5.

The collective summary of data was studied as a whole and tentative themes were formed. Assets were compared and contrasted until all identified assets were grouped as different themes.

A main theme was derived from every theme (figure 3.2). Seven themes emerged. Each theme was then studied on its own. Assets within each theme were grouped into clusters to form categories (figure 3.3). Where necessary, categories were further expanded into subcategories (figure 3.4 to figure 3.10).

The data is seen as assets because of the value it has for enriching preschool learning within a culture of poverty. Each of these assets can be used for different activities, practicing skills needed for learning. Through using these assets the learning outcomes for the foundation phase as stated by the Revised National Curriculum Statement, are practiced. These activities, skills and learning outcomes are listed in table 3.6.

3.3.2.1 Assets identified from field notes

References next to assets consist out of the date the notes were written, the page number of the notes and the paragraph number. For example, wooden benches were written down on the 8th of April 2001, page 1, paragraph 1.

TABLE 3.1: ASSETS IDENTIFIED FROM FIELD NOTES

▪ Wooden benches (01-04-08,1,1) ▪ Steps at houses (01-04-08,1,2) ▪ Sheets and blankets (01-04-08,2,5) ▪ Washing lines (01-04-08, 2,6) ▪ Sand-heaps (01-04-08,3,1) ▪ Plastic straw decorations (01-04-08,1,3) ▪ Cardboard stars covered with fabric (01-04-08,1,4) ▪ Mats made from plastic bags (01-04-08,1,5) ▪ Hats crocheted from plastic bags (01-04-08,1,6) ▪ Husks of maize (01-04-08,2,1) ▪ Drawing in the sand (01-04-08, 2,2) ▪ Songs (01-04-08,2,3) ▪ Cutlery (01-04-08, 2,4) ▪ Wire cars (01-04-09,4,1)	▪ Chores of children (01-04-11,11,4) ▪ Free time of children (01-04-11,6,2) ▪ Free time of caretakers (01-04-11,6,2) ▪ Peanuts (01-04-11, 11,6) ▪ Vegetable gardens (01-04-11,12,1) ▪ Beans (01-04-11,12,2) ▪ Swings (01-04-12,13,1) ▪ Tires (01-04-12,13,2) ▪ Animals (01-04-12,13,3) ▪ Pods (01-04-12,13,4) ▪ Grains of maize (01-04-12,13,6) ▪ Mealie-stalk (01-04-12,13,5) ▪ Sweet potatoes (01-04-12,14,2) ▪ Egg boxes (01,04-12,14,5) ▪ Books (01-04-12,14,6) ▪ Children are independent from a very young age (01-04-10,8,5)

▪ Mud figures (01-04-09,4,2) ▪ Grass mats (01-04-09,4,3) ▪ Grass brooms (01-04-09,4,4) ▪ Beads (01-04-09,4,5) ▪ Traditional skirts (01-04-09,4,6) ▪ Rope jumping (01-04-09,5,1) ▪ Care takers (mothers, grandmothers, other siblings, neighbours, friends, family, teachers) (01-04-09,5,2) ▪ Yards (premises) (01-04-09,5,3) ▪ Fruits and Vegetables (seeds – oranges, papaya, mango, avocado, pumpkin, lemon) (01-04-09,4,5) ▪ Games, ball games, language games (01-04-09, 1 & 3) ▪ Clinic (01-04-10,7,1) ▪ Sugar cane (01-04-10,8,1) ▪ Water and buckets (01-04-10,8,2) ▪ Washing clothes (01-04-10,8,3) ▪ Wood (01-04-10,8,4) ▪ Importance of children (01-04-10, 9,2) ▪ Presence of children (01-04-10,9,3) ▪ Crèches (01-04-10,10,1) ▪ Chicken feathers (01-04-10,10,2) ▪ Modern toys (01-04-10,10,3) ▪ Stones (01-04-11,11,1) ▪ Trees, climbing trees (01-04-11,11,2) ▪ Activities in the evenings (01-04-11,11,3)	▪ Children like interacting with people (01-04-10,9,1) ▪ Children are not scared of people or strangers (01-04-12,18,1) ▪ Hair platting (01-04-12,18,2) ▪ Own bodies (01-04-12,18,3) ▪ Competitions (01-04-10,9,1) ▪ Fingers (01-04-08,2,2) ▪ Clothes (01-04-10,8,3) ▪ Insects (01-04-12,13,3) ▪ Furniture and household items (01-04-12,17,5) ▪ Sticks (01-04-08,2,2) ▪ Long grasses (01-04-09,4,3) ▪ Thorns (01-04-08,2,2) ▪ Radio (01-04-12,17,6) ▪ Television (01-04-12,17,7) ▪ Clinic, spacious waiting room and waiting time (01-04-10,7,1) ▪ Candle wax (01-04-12,16,2) ▪ Church (01-04-08,1,1) ▪ Sunday school (01-04-08,1,1) ▪ Schools (01-04-10,10,1) ▪ Special Schools (01-04-11,12,3) ▪ Mimic games (01-04-08,2,5)

3.3.2.2 Assets identified from photographs

References given next to each asset consist out of the film number and the photograph number, for example, Siblings are on film 2, photograph 25.

TABLE 3.2: ASSETS IDENTIFIED FORM PHOTOGRAPHS

▪ Siblings (2,25) ▪ Yards (premises) (2,9) ▪ Trees (2,23) ▪ Sand (1,15) ▪ Wooden benches (2,19) ▪ Fruits and vegetables (3,00)	▪ Pens (1,12) ▪ Paper (1,12) ▪ Cutlery (2,11) ▪ Gardens (2,17) ▪ Coals (2,22) ▪ Grains of maize (3,6)

▪ Songs (2,25) ▪ Dances (2,25) ▪ Games (1,19) ▪ Leaves (2,25) ▪ Bricks (1,15) ▪ Fences (1,19) ▪ Husks of maize (1,00) ▪ Mealie-stalks (1,00) ▪ Steps (2,20) ▪ Peers (1,19) ▪ Plastic containers (2,6) ▪ Tires (1,14) ▪ Ball games (2,9) ▪ Buckets (2,6) ▪ Balloon filled with sand (2,10) ▪ Language games (1,13) ▪ Drawing in the sand (1,7) ▪ Wire cars (1,11) ▪ Tablecloth (3,00) ▪ Blankets (3,00) ▪ Chairs (1,7) ▪ Swing (2,23) ▪ Modern toys (2,21) ▪ Hosepipe (2,21) ▪ Grass brooms (1,8) ▪ Cards (3,2) ▪ Books (3,0)	▪ Grass mats (1,8) ▪ Beans (2,18) ▪ Washing lines (3,1) ▪ Peanuts (2,24) ▪ Washing clothes (3,1) ▪ Chores of children (2,11) ▪ Water (2,7) ▪ Wheelbarrow (2,6) ▪ Wood (2,15) ▪ Cotton (3,5) ▪ Cool drink cans (3,4) ▪ Hats crocheted from plastic bags (3,8) ▪ Hair curlers (3,8) ▪ Baby's napkins (3,8) ▪ Plastic straw decorations (1,2) ▪ Maize meal bags (1,1) ▪ Plastic bags (1,6) ▪ Boxes (1,4) ▪ Fabrics (1,4) ▪ Beads (1,9) ▪ Small businesses next to the road (3,11) ▪ Market (1,9) ▪ Animals – chickens, donkeys, cattle (2,16) ▪ Clinic (1,22) ▪ Old and broken vehicles and machinery (3,9) ▪ Straw decorations (1,8) ▪ Roads (1,14)

3.3.2.3 Assets identified from artefacts

TABLE 3.3: ASSETS IDENTIFIED FROM ARTEFACTS

▪ Pods ▪ Seeds ▪ Grass mats ▪ Grass brooms	▪ Plastic straw decorations ▪ Boxes covered with fabric ▪ Straw decorations ▪ Maize-meal bags

3.3.2.4 Assets identified from interviews

References next to each asset consist of the interview number and the question number, for example same caretaker every day is interview 18 question number 4.

TABLE 3.4 ASSETS IDENTIFIED FROM INTERVIEWS

▪ Most of the time the children have the same caretaker every day – usually their mother (18,40 ▪ Mothers are very busy during the mornings, but late afternoons and evenings they have leisure time (1,3) ▪ Caretakers are responsible for many household activities in and around the house – some of these activities the children can help with (1,6) ▪ Ball games (1,5) ▪ Balls / lemons / stones (3,7) ▪ Mud figures (8,8) ▪ Children do not have chores during the evening, this gives time for learning (12,10) ▪ Dogs (17,9) ▪ Peanuts (2,6) ▪ Grandmothers are sometimes the caretakers (2,4) ▪ Songs (especially traditional ones) (12,7) ▪ Teachers (4,4) ▪ Soil (4,7) ▪ Electronic games, modern toys (4,9) ▪ Sit and talk (4,10) ▪ Chores the children have (cleaning and sweeping) (1,6) ▪ Crafts, decorations, mats, boxes, hats (10,8) ▪ Work in garden (5,6) ▪ Read (5,7) ▪ Run (5,7) ▪ Write (11,7) ▪ Books (11,9) ▪ Television (5,10)	▪ Learn prayers (5,10) ▪ Stones (6,7) ▪ Hula-hoop (7,7) ▪ Hide and Seek (17,7) ▪ Counting (7,7) ▪ Crawl (8,7) ▪ Make dolls (8,7) ▪ Guns (21,9) ▪ Cards (14,7) ▪ Mud (21,8) ▪ Play inside (8,10) ▪ Wire cars (15,9) ▪ Aunt (10,4) ▪ Language game (10,7) ▪ Netball (10,7) ▪ Washing dishes (1,6) ▪ Dances (12,7) ▪ Siblings teach crafts (5,5) ▪ Rope jumping (14,7) ▪ Music (14,7) ▪ Throw sand in a bottle (14.7) ▪ Ropes (14.7) ▪ Beads (15,8) ▪ Schoolbooks (15,9) ▪ Drums (16,9) ▪ Tires (16,9) ▪ Tins (17,7) ▪ Insects (17,7) ▪ Jumping (19,7) ▪ Foot Ball (1,7) ▪ Clinic – waiting time (22,5)

3.3.2.5 Collective summary of assets

TABLE 3.5: COLLECTIVE SUMMARY OF ASSETS

▪ Wooden benches ▪ Steps at houses ▪ Sand-heaps ▪ Plastic straw decorations ▪ Cardboard stars covered with fabric ▪ Mats made from plastic bags ▪ Hats crocheted from plastic bags ▪ Husks of maize ▪ Drawing in the sand ▪ Songs (especially traditional ones) ▪ Cutlery ▪ Sheets, blankets and tablecloths ▪ Washing lines ▪ Wire cars ▪ Mud figures ▪ Grass mats ▪ Grass brooms ▪ Beads ▪ Traditional skirts ▪ Rope jumping ▪ Care takers – mothers, grandmothers, siblings, neighbours, friends, family (aunts), and teachers ▪ Big yards ▪ Fruits and vegetables (seeds – oranges, lemons, papaya, mango, avocado, pumpkin) ▪ Fruits (used as balls) – lemons, oranges ▪ Ball games ▪ Language games ▪ Running games ▪ Singing and dancing games ▪ Clinic ▪ Waiting time at the clinic ▪ Waiting area at the clinic ▪ Sugar cane ▪ Water ▪ Buckets ▪ Plastic containers	▪ Children like interacting with people ▪ Children are not scared of people or strangers ▪ Hair platting ▪ Own bodies ▪ Competitions, for example running races ▪ Fingers ▪ Insects ▪ Furniture ▪ Household items ▪ Sticks ▪ Long grasses ▪ Thorns ▪ Radio ▪ Television ▪ Dances ▪ Leaves ▪ Bricks ▪ Fences ▪ Peers ▪ Balloon filled with sand ▪ Chairs ▪ Hose pipe ▪ Cards ▪ Pens ▪ Paper ▪ Coals ▪ Wheelbarrow ▪ Cotton ▪ Cold drink cans ▪ Hair curlers ▪ Baby's napkins ▪ Maize meal bags ▪ Plastic bags ▪ Fabrics ▪ Small businesses next to road ▪ Market ▪ Old or broken vehicles and machinery

▪ Cooking utensils ▪ Washing clothes ▪ Clothes ▪ Wood ▪ Importance of children ▪ Presence of children ▪ Crèches ▪ Chicken feathers ▪ Modern toys and electronic games ▪ Stones ▪ Trees ▪ Climbing trees ▪ Evenings ▪ Children's chores ▪ Children's leisure time ▪ Free time of caretakers (leisure time) ▪ Peanuts ▪ Vegetable gardens ▪ Beans ▪ Swings ▪ Tires ▪ Animals – dogs, chickens, cattle, donkeys, goats ▪ Pods ▪ Grains of maize ▪ Mealie-stalk ▪ Sweet potatoes ▪ Egg boxes ▪ Candle wax ▪ Books and schoolbooks ▪ Children are independent from a very young age	▪ Straw decorations ▪ Roads ▪ Church ▪ Sunday school ▪ Same caretaker every day ▪ Chores of care takers ▪ Teachers ▪ Sand and soil ▪ Sit and talk ▪ Work in the garden ▪ Read ▪ Write ▪ Learn prayers ▪ Hide and seek ▪ Hula-hoop ▪ Counting ▪ Crawling ▪ Make dolls ▪ Guns ▪ Netball ▪ Washing dishes ▪ Rope ▪ Music ▪ Throw sand in a bottle ▪ Drums ▪ Tins ▪ Jumping ▪ Football ▪ Schools ▪ Special schools ▪ Mimic games

3.3.3 ASSET THEMES

The previous section provided a collective summary of the assets that were identified to enrich preschool learning in a culture of poverty. In this section, these assets will be structured in terms of the themes that were identified during the course of the research. This will be done by means of graphic representations. At first, the main themes will be identified. This will be followed by graphic representations where each of the themes will be elaborated upon by providing the detail (assets) of each of the themes in the graphic representation. The following eight themes were identified:

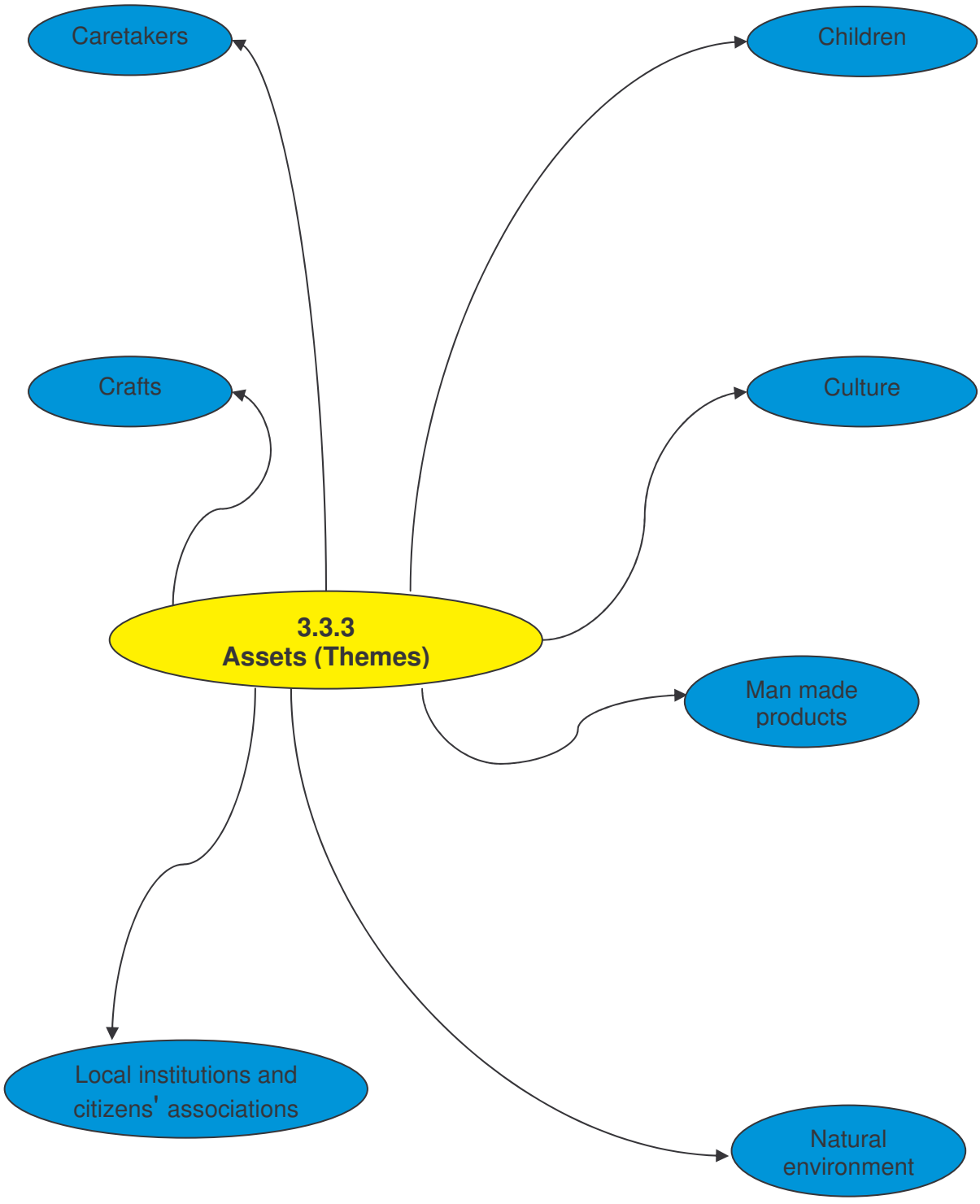

FIGURE 3.2: MAIN THEMES OF ASSETS IDENTIFIED IN THE RESEARCH

3.3.4 ASSET THEMES AND CATEGORIES

The asset themes were expanded into categories as follows:

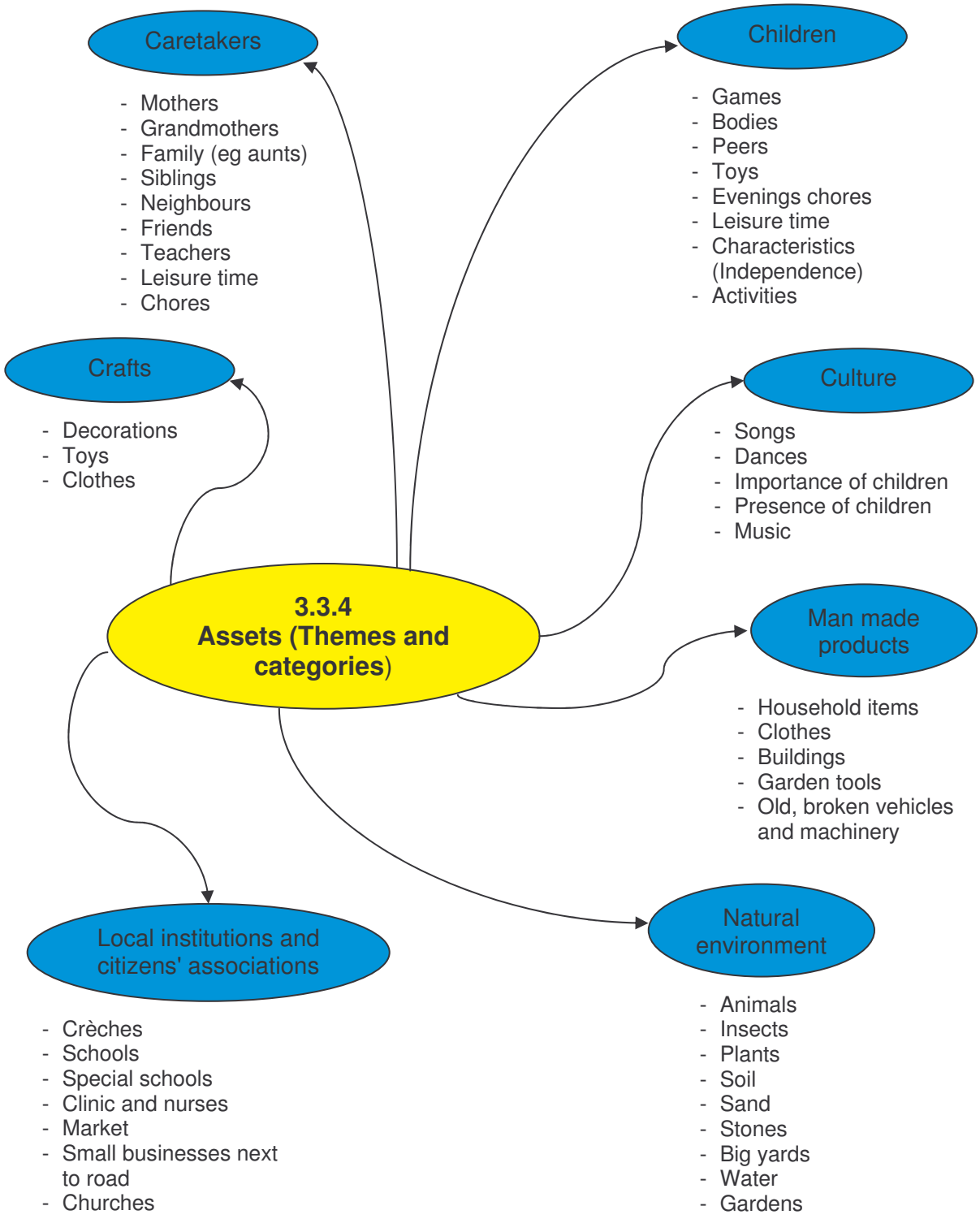

FIGURE 3.3: MAIN THEMES OF ASSETS IDENTIFIED EXPANDED INTO CATEGORIES

3.3.5 THEME MAPS (WITH CATEGORIES AND SUBCATEGORIES)

In the previous paragraph a graphic representation of the main themes identified was given with the categories. In the following paragraphs, graphic representations of each theme individually will show the theme's categories as well as the sub-categories.

Figures 3.4 to 3.10 shows each theme with its categories and subcategories:

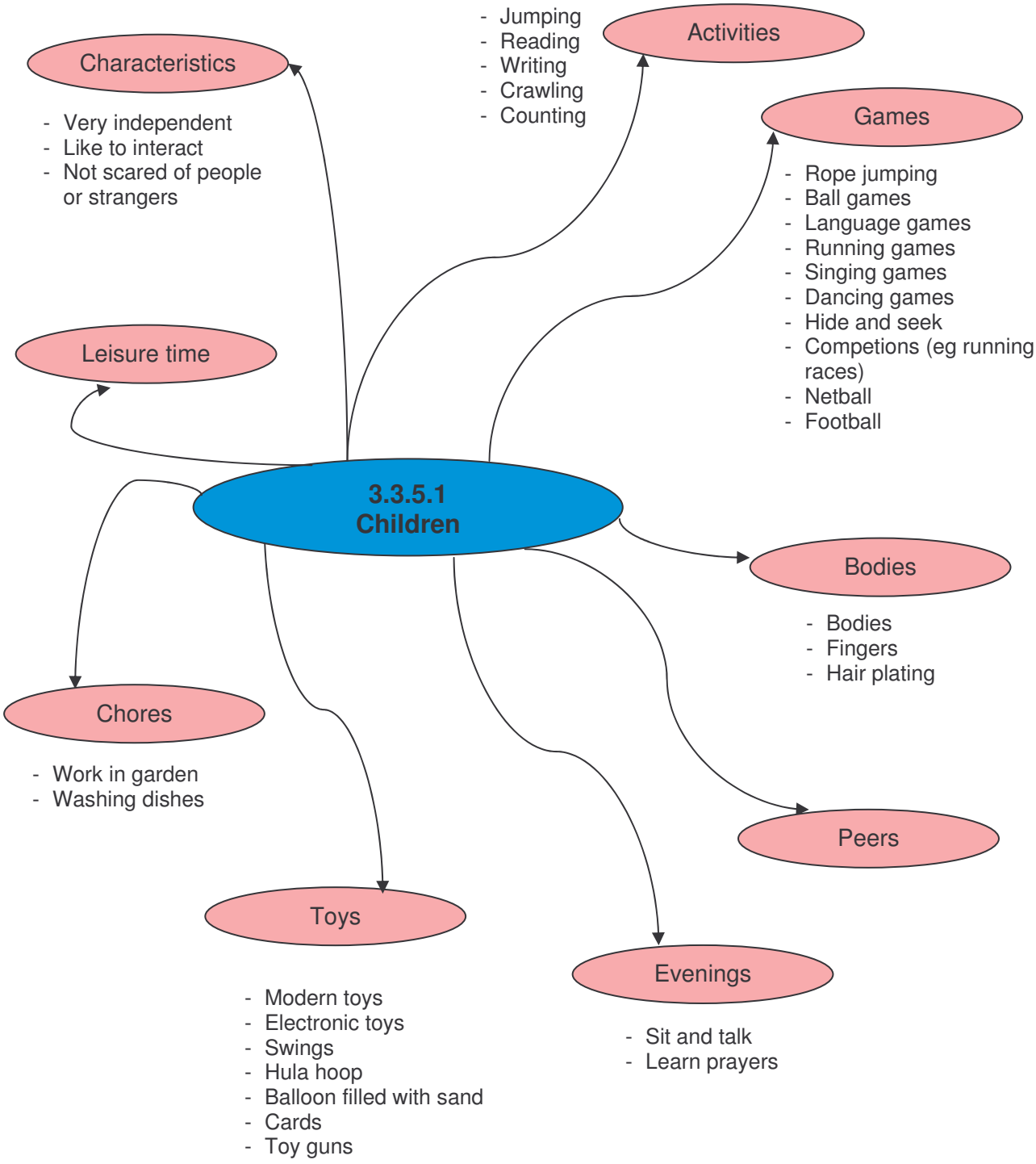

FIGURE 3.4: CHILDREN AS A THEME EXPANDED INTO CATEGORIES AND SUBCATEGORIES

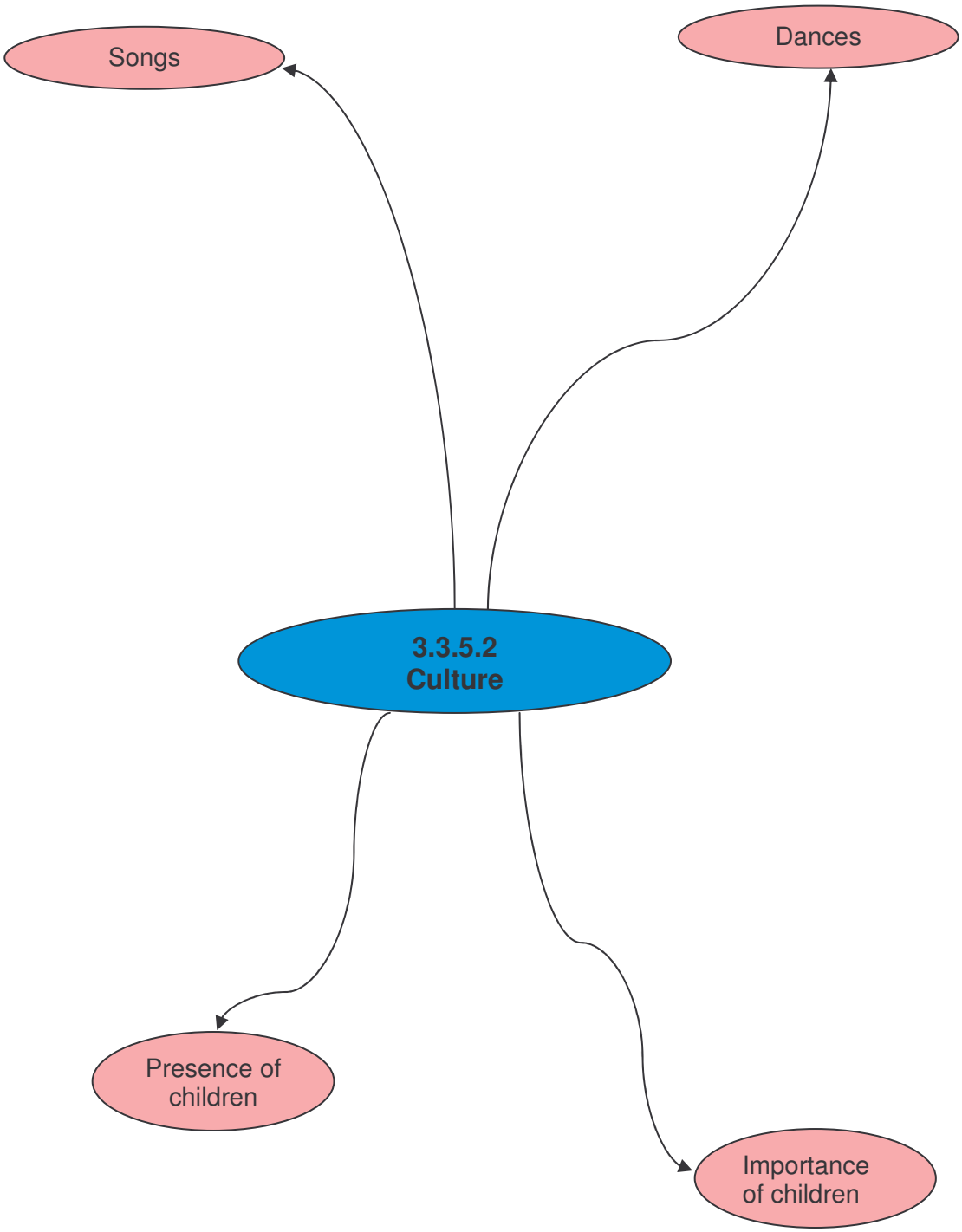

FIGURE 3.5: CULTURE AS THEME EXPANDED INTO CATEGORIES

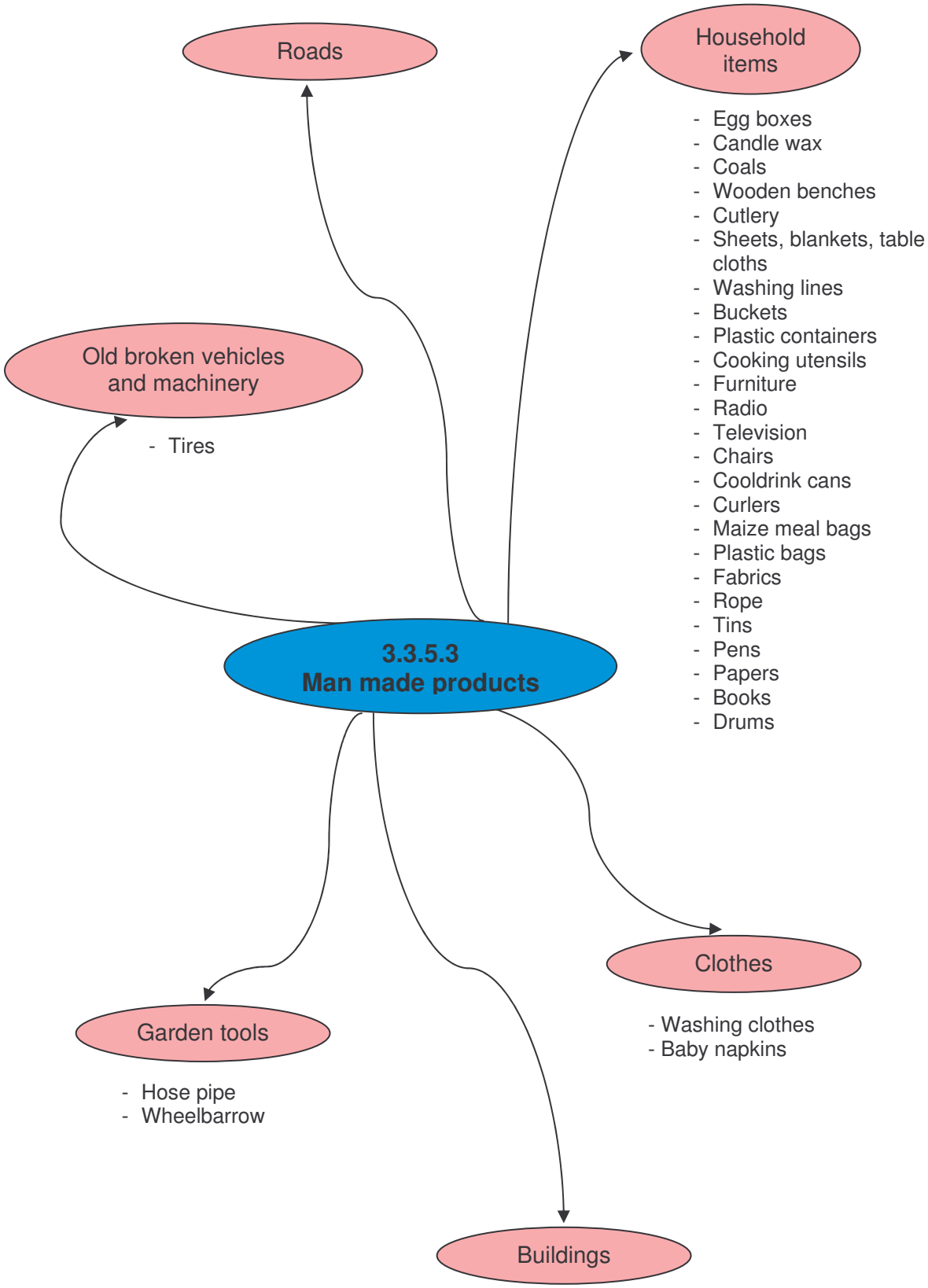

FIGURE 3.6: MAN MADE PRODUCTS AS A THEME EXPANDED INTO CATEGORIES AND SUB-CATEGORIES

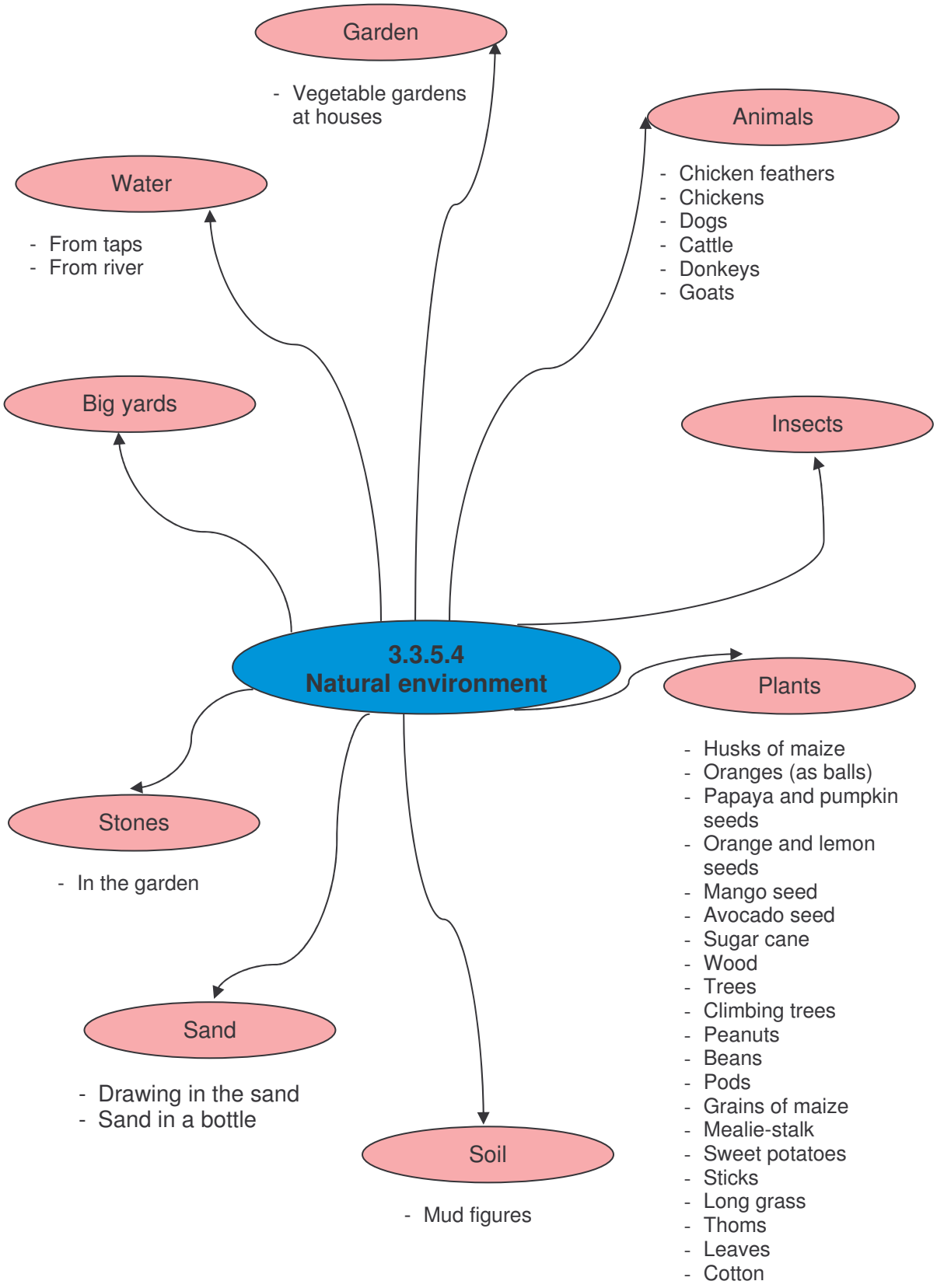

FIGURE 3.7: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AS A THEME EXPANDED INTO CATEGORIES AND SUB-CATEGORIES

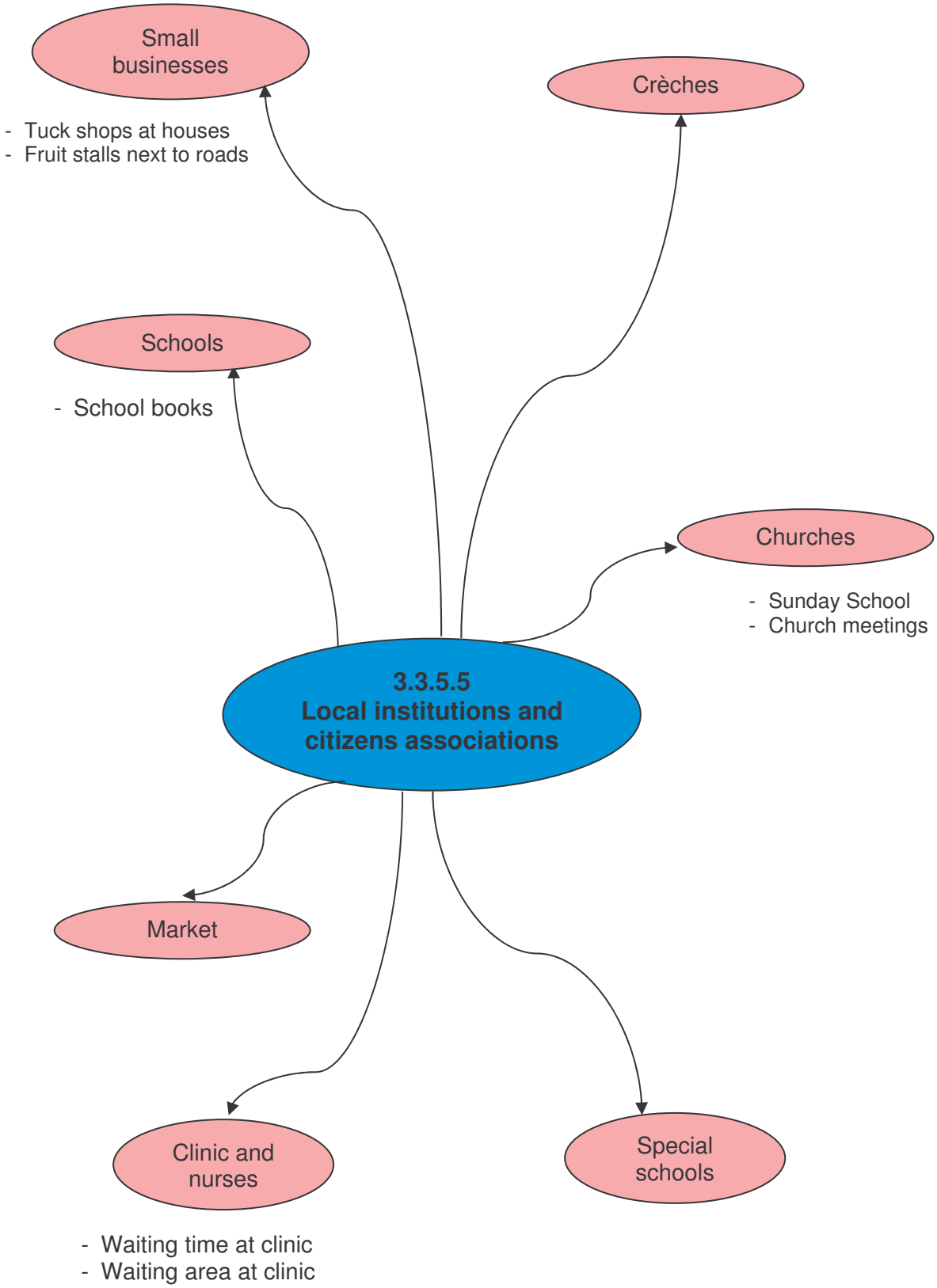

FIGURE 3.8: LOCAL INSTITUTIONS AND CITIZENS' ASSOCIATIONS AS A THEME EXPANDED INTO CATEGORIES AND SUBCATEGORIES

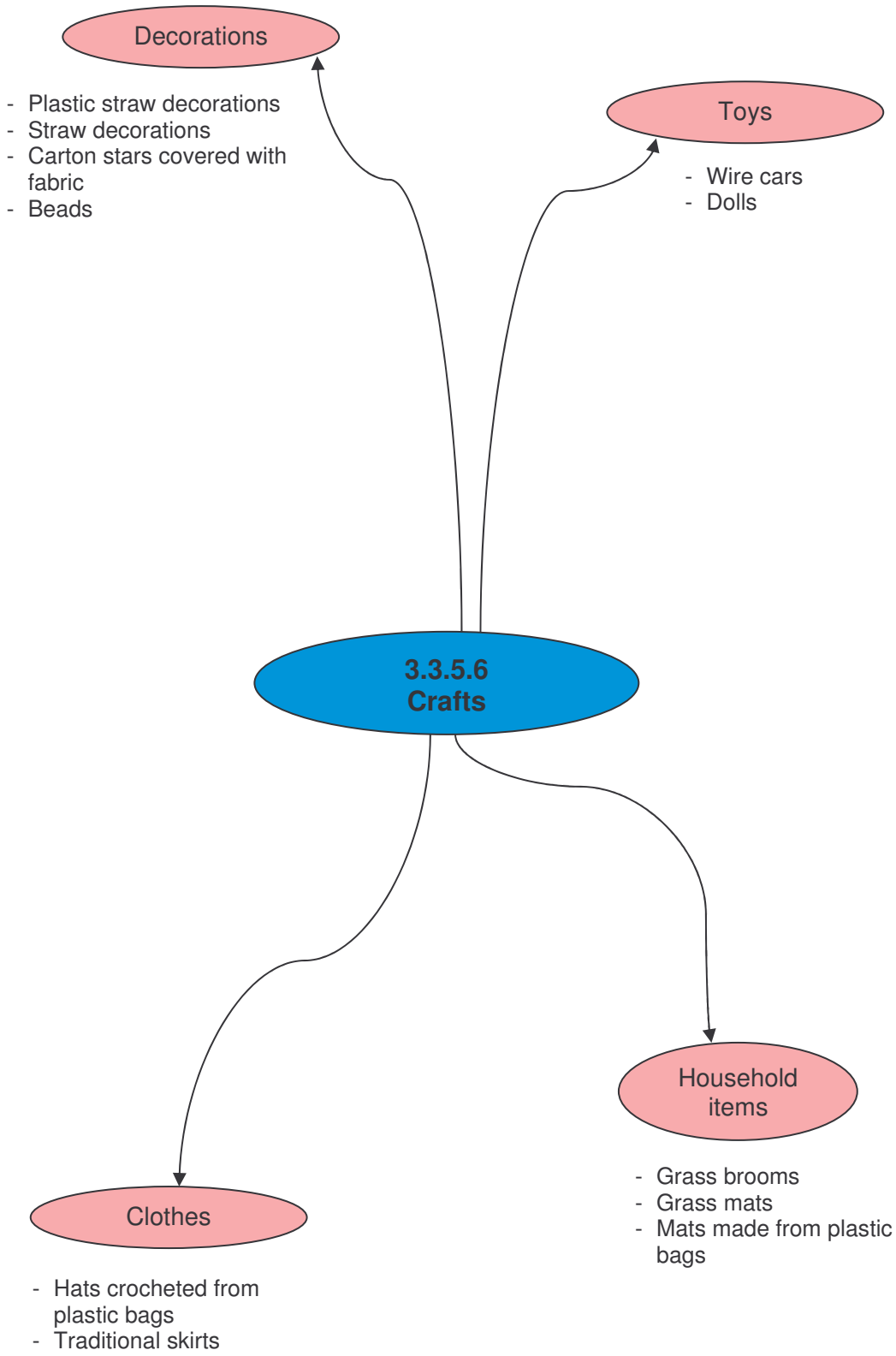

FIGURE 3.9: CRAFTS AS A THEME EXPANDED INTO CATEGORIES AND SUBCATEGORIES

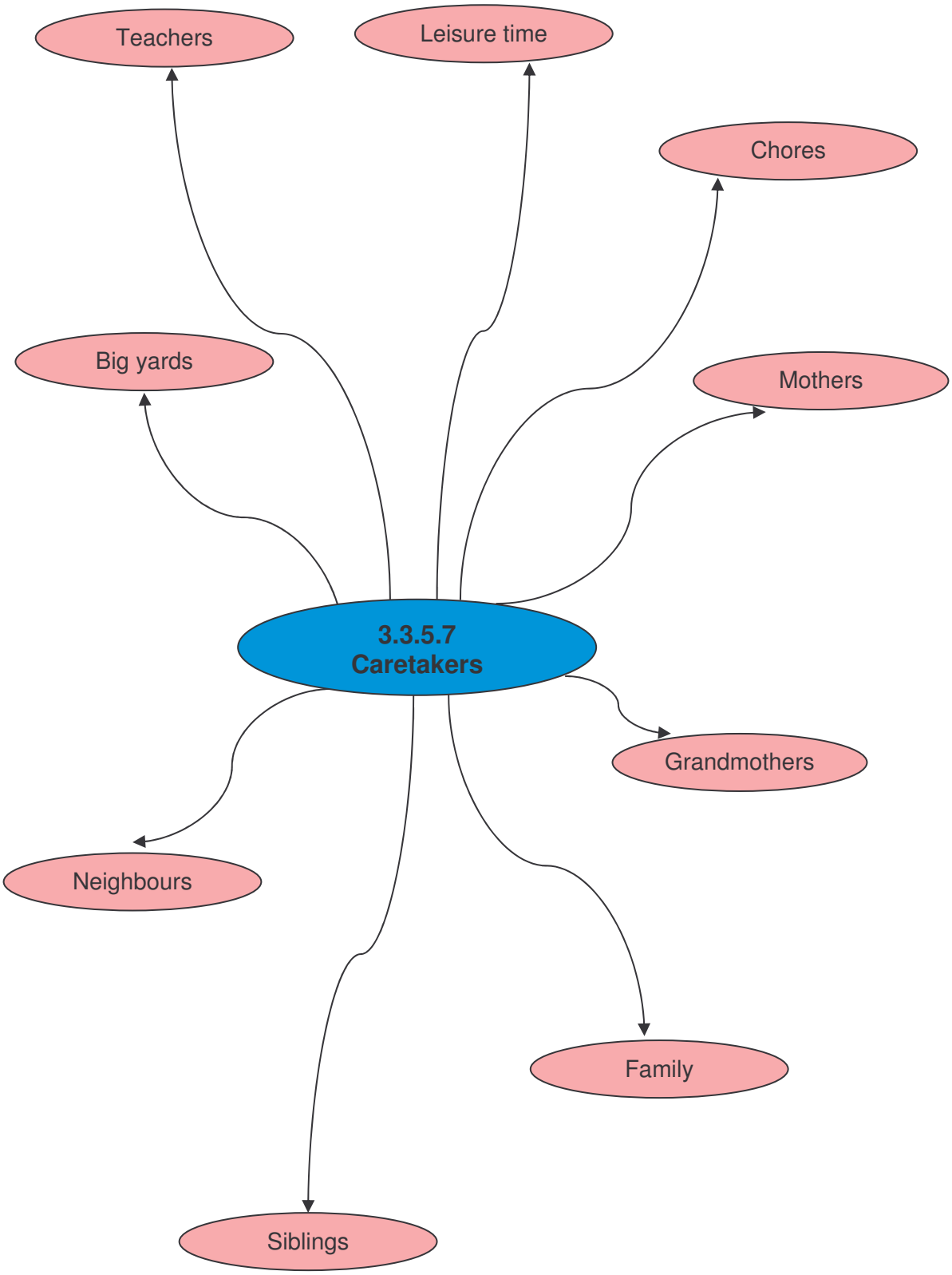

FIGURE 3.10: CARETAKERS AS A THEME EXPANDED INTO CATEGORIES

3.3.6 ACTIVITIES ASSETS CAN BE USED FOR, WITH SKILLS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES PRACTICED

The previous section provided graphic presentations of themes (assets) that were identified to enrich preschool learning within a culture of poverty. Each theme was expanded into categories and subcategories. In this section, the subcategories are expanded further. Each subcategory is discussed in four columns.

In the first column the assets' categories and subcategories are named. In the second column examples of activities are given, showing how the asset can be used. The third column states some of the skills that are practiced by using these assets in these activities. These are all skills that need to be developed and practiced in the early years of a child's life because they are needed for learning. The fourth column shows learning outcomes (for the foundation phase as given by the Revised National Curriculum Statement) that are practiced through these activities involving the given asset. The learning outcomes show what the child is supposed to master within his / her first years in school. The learning outcomes for each learning area are stated in annexure A, and only abbreviations are used in this section.

TABLE 3.6: ACTIVITIES ASSETS CAN BE USED FOR WITH SKILLS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES PRACTISED

3.3.6.1 Children

Asset	Activity asset can be used for	Skills practiced	Learning outcome practiced
	GAMES		
Rope jumping	▪ Jumping while running. ▪ Jumping over a rope of different heights. ▪ Jumping over the rope while singing songs and counting the number of times a child can jump over the rope without stopping.	Gross motor skills Concentration Laterality Social skills Balance Coordination Numeracy Rhythm	M 1 LO 3 LO 4 AC 1 AC 3
Ball games	▪ Kicking, throwing, catching, rolling and dribbling a ball or a substitute for a ball like a lemon. Individually and in groups. ▪ Netball. ▪ Football.	Gross motor skills Social skills Visual-motor skills Concentration Ball sense Balance Coordination Mid line crossing	LO 2 LO 4 LO 3

Asset	Activity asset can be used for	Skills practiced	Learning outcome practiced
Language games	▪ The children play a game where they draw squares in the sand. Each square has a letter of the alphabet. They jump from square to square naming an object (within a category decided before hand) starting with the given letter, example given: banana if the category is fruit and the letter is "b". ▪ One child or a caretaker describes an object he or she is seeing at the moment. The child must guess what the object is and can ask questions to help him. ▪ Any three objects (like spoons, knifes or forks) are hidden in a room in such a way that only a little piece of the object is showing. Three words are chosen to represent the objects, like three words starting with the sound "w" (whistle, wife, wagon). Two or more children enter the room after the objects have been hidden. They have to look for the objects without touching anything. When they see an object they shout out the first representative word, like whistle! Seeing the second objects they shout the second representative word, wife! Seeing the third they shout the third representative word, wagon! The first child to see all three objects is the winner. He or she then gets a turn to hide the objects and choose the next three representative words.	Vocabulary Auditory perception Concentration Language development Speech Symbolic functioning	LO 2 L 1 L 2 L 5
Running games	▪ Running races. ▪ The caretaker or one of the children gives an instruction like: run with giant steps, run with baby steps, run ten steps, run seven steps, run five giant steps, run two giant steps and then three baby steps.	Gross motor skills Social skills Coordination Memory	LO 2 LO 4 L 1 L 2 L 5
Singing games	▪ Singing a song while clapping. At the end of the song the last child to clap his or her hands, falls out. The song is repeated until only one child is left. He or she is the winner.	Musicality Rhythm Social skills Auditory perception Vocabulary	LO 2 LO 4 AC 1 AC 3 L 1
Dancing games	▪ While singing a song, one-child dances a short sequence where after she appoints a new dancer. They continue until every one had a turn.	Rhythm Vocabulary Musicality Gross motor skills Social skills Coordination Visual motor skills	LO 2 LO 3 LO 4 AC 1 AC 3 L 1
Hide and Seek	▪ Children have a few seconds to hide themselves after which one child or a caretaker has to look for them. The first child to be found has the next turn to look for the others.	Concentration Creative thinking Memory Independence Social skills Rationale thinking	LO 2 LO 4
Competitions	▪ Running races or other forms of competitive games. ▪ These games can be used to motivate children to participate and to try their best.	Social skills Self control Independence Self-assurance	LO 2 LO 3 LO 4

Asset	Activity asset can be used for	Skills practiced	Learning outcome practiced
Mimic games	▪ Children mimic daily activities, for example going to the market, working in the garden, cooking food, washing their bodies, being a teacher in the school.	Creative thinking Gross motor skills Imagination Sex role identity	LO 4 SSG 1 AC 1 AC 3 NS 1
	BODIES		
Children's own bodies	▪ A caretaker asks the child to identify certain parts of his body, for example, his nose, mouth, toes and stomach. ▪ A caretaker asks the child to name certain parts of his body (songs about body parts can be used). ▪ A game can be played where the child must copy the actions of the caretaker, for example when the caretaker touches her knees, the child must do the same. ▪ A caretaker gives the child instructions concerning his body parts, for example, touch your ear with your thumb, and rub your foot with your hand. ▪ The child has to clean and look after his or her own body. ▪ The caretaker can teach the child about his or her own body and personal hygiene, using the child's own body as example. ▪ Counting games can be played, for example, count your eyes, your toes, your ears, your elbows. ▪ New vocabulary concerning the child's body can be taught, for example health, hygiene, doctor, dentist, medicine, nurse, food, and exercise. ▪ Sizes for example big, small, smallest can be taught by comparing children with each other or by comparing different body parts. ▪ Facial expressions can be used to teach a child about his or her own emotions. They can make happy faces, angry faces, sad faces, and scared faces. ▪ Children can learn about their families comparing their bodies, for example men have stronger bodies than women; adults have larger bodies than children; grandparents have grey hair. ▪ Caretakers can give instructions to children to exercise their bodies and make them aware of themselves, for example stretch yourself and try to touch the roof, make yourself very small.	Vocabulary Visual motor skills Auditory perception Memory Musicality Numeracy Self worth Independence Language Emotional development Measuring	L 1 L 2 L 5 LO 1 LO 4 M 1 M 3 M 4 NS 1
Fingers	▪ Fingers can be used for counting activities. ▪ Fingers can be used for rhymes, describing the different fingers. ▪ Fingers can be used to draw pictures, numbers or letters in the sand.	Numeracy. Language. Vocabulary. Fine motor skills.	M 1 L 1 L 2 L 4
Hair plating	▪ Platting own hair or friends' hair.	Fine motor skills Social skills	LO 2
Peers	▪ Children can teach each other new games. ▪ Friends can help with difficult tasks, for example making coals. ▪ Together children can enjoy fantasy games or mimic games.	Social skills. Independence.	LO 2 LO 3

Asset	Activity asset can be used for	Skills practiced	Learning outcome practiced
	▪ Older children often teach younger ones songs, rhymes and dances.		
TOYS			
Modern toys	▪ Modern toys can be played with even when they are old or broken, for example plastic rattles.	Creative thinking	AC 1
Electronic toys	▪ Some children (very few) have electronic games, for example "King Kong" games.	Concentration	T 1 M 5
Swings	▪ Children take turns on a swing tied to a tree branch. A swing made of a soft branch has been observed.	Balance Gross motor skills Social skills	LO 2 LO 4
Hula Hoop	▪ Children try to swing the hula-hoop around their arms, waists, necks or legs. They can play together if there is more than one hula-hoop, or they make turns if only one hula-hoop is available. ▪ Hula-hoops can be put on the ground next to each other. Children can jump from one to the other. Hula-hoops can be moved further apart to make it more difficult. ▪ Hula-hoops can be used to make collections, for example collections of leaves, flowers and grass. Three hula-hoops are put down and children gather leaves, flowers and grasses and put each group in a hula-hoop. ▪ A caretaker or friend holds the hula-hoop upright and the children crawl through the hula-hoop. ▪ Hula-hoops can be used for fantasy play, for example driving a taxi using the hula-hoop as a steering wheel.	Gross motor skills Social skills Classification Coordination Creative thinking Imagination	LO 2 LO 4 AC 1 NS 1 M 2
Balloon filled with sand	▪ Balloons filled with sand can be used as a substitute for a ball. Any ball games can be played with it. ▪ A balloon filled with sand or flour can be used to squeeze between hands and fingers. ▪ Children can draw faces on a filled balloon to make little dolls.	Ball sense Imagination Gross motor skills	AC 1 LO 4
Play cards	▪ Children can sort cards together according to different categories, for example according to colours, shapes or numbers.	Classification Numeracy Concentration	M 2
Play guns	▪ Play guns can be used for fantasy play, individually or with friends. ▪ Caretakers can teach safety using play guns as examples of dangers.	Imagination Social skills Moral skills	LO 1 LO 2 AC 1 T 1
EVENINGS			
Sit and talk	▪ Families spend a lot of time in the evenings talking to one another. During this time parents can encourage children to talk about what they did during the day, their emotions, their friends or any topic of interest. ▪ Parents can share with children what they did during the day, their emotions and experiences. ▪ Parents can tell stories to the children. Children can be asked to repeat these stories to the parents.	Memory Language Auditory perception Vocabulary Self worth Social skills	LO 2 L 1 L 2 L 5 L 6

Asset	Activity asset can be used for	Skills practiced	Learning outcome practiced
Learn prayers	▪ Parents teach children prayers before they go to bed. This time can also be used to explain the meaning of prayers.	Spirituality	LO 2 LO 3 L 1 L 2
	CHORES		
Working in the garden	▪ Children have to help in the gardens and the vegetable gardens. They help with cleaning the gardens, making rows for seeds, planting seeds and watering the plants	Gross motor skills Social skills Responsibility Cause and effect	NS 1 SSG 1 SSG 2 M 4
Washing dishes	▪ Children help with washing. Caretakers can ask them to group the dishes after washing them, for example all the cups together, all the spoons together, all the plates together.	Responsibility Gross motor skills Classification	M 2
Leisure time	▪ Although children have some chores to do, it is not much and children have a lot of time to play. Leisure time can be used for any activity enriching pre-school learning.		LO 3
	CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN		
Independent children	▪ From a very young age, these children seem to be independent being able to play on their own, look after themselves and even find their own way back home. They do not seem scared of trying new things or of new learning opportunities.	Independence Creative thinking Self -assurance	LO 2 LO 3
Children like interaction	▪ Children like to interact with caretakers, friends, siblings and even strangers.	Social skills Self -assurance	LO 2 LO 3 L 2
Children are not afraid of people	▪ Children like to meet new people and to socialise with them.	Social skills Verbal skills	LO 2 L 1 L 2
	ACTIVITIES		
Jumping	▪ Jump in different directions. ▪ Jump up and down. ▪ Jump up and down on an old tire. ▪ Big jumps and small jumps. ▪ Jump with both legs and jump with one leg. ▪ Jump from one leg to the other leg. ▪ Give a certain amount of jumps on one leg, and then change to the other leg. ▪ Combine jumping with other activities, giving instructions when to do which activity, for example jumping when the mother claps her hands and running when she stamps her feet.	Gross motor skills Coordination Memory Concentration Balance	LO 4 L 1
Reading	▪ Parents or caretakers can read to children from the Bible or any other reading material. ▪ Teach informally some of the letters while reading, for example showing the child the letter his or her name starts with. ▪ Let children tell the story back to the reader when the story is finished. ▪ Count the pages of a book. ▪ Read the story more than once. The second time, change some of the details and let the child tell you when he hears something different than the first time.	Auditory perception Language Memory Vocabulary Numeracy Concentration	L 1 L 2 L 3 L 5 M 1

Asset	Activity asset can be used for	Skills practiced	Learning outcome practiced
Writing	▪ Children can write in the sand with sticks or with their fingers. ▪ All kinds of shapes can be drawn. ▪ Parents can draw a shape and the child should repeat the shape next to it. ▪ They can use thick and thin sticks to create different effects in the sand. ▪ Pictures in the sand can be "coloured in" with leaves, flowers and small stones. ▪ Children can learn to write their names in the sand. ▪ Numbers can be taught by writing them in the sand, putting the same number of stones next to the number. ▪ Writing exercises like circles and stripes can be practiced.	Fine motor skills Numeracy Visual motor skills Creativity.	L 4 LO 4 M 1 M 2 AC 1
Crawling	▪ Children can crawl under chairs. ▪ Crawl forward and backwards.	Gross motor skills Direction Spatial orientation	LO 4
Counting	▪ Count fingers and toes. ▪ Count furniture. ▪ Count any of the kitchen utensils. ▪ Count the family members. ▪ Count the animals, for example the chickens on the yard. ▪ Do simple calculations, for example one banana for the child and one banana for the parent, are two bananas.	Numeracy	M 1

3.3.6.2 Culture

Asset	Activity asset can be used for	Skills practiced	Learning outcome practiced
Songs	▪ Caretakers can sing to and with children. ▪ Children can sing alone or with friends. ▪ Children can make up their own song about something they learned about, for example water. ▪ A song can be sung fast, slow, loud, soft, high or low. ▪ Songs can be used together with clapping or dancing. ▪ Songs can be sung while doing chores. ▪ The caretaker can hum the melody and let the child guess which song it is.	Musicality Rhythm Vocabulary Auditory perception	L 1 L 2 AC 1 AC 3 LO 2 LO 4
Importance of children	▪ Parents make time for their children. ▪ When the mother cannot take care of her child, someone else will look after him/her. ▪ Children are seen as treasures. ▪ Parents want to educate their children.	Self worth Identity	LO 2 LO 3
Presence of children	▪ Children are allowed to be present when older people are gathered. This gives caretakers a lot of time with the child and a lot of learning opportunities.	Identity	LO 3
Music	▪ Caretakers and children can make music together with drums, sticks, clapping hands and singing.	Musicality Rhythm	AC 1 AC 3

Asset	Activity asset can be used for	Skills practiced	Learning outcome practiced
	▪ Kitchen utensils can be used as music instruments. ▪ Glasses filled with different amounts of water can give different pitches of sound. ▪ Music can be combined with dancing and singing. ▪ Rhythm can be clapped or beat. Slow and fast.	Creativity	T 1

3.3.6.3 Man made products

Asset	Activity asset can be used for	Skills practiced	Learning outcome practiced
	HOUSE HOLD ITEMS		
Egg boxes	▪ Make trains or wagons to play with. ▪ Count how many eggs can go into one box. ▪ Put mud inside to make mud cakes. ▪ Use to sort different kinds of seeds. ▪ Paint with fingers and mud patterns on the side. ▪ Cut into pieces and make a worm or a snake by threading them through a string. ▪ Teach the children about eggs, where they come from and what we do with them. ▪ Use the container again for eggs to teach about recycling.	Creativity Numeracy Classification Fine motor skills	T 1 AC 1 AC 2 AC 3 M 1
Candle wax	▪ Melt wax and make new forms or even little bowls from it. ▪ Drip melting wax on paper or sand to make a picture. ▪ Make new candles from old wax and use them or sell them.	Creativity Numeracy Fine motor skills	T 1 AC 1 EMS 1
Coals	▪ Children can help with the making of coals. ▪ Coals can be used to write with. ▪ Coals can be used in counting activities.	Fine motor skills Numeracy	M 1 L 4 NS 1
Wooden Benches	▪ Walk over, jump over, crawl under, crawl on top, run around it, walk forward on it, walk backwards, kneel, and walk with closed eyes. ▪ Balance on top of it, balance with closed eyes, balance with one leg. ▪ Learn about wood. ▪ Use for fantasy play, for example the bench can be a boat, a plane, a bed, a stove, a car or a drum.	Balance Coordination Gross motor skills Imagination	NS 1 LO 4 AC 1
Cutlery	▪ Can be used to play in the sand with it. ▪ Hold a spoon like a pen and use the back to write or draw in the sand with it. ▪ Sort different cutlery into groups. ▪ Count the cutlery. ▪ Hide a fork, a knife and a spoon in a room, making sure a piece of each utensil can be spotted. Let the child look for them without touching anything in the room. ▪ Use spoons or forks in fantasy play, pretending they are trucks or donkey carts. ▪ Fill glasses and cups with water to teach children quantity.	Fine motor skills Classification Numeracy Visual perception Imagination Conservation Symbolic functioning	L 4 M 1 M 4

Asset	Activity asset can be used for	Skills practiced	Learning outcome practiced
	▪ Measure how many cups of water will go into a bigger container.		
Sheets, blankets and table cloths	▪ Can be thrown over the edge of a table or a washing line to make a playhouse or a tent. ▪ Use to teach about colours and shapes. ▪ Use blankets to teach about winter and summer.	Imagination Rational thinking Memory	NS 1 AC 1 M 3
Washing lines	▪ Put washing pins on the line. ▪ Count pins on the line. ▪ Group pins together in two, three or four. ▪ Throw blankets over to make a playhouse.	Fine motor skills Numeracy Imagination	LO 4 M 1
Buckets	▪ Throw water or sand in and out. ▪ Make mud for modelling. ▪ Make patterns in the sand with the bottom and the top of the bucket. ▪ Teach about sizes and colours. ▪ Use as a drum. ▪ Use for water play. ▪ Collect different seeds or fruit in different buckets, making collections and sorting items.	Creativity Classification Rhythm Fine motor skills Measuring	M 3 NS 1 AC 1
Plastic containers	▪ Use for building mud houses. ▪ Water play. ▪ Collecting seeds or flowers in them. ▪ Teach about sizes. ▪ Use for fantasy play, for example a bus or a house.	Classification Imagination Measuring	M 3
Cooking utensils	▪ Play with them in water and sand. ▪ Play drum with wooden spoons on buckets. ▪ Sort them from big to small.	Rhythm Numeracy	M 3 AC 1
Furniture	▪ Use to make play houses. ▪ Make an obstacle course where the child must crawl under and climb over furniture.	Imagination Gross motor skills Balance	LO 4
Radio	▪ Listen to music and stories. ▪ Pretend you are a radio presenter; make own story or song for the radio. ▪ Listen to the news and teach about the weather. ▪ Teach about electricity.	Auditory perception Creativity	L 1 L 2 L 5 NS 1 T 1 AC 1
Television	▪ Watch educational programs. ▪ When an advertisement comes up, guess what product is being advertised. ▪ Make up your own advertisement for a product.	Visual perception Memory Creativity	L 1 L 2 AC 1
Chairs	▪ Play musical chairs. ▪ Make play houses. ▪ Use for fantasy play, using them as a car, bus or train. ▪ Crawl under, climb over, and stand behind, next to, in front of or on top of chair. ▪ Give a list of commands, for example stand on the chair and clap your hands twice, then sit down on the chair and cover your eyes with your hands.	Concentration Gross motor skills Imagination Balance Direction Memory Coordination	LO 4 L 1
Cold drink cans	▪ Use in water play or sand play. ▪ Use for flowerpots. ▪ Decorate, put small stones in and use for a rattle. ▪ Collect different cans and teach colours.	Creativity Measuring	AC 1 M 3

Asset	Activity asset can be used for	Skills practiced	Learning outcome practiced
Hair curlers	▪ Use old hair curlers to make patterns in the sand. ▪ Use in fantasy play, for example as cars or tractors. ▪ Stick small flowers in to make a bouquet. ▪ Use in counting activities.	Creativity Fine motor skills Numeracy	AC 1 M 1 M 2
Maize meal bags	▪ Bags can be cut into strips and be used for plating. ▪ Different shapes can be cut out of bags and be used to teach shapes and patterns.	Fine motor skills Numeracy	M 3 LO 4
Plastic bags	▪ Bags can be cut into strips and be used to crochet hats or mats. ▪ Shapes can be cut out of plastic and be used to teach shapes and patterns.	Fine motor skills Concentration Numeracy Visual perception	M 3 EMS 1
Fabrics	▪ Can be used to teach colours. ▪ Shapes can be cut out. ▪ Clothes for dolls can be made out of fabric. ▪ Numbers or letters can be cut out of fabric to teach numbers and letters.	Numeracy Fine motor skills Visual perception	M 3 LO 4
Rope	▪ Rope jumping. ▪ Rope can be used to make shapes on the ground. ▪ Rope can be cut into different lengths and children can sort them from long to short. ▪ Ropes can be used for plating. ▪ Children can tie knots and bows in the rope.	Balance Coordination Rhythm Fine motor skills Measuring	LO 4 M 3 M 4
Tins	▪ Can be used in water play and sand play. ▪ Children can make different collections in different tins. ▪ Tins can be sorted from big to small. ▪ Tins with small stones in can be used for rattles. ▪ Tins can be drums.	Classification Rhythm Measuring	M 3 AC 1 T 1
Pens	▪ Drawing pictures on old newspapers. ▪ Old pens can be used to write with in the sand. ▪ Old pens can be played with in the sand. ▪ Pens can be covered with fabric to make dolls.	Fine motor skills Creativity	L 4
Papers	▪ Paper planes can be folded. ▪ Can be used for writing. ▪ Shapes, letters or numbers can be cut out. ▪ Can tear paper into small pieces. ▪ Fold paper into squares.	Fine motor skills Visual perception	L 4 M 3
Books	▪ Reading from books. ▪ Teaching the value of books and how to handle books. ▪ Counting using page numbers.	Auditory perception Numeracy Moral development	M 1 L 3 EMS 1
Drums	▪ Beating drums fast, slow, loud and soft. ▪ Make up new rhythms. ▪ Use one hand or both hands for beating. ▪ Use only one finger, then two and three and so forth.	Rhythm Coordination	AC 1 LO 4
CLOTHES			
Washing clothes	▪ While children help with washing clothes they can learn about colours and sizes. ▪ Caretakers can teach children how to take care of their clothes. ▪ Counting buttons.	Numeracy Vocabulary Visual perception	M 3 LO 1 NS 1

Asset	Activity asset can be used for	Skills practiced	Learning outcome practiced
	▪ Discuss warm and cool clothes according to the seasons. ▪ Teach about wool and cotton.		
Baby napkins	▪ Fold into shapes.	Visual perception	M 3
BUILDINGS			
Bricks	▪ Make stepping-stones for balancing. ▪ Use in fantasy play as a truck or furniture in a dolls house. ▪ Counting activities.	Balance Imagination Numeracy	LO 4 M 1
Fences	▪ Play with a piece of rope through patterns in fence. ▪ Count patterns in fence. ▪ Try to put different sizes of plastic containers through the fence, let the child first guess which ones would fit through and then test it.	Numeracy Fine motor skills Measuring	LO 4 M 1 M 3
Steps at houses	▪ Climb on and off steps. ▪ Jump on and off steps. ▪ Jump or climb on and off steps changing feet. ▪ Caretaker can give commands using numbers for example, jump on and off the step three times.	Gross motor skills Balance Coordination	LO 4 L 1
GARDEN TOOLS			
Hose pipe	▪ Can be used for water play. ▪ Jumping over the hosepipe. ▪ Running over the length of the hosepipe with feet on different sides of the pipe. ▪ Jumping on one leg from one side to the other. ▪ Walking over the length of the pipe crossing the legs.	Gross motor skills Mid line crossing Balance Coordination	LO 4
Wheel barrow	▪ Use in fantasy play as a plane, boat, train or car. ▪ Push friends in the wheelbarrow. ▪ Climb into and out of the wheelbarrow. ▪ Fill with water for water play.	Imagination Gross motor skills Balance Coordination Spatial orientation	AC 1 LO 4
OLD OR BROKEN VEHICLES AND MACHINERY			
Tires	▪ Fill tires with sand for sand play. ▪ Caretaker can hold the child while he jumps up and down on the tire. ▪ Roll the tire in the street, running with it, trying to balance the tire. ▪ Make a flowerpot out of the tire.	Gross motor skills Balance Creativity	LO 4 AC 1
Roads	▪ Running games in the roads with friends. ▪ Ball play.	Gross motor skills Social skills Ball sense Coordination	LO 2 LO 4

3.3.6.4 Natural environment

Asset	Activity asset can be used for	Skills practiced	Learning outcome practiced
ANIMALS			
Chicken feathers	▪ Use the back of the feather to write in the sand, holding it like a pen.	Fine motor skills Creativity	L 4 M 1

Asset	**Activity asset can be used for**	Skills practiced	**Learning outcome practiced**
	▪ Use the top of the feather to make patterns in the sand. ▪ Brush over the child's arms with the feather. ▪ Count the feathers.	Numeracy Body image	
Chickens	▪ Make sounds like a chicken. ▪ Count the chickens. ▪ Learn about chickens and chicken products. ▪ Look for chicken footprints in the sand. ▪ Make own chicken footprints in the sand with fingers or sticks.	Auditory perception Numeracy Cause and effect Visual perception	NS 1 EMS 1 EMS 2 M 1 LO 4
Dogs	▪ Rub dog to feel the texture of his hair. ▪ Learn how to care for pets.	Responsibility Tactile stimulation	NS 1 LO 1
Cattle	▪ Learn about products. ▪ Count cattle. ▪ Learn how cattle should be taken care of.	Numeracy	NS 1 EMS 1 LO 1
Donkeys	▪ Learn about donkeys and how to take care of them.	Responsibility Life skills	LO 1 NS 1
Goats	▪ Learn about products. ▪ Learn about goats and how to take care of them. ▪ Count goats.	Numeracy Responsibility	NS 1 LO 1 M 1
Insects	▪ Collect insects to learn about different insects. ▪ Caretakers can teach children the habits of different insects. ▪ Draw insects in sand or on paper. ▪ Keep insects alive in a container and study them.	Fine motor skills Creativity	NS 1 LO 1
	PLANTS		
Husks of maize	▪ Can be used as clothes for dolls. ▪ Plate the husks to make hair for dolls. ▪ Can be used as a sail for a sailboat. ▪ Can learn about maize. ▪ Weave to make a mat.	Creativity Fine motor skills	NS 1 T 1
Oranges	▪ Can be used as a substitute for a ball. ▪ Learn about smell and colour.	Ball sense Visual perception Multi-sensory perception	LO 4
Lemons	▪ Can be used as a substitute for a ball. ▪ Learn about taste and colour.	Ball sense Visual perception Multi-sensory perception	LO 4
Papaya and pumpkin seeds	▪ Put inside a can to make a rattle. ▪ Use for counting, sorting and grouping activities. ▪ Use for play money. ▪ Decorate mud cakes with seeds. ▪ Plant seeds and learn about plants. ▪ Make a pattern using different seeds.	Numeracy Classification Creativity Sequences Pattern completion Fine motor skills	AC 1 T 1 M 3 EMS 1 NS 1
Orange and lemon seeds	▪ Use for counting. ▪ Put inside a bottle to make a rattle or fill different bottles to make decorations. ▪ Use together with other seeds to make a collage on the ground or on paper.	Numeracy Creativity Auditory perception	M 1 AC 1
Mango pit	▪ When clean, it can be used as dolls. ▪ Use together with other sizes and shapes of seeds to sort and group.	Creativity Classification Fine motor skills	M 3 AC 1 L 4

Asset	**Activity asset can be used for**	Skills practiced	**Learning outcome practiced**
	▪ Use to draw in the sand with it.		
Avocado seed	▪ Use as a substitute for a small size ball. ▪ Counting activities.	Ball sense	M 1 LO 4
Sugar cane	▪ Can be cut to make wheels for car toys. ▪ Can be cut into different lengths. Children can sort them from long to short.	Creativity Measuring	T 1 M 3
Wood	▪ Building bricks for children can be made. ▪ Bricks can be built with, counted and sorted. ▪ Toys like cars can be cut from wood.	Classification Numeracy Visual perception Imagination	M 3 M 1 T 1
Trees	▪ Children can climb into trees. ▪ Tree houses for fantasy play can be built. ▪ Children can learn about trees and why we have to conserve them.	Gross motor skills Imagination Cause and effect	LO 1 LO 4 NS 1
Peanuts	▪ Children can help to peel peanuts. ▪ Use for counting activities. ▪ Use shells in fantasy play as small cars.	Fine motor skills Numeracy Imagination	LO 4 M 1
Beans	▪ Children can help women to sort beans. ▪ Counting activities.	Classification Numeracy	M 1 M 3
Pods	▪ Can be used in collages made with pods, seeds, flowers and leaves.	Creativity	AC 1 NS 1
Grains of maize	▪ Can be used in counting activities. ▪ To make patterns. ▪ To make collages. ▪ To sort and group. ▪ Children can help to take the grains of the stalks.	Numeracy Creativity Classification Fine motor skills	M 1 M 2 M 3 AC 1 LO 4
Mealie-stalk	▪ Can be used to make dolls or cars. ▪ Use for counting activities. ▪ Use as a drumstick on a bucket.	Creativity Numeracy Auditory perception	AC 1 T 1 M 1
Sweet potatoes	▪ Shapes and building blocks can be cut from raw sweet potatoes.	Visual perception	M 3
Sticks	▪ Different lengths of sticks can be sorted from long to short. ▪ Children can write and draw in the sand with sticks, holding the stick like a pen. ▪ Play “pick up sticks” -pick up one stick from a heap of sticks without the others moving.	Measuring Fine motor skills Creativity Concentration	M 3 L 4 LO 4
Long grasses	▪ Plat the grasses and use as dolls’ hair. ▪ Make a broom out of it. ▪ Use to make patterns in the sand.	Fine motor skills Creativity	T 1 M 2 AC 1
Thorns	▪ Draw or write in the sand.	Fine motor skills Creativity	
Leaves	▪ Use in collages. ▪ Collect different kinds of leaves and sort and count. ▪ Use as play money. ▪ Learn about seasons and changes that occur with them. ▪ Discuss different shapes of leaves.	Creativity Numeracy Classification Cause and effect	AC 1 M 3 EMS 1 NS 1
Cotton	▪ Children can help to sort cotton. ▪ Cotton can be used to make pictures on paper. ▪ Dolls can be stuffed with cotton. ▪ Caretakers can teach children about textures, using cotton and other different textures.	Classification Creativity Tactile perception	AC 1 NS 1

Asset	Activity asset can be used for	Skills practiced	Learning outcome practiced
	SOIL		
Mud figures	▪ Mud can be used to make figures or parts of figures. ▪ Make mud cakes and count them.	Fine motor skills Creativity Numeracy Tactile perception	M 1 AC 1
	SAND		
Drawing in the sand	▪ Children can draw pictures, shapes or patterns in the sand. ▪ Caretakers can draw patterns in the sand, asking the child to copy it. ▪ Numbers and letters can be practiced. ▪ Writing exercises can be practiced.	Visual perception Fine motor skills Visual motor integration Numeracy	L 4 M 2 M 3 AC 1
Sand in a bottle	▪ Children can throw sand in and out of a bottle. ▪ Sand can be thrown into a bottle with seeds, flowers and leaves to make a collage.	Fine motor skills Concentration Creativity Time awareness	AC 1 LO 4
Stones	▪ Can be counted and grouped in two, three and four. ▪ Pictures can be packed with stones. ▪ Can be used in collages. ▪ Can put stones in a can to make a rattle. ▪ Can use stones as play money.	Numeracy Creativity Auditory perception	M 1 AC 1 T 1 EMS 1
Big Yards	▪ Running games and ball games can be played inside yards. ▪ Rope jumping, singing and dancing. ▪ Many children can play together. ▪ Draw houses on the ground.	Gross motor skills Social skills	LO 2 LO 4
Water	▪ Water play to teach, “content”. ▪ Make mud for mud cakes and mud figures. ▪ Learn about water. ▪ Use water in fantasy play, e.g. as fuel for the wire car. ▪ Learn about hygiene.	Measuring Fine motor skills Creativity Imagination	NS 1 LO 1 LO 4
	GARDENS		
Vegetable gardens	▪ Children can help to clean the garden. ▪ They can learn about vegetables, colours and sizes. ▪ Caretakers can help children to have their own gardens and to sell some of the vegetables. ▪ Seasons can be taught.	Visual perception Entrepreneurship Cause and effect	NS 1 M 3 EMS 1 EMS 2

3.3.6.5 Local institutions and citizens’ associations

Asset	**Activity asset can be used for**	Skills practiced	**Learning outcome practiced**
	CHURCHES		
Sunday school	▪ Children can learn about religion. ▪ Songs can be sung. ▪ Stories can be used to teach religion. Children can	Moral development Auditory perception Musicality	LO 2 LO 3 AC 1 L 1 L 2

Asset	Activity asset can be used for	Skills practiced	Learning outcome practiced
	tell the stories back to caretakers when they arrive at home. ▪ Attitudes toward fellow men can be taught. ▪ Children can practice a concert or a song to perform for the parents.	Memory Self-assurance	
Church meetings	▪ Children can learn by observing their parents practicing their religion. ▪ Children can see how a group of people work together.	Moral development Social skills	LO 2 LO 3 HSS 2
Crèches	▪ Some children go to crèches. Teachers can use a variety of activities to stimulate learning. ▪ Children learn to share and interact with other children. ▪ Concerts can be planned, giving the children opportunity to sing, act and dance in front of an audience. ▪ Children learn to submit to their teacher and to follow the rules of the crèche.	Social skills Moral development Self-assurance	LO 2 AC 1 AC 3
SCHOOLS			
School books	▪ Older siblings can show younger children their books, teach them how to handle books, discuss pictures and colours with them and even read from the books.	Auditory perception	L 1 L 3 LO 2
Special Schools	▪ A school for children with special needs is situated in the town. The school accommodates children with different special needs, for example, children with hearing disabilities. ▪ Children from other schools can visit the school, they can be taught how to handle and communicate with people with disabilities.	Social skills	LO 2 LO 3
CLINIC AND NURSES			
Waiting time at the clinic	▪ Long waiting hours can be used to show mothers who are waiting to have their babies examined, examples of toys (like a can filled with stones), illustrating how to use it to stimulate learning.		AC 1 LO 3
Waiting area at clinic	▪ Mothers gather in the waiting area to have their babies examined. The waiting area lends itself to display toys to mothers.		LO 3
Market	▪ Children can visit the market to see how people trade. ▪ At home they can play that they have their own market stall selling vegetables or fruit with play money. ▪ Dialogue can be practiced between a salesman and a buyer.	Entrepreneurship Social skills Auditory perception	EMS 1 EMS 2 T 1 L 2
Small Businesses	▪ Children can help parents who own a small business. They can help to pack products. ▪ Children can play that they have their own small business, using play money. ▪ Caretakers can give children money to buy from a small business. ▪ Children can learn about money.	Entrepreneurship Numeracy	EMS 1 EMS 2 M1 LO 2

3.3.6.6 Crafts

Asset	Activity asset can be used for	Skills practiced	Learning outcome practiced
	DECORATIONS		
Plastic straw decorations	▪ Coloured plastic straws can be cut into pieces with a string holding them together. ▪ Children can make their own decorations. ▪ Colours can be taught. ▪ Straws can be cut into different lengths, sorting them from long to short. ▪ Colours can be sorted together.	Fine motor skills Creativity Visual perception Measuring Classification	AC 1 M 3
Straw decorations	▪ Straws decorations are made from pieces of straw with a string holding them together. ▪ Children can make decorations to decorate or sell.	Creativity	AC 1 EMS 1
Cardboard stars covered with fabric	▪ Children can make decorations with cardboard. Any shape can be cut out and then covered with fabric. ▪ Shapes and colours can be taught.	Fine motor skills Creativity Visual perception	M 3
Beads	▪ Children can thread beads through a piece of string to make a necklace. ▪ Beads can be sorted according to colours and sizes. ▪ Necklaces can be sold or played with during fantasy play.	Fine motor skills Concentration Visual perception Measuring Entrepreneurship Imagination	LO 4 M 3 EMS 1 AC 1
	TOYS		
Wire cars	▪ Older boys make their own cars with wire. ▪ Cars are used for fantasy play.	Fine motor skills Imagination Creativity	T 1 AC 1
Dolls	▪ Dolls can be made from pits, maize-stalk or fabric. ▪ Dolls can be used for fantasy play. ▪ Girls can learn how to handle and take care of babies.	Creativity Imagination Responsibility Gender	T 1 AC 1 LO 1
	HOUSEHOLD ITEMS		
Grass brooms	▪ Children can help to make grass brooms. ▪ Children can use brooms to sweep the house or the yard. ▪ Brooms can be used in fantasy play as a horse or a donkey.	Fine motor skills Responsibility Imagination	T 1 LO 1 LO 4
Grass mats	▪ Children can learn how to make these mats. ▪ Mats can be used to play or learn on.	Fine motor skills	T 1 LO 4
Mats made from plastic bags	▪ Children can help to make these mats. ▪ Children learn to recycle bags.	Fine motor skills Responsibilities	T 1 SSG 3
	CLOTHES		
Hats crocheted from plastic bags	▪ Older siblings can teach young children how to crochet. ▪ Hats can be used in fantasy play.	Fine motor skills Concentration Imagination	T 1 LO 4
Traditional skirts	▪ Traditional skirts can be played with, teaching the children about their heritage.	Gender role identity Moral development	SSH 1 SSH 2 SSH 3

3.3.5.7 Caretakers

Asset	Activity asset can be used for	Skills practiced	Learning outcome practiced
	MOTHERS		
Same care taker every day	▪ Mostly children have the same caretaker(s) every day. Caretakers can establish a routine for the children making time for playing and learning.	Responsibility Self-discipline Healthy lifestyle	LO 1 LO 2
Grandmothers	▪ When the mother is working away from home, someone else often takes care of the children. Many grandparents live with their children and grandchildren and grandmothers can look after the children in their own environment.		
Family	▪ Aunts sometimes look after children.		
Siblings	▪ Older sisters are often responsible for younger siblings. While looking after them, they teach them skills, for example, how to make a grass mat.	Fine motor skills Creativity	T 1 LO 2 LO 4
Neighbours	▪ When children play with friends next door, it is the neighbour that looks after all the children. It is seldom that children are without supervision. This gives caretakers a lot of opportunity to direct learning.	Social skills	LO 2
Friends	▪ Children very seldom play alone. Friends teach each other skills, songs and dances they learned elsewhere. ▪ Children feel safe with their friends.	Social skills	LO 2 AC 4
Teachers	▪ Teachers have the opportunity to be involved in the children's learning full time. ▪ Teachers can educate parents about learning.		
Leisure Time	▪ Caretakers spend leisure time with the children around them. This gives them time to teach the children new games.		
Chores	▪ Young children have few chores. They can help with easy chores. ▪ They have plenty of time to play while they are developing skills and learning.		

3.4 CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter an attempt has been made to present the many assets for pre-school learning that have been identified within this community. Eight themes have developed from the data. When these assets are developed and mobilised, they enhance many skills which are necessary for pre-school learning and development. These assets are situated in the community as a whole. Pre-school learners are growing and learning in this community – a community where it seems that the potential in the inherent assets that are present holds seemingly endless possibilities to enrich pre-school learning in a culture of poverty.

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CHAPTER FOUR
RELATING RESEARCH RESULTS TO BROADER LITERATURE

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter three the results of this research study were discussed by means of themes, categories and sub-categories. Each asset that can be used to enrich pre-school learning within a culture of poverty derived from the data was listed together with examples of activities that the specific asset could be used in. Furthermore, skills were listed with each asset that was developed or practiced by using the asset. Learning outcomes for the Foundation Phase, as stated by the Revised National Curriculum Statement, were incorporated with the research results by listing those practiced, together with the applicable assets.

In this chapter a variety of literature relating to the research results of this research, will be discussed. The discussion of relating literature will be presented in a three-column table (table four). The first column will consist of all the assets discussed in chapter three. They will be listed according to the themes, categories and sub-categories that were derived from the data analysis and that were used in chapter three. The second column will give a brief summary of the examples of activities each asset can be used for as found during the research. The third column discusses literature relating to the results form this study.

During the literature review, I found that some assets, for example seeds, appear in a lot of literature and can be used in a wide variety of ways to enrich pre-school learning. For the purpose of this research study, only one to three references to literature was stated for each asset because of the vastness of opportunities of many of the assets. Some of the assets, however, could only be found in one resource and were often only referred to once in the literature reviewed during this study, for example sweet potato.

This research study was done within a culture of poverty. The assets derived from this research, are mainly every day objects with a lot of potential for enriching pre-school learning. After studying a lot of modern literature, I found that many assets, in this research, have been replaced in our modern society with modern substitutes, for example, balancing beams are used for balancing in stead of wooden benches. Another common example is clay being used as a substitute for mud. Studying older literature, I found many

references to assets of a more rural community. Hence the reader will find that many references used in this literature review, dates back a few years, even as early as 1930.

In some cases the literature reference for an asset, gives the same example of activity that was derived from the research, for example ball games during which children can throw or roll a ball. In other cases, the literature reference differs somewhat and in some cases the literature reference is completely different, for example sweet potatoes that can be cut into shapes or building blocks or children can put them in a glass jar with water to watch them grow (likely because of the wide potential of the asset).

Eight of the assets discussed in this research study, could not be found in the literature. The absence of these assets in the literature studied, could suggest that more research needs to be done on these assets to determine their potential for enriching pre-school learning. Keep in mind that some of these assets are related to the specific community in which the research was done. An asset, for example, mats crocheted from plastic bags, may be innate to the community but may not yet have been considered as an asset in terms of pre-school learning. These assets that could not be verified in terms of the broader literature, are therefore considered to be unique contributions of this study.

A parent, parents, a caretaker or a teacher, can facilitate all the activities described in the second and third column of Table Four.

4.2 LITERATURE CONTROL

The literature review will be discussed under the following headings:

4.2.1 Children

TABLE 4.2: LITERATURE CONTROL

Games	Research	Literature review
Rope jumping	Children can play different games using a rope. These games include singing, counting, clapping, jumping and running.	Rope jumping with a variety of movements in different directions promotes gross motor skills development (Du Toit 1996:167).
Ball games	Any game that is played with a ball or a substitute for a ball like a lemon. Kicking, throwing, catching, rolling or dribbling of the ball.	Rolling, bouncing and throwing of different kinds of balls promote gross motor skills development (Du Toit 1996:167).
Language games	Games in which the child must use language skills, vocabulary, phonics, words and descriptions.	To promote language, a parent or teacher can play games with the child like “I spy with my little eye” (Du Toit 1996:226).

Games	Research	Literature review
Running games	Games that consist of running. The running can be in different directions and in different ways.	Children can run in different ways, for example: run and stop, running quietly, running low and running high, run in slow motion, run backwards, run around objects and run with a partner (Gallahue 1976:154).
Singing games	Games that require the children to sing certain songs and clap and take turns.	Parents can sing to their children and with their children and also recite poems and nursery rhymes to enhance language skills and vocabulary (Du Toit 1996:117).
Dancing games	Children take turns to dance a short sequence while singing a song.	A singing rhythm is a dance that the children sing verses to a song that provides clues as to how to move. Dancing and singing together adds an action phase (Gallahue 1976:240).
Hide and Seek	Children and caretakers hide themselves and an appointed child must look for them.	Children like to play action games like "Hide-and-Seek". They become more conscious of their bodies, the size and shape of their bodies and their special orientation (Louw 1994:249).
Competitions	Games in which children compete against each other and a winner is appointed. These games are used to motivate the children to participate and to do their best.	During the toddler year children start to compete against each other. Through this they become more aware of their bodies (Louw 1994:249).
Mimic games	Children mimic daily activities like going to the market, working in the house or being a teacher at school.	Parents can play with their children games like "At home", "In the shop", "At the office" with the appropriate vocabulary (Du Toit 1996:117).
BODIES		
Children's own bodies	Activities that consist of identifying body parts, carrying out instructions using body parts for example: touch your nose with your thumb; caring for your body; counting body parts; comparing body parts, for example the length of your fingers; facial expressions; differences between family members' bodies and exercises can be done.	Teachers and parents can let the children make life-size paper dolls of themselves by letting them lay on shelf paper and tracing their bodies. They can use crayons to make faces, hair and clothes to teach body awareness (Group 1996:12). Parents can play a game with the child where he or she has to use his/her senses. What can you see/hear/smell/touch/taste? The child learns to observe and he learns about his body (Taylor & Taub 1989:68).
Fingers	Children can use their fingers to count, do finger rhymes and draw in the sand.	There are several finger plays that can contribute to the development of body awareness, for example, a rhyme like "Eensy weensy spider" with finger movements (Gallahue 1976:269).
Hair plating	Children plate their own hair or friends' hair.	No literature found.
Peers	Children teach each other games, songs, rhymes and dances. They play together and work together.	Peer tutoring means that one child teaches another child. The tutor can be an older child who for example practices his own reading by reading to a younger child. Both children benefit from this. Children of the same age can also teach each other through games (Du, Toit 1996:129).

Games	Research	Literature review
	TOYS	
Modern toys	Modern toys like rattles can be played with.	Toys are a very strong socialising force in children's lives and must be purchased, displayed and used with circumspection (Atmore 1994:161).
Electronic toys	Electronic games for example "King Kong" games are very scarce, but when present, children can play with them.	With some interactive media children can design and build things on a screen. They can use animation to do such things like plant a garden and watch the flowers grow, in this way they can learn about natural sciences (LaPlante & Seidner 1999:156).
Swings	Children take turns to swing on a homemade swing.	Swinging is a game in which the child experiences sensory-stimulation. He learns about his body, his skills and his surroundings (Louw 1994:315).
Hula Hoop	Children can swing the hula-hoop around different body parts, jump in them, crawl through them, use them in fantasy play or make collections in them.	Filling a large, but shallow container with bubble solution, children can use hula-hoops to make really big bubbles during water play (West & Cox 2001:62).
Balloon filled with sand	A balloon filled with sand can be used as a substitute for a ball, to squeeze between hands and fingers or to make dolls.	Balloons can be used to teach mathematics, science or art. They can also be used as toys or to play games for example balloon tennis and balloon volleyball (Booth, Briten & Scott 1987:10).
Play cards	Play cards can be used to teach children how to sort according to different categories, for example, colours, shapes or numbers.	Card games can enhance children's concentration and is something that the whole family can play together indoors (Thomson 1992:16).
Play guns	Children can use play guns for fantasy games but they can also be taught safety if caretakers use play guns as examples of dangers.	When the war started against Germany, children played with toy guns during fantasy play, pretending that they are soldiers (Thomson 1992:18).
	EVENINGS	
Sit and talk	Parents must encourage children to talk about a variety of topics. Parents must also share their experiences with the children through story telling. Parents can tell stories and ask children to repeat them.	Parents must talk to their children about daily experiences, tell stories and even ask the children to repeat these stories to enhance auditory perception (Du Toit 1996:118).
Learn prayers	Parents teach children how to pray and the value of praying.	It is good for a child to learn prayers that he can either do on his own or with his parents. The parents can also teach the child that he can pray about anything. In this way parents teach normative skills (Roos & Vlok 1985:84)
	CHORES	
Working in the garden	Children have to help to keep gardens clean, to sow and care for crops.	To enhance auditory perception children can close their eyes and try to identify the sounds they are hearing and the objects or creatures making them when they are working in the garden (Erridge 1987:28).
Washing dishes	Children must help with washing dishes and can group dishes.	Parents should let their child help with the washing of dishes. The child will learn that water is a solvent. This activity also gives the opportunity for a parent-child relationship to grow (Roos & Vlok 1985:112).

Games	Research	Literature review
Leisure time	The children have a lot of time to play and to be enriched through various activities.	Educating a child also contains relaxing together. Parents and children can spend leisure time together, for example, taking a bath together (Roos & Vlok 1985:113).
CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN		
Independent children	The children are not scared of new learning opportunities and are very independent.	Briedenhann (2003:71) identifies determination in a child to do things for herself as an asset that contributes to a positive identity.
Children like interaction	The children like to interact with caretakers, friends, siblings and even strangers.	Children are friendly individuals, sociable and ready to make friends with other children and show consideration for others (Reynolds 1989:94)
Children are not afraid of people	Children enjoy socialising and they enjoy meeting new people.	The need to be part of a group comes naturally for a child. He wants to be part of a group of people with whom he can socialise and feel safe with (Roos & Vlok 1985:73).
ACTIVITIES		
Jumping	Children jump on one and both legs, on an old tire, up and down, in different directions, big jumps, small jumps, different amounts of jumps when instructed to do so.	Jumping in different directions promote gross motor development (Du Toit 1996:167)
Reading	Parents read to children from reading material and teach them the letters of their names. They can also count the pages and let the child tell the story back to them.	When children read to their parents, parents read to their children and siblings read to each other, children are motivated to read. When reading to a child parents must point to the words and encourage children to talk about the story and ask questions. Parents can also read with the child to improve the child's confidence when reading (Du Toit 1996:119)
Writing	Children can use their fingers or sticks to write in the sand, draw shapes, copy pictures, create different effects in the sand, write numbers and patterns.	Children will increase their fine motor skills as they practice writing (West & Cox 2001:10)
Crawling	Children can crawl under chairs and crawl forward and backwards.	Creeping enhances perceptual motor abilities. Let children creep forward, backward and to the side using a homo-lateral pattern and a cross-lateral pattern (Gallahue 1976:284).
Counting	Children can count fingers, toes, furniture, kitchen utensils, family members and animals. Simple calculations can be taught.	Children can count objects around them like trees, pencils or children to practice numeric skills (Du Toit 1996:306).

4.2.3 CULTURE

Asset	Research	Literature review
Songs	Caretakers can sing to and with children. Children can sing alone and with friends. They can make up their own songs. Different varieties of a song can be sung, for example, slow, fast, high and low.	Songs give children the opportunity to practice their vocabulary, their listening skills and their expressive language skills (Moletsane & Bouwer 2000:32).

Dances	Children do traditional dances, they make up their own dances, they sing while dancing, they dance with friends, they repeat dances, vary dances and use dance as part of mimic play.	Parents can help children to preserve their cultural heritage by teaching them traditional songs and dances (Reynolds 1989:113).
Importance of children	Children are very important and parents want what's best for their children. Parents spend a lot of time with their children.	Parents valuing children as an asset within the child's family (Kriek 2003:57). Parents and other adults in the community valuing and appreciating children is an asset that empowers the community (Roehlkepartain & Leffert 2000:63).
Presence of children	Children are allowed to be present when older people are gathered	A child who is often picked up, hugged, kissed and pampered by parents or caretakers has the opportunity to be stimulated through all his senses (Roos & Vlok 1985:21).
Music	Caretakers and children can make music together with homemade instruments, clapping and singing.	Children learn to distinguish between sounds by using music instruments (Du Toit 1996:169).

4.2.3 MAN MADE PRODUCTS

Asset	**Research**	Literature review
	HOUSE HOLD ITEMS	
Egg boxes	Egg boxes can be made into toy trains, wagons or snakes. They can be used for recycling, to paint on, to make mud cakes in, to sort seeds in and to count eggs.	To introduce children to the concept of fractions, parents or teachers can fill egg boxes with liquid until its half full, three-quarters full or completely full (Du Toit 1996:309). For a creative activity children can use a thread to thread together pieces of egg box cartons to make decorations (Rice 1991:6). For a mask to use during fantasy play, children can create their own owl mask. Use egg cartons, feathers and a piece of string to make the mask (Van Rooyen & Jawitz 1996:8).
Candle wax	Melted candle wax is used to make new candles, pictures or little wax bowls.	While candle wax can be used to draw on white paper. When the child is finished drawing on the paper, he must paint over it with dark colour paint. The paint will cover the paper, leaving the picture to show up clearly (Goldstein 1980:104).
Coals	Children can help with the making of coals. Coals can be used for counting and writing.	Children can use charcoal for drawing. This is an opportunity for creative expression (Austin 1973:18).
Wooden Benches	Wooden benches can be used to balance on, walk over, jump over, crawl under, run around or kneel on top of it. Children can use a bench for fantasy play and to learn about wood.	Many schools have benches as part of their standard equipment. It may be used in a number of ways to enhance stability abilities. Let children walk on the bench forward, backward side ways, like a cat or like a duck (Gallahue 1976:146).
Cutlery	Cutlery can be used to draw, write and play in the sand with. It can be used in games and in fantasy play. Caretakers can teach children quantity using cups	For fantasy play or sand play children can play with cooking equipment, such as rolling pins, cookie cutter, cupcake pans, mixing bowls, spoon, measuring cups

Asset	Research	Literature review
	and glasses.	and sifters in the sand, playing that they are preparing food (West & Cox 2001:26). For a creative activity, let children make a "flower" arrangement, but instead of flowers, use plastic cutlery. Decorate it with coloured paper (Shepherd 2003:30).
Sheets, blankets and table cloths	Children can learn about summer, winter, shapes and colours using blankets. They can also be used to make a playhouse.	Parents can hang an old bed sheet as a backdrop, then let children use flashlights to give funny shadow shows. This will enhance their creativeness and coordination (Group 1996:49).
Washing lines	Children can play with washing pins on the washing lines putting them on, counting them and grouping them.	Fastening papers on a line with washing pins promotes fine motor skills development (Du Toit 1996:168).
Buckets	Buckets can be used for water play, for making mud, for throwing water or sand in and out, as a drum, for making collections of seeds and fruit, for learning about sizes and colour and for making patterns in the sand with the top and the bottom.	Children can fill buckets with sand, water and other materials to create sand castles during water and sand play (West & Cox 2001:54). Children can use a bucket, a bottle and a straw to find out how much air their lungs can hold to learn more about their bodies (Markle 1995:19).
Plastic containers	Plastic containers can be used for building mud houses, for water play, for collecting seeds and flowers, for fantasy play and to teach sizes.	To teach children about content, parents can fill different sized containers with the same amount of liquid and let the children measure it (Du Toit 1996:304). Different kinds of plastic containers can be used during water play for the child to fill, pour, feel and splash (Jameson & Kidd 1974:47).
Cooking utensils	Children play with utensils in water and sand or use them as drumsticks and can sort them from big to small.	Children can use kitchen utensils during water play trying to make bubbles in a bubble solution (West & Cox 2001:20).
Furniture	Furniture can be used to make playhouses or an obstacle course the child must crawl through.	Briedenhann (2003:37) identified the furniture in a classroom as a potential asset for learning.
Radio	Radios can teach children about music, stories, presenters, the weather, the news and electricity.	A tape recorder can be used to record many familiar sounds, for example, paper tearing, breathing, crying and sneezing. Let the children listen to the sounds and try to identify them, this will enhance their auditory perception (Gallahue 1976:302).
Television	Children can watch educational programmes or play a game using the advertisement.	Television programmes offer many opportunities to children to learn about new things (Louw 1994:271).
Chairs	Children can use chairs to play musical chairs, to make play houses, for fantasy play, to crawl under and climb over.	Let children walk through a maze of chairs, step over them, crawl under them, walk around them and step on them to develop gross motor skills and coordination (Gallahue 1976:273).
Cold drink cans	Cold drink cans can be used in water play or sand play, as a flowerpot or a rattle and to teach colours.	To practice auditory abilities, take 10 cans and fill five with five different materials and duplicate these with the last five cans. Mix the cans up and let the children match the cans by sound (Gallahue 1976:305). Children can make fat lacy candles by using cans, ice cubes and candle wax. In this way they can be

Asset	**Research**	Literature review
		creative and make their own gifts or even sell them (McPhee 1977:6).
Hair curlers	Hair curlers can used to make patterns in the sand, for fantasy play, to make a bouquet of flowers or in counting activities.	Curlers can be used during informal fantasy play together with brushes and combs (Austin 1973:4).
Maize meal bags	Bags can be cut into shapes or strips. Children can learn about shapes and strips can be used for plating.	Grain bags can be used for a race between children. Each child climbs into a bag with both feet and try to jump or run with the bag (Taljard 1962:150).
Plastic bags	Bags are cut into strips and used to crochet hats or mats. Shapes can also be cut out to teach shapes.	Parents or teachers can cut off the bottoms of the plastic bag. Children can slip their arms through the handles to use the bags as disposable smocks (Miller & Gibbs 2002:110).
Fabrics	Numbers, letters and shapes can be cut out of old fabric. Fabric can also be used to teach about colours. Play clothes for dolls can be made from fabrics.	Teachers make use of materials such as rags to teach the children to make their own toys (Moletsane & Bouwer 2000:40). Children can knot strips of cloth together and weave them over and under a string for fine motor skills development (Lohf 1989:23).
Rope	Rope can be used for rope jumping, for plating, for tying knots and bows, for making shapes on the ground and for teaching length.	Children can jump over a stretched rope of different heights and in different directions to promote gross motor skills development (Du Toit 1996:167). Children can use rope (string) and glue to make pictures, for example, a string flower. This can help to develop fine motor skills and creativeness (Lewis 1972:16).
Tins	Tins can be used as drums, as rattles, for making collections, for sorting according to size and for playing with water or sand.	Children can make their own coffee can stilts. They are easily made from metal coffee containers and a length of rope. They offer a new dimension to stability because the center of gravity is raised, thus making balancing more difficult (Gallahue 1976:139). Children can use two empty tins, a string, a hammer and a nail to make a telephone. This teaches technology and will develop auditory perception (Webster 1966:10).
Pens	Pens can be used for writing and drawing or making dolls.	Children can use pens to trace pictures and cut them out and make a story with the pictures. This develops fine motor skills and chronological order (Miller & Gibbs 2002:51).
Papers	Papers can be used to write on, to fold paper planes, to tear, to fold squares or to cut out letters, numbers and shapes.	To teach children about the sizes of surfaces, papers can be cut into pieces and the pieces can be measured next to a whole paper (Du Toit 1996:304). Children can make paper decorations in the form of a star or a heart by folding paper into a concertina pleat. Children can develop creativeness and fine motor skills through these activities (Hoogewegen 1974:25).

Asset	Research	Literature review
Books	Books can be used to read from or to count pages. The value of books can be taught.	Books are an important medium to communicate information to children (Kachelhoffer 1993:83).
Drums	Children can beat drums in different ways and make up new rhythms.	Let children imitate living creatures to the beat of a drum, for example, an elephant, a giraffe, a lion, a rabbit, a bird or a fish (Gallhue 1976:220).
CLOTHES		
Washing clothes	While children help with washing clothes they can learn about colours, sizes, seasons, wool, cotton and how to take care of clothes.	Children can discover matches in clothes and fabrics by recognising repeating shapes (Atherlay 1995:2).
Baby napkins	Napkins can be folded into different shapes.	Children can play with baby dolls and learn responsibility. They can bathe them, put diapers on, clothe them and put their dolls to sleep (West & Cox 2001:28).
BUILDINGS		
Bricks	Bricks can be used for fantasy play, for stepping-stones and for counting activities.	Bricks can be used in teaching mathematics. Children can count the number of bricks in a wall or weigh a brick (Booth, Briten & Scott 1987:24).
Fences	The openings in fences made by the pattern of the fence can be used by trying to put different sizes of objects through the openings or weaving a piece of rope through the openings.	No literature found.
Steps at houses	Children can jump and climb on and off steps in various ways.	Jumping with both feet from one step to another is an important gross motor development that young children need to master (Louw 1994:255).
GARDEN TOOLS		
Hose pipe	Hosepipes can be used for water play, jumping over the hosepipe and for running over the length of the pipe in various ways.	Using a hosepipe and a sprinkler and some mirrors, teachers can help children to create rainbows and teach them about colours (West & Cox 2001:64).
Wheel barrow	A wheelbarrow can be used for fantasy play, to push friends in, to climb into and out off and to fill with water for water play.	Parents or teachers can discuss with children the equipment and tools that are used outside, for example, a wheelbarrow (Erridge 1987:13).
OLD OR BROKEN VEHICLES AND MACHINERY		
Tires	A tire can be used as a sand pit, flowerpot, for jumping on or for rolling down the street.	Jumping up and down on a trampoline or a tire promotes gross motor development (Du Toit 1996:167).
Roads	Children can run and play ball games in the road.	If there is not much room to play inside the house, children can play in a quiet street (Thomson 1992:20).

4.2.4 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Asset	Research	Literature review
ANIMALS		
Chicken feathers	Feathers can be used for writing or making patterns in the sand and even for counting activities.	Children can experiment blowing different objects like feathers using straws (West & Cox 2001:68). For a creative activity children can paint feathers and print them

Asset	Research	Literature review
		on paper to make a picture (Smith & Neethling 1985:30).
Chickens	Children can learn about chickens and their products.	Children can imitate the movement of different farm animals, for example, a rooster strut (Carlyon, Lowe, Lowe, MacLaughlin & Shreiner 1981:73).
Dogs	Children can learn about pets and even texture by rubbing the dog.	Children can play a game that consists of one child pretending to be a farmer and the other children pretending to be dogs. The "dogs" all sit behind the "farmer" and each one gets a turn to "bark". The "farmer" must then guess which "dog" barked (Carlyon *et al*. 1981:73).
Cattle	Children learn about how to take care of cattle, how to count them and what products we get from them.	Using a poster, teachers can discuss characteristics, habits, care and feeding of cows (Carlyon *et al*. 1981:75).
Donkeys	Children learn about donkeys and how to take care of them.	Children can learn how to look after donkeys and what donkeys do for humans (Davis & Shaw 1998:68).
Goats	Children learn about goats and how to take care of them.	Parents or teachers can discuss with children how to care for goats and the uses of goats (Cook 1988:21).
Insects	Children can study insects and learn about them.	Children can be introduced to match concepts when studying bugs, for example counting their legs or comparing sizes (Atherlay 1995:19). Children can study insects by comparing insect body parts with their own to help them realise that there is not a one-to-one correspondence (Ashbrook 2003:55).
PLANTS		
Husks of maize	Husks of maize can be used to make dolls or sailboats. Children can learn about maize.	The thinner inner husks are used extensively for filling mattresses and pillows, whilst they are also braided into mats, rugs, baskets and hats (Saunders 1930:234).
Oranges	Oranges can be used as a substitute for a ball. Children can also learn about smell, taste and colour.	Children are surprised to learn that many foods have geometric shapes. Parents or teachers can ask them to think of foods shaped in circles, for example oranges (Miller 1974:94). A teacher or parent can put objects with different shapes inside a bag. An orange can be used for a round object. The child must take out a specific shape, for example, a round object. This helps to develop tactile perception and sensory-motor integration (Grove 1989:231).
Lemons	Lemons can be used as a substitute for a ball. Children can learn about taste, smell and colour.	Lemons can be used in a discussion on the colour yellow. Parents or teachers can make a mystery box with yellow objects inside and let children feel the objects and guess what they are (Carlyon *et al.* 1981:104).

Asset	Research	Literature review
Papaya and pumpkin seeds	Seeds can be used for counting, for sorting, for grouping, for patterns, for decorations, for play money and for making a rattle.	A teacher can precut an opening at the top of a pumpkin and ask the children to use spoons to scoop out the seeds. The teacher can then encourage them to count the number of seeds inside the pumpkin. Bake the seeds in the oven and eat the toasted seeds (West & Cox 2001:106).
Orange and lemon seeds	Seeds can be used to make a collage, a rattle or decorations. They can also be used for counting.	Orange and lemon seeds can be washed and dried to use in seed picture making (Marsh & Marsh 1973:20).
Mango pit	A mango pit can be made into a doll or be used to draw in the sand.	No literature found.
Avocado seed	An Avocado seed can be used as a small ball or many seeds can be used for counting.	Let children place an avocado seed in water in a sunny spot and observe over time how the seed begin to sprout. They can then plant them in soil (Jorde 1981:28).
Sugar cane	Sugar cane can be cut into different lengths to teach children to sort them from long to short. They can also be cut into wheels for toy cars.	Children can learn how to grow sugar cane and how sugar is derived from the sugar cane (Davis & Shaw 1999:25).
Wood	Wood can be used for making building bricks or toy cars.	Children can experiment with any wooden objects, metal object and plastic objects to see which items a magnet will attract (West & Cox 2001:70). Cut a piece of thin wood to a useable size for a child. Cut a pattern on the long side of the piece of wood. You now have a sand comb that can be used during fantasy play or sand play to made roads or rivers in the sand (Caney's 1972:80).
Trees	Children can climb into trees, make tree houses and learn about the necessity of trees.	Trees should be an integral part of the outdoor movement centre, to provide shade and to encourage climbing (Gallahue 1976:375).
Peanuts	Children can help to peel peanuts, count them and use in fantasy play.	Teachers and parents can collect inexpensive materials, such as nuts inside their shells, for math activities (Miller & Gibbs 2002:14).
Beans	Children can help woman to sort beans and count them.	Soybeans can be used in sand and water play for a variety of creative activities (West & Cox 2001:11). Dried soup beans can be used together with other objects to find out why some things float (Markle 1992:45).
Pods	Pods can be used to make collages.	Children can make textured paintings using glue to secure things as pods (Gallahue 1976:310).
Grains of maize	Grains of maize can be used in counting activities to make patterns, to make collages, to sort and group and children can help to take the grains off the stalks.	Children can pour potting soil into a resealable plastic bag. They must then place two or three corn kernels in the soil and sprinkle the soil with water. They must seal the hag and hang it in a sunny window. In about a week the children can watch as the seeds sprout (Miller & Gibbs 2002:123).

Asset	Research	Literature review
Mealie-stalk	A mealie-stalk can be used as a drumstick or to make dolls.	Maize stalks can be used for making paper, wall boards and plaster boards or as packing for insulation (Saunders 1930:233).
Sweet potatoes	Raw sweet potatoes can be cut into shapes or building blocks.	Give children a sweet potato and have them stick three toothpicks into the sides of the potato. The toothpick should form a triangle and should rest on the top of a glass jar. Fill the jar with water so that only the tip of the potato above the jar is uncovered. Put the jars in filtered sunlight and let the children observe the potatoes grow over a period of time (Stringer & Bowman 1981:62).
Sticks	Children can use sticks as pens to write in the sand. They can play "pick-up-sticks" or sort them from long to short.	Children can gather rocks, sticks, leaves, flowers and grass and mix it with sand and water to make sand stew. They can mix everything together using sticks (West & Cox 2001:56). When the child is outdoors, he or she can make designs in mud or sand with sticks or twigs to learn that he has the ability to control materials (Cherry 1976:65).
Long grasses	Grasses can be used for brooms or to plate or to make patterns in the sand.	Corn dollies can be made with five straw plates, which form a spiral shape. The straws are soaked in water and plaited together. They are made for decoration purposes (McInnes 1989: 24). When learning about nature, children can use grasses and other material from nature to make a creative picture (Frankson & Benson 1970:45).
Thorns	Thorns can be used to write or draw with in the sand.	No literature found.
Leaves	Caretakers can discuss the different shapes of leaves with children and teach them about seasons. They can use leaves as play money or to make collages.	For a creative activity children can use small leaves together with flowers and wax paper to make beautiful sun catchers (West & Cox 2001:22). Children can do leaf printing by pinning leaves onto a paper and covering it with paint. This will help develop fine motor skills (Winer 1977:27). When learning about nature and seasons, children can trace around real leaves and then make leaf paintings that are bright and colourful (Eben 1982:201).
Cotton	Children can help to sort cotton. Cotton can be used to make pictures or to stuff dolls with and to teach children about texture.	For a lesson on weight children can experiment blowing different objects like cotton balls with straws (West & Cox 2001:68). For a creative activity or to teach children about sea animals, children can make a penguin from cotton wool and cardboard (Beneke 1983:22).
SOIL		
Mud figures	Children can play with mud making mud cakes or mud figures.	Mud can be used in water play and sand play for a variety of creative activities (West & Cox 2001:11).
SAND		
Drawing in the	Shapes, numbers, letters and patterns	Drawing lines, patterns, pictures, letters

Asset	Research	Literature review
sand	can be practiced by writing and drawing in the sand.	and numbers on sand promotes fine motor skills development (Du Toit 1996:168).
Sand in a bottle	Children can pour sand in and out of a bottle. Used together with seeds, flowers and leaves the child can make a collage.	To teach children about weight, the same amount of sand can be poured into different sizes containers and let them compare them (Du Toit 1996:304).
Stones	Stones can be used to make a rattle or a collage. They can be used as play money or to pack pictures. They can also be used for counting.	Parents can help children to make a miniature construction site with small rocks and sand (West & Cox 2001:36).
Big Yards	Many children can run, play ball, jump rope or dance in big yards.	Children should have ample space outside to move freely -space for running, jumping, sliding, rolling and climbing (Gallahue 1976:375).
Water	Children can learn about the necessity of water and hygiene. Water can be used in water play and fantasy play.	Water is one of the many different mediums children need to play with to learn basic concepts at a young age (West & Cox 2001:7).
GARDENS		
Vegetable gardens	Children can learn about vegetables, colours, sizes and seasons. Caretakers can help children to have their own garden and to sell some of the vegetables.	Children can come together, each bringing a different vegetable from their garden or the market. They can discuss their vegetables according to size, shape and colour (Carlyon *et al.* 1981:72).

4.2.5 LOCAL INSTITUTIONS AND CITIZENS ASSOCIATIONS

Asset	Research	Literature review
CHURCHES		
Sunday school	At Sunday school the children learn songs, stories, attitudes, religion and even performing arts.	The Sunday school helps the church to carry out its primary mandate (Barker 1993:5).
Church meetings	Children learn through observation of church meetings how to practice their religion and how a group of people work together.	The doctrine of the church can help to establish and develop certain principles and philosophies of life (Jacobs 1993:116). Role models and value consensus in the neighbourhood limit and control problem behaviour (Shonkoff & Phillips 2000:330).
Crèches	At a crèche a child can learn to share and interact with other children. Children learn to submit to their teacher and to follow rules. Teachers can teach a variety of skills.	Pre-school educare offer a structured environment, a variety of learning activities, interaction, active and experiential learning and the support of a teacher (Atmore 1994:152).
SCHOOLS		
School books	Older siblings can show younger children their books and teach them how to handle books. They can discuss pictures and colours and ever read from them.	Books from the school library can be read at home by children or by parents and children together (Du Toit 1996:119).
Special Schools	Special schools can accommodate children with special needs. Children from other schools can visit the school to teach them how to handle people with disabilities.	Learners with a back log of one or more years can be accommodated in a special class or a special school for extra support (Du Toit 1996:27).

CLINIC AND NURSES		
Waiting time at the clinic	Long waiting hours at the clinic can be used to show mothers examples of toys (like a can filled with stones), illustrating how to use it to stimulate learning.	No literature found.
Waiting area at clinic	The waiting area at the clinic lends itself to display toys to mothers.	The facilities of the Daspoort Clinic are an asset to local institutions (Kriek 2003:58).
Market	Supervised visits to the market can teach children how to trade. Children can play "At the market" when at home and practice a dialogue between a salesman and a customer.	To increase awareness of everyday sounds parents can take their child to a supermarket or walk down a busy street with him. They can encourage the child to tell them about the sounds he hears and what objects make these sounds (Erridge 1987:27). Events such as shopping hold potential for social, cognitive and language skills development (Barnett, Bell & Carey 1999:214).
Small Businesses	Children can help parents who own small businesses. Children can play that they have their own business using play money. Caretakers can give children play money to buy from small businesses.	Parents or teachers can set up a play store for children. Children can play with empty cans, empty cartons and boxes to use as merchandise. Children can use play money to shop at the play store (Miller 1974:114).

4.2.6 Crafts

Asset	Research	Literature review
DECORATIONS		
Plastic straw decorations	By making these decorations children can learn about length and colour.	Children can make three-dimensional patterns using drinking straws and threads. They can make freestanding of hanging constructions (Rogers & Sutcliffe 1970:46).
Straw decorations	Children can make these decorations to decorate or to sell.	In the Zulu culture, one of the boys' favourite pastimes was to plait braids from the stalks of grass. They used these braids to make bangles and necklaces (Grossert 1978:15).
Cardboard stars covered with fabric	By making these decorations children practice cutting and pasting and learn about shapes and colours.	No literature found.
Beads	Children can thread beads through a piece of string to make a necklace. They learn about colours and sizes. Necklaces can be sold or played with.	Threading beads is an important visual-motor skill that children need to master (Louw 1994:255).
TOYS		
Wire cars	Older boys make their own cars with wire. Cars are used for fantasy play.	Boys and girls can make wire cars and play alone with them or in a group (Davis & Shaw 1998:7).
Dolls	Dolls can be made from pits, maize stalk or fabric. Dolls are used for fantasy play and girls learn how to take care of babies.	The girl that is playing with her doll, bathing and feeding it, is anticipating her role as mother one day (Louw 1994:317).

HOUSEHOLD ITEMS		
Grass brooms	Children can help to make grass brooms and use them to sweep. They can also be used in fantasy play as a horse or a donkey.	A child's symbolic functioning can be seen when he climbs onto a broom and pretends that it is a horse (Louw 1994:256).
Grass mats	Children can learn how to make these mats. Mats can be used to play and learn on.	Each member of the Zulu family had his, or her, own sleeping mat. Smaller mats were made for sitting on. Finely woven mats were provided for eating and larger ones without coloured decoration were used to collect the meal from maize (Grossert 1978:5).
Mats made from plastic bags	Children learn about recycling and how to make these mats.	No literature found.
CLOTHES		
Hats crocheted from plastic bags	Older siblings can teach young children how to crochet and hats can be used in fantasy play.	No literature found.
Traditional skirts	Traditional skirts can be played with in teaching children about their heritage.	Parents can help their children to preserve their cultural heritage by playing with traditional costumes (Reynolds 1989:113).

4.2.7 CARETAKERS

Asset	**Research**	Literature review
MOTHERS		
Same care taker every day	Children mostly have the same caretaker every day. Caretakers can establish a routine for the children making time for playing and learning.	The daycare mother who provides loving care and who maintains consistent routine and discipline is an asset within the close community of a child (Kriek 2003:58).
Grandmothers	Sometimes grandmothers take care of the children when mothers cannot. Grandmothers live with their children and can take care of their grandchildren in their own environment.	Grandparents and their involvement with their children and grandchildren are an asset that support the family (Briedenhann 2003:73).
Family	Aunts sometimes look after children.	A family is important to a child and it is necessary that a family spend time together. A child must realise that a family is a social grouping that can be a lot of fun (Mannix 1996:353).
Siblings	Older sisters are often responsible for younger siblings and while looking after them, they teach them skills.	An elder sister or brother spending time with a younger sibling, reaching out to him or taking him on outings, is an asset within the child's family (Kriek 2003:58).
Neighbours	When children play with friends next door, the neighbour looks after all the children. It is seldom that children are without supervision. This gives caretakers a lot of opportunity to direct learning.	Neighbours are usually well known to the parents of a child and therefore reliable and responsible. Neighbours could do babysitting on an exchange basis (Reynolds 1989:95).
Friends	Children very seldom play alone. Friends teach each other skills, songs and dances. Children feel safe with their friends.	When children teach each other, there is social support for learning and the child feels confident to ask questions (Du Toit 1996:132).

Asset	**Research**	Literature review
Teachers	Teachers have the opportunity to be involved in the children's learning and can educate parents about learning.	The teacher guides the learners in their learning. The teacher is responsible for teaching, correcting, evaluating, repeating and expanding until the learner masters the content (Du Toit 1996:67). The teacher is responsible for creating an atmosphere that facilitates learning. Teachers should give parents guidance on how to help their children to develop their potential (Du Toit 1996:108).
Leisure Time	Caretakers spend leisure time with the children. This gives them time to teach the children new games.	Parents teach their children through their example and conversations with the child. The parents have many teaching opportunities because they are with their children every day (Du Toit 1996:110).
Chores	Young children have few chores. They can help with easy chores. They have plenty of time to play while they are developing skills and learning.	To motivate children to take responsibility and to be willing to help around the house, they can make a list of all the chores that need to be done. Next to each chore they can write down whose responsibility it is. Parents can discuss with them why chores need to be done, why chores need to be divided amongst the family members and that some people might be better at doing one chore than another (Mannix 1993:346).

4.3 DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

In the previous section, the results of this research study were linked with supporting literature in the form of a table. In the following section, the research results will be discussed.

This is a critical time in the developing world for the well-being of young children. Early childhood intervention is necessary for preventing a decrease in development and for minimising the impact of already established disabilities in the functioning of the individual child and his or her family. Due to an extensive range of challenging conditions impacting on the lives of young children, there is an alarming number of children at risk for development disabilities (Alant 2003:209). These challenging conditions motivate a study such as this one.

In this research study, numerous assets to enrich pre-school learning were identified and mobilising it could have a constructive outcome. Each learning environment boasts a unique combination of assets and capacities (Eloff & Ebersöhn 2001:150). If these assets are recognised, it can contribute to the creation of an effective learning environment. Although many assets are present in this community, it seemed as if community members

have the approach of seeing the glass as being half-empty and not half-full. Data derived from the interviews, suggested that community members experience that they do not have sufficient resources for pre-school learning. Some caretakers said that their children do not have any toys and do not play games. Observations, field notes, photographs, artefacts and some interviews suggested otherwise. Some remarks made by participants suggested that there is a government-must-provide attitude amongst community members when it comes to resources for pre-school learning. However, when problem solving comes from within, potential for sustainable empowerment is created (Eloff & Ebersöhn 2001:153). It is important for people from informal settlements to take the lead in improving their circumstances (Pillay 2004:9). According to Page-Adams and Sherraden (In Eloff & Ebersöhn 2001:154) identifying and mobilising assets have positive effects on well being.

However, we cannot assume that all people are interested in mobilising their assets. People might not be interested in mobilising assets because primary needs, like food and water, are not met. The hierarchy of needs described by Maslow (Pretorius 1998:28) states that human needs are interlinked. Primary needs (oxygen, water, food, rest) need to be fulfilled before an individual would seek to fulfill a higher need (learning, understanding, realising optimal potential). Within a culture of poverty, many community members suffer from malnutrition. From this perspective it seems as if community members are not interested in higher needs until their primary needs are satisfied.

Many of the community members are affected by unemployment. These include teenagers who have a low expectancy for employment when they finish school. Because many parents are unemployed, their children expect to be unemployed as well when they finish school. Because of this, the children may possibly not be motivated to study or to finish school.

In paragraph 3.3.6 a table is used to relate each asset to activities the asset can be used for to enrich pre-school learning, the skills practiced by these activities and the learning outcomes for the Foundation Phase, as stated by the Revised National Curriculum, practiced. Using these assets as resources for pre-school learning all the learning outcomes for the Foundation Phase were covered. Therefore, one can conclude that there is an ample amount of resources present in the community to enrich pre-school learning. The assets were identified within a culture of poverty. This concludes that the assets are everyday objects and activities present in most households. These everyday objects and activities have a lot of potential for enriching pre-school learning. These assets give practical solutions for problems; for example, children can practice their fine motor skills

by writing in the sand with a thorn or practice hand-eye coordination by playing ball games with a lemon. These assets can effectively be used in intervention programs. Intervention programs should be aimed at maximising opportunity factors (Wolery 2000:191). According to some authors (Guralnick in Kriek & Eloff 2004:133) intervention programs should also be based within the local community. Kelly (In Eloff & Ebersöhn 2001:150) contends that we need less expensive and more innovative approaches when it comes to intervention. Because these assets were identified within the community they are replaceable when broken, for example, a broken wooden bench can easily be fixed or replaced. The assets identified in this study are also inexpensive and can be used innovatively to enhance pre-school learning.

Intervention with a competency-based approach looks at the child holistically (Wilson 1998:3). The results of this research study can be used as a different point of departure when looking at intervention. Intervention can consist of starting with the assets of the child. This research study identified children as an asset. This includes the games the children play, like rope jumping, ball games, language games, running games, singing games, dancing games, hide and seek, competitions and mimic games. These games cover a variety of skills and learning outcomes that are practiced by playing these games. It can facilitate the general development of children as well as peer interaction (Alant 2003:209). The child's own body was identified as an asset to teach children vocabulary, visual motor skills, auditory perception, memory, musicality, numeracy, self worth, independence, language, emotional development, measuring, social skills and fine motor skills. Peers were identified as an asset for developing social skills and independence. The toys (modern toys, electronic toys, swings, hula hoops, balloons filled with sand, play cards and play guns) of the children are assets that can be used in a variety of ways to enrich pre-school learning. The way in which evenings are spent, talking and teaching prayers to the children, is an asset to this community. Chores that the children have to help with, like working in the garden or washing dishes, can enrich the learning of pre-school learners. The ample leisure time available to children can be used for any activity enriching pre-school learning. Characteristics of the children (their independence, their preference for interaction and their boldness towards people) put them in a favourable situation for learning and development. Activities of children (jumping, reading, writing, crawling and counting) have been identified as assets with a variety of applications to enrich pre-school learning.

The culture of this community has been identified as an asset to enrich pre-school learning. Songs are part of community members' lifestyle. Children are exposed to songs from a very young age. This enhances the children's musicality, rhythm, vocabulary and

auditory perception. Dances too are common in the community. Dancing contributes to the children's rhythm, musicality, gross motor skills, coordination, imagination and social skills. Making music is another asset contributing to children's musicality, rhythm and creativity. Furthermore, the importance and the presence of children in the company of adults are identified as assets that enrich identity and self worth.

Young children learn through play and through interactions with people and objects in their environment (Wilson 1998:1). Man-made products were identified as assets to enrich pre-school learning. Everyday household items such as egg boxes, candle wax, coals, wooden benches, cutlery, sheets, buckets, plastic containers, cooking utensils, furniture, radio, television, maize meal bags, plastic bags, fabrics, rope, tins, pens, papers, books and drums can be used in different ways to develop skills related to pre-school learning. The clothes that the children wear are an asset. The activity of washing clothes can teach children aspects of numeracy, new vocabulary and visual perception. Folding baby napkins into shapes can also contribute to the child's visual perception. Buildings in a child's environment are assets. Bricks, fences and steps at houses can be used for the development of balance, imagination, numeracy, fine motor skills, gross motor skills, measuring and coordination. Garden tools like hosepipes and wheelbarrows can be applied to create activities to enrich pre-school learning. Old tires are an asset for the practicing of gross motor skills, balance and creativity. The roads in the community are an asset for playing games and socialising with friends.

Hunt (Wilson 1998:17) recommends that children be provided with optimal environments to increase their intellectual development. The process of learning is based on experiences gained in interaction with the environment that provides messages to the learner (Wilson 1998:230). Accessibility to the environment fosters independence, feelings of competence and active exploration to the child (Wilson 1998:231). Neal and Palmer (In Queiros 2001:67) describe three types of environmental education: Education about, through and for the environment. Education about the environment aims at discovering the nature of the environment. Education through the environment uses the environment as a medium for learning and education for the environment develops an informed concern for the environment. Environmental education stresses the importance of integrating conceptual knowledge with sensory and perceptual development. In this research study many assets to enrich pre-school learning were identified within the natural environment. Assets included animals (chicken feathers, chickens, dogs, cattle, donkeys and goats) and insects that can be used to teach children about these creatures and how to care for them. Plants or parts of plants such as husks of maize, oranges, lemons, papaya and pumpkin seeds, orange and lemon seeds, mango pit, avocado seed, sugar

cane, wood, trees, peanuts, beans pods, grains of maize, mealie-stalk, sweet potatoes, sticks, long grasses, thorns, leaves and cotton were identified as assets with various ways in which they can be used to enrich pre-school learning. Soil used for mud figures is an asset for the development of fine motor skills, creativity, numeracy and tactile perception. Sand was identified as an asset for drawing (in the sand) and pouring sand into a bottle. Stones are an asset to promote numeracy, creativity and auditory perception. The big yards in the community are an asset for gross motor skills and social skills. Water can be used in many ways to enrich pre-school learning and was identified as an asset. Vegetable gardens are an asset when they are used to teach children colours, sizes, seasons and entrepreneurship.

Local institutions and citizens associations were identified as assets to enrich pre-school learning. Local churches hold church meetings and Sunday school during which children are actively involved and have the opportunity to develop in terms of morality, auditory perception, musicality, memory, self-assurance and social skills. Church buildings that are vacant during the week can be used as a playgroup, a crèche or a venue for parent guidance. Crèches in the community offer a variety of opportunities to children for pre-school development. Schools in the community hand out schoolbooks to enrolled students who can take books home. At home younger siblings can benefit from these books when parent or older siblings read to them. Special schools in the community accommodate learners with special needs but can also give learners in mainstream education the opportunity to learn how to socialise with people with special needs. The local clinic was identified as an asset because of the waiting time at the clinic and the waiting area. The waiting area lends itself to display toys to enrich pre-school learning to visiting mothers. The long waiting hours can be used to show mothers, who are waiting to have their babies examined, examples of toys (like a can filled with stones), illustrating how to use it to stimulate learning. The clinic can be used as a venue for an intervention program to provide caretakers with training and support in influencing their children's interactions with the environment. Caretakers can be empowered to understand the importance of the first six years for later life and their role as caretaker. They can also acquire skills to use resources to facilitate pre-school learning. When caretakers take children to the market, children get exposed to the business world. The market place can also facilitate learning of other concepts such as size, shape and colour. Small businesses in the community give children the opportunity to buy by themselves and help parents sell products. This facilitates the learning of entrepreneurship and numeracy.

Caretakers can expose children to music, art or other creative activities. As they mature, children can participate in these activities regularly. These fun and meaningful activities

can help children become caring, confident and creative adults (Roehlkepartain & Leffert 2000:127). Crafts were identified as an asset in the community. Children can make different kinds of decorations like plastic straw decorations, straw decorations, cardboard stars covered with fabric and decorations with beads. This will help the children to develop fine motor skills, creativity and concentration. They can also make their own toys like wire cars and dolls, learning fine motor skills, imagination, creativity, responsibility and gender. Making household items such as grass brooms, grass mats and plastic bag mats not only teaches children fine motor skills, but can also be used to play and learn with. Clothes such as hats crocheted from plastic bags and traditional skirts, are assets for the development of fine motor skills and to play with, for example during fantasy play.

To grow and thrive, children need supportive adults. Anyone who spends time with children can love, care for, encourage and affirm them (Roehlkepartain & Leffert 2000:27). The caretakers in this community include mothers, grandmothers, family, siblings, neighbours, friends and teachers. Caretakers and children spend a lot of time together in predictable and enjoyable routines. Caretakers that provide appropriate supervision of children are an asset in this community.

4.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the assets derived from this research study, were discussed by way of a summary of activities each asset can be used for according to the research and by way of relating literature for each asset. By looking at the relating literature, the value and trustworthiness of the assets as agents of enriching pre-school learning within a culture of poverty are strengthened. The absence of relating literature for some assets, does not necessarily eliminate them as assets, but merely suggests that more research regarding these assets need to be done. It can also be seen as a unique contribution of this study.

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CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this research personal and environmental assets were identified to enrich pre-school learning within a culture of poverty. This was, therefore, an ethnographic study. Previous chapters in this dissertation covered the overview and rationale of this research study (chapter one), the research design – an ethnographic study identifying personal and environmental assets to enrich pre-school learning within a culture of poverty (chapter two), the research results – personal and environmental assets to enrich pre-school learning (chapter three) and a literature control – literature relating to the research results (chapter four). In this chapter conclusions are drawn and recommendations and shortcomings are discussed.

5.2 ANSWERING THE RESEARCH QUESTION

The research question of this study looked at assets within children, caretakers and the community that can be used to enrich the education and learning of pre-school learners within a culture of poverty: **What assets within children, caretakers and the community can be used to enrich the education and learning of pre-school learners within a culture of poverty?** The main objective of this research was therefore to identify and establish these assets. This study was conducted as an ethnographic study. This implies that this research study is my construction of reality rather than a literal description of the situation. Assets were identified by analysing data derived from observations, field notes, photographs, interviews and artefacts. A collective summary of assets was drawn up and seven themes emerged from the data. The seven themes were children, culture,- man made products, natural environment, local institutions and citizens' associations, crafts and caretakers. These main themes of assets identified were expanded into categories and subcategories.

Assets in children that can be used to enrich pre-school learning and education were the games they play (rope jumping, ball games, language games, running games, singing games, dancing games, hide and seek, competitions like running races, netball and football), their bodies (bodies, fingers and hair plating), peers, toys (modern toys, electronic toys, swings, hula hoops, a balloon filled with sand, cards and toy guns),

evenings (learning prayers and sitting and talking to family members), the chores they have to do (like working in the garden or washing dishes), their plenty of leisure time, their characteristics (independence, like interaction with people, not being scared of people) and activities they keep themselves busy with (jumping, reading, crawling, writing and counting).

Assets that were identified in the community's culture, that can be used to enrich pre-school learning, are music, songs and dances that are part of the community members' everyday lives that children get exposed to from a very young age. Children being very important to the community and being present in adult company are assets of this community to enrich pre-school learning.

Many assets to enrich pre-school learning were identified in man-made products that are present in the children's environment. Household objects such as egg boxes, candle wax, coals, wooden benches, cutlery, sheets, blankets, table cloths, washing lines, buckets, plastic containers, cooking utensils, furniture, radio, television, chairs, cool drink cans, curlers, maize meal bags, plastic bags, fabrics, rope, tins, pens, papers, books and drums can all be used in various ways to enrich pre-school learning. The clothes children wear every day, baby napkins and the washing of clothes are assets for pre-school learning when used in activities to develop learning skills. Garden tools, such as a hosepipe and a wheelbarrow, old tires, the roads and buildings (the bricks, fences and steps at houses) can all be used for pre-school learning.

The children spend a lot of time outside their houses. In this natural environment, many assets were identified with educational value. The animals (chickens, dogs, cattle, donkeys and goats) and insects can be used to teach children about the environment. Plants and parts of plants were identified as assets for the various ways they can be used for pre-school learning. Assets were husks of maize, oranges, papaya and pumpkin seeds, mango seed, sugar cane, wood, trees, climbing trees, peanuts, beans, pods, grains of maize, mealie stalk, sweet potatoes, sticks, long grass, thorns, leaves and cotton. Other assets in the natural environment that were identified to enrich pre-school learning were soil (making mud figures), sand (drawing in the sand and throwing sand in a bottle), stones, big yards, water (from taps and the river) and vegetable gardens.

Local institutions and citizens' associations were identified as assets to enrich pre-school learning because of the service they render, or can provide to the community and, deriving from this, the learning experience they can provide to children. These assets were the churches (the church meetings and Sunday school), the crèches, schools (the

school books they provide) special schools, the clinic and nurses (the waiting time and waiting area at the clinic), the market and small businesses in the community (tuck shops at houses and fruit stalls next to roads).

Many community members are involved in crafts. These crafts are taught to children from a young age. These crafts were identified as assets to enrich pre-school learning because of the value they have for the development of fine motor skills and creativity. These assets include toys (wire cars and dolls), household items (grass brooms, grass mats and mats crocheted from plastic bags and traditional skirts) and decorations (plastic straw decorations, straw decorations, carton stars covered with fabric and beads).

The caretakers in the community include mothers, grandmothers, family members (like aunts), siblings, neighbours, friends and teachers. These groups of caretakers were identified as assets to enrich pre-school learning because of their potential to facilitate pre-school learning. Caretakers spend leisure time with the children around them. This gives them time to facilitate pre-school learning, therefore, leisure time was also identified as an asset to enrich pre-school learning. Chores were also identified as an asset to enrich pre-school learning because children can acquire skills necessary for pre-school learning by doing simple chores.

5.3 SUB-OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The sub-objectives of this study involved exploring the asset based approach to learning development and understanding pre-school education and learning within a culture of poverty.

To explore the asset based approach to learning development and understanding pre-school education and learning within a culture of poverty, the following references were made. In paragraph 1.1 the risk factors for a child growing up within a culture of poverty were discussed and early childhood intervention as a powerful future investment was explained. Two approaches, the needs-based approach and the asset-based approach were introduced. Smit's project on the development of house crèches in disadvantaged communities in South Africa was used as an example of a needs based approach. The necessity of an asset-based approach to address the challenges of society in the South African context was discussed. The asset-based approach was explained as an empowerment perspective that focuses on potential assets and capacities in a community.

In paragraph 1.4 and paragraph 2.3.3.1 the asset based-approached was discussed as the theoretical framework for this research study. The rationale for using the asset-based approach as theoretical framework and the advantages of this approach were explained.

In paragraph 1.6 relevant concepts for this research study were defined such as asset-based approach, pre-school learning and a culture of poverty. Through these discussions an attempt was made to explore the asset based approach to learning development and understanding pre-school education and learning within a culture of poverty.

5.4 SUMMARISED CONCLUSION

In this research, I did an ethnographic study in a community that has a culture of poverty. The aim of my research was to identify personal and environmental assets that could be used to enrich pre-school learning of the community's children. These assets included anything that could be used for pre-school learning, for example pumpkin seeds. While participating as a member of the community, I used observations, field notes, interviews, photographs and artefacts to study the community. Numerous assets were identified when data was analysed. Seven main themes were derived from a collective summary of data. The main themes were children, culture, man-made products, the natural environment, local institutions and citizens' associations, crafts and caretakers. The themes were expanded into categories and sub-categories. Each sub-category was discussed as an asset in the light of various activities the asset can be used for, the skills and the learning outcomes practiced by these activities. Using these assets as stated by the Revised National Curriculum, I covered all the learning outcomes for the Foundation Phase. Furthermore, I studied literature that relate to the theme of this research study and incorporated literature control to verify the results from this study. By doing this research, I came to the conclusion that this particular community is rich with potential, opportunities and material to enrich the pre-school learning of their children.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section recommendations for practice, training and research are made with taking the results of this research study into consideration.

5.5.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Parents, teachers and other caretakers who support young children for pre-school learning need not be crippled by the cost of educational material and toys. Caretakers can

easily make inexpensive material for learning or use available resources to facilitate effective pre-school learning. This can account for caretakers at all levels of financial competence.

5.5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TRAINING

The asset-based approach could be part of training that involves caretakers and teachers working with pre-school children. Students must get the opportunity to practice identifying assets and putting them into practice to support pre-school learning. This can put them in a more favourable position to focus on resources in contexts that can easily be defined purely in terms of the lack of resources.

Facilities in a community, such as clinics, libraries and church halls, can be used as venues to facilitate training or information sessions about pre-school learning and the role of the parents and caretakers in the development of the child. Exhibitions on assets to enrich pre-school learning can be held, for example, in the waiting room of the clinic. This would expose all the visiting mothers to the assets in their community.

When assets are identified, community members should be informed about the assets and its applicability. This can be done through exhibitions of examples of applied assets and parent guidance by means of information sessions on how to use assets and the possible outcome of using the assets.

5.5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESEARCH

To verify the effectiveness of the assets, identified in this research study, to enrich pre-school learning within a culture of poverty, a long-term study can be done where pre-school learning is supported using these assets. The children can then be assessed in primary school to determine whether the enriched pre-school learning has benefited them.

A case study can be done to gather a large amount of information on one or a few cases, to go into greater depth on the theme of the use of assets to support pre-school learning. Intervention can be done with one or a few children, exposing them to enriched pre-school learning, using only local assets and recording their performances and development.

An in-depth study relying mostly on participant observation can be used to do further research on assets for pre-school learning. This research study can be repeated in

another community with a culture of poverty to test if these assets will occur in another community as well.

5.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter an attempt has been made to answer the research question of this research study and to show that the sub-objectives of this study have been met. A summarised conclusion about this research has been made. Recommendations for practice, training and research were also made.

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ANNEXURES

Annexure A: **Learning outcomes for the foundation phase (according to the revised national curriculum statement)**

Annexure B: **Research Diary**

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Annexure A

LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR THE FOUNDATION PHASE (ACCORDING TO THE REVISED NATIONAL CURRICULUM STATEMENT)

Languages (L)

1. Listening: Listen for information and enjoyment and respond appropriately and critically in a wide range of situations.
2. Speaking: Communicate confidently and effectively in spoken language in a wide range of situations.
3. Reading: Read and view for information and enjoyment and respond to the aesthetic, affective, cultural and social values in texts.
4. Writing: Write different kinds of factual and imaginative texts for a wide range of purposes.
5. Thinking and reasoning: Use language to think and reason, as well as to access, process and use information for learning.
6. Language structure and use: Use sounds, words and grammar of the language to create and interpret texts.

Mathematics (M)

1. Numbers, operations and relationships: Recognize, describe and represent numbers and their relationships. Count, estimate, calculate and check with competence and confidence in solving problems. Demonstrate an understanding about ways of working with numbers.
2. Patterns, functions and algebra: Recognize, describe and represent patterns and relationships; solve problems using algebraic language and skills.
3. Space and shape: Describe and represent characteristics and relationships between two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects in a variety of orientations and positions.
4. Measurement: Use appropriate measuring units, instruments and formulas in a variety of contexts.
5. Data handling: Collect, summaries, display and critically analyse data in order to draw conclusions and make predictions and to interpret and determine chance variation.

Natural Sciences (NS)

1. Scientific Investigations: Act confidently on curiosity about natural phenomena, and investigate relationships and solve problems in scientific, technological and environmental contexts. Use process skills to investigate phenomena related to the natural sciences.

Technology (T)

1. Technological processes and skills: Apply technological processes and skills ethically and responsibly using appropriate information and communication technologies.

Arts and Culture (AC)

1. Creating, interpreting and presenting: Create, interpret and present work in each of the art forms.
2. Reflecting: Reflect critically on artistic and culture process, products and styles in past and present contexts.
3. Participating and collaborating: Demonstrate personal and interpersonal skills through individual and group participation in Arts and Cultural activities.
4. Expressing and communicating: Analyse and use multiple forms of communication and expression in Arts and Culture.

Social Sciences - History (SSH)

1. Historical Enquiry: Use enquiry skills to investigate the past and the present.
2. Historical Knowledge and understanding: Demonstrate historical knowledge and understanding.
3. Historical interpretation: Interpret aspects of history.

Social Sciences – Geography (SSG)

1. Geographical enquiry: Use enquiry skills to investigate geographical and environmental concepts and processes.
2. Geographical knowledge and understanding: Demonstrate geographical and environmental knowledge and understanding.
3. Exploring issues: Make informed decisions about social and environmental issues and problems.

Life Orientation (LO)

1. Health promotion: Make informed decisions regarding personal, community and environmental health.
2. Social development: Demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to constitutional rights and responsibilities, and show an understanding of diverse cultures and religions.
3. Personal development: Use acquired life skills to achieve and extend personal potential to respond effectively to challenges in his or her world.
4. Physical development and movement: Demonstrate an understanding of, and participate in, activities that promote movement and physical development.

Economic and Management Sciences (EMS)

1. The Economic cycle: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the economic cycle within the context of “the economic problem”.
2. Sustainable growth and development: Demonstrate an understanding of sustainable growth, reconstruction and development, and reflect critically on its related processes.

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ANNEXURE B

RESEARCH DIARY

When I started my research, I knew nothing about an asset-based approach. However, I knew that only telling people what their problems were did not result in positive outcomes. My initial theme was "Informal education within the home environment". As soon as I started working on this theme, I was introduced to the asset-based approach. This led me to expanding my title to include the identification of assets. I felt comfortable with this approach and the approach formed a theoretical basis for my research study. I decided to work on assets within the children, the caretakers and the environment. My training and experience in Special Educational Needs helped me to be able to see the potential of an object, for example, to know that dancing games are an asset for the development of gross motor coordination and rhythm. The available literature on the asset-based approach was of great help, explaining the approach and discussing research studies based on this approach.

I had a good idea of how I wanted to conduct my research. I put together my research proposal and started to plan my research. Collecting the data was the part I enjoyed most. I stayed with local people of the community. Although we could not communicate in a mutual language, I enjoyed staying with them. The first two days that I stayed in the community, I was a little worried because I had no interpreter. I was looking for somebody that was very fluent in English to interpret for me, because I did not want to misunderstand participants. On the third day a young man showed up at the house where I was staying. He heard that I was looking for an interpreter and offered to help. His

English was very good and I was delighted. Soon we started conducting interviews. My interpreter was of great help, explaining traditions, games and activities. He quickly realised what my research was all about and eagerly participated. I went home with photographs, recorded interviews, field notes and artefacts.

Analysing the data was not difficult but took a lot of time. Discussing each asset together with activities, skills and learning outcomes took even more time. Many assets were identified and at first I was a little overwhelmed by the amount of information that I wanted to present. Eventually I decided to present it in the form of tables. This gave structure to the great amount of information and made it much easier to control.

I was not very excited about the literature control that I had to do, mainly because I did not know where to start or how to start. After deciding that I would also present the relevant literature in a table, it made more sense and I found a starting point. I read a lot of literature on making toys, on activities with everyday objects and on everyday activities benefiting children. Some of the assets were very hard to find relevant literature for and I had to look at very old literature, for example, the only reference that I could find for using husks of maize and mealie stalks, was in a book dating back to 1930! Something else that I realised while studying the relating literature was that although I have identified many assets, I have missed a lot of assets as well. This supported my conclusion that this community really is rich with potential!

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